

2015 Air and Space Conference**Enlisted Personnel Programs Update**

**Chief Master Sgt., Brandy Petzel,
Chief Of The Enlisted Force Policy Branch
September 16, 2015**

CHIEF MASTER SGT. PETZEL: [Applause] Well, thank you so much for joining me this afternoon, it's a pleasure. Thank you to AFA for having me back and Chief Cody for fulfilling that. It's great to be back here with the team and on the enlisted focused day to talk to you about some of the things that we have accomplished in the last year with regards to enlisted force policy. So last year I had the pleasure of kind of giving you a timeline of what we were rolling out with our new enlisted evaluations and promotion system changes. Kind of walked the dog through everything that we were anticipating over the next what's truly 30 months from last year when we started with our new performance feedbacks, which is the Air Comprehensive Assessment.

So now we're significantly further down the

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line, and we have had more than a year now of rolling out. And we still have a lot that's yet to come. Let's touch on exactly what we've seen and then what we still have yet to accomplish with these changes. As you're well aware, and I think we've foot stomped it a lot over the last year, our promotion system was developed 45 years ago. So four and half generations ago, when we had over a million airmen in the Air Force, we developed the promotion system that we all have grown up in and known.

So it was a significant challenge for us to take that and to rework it and modernize it, if you will, and that's what we've been doing for the last year. So we've done everything from change promotion eligibility cutoff dates, we've changed the weight of our EPRs, we have changed the formula for which we calculate our EPRs, we've made sure that we have an emphasis on performance with regards to everything we do specifically tied to promoting our enlisted force and ensuring that we are promoting the best qualified and the best performing airmen to serve the next

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highest grade. All things that we have done last year, and we continue to see the very last of those changes through our Chief Master Sergeant 15E9 Cycle that we have just entered in, and then we will see the rest of those changes through for our 16E8 Cycle. And we'll have all those things done.

At the same time, we started a significant change to the enlisted evaluation system. And, again, we started last July with the Airmen Comprehensive Assessment that we released, the new Air Force Forms 931 and 932. We've been with that for more than a year now. We've established static closeout dates. Fixed closeout dates for all enlisted grades for our evaluations to closeout. And eliminated nearly 37,000 CROs the force did each year. Both the Guard and the Reserve 100% of their force having enlisted evaluations that close out at exactly the same time as the REGAF. Total force initiative, over 70,000 of our traditional Guardsmen, which have joined the rest of the enlisted ranks, having evaluations every year, that makes me so excited to hear. Total force

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initiative and we're all in.

We have the new Air Force Form 912 that we fielded. Tested for a year, officially fielded it the end of May. Every chief master sergeant in the Air Force - REGAF, Air Force Reserve, Air National Guard - had Chiefs' EPRs on the 31st of May. And then we just released our new Air Force Form 911, a new performance evaluation that is directly tied to our Airmen Comprehensive Assessment. Specifically focusing on performance, capturing an enlisted member's performance, their potential to serve at that next higher grade. And we're getting ready here now to field our new Air Force Form 910 and all of the policy that will accompany the Air Force Form 910 and our restrictions on promotion recommendations for our promotion eligible airmen. Significant changes.

During the Chief Master Sergeant of Air Force's brief, and then General Welsh's brief, I hope that you were all able to sit in on both of those briefings. You know we talked about modernization of the Air Force. How a lot of our weapons systems are

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quite, well for many of us, we are still flying aircraft that were brought into the service before anyone in this room was even in the Air Force. And it's no different than modernizing our enlisted evaluation and promotion systems. As with any major acquisition, we don't have the luxury of building a new aircraft, and then testing it, and then looking at the flaws and troubleshooting it, and working around those, and retesting it. We have an evaluation system and a promotion system that we have to fix, trouble shoot, and rewrite and develop and change, all the while we're flying the aircraft, if you will.

