NPS INSTRUCTION 12430.1

Subj: DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY (DON) INTERIM PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT POLICY

Ref: (a) Title 5, United States Code, Chapter 43
     (b) 5 Code of Federal Regulations, Chapter 430
     (c) DON Interim Performance Management System covering positions transitioning to the General Schedule (GS) from the National Security Personnel System (NSPS), Version 2 of Sep 10

Encl: (1) Additional Performance Evaluation Requirements (Appendix A)
     (2) Critical Element Performance Standards (Appendix B)
     (3) Career Stages Crosswalk (Appendix C)
     (4) Framework for Recognition and Rewards (Appendix D)

1. Purpose. To establish Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) interim performance management guidance and assign responsibility for implementing the interim performance management system under the DoN Guidance for covered positions.

2. Background. The Department of the Navy (DON) Interim Performance Management System is designed to support organizational effectiveness in continuing to recognize and reward employees in meaningful ways by leveraging the capabilities of the legacy two-level system.

3. Scope. This instruction applies to the following NPS employees:

   a. Civilian employees who occupied positions under the National Security Personnel System (NSPS) and transitioned back to the General Schedule in 2010.

   b. Newly hired civilian employees who occupy a non-bargaining unit position within the General Schedule.

   c. Any civilian or military personnel who serve as rating officials or Senior Rating Officials for employees covered by the DON Interim Performance Management System.
4. **Period of Performance.** Performance cycles will be from 1 October to 30 September each year. To be eligible for a rating of record, employees must be covered under an approved performance plan for a minimum of 90 days as of the last day of the rating cycle. If necessary, an employee’s rating period may be extended by the rating official with approval from the Senior Rating Official beyond the end of the rating period to insure the minimum 90-day period is met, as long as the extension does not interfere with the ability to manage any part of the rating and rewarding process for the employee’s organization. Employees not meeting the 90-day requirement are not rated and are not eligible for a performance payout.

5. **General Roles and Responsibilities**

   a. **Performance Awards Review Board (PARB).** After award amounts and types have been recommended by the Senior Rating Official, the Performance Awards Review Board will approve or disapprove the recommendations to ensure fairness and good business decisions across the organization. The Board may also make recommendations for changes for the upcoming rating period based upon any review it conducts.

   b. **Supervisors.** Supervisors are responsible for effectively managing the performance of assigned employees, including but not limited to:

      (1) Executing the requirements of this instruction in a manner consistent with Merit Systems Principles;

      (2) Ensuring employees are trained in the performance management system;

      (3) Clearly communicating performance expectations and holding employees responsible for accomplishing them;

      (4) Aligning performance expectations and employee development with organization mission and goals;

      (5) Developing written critical elements reflective of expected accomplishments and contributions for the appraisal period and identifying applicable Critical Element Performance Standards;

      (6) Providing meaningful, constructive, and candid employee feedback concerning performance expectations, including at least one documented interim review;
(7) Ensuring employees are aware of the opportunity to provide self-assessments;

(8) Fostering and rewarding excellent performance;

(9) Addressing poor performance;

(10) Making meaningful distinctions among employees based on performance and contribution;

(11) Completing close-out assessments, as appropriate, and within deadlines established by this policy;

(12) Assuring that eligible employees are assigned a performance rating as prescribed by this guidance;

(13) Forwarding performance ratings and award recommendations to the Senior Rating Official;

(14) Communicating performance ratings and approved award payouts to employees under their supervision.

c. Employees. Employees will participate in midyear progress reviews and year-end assessments. Employees are additionally encouraged to:

(1) Engage in dialogue with supervisors to develop critical elements and Critical Element Performance Standards;

(2) Provide timely feedback to supervisors in sufficient detail for the supervisor to understand accomplishments and challenges. Feedback should include communicating individual accomplishments and shortfalls, or anticipated shortfalls, in meeting critical elements. Employees should discuss major impediments and/or constraints relative to meeting their critical elements well before performance may be determined deficient. Employees are also encouraged to provide feedback on performance enhancements that could be implemented, developments, or changes in the work environment that may assist in setting or achieving their critical elements, or to suggest methods whereby they may contribute more fully to overall organizational effectiveness;

(3) Identify and record their accomplishments and results through the appraisal period;

(4) Participate in the self-assessment;
(5) Understand the link between their performance expectations, conduct, and organizational mission and goals; and

(6) Assume individual responsibility for career development and advancement by proactively seeing workplace developmental opportunities, accepting challenges, and undertaking self-development activities to enhance their ability to more effectively contribute to mission accomplishment.

