



## ADS Chapter 461

# Foreign Service and Senior Foreign Service Performance Management and Development Programs

Partial Revision Date: 05/07/2024  
Responsible Office: HCTM/FSC  
File Name: 461\_050724

**Functional Series 400 – Human Resources**  
**ADS 461 – Foreign Service and Senior Foreign Service Employee**  
**Performance Management and Development Programs**  
**POC for ADS 461: See [ADS 501maa, ADS Chapters and Point of Contact List](#)**

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## ADS 461 – Foreign Service and Senior Foreign Service Employee Performance Management and Development Programs

### 461.1

### OVERVIEW

Effective Date: 05/07/2024

This chapter provides the policies and procedures for the performance management and development programs for Foreign Service (FS) and Senior Foreign Service (SFS) employees. The FS Employee Performance & Development (EP&D) program and SFS Employee Evaluation Program (EEP) are two separate performance management programs through which USAID involves its employees in improving organizational effectiveness in the accomplishment of the Agency's mission and goals by:

- Establishing clear linkages among the Agency's goals and priorities (e.g., Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility [DEIA]), Operating Unit (OU) strategic objectives, and employees' work;
- Improving communications about the relationship between organizational objectives and individual career goals and performance;
- Developing the capacity of employees to perform;
- Engaging employees in ongoing feedback and coaching to motivate them to work more effectively, improve their skills, and prepare themselves for increased responsibilities;
- Correcting deficiencies and providing both positive and constructive feedback; and
- Providing a basis for cash awards, bonuses, and pay adjustments based on performance, and other non-monetary awards for performance.

Employee performance and development is a shared responsibility between employees and their supervisors/Rating Officials (ROs).

This chapter applies to all FS and SFS employees under the authority of the [FS Act of 1980, As Amended](#). This includes FS and SFS employees assigned outside of the Agency who have reemployment rights to USAID, as well as Civil Service (CS) and other employees serving on non-career Foreign Service limited appointments. Any RO of an FS or SFS employee who rates or reviews FS employees' performance is required to follow this guidance.

This chapter is not applicable to Foreign Service Nationals (FSNs), Personal Service Contractors (PSCs), CS employees (including Schedule C employees and employees whose appointments are administratively determined [AD]), Presidential Appointees, Senior Executive Service (SES) employees, or experts and consultants under the authority of [5 USC 43](#) and [5 CFR 430](#). See [ADS 462, Employee Evaluation Program](#).

Civil Service for the performance management program for CS employees.

ADS 463, Foreign Service and Senior Foreign Service Promotion Eligibility Requirements and Procedures contains information on the FS and SFS Promotion Boards and Performance Standards Board.

## **461.2 PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES**

Effective Date: 05/07/2024

a. The **Chief Human Capital Officer (CHCO), or designee**, is responsible for the following:

1. Approving the FS performance management program, including changes to policies;
2. Overseeing administration of the EP&D program;
3. Exercising authority to make exceptions to policies, except those prohibited by law and negotiated agreement, hold actions in abeyance, or waive actions based on the needs of the Agency and in accordance with this ADS chapter; and
4. Determining appropriate action for non-compliance with the provisions of this ADS chapter.

b. The **Office of Human Capital and Talent Management, Policy for Performance Systems Management, Center for Performance Excellence (HCTM/PPSM/CPE)** is responsible for:

1. Administering the EP&D program to include the program's formulation, monitoring, modification, and training;
2. Ensuring compliance with all aspects of the EP&D program: and
3. Determining what action is appropriate (including referral to HCTM's Office of Employee and Labor Relations) in cases where required procedures are not followed.

c. The **Office of Human Capital and Talent Management, Office of Employee and Labor Relations (HCTM/ELR)** is responsible for supporting supervisors when employee misconduct issues arise, including potential violations of this ADS chapter.

d. The **Office of General Counsel/ Ethics and Administration (GC/EA)** is responsible for:

1. Reviewing Performance Improvement Plans (PIP); and
2. Providing legal support to HCTM and supervisors regarding all aspects of this

ADS chapter.

- e. The **Principal Officer** of an OU is responsible for:
1. Managing their OU's EP&D program, to include communicating objectives, goals, policies, procedures, and deadlines;
  2. Ensuring compliance with the EP&D program;
  3. Designating employees to play particular roles in the program; and
  4. Keeping HCTM/CPE abreast of important information concerning the EP&D program.
- f. The **Reviewing Official** (normally the supervisor of the employee's RO but, in some cases, this may be a Principal Officer of the OU, or their designee) is responsible for:
1. Reviewing and either concurring or not concurring with a determination by a RO that an employee is performing at a satisfactory or an unsatisfactory level at the end of the performance period (as documented in the FS Annual Performance Evaluation [APE] form); and
  2. Deciding whether to concur or not to concur with an RO's determination about whether an employee failed a PIP.
- g. The **Rating Official (RO)** is responsible for:
1. Working closely with individual employees throughout the performance appraisal cycle to create work and skill development objectives; and
  2. Evaluating performance, providing feedback, and revising expectations and objectives as needed (see sections 461.3.1.4, 461.3.1.7, and 461.3.1.8 for detailed RO responsibilities).
- h. **Employees** are responsible for actively participating in their own performance and development planning from beginning to end. This includes:
1. Helping to develop and document their work and skill development objectives;
  2. Identifying and working to address professional development priorities;
  3. Working to meet expectations and objectives in good faith;
  4. Actively participating in review and feedback discussions;

5. Documenting quarterly conversation dates in the Quarterly Conversation Record (QCR); and
6. **Completing their Annual Accomplishment Record (AAR) and APE at the end of the performance appraisal cycle.**

i. The **Administrative Management Specialist (AMS)** of each Bureau and Independent Office (B/IO), **Executive Officer (EXO)**, or **other employee designated by the Principal Officer** is responsible for:

1. Providing guidance to employees and their supervisors on EP&D requirements and the ePerformance System;
2. Tracking adherence to requirements and ensuring **the employees'** AAR and APE are completed, signed, and submitted in ePerformance; and
3. **Ensuring the approved Operating Unit Context Statement (OUCS) is uploaded to the appropriate location in ePerformance.**

j. The **Appraisal Committee (AC) for the SFS** is responsible for:

1. Reviewing and discussing AEFs with ROs, providing input to the evaluation, and formally approving the AEF;
2. Reviewing the Skills Assessment if requested by the employee or RO, or the AC; and
3. Providing assistance and helping resolve conflicts for ROs and employees.

### **461.3 POLICY DIRECTIVES AND REQUIRED PROCEDURES**

Effective Date: 06/26/2018

Please note this section is broken down into policy directives and required procedures for (1) FS employees and (2) the SFS Employee Evaluation Program.

