Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency
Department of Homeland Security Employee Performance Plan and Appraisal Form

Part 1. Employee Input *I have reviewed this plan and have been involved in its development.*	

Employee Name (Last, First, Middle): TIPTON, MICHAEL B	Appraisal Pd. 10/1/2024 - 9/30/2025
Title: IT Specialist Supervisory Code: 7 - Team Leader	Series/Plan/Grade: 2210 - GS - 14
Organization: Threat Hunting	Plan Number: DHS Form 309
Plan Purpose: Annual	

Originally signed by ERIC FILDEBRANDT on 3/20/2025

Rating Official's Signature: 🔍 Electronically signed by HARVEY, ALEXANDER (Rating Official) **Originally signed by Alexander Harvey on 3/19/2025**	Date: 📅 6/7/2025
Employee's Signature: 🔍 Electronically signed by TIPTON, MICHAEL B **Originally signed by MICHAEL B TIPTON on 3/26/2025**	Date: 📅 6/10/2025

Part 2. Progress Review	

Phase: Progress Review 1

Rating Official's Signature: 🔍 Electronically signed by HARVEY, ALEXANDER (Rating Official)	Date: 📅 6/16/2025
Employee's Signature: 🔍 Unable to sign/see Part 10: HARVEY, ALEXANDER	Date: 📅 6/16/2025
Reason Employee Signature Bypassed: On leave	

Phase: Progress Review 2

Rating Official's Signature: 🔍 Electronically signed by HARVEY, ALEXANDER (Rating Official)	Date: 📅 6/16/2025
Employee's Signature: 🔍 Unable to sign/see Part 10: HARVEY, ALEXANDER	Date: 📅 6/16/2025
Reason Employee Signature Bypassed: On leave	

Phase: Progress Review 3

Rating Official's Signature: 🔍	Date: 📅
Employee's Signature: 🔍	Date: 📅

Part 3. Rating	

Summary Rating Levels:	☐ Unacceptable ☐ Achieved Expectations ☐ Exceeded Expectations ☐ Achieved Excellence

Unacceptable:	The employee performed below the "Achieved Expectations" standard; action is required.
Achieved Expectations:	The employee performed as described by the "Achieved Expectations" standard.
Exceeded Expectations:	The employee performed at a level between "Achieved Excellence" standard and the "Achieved Expectations" standard.
Achieved Excellence:	The employee performed as described by the "Achieved Excellence" standard.

Part 6. Instructions

Mission Statement: With Honor and Integrity, we will safeguard the American people, our homeland and our values.

Core Competencies Part 7 allows you to view the pre-established, critical core competencies and associated performance standards. Each core competency is critical which means that an Unacceptable determination in any one competency results in an overall Unacceptable Rating. These behavioral competencies were validated by the DHS workforce population. You cannot update or modify any of the information in this section. Supervisors rate employees in each critical core competency in USA Performance. The system will calculate the final summary rating.

Each critical competency is weighted equally and, together, makeup 40% of the overall performance rating. The critical performance goals makeup the other 60% of the overall performance rating and appear under the Part 7 of this document.

- Achieved Excellence. The employee performed as described by the "Achieved Excellence" standard.
- Exceeded Expectations. The employee performed at a level between "Achieved Excellence" standard and the "Achieved Expectations" standard.
- Achieved Expectations. The employee performed as described by the "Achieved Expectations" standard.
- Unacceptable. The employee performed below the "Achieved Expectations" standard; action is required.

Performance Goals Part 7 allows entry for up to 5 critical Performance Goals for the employee. Each performance goal is critical, which means that an Unacceptable determination in any one goal results in an overall Unacceptable Rating. If more than 5 Performance Goals need to be added, please refer to your servicing HR specialist. Supervisors rate employees in each performance goal in USA Performance. The system will calculate the final summary rating.

Each critical performance goal must be assigned a share to equal 60% of the overall performance rating. For example, if the employee has 3 critical goals, they might be weighted as follows: 30%, 20%, and 10%. The critical competencies makeup the other 40% of the overall performance rating and appear under Part 7 of this document.