We're changing wings while we're still flying. So we have had some challenges with that. There's been some things that we have had to work through. But I think the Force has done such a good job of embracing all of the changes that we put out there. Understanding what a wonderful thing it is to ensure that we have equitable evaluation of our performance. And the ability to recognize our top performers, ensure that they're promoted, ensure that

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they are in a position to be moved into positions of greater responsibility. But it has not been without its challenges. And we will continue to work through those, as we continue to refine policy for all of the things that we have yet to roll out here over the next, we still have about 18 months to go. Eighteen months in all, until we get all of the Guard and the Reserve through all of the transitions to our static closeout dates, and we see everything all the way through.

The 30th of September we'll see our last static closeout date for the REGAF come, and we will now have been full-circle, a full year of static closeout dates for the REGAF and then we'll continue to see our partners through as they finish their transition.

But, again, it's been with some challenges. We have some amazing professionals at the Air Force Personnel Center on the Air Force Staff, the Enlisted Board of Directors, again, our Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force, that have helped us to refine things

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as we have rolled out these programs, to look at how we have to change things, and all the while that we are building a new program, developing the change to the systems that we have in place, we're changing other programs that affect that as well.

That's a little bit of what we have done. I really want to be able to have a lot of time during this session to answer questions. Because I have found that over the last six to eight months that more than anything the field has specific questions that they need answered. And as you answer those questions, everybody becomes a little bit calmer and a little bit more understanding, and they feel a little bit more at ease with all of the changes that we are getting ready to go through, or that we already have gone through. And how it affects them, it affects their airmen, it affects their future, so I want to be able to have the opportunity to do that.

Instead of using notecards, we used last year, we do have some individuals that will have microphones, because I would like to be able to

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understand the context of your questions directly. So if you have a question, please feel free to raise your hand, and one of our NCOs will ensure that you actually have a microphone and that you can ask those questions. All right, anybody? That is awesome. [Laughter] That means we are doing everything right. Chief?

QUESTIONER: Good afternoon, Chief, thank you for coming here and briefing us. I have a question regarding the rollout of the 911. I was wondering, because we hear a lot of talk one way or the other, was it a deliberate decision to roll that out so close to the implementation date? Or was that an artifact of just working through the problems as you say?

CHIEF MASTER SGT. PETZEL: So it wasn't the intention at all. I would say that not really at the A1 level, at the AFPC level, and the senior enlisted and the senior leadership levels period. At the Air Force, we always want to be able to provide the field as much advanced notice to work on things as

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absolutely possible. One of the things that has been challenging with the EES rollout specifically is the Air Force has transitioned to a different platform with which we use our forms. Transitioned over to Adobe. That was new for the Air Force. We had challenges just getting the ACAs out on time because of the Adobe.

I would also offer that some of the things that the Force doesn't, I think, recognize, or maybe we haven't educated them enough on, is everything that we're doing, again, so this tieback to modernization, no longer do we have this old EPR form that you can pull out your IBM typewriter and type in bullets, right. I really dated myself there. But what we have now, is we have smart forms. We have software that helps us to populate our IT systems, our personnel data systems to update things. So not only do we have interactive forms, we have forms that specifically update and tie to our personnel systems, that tie to our systems of record, that file everything. And so for every one of the forms that we're used to just

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going out to the Air Force pub site, pulling down, and filling in, there are miles upon miles of Java code behind them, that make the forms do all the cool stuff that they do now.

And then even deeper than that are miles and miles of programming that update our military personnel system, that update our ARMS records, so that our documents go to a system of record. And with every single change to each one of those documents, comes a change to each one of those layers. And as with anything in the Air Force, you know, when you're just about to roll something out, we decide that we want to do things just slightly different, and that rolls through several different layers of change. So we have done everything as quickly as absolutely possible with the understanding that there are times that we have put the force right up against the wall with completing things. But no different than we do every day, we know that everybody delivered. And our intention is to always give the field as much time as absolutely possible.

All right, what else do we have?

SGT. HARLEY: Ma'am, Sergeant Harley from A3, just curious, if you could please explain why senior NCOs are not falling under the force distribution, the way the other ranks do?

