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Description of document:	Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Recognition Policy and Procedures Manual 2001
Requested date:	22-September-2021
Release date:	23-September-2021
Posted date:	01-November-2021
Source of document:	National FOIA Office US Environmental Protection Agency 1200 Pennsylvania Avenue NW (2310A) Washington, DC 20460 FOIAonline
	Preferred during COVID-19 pandemic: FOIAonline

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UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

OFFICE OF MISSION
SUPPORT

September 23, 2021

RE: Request Number: EEPa-2021-006622

Thank you for your Freedom of Information Act request. This letter concerns the above-referenced Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request, received by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Freedom of Information Office on 9/22/21 in which you requested "copy of the EPA Recognition Policy and Procedures Manual."

The Office of Mission Support, Office of Human Resources has reviewed your request and is providing a full release.

Final Appeal Rights and Contact Information

You can access the records via FOIAonline.

This letter concludes our response to your request. You may appeal this determination by email at hq.foia@epa.gov, or by mail to the EPA's National FOIA Office, U.S. EPA, 1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W. (2310A), Washington, DC 20460 or through FOIAonline if you are an account holder. If you are submitting your appeal by hand delivery, courier service, or overnight delivery, you must address your correspondence to 1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., WJC-N Building, Room 7309C, Washington, DC 20460.

Your appeal must be in writing, and it must be received no later than 90 calendar days from the date of this letter. The Agency will not consider appeals received after the 90-calendar-day limit. Appeals received after 5:00 p.m. EST will be considered received the next business day. The appeal letter should include the FOIA tracking number listed above. For quickest possible handling, the subject line of your email, the appeal letter, and its envelope, if applicable, should be marked "Freedom of Information Act Appeal."

If you need any further assistance or would like to discuss any aspect of your request, you may seek assistance from EPA's FOIA Public Liaison at hq.foia@epa.gov or call (202) 566-1667. You may also seek assistance from the Office of Government Information Services (OGIS). You may contact OGIS in any of the following ways: by mail, Office of Government Information Services, National Archives and Records Administration, 8601 Adelphi Road, College Park, MD 20740-6001; email: ogis@nara.gov; telephone: (202) 741-5770 or (877) 684-6448; or fax: (202) 741-5769. For all media inquiries, please contact press@epa.gov.

Sincerely,
**RHONDA
JONES**

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Rhonda Jones
Director
Policy, Planning and Training Division



3130 A2 - RECOGNITION POLICY AND PROCEDURES MANUAL

Approval Date: 11/27/2001

Strategic Planning & Policy Services Division
Office of Human Resources and Organizational Services

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Chapter 1 - OVERVIEW

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Chapter 1 - OVERVIEW

1. PURPOSE. This Manual establishes policy for the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Recognition Program and prescribes responsibilities and procedures for program administration. This manual replaces the Awards Manual, dated 11/25/97, in its entirety.

2. POLICY.

a. It is the policy of the Environmental Protection Agency to encourage all employees to make their best efforts in their daily work, to urge them to bring forward ideas to improve the efficiency and economy of Agency operations, and to give them appropriate recognition for noteworthy achievements in the public interest or related to their official employment.

b. The EPA Recognition Program is designed to motivate employees to achieve significant increases in productivity or quality by rewarding those whose performance is substantially above normal job requirements and standards.

3. REFERENCE. This Manual specifies the Agency's Recognition Program in accordance with requirements for awards contained in 5 CFR 451, and the requirements for justifying Quality Step Increases contained in 5 CFR 531. ("CFR" refers to Code of Federal Regulations.)

4. DEFINITIONS.

a. Contribution. Means (1) a suggestion, invention, high quality performance, or other personal effort that contributes to the efficiency, economy, or other improvement of Government operations or, (2) a special act or service in the public interest, in connection with or related to official employment.

b. Agency Award. An award granted by an authorized EPA official to an EPA employee or a group of EPA employees.

c. Interagency Award. An award granted by an authorized official to an employee or a group of employees of another agency, or a member of the armed forces.

d. Formal Honor Award. A Non-Monetary award given for the recognition of employees or teams for exceptional, distinguished, or heroic individual or group achievements.

e. Informal Non-monetary Award. A non-monetary award granted to an employee or a team to recognize accomplishments of lesser scope than would be recognized by a formal honor award or monetary award.

f. Monetary Award. A lump sum cash payment to an employee or a team to recognize noteworthy accomplishments or high quality performance.

g. Suggestion Award. An award granted for an idea submitted in writing by an employee and adopted by management, which benefits the Government.

h. Invention Award. Monetary and/or honorary recognition granted for an invention by Federal personnel that is of interest to the U.S. Government or the public, and for which patent coverage is sought or granted.

i. Quality Step Increase (QSI). An additional within-grade increase granted to General Schedule employees based on: (1) a rating of successful for the most recent performance rating period; (2) demonstrated high quality performance during the period of the most recent rating of record; and (3) the assumption that quality performance will continue during the next period of rating.

5. APPLICABILITY. This Manual is applicable to all Environmental Protection Agency employees, Public Health Service Commissioned Officers assigned to the Agency, employees of other Federal agencies detailed to EPA, former employees or the heirs or estates of deceased employees if the contribution recognized was made during service with EPA, and Intergovernmental Personnel Act assignees under appointment to EPA, in accordance with the following:

a. Quality Step Increases are limited to General Schedule employees who occupy permanent positions or who are serving under term or Temporary Appointment Pending Establishment of a Register (TAPER). Agency employees on Intergovernmental Personnel Act assignments may not receive quality step increases.

b. Public Health Service Commissioned Officers may receive EPA honor awards. (PHS Officer awards are covered in Chapter 8.)

c. Administrative Law Judges are only eligible for special act or service awards for non-performance/non-work related activities, such as heroism, and for suggestion/invention awards which are not job-related.

d. Limitations on awards to noncareer SES appointees, Schedule C appointees and Presidential appointees. 5 CFR 451.105 sets limitations on awards during a Presidential election period and prohibits cash awards at any time to Presidential appointees approved by the Senate and serving in Executive Level positions or positions where pay is set by statute in reference to the Executive Schedule. In those cases where awards-cash, formal or informal nonmonetary are permitted, such awards will be given in accord with the guidance of this manual.

_____ (1) Cash awards during a Presidential election period
- In accord with 5 CFR 451.105, cash awards may be not given to noncareer SES appointees, Schedule C appointees, Presidential appointees or any other category of political appointee. The limitation on cash awards includes time-off awards.

_____ (2) Cash awards outside a Presidential election period
- Cash awards may be given to noncareer SES and Schedule C appointees. Presidential appointees may not receive cash awards at any time, including time-off awards.

(3) Nonmonetary awards -formal or informal. Noncareer SES, Schedule C and Presidential appointees may be given nonmonetary awards at any time.

6. PROGRAM MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES.

a. Managers and Supervisors are responsible for making effective use of their human resources by encouraging and promptly recognizing creativity, innovation and superior performance. Specifically, all managers and supervisors will:

(1) Recommend and approve deserving employees for awards;

(2) Support the Awards Program and effectively use the various types of awards available to recognize deserving employees for individual efforts and groups of employees for team efforts;

(3) Ensure that recognition under this program is given to employees without discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, political affiliation, marital status, disability, age or membership or nonmembership in a labor organization;

(4) Participate actively in the award suggestion system by encouraging employees to submit their ideas, helping

employees develop their ideas and by evaluating suggestions promptly and objectively;

(5) Use the PERFORMS (Performance Planning, Employee Rating, Feedback, Opportunity and Reward Management System) to identify employees worthy of recognition for a Quality Step Increase based on the employees' demonstration of continued high quality performance;

(6) Identify through management review processes specific program operations where the performance of the employee(s) involved warrants recognition;

(7) Provide timely recognition for one-time special acts or services worthy of monetary and/or non-monetary recognition; and

(8) Consider all employees for nomination, under their supervision, who may be eligible for awards sponsored by other Federal agencies and non-Governmental organizations;

b. Director, Office of Human Resources and Organizational Services(OHROS) is responsible for providing leadership and guidance to ensure that the policies set forth in this Manual are carried out, specifically, s/he is to:

(1) Monitor and develop improved procedures and guidelines for the Recognition Program and to provide staff guidance and assistance to all Headquarters and field components as required;

(2) Designate the Agency Awards Program Officer;

(3) Approve proposals for local awards;

(4) Provide periodic evaluations of the effectiveness of the Recognition Program and its contribution to improved Agency productivity; and

(5) Report to Agency management and to the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) on the EPA Recognition Program activities as required.

c. Human Resources Officers are responsible for providing guidance to their respective jurisdictions to ensure that the policies set forth in this Manual are carried out and to:

(1) Develop and implement local procedures to carry out the Recognition Program;

(2) Serve as local Recognition Coordinators or designate a staff member to serve in such capacity;

(3) Provide advice, assistance, training and information concerning all aspects of the program to managers, supervisors and employees in their local areas or respective jurisdictions;

(4) Assure that recommendations for Honor and Monetary Awards are clearly consistent with the criteria established for a particular award;

(5) Assure that employee suggestions are promptly forwarded for evaluation and consideration to those management officials who have authority to adopt them; and

(6) Maintain records and statistical information concerning program activity, and submit reports as required (see paragraph 10 in this Chapter for details).

d. EPA Awards Board.

(1) Membership. The EPA Awards Board consists of representatives of major EPA program areas, both Headquarters and field, and special emphasis program representatives, as appointed by the Administrator. The Board selects a chairperson annually from among its members. Membership is limited to three-year terms that may not be served consecutively, with the exception of the Director of Human Resources and Organizational Services (OHROS). The Director of OHROS serves as a non-voting executive secretary to the Board. The Deputy Administrator may designate special representatives to the Awards Board as needed to assist Board members with the review of award nominations.

(2) Functions. The Board advises and makes recommendations to the Administrator concerning Agency Formal Honor Awards, and when requested, reviews and evaluates nominations for various awards requiring approval by the Administrator, excluding SES bonuses and Presidential Rank Awards.

7. FUNDING. Agency officials responsible for approving awards will ensure that adequate funds are identified in yearly operating plans to permit prompt recognition of employee achievements at the time they occur. Funds should be adequate to cover Monetary Awards, Quality Step Increases, and any costs incurred for printing and presentation of local non-monetary awards.

8. RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER PERSONNEL ACTIONS. Agency merit promotion plans must ensure that EPA and other Government awards are considered in qualifying and selecting employees for promotion (5 USC 3362). No personnel action may be based, either wholly or in part, on the receipt of, or nomination for, external (privately-sponsored) awards.

9. DOCUMENTATION AND RECORDS.

a. Servicing Human Resources Officers are required to keep complete and accurate records of all awards except Informal Recognition/Non-monetary awards to substantiate the expenditure of funds and for reporting and evaluation purposes.

b. Recommending, reviewing, and approving officials, as well as personnel or payroll office staff, and peer nominators must treat award recommendations and any supporting documentation as confidential information. Reviewing and approving officials, and other officials on a need to-know-basis are the only persons with authorized access to award recommendations and documentation during processing.

c. Any award records retained in the employee's official personnel folder and any documentation filed in the employee's performance file become part of the OPM/GOVT-1 system of records established under provisions of the Privacy Act. (5 U.S.C. 552a.)

10. REPORTS. Local awards program coordinators are responsible for providing feeder reports and data to the Agency Awards Program Officer as required for preparation of the OPM Incentive Awards Annual Report and at other times as requested.

11. LOCAL AWARDS. In unusual circumstances, local offices may wish to develop suitable Non-Monetary means of recognizing employee contributions that do not meet the criteria for Monetary Awards, Quality Step Increases or Agency Formal Honor awards. These awards may take the form of certificates, citations, plaques or other suitable means of recognition. Awards of this type may be suitable for recognizing contributions to equal employment opportunity that are not job related or for community service that enhances public awareness of the Agency's mission or accomplishments (see Chapter 3 of this manual for details on Informal Non-monetary Awards).

12. COLLECTIVE BARGAINING. To the extent consistent with law, provisions of this manual may be subject to collective bargaining negotiations with certified unions.

CHAPTER 2 - FORMAL HONOR AWARDS

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Annual Honor Awards Ceremony	2
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Silver Medal for Superior Service	4
Bronze Medal for Commendable Service	5
Distinguished Career Award	6
Paul G. Keough Award for Administrative Excellence	7
Trudy A. Speciner Award	8
EPA Exemplary Leadership in Human Resources Management	9
Fitzhugh Green Award for Sustained Outstanding Contributions to International Environmental Protection	10
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Glenda A. Farmer Award for Professionalism	12
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Barbara Metzger Environmental Data Quality	
Assurance Manager Award	14
James W. Craig Pollution Prevention Leadership Award	15
EPA Science Achievement Awards	16
Contracts Management Awards	17
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EPA Form 3130-16, Recommendation for EPA Honor Award	2-1
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CHAPTER 2 - FORMAL HONOR AWARDS

1. GENERAL. The EPA Formal Honor Awards Program is designed to recognize exceptional, distinguished or heroic individual or group achievements. A recommendation should always be for the highest award that is appropriate for the achievement. If the recommendation is disapproved, it may be considered for the next lower award that is appropriate. No employee or group may be given more than one Agency Honor Award for the same contribution; however, several earlier contributions may later be grouped to form the basis for a higher ranking Honor Award. Receiving an Agency Honor Award does not preclude the nomination of an employee for a non-Agency Award or a Monetary Award based on the same contribution. Unless otherwise specified, the Agency Awards Board may recommend more than one recipient for each award category. All Agency Honor Awards are reviewed by the Inspector General (IG) to ensure nominee(s) is not in violation of Agency ethics and conduct policy, or Federal law; and the Office of Human Resources and Organizational Services (OHROS) to ensure nominee(s) meets eligibility requirements and that nomination procedures were followed. The Office of Civil Rights (OCR) provides demographic data to OHROS for inclusion of Awards Board's review. Unless otherwise specified, the Administrator's Awards Board reviews all Honor Award nominations and forwards recommendations to the Administrator for approval.

