United States
Office of Personnel Management

Philadelphia Oversight Division
William J. Green, Jr. Federal Building
600 Arch Street
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19106-1596

In Reply Refer To: Your Reference:

OPM decision number: C-0818-06-01, 8/15/97
PH:OD:97-19

PERSONAL
[appellant's name]
Engineering Draftsman
Directorate of Public Works
Engineering Division
[activity name] Army [large military post]
[activity location]

Dear [appellant's name]:

This is our decision on the classification appeal filed with our office, which we accepted under the authority contained in section 5112(b) of title 5, U.S. Code.

This appellate decision constitutes a certificate that is mandatory and binding on administrative, certifying, payroll, disbursing, and accounting offices of the Government. It is the final administrative decision on the classification of this position, and is not subject to further appeal. It is subject to review only under the limited conditions and time limits specified in title 5 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 511.603 and 511.613 and the Introduction to the Position Classification Standards (Introduction), Appendix 4. It must be implemented according to the provisions contained in 5 CFR 511.612.

Position Information

Appellants:	[two appellant's names]
Current Classification:	Engineering Draftsman, GS-818-6
Position Description:	70320
Requested Classification:	Engineering Draftsman, GS-818-7
OPM Decision:	Engineering Draftsman, GS-818-6
Organizational Information:	U.S. Department of Army [large military post] Directorate of Public Works Engineering Division [activity location]

Analysis and Decision

In considering your appeal, we carefully reviewed all the information submitted by you and your co-appellant [name], or on your behalf; information obtained during telephone interviews with you and your co-appellant on July 22, 1997 and August 4, 1997, and a telephone interview with your immediate supervisor, [name], Chief, Engineering Division, on July 31, 1997; and other pertinent classification information provided by your agency at our request.

It is our decision that your position is classified properly as Engineering Draftsman, GS-818-6. Accordingly, your appeal is denied.

In your appeal letter of April 14, 1997, you stated that you would "like to appeal the results of Classification Review of Engineering Draftsman GS-818-06 positions dated September 19, 1996 conducted by [servicing personnel office name and location]." You further stated, "I feel that an 'HONEST' review of the positions 'was not conducted' and would like someone from 'outside [activity name]' to review their findings . . . " "If you would review the level of work depicted in the Position Description submitted for CLASSIFICATION ADVISORY and make a comparison between this work and that which is depicted in the current Classification Standard 'TS-4' at a GS-7 level you would see the work depicted is at a GS-7 level." [co-appellant's name] appeal rationale dated April 8, 1997, also states he believes that the desk audit conducted by the [activity] was not performed properly.

[co-appellant's name] also stated in his appeal rationale, "I feel that the use of AUTOCAD places a great deal more and demanding technological duties for our drafting positions." You also refer to use of computers to make computer aided drawings in your appeal rationale. Both you and [co-appellant's name] disagreed with the [activity] characterization that this is a technological advancement designed to assist the draftsman perform his or her duties (i.e., portraying engineering and architectural ideas and information through drawings). Integral to your appeal rationale is your belief that your PD of record describes work warranting a higher grade level. In addition, your supervisor, in his letter of April 15, 1997, stated that a relatively minor drafting error on projects prepared for competitive bidding could result in substantial additional cost to the government for a contract modification. He also stated that your positions have assumed additional responsibilities over the years through accretion of duties as the workload has increased and the staffing has decreased.

Your appeal submissions raise several procedural issues warranting clarification. All positions subject to the Classification Law contained in title 5, U.S. Code, must be classified in conformance with published position classification standards (PCS's) issued by the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) or, if there are not directly

applicable PCS's, consistently with related PCS's for similar kinds of work. The classification appeal process is a de novo review that includes an official determination as to the duties and responsibilities assigned to your position and performed by you, and constitutes the proper application of published PCS's to those duties and responsibilities. Thus, any action taken by your activity before your appeal to OPM concerning your position is not germane to our review. It is an established classification principle that only the effect of properly performed work is to be considered in the classification appeal process. Therefore, the size of your workload and the quality of your work, are not germane to the classification appeal process. They are matters covered by the performance management and awards programs.

