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Personnel



MANAGING THE CIVILIAN PERFORMANCE PROGRAM

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This instruction describes a program to evaluate performance of civilian employees and integrate performance with pay and recognition. It implements the requirements of Title 5, United States Code, Chapter 43 (Performance Appraisal) and Chapter 45 (Incentive Awards), and Title 5 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Part 430 (Performance Appraisal), Parts 531 and 532 (Within-Grade Increases (WGI)), Part 315 (Probation), and Part 451 (Awards). It also implements AFD 36-10, *Civilian Performance Management*. Authority to collect or maintain the records prescribed is 10 U.S.C. 8013. System of Records F040 ASG A applies.

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★This revision updates and clarifies previous guidelines on managing civilian performance programs. A ★ indicates revisions from the previous edition.

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Chapter 1

PERFORMANCE PLANNING AND APPRAISAL

1.1. Developing Plan Using AF Form 860, Civilian Performance and Promotion Appraisal - Performance Plan.

1.1.1. Write performance plans for general schedule (GS), federal wage system (FWS), senior level (SL), and scientific and professional (ST) employees.

1.1.2. Each plan is developed as a joint effort between employee and supervisor.

1.1.2.1. The supervisor (rating official) makes final decisions about which performance elements and standards to include in the plan.

1.1.2.2. The reviewing official (next higher in chain of command) must approve the plan.

1.1.3. Give a plan to each employee who enters a new position and at the beginning of each appraisal cycle (normally, within 30 calendar days).

1.2. Performance Elements. Each performance plan must contain sufficient elements to describe performance requirements of the position. They may be derived from the official position description (PD) or core document (CD) which details the duties and responsibilities on which the supervisor normally bases an employee's pay. Between five and seven performance elements usually suffice. Some employees may perform significant additional tasks or projects that may be included as part of their evaluation.

1.3. Performance Standards. Write standards so that they clarify performance expectations for employees. They should permit you to accurately evaluate job performance and describe contributions by the employee.

1.4. Mandatory Elements and Standards. Include appropriate standards and requirements in the performance plan:

- Supervisory responsibilities
- Competition and price reasonableness for contracting and acquisition personnel
- Equal employment opportunity (EEO)
- Safety and health
- Security
- Internal management control for safeguards against waste, loss, unauthorized use, misappropriation of funds, property, etc.
- Internal audit: resolution and follow-up of internal audits

1.5. Discussing the Performance Appraisal.

1.5.1. The supervisor and employee meet at the beginning of each appraisal cycle to recertify and discuss the employee's performance elements and standards. Such

discussions during the appraisal period help keep the performance elements current and allow supervisors to make necessary changes to the performance plan.

1.5.2. When a supervisor or employee is newly assigned, use these discussions to certify the performance elements and standards.

1.6. Appraising Temporary Duty Performance. When an employee is temporarily assigned for 120 days or more (for example, on detail or temporary promotion), the temporary supervisor gives the employee a written performance plan reflecting the temporary assignment as soon as possible, but no later than 30 calendar days after the beginning of the assignment. The rating official (permanent supervisor) considers informational ratings from details and temporary promotions in deriving an employee's next rating of record.

1.6.1. When an employee is on a detail or temporary promotion for 90 calendar days or more and the annual appraisal is due, the temporary supervisor completes the rating.

1.6.2. If an annual appraisal is due and the detail or temporary promotion is for less than 90 calendar days, the rating official completes the appraisal, but consults with the temporary supervisor.

1.7. Appraising Performance Under Other Circumstances. If a GS or FWS employee is in duty status at the time of closeout, but has not been in duty status for 90 days during the rating period (the minimum appraisal period), rate the employee when 90 calendar days have elapsed. This rating meets the minimum appraisal period requirement and becomes the rating of record.

1.7.1. If the employee served in the official position 90 calendar days or more during the current rating cycle, give a rating of record for the time worked.

1.7.2. Give an assumed fully-successful rating to employees on workers' compensation, leave without pay, or extended sick leave who have not worked at least 90 calendar days during the current rating cycle.

- Specifically show on the appraisal form the status of the employee for the period of time not on duty (for example, on extended sick leave).

1.7.3. Extend the last rating of record for one rating cycle for employees on long-term full-time (LTFT) training, intergovernmental personnel act (IPA) assignments, or military furlough if they have not worked at least 90 calendar days during the current rating cycle. In addition:

- If the employee's absence continues through the second cycle, use an assumed fully-successful rating for all purposes.

- If there is no rating of record to extend, use an assumed fully-successful rating for all purposes.

NOTE: When the employee returns to duty, give a rating of record at the end of 90 calendar days if you used an assumed fully-successful rating.

1.8. Completing the AF Form 860A, Civilian Performance and Promotion Appraisal - Performance Rating.

1.8.1. Supervisor:

- Writes and completes the Air Force appraisal form within 30 calendar days after the end of the appraisal period.
- Sends the form to the reviewing official for signature. Commanders should ensure that there is a reasonable quality control process in place as the reviewer signs the form to ensure that performance awards are properly justified, etc.
- After obtaining all required approvals, discusses the rating with the employee, who then signs the form.
- Gives the employee a copy of the form.
- Sends the form to the civilian personnel flight (CPF) for processing.
- Writes “employee refuses to sign” on the form if the employee so refuses, dates it, and sends the form to the CPF for processing.

1.8.2. Evaluating Performance Elements. The supervisor determines if the employee exceeded, met, or did not meet the standards for each element. Include a brief narrative each time an element is rated “did not meet” or as justification for an award nomination.

★1.8.3. Completing the Award Recommendation and Approval Block. Supervisors recommend employees for

performance awards. If appropriate officials approve the award, the final approval authority signs the rating form and validates the award percentage.

- CPF or organization prepares AF Form 2858, **Performance Award**, for presentation.

1.9. Quality Step Increase (QSI). QSI may be granted to a GS employee at or above step 4 of his or her grade.

1.9.1. An employee who receives QSI must display the highest quality performance above that ordinarily found in the type of position concerned. He or she must receive the highest performance rating.

1.9.2. Recommendations for QSI must be accomplished at the time of the annual performance rating, and undergo the same quality control and review process as performance cash awards. Charge a minimum of 3 percent of the employee’s salary against the awards budget for each QSI.

1.9.3. Employees may receive only one QSI at the same grade-level during a 3-year period, unless an exception is approved at major command (MAJCOM) or equivalent level. In any case, QSI may not be granted to an employee who has received QSI during the previous 52-week period.

★1.9.3.1. Process the QSI to be effective the first day of the first pay period following approval (i.e., following final signature on the appraisal form).

1.9.4. Do not award a performance cash award and QSI for the same period of performance.

1.9.5. At the end of the annual rating cycle, bases will publish the number, by grade level, of QSIs granted.

- CPF or organization prepares AF Form 2857, **Quality Step Increase**, to send to the employee’s unit for presentation.

Table 1.1. Annual Performance Appraisal Cycle.

PAY PLAN	TYPE OF RATING	APPRAISAL PERIOD	DATE RATED	PROCESSING PERIOD	EFFECTIVE PERIOD
★GS, FWS, SL or ST	Initial	Calendar days 1-90 after entering Air Force duty	90 days after entering duty	Days 91-120	Day 121 through 31 August
	Annual	1 July through 30 June	1 July	1 July through 31 August (Send completed AF forms to the CPF by 15 August.)	1 September
	Out of cycle	Date following last rating through rating date	You may give this rating when performance falls below fully successful. Issue a new rating when performance improves.	Keep time between rating and receipt by CPF to a minimum.	Date rating receives final approval

Table 1.2. Management Responsibilities When Employee Changes Positions.

IF EMPLOYEE MOVES WITHIN THE AIR FORCE		BETWEEN THESE DATES	THEN	AND
FROM	TO			
★GS, FWS, SL or ST	GS, FWS, SL or ST	Fewer than 90 days before closeout, to closeout date	Losing supervisor gives annual rating of record in old unit.	Losing organization pays approved awards.
★GS, FWS, SL or ST	★GS, FWS, SL or ST	Beginning of rating period to 90 days before closeout date	Losing supervisor prepares informational rating and sends with performance plan to new supervisor.	New supervisor renders annual rating of record at end of annual cycle.

NOTE: This table assumes that the departing employee held the position for at least 90 days.

Table 1.3. Management Responsibilities When Supervisor Departs.

IF THE EMPLOYEE IS	AND THE SUPERVISOR DEPARTS BETWEEN	AND THE SUPERVISOR	THEN
★GS, FWS, SL or ST	Beginning of rating period to 90 days before closeout date	Supervised employee less than 90 days	Departing supervisor prepares informational rating and sends it to new supervisor.
		Supervised employee for 90 days or more	Departing supervisor prepares informational rating for incoming supervisor.
	Fewer than 90 days before closeout, to closeout date	Supervised employee less than 90 days	Reviewing official prepares annual rating of record with input from departing supervisor.
		Supervised employee for 90 days or more	Departing supervisor prepares annual rating of record and leaves it for processing.

Chapter 2

USING THE APPRAISAL IN OTHER PERSONNEL ACTIONS

2.1. Determining Training Needs of Employees. Employees may receive training to improve performance and acquire job skills.

- Supervisors should make every effort during the appraisal cycle to determine if training would help an employee perform better on the job.

2.2. Using the Results of Appraisal. Methods of evaluating employees for promotion, placement, and training that

lead to promotion must comply with appropriate laws and guidance from the Office of Personnel Management (OPM).

2.3. Retaining the Employee. Use the ratings of record in this instruction to specify retention standing during reduction in force (RIF) per RIF implementing instructions.

Chapter 3

INCENTIVE AWARDS PROGRAM

3.1. Recognition for Accomplishments. The Air Force Incentive Awards Program provides special awards for superior accomplishments. Awards under this chapter should not be used to replace performance awards.

3.2. Approving Awards. The Secretary of the Air Force (SAF) approves all cash awards under this instruction for senior executive service (SES) members.

3.2.1. See tables 4.1 and 6.1 for approval levels for all other awards.

3.2.2. Managers make the decision to grant or refuse an award.

3.3. Delegating Award Approval.

3.3.1. Establish broad approval authority to allow award approval at the lowest possible level without official committee action.

3.3.2. Have the installation incentive award committee review award recommendations over \$2,500.

★3.4. Air Force Incentive Awards Board (AFIAB).

The Air Force Chief of Staff appoints the AFIAB, which is chaired by a general officer or civilian equivalent. The board may approve, disapprove, or modify awards.

3.4.1. The board makes recommendations to SAF to approve:

- The Air Force Decoration for Exceptional Civilian Service
- The Air Force Civilian Award for Valor
- The President's Award for Distinguished Federal Civilian Service
- Non-Federal awards, except those limited to senior executives (SES, SL, and ST)(see AFI 36-901, *Air Force Senior Executive Resources*)

3.4.2. The Board recommends various awards, including The Department of Defense (DoD) Distinguished Civilian Service Award to SAF for submission to the DoD Washington Headquarters Services Directorate for Personnel and Services, or other appropriate authorities, including nominations for cash awards in excess of \$10,000.

