

U.S. Office of Personnel Management
Office of Merit Systems Oversight and Effectiveness
Classification Appeals and ELSA Programs



San Francisco Oversight Division
120 Howard Street, Room 760
San Francisco, CA 94105

Classification Appeal Decision
Under Section 5112 of Title 5, United States Code

Appellant: [appellant's name]

Agency classification: Transportation Assistant (Freight)
GS-2102-7

Organization: [appellant's installation]
U.S. Department of the Navy

OPM decision: Transportation Assistant
GS-2102-6
parenthetical title at agency discretion

OPM Decision Number: C-2102-06-02

Signed by Denis J. Whitebook

Denis J. Whitebook
Classification Appeals Officer

October 15, 1997

Date

As provided in section 511.612 of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations, this decision constitutes a certificate that is mandatory and binding on all administrative, certifying, payroll, disbursing, and accounting officials of the government. The agency is responsible for reviewing its classification decisions for identical, similar, or related positions to ensure consistency with this decision. There is no right of further appeal. This decision is subject to discretionary review only under conditions and time limits specified in the Introduction to the Position Classification Standards, appendix 4, section G (address provided in appendix 4, section H).

Since this decision lowers the grade of the appealed position, it is to be effective no later than the beginning of the sixth pay period after the date of this decision, as permitted by 5 CFR 511.702. The servicing personnel office must submit a compliance report containing the corrected position description and Standard Form 50 showing the personnel action taken. The report must be submitted within 30 days from the effective date of the personnel action.

The personnel office must also determine if the appellant is entitled to grade or pay retention, or both, under 5 U.S.C. 5362 and 5363 and 5 CFR 536. If the appellant is entitled to grade retention, the two-year retention period begins on the date this decision is implemented.

Decision sent to:

[appellant's name]
c/o [name and address of appellant's
representative]

[name and address of servicing personnel officer]

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Introduction

On May 7, 1997, the San Francisco Oversight Division of the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) received a classification appeal, by way of her representative, from [the appellant], whose position is classified as Transportation Assistant (Freight), GS-2102-7. However, she believes that her position should be classified as Traffic Management Specialist, GS-2130, and graded at a higher level than her current position. The appellant works in [her activity, U.S. Department of the Navy]. We have accepted and decided this appeal under section 5112 of title 5, United States Code (U.S.C.).

General issues

This appeal decision is based on a careful review of all information submitted by the appellant and her agency. In addition, a telephone interview was conducted with the appellant, and onsite interviews conducted with her immediate and second level supervisors, to gather more information about the duties and responsibilities of the position. The supervisor has certified to the accuracy of the appellant's official position description (number QKR 7036). However, the appellant believes that the position description is inaccurate, and has been unable to resolve this issue with agency management. In such cases it is OPM policy to decide the appeal based on the actual duties that management has assigned and the appellant performs. In the case file, the appellant makes various statements about her agency and its evaluation of her position. Moreover, she notes that there are other positions at other installations within the Department of the Navy whose employees perform duties similar to hers, but are classified in a different series and at a higher grade level. In adjudicating this appeal, our only concern is to make our own independent decision on the proper classification of the appellant's position. By law, we must make that decision solely by comparing her current duties and responsibilities to OPM standards and guidelines (5 U.S.C. 5106, 5107, and 5112). Therefore, we have considered the appellant's statements only insofar as they are relevant to making that comparison.

In the appeal the appellant mentions that she is required to attend two weeks of training covering the transportation and storage of hazardous materials. This training is needed so that she can certify shipments of hazardous materials. Additionally she notes that she can be held personally liable for errors made in certifying shipments of hazardous materials, and is subject to heavy financial penalties resulting from such errors. The appellant believes that because she must regularly receive certification training, and is personally liable for errors in shipping hazardous materials, her position is more complex and thus warrants assignment of a higher grade level. Although we recognize that these two issues place additional burdens on the appellant to perform her job, in deciding classification appeals the only elements we can consider are the levels of difficulty of assignments and responsibilities. Therefore, all other matters such as certification training and personal liability cannot be considered in the appeals process.