We also believe there is some misunderstanding concerning the basis of classifying a position. A **position description (PD)** is the official record of the major duties and responsibilities assigned to a position by a responsible management official, i.e., a person with authority to assign work to a position. A **position** is the combined duties and responsibilities that make up the work performed by an employee. Title 5, U.S. Code, section 5106 prescribes the use of these duties and responsibilities, and the qualifications required by these duties and responsibilities, as the basis for determining the classification of a position. The Introduction provides that "As a rule, a position is classified on the basis of the duties actually performed." Additionally, 5 CFR 511.607(a)(1), in discussing PD accuracy issues, provides that OPM will decide classification appeals based on the actual duties and responsibilities assigned by management **and** performed by the employee. The point here is that it is a real operating position that is classified, and not simply the PD. The duties classified must be assigned to the position and performed by its occupant(s).

Our analysis of your position is based, in large part, on the information developed during our telephone interviews with you and [co-appellant's name] and an interview with your supervisor. This information substantially clarified the duties and responsibilities contained in your PD of record that you, [co-appellant's name], and your supervisor have certified are current and accurate. We find your work assignments do not represent the complexity and uniqueness, or reflect the exercise of expert draftsman knowledge and skill highlighted in your PD and your appeal rationale. Rather, we find these projects are more limited in scope, and are performed by application of established occupational methods, techniques and practices. Our fact-finding revealed your PD of record covers the work assigned by management and performed by you. However, it overstates the difficulty and complexity of work assigned.

The [activity] mission is to provide for the maintenance, manufacturing, overhaul, systems integration, testing, issue, technical assistance, and life cycle support services for communications-electronics components and systems. The mission of the Directorate of Public Works is to maintain, repair, replace, and renovate the entire

installation physical plant including buildings, utilities, grounds and equipment; provide operations of utility systems, equipment management and accountability, master planning, and transportation, bus, and taxi service; execute the Department of Defense (DOD) personal property moving and storage programs for assigned geographical areas of responsibility; and, accomplish supply management, initiate requisition, maintain accountability, and process documentation for Depot property stock.

The Engineering Division is responsible for repairing and maintaining [activity] facilities encompassing approximately 1,300 acres and 145 buildings (approximately four million square feet of interior space) of various types of construction. The Engineering Division performs and provides technical assistance for all fields of engineering in support of Public Works functions. The staff consists of approximately 25 employees, mainly composed of engineers, engineering technicians, and engineering draftsman.

As the only two engineering draftsmen in the Engineering Division, you stated that you are responsible for any drawing and/or drafting of building construction on the Depot and any buildings utility work. The existing buildings primarily were constructed in the 1950's, and require maintenance and renovations to ensure their adequacy for current use and compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Your PD states that your projects require knowledge and ability to select and use a full range of projection techniques and universally recognized symbols to portray unusual and complex designs with a high degree of precision in the architectural field and the following engineering areas: civil; mechanical; electrical; and structural as they relate to site, utility, facility, building repair, and modification and construction.

Your supervisor stated that most of your drawings are two dimensional or orthographic projections that include an elevation view and a side view. In addition, he stated, your drawings must be sufficiently accurate and with enough detail to provide for competitive bidding, as your contracts cannot require contractors to physically look at a site or project out for bid.

You stated that approximately one-half of your assignments involve drafting plans to renovate both the production and administrative areas of warehouses, and storage space for the Defense Logistics Agency (DLA), a tenant activity at the [activity]. You claimed that this type of work is more complicated than drafting new structures, since existing fixtures and utilities, e.g., electrical lines, ductwork, heating systems, steam pipes and stairways, must be considered. The remaining projects include less complicated drawings, e.g., painting projects, or paving roads, and updating lighting and/or ventilation.

