

Directive

FGIS 4430.1

4/14/95

PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL UNDER THE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

1. PURPOSE

This Directive provides a guide of basic regulations and procedures to be followed in the Performance Management process. The guide also outlines basic responsibilities of Federal Grain Inspection Service (FGIS) employees under the Performance Management System. This Directive also establishes a tool for managers by linking performance appraisals to the personnel actions, i.e., promotions, reassignments, within-grade increases, performance awards, removals, quality step increases, reductions-in-force, retention under reduction-in-force procedures, and training.

2. REPLACEMENT HIGHLIGHTS

This Directive revises and updates FGIS Directive 347.1, dated November 12, 1987, entitled Performance Appraisal Under the Performance Management System Plan, which expired 12/31/90.

3. COVERAGE

The Performance Management System applies to all FGIS employees (including Foreign Service and Senior Foreign Service employees) unless specifically excluded in the attached guide.

4. POLICY

It is FGIS policy to follow the USDA Performance Management System and to rate employees fairly and equitably in line with the principles stated in the Department's Plan.

Operating guidelines for the FGIS Performance Management System are given in the attached guide.

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Deputy Administrator

Attachment

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GUIDE TO PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL UNDER THE
PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

		<u>TABLE OF CONTENTS</u>	<u>Page</u>
CHAPTER	1	GENERAL INFORMATION	1-1
	I.	COVERAGE	1-1
	II.	DEFINITIONS	1-2
	III.	RESPONSIBILITIES	1-4
		A. SUPERVISORS/MANAGERS	1-4
		B. RATING SUPERVISORS	1-5
		C. EMPLOYEES	1-6
		D. HUMAN RESOURCES DIVISION	1-6
		E. FIELD MANAGEMENT DIVISION	1-6
CHAPTER	2	APPRAISAL REQUIREMENTS	2-1
	I.	PERFORMANCE ELEMENTS AND STANDARDS	2-1
	II.	GENERIC ELEMENTS AND STANDARDS	2-2
	III.	APPRAISAL PROCESS	2-2
	IV.	PROGRESS REVIEW	2-4
	V.	MEASURING PERFORMANCE	2-5
		A. APPRAISAL ELEMENTS	2-5
		B. DOCUMENTATION OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS OR DEFICIENCIES	2-7
		C. SUMMARY RATINGS	2-8
		D. WEIGHTS	2-9
		E. MULTIPLE APPRAISALS	2-9
		F. APPRAISAL OF DISABLED VETERANS	2-11
		G. CONVERSIONS	2-11
		H. EMPLOYEE'S CERTIFICATION	2-11

			<u>Page</u>
EXHIBIT	1	DECISION TABLE	
EXHIBIT	2	SUMMARY RATING EXAMPLES	
CHAPTER	3	APPEALS AND RELATED PERSONNEL ACTIONS	3-1
	I.	GRIEVANCES	3-1
	II.	LINKAGE TO OTHER PERSONNEL ACTIONS AND DECISIONS	3-1
CHAPTER	4	FORMS AND RECORDS	4-1
EXHIBIT	1	SAMPLE FORM AD-435A	
EXHIBIT	2	SAMPLE FORM AD-435B	
EXHIBIT	3	SAMPLE AD-435	
EXHIBIT	4	FGIS FORM 301	

CHAPTER 1 GENERAL INFORMATION

I. COVERAGE

The Performance Management System applies to all FGIS employees unless specifically excluded below.

- A. Employees in the following positions are excluded when employed under appointments limited to 1 year or less or when employees are serving on intermittent tours of duty:
 - 1. Positions filled under 5 CFR 213.3102 (g) when occupied by nontemporary part-time or intermittent employees whose compensation during his/her service year will be no more than 40 percent of the annual salary rate for the first step of grade GS-3.
 - 2. Positions filled under 5 CFR 213.3102 (k) when occupied by employees to whom no compensation is paid.
 - 3. Positions filled under 5 CFR 213.3102 (I) when occupied by scientific, professional, or technical experts for consultation purposes.
 - 4. Positions filled under 5 CFR 213.3102 (0) when occupied by faculty members.
 - 5. Positions filled under 5 CFR 213.3102 (p) when occupied by graduate students.
 - 6. Positions filled under 5 CFR 212.3102 (q) when occupied by students working intermittently or on a part-time basis while attending school. However, this exclusion does not apply to any position occupied by a cooperative student who may become eligible for noncompetitive conversion to a competitive service appointment.
 - 7. Positions filled under 5 CFR 213.3102 (v) when occupied by temporary summer aids.

