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Engineer Regulation 672-1-19

Effective 23 September 2024

CEHR

### Decorations, Awards, and Honors Incentive Awards

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FOR THE COMMANDER:

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Chief of Staff

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**Purpose.** This regulation establishes policy and responsibilities for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Incentive Awards Program. The objective of the Incentive Awards Program is to recognize U.S. Army Corps of Engineers civilian personnel who have distinguished themselves through professional excellence, superior performance, or special acts.

**Applicability.** This regulation applies to all USACE civilian personnel, including Headquarters, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Major Subordinate Commands, Districts, Laboratories, Centers, and Field Operating Agencies.

**Distribution Statement.** Approved for public release; distribution is unlimited.

**Proponent and Exception Authority.** The proponent of this regulation is the Directorate of Human Resources. The proponent has the authority to approve exceptions or waivers to this regulation that are consistent with controlling law and regulations. Only the proponent of a publication or form may modify it by officially revising or rescinding it.

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## **Chapter 1**

### **Introduction**

#### **1-1. Purpose**

This regulation establishes policy and responsibilities for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Incentive Awards Program. The objective of the Incentive Awards Program is to recognize U.S. Army Corps of Engineers civilian personnel who have distinguished themselves through professional excellence, superior performance, or special acts.

#### **1-2. Distribution statement**

Approved for public release; distribution is unlimited.

#### **1-3. References**

See Appendix A.

#### **1-4. Records management (record keeping) requirements**

The records management requirement for all record numbers, associated forms, and reports required by this regulation are addressed in the Army Records Retention Schedule – Army (RRS-A). Detailed information for all related record numbers is located in the Army Records Information Management System (ARIMS)/RRS-A at <https://www.arims.army.mil>. If any record numbers, forms, and reports are not current, addressed, and/or published correctly in ARIMS/RRS-A, see DA Pam 25-403 for guidance.

#### **1-5. Associated publications**

Procedures and guidance related to this policy is in EP 672-1-1.

#### **1-6. Responsibilities**

*a. Directorate of Human Resources.* The Directorate of Human Resources (CEHR) is responsible for key program development, implementation, and oversight responsibilities consistent with other personnel management functions. CEHR will:

(1) Provide advice and assistance in the application of the policies, procedures, and guidelines of the Incentive Awards Program (IAP).

(2) Act as point of contact between Headquarters and the rest of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Enterprise to execute the awards program.

(3) Establish the USACE Incentive Awards Board (UIAB).

*b. USACE Incentive Awards Board.* The UIAB, established at Headquarters, USACE (HQUSACE), will make recommendations on incentive awards nominations requiring HQUSACE approval.

*c. Supervisors will:*

(1) Carefully monitor employee performance.

(2) Support the IAP by initiating or approving recommendations for appropriate awards and ensuring that noteworthy performance is recognized in a timely manner.

(3) Submit timely honorary award nomination packages by the required processing time frame(s) according to USACE policies.

(4) Ensure approved awards are documented in the employee's record, via the AutoNOA tool (<https://autonoa.army.mil>).

d. *Incentive Awards Committee (IAC)*. An IAC will be established at all Divisions, Districts, Centers, and Laboratories.

(1) Generally, IACs review awards for consistency with command practice, confirm the criteria for the level of award is met, and ensure similar accomplishments receive comparable levels of recognition.

(2) IACs disapproving or down-grading awards will provide rationale/feedback to the nominating official and give the nominating official opportunity to modify or withdraw the nomination.

(3) All awards referred to the USACE Commander for signature, must be endorsed by the local IAC chairperson on Department of the Army (DA) Form 1256 (Incentive Award Nomination and Approval), Part III, block 9. For guidelines regarding IACs, see EP 672-1-1.