2. ANNUAL HONOR AWARDS CEREMONY. Each year the Administrator presents the major EPA Honor Awards at a ceremony in Washington, D.C. The two highest ranking Public Health Service Commissioned Officer Awards (described in Chapter 8) and the SES Presidential Rank Awards are also presented at the annual ceremony. The Annual Honor Awards Ceremony may also be the appropriate occasion, in individual circumstances, for presenting the Distinguished Career Award.

3. GOLD MEDAL FOR EXCEPTIONAL SERVICE.

a. Description. This award, consisting of a gold medal, a lapel pin, and a certificate, is the highest Honor Award granted by the Agency. It is approved and presented by the Administrator, and may be granted to an individual or a group.

b. Eligibility and Criteria. This award is granted on a highly selective basis for distinguished service of major significance to environmental improvement and to public service. Individual employees through grades GS/GM-15 and groups of employees working as a team are eligible for consideration for this award. Group or team nominations may not exceed 15 participants, except under unusual circumstances. Nominations including more than 15 participants require additional

justification as part of the nomination package. Employees or groups must have made outstanding contributions which clearly distinguish their performance and achievements from those of other highly qualified and competent employees/groups in the same area of work activity. The following examples serve as a general guide to those who initiate or evaluate a recommendation for this award:

(1) Outstanding contributions to environmental protection programs of national or international scope or significance;

(2) Outstanding leadership, skill, ability or creativity in devising and implementing or administering major Agency programs;

(3) Significant contributions to managerial excellence in the areas of productivity, human resources management, efficiency, affirmative action, and anticipation or responsiveness to changing program requirements;

(4) Major contributions of national or international scope or applicability to scientific and technological knowledge;

(5) Distinguished authorship;

(6) Notably creative service;

(7) Heroic action;

(8) Significant reduction in paperwork; or

(9) Significant achievement in equal employment opportunity, promoting diversity, and/or occupational safety and health programs.

c. Nomination Procedure. A recommendation for the Gold Medal will be initiated or endorsed by the Deputy Administrator, appropriate Assistant Administrator, Associate Administrator, the General Counsel, the Inspector General, the Chief Financial Officer, or Regional Administrator. Recommendations are made to the Agency Honor Awards Program Officer in OHROS. A special call for nominations will be issued annually by OHROS. Organizations may submit no more than a total of four Gold/Silver nominations, with no more than three group nominations.

4. SILVER MEDAL FOR SUPERIOR SERVICE.

a. Description. This Award ranks second among EPA's Formal Honor Awards. It consists of a silver medal, a lapel pin, and a certificate. It is approved and presented by the Administrator, and may be granted to an individual or group.

b. Eligibility and Criteria. This Award is presented for contributions or services of unusual value beyond that ordinarily required. Unsuccessful nominees for the Gold Medal may be considered for this award. Employees through grades GS/GM-15 and groups of employees are eligible for consideration for this award. Group or team nominations may not exceed 15 participants, except under unusual circumstances. Provisions in subparagraph 3.b. apply. The Silver Medal will be presented for performance such as:

(1) Highly meritorious service to the mission of environmental protection;

(2) Achievement of outstanding results in increased productivity, efficiency or economy of operations resulting in a substantial contribution to the accomplishment of the Agency's mission;

(3) Unusual courage or competence in an emergency related to employment;

(4) Meritorious authorship; or

(5) Outstanding contributions to equal employment opportunity promoting diversity, and/or occupational safety and health programs.

c. Nomination Procedure. Provisions in subparagraph 3.c apply.

5. BRONZE MEDAL FOR COMMENDABLE SERVICE

a. Description. This is the third highest Formal Honor Award given by the Agency. It consists of a bronze medal, a lapel pin, and a certificate. The award is approved by the head of the organization to which the recipient is assigned, i.e., the Deputy Administrator, Assistant Administrators, General Counsel, the Inspector General, the Chief Financial Officer, and Regional Administrators. The manner and timing of presentation of the

Agency Bronze Medal shall be at the discretion of approving officials. Bronze medals may be granted at anytime during the year.

b. Eligibility and Criteria. This Award is granted to an employee or to a group of employees for significant acts and achievements which materially aid or affect the successful accomplishment of the Agency mission or serve the public interest. Examples of such services include:

(1) Accomplishment of a particularly difficult or important mission, operation, or assignment that reflects credit on the individual or the Agency;

(2) Noteworthy success in equal employment opportunity, promoting diversity and/or occupational safety and health programs;

(3) Superior accomplishments in fostering equal employment opportunity through supervisory excellence;

(4) Demonstration of unusual initiative or creative ability in the development and improvement of methods, procedures, or devices resulting in substantially increased productivity, efficiency, economy, or reduction in paperwork; or

(5) Outstanding volunteer contributions of time and effort during non-duty hours to projects of civil betterment and to voluntary organizations serving individual or community needs.

c. Procedure. Recommendations are made by using EPA Form 3130-16, Recommendation for Honor Award. The recommendation must be submitted through supervisory channels to the appropriate approving official. It is not necessary to send the recommendation to the Agency Honor Awards Program officer for review. The servicing Human Resources Officer provides Bronze medals and certificates.

6. DISTINGUISHED CAREER AWARD.

a. Description. This is a special Award approved by the Administrator to recognize the cumulative achievements of employees who have given truly distinguished service throughout their employment in EPA and the Federal service. It is usually presented to awardees at the completion of service in EPA. It consists of a gold medal, a lapel pin and a certificate. While this award is unranked among EPA Honor Awards the gold medal is indicative of its importance and the selectivity which should be exercised in recommending persons to receive it.

b. Eligibility and Criteria. There should be tangible evidence of the employee's contribution to EPA. Normally, individuals recommended for this award will have received other recognition during their careers. A Gold Medal Award or nomination by the Agency for high level awards outside the Agency are types of recognition that would justify recommending an employee for this award. The employee's accomplishments should have had significant impact upon a major organizational segment or a major program. Professional, scientific, or administrative achievements receiving widespread recognition outside EPA are also a basis for nominating an employee for this award.

c. Nomination Procedure. A recommendation for this award should be initiated as soon as it is known that the employee plans to retire or leave EPA. The recommendation will be initiated or endorsed by the Deputy Administrator, appropriate Assistant Administrator, the General Counsel, the Inspector General, the Chief Financial Officer, or Regional Administrator. Occasionally, it may be necessary to present the award after separation from employment. A memorandum of recommendation, including justification and proposed citation, will be addressed to the Administrator, through the Agency Honor Awards Program Officer in the Office of Human Resources and Organizational Services (OHROS).

7. PAUL G. KEOUGH AWARD FOR ADMINISTRATIVE EXCELLENCE.

a. Description. This Award consists of a plaque presented by the Administrator at the Annual Honor Awards Ceremony and can be granted to more than one recipient. This award was reestablished in 1994 in honor of Paul G. Keough, former Deputy Regional Administrator and Acting Regional Administrator for Region 1, who was an advocate for enhancing the work life and career potential of the Agency's administrative and technical support staff.

b. Eligibility and Criteria. This award may be granted to employees working in clerical, administrative or technical support positions (usually GS-1 through GS-10 and Wage Grade equivalents) who have made such exceptional or outstanding contributions to the mission of the Agency that they deserve Agency wide recognition. Nominations for this award must clearly describe achievements in one or more of the following areas:

(1) Outstanding leadership skills, abilities, or resourcefulness in a) implementing innovative approaches that resulted in significant improvements to the efficiency of office operations; or b) organizing, planning, or facilitating activities that promoted EPA special emphasis programs such as Federal Women's Program, Secretarial Administrative Advisory Counsel, Women in Science and Engineering and others.

Nominations must explain how this accomplishment exceeded the normal job expectations of the nominee's supervisor.

(2) Demonstrated personal diligence or initiative by accepting responsibility for special projects or heavy workload involving unexpected difficulties that went well beyond assigned duties and responsibilities. Nominations must cite specific examples and results.

(3) Technical expertise and competence in dealing with critical or sensitive job-related situations. Nominations must list specific human relation skills/traits used by the nominee that aided in the resolution of these situations.

c. Nomination Procedure. A recommendation for presentation of the award will be initiated or endorsed by the Deputy Administrator, appropriate Assistant Administrator, the General Counsel, the Inspector General, the Chief Financial Officer, or Regional Administrator. Recommendations are addressed to the Agency Honor Awards Program Office in the Office of Human Resources and Organizational Services (OHROS) via the EPA Recommendation for EPA Honor Awards Form. A special call for nominations will be issued annually by OHROS.

8. TRUDY A. SPECINER AWARD.

a. Description. This Award consists of a plaque presented by the Administrator at the Annual Honor Awards Ceremony. It is named for a former employee, Trudy Speciner, who made outstanding contributions showing unusual analytical ability, creativity and judgment and whose achievements significantly advanced the cause of environmental protection.

b. Eligibility and Criteria. This Award may be presented to an EPA employee who is working at a grade level no higher than GS/GM-13 and has fewer than four years of EPA service and no more than seven years of total government service. Nominations must clearly distinguish the employee's performance and achievements from those of other competent staff employees as evidenced by:

(1) Outstanding analytical or implementational achievements which substantially contributed to a successful project or projects that significantly advanced the cause of environmental protection;

(2) Outstanding initiative, creativity and judgment,
or;

(3) Exceptional ability to work well with other staff or constituencies possessing different perspectives and interests, both within and beyond the nominee's immediate office.

c. Nomination Procedure. Provisions in subparagraph 7.c apply.

9. EPA EXEMPLARY LEADERSHIP IN HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

a. Description. This Award consists of a plaque presented at the EPA Annual Honor Awards Ceremony to recognize a senior manager whose efforts and examples have significantly advanced human resources management in the Agency. It was established in 1986 and is in honor of former Deputy Administrator Jim Barnes. His leadership, commitment and dedication to the conviction that the people of EPA are its greatest resource were instrumental in establishing an exemplary human resources program throughout the Agency.

b. Eligibility and Criteria. This Award may be presented to any EPA supervisor or manager whose efforts have significantly advanced human resources management, leadership and diversity in EPA. Program Management Officers (PMO's), Human Resources Officers (HRO's) and OHROS staff are ineligible.

c. Nomination Procedure. Provisions of subparagraph 7.c apply.

10. FITZHUGH GREEN AWARD FOR SUSTAINED OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTIONS TO INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION.

a. Description. This Award consists of a plaque presented at the EPA Annual Honor Awards Ceremony. It is named for former Assistant Administrator for International Activities, Fitzhugh Green, who for over 10 years, molded EPA's international environmental policy and who left a legacy of outstanding accomplishments and professionalism.

b. Eligibility and Criteria. This Award may be presented to any EPA employee through the Senior Executive Service level for distinguished service of major significance to international environmental activities. Examples include:

(1) Outstanding contributions to environmental protection programs of international scope or significance, especially those which are sustained and have long lasting effects; devising and implementing or administering major Agency programs overseas;

(2) Outstanding leadership, skill, ability or creativity in devising and implementing or administering major Agency programs overseas;

(3) Major contributions of international scope or applicability to scientific and technological knowledge; or

(4) Outstanding competence, initiative and achievements which have had a significant impact on an international environmental program.

c. Nomination Procedure. Provisions in subparagraph 7.c apply. In addition, a review panel comprised of Headquarters and Regional officials, chaired by either the Assistant Administrator or Deputy Assistant Administrator for International Activities, reviews all nominations and submits the nomination to the Agency Honor Awards Program Officer.

11. SUZANNE E. OLIVE EEO AWARDS.

a. Description. This Award consists of a plaque presented by the Administrator at the Annual Honor Awards Ceremony. This award is named in the honor of Suzanne E. Olive, the former Deputy Director of the Office of Civil Rights. The purpose of the award is to:

(1) Emphasize the policy of EPA regarding equal employment opportunity (EEO) and affirmative action (AA);

(2) Demonstrate the value which management places upon supervisors, managers and other employees who actively and effectively contribute to equal employment opportunity and affirmative action;

(3) Give due honor and regard to persons who excel in promoting/providing equal employment opportunity; and

(4) Enhance the EEO/AA program by publicizing the superior accomplishments of award recipients and the positive effects of these accomplishments have upon others seeking equal opportunity.

b. Awards are granted in four categories, where the first three are awarded to individual accomplishments:

(1) Management;

(2) Non-Management;

(3) EEO-Related Human Resources Staff; and

(4) Group.

c. Eligibility and Criteria. This Award may be presented to any EPA employee through the Senior Executive Service level. Award recipients should be those who have achieved outstanding affirmative employment results through effective leadership, skill, imagination, innovation and perseverance in extending equal opportunities to minorities, women or individuals with disabilities. Criteria for each category are:

(1) Management Award: This award category recognizes persons at all levels of supervision and management who clearly excel in promoting EEO within their own organization and support Agency wide program efforts in EEO and Affirmative Action. To be effective, recognition for superior accomplishments in fostering equal employment opportunity must be based on objective evidence which indicates that the supervisor has excelled in several of the following job factors:

(a) Achieving a diverse workforce through creative programming, outreach, etc. Examples of positive results include accomplishing affirmative action goals and achieving substantial new improvement in the representation of specific under-represented groups: in professional and administrative categories; grades 13-15 and SES; and supervisory and managerial positions.

(b) Motivating employees through direct encouragement and assistance to develop their full potential and utilize their skills to the maximum extent. Positive results showing excellence in this area might be demonstrated by outstanding skills development efforts which show concern for assuring equal opportunity for minorities, women and individuals with disabilities; in addition to the upward mobility of lower grade and underutilized employees evident through promotions, and recognition and awards for their achievements.

(c) Demonstrating and fostering sensitive treatment of all employees. Positive results showing excellence in this area might include high morale and productivity, along with low turnover. They might also include the manager's concern for providing equal opportunity for employees to attend training courses, or to receive recognition, special assignments, promotions.

