

Department of the Interior
DEPARTMENTAL MANUAL

Personnel

Part 370 - DM Addition to FPM

Position Classification Under
Chapter 511 the Classification Act System

370 DM 511, 1.1

Subchapter 1. General Provisions

.1 Sources of Additional Information.

- A. 370 DM 230 for information on delegations of authority.
- B. 370 DM 311 for information concerning the power of appointment and removal.
- C. 370 DM 534 for information on positions assigned to the Agency for International Development (AID).

.2 Responsibility of the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Administration. The Office of the Assistant Secretary for Administration is responsible for the development and control of position classification throughout the Department. In carrying out this responsibility, the following classification activities are performed in the Office of Personnel Management. (See 370 DM 271 for role of the Office in the development of classification standards):

- A. Formulate Departmental policies and criteria which implement or clarify the applicability of laws, executive orders and Commission rules and regulations to Departmental position classification activities.
- B. Review the effectiveness of bureau classification activities. Suggest program improvements and direct compliance with legal and regulatory requirements where necessary.
- C. Make Departmental determinations on any position or group of positions about which there is a classification question and determine whether certain positions are subject to or exempt from the Classification Act. Cases which cannot be resolved by the Office of Personnel Management are submitted to the Commission for final decision.
- D. Provide advice on classification matters as requested.
- E. Evaluate the following categories of positions, and submit classification recommendations to the Commission or other appropriate authority:
 - (1) GS-16, 17 and 18 positions
 - (2) PL-313 positions

3/9/67 (Rel No. FPM 89)

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(3) Hearing Examiner positions

(4) Other positions for which the rate of pay is equal to that for GS-16 and above

F. Classify the following positions:

(1) Positions proposed for classification to GS-15 the incumbents of which report directly to the Bureau Director or the Deputy Bureau Director or their equivalents.

(2) Positions proposed for classification to GS-15 the incumbents of which report directly to an Assistant Bureau Director or equivalent. An Assistant Bureau Director is defined herein as an official who reports directly to the Bureau Director, the Deputy Director, or their equivalents.

(3) Chiefs of field installations and regional or area directors proposed for classification to GS-15.

(4) Schedule C positions proposed for classification to GS-15.

(5) Personnel officer positions at the bureau level or the equivalent. Proposed classification actions for assistant bureau personnel officer positions and regional, area or equivalent personnel officer positions require concurrence by the Office of Personnel Management.

(6) Positions assigned to Job Corps activities which deviate from the approved grading pattern must have the prior approval of the Office of Personnel Management.

(7) Positions proposed for GS-15 located in foreign countries, except those positions filled by foreign nationals hired overseas which do not meet any of the above criteria; and all positions GS-15 and above on projects of the AID covered by AID Special Project Agreements.

G. Review the duties proposed to be performed by consultants and experts.

.3 Responsibility of the Bureaus. Under criteria established by the Office of Personnel Management, each bureau shall administer an effective position classification program. Standards shall be prescribed and controls exercised to insure that the program conforms to the requirements of applicable statutes, regulations, standards, policies of the Department, approved organization plans, and budgetary limitations (See 370 DM 271 for role of the bureaus in the development of classification standards and

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300 DM 1 for the role of bureaus in the maintenance of an effective position management system).

A. Bureaus shall classify all positions except those classified by the Commission and by the Office of Personnel Management.

B. Bureaus shall recommend classification grades for positions to be classified finally by the Office of Personnel Management or the Commission. These positions shall have been approved organizationally prior to submission to the Office.

C. Bureaus shall initiate an annual administrative review by first-line supervisors and such cyclical audits by classifiers as may be necessary to administer an effective classification program on a current basis.

.4 Position Reclassification. Positions which have been classified by the Office of Personnel Management or the Commission shall not be classified finally by the bureau to a higher grade within one year after the Office or Commission action. Requests for consideration of such cases shall be forwarded by the bureaus to the Office for review. The Office shall take final action or shall refer the cases to the Commission for final classification.