### **1-7. General practices**

a. *Approval authority*. AR 672-20 outlines the approval authorities for the various incentive awards. This approval authority is extended to those individuals occupying positions at the level of the approval authority, regardless of their current grade, unless a minimum grade is specified. The Commanding General (CG) may delegate approval authority according to AR 672-20.

b. *Appropriate use of recognition*. Awards should only be initiated when an employee's accomplishments warrant special recognition and fully meet the criteria for the award according to AR 672-20. Appropriate and timely recognition will maintain employee confidence in the value and integrity of awards presented. Awards are not mandatory but may be initiated when applicable criteria are met. Narrative justifications must:

- (1) Address accomplishments.
- (2) Describe why the accomplishments were extraordinary.
- (3) Include their positive impact on the USACE mission.

c. *Confidentiality of nominations*. Employees should not be informed that they are under consideration for or have been nominated for an award. Such action may create morale problems if the award is not approved.

d. *Sequence of recognition*. Awards should follow a progressive sequence of recognition, except when the contribution is so extraordinary that recognition with a lesser award would be insufficient. Deserving employees should receive timely recognition by their supervisors or command using the full range of available civilian awards. Such action will lay the foundation for higher recognition. A record of all incentive awards for exceptional employees should be built throughout an employee's career, not just at the time of retirement. The nominating district/division may be asked to rewrite the justification when the IAC determines it does not support the requirements of the requested award.

e. *Timeliness of nominations*.

(1) Honorary awards should be submitted no later than (NLT) 6 months after completion of the act or period cited in the award.

(2) Superior Accomplishment Awards (Special Act, On-the-Spot (OTS), and Time Off Awards) should be submitted within 30 calendar days after completion of the act or period cited in the award.

(3) All nominations must comply with the requirements of AR 672-20 and this regulation; those that do not will hold up the processing time and delay the recognition of the employee.

*f. Multiple awards.* An employee:

(1) Can receive both an honorary and a monetary award for the same accomplishment if the criteria for both awards are met.

(2) Cannot receive two monetary awards or two honorary awards for the same action (for example: a special act award and an OTS award).

(3) Can receive multiple honorary or monetary awards of the same type so long as the periods of service and accomplishments recognized do not overlap. Honorary awards may be given to civilian employees at any time in their careers such as retirement, reassignment, transfer, or separation, provided the individual's accomplishments fully meet the criteria for the proposed award.

## **Chapter 2**

### **U.S. Army Corps of Engineers incentive awards program**

#### **2-1. Program administration**

a. The goal of the USACE IAP is to foster mission accomplishment by recognizing excellence of both military and civilian members of USACE and motivating them to high levels of performance and service. The program has, as its capstone, a group of civilian honorary medals that parallel similar military honors. Monetary awards are also authorized to recognize the superior accomplishments and performance, as well as scientific achievements and inventions. Whenever possible, the service, accomplishments, and performance of military and civilian members will be recognized at awards ceremonies. Specific information on awards for civilian personnel is found in AR 672-20. Specific information on awards for military personnel is found in AR 600-8-22.

b. The USACE IAP will be administered by CEHR, commanders, directors, and supervisors on the basis of merit without regard to sex, race, color, age, genetic information, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, disability, reprisal, or other non-merit factors.

c. All levels of command will endorse and support the USACE IAP to help ensure the following:

(1) Appropriate, effective, and consistent use of the various types of awards.

(2) Active interest and participation by all USACE personnel.

(3) Full consideration of eligible USACE employees for awards sponsored by external organizations.

d. All monetary and honorary awards for performance or achievement will not be made to an individual who has been actively and substantially involved in unlawful discrimination based on sex, race, color, age, genetic information, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, disability, or reprisal. No discretionary monetary or honorary award for performance or achievement will be made to an individual who –

(1) Is either under investigation, or upon whom disciplinary or adverse action based on performance or conduct is pending.

(2) Was the subject of a disciplinary action within the preceding 120 days.

e. All award nominations requiring DA approval, except those for public service awards, must include Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) and adverse action certification for civilians. In no event will an award be approved for a period of time in which the nominee was found to have personally acted in a discriminatory manner in violation of EEO guidelines or standards of conduct.

(1) The EEO officer reviewing the award nomination will sign block 7b on DA Form 1256 affirming that the nominee's records. Nominees will:

(a) Not have any current EEO complaints pending.

(b) Not have any past history of adverse findings in EEO complaints based on performance or conduct.

(2) The Civilian Personnel Advisory Center (CPAC) representative reviewing the award will sign block 7e on DA Form 1256 affirming that the nominee's records. Nominees will:

(a) Not have any current personal adverse actions pending.

(b) Not have any past history of adverse findings based on performance or conduct.