(d) Achieving effective employee utilization. Positive results showing excellence include high productivity and morale, low turnover, few grievances, etc. and the creation of new job opportunities for minorities, women and individuals with disabilities.

(e) Demonstrating commitment to the Agency's broader EEO/AA efforts. Positive results include improved success in meeting affirmative action objectives, development of creative models and enhanced image of the organization and the Agency.

(2) Non-Management: This Award category recognizes persons at all levels in the workplace who embody EPA's commitment to provide equal employment opportunity. To be effective, the nomination must be based on objective evidence which indicates that the individual has accomplished

distinguished service outside of the normal job description in several of the following areas (criteria not all-inclusive):

(a) Demonstrating initiative and assuming leadership in identifying, seeking solution to and assisting in rectifying EEO-related problems that have occurred in the workplace.

(b) Encouraging peers to pursue productive self-development activities which lead to increased skills and career advancement.

(c) Embodying EEO principles in interaction with others, earning respect and admiration of peers for his/her efforts, demonstrating a high degree of sensitivity to peers' needs, abilities and interests, raising morale and fostering a more productive working environment.

(d) Demonstrating initiative in mentoring or assisting other employees; e.g., EPA's Student Temporary and Career Employment participants, summer interns, new employee, etc.

(e) Demonstrating outstanding leadership service on committees and/or projects that further EEO objectives.

(f) Providing outstanding leadership/service and active support to community activities that promote EEO concepts and objectives.

(3) EEO-Related Human Resources Staff. This Award recognizes persons who have specific responsibilities for equal employment opportunity within the Agency such as EEO Officers, EEO Counselors, or Special Emphasis Program Managers, on a full-time, part-time or collateral basis. It also includes persons whose work is not specifically EEO, but who through their superior accomplishments in training, recruitment, or other activity, advance equal opportunity in the government. This award category spans the entire grade range of staff. The nomination should focus on recognition of extraordinary accomplishments in a particular activity, beyond what might be expected in normal job performance, taking into account time allocated for undertaking such EEO related responsibilities. Some examples of such achievements are:

(a) Providing superior counseling and guidance to employees that effectively encourage and assist in planning and acquiring occupational training to benefit the employee, the Agency or the Federal service;

(b) Providing outstanding service through effective resolution of employee discrimination complaints by developing rapport with employees, offering helpful guidance in

the discussion of their complaints, and building a reputation for prompt, effective action;

(c) Providing outstanding leadership in the development and implementation of an EEO action plan or activity which leads to significant changes or improvements in the Federal EEO program;

(d) Establishing and maintaining a high level of respect and the confidence of minority group or women's organizations, thus advancing the Agency's EEO program;

(e) Achieving outstanding success by working in support of economic opportunity or other community action programs directed to advance equal opportunity in government;

(f) Providing excellent leadership in creative development of successful recruitment or training programs to promote equal opportunity; e.g., skill enhancement or self-marketing for lower-graded and underutilized employees or creative modules for enhancing appreciation of cultural differences; and

(g) Achieving outstanding success in working with educational institutions to encourage qualified minorities, women and persons with disabilities to apply for middle or higher level or shortage category jobs.

(4) Group. This Award recognizes any assembly of persons gathered to resolve any matter(s) having equal opportunity implications that impact on the employment and advancement of minorities, women, or people with disabilities in the EPA's workforce. A group may include any of the persons described in categories 1 through 3 that are within a single organization or are from a combination of organizations throughout the EPA.

This Award acknowledges and encourages outstanding accomplishments in furthering equal employment opportunity objectives. The achievements of the group should be evaluated against a standard of excellence rather than in comparison to other groups, individuals, or organizations. If no group has presented accomplishments which meet the standard, the award will not be presented. To merit the Award, the group must have contributed to at least three of the following:

(a) A significant improvement in the number and percentage of minorities, women, or persons with disabilities in occupational categories where they are under-represented or under-utilized;

(b) A significant net gain in representation of women, minorities, or persons with disabilities in positions of influence (grades 13 through SES);

(c) The planning, development, and/or administration of: outreach programs designed to attract qualified minorities and women to non-traditional positions, or positions in which they are under-utilized; career days; conferences and/or conventions in support of equal opportunity program goals and objectives; partnership programs such as Cooperative Education Summer Internships, Management Internships, Minority Apprenticeships, Faculty Internships, etc. designed to enhance the employment and advancement of minorities, women, and/or persons with disabilities; or special emphasis programs observances which focus on the culture and contributions of minorities, women, and people with disabilities;

(d) The development and/or implementation of management strategies designed to enhance the employment and advancement of minorities, women, and/or persons with disabilities;

(e) The adjustment and progress of minorities, women and/or persons with disabilities on the job; and

(f) The promotion of the equal opportunity program which results in a better understanding of program objectives and support for the program by management officials and employees.

c. Nomination Procedure. For all categories, provisions in subparagraph 7.c apply.

12. GLEND A. FARMER AWARD FOR PROFESSIONALISM.

a. Description. This Award consists of a plaque presented by the Administrator at the Annual Honor Awards Ceremony. It is named for Glenda A. Farmer, a charter member of EPA and an employee in the Office of General Counsel, who always demonstrated the dedication and professionalism that served as a model for other employees.

b. Eligibility and Criteria. This Award may be granted to an EPA employee who is working in a clerical, administrative or technical support position (generally in grades GS/GM-1 through GS/GM-11 and Wage Grade equivalents) for exceptional service and demonstration of professional support qualities contributing to the accomplishment of EPA's mission. Achievements should be such that Agency-wide recognition is appropriate. Nominees must have completed three years of service with EPA and have performed the duties being recognized for a minimum of one year. Examples of such services and qualities include:

(1) Outstanding leadership skills and abilities that show commitment to team building, especially Quality Management (QM) efforts; communication in all aspects as related to support positions; commitment to equal opportunity and fairness in all relationships with all employees, empowering employee decision-making and commitment to continuous improvement to the efficiency of office operations.

(2) Demonstration of a good disposition, courtesy, stability and assertiveness that go well beyond the assigned duties and responsibilities.

(3) Demonstration of outstanding performance in four specific skills dealing with on-the-job situations.

(a) Technical skills (as related to the automated office);

(b) Interpersonal skills (relationships dealing with selecting, motivating and leading other employees);

(c) Conceptual skills (ability to see the total organizational picture by integrating and coordinating a large number of activities); and

(d) Diagnostic skills (ability to quickly get at the true cause of a situation through a maze of data observations and facts).

c. Nomination Procedures. Provisions in subparagraph 7.c. apply.

13. F. HENRY HABICHT II AWARD FOR QUALITY AND INNOVATION.

a. Description. This Award consists of a plaque presented at the EPA Annual Honor Awards Ceremony to recognize outstanding leadership and commitment to continuous improvement in the way EPA does business through Quality Management. It is named for former Deputy Administrator, Hank Habicht, whose leadership and support helped establish the principles and importance of quality management in EPA.

b. Eligibility and Criteria. This award may be presented to any EPA employee up through the Senior Executive Service level who has demonstrated a commitment to quality by leading change and innovation, building teams, developing and empowering people, managing diversity, and improving the way EPA does business. Credit should not be given to unsupported assertions or planned future activities. Examples include:

(1) Creating an environment which results in innovation, pride in work, trust, belief in continuous

improvements through such activities as open communication, information sharing, and cooperation across the organization.

(2) Demonstrated use of training for the development of the workforce.

(3) Visible active involvement in quality related activities and/or the use of strategies/actions to involve the organization to ensure that the quality of information, products, and services are assured, assessed and improved.

(4) Use of data for key organizational measures of quality, timeliness, and/or productivity in addition to use of data to determine the level of internal or external customer satisfaction.

c. Nomination Procedure. Provisions in subparagraph 7.c apply.

14. BARBARA METZGER ENVIRONMENTAL DATA QUALITY ASSURANCE
MANAGER AWARD.

a. Description. This Award consists of a plaque presented by the Administrator at the EPA Annual Honor Awards Ceremony to recognize an individual who has demonstrated outstanding leadership and accomplishments in the field of data quality assurance management at EPA.

b. Eligibility and Criteria. The Agency may grant this award annually to any EPA employee through the Senior Executive Service level except those of the Quality Assurance Division. Previous winners of the award are not eligible. Nominations should include a description of the nominee's personal contributions to improving the quality of EPA's environmental data operations and the benefits derived by the contribution. Examples include:

(1) Promotion of broader understanding of the value and benefits of quality assurance (as opposed to quality control).

(2) Promotion of cross-organizational cooperation and dialogue on data quality assurance issues.

(3) Demonstrated success in the implementation of uniquely valuable data quality assurance concepts, procedures, or tools.

c. Nomination Procedure. Provisions of subparagraph 3.c apply. In addition, a review panel comprised of Headquarters and Regional officials reviews all nominations and submits the nomination to the Agency Honor Awards Program Office.

15. JAMES W. CRAIG POLLUTION PREVENTION LEADERSHIP AWARD.

a. Description. This Award consists of a plaque presented by the Administrator at the Annual Honor Awards Ceremony to recognize the demonstration of exceptional efforts and accomplishments in the advancement of pollution prevention in EPA's core programs.

b. Eligibility and Criteria. The Agency may grant this award annually to any employee through GS/GM-15 who has brought about fundamental and sustained improvement in the Agency's core programs and processes through the identification and integration of practical pollution prevention solutions to environmental problems. This can be accomplished through improved project management, by fostering new technology or applying administrative enhancements. The award may be granted to an individual or to co-leaders whose efforts have resulted in real and substantial improvements in environmental management and performance. Co-leaders are defined as 2-3 individuals whose work and efforts are determined to be inseparable and equal. Examples include:

(1) Success in creating and applying a new approach in an Agency regulatory standard, permit or other activity which promotes pollution prevention, especially an approach that could be more widely applied in EPA's air, water, solid waste, pesticides, toxic substances or multimedia field programs.

(2) The development of an enforcement settlement or other compliance activity that will effectively eliminate any future pollution from a source and that may be applied to subsequent classes of enforcement cases.

(3) The development and implementation of a partnership program with industry and others that effectively reduces or eliminates pollution in an industry and may serve as a model for other sectors.

(4) The establishment of new approaches that demonstrate the source reduction benefits of doing our business a different way, such as through improved EPA administrative processes (accounting, procurement, etc.) and in partnership projects with other Federal agencies.

c. Nomination Procedure. Provisions in subparagraph 7.c apply.

16. EPA SCIENCE ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS.

a. Description. These Awards consist of plaques presented at the EPA Annual Honor Awards Ceremony to recognize employees who have excelled in scientific and technical disciplines.

Awards are given in conjunction with appropriate professional societies or associations who participate in the selection process.

b. Eligibility and Criteria. The Award may be presented to any EPA employee through the Senior Executive service level who has excelled in a scientific or technical area related to the broad field of environmental protection. Accomplishments may be in research or in regulation development, implementation or enforcement. The award may be granted to more than one EPA employee or group. Examples include:

(1) the extent to which environmental protection in the scientific/technical area has been strengthened or advanced by the particular achievement;

(2) the extent to which ideas, concepts, etc. represent originality, creativity, and/or initiative;

(3) Outstanding record of advancing the state of the art in the scientific/technical area;

(4) major accomplishments in the scientific/technical area that directly contributed to major progress for the agency in meeting its mission of protecting human health and the environment; and

(5) the extent of recognition received from scientific/technical organizations outside of the Agency.

c. Nomination Procedure. Nominations for these Awards are solicited annually in conjunction with the Annual Honor Awards Ceremony. Special nomination forms and instructions are provided at that time. A review panel comprised of Headquarters and Regional Officials and appropriate professional society or association representatives reviews the nominations and recommends finalist(s) for each category to the Administrator for approval.

17. CONTRACTS MANAGEMENT AWARDS.

a. Description. This Award consists of a plaque presented at the EPA Annual Honor Awards Ceremony. This Award provides a special means of recognition for employees who have excelled in the effective management of the Agency's contracts and whose extraordinary efforts have resulted in improved methods to manage contracts, or in significant cost saving realized on one or more individual contracts, or in other substantial benefits to EPA.

b. Eligibility and Criteria. The Award may be granted to more than one EPA employee or group through the Senior Executive Service level. Nominees must be directly involved in the placement, management or administrative functions, of contracts,

or in a supervisory capacity over such functions, and must have made an accomplishment of the following nature:

(1) Achievement must have received critical acceptance within the recipient's organization and in the EPA procurement community.

(2) Achievement must have significant benefit to the Agency.

(3) Achievement must have either broad-based applications throughout a major Agency program or contract activity, or a broad-based application within the recipient's organization or result in the delivery of goods and/or services significantly exceeding expectations or in significant cost savings to the Government.

c. Nomination Procedure. Nominations for these awards are solicited annually in conjunction with the Annual Honor Awards Ceremony. Special nomination forms and instructions are provided at that time. A review Panel comprised of Headquarters and Regional Officials reviews the nominations and recommends finalist(s) to the Administrator for approval.

CHAPTER 3-INFORMAL RECOGNITION/NON MONETARY AWARDS

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CHAPTER 3 - INFORMAL RECOGNITION/NON MONETARY AWARDS

1. GENERAL. Recognition of employee accomplishments is a basic function of all managers and supervisors, and a basic element in maintaining an effective workforce. The Agency encourages and expects managers and supervisors to recognize employee accomplishments using appropriate authorities and awards.

2. CRITERIA.

In general, Informal Non-monetary Awards should be used to recognize accomplishments that are of lesser scope compared to the accomplishments that are recognized by other kinds of awards discussed in this manual. An Informal Non-monetary Award is a wonderful way to recognize an accomplishment that would otherwise went unacknowledged.

The accomplishments appropriate for this Award must be related to specific work achievements and time frames; and related to a specific employee, team or group.