6. **Performance Plans**

   a. When establishing performance plans, supervisors will consider the specific organizational mission, goals, and objectives supported by their department and toward which their department can contribute. Once identified, supervisors and employees should work together on establishing and aligning performance plans and individual critical elements towards the respective mission, goals, and/or objectives.

   b. NPS policy requires supervisors have a face-to-face conversation with employees to develop their performance plan, where feasible to do so. This facilitates employee ownership in the process and provides the basis for fostering relevant and open communication between the supervisor and employee during the development of job objectives and throughout the rating cycle.

   c. Performance plans must be established for each employee no later than 30 days after the beginning date of the rating period. The 30-day requirement also applies to new hires or employees who change jobs.

7. **Critical Elements**

   a. Critical elements are the core of the DON Interim Performance Management system, and therefore will play a critical role in the successful and execution of the performance process. The "SMART" principles of Specific, Measurable, Aligned, Realistic/Relevant, and Timed should be used in developing critical elements.

   b. Generally, employees must have a minimum of two, but no more than five critical elements established as part of their performance plans. Supervisors will work with employees to establish their critical elements. Care should be taken to avoid developing a task list or activity list of duties versus definitive critical elements with expected performance results.
and outcomes. Critical elements must be sufficiently specific in nature and also comprehensive enough to normally span the entire rating period or a substantial portion thereof. Critical elements should relate expected performance outcomes to the salary range being paid. In addition, performance plans must include the critical elements required for specific types of positions such as safety, security, etc. Appendix A contains additional performance plan and evaluation requirements particular to certain professions and as identified in applicable regulations.

c. Critical elements may not be weighted in the DON Interim Performance Management System.

d. Critical elements may be added, deleted, or modified at any time during the rating cycle. However, consideration will be given to the time remaining to accomplish the new or restated objective, and the impact the change may have on other job objectives. Critical elements may not be adjusted within 90 days of the end of the appraisal period.

e. Each performance plan for supervisors must contain at least one supervisory critical element. Supervisors and managers shall be held accountable through their performance expectations for how well they plan, monitor, develop, correct and assess subordinate employees’ performance. Additional requirements include but are not limited to requirements outlined in Appendix A.

f. At the time the performance plan is established, the rating official must certify if the employee’s Position Description (PD) is or is not current and accurate. If the PD is not current and accurate, the rating official shall take corrective action to ensure its accuracy.

8. Critical Element Performance Standards. The DON has established performance standards which are to be applied to the critical elements during the assessment process. To ensure consistency across the DON, they are the only performance standards that can be used in assessing performance and they may not be augmented or altered. The Rating Official and the Employee should work together to determine the appropriate career stage for the employee and identify the standards that will be used in the assessment. Supervisors must use the Supervisory Assessment standard for their supervisory critical element. They must also select a career stage: Entry, Journey or Expert, to apply to the remaining critical elements. The
Critical Elements appear in Appendix B of this document. Further discussions of career stages can be found in Appendix C.

9. Documenting Performance Information. The DoN Interim Performance Appraisal Form, will be used to document information related to performance plans.

10. Performance Dialogue and Feedback. Supervisors will engage in an ongoing meaningful and relevant dialogue with employees regarding performance expectations. Timely and specific feedback should be built into routine meetings, memos, email, voice mail, short notes or letters, and through daily dialogue.

11. Performance Review Requirements

   a. Progress Review. One midyear progress review is required, at which time employees should be informed of how they are progressing in regards to their critical elements. To the maximum extent possible, progress reviews will be informative and developmental in nature and will focus on future performance expectations. Progress reviews do not require the assignment of a rating of record; however, the rating official and employee must sign and date the performance plan form to indicate that the review was conducted. Failure by an employee to sign shall not void the content of the plan or progress review. Employee self-assessments will be required for the progress review.

   b. End-of-Year Performance Assessments

      (1) Employees are required to provide their rating officials with narrative self-assessments of their accomplishments for each of their critical elements compared to their assigned performance standards on the performance plan form no later than 15 days after the end of the appraisal period.

      (2) Rating officials are required to consider employee self-assessments and prepare written assessments of employee performance and contribution to mission no later than 30 days after the end of the appraisal period. Written assessments will be used to justify ratings of record to the Senior Rating Official.

      (3) The rating official’s recommended performance ratings are subject to the review and approval by the Senior Rating Official. If the Senior Rating Official changes the
performance rating, the rational for doing so must be documented in the Performance Appraisal Form.

c. Close-out Assessments. Close-out ratings must be conducted when:

(1) An employee completes a detail or temporary promotion of more than 120 days under established critical elements. This requirement also applies to employees on loan from another activity or agency for more than 120 days.

(2) An employee changes positions, is promoted or moves to a new agency or activity after being under established critical elements for a minimum of 90 days.

