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(U//~~FOUO~~) Fiscal Year 2019  
Annual Report on Security  
Clearance Determinations

(U) Congressional Tasking

April 2020



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**(U) INTRODUCTION**

(U) The Intelligence Authorization Act (IAA) for Fiscal Year (FY) 2010, as amended, now codified as 50 U.S.C. 3104, requires the President to submit an annual report on security clearance determinations to Congress. The statute directs that this report include: 1) the number of United States Government (USG)<sup>1</sup> employees and contractors who held a security clearance at each level as of 1 October of the preceding fiscal year (FY) and; 2) the number of USG employees and contractors who were approved for a security clearance at each level during the preceding FY. The statute also requires in-depth security clearance determination timeliness metrics for each element of the Intelligence Community (IC). In response to these statutory requirements, the Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI) National Counterintelligence and Security Center (NCSC) has prepared this *Fiscal Year 2019 Annual Report on Security Clearance Determinations*, consistent with the security clearance data requirements outlined by the categories listed below.

**(U) Security Clearance Data Required by 50 U.S.C. 3104**

<b>Security Clearance Volume Levels for USG Employees and Contractors</b>	<b>Security Clearance Determination Timeliness Metrics for IC Agencies and Elements of the IC</b>
The number of individuals, categorized as government employees and contractors, who held and who were approved for a security clearance as of 1 October 2019, sorted by security clearance level.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. The time (in days) to process the shortest and longest security clearance determination made among 80 percent of security clearance determinations, and the time (in days) to process, the shortest and longest security clearance determination made among 90 percent of determinations.</li> <li>ii. The number of security clearance investigations as of 1 October of the preceding FY that were open for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o 4 months or less</li> <li>o 4-8 months</li> <li>o 8-12 months</li> <li>o More than 1 year</li> </ul> </li> <li>iii. Percentage of reviews during the preceding FY that resulted in a denial or revocation of a security clearance.</li> <li>iv. Percentage of investigations during the preceding FY that resulted in incomplete information.</li> <li>v. Percentage of investigations during the preceding FY that did not result in enough information to make an adverse decision.</li> <li>vi. The number of completed or pending security clearance determinations for government employees and contractors during the preceding FY that have taken longer than one year to complete, the agencies that investigated and adjudicated such determinations, and the cause of significant delays in such determinations.</li> </ul>

(U) Table is UNCLASSIFIED.

<sup>1</sup> (U) For the purposes of this report, "USG" includes Non-Title 50 agencies, the Department of Defense (DoD), IC agencies, and elements of the IC.



(U) The National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for FY 2018 outlined new data collection and reporting requirements for Executive Branch Departments and Agencies (D/A). These new requirements, along with the existing requirements found in the *Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004* (IRTPA) and the IAA for FY 2016, levy substantial data collection and reporting upon D/As. In an effort to standardize data collection and reporting across the Executive Branch, the Director of National Intelligence (DNI), as the Security Executive Agent (SecEA), consolidated all reporting requirements and tasked the D/A heads to collect and report the relevant data. Various D/A heads expressed concerns, as they must alter their internal reporting systems to collect the newly identified metrics, which will require time and resources. While this standardized approach aligns all reporting requirements and minimizes the impact on reporting D/As across the Executive Branch, delays in responses to certain requirements continue; for FY 2019 some delays have been the result of government shutdown. Since some D/As are unable to respond to all metrics requirements, the SecEA will provide initial reporting with available data, and subsequent reporting as additional data becomes available.

## (U) EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

(U) The *Fiscal Year 2019 Annual Report on Security Clearance Determinations* provides the current state of USG security clearances. The report is divided into two sections: Section 1, “Security Clearance Volume for the Entire Federal Government,” and; Section 2, “Security Clearance Performance for IC Agencies and Elements of the IC.”

