Security Clearance, Suitability/Fitness, and Credentialing Reform

Goal Leaders

Daniel Coats, Director of National Intelligence, Office of the Director of National Intelligence

Joseph Kernan, Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence, Department of Defense

Jeff Pon, Director, Office of Personnel Management

Margaret Weichert, Deputy Director of Management, Office of Management and Budget

Goal Statement

A Federal workforce entrusted to protect Government information and property and to promote a safe and secure work environment, sustained by an enhanced risk management approach. Supported by:

- Improved early detection enabled by an informed, aware, and responsible Federal workforce
- Quality decisions enabled by improved investigative and adjudicative capabilities
- Optimized government-wide capabilities through enterprise approaches
- Strong partnership with Insider Threat Programs to strengthen the identification, deterrence, and mitigation of problems before they negatively impact the workforce or national security.

Urgency

Our world is changing at a pace that requires the security, suitability/fitness, and credentialing community to anticipate, detect, and counter both internal and external threats, such as those posed by trusted insiders who may seek to do harm to the Federal Government's policies, processes, and information systems.

Goal Leaders:
- Daniel Coats, DNI
- Joseph Kernan, USD(I)
- Jeff Pon, Director OPM
- Margaret Weichert, DDM OMB

The Security Clearance, Suitability, and Credentialing Performance Accountability Council (PAC) Principal agencies include the Office of Management and Budget, the Office of the Director of National Intelligence, Office of Personnel Management, and Department of Defense. The PAC* is responsible for driving government-wide implementation of security, suitability, and credentialing reform.

* PAC members are the Office of Management and Budget, Office of the Director of National Intelligence, Office of Personnel Management, Department of Defense; the Departments of State, the Treasury, Justice, Energy, and Homeland Security; the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the General Services Administration, the National Archives and Records Administration, the National Security Council, and the National Background Investigations Bureau.

Goal Structure

Goal	
A Federal workforce entrusted to protect Government information and property and to promote a safe and secure work environment, sustained by an enhanced risk management approach.	
Sub-Goal	**Major Strategies to Achieve Sub-Goal**
1 **Trusted Workforce**	• Develop aligned and consistent policy for reporting potential security risks or observable behaviors of concern • Train and educate the Federal workforce on their vital role in the early detection of potential issues or risks • Build an SSC awareness campaign to reinforce the early identification of reportable behaviors • Study other related mission areas for potential information-sharing opportunities to streamline processes
2 **Modern Policies & Processes**	• Establish an agile, data-driven, and transparent policy-making process that simplifies traditional overly complex policy development processes • Review current end-to-end SSC processes and identify the most cost-effective and efficient methods to vet the Federal workforce • Professionalize the SSC workforce through community training, certificate programs, and collaboration with universities
3 **Secure and Modern Mission-Capable IT**	• Modernize the lifecycle through the use of agency federated systems and shared services • Identify enhanced security and interoperability standards and capabilities to better inform IT cost and planning decisions • Provide agencies with a mechanism to adopt modern technology, automate manual processes, reduce duplicative investments, and decrease the cyber threat footprint
4 **Continuous Performance Improvement**	• Establish and implement outcome-based performance metrics and measures • Develop a Research and Innovation program to inform policy, process, and technology with empirical data-driven decisions • Establish a Continuous Performance Improvement model that will continuously evaluate the performance of the SSC policies and processes

- **Placement of Background Investigations:** A congressional mandate for the National Background Investigations Bureau (NBIB) to transfer its Department of Defense (DoD) background investigations (constituting approximately 70 percent of NBIB's background investigation volume) raised questions about government-wide implications regarding the remaining 30 percent. Following a PAC interagency review, the Administration decided to transfer the entire NBIB background investigation program (including mission, assets, and resources) to DoD. A 100 percent transfer avoids a variety of potential problems with splitting the existing program: it will retain "economies of scale," facilitate better leveraging of DoD's existing enterprise capabilities, and provide the opportunity for truly transformational reform. The PAC will oversee the transition and will continue to be accountable for ongoing reform of the broader Executive Branch vetting program, including background investigations.

- **Security Executive Agent (SecEA) and Suitability and Credentialing Executive Agent (SuitEA/CredEA) Kick Off Effort to Fundamentally Overhaul Federal Vetting Approach:** The Executive Agents hosted a two-day Trusted Workforce 2.0 offsite meeting on March 12-13, 2018, to charter transformational change in the way the federal workforce is vetted. The newly launched effort will lead to near-term actions to significantly reduce the background investigations inventory and a revamp of the fundamental vetting approach and supporting policy framework, an overhaul of the business process, and a modernization of the information technology.

- **PAC Takes Decisive Action to Reduce Investigation Backlog:** In a recent Executive Correspondence, the SecEA and Suit/CredEA adjusted elements of the Federal Investigative Standards to aid efforts targeting a significant reduction of the background investigation inventory. These changes are part of a comprehensive strategy to increase background investigation resources capacity and productivity and incorporate business transformation efficiencies.

- **ODNI Publishes Directive Establishing Continuous Evaluation Policy and Implementation Guidance:** The ODNI issued Security Executive Agent Directive (SEAD) 6 on January 12, 2018, establishing Continuous Evaluation (CE) policy and requirements for individuals who have been determined eligible for access to classified information or to hold a sensitive position. CE uses automated record checks of commercial and government databases to assess eligibility more frequently and manage risk more effectively than with the standard periodic reinvestigation process. On March 16, 2018, ODNI issued "Continuous Evaluation Program Implementation Guidelines," to provide Executive Branch departments and agencies with implementation and business process guidance to conduct CE consistent with SEAD 6 and Federal Investigative Standards.

- **Memorandum Issued to Standardize Temporary Eligibility for Access to Classified Information:** The ODNI issued an Executive Correspondence on March 16, 2018, clarifying guidance on the granting and management of temporary eligibility for access to classified information. This guidance standardizes the Executive Branch approach to granting temporary eligibility to maintain the quality and integrity of personnel security vetting practices. The correspondence further reminds departments and agencies of the minimum investigative standards to be considered when granting such access.

- **Performance Accountability Council (PAC) Realigns Implementation Plan:** The PAC Strategic Intent and Enterprise IT Strategy Implementation Plan, approved in 2017 to implement the PAC's five-year business and IT strategy, was revised to align with the current trajectory of SSC reform and to reflect the Trusted Workforce 2.0 efforts. Many initiatives included in the Implementation Plan are reported below as part of the CAP Action Plan for transparency on reform progress.