- Achieved Excellence. The employee performed as described by the "Achieved Excellence" standard.
- Exceeded Expectations. The employee performed at a level between "Achieved Excellence" standard and the "Achieved Expectations" standard.
- Achieved Expectations. The employee performed as described by the "Achieved Expectations" standard.
- Unacceptable. The employee performed below the "Achieved Expectations" standard; action is required.

For each performance goal, please describe expected performance at the "Achieved Expectations" and "Achieved Excellence" levels. These "performance standards" should include measures such as quality, quantity, timeliness, and/or cost effectiveness.

Summary rating narratives are required for overall ratings at the Unacceptable and Achieved Excellence rating levels.

Part 7. Performance Elements

Core Competencies   Weight: 40%

CORE COMPETENCY 1: COMMUNICATION   ☑ Critical

Strategic Alignment:

Actively listens and attends to nonverbal cues when responding to the questions, ideas, and concerns of others. Communicates in an influential or persuasive manner, as appropriate. Writes in a clear and concise manner. Orally communicates in a clear and concise manner. Tailors communication (e.g., language, tone, level of specificity) to the audience's level of understanding and to the communication medium.

Achieved Expectations:

Solicits others' input, viewpoints, or questions; addresses various viewpoints and provides clear and organized responses to complex issues, following up to ensure understanding. Shows respect for and carefully considers others' ideas, comments, and questions. Communicates in an influential or persuasive manner, as appropriate. Independently prepares and delivers timely, clear, and concise communications on complex topics. Independently and effectively selects what information to include in communications to best meet the audience's needs. Writes communications that typically require minimal revisions.

Achieved Excellence:

Additions at the Achieved Excellence level: Accurately reads and assesses complex organizational or interpersonal situations and responds effectively. Delivers responses in a confident and compelling manner that frequently persuades the audience to a viewpoint. Tailors communication style (e.g., language, tone, and format) and content to different levels of audiences, properly emphasizing the most critical issues and considering ramifications of communications. Writes communications that rarely require revisions.

CORE COMPETENCY 1: COMMUNICATION Rating Levels:	☐ Unacceptable	☐ Achieved Expectations	☐ Exceeded Expectations	☐ Achieved Excellence

CORE COMPETENCY 2: CUSTOMER SERVICE   ☑ Critical

Strategic Alignment:

Communicates with customers to understand their needs. Works with customers to set expectations and keeps them informed of issues or problems. Provides timely, flexible, and responsive services to customers.

Achieved Expectations:

Maintains regular contact with customers to understand and anticipate their needs; uses customer feedback to enhance products and services. Works with customers to reach mutually acceptable expectations, timelines, and deliverables for large-scale initiatives. Informs customers of changes, issues, or problems that could affect progress and develops effective solutions to address them. Provides flexible, creative, and responsive service to customers, resulting in high levels of customer satisfaction.

Achieved Excellence:

Additions at the Achieved Excellence level: Proactively develops innovative and useful approaches for improving or expanding products or services. Takes initiative to anticipate and proactively implement effective solutions to prevent problems, thus avoiding gaps in customer expectations and maximizing customer satisfaction.

CORE COMPETENCY 2: CUSTOMER SERVICE Rating Levels:	☐ Unacceptable	☐ Achieved Expectations	☐ Exceeded Expectations	☐ Achieved Excellence

CORE COMPETENCY 3: REPRESENTING THE AGENCY ☑ **Critical**

Strategic Alignment:

Represents the agency and its interests in interactions with external parties. Ensures that interactions with and information provided to outside parties reflect positively on the agency. Enhances trust and credibility in the agency and its mission through effective professional interactions with others outside the organization. Deals professionally and tactfully with external parties in difficult, tense, or emergency situations.

Achieved Exepectations:

Represents the agency in a professional manner that educates others, protects its interests, and enhances its image and reputation. Takes action to effectively manage difficult, tense, or emergency situations. Engages with others in a manner that earns their respect and helps to advance the agency's goals and objectives.

Achieved Excellence:

Additions at the Achieved Excellence level: Demonstrates exceptional skill in representing the agency; is widely recognized and regularly sought to handle very difficult, sensitive, or visible situations with others. Assumes leadership in handling extremely difficult, tense, or emergency situations; quickly and decisively manages them with a high degree of effectiveness.

CORE COMPETENCY 3: REPRESENTING THE AGENCY Rating Levels:	☐ Unacceptable	☐ Achieved Exepectations	☐ Exceeded Expectations	☐ Achieved Excellence

CORE COMPETENCY 4: TEAMWORK AND COOPERATION ☑ **Critical**

Strategic Alignment:

Makes positive contributions to achieving team goals. Develops and maintains collaborative working relationships with others. Builds effective partnerships that facilitate working across boundaries, groups, or organizations. Treats everyone respectfully, fairly, and professionally. Works constructively with others to reach mutually acceptable agreements to resolve conflicts.

Achieved Expectations:

Contributes to achieving objectives by demonstrating collaborative behaviors with others and building effective partnerships across organizational boundaries. Independently offers assistance and provides support to advance goals. Deals with everyone fairly, and professionally. Anticipates situations with potential for conflict and takes effective measures to minimize escalation. Fosters an environment in which all team members are encouraged to speak openly, freely, and constructively, resulting in the effective resolution of conflicts.

Achieved Excellence:

Additions at the Achieved Excellence level: Collaborates beyond what is expected resulting in high-impact contributions. Skillfully develops productive relationships and networks that advance goals. Fosters a climate of trust.

CORE COMPETENCY 4: TEAMWORK AND COOPERATION Rating Levels:	☐ Unacceptable	☐ Achieved Expectations	☐ Exceeded Expectations	☐ Achieved Excellence

CORE COMPETENCY 5: TECHNICAL PROFICIENCY   ☑ **Critical**

Strategic Alignment:

Demonstrates and applies relevant knowledge and skills to perform work in accordance with applicable guidelines. Uses appropriate and available technology or tools to perform work activities. Acquires, develops, and maintains relevant and appropriate job skills through training or other opportunities for learning and development. Stays up-to-date on developments related to own work. Demonstrates an understanding of the organization's mission, functions, and systems. Collects relevant information that is needed to identify and address problems or issues. Analyzes and integrates information to identify issues and draw sound conclusions. Identifies and evaluates alternative solutions to problems. Makes sound, well-informed, and timely decisions or recommendations. Identifies and utilizes innovative or creative methods and solutions to accomplish work, as appropriate. Maintains an awareness of available resources and the process for acquiring resources. Identifies and advocates for resources required to accomplish work activities or projects. Makes effective and efficient use of available resources. Safeguards available resources to prevent fraud, waste, and abuse.

Achieved Expectations:

Successfully applies advanced knowledge and skills (including use of technology and tools) to perform a wide range of work activities, such as those that are highly complex, visible, or organization-wide. Effectively seeks and uses formal or informal feedback on own performance to enhance knowledge and skills that facilitate achieving results. Demonstrates a thorough understanding of the applicable organization's mission, functions, values, the interrelationships between various units and organizations, and relevant policies/procedures (to include, as appropriate, responsibilities toward the protection of classified national security information) and how these affect the agency; carries out complex work in accordance with these. Demonstrates in-depth knowledge of the resources available to the work unit, and ensures that resources are distributed and utilized in a highly efficient manner. As required, prepares complex project or activity resource plans and effectively defends resource requirements. Identifies and collects key information that is needed to provide a comprehensive understanding of the situation. Effectively analyzes and integrates complex information to identify important issues and assumptions, assess impact, and draw logical conclusions. Anticipates and identifies alternative solutions for complex problems and makes sound and timely decisions; considers alternative courses of action and chooses an effective option.

Achieved Excellence:

Additions at the Achieved Excellence level: Uses depth or breadth of expertise to handle the most complex and difficult technical assignments at this level, performing cutting-edge or precedent- setting work. Continually broadens and enhances expertise, resulting in performing the most complex work activities and making contributions that significantly advance key organizational goals and objectives. Devises creative and resourceful approaches to leverage available resources, thereby maximizing achievement of outcomes. Identifies and uses effective methods to optimize efficiency in gathering information. Develops highly effective solutions or decisions for unusual or more complex issues, carefully considering both short- and long-term consequences. Rapidly makes insightful connections between disparate pieces of information and identifies issues with larger implications and significance.

CORE COMPETENCY 5: TECHNICAL PROFICIENCY Rating Levels:	☐ Unacceptable	☐ Achieved Expectations	☐ Exceeded Expectations	☐ Achieved Excellence

Performance Goals   Weight: 60%

PERFORMANCE GOAL	☑ **Critical**	Weight: 25 %

Strategic Alignment:

Threat Hunting FY25 Performance Goal:

Threat Hunting FY25 Performance Goal

Achieved Expectations:

- Support inputs necessary that enable the organization to track and measure performance. Inputs will be provided though the appropriate channels at the cadence dictated by leadership.
- Provide on the appropriate cadence and through appropriate channels to support inputs for measures and metrics.
- Follow all "Flexible Work Environment Principles." This includes that teammates will be on camera during virtual meetings when working from unclassified spaces; exceptions to this should be rare and explicitly approved by the meeting organizer.
- Follow all TH policy and guidance regarding operational and programmatic decision making. Decisions shall be made at the appropriate levels of the organization (e.g., executive vs. manager) and be effectively communicated to relevant stakeholders.
- Assist in process and procedure development in accordance with redesign goals. For example, support and assist in the development of branch or section-level concept of operations (CONOPS) or other project-related documents; participate in a working group relevant to your role, respond to project surveys on-time, or other equivalent asks.
- Complete Federal Acquisition Certification (FAC) Training Course 043 - Ethics & Procurement Integrity. Provide certificate to direct supervisor by August 1, 2025

Achieved Excellence:

- In addition to the "Achieved Expectations" requirements,
- Identify at least three (3) innovative (concept, process improvement, and/or technology) improvements for the subdivision, document and submit:
  - If only relevant to the section, submit to section chief.
  - If only related to the branch, submit to branch chief.
  - If related to subdivision, submit to AD/DAD review via chain of command.
- Submit work-related achievements/ accomplishments at minimum once per month in writing to your supervisor and/or Branch Chief.
- Be nominated by your Office, Branch Chief, Deputy Branch Chief, or first-line supervisor for a TH, CSD, and/or CISA individual award during the FY25 performance cycle. Award nominations should be made for individuals who have distinguished themselves by making outstanding and extraordinary contributions to CISA's mission.

PERFORMANCE GOAL Rating Levels:	☐ Unacceptable	☐ Achieved Expectations	☐ Exceeded Expectations	☐ Achieved Excellence

PERFORMANCE GOAL	☑ Critical	Weight: 35 %

Strategic Alignment:

Capability Development & Engineering (CDE) Section Goal:

Establish a robust CDE section that effectively collaborates with stakeholders to deliver value-added capabilities that meet their needs.

Achieved Expectations:

Establish a deep understanding of stakeholder needs, pain points, and aspirations through engagement and analysis.

- Directly contribute to at least 2 stakeholder engagements (meetings, workshops, surveys) with each primary stakeholder group (TH branch) by the end of Q4 FY25.
- Collect feedback from stakeholders to inform future capability development.
- Establish a basic understanding of stakeholder roles, responsibilities, and expectations.

Design and develop innovative solutions to address specific stakeholder challenges.

- Directly contribute to the development of at least two (2) innovative solutions to address specific stakeholder challenges by the end of FY25.
- Collaborate with cross-functional teams to integrate capabilities into existing systems and processes.
- Establish a culture of continuous learning and improvement, incorporating emerging technologies and best practices.

Achieved Excellence:

Establish a deep understanding of stakeholder needs, pain points, and aspirations through engagement and analysis.

- Conduct at least 1 comprehensive, in-depth stakeholder engagement (e.g., a workshop), with TH/PH or TH/IR, by the end of Q4 FY25.
- Develop a detailed, data-driven analysis of stakeholder needs and pain points by end of Q4 FY25.
- Establish a thorough, documented, understanding of stakeholder expectations, including specific requirements and constraints by the end of Q4 FY25.

Design and develop innovative solutions to address specific stakeholder challenges.

- Spearhead the development of four (4) innovative solutions to address specific stakeholder challenges by the end of FY25.
- Successfully integrate capabilities into existing systems and processes, resulting in significant, measurable, and documented mission value.
- Establish a deep understanding of emerging technologies and best practices, including ability to apply them to complex problems.

PERFORMANCE GOAL Rating Levels:	☐ Unacceptable	☐ Achieved Expectations	☐ Exceeded Expectations	☐ Achieved Excellence

PERFORMANCE GOAL	☑ Critical	Weight: 40 %

Strategic Alignment:

Individual / Team Goal:

Redesign the Technical Engagement Network (TEN) to reduce or eliminate redundant capabilities, integrate with Enterprise Services, implement zero-trust principles, and refactor and modernize Threat Hunting capabilities. Develop a comprehensive service map of all CISA capabilities and applications utilized by Threat Hunting across all Agency networks, ensuring seamless integration, efficient resource allocation, and improved user experience. Develop a data pipeline to process, store, and analyze Threat Hunting data.

Achieved Expectations:

Redesign the TEN to reduce or eliminate redundant capabilities, integrate with Enterprise Services, implement zero-trust principles, and refactor and modernize Threat Hunting capabilities.

- Directly contribute to the development of a comprehensive Threat Hunting Enterprise (TEN and Cloud) network redesign plan that outlines the scope, timeline, and budget for the project by Q4 FY25.
- Ensure the plan includes clear objectives, metrics, and key performance indicators (KPIs) to measure success.
- Implement the reduction or elimination of two (2) redundant CDE Team-managed capabilities by Q3 FY25.
- Integrate two (2) CDE Team-managed capabilities with CISA and CSD Enterprise Services by Q4 FY25.

Develop a comprehensive service map of all CISA capabilities and applications utilized by Threat Hunting across all Agency networks, ensuring seamless integration, efficient resource allocation, and improved user experience.

- Identify and document all TH tools and applications used across all CISA networks by the end of Q3 FY25.
- Categorize and group similar services into logical categories by Q3 FY25.
- Develop an understanding of how service dependencies and integrations impact the overall service map, taking into account factors like network enclave, service owner, and customer utilization, by Q4 FY25

Develop a data pipeline to process, store, and analyze Threat Hunting data.

- Directly contribute to the development of a data pipeline within the Threat Hunting and CISA/CSD Enterprise Architecture.
- Migrate at least one (1) existing Threat Hunting data source to the data pipeline service.
- Standardize at least one (1) existing migrated data source within the data pipeline service to a common data standard.
- By the end of Q4 FY25, implement at least one (1) Use Case within the CDaaS Platform.

Achieved Excellence:

Redesign the TEN to reduce or eliminate redundant capabilities, integrate with Enterprise Services, implement zero-trust principles, and refactor and modernize Threat Hunting capabilities.

- Ensure TEN Redesign plan and implementation complies with CISA Zero-trust and Secure by Design guidelines.
- Implement the reduction or elimination of four (4) redundant CDE Team-managed capabilities by Q4 FY25.
- Integrate four (4) CDE Team-managed capabilities with CISA and CSD Enterprise Services by Q4 FY25.
- Refactor and modernize two (2) CDE Team-managed capabilities by Q4 FY25.

Develop a comprehensive service map of all CISA capabilities and applications utilized by Threat Hunting across all Agency networks, ensuring seamless integration, efficient resource allocation, and improved user experience.

- The service map is accessible to stakeholders through a user-friendly interface by the end of Q4 FY25.
- The service map should include alerts and notifications for potential issues or anomalies in the service map by the end of Q4 FY25.
- A report on the current state of the service map and its implications for resource allocation and user experience must be generated and presented to TH senior management by the end of Q4 FY25.

Develop a data pipeline to process, store, and analyze Threat Hunting data.

- Spearhead the development of a data pipeline within the Threat Hunting and CISA/CSD Enterprise Architecture.
- Migrate at least two (2) existing Threat Hunting data sources to the data pipeline service.
- Standardize at least two (2) existing migrated data sources within the data pipeline service to a common data standard.
- By the end of Q4 FY25, implement at least two (2) Use Cases within the CDaaS Platform.

PERFORMANCE GOAL Rating Levels:	☐ Unacceptable	☐ Achieved Expectations	☐ Exceeded Expectations	☐ Achieved Excellence

Part 9. Employee Self-Accomplishment Narrative

Part 10. For Agency Use