#### **461.3.1 Policy and Procedures for Foreign Service Employees**

##### **461.3.1.1 FS Employee Performance & Development Program (EP&D) Details**

Effective Date: 04/25/2022

Implementation of the EP&D Program begins with the Principal Officer of each OU. The Principal Officer:

- Establishes overall OU strategic objectives and communicates to employees the relationships between Agency goals and the OU's strategic objectives;
- Communicates information on the EP&D process to all employees in the unit,

including establishing and publicizing internal deadlines and procedures for completing each phase of the process;

- Emphasizes the importance of supervisors and employees engaging in ongoing feedback and coaching, addressing performance deficiencies, and establishing work objectives and expectations that are relevant to the OU's priorities and appropriate to the employees' class levels to guide, motivate, develop, and assess employees over the course of the performance appraisal cycle/period;
- Ensures the OU's adherence to Agency policies, procedures, and schedules governing the EP&D program; and
- Notifies HCTM/CPE when employees in the OU fail to adhere to the policies, procedures, and schedules of the EP&D program (i.e., a supervisor fails to hold quarterly conversations, an employee fails to cooperate in the EP&D process, etc.).

In turn, HCTM/CPE in coordination with HCTM/ELR initiates appropriate action against Agency management officials and employees who fail to comply with the policies, procedures, and schedules of the EP&D program. HCTM/CPE also monitors implementation and evaluates the effectiveness of the EP&D program and adjusts policies, procedures, guidelines and training as needed.

To understand the policies and procedures for each part of the EP&D cycle, employees must first familiarize themselves with all aspects of the program.

#### **461.3.1.2 FS EP&D Cycle** Effective Date: 05/07/2024

USAID has established a performance appraisal cycle for the FS EP&D process that runs for one year from April 1 through March 31. The RO for the employee must complete and sign the APE anytime between March 1 and **the first Thursday in April**. However, the APE may be completed up to 120 days prior to the end of the cycle if an employee will be on extended leave or in language training at the end of the **performance appraisal cycle/period**. In these cases, the RO should ensure the APE is completed before the employee leaves. The annual performance appraisal cycle may be extended **as necessary** to allow an employee to complete a PIP before they receive their official rating of record for the performance appraisal cycle.

#### **461.3.1.3 FS EP&D Quarterly Conversation Record (QCR)** Effective Date: 05/07/2024

The RO and employee **must** use the EP&D QCR in the automated performance management tool, ePerformance, throughout the year to record work objectives, skill development objectives, notes from quarterly conversations, and dates of those conversations.



The QCR contains the three following sections:

- **Section 1 – Employee Information**

The employee completes this section at the beginning of the performance appraisal cycle/period or ensures that pre-populated fields are correct.

- **Section 2 – Objectives**

During the first quarter of the performance appraisal cycle/period or start of a new assignment/supervisor, the employee and RO work together to set work objectives and one skill development objective, and through a conversation, clarify expectations around how and when the work **must** be accomplished. The objectives can be modified throughout the year to reflect changing priorities and circumstances.

- **Section 3 – Quarterly Conversations**

On a quarterly basis, the employee and RO meet to discuss priorities, progress, and performance. The QCR for each quarter includes text boxes with conversation prompts the employee and supervisor may use to frame their conversation and record notes. Once the conversation has taken place, the employee enters the date of the conversation in the appropriate block, and both parties must confirm the date before the conversation for that quarter can be recorded as having been completed. If either party does not agree that a substantive conversation took place on the date entered, they need to schedule a second conversation. If either party fails to confirm a conversation date by the last day of the quarter, the record for that quarter reverts to “read only” and the status will reflect that one or both did not confirm a conversation date.

**a. Objectives**

Objectives are prepared jointly by the RO and employee and consist of statements about performance expectations and results to be achieved.

In most cases, the RO and employee draft objectives and establish expectations during the first Quarterly Conversation of the performance period. This conversation can occur any time between April 1 and June 30. However, any time an employee receives a new supervisor or starts a new assignment, the supervisor and employee should meet within 30 days of the start date to discuss expectations and objectives. Throughout the performance appraisal cycle, objectives should be updated or modified as needed to reflect new priorities or changing circumstances. Objectives are intended to serve supervisors and employees by guiding work activities and performance conversations; they are not included in the documentation submitted to the Promotion Boards.

Employees in language training, long-term training, and assignments with non-USAID supervisors are not required to complete the QCR during these assignments but are encouraged to seek quarterly feedback on an informal basis.

There are two types of objectives: Work-related Objectives and Skill Development Objectives.

- 1) **Work-related Objectives:** Generally, two work-related objectives are recommended, although more may be appropriate if an individual has multiple separate work streams or projects or if the RO otherwise determines that more are necessary to provide sufficient notice to the employee about their work expectations. The RO and employee should discuss what makes sense based on the nature of the work and the context in which the work is performed; however, the supervisor has the final decision on the objectives. Objectives can be long term and/or short term.
- 2) **Skill Development Objectives:** Employees and their ROs must define at least one skill development objective for the performance appraisal cycle/period. This objective may relate to the development of technical/substantive expertise per the backstop-specific competencies contained in the [Agency's Competency and Proficiency Catalog](#), or the improvement of a skill or subskill in the, [ADS 461mad, FS/SFS Skills Framework](#). Feedback received by the employee at the end of the last performance appraisal cycle/period is particularly relevant to establishing the skill development objective for the new performance appraisal cycle/period.

#### b. EP&D Quarterly Conversations

The EP&D quarterly conversations are mandatory informal meetings between the employee and RO. Although it is expected that conversations should occur frequently throughout the performance appraisal period, at least one conversation per quarter is mandatory and the date of the conversation must be documented in the QCR. There are no set requirements for the format or topics of discussion during these check-ins, other than the requirements that (a) objectives are discussed in the first quarter of the appraisal period or new assignment, and (b) performance during the appraisal period, including skill proficiency levels, is discussed in the last quarter of the performance appraisal period. General quarterly conversation topics may include:

- Performance and progress to date;
- Circumstances that may warrant adding or modifying objectives, expectations, or priorities;
- 360 feedback that the supervisor may have received, and any recent Multisource Rating summaries;
- Performance problems that have occurred and possible remedial actions;

- Developmentally-oriented topics, such as:
  - a. Opportunities to deepen skills in the FS/SFS Skills Framework.
  - b. Strategies to master technical competencies.
  - c. Training courses to be taken.
  - d. Alignment of work with USAID's mission and strategy.
  - e. Behaviors to start/continue/stop in order to achieve results.
- Challenges the employee has encountered; and
- Resources or support the employee may need from the supervisor or the work unit to succeed in achieving work objectives and meeting expectations.

The QCR provides a convenient place to record notes from these conversations.

Consistent performance feedback is the best way to prevent performance problems from developing. In most cases, an open line of communication between the RO and employee can resolve or improve performance problems. If an employee is not performing satisfactorily against established work objectives and expectations or is displaying deficiencies in specific FS skill areas or technical backstop competencies, the RO must conduct a counseling session with the employee and inform them that their work is not meeting standards. If an employee continues to fail to meet performance expectations during the performance appraisal cycle/period, the RO should consult with HCTM/ELR to establish that the issue is performance and not misconduct, and to confirm that a formal PIP is warranted.

#### **461.3.1.4 Annual Review Conversation** Effective Date: 05/07/2024

The Annual Review Conversation occurs **no later than the first Thursday in April**. To prepare for this conversation, the supervisor should review notes on performance (quarterly conversations, 360 feedback, etc.) throughout the year, and consider how best to encourage honest self-reflection and capture lessons learned that can support the employee's professional development in the future.

