



Republic of Zambia

**ANNUAL PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL
SYSTEM**

(A P A S)

USER GUIDE

**CABINET OFFICE
LUSAKA**

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FOREWORD

1. It is now generally accepted by both the supervisors and subordinates that our Civil Service Annual Confidential Reports on individual performance are just a matter of routine. Almost everybody, the performer and non-performer, gets a good Confidential Report. This is a sad fact which has contributed to the loss of confidence in the credibility of the Annual Confidential Reports. Happily, action has been initiated under the Public Service Reform Programme (PSRP) to restore the credibility of the staff reporting mechanism through the introduction of a new Annual Performance Appraisal System (APAS) to replace the traditional Annual Confidential Reporting system. The APAS is an integral part of the Performance Management Package (PMP). It is gratifying to announce that the new PMP will be introduced and operationalised in the restructured ministries and provinces.
2. In order to facilitate the transition from the old performance appraisal system to the new one, measures will be taken to train the users in various Ministries/Departments who will apply the new appraisal system. Even though the training may be sufficient, there is the need to be constantly reminded about the requirements of the new system. To this end, an APAS User Guide has been prepared.
3. The APAS User Guide contains appropriate guidelines that could serve as a frame of reference. It also seeks to focus on the requirements/principles that should keep managers/supervisors on their guard in their assessment of performance.
4. In the honest application of the principles, managers/staff will realise that the only objective and purposeful approach is one which is characterised by integrity, fairness and fearlessness and, over time, reporting officers should display greater confidence in handling of performance assessments. It is envisaged that the negative image of the civil service held over the years will soon be erased and a positive one restored in its place.
5. The co-operation of all Civil Servants is called for to make the new appraisal system a success.

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SECRETARY TO THE CABINET

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INTRODUCTION

1. This User Guide is intended for use by officers in the Public Service when applying the Annual Performance Appraisal System (APAS). The APAS is an integral part of the Performance Management Package (PMP) which seeks to introduce the culture of workplanning and target-setting as well as this new appraisal system. The design and installation of the APAS is in line with component two of the Public Service Reform Programme (PSRP).

WHY APPRAISE PERFORMANCE?

2. The objectives of component two of the PSRP are:
 - a) To improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Public Service in the performance of its functions by establishing management systems of accountability and performance in the public service and developing skills which will enable senior managers to effectively manage the public service; and
 - b) To put in place an effective personnel appraisal instrument and management information system to enable the government to compile and manage data useful in making vital personnel decisions at the time of confirmation, promotion, discipline, transfer and retirement of public servants.
3. One basic responsibility falls on every supervisor. This is the need to ensure that the best possible use is being made of all the resources available at work. Among those resources are people. From time to time and for various reasons they need to know how well or not so well they are doing at work. This also applies to supervisors, as well as the employing organisation itself. And so both supervisors and supervised have a basic need to appraise performance. This allows questions to be asked and decisions to be made. Action can then be taken to improve performance at the individual, team and organisational levels.
4. At the individual level, some of the issues which are of concern are as follows:-
 - Do I have a correct understanding of my job?
 - Am I clear about what I am expected to achieve?
 - Is my supervisor satisfied with my output?
 - What are my strengths and weaknesses?
 - What do I need to do to improve on any of my weaknesses?
 - What problems do I need to discuss with my supervisor?
 - What training do I need and when can I get it?
 - How do I stand in relation to promotion?
 - What are my career prospects?
 - Is there another post where my strengths might be better used?
 - Am I doing all that can reasonably be expected of me to meet my own needs and those of the service?

5. At the supervisor level, in addition to the questions shown above, the answers to the following questions are relevant:

- How well do I know the jobs and the people I supervise?
- Are there any particular problems I must address?
- Am I doing everything possible to improve the output of the people I supervise?
- Have I made it clear to them what is required from their work?
- Am I getting what I must have from them to do my own job?
- What are their training needs and how are these to be met?
- Have I identified and developed a likely successor so that I may be considered for promotion?
- What other actions should I undertake in order to improve team-work and overall performance?
- How well am I managing the resources I supervise?

