



## Department of Energy

Washington, DC 20585

SEP 30 2015

MEMORANDUM FOR HEADS OF DEPARTMENTAL ELEMENTS

FROM: ROBERT C. GIBBS  
CHIEF HUMAN CAPITAL OFFICER 

SUBJECT: FISCAL YEAR (FY) 2015 DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY  
(DOE) SENIOR EXECUTIVE SERVICE (SES) AND  
SENIOR PROFESSIONAL (SP) PERFORMANCE  
APPRAISAL CYCLE

The FY 2015 performance appraisal cycle for both SES and SP members, which include Senior Level (SL) and Scientific or Professional (ST) employees, concluded on September 30, 2015. All recommended ratings, performance awards and pay increases must be submitted in ePerformance, as applicable, and provided to the Office of Executive Resources (OER) by Friday, October 23, 2015, to prepare for the Performance Review Board (PRB) process. Rating and Reviewing Officials are responsible for making meaningful distinctions in performance and ensuring those who achieved extraordinary results during the performance cycle receive the highest performance ratings with commensurate rewards.

It is important that the performance awards correlate with achievement of program goals supporting the DOE mission. Last year's performance results showed the Department experienced a significant upsurge in "Outstanding" ratings for both the SES and SP cadre. Specifically, 47% of SES and 50% of SP employees received the highest-level rating. The U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) guidelines state the modal rating should be below "Outstanding." It is imperative that rating officials be judicious in applying rigorous standards of performance to carefully avoid ratings inflation.

The Department will complete its next scheduled recertification of our executive-level performance management systems based on the FY 2015 performance results. Certification of our performance management systems allows agencies to pay higher salaries to covered senior employees. One of the certification criteria OPM assesses is an agency's pay distinctions and its ability to make meaningful distinctions in performance by reserving the highest performance pay increases and awards for those members who received the highest ratings and made the most significant contributions to the Department's strategic goals. While the performance ratings may be supported by an organization's performance, as a Department, we must ensure every precaution is taken to avoid overinflated ratings.

As a reminder, the recommended ratings, performance awards and pay increases provided to SES and SP employees need to be clearly linked to the level of their contributions to achieving the goals and missions of your respective organization and the overall goals of the Department. The Business Quarterly Reports (BQRs) or other



appropriate Departmental Element document that assesses, validates, and verifies organizational performance must be communicated within your organizations and used to assess to inform ratings.

The Department will issue performance and pay increase guidance in a separate communication.

Thank you for your ongoing support as we strive to continually improve our executive-level performance management processes. If you have questions, please contact Erin Moore, Acting Director, OER, at [Erin.Moore@hq.doe.gov](mailto:Erin.Moore@hq.doe.gov) or 202-586-9558.

Attachment:

FY 2015 SES and SP Performance Appraisal Closeout Guidance

Copy to:

Senior Executive Service Members

Senior Level and Scientific or Professional Members

Human Resources Directors and Performance Management Liaisons



*Office of Executive Resources  
Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer  
U.S. Department of Energy*

# FY 2015 Senior Executive Service (SES) and Senior Professional (SP) Performance Appraisal Closeout Guidance

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**Fiscal Year (FY) 2015  
Performance Appraisal Closeout Guidance**

This document provides a summary of the key performance management requirements to close out the FY 2015 performance appraisal cycle. These requirements are applied for Senior Executive Service (SES) members, as well as Senior Professionals (SP), which include Senior Level (SL) and Scientific or Professional (ST) members in the context of the existing policies.

## **I. FY 2015 PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL CYCLE BUSINESS RULES**

### **ASSESSING PERFORMANCE**

1. The minimum performance appraisal period is 90 days to provide a meaningful evaluation of an individual's performance
  - a. The minimum appraisal period is effective from the date the SES or SP member is appointed, transferred, reassigned or detailed to a position
  - b. SES or SP members who perform for a minimum of 90 days must receive a performance rating
    - i. SES or SP members who come onboard with less than 90 days (i.e., after July 3) are not eligible to receive a rating; the appraisal period is extended to the end of the FY 2016 appraisal cycle
2. In accordance with law and regulation, quotas or forced distribution of ratings are prohibited
3. Rating Officials, Reviewing Officials and the Performance Review Board (PRB) must make meaningful distinctions in performance and consider individual performance based upon:
  - a. Individual performance results
  - b. Impact to organizational performance
  - c. Solicitation and receipt of customer and employee feedback
4. The Business Quarterly Reports (BQRs) or other appropriate Departmental Element documents that assess, validate and verify organizational performance should be used to assess relevant performance measures against organizational performance to inform ratings
  - a. This information must be communicated across the organization and used by officials in the rating chain to determine the extent to which an SES or SP member's performance impacted organizational results to ensure the performance ratings reflect the impact and progress on DOE's strategic goals
5. Rigorous assessments of the SES and SP member's performance must drive these distinctions and support appropriate compensation decisions
  - a. Do not reward performance based on longevity or provide simply as a perceived entitlement; distinguish ratings based on the level of effort and program outcome in order to identify our truly outstanding performers
6. SES and SP members are expected to exhibit exemplary leadership and management skills, personal integrity, and commitment to the highest ideals of public service; achieving what is required and performing what is expected based on the performance plan is considered to be upholding the performance appraisal between the member, Rating Official and the organization
  - a. Demonstrating these attributes in addition to achieving expected results is considered a "Fully Successful" rating