CHIEF MASTER SGT. PETZEL: Oh, awesome. Yeah, sure. So one of the things that we changed with the weighted airman promotion system was that we eliminated the weighted EPR points calculation. So for junior NCOs we calculate the points up and you get an EPR score, right? We don't have EPR scores any longer in the promotion system for our senior NCOs. No longer do we calculate a score. There is no maximum of 250 EPR points for senior NCOs, because we don't even utilize those points any longer.

The Evaluations Board provides a score based on record of performance in your evaluations, and it was kind of two bites of the same apple. So we removed that. By removing that weighted points from the calculation for senior NCO promotions, means we could remove it from the form, because it was

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something that we didn't need to utilize.

So now we look at the level of endorsement. We look at the performance captured within the report. When promotion eligible, we'll look at the promotion statements that the final evaluators make on those evaluations. And that Evaluation Board, the same as they always have, will look at that history of sustained superior performance, and the individual's potential to serve at the next higher grade. So the score was no longer a requirement, therefore no forced distribution required. That forced distribution on that junior enlisted report specifically ties to the calculation of the weighted EPR points for that airman.

All right, any other questions? I'm sure there's plenty. Yes, sir.

STAFF SGT. PRESLEY: Hello, Chief. Staff Sergeant Presley, First Air Squadron, how can a supervisor provide accurate feedback to their airmen when they are not the ones giving the actual evaluation rating? And then how can they set them up

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for success, when they don't know how the commander and/or other supervisors will be grading their peers?

CHIEF MASTER SGT. PETZEL: So you mean how could a supervisor provide an accurate assessment of performance when they're not the ones providing the promotion recommendation?

STAFF SGT. PRESLEY: During a feedback session, yes, ma'am.

CHIEF MASTER SGT. PETZEL: So first and foremost, the feedback is the cornerstone of the enlisted evaluation system. That ACA is the bedrock for our airmen when it comes to performance, and the evaluation of that performance. We have 36, 26, 18, the enlisted force structure gives us our foundation and our framework with which our airmen and our NCOs should be functioning within. The Air Force established standards and expectations for each of the grades, right. So we should be walking our airmen through those. What is expected of our airmen? What does the Air Force expect of our airmen? And then what do you, as a supervisor, expect of your airmen

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with regards to those Air Force standards and expectations, and your work center, and your mission, and the requirements that your installation has? All of those things. But at the end of the day, it comes down to honesty. You really have to be able to look an airman in the eye and tell them exactly how they're performing, and we cannot be afraid to.

I would offer that if you walk up to an airman and ask them would you rather me telling you that you're not doing anything wrong, that you're performing perfectly, or would you rather me walk up and give you an accurate assessment of your performance and discuss with you your strengths and weaknesses, and where you can work to become a stronger airman or NCO? That they are going to appreciate the latter much more than just being told that they're doing a great job every day. Because airmen want to know where they stand. Airmen want you to be honest with them.

The new evaluation forms are a two-fold form for our 911s and our 910s. They are always and every

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year will be a performance assessment for that rating period, for that through date from static closeout date to static closeout date, that's an assessment of performance by the rater. Promotion recommendations only come in years that you're promotion eligible. So first and foremost every single year you need to accurately capture performance and you need to appropriately and accurately document an airman's performance on that ACA, to have that discussion with those expectations. The years that a commander's going to make a promotion recommendation, they're going to look back across those three years when they're going to make a determination, right. They're going to look at the year that they're evaluating. They're going to look at the two years prior, right. It is your responsibility as a rater, each one of those years to provide the expectations to your airmen, and then provide an accurate assessment of those expectations at the end of the reporting period. That's your job.

The commander's job comes when he or she

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looks back across those years and sees how well that airman has performed, and what is their potential to serve at the next higher grade. And with that next higher grade, step into positions of greater responsibility. If you do your job first and foremost, that airman, your ratee, understands what's expected of them, understands how they need to perform, and provided they do that, you set your commander up for success when it comes down to evaluating their record and determining whether they warrant promotion.