The employee should also reflect on past performance and future career goals in preparing for the conversation, in addition to completing their AAR. The employee and supervisor should discuss the AAR before the employee submits it to the supervisor for signature.

The supervisor must also complete the [FS Skills Assessment form \(AID 461-3\)](#) during the Annual Review Conversation and confirm the date of the conversation in the QCR. The automated performance management tool, ePerformance, tracks the completion

status of the end-of-cycle forms (the AAR and the APE) that must be reviewed and signed by the supervisor.

Ongoing or systemic performance issues should not be addressed for the first time in an end-of-year review conversation unless the RO only became aware of the issues in the current quarter.

**461.3.1.5 Foreign Service/Senior Foreign Service Skills Framework**  
Effective Date: 05/07/2024

ROs must use the [ADS 461mad, FS/SFS Skills Framework](#) to prepare for annual review conversations and completion of the FS **APE** form.

The FS/SFS Skills Framework defines all the skill and sub-skill areas and provides proficiency indicators that define how each sub-skill should be demonstrated across the class levels.

**461.3.1.6 Foreign Service Skills Assessment**  
Effective Date: 05/07/2024

The [FS Skills Assessment Form \(AID 461-3\)](#) must be completed by the RO at least once per performance appraisal cycle **no later than the first Thursday in April**. The RO must use the FS/SFS Skills Framework in completing this evaluation.

The FS Skills Assessment contains the two following sections:

- **Section 1 – Employee Information**  
The RO completes this section with the appropriate information.
- **Section 2 – FS Skills Assessment**  
The RO completes this section and rates the employee's performance against the standards for their personal class.

The purpose of the FS Skills Assessment is to identify the extent to which an employee is performing at the level expected for their personal class as described in the FS/SFS Skills Framework, and to provide a foundation for discussing the employee's growth and development. This assessment is not part of the official rating of record and it is not provided to the Promotion Board.

HCTM requires employees and supervisors to discuss the employee's career development goals and complete an Individual Learning and Training Plan (ILTP) annually. For efficiency and timeliness, supervisors should consider having this discussion in conjunction with establishing the employee's objectives in the first quarterly conversation of the rating cycle. The staff in HCTM's Center for Professional Development (HCTM/CPD) is available to offer assistance to supervisors and employees in identifying training and learning activities for the ILTP. For more information please refer to [ADS 458, Training and Career/Professional](#)

Development.**461.3.1.7 Foreign Service Annual Performance Evaluation Form**

Effective Date: 05/07/2024

The online [FS Annual Performance Evaluation form \(AID 461-1\)](#) must be completed by the RO and Second Level Reviewer (if required) no later than the first Thursday in April as part of the annual evaluation. The employee must have been in a Foreign Service position in the Agency for a minimum of 120 days **during the performance appraisal cycle/period** to receive an **APE**. If the employee has been in a Foreign Service position for less than 120 days, an **APE** is not required. The **APE** may be completed up to 120 days prior to the end of the cycle if an employee will be on extended leave or language training at the end of the **performance appraisal cycle/period**.

The FS **APE** form contains the three following sections:

- **Section 1 – Employee Information**

The RO completes this section with the appropriate information or corrects any pre-populated information.

- **Section 2 – Annual Overall Evaluation**

The RO and Second Level Reviewer (if required) completes this section, which includes the rating of the employee's overall performance throughout the performance appraisal cycle/period. The rating scale in Section 2 includes two options:

- 1) **Satisfactory:** A rating of Satisfactory indicates that the FSO consistently met work expectations established for their role, made substantive contributions to the work unit, and consistently demonstrated the level of proficiency required for their class on the FS skills and subskills throughout the performance appraisal cycle/period.
- 2) **Unsatisfactory:** A rating of Unsatisfactory indicates that the FSO did not meet many of the established work expectations for their role, their contributions to the work unit were minimal or deficient based on their class and position, and/or the FSO did not consistently demonstrate the level of proficiency required for their class on the FS skills and subskills throughout the performance appraisal cycle.

An Unsatisfactory rating may only be provided if the employee has received at least one counseling session, **a written notification of unsatisfactory performance**, and an unsatisfactory assessment **upon completion of a formal PIP**. In this case, the RO must provide a narrative explanation, including a rationale for the unsatisfactory rating and which actions were taken to address poor performance.

- **Section 3 – Signatures for Annual Performance Evaluation (APE)**

The employee, RO, and Second Level Review (if required) complete this section.

Prior to signing, an Annual Review Conversation must be held in which the employee and supervisor discuss the employee's performance against work expectations, achievements, contributions, strengths, and skill development areas.

The employee **must sign and date the APE** to acknowledge that: 1) an Annual Review Conversation was held with their RO and the ratings from the FS Skills Assessment were discussed, 2) the employee reviewed the overall evaluation with the RO and provided comments (if applicable), and 3) the employee reviewed comments from the Second-Level Reviewer (if applicable). By signing, the employee is not necessarily indicating concurrence with the comments.

The RO **must sign and date the APE** to indicate the Skills Assessment and overall evaluation were discussed with the employee and the rating accurately represents the employee's performance during the performance appraisal cycle.

If the RO gives the employee an unsatisfactory rating, the dates of the PIP must be included and a Second Level Reviewer (typically the RO's supervisor) must indicate whether they concur with the rating. The Reviewer should indicate concurrence or non-concurrence based on a review of PIP documentation, the quarterly check-in documentation, FS Skill Assessment, and the employee's AAR. If the Reviewer does not concur, a narrative explanation is required, but non-concurrence does not overturn the unsatisfactory rating from the RO.

All signatures must be obtained by **no later than the first Thursday in April** after the end of the performance appraisal cycle.

#### **461.3.1.8 Annual Accomplishment Record (AAR)**

Effective Date: 05/07/2024

The **Annual Accomplishment Record, (AAR) (AID 461-5)** documents the employee's individual accomplishments and contributions over the course of a performance appraisal cycle. If the employee had the same supervisor for the entire year, **only one AAR must be completed and signed** by the first Thursday in April, unless HCTM officially announces a different deadline through Agency Notices. However, **when** there is a change of supervisor and the employee is working under **the new** supervisor for at least 90 calendar days before the end of the performance appraisal cycle, a new AAR must be started. The intent is to ensure the supervisor responsible for the employee when accomplishments and contributions were completed is the supervisor who signs

the AAR. If the employee is in an assignment or under the supervision of an RO for less than 90 calendar days during the rating cycle, an AAR is not required for that period of time.

The requirement to complete an AAR for assignments of **at least 90 calendar days** or more applies to employees in long-term training and non-traditional assignments. It does not apply to employees in language training. Employees in language training are not expected to complete an AAR for that time period.

Instructions for obtaining signatures from supervisors without access to USAID systems are included in ePerformance.

The AAR consists of the following four sections:

- **Section 1 – Employee Information**

The employee completes this section with the appropriate information.