(3) If there is an adverse finding because of an EEO complaint, or a past adverse action based on conduct or performance, the CG may evaluate the underlying facts and certify that the nomination:

(a) Is not inconsistent with attainment of EEO and affirmative action goals.

(b) Will not reflect adversely on USACE.

(4) A decision not to initiate an award or forward a nomination will be made by the CG based on the individual evaluation.

f. For awards not reviewed by the DA, the nominating command EEO officer will furnish information based on review of pending and past EEO complaints and the CPAC for adverse actions.

## **2-2. Eligibility for awards**

a. *Basic nominee eligibility.* Except for public service awards, nominees must:

(1) Be a current USACE employee.

(2) Have contributed substantially to the mission, prestige, and reputation of USACE.

(3) Attain the highest standards of excellence as a civilian employee.

b. *Contractors.*

(1) *When recognition is not authorized.* Persons, organizations, or companies having a commercial or profit-making relationship with USACE (contractors) may not be granted recognition to avoid:

(a) Issues with contractual relationships and obligations.

(b) Actual or perceived conflicts of interest.

(c) Actual or perceived acts of favoritism.

(2) *When recognition is authorized.* Contractors may be recognized if:

- (a) The contribution is deemed to be unrelated to, and completely outside of, any contractual relationship with the Department of Defense (DoD) or Army; and
- (b) The recognition is clearly in the public interest.
- (3) Recognition is limited to a letter or DA Form 7013 (Certificate of Appreciation) to the individual or to the organization signed at the lowest applicable level.
- (4) Awards, awards programs, ceremonies, or receptions to acknowledge contractor contributions are not authorized.
- c. *Public service awards.* Individuals not employed by USACE (for example, a military spouse), or who were not employed during the period for which an award is recommended are eligible for Public Service Awards.

### **2–3. U.S. Army Corps of Engineers incentive awards board**

- a. *Establishment and organization.* One UIAB will be established at Headquarters.
- b. *Membership*
  - (1) The UIAB is appointed by the Director of Human Resources.
  - (2) The UIAB will consist of three members, in order to avoid an impasse, who have knowledge of the USACE enterprise, its mission, the awards policy, and the ability to facilitate the awards program.
  - (3) Members should be objective, demonstrate good judgment, and enjoy the confidence of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers at large.
  - (4) UIAB membership will be evaluated as necessary. If a member leaves USACE Headquarters or decides to step down, then that member will be replaced.
  - (5) In the event of an impasse due to a board member being out of office, CEHR will serve as the tie breaker.
- c. *Awards reviewed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Incentive Awards Board*
  - (1) All awards requiring USACE Command approval must be reviewed by the UIAB except for public service awards. See EP 672-1-1 for more duties and requirements of the UIAB.
  - (2) All award nominations reviewed by the UIAB must be sent through proper channels to the CEHR Civilian Personnel Division.
- d. *Award nomination requirements.* Nominations submitted to the UIAB for review must contain the following:
  - (1) ENG Form 6304 (USACE Honorary Award Checklist)
  - (2) DA Form 1256
  - (3) Justification
  - (4) Award Citation
  - (5) Previous awards history
  - (6) District/Division Commander Endorsement Memorandum (Required for the Distinguished Civilian Service Medal (DCSM), the Superior Civilian Service Medal, and the Meritorious Civilian Service Medal only).
  - (7) USACE Commander Endorsement (Required for the DCSM only).
  - (8) Biography (Required for the DCSM only).
  - (9) *Photograph* (Required for the DCSM only).

## **2-4. Incentive awards committees**

### *a. Establishment and organization.*

- (1) One IAC will be established at each Division, District, Center, and FOA.
- (2) More than one IAC may be established when circumstances warrant; for example, a large Division with a high volume of awards.

### *b. Membership.*

- (1) The IAC should consist of an odd number of members to avoid an impasse.
- (2) Committees should include key persons from the major elements of the command who have knowledge of the activity (for example, Civil Works, Military Programs, etc.), its mission, the awards process, and the ability to facilitate the awards program.
- (3) Members should be objective, demonstrate good judgment, and enjoy the confidence of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers at large.
- (4) IAC membership should be evaluated as necessary. If a member leaves their USACE installation/duty station/FOA or decides to step down, then that member will be replaced. Headquarters/Divisions/Districts may consider changing members every three years to ensure continuity and excellence of the awards program.