6. At the organisational level, the Public Service as a whole needs to have a clear picture of, and be satisfied about the best use of, its human resources. By appraising the performance of all its employees - both managers and managed - at all levels from the top downwards, the public service will collect essential information on a number of issues which require decisions and control, such as:

- Do we have the right number and mix of skills, qualifications and experience in the right place at all levels?
- Where are the skills gaps and overlaps?
- What should we be doing about recruitment now and in future?
- How effective are our selection and appointment procedures?
- Who needs training, in what subjects, and when?
- Who is capable of or ready to be promoted?
- How well are our procedures for career progression and for succession planning working?
- What should we be doing about retirement policy?
- Which people would perform better if transferred to other posts?
- Where are the problem areas in overall performance and what action should we be taking to secure improvements?
- How well are our supervisors managing the organisation?

7. A well developed performance appraisal system is therefore a helpful organisational tool. Conducted once a year and regularly reviewed, it tells both the organisation and the employees who work in it how well or otherwise it is being managed and what needs to be done to overcome any weaknesses or problem areas.

8. The APAS is not a threatening weapon nor is it punitive in its intent. If it is conducted in an open manner with fair-mindedness, there will be no room for bias or prejudice.

WHO AND WHAT IS INVOLVED?

9. The APAS applies to all civil servants. The way in which the APAS is designed means that every officer required to be appraised is involved. Both the supervisor and the job-holder take an active part in the appraisal process.
10. The APAS Form has been designed to be as simple as possible. The various items on the appraisal form and the statements in it are explained in the appendix of the form.
11. It is important that the supervisor reviews the agreed work plan and targets according to the job description and the Appraisee should contribute to this process. The supervisor then appraises the current level of performance being achieved by the job-holder in meeting the agreed upon targets.
12. After the supervisor and the job-holder have completed their appropriate parts of the APAS Form, both parties come together for an appraisal interview. During the appraisal meeting, what was achieved and what was not achieved, development needs and any follow-up action; in relation to the Appraisee's performance, is discussed.
13. At the end of the appraisal interview the job-holder will provide comments as required in Part 4. The Form will then be forwarded to the Countersigning Officer who will make comments, and submit it to the Head of Department, where applicable, for onward transmission to the Permanent Secretary through the Human Resources and Administration Department. The counter-signing officer is the immediate supervisor of the appraiser.
14. **Summary Of Jobholder's Responsibilities:**
 - ◆ Producing the first draft of the work plan and targets for the year ahead and agreeing on them with the supervisor. These should be recorded on the Performance Against Target Form
 - ◆ If circumstances change during the year ensure that the targets, including training and development plans are amended, as necessary.
 - ◆ In case of delay the job-holder should remind the supervisor of the need for the appraisal.
 - ◆ Completing the appropriate parts of the form.
 - ◆ discuss any disagreements about the assessment with your supervisor
 - ◆ prepare for the appraisal interview and use it as an opportunity to focus on how to improve performance
 - ◆ Consider training and development needs for the year ahead and discuss them with the supervisor.

15. **Summary Of The Supervisor's Responsibilities:**

- ◆ Agree jobholder's Key Result Areas (KRA) and Principal Accountabilities to be pursued during the appraisal period.
- ◆ Ensure that appropriate work plan/targets are set, and are **SMART**.(Specific Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time bound).
- ◆ Ensure that work plan/targets are kept up to date and reviewed at least once during the year. Record any changes in-year.
- ◆ give feedback in-year on performance to date
- ◆ Assess performance competences bearing in mind that the jobholder does not have to demonstrate all the observable behaviours as outlined in Part 3 of the APAS form.
- ◆ Recommend the type of follow-up action that should be taken on the Appraisee.
- ◆ Prepare for and carry out the appraisal interview, and agree targets for the forthcoming year.
- ◆ Consider training and development needs and how they will be met in the coming year.
- ◆ in case of delay remind the Human Resources Department of the need for appraisal
- ◆ give the completed appraisal form to the countersigning officer
- ◆ Ensure completed appraisal form is sent to Public Service Management Division (PSMD).

