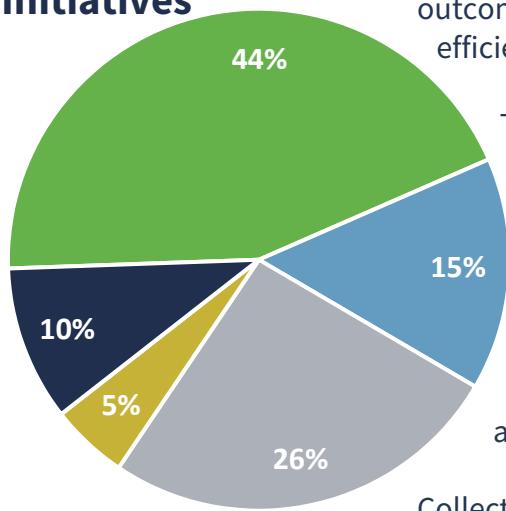


# Leaner Government

## Billions of dollars in savings and hundreds of thousands of Full-Time Employee hours shifted to higher-value work

### Breakdown of Burden Reduction Initiatives



- Process Improvement / Standardization
- Digitalization
- Robotics Process
- Automation (RPA) / Artificial Intelligence (AI)
- Shared Services & Staff
- Regulatory Reform

The President's Management Agenda (PMA), launched in March of 2018, sets out a long-term vision for modernizing the Federal Government to improve mission outcomes, service to the public, and stewardship of taxpayer dollars for the American people. As part of PMA Cross Agency Priority (CAP) Goal 6, *Shifting from Low-Value to High-Value Work*, agencies are shifting resources from outdated and redundant requirements and processes to accomplishing mission outcomes and are delivering efficient and effective results.

This update includes more than 100 initiatives reported by the major 24 Federal agencies. These initiatives include more than 50 focused on process improvement and standardization, approximately 30 using robotics process automation (RPA), artificial intelligence (AI), and/or other innovative software, and nearly 20 focused on the digitalization of process within a agency.

Collectively, this represents billions of dollars in realized and anticipated savings and hundreds of thousands of Full-Time Employee (FTE) hours shifted to higher-value work. The agency updates contained in this report summarize activities from the start of the new Administration to March 31, 2019 and as agencies move towards a leaner government for the American People.

## Highlights

The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) launched a *Patients over Paperwork* initiative to reduce unnecessary administrative burden and actively solicited feedback from the medical community through requests for information (RFIs). Through the RFI process alone, HHS received over 3,000 mentions of burden which resulted in over 1,000 distinct burden topics to consider. As of February 2019, HHS resolved, or is actively addressing, over 80 percent of the actionable RFI burden topics.



Eliminated  
**\$5.7 billion**  
in healthcare administrative costs.



Saved  
**\$7.5 million**  
cutting regulations.



Through regulatory changes alone, HHS estimates a savings to the medical community of at least \$5.7 billion and at least 40 million hours through 2021.

The Department of Labor's (DOL) Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) completed several regulatory actions and amended OSHA's standards on Recordkeeping, Crane Operator Certification, and other requirements. These actions resulted in an estimated \$7.5 million in direct savings to OSHA through the elimination of costs associated with maintaining and enforcing these regulations. The impact of this initiative is \$25.5 million in reduction of federal reporting burden on the regulated community.

16 agencies reported adopting advanced technologies to perform repetitive business processes, known as **Robotics Process Automation (RPA)**, and this is making Federal work more efficient.



Also, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) eliminated the requirement to submit an annual Comprehensive Acquisition Status Report (CASR) to Congress by justifying that the majority of the report's content was already provided to Congress via other departmental reports. By eliminating the CASR, DHS saved over 3,000 FTE hours per year.



Streamlined reporting to save employees  
**3,000 hours**  
each year.

Automated nearly  
**230,000 hours**  
of repetitive work.



The U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) uses RPA to manage tasks like opening email, moving files, making calculations, and filling in forms. This has allowed the agency to shift an estimated 230,000 employee hours towards more high-value work.

**PRESIDENT'S  
MANAGEMENT  
AGENDA**

The Social Security Administration (SSA) developed software to capture improper payments and automated a remittance system, collecting more than \$1.25 million in program debt.



Recovered more than  
**\$1.25 million**  
in program debt.





## Shifting From Low-Value to High-Value Work

# CAP Goal Action Plan Appendix

### Goal Leaders:

**Brian Montgomery**, Acting Deputy Secretary, Department of Housing and Urban Development

**Ralph Gaines**, Chief Strategy Officer, Department of Housing and Urban Development

**Peter Warren**, Associate Director for Performance and Personnel Management, Office of Management and Budget

**Dustin Brown**, Deputy Assistant Director for Management, Office of Management and Budget

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# Department of Agriculture



## Burden Reduction Update 2019: Department of Agriculture

### U.S. Department of Agriculture

#### Data-Driven Decision Making

**Action Taken:** The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) created a first-in-government suite of data dashboards that improve decision-making across 7 administrative functions and 6 of 8 USDA mission areas, with plans to complete all 8 by the end of the calendar year. In just one mission area, the Farm Production and Conservation dashboards provide real-time insights into the utilization of over \$11 billion in farm assistance and loans and \$8 billion in conservation practices, financial and technical assistance, natural disasters, and optimal management of resources. By integrating data into a common enterprise platform, the dashboards reduce the need to perform data calls, eliminate thousands of hours spent by staff pulling data manually from underlying systems, and enable employees to shift from low-value to high-value work. The dashboards were recognized as FedScoop's Innovation of the year in 2018.

**Impact:** Due to the program's successful communication and training strategy, in its first year of implementation, 3000 employees were trained in dashboard usage and 150 employees were provided with the training to create visualizations. Dashboard usage increased to 18,000 views a month, a 1000%+ improvement in a single year.



### U.S. Department of Agriculture

#### Robotic Process Automation

**Action Taken:** Robotic Process Automation has been in production and live at USDA for nearly a year. USDA is proud to be one of the first federal government departments to deploy bots at a server level and run bots autonomously in production. This setup has allowed agencies and staff offices from across USDA to take advantage of RPA. USDA currently has 6 automations in production, with 5-10 more to be deployed within the next month, and dozens more in the queue. Our first automations in production are our Funds Distribution bots, which automates the process of entering the transactions into Financial Management Modernization Initiative (FMMI).

**Impact:** This allows OCFO budget analysts to spend more time analyzing budget availability and helping to make decisions on other budget formulation and execution tasks, such as status of funds analysis. The OCFO processes more than 500 transactions per year at approximately 15 minutes per transaction, which is now performed entirely by the bot. This automation redirects 2-3 hours of manual work per day, just for the OCFO. This is currently in the process of being deployed across USDA's 29 staff offices and agencies, potentially increasing this impact by 30 times.



Department of Commerce



## Burden Reduction Update 2019: Department of Commerce

### **U.S. Patent & Trademark Office, Office of Patent Examination Support Services**

#### **Redesigning the Patent Information Technology Systems**

**Action Taken:** The U.S. Patent & Trademark Office (USPTO) initiated the implementation and redesign of a portion of its patent information technology systems by providing automation enhancements which streamlined and eliminated the need for much of the technical support work that was manually performed by support staff. The elimination of some of these now-automated tasks resulted in a need to decrease the amount of impacted support staff FTEs by 50% (from approximately 200 to 100 FTE in this area).

To address this situation, in 2017, the USPTO was granted Voluntary Early Retirement Authority and Voluntary Separation Incentive Payments (VERA/VSIP) for the impacted support staff. The USPTO also implemented an upward mobility program that was designed to provide job transition assistance for support staff by placing those employees into positions that provide high-value administrative and analytical support to management staff.

**Impact:** By January 2019, approximately 100 support staff FTE positions were successfully eliminated; all employees either took (a) advantage of VERA/VSIP and retired, (b) were reassigned into other vacant positions, or (c) were hired into other positions within the agency.



### **International Trade Administration**

#### **Development of Online Tools to Assist U.S. Exporters**

**Action Taken:** During FY 2018, the International Trade Administration (ITA) continued developing and improving online tools for U.S. exporters. Tools included: Interactive Global Steel Trade Monitor, Market Diversification Tool, eCommerce Innovation Lab and Exporter Portal. These tools aim to maximize ITA's digital service delivery, engage and serve more U.S. exporters, and improve efficiency for staff and businesses. The tools support the President's Management Agenda Cross-Agency Priority Goals of improving customer service, IT modernization, and replacing low-value work with high-value work.

**Impact:** Through the first half of FY 2019, and despite 35 days of a government shutdown, the cumulative number of cases successfully resolved is 66. ITA has exceeded both the 1st and 2nd quarterly targets of 17 and 48 successes, recording 34 and 66 respectively. That is 38% above the half-year target and 22% above last year's achievement of 54 for the same time period.

The number of U.S. exporters assisted has increased by 15% during the current administration and is on track to exceed the FY 2019 target.





## Burden Reduction Update 2019: Department of Commerce

### National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration Streamlining the Permitting Process

**Action Taken:** In FY 2018, through process re-engineering, the National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration reduced processing time for informal consultations under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) by 15%, from 53 days in FY 2017 to 45 days in FY 2018.

**Impact:** Since efficiency measures were first implemented in 2016, processing time for informal consultations has been reduced overall by 63%. Timely consultation with Federal agencies expedites actions that support infrastructure, jobs, and the economy while incorporating reasonable and prudent measures to minimize harmful impacts to threatened or endangered marine species as required under the ESA.

*Reengineered the informal consultation process, reducing overall processing time by 63%.*





## Department of Defense



## Burden Reduction Update 2019: Department of Defense

### Department of Defense

#### Business Process Improvements

**Action Taken:** The Department of Defense (DoD) DoD has saved \$4.702 billion through reform efforts in FY 2017 and FY 2018 combined and is on track to save \$6.5 billion through new and continuing efforts in FY 2019. This achievement is a collective effort by key stakeholders in the Department.

**Impact:** \$4.702 billion savings.



### Department of Defense

#### Financial Audit

**Action Taken:** DoD completed the largest-ever financial statement audit, which covered roughly \$2.7 trillion in DoD assets and reviewed key missions and lines of business in the Department. Key takeaways from the audit were that the auditors found no evidence of fraud and did not report any material weaknesses for civilian or military pay. Auditors also found that the Army, Navy, and Air Force could all account for the existence and completeness of major military equipment.

DoD has created an enterprise-wide database of Corrective Action Plans (CAPs) matched against 97% of the total Notice of Findings and Recommendations (NFRs). The Department has begun to implement the CAPs and close NFRs, which will drive efficiency and effectiveness in the business operations of the Department.



### IT & Business Systems Reform Team

#### IT & Business Systems

**Action Taken:** The IT & Business Systems Reform Team produced significant savings in FY 2017 and FY 2018. The Department adopted commercial IT solutions in business travel, department-wide network management, and worked with the Defense Information Systems Agency and the Military Departments to close duplicative data centers.

These changes resulted in a combination of programmed and budgeted savings of over \$395 million in FY 2018, as well as a funding realignment request to reclaim Department-wide underutilized spend of \$96.3 million in software licenses to fund real-time endpoint monitoring capability.

Additionally, the Department directed all Components to engage Office of Personnel Management USALearning to satisfy training and education requirements, including learning hardware, software,



## Burden Reduction Update 2019: Department of Defense

courseware, and other externally procured training and associated services. The purpose of this enterprise approach is to provide improved quality, more rapid acquisition and modernization outcomes, and more cost-optimized training and education products and services compared to the Department's acquisition processes separately undertaken by each Component. USALearning also supports the development and hosting of a DoD-wide Common Course Catalog and Common Learning Record Repository.

Through this effort, the Department programmed savings of \$122 million across the Future Years Defense Program in FY 2020 – 2024.

### **Impact:**

- These changes resulted in a combination of programmed and budgeted savings of over \$395 million in FY 2018, as well as a funding realignment request to reclaim Department-wide underutilized spend of \$96.3 million in software licenses to fund real-time endpoint monitoring capability.
- Through this effort, the Department programmed savings of \$122 million across the Future Years Defense Program in FY 2020 – 2024.



## **Office of the Chief Management Officer**

### **Regulatory Reform**

**Action Taken:** The Office of the Chief Management Officer's Regulatory Reform Task Force reviewed all the Department's 716 rules and regulations and recommended 243 rules for repeal.

**Impact:** To date, 57 repeals are completed and expected cost savings are \$5.1 million, with potential additional savings of \$25.2 million to American taxpayers.



## **Service Contract and Category Management Reform Team**

### **Contract Management**

**Action Taken:** The Service Contract and Category Management reform team has reviewed up to \$16.5 billion in annual spending during the first phase and identified significant savings opportunities. Contract renegotiations are currently in progress. By taking a 360-degree look at the entire category of spend, DoD is driving efficiency to get more mission capability for the dollars spent. In the two years since beginning the reviews, the Service Requirements Review Board team have assisted more than 60 organizations in tracking identified efficiencies and reinvestments in the contracting process.



## Burden Reduction Update 2019: Department of Defense

**Impact:** Through this effort the Department has programmed savings of \$517 million in FY 2017 and FY 2018. The additional identified savings will be reinvested by the Combatant Commands and Working Capital Fund Organizations in higher priority requirements.



### Department of Defense

#### Health Care Management

**Action Taken:** The Department is improving patient care and medical readiness of the force by consolidating four healthcare enterprises into one by October 2019. The Department will save more than \$2.5 billion annually in savings by 2023.

**Impact:** More than \$2.5 billion in annual savings by 2023.



### Office of Performance Management

#### Human Resources

**Action Taken:** The Office of Performance Management's standard for civilian time-to-hire (TTH) is 80 days. DoD has reversed the years-long trend of annual increases in TTH by establishing data-driven action plans with collaborative reviews to share solutions. Average TTH in DoD increased about 40% between FY 2013 and FY 2017 (from 70 to 100 days) but began trending downward in FY 2018. The Department has also submitted a legislative proposal that will allow the Department's 66 hiring processes to be streamlined.



### Defense Logistics Agency

#### Defense Logistics Agency

**Action Taken:** The Defense Logistics Agency (DLA) implemented six on-demand printing and mapping facilities strategically placed world-wide in support of the warfighter, identifying \$10 million in savings for FY 2018.

These Print on Demand facilities created a 90% reduction in print times, 50% reduction in print volume, and 140 million physical maps removed from warehouses, with additional reductions in inventory to follow in the out-years. This initiative freed up 25 acres of warehouse storage space.



## Burden Reduction Update 2019: Department of Defense

### **Impact:**

- \$10 million in savings for FY 2018.
- 90% reduction in print times, 50% reduction in print volume, and 140 million physical maps removed from warehouses, freeing up 25 acres of warehouse storage space.





## Department of Education



## Burden Reduction Update 2019: Department of Education

### Office of the General Counsel

#### Leverage IT Solutions #1

**Action Taken:** In February 2019, the Office of the General Counsel began the transition to electronic submission of Federal Register notices. This process will replace the prior approach of hard copy submission by courier, which involved preparing multiple written copies of each document, creating a CD-ROM, and submitting the package via courier.

#### Impact:

- No additional IT solution costs are expected to complete this initiative.
- Expected FTE staff hours shifted: 4.5 hours per week or \$7,883 per year.
- Additional expected benefits: reduced staff time devoted to additional tasks associated with hard copy submissions and reduced costs associated with printing and use of courier.



### Office for Civil Rights

#### Leverage IT Solutions #2

**Action Taken:** When the Office for Civil Rights (OCR) launched an online complaint filing system, it was supposed to save time -- for both the parents, students, and others who allege civil rights violations and for the OCR office employees who were expected to do less paperwork. However, OCR did not have a way to automatically transfer the information from online complaints into the separate database that OCR uses to track cases (the Case Management System, or CMS). Employees would have to manually input information from online complaints into CMS. Approximately 9,000 complaints were received online in FY 2017, and each required manual processing into CMS. Each took an average of 20 minutes to do, with complex complaints requiring additional time.

#### Impact:

- Ongoing modernization efforts include a solution to automate the transfer of data from online complaints to CMS. IT solution costs are included under a current contract with the estimated value of \$59,000. No additional IT solution costs are requested to complete this initiative.
- Expected FTE staff hours shifted: at the median grade of GS-13, an average of 750 hours shifted annually or \$36,000 per year.
- Additional expected benefits: decreased time to process complaints and increased reliability of complaint data because of the reduced risk of errors associated with manual processing.





## Burden Reduction Update 2019: Department of Education

### Office of the General Counsel

#### Leverage IT Solutions #3

**Action Taken:** Public financial disclosure reports must be filed via hardcopy for most of the Department's staff, as only Senior Executive Service (SES) staff or persons in covered positions can submit electronically through Integrity.gov. The Office of the General Counsel (OGC) must manually process the 1,300 or so disclosure reports that are submitted annually in hard copy by non-SES supervisory staff. OGC is seeking to leverage an IT shared service agreement solution that would enable all staff who need to file such reports to do so electronically. OGC is coordinating with the Department's Contracts and Acquisitions Management division to develop, solicit, and award the contract.

#### Impact:

- Expected estimated IT solution costs: \$30,000 initial cost and \$40,000 annual maintenance cost.
- Expected FTE staff hours shifted: 20% and 50% of two GS-13 staff for 3 months or \$15,000 per year.
- Additional expected benefits: reduced costs of staff from multiple locations having to deliver hard copies to one central location, and reduced costs associated with the maintenance, review, and proper disposal of confidential paper records; increased reliability of form data by reducing risks associated with manual processing; and increased efficiency of document retrieval.



### Office of Human Resources

#### Leverage IT Solutions #4

**Action Taken:** The Department's Office of Human Resources (OHR) issues general guidance on personnel and employment issues by emailing staff. These emails may then be stored in Microsoft Outlook, if they are not quickly deleted by staff. By the time an employee realizes he or she needs guidance on a subject that was covered in an OHR email, he or she may no longer have the email or find it difficult to locate the email. In FY 2019, the Office of Finance and Operations (OFO) will create a central electronic location for OHR's emails that are Department-wide.

#### Impact:

- Expected FTE staff hours shifted: more than 30 hours per quarter or 120 per year at the rate of a GS-14 and GS-15, or approximately \$15,500 a year.
- Anticipated shift in the focus of the GS-14 and GS-15 to more complex OHR matters, including an evaluation of the effectiveness of human capital policies.
- Additional expected benefits: decrease the amount of time OHR staff and customers spend searching for or researching OHR guidance; provide customers with access to consistent OHR communication; eliminate the need to recreate annual OHR guidance; and increase reliability and relevancy of OHR information retrieved.



## Burden Reduction Update 2019: Department of Education

- Anticipated decrease in number of documents requiring Departmental review and clearance: approximately 10% of documents. On average a document will be reviewed by six employees in OHR, OGC, and OFO Immediate Office staff.



### Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services

#### Leverage IT Solutions #5

**Action Taken:** The Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services transitioned from a paper-driven system to document its grants processing to a more efficient and effective electronic system. The new system allows users to collaboratively build a package for each grant award cycle and, working online, follow it through to review and approval. The new system also provides time-stamped logging of each step performed. It no longer requires the printing of documents, the development of folders, and the signing of hard copy documents. This has resulted in a substantial decrease in staff burden.

*Implemented a new electronic data collection application, saving 3,600 FTE hours or \$117,980 in efficiency.*

#### Impact:

- No additional IT costs are expected to complete this initiative.
- FTE staff hours shifted: at the median employee grade of GS-13, an average of 165 hours is saved annually or \$8,689 per year.
- Additional expected benefits: reduced staff time devoted to preparing folders for Assistant Secretary review, increased staff time for additional duties, and increased level of oversight. It also maintains an historical record of the evolution of each document.



### Institute for Education Sciences

#### Leverage IT Solutions #6

**Action Taken:** The Institute for Education Sciences (IES) implemented a new electronic data collection application entitled, “IES Clearance Application Manager” (ICAM). It will manage, monitor, and track all aspects of the security clearance process. ICAM will also support daily activities for the Electronic Questionnaires for Investigation Processing (e-QIP) submission process. This will result in more rapid and efficient processing of e-QIP submissions, improved data quality, and improved monitoring of applications as they move through the multi-stage review process.



## Burden Reduction Update 2019: Department of Education

### **Impact:**

- FY 2019 funds were used for the initial build, rollout and training of ICAM users. FY 2020 funds will support ongoing revisions and support for submission and monitoring of the e-QIP database application and process.
- FTE staff hours shifted: at the employee grade of GS-11, an average of 2,080 hours and at the grade of GS-14, an average of 1,520 hours, or 3,600 combined hours and \$117,980 total.



## Institute for Education Sciences

### [\*\*Leverage IT Solutions #7\*\*](#)

**Action Taken:** The Institute for Education Sciences is developing a standardized electronic template that can be used to generate an Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Information Clearance Request (ICR). The project is part of the Cross-Agency Priority (CAP) Goal of Leveraging Data as a Strategic Asset. It will involve standardizing the content for data collection. Information will be stored in an electronic system and can be retrieved for use, and modified, as necessary. Once an ICR package receives OMB approval, the data extraction program can be run, and the data will then be electronically transmitted and loaded into the Department Data Inventory.

### **Impact:**

- The initial build was supported with FY 2018 CAP implementation funds. Piloting and implementation within the National Center for Education Studies (NCES) is funded through FY 2019 NCES statistics funds and FY 2019 Department IT funds will be used to conduct further testing in other program offices. FY 2019 CAP implementation funds will be used for testing in one or more other agencies and, if successful, for rollout across the government.
- FTE staff hours shifted: An average of 6,700 staff hours will be shifted annually to other work or \$141,000 per year.
- Further savings are anticipated as additional program offices adopt the template.



## Office of the Chief Information Officer

### [\*\*Utilize Shared Services #1\*\*](#)

**Action Taken:** The Office of the Chief Information Officer completed the Department's cloud email migration to a Federal Risk and Authorization Management Program (FedRAMP) authorized cloud solution in October 2015. FedRAMP is a government-wide program that provides a standardized approach to security assessment, authorization, and continuous monitoring. As part of ongoing IT modernization efforts, the Department continues to work towards moving cloud products and services into FedRAMP-compliant cloud service providers.



## Burden Reduction Update 2019: Department of Education

### **Impact:**

- Estimated cost savings: minimum of \$900,000 per year.
- Additional expected benefits: reduced acquisition time; assessment and authorization cost savings; reduced duplication of effort; enhanced security to include continuous monitoring; increased availability and reliability; enhanced reporting capabilities; independent verification of compliance assessments; and reduced risk.



## Entire Department, led by the Office of Finance and Operations

### **Utilize Shared Services #2**

**Action Taken:** By October 2019, the Department, led by the Office of Finance and Operations, will complete an evaluation of available commercial “off the shelf” and Shared Service Solutions that will meet core business requirements for grants management. At the end of the evaluation, the Department will determine whether it is in the best interest of the agency to transition to a new solution or to enhance its existing grants management system.



## Office of Finance and Operations

### **Utilize Shared Services #3**

**Action Taken:** In 2018, the Department initiated planning for the Security Operations Centers (SOC) and investments across the entire IT portfolio that will ensure compliance with the Department of Homeland Security’s Continuous Diagnostics and Mitigation requirements. The Office of Finance and Operations and the Office for Federal Student Aid aligned technologies and services to leverage complementary resources and capabilities, and to limit duplicative technologies across the two offices. This includes eliminating the SOC tier 1 and 2 services located across the Department by consolidating them into the Department SOC. The Department will adopt and expand on existing technologies and risk processing techniques for enterprise-wide use when possible.

### **Impact:**

- Estimated cost savings: minimum of \$900,000 per year.
- Additional expected benefits: optimized SOC capabilities enhance the near-real-time risk visibility and the ability of the Department to react to cross-organizational threats.





## Burden Reduction Update 2019: Department of Education

### Federal Student Aid (FSA)

#### Streamline Processes #1

**Action Taken:** Federal Student Aid (FSA) has made significant improvements to the contractor and employee personnel security clearance process. This will improve efficiencies and reduce the total time required to get FSA contractors and employees cleared. To date, the Department has obtained approval for expanded security clearance authority; designed and established a comprehensive professional security team; and documented processes and key steps to facilitate the training of new personnel security professionals. Next, the Department will begin the development of a new Personnel Security System. This system will track and manage case records, dashboards, and report functions to provide real-time status and ensure task completion.

#### Impact:

- Additional expected benefits of the Personnel Security System: timely processing of investigations, paperless submissions, as well as reduced staff time for the Contracting Officer Representative.



### Office for Civil Rights

#### Streamline Processes #2

**Action Taken:** In 2018, the Office for Civil Rights (OCR) revised its Case Processing Manual to increase the types and number of cases that can be resolved using the Rapid Resolution Process (RRP). RRP is an expedited case processing approach that can be used to resolve, as OCR deems appropriate, complaints that are filed regarding any of the statutes enforced by OCR. It aims to resolve cases at the earliest possible stage after they are received by OCR, thereby reducing the written communications between OCR and the parties to a complaint.

#### Impact:

- FTE staff hours shifted: to be determined.
- Additional expected benefits: students and others who allege they have been subjected to civil rights discrimination are able to get speedier resolutions to their issues. OCR staff are able to devote more time to other cases. The office, overall, is able to be more responsive to more complainants.





Department of Energy



## Burden Reduction Update 2019: Department of Energy

### Western Area Power Administration

#### [Sierra Nevada Region/Western Area Power Administration Bird Deterrent System](#)

**Action Taken:** Researched and implemented a bird deterrent system at Maxwell substation. System mists initially scout birds with a food-based grape derivative that “encourages” the scouts to lead the larger flock to roost elsewhere. Previously, the bird feces from these massive roosting flocks caused severe equipment damage, major line outages, degraded insulators, and an extremely unsafe and unhealthy work environment for Western Area Power Administration (WAPA) employees.

**Impact:** Combination of financial benefits estimated at over \$16 million across 3 years. Majority of benefits will be realized in regained revenue capability (\$16 million). Additionally, WAPA will save/avoid \$187,000 in services contracts, replaced equipment, and engineering support.



### Western Area Power Administration

#### [HQ Government Purchase Card Invoice Payment Process Improvement](#)

**Action Taken:** Streamlined and standardized the Western Area Power Administration HQ Government Purchase Card invoice payment process; eliminated manual tracking and improved job aids, references, and analyst knowledge/capabilities (communication and training).

**Impact:** Improved efficiency; reduced cycle time by 50% and 520 labor hours.



### Western Area Power Administration

#### [Traders Tagging Validation Process](#)

**Action Taken:** Streamlined the Real-time Traders’ tagging validation process by eliminating multiple manual steps and replacing with automated comparison and analysis.

**Impact:** Improved efficiency; more than 700 hours per year shifted from low- to high-value work.



### Western Area Power Administration

#### [Self Service Invoicing Processing Platform](#)

**Action Taken:** Improved the efficiency of the invoice payment process through implementation of the Invoice Processing Platform (IPP). Automated the formerly paper-based processes in a secure, web-



## Burden Reduction Update 2019: Department of Energy

based service that more efficiently manages government invoicing from purchase order through payment notification. IPP was at no charge to the organization or our vendors. Promotes a standard process with improved controls and communication with vendors.

**Impact:** More than 2,000 hours annually shifted to high-value work.



### Western Area Power Administration

#### [Phase Out of Equipment Loan Program](#)

**Action Taken:** After programmatic assessment and evaluation, team determined the program had accomplished its original objectives and was no longer necessary. Were the program to continue, bringing the library up to date would be costly. The decision to end the program avoided approximately \$177,000 of required upgrades and shifted 1040 hours (1/2 FTE) to high-value work.

**Impact:** \$177,000 cost avoidance and 1040 labor hours (1/2 FTE).



### Western Area Power Administration

#### [Streamlined the Real-Time Forced Outage Workflow across the Western Area Power Administration](#)

**Action Taken:** The Western Area Power Administration integrated Tools for Operations Application Team deployed the real-time forced outage workflow. The new workflow improved the dispatchers' ability to meet North American Electric Reliability Corporation requirements to ensure proper outage reporting and coordination between entities. The workflow increased efficiency while dramatically improving the effectiveness and timeliness in communication in a more efficient manner.

**Impact:** Approximately 40 hours per year reduced. Significant operational and compliance benefits.



### Western Area Power Administration

#### [Western Area Power Administration Financial Information Management System Enhancements](#)

**Action Taken:** Implemented automation enhancements to improve efficiency, reduce rework, and eliminate multiple manual tasks from the financial processes.



## Burden Reduction Update 2019: Department of Energy

**Impact:** Shifted approximately 2,166 labor hours from low- to high-value work.



### Office of Legacy Management

#### Decision to Demolish Piqua Decommissioned Reactor Will Lead to \$88 Million Life Cycle Savings

**Action Taken:** DOE's Office of Legacy Management re-evaluated a 1968 contract and subsequent 1969 lease, between the Atomic Energy Commission and the City of Piqua, to determine whether the ongoing repair, maintenance, building and safety code compliance, and operational cost required for occupancy until safe release of radiological activity estimated to occur in year 2106 of the Piqua Decommissioned Reactor was financially justifiable while meeting the facility needs of the City of Piqua. It was determined that the configuration and condition of the facility did not meet the facilities needs of the City of Piqua.

*Decided to demolish a decommissioned reactor, which will save \$88 million over life cycle.*

**Impact:** \$88 million in life cycle savings.



### Office of Loan Programs

#### Amended Credit Review Process in DOE's Office of Loan Programs Reduces Length of Credit Review

**Action Taken:** The Office of Loan Programs implemented a standard credit review form with specified components to focus the review on the most salient points and eliminate irrelevant discussion.

**Impact:** Standardizing the credit review form has decreased writing time by 20% (280 to 420 pages saved annually), amounting in 32 hours saved per report. Annually, this translates roughly to 896 hours saved.





## Burden Reduction Update 2019: Department of Energy

### Office of Loan Programs

#### Streamlining and Automation of Monthly Office of Loan Programs Project Status Reports to Reduce Production Time

**Action Taken:** Monthly Project Status Reports provide Office of Loan Programs Leadership with a summary of a project's current risk rating, metrics, highlights, and milestone achievements.

The Technical Project Management Division (TPMD) revised the format of the Monthly Project Status Report to eliminate the need to make formatting adjustments in the final document. TPMD has also moved from weekly reporting to just end-of-the-month reporting through an automated report-generating system created in AdobePro.

**Impact:** The automation of the Monthly Project Status Report has saved TPMD approximately 4 hours each month, by reducing total production time to approximately 1 hour. This amounts to 48 hours saved annually for TPMD.



### Office of Loan Programs

#### Streamlining and Automation of Routine Annual Sector Reports to Reduce Production Time

**Action Taken:** Annual Sector Reports provide context to analyze trends that may impact borrowers in the portfolio. The Portfolio Management Division (PMD) streamlined and automated the production of the four annual Sector Reports focusing on the most relevant trends and key risks associated with each sector: Geothermal, Nuclear, Solar, and Wind.

**Impact:** Since streamlining and automating the four annual Sector Reports, PMD reduces production time per report from 6 weeks to 3 weeks. This amounts to approximately 480 hours saved annually.





## Department of Health and Human Services



## Burden Reduction Update 2019: Department of Health and Human Services

### Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, Office of the Administrator

#### Patients Over Paperwork: Eliminating Burdensome and Unnecessary Regulations to Allow Clinicians to Focus on their Primary Mission – Improving their Patients’ Health

**Action Taken:** Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) is committed to transforming the health care delivery system – and the Medicare and Medicaid programs – by putting additional focus on patient-centered care, innovation, and outcomes. Our goal is to eliminate overly burdensome and unnecessary regulations and sub-regulatory guidance to allow clinicians and providers to spend less time on paperwork and more time on their primary mission – improving their patients’ health. We are also modernizing or eliminating outdated regulations to remove barriers to innovation.

We launched our Patients over Paperwork initiative in 2017 to focus all of CMS on finding and addressing opportunities to reduce unnecessary administrative burden and established an executive-level Steering Committee and dedicated project team to coordinate the effort. To get this right, we actively solicited feedback from the medical community through requests for information (RFIs), listening sessions, and clinical onsite engagements with front-line clinicians and staff to learn how our administrative requirements and processes affect their daily work and ability to innovate in care delivery. Through the RFI process alone, we received over 3,000 mentions of burden, which resulted in 1,146 distinct burden topics to consider. In addition, over 2,000 clinicians, administrative staff and leaders, and beneficiaries have participated in our listening sessions and onsite engagements, and we continue to send teams out into the field to learn.

As of February 2019, we have resolved or are actively addressing over 80% of the actionable RFI burden topics. Through regulatory changes alone, we estimate savings to the medical community of at least \$5.7 billion and at least 40 million hours through 2021. In addition, many of the suggested changes have been made through sub-regulatory guidance or direct education and outreach to providers and beneficiaries.

**Impact:** \$5.7 billion and 40 million hours through 2021.



### ReImagine BuySmarter

#### ReImagine BUYSMARTER is Modernizing the Way HHS Procures Over \$24B in Goods and Services Annually by Leveraging New and Emerging Technologies in a Group Purchasing Environment

**Action Taken:** BUYSMARTER is a transformative, data-driven initiative leveraging the collective purchasing power of HHS to secure lower prices, achieve operational efficiencies, and generate cost savings on goods and services.

BUYSMARTER uses Artificial Intelligence (AI) technology to analyze departmental requirements based on current HHS-wide spend data. This helps identify opportunities to consolidate contract vehicles



## Burden Reduction Update 2019: Department of Health and Human Services

across agencies within HHS to leverage overlapping requirements at a significant cost savings for the Federal government.

BUYSMARTER was established in July 2017 and entered early implementation in October 2018. BUYSMASTER projects to achieve status as a sustainable program within HHS by July 2020 and to reach full implementation by October 2022.

**Impact:** Once fully implemented, BUYSMASTER is projecting over \$720 million/year in savings for HHS.



## Health Resources and Services Administration, Office of Operations

### Electronic Performance Management Appraisal Program

**Action Taken:** The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) collaborated with the National Institutes of Health to develop and implement a secure electronic Performance Management Appraisal Program (ePMAP) system for General Schedule employees across HRSA's entire organization – more than 1,900 employees.

Since successfully launching ePMAP in January 2018, HRSA has achieved significant cost savings by reducing and/or eliminating: (1) paper consumption and storage expense; (2) redundant data entry and errors, photocopying, and manual filing of paper forms; and (3) labor costs required to manage employee performance across the organization.

*Developed & implemented a secure electronic performance management system, reducing paper consumption by ~70,000 pages & saving 3,800 FTE hours.*

**Impact:** Reduced paper consumption by approximately 70,000 pages and 3,800 FTE hours involved in the performance evaluation process.



## Food and Drug Administration

### Information Exchange and Data Transformation Digital IND Safety Program

**Action Taken:** Sponsors of clinical trials conducted under an investigational new drug (IND) application are required to report serious and unexpected suspected adverse reactions in an IND safety report to the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and participating investigators within 7 or 15 days depending on the type of event (21 CFR §312.32). From 2015 to 2017, FDA's drug review divisions received an average of approximately 50,000 reports per year. The current process for submission and



## Burden Reduction Update 2019: Department of Health and Human Services

review of IND safety reports submitted to the FDA as PDF files or on paper is inefficient, labor intensive, and poses significant challenges for safety signal detection and tracking.

In 2016, FDA's Information Exchange and Data Transformation (INFORMED) Program conducted a pilot that created a digital framework for the electronic submission of IND safety reports so that data in these reports can be visualized, analyzed, and tracked.

The pilot comprised two stages. In the first stage (February to April 2016), three PDF safety report submissions were randomly selected and manually converted to an electronic format based on the E2B R2 guidelines of the International Conference on Harmonization of Technical Requirements for Registration of Pharmaceuticals for Human Use (ICH) for post-market safety report submissions. The transformed data files were subsequently transmitted to a pre-production environment of the FDA's Adverse Event Reporting System (FAERS), which is designed to support the FDA's post-market safety surveillance program for drug and therapeutic biologic products. The first stage of the pilot was successfully completed upon confirmation that the transformed data files containing the three premarket safety reports were successfully ingested by the system.

In the second stage of the pilot (April to July 2016), INFORMED worked with four companies (Merck & Co., AstraZeneca, Novartis, and Genentech) to voluntarily submit ten expedited safety reports each, based on the ICH E2B R2 guidelines, to the FAERS pre-production environment. This stage of the pilot was concluded after confirmation of successful capture and processing of data elements in the transmitted safety report files.

INFORMED has established a program for implementation of the new successfully-piloted digital framework. The expected completion date is the end of 2019. This is the most significant overhaul of a significant function of the FDA in recent history.

**Impact:** At full implementation of the Premarket Digital Safety Program, about 400 full-time equivalent hours per month are expected to be saved by the FDA. A survey conducted by INFORMED in 2016 showed that FDA reviewers spend an average of 16% of their time on premarket safety reviews, most of which is spent on paper and PDF file management.



## Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority Division of Research, Innovation and Ventures, Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response, Office of the Secretary

[\*\*Transformative Improvements to the BARDA DRIve Broad Agency Announcement and the Integration of IT Modernization Efforts Allocate More than 2,227 Employee Hours on Higher-Value Mission Work\*\*](#)

**Action Taken:** The Division of Research, Innovation and Ventures (DRIVe), under the Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority (BARDA), refocused employee hours through piloting the Easy Broad Agency Announcement (EZ BAA) process starting August of 2018 with accompanying IT



## Burden Reduction Update 2019: Department of Health and Human Services

systems to enhance mission delivery and productivity. The EZ BAA process significantly streamlines the standard BAA process in use by BARDA, standardizing the data ask from solicitation respondents and allowing DRIVe Digital Resources (DDR) analytics to easily report out and visualize submission data. The utilization of DDR virtualized a major review step, obviating the need for an in-person review meeting. Additional DDR process automation steps bring the entire process online, eliminating a number of administrative tasks. This allows for a significant reduction in time spent reviewing abstracts as well as time spent performing basic administrative data entry and routing while vastly improving data integrity and reporting capabilities.

The impact numbers may appear minimal, but the pilot team consists of just 11 FTEs who over the course of eight months have reviewed over 250 proposals. When we project across the entire organization, we project significant staff-hour savings. The pilot program is being run within a BARDA Division for six months. If successful, it could be rolled out to the entire BARDA organization in the coming fiscal year. The next step would be to roll it out to the ASPR organization. Additional discussions would be required before consideration of implementation to additional agencies within HHS.

**Impact:** 2,227 FTE hours saved over pilot time period (Approximately 3,340/year or 14.5% of available FTE hours).



## Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, Office of Management Services Electronic Proposal Submission System

**Action Taken:** Created and implemented an electronic proposal submission process for our current Indefinite Delivery/Indefinite Quantity and Blanket Purchase Agreement contractors without the administrative burden of creating log-on credentials when a solicitation is released.

Paperless proposals reduce administrative burden on Agency employees and contractors. Contractors also save time and money on proposal handling and mailings. This system was implemented in October 2018.

The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality plans to explore potential future enhancements to the system to automate and modernize other parts of the process.

**Impact:** 600 hours per year.

\*Note: Impact does not attempt to quantify contractor time or cost savings.





## Burden Reduction Update 2019: Department of Health and Human Services

### **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Office of Financial Resources, Office of Finance and Accounting Services, Commercial Payments Branch**

#### **Purchase Card Quality Assurance Review Automation**

**Action Taken:** Over the past year, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Commercial Payments Branch (CPB) explored automation and digital capabilities to strengthen the agency's review of its purchase card transactions. On average, CDC spends about \$5 million monthly as part of the General Services Administration SmartPay3 purchase card program resulting in approximately 11,000 transactions. CPB is responsible for monitoring these payments to ensure compliance with all applicable laws and standards. Historically, CPB reviewed every purchase card transaction manually to identify questionable purchases requiring further analysis – a tedious and time-consuming process primed for automation. In FY 2018, the agency developed a prototype to automate this manual review process. The prototype was built using Python, an advanced scripting and prototyping language, and codified purchase card policies and the collective criteria of CPB experts to efficiently data mine our payment universe for questionable purchases.

CPB ran a pilot of the prototype in parallel with the existing manual process to evaluate the automation's effectiveness and efficiency. By automating the sample selection process, CPB applied consistency to the agency's methodology and realized time savings over the existing manual processes. CPB plans to further explore future automation opportunities to compare archived sample results to identify trends and provide insights for proactive solutions rather than reactive corrective actions around purchase card transactions.

**Impact:** About 145 FTE hours saved per year plus consistently applied selection criteria.



### **Health Resources and Services Administration, Office of Operations**

#### **Streamlining HRSA's Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) Committee Operations**

**Action Taken:** This project, which began in September 2018, identified challenges and opportunities to streamline and increase efficiency among the Health Resources and Services Administration's (HRSA's) 13 Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) committees. In 2018, HRSA streamlined certain operational functions, including charter renewals, committee member nominations, and data sets; aligned data sets with a new database implemented by the General Services Administration; created standard templates with automated calculations to decrease reporting burden; modernized and centralized updated review, clearance, and approval processes; and leveraged improved contract management and oversight to improve performance efficiencies, eliminate unnecessary redundancies, and increase transparency of processes, discussions, and outcomes of FACA committees.

**Impact:** Between 42% and 63% reduction in time from when the first draft is submitted to receiving the Secretary's approval of nomination packages. Approximate 40% reduction of time for charter



## Burden Reduction Update 2019: Department of Health and Human Services

renewals. Positive downstream impact realized as staff and committee members can plan committee meetings in advance for improved participation and stronger outcomes.

Nomination package approval time was reduced from 226 to 125 days from time of first draft submission. Charter renewal time was reduced from over six months to under three months. Reduction in the number of reviews and revisions as well as decreased staff time required for drafting, review, and approval.



### Indian Health Services, Office of Information Technology, Division of Information Technology

#### National Patient Information Reporting System Investment – Enterprise Business Intelligence Reporting

**Action Taken:** During FY 2017 and FY 2018, the Indian Health Services (IHS) Office of Information Technology (OIT) reassessed the way we deliver information and re-engineered a few fundamental concepts, processes, tools, and techniques to deliver data-driven solutions across the agency. OIT collaborated with other stakeholders to identify redundancies in reporting and technology to define enterprise requirements to support data analytics that ensure users have insight into critical information to support informed, data-driven decisions and enable them to quickly identify, forecast, and solve business problems using the agency Business Intelligence (BI) analytic platform.

The enterprise reporting environment offers sharing and re-use via a security framework within one business intelligence reporting solution while servicing multiple ‘types’ of users (i.e., national, regional, and lower levels of role granularity). Additionally, the BI platform streamlines and optimizes data collection which replaces manual ‘data calls’ and promotes automated data collection and integration to support reporting. Initial operational cost savings, for one report, for one program office, was estimated at about 35%, which saved approximately \$270,000 annually. IHS projects additional cost savings through a reduction in technical debt, by migrating legacy business intelligence reporting tools and/or stand-alone licenses to the enterprise reporting environment, resulting in reduced software license and infrastructure cost by 66%, or approximately \$1.2 million annually.

IHS predicts that cost savings from these efforts will continue to be realized as program offices and respective user communities are onboarded, manual processes are reduced or alleviated, and relevant data is transformed. The business value realized is meaningful, insightful, and useful information within a standard, common enterprise platform.

**Impact:** Currently, we have approximately 92 users, 8 Program Offices and 1 Area Office leveraging the BI platform. By the end of FY 2019, we estimate onboarding the remaining 10-11 regional/area office users resulting 1-2 reports/processes that can be re-engineered in the NDW BI environment, resulting in potential cost savings of over \$6 million annually.



## Burden Reduction Update 2019: Department of Health and Human Services



### National Institutes of Health, National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases

#### [\*\*Creation and Governmentwide Dissemination of the Employee Viewpoint Survey Analysis and Results Tool\*\*](#)

**Action Taken:** Three National Institutes of Health (NIH) employees launched a grassroots effort, emulating the spirit of the President's Management Agenda Cross-Agency Priority Goal of "Developing a Workforce for the 21st Century" and "Shifting from Low-Value to High-Value Work," and in doing so successfully transformed how the Federal workforce analyzes and utilizes valuable employee feedback through the creation of the Employee Viewpoint Survey Analysis and Results Tool (EVS ART). The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) distributes the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS) to approximately 1.47 million Federal employees, with 80,000 of those residing in HHS. FEVS is a powerful platform for employees to share their opinions and perceptions of their work experiences, their agency, and their leadership. While OPM has embedded Index Measures and Key Categories into the survey to help agencies pinpoint areas of strength and opportunities for improvement, they do not deliver results in that format -- creating substantial duplication of efforts as agencies work to analyze the data. It's labor-intensive, time consuming, and costly.

Recognizing the dearth of analysis provided, National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases Executive Officer Camille Hoover and analysts Robin Klevins and Vy Tran set out to create an innovative analytic framework for interpreting FEVS results. The tool's innovative, intuitive design interprets survey data, simplifies the analytical process, and captures OPM-defined focus areas -- bringing to life the voice of the people. Its beauty lies in its simplicity yet extraordinary power in transforming massive amounts of data, allowing leaders to hone in on important themes and compare prior year data in five simple steps. Astoundingly, analysis that previously required weeks or months is now delivered in minutes, allowing leaders to quickly identify cross-cutting themes and develop actionable employee-centric initiatives.

Realizing EVS ART's value and powerful impact, the team has campaigned to gift the tool broadly, allowing others to benefit from their innovation at no cost, first to other NIH Institutes, then to HHS, and ultimately to all Federal agencies. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) staff have been their champion, stating that "this team's efforts provide proof of concept that, with strategic initiatives and targeted interventions, a leader can affect positive change within struggling organizations and see significant improvement from one year to the next." The NIH team has now showcased EVS ART at over 70 meetings, trainings, and conferences demonstrating how strategic initiatives and targeted interventions affect change and can create a culture where employees thrive. They conducted custom analyses for numerous agencies, trained hundreds of staff across government, and in all 15 Executive Departments demonstrated how leaders can translate results into actions to improve organizational effectiveness and the well-being and productivity of staff. Building on this, OMB Deputy Director Margaret Weichert, who strongly believes that people are the fundamental underpinning to the work of all government, recently affirmed at the President's Management Council that the contributions of



## Burden Reduction Update 2019: Department of Health and Human Services

Camille Hoover, Robin Klevins, and Vy Tran on EVS ART “lets leaders lead... and is proof that change is possible.”

**Impact:** The team’s innovation generates astonishing reductions in cost, advancing the stewardship of government resources. For example, by using EVS ART the Centers for Disease Control reduced their analysis time from 72 days to one day, decreasing costs from \$31,000 to \$1,100, allowing them to increase their deeper dive analyses six-fold and provide an additional 126 managers with actionable employee feedback. The Internal Revenue Service stated the tool reduced analysis time from 25 days (\$12,302) to 40 minutes (\$41) - a 99.7% reduction in time and cost. And a single NIH analysis that once took 30 hours is now completed in fewer than five minutes, cutting production costs from \$1,350 to \$3.75. EVS ART has changed the federal terrain by breathing new life into how agencies utilize FEVS data, and leaders are energized by its power to generate meaningful data that captures the pulse of the workforce and, in turn, translate employee feedback into actionable plans. EVS ART was adopted by the White House and Excellence in Government Fellows for government-wide engagement initiatives, OPM has deemed EVS ART a best practice on UnlockTalent.gov, and HHS leadership has elected to use EVS ART to review organizational performance in a standardized way. HHS will also be utilizing the standard action plan format, provided by EVS ART, for reports from the components regarding their approach for improving low scores and continuously increasing scores in general, including high scores.

*Created a FEVS analysis tool, reducing analysis time from 72 days.*

Impact can be measured in the savings of FTE hours in conducting analysis and in providing leaders and managers valuable data for decision-making weeks (and in most cases months) sooner. Leaders/managers now have time to create strategic initiatives based on employee feedback, whereas they previously received their information on the heels of the next FEVS survey (if at all).



## National Institutes of Health

### Optimize National Institutes of Health Committee Management

**Action Taken:** Committee Management focuses on improving the management process for Federal Advisory Committee and activities, specifically nomination slates and appointment to identify automation and process improvements, and opportunities for policy relief. Committee Management aims to streamline and standardize nomination slate reporting and appointment processes using automation, which will eliminate data entry duplication, replace wet signatures with eSignatures, and improve workflow, tracking, analysis, and records management. Cost savings are anticipated from eliminating the use of courier services.



## Burden Reduction Update 2019: Department of Health and Human Services

When fully automated, eliminating courier services to HHS has a projected cost savings of \$11,000 per year.

**Impact:** Projected savings of \$11,000 in annual courier service costs.



## National Institutes of Health

### Optimize NIH Freedom of Information Act

**Action Taken:** Starting in FY 2018, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) began the Optimize NIH Initiative, which will increase the efficiency and effectiveness of administrative functions for employees and the agency and improve support for the NIH mission. NIH's optimization efforts are being driven by NIH in a data-driven, scientific manner, using teams led by NIH experts in the administrative areas being optimized with full engagement by employees. Between January 2018 and March 2019, the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) team aimed to streamline and standardize FOIA request processing to increase the number of requests processed, reduce the volume of backlogged requests, reduce the number of pending appeals, and increase tracking and reporting capabilities.

The FOIA team implemented a new, customizable platform, FOIAxpress, to improve FOIA management and standardize processes across all 27 Institutes and Centers. Additionally, the FOIA team implemented a public request portal, allowing requestors to electronically submit FOIA requests. Implementation of these automated solutions streamlined FOIA request processing by 1) reducing the number of systems used to track and submit FOIA requests from eight systems and spreadsheets to one system and 2) eliminating data entry duplication, thereby increasing efficiency, allowing staff to focus on high-value work of processing FOIA requests, and increasing compliance with the law (20-day mandate).

Because of these efforts, NIH FOIA was able to process 181 requests since the launch of FOIAxpress and the Portal in March 2019, an increase from 101 requests processed in the same timeframe before automation.

**Impact:** Increase of 80 requests processed per six weeks (high-value work).





## Department of Homeland Security



## Burden Reduction Update 2019: Department of Homeland Security

### Office of Program Accountability and Risk Management

#### Electronic Organizational Document Management Processing

**Action Taken:** The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Instruction 102-01-001 provides guidance for origination, validation, review, and signature for approximately 20 key acquisition documents in the Acquisition Lifecycle Framework (ALF). A major lesson learned from a cross-component Agile Acquisition Working Group (AAWG) was that the ALF document review process is inefficient. Some of the problems identified were the inefficiencies in exchanging emails and spreadsheets for review, maintenance of configuration management, and the high probability of errors. One of the 18 action plans to come out of the AAWG required the development of a tool to improve document review, adjudication, and approval. As a result, development began of the Electronic Organizational Document Management Processing (eODMP) system.

The eODMP system has been designed to achieve the following goals:

- Simplify submission of documents for review, at the department level;
- Ensure the correct offices get the opportunity to review appropriate documents;
- Facilitate more timely reviews, and adjudication of comments – easy monitoring of review deadline;
- Provide a one-stop location for in-progress documents.

This system will ultimately encompass the vast majority of the acquisition documentation, but the initial capability, and focus of this effort, will enhance the management the following documents:

- Acquisition Program Baseline
- Integrated Logistics Support Plan
- Systems Engineering Life Cycle-Tailoring Plan

**Impact:** 896.8 Hours



### Office of Program Accountability and Risk Management

#### Elimination of the Comprehensive Acquisition Status Report

**Action Taken:** Based on language in the Consolidated Appropriations Act, DHS eliminated the requirement to submit an annual Comprehensive Acquisition Status Report (CASR) to Congress. The CASR was a labor-intensive report that consumed the vast majority of one full person/year for a senior government employee, as well as one support contractor. The Annual and Quarterly CASR was last processed in 2017. The justification for eliminating this requirement was that the majority of the report's content was already provided to Congress via other departmental reports, and in a timelier manner which made the data more relevant and actionable.

The CASR was developed in order to obtain the information necessary for in-depth Congressional oversight. The CASR was to be included as part of the submission of the President's Annual Budget,



## Burden Reduction Update 2019: Department of Homeland Security

with quarterly updates to be submitted 30 days after the completion of each quarter. The CASR included programs identified for Major Acquisition Oversight and included on the Master Acquisition Oversight List.

**Impact:** 3,120 hours/year



## Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer & Office of the Chief Procurement Officer

### Decommission of the Balanced Workforce Assessment Tool

**Action Taken:** DHS has decommissioned the Balanced Workforce Strategy (BWS) and the Balanced Workforce Assessment Tool (BWAT). In 2010, DHS established BWS in response to statutory requirements, including section 736 of the 2009 Omnibus Appropriates Act, to support a balanced multi-sector workforce in executive branch agencies. The BWS was a repeatable and documented process to ensure Components determine the proper balance of Federal and contractor employees for programs and functions and reduce mission risk in compliance with applicable statutes, regulations, and policies. The BWAT was an enterprise-wide online questionnaire supporting the BWS process. DHS required all Components, directorates, and program offices to use the BWAT to analyze all proposed requirements for services above the simplified acquisition threshold (SAT).

*Eliminated an unnecessary step in the Balanced Workforce Strategy, saving 3,000 FTE hours per year.*

DHS has determined that a BWS program is no longer necessary because these statutory requirements are being met through other DHS human capital and acquisition program guidelines, including the Homeland Security Acquisition Manual, Workforce Planning Guide, and the upcoming Manpower and Organization Policy Manual. Effective March

22, 2019, DHS discontinued the BWS and the use of the BWAT. Components, directorates, and program offices are using the job aid titled “Inherently Governmental and Critical Functions Analysis” in place of the BWAT to analyze proposed services over the SAT for inherently governmental functions, functions closely associated with inherently governmental functions, and critical functions.

#### **Impact:**

- Over 35 FTEs department-wide, 3000 hours/year, 3 hours per analysis (1031 analyses completed in FY 2017).
- \$363,000 in contract dollars saved by not re-competing the contract for the BWAT.





## Burden Reduction Update 2019: Department of Homeland Security

### Office of the Chief Procurement Officer

#### Centralizing the Congressional Notifications Process

**Action Taken:** DHS has taken action to centralize and streamline the Congressional Notifications (CNs) process. In accordance with each Annual Appropriations Act, DHS is required to notify the Committees on Appropriations of the Senate and the House of Representatives in advance of making a contract awards over \$1 million. Contracting activities submit CNs for review in a database called the Enterprise Reporting Application (ERA). Currently, the multiple offices share the responsibility of reviewing and approving CNs before Congress is notified. This responsibility will now be centralized and subject matter experts will review CNs to ensure the information sent to Congress is clear and accurate. Additionally, the data entry process will be streamlined as data fields within ERA will be limited to only those statutorily required. Having fewer individuals involved in the review process and requiring fewer data fields be completed will result in a more efficient process as workflow will be improved, and CN processing time for contracting activities to complete the CNs will be significantly reduced.

#### Impact:

- 100 hours/year (processing time contracting activities).
- 200 hours/year (processing time for review).
- 2 FTE within the Office of Legislative Affairs.



### Office of the Chief Procurement Officer

#### Implementation of the Head of the Contracting Activity Scheduler and Tracker

**Action Taken:** The Head of the Contracting Activity Scheduler and Tracker (HCAST) is a communications facilitation tool to assist the procurement line of business in assigning, responding and overseeing requests for various ad hoc and recurring information requests and data calls. It provides valuable insight about the inquiry and the corresponding processes implemented to respond to that particular inquiry. HCAST prevents multiple requests for the same information and helps to leverage information previously provided. Additionally, it provides important process metrics which assist in performance and compliance management as well as organization assessment of DHS procurement activities. Data from HCAST will help eliminate low-value-added data calls. HCAST data will be used to inform business decisions and improve business processes while freeing up personnel to spend time on more critical tasks.

