

CRITERIA FOR ASSESSING THE OFFICERS OF SELECTED UNIFORMED SERVICES IN POLAND

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Abstract: Assessing the officers in ranks of the uniformed services is a key personal process impacting the applied personal policy, including personnel decisions. Criteria used in the process of assessing should be selected in order to enable preparing full-scale evaluation of an officer, especially her/his suitability for service, degree of fulfilling service responsibilities, motivation to engage in work and willingness to pursue professional development. In perspective of the assessment process significance, the goal of the conducted research was to identify criteria for assessing service of officers in selected uniformed services and to conduct their comparative analysis. To this end, analysis of legal instruments regulating the issue of assessing the service was carried out, including the Act and the Ordinance. The research allowed to draw up the criteria for assessing the service of officers in ranks of the Police, the Border Patrol, professional soldiers and the Prison Guard, to specify the general criteria applied in the process of assessing the officers in ranks of the four services in question and to propose changes in the criteria, as well as to add the new ones and to discard those used for assessment based on analysing the same patterns of behaviour.

Keywords: uniformed services, service assessment, assessment criteria

KRYTERIA OPINIOWANIA FUNKCJONARIUSZY WYBRANYCH SŁUŻB MUNDUROWYCH W POLSCE

Streszczenie: Opiniowanie funkcjonariuszy służb mundurowych to kluczowy proces personalny mający wpływ na realizowaną politykę personalną, w tym na podejmowane decyzje kadrowe. Kryteria stosowane w procesie opiniowania powinny być tak dobrane, aby umożliwiły dokonanie pełnej oceny funkcjonariusza, w tym jego przydatności do pełnienia służby, poziomu wywiązywania się z obowiązków służbowych, motywacji do pracy i chęci rozwoju zawodowego. Mając na względzie istotność procesu opiniowania, celem prowadzonych badań była identyfikacja i analiza porównawcza kryteriów opiniowania służbowego funkcjonariuszy wybranych służb mundurowych. W tym celu analizie poddano akty prawne regulujące problematykę opiniowania służbowego w tym ustawy i rozporządzenia. Efektem przeprowadzonych badań jest wyodrębnienie kryteriów opiniowania służbowego funkcjonariuszy Policji, Straży Granicznej, żołnierzy zawodowych i Służby Więziennej,

wskazanie kryteriów ogólnych stosowanych w procesie opiniowania funkcjonariuszy czterech rozważanych służb, jak również zaproponowanie zmian w kryteriach, w tym dodanie nowych kryteriów oraz odrzucenie kryteriów, których ocena polega na analizie tych samych zachowań.

Słowa kluczowe: służby mundurowe, opiniowanie służbowe, kryteria opiniowania.

1. Introduction

Evaluating/assessing the personnel is very often specified as a personal process causing supervisors and managers the most difficulties, no matter the type of an organization. Both profit-oriented organizations and public organizations, including the uniformed services, when bringing the process of human resource management into life, engage in activities aimed at future assessment of employees – the officers – both as regards their efficiency in fulfilling their duties, usefulness at a specific post, development potential and level of motivation to engage in work. Considering the evaluation process – service assessment – significance, this paper is devoted to the issue of criteria for evaluation (assessment) applied in specific uniformed services. The goal of the conducted research was to identify criteria for assessing service of officers in selected uniformed services and to conduct their comparative analysis. The author's intention is to bring the essence and typology of evaluation criteria closer and to point out the criteria that are currently applied in the process of service assessment in given services. Taking into account the enormous scale of the discussed issue, the author attempts to identify and to compare the criteria of assessing only the selected uniformed services such as: the Police, the Prison Guard, the Border Patrol and the Polish Army. The final effect of the conducted research is to propose changes in the scope of the applied criteria for assessment.

2. Uniformed services – identification attempt

Due to the nature of the public organizations functioning, the uniformed services hold a special place among them – while fulfilling their duties, their officers also ensure safety of the state and its officers. In the case of the legal instruments regulating their functioning, the word *employee* is replaced with a term *officer*, emphasising the fact that the individuals working for the uniformed services serve their homeland and its citizens. When looking at the definition of the word *service*, what is underlined is the fact that it is the *work performed for a community, with devotion, acting for a specific cause or a public-purpose institution or an army conducting activities in specific sphere; also: employees of such institution* (Dubisz, 2003, p. 1278). The Polish Language Dictionary of PWN in turn defines an officer as *an employee of state services, i.a. the Police and the prison system* (Słownik Języka Polskiego PWN, 30.08.2017).

