

# Senior Officer Pay Progression Scheme

This Guideline promotes best practice when assessing eligible Senior Administration Officers and Senior Professionals (herein 'Senior Officers') for the pay progression scheme under the *Northern Territory Public Sector 2013 – 2017 Enterprise Agreement* (clause 28). This guideline is to be read in conjunction with Determination 4 of 2014 and Employment Instruction 4 – Employee Performance Management and Development Systems. The Guideline does not form part of legislation.

## 1. Performance Management and the Senior Officer Pay Progression Scheme

The 'performance management process' is part of a system managing employee performance in the Northern Territory Public Sector (NTPS) for all classifications and is embedded in the *Public Sector Employment and Management Act* ('PSEM Act') and Employment Instruction 4 – Employee Performance Management and Development Systems (as varied from time to time).

The Senior Officer Pay Progression Scheme ('the scheme') is the assessment process to determine high performance for the purpose of progression to the next pay point. High performance is determined through achievement of one (or a combination) of the progression criteria.

The scheme operates in conjunction with the performance management process. A Senior Officer is not to pursue achievement of the pay progression criteria to the exclusion of performance targets or work outcomes identified for the position within the performance management process. The scheme can only operate if a performance management process is in place; however, it is not necessary for the two process cycles to align (see *Example 1*).

## 2. Progression Criteria

Progression criteria describe the level of performance that a Senior Officer must achieve to be eligible to progress to the next pay point. Assessment against these criteria must be in the spirit of identifying high performance beyond what is generally expected when performing the role satisfactorily.

Progression criteria	Some examples of achieving this criteria
a) sustained superior performance (i.e. above good performance)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>consistently exceeded expectations as set out in the performance agreement</li> <li>added value to achievement of strategic and/or business plans/programs</li> <li>improved partnership arrangement</li> </ul>
b) successful performance of increased duties/responsibilities that are not sufficient to justify an increase in the level of classification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>successfully undertook duties / responsibilities in addition to agreed performance targets</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>made a significant personal contribution to an identified process or service improvement that benefited the agency</li> <li>implemented improvements to operational modes</li> </ul>
c) successful undertaking of new projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>delivered projects ahead of schedule and below budget</li> <li>undertook and successfully completed special major projects (may be one off)</li> <li>played a lead role in a project outside immediate sphere of responsibility at a superior level</li> </ul>
d) applied specialist individual expertise resulting in superior outcomes for the agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>developed specialist expertise which adds value to the agency / government</li> <li>detailed superior outcomes for the agency and the role of the individual achieving it</li> <li>developed professional standing as an expert that benefits the agency</li> <li>developed approaches to share 'learning' and knowledge with others that benefit the agency</li> <li>developed new skills that provide opportunities for enhancing the work outcomes of the agency</li> </ul>
e) successful and sustained performance as a leader	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>contributed significant personal contribution to improved performance of work team through effective people management</li> <li>made an extended effort to networks and be known outside the work area so that an improved profile and reputation benefits the agency</li> <li>identified and developed project and work opportunities for team members</li> </ul>

### 3. Annual Assessment date

The annual assessment date is a date agreed to in the performance management process and is generally the anniversary of when an Employee commenced at the Senior Officer level (for Senior Officers who have not yet participated in the scheme) or the anniversary of the previous annual assessment date.

However, subject to a minimum 12 month period, this annual assessment date may be amended by agreement to accommodate different circumstances, for example it may be agreed:

- to set the annual assessment date 12 months from when an employee commences a new position at level;
- to align the assessment date with agency performance management cycle;
- to postpone the assessment date to allow for special projects to be completed prior to submitting assessments (*see Example 4*);
- to extend the assessment date to accommodate extended leave.

The annual assessment date will also be postponed by any amount of leave without pay that does not count as service (*see Example 2*).

The annual assessment date is likely to vary from year to year and recording the annual assessment date agreed to in the performance management process is a shared responsibility between the Senior Officer and their supervisor.

## 4. Impact of Transfer

Where a Senior Officer has transferred to a different Senior Officer position ('new position') the Senior Officer and supervisor should as soon as practicable enter a performance management process and agree on an annual assessment date. The annual assessment date will be the date set from the previous position unless a new date is agreed to (*see Example 3*).

The annual assessment date may be less than 12 months from the commencement of the new position provided that the combination of the previous position and new position term is a minimum of 12 months.

## 5. Agency Application and Assessment Process

The application format will be guided by the agency assessment process. Where possible, the Senior Officer should discuss with their supervisor the intention to lodge a submission. The written submission from the Senior Officer should:

- (a) be sufficient to inform the Supervisor and the authorised officer(s) without being unnecessarily lengthy or complex;
- (b) where relevant refer to information already obtained through regular performance management review processes and feedback from supervisor or other stakeholders;
- (c) refer to examples and evidence to support application from work performed during the performance management cycle (e.g. evidence from work performed from the development of the performance plan).

