

**U.S. Office of Personnel Management
Office of Merit Systems Oversight and Effectiveness
Classification Appeals and FLSA Programs**

**Chicago Oversight Division
230 South Dearborn Street, DPN 30-6
Chicago, Illinois 60604**

**Classification Appeal Decision
Under Section 5112 of Title 5, United States Code**

Appellants: [Appellants' Names]

Agency Classification: Purchasing Agent
GS-1105-6

Organization: Department of Veterans Affairs
VA Medical Center
Acquisition and Material Management Service
Acquisition Department
[City, State]

OPM decision: **GS-1105-6**
Purchasing Agent

OPM decision number: C-1105-06-01

/s/

Frederick J. Boland
Classification Appeals Officer

June 30, 1998

Date

As provided in section 511.612 of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations, this decision constitutes a certificate that is mandatory and binding on all administrative, certifying, payroll, disbursing, and accounting officials of the government. The agency is responsible for reviewing its classification decisions for identical, similar, or related positions to ensure consistency with this decision. There is no right of further appeal. This decision is subject to discretionary review only under conditions and time limits specified in the Introduction to the Position Classification Standards, appendix 4, section G (address provided in appendix 4, section H).

Decision sent to:

[appellants' name and address]

[name and address of appellants' servicing personnel office]

Mr. Ronald E. Cowles
Deputy Assistant Secretary for Personnel and Labor Relations
Department of Veterans Affairs
Washington, DC 20420

Introduction

The appellants are assigned to position number 00394A reclassified on July 7, 1997, as Purchasing Agent, GS-1105-6. The position is located in the Acquisition Department of the Acquisition and Material Management Service, Veterans Affairs Medical Center, [City, State]. They believe their duties warrant greater credit than that assigned by their agency under Factors 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6/7 (Knowledge, Supervisory Controls, Guidelines, Complexity and Personal Contacts/Purpose of Contacts) of the classification standard and feel the position should be classified as Contract Specialist, GS-1102-7.

Position Information

The appellants are two of seven employees within the Acquisition Department. In addition to the appellants, the Acquisition Department includes two GS-9 Contract Specialists, one GS-7 Purchasing Agent, and two GS-5 Procurement Clerks.

The appellants procure a variety of supplies, services, and equipment (ranging from drugs, office supplies, medical equipment, and instruments to training materials and foodstuffs) for the Medical Center, the [City] National Cemetery, and the Veterans Outreach Center. In filling orders they use both noncompetitive (such as oral and written orders, Federal Supply Schedules, and credit card purchases) and competitive procedures [normally requests for quotes (RFQs)].

Most of their orders employ simplified purchase procedures.¹ For example, one of the appellants indicates that of the approximately 600 orders she processed in a year, roughly 60 percent were for simple supply purchases. She states, however, that most of her time is devoted to working with service, construction, or annual maintenance contracts. She estimates that of about 95 such contracts administered by her office, she is responsible for 31 and her co-appellant is responsible for 22. Examples of the types of contract work they handle include annual maintenance contracts (computer networks, laser printers, other technical equipment), service contracts (e.g., copier repair), personal service contracts (chaplain, pianist, and organist services), and repair/construction contracts (asbestos removal, roof repair, sidewalk replacement, etc.)

The appellants have the authority to make formal commitments and obligate the Government for up to \$50,000 per transaction on open market purchase/services, and up to the maximum order limitation on purchases made from Federal Supply Schedule Contracts. In addition, they act as Contracting Officers for small construction procurement, annual service, and maintenance contracts. The

¹ Simplified purchase procedures include (a) imprest fund (cash) accounts, (b) informal open-market methods, such as repeat suppliers, price catalogs, and oral solicitations, (c) orders under Blanket Purchase Agreements, (d) orders under indefinite delivery contracts, (e.g., Federal Supply Schedules), and (e) purchase orders, invoices, vouchers, or priced purchase orders.

Simplified purchase procedures are characterized by: (a) low dollar value, (b) use of prenegotiated pricing arrangements when negotiation of price is not required, (c) standard products or specifications, (d) competitive prices from available price lists or catalogs, (e) award by purchase order or other instrument where terms and conditions are preestablished, (f) short contractual periods (usually within 30 days) (g) large volume of actions, and (h) adequate sources of supply.

appellants hold minimum Contracting Officer Warrants limited to \$50,000. They prepare and type solicitation documents and make a recommendation based on the lowest bid to the user service. They also handle payment problems or problems that develop with the terms of these contracts.

