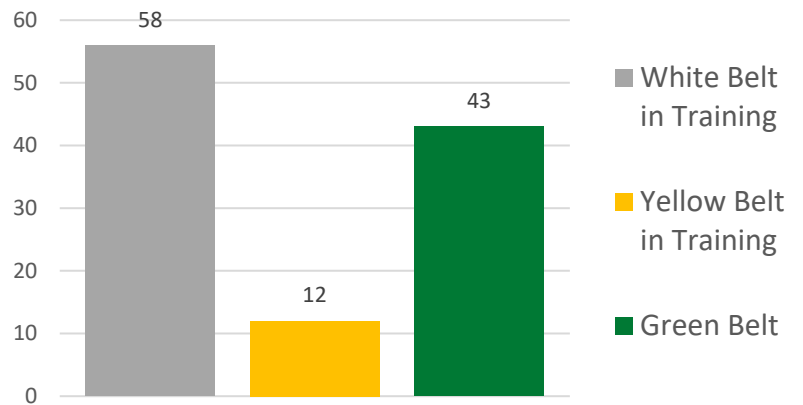


# 2021 Lean Annual Report

## Business Transformation Initiative

The Department of Environmental Conservation's (DEC) Business Transformation Initiative (BTI) program is an effort to build a system of continuous improvement. The goal is to better serve Vermonters through more efficient, timely and transparent processes. This initiative includes the deployment of a "Lean" process improvement methodology along with modern information technology tools.

## DEC Training Levels



## Recognition

### + Successes

- Deploying Lean Leadership training
- Supporting strategic planning efforts
- Coaching staff for incremental progress

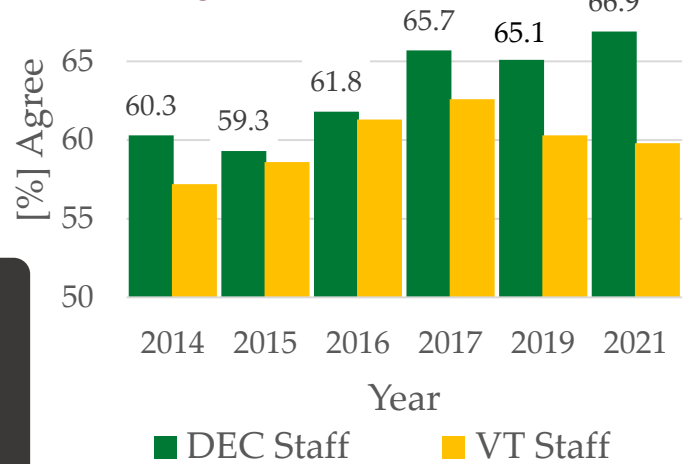
### Δ Challenges

- Energizing teams to complete full implementation
- Finding the right timing for improvement efforts
- Finding improvement opportunities in new areas

## 2021 Employee Engagement Survey

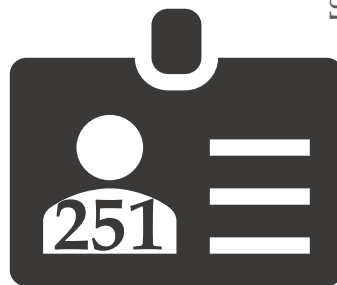
*"I am encouraged to share ideas on improving either service delivery or business process efficiency."*

### 70% Target

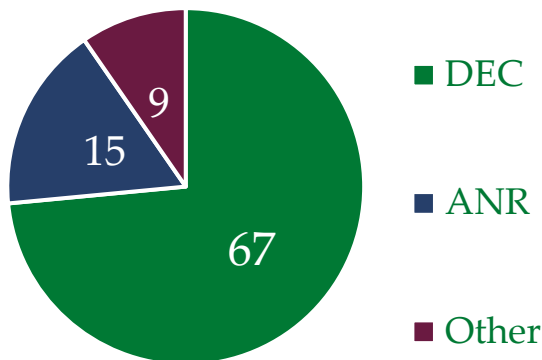


## Staff Participation in Lean Events since 2014

# of Unique DEC Staff Who Have Participated in Lean Events



Total Lean Events Held Since 2014



## Fiscal Year 2021 Projects



## Background

Lean is a process improvement methodology and management philosophy that can, and has, dramatically changed how state government operates. The Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) has been leading the way, ever since 2013, when we adopted Lean practices and principles. With support from the Vermont General Assembly, DEC took a structured approach to its Lean implementation, dedicating both staff and resources to the effort and that commitment continues eight years later.

This State Fiscal Year 2021 Annual Report summarizes DEC efforts on [DEC's 3-year Lean Implementation Plan covering FY2020-FY2025](#).

## Closed Projects

### **Major Improvements**

**DEC Passthrough Project** – The timeline from RFP posting to Agreement Execution is being isolated to better expedite the process which can often get lost in the shuffle. Invoices are processed electronically through the ANR Online submittal platform.

**Result:** Reduced the number of invoices misplaced from 5% to 0%.

**Air Quality & Climate Division's (AQCD) Point Source Registration** - The annual registration process was overly burdensome in terms of staff time and the lack of transparency to the regulated community in the process which makes tracking the various phases of the system's status difficult and prone to error.

**Result:** Customer payments were received electronically for the first time using ANR Online, 60% of customers transitioned to submitting payment electronically.

