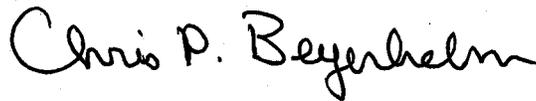


For: FSA Employees

**Farm Service Agency (FSA) FY 2015 Performance Awards
and FY 2016 Non-Rating Based Awards Program**

Approved by: Associate Administrator for Operations and Management



1 Overview

A Background

A performance management and awards program is critical to the success of any organization. According to the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), performance management **must** effectively differentiate between high and low performance, and the awards system **must** reward top performers with meaningful and appropriate recognition. FSA awards policy is documented in 5-PM, Performance Management System.

FSA supervisors will be able to recognize FY 2015 employee performance with cash awards, time off awards (TOA's), or a combination cash award/TOA according to 5-PM.

B Purpose

This notice provides guidance for:

- FY 2015 (October 1, 2014, to September 30, 2015) performance awards for rating-based awards,
- FY 2016 extra effort and spot awards,
- rating-based award cash amounts,
- non-rating-based awards, and
- supervisors to recognize the workforce fairly and equitably for the level of performance being delivered.

Disposal Date	Distribution
October 1, 2016 12-1-15	All FSA employees; State Offices relay to County Offices

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1 Overview (Continued)

C Labor-Management Obligations

Where exclusive representation exists, bargaining may be requested to the extent allowed by applicable statutes and according to contract language. Negotiation issues raised **must** be resolved before implementation of this notice for employees in that collective bargaining unit.

D Effective Date

Every effort should be made to process FY 2015 awards by pay period (PP) 24 (ending December 12, 2015) for employees with FY 2015 performance ratings.

Note: FY 2015 performance rating **must** be entered in EmpowHR or the Entry, Processing, Inquiry and Correction (EPIC) System before entering the performance cash award.

E Award Justifications

Rating-based awards do not require a separate award justification, provided the justification for the rating of record is thoroughly documented during the appraisal process. A copy of the rating justification must be filed with the award documentation.

Justifications for other awards must clearly state:

- the employee or group accomplishment,
- the time period covered by the accomplishment,
- how the accomplishment exceeded normal expectations of the employee(s)' role,
- the result or outcome of the accomplishment, and
- the calculation of measurable or non-measurable benefits.

Any split between cash and a TOA should be documented in the justification and addressed in the calculation of benefits.

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1 Overview (Continued)

F Contacts for TOA’s, Cash Awards, or Quality Step Increases (QSI’s)

If there are questions about processing TOA’s or cash awards contact the appropriate servicing personnel office (SPO) as follows.

Location/Office	SPO Contact
FSA state or county office	state administrative officer (AO)
FSA headquarters and RMA employees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dana Candler by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • e-mail at dana.candler@kcc.usda.gov, • telephone at 816-926-6117, or • FAX at 816-926-6156 • Patty Gepford by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • e-mail at patricia.gepford@kcc.usda.gov, • telephone at 816-926-6259, or • FAX at 816-926-6156 • Ernest Kary by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • e-mail at ernest.kary@kcc.usda.gov, • telephone at 816-926-6225, or • FAX at 816-926-6156 • Karen Williams by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • e-mail at karen.williams@kcc.usda.gov, • telephone at 816-926-2670, or • FAX at 816-926-6156 • Kedra Watts by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • e-mail at kedra.watts@wdc.usda.gov, • telephone at 202-401-0678, or • FAX at 202-205-9017.

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2 FY 2015 Rating-Based Awards

A General Information

Rating-based awards are based on employee performance accomplishments over the course of the rating cycle, as documented on the employee's rating of record. See 5-PM for further information.

Rating-based awards do not require a separate award justification, provided the justification for the rating of record is thoroughly documented during the appraisal process. A copy of the rating justification must be filed with the award documentation.

B Types of Rating-Based Awards

Employees may receive **one** of the following types of awards in recognition of their FY 2015 performance rating of record:

- cash award (lump-sum) **only**,
- TOA **only**, or
- combination of cash award and TOA.

It is the employee's choice as to which authorized award they receive. Document the employee's choice by e-mail and on the FSA Awards Calculation Worksheet (Exhibit 1).

Note: See paragraph 3 for the opportunity to offer QSI's instead of awards listed above to select employees with outstanding ratings.