Position information

The appellant performs numerous duties related to the transportation of a variety of material in support of the Trident submarine fleet, Strategic Weapons Systems, related supply support to the Fleet Ballistic Missile systems, and support of overhauls and services to submarines. In providing

support, she prepares, processes and maintains transportation documentation and arranges for shipment of material. She determines the appropriate mode of transportation (e.g., air, rail, motor, water) for general cargo and special category material (i.e., explosives, radioactive, hazardous, classified) and selects the appropriate carrier. In arranging for shipments the appellant considers such matters as availability of routes, costs, relative priority, and the need for special handling of certain freight, e.g., use of specialized loading equipment, temperature control enroute, highway permits. She coordinates with the Supply Department's packing section to ensure packing meets requirements. She prepares all transportation documents, including certification that special category material is properly packed, marked, labeled, and described. As part of her shipping responsibilities she researches and determines the requirements for special movements of materials which are considered hazardous, or are classified from a national security standpoint, or require great urgency in shipment. She advises outbound carrier drivers transporting special materials as to the nature of the cargo, safety precautions and periodic reporting requirements. The appellant also directs other section employees in the preparation, correction, and/or completion of documentation, work requirements, methods and procedures as needed, giving special instructions to, and answering technical questions from, two civilian co-workers and one individual in the Navy. The appellant provides training to the staff on new transportation rules and regulations, and receives and relays local traffic policies, procedures, and instructions from the Transportation Officer to the section staff.

The results of our interviews, data in the case file, and the position description of record, furnish much more information about the appellant's duties and responsibilities and how they are carried out.

Series, title, and standard determination

The appellant's position is currently classified by the agency in the Transportation Clerk and Assistant Series, GS-2102. However she believes that her duties warrant classification in the Traffic Management Series, GS-2130. We concur with the agency's series determination. As described on page 1 of the classification standard for the GS-2102 series, that series includes positions that involve supervising or performing work to arrange transportation for or perform other actions in connection with the movement of freight, passengers, or personal property by Government or commercial means. This series also includes other transportation support work not covered specifically by another one grade interval series in the Transportation Group. The work requires a practical knowledge of the regulations and methods governing traffic management or transportation programs.

As noted on page 3 of the GS-2102 standard, the objective of most transportation support work is to obtain the most efficient transportation services at the least cost. Transportation support work is typically organized by specific functional areas or specialties including shipment of freight, passenger, personal property and fleet management. The appellant's work is limited to the shipment of freight and involves such duties as those listed on page 3 of the GS-2102 standard including:

- securing carriers to arrange for pickup, delivery, and storage of shipments;

- identifying the mode or combination of modes, types of special equipment, and services required for shipments; and
- advising customers of inadequacies or inaccuracies in shipping requests and related documentation.

In shipping freight the appellant performs all of the above functions. Similar to positions classified in the GS-2102 series, she exercises a practical knowledge of the regulations and methods governing the organization's transportation and traffic management programs.

As previously noted, the appellant believes her position should be classified as Traffic Management Specialist, GS-2130. As discussed on page 1 of the classification standard for the Traffic Management Series, GS-2130, positions included in that series involve (1) performing, administering, or supervising technical and analytical work concerned with planning, development, and execution of traffic policies and programs; or (2) directing and managing programs to obtain the economical and efficient transportation of freight, personal property, and/or passengers. Positions in this series primarily require a knowledge of Federal traffic management principles and policies; transportation industry operations, practices, and capabilities; special handling or movement requirements associated with freight, passengers, or other transportation operations; and the relationship of traffic management to other agency or organizational programs and functions. There are two types of positions classified in the GS-2130 series: Traffic Managers and Traffic Management Specialists. Traffic Managers perform the functions listed on page 2 of the classification standard including:

- plan and direct the overall traffic management program of an organization;
- develop, adapt, and implement policies and plans to support the mission of the agency or installation served;
- analyze and advise on transportation matters;
- conduct traffic studies;
- negotiate with carriers; and/or
- represent the organization's position in disputes, such as disagreements over rates and charges.

Positions classified as Traffic Managers combine transportation program management and direct supervisory responsibilities.

As described on pages 2-3 of the GS-2130 standard, traffic management specialists perform staff analytical work. They may:

- develop, plan, evaluate, and advise on traffic management policies and programs;

- conduct special studies and work on projects in a specific functional area; and/ or
- study the general development, application, and impact of traffic management programs, policies, and operations, rather than focusing on individual shipments or transportation of passengers.

