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Personnel

**CIVILIAN SENIOR EXECUTIVE
MANAGEMENT**

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This instruction implements Air Force Policy Directive (AFPD) 36-9, *Senior Executive Resource Management*. It provides requirements and procedures for the administration and management of Senior Executive Service (SES), Defense Intelligence Senior Executive Service (DISES), Defense Intelligence Senior Level (DISL), Senior Level (SL), Scientific and Professional (ST), and Highly Qualified Expert (HQE) positions and personnel resources. The publication does apply to Air National Guard (ANG) and Air Force Reserve (AFR). This publication may not be supplemented. Refer recommended changes and questions about this publication to the Office of Primary Responsibility (OPR) using AF Form 847, *Recommendation for Change of Publication*. Ensure all records created as a result of processes prescribed in this publication are maintained in accordance with AFMAN 33-363, *Management of Records*, and disposed of in accordance with the Air Force Records Disposition Schedule (RDS) located at: <https://www.my.af.mil/afirms/afirms/afirms/rims.cfm>.

SUMMARY OF CHANGES

This document has been substantially revised and must be reviewed in its entirety. Major changes include clarification of procedures for Performance Management, and the addition of guidance on Pay and Other Compensation, Talent Management, Career Development and Highly Qualified Experts (HQEs).

Chapter 1—MANAGING CIVILIAN SENIOR EXECUTIVE RESOURCES	5
1.1. Overview.	5
1.2. Retained Authority.	5

1.3. Position Types. 5

1.4. Roles and Responsibilities. 6

Chapter 2—CLASSIFICATION AND REVIEW 8

2.1. Retained Authority. 8

2.2. Civilian Senior Executive (CSE) Allocations. 8

2.3. Establishing Civilian Senior Executive (CSE) Positions. 8

2.4. Biennial Requirements Survey. 9

2.5. Precedence Priority Codes and Position Tiers. 9

Chapter 3—RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION 11

3.1. Recruitment Process. 11

3.2. Selection Process. 11

3.3. Suspension of Qualifications Review Board (QRB) Certification for Specific Agencies. 13

3.4. Appeals. 13

3.5. Senior Executive Service (SES) and Defense Intelligence Senior Executive Service (DISES) Appointments. 14

3.6. Other Appointment Types. 14

3.7. Recognition on Appointment or Transfer from another Component/Agency. 14

3.8. Conditions of Employment. 14

3.9. Probationary Period for New Appointments. 15

Chapter 4—OTHER STAFFING ACTIONS 16

4.1. Reassignments. 16

4.2. Reassignment Action. 16

4.3. Details. 17

4.4. Reduction-in-Force (RIF). 18

4.5. Resignations. 18

Chapter 5—SUSPENSION AND REMOVALS 19

5.1. Suspensions. 19

5.2. Removals. 20

Chapter 6—PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT 23

6.1. Performance Management. 23

6.2. Performance Plan. 23

6.3. Performance Requirements. 24

6.4.	Performance Appraisal Period.	25
6.5.	Progress Reviews.	26
6.6.	Annual Performance Appraisal.	28
6.7.	Performance Rating Process.	28
Chapter 7—PAY AND OTHER COMPENSATION		32
7.1.	Background.	32
7.2.	Pay Ranges.	32
7.3.	Setting Pay.	33
7.4.	Pay Flexibility.	34
7.5.	Total Performance Payout.	35
Table 7.1.	Performance Rating Level, Score and Shares for Payout Share Conversion Chart.	37
Table 7.2.	Sample Performance Rating Level Basic Pay Increase for Payout Conversion Chart.	38
Chapter 8—AWARDS AND OTHER RECOGNITION		40
8.1.	Background.	40
8.2.	Monetary Awards.	40
8.3.	Non-Monetary Awards.	41
Chapter 9—TALENT MANAGEMENT AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT		42
9.1.	Talent Management.	42
9.2.	Talent Pool.	42
9.3.	Talent Management Board (TMB).	42
9.4.	Succession Planning.	44
9.5.	Career Development.	45
Chapter 10—HIGHLY QUALIFIED EXPERTS		47
10.1.	Background.	47
10.2.	Highly Qualified Expert (HQE) Appointment.	47
10.3.	Highly Qualified Expert (HQE) Duties.	47
10.4.	Precedence Priority Codes and Position Tiers.	47
10.5.	Recruitment and Selection.	47
10.6.	Former Civil or Uniformed Service Employees.	47
10.7.	Funding and Manpower.	48
10.8.	Compensation.	48
10.9.	Performance Management.	48

10.10. Work Schedule.	51
10.11. Conditions of Employment.	51
10.12. Suspensions, Removals and Terminations.	51
Attachment 1—GLOSSARY OF REFERENCES AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION	52
Attachment 2—CSE POSITION ALLOCATION REQUEST JUSTIFICATION FORMAT	62
Attachment 3—CSE POSITION DESCRIPTION FORMAT	63
Attachment 4—CSE POSITION JUSTIFICATION CRITERIA	64
Attachment 5—CSE RECRUITMENT FLOWCHART	66
Attachment 6—CSE REASSIGNMENT FLOWCHART	67
Attachment 7—HQE RESUME FORMAT	68
Attachment 8—HQE EXECUTIVE SUMMARY FORMAT	70

Chapter 1

MANAGING CIVILIAN SENIOR EXECUTIVE RESOURCES

1.1. Overview. This instruction establishes guidance and procedures for the administration and management of the Air Force Civilian Senior Executive (CSE) resources. The Air Force centrally manages the CSE resources in accordance with statutory and regulatory requirements under authorities granted by the Department of Defense (DoD). The CSE resources include: Senior Executive Service (SES - Career, Non-Career (NC) and Limited Term); Defense Intelligence Senior Executive Service (DISES); Defense Intelligence Senior Level (DISL); Senior Level (SL); Scientific and Professional (ST); Presidential Appointee with Senate (PAS) confirmation and Highly Qualified Expert (HQE) positions assigned to the Air Force. This instruction is to be used in conjunction with the policies and guidance issued by OPM, including related regulations, and other Air Force Instructions (AFIs) in the Personnel series.

1.2. Retained Authority. Air Force Senior Executive Management Office (AFSEMO) through the Executive Resources Board (ERB) establishes policies on SES/DISES/DISL/SL/ST/HQE position management, requirements, classification, recruitment, selection, salary, bonuses, authorizes use of position allocations, evaluates current and projected use of positions to assure proper use of resources, and retains these authorities for these positions.

1.2.1. Non-Career (NC) Senior Executive Service (SES) Members. AFSEMO administers classification and review, and performance management for NC SES members. All other NC SES administrative and management matters are managed by the Office of the Administrative Assistant to the Secretary of the Air Force, Human Resources Directorate (SAF/AAA). SAF/AAA performs these processes through delegation from the Secretary of the Air Force (SECAF) and the Administrative Assistant to the Secretary of the Air Force (SAF/AA), in accordance with DoD Directive 5105.76, *Transition of Administration Appointees and Other Officials*.

1.2.2. Presidential Appointee with Senate (PAS) confirmation. All PAS administrative and management matters are managed by SAF/AAA. SAF/AAA performs these processes through delegation from the SECAF and SAF/AA, in accordance with DoD Directive 5105.76, *Transition of Administration Appointees and Other Officials*.

1.3. Position Types.

1.3.1. Senior Executive Service (SES). The SES is a "third" service and is completely separate from the Competitive Service (e.g., Civil Service positions filled by competitive examination resulting in Career tenure) and the Excepted Service (e.g., Civil Service positions exempted from competitive examination by either law or administrative action because it is impossible or impractical to conduct an appropriate examination). The SES is a collective corps whose members have solid executive skills, public service values and a broad perspective of Government. The SES incorporates civilian managerial, supervisory and policy positions above General Schedule (GS) grade 15 (or equivalent) that are not filled by a PAS confirmation, nor filled by NC SES members and whose pay does not exceed level II of the Executive Schedule (ES). There are two types of Career SES positions: General and Career Reserved.

1.3.1.1. A General position may be filled by a Career, NC, or Limited Term appointee. The same General position may be filled by a Career appointee at one time and by a NC or Limited Term appointee at another time.

1.3.1.2. A Career Reserved position must always be filled by a Career appointee. A position is designated Career Reserved when a Career employee must fill the position to ensure impartiality or the public's confidence in the impartiality of the Government.

1.3.2. **Defense Intelligence Senior Executive Service (DISES).** These managerial, supervisory and policy positions are equivalent to SES positions and are in the Excepted Service. These positions may be filled through permanent or nonpermanent appointments under the Defense Civilian Intelligence Personnel System appointing authority.

1.3.3. **Non-Career (NC) Senior Executive Service (SES).** These appointments do not require merit staffing procedures, and appointees do not acquire SES career status. There is no time limit on an NC SES appointment, but the individual serves at the pleasure of the appointing official.

1.3.4. **Senior Level (SL) and Scientific and Professionals (STs).** The SL/ST positions generally cover similar responsibilities as the SES/DISES, but are non-managerial (i.e., performing research and development functions in the case of ST). They are in either the Competitive Service or the Excepted Service. SL/ST members may supervise immediate administrative support staff only. Any exceptions must be approved by the ERB.

1.3.5. **Defense Intelligence Senior Level (DISL).** A functional/technical expert who is a recognized leader and authority in a specialist field or functional area. The difficulty, complexity and novelty of DISL work requires creativity, mastery of the subject-matter field and recognition by the professional community. These positions do not have the organizational or program management responsibilities appropriate for the DISES. The DISL positions are classifiable above grade GS-15 (or equivalent) and are equivalent to the SL/ST positions. These positions are in the Excepted Service. DISL members may supervise immediate administrative support staff only. Any exceptions must be approved by the ERB.

1.3.6. **Highly Qualified Experts (HQEs).** Senior-level Excepted Service employees. HQEs are experts possessing specialized knowledge or skills not readily available within the Air Force. HQE administrative and management matters are managed by AFSEMO. HQE guidance is addressed separately in chapter 10 of this AFI.

1.4. Roles and Responsibilities.

1.4.1. **Department of Defense (DoD).** Establishes Department-wide executive management policies within the overall DoD policy framework. DoD allocates positions and provides the Air Force with the authority, control and flexibility needed to accomplish the Air Force strategic goals and mission.

1.4.2. **Office of Personnel Management (OPM).** Allocates SES/SL/ST authorizations to DoD which, in turn, sub-allocates to the Air Force. The Office of the Under Secretary of Defense Intelligence [OUSD(I)] allocates DISES/DISL authorizations. These positions must meet both the executive and professional grade level criteria prescribed in statute. An agency

cannot fill a position in an executive or professional position without an authorized allocation.

1.4.3. Air Force Senior Executive Management Office (AFSEMO). AFSEMO manages the CSE allocation process on behalf of the Secretary of the Air Force (SECAF). Allocation and appointment actions are staffed through the ERB Chair to the SECAF for final approval in a biennial requirements survey. Out-of-cycle requests are ranked against any existing or unfilled requirements to prioritize Air Force needs and may require a reallocation of resources from DoD. As there are a limited number of executive resources available, the Air Force analyzes new requests for CSE positions to assure allocations are used in the most effective and efficient means.

1.4.4. Secretary of the Air Force (SECAF). Approves all Air Force CSE resource policies and procedures as the authorizing official, and retains full responsibility for the management of Air Force CSE resources.

1.4.5. Executive Resources Board (ERB). Appointed by the SECAF to fulfill Title 5, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), statutory and regulatory requirements. The ERB consists of a Chair, Alternate Chair and other Tier 3 Career SES members appointed by the SECAF. The ERB responsibilities include, but are not limited to the following:

1.4.5.1. Meet at least semi-annually to provide Air Force-wide leadership, policy direction and oversight on CSE resources.

1.4.5.2. Review CSE appointments, reassignments, allocation requests, and position tier upgrades etc.

1.4.5.3. Perform other taskings as determined appropriate by the SECAF.

1.4.6. Talent Management Board (TMB). Appointed to ensure Career SES/DISES member continuity and assist AFSEMO in succession planning to include an annual assessment of incumbents and positions to help determine future SES/DISES resource needs. The intent is to have potential candidates identified, in order to fill critical positions in a timely manner. This is a strategic planning board that does not operate as a promotion board.

1.4.7. Performance Review Board (PRB). Appointed to ensure the quality and consistency of the performance appraisal process across the Air Force. The PRB ensures balance, equity, and fairness in the evaluation and scoring process for CSEs under the performance appraisal system and ensures there are meaningful distinctions in the Air Force performance requirements.

1.4.8. Headquarters Air Force (HAF) 2-Letter (Ltr) Officials/Major Command (MAJCOM)/Combatant Command Commanders. Coordinate with AFSEMO on overall management of the CSE resources assigned to their organizations. Handle day-to-day issues, except disciplinary actions, regarding CSE matters within their organizations.

Chapter 2

CLASSIFICATION AND REVIEW

2.1. Retained Authority.

2.1.1. **The Secretary of the Air Force (SECAF).** Establishes policies on CSE position management and retains the following authorities for CSE positions (**Note:** This chapter does not apply to PAS members and HQEs):

2.1.1.1. Approves Air Force CSE position requirements and requests Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) and OPM approval of the number of CSE positions allocated to the Air Force. The allocations for DISES/DISL positions are provided by OUSD(I).

2.1.1.2. Evaluates current and projected use of CSE positions to assure proper use of resources.

2.1.2. HAF 2-ltr officials/MAJCOM/Combatant Commanders can submit requests for positions, on behalf of their organizations, to AFSEMO for ERB recommendation and SECAF approval.

2.1.3. AFSEMO, through the ERB, establishes policies on CSE position management, requirements, classification, authorizes use of position allocations, evaluates current and projected use of positions to assure proper use of resources.

2.2. Civilian Senior Executive (CSE) Allocations. Position allocation requests are submitted for SECAF approval. New requirements for CSE allocations should be for positions of the highest priority that support the Air Force's warfighting requirements or are due to Presidential mandate or legislative requirements. Submit the justification in the format specified in [Attachment 2](#).

2.3. Establishing Civilian Senior Executive (CSE) Positions. After a position allocation has been approved, requesting officials must submit the following documentation to AFSEMO:

2.3.1. **Organizational Charts.** The organizational chart(s) should show where the position is located and the chain of command reporting relationships up to the HAF 2-ltr official/MAJCOM/Combatant Commander level. SES/DISES members can serve above and below general officers (GOs), and DISL/SL/ST members serve below SES/DISES/GOs in a line command structure.

2.3.2. **Position Description (PD).** Prepare the PD in the format specified in [Attachment 3](#). AFSEMO provides assistance to organizations on the preparation of the PD. For previously approved PDs, minor adjustments, including modifications to duty titles, may be documented in pen and ink changes and submitted with a cover letter, signed by the supervisor. All changes to CSE PDs are submitted to AFSEMO with any necessary documentation stating the reason for the change.

2.3.3. **Justification Criteria.** Justification criteria applies to SES/DISES positions only. For each proposed new or revised PD, submit the justification criteria documentation in the format specified in [Attachment 4](#). Include the classification rationale as to why the position exceeds grade GS-15 (or equivalent) and address how the position meets the SES/DISES

criteria. The immediate supervisor of the position must be an SES/DISES, higher civilian or a GO.

2.3.4. Evaluation Statement. The evaluation statement provides an analysis for the position to exceed grade GS-15 (or equivalent) and addresses how the position meets the appropriate CSE criteria. The evaluation statement is completed by an AFSEMO classifier.

2.4. Biennial Requirements Survey. Every other year, AFSEMO announces the deadline and documentation requirements for the survey of CSE requirements for the next Fiscal Year (FY). During the biennial review, supervisors review all current CSE PDs for currency and accuracy.

2.4.1. OPM authorizes, biennially, the number of SES/SL/ST positions for each agency; while OUSD(I) authorizes the number of DISES/DISL positions. The ERB, with final approval from the SECAF, assigns CSE authorizations allocated to the Air Force. AFSEMO notifies organizations of the results of the biennial survey.

2.4.2. **Out-of-Cycle Requests.** Air Force organizations may request new CSE resources whenever the need arises. However, they must explain why the need was not addressed in the biennial survey and must include the documentation specified in [Attachment 2](#). CSE allocations may not always be available to meet even high priority out-of-cycle requirements. The SECAF retains final approval authority.

2.5. Precedence Priority Codes and Position Tiers. OSD periodically publishes updates to the Order of Precedence list, which provides the relative protocol precedence for CSEs within DoD.

2.5.1. CSEs are not stratified by grade; therefore, position and pay structure distinctions for CSEs necessitates order of precedence. For protocol purposes, order of precedence is accomplished in the Air Force through Distinguished Visitor (DV) codes.

2.5.2. **Distinguished Visitor (DV) Codes.** DV code designations are used to determine the order of precedence for official visits and activities, assignment of quarters, seating and travel status on Government aircraft and surface transportation for GO, Flag Officer (FO) or staff of equivalent rank. DV code designations are based on placement and level of responsibility for the Air Force position. The DV codes are assigned to positions, not people. The DV code for the position may be equal to, or lower than the DV code of the supervisor's position. In addition, each CSE position is placed in one of three tiers. Position tiers distinguish position levels and pay distinctions. The relationship of the DV code to the GO/FO hierarchy and the existing three tiers are as follows:

2.5.2.1. DV-4 /Tier 3 is equivalent to a three-star GO/FO. A typical DV-4 is Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary, the Administrative Assistant, an Assistant Deputy Chief of Staff or Air Force Materiel Command (AFMC) Executive Director.

2.5.2.2. DV-5 /Tier 2 is equivalent to a two-star GO/FO. A typical DV-5 is Deputy Assistant Secretary, Deputy General Counsel.

2.5.2.3. DV-6 /Tier 1 is equivalent to a one-star GO/FO. The minimum DV code for all CSEs is DV-6. For protocol purposes, SL/ST/DISL/HQEs are given a designation of DV-6. If the HQE is a retired Uniformed Service member, consideration is given to retired rank, whichever is higher.

2.5.2.4. DV codes for CSEs above DV-4 are generally reserved for Executive Level (EX) positions. The DV-2/DV-3 is equivalent to a four star GO/FO. The DV-2 is the SECAF; and DV-3 is the Under Secretary, Assistant Secretary to the SECAF, General Counsel and other Presidential appointments that require Senate confirmation.

Chapter 3

RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

3.1. Recruitment Process. AFSEMO conducts an extensive, systematic and competitive recruitment process for CSE appointments. The process must be in full compliance with merit principles, free from any prohibited personnel practice, and must meet the requirements of 29 CFR 1607, Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection Procedures. The recruitment process is outlined below and in Attachment 5. Note: This chapter does not apply to PAS, NC SES members and HQEs. HQE recruitment and selection guidance is addressed separately in Chapter 10 of this AFI.

3.1.1. Vacancy Announcements. All Air Force CSE vacancies that will be filled with initial Career appointment are listed on the OPM Government-wide automated vacancy announcement system. Applicants can access the information at the OPM web site (<http://www.opm.gov>).

3.1.2. Recruitment Area. The recruitment area is not limited to the Air Force or those with competitive status. The Air Force considers all applicants who demonstrate the required qualifications. In addition to general recruitment efforts, targeted recruitment of candidates with specialized skills is utilized for hard-to-fill positions.