**Impact:** 624 hours/year.





## Burden Reduction Update 2019: Department of Homeland Security

### Office of the Chief Financial Officer

#### Unified View of Investments

**Action Taken:** Through the Unified View of Investments (UVI) initiative, Management CXOs are identifying processes and data calls that are redundant and/or inefficient and either eliminating or streamlining them to reduce burden on Component personnel and enhance the accuracy of data associated with major acquisition programs. Specifically, through the development of a business intelligence dashboard, the UVI team has delivered a centralized and authoritative view of DHS major acquisition programs, enabling Management and Component Lines of Business personnel to have a consistent set of financial, procurement, programmatic, and technical data from which to report on and make decisions. The team has eliminated fields in the INVEST system that were unclear and provided little transparency into how a program was performing. The team also improved data accuracy and reduced burden by reviewing data manually entered into the INVEST system of record and identified those not identifiable in the Office of the Chief Procurement Officer (OCPO) authoritative source for contracts, Enterprise Reporting Application (ERA). The UVI team went through each contract entry and identified errors which brought the misalignment rate down from 70% to 7%. They then worked with OCPO to develop and deploy a matching algorithm service that now allows program managers to select from an active set of contracts already being reported in the ERA system. This removes any future opportunity for data error. The team then developed a data exchange to export this data from INVEST to the UVI Dashboard and display it for each acquisition program. Stakeholders now have the ability to quickly discern a number of elements about a program's procurement profile, such as how many contracts exist by program, the total value of obligations to date, the number of fixed prices versus cost type contracts, etc. This information will not only allow us to form the basis for portfolio analysis but will also allow DHS to answer questions from Congress within minutes that have historically taken weeks.

**Impact:** 5120 hours/year business processing time for Acquisition Review Board, Program Budget Review, Component Annual Portfolio Review, and External Requests.



### Office of the Chief Financial Officer

#### Implementation of Planning, Programming, Budgeting, and Execution One Number System

**Action Taken:** The One Number system will eliminate burdensome manual data manipulation and transaction processing by providing a system that fully integrates the Planning, Programming, Budgeting, and Execution (PPBE) processes. The PPBE One Number system will provide DHS Headquarters and Component resource personnel with consistent, accurate, and timely decision support data and tools to streamline major recurring processes and enhance stakeholder product delivery and reporting. System capability will include maintaining prior, current, and future year(s) resource and performance data, producing annual and periodic reports and products (e.g., Congressional Justification, prior years, out-year planning/programming, and performance management reports), capturing point-in-time positions, decisions, and reprogramming for resource



## Burden Reduction Update 2019: Department of Homeland Security

level changes. In addition, the system will have the capability to automate performance management procedures, query and report data, upload execution data from financial systems, and perform workforce modeling/pricing scenarios based on full time equivalent counts/payroll data, and out-year inflation assumptions. Further, the system will import and store actual financial execution data for analysis and comparisons of planned versus actuals to improve future decision making.

**Impact:** 4,160 hours.



### Office of the Chief Financial Officer

#### [\*\*Elimination of Duplicate Reporting to the Office of Management and Budget for IT Commodities\*\*](#)

**Action Taken:** Leverage IT Capital Planning and Investment Control (CPIC) Standard Investment Reports (SIR) for more consistent and usable results at investment level. This could require additional data to be collected for the SIR, but only additional analysis could determine this. The information collected via CPIC SIR can be consolidated either at DHS or at the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and replace the current, separate data call and submission to OMB.

**Impact:** 1680 hours/year.





# Department of Housing and Urban Development



## Burden Reduction Update 2019: Department of Housing and Urban Development

### Office of Community Planning and Development, Office of Special Needs Assistance Programs

#### Homelessness Continuum of Care Re-Imagining Initiative

**Action Taken:** FY 2018 saw The Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Office of Special Needs Assistance Programs (SNAPS) significantly increase efficiencies around the annual Homelessness Continuum of Care (CoC) Program competition through the “CoC Re-Imagining” Initiative. The goal of the Initiative was to make the CoC Program competition less time-consuming and more efficient for communities, project recipients, and HUD employees. SNAPS reduced the homelessness CoC competition review period by seven days from FY 2016 to FY 2017, and by up to 65 days over past years, by carefully examining and streamlining processes. SNAPS also saved between 175—350 hours' worth of employees' time by eliminating the need for detailed review of over 500 projects in FY 2017. These projects were renewals (awarded funds in FY 2016) that pledged to conduct the same activities if awarded FY 2017 funds; since they had already been reviewed and approved for funding in the prior year, review of these projects was substantially streamlined, thus saving competition review time. Furthermore, SNAPS lessened field office burdens by reducing the number of projects with issues or conditions that must be addressed during the post-award phase by over 60%. All-in-all, the Homelessness “CoC Re-Imagining” Initiative saved a significant amount of time for both HUD employees and Program applicants.

#### Impact:

- 175-350 FTE hours reviewing applications (7-14 days).
- 65 total days saved during the CoC competition review period.



### Office of Business Transformation, Grants Management Office

#### Grants Oversight and New Efficiency Act Closeout Process Improvements

**Action Taken:** FY 2018 saw the resolution of approximately 186,000 open grants, over 99% of those reported in the FY 2017 Grants Oversight and New Efficiency (GONE) Act submission. HUD had, by far, the most open grants of any agency submitting under the GONE Act in FY 2017, and the 30 oldest grants. HUD improved legal compliance and developed standard procedures to capture periods of performance for HUD grants through this grant closeout process. By the end of FY 2018, HUD had reduced its total number of open grants down to 457.

**Impact:** 185,849 open grants resolved.





## Burden Reduction Update 2019: Department of Housing and Urban Development

### Office of the Chief Financial Officer

#### HUD Robotics Process Automation Program – Grantee Accrual Data Validation Process Improvement

**Action Taken:** Every year, HUD prepares financial statements that provide a snapshot of how our funding was used. The grant accrual validation process cycle took six-and-a-half months and approximately 2,100 hours of employee time. To streamline the cycle, HUD set up a bot to replicate the steps it used to perform manually. The bot 1) retrieves data from multiple spreadsheets; 2) compiles data into a new file; 3) validates information; and 4) applies business rules as it works. The bot also automatically selects a statistically valid sample of grants which it then consolidates by grantee. A second bot is then used to compose emails to each recipient which feature unique, custom-generated survey forms. The cycle finishes when the initial bot sends the messages out. In total, the automated process now takes about 65 hours over the course of three to four weeks.

*Implemented RPA, saving 2,000+ FTE hours.*

Robotics saved HUD over 2,000 hours of our employees' time. Robotics Process Automation (RPA) was able to take a process that took over six months and condense it down to just three to four weeks. Most impressive of all, bots reduced the level of effort required to perform grantee validation processes by 97%.

**Impact:** 6.5 months (2,100 hours) to 3-4 weeks (65 hours) reduced process time.



### Office of General Counsel

#### FY 2018 Regulatory Reform

**Action Taken:** In FY 2018, HUD removed seven regulatory actions from its Regulatory Agenda. These items were long-term rule-making actions that had been continuously listed on prior Agendas without any activity. Accompanying the removal of seven actions was HUD's publication of a final rule to remove regulations for the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) Inspector Roster on July 3, 2018. Now that most states have adopted the International Residential Code, the separate regulations prescribed by HUD are no longer necessary. The end of FY 2018 also saw HUD's publication of a rule removing regulations requiring 10-year protection plans to qualify for high Loan-to-Value FHA-insured mortgages on newly constructed single-family homes. These two rules will result in cost savings of approximately \$27.4 million. Combined, HUD's regulatory reforms resulted in estimated savings of \$507 million to taxpayers through the streamlining, clarifying, and updating of HUD's regulations.

**Impact:** \$507 million taxpayer dollars saved.



## Department of the Interior



## Burden Reduction Update 2019: Department of the Interior

### Office of Natural Resources Revenue Indian Energy Service Center Community Agreements

**Action Taken:** In their multiple agency collaboration with the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), and the Office of Natural Resources Revenue (ONRR), the Indian Energy Service Center (IESC) assisted with processing several dozen Communitization Agreements (CAs) for Fort Berthold and Uintah and Ouray (U&O) reservations. The IESC has pulled together a group of subject matter experts from BIA, BLM, and ONRR to work on the adjudication process to expedite the processing and approval of CAs. The IESC processed 92 CAs over the past two years for Fort Berthold, many of which were complex CAs. The IESC processed 29 CAs for U&O in just a couple of months. This has reduced the administrative burden, expedited the process, and cleared out some of the backlog of CAs so that royalty revenues can be distributed to beneficiaries consisting of Individual Indian Mineral Owners and Tribes.

**Impact:** The IESC was able to process the CAs for Fort Berthold and U&O that were pending. There were millions of dollars of royalties associated with the CAs that were processed. This ensures that royalties are distributed to beneficiaries. This reduces the time required to approve CAs and minimizes customer complaints. This will resolve concerns over beneficiaries receiving royalties in a timely manner and ensure that the Department of Interior (DOI) is meeting its trust responsibility.



### Office of Natural Resources Revenue Indian Energy Service Center Uintah and Ouray Lease Termination

**Action Taken:** The Indian Energy Service Center is reviewing 216 leases that are obsolete on the Uintah and Ouray (U&O) Reservation. It's important that these leases are terminated to eliminate obsolete information from the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM's) and the Office of Natural Resources Revenue's (ONRR's) systems and minimize time required to perform certain tasks. This also ensures accurate information is being stored in data systems. It is a lengthy process as it takes a lot of coordination with BLM and ONRR to review outstanding liabilities and with the Bureau of Indian Affairs to get letters sent to the company letting them know these leases have been terminated.

**Impact:** It is important to one of the larger companies at U&O to get the lease status updated so that they can have a "clean" lease sale. There have been some good conversations with BLM where they have said that this will increase accuracy of data in system, minimize errors, and reduce time of specific administrative tasks; thus, overall, reducing administrative burden. This action also reduces the obsolete data reference information in ONRR's system which increases accuracy.





## Burden Reduction Update 2019: Department of the Interior

### U.S. Geological Survey

#### [U.S. Geological Survey High Performance Computing, Expertise, and Consulting Services Save Processing and Analysis Time During the Kilauea Eruption](#)

**Action Taken:** The Core Science Systems' Advanced Research Computing (ARC) team offered critical behind-the-scenes support during the 2018 eruption of Kilauea. As U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) scientists were on the ground in Hawaii offering critical assessment and analysis of the volcanic eruption, ARC computer scientists were behind the scenes optimizing code and model runs to speed the release of information on the prediction of lava flows, critical for public safety.

After receiving a late-night phone call during the eruption, the ARC team gave USGS hazards scientists priority 24/7 reserved access to the USGS Yeti supercomputer to run models on-demand; however, even with dedicated 24/7 access to compute resources, the lava flow prediction models were still taking 27 hours to run, an unacceptable rate when monitoring active fissures and rapidly changing topography. After assessing the model's computational bottlenecks, ARC computer scientists reworked the code to fully utilize all available compute cores, resulting in run times under one minute! This allowed USGS scientists to quickly provide critical lava flow prediction information to emergency personnel during the event.

**Impact:** Gained 99.9% efficiency by decreasing turn-around time to under one minute, producing lava flow prediction maps 27 hours faster, and delivered critical data to emergency personnel. Volcano hazards researchers ran over 30,000 jobs, potentially saving hundreds of thousands of hours of processing time through model improvements and USGS Core Science Systems ARC expertise.



### U.S. Geological Survey Water Mission Area

#### [Water Mission Area Technical Policy Refresh](#)

**Action Taken:** The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) Water Mission Area (WMA) has recently begun an effort to review its roughly 1,000 technical "policy" memoranda that date back several decades. Historically, it was common for WMA policy memoranda to blend policy with procedure. This linkage often resulted in the need to update policy memos when technology changed. In addition, many of the WMA policies are no longer current because they do not meet Bureau or Departmental policy, do not ensure consistency, do not comply with WMA strategic direction, or are out of date because of recent organizational changes. The purpose of the review is to determine which of the Technical Policies are still active, identify primary "owners" from within the new WMA organizational structure, and refresh and reissue them, as appropriate. [Note: An "owner" is the office responsible for refreshing the policy and providing any technical documents that support the policy.]

As of March 31, 2019, the WMA has identified about 130 active policies (out of the nearly 1,000) and has assigned them to proposed owners. The WMA goal is to have owners work through a uniform process of developing new policies to ensure all stakeholders are considered, that policies contain only policy content, and that they are widely distributed and easily accessible. It is anticipated that the 130 active



## Burden Reduction Update 2019: Department of the Interior

policies memorandum will be further reduced to perhaps a couple dozen (or less) high-level topical policies that will be long lasting with minimal to no need to change with changing technology, will ensure consistency throughout the WMA, and are compliant with the WMA strategic direction. Several linked procedure documents to support policy will also be refreshed as needed which are expected to be updated as technology and needs change.

**Impact:** The number of policies will be reduced significantly, from several hundred, of which many are outdated, to perhaps a couple dozen. The small number of long-lasting policies will have incorporated stakeholder input, identified a cost/benefit of the policy, will ensure consistency throughout the WMA, Bureau and Department, and will be compliant with WMA strategic direction. The relatively small number of policies will also be accessible online and will be searchable using keywords.

Measures of success include:

1. The production of a relatively small number of high-level policy documents that are long-lasting, have incorporated stakeholder input, identified a cost/benefit of the policy, and ensure consistency throughout the WMA, Bureau, and Department, while being compliant with WMA strategic direction;
2. The policies have identified owners responsible for enforcement;
3. The policies are easily accessible online and are searchable by topic/keyword, and;
4. Policy-supporting procedural documents are kept current.



## Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement

### Bureau Headquarters Relocation from South Interior Building to Main Interior Building

**Action Taken:** On May 25, 2017, the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation (OSMRE) was notified that the 125 employees and functions comprising the Bureau Headquarters would be required to move out of the South Interior Building (SIB) no later than September 30, 2017. The SIB was home to the Headquarters since the Bureau's establishment in 1977 and preparing to move was no small undertaking. An aggressive and comprehensive all-hands move effort was initiated with OSMRE occupying its new Main Interior Building office space nearly 30 days ahead of schedule. The move was accomplished on budget, without any loss of accountable property, and with no employee injuries. The dedication and professionalism of the Bureau's workforce also ensured that the performance of OSMRE's mission -- required by the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act -- continued without interruption during the transition.

**Impact:** Immediate savings of approximately \$800,000 per year in rent.





## Burden Reduction Update 2019: Department of the Interior

### Office of the Special Trustee for American Indians

#### Reduction in Contract Costs Because of Converting to a New Trust Funds Accounting System

**Action Taken:** The Office of the Special Trustee for American Indians (OST) manages approximately \$5 billion in trust assets for Federally-recognized Tribes and Individual Indian beneficiaries. In February 2018, a contract was awarded to a new vendor to provide a commercial off-the-shelf trust fund accounting system. The previous vendor had provided this function for approximately the last twenty years.

The new contractor was awarded a ten-year, firm fixed price contract that will cost OST approximately \$47 million dollars over the next ten years. The previous contract for the prior ten years amounted to approximately \$180 million dollars. This change in contractor will result in a significant savings to OST over the next ten years of approximately \$133 million.

**Impact:** Savings of approximately \$133 million over the next ten years and a more robust TFAS system.



### Office of the Special Trustee for American Indians - Division of Trust Services

#### Reduce Transactional Call Center Workload

**Action Taken:** Within one year after the implementation of the Office of the Special Trustee for American Indian's (OST's) new Trust Funds Accounting System (TFAS), Indian trust beneficiaries will be provided with a modernized, customer-friendly, 24/7 digital/online experience that enables them to check their Individual Indian Money (IIM) account balance, review transaction history, receive funds, change their address, and review and print Quarterly Statements. In moving to this new self-service application, OST aims to substantially reduce the transactional workload from its call center so that employees are available to resolve more complex beneficiary inquiries. (Currently, all OST banking services are provided via a manual process – in person/walk-in, mail, or phone.)

For example, the OST Trust Beneficiary Call Center (TBCC) responds to approximately 2,800 Oil and Gas Royalty inquiries each month. Enabling the trust beneficiaries to use a self-service application to obtain this information could potentially save OST over \$330,000 per year. Additional annual cost savings may include:

- Eliminating the need for the TBCC to respond to just under 39,000 IIM account balance inquiries each year will save about \$382,000.
- Eliminating the need for the TBCC to resend over 1,300 Quarterly Statements each year will save over \$12,000.
- Eliminating the need for the TBCC to initiate 7,500 Address Changes each year will save almost \$74,000.

**Impact:** Possible annual cost savings of close to \$800,000.



## Burden Reduction Update 2019: Department of the Interior



### National Park Service, Accounting Operations Center

#### Agency Consolidated Deposit Reconciliation Report

**Action Taken:** The National Park Service (NPS) collects significant dollars each year from various sources such as donations, special use permits, and park entrance and recreation fees. In FY 2018, these collections totaled approximately \$500 million. Reconciling the roughly 185,000 deposit documents is an important task performed by staff at hundreds of field units. One of the challenges is that these funds come from many different sources and can be in the form of cash, check, credit card receipts, etc. The financial system is the single source that captures all these funds. Previously, park staff needed to run and format multiple reports from within the financial system to reconcile deposits against the various sources. In early 2017, staff from the Accounting Operations Center worked with park staff to develop a single consolidated report of deposits with key calculations, improved filtering, and built-in identification to eliminate the need for multiple reports. The report was completed spring 2017, followed by the delivery of updated deposit reconciliation training in June 2017. The new report

reduced the number of FTE hours required to complete deposit reconciliation from approximately 10,000 FTE hours per year to approximately 1,000 FTE hours per year.

*Consolidated deposit reporting,  
saving ~9,000 FTE hours per year.*

**Impact:** Approximately 9,000 FTE hours saved per year.



### Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement

#### ePermits

**Action Taken:** The Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement (BSEE) continues to streamline the permitting review process through implementation of electronic permitting and reporting modules (ePermits) in BSEE's Technical Information Management System Web system (TIMSWeb). The TIMSWeb ePermits modules allow BSEE to track and review the submission of permits, reports, and notifications and provide industry with access to monitor the review and approval of their submissions.

**Impact:** Implementation of ePermits converts regulatory paper processes into more efficient web-based systems that will reduce burdens on the operator and expedite the permitting process. Companies can submit and monitor permits electronically, opening the door for improved consistency, better work flow management, and reduced process time.



