



Human Capital Management Office (HCMO)

DCIPS Guidance Message 001 – Performance Management Frequently Asked Questions

September 18, 2025

A few FAQs...

Q. What is the Integrated Performance Development System (iPDS)? Why did we start transitioning to it anyway?

- The decision to move to a new DCIPS performance management system is rooted in the fact that the previous 5-point performance management system fell short of its intended outcomes. The system placed more emphasis on the performance goals and the numerical ratings that drove end-of-year bonuses, and less on behaviors or timely recognition of achievements. This fostered an environment of rating inflation, less focused on employee development or on continuous employee-supervisor dialogue. While the DCIPS Performance Management System was successful in many ways, the uneven implementation of DCIPS performance evaluation across the DISE (as evidenced in the climate survey results and HCMO's analysis of awards and ratings data), the evolution of the DISE workforce and the overall DISE mission complexity, highlighted opportunities for further development (i.e., recognition, addressing poor performers, employee development, supervisory engagement and meaningful differentiation).
- iPDS is a future-focused performance development system that transitions from evaluating past performance and behaviors to deliberately developing employees in alignment with current and future mission needs.
- The primary objectives of iPDS are to:
 - Integrate talent management processes and emphasize the inherent relationship between development, evaluation, and recognition.
 - Strengthen the performance culture through aligning employee performance and development plans to organizational goals and providing timely recognition to reinforce performance culture.
 - Enhance meritocracy and transparency by prioritizing employee development through consistent employee supervisor engagement, streamlining the performance evaluation scale, and increasing the range of employee and team recognition to reinforce an innovative work environment.
 - Reduce administrative burden through the implementation of quarterly check-ins (at a minimum) that provide consistent engagement and feedback in lieu of lengthy narrative documentation by supervisors and employees. This enables ongoing employee performance evaluation, development, and recognition to grow trust.

Q. iPDS pilots feel a bit....binary. What about that?



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- The DCIPS integrated Performance Development System (iPDS) was modeled after the NSA TEA program which was foundationally proposed as a three-tiered rating system including – Met, Did Not Meet, and Recognition Eligible. NSA did not incorporate the “Recognition Eligible” component to their pilot and the concept has evolved to the Transformative Impact assessment.
- Previous communications focused on the “binary” decision of “Met” and “Did Not Meet” – with good intent. Removing a numerical rating turns employees’ attention from the rating itself to the impact of their performance accomplishments on the mission. iPDS’s highest level of accomplishment, Transformative Impact, focuses on the intersection of personal leadership, performance accomplishments, and behaviors to impact mission, while reinforcing the importance of continual learning and development. At this nexus, employees push beyond “Met” and set new standards for business processes across (and often beyond) their expected sphere of influence. The official design of the new DCIPS Performance Management System is not finalized. It may be different than the pilot instantiations.
- HCMO recently discussed the plan to modify iPDS and the sense from CPP is that a three-level rating system is not considered optimal. The Defense Civilian Personnel Advisory Service (DCPAS) was recently directed to explore modification to the Defense Personnel Management System, a three-level rating system.

For questions on the DCIPS Integrated Performance Development System (iPDS) or Performance Management under DCIPS, please contact the Human Capital Management Office (HCMO) point of contact Ms. Kristen Reese at 703-695-4438 or via email at kristen.h.reese.civ@mail.mil.