3.1.3. Senior Executive Service (SES) and Defense Intelligence Senior Executive Service (DISES) Qualifications. OPM has developed Executive Core Qualifications (ECQs) that represent the critical skills that all SES members need in order to succeed today and in the future. Although OPM does not administer the DISES positions, the Air Force does utilize the same standard SES criteria for DISES appointments. OPM guidance on ECQs can be accessed at the OPM web site (<http://www.opm.gov>).

3.1.4. Senior Level (SL), Defense Intelligence Senior Level (DISL), and Scientific and Professional (ST) Member Qualifications. Candidates must have at least three years of specialized experience at grade GS-15 (or equivalent) that demonstrates significant contributions, stature and professional reputation.

3.2. Selection Process. AFSEMO is responsible for facilitating the entire selection process, including the Rating and Ranking Panel, interview process, providing the certificate of Best Qualified candidate(s) to the selecting official, facilitating the ERB case processing and staffing recommendations for SECAF approval and Qualifications Review Board (QRB) approval (if applicable).

3.2.1. Rating and Ranking Panel. This panel meets to rate and rank the CSE applicants. The panel determines which applicants are Not Qualified, Qualified, or Best Qualified.

3.2.2. Rating and Ranking Panel Membership Composition.

3.2.2.1. Three to five SES/GO (or equivalent) members. In assembling the panel, consideration should be given to the diversity of the members, including all aspects of the Air Force definition of diversity. When filling an SL/ST/DISL position, the panel membership may include SL/ST/DISL members. The panel membership must meet the following criteria:

3.2.2.1.1. Panel Chair. The Panel Chair is a Tier 3 SES/DISES (or civilian equivalent) member and will not be the immediate supervisor of the position.

3.2.2.1.2. An individual from the selecting organization. It is recommended that the supervisor of the position fill this position, unless the supervisor is also the selecting official.

3.2.2.1.3. A Secretary of the Air Force (SAF) or Air Staff functional.

3.2.2.1.4. An individual from outside the organization or functional community.

3.2.3. All eligible candidates are rated and ranked by the Rating and Ranking Panel on the basis of their knowledge, skills, abilities and other job-related factors, as reflected in the position's qualifications standard. If the position is an SES/DISES the panel members must adequately document the basis for qualifications, rating and ranking determinations. The panel chair will certify that the ECQs of those selected for an interview would pass ERB scrutiny and believe the ECQs will meet the criteria of a QRB review.

3.2.4. **Interview Panel.** The Rating and Ranking Panel that reviewed the applications also interviews the candidate(s) determined to be "Best Qualified" and forwards recommendations in rank order to the selecting official. Interviews should be held in person. The hiring organization is responsible for all costs associated with travel for candidates selected for an interview and any subsequent interviews.

3.2.5. **The Selecting Official.** The selecting official for all CSE positions will be one of the following: four-star GO, HAF 2-ltr official/MAJCOM/Combatant Commanders. If the HAF 2-ltr official/MAJCOM/Combatant Commander is only a two-star GO (or equivalent), the referral certificate must be routed to his/her supervisor to at least a three-star GO (or equivalent) at the HAF level. The selecting official may choose any one of the candidates referred and may interview any of the candidates forwarded for selection recommendation.

3.2.6. The tentative selection of an SES/DISES/SL is forwarded by AFSEMO to the ERB, for consideration. The ERB recommends final approval to the SECAF for appointment. For a new appointment to the SES, the appointment is not effective until final approval is received from the QRB at OPM.

3.2.7. **The Executive Resources Board (ERB)–Case Processing.** AFSEMO facilitates ERB case processing. The ERB is held regularly to review all pending recruitment cases. Before initial appointment to SES/DISES or SL positions, the ERB screens the technical and executive qualifications of each eligible candidate to make recommendations for candidate selection to the SECAF for final approval.

3.2.8. Upon SECAF approval, for SES appointments, the candidate's ECQs (if they have not been previously certified) are forwarded to OPM QRB to complete the certification process. All candidates must meet the qualification requirements for the position for which selected.

3.2.9. **Qualifications Review Board (QRB).** OPM administers regularly scheduled QRBs. The QRB convenes to provide a critical, independent peer review of a candidate's ECQs. The board membership is composed of SES members from three different agencies. A majority of the board members must be SES Career appointees. Board members are not permitted to review their own agency's candidates, and if a member otherwise believes he/she cannot provide an impartial review, the member will be excused from the case review.

3.2.9.1. The QRB review helps to ensure technical expertise does not outweigh the candidate's leadership skills. The ECQ criteria encompass demonstrated executive level experience or successful participation in an OPM-approved candidate development program. The criterion also provides for flexibility to allow appointment of those with unique qualities that signify an appointee's likelihood to succeed. The QRB either approves or disapproves the candidate's ECQs.

3.2.9.2. Upon ECQs approval, OPM notifies the Air Force to proceed with the appointment. Career appointments may be made to any SES position.

3.2.9.3. Disapproved actions are usually due to the candidate not meeting the ECQ requirements or not adequately addressing his/her qualifications in relation to the five ECQs. A disapproved case may be resubmitted for a second review within 60 working days. If a case is disapproved a second time, the candidate may not be resubmitted for any SES positions for 12 months from the closing date of the original announcement. This allows time for the candidate to acquire additional qualifying experience in the deficient areas as noted by the QRB.

3.3. Suspension of Qualifications Review Board (QRB) Certification for Specific Agencies. The Office of Personnel Management initiates a QRB moratorium for all SES appointments in the event the SECAF resigns, or announces an intention to resign.

3.3.1. The moratorium is lifted when the President nominates a new SECAF. To fill a mission critical position during this time, the case may be submitted to AFSEMO with a request for an exception to the QRB moratorium.

3.3.2. The case will go to the ERB for recommendation and to the Acting SECAF requesting approval. Factors considered include whether the new SECAF would have personal interest in the selection, the organizational level of the position, the degree to which the candidate would be involved in policy matters and how long it may be before the new SECAF is appointed.

3.4. Appeals. There is no right of appeal for a non-selected individual on actions taken by the ERB, QRB or the SECAF. Other avenues afforded by law or regulation (e.g., prohibited personnel practice allegations or discrimination complaints) may be pursued if appropriate. Applicants may contact the Merit Systems Protection Board (MSPB) or the appropriate Air Force Equal Opportunity Office, if they have complaints falling under their purview.

3.4.1. Air Force employees are expected to use the Air Force grievance procedures to resolve allegations of irregularities in recruitment and selection for CSE positions, other than those related to prohibited personnel practices or violations of equal opportunity law.

3.4.2. CSE recruitment and selection procedures are made available for review by AFSEMO.

3.4.3. At the conclusion of the Rating and Ranking Panel, AFSEMO provides each applicant with a written notification on the status of his/her application and if the applicant is selected for an interview.

3.4.4. By request, AFSEMO will provide feedback to applicants concerning the rating and ranking of his/her application. If candidates request specific feedback from a Rating and Ranking Panel member, AFSEMO will coordinate this process.

3.5. Senior Executive Service (SES) and Defense Intelligence Senior Executive Service (DISES) Appointments.

3.5.1. **Career Appointment.** SES/DISES applicants are selected for Career appointment through the Air Force senior executive merit staffing process. Career appointees are afforded specific due process protections.

3.5.2. **Limited Appointment.** Limited appointments may only be made to General positions using internal competitive procedures. To be eligible for a limited appointment the individual must hold a career or career conditional appointment (or equivalent tenure) in a permanent Civil Service position outside the SES and meet the qualifications for the position. The use of the limited appointment must be approved by the SECAF. Appointments may be terminated at the discretion of the SECAF. When the limited appointment is terminated for reasons other than misconduct, neglect of duty or malfeasance, the individual is entitled to be placed in his/her former position or a position of like status, tenure and grade. There are two types of limited appointments: Limited Term and Limited Emergency.

3.5.2.1. **Limited Term Appointment (LTA).** An LTA is a nonrenewable appointment for up to 36 months to a position that must be abolished when the appointment expires.

3.5.2.2. **Limited Emergency Appointment.** A Limited Emergency appointment is a nonrenewable appointment for up to 18 months to a position established to meet a bona fide, unanticipated, urgent need.

3.5.2.3. **Extensions.** Limited appointments may be extended without prior OPM approval, if the initial appointment was for less than the maximum allowed period of time. An individual who held one or more limited appointments, for a total of 36 months in a 48 month period, will not continue to serve in a limited appointment. Requests for extensions require ERB approval.

3.6. Other Appointment Types.

3.6.1. SL/ST/DISL are Career appointments.

3.6.2. HQE appointments are in the Excepted Service.

3.6.3. **Presidential Appointees.** These appointees include personnel appointed by the President with the advice and consent of the Senate, NC SES members and Schedule C personnel approved by OPM.

3.7. Recognition on Appointment or Transfer from another Component/Agency. When appointed or reassigned to an Air Force CSE position from another component/agency, the CSE receives a welcome package from AFSEMO. Welcome packages will include: CSE appointment certificate signed by the SECAF, appropriate lapel pin, welcome letter, vehicle decal and handbook. In addition, newly appointed SES/DISES members will receive the Air Force SES Flag.

3.8. Conditions of Employment.

3.8.1. **Financial Disclosure.** As a condition of employment, all CSEs shall file a Standard Form 278 (SF 278), *Public Financial Disclosure Report*. This form must be filed with the Deputy General Counsel for Fiscal, Ethics and Administrative Law, Office of the Air Force General Counsel (SAF/GCA).

3.8.2. **Mobility Agreements.** All members appointed to the SES/DISES are required to sign a Reassignment Rights and Obligations Agreement. This agreement is maintained by AFSEMO.

3.8.3. **Drug Testing.** Prior to appointment, or reassignment to another CSE position, all CSEs are required to complete and pass drug urinalysis testing. Once appointed, CSEs are required to undergo periodic random drug testing in accordance with **Executive Order (EO) 12564, Drug Free Federal Workplace**, dated 15 September 1986.

3.8.4. **Conflict of Interest Prohibition.** All CSEs are subject to the rules prohibiting participating “personally and substantially” in any agency matter that affects their financial interests (or that of a spouse, children, or organization whose interests are imputed to them).

3.8.5. **One Year Cooling Off Period.** All CSEs who serve more than 60 days in a calendar year and whose basic rate of pay is over that amount designated for the appropriate year, are subject to a one year cooling off period after they leave the agency (Air Force) and may not represent back to the agency during that year.

3.8.6. **Lifetime and Two Year Ban.** All CSEs involved personally and substantially in agency matters are permanently barred from representing anyone back to any Federal Department, agency, or court on that same matter. If a matter was under a CSE’s official responsibility during the last year of Government service, then he/she is barred for two years after leaving Government service from representing anyone back to the Government on that same matter.

3.9. Probationary Period for New Appointments. All new Career CSEs are required to serve a 12 month probationary period.

3.9.1. At the time of appointment, AFSEMO will provide the probationer, and his/her supervisor, an initial probation notification addressing the supervisor and CSE responsibilities.

3.9.2. At the six month period, a notification, from AFSEMO, is provided for the supervisor to review and document the performance.

3.9.3. At the ten month period, a request is made, from AFSEMO, for the supervisor to sign and return the Probationary Period Certification.

3.9.4. At the 11-month period, AFSEMO will forward the signed Probationary Period Certification to the appointing authority, or designee, for review and final approval.

3.9.5. The Career appointment becomes final after the successful completion of the probationary period.

3.9.6. Unsuccessful performance will be referred to SAF/GCA for appropriate action.

3.9.7. A Career CSE who does not successfully complete the probationary period is entitled to be placed in a vacant Civil Service position (other than an SES position) for which he or she is qualified, in any agency, that is a continuing position at GS-15 or above, or equivalent, that will last at least three months. The Air Force is responsible for placing the appointee in an appropriate position within the agency, or for arranging a transfer to an appropriate position in another agency.

Chapter 4

OTHER STAFFING ACTIONS

4.1. Reassignments. In creating the SES, DoD envisioned a mobile corps of SES/DISES members who may be reassigned to meet shifting agency priorities. DoD embraces this vision thereby encouraging functional and geographical mobility as a condition of employment for SES/DISES appointments. Through succession planning and career development, the Air Force ensures all SES/DISES incumbents are provided assignments to advance their career and meet the Air Force quality and operational performance objectives. **Note:** This chapter does not apply to PAS, NC SES members and HQEs.

4.1.1. The Air Force may reassign a Career SES/DISES member to any SES/DISES position in the agency for which they are qualified. Failure to accept a directed reassignment subjects the individual to removal under adverse action procedures.

4.1.2. Career SES/DISES members cannot be reassigned within 120 days after the appointment of the SECAF.

4.1.3. Career SES/DISES members cannot be reassigned within 120 days after the appointment of the Career appointee's most immediate supervisor, if the supervisor is a NC appointee (PAS or NC SES) and has the authority to make an initial appraisal of the Career appointee's performance.

4.2. Reassignment Action. AFSEMO is the Office of Primary Responsibility (OPR) to fill SES/DISES vacancies. The process is outlined below and in [Attachment 6](#):

4.2.1. Selecting official (four-star GO, HAF 2-ltr official/MAJCOM/Combatant Commander requests a position slate from AFSEMO.

4.2.2. AFSEMO provides referral notification to HAF 2-ltr officials/MAJCOM/Combatant Commanders for the identified SES/DISES members in their organization, while simultaneously notifying the SES/DISES members of the referral.

4.2.3. AFSEMO provides a position slate with contact information, biography and a civilian personnel brief to the selecting official. Selecting official can select by interview or records review.

4.2.3.1. Tier 1. Selecting officials consider slated candidates. If the candidates do not meet requirements, selecting officials may request external recruitment, or additional candidates from AFSEMO. Candidates will be forwarded based on the TMB results (i.e., readiness ratings, etc).

4.2.3.2. Tier 2/3. Selecting officials first consider the slated candidates. If TMB results are not used, the selecting official must provide a justification to the ERB and may request additional candidates or provide a justification for a proposed SES member that has been identified as suitable for the position. Alternatively, the selecting official can request to recruit for external candidates. For all Tier 2/3 and Combatant Command positions, regardless of tier, AFSEMO will concurrently request candidate slates from across DoD for the selecting official to consider. Upon selection of a candidate, AFSEMO will forward the selection documentation to the SECAF for final approval.

4.2.4. Notice to Senior Executive Service (SES)/Defense Intelligence Senior Executive Service (DISES) Member. After SECAF approval, the SES/DISES member must be given 15 days advance written notice for a reassignment in the same commuting area, and 60 days advance written notice for reassignments to a new geographic area.

4.2.4.1. **Reconsideration.** SES/DISES members unwilling to accept a reassignment may request reconsideration. The written request must state the reason the reassignment is not in the best interest of the member and/or the Air Force. Hardship to the SES/DISES member should be documented by the SES/DISES member for consideration by the ERB. If an SES/DISES member disagrees with the ERB decision he/she may appeal the final decision to the SECAF. The appeal must be submitted to AFSEMO.

4.2.4.2. **Failure to Accept a Directed Reassignment.** SES/DISES members unwilling to accept reassignment are subject to removal. If removal is for failure to accept directed reassignment to a different commuting area, the individual may be entitled to discontinued service retirement (if eligible) or severance pay, unless a memorandum of understanding or other written agreement provides for such geographic reassignments. Removal under these circumstances can be appealed to the MSPB.

4.2.4.3. **Reassignment to a Lower Tier.** SES/DISES members may be reassigned to a lower tier for the following specific reasons:

4.2.4.3.1. **Discretion of the Authorizing Official.** When a reassignment action to a lower tier is initiated to meet organizational needs such as executive development, the SES/DISES member will retain his/her salary/DV code and future pay increases will be grandfathered.

4.2.4.3.2. **Reassignment to a Lower Tier at the Request of the Member.** The SES/DISES member will retain his/her salary, assume the DV code of the new position, and may receive only 50 percent of future pay increases (exceptions may be applied).

4.3. Details. A detail is the temporary movement of an employee within, into, or out of the SES/DISES for a specified period, usually with the expectation that the employee will return to his/her regular position at the end of the period. Administratively, for purposes of pay and benefits, the employee continues to be the incumbent of the position from which he/she is detailed.

4.3.1. **Details of Non-Senior Executive Service (SES)/Defense Intelligence Senior Executive Service (DISES) Employees to Senior Executive Service/Defense Intelligence Senior Executive Service Positions.** Details of non-SES/DISES employees to SES/DISES positions should be kept to an absolute minimum and strictly controlled. The employee continues to encumber the position from which detailed, for purposes of pay and benefits.

4.3.1.1. The duties of a vacant SES/DISES position may be restructured temporarily to an appropriate level outside the SES when a non-SES/DISES employee is to be detailed to an SES/DISES position. If that is not possible, the organization should ensure the detail authority is used judiciously. If a position has to be filled on detail for an extended period, an organization should consider rotating more than one qualified employee on the detail.

4.3.1.2. Details of non-SES/DISES employees should not be used as a means of providing a specific employee the opportunity to acquire the qualifications required for entry into the SES.

4.3.2. Details of SES/DISES members to non-SES/DISES positions below the SES level are generally considered to be an inappropriate use of executive talent.

4.3.3. **Conditions.** Initial details and extensions are to be made in accordance with **5 USC 3341, Details; within Executive or military departments** and **5 CFR 317.903(b)(1), Details**, which authorizes details in increments of no more than 120 days. Competitive Service merit promotion procedures must be observed when detailing non-SES/DISES employees to an SES/DISES position for more than 240 days.

4.3.4. Requests to detail a non-SES/DISES member to an SES/DISES position must be submitted to AFSEMO.

4.4. Reduction-in-Force (RIF). This applies to Career SES members only. For SL/ST members, follow the regulatory provisions applicable to Air Force employees at grades GS-15 (or equivalent) and below. For DISES/DISL members contact AFSEMO for RIF procedure guidance.

4.4.1. The RIF procedures are only used when the elimination or modification of an SES position is due to reorganization, a lack of funds or a curtailment of work that results in the need to separate an SES member.

4.4.2. The RIF option is only used after all other options for placement of SES members have been exhausted. The RIF procedures are conducted with prior ERB approval.

4.4.3. Career SES members who have completed probation can be assigned to any vacant Air Force SES position for which he/she qualifies. Vacant positions within their employing Component are first considered, the Air Force, elsewhere in DoD, and other agencies, in that order. If no vacancy exists, OPM has 45 days to try to place the SES member elsewhere in the Government. If the SES member cannot be placed in the SES, the SES member is entitled to placement in the agency at a grade GS-15 (or equivalent) position with saved pay.

4.4.4. If an SES member declines a reasonable offer of placement to another SES position, or if no placement offer can be made, the member will be separated from the SES following a 45-day written notice. A second notice, one day in advance of the termination date, is also required. If RIF procedures are invoked, contact AFSEMO for further guidance.

4.4.5. A Career SES employee separated by RIF may appeal to the MSPB on the competitive procedures taken under a RIF.

4.5. Resignations. The CSE, or the CSE's supervisor (or designated representative), coordinates the resignation with AFSEMO. After coordination, the CSE or CSE's supervisor (or designated representative), must contact the servicing CPF and request a resignation action be processed.

