

PUBLIC SERVICE MINISTRY

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FROM: Permanent Secretary,
Public Service Ministry

TO: All Permanent Secretaries,
Heads of Departments and
Regional Executive Officers

SUBJECT:

**Implementation of the new staff Performance Appraisal
Report Forms within the Public Service.**

DATE: 29th November, 1979

I have to inform you that approval is given for the implementation of the new Staff Performance Appraisal Report forms within the Public Service as from 1st December, 1979, inclusive. The forms are as follows:-

- Form "A I" Senior Administrative Staff Performance Appraisal Report.
- Form "A 2" Junior Administrative and Clerical Staff Performance Appraisal Report.
- Form "B" Professional and Technical Staff Performance Appraisal Report.

2. Attached hereto is a copy of the 'Guidelines' in the preparation of Staff Performance Appraisal Reports, which should be carefully read before any step is taken in preparing annual staff reports on employees.

3. It is therefore suggested that Personnel Officers and those officers who are responsible for the personnel functions within your Ministries/Departments should arrange for all supervising officers who will be required to complete staff reports on their subordinates to be given the necessary guidance with a view to ensuring inter alia that a general understanding in the assessment of staff is achieved.

4. Please indicate how many of the individual forms, that is A1, A2 and B will be required in your Ministry/Department so that these can be made available.

A.R. Brutus,
For Permanent Secretary,
Public Service Ministry.

GUIDELINES IN THE PREPARATION OF STAFF

PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL REPORTS

The appraising of staff performance is a duty which has to be undertaken by most public servants at some time during their careers. How well it is done depends on the personal qualities of the Report Officer and, in particular, on the soundness of his/her judgement and the impartiality with which he/she approaches the task.

2. In order to standardize the system of staff performance appraisal throughout the Public Service, training of reporting officers is essential. No officer should report on staff until the officer has received some training on how intended to be used as a substitute for training; they should however be read every time that reports have to be made, as a reminder of some points to be borne in mind.

The Objective of Staff Performance

Appraisal Report

3. Staff Reports are made to ensure that the qualities of the staff are properly and justly evaluated so that, as people develop, they will have a reasonable chance of moving to better work and securing promotion. In addition to this, they provide the following data:-

- (i) A continuous record of performance by which an officer's progress – or lack of it – can be judged;
- (ii) They indicate the officer's capacity or – incapacity – to perform his present job;
- (iii) They indicate the officer's suitability for other jobs within or outside the Ministry/Department;
- (iv) They provide information to help in selection and promotion;
- (v) They are a useful source of information in general establishment matters – such as efficiency, training, conduct and discipline cases, retention of services beyond normal retiring age, etc.;
- (vi) They are helpful in career planning;
- (vii) They provide an overall picture of the standards prevailing in a Ministry or a Department at a given time.

The Report should therefore contain an assessment of how the officer performed his duties throughout the period covered by the report and an estimate of his potential, together with a recommendation as to how the potential might be best developed.

Reporting Officer

4. The Reporting Officer should be at least one grade above the officer reported on. In reporting, the Reporting Officer should ask himself three (3) main questions:-

- (a) What does the officer's job consist of?
- (b) How effectively does the officer do it?
- (c) What does this tell the Reporting Officer about him/her?

In order to enable these questions to be answered, the Reporting Officer must have established an effective working relationship with the person reported on. In cases where the officer reported on served under various supervisors during the period of report, the present supervising officer should write up the report, after consulting with the other supervisors of the reportee for the period in question.

Reviewing Officer

5. The Reviewing Officer should be at least two grades above the officer reported on. To provide a safeguard against bias or lack of experience of the Reporting Officer, the report must be completed by the Reviewing Officer. He is usually the immediate superior of the Reporting Officer and has the task of reviewing the report. The Reviewing Officer's duty is:-

- (a) To ensure, as far as possible, consistency as between reporting officers under his control;
- (b) To train Reporting Officers by discussion and to give the benefit of his wider experience;
- (c) To provide a second opinion on the person reported on, with particular regard to his suitability for promotion and potential

Where the Reviewing Officer does not agree with the Reporting Officer on any particular point he should discuss with the Reporting Officer the reasons for the disagreement. He should never delete the Reporting Officer's marking and substitute his own. Neither should he merely add his own marking without comment.