### *c. Functions:*

- (1) The incentive award committee will consider and present recommendations to the approval authority concerning the following:
  - (a) Nominations for monetary award amounts that require local committee action or higher-level approval.
  - (b) Nominations for honorary awards requiring local committee action and higher-level approval.
- (2) In making these recommendations, committees will consider the following:
  - (a) The nature of the nominee's accomplishments, including the period of time and nature of the circumstances during which the accomplishments contributed to the success of the USACE mission.
  - (b) The types of awards available for recognizing various levels of accomplishments. If the justification does not support the recommended award type, the IAC may request a rewrite of the justification.
  - (c) A nominee's honorary award history, in particular the presence or lack of previous honorary awards.

## **2-5. Relationships with unions**

Union support of the USACE Incentive Awards Program is encouraged. Therefore, Commanders and management officials will confer, consult, and negotiate with unions holding exclusive recognition, as appropriate, on the implementation and operations of the incentive awards program. Labor agreements negotiated subsequent to the publication of this regulation should be consistent with its provisions, to the extent practicable.



## **Chapter 3**

### **Monetary awards**

#### **3-1. Types of monetary awards**

Supervisors may use a range of monetary awards to include special act or service awards (SASA), OTS awards, quality step increases, performance awards, and time-off to recognize employee accomplishments. Refer to AR 672-20 for additional regulations regarding monetary awards.

#### **3-2. Authority to approve monetary awards**

Approval authority is delegated for monetary awards to individuals or individual pro rata shares of group awards as follows:

- a. *Up to \$10,000.* Delegated to the USACE CG.
- b. *Up to \$8,000* - delegated to the:
  - (1) USACE Deputy Commanding General (DCG)
  - (2) DCG for Civil and Emergency Operations
  - (3) DCG for Military International Operations
  - (4) Division Commanders
  - (5) Headquarters (HQ) Directorate Chiefs/Directors when exercising staff supervision over a Field Operating Agency (FOA)
- c. *Up to \$5,000* – delegated to the:
  - (1) District Commanders
  - (2) Directors, Labs and Separate FOAs
  - (3) HQ Separate Office Chiefs

#### **3-3. Payment of awards**

- a. USACE-approved monetary awards are valid obligations of the government that must be paid, subject only to availability of funds and meeting legal and regulatory requirements.
- b. All monetary awards will not be paid until all required approvals are obtained.

## **Chapter 4**

### **Honorary awards**

#### **4-1. Department of the Army honorary awards**

These Civilian awards authorized by the Army are granted to those USACE employees who demonstrate high levels of performance and service.

- a. Nominations for awards should be submitted within six (6) months after completion of the act or period to be cited.
- b. Nominations requiring approval at the Command level must be submitted to CEHR NLT 6 weeks prior to expected presentation date.
- c. Nominations requiring approval at the Army or DoD level must be submitted to CEHR NLT ten weeks prior to expected presentation date.
- d. Nominations for Senior Executive Service (SES) members requiring Army or DoD approval must be submitted using CEHR NLT than 18 weeks prior to expected presentation date.

e. Nominations submitted after the established deadlines must include a memorandum of lateness signed by the commander of the submitting District/ Division/ Center.

#### **4-2. U.S. Army Corps of Engineers national awards**

These awards recognize USACE employees annually over the entire enterprise for their outstanding contributions.

a. CEHR will publish an Operations Order (OPORD) annually that:

(1) Establishes the administrative procedures for the maintenance of the USACE Headquarters Civilian Awards Calendar.

(2) Establishes guidelines for soliciting National Award nominations.

(3) Provides information and suspense dates regarding the planning of the National Award Ceremony.

b. CEHR will update the list of USACE awards and their points of contact prior to the publication of the annual OPORD.

## **Appendix A References**

### **Section I**

#### **Required Publications**

Unless otherwise indicated, all U.S. Army Corps of Engineers publications are available on the USACE website at <https://publications.usace.army.mil>. Army publications are available on the Army Publishing Directorate website at <https://armypubs.army.mil>.