Chapter 5

SUSPENSION AND REMOVALS

5.1. Suspensions. A suspension is considered an adverse action (if over 14 days). It serves as a warning that further violation of rules could result in removal and is an attempt at rehabilitation of the employee. A suspension is a disciplinary action which prevents an SES member from performing work and withholds salary for the suspension period. Procedural requirements are covered in **5 CFR, Part 752, Adverse Actions**. The DISES/DISL/SL/ST member suspensions follow the regulatory and AFI provisions applicable to Air Force employees at grades GS-15 (or equivalent) and below. **Note:** This chapter does not apply to PAS, NC SES members and HQEs.

5.1.1. Commanders or supervisors may not take unilateral action against CSE members. Contact AFSEMO for interpretation of the requirements and guidance on the suspension process. Proposed suspension actions are submitted to AFSEMO for approval by the ERB before formal employee notification.

5.1.2. **Senior Executive Service (SES) Suspensions.** SES members and LTA or Limited Emergency members, without a break in service from a Career appointment in the Air Force, may be suspended for disciplinary reasons, as defined as misconduct, neglect of duty, malfeasance or failure to accept a directed reassignment or accompany a position in a transfer of function. Guiding SES statutory and regulatory requirements only allow for a suspension period of 14 days or more for SES members.

5.1.3. **Senior Executive Service (SES) Suspension Process.** An SES member against whom an action is proposed is entitled to at least 30 days advance written notice of the suspension unless the SES member has committed a crime for which a sentence of imprisonment may be imposed. In that case, a shortened notice period may be invoked. The SES member will remain in a duty status during the advance notice period unless the SES member's presence poses a threat to the member or others, results in loss of, or damage to, Government property or otherwise jeopardizes legitimate Government interests. In that case, administrative leave may be appropriate. The notice letter must state the specific reasons for the proposed action and inform the SES member of his/her right to review the material supporting the suspension.

5.1.3.1. The SES member may answer orally, in writing, or both and is entitled to be represented by an attorney or other representative. The Air Force must give the SES member a reasonable amount of official time to review the supporting material and prepare his/her response, but not less than seven days. If a medical condition affected the basis of the suspension, the SES member must be given reasonable time to furnish medical documentation.

5.1.3.2. The Air Force will consider only the reasons specified in the notice of proposed action, the oral and/or written response of the SES member, the SES member's representative, or both and any medical documentation provided in making a determination.

5.1.3.3. The decision letter must specify in writing the reasons for the decision and advise the SES member of any appeal rights. The notice must be delivered before the effective date of the action.

5.1.3.4. SES and LTA or Limited Emergency SES members, without a break in service from a Career appointment in the Air Force, have the right to appeal a suspension to the MSPB.

5.1.4. Limited Term Appointment (LTA)/Limited Emergency Senior Executive Service (SES) Suspensions. Neither the laws, nor regulations, cover procedural requirements for suspending LTA SES members, Limited Emergency SES members or reemployed annuitants for disciplinary reasons. If an employee is a LTA or Limited Emergency SES employee they may fall under the rules depending on their prior appointment.

5.2. Removals. A removal is the most severe adverse action. Before initiating a removal of an SES member, ensure the individual has demonstrated unwillingness to conform to the rules of conduct, performance standards or has so breached the employee-employer relationship that rehabilitation is not appropriate and removal is warranted for the offense. Procedural requirements are **5 CFR, Part 752, Adverse Actions**. **Note:** for DISES/DISL/SL/ST member suspensions, follow the regulatory and AFI provisions applicable to Air Force employees at grades GS-15 (or equivalent) and below. The procedural requirements for removal due to less than successful performance are found in **5 CFR, Part 359, Subpart E, Removal of Career Appointees for Less Than Fully Successful Executive Performance**.

5.2.1. Commanders or supervisors may not take unilateral action against CSEs. Proposed removal actions for any reason are submitted to AFSEMO for approval by the ERB before formal employee notification. Contact AFSEMO for interpretation of the requirements and guidance on the removal process.

5.2.2. Senior Executive Service (SES) Disciplinary Removal. Disciplinary removal procedures and rights for post-probation Career SES and LTA or Limited Emergency SES members, without a break in service from a Career appointment in the Air Force, are similar to those for Competitive Service employees, except the standard for action is misconduct, neglect of duty, malfeasance or failure to accept a directed reassignment or accompany a position in a transfer of function. The Air Force does not have to show a nexus to the “efficiency of the service.”

5.2.2.1. Disciplinary Removal Process. The post-probation disciplinary removal process is the same as the suspension process described in item **5.1.3**. Probationary employees are covered by different rules, as set forth below and in **5 CFR, Part 359, Removal from the Senior Executive Service; Guaranteed Placement in Other Personnel Systems**.

5.2.2.2. SES, LTA or Limited Emergency SES members, without a break in service from a Career appointment in the Air Force, have the right to appeal a disciplinary removal to the MSPB.

5.2.2.3. SES members removed for disciplinary reasons have no placement rights to a grade GS-15 (or equivalent) position.

5.2.3. Senior Executive Service (SES) Member Removal for Performance. Post-probation SES members (this does not include Limited Term or Limited Emergency SES members, without a break in service from a Career appointment in the Air Force) may be optionally or mandatorily removed based on their record of performance. *See 5 CFR, Part 359.* **Note:** For removal of DISL/SL/ST members, follow the provisions applicable to Air Force employees at grade GS-15 (or equivalent) and below.

5.2.3.1. **Optional Removal.** If an SES member receives one unsatisfactory rating, he/she may be removed or reassigned to another SES position in which he/she qualifies.

5.2.3.2. **Mandatory Removal.** An SES member must be removed from the SES for two unsatisfactory ratings in five consecutive years, or for two less than fully successful ratings in three consecutive years.

5.2.3.3. **Performance Removal Process.** The Air Force notifies the SES member in writing at least 30 calendar days before the effective date of the action. The notice advises the SES member of the basis of the action, the SES member's placement rights if any, the SES member's right to request an informal hearing from the MSPB, the effective date of the action, and the SES member's eligibility for immediate retirement, if applicable.

5.2.3.3.1. An SES member cannot formally appeal removal for performance to the MSPB, but is entitled to request an MSPB informal hearing at least 15 days before the effective date of the removal. The informal hearing should not delay the removal action.

5.2.3.3.2. An SES member removed from the SES for performance reasons is placed into a continuing position at grade GS-15 (or equivalent), with saved pay. In lieu of placement in a grade GS-15 (or equivalent) position, the SES may elect discontinued service retirement with 25 years of service or 20 years of service at age 50.

5.2.3.3.3. An SES member cannot be removed for performance reasons until 120 days after appointment of a new SECAF or new NC supervisor with removal authority, except removals based on a rating(s) issued prior to appointment of the new SECAF or NC supervisor. Contact AFSEMO if this issue arises.

5.2.4. Senior Executive Service (SES) Member Removal During Probationary Period. An SES member may be removed during the one year probationary period for unacceptable performance, misconduct, conditions arising before appointment or Reduction In Force (RIF). *See 5 CFR, Part 359.* The RIF procedures are described in **Chapter 4** of this AFI.

5.2.4.1. For unacceptable performance during the probationary period, the Air Force notifies the SES member in writing before the effective date of the removal action.

5.2.4.1.1. The notice, as a minimum, states the conclusions as to the inadequacies of the SES member's performance, whether the SES member has placement rights and if so, identifies the position, and the effective date of the action. If the SES member was not in the Federal Service at the time of the initial appointment to the SES from which the SES member is being removed or if the SES member was in an NC position previously, the individual has no placement rights.

5.2.4.1.2. An SES member removed for unacceptable performance cannot appeal a removal during the probationary period to the MSPB.

5.2.4.2. For misconduct during the probationary period, the Air Force notifies the SES member in writing before the effective date of the removal action.

5.2.4.2.1. The notice, as a minimum states the basis for the removal action (including the acts of misconduct, neglect of duty, or malfeasance) and the effective date of the action.

5.2.4.2.2. An SES member removed for misconduct cannot appeal a removal during the probationary period to the MSPB.

5.2.4.3. For conditions arising before appointment, but discovered during the probationary period, the Air Force provides the SES member an advance written notice stating the specific reasons for the proposed removal. The SES member is given a reasonable time to reply. The Air Force provides the SES member a written decision indicating the reasons for the action and the effective date. The decision is provided to the SES member before the action is effective.

5.2.4.3.1. The SES member cannot appeal a removal during the probationary period for conditions arising before appointment.

5.2.4.3.2. The SES member is entitled to placement in a grade GS-15 (or equivalent) position, with saved pay, unless the SES member was appointed to the SES from outside the Government or from a NC-type appointment.

5.2.4.4. An SES member in a probationary period cannot be removed until 120 days after appointment of a new SECAF or new NC supervisor with removal authority, except removals based on a performance rating(s) received prior to appointment of the new SECAF or NC supervisor; a disciplinary action initiated before appointment of a new SECAF or NC supervisor; a disciplinary action when there is reasonable cause to believe the SES member has committed a crime for which a sentence of imprisonment may be imposed; or when the circumstances are such that retention of the SES member poses a threat to the SES member or others, results in loss of or damage to Government property, or otherwise jeopardize legitimate Government interests. If this issue arises, contact AFSEMO for additional guidance.

5.2.5. Removal of Limited Term Senior Executive Service (SES) Members. These SES members serve at the discretion of the SECAF and can be removed at any time. AFSEMO provides written notice at least seven calendar days before the effective date of a removal action. Limited Term SES members are not entitled to appeal rights to the MSPB nor to placement rights.

Chapter 6

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

6.1. Performance Management. AFSEMO manages the performance-based pay system for CSEs. The intent of the performance-based pay system is to make meaningful distinctions in performance and hold CSEs accountable for their individual and organizational performance by linking results to an agency's strategic planning initiatives as an effective means of achieving this goal. **Note:** This chapter does not apply to PAS members and HQEs. HQE performance management guidance is addressed separately in chapter 10 of this AFI.

6.1.1. AFSEMO ensures policies and procedures are in place so the appraisal system allows meaningful distinctions to be made based on relative performance and the Annual Summary Ratings (ASRs), pay adjustments and bonuses to accurately reflect the employee's performance and their contribution to the Air Force mission.

6.1.2. **Executive Performance Appraisal Tool (EPAT).** EPAT is a mandated web-based DoD enterprise tool to aid CSEs, rating and reviewing officials with their individual and organizational performance management responsibilities. Air Force CSEs will have an account established in EPAT. The CSEs rating and reviewing official will also have an account established in the system, even if that rating and reviewing official is from another Federal agency or a different DoD component, a NC CSE, a PAS or an active duty GO. It is the responsibility of the CSE to ensure their information is accurate.

6.2. Performance Plan. The performance plan sets forth the performance requirements that must be accomplished during the performance appraisal period (1 October to 30 September). Each performance plan must include the mandatory Performance Elements (PEs) with associated results-driven performance requirements that are aligned with Air Force organizational goals.

6.2.1. The performance plan and performance requirements must be developed jointly by the rating official and the CSE. The rating official must clearly set the performance expectations.

6.2.2. The development of the performance plan does not involve the reviewing official. All plans are to be completed in EPAT by selecting an Air Force performance plan template (categorized by pay plan and tier level, if appropriate). Each CSE will develop a performance plan using the guidelines established below:

6.2.3. The performance plan must be completed within 30 days after a CSE is appointed to the Air Force or within the start of a new performance cycle.

6.2.3.1. A change in position or rating official during the performance appraisal period may necessitate a modification or a complete revision of the performance plan. If a change occurs, the new performance plan must be completed within 30 days.

6.2.3.2. A CSE must have at least 90 days under the new performance plan, as of the end of the performance appraisal period, to be eligible to receive an ISR. The ISR provides the preliminary performance assessment of the CSE.

6.2.4. Performance Elements (PEs). Each performance plan must include the mandatory PEs, with associated results-driven performance requirements that are aligned to Air Force organizational goals. The following PEs may be selected to appraise a CSE's performance; the first three are mandatory. For current information on mandatory and optional PEs, contact AFSEMO for the latest guidance.

6.2.4.1. Contribution to Mission Accomplishment (mandatory)

6.2.4.2. Leadership/Supervision (mandatory)

6.2.4.3. Customer Care (mandatory)

6.2.4.4. Technical Competence/Problem Solving

6.2.4.5. Resource Management

6.2.4.6. Communication

6.2.4.7. Cooperation/Teamwork

6.2.5. Performance Element (PE) Weight Distribution. The Air Force has assigned weights to the mandatory and optional PEs contained in the performance plan. "*Contribution to Mission Accomplishment*" must be weighted at least 60 percent among all PEs selected. The sum of the weights for all PEs used is 100 percent. The current Air Force weight distributions are specified by the CSEs pay plan and tier, if applicable. The weight distribution is also pre-set in EPAT in the performance plan template. For specific PE weight distribution requirements contact AFSEMO for the latest guidance.

6.3. Performance Requirements. Performance requirements are the duties upon which the CSE will be evaluated during the mid-term feedback and the annual performance appraisal. The requirements should represent the most important and/or time consuming portion of the CSE's duties. The performance requirements will not represent all duties.

6.3.1. Performance requirements must show alignment to specific goals and objectives in an appropriate strategic planning document (e.g., the Air Force Strategic Plan). Performance requirements may link to non-Air Force strategic guidance documents (e.g., President's Management Agenda, National Intelligence Strategy, DoD Organizational Assessment, etc.). However, the first linkage for Air Force CSEs should be the Air Force Strategic Plan.

6.3.2. The rating official determines the expected results and level of accomplishment for each performance requirement. All performance requirements must be written at the "Fully Successful" level.

6.3.3. Performance requirements must be results-oriented and have an outcome stated, with an appropriate type(s) of measurements identified to determine success. They must be written in the SMART-Q format:

6.3.3.1. S - Specific (define results to be accomplished within the scope of the job)

6.3.3.2. M - Measurable (define quality, quantity, cost and/or effectiveness)

6.3.3.3. A - Aligned (support specific strategic goals)

6.3.3.4. R - Realistic/Relevant (requirements are achievable yet challenging)

6.3.3.5. T - Timely (define a timeframe for achieving the requirements)

6.3.3.6. Q - Quality (identify the degree of excellence expected).

6.3.4. Performance requirements should also include the criteria defined below:

6.3.4.1. There should be no more than four performance requirements for each PE with the possible exception of the Leadership/Supervision PE for supervisors.

6.3.4.2. There are mandatory performance requirements that must be addressed for supervisors in the Leadership/Supervision PE. The mandatory performance requirements include:

6.3.4.2.1. **Employee Balance.** Proactively seeks and listens to employees and objectively considers others' ideas and opinions, even when they conflict with one's own; use of employee feedback to inform decisions.

6.3.4.2.2. **Hiring Reform.** Effectively attracts/recruits a high caliber workforce; ensure successful transition/ retention into Federal Service by providing opportunities for orientation and tools for enabling employees to successfully perform during the probationary period; ensure recruiting is appropriately focused and timely to produce high quality candidate pools.

6.3.4.2.3. **Diversity.** Achieves results in promoting equal employment opportunity and diversity (as broadly defined by the Air Force) in the performance of responsibilities in accordance with requirements identified in organizational goals.

6.3.4.2.4. **Accountability.** Ensures that all subordinate employee performance plans are aligned with organizational goals; appraised realistically against clear, measurable standards of performance; and that employee views are considered in achieving organizational results.

6.3.4.2.5. **Customer Care.** The Customer Care PE, for both supervisor's and non-supervisor's, performance requirement must address **Customer Balance.** Proactively seeks and listens to customers and objectively considers others' ideas and opinions, even when they conflict with one's own; and uses customer feedback to inform decisions.

6.3.5. **Stretch Goal.** A requirement can be identified as a "stretch goal". Identification of the "stretch goal" acknowledges the requirement as attainable, but requiring exertion beyond the normal course of duties. Reaching this goal, demonstrates surpassing the "Fully Successful" performance level and permits, but does not guarantee a performance rating of 4 or 5. A stretch goal is not a stand-alone performance requirement. It must be in addition to a performance requirement written at the fully successful level.

6.4. Performance Appraisal Period. The CSE annual performance appraisal period is 1 October through 30 September. CSEs must serve a minimum of 90 days in a CSE position in order to be rated and evaluated. The following exceptions apply

6.4.1. When the member becomes a new Air Force CSE (i.e., transfers from an outside agency other than DoD or receives a promotion from a grade GS-15 (or equivalent) position after the start of the annual performance appraisal period (through appointment, reinstatement, reassignment or transfer).

6.4.2. When other circumstances occur to reduce the performance appraisal period to less than 12 months (e.g., rating official departs before the end of the performance appraisal period). Exceptions to this rule occur within the last 90 days of the performance period and are as follows:

6.4.2.1. **Movement within Department of Defense (DoD).** Air Force CSEs who change jobs to a position in the same or different DoD Component with a different Pay Pool and who served all but the last 90 days of the performance appraisal period, will be provided an ISR (i.e., early annual rating) appraisal by the rating official of record before reassignment, provided there is an adequate basis on which to appraise and rate the CSE's performance.

6.4.2.1.1. The CSE shall be included in the gaining DoD Component Pay Pool at the end of the regular performance cycle.

6.4.2.1.2. Air Force CSEs who transfer to other agencies within DoD in last 90 days shall receive a rating, performance score and number of Shares from their departing rating official. The CSE will be included and evaluated in the gaining organization's Pay Pool and PRB.

6.4.2.2. **Movement outside of Department of Defense (DoD) or New Appointment to a Civilian Senior Executive (CSE) Position.** Members who are new Air Force CSEs and did not transfer from another DoD agency will be eligible to receive their performance rating and evaluation at the end of the next performance appraisal period, after 3 July. They will be granted an extended performance appraisal period not longer than 15 months.

6.4.2.3. Air Force CSEs who change jobs within the Air Force in the last 90 days must complete a new performance plan at the start of the next performance cycle. CSEs will still be evaluated in the Air Force Pay Pool Panel based on their old plan (provided the CSE had 90 days under the old performance plan).

6.4.3. **Movement After the Last Day of the Performance Appraisal Period.** The period from 1 October through to the first pay period in the next calendar year. CSEs who change jobs to a position in the same or different DoD Component with a different Pay Pool shall be provided an ISR by the rating and reviewing officials of record on the last day of the appraisal period. The CSE's salary will be included in the departing Pay Pool. Their performance will be evaluated and the ASR assigned by the authorizing official in the departing Pay Pool. CSE performance payout shall be calculated and paid based on the Pay Pool Funding Factor and Share Value of the gaining Pay Pool.

6.5. Progress Reviews. Feedback between the rating official and CSE is a fundamental part of the performance cycle process. Feedback may serve as the basis for discussing developmental needs. The reviewing official is not involved in the progress reviews.

6.5.1. **Mid-Year Progress Review.** At least one documented progress review is required during the cycle, which is typically scheduled in the late March or early April timeframe. The mandatory mid-term progress review will be recorded in EPAT and the date the progress review was accomplished will be annotated on the DD Form 2899, *Executive Pay and Performance Appraisal*.

6.5.1.1. Comments by the CSE are highly suggested during the progress review. Comments provided may influence the assessment of the CSE's performance to-date.

6.5.1.2. Comments during the progress review are highly suggested by the rating official. The progress review provides the CSE an understanding of current performance in relation to expected performance. This prepares the CSE for the annual performance appraisal and identifies any needed areas for improvement.

