

OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT
MERIT SYSTEMS OVERSIGHT AND EFFECTIVENESS
DALLAS OVERSIGHT DIVISION
JOB GRADING DECISION

Under section 5346 (c) of title 5, United States Code

Appellant: [the appellant]

Position: Aircraft Engine Mechanic Supervisor, WS-8602-12
Position Number: 2-B6290-0

Organization: [organization]
Air Education and Training Command
U.S. Air Force
Kirtland Air Force Base, New Mexico

Decision: Aircraft Engine Mechanic Supervisor, WS-8602-12
(Appeal Denied)

OPM Decision Number: C-8602-12-01

/s/ Bonnie J. Brandon
Bonnie J. Brandon
Classification Appeals Officer

4/17/97
Date

Copy of decision sent to:

[CCs]

INTRODUCTION

The appealed position is assigned to [a large DOD installation]. The appellant's position is classified as Aircraft Engine Mechanic Supervisor, WS-8602-12, and serves as the Chief of the [section]. The appellant requests that his position be classified at the WS-13 grade level. He initially filed an appeal with the [DOD] Civilian Personnel Management Service, which sustained the WS-12 grade level of the position.

This appeal is filed with the Office of Personnel Management under the provisions of section 5346(c) of title 5, United States Code. This is the final administrative decision of the Government, subject to discretionary review only under the conditions specified in title 5 of the Code of Federal Regulations, section 532.705, and in the Introduction to the Position Classification Standards, Appendix 4.

GENERAL ISSUES

The appellant stated that his position description accurately describes his duties and responsibilities, and we find the position description adequate for classification purposes. He also agrees with the agency and Department evaluation of his position and the initial grade determination that results from applying the Federal Wage System (FWS) Job Grading Standard for Supervisors.

The appellant contests the downward adjustment that was applied to the initial grade determined for his position, which is grade 13. As instructed on page 27 of the Standard, the agency and Department adjusted the initial grade of 13 down to 12, since the appellant's immediate supervisor is a military incumbent holding a job equivalent to the 13 level. The appellant's supervisor is the [chief]. The adjustment was made to align the grades of the higher and lower level supervisors within the Flight. The appellant believes the agency and Department evaluation of the [chief]'s job is inaccurate. Specifically, he maintains that elements and subfactors of Factor I and Factor III of the Standard should be evaluated at higher levels, which would result in a grade determination of 14 for that position. If the grade of the appellant's supervisor is determined at the 14 level, the appellant reasons that his position would maintain the 13 grade and not be adjusted downward.

POSITION INFORMATION

The mission of the 58th Special Operations Wing is to provide specialized Aircrew Training, Special Operations Training, Pararescue Training, and Combat Control Training, involving fixed and rotary-wing aircraft such as the C-130, H-1, H-53, and H-60, and various models of these aircraft. The Wing consists of the 58th Operations Group and the 58th Logistics Group. The appellant is part of the [agency subordinate organization]. There are six different Flights within the Maintenance Squadron, including the Propulsion Flight, Avionics Flight, Accessory Flight, Fabrication Flight, Aerospace Ground Equipment Flight, and Combat Systems Flight. The Propulsion Flight consists of the Test Cell

Section and Propulsion Section, each with a supervisor over the operations. The [chief] has full supervisory authority over the Flight.

The appellant is Chief of the [station], which is also known as [the activity]. The section consists of approximately 30 military and civilian employees and is divided into four subordinate elements, each with a supervisor. The section is involved with aircraft engine maintenance on four diverse turboshaft engines in support of 10 to 11 inter-command customers and propeller maintenance on the Wing's assigned C-130 aircraft. The turboshaft engines are found in helicopters such as the H-1, H-53, and H-60.

The appellant ensures that the [section] is organized and operated in accordance with established maintenance directives, applicable technical data, and local operating instructions. He has responsibility for control over subordinate employees and the work of the section.

SERIES AND TITLE DETERMINATION

The agency has classified the position in the Aircraft Engine Mechanic, WG-8602 series, and the appellant does not question this determination. This series covers work involving the maintenance, trouble shooting, repair, overhaul, modification, and test of aircraft turbine and reciprocating engines. This is the appropriate series for the appellant's job.

The appellant supervises approximately 30 civilian and military subordinates in the 8602 Aircraft Engine Mechanic and 8810 Aircraft Propeller Mechanic occupations. The majority of work performed in the section is in the 8602 occupation. The appellant has four subordinate first-line supervisory positions which are over four elements. The appellant's position meets the definition of an FWS supervisor, as described in the FWS Job Grading Standard for Supervisors. Based on the titling instructions in this Standard, we agree with the agency in allocating the appellant's job as Aircraft Engine Mechanic Supervisor, WS-8602.

GRADE DETERMINATION

The FWS Job Grading Standard for Supervisors is used to determine the grade level of the appellant's position. This standard grades supervisory work in accordance with three factors: (1) the nature of supervisory responsibility, (2) the level of work supervised, and (3) the scope of work operations supervised. The appellant agrees with the agency and Department evaluation of his job against these factors.