- b. A "Fully Successful" rating is not average or ordinary; it demonstrates a significant level of accomplishment
- 7. Critical Elements rated higher than "Fully Successful" must not only achieve expected results to further DOE's Strategic Plan and organizational goals, but also demonstrate **real and proven results that created meaningful change, advanced technologies or provided substantial additional savings beyond established targets**
- 8. An "Outstanding" rating should be reserved for only the top SES and SP members who achieve considerably higher levels of performance that greatly contribute to DOE's mission and are demonstrative of significant efficiencies, improvements, advances in technologies or cost savings
- 9. If any Critical Element is rated "Unsatisfactory", the overall summary rating is "Unsatisfactory"
- 10. Rating Officials, Reviewing Officials and PRB members must consider the impact of documented disciplinary issues when assessing performance against the appropriate performance requirements (e.g., the Leading People Critical Element)
  - a. If the disciplinary issue affected performance, the Critical Element(s) should reflect an appropriate rating which may impact the eligibility for a performance award and pay increase at the end of the appraisal cycle
- 11. Rating Officials must take into account any interim ratings related to a detail, reassignment or transfer when preparing the Initial Summary Rating (ISR), which is the preliminary performance assessment rating pending review and approval by the PRB and Appointing Authority or designee
- 12. Recommended ratings, pay increases and awards should be implemented consistently within the Departmental Element and the highest ratings should receive highest rewards
- 13. Ratings of "Outstanding" must be considered for a performance pay increase and award
- 14. Performance appraisal narratives must support the ISR
  - a. Career SES members and all Rating Officials **must** provide written narratives in ePerformance
    - i. An employee accomplishment narrative is optional for non-career SES members but is strongly encouraged
  - b. All SP members and Rating Officials **must** provide written narratives on the appraisal form
- 15. If there is a disagreement between the Rating Official and Reviewing Official on the proposed ISR, the Reviewing Official may indicate his/her assessment of the member's performance; **only the Rating Official may change the ISR**
- 16. PRB members will be identified corporately to assure consistency, equitability, stability and objectivity in recommending ratings, awards and pay increases to the Appointing Authority or designee
  - a. Four PRB panels review the SES and SP performance plans and conduct an objective review for each ISR, accomplishment narratives, and any written recommendations provided by the reviewing official or Higher Level Review Official (HLRO), as appropriate, within their purview
  - b. Discrepancies will be referred to the Senior Management Review Board (SMRB) for adjudication
  - c. Final written recommendations of ISRs, pay increases and awards will be provided to the Appointing Authority or designee for final approval

## HIGHER LEVEL REVIEW (HLR) PROCESS

1. If an SES or SP member has a compelling reason to believe his/her ISR is not an adequate reflection of performance, he/she may request an HLR of the performance appraisal

- a. SES and SP members may not grieve the performance plan, appraisal, rating level, associated performance score, performance based adjustment in basic pay (if any), the non-receipt of a performance award or the amount of a performance award
2. For SES members, **an HLR must be documented in ePerformance and submitted within seven (7) calendar days upon receipt of the ISR**
3. For SP members, **an HLR must be submitted to the Office of Executive Resources (OER) in email within seven (7) calendar days upon receipt of the ISR**
4. The review is conducted by a Higher Level Reviewing Official (HLRO) who provides an independent review of the performance appraisal
  - a. HLRO is assigned by OCHCO and is outside of the Departmental Element at a higher level than the Rating Official
5. HLRO reviews and assesses the performance plan, the Rating Official's assessment, the member's accomplishment narrative and any additional comments provided by the SES or SP member
6. The HLRO may not change the Rating Official's ISR but may recommend a different ISR to the PRB and Appointing Authority or designee
  - a. In instances of non-concurrence, a recommended rating and justification is provided in writing
  - b. HLRO cannot change the ISR; only can provide an independent assessment
  - c. HLRO findings and recommendations become a part of the official record and are submitted to the PRB
7. Copies of the HLRO's findings and recommendations are provided to the SES or SP member, Rating Official, Reviewing Official and the PRB