Some positions require specialized knowledge, such as:

- knowledge of particular transportation programs; i.e., freight, personal property, and/or passenger;
- knowledge of the transportation requirements and systems for specific geographic areas;
- knowledge of particular functions or programs that require transportation support, e.g., contract administration, supply, storage, distribution, or inventory management;
- knowledge of program operations to identify and define requirements for the use of automated systems, and/or
- knowledge of contract methodology for the procurement of specific transportation services.

The classification standard indicates that occupations classified in the GS-2130 series involve a broad range of assignments. On pages 3-5 of the standard are listed some illustrative work assignments which may be typically found in positions classified in the GS-2130 series. The list includes such duties as:

- provide advisory services to operating program managers on transportation program requirements, capabilities, policies, and procedures;
- analyze and evaluate effectiveness of shipment and transportation programs involving material and/or passengers and recommend alternative strategies to improve efficiency and economy of operations;
- develop transportation plans to support a particular program or function, such as mobilization;
- study, analyze, and evaluate the potential benefits of using automation to improve efficiency of transportation operations;
- determine data requirements and make recommendations for the automation of transportation administrative operations and systems;
- monitor carrier performance and recommend or take action to suspend or remove from service carriers that fail to perform satisfactorily;

- analyze and evaluate legislative and regulatory proposals for potential impact on transportation programs, recommend revisions, and prepare implementing guidance;
- survey and evaluate transportation program operations to assess compliance with applicable regulations, policies, procedures, and sound management practices;
- negotiate with carriers, using known or forecasted traffic patterns, to provide transport services for specified routes at specific fares and/or rates;
- maintain liaison with transportation industry representatives and organizations to evaluate industry proposals and deal with matters of mutual interest;
- analyze characteristics of commodities shipped to ensure consistency of freight classifications; and/or
- study the possibility of consolidating shipments and using alternate transportation modes to achieve greater economy of operations.

Based on our review, the appellant does not perform work typical of positions classified in the Traffic Management Series, GS-2130. Unlike traffic managers or traffic management specialists, the focus of her work is on arranging transportation for individual shipments of freight. This is in contrast to the work of traffic managers who are responsible for planning and directing the overall traffic management program of an organization, including developing and implementing traffic policies and plans to support the installation's mission. Such responsibilities are assigned to her supervisor, who serves as the installation's Transportation Officer and Chief of [her] Branch. The work of traffic management specialists also differs significantly from that performed by the appellant. Unlike the appellant's position, specialists are also not generally concerned with the transportation of single shipments. Rather they act in a staff capacity to, for instance, advise on traffic management policies, perform studies covering specific functional areas, and assess the impact of the overall traffic management program on the agency's mission. Although the appellant is occasionally called upon by her customers on base to do comparative reviews and determine the most cost effective and efficient method to transport a particular shipment of freight, such tasks do not meet the scope of the broader general traffic management studies performed by specialists. We note that the appellant mentions in the case record that she sometimes negotiates with carriers. However, her duties in that regard are limited to getting a special rate from an approved carrier for shipments of high priority where timeliness of delivery is critical, thus precluding going through the Military Traffic Management Command (MTMC) to arrange the shipment. In contrast, positions classified in the GS-2130 series negotiate with carriers on a much broader level and with greater authority to establish agreements for transportation services for the installation. In the file the appellant lists many of the assignments which employees whose positions are classified in the GS-2130 series perform. We have listed some of those (from pages 3-5 of the standard) earlier in this evaluation. Although the appellant believes her work encompasses many of the typical assignments addressed in the GS-2130 standard, the scope of her work does not meet the intent of jobs classified in that series, and, as

previously noted, her efforts focus mainly on individual shipments of freight. Her duties do not require that she perform the significantly broader assignments of GS-2130 positions, where the employee is concerned with advising traffic managers on overall transportation program requirements, and where analysis and evaluation techniques are used to assess the general efficiency and economy of the installation's operating transportation program as a whole. We found no indication that the appellant is involved with the transportation program to the extent that she develops transportation plans to support the overall freight shipment programs at the installation. In addition, she is not called upon to survey and evaluate the overall transportation program at the installation in order to evaluate the degree of compliance with applicable regulations, policies, and sound management practices. Such duties are found in positions above her level, i.e., Transportation Officer, Physical Distribution Officer. For all of the preceding reasons the appellant's position does not meet the criteria for classification in the Traffic Management Series, GS-2130.