## Burden Reduction Update 2019: Department of the Interior



### Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement

#### [Blowout Preventer Systems and Well Control Revisions \(AA39\) \(83 FR 22128\)](#)

**Action Taken:** In keeping with the Executive Order and Secretary's Orders, the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement (BSEE) undertook a review of the 2016 Well Control Final Rule with a view toward the policy direction of encouraging energy exploration and production on the Outer Continental Shelf and reducing unnecessary regulatory burdens while ensuring that any such activity is safe and environmentally responsible. This rulemaking would revise current regulations that impact offshore oil and gas drilling, completions, workovers, and decommissioning activities. The proposed regulations would also address various issues that were identified during the implementation of the current Blowout Preventer (BOP) Systems and Well Control regulations, as well as numerous questions that have required substantial informal guidance from BSEE regarding the interpretation and application of the provisions. BSEE is in the process of preparing a final rulemaking.

**Impact:** The proposed rule would reduce the current paperwork requirements that impose a burden on BSEE and the oil and gas industry. This rulemaking is not final yet, therefore BSEE does not have final numbers on the reduction of burden. Examples of proposed regulatory changes with reductions include:

- **§ 250.428 What must I do in certain cementing and casing situations?**

Proposed § 250.428 would remove the requirement for operator to resubmit an Application for Permit to Drill (APD) in the event of planned mud losses, or remedial actions for inadequate cement jobs, if these circumstances are addressed in the original approved APD. This would reduce the time that BSEE engineers spend reviewing the resubmitted APDs. Reductions will be shown during the information collection renewal process.

- **§ 250.724 What are the real-time monitoring requirements?**

BSEE proposed to eliminate the requirement for operators to submit certification that they have a real-time monitoring plan that meets the specified criteria listed in the regulations. BSEE engineers would no longer need to review these plans.

- **§ 250.423 What are the requirements for casing and liner installation?**

The proposed rule reworded the requirement in a manner that would reduce the number of alternative procedure or equipment requests under “§ 250.141 May I ever use alternate procedures or equipment?” The proposed revisions would provide more flexibility to the operators in determining the appropriate time to engage lockdown mechanisms on casing and liners, therefore reducing the number of alternative compliance requests BSEE receives for review and approval. Final reductions will be shown during the information collection renewal process.

- **§ 250.292 What must the DWOP contain?**

The proposed rule would eliminate the detailed information required in the deepwater operations plans for free standing hybrid riser design, fabrication, installation, and load cases,



## Burden Reduction Update 2019: Department of the Interior

this information is already required by the relevant portions of the platform verification program. Actual reductions will be shown during the information collection renewal process.

- **§ 250.732 What are the independent third-party requirements for BOP systems and system components?**

BSEE proposed to eliminate the requirement for operators to request and submit for approval all relevant information to become a BSEE Approved Verification Organization (BAVO). Since the proposed rule would change the replace the requirement for operators to use a BAVO with a requirement for independent third-party verification. The current regulations require BSEE to approve independent companies or individuals to provide certain verifications. In addition, BSEE would need to develop and maintain a list of approved companies and individuals, which would be provided to the operators to use. This change would reduce burdens on BSEE while increasing flexibility for the operators.





## Department of Justice



## Burden Reduction Update 2019: Department of Justice

### **Justice Management Division, Office of the Chief Information Officer**

#### **Implementing Technologies to Reduce Repetitive Administrative Tasks #1**

**Action Taken:** During the period from January 2017 through March 2019, the Department of Justice (DOJ) Office of the Chief Information Officer implemented or expanded use of IT tools to reduce the number of manual IT support and management tasks. Examples include:

1. Implemented use of an automated password management tool that enables individual network users to perform self-service password reset through a sequence of security questions and confirmation of Personal Identity Verification credentials versus requiring Service Desk agents to reset passwords.
2. Increased use of automated discovery tools to perform a variety of account management tasks such as identifying user accounts no longer being used, permitting deactivation or closure of unused accounts and reducing security risks.

Each of these initiatives reduced or eliminated numerous manual work processes that required system administrators or other technical staff to perform manual processes to complete these tasks. The hours saved by implementing these tools has allowed IT staff to shift their focus to higher-value work in systems analysis, performance monitoring, and service management.

**Impact:** To be determined.



### **Justice Management Division, Office of the Chief Information Officer**

#### **Implementing Technologies to Reduce Repetitive Administrative Tasks #2**

**Action Taken:** During the period from March 2018 through May 2018, the Office of the Chief Information Officer automated the software inventory process of the enterprise software asset management program by leveraging the asset inventory capability of the Department's endpoint management tools. This initiative enables the Department Software Asset Manager to perform automated software inventory permitting rapid verification of widely used software for license deployment validation, management, and compliance.

This initiative eliminated labor-intensive software inventory by each component, and also eliminated the manual process of inventory reporting and reconciliation previously conducted using spreadsheets. The hours saved by implementing these tools enabled IT staff to shift their focus to higher-value work in active enterprise software asset management which led to identification of unused software that was reassigned within the Department, resulting in cost avoidance of over \$2.03 million.

*Implemented new technologies & identified unused software, avoiding costs of over \$2.03 million.*

**Impact:** Cost avoidance of \$2.03 million.



## Burden Reduction Update 2019: Department of Justice



### Justice Management Division, Finance Staff

#### **Reduce the Number of Reimbursable Agreements to Manage the Working Capital Fund More Effectively**

**Action Taken:** In FY 2018, DOJ transitioned its Working Capital Fund (WCF) to a new financial management system that provides better controls, but also allows us to reduce the burden of managing time-consuming reimbursable agreements by moving to a less cumbersome rate memoranda process. DOJ issued FY 2019 WCF Rate Memos for three of the four areas managed through the fund on November 14, 2018. In addition, the Justice Management Division Finance Staff hosted Rate Memo Working Sessions with the WCF customers. During March 2019, the FY 2019 initial customer bills based on the rate memos were processed for the first six months of FY 2019. Overall, each of the rate memos has 90 DOJ Customers that previously would have received a paper Reimbursable Agreement (RA) from the specific provider. Impact section below presents the number of RAs we believe will be eliminated with the rate memo implementation in FY 2019.

**Impact:** 450 fewer Reimbursable Agreements.



### Justice Management Division, Office of Acquisition Management

#### **Commercial Platforms Initiative**

**Action Taken:** The FY 2018 NDAA, Section 846, directed the General Services Administration (GSA) to establish a program to procure commercial products through commercial e-commerce portals. The program aims to modernize and streamline the commercial product buying experience and increase transparency into commercial item spend. GSA seeks agency volunteers for an “Initial Proof of Concept” to define requirements and demonstrate utility of approach for select commercial product subcategories. If selected, DOJ will utilize this initiative to decrease burden by moving commercial item transaction responsibility from Contracting Officers to Program Officials and executing Federal Acquisition Regulation Deviations to permit use of fewer contract clauses and streamlined policies and procedures. Agency participation was confirmed in 4th Quarter FY 2019.





## Burden Reduction Update 2019: Department of Justice

### Justice Management Division, Office of Acquisition Management Justice Acquisition Regulation Update

**Action Taken:** Justice Acquisition Regulation (JAR) was established to provide procurement regulations that supplement the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR), 48 Code of Federal Regulations, Chapter 1, DOJ. The JAR addresses areas where agency implementation is required by the FAR, or where DOJ policies and procedures exist that supplement FAR coverage and directly affect the contractual relationship between DOJ and potential or existing contractors. DOJ is revising the JAR to update and streamline agency procurement actions, align departmental guidance, and remove outdated and duplicative requirements. The regulatory update is included in the DOJ Unified Agenda for Fall 2019.





## Department of Labor



## Burden Reduction Update 2019: Department of Labor

### Mine Safety and Health Administration

#### Streamlining Enforcement

**Action Taken:** In the summer of 2018, the Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) announced plans to begin reorganizing its enforcement structure by geography rather than mined material, leading to a merging of the traditional lines between Coal and Metal/Nonmetal enforcement and an evolution toward a more unified MSHA.

#### *Reorganized mine safety enforcement structure, decreasing inspector travel time by 41%.*

MSHA launched the first stage of this effort in October 2018 by moving the jurisdiction of 90 mines to field offices that were geographically closer, saving inspectors hundreds of hours of travel time. During the first half of FY 2019 (October-March), MSHA inspectors spent 655 hours traveling to locations, a 41% reduction in travel time from the same period in FY 2018. To ensure that MSHA's consolidation of two programs into one unified enforcement structure with one Administrator is

implemented in accordance with MSHA policies and procedures, all inspectors have or will have received crossover training that includes 40 to 56 hours in the classroom and 24 hours of on-the-job training with an experienced inspector previously assigned to the mine. Enforcement supervisors and managers also received crossover training.

MSHA is preparing to implement the second stage of this evolution with two additional significant changes:

- Realigning jurisdictions for 117 additional mines to field offices that are geographically closer, reducing additional travel time for inspectors.
- Modifying the reporting structure of eight field offices and one duty station, which will then report to district offices that are much closer geographically.

**Impact:** 41% decrease in travel time (FY 2019 Q1–2 compared to FY 2018 Q1–2), freeing inspectors to spend more time ensuring the safety and health of miners.



### Occupational Safety and Health Administration, Appleton Area Office

#### Transitioning OSHA Complaint/Inspection Case Files to Paperless Files (E-Case Files)

**Action Taken:** During FY 2017 and 2018, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's (OSHA's) Chicago Region (Region V) piloted electronic case files and electronic complaint processing at the Appleton, WI Area Office (AO). Since the inception of the pilot, 850 complaints and 650 inspection case files have been processed electronically. The Appleton AO examined the components of a traditional paper-based case file. This structure was used to develop an analogous electronic record using already available software such as Adobe Acrobat Pro and Windows 10 laptops and



## Burden Reduction Update 2019: Department of Labor

tablets. The staff was able to combine an e-Inspection file into a single PDF document with bookmarks and a traditional Left/Right paper file layout. A policy and platform for storing, sharing, and archiving the electronic case file was developed along with written guidance, standard operating procedures, and a SharePoint site to host documentation regarding the initiative.

The transition to electronic case files and complaints is estimated to have saved \$2,500 per fiscal year in direct costs for the Appleton AO related to supplies, printing, shredding, shipping, and archiving. With 13 AOs in the Region, this would amount to \$32,500 in savings across the Region annually.

This process will allow Region V to shift a significant amount of administrative and paper processing work to higher-value mission work. Electronic case files are specifically constructed in a standardized manner, and this consistent format creates efficiencies in the case development process.

Conservatively, Region V estimates an approximate time savings realization of 30 minutes per case file. Electronic case files also create management efficiencies due to the ability to seamlessly utilize staff resources across widespread geographic locations. This capability was fully demonstrated during FY 2018. For example, the leadership team of the Appleton AO assumed responsibility for managerial oversight of Compliance Officers assigned and located in the Lansing, MI AO. E-Case Files allowed the management team in Appleton to assign work and seamlessly review all cases for personnel in the Lansing AO 400 miles away. Greater efficiency in data mining is another contributing factor in the estimated FTE hours saved. Searching through case files becomes less of a manual process, and keyword searches can be performed electronically on thousands of pages quickly and accurately. These efficiencies save an estimated 45 minutes for each Freedom of Information Act request processed within electronic case files versus paper case files. Region V estimates that it will be able to shift more than 6,000 annualized employee FTE hours to higher-value mission work as a direct result of moving to electronic case files.

**Impact:** \$2,500 per Office Annually/\$32,500 Annually in Region V and 6,000 FTE hours in Region V annually.



## Occupational Safety and Health Administration, Directorate of Technical Support and Emergency Management

### [\*\*Revisions to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's Blood Lead Laboratories Program\*\*](#)

**Action Taken:** Under the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's (OSHA's) general industry Lead Standard (29 CFR 1910.1025(j) (2) (iii)) and the construction Lead Standard (29 CFR 1926.62(j) (2) (iii)), impacted U.S. employers are required to use certified clinical laboratories for testing employee blood lead levels. In 1986 the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ended its licensing and proficiency testing program for clinical laboratories. As a result, OSHA established its own clinical laboratory proficiency recognition program to address this requirement. However, OSHA recently reviewed the elements of a newer blood lead laboratory monitoring program administered by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments,



## Burden Reduction Update 2019: Department of Labor

and determined that it constitutes the Federal government's legal requirements for laboratories performing human blood lead testing.

As a result, OSHA issued a memo entitled “[De Minimis] Violation Notices: Blood Laboratory Proficiency Testing and Approval” on October 1, 2018, ending OSHA’s recognition program, which was nearly identical to the HHS program and required laboratories analyzing blood lead under the two OSHA standards cited above to report nearly identical information to two Federal agencies. In addition to a reduction of burden on covered entities, OSHA is now able to shift approximately 90 FTE hours to higher-value work.

**Impact:** 90 FTE hours annually; Reduction of federal reporting burden on covered entities.



## Occupational Safety and Health Administration, Directorates of Standards and Guidance, Technical Support and Emergency Management, and Construction

### OSHA Regulatory Burden Reductions

**Action Taken:** The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has completed several regulatory actions that reduce costs and burden to employers and taxpayers by an estimated, based on the Final Economic Analyses, \$25.5 million per year at a 7% discount rate. These cost savings resulted from amending OSHA standards on Recordkeeping, Crane Operator Certification, Beryllium, and others. For example, amending the Recordkeeping standard rescinded the requirement for establishments with 250 or more employees to electronically submit information from OSHA Forms 300 and 301. OSHA determined that the rule benefits employee privacy by preventing routine government collection of information that may be quite sensitive. Additionally, OSHA has archived or deleted more than 50 interpretations of OSHA standards during this timeframe. Further, OSHA has issued new letters of interpretation that resulted in burden reduction, including a letter that excludes monorail cranes from the requirements of the crane standard.

These actions have also resulted in an estimated \$7.5 million in direct savings to OSHA through the elimination of costs associated with maintaining and enforcing these regulations, including the creation of a data reporting system, compliant with the Federal Information Security Management Act of 2002, which would have collected detailed data on injuries and illnesses.

**Impact:** \$25.5 million reduction of federal reporting burden on regulated community; \$7.5 million in direct agency costs.





## Burden Reduction Update 2019: Department of Labor

### **Office of Workers' Compensation Programs, Division of Federal Employees' Compensation**

#### **Focusing Federal Professional Claims Staff on High-Value Work**

**Action Taken:** To focus the efforts of federal professional claims staff on higher-value work, the Federal Employees' Compensation Act (FECA) program shifted the administrative work associated with reviewing and categorizing a significant amount of incoming mail to existing contract staff. By shifting the administrative work associated with mail processing to existing contract staff at no additional cost, the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs' (OWCP's) FECA program saved 7,900 hours of federal professional claims staff time over the course of nine months and will continue to reap this level of savings, which equates to approximately 10,500 hours annually. This allows professional staff to focus that time on value-added, decision-making activities.

**Impact:** 10,500 FTE hours.



### **Office of Workers' Compensation Programs, Division of Coal Mine Workers' Compensation (Black Lung Program)**

#### **Staffing Realignment in the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs' Black Lung Program Refocuses More Than 15,000 Employee Hours on Higher-Value Mission Work**

**Action Taken:** During FY 2017 and FY 2018, the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs' (OWCP's) Black Lung Program strategically realigned its workforce by backfilling more than ten administrative and other non-critical positions with claims examiners who can perform the full range of claims adjudication activities central to program mission, while at the same time transferring administrative work to contractor staff where possible. This allowed more employee time to be focused on high-value activities.

As a result of this realignment, OWCP's Black Lung Program shifted an estimated 15,000 annualized employee hours to higher-value mission work.

**Impact:** 15,000 FTE hours.



### **Office of Workers' Compensation Programs, Division of Coal Mine Workers' Compensation (Black Lung Program)**

#### **Centralization of OWCP's Black Lung Program's Case Creation, Printing and Mailing, and Call Intake Procedures**



## Burden Reduction Update 2019: Department of Labor

**Action Taken:** The Office of Workers' Compensation Programs' (OWCP's) Black Lung Program increased efficiency by centralizing several administrative functions and shifting services to allow claims examiners to perform higher-value work in FY 2017 and FY 2018. The Black Lung Program centralized its case creation function from seven district offices down to one, eliminating jurisdictional boundaries and distributing incoming claims equitably to district offices. This led to more effective use of contractor services and provided for an even work distribution amongst federal staff. The program also centralized printing and mailing functions from the eight district offices to one, through more efficient use of contractor resources. Previously, some printing and mailing services were provided by claims examiners. By shifting the work to contractors, those claims examiners were able to focus on higher-value claims work. Finally, the Black Lung Program centralized call intake functions to improve customer service, optimize productivity, and enhance overall efficiency.

More efficient and centralized use of contractor resources freed up claims examiners to provide higher-value services and led to an increase in production beginning in FY 2017 that continued into FY 2018. Specifically, in FY 2017, the Black Lung Program issued more than 7,000 decisions — the most in over a decade — and the program again achieved near-record productivity in FY 2018, issuing more than 6,600 decisions, the first year since 2011 when production outpaced claim receipts. Decisions issued in FY 2017 represented an 11% increase over FY 2016, while output in FY 2018 was 5% more than in FY 2016.

**Impact:** 11% increase in decision issuance.



## Employee Benefits Security Administration

### [Major Case Program – Efficient Enforcement](#)

**Action Taken:** The Employee Benefits Security Administration (EBSA) is responsible for protecting the public interest in nearly 5 million Employee Retirement Income Security Act (ERISA)-covered plans, which cover 150 million people and hold nearly \$10 trillion in assets. Compared to this vast universe of ERISA-covered arrangements, EBSA is very small. In total, it has just over 800 employees, including 375 investigators and 125 benefits advisors. With less than one investigator for approximately every 13,000 plans, EBSA is constantly searching for ways to maximize its impact with limited resources. EBSA's Major Case Program is one of the ways EBSA tries to have a large impact on ERISA compliance with limited resources. The program focuses on dedicating agency resources to the conduct of those investigations that have the greatest potential to impact large numbers of plans, participants, and beneficiaries, such as cases involving plan service providers and institutional fiduciaries. For example, rather than focus exclusively on plan-level investigations, EBSA looks for opportunities to correct violations that may involve hundreds or thousands of plans.



## Burden Reduction Update 2019: Department of Labor

The Major Case Program seeks to maximize the positive impact of EBSA's scarce resources on ERISA plan outcomes in a variety of ways:

- Careful targeting of cases likely to have the greatest potential impact on large numbers of plans, participants, and beneficiaries based on program criteria that include both monetary and non-monetary outcomes (e.g., systemic reforms in plan processes). Service-provider investigations are a particular priority because of the ability to obtain global corrections that span many plans.
- The preparation of specifically tailored written investigative plans for Major Cases with input and review from the national office as well as the field.
- The use of specialized teams and cross-regional investigations designed to more efficiently use investigative resources to conduct the more complex investigations that are at the heart of the Major Case Program.
- The development of performance metrics focused on the effectiveness and efficiency of EBSA's investigative efforts (i.e., maximizing recoveries per staff days).
- A requirement that Regional Directors estimate the expected value of their pipeline or inventory of investigations on an ongoing basis, so that they stay focused on maintaining an ongoing inventory of cases likely to generate large positive outcomes for plan participants.
- Prioritization of Major Case investigations for allocation of limited expert funding and litigation resources. In this way, EBSA allocates resources to the most egregious and impactful cases.