★3.5. Major Command (MAJCOM) Incentive Awards Committee. Each MAJCOM and comparable organization that has a civilian personnel division may establish a committee including military and civilian personnel. The decision to use or not use a committee rests with the award approval authority. The committee:

- Reviews, approves, or disapproves recommendations for awards.
- Recommends or selects nominees for competitive awards.

- Advises on program improvements.
- Reviews, completes, and provides a recommendation or decision to the MAJCOM commander concerning:
 - Cash award amounts that MAJCOM or AFIAB must approve
 - Honorary recognition for valor, meritorious, exceptional, or distinguished service
 - Command nominations to send to AFIAB

3.6. Installation Incentive Awards Committee.

3.6.1. Installations with a servicing CPF may establish an incentive awards committee.

- Field operating agency (FOA) commanders may use existing installation incentive awards committee.
- The CPF may establish a subcommittee of FOA members.
- In all cases, the servicing CPF gives program support and technical assistance.

3.6.2. Tenant units use the local incentive awards committee that the servicing CPF supports through host and tenant servicing agreements. The committee:

- Reviews, computes, and recommends to the owning commander approval or disapproval of cash award amounts that require committee action or higher level approval.
- Recommends honorary awards that need higher level approval and nominations for Federal or non-Federal awards.

3.7. Presenting and Publicizing Awards. The commander, management official, or supervisor recognizes employees and presents awards at a suitable ceremony. When an Air Force employee receives recognition outside the Air Force (for example, the DoD Distinguished Civilian Service Award), the Air Force organization to which the employee belongs makes all arrangements, including protocol, with the awarding party. Recognize and publicize significant achievements or contributions in the local community as well as on base.

3.8. Giving Certificates in Braille. All Air Force award certificates for blind award recipients must have Braille overlaid lettering as well as standard print. Use local purchase authority to obtain these certificates.

3.9. Recognizing Local Community or Civic Officials (Non-Federal Employees). When local business persons and civic officials offer significant services or contributions to the installation and the Air Force, commanders may

recognize these non-Federal persons using AF Form 3033, **Certificate of Appreciation**.

★3.10. Incentive Awards Program Annual Report (Civilian), IRCN: 1059-OPM-AN. AFPC writes the statistical portion of this report through DCPDS. The report is provided to AFPOA/DPM for review and transmittal to the OPM.

3.11. Other Recognition Programs. Air Force employees may receive monetary and honorary awards from other Federal departments and agencies for contributions that

benefit those operations. The Air Force may grant monetary and honorary awards to employees of other Federal departments and agencies when their contributions benefit the Air Force.

3.12. Wearing or Accepting Foreign Awards. An Air Force employee may not accept or wear a decoration from a foreign government without the express consent of Congress. The CPF inquires about foreign awards for US citizen employees to HQ AFPC/DPMASA, 550 C St W, Ste 12, Randolph AFB TX 78150-4714.

Chapter 4

MONETARY INCENTIVE AWARDS

4.1. Purpose and Coverage. The Air Force encourages using monetary incentive awards to increase productivity and recognize outstanding achievements.

4.1.1. Monetary incentive awards do not substitute for other personnel actions, pay, or performance awards.

4.1.2. This program applies to SES, SL, ST, GS, and FWS employees.

4.1.3. It does not apply to:

- Non-US citizen employees (except Panama)
- Nonappropriated fund (NAF) employees
- Administrative law judges
- Prevailing rate employees whose pay is set outside the United States
- Foreign service employees
- Individuals on noncareer executive assignments under 5 CFR, Part 305

4.2. Funding. The program needs funds to comply with the spirit of the law and Air Force policy on civilian productivity and performance. The command, staff, and line managers account for civilian personnel cost management. Each activity should budget a percent of its yearly civilian pay budget for funding awards.

4.3. Special Act or Service Award (SASA). SASA recognizes a GS, ST, or FWS employee or group contribution for a nonrecurring special achievement.

4.3.1. An SES member may receive SASA only for achievements outside normal job responsibilities.

4.3.2. Grant SASA at any time for special acts or services, including while an employee was on detail or other temporary assignment.

4.3.3. Submit recommendations for SASAs in narrative form immediately after the event. Use AF Form 1768, **Staff Summary Sheet**, and AF Form 2860, **Special Act or Service Award**. AF Form 1768 must include the recommended award amount and a brief description of the act or service.

4.3.4. See table 4.1 for approval authority. Send original and three copies of recommendations for SASAs exceeding \$10,000 to AFPOA/DPM, 1040 Air Force Pentagon, Washington, DC 20330-1040 for AFIAB review.

4.3.5. Base payment for such awards on tangible or intangible benefits. (See tables 4.2, 4.3, and 4.4.)

4.4. Notable Achievement Award (NAA). The NAA is a category of SASA for GS, ST, and FWS employees, based on noteworthy contributions that do not warrant SASA. Use AF Form 1768 and AF Form 3032, **Certificate of Achievement**.

4.4.1. A supervisor at any level in the employee's chain of command may initiate the award. The next higher level supervisor gives final approval.

4.4.2. Award amounts may range from \$25-\$300. Do not grant the award for a contribution for which you gave a previous award.

4.4.3. Managers outside the employee's chain of command may also nominate an employee for a NAA by making recommendations to the employee's immediate supervisor for approval by the employee's second-line supervisor. In which case, the nominating organization:

- Pays the award costs.
- Provides the funding information to the employee's organization.

NOTE: If the administrative costs of transferring funds would exceed the amount of the award, the employing agency shall absorb the award costs and pay the award.

4.4.4. Local procedures may be established for nominating and processing NAAs.

4.5. Using the Productivity Cash Incentive Program (PCIP). The Air Force encourages activities to establish unique PCIPs. A PCIP augments job performance awards rather than replacing them. Limit PCIP to jobs where:

- Tasks are recurring and repetitive
- You can objectively measure performance

- A specific employee or group of employees performs the work
- The employee controls the work pace

NOTE: HQ USAF/DPC must approve each PCIP before implementation. Send PCIP plans and documents to HQ USAF/DPC, 1040 Air Force Pentagon, Washington DC 20330-1040, at least 120 calendar days before the desired implementation date.

Table 4.1. Monetary Incentive Awards.

BASIS OF AWARD	EXAMPLE OF ACHIEVEMENT	AWARD/TYPE	METHOD OF NOMINATION	APPROVAL AUTHORITY
A special act or service resulting in verifiable, significant, tangible or intangible benefits to the government. AF Form 2860	Superior accomplishment, or scientific achievement that saves government significant time, manpower, or money.	SASA, individual or group	Within 60 days after completing special act or service, first-level supervisor prepares AF Form 1768 to describe achievement and recommend amount of award and submits through proper channels.	Up to \$10,000: Installation commander or designee. Over \$10,000, not to exceed \$25,000: OPM through AFIAB.
A special act or service resulting in noteworthy contributions. AF Form 3032	Personal effort that eliminates a wasteful or inefficient practice, or enhances mission effectiveness.	NAA, individual or group	Within 30 days of act, first-level supervisor prepares AF Form 1768 to describe achievement and recommend amount of award.	Second-level supervisor may approve NAA in amounts ranging from \$25-\$300.

Table 4.2. ★Scale of Recommended Awards Based on Tangible Benefits.

ESTIMATED FIRST-YEAR BENEFITS TO GOVERNMENT	AMOUNT OF AWARD TO EMPLOYEE
Up to \$100,000.	10% of benefits up to \$10,000 (minimum award is \$25).
\$100,001 and above.	\$10,000 plus 1% of benefits above \$100,001, up to \$25,000 with the approval of the Office of Personnel Management. Presidential approval is required for all awards over \$25,000.

NOTE: When possible, recommending officials identify dollar savings or benefits resulting from the contribution and use these savings as the basis for award. Base awards for contributions that result in tangible benefits or savings on an estimate of the first-year dollar savings or benefits. If the tangible benefits or savings in the first year following implementation do not represent benefits to the government, base award on benefits or savings during the second or third year or on an average of the several years following implementation.

Table 4.3. Scale of Recommended Awards Based on Intangible Benefits.

VALUE OF BENEFIT	EXTENT OF APPLICATION			
	Limited	Broad	General	Government-Wide or National

	Affects functions, mission or personnel of one office, facility, installation, regional area, or organizational headquarters element	Affects functions, mission or personnel of an entire regional area, command.	Affects functions, mission or personnel of several regional areas or commands, or an entire department or agency.	Affects functions, mission or personnel of more than one department or agency, or is in the public interest of the US or beyond.
	Affects a small area	Affects an important area of science or technology.	Affects a broad area of science or technology.	
Moderate Value				
Changing an operating principle or procedure with limited impact or use.	\$25-\$125 (minimum award is \$25)	\$125-\$325	\$325-\$650	\$650-\$1,300
Substantial Value				
Substantially changing or modifying procedures. Significantly raising the value of a product, activity, program, or service to the public.	\$125-\$325	\$325-\$650	\$650-\$1,300	\$1,300-\$3,150
High Value				
Completely revising a basic principle or procedure; significantly improving the value of a product or service.	\$325-\$650	\$650-\$1,300	\$1,300-\$3,150	\$3,150-\$6,300
Exceptional Value				
Initiating a new principle or major procedure; major improvement in the quality of critical product, activity, program, or service to the public.	\$650-\$1,300	\$1,300-\$3,150	\$3,150-\$6,300	\$6,300-\$10,000*

*OPM may approve granting an award of \$10,000 to \$25,000.

Table 4.4. Computing Awards for Contributions to Management Improvement Projects or Programs and Productivity.

TANGIBLE BENEFITS	AMOUNT OF AWARD
\$10,000-\$100,000	\$150 for the first \$10,000 and \$25 for each additional \$10,000, or part.
\$100,001-\$1,000,000	\$375 for the first \$100,000 and \$50 for each additional \$100,000, or part.
\$1,000,001 and up	\$825 for the first \$1,000,000 and \$100 for each additional \$1,000,000, or part.

NOTE: Use this table for awards discussed in paragraph 4.5.

Chapter 5

TIME-OFF INCENTIVE AWARDS

★5.1. **Granting Time-Off Awards.** Time-off awards grant time off from duty without loss of pay or charge to leave and are awarded for superior accomplishments that contribute to the quality, efficiency, or economy of government operations. The intent of a time-off award is to provide an alternate means of recognition in lieu of granting a monetary award. Therefore, the decision to grant a time-off award shall be based upon the same criteria or circumstances as for other incentive awards (e.g., Special Act or Service Award).

5.1.1. Supervisors may approve time-off awards of no more than 1 working day without review and approval of a higher official. Complete all documentation and processing requirements.

★5.1.2. Officials who exercise personnel appointing authority may approve time-off awards in excess of 1 working day. They may delegate this authority to officials who approve recommendations for other incentive awards.

- Designate these officials in local written operating guidelines.

