



# United States Department of the Interior



BUREAU OF RECLAMATION  
PO Box 25007  
Denver, Colorado 80225-0007

IN REPLY REFER TO:

84-50000  
PRJ-1.10

## MEMORANDUM

To: Deputy Commissioner – External and Intergovernmental Affairs  
Attn: 92-00000  
Deputy Commissioner – Policy, Administration and Budget  
Attn: 94-00000

From: Robert W. Johnson  
Commissioner

FEB 21 2008

Subject: Decision Related to *Managing for Excellence* Team 1 – Final Recommendations

You are hereby directed to take the appropriate actions necessary to implement the following recommendations.

Deputy Commissioner for External and Intergovernmental Affairs:

1. In collaboration with the Deputy Commissioner for Policy, Administration and Budget, develop an annual Bureau of Reclamation award to recognize an individual or group of employees that exemplify excellence in building strong working relationships both internally and externally.

Deputy Commissioner for Policy, Administration and Budget:

2. Develop a policy that establishes a general expectation of effective communication and collaboration with customers and stakeholders.
3. Implement the modified version of the Benchmark Supervisory Performance Standards for the calendar year 2008 rating period.

If you have any questions regarding Team 1's report, please contact Lorri Gray at 702-293-8411.

Attachment

cc: 84-20000, 84-50000 (Gonzales), 84-55000 (Marrone), 84-56000 (Byers)  
LC-1000 (Gray)  
(w/att to each)

# **Strengthening Relationships with Customers and Stakeholders**

*Executive Sponsor*  
Roseann Gonzales

*Team Members*  
Lorri Gray (Team Leader), Robert Walsh, Bruce Brown, Gary Campbell, Lilas Lindell, Kerry McCalman, and Elizabeth Reike

*Key Organizational Function Interfaces*  
Reclamation Managers, Supervisors and Employees

## **Action Item Statement from the *Managing for Excellence* Action Plan**

Team 1 – Strengthen interaction with customers and other stakeholders at national, regional, and project levels to address Bureau-wide issues.

## **Scope Statement from the *Managing for Excellence* Project Management Plan**

The goal of the activity is to strengthen communication and coordination with customers and stakeholders at all levels of Reclamation’s organization regarding Bureau-wide issues. This includes identifying and providing opportunities for stakeholders to become aware of proposed activities and effectively participate in the planning, policy, and decision-making processes where appropriate. An outcome of this Team is to have a more participative relationship with customers and stakeholders and a more informed group of customers and stakeholders. A key element in achieving this outcome is providing a process for hearing and incorporating feedback from customers.

## **Approach and Methodology**

To accomplish the objectives the Team gathered and analyzed examples of successful working relationships across Reclamation, informally talked with external customers about what was working well and what could be done to improve relationships, and gathered information from managers and supervisors about tools that would help them be more effective in developing relationships. The Team did find that the performance standards for Senior Executive Service employees currently contain an element focusing on building productive Partnerships.

## **Deliverables**

The team believes that the following recommendations will not only reinforce the good work already occurring in Reclamation related to developing strong relations with customers and stakeholders but will also provide the tools needed to assist managers and supervisors in improving relationships, where needed. The recommendations establish a general policy, performance expectations, and a formal award to recognize quality performance when it occurs.

## Recommendations

The Commissioner should assign the following tasks to the identified Deputy Commissioner for implementation:

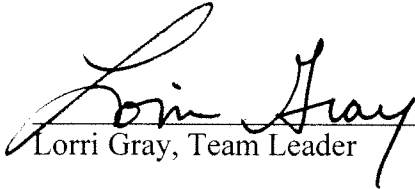
Deputy Commissioner – External and Intergovernmental Affairs:

1. In collaboration with the Deputy Commissioner for Policy, Administration and Budget, develop an annual Reclamation award that recognizes an individual employee or group of employees that exemplify excellence in building strong working relationships both internally and externally.

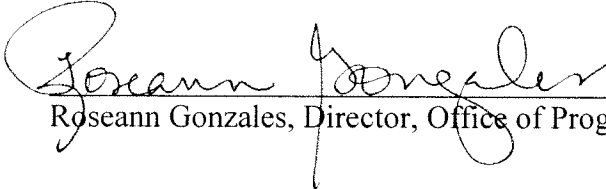
Deputy Commissioner – Policy, Administration and Budget:

2. Develop a policy that establishes a general expectation of effective communication and collaboration with customers and stakeholders.
3. Implement the modified version of the Benchmark Supervisory Performance Standards for the calendar year 2008 rating period (attached).

*Submitted by:*

  
Lorri Gray, Team Leader

2/8/08  
Date

  
Roseann Gonzales, Director, Office of Program and Policy Services

9/20/07  
Date

## Team 1 Recommendations – Attachment 1

**GPRA/Strategic Goal:** Managing for Excellence; Strategic Management of Human Capital.  
Performance Measure: Supervisory/managerial duties are effectively carried out customer-focused and efficient manner.