As mentioned above, the appellant directs other employees in the preparation and completion of documents, and gives special instructions and answers technical questions from her co-workers on transportation matters. She also presents training to the staff on new regulations, and relays local traffic policies and changes in procedures from the Transportation Officer to the staff. The appellant feels that these additional "lead" duties should impact the grade of her position. Although we recognize that these additional duties impose more responsibility on the appellant, they do not meet the basic requirements for classification as a "work leader" as described in the Work Leader Grade-Evaluation Guide. As noted on page 1 of the Guide, work leaders, on a regular and recurring basis, lead *three* or more employees in accomplishing work in clerical or other one-grade interval occupations in the General Schedule. They are responsible to their supervisors for assuring that the work assignments of the other employees of the group are carried out by performing a range of duties such as:

- Distributing and balancing the workload among employees in accordance with established workflow, assuring timely accomplishment of the assigned work, and assuring that each employee has enough work to keep busy;
- Keeping in touch with the status and progress of work, making daily work adjustments in accordance with established priorities, estimating expected time of completion of work, maintaining records of work accomplishments;
- Instructing employees in specific tasks and job techniques, and making available written instructions; giving on-the-job training to new employees and answering questions from employees on procedures, policies, directives, etc.;
- Checking on work progress, amending or rejecting work not meeting established standards;
- Approving leave for a few hours, resolving simple informal complaints, reporting to the supervisor on performance, progress and training needs, and on disciplinary problems, and making suggestions

to the supervisor as requested concerning promotions, reassignments, awards, and personnel needs.

Other than providing some training and informal direction to the staff, the appellant does not perform any of the above duties typical of work leader positions. In addition, she provides direction to only two other civilian workers. The one military person is not subject to her direction, and has mixed duties outside the appellant's freight transportation function in which he reports to the [appellant's second level supervisor]. The primary responsibility of the appellant is personal work accomplishment, and her tasks concerning the other employees are not sufficient to warrant being classified as a leader.

As previously discussed, the appellant's position is best classified in the Transportation Clerk and Assistant Series, GS-2102. The standard specifies that for positions at the GS-5 level and above, the proper position title is Transportation Assistant. According to the standard, agencies may, at their discretion, add a parenthetical title to the basic title to reflect a particular specialization or when further distinctions in the work are necessary. The agency has added the parenthetical title of "Freight" to reflect the transportation specialization of the appellant's work, which appears to be appropriate. The classification standard for the GS-2102 series contains criteria for evaluating the grade level of positions in that series. We have applied those criteria to the appellant's position in the discussion that follows.

Grade determination

The GS-2102 standard uses the Factor Evaluation System (FES), which employs nine factors. Under the FES, each factor level description in a standard describes the minimum characteristics needed to receive credit for the described level. Therefore, if a position fails to meet the criteria in a factor level description in any significant aspect, it must be credited at a lower level. Conversely, the position may exceed those criteria in some aspects and still not be credited at a higher level. Our evaluation with respect to the nine FES factors follows.

Factor 1, Knowledge required by the position, Level 1-4, 550 points

This factor measures the nature and extent of information or facts that a worker must understand to do acceptable work. To be used as a basis for selecting a level under this factor, a knowledge must be required and applied.

The appellant's position fully meets Level 1-4, which is described on pages 12-15 of the GS-2102 standard. Level 1-4 is the highest level for this factor described in the standard. Similar to that level, her duties require knowledge and application of an extensive body of transportation regulations, methods and practices to perform a broad variety of interrelated and nonstandard transportation support requirements, and resolve a wide range of problems relating to shipment of freight. Like Level 1-4, her duties require knowledge comparable to one or more examples listed on pages 12-14 of the standard. Similar to the first example, she must have a thorough knowledge of a variety of transportation regulations relating to the movement of a wide range of specialized shipments. Her

duties include not only the movement of general stock items, but also highly specialized shipments including national security classified material, hazardous, explosive, and radioactive material. Hazardous materials include paints, chemicals, aerosols, flammables, and gases. Explosives include rocket motors, detonating fuses, and missile parts. She is also concerned with movement of oversized and heavy haul items, e.g., entire “dummy” missiles, heavy third stage rocket motors. All of these specialized items require that the appellant apply a practical knowledge of the carrier industry, and of special packing and shipping requirements, as well as handling and storage facilities and equipment, in order to ship the items in the most efficient and cost effective manner. For instance, old third stage rocket motors which are shipped from [the appellant’s installation] to a destruction facility at [an Army depot] are stored in a magazine at the installation, and shipped in temperature controlled units via truck or rail. Shipping of explosives from Polaris, Trident, or Poseidon missiles also requires temperature control depending on the class of explosive, and may also need dual drivers, escorts, and electronic satellite tracking to determine the exact location of the shipment along a preplanned route.