Sir?

COLONEL JODY: Thanks, Chief. Appreciate you being here. Colonel Jody with the OG, here at Bolling. I've got a question, as we're going through the total revamp, as we get further down obviously we're going need to do some minor course corrections and everything, because we're doing such sweeping changes at one time. Can you help me understand if we can consider the squadron commander stratification piece down the line, that we might be able to look at

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that, and examine that, instead of just limit it to the senior rater? Just as another tool to help tell the story on that evaluation cycle. Or if that's something that, is the door closed? Is that something that we can look at down the road? Just from my experience, as I was squadron commander and had about 100 officers, and a 100 enlisted, so I've seen it from both sides and how it's effective on both sides. Thank you.

CHIEF MASTER SGT. PETZEL: There was a very deliberate decision, sir, to move to restrict that stratification for senior NCOs to the senior rater. No different than it's been a very deliberate decision to ensure that promotion recommendations for promotion eligible senior NCOs are restricted to that final evaluator. It fences those top performers to that senior rater's stratification. It provides a mechanism for that Evaluation Board to be able to identify top performers. It culls it out for them.

So, personal opinion, if you had your CCAF degree done, you had your Course 14 done, and you were

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PETZEL-2015/09/16

breathing, you were eligible for senior rater endorsement, right? Right. We had some 90-some percent of our force that had senior rater endorsement every year. And it makes it very difficult for an Evaluation Board looking at records that every single person has the same endorsement, has the same recommendations, it comes down to them having to do a lot of work versus it being spelled out. And by restricting it to those lines, you really do have the ability to identify who your top performers are. That is first and foremost our number one thing that we want to accomplish with this, accurately capture and document performance, and then ensure those top performers are promoted. And by doing that, you in your position, sir, and the folks that are below you at the squadron level, they have the ability to filter those top performers up through you, and you filter those top performers over to the senior rater. And then the senior rater has the responsibility of looking at those records and determining who exactly in that very, very small measure of airmen are

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PETZEL-2015/09/16

deserving and warranting that senior rater endorsement. And with that, any stratification that comes in the form of written stratification and promotion recommendations.

We're talking about the top 1 percent in the Air Force and the top 3 percent, right. So that doesn't mean everybody should automatically move to there. And I'm sure, you can step into any organization and you can ask any commander, you could ask every senior NCO in one of those organizations if they could tell you who their top performers are, and they can. And so can the OG, and so can the Wing Commander, and we just want to be able to have a mechanism to be able to identify those versus lumping everybody into that same category and pushing it down to an Evaluation Board, and making an Evaluation Board do the hard and dirty work of it. It's our responsibility to make sure that we detail who those outstanding performers are. Set them up for success, and then to really outline who are the folks that we need to promote to the next higher grade based on that

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performance. That's what those two things do for you, sir.

Yes, ma'am?

QUESTIONER: Langley Air Force Base. My question, ma'am, is in regards to feedback. With the mission with the war winding down, I have a lot of airmen in my squadron that don't have the ability to gain as much performance feedback due to not having a mission. It's almost obsolete now. What recommendations do you have in giving them not only that boost of morale, but the ability to do more than just the administrative side of the Reserve?

CHIEF MASTER SGT. PETZEL: Okay, so I'm going to ask a question back. I think I misunderstood. You don't have a mission, so they don't have anything to be evaluated on?

QUESTIONER: At a lot of bases, ma'am, the ability to move the cargo and passengers that we have, has become almost obsolete. The active component and the Guard are taking more of the workforce versus the actual Reservists. So I'll have my troops show up on

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PETZEL-2015/09/16

drill weekends, and we're doing our CBTs, we're getting the administrative part of that done, but because we don't have that passenger and cargo movement, the deployments are falling off. Our AFSC for aerial port is soon to be, from what I've heard, not even on the critical skills list anymore. So we're not able to meet one of those blocks when it comes to feedback, the airmen are coming and saying, "Well, how do I check off these squares, when I'm not even able to really perform my job outside of the upgrade training, and just mock missions that we're doing at the port?"