- **Challenge:** Information of concern often goes unreported in the Federal Government, which inhibits an agency's ability to address potential issues before escalation.

- **Theory of Change:** The SSC must work toward instilling a sense of shared responsibility by enabling a trusted workforce through consistent reporting requirements, employee and supervisor training, awareness campaigns for reportable behaviors, and identification of gaps in information sharing with sister missions.

Milestone Summary				
Key Milestones	**Milestone Due Date**	**Milestone Status**	**Owner**	**Recent Actions**
Identify and provide recommendations to improve cross-mission information sharing.	Mar-2018	Missed	PAC PMO, ODNI, OPM	Recommendations are on track for Performance Accountability Council consideration in Q2.
Expand reporting requirements to the entire workforce.	Oct-2021	On Track	OPM	No significant actions during the reporting period.

- **Challenge:** The SSC community faces an ever-changing global environment with an increasing mobile workforce, emerging global threats, and advancements in cutting-edge technology and innovations.

- **Theory of Change:** To successfully modernize our processes, the SSC community must develop agile capabilities that integrate the latest innovative technologies to facilitate continuous vetting of more of our trusted workforce and promote delivery of real-time information to the appropriate SSC professional responsible for making risk-based decisions.

Milestone Summary				
Key Milestones	**Milestone Due Date**	**Milestone Status**	**Owner**	**Recent Actions**
Issue updated standards for denying, suspending, and revoking Federal credentials.	Jun-2018	On Track	OPM	The office of the Suitability Executive Agent is finalizing draft standards for review by partner agencies as required by EO 13467, as amended.
Establish standards and requirements for Trusted Information Providers to provide shared data with Investigative Service Providers.	Oct-2018	On Track	ODNI, OPM	The Suitability & Credentialing Executive Agent and the Security Executive Agent are reviewing revised draft standards for signature.

Milestone Summary				
Key Milestones	**Milestone Due Date**	**Milestone Status**	**Owner**	**Recent Actions**
Issue Executive Branch-wide reciprocity policy for national security/sensitive positions.	Dec-2018	On Track	ODNI	The Security Executive Agent finalized the draft policy. Preparing for next stage to submit to OMB for formal interagency coordination.
Refine standards and guidelines under the new Federal vetting approach.	Dec-2018	On Track	ODNI, OPM	Effort was kicked off in early March assembling dedicated teams to focus on government-wide vetting approach.
Develop quality standards for adjudicative determinations and expand quality tools to include adjudications.	Jul-2019	On Track	ODNI, OPM	No significant actions during the reporting period.
Provide the PAC a recommendation for the expansion of continuous vetting across the entire Federal workforce to regularly review their backgrounds to determine whether they continue to meet applicable requirements.	Sep-2019	On Track	OPM	No significant actions during the reporting period.

Milestone Summary				
Key Milestones	**Milestone Due Date**	**Milestone Status**	**Owner**	**Recent Actions**
Reduce the inventory of background investigations to a steady and sustainable state.	Mar-2021	On Track	NBIB, ODNI, OPM	The Executive Agents and the PAC convened a tiger team to identify aggressive backlog reduction measures and identified new actions that will be directed by the Executive Agents. Identified efforts are expected to reduce the backlog by approximately 20% by the end of 2018.
Stand up DoD background investigation capability and complete phased transition of cases from NBIB to DoD.	Oct-2021	On Track	DoD	Effort kicked off in January 2018 with ongoing NBIB & DoD discussions on BI transfer for DoD personnel.
Implement business transformation efforts to reengineer the process, enhance customer engagement, and support policy and process transformation and transition efforts.	Oct-2021	On Track	DoD, NBIB	DoD continues to refine and expand CE capabilities for DoD personnel. Phased implementation of Defense Information System for Security initiated in January 2018.

- **Challenge:** The end-to-end SSC process relies heavily on data sharing and information technology (IT) to operate efficiently, effectively, and securely.

- **Theory of Change:** The SSC mission must develop and deploy a modern, secure, and mission-capable, end-to-end digital environment that builds on a foundation of government-wide standards, promotes interoperability and information sharing, and collaboration across the SSC community.

Milestone Summary				
Key Milestones	**Milestone Due Date**	**Milestone Status**	**Owner**	**Recent Actions**
Implement a shared unclassified record repository to store background investigation and adjudication history.	Oct-2019	On Track	DoD, NBIB, ODNI, OPM	Efforts are underway to consolidate the two major unclassified repositories (JPAS and CVS) into a single entity (DISS).
Implement a new electronic Application shared service capability and continue to make iterative improvements.	Oct-2019	On Track	DoD, NBIB, ODNI, OPM	The SF-86 has been implemented in the tool and will soon begin a small-scale pilot.
Implement a shared service to provide an unclassified information exchange for ready and efficient access to data, and continue to make iterative improvements.	Oct-2019	On Track	DoD, NBIB, ODNI, OPM	No significant actions during the reporting period.

Milestone Summary				
Key Milestones	**Milestone Due Date**	**Milestone Status**	**Owner**	**Recent Actions**
Implement a shared service capability that leverages automation to determine the sensitivity and risk level of a position, and continue to make iterative improvements.	Oct-2019	On Track	DoD, NBIB, ODNI, OPM	An updated position designation tool is being deployed in a new environment that will allow for iterative improvement and integration with related applications.
Implement a shared service capability that supports the development of background investigation reports, and continue to make iterative improvements.	Oct-2019	On Track	DoD, NBIB, ODNI, OPM	Discovery and development work has begun on an advanced investigation management capability to replace legacy applications.
Implement a shared service capability that supports the adjudication of background investigations, and continue to make iterative improvements.	Oct-2019	On Track	DoD, NBIB, ODNI, OPM	A phased deployment of updated adjudication management capabilities to the Consolidated Adjudications Facility of DoD has recently begun.
Implement a shared service capability that supports security or suitability manager functions that take place after adjudication (e.g. reciprocity, visit requests), and continue to make iterative improvements.	Oct-2019	On Track	DoD, NBIB, ODNI, OPM	Updated security manager capabilities have recently been deployed to the DoD.

- **Challenge:** The SSC has faced challenges in monitoring performance and identifying and driving enterprise-level enhancements to policy, oversight, and operational processes.

