

BPA Human Resources Desk Reference

Recognition — Performance-Based

HR Desk Reference: 410-08-02

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1. Purpose & Background

This HR Desk Reference implements BPA HR Directive 410-08: Employee Recognition and Awards.

A. Introduction:

1. **Governance model:** This HR Desk Reference is part of a tiered approach to BPA’s Human Resources governance model. The first tier is the BPA Human Resources Policy, which provides broad BPA-wide guidelines and standards for making specific human resources-related decisions and specifies who in BPA is delegated the authority to make them.

The second tier consists of HR Desk References covering more detailed instructions concerning program administration and processes. These second tier documents will be authorized in the “Related HR Desk References” section of the BPA HR Directive when they are published as an extension of a specific HR Policy.

The third tier consists of Standard Operating Procedures applicable to a specific business process. Standard Operating Procedures may stand alone or be encompassed in an HR Desk Reference.

2. **Design of the HR Desk Reference:** In order to support the overarching guidance contained in the relevant HR Policy, this Reference provides a standardized and consistent approach to HCM’s and BPA Management’s administration of the programs and processes contained in this HR Desk Reference.
3. **Using the HR Desk Reference:** Recorded information is an integral part of all business functions at BPA and as such, is an asset of the agency that is handled and managed based upon content and the circumstances surrounding the function. Users of this HR Desk Reference are likely to reference a specific function or procedure rather than reading it in its entirety and it is therefore structured to reflect this type of use.

B. Purpose/Objectives:

This HR Desk Reference provides procedures to be followed to recognize employees and their accomplishments, milestones and contributions to further BPA’s mission. It also provides information and clarification about BPA’s recognition programs and opportunities to support the goal of a recognition-rich culture.

C. Background:

DOE views its performance management programs as strategic tools to increase individual success and accountability, achieve agency and organizational goals, and improve efficiency. A program that works well helps supervisors to recognize their employees’ full performance potential, identify high achievers, identify areas requiring

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improvements, and differentiates between the two, thereby assisting with meeting BPA’s and DOE’s missions and goals.

BPA’s three-tier recognition system provides the foundation to recognize individuals, groups and organizational achievements. The variety of programs and venues provide opportunities to enhance the recognition culture, increase engagement and express appreciation throughout the year, through timely, specific and sincere recognition.

It is important to give recognition in a fair and consistent manner. A recognition-rich culture increases employee engagement, morale and productivity. Favorable recognition, when it is not earned or explained, often reduces an employee’s pride in his or her work. On the other hand, when recognition is not given where it is deserved, employees may become discouraged and lose their incentive to do a better job.

2. Applicability

These procedures apply to all performance rating-based awards and recognition for all BPA managers and employees.

3. Terms & Definitions

1. **Award:** Something bestowed, or an action taken, to recognize and reward an individual or team achievement that contributed to meeting organizational goals or improving the efficiency, effectiveness, and economy of the Government, or is otherwise in the public interest. Such awards include, but are not limited to, employee incentives which are based on predetermined criteria such as productivity standards, performance goals, measurement systems, award formulas, or payout schedules.
2. **Monetary awards:** Are one-time payments awarded to an individual or group of employees for an outstanding accomplishment or contribution that produces tangible savings or intangible benefits to the Government, for effective performance, or for their part in helping the Agency or their organization meet its performance targets.
3. **Pay pool:** The funding allocated for awards.
4. **Performance award:** A lump-sum cash award based on a successful rating of record.
5. **Positive net revenue:** BPA’s net revenue (exclusive of any adjustments due to refinancing of Energy Northwest debt and the Financial Account Standard 133 market-to-market adjustment for derivatives) is positive for the fiscal year, regardless of improvements that may have been made in financial performance from start-of-year expectations.

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6. **Quality Increase or Quality Step Increase (QSI):** An increase in an employee’s rate of basic pay from one step, or rate of the grade of his/her position, to the next higher step of that grade or subsequent higher rate within the pay band.
7. **Recognition:** Acknowledging contributions through monetary and non-monetary means.
8. **Recognition celebration:** An opportunity to recognize employee (BFTE) accomplishments formally, and may or may not include speeches and awarding certificates of accomplishment. Examples of accomplishments that qualify for recognition include: project completions, major milestones, completion of significant work efforts, safety award celebrations and other comparable achievements.
9. **Success Share:** A monetary payout to eligible employees based on BPA’s accomplishments of one or more Agency success targets established for the fiscal year.
10. **Team Share:** A monetary payout to eligible employees based on their organization’s accomplishments of pre-designated balanced scorecard objectives established at the beginning of the fiscal year.