(3) The rating official leaves the position after the employee is under established critical elements for a minimum of 90 days. In this situation, the employee may continue under the same performance plan unless changed by the new rating official.

(4) Close-out ratings may become the rating of record if there is insufficient time (fewer than 90 days) to establish a new performance plan and rate the covered employee in the newly assigned position before the end of the appraisal period.

d. Summary Level. A summary level of "Acceptable" or "Unacceptable" must be assigned as the rating of record.

(1) Ratings are based on a comparison of performance and written standards. Accomplishments in each critical element are assigned an individual element level after having been compared to the performance standards in Appendix B.

(2) Individual element levels are then converted to one of two summary levels: "Unacceptable" as the lowest and "Acceptable" as the highest.

(3) An "Unacceptable" summary level is assigned only if performance on one or more critical elements is appraised as "Unacceptable".

e. Communicating and Recording the Results

(1) Rating officials are required to have a conversation with their employees to discuss the rating of record and rating official narrative assessment within 75 days after the end of the annual appraisal period. This conversation
may only occur after the senior rating official review and approval of the rating of record. Employees must be provided a copy of their rating of record and the rating official narrative assessment.

(2) The performance rating shall be signed and dated by the employee, rating official and the senior rating official. The employee’s signature signifies the employee has received the rating and does not necessarily constitute agreement with it.

12. Unacceptable Performance. If at any time during the performance appraisal period an employee’s performance is determined to be unacceptable in one or more critical elements, then the rating official shall notify the employee. Within-grade increases (WGIS) cannot be granted while performance is at an unacceptable level. If performance is determined to be "Unacceptable" at the time a WGI is due to an employee, the rating official must take action to deny the WGI. If unacceptable performance persists, the rating official should consider corrective action including, but not limited to, initiating a reassignment, a reduction-in-grade, a formal opportunity to improve through a performance improvement plan (PIP), or a removal in accordance with HR policies.

13. Grievances and Appeals. Covered employees may raise issues relating to the performance appraisal process either through the administrative grievance procedure or, where applicable, a negotiated grievance procedure. Employees are encouraged to use Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR). Appealable issues may be submitted to the Merit Systems Protection Board (MSPB). Guidance on grievable/appealable matters is as follows:

a. The substance of an employee’s critical elements is not grievable.

b. Failure to inform employees of critical elements and standards within the required time frame is grievable.

c. Ratings on individual elements and summary level ratings are grievable.

d. Performance-based demotions and removals may be grieved through the appropriate grievance procedure or appealed to the MSPB, but not both.
14. Relationship to Other Personnel Actions
   
a. Within-Grade Increases (WGIs)

   (1) Covered GS employees receive WGIs, when eligible, after completing appropriate waiting periods if their performance is at an acceptable level of competence. Acceptable level of competence equates to an “Acceptable” rating of record.

   (2) When a WGI decision is not consistent with the employee’s most recent rating of record, a more current rating of record must be prepared. The rating of record used as the basis for an acceptable level of competence determination for a WGI must have been assigned no earlier than the most recently completed appraisal period.

b. Promotions

   (1) Career-Ladder Promotions. Performance appraisals are used as a basis for determining eligibility for career-ladder promotions. To be promoted, an employee must be performing at the “Acceptable” level on all critical elements. However, the fact that an employee is rated “Acceptable” at the time he/she is eligible for a career-ladder promotion does not mean that the promotion is automatic or that the employee is ready for promotion.

   (2) Merit Promotion Actions. The rating of record should be used in merit promotion evaluations and by selecting officials to the extent it is relevant to the position to be filled.

c. Probationary Period

   (1) Career-Ladder Promotions. Performance appraisals are used as a basis for determining eligibility for career-ladder promotions. To be promoted, an employee must be performing at the “Acceptable” level on all critical elements. However, the fact that an employee is rated “Acceptable” at the time he/she is eligible for a career-ladder promotion does not mean that the promotion is automatic or that the employee is ready for promotion.

   (2) Merit Promotion Actions. The rating of record should be used in merit promotion evaluations and by selecting officials to the extent it is relevant to the position to be filled.
d. Reduction-in-Force (RIF)

(1) The rating of record for RIF purposes is either “Acceptable” or “Unacceptable.” A special rating conducted to support WGI determinations or as the result of a performance improvement plan may be used for RIF purposes.

(2) The three most recent ratings of record received in the last four years prior to the date of issuance of (RIF) notices are factors in determining retention standing for RIF purposes. An employee receives additional years of service for each “Acceptable” rating.

e. Training and Development

(1) Identification of training requirements to improve performance is a significant element in the appraisal process. The performance appraisal process should clearly identify areas where training and development may be appropriate.

