NASA Procedural Requirements

NPR 3430.1C
Effective Date: May 01, 2007
Expiration Date: May 01, 2016

COMPLIANCE IS MANDATORY

NASA Employee Performance Communication System (EPCS) - Change 6 (10/29/10)

Responsible Office: Office of Human Capital Management

Table of Contents

Change Log

Preface

P.1 Purpose
P.2 Applicability
P.3 Authority
P.4 References
P.5 Cancellation

CHAPTER 1. Responsibility

1.1 Director, Workforce Management and Development Division
1.2 Administrator and Deputy Administrator
1.3 Center Directors and Officials-in-Charge of Headquarters Offices (OICs)
1.4 Center Directors and the Assistant Administrator for Infrastructure and Administration
1.5 Center Human Resources Directors
1.6 Rating Officials
1.7 Reviewing Officials

CHAPTER 2. Objectives

CHAPTER 3. Definitions

3.1 Acceptable Level of Competence
3.2 Appraisal Period
3.3 Critical Element
3.4 Minimum Appraisal Period

3.5 Narrative Summary
3.6 NASA Employee Performance Communication System (EPCS)
3.7 Non-Critical Element
3.8 Not Rated
3.9 Performance
3.10 Performance Appraisal
3.11 Performance Management System
3.12 Performance Plan
3.13 Performance Standard
3.14 Progress Review
3.15 Rating Definitions
3.16 Rating Official
3.17 Rating of Record
3.18 Reviewing Official
3.19 Supervisor

CHAPTER 4. Basic Provisions

CHAPTER 5. Performance Appraisal Process

5.1 Performance Plan and Appraisal Forms
5.2 Performance Planning
5.3 Performance Monitoring
5.4 Performance Assessing
5.5 Detailed or Matrixed Employees
5.6 Position Changes/Transfer
5.7 Performance Review Process
5.8 Awards Eligibility
5.9 Quality Step Increases (QSI)
5.10 Reduction in Force (RIF)
5.11 Promotions
5.12 Within-Grade Increase (WIG)
5.13 Failure to Meet Performance Expectations
5.14 Appraisal Disagreements
5.15 Linkage to Senior Executive Service (SES) Performance Management System

CHAPTER 6. System Evaluation

CHAPTER 7. Employee Performance Files

Appendix A. Performance Elements and Standards for Supervisory Employees

Element 1: Program/Project/Functional Objective (PPFO)
Element 2: Supervisory Competencies

Appendix B. Performance Elements and Standards for Nonsupervisory Employees

Element 1: Program/Project/Functional Objective (PPFO)
Element 2: Collaboration and Teamwork

Element 3: Communications

Change Log

NPR 3430.1C, NASA Employee Performance Communication System (EPCS)

Change #	Center	Date Approved	Description
1	Associate Administrator for Office of Human Capital Management	5/27/2009	CHAPTER 5, 5.8.1 Awards Eligibility change to 5.8.1 minor edits to include entitlement to an award
2	Associate Administrator for Office of Human Capital Management	5/27/2009	CHAPTER 5, 5.8.4 Quality Step Increase (QSI) change to 5.8.4 to include minor edits made to Quality Step Increase is considered
3	Associate Administrator for Office of Human Capital Management	5/27/2009	CHAPTER 5, 5.9.3 Quality Step Increase (QSI) change to 5.9.3 to include minor edits made to When QSI is granted, no other award shall be given in conjuction with a QSI.
4	Associate Administrator for Office of Human Capital Management	5/27/2009	CHAPTER 5, 5.14.2, Appraisal Disagreements, change to 5.14.2, to include minor edits to when an employee who disagrees with the Rating Record....in case of a disagreement with a perofrmance summary rating of Distinguished, Needs improvement, or Unacceptable that must be reveiwed and approved by a higher-level official....
5	Associate Administrator for Office of Human Capital Management	5/27/2009	CHAPTER 5, 5.14.3, Change of Appraisal Disagreements, change to 5.14.3, to include minor edits for when an employee is dissatisfied with the reconsideration decision, he/she may formally grieve the Rating of Record.
6	Associate Administrator for Office of Human Capital Management	10/29/2010	APPENDIX A, Element 2d. Resources Management, last bullet to include minor edits to rearrange wording with addtional language which is relative to the compliance requirement.

Preface

P.1 Purpose

The Employee Performance Communication System (EPCS) is NASA's performance management system for all employees other than Senior Executive Service (SES), Senior Scientific and Technical (ST), and Senior Level (SL) employees. EPCS coverage includes employees serving under temporary, term, excepted (including NASA Excepted (NEX)), and Student Educational Employment Program appointments. The EPCS establishes a systematic process for planning, monitoring, developing, assessing, and rewarding employee performance that contributes to achieving the Agency's Vision, mission, and goals in accordance with applicable laws and regulations. The EPCS creates a strategically linked set of performance expectations for all employees, promotes a performance culture that focuses on two-way communication and accountability for results, and clearly differentiates between high and low performers.

P.2 Applicability

This NPR is effective May 1, 2007, and is applicable to NASA Headquarters, NASA Centers (including Component Facilities), and the NASA Shared Services Center. Unless otherwise indicated, the word Center(s) in the text of this NPR includes NASA Headquarters and the NASA Shared Services Center. Any reference to Center Director(s) includes the Assistant Administrator for Infrastructure and Administration and the Executive Director, NASA Shared Services Center.

The Office of the Inspector General has statutory independence and may create a separate performance management system that more effectively meets its mission requirements.

P.3 Authority

a. Performance Appraisal, 5 U.S.C. S 4301 et seq.

b. Performance Management, 5 C.F.R. Part 430.

c. NPD 3000.1, Management of Human Resources.

P.4 References

a. Employee Performance File System Records, 5 C.F.R. Part 293.

b. Privacy Procedures for Personnel Records, 5 C.F.R. Part 297.

c. Reduction in Force, 5 C.F.R. Part 351.

d. Performance Appraisal for General Schedule, Prevailing Rate, and Certain Other Employees, 5 C.F.R. Part 432.

e. Awards, 5 C.F.R. Part 451.

f. Pay Under the General Schedule, 5 C.F.R. Part 531.

g. Adverse Actions, 5 C.F.R. Part 752.

h. OPM/GOVT-2, Employee Performance File System Records, 65 Fed. Reg. 24731 (April 27, 2000).

i. NPD 1000.1, 2006 NASA Strategic Plan.

j. NPD 1382.17, NASA Privacy Policy.

k NPD 1440.6, NASA Records Management.

l. NPR 3335.1, Internal Placement of NASA Employees.

m. NPR 3351.1, Reduction in Force for NASA Employees.

n. NPR 3432.1, Performance-Based Reduction-in-Grade or Removal Actions.

o. NPR 3451.1, NASA Awards and Recognition Program.

p. NPR 3713.1, Procedures for Providing Reasonable Accommodation for Individuals with Disabilities.

q. NPR 3771.1, Grievance System.