- **Section 2 – Position Information**

The employee completes this section, providing **brief descriptions of position duties, responsibilities, and exceptional or unusual challenges faced**. More general information about the Missions or B/IOs **is** included in the annual OUCS, which the Missions and B/IOs **must** prepare each year at the end of the performance cycle.

- **Section 3 – Significant Contributions and Accomplishments**

The employee completes this section to briefly (no more than 75 word limit per block, first-person language) describe significant contributions and accomplishments, including contributions through management or support of key operational activities. It is expected an employee will have up to five accomplishments for a full performance appraisal cycle, so AARs covering a shorter time period are not expected to include five accomplishments, although the number to include (up to five) is left up to the employee.

Employees and ROs are encouraged to discuss and revise entries as needed until both parties agree Section 3 accurately represents the employee's significant contributions and accomplishments during the performance appraisal cycle.

If the employee and RO cannot come to an agreement on the accomplishments described, the RO can decline to sign and indicate the reason in the block provided; the employee can then also provide additional input.

- **Section 4 – Signature**

Once Sections 1, 2, and 3 have been completed and reviewed by both the

employee and the RO, the RO must sign and date the AAR. The signature indicates agreement that the AAR accurately represents the employee's significant contributions and accomplishments while they were under the supervision of the RO during this performance appraisal cycle. If the RO declines to sign the AAR, they must check the box indicating this, and provide an explanation.

If the RO declines to sign in Section 4, the employee has an opportunity to provide a short statement with relevant information.

#### **461.3.1.9 Submission of Annual Performance Materials**

Effective Date: 05/07/2024

The two forms that must be signed by supervisors in the Employee Performance and Development process (the AAR and APE) can be completed, signed, and stored in ePerformance. When an employee or RO does not have access to ePerformance, forms may be downloaded, signed, scanned, and returned via email to the employee's EXO or AMS officer. The AMS, EXO, or other employee designated by the Principal Officer must then follow procedures outlined in ePerformance to ensure the forms are uploaded to the appropriate location in ePerformance. **AARs or APEs** received via email must also be forwarded to HCTM/CPE for retention in the employee's Official Personnel File (eOPF). The AMS, EXO, or other employee designated by the Principal Officer must also ensure the approved **OUCS** is uploaded to the appropriate location in ePerformance.

HCTM/CPE annually issues an Agency Notice with instructions and due dates for submitting materials for the Promotion Boards. The Principal Officer of an Operating Unit is responsible for ensuring all annual performance materials are submitted to HCTM/CPE in a timely fashion.

Any AARs or APEs submitted after the prescribed due date must include a statement explaining the reasons for the late submission. HCTM/CPE reviews these statements to determine whether the delays have been adequately explained. If HCTM determines that the delay was not justified, HCTM/CPE must refer the matter to **HCTM/ELR and** the CHCO, or designee, who must decide what action should be taken.

#### **461.3.1.10 Soliciting Input from 360 Degree Input Sources**

Effective Date: 05/07/2024

ROs are expected to solicit timely, specific and developmentally oriented feedback from a variety of sources throughout the year. They must focus their questions on job-relevant discussions of work and skills and ensure feedback providers have been in a position to observe and assess employees in key situations. It is the RO's responsibility to reconcile any differences of opinion and determine which viewpoint is most likely to be valuable for the employee's learning and development. ROs are prohibited from directly or indirectly soliciting feedback from implementing partners on the performance of **Contracting Officers/Agreement Officers** (COs/AOs) and **Contracting Officer's**



**Representatives/Agreement Officer's Representatives** (CORs/AORs). It is not appropriate for the RO to convene a meeting of 360 degree input sources to discuss an employee in order to resolve conflicting input.

ROs' notes on feedback from 360 degree input sources are personal working notes. There is no requirement to maintain these notes or provide them to the employee. However, if significant performance problems are identified during the process that result in an employee failing to meet their work objectives or being deficient in one or more skill areas, the RO must maintain supporting documentation obtained from all sources.

#### **461.3.1.11 Exceptional Performance** Effective Date: 06/26/2018

ROs are encouraged to provide timely and appropriate feedback and recognition to employees who demonstrate exceptional performance. Feedback is always best provided as soon after the action or occurrence as possible. Recognition may be provided through acknowledgement of the special act or contribution privately to the employee, publicly in staff meetings, and/or through the Agency's awards program (see [ADS 491, USAID Incentive Awards Program](#) and Mandatory Reference [491maa, Descriptions of Incentive Awards](#)). Recognition for sustained exceptional performance can also be made through the awards program and in the RO's written statement on the Promotion Input Form when employees are eligible for promotion. [ADS 470, Pay Under the Foreign Service](#) provides the policies and process for Meritorious Step Increases.

#### **461.3.1.12 Deficient Performance** Effective Date: 05/07/2024

If an employee is not performing satisfactorily against established work objectives or is displaying deficiencies in specific skill areas, the RO must refer to [ADS 464, Foreign Service Performance-Based Actions](#), for detailed guidance and should seek support from HCTM/ELR.

### **461.3.2 Policy and Procedures for Senior Foreign Service (SFS) Employees**

#### **461.3.2.1 SFS Employee Evaluation Program (EEP) Details** Effective Date: 05/07/2024

Implementation of the EEP for SFS begins with the Principal Officer of each OU. The Principal Officer:

- Establishes overall OU strategic objectives and communicates to employees the relationships among Agency goals and the OU's strategic objectives;
- Communicates information on the evaluation process to all employees in the unit, including establishing and publicizing internal deadlines and procedures for

completing each phase of the process;

- Emphasizes the importance of providing ongoing feedback and coaching and the value of establishing and implementing performance plans that are relevant to the Operating Unit's priorities and appropriate to the employees' class levels to guide, motivate, develop and assess employees over the course of the **performance appraisal cycle**;
- Ensures the OU's adherence to Agency policies, procedures, and schedules governing the EEP; and
- Notifies HCTM/CPE when employees in the OU fail to adhere to the policies, procedures, and schedules of the EEP.

In turn, HCTM/CPE initiates appropriate action against Agency management officials and employees who fail to comply with the policies, procedures, and schedules of the EEP. HCTM/CPE also formulates employee evaluation policies, procedures, and guidelines after monitoring the operation and evaluating implementation of the EEP, and the related pay and awards systems affected by this program.

To understand the policies and procedures for each part of the evaluation cycle, employees must first familiarize themselves with all aspects of the EEP.

#### **461.3.2.2 SFS Employee Evaluation (EEP) Cycle**

Effective Date: 05/07/2024

USAID has established an appraisal period for Senior Foreign Service employees of one year, which runs from April 1 through March 31. The RO must complete written performance appraisals at the end of the **performance appraisal cycle and submit it by the published due date.**

The minimum appraisal period is 120 days. All employees who are on an active performance plan of 120 days or more **must** receive an **Annual Evaluation Form (AEF) Senior Foreign Service, AID 461-6 Form** at the end of their performance appraisal cycle.

