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	U·S·DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR OFFICE OF SURFACE MINING RECLAMATION AND ENFORCEMENT DIRECTIVES SYSTEM	Subject Number: PER-14 Transmittal Number: 483 Date: 11/8/88

Subject: Performance Management System

Approval: | Title: Deputy Director

1. Purpose. This directive prescribes the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement's (OSMRE) policy and procedures for implementing the Performance Management System (PMS) for GM, General Schedule (GS), and Prevailing Rate employees. This directive supplements the law and implementing regulations or instructions issued by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), and the Department of the Interior (DOI). The Performance Management System (PMS) will:

a. clarify and communicate agency goals and objectives.

b. identify individual accountability for the accomplishment of organizational goals and objectives.

c. evaluate and improve individual and organizational accomplishments.

d. be the basis for decisions on performance awards, merit and general increases (when applicable), training, reassigning, promoting, reducing in grade, retaining, and removing employees.

e. apply to all positions in OSMRE for which employment is expected to exceed 120 days in a consecutive 12 month period. Positions excluded from coverage are noncareer executive assignments, Presidential appointees, Senior Executive Service (SES) members, or other positions excluded by Office of Personnel Management regulation.

f. provide meaningful feedback to employees about their performance and how to improve their performance.

g. provide employees with an opportunity to participate in the establishment of performance plans.

2. Summary of Changes. This directive is a rewrite of the Performance Appraisal Directive and completes the conversion to the Performance Management System which was established by Office of Personnel Management regulations on March 11, 1986.

3. Definitions.

a. "Appraisal" means the act or process of reviewing and evaluating the performance of an employee against the described performance standard(s).

b. "Appraisal period" means the period of time, normally one year but no less than 90 days under an approved performance plan, for which an employee's performance will be reviewed.

c. "Critical element" means a component of a position consisting of one or more duties and responsibilities which contributes toward accomplishing organizational goals and objectives and which is of such importance that unacceptable performance on the element would result in unacceptable performance in the position.

d. "Days" means calendar days.

e. "Element Rating" means the rating used to describe whether or not the employee met, exceeded, or failed to meet the performance standards set for a particular element.

f. "Minimum appraisal period" means no less than 90 days under an approved performance plan for which an employee's performance will be reviewed.

g. "Opportunity to improve period" means a period of no less than 60 days granted in writing to an employee during which time that employee is to demonstrate acceptable performance or improve performance to the Fully Successful level or higher on the critical element(s) not being met.

h. "Performance" means an employee's accomplishment of assigned work as specified in the critical and required elements of the employee's position.

i. "Performance Management and Recognition System (PMRS)" means the system prescribed by 5 United States Code (USC) Chapter 54 which addresses pay increases and cash awards for GM 13, 14, and 15 employees (formerly the merit pay system).

j. "Performance plan" means the aggregation of all of an employee's written critical and required elements and performance standard(s).

k. "Performance standard" means a statement of the expectations or requirements established by management for a critical or required element at a particular rating level. A performance standard may include, but is not limited to, factors such as quality,

quantity, timeliness, and manner of performance.

l. "Progress review" means a review of the employee's progress toward achieving the performance standards. It is not a rating.

m. "Rating": see Summary rating.

n. "Rating Official" means the person who evaluates the performance of an employee and who assigns the rating of record. Usually, this will be the rated employee's immediate supervisor.

o. "Rating of record" means the summary rating required at the time specified in this plan including the written notice at any time a GM employee fails to meet the performance standard for one or more critical elements, or at such other times as the plan specifies for special circumstances.

p. "Required Element" means a component of an employee's position which does not meet the definition of a critical element, but is of sufficient importance to warrant written appraisal. More weight is given to a critical element than to a required element.

q. "Reviewing Official" means the official who is designated to review and approve the performance plan, ratings of record and performance-based personnel actions made by a rating official. Usually this will be the rating official's immediate supervisor. The bureau director may act as the rating and reviewing official for personnel on his/her immediate staff.

r. "Summary Rating" means the written record of the appraisal of each critical and required element and the assignment of a summary rating level (as specified in paragraph 4.c.(9)).

4. Policy/Procedures.

a. General.