6.5.2. Frequent face-to-face review/feedback is encouraged throughout the performance appraisal period to ensure a mutual understanding is developed to better distinguish between less than satisfactory, minimally satisfactory, achieving expectations, exceeding expected expectations and accomplishing exceptional results. Progress review comments are not provided to the Pay Pool Panel or PRB.

6.5.3. After the CSE has been under performance standards for a minimum of 90 days a closeout/interim feedback must be conducted when either the CSE or rating official leaves their position before the end of the performance appraisal period. Rating officials will provide comments and a score regarding the performance to the individual who succeeds them as the rating official for their consideration when completing the ISR. CSEs do not provide comments.

6.5.4. **Initial Summary Rating (ISR).** The ISR provides the preliminary performance assessment of the CSE. It provides a recommended performance score (between 0 -100), a recommended performance rating (from level 1 - 5), and a corresponding number of shares. This numeric score is derived from the cumulative assessments of the CSE's demonstrated accomplishment in each of the PEs contained within the CSE's performance plan. The ISR is evaluated by the Pay Pool and the PRB who determine if any performance-based pay increase and/or bonus is warranted. A full description is located at the Air Force Performance Rating Level, Score Ranges and Shares for Payout Share Conversion Chart, **Table 7.1** Performance ratings are as follows:

6.5.4.1. **Level 5 – Exceptional Results.** Performance far exceeds what is expected in the attainment of the performance requirement, as evidenced by exceptional accomplishments of contributions to the mission.

6.5.4.2. **Level 4 – Exceeds Expected Results.** Performance surpasses what is expected in the attainment of the performance requirements and/or results in the achievement of unexpected outcomes that contribute to the mission.

6.5.4.3. **Level 3 – Achieved Expectations.** Performance that fully meets the requirements as defined by the performance plan.

6.5.4.4. **Level 2 – Minimally Satisfactory.** Performance partially meets or demonstrates some progress toward the attainment of the performance requirements described in the performance plan.

6.5.4.5. **Level 1 – Unsatisfactory.** Performance fails to meet the requirements for any element in the performance plan.

6.5.5. The reviewing official completes a second-level review of the CSE's ISR assigned by the rating official. Reviewers may not change the rating official's ISR. However, reviewers may non-concur with the rating official's ISR and provide appropriate rationale within their comment block on the appraisal form prior to the PRB.

6.5.5.1. Reviewers should meet with rating officials prior to the rating official assigning the CSE an ISR for discussion.

6.5.5.2. The CSE must acknowledge receipt of the ISR within EPAT. The CSE's acknowledgement of receipt does not indicate concurrence with the ISR or comments. CSEs express non-concurrence through a request for a higher level review (HLR) within seven working days of receipt of the ISR from the rating official.

6.6. Annual Performance Appraisal. The annual performance appraisal is a mandatory requirement in the performance management cycle and determines if any performance pay increase or performance bonus is warranted.

6.6.1. On an annual basis, AFSEMO will identify the time and date that performance appraisals must be completed to prepare for the Pay Pool Panel and PRB.

6.6.2. The CSE initiates his/her own annual performance appraisal by providing specific comments on accomplishments achieved throughout the year.

6.6.3. Rating officials are required to evaluate a CSE's performance at the end of the appraisal period and provide an ISR.

6.6.3.1. If the CSE received an interim/closeout appraisal from a previous rating official(s) any time during the annual appraisal period (in cases where the CSE served under more than one rating official), then the current rating official must also review any previous materials to use in consideration during his/her evaluation of the CSE.

6.6.3.2. Both individual and organizational performance should be evaluated against the successful completion of the performance requirements in the CSE's performance plan (i.e. results achieved). In cases where the rating official is also the reviewer, no additional reviewer comments are permitted.

6.7. Performance Rating Process. For purposes of rating, the following structure is established and applies to all CSEs.

6.7.1. **Rating Official.** Rating officials are typically the immediate supervisor and are responsible for approving and conducting mandatory mid-term feedback and accomplishing annual performance appraisals for assigned CSEs. Rating officials must discuss their CSE's individual performance and contribution to the mission, as well as ratings. The rating official may recommend a Total Performance Payout Adjustment consistent with policy outlined in Subchapter 920, *Executive and Senior Professional Pay and Performance System*.

6.7.2. **Reviewing Official.** The reviewer is a HAF 2-ltr official/MAJCOM/ Combatant Commander. The SECAF and CSAF may designate a single reviewer for Air Staff CSEs, respectively, if desired. Reviewers provide additional comments for the CSE during the appraisal stage, but do not provide additional comments during the mid-term feedback or performance plan creation. Reviewers cannot change the rating official's ISR but may provide their own comments. Reviewers may also make a recommendation in favor or opposition for a Total Performance Payout Adjustment in the reviewer comments.

6.7.3. **Higher Level Review (HLR).** If the CSE has compelling reason to believe the ISR is not an adequate reflection of his/her performance, the CSE may request an HLR. CSEs will have seven working days (from receipt of the ISR) to request the HLR. All requests must be forwarded to AFSEMO.

6.7.3.1. For non-concurrence with the ISR the CSE will provide justification and/or documentation to the Higher Level Reviewing Official (HLRO).

6.7.3.2. The rating official may also provide additional rationale and/or any supporting comments. However, the CSE's comments are not required to be provided to the rating official or reviewer.

6.7.3.3. The HLRO will review the CSE's ISR as documented, and any justification provided by the CSE, rating official and/or reviewer.

6.7.3.3.1. The HLRO is typically either another higher-ranking CSE or an active duty GO in the Air Force. The HLRO is appointed by the SECAF.

6.7.3.3.2. The HLRO may not change the ISR, they may however, make recommendations provided along with all supporting documentation to the Pay Pool, PRB and/or SECAF to include comments and/or a score adjustment.

6.7.3.3.3. Copies of the HLRO's findings and recommendations will be provided to the CSE, the rating official, the reviewing official, the Pay Pool, the PRB and the authorizing official. The HLR is the final process by which a CSE may request review of the assigned ISR. A CSE may not grieve any performance plan, shares allocation, adjustment in basic pay, the non-receipt of a performance bonus or the amount of a performance bonus.

6.7.4. **Pay Pool Panel.** The Pay Pool is a combination of organizational elements and/or tier structure that is defined for purposes of making meaningful distinctions in performance to determine performance payouts.

6.7.4.1. The Pay Pool Panel is the first step in the review process to ensure performance standards are applied consistently across the organization and to manage, control and distribute performance-based pay increases and performance-based bonuses.

6.7.4.2. **Pay Pool Panel Composition.** Pay Pool Panel composition must be established in a manner that precludes conflicts of interest. The membership will include GOs and Career SES members from the Air Force and other Components. More than one half of the PRB members must be Career SES appointees.

6.7.4.2.1. Members of the Pay Pool Panel cannot participate in the PRB.

6.7.4.2.2. Members of the Pay Pool Panel must possess a thorough knowledge and understanding of the Air Force appraisal system gained through experience and or training.

6.7.4.2.3. Members of the Pay Pool Panel cannot participate in the rating or scoring of their own appraisal, the appraisal of their supervisor, or the appraisals of peers within their same position tier.

6.7.5. Pay Pool Panel Methodology. Pay Pool Panel members will review each appraisal within the category to which they are assigned and must consistently apply the Air Force appraisal system methodology. The Pay Pool reports proposed changes to the rating official prior to finalizing Pay Pool deliberations.

6.7.5.1. The Pay Pool Panel may adjust up or down a CSE's ISR based on applying the performance standards in a fair and consistent manner.

6.7.5.2. The Pay Pool must report proposed changes to the rating official prior to finalizing deliberations.

6.7.5.3. Rating officials should be prepared to provide immediate feedback that may include additional evidence to substantiate the CSE's ISR (if applicable).

6.7.5.4. If a dispute between the rating official and the Pay Pool Panel exists regarding a change to the CSE's ISR, the PRB will make a final determination based upon the Pay Pool Panel's recommended results.

6.7.5.5. In the event changes are made to a CSE's ISR by the Pay Pool, that affects overall rating levels, the Pay Pool manager must notify the CSE. The CSE has the opportunity to request an HLR if the recommended change to the ISR results in an increase/decrease in the rating level (i.e. Rating Level 5 to Rating Level 4). An HLR review cannot be requested if changes in a score or shares do not result in a rating level change. CSEs will have seven days from receipt of the change to initiate an HLR.

6.7.5.6. The Pay Pool may approve or disapprove recommendations for the Total Performance Payout Adjustments.

6.7.6. Performance Review Board (PRB). The PRB is the second step in the review process. The PRB ensures the Pay Pool Panel recommendations were applied fairly and consistently across the Pay Pools.

6.7.6.1. **Performance Review Board (PRB) Composition.** The membership will include GOs and Career SES members from the Air Force and other Components. More than one half of the PRB members must be Career SES appointees and the PRB Chair must be a 4-star GO.

6.7.6.2. The SECAF must appoint, in writing, the membership of the PRB and the names of the board members must be recorded in the Federal Register. The PRB panel members will be appointed in a manner to assure consistency, stability, and objectivity in assigning performance appraisal ratings.

6.7.6.3. Members of the PRB cannot participate in the rating or scoring of their own appraisal, the appraisal of their supervisor or the appraisals of peers within their same position tier.

6.7.6.4. The PRB must be established in a manner that precludes conflicts of interest.

6.7.7. Performance Review Board (PRB) Methodology. The PRB members will review appraisals and must consistently apply the Air Force appraisal methodology. The PRB will consider organizational performance and CSE member's individual accomplishments. The PRB will make written recommendations to the SECAF for final approval.

6.7.7.1. The PRB may adjust a CSE's ISR up or down and must be based on applying the performance standards in a fair and consistent manner.

6.7.7.2. The PRB reports proposed changes to the rating official prior to finalizing PRB deliberations.

6.7.7.3. Rating officials should be prepared to provide immediate feedback that may include additional evidence to substantiate the CSE's ISR (if applicable).

6.7.7.4. If a dispute between the rating official and the PRB exists, the SECAF will make a final determination based upon the PRB's performance payout recommended results.

6.7.7.5. The PRB may approve or disapprove recommendations for Total Performance Payout Adjustments.

6.7.8. **Authorizing Official.** The SECAF has final approving authority for the Air Force and ensures the recommendations of the PRB make meaningful distinctions based on relative performance and results are consistent with **Subchapter 920, Executive and Senior Professional Pay and Performance System policy guidelines**. The SECAF assures that performance pay increases and performance bonuses accurately reflect and recognize individual performance and contributions to the Air Force mission performance. The SECAF will determine the ASR and send to OSD for validation. The authorizing official is the only one who can grant a recommended Total Performance Payout Adjustment.

6.7.9. **Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD).** Office of Secretary of Defense validates the Air Force's final summary rating determinations recommended by the SECAF.

6.7.10. **Notification of Results.** After SECAF approval and OSD certification of ASR, AFSEMO will provide full disclosure to the CSE, rating official and reviewing official on individual scoring and documentation. AFSEMO will notify AFPC and Defense Financial Accounting Service to process all performance-based payout for all CSEs and professionals. In addition, AFSEMO will provide aggregate results to the CSEs.

6.7.11. **Performance Management Requirements.** Further guidance is outlined in Subchapter 920, *Executive and Senior Professional Pay and Performance System*.

Chapter 7

PAY AND OTHER COMPENSATION

7.1. Background. CSE pay and compensation is based on a variety of factors and conditions. The foundation for all Air Force CSEs annual pay increases is tied to the Department's pay-for-performance system. The pay-for-performance system ensures a CSE's pay is tied to the results achieved during the performance year that directly links to accomplishment of the Air Force goals and mission. In addition to the annual performance-based increases, Air Force CSEs may be eligible for additional compensation during appointment or reassignment to a position of greater responsibility. **Note:** This chapter does not apply to PAS members, NC SES members and HQEs. HQE pay and other compensation guidance is addressed separately in chapter 10 of this AFI.

7.2. Pay Ranges. The Air Force CSE pay range has a minimum rate of basic pay equal to 120 percent of the basic pay rate for grade GS-15 (step 1). The maximum rate of basic pay is the basic pay rate for Level II of Executive Schedule (EX-II) under a certified performance management system.

7.2.1. **Annual Rate of Pay.** The applicable maximum rate of basic pay for the rate range will increase with any Government-wide increase in the rate for the EX. The adjustment usually occurs at the beginning of the first pay period beginning on or after the first day of the month in which the GS rates are adjusted.

7.2.2. **Tier Levels.** The Air Force SES/DISES positions are designated in a three-tier structure as a means of ensuring comparability and transparency in SES/DISES positions and compensation management across the Department.

7.2.2.1. **Tier 1.** The maximum rate is equivalent to EX-III.

7.2.2.2. **Tier 2.** The maximum rate of basic pay for Tier 2 is equivalent to the midpoint between the maximum rate of basic pay of EX III and the maximum rate of basic pay of EX II (rounded up to the nearest thousand) under a certified performance management system.

7.2.2.3. **Tier 3.** The maximum rate of basic pay is equivalent to EX-II under a certified performance management system.

7.2.3. The DISL/SL/ST positions are not assigned to tiers, but have a maximum rate of basic pay of EX-II under a certified performance system. However, Air Force typically limits pay to EX-III.

7.2.4. The SECAF approves all pay adjustments.

7.2.5. **Aggregate Limitation on Pay.** Aggregate limitation on pay cannot exceed limits established in **5 USC Section 5307, *Limitation on Certain Payments***, for CSEs paid under **5 USC Section 5383, *Setting Individual Senior Executive Pay***. The aggregate limit applies to basic pay, awards (e.g., rank, performance, stipend incentive), recruitment and relocation bonuses, retention allowances and other similar payments. Under a certified performance management system, total compensation paid to a CSE during a calendar year may not exceed the Vice President's salary at the end of the calendar year, based on a current AF

certified performance management system, pursuant to **5 CFR Subpart D, *Pay and Performance Awards under the Senior Executive Service***. If the performance management system is not certified, the aggregate limit is EX-I in accordance with **5 CFR, 530.201(b), *Aggregate Limitation on Pay***.

7.3. Setting Pay. Pay is set based upon a number of factors that includes individual and organizational performance results, the complexity and scope of work, the breadth of responsibility, the CSE's experience, pay history and qualifications.

7.3.1. All CSEs basic pay is exclusive of bonuses, differentials and allowances. An organization may adjust the rate of basic pay of a CSE not more than once during any 12-month period, except as provided by **5 CFR 534.404, *Setting and Adjusting Pay for Senior Executives***.

7.3.2. Locality pay was eliminated for SES/DISES members on 11 January 2004, and for DISL/SL/ST members on 12 April 2009. Therefore, all pay increases are now based on performance and all pay converted to a single base pay rate.

7.3.3. **New Accession.** Pay for new CSEs is generally set at a minimum of six percent above the appointee's total salary or at the floor of the tier for the position the new CSE is being appointed to, whichever is greater.

7.3.3.1. For Federal appointees, total salary excludes bonuses, allowances and awards.

7.3.3.2. For private sector appointees, total salary excludes bonuses, allowances and awards and other monetary incentives, e.g. stock options, company car etc.

7.3.3.3. The ERB will recommend an appropriate starting salary for new CSEs, subject to SECAF approval.

7.3.3.4. Organizations may submit justification for increases above the recommended percent.

7.3.4. **Transfer.** Consideration for pay increases regarding SES/DISES members transferring from different agencies is on a case-by-case basis and recommend approval/disapproval to the SECAF, subject to the limitation on the maximum rate of basic pay. Generally, these increases may be justified by a comparison of the position at the losing agency to the position within the Air Force. If the movement is determined to be to a higher tier, a pay increase may be appropriate.

7.3.4.1. If pay is set at the same SES rate the SES/DISES member received in his/her former agency, the action is not considered a pay adjustment for the purpose of applying the 12-month rule.

7.3.4.2. The SES/DISES members rate of pay is not considered a retained rate of pay for the purpose of applying **5 USC Section 3594, *Guaranteed Placement In Other Personnel Systems*** and **5 CFR Part 359, Subpart G, *Guaranteed Placement***, or **5 USC Section 5363, *Grade and Pay Retention***, and **5 CFR Part 536, Subpart C, *Pay Retention***.

7.3.5. **Movement Within A Tier.** The ERB will consider pay increases (reserved for rare and unusual circumstances) for movement within a tier on a case-by-case basis and recommend approval/disapproval to the SECAF. Examples may include: reassignments recommended as succession planning (where the SES/DISES member is being groomed for

greater levels of responsibility) or movement to positions for which candidates are generally not recruited from outside the SES corps.

7.3.6. Movement to a Higher Tier. Generally, pay for reassignment to a higher tier will result in a six percent increase to the SES/DISES member's current salary. For an increase greater than six percent, organizations must submit justification to the ERB for a recommendation to the SECAF for approval/disapproval.

7.3.7. Movement to a Lower Tier. When movement to a lower tier is done at the discretion of the authorizing official to meet organizational needs for such purposes as SES/DISES development, the SES/DISES member will retain his/her salary and protocol status of the higher tier position and will be grandfathered in the pay pool.

7.3.7.1. When movement to a lower tier is at the request of the SES/DISES member (i.e., applied for the vacancy), the member will retain his/her salary and assume the protocol status of the lower tier position and will not be grandfathered in the position.

7.3.7.2. When movement to a lower tier is for cause, a decrease in pay for the SES/DISES member will be considered upon receipt of a minimally successful or unsatisfactory ASR, failure to meet a critical performance element, and/or disciplinary action.

7.3.8. Maximum Payable Rate. If a CSE takes a position in the GS at the member's request and is not eligible for saved pay, the individual may be paid under the "maximum payable rate" rule, as determined by the agency. An individual serving on an LTA who returns to the GS is not eligible for retained pay, but may have his/her pay set under the "maximum payable rate" rule, as determined by the agency. It does not matter whether the return to GS is voluntary or is the result of a management decision. However, the SES appointment must have been for more than 90 days, even though the appointee may have not actually served that long. In determining the GS rate, agencies may take into account such factors as how long the individual served under the LTA and what the individual's pay would have been had the individual remained in the GS.

7.4. Pay Flexibility. The Air Force has discretionary authority to provide additional compensation to meet pre-employment interview expenses, travel and moving costs for new appointees. The Air Force may advance pay for new appointees up to two pay periods (unless the appointee is the agency head).

7.4.1. Recruitment and Relocation. The Air Force may pay, as a lump sum, a recruitment incentive to a newly appointed CSE if the agency has determined that the position is likely to be difficult to fill in the absence of an incentive, or pay a relocation incentive to a current CSE who must relocate to accept a position in a different geographic area if the agency determines that the position is likely to be difficult to fill in the absence of an incentive. The amount (not to exceed 25 percent of base salary) must be recommended to the ERB and must be approved by the SECAF.

7.4.1.1. To receive these incentives, an employee must sign an agreement to complete a period of service with the agency. Failure to complete the service agreement requires repayment on a pro rata basis. These payments are not considered a part of basic pay but are included in the calculation on the limitation of aggregate basic pay.

7.4.1.2. A relocation incentive may be paid only when the CSE's last ASR under an official performance appraisal or evaluation system is at least "Fully Successful" or equivalent, but the relocation incentive is included for the limitation of aggregate basic pay.

7.4.2. **Retention Payments.** The Air Force may pay a retention allowance (paid bi-weekly) of up to 25 percent of basic pay to a CSE with unusually high or unique qualifications, or based upon the special need of the Air Force, if it is determined the CSE's skills makes it essential to retain the CSE in their current position during a period of time before the closure or relocation of the CSEs office, facility, activity or organization.