A. A bureau may take final action within its delegated authority in reclassifying positions to a higher grade in the following cases:

(1) Where there has been a material change in duties and responsibilities of a position at any time subsequent to the Office or Commission classification, requiring a new position description.

(2) Where new classification standards have been issued which would affect the classification of the positions.

.5 Vice or Identical Additional Action. In the interest of keeping position descriptions current and accurate, vice or identical additional action should not be applied to any position more than two years old unless there is assurance that no change in duties and responsibilities has occurred. Vice action shall not be taken on a position which has been vacant for one year or more without a certification to the effect that the duties have not changed since the original classification.

.6 Effective Date of Non-Appeal Classification Action.

A. Certificate Issued by the Office of Personnel Management. The effective date of a classification decision made by means of a certificate

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issued by the Office of Personnel Management shall be fixed in accordance with the rule prescribed for Commission certificates in FPM 511.

B. Whitten Amendment Cases. An employee whose position is classified upward pursuant to the Classification Act, and who, although qualified to perform the duties and carry out the responsibilities of the position, is not eligible to be immediately promoted to the higher grade because of the service-in-grade requirement of the Whitten Amendment, may be regarded as remaining in status quo as on detail until he is eligible for the higher grade. (See 34 C.G. 179)

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Subchapter 2. Coverage of the Classification Act

.1 Authority to Determine Coverage

A. Bureaus are authorized within their delegated authority to determine whether a position is subject to or is excluded from the Classification Act in accordance with regulations and standards issued by the Commission. (See FPM Supplement 990-1) However, concurrence of the Commission is required to convert a position (with no material change in duties) from the Classification Act pay system to a pay system other than a wage board pay system and vice versa.

B. Whenever a bureau has reasonable doubt whether a position is exempt from the Classification Act, it shall refer the case to the Division of Personnel Management, Office of the Administrative Assistant Secretary, for review. The Division will determine if there is reasonable doubt and decide on the coverage or request a decision from the Commission.

C. Authority for deciding whether any given position, or class of position, is an attorney position is set forth in FPM 213.

.2 Positions Exempt from the Classification Act. Positions which are subject to the Interior General Schedule (IGS), the Interior Alaska Seasonal Schedule (IASS), or the Agency for International Development Schedule (AID); or whose wages are determined by wage board or similar administrative authority, or in accordance with the practices of the maritime industry, are treated under 370 DM 532 and 370 DM 534.



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Subchapter 3. Position Classification Standards

.1 Grade Changes Resulting from Revised Standards. Administrative action to place existing positions in proper classes and grades prescribed by revised standards published by the Commission and to pay the scheduled salaries of the grades is mandatory. This action is to be taken within a reasonable period of time after publication of such standards. (See 37 CG 492)

3/25/64 (FPM 18)



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Subchapter 4. Use of Position Descriptions and supporting documents
in Classification

.1 Position Descriptions. Position requiring classification approval in the Office of Personnel Management, shall be described on Optional Form 8. Positions within bureau classifying authority may be described on Optional Form 8, or such other form that has been approved by the Office of Personnel Management. It is mandatory that position descriptions be prepared in a manner which will meet the Commission's standard of adequacy described in FPM 511. The Department endorses the objective of holding classification paperwork to a minimum and imposes no additional standards of adequacy. Bureaus are urged not to impose additional standards of adequacy unless they are needed in the establishment or maintenance of a sound classification program. Item 14 on Optional Form 8 shall be signed in the bureaus for positions to be classified by the Commission, and item 15 shall be reserved for signature in the Office of Personnel Management. Positions subject to classification by the Office of Personnel Management shall be signed in item 15 in the bureaus.

A. Master Position Descriptions. Bureaus are urged to use master descriptions to describe positions having similar duties and responsibilities operating under the same level of authority and under like working conditions.

B. Number of Copies of Position Descriptions Required. The original and one copy are necessary for positions classified by the Office of Personnel Management. Two additional copies are required for positions recommended for Schedule C. Authenticated copies of position descriptions returned to the bureaus shall be retained in the official position description file. For post audit and record purposes, one copy of all position descriptions classified by the bureaus to grades GS-14 and above, shall be submitted to the Office of Personnel Management.

