

U.S. Office of Personnel Management
Office of Merit Systems Oversight and Effectiveness
Classification Appeal and FLSA Programs

Philadelphia Oversight Division
600 Arch Street, Room 3400
Philadelphia, PA 19106-1596

Classification Appeal Decision
Under section 5112 of title 5, United States Code

Appellants: [appellant's names]

Agency classification: Shipbuilding Specialist (Industrial Repair Facility) GS-1101-11

Organization: [name] Project Office
Detachment [name]
Supervisor, Shipbuilding, Conversion
and Repair (SUPSHIP) [name]
Department of the Navy
[location]

OPM decision: Production Controller (Ships)
GS-1152-11

OPM decision number: C-1152-11-02

Robert D. Hendler
Classification Appeals Officer

/s/ 4/12/00

Date

As provided in section 511.612 of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), 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* (PCS's), appendix 4, section G (address provided in appendix 4, section H).

Since this decision changes the classification of the position, it is to be effective no later than the beginning of the fourth pay period after the date of the decision (5 CFR 511.702). The servicing human resources office must submit a compliance report containing the corrected position description (PD) and a Standard Form 50 showing the personnel action taken. The report must be submitted within 30 days from the effective date of the personnel action.

Decision sent to:

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and Repair (SUPSHIP) [name]
Detachment [name]
[address]
[location]

PERSONAL

[appellants' names]
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Introduction

On October 12, 1999, the Philadelphia Oversight Division of the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) accepted a classification appeal from [name]., representing a group of nine co-appellants including himself. All occupy positions currently classified as Shipbuilding Specialist (Industrial Repair Facility), GS-1101-11. Messrs. [appellants' names], assigned to the [name] Project Office, occupy identical additional (IA) positions under the basic PD #960011. Messrs. [appellants' names], assigned to the [name] Project Office, occupy IA positions under the basic PD #96001. The PD's are virtually identical. However, because the two groups of employees are assigned to different work sites and do not occupy identical positions, we will issue separate appeal decisions for each group. This decision pertains to the appellants located at the [name] Project Office, Detachment [name], Supervisor, Shipbuilding, Conversion and Repair (SUPSHIP) [name], [location]. We have accepted and decided this appeal under section 5112 of title 5, United States Code (U.S.C.).

General issues

The appellants provided a history of their removal from Ship Surveyor, WD-8 jobs in the Federal wage system production facilitating pay plan to their placement in their current positions. They described their change in work assignments from performing work in a single trade as ship surveyors, e.g., marine machinist, shipfitting, electronics, pipefitting, and boiler, to "cross-trading" by working in multiple trades. The appellants provided a chronology of actions they had taken to resolve both issues of PD accuracy and its classification with their agency. They described what they believe were "Unfair Labor Practices" in how their agency responded to these issues.

The appellants pointed to what they believe is inconsistent classification of similar positions in other SUPSHIP organizations, stating that they either remained in the production facilitating pay plan or are classified to the Engineering Technician Series, GS-802 or the Production Control Series, GS-1152. Others remained in the production facilitating pay plan. Based on reviewing PD's from other Federal agencies, the appellants state that they are performing Marine Surveyor, GS-873 work because: "They are responsible for planning functions in all disciplines (trades) and the field administration of the contract at ship repair facilities. As WD 8's, we were tasked, qualified and held responsible to accomplish the above functions."

In his letter of September 27, 1999, [name] asked that the appellants' positions be changed to Marine Surveyor, GS-873-12 because it "contains the elements of both Series **0802** and **1101**, and which correctly defines the duties given to us by our Command." He also requested that the appellants "be monetarily compensated for duties performed from January 1997 until the present." Although not raised during the January 14, 2000, on-site audit conducted with the available appellants, Messrs. [names], [representative's name] subsequently claimed that the appellants also performed Equipment Specialist Series, GS-1670 work when they developed lists of parts and equipment in performing their planning work.

These statements raise procedural issues that need to be addressed. By law, we must classify positions solely by comparing their current duties and responsibilities to OPM PCS's and guidelines (5 U.S.C. 5106, 5107, and 5112). We have considered the appellants' statements only insofar as they are relevant to making that comparison. Other methods or factors of evaluation are not authorized for use in determining the classification of a position, e.g., comparisons to other positions that may or may not be classified correctly, such as those cited by the appellants in their appeal rationale, or those previously occupied by the appellants. As discussed with the appellants during our adjudication of this appeal, unfair labor practices are not reviewable under the classification appeals process.

