

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

Appellant: [appellant's name]

Agency classification: Supply Technician
GS-2005-6

Organization: Acquisition Management Division
Supply Department
Naval [name] Station
[location]

OPM decision: Supply Technician
GS-2005-6

OPM decision number: C-2005-06-04

/s/

Robert D. Hendler
Classification Appeals Officer

2/8/01

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).

Decision sent to:

[appellant's name]
[appellant's address]

[name]
Personnel Director
Human Resource Division
Code [number]
[activity]
[component]
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Introduction

On November 14, 2000, the Philadelphia Oversight Division of the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) accepted a classification appeal from [appellant's name]. Her position is currently classified as Supply Technician, GS-2005-6. However, the appellant believes the classification should be Supply Systems Analyst, GS-2003, at a higher grade level. She works in the Acquisition Management Division, Supply Department, Naval [name] Station [(acronym)] [location]. We accepted and decided her appeal under section 5112 of title 5, United States Code (U.S.C.).

General issues

In her November 1, 2000, appeal letter, the appellant states that the duties she performs as the Material Handling Equipment (MHE) coordinator (Major Duty A) and portions of Major Duty C of her official position description (PD) were previously performed by higher graded employees. She has performed Major Duty A for over one year and Major Duty C for over five years. She believes that these duties warrant upgrading her position.

In its December 5, 2000, administrative report, the activity confirmed that the appellant is performing work previously assigned to higher graded positions. However, the report further indicates that these duties were not the grade controlling duties of the higher graded positions.

These statements raise procedural issues that must be addressed. By law, we must classify positions solely by comparing their current duties and responsibilities to OPM Position Classification Standards (PCS's) and guidelines (5 U.S.C. 5106, 5107, and 5112). Other methods or factors of evaluation are not authorized for use in determining the classification of a position, including comparison to the duties and responsibilities of other positions that may or may not be classified correctly. Many positions in the Government perform a variety of functions. However, not all of those functions are classifiable at the same grade level. For example, many technicians perform clerical duties part of the time. Those clerical duties are at a lower grade level than the technician work that controls the grade of the position.

In her December 18, 2000, letter the appellant disagreed with portions of the activity's administrative report. Our decision sets aside all previous agency decisions regarding the classification of the position in question. Information contained in the agency administrative report and persons knowledgeable of the appellant's work are relevant only insofar as they clarify the duties and responsibilities assigned to and performed by the appellant.

Position information

The appellant assigns MHE, i.e., forklifts and other minor equipment, to users and tracks equipment usage. Following U.S. Department of Labor, Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and Department of the Navy guidance, she determines the appropriate equipment to assign based on user requirements, location and type of operation. The appellant periodically visits work sites to assess equipment status, and collect usage and maintenance data. She maintains preventive maintenance and safety inspection schedules, and instructs equipment

users on completing operator checklists. She schedules equipment maintenance service at times that minimize the effect on workload and expedites requisitions for unscheduled repairs when needed.

The appellant provides administrative support for the Uniform Automated Data Processing System (UADPS) which is managed by the Naval Inventory Control Point (NAVICP), Mechanicsburg, PA. She serves as the contact point to that activity for all trouble calls and ensures that purchase orders flow properly through the system. The appellant reviews processing schedules, run sheets and related instructions to identify processing requirements. She investigates system malfunctions to identify the problem and arranges for repairs. The appellant maintains Data Processing Guides (DPG's) for UADPS and notifies users of changes. The appellant distributes periodic updates to supply instructions, manuals, directives and procedures to various departments. The appellant is the Terminal Area Security Officer for user access and passwords.

The appellant and her supervisor certified the accuracy of the PD of record (# [number]). To help decide this appeal, we conducted a telephone audit with the appellant and an interview with her immediate supervisor, [name], on January 22, 2001, and a follow-up audit with the appellant on February 1, 2001. In deciding this appeal, we fully considered the audit findings and all information of record furnished by the appellant and her agency. Our fact-finding confirmed that the PD of record contains the major duties and responsibilities performed by the appellant and we incorporate it by reference into this decision.

