



## **ADMINISTRATIVE MEMORANDUM No. 92 Rev. 1**

**SUBJECT:** Guidelines for the Performance Evaluation System

### **I. BACKGROUND**

Article 39 of the General Standards, entitled "Work Performance Evaluation," states:

Staff Members' work performance shall be evaluated periodically. Accordingly, the Secretary General shall issue regulations for an evaluation system pursuant to the provisions of Article 120 of the Charter, which provide for:

- a. Evaluation of the staff at least once a year;
- b. The manner of conducting the evaluation process and its stages;
- c. The guarantees for the staff subject to evaluation, and
- d. The consequences of the evaluation process.

Pursuant to the mandate set out in that Article, the Department of Human Resources, in collaboration with other areas of the Secretariat, has revised the Guidelines on Conducting Performance Evaluations, attached as Annex A.

Staff Rule 105.9 states that the procedures established for conducting evaluations shall be published by way of a Personnel Circular.

### **II. THE DECISION**

The Secretary General has approved the Guidelines on Conducting Performance Evaluations, attached as Annex A.

### III. ENTRY INTO FORCE

This Administrative Memorandum shall enter into effect on the date it is signed, and shall replace Administrative Memorandum No. 92 and any previous administrative memoranda issued by, as well as provisions and practices followed by the General Secretariat to the date of publication of this Administrative Memorandum.



Gerald Anderson  
Secretary for Administration and Finance

February 27, 2013

## **GUIDELINES FOR THE PERFORMANCE EVALUATION SYSTEM**

### **I. INTRODUCTION**

#### **A. Overview**

Effective performance in the General Secretariat of the Organization of American States (GS/OAS) is a key element in implementing the strategy and objectives of the Organization of American States (OAS and the Organization). This is achieved by setting appropriate annual performance expectations and by having periodic performance evaluations.

The Performance Evaluation Process is grounded in the principles that all staff members have the right to know what is expected of them and are entitled to a periodic review of their performance; the level of achievement of work-based performance goals is the only thing measured in performance review; and, the successful attainment of performance objectives is in large measure a shared responsibility between the worker and the supervisor.

The Performance Evaluation Process is designed to be participatory in nature and to provide ongoing feedback. It focuses on how well the individual's most important performance goals are achieved, and ensures that the individual has the opportunity to acquire the skills and knowledge necessary to achieve them. The Staff Member has the opportunity to participate in the development of his or her performance goals and to discuss them with the Supervisor. An essential aspect of the Performance Evaluation Process is ongoing, frank and constructive meetings concerning work performance based on jointly developed performance requirements and measures.

#### **B. Objectives**

The Performance Evaluation System (PES) is intended to:

1. Ensure that Staff performance furthers organizational and departmental goals;
2. Evaluate Staff Members' performance;
3. Increase accountability for Staff Members' performance;
4. Encourage the personal and professional growth and development of staff members;
5. Establish and maintain communication between the supervisor and staff member;
6. Provide reliable, objective performance data for use in personnel decisions and identifying training programs; and
7. Provide an opportunity for skills improvement.

#### **C. Authority**

The PES is established in accordance with Article 39 of the General Standards to Govern the Operations of the GS/OAS and Rule 105.9 of the Staff Rules.

**D. Key Actors**

1. Staff Member: person whose performance is being evaluated. <sup>1</sup>
2. Direct Supervisor: Staff Member who oversees and evaluates Staff Member's performance.
3. Reviewing Supervisor: Direct Supervisor of the Staff Member's Supervisor.
4. Director: Staff Member responsible for a Department/Office results and for setting priorities for that area and for ensuring compliance with PES in their respective Department.
5. Secretary: Staff Member responsible for a Secretariat and for ensuring compliance with PES in their respective Secretariat.
6. Performance Evaluation Review Committee (PERC): committee responsible for PES matters. For further information please refer to section III of this document.
7. Department of Human Resources (DHR): Department in charge of facilitating and managing the PES.

**E. Performance Evaluation Cycle**

The PES consists of three phases:

1. Defining Individual Objectives - First phase, where Staff Member and Direct Supervisor identify and agree on three to five objectives for the Performance Evaluation Cycle.
2. Performance Conversations – Second phase, where Staff Member and Direct Supervisor communicate periodically providing and receiving feedback about Staff Member's performance.
3. Formal Performance Evaluation Meeting – Direct Supervisor and Staff Member will together review Staff Member's performance for the entire Performance Evaluation Cycle and Reviewing Supervisor's input on Staff Member's performance. At the end of this phase, Staff Member will receive a final rating.

(For details see section II.B: Activities.)

**F. Scope**

1. The PES applies to all Staff Members of the GS/OAS, regardless of their contract type, who are hired for six months or more during a Performance Evaluation Cycle (includes

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<sup>1</sup> According to General Standards 17 (a) and Staff Rule 104.1 (a).

cumulative contracts). Individuals falling under this timeframe shall be subject to a performance evaluation. Those with less than six months' service will be evaluated upon the termination of their contract, if this is not renewed. If the contract is renewed, they will be reviewed within the regular Performance Evaluation Cycle. A different process is in place to evaluate new Staff Members before the end of their probationary period.

2. The Direct Supervisor must ensure that the individual objectives of a new Staff Member for the corresponding Performance Evaluation Cycle are included in the PES electronic form within three months from the date of hiring.
3. The following rules apply in special circumstances such as transfers, promotions, details, or special assignments:
  - a. Individual objectives will need to be updated to match the current situation of Staff Member (current post, job responsibilities, alignment to department/office objectives, and line of command).
  - b. A Direct Supervisor who leaves for another post or who for any reason leaves the GS/OAS and has worked as a Direct Supervisor for six or more months of any given Performance Evaluation Cycle shall, before leaving, complete an evaluation of all the Staff Members he/she supervised based on the work accomplished up to that time.
  - c. In the event that a Staff Member is transferred to a different area during a Performance Evaluation Cycle, the following will apply:
    - i. The Staff Member will be subject to a performance evaluation in the area where he/she spent the greater time working during the corresponding Performance Evaluation Cycle.
    - ii. If the Staff Member spent the same time working in different areas, he/she will be subject to a performance evaluation from his/her current Direct Supervisor. The former Direct Supervisor and current Direct Supervisor will meet prior to the Evaluation Meeting to discuss Staff Member's performance.
4. In the event a Staff Member's contract terminates before the end of his/her Performance Evaluation Cycle, or a Staff Member leaves the GS/OAS before the end of that cycle, he/she shall complete his/her performance evaluation by the date of termination.

## II. THE PROCESS

### A. Schedule

PES is a yearly process (January 1<sup>st</sup> to December 31<sup>st</sup>) within which Staff Members receive a performance evaluation. Performance Evaluation Cycle phases and timelines will be communicated by the DHR through Personnel Circulars.

### B. Activities

#### 1. Setting Organizational and Departmental Objectives (Beginning of the Performance Evaluation Cycle)

- a. Department/Office sets mission and objectives according to Executive Orders, OAS Mandates and strategic planning.
- b. Secretary/Director determines expected results for the Secretariat/Department/Office and sets objectives with Direct Supervisors.

#### 2. Defining Individual Objectives (Beginning of the Performance Evaluation Cycle January- March of each year)

- a. Direct Supervisor meets with Staff Member to develop objectives linked to the goals of the Secretariat/ Department/ Office. For information on how to define individual objectives, please refer to the PES section in the Organization's intranet.
- b. Both parties agree on exactly how these objectives are to be carried out during the Performance Evaluation Cycle.
- c. Staff Members will register individual objectives in the PES electronic form and send them for Direct Supervisor's approval. Until objectives are properly registered and approved, the process of the PES first phase is incomplete and both Staff Member and/or Direct Supervisor who fail to complete this phase are subject to the Administrative Measures specified in Section H of this document.
- d. If objectives cannot be registered and approved within the specified timeframe for any verifiable reason, the Director must send a request for an extension to the Performance Evaluation Review Committee (PERC), no more than 10 days after the provided deadline. All requests will be channeled through the DHR for PERC review and approval.
- e. If a Staff Member's work circumstances have changed and/or the objectives need to be updated during the Performance Evaluation Cycle, the Direct Supervisor shall return Staff Member's PES electronic form for update. Each Staff Member must update his/her individual objectives in the following cases:

- i. When the goals or priorities of his/her area or department have changed.
  - ii. When new responsibilities or duties have been assigned.
  - iii. When transferred to a new area / department.
  - iv. When promoted.
  - v. When supervisory duties have been assigned.
  - vi. When his/her line of command has changed (Direct Supervisor and/or Reviewing Supervisor).
- f. New Supervisors, upon appointment, will meet with their Staff Members to discuss and, if necessary, revise previously set performance objectives.

### **3. Performance Conversations (Throughout the Performance Evaluation Cycle)**

Direct Supervisor and Staff Member shall hold informal performance conversations periodically throughout the entire Performance Evaluation Cycle. The purpose of these meetings is to provide and receive feedback, follow-up on objectives and agreements, provide guidance and correction if needed. While the results of this meeting need not be forwarded to the DHR, it is strongly suggested that the Direct Supervisor and Staff Member document all meetings for future reference to avoid misunderstandings about work expectations. The Staff Member is encouraged to prepare adequately for this meeting by bringing along documentation pertaining to examples of performance. The Direct Supervisor should offer support, acknowledge work well done, and make suggestions for improvement as appropriate.

As part of the second phase, during the second and/or third trimester of the Performance Evaluation Cycle, a mid-term review will be done to assess Staff Member's performance until that point of the cycle. Mid-term review will be completed through the PES electronic form. A Staff Member cannot be rated unsatisfactorily unless there is documented evidence that the poor performance has been addressed during the mid-term review.

### **4. Statement of Accomplishment (End of the Performance Evaluation Cycle)**

To begin the formal evaluation process, the Direct Supervisor shall request from the Staff Member, a Statement of accomplishment where Staff Member submits to his/her Direct Supervisor examples of individual contributions to the accomplishment of the agreed objectives during the Performance Evaluation Cycle.

### **5. Formal Performance Evaluation Meeting (End of the Performance Evaluation Cycle- (January- March of subsequent year )**

After reviewing the information requested, Direct Supervisor and Staff Member hold the formal review session. During this required session the Direct Supervisor meets with the Staff Member to discuss the results and to explain to the Staff Member the rating that he/she received. Also, developmental opportunities for Staff Member will be discussed and agreed upon at that meeting.

## 6. Rating of Performance

- a. The performance evaluation will be rated using the PES electronic form.
- b. Direct Supervisor reviews prior to the final meeting the statement of accomplishment, ratings and competencies definitions.
- c. Direct Supervisor evaluates Staff Member during the evaluation meeting using the following criteria:
  - Staff Member - if not a Supervisor :
    - 60% accomplishment of objectives
    - 40% demonstration of competencies
  - Staff Member - if Supervisor:
    - 60% accomplishment of objectives
    - 20% demonstration of competencies
    - 20% demonstration of managerial competencies
- d. The Reviewing Supervisor may add comments to Staff Member's performance evaluation, and will send the PES electronic form to the Staff Member for his/her review.
- e. If the Staff Member agrees with the rating, it shall become a part of the Staff Member's official record.
- f. If the Staff Member disagrees with the rating, he/she may initiate the appeal process (for details see Section E: The Appeals Process).
- g. Until the evaluation is completed (Direct Supervisor assessed performance, Reviewing Supervisor added comments and Staff Member agreed with final rating), the process of the third phase is incomplete and Staff Member, Direct Supervisor and/or Reviewing Supervisor who fail to complete this phase are subject to the Administrative Measures specified in Section H of this document.

## C. Ratings

There are but two possible performance ratings for purposes of assessing and documenting performance through the performance evaluation forms. These are "Unsatisfactory", (1) and "Satisfactory" (2).

1. A rating of (1) means that the Staff Member demonstrates consistently poor work achievement even with close supervision. It shows a lack of application where tasks are frequently not completed in a timely manner, or not completed well or not at all. A Staff Member who falls into this category must be given

fair warning of the deficiencies in their work, as well as time to improve. Two consecutive level 1 ratings will result in termination from service in accordance with the Staff Rules and conditions of service. On average, no more than 5 percent of staff members in any given organization would be expected to fall into this category.

2. A rating of (2) means that the Staff Member consistently and competently performs to the required level and has accomplished his or her goals in a fully satisfactory manner. In any given organization 80 to 85 percent of staff members normally fall into this category.

#### **D. Competencies**

All Staff Members are evaluated in three competencies. These are described below:

1. Client Orientation
  - a. Understands clients' needs and concerns
  - b. Responds promptly and effectively to clients' needs, services and products as appropriate
  - c. Monitors ongoing developments inside and outside the clients' environment to stay informed and anticipate problems
2. Teamwork
  - a. Promotes positive collaboration inside and outside the group
  - b. Demonstrates respect and professionalism in dealing with other individuals of different cultures
  - c. Shares credit for team accomplishments and accepts joint responsibility for team shortcomings
3. Learning and Knowledge Sharing
  - a. Open to new ideas
  - b. Shares information, skills, and knowledge in daily work
  - c. Actively seeks to develop himself/herself professionally and personally
  - d. Contributes to the learning of colleagues and subordinates
  - e. Shows willingness to learn from others

In addition to the previous three competencies, Staff Members who currently supervise other Staff Members will be evaluated in other five managerial competencies:

1. Selecting, coaching, and appraising staff
  - a. Selects on basis of skills
  - b. Coaches staff to help them perform effectively

- c. Appraises performance accurately
  - d. Makes sure that roles, responsibilities and reporting lines are clear to each Staff Member
  - e. Regularly discusses performance and provides feedback and coaching to staff
  - f. Actively supports the professional development of Staff Members
2. Planning and managing Staff Members to achieve quality results
    - a. Communicates unit goals clearly
    - b. Develops realistic plans
    - c. Empowers staff by delegating responsibility over their work, and sharing accountability for results
    - d. Encourages others to set challenging goals
  3. Focusing on big picture and overall framework for development
    - a. Develops strategic priorities consistent with OAS mission and mandates from OAS governing bodies
    - b. Communicates strategy to different audiences
    - c. Following OAS mission and mandates from OAS governing bodies, generates and communicates broad and compelling organizational direction, inspiring others to pursue that same direction
  4. Encouraging Innovation and Open, Team Based Environment
    - a. Creates an environment of collaboration and teamwork
    - b. Thinks beyond existing paradigms
    - c. Establishes and maintains relationships with a broad range of people to understand the needs for his/her area and to gain support to overcome or resolve such needs
    - d. Tries to improve the area under his/her supervision; when feasible, does not accept the status quo
    - e. Provides to all Staff Members an environment in which others can talk and act without fear of repercussion
  5. Decision Making/Judgment
    - a. Identifies the key issues in a complex situation, and comes to the heart of the problem quickly
    - b. Considers positive and negative impacts of decisions prior to making them
    - c. Makes decisions with an eye toward the impact on others and on the Organization
    - d. Proposes a course of action or makes a recommendation based on all available information

## **E. The Appeals Process**

1. Until a more specialized process for resolving disputes over performance reviews is incorporated into the Staff Rules, the procedures set out in Chapter XII of the Staff Rules shall apply to disputes over performance evaluations. Nonetheless, Staff Members are

encouraged to try to resolve those disputes first by taking the matter to the Direct Supervisor and/or Reviewing Supervisor.

2. If the Staff Member first requests review of the dispute by the Direct Supervisor in accordance with the procedural requirements stated below, the fifteen day period for filing a Hearing Request under Staff Rule 112.1(a) shall be extended for thirty additional days. To be eligible for the thirty day extension, the aggrieved Staff Member must present the review request in writing to the Direct Supervisor within fifteen days of having received a written copy of his/her performance evaluation. The Staff Member must ask the Direct Supervisor to initial a copy of the request so that there will be written proof that the request was timely received. If the Direct Supervisor is unable to resolve the dispute to the Staff Member's satisfaction within the thirty-day extension period, the Staff Member may then request a hearing under Staff Rule 112.1, and must submit with the hearing request the initialed copy of the review request.
3. In lieu of Reconsideration under Staff Rule 112.2, an aggrieved Staff Member who has requested a Hearing and otherwise complied with the requirements of Staff Rule 112.1 may request review of the dispute by the PERC, which functions are described in Part III of these Guidelines. The recommendation of the PERC, if approved by the Secretary General, will have the same legal significance as a final decision of the Secretary General in the Reconsideration Process in the event the Staff Member elects to pursue the matter before the OAS Administrative Tribunal. A Staff Member who wishes review by the PERC in lieu of Reconsideration, must request that review within the same fifteen-day time period established for requesting Reconsideration under Staff Rule 112.2.

#### **F. Step Increase**

Step increase shall be given to Staff Members whose performance is satisfactory as established in Staff Rule 103.4

Staff Members, Direct Supervisors and/or Reviewing Supervisors that do not comply with PES will not be entitled to receive step increase. (Please refer to Section H: Administrative Measures.)

#### **G. Personnel Actions**

As a result of the performance evaluation, the following actions may take place:

##### **1. Training**

For purposes of the PES, Training means:

- a. Assessment of the GS/OAS training needs,
- b. Training programs tailored to occupation and,

- c. Developmental opportunities discussed between Direct Supervisor and Staff Member in the Formal Performance Evaluation Meeting. The results of such discussions are to be registered in the PES electronic form.

Training programs will be offered according to budget allocation and strategic priorities.

## 2. Promotions

In order to be eligible for promotions, a Staff Member must obtain a satisfactory rating. Note that a satisfactory rating does not imply an automatic promotion, since other requisites and conditions might be needed to qualify as established in Staff Rule 105.1.

## 3. Continuing Contract

Staff Members shall be eligible for Continuing Contract as set forth in Article 19 of the General Standards.

## 4. Performance Improvement Plan

Please note that a Staff Member cannot be rated “Unsatisfactory” unless there is documented evidence that the Staff Member’s poor performance has been addressed during the mid-term review, as indicated in section II.B.3 of these Guidelines.

Staff Members who obtained an “Unsatisfactory” rating during their mid-term review will work with their Direct Supervisors to develop a Performance Improvement Plan to achieve a satisfactory performance level by the end of the Performance Evaluation Cycle. Such plan should:

- a. Indicate the reason(s) why performance is “Unsatisfactory”
- b. Indicate areas that need improvement, including examples
- c. Indicate the performance expected from the Staff Member by the Direct Supervisor
- d. If necessary, suggest support and resources to assist the Staff Member (including training)
- e. Include follow-up meetings between Staff Member and Direct Supervisor to monitor progress
- f. A follow-up evaluation must be done during the third month of the Performance Evaluation Cycle following the cycle in which he/she obtained an “Unsatisfactory” rating, pursuant to Staff Rule 103.4 (b). Staff Members should obtain a “Satisfactory” rating; otherwise, disciplinary measures pursuant to Staff Rules 110.4 (a) (iv) and 111.1 shall be imposed upon them.

## 5. Termination

Two “Unsatisfactory” ratings are considered reason for termination as established in Staff Rule 110.4. (a)(iv). Furthermore, the SG/OAS may terminate the services of a Staff Member for prolonged inability to perform job functions satisfactorily due to illness or injury, whatever its origin or nature, when it exceeds 18 months in a consecutive four-year period as established in staff rule 110.4. (a)(i).

## 6. Disciplinary Measures

When applicable, disciplinary measures will be taken in accordance with the Staff Rules.

The above-mentioned personnel actions are intended to:

- a. Adequately respond to the evolving needs of increase in efficiency and Staff Members’ motivation within the Organization
- b. Promote best work practices
- c. Encourage and recognize continuing high performance
- d. Facilitate staff development based on individual needs and results
- e. Provide support to Staff Members in delivering high quality results
- f. Create a work culture based on results, accountability and transparency

## H. Administrative Measures

1. The Direct Supervisor and/or Reviewing Supervisor who fail to complete the Performance Evaluation Cycle for their Staff Members as required and within the specified time limits will not receive a within-grade salary increase until the next Performance Evaluation Cycle, and will receive a written admonition and ultimately an “Unsatisfactory” rating. Disciplinary measures will be imposed as provided in Staff Rule 111.1. In case the Direct Supervisor fails to fulfill his/her role, it is the responsibility of the Reviewing Supervisor to complete the Staff Member’s performance evaluation.
2. If an evaluation cannot be completed because the Staff Member or the Direct Supervisor is absent for any reason, other than a verifiable emergency, the Director must send a written explanation for the delay to the Chairman of the PERC at least fifteen days before the deadline. All requests will be channeled through the DHR for PERC review and approval.
3. In the case of Staff Members, failure to comply with the Performance Evaluation Cycle will also result in the withholding of within-grade salary increase as well as a written admonition and other administrative sanctions, including but not limited to an “Unsatisfactory” rating. Disciplinary measures will be imposed as provided in Staff Rule 111.1.

### **III. PERFORMANCE EVALUATION REVIEW COMMITTEE (PERC)**

#### **A. Structure**

The PERC is composed of three principal members and three alternates. One principal and alternate shall be appointed by the Secretary General from a list of qualified candidates submitted by the DHR, and one principal and one alternate shall be appointed by the Secretary General from a list presented by the Staff Committee. The third member shall be the Director of the DHR, who shall chair the Committee and who shall appoint a senior Staff Member in that Department to serve as the third alternate. Members serve for the calendar year and may be re-appointed. Those persons appointed to fill vacancies created during a calendar year shall serve for the balance of that year.

#### **B. Functions and Responsibilities**

The functions and responsibilities of PERC are as follows:

- a. To review a random cross section of year-end performance evaluations to ensure that:
  - i. the performance goals are specific, measurable, achievable, results-oriented, time-defined and linked to the area's work objectives;
  - ii. In cases of "Unsatisfactory" or outstanding performance, the documentation provided adequately supports the rating.
- b. To serve as an alternative mechanism for reviewing staff grievances arising out of the performance evaluation in place of Reconsideration, if so requested by the aggrieved Staff Member in accordance with the Appeals Process outlined in section II.E of these Guidelines.
- c. To review and consider the exception requests for definition of individual objectives or final performance evaluations after provided deadlines. PERC shall grant exceptions when considered appropriate.
- d. To review requests for extensions for registering individual objectives or evaluating performance evaluations. PERC shall grant extensions when considered appropriate.
- e. To make recommendations to the Secretary General to change or refine the PES.

### **Staff Incentive Awards Committee**

#### **1. Structure**

The Staff Incentive Awards Committee ("SIAC") is composed of one Member appointed by the Staff Committee, the Training and Human Resource Development Officer of the Department of Human Resources, who shall chair the Committee, and one other member at-large as may be appointed by the Secretary General as suggested by the DHR. This member at-large and the member appointed by the Staff Committee serve for a calendar year and may be re-appointed. Those persons appointed to fill vacancies that arise during a calendar year shall serve for the remainder of that year.

## 2. Functions and Responsibilities

The Functions and Responsibilities of the SIAC are as follows:

- a. Develop a mechanism, in accordance with Staff Rule 105.10, whereby staff members are rewarded for outstanding performance.
- b. Provide a system of awards based on outstanding job performance over a one-year evaluation period that is substantiated by a written recommendation from the supervisor, supported by the director of the area and documented if possible by others who are in a position to judge.
- c. Make recommendations to the Secretary General respecting awards for outstanding performance to no more than 10% of all staff members, regardless of the source of financing for their posts.

### Outstanding Performance Awards

1. As provided for by Staff Rule 105.10, "Staff Incentive Awards," recommendations shall be made to the Secretary General regarding staff who are to be recognized for outstanding performance according to a system making use of the Staff Incentive Awards Committee.
2. It is anticipated that no more that 10 percent of staff members will be considered to have outstanding performance. Outstanding performance, that is, performance that consistently exceeds expectations, will require complementary supporting documentation and information beyond that contained in the performance evaluation forms. Such staff members must have demonstrated repeatedly performance that exceeds the requirements that have been agreed.
3. Supervisors who believe that a staff member has performed in an outstanding manner should submit recommendations to the Staff Incentive Awards Committee according to the procedures established in circulars published by the Department of Human Resources (DHR).

## V. GENERAL CONDITIONS

### A. Effective Date

These Guidelines shall enter into effect on the date they are published in the corresponding Personnel Circular, and shall replace any previous guidelines issued by, or provisions and practices followed by, the General Secretariat to the date of publication of these Guidelines.

**B. Revocation or Modification**

These Guidelines may be unilaterally modified or revoked by the Secretary General and such revocation or modification shall take effect on the date it is published in a Personnel Circular. Nothing contained in these Guidelines is intended to establish an acquired right; nor should it be construed as granting an acquired right of any kind.