IF the rating is...	THEN the award can be one of the following...
outstanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2 percent of the employee's base salary, including locality pay,• 40 hour TOA, or• 1 percent of the employee's base salary, including locality pay, and 20 hour TOA.
superior	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1 percent of the employee's base salary, including locality pay,• 20 hour TOA, or• 0.5 percent of the employee's base salary, including locality pay, and 10 hour TOA.

Cash award amounts are determined based on the employee's base salary, including locality pay. This includes salary rates because of a temporary promotion that is or was in place for **six months or more** during the FY 2015 performance period.

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2 FY 2015 Rating-Based Awards (Continued)

B Types of Rating-Based Awards (Continued)

If a temporary promotion is or was for **less than six months**, then use the appropriate rate for the position of record as of September 30, 2015.

Example: An employee was on a temporary promotion for one year that ended on August 23, 2015. Use the salary rate in place as of August 23, 2015, if higher than salary as of September 30, 2015.

Notes: Exceptions to the salary used to calculate the award amount **must** be approved by the appropriate deputy administrator or the Associate Administrator for Operations and Management (AAOM).

C Eligibility

All FSA employees, federal and non-federal, rated superior are eligible for a rating-based award. All employees rated outstanding are eligible for QSI consideration. Employees rated fully successful or below are **not** eligible for rating-based awards.

3 QSI's

A Overview

QSI's are a faster than normal within grade increase (WGI) used to reward employees at any general schedule (GS) or county (CO) grade level rated outstanding. Receiving a QSI will **not** affect receiving the next WGI, **unless** the employee is in step 3 or step 6 **before** receiving the QSI, in which case receiving a WGI will be pushed back exactly one year. QSI's are earned by employees who have far exceeded job expectations and their performance is expected to continue into the future. A QSI may be granted, instead of the award options listed in subparagraph 2 B, for employees with a rating of record of outstanding.

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3 QSI's (Continued)

B Allocation Award Pools

For QSI rating-based award purposes, allocation of QSI's will be divided into award pools. The award pools are as follows:

- Office of the Administrator (immediate Office of the Administrator and staff offices reporting to the Administrator),
- Office of Budget and Finance (OBF),
- Deputy Administrator for Commodity Operations (DACO),
- Deputy Administrator for Farm Loan Programs (DAFLP),
- Deputy Administrator for Field Operations (DAFO), excluding state and county offices,
- Deputy Administrator for Farm Programs (DAFP),
- Deputy Administrator for Management (DAM),
- Information Technology Services Division (ITSD), and
- each state office.

Note: The U.S. Virgin Islands are included with the Florida award pool.

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3 QSI's (Continued)

B Allocation Award Pools (Continued)

Each award pool may give a number of QSI's up to 2 percent of the total number of ratings of record given that year within that award pool. Fractions of 0.5 or greater shall be rounded up; fractions less than 0.5 shall be rounded down.

Example: An award pool gives 210 ratings of record, 2 percent of 210 =4.2; therefore, a maximum of 4 QSI's may be given in this award pool.

For small award pools where this percentage would not allow any QSI's, one QSI per award pool may be given.

All decisions about QSI's will be made by the:

- AAOM for the Office of the Administrator award pool,
- Chief Financial Officer,
- Chief Information Officer,
- deputy administrator for all other associated award pools, and
- state executive director (SED) for each state office award pool.

C Criteria

QSI's are the highest rating-based award that an employee can earn. FSA has established stringent criteria for QSI's to maintain QSI integrity. The following criteria **must** be met to be considered for a QSI:

- the rating of record **must** be outstanding,
- the employee has **not** received a QSI within the last 52 weeks,
- the employee is **not** at step 10 of their grade level,
- the employee demonstrates sustained performance of high quality significantly above expectations and is expected to continue in the future, and
- the employee has held the same grade and type of position, or similar position, in a pay status for at least six months **before** the end of the appraisal cycle.

Note: If an employee is in the process of being promoted within 60 calendar days after the effective date of the QSI, check the next salary level to ensure that the QSI will **not** be lost.

D Employees at Step 10

Employees at step 10 of their grade **cannot** receive a QSI. Employees at step 10 of their grade rated outstanding will receive their award of choice as listed in subparagraph 2 B.

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3 QSI's (Continued)

E Effective Date

QSI's will be made effective the first day of the PP after written notification is received in the SPO that the QSI should be processed. Written notification may take place through EmpowHR, by submitting a completed AD-287-2, Recommendation and Approval of Awards, or by using some other form of written communication, such as a spreadsheet or memorandum. The effective date may be delayed up to four PP's when advantageous to the employee.

