

Position Classification Standard for Motor Carrier Safety Series, GS-2123

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SERIES DEFINITION

This series includes positions the duties of which are to administer, supervise, or perform work involved in promoting or enforcing compliance with Federal laws, standards, and regulations related to the safe operation of commercial motor vehicles on the public highways. Included are positions concerned with promoting safe operating practices and enforcing compliance by shippers of hazardous materials; motor carrier accident investigation and prevention; developing regulations and standards; and providing technical assistance to the industry and other jurisdictions involved in motor carrier safety. The work requires: (1) comprehensive knowledge of the laws, standards, and regulations governing motor carrier safety; (2) knowledge of the safety principles and practices applicable to the motor carrier industry; (3) practical knowledge of the competitive and operating practices, policies, organization, equipment, facilities, and recordkeeping systems of motor carriers; and (4) knowledge of investigative techniques used in compliance enforcement and accident investigation.

This classification standard has been developed for positions in the Department of Transportation. Positions in other agencies may not be placed in this series without the approval of the Office of Personnel Management. The standard may be used, however, for making cross-series comparisons guided by sound position-classification judgment.

SERIES COVERAGE

Most of these positions were formerly classified in the Highway Safety Management Series, GS-2125, which has been redefined and superseded by the [Highway Safety Series, GS-2125](#).

Positions in the Motor Carrier Safety Series are concerned with promoting and/or enforcing compliance by motor carriers, and shippers of hazardous materials, with Federal laws, standards, and regulations related to safe operation of motor vehicles engaged in interstate or foreign commerce on the public highways. Most positions involve such tasks as:

- conducting compliance surveys and inspections of carriers' operating practices, records, and equipment for evidence of safety problems or violations of regulations;
- investigating and documenting reports or allegations of unsafe and illegal carrier activity;
- educating company officials and their employees on the intent and applicability of the regulations and on techniques and methods for improving safety and maintaining compliance;
- investigating accidents and hazardous materials incidents involving motor carriers;
- providing technical assistance to others involved in motor carrier and highway safety; and/or

- performing other related technical or administrative work requiring knowledge of government regulation of the industry, knowledge of the principles, techniques, and content of the motor carrier safety program, and knowledge of the problems and operating practices of motor carriers.

The series includes those few staff positions involved in program development or regulation development or promulgation because they tend to require much the same industry knowledge and the same analytical skills. However, this standard does not directly address these positions in either the factor level descriptions or the Office of Personnel Management benchmark descriptions.

EXCLUSIONS

Excluded from this series are:

1. Positions which primarily involve developing and administering programs to elicit and promote public support for highway safety; performing analytical studies to identify highway safety problems and evaluate the effectiveness of highway safety programs and methods; or that primarily involve providing State and local jurisdictions with technical assistance in planning, developing, monitoring, funding, managing, promoting, or evaluating specific programs and systems to improve vehicle, passenger, or pedestrian safety and to identify, control, or eliminate the factors that influence highway accidents. Except when the paramount duties and qualifications requirements of the job require a professional background in engineering, law, psychology, or other science, such positions are classified in the [Highway Safety Series, GS-2125](#).
2. Positions which primarily involve accident investigation, analysis, and reconstruction duties relating to major highway and grade crossing accidents involving any and all types of highway motor vehicles. Except where full professional qualifications in engineering, psychology, or other science is required, these positions are classified in the [Transportation Specialist Series, GS-2101](#).
3. Positions which require application of the principles, methods, and techniques of professional engineering to: (a) eliminate, prevent, and control occupational safety hazards; (b) identify and resolve highway safety problems; or (c) investigate and analyze highway accidents. Such positions are classified in the [Safety Engineering Series, GS-0803](#).
4. Positions primarily involving technical and management work concerned with occupational safety programs, regulations, or standards; or primarily involving the elimination or control of the physical conditions, operating practices, and other factors at the motor carrier terminal which may result in injury to persons or damage to property; and which require the application of a knowledge of the principles, standards, and techniques of safety and pertinent aspects of psychological, physiological, engineering, and other scientific and technological factors affecting safety. Such positions are classified in the [Safety Management Series, GS-0018](#).

5. Positions which involve support work in accident prevention (e.g., inspecting safety conditions, investigating and compiling data on worksite accidents, and providing information on safety standards and techniques) requiring a practical knowledge of work processes and equipment, environmental conditions, and established occupational safety standards, protective devices, and accident prevention measures. Such positions are classified in the [Safety Technician Series, GS-0019](#).
6. Positions which involve the performance of clerical or technical support functions where the work primarily requires the ability to apply established instructions, rules, regulations, and procedures related to the motor carrier safety program. Such positions are classified in the [Transportation Clerk and Assistant Series, GS-2102](#).

OCCUPATIONAL INFORMATION

The principal characteristic of positions classified in this series is inspection, investigative, promotional, and educational work directed toward regulatory compliance to correct a wide variety of unsafe, illegal, and potentially hazardous conditions and activities associated with the commercial operation of motor vehicles and the highway transportation of hazardous materials. This work, which is akin to Federal economic regulation of the motor carrier industry, attempts to diminish the injury, death, and property damage caused by motor vehicle accidents involving motor carriers, and to provide a safer driving environment for the motoring public. It accomplishes these goals by promoting good safety practices in compliance with applicable Federal regulations by commercial motor carriers of cargo and passengers who operate in interstate and foreign commerce.

The industry addressed by this regulatory effort is a sprawling, complex, highly diversified segment of the nation's transportation system. Subject to all or parts of the Federal motor carrier safety or hazardous materials regulations are over 150,000 carriers of record involved in interstate or foreign commerce. These carriers operate, under a wide variety of contract arrangements and authorities, over 3 million medium and heavy commercial vehicles hauling everything from general freight to foodstuffs or people, and employ approximately 5 million full- or part-time drivers. Carriers include common, private, and contract carriers, and range in size from owner-operator businesses to international or multi-million dollar corporations employing thousands of vehicles and drivers. Included are shippers of hazardous materials (e.g., chemicals, paints, fuels, fertilizers, poisons, explosives, radioactive materials), and manufacturers of containers for use in transporting such materials.

Given the size and diffusion of the industry, the free flow of commerce, and the practical impossibility of closely supervising the vast number of carriers, vehicles, drivers, and roadway miles involved, the success of the regulatory effort rests heavily on securing the voluntary compliance of motor carrier operators and their employees.

Functional Areas of Work

Most positions in this series perform a wide range of duties in achieving their primary objectives (i.e., those above the trainee levels) of personally promoting and enforcing the Federal motor carrier safety program in a defined geographic area.¹ Such an area would include a number of counties or other subdivisions of a State. (The size and other characteristics of territorial assignments are discussed in greater detail below.) Typically, these positions function in one-and two-person field offices situated near places where motor carrier terminals are concentrated. Some of these positions combine compliance enforcement responsibility for a territory with responsibility for overall administration and coordination of program activities in an entire State. Such duties may involve some supervision of one or more employees, each of whom may have responsibility for promoting the program in a territory.

There are other field positions, typically located in the agency's regional offices, which do not entail responsibility for a territory as such, but do involve performing many of the same kinds of enforcement and safety promotion activities as needed anywhere in the region. This broader role (i.e., for a multi-state area) is usually focused on a particular area of program specialization, such as regulation of hazardous materials or accident investigation and prevention, and includes region wide program management, development, and evaluation responsibility for the area of specialization. The assignment may involve such things as directing or coordinating the day-to-day administration of the specialized program area by the employees scattered throughout the region, and monitoring all work related to that area to insure uniformity of interpretation and enforcement and to identify problem areas. The assignment may involve developing guidance material to keep the region's employees, and others with an interest, aware of technical developments and changes in regulations, policies, or program emphasis. The work generally involves providing special expertise concerning interpretation of the regulations or program requirements, and resolution of unusual or particularly difficult and time-consuming safety or compliance problems.

Still other positions in this series are concerned primarily with researching and drafting regulations and advisory materials for use by the industry and/or by field personnel. Among other things, such work involves analyzing and answering comments submitted in response to proposed rulemaking actions, or conducting special studies to identify and research regulatory problem areas. These positions, as those described in the paragraph above, tend to be "specialist" as opposed to "generalist" because of the broader scope of responsibilities and/or the lesser emphasis on inspection and investigative work.

The following discussion and the factor level descriptions and benchmark descriptions provided later in the standard will primarily reflect the work of the positions in the field which constitute the major portion of the occupation.

¹ Positions primarily involved in motor carrier safety compliance and enforcement functions are classified in the Motor Carrier Safety Series, GS-2123. However, positions primarily involved in promoting, developing, and administering highway safety programs dealing with motor carriers in State and local jurisdictions are classified in the [Highway Safety Series, GS-2125](#).

Nature of Territorial Assignments

While each geographic area is unique in the particular mix of carriers and shippers that are domiciled there, territorial assignments tend to be structured in such a way as to be roughly comparable to one another in terms of the number and variety of companies and problems with which the position might deal. Physical size of a territory depends largely on geography, traffic volume, and carrier concentrations and distributions. A territorial assignment may encompass an entire State. More typically, an assignment encompasses part of a State or portions of several States, and includes one or more metropolitan areas. It is home to 1000-1500 motor carriers, most of which are small or medium sized companies employing less than 100 drivers. The area also domiciles a number of shippers of hazardous commodities and large to very large companies employing more than 100 to several thousand drivers and vehicles.

A similar set of duties is carried out in each territory with individual employees allocating time and resources according to local needs and program priorities. These needs change, necessitating frequent reordering of competing priorities as new problems are identified. The distinction between one assignment and another is not so much based on differences in the composition of the areas' carrier populations, but rather is based on the extent to which the individual employees attempt to resolve the full range of problems to be found, and on the degree to which they exercise independent responsibility for planning and carrying out the work. For example, less experienced employees work an assigned territory under the general supervision of a more senior employee, and may be somewhat restricted in initiating or pursuing particular types of activity where problems are likely to be encountered. Experienced employees would not operate under those same restraints and would have much more leeway in initiating enforcement investigations or indepth accident investigations.

Work Activity

In any territory, there is a constant turnover in the carrier population, as some companies are formed and others go out of business.

Of necessity, the work activity concentrates on those motor carriers with a history of noncompliance or those who never have been surveyed or the subject of complaints or accident and hazardous materials incident reports. The principal areas of regulation for which minimum standards are set and enforced, and around which work activities center, are:

- qualifications of drivers;
- driving of motor vehicles;
- parts and accessories necessary for safe operation;
- notification, reporting, and recording of accidents and incidents involving hazardous materials;
- hours of service of drivers;
- vehicle inspection and maintenance; and
- transportation and shipment of hazardous materials.

An area work program is developed within the general constraints of program resource limitations, regional and national program priorities and emphasis, and local problems and population characteristics. It typically includes a mix of the following types of activities:

1. **Safety Review** -- This activity comprises the largest single component (though not necessarily the most difficult or grade controlling part) of the work of the motor carrier safety specialist. It involves identifying and documenting unsafe and illegal motor carrier activity, to encourage and assist motor carriers in obtaining and maintaining a higher level of compliance with applicable safety regulations. Included under this heading are a variety of distinct activities, such as:

Safety and hazardous materials compliance surveys are periodic reviews of carriers' dispatching, maintenance, inspection, and operating practices. Such surveys might be generated by the specialist's area work plan, by reports of illegal or unsafe activity, or by special assignment in response to a specific problem (e.g., an unusually high accident ratio for a particular carrier or group of carriers).

A safety survey typically begins with the specialist's review of agency files for relevant facts about the carrier and for any evidence of past compliance problems. This review, which sometimes provides leads as to the particular violations or other problems most likely to be encountered, is followed by a visit (usually without advance warning) to the carrier's terminal or place of business. At that time, a random sample of records covering a specific period of time is examined for evidence of illegal and unsafe practices. Records selected for examination include driver personnel files, drivers' logs, accident registers, complaint files, and vehicle inspection, repair, and maintenance records. While these records (many of which carriers are obliged to maintain and surrender for inspection and copying) constitute multiple sources of information, any or all of these records might be disorganized, scattered, falsified, or otherwise unreliable. Depending on such things as company size and attitude toward safety and Federal regulation, carrier officials might attempt to bury evidence of violations in the volume of paperwork.

Where violations of the regulations are indicated, or if record falsification or duplication is suspected, the specialist determines what corroborative documents might be available and persuades the carrier to produce those documents for examination. By comparing various required written records and other documents less subject to falsification, the specialist documents the extent and seriousness of the compliance problem. The specialist also interviews drivers and other company officials and employees to verify or explain the facts or to assess their familiarity with those parts of the regulations with which they are obliged to comply. Often these individuals are apprehensive or uncooperative.

Through factfinding the specialist establishes a basis upon which a plan for corrective action can be developed.

Before leaving the carrier's office, the specialist provides the responsible company managers and corporate officials with a written notice of violations, discusses with them the applicable

regulations and safety problems found, interprets misunderstood parts of regulations, and offers assistance in developing a plan for obtaining and maintaining compliance. At the same time, the specialist discusses the prospect of a follow up inspection at a latter date and further administrative or other agency action (discussed below) if serious and willful noncompliance persists. Depending on the assessment of the situation and the results of any subsequent follow up inspection, the specialist will close the case without further action; will recommend that the agency pursue civil, criminal, or other legal sanctions against the company or individuals; or, if legal action is assured, will initiate an investigation to compile and organize whatever additional documentation is necessary to sustain the planned agency or government action.