5.2. Eligibility. Grant a time-off award to any Federal employee who meets the definition at Title 5 U.S.C. 2105, including SES employees and direct-hire foreign national employees (FNE) under DoDI 5120.6. Indirect-hire FNEs are eligible for these awards only if an incentive awards program established by agreement with the host country includes such a provision.

★5.3. Time-Off Award Limits.

5.3.1. Full-time employees, may be awarded a total time-off of 80 hours during any 1 leave year. The maximum amount of time-off that can be approved for any single contribution is 40 hours.

5.3.2. For part-time employees or employees with an unusual tour of duty, officials may grant during any leave year an amount of time equal to the average number of work hours in the employee's biweekly scheduled tour of duty. Maximum award for any single contribution is one-half the maximum amount of time that can be granted during the year.

5.3.3. Schedule awarded time-off within 90 calendar days after the effective date of the award. Employees forfeit any time-off not used within 1 year from the effective date.

5.3.4. Schedule time-off to avoid adversely affecting an employee who has an annual leave "use or lose" situation and who cannot use awarded time-off to justify restoring forfeited annual leave.

5.3.5. Employees may never convert a time-off award to a cash payment.

5.3.6. Employees may not transfer approved unused time-off when they transfer from the Air Force to another DoD component or to another Federal agency, nor may employees coming from another department or Federal agency transfer time-off to the Air Force.

★5.3.7. Time-off awards to individuals or groups of individuals shall not be granted or scheduled to give the perception of an additional paid holiday (e.g., the day after Thanksgiving), and shall not be used in lieu of administrative or other categories of leave.

5.4. Documenting Time-Off. Support any time-off award with appropriate written justification. Submit approved time-off awards to the CPF for processing. Include the employee's name, Social Security number, organization, and number of hours of time-off granted.

5.4.1. Justify time-off by explaining how the employee merits the award. Include certification from the supervisor or recommending official as shown in this sample:

"I have considered the cost of this time-off award in lost production time and believe that the benefits to the Air Force from the employee's contributions justify the amount of time-off approved. I also considered the unit's workload and unit employee leave projections and certify that this employee can schedule the time-off in addition to other projected leave no later than _____ (date not to exceed 90 calendar days from submitting the time-off award for approval, if possible; otherwise, not to exceed 1 year). I also considered other available forms of recognition and cash awards in determining the amount of this time-off award."

5.4.2. Include the approving official's name, position title, signature, and date signed, as well as those of the recommending official, as appropriate.

5.4.3. Document the approved time-off award on a Standard Form 50 (SF 50), **Notice of Personnel Action**. Keep the form in the employee's OPF. File award justification in the employee performance file (EPF). Prepare separate SF 50 for each approved award.

5.4.4. Document the effective date on the SF 50 after appropriate review and verification of legal requirements by an approving official.

5.5. Recording Scheduled Time-Off.

5.5.1. Record the employee's use of time-off on the employee's time and attendance reports according to instructions published by the civilian payroll function.

5.5.2. The employee must get supervisory approval to schedule and use the time-off award. Employee requests time-off far enough in advance to use it without disrupting the unit's work.

5.5.3. Supervisors who want to schedule an employee's time-off before receiving the SF-50 may check with the servicing CPF to verify that regulatory requirements were met.

Chapter 6

HONORARY INCENTIVE AWARDS

6.1. General Information. Use honorary incentive awards alone or in addition to monetary awards to acknowledge significant contributions. The honorary awards in this chapter serve as incentives to employees with continuous Federal service. Except for the Outstanding Civilian Career Service Award and the Valor Award, do not nominate employees who are about to retire.

6.2. Eligibility for Multiple Federal Awards. You may recommend an employee for the DoD Distinguished Civilian Service Award or the President's Award for Distinguished Federal Civilian Service to recognize the same act or achievement for which the Air Force previously granted an award.

6.3. Eligibility for More Than One Air Force Award.

You may give an honorary Air Force award to recognize a contribution for which the Air Force previously awarded a cash award. **RESTRICTIONS:**

- Give only one Air Force honorary award for a single act, achievement, or period of service.
- Do not give an honorary award to recognize an act or achievement for which military recognition was previously given.

EXCEPTION: The Air Force Outstanding Civilian Career Service Award is exempt from these restrictions since it recognizes long-term service that may include one or more honorary awards.

★6.4. Processing Honorary Awards. Since honorary awards require considerable review and deliberation, avoid short-notice processing. Submit honorary award nominations for presentation at a special ceremony at least 3 months before the scheduled event.

6.4.1. Local incentive awards procedures must be established to review and make recommendations on all awards that must be forwarded to higher headquarters for approval.

6.4.2. Awards approved by SAF or higher authority go through local incentive award channels and the parent MAJCOM or comparable organization to AFPOA/DPM, 1040 Air Force Pentagon, Washington DC 20330-1040, ATTENTION: Executive Secretary, Air Force Incentive Awards Board.

- The board sends approved recommendations to SAF.

6.5. Air Force Honorary Awards. Air Force honorary awards are outlined in table 6.1.

6.6. Non-Air Force or Non-Federal Honorary Awards. Table 6.2 lists various non-Air Force or non-Federal awards and criteria for Air Force participation.

★6.7. Nomination Deadlines. Commanders at each echelon should participate in any locally sponsored honorary award programs that recognize performance or service of Air Force employees. Tentative suspense dates set by sponsors of the various awards will be published annually by AFPOA/DPM (award solicitation schedule). AFPOA/DPM will identify awards that are mailed directly to the award sponsor (e.g., National Public Service Awards). Suspense dates for awards that must be mailed to AFPOA/DPM for AFIAB review prior to submission to the award sponsor will also be provided in the award solicitation schedule to allow sufficient processing time (e.g., Arthur S. Flemming Award). Because sponsor solicitations for award nominations frequently arrive with short notice, use the AFPOA/DPM award solicitation schedule to request nominations 60-90 days before suspense date. AFPOA/DPM will announce any major suspense date changes in writing to MAJCOMs and FOAs.

★6.8. Awarding Letters and Certificates of Commendation. Use AF Form 3034, **Certificate of Commendation**, with a letter of commendation to recognize an employee for an unusual achievement or contribution that does not meet the criteria for other awards. Such situations include:

- Noteworthy accomplishments while on special assignment or during short periods when an unusual work situation or emergency exists.
- Air Force programs recognized by an outside organization to which the employee made a contribution that was significant.
- Exceptional participation in civic or professional activities related to official employment.

6.8.1. Letters of commendation must contain a complete and concise description of the employee's act, accomplishment, or service and identify position title, organization, and dates. Commanders (unit level and above) may sign certificates of commendation.

6.8.2. Supervisors give certificates and letters of commendation to employees. The supervisor annotates the employ-

ee's AF Form 971, **Supervisor's Employee Brief**, with reference to the letter or certificate, and they are filed in the employee's EPF.

6.9. Letters and Certificates of Appreciation. AF Form 3033 is an all-purpose certificate that you can use to recognize individuals for a variety of accomplishments that do not fall under the performance awards category.

6.9.1. You may use letters or certificates of appreciation at any time to express appreciation to an employee for an above-average act or service.

6.9.2. You may use the letter or certificate to recognize employee contributions to civic or professional activities normally expected in the performance of the job, such as speaking, participating in conferences, or other leadership activities.

6.9.3. The employee's immediate supervisor, higher-level supervisor, or any person having knowledge of the service may sign the letter or certificate.

6.9.3.1. The supervisor gives the letter or certificate to the employee.

6.9.4. Record and file a copy of the certificate or letter of appreciation with the employee's AF Form 971. Do not file a copy in the OPF or EPF.

6.10. Other Air Force Recognition. Civilian employees are eligible for other types of recognition according to the governing regulation or instruction.

NOTE: The Air Force Outstanding Unit Award (AFOUA) and Air Force Organizational Excellence Award (AFOEA) are not documented in the OPF or DCPDS. Appropriate lapel buttons are used exclusively to recognize Air Force civilians assigned or attached to units awarded the AFOUA or AFOEA who contributed to the achievements of a cited unit.

6.11. Special Command Trophies and Awards. The Air Force encourages MAJCOMs and comparable organizations to establish unique honorary awards to recognize superior accomplishments.

6.11.1. Obtain approval from HQ USAF/DPC before presenting a special command trophy or award to a nationally prominent person serving as an expert or consultant.

Include the following in the approval request: Name of the person, copy of the awards committee minutes, and other supporting data. Send to HQ USAF/DPC at least 60 calendar days before the presentation ceremony.

6.11.2. You may present nonmonetary awards and define such items as a medal, certificate, plaque, citation, badge, or other similar items as having award or honor connotation. You may give other items with the command or organization logo, such as belt buckles and jackets, but such items must be valued less than \$50.

6.12. Recognizing Length of Service. Present certificates and lapel buttons to recognize 10, 20, 30, 40, and 50 years of creditable Federal service if at least 5 years were spent in civilian service.

6.12.1. Creditable Federal service includes both civilian service and all honorable military service creditable for leave. Normally, Federal service as a military member that led to formal military retirement is considered appropriately recognized at the time of that retirement. However, an employee who wants recognition for combined civilian and military service may request it from the CPF.

★6.12.2. Obtain these signatures for the certificates:

- AF Form 3589, **10 Year Length of Service Certificate**--Division chief or comparable level (unless the employee works for higher level)
- AF Form 3590, **20 Year Length of Service Certificate**--Director in departmental service (unless the employee works for higher level)
- AF Form 3591, **30 Year Length of Service Certificate**--Deputy chief of staff, installation commander or designated representative)
- AF Form 3592, **40 Year Length of Service Certificate**--MAJCOM commander.
- AF Form 3593, **50 Year Length of Service Certificate** --SAF (**NOTE:** For 50-year recognition, AFPOA/DPM identifies potential recipients, obtains eligibility verification from the MAJCOMs and processes certificates to SAF for signature.

★6.13. **Certificate of Retirement and Retiree Pin.** AF Form 342, **Retirement Certificate of Civilian Service**, and the retiree lapel pin (Stock # NSN 8455-01-345-2768) are available if desired.

Table 6.1. ★Air Force Honorary Awards.