P.5 Cancellation

NPR 3430.1B, NASA Employee Performance Communication System, dated May 1, 2007.

/S/
Charles H. Scales
Associate Administrator
For Institutions and Management

CHAPTER 1. Responsibility

1.1 Director, Workforce Management and Development Division

The Director, Workforce Management and Development Division, Office of Human Capital Management, is responsible for ensuring that the EPCS and these procedural requirements comply with applicable law and regulations.

1.2 Administrator and Deputy Administrator

The Administrator and Deputy Administrator shall hold senior management officials accountable for ensuring that all covered employees receive timely and complete performance plans and appraisals in accordance with the requirements of this NPR.

1.3 Center Directors and Officials-in-Charge of Headquarters Offices (OICs):

1.3.1 Shall establish and communicate the annual performance goals for/to their organization prior to the beginning of the appraisal period.

1.3.2 Shall communicate their organization's performance in achieving the annual performance goals prior to the end of the appraisal period and provide guidance to subordinate managers and supervisors on how the organization's performance are to be considered when assessing the performance of individual employees.

1.3.3 Must hold subordinate managers and supervisors accountable for ensuring that all covered employees receive timely and complete performance plans and appraisals in accordance with the requirements of this NPR.

1.4 Center Directors and the Assistant Administrator for Infrastructure and Administration

In addition to the responsibility identified in paragraph 1.3, Center Directors and the Assistant Administrator for Infrastructure and Administration shall, for their respective installation in accordance with the requirements of this NPR, ensure the implementation of the following:

1.4.1 Process(es) by which employee and, if applicable, customer perspectives are considered when evaluating and appraising supervisory employees.

1.4.2 Performance review process(es) (e.g., Performance Review Board) to ensure:

1.4.2.1 Fairness and consistency in the appraising and rewarding of employees.

1.4.2.2 The distribution of performance award amounts is aligned with the distribution of performance summary ratings by establishing guidelines (e.g., percentage/range of percentage of salary) for monetary performance awards applicable to Distinguished, Accomplished, and Fully Successful performance summary ratings.

1.5 Center Human Resources Directors:

1.5.1 Shall determine the actual date performance appraisals are due; however, appraisals must be given to employees as soon as practicable (generally within 30 days) after the end of the appraisal period.

1.5.2 Are responsible for communicating these procedural requirements to all covered employees. This responsibility may be accomplished through a variety of means (e.g., briefings, training, Web-based information).

1.5.3 Shall certify annually to the Director, Workforce Management and Development Division, no later than November 30 or six months after the beginning of the appraisal period, that midpoint progress reviews have been held. The certifications shall identify the number of employees covered by this NPR and the percentage of those employees who received a midpoint review and describe the method used to make and support this determination.

1.5.4 On the date determined by the Director, Workforce Management and Development Division, shall report annually the process(es) used to ensure the alignment of performance award amounts to performance summary ratings and shall be able to demonstrate such alignment.

1.5.5 Shall, at a minimum and as a function of the Human Resources Office, provide guidance to Rating Officials regarding the determination of an employee's performance summary rating as Needs Improvement, the denial of a within-grade increase, and the appropriate action to take when a performance summary rating is Unacceptable.

1.5.6 Shall establish written procedures for the maintenance and retention of an Employee Performance File for each employee covered by this NPR. Maintenance of, access to, transfer of, and destruction of such files shall be in accordance with this NPR, NASA Privacy Policy, the Office of Personnel Management's (OPM) Government-wide system of records' (OPM/GOVT-2) requirements, and other applicable regulations.

1.6 Rating Officials:

1.6.1 Must establish a written performance plan for each employee at the beginning of the appraisal period (normally within 30 days) or within 30 days of an employee's assignment to a position or to a set of duties in accordance with the requirements of this NPR.

1.6.2 Must explain to each employee how his/her Program/Project/Functional Objective (PPFO) aligns with and supports the accomplishment of the Agency's goals and objectives.

1.6.3 Are encouraged to provide performance feedback to each employee throughout the appraisal period.

1.6.4 Must conduct and document a midpoint progress review with each employee.

1.6.5 Must appraise each employee at the end of the appraisal period (generally within 30 days) in accordance with the requirements of this NPR.

1.6.6 Shall ensure that subordinate employees are appraised and rewarded fairly and consistently, based on their accomplishments and contributions to achieving the performance goals and objectives of the organization.

1.6.7 Must take appropriate action, with the assistance of the Human Resources Office, to address the performance of any employee that is below the Meets Expectations performance element rating

level.

1.6.8 Must, at a minimum, discuss training and development needs with each employee during the progress review and annual appraisal.

1.6.9 Shall, prior to leaving their position before the end of an appraisal period, complete an appraisal for each employee to be given to the employee and to be used by the incoming supervisor.

1.7 Reviewing Officials:

1.7.1 Shall hold Rating Officials accountable for:

1.7.1.1 Completing a performance plan and appraisal for each covered employee in accordance with the requirements of this NPR.

1.7.1.2 Appraising and rewarding employees in a fair and consistent manner across the organization.

1.7.1.3 Taking appropriate and timely action to address the performance of any employee who is performing below the Meets Expectations performance element rating level.

1.7.2 Reviewing and approving the assignment of a performance summary rating of Distinguished, Needs Improvement, or Unacceptable.

1.7.3 Ensuring that, prior to leaving his/her position before the end of the appraisal period, the Rating Official completes an appraisal for each employee to be given to the employee and to be used by the incoming supervisor.

CHAPTER 2. Objectives

2.1 Supports the Agency's Vision, mission, goals, and Strategic Plan.

2.2 Emphasizes the embodiment of NASA's values in everything that we do.

2.3 Establishes an Agency-wide performance management system that ensures alignment with the Agency's goals, focuses on accountability for results, and effectively differentiates between high and low performance.

2.4 Establishes the employee as a partner through ongoing communication and constructive feedback between the Rating Official and employee to, among other things, ensure that each covered employee understands how he/she contributes to achieving the Agency's goals.