CHIEF MASTER SGT. PETZEL: So I have to ask, how are you maintaining the technical core efficiency of your NCOs? Is it through that training that you're doing during?

QUESTIONER: A lot of it is mock training. We're also trying to build a better relationship with the active force. For instance, the LRS, we're reaching out to Norfolk. I just recently transferred to the 71st from the 26th Aerial Port at Lackland Air

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Force Base. So even with them, we're working with the school house. We're reaching out during annual tours, and we're really trying to prove that the Reserve Force can wholeheartedly hold up the active component part of the mission, but it's really having to be very creative, ma'am.

CHIEF MASTER SGT. PETZEL: So that's challenging. I think I can put myself in your same position, if I was, I mean as a career personnelist working in the MPS and I didn't have the same opportunities. I think what you have to do is work within what you've been given. Evaluate how that training is. Put your folks through real-world scenarios, which it sounds exactly what you're doing. I mean you're going have to evaluate what you have, what the proficiency is that they have in what they're training on. And take every opportunity to capture anything for when they are there, because of their mission, because they are citizen airmen, and you're not going to have them there 100 percent of the time, and the Air Force recognizes that. And what you have

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to do is capture how well they are performing when they are there. How well are they performing as they're going through that training? How well are they maintaining those proficiencies not only within their skillset, but within their ancillary training, and the times that you do have them sitting there in the seat performing the job? That's all that you can do. And you just want to be very cognizant of what you have, and how you capture it, and doing it accurately. We can't ask for anything more than what you're already doing, which it sounds like you're finding some amazing ways to make sure that you're airmen are trained and ready, and obviously to exactly the same standard as the REGAF component, which is what we ask and expect, and understand or our ARC. So I applaud you for what you're doing, and just continue to capture those areas that you have in place to capture.

QUESTIONER: Yes, ma'am. Thank you.

CHIEF MASTER SGT. PETZEL: Yes, sir?

QUESTIONER: Ma'am Tech Sergeant [Rick Elk]

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from [inaudible]. I just have a question in reference to the stripes for exceptional performers, if it's still available for the grades E-4 through E-6.

CHIEF MASTER SGT. PETZEL: What's your question again?

QUESTIONER: As far as the STEP program goes, is that still available for our airmen as far as the grades from senior airman to tech sergeant?

CHIEF MASTER SGT. PETZEL: Yes, it is. So the step program is owned by the CSAF, and we did remove master sergeants from the step program last year, because we transitioned to the Evaluation Board. But the step program is still an annual program and we will still provide those allocations to the major commands, as we always have had. And we will still have our Central Boards at AFPC and there will still be that allocation of stripes for commanders to be able to recognize exceptional performers through STEP, yes.

QUESTIONER: Thank you.

CHIEF MASTER SGT. PETZEL: Yes, sir?

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QUESTIONER: Does the forced distribution and the emphasis placed on performance reports, does that not set the stage to eliminate the STEP promotion program by recognizing that top 10 percent who might not be such great testers, for example?

CHIEF MASTER SGT. PETZEL: STEP is a completely separate mechanism that we have in place. The numbers that we allocate to STEP each year are very, very small. They're not even a percent of the enlisted force, not even a full percentage point. Forced distribution ensures that we have those top performers that are receiving a promotion, opportunity that is commiserate with their performance. STEP is a completely different mechanism that we have in place to provide commanders a different avenue to ensure that those outstanding performers are recognized and promoted.

Those stripes are allocated in a much different manner, and so it doesn't deter from the forced distribution and, again, still provides that mechanism for commanders to be able to identify those

PETZEL-2015/09/16

folks that perhaps will not fall into the forced distribution. It's all going to be based on performance. And I would offer that if you have an exceptional performer that is going to get STEP promoted, they're probably one of the exceptional performers that would have received a forced distribution, a promote now or must promote.

Can I answer any other questions for you?

Yes, ma'am.