C. Position Description Amendment Form I-625. Use of this form to record position changes is normally limited to not more than two amendments to the basic position description. The original of the Amendment Form shall be retained with the basic classification document and distribution of the copies shall be the same as that for the basic position description.

4/23/68 (FPM 108)

.2 Evaluation Reports. The purpose of the evaluation reports is to briefly and logically set forth the reasons why the position under consideration should be classified to the series and grade level proposed. To do this, evaluation reports will contain the following information.

A. The series, grade and title proposed for the position.

B. The name of the incumbent. If the position is vacant, so identify it.

C. Background information pertinent to the classification of the position. This information should include facts such as: the source of the duties (i.e., new programs, reorganization, reassignment from other positions), reasons for establishing the position, particular qualifications of the incumbent and the impact on the grade levels of other positions if the proposed classification is approved.

D. Basis for the proposed classification series. This portion of the evaluation report will provide the reasons for recommending the series classification for the position. The primary reference will be to pertinent Civil Service Commission position classification standards. Other factors such as career patterns or comparisons with other properly classified positions may be used to confirm the conclusion reached through reference to the standards or to resolve borderline situations.

E. Basis for the proposed grade. This portion of the evaluation report will supply the reasons for the grade level recommended. As in the case of series determination, primary reliance will be placed on appropriate position classification standards. Comparisons with other properly classified positions will be used to confirm the conclusions reached through reference to the standards or to resolve borderline situations. The analysis should be brief and to the point. This can be done by focusing the analysis on those duties which the standards distinguish as grade controlling. Long excerpts from the standards or lengthy comparisons of the positions having similar duties are unnecessary.

.3 Position Charts. The purpose of the position chart is to show, graphically, the relationships between the position proposed for classification by the Office of Personnel Management and other related positions in the immediate or closely associated organization. The charts will show the established positions by title, series and grade. The number of authorized positions classified to each series and grade should also be shown on the chart. Names of the incumbents are not necessary. Charts may be typed or drawn in freehand with pen and ink or pencil. Accuracy and legibility are the only criteria for acceptability.

.4 Bureaus will submit one copy of an evaluation report and one copy of a position chart along with the required number of copies of position descriptions for classification by the Office of Personnel Management.



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Subchapter 5. Assignment of Positions to Classes and Grades

.1 Control of Positions in Grades GS-16, GS-17 and GS-18. Requirements for the control of GS-16, GS-17 and GS-18 positions are set forth in FPM 312 and 370 DM 312.

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370 DM 511,6.1

Subchapter 6. Appeals

6.1 Establishment of Bureau Appeal Procedures. Each bureau will establish a procedural system for the adjudication of employees' classification appeals. The appeal procedures should be in writing and readily available to all employees. In order to afford an opportunity for corrective action within the bureau, if warranted, internal procedures should provide for an employee's submission of an appeal to an administrative level above the level at which the position was originally allocated (unless administratively impossible, e.g., if the position is allocated at bureau headquarters or if the headquarters office was involved in an advisory capacity to a field classification office regarding the decision being appealed). Internal decision levels and jurisdictions should be clearly defined in the bureau's written procedures.

6.2 Notification of Employee Appeal Rights. Generally, an employee may appeal the classification of his or her current position at any time. However, when a bureau makes a classification decision which changes a position to a lower grade or rate of basic pay, the affected employee must be promptly notified in writing of the decision and right of appeal, as well as the date upon which the action is to take effect, which must be no longer than four (4) pay periods from the date of the classification decision. The written notice must make it clear that the employee may file only one appeal within the Department, i.e., at bureau level, when the position was not allocated at bureau headquarters or Departmental level, and subsequently to the Office of Personnel Management (OPM). This provision includes reclassification actions when the employee is entitled to retained grade and pay under the provisions of 370 DM 536.

The notice must also inform the employee of: the option of filing an appeal directly with OPM; time limits in which the right to retroactive adjustments may be established or preserved if warranted (see FPM Letter 511-9, 6-8c); and any other appeal channels that may be available, e.g., an employee who is not entitled to retained grade or pay under the provisions of 370 DM 536 may appeal a downgrading or loss of pay under the provision of 370 DM 752, Adverse Actions.