The Act of 6 June 1997 on the Criminal Code (Journal of Laws 2018, No. 1600, consolidated text) elaborates on the issue of public officers defining them i.a. as:

- Article 115, § 13, point 7) *an officer of a public body assigned to safeguard public safety or an officer of the Prison Guard.*
- Article 115, § 13, point 8) *a person on active military duty except for the territorial military service performed at discretion.*

Officers of the uniformed officers wear a uniform to emphasise affiliation with a specific organisation. It can be therefore stated that the uniformed services are the formations having expertise to carry out their tasks in uniforms. However, going back to the essence of the uniformed services itself, as pointed out by W. Maciejko, this term is not legally defined, causing ambiguity in its understanding. Although a detailed definition of the term uniformed services is difficult to come by in literary references and contents of legal instruments, authors of numerous publications still try to distinguish the uniformed services formations. For instance, W. Maciejko, M. Rojewski and A. Suławko-Karetko claim that among the ranks of the uniformed services we may include: the Police, the Government Protection Bureau, civil and military special forces, the Army, the State Border Patrol, the Border Patrol, the Customs Service, the Prison Guard, and the communal guards, person and property security guards, the Forestry Corps, the State Hunting Corps, The State Fishing Corps, the National Park Guard, the Railroad Guards, the Road Transport Inspectorate, the Speakers Guard and the Military Gendarmerie (Maciejko, et al., 2011). A shorter list of the uniformed services is drawn up by K. Sławik who claims that the uniformed services include: the Police, the Border Patrol, the Prison Guards, the Government Protection Bureau, the Military Gendarmerie, special forces, the Speakers Guard, the Road Transport Inspectorate, the State Fire Service and the Customs Service (Sławik, 2011).

To conclude, each list of the uniformed services presented in numerous publications features the following formations: the Police, the Prison Guard, the Border Patrol, the Government Protection Bureau and the Army. It is therefore justifiable to validate the claim by M. Liwo who stresses that the uniformed services is a term to describe *legislator-indicated public entities of specific organization based on the military model, answering to the main bodies of the government administration and carrying out their statutory tasks as a part of the public service associated with ensuring specific kind of safety or order based on the granted scope of authority and legal forms of activity exercised by given administrations* (Liwo, 2015, p. 20).

The uniformed services are the hierarchy-based organisations holding responsibility for performance of tasks imposed by those of higher ranks, additionally impacting the manner the personal processes are practiced, including the significance of such processes as recruitment and selection, evaluating/assessing, improvement and motivating.

3. Definitions and types of criteria for evaluation/assessment

On each occasion an evaluation is being made, no matter its target, a person making such an evaluation applies the criteria allowing to verify how a specific key factor relates to a model of an ideal. In every day evaluations we apply a lot of criteria, some of which are entirely unconscious and automatic. These are usually subjective criteria, resulting both from experience and social trends at play. In an organisational surrounding, subjective selection of criteria should give its way to objectivism, stemming from thorough knowledge of job post, which is also the knowledge of requirements set for an employee. Evaluation criteria are nothing more than *a condition being a basis for division, measurement, assessment of something* (Słownik Języka Polskiego, 20.08.2017) or *as a factor using for basis of an evaluation, selection or qualification* (Słownik Języka Polskiego PWN, 30.08.2017). Therefore, criteria for evaluation should allow an evaluator to answer the question: what am I evaluating? What aspect is to be evaluated? Criteria for evaluation also result directly from the purpose of evaluation.

When considering a criterion both in terms of evaluation factor and a condition for evaluating something, attention needs to be paid to diversity of criteria and thus their possible categorisation. In source literature, the authors usually agree that evaluation criteria may be divided into four groups:

- effectiveness criteria,
- qualification criteria,
- behavioural criteria,
- personality criteria.

The above division of criteria is presented by i.a. T. Oleksyn (1993), A. Poczowski (2003), M. Sidor-Rządkowska (2013) and A. Ludwicyński (2006).

The effectiveness criteria are very often defined as the basic criteria for evaluating an employee in an organisation. They apply to job results and may be of individual, team or organisational character. The effectiveness organisational criteria serve for assessing an organisation as a whole and they are used, among others, to evaluate the highest-ranking managing personnel. In the group of effectiveness criteria at this level of evaluation we may include:

- company sale value,
- manufacturing profitability,
- rate of profit, investments rate of profit,
- profitability of the applied manufacturing process,
- gross and net worth,
- financial liquidity ratio, etc. (Oleksyn, 1993).

At higher evaluation level we may distinguish the team criteria, such as:

- sale value achieved by employees of a given team, e.g. employees of a specific company salon,
- number of customers acquired by employees of a team within given time frames,
- timeliness of fulfilling the tasks entrusted to a team, including the degree of complying with deadlines under e.g. concluded agreements, contracts,
- quality of work performed by a team within given time frames,
- extent of tasks completion by a given team of employees,
- number of complaints under consideration, costs of complaints,
- number of customers extending their agreements, etc.

