

Memorandum of Agreement on the Performance Management System  
Between  
The Government Accountability Office (GAO)  
And  
The GAO Employees Organization, IFPTE, Local 1921 (Union)

The Union and the Agency recognize that a revised performance management system is being designed. While the performance management system is being revised, the Parties acknowledge that they will pilot various features to obtain feedback on the potential usefulness of these features in the revised system to address the issues raised by the various studies on the performance management system.

The Agency and Union agree that it is important for managers and employees to discuss employee performance throughout the year so that employees understand how they are performing and how to improve their performance.

In reviewing an employee's performance, managers will look at all the work activities, encompassed within a competency, which were to be performed during the appraisal year. In rating an employee's performance, employees will only be rated on work activities actually performed. The work activities actually performed will be rated against the standards contained in a competency. The absence of the opportunity to perform a work activity will not negatively impact the rating for a competency. It is understood that all employees should have the possibility of achieving a role model rating in a competency regardless of the number of work activities performed in the competency. However, the number of work activities performed does not guarantee a specific rating. It is understood that there is no predetermined distribution of ratings among employees.

The Parties agree that for the FY 2010 performance management cycle and until the revised system is completed and implemented, the current system shall remain in effect with the following exceptions and/or understandings:

A rating official is responsible for an employee's rating. A rating official may seek input from others with knowledge of the employee's performance, including Analysts In Charge (AICs) and other stakeholders.

The Parties have a shared interest in having input from knowledgeable sources but in preventing situations where a manager asks or requires an AIC or other employee in the bargaining unit to draft the narratives for a non-developmental program employee's mid-point feedback or final ratings. This does not preclude knowledgeable sources from providing written input in any form.

It is understood that Band II employees may be involved in providing drafts of performance appraisals of developmental program employees to appropriate officials. However, the Designated Performance Manager (DPM) is the rater of record for these employees.

In addition to the above understandings with respect to the FY 2010 performance management cycle, beginning with the FY2011 performance management cycle and until the revised system is implemented, the following will occur:

Managers and employees will have a discussion of the employee's performance expectations for the rating year, and these expectations may also be provided in writing.

At any time during the appraisal cycle, if an employee is in danger of receiving a 'below meets' rating on a required competency, management will inform the employee of the competency and deficient performance. An employee may request feedback with respect to what improvement(s) should be made in his or her performance.

A midpoint feedback summary will be provided in writing (maximum of 2500 characters) for all non-developmental program employees in addition to the oral feedback discussion. It will normally be given after the oral feedback session. This summary will only cover the first half of the appraisal year. It will not include rating checkmarks and is non-binding for purposes of a final appraisal. It will cover the following topics:

- Whether expectations are being met
- General statement of performance
- If known, observable performance differences
- Actionable and constructive next steps, as appropriate

For the annual rating, employees – not including employees in a developmental program – have the option of providing a written (maximum of 2500 characters) summary self-assessment of their performance in lieu of a competency by competency self-assessment, but are not required to provide either. The written summary self-assessment may include the following:

- key examples of the employee's performance and achievements for the year
- key performance information related to the relevant competencies, work activities and standards

When completing their self-assessments, employees have the option of providing rating check marks for each competency either with the narrative summary or competency by competency narrative; employees also have the option of not providing rating check marks.

Employees – not including employees in a developmental program – will receive a written summary narrative (maximum of 2500 characters) of their performance. It is understood that the written summary narrative might not contain all of the support for the rating. This written narrative is appropriate for annual appraisals and out-of-cycle appraisals at the end of an opportunity period. It will be in addition to the required oral feedback session that will be held after the employee receives the rating. The written summary narrative will contain the following:

- key examples of the employee's performance and achievements for the year
- key information supporting the rating

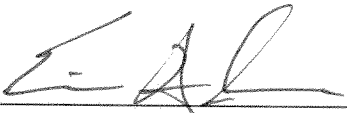
It is understood that employee ratings are used for various purposes by the Agency in making decisions about issues related to employees. To the extent that ratings of record are considered in Agency decisions, only final ratings of record will be used. Final ratings of record do not include items such as midpoint feedback summaries and employee self-assessments.

Beginning with the FY 2011 performance management cycle, employees must be under their performance standards for a minimum of 90 days and work a minimum of 440 hours to receive an appraisal. Based on the circumstances of an employee, exceptions to the minimum requirement may be made on a case by case basis at the discretion of the Agency. An employee may request such an exception based on his or her particular situation.

Union officials who engage in representational activities will be rated on the work performed during the period the employee is in a work status as described in the paragraph above. If Union officials do not work the minimum number of hours they will be treated the same as other employees who did not receive a rating.

The Agency will provide data to the Union for the FY 2009 through FY 2011 appraisal cycles consisting of sanitized bargaining unit employee ratings and related demographic and personnel data consistent with the sanitized performance appraisal data provided for FY 2002 – FY 2008.

For the GAO:

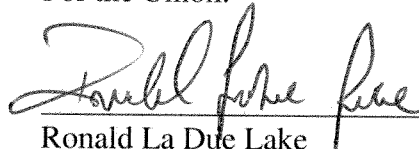


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8/30/2010  
Date

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