



## Department of Energy

Washington, DC 20585

SEP 18 2014

MEMORANDUM FOR: HEADS OF DEPARTMENTAL ELEMENTS

FROM: ROBERT C. GIBBS  
CHIEF HUMAN CAPITAL OFFICER *Robert Gibbs*

SUBJECT: FISCAL YEAR (FY) 2014 DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY  
(DOE) SENIOR EXECUTIVE SERVICE (SES) AND  
SENIOR PROFESSIONAL (SP) PERFORMANCE  
APPRAISAL CYCLE

The FY 2014 performance appraisal cycle for both SES and SP members, which include Senior Level (SL) and Scientific or Professional (ST) employees concludes on September 30, 2014. 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 October 24, 2014, to prepare for the Performance Review Board (PRB) process. Rating and Reviewing Officials are responsible for making meaningful distinctions in performance and ensuring that those who achieved extraordinary results during the performance cycle receive the highest performance ratings with commensurate rewards.

It is important that we reward performance that correlates with the goals and missions of DOE and reflects the successes or miscues of our programs. The executive-level performance management process relies on the specific insight of those closest to its members and those assessments are critical to the PRB process. The recommended ratings, performance awards and pay increases provided to SES and SP members 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 Department is awaiting performance award and pay increase guidance from the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). Compensation guidance will be released in a separate communication. Since the last SES and SP performance cycle, performance award and pay increase eligibility policies were reviewed based on the feedback that policies were too restrictive. The changes are highlighted in the attached guidance and provide more flexibility to Departmental Elements, while adhering to DOE's unique operating environment as well as law and regulation.

Thank you for your ongoing support as we strive to continually improve our executive-level performance management processes. If you have questions, please contact Tonya Mackey, Director, OER, at [Tonya.Mackey@hq.doe.gov](mailto:Tonya.Mackey@hq.doe.gov) or 202-586-2195.

Attachment:

FY 2014 SES and SP Performance Appraisal Closeout Guidance

cc:

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 2014 Senior Executive Service (SES) and Senior Professional (SP) Performance Appraisal Closeout Guidance

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**Fiscal Year (FY) 2014**  
**Performance Appraisal Closeout Guidance**

This document provides a summary of the key performance management requirements to close out the FY 2014 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 2014 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
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 for use by officials in the rating chain to determine the extent to which an SES or SP member's performance impacted organizational results and 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. Performance appraisal narratives must support the ISR
  - a. SES members and Rating Officials must provide written narratives in ePerformance
  - b. SP members and Rating Officials must provide written narratives on the appraisal form
14. 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
15. 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 requested 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 an 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 self-assessment 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; can only 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, 2014) 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 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
  - 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 be 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
  - a. For example, an SES member who is appointed to a new position on August 1, 2014, will have a 14-month performance plan that will end September 30, 2015
4. **Transfers after the End of the Appraisal Period.** SES and SP members who transfer from outside of DOE after 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 that period 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, 2014
2. Past practice required new SES and SP appointees, as well as current SES and SP members who transferred to the Department during the performance cycle, to be onboard for 12 months in order to be eligible for a performance award; this tenure requirement is **no longer** mandatory
  - a. New career SES and SP appointees may be considered for a performance award if appointed to the executive-level position by April 1, 2014 (i.e., on board for six (6) months of the SES and SP performance appraisal cycle)
  - b. SES and SP members who transfer to DOE during the performance appraisal period may be considered for a performance award if onboard with DOE as of July 3, 2014, in order to meet the minimum 90 day requirement to be eligible to receive a performance rating
3. 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
4. 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
5. 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

6. Performance awards will be made effective the first full pay period in January 2015, 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 for the appraisal period
  - 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. Past practice required new SES and SP appointees, as well as current SES and SP members who transferred to DOE during the performance appraisal period, to be onboard for six (6) months in order to be eligible for a performance pay increase; this tenure requirement is **no longer** mandatory
3. 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 in January 2014
  - 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 2014 **is ineligible** for a pay increase for the FY 2014 performance cycle
  - c. Example 2: an SES member who was appointed in December 2013 **is eligible** for a pay increase for the FY 2014 performance cycle
4. 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
5. Pay above EX-III of the Executive Schedule (\$167,000) 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
6. Performance pay increases will be effective on the first full pay period in January 2015, if authorized