While their position description accurately describes some of their procurement duties, in some areas it overstates their actual assignments. For example, the position description contains the following language with respect to duty assignments: negotiate such items as price, discount, specifications, and delivery terms; procure technical items manufactured to specification; many items required are not in common use, not normally consumed, and/or not common "shelf" items; the incumbent deals with unusual provisions and develops contracts that deviate from standard features; the incumbent is required to have a working knowledge of the mechanics of the equipment used in various Services; and the administration of small purchases that require extensive monitoring in the resolution of complex problems that may arise in protests, claims, etc. Such language has little relation to the appellants' actual assignments and misconveys the level of expertise demanded. Accordingly, the letter transmitting this decision to the agency requests correction of the position description's language wherever it conflicts with the findings in this decision

Analysis and Findings

Series and Title Determination

Among the reasons the appellants cite in support of their claim that they be reclassified into GS-7 Contract Specialist positions are:

- In March of this year our [supervisor], took all the annual maintenance contracts previously assigned to the contract specialist's and reassigned them to both myself and the other purchasing agent. The annual maintenance contracts have been 75% of all of the work that we have been doing since they were reassigned to us. There are 95 total orders for our entire office for annual contracts and construction so far for FY98. [of which] [appellant's name]-(purchasing agent) handles 31; [appellant's name]-(purchasing agent) handles 22.
- [We] use the same methods of contracting that the 1102's use, (i.e. Formal Advertising & Negotiation.) The types of contracts are also the same method, whether it is for fixed price, cash reimbursements or special purpose contracts.
- [We] can also terminate contracts, which include some if not all, of the following: review of the contract, including any amendments or modifications; hold conferences with contractor to discuss termination; recommend approval or disapproval of payments; evaluate default claims.
- ACO (Administrative Contracting Officer) along with TCO-(Terminating Contract Officer) duties should also be added to [our] position description. [We] award contracts, which is part of the Contract Administration that includes: post award conferences; assure required reports are turned in; negotiate contract modifications on cost of changes, final overheads, or any other changes that may occur; analyze claims & negotiate final settlements; close out contracts assuring delivery and/or services are completed.

Most of the appellants' orders involve the procurement of standardized supplies, equipment and routine repair and maintenance services. Positions involving such work are typically assigned to the Purchasing, GS-1105, series, which covers the acquisition of supplies, services, and construction by purchase, rental, or lease through delivery orders or small purchase procedures.

In contrast, the Contracting, GS-1102, series covers work involving procurement of supplies, services, or construction through the use of formal advertising or negotiated procedures.² The appellants handle some of the more routine maintenance, service, and repair/construction contract work at the Center. However, in handling these contracts, the appellants only once used formal advertising procedures. Contracts requiring formal advertisements are normally handled either by the supervisor or the Contract Specialists.

Mixed work positions, like the appellants', cannot be placed in the appropriate series using typical key indicators like the dollar value of procurements and the procedures and instruments employed (simple procedures using purchase orders and requests for quotations versus formal advertising procedures using invitations for bid or requests for proposal).³ Instead, the paramount knowledge, reason for existence, organizational function, line of promotion, and recruitment source for the position must be scrutinized, as follows.

- Formal advertising procedures rarely apply to small purchases and typically involve non-repetitive procurement, long contractual periods, extensive cost/price analysis, and more complex regulations than pertain to small purchases. The appellants rarely use formal advertising when conducting small purchases or soliciting contracts and do not conduct cost/price analysis. In almost all instances their awards determinations go to the lowest bidder. Their maintenance, construction, and service contracts for the most part involve standard construction practices and standard contract clauses. They handle some contracts requiring the use of special contract clauses such as meeting Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) regulations or setting up special progress payment clauses. However, upon determining the need for these requirements, the language of the contracts and their associated special clauses are well preceded and prescribed in the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR).
- The purpose of the position is to procure supplies, equipment, services, and construction within the dollar limitation set for the organization. While this includes a minimum

² Formal advertising and negotiation are basic contracting methods. Formal advertising begins with preparing an invitation for bid (IFB), which includes a technical description of the construction desired, completion date, and other terms and conditions desired. The IFB also contains mandatory contract clauses pertaining to warranty, standards of work, default, excusable delays, inspection, liability, labor provisions (nondiscrimination, overtime, working conditions, etc.), subcontractor payment, etc. A bid is legally binding and might be solicited even though the cost of construction is low, when a firm price is desired. Negotiation is used when formal advertising would be unproductive and is not otherwise required.