(U) The first section reports the total volume of individuals across the USG who are eligible for access to classified information, and aligns with the language of 50 U.S.C. 3104. It includes data for the number of individuals who are currently “in access,” as well as those who are eligible but currently “not in access.” In FY 2019, there was a 4.2 percent increase in the cleared population. This change may have resulted from initiatives implemented to reduce the National Background Investigations Bureau’s (NBIB) investigation inventory that impacts mission and operational requirements across the Executive Branch.<sup>2</sup> These initiatives were implemented by the SecEA, the Suitability and Credentialing Executive Agent (SuitEA/CredEA), the Performance Accountability Council (PAC), and other key stakeholders.

(U) The “Security Clearance Performance for IC Agencies and Elements of the IC” data continues to be unavailable for some of the IC elements due to the impact of new reporting requirements levied in the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for FY 2018. As a result of the new requirements, in November 2018 the SecEA announced the upcoming release of a single consolidated metrics reporting requirement for the Executive Branch to standardize and align collection of data outlined in the FY 2018 NDAA, IRTPA and the FY 2016 IAA. Many D/As continue to work on modifying their internal reporting systems to collect the newly identified metrics, which will require time and resources. During the upcoming calendar year, we expect D/As to improve with a more robust collection of reportable metrics. Upon receipt, we will incorporate that additional information into next year’s annual report.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> (U) DNI Memorandum ES-2017-00049, “Strategy to Mitigate the Impact of National Background Investigations Bureau’s Background Investigation Backlog.” 16 February 2017.

<sup>3</sup> (U) DNI Memorandum ES-2018-00758, “Metrics Reporting Requirements for National Security Vetting in Fiscal Year 2018 and Beyond.” 19 November 2018.

**(U) METHODOLOGY**

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(U) To report security clearance volume levels, NCSC compiled, processed, and analyzed data from the three security clearance record repositories—ODNI's Scattered Castles (SC), DoD's Joint Personnel Adjudication System (JPAS), and the Office of Personnel Management's Central Verification System (CVS)—and ensured there was no duplication. To fulfill specific reporting requirements of the FY 2010 IAA that were not captured in these repositories, the ODNI is in the process of conducting a data call to collect the appropriate information, which will be provided accordingly.



**(U) SECURITY CLEARANCE VOLUME FOR THE ENTIRE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT**

(U) The FY 2010 IAA requires that the number of individuals who held or were approved to hold a security clearance as of 1 October 2019 be calculated and categorized by personnel type and by security clearance level. The first set of tables, below, provides figures for both FY 2018 and FY 2019.<sup>4</sup> Table 1.1 reflects the total number of individuals “in access,” Table 1.2 reflects those eligible but currently “not in access,” and Table 1.3 reflects the total number of individuals eligible to hold a security clearance, regardless of access status.

(U) To present accurate and detailed information on the number of security clearances, three sets of data are included below in tables 1.1, 1.2, and 1.3, broken out by “Eligible (in access),” “Eligible (not in access),” and “Total Eligible” population categories.

(U) **Table 1.1, Eligible (in access)**, refers to individuals who were investigated and adjudicated favorably and were briefed into access to classified information. As of 1 October 2019, 2,949,756 individuals were eligible and in access, which was 77,522 more individuals than on 1 October 2018 (2.7 percent increase).

Employee Type	As of 10/1/18:		As of 10/1/19:	
	Conf/Secret	Top Secret	Conf/Secret	Top Secret
Government	(b)(3)			
Contractor				
Other				
Sub-Total:	1,660,146	1,212,088	1,697,798	1,251,958
Total:	2,872,234		2,949,756	

(U) Table is U//FOUO.

<sup>4</sup> (U) The “Government” category includes all government employees and military personnel. The “Contractor” category includes all industry employees, independent contractors, and consultants. The “Other” category is predominantly comprised of the number of cleared government and contractor personnel reported in CVS, which does not have an employee type field.

(U) **Table 1.2, Eligible (not in access)**, refers to individuals, such as those supporting the military, that may be determined eligible due to the sensitivity of their positions and the potential need for immediate access to classified information, but do not have actual access to classified information until the need arises. As of 1 October 2019, 1,294,181 eligible individuals were not in access, which was 91,600 more individuals than on 1 October 2018 (7.6 percent increase).