(2) Performance plans related to training may include achievement of specific training objectives needed for the basic requirements of a position, such as training for career development. Performance appraisals conducted as part of the employee’s individual training plan or other specialized training plan should be considered in the annual performance rating process. Such appraisals do not serve as the rating of record.

15. Awards

a. Awards will be used as tools to acknowledge and motivate employees by recognizing and rewarding significant individual, team or organizational achievements or contributions. Awards are neither mandatory nor guaranteed.

b. NPS will ensure that there are clear distinctions in award amounts for different levels of performance and contribution to mission. Appendix D provides further information regarding the framework for recognition and rewards.

c. In adhering to good principles of compensation management, the Performance Awards Review Board will consider all aspects of an individual’s compensation profile when making award decisions to include recent promotions, within-grade increases, salary adjustments as a result of the transition from
NSPS (applies to transition years only), other monetary awards paid out during the performance year, and internal equity.

d. Care will be taken to ensure that similarly situated employees with like performance and contribution to mission are rewarded in a consistent manner.

e. NPS will ensure transparency in all steps of the recognition and rewarding process to include timely notification to employees of the processes involved.

f. Chapter 45 of Title 5 United States Code awards flexibilities will be used to recognize specific contributions or acts during the performance year.

16. Quality Step Increases (QSIs)

a. An additional step increase may be granted in recognition of high quality performance above that ordinarily found in the type of position concerned. The purpose of a QSI is to provide appropriate incentive and recognition for excellence in performance by granting a faster than normal step increase.

b. To be eligible for a QSI, an employee must:

(1) Currently be paid below step 10 of his or her grade;

(2) Have received the highest level of performance as defined by the framework used by NPS as part of an annual appraisal;

(3) Have demonstrated sustained performance of high quality; and

(4) Not have received a QSI (or QSI-equivalent under a personnel system other than the General Schedule) within the preceding 52 consecutive calendar weeks.

c. The rating official will record a justification for a QSI. Such documentation must show that the proposed recipient has performed at a truly exceptional level to justify a permanent increase in the employee's rate of pay.

d. Rating officials shall consider pay equity, assess the compensation of similarly situated employees, and evaluate how a proposed QSI fits into an existing compensation pattern. Considerations include, but are not limited to, pay equity (what
similarly situated employees earn), expectation of continued high performance, and sound business reasons that take into account the impact of that decision on the current workforce and its existing salary structure.

e. A QSI will not affect the timing of an employee's next regular within-grade increase, unless it places the employee in step 4 or step 7 of his or her grade. In these cases, time served toward waiting period is credited towards the waiting period for the next step. In recommending a QSI, the activity should review several factors in regard to timing:

(1) How long will the employee be able to enjoy the benefits of a QSI?

(2) Will the employee be promoted in the near future (i.e. career ladder positions)?

(3) Will the QSI make a difference in setting the promotion pay?

(4) When is the employee eligible for his or her next within-grade increase (WGI)?

(5) Will the increase take the employee to a new waiting period?

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Chief of Staff

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APPENDIX A

ADDITIONAL PERFORMANCE EVALUATION REQUIREMENTS

1. **Purpose.** Specific provisions of law, regulation and DoD policy require certain matters to be considered in the performance evaluations of some employees. Paragraph 2 below addresses those situations where individual performance elements may be appropriate. However, the establishment of specific performance elements and standards may not be necessary in all instances. Rather, it may be appropriate to combine these expectations into one or more performance elements. An example is a supervisory element that captures all supervisory responsibilities. Management has discretion in determining those matters that require individual performance elements and when "combined" elements are appropriate.

2. **DoD Performance Evaluation Requirements**


   b. **Protecting Classified Information.** Performance evaluations of all employees whose duties involve access to classified information must include a comment by rating officials pertaining to an employee’s discharge of security responsibilities. This requirement is established in DoD 5200.2-R, "Personnel Security Program," January 1987.

   c. **Manager’s Internal Control Program.** Performance evaluations of managers who have significant MIC responsibilities must reflect the accountability for the success or failure of MIC practices. This requirement is established in DoD Instruction 5010.40.

