



Lean 6-Sigma Green Belt Project



Department of Pesticide Regulation

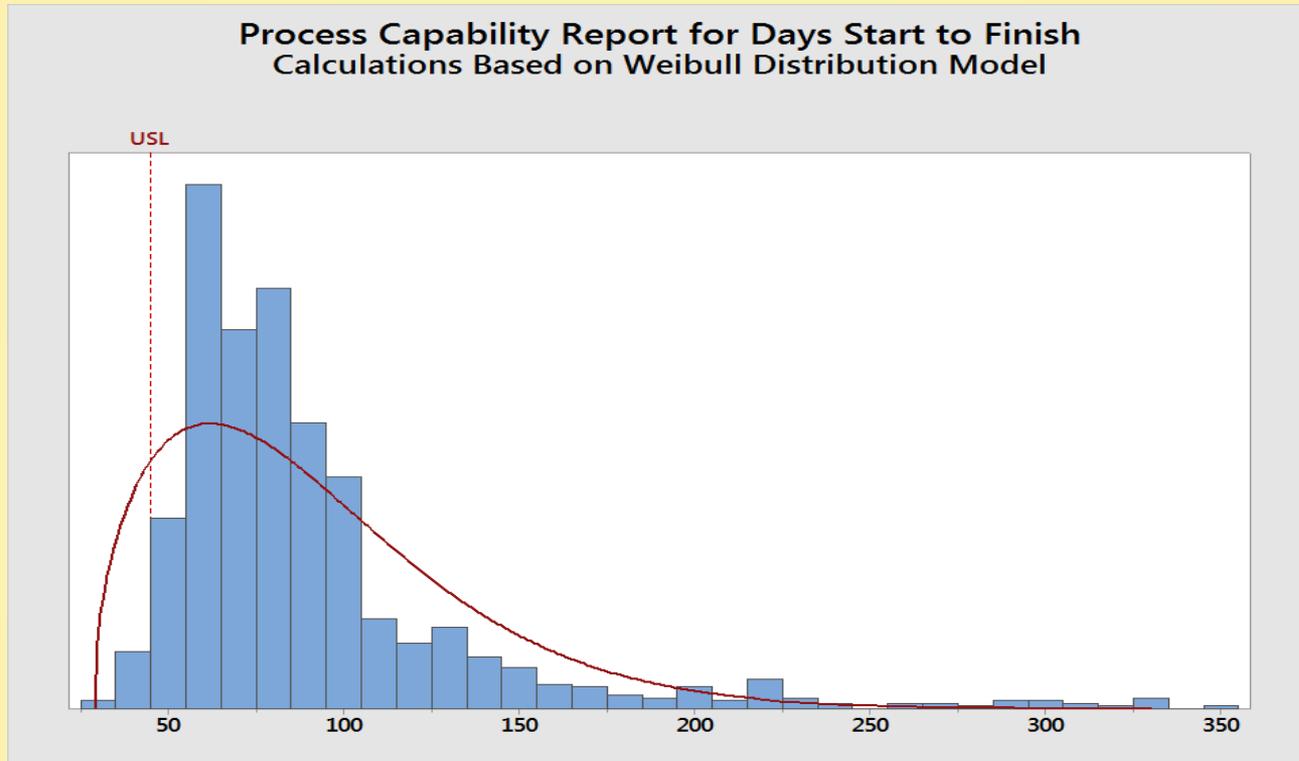
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(Project Greenbelt)

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(Project Champion)