When assessments differ, the Reviewing Officer first objective will be to find out the evidence on which the Reporting Officer made his assessments. At the end of the discussion the Reviewing Officer should either confirm that he and the Reporting Officer are now in agreement, or indicate where they still differ.

In no circumstances should he ask the Reporting Officer to amend his original markings.

Staff Performance Appraisal Report Forms

6. For the purpose of assessing and comparing reports and ensuring that certain important aspects of the reportee's character, and performance of his duties as well as the development of his potential are reported upon, the following prescribed forms are to be used:-

- FORM A 1 - For Senior Administrative grade including positions graded on salary range A24 and above.
- FORM A 2 - For Junior Administrative and Clerical grade in respect of positions graded on salary range A23 and below.
- FORM B - For all Professional and Technical positions.
- *FORM C - For Electronic Data Processing/Accounting Machine Operators.
- *FORM D - For Telephone Operators: Clerk-Stenographers and Typist Clerks.
- *FORM E - For Traders and Labour Services in respect of positions graded on salary range A14 and below.

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INSTRUCTIONS ON THE USE OF FORMS

Section A:

Officers who have been acting in excess of four (4) months in respect of the period reported on should be reported on in their acting capacities.

Sections B & C are self-explanatory.

Section D:

Since it is the reportee's actual performance which will be assessed due care must be given in listing his duties. The list of duties in order of importance should be drawn up wherever possible by the officer reported on and agreed with the Reporting Officer. If this is not practicable, the list should be prepared following joint consultation between the Reporting

Officer and reportee. Where a number of people are employed on similar duties and an approved job description has been established, then the Reporting Officer has only to confirm with the officer reported on whether the job description accurately reflects the duties carried out, add or subtract other duties as necessary and agree on the order of importance. The list of duties and order of importance should normally be agreed at the beginning of the period covered by the report. It will make for easier understanding and for assessment especially in respect of items 2, 3 and 4 of Section F (as in Form A2), if the duties are recorded in separate paragraphs.

7. Sometimes, the Reporting Officer and the reportee may not agree on the list of duties or their relative importance. It is important that any disagreement should be recorded because a person's own opinion about what the job comprises needs to be on record.

Rating Staff Performance

8. The rating system herein requires the appraisal of the reportee in terms of his or her actual performance. It is essential, therefore, that personal bias and snap judgement be replaced by serious and careful analysis.

9. The rating scaled is explained under each factor. This explanation is intended as a guide and may not cover every circumstance. Study the definitions given for each factor and the specifications for each level (as indicated in the boxes). Select that level which best describes your judgement of the officer, place a check-mark in the box immediately opposite the level chosen.

10. There may be instances where a factor is not quite relevant to the duties performed by the officer. Where cases as such occur the Reporting Officer should insert 'NOT APPLICABLE' against the factor(s). In other words the Reporting Officer is required to rate the performance of the reportee only where appropriate in this Section.

11. Marking(s) in Box A should be conveyed in writing copied to Secretary, Public Service Commission and to the officer reported on.

Overall Assessment

12. The overall assessment relates to the way in which the duties as a whole have been carried out. If the officer spent most of the year on a job regarded as proper to a grade other than his substantive grade (this should be clear from the record in Section D). The assessment should relate to the standard expected in that job. If during the period, his time has been divided more or less equally between posts normally filled by officers or different grades, the Reporting Officer must do his best to report on how the work was done on the whole. Whenever, during a reporting period, a person has spent time in posts of different grade levels, the Reporting Officer should add a remark against his overall assessment which will make absolutely clear the grade level to which his assessment predominantly applies.

13. The overall assessment should not be altered to take account of any factors outside the person's control which have affected performance; the standard achieved is the only factor to be considered. It cannot, however, be strongly emphasized that all special factors, including any personal disabilities, which may have affected performance must be indicated. This can include a remark about the 'weight' of the job i.e. whether the duties are regarded as more or less onerous than the average for the grade in the Ministry/Department.