Enclosure (1)

e. Inventory Management. Performance evaluations of individuals employed at Inventory Control Points must give appropriate consideration to efforts made by these individuals to eliminate wasteful practices and achieve cost savings in the acquisition and management of inventory items. This requirement is established in section 2458 of Title 10, U.S.C.

f. Acquisitions. Employees serving in positions in the acquisition career field must have a supervisory acquisition professional provide review and comments on any appraisal of their performance. This requirement is established in DoD Directive 5000.52, "Defense Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics Workforce Education, Training, and Career Development Program," January 12, 2005.

g. Regulatory Reinvention. Performance measurements of persons who are frontline regulators, i.e., those who have authority to order a corrective action or levy a fine on a business or other government entity, must focus on results, not process and punishment. Therefore, such measures should not be based on process (e.g., number of visits to a business or government entity) or punishment (e.g., number of violations found, number of fines levied on a business or government entity). This requirement is established by a Presidential Memorandum for heads of federal departments and agencies, "Regulatory Reinvention Initiative," March 4, 1995.

h. Classified Information Management. The performance ratings of civilian employees who are original classification authorities, security managers, security specialists or significantly involved in the creation or handling of classified information must include the management of classified information as a critical element or item to be evaluated. This requirement is established in Executive Order 13292, "Classified National Security Information," March 25, 2003.
i. **Safety.** Responsible DoD officials at each management level, including first level supervisors, must to the extent of their authority, comply with the DoD Occupational Safety and Health program guidance and regulations. Performance evaluations of these employees must reflect personal accountability in this respect, consistent with the duties of the position, with appropriate recognition of superior performance and, conversely, with corrective administrative action, as appropriate, for deficient performance. This requirement is established in DoD Instruction 6055.1, "DoD Occupational Safety and Health Program," August 19, 1998.

j. **Increased Competition and Cost Savings in Contracts.** Performance evaluations of officials involved in contracting and acquisition must give appropriate recognition to efforts to increase competition and achieve cost savings. This requirement is established in section 2317 of Title 10, U.S.C.
APPENDIX B

CRITICAL ELEMENT PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

1. The career stages used in this Appendix - Entry, Journeyman and Expert - apply to individual employee competence and performance as they relate to a given type of work or the grade level of the work itself as determined by position descriptions and the normal pattern of advancement for each occupation, as opposed to how the same terms are used in compensation management. Rating officials are expected to use their judgment in determining which term best describes the nature of individual employees. The descriptions that follow are not all inclusive and are meant as a guide for supervisors and management officials to use in determining which of the critical element assessment standards to use for each employee.

   a. **Entry.** A position for an employee who is new to or who needs to learn a particular type of work. Position requires close guidance and supervision.

   b. **Journey.** A position requiring sufficient experience performing a particular type of work with less supervision than an entry-level position. Generally, the full performance level of a career ladder position.

   c. **Expert.** A position requiring strong breadth and depth of experience in a particular type of work or career field. Position requires little supervision.

2. The performance standards listed on the next page are the only ones by which critical elements can be assessed; to ensure consistency across the DON, they may not be augmented or altered.

Enclosure (2)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Career Stage</th>
<th>Element Level</th>
<th>Performance Standard</th>
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</table>
| Entry        | Acceptable    | With guidance and assistance:  
  - Accomplished the stated critical element, achieving desired results that were sound, accurate, thorough or documented; met applicable authorities, standards, policies, procedures and guidelines.  
  - Planned, organized, prioritized and scheduled own work activities to deliver the critical element in a timely and effective manner.  
  - Demonstrated ability to work well with others. |
| Entry        | Unacceptable  | Though guidance was provided:  
  - Failed to achieve all or part of the stated critical element by failing to provide products or services that were sound, accurate, thorough, documented and/or failed to meet applicable authorities, standards, policies, procedures or guidelines; or  
  - Failed to plan, organize, prioritize and schedule own work activities to deliver the critical element in a timely and effective manner; relied on others to redo or complete work assignments; or  
  - Demonstrated poor cooperation or inability to work with others. |
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<tr>
<th>Career Stage</th>
<th>Element Level</th>
<th>Performance Standard</th>
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</table>
| Journey      | Acceptable    | • Completed the stated critical element by achieving results that met applicable standards, policies, procedures, and guidelines.  
• In achieving critical elements and work assignments, adhered to work/project schedules; organized or prioritized own tasks to complete assignments; adjusted own work priorities to achieve desired results.  
• Demonstrated ability to work well with others. |
| Journey      | Unacceptable  | • Failed to achieve all or part of the stated critical element; or  
• Failed to provide products that were sound, accurate, thorough and documented, and regularly failed to meet applicable authorities, standards, policies, procedures and guidelines; or  
• Failed to plan, organize, prioritize, and schedule own work activities to deliver the critical element in a timely and effective manner; relied on others to frequently assist with or redo work assignments; or  
• Demonstrated poor cooperation or inability to work with others. |
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<tr>
<th>Career Stage</th>
<th>Element Level</th>
<th>Performance Standard</th>
</tr>
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</table>
| Expert       | Acceptable   | • Delivered on each critical element with broad and significant impact that was in alignment with the mission and objectives of the organization as well as applicable authorities, standards, policies, procedures and guidelines anticipating and overcoming significant obstacles.  
• Established priorities and coordinated work across projects, programs or people, balancing work demands and anticipating and overcoming obstacles to achieve a timely and positive outcome.  
• Demonstrated high standards of professional conduct and represented the organization or work unit effectively. |
| Expert       | Unacceptable | • Failed to achieve all or part of the stated critical element; or  
• Failed in the accomplishment of priorities and coordination of work across projects, programs or people; consistently failed to balance work demands resulting in an untimely and unproductive product or event; or  
• Demonstrated poor cooperation or inability to work with others. |
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<tr>
<th>Career Stage</th>
<th>Element Level</th>
<th>Performance Standard</th>
</tr>
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| Supervisory  | Acceptable    | • Achieved expected results by effectively carrying out established supervisory responsibilities.  
• Demonstrated adequate EEO and Affirmative Action awareness in areas of supervision and leadership.  
• Supported use of Alternative Dispute Resolution to resolve conduct and performance concerns at the lowest level and early timeframe to ensure the workplace provided a harmonious climate. |
| Supervisory  | Unacceptable  | • Failed in the accomplishment of priorities and coordination across projects, programs, and people; consistently failed to balance work demands of employees resulting in untimely or unproductive products or events; or  
• Failed to demonstrate adequate EEO and Affirmative Action awareness in areas of supervision and leadership; or  
• Failed to support the use of Alternative Dispute Resolution to resolve conduct and performance concerns to ensure the workplace provides a harmonious climate; or  
• Failed to provide timely performance feedback as required during the rating cycle or to take appropriate corrective action to address instances of inappropriate conduct and/or unacceptable performance. |
APPENDIX C