AWARD AND TYPE	BASIS OF AWARD	AWARD DESCRIPTION	METHOD OF NOMINATION	APPROVAL AUTHORITY
Letter/Certificate of Appreciation (individual or group)	Act or service that is above average.	Certificate (AF Form 3033) and letter	Prepare letter and or certificate of appreciation; provide to employee thru proper channels.	Official having knowledge of the act or service

Letter/Certificate of Commendation (individual or group)	Any unusual achievement or contribution beneficial to the Air Force, but not meeting the criteria for a cash award.	Certificate (AF Form 3034) and letter	Prepare letter and certificate of commendation; provide to employee thru proper channels; provide copy to CPF.	Installation: Unit/CC MAJCOM: Division Chief Air Staff: Branch Chief
Command Civilian Award for Valor	Demonstrating unusual courage or competence in an emergency, either on or off duty (but beyond the call of duty). Examples: Supervising orderly exit from building during fire, executing proper course of action during an emergency.	Sterling silver medal bearing the AF thunderbolt on equilateral triangle surmounted by AF eagle perched on a scroll inscribed "Valor" within an olive wreath. Light blue silk ribbon with 4 yellow stripes and 1 red stripe in center. Sterling silver lapel emblem, ribbon rosette, AF Form 1307, and \$500 honorarium accompany award.	Supervisor prepares AF Form 1768 describing accomplishment(s) and draft citation (90 words or less) (see figure 6.1). Submit thru proper channels to MAJCOM Awards OPR within 3 months of act/event. Copy to CPF. MAJCOM provides certificate (AF Form 1307); servicing CPF provides medal set (stock # 8455-00-965-4714).	MAJCOM/CC or CV (<i>May be delegated to MAJCOM Director or Wing/CC</i>)
AF Civilian Award for Valor	Act of heroism with voluntary risk of personal safety in the face of danger, on or off duty. Example: Approaching or entering burning aircraft to rescue trapped victims.	Gold-colored medal of same design as Command Civilian Award for Valor. Light blue ribbon with 4 yellow stripes, 2 dark blue stripes, and 1 red stripe in center. Gold-colored lapel emblem, ribbon rosette, AF Form 1306, and \$1,000 honorarium accompany this award	Supervisor prepares AF Form 1768 describing act/event and draft citation (90 words or less) (see figure 6.1). Submit thru proper channels to MAJCOM Awards OPR within 3 months of act/event. Upon approval, provide copy to CPF. AFPOA/ DPM prepares and provides certificate (AF Form 1306); servicing CPF provides medal set (stock # 8455-00-965-4718).	SAF
Exemplary Civilian Service Award	Clearly outstanding service supporting a command mission for at least 1 year or a single act that significantly contributed to command mission. Action must clearly demonstrate how employee exceeded service expected of individuals with similar responsibilities.	Bronze colored medal bearing AF coat of arms within wreath of laurel leaves. Ribbon is edged with green with 3 red stripes in middle, bordered by light blue and white. Miniature medal, lapel pin, and AF Form 3517 accompany this award.	Supervisor prepares AF Form 1768 describing accomplishment and draft citation (90 words or less) (see figure 6.1). Provide copy to CPF. Unit provides certificate (AF Form 3517); servicing CPF provides medal set (stock # 8455-01-344-8740).	Installation: Wing/CC MAJCOM: Director Air Staff: Division Chief (<i>May be delegated one level to Group/CC, division chief, or branch chief, respectively.</i>)

Meritorious Civilian Service Award	Outstanding performance worthy of recognition for significant accomplishments with command-wide impact. Individuals must have performed assigned duties for at least 1 year. This award is not appropriate for individuals about to retire (see the OCCSA).	Sterling silver medal and lapel emblem bearing AF coat of arms with wreath of laurel leaves. Light blue silk ribbon rosette with gold and dark blue in center. Miniature medal and AF Form 1166 accompany this award. (<i>Emblem with ruby indicates receipt of more than one meritorious award.</i>)	Supervisor prepares AF Form 1768 describing accomplishments and draft citation (90 words or less) (see figure 6.1). Submit thru proper channels to MAJCOM Awards OPR within 3 months of act/event. Upon approval, provide copy to CPF. MAJCOM provides certificate (AF Form 1166); servicing CPF provides medal set (stock # 8455-00-571-8782; miniature medal: #8455-00-914-1851).	MAJCOM/CC or CV Air Staff: DCS
Outstanding Civilian Career Service Award (OCCSA)	Outstanding career service meriting recognition at the time of retirement. Demonstrating significant accomplishments, leadership, unusual competence, and significant impact upon the AF mission throughout the employee's career.	Bronze medal bearing AF coat of arms with a wreath of laurel leaves. Ribbon is white, trimmed in maroon, with 3 maroon strips in the center. Bronze lapel emblem and certificate (AF Form 2856) accompany this award.	Supervisor prepares AF Form 1768 describing career achievements and draft citation (90 words or less) (see figure 6.1.). Submit thru proper channels to MAJCOM Awards OPR within 30 days of desired presentation date. Provide copy to CPF. Unit provides certificate (AF Form 2856); servicing CPF provides medal set (stock # 8455-01-187-0127).	Installation/MAJCOM: MAJCOM/CC or CV (<i>may be delegated to Wing/CC or MAJCOM Director</i>) Air Staff: CSAF or VCSAF (<i>may be delegated to DCS</i>)
Decoration for Exceptional Civilian Service	Exceptionally distinguished service and accomplishments having significant AF-wide scope and impact covering a period of at least one year. Normally nominees should have previously received the Meritorious Civilian Service Award. Because this decoration is the highest recognition granted a civilian within AF and serves as an incentive, don't nominate employees about to retire (<i>see OCCSA</i>).	Gold-colored medal bearing AF coat of arms with wreath of laurel leaves. Dark blue silk ribbon with 3 dotted golden-orange lines in center. Miniature medal, ribbon rosette and certificate (AF Form 1310) accompany this award. (<i>Emblem with ruby indicates prior award of both the Decoration for Exceptional Civilian Service and the Meritorious Civilian Service Award. Emblem with diamond indicates receipt of more than one "Exceptional" award.</i>)	Supervisor prepares AF Form 1768 with description of accomplishments and draft citation (90 words or less) (see figure 6.1). Submit thru MAJCOM Awards OPR to AFPOA/DPM for review by AFIAB. Upon approval, send copy to CPF. Certificate is prepared and provided by AFPOA/DPM; servicing CPF provides medal set (stock #8455-00-965-4763; miniature medal: 8455-00-546-6108).	SAF

Figure 6.1. Sample Citations.

<p>ACCOMPLISHMENT AND ACHIEVEMENT</p> <p>In recognition of her distinguished performance as Technical Director for Aircraft, Aeronautical Systems Division, Air Force Materiel Command, from 12 June 1992 to 6 November 1993. As a pioneer in the field of manned aerospace vehicles, Ms. Employee helped advance the Nation's first line of defense through creative thinking, highly competent technical leadership, and exceptional ability applied to the advancement of aircraft technology, development, and implementation of new systems management policies and procedures during this period. Her outstanding devotion and accomplishments reflect the highest credit upon herself and the United States Air Force.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">VALOR AWARDS</p> <p>In recognition of his outstanding bravery while performing duties as Tractor Trailer and Fuel Systems Distribution Operator, Air Space Logistics Center, Air Force Space Command, 15 September 1993. When a vehicle crashed into a fuel stand in the storage area spreading burning fuel over a wide area, Mr. Employee was filling a tanker about 30 feet from the center of the fire. His alertness in moving his trailer to a safe position prevented a major fire disaster. Such courage reflects the highest devotion to duty and great credit upon himself and the United States Air Force.</p>
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Table 6.2. Major Awards Sponsored By Non-Air Force or Non-Federal Organizations.

NAME OF AWARD	PURPOSE	DESCRIPTION AND NUMBER GRANTED ANNUALLY	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF CRITERIA
<p>Arthur S. Flemming Award (established 1955).</p>	<p>To honor outstanding individuals in the Federal Government and to recognize those who have performed outstanding and meritorious work for the Government, to attract outstanding persons to the Federal Government, encourage high standards of performance in the Federal service, and to enhance appreciation of our form of Government and the opportunities and responsibilities it represents.</p>	<p>Engraved plaque. Presented by Downtown Jaycees of Washington in annual ceremony.</p>	<p>Career employees of the Executive Branch, under the age of 40. A specific accomplishment for which the nominee is primarily responsible but not necessarily connected with or related to a specific accomplishment or project that resulted in service, substantial financial savings to the government, significant social or technological progress, outstanding executive, scientific, or technical ability, outstanding performance during preceding fiscal year.</p>

NAME OF AWARD	PURPOSE	DESCRIPTION AND NUMBER GRANTED ANNUALLY	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF CRITERIA
William A. Jump Memorial Award (established 1950).	To recognize and encourage outstanding and deserving young government employees for sustained growth, development, integrity, and interest in the field of public administration.	Gold Key and Certificate of Merit. Presented by Jump Memorial Foundation in Dept of Agriculture annual award ceremony.	Career employees under the age of 37 whose work performance over a period of at least five years in a line or staff position, demonstrates unusual competence and interest in public administration, endowment for leadership in directing or developing programs, creativity and resourcefulness, close adherence to the basic principles of enlightened public service and integrity and dedication to duty.
William T. Pecora Award (established in 1974).	To recognize outstanding contributions of individuals or groups toward understanding of the earth by remote sensing.	Plaque and citation. Presented jointly by NASA and Dept of Interior in annual ceremony.	Sustained or single contributions of major importance to the art or science of understanding of the Earth through observations made from space. All individuals or groups, military or civilian, working in the field of earth resource sensing, including those from the scientific and technical community and those involved in the practical application of remote sensing.
Air Force Association Outstanding Air Force Civilian of the Year.	To recognize the outstanding achievements by Air Force civilian appropriated fund employees for the period of 1 January through 31 December each year.	Engraved plaque. Honored at the annual AFA convention in Washington, DC, normally in September.	Nominations are evaluated on criteria such as nature of the achievement, development of techniques or procedures which significantly increased mission effectiveness, and breadth of impact. There are four categories: Civilian Wage Employee of the Year (all FWS); Civilian Program Specialist of the Year (GS 1-11); Civilian Program Manager of the Year (GS 12-13); and Civilian Senior Manager of the Year (GS 14-15).
Government Employees Insurance Company (GEICO) Public Service Awards.	To recognize four federal employees and one retiree for special achievements, contributions, and outstanding service to the public good.	Plaque and \$2500 to four active employees; separate award presented to a retired federal employee.	Nominees are judged on the impact of their work related or non-work related contributions and extent to which they have served as an inspiration to others and brought credit to the federal service in each of the four areas: substance abuse prevention and treatment; fire prevention and safety; physical rehabilitation; traffic safety and accident prevention.

NAME OF AWARD	PURPOSE	DESCRIPTION AND NUMBER GRANTED ANNUALLY	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF CRITERIA
National Public Service Award.	The National Academy of Public Administration (NAPA) and the American Society for Public Administration presents this award annually to outstanding individuals in Government service. This award pays tribute to public service practitioners whose careers exhibit the highest standard of excellence, dedication, and accomplishment over a sustained period of time and to underscore the need for creative and highly skilled individuals as managers of complex and demanding government functions.	A lead crystal American eagle at the ASPA National Conference (Total of five presentations).	Awards are presented to public service employees who currently work, or have spent the primary portion of their careers working in organizations in the public service; have made outstanding contributions on a sustained basis rather than having performed a single exceptional deed; and have accomplished or caused to be accomplished significant programs or projects within their areas of responsibility to the ultimate benefit of the general public.