After careful analysis, we agree with the Department's evaluation and initial grade determination on the appellant's job. Since the appellant does not dispute this issue, it is not discussed in detail. The nature of the appellant's supervisory responsibility (Factor I) is equivalent to Situation #3 and the level of work supervised (Factor II) is WG-10. The

scope of work operations supervised by the appellant (Factor III) is equivalent to Level C, which consists of subfactors A-3 and B-3. The combination of these factors equals WS-13, which is the initial grade determined for the appellant's position.

According to the Standard, downward adjustments are made to positions when the grade of a supervisor's job is the same as the grade of the supervisor's superior. In the appellant's case, the grade of his superior, the [chief], was determined by the agency and Department as WS-13. Since the appellant contests this evaluation of his superior's position, it is addressed in our decision.

The appellant agrees with the agency and Department evaluation of Factor II and subparts B and C of Factor III for the [chief]'s job. We concur that Factor II equals WG-10, that subfactor level B-3 under Factor III is appropriate, and that no credit for subpart C under Factor III can be given for the Flight Chief's job. The appellant specifically disagrees with the evaluation given for Factor I and subpart A of Factor III. The agency and Department evaluated the Flight Chief's job at Situation #3 of Factor I and subfactor level A-3 of Factor III. The appellant believes his superior meets Situation #4 of Factor I and subfactor level A-4 of Factor III. The following addresses these two issues.

Factor I, Nature of Supervisory Responsibility

This factor considers the nature of the supervisory duties performed, and the type and degree of responsibility for control over the work supervised.

Situation #3

Supervisors in Situation #3 are responsible for the overall direction and coordination of subordinate work activities and functions. The work operations are of such scope, volume, and complexity that they are (1) carried out by subordinate supervisors in two or more separate organizational segments or groups, and (2) controlled through one or more levels of supervision. In addition to the duties described in Situation #2, supervisors in Situation #3 perform the following:

Planning

- Plan on a quarterly or longer basis the overall use of subordinate personnel and other resources under their control;
- Determine resource requirements, materials, and the number of subordinates and the types of skill necessary to accomplish long-range work schedules;
- Allocate resources and distribute work to organizational segments or groups under their control;
- Analyze work plans developed by subordinate supervisors and monitor the status of their work in relation to the overall schedule requirements, including unanticipated or emergency requirements;

- Obtain prior approval of changes that would modify or deviate overall work schedules or affect work operations controlled by supervisors not under their control; and
- Provide information and advice to higher level supervisors, management officials, and staff organizations on feasibility of work assignments as scheduled, budget estimates, and workload data to assist in developing or reviewing proposed long-range schedules and work requirements, and may participate with superiors in planning conferences and meetings.

Work Direction

- Assign and explain work requirements and operating instructions to subordinate supervisors and set deadlines and establish the sequence of work operations to be followed;
- Maintain balanced workloads by shifting assignments, workers, and other resources under their control to achieve the most effective work operations;
- Review and analyze work accomplishments, cost, and utilization of subordinates to evaluate work progress, control costs, and anticipate and avoid possible problems by recommending corrective action to superiors;
- Participate with management officials and/or engineering personnel to develop qualitative and/or quantitative work standards;
- Evaluate work operations and review completed work and inspection reports to assure that standards are met; and
- Coordinate work operations with the supervisors of other organizations and functions.

Administrative

- Assure that subordinate supervisors effectively carry out policies to achieve management objectives;
- Recommend promotion or reassignment of subordinate supervisors, make formal appraisals of their performance, and determine their training needs;
- Schedule leave of subordinate supervisors, review personnel actions and performance appraisals initiated by them, act on personnel problems referred by subordinate supervisors, and maintain administrative records; and
- Serve as a management representative at hearings, meetings, and negotiations involving labor management relations.

Situation #4

Supervisors in Situation #4 differ from supervisors in Situation #3 in the nature of their *participation* with other management officials in (1) the planning and establishment of long-range work requirements and schedules, (2) the authority deriving from their responsibilities as the highest level “blue-collar” subject matter expert for work accomplished under their direction, and (3) the work activities and functions under their direction because these are typically controlled through *two* or more levels of supervision.

In addition to the duties described in Situation #3, supervisors in Situation #4 perform the following:

Planning

- Provide direct input or participate in meetings and/or conferences with engineering, production control, and other personnel involving the initial analysis of long-range work requirements (typically, 6 months or longer in advance of the beginning of actual work operations);
- Review the immediate and long-range requirements of the organizational segments and groups supervised based on workload forecasts, and develop, for approval by their superiors, plans for meeting long-range resource requirements;
- Plan the allocation of resources and the distribution of work to subordinate supervisors, and determine the internal plan to be followed by the subordinate supervisors in applying those resources to accomplish work operations;
- Evaluate resources required to accomplish the proposed work "packages" or program(s) in relation to the resources committed to ongoing and previously scheduled work operations and recommend changes to superiors concerning previously planned work schedules; and
- Participate fully with higher level management officials and staff organizations in studying and developing recommendations concerning changes in specifications requirements, work techniques, and standards; revision of organizational structures, responsibilities, and relationships; and improvement or modernization of equipment, facility layout, and workflow.