**Impact:** In FY 2018, EBSA spent 23% of its investigative time on Major Cases. The initiative recovered \$1.05 billion out of the agency's total recoveries of \$1.15 billion for the year. Monetary results per investigative staff day increased under the program from the average since the initiation of the Major Case initiative in FY 2014 until 3rd Quarter FY 2017 of \$16,604 to \$62,956 in FY 2018.



## Employee Benefits Security Administration

### [Employee Benefits Security Administration Employee Stock Ownership Plan Targeting](#)

**Action Taken:** The number of Employee Benefits Security Administration (EBSA) Employee Stock Ownership Plan (ESOP) investigations dropped from an average of 178 cases per fiscal year to 18 cases in FY 2018. This decrease is attributable to a change from targeting plan level to ESOP service provider cases to identify and correct systemic practices. Prior to this strategic approach, plan-level cases were often opened based on random audits. Often multiple plan-level cases would target the same service provider. The service provider approach has the effect of opening and targeting the most egregious cases. Many cases in this category require experts, so more effective targeting reduces expert funding requirements and fewer investigative resources to identify the most egregious violators. EBSA also developed in-house valuation experts to review ESOP valuations for potential problems.



## Burden Reduction Update 2019: Department of Labor

**Impact:** In FY 2017 and FY 2018, a team of five regional and national office experts conducted 23 (2017) and 24 (2018) preliminary valuation reviews, resulting in a cost savings of \$15,000 per review or \$705,000 total in consulting expert fees.



## Employee Benefits Security Administration

### Investigative Tools

#### Action Taken: Terminated Vested Participant Project Tools

The Employee Benefits Security Administration (EBSA) has created various tools to automate some of the common tasks undertaken during Terminated Vested Participant Investigations. The Annuity Benefit Calculator tool, released in 2016, calculates the net present value of the participants' future stream of benefits for the investigator. The Terminated Vested Participant Project Sampling tool, released in 2016, allows investigators to draw a statistical sample of terminated vested participants, whom they can then contact to ensure that they are aware of their eligibility for pension benefits. In addition to performing sampling functions, the tool helps verify the accuracy of data within the supplied list of participants by checking for invalid birthdates and Social Security numbers. Investigating a statistical sample of participants, as opposed to all participants, greatly reduces investigative burden while still allowing investigators to draw statistically valid conclusions about all terminated vested participants for that plan. The sampling tool itself further streamlines the process of pulling a stratified random sample without having to contact EBSA's statistical support staff. These tools, together with the training provided between 2017 and 2019, greatly reduce the time investigators need to analyze the data obtained during their investigations.

**Impact:** These tools were essential to the conduct of Terminated Vested Participant Project investigations in FY 2018, which recovered over \$800 million for plan participants and beneficiaries.



## Wage and Hour Division

### Field Operations Handbook Historical Insert and Revision Tracker

**Action Taken:** The Wage and Hour Division's (WHD's) 2,700-page Field Operations Handbook (FOH) is composed of agency guidance and procedures. After it was first issued in its present form in December 1955, the FOH has been updated via modifications called inserts and revisions approximately 2,400 times. All those records and their background materials, approximately 150 pages of records per update on average, were maintained entirely on paper and via paper processes located in a file room. The information contained in those files is and will continue to be essential in the development of new policies, when determining the history of a policy or interpretation, and responding to Freedom of Information Act requests. Not only was access to those files severely limited by their nature and location, but once one had access, searching through the paper records was time consuming.



## Burden Reduction Update 2019: Department of Labor

Throughout 2016, WHD conducted and completed a massive undertaking of modernizing and digitizing the FOH, which paved the way to do the same for its historical records.

In January 2017, WHD embarked on a project to modernize the FOH's historical records and to build a comprehensive, purely digital catalog. Over many months, the staff scanned every historical record and organized them in a SharePoint space, reviewed every FOH revision and insert, and cataloged each in an Excel document so that the recorded information might be sorted to best accommodate a researcher's needs. In 2018 and 2019, WHD performed Optical Character Recognition scans of every historical record, which renders text in digital documents searchable. Lastly, the staff conducted and completed a quality check of all data entry, added hyperlinks to the digital copies of all FOH historical documents to the Excel spreadsheet, granted access to appropriate users, and trained WHD and Office of the Solicitor staff on the FOH Historical Insert and Revision Tracker's (HIRT) proper use.

**Impact:** FOH HIRT allows staff to identify all responsive documents and immediately view and download digital, searchable copies of all pertinent historical records. Staff do not need to be physically present in the Frances Perkins Building to conduct this research — a significant gain for regional, remote, or teleworking staff — and WHD is no longer at risk of losing such critical information and context if the paper records are damaged or lost. FOH HIRT allows research to be more thorough, complete, and efficient.



## Wage and Hour Division

### Ideas Challenge

**Action Taken:** In 2018, the Wage and Hour Division (WHD) launched an ideas challenge to gather ideas from throughout the agency focused on ways to improve efficiency. The first winner suggested that for investigations in which no violations were found, WHD conduct the final conferences via phone instead of in person, saving resources in travel time and expenses. Another idea was to provide employers with links to electronic publications during enforcement actions and in all related correspondence instead of providing hard copies, which will not only save printing and postage costs but also reduce the need for costly storage space. WHD has already issued an internal guidance document setting out the new procedures.

**Impact:** Approximately \$750,000 savings annually in travel costs and expenses.



## Wage and Hour Division

### Automated Reporting



## Burden Reduction Update 2019: Department of Labor

**Action Taken:** Individual Wage and Hour Division (WHD) employees historically have pulled data onto their local computers from its existing internal enforcement database, then spent time processing that data in Excel spreadsheets. This means that hundreds of individuals were executing the same process multiple times per week, independently of each other. Using modernized business intelligence software, WHD's Data Team was able to design and automate reports that allowed users to obtain the same information they previously pulled manually. For example, a report that every district office manager was creating in Excel to manage the case load in their office is now automated. They now receive the report they need in their email inbox each week or on demand working with newly trained staff throughout the organization. WHD is in the process of opening up this automated reporting to more staff throughout the organization on its journey to full self-service data analytics.

**Impact:** Approximately \$3 million since 2017 in staff resource savings.

*Automated reporting, saving  
~\$3 million in staff resources.*



## Office of the Chief Financial Officer

### DOL-wide Program Inventory and Improper Payments Risk Assessment & Recapture Audit Cost-Benefit Analysis (Triennial Integrity Exercise)

**Action Taken:** The Office of the Chief Financial Officer (OCFO) simplified and streamlined the statutorily required Triennial Integrity Exercise to dramatically improve the accuracy and completeness of DOL reporting while providing DOL with a standard annual “program inventory,” an improvement over previous ad hoc inventories. By leveraging existing resources and reducing dedicated annual contractor FTE support from approximately 1.5 to 0.25 federal FTE, the reformed process reduced administrative burden and eliminated the need for at least \$1 million in contract support annually. The improved process will be implemented on a revolving annual basis. This will further reduce burden across DOL by decreasing training needs, reducing ramp-up times, and smoothing the level of burden, while significantly decreasing risk and expense related to the loss of institutional memory. Further, risk is lowered and strategic decision-making information is improved by ensuring waste, fraud, and abuse risk assessments are updated regularly, rather than in three-year snapshots. OCFO implemented the new process in May 2017.

**Impact:**

- Approximately 2,600 fewer FTE hours.
- 1.5 contractor FTE to 0.25 federal FTE support (annual).
- More than \$1,000,000 in cost savings.
- Annual review instead of three-year snapshot/Annual program inventory instead of ad hoc.





## Burden Reduction Update 2019: Department of Labor

### **Adjudicatory Boards (Administrative Review Board, Benefits Review Board, Employees' Compensation Appeals Board)**

#### **Streamlining of Process & Procedures by the Use of Technology and Automation**

**Action Taken:** During FY 2018 and FY 2019, the Adjudicatory Boards (referred to collectively as the Boards) implemented and adopted several higher-value technologies that replaced low-value processes, greatly improving ease of access to the Boards by stakeholders and enhancing the Boards' internal business functions and operations. These include the following:

- Establishment of the initial technological architecture for the implementation of mandated e-Filing and e-Service that will result in the reduction of mailing costs, and associated office operations hardware (e.g., copiers, fax) and consumables (e.g., buying and storage of paper, toner).
- Access delegation functionality in case management system to allow law firms to delegate electronic access to cases to other members of their organizations for the purposes of e-Filing and e-Service.
- The refinement of processes and procedures to reduce FTE time and paper usage. In order to gain efficiencies, the Boards were able to leverage existing Microsoft Office tools to develop a series of templates and custom scripts to circulate draft decisions in an electronic manner, thereby reducing the need to disseminate paper copies for comment among the Board members. Furthermore, automation processes were also implemented in the creation of routine letters and orders which allowed for the reassignment of this function from GS-13/14 attorney advisers to docket staff for eventual issuance to stakeholders.

**Impact:** \$1,112,979 in cost savings





# Department of State



## Burden Reduction Update 2019: Department of State

### Bureau of Consular Affairs

#### Repatriation Pilot

**Action Taken:** The Department of State (State) established a Repatriation Pilot Working Group to increase efficiencies, shifting the overseas adjudication function of routine passport renewal applications to domestic agencies. This shift enables efficiencies of scale due to the higher volumes of passport renewal applications processed domestically and increases the time available for Foreign Service Officers (FSO) and Locally Employed Staff (LE Staff) at U.S. embassies overseas to provide other mission critical services.

During the six-month pilot, an Embassy in the East Asian and Pacific Region reallocated 1,406 personnel hours (196 FSO hours and 1,210 LE Staff hours) from passport renewals to mission critical American Citizens Services (ACS) activities, to better serve U.S. citizens in the Embassy's location. As a result, this Embassy now offers emergency walk-in ACS services in the afternoon and provides a quicker turnaround for other passport issues and citizenship cases. Consular officers will be able to turn their attention to providing faster assistance to U.S. citizens in the event of emergencies abroad. The pilot Embassy recorded a reduction in mail delivery times by one to two days, and LE Staff are using the time saved to perform other required duties.

**Impact:** 1,406 personnel hours.



### Bureau of Consular Affairs

#### Automation of Validation Studies

**Action Taken:** In 2017, institutionalized a procedure for automating a validation study process that frequently took several weeks to obtain and then analyze the data. In 2015 and 2016, instituted a number of internal process improvements and negotiated an agreement to obtain a tool from another Federal agency that facilitated rapid, bulk export of data. As a result, in 2017, the office was able to reduce the time required to conduct these studies by 90%, therefore enabling State to significantly increase the number conducted in the future.

**Impact:** 58,500 personnel hours saved between January 2017 and March 2019. The number of records analyzed increased to more than 10 million per year since 2017, from 1.28 million in FY 2016.





## Burden Reduction Update 2019: Department of State

### Bureau of Consular Affairs

#### Data Analytics Advances

**Action Taken:** In 2017, the Bureau of Consular Affairs undertook a major project to overhaul and automate the Consular Overseas Data Collection survey (CODaC), which tracks how consular staff spend their time overseas doing various activities within the Consular Section. The previous survey was done manually and required a significant workload and multiple people to validate and analyze the data. Data was collected via PDF surveys to track times, which was cumbersome for overseas staff and resulted in hours of troubleshooting to resolve data deficiencies and anomalies in the reporting.

After the CODaC Modernization Working Group reviewed the entire CODaC process, editing the language and guidance for all aspects of the process, they automated the survey using a WordPress website on an internal Departmental shared platform. This change has already saved hundreds of hours of work for domestic and overseas staff. One of the most common and time intensive issues with the old CODaC was individuals completing the survey not answering all of the questions, requiring follow up with each individual for clarification. The CODaC online survey must be completed in entirety before they are able to submit the survey.

The working group also drafted guidance, a glossary, and an instructional video to eliminate the need for individual calls and webinars with posts. Finally, the team transferred the post reports from PowerPoint to Tableau, which can generate post reports from a drop-down list. This reduced delivery times from over six months to less than two weeks, a 97% reduction in processing time for reports.

**Impact:** 500 personnel hours.



### Bureau of Consular Affairs

#### Unliquidated Obligations Coordination

**Action Taken:** In FY 2018 the Bureau of Consular Affairs, Office of the Comptroller reformed its Unliquidated Obligations (ULO) monitoring and coordination process. At the start of the new fiscal year, the office developed a robust ULO monitoring process in conjunction with each bureau office and directorate. The process began with the implementation of the Contract Information Management System (CIMS), a contract monitoring and reporting tool that furthered the bureau's ability to identify and track high priority ULOs by consolidating data from internal Department systems to provide enhanced data analytics and visualization.

An obligation validation workflow allows the bureau to accurately track and report the status of all obligations. The office further improved its ULO monitoring process by conducting quarterly ULO validations, which increased the total number of obligations validated, reduced invalid obligations, and increased audit readiness. As a result of the newly implemented ULO process, the bureau did not receive any findings during the year-end ULO audit. The reorganization of the validation process through the use of CIMS resulted in a 60% reduction in time needed to process one validation round, saving approximately 21,600 FTE hours to-date.



## Burden Reduction Update 2019: Department of State

**Impact:** 60% reduction in time needed to complete task, 21,600 FTE hours saved.





## Department of Transportation



## Burden Reduction Update 2019: Department of Transportation

### Office of the Chief Information Officer

#### Information Technology Consolidations Yield Big Benefits for DOT

**Action Taken:** Throughout the course of the current administration, the Department of Transportation (DOT) has undertaken a shared services effort to consolidate duplicative IT systems. This led to increased efficiencies and standardization as well as significant cost avoidance. Here are some examples of DOT's recent successes:

- Wireless Contract Consolidation: DOT has consolidated 19 wireless plans into two DOT wireless contracts.
- Web Consolidation: DOT has consolidated the management of more than 30 websites into the Transportation.gov enterprise web content management platform. The platform now supports all parts of the Department (except for the Federal Aviation Administration and the Office of the Inspector General) as well as the cross-Departmental Permitting Dashboard website. *Consolidating websites improved efficiency of operations and maintenance and allowed DOT to retire duplicative web systems and several domains.*
- Enterprise License Agreement Contract Consolidation: DOT consolidated several separate enterprise license enrollments into one DOT enrollment. *The consolidation created efficiencies in contract management and allowed DOT to easily reallocate licenses within the Department.*
- Data Visualization Software Contract Consolidation: In FY 2018, DOT consolidated multiple data visualization software licenses from across the Department. As a result, *DOT increased the number of available licenses and negotiated a 30% discount for a three-year term.*
- Field Office Network Consolidation: It is common for different DOT organizations to occupy co-located field office space, and, historically, they have maintained independent IT networks. DOT has implemented an initiative to consolidate multiple circuits and servers into a single system that can manage data for each organization in the same facility. To date, DOT has consolidated 27 locations. *The circuit and server consolidation at the first 27 sites are expected to avoid approximately \$680,000 in costs over five years. The Office of the Chief Information Officer expects further costs avoidance as it consolidates additional sites.*

#### Impact:

- Cost avoidance (e.g., 30% discount for data visualization software, approximately \$595,000 saved over five years through circuit and server consolidations).
- Increased software standardization.
- Improved IT operations and maintenance efficiencies.
- Reduced duplicative web systems and domains.
- Additional contract management efficiencies.





## Department of the Treasury



## Burden Reduction Update 2019: Department of the Treasury

### Internal Revenue Service

#### Using Robotics to Reduce Critical Contracting Compliance Measures

**Action Taken:** Over the past two fiscal years the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) at the Department of the Treasury oversaw on average 11,000 acquisition transactions, totaling \$2.3 billion. The process of newly awarding contracts includes contracting officers making a contractor responsibility determination, in which the vendor is assessed for prohibited business behaviors, past bankruptcies, and other standards. The determination usually takes between two to four hours for each contract as contracting officers use a vendor's unique entity identifier in multiple databases to search for red flags, followed by generating a report.

In FY 2018 and FY 2019, IRS began piloting an automation tool with a small group of contracting officers and discovered that the new system, using a bot, was able to automatically scan all relevant databases and provide valuable information in a PDF in about two minutes. Contracting officers are still required to make the contractor responsibility determination, but the hours traditionally spent copying and pasting information from one database to another can now be used for more high-value work such as contract negotiations and relationship building with the vendor community. The shifting of this work is extremely significant and impactful in the pre-award phase.

The agency intends to roll out the new system to all 308 contracting officers by the end of June 2019.

**Impact:** Estimated more than 10,000 FTE hours after rollout.





## Department of Veterans Affairs



## Burden Reduction Update 2019: Department of Veterans Affairs

### Office of Enterprise Integration, Office of Policy and Interagency Coordination

**Eliminating Agency Specific Guidance (such as reducing internal agency guidance, memoranda, other policy documents HQs directs at bureaus, components, sub-offices)**

**Action Taken:** Since the beginning of the current Administration, the Office of Enterprise Integration (OEI), Office of Policy and Interagency Coordination (OPIC) in the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) took a comprehensive approach to the reduction and elimination of repetitive, unnecessary, or burdensome agency guidance. In conjunction with VA Central Office and Veterans Health Administration policy managers, OPIC has coordinated the rescission of 139 outdated or unnecessary policy documents to streamline dissemination of policy guidance, business management, and processes to sub-offices. First, OPIC chaired a Chief of Staff chartered Integrated Process Team (IPT) to review the process and procedures used to update or rescind policy documents to glean best business practices across the government and compare them to current practice. Second, the IPT developed and implemented recommendations to reduce or eliminate low-value work and incorporated these processes in its revised Directive 0999, Enterprise Directive Management, and corresponding Handbook 0999 which is in final stages of staff coordination. Finally, OPIC made significant improvements to the VA Publications Website to make it more user-friendly to leaders and staff attempting to conduct research on policy guidance. This process is ongoing, with additional improvements to the VA Publications Website occurring regularly. This reduced the time to create and publish policy documents as well as research policy for the Department by approximately 20%.

As a result of these efforts, VA has reduced the time to create, publish, and research policy documents by approximately 6240 hours and in so doing shifted those employee hours to higher-value mission work.

**Impact:** Estimated at 6,240 FTE hours.





# Environmental Protection Agency



## Burden Reduction Update 2019: Environmental Protection Agency

### Office of Human Resources

#### Consolidation of EPA's Employee Assistance Programs Improves Service and Reduces Staff by 90%

**Action Taken:** In FY 2018, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Office of Human Resources successfully consolidated the Agency's Employee Assistance Program (EAP) under a single contract. Until April 2018, EAP services were provided through 19 separate interagency agreements/contracts (contracts) to support all 10 EPA regions as well as other national programs. With respect to FTE support, administering the separate contracts required contracting and technical representative support in each geographic location. With respect to cost, the separate ordering vehicles cost EPA about \$360,000 annually and equated to an annual average price of about \$23 per employee. Additionally, prices for services ranged from approximately \$10 to \$28 per employee and types of services varied by contract.