Local officials may also grant Informal Non-monetary Awards which are not strictly related to an employee's assigned duties and responsibilities. Depending on local circumstances and the judgement of approving officials, it may be appropriate to use an Informal Non-monetary Award to recognize an employee's accomplishment connected to equal employment opportunity activities, community service that enhances public awareness of the Agency's mission, or similar types of activities.

3. APPROVING OFFICIALS. All managers and Supervisors can be the approving officials of the Informal Non-monetary Awards, usually for their immediate subordinates.

4. PROCEDURES.

a. General. The primary characteristic of Informal Non-monetary Awards is informality. Therefore, procedures connected with informal awards, unless otherwise specified, are informal, subject to local officials and local conditions.

b. Nominations. There is no requirement that informal non-monetary awards must have a nominating procedure. However, if nominations are solicited, local officials must assure that the following are clearly explained to affected employees: criteria and eligibility for the particular award, the nomination procedure, and the outcome of nominations, i.e. the name of the award recipient and the date of the award.

c. Records. There is no requirement for formal record keeping or documentation except where procurement and/or other policies require documentation to support expenditures.

d. Approval. Informal Non-monetary Awards are approved by the immediate supervisor of the award recipient.

e. Presentation. When presenting the Informal/Non-monetary Awards, managers must do so in public, generally in a setting that includes, at a minimum, immediate co-workers of the awardees. Efforts should be made to convey to the awardees that their contributions are just as important, appreciated and valued as contributions for other types of formal/monetary awards.

5. MONETARY LIMITATIONS AND CONTROLS.

a. Funding Control Mechanisms. It is the responsibility of each organization to have funding control mechanisms in place related to the purchase of items for Informal Non-monetary Awards.

b. Source of Funds. Monetary Awards are funded from the PC&B (Personnel Compensation and Benefits) budget object class. However, Informal Non-monetary Awards must be funded from budget object classes other than PC&B and must be in compliance with Agency procurement policies.

6. CHARACTERISTICS OF ITEMS USED AS A NON-MONETARY AWARD.

Whenever an Informal Non-monetary Award is given, it must include an item or memento which is given to the award recipient. The item or memento must have the following characteristics:

____a. Nominal Value. The item shall not have a cash value over \$75.00.

b. Appropriateness. The item must have an appropriate form to be used in the public sector and to be purchased with public funds.

c. Finite. A Non-monetary Award may be selected from a wide range of material items or may be an event, service or temporary privilege (see Paragraph 7 below for examples). The item given must be either a specific material object, or a specific event, service or privilege with a clear definition, time frame and end date.

7. EXAMPLES OF INFORMAL NON-MONETARY AWARDS. It should be noted that the presentation and publicity associated with a particular item is integral to the informal award and must be considered and planned with the same concern as the selection of the award item. In addition, selected items or memento must conform to all cash value and nominal value limitations in paragraph 6 of this Chapter. The following are examples of Informal Non-monetary Awards:

- Portfolio with team logo inscribed
- Tee shirts with EPA logo or team logo
- Coffee mugs with EPA logo
- Trophy
- Reserved parking space for a week or month, where appropriate based on locale
- Mentoring for one-year from a senior official
- Certificates
- Team banners
- Team mouse pads
- Team office luncheon
- Gift certificates
- Attend the staff meetings of senior management for one month
- Attend the staff meeting of senior scientists for one month
- Employee of the quarter, week, month or year (photo, certificate, announcement in newsletter)
- Wooden desk clock with team logo name scribed
- Desk calendar, clock, pen, writing pad with team logo
- Personalized cartoon
- Spend one day participating or observing special equipment or functions-- installation of computer modules, operation of a spectrograph, presentation of legal arguments in open court
- event tickets (including sporting events, movies, and theater)

CHAPTER 4 - MONETARY AWARDS

PARAGRAPH TITLES	PARAGRAPH NUMBERS
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Peer Nominations	4
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FIGURE TITLE	FIGURE NUMBER
Recommendation for Incentive Recognition Form (3130-1)	4-8A
Table #1--Guidelines for Monetary Awards Based on Tangible Benefits	4-8B
Table #2--Guidelines for Monetary Awards Based on Intangible Benefits (i.e. Suggestions, S-Award, Team Award and On-the-Spot Award)	4-8C
Table #3--Guidelines for Monetary Awards Based on Intangible Benefits (i.e. Suggestions, Q-Award and Team Award)	4-8D

CHAPTER 4 - MONETARY AWARDS

1. GENERAL. Monetary Awards are used to recognize employees who perform assigned duties and/or accomplish special assignments or other mission-related work in an exemplary and noteworthy manner. Monetary awards are intended to reward and recognize employee actions and accomplishments that serve the public interest related to official employment.

2. REFERENCE. Paragraph 3 in this chapter is written in accordance with Delegation 1-15, Monetary Awards, of the Agency Delegations Manual.

3. RECOMMENDING AND APPROVING OFFICIALS.

a. General. All Monetary Awards, must have a supervisor as the recommending official and a higher level supervisor as the approving official except in two situations cited in subparagraph 3.c. below. Only supervisory officials are permitted to recommend or approve Monetary Awards.

b. Delegation of authority. Awards up to \$10,000 is redelegated to Assistant Administrators, the General Counsel, the Chief Financial Officer, Regional Administrators and the Inspector General for their respective jurisdictions. In turn, the above officials may further redelegate their authority as follows:

(1) The authority to approve Awards up to \$5,000 may be redelegated to the Associate Administrators, Heads of Staff Offices in the Office of the Administrator and Headquarters and Regional Office Directors or equivalent. This authority may be further redelegated to Headquarters and Regional Division Directors or equivalent and it may not be redelegated further.

(2) The authority to approve Awards up to \$4,000 may be redelegated, through the officials cited in 3.b.(1) above, to supervisors below the level of these officials and it may not be redelegated further.

(3) The authority to approve Awards up to \$3,000 may be redelegated, through the officials cited in subparagraph 3.b.(2) above, to supervisors below the level of these officials and it may not be redelegated further.

(4) The authority to approve Awards up to \$2,000 may be redelegated, through the officials cited in subparagraph 3.b.(3) above, to the lowest level supervisor within an organization and it may not be redelegated further.

(5) Awards above \$10,000

(a) Initial recommendation for such awards may be made to the Administrator by Assistant Administrators, the General Counsel, the Chief Financial Officer, Regional Administrators and the Inspector General only.

(b) Must be reviewed by the Director, Office of Human Resources and Organizational Services.

(c) Must be formally recommended by the Administrator before forwarding:

1 to the Office of Personnel Management for approval for awards between \$10,001 and \$25,000.

2 to the President of the United States for approval through the Office of Personnel Management for awards above \$25,000.

c. Recommending Officials. All Monetary Awards must have a supervisor as the recommending official and a different and higher level supervisor as the approving official with the exceptions listed below:

(1) Awards up to \$10,000 may be approved, without any lower supervisor recommendation, by the Administrator, Deputy Administrator, Assistant Administrators, the General Counsel, the Chief Financial Officer, the Regional Administrators and the Inspector General for their respective jurisdictions.

(2) Awards up to \$2,000 may be recommended and approved of by the same supervisor for his/her immediate subordinates.

4. PEER NOMINATIONS.

a. Definition. The process whereby a non-supervisory employee may nominate another non-supervisory employee for a Monetary Award up to \$250, or for an Informal Non-monetary Award.

b. Limitations. The nominator and the nominee must be in the same AA/RA or on the same team.

c. Reviewing, Recommending and Approving. Peer nominations will be submitted to the immediate supervisor of the nominee. The immediate supervisor may consult on the nomination with other supervisors or officials as appropriate. The immediate

supervisor will review the nomination and either disapprove the nomination, or endorse the nomination, as recommending official, and forward it to an approving official. The recommending and approving officials for peer nominations are the same officials as listed above for Monetary Awards (Paragraph 2 above), and, for Informal Non-monetary Awards (paragraph 3 above).

d. Procedures for Submission. Peer nominations will follow the same procedures for submission as the procedures for monetary awards and for informal non-monetary awards as listed in this manual--including completion of required forms and narrative justifications (see Form 3130, Figure 4-8A). Local Human Resources Officers may establish any additional procedures and time frames as necessary to insure efficient consideration and processing of peer nominations.

5. MONETARY LIMITATIONS AND CONTROLS.

a. Funding Control Mechanisms. It is the responsibility of each organization to have funding control mechanisms in place that will preclude the approval of awards that exceed available monies

b. Limitation on Maximum Cash Value of Monetary Awards Per Individual. An employee shall not receive Monetary Awards that exceed 20% of the employee's base pay during the same fiscal year. However, it should be noted that a Quality Step Increase (discussed in Chapter 5) that increases one's base salary should not be used for the calculation of the limitation on maximum cash value of Monetary Awards.

c. Exceptions to the Maximum Cash Value Limitation. Exceptions to the 20% limitation may be approved, in writing, only when the additions to base salary within a fiscal year derive from Monetary Awards granted for suggestions, inventions or patents. The officials who may approve exceptions to the 20% limitation are: the Administrator, Deputy Administrator, appropriate Assistant Administrator, Associate Administrator, the General Counsel, the Inspector General, the Chief Financial Officer, or Regional Administrator.

d. Maximum Number of Monetary Awards Per Individual. There is no limit to the total number of Monetary Awards an employee may receive in any given period, either as an individual or as a member of a team, as long as the awards are for different contributions. Receipt of a Monetary Award does not preclude receipt of honorary recognition or a quality step increase based on other job responsibilities as long as the criteria for such recognition are met.

6. TYPES OF MONETARY AWARDS.

Many awards given in the Agency are Monetary Awards and they are: Quality Accomplishment Recognition Award (Q Award), Superior Accomplishment Recognition Award (S Award), Team Awards, and On the Spot Awards. Additionally, Suggestions, Patents and Inventions Awards can also be Monetary Awards (see Chapter 7 for details regarding these awards).

a. Quality Accomplishment Recognition Award (Q-Award).

(1) Criteria. (Value \$5,001 to \$10,000) This Award is given to recognize an employee or a team for their exceptional and rare accomplishments of extraordinary scope, impact, difficulty, and precedent. The accomplishments that are appropriate for this Award may include one-time special acts or exceptional performance of assigned duties for a period of at least 30 days or not more than one year. This Award is intended to recognize an employee or team which displays the highest level of accomplishment that can be achieved in the Agency. This Award is based on the value of tangible benefits, intangible benefits or a combination of the two (see Figures 4-8C and Figure 4-8D for guidance).

(2) Recommending and Approving Officials. The recommending and approving officials for Q-awards are: the Administrator, Deputy Administrator, Assistant Administrators, the General Counsel, the Inspector General, the Chief Financial Officer, and the Regional Administrators (see paragraph 3 in this Chapter for detailed guidance). Recommending and approving officials of the Q-Award should assure that the accomplishments considered for this award clearly exceed the criteria of the S-Award discussed below.

b. Superior Accomplishment Recognition Award (S-Award) Criteria.

(1) Criteria. (Value up to \$5,000) This Award is a suitable recognition for a one time special act, service or achievement of a non-recurring nature, and for high quality performance of assigned duties by an employee or a team of employees. This Award is based on the value of tangible benefits, intangible benefits or a combination of the two (see Figures 4-8C and 4-8D for guidance).

(2) Types of contributions appropriate for this Award

(a) Performance substantially beyond expectations for a period of time --not less than 30 days or more than one year-- of an employee's assigned duties and responsibilities;

(b) Performance substantially beyond expectations on a specific assignment or aspect of an assignment or job function that results in significant improvements in quality of operations;

(c) Specific scientific advancements or administrative improvements;

(d) Special accomplishments in affirmative action/equal employment opportunity;

(e) Acts of heroism connected to official employment;

(f) Outstanding or noteworthy publications;

(g) Improved service to the public; or

(h) Other achievements that significantly enhance effectiveness, efficiency or quality of operations, energy conservation or reduction in paperwork.

c. Team Awards.

(1) Criteria.

(a) General. The Team Award recognizes accomplishments which are the result of team effort. The criteria for a Team Award are the same as the criteria for individual awards, except that the accomplishments to be recognized are based on overall team effort. Q-Award, S-Award and On-the-spot Award can all be given as Team Awards when the contribution was a team contribution. Additionally, Patents and Inventions Awards can also be given as Team Awards (see Chapter 7 for details on these awards). Recommending and approving officials should judge and measure team accomplishments primarily in relation to the performance expectations in the team charter. The Team Awards are based on the value of tangible benefits, intangible benefits or a combination of the two (see Figures 4-8C and 4-8D for guidance).

(b) Purpose and Types of Teams. Team Awards are intended to recognize exemplary team accomplishments. Management may direct the use of teams for various purposes, including teams which are formed to accomplish a specific project within a specified time frame, and teams which are formed to work within a specific functional area and/or to provide specific services.

(2) Calculation of Monetary Value. The Monetary value of a Team Award is based on the value of the total team

accomplishment and is calculated as described in Paragraph 7 below. The calculated monetary value of the accomplishment will help determine the appropriate type of Monetary Award for the Team or Team Members, e.g On-the-Spot; S-Award, or Q-Award. However, the final determination of the appropriate award depends on sound judgement by the recommending and approving officials.

(3) Awards to a Team and Team Members. Approving officials must make two determinations on Monetary Awards to teams, in the following order: first, decide on the Monetary value of the team accomplishment; and second decide on the Monetary Awards to individual team members. Awards to team members may be in equal shares or different shares in proportion to the members contribution to the team accomplishments. For example: the accomplishment of a four member team is valued at \$2,000. The approving official may decide to award \$500 to each member (equal shares) or may decide to award \$600 to three members and \$200 to one member (different shares).

(4) Dollar Limits to Team Awards. Monetary Awards to teams must follow the same dollar limits as Monetary Awards to individuals. For example, a S-Award of \$5,000 given to a five-member team in equal amounts, the total award may not exceed \$5,000 and each team member's share may not exceed \$1,000.

d. On-the-Spot Awards.

