

After review of the NSPS Federal Register Vol. 70 No. 29 I do not believe it offers much improvement. I think it undermines the federal worker and lowers an already low morale.

Comments follow:

E.O. 12866, Regulatory Review

*“The primary benefit to the public of this new system resides in the HR flexibilities that will enable DoD to attract, build, and retain a high-performing workforce focused on effective and efficient mission accomplishment.”*

I have heard this referred to as “being able to hire the best and brightest”. Even with the upheaval that is being experienced with reorganization, transformation and threats to our retirement and health benefits, a government job is one of the most sought after jobs, it is still considered more secure than private industry. What’s different?? The current system strives to hire the best and the brightest now. Outside of being a veteran it is very difficult to get a government job unless you have a degree and enter through Copper Cap, Palace Acquire, and Outstanding Scholar, some of the programs that target college graduates and brings them into federal service and fast-tracks them through the pay grades. Retention could be hindered by the removal of longevity increases. Any intelligent person looking for a job would be attracted by longevity pay increases rather than increases that may arrive based on the opinion of subjective supervisors.

#### Sub Part C 9901.342 Performance-Based Pay

Throughout the Federal Register Vol. 70 No. 29 there is much emphasis on performance for pay. In the E.O. 12866 Regulatory Review it states the NSPS design requirement is to build a system that is competitive, cost effective and fiscally sound, while also being flexible, credible, and trusted. Read on.

#### 9901.342 (b)(2) Performance based pay.

What is different? We have performance based pay increases; performance based bonuses; and a combination of both already available through the current rating system. The supervisor is the rating official who decides who is deserving of these increases, this does not change under NSPS. What is different is that whether we are mediocre employees or top performers we no longer get the WGI longevity pay increase.

Ratings as always will remain with the first line supervisor. Currently it is incumbent on the supervisor to not sign off on a WGI increase if the employee is not performing in a fully successful manner. It has been my experience throughout 27yrs that most first line supervisors avoid conflict, they don’t want to write up employees and get embroiled in a slew of personnel actions. Therefore, it is easier to rate most employees fully successful or higher, easier to approve the WGI versus providing proof (documentation) it is not deserved. As a previous first line supervisor I had ability to rate individuals high enough for performance awards, however, my management dictated to me how many individuals could be rated high enough to reach the performance for pay ratings. There is no confidence amongst employees that this will be any different under NSPS. Favoritism by supervisors is alive and well and will always undermine the trust and credibility of any rating system. It has been my experience that good workers just get more work piled on them, mediocre workers who are just a warm body in a chair and don’t have bad conduct will continue to get paid for just showing up. Don’t see NSPS changing this.

Sub Part D Performance management

9901.406 Setting and communication performance expectations.

9901.407 Monitoring performance and providing feedback.

Performance plans exist under the current system, with critical and non-critical elements. It is the supervisor's responsibility to ensure that employee has a clear understanding of the elements and performs accordingly, this does not appear to be any different than what the NSPS is trying to achieve. Interim appraisals are to be done to let the employee know how they are doing, this is current policy, also covered by NSPS.

NSPS puts a greater burden on the first line supervisor. After reading the register I do not feel that this is going to take care of the problems that exist now. The real problems that exist are a direct result of the supervisors not knowing how or not willing to handle to real problem employees. It is and always will be easier to not "rock the boat". Nothing in my reading of this register raises my confidence in the NSPS to change or improve how the supervisors deal with the employee.

Until the actual pay bands are defined and we see where we fit in the band and at what level we really do not see the impact. What is not clear is what happens to a person already in the top step of their grade with no more WGs to look forward to. It is not clear if the performance pay increases are permanent or if they are more like a bonus and do not increase the basic pay for retirement purposes.

I would like to see an opportunity to provide more comments once we all see our pay bands and where we fit.

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