## II. KEY ACTIONS and TIMELINE

DATES (2014)	ACTIONS
Mid – Late Sep	Rating Officials release plan to SES members in ePerformance to complete their Executive Accomplishment Narrative
Sep 30	End of FY 2014 SES and SP performance appraisal cycle
Oct 24	All ISR discussions held between Rating Official and SES or SP members; all DOE SES and SP appraisals completed and released in ePerformance system (for SES members) or paper copy finalized (SP members)
Oct 31	Last day for HLR requests to be submitted by SES or SP members to OER; must be documented in ePerformance (SES only)
Nov 10	Last day for HLRO reviews
Nov 12 – 3 Dec	PRB adjudication
Dec 16	Senior Management Review Board (SMRB) reviews PRB recommendations
Mid Dec – Early Jan	Approval of annual performance results by the Appointing Authority or designee
Jan 11, 2015	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, 2014***

### **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 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 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, 2014 with all steps completed by Oct 24, 2014***

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

- Consider accomplishments from a prior position held during the performance cycle must be considered 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 2014 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 17, 2014*

### 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 12 – December 3, 2014*

### 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/AppLogin.aspx>
- 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:
  - Ina Shaw, [Ina.Shaw@hq.doe.gov](mailto:Ina.Shaw@hq.doe.gov); (202) 586-8464
  - 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 Outstanding</b>	Overall, the performance requirements in the element were performed at the Outstanding level, with none below the Highly Successful level, as defined by Level 5 above.
<b>Level 4 Highly Successful</b>	Overall, the performance requirements in the element were performed at least at the Highly Successful level, with none below the Fully Successful level, as defined by Level 4 above.
<b>Level 3 Fully Successful</b>	Overall, the performance requirements in the element were performed at least at the Fully Successful level, with no more than one performed at the Minimally Satisfactory level, and none performed at the Unsatisfactory level, as defined by Level 3 above.
<b>Level 2 Minimally Satisfactory</b>	Two or more of the performance requirements in the element were performed at the Minimally Satisfactory level, with no more than one performed at the Unsatisfactory level, as defined by Level 2 above.
<b>Level 1 Unsatisfactory</b>	Two 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		
<b>1. Leading Change</b>	4	10	4 x 10 = 40	<b>475-500</b>	<b>Level 5</b>
<b>2. Leading People</b>	5	10	5 x 10 = 50		
<b>3. Business Acumen</b>	3	10	3 x 10 = 30	<b>400-474</b>	<b>Level 4</b>
<b>4. Building Coalitions</b>	4	10	4 x 10 = 40	<b>300-399</b>	<b>Level 3</b>
<b>5. Results Driven</b>	4	60	4 x 60 = 240	<b>200-299</b>	<b>Level 2</b>
	Total	100	400		
				<b>Any CE rated Level 1 = Level 1</b>	