(1) Criteria. (Value up to \$250) The criteria for On-the-Spot Award are the same as for the S-Award, except that this Award is limited to not more than \$250. It is intended to quickly recognize employees or teams for accomplishments that are generally modest and limited in scope. On-the-Spot awards are appropriate to recognize accomplishments with tangible/measurable benefits of up to \$2,500 and/or intangible benefits of substantial value/limited application or moderate value/intended benefit (see Figures 4-8C and 4-8D for guidance). On-the-Spot Awards should be given quickly after an employee's accomplishment is demonstrated.

7. TIME LIMITS FOR MONETARY AWARDS. Monetary Awards should be given as soon as possible, especially, in the case of accomplishments that are outside an employee's regularly assigned duties. Therefore, recommending officials should initiate Monetary Awards as soon as possible following the accomplishment. Ideally, awards should be presented to the employee within 30 to 60 days after the completion of the employee's accomplishment.

8. DETERMINING THE CASH VALUE OF MONETARY AWARDS.

a. Tangible Benefits. Tangible benefits must be established as a basis for an award whenever possible. Benefits are considered tangible when they can be shown that they have a measurable monetary value, and the documentation must be specific as to how the measurable benefits were calculated. The award usually is calculated on the basis of the actual or estimated "net" monetary benefits for the first full year of operation following the use of the contribution, i.e. implementing costs must be deducted from estimated savings. However, when substantial nonrecurring costs are involved in the implementation of a contribution and the contribution is expected to have a useful life of a number of years, the calculation of the amount of award should not be based on the first year benefits. Instead, the calculation of the award should be made based on the basis of average annual net benefits over a period of years not to exceed the reasonable life of the initial implementation (see Figures 4-8C and 4-8D for further guidance).

b. Intangible Benefits. When no measurable monetary benefits can be substantiated or the extent of tangible benefits is considered of little significance in relation to the total benefits, the value of an employee's accomplishment may be described in terms of intangible benefits. Good judgment must be the principal guide in setting values on accomplishments which do not result in benefits having a measurable monetary value, and the documentation must describe in specific terms how the benefits are to be realized. The following are important factors to be considered: significance of the contribution, importance of the program affected, and the extent of the accomplishment (see Figures 4-8C and 4-8D for guidance).

c. Combined Tangible and Intangible. Employee accomplishments may result in both tangible and intangible benefits. In evaluating this type of contribution, the extent of benefits in each of the two categories will be determined separately by applying the requirements set forth in subparagraphs 8.a. and 8.b. above. For contributions having both tangible and intangible benefits, the amount of award is based on the total value of the contribution to the Government, i.e. the award amount is based on the combination of tangible and intangible benefits.

9. PROCEDURES. The following procedures will apply:

a. Initiating the Award Recommendation. Supervisors may recommend an employee or a group of employees for a Monetary Award at any time during the year using EPA form 3130-1, Recommendation for Incentive Recognition. An additional narrative justification must accompany the form and it must describe the contribution in simple, factual terms, cite the

appropriate Tangible or Intangible Table used, state the tangible and/or intangible benefits and the basis for determining benefits. The minimum award that may be granted is \$25.00 based on tangible benefits estimated to be \$250.00, or intangible benefits of comparable value. Recommending officials will determine the amount of award using the guidance illustrated in Figures 4-8C and 4-8D.

b. Recommendations should be discussed with the operating Human Resources Officer or local awards coordinator and with the appropriate obligating funds official or budget official of the originating office prior to submission to the approving official.

c. Approving officials will review and approve or disapprove the awards using the EPA form 3130-1 (see Figure 4-8). Awards that are approved should be forwarded to the operating Human Resources Office for final processing subject to local procedures set by Financial Management Officials. Subject to local procedures set by Financial Management Officials, Human Resources Offices will forward the original, signed copy of the EPA form 3130-1 to the Payroll Office, EPA Headquarters, to substantiate payment of the Monetary Award.

d. A copy of the approved Recommendation for Incentive Recognition, form 3130-1a, will be filed in the employee's performance file.

EPA FORM 3130-RECOMMENDATION FOR INCENTIVE RECOGNITION

[DIRECTIONS: Check below as appropriate. Refer to EPA Manual 3130 for criteria. For monetary awards cite appropriate table extent and scope of intangible benefit in written description]

- ____ “Q” Award- QUALITY ACCOMPLISHMENT RECOGNITION AWARD. The Agency’s highest monetary award. Exceeds criteria for S-Award, for exceptional and rare accomplishments. (Attached detailed description of accomplishments)
- ____ QUALITY STEP INCREASE (QSI)- Step increase to base salary; based on high quality performance during most recent rating period of record; and, anticipated during next rating period. Employee may receive no more than one QSI in a 52 week period. (Attach completed EPA form 3130-QSI)
- ____ “S” Award-SPECIAL ACCOMPLISHMENT RECOGNITION AWARD–For noteworthy accomplishments including one-time acts or high quality performance. (Attach a brief description of accomplishment).
- ____ On-The-Spot (OTS) -- Same general criteria as S-Award, except intended to recognize modest accomplishments quickly. Maximum cash value: \$250. (Attach brief description of accomplishment)
- ____ TIME-OFF AWARD (TO)-- award of excused absence, in increments of from 1 hour to 40 hours, for noteworthy achievements, either one-time acts or performance. (Attach description of achievement)
- ____ “T” Award -TEAM AWARD -- For accomplishments by entire team, individual team members, and/or team peers on a team. (Attach a brief description of team achievement, as appropriate, description of individual member achievement & justification of cash amounts other than equal shares) (Indicate whether this is a “Q” or “S” Team award) ____
____ Award to entire Team ____ Award to individual Team Member(s)

INFORMATION ON RECIPIENT(S)

NAME _____

(For team awards attach a list showing: names, SSNs, position title, series, grade/step.)

ORGANIZATION AND LOCATION

SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER

TIMEKEEPER NO.

PERSON TO RECEIVE CHECK

PERIOD OF SERVICE ON WHICH AWARD IS BASED

FROM

TO

RECOMMENDED CASH AMOUNT OF MONETARY AWARD (Refer to Tables #1, #2 or #3)

TIME OFF	[S-Award, On-the-Spot, Suggestion or Q-Award]		
HRS.	TANGIBLE	INTANGIBLE	TOTAL
\$	\$	\$	

NOMINATING EMPLOYEE (PEER). RECOMMENDING, and APPROVING OFFICIALS (SUPERVISORS). OBLIGATING FUNDS OFFICIAL.

OFFICIAL

SIGNATURE

TITLE

DATE

NOMINATING EMPLOYEE (PEER)

RECOMMENDING OFFICIAL

APPROVING OFFICIAL

OBLIGATING FUNDS OFFICIAL

Financial and Accounting Data

LINE	DCN	BUDGET/FY	APPROP. CODE	BUDGET ORG/CODE	PROGRAM ELEMENT	OBJECT CLASS	SFO
AMOUNT	DOLLARS	CENTS	SITE/PROJ.	COST ORCGD	FUNDING APPROP. (%)		

Figure 4-8A

TABLE #1 -- GUIDELINES FOR MONETARY AWARDS BASED ON TANGIBLE BENEFITS (use for Suggestions, S-Award, Q-Award, Team Award and On-the-Spot Award)

Estimated first year benefits to government	Amount of award
Up to \$10,000 in benefits	10% of benefits
Between \$10,000 and \$100,000 in benefits	\$1,000, plus 3% to 10% of benefits over \$10,000
More than \$100,000 in benefits	\$3,700 to \$10,000*for the first \$100,000 in benefits plus 0.5% to 1.0% of benefits above \$100,000

***NOTE:** For awards over \$10,000, the approval authority is the Office of Personnel Management. For awards over \$25,000, the approval authority is the President of United States through the Office of Personnel Management.

Figure 4-8B

TABLE #2 -GUIDELINES FOR MONETARY AWARDS BASED ON INTANGIBLE BENEFITS (use for: Suggestions, S-Award, Team Award and On-the-Spot)

VALUE OF BENEFIT	EXTENT OF APPLICATION			
	LIMITED	EXTENDED	BROAD	GENERAL
	<p>The contribution affects the duties, work assignments, and employees of one division or office.</p> <p>A limited area pertaining to science, technology, a program, environmental or legal element that has been affected.</p>	<p>The contribution affects the duties, work assignments, and employees of multiple divisions or offices.</p> <p>A substantial area of science, technology, a program, environmental or legal element that has been affected.</p>	<p>The contribution affects the duties, work assignments, and employees of offices or larger organization.</p> <p>A broad area of science, technology, a program, environmental or legal element that has been affected.</p>	<p>The contribution affects the duties, work assignments, and employees of multiple agencies or are Agency-wide.</p> <p>An extensive area of science, technology, a program, environmental or legal element that has been affected.</p>
<p>MODERATE VALUE</p> <p>A limited contribution to a product, activity, program or service which improves the effectiveness, efficiency, quality, productivity, or service.</p> <p>A modification to an operating principle or procedure.</p>	\$25 -125	\$125-325	\$325-650	\$650 - 1,300
<p>SUBSTANTIAL VALUE</p> <p>A noteworthy contribution to a product, activity, program or service which improves the effectiveness, efficiency, quality, productivity, or service.</p> <p>A revision to a major part of an operating principle or procedure.</p>	\$125 - 325	\$325 - 650	\$650 - 1,300	\$1,300 - 3,100
<p>HIGH VALUE</p> <p>A superior contribution to a critical or sensitive product, activity, program or service which substantially improves the effectiveness, efficiency, quality, productivity or service.</p> <p>A complete revision of an operating principle or procedure.</p>	\$325 - 650	\$650 - 1,300	\$1,300 - 3,150	\$3,150 - 5,000
<p>EXCEPTIONAL VALUE</p> <p>An extraordinary contribution to a highly critical or highly sensitive product, activity, program, or service which defines a new standard of excellence for effectiveness, efficiency, quality, productivity or service.</p> <p>Initiation of a new principle or major procedure with extensive impact.</p>	\$650 - 1,300	\$1,300 - 3,150	\$3,150 - 5,000	This cell is not applicable to the S-Award.

Figure 4-8C

TABLE 3.--GUIDELINES FOR MONETARY AWARDS BASED ON INTANGIBLE BENEFITS (use for: Suggestions, Q-Award and Team Award)

VALUE OF BENEFIT	EXTENT OF APPLICATION	
	BROAD	GENERAL
	<p>The contribution affects the duties, work assignments, and employees of offices or larger organization.</p> <p>A broad area of science, technology, a program, legal or environmental element that has been affected.</p>	<p>The contribution affects the duties, work assignments, and employees of multiple agencies or are Agency-wide.</p> <p>An extensive area of science, technology, a program, legal or environmental element that has been affected.</p>
<p>HIGH VALUE</p> <p>A superior contribution to a critical or sensitive product, activity, program or service which substantially improves the effectiveness, efficiency, quality, productivity or service.</p> <p>A complete revision of operating principles or procedures.</p>	<p>This cell is not applicable for Suggestions, Team Award or Q-Award.</p>	<p>\$5,001 - \$6,300</p>
<p>EXCEPTIONAL VALUE</p> <p>An extraordinary contribution to a highly critical or highly sensitive product, activity, program, or service which defines a new standard of excellence for effectiveness, efficiency, quality, productivity or service.</p> <p>Initiation of a new principle or major procedure with extensive impact.</p>	<p>\$5,001 - \$6,300</p>	<p>\$6,300 - \$10,000</p>

Figure 4-8D

CHAPTER 5 - QUALITY STEP INCREASES

PARAGRAPH TITLE	PARAGRAPH NUMBERS
General	1
Approving and Recommending Officials	2
Criteria	3
Procedure	4
Effective Dates	5
Relation to Regular Within-Grade Increases	6

FIGURE TITLE	FIGURE NUMBERS
Quality Step Increase Justification (EPA Form 3130-QSI)	5-2a

Chapter 5 - QUALITY STEP INCREASES

1. GENERAL. Quality Step Increases (QSIs) are additional salary step increases granted for continuing high quality performance during a rating period and for expected maintenance of high quality performance over the next rating period. They may be granted only to General Schedule employees who occupy permanent positions, or who are serving in a term or Temporary Appointment Pending Establishment of a Register (TAPER) position, and are paid less than the maximum rate of their grade. QSIs, granted to employees at the statutory salary ceiling, will become effective only when the statutory salary limit is raised. An employee may receive only one QSI in any 52 week period. Agency employees on Intergovernmental Personnel Act assignments are not eligible for QSIs.

2. RECOMMENDING AND APPROVING OFFICIALS. The recommending official is the immediate supervisor of the employee being recommended for the QSI. The approving official is the next higher supervisor. A supervisor may not be both the approving and the recommending official except in the case of the Administrator, Deputy Administrator, and those officials reporting directly to the Administrator.

3. CRITERIA. A QSI may be granted to an employee when: (a) the employee's most recent performance rating of record is outstanding and the recommending official certifies the employee's performance was at a high level of performance during the period covered by the most recent rating; and (b) the recommending official anticipates that the employee's performance during next performance rating period will merit a successful rating, and will continue at a high level of performance.

4. PROCEDURE.

a. A QSI is granted in conjunction with the employee's annual performance appraisal, in which case, justification will normally be initiated by the immediate supervisor.

b. Recommending officials will complete EPA Form 3130-1a and EPA Form 3130-QSI for processing as follows:

(1) Approving officials will review and approve or disapprove recommendations using EPA Forms 3130-1a and 3130-QSI. Those that are approved should be forwarded to the servicing Human Resources Office for final processing. The servicing Human Resources Office will generate the necessary personnel action form in accordance with current PPL procedures.

(2) The original, approved copies of EPA Forms 3130-1a and 3130-QSI will be filed in the employee's performance file. A record of the award (i.e., SF-50) will be filed in the employee's official personnel folder.