- **Theory of Change:** To initiate the necessary culture shift across the enterprise, the SSC community must institutionalize and integrate a continuous performance improvement model that will establish outcome-based performance metrics and measures; inform policy, process, and technology with empirical-based decisions; and continuously evaluate its performance and identify efficient and effective ways to perform its mission.

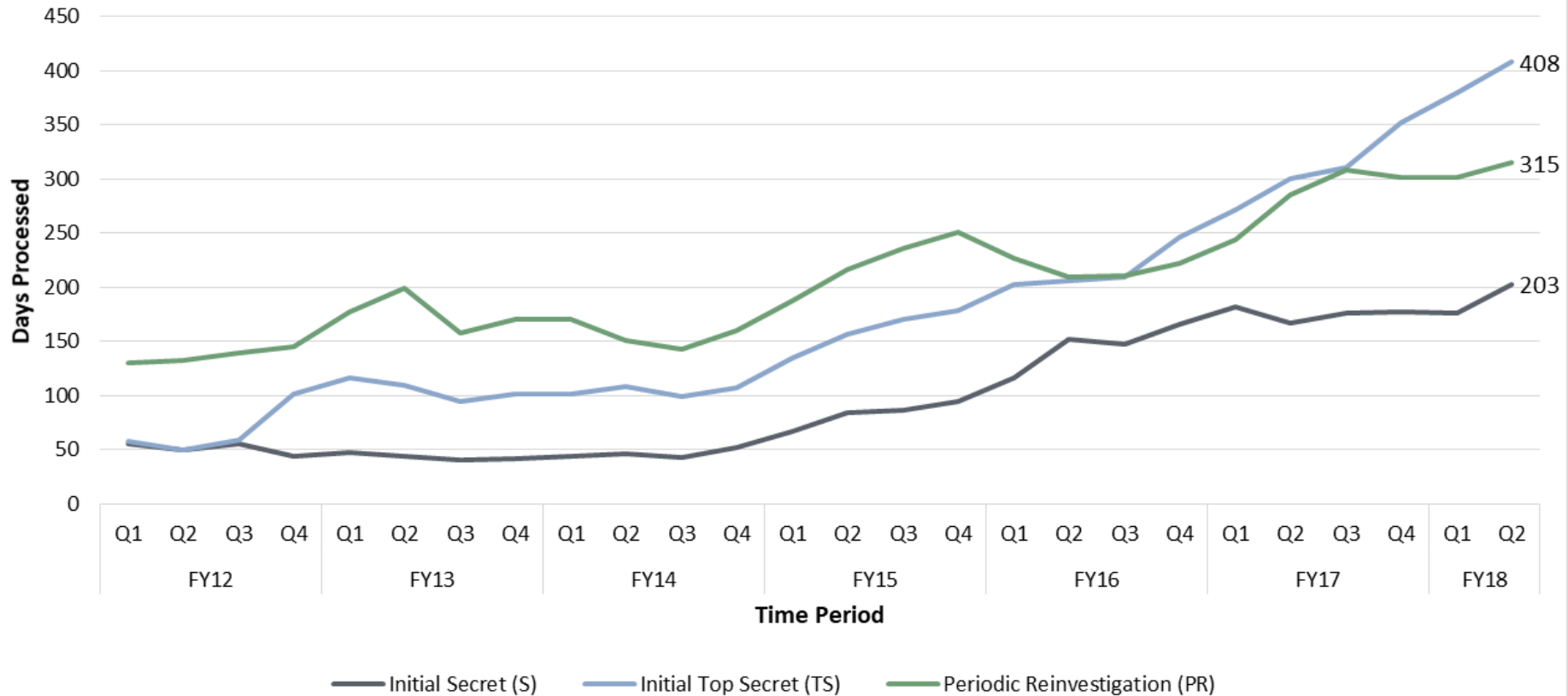| Milestone Summary				
Key Milestones	**Milestone Due Date**	**Milestone Status**	**Owner**	**Recent Actions**
Improve public transparency of progress and performance.	Apr-2019	On Track	PAC PMO, ODNI, OPM	Release of performance metrics on performance.gov.
Improve decision-making by increasing access to research findings across the Executive Branch.	May-2019	On Track	PAC PMO, ODNI, OPM	No significant actions during the reporting period.
Continue to mature the research & innovation program to support SSC priorities.	Oct-2019	On Track	PAC PMO, ODNI, OPM	No significant actions during the reporting period.

Focus Area	Key Indicator Title	Description
Timeliness	End-to-End Process Timeliness (2 slides)	Average number of days to complete end-to-end processing for the national security population
Volume	NBIB Investigations Inventory	Total inventory of pending NBIB investigations by anticipated workload effort
	NBIB Investigations Case Flow	Total number of cases closed and scheduled per month, which drives changes to the Investigations Inventory
	NBIB Investigator Headcount	Total number of investigators performing investigations for NBIB per year by both federal and contractor population
Risk	DoD National Security Population Eligibility and Access	Total number of federal, military, and contractor personnel eligible for a national security position and personnel currently in access for the Defense Department
	DoD Continuous Evaluation Enrollment	Total number of DoD personnel enrolled in the Department's Continuous Evaluation (CE) Program
	Out-of-Scope National Security Population (2 slides)	Total number of Federal workforce eligible for a national security position with out-of-scope (outdated) investigations by security clearance level

Average Timeliness for Processing the Fastest 90% of Security Clearance Cases

Legend: Initial Secret (S) — Initial Top Secret (TS) — Periodic Reinvestigation (PR)

PRESIDENT'S MANAGEMENT AGENDA

Average number of days to complete end-to-end processes at the 90th percentile, by case type as defined under IRTPA

(PAC Methodology)

Fastest 90%

	100%	Initiate (Average Days)				Investigate (Average Days)				Adjudicate (Average Days)				End-to-End (Initiate + Inv. + Adj.) (Average Days)			
		Q3 17	Q4 17	Q1 18	Q2 18	Q3 17	Q4 17	Q1 18	Q2 18	Q3 17	Q4 17	Q1 18	Q2 18	Q3 17	Q4 17	Q1 18	Q2 18
Initial Secret Cases	Volume	Goal: 14 Days				40 Days				20 Days				74 Days			
	301,428	15	13	11	13	137	141	142	162	24	23	23	28	176	177	176	203
Initial Top Secret Cases	Volume	Goal: 14 Days				80 Days				20 Days				114 Days			
	87,204	18	18	21	20	272	306	333	345	21	28	26	43	311	352	380	408
Periodic Reinvestigations	Volume	Goal: 15 Days				150 Days				30 Days				195 Days			
	178,617	21	24	26	26	249	243	247	253	38	35	29	36	308	302	302	315

