

The USAF Dental Evaluation and Consultation Service (DECS) conducts an extensive program of dental product evaluation. The individual product evaluations commonly include laboratory testing in the DECS laboratories and clinical-user evaluations at federal dental service clinics around the world. At the end of the typical 6-month evaluation, DECS awards an overall rating to the product.

The [original product evaluation rating system](#) consisted of 4 categories: Recommended, Acceptable, Marginal, and Unsatisfactory. Beginning 1 March 2005, a new rating system was applied to all newly evaluated products and includes 5 categories and a visual scale as shown below. Previously evaluated products will maintain their existing rating using the original rating system.



Outstanding: A product that is reliable, user friendly, cost effective, and has superior design and workmanship. Exceeds most applicable standards and requirements. Has clearly identifiable advantages over similar products.



Excellent: A product that is reliable, user friendly, cost effective, and free of defects in design and workmanship. Meets applicable standards and requirements. Has identifiable advantages over similar products.



Acceptable: A product that is reliable and free of defects in design and workmanship. Meets critical elements of applicable standards and requirements. Performs all essential functions for which it was designed.



Marginal: A product that performs essential functions but has poor operating features or handling characteristics that renders it difficult to use. May not meet manufacturer's claims of performance. More user-friendly or cost-effective alternatives are available.



Unacceptable: A product that fails to perform essential functions for which it was designed. May not meet applicable standards or requirements. May be unsafe to use or is of poor quality rendering it unsuitable for use in Air Force dental facilities.

Federal dental service clinics may request a current list of products DECS has rated as "Unacceptable" or "Marginal" by clicking [here](#). Note: If you are not in the federal dental services we will not be able to send this list to you.

Original Product Evaluation Rating System (Prior to 1 March 2005)

Recommended - A superior product. User-friendly, reliable, cost-effective, and free of defects in design and workmanship. Meets or exceeds all applicable standards or requirements. Has clearly identifiable advantages over similar products.

Acceptable - Product performs all essential functions for which it was designed. Has proven to be reliable and free of significant defects in design and workmanship. Meets critical elements of applicable standards or requirements.

Marginal - Product performs its essential functions but has poor operating features or handling characteristics that render it difficult to use. May not meet manufacturer's claims of performance or cost-effectiveness. More user-friendly or cost-effective alternatives are available.

Unacceptable - Product fails to perform essential functions for which it was designed. May not meet applicable standards or requirements. May be unsafe to use or is of such poor quality that it is not acceptable for use in federal dental facilities.