You also claimed you spend a considerable amount of time (50 percent) researching information and specifications using technical publications and manufacturers' catalogs for design characteristics such as dimensions, tolerances, code requirements, and, installation procedures. You select, interpret, and apply these technical guidelines when precedent drawings are not applicable. In addition, you said that using computer aided drawing software (AUTOCAD) contributes to the complexity of your projects. You believe that AUTOCAD adds a significant dimension to your position that is not credited in the current GS-818 PCS. Our fact-finding confirmed that you generate computer drawings using various file naming conventions, layering or leveling definitions and conventions, plot scales, color definitions, special libraries and symbols, line weights and types, and lettering styles. In addition, you operate plotters to produce a usable finished drawing from computer generated files.

You also are responsible for maintaining the Drawing Index Book for the [activity]. There are approximately 7,000 "as-built" drawings indexed in the book. These drawings are manually numbered and referenced by the building number, and trade, (e.g., architectural, structural, heating/ventilation, etc.). The goal of your division is to convert as many drawings as possible to the AUTOCAD system.

Your supervisor stated that approximately one-half of the contracts at the [activity] over $100,000 are contracted out to Architectural and Engineering (A&E) firms through the Corps of Engineers, [location] District for drafting. A decision to contract out the projects is made based on the size and current workload of in-house staff.

Examples of projects to which you have been assigned are summarized below:

(1) You prepared plans to upgrade Warehouse 4, Bay 2, (200 feet by 200 feet) previously used as a work area to repair electronic equipment. The plans included renovated office space, suspended ceilings, electrical wiring for a public announcement system, lighting, floor treatment, a power substation and a supporting foundation. The project included the drafting of plans to demolish existing walls, ceilings and piping. You drafted plans to remove asbestos that included sealing the area, and constructing temporary showers at the entrance for the asbestos removal personnel.

(2) You prepared plans to widen a street on the [activity]. You stated you were provided a site map of the [activity] with the street requiring widening blacked out. Planning required several technical considerations. The street was internal to the [activity] and had to be maintained according to the "Installation Design Guide" (the standards for the [activity], and [state] Department of Transportation standards. These standards include

specifications on drainage, pavement type, and degree of compacting, catch basins, and the elevation of pipes so that surface water flows into storm drain lines. In addition, the plans included underground wiring for street lamps. You stated that this type of project requires a higher level of precision than the typical construction plans you are assigned. This level of accuracy and precision is detailed in the standards mentioned above and must be followed to avoid problems with the roadway surface and life span of the road itself.

(3) You prepared plans to update air-conditioning ductwork in Building 18. You stated an engineer gave you a rough sketch of a layout. When drafted, you found the type of ductwork requested would not conform with the existing construction. You drafted a layout that included more shallow, wider ducts that could be accommodated within the existing construction. The project manager approved the revisions to the plan.

(4) You prepared plans to upgrade shipping docks in Building 1-B. This dock is used several times each day by DLA for shipping and receiving. The plans included new cargo bay doors, dock levelers that would lower and raise to meet trucks, door seals, locks, and a reinforced concrete pit to house the electrical wiring for lifts. As drawings are used competitively to bid projects, several considerations had to be taken into account when drafting these plans. Manufacturers use various types of dock levelers with different specifications, and your drawings had to allow for several manufacturers to be able to bid on the project using their own specific product.

(5) You prepared plans to redesign the 1,200 foot canopy roof of Building 5. The canopy roof was pitched back toward the building to prevent water from running into railcars stopped at the loading dock. This project required plans to replace the current canopy with an aluminum stand-in-seam metal roof, tie it into the existing structure, calculate expansion joints on the dock and canopy so that the building and canopy expand together and install new wiring for lighting fixtures and fire alarm.

Series and Title Determination

Your agency has determined that your position is classified properly to the Engineering Draftsman Series, GS-818, with which you have not disagreed, and with which we concur. Based on the titling practices contained in the GS-818 PCS, your position is allocated properly as Engineering Draftsman, GS-818.

Grade Level Determination

The GS-818 PCS provide two broad criteria for classifying engineering drafting positions: Nature of Assignment and Level of Responsibility. Neither of these elements should be considered alone as grade determining, but in combination they give a picture of the overall complexity of drafting assignments.