Note: Employees may **not** receive both of the following based on a rating of record for the same appraisal period a:

- QSI, and
- cash award, TOA, or combination cash award/TOA.

4 Cash Award Only Option

A Overview

When giving a cash award **only**, determining the individual award amounts may be accomplished by using the spreadsheet in Exhibit 1.

B Award Amount Based on Employee Salaries

Issuing awards based on a percentage of the employee's salary:

- provides consistency throughout the program area and/or state,
- shows distinctions based on levels of performance, and
- is based on the employee's annual base pay; that is GS or CO pay, plus locality pay.

Note: See contacts listed in subparagraph 1 F for assistance in determining award amounts.

C Effective Date

Cash performance awards will be made effective the first day of the PP after written notification is received in the SPO. Every effort should be made to submit award requests by PP24, 2015 to allow for processing and pay out by PP25, 2015. Written notification may take place through EmpowHR, by submitting a completed AD-287-2, or by using some other form of written communication such as a spreadsheet or a memorandum.

Note: The FY 2015 performance rating **must** be entered in EmpowHR or EPIC before entering the performance cash award.

Important: When entering the cash awards in SPPS or EmpowHR, a line of accounting must be entered. This line of accounting is the 14 digit accounting code that is located in the employee webTA timesheet. It is also located in 98-FI. If this accounting code is not manually entered the award may be rejected and it may slow the issuance of the award. Not only will the accounting code be rejected by NFC but the awards will not be properly reflected in the payroll reports for the respective offices where the awards are issued.

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5 TOA's

A Award Preference

FSA recognizes that time off is a valuable tool in rewarding the workforce. TOA's may be preferred by employees instead of cash awards.

B TOA Hour Limitations

TOA's are granted to employees in the form of time off from work without loss of pay or charge to leave. Full-time employees may:

- be granted up to 80 hours of time off during a leave year, and
- not be granted more than 40 hours for a single achievement.

TOA's **must** be scheduled and used within 26 PP's from the effective date of processing. After 26 PP's, unused time off will automatically be forfeited and may **not** be restored or otherwise substituted.

Part-time employees or employees with uncommon tours of duty may be granted up to the average number of hours worked in a PP or the employee's scheduled tour of duty. This figure should be prorated for part-time employees or employees with uncommon tours of duty.

Note: All FY 2015 performance appraisals **must** be entered into the National Finance Center (NFC) **before** processing FY 2015 performance TOA's. Managers **must** check with their state office or HRD for federal employees, to ensure that the FY 2015 appraisal has been entered **before** entering TOA's for performance.

6 Processing TOA's Using EmpowHR

A Recommendation Responsibilities

Only the supervisor may be the recommending official for a rating-based TOA. Recommending individuals using EmpowHR shall take the following steps to nominate an employee for a TOA. See paragraph 7 for making recommendations **without** using EmpowHR.

Step	Action	
1	Prepare the TOA recommendation in EmpowHR (Manager Self Service - Tasks - Awards).	
2	IF the recommendation...	THEN EmpowHR forwards the TOA recommendation...
	is within the supervisor's approval authority (up to 10 hours time off)	directly to the SPO for processing.
	exceeds the supervisor's approval authority (10 or more hours)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to the supervisor's supervisor for approval • to the SPO for processing after approval.

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6 Processing TOA’s Using EmpowHR (Continued)

B Supervisor Review and Approval or Disapproval

After receiving notification from the approving official:

- the recipient’s supervisor shall inform the employee of the decision, and
- the SPO will notify the supervisor after TOA is approved. The supervisor will notify the employee of the TOA and let the employee know the TOA will be reflected on their Employee Personal Page (EPP) (subparagraph 8 F).

C Approval Official Responsibilities

The approving official shall review the TOA recommendation and make one of the following decisions.

IF the approving official...	THEN...
approves the recommendation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EmpowHR forwards the recommendation to the SPO for processing, and • notify, verbally or by e-mail, the recipient’s supervisor and recommending individual of action.
modifies and approves the recommendation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • note changes, • EmpowHR forwards the recommendation to the SPO for processing, and • notify, verbally or by e-mail, the recipient’s supervisor and recommending individual of action.
disapproves the recommendation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EmpowHR forwards the recommendation to the SPO where it will be canceled, and • notify the supervisor verbally or by e-mail.