The appellant’s work is comparable to the illustration for freight duties described on page 14 of the standard under Level 1-4. She reviews customer requests for various types of shipments including general stock replenishment, hazardous, oversized, high priority, and other freight which due to their urgency may not be covered by standing route orders. Because of the nature and priority of the freight, the appellant must frequently arrange for special routing, handling and monitoring services, and work with the packing section to ensure packing meets regulatory requirements, and that special handling equipment is available either from the carriers or the agency. She coordinates shipping arrangements with the customer, carrier, and other activity personnel (e.g., [an office]), and reviews the nature, size and weight of items to determine any special needs, e.g., temperature control, escort service. Like the illustrative example, she is responsible for arranging for complete routing and handling of urgent shipments and those to isolated destinations which cannot be transported through normal channels. Much of the urgency of shipments (overnight) stems from the fact that the freight items are crucial to the operation of a Trident submarine, which may be docked on an emergency basis at some isolated port outside the continental United States, e.g., Diego Garcia Island. Navigation computers and oxygen regeneration kits are typical high priority items which sometimes are transported through other than normal channels, e.g., use of a Lear jet on a one time basis to urgently send equipment replacements. Like Level 1-4, the appellant prepares detailed enroute instructions in accordance with agency requirements especially for hazardous or special freight.

This factor is evaluated at Level 1-4 and 550 points are credited.

Factor 2, Supervisory controls, Level 2-3, 275 points

This factor covers (1) the nature and extent of direct or indirect controls exercised by the supervisor, (2) the employee’s responsibility, and (3) the review of completed work.

The appellant’s position meets Level 2-3, which is described on page 17 of the GS-2102 standard and is the highest level for this factor described in the standard. Similar to Level 2-3, the supervisor outlines the objectives, priorities and deadlines for freight shipments, and is consulted when unusually

involved or one-of-a-kind situations occur, e.g., use of an expensive, nonroutine mode of transportation for extremely high priority cargo. The appellant independently plans and carries out her work using accepted practices to resolve problems and deviations. Like Level 2-3, she processes shipment actions that sometimes cannot be processed using standard instructions because of the specialized nature of the freight (e.g., radioactive materials), or where there is a lack of documentation (e.g., no performance test package) to complete the shipping process. Like the work examples under Level 2-3, the appellant sometimes ships freight which is oversized, requires protective services (escorts, satellite tracking), and requires her to deal directly with a carrier to arrange a nonstandard route. Similar to Level 2-3, the supervisor generally reviews work for appropriateness and conformance to policy. This is frequently done after the fact (after a shipment has been completed) in response to complaints from customers. The methods the appellant uses to complete her assignments are not reviewed in detail by the supervisor.

This factor is evaluated at Level 2-3 and 275 points are credited.

Factor 3, Guidelines, Level 3-2, 125 points

This factor covers the nature of guidelines and the judgment needed to apply them.

The appellant's position fully meets Level 3-2 (page 18 of the standard), but falls short of Level 3-3 (page 19). Like Level 3-2, numerous procedures for doing the work have been established, and many specific guidelines are used. Guidelines include a variety of Navy regulations, applicable codes of Federal regulations, Departments of Defense and Transportation regulations, MTMC guidelines, and commercial publications such as the International Air Transportation Association Dangerous Goods Regulations. These guidelines cover the kinds of documents required for shipment of freight (requisitions, bills of lading, and invoice shipping documents), special instructions addressing additional documents and certifications for shipment of hazardous or radioactive freight, carrier selection criteria, specialized packing instructions, etc. Due to the diversity of freight shipped, requiring a variety of different individual shipping actions, the appellant must use judgment to identify and select the correct reference for each shipping procedure. This is particularly true when shipping hazardous or radioactive material. In the case of the latter, packing and shipping of cobalt material is governed by Navy, Department of Defense, and Department of Transportation regulations. The appellant must choose the most stringent guidance from the three governing safety and transportation requirements. Like Level 3-2, there are sometimes omissions in guidelines requiring the appellant to use some judgment and initiative to handle aspects of the work not covered completely. For instance, when use of routes specified by MTMC based on carrier tender agreements exceed the time limits specified by customers (e.g., high priority overnight shipment), the appellant deals directly with approved carriers to design specific routes to expeditiously transport freight via the most direct and cost effective method. Like Level 3-2, the appellant refers situations requiring significant judgment or interpretation to others for guidance and resolution. This is especially true when shipping explosive materials which have not been classified as to the type of explosive. In such cases the appellant contacts Naval ordnance personnel at Indian Head, Maryland, for information on the contents of the explosive. When provided the data (which is sometimes also furnished from