CAREER STAGES CROSSWALK

The performance standards in Appendix B are defined for three different stages in the advancement pattern of a position or career - entry, journey and expert. The following crosswalk is provided to assist rating officials in determining career stage. The crosswalk is a guide; rating officials may determine that a particular position is at a different career stage than that shown in the crosswalk as appropriate. Definitions of the types of work follow.

For **professional work** and **administrative work**, the following is generally applicable:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Grades</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Entry</td>
<td>GS-05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Typically based on education alone)</td>
<td>GS-07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>GS-09*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Journey</td>
<td>GS-09*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Typically requires a combination of education and experience)</td>
<td>GS-11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expert</td>
<td>GS-12</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Primarily based on experience) and above</td>
<td>GS-13</td>
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*May be considered either entry or journey depending on the position and career progression.*

For **technician work**, the following is generally applicable:

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<th>Level</th>
<th>Grades</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Entry</td>
<td>GS-04</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>GS-05</td>
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<tr>
<td>Journey</td>
<td>GS-06</td>
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<td>GS-07</td>
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<td>GS-08</td>
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<td></td>
<td>GS-09*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Expert</td>
<td>GS-09*</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>GS-11</td>
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<td>GS-12</td>
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*May be considered either entry or journey depending on the position and career progression.*

Enclosure (3)
For clerical work, the following is generally applicable:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Grades</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Entry</td>
<td>GS-03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>GS-04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journey</td>
<td>GS-05</td>
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<td>GS-06</td>
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<td></td>
<td>GS-07*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Expert</td>
<td>GS-08</td>
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<td>GS-10</td>
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<td>GS-12</td>
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*May be considered an expert for those series that normally are not graded above the GS-07 level.*

**Professional work** - Requires knowledge in a field of science or learning characteristically acquired through education or training equivalent to a bachelor’s or higher degree with major study in or pertinent to the specialized field, as distinguished from general education. Professional occupational series follow a two-grade interval pattern and are identified as professional in the series definitions. Examples include Psychologists (0180), Computer Scientists (1550), and Computer Engineers (0854).

**Administrative work** - Involves the exercise of analytical ability, judgment, discretion, and personal responsibility, and the application of a substantial body of knowledge of principles, concepts, and practices applicable to one or more fields of administration or management. While these positions do not require specialized education, they do involve the type of skills (analytical, research, writing, judgment) typically gained through a college level education, or through progressively responsible experience. Administrative occupational series follow a two-grade interval pattern. Examples include Human Resources Specialist (0201), Management and Program Analyst (0343), and Technical Writer (1083).

**Technician work** - Typically associated with and supportive of a professional or administrative field. It involves extensive practical knowledge, gained through experience and/or specific training less than that represented by college graduation. Technician employees carry out tasks, methods, procedures, and/or computations that are laid out either in published or oral instructions and covered by established precedents or guidelines. Technician work, however, typically follows a one-grade interval pattern and does not require the application of
knowledge and skills equivalent to those required for two-grade interval work. Examples include Safety Technician (0019), Medical Technician (0645), and Dental Assistant (0681).

