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NPS, Union Sign Defense Performance Management and Appraisal Program MOA

By MC2 Michael Ehrlich

Members of the Naval Postgraduate School's (NPS) Labor Management Forum gathered to discuss, among other things, the implementation of the Defense Performance Management and Appraisal Program (DPMAP), June 21. The forum was followed by a formal Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) signing, which paved the way for DPMAP implementation in April of next year.

“Signing the MOA with the union today was a step toward ensuring they are onboard with the upcoming actions needed to implement this system,” said Director of Business Operations Les Martin.

The 2010 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), mandated the creation of a

“fair, creditable, transparent, enterprise-wide performance management program,” This resulted in the creation of DPMAP. The 2010 NDAA explicitly called for employee involvement in the development of the program.

Deputy Human Resources Director Jennifer Amarin, came to NPS after leading the Defense Language Institute’s (DLI) transition to DPMAP last year. She noted, “A collaborative partnership is critical to the effective implementation of a new performance management system.”

DPMAP will replace the three separate performance management systems currently used by faculty, supervisors, and bargaining unit members at NPS. Martin and Amarin are also working with NPS academic and staff directorate leadership to ensure a smooth faculty and supervisor transition to the system. “It [DPMAP] will help reduce the confusion of having three different performance systems in place at NPS,” said Martin. “DPMAP provides a framework for supervisors and managers to communicate expectations and job performance by linking individual employee performance and organizational goals,” added Amarin.

Amarin acknowledges that there is a lot of work to do before DPMAP can be implemented. She notes that the program will require a cultural shift at NPS, and across the DOD, as employees and supervisors adjust to the new program, which requires a minimum of three face-to-face, formal discussions to occur annually between employees and supervisors as well as a three-tiered rating system. “In most systems, you are used to evaluating folks on a pass or fail basis, which you call meritorious or unacceptable here at NPS,” explained Amarin. “We are going to go to a three-tier system, which allows an opportunity for distinction.” The three tiers that will be used with DPMAP are outstanding, fully successful, and unacceptable.

In an effort to aid with the transition, the DOD has mandated that all employees and supervisors receive a full day of DPMAP training in a mixed setting, where employees and supervisors can ask questions and receive instruction together. “We are working on getting together a cadre of trainers who will be responsible for working with us to train the material to the workforce,” said Amarin.

For more information on DPMAP see DoD Instruction 1400.25, Volume 431, dated February 4, 2016, which establishes the framework for the performance management system, and keep an eye out for a NPS instruction with more detailed information.