## PERSONNEL CHANGES - SCENARIOS

1. **Reassignments within DOE in the Last 90 Days.** SES or SP members who have been on a performance plan for at least the minimum rating period of 90 days and are reassigned within DOE in the last 90 days of the performance period (before September 30, 2015) must receive an early ISR from the Rating Official of record prior to movement to the new position
  - a. Salary and early ISR is considered in the gaining Departmental Element's award pool at the end of the performance cycle;
  - b. The new Rating Official may provide an additional narrative to the recommended ISR at the end of the performance appraisal period; if provided, the additional narrative must be provided to OER for documentation as part of the official record
  - c. The gaining Departmental Element recommends a performance pay increase and/or award based upon the member's early ISR
2. **Departure of Rating Official in Last 90 Days.** Rating Officials who change jobs within 90 days of the performance cycle must assess and provide an early ISR for all of their SES and SP members who have been on a performance plan for a minimum of 90 days
  - a. This serves as the ISR of record and is forwarded to the PRB for evaluation
  - b. The incoming Rating Official may provide an additional narrative to the recommended ISR at the end of the performance appraisal period; if provided, the additional narrative must be provided to OER for documentation as part of the official record

3. **Starting New Positions in the Last 90 Days.** SES or SP members who start a new position through appointment, reassignment, reinstatement or transfer in the last 90 days of the rating cycle (i.e., after July 3) will have their appraisal period extended to the end of the following appraisal cycle not to exceed 15 months; for example:
  - a. An SES member who is appointed to a new position on August 1, 2015, will have a 14-month performance plan that will end September 30, 2016
  - b. An SES member is reassigned to a different position on September 1, 2015, will receive an early ISR from their losing rating official and will have a 13-month performance plan that will end September 30, 2016
4. **Transfers after the End of the Appraisal Period.** SES and SP members who transfer from outside of DOE after the conclusion of the appraisal period but before the conclusion of the DOE's annual performance appraisal process (e.g., an SES member transfers to DOE in November) will receive their annual performance rating for the FY 2015 cycle by their losing agency
  - a. Annual rating must be approved by the losing agency's Appointing Authority or designee
  - b. The SES or SP member will not be included in the current DOE PRB process
  - c. The SES or SP member will be ineligible to receive a performance pay increase for the current appraisal period; setting pay upon transfer should factor in the performance at the previous agency
  - d. Any performance award for the appraisal period must be paid by the losing agency to the SES or SP member or transferred to DOE for payment to the employee

## PERFORMANCE AWARDS CONSIDERATIONS AND ELIGIBILITY

1. SES and SP members may be considered for performance awards if the rating of record is "Fully Successful" or higher and on DOE rolls on September 30, 2015
2. New career SES and SP appointees **may be considered** for a performance award if appointed to the executive-level position **by April 1, 2015 (i.e., on board for six (6) months of the SES and SP performance appraisal cycle)**
3. SES and SP members who transfer to DOE during the performance appraisal period (i.e., an SES or SP at another agency) may be considered for a performance award if onboard with DOE as of July 3, 2015, in order to meet the minimum 90 day requirement to be eligible to receive a performance rating
4. SES and SP members who are rated **"Outstanding" must be considered for a performance award**
5. SES and SP members may be considered for a performance award if they leave DOE to obtain a new position or retire after the end of the performance appraisal period
6. An individual may receive both a Presidential Rank Award (PRA) and a performance award during the same calendar year. It is not recommended to deny or reduce a performance award for PRA winner solely on the basis of receiving the award during this performance cycle
  - a. PRAs recognize sustained periods of significant accomplishments over multiple performance appraisal periods, while the performance award recognizes the accomplishments achieved during the current performance award period
7. SES and SP members who received a monetary award (e.g., Special Act) during the performance appraisal period **cannot receive duplicate recognition for the same accomplishment** during the performance appraisal process

- a. Any monetary awards received during the appraisal period will be forwarded to the PRB
8. Performance awards will be made effective the first full pay period in January 2016, if authorized

## PERFORMANCE PAY INCREASE CONSIDERATIONS AND ELIGIBILITY

1. SES and SP members who receive a rating of “Fully Successful” or higher may be eligible for a performance pay increase
  - a. Ratings **less than “Fully Successful” cannot receive a pay increase**
  - b. Ratings of **“Outstanding” must be considered for performance pay increase**
  - c. SES and SP members who are paid consistent with their current level of responsibilities and performance and who receive a “Fully Successful” or better rating should receive a performance-based pay increase
2. In accordance with law and regulation (5 CFR 534.404(c)), an SES member’s rate of pay cannot be adjusted more than once in any 12-month period; therefore, performance pay increases are not authorized for any SES member who received a pay adjustment in the past 12 months after the effective date of the pay increase on January 11, 2015
  - a. This includes setting pay upon appointment or increasing pay upon a reassignment or transfer
  - b. Example 1: an SES member who was reassigned with a pay increase in March 2015 **is ineligible** for a pay increase for the FY 2015 performance cycle
  - c. Example 2: an SES member who was appointed in December 2014 **is eligible** for a pay increase for the FY 2015 performance cycle
3. SES members, who transferred or were reassigned during the performance cycle and received an additional pay increase, may be considered for an exception to the 12-month rule to get back on the regular performance cycle (5 CFR 534.404(c)iv).
  - a. Requests to use this exception to the 12-month rule should only be done in rare circumstances; an additional justification is required from the head of the Departmental Element for the PRB’s review
  - b. The exception to grant a performance pay increase will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis and can only be approved by the Appointing Authority or designee
  - c. This exception to the 12-month rule will not be authorized for new appointees
  - d. This policy is extended to SP members for consistency
4. Pay above EX-III of the Executive Schedule (\$168,700) should be reserved for an SES or SP member who demonstrates the highest levels of individual performance and/or made the greatest contributions to agency performance
5. Performance pay increases will be effective on the first full pay period in January 2016, if authorized