#### **461.3.2.3 Rating and Reviewing Officials for Senior Foreign Service**

Effective Date: 05/07/2024

The Principal Officer of the OU designates the RO. For SFS Officers serving as Mission Directors or AID Representatives at bilateral posts, the RO is the Ambassador. ROs play an essential role in the EEP since they accomplish the following:

- Develop work objectives and performance measures for each rated employee;
- Observe, evaluate performance, and provide ongoing feedback to each employee;

- Provide negative feedback in a timely manner and in writing;
- Conduct at least one mandatory mid-cycle review with each employee;
- Review the employee's self-assessment narrative and work products, gather additional performance information from relevant sources (AIFs and other 360 degree input), draft Sections 5 and 7 of the AEF ([AID Form 461-6](#)) and the [FS Skills Assessment form \(AID 461-3\)](#);
- Submit the AEF to the AC for review and signature; and
- Discuss the final AEF and FS Skills Assessment form with each rated employee.

ROs and ACs have the authority to request the Principal Officer to forward to HCTM/CPE for appropriate disciplinary action the name of any employee who fails to adhere to the policies, procedures, and schedules of the EEP.

The Principal Officer of the OU designates Reviewing Officials only for employees who are serving as Mission Directors and Country Representatives and whose RO is the Ambassador, based on the assigned position held on the last day of the performance appraisal cycle. The State Department may designate a USAID Reviewing Official for USAID SFS employees serving as Ambassadors. Reviewing Officials are responsible for:

- Writing a statement on the contributions the Mission Director made to the Agency's mission and/or goals, using examples with reference to the SFS skills model elements;
- Describing relations between the RO and the Rated Employee; and
- Noting in their statement if they disagree with the evaluation of the RO, or if relations between the RO and the employee are strained.

#### **461.3.2.4 Appraisal Committees (ACs)**

Effective Date: 05/07/2024

ACs provide an organizational perspective of an employee's performance. The committees also ensure all AEFs are fair and objective. An AC or AC Representative is involved in every aspect of the EEP, if requested, but service by the AC members is mandatory at the end of the rating cycle.

#### **AC Functions**

Appraisal Committees are responsible for the following:

- Reviewing and signing performance plans, when requested by either the RO or

employee, and ensuring that work objectives and performance measures are reasonable and attainable;

- Reviewing substantive changes and signing mid-cycle performance reviews, when requested by the RO or employee;
- Reviewing and discussing draft AEFs and the FS Skills Assessment Form with ROs and recommending changes. This review includes:
  - 1) Ensuring ROs obtained 360 degree input and used it appropriately;
  - 2) Ensuring ROs reviewed and considered employee self- assessments; and
  - 3) Ensuring evaluations are properly prepared and are objective; and
- Recommending changes to AEFs. When the AC and RO cannot agree on appropriate language, the Principal Officer must attempt to resolve differences. If the RO and AC still do not agree, the AC may document its recommendations on the AEF, Section 8b.

### **Establishing and Staffing the Appraisal Committee**

ACs are established at the beginning of the performance appraisal cycle and must include sufficient members to enable careful review of all the OU's AEFs. If an RO for a SFS employee(s) is a member of the AC, they must not review any AEF for which they are the RO and must not participate in AC deliberations when the AC reviews the AEFs they prepared. AC members must not participate in AC deliberations over their own AEF.

The Principal Officer for each OU must establish the AC. The Officer must appoint only U.S. direct hire career employees to ACs. Foreign Service Limited employees and probationary Civil Service employees are not eligible to serve on ACs. Career candidates and FS employees appointed under the Recall Authority (Section 308 of the [Foreign Service Act of 1980, as amended](#)) are eligible to serve on ACs, but there can only be one of each per AC and neither can serve as the committee chairperson.

To support the AC's review of the employee's performance, at least one member of the AC must be familiar with the work of the rated employee. AC members also must be familiar with the EEP process and able to serve as objective reviewers of the AEF documents. Large Operating Units may establish more than one AC to effectively review all employees.

#### **461.3.2.5 SFS Annual Performance Evaluation** Effective Date: 05/07/2024

The AEF ([AID Form 461-6](#)) is used to evaluate the performance of all SFS employees. The RO and AC prepare, approve, and sign all AEFs.

When completing the AEF, do not exceed the space allowed.

The AEF consists of the following eight sections:

**Section 1 – Administrative Data**

ROs complete this section, providing basic information, at the beginning of the performance appraisal cycle.

**Section 2 – Authentication of Final Annual Evaluation**

ROs complete this section by having appropriate parties sign to show the final AEF has been put in place.

**Section 3 – Role in the Organization**

ROs describe the employee's role in the organization in terms of organizational setting, continuing responsibilities, and functions within the Operating Unit, including resources managed.

**Section 4 – Performance Plan**

ROs establish one to three work objectives and no more than one to two performance measures for each work objective.

**Section 5 – Formal Mid-Point Progress Review**

RO documents mid-point progress review meeting, which includes any changes that have been made to work objectives and performance measures.

**Section 6 – Description of Accomplishments**

Employees complete this section by describing their key contributions and accomplishments during the performance appraisal cycle, including the impact they had on advancing the Operating Unit's strategic priorities.

**Section 7 – Evaluation of Performance, Skills, and Potential**

- a. ROs prepare a written assessment of the employee's performance, skills, and potential. ROs may not recommend an employee for promotion.
- b. **Reviewing Statement:** If the employee reviewed is a Mission Director or Country Representative whose AEF was completed by an Ambassador, the Assistant Administrator of the regional Bureau, or their designee, must prepare a written statement assessing the performance and contributions of the employee. The State Department may designate a Reviewing Official for USAID SFS employees serving as Ambassadors. With prior approval from the CHCO, in certain exceptional cases when the RO is not a USAID employee, a designated USAID Reviewing Official may prepare a reviewing statement for the employee.

- c. The RO assesses whether the rated employee met the **expectations** of their class (check box).
- d. The RO indicates whether the employee properly protected classified and sensitive information (check box for met/not met/N.A.).
- e. The RO indicates which 360 sources were used.
- f. The RO indicates which mandatory additional 360 sources were used (as appropriate).

#### Section 8 – AC Members and Comments

- a. AC member names should be provided in the indicated blocks in Section 8a. The AC chair must sign in Section 2 of the AEF at the completion of the AC review.
- b. If the RO does not accept the AC's recommended changes to the AEF, the AC may document its recommended changes in Section 8b. If comments are added, all AC members must sign in the appropriate box.

#### **461.3.2.6 Senior Foreign Service Performance Plans**

Effective Date: 05/07/2024

Performance plans are statements of performance expectations and results to be achieved **as** documented in Section 4 of the AEF Form (AID 461-6) and prepared by the RO in consultation with the employee. The plan informs the employee of the measures that will be used to evaluate their performance. Performance plans consist of work objectives and performance measures.

The RO **drafts** and approves the performance plan and gives it to the employee within 45 days of the beginning of the **performance appraisal cycle** or the employee's assignment to a new position. The AC reviews and signs performance plans only if requested by the employee or RO. **The employee must provide a copy of the completed and signed Section 4 of the AEF to the Administrative Management Services Lead of the home Bureau and to the EXO if serving in the field.**

#### **461.3.2.7 Senior Foreign Service Work Objectives**

Effective Date: 05/07/2024

Employees and their ROs must collaborate in the development of work objectives. Employees must have at least one work objective and no more than three. Work objectives must be characterized by the following:

- Must be within the employee's control to accomplish; and
- Must reflect the strategic and/or operational priorities of the Agency or OU.