The appellants believe, if they prevail, that they should receive GS-12 pay retroactive from January 1997. However, the U.S. Comptroller General states that an ". . . employee is entitled only to the salary of the position to which he is actually appointed, regardless of the duties performed. When an employee performs the duties of a higher grade, no entitlement to the salary of a higher grade exists until such time as the individual is actually promoted Consequently, back pay is not available as a remedy for misassignments to higher level duties or improper classifications" (CG decision B-232695, December 15, 1989).

The PD's provided by the appellants contain some duties that parallel those performed by the appellants. However, they contain other duties substantially different from those assigned to the appellants. For example, the Mechanical Engineering Technician, GS-802-11 PD includes responsibility for engineering design. Engineering design responsibilities in the SUPSHIP Portsmouth are assigned to and performed in another Detachment component. The Marine Surveyor, GS-873 PD's at the GS-12 and GS-13 grade levels also contain critical functions not assigned to and performed by the appellants. For example, the GS-13 PD includes complete vessel responsibility, technical functions for system acquisition design and development, and developing technical maintenance procedures. The GS-12 PD includes "port engineer" technical design and related responsibilities assigned to a SUPSHIP contract employee.

Like OPM, the appellants' agency must classify positions based on comparison to OPM's PCS's and guidelines. Agencies are obligated to review their own classification decisions for identical, similar or related positions to insure consistency with OPM appeal certificates. If the appellants consider the appealed position so similar to others that they warrant the same classification, they may pursue this matter by writing to their agency's human resources management headquarters. They should specify the precise organizational location, classification, duties and responsibilities of the positions in question. If the positions are found to be basically the same as the appealed position, or warrant similar application of the controlling PCS's, the agency must correct their classification to be consistent with this appeal decision. Otherwise, the agency should explain to them the differences between the appealed position and the others.

A PD is the official record of the major duties and responsibilities assigned to a position by a responsible management official; i.e., a person with authority to assign work to a position. A **position** is the duties and responsibilities that make up the work performed by an employee. Title 5, U.S.C. 5106 prescribes the duties, responsibilities and qualifications required by those duties and responsibilities as the basis for determining the classification of a position. The Introduction to the PCS's (Introduction) further provides that "As a rule, a position is classified

on the basis of the duties actually performed." Additionally, 5 CFR 511.607(a)(1), in discussing PD accuracy issues, provides that OPM will decide classification appeals on the basis of the actual duties and responsibilities assigned by management **and** performed by the employee. The point here is that it is a real operating position that is classified, and not simply the PD or available documents. Therefore, this decision must be based on the actual work assigned to and performed by the appellants and will resolve the issue of PD accuracy.

We must evaluate the appellants' work within the confines of the position classification theories, principles, and practices established by OPM. The Introduction states that in most instances, the highest level of work assigned to and performed by the employee for the majority of time is grade-determining. When the highest level of work is a smaller portion of the job, it may be grade controlling only if it regular and recurring, occupies at least 25 percent of the employee's time, and the higher level of knowledge and skills needed to perform the work would be required in recruiting for the position if it became vacant.

We have evaluated the work assigned by management and performed by the appellants according to these classification requirements. In reaching our decision, we carefully reviewed the information provided by the appellants and their agency, including the appellants' basic PD of record. In addition, we conducted an onsite audit with the available appellants, Messrs. [names], and an interview with their immediate supervisor, [name], on January 14, 2000. We also considered information submitted by the appellants; the agency appeal administrative report of December 7, 1999; and additional information provided by the appellants at our request. As discussed below, we find the PD of record contains the major duties and responsibilities assigned by management and performed by the appellants and we incorporate it by reference into this decision.

Position information

The appellants believe that their PD does not adequately recognize their planning work. Initially, their positions concentrated on contractor surveillance. This involved receiving work items (specifications) developed by other Navy or contractor organizations; monitoring contractor performance; responding to contractor questions; and attending Check Points, accepting or rejecting contractor work and, if necessary, writing corrective action requests. However, they have assumed planning functions. These duties include checking the validity and accuracy of work requests; developing estimates; researching assigned items, reviewing plans, technical manuals and Navy instructions to determine the work to be performed and develop the parts and equipment list for the work; and writing the work item also known as Statement of Work.

