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Office of Merit Systems Oversight and Effectiveness
Digest of Significant Classification Decisions and Opinions
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Standard: [Job Grading Standard for Supervisors](#) (WS) (August 1982)
Factor: Factor I, Nature of Supervisory Responsibility
Issue: Full Foreman vs. limited: Impact of Shop Planner and of higher supervisors

Although there have been several revisions of the Job Grading Standard for Federal Wage System Supervisors, the discussion in this article is still valid.

Identification of the Classification Issue

This issue arose during the adjudication of an appeal by an Office of Personnel Management region. The appellant was one of five unit supervisors. The appellant supervised 14 full-time employees and engaged in various maintenance and repair activities. He and the four other unit supervisors performed similar supervisory work; the organization was supervised by a General Engineer; day-to-day supervision was performed by an Assistant Chief of the Engineering Section. In addition, a Shop Planner (Maintenance Scheduler) planned and coordinated the activities of all craftsmen through the work order system.

The agency had determined the Nature of Supervisory Responsibility was that of a limited Foreman. This was based on the presence of the General Engineer and Assistant Chief, but mostly because of the work of the Shop Planner. The appellant requested that he be credited with full Foreman responsibility.

Resolution

The Office of Personnel Management found that the day-to-day supervision of the Assistant Chief was "general" rather than close. Since the Assistant Chief was responsible for second level supervision of five units, sound management practice dictated that he could not be closely involved in directly supervising the day-to-day work within each work unit.

The Region also decided that the duties of the Shop Planner did not curtail the Foreman's responsibility for supervising and directing work operations in his shop. The Shop Planner functioned in a staff capacity and had primary responsibility for coordinating and monitoring activities through the work order system. Thus, his responsibility for the planning and scheduling systems and procedures assisted management in the overall control and management of the operations.

The Foreman, on the other hand, had complete responsibility for actually assigning work to shop personnel, ordering materials, and seeing that work was completed efficiently and effectively. In short, the Shop Planner was the focal point of the work order system whereas the Shop Foreman handled work orders concerning his own shop. Thus, the coordination of the work order system had no limiting effect on the direct supervision of shop employees by the Shop Foreman.

It was decided that the appellant's supervisory responsibility was that of a full Foreman, not limited. As a result, the job was reclassified one grade higher.