



Agency Priority Goal Action Plan

Visa Security

Goal Leaders:

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Overview

Goal Statement

- Impact Statement: Under Executive Order 13780 (Protecting the Nation From Foreign Terrorist Entry Into the United States), CA along with its interagency partners identified critical data points that should be collected from every visa applicant to enhance border security and visa security screening protocols.
- Agency Priority Goal Statement: By September 30, 2019 State will update the DS-160 and DS-260 nonimmigrant and immigrant visa application forms and add the newly-collected fields to our data sharing feeds for interagency partners.

Challenge

- The interagency, under direction of Executive Order 13780, is working to improve uniform screening and vetting standards for visa applicants.
- Collecting additional information from applicants is feasible once interagency consensus is reached, subject to the requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act. The application form and processing systems can then be updated to collect this data.

Opportunity

- Collecting additional information from visa applicants will enhance the visa security screening process by providing additional data points to help identify potential threats before they gain entry to the United States.

Goal Structure & Strategies

In order to complete all critical fields for uniform screening and vetting, we must: 1) reach agreement on the use and definition of additional information; 2) obtain OMB approval to revise our visa application forms; and 3) update our visa processing systems.

Early and effective external agency coordination is a key factor that could affect goal achievement. Gaining approval for the content of forms usually follows a standardized process controlled by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) under the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA). For this project, we have taken into consideration the standard process, timelines, and milestones, and have engaged OMB on the importance of meeting our timeline for this project.

Consular Affairs must also update our public-facing electronic application forms, as well as our back-end databases to collect and store the new information. CA anticipates that these changes will require modifications to the DS-160 and DS-260 online application forms, changes to the Consular Electronic Application Center (CEAC), the CEAC web report used by consular officers to review DS-160 and DS-260 information, and relevant databases.

Summary of Progress – FY 18 Q1 – FY 19 Q4

The Department of State accomplished its goal of including social media questions into the DS-160 and DS-260 visa forms on May 30th and also included additional supplemental Social Media questions on October 12th. As a result, the vast majority of visa applicants are now asked to enter the social media platforms they use and their user handles. Applicants are also able to enter social media platforms that are not present in the drop-down menu of the visa forms. The next challenge is for interagency partners to develop the capacity to ingest the social media data the State Department now collects. While overcoming that challenge primarily lies with interagency partners, the Department will continue to do what it can to facilitate their work.