A hazardous materials survey may be done separately or in conjunction with a safety survey, and it follows the same general format discussed above. However, the focus and applicable regulations are different, and the companies surveyed include manufacturers and container reconditioning plants as well as carriers and shippers of hazardous materials. In the course of a survey, the specialist must determine which products the firm ships are classified as hazardous materials. This usually requires checking with the company chemist (or the manufacturer, if different from the shipper) or other official who has knowledge of the makeup of the products. Since many products are compounds of a number of substances, one or more of which might be hazardous, it may also involve determining whether the resulting mixture at its given strength constitutes a hazard. While specialists need not possess a professional background in chemistry to do this work, they must be able to use chemical dictionaries and understand and interpret chemical terminology. They also must keep abreast of the ever-increasing number and variety of items classifiable in the different categories of hazardous materials (e.g., explosives, compressed gases, flammable gases, liquids and solids, oxidizing materials, corrosives, poisons, radioactive materials, etc.), and with a growing body of regulations.

During the onsite visit, the specialist reviews the company's procedures for packaging, labeling, storing, and transporting its hazardous items to assess compliance with applicable regulations and specifications. Where applicable, procedures for reconditioning containers to be used in such transport are also reviewed. Often it is necessary to determine whether the company has been issued any exemptions from parts of the regulations. The review includes inspection of containers, personal observation of handling procedures on the loading dock, tracing the paper flow of items shipped, and interviewing company employees to determine whether they are aware of and observe applicable regulations and related company safety procedures as they perform their handling, dispatching, and/or driving duties.

- roadside vehicle equipment and driver inspections, provide a means of assessing carriers' compliance under operating conditions. These unannounced spot check inspections are generally conducted in coordination with State and local authorities at State weigh stations, toll booths, ports of entry, bus terminals, or other such places that would allow safe inspection of the vehicles. Frequently, a team approach, geared toward sampling specific safety problems or problem carriers, is used. This may involve coordinated inspections at various points around the region or around the country. In conducting a road check, the specialist selects those vehicles to be inspected, which usually are those

with obvious defects or from companies with known or suspected problems. After determining that the vehicle is operating in interstate or foreign commerce or is otherwise subject to Federal safety regulation, the specialist proceeds with a thorough visual and audio inspection of the vehicle's condition, its loading, and looks for worn, defective, or missing parts. Items inspected include: lighting and electrical systems, cables, braking systems, fuel systems, coupling devices, tires, emergency equipment, and other critical parts and accessories. If the vehicle is found to be carrying hazardous materials, shipping papers, containers, blocking, labeling, and placarding are also examined. In all cases, the specialist examines the driver's logbooks and other documents (e.g., license and medical certificate) certifying the driver's qualifications.

Inspections typically require from 30 to 60 minutes for each vehicle. An inspection form, noting all violations found, and indicating what corrective action the carrier must take, is completed and a copy given to the driver. If a vehicle's condition is found to be imminently hazardous or likely to result in an accident or breakdown if it returns to the highway (e.g., because of inoperative or defective brakes, or a cracked fifth-wheel), it may be declared "out of service" and not driven until the defect is repaired. Also, a driver may be declared "out of service" if the individual represents a hazard because of fatigue or other causes; or if inspection of the driver's log discloses driving in excess of permitted hours, the driver may not resume driving until the problem is remedied.

- noise control inspections include routine roadside checks of interior and exterior noise levels of trucks and buses. Such inspections involve setting up a test area, calibrating the sound level meters, and taking a number of noise level readings under prescribed conditions.
 - cargo security surveys include inspections of carriers' terminal facilities to identify cargo security problems and to advise on ways of remedying cargo theft and security problems.
 - driver handicap waivers involve issuing waivers to handicapped individuals who can demonstrate the ability to operate a vehicle in interstate or foreign commerce. This requires considerable judgment in balancing fairness to the individual seeking the waiver and overall safety considerations.
2. Enforcement -- Serious violations of the motor carrier safety regulations are investigated to develop evidence for enforcement actions by the agency. Such action is aimed at bringing those involved into compliance and encouraging other carriers to achieve better compliance. Investigations also are conducted to determine the validity of complaints or allegations of violations brought by the public, employees, or other governmental agencies (e.g., an allegation that a carrier is requiring its drivers to exceed the hours of service limits and maintain false logs to hide the fact; or that a carrier has been taking adverse action against drivers who refuse to participate in such activity). Enforcement cases are often precipitated by safety problems or patterns surfacing in the course of a vehicle inspection, safety survey, accident investigation, or routine analysis of a carrier's file.

Investigations vary considerably in terms of depth (i.e., the lengths to which the specialist must go to resolve the critical issues raised) and the degree of cooperation offered by the individuals involved. They also differ in terms of the complexity of the applicable regulations; the nature and seriousness of the violations or allegations; and the quantity, type, and availability of documentary evidence needed to support the planned action.

A full scale investigation typically involves interviewing and taking statements from such persons as drivers, platform workers, clerks, secretaries, maintenance personnel, and corporate officials. The specialist selects, examines, and copies pertinent documents to establish the frequency and nature of the violations and to depict any patterns which exist. After analyzing and evaluating these findings, the specialist organizes the information and exhibits into a detailed written report portraying the carriers past and recent record of noncompliance and the agency's efforts to elicit compliance.

Judgment, objectivity, and imagination are required in recognizing and exploiting leads to necessary information, and in determining and documenting whether violations found are deliberate and conscious. The specialist makes a preliminary determination whether prosecution is warranted, whether evidence is sufficient to support pursuing enforcement action, and which violations are most serious and representative and likely to be successfully prosecuted. Investigations which determine that prosecution is not warranted are closed administratively by the specialist. Reports of investigations which disclosed serious violations are referred to agency reviewing officials for approval and any further action. The government attorneys who use the report as the basis for the enforcement proceedings may not possess specialized knowledge of the industry and have to rely heavily on the work done by the specialist. Enforcement proceedings may result in criminal charges, civil forfeiture or fines, or may involve administrative cease and desist orders, disregard of which may result in the agency's petitioning for government suspension or revocation of the carrier's operating authority. The safety specialist on occasion may be called upon to testify in a court or administrative proceeding as the government's expert witness on motor carrier safety or as a witness to the facts of an investigation.

3. Accident Investigation -- Included in this work category are investigations into the causes of highway accidents and hazardous materials incidents involving motor carriers. The purposes of such investigations are to determine the facts, conditions, and circumstances of the occurrences; to identify the contributing factors and probable cause(s) without regard to culpability and liability; to determine whether Federal laws or regulations were violated; to evaluate the adequacy of existing regulations; to generate recommendations for refining the regulations or for remedial action to prevent similar accidents; and to develop information for the agency's safety education and accident prevention efforts.

Upon hearing of an accident involving a motor carrier, the motor carrier safety specialist in that area initiates a preliminary investigation of the known facts and circumstances of the accident. Sometimes the causes of the accident are made apparent from a few simple observations or discussions; at other times there may be no apparent explanation. Depending on such factors as the dollar amount of property damage, the number of fatalities, available staff, anticipated public or industry interest, or circumstances that offer information useful to the agency's accident prevention efforts, a decision is made on whether to proceed with an

indepth investigation. Typically the specialist would consult with the regional director and/or other regional authority concerning any special factors that must be considered.

An indepth investigation begins with a thorough examination of the vehicle wreckage, the roadway, and the overall accident scene for evidence of the equipment malfunction, structural failure, or environmental factors contributing to the accident. The accident investigator diagrams the accident; takes road, skid, and other relevant measurements; and photographs the scene. Pertinent photographs or other information obtained by the police, emergency response personnel, or the media are also obtained. Throughout the investigation, the specialist must decide which of the many available avenues of investigation are most likely to be productive. Local law enforcement personnel, repair crews, participants, and nonparticipant eyewitnesses are interviewed, as are carrier officials and fellow employees, relatives or friends of the driver, and others if such interviews are judged relevant to establishing the circumstances leading to the accident.

The specialist seeks out traffic records and other documents detailing the driver's qualification, employment and driving record, and medical history for information relevant to the case. The employee also may review accident statistics for patterns of accidents occurring under similar conditions. Sometimes metallurgical tests or simulation studies are arranged. Finally, all data are analyzed and organized into a factual narrative report with supporting exhibits and documentation. This report reconstructs the series of events leading up to and encompassing the accident and includes a determination as to probable cause. Usually, the investigation also yields recommendations for preventive or corrective action (e.g., additional driver training, new or amended regulations, modification of the design of vehicle equipment, or roadway redesign).

Usually, the safety specialist assigned to an accident investigation works as the sole Federal official assigned to the case, but in cooperation with State and local investigating authorities. However, certain major accidents, involving multiple points of investigation and extending across regional boundaries, or spectacular accidents which have generated widespread public or industry interest, may involve a team effort. In such cases, the regional specialist may lead or coordinate the activity of the other specialists. Where such an investigation is led or coordinated by an employee from another agency, as occasionally happens, the specialist may be assigned responsibility for doing a certain part of the overall investigation.

A variety of factors may contribute to the difficulty of investigating an accident:

- the natural confusion at the scene of an accident, and the unintentional or de facto destruction or alteration of evidence by curious bystanders, wrecker crews, or fire;
- the physical location of the accident and the time lag in the investigator's getting to the scene before it is altered;
- the fact that the wreckage, witnesses, or participants are frequently scattered and difficult to locate;
- the fact that all witnesses to the accident are dead or are bereaved, hysterical, or otherwise unwilling or unable to cooperate;
- contradictory statements from witnesses or participants reluctant to talk because of liability implications;
- the involvement of hazardous materials, not always appropriately marked;
- the pressures of public and private interest in the accident (e.g., Members of Congress with interested constituents, government and industry organizations, employee unions, insurance companies, and equipment manufacturers);
- the involvement of unique types of equipment (e.g., a new kind of brake or tank car) or other circumstances for which there are no precedents;
- weather conditions, which make site documentation difficult;
- involvement with other Federal, State, and local government agencies with varying interests in the accident and its investigation;
- the range of possible causes (e.g., environmental, mechanical, and human) of any particular highway accident.

As with enforcement investigations, accident investigators must use considerable judgment, tact, and creativity to elicit the cooperation of others and to develop the essential facts upon which conclusions can be drawn.

4. **Safety Education and Technical Assistance.** Included in this category is the technical assistance provided to carriers and others in the course of onsite surveys, telephone conversations, meetings, and safety seminars. Safety specialists advise carriers of their responsibilities under the law, interpret regulations, and aid in diagnosing and resolving persistent safety, compliance, or cargo security problems. They also organize, participate in, or conduct informational or training programs and meetings for drivers, industry representatives, and State and local emergency response and law enforcement personnel. Topics covered include the Federal motor carrier safety program, the regulations, pretrip

vehicle inspections, logkeeping, accident prevention, accident investigation techniques, and hazardous materials problems. This activity, plus the answering of public inquiries on the same range of topics, is aimed at broadening program impact and lessening the need for enforcement action by encouraging higher levels of cooperation and voluntary compliance by motor carriers.

Also included under this category is work directed toward developing, updating, and expanding formal cooperative agreements with State and local law enforcement and other government agencies. Such agreements cover, among other things, exchange of information, promotion and enforcement of a uniform motor carrier safety and hazardous materials program, and joint enforcement and inspection activities. Substantive personal contacts and related work associated with developing these agreements are usually reserved for senior safety specialists, who typically are assigned to State capitals. While much of this activity consists of routine personal contacts and information exchange for updating and maintaining agreements already in place, it may also involve informal review of proposed State legislation for consistency with Federal regulations, negotiating new agreements, or encouraging State agencies to cooperate among themselves in exchanging information and ideas.

Nature of Investigative Work

As in other occupations involving investigative work in a regulatory compliance setting, motor carrier safety specialists employ a variety of standard investigative techniques and practices, including: case development, interviewing and interrogation of witnesses, record searches, examination of physical evidence, collecting and refining the data, developing and exploiting leads, assessing the accuracy and reliability of documentary evidence, recognizing and resolving discrepancies in the reported "facts," and organizing the material into a clear, concise, objective report of the facts. While specialists are authorized by law to inspect carriers' facilities and equipment and to examine and copy any and all business documents, they nevertheless must rely heavily on the good will and cooperation of those with whom they deal. Consequently, they must exercise tact and judgment in these personal contacts, must deal impartially and intelligently with all, and must take care to respect the rights of the individuals or business entities being contacted. Specialists must be able to express themselves clearly on technical matters, draw unbiased conclusions from all of the facts, conditions, and circumstances of a case, and decide on the appropriate course of action to deal effectively with the situation. Moreover, they must be able to work under some degree of pressure, even under relatively hazardous conditions as in the inspection of a vehicle or in the investigation of an accident involving a hazardous material. While firmly enforcing the regulations, specialists must be sensitive to the economic and social pressures on drivers and carriers, persuading economically hard-pressed individuals and companies to comply voluntarily.

