IT Program Assessment
United States Customs and Immigration Services – CLAIMS 4 Program

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) conducted a program review of the U.S Customs and Immigration Services (USCIS) – CLAIMS 4 Program. This assessment represents the program's status through March 2012.

Description and Background:

CLAIMS 4 (C4) is the primary case processing system for the adjudication of Applications for Naturalization. It is operational at 98 locations nationwide (four Service Centers, the National Benefits Center, 92 Field Offices, and Headquarters) and offers a standardized automated process for adjudicating applications. The C4 system is designed to meet the USCIS vision and mission to provide 1) a customer-focused benefits processor; 2) a credible source of useful information, contributing to U.S. security; 3) accurate and useful information to our customers; 4) an immigration and citizenship benefits granting system; and 5) a means of ensuring the integrity of our immigration system. As a part of USCIS vision to consolidate the legacy form and functional capabilities to receive, process, adjudicate and print certificates, N-336, N-600 and N-600K applications were deployed in Oct-Nov of 2011. By the end of the third quarter of fiscal year 2012, C4 will be capable of adjudicating N-470 and N-565 applications. By the end of the third quarter of fiscal year 2013, C4 will be capable of adjudicating N-565 is planned to be integrated by third quarter of fiscal year 2013. Also, per DHS-USCIS mandate to consolidate and host in a secured data center, CLAIMS 4 systems 4 will be migrating to DC1 third quarter of FY12.

C4 is a legacy multi-tier client/server system designed to support high-volume processing of U.S. citizenship naturalization applications received by USCIS at the JP Morgan Chase Lockbox facility. C4 is currently a steady-state program. Its major activities include maintenance, support, and enhancement-related activities.

The program worked successfully to mitigate FY11 technical obsolescence concerns by developing more robust architecture and data model solutions. Additionally, the C4 program updated its existing database from Oracle 9i to 11g R1.

Risks and Issues:
The following list represents the current risks for the program:

- If emergency congressional requests continue, then the ongoing release schedule will be impacted and cost growth should be expected.

- If the Oracle Stream is installed on C4 servers incorrectly, there could be detrimental impacts to the systems performance
- If multiple, concurrent releases and emergency releases are not managed properly, then optimal user acceptance testing and system/application installation and configuration may add to schedule delays.

Mitigation Strategy:

The program is currently executing the following mitigation strategies to address the outlined risks:

- To mitigate the impact of unknown emergency congressional requests, the PM will continue to work with the business owner through IPTs and conduct bi-weekly conference calls.
- To reduce the possibility of the Oracle Stream negatively impacting C4 performance, the system will be deployed in phases and/or small releases.
- To reduce the impact of not properly managing concurrent releases, the program will coordinate bi-weekly meetings to review dependencies and ownership of activities.

Assessment:

The program's use of commercial off the shelf solutions such as Oracle database solutions presents a cost effective solution and mitigates potential program impacts from possible budget shortfalls. The program is currently undergoing efforts to migrate to DC1 secured data host, in line with DHS CIO priorities. Additionally, the program is undertaking efforts to implement the Federal CIO's "25 Point IT Management Reform Program" by offering agile sprints to ensure products deliver business value to their customers. The program has recognized risks associated with mitigating the impact of multiple concurrent releases and compressed timelines on system acceptance testing and user acceptance testing. The goal of the CIOs office is to continue monitoring this issue to ensure that its impact on the program is minimal. The DHS OCIO assesses the C4 program as **Medium Risk**

Score*:* **3**