One major duty in the PD of record is: "Develops, reviews, and negotiates modifications to original specifications and new work specifications for work to be accomplished by the contractor." This was amended on March 17, 1998, by the addition of:

Supports the field planning effort in the development of new work items by performing support functions, such as:

- a. Performs ship checks to confirm accuracy of required repairs, equipment identification for ship's work request (2-Kilo).
- b. Reviews new and growth work item specifications for technical accuracy to achieve desired 2-Kilo repair objective, provides written review comments to the supervisor of work item discrepancies.

Although the appellants may work on other vessels, the Detachment's primary responsibility is supporting four oil, ammunition, and supply vessels (AOE's). They are homeported at the [name] annex of Naval Weapons Station, [name], in [location]. Major dry dock overhaul and repair is assigned to the [name] office. However, the vessel currently in dry dock overhaul is at the site of the former [name] Naval Shipyard, in [location]. The four AOE's are on an 18-month cycle phased maintenance availability (PMA) process. One vessel is in dry dock at any time. The two newer vessels spend up to three months in overhaul. The other two are more than 30 years old and typically spend four months or more in dry dock because of additional maintenance and repair needs. Other projects over the past two years included landing craft, a floating dry dock, and a crane barge. Although the appellants may be assigned to work on larger war ships, e.g., aircraft carriers, these assignments are infrequent.

Under the current PMA contract, the contractor develops specifications (work items). However, the PMA on one of the newer vessels [name] was cancelled. The [name] office appellants will write and execute the specifications at that site. The [name] office appellants write specifications for other assigned vessels cited above. They also must check contractor prepared specifications before they are sent out so that they are not ambiguous or open to interpretations creating the potential for unintended additional Government costs. This includes reviewing the proposed maintenance or repair to determine what actually needs to be fixed and how it should be accomplished, referencing ship drawings and other technical documentation. Additional work typically must be planned when machinery is taken apart and inspected.

The PD includes assisting in performing pre-award surveys as a major duty. While the appellants may be asked to review the capability of potential contractors to perform overhaul and repair, these duties are performed infrequently. Causes include a decline in the number of companies in the marine repair industry and the five-year length of the recently let PMA contract.

Quality assurance duties are listed as occupying approximately 20 percent of the appellants' time. They include checking contractor work to assure that it meets Government quality standards; preparing discrepancy reports on failures of contractor quality assurance/inspection processes; inspecting alteration and installation team (teams sent out to alter and/or install systems and/or equipment); witnessing critical tests; and providing feedback to the Quality Assurance Office on contractor performance.

Series, title, and standard determination

The appellants believe that their work is covered by the Ship Surveying Series, GS-873. This series covers work involved in surveying vessels, including installed components, to determine the condition and need for an extent of work required to place the vessels in condition to meet specified requirements. The work combines: (1) preparing specifications, including estimates of labor and material costs to cover work determined to be necessary as a result of surveys; (2) inspecting and accepting work accomplished to place the vessel in the condition specified; and, (3) performing other work, such as preparing reports, incidental to ship surveying. Specifically excluded from the series is work primarily concerned with inspecting construction, assembly, modification, conversion, overhaul, or repair of vessels or inspections involved in the procurement of vessels chiefly to assure compliance with contracts, plans, and specifications.

As a non-professional occupation in the Engineering and Architecture Group, GS-800, use of the "specification" is materially different from that proposed by the appellants. While the appellants have access to and use engineering manuals to estimate time and material costs, these decisions are based primarily on technically established maintenance and overhaul requirements, e.g., phased maintenance on portions of the boiler system, pumps, and motors. In contrast, the primary and paramount purpose of GS-873 specification work consists of establishing actual technical overhaul and repair requirements. The resulting labor and material estimates implement these decisions. In the appellants' organization, work typical of the GS-873 occupation is assigned to and performed by the Detachment engineering staff and/or the contract port engineer who orchestrates the maintenance and overhaul for an entire assigned vessel.