The effectiveness criteria at an organisational level are similar in every company and the effectiveness criteria at a level of teams result strictly from a character of the performed work. Therefore, a countless number of effectiveness criteria at a level of team may be specified.

Furthermore, when considering the individual effectiveness criteria, we may conclude that they are a detailed extension of the team criteria. Consequently, the effectiveness criteria at a level of an employee may include the following:

- sale value achieved by an employee,
- number of clients acquired by an employee,
- timely performance of tasks assigned to an employee,
- extent of compliance with quality standards of works performed by an employee within specific time frames,
- extent of tasks completion by a given employee,
- number of complaints under consideration of an employee within a specific time frame, etc.

Identification of the effectiveness criteria both at the organizational, team and employee levels is not a difficult task, especially when an organisation possesses job posts descriptions, collects detailed data, i.a. the financial one and prepares rational sale or manufacturing plans. The most problems come up at the moment when it is necessary to determine the manner of work effectiveness measurement. Difficulty stems from two issues: firstly, from the necessity to determine frameworks of measurement beforehand, secondly from the need to specify an expected level for a given criterion at an earlier stage. For some of the posts, it may be easy to determine the effectiveness criteria, since they assume the character of quantitative criteria allowing them to be expressed in Polish zloty, number of acquired customers, complaints under consideration, drawn up agreements, etc. The problems arise in the case of job posts where work has a conceptual character and thus difficult to be measured in terms of quantity. The effectiveness criteria also include the qualitative criteria, e.g. the ones regarding an extent of compliance with the quality standards applicable to a given product.

Determination of the effectiveness criteria, adequate to work performed at a given post, non-inflated and non-understated, is crucial, since evaluation of the effectiveness criteria very often forms the basis in the process of assigning awards to personnel and employees, including decisions regarding further professional career of an employee.

The group of evaluating employees also includes behavioural criteria regarding behaviour of an employee or a team of employees. Behavioural criteria may also be included among the criteria causing lots of difficulties. They require more involvement of the evaluating persons, since it is an observation that predominantly allows a superior to compare work behaviour with desired behaviour. As in the case of all the criteria, the behavioural criteria need to have their comparison model determined beforehand, which may be especially difficult in the case of employees hired at newly-created job posts. Another nuisance associated with evaluation of the effectiveness criteria is a necessity to put an employee under observation forming a basis to evaluate behaviour. Yet, an evaluating person is not always able to accurately interpret behaviour of an employee, since manager's experience, preferences, tradition and work ethics, and most of all, knowing a worker and her/his work exert a large impact on evaluation. These criteria should apply only to following the discipline of work, they should be also associated with competences necessary to achieve success at a given post. The behavioural criteria can usually be divided into general criteria and criteria regarding the managerial posts. Among the most frequently applied general criteria we may include:

- punctuality,
- availability,
- caring for possessions entrusted,
- work self-organisation,
- following the procedures and standards both the general and individual ones set forth by superiors,
- attitude towards a superior, co-workers, clients,
- showing initiative, etc.

In turn, the behavioural criteria applied towards managerial posts may include: ability to motivate, evaluate and recruit employees, set goals and priorities, supervise work, settle disputes, plan own actions and actions of subordinates.

The third group of criteria are the personality criteria. They refer to the *entirety of the psychical traits and inner mechanisms regulating human behaviour* (Słownik Języka Polskiego PWN, 30.08.2017) in the process of work. Applying the effectiveness criteria stems from the assumption that there is a relation between the behaviour translating into work results and human personality. However, the above assumption is being criticised, since it is not true that it is always possible to clearly state that having specific traits always produces good results at work. More often, attention is paid to a combination of specific traits which are not easy to be determined. When applying the personality criteria we need to investigate into motivation,

attitudes, motives of action and beliefs of an employee. To find out if an employee is e.g. responsible, creative, self-confident, assertive, stress-resilient, persistent and courageous, behaviour of an employee needs to be observed, since only through behavioural analysis it is possible to evaluate which traits does an employee possess. In light of the above, numerous authors underline the lack of necessity to distinguish the personality criteria as:

- the personality criteria are evaluated as a result of observing behaviour of an employee, therefore, it is only required to look into the behavioural criteria,
- investigating into the behavioural criteria within the frameworks of periodical evaluation becomes pointless, considering the fact that human personality is a relatively constant structure that undergoes very slow changes (if any); therefore, it is justified to research into the personality criteria only in the process of employees selection to verify whether specific traits are possessed.

