Improving Grants Administration

May 2013

Ideas for...
Leveling Award Workload

Background: "Leveling Award Workload" will be presented to NSF Executive Leadership to champion change in business processes to improve workload efficiencies and resource management.
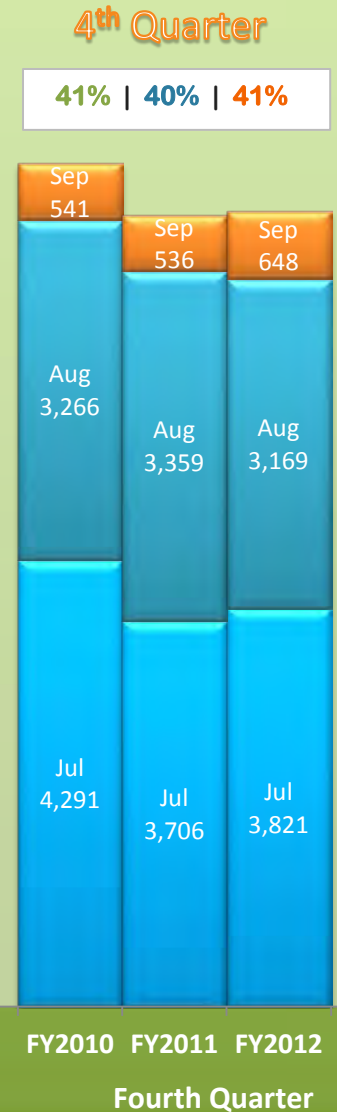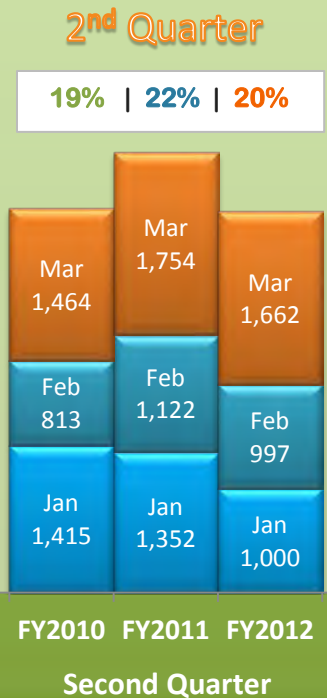
Purpose: To obtain feedback on strength of case and strategies for change management.

Funded Actions Received by DGA: FY 2010-2012

Total Awards
FY2010 - 19,747 *
FY2011 - 19,105
FY2012 - 18,544

* Includes 566 ARRA awards

1st Quarter

8% | 7% | 8%

FY2010	FY2011	FY2012
Dec	Dec	Dec
Nov	Nov	Nov

First Quarter

2nd Quarter

19% | 22% | 20%

FY2010	FY2011	FY2012
Mar 1,464	Mar 1,754	Mar 1,662
Feb 813	Feb 1,122	Feb 997
Jan 1,415	Jan 1,352	Jan 1,000

Second Quarter

3rd Quarter

33% | 31% | 31%

FY2010	FY2011	FY2012
Jun 2,409	Jun 2,123	Jun 2,039
May 1,978	May 2,062	May 2,109
Apr 2,063	Apr 1,696	Apr 1,672