14. The determination of the overall level of assessment must be seriously considered as there is a strong human tendency to be swayed by outstanding characteristics of the officer reported on.

15. The assessment of the factors of qualities and the performance as well as the overall assessment appraisal of the reportee are based on a five-level system. It would therefore be generally expected in terms of consistency that an officer who has been accorded a predominantly level C rating in (say Section E as in Form A2) should not be appraised in his overall performance as VERY GOOD or UNACCEPTABLE.

16. A marking in the Box UNACCEPTABLE must be communicated in writing to the officer reported on.

Training Needs

17. This section also related to another aspect of the officer's performance; it can help to identify training needs or to indicate that the officer is in a job for which he is not well suited of which does not make use of all his good qualities. Training should therefore not be recommended indiscriminately – the Reporting Officer should consider what the officer

needs in order to be more effective immediately or in the foreseeable future. The analysis under item 3 of this section can be great help in deciding on such needs. These needs should be expressed as precisely as possible e.g. "The officer needs training which will help him to put his thought in a logical sequence before writing minutes and letters" is better than "The officer needs a course in minute and letter writing." Reporting Officers should ensure that they record any views expressed about training needs by the officer reported on. Such information should be passed on to the Training Division of the Public Service Ministry, but only in the case that the type of training required falls to be dealt with by that Ministry.

Fitness for Promotion

18. This section also calls for a forecast of the capacity of the reportee to undertake higher duties. There are three quite distinct sub-headings:-

- (a) Very good promotional material – should be used only if the Reviewing Officer is fully satisfied that the officer will do very well indeed in the next higher grade and that given further exposure and training he is likely to advance to even higher grades.
- (b) Good promotional material means that the officer will be able, given experience and training to perform the duties of the next higher grade competently.
- (c) Has marginal potential for promotion implies that the officer, even given further training and experience, is unlikely to perform competently at the next higher grade.

Appraisal Interview

19. This occasion, besides being used for discussing the ratings with the officer reported on (who should only be allowed to see up to Section F as in Form A2 of the completed form) should provide an opportunity to discuss with the officer-

- (i) The work done over the period reported on.
- (ii) The problem(s) that have arisen.
- (iii) Ways in which performance on the job might be improved in the future.

It should also provide the officer with a chance to express his own comments about the job and the way he sees it and to talk about the development of his job experience in future. The emphasis should be a two-way exchange of information – a problem-solving approach to difficulties and not simply letting the officer know how he stands – important though this is.

20. The interview should not be treated as a formality. It is an opportunity for human contact and can do much to encourage and sustain performance. Even for those officers who have reached their highest position or who are close to retirement, the interview can be helpful in re-assuring them that their work is still necessary and important.

21. The interview should be conducted by the Reviewing Officer and if necessary with the Reporting Officer present. The interviewer should have at his fingertips all relevant details about the officer and he should know the main duties of the job and the officer's performance of these duties. He should also know what advice has been given previously and what action has been taken.

22. The interviewer should also prepare an agenda with perhaps six headings:-

- 1. Explain purpose of interview;
- 2. Discuss the job situation;
- 3. Give praise for good work and mention areas of weakness;
- 4. Agree on the objectives for the future performance;
- 5. Talk about the officer's interests both within and outside the Service in so far as these are relevant to this job;
- 6. Review the discussion.

By the end of the interview the office should have a clear idea of this present performance and plan for the future.

23. After the interview the Reviewing Officer should write down briefly the salient features of the interview and what action, if any, is to be pursued.

24. The Reviewing Officer should ensure that the reportee sign the form before the end of the interview.

Head of Department Recommendation

25. Heads of Department should try to ensure that the assessments of the Reporting and Countersigning Officers have been correctly and uniformly done. They should then add further remarks if they wish to do so especially when reports carry ratings such as "OUTSTANDING" or "UNACCEPTABLE".

Handling of Reports

26. Performance Appraisal Reports on completion by Ministries/Departments should be submitted under confidential cover to the Secretary, Public Service Commission.

27. Finally, it should be borne in mind that the success of any appraisal system depends on two factors:-

- (a) The commitment of top management; and
- (b) The involvement and acceptable of line managers.