(1) Written performance standards will be based on the duties of an employee's position; formal written appraisals of performance of those duties will be made at least annually. Rating officials will assure participation of GM employees and encourage participation of non-GM employees in the development and revision of performance plans. Performance standards will be communicated to an employee and documented within 30 days of the beginning of a rating period or within 30 days of placement or position change. Ratings of record derived from these performance plans will be the basis for various personnel actions.

(2) The establishment and content of performance standards and the identification of critical and required elements as well as the determination of definitions of summary rating levels are retained management rights under 5 USC 7106(a)(2)(A) and (B) and are not negotiable. Exclusive representatives of bargaining unit employees may bargain on the impact and implementation of performance management decisions.

b. Responsibilities

(1) The Director of OSMRE through the Deputy Director and Assistant Director, Budget and Administration, is responsible for:

(a) assuring the establishment, implementation, and monitoring of OSMRE's Performance Management System consistent with governing Departmental directives and OPM regulations.

(b) assuring statutory and regulatory compliance throughout OSMRE.

(c) assuring full management commitment to the goals and objectives of OSMRE's Performance Management System.

(2) The Division of Personnel is responsible for developing policy and guidance on the provisions and administration of the Performance Management System and gathering and compiling rating data for general and merit increase payouts and ratings of record files.

(3) The Servicing Personnel Offices (SPO) are responsible for:

(a) providing advice and assistance to supervisors and managers in carrying out their performance management responsibilities.

(b) providing supervisors and managers adequate performance appraisal training opportunities, technical advice in performance appraisal policies and procedures, notification of annual performance appraisal due dates, and necessary assistance to follow-up on delinquent performance ratings and to conduct procedural review and maintain record copies of performance ratings in the Employee Performance File (see 4.c.(12)(e)).

(c) assuring that the provisions of the performance appraisal system are communicated to employees.

(d) reviewing performance plans.

(4) Rating Officials are responsible for:

(a) determining and documenting in writing, with input from employees, the job elements and performance standards of positions under their supervision and providing signed copies of same to the Servicing Personnel Office for review and retention in the Employee Performance File.

(b) determining changes needed in position descriptions to reflect long-term job responsibilities that relate to the performance standards.

(c) discussing those elements and standards with their employees within 30 days of the beginning of the rating period and updating these elements and standards as needed during the appraisal period (see 4.c.(3)(d)).

(d) keeping the employees advised of his/her assessment of their performance throughout the appraisal period. Rating officials are encouraged to record written documentation of performance incidents on a frequent basis as an aid in subsequently making evaluations. Documentation will be maintained by the supervisor and will be available for the employee's review at any time.

(e) conducting employee progress reviews semiannually and at the end of the appraisal period; preparing a written evaluation of the employee at least annually and when other provisions of this directive require. Evaluations should clearly document how the employee met, exceeded, or did not meet the standards.

(f) recognizing and rewarding employees whose performance so warrants.

(g) providing opportunities for employees to improve minimally successful and unacceptable performance.

(h) initiating appropriate corrective action when unacceptable performance fails to improve to an acceptable level.

(i) completing summary ratings in writing, for all subordinates before leaving a supervisory position; and forwarding copies of signed summary ratings to the SPO for incorporation into the Employee Performance File (see 4.c.(1)(g)).

(j) providing guidance and information to employees on the Performance Management System.

(5) Reviewing Officials are responsible for:

(a) indicating approval of performance plans and final ratings of records by their signatures on the appraisal form.

(b) meeting with the rating official in an attempt to resolve any conflicting issues concerning the appraisal in the event of a disagreement between the rating and reviewing officials about the overall appraisal. When the parties cannot resolve their differences, the reviewing official will determine the rating of record.

(c) initiating appropriate remedial action if a rating official has failed to develop performance standards, to make fair and objective appraisals, or to otherwise fulfill performance appraisal obligations. Such deficiencies will also be noted in any appraisal made of the rating official.

(d) ensuring that rating officials provide copies of performance plans to the Servicing Personnel Office for review.

(e) providing advice or instruction to subordinate supervisors on the Performance Management System.

(6) Employees are responsible for:

(a) cooperating with their supervisors in the development of job elements and performance standards for their positions.

(b) notifying their supervisors of any facts or circumstances which employees believe should be taken into account when developing or revising elements and standards or when performance is appraised.

(c) keeping supervisors aware of circumstances beyond the employees control that may impact upon or deter them from the proper performance of duties or the meeting of assigned deadlines.