Employee Type	As of 10/1/18:		As of 10/1/19:	
	Conf/Secret	Top Secret	Conf/Secret	Top Secret
Government	(b)(3)			
Contractor				
Other				
Sub-Total:	1,086,780	115,801	1,162,079	132,102
Total:	1,202,581		1,294,181	

(U) Table is U//FOUO.

(U) **Table 1.3, Total Eligibility**, shows the number of individuals who were investigated and adjudicated favorably and had access to classified information as well as those who were favorably adjudicated but did not have access to classified information. As of 1 October 2019, 4,243,937 individuals were eligible to hold a clearance, which was 169,122 more individuals than on 1 October 2018 (4.2 percent increase).

Employee Type	As of 10/1/18:		As of 10/1/19:	
	Conf/Secret	Top Secret	Conf/Secret	Top Secret
Government	(b)(3)			
Contractor				
Other				
Sub-Total:	2,746,926	1,327,889	2,859,877	1,384,060
Total:	4,074,815		4,243,937	

(U) Table is U//FOUO.



(U) **Table 2, Number of Security Clearance Approvals**, presents the number of individuals approved for a security clearance during the FY, by clearance level. Variations in data collection fields within the repositories limit our ability to collect precise data. For instance, a query of the security clearance determination *approvals* recorded in some repositories cannot distinguish between initial clearance and Periodic Reinvestigation (PR) approvals. As a result, the number of approvals represents a combination of initial clearances and PRs of existing clearances. Within this category, there was a 44 percent increase in the number of security clearances approved since FY 2018.

Employee Type	In FY 2018:		In FY 2019:	
	Conf/Secret	Top Secret	Conf/Secret	Top Secret
Government	(b)(3)			
Contractor	(b)(3)			
Other	(b)(3)			
Sub-Total:	454,859	213,687	616,292	347,846
Total:	668,546		964,138	

(U) Table is U//FOUO.

**(U) SECURITY CLEARANCE PERFORMANCE FOR IC AGENCIES AND ELEMENTS OF THE IC**

(U//FOUO) As stated above, the data for Section 2 is unavailable for certain IC elements due to new reporting requirements in the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for FY 2018. As a result of these requirements, in November 2018 the SecEA announced a single consolidated metrics-reporting requirement for the Executive Branch to standardize and align collection of the new metrics and those required by IRTPA and the IAA for FY 2016.

(b)(3)

As previously noted, many D/As are still in the process of modifying their internal reporting systems to collect the newly identified metrics, which will require time and resources. During the upcoming calendar year, we expect D/As to improve with a more robust collection of reportable metrics. We will incorporate that additional information into next year's annual report.

(U) **Table 3, IC Timeliness Performance Trend**, presents the total amount of time to process the security determination for Secret cases, Top Secret cases, and PRs within the IC, and was among the 90 percent fastest security clearance determinations made during FY 2019.

Fastest 90% →

	Initiate				Investigate				Adjudicate				End-to-End (Initiate + Inv. + Adj.)			
	Average Days				Average Days				Average Days				Average Days			
	Q1 19	Q2 19	Q3 19	Q4 19	Q1 19	Q2 19	Q3 19	Q4 19	Q1 19	Q2 19	Q3 19	Q4 19	Q1 19	Q2 19	Q3 19	Q4 19
Initial Secret Cases	Goal: 14 Days				40 Days				20 Days				74 Days			
	12	13	14	16	66	64	81	66	54	47	37	30	133	124	131	113
Initial Top Secret Cases	Goal: 14 Days				80 Days				20 Days				114 Days			
	13	12	12	12	113	113	109	125	47	42	35	55	173	167	155	192
Periodic Reinvestigations	Goal: 15 Days				150 Days				30 Days				195 Days			
	7	6	4	6	117	123	125	113	47	58	50	48	172	187	179	166
	Red Text: Goal Not Met								Blue Text: Goal Met							