7.4.2.1. Retention payments may be provided if the Air Force determines that without the allowance the CSE would be likely to leave the Federal Government in the absence of a retention incentive, whether or not other employment is planned. DV-4 and DV-5 are paid 20 percent of their basic pay, and a DV-6 is paid 15 percent. These payments are not considered a part of basic pay but are included in the calculation on the limitation of aggregate basic pay.

7.4.2.2. A retention incentive may be paid only when the CSE's last ASR is at least "Fully Successful" or equivalent.

7.5. Total Performance Payout. Under a DoD certified performance management system, CSE pay adjustments must be linked to performance. Payouts are either as a performance-based salary increase and/or a performance-based bonus and are subject to the availability of funds. A DoD certified performance appraisal system makes meaningful distinctions based on relative performance and links an individual's pay to results that contribute to mission accomplishment.

7.5.1. **Limited Term Appointment (LTA).** LTA members are not eligible for performance-based bonuses but can receive a performance-based pay raise. Limited Term Appointment member salaries are included in the Pay Pool since they are eligible for performance-based basic pay increases.

7.5.2. **Pay Rules for Less Than a Full Cycle.** The Air Force uses optional Total Performance Payout Adjustment (proration) for members with less than a full year of service (12 months). This does not apply to members serving in CSE positions in other Federal Agencies prior to reassignment to the Air Force.

7.5.2.1. New CSEs are prorated based on the ratio of the year completed.

7.5.2.2. New CSEs with less than 90 days on a performance plan (appointment after 3 July or later) are not rated in the Pay Pool Panel or PRB of the same year. They are not eligible for any pay adjustments or bonuses from the Air Force until the following year. However, the CSE's salary will be included in the pay pool.

7.5.3. **Annual Closeout Guidance.** OSD issues annual closeout guidance for the performance management system to ensure consistency across the Department. The guidance covers Pay Pool funding, compensation rules, organizational assessment and evaluation procedures.

7.5.3.1. **Pay Pool Funding Factor.** OSD determines the Pay Pool Funding Factor which is the sum of three variables: President's Adjustment to Executive Pay (PAEP); Pay Progression Budget (pay increases); and Performance Bonus Budget (bonuses).

7.5.3.1.1. The SECAF determines how funds will be split between Pay Progression Budget (pay increases) and Performance Bonus Budget (bonuses) and approves CSE pay changes based on OSD guidance.

7.5.3.1.2. Unspent funds from the Pay Progression Budget may be moved to the Performance Bonus Budget. However, none of the amount budgeted for bonuses may be used to pay performance pay increases.

7.5.3.1.3. The amount of performance bonuses paid may not exceed 10 percent of the total aggregate basic pay of the Career CSEs on board as of 30 September prior to the FY in which the award payments are made.

7.5.3.2. **Pay Pool Funding.** The Pay Pool Funding will be determined by the sum of all CSE's salaries (including NC and LTA members) on the rolls as of 30 September and then multiplied by the Pay Pool Funding Factor. Pay Pool Funding Factors are defined for each tier level.

7.5.3.2.1. Only those CSEs on a performance plan for a minimum of 90 days (prior to 30 September) will be rated by the Pay Pool Panel and PRB and are eligible to receive a performance-based payout.

7.5.3.2.2. Performance payouts will be calculated and administered so that payouts do not exceed the resources that are available in the Pay Pool.

7.5.4. **Determining Number of Shares.** Shares are the first step in linking performance to payout. Shares are a notional representation of a portion of the Pay Pool, which allows mathematical computation of individual performance payouts. Shares are assigned as a result of the final performance score and are the basis on which individuals earn an increase to basic pay, a performance bonus, or both. Using the Performance Rating Level, Scores and shares for Payout Share Conversion Chart found in **Table 7.1**, the number of earned shares corresponds directly to the CSEs performance rating and performance score. The PRB Score Table is reviewed annually by the ERB and is subject to change.

Table 7.1. Performance Rating Level, Score and Shares for Payout Share Conversion Chart.

Performance Review Board Score Table			
Rating	Rating Level	Score	Share
Unsatisfactory	1	0-50	0
Minimally Satisfactory	2	51-69	0
Achieved Expectations	3	70-71	1
		72-74	2
		75-77	3
		78-79	4
		80-83	5
		84-85	6
Exceeds Expected Results	4	86-91	7
		92	8
		93	9
		94	10
Exceptional Results	5	95	11
		96	12
		97	13
		98	14
		99	15

7.5.4.1. CSEs must have an Annual Performance Rating of “Achieved Expectations” (based on an overall performance score of at least 70, or the equivalent) to be considered for a performance payout. In addition, CSEs must have at least “Achieved Expectations” for all PEs to be eligible for a performance payout.

7.5.4.2. The number of shares earned by a CSE will be used to calculate the performance payout of a CSE by multiplying the number of shares by the Share Value.

7.5.4.3. If grandfathered in accordance with the tier policy, CSEs serving in a tier lower than previously assigned will be paid using the Share Value of the higher tier.

7.5.5. Determining the Share Value. The Share Value (for a single share) is determined by each member’s basic pay multiplied by the number of shares awarded to the CSE. The total Pay Pool value is then divided by the aggregate total of (salary x shares) for all CSEs to calculate the Share Value. The computed Share Value is a percentage.

7.5.6. Formula for the Total Performance Payout. A CSE’s total performance payout is calculated by multiplying the member’s current salary by the individual number of shares earned and then multiplied by the Share Value. This calculation will result in a dollar amount that represents the total amount of performance payout a CSE has earned.

7.5.7. Elements of the Total Performance Payout. The amount of Total Performance Payout money available for the CSE is divided into two elements: basic pay increase and performance bonus.

7.5.7.1. **Determining a Basic Pay Increase.** The basic pay increase is the pay raise portion of the Total Performance Payout. A CSE's pay raise opportunity is driven by the final performance rating. It is an Air Force policy that the highest ratings should receive the highest percentage of a basic pay increase. Using the sample Performance Rating Level Basic Pay Increase for Payout Conversion Chart found in **Table 7.2**, the rating level corresponds directly to the CSE's basic pay increase and is reviewed annually by the ERB and may be modified.

Table 7.2. Sample Performance Rating Level Basic Pay Increase for Payout Conversion Chart.

Performance Rating Level	Rating	Basic Pay Increase
Exceptional Results	5	(SES/DISES/SL/ST/DISL) PAEP + 3 percent
Exceeds Expected Results	4	(SES/DISES/SL/ST/DISL) PAEP + 1 percent
Achieved Expectations	3	(SES/DISES/SL/ST/DISL) PAEP
Minimally Satisfactory	2	N/A
Unsatisfactory	1	N/A

7.5.7.1.1. Basic pay increases are generally effective the first full pay period in January.

7.5.7.1.2. Members in a grandfathered status will not have their pay raises capped unless they are at EX-II pay. They will meet the PRB based on current position.

7.5.7.2. **Determining a Performance-Based Bonus.** The performance bonus is the lump sum portion of the Total Performance Payout awarded to the CSE at the end of the calendar year. **Note:** Basic pay increase monies are first removed from the Total Performance Payout amount and then the remainder is awarded as the performance bonus. The performance bonus is considered a "rating-based" cash award.

7.5.7.2.1. Rating-based cash awards above \$25,000 for DISL/SL/ST members require White House approval and must be routed through OSD. This restriction does not apply for SES/DISES members.

7.5.7.2.2. DISL/SL/ST member bonuses normally will not exceed 10 percent of the annual rate of basic pay. Exceptional performance by the member may justify up to 20 percent.

7.5.7.2.3. SES/DISES member bonuses must be between 5 and 20 percent of basic pay. If an adjustment decreases the amount of a bonus, the resulting bonus cannot be less than 5 percent of the SES/DISES member's salary. This restriction does not apply to SL/ST and DISL members.

7.5.7.2.4. If an adjustment is made to a CSE's performance bonus the combined total (the original bonus amount plus the adjusted amount to include the Total Performance Pay Adjustment) cannot exceed 20 percent of the member's salary.

7.5.8. Total Performance Payout Adjustments. An increase or decrease to the proposed basic pay increase and/or performance bonus as calculated by the Performance Payout formula determined by the SECAF. The Total Performance Payout Adjustment is an adjustment only, not a separate cash award, such as a special act or incentive award.

7.5.8.1. The decision to make an adjustment to a CSE's Total Performance Payout must be done in a judicious and prudent manner. It must be documented in writing and can only be approved by the SECAF. However, it may be recommended by the rating official, Pay Pool Panel and/or PRB.

7.5.8.2. A Total Performance Payout Adjustment increase may be made for reasons such as recognizing rare and unusual circumstances in which an CSE achieves "Extraordinary Results" above that which the Performance Payout Formula provides. It may also recognize a significant team accomplishment or achievement in meeting an organization's strategic goal.

7.5.8.3. A Total Performance Payout Adjustment decrease may be made for the following reasons:

7.5.8.3.1. **Proration.** Members with less than a full year of service (12 months) during the performance appraisal period will have their Total Performance Payout decreased based on the ratio of the year completed. This does not apply to members who were serving in CSE positions in other Federal agencies prior to reassignment to the Air Force.

7.5.8.3.2. Recent hiring action (e.g., within the performance cycle) in which a significant pay increase was granted upon appointment, reassignment or transfer.

7.5.8.3.3. To comply with the aggregate Pay Pool funding limits imposed by statute, regulation or by DoD.

7.5.8.3.4. If an adjustment decreases the amount of a bonus of a member of the SES/DISES, the resulting bonus cannot be less than five percent of the member's salary.

Chapter 8

AWARDS AND OTHER RECOGNITION

8.1. Background. The law authorizes agencies to grant special recognition, awards and incentive payments to CSEs to help attract, retain, recognize, reward, and motivate highly competent CSE members. Monetary forms of recognition include performance awards (bonuses) and honorary incentive awards (DoD and Presidential). By DoD policy, only Career appointees are eligible for performance awards and the PRA. CSEs are not eligible for monetary Special Act or Service awards. Non-monetary forms of recognition include Campaign and Service awards. Approval authority for non-monetary awards is outlined in **AFI 36-1004, Table 5.1** *The Air Force Civilian Recognition Program, 3 December 2009*. **Note:** This chapter does not apply to PAS, NC SES members and HQEs.

8.2. Monetary Awards. These awards are recognized with compensation subject to the aggregate limitation on pay. Total compensation paid to a CSE member during a calendar year, to include allowances, differentials, bonuses, awards or other similar cash payments may not exceed EX-I, or the Vice President's salary, at the end of the calendar year, under a certified performance management system.

8.2.1. Performance-Based Bonus. The SECAF, as the authorizing official, determines performance awards for all Air Force CSEs based on recommendations from the PRB in accordance with **Chapter 6**, Performance Management for eligibility and **Chapter 7**, Pay and Other Compensation for monetary compensation amounts.

8.2.2. Presidential Rank Award (PRA). The PRA is the most prestigious recognition awarded to CSEs. It is restricted to those in Career status only. Career CSEs may be recognized for exceptional performance over an extended period of time. CSEs serving in NC appointments, LTAs, and PAS are not eligible for a PRA. As PRAs recognize performance over an extended period of time, CSEs whose performance is exceptional for at least three years may be nominated for one of two Presidential rank levels: Distinguished or Meritorious.

8.2.2.1. The Distinguished PRA recognizes sustained extraordinary accomplishment. Distinguished recipients receive a lump-sum payment of 35 percent of their rate of annual basic pay, a gold pin, and a framed certificate signed by the President. The Distinguished rank is awarded to one percent or less of Career CSEs Government-wide for sustained extraordinary accomplishments.

8.2.2.2. The Meritorious PRA recognizes sustained accomplishment. Meritorious recipients receive a lump-sum payment of 20 percent of their rate of annual basic pay, a silver pin, and a framed certificate signed by the President. The Meritorious rank is awarded to five percent or less of Career CSEs Government-wide for sustained accomplishments.

8.2.2.3. There is no restriction on receiving a meritorious award before receiving a distinguished award. A CSE may not receive the same award more than once in a five year period.

8.2.2.4. CSEs are eligible to receive a PRA and a performance bonus in the same calendar year. It is inappropriate to deny or reduce a performance award solely on the basis of receiving a PRA during the same year.

8.2.2.5. AFSEMO annually issues calls for nominations. Two separate nomination processes occur: one for Career SES/SL/ST and one for Career DISES/DISL.

8.2.2.5.1. Only HAF 2-ltr officials/MAJCOM/ Combatant Commanders may submit nominations to AFSEMO. Specific guidance for content of award packages will be provided when the call for nominations occurs.

8.2.2.5.2. There are no limits on the number of nominees a HAF 2-ltr official/MAJCOM/ Combatant Commander can submit; however, there should be no more than one Distinguished nominee for every five Meritorious nominees submitted. Nominees should have demonstrated progression of performance accomplishments by receipt of performance awards prior to nomination.

8.2.2.6. A Presidential Rank Award Panel (PRAP) is composed of members appointed by the SECAF to consider nominations annually. The PRAP is chaired by a 3 or 4-star GO or SES equivalent. The Board members are typically selected from previous PRA winners.

8.2.2.6.1. There is one PRAP board for Air Force SES/SL/ST members. Air Force nominees are selected and their names are forwarded to OSD for consideration. Nominations are then sent to OPM for Government-wide screening and forwarded for Presidential approval.

8.2.2.6.2. There is a separate PRAP board submission process for DISES/DISL Air Force nominees. This board is composed primarily of members of the Intelligence community. Air Force nominees are selected and forwarded to the Director of Administration and Management for consideration and final selection by the SECDEF. The SECDEF forwards the nominations to the White House for Presidential approval.

8.2.2.7. AFSEMO notifies appropriate authorities of PRA recipients. The SECAF hosts a ceremony and reception honoring the Air Force PRA recipients.

8.2.2.8. Public release of PRA recipients (e.g., website, newsletter, newspaper) is not authorized until the President officially announces the winners and AFSEMO receives OPM and OSD authorization.

8.3. Non-Monetary Awards. Non-monetary awards are appropriate for special acts or service. Non-government organizations may present non-monetary awards to recognize outstanding executive achievements. Non-monetary awards, eligibility requirements and nomination procedures are found in AFI 36-1004. These awards are not presented in lieu of a performance-based bonus or in addition to a performance-based bonus for the same accomplishment.

Chapter 9

TALENT MANAGEMENT AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT

9.1. Talent Management. Talent management is a deliberate process used to manage the career lifecycle of SES/DISES members. Talent management builds a leadership talent pool to ensure continuity to execute the Air Force mission without interruptions that may be created by position vacancies. The Air Force provides an annual corporate assessment of leadership and utilization potential based on the results of performance and competency based readiness assessments of all Career SES/DISES members to identify candidates for positions of increased responsibility and developmental opportunities. The talent management process allows the Air Force to identify and develop a bench of SES/DISES talent with an enterprise, joint and national security perspective. **Note:** This chapter does not apply to DISL/SL/ST/PAS/NC SES members and HQE's.

9.2. Talent Pool. The talent pool consists of all Career SES/DISES members. The SES/DISES members are provided the opportunity for varied/competitive job-based experiences and continuous career development through the TMB which is a succession planning process.

9.2.1. **Self Assessment/Executive Profile.** Annually, SES/DISES members complete a self-assessment as part of the overall talent management process. This self-assessment is accomplished through and maintained in the Defense Talent Management System (DTMS). DTMS includes an executive profile about the SES/DISES member's current position, job history, preferences for position movement, competency assessments, education, awards and prior year performance appraisal.

9.2.2. AFSEMO is the Office of Primary Responsibility (OPR) for DTMS and allows SES/DISES members the opportunity to update information, as necessary, on their current duties, most significant career accomplishments and other required information. The self-assessment/executive profile is reviewed by the rater and endorser of the SES/DISES member to provide input to the TMB. MAJCOM/COCOM Commanders and HAF/SAF 2-letters must serve as the Endorsers for all of their SES/DISES members in DTMS in order to provide the big-picture view of executive potential within their organization.

9.3. Talent Management Board (TMB). AFSEMO facilitates the TMB on behalf of the SECAF. The TMB is chaired by a four star GO and the members are comprised of an appropriate mix of Career SES/DISES and GOs. The chair and members are appointed by the SECAF. The board conducts SES/DISES member readiness assessments, utilizes performance data to identify potential candidates for future vacancies and develop succession management plans. The TMB convenes during the third quarter of each FY. All TMB deliberations are confidential.

9.3.1. **Assessment.** A common means of evaluating all Tier 1 and Tier 2 SES/DISES member's executive competency level based on multiple performance indicators including performance history, career chronology and pre-determined competency ratings. This is a two-part process to provide both a near and long term assessment. The Air Force SES/DISES leadership and utilization potential are assessed/grouped by Tier 1 and 2.

9.3.1.1. **Readiness Rating.** Using a decision matrix, a readiness rating is assigned after a review of performance and a TMB agreed level of future potential. The readiness rating is used for deliberate succession management and the assignment of development priorities. There are four possible readiness ratings:

9.3.1.1.1. **Ready for Increased Challenge.** Member is ready now for a position of greater scope, impact, complexity, responsibility of institutional importance.

9.3.1.1.2. **Ready for Career Broadening.** Member is ready now to move into a position of equivalent scope, impact, complexity, responsibility, and authority that offers different challenges and provides growth.

9.3.1.1.3. **Build Tenure/Experience.** On track or recently assigned.

9.3.1.1.4. **Contribute In-Place.** Member occupies a highly specialized, unique or niche position creating a need for continuity.

9.3.1.2. **Transferability.** The TMB is used to identify and understand the skills and competencies available within the SES/DISES community to ensure visibility of talent; and promote career opportunities within the Air Force and across DoD to maximize transferability. The Air Force requires its corps of SES/DISES members to be mobile with the understanding they may be reassigned to meet shifting Air Force priorities. The Air Force supports this requirement by developing SES/DISES members through a structured series of well-planned developmental and educational experiences, often including reassignments to more challenging positions. The objective of position mobility is to develop SES/DISES members with strong skills to lead and operate effectively across organizational and functional boundaries, enterprise-spanning perspectives and deepen knowledge of joint/interagency matters. Upon SECAF approval of the TMB results, SES/DISES members and their rater, and/or endorser will be notified that a readiness rating of “ready for increased challenge” or “ready for career broadening” may result in a referral for opportunities enterprise-wide within the next 12 months.

9.3.1.3. The TMB shall match SES/DISES members to critical developmental experiences.

9.3.1.4. The outcome of TMB deliberations shall be approved by the SECAF as the final authorizing official. The SECAF will ensure compliance with succession management policies issued by DoD and submit endorsed assessments and goals annually to the Defense Executive Advisory Board through its representatives.

9.3.2. **Talent Management Board (TMB) Feedback.** AFSEMO ensures all SES/DISES members are notified of their TMB results via a signed memorandum from the SECAF. The memorandum details the readiness rating. A copy of this memorandum is provided to endorsing officials informing them of the readiness ratings of members within their command; positions slated and information on the positions that “their” SES/DISES members were slated for within the next 12 months. This is facilitated in the form of feedback to promote self-examination and assessment for continuous development.

9.3.2.1. AFSEMO will provide SES/DISES members with their personal readiness rating and the definition of each readiness rating.

