Agency Priority Goal Action Plan

Visa Security

Goal Leaders:

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Overview

Goal Statement

- Impact Statement: Under Executive Order 13780 (Protecting the Nation From Foreign Terrorist Entry Into the United States), the interagency identified critical data points that should be collected from every visa applicant to enhance border security and visa security screening protocols.

- Agency Priority Goal Statement: By September 30, 2019, we will update the DS-160 and DS-260 nonimmigrant and immigrant visa application forms and add the newly-collected fields to our data sharing feeds for interagency partners.

Challenge

- The interagency, under direction of Executive Order 13780 (Protecting the Nation From Foreign Terrorist Entry Into the United States), is working to improve uniform screening and vetting standards for applicants for visa applicants.

- Collecting additional information from applicants is feasible once interagency consensus is reached. The application form and processing systems can then be updated to collect this data.

Opportunity

- Collecting additional information from visa applicants will enhance the visa security screening process by providing additional data points to screen against to prevent potential threats from gaining entry to the United States.

Goal Structure & Strategies

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

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

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

Summary of Progress – FY 19 Q1 & Q2

Milestones for FY 19 Q1 and Q2: Technical systems monitored for stability and data integrity (Q1). Initial statistical analysis of quarterly data to determine effectiveness of revised forms and data collection (Q2).

The Visa Office published the 60-day notice for proposed changes to the DS-160 and DS-260 in the Federal Register on March 30, 2018. We responded to over 10,000 public comments received during the 60-day comment period. The final 30-day notice was published in the Federal Register on August 28, 2018, and closed on September 27, 2018.

The Visa Office and the Office of Consular Systems and Technology updated the electronic DS-160 and DS-260 to collect the social media information. OMB ~~has just~~ approved these updated forms on April 11, 2019, but with revised text requirements. The development teams are working on incorporating the changes, which will require formal, independent testing. Deployment of the software releases are being coordinated across multiple CST teams and is currently targeted for May 31, 2019.
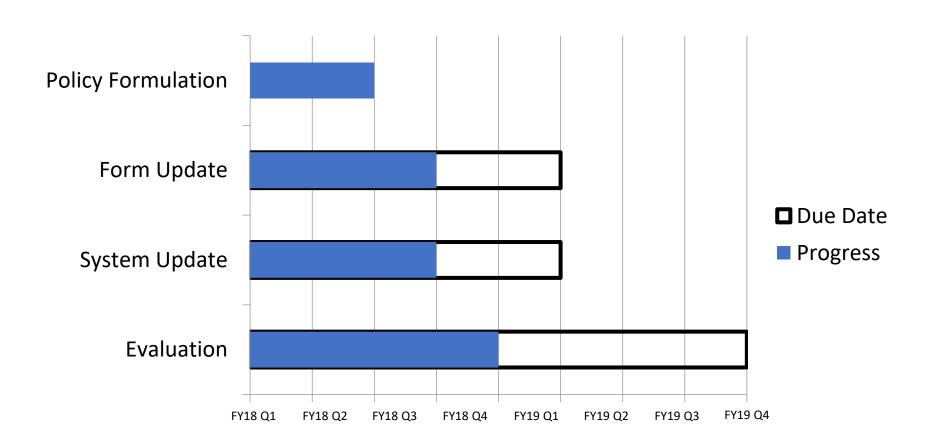
Key Milestones

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

Milestone Summary					
Key Milestone	Milestone Due Date	Milestone Status	Change from last quarter	Owner	Comments
Definition and formulation of policy strategy and initial discussion with Interagency stakeholders to identify barriers and other issues.	FY18Q1	Complete	N/A	CA/VO	Milestone Complete
Publication of form change proposal in Federal Register; Technical requirements defined.	FY18Q2	Complete	Yes	CA/VO/L/R	Milestone Complete
State submits PRA Package to OMB	FY18Q3	Complete	Yes	CA/VO/L/R	Milestone Complete
Online forms updated; systems upgrade complete	FY18Q4	Delayed	Yes	CA/VO/I CA/CST	OMB PRA approval received April 11, 2019, but requested text changes. Development teams will need to create change packages to update the approved versions. Deployment of adjusted systems being coordinated. Milestone delayed accordingly and deployments are currently targeted for May 31, 2019.
Technical systems monitored for stability and data integrity	FY19Q1	Delayed	Yes	CA/VO/I CA/CST	OMB PRA response received April 11, 2019; Milestone delayed accordingly
Initial statistical analysis of quarterly data to determine effectiveness	FY19Q2	Delayed	Yes	CA/VO/I	OMB PRA response received April 11, 2019; Milestone delayed accordingly
Further statistical review and analysis	FY19Q3	Delayed	Yes	CA/VO/I	Due to term projects being delayed, milestone will be delayed accordingly
Final evaluation of forms enhancement program and policy.	FY19Q4	Delayed	Yes	CA/VO	Due to term projects being delayed, milestone will be delayed accordingly

Key Indicators

APG Progress

Data Accuracy and Reliability

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

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

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

Additional Information

<u>Contributing Programs</u>

Program Activities:

o   Consular Affairs/Visa Office will coordinate the overall project and lead the OMB submission process;

o   Consular Affairs/Consular Systems and Technology will update the online forms and adjust any State Department data share connections with interagency partners;

Regulations:

o   Office of the Legal Adviser will assist with the legal reviews needed for the OMB forms process and information decisions;

o   Office of Management and Budget will manage the form approval process and provide a final approval to the form changes;

Stakeholder / Congressional Consultations:

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