Third Quarter

4th Quarter

41% | 40% | 41%

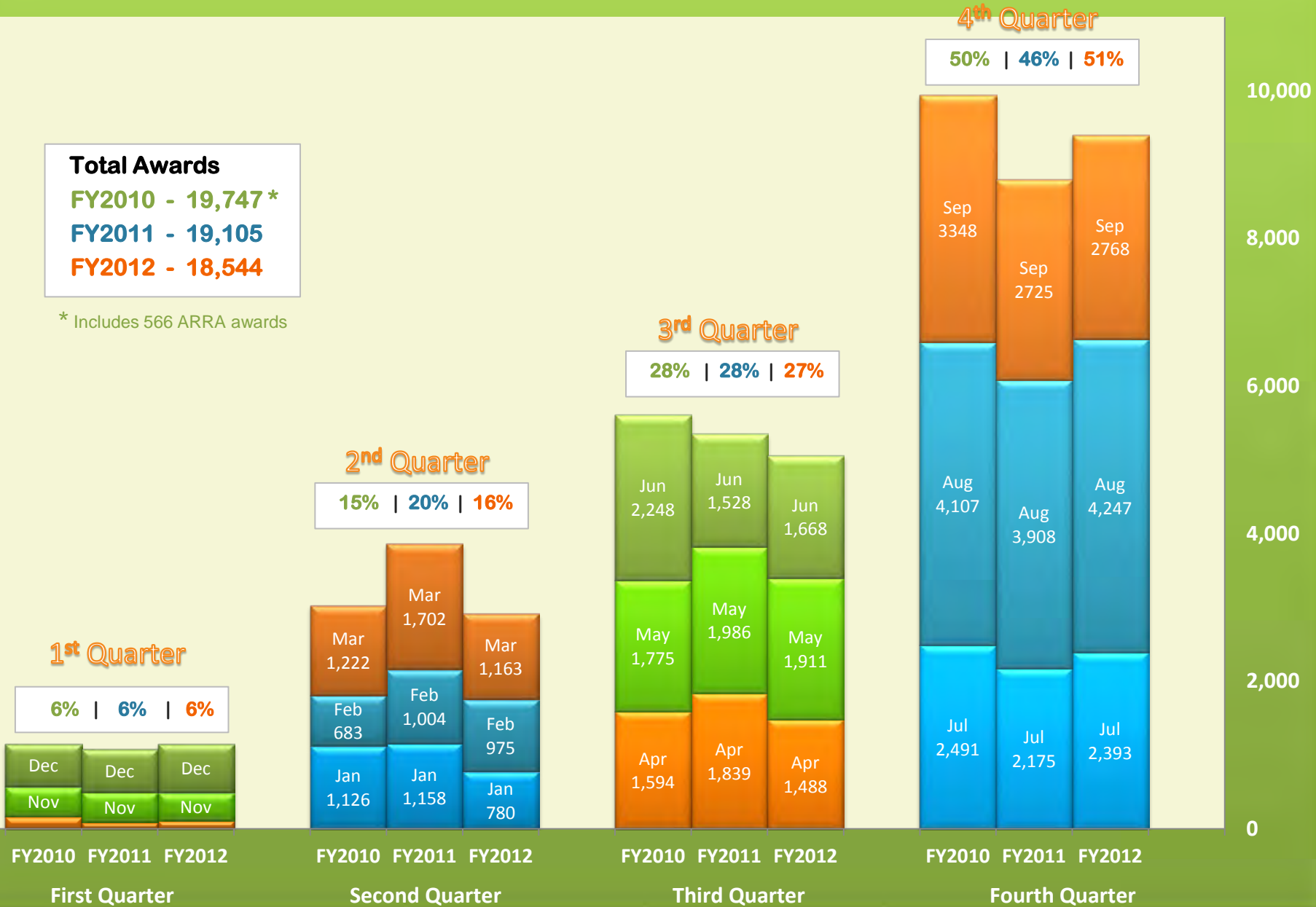| FY2010	FY2011	FY2012
Sep 541	Sep 536	Sep 648
Aug 3,266	Aug 3,359	Aug 3,169
Jul 4,291	Jul 3,706	Jul 3,821

Fourth Quarter

10,000
8,000
6,000
4,000
2,000
0

Funded Actions Awarded by DGA: FY 2010-2012

Total Awards
FY2010 - 19,747 *
FY2011 - 19,105
FY2012 - 18,544

* Includes 566 ARRA awards

1st Quarter

| 6% | 6% | 6% |

FY2010	FY2011	FY2012
Dec	Dec	Dec
Nov	Nov	Nov

First Quarter

2nd Quarter

| 15% | 20% | 16% |

FY2010	FY2011	FY2012
Mar 1,222	Mar 1,702	Mar 1,163
Feb 683	Feb 1,004	Feb 975
Jan 1,126	Jan 1,158	Jan 780