Among the evaluation criteria we may also distinguish the qualification criteria. The name of criteria itself is certainly at place, but the scope of criteria included among the qualification criteria raises some doubts. A lot of authors, including A. Ludwicyński and A. Poczowski, claim that the qualification criteria may be defined as: *knowledge, skills, experience, health condition of an employee or job candidate. They are necessary for proper performance of tasks at a job post* (Ludwicyński, 2006, p. 285). As a part of the qualification criteria, the following are evaluated:

- employee education,
- professional experience,
- skills e.g. computer skills, handling office equipment,
- knowledge of foreign languages,
- qualifications necessary to carry out tasks at a job post, e.g. license to transport passengers and possessions,
- ability to constantly learn and improve, etc.

The author of the article thinks that in a lot of cases the qualification criteria do not apply to qualifications of an employee, but her/his competences. It is therefore justified to draw a distinction between the terms qualifications and competences, as being able to indicate what is a qualification and what is a competence will allow to avoid mistakes in determining the criteria.

The term qualifications, according to the definition in the Dictionary of the Polish Language, means: *education and ability needed to perform a function or practice a profession* (Słownik Języka Polskiego PWN, 31.08.2017). The term is defined in more details in the Dictionary of the Integrated Qualifications System, stating that qualifications are: *a set of learning effects in the scope of knowledge, skills and social competences, acquired in the course of formal education, extra-formal education or informal learning, corresponding to the requirements applicable to a given qualification validated and formally confirmed by*

a certifying body having proper authority (Sławiński, 2016, p. 25). Therefore, the following qualifications characteristics may be indicated:

- they are a product of learning and experience gathering processes,
- they are formal in nature, confirmed by a proper certificate issued by an authorised body,
- to achieve specific qualifications, competences are necessary,
- qualifications are usually of binary character, they are either possessed by an employee or not,
- not all the competences possessed by an employee may be documented, which makes the term competences broader than qualifications.

The publications devoted to the issue of assessing and the assessment systems applied at organisations often equate the term qualifications with the term competences, causing the terms to be used interchangeably and the name of the qualification criterion itself does not fully reflect the contents of such criterion, since in most of the cases the qualification criterion includes an analysis of competences lacking confirmation in documents – certificates. Therefore, it would be justifiable to use the competence criterion, not the qualification one.

To conclude, in the organisational practice the indicated evaluation criteria are reflected in the criteria directly subject to assessment, despite the fact that in a lot of cases division into behavioural, personality, effectiveness and qualification criteria is not applied.

4. Evaluation of employees in the management process against the principles of selecting evaluation criteria

In the process of human resources management in every organisation, not only in public institutions, employee evaluation is a key activity allowing to measure the extent of achievement of a number of objectives, whether at the strategic, tactical or operational level (Noe, et al., 2011). Therefore, a method of evaluating employees should be constantly analysed, which will allow to adjust evaluation objectives to the current objectives of an organisation, resulting, among others, from a change of social expectations influencing the prioritised directions of activities. The said activity will also make it possible to determine the current demand in the scope of employees' competences in those areas which are of key importance for the long-term success of an organisation (Dubois, and Rothwell, 2008). In turn, identification of the resulting competence gap will make it possible to use the results of evaluation/review in practice while making rational personnel decisions. However, such an approach is not possible in the case of selecting inappropriate evaluation criteria (Sienkiewicz, 2013).

Taking into account the current manner of implementing the system of performance reviews in the selected uniformed services, it is justified to conduct a full analysis of the implemented processes, which will allow for identification of areas requiring improvement, at the same time

exerting an impact on the whole personnel activity and thus on efficiency and effectiveness of functioning within an organisation. The analysis carried out may become the basis for introducing appropriate changes in the process, including the use of good practices

in popular management areas in the business environment, such as the development of competence standards for individual work posts. At the same time, the conducted analysis should become a stimulus to verify the correct application of the basic principles of evaluation in the scope of constructing such evaluation criteria as:

- accounting for organisational objectives in the process of criteria selection (purpose principle) (Sidor-Rządkowska, 2006; Pochtowski, 2003; Zając 2007),
- selection of an appropriate number of criteria in relation to specificity of work to be evaluated (adequacy principle) (Sidor-Rządkowska, 2006),
- selection of measurable criteria (indication of a given criterion measurement method – establishing indicators), unambiguous and easy to apply at the same time (simplicity principle),
- shunning from fragmentation of criteria to the level of individual employees,
- avoidance of arbitrariness in selection of criteria, which allows for comparability of results and refers to the principle of regularity in evaluating (Jędrzejczak, 2016),
- a flexible approach to making changes in selection of evaluation criteria, e.g. due to a change in the competence profile of a job post (flexibility principle) (Dudzińska-Głaz, 2012),
- application of the same evaluation criteria to all employees working at the same job post (principle of universality and uniformity) (Pochtowski, 1998).