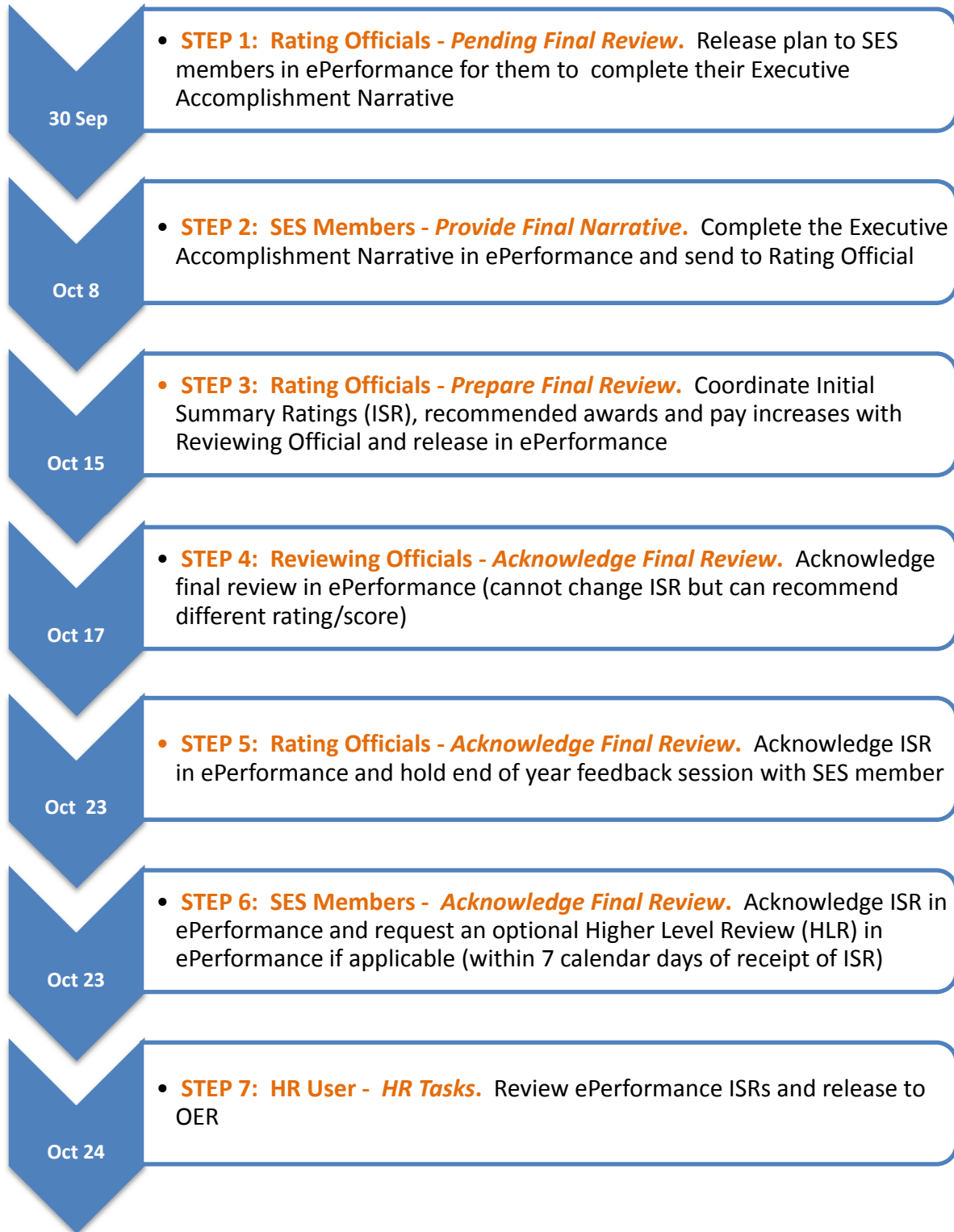
**\*Scores will be automatically calculated in ePerformance**

## 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



For Rating Officials, the location of the **Plan Current Task** is listed under **My Tasks** tab. For SES members, the location of the **Plan Current Task** is listed under **Active Plans** tab. All plans must first be released from the Rating Official to the SES member to begin.

**STEP 1: Rater - Pending Final Review.** The Rating Official (or proxy) opens the plan and selects **Release** – then logs out or moves to another ePerformance task. After selecting **Release**, a message from the webpage stating “Confirm information and release to the next step?” will appear. Click **OK** to go to the next plan.

**This step will be required until October 2, 2014.** On October 2, 2014, all plans in the **Rater – Pending Final Review** stage will be automatically routed to the SES member (Step 2). **If the plan is not in this stage, Step 1 must be manually accomplished.**

**STEP 2: Employee – Provide Final Narrative.** The SES member will receive a system email alerting them to begin documenting his/her narrative of accomplishments.

1. Log in and open plan (folder with green arrow on the right hand side of the screen)
2. Select the **Narrative** tab; proceed to select the **Add Narrative** link to add narrative
3. Type narrative directly into the textbox or copy and paste text from Word document (character limit is 8,000) and select **Save**
4. Text may be edited as often as desired. To open the narrative for edits, select the **magnifying glass icon** then select **Edit** to access the text box; always **Save** after editing
5. When completed, return to the **Plan Info** tab and select **Release** to send the appraisal to the Rating Official for next steps

**STEP 3: Rater – Prepare Final Review.** The Rating Official receives a system email to begin documenting the final review. Four steps are mandatory and require data entry for the SES member’s final review:

- Rater Narrative
- Individual Element Ratings
- Recommended Performance Award and Pay Adjustment
- Release to Next Step

**Rater Narrative:** The Rating Official must complete the following steps to document the Rater Narrative:

1. Log in and open plan (folder with green arrow on the right hand side of the screen)
2. Select the **Narrative** tab
3. Select **Add Narrative** and the text box will automatically appear
4. Type your narrative into the text box or copy and paste your narrative from your Word document (8,000 character limit)
5. Select **Save**; there is no automatic save mechanism in ePerformance
6. Text may be edited as often as desired. To open the narrative for edits, select the **magnifying glass icon** then select **Edit** to access the text box; always **Save** after editing

