

# Questionnaire for E-Gov Presidential Initiative or Line of Business Standards Selection Process

1. Title of E-Gov Initiative or Line of Business: e-Clearance
2. Initiative / LOB website: <http://www.opm.gov/egov/e-gov/e-clearance/>
3. Name and contact information for responsible Project Manager:

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4. Name and contact information for questions regarding standards used in this initiative/LOB (if different from above): same
5. Describe the process that was undertaken to choose and/or develop the standards required to implement the objectives of the Initiative or LOB:

The initiative addressed three major areas to improve the security clearance investigative process and was developed using industry standards in the areas of XML, XSL, and Java programming. The electronic Questionnaire for Investigation Processing (eQIP), automated the established SF-86 hard copy form, the Imaging solution provided interoperability with the other e-Clearance and e-Government systems based on guidance in the Federal Enterprise Architecture. The Clearance Verification System (CVS) was developed to enable agencies to verify clearances granted by other agencies in real time. Through the development of a bridge between the Department of Defense's (DoD) Joint Personnel Adjudication System (JPAS) and OPM's Security/Suitability Investigations Index (SII) database, agencies have real time access to more than 95% of existing clearances.

Under CFR 732.202 required a reduction in investigation submission timelines to 14 calendar days or less. To achieve this, agencies acknowledged one part of the timeliness factor was the rejection rate under the manual submission process. By automating the approved SF-86, automated validation measures were implemented, providing a standard rejection rate agreed to by agencies of no more than 5% of submissions to improve the overall timeliness of processing.

The e-QIP module of the e-Clearance initiative improved the eligibility determination process by enhancing the submission and processing of forms used to begin the investigation process. The CVS module improved clearance tracking and security verification by allowing superior access by authorized individuals to clearance and investigation records covering all Federal agencies (except for highly sensitive intelligence agency clearances). The Imaging component supported eligibility determination and security verification services by improving access to supporting data from previous investigations.

The Federal Enterprise Architecture (FEA) Business Reference Model (BRM) Version 1.0 released in July, 2002 divides the Federal Government's activities into three layers: business areas, lines of business and sub-functions. Each of these layers provides more detail and analysis of the particular activity. The e-Clearance initiative has a very clear and direct relationship to the BRM. The e-Clearance initiative falls under the Internal Operations and Infrastructure Business Area, then the Human Resources Line of Business, and finally, the Security Clearance Management Sub-Function. As the three components of e-Clearance were developed, they complied with FEA guidelines. The e-Clearance architecture received direction from the Solution Architects Working Group (SAWG). The SAWG was created to help the 24 Presidential Priority E-Gov initiatives succeed. To support enterprise architecture standards, e-Clearance evaluated a component-based architecture approach as recommended by the SAWG. In addition, the project staff paid careful attention to OMB Circular A-130, especially the Security of Federal Automated Information Resources appendix and NIST Federal Information Processing Standards Publications. In addition, the OPM Chief Information Officer coordinated with the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) to review the e-Clearance security standards and procedures. The OIG independently reviewed system development efforts as part of their annual review process under the Government Information Security Reform Act.

6. When determining standards needs were consensus standards given first consideration? If not, why? Yes.

7. Describe the process used to ensure that input from all appropriate stakeholders, public and private, was considered?

Each of the partner agencies provided one or more executive representatives that provided advice and support to the initiative. The partners attended meetings, reviewed documents and strategies, and provided input to the e-Clearance initiative leadership. Councils involved include the National Security Council (NSC) and the Quad Council, which acted as the Steering Group. The NSC served as a technical advisor to this initiative. Members of the e-Clearance project team coordinated closely with the NSC to ensure there was no duplication of efforts and that the initiative stayed focused on the critical needs of national security programs. In addition, input was gathered from members of the Background Investigative Working Group (BISG), which represented all agencies involved in the security clearance investigations processes.

8. Please list participating federal agencies involved in selecting or developing and implementing standards for the initiative/LOB:

The initiative involved all agencies that process applicants for a security clearance and/or are responsible for providing records relating to the security clearance process. Major specific agencies included:

Department of Commerce  
Department of Defense  
Department of Homeland Security  
Department of Justice  
Department of State  
Nuclear Regulatory Commission

9. Please list participating state or local governments agencies involved in developing and implementing standards for the initiative/LOB: Not applicable.

10. Please list participating private sector organizations involved in developing and implementing standards for the initiative/LOB:

Research and guidance was obtained from industry working groups on XML such as the World Wide Web Consortium and the Organization for the Advancement of Structured Information Standards (OASIS) regarding the standards for electronic business transactions.

11. Please list participating voluntary consensus standards bodies involved in developing and implementing standards for the initiative/LOB:

The e-clearance initiative was developed in accordance with OMB's Federal Enterprise Architecture guidelines. An Imaging Courier Working Group was established to develop and recommend the standards for electronic capture and transmission of the imaging system.

12. Please provide a list of standards relevant to the development and implementation of the initiative/LOB.

- OMB Federal Enterprise Architecture
- Department of Navy Naming Conventions for XML
- Global Justice Data Model
- National Information Exchange Model (NIEM)
- XML World Wide Web Consortium
- Organization for the Advancement of Structured Information Standards (OASIS)
- Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004 (IRTP)
- CFR 732.202