2.5 Is fair, simple, and relevant.

CHAPTER 3. Definitions

3.1 Acceptable Level of Competence (ALOC). Performance at the fully successful level or higher that justifies an increase to an employee's rate of basic pay to the next higher step of the grade or the next higher rate within the grade of the employee's position.

3.2 Appraisal Period. The one-year period, from May 1 through April 30, for which performance shall be appraised and a Rating of Record prepared.

3.3 Critical Element. A work assignment or responsibility of such importance that unacceptable (i.e., Fails to Meet Expectations) performance in that element would result in a determination that an employee's overall performance summary rating is Unacceptable. Such elements shall be used to measure performance only at the individual level (5 C.F.R. S 430.203).

3.4 Minimum Appraisal Period. The minimum amount of time that an employee must be under a performance plan before a Rating of Record can be assigned. This period is 90 calendar days.

3.5 Narrative Summary. A written, or otherwise recorded, summary that succinctly addresses an employee's significant performance achievement(s) or result(s) or observable behavior(s) relative to his/her performance elements and standards for the appraisal period.

3.6 NASA Employee Performance Communication System (EPCS). The specific responsibilities and requirements for planning, monitoring, developing, assessing, and rewarding employee performance established under the policies and parameters of NASA's performance management system.

3.7 Non-Critical Element. A dimension or aspect of individual, team, or organizational performance, exclusive of a critical element, that is used in assigning a performance summary rating level. Such elements may include, but are not limited to, objectives, goals, program plans, work plans, and other means of expressing expected performance (5 C.F.R. S 430.203). Failure on a non-critical element cannot be used as a basis for a performance-based action (e.g., reduction in grade or removal) (5 C.F.R. S 432.104) nor can the employee's performance be summarized as Unacceptable overall based on that failure (5 C.F.R. S 430.208(b)(2)). Note--non-critical does not mean not important.

3.8 Not Rated. A term, applicable only to a performance element, used when no performance element rating level can be assigned because the employee has had insufficient opportunity to demonstrate performance of the element, the element was removed from the performance plan, or for other similar reasons.

3.9 Performance. The accomplishment of the work assignments and responsibilities described in the employee's performance plan.

3.10 Performance Appraisal. The review and evaluation of an employee's performance against the performance elements and standards described in the employee's performance plan.

3.11 Performance Management System. The general policies and parameters under which the requirements of the EPCS to plan, monitor, develop, assess, and reward employee performance have been established. The NASA Performance Management System (also referred to as the NASA EPCS) was approved by OPM on April 23, 1996.

3.12 Performance Plan. All the written or otherwise recorded performance elements that describe what the employee is expected to accomplish during the appraisal period and the standards against which the employee's performance shall be appraised.

3.13 Performance Standard. An expression of a performance threshold, requirement, or expectation that is measurable and focused on results.

3.14 Progress Review. A Rating Official's and employee's review and documented discussion of the employee's performance, progress in meeting the performance elements and standards of the employee's performance plan, and training and development needs and requirements. A progress review does not result in a Rating of Record.

3.15 Rating Definitions.

3.15.1 Performance Element Rating Levels.

3.15.1.1 Significantly Exceeds Expectations. Performance that consistently exceeds the performance standards to an exceptional degree for the element.

3.15.1.2 Exceeds Expectations. Performance that consistently exceeds the performance standards to a high degree for the element.

3.15.1.3 Meets Expectations. Performance that fully and consistently meets the performance standards identified for the element.

3.15.1.4 Needs Improvement. Performance that does not fully meet the performance standards for the element.

3.15.1.5 Fails to Meet Expectations. Performance that fails to meet the established performance standards for the element.

3.15.2 Performance Summary Rating Levels (Pattern H) (5 C.F.R. S 430.208(d)).

3.15.2.1 Distinguished (Level 5). Performance when all elements are rated Significantly Exceeds Expectations.

3.15.2.2 Accomplished (Level 4). Performance when all elements are rated no lower than Exceeds Expectations.

3.15.2.3 Fully Successful (Level 3). Performance when no element is rated below Meets Expectations.

3.15.2.4 Needs Improvement (Level 2). Performance when any element is rated below Meets Expectations.

3.15.2.5 Unacceptable (Level 1). Performance when any critical element is rated Fails to Meet Expectations.

3.16 Rating Official. The individual (usually the immediate supervisor) who is responsible for:

3.16.1 Planning. Engaging the employee as a partner in the establishment of the employee's performance elements and standards.

3.16.2 Monitoring. Promoting two-way communications with the employee and providing constructive feedback relative to the employee's performance during the appraisal period.

3.16.3 Developing. Assessing the employee's training and development needs and requirements to improve good or poor performance and, when possible, providing educational, developmental, and growth opportunities.

3.16.4 Rating. Appraising in a fair, accurate, and timely manner the employee's performance against

the performance plan at the end of the appraisal period.

3.16.5 Rewarding. When appropriate, fully and fairly utilizing awards and recognition to recognize the employee's performance and achievements.

3.17 Rating of Record. The written, or otherwise recorded, performance summary rating level assigned at the end of an appraisal period or when required by special circumstances. The Rating of Record must be supported by a narrative summary of the employee's performance.

3.18 Reviewing Official. The individual (usually the second-level supervisor) who must review and approve a performance summary rating of Distinguished, Needs Improvement, or Unacceptable. Center Directors and OICs may be both the Rating and Reviewing Official.

3.19 Supervisor. See Rating Official.

CHAPTER 4. Basic Provisions

4.1 The Agency-wide performance appraisal period shall be from May 1 through April 30.

4.2 The Rating Official must establish a written performance plan at the beginning of each appraisal period (normally within 30 days) or within 30 days of an employee's assignment to a position or to a set of duties.

4.3 Performance plans:

4.3.1 Must identify the performance goals and objectives of the employee's organization for the appraisal period to which he/she will contribute.

4.3.2 For supervisory employees, must include the performance elements and standards identified in Appendix A. Both elements are critical, and the PPFO element must link to and support the achievement of the organization's goals and objectives.

4.3.3 For nonsupervisory employees, must include the performance elements and standards identified in Appendix B. The performance plan may include both critical and non-critical elements; however, the PPFO element must be critical and link to and support achieving the organization's goals and objectives.

4.3.4 May include additional performance elements and standards at the discretion of the Rating Official.

4.4 Team or organizational performance expectations can be established as a non-critical element.

4.5 Each element must include a sufficient number of performance standards to clearly communicate to the employee the performance expectations for that element. The performance standards must be measurable and focused on results.