Red Text: Goal Not Met   **Green Text: Goal Met**

NBIB Investigative Cases by Fieldwork Intensiveness - Annual
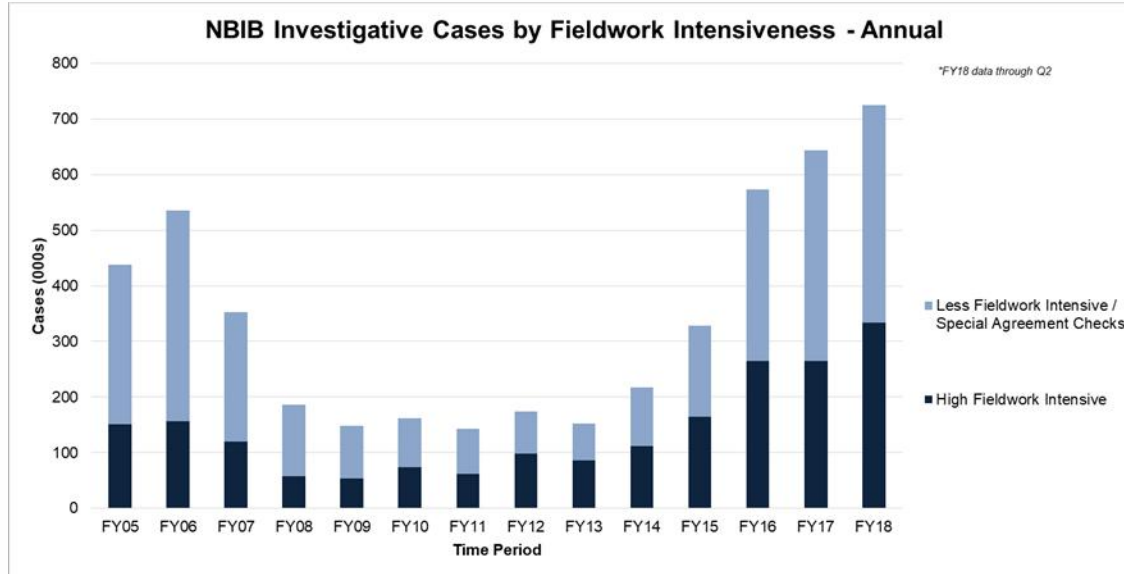
High Fieldwork Intensive – Cases that typically require investigators to do more extensive work in the field (i.e., case issues that require manual follow-up). These are used for higher risk positions.

Less Fieldwork Intensive/Special Agreement Checks – Cases that typically require little to no work in the field (i.e. automated fingerprint checks or clean cases). These are used for lower risk positions.
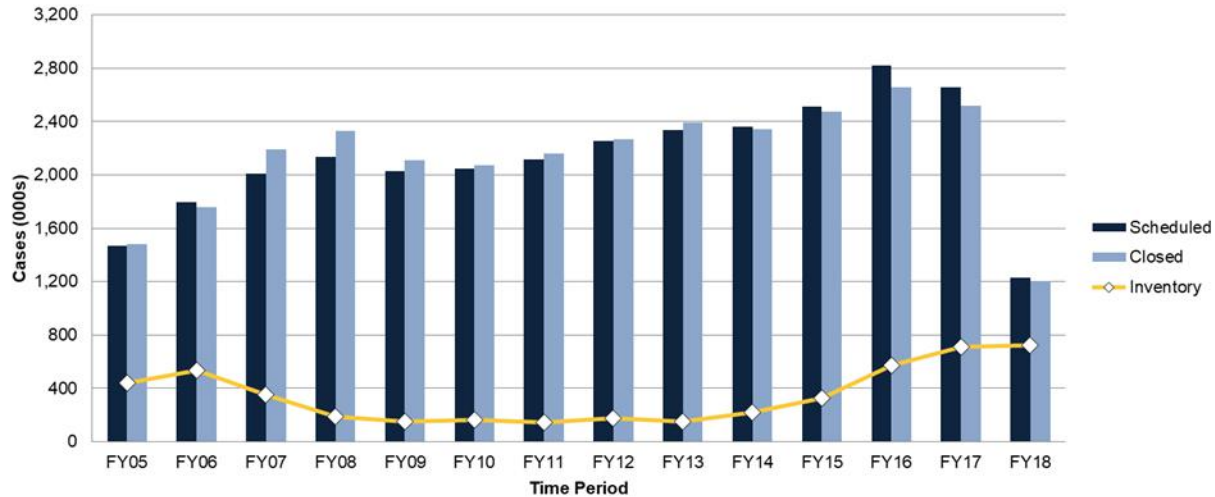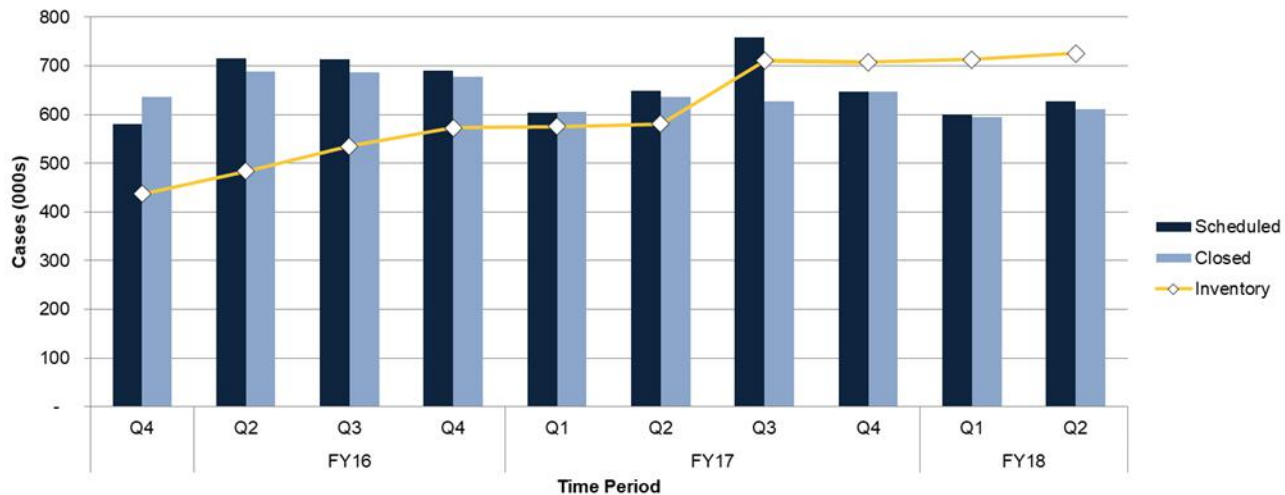