Series, title, and standard determination

The agency has placed the appellant's position in the Supply Clerical and Technician Series, GS-2005, for which there is a published PCS, and titled it Supply Technician. The appellant believes that her position is more appropriately classified in the Supply Program Management Series, GS-2003, and titled Supply Systems Analyst, and evaluated using the Grade-Evaluation Guide for Supply Positions.

The GS-2005 PCS provides guidance on distinguishing between GS-2005 work and two-grade interval supply specialist work, e.g., GS-2003. The Supply Program Management Series, GS-2003, includes positions dealing with the overall management of supply programs. Supply specialists must have a broad understanding of an interrelated chain of activities involving the process of supply, often extending from the conception or acquisition of a new item through storage, distribution, property utilization, consumption, or disposal. They plan and develop the supply system, programs, or services, and develop, adapt, or interpret operating methods or procedures. In contrast, supply technicians follow established methods and procedures that have been developed by supply specialists and management personnel. Supply specialists perform assignments requiring a deeper knowledge and understanding of programs and the needs and operations of the organization serviced. For example, they apply knowledge of present or proposed programs, program changes, work operations, work sequences and schedules, and apply knowledge of the technical characteristics or properties of supply items to plan and forecast inventory needs under changing technological or program requirements. In contrast,

supply technicians perform assignments requiring less extensive knowledge of programs, operations, or organizations serviced; and requiring a more limited knowledge of system characteristics or technical uses of items of supply or equipment. While some supply technicians perform some of the same work tasks as supply specialists, they do so based on practical experience and familiarity with supply operations, the supply mission of the organization, and supply regulations, policies, procedures, and directives.

The record shows that the appellant performs supply support work necessary to ensure the effective operation of supply activities typical of the GS-2005 series. Her duties require knowledge of supply operations and program requirements and the ability to apply established supply and safety policies, day-to-day servicing techniques, regulations, and procedures to support local supply activities. This does not equate to the in-depth knowledge required of supply specialists in order to plan and forecast inventory needs under changing technological or programmatic requirements. The appellant is not responsible for planning and developing the supply system, and does not apply the level of judgment based on the possession of analytical ability and a theoretical or conceptual understanding of supply principles and techniques required by supply specialists. Consequently, we find that the appellant's position does not require the extensive knowledge base and does not perform duties that would require the exercise of the level of judgment and analytical ability found in supply specialist positions.

Because the appellant is not performing two-grade interval supply management work, we may not use the Grade-Evaluation Guide for Supply Positions to evaluate her position. The appellant's position is properly allocated as Supply Technician, GS-2005, based on the grade determination analysis that follows.

Grade determination

The GS-2005 PCS 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. For a factor to warrant a given point value, it must be fully equivalent to the overall intent of the selected factor level description. If a position fails in any significant aspect to meet a particular level in the PCS, the next lower level and its lower point value must be assigned unless an equally important aspect that meets a higher level balances the deficiency.

The appellant agrees with her agency's evaluations of Factors 3, 6, 7, 8, and 9 and we concur. She disagrees with her agency's evaluation of Factors 1, 2, 4, and 5. Our evaluation of her position, therefore, focuses on Factors 1, 2, 4, and 5.

Factor 1, Knowledge required by the position

This factor measures the nature and extent of information or facts that the technician must understand to do acceptable work (e.g., steps, procedures, practices, rules, policies, regulations, and principles) and the nature and extent of the skills needed to apply those knowledges.

As at Level 1-3 (350 points), the appellant's work requires knowledge of standardized supply regulations, policies, procedures, or other instructions relating to the supply functions assigned. She must be able to use several automated databases and systems used for inventory tracking and supply acquisition information. Level 1-3 includes entering, correcting, and retrieving recurring reports, and structuring and retrieving specialized reports. Managing [acronym]'s MHE and related equipment requires knowledge of OSHA, NAVICP and [acronym] regulations, guidelines and instructions to determine proper and most efficient utilization of assigned equipment. She applies similar knowledge in providing maintenance support to tenant owned MHE equipment. Her UADPS work requires sufficient knowledge to identify system errors or problems, assist other users in resolving their transaction errors, and take corrective action.