11. **Acronyms:**

Acronym	Description
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
COO	Chief Operating Officer
DOE	Department of Energy
EE	Exceeds Expectations
eOPF	Electronic Official Personnel File
GS	General Schedule
HCM	Human Capital Management
HRD	Human Resources Director
IPA	Individual Performance Award
ME	Meets Expectations
NHE	Employee/Labor Relations & Benefits
OPM	Office of Personnel Management
QI or QSI	Quality (Step) Increase
SBP	Strategic Business Partners

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Acronym	Description
SE	Significantly Exceeds

4. Responsibilities

- A. **BPA Administrator:** Approves the funding of BPA’s recognition system.
- B. **BPA Deputy Administrator and/or Chief Operating Officer:**
 - 1. Approves BPA Success Share and Team Share targets, as decided by key Executive Board members, including the Chief Financial Officer;
 - 2. Determines whether BPA Success Share targets were met and whether the criteria specified in this HR Desk Reference are satisfied in order to issue payout; and
 - 3. Approves Success Share celebrations coordinated by Public Affairs.
- C. **Executives and managers** with delegated authority to manage administration of BPA’s recognition system:
 - 1. Approve Organizational Team Share targets, following consultation with the COO, and ensuring such targets are consistent with the requirements of this HR Desk Reference;
 - 2. Ensure employees are informed of Organizational Team Share targets;
 - 3. Determine whether Organizational Team Share targets were met, following consultation with the COO, and confirming any payout;
 - 4. Approve final amounts of performance awards when they serve as “performance award pool managers”;
 - 5. Ensure expenditures are monitored and do not exceed the amounts of applicable funding pools; and
 - 6. Ensure any celebrations for Success Share payout is in coordination with Public Affairs and is consistent with provisions of HR Desk Reference 410-08-01: Employee Recognition and Awards.
- D. **BPA Human Resources Director or his/her assignee:**
 - 1. Develops and issues BPA’s Employee Recognition and Awards BPA HR Directive and HR Desk Reference, and advise management on the policy; and
 - 2. Evaluates effectiveness of BPA’s recognition policy and its administration by others, as needed, and follow through with appropriate action to address significant problems.
- E. **BPA Managers and Supervisors:**

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1. Approve awards according to the procedures in this HR Desk Reference; and
2. Ensure any celebrations for Success Share payout is in coordination with Public Affairs and is consistent with provisions of HR Desk Reference 410-08-01: Employee Recognition and Awards.

5. Recognition and Award Program Requirements and Guidance

5.1 Funding

1. BPA recognition funding is based on three separate funding pools. Specific Pool funding amounts and allocation of funds within a pool are contained in Appendix 1.
2. The method for calculating dollar amounts for funding pools is contained in Section 11 of this guide.

5.2 Performance Awards (Individual/Group Results Award)

- A. **General:** Performance awards are linked directly to the summary rating on the employee's rating of record for the appraisal period for which the award is granted.
- B. **Funding:**
 1. 75% percent of the Individual/Group Results fund is reserved solely for use for performance awards. See Appendix 1 for Individual/Group Results funding pool amount.
 2. The performance award funding pool for General Schedule (GS) managers and supervisors is separate from all other employees.
- C. **Eligibility:** To be eligible for an individual performance award, an employee or manager must be on the employment rolls on the last day of the performance period and have a qualifying rating of record.
 1. Performance awards are mandatory for the following ratings:
 - a) Significantly Exceeds Expectations (SE), if the employee did not receive a Quality Step Increase QSI; and
 - b) Exceeds Expectations (EE).
 2. Performance awards are discretionary for employees that receive a Meets Expectations (ME) rating of record provided the employee was not rated below ME on any critical element.
- D. **Relation to other awards:** Employees may not receive other awards, e.g. OTS/TO for any performance goals directly identified in the employee's performance plan. In addition, may not receive a performance award if receiving a QSI.