Proceeding in organisational practice in accordance with the indicated principles applied in employee evaluation should ensure effectiveness of the performance review process, contributing to an increase in efficiency of the whole personnel activity in uniformed services.

5. Comparison of criteria for assessing the service of officers in selected uniformed services

What is specific in the processes of service assessment in uniformed services is the fact that the criteria included in the assessment process have been authoritatively determined and apply to all of the officers (with a distinction into the officers at managerial posts). These criteria are set forth in the acts or ordinances providing detailed regulations for the service assessment process.

Looking at the selected uniformed services, table No. 1 presents the legal basis for service assessment criteria formation.

Table 1.

Legal acts regulating a type of criteria used in the process of service assessment of officers in selected uniformed services

Military service	Legal act type
Police	Ordinance of the Minister of Internal Affairs and Administration of 30 August 2010 <i>on service assessment of Policemen</i> (Journal of Laws, No. 170, item 1145, as amended)
Professional Soldiers	Ordinance of the Minister of National Defence of 26 May 2014 <i>on assessing the professional soldiers</i> (Journal of Laws of 2014, item 764)
Prison Guard	Act of 9 April 2010 <i>on the Prison Guard</i> (Journal of Laws of 2010, No. 79, item 523, as amended)
Border Patrol	Ordinance of the Minister of Internal Affairs and Administration of 17 June 2002 <i>on periodical assessment of the Border Patrol officers</i> (Journal of Laws of 2002, No. 86, item 787, as amended).

Source: own study.

When analysing table 1, we may notice that detailed service assessment criteria were set forth in an act only in the case of the Prison Guard (whereas a model for assessing the service was introduced in the Ordinance of the Minister of Justice of 16 June 2010 *on sheet model of the Prison Guard officer service assessment*, Journal of Laws of 2010, No. 121, item 816). In the remaining cases, the ordinances introduced the periodical assessments of officers with chances to submit and analyse appeals against the issued service assessments, while taking into consideration the terms and circumstances causing an opinion to be drawn up, criteria forming the basis for issuing opinions, characteristics of superiors in the scope of issuing and analysing appeals against opinions and a model questionnaire for service opinion.

To compare the criteria for service assessment, table 2 breaks down the criteria applied in the process of assessing in specific services.

Table 2.

Criteria for service assessment

Uniformed service	Assessment areas	Criteria
Police	Performance of tasks and actions	quality, self-reliance and initiative, timeliness, work planning and organisation;
	General competences	- self-development and raising qualifications, - being able to cooperate, - personal etiquette, - availability;
	Managerial competences	- caring for human relations, - coping with crisis situations, - creativity.

Cont. table 2.

Professional Soldiers	Fulfilling service duties of an assessed person at a post ¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - quality and timeliness in carrying out duties or tasks, - availability, - self-reliance and initiative, - work planning and organisation;
	Competences and potential of an assessed person	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - responsibility, - determination in pursuing goals, - accuracy and quickness in decision making, - stress resistance, - communicativeness and ability to work in a team, - adhering to regulations, standards and rules, - self-development and raising qualifications, - caring for equipment and possessions, - personal etiquette and caring for appearance.
Prison Guard	General criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - professional skills coupled with post-specific specialist qualifications resulting from completing trainings or university course, knowledge of foreign languages and results achieved by an officer during trainings; - using the possessed set of skills coupled with knowledge of the applicable regulations and procedures as well as their application, possessed information and skills allowing for fulfilling service duties at a post; - initiative and raising qualifications as well as an ability to search for and acquire necessary information without assistance; - ability to plan and organise work with coupled with capabilities of rating tasks according to their importance, as well as efficiency and timeliness in tasks performance; - ability to work in a team coupled with attitude conducive to good atmosphere at work, avoiding conflict situations, ability to assist and give advice if needed; - communicativeness coupled with ability to pass, receive and understand spoken and written information and to form utterances clearly, in the manner guaranteeing their understanding; - ability to think in analytical terms coupled with capability to assess information value, their sources and selection and to interpret, draw conclusions; - self-reliance coupled with ability to act without involvement of other persons and with no superiors supervision; - motivation and creativity coupled with ability to create new solutions and improve the existing ones, to initiate actions and accept responsibility for them; - availability coupled with capability and readiness to take up and carry out tasks and service actions; - coping with crisis situations coupled with firm and decisive acting in atypical situations when the applicable (standard) procedures of acting are not enough, resistance to stress, emotional composure, ability to adapt actions to quickly changing conditions and situations; - following the occupational code of ethics and self-discipline coupled with adherence to rules resulting from the vows made.