9.3.2.2. Supervisors will provide timely feedback to SES/DISES members regarding the outcomes of the TMB process.

9.3.2.3. Feedback is a shared responsibility; however, this annual feedback should always be initiated by the supervisor.

9.3.2.4. Feedback will address how the SES/DISES members can achieve career goals; how to broaden capabilities; how to advance and contribute more fully to the mission; and how to create a meaningful Executive Development Plan (EDP), refer to item **9.5.1**

9.3.2.5. Feedback regarding a readiness rating or succession plan cannot be challenged, but SES/DISES members may solicit clarification of the assessment through the chain of command.

9.3.2.6. Feedback provides SES/DISES members with insight on others' perceptions of his/her capabilities and competencies.

9.3.2.7. Feedback shall be relevant and actionable.

9.4. Succession Planning. A method of strategic planning for all Air Force SES/DISES positions and SES/DISES members based on the TMB's analysis of the competency gaps between the members capabilities and needs. Succession planning is a multi-year, multi-level, cross-functional and enterprise-wide system to ensure the continuity of SES/DISES talent and develop the SES/DISES talent pool. Organizational succession planning identifies and develops a bench of talent strength, then develops SES/DISES members early to meet long-term needs.

9.4.1. **Position Planning.** Multi-year succession planning recognizes that SES/DISES positions are too critical to be left vacant or filled by anyone other than the best prepared SES/DISES members. Assigned readiness ratings are used to assess, identify and present qualified candidates for specific SES/DISES positions based on the TMB's assessment of an individual's ability to take on greater responsibility.

9.4.2. A summary of all succession plans is reviewed to identify gaps in bench strength across the Air Force; analyze staffing patterns and enterprise-wide gaps; and make recommendations to address gaps, weaknesses, threats and opportunities, as needed.

9.4.2.1. Each Tier 3 and Tier 2 position in the succession plan is slated for the next 12 months and succession plans developed for subsequent years.

9.4.2.2. Succession plans will be developed for all Tier 2 and "draft" slates for Tier 3 positions for review at CORONA.

9.4.2.3. Succession plans will be validated for Tier 1 positions as "developmental" or "entry".

9.4.2.4. Succession plans will be created and refreshed annually and mid-year as a minimum.

9.4.2.5. Succession plans will be comprehensive, and multi-year, by position/function.

9.4.2.6. Succession plans may be shared across the Department to inform other Component SES/DISES members.

9.4.2.7. Succession plans will use competency information for analysis and identification of developmental gaps within the Air Force.

9.4.2.8. Position slates for the next 12 months will be shared with the owning HAF 2-ltr officials/MAJCOM/Combatant Commanders, for their positions only.

9.4.2.9. Readiness ratings for SES/DISES members with “Ready for Increased Challenge,” “Ready for Career Broadening” will be shared with HAF 2-ltr officials/MAJCOM/Combatant Commanders to inform them that these individuals may be referred for other positions in the next 12 months. AFSEMO will use the slates and ratings to build the referral listings.

9.5. Career Development. The Air Force’s goal is to provide high potential SES/DISES members with targeted and specialized development opportunities focused on meeting current and future corporate needs as identified by annual succession planning. Owing organizations have an inherent responsibility for providing functional or development training for their SES/DISES members. **Note:** There is no requirement to provide development training for DISL/SL/ST members.

9.5.1. Executive Development Plans (EDPs). To assist with career development, EDPs must be prepared for all SES/DISES members. An EDP is a detailed guide of development activities to help SES/DISES members, through participation in short-term and long-term experiences, meet organizational needs for leadership, managerial improvement and results.

9.5.1.1. The EDP will include career broadening and developmental education needs, based upon feedback from the TMB. The EDP will address enhancement of executive competencies, and outline developmental opportunities and assignments that allow the individual to develop a broader perspective in the agency as well as enterprise-wide.

9.5.1.2. Senior leadership provides perspective by validating each EDP within their rating chain. The EDPs will be monitored and updated annually. **Note:** There is no requirement for DISL/SL/ST members to develop EDPs. DISL/ SL/ST members are considered to possess the requisite skills associated with the level and position for which they were hired and are therefore not considered for development.

9.5.2. Centrally-Managed Development Opportunities. AFSEMO executes the Senior Leader Development Portfolio. The portfolio of these executive-level development courses is published by AF/A1 and managed by AF/A1D.

9.5.2.1. Selection Methodology. SES/DISES members are identified as potential candidates for developmental opportunities, as a result of succession planning during the annual TMB. This strategic approach is applied to maximize the Air Force’s return on investment, rather than using a nominative or self-identification process. Limited budget and developmental opportunities drive a selective process focusing on the identification of highly competitive candidates. Therefore, the Air Force selects those SES/DISES members who demonstrate potential to assume higher levels of responsibility and to address competencies.

9.5.2.1.1. **General Selection Criteria.** Only SES/DISES member records are individually reviewed to identify gaps, avoid duplication, and ultimately match them to appropriate development opportunities.

9.5.2.1.2. Budgetary constraints may limit the availability of course allocations. Primary and alternate candidates are identified based on outcomes from the TMB and the available number of allocations. Once identified as a primary for a course, it is imperative SES/DISES members make every effort to attend.

9.5.2.2. **Interest-Based/Voluntary/Nominative Courses.** AFSEMO annually receives course allocations for courses which may be filled via self-nomination. These courses may be specific to a functional area or provide a general level of executive development. AFSEMO will advertise these opportunities and accept nominations with specific response timelines.

9.5.2.3. **External Courses.** Each year, AFSEMO receives a limited number of external opportunities from DoD, other Components or Federal agencies to provide attendees for specialized programs or courses not contained in the Senior Leader Development Portfolio. The courses are specific to a functional area or provide a general level of executive development. These courses may be filled deliberately from the outcomes of the TMB or may allow for self-nomination. As appropriate, AFSEMO will advertise these opportunities and accept nominations with specific response timelines. AFSEMO will review records to identify gaps, avoid duplication and ultimately match the SES/DISES members appropriately.

9.5.2.4. **Funding.** Central funding of development opportunities is limited to SES/DISES members.

9.5.2.5. **Cancellation/Withdrawal Policy.** Once an SES/DISES member is confirmed and notified for a specific course, senior leader policy requires any cancellation or withdrawal from the course must include a written justification, signed by the MAJCOM/CV or Air Staff 2-ltr equivalent official. Requests for withdrawal will be forwarded to AFSEMO for action.

9.5.2.6. **Executive Orientation.** To assist in the transition to both the Executive Corps and the Air Force, mandatory courses are identified for newly appointed SES/DISES members. SES/ DISES members who transfer to the Air Force will be admitted to the courses on a space available basis. The target window for completion of these courses is within the first 18 months of appointment.

9.5.3. **Sabbaticals.** The SECAF may approve a sabbatical for up to 11 months to SES appointees for full-time study or uncompensated work experience which will contribute to their development and effectiveness. A member may have only one sabbatical in any 10-year period. To be eligible for a sabbatical, the member must have completed seven years of Federal Civil Service at the SES (or equivalent) level, with at least two of the seven years in the SES; must not be eligible for optional retirement as of the time the sabbatical begins; must have a rating of “exceeds expected results” on latest performance appraisal; and must agree to remain in Federal Civil Service for two consecutive years after completion of the sabbatical.

Chapter 10

HIGHLY QUALIFIED EXPERTS

10.1. Background. HQEs are senior-level Excepted Service Government employees who possess expert knowledge or skills generally not available within DoD. They are utilized to satisfy a relatively non-permanent, short-term requirement.

10.2. Highly Qualified Expert (HQE) Appointment. HQEs can be appointed for a period of five years. Air Force policy limits initial appointments to no more than three years; however, appointments can be extended for up to two years. In extenuating circumstances, a waiver may be obtained to extend an HQE for one additional year. The initial appointment and extensions shall not exceed six years.

10.3. Highly Qualified Expert (HQE) Duties. HQEs may mentor, lead, oversee, direct, manage and consult on DoD programs and initiatives. If an HQE's responsibilities will include supervisory or managerial duties, these duties must be approved by the ERB.

10.4. Precedence Priority Codes and Position Tiers. OSD periodically publishes updates to the Order of Precedence list, which provides the relative protocol precedence for members within DoD. CSEs are not stratified by grade; therefore, position and pay structure distinctions for CSEs necessitates some order of precedence. For protocol purposes, order of precedence is accomplished in the Air Force through DV codes. For DV codes, refer to chapter 2, item **2.5.2**.

10.5. Recruitment and Selection. The hiring organization must conduct their own recruitment search and identify potential HQE candidates. Candidates must possess substantive knowledge, skills, experience, and/or education along with a proven ability in the particular occupational field.

10.5.1. The ERB approves the qualifications of all HQE candidates. The SECAF has delegated authority to SAF/AA to approve the appointments and extension of appointments for all HQEs.

10.5.2. Requesting officials submit the following documentation to AFSEMO for the establishment of an HQE position: PD; performance plan; resume of proposed candidate (see [Attachment 7](#)); and an executive summary of the HQE requirement (see [Attachment 8](#)).

10.6. Former Civil or Uniformed Service Employees.

10.6.1. Intervening Period of Service. Former Civil or Uniformed Service employees are required to have a 30-day break in service prior to an appointment as an HQE. In situations where a recent Civil or Uniformed Service employee is selected as an HQE candidate, the experience they possess must be an uncommon level of expertise. These types of appointments should occur only in exceptionally compelling instances. These appointments are subject to a pre-appointment staffing review by the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Civilian Personnel Policy, after the ERB recommends approval. This review does not apply to Senior Mentor appointments.

10.6.2. Retired Federal Civil Service Employees. Retired Federal Civil Service employees who do not possess an uncommon level of expertise and recognition required for an HQE appointment shall be appointed as Reemployed Annuitants under the provisions of **DoD Instruction 1400.25, Volume 300, DoD Civilian Personnel Management System: Employment of Federal Civilian Annuitants in the Department of Defense.**

10.7. Funding and Manpower. The gaining unit's organization must fund the HQE position. Any HQE salary drawn from civilian pay accounts will be reimbursed from Operations and Maintenance accounts as chosen by the hiring MAJCOM in accordance with standard financial regulations and policies. The Air Force does not require manpower or billet numbers for HQE positions, as they are temporary. This does not preclude an organization from assigning a manpower or billet number.

10.8. Compensation. In addition to basic pay, HQE employees may receive additional compensation to include locality pay, recruitment, relocation and retention incentives, subject to limitations established under **5 USC, Section 9903 (d), Attracting Highly Qualified Experts.**

10.8.1. Basic Pay. The HQE basic rate of pay may range from GS-15, Step 1 times 120 percent to EX-IV. Hourly rate of pay is based on 2,087 hours annually.

10.8.2. Locality Pay. The Air Force may pay locality pay; however, the HQE's total pay (basic rate of pay plus locality pay) cannot exceed the statutory limit of EX-III. Since the total pay cannot exceed these limits, when the HQE is eligible for locality-based pay, basic pay must be adjusted to ensure it is within the statutory caps.

10.8.3. Aggregate Limitation on Pay. Under a certified performance management system, in any calendar year, the aggregate annual compensation (basic pay, locality, and bonus pay) cannot exceed the salary of the Vice President. If the performance management system is not certified, the aggregate statutory limit is EX-I in accordance with **5 CFR, Part 530.201(b).**

10.8.4. Overtime Pay. HQEs do not qualify for overtime compensation for work in excess of the maximum allowed 80-hour per pay-period. Federal employees whose biweekly rate of pay exceeds the maximum rate of pay for a grade GS-15 or EX-V are prohibited from receiving overtime pay. The HQE biweekly rate of pay usually exceeds this threshold. Further, an HQE will not be eligible for any other type of premium pay (e.g. danger pay).

10.8.5. Travel Time and Compensatory Time. Pay while in travel status may be authorized depending on whether the HQE's work schedule is full-time, part-time, or intermittent. Pay is authorized for full-time and part-time HQEs when travel occurs during a regularly scheduled work week or while performing work while traveling to or from business. Travel pay is authorized for intermittent HQEs only when performing work, since there is no regularly scheduled work week. Pay may be authorized during travel in rare instances when carried out under arduous conditions or is not scheduled/controlled by the Agency. HQEs are not eligible for compensatory time.

10.9. Performance Management. HQEs are subject to a performance management process that requires the development of performance plans as a method to determine performance-based compensation. HQEs are not subject to the requirements set forth under **Chapter 6** "Performance Management" in this AFI.

10.9.1. Performance Plan. HQEs are required to be on an appointment-specific performance plan that spans the duration of the HQE's appointment period in the Air Force. The "HQE appointment-specific performance plan" template is provided by AFSEMO and will be used for all HQE performance plans. All HQEs must be on approved performance plans within 30 days of appointment or within 30 days from the start of the performance appraisal period.

10.9.1.1. The performance plan must be developed and discussed in consultation with the rating official and reflect the duties and expected outcomes of the position.

10.9.1.2. A revalidation of the performance requirements are required yearly and will typically occur at the beginning of the next performance appraisal period.

10.9.2. Performance Factor. There is only one performance factor: "*Mission Accomplishment*" on which an HQE can be assessed. Mission Accomplishment is defined as: Executes the position's assigned duties in a manner that contributes to the successful outcome of strategic goals and objectives; ensures the accomplishments of the organization or program managed can be directly tied to mission need and specifies the results or commitments to be achieved during the rating period.

10.9.3. Performance Requirements. Three mandatory performance requirements are required for the *Mission Accomplishment* performance factor. All performance requirements must be written at the "*In Good Standing*" level. They must be results-focused and be written in the SMART-Q format. Each performance requirement must show alignment to a specific goal in either the Department of the Air Force's strategic plan, the MAJCOM specific strategic plan or DoD Organizational Assessment.

10.9.4. Performance Rating Level. The HQE performance management process is a pass-fail system. There is only one performance rating level: "*In Good Standing*". To receive a performance rating of "*In Good Standing*", results and accomplishments achieved by the HQE during the performance appraisal period must be characterized as:

10.9.4.1. Uncommon, Proficient, Exceptional, Outstanding and;

10.9.4.2. Demonstrate efficiencies and cost savings.

10.9.4.3. HQEs serve at the will of the appointing official. If an HQE does not achieve results expected at the "*In Good Standing*" level, the HQE must be terminated.

10.9.5. Performance Appraisal Period. While each performance plan is appointment-specific, the performance appraisal period is typically from 1 October thru 30 September. If an HQE begins employment with the Air Force in the middle of the performance appraisal period, the performance appraisal period will begin on the date of his/her appointment.

10.9.5.1. HQEs must be on a performance plan for a minimum of 90 days in order to be eligible to receive a performance rating. Otherwise, the performance appraisal period will be extended for a maximum of 15 months to coincide with the end of the next performance cycle.

10.9.5.2. Rating officials are responsible for assessing and monitoring performance during the performance appraisal period and ensuring on-going feedback as necessary. On-going feedback should address expectations and progress on the HQE's accomplishments towards meeting the performance requirements set forth in the

performance plan. A mandatory mid-year performance review must be held and the date formally documented on the performance plan.

10.9.5.3. Rating officials are responsible for providing a recommended performance rating for the HQE at the end of the performance appraisal period. If warranted, rating officials may recommend consideration of a performance-based bonus in accordance with the compensation section below.

10.9.5.4. The PRB review the performance appraisals of all HQEs eligible for a performance rating. The PRB assesses the recommended performance rating level and determines if the accomplishments warrant a performance-based bonus. There is no HLR process and HQEs cannot grieve their rating or performance-based pay increase/bonus.

10.9.5.5. At the beginning of the appointment and at the conclusion of the performance cycle, all HQE performance plans must be provided to AFSEMO. AFSEMO retains final HQE performance plans for a minimum of three years after expiration of the appointment.

10.9.6. Performance-Based Compensation. HQEs must be on board at the end of the FY in order to be eligible to receive a performance-based bonus. In order to be eligible to receive a performance-based pay increase, HQEs must still be on board during the first pay period in the following year.

10.9.6.1. If an HQE is rated at the “*In Good Standing*” performance level, they will receive a performance-based pay increase equal to the PAEP as determined by OPM.

10.9.6.2. In rare circumstances, accomplishments achieved by an HQE during the performance appraisal period may be considered “*Extraordinary Results*”. The “*Extraordinary Results*” are a high bar standard and are characterized as:

10.9.6.2.1. Significantly advancing the Air Force or DoD’s mission or program objectives (e.g., game changing); and

10.9.6.2.2. Demonstrates significant efficiencies and/or cost savings.

10.9.6.2.3. If it is determined an HQE achieved “*Extraordinary Results*” during the performance appraisal period, they will receive a performance-based pay increase equal to the PAEP percentage as determined by OPM. They are also eligible for a performance-based bonus as determined by the PRB. The bonus must be in the form of a retention bonus.

10.9.6.3. Additional payments, to include a performance-based bonus and/or a recruitment, relocation or retention incentive, are subject to the following limitations:

10.9.6.3.1. The total of all additional payments made under these provisions during any 12-month period may not exceed the lesser of (1) \$50,125, which may be adjusted annually thereafter by the SECDEF; or (2) the amount equal to 50 percent of the employee’s annual rate of basic pay.

10.9.6.3.2. These additional payments may be paid to an HQE who works a full-time, part-time, or intermittent work schedule.

10.9.6.4. Funds to cover pay increases and/or additional payments are not centrally funded by the Air Force. Each MAJCOM is required to provide funds to cover the additional increases/payments.

10.10. Work Schedule. Employment may be full-time, part-time or intermittent. The work schedule is set and pre-approved by the supervisor, depending on organizational mission, with the flexibility to change on a daily basis.

10.11. Conditions of Employment.

10.11.1. **Conflict of Interest Prohibition.** HQEs will receive a full ethics briefing on reemployment restrictions and conflict of interest. This briefing is provided by SAF/GCA.

10.11.2. **Financial Disclosure.** All HQEs regardless of basic rate of pay or schedule shall file with SAF/GCA a *Public Financial Disclosure Report*, (SF 278) or the *Confidential Financial Disclosure Report*, Office of Government Ethics, Form 450 (OGE 450). Contact AFSEMO for specific guidance on this requirement.

10.11.3. **Drug Testing.** Prior to appointment, HQEs are required to complete and pass drug urinalysis testing. Once appointed, HQEs are required to undergo periodic random drug testing in accordance with **EO 12564**.

10.12. Suspensions, Removals and Terminations. HQEs serve at the will of the appointing official and may be terminated at any time without cause. Prior to any formal notification to an HQE, contact AFSEMO for procedural guidance for any proposed suspensions, terminations and removal actions.