Second Quarter

3rd Quarter

| 28% | 28% | 27% |

FY2010	FY2011	FY2012
Jun 2,248	Jun 1,528	Jun 1,668
May 1,775	May 1,986	May 1,911
Apr 1,594	Apr 1,839	Apr 1,488

Third Quarter

4th Quarter

| 50% | 46% | 51% |

FY2010	FY2011	FY2012
Sep 3348	Sep 2725	Sep 2768
Aug 4,107	Aug 3,908	Aug 4,247
Jul 2,491	Jul 2,175	Jul 2,393

Fourth Quarter

10,000
8,000
6,000
4,000
2,000
0

Collaborative Effort

Perennial issue of award workload being compressed into the **4th quarter** of the fiscal year

Higher **risk** for awards made late in the fiscal year

Ideas for establishing **best practices** to alleviate issues

Potential Barriers

Myths

- Proposals cannot be recommended until budget is known

- Do not send award actions to DGA in October

- Paneled proposals must be awarded in same fiscal year

- Award actions cannot be "undone" after DD concur

Facts

- During Continuing Resolution no awards can be made under <u>new</u> programs

- Limited resources affect updates to eJacket and space for holding panels

- Lack of pressure to spend until late in the fiscal year near critical deadlines – **can be mitigated with proposed leveling ideas….**

Collaborative Ideas for Solutions

Calendar Management

Operating Procedures

IT Improvements
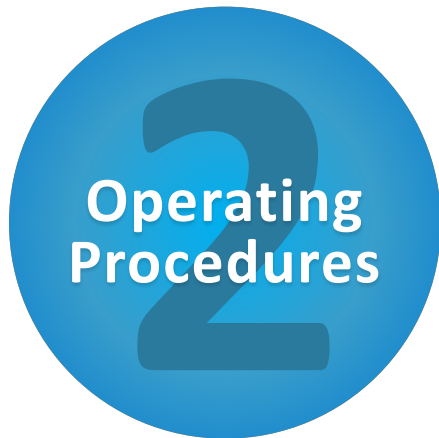
Suggestions for Leveling Award Workload

Calendar Management

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❖ Shift solicitations

❖ Evaluate panel cycles

❖ Set priority deadlines for REU/RET supplements

❖ Commit funds in 1st quarter for cross-cutting, multi-year initiatives

Management issues / Staff time commitment

2 Operating Procedures

- ❖ Create quarterly targets
- ❖ Award proposals paneled in 4th quarter during next fiscal year
- ❖ Streamline process for solicitations
- ❖ Standardize administrative procedures
- ❖ Support additional outreach and training participation

Management issues / Staff time commitment

3 **IT Improvements**

❖ Modernize award system–migrate to eJacket

❖ Improve eJacket functionality

- Expand co-funding process
- Automate decomittments
- Enable data fixes without decommitting
- Change post-award approval requirements

❖ Replace Program Information Management System (PIMS) used for clearance

Involves financial resource commitment

Program support is needed!

The current **Award System**, used to obligate about **20,000 actions annually**, does not have the flexibility to respond to ever changing requirements and is expensive to maintain.

Integration of award management into eJacket would provide **significant program and user benefits** as well as process improvements.

Integrated business systems
for seamless administration

❖View from the Community:

➤ Effect of award workflow on awardee organization?

➤ Impacts on awardee budget, hiring, or project planning?

❖Change Management:

➤ Changing "That's the way it's always been done" attitude?

➤ Program support for investments on business side?

➤ How to strengthen case to Executive Leadership?

Feedback from the Committee