



# United States Office of Personnel Management

**Office of Merit Systems Oversight and Effectiveness**  
*Digest of Significant Classification Decisions and Opinions*  
April 2002  
Article No. 28-08

**Standards:** [Introduction to the Electronic Equipment and Maintenance Family 2600](#)  
[Administrative Work in the Information Technology Group, GS-2200](#) (May 2001)

**Factor:** N/A

**Issue:** Distinguishing between Federal Wage System (FWS) and General Schedule (GS) Positions

## **Identification of the Classification Issue**

The appellant's job was classified as Electronics Mechanic, WG-2604-11. He believed that his position was covered by the Information Technology (IT) Management Series, GS-2210, and should be evaluated using the Job Family Standard (JFS) for Administrative Work in the IT Group, GS-2200.

## **Resolution**

The appellant supported networking hardware that used proprietary Internet operating systems (IOS's) and operating systems (OS's) that used different languages and command line interfaces (CLI's). He said that he used CLI's to analyze, diagnose, test, configure, and verify IOS/OS functionality and claimed that he analyzed and configured networking systems into local area networks (LAN's). He simulated operations, verifying that interfaces functioned and that the IOS could support any other interface that might be added. He claimed that he used GS-2210 skills to gain entrance to system software to perform his work and to restore root privileges.

The appellant's rationale relied on extracts from the definitions of network services and systems administration of IT Management, GS-2210, work in the JFS for Administrative Work in the IT

Group, GS-2200. OPM found that GS-2210 network analysis, definition, and configuration involves making decisions on such matters as what networks will be fielded and supported, including the hardware to purchase and the system software used to operate the hardware, as well as determining if networks are achieving their performance objectives. It does not cover the appellant's connecting and testing hardware to assure that components communicate with one another, loading the correct version of operating software, and downloading and installing the most recent commercial off-the-shelf software release from the Web.

OPM found that the appellant's primary and paramount duties flowed from the mission and function of the organization in which he worked. Those duties entailed the fielding, upgrading, integration, and repair of computer and peripheral equipment in a depot level repair production environment. The work required trade knowledge of electronics principles and practices in determining whether computer and peripheral equipment operating problems are hardware and/or software based and required trades skill and knowledge to make repairs, including replacing drives and other components. OPM sustained the agency's allocation to the FWS.

### **“Back to the Basics”**

FWS 2600 Family mechanics and GS employees may possess and use similar knowledge to some degree. However, the distinction lies in the manner in which knowledge is applied. Work in the 2600 Family requires the ability to understand and use IT equipment and software to test and troubleshoot equipment that is increasingly IT-based, including knowledge of proprietary software to install LAN's. Other 2600 Family positions use this knowledge to initially upload systems and upload changes to equipment operations software, including weapons and comparable systems. They also use well documented and defined programming routines to set and adjust equipment operating parameters. However, the overall nature and purpose of the work is to install, maintain and repair equipment which is excluded from the General Schedule.

**Link to [C-2604-00-01](#)**