**Fire Warden Onboarding Process\*** – The Fire Warden program is a statutorily required program. Fire Wardens and Deputy Fire Warden duties include issuing burn permits and responding to forest fires. The goal of this project was to reduce burden on the administrative staff by streamlining the appointment paperwork and adjusting payment policy to be consistent with a lower work burden.

**Result:** Utilized ANR Online to register fire wardens electronically which automatically updates the fire warden database resulting in a 40% reduction in administrative workload.

**Federal Grants-In** - This project sought to create greater consistency and transparency in the process of federal grants coming into the DEC and ensuring adequate time for budget and proposal development before submittal to federal agency. A major outcome was to reassign job responsibilities and assign grants-in work to just two staff people as opposed to the previous five staff allocated for this work. This enabled them to become experts in federal grant management and develop a consistent, efficient process with the Department.

**Result:** Streamlined work resulting in a decrease from five to two federal grant managers.

**Watershed Management Division’s LaRosa Program Revitalization Project**– This project was undertaken to develop more strategic surface water monitoring designs, less programmatic oversight, and enhanced coordination with partners while staying within capacity.

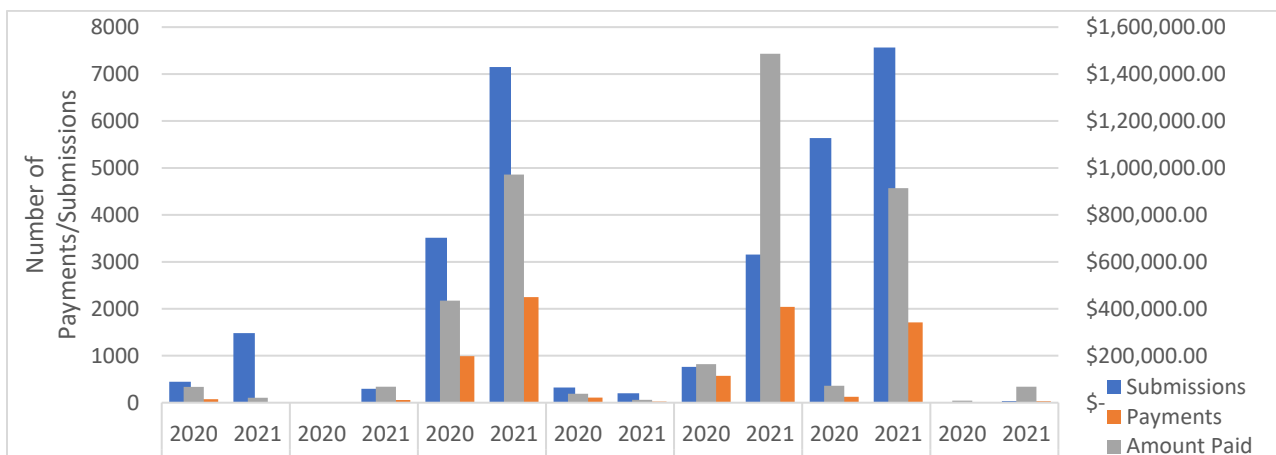
**Result:** 50% reduction of administrative work. staff to focus on science and data review.

**Legislative Report Streamlining\***- Staff were dedicating hundreds of hours on 45 reports delivered to the legislature each year. A shortened template was created to make legislative reporting more straightforward, concise and encourage readership by the legislature. This resulted in reports that were tens or more pages being reduced to around two pages.

**Result:** Created a standardized reporting format for the legislature, 24% of reports were submitted on the new template in the first year.

**Tiger Team** – Achieve 100% transition for all high priority-ranked forms across the permitting divisions to mandatory applicant submission of permit applications, payments, and compliance and reporting forms through ANR Online by September 1, 2021.

**Result:** \$4,331,544 received through the ANR Online platform over the last two years.



## The Year Ahead

### Other Active Projects

- Act 250/Section 248 – Improving accuracy and timing of Act 250 agenda items to staff to ensure completeness.
- Water Investment Division’s Act 76 Closeout\* - As of March 2020, 57 clean water projects were administratively closed out in the Grants & Contracts Management System, but not closed out in the Watershed Planning Database causing errors.
- Sites Contract Invoicing\* - Currently the system receives invoices from contractors via email, resulting in redundant data entry for WMPD and AID in the GCMS and WMID databases, as well as duplicate document storage of invoices. Administrative errors are also abundant.
- Clean Water Report Efficiency\* - At the end of each state fiscal year (SFY), it can take up to four CWIP staff nearly 30 days to close out the projects in Watershed Program Database (WPD) that have been completed in Grants Contracts Management System (GCMS).
- DEC Coaching – Eight Projects conducted through one on one “Coaching Kata” practice. Work conducted with six different learners, processing 70+ experiments, overcoming 50+ obstacles. Projects ranged from administrative workload to database development.
- ANR Online Expansion\* – In 2020, the Department launched efforts to support retooling our approach to regulatory review and environmental permitting to allow for and support increased telework. This also includes ongoing efforts to transfer paper-based processes to ANR Online- electronic forms and other online platforms.

\*New in FY 2021

**Trainings:** The DEC Lean Program is deploying a Lean Leadership training to augment the Lean Learning Series and to [share techniques for supervisors/managers](#).

Topics Include:

