

## 2015 Performance Review Panel Structure, Process and Timeline

The 2015 Performance Review Panel will take place in October 2015. There are three major changes to the process from the last PRP based on the [PIE Assessment Committee Recommendations](#) (April 2014):

- Programs will select up to 80 impacts and accomplishments (associated with the 2010-2013 strategic plans) to include in the focus area reports (completed by July 17, 2015).
- The PIER-generated focus area reports will be reformatted to be shorter and better organized.
- The new rating system is explained in detail in Section III below and also in [Section IV of The National Sea Grant College Program Planning, Implementation and Evaluation System](#).
  - The PRP rating system is now on a 1-highest performance to 5-unsuccessful scale.
  - Given the tight distribution of ratings, a program's merit funding is calculated based on a cubed rating to increase the monetary benefit of achieving a higher score.

### **Background**

A key component of the Planning, Implementation and Evaluation (PIE) process is the Performance Review Panel (PRP) process. The goal of the PRP process is to assess and rate the scientific preeminence and societal impact of each Sea Grant program relative to the federal Sea Grant investment (*15 CFR 918.3b, 1 and 8*).

The 2012 “transitional” PRPs reviewed each program's performance in years 2008 through 2011. The next PRPs will convene in October 2015 to conduct retrospective evaluations of each Sea Grant program's overall impact on society as guided by their 2010-2013 strategic plans.

This document describes the composition of the PRPs, the materials for the review, and the PRP process. Appendix A contains a timeline for the 2015 PRP schedule.

### **I. PRP Structure and Role**

The PRP will be composed of approximately 30 individuals from the National Sea Grant Advisory Board, academia, government, non-governmental organizations, and industry appointed by the National Sea Grant College Program (NSGCP) Director.

Based on expertise, panelists will be assigned to five PRPs to correspond with the four 2010-2013 national focus areas, and the fifth focusing on environmental/ocean literacy. Each PRP will be responsible for reviewing and rating each program's impact in that focus area as it relates to the program's strategic plan.

*Members of the Sea Grant network are encouraged to provide nominations to the NSGCP Director by Friday, June 5, 2015. The Panels will all convene between October 5 and October 23, 2015.*

Each PRP will be facilitated by a National Sea Grant Office (NSGO) staff member. The NSGO facilitator will assign programs for each panelist to either be the primary or secondary reviewer; all other panelists will serve as tertiary reviewers. Primary reviewers are responsible for leading the discussion on each Program with substantive input from the secondary panelist. Primary and secondary panelists will fill out an evaluation form (see Appendix B) prior to the review. All panelists (except those with a conflict of interest) will be expected to provide a rating after discussions are complete.

The NSGO facilitator will produce a document for each Program that includes the rating and an explanation of how it was derived including the program's strengths and recommendations for improvement discussed during the PRP.

If a panelist has a conflict of interest with a particular program, he or she will not take part in the discussion nor provide a rating for that program.

## **II. PRP Materials**

### **A) Planning, Implementation, and Evaluation Resources (PIER) Program Focus Area Reports (Due July 17, 2015)**

Programs will submit 2014 annual reports by June 10, 2015. Programs may associate impacts and accomplishments in the 2014 annual report with the 2010-2013 program strategic plans, and they can be included in the PIER program focus area reports.

Programs can select up to 80 impacts and accomplishments from any of the 2010-2014 annual reports (February 2010 through January 2015) that are associated with the 2010-2013 strategic plan. *Currently, no impacts/accomplishments are selected in PIER to go to the PRP.*

To select the 80 impacts/accomplishments through PIER, click the “Include in PRP” button beside each impact/accomplishment on the PIER “Impacts & Accomplishments” page. Please ensure that impacts/accomplishments are associated with the 2010-2013 strategic plan.

Based on the PIE Assessment Committee Recommendations (April 2014), the PIER Program Focus Area Report is being reformatted and will be available for download by the end of June. PIER program focus area reports will be generated from Sea Grant’s online reporting system (template is in Appendix C) and shared with panelists at least 6 weeks prior to the PRP. The PIER program focus area report will include:

- The selected impact and accomplishment statements that are linked to the program’s 2010-2013 strategic plan goals;
- Program performance measure targets, actuals, and any associated comments; and
- Program objectives and any associated comments.

### **B) Program One-Page Introduction (Due: August 14, 2015)**

Each Sea Grant program may produce a single-page introduction to the program that will be shared with all focus area PRPs. This should provide high-level context for the rest of the PRP materials.

To upload the one-page program introduction, go to the PIER homepage; under “Upload PRP Documents.” Under “Upload Report”, select from the dropdown menu “One-Page Program Introduction” and then click on “Choose File” to locate your file. Once you select the file, your one-pager will be uploaded.

### **C) PRP Program Summary Report (Due August 14, 2015)**

Each Sea Grant program should produce a summary report that is intended to weave together major accomplishments and impact stories that occurred as a result of implementation of the 2010-2013 strategic plans. To limit the burden on programs and the PRPs, the Program Summary Report will be limited to a total of 20 pages. Guidance for the Program Summary Report can be found in Appendix D.

To upload the program summary reports, go to the PIER homepage; under “Upload PRP Documents,” select the appropriate focus area beside “Report Type:”.

### **D) Program 2010-2013 Approved Strategic Plan (already in PIER)**

Individual program strategic plans include goals, objectives, and performance measures (with targets) that align with and support the national strategic plan. Since each program has a unique set of local and regional stakeholders, partners

and priorities, the individual program plans may not address all of the national focus areas and goals.

**E) Sea Grant Investment in the Focus Area (already in PIER)**

The Sea Grant appropriated funds (Sea Grant federal and associated matching funds) that each program invested in the focus area will be provided to the PRP to scale expectations of each program’s scientific enterprise and societal impact. Programs have previously associated funding with focus areas each year through the PIER level of effort page.

**III. PRP Ratings**

Panelists will assign ratings based on each program’s overall impact on society relative to Sea Grant appropriated funds as guided by its strategic plan. Panelists will use the following rating guidance:

- a. Highest Performance – exceeds expectations by an exceptional margin in most areas/aspects (1)
- b. Exceeds Expectations by a substantial margin in some areas/aspects (2)
- c. Meets Expectations in most areas/aspects (3)
- d. Below Expectations in some areas/aspects (4)
- e. Unsuccessful in most areas/aspects (5)

Final ratings are determined for each program by weighting the average individual Panels’ ratings by the proportion of funding resources allocated by the program to that focus area. “Funding resources” include all Sea Grant appropriated funds (federal and associated match), pass thru and leveraged funds that are managed by programs and used to meet the goals and objectives of the four-year plan. For example, if a program allocated 25% of its funding resources to the SCD focus area and was rated an average of 1.6, and it allocated 75% of its resources to HCE and received an average rating of 2.2, it would score an overall weighted rating of 2.05, calculated as follows:

$$\begin{array}{r} \text{SCD} \qquad \qquad \text{HCE} \\ [25\% \times 1.6] + [75\% \times 2.2] = 2.05 \end{array}$$

There is no requirement that a program address all national focus areas in its strategic plan. Instead, the rating process is intended to emphasize those areas that each program considers most important based on the amount of allocated resources. If a program allocates no funding resources to a focus area, that focus area will not figure into the overall weighted rating, and the corresponding focus area panel will not review that program.

**IV. After the PRP**

Upon completion of the review process, summary PRP documents will be sent from the NSGCP Director to the state Sea Grant Program Director. The state Sea Grant program will have an opportunity to submit a memorandum to the NSGCP Director responding to factual errors in the PRP documents. **(Due: February 12, 2016)**

National Sea Grant Office Annual Review (NSGO)

The NSGO staff will discuss the Site Review Report and program response, and the PRP documents and any program response during the NSGO Review. The NSGCP Director will determine a final program rating that is used to allocate merit funds.

If a program receives an overall rating greater than 4, it will not be eligible for merit funding, and the program will be placed in probationary status.

Allocation of Merit Funds

Merit funding eligibility is based on the site review and PRP, and the funds are allocated based on the overall program rating from the PRP. Any program that does not meet the [Sea Grant Standards of Excellence based on the site review](#)

(see <http://1.usa.gov/1C1Aiiy>) or is put on probation based on an overall PRP rating greater than 4 will not be eligible for merit funding. The merit funding coefficient is calculated by subtracting the PRP rating from 5, and then cubing that value. For instance, the program in the example above received a PRP rating of 2.05, therefore the merit funding coefficient of this program is  $(5-2.05)^3 = 25.7$ . If the sum of all of the merit funding coefficients for all eligible programs happened to equal 1,000, the program would receive  $25.7 / 1,000 = 2.57\%$  of available merit funding until the next review cycle ends in four years.

## **Appendix A: 2015 PRP Timeline**

June 10, 2015:	2014 Annual Report due into PIER
July 17, 2015:	Selection of up to 80 impacts or accomplishments in PIER
August 14, 2015:	Program One-Page Introduction and Program Summary Reports due into PIER
August 24, 2015:	PRP materials sent to panelists
October 2015:	Panels meet, review and rate Programs
January 8, 2016:	PRP documents sent to the programs
February 12, 2016:	Program response memos to Site Review recommendations and optional response to factual errors to the PRP documents due to the NSGCP Director
February 22-26, 2016:	NSGO Review
May 1, 2016:	Final Evaluation Reports with ratings sent to programs

## Appendix B: PRP Evaluation Form

Ratings for the 2015 PRP will be based on the program's scientific preeminence and overall impact on society relative to appropriated Sea Grant federal investment as guided by its strategic plan. Consider the approved program strategic plan and the investments of Sea Grant appropriated resources, and please provide a rating based on the impacts, accomplishments, objectives, and performance measures reported in the PIER Focus Area Report and the Program Summary Report.

*Please circle the rating:*            **1.0**   **1.5**   **2.0**   **2.5**   **3.0**   **3.5**   **4.0**   **4.5**   **5.0**

- 1.0 - Highest Performance – exceeds expectations by an exceptional margin in most areas
- 2.0 - Exceeds Expectations by a substantial margin in some areas/aspects
- 3.0 - Meets Expectations in most areas/aspects
- 4.0 - Below Expectations in some areas/aspect
- 5.0 - Unsuccessful in most areas/aspects

Provide an explanation of your rating below.

**Is the program making a significant contribution to society through advancements in science and technology in this focus area? Please describe the evidence below.**

Suggested Considerations for Evaluators –

1. What are the contributions (e.g., seminal publications or patents) to science and technology: new understanding, products, processes, and technology?
2. What is the area of impact: Local/State? Regional/National? International?
3. What has been Sea Grant's role in producing this contribution?
4. Are the science and technology contributions commensurate with the size of the program?

**Is the program making a significant contribution to society beyond the contribution to science and technology in this focus area? Please describe the evidence below.**

Suggested Considerations for Evaluators –

1. What are the societal benefits of the program?

2. Are the public or constituent groups better informed on a major issue?
3. Has public health or safety improved?
4. Have there been changes in constituent group or public opinions or behavior?
5. What are the economic benefits (e.g., value, jobs, businesses) of the program?
6. Are there new or expanded industries, companies, businesses?
7. Are there cost savings or productivity improvements?
8. Has the management of natural resources improved as a result of the program's efforts?
9. What is the area of impact: Local/State? Regional/National? International?
10. What has been Sea Grant's role in producing this benefit?

## Appendix C: PIER Program Focus Area Report Outline

### PIER Program Focus Area Report            *Sea Grant Program* Focus Area

#### **Program Focus Area:**

*Program Goal 1*

*Program Goal 2*

#### Impacts and Accomplishments toward Program Goals

##### ***Program Goal 1***

##### Impact(s)

ID - Title 1

ID - Title 2

##### Accomplishment(s)

ID - Title 3

ID - Title 4

##### ***Program Goal 2***

##### Impact(s)

ID - Title 2

ID - Title 5

##### Accomplishment(s)

ID - Title 6

ID - Title 7

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#### Full Text of Impacts and Accomplishments

##### **ID - Title 1**

Relevance

Response

Results

Recap

##### **ID - Title 2**

Relevance  
Response  
Results  
Recap

**ID - Title 3**

Relevance  
Response  
Results  
Recap

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**Program Performance Measures (2010 – 2013)**

<b>Program Performance Measures</b>	<b>Program Plan Target (2010-2013)</b>	<b>Reported</b>	<b>Program Comments</b>

**Program Objectives (2010 – 2013)**

<b>Program Objective</b>	<b>Achieved (yes/no)</b>	<b>Program Comments</b>

## Appendix D: Program Summary Report Guidelines

Programs should write a Program Summary Report for each focus area in their 2010-2013 strategic plan. Program Summary Reports will be due into PIER no later than **August 14, 2015**.

**Format:** The total number of pages cannot exceed 20 for all focus areas combined, but it is up to the discretion of the program how many pages are allocated to each focus area. The font size shall be no less than 12 point and font shall be Times New Roman. Margins shall be no less than 1 inch. Figures and illustrations may be included, but count toward the page limit. All reports shall be uploaded into PIER in PDF format.

**Content:** The PRP will have reviewed the impact and accomplishment statements reported in the PIER Focus Area Report, so the Program Summary Report is an opportunity to weave together multiple impact statements, present additional information not included in the PIER Focus Area Report, and highlight challenges that the program has been particularly effective at addressing. One approach is to explain how a series of projects were funded over time to accomplish an objective or to achieve an outcome greater than the “sum of the parts.” What information is presented within the Program Summary Report, and how it is presented, is up to the program’s discretion. Readability and organization of the information is vital.

The [guidance for preparing Sea Grant impact statements](#) may be useful in developing the Program Summary Report. The Report should describe a program’s contribution to society. Below are a few questions to consider when developing the Report:

- What are the major challenges for the state within this focus area?
- How and by whom were those challenges identified?
- How are they reflected in the program strategic plan?
- Why is Sea Grant the best organization to address those challenges?
- What was the program’s role addressing the challenges?
- Who benefited from Sea Grant’s efforts, and how did they benefit?
- What was the geographic scope of the benefit?
- How has the state/region/nation social, economic, and/or environmental status improved as a result of Sea Grant’s work?
- Other questions in the PRP Evaluation Form (Appendix B).