## II. KEY ACTIONS and TIMELINE

| DATES (2015)        | ACTIONS   |
|---------------------|---|
| Mid – Late Sep      | Rating Officials release plan to SES members in ePerformance to complete their Executive Accomplishment Narrative   |
| Sep 30              | End of FY 2015 SES and SP performance appraisal cycle   |
| NLT Oct 23          | All Initial Summary Rating (ISR) discussions held between Rating Official and SES or SP members; all DOE SES and SP appraisals completed and signed in ePerformance system (for SES members) or paper copy finalized (SP members) |
| Oct 30              | Last day for Higher Level Review (HLR) requests to be submitted by SES or SP members to OER; must be documented in ePerformance (SES only)  |
| Nov 10              | Last day for Higher Level Reviewing Official (HLRO) reviews   |
| Nov 6 – 3 Dec       | PRB adjudication  |
| Dec 15              | Senior Management Review Board (SMRB) reviews PRB recommendations   |
| Mid Dec – Early Jan | Approval of annual performance results by the Appointing Authority or designee  |
| Jan 10, 2016        | Projected effective date of ratings, performance awards and performance pay increases   |

## III. SES and SP MEMBER GUIDANCE

***Estimated Window for Completion: Sep 30 - Oct 8, 2015***

### **SES and SP Member Responsibilities:**

- Reflect quality results that show milestones, target dates and customer expectations were met in the executive’s accomplishment narrative
  - Bullet format may be used in order to highlight results
- Provide narrative for the each of the Critical Elements
  - Address *all* Critical Elements individually
    - Helpful to start with leading word (e.g., met, exceeded, etc.)
    - Clarify why any Critical Elements were not met
  - Prioritize achievements and describe why they matter in relation to mission
  - Describe the conditions under which you achieved your accomplishments and obstacles/challenges you overcame
  - Relate accomplishments to the impact to mission objectives – answer the question “So what?”
  - Write narratives in non-technical/clear terms (no jargon) so accomplishments are clear and concise

- Write in the past tense
- Write in first person (e.g., “I”, “me”, “my”)
- Be succinct
- Ensure the accomplishment narrative is completed in a timely manner to allow the Rating Official sufficient time to complete the ISR
  - The early completion of the ISR should take place prior to departure from position, if departure takes place during the last 90 days of the performance cycle
- Request an HLR in the designated timeframe (7 calendar days) for review of the Rating Official assessment, if there is a disagreement with the given ISR
  - Ensure justification for dispute is well documented and substantiated. See page 4 for HLR process

#### IV. RATING OFFICIAL GUIDANCE

***Estimated Window for Completion: Oct 8 – 15, 2015, with all steps completed by Oct 23, 2015***

##### **Rater Responsibilities:**

- Consider accomplishments from a prior position held during the performance cycle when assessing overall performance (if applicable)
- Provide comments for each critical element
  - State “did not meet”, “met”, “exceeded”, “exceptional” for each element; quantify results and impact
  - Address scale and scope
  - Narratives must address objectives approved in performance plan
    - Address any performance requirements unable to be met and reasons why
  - Avoid flowery language that does not address results achieved
  - Limit the use of jargon/acronyms and technical terms so accomplishments are clearly understood and scored appropriately
- Do not “copy and paste” the member’s assessment comments from the appraisal into the Rating Official narrative section
  - Expand on accomplishments and if applicable demonstrate how the SES or SP member exceeded what was expected
  - Demonstrate how their accomplishments helped achieve organizational success
  - Relate accomplishments to the impact to mission objectives – answer the question “So what?”
- If an executive is subject to a disciplinary action or reprimand during the FY 2015 performance cycle, consider the impact of documented disciplinary issues when assessing performance against the appropriate Critical Element(s) (e.g., Leading People)
- Coordinate with the Reviewing Official prior to completing the appraisal and discuss any disagreements
- Assign a recommended performance rating/score for each Critical Element
  - Outstanding ratings must be substantiated by the results achieved under each performance element
- Conduct an end-of-year performance review with each member once the Reviewing Official provides comments (if applicable)
  - Provide the ISR and discuss overall performance

## V. REVIEWING OFFICIAL GUIDANCE

*Estimated Window for Completion: October 16, 2015, with all steps completed by Oct 23, 2015*

### Reviewing Official Responsibilities:

- Review proposed ISRs with the Rating Official and provide feedback as appropriate to support equitable appraisal of SES and SP members in line with organizational results
- Review and approve proposed performance recognition and sign the performance appraisal to ensure equity and fairness across the organization
- Ensure recommended ratings, pay increases and awards are implemented consistently across the Departmental Element and that the highest ratings receive highest rewards
- If the Reviewing Official and Rating Official do not agree with proposed rating, the Reviewing Official may provide comments in the appropriate space designated in the ePerformance system (SES only) to be forwarded to the PRB, SMRB and the Appointing Authority or designee for review