TITLES

Motor Carrier Safety Specialist is the basic title authorized for all nonsupervisory positions primarily engaged in enforcement and promotion of the Federal motor carrier safety and

hazardous materials regulations through periodic inspections, complaint investigations, advisory services to motor carriers, and related activities for a defined geographic area. This title also is used for all other nonsupervisory positions in this series, including those involved with policy development, program administration, and regulation research and development.

Positions which meet or exceed the criteria of the [General Schedule Supervisory Guide](#) for evaluation as a supervisor are titled Supervisory Motor Carrier Safety Specialist.

EVALUATION NOTE TO USERS

As already noted, territorial assignments generally are structured so as to have a comparable range and variety of carriers and problems, and tend to be interchangeable. Position assignments are distinguished by: (1) the range of duties performed, and (2) by the level of responsibility exercised by the individual employee. The sheer size of an assigned territory or the gross number of carriers domiciled there is not in itself a reliable measure of the difficulty of the position assignment.

It also should be noted that motor carrier safety specialists at grades GS-11 and above often provide guidance and assistance to employees in lower grades on the more difficult assignments. Some also coordinate and review the work of one or more employees in an area or State, but often do not exercise the range of personnel management or organization and work planning responsibilities characteristic of supervisory positions. Positions of this nature are to be evaluated on the basis of the nonsupervisory work performed, which may include team leadership duties.

GRADING OF POSITIONS

Positions should be evaluated on a factor-by-factor basis, using, to the extent possible, one or more of the comparable Office of Personnel Management benchmark position descriptions or the factor level descriptions for the Motor Carrier Safety Series, or both. Only the designated point values may be used. More complete instructions for evaluating positions are contained in the [Introduction to the Position Classification Standards](#).

This standard includes benchmarks for typical nonsupervisory positions GS-5 through GS-11. The absence of a benchmark for positions at any grade from GS-5 to GS-15 does not preclude evaluation of positions at that grade.

Supervisory and managerial positions that fully meet or exceed the "minimum level of supervisory responsibility" defined in the [General Schedule Supervisory Guide](#) should be evaluated through application of that Guide.

GRADE CONVERSION TABLE

Total points on all evaluation factors are converted to GS grade as follows:

GS Grade	Point Range
5	855-1100
6	1105-1350
7	1355-1600
8	1605-1850
9	1855-2100
10	2105-2350
11	2355-2750
12	2755-3150
13	3155-3600
14	3605-4050
15	4055- up

FACTOR LEVEL DESCRIPTIONS

FACTOR 1, KNOWLEDGE REQUIRED BY THE POSITION

This factor measures the nature and extent of information or facts which the employee 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 those knowledge. To be used as a basis for selecting a level under this factor, a knowledge must be required and applied.

Level 1-5 -- 750 points

All positions at this level require a foundation of basic knowledge and skills to permit the employee to perform elementary and developmental assignments pertaining to the Federal motor carrier safety program, to learn the technical work, and to advance to higher level work in the occupation. This foundation includes:

- knowledge of the commonly used terminology, business recordkeeping practices, and general operations of the motor carrier industry to perform limited segments of safety compliance surveys, vehicle inspections, and accident or enforcement investigations. Such tasks typically include the more routine interviewing, data collection, summarizing, or measuring tasks associated with the work;

- skill in analyzing and evaluating factual data and skill sufficient to understand, retain, and interpret technical information, legal provisions, regulations, precedents, and general principles and concepts;
- skill in oral and written communication sufficient to be able to interview carrier employees to ascertain or obtain facts, answer routine questions about the motor carrier safety program, the regulations, or procedures, and clearly and concisely report orally and in writing the results of inspections, audits, or other analyses; and
- knowledge sufficient to learn and apply a variety of inspection, investigative, audit, and reporting procedures used in enforcing carrier compliance with the Federal motor carrier safety regulations.

OR

Equivalent knowledge and skill

The basic level of knowledge may have been gained through a baccalaureate educational program or its equivalent in work experience, training, or self-study, while the skill in applying this knowledge is acquired from closely related work experience.

Level 1-6 -- 950 points

In addition to the knowledge and skills described at Level 1-5, positions at this level require:

- knowledge of the general principles, methodology, purposes, and legal requirements of the Federal motor carrier safety program; sufficient skill in applying this knowledge to plan and perform a variety of compliance-related assignments of moderate scope and complexity for which precedents exist;
- practical knowledge of the body of laws, regulations, policies, and procedures related to motor carrier safety; knowledge of the common exceptions and exemptions authorized by the regulations and precedent decisions; and skill sufficient to interpret, explain, and otherwise apply this knowledge to a variety of compliance and safety problems and situations encountered in the context of conducting complete safety surveys, vehicle inspections, and complaint investigations;
- practical knowledge of the operating policies, practices, authorities, business organization, recordkeeping systems, vehicles, and equipment common to interstate commercial motor carriage to serve as a basis for planning and conducting compliance surveys, vehicle inspections, and complaint investigations;
- practical knowledge of conventional factfinding, problem solving, or investigative techniques to develop, critically analyze, and evaluate the facts relative to an inspection,

investigation, or other project; to identify the key elements of the problem under study; to recognize and resolve irregularities in the data collected to analyze facts to draw reasonable conclusions as to the nature and seriousness of the problem; and to take or recommend action soundly supported by the case documentation or other research.

OR

Equivalent knowledge and skill

These knowledge and skills are equivalent to that gained by closely related work experience.

Illustrations:

Motor carrier safety specialists plan and conduct roadside vehicle inspections and all, or parts of, onsite safety surveys of motor carrier's vehicles, records, and operating practices where the carriers do not have a history of serious compliance problems. They select a representative sample of records, review and compare them for discrepancies or other evidence of violations, and record and report the results on standardized reporting forms. Based on analysis of the facts and evaluation of the circumstances of the case, the specialists recommend appropriate corrective action and assist the carriers in resolving the compliance problems.

Motor carrier safety specialists investigate reports or complaints of unsafe carrier activity when there are clear precedents and no unusual problems or public interest is anticipated. The employees develop the facts of the case through personal interview and inspection, and recommend appropriate disposition of the case, e.g., closing, prosecution, or further investigation.

Motor carrier safety specialists assist in the conduct of accident or incident investigations by taking measurements of the accident scene, by interviewing witnesses or participants in the event, or by compiling and organizing required pieces of documentation for the investigative report.

Motor carrier safety specialists provide technical assistance to carrier officials and employees concerning resolution of safety problems and practical means of gaining and maintaining compliance with the regulations.

Level 1-7 -- 1250 points

In addition to the knowledge and skills described at Level 1-6, all positions at this level require:

- comprehensive knowledge of the laws, regulations, precedent decisions, interpretations, and critical issues related to motor carrier safety and the Federal compliance enforcement program, including those concerned with the transportation and handling of hazardous materials; and skill in applying this knowledge to a wide variety of difficult and complex

work assignments aimed at promoting and enforcing motor carrier compliance with the law;

- broad knowledge of the business and operating practices and safety compliance problems of commercial motor carriers; and understanding of the interrelated social, economic, and other factors impacting on carrier compliance with the regulations.
- This knowledge is applied in:
 - X developing and implementing a comprehensive enforcement program in an assigned territory and developing practical solutions to the wide range of problems found;
 - X identifying and documenting serious safety hazards when the information necessary to support effective action is scattered or hidden;
 - X persuading recalcitrant persons or companies to correct serious safety hazards and to comply voluntarily with the regulations; and/or
 - X researching persistent or widespread safety or compliance issues and, from analysis of the information gathered, developing program recommendations to address the problems.
- skill in applying the full range of factfinding, problem-solving, and investigative techniques, including interviewing, interrogation, discussion, conciliation, analysis, interpretation, and persuasion, to implement a comprehensive, area wide compliance program or perform other program development and technical assistance activities;
- knowledge of accident investigation procedures and techniques as applied to motor carrier accidents. Such knowledge includes such fundamentals as investigation planning and report writing, site documentation, techniques for interviewing witnesses, legal aspects of conducting an investigation, and varied and interrelated human or environmental factors that may contribute to an accident (e.g., effects of alcohol, drugs, fatigue, monotony, weather, roadway construction and condition, load, material, or structural failure). Also included is knowledge of techniques for analyzing structural failure, vehicle kinetics, human factors, and crash-injury correlation in determining the probable cause of an accident and means of accident prevention. This knowledge is applied in performing indepth investigations of major highway accidents involving motor carriers.

OR

Equivalent knowledge and skill

Illustrations:

In the context of a largely self-developed area work plan, the specialist plans, schedules, and conducts complete investigations of alleged or suspected unsafe or illegal activity which is significant but difficult to substantiate because the issues are unusual, the facts or documentary evidence are hidden, fragmented, or falsified, or the witnesses are uncooperative, deceitful, or openly hostile. The specialist compiles and organizes the facts and documentation into a report to be used as the basis for further court or administrative action by the agency. The specialist serves as the agency's expert witness or technical authority in the proceedings.

A motor carrier safety specialist who serves as the regional technical authority on all matters relating to the transportation and handling of hazardous materials. This involves responsibility for providing expert advice on the interpretation and enforcement of the regulations and the administration of that segment of the program in the smaller geographical areas. The employee is charged with revising, developing, and maintaining regional or agency procedural and technical handbooks for guidance of the agency's field staff, and furnishing advice on their use and interpretation. The employee also is responsible for analyzing field reports for the purpose of pinpointing problem trends, recommending adjustments to the national or regional work program, and finding practical solutions to new, unusual, or recurring safety problems.

The motor carrier safety specialist personally conducts, or coordinates the conduct of, investigations of major highway accidents involving motor carriers. The employee analyzes and evaluates the data and facts developed and makes a determination as to probable cause(s). The determination is complicated by obscure or altered evidence, and any of a variety of conditions or causes have contributed to the total event. The employee prepares a comprehensive report with supporting documentation and exhibits, and includes recommendations for public information, enforcement, regulatory, or other action to prevent similar occurrences in the future.

FACTOR 2, SUPERVISORY CONTROLS

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

- Controls are exercised by the supervisor in the way assignments are made, instructions are given to the employee, priorities and deadlines are set, and objectives and boundaries are defined.
- Responsibility of the specialist depends upon the extent to which the employee is expected to develop the sequence and timing of various aspects of the work, to modify or commend modification of instructions, and to participate in establishing priorities and defining objectives.

- The degree of review of completed work depends upon the nature and extent of the review, e.g., close and detailed review of each phase of the assignment, detailed review of the finished assignment, spot check of finished work for accuracy, or review only for adherence to policy.

Level 2-1 -- 25 points

The supervisor or a higher graded employee assigns specific tasks (e.g., routine tasks related to preparing for or conducting inspections, safety surveys, or investigations; review and summarization of an accident report) and provides the specialist with clear, detailed, and specific oral or written instructions on the methods to be used in completing those tasks.

At this level, the specialist is typically an inexperienced trainee who completes the assignments as instructed. Any problems not specifically covered by the original instructions are brought to the attention of the supervisor or higher grade employee, who is readily available to clarify the instructions or to offer advice.

Completed work products, usually in the form of sampling results, statistical summaries, observation reports, case analyses, synopses, and methods used, are closely reviewed not only for accuracy, adequacy, and proper adherence to instructions and established procedures, but also as an index of the employee's training progress.

Level 2-2 -- 125 points

The supervisor or a higher grade employee assigns portions of vehicle inspections, accident or enforcement investigations, safety surveys, or other projects, indicating generally what is to be done, which techniques might prove to be most helpful, possible precedents to use, and what deadlines or other constraints apply. In new or unusual assignments the specialist is provided additional specific guidance concerning procedures to be followed (e.g., the numbers and types of records to be reviewed, the means of documenting a violation, the line of questioning to be pursued in interviewing a witness), approaches to be taken, or sources of information.

The specialist prepares for and carries out recurring assignments according to established procedures and guidelines and usually without additional instructions. The supervisor or a higher grade employee is readily available for advice and assistance if problems or situations not covered by instructions are encountered.

Completed work, whether in the form of a written record of findings and conclusions, a written report, or the work process itself, is reviewed for technical accuracy, thoroughness, and conformance with established methods and procedures. Negative recommendations are considered tentative until confirmed by the supervising employee, who has overall responsibility for deciding and taking the appropriate action. New assignments performed by the specialist are reviewed in detail. In developmental positions, new assignments provide a means of assessing the specialist's rate of progress in acquiring new knowledge and skills.

Level 2-3 -- 275 points

At this level the assignment usually involves ongoing but limited personal responsibility for promoting and enforcing motor carrier compliance with Federal safety regulations in a defined geographic area. In assigning whole inspections, surveys, investigations, and/or other projects (frequently of a continuing nature, and aimed at preparing the specialist to assume full responsibility for the territory), the supervisor or a higher grade employee defines the objectives, the expected end product (e.g., analysis of a certain problem, resolution of a complaint, a survey of a particular group of carriers), assignment priorities, and applicable deadlines. The supervisor advises the specialist on potential problems that may be expected, and is available for assistance when unusual or unprecedented problems arise.