**Supervisory/Managerial Element:** *Performance of supervisory/managerial duties will be carried out in accordance with regulatory requirements and other Bureau/Office policies governing the following areas: Diversity/EEO obligations; Internal management controls; Merit Systems Principles; Safety and Occupational Health obligations; Effective performance management; Effective management of ethics, conduct & discipline issues; and Effective Customer Relations.*

Benchmark **Supervisory** Performance Standards

### **Exceptional:**

The employee demonstrates excellent leadership skills and with only rare exceptions develops effective working relationships with others; immediately handles difficult situations with subordinates with professionalism and effectiveness, and demonstrates foresight in correcting situations that may cause future problems before they arise; encourages independence and risk-taking among subordinates, yet takes responsibility for their actions; is open to and solicits the views of others, and promotes cooperation among peers and subordinates, while guiding, motivating and stimulating positive responses. The employee demonstrates a strong commitment to fair treatment, equal opportunity and the affirmative action objectives of the organization, and has a significant positive impact on achievement of goals in this area.

In addition, the employee demonstrates innovation and specific positive achievements in meeting other management obligations such as safety, internal management controls, merit systems principles, performance management, and management of ethics, conduct and discipline issues. The employee systematically monitors quality, delivery, and customer satisfaction levels and makes adjustments accordingly; and works with staff to proactively implement solutions to prevent problems and avoid gaps in customer expectations. Utilizing collaborative competencies, employee develops an expectation of transparency aiding in the development and maintenance of strong relationships with all of the office's customers and stakeholders. Collaboration competency is noted in each employee's position description and training is conducted in this arena.

**Effective Performance Management:** Uses employee preferences and performance information to identify both immediate and long-term developmental needs, helps staff to identify their own developmental needs and provides challenging assignments to address those needs; promotes cooperation among peers and subordinates, while guiding, motivating and stimulating positive responses to accomplishments; and provides continuing constructive performance feedback, working with employees to identify ways to improve their strengths.

### **Superior:**

The employee demonstrates good leadership skills and establishes sound working relationships; almost always handles difficult situations with subordinates with professionalism and effectiveness; shows good judgment in dealing with others and considering their views; has a strong sense of mission and seeks out responsibility; demonstrates a commitment to fair treatment, equal opportunity and the affirmative action objectives of the organization, and has a positive impact on achievement of goals in this area. In addition, the employee promotes a safe working environment and solutions to problems encountered in meeting other management obligations including internal management controls, merit systems obligations,

managing performance, and management of ethics, conduct and discipline issues; and anticipates customer needs and resolves or avoids potential problems, resulting in high customer satisfaction. Utilizing collaborative competencies, demonstrates transparency aiding in the development and maintenance of strong relationships with certain customers and stakeholders. Collaboration competency is noted in each employee's position description and supports additional training in this arena. Employee tailors methods of reward and recognition to the individual to the extent possible, resulting in increased motivation in staff; and solicits employee input and takes initiative to seek out and arrange for a variety of developmental opportunities beyond standard training.

Effective Performance Management: Using effective planning works with employees to exceed expectations in critical areas and shows sustained support of organizational goals; establishes sound working relationships with subordinates and shows good judgment in dealing with them, considering their views; works with employees to develop plans and timeframes to improve performance.

**Fully Successful:**

The employee is a capable leader who works successfully with others and listens to suggestions. The employee generally handles difficult situations with subordinates with professionalism and effectiveness. The employee also works well as a team member, supporting the group's efforts and showing an ability to handle a variety of interpersonal situations. The employee's work with others shows an understanding of the importance of fair treatment and equal opportunity and meets all management commitments related to providing a safe working environment, merit systems obligations, performance management, and internal controls, and management of ethics, conduct and discipline issues. The employee maintains contact with customers (internal and/or external), and is effective in understanding their needs and using feedback to address customer requirements. Provides timely, flexible, and responsive responses, products and/or services to customers, resulting in valued products and services. Utilizing collaborative competencies, employee generally demonstrates transparency aiding in the development and maintenance of strong relationships with a few of the office's customers and stakeholders. Collaboration competency is noted in each employee's position description. Solicits employee input to improve work products and/or services and to develop employee skills. Recognizes and rewards employee contributions in a fair and consistent manner.

Effective Performance Management: The employee identifies and ensures alignment of unit goals with agency goals, seeks input of employees in the development of performance criteria, effectively translates and communicates project or work unit goals into concrete work assignments for staff; provides feedback and conducts reviews according to DOI established timeframes; ensures performance distinctions are made among individuals and awards are reflective of employee contributions toward organizational performance; and addresses poor performance in a fair and timely manner.

**Minimally Successful:**

The employee's supervisory performance shows serious deficiencies that require correction. The employee sometimes fails to motivate subordinates and promote team spirit; provide clear assignments and performance requirements or sufficient instructions to subordinates; provide sufficient explanation of organizational goals to subordinates; satisfy customer needs and/or meet customer service objectives; and/or meet production or mission goals in a timely and quality manner. Employee demonstrates an understanding of collaborative competencies. The employee's work with others fails to show a consistent understanding of the importance of fair treatment and equal opportunity. The employee does not meet all management obligations related to internal controls, merit system obligations, performance management, and/or management of ethics, conduct and discipline issues.

**Unsatisfactory:**

Supervisory: The employee's supervisory performance is unsatisfactory. The employee usually fails to motivate subordinates and promote team spirit; often provides unclear assignments and performance requirements or insufficient instructions to subordinates; frequently fails to provide sufficient explanation of organizational goals to subordinates; generally fails to satisfy customer needs and/or meet customer service objectives; and/or frequently fails to meet production or mission goals in a timely and quality manner. The employee's work with others consistently fails to show an understanding of the importance of fair treatment and equal opportunity. Employee frequently fails to meet other management obligations related to internal controls, merit systems obligations, performance management, and/or management of ethics, conduct and discipline issues.