

## Washington Air National Guard 194<sup>th</sup> Intelligence Squadron (Retention Project)

**Agency:** Washington Military Department

### **Project Impact:**

Keeping Washington National Guard units at full strength (filling all authorized positions in the unit) is essential to being able to accomplish state and federal missions. Without people, we cannot protect lives and property in the state, or serve the cause of freedom overseas. Retention is vital to this effort. Retaining quality Guard members helps keep units at full strength, and provides a trained and experienced force.

The goal of this project was to keep the Washington Air National Guard's 194<sup>th</sup> Intelligence Squadron above 90% strength by improving retention.

### *Headline:*

The 194<sup>th</sup> Intelligence Squadron maintains unit strength above 90% through September 30 2019 by implementing strategies that will increase retention in the unit.

### *Impact to Washingtonians:*

The vast majority of the citizen-soldiers and airmen of the Washington National Guard are citizens of Washington State. Our domestic missions – to protect lives and property; maintain emergency communication and ensure continuity of government – are paramount to the health and good order of our state. We cannot accomplish our domestic mission (or any mission) without people to fill out our ranks. This is why retention is critical to the strength of the National Guard and to the people of Washington State.

### **Project Summary:**

The 194<sup>th</sup> Intelligence Squadron collected voice of the customer data from the members of their unit in order to determine what improvements they could make to retain more airmen. After defining, measuring and analyzing their problem – they developed and implemented a number of improvements. Six months later, their data shows improvement in unit strength and retention. Unit strength as of December 12, 2018 is 105%.

### *Problem Statement (As of Spring 2018):*

Current unit strength is 95% (76 assigned out of 80 position), however, if the unit retains less than half of those eligible to end their time in service over the next six months, the 194<sup>th</sup> Intelligence Squadron is projected to be below the target of 90%.

### *Improvements made:*

Disseminate unit information with a factual message as opposed to a threatening message.

- Active Guard Reserve positions for technicians
- Better situational awareness on how things get done in the squadron and how people can assist
- Better balance between currency, mission requirements, and team building activities
- Hire more technicians to help with the work-load
- Mileage from Spokane
- More opportunities for Duty Status Guardsmen to assist with additional duties
- Shorter enlistment options (4 years)

### **Project Results**

Over the past six months, the unit has retained 13 out of 21 airmen eligible to end their service. The unit strength is currently at 105%.

# Strategic Lean Project Report



**Date improvement project was initiated: 7/1/2018**

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