#### **AR 25–50**

Preparing and Managing Correspondence

#### **AR 672-20**

Incentive Awards

#### **DA Form 1256**

Incentive Award and Nomination Approval

#### **EP 672-1-1**

Incentive Awards

### **Section II**

#### **Prescribed Forms**

ENG Form 6304

## **Glossary of Terms**

### **CEHR (Human Resources Directorate)**

The Human Resources Directorate is the proponent and primary point of contact for the Incentive Awards Program.

### **CG (Commanding General)**

The commanding general is the highest-ranking officer of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

### **CPAC (Civilian Personnel Advisory Center)**

The Civilian Personnel Advisory Center is a regionalized personnel action center assigned to a specific U.S. Army Corps of Engineers command that provides an adverse action certification for incentive awards.

### **DA (Department of the Army)**

The Department of the Army is the proponent of the Army Regulation for Incentive Awards (AR 672-20). The proponent of AR 672-20 has the authority to delegate the approval authority in writing within its direct reporting unit (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers).

### **DCG (Deputy Commanding General)**

The Deputy Commanding General is the second highest-ranking officer of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

### **DCSM (Distinguished Civilian Service Medal)**

The Distinguished Civilian Service Medal is an honorary award granted by the SECARMY consisting of a medal, lapel button, and citation certificate, DA Form 7014.

### **DoD (Department of Defense)**

The Department of Defense is the proponent for several Department of Defense level awards.

### **EEO (Equal Employment Opportunity)**

Equal Employment Opportunity provides leadership and direction in creating and sustaining a diverse workforce and an environment free of discrimination that provides EEO certification for incentive awards.

### **Equal employment opportunity and adverse action certification**

A statement signed by the commander (or EEO officer for the commander) attesting to prior founded discrimination charges against the nominee and prior adverse personnel actions, if any.

**Honorary Award**

An honorary award recognizes outstanding performance and achievement usually accompanied by a medal, certificate, plaque, or other item that can be worn or displayed.

**HQUSACE (Headquarters, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers)**

The center of operations for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers located in Washington, D.C. Major Subordinate Commands that do not have signature authority for incentive awards must coordinate through the HQUSACE CEHR to obtain approval.

**IAC (Incentive Awards Committee)**

An Incentive Awards Committee is made up of key persons from the major elements at each Division, District, Center, or Field Operating Agency who have knowledge of the location and its mission, and who are objective, demonstrate good judgment, and enjoy the confidence of the workforce at large.

**IAP (Incentive Awards Program)**

The Incentive Awards Program fosters mission accomplishment by recognizing excellence of both military and civilian members of the force and motivating them to high levels of performance and service.

**Incentive Award**

An incentive award is a monetary award, honorary award, or both, but does not include a QSI or performance award.

**Monetary Award**

A monetary award is an award given to recognize performance or contributions resulting in tangible or intangible benefits for the government, includes special act or service awards, quality step increases, performance awards, and on-the-spot awards.

**NLT (No later than)**

At, in, on, or before (a specified time).

**OPORD (Operations Order)**

An operations order is a plan format meant to assist subordinate units with the conduct of an activity.

**OTS (On-the-spot) Award**

An on-the-spot award is a small special act or service award to recognize an individual for day-to-day accomplishments.

**Performance Award**

A performance award is a monetary award given in recognition of high-level performance for a specific period and used to recognize all appropriated fund employees, except Senior Executive Service members.

**Proponent**

The proponent is the office or individual responsible for initiating, developing, coordinating, and/or maintaining a publication or form.

**Public Service Award**

A public service award is an award granted to a private citizen in recognition of service benefiting the Government.

**Quality Step Increase**

A quality step increase is a monetary award given to recognize excellence in performance by granting an accelerated step increase and is a permanent salary increase for General Schedule employees only.

**SASA (Special Act or Service Award)**

A special act or service award is a monetary award given to recognize a meritorious personal effort, act, service, scientific, or other achievement accomplished within or outside assigned job responsibilities.

**SES (Senior Executive Service)**

The Senior Executive Service is a position classification in the United States federal service equivalent to general officer.

**Time-off Award**

A time-off award is an award given to recognize contributions made in direct support to the USACE and Army mission or result in benefits to the Government.

**UIAB (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Incentive Awards Board)**

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Incentive Awards Board is established at Headquarters, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. It is made up of appointed individuals that make recommendations on incentive award nominations requiring U.S. Army Corps of Engineers commanding general or deputy commanding general approval.