The specialist plans and completes the assigned work according to previous training and accepted practices and within the agency's established policy framework and guidelines. In performing the work, the specialist determines the methods to be used, the type of documentation needed, and the likely sources of information. The specialist exercises judgment in altering the sequence of steps or adapting the prescribed methods to best accomplish the project or task within the established guidelines. Except for unprecedented or particularly unusual situations, most problems are resolved by the specialist without recourse to the supervisor for advice.

Completed work such as investigative reports, inspection findings, research papers, case reports, rulemaking proposals and memoranda are reviewed for technical soundness and conformance to established policies and procedures. Generally the supervisory review takes place after the fact (e.g., in the case of field investigations, after the factfinding has been completed and the survey report or notice of violations has been given to the carrier officials for action). Consequently, the review focuses primarily on the soundness of the results rather than on the adequacy of the methods employed.

Level 2-4 -- 450 points

Positions at this level typically are assigned full responsibility for involved ongoing special projects, a defined geographic area, or a specialized technical program area (e.g., conducting special studies of complex safety and regulatory issues; responsibility for independently planning and implementing the Federal motor carrier safety program in an assigned territory; responsibility for providing expert technical advisory services on a broad range of complex safety issues related to transportation and handling of hazardous materials, responsibility for coordinating the region's accident investigation activity). In consultation with the supervisor, and consistent with agency objectives and the resources made available, the specialist determines what needs to be done, chooses an appropriate approach to unusual or particularly sensitive problems or policy issues, and establishes the deadlines and priorities of the work to be accomplished.

Based on thorough knowledge of the motor carrier safety program, motor carrier operations, and general agency policy and objectives, and having developed expertise in applying compliance techniques, the specialist exercises judgment in planning and carrying out independently a wide

range of assignments and in interpreting agency policy and regulations. The specialist determines the depth of an investigation or research effort and the approach to be taken to achieve lasting carrier compliance with the regulations or to complete the assignment within available resources. In the case of field inspections and investigations, most of which take place away from the supervisor's workplace, the specialist uses initiative to resolve most work problems. The specialist routinely files periodic reports summarizing the progress of major investigations or other projects, and informs the supervisor of potentially far-reaching or controversial problems and issues, e.g., recurring failure of a certain type of hazardous materials container and repeated and flagrant disregard of the Federal safety regulations by a large or important motor carrier operator, whose actions, are likely to be imitated by others.

Completed work (e.g., final reports of major investigations, decisions relating to an enforcement action, guideline material developed for use by the field staff) usually is considered technically sound, but is reviewed generally for its effectiveness and efficiency in promoting motor carrier safety and the program objectives for the area of responsibility. Recommendations on controversial issues are reviewed in terms of their practicality and compatibility with agency program goals and policies.

Level 2-5 -- 650 points

The supervisor provides only administrative direction in making assignments (e.g., identifying solutions to complex industry wide safety issues; developing programs for agency wide implementation of major legislative and regulatory changes), discussing them in terms of broadly defined agency missions and functions and giving the specialist more or less complete freedom to identify the specific problems to be dealt with, the projects to be initiated, and the goals to be met.

The assignment typically involves very broad program development and management responsibility, sometimes for a complex, highly specialized, technical program area. The specialist independently plans, designs, organizes, and carries out large scale projects or special studies related to overall program administration or major safety or compliance issues in a technical program area, frequently as a project leader or the agency's technical expert. The employee independently monitors and evaluates the effectiveness of the agency's programs and develops new procedures, guidelines, or recommendations for policy changes to augment program effectiveness.

Results of the work are considered technically authoritative and are normally accepted without significant change. Where reviewed, work products, usually in the form of new program activities or recommendations and proposals for major policy, program, or regulatory changes, are evaluated in terms of agency program goals, fulfillment of program objectives, or the overall effect of the proposals, project, or study. Changes of a particularly controversial or precedent-setting nature may become subject to administrative hearings and/or litigation and judicial review.

FACTOR 3, GUIDELINES

This factor covers the nature of guidelines and the judgment needed to apply them. Since individual assignments vary in the specificity, applicability, and availability of guidelines, the constraints and judgmental demands placed upon workers also vary. For example, the existence of specific instructions, procedures, and policies may limit the opportunity of a specialist to make or recommend decisions or actions. On the other hand, in the absence of procedures or under broadly stated objectives, a specialist may use considerable judgment in researching literature and developing new methods.

Guides specifically relevant to the Motor Carrier Safety occupation include an evolving body of Federal regulations, precedent court decisions and administrative interpretations, an extensive agency operations manual, standard investigative techniques and procedures, the rules of evidence, various reporting forms and checklists, and assorted policy memoranda. Guidelines should not be confused with the knowledge described under Factor 1, Knowledge Required by the Position. Guidelines either provide reference data or impose certain constraints on the use of knowledge.

Level 3-1 -- 25 points

Guidelines, such as previously completed work products, checklists, policy memoranda, and an operations manual provide specific and detailed guidance on all important aspects of the work. The employee, typically a trainee, is thereby able to accomplish routine supportive tasks while gaining familiarity with the motor carrier safety program and agency procedures.

The employee is expected to adhere strictly to the guidelines except where deviations are authorized by the supervisor or higher graded employee in charge.

Level 3-2 -- 125 points

Guidelines consist of numerous standing oral instructions, written procedural guides and manuals, agency policy directives and technical bulletins, administrative interpretations and precedent decisions, samples of work products, and the Federal motor carrier safety laws and regulations themselves. While they cover virtually every aspect of the assignments and generally are available for reference if needed, these guidelines apply in various ways to different work situations. Where possible, assignments are prescreened by the supervisor to avoid those for which guidelines are not applicable.

The specialist must use judgment in selecting the most appropriate procedures or precedents for use in specific situations and in recognizing the occasional situation where existing guidelines cannot be applied. For example, in planning and conducting a safety survey or vehicle inspection, the specialist follows procedures established by the agency for performing the work, but uses judgment in determining applicability of the regulations, deciding the lines of questioning to pursue in interviews, determining the amount of documentation needed to

establish the essential facts, and/or selecting precedents for action appropriate to the specific situation. Where guidelines are lacking or significant deviations are suggested by the situation, the specialist may seek further guidance from the supervisor or a more experienced employee.

Level 3-3 -- 275 points

The guidelines are generally the same as those listed at Level 3-2. However, assignments and problems encountered are much more diverse and varied than at the lower level, and are less likely to be completely anticipated in guidelines and precedents or subject to prior screening. Consequently, the guidelines are not always applicable or in many cases do not cover the extensive range of operating situations, problems, or issues with which the specialist is expected to deal effectively and efficiently in the course of inspection or investigation activities.

The specialist exercises considerable judgment not only in determining which of the guidelines apply to specific problems or the situation at hand, but also how they are to be applied for best results. For example, where violations are alleged, suspected, or discovered, the specialist decides which of several alternative approaches for obtaining the necessary evidence are most likely to be fruitful; and, once the violations are documented, what subsequent course of action holds most promise of yielding quick and continuing carrier compliance. The specialist interprets, adapts, and improvises procedures to accommodate the wide variety of problems and situations encompassed by the total assignment. Based on personal experience, the specialist may recommend changes in the guidelines to improve the effectiveness of the work process and program.

Level 3-4 -- 450 points

At this level, major duties and responsibilities are covered only by broadly stated administrative policy and past precedents. These guidelines are generally not adequate for dealing with particularly complex or unusual assignments, such as:

- an enforcement investigation involving a very large nationwide carrier with a complex corporate structure, a penchant for disregarding the regulations, and a history of successfully evading traditional enforcement measures;
- an assignment to develop a new mutual assistance agreement with a State law enforcement agency hesitant to enter into an agreement, and meeting with State officials to discuss and negotiate adoption of the Federal motor carrier safety regulations;
- an investigation of a major highway accident involving highly unusual circumstances, widespread public interest, multiple points of investigation requiring extensive coordination, and little indication of the probable cause(s) of the crash;
- an assignment to research and analyze regional trends regarding a particular safety problem or issue, to evaluate the effectiveness of the program effort, and to recommend changes in existing agency policy or procedures.

The specialist exercises considerable resourcefulness, initiative, and judgment based on experience to interpret available guidelines and to expand them to cover new situations or problems. The specialist is frequently recognized as one of the agency's technical experts in a broad specialized area of the program, and is charged with developing technical bulletins, instructions, manual material, proposed new policies, and improved approaches to specific problems and activities.

Level 3-5 -- 650 points

Guidelines are broadly stated and nonspecific, essentially consisting of new legal decisions, legislation which hasn't been developed into facilitating programs, or broad top management policy statements or directives which are similarly vague on methods for implementation. Assignments dealing with such broad and nonspecific guidelines generally are found at the agency headquarters level.

In such assignments, the employee interprets the intent of the basic legislation and other existing guidelines to develop technical bulletins, manuals, agency policy statements, and other applications to more specific areas of work for use by agency field staff or others involved in motor carrier safety. The employee usually is recognized as an agency technical authority in the development and interpretation of the broadest program guidelines, policy, and objectives.

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.

Level 4-2 -- 75 points

Assignments consist of individualized tasks or limited segments of complete inspections, surveys, investigations, or other projects. The work typically involves gathering and summarizing specific information or performing routine or repetitive measuring tasks in support of higher grade employees. The assignments provide the specialist with practical experience in several aspects of the agency's enforcement and safety promotion program, while at the same time exposing the specialist to a variety of regulatory issues or carrier operating situations and problems.

Decisions regarding what needs to be done involve making some choices in the factfinding process as to sources of reliable information, the sequence of factfinding steps, the specific regulations which apply, the manner of presenting the findings, or which of a few precedent situations or clear principles to follow.

The decision as to whether there is evidence of a violation or other problem is usually determined by measurement with simple but precise technical instruments (e.g., tire tread gauges or noise level meters), by auditory or visual inspection, by comparison of suspect records with

other records or known facts, or by similar means. Actions taken differ from situation to situation, and depend on the factual circumstances of the case, the additional information, evidence, or leads developed, or the nature and seriousness of the violations discovered.

Illustrations:

Assignments at this level usually involve performing tasks in support of higher level specialists. Typical assignments include: searching carrier files and records for evidence relevant to a particular case; inspecting basic vehicle systems for worn or defective parts; measuring and recording vehicle noise levels; analyzing accident statistics and preparing narrative summaries; writing replies to correspondence; preparing short reports based on information obtained from office files or standard reference sources; and answering factual questions from the general public concerning program objectives, jurisdiction, or procedures.

Level 4-3 -- 150 points

Assignments include complete vehicle inspections, compliance surveys, investigations, and technical assistance services aimed at promoting motor carrier compliance with applicable Federal safety regulations. The work, which involves the specialist in planning and performing the full range of compliance activities, requires application of conventional factfinding, investigative, and problem-solving techniques to identify, document and resolve varied safety and compliance problems.

The specialist frequently has incomplete or inaccurate information with which to begin an assignment and must develop the essential facts of the case in the course of the work. Problems be identified, documented, and resolved vary from one assignment and operating situation to another. The regulations enforced apply to various types of carriers, commodities, and operating situations in different ways. Decisions on appropriate action or factfinding methods and direction depend on the extent of the agency's jurisdiction, the type of inspection or investigation, the type of carrier operation, the parts of the regulations applying in the case, the carrier's past history of cooperation, and whether enforcement action is planned. In each operating situation the specialist must consider a combination of facts, conditions, and circumstances to assess the nature and seriousness of the safety problem and to select the course of action most likely to result in an effective solution.

The work involves conditions and issues which must be identified and analyzed before conclusions can be drawn and actions taken. Assignments are characterized by such things as: a number of interrelated facts, but one or a few related, relatively simple problems to be identified, documented, and resolved; some discrepant information to be clarified; facts generally assessable with application of standard factfinding and problem-solving techniques; or a compliance problem predicated more on the carrier's ignorance of the law and appropriate safety measures than hostility or willful disregard of the regulations.

Illustrations:

Assignments typically involve limited but ongoing responsibility for promoting and enforcing motor carrier compliance with Federal safety regulations in a defined geographic area. Consistent with the priorities established for the area, the employee independently plans and coordinates a roadside vehicle specialist program with relevant State law enforcement personnel; plans and performs safety surveys of carriers previously served with copies of the regulations but not recently surveyed; independently investigates a driver's complaint that a carrier is forcing drivers to exceed the maximum hours of service; and/or performs segments of a complex survey of a large carrier with suspected safety problems. The specialist examines a variety of business records for discrepancies or other indications of illegal activity or safety problems, and advises the carrier both as to its obligations under the law and practical means of attaining compliance. The carriers dealt with are generally cooperative and not in serious or flagrant noncompliance.

Level 4-4 -- 225 points

Assignments involve broad responsibility for independently planning and carrying out a variety of compliance, enforcement, and safety promotion activities aimed at a wide range of safety and compliance problems. Usually these activities (e.g., inspections, compliance surveys, enforcement investigations, accident investigations and analyses, safety seminars) are linked to continuing responsibility for developing and managing a specialized and highly technical program area (e.g., transportation and handling of hazardous materials, accident investigation and prevention) for a region, or for administering a comprehensive enforcement and promotion program in a smaller geographic area. While factfinding and problem-solving techniques at this level are much the same as those employed at Level 4-3 above, at this level they are applied to a much wider range of carriers, operating situations, and safety or compliance problems, requiring a higher degree of planning.