4.6 The minimum period an employee must work under a performance plan before receiving a performance summary rating (Rating of Record) is 90 calendar days.

4.7 The Rating Official must conduct and document a progress review with each employee at least once during the appraisal period (normally midpoint of the appraisal period). If at midpoint in the appraisal period an employee has been under a performance plan for less than 90 days, a midterm review may be conducted or delayed until such time when the employee has had a sufficient opportunity to perform.

4.8 Each performance element that the employee has had an opportunity to perform must be appraised as Significantly Exceeds Expectations, Exceeds Expectations, Meets Expectations, Needs Improvement, or Fails to Meet Expectations.

4.9 Performance in one or more critical elements that Fails to Meet Expectations shall be the basis for an action to reassign the employee or initiate an adverse action (e.g., reduction in grade or removal) against the employee, but only after the employee has been given a period of time to improve his/her performance. The minimum Performance Improvement Period (PIP) is 30 calendar days.

4.10 An employee's overall performance must be appraised at one of five performance summary rating levels (Pattern H)--Unacceptable (Level 1), Needs Improvement

(Level 2), Fully Successful (Level 3), Accomplished (Level 4), or Distinguished

(Level 5) (5 C.F.R. S 430.208(d)).

4.11 An employee shall be given a Rating of Record on an annual basis after the end of the appraisal period (generally within 30 days) except in specific circumstances when it is not appropriate to do so. For example, an employee has not been under a performance plan for the minimum appraisal period (90 days) at the end of the appraisal period; or an employee is on a PIP at the end of the appraisal period and the opportunity to demonstrate acceptable performance, as specified in the PIP, has not elapsed.

4.12 There is no limit on the number of or a quota for Distinguished performance summary ratings. Every employee shall have an opportunity to demonstrate performance that meets, exceeds, or significantly exceeds the expectations in his/her performance plan; however, only those whose performance significantly exceeds expectations shall merit the performance summary rating of Distinguished.

CHAPTER 5. Performance Appraisal Process

5.1 Performance Plan and Appraisal Forms

Standard Agency-wide performance plan and appraisal forms for supervisory and non-supervisory employees must be used by all Centers. Centers with an automated performance management system may develop automated forms provided the information does not deviate from the Agency-wide forms.

5.2 Performance Planning

5.2.1 The Rating Official must:

5.2.1.1 Establish a written, or otherwise recorded, performance plan for each employee. Normally, these plans shall be established within 30 days of the beginning of the appraisal period or within 30 days of an employee's assignment to a position or to a set of duties.

5.2.1.2 Offer an employee the opportunity to provide input into his/her performance plan. Before finalizing a performance plan, the Rating Official must provide a draft of the plan to the employee and give the employee an opportunity to provide input/feedback. However, the Rating Official shall make the final decision on the performance elements and standards to be included in the plan.

5.2.2 Performance plans:

5.2.2.1 To establish the required alignment with the Agency's Strategic Plan, must identify the performance goals and objectives of the employee's organization for the appraisal period to which he/she will contribute in order. It is expected that responsibility for specific organizational goals and objectives follows the chain of authority within an organization (i.e., from senior executive to manager to supervisor to employee). During the planning phase, it is the responsibility of the Rating Official to discuss with the employee how the individual performance elements and standards are aligned with and support achieving of the organization's goals and objectives.

5.2.2.2 For supervisory employees, must include the performance elements and standards identified in Appendix A.

5.2.2.2.1 These performance elements and standards are the minimum requirements.

5.2.2.2.2 Both elements are critical.

5.2.2.2.3 The PPFO element must link to and support achieving the organization's goals and objectives.

5.2.2.3 For nonsupervisory employees, must include the performance elements and standards identified in Appendix B.

5.2.2.3.1 These performance elements and standards are the minimum requirements.

5.2.2.3.2 The elements may be either critical or non-critical. However, the PPFO element must be critical and link to and support achieving the organization's goals and objectives.

5.2.2.4 For team leaders, program managers, and other similar nonsupervisory positions when determined applicable by the Rating Official, may include one or more of the performance

sub-elements and standards from the Supervisory Competencies element (Appendix A).

5.2.2.5 At the discretion of the Rating Official, may include additional performance elements and standards that are specific and relative to the employee's duties.

5.2.2.6 When an employee will be matrixed to one or more projects or detailed to another position outside of the direct supervision and control of the supervisor of record (Rating Official) for 90 days or more, refer to paragraph 5.5.1.

5.2.2.7 Typically, should not have more than eight elements including the minimum requirements as stated in paragraphs 5.2.2.2 and 5.2.2.3.

5.2.3 The performance elements identify the expected results stated in very broad terms. Therefore, each element must include a number of performance standards in sufficient detail for the employee to understand what is expected of him/her. Performance standards:

5.2.3.1 Must be written at the Meets Expectations level, commensurate with the knowledge and skills required by the position. The performance standards must be challenging and significant in their expected results and must require the employee to consistently and reliably perform all the duties of the position with no greater level of supervision than is described by the position description.

5.2.3.2 Must identify the measures (e.g., quality, quantity, timeliness, cost-effectiveness) that will be used to evaluate the performance results.

5.2.3.3 Should guide the Rating Official/employee discussion about performance expectations during the performance-planning stage and the discussion about the employee's performance and accomplishments during a progress review and the annual appraisal.

5.2.4 At any time during the appraisal period, when necessary and with the agreement of the Rating Official and employee, a performance plan may be modified to reflect a change(s) to the performance requirements of the position.

5.2.5 No higher-level review of performance plans is required at this phase of the performance management process.

5.3 Performance Monitoring

5.3.1 The EPCS emphasizes ongoing communication and constructive feedback about performance between the Rating Official and the employee (including employees who are matrixed to one or more projects or detailed to another position) throughout the appraisal period, and each has a responsibility to keep the other informed. Such feedback may be provided by a Rating Official in his/her informal and/or formal day-to-day communication with an employee, individually, or as a member of a team and by an employee through his/her informal communication, verbally or via e-mail, and/or written status reports on the programs/projects he/she is working on.

5.3.2 At a minimum, one progress review must be held during the appraisal period, generally at midpoint in the period (refer to paragraph 4.7). Either a Rating Official or an employee may initiate a progress review at any time during the appraisal period.