NBIB Investigative Cases by Fieldwork Intensiveness - Quarter
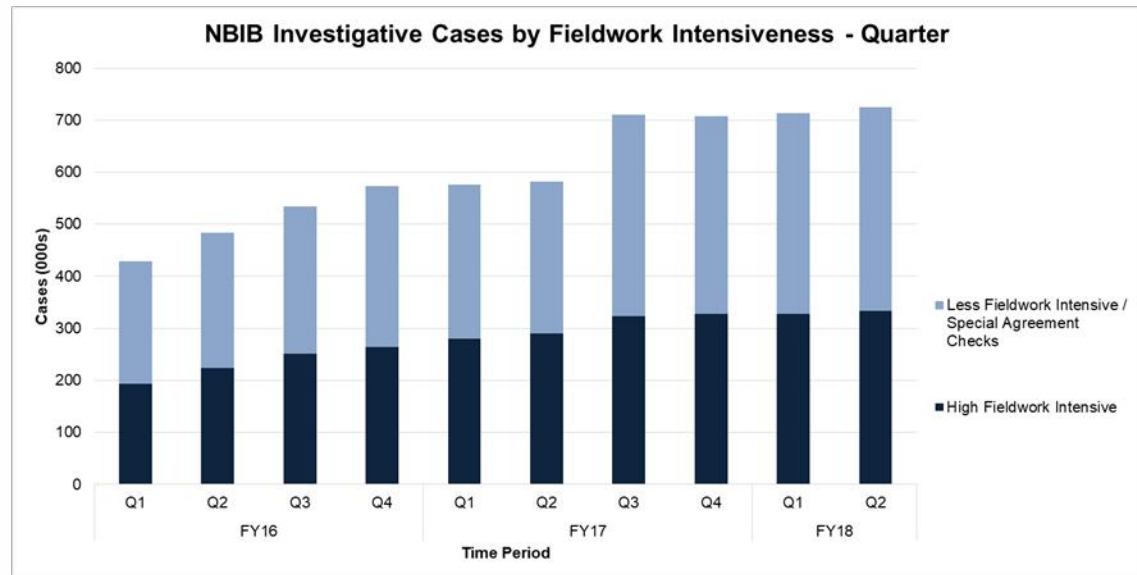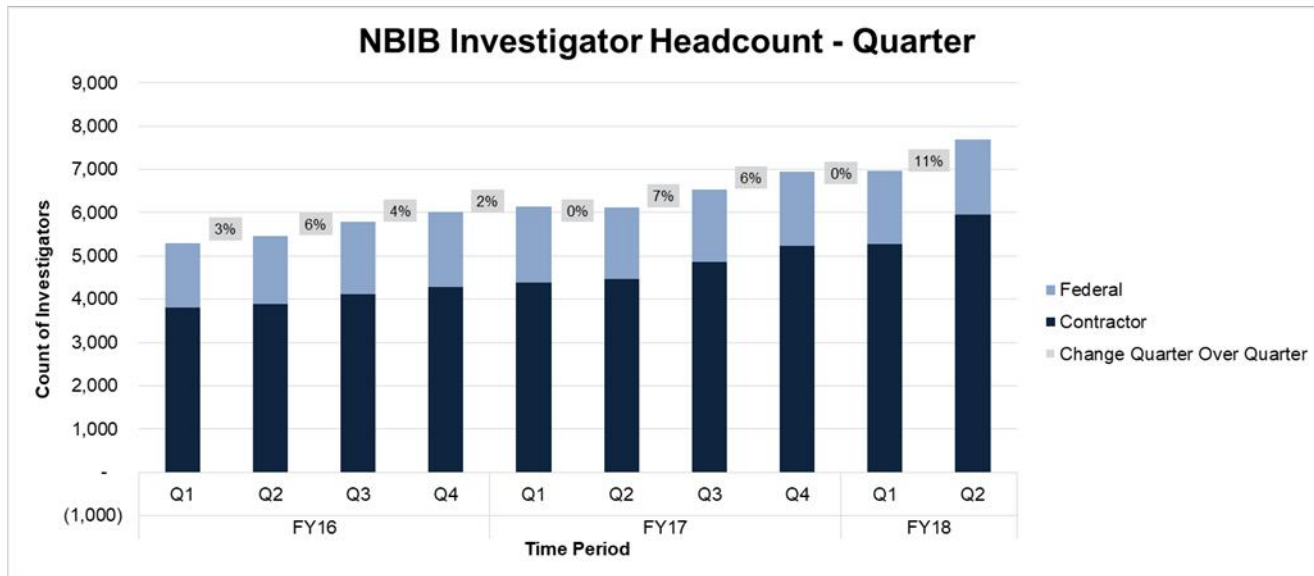
NBIB Cases Scheduled and Closed - Annual