7 Processing TOA’s Not Using EmpowHR

A Recommendation Responsibilities

The recommending individual shall take the following steps to nominate an employee for TOA.

Step	Action
1	Prepare the TOA recommendation on AD-287-2.
2	If recommending for a rating-based TOA, use the write-up accompanying the rating.
3	Sign AD-287-2.
4	Forward AD-287-2 and all supporting documents to the recipient’s supervisor.

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7 Processing TOA's Not Using EmpowHR (Continued)

B Action After Approval Received

After receiving notification that the TOA has been approved from the approving official, the supervisor can inform the employee:

- of the decision, and
- that the TOA will be reflected on their EPP after SPO processing.

8 Extra Effort and Spot Awards

A General

Extra effort and spot awards are non-rating-based awards that are given based on employee accomplishments or contributions on a short-term assignment, project, or detail. Funds for extra effort or spot awards will be allocated later in the FY based on funding availability. Each award pool will receive an allocation by memorandum from OBF.

- Extra effort awards are monetary awards that recognize individuals or groups who make a significant one-time contribution (special project, assignment, detail) to FSA's mission or goals. Extra effort award amounts can range from \$50 to more than \$10,000, depending on the value of the benefits and the application of the contributions to the Government. Award amounts over \$5,500 require approval of the Secretary.
- Spot awards are monetary awards designed to grant immediate recognition to individuals or teams of employees for their day-to-day extra efforts and contributions. Spot awards range from \$50 to \$750, will be issued immediately, and taxes will be included. Enter the award amount in EmpowHR for spot award. For budgetary purposes, supervisors should deduct, from their spot award budget, the spot award amount plus taxes. For taxes, add 55 percent, if the state has no income taxes and 60 percent, if the state has income taxes.

Example: \$500 award + \$300 taxes = \$800 deducted from the spot award budget.

Note: TOA's can be granted, instead of cash, to recognize employee accomplishments or contributions. TOA's are subject to the limitations in subparagraph 5 B.

B Award Amounts

Funds for extra effort or spot awards will be allocated by OBF memorandum to each award pool identified in subparagraph 3 B. These awards funds shall **only** be used to award employees for their short term accomplishments or contributions using extra effort and spot cash awards.

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8 Extra Effort and Spot Awards (Continued)

C Justification

Extra effort and spot awards require written justification regardless of the award amount. Written justification **must**:

- accompany the award recommendation,
- describe the employee's accomplishments or contributions,
- clearly reflect to the approving official where the award falls on the Non-Measurable Benefits Scale (Exhibit 2), and
- follow the format in Exhibit 3.

D Current Practices

If an office currently has a system in place for handling extra effort or spot awards, such as a review committee, the system may be kept as long as the provisions of the system comply with this notice.

E TOA and Transfer Between CO and GS

If an employee is transferred between the FSA CO and GS systems and they have unused TOA hours, the TOA hours will be dropped by NFC. To restore TOA hours, the SPO will process another TOA, in the amount of the unused hours, for the employee after their transfer is complete.

Note: The SPO will **only** process another TOA if the employee is transferring **within FSA**.

F Connecting to NFC's EPP

To access your EPP, go to <https://www.nfc.usda.gov> and under "Application Launchpad", CLICK "My EPP" icon. On the Employee Personal Page Warning Screen, read message and then CLICK "I Agree".

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8 Extra Effort and Spot Awards (Continued)

F Connecting to NFC’s EPP (Continued)

On the EPP Log-In Screen, follow directions to log into EPP using one of the following options:

- enter user ID and password and CLICK “Log In”,
- CLICK “New User Sign Up”, or
- CLICK “eAuth Log In”.

Note: For user ID or password assistance, contact the EPP Help Desk directly, as follows:

- CLICK either “Forgot Your User ID?” or “Forgot Your Password?”,
- e-mail osc.etix@usda.gov,
- telephone toll free at 800-767-9641, or
- telephone at 504-426-6435.

To view leave balances in EPP, under “Home”, “Personal Info”, CLICK “Leave”.

Note: To ensure privacy, close all other tabs on the screen.

9 Processing Awards Other Than TOA’s Using EmpowHR

A Recommending Individual Responsibilities

Anyone may be the recommending individual for an extra effort or spot award. Recommending individuals using EmpowHR shall take the following steps to nominate an employee for an award. See paragraph 10 for making recommendations without using EmpowHR.