5. EFFECTIVE DATES. Approved QSIs will be effective as soon as practicable after all approvals have been received.

6. RELATION TO REGULAR WITHIN-GRADE INCREASES. An employee who receives a QSI does not begin a new waiting period to meet the time requirements for a regular within-grade increase. However, if a QSI places an employee in the fourth or seventh step of the grade, the waiting period is extended by 52 weeks from the last within grade increase.

EPA FORM-3130-QSI

QUALITY STEP INCREASE (QSI) JUSTIFICATION

NAME: _____ OFFICE: _____ SSN: _____

CURRENT: _____

Series/grade/step/salary: _____

1. REQUIREMENTS and CRITERIA:

- Employee has received a rating of outstanding for the most recent performance rating period.
- Employee has accomplished assigned work during the most recent rating period which demonstrates high quality performance.
- It is anticipated that employee will maintain the same high quality performance during the next performance period.
- Employee has not received a QSI during the preceding 52 weeks and has not reached the maximum step in grade.

2. NARRATIVE JUSTIFICATION: Describe actual work accomplishments.

A. Work accomplishments during the most recent record of rating period:
Rating period: From: _____ To: _____.

B. Reasons/examples why supervisor anticipates that employee will maintain high level performance during the next performance rating period.

Next rating period: From: _____ To: _____

3. CERTIFICATION: The undersigned certify that the subject employee meets the above requirements for a QSI and that the narrative accurately reflects employees accomplishments.

Recommending Official

Date

Approving Official

Date

[Attach this form to completed Form EPA-3130-1)

CHAPTER 6 - CAREER SERVICE RECOGNITION

PARAGRAPH TITLES	PARAGRAPH NUMBERS
General	1
Length of Service Awards	2
Retirement Certificates	3

CHAPTER 6 - CAREER SERVICE RECOGNITION

1. GENERAL. EPA Length of Service and Retirement Certificates are granted to employees to recognize the significant milestones in their careers with the Federal government.

2. LENGTH OF SERVICE AWARDS. In computing eligibility for Length of Service awards, employees receive credit for total Federal Service, including civilian and all active honorable military service. Emblems and certificates are presented to employees at the completion of ten, twenty, thirty or forty years of service. An EPA plaque is also presented to those employees upon their completion of thirty or forty years of service.

a. Identification of Employees. Servicing Human Resources Officers/Human Resources Staff Directors are responsible for periodically identifying employees who qualify for Length of Service awards. The Human Resources Officers/Human Resources Staff Directors or his/her designee will inform the appropriate management officials of eligible employees, have the appropriate certificates prepared, furnish the necessary emblems, and assist in making arrangements for presentation of the awards.

b. Presentation.

(1) For Thirty and Forty Years. The Administrator will sign all certificates honoring employees for completion of thirty and forty years of service and will offer his/her congratulations in a letter to each eligible employee. To the extent possible, the Administrator will personally participate in planned awards ceremonies for presentation of certificates and emblems to employees who have achieved thirty and forty years of service.

(2) For Ten and Twenty Years. Assistant Administrators, Associate Administrators, the General Counsel, Regional Administrators, the Inspector General, the Chief Financial Officer, or Heads of Headquarters Staff Offices should sign certificates for employees under their jurisdiction completing ten and twenty years of service. This authority may be delegated to division and laboratory directors. Certificates and emblems will be presented in an appropriate manner.

c. Presentation of Certificates. Human Resources Officers/Human Resources Staff Directors or their designees are responsible for having the employee's name and the title of the signatory lettered in the appropriate places on the certificate. They are also responsible for providing the plan for presentation

and the certificates for the Administrator's signature four weeks prior to the planned presentation date.

3. RETIREMENT CERTIFICATES. The Certificate of Retirement is appropriate for presentation at the time when an employee retires. Certificates should be signed by an Agency official designated in subparagraph 2.b.(2) above. The retiree's organization should send requests for retirement certificates to the servicing personnel office, allowing adequate time for processing.

_____a. Processing.

(1) A request for a retirement certificate should include the following information necessary to complete the certificate:

- (a) Name of employee;
- (b) Date (either the retirement or presentation date); and
- (c) Title of signatory.

(2) The Human Resources officer or his/her designee will arrange for the lettering of the certificate and will secure the appropriate signature.

b. Presentation. Each office will determine its own procedures for presentation of the Certificate of Retirement.

CHAPTER 7 - SUGGESTIONS, PATENTS & INVENTIONS

PARAGRAPH TITLES	PARAGRAPH NUMBERS
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General	1
Requirements	2
Submitting Suggestions	3
Evaluation of Suggestions	4
Processing Adopted Suggestions	5
Processing Non-adopted Suggestions	6
Requests for Reconsideration after Rejection	7
Funding of Awards	8
Additional Awards	9
Group Awards	10
Time Limitations	11
Patents and Inventions	12

FIGURE TITLE	FIGURE NUMBERS
-----------------	-------------------

EPA Form 3130-2, "Employee Suggestion Form"	7-1 & 1a
EPA Form 3130-3, "Suggestion Record and Evaluation"	7-2, 2a & 2b
EPA Form 3130-4, "Certification of Approval for Payment of Suggestion Award"	7-3

CHAPTER 7 - SUGGESTIONS, PATENTS AND INVENTIONS

1. GENERAL.

a. The EPA suggestion system is an organized method for soliciting constructive ideas that will benefit the Agency and reward the originator. It provides an incentive for employees to demonstrate initiative and creativity beyond normal job requirements because those whose ideas are adopted receive personal recognition and, when appropriate, cash awards. All Agency employees are eligible to participate in the suggestion program.

b. A constructive idea (or invention), conceived by an employee or a group of employees, may be submitted to management for evaluation and consideration for adoption. An employee suggestion should improve methods, equipment or procedures to reduce time or cost or increase effectiveness of operations. It may save materials, money, manpower or property; conserve energy; reduce paperwork; or improve service to the public.

c. Designated local Recognition Coordinators in servicing Human Resources Offices are responsible for oversight of the suggestion program in their respective areas.

d. Supervisors will periodically inform their employees of the Agency's interest in their ideas and will assist employees in developing suggestions for submission.

2. REQUIREMENTS.

a. To be processed through the employee suggestion system, a proposal must directly contribute to efficiency or economy or increase the effectiveness of Government programs and missions. The proposal should have measurable (tangible) dollar benefits of at least \$250.00 for the first year after adoption or intangible benefits of comparable value. A proposal may also be based on a combination of tangible and intangible benefits totaling at least \$250.00. Ideas related to services or benefits to employees, routine safety practices, working conditions, buildings and grounds maintenance, and housekeeping will be handled through administrative channels instead of the suggestion program, unless the employee demonstrates that tangible savings of at least \$250.00 will be realized.

b. A suggestion does not have to be new or unique as long as it is beneficial to Agency or government operations. It may be adopted in its entirety or in part. Awards are based on the

degree of benefit derived from the ideas which are adopted as a result of a suggestion.

c. A suggestion may be processed if it is job related, but not if it actually comes within an employee's assigned job requirements. For example, an employee in an occupation concerned with methods or systems improvement, or in a supervisory or managerial position where he or she is expected to make operational improvements may not be eligible for a cash suggestion award if the contribution is clearly within assigned job responsibilities. A contribution that is determined to be within an employee's job responsibilities, but so superior as to warrant special recognition, may be considered for a performance or honor award.

d. An employee idea informally communicated to management, and adopted, may be documented later by the employee and submitted as a suggestion. A suggestion award may be granted or the idea may form the basis for a special act or service award if adopting officials consider this to be a more appropriate way to recognize the contribution. To protect an employee's rights to a suggestion, management officials who adopt an idea communicated informally should urge the employee to submit it as a suggestion immediately. An award may be given to the suggester provided he/she submits the suggestion within 6 months from the date the idea was implemented.

3. SUBMITTING SUGGESTIONS.

a. Initial Submission. An employee will submit an original and one copy of his/her suggestion on EPA Form 3130-2, Employee Suggestion Form, Figure 7-1, or an appropriate electronic facsimile preferably typed. Unsigned suggestions will not be accepted. The completed suggestion form must be submitted to the immediate supervisor. The immediate supervisor will forward the suggestion to local Awards Coordinator/Headquarters Awards Coordinator after determining the eligibility, making no additional determinations at that time. Further determinations and evaluations will be made by following section 3.a.(2)below. For suggestions which may constitute patentable inventions, an additional copy of EPA Form 3130-2 should be submitted to the Patent Counsel, Office of General Counsel in Headquarters. After a review of the form, the Patent Counsel may request the inventor to complete and submit EPA Form 3340-1, Employee Report of Invention. Any new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter, or any new and useful improvement thereof, may constitute a patentable invention.

(1) Immediate supervisors who receive a suggestion must determine if it is an eligible suggestion as defined in paragraph 1b of this Chapter and if it meets the requirements stated in paragraph 2. Supervisors may send the suggestion directly to the local Awards Coordinator, or review it themselves if applicable to their operation and then refer the suggestion with comments to the local Awards Coordinator. If the immediate supervisor has authority to adopt and implement the suggestion, as stated in paragraph 4 of this Chapter, he or she must complete EPA Form 3130-3, Suggestion Record and Evaluation, Figure 7-2, and then submit the suggestion, with a recommendation to adopt or not adopt, to the local Awards Coordinator.

(2) The local Awards Coordinator who receives a suggestion, ascertains whether it is an eligible suggestion, and if so, acknowledges its receipt, makes a control record, and refers it for evaluation to the management official who would have the authority to adopt it (see paragraph 4 below). Suggestions will be assigned code numbers for control purposes. Each Awards Coordinator will develop a code appropriate to his/her local area, which will be clearly distinguishable no matter where a suggestion is referred. Examples of assignment numbers: RTF-(FY-last 2 digits) - (no.), RGI-(FY-last 2 digits)(no.), etc.

b. Intra-Agency Referrals. Suggestions originating in field locations which must be approved at Headquarters (including submissions for Agency-wide consideration) will be sent by the appropriate field Awards Coordinator to the Headquarters Awards Coordinator for referral.

c. Duplicate Suggestions. If two or more substantially identical suggestions are received on the same date, the suggestion bearing the earliest date of signature by the suggester will be considered to be the original suggestion. The later suggestion will be returned to the suggester without evaluation, explaining that it is not eligible because it is a duplicate of a suggestion already received and open for evaluation. If two identical suggestions are received on the same date, but one has no date of signature, they will be treated as a joint suggestion. If the dates of the signatures on both suggestions are the same, they will also be treated as a joint suggestion for purposes of evaluation. The award amount if any, will be divided equally between the suggesters.

d. Interdepartmental Referrals. Incoming interdepartmental referrals of suggestions will be accepted for consideration only if received from other agency suggestion systems or through Office of Personnel Management channels. Suggestions submitted directly from employees of other agencies will be returned to them. Ideas originating with EPA employees which the Evaluator or the awards Coordinator believe may be useful to other

agencies, or which relate wholly or in part to work of other agencies, will be sent by the local Awards Coordinator to the Headquarters Awards Coordinator for referral to the Office of Personnel Management or directly to the agency (or agencies) concerned, as prescribed by Office of Personnel Management regulations.

4. EVALUATION OF SUGGESTIONS. All suggestions must be evaluated by a qualified official (the evaluator), at division level or higher, who determines if a suggestion is of value and should be adopted, and who is able to implement it or to authorize implementation and the expenditure of funds for payment of an award. Evaluators may request other officials to make informal reviews or evaluations of suggestions in areas in which they have technical competence and expertise, as a part of the total evaluation. (Copies of evaluation procedures may be obtained from Headquarters Awards Coordinator.)

a. Recording the Evaluation. The Evaluator should use EPA Form 3130-3, Suggestion Record and Evaluation, Figure 7-2, and prepare a response that is comprehensive enough to let the suggester know the reason for adoption or non adoption of the suggestion. The Evaluator must return the evaluation to the local Awards Coordinator within 30 days after receiving it stating the decision for adoption or rejection. The evaluator must give a thorough reply to the suggester and, if the Evaluator recommends adoption, an estimation of the first-year tangible and/or intangible benefits must be included. If adopted, the suggestion will be certified by the Headquarters Awards Coordinator for an award based upon the estimated benefits. If the evaluation is not deemed responsive to the suggestion or is not complete, the local Awards Coordinator may return it for reevaluation or additional information.

b. Determining Value of Contributions

(1) Tangible Benefits. Tangible benefits must be established as a basis for an award whenever possible. Benefits are considered tangible when they can be shown that they have a measurable monetary value, and the documentation must be specific as to how the measurable benefits were calculated. The award usually is calculated on the basis of the actual or estimated "net" monetary benefits for the first full year of operation following the use of the contribution, i.e. implementing costs must be deducted from estimated savings. However, when substantial nonrecurring costs are involved in the implementation of a contribution and the contribution is expected to have a useful life of a number of years, the calculation of the amount of award should not be based on the first year benefits. Instead, the calculation of the award should be made based on the basis of average annual net benefits over a period of years not

to exceed the reasonable life of the initial implementation (see Figures 4-8C and 4-8D for guidance).

(2) Intangible Benefits. When no measurable monetary benefits can be substantiated or the extent of tangible benefits is considered of little significance in relation to the total benefits, the value of a suggestion may be described in terms of intangible benefits. Good judgment must be the principal guide in setting values on suggestion which do not result in benefits having a measurable monetary value, and the documentation must describe in specific terms how the benefits are to be realized. The following are important factors to be considered: significance of the contribution, importance of the program affected, and the extent of the accomplishment (see Figures 4-8C and 4-8D for further guidance).

(3) Combined Tangible and Intangible. Some suggestions may result in both tangible and intangible benefits. In evaluating this type of contribution, the extent of benefits in each of the two categories will be determined separately by applying the requirements set forth in subparagraphs 4.b.(1) and 4.b.(2) above. For suggestions having both tangible and intangible benefits, the amount of award is based on the total value of the suggestion to the Government, i.e. the award amount is based on the combination of tangible and intangible benefits.