6.3 What May Be Appealed.

A. Employee Appeal.

(1) A General Schedule (GS) employee may appeal to the bureau, Department or OPM for a determination on: the correct series or grade of the official position; or whether the position is appropriately included in or excluded from the General Schedule.

(2) Employee job grading appeals for reclassification within the Federal Wage System are processed in accordance with the procedures set forth in FPM Supplement 532-1, Subchapter S-7 and 370 DM 532-1, S-7 on Job-Grading Appeal Procedures for Federal Wage System Employees.

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B. Agency Appeal. The Secretary, an Assistant Secretary, a Bureau Director, or an authorized management official may appeal (to OPM) the classification of a position whose classification has been certified by OPM under 5 U.S.C. 5103 or 5110. Agency appeals should be filed with the OPM Classification Appeals Office within 45 calendar days of the date of the certificate.

6.4 Employee Representatives.

A. Selection. An employee may choose anyone as a personal representative in a classification appeal except a supervisor (line or staff) or an official who has classification authority over the position. The deciding official must be notified in writing of the selection of a representative.

B. Duties. A representative's duties will consist of providing information significant to the classification of the appealed position, as needed or requested by the deciding officials, and relaying their instructions to the appellant. A representative may not, however, be present during any fact-finding session, i.e., onsite audit or supervisory interview.

6.5 Classification Appeal Options.

A. Filing Options.

(1) An employee may file an appeal with the bureau under bureau procedures, or directly with the Department. When an employee receives an appeal decision from either the bureau or Department, the right of appeal within Interior is exhausted. If dissatisfied with the bureau or Departmental decision, the employee may file a subsequent appeal to OPM. This option affords the maximum number of reviews.

(2) An employee may file an appeal with OPM through either the bureau or the Department. The administrative level to which the employee appeals has 60 calendar days in which to provide the employee with a written appellate decision. If the decision is favorable and the bureau or Department has the authority to classify the position, the necessary personnel action may be taken and the appeal closed. If the decision is unfavorable, the bureau or Department must forward the appeal along with the written decision to OPM for adjudication.

(3) An employee may file an appeal directly with the appropriate Regional Office of OPM, as listed in FPM 511, Appendix B. If the employee appeals directly to OPM, he/she may not later appeal to the bureau or the Department since OPM decisions are final.

B. Employee Appeal of OPM Certificate. In accordance with FPM 511-6.7b, an employee may appeal a nonappellate decision made by an OPM Regional Office, which has been certified to the agency (e.g., via PME review), by submitting the appeal to the OPM Classification Appeals Office.

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C. Department or Bureau Option. An employee's appeal, though addressed to the bureau or Department, may be forwarded by the concerned administrative level to the appropriate OPM Regional Office without issuing a final decision. If this option is elected, the appeal must be forwarded to OPM within 30 calendar days of its receipt. The bureau or Department will notify the employee, in writing, of its intended OPM submission action, and will obtain the employee's concurrence. If the employee does not concur with the action, the bureau or Department will cancel the appeal.

6.6 Mandatory Referrals. Employee appeals must be forwarded to OPM within 60 calendar days of receipt when: the appeal was addressed to OPM through the bureau or Department and the decision is unfavorable to the employee; or the bureau or Department is not authorized to act on the request, e.g., when the classification of the position has been certified by OPM.

6.7 Retroactivity Provisions.

A. Classification Error. A bureau, Department or OPM appeal decision may be implemented retroactively if it reverses an original classification decision which changed the appealed position to a lower grade or resulted in a loss of pay. The appeal decision must find that the original classification decision which resulted in the downgrading or pay loss was based on classification error.

B. Timely Filing. Under the above circumstances, the employee is eligible for retroactive benefits if a timely appeal is filed at bureau/Department level or with OPM, i.e., no later than 15 days after the effective date of the official personnel action. If the employee appealed initially to the bureau or Department and has received a decision with which he/she disagrees, a subsequent appeal with OPM must be filed no later than 15 calendar days after the bureau/Departmental decision is received. OPM may extend this time limit under certain circumstances specified in FPM 511, Subchapter 6-8d.