DARRELL D. JONES, Lt General, USAF
DCS, Manpower, Personnel and Services

Attachment 1

GLOSSARY OF REFERENCES AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

References

AFPD 36-9, *Senior Executive Resource Management*, 26 July, 1994

AFI 36-1004, *The Air Force Civilian Recognition Program*, 3 December 2009

AFMAN 33-363, *Management of Records*, 1 March 2008

DoD Directive 5105.76, *Transition of Administration Appointees and Other Officials*,

8 August 2008 (<http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/corres/pdf/510576p.pdf>)

DoD Instruction 1400.25, Volume 300, *DoD Civilian Personnel Management System: Employment of Federal Civilian Annuitants in the Department of Defense*, 10 December 2008

(<http://www.cpms.osd.mil/ASSETS/E8AB932EA1E44617BAC7222922E42A62/DoDI140025-V300.pdf>) Subchapter 920, *Executive and Senior Professional Pay and Performance System*, 18 March 2008 (<http://www.cpms.osd.mil/sespm/docs/SC920FinalDraftTierPolicy.pdf>)

United States Code (USC) can be located using the following website:

<http://uscode.house.gov/search/criteria.shtml>

5 USC Chapter 45, *Incentive Awards*

5 USC Section 552a, *Records Maintained on Individuals*

5 USC Section 3341, *Details; within Executive or Military Departments*

5 USC Section 3594, *Guaranteed Placement in other Personnel Systems*

5 USC Section 5307, *Limitation on Certain Payments*

5 USC Section 5363, *Grade and Pay Retention*

5 USC Section 5376, *Pay for Certain Senior-Level Positions*

5 USC Section 5382, *Establishment of Rates of Pay for the Senior Executive Service*

5 USC Section 5383, *Setting Individual Senior Executive Pay*

5 USC Section 7543, *Cause and Procedure*

5 USC, Section 9903 (d), *Attracting Highly Qualified Experts*

5 USC Appendix Sec. 101, *Ethics in Government Act*

10 USC 8013, *Secretary of the Air Force*

5 CFR, Part 534, Subpart D, *Pay and Performance Awards under the Senior Executive Service* (http://www.access.gpo.gov/nara/cfr/waisidx_11/5cfr534_11.html)

5 CFR Part 317.703, *Guaranteed Reinstatement: Presidential Appointees* (http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/cfr_2011/janqtr/5cfr317.703.htm)

5 CFR 317.903(b)(1), *Details* (<http://www.gpoaccess.gov/cfr/retrieve.html>)

5 CFR Part 359, *Removal from the Senior Executive Service; Guaranteed Placement in other Personnel Systems* (http://www.access.gpo.gov/nara/cfr/waisidx_11/5cfr359_11.html)

5 CFR Part 359, Subpart G, *Guaranteed Placement*
(<http://www.gpoaccess.gov/cfr/retrieve.html>)

5 CFR Part 430.310, *Performance Review Boards*
(<http://www.gpoaccess.gov/cfr/retrieve.html>)

5 CFR Part 530.201(b), *Aggregate limitation on Pay*
(<http://www.gpoaccess.gov/cfr/retrieve.html>)

5 CFR Part 534.403(a), *SES Rate Range*
(http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/cfr_2011/janqtr/5cfr534.403.htm)

5 CFR 534.404, *Setting and Adjusting Pay for Senior Executives*
(<http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/get-cfr.cgi>) 5 CFR Part 534.404(c), *Setting and Adjusting Pay for Senior Executives* (<http://www.gpoaccess.gov/cfr/retrieve.html>)

5 CFR Part 534.404(j), *Setting and Adjusting Pay for Senior Executives*
(http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/cfr_2011/janqtr/5cfr534.404.htm)

5 CFR Part 536, Subpart C, *Pay Retention*
(http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/cfr_2011/janqtr/5cfr536.101.htm)

5 CFR Part 536.103, *Grade and Pay Retention definitions*
(http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/cfr_2011/janqtr/5cfr536.103.htm)

5 CFR Part 536.104, *Reasonable Offer*
(http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/cfr_2011/janqtr/5cfr536.104.htm)

5 CFR, Part 359, Subpart E, *Removal of Career Appointees for Less Than Fully Successful Executive Performance* (<http://www.gpoaccess.gov/cfr/retrieve.html>)

5 CFR Part 752, *Adverse Actions*
(http://www.access.gpo.gov/nara/cfr/waisidx_11/5cfr752_11.html)

29 CFR 1607, *Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection Procedures*, 1978
http://www.access.gpo.gov/nara/cfr/waisidx_10/29cfr1607_10.html

Executive Order 9397, *Numbering System for Federal Accounts Relating to Individual Persons*, 22 November 1943

Executive Order 12564, *Drug Free Federal Workplace*, 15 September 1986

Executive Order 13478, *Amendments to Executive Order 9397 Relating to Federal Agency Use of Social Security Numbers*, 18 November 2008

Adopted Forms

AF Form 847, *Recommendation for Change of Publication*

DD Form 2899, *Executive Pay and Performance Appraisal*

SF 278, *Public Financial Disclosure Report*

OGE Form 450, *Confidential Financial Disclosure Report*

Abbreviations and Acronyms

AFI—Air Force Instruction

AFMC—Air Force Materiel Command

AFPC—Air Force Personnel Center

AFSEMO—Air Force Senior Executive Management Office

ASR—Annual Summary Rating

CFR—Code of Federal Regulations

CPO—Civilian Personnel Flight

CSE—Civilian Senior Executive

DISES—Defense Intelligence Senior Executive Service

DISL—Defense Intelligence Senior Level

DoD—Department of Defense

DTMS—Defense Talent Management System

DV—Distinguished Visitor

ECQ—Executive Core Qualification

EDP—Executive Development Plan

EPAT—Executive Performance Appraisal Tool

ERB—Executive Resources Board

ES—Executive Schedule

EX—Executive Level

FO—Flag Officer

GC—General Council

GO—General Officer

GS—General Schedule

HLR—Higher Level Review

HLRO—Higher Level Reviewing Official

HQE—Highly Qualified Expert

ISR—Initial Summary Rating

LTA—Limited Term Appointment

MAJCOM—Major Command

MSPB—Merit Systems Protection Board

NC—Non-Career

OGE—United States Office of Government Ethics
OPM—Office of Personnel Management
OPR—Office of Primary Responsibility
OUSD(I)—Office of the Under Secretary of Defense Intelligence
PAEP—Presidential Adjustment of Executives' Pay
PAS—Presidential Appointee with Senate confirmation
PD—Position Description
PE—Performance Elements
PPA—Performance Payout Adjustment or Super Bonus
PRA—Presidential Rank Award
PRAP—Presidential Rank Award Panel
PRB—Performance Review Board
PRC—Performance Rating Cycle
QRB—Qualifications Review Board
RIF—Reduction in Force
SAF—Secretary of the Air Force
SAF/GCA—Secretary of the Air Force, General Counsel Fiscal, Ethics and Administrative Law
SES—Senior Executive Service
SL—Senior Level
SSN—Social Security Number
ST—Scientific and Professional
TMB—Talent Management Board
USC—United States Code
USAF—United States Air Force

Terms

Air Force Senior Executive Management Office (AFSEMO)—This office is responsible for recruitment, development, performance management, and assignment policies for Air Force Civilian Senior Executives.

Annual Summary Rating (ASR)—The final rating approved by the authorizing official at the end of the performance appraisal period. This includes the summary performance rating, total performance score and approved number of shares. This is also the rating of record, the official rating or the final summary rating.

Appraisal—The annual process, under which results-driven performance requirements are established, reviewed, evaluated, assigned a summary rating, and documented in writing. The results of performance appraisals and ratings are used as a basis to adjust pay, grant bonuses and make other personnel decisions.

Authorizing Official—The head of a DoD Component, or an official who is delegated authority in writing to act on behalf of the head of the DoD Component, is defined as an authorizing official for the purpose of this policy.

Basic Pay—The annual rate of compensation exclusive of awards, bonuses and differentials. The rate of basic pay may not exceed the applicable maximum rates under law and regulation, including 5 USC Section 5307(d).

Civilian Senior Executive (CSE)—All SES/DISES/DISL/SL/ST/HQE appointees.

Code of Federal Regulations (CFRs)—The codification of the general and permanent rules published in the Federal Register by the executive departments and agencies of the United States Federal Government.

Defense Intelligence Senior Executive Service (DISES)— Managerial, supervisory and policy positions that are equivalent to the SES positions.

Defense Intelligence Senior Level (DISL)—A functional/technical expert who is a recognized leader and authority in a specialist field or functional area.

Defense Talent Management System (DTMS)—The official DOD web-based tool used for the lifecycle management of SES/DISES members.

Distinguished Visitor (DV)—Code designations used to determine the order of precedence for official visits and during activities, assignment of quarters, seating and travel status on Government aircraft and surface transportation for GO/FO or staff of equivalent rank. DV code designations are based on placement and level of responsibility of an Air Force position. The DV codes are assigned to positions, not people.

Diversity—Broadly defined as a composite of individual characteristics, experiences, and abilities consistent with the Air Force Core Values and the Air Force Mission. Air Force diversity includes but is not limited to: personal life experiences, geographic background, socioeconomic background, cultural knowledge, educational background, work background, language abilities, physical abilities, philosophical/spiritual perspectives, age, race, ethnicity and gender. The concept of diversity is to be tailored as specific circumstances and the law require.

Executive and Senior Professional Pay and Performance System—DoD-wide policies, requirements, and parameters governing the performance of CSEs (excluding PAS), which includes the appraisal programs under the CFR and the USC. This includes policies, practices, and procedures for planning, monitoring, developing, evaluating, and rewarding performance.

Executive Core Qualifications (ECQs)—Describe the leadership skills needed for individuals to succeed in the SES. They are designed to measure executive experience and potential, not technical expertise.

Executive Development Plan (EDP)—A mandatory, detailed guide of development activities for SES/DISES members. The EDP includes both short-term and long-term experiences, designed to meet organizational needs for leadership, managerial improvement and results. It addresses enhancement of executive competencies, and outlines developmental opportunities/assignments that allow the individual to develop a broader perspective in the agency as well as enterprise-wide.

Executive (EX) Level—A series of three pay tiers within the Executive Schedule.

Executive Performance Appraisal Tool (EPAT)—An web-based Executive Performance Appraisal Tool used to aid CSEs, rating and reviewing officials with individual/organizational performance management responsibilities.

Executive Schedule (ES)—An Executive pay scale used within the United States Civil Service.

Executive Resources Board (ERB)—Appointed by the SECAF to fulfill Title 5, CFR statutory and regulatory requirements. Provides Air Force wide leadership and policy direction on CSE resources.

Federal Register—The official daily publication for rules, proposed rules, and notices of Federal agencies and organizations, as well as executive orders and other Presidential documents.

Flag Officer (FO)—An officer in the Navy holding the rank of Rear Admiral, Vice Admiral or Admiral.

General Officer (GO)—An officer in the Air Force, Army or Marine Corps holding the rank of Brigadier General, Major General, Lieutenant General or General.

General Schedule (GS)—One of the pay scales used within the United States Civil Service.

Higher Level Reviewing Official (HLRO)—A PAS or higher level official, outside the CSEs chain of command.

Highly Qualified Expert (HQE)—Senior-level Excepted Service Government employees. These individuals are experts possessing specialized knowledge or skills not readily available within the Air Force.

Incentive Award—Recognition or incentive granted for a suggestion, invention, superior accomplishment, or other meritorious effort under the authority of **5 USC, Chapter 45, Incentive Awards**.

Initial Summary Rating (ISR)—A proposed performance rating of record for CSEs.

Interim Rating—A written assessment provided when either the rating official or CSE leaves his/her position before the end of the performance appraisal period. The member must have been under performance standards for a minimum of 90 days.

Merit System Protection Board (MSPB)—An independent, quasi-judicial agency in the Executive branch that serves as the guardian of Federal merit systems. The Board's mission is to protect Federal merit systems and the rights of individuals within those systems.

Minimum Performance Appraisal Period—The minimum period (90 days) that a CSE must serve under a performance plan to be rated.

Office of Personnel Management (OPM)—A United States Government independent agency that manages the Federal Government Civil Service.

Pay Pool—A combination of organizational elements, (e.g., divisions, branches, functional communities, etc.) and/or tier structures, that is defined for purposes of determining performance payouts under the Executive and Senior Professional Pay and Performance Appraisal System.

Pay Pool Funding Factor—The formula used to calculate a performance payout.

Pay Pool Manager—The individual charged with the overall responsibility for the effective operation of the Pay Pool.

Pay Pool Value—The amount of money available for performance payouts in a Pay Pool. It is calculated by multiplying the Pay Pool Funding Factor by the total salaries of all covered CSEs in the Pay Pool.

Pay Progression Budget—One of three variables in the equation that determines the Pay Pool Funding Factor. It is a percentage of the payroll budget set aside for performance-based pay increases and is determined and published annually by the head of the Component.

Performance Appraisal Period/Performance Cycle—The established period of time for which a CSE's performance will be appraised and rated. There is a standard performance appraisal period in DoD. The performance appraisal period begins 1 October of each year and ends on 30 September of the following year. The performance appraisal period is also called the performance cycle.

Performance Award/Bonus—A one-time, lump-sum payment paid to CSEs in recognition of performance during the performance appraisal period. A performance-based bonus is not part of basic pay.

Performance Bonus Budget—One of three variables in the equation that determines the Pay Pool Funding Factor. It is a percentage of the payroll budget set aside for performance awards and is determined and published annually by the head of the Component.

Performance Elements (PEs)—The critical Components of a CSE's work that contribute to organizational goals and results, and are so important that unsatisfactory performance of any one of the PEs would make the CSE's overall job performance unsatisfactory.

Performance Payout—The total monetary value of a basic pay increase and performance bonus.

Performance Payout Formula—The formula that calculates a performance payout. It consists of the following variables: salary, number of shares and Share Value.

Performance Plan—The document that describes the individual and organizational expectations for the performance appraisal period and establishes the elements and performance requirements against which performance will be evaluated.

Performance Rating—The written assessment of performance compared to the performance elements and the performance requirements for the position. There are five rating levels: Exceptional Results; Exceeds Expected Results; Achieved Expectations; Minimally Satisfactory; and Unsatisfactory.

Performance Rating Cycle—A term used to identify the performance rating year. The performance rating cycle runs from 1 October of the prior year through 30 September of the year being described. For example, the performance rating cycle for 2012 is from 1 October 2011 through 30 September 2012.

Performance Requirements—Written statements of measurable results expected to be achieved during the performance appraisal period.

Performance Review Board (PRB)—A panel of individuals established to provide oversight to ensure balance, equity, and fairness in the evaluation and scoring process under the performance appraisal system and to ensure there are meaningful distinctions in relative performance reflected in the performance requirements. The PRBs are used for the CSE review processes.

Performance Score—The numeric value between 0 and 100 associated with a performance rating. The performance rating, performance score and shares comprise the ISR and (once approved by the authorizing official) the ASR.

Position Slate—A pre-approved list of individuals that meet the experience, education and skill level required to fill identified positions.

Precedence Priority—Protocol precedence for CSEs established through distinguished visitor (DV) codes. DV-6 indicates equivalence with Brigadier General for protocol purposes. DV-5 indicates equivalence with Major General, and DV-4 indicates equivalence with Lieutenant General.

Presidential Adjustment of Executives' Pay (PAEP)—An annually determined adjustment to the rate of the pay scales for CSE members. **Note:** HQEs can receive a PAEP only at the discretion of the SECAF.

Presidential Rank Award (PRA).—The most prestigious recognition awarded to CSEs. It is restricted to those in Career status only.

Presidential Rank Award Panel (PRAP)—An ad hoc panel appointed by the Air Force ERB Chair to review and recommend final Air Force action on PRA nominations.

Qualifications Review Board (QRB)—A board established to review and certify the ECQs of selectees for initial Career appointment to the SES.

Rating Official—The supervisor who is responsible for assessing a CSE's performance as part of the annual performance appraisal process and develops the ISR for a CSE performance appraisal.

Rating and Ranking Panel—The Rating and Ranking Panel is composed of three to five SES/GO (or equivalent) members who rate and rank candidate applications for CSE positions.

Reduction in Force (RIF)—When an agency must abolish positions, the RIF regulations determine whether an employee keeps his/her present position, or whether the employee has a right to a different position.

Reviewing Official—Four-star GO, HAF 2-ltr official/MAJCOM/Combatant Commander.

Rigorous Appraisal of Subordinates—The supervisors' deliberate engagement in the full spectrum of performance management (planning, monitoring, rating, and rewarding) of subordinate employees.

Scientific and Professional (ST) Position—A civilian position above grade GS-15 (or equivalent) that does not meet the managerial criteria for SES and is a Scientific and Professional position engaged in research and development functions.

Selecting Official—Four-star GO, HAF 2-ltr official/MAJCOM/Combatant Commander.

Senior Executive Service (SES)—The SES is comprised of the men and women charged with leading the continuing transformation of Government. These leaders possess well-honed executive skills and share a broad perspective of Government and a public service commitment which is grounded in the Constitution.

Senior Executive Service (SES) Career Appointee—An employee with a Career appointment who was selected through the SES merit staffing process and whose ECQs have been approved by the QRB; or a member who was converted to the SES from a GS-16/17/18 position when the SES became effective in 1979.

Senior Executive Service (SES) Career Reserved Position—An SES position with duties and responsibilities that require the position be filled by a Career appointee to assure the public's confidence in the impartiality of Government.

Senior Executive Service (SES) General Position—These positions are designated for Career and NC SES members.

Senior Executive Service (SES) Limited Emergency Appointee—An employee with a nonrenewable appointment for up to 18 months to a position established to meet a bona fide, unanticipated, urgent need. Appointments are made only to General positions.

Senior Executive Service (SES) Limited Term Appointee—An employee with a nonrenewable appointment for up to 36 months to a position that will not be continued beyond that time. Appointments are made only to General positions.

Senior Executive Service (SES) Non—Career (NC) Appointee—The SECDEF approves all NC appointees, subject to receipt of appropriate NC appointment authorizations from OPM. Appointments are made only to "General" positions. Appointments do not require merit staffing procedures and appointees do not acquire SES Career status. Appointments may be terminated at any time by the SECAF or his/her designee after concurrence by the SECDEF.

Senior Level (SL)—A civilian position above grade GS-15 (or equivalent) that meets neither the managerial criteria for the SES nor the research and development criteria for the ST.

Senior Professional—Those employees in appropriated fund positions classified SL/ST/DISL under 5 USC Section 5376, *Pay for certain senior-level positions*.

Share—A notional representation of a portion of the Pay Pool fund, which allows mathematical computation of individual performance payouts. Shares are assigned as a result of performance scores and are the basis on which individuals earn an increase to basic pay, performance bonus, or both.

Share Value—The Share Value represents a fixed percentage used to calculate the performance payout (to include basic pay increase, bonus or both). It is a variable of the performance payout formula. The share value is calculated by dividing the Pay Pool Value by the sum of each executive's salary multiplied by each executive's number of shares for all covered in the Pay Pool.

SMART—Q—A framework used for developing measurable results-driven performance requirements. The acronym stands for: Specific (define results to be accomplished within the scope of the job), Measurable (define quality, quantity, and/or effectiveness), Aligned (support specific strategic goals), Realistic/Relevant (requirements are achievable yet challenging), Timely (define a deadline/timeframe for achieving the requirements), and Quality (identify the degree of excellence expected).

Talent Management Board (TMB)—A comprehensive multi-year succession management team that provides an annual corporate assessment of the leadership potential of Air Force SES/DISES members. The TMB develop “Ready Now” slates and build out-year benches to select SES/DISES members for reassignment, developmental opportunities and joint/interagency assignments.

Total Performance Payout Adjustment—An increase or decrease to the proposed basic pay increase and/or performance-based bonus as calculated by the performance payout formula determined by the authorizing official.

United States Code (USC)—A consolidation and codification by subject matter of the general and permanent laws of the United States Government.