¹ or service tasks in the case of the assessed person performing service as a reserve.

Cont. table 2.

	Additional criteria applied in service assessment at higher managerial posts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ability to manage effectively coupled with capability to properly distribute and use human potential and material, financial and informational assets necessary to carry out service tasks, ability to acquire new resources, supervise the course of service tasks and control tasks performance, as well as to motivate the subordinate officers and employees to achieve higher quality of work and to pursue professional development; - ability to negotiate coupled with capability to acquire a desired post, to maintain proper human relations, and in a conflict, to take up an open discussion about the sources of conflict to tackle it; - ability to think strategically, recognise needs and mark out suitable actions, to assess risk, create strategy of acting in line with service goals.
Border Patrol	Preparation of an officer to perform a profession	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - education, - professional qualifications, - expert licences, - possessed set of skills.
	Manner of performing service tasks	<p>General criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - timeliness, - quality, - effectiveness, - professionalism, - self-reliance, - ability to decide on importance hierarchy of carried out service tasks, - initiative when carrying out service tasks, - cooperation with other persons (team work) when carrying out service tasks, - taking up service responsibilities with the whole scope of authority and duties for other officer.
		<p>Additional criteria for officers taking up managerial posts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - work organisation, managing and supervision, - motivating subordinate officers.
	Results achieved during training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - training result (extent of theoretical and practical knowledge acquired in the course of training), - responsibility and discipline, - behaviour in conflict situations and behaviour oriented at effecting team work.
	Abilities affecting the manner of service tasks performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - planning and organisation of work, - expressing thoughts in speech and in writing, - professional aspirations and ambitions, - team work and cooperation, - composure, - availability and discipline, - perceptiveness, - self-education.
<p>Additional criteria for officers holding managerial posts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - organisational abilities, - managing personnel, - using the resources, - accuracy and quickness in decision making, - pressure resistance. 		

Source: own studies based on the acts and ordinances regulating the process of service assessment of officers in given uniform services.

As results from the analysis of the Police officers assessment criteria, two areas to be evaluated have been determined for the officers at the posts of privates, such as: performance of tasks and actions (4 criteria) and general competences (4 criteria). Additionally, with reference to the officers at managerial posts, the managerial competences are also subject to evaluation (3 criteria).

Criteria have not been broken into the general and managerial ones in the case of assessing services of professional soldiers. What was evaluated was how an assessed person fulfilled her/his duties at the service post or service tasks in the case of an assessed person on service in personnel reserves (4 criteria) and competences and potential of the assessed person (9 criteria).

In the case of assessing services of the Prison Guard officers 12 general criteria have been determined that are applied in the process of assessing all the officers, as well as 3 additional criteria that need to be taken into consideration in the process of service assessment of the officers at higher managerial posts. The indicated criteria are largely extensive, since they offer a general criterion together with indicators for evaluation.

Looking at the instance of Border Patrol, we can see that evaluation applies to professional preparation of an officer, including educational background, professional qualifications, expert licenses and abilities held (4 criteria in total), manner of carrying out service tasks by an assessed person (9 general criteria and 3 additional ones for managerial posts), results achieved by an assessed person in the course of training (3 criteria) and aptitude of an assessed person affecting the manner of service tasks performance (8 general criteria and 5 additional ones for managerial posts) (Journal of Laws of 2002, No. 86, item 787, as amended). Criteria for assessing services of the Border Patrol officers are the most extensive ones and 31 aspects to be evaluated can be enumerated.

To sum up, the greatest number of service assessment criteria has been determined in the case of the Border Patrol, followed by the Prison Guard, professional soldiers and the Police officers and when looking at the way the indicated criteria have been formulated, only in the case of the Police the Ordinance of the Minister of Internal Affairs and Administration of 30 August 2010, Appendix 1, includes a description of all the criteria and a descriptive scale of evaluation (an example of a selected assessment criterion described on six-level scale has been presented in table 3).

Table 3.

Descriptive scale of the criterion assessment: self-reliance and initiative

DESCRIPTIVE SCALE OF EVALUATION	GRADE
1	2
Able to act effectively and independently, to effect complex, non-standard actions, to choose right methods and measures, to propose new solutions used by the others. Highly responsible for her/his own actions and ready to assume responsibility for co-workers.	6
Able to act independently, to choose methods and measures adequately to the effected tasks, also the non-standard ones, to suggest solutions and assume responsibility for effects of her/his own actions.	5

Cont. table 3.