5. PROCESSING ADOPTED SUGGESTIONS.

a. Upon receipt of the completed evaluation indicating that the suggestion has been adopted or will be implemented, the local Awards Coordinator will, in conjunction with the Evaluator, determine eligibility for an award based on the estimated tangible and/or intangible benefits. If the amount of the benefits is less than \$250.00, a cash award may not be authorized, and the Award Coordinator and Evaluator will recommend another appropriate form of recognition, such as a Letter of Commendation, etc. A copy of any commendation letter or notation of any non-cash recognition will be placed in the employee's official personnel folder as a permanent record. If a cash award is warranted, the Awards Coordinator and the Evaluator will jointly recommend the amount and the account to be charged.

b. The local Awards Coordinator will forward the suggestion file, including the suggestion form, evaluation and cash award recommendation, and EPA Form 3130-4 (Figure 7-3) authorizing payment of the award, to the appropriate approving official. Suggestion awards are approved in accordance with Delegation 1-15, Monetary Awards, of the Agency Delegations Manual. The delegation of authority for approving Suggestion awards is as follows:

(1) Awards up to \$10,000 is redelegated to Assistant Administrators, the General Counsel, the Chief Financial Officer, Regional Administrators and the Inspector General for their respective jurisdictions. In turn, the above officials may further redelegate their authority as follows:

(a) The authority to approve Awards up to \$5,000 may be redelegated to the Associate Administrators, Heads of Staff Offices in the Office of the Administrator and Headquarters and Regional Office Directors or equivalent. This authority may be further redelegated to Headquarters and Regional Division Directors or equivalent and it may not be redelegated further.

(b) The authority to approve Awards up to \$4,000 may be redelegated, through the officials cited in 5.b.(1)(a) above, to supervisors below the level of these officials and it may not be redelegated further.

(c) The authority to approve Awards up to \$3,000 may be redelegated, through the officials cited in subparagraph 5.b.(1)(b) above, to supervisors below the level of these officials and it may not be redelegated further.

(d) The authority to approve Awards up to \$2,000 may be redelegated, through the officials cited in subparagraph 5.b.(1)(c) above, to the lowest level supervisor within an organization and it may not be redelegated further.

(2) Awards above \$10,000

(a) Initial recommendation for such awards may be made to the Administrator by Assistant Administrators, the General Counsel, the Chief Financial Officer, Regional Administrators and the Inspector General only.

(b) Must be reviewed by the Director, Office of Human Resources and Organizational Services.

(c) Must be formally recommended by the Administrator before forwarding:

1 to the Office of Personnel Management for approval for awards between \$10,001 and \$25,000.

2 to the President of the United States for approval through the Office of Personnel Management for awards above \$25,000.

c. If the suggestion appears to have applicability beyond the location where it was originally adopted, the local Awards Coordinator may refer it to other locations for additional evaluation. The suggester should be notified if such action is taken. If the suggestion is adopted at other locations, it must be reprocessed for an additional award based on the additional benefits to the Government (See paragraph 9 of this Chapter).

d. Certificates will be given to employees whose suggestions meet the minimum requirements for cash awards. Award payments will be made to the employee in the same manner as the employee receives his or her payroll payments, i.e. by direct deposit or check.

e. Acceptance of a cash award by an employee constitutes an agreement between the employee and the Agency, that the use of the idea, method or device for which the award is not the basis for any further claim against the Government by the employee, his or her heirs, or assigns. Once an award is made, the suggestion becomes the exclusive property of the U.S. Government.

6. PROCESSING NON-ADOPTED SUGGESTIONS. When a suggestion is not adopted, the evaluator must respond in writing, written in a positive tone, to the local Awards Coordinators. They will then notify suggesters by memorandum when suggestions are not adopted locally and that they do not have applicability elsewhere. The memorandum should thank the employee for his/her efforts and encourage the employee to continue to submit ideas.

7. REQUESTS FOR RECONSIDERATION AFTER REJECTION. Agency management has the authority and responsibility for operations affected by suggestions and, therefore, is responsible for making final decisions to adopt or not to adopt suggestions. Accordingly, a rejected suggestion is not grievable. However, an employee may request that his or her suggestion be re-evaluated after rejection if there is sufficient demonstrated reason, such as providing added facts or new information that would enhance its chances for adoption. The local Awards Coordinator will decide whether or not re-evaluation is warranted and take appropriate action.

8. FUNDING OF AWARDS.

a. Intra-Agency. Cash awards will be charged to the appropriation and fiscal program of the organizations adopting the suggestions, except that awards for suggestions not adopted in the Agency but on which the Agency files a patent application will be paid by the organization to which the employee is assigned.

b. Inter-Agency. The cash award for an EPA employee suggestion which is adopted outside the Agency will be paid by

the benefitting agency or agencies through a transfer of funds to EPA. Payment of the cash award will be made upon receipt of the transfer document. Conversely, when a suggestion from an employee of another agency is adopted by EPA, funds will be transferred from the adopting EPA organization upon receipt of a transfer document from the suggester's agency. When a suggestion is referred to EPA as an interdepartmental referral by the Office of Personnel Management and is adopted by EPA, funds as will be transferred from the adopting EPA organization to OPM.

c. Informal Recognition. Informal award items such as pens, mugs, mouse pads, etc may be given to employees in recognition of a submitted suggestion. (See Chapter 3 on Informal Non-monetary Recognition for guidance.)

9. ADDITIONAL AWARDS. Local Awards Coordinators must maintain adequate records to prevent the payment of more than one cash award for the same suggestion. Management officials also should be alert to prevent duplicate cash awards for the same suggestion. This does not prohibit payment of separate awards to employees at different locations for use of the same idea when each award is based solely on the benefit derived at the adopting location, nor does it prohibit additional awards based on benefits in addition to those realized from the original suggestion. Additional awards should be paid when benefits actually derived from an employee's contribution exceed the original estimated benefits by \$25 or more, or when a suggestion is implemented beyond the organizational segment in which the suggestion was originally adopted and an initial award was approved. The suggester, the valuator, or any other official who is familiar with the facts may request that a suggestion be re-evaluated for an additional award. When a suggestion is referred to other locations for consideration, previous adoptions and benefits will be reported to that local Awards Coordinator.

10. GROUP AWARDS. An important objective of the suggestion program is to encourage teamwork in improving operations, and reward each member of a group for his or her contribution. Cash awards may be divided in equal shares or in different amounts, if desired, to recognize varying degrees of employee contributions to a group accomplishment. Cash awards authorized for a group contribution should ordinarily not exceed the amount that would be given to an individual employee whose suggestion had been adopted. Approving officials may make an exception to this when the amount of award per employee would be too small to be meaningful or motivating.

11. TIME LIMITATIONS.

a. Generally, the following time limits will be observed in processing suggestions: 30 days for suggestions of nominal value and they can be implemented by the field or Headquarters organization in which they originate; and 60 days for cases which

must be sent to organizations in other geographic locations. The time limit will be noted in the suggestion file by the appropriate local Awards Coordinator before it is forwarded to the Evaluator. The coordinator will follow-up as needed to assure that time limits are met.

b. In those instances where management adopts an employee idea which has not been processed as a suggestion, the immediate supervisor must inform the employee of his/her right to document and submit the idea as a suggestion within 6 months from the date management implemented the idea. The suggestion must be documented, and the approval process must be in accordance with procedures established in this Chapter.

12. PATENTS AND INVENTIONS.

a. The Government Employees Incentive Awards Act provides for suggestions of an inventive nature which may be patentable or contain patentable features. Inventions will receive both patent and award consideration. Once an employee submits a report of his/her invention to the Patent Counsel, Office of General Counsel, on EPA Form 3340-1, the Patent Counsel will, at his/her discretion, determine whether the invention is of sufficient novelty and/or importance to the Agency or general public to warrant the filing of a patent application in the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. The employee may be asked to supply additional information. In addition, a determination of Government rights in the invention will be made in accordance with appropriate Federal Regulations. If it is determined that a patent application will not be filed, the inventor may request reconsideration, provided he/she submits more information pertinent to the invention which would either improve it, or have a bearing on its importance or patentability. The final decision as to whether a patent application will be filed will be made by the Patent Counsel and will not form the basis for any appeal under the Agency grievance procedure.

b. The appropriate approving official will grant an initial award of \$100 to an employee whose invention has been favorably evaluated by the Patent Counsel, and a U.S. patent application has been filed, provided the invention will benefit the Agency's mission and is related to the employee's official employment. In cases where two or more employees are co-inventors, each shall receive a \$100 award.

c. The appropriate approving official will grant a cash award of \$300 to the inventor whenever a patent is issued by the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, based on the filed application, and the Government owns the invention or has been granted at least a non-exclusive royalty-free license, with the power to grant sub-licenses for all Government purposes. In cases where two or more employees are co-inventors, each shall receive a \$300 award.

d. In addition to the \$100 and \$300 awards, an invention should be evaluated, as appropriate, for an additional award based on the criteria for an award for any other suggestion, as established in this Chapter (see paragraph 4 above for detailed information on evaluation of suggestion). In cases where two or more employees are co-inventors, any added award will be considered as a joint suggestion and will be divided equally between/among the suggesters.

e. Awards will be paid by the adopting organization, or if there is no adopting organization, by the suggester's employing organization.

f. For purposes of granting an award of \$100, \$300, or any other Patent Award, the Patent Counsel will officially notify the appropriate local Awards Coordinator whenever a domestic patent application is filed, and if and when a patent is issued by the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office.

g. As with employee suggestions, the inventor, his or her supervisor, the local Awards Coordinator, the Agency Patent Counsel, or any other knowledgeable management official may request consideration of additional awards on inventions owned by the Government. Any additional awards will be documented and processed according to the procedures for suggestion awards in paragraph 9 above.

RECOGNITION MANUAL EPA Suggestion Record & Evaluation
EPA FORM 3130-3

GUIDELINES FOR DETERMINING INTANGIBLE BENEFITS

A monetary award for beneficial suggestions may be granted when a contribution results in intangible benefits. The amount of the monetary award is determined on the basis of its value or benefit to Government operations after consideration of such factors as extent and scope of application, significance of the contribution, and importance of programs affected. The amount of the monetary award may be based on the table below. The minimum monetary award for intangible benefits should be the same as the tangible - \$25, and it should be granted only if the contribution compares favorably with those receiving the minimum cash award for tangible benefits.

*****Extent of Application*****

LIMITED	The contribution affects the duties, work assignments, and employees of one division or office. A limited area of science or technology has been affected.
EXTENDED	The contribution affects the duties, work assignments, and employees of multiple divisions or offices. A substantial area of science or technology has been affected.
BROAD	The contribution affects the duties, work assignments, and employees of offices or larger organization. A broad area of science or technology has been affected.
GENERAL	The contribution affects the duties, work assignments, and employees of multiple agencies or are agency-wide.

*****Value of Benefit*****

MODERATE VALUE	A limited contribution to a product, activity, program or service which improves the effectiveness, efficiency, quality, productivity, or service. A modification to operating principles or procedures.
SUBSTANTIAL VALUE	A noteworthy contribution to a product, activity, program or service which improves the effectiveness, efficiency, quality, productivity, or service. A revision to a major part of an operating principles or procedures.
HIGH VALUE	A superior contribution to a critical or sensitive product, activity, program or service which substantially improves the effectiveness, efficiency, quality, productivity or service. A complete revision of operating principles or procedures.
EXCEPTIONAL VALUE	An extraordinary contribution to a highly critical or highly sensitive product, activity, program or service which defines a new standard of excellence for effectiveness, efficiency, quality, productivity or service. Initiation of a new principle or major procedure with extensive impact.

Fig 7-4

CHAPTER 8- AWARDS FOR PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE
COMMISSIONED OFFICERS

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FIGURE
TITLES

FIGURE
NUMBERS

Nomination Format for Commissioned Officer Award . . .	8-1 & 1A
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CHAPTER 8 - AWARDS FOR PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE COMMISSIONED OFFICERS

1. GENERAL.

a. EPA managers and supervisors may recognize commissioned officer contributions and accomplishments through the Public Health Service (PHS) Commissioned Officers' Recognition Program, or through the EPA Honor Awards Program when the officer is part of a group receiving an award. In addition, PHS officers assigned to EPA are eligible for monetary awards for suggestions and inventions (see Chapter 7), and the Special Act for Scientific Achievement (see subparagraph 2.d. below).

b. The PHS Commissioned Officers' Recognition Program consists of individual honor awards, unit awards, and service awards. The Distinguished Service Medal, the Meritorious Service Medal, the Outstanding Service Medal, and the Outstanding Unit Citation require approval by the Surgeon General of the Public Health Service. The Commendation Medal, the Achievement Medal, the PHS Citation and the Unit Commendation require approval by the EPA Administrator. The service awards are approved by the Director, Division of Commissioned Personnel of the Public Health Service.

2. DESCRIPTION AND CRITERIA.

a. Honor Awards. There are six individual honor awards for which commissioned officers may be nominated. The first five listed below consist of a medal-with ribbon, ribbon bar, miniature medal with ribbon, lapel device, and a certificate. The PHS Citation consists of a ribbon bar and a certificate.

(1) Distinguished Service Medal. This is the highest award given to a PHS Commissioned Officer, and it is characterized by an exceedingly high level of achievement. The award is bestowed upon an officer who has demonstrated a genuine sense of public service and has made outstanding contributions to the mission of the PHS and to EPA. Such achievement may range from the management of a major health program to initiative resulting in a major impact on the health of the nation. The award can be conferred for a one-time heroic act resulting in great saving of life, health, or property.

(2) Meritorious Service Medal (MSM). This award is the second highest recognition presented to PHS officers for high level achievement. The award of this medal represents meritorious service on the basis of a single particularly

important achievement, or unusually high quality initiative in leadership; a highly significant achievement in research, program direction, or program administration; a series of significant contributions; a continuing period of meritorious service; or exhibition of great career notable for accomplishments in technical or professional courage in hazardous work or in an emergency are examples which may merit this award.