Chapter 7

PROBATION FOR NEW EMPLOYEES

7.1. Basic Probation Requirements. Employees who receive a career or career-conditional appointment, and who have not previously completed probation serve a one-year probationary period. This probation extends and continues the merit system competitive examining process for initial entry into Federal civilian service. During probation, supervisors evaluate the new employee for qualities and characteristics essential to effective performance, but which preemployment testing and examination methods do not adequately measure. An employee who does not satisfactorily complete the probation must be assigned to another position or separated.

7.2. Evaluating Factors. This instruction sets guidelines for evaluating job performance and work behavior. The supervisor also evaluates the probationer's character, conduct, and attitude that directly affect job performance against applicable standards of conduct according to such instructions as AFI 36-703, *Civilian Conduct and Responsibility*.

7.3. Certifying Completion of Probation. The supervisor certifies the probationer's performance in writing,

normally no later than during the 10th month of the probation.

7.3.1. The CPF advises the supervisor of this requirement with a notice from DCPDS.

7.3.2. The supervisor completes the certification through supervisory channels, sends it to the CPF, and retains a copy in AF Form 971, unless the determination is unsatisfactory.

7.3.3. If the supervisor does not recommend keeping the employee, the supervisor must contact the CPF as soon as possible before the probationary period ends for guidance on the proper course of action.

7.3.4. If the supervisor does not complete the certification process on time, an employee may pass probation by default.

7.4. When an Employee Fails Probation. Assign an employee who fails the probationary period to another position only:

- When enough time remains in the probationary period to determine fitness in the new position and the Federal service.
- Where good reason exists to believe the employee will successfully complete the continued probation.

7.4.1. A supervisor who decides that change-to-lower-grade (CLG) or separation is appropriate for the employee consults with the CPF staff and issues a notice of the action.

7.4.2. A probationer has no right to adverse action benefits provided by law or OPM governing rules. Procedures in 5 U.S.C., chapters 43 and 75, are inappropriate in CLG or separation of a probationer.

7.4.3. A supervisor who decides to terminate a probationer based in whole or in part on conditions arising before appointment must comply with the requirements of 5 CFR 315.805 and 1201.21.

7.5. Notice of Action. The supervisor:

7.5.1. Notifies the probationer in advance in writing of the intended action to demote or separate.

7.5.2. Signs and sends the notice to the probationer as far in advance as possible before the effective date.

7.5.3. The notice must include:

- What will be done and the action's effective date.
- Specific, detailed reasons sufficient to conclude that the probationer is unlikely to give subsequent satisfactory service.
- Information on how the probationer may ask for an official review of the action.
- The name and official address of the reviewer.
- The probationer's duty status until the effective date.

- Information that the probationer may appeal to the MSPB only based on:
- Alleged partisan political reasons or marital status (5 CFR 315.806(b)).
- Improper procedure (5 CFR 315.806(c)).
- Discrimination, if raised in addition to one of the two issues above, (5 CFR 315.806(d)).

7.5.4. Give the employee a reasonable time:

- To file a written response to the notice.
- To furnish affidavits that support the response.

7.5.5. The notice must meet the requirements of 5 CFR 1201.21.

7.5.6. A probationer may file the petition for appeal to the MSPB any time from the day after the effective date of the action until 20 calendar days after the effective date.

7.5.7. The supervisor must set a time limit for the probationer's response. Unless the probationary period ends sooner, allow at least 3 working days.

7.6. Reviewing the Action. At the probationer's request, the reviewing official determines if the action is arbitrary, capricious, or unreasonable in view of the documentation and other information provided by the supervisor relative to required performance, conduct, behavior, and attitude.

- The probationer receives notice in writing of the reviewing official's decision.

Chapter 8

PROBATION FOR NEW SUPERVISORS AND MANAGERS

8.1. Probation Requirements. New supervisors and managers must serve a probationary period the first time they start a permanent supervisory or managerial position in the competitive service.

8.1.1. The employee serves a probationary period on receiving an initial managerial assignment unless the selecting official waives the requirement based on the employee's previous satisfactory completion of a supervisory probationary period.

8.1.2. When the initial assignment is both supervisory and managerial, an employee must complete a single probationary period.

8.2. Exceptions.

8.2.1. An employee who, as of 11 August 1979, was serving or had served for any length of time in a Federal civilian supervisory or managerial position, need not serve a comparable probationary period under this chapter.

8.2.2. Temporary service (temporary appointment, promotion, or reassignment) as a supervisor or manager before 11 August 1979, counts if the employee officially held the position for more than 120 calendar days. Service while on detail or in an acting capacity does not count.

- Employees must give evidence of current or prior Federal civilian supervisory or managerial experi-

ence using official records or other evidence supplied by the employee or a Federal official.

8.3. Advance Notification. Inform the employee about the probationary period in writing before assigning him or her to a supervisory or managerial position.

8.3.1. Include information on the entitlement to placement if the employee does not satisfactorily complete the probation, and the absence of appeal rights over such placement.

8.3.2. Recruitment notices and vacancy announcements must explain these requirements and entitlements.

8.4. Training. Determine first-year supervisory and managerial skills training or career development requirements for the new supervisor or manager.

8.5. Full and Fair Evaluation. The manager over the supervisory or managerial position develops a performance plan on initial appointment to the supervisory or managerial position.

- Hold performance discussions during the probationary period to monitor the progress of the new supervisor or manager.

8.6. Length of Probation. The maximum length of the probation is 1 year. New supervisors and managers normally serve the entire period.

8.6.1. The DCPDS produces a notice 90 calendar days before the end of the probation to remind the CPF and supervisor of the certification due date.

8.6.2. The supervisor, with agreement from the next higher level manager, may terminate probation when it becomes clear that the employee lacks the aptitude or skills for the position and that further training and experience will not provide the skills for full and effective performance.

8.6.3. As an exception to the rule, based on consistently demonstrated fully-successful performance for at least 6 months, the supervisor may certify that probation was satisfactorily completed. The supervisor certifies this in writing, signs and files it in the employee's OPF.

8.7. Failing to Complete Probation. Managers and supervisors may not continue in the position if they do not satisfactorily complete probation.

8.7.1. When the employee cannot complete probation satisfactorily, the employee returns to a nonsupervisory or nonmanagerial position.

8.7.2. Return an employee to a nonsupervisory or nonmanagerial position for failing to complete probation only for reasons that relate directly to the employee's performance as a supervisor or manager. This return is not an adverse action.

- Process actions to demote or separate for conduct or performance unrelated to supervisory or managerial performance under 5 CFR Part 432 or 752.

8.7.3. Give an employee who returns to a nonsupervisory or nonmanagerial position sufficient facts to make clear why you took such action.

8.7.3.1. Give written notice of the reasons for the action to the employee.

8.7.3.2. Include with the notice information on how the Air Force will satisfy the employee's placement rights.

8.7.4. Continue to consider an employee whom you returned to a nonsupervisory or nonmanagerial position for assignment to other supervisory or managerial positions. Because position requirements and individual abilities vary, an employee who is unsuited to one supervisory or managerial position may perform satisfactorily in another.

8.7.5. An employee who returns to a lower graded nonsupervisory or nonmanagerial position may not retain the grade or pay of the higher position.

8.7.5.1. If the employee already has an entitlement to grade or pay retention from a prior position, it is unaffected by this assignment.

8.7.5.2. If the employee's entitlement to grade retention ceased on promotion to a supervisory position, the employee may resume the remainder of the period of eligibility if he or she does not complete probation and returns to the previous or equivalent position.

8.7.6. An employee who received a promotion from a nonsupervisory or nonmanagerial position to a supervisory or managerial one may return under this instruction to a position of no lower grade and pay than the one left.

8.7.6.1. An employee who transfers from a nonsupervisory or nonmanagerial position at a different agency to a supervisory or managerial position in the Air Force and does not satisfactorily complete probation has the right to be assigned in the Air Force rather than at the originating agency.

8.7.6.2. If the employee fails probation under this chapter, do not use RIF procedures to determine the new assignment.

8.7.6.3. Do not use a temporary appointment to give a "fall-back" job to the supervisor or manager who fails probation. Don't obligate the Air Force except in connection with overseas employment with return rights.

★8.7.7. When it is appropriate for an employee to return to a nonsupervisory or nonmanagerial position, his or her organization will place the employee.

- If the employee in question is to be moved from or to a career program position, the CPF must coordinate the placement with the career program.

8.7.8. An employee who is serving a supervisory or managerial probation overseas and was assigned to that position from a nonsupervisory or nonmanagerial position with return rights, may need to exercise those rights to regain the nonsupervisory or nonmanagerial position.

8.8. Crediting Service Toward Completing the Probationary Period.

8.8.1. Moving to Other Supervisory or Managerial Positions During Probation. A supervisor or manager who is assigned or promoted to another supervisory or managerial position during probation must serve probation for the new position. Service in the former position counts toward completing the probation for the new position.

- When an employee serving probation is temporarily placed in another supervisory or managerial position (for example, under detail, or temporary promotion), the employee receives credit toward completing the probationary period for the temporary service.

8.8.2. Temporarily Moving to a Nonsupervisory Position During Probation. Temporarily moving to a nonsupervisory position during probation (for example, detail, temporary promotion, or reassignment) does not give credit toward completing probation.

8.8.3. Getting Credit Toward A Subsequent Probationary Period. When an employee serving probation under this chapter moves to a permanent nonsupervisory or nonmanagerial position, a nonpay status, or has a break in service of over three calendar days, the employee does not receive credit toward completing a probationary period under a subsequent appointment.

EXCEPTION: Employees receive full credit for absence on or off the rolls for compensable injury, illness, or military duty.

- When the Air Force separates an employee for cause or returns the employee to a nonsupervisory or nonmanagerial position during probation, the service does not count toward completing probation under subsequent appointment or assignment.

8.8.4. Temporary Service Before Probation. Serving as a supervisor or manager under temporary appointment counts toward completing probation if the temporary period was more than 120 calendar days or occurred immediately (without a break in service) before changing to a permanent supervisory or managerial position.

8.8.5. VRA Service Prior to Probation. Serving as a supervisor or manager under a VRA appointment counts toward the employee's conversion to a supervisory position in the competitive service. If the Air Force moves an individual serving on a VRA appointment to a supervisory position during the 2-year period and the employee does not have enough time under the VRA to satisfy the supervisory probation, the individual serves the remaining probation time after conversion.

Chapter 9

DEALING WITH PERFORMANCE PROBLEMS

9.1. Identifying Performance Problems. To maintain a high-quality civilian work force and encourage employees to strive for top performance, supervisors should act as soon as they notice a performance problem. The supervisor can't always know the source of the problem. Health problems, injury, disease, psychiatric problems, alcohol abuse, or other disabling conditions might exist. Nor will the supervisor necessarily know if the medical condition is the cause of the problem. Supervisors must identify, address, and correct problems early.

★9.2. When Medical Condition Impairs Performance.

If the supervisor suspects that the employee's performance is adversely affected by alcohol or drug abuse, or by some other medical condition, apply the provisions of AFI 36-810, *Drug and Alcohol Abuse Prevention and Control*. Medical condition means health impairment which results from injury or disease, including psychiatric conditions.