NBIB Cases Scheduled and Closed - Quarter

NBIB Investigator Headcount - Annual

NBIB Investigator Headcount - Quarter
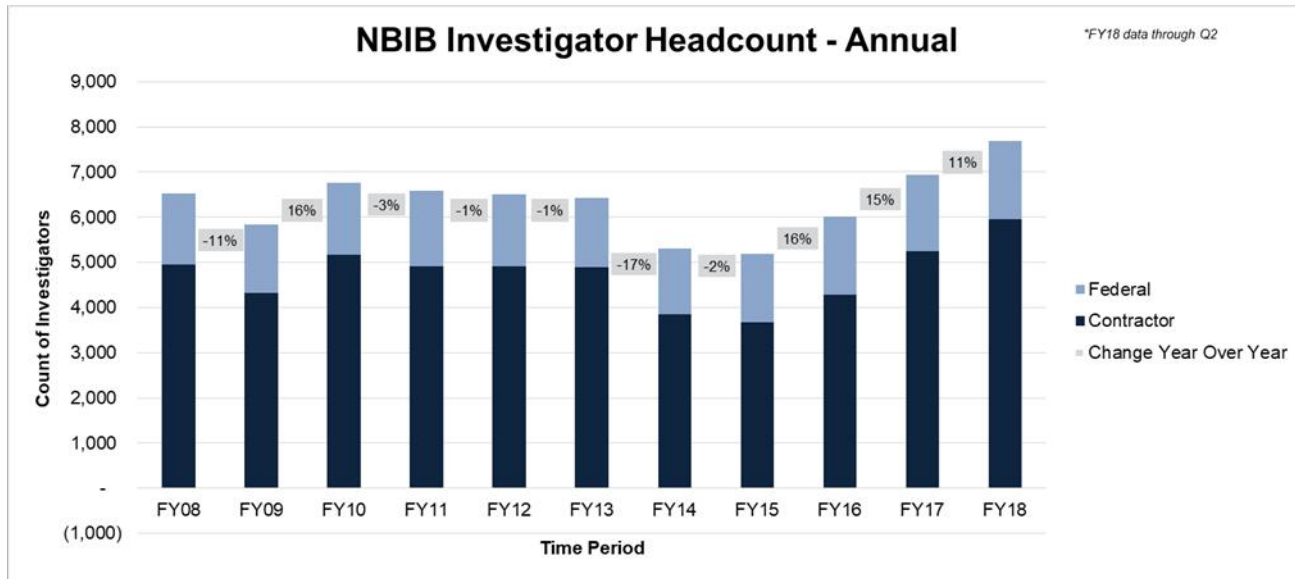
Key Indicator:
DoD National Security Population Eligibility & Access

DoD National Security Population Eligibility/Access
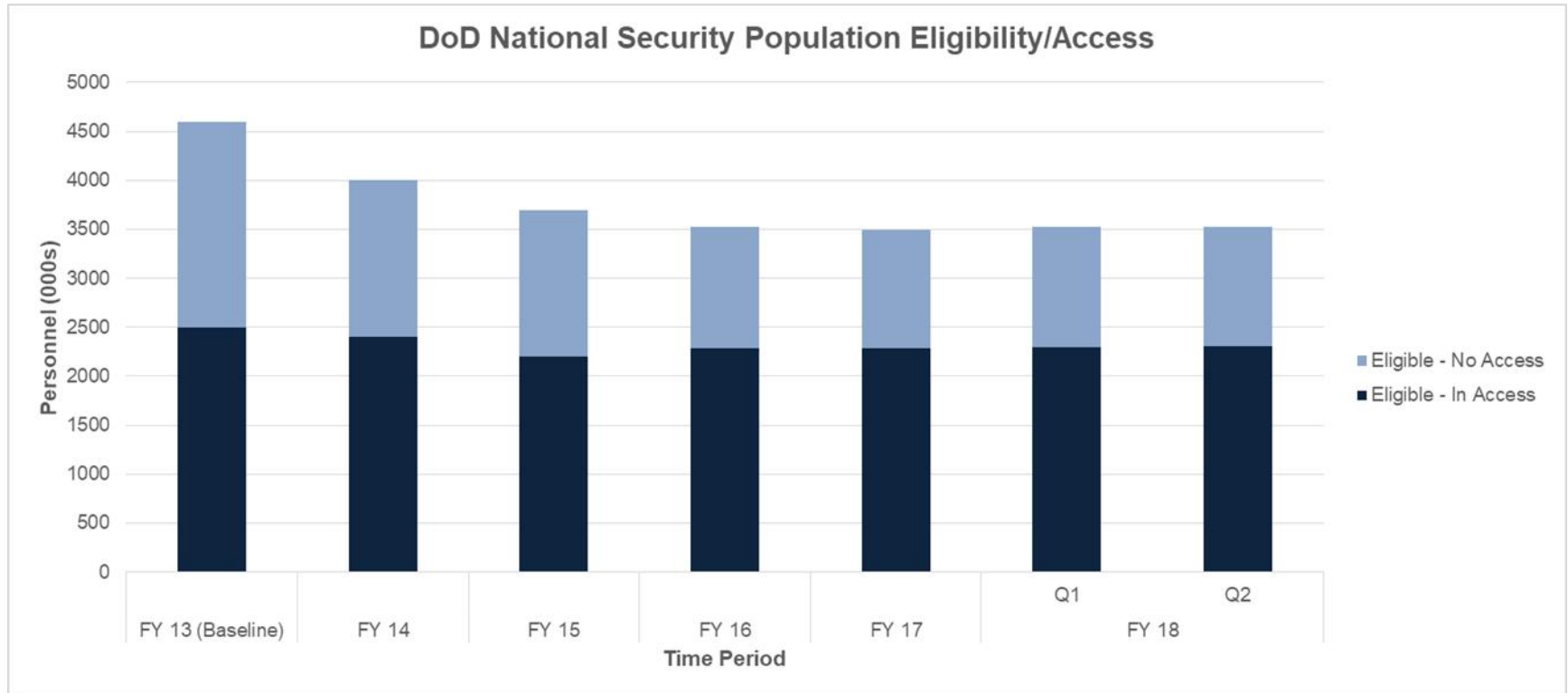
Change in DoD Clearance (in Thousands)									
	FY13 (Baseline)	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17	FY18Q1	FY18Q2	Number Decreased (from baseline)	FY13-FY18Q2 % Change
Eligible - In Access	2500	2400	2200	2280	2280	2300	2310	-190	-8%
Eligible - No Access	2100	1600	1500	1250	1210	1230	1220	-880	-42%
Total	4600	4000	3700	3530	3490	3530	3530	-1070	-23.3%