C. Applicability. Only in the cases of employees who are ineligible for retained grade and pay will retroactivity result in recomputation of lost compensation. Employees entitled to retained grade and pay generally would not be eligible for retroactive compensation, however, personnel records would be recreated to reflect retroactivity.

6.8 Cancellation of Appeals. The Department will cancel an appeal when requested by the employee in writing, or when it is learned that the employee is no longer officially assigned to the appealed position. An appeal will not be cancelled if: the employee is no longer assigned to the appealed position, but there is the possibility of retroactive benefits because of reasons covered by the above, or the appellant is on detail or temporarily promoted to another position (unless cancellation is specifically requested by the appellant).

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370 DM 511,6.9

6.9 Reconsideration of a Departmental Decision. The Department's Office of Personnel (PPM) will reopen and reconsider an appeal decision only if information is presented, in writing, which establishes a reasonable doubt as to the technical accuracy of the decision.

6.10 Content and Filing of Appeals.

A. Letter of Appeal. Employee appeals must be in writing and, whenever possible, the employee and supervisor should agree on the duties, responsibilities, and knowledges and skills outlined in the official position description. If possible, disagreements over duties and responsibilities should be resolved at bureau level before the appeal is filed. Whether submitted to the Department or OPM, the employee's letter of appeal should include:

- (1) The employee's name, mailing address, and office telephone number;
- (2) Employing department or bureau, and the location of the official headquarters;
- (3) Exact location of the employee's position within the Department (Bureau, Division, Branch, etc.);
- (4) Employee's current title, series, and grade;
- (5) Requested title, series, grade or other classification action desired;
- (6) A copy of the official position description, along with a signed statement that the employee agrees with the official description. If agreement has not been reached that the position description is accurate, the employee may provide a description of work actually performed.
- (7) Reasons why the employee believes the position is erroneously classified, referring to standards which support that point of view;
- (8) Name, address, and business telephone number of the representative, if one has been selected.

B. Filing.

(1) Appeals to the Department should be addressed to Director, Office of Personnel, Department of the Interior, 18th and C Streets, N.W., Room 5230, Washington, D.C. 20240.

(2) Appeals to the Office of Personnel Management should be addressed to the appropriate Regional Director. Addresses and areas of jurisdiction are listed in FPM 511, Appendix B.