(d) participating in appraisal discussions with their supervisors concerning performance and ways of improving it.

(e) successfully performing the duties of their positions.

(f) becoming familiar with OSMRE's Performance Management System.

(g) requesting clarification from supervisor when questions arise regarding the Performance Management System.

(7) Performance Standard Review Board (reserve)

c. Procedures.

(1) Eligibility for Appraisal.

(a) An employee must have worked under elements and standards in his or her present position for a minimum period of at least 90 calendar days before being eligible to receive a rating of record.

(b) Within the first 30 days of an employee's assignment, the rating official must have worked with that employee to identify elements, establish performance standards and communicate the same to the employee in writing on the performance plan. A copy of the performance plan must be provided to the employee.

(c) The rating official for performance appraisal purposes will generally be considered to be the last official to have supervised the employee at the time the rating of record is due. (See paragraphs 4.c.(4)(e) and (5)(e) for variances.)

(d) If an employee is on detail or temporary assignment for a period of less than 90 days at the due date of the rating of record, the rating official will be considered to be the last official to have supervised the employee for 90 days prior to the detail or temporary assignment, providing the above requirements in (a) and (b) are met.

(e) An employee who is detailed or temporarily assigned to a different position (within the Department) for a period of 120 days or more must be provided with the performance elements and standards of the assigned position within 30 days of the beginning of the detail or temporary assignment. Development and communication of these elements and standards must follow the guidelines established by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), the Department and OSMRE.

(f) When an employee is or has been detailed or temporarily assigned outside of the Department, a rating of record must be prepared if the employee has served for the minimum

appraisal period within the Department. If an employee has not served in the Department for the established minimum appraisal period, but has served for the minimum appraisal period in another organization, the rating official must make a reasonable effort to obtain appraisal information from the other organization sufficient to prepare a rating of record.

(g) A summary rating will be completed when an employee changes positions during the appraisal period, if the employee has served for the minimum appraisal period in the position from which he/she has changed. See paragraph 4.c.(12) for distribution of rating forms. As well, rating officials will prepare summary ratings or annual ratings of record as appropriate before leaving the supervisory positions (see 4.b.(4)(i)).

(h) In the event that an employee receives more than one written summary rating during the appraisal cycle, the results of all such appraisals will be considered. The final rating official will be responsible for combining all such information to form the rating of record for that period, subject to the approval of the reviewing official.

(2) Performance Planning

(a) A written performance plan will be prepared for each employee covered by this directive within 30 days of the start of the rating period. These plans should be reviewed periodically to assure they accurately reflect the duties and responsibilities of the position to which the employee is assigned. They must be documented in writing with a copy provided to the employee and must be reviewed and approved by the reviewing official before application. The original of the form will be retained by the supervisor for use in the evaluation process; a signed copy will be provided to the Servicing Personnel Office for review and retention in the Employee Performance File.

(b) Supervisors should encourage employees to participate in establishing elements and standards for their positions. As employees participate in this process, they will receive a clearer understanding of the level of performance required. Employee participation may be achieved as follows:

1 The employee and supervisor jointly develop the performance plan; or

2 The employee provides the supervisor with a draft plan; or

3 The supervisor provides the employee with a draft plan.

(c) The identification of job elements is necessary for the proper evaluation of job performance. These elements are usually consistent with the primary duties and responsibilities covered in the employee's position description. No more than seven elements may be established for a position. Each plan should have at least three but no more than five critical elements and at least one required element.

(d) Performance standards must be established for the evaluation of job elements on the basis of factors which can be observed and documented, and which are consistent with the duties and responsibilities covered in the employee's position description. These standards should be stated in terms which will permit the supervisor and the employee to know what is expected and if the standards have been met. The standards should be expressed in terms of quantity, quality, timeliness, objectives or results expected of the employee. See paragraph 4.c.(2)(i)6 for an additional factor for PMRS employees.

(e) Critical elements, required elements, and performance standards may be standardized for the same duties at the same grade level. In the event of such standardization, consideration must be given to specific differences. Notations should be made on appraisal and planning session instruments to document such differences.

(f) A planning session must take place within 30 days of entrance on duty of a new employee, and within 30 days of the beginning of each rating period for current employees. At this planning session the rating official, with input from the employee, must establish the job elements and performance standards of the employee's position. In establishing these elements and standards, the position description should be reviewed to assure that it accurately reflects the duties to be performed. Critical and required elements and performance standards developed in the planning session must be documented on the performance planning form.