9.2.1. Do not remove an employee through adverse action for ineffective performance unless these requirements are met. The supervisor should also review AFP 40-10, *A Supervisor's Guide-The Air Force Civilian Drug and Alcohol Abuse Prevention and Control Program*.

9.2.2. When a medically based performance problem exists or might exist, the supervisor:

- Informs the employee that job performance is suffering.
- Advises the employee to supply medical documentation of any medical condition that could be affecting work performance.
- Explains exactly what documentation the employee needs (5 CFR 339.104) and the amount of time (opportunity period, see paragraph 9.4) employee has to provide it.

9.2.2.1. The employee supplies pertinent documentation as soon as possible after being informed of unacceptable performance on the job. If the employee does not provide the documentation within the specified time, the supervisor may grant more time or proceed with the action.

9.2.2.2. If the employee provides medical documentation and has 5 years of creditable service under the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) or 18 months of creditable service under the Federal Employee's Retirement System (FERS), the CPF furnishes information about disability retirement and explains that applying for disability retirement will not preclude or delay any other appropriate personnel action.

9.2.2.3. The supervisor and an Air Force or other Federal medical officer review the medical documents that the employee provides. These criteria apply:

- When the employee's job requires meeting physical or medical standards or is covered by the environmental health or bioenvironmental engineering programs, the supervisor may require the employee to report for a medical examination.
- In any case, a management official may require or offer a psychiatric examination according to 5 CFR, part 339, section 339.301(e)(1)(i) and (ii). Coordinate any such action in advance with the CPF.
- When the supervisor requires or suggests a medical examination, the employee must receive a written explanation and be informed the consequence of refusing.

9.2.2.4. All medical examinations must comply with Title 5 CFR, part 339. The Air Force pays for or provides the medical examination.

9.3. When Disabled Employee Has Performance Problem. When dealing with a disabled employee's performance problem, both the supervisor and the CPF must discharge any obligations per 29 CFR, section 1614.203.

9.4. Initiating the Opportunity Period.

9.4.1. If the employee's performance becomes unacceptable at any time during the appraisal cycle, the supervisor must inform the employee in writing:

- What elements are making the performance unacceptable.
- How performance is unacceptable.

- What the employee must do to remain in the position.

9.4.1.1. Air Force recommends that the supervisor complete a performance appraisal, if possible. (See table 1.1.)

9.4.1.2. The supervisor initiates an opportunity period to give the employee a reasonable time to demonstrate acceptable performance. The time period should align with the level of the employee's duties and responsibilities, usually 30-60 days.

9.4.1.3. If the supervisor issues the employee's appraisal, the employee has the right to ask a higher level supervisor (if any) to reconsider the appraisal. The reconsideration process must comply with the negotiated grievance procedures or agency grievance procedures.

9.4.2. The supervisor must help the employee improve performance during the opportunity period. Help may include closer supervision and counseling, personal demonstration, supervisory or peer coaching, frequent reporting, special assignments, on-the-job training, and so on. Although this instruction does not require it, the supervisor may order formal training for the employee. Such training should have a sufficiently high ranking within the appropriate priority.

9.4.3. At the end of the opportunity period, if the employee's performance does not improve to the fully-successful level, the supervisor may propose a reduction-in-grade or removal.

9.4.4. If the employee's performance improves to the fully-successful level or higher after getting written notice of a less than fully-successful rating, the supervisor:

- Completes a new appraisal.
- Obtains the reviewing official's and employee's signature.
- Sends the rating to the CPF for input to DCPDS.

9.4.5. If an employee performs acceptably for one year from the beginning date of the opportunity period, and the employee's performance subsequently becomes unacceptable, the supervisor initiates a new opportunity period before proposing a reduction in grade or removal.

9.5. Reassigning, Demoting, or Removing Employee for Performing Unacceptably. These rules do *not* apply to demoting or removing an employee serving a probationary period under chapter 7, or demoting a supervisor or manager serving probation.

9.5.1. When an employee's performance does not improve despite all attempts to correct it, use Title 5 U.S.C. 4303 and 5 CFR, part 432 to remove the employee.

9.5.2. When a supervisor demotes or removes an employee:

- Coordinate with the CPF before issuing the notice.
- Notify the employee in writing 30 calendar days in advance of the proposed action.
- Identify specific instances of unacceptable performance justifying the proposed action.
- Specify the elements in each instance of unacceptable performance. Specify the elements in each

instance of unacceptable performance. (**NOTE:** The instances of unacceptable performance must have occurred during the opportunity period and within the previous 1-year period ending on the date of the proposed notice.)

- Give the employee reasonable time to answer orally or in writing to the supervisor or other management official. The employee may retain an attorney or other representative.

9.5.2.1. The notice period expires at the end of the 30 days unless the supervisor extends it for an additional 30 days. See 5 CFR 432.105 (a)(4)(i)(B) for reasons allowing you to extend the notice period beyond 30 calendar days.

9.5.2.2. If the employee provides medical documentation during the notice period, consider it part of the reply to the notice. The employee must provide the documentation within the set time limit, if possible. Also, consider any documentation you receive after the time limit, but before making final decision.

9.5.3. The management official who makes the final decision considers only the unacceptable performance specified in the proposed action notice and any replies, including medical documentation.

★9.5.3.1. Make the final decision within 30 calendar days after the notice period expires.

9.5.3.2. The supervisor who decides to go ahead and demote or remove the employee must specify or reference the unacceptable performance justifying the action.

9.5.3.3. A higher level management official must concur with the final decision.

9.5.3.4. The notice of decision must tell the employee of appeal rights and eligibility for disability or discontinued service retirement.

9.5.3.5. Deliver the written notice of decision to the employee at or before its effective date.

9.5.4. An employee who is demoted or reassigned due to unacceptable performance retains the unacceptable rating. The employee need not serve another opportunity period on entering the new position. After serving 90 calendar days in the new position, the employee receives a new rating, which then goes to the CPF for input to DCPDS.

9.5.5. If the employee's performance improves to an acceptable level during the opportunity period and continues to be acceptable for 1 year from the beginning date of an opportunity period, the Air Force removes any records of less than fully-successful performance from the employee's records.

9.5.6. After demoting or removing an employee for unacceptable performance, keep all pertinent documents according to AFMAN 37-139, *Disposition of Air Force Records--Records Disposition Schedule*. All documents must be available for review by the employee or representative. The file must include:

- One copy of the notice of proposed action
- The employee's written reply
- A summary of any oral reply

- The notice of decision and the reasons
- Any supporting material including documentation regarding the employee's opportunity to demonstrate acceptable performance
- A statement that the OPM approved plan is on file in HQ USAF/DPC, if the employee appeals the action

Chapter 10

WITHIN-GRADE INCREASES (WGI)

10.1. General. This chapter applies to FWS and GS employees except those GS employees on a temporary or term appointment of one year or less. An employee automatically receives a WGI who:

- Completes the required waiting period.
- Did not receive an equivalent pay increase during the period.
- Demonstrates job performance at the fully-successful level or higher.

10.2. Waiving Requirements for Determining Fully-Successful Performance.

10.2.1. A GS employee who completes the waiting period but is in a duty status for fewer than 60 calendar days during the final 52 calendar-weeks of the waiting period due to absences considered creditable service, such as paid leave or service credit under the back pay provisions of 5 CFR 550, receives a WGI without demonstrating fully-successful or higher performance.

10.2.2. An FWS employee in a duty status for fewer than 30 calendar days during the 26-calendar weeks waiting period receives a WGI per paragraph 10.2.1.

10.3. Granting WGI.

10.3.1. Eligible employees automatically receive the WGI when their last assigned rating was fully-successful or better. If performance declines from fully-successful to less than fully-successful, see instructions below on withholding the WGI.

10.3.2. To grant a WGI any time following denial or when an employee's performance improves from less than fully-successful to fully-successful or higher, complete the appraisal form (indicating a rating of fully-successful or better) and submit it to the CPF no later than 14 calendar days before the WGI due date.

★10.3.3. When an employee transfers to an Air Force activity, the CPF tries to obtain ratings from the losing activity/agency. If those ratings do not arrive in sufficient time to ensure the timely receipt of a WGI, the CPF may contact the gaining supervisor to obtain and input a fully successful rating to ensure that the WGI will not be delayed if deserved.

10.4. Postponing WGI. Postpone giving the WGI to a GS or FWS employee when either condition in paragraphs 10.4.1 and 10.4.2 exists:

10.4.1. The employee's performance is less than fully-successful and you have not given the employee a performance plan or explained the specific requirements for fully-successful performance at least 30 calendar days before the end of the waiting period. Notify the CPF that you intend to postpone granting a WGI.

10.4.2. The employee was reassigned or demoted due to unacceptable performance and is eligible within 60 calendar days for a WGI.

- The CPF notifies the supervisor of the increase due date and the requirement to postpone.

10.4.3. Under either condition, the supervisor must notify the employee in writing that:

- WGI is being postponed
- Reason for postponement
- The employee has no more than 90 calendar days to demonstrate fully-successful performance

10.4.4. Give the employee a new or revised performance plan setting the performance elements and standards to be met during the 90-day period.

10.4.5. When the employee attains fully-successful performance any time after the 60th calendar day, but not later than the 90th calendar day, complete the appraisal form and send it to the CPF. The employee receives the WGI retroactive to the original date due.

10.4.6. If the employee's performance remains less than fully-successful after the 90th calendar day, the supervisor must withhold WGI. Complete the appraisal form; send it to the CPF; and comply with paragraph 10.5.

10.5. Withholding WGI. Withhold WGI when:

- The employee's rating of record is fully-successful, but actual performance has deteriorated to less than fully-successful.
- The employee's rating of record is less than fully-successful (DCPDS will not process WGI if the last assigned rating is less than fully-successful).
- The employee fails to demonstrate fully-successful performance during the 90-day postponement period.

10.5.1. When an employee's performance deteriorates to less than fully-successful, the supervisor must:

- Complete the appraisal form to notify the CPF of the decision to issue a new rating and deny WGI.
- Give a copy of the rating to the employee.
- After coordination with the CPF, give the employee a letter explaining the decision to deny WGI no later

than 30 calendar days before WGI due-date (see figure 10.1 for sample).

10.5.2. A letter of decision to withhold a WGI must contain:

- The specific performance element and standard that the employee is not fulfilling.
- An explanation of how the employee must improve performance to receive a WGI.
- A statement of the employee's right to representation.
- A statement that the employee or the employee's representative may request reconsideration of the decision no later than 15 calendar days after receiving the letter.
- The name and address of the official to whom the employee may send a reconsideration request.
- Information advising the employee:
- To file any reconsideration request in writing and state why the decision deserves reconsideration.
- To state in the reconsideration request if the employee or employee's representative also wants to reply orally to the decision.
- A statement that the employee and the employee's representative may review the file containing all pertinent documents.
- The file's location, how to review the file, and the name, office symbol, location, and telephone number of the person with whom to make review arrangements.
- A statement granting the employee and the employee's representative a reasonable amount of time to review the material and prepare a response.

