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NASA Procedural Requirements

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COMPLIANCE IS MANDATORY

Management of the Senior Executive Service (SES)

Responsible Office: Office of Human Capital Management

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Change History

NPR 3100.1A, Management of the Senior Executive Service

Change #	Date	Description
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Preface

P.1 Purpose

This NPR delineates the lines of authority and responsibility for implementing NASA's Senior Executive Service (SES) management system and outlines the system's principles and procedures.

P.2 Applicability

This NPR applies to NASA Headquarters and NASA Centers, including Component Facilities. In consonance with the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended (5 U.S.C. Appendix), and the Chief Financial Officers Act of 1990 (31 U.S.C. 901 et seq.), nothing herein shall be construed as limiting the Inspector General's or the Chief Financial Officer's authority regarding members of the SES or SES positions within those organizations.

P.3 Authority

- a. Authority for Employment, 5 U.S.C. SS 3101 - 3152.
- b. Examination, Selection, and Placement, 5 U.S.C. SS 3301 - 3397.
- c. Retention Preference, Restoration, and Reemployment, 5 U.S.C. SS 3501 - 3597.
- d. Performance Appraisal, 5 U.S.C. SS 4301 - 4315.
- e. Incentive Awards, 5 U.S.C. SS 4501 - 4523.
- f. Pay Rates and Systems, 5 U.S.C. SS 5301 - 5392.
- g. Travel, Transportation, and Subsistence, 5 U.S.C. SS 5701 - 5755.
- h. Adverse Actions, 5 U.S.C. SS 7501 - 7543.
- i. The Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended, 5 U.S.C. Appx, S 2.
- j. The Chief Financial Officers Act of 1990, 31 U.S.C. SS 901 et seq.
- k. Employment in the Senior Executive Service, 5 C.F.R. S 317.
- l. Pay and Performance Awards Under the Senior Executive Service, 5 C.F.R. SS 534.401 - 408.
- m. Executive, Management, and Supervisory Development, 5 C.F.R. S 412.
- n. Performance Management, 5 C.F.R. S 430.
- o. Awards, 5 C.F.R. S 451.

P.4 References

NPD 3000.1B, Management of Human Resources.

NPR 3435.1A, NASA Performance Management System for the Senior Executive Service

P.5 Cancellation

NPR 3100.1, dated May 07, 1999.

/S/

Charles H. Scales
Associate Administrator for
Institutions and Management

Chapter 1 SES Role and Objectives

1.1 Role of the NASA SES

The SES constitutes a senior management resource to be used by the Administrator to execute the mission of NASA. As such, the SES personnel system and authority to effect SES actions emanate from the Administrator. An overview of the management structure for executive resources in NASA is depicted in Appendix A.

1.2 Objectives of the SES Executive Resources System

- 1.2.1 To attract and retain highly competent executives and to assign them where they will be most effective in accomplishing their mission and where best use will be made of their talents.
- 1.2.2 To provide for the systematic development of managers and executives.
- 1.2.3 To hold executives accountable for individual and organizational performance.
- 1.2.4 To reward the outstanding performers and remove the poor performers.
- 1.2.5 To provide for an executive merit system free of prohibited personnel practices and arbitrary actions.

1.3 Characteristics of an SES Position

- 1.3.1 SES executives serve under the President's top appointed officials, such as heads of departments and agencies and are above GS-15 (or equivalent) positions.
- 1.3.2 An SES member engages in one or more of the following activities:
 - 1.3.2.1 Directs the work of an organizational unit.
 - 1.3.2.2 Is held accountable for the success of one or more specific programs or projects.
 - 1.3.2.3 Monitors progress toward organizational goals and periodically evaluates and makes appropriate adjustments to such goals.
 - 1.3.2.4 Supervises the work of employees other than personal assistants.
 - 1.3.2.5 Exercises important policy-making, policy-determining, or other executive functions.

Chapter 2 Management Structure

2.1 The Administrator is directly and personally responsible for the overall management of the SES at NASA. Where not prohibited by law or regulation, any or all of the individual responsibilities may be delegated to an appropriate management level. Such delegations may be communicated by memorandum and are considered as incorporated into this NPR.

2.2 The Executive Resources Board (ERB) is a board required by law to conduct the SES merit staffing process. The ERB also functions as an advisory board to the Administrator in executive personnel planning, utilization of executive resources, diversity and equal opportunity, and executive development, including competitive recruitment and selection, SES appointments, performance appraisal and recognition, and compensation. Members and the chairperson are appointed by the Administrator or designee.