Decision making must take into account the somewhat intangible nature of safety and the fact that a variety of factors may contribute to any individual safety or compliance program. In each situation, the employee must consider a relatively unique combination of facts, conditions, and circumstances (and must identify all the factors contributing to the problem) to determine the best approach toward solving the problem at hand or improving compliance with the regulations.

As at Level 4-3, the employee has minimal or incomplete information with which to plan or begin a project; and the nature and seriousness of the problem has to be developed and documented in the course of the work. However, at this level the specialist deals with much or serious problems and a much wider range of operating situations. Surveys and investigations often involve serious and flagrant noncompliance, companies adept at frustrating compliance enforcement efforts, conflicting statements from witnesses, fragmented or deliberately falsified records, and/or complex organizational structures. Such factors combine to complicate identifying the issues, documenting the facts, defining the problem, reconstructing the chain of events, identifying responsible persons, determining cause and effect relationships, and/or establishing a basis upon which to persuade those subject to the regulations to comply voluntarily.

The work requires considerable advance planning to accomplish maximum coverage of the assigned area with limited program resources. It also entails reordering priorities as competing priorities arise and making numerous decisions at each stage of a project. For example, the specialist must:

- define problems in terms of the policies and regulations being enforced;
- interpret complex and often overlapping regulations;
- weigh the relevance, reliability, and importance of the data gathered;
- assess individuals' attitude toward voluntary compliance;
- judge the sufficiency of documentation for supporting the planned course of action;
- evaluate all of the interrelated pieces of information gathered to draw conclusions as to a company's state of compliance or the root causes of a problem; and
- tailor a plan of action to the situation.

Conventional factfinding and problem-solving techniques are applied and modified as necessary to accomplish the objectives of the assignment.

Illustrations:

The assignment involves broad responsibility for planning and implementing an areawide compliance program geared to the needs of a large and varied motor carrier population. Work projects include compliance surveys or enforcement investigations characterized by such things as a number of undefined or undocumented compliance problems, a large body of interrelated facts scattered through a host of information sources, minimal cooperation from carrier officials and knowledgeable witnesses, deliberate falsification of critical records, and a serious and apparently flagrant disregard of the safety regulations. This work activity is directed toward developing and piecing together sufficient information to document the illegal activity and to provide a basis for persuading the offending carrier officials to bring the company into compliance.

Other assignments include major accident investigations characterized by extensive alteration of the accident scene and a consequent need to search out and piece together disparate pieces of information and to develop new information to establish the facts of the accident and the cause and effect relationships. On the basis of these facts the employee draws conclusions as to which of several possible causes is the probable cause of the accident, and whether measures can be taken to prevent similar accidents or to lessen their severity.

Level 4-5 -- 325 points

The work at this level requires application of a high degree of analytical skill to resolve widespread and critical safety issues and program problems for which innovative solutions are necessary. Often the specialist functions as a program troubleshooter or project leader on particularly complex, sensitive, or precedent-setting investigations and long-term special studies. Typically the assignment includes substantial program management responsibilities involving establishment of program goals, making long-term and short-term program plans, systematically evaluating progress, and recommending levels of resources and overall program organization and emphasis.

Decision making and planning are complicated by major areas of uncertainty as to the scope of a particular problem, the lack of research data defining the issues, and uncertainty as to the appropriate approach to take in researching and resolving the problem. Among the factors contributing to the difficulty of the work are:

- need to assess and analyze changing conditions in the industry and the nation's economy; and the potential impact on the industry and individuals of new regulations or shifts in policies;
- need to recognize and resolve conflicts between program requirements and goals and goals and fundamental, long-established industry and individual practices;
- lack of information or conflicting evidence with which to plan a project;
- need to keep abreast of trends to anticipate the need for new regulations or policy changes;
- need to develop new or revised policy, procedures, and regulations to quickly incorporate the effects of technological developments (e.g., new vehicle systems, new chemical compounds) into program guidelines and to address new and potentially dangerous situations;
- need to interpret conflicting requirements of the regulations and to extrapolate relevant laws and regulations to new and unprecedented situations or issues; and
- problems associated with monitoring the effectiveness and consistency of a wide-ranging regulatory program implemented through a widely dispersed field staff.

The work requires a high degree of judgment in setting program priorities, identifying, researching, and resolving complex problems, and recommending changes in program direction. The work involves continuing analysis of a wide variety of interrelated complex problems and advising agency managers on the best course of action to eliminate obstacles to safety and program effectiveness. As required, the specialist develops and pilots new and innovative techniques, procedures, or program components to meet new requirements and resolve persistent

industry wide problems. The technical decisions tend to be precedent-setting and establish criteria for agency action.

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. Effect measures such things as whether the work output facilitates the work of others, provides timely services of a personal nature, or impacts on the adequacy of research conclusions. The concept of effect alone does not provide sufficient information to understand and evaluate the impact of the position. The scope of the work completes the picture, allowing consistent evaluations. Only the effect of properly performed work is to be considered.

Level 5-1 -- 25 points

The work involves performance of specific, routine assignments including tasks related to preparing for and carrying out parts of inspections, investigations, and other projects. Such tasks include: reviewing and summarizing relevant information in the agency's investigative files, or tabulating and summarizing accident statistics or cargo security data; inspecting basic vehicle equipment for worn or missing parts; reviewing and comparing carrier records for evidence of violations, and preparing worksheets and summary reports of the results; making follow up inquiries in an enforcement case or accident investigation; and updating agency lists of carriers of record.

While the assignments are primarily for training purposes and for orienting the trainee to the concepts of the Federal motor carrier safety program and the operating procedures and methods of the office, they also have the effect of relieving higher graded specialists of some of the time-consuming sampling and data collection tasks involved in their work.

Factor 5-2 -- 75 points

The work involves performance of defined segments of complete safety inspections, complaint investigations, and other projects for the purpose of refining the specialist's job-related knowledge and skills and to facilitate the work of higher graded specialists. Assignments include: interior and exterior vehicle noise level checks; roadside vehicle equipment inspections; interviewing persons knowledgeable about an accident, incident or complaint; in a routine safety survey, selecting a representative sample of records, reviewing and comparing them for discrepancies or other evidence of violations, recording and reporting the results, and recommending appropriate corrective action; and taking measurements of an accident scene or compiling and organizing pieces of documentation for the final report.

The work contributes to the overall effectiveness of the Federal motor carrier safety program. Specifically, the results of the work facilitate the work of higher level specialists by providing preliminary information on suspected or alleged unsafe operating practices and conditions, and by providing a basis for further decisions or actions by other employees.

Level 5-3 -- 150 points

The purpose of the work is to promote and enforce motor carrier compliance with applicable Federal regulations, usually in a defined geographic area. The specialist accomplishes this through a program of vehicle inspections, enforcement investigations, compliance surveys, technical assistance seminars, and other activities aimed at identifying and eliminating illegal and unsafe operating practices or conditions. Most problems encountered can be dealt with by using and adapting established methods and procedures.

The work directly affects not only the adequacy and effectiveness of the agency's enforcement effort in the assigned area, but also the credibility of the nationwide compliance program. Work products include inspection and investigation reports, conclusions as to a person's or corporation's compliance with applicable regulations, and recommendations for corrective action. The specialist's decisions and recommendations (e.g., whether to place a vehicle or driver out of service; whether to recommend that the agency initiate administrative, civil, or criminal enforcement proceedings against a scofflaw) can have serious adverse economic impact on individual drivers, shippers, or carriers found to be in serious noncompliance. In broadest terms, the work activity directly fosters a safer driving environment for the motoring public and a lessening of property damage, injury, and loss of life due to accidents.

Level 5-4 -- 225 points

The specialist typically serves a large area as senior specialist or as a program manager or technical consultant in a complex specialty area (e.g., accident investigation and prevention; transportation of hazardous materials). In addition to the activity described at Level 5-3 above, the work at this level involves: solution of particularly difficult, widespread or persistent safety and compliance problems and issues; analyzing reports to identify trends or patterns; evaluating the effectiveness of the various program activities; identifying deficiencies and developing means of increasing program effectiveness; interpreting the more complex regulations for application to new or unusual situations; coordinating large-scale or one-of-a-kind enforcement projects; leading indepth investigations of unusually complex and controversial accidents; and/or developing and negotiating new and precedent-setting cooperative agreements with State officials.

The work performed concerns more than immediate day-to-day safety and enforcement issues and problems. The specialist provides authoritative advice on the applicability of the regulations and interpretation of agency policies. Determinations may impact major segments of the industry and provide precedents for future agency decisions and actions. Information and recommendations developed are used by responsible agency management as a basis for planning the work, revising procedures and methods, shifting program emphases and priorities, developing new regulations and policies, or pursuing strong enforcement action against a large and important carrier.

Level 5-5 -- 325 points

Work assignments typically involve planning and carrying out agency wide projects and programs to research and resolve broad and/or critical safety problems or making sweeping changes in major portions of Federal motor carrier safety regulations, standards, and enforcement programs, or other special assignments of comparable breadth and originality.

The work substantially contributes to eliminating safety problems and issues that are or could potentially be major causes of serious highway accidents and incidents involving hazardous materials. The specialist provides definitive interpretation of the regulations and agency policies. Advice, conclusions, or work efforts directly impact development of major segments of the agency's total program.

Work efforts, which frequently have industry wide interest and impact, affect the work of other experts within and outside the government who are involved in highway safety and accident prevention.

FACTOR 6, PERSONAL CONTACTS

This factor includes face-to-face contacts and telephone and radio dialogue with persons not in the supervisory chain. (Note: Personal contacts with supervisors are covered under Factor 2, Supervisory Controls.) Levels described under this factor are based on what is required to make the initial contact, the difficulty of communicating with those contacted, and the setting in which the contact takes place (e.g., the degree to which the specialist and those contacted recognize their relative roles and authorities).

Points should be credited under this factor only for contacts which are essential for successful performance of the work and which have a demonstrable impact on the difficulty and responsibility of the work performed.

The relationship of Factors 6 and 7 presumes that the same contacts will be evaluated for both factors. Therefore, use the personal contacts which serve as the basis for the level selected for Factor 7 as the basis for selecting a level for Factor 6.

Level 6-1 -- 10 points

Personal contacts are primarily with employees in the immediate office. Any direct working contacts with members of the general public or employees of the regulated industry occur in a very highly structured situation (e.g., to exchange factual information). This level rarely will be found in positions in this occupation, even at trainee levels.

Level 6-2 -- 25 points

Personal contacts are with employees in the immediate office and related units within the agency, members of the general public, State and local law enforcement personnel, and carrier

officials and employees. While many of these contacts are neither routine nor occur in the structured setting of the specialist's office, usually the specialist's role and authority are at least partially established by a higher graded specialist.

Level 6-3 -- 60 points

Personal contacts are primarily with persons outside the employing agency, such as carrier officials and their employees, drivers, representatives from employee groups, trade associations, the news media, State and local law enforcement, emergency response officials and personnel, employees of other Federal agencies, and members of the general public. Contacts frequently take place in the context of unannounced roadside vehicle inspections, onsite safety compliance surveys, complaint investigations, accident investigations, or other enforcement action. Also included at this level are contacts with officials of large national corporations or State agency heads and legislators.

FACTOR 7, PURPOSE OF CONTACTS

In this occupation, the purpose of personal contacts ranges from factual exchange of information to situations involving significant or controversial issues and differing viewpoints, goals, or objectives. The personal contacts which serve as the basis for the level selected for this factor must be the same as the contacts which are the basis for the level selected for Factor 6.

Level 7-1 -- 20 points

The purpose of personal contacts is to exchange facts or technical and administrative information related to the work.

Level 7-2 -- 50 points

The purpose of personal contacts is to plan, coordinate, and/or conduct segments of inspections or investigations, and to resolve minor safety problems or misunderstandings regarding the work project, carrier operating practices, Federal regulations, or agency procedures. As much as possible, assignments at this level are screened to avoid controversial compliance problems or independent contact with uncooperative or hostile individuals. For the most part, individuals contacted directly are committed to the goals of the motor carrier safety program. Where this is not the case, the supervisor or higher graded employee exercises primary responsibility for dealing with the problem.

Level 7-3 -- 120 points

The purpose of the personal contacts is to promote motor carrier safety and to enforce carrier and shipper compliance with Federal safety regulations via a wide range of activities including information seminars, unscheduled onsite inspections, and accident or enforcement investigations. Witnesses to an accident or other persons having information relevant to an investigation are interviewed or interrogated. Persons contacted may be fearful, skeptical,

grief-stricken, suspicious, uncooperative or openly hostile, requiring the employee to use tact, persuasion, judgment and technical expertise to accomplish the purpose of the contact.