**461.3.2.8 Senior Foreign Service Performance Measures**

Effective Date: 05/07/2024

Employees and their ROs must define no more than two performance measures for each work objective. Performance measures address quantity, quality, timeliness, or the most cost-effective or sustainable way of accomplishing the work objective.

**461.3.2.9 Review and Approval of Senior Foreign Service Performance Plans**

Effective Date: 05/07/2024

An AC Representative is assigned to each OU to serve as a liaison among employees, ROs, and the AC. The AC Representative, when requested, **completes the following actions:**

- a. Reviews, provides input, and approves performance plans for all employees in the OU; and
- b. Reviews and approves any substantive revision of work objectives or performance measures during the **performance appraisal cycle**. An employee's performance plan becomes effective when the RO and employee sign the AEF. If an employee declines to sign the AEF, the RO annotates the AEF with an "x" in the employee signature block. If this is the case, the AC Representative also signs. The date that the RO and AC Representative annotate the AEF is the date that the performance plan becomes official.

**461.3.2.10 Senior Foreign Service Progress Reviews**

Effective Date: 05/07/2024

ROs must conduct at least one progress review with each SFS employee, normally at mid-cycle during a **performance appraisal cycle**, and are encouraged to provide progress reviews to employees on a continuous basis throughout the **performance appraisal cycle**.

For the **midpoint** progress review, **SFS** employees must provide the RO with 360 degree sources (names of customers, peers, subordinates (if any), and any other person with whom they may have worked during the rating cycle) who can provide the RO with information about their performance. COs/AOs and CORs/AORs must not include implementing partners as 360-degree sources.

During progress reviews, ROs and **SFS** employees must discuss the employee's progress toward achieving work objectives. If a **SFS** employee is failing to meet a work objective, the RO must counsel the employee and document in writing their deficient performance.

ROs must document on the AEF in Section 5 – Formal Mid-Point Progress Review AEF – any revisions, additions, or deletions to work objectives or performance measures.

The RO and SFS employee must sign the AEF, indicating that a mid-cycle progress review took place. The AC Representative must be brought into the process and sign the AEF, if requested. However, if the employee has failed a work objective or is deficient in a skill area (“Not Met”), it is mandatory the RO notify the AC. If an employee declines to sign a mid-cycle review, the RO must check the box in the employee’s signature block. In this case, the AC Representative must sign. The review then becomes part of the official rating of record.

#### **461.3.2.11 Senior Foreign Service Self-Assessments**

Effective Date: 05/07/2024

At the end of the appraisal period, SFS employees must provide ROs with a written assessment of their performance during the performance appraisal cycle.

#### **461.3.2.12 360 Degree Input Sources: SFS Employee Submission of Names**

Effective Date: 05/07/2024

At the end of the appraisal period, SFS employees must provide the RO with the names of customers, peers, subordinates (if any), and any other person with whom they may have worked during the appraisal period who can provide the RO with information about their performance. ROs must contact at least three of these sources for performance information.

#### **461.3.2.13 360 Degree Input Sources: Agreeing on 360 Degree Input Sources**

Effective Date: 05/07/2024

ROs and SFS employees are required to agree on at least three individuals whom the RO must contact to gather performance information. ROs are free to contact more than three individuals on the employee’s list or other sources deemed appropriate to the RO. AC members may be consulted.

ROs of supervisors must contact no fewer than two of the supervisor’s subordinates for information about the supervisor’s human resource management skills.

#### **461.3.2.14 360 Degree Input Sources: Soliciting Input from 360 Degree Input Sources**

Effective Date: 06/26/2018

RO must focus their questions on job-relevant discussions of work objectives and performance measures. It is the RO’s responsibility to reconcile any differences of opinion and determine which viewpoint is most accurate. It is not appropriate for the RO to convene a meeting of 360 degree input sources to discuss an employee in order to resolve conflicting input. ROs must maintain confidentiality of 360 feedback information.

ROs’ notes on feedback from 360 degree input sources are personal working notes. There is no requirement to maintain these notes or provide them to the employee.



However, if significant performance problems are identified during the process that result in an employee failing to meet their work objectives or being deficient in one or more skill areas, then the RO must maintain supporting documentation obtained from all sources.

#### **461.3.2.15 Foreign Service/Senior Foreign Service Skills Framework**

Effective Date: 05/07/2024

ROs must use the FS/SFS Skills Framework to prepare end-of-year AEFs. When ROs prepare the end-of-year AEF, they must not make recommendations for promotion. However, they should ensure the AEF covers all skill areas and shows how the employee made an impact on the overall USAID Mission or sector. They should also discuss the employee's willingness to be innovative, take on non-traditional or hardship assignments, or take calculated risks.

#### **461.3.2.16 Senior Foreign Service Skills Assessment**

Effective Date: 05/07/2024

The [FS Skills Assessment Form \(AID 461-3\)](#) must be completed by the RO at least once per performance appraisal cycle. The RO must use the FS/SFS Skills Framework in completing this evaluation. The FS/SFS Skills Framework defines all the skills and subskills and the proficiency indicators that define how each sub-skill should be demonstrated across the class levels.

The SFS Skills Assessment contains the two following sections:

- **Section 1 – Employee Information**  
The RO completes this section with the appropriate information.
- **Section 2 – FS Skills Assessment**  
The RO completes this section and rates the employee's performance against the standards for their personal class.

The purpose of the FS Skills Assessment is to identify the extent to which an **SFS** employee is performing at the standards for their personal class as described in the FS Skills Framework, and to provide a foundation for discussing the **SFS** employee's growth and development. This assessment is not part of the official rating of record. The RO **gives the FS Skills Assessment Worksheet (AID 461-3)** to the employee at the same time the employee receives their final AEF. It is not submitted to HCTM for filing in the employee's Performance Evaluation File. When completing the FS Assessment, the RO must base the assessment on the personal class of the employee.

#### **461.3.2.17 Senior Foreign Service Appraisal Input Form (AIF)**

Effective Date: 05/07/2024

The RO **of a** SFS employee on March 31 is the "Rater of Record" and must complete the final AEF, regardless of the number of days the employee has been under their

supervision. The RO of record must use AIFs and any other 360 degree information to complete the final AEF.

The RO of a SFS employee must complete the [Appraisal Input Form \(AID 461-7\)](#) when either the RO or SFS employee changes assignments or responsibilities and when the employee has been supervised for at least 30 calendar days. The AIF records progress towards established work objectives and performance measures. The RO must act as follows:

- Complete the AIF at least two weeks before either the employee or the RO changes jobs;
- Provide the employee with the AIF at least five days prior to the performance feedback meeting;
- Hold a mandatory meeting with the employee to review the AIF; and
- Forward the AIF, with optional employee response, to the employee's next RO (or Administrative Officer, EXO, or other employee designated by the Principal Officer) within two days after completion.