(g) Performance standards will be prepared at the Fully Successful level only. The standards should describe what is expected of the average, trained, competent employee. They should be realistic, attainable, and present a challenge to the employee.

(h) No rating will be given on elements/standards for which no actual work was assigned and the absence of a rating for

that element will not be considered in determining the summary rating.

(i) For all supervisory positions, a critical element must be developed to include supervisory functions. To the extent appropriate, this critical element should address:

1 accountability for internal controls,

2 the fulfillment of equal employment opportunity responsibilities,

3 assuring that appropriate personnel decisions and actions are in accordance with merit principles,

4 the appraising of employees fairly, accurately, timely, and in accordance with established performance standards.

5 the implementation of occupational safety and health program.

6 factors that take into account organizational accomplishments, as well as individual performance requirements, for PMRS employees.

(3) Progress Reviews

(a) Performance appraisal is a continuing process during which supervisors judge the work of individual employees compared to performance standards for the critical and required elements of the position. An employee will be appraised only by comparing performance with his or her individual performance plan for the current rating period. The employee must have at least 90 days (the minimum rating period) between receipt of the performance plan and the end of the rating period to meet performance standards.

(b) Supervisors should periodically appraise overall performance and keep employees informed of their progress toward meeting performance standards. Performance review discussions should be held as often as needed to provide supervisors with data to assess work progress and to help employees improve their performance. Supervisors will hold progress reviews at the mid-point of employees' rating periods, as a minimum. Written documentation of this review is optional and when exercised is documented on the appraisal form. Periodic counseling sessions with employees will ensure timely identification of their strengths and weaknesses and help to avoid unexpected performance ratings at the end of the rating period.

(c) At the time a supervisor identifies performance which fails to meet performance standards for a critical or required element, the supervisor will inform the employee of his or her performance deficiencies. Timely counseling sessions should be held to identify corrective actions and assist the employee to improve performance. If an employee's job performance appears to be affected by a personal problem, the supervisor should seek advice and assistance from the Servicing Personnel Office or Employee Assistance Program Counselor. When an employee alleges that a performance problem is due to alcohol or drug abuse, management must offer rehabilitation assistance to the employee. Managers should contact the employee relations specialist for further guidance.

(d) Rating supervisors will discuss changes to performance plans with employees when changes occur (see 4.b.(4)(c)). Changes will be developed with employee participation in the same manner as initial development of performance plans. Changes in mission, organization, technology, or program emphasis; revisions to position descriptions; or changes to performance standards which were set too high or too low may require revised performance plans. Any such changes must be introduced far enough before the end of the rating period to give employees an opportunity to meet revised performance standards. The length of time needed will depend on the nature of the job and the extent of the changes.

(4) Employee Performance Ratings

(a) After the rating period ends, the rating supervisor will prepare a written appraisal on the performance rating form. The supervisor will consider performance during the entire rating period to include performance compared to the employee's current performance plan and performance under other plans (e.g., special ratings and summary ratings transferred with employees from other Federal agencies.) Consideration will give due weight to such factors as, length of time covered by special ratings and summary ratings, similarity between job elements and performance standards, and explanations of employee strengths and/or weaknesses. Appropriate narrative justification must be prepared to show how standards are met, exceeded, or not met. Specific examples should be provided.

(b) Performance ratings and performance-based personnel actions will be reviewed and approved by officials at a higher level in the organization than the rating supervisor. Rating officials will discuss proposed performance ratings with others who have supervised the employee during the rating period before discussion with employees. Mutual agreement among rating

officials will be sought but the reviewing official has final authority. When the Director is the rating supervisor, higher level review/approval is not required.

(c) The rating of record will not be communicated to an employee before approval of the reviewing official. This does not preclude communication about appraisal of performance between a supervisor and an employee prior to determination of a rating of record. Employees will sign and date performance ratings after approval and signing by the reviewing official. If an employee refuses to sign and date a performance rating, such will be noted in the signature block and the rating will stand as prepared.