2.3 The Performance Review Board (PRB) is a board required by law to make recommendations to the Administrator on the performance of NASA executives. Members and the Chairperson are appointed by the Administrator or designee. The NASA Senior Executive Committee (SEC) serves as the PRB for NASA Center Directors, executives reporting to the Administrator and Deputy Administrator, and members of the PRB. Members are the chairperson of the ERB, the chairperson of the PRB and one or more other members appointed by the Administrator or designee. At a minimum, more than one-half of the members of each board must be SES career appointees.

2.4 The Deputy Administrator oversees the executive resources system in the Mission Support Offices at Headquarters, chairs the SEC, and shares full authority with the Administrator for overall management of the SES at NASA.

2.5 The Associate Administrator oversees the executive resources system in Mission Directorates, the Office of Safety and Mission Assurance, the Program Analysis & Evaluation Office, the Office of the Chief Engineer, the Office of Program and Institutional Integration, and NASA Centers.

2.6 The Assistant Administrator for Human Capital Management assists the Administrator in the overall management of the SES, chairs the ERB, serves on the PRB, directs activities that provide policy advice and management support to the Administrator, and oversees and coordinates SES systems dealing with recruitment, appointment, position allocation and management, executive development, performance management, and compensation.

2.7 Executive Position Managers (EPMs) are Center Directors, Associate/Assistant Administrators, and other Officials-in-Charge (OICs) of Headquarters Offices. They manage the NASA executive resources system within their organizational jurisdictions. The EPMs implement SES management policy and processes in their organizations, including the following: SES performance management, nominations for bonuses and Presidential Rank Awards, incentive awards, compensation, executive resources and development planning, and identification of potential successor candidates.

2.8 Mission Directors are the Associate Administrators of the Mission Directorates who exercise line management authority over primary program managers (e.g., Space Shuttle, International Space Station, and Constellation program managers).

2.9 The Director, Workforce Management and Development Division, Office of Human Capital Management, serves as the Executive Secretary and provides direct staff support to the ERB, PRB, and the SEC.

2.10 The reporting relationships of the Administrator, the Deputy Administrator, the Associate

Administrator, the SEC, the PRB, the ERB, and the EPMs are shown in Appendix A.

Chapter 3 Management Authority

3.1 The Administrator retains all SES authority not otherwise delegated, including (but not limited to) the following:

3.1.1 Approval of new appointments to the SES, including limited term appointments and selections of current or former SES members from outside NASA.

3.1.2 Approval of all Presidential Distinguished and Meritorious Rank Award nominations and Incentive Awards.

3.1.3 Approval of Performance Awards (bonuses).

3.1.4 Designation of a Tier 1, 2, or 3 SES position, as described in Appendix B and NPR 3435.1B.

3.1.5 Appointments to the ERB, the PRB, and the members of the SEC.

3.1.6 Establishment, modification, or abolishment of SES positions.

3.1.7 Establishment and allocation of ceilings for positions above GS-15.

3.1.8 Approval of personnel actions affecting EPMs and their full deputies (those who serve as alternates to the EPM, with full authority to act on behalf of the EPM).

3.1.9 Adjusting pay, including to a rate exceeding Executive Level III, increases to maintain the relative position in the rate range, and increases exceeding the range authorized for performance-based increases.

3.1.10 Approval of administrative decreases in pay.

3.1.11 Approval of adverse actions.

3.1.12 Approval of reassignments.

3.1.13 Approval of recruitment, relocation, or retention incentives.

3.1.14 Approval of details, Intergovernmental Personnel Act (IPA), or developmental assignments exceeding 120 days.

3.1.15 Recommendations to OPM for waiver of reduction in pay for civil service annuitants.

3.1.16 Approval of critical position pay.

3.1.17 Approvals of waivers of the 12-month limitation on pay adjustments.

3.2 Authorities delegated by the Administrator may be redelegated if expressly permitted, but not below the EPM.

3.3 Actions involving programs or functions with direct oversight by a Headquarters executive must be coordinated with that executive before they are submitted for higher level approval.

Chapter 4 Policy Implementation

4.1 SES Recruiting and Selection

Initial appointments will be made on the basis of merit through a competitive selection process. NPR 3317 covers merit staffing within the SES.

4.2 SES Performance Management

NASA's Performance Management Plan for the SES is designed to enhance the achievement of Agency goals by encouraging managerial excellence in individual and organizational performance. It also facilitates a systematic eligibility for performance awards and retention in the SES. The PRB reviews documentation relating to initial ratings, any recommended alterations, and comments prior to recommending final performance ratings and bonuses. The Administrator considers the recommendations of the PRB and SEC in determining final performance ratings and bonuses. NPR 3435 covers performance management in the SES.