## VI. PRB GUIDANCE

*PRB Scheduled for November 6 – December 3, 2015*

### PRB Responsibilities:

- Evaluate ISRs from Rating Officials and review written documentation provided by SES and SP members to ensure that only those whose performance merits a “Fully Successful” or higher rating receive them
- Ensure performance ratings, pay increase and performance award recommendations are applied consistently within the Departmental Elements and that the highest ratings receive the highest pay and/or award recommendations
- Consider organizational performance and the SES and SP member’s individual accomplishments when assessing the ISRs, pay increase and performance award recommendations
- Ensure recommended pay increases and awards comply with DOE guidance
- Advise the Heads of the Departmental Elements of recommended changes to the ISR
- Report performance scores and rating recommendations to the Appointing Authority or designee

## VII. MISCELLANEOUS

- ePerformance must be accessed through Internet Explorer using this link:

<https://eperformance.doe.gov/>

The link for the BQRs and other financial metrics are located in the iPortal at:

[DOE's BQR webpage](#)

- Contact OER performance management team for assistance:
  - Keidra Biddiex, [Keidra.Biddiex@hq.doe.gov](mailto:Keidra.Biddiex@hq.doe.gov); (202) 586-7693
  - Deanna Yates, [Deanna.Yates2@hq.doe.gov](mailto:Deanna.Yates2@hq.doe.gov); (803) 752-0113
  - Erin Moore, [Erin.Moore@hq.doe.gov](mailto:Erin.Moore@hq.doe.gov); (202) 586-9558

## APPENDIX A – SES PERFORMANCE RATING LEVEL DEFINITIONS and QUICK GUIDE

### SES CRITICAL PERFORMANCE ELEMENTS

There are five (5) Critical Elements that are required in each performance plan. All SES members will be assessed and rated on each of the five Critical Elements which are based on the Executive Core Qualifications. The Critical Elements are:

- Leading Change
- Leading People
- Business Acumen
- Building Coalitions
- Results Driven

### OPM PERFORMANCE RATING LEVEL DEFINITIONS

The performance standard definitions as defined by OPM for each rating level are specified below:

- **Level 5 (Outstanding):** The executive demonstrates exceptional performance, fostering a climate that sustains excellence and optimizes results in the executive’s organization, agency, department or government-wide
  - This represents the highest level of executive performance, as evidenced by the extraordinary impact on the achievement of the organization’s mission. The executive is an inspirational leader and is considered a role model by agency leadership, peers, and employees
  - The executive continually contributes materially to or spearheads agency efforts that address or accomplish important agency goals, consistently achieves expectations at the highest level of quality possible, and consistently handles challenges, exceeds targets, and completes assignments ahead of schedule at every step along the way
- **Level 4 (Highly Successful):** The executive demonstrates a very high level of performance beyond that required for successful performance in the executive’s position and scope of responsibilities
  - The executive is a proven, highly effective leader who builds trust and instills confidence in agency leadership, peers, and employees
  - The executive consistently exceeds established performance expectations, timelines, or targets, as applicable
- **Level 3 (Fully Successful):** The executive demonstrates the high level of performance expected and the executive’s actions and leadership contribute positively toward the achievement of strategic goals and meaningful results
  - The executive is an effective, solid, and dependable leader who delivers high-quality results based on measures of quality, quantity, efficiency, and/or effectiveness within agreed upon timelines
  - The executive meets and often exceeds challenging performance expectations established for the position
- **Level 2 (Minimally Satisfactory):** The executive’s contributions to the organization are acceptable in the short term but do not appreciably advance the organization towards achievement of its goals and objectives
  - While the executive generally meets established performance expectations, timelines and targets, there are occasional lapses that impair operations and/or cause concern from management

- While showing basic ability to accomplish work through others, the executive may demonstrate limited ability to inspire subordinates to give their best efforts or to marshal those efforts effectively to address problems characteristic of the organization and its work
- **Level 1 (Unsatisfactory):** In repeated instances, the executive demonstrates performance deficiencies that detract from mission goals and objectives
  - The executive generally is viewed as ineffectual by agency leadership, peers, or employees
  - The executive does not meet established performance expectations/timelines/targets and fails to produce – or produces unacceptable – work products, services, or outcomes

### RATING CRITICAL ELEMENTS

The rating level determination for each Critical Element is based on the relationship of the SES member’s accomplishment to the performance requirements, as established in the plan, for his/her position. When any Critical Element contains more than one performance requirement the Rating Official must use the rating determination in Table 1.