(d) Completed performance rating forms are due in the Servicing Personnel Office within 45 days of the end of the rating period. If a rating official fails to complete a performance rating when due, the Servicing Personnel Office will conduct a follow-up and bring the tardiness to the attention of the rating officials involved who will complete the rating within 30 days. If the rating is still delinquent at the end of 30 days, the issue will be raised to the next higher level of supervision for action.

(e) When a rating official is not able to participate in the preparation of a performance rating (e.g., extended illness, death, reassignment, resignation, etc.), it will be done by the new or next-level supervisor(s) by the due date.

(f) Ratings of record are established and effective on the date the reviewing official signs the rating. It remains in effect until replaced by another rating of record.

(5) Employee Position Changes

(a) Promotions. New elements and standards should be prepared for an employee who is promoted to reflect his/her higher level responsibilities. The employee will be rated at the end of the rating period using the higher grade performance standards provided he/she has served under those performance standards the minimum appraisal period - 90 days. Should the employee not have been issued standards or served the minimum appraisal period, the provisions of paragraph 4.c.(6)(a) apply.

(b) Details/Temporary Promotions. Employees detailed or temporarily promoted within or outside the agency for a period of 120 days or more should be issued performance standards and at the conclusion of their details or temporary assignments should be issued a summary rating on their temporary duties. These ratings will be considered when determining the final annual rating of record.

(c) Detail of Employee to Vacancy Normally Occupied by a Senior Executive Service (SES) Member.

1 The intent of the SES system is to provide a "rank in the person" concept rather than a position designated as an SES slot. Incumbency of a position by a non-SES employee does not make him/her eligible for any of the emoluments of SES rank. Consequently, such incumbents are rated under the appraisal system for non-PMRS or PMRS employees as appropriate rather than that for SES.

2 The standards to be applied are those based on the actual duties to be performed in the position to which detailed, if the detail is 120 days or more. The fact that the position has been or may in the future be held by an SES employee should not affect the rating of record eventually made of the employee's performance.

(d) Employee Movement. A summary rating will be prepared whenever an employee moves from one position to another during the rating period or moves to a position in another agency provided he/she has met the minimum appraisal requirements.

(e) Supervisory Movement. A summary rating will be prepared for all employees for whom he/she is rating official as of the date a supervisor leaves his/her position if departure is less than 90 days before the end of the rating period (April 2 through June 30). This summary rating will be considered the annual rating for affected employees.

(f) Performance Problems. To assure an employee's record reflects actual performance, additional ratings of record must be prepared:

1 when an employee who has been rated less than Fully Successful improves performance to a higher level 90 days or more after having received a less than Fully Successful rating. A new rating must be prepared to document the improvement.

2 when an employee has been reduced in grade because of unacceptable performance and has served in one position at the lower grade for at least 90 days.

3 when an employee meets time requirements for a within-grade increase and his/her most recent rating of record is not consistent with the within-grade increase decision.

(6) Extensions on Rating Periods. For reasons set forth below, it may be advisable to extend rating periods for a certain period of time:

(a) To meet the 90-day minimum appraisal period (mandatory). Rating period extensions beyond September 30 for GM employees is authorized for nonpay purposes only. See paragraph (7)(b) below.

(b) To provide a new supervisor an opportunity to observe an employee's performance against current requirements when information concerning the employee's past performance during the rating period is not available.

(c) To provide an employee who has been notified of failure to meet the performance standards for one or more critical elements an opportunity to improve performance.

(7) Prohibitions Against Rating Period Extensions.

(a) Rating periods will not be extended because a performance plan is revised less than 90 days before the end of the rating period if the original plan was in effect at least 90 days immediately before the revision. In such cases, the original plan will be used for the current rating period and the revised plan will be in effect at the start of the next rating cycle.

(b) The rating period for GM employees may not be extended beyond September 30 for pay purposes. For other GM personnel actions it can and must be extended, i.e., to establish a rating of record to reflect actual performance level when an employee has had a position change at the end of the rating cycle and had to be issued a presumed Fully Successful rating or have had last year's rating extended for pay purposes. If a GM employee's rating period cannot be extended (for pay purposes), the employee's previous rating of record (if it was a PMRS (GM) rating) will be extended and used for pay purposes (to include award determinations). However, the employee's performance at the end of the minimum appraisal period will be reviewed and a rating of record prepared; this rating will be used for all other personnel actions.