**Clerical work** — Involves structured work in support of office, business, or fiscal operations. Clerical work is performed in accordance with established policies, procedures, or techniques; and requires training, experience, or working knowledge related to the tasks to be performed. Clerical occupational series follow a one-grade interval pattern. Examples include Correspondence Clerk (0309), Legal Assistant (0986), and Equipment Operator (0350).
APPENDIX D

FRAMEWORK FOR RECOGNITION AND REWARDS

The following is the NPS framework for meeting the requirements of performance recognition that emphasizes rigor in the areas of performance-based recognition, tying performance plans to organizational mission and goals, and communication between employees and supervisors.

1. To provide a means to differentiate levels of contribution to mission and recognize and reward employees appropriately based on their individual accomplishments and contributions, for those employees who received an “Acceptable” rating of record as part of an annual performance appraisal, each critical element will be assessed against the performance awards standards in paragraph 4 of this appendix.

   a. This assessment will result in the assignment by the rating official of a reward recommendation score of 1, 2 or 3 to each critical element.

   b. The senior rating official will review and modify as necessary the scores recommended by the rating official.

   c. The score and any associated award amount will then be reviewed and modified or approved by the Performance Awards Review Board in accordance with section 15. c. of this policy.

2. Eligibility for the various forms of recognition and rewards is based on the rounded average of the reward recommendation scores assigned as described in paragraph 1 of this appendix. The two primary means of recognizing and rewarding performance and contributions to mission are as follows:

   a. Awards. In accordance with section 15. a., awards may be used as tools to acknowledge and motivate employees by recognizing and rewarding significant individual, team or organizational achievements or contributions. Performance-based awards will be granted according to the chart below. Awards are neither mandatory nor guaranteed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Average of Critical Element Scores</th>
<th>Award Eligibility (% of basic pay)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.0 - 1.49</td>
<td>No award - 1.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.50 - 2.49</td>
<td>1.0 - 2.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.50 - 3.0</td>
<td>2.0 - 4.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Enclosure (4)
b. Quality Step Increases (QSIIs). In accordance with section 15. b., the purpose of a QSI is to provide appropriate incentive and recognition for excellence in performance by granting a faster than normal step increase. To be eligible for a QSI, an employee must:

(1) Currently be paid below step 10 of his or her grade;

(2) Have received an average reward recommendation score of no less than 2.5;

(3) Have demonstrated sustained performance of high quality; and

(4) Have not received a QSI (or QSI-equivalent under a personnel system other than the General Schedule) within the preceding 52 consecutive calendar weeks.

3. For the transition year only, the chart in paragraph 2. a. of this appendix may be modified to ensure that transitioning employees are appropriately rewarded for their performance during the entire FY2010 appraisal period. For employees who are not entitled to a rating of record under NSPS (i.e., employees who transitioned from NSPS to GS prior to 3 July 2010), the chart will be modified as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Average of Critical Element Scores</th>
<th>Award Eligibility (% of basic pay)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.0 - 1.49</td>
<td>No award - .75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.50 - 2.49</td>
<td>.75 - 1.25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.50 - 3.0</td>
<td>1.25 - 2.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. The performance awards standards by which performance on individual critical elements is assessed in order to assign a score, as described in paragraph 1 of this appendix, are on the following pages.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Career Stage</th>
<th>Rewards Score</th>
<th>Performance Awards Standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Entry        | 1             | With considerable guidance and assistance:  
|              |               |   • Accomplished the stated critical element, achieving desired results that were minimally sound, accurate, thorough or documented; met applicable authorities, standards, policies, procedures and guidelines.  
|              |               |   • Planned, organized, prioritized and scheduled own work activities to deliver the critical element in a timely and effective manner.  
|              |               |   • Demonstrated ability to work well with others. |
| Entry        | 2             | With minimal guidance and assistance:  
|              |               |   • Effectively achieved the stated critical element.  
|              |               |   • Achieved results that were technically sound, accurate, thorough and documented and met applicable authorities, standards, policies, procedures and guidelines.  
|              |               |   • Planned, organized, prioritized and scheduled own work activities to deliver the critical element in a timely and effective manner, making adjustments to respond to changing situations as necessary.  
|              |               |   • Demonstrated high standards of teamwork. |
| Entry        | 3             | Without guidance or assistance:  
|              |               |   • (Measured in addition to Entry 1 and 2 above)  
|              |               |   • Contributed results beyond what was expected; results were far superior in quality, quantity and/or impact to the stated critical element.  
|              |               |   • Represented the organization or work unit effectively through model team cooperation. |