Improving the New License Application Processing Time

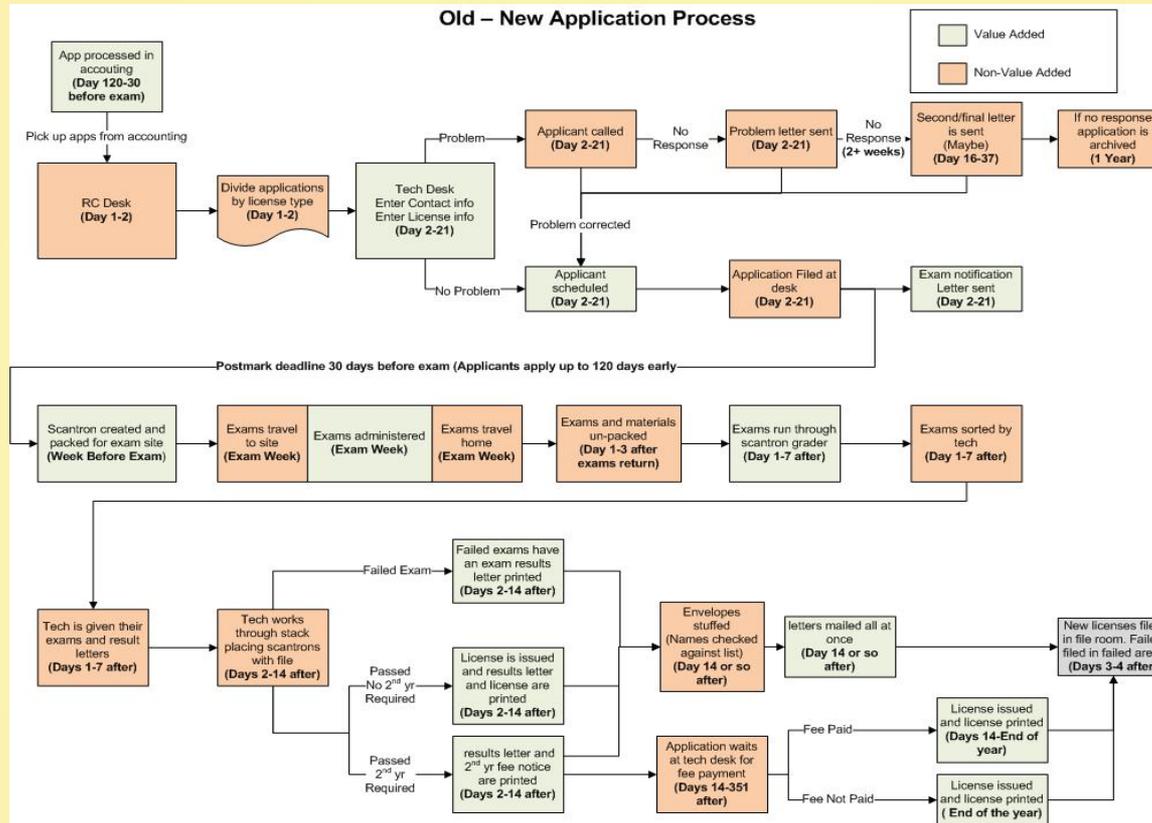
- ❖ **Problem Statement:** Currently the average time to complete the examination application process and become licensed (if the exams are passed) is 90 days. The process takes too long to schedule exams, results in mistakes and overpayment of exam fees, and is frustrating for prospective licensees waiting for exam results.
- ❖ **Objective:** To have 95% of new applicants who pass their tests the first time, receive their license within 45 days of their initial application.
- ❖ **Project Team:**
 - ❖ *Cynthia Ray – Licensing Supervisor (Process Owner)*
 - ❖ *Rebecca Olson – Licensing Staff*
 - ❖ *Kenneth King – Licensing Staff*
 - ❖ *Shernee Tousant – Licensing Staff*
 - ❖ *Valerie Ruvalcaba – Staff Services Analyst (Schedules exam sites)*
 - ❖ *Smita Tandel – Accounting Staff*
 - ❖ *Donna Gonzales – Accounting Staff*

Baseline Capability



- ❖ Average days = 90 Days
- ❖ Standard Deviation = 46 Days
- ❖ Maximum = 346 Days
- ❖ Goal = 45 days
- ❖ Percent meeting the goal = 3%