Note: Only the recipient’s supervisor may be the recommending individual for a rating-based award.

Step	Action	
1	Prepare the award recommendation in EmpowHR.	
2	IF the recommendation is by a... nonsupervisory	THEN forward the award recommendation... to recommending individual’s supervisor.
	supervisor and recommended amount is within supervisor’s approval authority (up to \$750 in cash and up to 10-hour TOA)	directly to the SPO for processing.
	supervisor and recommended amount exceeds supervisor’s approval authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to the supervisor’s supervisor for approval, and • then to the SPO for processing after approval.
Note: In all cases, before creating the award recommendation, the recommending individual must notify the recipient’s supervisor of the award recommendation for concurrence.		

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9 Processing Awards Other Than TOA’s Using EmpowHR (Continued)

B Supervisor Review and Approval/Disapproval

The recipient’s supervisor shall review the award recommendation and notify the recommending individual of their decision.

After receiving notification from the approving official, the recipient’s supervisor shall:

- inform the employee and recommending individual of the decision
- if the award was approved, let the employee know the award will be reflected on their EPP after processing by the SPO.

C Approving Official Responsibilities

When an award is recommended by a supervisor that exceeds the amount authorized for supervisory approval, an approving official is required. The approving official shall review the award recommendation and make one of the following decisions.

IF the approving official...	THEN...
approves the recommendation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• forward the award recommendation to the SPO for processing, and• notify the recipient’s supervisor and recommending individual of action, verbally or by e-mail.
modifies and approves the recommendation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• note changes,• forward the award recommendation to the SPO for processing, and• notify the recipient’s supervisor and recommending individual of action, verbally or by e-mail.
disapproves the recommendation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• forward the award recommendation to the SPO where it will be canceled, and• notify the recipient’s supervisor, verbally or by e-mail.

Note: The extra effort and spot award amount will be deducted from the approving official’s extra effort and spot awards allotment.

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10 Processing Awards Other Than TOA’s Not Using EmpowHR

A Recommending Individual Responsibilities

Anyone may be the recommending individual for an extra effort or spot award. The recommending individual shall take the following steps to nominate an employee for an award.

Note: Only the recipient’s supervisor may be the recommending individual for a rating-based award.

Step	Action	
1	Prepare the award recommendation on AD-287-2.	
2	IF recommending for...	THEN...
	an extra effort or spot award	prepare a written justification.
	a rating-based award	use the write-up accompanying the rating.
3	Sign AD-287-2.	
4	Forward AD-287-2 and all supporting documents to the recipient’s supervisor.	

B Recipient’s Supervisor

The recipient’s supervisor shall review the award recommendation and make one of the following decisions.

IF the recipient’s supervisor...	THEN...
approves the recommendation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sign AD-287-2, and • forward the award recommendation to the approving official.
modifies and approves the recommendation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • note changes, • sign AD-287-2, and • forward the award recommendation to the approving official.
disapproves the recommendation	attach a note to AD-287-2, or note can be done by e-mail, and return to the recommending individual.

After receiving notification that the award has been approved from the approving official:

- inform the employee of the decision, and
- let the employee know the award will be reflected on their EPP after processing by the SPO.

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10 Processing Awards Other Than TOA's Not Using EmpowHR (Continued)

C Approving Official Responsibilities

The approving official shall review the award recommendation and make one of the following decisions.

IF the approving official...	THEN...
approves the recommendation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• sign AD-287-2,• forward the award recommendation to the SPO, and• notify the recipient's supervisor and recommending individual of action.
modifies and approves the recommendation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• note changes,• sign AD-287-2,• forward the award recommendation to the SPO, and• notify the recipient's supervisor and recommending individual of action.
disapproves the recommendation	attach a note to AD-287-2, or note can be done by e-mail, stating the reason for disapproval, and return one copy to the recipient's supervisor and one copy to the recommending individual.

11 Additional Information

A Purchasing Mementos for Employees

Some employees value a memento more than other types of recognition, including cash awards or TOA's. Offices may spend up to 15 percent of their extra effort and spot awards pool on mementos for employees. Before purchasing mementos offices **must** develop a written proposal for the memento program and submit it to the national office for approval. The award pool executive **must** submit the proposal to HRD, Attn: Charlotte Moment.

Purchasing all employees a polo shirt, jacket, or other memento awards all employees equally, the high performers and low performers, and does **not** make distinctions based on the level of performance. This practice does **not** meet OPM requirements.