Level 7-4 -- 220 points

The purpose of the personal contacts is to justify, defend, negotiate or settle highly significant or controversial regulatory matters or administrative actions. Work at this level involves active participation and representation of the agency in conferences, meetings, hearings, or presentations involving problems or issues of considerable consequence or importance, e.g., a legislative proposal mandating a controversial piece of equipment industry wide or negotiation of a settlement of a major enforcement action against a major carrier. Typically, persons contacted have diverse viewpoints, goals, or objectives, requiring the employee to achieve a common understanding of the problem and a satisfactory solution by convincing them, arriving at a compromise, or developing suitable alternatives.

FACTOR 8, PHYSICAL DEMANDS

This factor covers the requirements and physical demands placed on the employee by the work assignment. This includes physical characteristics and abilities (e.g., specific agility and dexterity requirements) and the physical exertion involved in the work (e.g., climbing, lifting, pushing, balancing, stooping, kneeling, crouching, crawling, or reaching). To some extent the frequency or intensity of physical exertion also must be considered, e.g., a job requiring prolonged standing involves more physical exertion than a job requiring intermittent standing. NOTE: Regulations governing pay for irregular or intermittent duty involving unusual physical hardship or hazard are in Chapter 550, Federal Personnel Manual.

Level 8-1 -- 5 points

the work is primarily sedentary and requires no special physical attributes. The employee occasionally may visit terminal locations, industrial plants, vehicle inspection sites, or accident locations, and be subjected to prolonged standing or considerable walking. However, these situations do not occur on a regular and recurring basis.

Level 8-2 -- 20 points

On a regular and recurring basis the work requires prolonged standing, walking, stooping, reaching, and climbing in the course of vehicle inspections and accident investigations. The work also may require some lifting or tipping-on-edge of moderately heavy objects such as crates, cartons, and drums to check for appropriate labeling and signs of leakage. Where heavy lifting (e.g., objects weighing over 50 lbs) is required, carrier personnel with appropriate mechanical equipment generally are available to do the lifting or tipping.

FACTOR 9, WORK ENVIRONMENT

This factor considers the risks and discomforts in the employee's physical surroundings or the nature of the work assigned and the safety regulations required. Although the use of safety precautions can practically eliminate a certain danger or discomfort, typically such situations place additional demands upon the employee in carrying out safety regulations and techniques.

NOTE: Regulations governing pay for irregular or intermittent duty involving unusual physical hardship or hazard are in Chapter 550, Federal Personnel Manual.

Level 9-1 -- 5 points

The work is usually performed in an office setting where there is adequate heating, lighting, and ventilation, and minimal exposure to other than the everyday risks or discomforts typical of such places. The employee occasionally visits a carrier terminal, vehicle inspection site, or accident scene where there is some exposure to weather, noise, dust, and moving vehicles. However, such situations are not considered a regular characteristic of the position.

Level 9-2 -- 20 points

The work involves regular and recurring exposure to moderate risks, discomforts, or unpleasant surroundings. For example, in the course of roadside vehicle inspections and accident investigations, the employee is frequently exposed to dirt, grime, grease, dust, high noise levels, outdoor weather conditions, spilled or leaking hazardous materials, and/or moving vehicles. Special protective clothing, such as hardhat, safety glasses, steel-toed shoes, coveralls, or other protective gear, is worn as needed to lessen the degree of risk or discomfort. In the course of a survey at a shipping terminal, the specialist may be exposed to moving carts or forklifts, and/or spilled, leaking, or improperly handled hazardous materials.

OPM BENCHMARK DESCRIPTION: SERIES GS-2123 MOTOR CARRIER SAFETY SPECIALIST, GS-5, BMK #1

Duties

This is a trainee position located in an agency's regional motor carrier safety office. Duties are designed to: (a) familiarize the employee with the principles and methods of the Federal motor carrier safety program, the regulations enforced, the procedures of the office, and the organization and operating practices of the industry, and (b) relieve higher graded employees of some of the more routine work. The employee:

- Studies instructional materials, the operations manual, and the safety regulations which frame the Federal motor carrier safety program;

- Receives classroom and on-the-job training in motor carrier safety, basic inspection and investigative techniques, vehicle mechanical systems and equipment, the function and operations of the agency and office, and application of Federal safety laws and Regulations to motor carrier operating practices;
- Assists higher grade specialists by performing portions of the work under their guidance. Such tasks include:
 - X reviewing and summarizing relevant information in the agency's investigative files to provide higher grade specialists possible leads in their planning and preparing for safety surveys or complaint investigations;
 - X reviewing and comparing payroll or personnel records from carrier files in an onsite compliance survey for evidence of obvious violations of the hours of service, recordkeeping, or other applicable regulations; and preparing work sheets and summary reports of the results;
 - X interviewing carrier employees to obtain routine factual information relevant to an inspection or investigation; making follow up inquiries in an enforcement case or accident investigation;
 - X conducting parts of roadside vehicle inspections and noise level checks of trucks and buses to detect missing, worn, or defective parts (e.g., brakes, coupling devices, lights, emergency equipment);
 - X drafting letters, memoranda, or internal reports on a variety of subjects to answer specific questions from the general public, agency officials, industry representatives, or others;
 - X tabulating accident or cargo security data; reviewing and updating agency lists of motor carriers of record.

Factor 1, Knowledge Required by the Position -- Level 1-5 -- 750 points

Knowledge of the commonly used terminology associated with interstate commercial motor carriage; knowledge of basic truck and bus vehicle systems and motor carrier business operations. This knowledge provide a basis for intensive on-the-job training in the principles and methods of the Federal motor carrier safety compliance program, and enables the trainee to carry out a variety of elementary assignments.

Skill to analyze and evaluate factual data gathered from personal interviews, reviews of carriers' business records, or other factfinding; ability to read, understand, interpret, and apply regulations, precedent decisions, legal provisions, and technical information to specific situations encountered in performing routine inspection tasks or other similar assignments.

Skill in communicating, both orally and in writing, to: interview carrier employees about the company's operating practices, exchange information about the Federal motor carrier safety program, answer routine questions on office policies and procedures, and write reports of the results of these and other work activities.

Knowledge and skill to learn and apply a variety of vehicle inspection, factfinding, and reporting procedures used by the office in gauging the level of motor carrier compliance with the Federal safety regulations and in promoting and enforcing better compliance.

Factor 2, Supervisory Controls -- Level 2-1 -- 25 points

The director of the regional motor carrier safety office assigns the trainee to a higher grade specialist for on-the-job training. The latter provides detailed and specific instructions on the asks to be done and the methods to be used in completing them.

The trainee works in strict adherence to the instructions. The supervising employee is available to provide immediate clarification or further advice if situations arise which are not covered by the original instructions.

Inspection results, summaries, and observation reports, along with the methods used in performing the work, are reviewed in detail for accuracy and adherence to established procedures.

Factor 3, Guidelines -- Level 3-1 -- 25 points

A variety of instructional materials, reports from previously completed inspections or investigations, and an extensive operations manual provide the trainee with specific and detailed guidance on the inspection tasks to be performed and the manner of completing the reporting forms. The trainee deviates from these guidelines only with the approval of the supervising specialist.

Factor 4, Complexity -- Level 4-2 -- 75 points

Assignments consist of a number of routine measuring, data collecting, summarizing, and reporting duties related to and performed in support of the work of higher grade specialists.

The trainee must make a variety of choices as to applicable regulations, sources of reliable information, ways of framing interview questions, the manner of presenting the findings, and which of a few precedent situations to follow.

The work involves: recognizing obvious vehicle defects via visual or auditory inspection or by measurement with such instruments as tire tread gauges or noise level meters; discerning obvious discrepancies in carrier records by comparing them to other more reliable records or known facts; and citing the applicable regulations being violated. Operating conditions and circumstances differ from one case to another.

Factor 5, Scope and Effect -- Level 5-1 -- 25 points

The trainee performs routine measuring, data collecting, summarizing, and other simple tasks related to preparing for and carrying out vehicle inspections, safety surveys, accident or enforcement investigations, and other projects.

The work is done primarily for training purposes, but serves to relieve higher grade employees of some of the more repetitive, routine, and time-consuming aspects of their enforcement and safety promotion duties.

Factor 6, Personal Contacts -- Level 6-2 -- 25 points

The trainee's personal contacts are with other specialists and agency employees, carrier officials and employees, State highway patrol and inspection personnel, and members of the general public. Contacts with carrier representatives or State personnel usually occur away from the office but in the presence of a higher grade specialist who introduces the trainee and explains the purpose of the visit.

Factor 7, Purpose of Contacts -- Level 7-1 -- 20 points

The trainee's personal contacts are for the purpose of reporting the results of measurements and observations, obtaining or verifying information from carrier officials, or answering routine questions from the general public or others.

Factor 8, Physical Demands -- Level 8-2 -- 20 points

Vehicle inspection activities involve regular and recurring periods of standing, bending, climbing about trucks, stooping, and occasionally some lifting or tipping of boxes, crates, or drums to read container labels. Usually, the vehicle driver or other carrier personnel is available to do whatever heavy lifting is required.

Factor 9, Work Environment -- Level 9-2 -- 20 points

The trainee actively participates in roadside vehicle inspections and accident investigations which involve regular and recurring movement around moving vehicles, exposure to dirt, grease, fumes, noise, irritant chemicals from leaking containers, and, occasionally, inclement weather. As required, the employee wears protective clothing such as safety shoes, a hardhat, and coveralls to minimize hazards or discomfort.

TOTAL POINTS – 985

MOTOR CARRIER SAFETY SPECIALIST, GS-7, BMK#1

Duties

This is an advanced trainee position located in an agency's regional motor carrier safety office. The assignments are designed to expose the employee to a wide range of program functions and to refine program knowledge and inspection and investigative skills to allow performance of higher level duties. At the same time, the duties provide technical support to higher grade employees conducting onsite safety and hazardous materials surveys, inspections, and accident and enforcement investigations. The training process includes both formal classroom instruction and intensive on-the-job training. The employee:

- Studies instructional materials, the operations manual, and the motor carrier safety and hazardous materials regulations which govern the Federal motor carrier safety program;
- Receives classroom and on-the-job training in motor carrier safety, the placarding and handling requirements for transporting hazardous materials, the techniques for accident site documentation and interviewing witnesses, standard inspection and investigative techniques, and the special operating characteristics and problems of the various classes of motor carriers;
- Develops skill in standard work techniques by performing portions of assignments under the guidance of higher grade specialists. Such duties include:
 - X reviewing and summarizing information in the agency's investigative files to assist other specialists in preparing for a safety survey or complaint investigation by identifying specific problem areas that might need particularly close review;
 - X planning and conducting entire segments of relatively routine onsite safety surveys (e.g., those involving a carrier with less than 20 drivers, a positive attitude toward compliance, and no past history of serious noncompliance); selecting a representative sample from the carrier's payroll, personnel, maintenance, or other records; reviewing and comparing them for discrepancies or other evidence of violations of the hours of service, driver qualifications, or other applicable regulations; recording and reporting the results; and, after analyzing the facts and circumstances of the case, recommending appropriate corrective action and advising the carrier on resolving the compliance problems;
 - X conducting roadside inspections of trucks and buses to detect missing, worn, or defective parts or to detect drivers operating in excess of the allowable hours of service or without the required license and medical certificate; conducting routine interior and exterior vehicle noise level checks; inspecting hazardous materials shipments for proper placarding; completing the inspection forms citing the drivers and/or carriers for the violations found;

- X interviewing witnesses, participants, or others knowledgeable about an accident, incident, or complaint to obtain factual information;
- X performing follow up inquiries in an enforcement case or accident investigation; assisting in an accident investigation by taking measurements of the accident scene, by taking photographs or preparing diagrams of the site, or by compiling and organizing pieces of documentation for the final report;
- X drafting letters, memoranda, or internal reports on a variety of subjects to answer specific questions on agency policy or procedures from the general public, agency officials, industry representatives or others;
- X tabulating accident, incident, or cargo security data; reviewing and updating agency files on motor carriers of record.

Factor 1, Knowledge Required by the Position -- Level 1-6 -- 950 points

Knowledge of the principles, methods, and legal requirements of the Federal motor carrier safety program, including knowledge of the agency's inspection, compliance enforcement, and technical assistance program activities. The trainee plans and carries out complete roadside vehicle inspections and major factfinding segments of safety compliance surveys and complaint investigations, and answers basic questions on agency policy and procedures.

Practical knowledge of the Federal motor carrier safety regulations and precedent decisions governing trucks and buses operating in interstate and foreign commerce; knowledge of the common exceptions and exemptions applying to the different classes of carriers, commodities hauled or shipped, or operating situations; and skill in applying these knowledge to inspecting all types of trucks and buses for safety hazards, reviewing carrier records for evidence of unsafe operating practices, and explaining the regulations to carriers or drivers found to be in noncompliance.

Practical knowledge of the range of vehicles, operating practices, contract arrangements, route structures, authorities, business organization, and recordkeeping systems commonly employed by the motor carriers and shippers in the area; this knowledge is applied in the course of performing complete vehicle inspections and compliance surveys or investigations. These activities involve: selecting a sample of carrier business records to review for discrepancies or omissions indicative of safety problems; identifying and documenting the problem(s) found; recommending a plan of corrective action, and providing the responsible carrier officials with the technical assistance they need to implement the plan.