If a SFS employee is on temporary duty (TDY) at another duty station for 30 days or more, an appropriate official at the TDY duty station must prepare an AIF on the employee's performance for the employee's RO.

SFS employees who spend the majority of the performance appraisal cycle in language training and less than 120 days at any assigned post are not required to have an AEF. In these cases, the SFS employee must submit a completed [SFS Annual Evaluation Waiver, AID Form 461-1a](#) to HCTM/CPE for review and approval. Employees who have an approved AEF waiver are considered to have met the standards of their class.

#### **461.3.2.18 Gathering Appraisal Information for Senior Foreign Service Officers** Effective Date: 05/07/2024

ROs must base SFS employee performance appraisals on multiple sources of information, including the following:

- Direct observation of performance and evaluation of representative work products;
- The SFS employee's self-assessment of performance;
- Information solicited from individuals who can provide informed views of the employee's performance during the rating cycle (360 degree input sources);
- All AIFs received from prior ROs during the rating period and

- If rating a supervisor, comments from at least two subordinates.

#### **461.3.2.19 Senior Foreign Service Final AEF**

Effective Date: 05/07/2024

Using the multiple sources of information described in section **461.5.13**, the Rater of Record must prepare the final AEF. ROs must determine whether the employee met or did not meet the performance measure(s) of each work objective.

#### **461.3.2.20 AC Review of the Final Evaluation**

Effective Date: 05/07/2024

ACs are responsible for reviewing and discussing each employee's end-of-year AEF with the responsible RO. A Skills Framework Assessment must be completed, shared with the employee, and made readily available for possible AC review. ACs review the Skills Assessment Framework if requested by the employee or RO, and may review the Skills Assessment Framework if they choose.

When reviewing an employee's evaluation, ACs have the authority to review self-assessments, contact anyone (including the employee and selected 360 degree input sources), and review documents relied on by the RO in order to make appropriate recommendations.

ACs are responsible for ensuring AEFs are balanced, fair, and accurate.

ACs do not have the authority to direct or make substantive changes to an AEF but may make recommendations to the RO. If the AC and RO cannot agree on appropriate language, the RO's supervisor must attempt to resolve differences. If the RO and AC still do not agree, the AC must document its recommendations on the AEF, Section 8b.

If comments are placed in Section 8b of the AEF, all AC members who reviewed the final AEF must sign.

#### **461.3.2.21 Submission of Annual Evaluation Forms**

Effective Date: 05/07/2024

The AMS, EXO, or other employee designated by the Principal Officer must forward approved AEFs to HCTM/CPE for retention in the employee's Performance Evaluation File (PEF) and distribution as appropriate. The Principal Officer of an Operating Unit is responsible for ensuring all AEFs are submitted to HCTM/CPE.

All AEFs submitted after the prescribed due dates must include a statement explaining the reasons for the late **submission**. HCTM/CPE reviews these statements to determine whether the delays have been adequately explained. If it is determined that the delay was not justified, HCTM/CPE **must** refer the matter to **HCTM/ELR and the CHCO**, who **must decide** what action should be taken. The CHCO, or designee, may decide to issue a critical letter, which **is** placed in the employee's PEF for two years. If deemed

warranted, this letter **serves** to deny or reduce any award or performance bonus for the year in which the AEFs were due.

#### **461.3.2.22 Exceptional Performance**

Effective Date: 04/25/2022

ROs are encouraged to provide timely and appropriate feedback and recognition to employees who demonstrate exceptional performance. Feedback is always best provided as soon after the action or occurrence as possible. Recognition may be provided through acknowledgement of the special act or contribution privately to the employee, publicly in staff meetings, and/or through the Agency's awards program (see [ADS 491, USAID Incentive Awards Program](#) and Mandatory Reference [491maa, Descriptions of Incentive Awards](#)). Employees who demonstrate skills and performance beyond their individual class should also be encouraged to seek promotion to the next higher class when they are eligible (see [ADS 463](#)).

#### **461.3.2.23 Waiver of the Final AEF for Senior Foreign Service**

Effective Date: 05/07/2024

SFS employees who plan to retire or resign by the end of the calendar year in which the Foreign Service Performance Boards are meeting may waive their final AEF, provided they have not received a low-ranked rating within a five-year period and have submitted a **waiver** to HCTM/CPE, requesting an Annual Evaluation Form (AEF) not be prepared for the rating cycle ending during **the current** calendar year.

If a **SFS** employee retires or resigns before the end of the current **performance appraisal** cycle, they are automatically exempt from Board review and do not need to submit an AEF or waiver for the upcoming Boards.

#### **461.3.2.24 Deficient Performance for SFS**

Effective Date: 05/07/2024

If an employee is not performing satisfactorily against established work objectives or is displaying deficiencies in specific skill areas, the RO must refer to [ADS 464](#), and should consult with HCTM/ELR for guidance.

### **461.4 MANDATORY REFERENCES**

#### **461.4.1 External Mandatory References**

Effective Date: 06/26/2018

- a. [5 CFR 430, Subpart B, Performance Appraisal for General Schedule, Prevailing Rate, and Certain Other Employees](#)
- b. [5 USC 43, Performance Appraisal](#)
- c. [Foreign Service Act of 1980, as amended](#)

**461.4.2 Internal Mandatory References**

Effective Date: 05/07/2024

- a. [ADS 458, Training and Career/Professional Development.](#)
- b. [ADS 461mad, FS/SFS Skills Framework](#)
- c. [ADS 461mae, Civil Service, Foreign Service, and Foreign Service National Competency and Proficiency Catalog](#)
- d. [ADS 462, Employee Evaluation Program, Civil Service](#)
- e. [ADS 463, Foreign Service and Senior Foreign Service Promotion Eligibility Requirements and Procedures](#)
- f. [ADS 464, Foreign Service Performance Based Actions](#)
- g. [ADS 470, Pay Under the Foreign Service](#)
- h. [ADS 491, USAID Incentive Awards Program](#)
- i. [ADS 491maa, Descriptions of Incentive Awards](#)

**461.4.3 Mandatory Forms**

Effective Date: 05/07/2024

- a. [AID Form \*\*Worksheet 461-1\*\*, Foreign Service Annual Performance Evaluation Form](#)
- b. [AID Form \*\*461-1a\*\*, Senior Foreign Service Annual Evaluation Form Waiver](#)
- c. [AID Form \*\*461-3\*\*, Foreign Service Skills Assessment Form](#)
- d. [AID Form \*\*461-4\*\*, EP&D Quarterly Conversation Record](#)
- e. [AID Form \*\*461-5\*\*, Annual Accomplishment Record](#)
- f. [AID Form \*\*461-6\*\*, AEF Senior Foreign Service Form](#)
- g. [AID Form \*\*463-4\*\*, Promotion Input Form \(PIF\)](#)

**461.5 ADDITIONAL HELP**

Effective Date: 06/26/2018

There are no additional help documents for this chapter.

**461.6****DEFINITIONS**

Effective Date: 05/07/2024

See the [ADS Glossary](#) for all ADS terms and definitions.