Able to act independently, effecting variable actions, to propose solutions, needing assistance with non-standard tasks. Characterised by responsibility	4
Able to complete simple tasks, requiring supervision in more difficult ones. Able to use prepared models of solutions. Does not take initiative to carry out further stages of a task. Generally responsible for work.	3
Is generally not able to act independently, requiring constant assistance. Unwilling to search for information, does not assume responsibility for the actions taken.	2
Unable to act independently, with no involvement of other persons. Does not search for information. Does not take actions or does not assume responsibility for the actions.	1

Source: Appendix No. 1 to the Ordinance of the Minister of Internal Affairs and Administration of 30 August 2010 *on service assessment of Policemen* (Journal of Laws of 2010, No. 170, item 1145, as amended).

The criteria have been described on a six-grade scale, which significantly facilitates later evaluation. Whereas, the definition of criteria applying only to aptitudes affecting the manner of service tasks performance has been included in the service evaluation sheet of the Border Patrol officers (for instance personnel management has been defined as: *ability to efficiently manage the subordinates, including the use of incentives to carry out tasks [rewards and punishments], to promote professional development of the subordinates [courses, school]. and to gain authority among the subordinates*). The remaining criteria have neither been defined nor described on the scale. In light of the above, it would be valid to introduce descriptions of specific criteria in all the analysed uniformed services, including the description of such criteria on the scale. Such solutions are introduced in the growing number of organisations, including the public institutions, since it is well-founded to assume competence-based approach in evaluating, allowing for more comprehensive evaluation, as well as making an evaluation that is more comprehensible for an officer (when analysing, for instance, a descriptive scale an officer could understand what behaviour her/his superiors expect and what behaviour is missing in her/his current service).

When analysing the indicated service assessment criteria of the selected uniformed services officers, in none of the documents regulating assessment aspects a distinction into behavioural, personal, qualification and effectiveness criteria has been made. In most of the cases, the indicated criteria have been included in specific areas to be evaluated.

Accounting for specificity of the uniformed services functioning, which also means that the scope of competences required from officers needs to be taken into consideration, it is justifiable to compare the service assessment criteria in order to mark out the criteria applied to all the officers. Such a comparison has been included in table 4.

Table 4.
Comparison of criteria for assessing of officers

Criteria	Police	Professional Soldiers	Prison Guard	Border Patrol
Quality	x	x		x
Self-reliance and initiative	x	x	x	x
Timeliness	x	x	x	x
Work planning and organisation	x	x	x	x
Self-development and raising qualifications	x	x	x	
Ability to cooperate	x	x	x	x
Personal etiquette	x	x (and caring for appearance)		
Availability	x	x	x	x (and discipline)
Caring for human relations	x			
Coping with crisis situations	x		x	
Creativity	x		x	
Responsibility		x		x (and discipline)
Determination in pursuing goals		x		
Accuracy and quickness in decision making		x		x
Stress resistance		x	x	x (to pressure)
Communicativeness			x	
Adhering to regulations, standards and rules		x	x	
Caring for equipment and possessions		x		
Using resources			x	x
Managing personnel				x
Organisational abilities				x
Self-education			x	x
Ability to search for and acquire information			x	
Perceptiveness				x
Professional aspirations and ambitions				x
Composure			x	x
Expressing thoughts in speech and in writing			x	x
Training result			x	x
Behaviour in conflict situations			x	x
Motivating subordinate officers			x	x
Work organisation, management and supervision			x	
Effectiveness			x (effectiveness)	x
Professionalism			x (knowledge of applicable regulations, etc.)	x
ability to decide on importance hierarchy of carried out tasks			X	x
Replacing other officer				x
Education				x
Professional qualifications			x	x

Cont. table 4.

Expert licenses			x	x
Skill set held			x	x
Ability to think analytically			x	
Motivation			x	
Following the occupational code of ethics			x	
Ability to negotiate			x	
Ability to think strategically			x	

Source: own studies based on the acts and ordinances regulating the issue of service assessment of officers in selected uniform services.

When comparing the criteria for service assessment, we may distinguish five criteria used in relation to the officers of the four analysed services. These are the following criteria: self-reliance and initiative, timeliness, work planning and organising, ability to cooperate and availability. The remaining criteria usually apply to one, two, or on less frequent occasions, to three types of services (stress resistance, self-development and raising qualifications). The indicated criteria applied in the assessment process of all the services in question are of general character, they are basic and used in most of the systems for assessment/evaluation of employees. Analysing the remaining assessment criteria, we may come across several criteria more closely related with job specifics of the uniformed services. These include: stress reliance (this criterion is not used in the case of the Police officers assessment, which the author of this paper finds worthy of re-consideration), accuracy and quickness of decision making, following the occupational code of ethics (subject to assessment only in the case of professional soldiers; yet, it should be a general criterion applicable to all the services where the officers are given authority – the possibility to execute law) and expertise (it is a general of special significance due to constant changes in legal instruments that need to be known especially to the Police and Border Patrol officers, as well as due to the everyday use of specialist by the officers in ranks of these services to ensure safety, public order and compliance with law).