To determine a better way of managing the EAP, the Office of Human Resources conducted internal benchmarking, conducted market research, developed a White Paper with their findings, and briefed EPA's five unions on the proposed contract consolidation. The consolidated contract acquisition strategy was determined to be feasible and less burdensome regarding FTE support and cost. The new agency-wide, consolidated contract was awarded on April 1, 2018 and is centrally managed by one contracting officer and one contract-level technical representative at EPA Headquarters. Additionally, the new contract features exhaustive and consistent levels of EAP services for all EPA employees nationwide and a flat fee per employee for counseling services. The new contract resulted in savings of over \$188,000 per year. Data from the start of the new contract demonstrates agency-wide use of 8.5% (and 6% more than previous usage), which suggests that EPA staff find the consolidated contract more useful.

#### Impact:

- \$188,000 annual cost savings.
- Reduction in administrative support from 20 to 2 employees.



### Region 9

#### New Electronic Permit Submittal System Replaces Outdated System and Avoids \$10 Million in One-Time Costs

**Action Taken:** Because of the high volume and public sensitivity to permitting actions, Region 9 previously maintained two Lotus Notes applications to manage air permit information. With EPA discontinuing use of the Lotus Notes, Region 9 needed a new system that would allow electronic exchange of data with state and local agencies and the publication of information on the web. Region 9 identified an EPA application developed for another purpose as a potentially suitable platform. It



## Burden Reduction Update 2019: Environmental Protection Agency

*Replaced an outdated electronic permitting system, avoiding \$10 million in one-time costs.*

then worked quickly to design the system, then collaborate with the software developer and EPA Headquarters to create, test, and deploy the application.

Region 9 successfully created a user-friendly data exchange system able to serve as a national database. In addition, the Region worked with other EPA offices on ways that the new application could be expanded to further augment the exchange of permitting information. Thanks to the Region's problem-solving skills, this new application comes at a significantly reduced cost versus a brand-new application. The brand-new application would have cost well over \$10 million. The seed money provided for this application began with \$28,000.

**Impact:** Avoided \$10 million cost.



### Cross-Agency (Headquarters and Regions)

*Stormwater Permits eReporting “Smart-Form” Provides Greater Certainty to Regulated Entities at Construction and Industrial Sites and Saves Costs*

**Action Taken:** EPA modernized an electronic reporting system required by more than 25,000 construction sites and 2,000 industrial sites across the country to apply for National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System stormwater permits. The new system provides improved tracking and monitoring of regulated facilities required to have a permit; a simplified, significantly improved process for permit applicants; reduced long-term operations and maintenance costs; and increased transparency for EPA and the American people.

The improvements include the addition of a “smart-form” that only shows questions that are applicable to the user. Web-based services automatically populate the form with relevant data from other data sources.

Another major improvement includes a feature to improve the accuracy of pollutant data to help the permittee to determine the correct monitoring requirements. When a facility operator identifies a discharge location on a map, a web service provides the waterbody name and the pollutants for which it is impaired. Since adding this new feature, Region 10 has reported that calls for help from permittees have dropped by 60% and data accuracy has increased by nearly 100% (from 50% to 98%).

The team also developed a public-facing portal that allows the public to conduct their own inquiries about water quality for lakes, rivers, and streams. The development and implementation of the new system resulted in a \$60,000 annual cost savings for EPA.

**Impact:** \$60,000 annual cost savings.



## Burden Reduction Update 2019: Environmental Protection Agency



### Region 7

#### EPA Region 7 Laboratory Streamlines Operations to Deliver High-Quality Services, Saving Costs for EPA and States

**Action Taken:** EPA's Region 7 Laboratory embraced the EPA Lean Management System (ELMS) to improve laboratory operations without sacrificing quality, while improving the timeliness to their customers.

Their most notable accomplishments include:

- Submitting all sample data on time with a standard 30-day turnaround in FY 2018.
- Achieving a savings of \$30,000 per year on sample container procurement.
- Streamlining data reviews so they are completed in less than 10 days.
- Using an ELMS flow board to track and revise over 80 SOPs within a two-month period.
- Initiating electronic data transmittals to reduce paper use by 600 boxes annually.
- Supporting a new extraction for semi-volatile compounds which requires no solvents and has lower detection limits.
- Delivering 100% of data generated by EPA to the customer on time with an average delivery of 12 days before the due date and with a standard delivery of 30 days.
- Partnering with the states in the region by analyzing quarterly water samples, saving the states over \$45,000 annually.

EPA's Region 7 Laboratory embraced the EPA Lean Management System to improve laboratory operations without sacrificing quality, while improving the timeliness to their customers.

The Laboratory used an ELMS flow board to track and revise over 80 SOPs within a two-month period. By improving its procedures, the Laboratory was able to submit all sample data on-time with a standard 30-day turn-around in Fiscal Year 2018, also achieving a savings of \$30,000 per year on sample container procurement. In addition, the Laboratory streamlined its data reviews so they are completed in less than 10 days, and now delivers 100% of data generated by EPA to the customer on time with an average delivery of 12 days before the due date and with a standard delivery of 30 days. By initiating electronic data transmittals, the Laboratory was able to reduce paper use by 600 boxes annually.

Other innovations adopted by the Laboratory included a new extraction for semi-volatile compounds which requires no solvents and has lower detection limits. The Laboratory is also partnering with the states in the region by analyzing quarterly water samples, saving the states over \$45,000 annually.

**Impact:** Annual savings of at least \$30,000 for EPA and \$45,000 for states.



## Burden Reduction Update 2019: Environmental Protection Agency



### Office of the Administrator

#### EPA Uses Lean Process Improvement to Reduce the New Permit Applications in the Backlog by over 50%

##### Action Taken:

EPA conducted a series of targeted, comprehensive Lean process improvement events aimed at streamlining the agency's key permitting processes – Clean Water Act (NPDES) and Safe Drinking Water Act (UIC), Title V (CAA), and New Source Review (NSR) programs.

To increase visibility on the agency's pending applications, last March, the agency launched a comprehensive electronic system to track the status of pending applications for new permits (NPDES, UIC, CAA, NSR, RCRA Subtitle C, and TSCA PCB approvals). This is the first time that the agency has had such a system.

Many permitting delays stem from incomplete information submitted to the agency. The UIC program developed a checklist to help permit writers ensure complete applications and guide applicants to submit correct paperwork. The NPDES program developed checklists to support application completeness review and developed workflow systems to streamline the internal review of permits.

Region 10's NPDES program completed authorization of Idaho's program and, starting in last July, began transferring permits to the state.

Each regional office developed a draft backlog elimination strategy for its respective NPDES program. The Office of Water expects to have a final plan by September 2019.

Over the past year, Regions have begun implementation of management tools to keep permits on track, such as visual management boards and huddle boards. All Regions now track applications for new permits in their monthly bowling charts and discuss progress as part of their monthly business reviews.

**Impact:** Between June 2018 and March 2019, EPA reduced the backlog of new permit applications by over 50%.





## General Services Administration



## Burden Reduction Update 2019: General Services Administration

### Office of the Chief Financial Officer

#### GSA Office of the Chief Financial Officer Targets 200,000 Hours of Workload Redeployed to Higher-Value Work

**Action Taken:** In 2018, the General Service Administration (GSA) Office of the Chief Financial Officer (OCFO) introduced its Eliminate, Optimize, and Automate (EOA) Initiative. Leaders charged all members of the workforce with identifying standards, processes, and tasks that could either be improved or eliminated. As a result, GSA OCFO and its business partners have identified more than 230,000 annualized hours of GSA-wide workload that can be redeployed to higher-value work, including emerging partner needs in analytics, planning, and reporting.

GSA's Robotic Process Automation (RPA) program is a critical component of the EOA Initiative, representing roughly 170,000 of 230,000 hours. GSA currently has 16 bots fully implemented, delivering approximately 15 FTE of annualized capacity across GSA. The program is on track to deploy 25 bots by the end of the fiscal year for partners throughout GSA. GSA OCFO is also leading the launch of a government-wide Community of Practice focused on helping other Federal organizations develop or improve their RPA capabilities.

Finally, OCFO is working to expand the EOA initiative to include all administrative (CXO) functions within GSA, while launching a Version 2.0 within OCFO.

#### Impact:

- Annualized Hours Identified for Transitioning from Low-Value to High-Value Services: 230,000.
- Total Hours Implemented to Date: 70,000.
- Estimated Capacity Created: \$4,900,000.



### Public Buildings Service

#### Reimbursable Work Authorization Program Review

**Action Taken:** The Public Buildings Service (PBS) conducted an extensive review of the Reimbursable Work Authorization (RWA) program to identify efficiencies in the program.

GSA has undertaken numerous initiatives to improve efficiency; below are a few of the significant initiatives as a part of the overall Fee Reform initiative that are currently underway:

- Implementation of an “Express Menu” to create cost, requirements development, and time efficiencies for the delivery of under-the-prospectus threshold (about \$3 million) projects:
  - Proactive pre-priced construction items
  - GSA’s highest volume of recurring items
  - Non-complex, lower-funded items
  - “Express” delivery time, annual costs, upfront requirements development
  - All GSA offices will commit to acquiring the over 300-line items developed



## Burden Reduction Update 2019: General Services Administration

The Express Menu is scheduled for completion in FY 2019 and full implementation will occur in FY 2020.

**Impact:** Transitioning from paper to electronic work requests: \$5 million in labor savings.



## Public Buildings Service

### Lease Cost Avoidance Plan Implementation

**Action Taken:** The Public Buildings Service (PBS) is focused on achieving taxpayer savings by avoiding increased PBS lease costs through the timely replacement of expiring leases. The Lease Cost Avoidance Plan (LCAP) is GSA's plan to achieve billions in cost avoidance for the GSA Rental of Space account over the life of leases that become effective through FY 2023 (six-year goal, beginning in FY 2018). GSA's current leasing portfolio consists of more than 8,000 leases equating to more than 187 million rentable square feet of space, with 66% of these leases expiring within the next five years. GSA is investing \$34 million in a combination of Government and contract personnel to implement this high value, high return initiative.

- Evaluating lease workload by region;
- Optimize the mix of personnel resources to most effectively execute the LCAP;
- Identify priority leases for action to ensure on time replacement of expiring leases or backfill of vacant Federal or leased space.

*Replaced expiring leases,  
avoiding \$1.4 billion in lease  
costs.*

**Impact:** \$1.4 billion in GSA lease cost avoidance through March 2019 over the 15029 year lease term.

Note: these cost avoidance calculations do not include move and replication costs.



## General Services Administration

### Regulated Utilities Process Improvement Project

**Action Taken:** Regulated utility companies are the sole providers of utility services in their respective jurisdictions and utilize rates established by State regulatory bodies. Nevertheless, the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) requires agencies to seek to enter into contracts using FAR procedures for all regulated utility services and, if a regulated utility refuses to sign a contract, to follow and document numerous steps to demonstrate that the agency has attempted to enter into a contract. These steps added no value to the process and resulted in the creation of unnecessary administrative documentation. GSA sought and obtained a deviation from the requirement to enter into a contract for regulated utility services using FAR procedures, citing statute and Government Accountability



## Burden Reduction Update 2019: General Services Administration

Office opinions that allow recording of utility obligations upon presentation of a valid invoice without the need for a FAR based contract.

GSA signed the regulated utilities deviation on March 8, 2019, and subsequently issued streamlined procedures for obtaining and administering regulated utilities services. These procedures allow points of contact throughout GSA to enter into, modify, and terminate regulated utility accounts using a utility's own procedures, leveraging GSA's Area-Wide Contracts and GSA's Federal Shared Services Provider, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, which receives and pays utility invoices on behalf of GSA.

**Impact:** 26,000 hours per year. Equivalent of approximately 13 GS-12 (step 5) FTE/\$1.6 million per year (inclusive of salaries and benefits) which have been redeployed to other GSA Acquisition mission areas.





# National Aeronautics and Space Administration



## Burden Reduction Update 2019: National Aeronautics and Space Administration

### National Aeronautics and Space Administration

#### Information Technology

**Action Taken:** Identify and implement a suite of common collaboration tools for employees. Consolidating various SharePoint collaboration environment instances across the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) to achieve a cost avoidance of around \$7 million per year which will be re-invested in other critical areas, such as upgrades to cyber-security. Strengthened NASA's cyber-security posture by adopting the National Institute of Standards and Technology risk-based framework and aligning all IT security projects, investments, and services with this framework. Lastly, consolidated multiple, distributed network operation centers into a consolidated capability.

**Impact:** Cost avoidance of around \$7 million per year.



### National Aeronautics and Space Administration

#### Procurement

**Action Taken:** Developed and issued guidance on single award Indefinite Delivery/Indefinite Quantity contracts and issuing task orders, resulting in the reduction of the volume of transactions and fewer incremental funding actions. Utilizing these new tools and processes resulted in a 20% reduction in procurement lead time, freeing up procurement staff to perform additional high-value work.

**Impact:** 20% reduction in procurement lead time.



### National Aeronautics and Space Administration

#### Human Capital

**Action Taken:** Launched supervisor curriculum (collection of learning resources books, videos, online courses, and instructor-led courses) for NASA supervisors and anyone interested in supervision. This is helping new supervisors transition their focus from being technical experts to competent managers. The added focus on supervisors also ensures that managers/supervisors are supporting new employees and new supervisors as needed to successfully perform their duties.





## Burden Reduction Update 2019: National Aeronautics and Space Administration

### National Aeronautics and Space Administration

#### Facilities

**Action Taken:** Incentivize divestments through an expansion of demolition and leasing. Fully consider leveraging of other agencies for construction and demolition management.





National Science Foundation



## Burden Reduction Update 2019: National Science Foundation

### National Science Foundation

#### Automated Monthly Google Analytics-Statistical Reports for NSF Webmasters

**Action Taken:** Automated the monthly Google analytics reporting of web statistics, eliminating the need to manually create monthly reports by each webmaster throughout the National Science Foundation (NSF). The monthly reports track web trends, bounce rates, information about visitors, and traffic flow of pages.

Implementing the technological tool reduced a repetitive administrative task, eliminating an administrative burden for the NSF webmasters. Further, the automated reports created a time efficiency. Webmasters can now spend more time analyzing the data and making required adjustments.

**Impact:** 700 FTE hours saved annually.



### National Science Foundation

#### NSF PrintWise Program

**Action Taken:** In August 2017, NSF implemented a managed print services solution, NSF PrintWise, to greatly reduce overall printing cost via the active management of agency printing. The rollout of NSF's new and improved print environment coincided with the move of the NSF headquarters to Alexandria, VA. NSF PrintWise is a streamlined and centralized printing environment that is governed by agency-wide printing policies, business rules, and the centralized purchasing of printers, copiers, scanners, faxes, printer supplies, and device maintenance by a single division within NSF.

NSF desired to include equipment, services, and personnel in the development and deployment of its strategies to foster innovation, reduce spending, and strengthen the communities in which we operate.

**Impact:**

- Reduction from about 350 to 166 multi-function devices (MFDs) in service at agency.
- Increase in ratio of staff to MFDs and other printing devices from about 1:1 to 15:1.
- Reduction from more than 15 to 2 different print device manufacturers.
- Reduction from more than 160 to 6 print device models.





## Burden Reduction Update 2019: National Science Foundation

### National Science Foundation

#### Implementation of Treasury's Invoice Processing Platform Shared Services Offering

**Action Taken:** NSF implemented the Treasury Invoice Processing Platform (IPP) solution as a shared service in FY 2017. The primary burden reduction-related savings involved in IPP are in the elimination of NSF invoice entry and the reduction of paper, transaction time, and communications that have become more efficient with the implementation of electronic invoicing. We estimate that each year we will have a cost savings of roughly \$92,000. This was calculated by evaluating the time spent by the individuals involved in the invoice approval and payment process before and after IPP was implemented.

**Impact:** \$92,000 annually based on FTE hours saved.



### National Science Foundation

#### Enterprise Reporting Principal Investigators with Overdue Project Reports

**Action Taken:** Per user requirements, the DIS Enterprise Reporting team implemented a new report in November 2018 that identifies Pending Proposals where the Principal Investigator (PI) has overdue project report(s) on other proposals. This condition disallows the award of any pending proposal until the overdue project report(s) are submitted and approved. Prior to the introduction of this report, Program Officers (POs) would have to manually identify the conflicts and resolve the issue. Now they can easily run the report and immediately identify the conflict.

**Impact:** 1,600 FTE work hours saved annually by program officers (2 hours each x 800 NSF POs).



### National Science Foundation

#### Suggest Reviewer Dashboard

**Action Taken:** In August 2018, NSF implemented an artificial intelligence (AI) solution that identifies and suggests potential reviewers for proposals based upon similarity of previous submitted

proposals. This tool, the Suggest Reviewer Dashboard, reduces the need for Program Officers to manually search for reviewers. The tool matches new proposals to submitted proposals based on project summary, project description, and proposal title to identify potential reviewers for similar proposals to be reviewed and provides details about suggested

*Implemented an AI solution to identify proposal reviewers, saving 14,384 FTE hours per year.*



## Burden Reduction Update 2019: National Science Foundation

reviewers. In December 2018, NSF enhanced the AI algorithm to add basic Conflict of Interest checks which identify potential reviewers who may have a conflict of interest and are therefore unable to conduct the proposal review.

**Impact:** 14,384 FTE work hours saved annually by program officers (7,192 proposals submitted using the tool and reviewed x 2 hours per proposal).



## National Science Foundation

### Local Travel Reimbursement

**Action Taken:** The Local Travel Reimbursement site, implemented in June 2018, was created by the Office of Budget, Finance, & Award Management's Division of Financial Management (BFA/DFM) to provide an NSF-tailored version of the form OF 1164 used to claim reimbursement for local travel expenditures while on official NSF business. The form allows for the submission and processing of reimbursements, including automating the approvals by Administrative Managers and BFA/DFM. Staff and panelists requesting reimbursements no longer have to submit a paper OF 1164 along with physical receipts to DFM's physical mailbox. The site has eliminated the issue of lost submissions and reduced the number of rejected submissions due to incorrect codes or missing receipts. All the submissions are consolidated in one repository and forms and documentation are expired on an automatic records retention policy no longer requiring DFM staff to manually handle the task.

**Impact:** 1,194 FTE work hours saved annually by staff/panelists (number of local travel reimbursements annually x 1 hour each (estimate)).