11 **Additional Information (Continued)**

B Length of Service (LOS) Awards

The incentive awards program does not authorize the spending of government funds on keepsakes such as engraved clocks and other items. Departmental Regulation 4040-451-1 (USDA Employee Awards and Recognition Program) allows for a length of service certificate and a pin or charm, consistent with guidance from the OPM.

C Retirement Recognition/Non-Monetary Awards

Employees should **not** be recognized monetarily when they leave FSA, either through retirement or separation. The limit on expenditures for non-monetary awards remains \$250 on any one item, with that amount reserved for **only the highest level honorary awards** or other major or career accomplishments. However, offices may consider providing some form of honorary or nonmonetary recognition of the employee's efforts in support of FSA's mission. Typically, non-monetary items are of nominal value. Items such as certificates, plaques, and pins are considered appropriate and may be presented. These items should be charged to the office's supply allotment.

D Publishing Awards

FSA encourages supervisors to use the various resources available to them to publicize the accomplishments and contributions of their employees. When publicizing awards, the employee's name and the general type of award (rating-based, extra effort, or spot), along with information, such as a description of the accomplishments, can be published. However, do **not** publish the names of employees receiving QSI's. Employee appraisal information is protected under the Privacy Act. Therefore, because it is a requirement to have an outstanding rating to receive a QSI, publishing the names of employees receiving QSI's would be effectively disclosing their appraisal information.

Example: An acceptable method for publishing awards would be a combined list titled, "Rating-Based Award Recipients List Including QSI's, Cash Awards, TOA's, or Cash Award/TOA." In this example, do **not** disclose the specific type of award (QSI, performance bonus, etc.) with the recipients' names.

Extra Effort and Spot Award Benefits Scales

The following table provides the benefits scale for extra effort and spot awards.

Nonmeasurable Benefits Scale			
Value of Benefits	Application		
	Limited	Broad	General
	Impacts the public interest, or a specific small work unit, including a division or region.	Impacts the public interest, several regional areas, or an entire agency.	Impacts the public interest, more than one agency, or the entire department.
Small to Moderate	\$50 - \$325	\$325 - \$650	\$650 - \$1,300
Moderate to Substantial	\$325 - \$650	\$650 - \$1,300	\$1,300 - \$3,150
Substantial to Extended	\$1,000 - \$2,500	\$2,500 - \$5,500	\$5,500 - \$10,000 <u>1/</u>

Measurable Benefits Scale	
Benefit	Award
Up to \$10,000	10 percent of the benefits.
\$10,001 to \$100,000	\$1,000 for the first \$10,000 in benefits, plus 3 percent of benefits over \$10,000.
\$100,001 or more	\$3,700 for the first \$100,000 in benefits, plus .005 of benefits over \$100,000. The award amount should not exceed the recipient's annual salary.

1/ Any award over \$5,500 **requires** the Secretary's approval.

TOA Scale	
Value of the Employee's Contribution	Hours To Be Awarded
Small to moderate contributions that helped to ease a backlog or completion of a special project that benefited primarily the employee's home office.	1 to 10 hours
Moderate to substantial contributions that helped an entire division, region, or other large geographic area.	11 to 40 hours

Note: These tables shall **not** be used when calculating rating-based awards.

Example of Extra Effort and Spot Award Justification

Notes: All extra effort and spot awards, regardless of amount **unless** otherwise specified in a Union Agreement, require a separate written justification.

All other awards justification will be entered in EmpowHR using the drop-down list choices, when supervisors input the award information.

The following is an outline that describes the sections and wording to justify an award:

“During the period of [mmdyyy to mmdyyy], [Employee/Group Name], [description of accomplishment and/or list of duties and accomplishment the employee has done to deserve this award].

This exceeded expectations as identified in the current performance plan by: [As applicable.]

- [Improving quality.]
- [Timely completion of the project.]
- [Increasing productivity.]
- [Overcoming adverse obstacles or working under unusual circumstances.]
- [Using unusual creativity.]
- [Saving the Government time and/or money.]
- [Increasing program effectiveness.]

As a result: [As applicable.]

- [Project acceptance.]
- [Savings in time, money, and/or material. More efficiency.]
- [Effectiveness.]
- [Technological advancement.]
- [Productivity increase.]
- [Improved levels of cooperation that will result in...]

Therefore, we propose an award of [amount and/or hours].”