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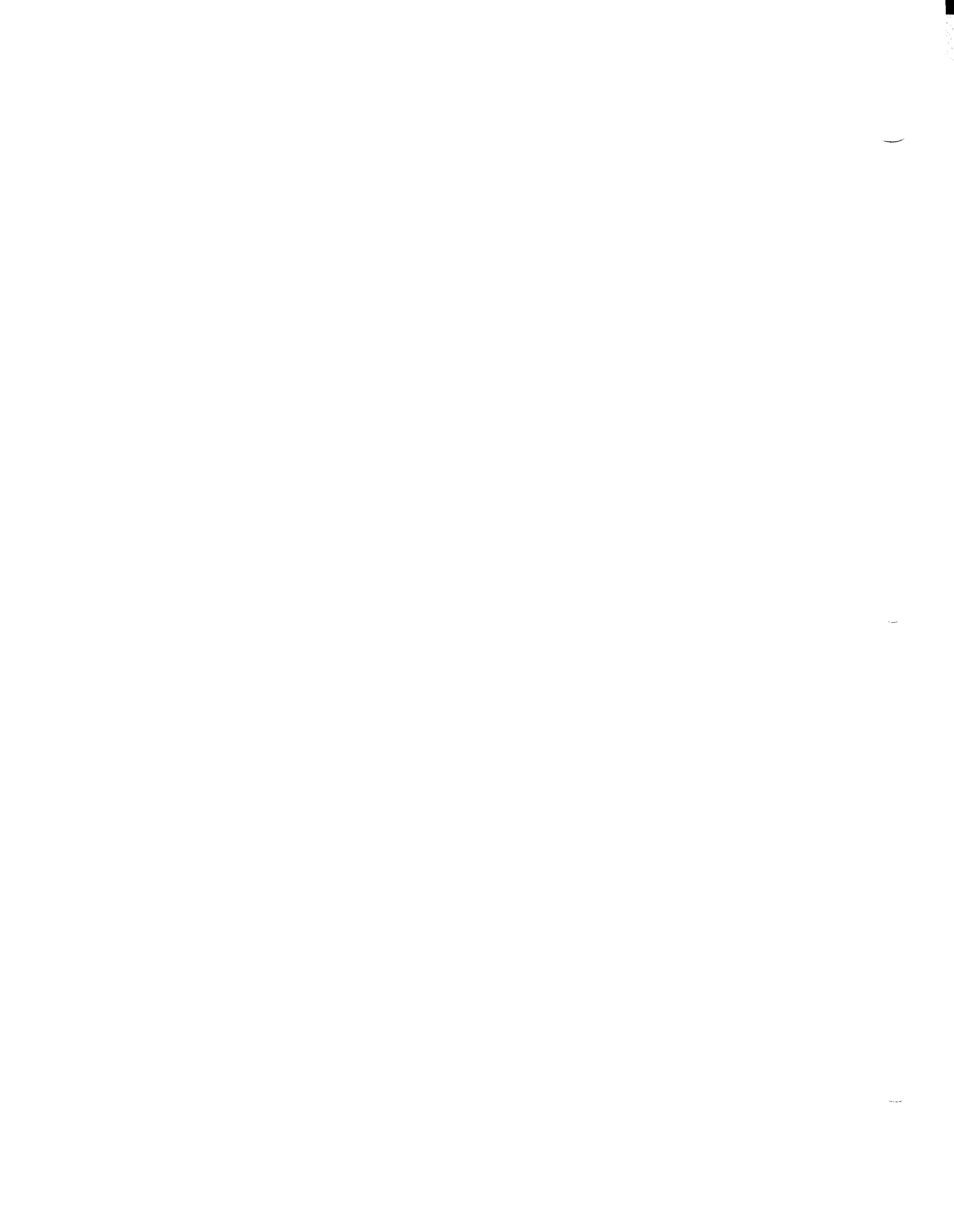
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6.11 Appeal Decision. A Departmental or bureau appeal decision will be provided directly to the appellant, in writing, with a copy to the representative if one has been selected. Bureaus will also insure that the Department (PPM) receives copies of significant appeal decisions rendered at bureau level or which are received from OPM.



EVALUATION REPORT

Recommended Classification: Marketing Specialist, GS-1101-14

Incumbent: (Name of incumbent or vacancy)

Background: The duties and responsibilities of this position are a direct outgrowth of the competence, skills and abilities of the incumbent. Mr. _____ has been assigned the additional responsibilities for the national marketing program in line with his ability to meet with and gain the cooperation of industry, consumers and representatives of public information media. As a result of his ability, Mr. _____'s responsibilities have been broadened from a regional to a national program over the past few years. In effect, this position is a result of "the impact of the man on the job". Accordingly, any changes in incumbency should require a reaudit of the job.

Determination of Series: There are no specialized standards published which cover the kind and variety of duties assigned to this position. The general nature of the position, however, require primary knowledge of business and trade practices, contacts with industry and skills in marketing. Since these characteristics are within the purview of the GS-1100-0 Business and Industry Occupational group, the position is classified to the GS-1101-0 General Business and Industry Series, rather than to the GS-301-0 General Administrative and Clerical Series. The GS-1101-0 allocation also aligns and is consistent with the other similar positions in this Bureau. Specifically, position no. _____, (title), GS-1101-14 in (organization) and position no. _____, GS-1101-14 in (organization).

