



SEI BULLETIN - JULY 27, 2016

News: SEI's Will Hayes Testifies on Use of Agile Approaches in Social Security Systems Modernization

Provides insights on Agile at Scale to House Ways and Means Subcommittee on Social Security

Computer technology continues to deliver new capabilities and adapt to the changing ways in which users access information. Yet the Social Security Administration (SSA), despite recent updates to its physical assets such as computers and data centers, struggles with applications created decades ago in the [COBOL](#) programming language.

“SSA had state-of-the-art systems in the 1970s,” said Congressman Xavier Becerra, minority member of the House Ways and Means Subcommittee on Social Security, “but today those legacy systems are increasingly obsolete. They are expensive to maintain, prone to breakdown, and difficult to reprogram.” To address these problems, SSA has put forward a funding-dependent plan to modernize its software, and it plans to do so using agile development approaches.

On July 14, 2016, Will Hayes testified before the House Ways and Means Subcommittee on Social Security to offer the SEI's perspective on the use of Agile approaches in the SSA's information technology modernization plan. Agile development approaches, relatively new in government settings, create opportunities for rapid deployment of new capabilities but also pose challenges to traditional government oversight and management practices.

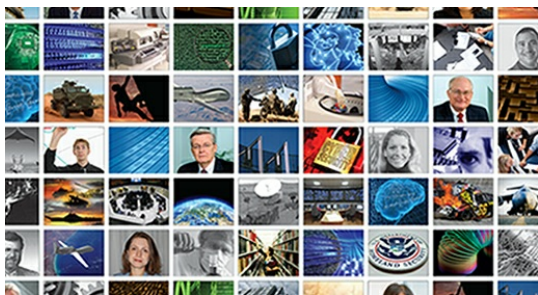
[Read about Hayes' testimony, access the full hearing transcript, and read the SEI's written testimony.](#)

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