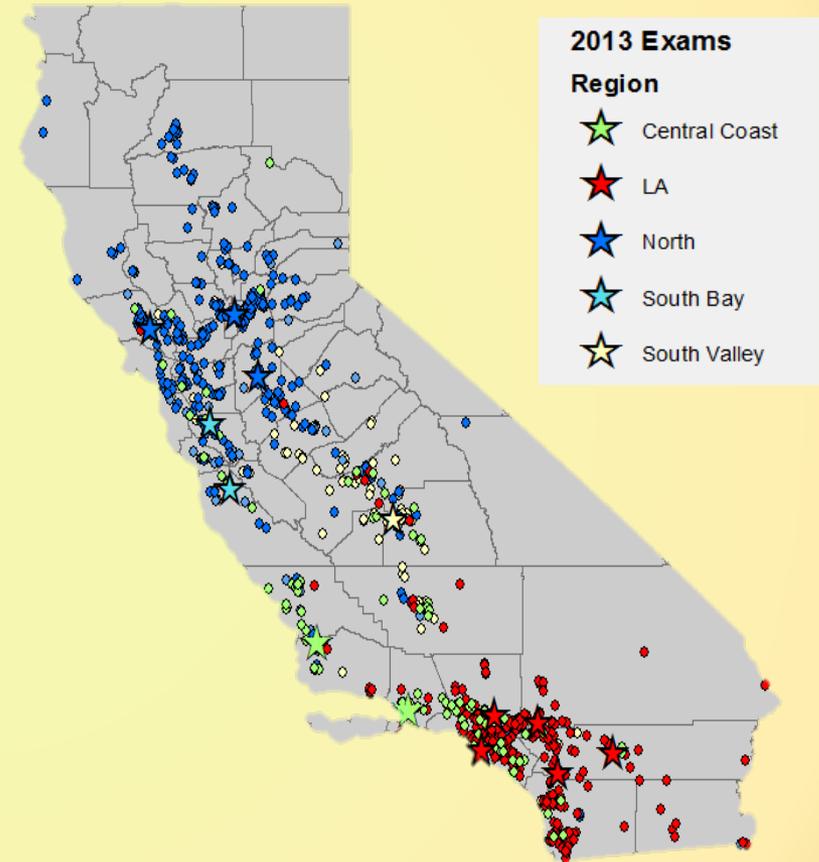
Process Map



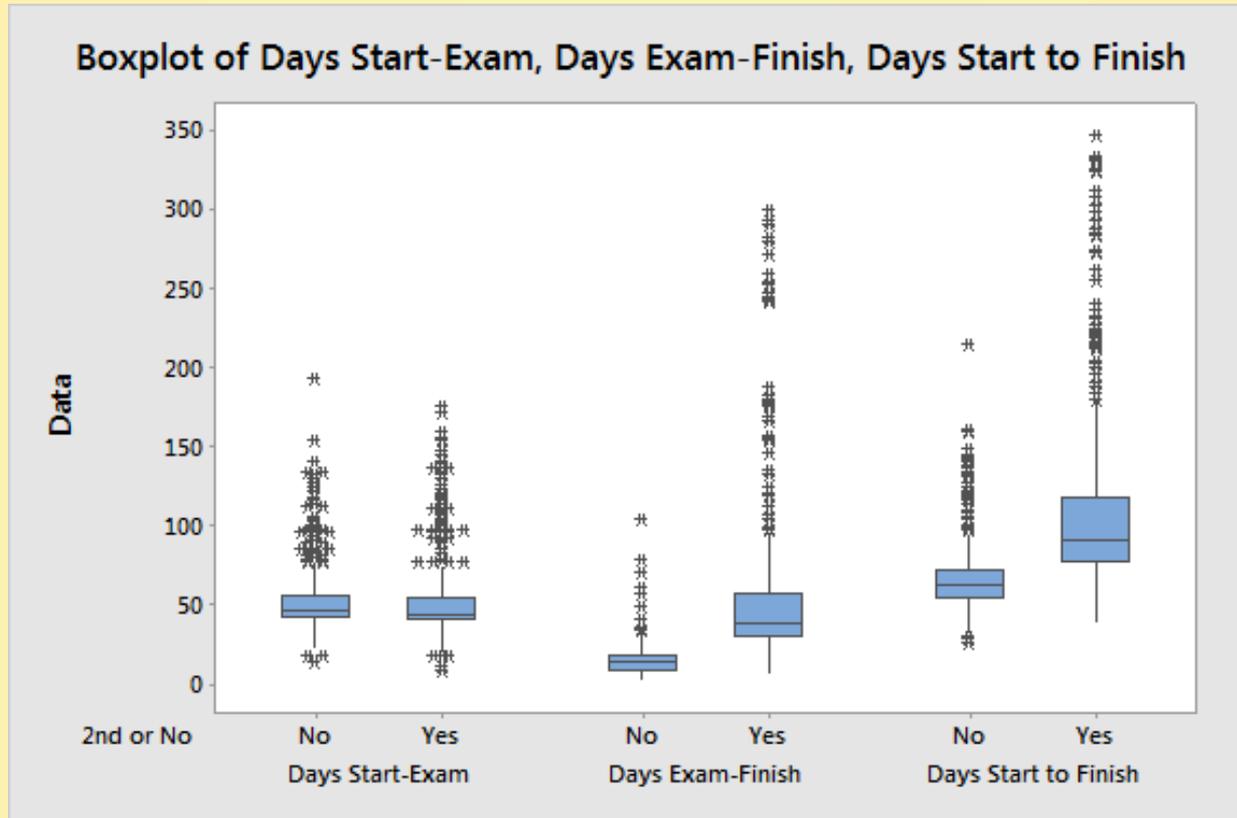
- ❖ Opportunity to reduce excessive non-value added steps.
- ❖ Opportunity to stabilize and shorten processing times.

Analysis Tools

- ❖ FMEA
- ❖ Fishbone chart
- ❖ Multi-vari analysis
- ❖ GIS analysis
- ❖ Capability analysis
- ❖ Time series plot
- ❖ Box Plot

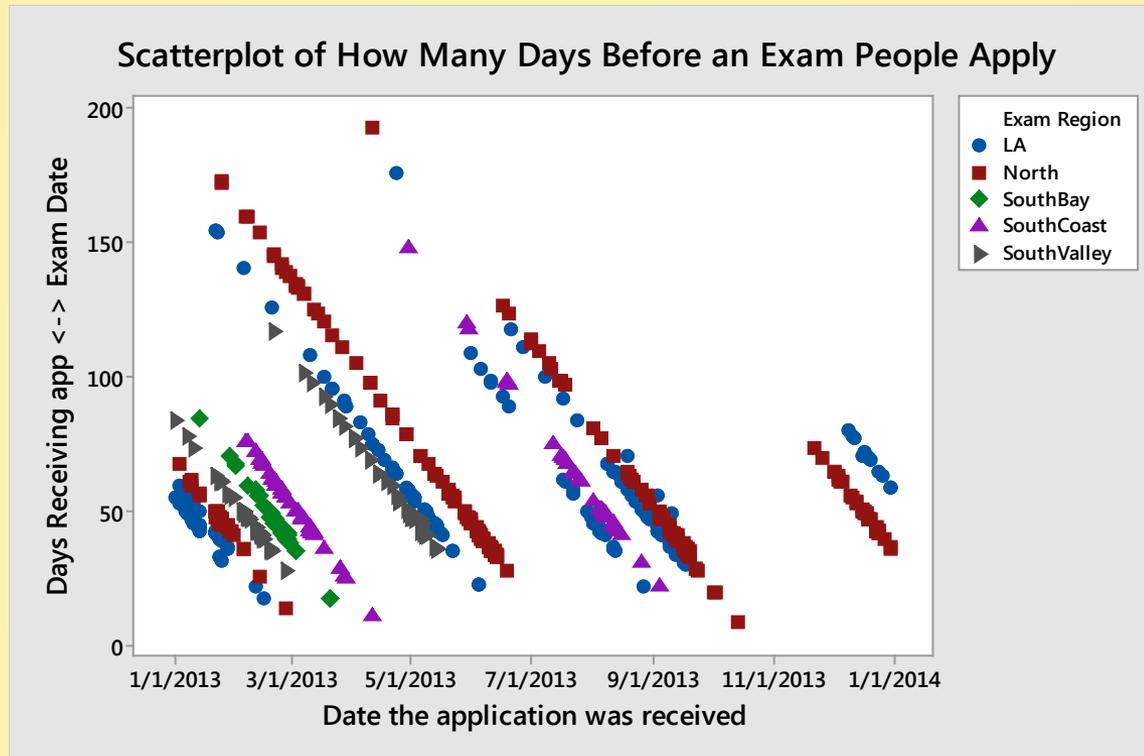


Key Analytical Finding 1



- ❖ A 2nd year fee requirement added a significant amount of time to the process
- ❖ The fee also added variability to the length of the 2nd half of the process

Key Analytical Finding 2



- ❖ Applicants applied to tests that occurred in their region. Once the postmark deadline passed for one site in the region, applicants started applying for the next site in the region.
- ❖ They didn't apply to a site in the future if there was an earlier option.



Critical x's

- ❖ 2nd Year fees: Fee required for half of the applicants after they passed their exams and before we issued a license. Allowed them to get onto the 2 year renewal cycle.
- ❖ Applicants apply early: Applicants apply early because the next exam in the area was months out.
- ❖ Staff out of the office: Any applications assigned to them would remain their until they returned.
- ❖ Exam results held until all ready: Exam results and licenses were held up to two weeks until all were ready to mail.