The position classification process requires that the full intent of PCS's must be discerned and applied to classify positions properly. The Introduction recognizes that some positions involve performing different kinds and levels of work that, when evaluated separately in terms of duties, responsibilities, and qualifications required, are at different grade levels. The proper grade of such a position is determined by evaluation of the regularly assigned work that is paramount in the position. Usually the highest level of work performed a majority of the time is grade-determining. When, however, the highest level of work is a smaller portion of the position, it may be grade controlling only if:

-- The work is officially assigned to the position on a regular and recurring basis;

-- It is a significant and substantial part of the overall position (i.e., occupying at least 25 percent of the employee's time); and,

-- The higher level knowledge and skills needed to perform the work would be required in recruiting for the position if it became vacant.

Nature of Assignment

Nature of assignment is defined by the complexity of the design, techniques used, and visual information from which draftsman prepare drawings. The complexity of the design ranges from simple designs involving mostly straight lines, some arcs and circles, few parts, parts with clean, easily visualized interrelationships, and few hidden (i.e., interior) design features to complex designs involve irregular and reverse curves; small, crowded, and hidden details; and many parts with unusual interrelationships and contours. The techniques used range from drawing irregular curved lines with a compass and plotting curves on a coordinate system using certain mathematical principles and more skill than drawing curves with templates (i.e., patterns that come in many shapes and sizes) to more complex techniques using various projection techniques. The projection technique used is less significant than the complexity of the drawing or design involved. A perspective drawing of a simple design may be less difficult to make than an orthographic drawing of a complex design.

As draftsmen progress, the visual information from which they prepare drawings is less accurate and they must determine such things as appropriate arrangements, scales, views, and spacing and location of dimensions and notes. At the higher levels, draftsmen receive layouts, models, photographs, and very rough sketches from which to prepare several views of an object. They also combine design features from several sources into a single drawing. Drawing upon experience in the particular area of engineering or architecture concerned, draftsmen visualize and draw views that are not shown on the information that they receive. They may also prepare drawings from written specifications with no visual materials to use as a base.

The nature of your assignments described previously in this decision closely matches that described in the PCS at both the GS-5 and the GS-6 level. At the GS-5, draftsmen prepare complete sets of orthographic drawings, normally including several views, details and assembly drawings. The designs frequently involve irregular and reverse curves, small and intricate details and hidden design features in combinations that require experienced drafting skill to visualize and portray accurately. They prepare complete sets of drawings of equipment or facilities from incomplete sketches, layouts, or models and supplementary verbal information. Given the purpose of the drawings, they determine what views, sections, stages of assembly, detail and supplementary design information are needed. When the design is easily visualized and without unusual, crowded, and irregular features, GS-5 draftsmen prepare layouts and, in some cases, three-dimensional drawings from sketches, models, and finished orthographic drawings.

Examples of GS-5 assignments are: (1) preparing isometric diagrams from sketches of plumbing or electrical wiring systems of a small building, such as a single family residence; (2) preparing complete sets of shop drawings from layouts or sketches of test equipment to be manufactured locally. To properly describe the design, several cross-sectional and subassembly drawings are necessary. The drawings include the information necessary to make the equipment, such as dimensions, tolerances, fits, fabrication techniques, and standard parts to be used. The draftsman obtains such information verbally from the design originator and from technical handbooks, manuals, and manufacturer's catalogs; and, (3) updating compilation sheets of underground utilities in a geographic area. The draftsman reviews drawings of new underground line proposals by utility companies, plots new lines on compilation sheets to check for interference with any existing lines and, where interference exists, and needed changes are minor, recommends alternative position.

The GS-6 draftsmen, however, prepares drawings that are similar in difficulty and complexity to GS-5, but involve more breadth and variety. The drawings serve a variety of purposes: fabrication and construction; repair, maintenance, and installation; reports and publications; feasibility studies; and displays. GS-6 draftsmen use the full range

of drafting techniques, including three-dimensional projections. They exercise considerable versatility in preparing drawings of such breadth and variety. Other GS-6 draftsmen are assigned to projects where directly applicable precedents are not available. The complexity of the design and techniques used are similar to those described at GS-5.