5.3.3 A Rating Official must offer an employee an opportunity to provide input on his/her accomplishments relative to the performance elements and standards for his/her progress review. Documentation, either written or otherwise recorded, is required to indicate that the review was held. Additional documentation is required in cases where the Rating Official is concerned that the

employee's performance is deficient and does not meet the performance standards for an element. Employees shall be given an opportunity to respond to any performance deficiency documented by the Rating Official.

5.3.4 Center Human Resources Offices shall annually certify to the Director, Workforce Management and Development Division, no later than November 30 or six months after the beginning of the appraisal period, that midpoint progress reviews have been held. The certifications shall identity the number of employees covered by this NPR and the percentage of those employees who received a midpoint review and describe the method used to make and support this determination.

5.4 Performance Assessing

5.4.1 A written, or otherwise recorded, Rating of Record must be given to an employee as soon as practicable after the end of the appraisal period (generally within 30 days) (refer to paragraph 4.11).

5.4.2 A Rating of Record shall be prepared only if the employee has served under a performance plan at least 90 days during the appraisal period. When a Rating of Record cannot be prepared at the end of the appraisal period, the appraisal period shall be extended for the amount of time necessary to meet the minimum period, at which time a Rating of Record shall be prepared.

5.4.3 Each employee must be appraised on each element in the performance plan on which the employee has had an opportunity to perform. An element shall be left unrated (i.e., Not Rated) only if the employee has had an insufficient opportunity to demonstrate performance on the element, in which case, the appraisal form shall be so annotated.

5.4.4 An employee's refusal to sign his/her Rating of Record shall not preclude it from being a final rating. In such instances, the Rating of Record shall be annotated to indicate the employee's refusal to sign, signed, and dated by the Rating Official.

5.4.5 Employee, Customer, and Other Perspectives

5.4.5.1 A Rating Official may consult with other sources (e.g., customers and peers) for feedback to be considered in appraising an employee's performance.

5.4.5.2 For supervisory employees, the Rating Official must seek and consider employees' perspectives when appraising a supervisor's performance. The Rating Official may use formal mechanisms such as surveys or less formal mechanisms such as solicited/unsolicited customer and employee feedback and analysis of personnel data to gather employee and, if applicable, customer perspectives when evaluating and appraising these employees.

5.4.5.3 When an employee will be matrixed to one or more projects or detailed to another position or to a set of duties outside of the direct supervision and control of the supervisor of record (Rating Official) for 90 days or more, refer to paragraphs 5.5.2 and 5.5.3.

5.4.6 Performance Element Rating Levels

5.4.6.1 Significantly Exceeds Expectations. Performance that consistently exceeds the performance standards to an exceptional degree for the element.

5.4.6.2 Exceeds Expectations. Performance that consistently exceeds the performance standard to a high degree for the element.

5.4.6.3 Meets Expectations. Performance that fully and consistently meets the performance standards identified for the element.

5.4.6.4 Needs Improvement. Performance that does not fully meet the performance standards for the element.

5.4.6.5 Fails to Meet Expectations. Performance that fails to meet the performance standards for the element.

5.4.7 A Rating Official must offer an employee the opportunity to provide input, relative to his/her performance elements and standards, on his/her accomplishments during the appraisal period. The employee shall be strongly encouraged to assume responsibility for identifying specific accomplishments and results (with examples) relative to his/her performance elements and standards. The employee's input must be retained as part of the appraisal documentation in the Employee Performance File.

5.4.8 Performance Summary Rating Levels

5.4.8.1 Distinguished (Level 5). Performance when all elements are rated Significantly Exceeds Expectations.

5.4.8.2 Accomplished (Level 4). Performance when all elements are rated no lower than Exceeds Expectations.

5.4.8.3 Fully Successful (Level 3). Performance when no element is rated below Meets Expectations.

5.4.8.4 Needs Improvement (Level 2). Performance when any element is rated below Meets Expectations.

5.4.8.5 Unacceptable (Level 1). Performance when any critical element is rated Fails to Meet Expectations.

5.4.9 A narrative summary that documents the overall performance of the employee is required for all performance summary rating levels; it must clearly and completely justify the rationale for the performance summary rating level assigned.

5.4.9.1 A performance summary rating of Distinguished, Needs Improvement, or Unacceptable must be reviewed and approved by a higher-level official (Reviewing Official). Center Directors and Officials-in-Charge of Headquarters Offices may act as both the Rating and Reviewing Official for this purpose.

5.5 Detailed or Matrixed Employees

5.5.1 When an employee will be matrixed to one or more projects or detailed to another position or to a set of duties outside of the direct supervision and control of the supervisor of record (Rating Official) for 90 days or more, the supervisor of record must confer with the Project Manager(s) or the supervisor responsible for defining the duties and assignments of the detail to determine if any additional performance elements or standards related to the project(s) or detailed position/set of duties need to be added to the employee's performance plan. The employee must be given an opportunity to provide input to any additional performance elements or standards.

5.5.2 When an employee is or has been matrixed to one or more projects outside of the direct supervision and control of the supervisor of record (Rating Official) for 90 days or more, the Rating Official must consult with the Project Manager(s) or others, as appropriate, for feedback to be considered in appraising the employee's performance on the elements and standards relative to the matrixed assignment established in the employee's performance plan.

5.5.3 When an employee is or has been detailed to another position or to a set of duties outside of the direct supervision and control of the supervisor of record (Rating Official) for 90 days or more, the supervisor responsible for defining the duties and assignments of the detail must provide, in writing, to the Rating Official an assessment of the employee's performance on the elements and standards relative to the detailed assignment established in the employee's performance plan. The assessment must be retained as part of the appraisal documentation in the Employee Performance File.

5.5.4 Any feedback on or written assessment of an employee's performance provided in accordance with paragraphs 5.5.2 or 5.5.3 above must be taken into consideration by the Rating Official for the midterm progress review and when appraising and rewarding the employee at the end of the appraisal period.

5.6 Position Changes/Transfers

5.6.1 When an employee transfers to another position within NASA prior to the end of the appraisal period and has served under a performance plan for at least 90 days, the Rating Official (losing supervisor) shall complete an appraisal form assessing the employee's achievements up to the date of the transfer. No performance summary rating level shall be assigned; therefore, this appraisal is not a Rating of Record. This assessment of the employee's performance shall be provided to the employee and the gaining supervisor of the position to which the employee is transferring and shall be taken into consideration by the Rating Official when appraising the employee at the end of the appraisal period.