5.3 Quality Step Increase (QSI)

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- A. **Relation to Within-Grade Increase (WGI):** A Quality Step Increase will not affect the timing of an employee's next regular WGI, **unless** the QSI places the employee in step 4 or step 7 of their grade. In these cases the waiting period is increased by an additional 52 weeks. The time that an employee has already waited counts towards the next increase, but they must wait the full period that the new step requires.
- B. **Eligibility:** Quality Step Increases (QSI) may be granted to General Schedule (GS) employees with a “significantly exceeds expectations” rating of record (See BPA HR Directive 410-07: Performance Management) in lieu of a cash award, if the following criteria are met (an employee on temporary promotion is not eligible for QSI):
1. The employee has not received a QSI within the preceding 52 consecutive calendar weeks;
 2. The employee is at the full performance level of the position, i.e., employee at a lower grade within a career ladder is not eligible;
 3. The employee has not been promoted, including a transfer that results in a promotion; and
 4. The employee has been in the same grade or pay band.
- C. **Funding and Limitations:**
1. QSI are funded from Business Unit budgets. Re-allocation from Business Unit Recognition Program budget is strictly prohibited;
 2. Business units shall not give QSI to more than 10 percent of the total number of annual employees at the start of each fiscal year; and
 3. HCM is responsible for notifying Business Units of the number of QSI’s available for each performance year.

5.4 BPA Success Share

- A. **General:**
1. BPA Success Share program is based on the Agency’s accomplishment of one or more pre-designated targets established each fiscal year.
 2. The maximum amount of funds available for payout is contained in Appendix 1.
 3. A BPA-wide, BPA-funded celebration may be held each year concurrent with payout. Field organizations may participate in a separate funded event, provided such events are coordinated with Public Affairs staff (See HR Desk Reference 410-08-01: Employee Recognition and Awards for information on celebrations). If there is no payout for a given year, a celebration will not be sponsored.
- B. **Success Share Targets:**

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1. BPA Success Share targets are determined each fiscal year, and the content and number may vary from year to year. The process for establishing targets includes consideration of input provided by bargaining units.
2. The Deputy Administrator or COO, in consultation with key Executive Board members, as appropriate, approves final BPA Success Share targets.
3. Each BPA Success Share target may identify a range of results, provided that the lower end reflects high performance and the upper end reflects extraordinary performance.
4. Targets that relate to results of employee surveys may not be established for Success Share.
5. Progress toward accomplishment of targets will be assessed periodically and reported to the workplace during the year.

5.5 Organizational Team Share

A. General:

1. Organizational Team Share targets are based on their organization’s accomplishments of pre-designated balanced scorecard objectives established at the beginning of the fiscal year.
2. Each BPA organization whose executives or manager has delegated authority to manage administration of BPA’s recognition system (see Appendix 1 in BPA HR Directive 410-08: Employee Recognition and Awards) is responsible for administering its Organizational Team Share award process.
3. The maximum amount of funds available for payout is contained in Appendix 1.

B. Target Content:

1. The executive or manager of the organization with delegated authority to manage administration of BPA’s recognition system is responsible for approving the organizational targets after consulting with the Chief Operating Officer.
2. All targets must reflect an organization’s contribution to the achievement of BPA Success Share targets. Where there is a direct connection between an organization’s responsibilities and a BPA Success Share target, the Organizational Team Share targets must address such “direct contributors” to the achievement of the BPA Success Share target. Organizational Team Share targets may also include those that indirectly contribute to the achievement of the BPA Success Share target. For example: BPA Success Share targets financial in nature should be addressed at the organizational level by means of establishing a Team Share target that:
 - a) Measures the financial performance of that organization alone; and

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- b) Does so in a manner that directly contributes to the achievement of the corresponding Success Share target.

An example of an indirect target might include the extent to which a major piece of software is brought on line successfully and, therefore, indirectly contributes to a BPA Success Share target that relates to *improving efficiency or effectiveness of BPA operations*.

- 3. Collectively, an organization’s Team Share targets should enable each employee in the organization to relate his or her own performance efforts to the accomplishment of one or more of the targets.

6. Processes and Procedures

6.1 Recognition Funding

A. **Funding:** The funding for BPA recognition programs is allocated as a percentage of aggregate salaries for Individual/Group Results awards. Success Share and Team Share are funded separately, based on targets achieved.

- 1. **BPA Success Share:** The amount per FTE is listed in Appendix 1, and applies to all organizations.
- 2. **Organization Team Share:** The amount per FTE is listed in Appendix 1 and applies to all organizational levels.