The appellants' representative stated during fact-finding that preparing parts and material lists for work items is Equipment Specialist Series, GS-1670 work. Employees in several occupations develop parts and materials lists. For example, supply technicians and specialists develop lists of parts, tool and other material based primarily on historical supply data and information provided in supply catalogs and other reference material on the interchangeability of items. In contrast, equipment specialists make similar recommendations based on such considerations as equipment operational characteristics and material composition, the accessibility of the equipment components for repair, the availability of those who use the equipment of the tools and facilities needed to make repairs, and their capability to make repairs. The record shows that other Detachment components and/or Naval Sea Systems Command engineering organizations make the technical decisions on material composition and similar issues covered by the GS-1670 occupation.

We also find that the appellants perform quality inspection rather than quality assurance work. As in inspection work, the primary purpose of the appellants' test and measurement observation is to provide the basis for accepting or rejecting the product, service, or process involved. The primary concern is to determine conformance of the product to drawings and/or technical specifications and stipulated process and/or acceptance testing routines, reporting defects encountered and their probable causes. That is the purpose and function of the appellants' contractor quality surveillance work. In contrast, inspection is only one of a variety of techniques used by Quality Assurance Specialists, GS-1910, to develop objective evidence as the

effectiveness of quality procedures and controls; identify potential problem areas or inherent weaknesses in the product itself; and serve as a basis for adjusting surveillance or control over operations. These analytical quality assurance program functions are assigned to the Detachment quality assurance staff.

The agency has classified the basic PD to the General Business and Industry Series, GS-1101, referencing the Industrial Specialist Series, GS-1150 and Production Control Series, GS-1152 PCS's on the PD cover sheet. The administrative report does not contain series determination or grade level analysis.

The GS-1150 series includes positions that primarily require a practical knowledge of the nature and operations of an industry or industries, and the materials, facilities and methods employed by the industry or industries in producing commodities. The functions include: (1) developing and carrying out plans for the expansion, conversion, integration or utilization of industrial production facilities, either to meet mobilization or strategic requirements or to strengthen the industrial economy; (2) furnishing technical information, assistance, and advice concerning facilities, machinery, methods, materials and standards for industrial production (which may include exploration, extraction, refining, manufacturing and processing operations); (3) developing and/or administering provisions or regulations covering such matters as materials allocation, tariffs, export-import control, etc.; (4) conducting surveys of industrial plants to evaluate capacity and potential for production of specific commodities; (5) planning, evaluating, and maintaining technical surveillance over Government production operations, either in contractor plants or in Government-operated plants; or (6) performing related functions which require essentially similar knowledge as the previously listed functions.

Similar skills and knowledge are applied in the GS-1152 series. The functions include planning, estimating, scheduling, and expediting the use of labor, machines, and materials in specific manufacturing or remanufacturing operations that employ mechanical or automated production systems and methods in the fabrication, rebuilding, overhaul, refurbishing, or repair of any type of Government-owned, controlled, or operated equipment, systems, facilities, and supplies.

The GS-1152 PCS states that some positions are involved in the preparation of contract bids that include the preproduction analysis of specific proposed work packages to determine workload capacity, labor, material, services, and machine requirements, to arrive at the most competitive bid. These positions are also covered by this series as they perform the same type of work as positions that are responsible for the preproduction planning for any assigned projects, since the source data used and knowledge applied are the same.

The GS-1152 PCS recognizes the close relationship between the two series, stating:

Classify positions responsible for planning, evaluating, and maintaining technical surveillance over Government production operations, either in contractor or Government-operated facilities in the Industrial Specialist Series, GS-1150. Positions that have significant production control responsibilities for contractor operations for analyzing, planning, and scheduling specific production operations or workload are included in the GS-1152 series.

The appellants' work closely matches the second sentence. While maintaining surveillance over contractor and some Government performed work, the appellants have significant production control responsibilities in analyzing, planning, and scheduling maintenance and overhaul work. Typical of GS-1152 work, the appellants: (1) prepare production plans for specific items and/or projects and operations through the compilation of customer requirements, engineering designs, specifications (technical data, not work items), and process data; (2) compile estimates for different types of skilled labor and the number of worker-hours required for production operations; (3) advise on a variety of material requirements and production schedule due dates; (4) schedule and control work assignments based upon capacity, priority, and due date; (5) determine the status of work in progress, time required to complete the job, the availability of materials, tools required, and reassess priorities; (6) expedite jobs in progress by any appropriate means; and, (7) monitor, record, and report the status of production funding.