Knowledge of conventional factfinding and investigative techniques to establish the nature and seriousness of a compliance problem through personal interviews, selective review of a carrier's business records, and personal observation. The trainee must recognize irregularities in operating records and in statements made by witnesses during an inspection, survey, or investigation; and search out readily available corroborative information to resolve the

discrepancies. Case documentation provides the basis for the conclusions drawn and the action(s) taken.

Factor 2, Supervisory Controls -- Level 2-2 -- 125 points

The trainee typically works with a higher grade employee who assigns routine vehicle inspections and safety surveys or certain factfinding portions of very large projects to be carried out according to general instructions.

The trainee performs the assigned tasks independently, but the higher grade employee is available at the inspection or survey site for advice if unusual situations are encountered.

All inspection or survey reports are reviewed in detail for technical accuracy and completeness until the supervising employee is assured that the trainee can perform a particular type of assignment competently. Most negative inspection findings are considered preliminary and the supervising employee is responsible for making the official determination of noncompliance and taking the required action.

Factor 3, Guidelines -- Level 3-2 -- 125 points

Guidelines include assorted technical bulletins, precedent decisions, portions of the Federal motor carrier safety and hazardous materials regulations, and an extensive operations manual which provides the trainee with specific guidance on inspection, investigation, and reporting procedures.

The trainee determines which regulations apply and which of several established procedures is the most suitable for a given assignment or work situation. When unable to apply the established guidelines, the trainee requests guidance from the supervising employee at the worksite.

Factor 4, Complexity -- Level 4-2 -- 75 points

Assignments consist of a number of measuring, inspection, data collection, summarization, and reporting duties performed in support of higher grade specialists.

The trainee must make a variety of choices as to whether a carrier is subject to the regulations, which regulations apply, which sources of information appear most reliable, how interview questions might be framed to obtain the desired response, how serious are the vehicle defects or noncompliance problems found, and how the findings should be presented.

Factor 4, Complexity -- Level 4-2 -- 75 points (Continued)

The work involves recognizing vehicle defects via visual or auditory inspection or by measurement with such instruments as tire tread gauges or noise level meters; detecting obvious discrepancies in carrier records by comparing them to other more reliable records or known facts; citing the applicable regulations being violated; and proposing practical means of

resolving the problem(s). Operating conditions and circumstances differ from one assignment to another.

Factor 5, Scope and Effect -- Level 5-2 -- 75 points

Assignments are designed to provide the trainee opportunities for refining program knowledge and skills through active participation in safety surveys, vehicle inspections, and complaint, accident, and enforcement investigations.

Findings, conclusions, and reports provide preliminary information on a compliance or safety problem and a possible solution, and constitute the basis for further investigation or action by an employee of higher grade.

Factor 6, Personal Contacts -- Level 6-2 -- 25 points

The trainee's personal contacts are with other specialists and agency employees, State highway patrol and inspection personnel, and members of the general public. Contacts with carrier representatives, State personnel, or witnesses to an accident usually occur away from the office, but in the presence of a higher grade specialist who explains the purpose of the visit.

Factor 7, Purpose of Contacts -- Level 7-2 -- 50 points

The purpose of the personal contacts is to encourage and persuade motor carrier officials and employees to voluntarily comply with applicable Federal safety regulations. During inspections and investigations, the trainee questions carrier officials and employees about the company's operating practices, advises them on the intent and applicability of the regulations, answers questions about the regulations, and attempts to resolve minor obstacles to compliance.

Factor 8, Physical Demands -- Level 8-2 -- 20 points (Continued)

Vehicle inspection activities involve regular and recurring periods of standing, bending, climbing trucks, stooping, and occasionally some lifting or tipping of boxes, crates, or drums to read container labels. Usually, the vehicle driver or other carrier personnel is available to do whatever heavy lifting is required.

Factor 9, Work Environment -- Level 9-2 -- 20 points

The trainee actively participates in roadside vehicle inspections and accident investigations which involve regular and recurring movement around moving vehicles, exposure to dirt, grease, fumes, noise, irritant chemicals from leaking containers, and, occasionally, inclement weather. As required, the employee wears protective clothing such as safety shoes, a hardhat, and coveralls to minimize hazards and discomfort.

TOTAL POINTS -- 1465

MOTOR CARRIER SAFETY SPECIALIST, GS-9, BMK #1

Duties

This position is located in an agency's regional motor carrier safety office. The specialist is assigned limited responsibility for promoting and enforcing the Federal motor carrier safety regulations, hazardous materials regulations, and other applicable regulations in a specific territory. Assignments involve small or medium sized carriers having a relatively good compliance history and/or a compliance problem predicated more on ignorance of the law and appropriate safety practices than willful violation of the regulations. Assignments are designed to involve the specialist in managing an areawide program and in planning and performing the full range of compliance functions. They serve to further refine the specialist's program knowledge and skills by providing opportunities to deal independently with a wide variety of problems normally encountered in implementing a compliance program. The employee:

- Independently plans, prepares for, and conducts complete safety and hazardous materials compliance surveys of carrier's dispatching, maintenance, inspection, and operating practices to assess compliance with applicable regulations;
- Investigate complaints of violations of the hours of service or other applicable regulations when no precedent-setting problems are anticipated and standard factfinding techniques are generally adequate; if necessary, collects documentation for prosecution;
- Plans, coordinates, and conducts roadside inspections of trucks and buses to detect excessively high noise levels, missing, worn or defective parts, or to detect drivers operating in excess of allowable hours of service or without the required driving papers; inspects vehicles transporting hazardous materials for compliance with all applicable shipping and handling requirements; and places out-of-service those vehicles or drivers posing an imminent danger of an accident or breakdown;
- Conducts routine investigations of accidents involving motor carriers or incidents involving hazardous materials to determine the facts and probable cause(s) of the occurrences, to determine whether Federal laws and regulations were violated, and to generate recommendations for remedial action to prevent similar accidents;
- Promotes voluntary compliance with the motor carrier safety regulations by giving safety talks and demonstrations to drivers on such things as log preparation and pretrip inspection techniques; provides carrier officials with interpretations and explanations of the regulations; and assists them in identifying and resolving potential safety compliance problems;
- Prepares written reports of inspections and investigations and drafts letters and memoranda to answer questions on a variety of subjects from the general public, agency officials, industry representatives, and others;

- Assists higher grade specialists by performing some of the factfinding and documentation duties in very complex surveys, indepth accident investigations, or enforcement cases where the evidence is scattered or hidden or where widespread and deliberate falsification of records to cover up flagrant and serious violation of the regulations is suspected;
- Assists higher grade specialists in preparing for, and participates in, meetings with State and local government officials, employees of other Federal agencies, and representatives of the motor carrier industry and individual carriers; through discussions promotes increased cooperation, uniformity of action, and/or methods for achieving mutual goals and voluntary compliance with the safety regulations;
- Receives additional classroom and on-the-job training in accident investigation techniques and transportation and handling of hazardous materials.

Factor 1, Knowledge Required by the Position -- Level 1-6 -- 950 points

Knowledge of the principles, methods, and legal requirements of the Federal motor carrier safety program, including practical knowledge of the agency's inspection, enforcement, and technical assistance program activities. The specialist applies this knowledge in performing inspections and investigations involving carriers who do not have a past history of serious noncompliance or who generally are receptive to accepting assistance in correcting the problems detected. The facts of the case, or other information sought, usually can be obtained from application of established factfinding methods, procedures, and precedents.

Practical knowledge of the Federal motor carrier safety regulations, the hazardous materials regulations, and related precedent decisions governing trucks and buses operating in interstate and foreign commerce; knowledge of the common exceptions and exemptions applying to the different classes of carriers, commodities hauled or shipped, or operating situations; and skill in applying these knowledge to inspecting all types of trucks and buses for safety hazards, reviewing carrier operating practices for evidence of violations of the regulations, and explaining the regulations and program requirements to carriers or drivers found to be in non-compliance.

Practical knowledge of the range of vehicles, operating practices, contract arrangements, route structures, authorities, business organizations, and recordkeeping systems commonly employed by the motor carriers and shippers in the assigned area. This knowledge is applied in performing vehicle inspections, compliance surveys, and enforcement investigations to detect and document violations of the regulations, to identify who or what is responsible for the safety problems discovered, and to develop a plan for corrective action.

Practical knowledge of conventional factfinding and investigative techniques to establish the nature and seriousness of a compliance problem through personal interviews, selective review of a carrier's business records, and personal observation. The specialist must recognize discrepancies and deficiencies in operating records and in statements made by witnesses during an inspection, survey, or investigation, and searches out available corroborative or additional

information to resolve the issues raised. Proper case documentation provides the basis for the conclusions drawn and the action(s) taken.

Factor 2, Supervisory Controls -- Level 2-3 -- 275 points

The employee shares with a higher grade specialist continuing responsibility for promoting and enforcing the Federal motor carrier safety program in the assigned territory. For the most part, the employee plans and carries out work assignments independently within the general parameters (i.e., regional priorities and available resources) defined by the supervising specialist. The supervisor or another senior employee can be reached by telephone for consultation, if needed, but typically is consulted only if a particularly unusual situation without a clear precedent is encountered.

The employee independently plans and carries out inspections, compliance surveys, investigations, and other assigned elements of the area work program, and resolves most problems which arise in accordance with previous training, inspections, or agency policy.

Inspection worksheets, survey reports, letters, and other work products are reviewed for technical soundness and conformance to legal requirements, regulations, and established policies and procedures. Due to the nature of inspection work, this review must often take place after the report, notice of violations, or out-of-service order has been submitted to the carrier officials or driver for action. Occasional joint inspection activities provide the supervising employee with opportunities to review the specialist's work methods.

Factor 3, Guidelines -- Level 3-3 -- 275 points

Guidelines include instructional training materials, chemical dictionaries, an extensive operations manual (including procedural guides for conducting inspections and investigations), agency policy directives and technical bulletins, precedent decisions and administrative interpretations, standing oral instructions, samples of work products, and the Federal motor carrier safety and hazardous materials regulations. While these guidelines generally cover basic aspects of the work and are available for reference, they lack specificity on the wide range of operating situations, problems, or issues with which the employee is expected to deal effectively and efficiently in carrying out the overall assignment.

The specialist uses judgment in selecting, interpreting, adapting, and independently applying appropriate guidelines to the particular situation to best accomplish the objectives of the assignment.

Factor 4, Complexity -- Level 4-3 -- 150 points

The assignment involves implementing parts of the comprehensive compliance program for the assigned area. In implementing the work plan the specialist plans and carries out roadside vehicle inspections, complete safety and hazardous materials compliance surveys, complaint investigations, accident and enforcement investigations, and varied safety education services. The work involves identifying and documenting specific violations of the Federal safety

regulations to define and assess the nature and seriousness of the underlying safety problem(s). The means used include interviewing witnesses, reviewing various carrier business records for discrepancies or other irregularities, and making personal observations and inspections.

Onsite, the specialist establishes coverage of the regulations, assesses the responsible person's attitude toward compliance, and selects a factfinding approach suited to the situation. From the preliminary facts developed, the specialist determines the extent of sampling and the type and amount of documentary evidence required to establish the facts of the case. The specialist recognizes discrepancies in the records or in witnesses' statements, develops and pursues leads to additional or corroborative information, sorts relevant and reliable facts from the mass of data accumulated, and draws conclusions as to: (1) the nature and seriousness of the problem(s) identified, and (2) a plan for corrective action suited to the situation (e.g., an out-of-service order, technical assistance now with follow up inspection at a later date, or enforcement proceedings).

The facts, conditions, and circumstances surrounding a compliance problem are developed in the course of the factfinding and provide the basis for any subsequent action on the part of the specialist. The companies with whom the specialist independently deals, tend to be small or medium sized carriers without a history of serious noncompliance and with a relatively simple safety or compliance problem to be identified and resolved. Standard factfinding techniques are generally adequate for developing the facts of a case, no precedent-setting problems are anticipated, and the carrier officials and employees are generally cooperative.

Factor 5, Scope and Effect -- Level 5-3 -- 150 points

The range of inspections, compliance surveys, and complaint or enforcement investigations planned and carried out by the specialist provide opportunities to deal independently with a variety of safety and compliance problems, and involve the employee in managing an areawide compliance program. These work efforts promote in the assigned area a higher level of carrier compliance with the regulations.

Placing a vehicle or driver out-of-service until a hazardous condition is corrected, or citing a company for serious violations of the regulations, can lead to heavy economic penalties for the driver, shipper, or carrier at fault. The consequences include loss of productivity, a driver's becoming subject to fines or criminal penalties, or the company's suffering the loss of operating authority. At the same time, the identification and elimination of unsafe operating practices fosters a safer driving environment for the motoring public.

Factor 6, Personal Contacts -- Level 6-3 -- 60 points

Most personal contacts are with carrier officials and their employees, drivers, State and local law enforcement personnel, and other specialists. They usually are nonroutine, unscheduled, unstructured, and occur away from the motor carrier safety office in the course of roadside vehicle inspections, onsite compliance surveys, and complaint or accident investigations. Occasionally they involve members of the general public who are lodging complaints about unsafe carrier activity or who are witnesses or participants in an accident.