**Table 1:** Critical Element Derivation Formula

| Critical Element Rating Levels            | Rating Determination  |
|---|---|
| <b>Level 5<br/>Outstanding</b>            | All performance requirements are rated Outstanding, as defined by Level 5 above.  |
| <b>Level 4<br/>Highly Successful</b>      | A majority of the performance requirements are rated at least Highly Successful, with none below the Fully Successful level, as defined by Level 4 above.             |
| <b>Level 3<br/>Fully Successful</b>       | A majority of the performance requirements are rated at least at the Fully Successful level, with none below the Fully Successful level, as defined by Level 3 above. |
| <b>Level 2<br/>Minimally Satisfactory</b> | One or more of the performance requirements in the element were performed at the Minimally Satisfactory level, as defined by Level 2 above.                           |
| <b>Level 1<br/>Unsatisfactory</b>         | One or more of the performance requirements in the element were performed at the Unsatisfactory level, as defined by Level 1 above.                                   |

## OVERALL PERFORMANCE RATING FORMULA

The overall final performance score and rating is determined based on the derivation formula located in Table 2. Each Critical Element is provided with a rating (Level 1 – Level 5) and it is multiplied by the weight of the Critical Element. All five Critical Elements are summed to determine the overall performance score (max of 500 points) which equate to a corresponding final rating level (Level 1 – Level 5).

**Table 2:** Overall Performance Rating Derivation Formula

| *EXAMPLE               | Rating Level           |        | Score               | Final Rating Level Derivation Formula |         |
|------------------------|------------------------|--------|---------------------|---------------------------------------|---------|
| Critical Element       | Initial Element Rating | Weight | Initial Point Score |                                       |         |
| 1. Leading Change      | 4                      | 10     | 4 x 10 = 40         | 475-500                               | Level 5 |
| 2. Leading People      | 5                      | 10     | 5 x 10 = 50         |                                       |         |
| 3. Business Acumen     | 3                      | 10     | 3 x 10 = 30         | 400-474                               | Level 4 |
| 4. Building Coalitions | 4                      | 10     | 4 x 10 = 40         | 300-399                               | Level 3 |
| 5. Results Driven      | 4                      | 60     | 4 x 60 = 240        | 200-299                               | Level 2 |
|                        | Total                  | 100    | 400                 |                                       |         |
|                        |                        |        |                     | Any CE rated Level 1 = Level 1        |         |

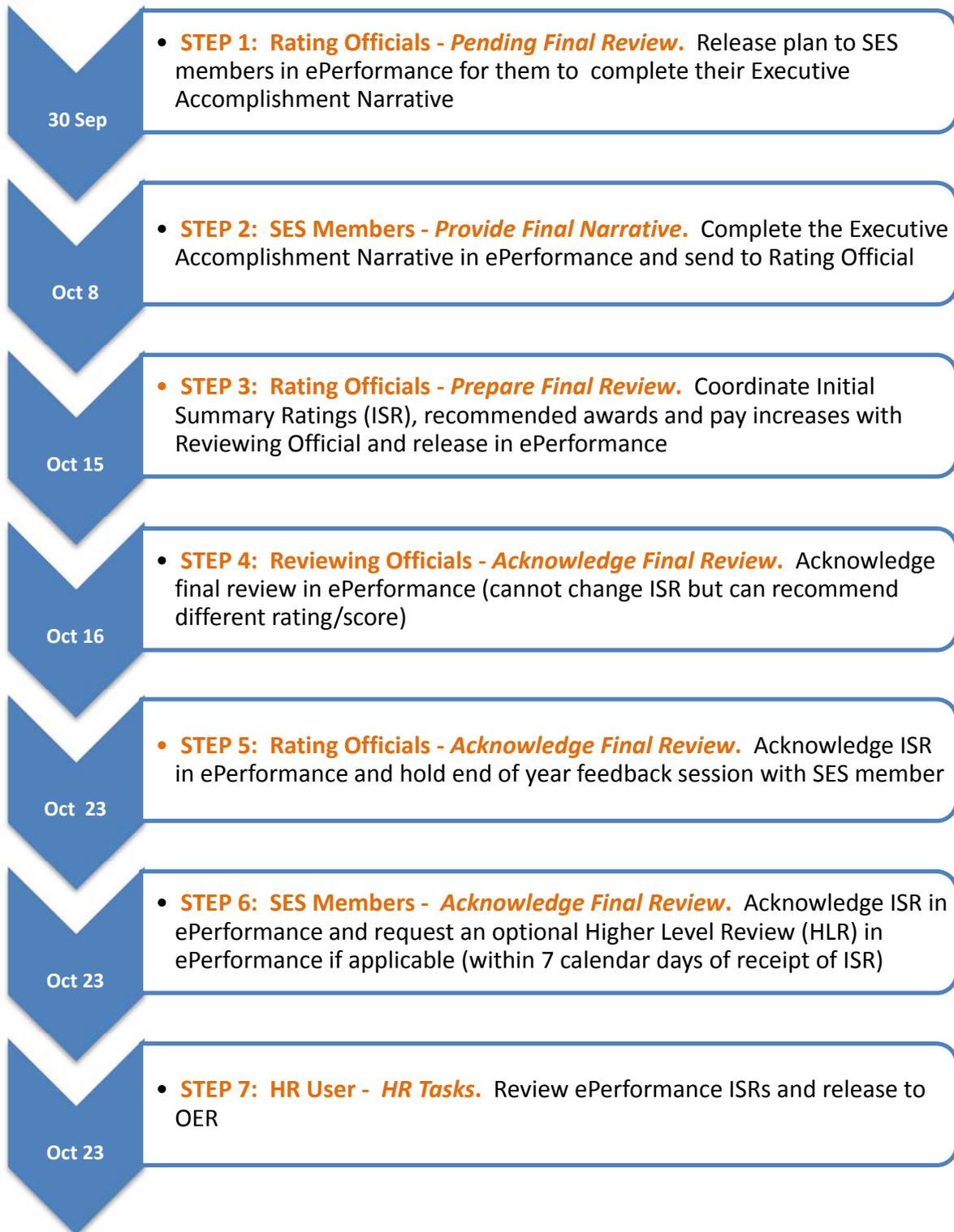
**\*Scores will be automatically calculated in ePerformance**