Note: an application should only contain examples from relevant work performed as a Senior Officer from commencing at the level or from the previous annual assessment date.

## 6. Late Submissions for Assessment

Senior Officers are to make a written submission no earlier than two months in advance of the annual assessment date. The authorised officer(s) may accept late applications where special circumstances exist.

## 7. Case Studies

*Example 1: Interaction of Agency Performance Management Cycle and Senior Officer Pay Progression Scheme*

Agency A has a performance management cycle for all employees from July to June each year, with mid-cycle progress meetings scheduled in January each year. Fatimah wins a promotion to a Senior Administrative Officer level 1 (SAO1) on 14 March 2013.

### Fatimah Summary

SAO1 commencement date: 14 March 2013

Annual Assessment date: 14 March 2014

After being in the job for two (2) weeks, Fatimah and her supervisor met to discuss the requirements of the role, wrote up a performance plan and agreed that her annual assessment date will be 14 March 2014 (12 months from her commencement date), subject to any period of leave without pay or approved extensions. Fatimah's supervisor emails the agreed date to her for both party's records.

Fatimah participates in the Agency performance management cycle in July 2013 reviewing goals and targets required for her position as well as reviewing her performance since commencement in March. She also subsequently participated in the six (6) monthly progress meeting in January 2014.

Fatimah makes a written submission to her Supervisor before her annual assessment date against the Senior Officer Progression Criteria in which she attached both of her successful performance management reports from July and January and provides an additional example of work performance which demonstrated a successful undertaking of a new project.

Fatimah's meets the eligibility criteria of 12 months service at level, has demonstrated satisfactory performance in her work outcomes through a performance management appraisal and was assessed as satisfying one of the Senior Officer Progression Criteria. Her application was approved and her pay increase applied from her agreed annual assessment date of 14 March 2014.

*Example 2: Annual assessment date deferred by period of leave without pay*

Peter won a pay progression at a Senior Professional level 1 (SP1) effective from his annual assessment date on 27 February 2013. Peter's next annual assessment date will be 12 months from his previous annual assessment date: 27 February 2014.

Peter has one (1) month leave without pay from 1 to 31 December 2013 (31 calendar days). Peter's annual assessment date is adjusted by 31 calendar days to 31 March 2014.

**Peter Summary**

Previous annual assessment date (progression was approved): 27 February 2013

Next annual assessment date: 27 February 2014

New annual assessment date: 31 March 2014 (deferred by 31 calendar days LWOP)

*Example 3: Assessment date on transfer*

Oliver worked for six (6) months as a Senior Professional 2 (SP2) in Agency A from 1 January 2013 with a performance plan in place. Oliver won a new SP2 position in Agency B from 1 July 2013. On arriving in the new position Oliver and his supervisor agreed to write a plan and set the annual assessment date for 1 January 2014 to take into account his previous service at Agency A.

In his application Oliver provided examples from his performance in Agency A and Agency B. His application was sent to his former Supervisor from Agency A and current Supervisor from Agency B for recommendation before progressing to the authorised officer(s) in Agency B for assessment.

**Oliver Summary**

SP2 commencement date (Agency A): 1 January 2013

Original annual assessment date (Agency A): 1 January 2014

New position commencement date (Agency B): 1 July 2013

Annual assessment date (Agency B): 1 January 2014

*Example 4: Annual assessment date extended by agreement*

Susan was employed in Agency A as a Senior Administrative Officer level 2 (SAO2) for four (4) months from 5 November 2012. On 4 March 2013 she took a temporary transfer at level to Agency B for 12 months (new position). On commencing in the new position in Agency B Susan met with her supervisor within the first month to implement a performance plan and set her performance targets. Both agreed that her annual assessment date would remain the 5 November 2013.

Six weeks prior to her annual assessment date Susan approached her supervisor and discussed her intention to submit a pay progression application. Susan expressed she would like to submit the application after the completion of a significant work project, due to be completed in December 2013. This would give her the best opportunity to succeed in her pay progression application as she wanted to submit against the criteria “successful undertaking of new projects”. Her supervisor agreed and her assessment date was extended to the 4 January 2014. Susan’s supervisor sent her an email confirming this.

In her application Susan relied solely on evidence of performance in the new position as this was most relevant for her application. Her application was recommended by her current supervisor prior to progressing to the authorised officer for assessment.

**Susan Summary**

SAO2 commencement date (Agency A): 5 November 2012

Original annual assessment date (Agency A): 5 November 2013

New position commencement date (Agency B): 4 March 2013

New annual assessment date by agreement (Agency B): 4 January 2014