4.3 SES Pay

4.3.1 General. The level of pay of an executive should be a reflection of the responsibilities of the position and the qualifications, performance, and contributions of the executive. Agencies are expected to utilize the full SES salary range.

4.3.2 Initial Pay Setting. Initial appointments will be made at the lowest practicable rate of pay. Current General Schedule employees promoted to an SES position may receive an appropriate increase in pay, normally six percent. Proposed salaries exceeding this level must be justified based on appropriate factors, such as the scope and impact of the position, the special or unique qualifications of the selectee, or competing salary offers. Employees occupying Senior Scientific and Technical (ST) or Senior Level (SL) positions may be given an increase in pay upon appointment to the SES if the duties of the position and the employee's qualifications relative to the position warrant it. The salary of a selectee from the private sector will be set at the lowest practicable level, taking into account the responsibilities of the position to be filled, the experience and qualifications of the selectee and anticipated contributions, the relative difficulty in filling the position with a highly qualified individual, and the selectee's current salary.

4.3.3 Tier Positions. A limited number of executives (approximately 25 percent of the incumbents within an organization or Center and across NASA) may be paid above the salary for Executive Level (EX) III, not to exceed EX II. These salaries are reserved for the very highest performers occupying key positions who are making the greatest contributions to Agency success. This salary range is divided into three approximately equivalent Tiers, defined by the types of positions considered appropriate for each category. The actual salary amounts for each Tier will be determined annually. A description of the Tiers is in Appendix B.

4.3.3.1 Generally, only employees at or near a salary of EX-III may be considered for promotion to a Tier salary, based on the importance of the position as well as individual performance and contributions to mission success. Promotions to and between Tiers will be considered during the annual performance review process.

4.3.3.2 The Administrator must approve any pay action involving a salary above EX III.

4.3.3.3 The fact that a position meets a Tier definition does not require that the position be designated as a Tier position, nor does it entitle an incumbent to a Tier salary.

4.3.3.4 Promotion of a current executive into a Tier position or to a higher Tier requires an "Outstanding" performance rating during the most recent performance appraisal period.

4.3.3.5 Although the assignment to a Tier is based largely on the position, the expectation is that an individual paid at a Tier salary would continue to occupy positions of equal stature in the future and continue to perform at the highest level.

4.3.4 Adjusting Pay. Generally, SES pay may be adjusted no more than once in a 12-month period. 5 C.F.R. S 534.404(c)(4) provides for waivers of this restriction in certain circumstances; the approval of the Administrator or designee is required.

4.3.4.1 Adjustments in pay will be made based on demonstrated individual performance and contributions to organizational and mission success. A decrease in pay must be based on reasons of poor performance or conduct and requires a 15-day written notice in advance of the effective date.

4.3.4.2 As part of the annual performance management process, the Administrator or designee will authorize pay increases for executives. Unless otherwise authorized by the Administrator, the following range of performance-based increases is authorized, based on a final performance rating approved by the Administrator (rounded to the nearest dollar):

Rating	Non-Tier	Tier
Outstanding	4-6%	Inc. up to top of Tier
Highly Successful	% inc. to EX-III up to 4%	Inc. up to top of Tier
Fully Successful	0% up to % inc. to EX-III	0% up to % inc. to EX-III
Below Fully Successful	0%	0%

Increases less than the maximum rate authorized are appropriate if a larger increase would cause the executive's salary to exceed EX-III (for non-Tier positions), or would be inconsistent with the salary structure established at a Center or within a Headquarters Office for different organizational levels. Increases greater than these amounts must be approved by the Administrator, based on appropriate justification by the EPM regarding the level of performance and/or contribution of the executive. Increases above EX-III are allowable only for individuals who currently occupy Tier positions.

4.3.4.3 Executives who meet all of the following criteria may receive a performance-based increase effective the first pay period in January:

1. Have completed the one-year SES probationary period.
2. Have completed at least 120 days under an approved SES performance plan.
3. Have received an official rating of record of at least Fully Successful as approved by the Administrator.

4. Have not received an increase in the last 12 months.

4.3.4.4 Executives with less than 12 months in the SES:

1. Who entered the SES before June 3 of the previous calendar year and receive an official rating of record of at least Fully Successful as approved by the Administrator may receive a performance-based increase when they have completed their probationary period (for limited term SES, when they complete one year in the SES). Probationary SES members may receive an increase to maintain their position in the rate range under 5 C.F.R. S 534.404(b)(4) provided the EPM documents that their performance meets or exceeds expectations, based on an approved SES performance plan; however, a subsequent performance-based increase upon completion of the probationary period is limited to the difference between the maximum performance-based increase allowed, and the increase under 5 C.F.R. S 534.404(b)(4).