For these reasons, we find the appellants' primary and paramount work is fully covered by the GS-1152 series. The appellants' other assignments are ancillary and integral to the basic position's primary and paramount GS-1152 functions. The variety of functions performed by each appellant; i.e., "multi-trading," is recognized in the established specialized title of (Ships). Therefore, the appealed basic position is allocated properly as Production Controller (Ships), GS-1152.

Grade determination

Because the basic position is classified to the GS-1152 series, the GS-1152 PCS must be used for grade determination. It is written in factor evaluation system (FES) format. Positions graded under the FES format are compared to nine factors. Levels are assigned for each factor and the points associated with the assigned levels are totaled and converted to a grade level by application of the Grade Conversion Table contained in the PCS. Under the FES, factor level descriptions mark the lower end; i.e., the floor, of the ranges for the indicated factor level. If a position fails in any significant aspect to meet a particular level in the standard, the next lower level and its lower point value must be assigned unless the deficiency is balanced by an equally important aspect that meets a higher level.

Factor 1, Knowledge required by the position

This factor measures the nature and extent of information or facts which the employees must understand to do acceptable work (e.g., steps, procedures, practices, rules, policies, theories, principles, and concepts) and the nature and extent of the skills needed to apply that knowledge.

The appellants' individual planning and surveillance assignments meet Level 1-6 (950 points) where employees use knowledge and experience in the recurring manufacture, overhaul, or repair of products or projects using multiple process production methods and procedures to develop information necessary for the control of a complex product, e.g., numerous skilled trades utilizing a variety of general purpose and specialized machines, tools, equipment, and material to manufacture, remanufacture, or overhaul and assemble products such as large self-propelled ordnance; a complex missile/launcher system; or major systems and airframes of fixed and rotary

wing aircraft. The level is creditable to the appellants' work on smaller vessels, e.g., landing craft.

At this level, the employee utilizes a practical knowledge of the industrial activity, its staff and support operations, the purpose and capacities of the machines and equipment, the type and kind of labor required, a variety of material resources and their cost, to plan for and control the production cycle. The work requires extensive knowledge, understanding, and use of product and manufacturing terminology, data, and standards and how to relate them properly to new projects, and considerable knowledge and experience to observe and analyze production operations to determine if schedules are being followed, if they can be improved, and to determine the causes of production delays.

However, the overall nature of each appellant's project assignment meets the threshold of Level 1-7 (1,250 points). In addition to Level 1-6, the work requires a comprehensive and intensive practical knowledge of all the production methods and procedures, machines, and materials; and considerable skill and experience to plan for the future or immediate production control for the manufacture, overhaul, or repair of prototype or very complex products; e.g., spacecraft; combat or strategic fixed wing aircraft; large and very complex weapon systems like a warship or submarine; or responsibility for a number of complex "compartmented zones" of a very large ship (the complete propulsion system is one such zone).

The employee applies: (1) knowledge, skill, and experience to prevent or alleviate production delays, scheduling conflicts, the lack of sufficient materials, faulty processes, labor shortages, or skilled trade imbalances; and (2) a variety of methods to investigate, analyze, plan, and implement corrective action as well as establish effective cost controls for difficult and complex production problems that may occur during the preplanning or the work-in-progress phase. This requires a good working knowledge of the basic requirements and procedures of all departments being coordinated both in and outside of the production area.

The four AOE's, the most complex vessels serviced by the appellants on a regular and recurring basis, meet the floor threshold definition of warship based on their variety of operational and defensive mechanical, electronic, and related systems. On major projects, the appellants are assigned clusters of work orders primarily organized by ship zone, and must assure that work is phased to eliminate access conflicts and meet critical time frames. This reflects the use of a good working knowledge of the basic requirements and procedures of all functions being coordinates both inside and outside the zone area to prevent or alleviate production delays, scheduling conflicts, lack of sufficient materials, and skilled labor availability. As at Level 1-7, the appellants apply a variety of methods to investigate and analyze maintenance and overhaul problems, and plan and implement corrective action so that availability time frames can be met. The position is credited at Level 1-7 (1,250 points).

Factor 2 - Supervisory controls

This factor covers the nature and the extent of direct or indirect controls exercised by the supervisor, the employee's responsibility, and the review of completed work.

