

## QUALITY STEP INCREASE (QSI)

### QSI Documentation Requirements

Prepare an [SF 52, Request for Personnel Action](#), and check the box for “QSI” on CD-430, Performance Management Record summary rating page. A complete CD-430 Performance Management Record, which includes all the critical elements in the plan, must accompany the SF-52 when submitted to Human Resources. A recommendation for a Quality Step Increase must include a detailed narrative attached to the summary rating page, providing specific examples of the employee’s exceptional performance justifying the QSI nomination.

A narrative supporting a QSI should include a justification that indicates how the employee exceeded expectations in **all** of the critical elements. The justification should reflect the significance and/or impact of the employee’s work. In determining whether an employee should receive a QSI, a recommending official must be able to apply several of the following statements to the specific critical results in the employee’s performance plan. In each critical result where the employee is being recommended for a QSI, the rating official should be able to **provide specific examples of the accomplishment**.

A QSI may be requested if the following criteria are met:

- The employee has been a major influence in the development of management practices, operating procedures, or program implementation guidelines, which have contributed substantially to the accomplishment of the organization’s goals.
- The employee’s assignments are consistently thought through, timely, and often completed ahead of established schedules. The result is a highly effective product of exceptional quality.
- The employee’s performance continually demonstrates an exceptional level of support of principal customers, and their requirements and/or the critical results in ITA’s strategic core processes supporting those requirements.
- The employee continually exhibits performance behaviors linked to the strategic goals which result in considerably improved quality, operational performance and customer satisfaction.
- A high degree of productivity is continually evidenced through the employee’s demonstrated work products while still maintaining a high level of quality.
- The employee handles interpersonal relationships with exceptional skill, anticipating and avoiding potential causes of conflict by actively promoting cooperation and teamwork with clients, coworkers, and supervisors. Because of the employee’s

efforts, significant products/outcomes are produced which otherwise would not have been achieved.

**Restrictions:**

- No **single** accomplishment merits a Quality Step Increase.
- QSI's should be given only to the most outstanding performers, i.e., **Level 5**.
- No more than 4% of the entire ITA population should be considered for QSI's. The monitoring of the number of QSI's is done at the Under Secretary, Assistant Secretary, Chief Financial Officer (CFO) and Director of Administration, and the Chief Information Officer (CIO) levels.
- Employees who have been permanently promoted or changed jobs in the last 6 months of the cycle, or who are expected to be promoted or change jobs within the next 90 days following the QSI, are **NOT** eligible for a QSI.
- The combined value of a QSI amount and all other monetary awards received in a fiscal year cannot exceed 10% of the employee's annual salary including locality pay.
- To receive QSI's in consecutive appraisal cycles, the documentation must demonstrate that the employee's current performance is at a *significantly* higher level than that of the previous year. Multiple QSI's must be personally approved by the Under Secretary following a technical review by Human Resources.
- If an employee is receiving more than one QSI in a four- year period, the recommendation for each QSI beyond two must be submitted to the Department of Commerce, Director for Human Resources Management, for approval following a review first by the Under Secretary.

Recommendations for QSIs must be submitted to ITA CFO Administration room 2006, no later than December 22, 2008, so that CFO Administration can deliver to the DOCHROC by December 29, 2008. (In the case of QSIs given in successive years, these must be submitted no later than October 10, 2008, for review and approval by the Under Secretary).