2. Who entered the SES after June 3 but before October 1 of the previous calendar year may receive an increase to maintain their position in the rate range under 5 C.F.R. S 534.404(b)(4) provided the EPM documents that their performance meets or exceeds expectations, based on an approved SES performance plan; they are not eligible for any additional performance-based increase. An executive paid in a Tier may receive such an increase only if the Administrator approves the increase together with either an official rating of record of Outstanding for at least a 120-day period, or a Highly Successful rating for at least a 120-day period together with a documented exceptionally meritorious accomplishment.

3. Who entered the SES on October 1 or later are not eligible for either of the above increases.

4.3.4.5 Executives who received a pay increase within the last 12 months may receive a pay increase effective the first pay period in January (or other effective date of an adjustment to the minimum or maximum rate of basic pay for the SES rate range) as follows:

1. Executives who received an increase before June 3 may receive an additional increase to maintain their position in the rate range under 5 C.F.R. S 534.404(b)(4). An executive paid in a Tier may receive such an increase only if the Administrator approves the increase and an official rating of record of Outstanding for the rating period ending September 30, or a Highly Successful rating together with an exceptionally meritorious accomplishment.

2. Executives who received an increase on or after June 3 may receive an increase only with the Administrator's approval, if otherwise permitted in regulations. However, a minimal increase is authorized if the executive's pay otherwise would fall below the range for the authorized Tier level.

3. If a performance-based increase was granted within the last 12 months, e.g., upon completion of the probationary period or due to other delay in granting such increases, the 12-month rule under 5 C.F.R. S 534 is waived, in order to align an executive's subsequent performance-based pay adjustment to the performance cycle.

4.3.4.6 An executive reassigned to a position with greater responsibilities may be considered for an increase in pay. The executive's most recent performance rating, current pay, and earlier pay adjustments will be factored into the decision. The Administrator's approval is required to waive the 12-month rule and to approve a Tier salary. Unless the position was approved previously for a Tier 1 or 2, such increases normally will be considered by the PRB during the annual performance review.

4.3.4.7 Unless otherwise authorized by the Administrator or designee, the pay of an employee returning to a General Schedule (GS) position from a limited term or limited emergency SES appointment will be set at the rate that would have been in effect had the employee remained in the GS position, including any within-grade increases to which the employee would have been entitled.

4.4 SES Presidential Rank Awards, Bonuses, and Incentive Awards (cash and time-off from duty)

SES members will be considered for all awards and bonuses for which they are eligible under Federal law and OPM guidelines, and consideration will be based on performance rather than position. The Administrator is the final approval authority for SES Presidential Rank Award nominations to OPM, bonuses, and cash incentive awards, unless otherwise delegated (incentive awards only).

4.5 SES Executive Development

NASA will provide an effective program framework and the required resources for the systematic development and continuous professional growth of its senior executives. NASA and its executives share the responsibility for identifying individual development needs and obtaining the training, education, and development experiences to meet those needs. Pursuant to its responsibility, NASA provides residential in-house executive education, financial, and logistics support for academic executive education programs, and arrangements for developmental work assignments.