Factor 7, Purpose of Contacts -- Level 7-2 -- 50 points

The overall purpose of the specialist's personal contacts is to promote and enforce compliance with Federal motor carrier safety regulations. For the most part, the individuals with whom the specialist deals are cooperative and open to correcting the problems identified. However, occasionally the employee may be required to interview persons who are suspicious or who are reluctant to cooperate for fear of reprisals or getting involved in possible legal action. The employee must use tact and persuasion in dealing with such witnesses.

Factor 8, Physical Demands -- Level 8-2 -- 20 points

Inspection activities involve regular and recurring periods of standing, bending, climbing, stooping, and, occasionally, some lifting or tipping of items such as boxes, crates, or drums to read container labels or check for leakage. Usually the vehicle driver or other carrier personnel is available to do whatever heavy lifting is required.

Factor 9, Work Environment -- Level 9-2 -- 20 points

Roadside vehicle inspections, accident investigations, and compliance surveys involve regular and recurring exposure to dirt, grime, grease, dust, high noise levels, outdoor weather conditions, spilled or leaking hazardous materials, and/or moving vehicles. Special protective clothing, such as a hardhat, safety glasses, steel-toed shoes, coveralls, or other protective gear is worn as needed to lessen the degree of risk or discomfort.

TOTAL POINTS -- 1950

MOTOR CARRIER SAFETY SPECIALIST, GS-11 BMK #1

Duties

This position is located in an agency's motor carrier safety field office. The specialist is assigned ongoing responsibility for personally administering the Federal motor carrier safety program in a specific territory. This territory encompasses parts of two states and several metropolitan areas, and is home to 1,000 to 1,500 motor carriers of all types and sizes. In promoting and enforcing carrier compliance with the Federal motor carrier safety regulations, the hazardous materials regulations, and other applicable laws and regulations, the specialist acts independently within general program objectives and a largely self-developed and self-adjusted area work plan. The employee:

- Analyzes survey and inspection results, accident and incident reports, complaints, and other information to identify safety and compliance problems or trends among the motor carriers and shippers in the assigned areas; assists in developing an annual area work planning guide for the territory consistent with national and regional goals and emphasis,

but geared to address the most critical local problems; and within the framework of the plan performs the following duties:

- X independently plans and carries out a schedule of periodic safety and hazardous materials compliance surveys of carrier and shipper operations; through personal interviews, examination of various carrier records, and comparison with other known facts, determines whether the company is in compliance or whether the violations found indicate deliberate and conscious disregard of applicable regulations; makes a
- X preliminary determination whether prosecution is warranted and evidence is sufficient to support enforcement action; if not warranted, discusses the findings with corporation officials, offers technical assistance in resolving the problems, and secures their agreement to take corrective action; follows up at a later time to ascertain compliance;
- X conducts investigations into alleged violations either as follow-up to a survey or in response to complaints; upon advice and approval by the supervisor, initiates enforcement investigations to develop supportive evidence of the kinds and volume needed to sustain criminal or civil forfeiture actions, cease and desist orders, or other proceedings; documents in detail the frequency and nature of the violations, any patterns which exist, and circumstances which prove deliberate and conscious violation of applicable regulations; closes investigations administratively upon concurrence of the supervisor when investigation shows that enforcement is unjustified; refers investigative reports disclosing serious violations to the supervisor for review and approval of action proposed;
- X plans and conducts unannounced roadside inspections of interstate commercial motor vehicles and drivers' documentation to spot-check over-the-road operating practices and carrier or driver compliance with applicable safety regulations; notes deficiencies and declares out-of-service any vehicles found to be imminently hazardous to highway safety, or any driver found to be unqualified or in violation of the hours-of-service regulations;
- X conducts indepth investigations into the causes of highway accidents and hazardous materials incidents involving motor carriers to determine whether Federal laws have been violated and to develop information for use in refining the regulations and in furthering the agency's accident prevention program; organizes the facts and information accumulated through interviews, physical examination of the wreckage and accident scene, and other means into a detailed written report identifying the probable cause(s) of the event and proposing recommendations for preventive action; participates as a team member in investigations of major accidents involving such things as multiple fatalities, technically unusual circumstances, or widespread public or industry interest;
- X provides technical assistance and information, frequently as an organizer or participant in safety meetings, seminars, or training programs, on the Federal

program, motor carrier safety, hazardous materials transportation safety, and other topics to carrier officials and employees, industry representatives, State and local law enforcement and emergency response personnel, and others interested in highway safety; provides written or oral interpretations of the regulations within the framework of the operations manual and other guides; drafts letters, memoranda, and internal reports to respond to questions on a variety of technical subjects; maintains liaison and effective working relations with other Federal and State officials involved in highway safety;

- X evaluates petitions for a waiver from limited portions of the Federal safety regulations, and makes recommendations to approve or deny the waiver.
- Keeps abreast of industry problems and trends, vehicle technology, rapidly changing hazardous materials developments, the activities of other Federal, State and local agencies, State regulations relative to motor carrier safety, and legal interpretations and court rulings that impact the program.

Factor 1, Knowledge Required by the Position -- Level 1-7 -- 1250 points

In addition to broad knowledge of the safety principles, compliance methods, factfinding and problem-solving techniques, and legal requirements of the Federal motor carrier safety program:

- thorough knowledge of the Federal motor carrier safety regulations, the hazardous materials regulations, and related precedent decisions and interpretations; knowledge of the reactions of hazardous commodities to various environmental conditions and of safe procedures for containing or controlling fires, explosions, or leaks of such materials; and detailed knowledge of the various exemptions and exceptions applying to different classes of carriers, commodities hauled or shipped, and operating situations. The employee applies this knowledge in the course of administering the agency's compliance enforcement and safety promotion program in the assigned territory;
- broad knowledge of the business and operating practices, corporate structures, subterfuges, and safety compliance problems of the interstate motor carriers and shippers in the assigned area. The specialist applies this knowledge in implementing a comprehensive compliance program for the area; in detecting and documenting serious violations even when the evidence is fragmented or has been deliberately falsified; in identifying the root causes of complex safety and compliance problems; and in developing and negotiating practical solutions to these problems;
- skill in oral and written communication to interview hostile or uncooperative witnesses for information necessary to an investigation; to provide expert testimony in civil or administrative proceedings; to analyze and organize the disparate pieces of information gathered by factfinding into a clear, concise, written or oral report of the facts; and to explain and interpret the principles and requirements of the Federal motor carrier safety program so as to persuade noncomplying individuals or companies to comply voluntarily;

- knowledge of the varied causative factors of motor carrier highway accidents and skill in applying conventional accident investigation and analysis techniques to determine probable cause and to develop recommendations for corrective measures.

Factor 2, Supervisory Controls -- Level 2-4 -- 450 points

The director of the regional motor carrier safety office or other employee responsible for coordinating program activities in the State assign to the specialist continuing responsibility for promoting and enforcing carrier compliance with Federal safety regulations in a specific territory. In consultation with the supervisor, the specialist develops an area work planning guide that takes into account national and regional program priorities, the critical needs and problems of the assigned area, and program resource limitations.

Within general program objectives and the area planning guide, the specialist, working alone and away from the home office most of the time, independently plans and carries out a program of inspections, investigations, and safety promotion activities. Given the various conditions and situations encountered, and the relative isolation from immediate technical assistance from the supervisor or a regional specialist, independent judgment must be exercised in resolving most of the conflicts and problems which arise. Where expert technical assistance is urgently required, a regional specialist usually can be contacted by telephone. The employee routinely files a travel schedule and periodic reports summarizing the progress of major investigations or other projects, and informs the supervisor of potentially far-reaching or controversial problems and issues.

Most decisions made by the specialist and the inspection and investigation reports are subject to after-the-fact review and are reviewed primarily for their effectiveness in promoting safety in the territory. Potentially controversial recommendations, such as ones relating to major enforcement action or accident causation, are reviewed in terms of their feasibility relative to the supporting documentation or other considerations, their practicality, and their compatibility with agency program goals and policies.

Factor 3, Guidelines -- Level 3-3 -- 275 points

Guidelines include an extensive operations manual, agency policy directives and technical bulletins, precedent decisions and interpretations, standing oral instructions, and Federal motor carrier safety and hazardous materials regulations. While these guidelines generally apply to most aspects of the work and are available for reference, they lack specificity to the variety of operating situations, conditions, problems, or issues with which the specialist is expected to deal in carrying out the overall assignment.

The specialist uses judgment in selecting, interpreting, adapting, and independently applying appropriate guidelines to the particular situation or problem at hand so as to best accomplish the objectives of the individual task or assignment.

Factor 4, Complexity -- Level 4-4 -- 225 points

The overall assignment involves implementing a comprehensive area work plan that addresses not only the national and regional program priorities, but also the critical safety problems

identified by the specialist. Through the inspection programs, compliance surveys, enforcement investigations, and technical assistance activities outlined in the plan, the specialist enforces and promotes a higher level of compliance by the assigned area's 1000-1500 motor carriers and shippers of hazardous materials. The operating situations and safety compliance problems encountered vary considerably from one assignment to another.

The specialist must consider a unique combination of factors in assessing the nature and seriousness of a carrier's noncompliance and in determining the best approach toward dealing with carrier officials and satisfactorily resolving the problem. Among the factors considered are: the company's size, the extent of the problems identified, the carrier's accident ratio, its past history of complaints, and the attitude of company officials toward voluntary compliance.

Defining and documenting the problems through factfinding, and arriving at practical solutions through analysis of the information gathered, is complicated by the fact that generally only a sample of the company's business records can be reviewed. Moreover these records and much of the information upon which the specialist must rely are to a large extent under the direct control of others who are sometimes hostile to any form of government interference and are not above concealing or falsifying records to hide a serious problem or to frustrate an investigation. Given the varying operating situations encountered, the range of types and sizes of carriers, and the differing attitudes of individuals toward safety and government regulation, the specialist must vary the approach to suit the situation and circumstances at hand.

The specialist must plan activities to provide maximum coverage of all program elements and effective use of limited program resources. This involves developing an itinerary and reordering priorities as new problems arise. The specialist must develop onsite sufficient data to define the problem(s) under investigation; must then analyze the many interrelated pieces of information developed in personal interviews, record audits, and other means to identify the root causes; and finally must select a strategy for convincing company officials to correct the problems and to comply voluntarily. Factfinding and analysis of the information requires making numerous judgments as to the relevance and reliability of the data, the truthfulness of a witness, the best means of documenting a problem, and the sufficiency of the documentation for supporting a planned action.

Factor 5, Scope and Effect -- Level 5-3 -- 150 points

The specialist plans and carries out a comprehensive program of vehicle inspections, compliance surveys, enforcement investigations, and technical assistance services to enforce and promote a higher degree of compliance by the assigned area's carriers and shippers. These activities involve identifying, documenting, and resolving a wide variety of difficult safety and compliance problems.

Placing a vehicle or driver out-of-service until a hazardous condition is corrected, citing a company for serious noncompliance, or recommending that the agency initiate enforcement proceedings against a scofflaw can have significant economic impact on the driver, shipper, or carrier at fault. Consequences include loss of productivity, a driver or company becoming subject to fines or criminal penalties, or the carrier suffering the loss or restriction of its

operating authority. At the same time, fair and even enforcement in the assigned area improves the credibility of the nationwide program while fostering a safer driving environment for the motoring public.

Factor 6, Personal Contacts -- Level 6-3 -- 60 points

Most personal contacts are with carrier officials and their employees, drivers, State and local law enforcement and firefighting personnel, and other specialists. They usually are nonroutine, unscheduled, and unstructured, and occur away from the motor carrier safety office in the course of roadside vehicle inspections, onsite compliance surveys, and complaint or accident investigations. Occasionally they involve members of the general public who are lodging complaints about unsafe carrier activity or who are witnesses or participants in an accident.

Factor 7, Purpose of Contacts -- Level 7-3 -- 120 points

The overall purpose of the specialist's personal contacts is to promote and enforce compliance with Federal motor carrier safety regulations. While investigating accidents or complaints of unsafe operating practices, or in documenting serious and flagrant noncompliance to support civil or criminal prosecution, the specialist frequently must interview witnesses who are hostile or unwilling to cooperate because of fear of reprisals, personal liability, or reluctance to be involved in possible legal action. The specialist must use tact and persuasion in dealing with such people, and in convincing uncooperative, cost-conscious drivers or carrier managers that safety compliance is both the law and good business.

Factor 8, Physical Demands -- Level 8-2 -- 20 points

Inspection activities involve regular and recurring periods of standing, bending, climbing, stooping, and occasionally some lifting or tipping of moderately heavy items such as boxes, crates, or drums to read container labels or check for leakage. Usually the vehicle driver or other carrier personnel is available to do whatever heavy or recurring lifting is required.

Factor 9, Work Environment -- Level 9-2 -- 20 points

Roadside vehicle inspections, accident investigations, and compliance surveys involve regular and recurring exposure to dirt, grime, grease, dust, high noise levels, outdoor weather conditions, spilled or leaking hazardous materials, and/or moving vehicles. Special protective clothing, such as a hardhat, safety glasses, steel-toed shoes, coveralls, or other protective gear is worn as needed to lessen the degree or risk or discomfort.

TOTAL POINTS -- 2570