(8) Unratable Employees. When a performance rating cannot be completed at the end of the rating period, the rating period will be extended and a rating will be prepared. During any period of time when a new rating of record cannot be prepared or a previous rating cannot be extended, the employee's performance is assumed to be Fully Successful. An employee is considered unratable when he/she:

(a) was not given job elements and performance standards. In this case, the provisions of paragraph 4.c.(6)(a) apply.

(b) is in an "opportunity to improve period."

(c) was on long-term training as defined in TRN-1, Training and Employee Development.

(9) Summary Ratings

(a) Procedures. Summary ratings are developed through a two-step process. In the first step, individual ratings for each element are determined. The second step involves conversion of the individual element ratings to the summary rating using the formula described. More weight must be given to critical elements than required elements.

(b) Element ratings. Each element is compared against the following definitions and an element rating assigned at one of the levels described below:

Exceeded	-	Overall performance for this element exceeded the established standard(s) in terms of measured dimensions (e.g., quality, timeliness, or quantity of work).
Met	-	Overall performance for this element met the standard(s) as written.
Not Met	-	Overall performance for this element failed to meet the established performance standard(s)
Not Rated	-	Employee had no opportunity to demonstrate performance on this element (e.g., performance standards revised too near the end of the rating period).

Only elements that are rated (i.e., exceeded, met, not met) will be considered in determining the summary rating level. All Not Rated entries will be fully explained and documented on the performance appraisal form.

(c) Summary ratings. Individual element ratings are converted to a summary rating level using the following criteria:

Level	Criteria
5. Outstanding	Exceeds performance standards for all critical and required elements. Performance is of rare, very high quality.
4. Highly Successful	Exceeds performance standards for the majority of critical elements, meets performance standards for all other critical elements, and at least meets performance standards for all required elements. Performance is of unusually good quality.
3. Fully Successful	At least meets performance standards for all critical and required elements. Performance is of good quality.
2. Minimally Successful	Performance is not "Unacceptable", but needs improvement to achieve the "Fully Successful" level. This may be evidenced by the need for close supervisory review, discussion and correction of work products. When performance falls below "Fully Successful", it may be necessary to take remedial action. (At least meets performance standards for all critical elements and fails to meet performance standards for one or more required elements.)
1. Unacceptable	Fails to meet performance standards for one or more critical elements.

(10) Reconsideration Review. The reconsideration review process may not be used to challenge the identification of critical or required elements or the establishment of performance standards.

(a) Every effort should be made by the employee and supervisor to informally resolve an employee's concern regarding any aspect of performance appraisal. The reviewing official may participate in the informal resolution if necessary.

(b) Whenever an employee fails to informally resolve a performance appraisal matter, including summary ratings and the application of job elements or performance standards, he/she may request a single review under the following reconsideration review process.

(c) Employees in exclusive bargaining units may have rights through the negotiated grievance procedure. Applicable collective bargaining agreements should be checked in such cases for possible coverage.

(d) Employees will not be permitted to simultaneously pursue the same performance appraisal request for reconsideration through both the reconsideration review process and any applicable negotiated grievance procedure. An employee must choose whether he/she will use the reconsideration review process or the negotiated grievance procedure.

(e) Equal employment opportunity and prohibited personnel practice complaint procedures apply to performance appraisal in the same manner as they apply to other matters.

(f) OSMRE's process for reconsideration review for all employees is as follows:

1 Employees should submit any formal request for reconsideration review as promptly as possible to the Servicing Personnel Office for a technical review, but not later than 10 working days after notification of the action or issue for which reconsideration is being requested. The employee, in the written request for reconsideration review, will identify the matter of concern or dissatisfaction, provide supporting documentation, and provide copies of the performance plan and performance rating.

2 The Servicing Personnel Office will promptly forward a copy of the request for reconsideration review with documentation to the rating and reviewing officials for written response to the deciding official defined in 3 below within 10 working days of receipt.

3 Reconsideration review requests and responses of both Headquarters and Field employees will be forwarded to and resolved by the next higher level official (or designee) above the reviewing official.

(g) The reconsideration review will be conducted by a person who has not been involved in the request submitted.

(h) The official conducting the reconsideration review will review the matter and issue a written decision to the employee within 20 working days of receipt of the request for reconsideration review. There is no further level of review.

(11) Relationships of Performance Appraisal to other Personnel Actions.