manufacturers' safety data sheets) the appellant refers to the proper regulation listing the substance which includes the prescribed safety requirements and shipping method.

The appellant's position does not meet Level 3-3. At that level guidelines are similar to those described at Level 3-2, but are not applicable completely to *many aspects* of the work because of the problem solving or complicated nature of the assignments. At this level there may be no directly related precedent cases or reference sources to use if, for example, the employee must decide if justifications for a higher than normal level of service are valid. Employees at Level 3-3 interpret guidelines, adapt procedures, decide approaches, and resolve specific problems. When processing requests for shipment, they reconcile incomplete and conflicting information when precedents or guidelines are not available or are not related directly.

Our fact-finding disclosed that the guidelines used by the appellant are completely applicable to many aspects of the work, despite the fact that she deals with complicated assignments on a regular basis. This is especially true when arranging for transportation of hazardous or radioactive materials. In such cases, as previously noted under Level 3-2, she must identify and select the most appropriate reference and procedures to ensure that shipping documents contain all required certificates and information, and that the carrier selected fully complies with all transportation requirements. The references the appellant selects are directly related to the movement of such freight and must be scrupulously followed. Errors in documentation or failure to follow instructions can result in the appellant incurring personal liability in the form of financial penalties. Unlike Level 3-3, although she is faced with deciding whether a justification for higher priority service is valid, there are many precedent cases and applicable guidelines to aid her in making such decisions. In addition, although the appellant is expected to interpret guidelines and resolve specific problems, she rarely deals with incomplete and conflicting information where precedents and guidelines are not available or not directly related. For example, due to the urgency of certain shipments, she sometimes goes outside normal MTMC procedures and identifies and deals directly with particular carriers capable of moving an item in a short time, e.g., rocket motors. In such cases she determines the route, the cost, and gets a spot bid for the transportation of the freight. Nevertheless, in doing so she uses guidelines which are available and fully applicable in these circumstances.

This factor is evaluated at Level 3-2 and 125 points are assigned.

Factor 4, Complexity, Level 4-3, 150 points

This factor covers the nature, number, variety, and intricacy of tasks, steps, processes, or methods in the work performed; the difficulty in identifying what needs to be done; and the difficulty and originality involved in performing the work.

The appellant's position fully meets Level 4-3 (pages 19-21), which is the highest level for this factor described in the standard. Similar to that level the appellant's work requires the use of different and unrelated procedures because her assignments are varied and involve the full range of freight shipping situations. Her work methods are not completely standardized because individual treatment of

actions varies according to the problems involved, e.g., stock replenishment shipments vs. transportation of hazardous materials. Like Level 4-3, the appellant identifies the nature of the problem or issue and determines the need for additional information through verbal contacts and review of regulations. She considers previous shipment actions and how they are similar or different from those at hand. For example, in dealing with various types of freight (e.g., general, hazardous or explosive material) shipped to many different destinations, she must examine the applicable regulations covering packing, security and safety measures, as well as the extent of documentation needed to transport the items. Sometimes special services are needed such as handling equipment for oversize loads. Similar to Level 4-3, the appellant takes actions like selecting the best means of transportation, and verifies compliance by the carrier with transportation instructions. Like the work example on page 20 of the standard, she reviews requests for various specialized cargo (e.g., temperature sensitive, hazardous, oversized), and determines the correct shipping methods. She coordinates with the packing section to ensure that particularly sensitive freight is properly packed, and that special loading equipment is available when carriers arrive to pick up cargo.

