Army Performance Tools and Process Improvements

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The United States Army Security Assistance Command (USASAC) concept for performance management directly links performance metrics to the command strategy. The metrics are tied to our strategic goals and objectives which, in turn, support the Army's strategic plan. This approach included developing standard metrics throughout our core functions and processes that are clearly linked to strategy. USASAC then developed automated performance management tools connected directly to our legacy management systems to automatically update and populate our performance measures. These legacy management systems include the Defense Security Assistance Management System (DSAMS) and the Centralized Integrated System-International Logistics (CISIL) and are at the core of how we manage the foreign military sales (FMS) process.

These legacy systems are our systems of record for FMS and are used to execute our core processes, but they do not readily provide actionable information to management on how well we are performing and on our overall process capability. In the past, when we needed process or metric data, we would query data from the legacy systems, download it into a spreadsheet, apply formulas, conduct analysis, and then place the results into a chart. This is the same process we used to conduct monthly performance review and analysis (R&A) and the process we used for any ad-hoc performance and process analysis.

Conducting these manual R&As and any desired process performance analysis is very time consuming. It also allowed a lot of variation based on who was pulling the information and for what purpose it was being used. For example, when conducting a Geographic Combatant Command (GCC) performance review, the GCC Director was primarily responsible for pulling the data and doing the analysis required to conduct the review. Even though general guidelines were provided for these reviews, each GCC Director varied slightly in what they pulled and how they presented data and metrics to Army senior leaders. This variation became even more apparent when trying to compare the performance of one GCC to another or when trying to show rolled up data for the entire organization. Another problem is that data could be massaged and "cleansed" before presentation to senior leaders.

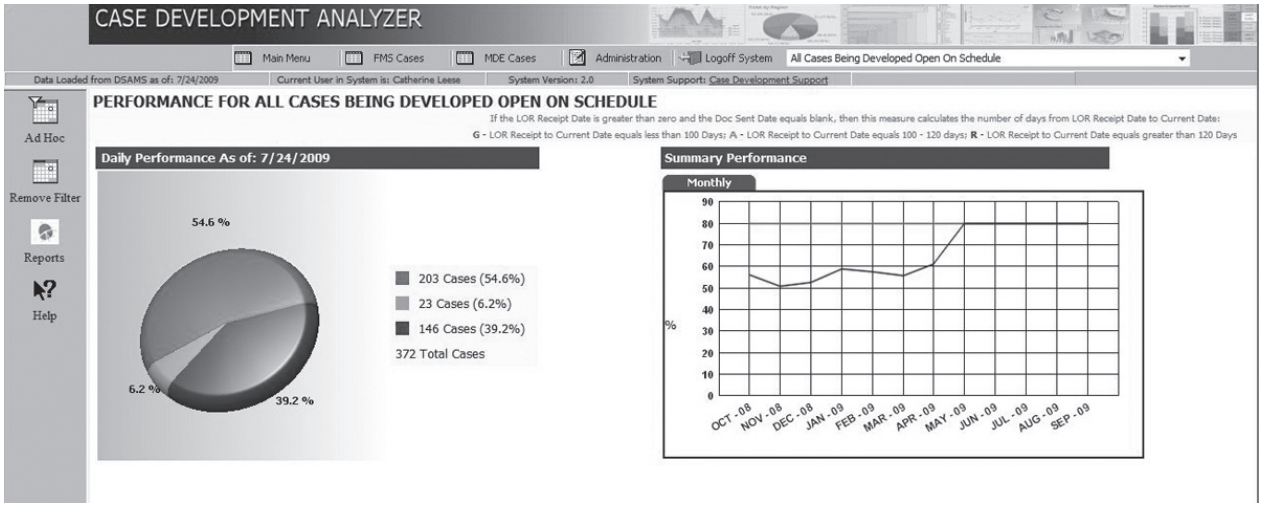
The purpose of our performance analyzer tools was to eliminate the variation in data and automate, where possible, the data for routine performance reviews and process analysis. This would allow for standardization of all metrics and management data across the organization and allow for easy drill down or roll up of metric data. The tools also eliminated all variation in data and limited the ability to exclude any data resident in our legacy systems.