In contrast, work at Level 1-4 (550 points) requires a thorough knowledge of governing supply regulations, policies, procedures, and instructions applicable to the specific assignment. Employees use this knowledge to conduct extensive and exhaustive searches for required information; reconstruct records for complex supply transactions; and/or provide supply operations support for activities involving specialized or unique supplies, equipment, and parts such as special purpose laboratory or test equipment, prototypes of technical equipment, parts and equipment requiring unusual degree of protection in shipment and storage, or others that are unique to the organization's mission and are seldom handled. The appellant does not deal with supply transactions with complications. She processes supply transactions for standard, commercially available MHE and related equipment. She assists other employees on automated system issues who are, in turn, responsible for the content of the supply transactions that they process. Because the appellant's duties and responsibilities do not require applying the more complex body of knowledge found at Level 1-4, the position is credited properly at Level 1-3 (350 points).

Factor 2, Supervisory Controls

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

The appellant's work meets, but does not exceed, Level 2-3 (275 points), the highest level described in the PCS. As at that level, she performs her work with considerable independence from supervision. Receiving general directions, she independently follows established supply policies, regulations, and instructions. As the UADPS contact point, she deals directly with the UADPS host site to resolve system problems. The supervisor does not control work flow on a day-to-day basis or review work for the specific methods used to accomplish results. Therefore, Level 2-3 (275 points) is credited.

Factor 4, Complexity

This factor covers the nature, number, variety, and intricacy of tasks, 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 work meets, but does not exceed Level 4-3 (150 points), the highest level described in the PCS. As at that level, she performs a variety of assignments or tasks involving UADPS support functions. Although available guidelines normally apply to the work and to the situations encountered by the appellant, problems periodically arise as a result of some gap in standard procedures or an unexpected deviation in the system. As the sole supply technician responsible for the UADPS function, the appellant operates with considerable independence in resolving a variety of problems. She relies on her experience and knowledge of precedent actions in many situations to determine the most probable cause of the problem and the potentially most expedient solution. She must maintain a high degree of flexibility in coordinating work and issues in light of changing situations relating to the UADPS system. She occasionally deals with equivalent MHE program issues. Therefore, Level 4-3 (150 points) is credited.

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.

As at Level 5-2 (75 points), the appellant's work involves executing specific rules, regulations and procedures that affects the accuracy, reliability, or acceptability of further processes or services in meeting customer requirements in supported organizations. Indicative of work at that level, she performs varied MHE assignment, maintenance, and repair tasks, including preparing MHE status reports and repair requisitions that affect activity operations. She also reviews daily processing schedules, run sheets and related instructions for completeness and accuracy of UADPS supply system entries, and resolves error and problem conditions occurring in computer equipment and program data and notifies system administrators of issues beyond her control. Her UADPS work affects meeting customer needs.

In contrast, work at Level 5-3 (150 points) involves dealing with a variety of problem situations either independently or as part of a broader problem solving effort under the control of a specialist. The problems encountered require extensive fact-finding, review of information to coordinate requirements, and recommendations to resolve conditions or change procedures. The employee performs the work in compliance with prescribed procedures and manuals. While the appellant's work involves a wide range of conditions that are not always covered by established or standardized procedures, the problems she encounters typically do not involve the extensive fact-finding, review of information, and coordination envisioned at Level 5-3. Problems of

Level 5-3 scope and impact are handled by her supervisor and positions at the UADPS host activity. Accordingly, the position is credited properly at Level 5-2 (75 points).

Summary

In summary, we have evaluated the appellant's position as follows:

Factor	Level	Points
1. Knowledge required by the position	1-3	350
2. Supervisory controls	2-3	275
3. Guidelines	3-3	275
4. Complexity	4-3	150
5. Scope and effect	5-2	75
6. Personal contacts <u>and</u>		
7. Purpose of contacts	3-b	110
8. Physical demands	8-1	5
9. Work environment	9-2	<u>20</u>
Total points:		1260

A total of 1260 points falls within the GS-6 grade level point range of 1105-1350 points on the Grade Conversion Table in the GS-2005 PCS.

Decision

The position is classified properly as Supply Technician, GS-2005-6.