## ePERFORMANCE OVERVIEW AND INSTRUCTIONS

The Annual Appraisal can be completed at any time during the last 90 days of the appraisal cycle. In this stage the SES member and Rating Official assess the member’s performance against the objectives established in the performance plan. This phase is much more in-depth than the Progress Review Stage. Both SES members and Raters must provide a narrative assessment. In addition to the narrative, Rating Officials are required to provide a rating for each Critical Element. The Reviewing Official will review the appraisal and may provide comments. It is strongly recommended that all comments for the appraisal be saved in a WORD document as back-up in the event of network related issues.

The workflow steps listed on the following page must be completed in order to complete the electronic performance appraisal process.

## Overview of ePerformance Steps and Targeted Due Dates



## APPENDIX B – SP PERFORMANCE RATING LEVEL DEFINITIONS and QUICK GUIDE

### SP PERFORMANCE ELEMENTS

All SP members are assessed and rated on two Critical Elements: (1) Key Programmatic Accomplishments (3-5 objectives) and (2) Key Leadership Attributes. Critical Element I focuses on the 3-5 “critical few” program and mission-related activities linked to the agency’s strategic goals in the SP member’s area of responsibility. The total weight for Critical Element I is 60%.

Critical Element I identifies clear, transparent alignment to relevant agency or organizational goals, including page numbers, from DOE’s Strategic Plan, Congressional Budget Justification, or other organizational planning document for each performance objective.

Critical Element II focuses on “how” the SP employee carries out his/her responsibilities relative to highly desirable attributes that are expected of all DOE SP members. The total weight is 40% for Critical Element II. Critical Element II is based on the 5 Executive Core Qualifications (ECQs). The five ECQ’s are: Leading Change, Leading People, Results Driven, Business Acumen and Building Coalitions. Supervisory SP members are assessed against all 5 ECQs and non-supervisory SP members are assessed against the 4 ECQs.

### SP SUMMARY RATING LEVEL DEFINITIONS

The performance standard definitions for each rating level are specified below:

- **Level 5 (Outstanding):** This level is reserved for the truly exemplary employee who demonstrates the highest degree of achievement in his/her area (s) of work
  - This employee demonstrates an extraordinary degree of initiative and self-reliance in identifying and resolving problems or requirements of the work situation and in developing, recommending or executing innovative solutions successfully to accomplish tasks ahead of target
  - The employee is extremely adaptable in adjusting to, and resolving, new, unusual, difficult or complex situations or problems in order to successfully accomplish program objectives. The employee’s performance and contributions are of such a high level that they produce a significant and positive impact on the performance of others and the operations or reputation of the work unit
- **Level 4 (Exceeds):** This level signifies that the results achieved are clearly beyond what could be reasonably expected
- **Level 3 (Meets Expectations):** This level signifies the employee’s performance results achieved are those that can be reasonably expected of any employee on the job in order to fully and adequately achieve assigned responsibilities
- **Level 2 (Minimally Satisfactory):** This level signifies that there is a significant performance-related problem(s) although the performance has not reached “Unacceptable” in any Critical Element. The employee demonstrates limited ability in:
  - Producing work of acceptable volume and/or quality within established timeframes; or
  - Exhibits limited sense of personal responsibility and accountability in work assignments; or
  - Experiences difficulty in addressing new or unusual work situations under normal pressure; or
  - Requires frequent guidance and assistance from supervisor or others

- **Level 1 (Unacceptable):** This level signifies the performance of the employee consistently fails to meet the established performance standards in one or more critical elements of the employee’s position.
  - When performance is rated at this level, a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) must be implemented to help the employee improve his/her performance to “Meet Expectations”

## RATING CRITICAL ELEMENTS

The rating level determination for each element is based on the relationship of the SP member’s accomplishments to the performance requirements, as established in the plan, for his/her position. Table 1 below, provides the benchmarks for determining levels of performance.