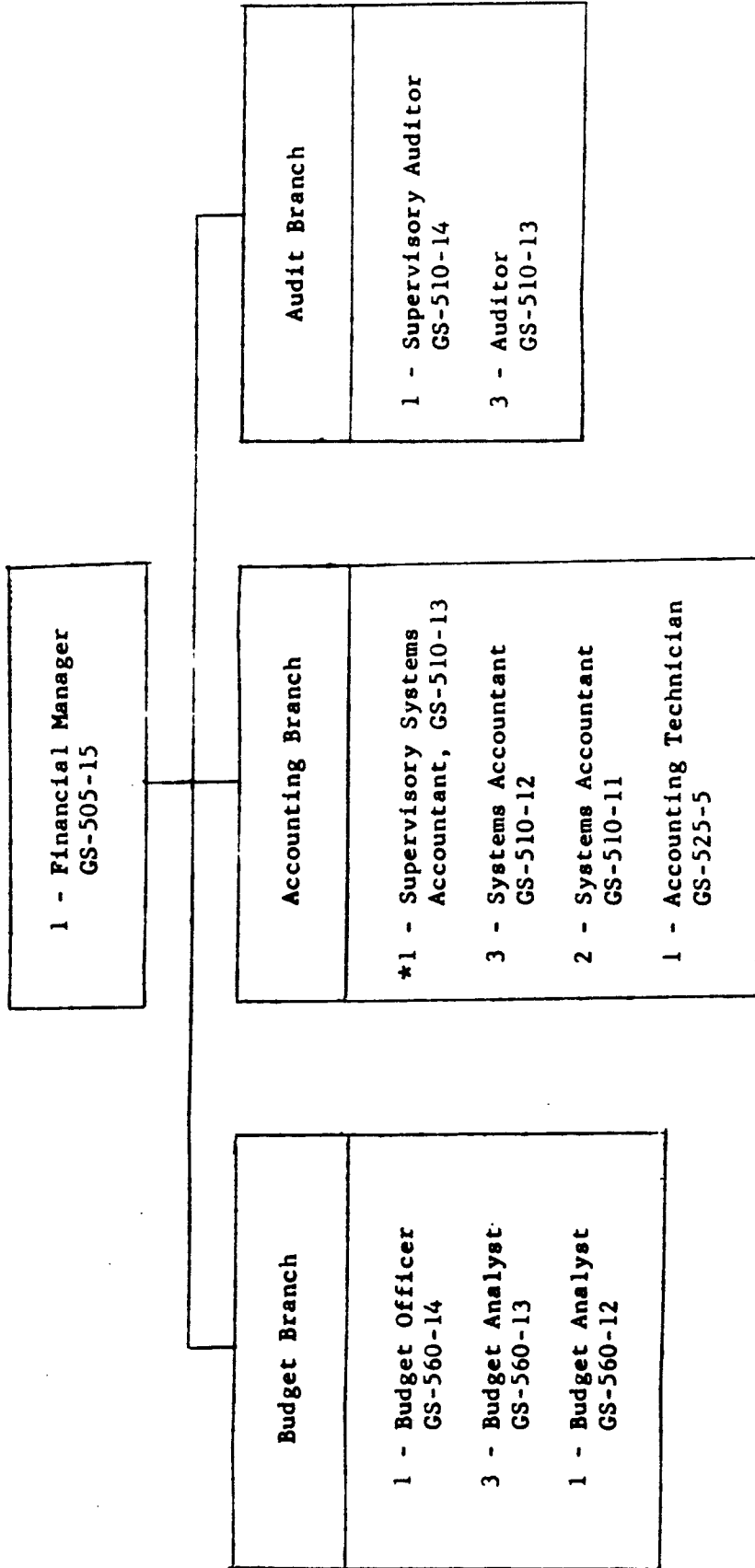
Determination of Grade: In the absence of published standards directly applicable to this position, the GS-1081-0 Public Information Series has been used to determine the proper grade level. This Series is chosen because the public information - contact work is the most important single aspect of the position covered by published standards.

Reviewing the essential grade determining factors in this Series, the position is most nearly characteristic of the GS-14 level because:

- The incumbent is concerned with a national program to inform and educate large segments of the public (i.e., housewives, wholesalers and retailers) about a major function of the Bureau (i.e., the marketing of _____ products).



Division of Financial Management



*Classification proposed: Supervisory Systems Accountant, GS-510-14