**Individual Element Rating:** Each Critical Element must be rated separately. Select the folder with the green arrow to rate each Critical Element. The first four Critical Elements (Leading Change, Leading People, Business Acumen and Building Coalitions) are rated in the same manner. You will need to complete the following steps:

1. Choose the Critical Element to rate (select folder with green arrow on the right hand side of the screen)
2. Select a rating from the **Initial Element Rating** drop down box



3. Select **Save Element**
4. Select **Close**
  - a. When each Critical Element rating is selected and saved, the rating is automatically populated on the **Plan Info** Tab

The last Critical Element (Results Driven) must be rated individually for each performance requirement. In order to rate the individual performance requirements the Rating Official must:

1. Select the folder with the green arrow for the Critical Element **Results Driven** to rate each performance requirement
2. Click on the **magnifying glass icon** to open each individual performance requirement
3. Select a rating from the **Results Rating** drop down box
4. Click **Save** for each Result
  - a. Repeat the same process for each result – no need to close the page until all of the results are rated
  - b. When each rating is selected and saved, the rating column automatically populates as each result rating is saved
5. **Close** the page when all results are rated
6. The **Rating Derived from Results'** displays in the **Initial Element Rating** field and updates as each result is rated
  - a. The ISR will automatically be populated based on the recommended ratings
  - b. If the **Individual Result Ratings** are equally divided between two rating levels, ePerformance will require the Rating Official to manually select the Individual Element Rating to break the tie
  - c. Select **Save**

**Recommended Performance Award and Pay Adjustment:** The **Recommended Performance Award** and **Recommended Pay Adjustment** fields must be populated (enter 0 if nothing is recommended). The Rating Official must complete the following steps to document a recommended performance award and/or pay adjustment:

1. Enter your **Recommended Performance Award** box – decimals can be used (0, 5.0 – 8.0)
2. Enter your **Recommended Pay Adjustment** box – decimals can be used (0 – 5.0)
3. Select **Save** at the top of the plan

**Release to Next Step:** When finished, Rating Official must complete the following steps to release the plan to the next step:

1. Return to **Plan Info** tab and select **Release**
2. **Select a Step** depending on the situation:
  - a1. Choose **Rater - Send to Reviewer for Ack** to route to Reviewing Official for acknowledgment
  - a2. Select **Rater - Return to Emp to Edit Narrative** if the employee narrative needs strengthening for the intended rating
3. Select **Release**
4. Select **OK** when dialog box appears to **Release** plan

The Employee plan disappears from the Rating Official's **My Tasks** tab. It can be found in the **My Employees** tab. There is no **Current Task** identified, and the **Next Step** is to **Create Plan**. The SES member's plan for the next performance year can now be created or cloned by clicking the **Create Plan** icon.

**STEP 4: Reviewing Officials – Acknowledge Final Review.** The Reviewing Official is the **first** person to acknowledge the SES member’s Initial Summary Rating (ISR). A system email will alert the Reviewing Official that a plan is ready for review. At this step, the Reviewing Official can:

- Acknowledge the final rating; or
- Add a summary comment (optional); or
- Return plan to Rater for changes (optional)

The Reviewing Official must complete the following steps to acknowledge and release the plan to the next step:

1. Log in and open plan (folder with green arrow on the right hand side of the screen)
2. Select **Add/Update Perf Comment** to provide summary comments (optional)
3. Place a check mark in the **Acknowledgement** section stating “I have reviewed the recommended ratings and narrative summary for this employee”
4. Type name in **Signature** box
5. Select **Submit**

If there is a need to return the plan back to the Rating Official, select the link **Return for Changes** located at the bottom of the page and follow prompts.

**STEP 5: Rating Officials – Acknowledge Final Review.** After the Reviewing Official has acknowledged (electronically signed) the SES member’s final rating, the plan moves to the Rating Official for the **second** acknowledgement. The Rating Official receives a system email notifying them that the SES member’s plan is ready for their electronic signature. There is no need for the Rating Official to review this rating again if nothing has changed. If the Reviewing Official routed it back to the Rating Official for edits, then the Rating Official would have made the required edits before this step.