**360 degree sources**

Customers, peers, other managers, subordinates, and other individuals with whom or for whom an employee may have worked who can provide feedback, from their various perspectives, about an employee's performance during any period of performance currently being evaluated. Selection panels are prohibited from directly or indirectly soliciting feedback from implementing partners on the performance of Contracting/Agreement Officers (COs/AOs) and Contracting Officer's Representatives/Agreement Officer's Representatives (CORs/AORs). (**Chapters [421](#), [457](#), [461](#)**)

**Annual Accomplishment Record (AAR)**

The form completed by Foreign Service Officers at the end of the performance period, or prior to changing assignments or supervisors, to document key accomplishments and contributions, plus any special challenges or circumstances that affected performance during the period. (**Chapter [461](#)**)

**Annual Evaluation Form (AEF)**

The form used for evaluating performance under the Employee Evaluation Program (EEP). (**Chapters [415](#), [459](#), [461](#)**)

**Annual Rating Cycle (Foreign Service and Senior Foreign Service)**

A one-year evaluation period, also known as the performance period, which is April 1 - March 31. (**Chapter [461](#)**)

**Appraisal Committee (Senior Foreign Service)**

A committee that reviews and provides management input into employee work objectives and performance measures (if requested), reviews mid-cycle performance (if requested), and reviews end-of-year AEFs (mandatory). (**Chapter [461](#)**)

**Appraisal Committee Representative (Senior Foreign Service)**

A member of the Appraisal Committee (AC), who acts as liaison to the AC for a specific employee and their Rating Official. (**Chapter [461](#) and [462](#)**)

**Appraisal Input Form (AIF) (Senior Foreign Service)**

An evaluation form covering a period of performance that is long enough to require written documentation of performance against an established performance plan but not long enough to be considered representative of the employee's performance for the entire annual rating cycle. (**Chapter [461](#) and [462](#)**)

**Core Skills**

The core skills that are required for all Foreign Service and Senior Foreign Service Officers. (**Chapter [461](#)**)

**Feedback**

Communicating to employees the extent to which their performance does not meet, meets, or exceeds expectations, the adequacy of their relevant skills, and their progress toward career development goals. (Chapters 461, [462](#))

**Implementing Partner**

An organization or individual with which/whom the Agency collaborates to achieve mutually agreed upon objectives and to secure participation of ultimate customers. Partners include host-country governments, private voluntary organizations, indigenous and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs), universities, other U.S. Government agencies, the United Nations and other multilateral organizations, professional and business associations, and private businesses and individuals. (Chapters [421](#), [425](#), 461, [462](#))

**Mid-cycle Review (Senior Foreign Service)**

A mandatory progress review to be held by the Rating Official and SFS employee at the mid-point in the appraisal period. (Chapter 461 and [462](#))

**Minimum Appraisal Period**

The minimum performance period that must be completed before a performance rating can be given. (Chapter 461 and [462](#))

**Performance Appraisal Cycle**

The 12-month cycle during which performance is appraised. In some circumstances, the performance appraisal cycle can be split into multiple performance appraisal periods. (Chapter 461)

**Performance Appraisal Period**

Periods of performance appraisal that occur within the performance appraisal cycle, initiated when an employee changes supervisors or assignments. (Chapter 461)

**Performance Evaluation File (PEF)**

An evaluation file established for each foreign service officer as part of the employee's Official Personnel File (eOFP). (Chapter 461)

**Performance Measure (Senior Foreign Service)**

Criteria (qualitative and quantitative) that measure an SFS employee's achievement of a given work objective. (Chapter 461)

**Performance Plan (Senior Foreign Service)**

The completed Senior Foreign Service Annual Evaluation Form at the beginning of the performance cycle, which consists of work objectives and performance measures. (Chapter 461 and [462](#))

**Principal Officers**

The most senior officer in a USAID Operating Unit in the field, e.g., USAID Mission Director or the USAID Senior Development Advisor or USAID Representative, if properly designated by the cognizant Regional Assistant Administrator pursuant to **ADS 102**. Principal Officers also include the directors of USAID/W/Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance and Office of Transition Initiatives when those offices are implementing emergency disaster relief and assistance to internally displaced persons, humanitarian emergencies, or immediate post-conflict and political crisis response in a cooperating country. For non-presence countries, the cognizant Principal Officer is the Senior USAID officer in a regional USAID Operating Unit responsible for the non-presence country, or in the absence of such a responsible Operating Unit, the Principal U.S Diplomatic Officer in the non-presence country exercising delegated authority from USAID. (**Chapter [320](#) and [461](#)**)

### **Progress Review**

A review of the Senior Executive's progress in meeting established performance elements and standards. A progress review normally occurs midway through the appraisal period. (**Chapters [421](#), [425](#), [461](#)**)

### **Rater of Record (Foreign Service)**

The Rating Official who supervises the employee at the end of the evaluation period, March 31st. (**Chapter [461](#)**)

### **Rating Official**

The employee's immediate supervisor or team leader, who prepares the initial summary rating. For FS employees in Long-Term Training (LTT) at Department of Defense (DOD) Institutions and Training Facilities, the Rating Official is located in the Bureau for Conflict Prevention and Stabilization, Office of Civilian-Military Cooperation (CPS/CMC). For SFS employees serving as instructors at DOD Institutions and Training Facilities, or as Senior Development Advisors within Combatant Commands, the Rating Official will be designated by the CPS Assistant to the Administrator (AtA/CPS), or their designee. For employees in non-traditional assignments, the Rating Official is identified in the Memorandum of Understanding between USAID and the receiving organization, or may be determined by the home Bureau. For employees in language training, the Rating Official is the rater of record for the most recent assignment of 120 days or more. (**Chapter [421](#) and [461](#)**)

### **Reviewing Official**

The second-level supervisor (supervisor of the rating official) who reviews and concurs/not concurs with the implementation of a PIP and on any end of year evaluation in which the Rating Official determines the rated employee is not performing at a satisfactory level. (**Chapter [461](#) and [464](#)**)

### **Skill Development Objectives**

Expectations for how an employee will work to develop or enhance skills or sub-skills during the performance period, as established through discussions between the supervisor and employee. (**Chapter [461](#)**)



**Skill Level**

The level an employee is rated against to determine whether they are meeting or exceeding the expectations of their personal class. (**Chapter 461**)

**Skills Framework**

A chart that provides the core skill area and subskill definitions as well as proficiency indicators that describe the requirements across the FS class levels and SFS. (**Chapter 461**)

**Subskills**

Specific skills that are aligned to a core skill and defined within the Skills Framework, reflecting the requirements of Foreign Service and Senior Foreign Service Officers. (**Chapter 461**)

**Work Objectives (Senior Foreign Service)**

Expectations for an employee established by management for a particular **performance appraisal cycle** (**Chapter 461** and [462](#))

**Work Objectives (Foreign Service)**

Expectations for the work an employee will accomplish, as established through discussions between the supervisor and employee. Work objectives may be short or long-term (e.g., annual) and updated as needed throughout the performance period. While employee participation in the development of work objectives is encouraged, the Rating Official maintains the final authority to set work objectives. (**Chapter 461** and [462](#))

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