5.6.2 When an employee transfers to another Government agency at any time during the appraisal period, NASA must transfer to the gaining agency all performance ratings of record of the employee that are four years old or less, including the performance plan on which the most recent Rating of Record was based, in accordance with 5 C.F.R. S 293.405(a).

5.6.3 When a Rating Official leaves his/her position prior to the end of the appraisal period, he/she shall complete an appraisal form for each employee assessing the employee's achievements up to the date of the Rating Official's departure from the position. No performance summary rating level shall be assigned; therefore, this appraisal is not a Rating of Record. This assessment of each employee's performance shall be provided to the employee and the incoming supervisor and shall be taken into consideration by the Rating Official when appraising the employee at the end of the appraisal period. The Reviewing Official shall be held accountable for ensuring that the Rating Official completes the appraisals before he/she leaves.

5.6.4 In the event that either of the situations described in paragraphs 5.6.1 or 5.6.3 occur within 90 calendar days prior to the end of the appraisal period, the appraisal prepared for that purpose may be designated, at the discretion of the gaining or incoming supervisor (Rating Official), as the Rating of Record after determining a performance summary rating level provided the employee has served under the performance plan for at least 90 days. In such cases, the appraisal shall be retained in the Employee Performance File.

5.7 Performance Review Process

5.7.1 Center Directors and the Assistant Administrator for Infrastructure and Administration shall implement a performance review process(es) to:

5.7.1.1 Establish and communicate expectations at the beginning of the appraisal period for individual and organizational performance.

5.7.1.2 Establish and communicate expectations at the end of the appraisal period for the differentiation in performance ratings as well as award determinations (i.e., highest performance summary ratings and monetary awards and nonmonetary recognition are given to the top performers).

5.7.1.3 Ensure fairness and consistency in the appraising and rewarding of employees (i.e., must be able to demonstrate alignment between achievements and performance summary ratings for the appraisal period and corresponding monetary awards and/or non-monetary recognition).

5.7.2 The performance review process(es) must be completed before performance summary ratings are finalized and performance appraisals and ratings of record are discussed by Rating Officials with employees.

5.7.3 Center Human Resources Offices shall report annually, on the date determined by the Director, Workforce Management and Development Division, the process(es) utilized to ensure the alignment of performance award amounts to performance summary ratings and shall be able to demonstrate such alignment.

5.8 Awards Eligibility

5.8.1 An employee who receives a performance summary rating of Distinguished, Accomplished, or Fully Successful is eligible for an annual monetary performance award and nonmonetary recognition, based on the rating; however, eligibility does not equate to entitlement; there is no entitlement to an award.

5.8.2 An employee who receives a Needs Improvement or Unacceptable performance summary rating is not eligible for a monetary award or nonmonetary recognition, based on performance.

5.8.3 An award and award amount determination must be linked to an employee's performance.

5.8.4 A Quality Step Increase shall be considered the highest monetary performance award an employee can receive (see paragraph 5.9); and therefore, no other award (monetary, i.e., lump-sum cash, and/or nonmonetary, i.e., time-off) shall be given in conjunction with a QSI based on the same performance summary rating.

5.8.5 An employee with a higher performance summary rating level (e.g., Distinguished) must receive a greater monetary performance award, based on a percentage of salary, than an employee with a lower performance summary rating level (e.g., Accomplished).

5.8.5.1 To achieve fairness and consistency in the differentiation of award determinations, based on performance ratings, the Center Director and Assistant Administrator for Infrastructure and Administration (or designee) shall annually establish, based on the awards budget, guidelines (e.g., percentage/range of percentage of salary) for monetary performance awards applicable to Distinguished, Accomplished, and Fully Successful performance summary ratings.

5.8.5.2 These guidelines must be consistently applied to all performance awards, based on ratings of record for the appraisal period, for all employees covered by this NPR.

5.8.5.3 As an exception to paragraph 5.8.5.2 above, if an employee is promoted during the appraisal period and the promotion resulted in an increase in pay, the employee may receive a lesser award than that assigned for the employee's performance summary rating level. The promotion and increase in pay may be considered, in part, as resulting from the employee's performance and, therefore, as an award based on the employee's performance summary rating.

5.8.5.4 When a Time-Off Award is granted in recognition of an employee's performance summary rating, the monetary value of a Time-Off Award shall be calculated and included in the percentage of salary designated for the respective performance summary rating level.

5.8.6 All performance awards must be processed in accordance with Appendix C of NPR 3451.1, NASA Awards and Recognition Program.

5.9 Quality Step Increase (QSI)

5.9.1 A QSI is not required but may be granted to an employee who receives a performance summary rating of Distinguished in accordance with 5 C.F.R. S 531.504. Recommendations for QSIs shall be processed in accordance with Appendix C of NPR 3451.1, NASA Awards and Recognition Program.

5.9.2 A QSI must be effected within 120 calendar days following the end of the appraisal period. No QSIs may be effected more than 120 days after the end of the appraisal period on which the Distinguished rating was based.

5.9.3 When a QSI is granted, no other award (monetary, i.e., lump-sum cash, and/or nonmonetary, i.e., time-off) shall be given in conjunction with a QSI.

5.10 Reduction in Force (RIF)

Service credit for performance shall be computed in accordance with 5 C.F.R. S 351.504(e) and NPR 3351.1, Reduction in Force for NASA Employees.

5.11 Promotions

A performance appraisal shall be one factor used in determining whether or not to promote an employee. (See NPR 3335.1, Internal Placement of NASA Employees, for further guidance on promotions.)

5.12 Within-Grade Increase (WIG)

5.12.1 An employee whose current Rating of Record is at the Fully Successful performance summary rating level or higher is performing at an Acceptable Level of Competence (ALOC) for purposes of a WIG.

5.12.2 Failure to attain/maintain an ALOC justifies, and will result in the denial of, a WIG.

5.13 Failure to Meet Performance Expectations

5.13.1 At any time during the appraisal period that an employee's performance Needs Improvement or Fails to Meet Expectations in one or more elements of his/her position, management should take appropriate action to address such performance.

5.13.1.1 When it is determined that an employee's performance Fails to Meet Expectations in one or more critical elements, management must take corrective action to improve the employee's performance. The employee must be placed on a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) and given a reasonable opportunity (a minimum of 30 days) to demonstrate acceptable performance. If after a

reasonable opportunity to improve, an employee fails to raise performance in a critical element to an acceptable level, then action must be taken to remove the employee from that position (5 C.F.R. S 432) (refer to NPR 3432.1, Performance Based Reduction in Grade or Removal Actions).