As of 01/15/2020

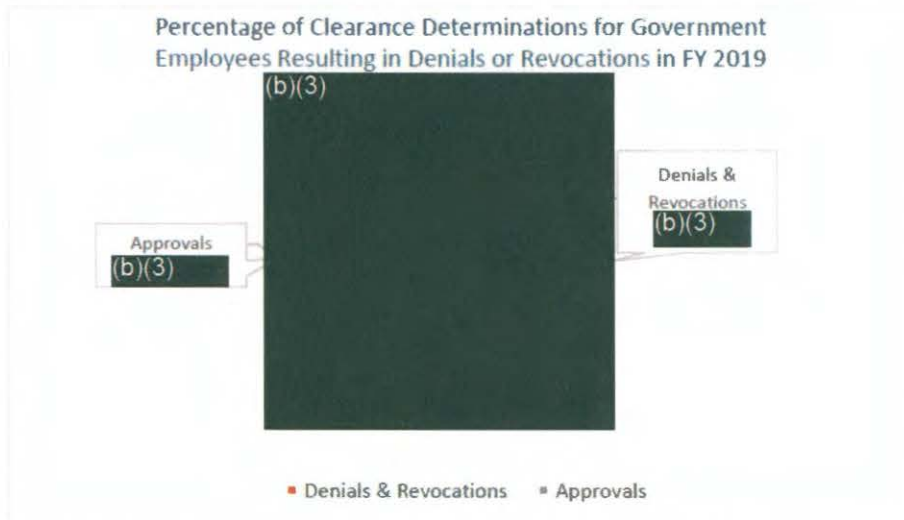
(U) Table is UNCLASSIFIED.

(U) **Table 4.1, Total FY 2019 IC Investigation Denials and Revocations**, the total number expressed in percentages of FY 2019 security clearance determinations that resulted in denial or revocation of Secret and Top Secret security cases, broken out by employee category.



(U) Chart is U//FOUO.

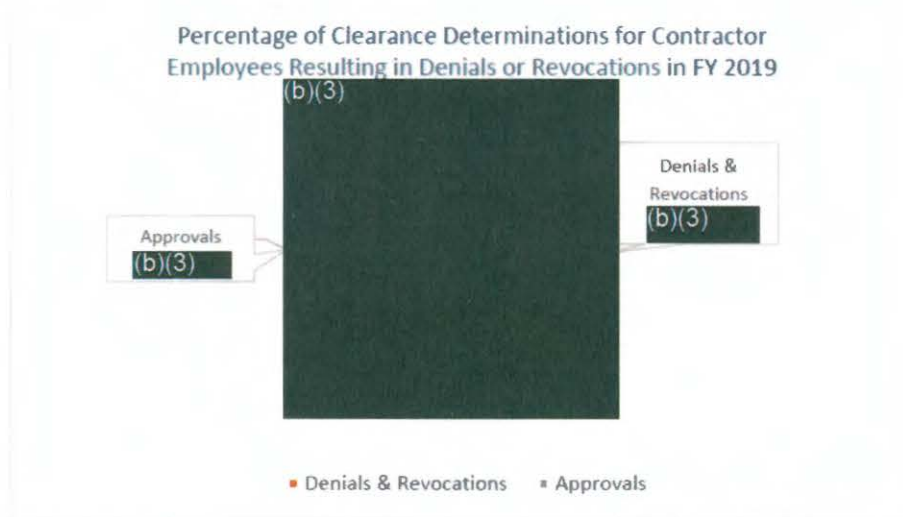
(U) **Table 4.2: Government Employee FY 2019 IC Investigation Denials and Revocations**



(U) Chart is U//FOUO.

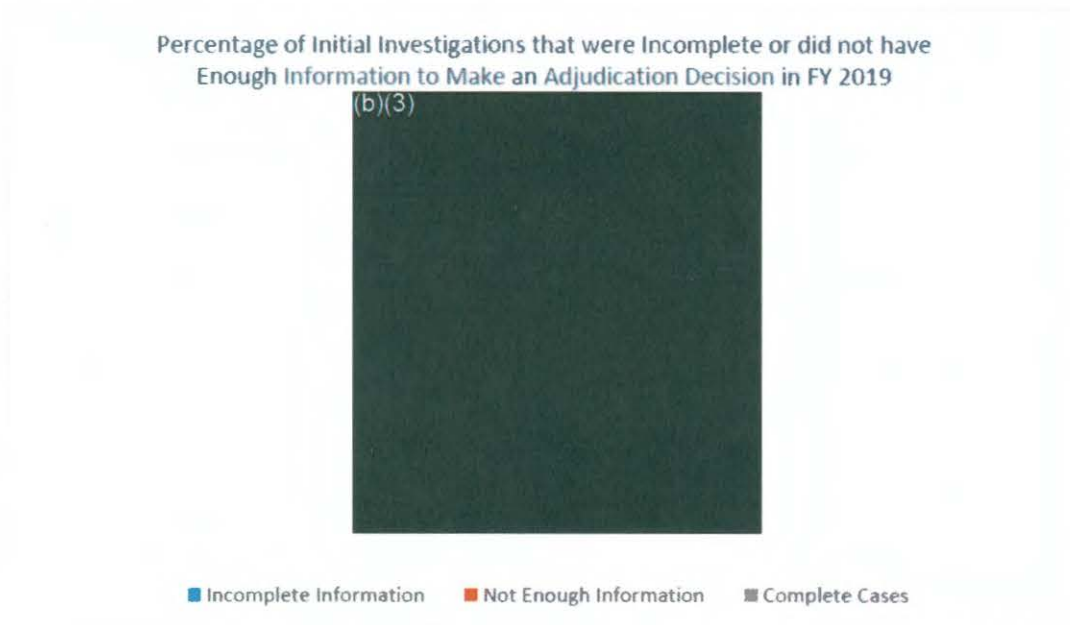


**(U) Table 4.3: Contractor Employee FY 2019 IC Investigation Denials and Revocations**



(U) Chart is U//FOUO.

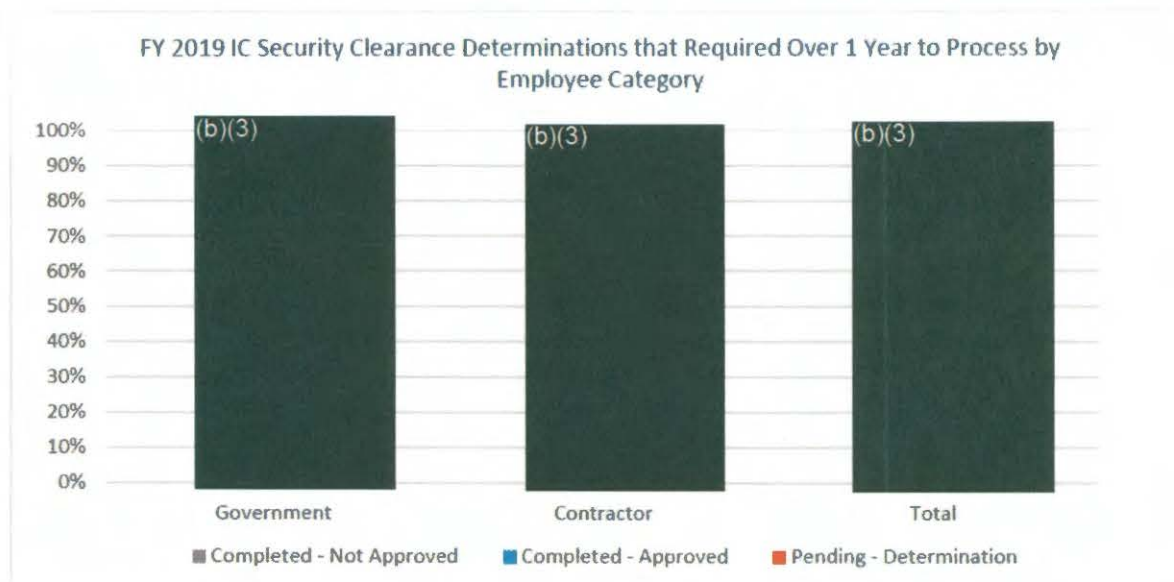
**(U) Table 5, Initial Investigations Resulting in Incomplete Information**, presents the total number expressed in percentages of FY 2019 investigations that were incomplete due to insufficient information to make an adjudicative decision.



(U) Chart is U//FOUO.

\* (U) This table does not include PRs.

(U) **Table 6, Security Clearance Determinations Over 1 Year**, presents the total number of IC security clearance determinations by employee category (government and contractor) that required more than one year to complete. The numbers presented below are broken out into two categories of Pending and Completed cases, and two sub-categories of Not Approved and Approved within the Completed category.



(U) Chart is U//~~FOUO~~

**(U) CONCLUSION**

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(U) Efforts to improve the timeliness, quality, and consistency of investigative and adjudicative processes have focused on better management of the size of the cleared population and reduction of the size of the NBIB investigations inventory. In FY 2019, the number of security clearance approvals *increased* by 44 percent, and the cleared population increased by 4.1 percent. These increases appear to reflect IC agencies' continued response to DNI guidance and are the result of initiatives implemented to mitigate and significantly reduce NBIB's investigation inventory.

(b)(3)



(U) Both Executive Branch D/As and IC personnel security programs are challenged by the uncertainty of future budgets, furlough, and the increasingly competitive marketplace for background investigators and polygraphers. The ODNI, in partnership with the PAC and DoD, is committed to addressing these challenges while driving Executive Branch improvements in the timeliness, quality, and consistency of investigative and adjudicative processes.

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<sup>5</sup> (U) Authorized in the 2018 National Defense Authorization Act.



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OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE  
WASHINGTON, DC

Steven Aftergood  
Federation of American Scientists  
1112 16<sup>th</sup> Street NW, Suite 400  
Washington, DC 20036

January 26, 2021

Re: ODNI Case DF-2020-00225

Mr. Aftergood:

This letter responds to your Freedom of Information Act (“FOIA”) request dated and received by the Information Management Office on 6 May 2020 (Enclosure 1), in which you requested, *“a copy of the FY 2019 ODNI annual report on security clearance determinations.”*

A search has been conducted and a document responsive to your request was located (Enclosure 2). The record is being released to you in part with the following exemption:

- (b)(3), which applies to information exempt from disclosure by statute. The relevant statute is: the National Security Act of 1947, as amended, 50 U.S.C. § 3024(i)(1), which protects information pertaining to intelligence sources and methods.

All reasonably segregable, non-exempt information has been released to you.

You may contact me, the FOIA Public Liaison, at [dni-foia-liaison@dni.gov](mailto:dni-foia-liaison@dni.gov) or (301) 243-2025 for any further assistance or to discuss any aspect of your request. You may also contact the Office of Government Information Services (“OGIS”) of the National Archives and Records Administration to inquire about the mediation services they provide. OGIS can be reached by mail at 8601 Adelphi Road, Room 2510, College Park, MD 20740-6001; telephone (202) 741-5770; facsimile (202) 741-5769; Toll-free (877) 684-6448; or email at [ogis@nara.gov](mailto:ogis@nara.gov).

If you are not satisfied with my response to your request, you may administratively appeal by submitting a written request to the Chief FOIA Officer, c/o Director, Information Management Office, Office of the Director of National Intelligence, Washington, DC 20511 OR [DNI-FOIA@DNI.GOV](mailto:DNI-FOIA@DNI.GOV). The request letter and envelope or subject line of the email should be marked “Freedom of Information Act Appeal.” Your appeal must be postmarked or electronically transmitted within 90 days of the date of this letter.

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OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE  
WASHINGTON, DC

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact our Requester Service Center at DNI-FOIA@DNI.GOV or (301) 243-1499.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sally A. Nicholson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "S".

Sally A. Nicholson  
Chief, Information Review &  
Release Group  
FOIA Public Liaison  
Information Management Office

Enclosures

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