In contrast to the GS-5 level, however, GS-6 draftsmen are dependent upon a wide variety of precedents and technical guidelines, which are not always directly applicable, to complete their drawings. In this situation the GS-6 draftsman's experience and practical knowledge of the engineering or architectural specialization, especially the kinds of equipment and the functional interrelationships of parts, enable him to visualize and combine complex design features from information encompassed in a variety of sources, including verbal descriptions. The draftsmen may prepare layouts that require a high degree of accuracy and are used by designers to check tolerances, clearances, and dimensions. Illustrative of GS-6 assignments are: (1) In a design and construction organization, preparing sets of drawings of new or changed facilities, equipment, and systems from engineers' sketches, marked up prints, and verbal instructions. Drawings contain information concerning location, design, materials, dimensions, and, standard parts, etc., that is necessary to carry out the construction project. Drawings involve a variety of branches of engineering and include such things as building designs, floor plans, and structures, roadways and parking areas, land contours and drainage patterns, plumbing, heating, air conditioning, and electrical systems, etc.; (2) Preparing a complete set of drawings for a feasibility study of the communications portions of a tunnel to be added to an existing freeway. The tunnel will contain cameras and will be hooked up to a computer several miles away. From old feasibility studies determines the kinds of information needed. Obtains rough sketches and written and verbal information from the engineer. Searching manufacturers' catalogs and standards' manuals for detail descriptions of standard cameras, computers, traffic signs, etc., preparing location plans and drawings of the electrical system using information obtained from road maps, utility maps, and visits to the site. Engineer reviews completed drawings to insure that adequate information is contained to evaluate communications phases of the overall plan; and, (3) Drawing preliminary layout for renovation of a school building, given written descriptions and sketches of desired facilities. Search drawings of existing schools with similar facilities and obtains specifications on per pupil room sizes, mandatory and optional facilities, etc., from manuals. Adapt information to existing building making use of existing walls, stairways, and facilities wherever possible. Refer conflicts between desired facilities and existing space to architect for resolution.

The third GS-5 illustration compares favorably with the type of work assignment described by both you and your supervisor. It discusses the need to check for existing underground utility lines in a geographic area and, where interference exists,

recommending alternative position. This illustration describes the use of analogous knowledge, skills and experience described by you in the air-conditioning ductwork layout project described above. When you drafted the plan, you recognized the requested ductwork would not conform with the existing structure. Your recommended changes to the project manager were accepted. These types of plans, though not original, are complicated by the need to accommodate existing structure. As at the GS-5 level, this assignment required the use of experienced drafting skill to visualize the difficulty in using the proposed ductwork approach. We find this equivalent to dealing with designs that frequently involve irregular and reverse curves, small and intricate details, and hidden design features in combinations that require experienced drafting skill to visualize and portray accurately analogous to the GS-5 level.

The first and third GS-6 illustrations compare favorably with the nature of your assignments described previously in this decision, e.g., the renovation of Warehouse 4, the street widening, and the upgrading of the shipping docks. Those examples capture the variety and breadth and complexity of your assignments, including the dynamic of the "new or changed facility," and, "renovation of existing building" that you discussed as making your work more complex. The knowledge and skills used at this level allow you to visualize and combine complex design features from information encompassed in a variety of sources, including verbal descriptions, such as you would receive from an Engineering Technician or an Engineer. These complex designs require a draftsman to depend upon a variety of precedents and technical guidelines, e.g., Architectural Graphic Standards, Means Graphic Construction Standard, Means Illustrated Construction Dictionary, and previous projects that are similar.

Your drawings are similar in difficulty and complexity to the GS-5 level, but involve more breadth and variety as is typical of the GS-6 level. As at the GS-6 level, you use the full range of drafting techniques, including three-dimensional projections and exercise considerable versatility in preparing drawings of such breadth and variety. The limited scope of the projects that are primarily maintenance oriented, however, reflects a work situation in which the work performed is inherently similar to that worked on previously in the organization. Although there has been new construction at the [activity] in the last ten years, typically these projects are contracted out to an A/E firm, limiting your involvement. For example, the recycling storage facility, recently constructed. was a pre-engineered, off-the-shelf, metal structure. You said that the engineer articulated the design tolerances, (e.g., snow and wind, and, seismic ratings for the area). You drafted the basic building, including footers and foundation, and, performed preliminary site work.