QUESTIONER: Hi, Chief. Do you have a timeline on roll out of 910?

CHIEF MASTER SGT. PETZEL: The 910 is in development, as is the policy to accompany the 910, which includes all of the forced distribution, which includes the identification of each of the units that will be calculated under forced distribution, the changes to the personnel system that go along with that. We are marching forward to ensure that we have as much as possible done, if not exactly everything by the 30th of November because we will have to be able to execute that on the first of December. It is not a

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small undertaking, but we have an amazing set of professionals that have been working on it for quite some time now. And we'll continue to do so. As a matter-of-face, we'll be down all collaboratively working on all of that policy next week at AFPC.

Yes, sir.

QUESTIONER: Tech Sergeant [inaudible] from Presidential Logistics Squadron. For the 910, as well, should we tailor our bullets to the feedback? Basically we're having to turn in our EPRs right now but we don't really have anything to go off of. So should we write our bullets tailored to our feedback right now, or kind of wait until that comes out? Or how should we go about that?

CHIEF MASTER SGT. PETZEL: Okay. The Airman Comprehensive Assessments are a mirrored image, a complementary image of the evaluations. So if you were to look at the Air Force Form 932, and you were to hold it up to next to the Air Force Form 911, every section that's on the feedback form has a complementary section on the Air Force Form 911,

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right, verbatim.

The Air Force 910 will be exactly the same. So I would encourage you to write, prepare your bullets following each one of those sections. You'll still have six lines under your performance in your primary duties, just like there are six areas on the Air Force Form 931, the Airman Comprehensive Assessment, that talked to performance in your primary duties, right. You have two sections that talk to followership and leadership. And you're going have two bullets that talk to followership and leadership. And then you have two that fall under the whole airman concept. And you're going have two on the EPR form for the whole airman concept. So you really could put that on a piece of bond paper and look at that Airman Comprehensive Assessment and look at each one of those sub components within each of those performance areas, and write your bullets accordingly. And when that form comes out, you'll be able to pop them right in there. Just like that. Really that easy.

QUESTIONER: Chief, can you talk a little

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bit about job recommendations for personnel who are not promotable at this particular time? I'm fielding a lot of questions from the first sergeants, and if you could also address airmen who are operating outside of their primary AFSC, but are preparing to return to that prior AFSC?

CHIEF MASTER SGT. PETZEL: Okay. For job recommendations when you are not promotion eligible, and I'll try to not quote, but quote chapter and verse from the AFI. When you're not promotion eligible your job recommendations and the future roles on the evaluation should be commensurate with the grade that you are in. When you're promotion eligible, and thereby eligible for a promotion recommendation to the next higher grade, your job or future role recommendations can be commensurate with the grade that you're holding and the recommendation to your next higher grade for promotion. One grade. One grade for future roles, one grade for your promotion recommendations, one grade for your next assignment. That way we're not veiling promotion in years that

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PETZEL-2015/09/16

you're not promotion eligible and in the years that you are promotion eligible we are making an accurate assessment of your performance and a recommendation for promotion in the next higher grade that match up for one grade. And the AFI will detail that when you can and when you can't, and how high, and everything.

Your second question, when you have an individual that has stepped outside of their job, and is not performing say in their primary duties, you're still assessing their performance based on their primary duties in the job that they're holding. In accordance, again, with the enlisted force structure and whatever their job is. So I'll use an example, say that you are a supply technician in LRS, and you're the command chief's exec. So you're not doing 3S duties, you're performing as an executive assistant to the command chief. So I expect that an entire EPR to talk to what you're doing to support the command chief in your primary duties. Now, it's great that you're still associated with the squadron. You're still staying proficient perhaps. You're doing

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PETZEL-2015/09/16

training, and whatnot within the squadron. But your primary duties are the job that you're holding. In this case, working for that command chief, even though you may still be holding that 2S career field. It comes down to performance in the job that you've been given during that performance period. And when they transition back in, it's going to be a transition back to their primary AFSC, and back to in this case being a 2S and being in supply. And we should see exemplary performance across both of those. It should be a seamless transition between the both of them, is what you would expect. That's how they need to capture that. Does that answer your question, Chief?