DoD Continuous Evaluation Program Enrollment
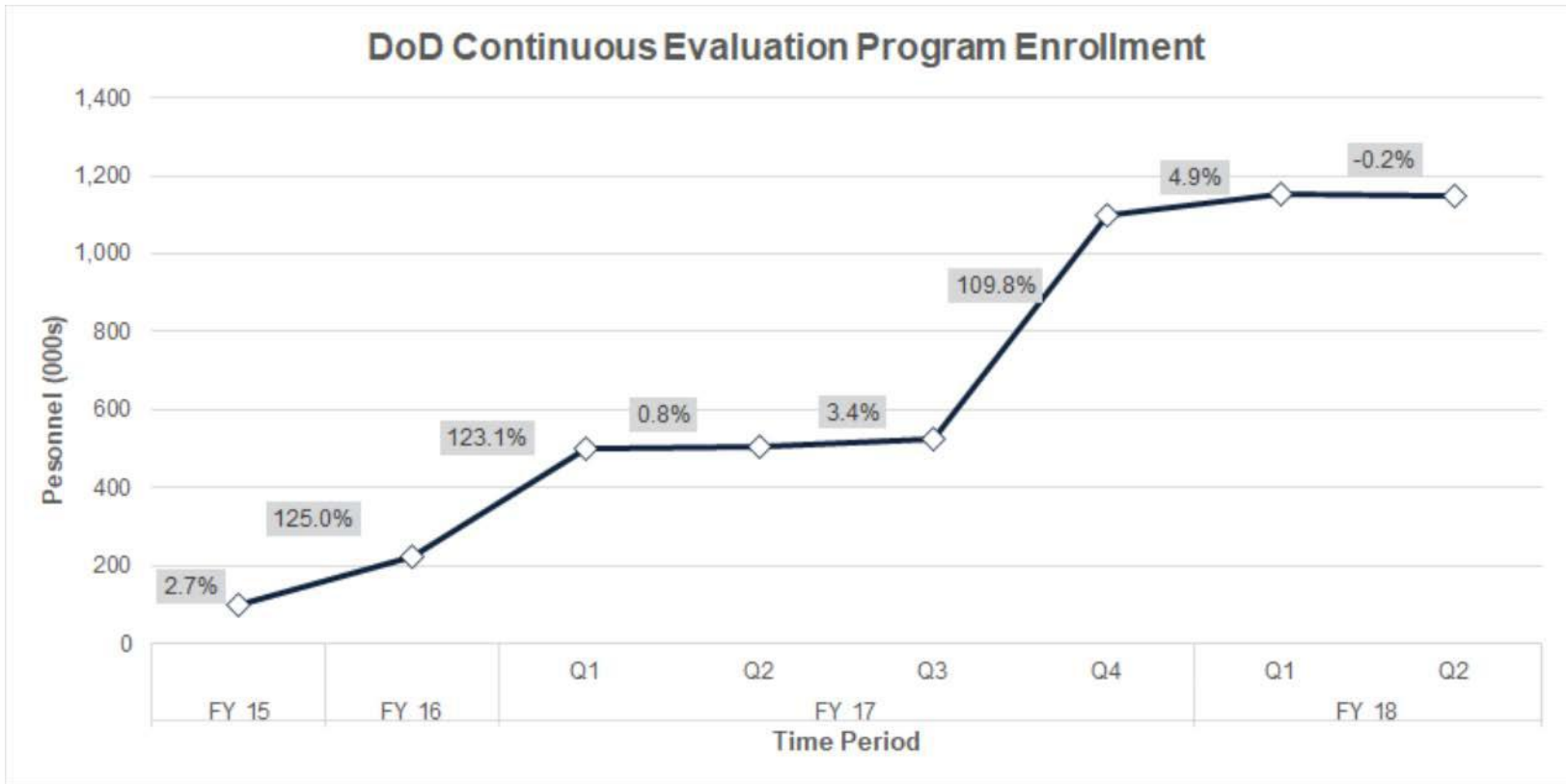
DoD and IC Top Secret & TS/SCI Out of Scope Population

	Aug '14 Baseline	FY17 Q3	FY17 Q4	FY18 Q1	FY18 Q2	Change Since Last Quarter	Change Since Baseline
Non-DoD IC	48K	36K	35K	35K	35K	0% (N/C)	-27% (13K)
DoD IC	52K	52K	52K	52K	53K	+2% (1K)	+2% (1K)
DoD	319K	303K	312K	327K	345K	+6% (18K)	+8% (26K)
Totals	419K	391K	399K	414K	433K	+5% (19K)	+3% (14K)

Overall change since baseline: +3% (14K)
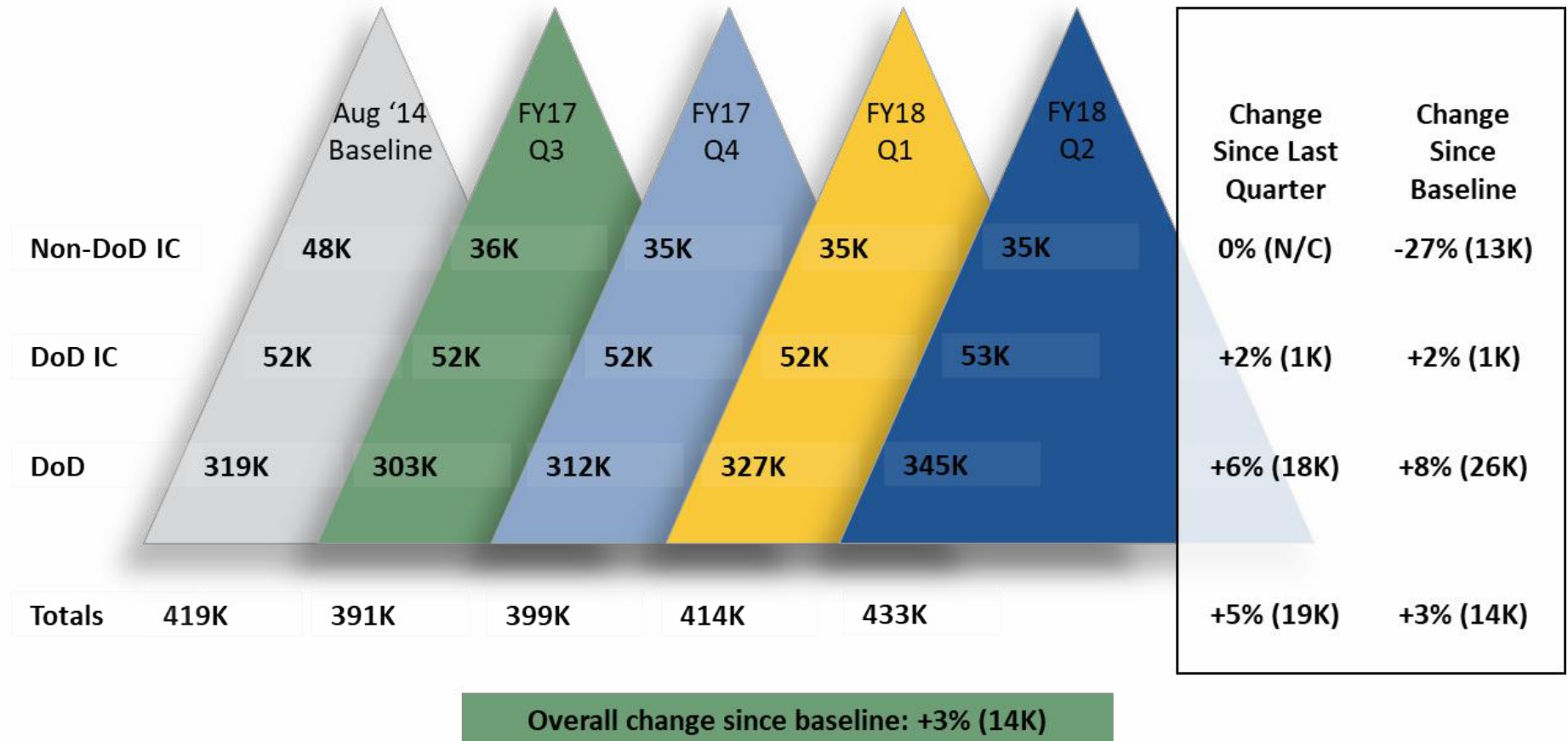
DoD Secret Out of Scope Population