B. **Budget:** Each executive or manager with delegated authority to manage administration of BPA’s recognition system (see BPA HR Directive 410-08: Employee Recognition and Awards) has the responsibility for determining the respective, projected base payroll for the year, taking into account projected FTE, and the prorated value of expected adjustments to General Schedule and negotiated pay rates used centrally by Finance for budget and other purposes.

6.2 Performance Awards

A. **Award Scales:**

- 1. HCM, in collaboration with Finance, establishes two BPA-wide performance award scales for General Schedule supervisors and for all other employees. The scales should be similar unless the rating distribution between the groups differs significantly.
- 2. Awards scales are developed and established after nearly all performance ratings have been completed for the group.
- 3. Scales are expressed as “percentage of base pay” award amounts.
 - a) All performance awards must be expressed as a percentage of base pay, including locality pay, if appropriate.

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- b) The amount of a performance award for an employee with a basic rate of pay that includes a retained rate of pay under 5 CFR must be expressed as a percentage of the maximum payable rate for the employee’s grade level.
4. Scales established must contain a range of percentage amounts. This provides flexibility to pool fund managers to distinguish individual performance award amounts based on differences in performance levels and other merit based factors, i.e., relative difficulty of the performance standards, and proportion of the annual appraisal period that ratings were based on.
 5. Annual Performance Award scales are approved by the COO after consultation with award pool managers. For illustrative purposes, the following is an example of a Performance Awards Scale:

Sample Performance Award Scale

Summary Rating	Awards Scale
Significantly Exceeds	1.5% - 3.0%
Exceeds Expectations	1.0% - 1.5%
Meets Expectations	0.5% - 1.0%

Note: Assumes rating distributions : SE=10%; EE=10%; and ME=80%

B. Individual performance award determinations:

1. Each pool manager solicits recommended award amounts from organizational managers.
2. The pool fund manager makes final decisions on award amounts. The decision on final award amounts must comply with the following:
 - a) Award amount provisions of BPA HR Directive 410-08: Employee Recognition and Awards (see Section 7.3) that require the average award for SE ratings to be higher than EE ratings, and the average amount for EE ratings must be higher than ME rating; and
 - b) The designated amount for performance awards is not exceeded, including taking into account anticipated delayed performance ratings.
3. The sum of all monetary awards for an individual employee may not exceed the annual limitation (see BPA HR Directive 410-08: Employee Recognition and Awards).
4. The sole determinant for deciding whether an employee’s award counts against the GS supervisory award pool or all other employee pool is the performance plan on which the employee received the rating of record. For example, if the employee’s

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rating of record is based on a supervisory performance plan, then any award is paid from the GS supervisor pool.

5. Approved performance awards are processed in the same manner as individual/group results awards, i.e., HRmis.
6. Each pool manager is required to maintain data on all performance awards, and provide it to HCM based on the format required. At a minimum, the following data is required to be maintained:
 - a) Employee name;
 - b) Summary rating level (i.e., SE, EE, etc.); and
 - c) Award amount (% of base pay, including locality pay) or QSI.
7. Employees receive payout of awards in wage/salary payments.
8. Payout is made through the accrual process using funds from prior fiscal year.

6.3 Quality Step Increase (QSI) Procedures

A. Nomination procedures:

1. The recommending supervisor must prepare a BPA F 3450.01e, Award Nomination, and a justification statement that specifically describes:
 - a) The expected work results;
 - b) The actual results achieved and their linkage to established targets; and
 - c) How the results exceeded the standards as specified in paragraph 10.03 of this HR Desk Reference guide.
2. The nomination must carry the signature of the highest level official from that organization, including the signature of the HCM Strategic Business Partner. Once all approvals are obtained, the form should be forwarded to the appropriate HCM processing unit for final processing.

B. QSI effective dates: The QSI will be effective at the start of the pay period following approval by the highest level official in the employee’s organization. The effective date of the QSI may be deferred for a maximum of two pay periods to provide the maximum benefit to the employee to allow an employee to receive a WGI due during the permissible deferral period.

1. HCM will notify the applicable supervisor that employee has a WGI due during the permissible deferral period.
2. The supervisor, in coordination with HCM staffing, will discuss with the employee the advantage of delaying a QSI, including how the processing of the QSI will impact future waiting periods for WGI, as appropriate.

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3. If the supervisor, employee, and HCM staffing approve, HCM will process the QSI at a later date (not to exceed the permitted deferral period).

6.4 BPA Success Share and Organizational Team Share eligibility and payout

A. **General:** BPA annual and hourly employees that meet minimum eligibility requirements contained in BPA HR Directive 410-08: Employee Recognition and Awards, Section 7.2, share equally in payouts of BPA Success Share.