**NOTE:** The Rating Official must hold a discussion with the employee to present the ISR **BEFORE** it is acknowledged. The Rating Official cannot electronically send the ISR to the SES member as a replacement for the face-to-face meeting (or phone/ VTEL meeting for geographically dispersed people).

The Rating Official must complete the following steps to acknowledge and release the plan to the next step:

1. Log in and open plan (folder with green arrow on the right hand side of the screen)
2. Place a check mark in the **Acknowledgement** section stating that “I have reviewed and discussed this appraisal with the employee”
3. Type name in **Signature** box
4. Select **Submit**

**STEP 6: SES Members – Employee Acknowledge Final Review.** After the Rating Official meets with the SES member and acknowledged (electronically signed) the ISR in ePerformance, the plan moves to the SES member for their acknowledgement. The SES member will receive a system email notifying them of this action.

At this point, the SES member should have seen the ISR during the discussion meeting with the Rating Official. The SES member should review the documentation before acknowledging his/her plan.

The SES member must complete the following steps to acknowledge and release the plan to the next step:

1. Log in and open plan (select folder with green arrow on the right hand side of the screen)
2. Select **View PDF** icon to view the performance appraisal prior to entering an electronic signature
3. Place a check mark in the **Acknowledgement** section stating that “I have reviewed and discussed this appraisal with my Rating Official. My signature does not necessarily imply that I agree with the appraisal recommendation”
  - a. If the SES member disagrees with the ISR, he/she must place a checkmark in the **Higher Level Review Requested** box
  - b. Check this only if the SES member desires their ISR to be reviewed by an independent SES Higher Level Reviewing Official (HLRO) outside of their assigned organization
  - c. A mandatory comment is required if an HLR is requested; comment will appear on the last page of the appraisal form
  - d. It is the SES member’s responsibility to provide additional documents to the OER, who will give them to the assigned HLRO
4. Type name in **Signature** box
5. Select **Add/Update Perf Comment** to add additional information; comment will appear on the last page of the appraisal form (optional)
6. Select **Submit**

**STEP 7: HR User – HR Tasks.** The HR User (SES HRDs and/or PM Liaisons) must review the plans for quality control to ensure that the ratings, awards and pay increase recommendations are within the correct limits. ePerformance allows an HR User to make edits without routing the plan back to the Rating Official to any of the following editable fields: (1) recommended performance award; (2) recommended pay adjustment; (3) any of the critical element ratings.

HR Tasks require several **Fetch** and **Release** steps. If an HR User **Fetches** a plan, that same HR User must **Release** task. If an HR User needs to be removed from a plan so another HR User can do a succeeding release task, the plan can be re-routed using **Plan Administration** back to the same step. The new task owner drop-down list is grayed out which allows another HR User to **Fetch** the plan.

To easily review the plans for quality control, run the “**SES FY14 Org Recommended Rating Report**”. The HR User must complete the following steps run the ad-hoc report:

1. Select **Ad-Hoc Reporting** tab
2. Select **(Functional) – Final Rating** in the **Report Type** drop-down box
3. Select “**SES FY14 Org Recommended Rating Report**” in the **Template** drop down box
4. Select View Report and export to Excel

Based on an analysis of the ePerformance report, there are three scenarios for the HR User:

- Plans – No Edits Required
- Plans – Edits Required
- Plans – HLR Required

**Plans – No Edits Required:** The HR User must complete the following steps in the **HR Tasks** tab to release the plan to OER when no edits are required:

- 1A. Fetch one plan by clicking the **orange folder icon**; the plan will open
  - a. Select **OK** when dialog box appears to **Fetch** plan
  - b. Select **Release**

- c. Select **“Exec Resources Review”** as the next workflow step in the **Current Task** drop-down box
  - d. Select **Release**
  - e. Select **OK** when dialog box appears to **Release** plan
- 1B. Fetch multiple plans at a time by clicking the appropriate checkboxes in the **Select** column next to the appropriate plans; a dialog box will open (plans will not open)
- a. Select **OK** when dialog box appears to **Fetch** plans
  - b. Select **Release**
  - c. Select **“To Exec Resources Review”** in the **Step** drop-down box
  - d. Select **Release**
  - e. Select **OK** when dialog box appears to **Release** plan

**Plans – Edits Required:** The HR User must complete the following steps in the **HR Tasks** tab to update the plan with the appropriate edits and release it to OER:

- 1a. Fetch one plan by clicking the **orange folder icon**; the plan will open
  - a. Select **OK** when dialog box appears to **Fetch** plan
  - b. Select **Release**
  - c. Select **“Org PRB Review”** as the next workflow step in the **Current Task** drop-down box
  - d. Select **Release**
  - e. Select **OK** when dialog box appears to **Release** plan
- 1b. Fetch multiple plans at a time by clicking the appropriate checkboxes in the **Select** column next to the appropriate plans; a dialog box will open (plans will not open)
  - a. Select **OK** when dialog box appears to **Fetch** plan
  - b. Select **Release**
  - c. Select **“To Org PRB Review”** in the **Step** drop-down box
  - d. Select **Release**
  - e. Select **OK** when dialog box appears to **Release** plan
- 2. In the **HR Tasks** tab, select **Refresh** to update the current task
- 3a. Fetch one plan by clicking the **orange folder icon**; the plan will open
  - a. Select **OK** when dialog box appears to **Fetch** plan
  - b. Select **Release**
  - c. Select **OK** when dialog box appears to **Release** plan
- 3b. Fetch multiple plans at a time by clicking the appropriate checkboxes in the **Select** column next to the appropriate plans; a dialog box will open (plans will not open)
  - a. Select **OK** when dialog box appears to **Fetch** plan
  - b. Select **Release**
  - c. Select **OK** when dialog box appears to **Release** plan
- 4. In the **HR Tasks** tab, select **Refresh** to update the current task
- 5. Fetch one plan for edits by clicking the **orange folder icon**; the plan will open
  - a. Select **OK** when dialog box appears to **Fetch** plan
  - b. Adjust Critical Element rating levels, performance award and pay adjustments as appropriate
  - c. Select **Release**
  - d. Select **OK** when dialog box appears to **Release** plan

**Plans – HLR Required:** The HR User must complete the following steps in the **HR Tasks** tab to release a plan that requested an HLR and no additional edits are required before submitting to OER:

- 1. Fetch the plan by clicking the **orange folder icon**; the plan will open
  - a. Select **OK** when dialog box appears to **Fetch** plan
  - b. Select **Release**

- c. Select “**Exec Resources – Assign HLR**” as the next workflow step in the **Current Task** drop-down box
- d. Select **Release**
- e. Select **OK** when dialog box appears to **Release** plan

If edits are required or SES member mistakenly selected to request an HLR:

1. Fetch the plan by clicking the **orange folder icon**; the plan will open
  - a. Select **OK** when dialog box appears to **Fetch** plan
  - b. Select **Release**
  - c. Select “**Org PRB Review**” as the next workflow step in the **Current Task** drop-down box
  - d. Select **Release**
  - e. Select **OK** when dialog box appears to **Release** plan
2. In the **HR Tasks** tab, select **Refresh** to update the current task
3. Fetch the plan by clicking the **orange folder icon**; the plan will open
  - a. Select **OK** when dialog box appears to **Fetch** plan
  - b. Select **Release**
  - c. Select **OK** when dialog box appears to **Release** plan
3. In the **HR Tasks** tab, select **Refresh** to update the current task
4. Fetch the plan by clicking the **orange folder icon**; the plan will open
  - a. Select **OK** when dialog box appears to **Fetch** plan
  - b. Adjust Critical Element rating levels, performance award and pay adjustments as appropriate, if applicable
  - c. Select **Release**
  - d1. If an SES member accidentally checked the box or changed their mind about requesting an HLR, Select “**Send to Employee for Review and Ack**” as the next workflow step in the **Current Task** drop-down box to route back to the SES member
  - d2. If no issues, Select “**Exec Resources – Assign HLR**” as the next workflow step in the **Current Task** drop-down box
  - e. Select **Release**
  - f. Select **OK** when dialog box appears to **Release** plan

## 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

Performance Rating Level	Benchmark Definition
<b>Level 5</b> <b>Score: 475-500</b> <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> <b>Score: 387-474</b> <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> <b>Score: 300-386</b> <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> <b>Score: 200-299</b> <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> <b>Score: 0-199 and below</b> <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			
4. Building Coalitions	4	8	4 x 8 = 32			
5. Results Driven	4	8	4 x 8 = 32			
				<b>Any CE rated Level 1 = Level 1</b>		
	<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.