In contrast, GS-7 draftsmen are senior draftsmen who normally have substantial experience in the drafting field and receive unusually difficult drafting assignments. Their assignments are distinguished from the GS-6 level by originality, scope, and/or

complexity. Some GS-7 draftsmen apply initiative and resourcefulness in independently planning the methods by which to portray original designs of complexity and variety. They draw upon their substantial experience in the field and use appropriate technical guidelines to resolve problems. Because of the originality of the design, however, GS-7 draftsmen may be dependent upon discussions with the designer to understand the design concept and to obtain the information needed to make the drawings.

At this level, draftsmen select and use the full range of projection techniques to portray unusual and complex designs. They may prepare layouts that require a high degree of precision and are used by designers to check tolerances, clearances, and dimensions on newly designed equipment where problems are anticipated or have been discovered in the manufacturing, assembly, installation, or operation of the equipment. In addition, GS-7 draftsmen independently plan the method of approach to a project. They serve as coordinators and planners for large projects with responsibility for the adequacy and accuracy of the completed projects.

Illustrative of GS-7 level assignments are: (1) Planning and preparing drawings of new avionics and fire control systems. These systems are novel in concept and differ significantly from established agency precedents. Obtains design information verbally and in rough sketches from the designer and from technical manuals. Designs involve crowded features, irregular shapes, multiple functional relationships, and requirements for achieving extremely precise positional relationships between components; (2) Independently planning the method by which to effectively portray information contained in patent specifications or descriptions. Receives assignments involving inventions in any field of technology. Makes drawings from written specifications and, in some cases, photographs, sketches, or models. Uses three-dimensional projections to portray the design in a single drawing of limited size, with crosshatching and shading to show colors, materials, and contours; and, (3) Receiving assignments that consist of a set or group of drawings for an entire project or a part of a project with independent responsibility for completion. Depending upon the assignment, they may have several lower graded draftsmen assigned to assist in completion of the assignment. Assignments involve complex items embodying design features differing from established agency precedents. These complexities require the draftsman to work in close support of the design originator to receive all necessary information to produce the detail required in the drawing and to obtain familiarity with the knowledge of the subject matter with which the drawings are concerned.

The mission of the Engineering Division is to repair and maintain the [activity] buildings. This mission by itself, does not present the opportunities to draft plans with the depth of originality, scope and/or the complexity envisioned in the PCS at the GS-7 level as described above, e.g., developing extensive, complex designs for major construction projects with a variety of unusual design features for which little information is provided

to the draftsman and deviates substantially from established agency precedents. The primary duties constituting the paramount reason for the existence of your position pertain to the support of professionals and technicians in the Engineering Division by portraying engineering and architectural ideas and information through drawings. Most of your drawings are two-dimensional and require a variety of knowledge, skills and experience in architectural, structural, civil, mechanical and electrical to repair, maintain and renovate existing [activity] structures. The individual projects upon which you work do not exceed the GS-6 grade level. Your work is performed within specific clearly defined criteria, e.g., the renovation of warehouses, the widening of streets with the [activity], and the heating/ventilation work. As at the GS-6 grade level, you work in an organization that provides support services for a number of engineering and architectural specializations and different requirements for data presentation. These complications permit the crediting of this factor at the GS-6 level. While the nature of your assignments requires a wide breadth of knowledge and ability to draft plans using a full range of projection techniques in the following engineering areas, fabrication and construction, mechanical, architectural and structural, the limitations of the mission itself; i.e., the repair and maintenance of the [activity] buildings, falls short of providing the opportunity to draft plans with the depth of complexity, scope and originality envisioned in the GS-818 PCS at the GS-7 level.

Your appeal rationale raised several questions regarding the impact of the use of computer aided drawing software (AUTOCAD) on the grade of your position. You stated that the use of this software to carry out your responsibilities contributes to the complexity of your assignments. You agreed that the software produces drawings with greater accuracy, and that, in time, as additional drawings are created with AUTOCAD, modifications and changes to the original plans will be simpler to make.