Enclosure (4)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Career Stage</th>
<th>Rewards Score</th>
<th>Performance Awards Standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Journey      | 1             | - Completed the stated critical element by achieving results that met applicable standards, policies, procedures, and guidelines.  
- In achieving job objectives and work assignments, adhered to work/project schedules; organized or prioritized own tasks to complete assignments; adjusted own work priorities to achieve desired results.  
- Demonstrated ability to work well with others. |
| Journey      | 2             | - Effectively accomplished the stated critical element by achieving results that were technically sound, accurate, thorough and documented and met applicable authorities, standards, policies, procedures and guidelines.  
- Planned, organized, prioritized and scheduled own work activities to deliver the critical element in a timely and effective manner, making adjustments to respond to changing situations as necessary.  
- Demonstrated high standards of teamwork and cooperation. |
| Journey      | 3             | - (Measured in addition to Journey 1 and 2 above)  
- Achieved outcomes and results that are superior in quality, quantity, timeliness and/or impact to what would ordinarily be expected at this level.  
- Contributed to organizational performance well beyond what is expected.  
- Persisted in overcoming obstacles and put forth extra effort to accomplish difficult assignments.  
- Represented the organization or work unit effectively through model team cooperation. |

Enclosure (4)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Career Stage</th>
<th>Rewards Score</th>
<th>Performance Awards Standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Expert       | 1             | • Delivered on each critical element with broad and significant impact that was in alignment with the mission and objectives of the organization as well as applicable authorities, standards, policies, procedures and guidelines anticipating and overcoming significant obstacles.  
• Established priorities and coordinated work across projects, programs or people, balancing work demands and anticipating and overcoming obstacles to achieve a timely and positive outcome.  
• Demonstrated high standards of professional conduct and represented the organization or work unit. |
| Expert       | 2             | • (Measured in additional to Expert 1 above)  
• Effectively demonstrated performance in each critical element that contributed to the mission and goals of the organization as well as applicable authorities, standards, policies, procedures and guidelines. Adapted established methods and procedures when needed.  
• Demonstrated high standards in representing the organization or work unit through teamwork, cooperation and leadership. |
| Expert       | 3             | • (Measured in addition to Expert 1 and 2 above)  
• Contributed results far superior in quality, quantity and/or impact to the stated critical element.  
• Accomplishments and outcomes were of such magnitude that they contributed to the organization exceeding its mission goals and objectives for the year.  
• Created new and innovative methods and processes that contributed significantly to the success of the organization.  
• Represented the organization or work unit through model teamwork, cooperation and exemplary leadership. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Career Stage</th>
<th>Rewards Score</th>
<th>Performance Awards Standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Supervisory  | 1             | • Achieved expected results by effectively carrying out established supervisory responsibilities.  
• Demonstrated adequate EEO and Affirmative Action awareness in areas of supervision and leadership.  
• Instituted measures to foster productivity and safety.  
• Provided timely performance feedback at a minimum of two times during the performance cycle. Took appropriate corrective action to address instances of inappropriate conduct and/or unacceptable performance. |
| Supervisory  | 2             | • Established priorities and coordinated work across projects, programs or people, effectively balancing work demands and anticipating and overcoming difficult obstacles to achieve a timely and positive outcome.  
• Provided clear guidance to others by translating organizational goals into concrete objectives, plans, priorities, and assignments.  
• Proactively instituted measures to foster increased productivity and safety.  
• Developed employee or team performance and/or potential through mentoring and coaching. |
| Supervisory  | 3             | • (Measured in addition to Supervisory 1 and 2 above)  
• Contributed business results beyond what was expected; results were far superior in quality, quantity, and/or impact to the stated objective.  
• Supervisory contributions were exemplary and the results achieved went well beyond what was expected in terms of quality, quantity, timeliness and/or impact.  
• Identified and utilized innovative and/or creative methods that accomplished work and provided long-range support for Human Capital Strategic Goals. Actively sought out information for and engaged in Strategic Workforce Planning for the work unit.  
• Maintained positive working relationships with employees and labor organizations. Encouraged and fostered organizational use of problem solving and Alternative Dispute Resolution techniques and programs to maintain or improve production and harmony in the workplace. Instituted proactive and innovative measures to foster increased productivity and safety.  
• Managed and recognized employee performance in keeping with DON policy; provided timely feedback, and held a minimum of two formal performance meetings during the rating cycle; developed employee or team performance and/or potential through mentoring and coaching. Took timely and appropriate corrective action. |

Enclosure (4)