5.13.1.2 When it is determined that an employee's performance Needs Improvement or Fails to Meet Expectations in one or more non-critical elements, management should address the need for improvement. However, no formal action, as specified in paragraph 5.13.1.1 above, is required.

5.13.2 If an employee expresses the need for an accommodation because of a disability after a performance-based action has been initiated, management must consider the request in accordance with NPR 3713.1, Procedures for Providing Reasonable Accommodation for Individuals with Disabilities.

5.14 Appraisal Disagreements

5.14.1 Employees are encouraged to have ongoing discussions with their Rating Officials regarding good, as well as poor, performance.

5.14.2 An employee who disagrees with the Rating of Record may request reconsideration by the Rating Official or, in the case of a disagreement with a performance summary rating of Distinguished, Needs improvement, or Unacceptable that must be reviewed and approved by a higher-level official, the Reviewing Official or in accordance with any local labor-management negotiated agreement. A reconsideration request must be made no later than 15 days after the employee is given a copy of the completed Rating of Record. When reconsideration is requested, the employee shall be given the opportunity to present information supporting the request and shall receive a decision within a reasonable period of time (e.g., 15 days). (Note: A reconsideration request at this stage substitutes for the informal procedure as outlined in NPR 3771.1, Grievance System.)

5.14.3. If the employee is dissatisfied with the reconsideration decision, he/she may formally grieve concerning the Rating of Record in accordance with NPR 3771.1, Grievance System, or any local labor-management negotiated agreement, if appropriate.

5.15 Linkage to SES Performance Management System

The performance results of non-SES supervisors and nonsupervisory employees shall be considered in the performance evaluation of SES managers and executives.

CHAPTER 6. System Evaluation

6.1 The EPCS shall be evaluated periodically. Evaluations may include one or more of the following:

6.1.1 Review and analysis of the distribution of performance summary rating levels.

6.1.2 Review and analysis of performance awards based on performance during the appraisal period.

6.1.3 Employee and supervisor feedback, comments, and results from the Federal Human Capital Survey, Agency surveys, and other similar means when determined appropriate.

6.1.4 Center self-assessments and Agency human resources operations reviews. 6.2 Measurement outcomes shall ensure the following:

6.2.1 Employee performance plans are aligned with the organization's goals and objectives.

6.2.2 Performance elements and standards are focused on results and include credible measures.

6.2.3 Employees had an opportunity to provide input to their performance plans and appraisals.

6.2.4 Employees received meaningful feedback on their performance.

6.2.5 Employees' performance appraisals are perceived as fair and accurately reflect a level of performance that is consistent across all organizations.

6.2.6 The EPCS makes meaningful distinctions in employees' performance.

6.2.7 The EPCS is integrated with and supports the Agency's Awards and Recognition Program.

CHAPTER 7. Employee Performance Files (Written or Otherwise Recorded)

7.1 Center Human Resources Directors shall establish written procedures for the maintenance and retention of a performance file for each employee covered by this NPR. An Employee Performance File shall be available to:

7.1.1 Agency officials having a need for the information.

7.1.2 Employees and, as appropriate, an employee's designated personal representative.

7.1.3 Support actions based on the records.

7.1.4 The OPM in connection with its personnel management evaluation role.

7.2 The Rating Official must provide to an employee the following documents at the time they are prepared:

7.2.1 A draft performance plan with an opportunity to provide input/feedback.

7.2.2 A performance summary rating, including the narrative summary, for the appraisal period and the performance plan that identifies the performance element ratings upon which the Rating of Record was based.

7.2.3 An Individual Development Plan, if applicable.

7.2.4 Any documentation of performance deficiency, if applicable.

7.3 Performance-related records shall, at a minimum, include:

7.3.1 The Rating of Record, including the narrative summary, for the appraisal period and the performance plan on which it was based.

7.3.2 When provided, input from the employee regarding accomplishments relative to the performance elements and standards of the performance plan.

7.3.3 Written input from the Project Manager(s) to which the employee is/has been matrixed to or the supervisor of a position or to a set of duties that the employee is/has been detailed to or transferred from.

7.3.4 Any customer and/or employee feedback and any analysis of personnel data considered and impacting the determination of the performance summary rating level assigned.

7.3.5 When provided, the employee's response to any deficiency documented by the Rating Official during the appraisal period.

7.4 Performance-related records may include, but are not limited to:

7.4.1 Recommendations for awards, QSIs, promotions, denial of within-grade increases, reduction to a lower grade, reassignments, and removals, including supporting documentation.

7.4.2 Recommendations for training that are performance related or for developmental purposes (e.g., Individual Development Plans).

7.4.3 Any document that indicates that the Rating of Record is being challenged under

administrative procedures (e.g., when the employee files a grievance on the performance summary rating received).

7.4.4 Records concerning performance during the supervisory or managerial probationary period or the employee's initial period of probation after appointment to a position.

7.4.5 Advice and counseling records that are based on work performance.

7.4.6 The Employee Performance Files must be maintained for no less than four years from the date the Rating of Record is issued. Such records shall be maintained and destroyed in accordance with the requirements of this NPR, the NASA Privacy Policy, and Office of Personnel Management (OPM) Government-wide system of records' (OPM/GOVT-2) requirements, and other applicable regulations.

Appendix A--Performance Elements and Standards for Supervisory Employees

Element 1. Program/Project/Functional Objective (PPFO)

The Program/Project/Functional Objective (PPFO) element must address the primary work assignment or responsibility of the supervisor and is the critical element that holds the supervisor accountable for achieving measurable results. This element must align with the performance goals and objectives of the supervisor's organization for the appraisal period to which he/she will contribute in order to establish the required alignment to the Agency's Strategic Plan.

The Rating Official must identify the position-specific performance standard(s) for this element, written at the Meets Expectations Level, described in terms of credible measures (i.e., quality, quantity, timeliness, cost-effectiveness) of expected results to be accomplished during the appraisal period. The performance standards must require the employee to consistently and reliably perform all the duties of the position, with no greater level of supervision than is described by the position description, and must be challenging and significant in their expected results.

Element 2. Supervisory Competencies

Supervisory Competencies is, also, a critical element. It identifies those supervisory competencies and standards that demonstrate a commitment to the strategic management of human capital and effective resource management needed to successfully achieve the organization's goals and objectives. Those competencies are: Leading and Managing Change, Leading and Managing People, Achieving Results, Resources Management, and Communications and Teamwork.