AUTOCAD software has been prevalent in the industry for at least ten years. It is a menu driven software program that enables the draftsman to produce drawings with an accuracy rate within one/one thousand of an inch. Stand-alone and networked computers and terminals are an integral part of the modern work place. They give the ability to handle large amounts of data and information. Employees use computers to solve problems and construct and manipulate models in their areas of specialization, e.g., agriculture, economics, personnel, loans, grants, supply budget. They build, add to, and subtract from data bases; correct or change automated records; design report formats; and define and produce reports. Some employees are directly involved in defining the work processes to be automated and selecting the hardware and software to be used by themselves and others. Some employees who specialize in subject matter work also apply computer programming skills to their work, although this is rarely a requirement in the subject matter occupation.

Automation may increase productivity, but typically the basic work processes performed by employees remain substantially unchanged. Your work processes remain unchanged, in that, you receive either verbal instructions or a rough sketch of a project, you spend considerable time researching the technical guidelines and any precedent available, you study the project for overall feasibility, including a site visit to verify your findings, and you determine the type of projections and views that will be needed based on its intended use. At that point you begin to draft the actual plans using AUTOCAD. The paramount subject matter knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to go through that process and produce a finished product of an accurate, neatly drawn portrayal of the project at hand, suitable for competitive bid, remain the same. The kinds of automation involved and the skills required to use them generally replace or supplement work methods and techniques previously performed through manual or machine enhanced processes or in centralized data processing centers. Most commonly, as in your case, neither the purpose of the work nor the products expected of the employee change due to the availability of the computer at the desk. When grades do change because of automation, they are just as likely to decrease as to increase. Sometimes, automation simplifies and, therefore, lowers the grades of positions.

With GS-818 work, the use of automated systems has diminished the importance and use of manual skills associated with complex hand drafting projects. Considering the impact of AUTOCAD, we find that this factor meets, but does not exceed, the GS-6 grade level.

Level of Responsibility

Level of responsibility is measured as to: (1) supervision received; (2) guidelines and precedents used; and, (3) person-to-person contacts. The nature of supervisory instructions is a primary consideration in determining the level of responsibility. The kinds of instructions draftsmen are given control the kinds of judgments they make in preparing their drawings.

On recurring assignments, draftsmen at all levels normally receive very general instructions. Drawings prepared by draftsmen at all levels are normally reviewed. At the higher levels, however, the draftsman's skill is assumed and, normally, the drawings are reviewed for accurate portrayal of the design and adequate information for the purpose.

As draftsmen advance, their guidelines and reference books become more numerous and technical. Higher level draftsmen normally use technical handbooks, catalogs, and specifications to obtain information of design characteristics, such as dimensions, tolerances, physical properties, fabrication techniques, and standard mathematical

tables and formulas. Because of the direct relationship with design originators, person-to-person contacts are a significant measure of the level of responsibility for higher graded draftsmen. Design originators frequently rely upon draftsmen with a practical knowledge of the technical aspects and terminology of the engineering specialty to determine, from very limited technical information, what kinds of drawings are needed and what information should be included in the drawings. Draftsmen at the higher levels normally need to exercise independent judgment. They frequently relieve the designer of many standard and noncritical design considerations and are completely responsible for the preparation of appropriate and adequate drawings.

At the GS-5 level, assignments require complex designs that are familiar to GS-5 draftsman as to objectives to be achieved and without explicit instructions as to work methods. GS-5 draftsmen typically resolve problems that they have previously encountered. In contrast, GS-6 draftsmen depend on a wide variety of precedents and technical guidelines that are not directly applicable to complete their drawings. The GS-6 draftsman is given instructions as to objectives and exercises independent judgment in completing assignments. Unusual assignments receive a more detailed review to insure the methods used are logical and the design is portrayed accurately. GS-7 draftsmen plan, develop, and execute their work with little or no supervisory assistance. They exercise judgment in selecting, rejecting, and interpreting data based upon their knowledge of the design intent, experience in the particular area of specialization and the various uses that will be made of completed drawings. GS-7 draftsmen are normally recognized as experts in their field. In addition, your supervisor's PD of record, certified as accurate by competent management authority, states he plans work to be accomplished, sets priorities, and prepares schedules for completion of work.