**Table 1:** Critical Element Derivation Formula

| <b>Performance Rating Level</b>   | <b>Benchmark Definition</b>   |
|---|---|
| <b>Level 5</b><br><b>Score: 475-500</b><br><b><i>Outstanding</i></b>            | The executive demonstrates exceptional top-level performance in fostering a climate that sustains excellence and optimizes results in the executive’s organization, agency, department or government-wide. This represents the highest level of executive performance, as evidenced by the extraordinary impact on the achievement of the organization’s mission.             |
| <b>Level 4</b><br><b>Score: 387-474</b><br><b><i>Exceeds Expectations</i></b>   | The executive demonstrates a very high level of performance beyond that required for successful performance in the executive’s position and scope of responsibilities. The executive consistently exceeds established performance expectations, timelines, or targets.  |
| <b>Level 3</b><br><b>Score: 300-386</b><br><b><i>Meets Expectations</i></b>     | The executive demonstrates the high level of performance expected and the executive’s actions. The executive meets and often exceeds challenging performance expectations established for the position.   |
| <b>Level 2</b><br><b>Score: 200-299</b><br><b><i>Minimally Satisfactory</i></b> | The executive’s contributions to the organization are acceptable in the short term but do not appreciably advance the organization towards achievement of its goals and objectives. While the executive generally meets established performance expectations, timelines and targets, there are occasional lapses that impair operations and/or cause concern from management. |
| <b>Level 1</b><br><b>Score: 0-199 and below</b><br><b><i>Unsatisfactory</i></b> | In repeated instances, the executive demonstrates performance deficiencies that detract from mission goals and objectives. The executive does not meet established performance expectations/timelines/targets and fails to produce – or produces unacceptable – work products, services, or outcomes.   |

## OVERALL PERFORMANCE RATING FORMULA

The overall final performance score and rating is determined based on the derivation formula located in Table 2. Within the two Critical Elements, each objective is individually scored based on the Rating Level (Level 1 – Level 5) definitions provided above in Table 1. The ratings are multiplied by the weight of the objective. Both Critical Elements are summed to determine the overall performance score (max of 500 points) which equates to a corresponding final rating level (Level 1 – Level 5).

**Table 2:** Overall Performance Rating Derivation Formula (Supervisory Example)

| *EXAMPLE  | Rating Level           |            | Score               | Final Rating Level Derivation Formula |                |                  |
|---|------------------------|------------|---------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------|------------------|
| Critical Elements   | Initial Element Rating | Weight     | Initial Point Score |                                       |                |                  |
| <b>Critical Element 1 (60%): Key Programmatic Accomplishments</b> |                        |            |                     | <b>Outstanding</b>                    | <b>Level 5</b> | <b>475 – 500</b> |
| - Objective 1   | 5                      | 15         | 5 X 15 = 75         | <b>Exceeds</b>                        | <b>Level 4</b> | <b>387 – 474</b> |
| - Objective 2   | 4                      | 15         | 4 X 15 = 60         |                                       |                |                  |
| - Objective 3   | 3                      | 15         | 3 X 15 = 45         | <b>Meets Expectations</b>             | <b>Level 3</b> | <b>300 – 386</b> |
| - Objective 4   | 3                      | 15         | 3 X 15 = 45         |                                       |                |                  |
| <b>Critical Element 2 (40%): Key Leadership Attributes</b>        |                        |            |                     | <b>Minimally Satisfactory</b>         | <b>Level 2</b> | <b>200 - 299</b> |
| 1. Leading Change   | 4                      | 8          | 4 x 8 = 32          | <b>Unacceptable</b>                   | <b>Level 1</b> | <b>0 - 199</b>   |
| 2. Leading People   | 5                      | 8          | 5 x 8 = 40          |                                       |                |                  |
| 3. Business Acumen  | 3                      | 8          | 3 x 8 = 24          | <b>Any CE rated Level 1 = Level 1</b> |                |                  |
| 4. Building Coalitions  | 4                      | 8          | 4 x 8 = 32          |                                       |                |                  |
| 5. Results Driven   | 4                      | 8          | 4 x 8 = 32          |                                       |                |                  |
|   | <b>Total</b>           | <b>100</b> | <b>385</b>          |                                       |                |                  |

## APPRAISAL INSTRUCTIONS

The SP plans are not currently in ePerformance but rather are paper-based. The Rating Official must document his/her rating for Critical Element I and II in section E3, Initial Rating, of the performance plan. Using the derivation formula above, the Rating Official must type in the point scores and overall ratings.

The SP member and Rating Official must complete the appropriate sections (SL/ST Employee Accomplishments and Rating Official Comments) with clear, concise documentation of accomplishments for both Critical Elements. Rating Official and SP accomplishment narratives are mandatory. Text is limited to the space provided and cannot be smaller than 10-point Times Roman font.

After the narratives are completed, the Rating Official, Reviewing Official (denoted as Higher Level Review on the form) and SP member must complete items C1 – C6 in section C, Annual Summary Rating before submitting to OER.