This factor is evaluated at Level 4-3 and 150 points are credited.

Factor 5, Scope and effect, Level 5-3, 150 points

This factor covers the relationship between the nature of the work (i.e., the purpose, breadth, and depth of the assignment), and the effect of work products or services both within and outside the organization.

The appellant's position meets Level 5-3 (page 22) which is the highest level for this factor described in the standard. Like that level she applies conventional practices to treat a variety of problems in transportation transactions. Problems she deals with frequently result from requests by customers to expedite a shipment because it is essential to the operation of a submarine. This sometimes results in a carrier's inability to meet the needs of the customer, so the appellant must go outside normal MTMC channels to locate and contract with another carrier who meets customer needs. Her work affects the ability of the Trident submarine fleet to operate and achieve its mission, since she frequently ships critical equipment and supplies worldwide (e.g., navigational computers, oxygen generating cells) which are needed for boats to remain operational.

This factor is evaluated at Level 5-3 and 150 points are assigned.

Factors 6 and 7, Personal contacts and Purpose of contacts, Levels 6-2 and 7-b, 75 points

Factor 6, Personal contacts

Factor 6 includes face-to-face contacts and telephone contacts with persons not in the supervisory chain.

Like Level 6-2 (page 23), which is the highest level for this factor described in the standard, the appellant has contacts with employees in the same agency but outside of her immediate organization. These include storage, shipping and packing personnel, as well as transportation staff at other installations, supply personnel onsite, and employees in other Department of Defense agencies who receive goods shipped by the appellant. Like Level 6-2, the appellant also has contact with members of the public such as airline shipping and contract carrier personnel, and freight forwarders. This factor is evaluated at Level 6-2.

Factor 7, Purpose of contacts

Under Factor 7 the purpose of contacts ranges from factual exchanges of information to situations involving the planning and coordination of actions.

The purpose of the appellant's contacts meets Level 7-b (page 24), which is the highest level for this factor described in the standard. Like that level, the appellant plans and coordinates shipping actions to prevent errors and delays so that freight is shipped on time and in the most cost effective and efficient manner. She briefs customers on transportation and shipping requirements, ensuring that transportation documents are timely and accurately prepared, and sometimes traces missing freight through various channels. This factor is evaluated at Level 7-b.

By application of the matrix table on page 24 of the standard, assignment of Level 6-2 and 7-b for factors 6 and 7 results in a total of 75 points credited to the position for those factors.

Factor 8, Physical demands, Level 8-1, 5 points

The appellant's position meets Level 8-1 (page 25), but not Level 8-2 (page 25). Like Level 8-1, her work may require some physical effort such as standing, walking, bending or sitting. There are no special physical demands. The position does not meet Level 8-2 which requires above average physical agility. Our fact-finding disclosed that she is not subjected on a regular and recurring basis to prolonged periods of standing, bending, stretching and lifting.

This factor is evaluated at Level 8-1 and 5 points are credited.

Factor 9, Work environment, Level 9-1, 5 points

The appellant's position meets Level 9-1 (page 25) but not Level 9-2 (page 25). Like Level 9-1 she works primarily in an office setting involving everyday risks or discomforts. Normal safety precautions are adequate. Unlike Level 9-2 she is not exposed on a regular and recurring basis to moderate risks or discomforts that require the use of special safety precautions. Although she occasionally visits warehouses or packing areas, this does not require the exercise of special safety precautions on her part.

This factor is evaluated at Level 9-1 and 5 points are credited.

Summary

The following factor levels and points have been awarded to the appellant's position:

Factor	Level	Points
1. Knowledge required by the position	1-4	550
2. Supervisory controls	2-3	275
3. Guidelines	3-2	125
4. Complexity	4-3	150
5. Scope and effect	5-3	150
6. Personal contacts	{6-2	
7. Purpose of contacts	{7-b	75
8. Physical demands	8-1	5
9. Work environment	9-1	<u>5</u>
Total points:		1335

A total of 1335 points falls in the GS-6 range (1105-1350) as indicated in the Grade Conversion Table on page 7 of the GS-2102 standard. Thus, this position is graded at the GS-6 level.

Decision

The appellant's position is properly classified as Transportation Assistant, GS-2102-6. Addition of a parenthetical title to reflect a specialized transportation function is at the agency's discretion.