



## United States Office of Personnel Management

**Office of Merit Systems Oversight and Effectiveness**  
*Digest of Significant Classification Decisions and Opinions*  
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**Standard:** [Job Grading Standard for Inspectors](#)  
**Factor:** N/A  
**Issue:** Coverage of the Standard

### **Identification of the Classification Issue**

This issue arose in an OPM oversight division's adjudication of a group appeal. The appellants occupied Videotape Inspector, 3901, jobs at an activity providing film and videotape storage, distribution, and related support services. The major functions of the job were (1) maintaining the electronic and related equipment in the activity, including repair and overhaul; (2) dubbing tapes and films from masters provided by external organizations; and, (3) inspecting videotapes and films provided by external organizations against established industry standards. Inspection was for the purpose of accepting or rejecting the final product. The tapes and films inspected included master tapes subsequently used by the appellants for dubbing as well as production run tapes dubbed by contractors.

The appellants believed that their job was covered by the General Schedule and was classified properly to the Quality Assurance Series, GS-1910, based on their inspection work. They opined that their inspection was of the film content, i.e., the quality of audio and visual effects and, therefore, reflected the analytical functions found in the GS-1910 series.

### **Resolution**

The oversight division found that the primary and paramount skill for performing the work was allocated properly to the Federal Wage System (FWS). The skills and knowledges recruited for by the organization in filling the job were covered by the Electronics Mechanic, 2604, occupation. Employees in 2604 jobs in the host activity served as the recruitment source. All the

appellants had received training in their inspection functions subsequent to their selection for their jobs.

The division found that the inspection work performed was not FWS in nature. The FWS Job Grading Standard (JGS) for Inspectors is used to grade jobs that involve examining the services, materials, and products of trade or craft workers to determine that the physical and operating characteristics are within acceptable standards, specifications, or contractual requirements. Inherent in such inspection work is the exercise of paramount trade, craft, or laboring skills and knowledge in order to perform the inspection process. The JGS for Inspectors provides a means to establish an appropriate pay relationship between the trade, craft, or laboring work performed and the difficulty and responsibility of the inspection function. The intent of the JGS, as reflected in Part II, Examples of Job Descriptions, is to measure the demands of inspection as they relate to correcting actual trades and crafts work processes that do not meet the standards of the trade or craft.

The appellants' work did not require skill and knowledge of videotape and film production, i.e., the skills and knowledges used to record, edit, and otherwise manipulate sound and visual images. Tape and film inspection was limited to performing processes similar to exclusion #4 in the JGS, i.e., inspection limited to the acceptability of the product for contractual requirements not requiring the exercise of trade, craft, or laboring skills as the paramount requirements. The work also did not entail the application of quality assurance principles and techniques; it was product inspection work specifically excluded from the GS-1910 series.

Because the inspection work was not FWS in nature, it could not be considered in the classification of the job based on the principle that only work in the controlling pay category can be considered in the evaluation of a job. The oversight division found that the tape dubbing work performed did not exceed the Grade 7 level by application of the Offset Photographer, 4414, JGS. The electronics mechanic work performed did not fully meet the Grade 11 level in the 2604 JGS. It consisted of servicing limited portions of a "television studio" and, thus, was evaluated properly at the Grade 10 level. An advisory opinion from the Classification Programs Division concurred with this analysis. OPM concluded the job was graded properly as Electronics Mechanic, 2604-10.