The appellants work with the freedom from supervision that meets, but does not exceed Level 2-4 (450 points), the highest level described in the GS-1152 PCS. As at Level 2-4, the appellants and their supervisor confer to set the overall objectives and adjust any conflicting priorities for the block of work assigned. The appellants receive minimal guidance and are expected to analyze, plan, and carry out complex production control tasks independently and resolve most production, labor, machine, and material conflicts or shortages that arise. The appellants plan and coordinate most of the timing and integrated production efforts of the contractor, avoiding conflicts with ship's personnel and/or other Government personnel that are responsible for work on various segments of the project or have work scheduled in the project area.

The appellants do not work on long-term assignments typical of Level 2-4, e.g., extensive overhaul of major warships usually requiring several years of difficult and intense preproduction and immediate production planning. However, the critical turnaround required for continuing fleet support requires equivalent attention to the demands of keeping the supervisor informed of any situations that could impact on long-term production requirements found at Level 2-4. As at that level, the appellants routinely consult with the supervisor to provide information needed by management, to report potentially troublesome situations, and to recommend corrective action in areas that extend beyond the area of the controller's authority. This information is routinely used in status meetings with the contractor. Typical of Level 2-4, completed work is reviewed only in terms of effectiveness in meeting and coordinating production requirements and deadlines. The position is credited at Level 2-4 (450 points).

Factor 3, Guidelines

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

The appellants stated that guidelines are limited. For example, there are no standards to estimate work hours. They use technical manuals when conducting the ship check that describes how to pull and tear down the equipment. They may call the manufacturer or distributors for component information. Navy planning yards maintain historical information for their assigned Navy vessels. Our fact-finding revealed that historical specification data is available from the PMA contractor. Historical data also is available internally from the [name] office, e.g., drawings or past history. Other historical information does exist and is retrievable, e.g., from the vessel Type Commander or the Ship Drawing Index. Furthermore, the advanced age of two of the vessels, the regular maintenance and overhaul cycle, and the documentation on the new vessels lead us to conclude that a substantial body of information is available for the appellants to use in preparing and/or reviewing work items. The appellants also have a network-based automated specification system available for estimating labor costs. The SUPSHIP organizational manual on planning provides additional guidance on program processes and procedures.

The nature and availability of these policies, guidelines, and procedures meets Level 3-3 (275 points) where guidelines are available for most assignments but they are not always specific or are not completely applicable to some products, processes, materials, or production operations. At as that level, the appellants use experience and judgment to interpret, adapt, or extend policies, guides, procedures, regulations, and precedents to new or different products and

production operations. Since some guides may not be applicable, the appellants analyze the results and makes recommendations for necessary changes; e.g., substitution of material or parts, dealing with incorrect or complete ship drawings and/or technical data.

The appealed position does not meet Level 3-4 (450 points) where there is a significant lack of definitive or directly applicable guidelines and standard data, and the employee usually refers to previous methods, procedural guides, and instructions which cover major production functional areas which are of limited use or application. As discussed in the GS-1152 PCS, this situation is typical in the research and development of complex prototype systems or the extensive overhauls and repair of major systems, e.g., the life extension overhaul of an aircraft carrier involving extensive ship alterations. This is not the case in the appellants' PMA and critical and urgent maintenance and overhaul environment. Based on the availability of historical production and technical information, the appellants' work does not require or permit them to exercise the degree of initiative in searching out sources of information, much of it indirect or obscure, to develop project estimates and plans for control of complex production projects found at Level 3-4. Similarly, the appellants are not routinely required to depart from traditional criteria, methods, and procedures to develop new ones which may also require proposing new policies to obtain effective results, overcome unusual problems, and meet the individual program and customer requirements. The position is credited at Level 3-3 (275 points).

