



One NASA

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# **Enhanced Employee Performance Communication System (EPCS)**

**Employee Briefing  
November 2004**



# Enhanced Employee Performance Communication System (EPCS)

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## **BACKGROUND**

- Agency-wide Team Formed to Develop Multi-Level Performance Management System January 2004
- Benchmarking and Research Activity
  - Employee discussion groups
  - Agency/academia/private industry practices reviewed
  - Results
    - No “perfect” system
    - Success depends on supervisory involvement and employee input
    - Communication is essential
- Multi-level EPCS Effective October 1, 2004



# Enhanced Employee Performance Communication System (EPCS)

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## RATIONALE

- Human Capital Performance Fund (Administration’s pay-for-performance initiative)
  - To be eligible must have fair, credible, transparent system
  - No more than 15% of workforce are eligible for payment
- One NASA
  - Use employee performance planning process so that each employee understands how their work aligns with Agency’s vision, mission, and strategy
  - Ensure consistency of rewards and recognition programs across Centers
- NASA Strategic Human Capital Plan
  - Focus on Accountability for Results
  - Differentiate between high and low performers



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## **GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

- Retain “Vision” for current system – Fair, Simple and Relevant
- Minimize changes
- Emphasize communication
- Link to Strategic Plan
- Involve employees
- Cascade SES performance factors



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## CHANGES

- **Summary Rating Levels: 3**
  - Distinguished (Level 5) –
    - Denotes “top-performers”
    - Must “significantly exceed expectations” for **all** performance elements
  - Meets or Exceeds Expectations (Level 3)
    - Broad range of performance achievement
    - All critical elements rated at least “meets or exceeds expectations”
  - Fails to Meet Expectations (Level 1) – When any critical element is rated “fails to meet expectations”



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## CHANGES

- **Element Rating Levels: 3**
  - Significantly Exceeds Expectations – consistently exceeds standards/performance indicators to exceptional degree
  - Meets or Exceeds Expectations – broad range that fully meets or may exceed standards and performance indicators
  - Fails to Meet Expectations – fails to meet standards and performance indicators



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## Examples –

- Significantly Exceeds Expectations
  - Consistently produces exceptional quality and/or quantity of work
  - Completes assignments significantly ahead of schedule
  - Significantly impacts his/her field
  - Performs work with unusual degree of initiative
- Meets or Exceeds Expectations – Broad Range
  - FROM: Generally satisfied that
    - Employee completes assignments by deadlines
    - Quality and/or quantity of products meets minimum required
    - Tasks performed with expected amount of supervisory direction
  - TO: Very satisfied that –
    - Employee frequently completes assignments before deadlines
    - Quality and/or quantity of products typically exceeds minimum required
    - Employee frequently displays initiative beyond that expected



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## CHANGES

- **Employee as “Partner”**
  - Review of draft plan with opportunity to provide input/feedback
  - Progress reviews (supervisor or employee initiated) with opportunity to provide input
  - Rating input, i.e., summary of accomplishments/results
  - Discussion of training/development needs



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## CHANGES

- **Performance Plans**

- Critical and Non-Critical Elements Allowed
  - Critical:
    - Assignment of such importance that unacceptable performance would result in determination of “Fails to Meet Expectations”
    - Can only be at individual level
  - Non-Critical:
    - May include individual, team or organizational performance
    - Considered for summary rating
    - Failure on non-critical element cannot be basis for fails rating
- Employee plans normally will have 5-8 elements



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## CHANGES

### • Performance Plans

- Standardized elements/standards must be included in plans
  - Minimum requirements
  - Supervisors determine if elements are critical or non-critical
    - Supervisory plans: normally all critical
  - Supervisors may add additional elements/standards
- Performance indicators (PI) required for each element/standard - sufficient to communicate performance expectations
  - Examples/evidence of what employee has to do to meet standard
  - Should identify measures to be used to evaluate performance
  - Drafted PI - May use as written, modify or replace



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## CHANGES

- **Agency-wide Performance Appraisal Period:**  
May 1 through April 30
- **Agency-wide “Standard” Appraisal Form (NF1726 and 1727)**
- **Appraisal Process**
  - Progress review: documentation of deficiencies, if any, is required
  - Higher level review (second level supervisor) required for “*fails to meet expectations*” and “*distinguished*” ratings
  - Performance results of non-SES supervisors and non-supervisory employees will be considered in evaluation of SES employees



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## CHANGES

- **Performance linked to awards**
  - *Distinguished* summary rating - eligible for monetary performance awards (including HC performance fund), QSI, and non-monetary recognition
  - *Meet or Exceeds Expectations* summary rating – eligible for monetary awards and non-monetary recognition based on performance only if all elements are rated *meets or exceeds expectations*
  - *Fails to Meet Expectations* rating on any element – not eligible for monetary awards or non-monetary recognition based on performance



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## CHANGES

- **Official Employee Performance File (EPF) Records**
  - Performance Appraisal Form (rating and plan)
  - Employee Input on performance
  - Employee response to any deficiency documented by supervisor
  - Written input from former supervisor or supervisor of a detail



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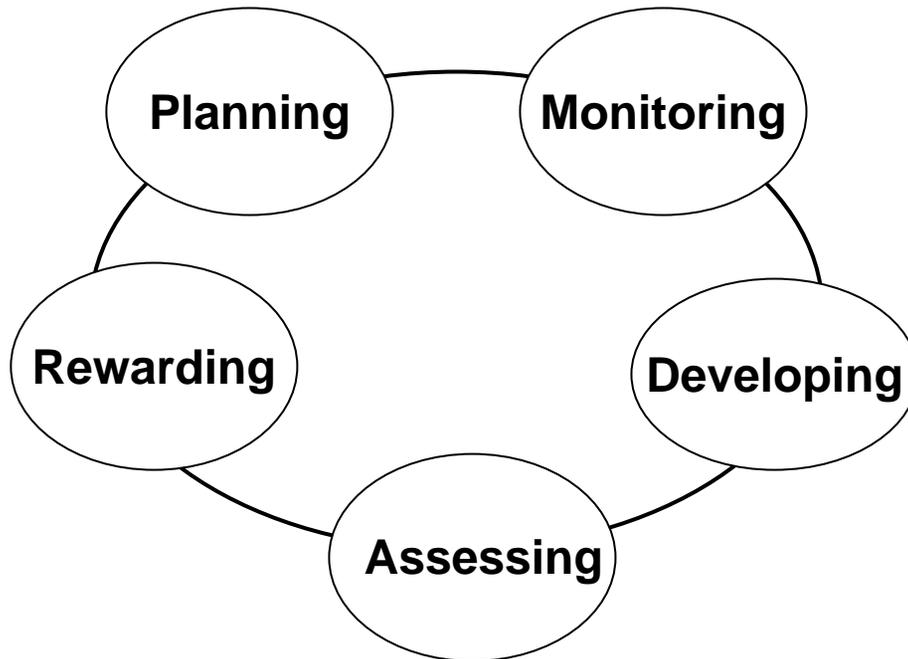
## NON-SUPERVISORY ELEMENTS

- Health and Safety
- Collaboration and Teamwork
- Communications
- Work Objectives



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- NASA's Employee Performance Communication System involves:
- **Planning** work and setting expectations,
  - continually **Monitoring** performance,
  - **Developing** the capacity to perform,
  - periodically **Assessing** performance in a summary fashion, and
  - **Rewarding** good performance.



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## SUPERVISOR'S RESPONSIBILITIES

- **Performance planning**
  - Give employee draft of plan and opportunity to provide input/feedback
  - Make final decision on the content of the plan
- **Performance monitoring**
  - Hold at least one progress review (usually mid-term)
  - Give employee opportunity to provide input
  - Must document progress review, in writing, if there is concern employee will not meet a performance standard
- **Performance development**
  - Discusses training and development needs during performance discussions
  - Document the discussions on the appraisal form



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## SUPERVISOR'S RESPONSIBILITIES

- Performance assessing
  - Obtain input and consider when preparing rating
  - Assign appropriate summary rating level and write narrative to support rating
  - Obtain higher level review for “distinguished” or “fails to meet expectations” rating
  - Discuss rating with employee
- Recognition of performance
  - Determine appropriate level of recognition, if appropriate
  - Keep in mind awards vision: awards are given for the right contribution, to the right people, at the right time



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## EMPLOYEE'S RESPONSIBILITIES

- **Planning:**
  - Review draft plan and provide input/feedback
  - Suggest additional performance elements, standards and performance indicators, as necessary
- **Monitoring:**
  - Provide input relative to performance for progress review
  - Request progress review at any time during appraisal period
  - Receive information provided and use opportunity to continuously improve performance
  - Keep supervisor informed of work activities



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## EMPLOYEE'S RESPONSIBILITIES

- **Developing:**
  - Discuss needs with supervisor
  - Develop/enhance performance and abilities
- **Assessing:**
  - Provide specific accomplishments/results relative to performance for annual appraisal
- **Recognition:**
  - Be knowledgeable about awards
  - Provide encouragement and express appreciation to fellow employees



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## MANAGEMENT OF EPCS

- Forced distribution of ratings is prohibited – no quotas or goals should be established
- Review of “Distinguished” ratings by Higher Level Review
  - Ensure reflects “best of the best”
  - Ensure rating is consistently awarded for highest level of performance to only those significantly impacting mission/goals of organization
- End of Cycle Evaluation of Ratings



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## PLANNED TRANSITION REQUIREMENTS AT GRC

- Union negotiations completed 11/3/2004
- MOU posted on web
- Highlights of MOU Provisions:
  - Provisions in current contract remain unchanged
    - Articles in current agreement remain unchanged except
      - Article 31.01 (referencing old system)
      - Article 31.03a (definition of job element)
      - Article 31.03e(definition of rating levels)
    - Performance elements, standards and PI will permit accurate evaluation of job performance on basis of objective criteria related to job and define expectations
    - Employees will only be rated on elements he/she has had an opportunity to perform



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## **PLANNED TRANSITION REQUIREMENTS AT GRC**

- Highlights of MOU Provisions (continued):
  - Files will be available to employees and designated representatives.
  - Only those with need to know will have access to EPF. Employees may request record of who accessed EPF.
  - Employees may not file a grievance on the summary prepared to close out the 2-level EPCS. Employees may submit response to summary to be included in EPF.
  - Information will be provided to employees on enhanced EPCS (briefings and in writing)
  - GLPR/GLPD will be updated and union will be provided opportunity to negotiate changes at that time.



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## **PLANNED TRANSITION REQUIREMENTS AT GRC**

- Extend performance appraisal cycle to April 30, 2005 (current cycle ends January 31, 2005)
- Close out of 2-level system: no official rating of record – only a summary will be done for consideration at end of rating cycle
- By December 31, 2004 supervisors of record will:
  - obtain input from employee on performance accomplishments under 2-level system;
  - discuss summary received from former supervisor;
  - preparing new plan (with employee involvement); and
  - discussing new plan with the employee



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## PLANNED TRANSITION REQUIREMENTS AT GRC

- By **June 15, 2005** supervisors of record as of April 30, 2005 will
  - complete appraisal
  - discuss appraisal with employee and
  - forward completed appraisal to OHRWP with supporting documentation
- **August 15, 2005** (approximate): All monetary awards must be submitted to OHRWP



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- Questions on EPCS call:
  - Lori Pietravoia at 3-2506
  - Xynique Sims at 3-2493
- Web Sites
  - OHRWP web site is <http://www.lerc.nasa.gov/WWW/OHR/>
  - NASA People web site is <http://nasapeople.nasa.gov/>