B. **Eligibility:**

1. Employee must have “Meets Expectations” or higher performance rating of record (See BPA HR Directive 410-07: Performance Management) and meet the minimum number of hour requirements during the fiscal year in C below.
2. BPA HRmis time and labor reports will be used to determine pay status for eligibility and calculation of pay-out prorations in C below. Pay status hours are regular time worked, annual leave, sick leave, holiday time, excused absence, military leave, and “continuation of pay” time under FECA.

C. **Ineligibility:** Employees are ineligible, if:

1. In a pay status for less than 320 hours during the fiscal year based on HRmis time and labor records;
2. Separate, except for retirement, from BPA prior to the end of the last full pay period of the fiscal year; or
3. Involuntarily separated for cause after the last full pay period of the fiscal year, but prior to the actual effective date of the BPA Success Share payout.

D. **Pay-outs:**

1. **Full payout (share):** Eligible employees in a pay status for a minimum of 1,760 hours during the fiscal year are eligible for full payouts, i.e., shares.
2. **Pro-rated payout:** Share amounts for eligible employees in a pay status at BPA for less than 1,760 hours, but 320 hours or more, during the fiscal year will be pro-rated based on the number of hours in a pay status, i.e., number of hours in pay status divided by 1,760.
3. **Minimum payout:** The minimum payout for any eligible employee is \$50. Any payout of less than \$50 will be rounded up to \$50.
4. Payouts will be included in wage/salary payments, normally in mid-November.
5. Payout is made through the accrual process using funds from the fiscal year of achievement.

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7. Authorities & References

- A. BPA HR Directive 410-08: Employee Recognition and Awards
- B. 5 U.S.C., Chapter 45, Incentive Awards
- C. 5 U.S.C., Chapter 53, Subchapter III, General Schedule Pay Rates
- D. 5 CFR, Part 531, Pay Under the General Schedule
- E. 5 CFR, Part 451, Awards
- F. IRC, Section 132 (e)
- G. BPA Financial Policy, Refreshments and Ceremonial Gifts Policy
- H. DOE O 331.1, Performance Management and Employee Recognition Programs
- I. DOE Supervisory/Non-Supervisory Employee Performance Management and Recognition Desk Reference, October 1, 2010
- J. Related HR Desk References:
 - 1. 410-08-01: Employee Recognition and Awards
 - 2. 410-08-02: Recognition – Performance-Based

8. Revision History

Version Number	Issue Date	Brief Description of Change or Review
1.0	4/18/2016	Initial issuance.

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Appendix A: Funding Amounts for Award Pools and Allocations

A. Recognition Pools

Tier Program ¹	Funding/Payout
BPA Success Share	Maximum payout is equal to \$400 per FTE
Organizational Team Share	Maximum payout is equal to \$800 per FTE
Individual/Group Awards	1.25% of aggregate salary

¹ For all three pools, the Administrator retains sole authority and discretion to determine if expenditures are prudent in light of BPA's financial condition and may choose to discontinue their use in the event of serious financial difficulties.

For each organization listed separately in Appendix 1, HR Directive 410-08: Employee Recognition and Awards, the amount must be allocated as shown in B below.

B. **Individual/Group Award Pool Allocation:** The portion allocated for performance awards is calculated and administered separately for annual managers and supervisors verses all other employees.

- a) Performance Awards is equal to 75%
- b) All other expenses are equal to 25%. This is further allocated as shown in the table below:

Table 2 – Award Category Allocation

Award	Budget
On the Spot, Special Act, Time-Off Awards	.25% of aggregate salary
Celebrations and Merchandise	.0625% of aggregate salary
Total	.3125% of aggregate salary

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Appendix B: List of Award Types and Various Expenses

The table below lists the award types and their corresponding budget sources, and whether the award amounts count against individual monetary award annual limitation.

Item	Subject to Individual Limitation	Fund/Budget Allocation
BPA Success Share	Yes	<u>Funding Pool</u> : BPA Success Share <u>Budget</u> : Each organization
Organizational Team Share	Yes	<u>Funding Pool</u> : Organizational Team share <u>Budget</u> : Each organization
Individual/Group Results Awards and Forms of Recognition		
Performance Awards	Yes	<u>Funding Pool</u> : Individual/Group Results <u>Budget</u> : Each organization

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