16. **Summary Of The Countersigning Officer's Responsibilities:**

- ◆ Ensure the approach to target setting and assessment and the general level of reporting standards are of a consistently high quality across the team/division/unit.
- ◆ where necessary, assist the jobholder and the supervisor to reach an agreement on the targets to be included in the jobholder's work plan
- ◆ See a sufficient amount of the jobholder's work throughout the year to be able to make an informed judgement on the performance.
- ◆ Complete appropriate sections of the APAS Form adding observations on the jobholder's achievement of targets and demonstrated competencies.
- ◆ Attempt to mediate a solution if the jobholder disagrees with the supervisor's ratings or comments.
- ◆ Record views and reasons in the event of disagreement with any parts of the supervisor's assessment which cannot be resolved through discussion.
- ◆ Encourage supervisors to consult at any time during the year about any aspect of the appraisal arrangements.
- ◆ Submit completed APAS form to the Head of Department where applicable for on-ward transmission to the Permanent Secretary through the Human Resources and Administration Department. The Human Resources and Administration Department to submit the form to the Permanent Secretary in the Public Service Management Division within two (2) weeks of the appraisal interview.

THE POST APPRAISAL PROCEDURES

17. After the appraisal interview the supervisor is responsible for ensuring that one original copy of the signed and completed Appraisal Form, is submitted under confidential cover to the Permanent Secretary in the Public Service Management Division, **P.O. Box 30587, Lusaka.**
18. One other copy of the signed and completed Appraisal Form must be retained by the supervisor, who is responsible for ensuring that it is placed on the job-holder's file in the Department or Division concerned. This file should be circulated to the Permanent Secretary and/or Head of the Division or Unit, so that appropriate follow-up action is taken on the outcome of the appraisal.
19. The third copy of the completed appraisal form is sent to the job-holder's Ministry Headquarters. Job-holders may make a photocopy if they wish.

APAS PROCESS FLOW CHART

20. The APAS Process Flow Chart which is in appendix 4 explains the steps involved in the entire Annual Performance Appraisal System Process.

TRAINING TO BE MADE AVAILABLE

21. APAS Workshops will be conducted in all restructured Ministries and Provinces where APAS will be introduced. These Workshops will include a detailed tutorial using this User Guide. Participants will have the opportunity to experience a practical session simulating the appraisal process.

TYPES OF APPRAISALS CONDUCTED

There are generally three (3) types of appraisals expected to be conducted within a year for different Officers.

1. General Annual Performance Appraisal

- Conducted at the end of every year to appraise the Individual Officer's performance in a particular year.
- Annual is from January to December
- Recommendations at Part 3.2:
 - Promotion (where a vacancy exists)
 - Demotion (poor performance)
 - Transfer
 - Training (specify the type of training)

2. Incremental Performance Appraisal

- Conducted when the Officer's annual incremental date is due (date of appointment to present post)
- Recommendations at Part 3.2:
 - Annual Increment (recommendation to be made for the current period – no arrears on annual increment)

3. Performance Appraisal for Confirmation purposes

- Conducted after six (6) months probation period.
- Recommendations at Part 3.2:
 - Confirmation in acting position

4. Performance Appraisal for Promotion

- Conducted after six (6) months acting in a position with a view of being considered for promotion.
- Recommendation at Part 3.2
 - Promotion

GUIDELINES FOR COMPLETING APAS FORMS

A properly completed APAS Form must meet the following standards:

- CORRECT APPRAISAL PERIOD AT PART 1 OF THE APAS FORM
- SMART TARGETS AT PART 2.3 OF THE APAS FORM
- OVERALL TARGET RATINGS INDICATED AT PART 2.3 OF THE APAS FORM
- OVERALL COMPETENCIES RATINGS AT PART 3.1 OF THE APAS FORM
- SPECIFIC AND RELEVANT RECOMMENDATIONS AT PART 3.2 OF THE APAS FORM