Factor 4, Complexity

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 individual work items and clusters of less complex items do not exceed the demands typical of Level 4-3 (150 points). However, the appellants' major work zone or equivalent assignments are projects that are difficult and complex and require the application of a complete range of production control principles, techniques, and methodology to plan and accomplish control over overhaul and/or repair assignments that meet the Level 4-4 (225 points) threshold. Typical assignments at this level include equipment systems that are composed of a large number of different components and subassemblies, or products that represent long-term depot level major overhaul or repair, e.g., responsibility for a major segment, system, or compartmented zone of a spacecraft or a complex combat or strategic aircraft or ship. Comparable products include the propulsion system of a large ship or nuclear submarine, or the complex fire control and launching systems for sophisticated missiles. Some are faced with difficult problems due to the lack of standard data and guidelines for the equipment or project, while others have to make difficult production planning decisions where there is a large amount of technical data and specifications. They exercise considerable judgment in identifying areas that are similar to previous production tasks to establish a framework for initial planning, conduct research for pertinent information, and consult directly with responsible officials to obtain missing technical data, specifications, and design information. The complexity and individual nature of each product or project and its own special requirements prevent the use of routine established production plans, methods, and procedures. Long-term overhaul work involves planning

production schedules and preparing justifications for additional funding for unplanned work discovered during the disassembly or tear-down of the product.

As discussed previously, the appellants have standard data and guidelines available. Although overhaul work is relatively limited in duration, the appellants routinely deal with the complications typical at Level 4-4, e.g., preparing justifications for additional work discovered during disassembly or tear-down. They must frequently assemble missing technical data, technical specifications, and ship drawings that may lead to changes in work items and, therefore, production schedules. These complications, in turn, routinely affect production plans, and require modifications to methods and procedures, e.g., correcting fixing critical problems preventing deployment while postponing action on less critical maintenance and repair needs.

The appellants' work fails to meet Level 4-5 (325 points) which involves substantial breadth and depth of analysis, and consideration of numerous interrelationships and variables to develop production control plans and programs for very difficult and complex products or projects. Typically, they require multi-year funding and more than a year of preproduction planning and immediate production. The production process requires a wide variety of skilled trades for hundreds of thousands of worker-days to accomplish the project. At this level, the most important function is the complex coordination of the timing and sequence of: (1) large amounts and wide varieties of materials; (2) hundreds of work orders for the overhaul, modification, removal, repair, and replacement work by many skilled trade shops scattered about the facility and at various contractor locations across the country; and (3) a multitude of requirements for new equipment and materials. Controllers make frequent adjustments to production schedules and prepare justification for additional funding for unplanned work discovered during the disassembly or overhaul of the product. Typical assignments require the responsibility for both the preproduction planning phase as well as the immediate production control for the major overhaul and repair of a number of large strategic multiengine aircraft or several destroyers; the responsibility for construction of a large ship; the major overhaul of a nuclear powered submarine; or, the responsibility for the complex long-term major overhaul of any other weapon systems typically requiring 24-36 months of work to complete. As discussed previously, the appellants' assignments involve overhauls limited in duration and coordination of a substantially more limited number of work items than found at Level 4-5. The position is credited at Level 4-4 (225 points).

Factor 5, Scope and effect

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. Only the effect of properly performed work is considered.

As at Level 5-3 (150 points), the appellants' work involves resolving a variety of conventional production problems and situations by the selection or adaptation of formal work methods and procedures, utilizing established or precedent criteria, and production plans. The maintenance and overhaul requirements on the four AOE's involve using established and precedent criteria for most projects. Major changes, such as ship alterations, are limited in both number and significance. Typical of Level 5-3, the results of their work impacts the effectiveness of

operations of the activity. The goal is to achieve and maintain desired production levels for products that meet or exceed the original specifications and terms of acceptability established by the customer, and are consistent with efficient and economic operations.

The appellants' work does not meet the scope and impact of Level 5-4 (225 points). At that level, the purpose of the work is to plan, develop, and implement production control programs of considerable breadth and complexity. The work involves establishing criteria, formulating effective production control programs, assessing the effectiveness of production programs, and investigating or analyzing a variety of unusual production problems and conditions. The work affects a wide range of organizations within the industrial activity, and typically has application to other agency activities that are performing similar work at other locations. Completed assignments have a direct impact on the industrial mission of the agency and the safety and security of personnel in the organization to which the product must be shipped in full operational condition. These functional responsibilities are vested in other SUPSHIP [name] positions engaged in ship type planning and oversight or equivalent duties. The position is credited at Level 5-3 (150 points).