QUESTIONER: It does somewhat. So more specifically, if I have a First Sergeant who's operating in the AF and the control, and duty AFSC; however, within a six-month period of the EPR coming out, they're returning to their primary AFSC --

CHIEF MASTER SGT. PETZEL: Oh awesome.

QUESTIONER: -- [inaudible] --

CHIEF MASTER SGT. PETZEL: Exactly. So when

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you have a period of reporting when you're doing two different jobs, obviously whatever the closeout date of that evaluation is, unless you're PCSing on an accounting date, and the losing unit is going to accomplish everything as that accounting date, that's where your duty title is. So it'll either be the static closeout date, if you've been with the unit for the whole time, or it's going to be the accounting date data, if you're losing unit is the one responsible for completing your evaluation and you PCS. But that doesn't mean within that evaluation, specifically within the key duties tasked and responsibilities in there, and in the performance areas that you are prohibited from capturing performance in both of those jobs.

You know first and foremost it is whatever's going to be as of that closeout date, or as of that accounting date. That's what's going to go into the system. But that doesn't mean on that evaluation that you can't capture the performance in both of those jobs if you held two different jobs during a reporting

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PETZEL-2015/09/16

period. And I would highly encourage you to do so. And because we have removed specifically the section that used to talk to significant additional duties, that's something that you would also tie into that key duties, tasks and responsibilities is anything that is significant that you're performing within that given job, or duty that you need to capture to be able to identify that it's something significant during that reporting period. Does that help a little more, Chief?

Colonel?

QUESTIONER: Chief, again, I want to echo everybody's words, I think you've done a great job leading this effort and I appreciate you coming out to Travis for the roadshow. That was a fantastic roadshow. I have a follow-up to the job recommendation question. I'll give you a notional example. Let's say right now I've got an EPR on my desk for one of the 12 outstanding airmen who's a senior master sergeant select. They're not promotion eligible, because they're a select. But it doesn't

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PETZEL-2015/09/16

really make sense to give them a job recommendation for the grade they're currently in, when they've already got a line number for the next higher grade. But I don't think the AFI specifically addresses that, I could be wrong. Do you have a recommendation on that?

CHIEF MASTER SGT. PETZEL: So first and foremost, sir, I'll take a note and we'll make an adjustment to the next installation of the AFI that helps to define that a little bit better. That's easy. If you have somebody that's a select, you've already selected them to the next higher grade, so therefore it wouldn't be a veiled promotion statement to make a recommendation that's commensurate with the grade that they're being promoted to. But we'll work to define that, so that's in there a little bit better for you, okay. So then if you have the not promoted and already been promoted, that we capture that group that's in between. But in his case, if he was going back to his career field, he's CE, yes? Right. So you're recommending him to be a flight chief, for

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PETZEL-2015/09/16

instance, which is commensurate with him being a senior master sergeant in CE. That's not veiled and that's authorized. But we'll work to put something in there that helps make that clearer for your airmen and for the field, in general, sir.

All right, other questions? Yes, sir?

QUESTIONER: How you doing, Chief?

CHIEF MASTER SGT. PETZEL: Wonderful.

QUESTIONER: Quick question kind of on the same lines as that. If you have an individual, let's say a tech sergeant who just made master, so master sergeant select. We're going through the 911s now, at what level would it close? So at that final evaluator, I tried reading into the regulations board AFIs but it was not clear, and we couldn't get a good answer on it. So I know we're not going to promote up to the, or give the recommendation for the wing, of course, but would it go group, or would it go intermediate?

CHIEF MASTER SGT. PETZEL: Depends upon what the record says. So in your example, the unit

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PETZEL-2015/09/16

commander needs to look at the performance within that senior NCOs, or senior NCO select's record, make a determination. Does it warrant deputy evaluator endorsement? If he or she feels that it does, they send it to the next higher level. And then that deputy evaluator will look at that, and determine whether or not it warrants his or her endorsement, or if they're going to send it back down, and it's going to closeout at the intermediate evaluator.