NOTE: A standard definition of "reasonable" is impossible. You must base the amount of time you give for each case on the particulars of that situation, such as the amount of and type of material involved and the difficulty in obtaining assistance. If the employee is covered by a bargaining agreement, you must follow the provisions of the agreement.

- A statement that the employee may request a time extension if sufficient reason exists.

10.6. Employee Representation Rights in Reconsidering WGI Denial. For bargaining unit employees, provisions of the bargaining agreement govern the employee's rights to representation. Employees not in a bargaining unit may be accompanied, represented, and advised by a representative of their own choice.

10.6.1. The reconsideration official may disallow the employee's choice of representative if:

- The representative's activities pose a conflict of interest or position.
- Releasing an employee from an official position to serve as representative would be too costly to the government.

- The proposed representative's priority work assignments preclude serving as a representative.

10.6.2. If appropriate, formally disallow a representative in writing and deliver the notice to the employee or the employee's representative, if the employee is unavailable.

10.6.2.1. Justify the disallowance citing regulatory provisions and other authorities.

10.6.2.2. The notice of disallowance explains management's position in an adjudication.

10.6.3. An employee in a bargaining unit may challenge the decision to disallow a representative through the provisions of the bargaining agreement or Title 5 U.S.C. 7118.

10.6.4. An employee who is not in a bargaining unit may challenge the disallowance of his or her representative according to Air Force instructions.

10.7. Reconsidering Withholding WGI.

10.7.1. If the employee makes an oral response, prepare a transcript or summary. Give the employee or representative an opportunity to submit a written exception to the summary or transcript. Any exception becomes part of the reconsideration file.

10.7.2. Reconsideration review includes:

- The employee's response
- The performance plan
- The performance appraisal
- Documentation of periodic performance discussions
- Other documentary evidence
- The overall rating that was the basis for withholding the WGI

10.7.3. The reconsideration official must notify the employee in writing of the decision within 30 calendar days of receiving the employee's reconsideration request.

10.7.4. The rating and reviewing officials may revise or prepare a new appraisal form that documents an overall rating of fully-successful or higher. If the rating is fully-successful or higher, the employee receives WGI retroactively to the original due date.

10.8. When Withholding WGI Remains In Effect.

10.8.1. Inform the employee in writing of the reasons for the decision and explain the employee's appeal rights to the Merit System Protection Board (5 CFR 531.410 (d)).

10.8.2. For an employee covered by a collective bargaining agreement, a reconsideration decision that sustains a negative determination is only reviewable in accordance with the terms of the agreement.

10.9. Action After WGI Is Withheld. After withholding WGI, the supervisor may grant WGI when the employee demonstrates sustained fully-successful performance.

10.9.1. The supervisor will review the performance for an acceptable level of competence determination every 90-180 days and again no more than 1 year after the original WGI eligibility date. The supervisor who denies WGI must make annual decisions on the employee's level of competence.

10.9.2. If the employee's performance improves to a fully-successful level after having WGI withheld, the supervisor completes the appraisal form, and sends it to the CPF.

- The employee then receives WGI (nonretroactively) at the beginning of the first pay period after the CPF receives the form.

10.9.3. If the employee's performance does not improve to at least a fully-successful level after remedial action and within a reasonable period of time after originally withholding WGI, the supervisor works with the CPF to determine other corrective or administrative action.

10.10. Reconsideration File. When the employee receives a final negative decision, the CPF puts together an employee reconsideration file according to the current

directive. The file must contain only documents that were available to the employee including:

- The written negative decision.
- A copy of the final performance appraisal.
- Documentation of the periodic performance discussions that served as the advance notice of deficient performance.
- The employee's written request for a reconsideration.
- A report of any investigation.
- A written summary or transcript of any oral presentation by the employee.
- Any written exception to the summary of transcript by the employee or designated representative.
- The final decision on the reconsideration.
- Other applicable documents.

Figure 10.1. Sample Letter of Decision to Withhold Within-Grade Increase.

FROM: Organization/Functional Address Symbol (*of employee's supervisor*)

SUBJECT: Decision to Withhold Within-Grade Increase (WGI)

TO: (Employee's name and organizational address)

1. This is to notify you that I am withholding your WGI, which is (was) due on ___(date)__. During your last periodic performance progress review, held on ___(date)__, I advised you that you have been performing your duties and responsibilities (minimally acceptably) or (unacceptably) and that you would have to improve your performance by the end of the required waiting period on ___(date)___ to advance to the next higher step of your grade. Below are the performance elements and standards for acceptable performance in which you were deficient. (List each deficiency by element, standard, and reasons the performance does not meet the standard.)

2. On ___(date)__, I assigned you a performance rating. A copy of your appraisal is attached. Your performance was still deficient, as indicated above. Because your performance is not fully-successful, the Air Force will withhold your WGI.

3. To be granted your WGI, your performance, for each element listed in paragraph 1, must meet the established standards. (If the standard does not state specifically what is expected, the supervisor must state here exactly what the employee must do to improve to a fully-successful level). Your performance must also continue to meet the standards established for all other elements of your performance plan. I will continue to counsel you in improving your performance.

4. (State here the employee's right to representation in preparing a response to the negative determination.) If you elect to have a representative, your request for reconsideration must so state and contain the name of that individual.

5. You or your personal representative may request an administrative reconsideration of this decision. Put your request in writing and make sure that (name, office location, and telephone number of reconsideration official) receives it no later than 15 calendar days from the date you receive this notice. Your request must state the specific reasons you believe the Air Force should reconsider the decision to withhold your WGI. Alternatively, if you or your personal representative wish to present the reasons for requesting reconsideration orally to (Name of reconsideration official), indicate as much in your written request and ask for an appointment to make this presentation. We will consider extending the time limit if you can show sufficient reasons for needing an extension. You and your representative, if otherwise in a duty status, may have up

to _____ hours of official time to prepare your request for reconsideration. Submit your request for use of official time to me.

If you have a representative who is a military member or Federal employee, send a request for official time to your representative's supervisor. You or your representative may review copies of all material used in taking this action by contacting (name, office symbol, location, and telephone number).

6. If you wish to review civilian personnel regulations pertinent to this action or obtain additional information concerning how to submit a request for reconsideration, you may contact (name, address, and telephone number of CPF representative).

SIGNED

Rating or Reviewing Official

Attachment

AF Form 860A, **Civilian Performance and Promotion Appraisal**

Chapter 11

KEEPING RECORDS

11.1. Supervisor's Records. Supervisors use the AF Form 860, **Civilian Performance and Promotion Appraisal - Performance Plan** or the core document to record performance elements, set performance standards, and document employees' acknowledgment of the element(s) and standard(s). The supervisor keeps the original of the AF Form 860 with the AF Form 971, **Supervisor's Employee Brief**, or in the EPF (see paragraph 11.2), maintained along with the AF Form 971 in the supervisor's employee work folder. The supervisor gives a copy to the employee, and if the EPF is maintained at the CPF, sends a copy there. At the closeout of the rating cycle, the supervisor:

- Completes AF Form 860A, **Civilian Performance and Promotion Appraisal - Performance Rating** and sends the original to the CPF, or keeps it in the EPF maintained along with the AF Form 971 in the supervisor's employee work folder.
- If the original goes to the CPF, keeps a copy for the AF Form 971 and gives a copy to the employee following the requirements of any applicable bargaining agreement.

11.2. Employee Performance File (EPF). The EPF contains the AF Form 860 or core document with performance element(s) and standard(s), and AF Forms 860A maintained according to paragraph 11.3. The EPF may be:

- a separate file maintained along with the AF Form 971 in the supervisor's employee work folder, or
- a separate file maintained with the OPF, or

- an envelope located on the left side of the OPF.

11.3. Keeping Records. Maintain AF Forms 860 and 860A in the EPF for four years (5 CFR 293.404).

- Destroy performance appraisals and DCPDS records superseded through an administrative, negotiated, quasi-judicial or judicial proceeding as soon as possible after receiving the final decision.
- Keep any performance documents connected with the proceedings in a separate file as long as necessary.
- Destroy performance appraisals and DCPDS records reflecting unacceptable performance when a notice of proposed demotion or removal was issued but not effected, within 30 calendar days after the employee completes one year of acceptable performance.

11.4. Transferring Records. When an employee moves within the Air Force or to a new agency any time during the appraisal period:

- Transfer all performance ratings of record retained in the EPF, i.e., performance ratings that are four years old or less, including the performance plan on which the last rating was based (5 CFR 293.405 (a)).
- See table 1.2 to determine whether the rating of record is completed or an informational rating is sent to the gaining supervisor.

11.4.1. When an employee transfers from another agency to the Air Force, the CPF tries to obtain ratings of record from the losing agency. Until those ratings arrive, DCPDS

automatically generates a fully successful (or equivalent) rating.

- When the CPF gets current ratings from the losing agency, those ratings are recorded and the current rating replaces the fully successful (or equivalent) rating.
- If these appraisal ratings are incompatible with Air Force ratings, the ratings must be converted to the appropriate Air Force level.
- Other agency appraisal systems may not use appraisal factors for merit promotion. In this case, ensure that the Air Force appraisal factors used for competition in merit promotion are appropriately completed.

11.5. Disposal of Records. When the OPF of a non-SES employee is sent to another Air Force activity, federal agency or the National Personnel Records Center, the losing CPF includes in the OPF the contents of the EPF, i.e., performance ratings that are four years old or less, including the performance plan on which the last rating was based (5 CFR 293.405 (a)), as well as any ratings prepared according to tables 1.2 or 1.3.

11.6. Forms Prescribed.

- AF Form 342, **Retirement Certificate of Civilian Service**
- AF Form 860, **Civilian Performance and Promotion Appraisal--Performance Plan**

- AF Form 860A, **Civilian Performance and Promotion Appraisal--Performance Rating**
- AF Form 1166, **Award for Meritorious Civilian Service**
- AF Form 1306, **Department of the Air Force Civilian Award for Valor**
- AF Form 1307, **Department of the Air Force Command Civilian Award for Valor**
- AF Form 1310, **Department of the Air Force Exceptional Service Award Certificate**
- AF Form 2856, **Outstanding Civilian Career Service Award**
- AF Form 2857, **Quality Step Increase**
- AF Form 2858, **Performance Award**
- AF Form 2860, **Special Act or Service Award**
- AF Form 3517, **Exemplary Civilian Service Award**
- AF Form 3589, **10 Year Length of Service Certificate**
- AF Form 3590, **20 Year Length of Service Certificate**
- AF Form 3591, **30 Year Length of Service Certificate**
- AF Form 3592, **40 Year Length of Service Certificate**
- AF Form 3593, **50 Year Length of Service Certificate**

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DCS/Personnel

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Terms

Civilian Personnel Flight (CPF)—The servicing civilian personnel office.

Congressional Pay Ceiling—A maximum salary imposed by Congress.

Critical Element—An employee's job performance element sufficiently important so that performing this element below the set standard requires remedial action and denial of a within-grade increase. Such performance may become the basis for removing, reassigning, or demoting the employee, without regard to other performance elements.