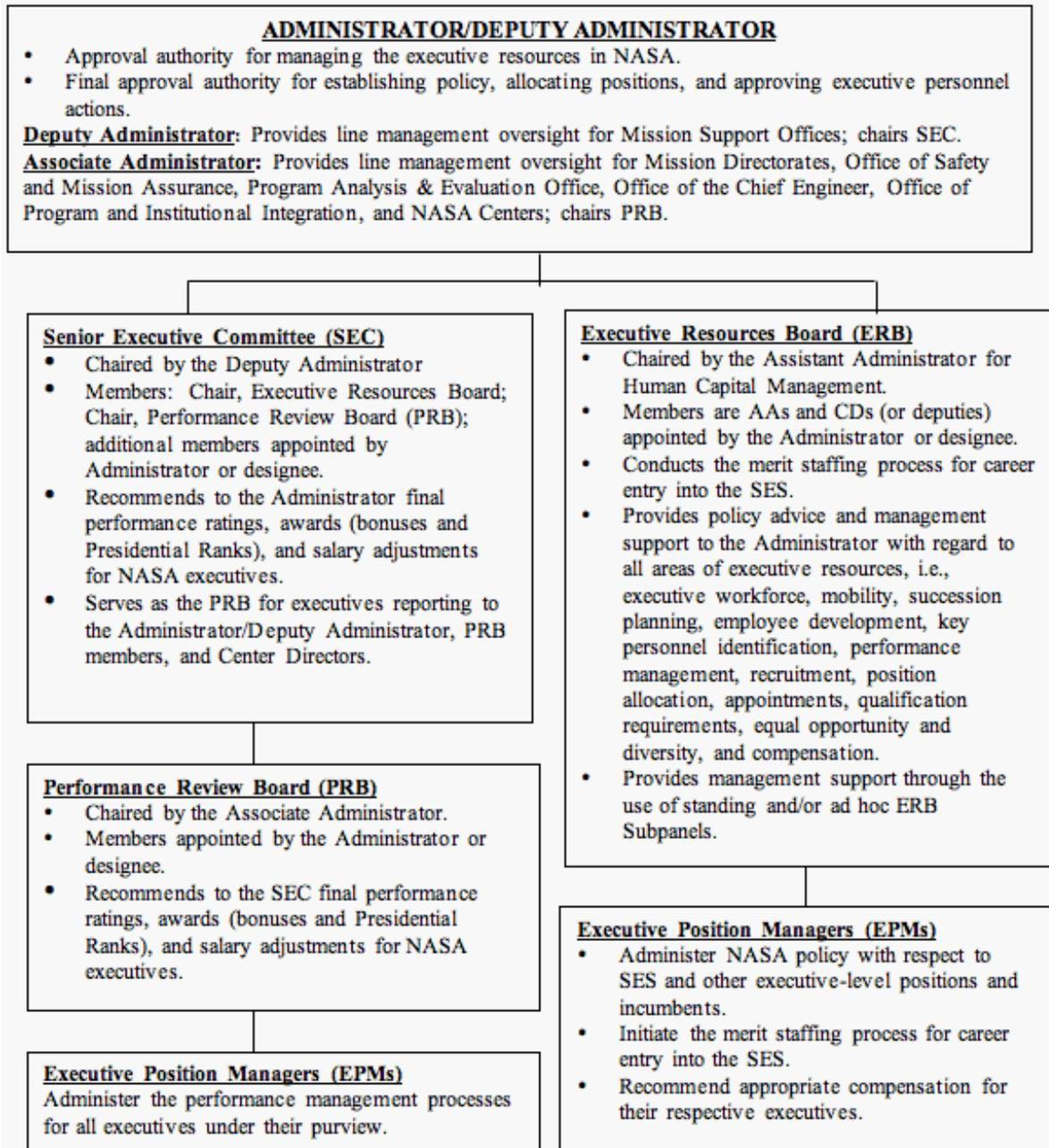
4.6 SES Ethical Standards

SES members will maintain and be held to the absolute highest level of ethics. Every member of the SES is entrusted with the senior management and execution of programs established by our national leadership. SES members must receive annual ethics briefings, supplemented with additional training as required. SES members must complete a public financial disclosure report annually, as well as when entering and leaving the SES.

Appendix A NASA Executive Resources Management Structure

NASA EXECUTIVE RESOURCES MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

The structure and functional relationships established by NASA for managing the SES are charted below.



Appendix B NASA Pay Structure for the SES: Tier Positions

An executive occupying a position authorized by the Administrator as a Tier position may be paid at any salary from the lowest payable SES salary to the top of the Tier. Tier maximum rates will increase if the pay caps are increased.

Tier 1: top range (not to exceed EX-II): Senior leadership positions that are most critical for mission success:

- Deputy and Associate Deputy Administrators, Associate Administrator.
- Chief of Staff.
- Mission and Mission Support Associate Administrators.
- Other key Associate/Assistant Administrators with Agency-wide functional responsibility such as, Safety and Mission Assurance, Education, Human Capital Management, Procurement, Public/Legislative Affairs.
- Center Directors.
- Heads of Major Agency Programs and Initiatives: Shuttle, Station, Mars, Constellation, and others of similar scope and importance to the NASA mission.
- Deputy Associate/Assistant Administrators with Tier 1 programs and initiatives reporting to them.

Tier 2: middle range: Other leadership positions that are critical to mission success:

- Full Deputies to positions in the above category.
- Other direct reports to positions in the above category such as heads of major divisions with Agency-wide responsibility at Headquarters or major organizations at the "director for" level at NASA Centers.

Tier 3: lower range: Other high-performing individuals whose positions do not fit in the above Tiers but are making key contributions to mission success.