But it can't go to the senior rater unless it's a forced endorsement, because of the fact that they are a select. But in a traditional, that's what the responsibilities are. We detail that out in the AFI, the expectation that whoever that first evaluator is, the first person that is eligible to be the final evaluator on that report, takes into consideration the history of performance within the evaluation and makes a determination if it warrants endorsement at the next higher level. And if it does, they move it to the next higher level. That next higher level in your case would be the deputy evaluator and he or she will

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PETZEL-2015/09/16

look at it, concur that it warrants their level of endorsement, either endorse the evaluation, and if it doesn't I'm sure would have a conversation with that unit commander as to why there is a disagreement. But that's exactly what they need to do. There's nothing blanket. There's nothing that says that a certain group needs to receive a certain, we provide restrictions, based on promotion eligibility or whether that you're falling in the senior NCO's top percentage of promotional eligibles, but when you have a select in that case, you just look at the history within a performance within the record, and make that determination from there.

Great questions. Yes, sir?

QUESTIONER: Good afternoon, Chief. Was there ever any consideration in leaving the Guard and Reserve at the 24 months, because of the time we actually spend on a job, I think this is kind of piggybacking on what was said earlier, I think from the conversations I'm having with my subordinates is after they do CBTs and currencies, and I have a flying

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job, so we do a little more than a one weekend, two weeks a year. But I think what we're feeling is there's going to be a lot of canned, generic statements, because if we do 39 days in the year with our drills and everything, and every year now we're trying to fill out that EPR to give it teeth, make them stand out.

CHIEF MASTER SGT. PETZEL: So you're still going have biennial reports for your traditional guardsmen and reserve personnel. The only folks that would have annuals are those folks that are at statutory tours, or are AGRs. So in your case you would have an ACA one year, and then you'd have an EPR, and the next year you'd have an ACA. So you still have two years, your 24-month between biennial reports, and on those "off" years, if you will, from evaluation, you'll receive your performance assessment. You'll still receive your mid-term evaluations. You're still going have those 24-month biennials.

QUESTIONER: Thank you, Chief.

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CHIEF MASTER SGT. PETZEL: So that gives you a little bit more time to capture that performance and, again, a work in progress. Certainly want to keep that documentation. But that portion has not changed for the folks in the ARC.

Can I answer any other questions for anybody? All right. Well, first and foremost, again, thank you for inviting me back. I have to tell you, when you're one of the people that gets to work on such a monumental change in the Air Force, it makes you excited.

There are a lot of people that are pensive still about the changes to the evaluations and promotion systems. And I would offer that everybody has nerves about change, but this is phenomenal. And I wouldn't say that if I didn't truly believe that what we are doing is the right thing and we're doing it in the right way. And that we are smoothing the bumps and the potholes as we go along, as quickly, and as efficiently as we absolutely can. For every person in this room that sees this in a positive fashion and

passes that on, it permeates through the force.

And every single thing won't be perfect. Just like the F-35 that wouldn't fly above 3Gs until they made an adjustment to a flange in a hydraulic system, we're going to have things that we're going to be challenged with. And we're going to have anomalies that pop up. We're going to have units that have some unique circumstance that we're going to have to work through making a change, or making an adjustment, or adding something to the AFI that provides clarification because it's confusing for the field. And we will continue to do that, because it's the right thing to do for our airmen. But I would ask first and foremost of every person in this room, to walk out of here knowing that we're doing the right thing. That we're doing absolutely the best that we can. And that we're doing it for the right reason. And that we're doing it for the betterment of our Air Force and for our airmen, and this is what we deserve, what we need, and in the end we'll get through all of it. It'll be smooth, and it'll be efficient, and it's

going be something that's great for our enlisted force
and our Air Force as a whole. So, again, thank you
very, very much for coming. I appreciate the support
yet a second year in a row, and for all that you do.

[Applause]

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