Defense Civilian Personnel Data System (DCPDS)—The DoD automated multi-level civilian management data system.

Endorsing Official—A higher level of review of performance ratings normally reserved for Air Force Career Programs--Any other use of the endorsing official must receive specific approval at MAJCOM level.

Excellent Rating—The overall performance rating for an employee who exceeds more than one half of the critical performance elements and meets all other performance elements.

Federal Wage Systems (FWS)—A statutory pay system covering employees in trades and crafts positions.

Fully Successful Rating—The overall rating based on demonstrated fully-successful performance given to an employee who meets all the performance elements of the performance plan. For within-grade increase purposes, fully-successful equals satisfactory performance for a FWS employee and an acceptable level of performance for a GS employee.

General Increase—The annual comparability adjustment in the pay rates of the General Schedule authorized by the President according to 5 U.S.C. 5305.

General Schedule (GS)—A statutory pay system covering employees in clerical, administrative, technical, and professional positions.

Incentive Award—A monetary or nonmonetary award for a contribution resulting in tangible or intangible benefits or savings to the government.

Management Official—Any employee in grades 13, 14, or 15 whose duties and responsibilities require or authorize formulating, deciding, or influencing the policies of HQ USAF, MAJCOMs, or comparable command-level organizations, installations, or any subdivisions.

Minimally Acceptable Rating—The overall rating assigned to an employee who meets the requirements of all critical performance elements of the performance plan but does not meet the requirements of one or more noncritical performance elements.

Noncritical Element—A performance element that is an important but not critical part of the position. Noncritical elements are part of the overall performance level. Performing below set minimum standards requires counseling, denying a within-grade increase, and removing the employee from merit promotion consideration.

Opportunity Period—The time period following notification of unacceptable performance during which the employee may demonstrate acceptable performance before authorities decide whether or not to demote or remove the employee.

Payable Salary—For any pay system, the legally or administratively fixed pay rate, including a retained pay rate for the employee's job or position before deducting or excluding additional pay of any kind. Payable salary is limited to the rate set for level v of the executive schedule.

Performance Appraisal—A systematic comparison of an employee's performance of duties and responsibilities with performance standards.

Performance Award—A performance-based cash payment based on the annual rating of record. A performance award does not increase base pay.

Performance Element—A significant job requirement derived from analyzing the job. Performance elements include:

- Important duties or responsibilities of the position.
- Specific projects or tasks that are part of the duties and responsibilities in the position description or core document.

Performance Plan—The written performance elements and standards developed for the employee and documented on AF Form 860.

Performance Requirement—The aggregate of the performance standards set for a performance element.

Performance Standard—A description of the minimum level of accomplishment necessary for fully-successful performance. Performance standards are expressed in terms of:

- Qualitative or quantitative objectives.
- Specific actions.
- Project assignments.
- Other job performance elements. More than one standard for a single performance element may exist.

Quality Step Increase (QSI)—An additional within-grade increase granted to a GS employee under Title 5 U.S.C. 5336 to recognize sustained high quality performance beyond normal expectations.

Rate Range—The span of rates between the minimum and maximum rates of a grade.

Rating Official—The supervisor who evaluates the performance of an employee and assigns the rating; the employee's first-level, immediate supervisor of record.

Rating of Record—The summary rating assigned:

- At the close out of the annual rating cycle (30 June)
- Any time an employee's performance falls below fully-successful
- When an employee's performance improves from unacceptable or minimally acceptable level
- When a rating of record is required

Reviewing Official—Normally the supervisor in the chain of command at the next higher level above the rating official. A supervisor above that level may serve as the reviewing official. An immediate supervisor who is the highest level in the chain of command at the installation usually also serves as the reviewing official.

Scientific and Professional (ST)—Positions above grade GS-15 that do not meet the SES criteria, and are engaged in research and development in the physical, biological, medical, or engineering sciences, or a closely-related field.

Senior Executive Service (SES)—Positions above grade GS-15 that carry out significant managerial or policy-making functions.

Senior Level (SL)—Positions above grade GS-15 that do not meet either the SES or ST criteria.

Superior Rating—The overall performance rating assigned when an employee exceeds all the performance elements of the performance plan.

Supervisor—An employee with authority to hire, direct, assign, promote, reward, transfer, furlough, lay off, recall, suspend, discipline or remove employees per Title 5 U.S.C. 7103(a)(10).

Unacceptable Rating—The overall rating assigned when an employee does not meet the requirements of one or more critical performance elements of the performance plan.

Within-Grade Increase (WGI)—A periodic increase in an employee's rate of basic pay from one step of the position's grade to the next higher step of that grade according to 5 U.S.C. 5335.

EMPLOYEE COVERAGE

Appointment--Pay Status	Performance Work Plan	WGI	QSI	Monetary Awards	Honorary Awards	Non-Federal Awards	Service Awards
Panama--Non US Citizen	Yes ¹⁶	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Consultants and Experts	No	No	No	No ¹⁵	Yes	Yes ²	No
Detailees	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes ²	Yes
Excepted Service (no time limit)	Yes ¹⁷	Yes ¹⁷	Yes ^{17,18}	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Executives							
Career SES	No	No	No	Yes ¹¹	Yes	Yes ²	Yes
Non-career SES	No	No	No	Yes ¹¹	Yes	Yes ²	Yes
SL	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes ²	Yes
ST--Scientific and Professional Personnel (5 U.S.C. 3104)	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes ²	Yes
Federal Wage System (FWS) (no time limit)	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes ²	Yes
Temporary--120 days or less	No	Yes	No	Yes ¹⁰	Yes	No	No
Temporary--121 days or more	Yes	Yes	No	Yes ¹⁰	Yes	Yes ²	Yes
Foreign National (Direct Hire)	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes ²	Yes
General Schedule (without time limitation)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes ²	Yes
Temporary--120 days or less	No	No	No	Yes ¹⁰	Yes	No	No
Temporary--120- 365 days	Yes	No	No	Yes ¹⁰	Yes	Yes ²	Yes
Temporary-more than 1 year	Yes	Yes ²²	Yes	Yes ¹⁰	Yes	Yes ²	Yes
Intermittent	Yes ¹⁸	Yes ³	Yes ³	Yes	Yes	Yes ²	Yes
IPA Assignment							
Federal Employee	Yes ¹⁸	Yes ³	Yes	No ⁶	Yes	Yes ²	Yes
Non-Federal Employee	Yes ¹⁸	Yes ³	No	No ⁷	No	Yes ²	No
Maximum salary ¹²	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes ²	Yes
Maximum rate of the grade	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes ²	Yes
At statutory pay limit	Yes	Yes ¹³	Yes ¹³	Yes	Yes	Yes ²	Yes

Overseas limited							
GS-indefinite appointment	Yes ¹⁷	Yes ¹⁷	Yes ¹⁷	Yes	Yes	Yes ²	Yes
FWS-indefinite appointment	Yes ¹⁷	Yes ¹⁷	No	Yes	Yes	Yes ²	Yes
Part-time permanent	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes ²	Yes
Presidential Intern	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes ²	No
Private Citizen	No	No	No	No	Yes ¹	No	No
Reemployed Annuitants	Yes ¹⁸	No ⁸	No ⁸	Yes	Yes	Yes ²	Yes
Schedule C, 5 CFR 213	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Taper	Yes	Yes	Yes ³	Yes ¹⁰	Yes	Yes ²	Yes
Term Appointment longer than 1 year	Yes ¹⁷	Yes ¹⁷	Yes ¹⁹	Yes	Yes	Yes ²	No
Veterans Readjustment Appointment	Yes ¹⁷	Yes ¹⁷	Yes ^{17,19}	Yes	Yes ²	No	Yes
★Student Career Experience Program	Yes	Yes	Yes ¹⁹	Yes	Yes	Yes ²	No
★Student Temporary Employment Program	Yes ¹⁷	Yes ¹⁷	Yes ^{17,19}	Yes	Yes	Yes ²	No

NOTES:

1. Under separate authority.
2. If qualified as outlined in sponsor's criteria.
3. Unless appointment is limited (for example, not to exceed one year).
4. Normally, don't grant the performance award if the individual received other cash recognition to adequately recognize the same contribution.
5. Except those appointed by and with the consent of the Senate.
6. Yes, if the contribution substantially benefits the Federal government.
7. Yes, if the person is serving under a temporary appointment in the Federal government.
8. Normally employed on a temporary basis. However, you may grant QSIs to those serving unlimited appointments under an OPM exception.
9. Prorate the amount of a performance award according to time worked.
10. If the individual otherwise satisfies criteria for the specific cash award.
11. Special Act or Service only for achievements outside job responsibilities.
12. Defined by 5 U.S.C. 5102 (c) (25). Positions for which rates of pay are individually fixed or expressly authorized to be fixed at or in excess of the maximum rate for level V of the executive schedule.
13. Appropriate personnel may recommend and approve a WGI or a QSI, but these may not become effective until the maximum salary limit increases.
14. Process honorary awards for nonappropriated fund personnel according to procedures in appropriate NAF instructions.
15. May only receive monetary recognition if they meet the definition of an employee under 5 U.S.C. 2105.
16. Complete only elements and standards of AF Form 860, **Civilian Performance and Appraisal--Performance Plan**, for these employees.
17. For temporary appointments, follow temporary GS or FWS rules.
18. Yes, if the number of work days exceed 120 in a calendar year. Otherwise, no.
19. No, if serving in a FWS position.
20. IPA means the Intergovernmental Personnel Act.
21. Complete only elements and standards of AF Form 860A for GS and GM-15s and above.

22. Initial temporary appointment must be for more than 1 year. Employees who receive temporary appointments for 1 year or less and who are subsequently extended beyond 1 year are not eligible for within-grade increases.

STAFF SUMMARY SHEET

Figure A3.1. Staff Summary Sheet.

Staff Summary Sheet							
	To	Action	Signature (Surname), Grade, Date		To	Action	Signature (Surname), Grade, Date
1				4			
2				5			
3				6			
Grade and Surname of Action Officer			Symbol	Phone			Suspense Date
Subject Decoration for Exceptional Civilian Service - <i>(Name)</i>							SSS Date
Summary							
<p>1. The attached recommendation for <i>(full name)</i> for the Decoration for Exceptional Civilian Service was submitted by <i>(Rank or Title, Full Name), (Organization)</i>. The nomination is submitted for review/approval.</p> <p>2. This award recognizes employees with continuous exceptional performance that resulted in extraordinary accomplishments with significant Air Force-wide scope and impact and whose service is expected to continue. <i>(Name)</i> has no immediate plans for retirement.</p> <p>3. Justification: <i>(list accomplishments)</i></p> <p>4. Other data: Social Security Number: Grade: Duty Title: Period Covered: <i>(For Exceptional Only):</i> Received Meritorious Civilian Service Award <i>(date(s))</i></p> <p>5. Proposed Citation: <i>(not to exceed 90 words)</i></p>							
Recommendation. Approval.							