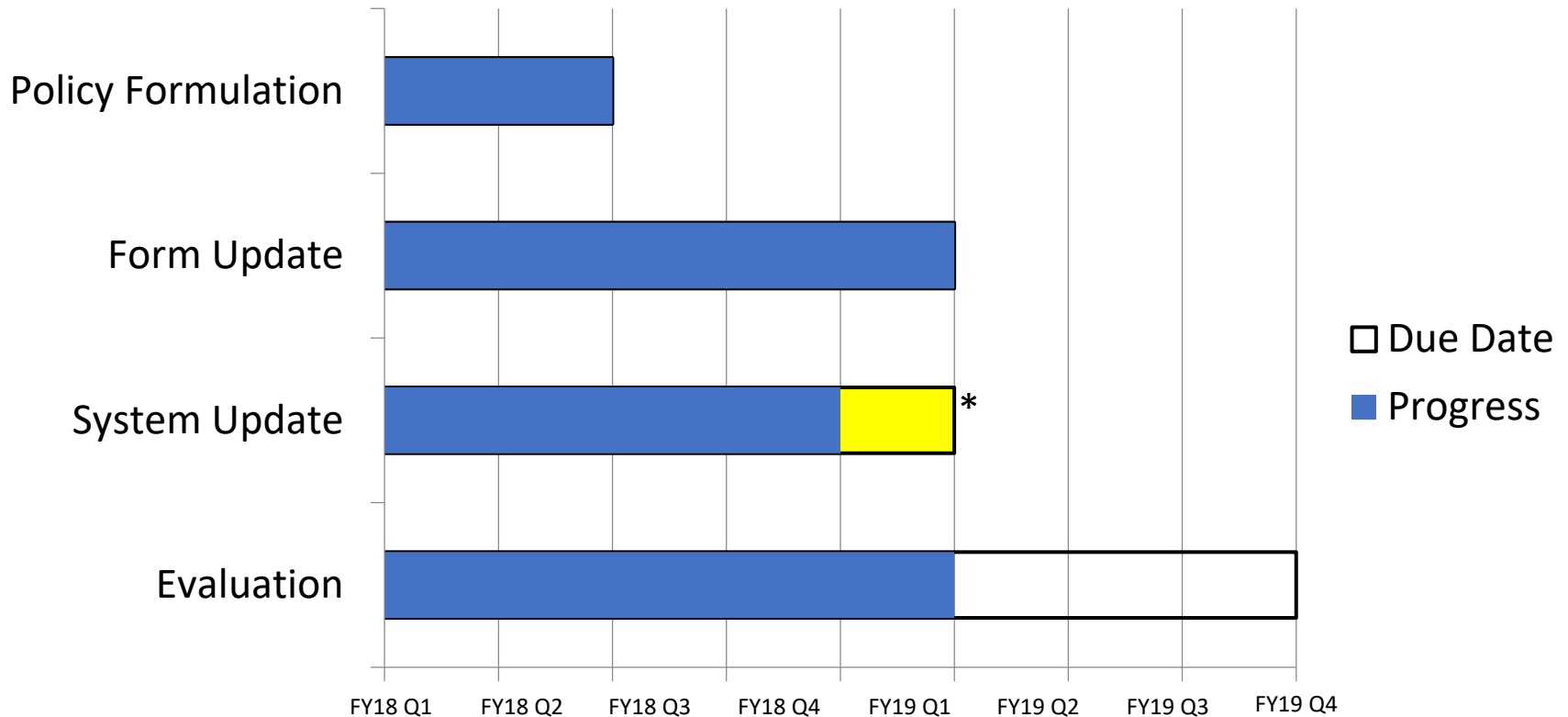
Key Milestones

In order to complete all critical fields for uniform screening and vetting, we must: 1) reach interagency agreement on the use and definition of required additional information; 2) obtain OMB approval to revise our visa application forms; and 3) update our visa processing systems.

Milestone Summary					
Key Milestone	Milestone Due Date	Milestone Status	Change from last quarter	Owner	Comments
Definition and formulation of policy strategy and initial discussion with Interagency stakeholders to identify barriers and other issues.	FY18Q1	Complete	N/A	CA/VO	Milestone Complete
Publication of form change proposal in Federal Register; Technical requirements defined.	FY18Q2	Complete	Yes	CA/VO/L/R	Milestone Complete
State submits PRA Package to OMB	FY18Q3	Complete	Yes	CA/VO/L/R	Milestone Complete
Online forms updated; systems upgrade complete	FY18Q4	Complete *FY 19Q1	Yes	CA/VO/I CA/CST	Milestone Complete: OMB PRA approval received April 11, 2019, but requested text changes. Development teams made the revisions and the software releases were deployed on May 30, 2019. Additional supplemental Social Media questions were deployed on October 12.
Technical systems monitored for stability and data integrity	FY19Q1	Complete	Yes	CA/VO/I CA/CST	Milestone Complete: Changes to the DS-160 and DS-260 were successfully deployed and are in use globally by visa applicants.
Initial statistical analysis of quarterly data to determine effectiveness	FY19Q2	Delayed	Yes	CA/VO/I	One visa clearance partner cannot receive and screen the new visa applicant data yet, and therefore this key milestone is delayed pending action from the vetting partner.
Further statistical review and analysis	FY19Q3	Delayed	Yes	CA/VO/I	Due to term projects being delayed, milestone will be delayed accordingly.
Final evaluation of forms enhancement program and policy.	FY19Q4	Delayed	Yes	CA/VO	Due to term projects being delayed, milestone will be delayed accordingly.

Key Indicators

Visa Security Agency Priority Goal Progress



* The systems update milestone was slated for completion by Q4, 2019 yet completed Q1, 2019. Progress refers to advancement of the goal during the relevant quarter.

Data Accuracy and Reliability

Data regarding the formal approval of form updates will be collected from regular communications with OMB allowing us to move to the next stage of the process.

Definition of additional data will be collected from either formal reporting or meeting minutes.

System update data will be collected from meeting minutes, system status reports, and project charters.

Additional Information

Contributing Programs

Program Activities:

- Consular Affairs/Visa Office will coordinate the overall project and lead the OMB submission process;
- Consular Affairs/Consular Systems and Technology will update the online forms and adjust any State Department data share connections with interagency partners;

Regulations:

- Office of the Legal Adviser will assist with the legal reviews needed for the OMB forms process and information decisions;
- Office of Management and Budget will manage the form approval process and provide a final approval to the form changes;

Stakeholder / Congressional Consultations:

- The Departments of Homeland Security and Justice and National Security Council Staff will contribute to the needed determinations for form enhancement.