The set of criteria for assessing the officers in uniformed services should be supplemented with several new criteria and the criteria whose assessment consists in analysing the same types of behaviour should be dealt away with (e.g. stress resistance and composure). An additional criterion worthy of consideration is the criterion of leadership abilities, assuming responsibility for individual decisions, as well as decisions made in the course of holding a leadership position in a team, caring for professional development of subordinates and granting substance-related and psychological support to co-workers and subordinate officers. Introducing such criteria would allow for making more comprehensive evaluation of, predominantly, the officers at managerial posts, as well as to single out from the group of officers with leadership abilities those who could take up managerial posts in the future.

Another proposed change in the scope of assessing the officers in the ranks of uniformed services is introducing the legal instruments regulating this issue with definitions of specific criteria and a descriptive evaluation scale that would allow drawing up a uniform framework for interpretation of a given criterion and decide on the degree to which this criterion has been met. Defining the specific criteria would allow to eliminate the converging ones, and in the case

of some services, to decrease a set of the applied criteria or to expand it. Introducing such a change is especially crucial when dealing with the officers who need to make a self-evaluation in the process of service assessment. Bringing forth a definition of criterion and a descriptive evaluation scale would significantly improve this process and would also provide the officers with a chance to receive feedback informing which type of behaviour they are expected to show in their service and which types of behaviour are currently not present in their service.

Any changes in the process of assessing the services of the officers in the ranks of selected services should be thought through and planned. Before they are introduced, it would be advisable to conduct research in order to make an up-to-date evaluation of the service assessment process, to evaluate the proposed criteria and the descriptive scales possible to be applied. It is also worthy to consider the issue of introducing additional criteria to be applied in the process of assessing the officers at different organisational units, since the indicated services are not the uniform formations. Such a change would allow to continue using a homogenous service assessment form with extra columns for entering e.g. 3-4 additional criteria (selected from a set of additional criteria) that would be assessed and communicated to an evaluated officer e.g. at the end of an evaluation interview, allowing the officers to account for frequency of service assessment and to devote appropriate portion of time for satisfying the basic criteria, with the stipulation that these criteria should be strictly related with the specifics of work (e.g. other additional criteria may be determined in the case of the Policemen – criminal and prevention service officers).

6. Summary

Adequate selection of criteria for service assessment of the officers in the ranks of the indicated uniformed services is especially significant considering the purpose of these services. Additionally, accounting for the assessment essence, the applied criteria should allow for limitless evaluation of officers' service and their usefulness at the job market and form a basis for providing an officer with full-scale feedback that is exceedingly valid for each "employee", since it is a foundation for making a self-assessment.

Applying the criteria suited for the officers work specifics, including a level of work difficulty, will entirely allow to evaluate usefulness of an officer at the job market and to make a forecast of competitive and development potential as well as to determine a level of motivation for work.

In order to make the evaluation process in uniformed services more objective, it would be justified to introduce good evaluation practices in selected areas, partly taken from the business environment, but adjusted to the specificity of the public institutions functioning. Proposals for changes concern, among others:

- introduction of definitions and levels of competence mastery, being the criteria for issuing performance reviews, which would make it possible to standardise the understanding of particular competences and their uniform evaluation in all units,
- elimination from the group of evaluated competencies those whose evaluation consists in the analysis of the same behaviour and addition of further evaluation criteria, including criteria concerning leadership competencies extremely important in the case of officers in uniformed services, especially those holding managerial positions,
- attaching the performance review sheets with a column allowing for evaluating additional criteria related to specificity of the performed service. This measure would allow for evaluating specific competencies, and thus for a more complete and objective evaluation of officers.

The currently applied criteria, in numerous cases of officers in specific uniformed services, do not allow to evaluate a degree of work difficulty at a given post, they are general and may be variably interpreted by officers and their superiors, which may exert a negative impact on fairness of service assessment. The author of the paper thinks that the proposed path of changes would improve the whole process and make it easier to reflect specifics of a given service in the assessment process through drawing more accurate connections between the criteria and service specifics, as well as through their deeper understanding by the assessed officers and the persons behind their service assessments.

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