

Defense Performance Management and Appraisal Program Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

What is “New Beginnings”

“New Beginnings” is a cooperative labor-management effort involving the Department and a broad array of DoD employees and national-level union representatives, to design and implement significant Human Resource practices and policies, including implementation of a new Department-wide Performance Management and Appraisal Program. New Beginnings also encompasses reforms in the areas of Hiring Flexibilities, Training and Development, and Workforce Incentives. Additional information on “New Beginnings” is available at: <https://dodhrinfo.cpms.osd.mil/New-Beginnings/Pages/Home1.aspx>

What is the Defense Performance Management and Appraisal Program?

The Defense Performance Management and Appraisal Program is a DoD-wide performance management program that fosters a high-performance culture by making meaningful distinctions in performance that will be acknowledged formally in the rating process and will be used to inform other personnel based decisions, including not only awards and recognition, but also promotions, training, and developmental opportunities.

What is the Defense Performance Management and Appraisal Program intended to accomplish?

The program will link organizational mission and goals to individual performance plans, ensure regular feedback during the appraisal cycle between employees and supervisors, and result in increased employee engagement, morale, and effectiveness. It is not about the “365th day.” The focus is on clear guidance, two-way communication, and continuous feedback.

What are the key features of the Defense Performance Management and Appraisal Program?

- a 3-level rating pattern;
- an appraisal cycle of April 1 through March 31;
- a minimum period of 90 days required to be eligible for a rating; and
- a minimum of three documented performance discussions between supervisor and employee.

Why was a three-level appraisal program selected versus some other system?

A three-level appraisal program was selected to implement across all of DoD because it:

- Is consistent with the legislative requirement of the NDAA 2010 to provide “[a] fair, credible, and transparent system for linking employee bonuses and other performance-based actions to performance appraisals of employees;”
- Promotes a high-performing culture by making meaningful distinctions in performance that will be acknowledged formally in the rating process and will be used to inform other personnel-based decisions, including not only awards and recognition, but also promotions, training, and developmental opportunities; and
- Provides the ability to retain high performing employees to meet the Department’s mission by granting greater service credit for top performers during reductions-in-force.

What are the 3-levels of rating?

Outstanding, Fully Successful and Unacceptable.

When is the appraisal effective under the Defense Performance Management and Appraisal Program?

June 1

Who is covered by the Defense Performance Management and Appraisal Program?

The Defense Performance Management and Appraisal Program will cover General Schedule (GS), Federal Wage System (FWS), and several additional groups of employees. The majority of the Air Force’s civilian workforce will be covered. This program does not cover employees who are covered by other performance management programs, such as Defense Civilian Intelligence Personnel System (DCIPS), the Acquisition Demonstration Project (AcqDemo), the Science and Technology Reinvention Laboratory (STRL) Demonstration Project (LabDemo), and Senior Executive Service (SES) employees.

How is this performance program different from the AF Civilian Performance Program currently in use?

The table below compares key features of the Defense Performance Management and Appraisal Program and the AF Civilian Performance Program. Many of these features are the same or similar. The most significant difference between the two programs, however, is the focus and emphasis on continual feedback and two-way communication. The Defense Performance Management and Appraisal Program was developed as a fair, credible, and transparent performance appraisal program that links organizational mission and goals to individual performance plans, ensures regular feedback during the appraisal cycle between employees and supervisors, and results in increased employee engagement, morale, and effectiveness.

	<i>Defense Performance Management and Appraisal Program</i>	<i>Air Force Civilian Performance Program</i>
Covered Employees:	All DoD appropriated fund civilian employees except those: 1) excluded under applicable laws or 2) covered by other performance mgmt systems as established through applicable regulations	GS and FWS employees
Appraisal Cycle	1 April through 31 March	1 April through 31 March
Rating Pattern	3-Level, 5-3-1 “Outstanding,” “Fully Successful,” “Unacceptable”	2-Level, 3-1 “Acceptable,” “Unacceptable”
Performance Elements:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All performance elements must be critical A minimum of one critical element is required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performance elements are critical A minimum of one critical element is required Additional performance elements may be used to address team, group, or organizational performance Supervisors, managers, and

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The number of supervisory critical performance elements will equal or exceed the number of non-supervisory (technical) performance elements 	personnel with EEO responsibility shall have a critical element on EEO
Performance Discussions:	<p>Minimum of 3 documented performance discussions during the appraisal cycle</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Initial performance plan meeting, Minimum of one progress review, and Final performance appraisal discussion 	<p>Three documented performance discussions during the appraisal cycle</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Initial performance plan meeting, At least one progress review, and Final performance appraisal discussion
Rating Levels/Criteria:	<p>Level 5 – “Outstanding”: The average score of all critical element performance ratings is 4.3 or greater, with no element rated a ‘1’ (Unacceptable)</p> <p>Level 3 – “Fully Successful”: The average score of all critical element performance ratings is less than 4.3, with no element being rated a ‘1’ (Unacceptable)</p> <p>Level 1 – “Unacceptable”: Any critical element rated as ‘1’</p>	<p>Level 3 – “Acceptable”: All critical elements are rated “Meets”</p> <p>Level 1 – “Unacceptable”: Any critical element is rated “Did not meet”</p>
Narrative Summary:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must be provided for each element rated “Outstanding” or “Unacceptable” Encouraged for each rated performance element 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not required “Impact on Mission Accomplishment” is mandatory for GS14s/15s “Award Justification” is required if an award is recommended
Automated performance appraisal tool:	The MyPerformance appraisal tool is the only automated tool authorized to create, review, and approve performance plans, document modifications, progress reviews, employee input, and performance appraisals	No AF-wide automated appraisal tool. Locally developed automated appraisal tools are used.
Form(s):	DD Form 2906 , “Department of Defense Performance Plan, Progress Review, and Appraisal” documents the Employee Performance Plan, Progress Reviews, and the Final Performance Appraisal	<p>AF Form 860, “Civilian Performance Plan” or</p> <p>AF Form 1003, “Core Personnel Document” documents the employee’s Performance Plan</p> <p>AF Form 860B, “Civilian Progress Review Worksheet” documents the Progress Review</p> <p>AF Form 860A, “Civilian Rating of Record” documents the Performance Evaluation and Rating of Record</p>

Will employees be required to complete a self-assessment?

No, the Defense Performance Management and Appraisal Program doesn't include self-assessments. However, employees are encouraged to provide input to their supervisor as a reminder of their significant accomplishments, achievements, and contributions during the performance year.

When will the Air Force implement the Defense Performance Management and Appraisal Program?

The Air Force intends to implement the program in April 2017.

Is there policy on the Defense Performance Management and Appraisal Program?

On 4 Feb 16, DoD issued the Department of Defense Instruction (DoDI) 1400.25, Volume 431 DoD Civilian Personnel Management System: Performance Management and Appraisal Program. The Air Force will provide supplemental guidance.

How does the Defense Performance Management and Appraisal Program change the way the Air Force recognizes and rewards employees?

Traditionally, employees receive recognition and rewards at the end of the rating cycle. The Defense Performance Management and Appraisal Program will emphasize and promote timely recognition and reward of employee contributions throughout the rating cycle. Continuous feedback is key to the program; no longer is it just about the "365th day."