



# National Security Personnel System Deployed Civilians under NSPS Guidance for Rating Officials, In-Theater Supervisors, and Employees May 2009

## Purpose

The purpose of this guidance is to help DoD organizations, rating officials, and civilian employees better understand how to successfully and efficiently apply the NSPS performance management system when employees deploy in support of combat operations by the military; contingency operations; emergency operations; humanitarian missions; disaster relief; restoration of order; drug interdiction; and stability operations of the Department of Defense.

## Background

Civilian employees are deployed in support of operations as defined in DoD Directive 1404.10 “DoD Civilian Expeditionary Workforce” through a variety of methods and for varying periods of time. Typically, an employee will be deployed by means of an officially documented detail, a temporary reassignment, or a temporary promotion. As deployments may impact the NSPS performance management and payout processes, it is critical that all stakeholders understand the NSPS processes and timelines, and have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities.

## Accountability and Responsibility

The major stakeholders in the NSPS performance management process include civilian employees, rating officials, in-theater supervisors, pay pool officials, and supporting human resources professionals. The in-theater supervisor is accountable for providing input to the home rating official on any performance objective(s) that align with the employee’s duties while deployed. The home rating official must consider all applicable performance information and will base the overall recommended rating on the employee’s accomplishments for each job objective. The home rating official is accountable for the official documentation of the NSPS performance management process. Employees are encouraged to take an active role in the performance management process by working with both their home rating official and in-theater supervisor to develop job objectives, identify and record their accomplishments, and complete self-assessments. Attachment 1 outlines the responsibilities of each of these three main stakeholders before, during, and post deployment. It also includes information on how the timing of the deployment may impact different activities during the performance management cycle.

## Communication

Integral to the success of any performance management system is effective communication. All stakeholders must communicate throughout the performance management cycle, especially when establishing a performance plan, conducting interim reviews, and completing annual appraisals. The communication link between the rating official of record and the in-theater supervisor is especially

important due to the unique nature of the deployed civilian operating environment, the need for a shared understanding and rigor in applying NSPS performance criteria, and to ensure the employee receives the appropriate recognition. The primary means of documenting NSPS performance management activity is the Performance Appraisal Application (PAA) and is the responsibility of the home rating official. The communication between the home rating official and in-theater supervisor may take place via phone or email or via the new guest reviewer feature included in the PAA (please contact your human resources office for information on this enhancement to the PAA). It is recognized that access to automated processes and specifically the PAA may not be available in some locations. In such cases, employees, home rating officials, and in-theater supervisors may use a PDF version of the NSPS Performance Appraisal Form or email to document their input.

## **Recognition**

Appropriate recognition for deployed civilians is the joint responsibility of the home rating official and in-theater supervisor. NSPS employees with a performance rating of level 3 or higher are eligible for a performance-based salary increase and/or bonus each January. Numerous types of incentive awards and non-monetary awards are also available to reward high-performing employees in addition to the NSPS performance management process. Both the home rating official and in-theater supervisor are encouraged to discuss recognition options with their servicing human resources office.

## **Summary**

The attachments are key resources for home rating officials, in-theater supervisors, and deployed civilians under NSPS. They outline the performance management responsibilities of the home rating official, in-theater supervisor, and employee before, during, and after a deployment. Attachment 2 includes information on how the timing of a temporary assignment to a non-NSPS position for a deployment may impact the NSPS performance management process.

For more information, please contact your human resources office or visit the NSPS website at [www.cpms.osd.mil/nsps](http://www.cpms.osd.mil/nsps).

## Attachment 1. Deployed Civilians - NSPS Responsibilities for NSPS Rating Officials, In-Theater Supervisors, and Employees

The following table summarizes the responsibilities of the home NSPS rating official, in-theater supervisor, and employee prior, during, and after a deployment. This table applies only if the employee's permanent position of record is an NSPS position and the employee is detailed or temporarily assigned to an NSPS deployed civilian position. This table also applies only to deployments lasting longer than 30 days, as there are no special performance management activities required by the home rating official, in-theater supervisor, or employee for deployments of less than 30 days.

Timeframe	Home Rating Official	In-Theater Supervisor	Employee
Prior to the employee's deployment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Discuss options for handling the employee's deployment with your HR office. Document the timeframe for deployment and request notification of any extension to deployment.</li> <li>▪ Discuss with your HR staff how the employee will return to an appropriate permanent position after the deployment.</li> <li>▪ Inform your pay pools data administrator and pay pool manager of the deployment.</li> <li>▪ Request contact information of in-theater supervisor or commander (if known).</li> <li>▪ Provide employee with home agency NSPS and/or HR point of contact information.</li> <li>▪ Discuss with employee any impact the deployment will have on the NSPS performance management process to include rating process and payout.</li> <li>▪ Ensure employee has copy of the approved performance plan to include an objective covering his/her time while deployed.<sup>1</sup> You will need to work with the in-theater supervisor to establish this objective. See the section below on "If Setting up a</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Take advantage of opportunities to learn about NSPS. Information can be found online on the NSPS website <a href="http://www.cpms.osd.mil/nsps">www.cpms.osd.mil/nsps</a></li> <li>▪ For specific information on writing performance objectives and assessments, please see the <i>iSuccess</i> training course on the NSPS home page.</li> <li>▪ At earliest opportunity, obtain contact information for home rating official.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Discuss with your home rating official and HR office how the deployment may impact your performance plan, rating, and NSPS payout.</li> <li>▪ Discuss with your home rating official and HR staff your return to an appropriate permanent position after the deployment and how it affects performance management.</li> <li>▪ Give your home agency rating official your deployed contact information and the contact information of in-theater supervisor or commander (if known).</li> <li>▪ Get copy of approved performance plan to include deployed objective. See sample objective.<sup>1</sup></li> </ul>

Timeframe	Home Rating Official	In-Theater Supervisor	Employee
Prior to the employee's deployment (cont'd)	<i>Performance Plan.</i> " (May be modified by in-theater supervisor upon employee's arrival).		
Upon employee's arrival in theater	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Contact the employee's supervisor in-theater and discuss your NSPS performance management responsibilities.</li> <li>▪ Provide employee and in-theater supervisor with timeline of any NSPS performance management related activities impacting the employee during the deployment (e.g., interim review or annual assessment).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Contact the employee's home rating official and discuss your NSPS performance management responsibilities.</li> <li>▪ Discuss performance expectations with your employee and address how his/her performance while deployed will be evaluated.</li> <li>▪ Modify deployment objective(s) as appropriate and provide to home rating official and employee. See sample objective.<sup>i</sup></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Keep home rating official apprised of changes to in-theater supervisor and commander's contact information.</li> <li>▪ Provide in-theater supervisor copy of approved performance plan.</li> <li>▪ Discuss performance expectations with your in-theater supervisor and address how your performance will be evaluated while deployed.</li> </ul>
During the employee's deployment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Notify in-theater supervisor and employee of changes in NSPS rating official and higher level reviewer.</li> </ul> <p><b>If you are setting up a performance plan while the employee is deployed.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Coordinate with in-theater supervisor as necessary to establish appropriate deployment objective(s).<sup>i</sup></li> <li>▪ Communicate with employee to determine appropriate objectives.</li> <li>▪ Provide the performance plan to employee.</li> </ul> <p><b>If completing an interim review while the employee is deployed.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ensure employee has the opportunity to complete their self-assessment.</li> <li>▪ If appropriate, ensure in-theater supervisor has employee self-assessment and solicit performance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Notify the employee's home rating official of any change in in-theater supervisor.</li> </ul> <p><b>If a performance plan is being set up for a deployed civilian.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Communicate with the home rating official and employee and provide input on appropriate deployment objective(s).<sup>i</sup></li> </ul> <p><b>If an interim review is being completed for a deployed civilian.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ensure employee has the opportunity to complete their self-assessment.</li> <li>▪ Review the employee's self-assessment and provide performance feedback to the home rating official for the interim review.<sup>ii</sup></li> </ul> <p><b>If a closeout or annual appraisal is being completed for a deployed civilian.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Review the employee's self-assessment and provide</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Notify your home rating official of any change in in-theater supervisor.</li> </ul> <p><b>If a performance plan is being set up while you are deployed.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Work with your home rating official and in-theater supervisor to establish appropriate deployment objectives.<sup>i</sup></li> </ul> <p><b>If an interim review is being completed while you are deployed.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Optional: <sup>iii</sup> Complete your self-assessment for the interim review and submit to your rating official and in-theater supervisor if applicable.</li> </ul>

Timeframe	Home Rating Official	In-Theater Supervisor	Employee
<p><b>During the employee's deployment (cont'd)</b></p>	<p>feedback from the in-theater supervisor to be included in the interim review.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Complete and document the interim review in the PAA.</li> </ul> <p><b>If completing a closeout or annual appraisal while the employee is deployed.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ensure employee has the opportunity to complete their self-assessment.</li> <li>▪ If appropriate, ensure in-theater supervisor has employee self-assessment and solicit performance feedback and recommended rating(s) on the deployment performance objective(s) from the in-theater supervisor to be included in the final review.</li> <li>▪ Complete the final review by providing assessment, recommended rating of record, share assignment, and payout distribution to higher level rater.</li> </ul> <p><b>If employee is deployed during the pay pool process.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Remain available to the pay pool panel and prepared to contact in-theater supervisor as needed.</li> </ul> <p><b>If communicating the rating and payout results while the employee is deployed.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Discuss final rating of record, share assignment, payout distribution decision and reconsideration process with employee.</li> </ul>	<p>performance feedback and recommended rating(s) on the deployment performance objective(s) to the home rating official for the final review.<sup>ii</sup></p> <p><i>(Note: Be aware that timelines are critical under the NSPS process as ratings must be reviewed by a panel and sometimes a sub-pay pool panel. Both the schedule for panel meetings and the requirement for payout at the beginning of January drive the timelines for rating official submissions.</i></p> <p><b>If supervising a deployed civilian during the pay pool process.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Provide additional feedback on the employee's performance if requested from the home rating official.</li> </ul> <p><b>If communicating the rating and payout results for a deployed civilian.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ N/A</li> </ul>	<p><b>If a closeout or annual appraisal is being completed while you are deployed.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Optional:<sup>iii</sup> Complete your self-assessment for the final review and submit to your home rating official and in-theater supervisor if applicable.</li> </ul> <p><b>If deployed during the pay pool process.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ No special action required</li> </ul> <p><b>If communicating the rating and payout results while you are deployed.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ N/A</li> </ul>
<p><b>Prior to the end of the employee's</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Encourage the employee to complete a self-assessment.</li> <li>▪ Solicit feedback from the in-</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Communicate with the rating official at home and send input for his/her</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Optional:<sup>iii</sup> Complete a self-assessment for your accomplishments</li> </ul>

Timeframe	Home Rating Official	In-Theater Supervisor	Employee
deployment	<p>theater supervisor to include in any closeout appraisals.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with the HR office and employee to ensure the employee is assigned to an appropriate permanent position and the salary is appropriately adjusted.</li> </ul>	<p>appraisals.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Solicit self-assessment from the employee.<sup>ii</sup></li> </ul>	<p>while deployed as they relate to the appropriate deployment performance objective(s).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with the HR office and home rating official to ensure you are assigned back to an appropriate permanent position and your salary is updated as needed.</li> </ul>
Upon the employee's return to the home organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with the HR office and employee to ensure the employee is assigned back to an appropriate permanent position and the salary is appropriately adjusted.</li> <li>Inform the pay pool manager and pay pool administrator that the deployment has ended.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No performance management action is required. Consider recognition of contributions to mission as appropriate.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No performance action from deployment is required.</li> </ul>

<sup>i</sup> Sample objective: "As a deployed civilian, in support of DoD contingency operations, and under the operational control of the [deployed Supervisor/Commander], is expected to effectively complete assigned projects/tasks in accordance with the responsibilities of the deployed position. As such, tasks are to be carried out within agreed upon or prescribed timelines. Completed work products are evaluated to ensure that they comply with applicable regulatory/policy guidelines and that the desired results are achieved."

<sup>ii</sup> Employee may elect not to complete a self assessment.

<sup>iii</sup> While self assessments are optional, employees are encouraged to complete self assessments to better inform the rating official of performance and contributions.

## Attachment 2. "Scenarios"

### Impact of Temporary Assignments to Non-NSPS Positions on the NSPS Performance Management Process

If an NSPS employee is temporarily assigned to a non-NSPS position (e.g., GS) for their deployment, the time on the non-NSPS position does not apply towards the 90-day minimum period of performance under an approved NSPS performance plan. While on the non-NSPS position, the employee's performance is managed using the procedures of the applicable system (e.g., GS). The employee may be eligible for salary increases and/or bonuses based on the rules of the applicable system (e.g., GS).

If an NSPS employee is temporarily assigned to a non-NSPS position (e.g., temporary promotion to GS) during the rating cycle, but has worked for 90 days under an approved NSPS performance plan, the employee is eligible to receive a rating and payout. If the employee is on the temporary assignment on the effective date of the NSPS payout, then the employee's pay adjustment will be calculated and processed when the employee returns to the NSPS position. However, any performance-based bonus will be processed and paid on the effective date of the payout.

<b>Scenario A:</b>	An employee that works in an organization under NSPS is on an approved NSPS performance plan from October 1, 2008 until he is deployed to Afghanistan on August 15, 2009. For the 6-month deployment, the employee is temporarily promoted to a GS-15. The employee returns to his permanent NSPS position on February 15, 2010.
<b>Explanation:</b>	The employee is eligible for a NSPS performance rating because he has worked under an approved NSPS performance plan for more than 90 days. Because the temporary job change took place in the last 90 days of the rating cycle, the employee will receive an early annual rating. This rating will be used during the pay pool process and a salary increase and bonus will be calculated for the employee. The employee's pay adjustment will be calculated and processed <i>when the employee returns</i> to their permanent NSPS position, while any performance-based bonus will be processed and paid on the effective date of the payout in January. See 5 CFR 9901.342(I), 5 CFR 9901.407, and 5 CFR 9901.412.

<b>Scenario B:</b>	An employee who works in an organization under NSPS is on an approved NSPS performance plan from October 1, 2008 until she is deployed to Afghanistan on April 26, 2009. For the 6-month deployment, the employee is temporarily promoted to a GS-15. The employee returns to her permanent NSPS position on October 25, 2009.
<b>Explanation:</b>	The employee is eligible for an NSPS performance rating because she has worked under an approved NSPS performance plan for more than 90 days during the rating cycle prior to the deployment. This rating will be used during the pay pool process and a salary increase and bonus will be calculated for the employee. Because the employee returned to the NSPS position prior to the effective date of the NSPS payout, she will receive her salary increase effective the first full pay period in January 2010. See 5 CFR 9901.407 and 5 CFR 9901.342(I).

If an NSPS employee has not worked for 90 days under an approved NSPS performance plan because he/she was on a temporary assignment to a non-NSPS position (e.g., temporary promotion to GS for deployment), then the employee will be credited with base salary rate adjustments based on the modal rating process.<sup>1</sup> The employee is not eligible for an NSPS bonus. Employees continue to be eligible for other forms of recognition under chapter 45 of title 5 of the United States Code.

<b>Scenario C:</b>	An employee is hired into an organization under NSPS and is on an approved NSPS performance plan from April 15, 2009 until he is deployed to Iraq on June 10, 2009. For the 6-month deployment, the employee is temporarily promoted to a GS-15. The employee returns to his permanent NSPS position on December 10, 2009.
<b>Explanation:</b>	The employee is not eligible for a NSPS performance rating because he has NOT worked under an approved NSPS performance plan for 90 days. The employee will receive a salary increase based on the modal rating process. Because the employee returns to the NSPS position prior to the effective date of the NSPS payout, he will receive his salary increase effective the first full pay period in January 2010. See 5 CFR 9901.342(I), and 5 CFR 9901.407.

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<sup>1</sup> The NSPS modal rating process credits the employee with the average base salary increase (expressed as a percentage) granted to other employees in the same pay pool who received the same rating as the employee's last NSPS rating of record or the average base salary increase (expressed as a percentage) granted to employees who received the modal rating for the pay pool, whichever is most advantageous to the employee. The employee will also be credited with base salary rate increases under § 9901.323. These base salary adjustments will be used solely in determining the prospective NSPS base salary rate upon return to the NSPS position.