Attachment 2

CSE POSITION ALLOCATION REQUEST JUSTIFICATION FORMAT

Table A2.1. CSE Position Allocation Request Justification Format.

Duty Title:						
DV/Tier:						
Duty Location:						
Organization:						
2-ltr/MAJCOM/Combatant Command						
Functional Domain:						
Supervisor/Rater Grade:						
Supervisor Duty Title:						
Number of Direct Reports:	CSE		GO		GS-15/ Equiv	
Number of Indirect Reports:	Military		Civilian		Contractor	
Manages Organization with Multiple Locations/Facilities?						
Size of Contracts:						
DAWIA Requirement:						
Size of Program Budget	Directly Manage = \$					
	Substantially Influence = \$					
POSITION COMPETENCIES – Please Check All That Apply						
Leading Change		Building Coalitions		Business Management		
External Awareness	Political Savvy		Financial Management			
Strategic Thinking	Partnering		Technology Management			
Results Driven		Leading People		Enterprise-Wide Perspective		
Decisiveness	Conflict Management		Joint Perspective			
Entrepreneurship	Developing Others		National Security			

Brief description of duties:**Requirement justification/mission-critical requirement statement:****How will the mission be accomplished if not approved?****Attachment: Organization Chart.**

Attachment 3

CSE POSITION DESCRIPTION FORMAT

A3.1. Position Description (PD) Format. The total PD narrative should not exceed three pages and must be in the format shown below. Submit the PD, organization chart, and justification criteria to AFSEMO.

A3.2. Full Position Title. Self explanatory.

A3.3. Introduction. In less than one-third page briefly state: organizational location, mission, function; primary purpose of the position, program magnitude, scope and effect; plus any additional pertinent background information.

A3.4. Major Duties and Responsibilities. State the important, regular, and recurring duties and responsibilities assigned to the position to include the following three categories.

A3.4.1. **Organizational Executive Level Duties** involving enterprise perspective and business acumen, resource acquisition and management, strategic thinking, decision-making authority, etc., directed toward mission accomplishment.

A3.4.2. **People/Team Roles** to include supervisory and managerial duties, building teams, fostering collaborative relationships, mentoring and career management, etc.

A3.4.3. **Personal/Representational Duties** personally performed by the CSE that were not listed in one of the other categories, e.g., special advisory relationships with others, representation and liaison with key external officials.

A3.4.4. **Controls over the Position.** Identify position's supervisor by organizational title and grade/rank. Describe the kind of supervision and guidance received by the executive in this position, including latitude for independent judgment.

A3.4.5. **Other Significant Facts.** List valid scientific, professional, or technical qualification requirements, as well as any conditions of employment that apply. This includes Critical Acquisition Position designation, Public Financial Disclosure Report (SF 278) requirements, post-employment restrictions of the *Ethics in Government Act, 5 USC, Appendix Sec. 101*, travel by commercial or military aircraft, security clearance level, emergency essential designation, drug testing requirements, etc.

Attachment 4

CSE POSITION JUSTIFICATION CRITERIA

A4.1. Criteria Format. Use the below format for the initial request for a position, or when a position changes significantly. Forward the PD, organization chart and justification criteria to AFSEMO.

A4.1.1. Position title, series, grade, organization and location.

A4.1.2. Recommended series and grade, if applicable.

A4.1.3. Description of duties (provide a concise statement of the incumbent duties).

A4.2. Criteria Analysis. What are the particular aspects of the position that warrant its designation as an executive level position? Justification must be in terms of the criteria below. Not every criterion will apply to every position.

A4.3. Criteria for Inclusion. Select only the criteria which have a clear and direct application to the position. Enter the criterion, followed by its application, as it applies to the position within your organization.

A4.3.1. Characteristics.

A4.3.1.1. **Type:** Staff, deputy, manager, specialist, etc.

A4.3.1.2. **Scope:** Operational command, training command, installation command, personnel management, fiscal affairs, etc.

A4.3.1.3. **Level:** HQ USAF, MAJCOM, numbered Air Force, etc.

A4.3.1.4. **Function:** Commander, operational forces, staff, strategic planning, special staff, legal affairs, service level etc.

A4.3.2. **Grade and Position of Superior, Principal Subordinates, and Lateral Points of Coordination.** A consideration of the military, civilian or governmental structure within which the function is performed and a statement of the level at which the function is performed.

A4.3.3. **Proximity and Degree of Supervision over the Position.** The remoteness or closeness of supervision which the incumbent receives and his/her degree of independence of operation.

A4.3.4. **Nature, Extent, and Level of Significant Official Relations with US and Foreign Governmental Officials and with the Public.** Who the incumbent reports to, works for, keeps informed, provides liaison, etc. Whether this is a primary function, frequent requirement, continuous additional duty, occasional requirement, etc. Level of relations with governmental department or agency, national or local government, civic organizations, industry, press, etc.

A4.3.5. **Reflection of National Emphasis and Determination.** Relation of position to national objectives and programs, special conditions under which the position was first established, or other reasons why the position reflects national will.

A4.3.6. **Special Qualifications Required by the Position.** Include special qualifications such as advanced education, or training or experience which is essential to the execution of responsibilities.

A4.3.7. **Mission of the Organization.** The nature of the responsibilities that the organizational mission involves and any non-organizational responsibilities associated with the position. The mission cited should be the exact organization or staff function being described. (Do not repeat the MAJCOM mission for each subordinate Commander or staff officer.)

A4.3.8. **Resources Managed and Employed.** Assigned or programmed personnel, equipment, supplies, real properties, budgets, scope and type of foreign resources involved, if any, or other important resources.

A4.3.9. **Geographical Area of Responsibility.** A consideration of the size, location, and if appropriate, the importance of the land, sea or air spaces involved.

A4.3.10. **Authority To Make Decisions and Commit Resources.** An identification of the specific authority delegated to, or withheld from, the position in either routine or emergency situations.

A4.3.11. **Auxiliary Authority and Responsibilities Inherent in the Position.** Inherent requirements charged to the position by virtue of the situation, location, proximity, tradition, etc.

A4.3.12. **Impact on National Security or Other National Interests.** Effects of mission accomplishment or position performance on the protection of national interests or the advancement of national programs.

A4.3.13. **Importance to Present and Future Effectiveness and Efficiency of the National Defense Establishment.** Effect on the force structure operational capabilities, status of combat readiness, quality of personnel and equipment, cost effectiveness, command control means, management procedures and techniques, responsiveness to national needs, or other factors. Positions charged with training doctrine, systems management, fiscal control and logistical support are examples meeting this criterion.

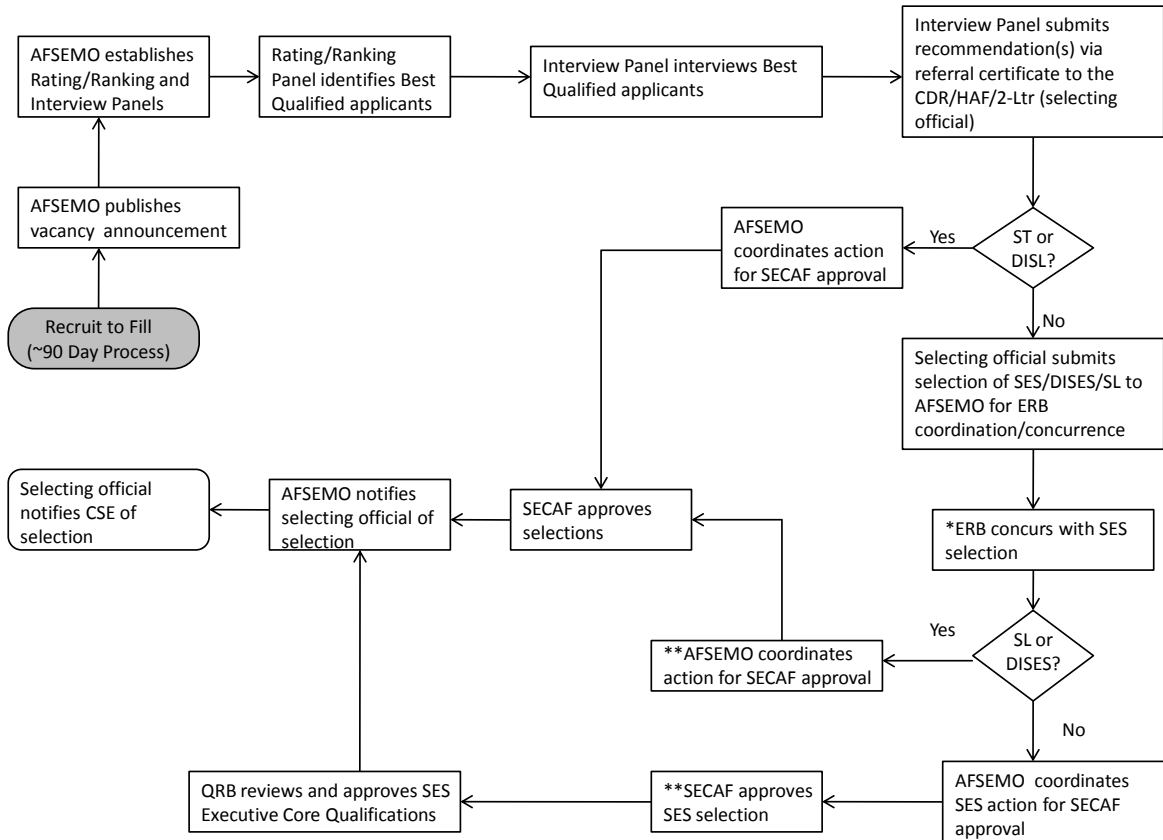
A4.3.14. **Effect on the Prestige of the Nation or the Armed Forces.** Indicate how the method and effectiveness of accomplishments reflect the stature of the nation and its armed forces, including world influence and public opinion that affect relations with allies and influences the credibility of national aims and capabilities.

Attachment 5

CSE RECRUITMENT FLOWCHART

Figure A5.1. CSE Recruitment Flowchart.

Note: For HQE recruitment, see chapter 10, item 10.4.



***ERB SES selection non-concurrence, select an alternate candidate referred to the selecting official or begin the recruitment process over.**

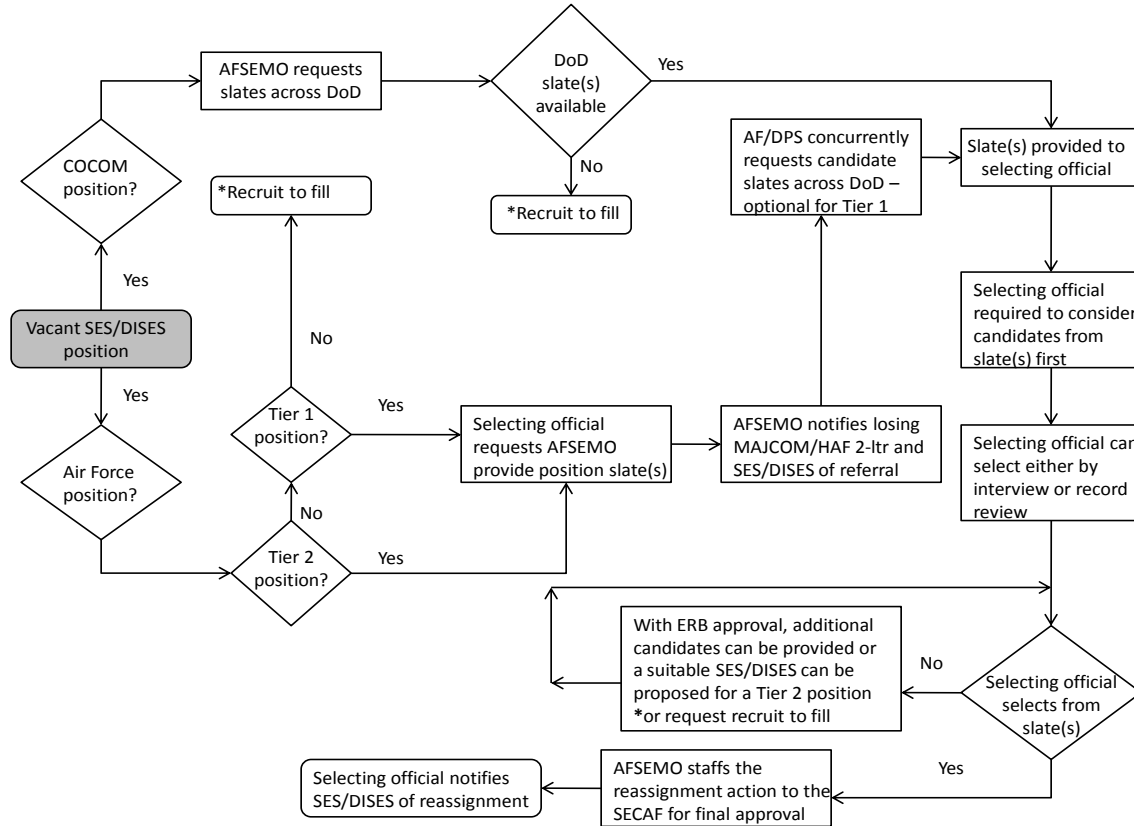
****SECAF disapproved SES selection, select an alternate candidate referred to the selecting official or begin the recruitment process over.**

*****QRB disapproves SES Executive Core Qualifications, see chapter 3, item 3.2.8.3.**

Attachment 6

CSE REASSIGNMENT FLOWCHART

Figure A6.1. CSE Reassignment Flowchart.



*Recruit to fill, see chapter 3 and attachment 5, figure A5.1.

Attachment 7**HQE RESUME FORMAT**

A7.1. A resume, in the following format, is required and must be typewritten.

A7.2. Personal Information: Full name, mailing address (with zip code), day and evening telephone numbers (with area code), complete E-mail address (personal and/or work) and Social Security Number (SSN).

A7.2.1. **Executive Order 9397**, as amended by **Executive Order 13478**, *Amendments to Executive Order 9397 Relating to Federal Agency Use of Social Security Numbers* and **10 USC 8013**, *Secretary of the Air Force*, allows Federal agencies to use the SSN as an individual identifier to distinguish between people with the same or similar names and complete a background check. The SSN may also be used in studies and computer matching with other Government files, i.e., unpaid student loans.

A7.2.2. The submission of the applicant's SSN is a mandatory requirement for the application to be processed. Applicant documents will be maintained in accordance with all applicable Federal laws, rules and regulations regarding confidentiality of records, including **5 USC, 552a**, *Records maintained on individuals*.

A7.3. Country of Citizenship: Self explanatory.

A7.4. Salary: State your salary history.

A7.5. Highest Federal Civilian Grade Held: Provide the job series and dates held.

A7.6. Highest Military Grade Held and Dates Held: Self explanatory.

A7.7. Education: Including the name, city and state of colleges or universities attended, the type and year of any degree(s) received. Report only attendance and/or degrees from schools accredited by accrediting institutions recognized by the U.S. Department of Education.

A7.8. Work Experience: Provide the following information for current/previous paid and non-paid work experience related to the job for which you are applying (do not send job descriptions).

A7.8.1. Starting and ending dates (month and year).

A7.8.2. Job title of positions (include Federal civilian series and grade or military rank).

A7.8.3. Employer's name and address.

A7.8.4. Supervisor's name and telephone phone number.

A7.8.5. Salary (current).

A7.8.6. Hours per week.

A7.8.7. Number of employees supervised and/or scope of responsibility of employees led.

A7.8.8. Duties and accomplishments (summarized in one paragraph).

A7.9. Other Qualifications:

A7.9.1. Job-related training courses (include title and year).

A7.9.2. Job-related skills i.e., foreign languages and computer software/hardware.

A7.9.3. Job-related certificates and licenses, i.e., Acquisition Professional Development Program certifications (current only).

A7.9.4. Job-related honors, awards, and special accomplishments, i.e., memberships in professional/honor societies, leadership activities, public speaking, and performance awards (provide dates - do not send documents unless requested).

A7.10. Publications: Provide a list of publications personally authored. Provide title, date, and any co-authors. Clearly indicate if you are the first author and state the impact of any publication on the community.

Attachment 8

HQE EXECUTIVE SUMMARY FORMAT

Table A8.1. Highly Qualified Expert Executive Summary Format.

1. Position Title and Location:	Include: Title, Organization, Duty Location for HQE Candidate.
2. Immediate Supervisor:	Include: Name, Rank/Grade, Duty Title.
3. HQE Rationale:	Provide a rationale for the HQE request and need. Note: HQEs may be hired into a variety of occupational fields for up to five years, with the possibility of a one-year extension. HQEs may mentor, lead, oversee, direct, manage, and/or consult on DoD programs and initiatives, to include high profile and fast track assignments. HQEs may not be hired to replace a member of the SES/DISES in a continuing Department function or to provide any one person temporary employment in anticipation of a permanent appointment.
4. Qualifications of Appointee:	Justify how/why the HQE candidate is an individual who possesses uncommon and recognized knowledge, skills, and experience in an occupational field; possesses judgment that is accorded authority and status by peers or the public; and brings enlightened thinking and innovation to help advance the Department's national security mission.
5. Other Candidates Considered:	List as appropriate.
6. Pay-Level Factors:	<p>Recommended salary: A total salary of \$XXX,XXX (base + locality pay), prorated if less than full-time, is proposed based on the following factors:</p> <p>Labor market conditions: How would this candidate compete and be compensated in the private sector?</p> <p>Type of position: Advisory, why does this candidate meet the requirements?</p> <p>Location of position: Self explanatory.</p> <p>Work schedule: Full/part-time or intermittent.</p> <p>Level of independence in establishing work objectives: Example - this position requires the incumbent to work with minimum direction, to interpret broad policies and directives and to exercise impeccable judgment. The position is fully responsible for the successful accomplishment of goals and objectives.</p>

	<p><u>Working conditions:</u> Example - this position is typically in a well-lighted and climate-controlled office. Travel by commercial aircraft is required.</p> <p><u>Organizational needs:</u> Example - at this time, no one in the organization has the background and currency to represent the Air Force at this level.</p> <p><u>Personal qualifications:</u> Addressed in item 4, above.</p> <p><u>Type of degree:</u> Address the degrees held by the candidate.</p> <p><u>Personal recommendations:</u> Are there any personal recommendations for this candidate?</p> <p><u>Experience (recency, relevance):</u> Usually, addressed in item 4, above.</p> <p><u>Organizational equity/pay considerations:</u> State the level of responsibility for the HQE position. Is the pay commensurate with the level of responsibility when compared to other CSE positions?</p> <p><u>Mission impact of work assignments:</u> Provide a bottom-line on the requirement for this HQE and possible impact if not approved.</p>
7. Position Funding/Budget Considerations:	State how the position is being funded.
8. Security Clearance Requirement:	Describe any special security requirements for this position.
9. Ethical Consideration:	(NAME) has received an Ethics Briefing from SAF/GCA, completed on DD/MON/YR and completed the Confidential Financial Disclosure Report, OGE Form 450 or Public Financial Disclosure Form, SF 278 on DD/MON/YR.
10. Complete and Pass Drug Urinalysis Testing	Date Passed Urinalysis
11. Allocation Availability:	Leave blank.
12. Recommendation:	Approval of this appointment at the total salary of \$XXX,XXX (Base + Locality) for a term not to exceed three (X) years or (date). Note: This salary will be prorated as appropriate.

Attachments:

- a. Position description
- b. Resume of proposed candidate
- c. Performance plan