Factor 6, Personal contacts and Factor 7, Purpose of contacts

Factor 6 includes face-to-face contacts and telephone and E-mail correspondence with persons not in the supervisory chain. The levels are based on what is required to make the initial contact, the difficulty in communicating with those contacted, and the setting in which the contacts take place, e.g., the degree to which the employee and those contacted recognize their relative roles and authorities. Factor 7 measures the purpose of the contacts that can range from strictly exchanges of factual information to resolving problems affecting the efficient operation of the office. The purpose of the contacts that serve as a basis for this factor must be the same as the contacts that are the basis for the level awarded for Factor 6.

Persons Contacted

In addition to the contacts typical of Levels 1 and 2, the appellants have regular and recurring contacts that meet, but do not exceed Level 3, the highest level described in the PCS. At this level, contacts are with individuals from outside the employing agency as well as with agency program heads. They normally take place on the telephone and in person in a moderately unstructured setting. They are significant to the production control effort, and are normally established on a nonroutine basis. Such contacts may include contractors or personnel from other Government agencies who may provide work projects, funding, support services, equipment, machinery, labor, and/or transportation. The appellants' contacts with contractors on significant production control issues result in the crediting of Level 3.

Purpose of Contacts

In addition to those at Level a, the appellants' contacts are for the purpose of planning, coordinating, or advising on production efforts, or to resolve production problems by influencing or motivating production or support personnel found at Level b, who are normally cooperative and have mutual production interests and goals. The appellants' contacts also meet some aspects of Level c, where the purpose is to influence, motivate, and persuade production shop

and department supervisory personnel and others in positions of decision making authority to follow a different course of action. These contacts often arise due to unexpected production material delays, or changes in production methods, procedures, requirements, and/or priorities. At Level c, the employee must overcome objections of skeptical or uncooperative personnel and may have to negotiate on significant and/or controversial issues to achieve compromise or an alternative solution. While the appellants routinely attempt to influence contractor personnel, e.g., suggesting improved technical approaches, issues of major contract significance entailing Level c persuasiveness are handled by the appellants' supervisor or other higher level SUPSHIP personnel. This precludes the crediting of Level c. The position is credited at Level 3b (110 points).

Factor 8, Physical demands

This factor covers the requirements and physical demands placed on the employee by the work assignment. It includes both the physical characteristics and abilities as well as the physical exertion involved in the work.

The appellants' work meets, but does not exceed, Level 8-2 (20 points), the highest level described in the PCS. As at Level 8-2, the appellants are frequently required to stand, walk, and climb in industrial facilities where it is necessary to bend, crouch, stoop, reach, and lift moderately heavy items. They are also be required to perform these and other functions in obstructed areas, e.g., in confining or potentially dangerous spaces in and around ships under overhaul or repair. The position is credited at Level 8-2 (20 points).

Factor 9, Work environment

This factor describes the physical surroundings in which the employee works and any special safety regulations or precautions that the employee must observe to avoid mishaps or discomfort.

The appellants' work meets, but does not exceed, Level 9-2 (20 points), the highest level described in the PCS. As at Level 9-2, the appellants work in an office part of the time, but production control duties necessitate regular visits to production areas. They involve moderate risks and discomfort and require safety precautions, e.g., working near operating machinery, moving vehicles, and cranes; down in dry docks; and/or on and around scaffolding. Visits take place in all weather conditions. The appellants may be exposed to strong odors or fumes from paint, fuels, or chemicals used in the work processes. Regular use of safety equipment is required, e.g., hard hats, safety glasses, ear plugs, steel toe safety shoes and other kinds of protective devices. The position is credited at Level 9-2 (20 points).

Summary

In summary, we have credited the position as follows:

| Factor | Level | Points |
|---------------------------------------|-------|-----------|
| 1. Knowledge required by the position | 1-7 | 1,250 |
| 2. Supervisory controls | 2-4 | 450 |
| 3. Guidelines | 3-3 | 275 |
| 4. Complexity | 4-4 | 225 |
| 5. Scope and effect | 5-3 | 150 |
| 6. Personal contacts and | {3 | |
| 7. Purpose of contacts | {b | 110 |
| 8. Physical demands | 8-2 | 20 |
| 9. Work environment | 9-2 | <u>20</u> |
| Total points: | | 2,500 |

A total of 2,500 points falls within the GS-11 grade level point range of 2,355-2,750 points on the Grade Conversion Table in the GS-1152 PCS.

Decision

The appealed basic position is classified properly as Production Controller (Ships), GS-1152-11.