	Aug '14 Baseline	FY17 Q3	FY17 Q4	FY18 Q1	FY18 Q2	Change Since Last Quarter	Change Since Baseline
Eligible - In Access	61K	105K	114K	118K	120K	+2% (2K)	97% (59K)
Eligible - No Access	411K	116K	113K	118K	122K	+4% (4K)	-70% (289K)
Totals	472K	221K	227K	236K	236K	+3% (6K)	-49% (-230K)

Overall change since baseline: -49% (-230K)
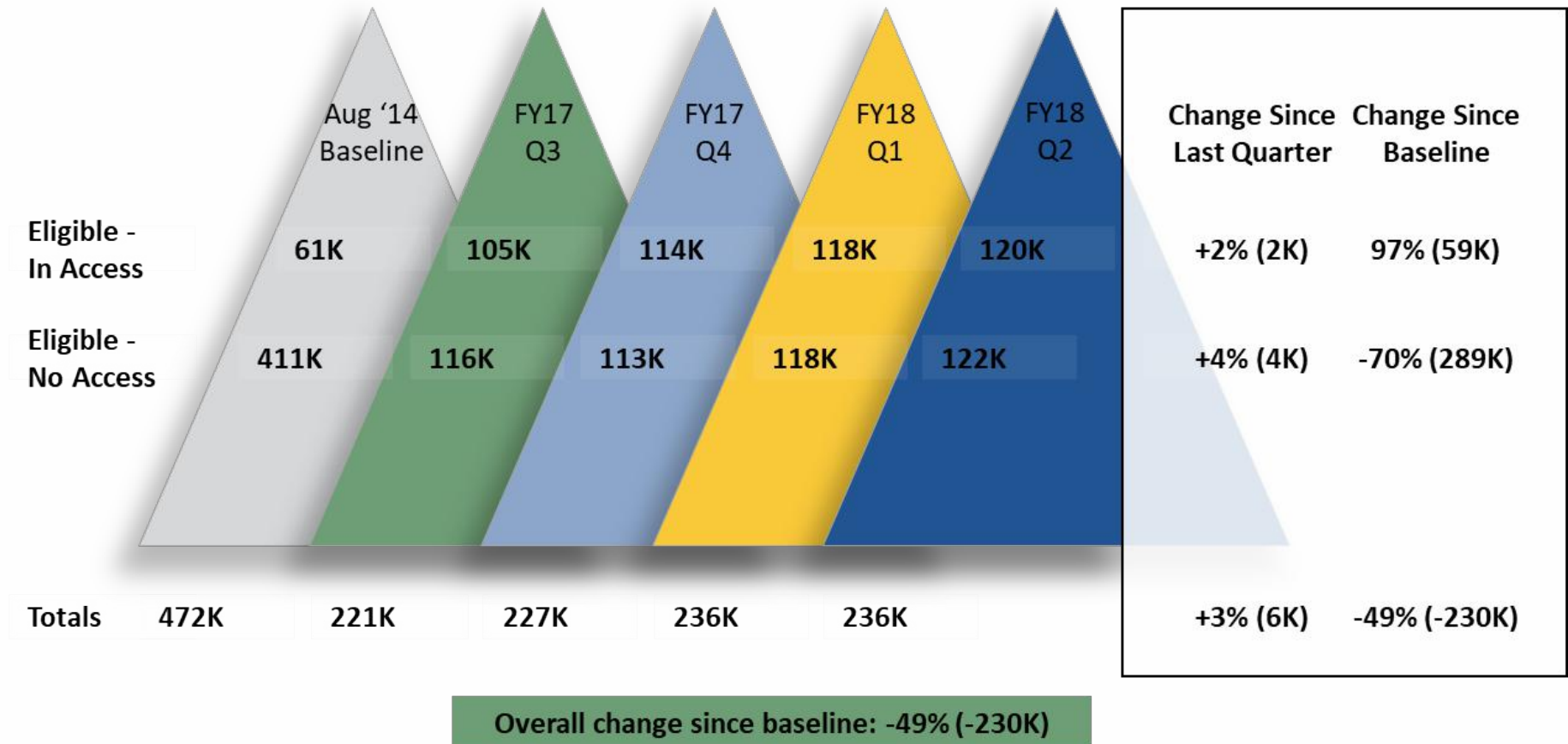
CE – Continuous Evaluation

DDM – Deputy Director of Management

DNI – Director of National Intelligence

DoD – Department of Defense

EA – Executive Agent

EIB – Enterprise Investment Board

IRTPA – Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004

IT – Information Technology

NBIB – National Background Investigative Bureau

ODNI – Office of the Director of National Intelligence

OMB – Office of Management and Budget

OPM – Office of Personnel Management

PAC – Performance Accountability Council

PMO – Program Management Office

SSC – Security, Suitability/Fitness, and Credentialing

SecEA – Security Executive Agent

Suit & CredEA – Suitability & Credentialing Executive Agent

USD(I) – Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence