

TRANSITION GUIDANCE - PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

for employees transitioning during the period of 1 August through 20 November 2011

Management responsibility: Managers must ensure that employees are placed on performance objectives or standards and are rated in accordance with the instructions in this guidance.

a. General

This guidance covers the transition from the National Security Personnel System (NSPS) performance management system to the Total Army Personnel Evaluation System (TAPES) for the period of 1 August 2011 through 20 November 2011.

- ✓ The 2010-2011 rating period will be from 1 October 2010 to 30 September 2011 or the date before transition out of NSPS.
- ✓ NSPS rating of record will be documented in the Performance Appraisal Application (PAA), approved by the HLR, and communicated to the employee.
- ✓ NSPS objectives will transfer to the 2011-2012 rating cycle so that there will be no break in accountability; must notify employees in writing.
- ✓ The TAPES performance plan will be approved and communicated to employees within the first 30 days after transition.
- ✓ After the end of the TAPES rating period, employees will receive a TAPES rating covering the period from 1 October 2011, or the transition date, through the end of the established TAPES rating cycle (based on GS grade level outlined in AR 690-400, Chapter 4302).

b. Assistance and Resources

Management officials should contact the servicing Civilian Personnel Advisory Center (CPAC) if assistance is needed in completing NSPS performance ratings, NSPS interim reviews, establishing TAPES performance plans, evaluating employee performance, addressing performance deficiencies, etc. A copy of the TAPES regulation can be obtained at http://www.apd.army.mil/pdf/r690_400.pdf. The forms for TAPES performance plans can be obtained at http://www.apd.army.mil/Forms/browse_forms.asp.

c. NSPS Rules Apply Until Transition

Organizations with employees under NSPS must continue to follow the NSPS Performance Management guidance applicable to those employees until no longer covered under 5 CFR 9901, Subpart D, with the exception of creating a new NSPS performance plan (performance objectives) in the PAA.

d. Employees Transitioning out of NSPS from 1 August 2011 through 30 September 2011 (i.e., not covered by NSPS on 30 September 2011)

1. Special Rating Cycles

(a) Employees transitioning out of NSPS from 1 August 2011 through 30 September 2011 will have a shortened NSPS rating cycle covering the period 1 October 2010 through the day immediately preceding the date of transition out of NSPS staffing, classification, and pay systems.

(b) The 2011-2012 rating cycle will begin from the transition date through the end of the previously established TAPES rating cycle (based on GS grade level outlined in AR 690-400, Chapter 4302).

(c) See timelines in Appendix A.

2. Actions Required in NSPS Performance Management System and PAA

(a) A written early annual recommended rating must be completed and documented in the PAA by the rater, and approved by the HLR following the existing NSPS procedures for early annual appraisals. If there is no access to the PAA (e.g., deployed foreign locations), a hard copy of the DD Form 2906 must be used.

Note: The Assessments and Ratings tab under the Annual Appraisal tab in the PAA will need to be changed to reflect "Early Annual – NSPS," and the appraisal period end date will need to be changed to reflect the day prior to transitioning out of NSPS staffing, classification, and pay systems.

(b) Coverage under NSPS performance management regulations, instructions, and policies will terminate the day after NSPS ratings of record become effective. Ratings are effective the date they are approved by the pay pool manager. This must occur no later than 90 days after transition from NSPS staffing, classification, and pay systems or December 31, 2011, whichever is earlier. Therefore, NSPS ratings of record must be recommended, reviewed, and finalized accordingly.

(c) Early annual recommended ratings must be reviewed and reconciled. The pay pool manager may perform these functions which were previously accomplished by the pay pool panel, for employees transitioning out during this period. Employees should be notified as soon as practicable of any changes to the pay pool process.

(e) Employees transitioning out in August and September 2011 are not eligible for an NSPS performance-based payout. In accordance with 5 CFR 9901.342(g)(7), employees who are no longer covered by NSPS on the effective date of the payout are not entitled to a performance-based payout. However, the authorities in AR 672-20, Incentive Awards, may be used to recognize accomplishments of employees for performance under NSPS or TAPES. (Note: A Quality Step Increase may be awarded to a GS employee based on the employee's rating of record under NSPS, as long as the employee's GS position, at the time the QSI is granted, is at the same grade/level as the employee's former NSPS position.)

3. Actions Required in TAPES

(a) Since employees will be transitioning out of NSPS to TAPES, NSPS performance plans for the 2011-2012 rating cycle will not be completed in the PAA or using the DD Form 2906. Upon transition, NSPS performance objectives from the 2010-2011 rating cycle will also be the performance objectives for the 2011-2012 rating cycle, supervisors must notify employees in writing that the performance objectives are still effective and employees are being held accountable for the same objectives. This process will ensure that employees are not disadvantaged (all accomplishments for the rating cycle will be considered for the end of cycle rating) and there will be no break in accountability for performance when TAPES ratings are completed at the end of the 2011-2012 rating cycle. The 2011-2012 objectives will be documented on the TAPES performance plan, and that TAPES forms should be in place (documented, approved by the senior rater, if used; otherwise approved by rater, and communicated to the employee) within 30 days after transition. The TAPES performance plan is a working document and performance objectives can be modified during the rating cycle.

[Note: Although there is a period after the date of transition that technically NSPS performance management coverage will continue. This period is simply for the purpose of allowing Pay Pool Managers to complete and approve the ratings of record.]

(b) The TAPES 2011 – 2012 rating cycle will cover the period from the date of transition from NSPS to normal TAPES end of rating cycle dates (based on GS grade level outlined in AR 690-400, Chapter 4302) will apply.

e. Employees Transitioning out of NSPS from 1 October 2011 through 20 November 2011

1. Special Rating Cycle

(a) Employees transitioning out of NSPS to TAPES in October and November 2011 will be covered by a rating cycle for the period from 1 October 2011 through the end of the established TAPES rating cycle (based on GS grade level outlined in AR 690-400, Chapter 4302). Accomplishments during this special cycle will include those achieved in both the NSPS-covered period and the TAPES-covered period, and will be documented at the end of the rating period in TAPES.

(b) For subsequent TAPES rating periods, normal TAPES rating cycle dates will apply. Any adjustments to subsequent rating cycles (for instance, extensions of rating periods) must be in compliance with the TAPES regulation.

(c) See action timelines in Appendix A.

2. Actions Required in NSPS Performance Management System and PAA

(a) A written annual recommended rating must be completed and documented in the PAA by the rater, and approved by the HLR following the existing NSPS procedures for annual appraisals for the rating

cycle ending 30 September 2011. If there is no access to the PAA (e.g., deployed foreign locations), a hard copy of the DD Form 2906 must be used.

(b) Coverage under NSPS performance management regulations, instructions, and policies will terminate the day after NSPS ratings of record become effective. Ratings are effective the date they are approved by the pay pool manager. This must occur no later than 90 days after transition from NSPS staffing, classification, and pay systems or December 31, 2011, whichever is earlier. Therefore, NSPS ratings of record must be recommended, reviewed, and finalized accordingly.

(c) Annual recommended ratings must be reviewed and reconciled. The pay pool manager may perform these functions which were previously accomplished by the pay pool panel, for employees transitioning out during this period. Employees should be notified as soon as practicable of any changes to the pay pool process.

(e) Employees transitioning out in October and November 2011 are not eligible for an NSPS performance-based payout. In accordance with 5 CFR 9901.342(g)(7), employees who are no longer covered by NSPS on the effective date of the payout are not entitled to a performance-based payout. The authorities in AR 672-20, Incentive Awards, may be used to recognize accomplishments of employees for performance under NSPS or TAPES. (Note: A Quality Step Increase may be awarded to a GS employee based on the employee's rating of record under NSPS, as long as the employee's GS position, at the time the QSI is granted, is at the same grade/level as the employee's former NSPS position.)

3. Actions Required in TAPES

(a) Since employees will be transitioning out of NSPS to TAPES, NSPS performance plans for the 2011-2012 rating cycle will not be completed in the PAA or using the DD Form 2906. NSPS performance objectives from the 2010-2011 rating cycle will also be the performance objectives for the 2011-2012 rating cycle. Supervisors must notify employees in writing that the performance objectives are still effective and employees are being held accountable for the same objectives. This process will ensure that employees are not disadvantaged (all accomplishments for the rating cycle will be considered for the end of cycle rating) and there will be no break in accountability for performance when TAPES ratings are completed at the end of the 2011-2012 rating cycle. The 2011-2012 objectives will be documented on the TAPES performance plan, and that TAPES forms should be in place (documented, approved by the senior rater, if used; otherwise approved by rater, and communicated to the employee) within 30 days after transition. The TAPES performance plan is a working document and performance objectives can be modified during the rating cycle.

[Note: Although there is a period after the date of transition that technically NSPS performance management coverage will continue. This period is simply for the purpose of allowing Pay Pool Managers to complete and approve the ratings of record.]

(b) The 2011 – 2012 rating cycle will start 1 October 2011 and the normal TAPES end of rating cycle dates will apply. This will be a “mixed” rating cycle consisting of a period under NSPS and a period under TAPES. Any adjustments to rating cycles must be in compliance with TAPES regulations.

f. TAPES Requirements

Once covered by TAPES, employees will receive a TAPES annual appraisal so long as the minimum period of performance (120 days) under an approved performance plan has been met. The flexibilities of extending or shortening a rating cycle under TAPES may be used to accommodate any special needs for the 2011 - 2012 rating cycle. In accordance with TAPES regulations, adjustments can be made to TAPES Performance Objectives and supplements to Responsibilities at any time after the transition. Early annual ratings will be given to employees who transitioned from NSPS to TAPES with the same job objectives, performed under those objectives for at least 120 days during the rating cycle, and who are leaving their position within the last 120 days of the TAPES rating cycle.

1. Senior Rater

The use of a senior rater in the review of performance plans is optional, subject to command policies. However, a senior rater must be identified in the performance plan, unless the rater is the Commander or equivalent. All plans must be approved by the senior rater, if utilized (otherwise, the plan is approved by the rater), and communicated to the employee. A TAPES rating of “fails 1 or more obj” or “fails” must be reviewed by the senior rater.

2. Weights and Contributing Factors

TAPES Performance Objectives for the Senior System or Responsibilities (such as Technical Competence) for the Base System are not weighted. TAPES also does not use Contributing Factors, which are a unique feature of NSPS. However, many of the same aspects of NSPS Contributing Factors are imbedded in the Performance Standards of TAPES and are relevant to evaluations of employee performance.

3. Documenting Performance Plans

Appraisals under TAPES will be documented on the DA Form 7222 (Senior System) and the DA Form 7223 (Base System). These forms can be obtained at http://www.apd.army.mil/Forms/browse_forms.asp

[Note: When transferring NSPS objectives to TAPES during the transition out process, ensure the TAPES forms indicate the appropriate rating period, rating cycle date begins with either the transition date (if prior to 1 October 2011) or 1 October 2011 through the appropriate end of the TAPES rating cycle as prescribed in AR 690-400, Chapter 4302.]

(a) Senior System Employees (GS-9 and above and Career Interns):

All major objectives should have a significant level of importance to/impact on mission accomplishment and be measurable in accordance with TAPES criteria. Any supplemental objectives that are part of the major objective should be included as sub-bullets to the major objective. The preprinted Performance Standards in part V of DA Form 7222-1 are performance threshold descriptors (identifying Success level)

for assigning a rating. Performance objectives are to be written at the Success level, i.e., Level 3. The use of the performance standards may not be necessary if performance objectives already include measurable criteria.

(b) TAPES Performance Plans for Base System Employees (GS-8 and below):

The preprinted Performance Standards are listed on the "REVERSE" page of the DA Form 7223-1. The Performance Standards are performance threshold descriptors for rating the associated Responsibility and are written at the "Success/Meets standard". For example, the "Technical Competence" (called Responsibilities under TAPES) for performing the assigned tasks listed under "Key Points Made" will be rated by using the threshold descriptors of having "knowledge, skills and abilities to do the work."

g. Request for Reconsideration

Coverage under NSPS performance management provisions terminates the day after NSPS ratings of record become effective. Therefore, all requests for reconsideration of ratings after that date must be accomplished using administrative grievance procedures, negotiated grievance procedures, or alternative dispute resolution, if applicable.

Appendix A

Performance Management Timeline for Employees Transitioning

1 August 2011 through 20 November 2011

Complete NSPS Rating of Record (1)*	Performance Objectives/Plan In Place (2)*	TAPES Rating Cycle for 2011-2012 (3)*	Complete TAPES Rating of Record (4)*
All Pay Bands	All Grades/Levels NLT 30 days from date of transition or from 1 Oct 2011	Date of transition or 1 Oct 2011 through end date of TAPES cycle in 2012	All GS Grades NLT 45 days after end of rating cycle

* See corresponding paragraphs below.

- (1) NSPS 2010-2011 early annual/annual ratings must be completed in the PAA, and communicated to employees for the NSPS rating cycle ending on 30 Sep 2011 or the date preceding the transition. If there is no access to PAA, then use a hard copy DD Form 2906 to complete the annual ratings. The date for completion of the NSPS annual ratings will be determined by the command or the PPM/PRA, as appropriate. However, the effective date (date approved by the Pay Pool Manager) of the NSPS ratings of record will be no later than 90 days after the appraisal period end date or December 31, 2011, whichever is earlier. A streamlined pay pool process may be conducted to finalize the ratings; the pay pool manager may perform these functions which were previously accomplished by the pay pool panel. Employees should be notified as soon as practicable of any deviations from previous guidance having to do with the pay pool process.
- (2) TAPES performance plans must be prepared, documented on TAPES forms (if senior rater is used, approved by senior rater; otherwise approved by rater), and communicated to employees NLT 30 days from date of transition from NSPS. **Note** that NSPS performance plans will not be required to be completed in the PAA, for employees transitioning out of NSPS in August--November; however, they must be documented in accordance with paragraphs d.3.a. and e.3.a. of this guidance.
- (3) The 2011-2012 TAPES rating cycle is to accommodate the NSPS to TAPES transition. For subsequent cycles, normal TAPES rating cycle dates will apply, e.g., 1 November to 31 October for GS 9 through GS 12. Any other adjustments must be in compliance with TAPES regulations.
- (4) At the end of the TAPES performance cycle, raters have 45 days to complete the annual rating. All TAPES provisions will apply, e.g., performance awards, Quality Step Increase (QSI), timeline for forwarding appraisals to processing centers, etc. (Note: Commands must follow the OPM/DoD 2011 guidance as well as the Army ASA (M&RA) policy memo dated 26 October 2010, when determining spending levels for performance awards.)

Note: In accordance with the guidance in NSPS Transition Office memorandum, subject: Establishment of Latest Date to Complete Transition from National Security Personnel System Positions, dated 11 May 2011, transitioning out of NSPS should be completed by 20 November 2011.