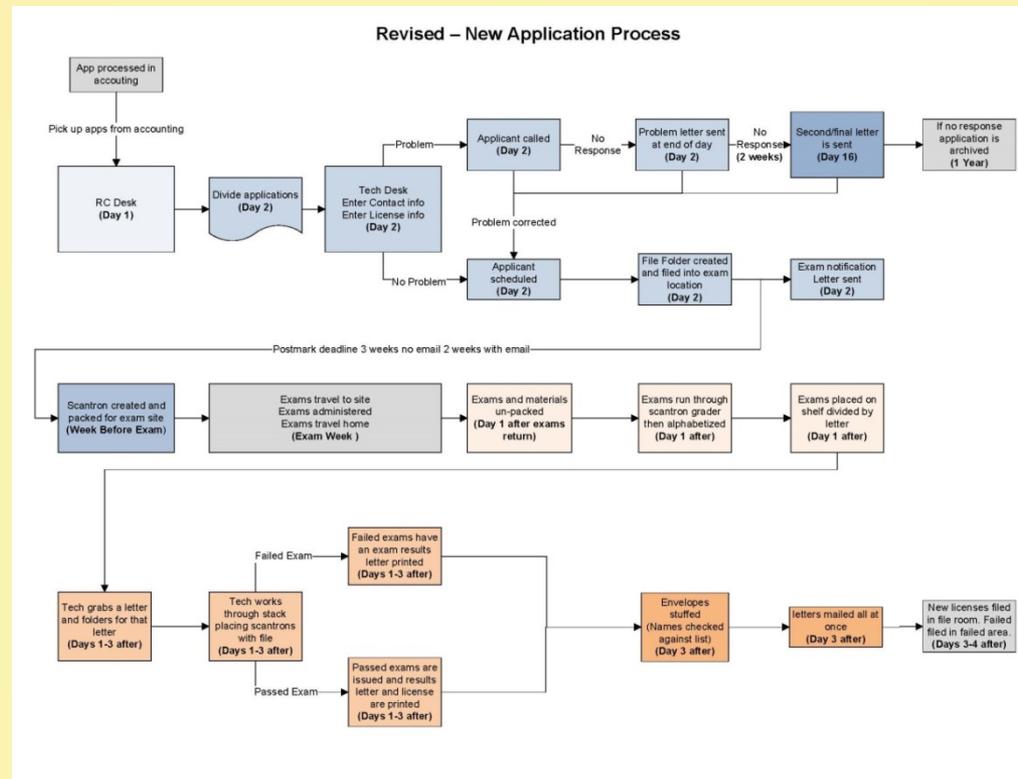


Improvement Techniques

- ❖ 2nd year fees: Changed so the license is issued immediately until the end of the year. The fee is required to extend the license one more year to get onto the cycle.
- ❖ Applicants apply early: We are going to hold small exams more often that are better spread through out the state. With the goal of no more than one month between exams in an area of the state.
- ❖ Staff out of the office: Changed the responsibility of new applications everyday to a team of techs instead of each tech responsible for their license type and half the alphabet. This way if staff is out then there is no application that is held up.



New Process Map



- ❖ The 2nd year fee process was eliminated from the end of the process
- ❖ The applications are now processed through a team approach which allows for more defined time schedules by eliminating the need to account in staff out of the office.

New Capability Analysis

- ❖ Exams being in a region every **30** days should make it so most people are applying for an exam that is no more than 30 days away.
- ❖ Decreasing our postmark deadlines from **30** days before exam to **21** (*if they want response by mail*) and **14** (*if they want response by email*) days will move the last minute group of applicants 1 to 2 weeks closer to the test date.
- ❖ A set 2 day response time from when an application is received and team approach for processing applications will allow for the shorter postmark deadlines.
- ❖ 2nd year fees have been removed which by itself reduces the average processing time by 20 days for half the applicants.
- ❖ The deadline for grading and issuing successful applicants will be set and stabilized at no more than 9 days after an exam date.
- ❖ The new process capability will be monitored as new data points are collected.



Control Plan

- ❖ Audit new processes at set intervals to verify capability.
- ❖ Built in visual queues to identify if the new timelines for processing applications is not being met.
- ❖ Initial monthly meetings to discuss the new team method of processing applications.
- ❖ Initial monthly identification of applications that do not meet the new timeframes that are laid out.
- ❖ Quarterly measurements of processing times after new process stabilizes.
- ❖ Quarterly measurements of the overall process once the new exam schedule is implemented.



Additional Benefits

- ❖ Better customer service with shortened response times.
- ❖ Clarified business processes for staff to follow.
- ❖ Staff members will no longer become behind on work when they are out of the office.
- ❖ Less confusion about where an application is located.
- ❖ Less sorting of applications into various piles.



Contact Info

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