These standards are the performance expectations of a supervisory position and should not be modified unless necessary to more accurately reflect the requirements of the position. If it is determined that a performance standard for a specific competency is not applicable to the supervisor's position, it should be so identified during the performance planning stage along with a written justification for its exclusion.

Standards:

a. Leading and Managing Change

- The implementation of changes to the organization and workforce are accomplished with minimal disruption.
- Risk taking, creative thinking, and innovation to identify new work processes to meet performance requirements and to effect change are supported and encouraged.

b. Leading and Managing People

- An inclusive work environment exists:
- That is free of discrimination, harassment, and retaliation of any kind and accessible to qualified individuals with disabilities.
- Where employees are valued and respected for their individual and cultural differences, treat each other with respect, and their talents are used regardless of backgrounds.
- Where commitment to equal opportunity is demonstrated through observable actions.
- Cooperation, collaboration, and teamwork across NASA Centers and functions are actively

promoted in the accomplishment of the targeted performance expectations and results.

- The work environment encourages the open and honest exchange of information and the expression of ideas, diverse opinions, and dissenting views while presenting one voice to the public.
- Conflicts are resolved in a positive and constructive manner and complaints of discrimination are resolved, if possible, by engaging in an Alternate Dispute Resolution (ADR) process.
- A work environment exists that recognizes and supports the needs of employees to balance work and personal life.
- Performance plans and appraisals of subordinate staff members are completed by the due date; and at least one critical element for each is clearly traceable to the Agency's goals and objectives (e.g., Strategic Plan, Agency Performance Plan, President's Management Agenda initiatives).
- Performance plans and appraisals of the employees reporting to subordinate managers and supervisors within the employee's organization are completed by the due date; and at least one critical element for each is clearly traceable to the Agency's goals and objectives.
- Feedback on performance is provided to subordinate staff members on a frequent basis. Their performance and that of their employees, if applicable, as an individual or as a member of a team, is recognized with performance awards that are commensurate with the level of performance, responsibility, and progress towards the goals and objectives. The distribution of annual performance awards mirrors the distribution of performance ratings.
- Employees are provided opportunities to excel and are encouraged to expand their knowledge and skills through coaching, mentoring, developmental assignments, and training.
- The performance of subordinate staff members is fairly appraised against Specific, Measurable, Aggressive yet Achievable, Results-oriented, and Time-based (SMART) performance expectations.

c. Achieving Results

- In the pursuit of the accomplishment of the Agency's goals and objectives, the behaviors exhibited exemplify a commitment to NASA's values of safety, teamwork, integrity, and mission success.
- A commitment to the Agency's value - safety - is evidenced by:
- Facilitation and/or conduct and documentation of safety inspections of assigned area(s) of responsibility as required and in accordance with applicable safety and occupational health regulations, policies, and procedures.
- Identification and expeditious action taken to correct unsafe conditions and/or procedures.
- Compliance with applicable safety and occupational health standards, rules, and regulations.
- Short- and long-term organizational goals and objectives are based on the Agency's Strategic Plan and Government-wide initiatives and are realistic, measurable, and results-oriented.
- Work units are organized and staffed with the appropriate technical expertise and the workload is balanced to ensure priorities are achieved.
- Potential or actual problems relating to the achievement of program/project/functional objectives are identified and diagnosed with alternative courses of action identified and brought to the attention of the appropriate management officials in a timely manner.
- Performance results and customer feedback are used to develop and implement initiatives to improve program/project performance, functional support, or service delivery.

d. Resources Management

- Workforce or project teams are deployed to efficiently and effectively accomplish the organization's goals and objectives.
- Current and future workforce or project team needs are assessed based on the organization's

goals and objectives.

- Program/project/functional budgets are well-defined and defensible and prepared within external and internal guidelines and by due dates.
- Programs/projects/functions are managed cost-effectively, including contractor costs. Any unutilized funds or cost overruns are identified and immediately brought to the attention of senior management.
- Programs/projects/functional and contractor performance are periodically reviewed to monitor progress against milestones and goals. Any problems or schedule delays are identified and immediately brought to the attention of senior management.
- Information technology is effectively utilized to organize and manage work and resources and to track and assess progress.
- To address skills imbalances and succession needs, highly qualified candidates are recruited and hired; support is provided to ensure successful transition into the Federal service; employees are developed and promoted ensuring adherence to the Merit Systems Principles and equal employment opportunity without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, age, sexual orientation, or religion and by providing, if needed, reasonable accommodation(s) to an otherwise qualified individual with a disability utilizing all available hiring flexibilities.

e. Communications and Teamwork

- Oral and written presentations are effective (e.g., accurate, well organized, and easily understood).
- Information, results, and decisions are communicated in a timely manner.
- Interactions with others demonstrate the ability to listen effectively and to seek the opinions, ideas, and expertise of others.
- Working relationships, both internal and external, are cooperative and demonstrate the ability to be flexible and adaptable, facilitating win-win situations and the open exchange of ideas and opinions from diverse groups.
- Interactions with others demonstrate respect and an understanding of others' needs, establish trust, and foster support, cooperation, and knowledge sharing for the accomplishment of the Agency's goals and objectives.

Appendix B--Performance Elements and Standards for Nonsupervisory Employees

The Rating Official must identify the position-specific performance standard(s) for all elements, written at the Meets Expectations Level, described in terms of credible measures (i.e., quality, quantity, timeliness, cost-effectiveness) of expected results to be accomplished during the appraisal period. The performance standards must require the employee to consistently and reliably perform all the duties of the position, with no greater level of supervision than is described by the position description, and must be challenging and significant in their expected results.

Element 1: Program/Project/ Functional Objective (PPFO)

The Program/Project/Functional Objective (PPFO) element must address the primary work assignment or responsibility of the employee and is the critical element that holds the employee accountable for achieving measurable results. This element must align with the performance goals and objectives of the employee's organization for the appraisal period to which he/she will contribute in order to establish the required alignment to the Agency's Strategic Plan.

Element 2: Collaboration and Teamwork

This element is the commitment to work cooperatively as a member of a group or team demonstrated by the willingness to share one's knowledge, experience, and expertise and to seek and listen to the opinions and ideas of others to achieve the organization's goals and objectives. Collaboration also requires respect for individual and cultural differences without discrimination or harassment of any kind.

Element 3: Communications

This element is the commitment to the open, honest, and effective exchange of information and ideas demonstrated both orally and in writing.