3) Outstanding Service Medal (OSM). This award is presented to officers who have demonstrated outstanding continuous leadership in carrying out the mission of the PHS; performed a single accomplishment which has had a major effect on the health of the Nation; or have performed a heroic act resulting in preservation of health or property. The award of the OSM or the MSM is determined by the magnitude of the achievement.

(4) Commendation Medal (CM). The Commendation Medal recognizes sustained high quality work performance in scientific, administrative, or other professional fields; or application of unique skill or creative imagination to the approach or solution of problems; or noteworthy technical and professional contributions that are significant to a limited area. This award requires a level of proficiency and dedication distinctly greater than that of the high standards of performances expected of the average commissioned officer.

(5) Achievement Medal (AM). This medal is awarded in recognition of noteworthy accomplishments in the performance of duty. This could include recognition of noteworthy contribution(s) toward the attainment of program objectives, or sustained above average performance of duty over a relatively short period of time, such as a short tour of duty of 120 days or less.

(6) PHS Citation (CIT). This award is given in recognition of noteworthy accomplishments in the performance of duty. This could include recognition of noteworthy contributions toward the attainment of program objectives, sustained above-average performance of duty, and high quality performance of duty over a relatively short period of time, such as a short tour of duty of 120 days or less. The CIT may also be awarded to officers at time of separation or retirement. In addition to the ribbon bar and certificate, a plaque may be presented consisting of a metal PHS seal mounted on a walnut base along with a brass plate for engraving the officer's name and award citation. Presentation of the plaque is at the discretion of, and is provided by, the awarding program office.

b. Unit Awards. There are two group or unit awards, each consisting of a ribbon bar and a certificate. Questions about eligibility and appropriate use of these awards should be referred to the PHS Personnel Liaison, OHROS in advance of any formal nomination.

(1) Outstanding Unit Citation (OUC). This award represents acknowledgment of outstanding achievement by a designated organizational unit within EPA. This award is made to commissioned officers in a group or unit who have exhibited superior service toward achieving the goals and objectives of the EPA. To merit this award, the unit recognized must have provided exceptional service of national or international significance. The period recognized will normally be short and marked by definite beginning and ending dates.

(2) Unit Commendation (UC). This award is presented to acknowledge an outstanding accomplishment by a designated organizational unit within EPA. The award is made to commissioned officers who have demonstrated a significant level of performance well above that normally expected, but at a somewhat lesser level than is required for the OUC. The period recognized will normally be short and marked by definite beginning and ending dates.

c. Service Awards. There are six service awards, each consisting of a ribbon bar and a certificate.

(1) Hazardous Duty Award (HDA). To be eligible for this award, the officer must have served in a position requiring frequent risk to his/her safety for a minimum of 180 days. The appropriateness of the award for specific assignments will be determined by the Public Health Service and will include: frequent flights on unscheduled airlines to remote areas, working with dangerous substances, or assigned to hostile areas.

(2) Special Assignment Award (SAA). This award is presented to officers who have been detailed a minimum of 30 consecutive days to specific program initiatives of other Federal or state agencies or to other organizations. This award does not include assignments that are a routine function of the position or are specifically included in the officer's billet description, or involve assignments between components of the PHS, or are for the purpose of training.

(3) Foreign Duty Award (FDA). The officer must serve outside the continental United States at least 30 consecutive days or 90 nonconsecutive days in a foreign post while on temporary or permanent assignment (other than while in training).

This award does not include service in any state of the United States, the District of Columbia, Guam, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Northern Mariana Islands, the Virgin Islands, American Samoa, and all other areas formerly encompassed in the Trust Territories of the Pacific Islands.

(4) Isolated Hardship Award (IHA). This award is presented to an officer who has served a minimum of 180 consecutive days in an area designated by the Public Health Service as being isolated, remote, insular or a hardship duty assignment.

(5) National Emergency Preparedness Award (NEPA). This award is presented to an officer currently serving in an organized unit or organizational entity that is mandated to provide emergency medical/support services within an organized framework for the PHS or other federal agencies or departments (e.g., National Disaster Medical System (NDMS) Disaster Medical Assistance Teams, National Security Preparedness Working Groups, or International Medical Emergency Assistance Teams). The officer is required to have served a minimum of four continuous years in an emergency preparedness activity before being eligible to receive the NEPA.

(6) Crisis Response Service Award (CRSA). This award is presented to officers who participate by direct, non-routine intervention in a crisis situation. Direct participation is defined as "hands on" PHS activity at the site, or sites, of the crisis. Non-routine participation is defined as activity which is not generally part of the officers assigned duties. Specifically excluded from eligibility for this award are officers serving at sites geographically separate from the location(s) of the crisis. No officer will be entitled to more than one award of the CRSA for participation in the same crisis response. The Surgeon General will determine if an event or activity merits this award.

d. Special Act Award for Scientific Achievement. Agency officials intending to submit a nomination for this award must contact the PHS Personnel Liaison, OHROS to receive instructions concerning documentation requirements and procedures.

(1) Scientific Achievement is defined as:

(a) An act, deed, or accomplishment that establishes a scientific or technological basis for later technical improvements of PHS function or that has national significance.

(b) A scientific or technical accomplishment of such quality and effectiveness as to have materially advanced the research and development achievements of an activity, group, or project.

(c) A significant scientific or technological achievement that contributes materially to the welfare of PHS and the Nation.

(d) A technical paper presented to professional societies that constitutes a substantial contribution to scientific knowledge.

(2) This award shall not be used to recognize superior performance. Superior performance shall be recognized through the honor awards described in subparagraph 2.a. above.

(3) A monetary award shall not be granted for an act that reasonably would be considered to be within the scope of the officer's assigned duties. Further, the act must contribute significantly to the efficiency, economy, or other improvement of Government operations or otherwise be in the public interest.

(4) The scientific achievement may or may not involve measurable monetary benefits and may involve more than one employee.

(5) The monetary award shall depend upon the scientific achievement being recognized. The amount of the award is determined according to the cash award criteria for tangible or intangible benefits for suggestion awards as specified in Chapter 7.

3. NOMINATION PROCEDURE.

a. Format. All honor award nominations must include a completed nomination form. Use PHS-6342-1 (Rev. 2/97) Unit Honor Award Nomination Record or PHS-6342-2 (Rev. 2/97) Individual Honor Award Nomination Record, Figure 8-1, which is available from the PHS Personnel Liaison, OHROS. Specifically:

(1) For honor and unit awards, the justification must concisely, clearly, and completely describe the officer(s) accomplishments and explain how these accomplishments meet the award criteria. The citation should be a brief description of the basis of the award not to exceed twenty-five words. The description should convey the specific program achievement for which the officer is being recognized. Unless pertinent to the recommendation, it is not necessary to include biographical

sketches, or to list education, training, and experience as this information is available to the Commissioned Corps Awards Board.

(2) The nomination for a service award should consist of a brief description of duties or specific act upon which the request is made and pertinent documents supporting the accomplishment of the award criteria.

b. Initiating a Recommendation. An officer may be nominated for an individual or unit award by a fellow officer, associate, the immediate supervisor or by someone from outside the PHS or the EPA. The nomination must be initiated formally through appropriate channels within six months after the act or period of service to be honored. Service awards may be initiated at any time after the criteria for the award have been met.

c. Endorsements. Nominations will be submitted through management channels to the EPA Awards Program Coordinator, and must have the endorsement of the Assistant Administrator, Associate Administrator, the General Counsel, the Chief Financial Officer, the Inspector General, or Regional Administrator and the Administrator. The EPA Awards Program Coordinator will forward the nomination to the Public Health Service.

d. Dates of Submission. Nominations for Agency approved awards (CM, AM, PHS Citation and UC) may be submitted at any time. The DSM, MSM, OSM, and OUC should be submitted to the EPA Awards Coordinator the first Tuesday of the following months: February, April, June, August, October and December. The awards cycle year starts July 1 and goes through June 30 of each year. There is only one individual honor award each year per officer. There is no limitation on submission of service award nominations.

4. PRESENTATION OF PHS AWARDS. Distinguished and Meritorious Service Medals will be presented by the Administrator, or her designee, at the Annual EPA Honor Awards Ceremony. The other awards may be presented by the EPA office which initially endorsed the nomination. The presentation may be made at any time in an appropriate ceremony.

CHAPTER 9 - TIME-OFF AWARDS

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CHAPTER 9 - TIME-OFF AWARDS

1. GENERAL. Employees may be granted time off from duty as an incentive award. Time-off Awards are intended to increase employee productivity by rewarding contributions to the quality, efficiency, effectiveness or economy of EPA operations.

2. CRITERIA. A Time-off Award (i.e., excused absence) may be granted, without loss of pay or charge to leave, to recognize a superior accomplishment or other personal effort that contributes to increased quality and effectiveness of EPA programs. It is suitable recognition for a one-time, non-recurring contribution such as:

- a. Making a unique contribution involving a difficult or important assignment;
- b. Displaying special skill or initiative in completing an assignment or project before the deadline;
- c. Using initiative or creativity in making improvements in a product, activity, program, or service through action or an employee suggestion; or
- d. Ensuring the mission of the unit is accomplished during a difficult period by successfully completing additional work or a project assignment while maintaining the employee's own workload.

3. ELIGIBILITY.

- a. The following categories of Agency employees are eligible to receive Time-off Awards: full-time, part-time, or intermittent employees are eligible to receive Time-off Awards; including those employees under the General Schedule (GS), Executive Schedule (ES) and Administratively Determined (AD) employees, and employees covered by the Federal Wage System.
- b. Public Health Service Officers, Senior Environmental Employment (SEE) enrollees, and employees of contractors are not eligible for Time-off Awards.

4. LIMITATIONS.

a. Maximum award hours. For full-time employees: A Time-off Award may be granted in installments of up to 40 hours per individual award, but no more than 80 hours total within a leave year.

b. Carry-over balances and over 80 balances in a new leave year. An employee may carry-over a balance of 80 hours into a new leave year and, if awarded, new time-off hours may acquire a balance over 80 hours. For example: an employee carries over 80 hours into a new leave year, receives a 16 hour award in February, resulting in a new balance of 96 hours in February. In all cases, unused award hours expire within one year from the date of the individual award.

c. Awards for part-time employees. Time-off Award may be granted no more than the total number of hours worked during a bi-weekly pay period in a given leave year. For example, an employee with a part-time tour of 32 hours a week may receive 64 hours in a leave year, with a maximum of 32 hours for one single award.

5. SCHEDULING TIME-OFF AWARDS. Time-off Award must be used within one year from the date the award is granted. It may not be converted to cash under any circumstances. If an employee becomes physically incapacitated for duty during a Time-off Award period, sick leave is to be used. If an employee fails to use a Time-off Award within the one year period, for any reason, the time-off hours expire.

6. RECOMMENDATION PROCEDURES. Supervisors may recommend employees for a Time-off Award at any time during the year using Recommendation for Incentive Recognition form, 3130, (Figure 4-8A). The Time-off Award is processed and documented the same way as a monetary award. Using Form 3130, supervisors should enter the number of hours of excused absence in the "total" box under amount recommended and attach a brief narrative description of the achievement and the benefits realized by the Government from the employee's contribution.

7. APPROVING AND RECOMMENDING OFFICIALS.

a. Awards of one workday or less. First level supervisors and above may approve awards not to exceed one workday (up to 10 hours) for their employees without higher level approval.

b. More than one workday. Time-off Awards in excess of one workday require a two-level approval: a lower level supervisor recommends a time-off award to the next level supervisor in the supervisory chain, who may approve the Time-off Award. An approving official may not also be the recommending official, except in the case of the Administrator, Deputy Administrator, and those officials reporting directly to the Administrator.

8. TEAM AWARDS. To foster teamwork in EPA, Time-off Awards may be used to recognize teams as well as individual achievements.

Time-off Awards granted to a team may be given in equal shares or to each employee in the team in proportion to his or her contribution.

9. COMBINATION AWARDS. A Time-off award may be granted in conjunction with a cash award to recognize a single achievement.

10. DOCUMENTATION. An employee's absence from duty as a result of being granted a Time-off award is recorded on their timecard as an "excused absence" (administrative leave) in accordance with instructions issued by the Agency's Payroll Office. The servicing Human Resources Office will file a copy of the approved Recommendation for Incentive Recognition, Form 3130-1a, in the Employee Performance File.

CHAPTER 10- NON-EPA AWARDS

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CHAPTER 10 - NON-EPA AWARDS

1. GENERAL. This chapter provides information on regularly recurring Non-EPA Awards in which the Agency usually participates. This includes other Government awards and external awards sponsored by private organizations. Management officials are urged to become familiar with these awards, as they represent additional means of rewarding employees for achievements often deserving wider recognition than can be provided by the Agency Awards Program. These awards may be given in addition to Agency cash or honor awards.

2. PROCEDURES. Each year EPA receives invitations to submit candidates for various awards. Nominations are generally solicited from appropriate management officials on a timely basis by the Agency Awards Program Officer. The EPA Awards Board may be convened, as needed, to consider nominees and make recommendations to the Administrator. Complete information about each award is forwarded to program officials as invitations are received. The Agency Awards Program Officer, unless otherwise noted, submits the nominations to the sponsoring organization(s).

3. NON EPA AWARDS. The awards noted below represent only a portion of the Non EPA Awards. When EPA is invited to submit candidates for outside awards, nominations will be solicited from appropriate organizations and officials of the Agency as described in paragraph 2. EPA reserves discretion in participating in Non EPA Awards, including, but not limited to:

- a) Arthur S. Fleming Award;
- b) Roger W. Jones Award for Executive Leadership;
- c) William A. Jump Memorial Award;
- d) Joint Financial Management Improvement Award;
- e) Outstanding Handicapped Federal Employee Award; and
- f) Federal Environmental Engineer of the Year Award.