Your level of responsibility exceeds the GS-5 and meets the GS-6 grade level in that your projects require you to spend considerable time researching technical reference materials for construction and building standards and searching for similar previous projects from the "as-built" drawing file index book. You also are required, at times, to visit the site physically to ensure that no modifications have been made to the site since the "as-built" drawings were completed. You also update structures, as other renovations are being made to conform with the American with Disabilities Act, where possible. As at the GS-6 grade level, you work independently, but discuss problems and submit 'progress plans' or 'mark-ups' to the project manager who reviews them for objective and accuracy. In contrast, GS-7 draftsmen spend considerable time searching for information. Technical guides and established precedents, although not directly applicable are numerous, and they exercise a finality of judgment on more complex issues not vested in your position.

Contacts at the GS-6 level are similar to those at the GS-5. Where unprecedented designs are involved, however, GS-6 draftsmen use greater knowledge to obtain design information and drawing requirements directly from the designer or project engineer. Your contacts with the project manager and/or the Chief, Engineering Division compares closely to the GS-6 level since they primarily are to clarify issues or bring problems to their attention. GS-7 draftsman are recognized as experts in their field. Other draftsmen come to them for advice on how to portray unusual or complex designs. They may play an active role in the training of lower grade draftsmen. The drafting program in the Division is more restricted in the nature and scope of work than at the GS-7 level and, thus, neither requires nor permits you and your co-appellant to function in this GS-7 role.

Although you perform your duties relatively independently and exercise considerable judgment, your level of responsibility does not fully meet that envisioned in the PCS at GS-7. That is, you do not exercise your independence in dealing with projects of GS-7 difficulty and complexity. In the classification process, the full intent of PCS's must be discerned and applied. Care must be exercised to assure that portions of PCS's are not taken out of context. It is an established classification principle that in applying a narrative PCS, such as the GS-818 PCS, the intent of the PCS requires consideration of the interrelationship of nature of assignment and level of responsibility. Neither increased independence nor increased difficulty of assignments is meaningful unless each is viewed concomitantly with the other. Thus, when applying a narrative PCS in determining grade level, when the nature of assignments and level of responsibility are one level apart, the lower of the two levels usually controls the grade of the positions as a whole to insure that the classification decision is in harmony with the total concept of the grade as depicted in the PCS. Applying this principle, while we find you work with a greater freedom from supervision based on your experience, the nature of your work assignments precludes evaluating this factor at the GS-7 grade level. Accordingly, this factor is properly credited at the GS-6 grade level.

Summary

In summary, we find that both the Nature of Assignment and Level of Responsibility of your position is evaluated properly to the GS-6 level. Thus, your position, as a whole, is classified properly to the GS-6 level by application of the GS-818 PCS. This decision is based on the current facts regarding the duties, responsibilities and qualification requirements of the position and is the basis for its classification.

Although our decision affirms the current classification of the position, our review revealed that the PD does not meet the standards of adequacy stipulated in the Introduction in that it overstates the complexity of the work assigned by management

to your positions. By copy of this decision, we are directing your servicing personnel office to correct your PD to reflect the actual duties and responsibilities assigned to the position as determined in this decision. A compliance report containing a copy of the position description must be submitted to this office no later than 30 days after the date of their receipt of this decision.

Please be assured that this decision is not intended to reflect on your abilities, qualifications, or the quality of your performance. Rather, it reflects our evaluation of the position based on a comparison of the duties and responsibilities with the appropriate standards.

Please inform your co-appellant of our decision.

Sincerely,

/s/ 8/15/97

Robert D. Hendler
Classification Appeals Officer
Philadelphia Oversight Division

cc:

[name]
Director of Personnel
Department of the Army
[activity name and address]

Chief, Position Management
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