## National Science Foundation

### Separation Clearance

**Action Taken:** Implemented September 2018 SharePoint site to automate Form 362 and streamline the NSF Separation Clearance process. The SharePoint solution allows for more efficient and transparent tracking of the separation process, equipping administrative staff and service offices with the information necessary to follow up with employees prior to departure. Previously, departing staff were tasked with visiting each service office to complete all the necessary departure actions prior to their exit. The site allows for early notification to the service office so they may complete tasks prior to staff departure. The site has improved clearance completion percentage since being implemented and allows for proper auditing and tracking of metrics.

**Impact:** 424 FTE work hours saved annually by Administrative Managers (212 separation clearance forms processed annually x 2 hours each (estimate)).



## Office of Management and Budget



## Burden Reduction Update 2019: Office of Management and Budget

### Office of Federal Financial Management

#### [Agencies Take Advantage of Improper Payment Relief from Reporting Requirements Allowing an Estimated \\$370,000 and 3,000 Employee Hours Annually for Relocation to Higher-Value Mission Work](#)

**Action Taken:** The Office of Management and Budget (OMB), OMB Circular A-123 Appendix C, “Requirements for Payment Integrity Improvements,” provides the eligibility requirements permitting agencies to request relief from reporting programs that fall below the statutory threshold of being classified as programs susceptible to significant improper payments. Across the government, at least 29 programs were eligible for relief, and relief was requested by six agencies for a total of ten programs. Of the reliefs granted, there was an estimated annual savings of approximately \$370,000 and 3,000 employee hours that could be reallocated to higher-value mission work.

**Impact:** \$370,000 and 3,000 FTE hours annually



### Office of the Federal Chief Information Officer

#### [Elimination of the E-Government Annual Report](#)

**Action Taken:** Since the passage of the E-Government Act of 2002, OMB has been required to submit an annual report to Congress on agency technology program activities that are antiquated and not aligned to modern private sector operations. These requirements are extremely burdensome on both OMB and CFO Act agencies, requiring tens of hours of FTE work each year by agencies. For example, the FY 2016 Report was 44 pages long, with a lengthy 25-page appendix. In addition, the implementation requirements within the Act are nearly 20 years old and largely outdated, serving little use to agencies, Congress, or the general public. More importantly, OMB and agencies put greater priority on implementing more recent and applicable statutory requirements, such as those found in the Federal Information Technology Acquisition Reform Act or the Federal Information Security Management Act.

This year, OMB stopped agencies from reporting any of these legacy program activities, instead sticking with the Trump Administration’s commitment to shift agencies from low-value to high-value work. Instead, OMB submitted a two-page letter to Congress that indicated that the requirements of the Report were being sufficiently met, but that, more importantly, OMB looked forward to working with Congress to update OMB authorities and agency priorities regarding technology service delivery, and to satisfy any agency reporting through digital mechanisms. This has been received positively by OMB leadership, agencies, and Congress. More progress will come over the next year, during the bill drafting process.



## Burden Reduction Update 2019: Office of Management and Budget

### Impact:

FY17 Report Stages	FY17 Report Dates	OFCIO Estimated Hours of Work
Updating instructions, agency points of contact, etc.	9/1/17 – 10/2/17	20
MAX Collect exercise prep	9/1/17 – 10/2/17	25
Agency Submission Period	10/2/17 – 11/13/17	10
Review of Submissions	11/13/17 – 11/17/17	15
Drafting Report	11/20/17 – 1/5/18	50
LRM review period	1/16/18 – 1/23/18	10
CATS	1/29/18 – 3/1/18	20
Total Hours	9/1/17 – 3/1/18	150

FY17 Agency Submission Period	10/2/17 – 11/13/17 estimations collected from 3 agencies	Estimated Hours of Work
Total Hours	Compile and validate responses including Senior Executive Service (SES) involvement, HQ review, HQ clearance	107
Total Hours Average		36

FY17 Agency Report Collection Stage Agency Submission Period	FY17 Report Dates	Estimated Hours of Work
General Services Administration	10/2/17 – 11/13/17	46



## Burden Reduction Update 2019: Office of Management and Budget

Department of Justice	Compile and validate responses, HQ review, HQ clearance	25
Department of the Treasury	Compile and validate responses, HQ review, HQ clearance	36
Total Hours		107
Total Hours Average		36





# Office of Personnel Management



## Burden Reduction Update 2019: Office of Personnel Management

### National Background Investigations Bureau, Federal Investigative Records Enterprise, Automated Federal Leads Center

#### NBIB's Automated Record Checks Shifts 28,064 Employee Hours to Higher-Value Work

**Action Taken:** As part of the background investigations process, the National Background Investigations Bureau (NBIB) conducts 2.5 million criminal history record checks per year. In FY 2018, NBIB has improved the automation of its criminal history checks by instituting a secure automated records check (ARC) capability. The ARC capability allows NBIB to automatically query criminal history data from the National Law Enforcement Telecommunications System (NLETS) and provides search results without human intervention. The ARC NLETS capability replaces a heavily manual process, and also facilitates the automatic completion of search requests where results indicate that no record of criminal history data is found. The ARC NLETS capability has helped to 'auto complete' 222,356 queries in Q2 FY 2019, and 673,550 record queries since inception. This capability has generated savings of 9,264 FTE hours in Q2 FY 2019, and 28,064 FTE hours since inception. Personnel that were completing these actions have been moved to higher-value work such as processing cases where the search results indicated that potential criminal history exists.

**Impact:** 28,064 FTE hours shifted.





## Small Business Administration



## Burden Reduction Update 2019: Small Business Administration

### Small Business Administration

#### [Disaster Credit Management System 2.0](#)

**Action Taken:** The Small Business Administration (SBA) has implemented the Disaster Credit Management System (DCMS) 2.0 for loan application processing, which replaces the legacy DCMS 1.0 system. The new system streamlined processes by maximizing the impacts of modern technology on the SBA business processes. New system functionality has increased the ability of loan specialists to process more loans and has improved workload management.

**Impact:** The SBA has increased the processing bandwidth for disaster application processes, increasing up to an average of six loans per loan specialist under DCMS 2.0 for the SBA's response to the California Wildfire declaration. In comparison, under DCMS 1.0, loan specialists processed an average of three loans per loan specialist per day. This new system doubled the amount of disaster loan applications processed.



### Office of the Chief Information Officer and Office of Disaster Assistance

#### [Virtual Desktop Cloud](#)

**Action Taken:** The SBA's Office of the Chief Information Officer partnered with the Office of Disaster Assistance to support technology requirements resulting from the addition of 5,000 surge employees during the response to Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria.

**Impact:** The SBA configured a Virtual Desktop Cloud, which helped the SBA avoid approximately \$350,000 in hardware costs, and the cloud technology significantly reduced end-user provisioning time and enabled employees to work from home. This action further reduced the facility footprint and contributed to cost avoidance.



### Office of the Chief Information Officer and Office of Disaster Assistance

#### [Online Training Utilizing Skype](#)

**Action Taken:** The SBA's Office of the Chief Information Officer partnered with the Office of Disaster Assistance to leverage Skype (Unified Communications Software) for online training in lieu of on-site training resulting in significant travel costs reduction for 100 Loan Verifiers.

**Impact:** Skype for Business helped the SBA avoid approximately \$194,000 in travel to include airfare and hotel costs, enabling Loan Verification training for 100 attendees. This action further reduced the need for additional logistical resources and contributed to cost avoidance.



**Social Security Administration**



## Burden Reduction Update 2019: Social Security Administration

### Social Security Administration

#### Agency Policy Streamlining

**Action Taken:** During FY 2018 and FY 2019, we have taken a comprehensive approach to shift from low-value to high-value work by streamlining agency policies. The Policy Operations Manual System (POMS) is our official vehicle for issuing program instructions. The program instructions included in POMS are derived from legislation, regulations, court decisions, and system, policy, or procedural changes. We are reviewing and updating nearly 500 sections of POMS related to benefit payments and debt collection over a three-year recurring cycle. As of March 2019, we have updated and published 212 POMS sections and removed 58 obsolete sections. We developed 68 new International Direct Deposit policies and 107 other policies are under review.

**Impact:** Elimination of 58 obsolete policies and/or procedures.



### Social Security Administration

#### Improper Payments Automation Efforts

**Action Taken:** During FY 2017-2019, we have taken a comprehensive approach to utilizing process automation to help improve payment accuracy and reduce agency burden.

##### Social Security Electronic Remittance System (SERS)

In FY 2018, we enhanced SERS for programmatic debt, which allows the public to make payments via credit card or check for debt owed from the Old-Age, Survivors, and Disability Insurance and the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) programs in our field offices. Prior to this enhancement, SERS allowed for the collection of payment for administrative debts. Some examples include: copy of an electronic folder, copy of paper folder, third-party manual Social Security number verification, Regional Office certification, record extract, and detailed earnings query.

*Enhanced remittance system, collecting \$127,265,180 in program debt.*

##### MyWage Report (myWR)

Changes in a person's work and wages are a leading cause of improper payments in the Disability Insurance (DI) and SSI programs. Currently, we use several sources to verify wage amounts, including pay stubs submitted by beneficiaries, annual earnings data from the IRS, and payroll information from The Work Number. However, verifying wages is a manual process, and we continue to rely on beneficiaries to self-report wages. In FY 2017, we implemented an online tool, myWR, which allows DI beneficiaries and SSI recipients to report their earnings electronically on computers, mobile devices, and smartphones through "my Social Security". Representative payees and SSI deemors (e.g., an ineligible spouse or parent living with the SSI recipient) can also use myWR to report earnings electronically.



## Burden Reduction Update 2019: Social Security Administration

### **Impact:**

- SERS – Q2 FY 2019, we have collected \$127,265,180 in program debt.
- myWR – Since the implementation of myWR, manual inputs reduced by over 85,000 through March 2019.





## U.S. Agency for International Development



## Burden Reduction Update 2019: U.S. Agency for International Development

### Bureau for Management, Office of the Chief Information Officer

#### Automation of the Information-Technology Service-Management Processes (Implementing Technologies to Reduce Repetitive Administrative Tasks)

**Action Taken:** U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) has begun to leverage the ServiceNow platform to streamline and automate processes that previously required a hierarchy of manual tasks. ServiceNow is a cloud-computing-based application that the Agency uses to manage and automate workflows for delivering a variety of IT services. Since the Agency implemented ServiceNow, the automation has resulted in a redirection of FTE hours to higher-value work. As part of service-delivery workflows, IT support staff used to submit approximately 30 change requests per month that involved their attendance at a series of meetings to discuss how to move the change requests along through the process. Examples of change requests include “I need a server replaced,” “I need access to an application for some new staff,” or “I need hot fix patches applied to a database.” The ServiceNow capabilities completely automate the process, which will result in a significant time savings from the point a customer submits an IT service request to when it is implemented and operational. USAID completed this initiative in February 2019 and estimates that the Agency will redirect an additional 440 FTE hours to high-value work over the rest of the fiscal year.

**Impact:** 110 FTE hours since February 2019 shifted to high-value work (Total FTE hours for FY 2019 will be 440 (February 2019-September 2019)).



### Office of Human Capital and Talent Management

#### Reform of Performance Management and ePerformance

**Action Taken:** In April 2018, USAID rolled out a new performance management system for our Foreign Service called Employee Performance and Development (EP&D). The new system separates EP&D from the Foreign Service promotion process so employees can more easily focus on performance and development, not solely promotion. USAID released a new, cloud-based tool called ePerformance, the first at the Agency for performance management. The Agency will extend this to other employment categories. The Agency also rolled out, refined, and streamlined a new tool to support the promotion process. These combined developments reduce the time wasted on ineffective and labor-intensive processes, while simultaneously adding value and meaning to performance and promotion processes.

Users, supervisors, and managers can now use ePerformance to 1) view upcoming due dates; 2) access and sign required forms; and, 3) track progress of forms in real time. The ePerformance platform:

- Brings everything for performance management together in one convenient place, including electronic forms and instructions;

*Reformed Foreign Service performance management, saving an estimated 52,798 FTE hours per year.*



## Burden Reduction Update 2019: U.S. Agency for International Development

- Provides easy access to data for Executive Officers and Administrative Management Services Officers, who will be able to track tasks throughout the year, view reports, and update Rating Officials through a dashboard designed for administrators; and
- Supports accountability for employees and Rating Officials through automatic reminders and form-routing.

USAID estimates savings of 52,789 FTE hours, or 1,320 FTE weeks of time, from Performance Boards, Appraisal Committee Members, Rating Officials, and Foreign Service employees, between the old and new performance management systems. Our employees can now spend these hours on our core mission: supporting local partners on their Journeys to Self-Reliance.

**Impact:** 52,798 FTE hours per year (estimated) shifted to high-value work.



## Office of Human Capital and Talent Management

### Automation for the Assignment Process for the Foreign Service

**Action Taken:** As a result of a current-state assessment in 2015, USAID completely redesigned an ineffective, labor-intensive, assignment process for the Foreign Service. The Agency launched two tools: Interactive Bidding, to facilitate bidding and selection (first released in August 2018), and Getting to Post (G2P), for facilitating a Foreign Service Officer's reassignment to the next post (first released in January 2018). The new Interactive Bidding tool brings together for the first time all bidding-related information, including post-specific information on schools, medical facilities, and the different allowances. The tool also makes it easy to sort, filter, and select positions online and communicate with the relevant points of contact. Foreign Service Officers placed 406 bids with this tool in the three-week Major Listing in October 2018. The G2P tool reduces the time it takes to issue an assignment cable, streamlines the assignment cable process, and enables greater transparency to track progress and approval. The tool collects all the needed information to create an assignment cable up front so there is less back and forth. Before the G2P tool, Foreign Service Officers would have to complete multiple forms, and the typical time to process a cable was three months — G2P has reduced that to 21 days.

**Impact:** Saved 60,237 process days since January 2018.



## Office of Human Capital and Talent Management

### Human Resources Contact Center

**Action Taken:** As a result of a current-state assessment in 2015, USAID instituted a Tier 1 contact center for HR support in June 2016, which allows for a small number of dedicated HR generalists to respond to routine inquiries and to escalate only complex cases to HR specialists. This allows HR



## Burden Reduction Update 2019: U.S. Agency for International Development

specialists to dedicate their time to high-value work. From January 2017 through March 2019, the HR Contact Center managed more than 56,000 inquiries, and resolved 24% on its own — which thereby reduced the workload on others — and did so with an average customer survey rating of 4.5 out of 5. The Contact Center has handled more than 10,000 calls since January 2017, an average of 400 a month. The average customer hold time for customers is under one minute.

**Impact:** 6,700 FTE hours since January 2017 shifted to high-value work.



## Bureau for Management, Office of Management Services

### [Reforming USAID's Travel Processes](#)

**Action Taken:** In 2018, USAID performed a Business-Process Review of the Agency's travel-authorization (TA) processes and implemented several recommendations to reform the policy for reviewing TA, which streamlined the process and reduced redundant roles for staff from the Bureau for Management, Office of Management Services (M/MS), Travel and Transportation (TTD) staff. The new process decentralizes TA approvals and transfers them to Bureaus and Independent Offices (B/IOs), a practice consistent with the increasingly user-direct reservation and ticketing practices of the U.S. Government. M/MS/TTD established a process to route all TAs through a third-party contractor for thorough vetting before approval by Administrative Officers (AMS) in B/IOs. AMS staff received training in the new process, and Agency Notices alerted all USAID travelers to the new procedures. As a result of this reform, the Agency reduced the travel processing workforce by four FTEs, equivalent to 4,160 FTE hours, and supervisory M/MS/TTD staff are no longer responsible for overseeing the checking and approving of all TAs. Now they add value by managing the overall process and providing policy guidance and regulatory oversight. Simply stated, USAID's travel operations are more efficient, more cost-effective, and better serve the Agency.

**Impact:** 4,160 FTE hours since October 2018 shifted to high-value work.



## Bureau for Management, Office of Management Services

### [Shared Services for Permanent Change of Station Travel](#)

**Action Taken:** In 2018, USAID did an internal analysis of its processes regarding Permanent Change of Station (PCS) travel, or the shipping of Foreign Service Officers' household effects. For more than a decade, the Agency has used the U.S. Department of State's (State) shared services for PCS travel, while also funding a supplemental shipping counselor contract for USAID employees. Analysis by M/MS determined that the Agency could meet its customer service standards through the shared services model without supplemental support. The Agency ended the PCS counselor contract, which saved the Agency \$200,000 in the first six months of FY 2019, for a total of \$400,000 in annual savings. To ensure the same level of customer service, the Bureau for Management, Office of Management



## Burden Reduction Update 2019: U.S. Agency for International Development

Services (M/MS) Travel and Transport Division (TTD) developed a Memorandum of Agreement with State that set Service Level Agreements for customer service. This process improvement also created efficiencies by steering USAID staff to the PCS Portal, a new joint State-USAID platform to manage all aspects of PCS travel. As a result of these cost savings and improved process, M/MS/TTD staff can now focus on transportation policy guidance and the management of customer relationships at a higher level.

**Impact:** \$200,000 since October 2018 redirected to higher priorities.



## Bureau for Management, Office of the Chief Financial Officer

### Automation of Low-Value Deobligations and Unliquidated Obligations in the Office of the Chief Financial Officer

**Action Taken:** USAID has spent significant staff time in authorizing low-value deobligations and has committed to addressing its unliquidated obligations (ULOs) issues more efficiently. USAID developed a tool that allows authorized staff to mark and approve financial- and travel-related ULOs, as well as unilateral-funded purchase-card-order ULOs that are under the micro-purchase threshold (currently \$10,000). As a result of these efforts, USAID shifted more than 5,300 annualized Agency employee hours to high-value work, such as spending more time working on mission-critical functions to meet our core humanitarian and development objectives. In addition, the Agency redirected ULOs to higher priorities.

**Impact:** 5,361 FTE hours/year shifted to high-value work, for a total of 12,064 FTE hours since January 2017.



## Bureau for Management, Office of Management Policy, Budget, and Performance

### Modernization of the Operating Expense Budget

**Action Taken:** USAID is in the process of modernizing the entire Operating Expense (OE) budget, which requires identifying process improvement opportunities and developing solutions to increase productivity and the accuracy of OE budget inputs and outputs. Since August 2017, the modernization process has brought measurable productivity increases that have removed the necessity for professional-graded U.S. Direct-Hire employees to perform previously necessary manual work that required relatively low levels of skill, such as excessive manual-key entry, formatting reports, and updating ad-hoc models with the outsized risk of human error. As of the date of submission of this report (March 2019), USAID has developed and implemented six modernization activities across multiple budget functions, which reduce the time employees spend on tracking budget operations and automate processes that previously required manual entry and tracking.



## Burden Reduction Update 2019: U.S. Agency for International Development

**Impact:** 5,200 FTE hours since August 2017 shifted to high-value work.