In order to develop our analyzers, we developed high-level process maps and then developed metrics to measure these high-level processes. We linked these metrics to our overall strategy map, completing the circle. The analyzers take data from our legacy systems and run it through programmed logic to produce status for each requirement currently in the pipeline. The status for each requirement is then aggregated with all other requirements and compared against a target for

overall performance status. This system fully automates our high-level metrics and gives us the ability to drill down to the specific requirements driving each metric.

As an example, in 2007 USASAC identified a void in the case development process and targeted it for improvement. Standard metrics did not exist, and performance management tools were not available to measure the process. We developed the Case Development Analyzer (CDA) program as a direct result of two Lean Six Sigma (LSS) Green Belt projects designed to address the case development process. The first LSS Green Belt project addressed the need for performance metrics at the Country Program Manager (CPM) level. The second project involved improving data collection and corresponding metrics for the process. The CDA effort sought to eliminate the manual cycle time of gathering and analyzing data while providing a standard format for use among the regional GCCs.

The CDA tool uses a daily feed of DSAMS data to provide access to performance metric information at the overall level for the case development process, as well as more detailed performance data for cases residing in any of the eight designated sub-processes/segments of the process. These overall and sub-process or segment measurements also align with the Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA) level metrics for the Case Development process. This process allows managers to query by GCC, country, or Country Program Manager. Reports with case-level detail are linked to each query and are displayed by green, amber, or red performance indicators based on established targets for each sub-process or segment.