8. Seasonal positions filled under 5 CFR 213.3102 (y) when occupied by finalists in national science contests.
- B. Employees in the following positions are excluded when they are expected to work less than 120 consecutive calendar days for the same supervisor under an appointment limited to 1 year or less:
1. Positions filled under 5 CFR 213.3113 (a)(5) when occupied by State performance assistants, field assistants, or forest workers, except that this exclusion applies for up to 220 working days in a service year when positions are occupied by employees providing emergency services.
 2. Positions filled under 5 CFR 213.3102 (w) when occupied by students appointed under the Stay-in-School Program.
- C. Employees in positions in the excepted service are excluded when they are not expected to work more than 120 calendar days in a consecutive 12-month period.

Although the above group of employees is exempted from the requirements of this User Guide, that exemption does not prohibit the Agency from maintaining records of work, nor does it prevent the Agency from recommending or taking administrative action involving such personnel. Supervisors are strongly encouraged to communicate standards of expected performance to these employees.

II. DEFINITIONS

- A. Appraisal Period. The period of time established by an appraisal system for which an employee's performance will be reviewed. The appraisal period for FGIS employees is October 1 to September 30.
- B. Appraisal Unit. The weighted value assigned to critical and noncritical elements.
- C. Decision Table. A matrix used for deriving a summary rating from appraisal of individual elements. (See Chapter 2, Exhibit 1)

- D. Critical Element. A component of a position consisting of one or more duties and responsibilities which contributes toward accomplishing organizational goals and objectives. A critical element is of such importance that "Unacceptable" (for SES "Unsatisfactory") performance on the element would result in "Unacceptable" ("Unsatisfactory") performance in the position.
- E. Element Rating. The level of performance on each individual element determined by comparing accomplishments to the performance standard. Element rating levels are: "Exceeds Fully Successful," "Fully Successful," and "Does Not Meet Fully Successful."
- F. Noncritical Element. A component of a position which does not meet the definition of a critical element, but is of sufficient importance to warrant written appraisal and the assignment of an element rating.
- G. Performance Management System. The total process of integrating performance, pay, and incentive systems with basic management functions to improve individual and organizational effectiveness. The performance appraisal process is basis to the foundation of performance management.
- H. Performance Plan. The written critical and noncritical elements and performance standard(s) of the employee's position.
- I. Performance Standard. The level of performance established by management for a critical or noncritical element at a particular rating level.
- J. Rating Official. The individual who is responsible for informing the employee of performance elements (both critical and noncritical) of his/her position, establishing performance standards for those elements, appraising performance, and assigning the performance rating. Normally, this is the employee's immediate supervisor .
- K. Rating of Record. The summary rating required at the time specified in this issuance, or at such other times specified for special circumstances.

- L. Reviewing Official. The supervisor who assigns, controls, and is responsible for the work of the rating official, normally the rating official's immediate supervisor and the employee's second level supervisor. In the event that the position of "Reviewing Official" is vacant, the next higher level official in the chain of command may serve in this capacity.

- M. Summary Rating. The written record of performance, the appraisal of each critical and noncritical element, and the assignment of a summary rating level. Summary rating levels are "Outstanding," "Superior," "Fully Successful," "Marginal," and "Unacceptable."

III. RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Supervisors/Managers will:

1. Review performance appraisal elements and standards at the beginning of the appraisal period and indicate concurrence by signing the performance plan.

2. Review ratings assigned employees by rating supervisors prior to the discussion between the supervisor and the employee.

3. Change ratings, when appropriate and necessary, after consultation with rating supervisor. The reasons for any changes should be substantiated and documented.

4. Sign the performance evaluation. Both the supervisor's and the reviewing official's signatures should precede the employee's signature. When this is not possible, provide documentation that the reviewing official reviewed and concurred with the evaluation prior to the discussion with the employee.

5. Designate a distribution point and make proper distribution of Form AD-435, Performance Appraisal, and review the form for accuracy and completeness.

6. Ensure that evaluations are conducted for all employees covered by this Guide.

The above responsibilities may be delegated to lower management levels above the rating supervisor level.

B. Rating Supervisors will:

1. Establish performance elements and standards in consultation with the employee.
2. Make changes to performance standards in consultation with the employee as assigned job tasks are changed.
3. Submit performance elements and standards to higher level supervisors for review, and for resolution when disagreements occur.
4. Provide employees with written and signed performance elements and standards for the position.
5. Conduct mandatory semiannual progress reviews to advise employees of their performance (this is the minimum required). Quarterly reviews are encouraged. The supervisor and the employee should initial and date the appropriate block of Form AD-435A, Performance Plan, Progress Review, and Appraisal Worksheet, to document that the progress review has taken place.
6. Maintain information about employees' work assignments and performance such as samples of employees' work products and documentation of accomplishments showing their progress.
7. Submit performance appraisal ratings of record to reviewing official for concurrence and signature before communicating them to employees.
8. Follow current instructions regarding distribution of the completed Form AD-435.
9. Adhere to the national/local memorandum of understanding concerning the administration of the Performance Management System.

- C. Employees will:
1. Inform their supervisors whenever they feel their assigned job tasks have changed significantly from the standards that were established for the rating period.
 2. Participate in the establishment of their performance elements and standards.
 3. Perform their assigned duties and responsibilities at or exceeding the established "Fully Successful" level.
- D. The Human Resources Division. APHIS, will: Develop policy, conduct reviews, and provide advice to PGIS managers, supervisors, and employees.
- E. The Field Management Division. PGIS, will: Negotiate/consult with recognized labor organizations on appropriate aspects of the performance appraisal system.

I. PERFORMANCE ELEMENTS AND STANDARDS

- A. Methods. Performance elements and standards are established using position descriptions, work plans, instructions, project proposals, goals, targets, job analyses, equal employment opportunity action plans, individual development plans, and any other source that assigns or fixes responsibility for accomplishment of work.
- B. Collateral Duties. An employee performing officially assigned collateral duties must be given performance appraisals which reflect both the primary duties and responsibilities and the collateral duties. This is a joint responsibility of the primary supervisor and the collateral duty supervisor .
- C. Number of Elements. A minimum of 3 elements must be used, but normally no more than 10 elements will be used. At least one, but not all elements, must be identified as critical. NOTE: An employee cannot be rated unless at least three elements have been performed.
- A. Use of Subelements. Subelements may not be used. However, this restriction does not preclude further specifications of work within an element as long as only one rating level is assigned per element.
- A. Performance Standards. Performance standards will be defined at the "Exceeds," "Fully Successful," and "Does Not Meet" levels. Each standard should be stated clearly so that the supervisor and employee understand what is expected and can determine whether the standard has been met. The specific indicators of quantity, quality, timeliness, manner-of -performance, or cost- effectiveness may be used to evaluate performance. Performance can be determined by counts of work processed, spot-checks of work, review of final product, or number of valid complaints received. A quantitative measure of

what an employee has accomplished may be expressed in terms of output, such as number of cases processed or closed, items produced, and amount of time used. Qualitative measures may include such things as the number of items rejected, recommendations adopted, clarity of reports, valid complaints received, or errors made. Standards may also be based on observable work behavior (how a job is done, rather than what is accomplished.)

II. GENERIC ELEMENTS AND STANDARDS

- A. Where there are like or identical positions, generic critical and noncritical elements and performance standards will be utilized for the performance appraisal system. For field supervisory and bargaining unit employees, these will be developed by a Performance Appraisal Review Board (P ARB) with Union input regarding those elements and standards applied to bargaining unit members.

- A. While like positions are assigned similar or identical duties and responsibilities, the specific number, degree, or other indicators of output in the final performance standards may vary for individual positions. For example, while two positions in the same agency may both have a responsibility and a similar element for conducting inspections, the number of inspections per inspector may vary from one location to another, depending on factors such as travel time required, type of inspections to be conducted, etc. Further, one of these employees may have an additional assigned responsibility not found in the other job. Thus, while the elements and standards for like or identical positions are similar, the rating official must seek to tailor generic elements and standards to the individual job situation.

III. APPRAISAL PROCESS

- A. Employee Participation in Establishing Elements and Standards. Elements and standards must be based on an employee's position. The identification of performance elements and establishment of performance standards requires joint participation of the supervisor and the employee. Joint participation may be accomplished by means including, but not limited to, the following:
 - 1. Employee and supervisor discuss and develop the performance plan together,

2. Employee provides supervisor with a draft performance plan,
3. Employee comments on draft performance plan prepared by the supervisor,
or
4. Employee prepares performance plan with other employees who occupy similar positions.

Final authority for establishing elements and standards, however, rests with the first and second level supervisors.

B. Communication of Performance Plans.

1. Within 30 days of the beginning of each appraisal period, the supervisor will communicate to the employee written performance elements and standards for the position. Forms AD-435A and B, Performance Plan, Progress Review, and Appraisal Worksheet (Continuation), will be used for this purpose (see Chapter 4, Exhibits 1 and 2, for examples). A copy of the elements and standards must be provided to the reviewing official for approval. Reviews of performance plans are made to ensure appropriate levels of quality and difficulty of performance standards within each employee's plan. Each program should determine its own procedures for these reviews and publish them internally within 30 days of the beginning of the appraisal period.

The communication of performance standards between the rating official and the employee will include, to the extent practicable, face-to-face discussions. Alternatives to face-to-face discussions include telephone conversations or local meetings with groups of employees who occupy similar or identical positions. In all cases, employees will be given a copy of their written elements and standards.

2. Within 30 days of an employee's assignment to a position (e.g., promotion, temporary promotion, detail for 120 days or more, reassignment, or transfer), written performance elements and standards will be established, approved by the reviewing official, communicated, and a copy provided to the employee.

3. Performance elements and standards will be reestablished or revised each time a work assignment changes significantly, whether or not the work assignment change requires a personnel action. Employees must be informed and provided an opportunity to participate in any revisions and changes made to their written elements and standards. Employees must be afforded an opportunity to perform under reestablished or revised standards for a minimum of 90 days.

C. The Appraisal Period. The appraisal period is normally 12 months. Ninety days is the minimum amount of time in which a supervisor can make an objective appraisal. A rating of record may not be given unless elements and standards have been established and communicated to the employee and the employee has served under those elements and standards in the current position for at least 90 days. This means that the supervisor, the reviewing official, and the employee must have signed and dated the performance elements and standards at the bottom of the Form AD-435A, at least 90 days prior to the appraisal date. Ratings may be based only on actual employee accomplishments; "presumptive" ratings of record are prohibited.

The appraisal period for employees is October 1 to September 30. When a rating of record cannot be prepared at the time specified in this plan because the employee has not performed under an established performance plan for a minimum of 90 days, the appraisal period will be extended for the amount of time necessary to meet the minimum appraisal period. At this time, the rating of record will be prepared.

IV. PROGRESS REVIEW

Progress reviews will take place approximately 6 months from the beginning of the appraisal cycle, although quarterly reviews are encouraged. Feedback from the rating supervisor is required to ensure that employees are provided specific information about their performance against established standards and guidance about areas of performance needing improvement (as well as how improvement can be made) throughout the appraisal period cycle. In addition, such reviews can provide an opportunity for counseling and training to the successful employee for the purpose of developing more advanced skills for potentially more complex assignments. A progress review is not in itself a rating.

V. MEASURING PERFORMANCE

A. Appraisal Elements. A 3-level rating system will be used to appraise performance on each element. The three element rating levels are "Exceeds Fully Successful," "Fully Successful," and "Does Not Meet Fully Successful." To assist supervisors in making a decision on employees' overall performance, the following examples serve as guidelines:

1. Exceeds Fully Successful. This level includes the range of performance which exceeds what is normally expected of an individual. Performance might include such indicators as:
 - a. Others seek this individual's counsel based on demonstrated knowledge.
 - b. Personal commitment to a high level of performance is evident.
 - c. Quality and timeliness of results are never in question, even under challenging circumstances.
 - d. Employee takes initiative in identifying challenging work goals and in mapping out solutions to achieve maximum results.
 - e. Accomplishments are more than expected.
 - f. Each job is done thoroughly and on a timely basis.
 - g. Employee continually provides "extras," exceeding requirements, and needing practically no direction or supervision.
 - h. Employee thinks beyond details of the job, working toward the overall objective of the organizational unit.
 - i. Decisions and actions have paid off to a higher degree than would be expected.
2. Fully Successful performance is what is expected of the majority of the employees. Some indicators of performance at this level are:

- a. Employee almost always completes work on schedule and demonstrates a sound balance between quality and quantity.
- b. Employee prioritizes problems and works well, requiring only normal supervision and followup.
- c. Errors are minimal and seldom repeated.

3. Does Not Meet Fully Successful.

- a. This level of performance includes a range of performance where, if the same level of work effectiveness existed throughout the organizational unit, some goals would not be met. Performance might include indicators such as:
 - (1) The employee may need encouragement and follow through but does the job under close supervision.
 - (2) Employee cannot always be depended on to complete assignments or perform steady work unless supervisor keeps checking.
 - (3) The employee has been on the job long enough to have shown "Fully Successful " performance but must be made aware of performance deficiencies.
 - (4) Employee would be better in some other job with lesser qualifications, and probably recognizes that the job isn't getting done.
 - (5) Employee fails to grasp the situation despite numerous explanations, and the supervisor may have to correct or reassign work because the employee's work had technical or procedural errors or omissions that are not expected of workers at that grade level.
 - (6) Adverse comments may arise from clients, industry, or trade concerning performance.

- b. An employee appraised "Does Not Meet Fully Successful" in any critical element must receive a summary rating of "Unacceptable" and corrective action must be taken consistent with Chapter 3, II., F.

B. Documentation of Accomplishments or Deficiencies. Performance in any performance element which either exceeds or does not meet the "Fully Successful" standard must be documented on the Form FGIS-301, Description of Performance, (Exhibit 4) or locally negotiated documentation. This documentation serves as a record of performance and provides employees with written notification that their performance for a certain element either exceeded or did not meet the requirements at the expected level. References to samples of work, completed projects or reports, production data, direct observation, feedback from third party sources or records of significant events should be recorded on this document. If more space is needed, this form may be attached to another sheet containing the additional information. This documentation will help ensure that appraisals are based on concrete evidence, and it will play an important role in supporting ratings which deviate from the "Fully Successful " level.

In some cases, an employee may work under different supervisors during the appraisal period. In these instances, communication among these rating officials is necessary to adequately and accurately document performance and arrive at a rating for the assigned elements. This may be accomplished through a number of processes including, but not limited to, the following: scheduling regular meetings of rating officials throughout the year for the purpose of issuing proper documentation, scheduling meetings prior to the midyear and final progress reviews to assess performance, and having each rating official prepare a summary rating for discussion and review in deriving an employee's rating of record.

At the end of the appraisal period, that rating supervisor documents the employee's performance on Form AD-435A and B. (See Chapter 4 for illustration of completed forms. Detailed instructions are contained on the reverse of Form AD-435A.) Performance will be documented as follows:

1. The supervisor should keep notes referring to samples of work, completed projects or reports, production data, direct observation, feedback from third party sources, or a record of significant events as they occur in the employee's performance. Such notes are valuable in recalling work done earlier in the appraisal period and ensure that an appraisal is based on concrete evidence known to the supervisor .
2. If the performance is at the "Fully Successful " level, the checkoff block may be used, and no written narrative of performance is required.
3. When an element has been appraised "Does Not Meet Fully Successful," the rationale for the decision must be documented citing the specific instances of performance. The documentation should cover when, where, what, and how the employee's job performance is deficient. Instances, work products, or other performance problems leading the supervisor to conclude that the performance "Does Not Meet Fully Successful" should be cited. If the performance indicates a lack of knowledge of regulations or technical expertise, this should be noted.
4. A brief narrative describing instances of performance accomplishments will be prepared for elements appraised "Exceeds Fully Successful" only when a summary rating of "Outstanding" is assigned.

C. Summary Ratings. Once the elements are appraised, the summary rating is calculated using the Decision Table and recorded on Form AD-435. The five required summary rating levels follow (See examples in Exhibit 2):

1. Outstanding. Performance which far exceeds what is normally expected. Performance on each element (critical and noncritical) is rated at "Exceeds Fully Successful. "
2. Superior. Performance beyond what is expected. There are more appraisal units at "Exceeds Fully Successful" than at "Fully Successful" and none are below "Fully Successful. " Performance at this level demonstrates that the employee seizes initiative in development and implementation of challenging work goals. Employee thinks beyond details of the job, working toward the overall objective of the organizational unit.

3. Fully Successful. Performance that is expected of the majority of employees and does not require significant improvement. Any combination of appraisal units which falls between "Superior" and "Marginal" is considered to be "Fully Successful" performance. Errors are minimal and seldom repeated. Employee prioritizes problems and works well, requiring only normal supervision and followup. Employee almost always completes work on schedule and demonstrates a sound balance between quality and quantity.
4. Marginal. Performance which needs improvement to achieve the "Fully Successful" level.

NOTE: A "Marginal" summary rating can be derived only when a rating of "Does Not Meet Fully Successful" is assigned to noncritical elements, and more appraisal units are at "Does Not Meet" than "Exceeds." The "Marginal" level is recognized substandard performance when the supervisor feels that overall performance is less than acceptable, and where improvement is expected. The employee is not removed from the job, but any within-grade increase (WGI) for which the employee might be eligible, will be denied.

5. Unacceptable. Performance which does not meet established "Fully Successful " performance standards in one or more critical elements of the employee's position.
- D. Weights. The weighting of critical and noncritical elements is built into the Decision Table through the use of appraisal units, and automatically occurs when the Decision Table is used to convert element ratings to the summary rating. Critical elements will be assigned two appraisal units and noncritical elements assigned one appraisal unit.
- E. Multiple Appraisals. Multiple appraisals of performance made during the appraisal period must be considered in deriving the employee's next rating of record. The supervisor serving at the end of the appraisal period completes and

signs the AD-435. If the total number of elements during the year is less than 10, all elements are listed on the AD-435. But, if the employee's total number of elements exceeds 10, the appraisal supervisor (with input from previous supervisor(s) and the employee) determines how to combine and weigh the elements.

1. Details. Performance elements and standards will be established for an employee who is detailed or temporarily promoted for 120 days or more to another position in the Agency or the Department. The supervisor responsible for the detail or temporary promotion will prepare elements and standards and communicate them in writing to the employee within 30 days of the start of the detail or temporary promotion. A summary rating will be prepared to document the employee's accomplishments at the end of the detail or temporary promotion and forwarded to the employee's supervisor for the appropriate consideration.

When details are less than 120 days in duration, written performance elements and standards are not required, but some documented record of performance should be kept and provided to the employee's permanent supervisor. When an employee is detailed outside of the Department, a reasonable effort must be made to obtain appraisal information from the outside organization.

2. Developmental Assignments. When an employee participates in developmental programs, such as Upward Mobility, the Women's Executive Leadership Program, the Senior Executive Service Career Development Program/Senior Management Preparation Program, etc., supervisors must seek input from the supervisor of the developmental assignment and have some documented record of performance. An employee in one of these programs will rotate through different offices and the duration may be less than 90 days. This will enable the supervisor to adequately assess employee accomplishments during the appraisal period.
3. Position Changes. When an employee changes positions during the appraisal period and has served for the minimum appraisal period in the previous position, a summary rating will be prepared and taken into consideration when deriving the next rating of record.

4. Transfer of Rating. If an employee moves to a new agency, department, or new organizational unit at any time after serving a minimal appraisal period (90 days), a summary rating must be prepared and transferred with a copy of the employee's unit (See Chapter 4, C.). This appraisal must be taken into consideration by the gaining organization when deriving the next rating of record.

- F. Appraisal of Disabled Veterans. The performance appraisal and resulting rating of a disabled veteran may not be lowered because the veteran has been absent from work to seek medical treatment as stated in Executive Order 5396.

- G. Conversions. When an employee's position is converted from another Federal pay system with no change in duties or responsibilities, the employee's rating of record will be considered to have been based on the position which the employee occupies after the conversion.

- H. Employee's Certification. After obtaining the concurrence of the reviewing official, the supervisor will review the approved rating of record with the employee. The employee's signature on Form AD-435 will serve as certification that such a discussion took place. If this discussion cannot be held, or if the employee does not sign the rating, the supervisor will document the reason on Form AD-435.

Instructions for Using Decision Table

1. If any critical element is appraised at the "Does Not Meet" level, this is an "Unacceptable" rating.
2. If all elements are appraised at "Exceeds," this is an "Outstanding" rating.
3. If neither of these conditions are met, compare the appraisal unit values at each of the three element rating levels to the appraisal unit combinations listed in the Decision Table, and assign the proper rating.

DECISION TABLE

Summary Rating Levels

Unacceptable	One or more critical elements are appraised at "Does Not Meet"
Marginal	More appraisal units are at "Does Not Meet" than at "Exceeds"
Fully Successful	Any combination of appraisal units which falls between "Superior" and "Marginal"
Superior	More appraisal units are at "Exceeds" than at "Fully Successful" but none are below "Fully Successful"
Outstanding	All appraisal units are at "Exceeds"

Critical element	=	2 appraisal units
Noncritical element	=	1 appraisal unit

SUMMARY RATING EXAMPLES

ELEMENTS	ELEMENT LEVELS	APPRAISAL UNITS
1. Critical Element	Fully Successful	2
2. Critical Element	Fully Successful	2
3. Noncritical Element	Does Not Meet	1

RECAP: 0 - appraisal units Exceeds
 4 - appraisal units Fully Successful
 1 - appraisal units Does Not Meet

This summary Rating is Marginal because there are more appraisal units at Does Not Meet (1) than at Exceeds (0).

ELEMENTS	ELEMENT LEVELS	APPRAISAL UNITS
1. Critical Element	Fully Successful	2
2. Critical Element	Exceeds	2
3. Noncritical Element	Exceeds	1
4. Noncritical Element	Fully Successful	1

RECAP: 3 - appraisal units Exceeds
 3 - appraisal units Fully Successful
 0 - appraisal units Does Not Meet

This summary rating is Fully Successful because it falls between definitions of Superior and Marginal.

ELEMENT	ELEMENT LEVELS	APPRAISAL UNITS
1. Critical Element	Exceeds	2
2. Critical Element	Exceeds	2
3. Noncritical Element	Fully Successful	1

RECAP: 4 - appraisal units Exceeds
 1 - appraisal unit Fully Successful
 0 - appraisal units Does Not Meet

This summary rating is Superior because more appraisal units are at Exceeds (4) than at Fully Successful (1) and none are below Fully Successful.

I. GRIEVANCES

- A. GM, GS, and WG employee grievances are handled in accordance with the U.S. Department of Agriculture procedures or in accordance with the negotiated grievance procedures under the contract when there is an employee organization representing employees. However, only one procedure may be used by the employee.
- A. SES employees cannot grieve their performance ratings.

II. LINKAGE TO OTHER PERSONNEL ACTIONS AND DECISIONS

Performance appraisals are used as a basis for the specified personnel actions below:

- A. WGI. An eligible employee may be granted a WGI only when the employee's rating of record is "Fully Successful" or better. The decision to grant or withhold a WGI is based upon the Employee's rating of record within the appropriate waiting period. When a WGI decision is not consistent with the employee's most recent rating of record, a more current rating of record must be prepared (e.g., An employees latest rating of record is "Fully Successful," "Superior," or "Outstanding." However, the employee's performance declined since that rating and a denial of a WGI is necessary .A new rating of record must be prepared which documents that the employee's performance is less than "Fully Successful.")
- B. Promotion. Performance ratings will be considered in evaluating an employee for promotion and/or reassignment to a position with greater promotion potential. An employee will only be considered for a career promotion when the current rating of record is "Fully Successful" or higher, and the employee has demonstrated the ability to perform at the next higher grade level. An

employee may be given an advisory rating, for Merit Promotion purposes only, if he/she has not been under written performance elements and standards for the minimum appraisal period necessary to give the employee a rating of record (i.e., 90 days) the employee does not have a rating of record from the previous rating period. This rating may not be used as a rating of record and is strictly for use when a supervisory appraisal is required for rating under Merit Promotion procedures.

- C. Training and Development. The performance appraisal process may be used as a basis for determining the training needs of employees.
- D. Pay Increases and Performance Awards. Performance ratings will be used as a basis for granting pay increases and performance awards.
- E. Reduction-in-Force. Performance ratings are used to establish service credit for reduction-in-force (RIF) purposes. For RIF purposes, rating of record means an annual summary rating required at the time specified in this plan. An employee will not be assigned a new rating of record for the sole purpose of affecting his/her retention standing. Performance ratings that were due before the date of specific RIF notices but were not officially approved and put on record until on or after the date of the specific notices are not used to determine additional service credit. The servicing personnel office will establish a cutoff date for receipt of ratings of record when a RIF will occur at or near the close of an appraisal period.
- F. Less than "Fully Successful" Performance.
 - 1. Marginal Performance. When it is noted that an employee's job performance in a noncritical element needs improvement, the supervisor will discuss the need for improvement with the employee. The discussion should include the supervisor's guidance regarding specific actions which should be taken by both parties to improve the employee's performance. Informal performance improvement efforts should be initiated immediately after the supervisor notes the need for improvement. The supervisor should not wait until performance deteriorates to an "Unacceptable" level.

2. Unacceptable Performance. Notification that performance "Does Not Meet Fully Successful" level in any critical element can occur at any time following the implementation of performance elements and standards. The employee must be afforded a reasonable opportunity period to demonstrate performance improvement. (Supervisors should contact the Performance Conduct and Labor Relations Staff for guidance.) At a minimum, the following will be communicated to the employee in writing:
 - a. The employee has until the end of the opportunity period of performance observation to improve his/her performance to a level which justifies retention in the position.
 - b. An explanation of the performance element(s) and standard(s) in which the employee's performance "Does Not Meet Fully Successful" level.
 - c. Specific goals in terms of time and results expected for levels of progress against each performance standard where improvement is needed, advice about what the employee must do to bring his/her performance up to the "Fully Successful" level, and periodic counseling and review of work by the supervisor.

3. Completion of Opportunity Period. If the employee's performance remains "Unacceptable" after the opportunity period, management is required to either reduce in grade, reassign, or remove the employee. However, management may opt to reassign the employee in lieu of a reduction in grade or removal.

- I. Form FGIS-301. Performance in an element which either exceeds or does not meet the fully successful standard will be recorded on this form.

- II Appraisal Forms. Appraisals must be recorded on Form AD-435, Performance Appraisal, and a copy provided to the employee. Performance elements and standards shall be documented on forms AD-435A and B.

- III. Filing Performance Ratings. Performance ratings of record for GM, GS, and WG employees and the performance plans on which the ratings are based must be filed in the Employee Performance File (EPF).

- IV. Transfer of Performance Ratings.
 - A. When an employee leaves the organization through transfer, termination, or resignation, supervisors should prepare a summary rating for the employee. All performance ratings of record that are 4 years old or less, including the performance elements and standards on which the most recent rating was based, and the summary rating must be filed in the Official Personnel Folder (OPF). For non-SES employees, all performance ratings and other performance related records more than 4 years old will be destroyed. SES appraisals and records are maintained for 5 years.

 - B. Authorized officials responsible for the EPF must ensure that all performance ratings of record 4 years old or less are forwarded with the EPF through appropriate channels to the servicing personnel office for filing in the OPF. Performance ratings of record 5 years old or less must be forwarded for SES employees.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
PERFORMANCE PLAN, PROGRESS REVIEW AND APPRAISAL WORKSHEET
 (Instructions on reverse)

1. Name (Last, First, M.I.)	Pay Plan, Series, Grade	Agency/Division	APPRAISAL PERIOD	
Position Title			From	To

2. **PERFORMANCE ELEMENT**
 No. (Describe below the duty or responsibility for which the employee is accountable and responsible. Indicate if the element is critical or noncritical.) CRITICAL NONCRITICAL

3. **STANDARD** (Describe the level expected for "Fully Successful" performance include appropriate indicators of quantity, quality, cost, efficiency, or timeliness, where applicable.)

4. **ELEMENT RATING** At the end of the rating period, compare the employee's performance with standard and assign an element rating. For instructions about documentation, see reverse. EXCEEDS FULLY SUCCESSFUL
 DOES NOT MEET

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

5. CERTIFICATION OF DEVELOPMENT AND RECEIPT OF PLAN

Signatures certify discussion with the employee and receipt of plan which reflects current position description.

Employee's Signature	Date
Supervisor's Signature	Date
Reviewer's Signature	Date

6. PROGRESS REVIEWS (at least one must be completed)

Employee's Initials and Date	Supervisor's Initials and Date

AD-436A 12/88

United States Department of Agriculture Performance Appraisal				1 Social Security No.	2 Position Number	3 Pay Plan	4 Census-Series		
5 Name (Last, First, Middle Initial)				6 Grade/Step or Pay Level		7 Appraisal Period From _____ To _____			
8 Official Position Title				9 Organization Structure Code					
10 Duty Station		11 Funding Unit		12 Agency Use		13 NFC Use			
<p>Instructions</p> <p>Blocks 1 through 10, completed by NPC, should be reviewed and, if necessary, corrected. Block 11. Enter funding unit number. Block 14. Enter brief description of performance elements. Block 15A. Check performance elements identified as critical.</p> <p>Blocks 15B, 15C, 15D. Rate actual performance by entering 2 for critical elements and 1 for non-critical elements in appropriate column. Blocks 15E, 15F, 15G. Enter total of each column. Block 15H. Enter total from 15E, 15F and 15G. Block 16A. Check off the correct summary rating described in decision table (16B). Blocks 17 through 22. Self-explanatory.</p>									
14 Performance Elements				15A Critical Element (✓)	15B Exceeds Fully Successful	15C Meets Fully Successful	15D Does Not Meet Fully Successful		
1)									
2)									
3)									
4)									
5)									
6)									
7)									
8)									
9)									
10)									
16B Decision Table: check off Summary Rating in block 16A! Rating of Outstanding if 15E equals 15H. Rating of Unacceptable if any critical element is rated in 15D. Rating of Superior if no element is rated in 15D; 15F is greater than sum of 15E to greater than 15G. Rating of Marginal if 15G is greater than 15E, and no critical element is rated in 15D. Rating of Fully Successful if none of the above apply. / Unacceptable for SES / Minimally Satisfactory for SES				15E Exceeds		15F Meets	15G Does Not Meet		
				15H Enter total		15H			
				15E + 15F + 15G = 15H					
17 Employee (Check off appropriate box) I have a copy of USDA and Agency regulations on employee responsibilities and conduct. I have discussed them with my supervisor and questions have been answered to my satisfaction.				<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		16A Summary Rating (See Decision Table in 16B) <input type="checkbox"/> Outstanding <input type="checkbox"/> Superior <input type="checkbox"/> Fully Successful <input type="checkbox"/> Marginal/ <input type="checkbox"/> Unacceptable/ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unacceptable for SES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Minimally Satisfactory for SES			
18 Employee's Signature		Date		If employee did not sign, state reason.					
(Instructions for resolutions of disputes are on the reverse of employee copy.)									
19 Supervisor's Signature		Date		20 Reviewer's Signature		Date			
21 Approving Official's or Funding Unit Manager's Signature (optional)		Date		22 FOR SES ONLY					
				PLA to ES _____		Bonus Amount _____			

Original - NFC Processing Copy

Form AO-435-111081

Attachment 1
FGIS Directive 347.1
4/14/95

CHAPTER 4

Exhibit 4

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE FEDERAL GRAIN INSPECTION SERVICE	LAST NAME AND INITIALS OF EMPLOYEE	
DESCRIPTION OF PERFORMANCE	DATE	ELEMENT NO.
DESCRIPTION:		
Employees taking exception with the information above have 5 business days after receipt to formally respond to their supervisor.	SIGNATURE OF SUPERVISOR	

FORM FGIS-301 (4-83) (Replaces Form FGIS-41 (9-81) which may be used until exhausted)