Work Direction

The work direction in Situation #4 is the same as that described in Situation #3.

Administration

- Develop and establish internal procedures (e.g., meetings, content, and timing of reports) to be followed by subordinate supervisors to assure effective control and direction of work activities, organizations, and personnel supervised; and
- Identify long-range training needs for all levels of subordinate supervisors and workers and submit justification and funding requests to superiors and arrange for the accomplishment of the training.

The [chief]'s job fails to meet the full planning aspect of Situation #4. This level envisions a supervisor having work operations characterized by the need for significant long-range planning. The typical work of the Flight's Test Cell Section and Propulsion Section does not require the Flight Chief to continually focus on long-range planning to accomplish the work. In general, the work of the Flight is not driven by long-range plans and requirements. The Flight's two sections work together closely, since the work operations

and work flow of both are interdependent; that is, the engines produced in the Propulsion Section go to the Test Cell for testing.

For the most part, the work operations of the Flight involve planning on the basis of six-month projections of scheduled maintenance and the month-to-month and week-to-week planning for unscheduled maintenance, various uncontrollable delays, equipment inspection and calibration, procurement and delivery of parts, maintenance of engine spare levels, use of overtime hours and personnel, and data collection and testing for projects or special studies. The Flight does not make significant efforts to plan for upcoming unscheduled maintenance, since this is unpredictable for the most part. The six-month projections of scheduled maintenance are provided to the Flight by the Base Engine Management Section of the Logistics Support Squadron. This organization develops the projected workload after tasking customers with forecasting their scheduled maintenance for six-month intervals.

This kind of planning does not require the Flight Chief to have significant participation with other management officials in planning the regular work of the Flight. The work operations of the Flight do not place continual long-range planning demands on the Flight Chief, as envisioned at Situation #4.

The FWS Job Grading Standard for Supervisors instructs that a supervisory situation must be fully met for it to be credited to a job. In this case, the Flight Chief's job does not meet one of the criteria for inclusion to Situation #4. Any focus or discussion on other aspects of Situation #4 cannot bring the position under this level. Therefore, Situation #4 is not credited to the Flight Chief's job since the long-term planning aspect is not fully met. Situation #3 is fully met and credited to the Flight Chief's job.

Factor III, Scope of Work Operations Supervised

Subfactor A. Scope of Assigned Work Function and Organizational Authority

This subfactor measures the scope of the assigned work function, that is, the purpose of the job in the organization, the extent and nature of the job's authority in relation to the organizational assignment, and the importance of the job's decisions.

At level A-3, supervisors have second level or higher supervisory and decision authority for work functions or a portion of a mission requirement. The scope of the mission or work functions at this level typically requires supervisors to utilize several subordinate supervisors and leaders through structured working relationships among subordinate groups of employees, formal procedures for scheduling and assigning work and work results, and the issuance of instructions through subordinate supervisors and leaders. At this level, supervisors make interpretive decisions within the program limits established at higher levels.

At level A-4, supervisors have supervisory authority for major work functions or missions. The scope and diversity of work at this level requires supervisors to utilize a large group of subordinate supervisors and leaders, typically through two or more levels of supervision, to control and manage work functions or missions. Supervisors at this level exercise planning and programming decision authority for the execution of policy made at higher organizational levels. At this level, supervisors must continually evaluate and improve operational effectiveness by studying the work structure and methods, examining various alternatives, calculating benefits to be achieved, and recommending basic changes.

The scope of the Propulsion Flight's operations does not meet level A-4. The work of the Flight involves 35-40 civilian and military personnel doing technical and support work in the 8602 Aircraft Engine Mechanic and 8810 Aircraft Propeller Mechanic occupations. The Propulsion Flight does not consist of diverse work involving varying occupations and functions, as envisioned at level A-4. Although the Flight Chief ensures that work is progressing as planned and makes adjustments as needed, he is not required to continually evaluate and improve the operational effectiveness of the Flight by analyzing work structure and methods or studying alternative approaches to accomplishing the work, as described at level A-4. Level A-3 is fully met and credited to the Flight Chief's position.

Summary

The Flight Chief's job is credited with the following: Factor I, Situation #3; Factor II, WG-10; and Factor III, A-3 (75 points) and B-3 (50 points), which converts to Level C. The combination of these factors is equivalent to WS-13.

Grade Level Adjustments

The jobs of the appellant and his supervisor are both found at the WS-13 level. As instructed in the FWS Job Grading Standard for Supervisors, the appellant's job must be adjusted downward, to the WS-12 level. This is to align the grades of a higher and lower level supervisor.

DECISION

The appellant's job is properly classified as Aircraft Engine Mechanic Supervisor, WS-8602-12.