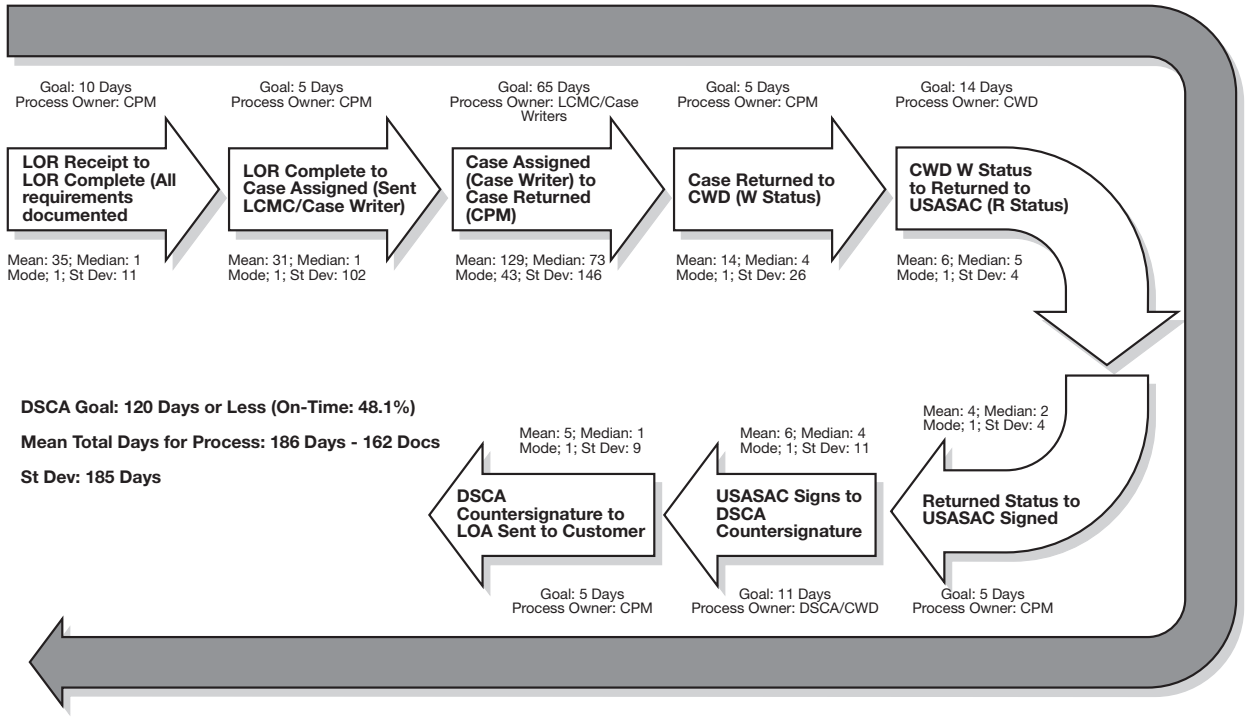


As an enhancement to the original tool, USASAC created the Interactive Case Development Analyzer (ICDA) (example on next page) to provide easy access to summary-level data by GCC or Life Cycle Management Command (LCMC) along with certain drill down capabilities. This new interactive tool was targeted at senior-level managers to give them a quick view of how the process is running and where trouble areas may exist. Although the ICDA is not as powerful as the CDA in terms of drill down, graphic, and ad-hoc capabilities, it has proven to be a powerful senior-level management tool because of its ease of use.

The current versions of both tools were brought online only for Army Defined Order cases in the DSAMS case development pipeline. USASAC decided to begin with these cases since they are most often the ones that do not meet the DSCA case development goal of 80 percent in 120 days and

were considered our "burning platform". Plans are currently in place to include Blanket Order and Cooperative Logistics Supply Support Arrangement (CLSSA) cases in the very near future.

Figure 1 European Command Case Development Processing Times
For Defined Order Cases and Amendments Target Goals and Actual
Average Days Based on Document Sent Milestone FY 2008 YTD



USASAC has seen a tangible benefit in using the CDA and ICDA as performance tools. From fiscal year (FY) 2007 to FY 2008, USASAC saw a 12.5 percent increase in the on-time performance for Defined Order cases processed. The average cycle time and standard deviation for the case development process also decreased since the tool's implementation. This results in less variation in the process. For the first time, USASAC managers and senior leaders have an easy way to see how many cases are in DSAMS and whether they are on schedule in each segment of the process and overall. This tool also allows USASAC to populate our high-level organizational metrics automatically and provides a reliable measurement system for our LSS process improvement efforts.

In addition to the two LSS Green Belt projects that resulted in the CDA and ICDA, USASAC also led or participated in many other LSS events/projects focusing on the Case Development process. Army events led by USASAC include events on reducing Letter of Offer and Acceptance (LOA) staffing and review cycle time, Letters of Offers and Acceptance Data (LOAD) development cycle time, and LOA errors caused by service unique notes. The events resulted in an increase in LOA quality and reductions of LOA re-work. Some other results of these events implemented across the Army and/or by USASAC are centralized:

- Letter of Request (LOR) receipt
- LOR checklists

- Development of the International Customers web site
- LOR technical review or "Quick Look" by our LCMC and Program Executive Officer/ Program Managers (PEO/PMs)
- Elimination of LOA Quality Reviews

Demonstrations on the capabilities of the tool were well-received by the other services and DSCA. In April 2009 the tool was deployed to both the Air Force and Navy for limited initial use and evaluation. Although some modification will be required by each service for full integration, the initial feedback on the tool was positive. In May 2009, USASAC hosted a Tri-Service CDA meeting during which representatives agreed to a tri-service baseline for the tool and identified areas where the tool needs to be modified prior to full use by the other services.

The CDA and ICDA are internal management tools only and are not intended to be exported to our international customers. Currently the tool does not have the security features necessary to partition the data of individual customers. DSCA will decide what case development information and data will be exportable to our customers through the Security Cooperation Information Portal (SCIP).

About the Author

Ms. Leese is an Army Supply Management specialist with over thirty years with the federal government. She has worked at the U.S. Army Security Assistance Command in New Cumberland, Pennsylvania for 23 years and currently works as a Logistics Management Specialist in the Performance Management Office. Her primary duties include development and management of metrics tools and reports; scheduling, coordination and analysis support to the command group for performance metrics reviews; and local administrator for the Army Strategic Management System. She completed her Lean Six Sigma Green Belt certification in April 2009.