(a) General. Supervisors and managers will use performance ratings of subordinate employees as a basis for adjusting base pay and determining performance awards, training, reassigning, promoting, reducing in grade, reduction-in-force, retaining, and removing employees. Such determinations will also be influenced by decisions made by the Merit Systems Protection Board, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, Federal Labor Relations Authority, and the courts.

(b) Promotion. No employee will receive a career ladder promotion unless his or her current rating of record is Fully Successful or higher. In considering an employee under merit promotion procedures, due weight may be given to supervisory appraisals of past or present performance.

(c) Awards. Performance appraisals are to be used as a basis for rewarding employees.

1 GM employees receiving an Outstanding rating (level 5) must receive a performance award. GM employees rated as Highly Successful (level 4) or Fully Successful (level 3) may receive a performance award (See PER-17 and 370 DM 540), but only if the award is supported by full justification as to how performance exceeded the expectations of the position.

2 Non-GM employees who are rated at the Outstanding or Highly Successful level should be considered for a performance award (See PER-17 and 370 DM 430). They are not required to receive an award. There should be no automatic awards based solely on performance appraisal. The performance appraisal document may be used to justify an award but only if it supports the conclusion that overall performance was substantially above the exceeded fully successful level. Those attaining an Outstanding rating are eligible for a Quality Step Increase provided they have not received one in the preceding 52 weeks.

(d) Within-Grade Increase.

1 In order to earn a within-grade increase, a General Schedule employee must be performing at an "acceptable level of competence" (i.e., most recent rating of record at least Fully Successful) and have completed the required waiting period. An employee whose most recent rating of record is unacceptable or minimally successful is not performing at an acceptable level of competence and the within-grade increase must be withheld.

2 A Federal Wage System employee will advance automatically to the next higher step if his or her rating of record is Fully Successful or better and he or she is otherwise eligible for a within-grade increase.

(e) Merit Increase. A GM employee's rating of record will be used as a basis for determining eligibility for and allocation of a merit increase.

(f) Training. Formal training must be job-related or reasonably expected to be job-related in the future. Training is one means by which management may positively assist an employee in correcting unacceptable performance. However, if an employee's performance fails to improve after a reasonable amount of assistance, further training should not be given. An Individual Development Plan (IDP) is required for each employee (see TRN-1, Training and Development). The IDP should be prepared and sent to the Servicing Personnel Office along with the performance plan.

(g) Reassignment, Demotion, or Removal. When an employee continues to perform at the "Not Met" level after being given assistance and an opportunity to meet performance standards, action may be taken to remove that employee from the position by reassignment, demotion, or removal from the Federal service. Such action may be taken at any time, during or at the end of the rating period. The Servicing Personnel Office will be consulted regarding the procedures to follow in effecting such an action.

(h) Probationary/Trial Periods.

1 New employees must be carefully observed during the probationary/trial period to determine whether they have the qualities needed to become satisfactory career employees. Proper use of periodic progress reviews to determine progress during the probationary/trial period can do much to assure that these employees have adequately demonstrated their qualifications and fitness. However, an employee may be removed at any time during the probationary/trial period if his/her performance is less than Fully Successful.

2 Certification to retain or remove a probationary employee from a position will be made at the end of the eighth month of employment. This certification requirement, however, does not mean the employee cannot be removed from the position before or after the ninth month of the probationary period.

(e) Performance related records will be maintained in accordance with the requirements of 5 CFR 293, Subpart D. As a minimum, the past three years ratings of record as well as the performance plans on which these appraisals are based will be retained.

(f) If an employee transfers to another bureau or agency at any time during the appraisal period, the performance ratings of record for the last three years, including the performance plan on which the most recent rating was based and any summary ratings prepared when the employee changed positions, must be transferred, as required by 5 CFR 293.405(a). A summary rating must be prepared which must be taken into consideration by the gaining organization when deriving the next rating of record.

5. Reporting Requirements. To be developed.

6. Effect on Other Documents. Supersedes Directive PER-14, Transmittal Number 171, dated May 11, 1983.

7. References.

a. Title 5, United States Code, Parts 430, 432, 451, and 540.

b. 370 DM 430

c. 370 DM 432

d. 370 DM 540

e. PER-17

8. Effective Date. Upon issuance.

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Appendix 1 Section Index with Paragraph Citation

APPENDIX 1

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