

INDIAN AFFAIRS DIRECTIVES TRANSMITTAL SHEET

(modified DI-416)

DOCUMENT IDENTIFICATION NUMBER NPM-HR-12	SUBJECT Quality Step Increases (QSI)	RELEASE NUMBER 07-35
FOR FURTHER INFORMATION Office of Human Capital Management		DATE AUG 16 2007

EXPLANATION OF MATERIAL TRANSMITTED:

This memorandum describes policies and procedures to be used in awarding Quality Step Increases (QSI).



Debbie L. Clark
Deputy Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs (Management)

FILING INSTRUCTIONS:

Remove: None

Insert: NPM-HR-12(new)



United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
Washington, D.C. 20240

National Policy Memorandum

**Assistant Secretary - Indian Affairs
Deputy Assistant Secretary – Management
Office of Human Capital Management**

Number: NPM-HR- 12

**Effective: AUG 16 2007
Expires: AUG 16 2008**

Title: Quality Step Increases

1. Purpose

To establish the parameters and processing deadlines for Quality Step Increases (QSI).

2. Scope

This policy applies to the Office of the Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and the Bureau of Indian Education.

3. Policy

A Quality Step Increase (QSI) is a **faster than normal** within-grade increase used to reward employees at all General Schedule grade levels who display exceptional performance. The employee's current rating of record is the basis for the QSI. QSIs are given in addition to regular within-grade increases and will not affect the timing of an employee's next regular within-grade increase, **unless** the Quality Step Increase places the employee in step 4 or step 7 of their grade. In these cases, waiting periods are extended an additional 52 weeks (waiting periods are 52 weeks for steps 1-3, 104 weeks for steps 4-6, and 156 weeks for steps 7-9). The time an employee has already waited counts towards the next increase, but they must wait the full period that the new step requires.

To be eligible for a Quality Step Increase, an employee must:

- be below step 10 of their grade level;
- achieve an overall rating of Exceptional (level 5) on their current Performance Appraisal;
- have demonstrated sustained exceptional performance; and
- not have received a Quality Step Increase in the preceding year.

Within Indian Affairs, the deadline for processing QSIs is:

- BIA - 12/31/07
- BIE - 09/30/07

07-35
New **AUG 16 2007**

No employee can receive a QSI in two consecutive years. In lieu of another QSI, Managers/Supervisors are encouraged to recognize exceptional performance with a Cash Award.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

The Deputy Assistant Secretary – Management is responsible for administering this policy.

The Office of Human Capital Management is responsible for providing information and guidance to managers, supervisors, and employees.

Servicing Human Resources Offices are responsible for assisting managers and supervisors in recognizing and rewarding exceptional employee performance.

Supervisors are responsible for recommending QSIs and for providing a brief specific example of how expectations were exceeded for each element in the justification. In recommending a Quality Step Increase, the supervisor and HR specialist should review several factors in regard to timing:

- How long will the employee be able to enjoy the benefits of a Quality Step Increase?
- Will the employee be promoted in the near future?
- Will the Quality Step Increase make a difference in setting the promotion pay?
- Has the employee received a Quality Step Increase within the last 52 weeks?
- When is the employee eligible for their next within-grade increase?
- Will the increase take the employee to a new waiting period, i.e., step 4 or step 7?

6. Approval



Debbie L. Clark
Deputy Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs (Management)

8-16-2007

Date