³ The GS-1105 standard acknowledges that while dollar values and procedures used typically distinguish Purchasing Agents from Contracting Specialists, some overlap can be found. For example, it recognizes that some Purchasing Agents use requests for proposals (RFPs; normally used for more complex procurement) for small purchases when a firm offer is required or when technical factors, rather than price, are the primary consideration. Likewise, some Purchasing Agents use bilateral purchase orders (typical of Contracting) rather than unilateral purchase orders (typical of Purchasing). Dollar value and procedures are key indicators, but not determinants, of the classification of a position. The knowledges required, complexity of procurement, and other factors addressed in the classification standards determine a position's placement.

contracting officer's warrant, the appellants employ contract procedures because of the need to obtain binding offers, not because the work demands full-fledged contracting knowledge.

- Their organization's function includes procurement support and contracting for services, repairs, and maintenance at the sites serviced. While the appellants work independently of the Contract Specialists in assuming responsibility for the annual maintenance and routine service contracts, the Contract Specialists are responsible for the more complex contract work requiring use of formal advertising and negotiation, differing site condition determinations, or terminations. (The GS-9 Contract Specialists hold intermediate warrants up to \$500,000 negotiated and \$1,500,000 formal contracts).
- The appellants' position does not automatically progress to an established Contract Specialist position and thus lacks a Contracting career path.
- Recruitment for the position is from applicants with purchasing, rather than contracting knowledge.

As a whole the above considerations clearly point to Purchasing as a better occupational match for the work than Contracting. Placing the position in the Purchasing series is consistent with classification for mixed occupational series work, given the primary knowledge requirements, purpose, organizational function, and recruitment source for the position.

The prescribed title for non-supervisory positions in the GS-1105 series is *Purchasing Agent*.

Grade Determination

The Purchasing series position classification standard is in Factor Evaluation System (FES) format. This requires a factor-by-factor analysis of the position in light of the standard. Under the FES format, a position factor must be fully equivalent to the factor-level described in the standard to warrant credit at that level and the associated point value. If a position factor is not fully equivalent to the overall intent of a particular level described in the standard, a lower level and point value must be assigned.

Work demanding less than a substantial (at least 25 percent) amount of time is not considered in classifying a position. Similarly, acting, temporary, and other responsibilities that are not regular and continuing are not considered in classifying positions. (Temporary assignments of sufficient duration, though, are sometimes recognized in accordance with agency discretion by temporary promotion if higher graded duties are involved, by formal detail, or by performance recognition).

Factor 1: Knowledge Required by the Position

This factor measures the nature and extent of information or facts that employees 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 knowledges.

Among the appellants' claims are:

- [We] must know and keep updated detailed, complex statutory & regulatory requirements that [we] now use. [We] received only 550 points for this knowledge, when in fact it should have been rated at the highest. One key element is that [we] have extensive monitoring & oversight to resolve complex problems. In that, [we] are always getting with the contractor and using service to work out any problems.
- Another key element in knowledge is that [we] negotiate on these construction & maintenance contracts. [We] have to use clauses that are not usually found in small purchase orders but are in construction and maintenance contracts such as: default termination, liability, and labor wage grade, are all included in these types of contacts that would have not been in just a small purchase order.

The appellants' position fails to meet Level 1-5 criteria, which requires knowledge of specialized technical purchasing methods and procedures to perform complex purchasing work. Work at this level might entail, for example, substantial involvement in any of the following areas:

- negotiating and awarding bilateral purchase orders for professional studies (e.g., research studies), or for the exclusive manufacture of unique equipment, instruments, dies, etc.,
- developing and selecting criteria/technical ranking factors for purchases of a variety of detailed commercial service or construction projects,
- administering purchase orders that require extensive monitoring and oversight to resolve complex problems (e.g., protests, claims, terminations, or substantial modifications) and coordinating/discussing these or similar problems with small purchase contractors and various agency or activity personnel,
- negotiating, awarding, and administering small purchases that involve clauses normally not applicable to small purchases (e.g., purchase orders that contain provisions related to default termination, liability, and Government furnished property), or
- negotiating, awarding, and administering small purchase orders that involve the use of instruments that are not firm fixed price (e.g., time and material, labor hour, or other unpriced small purchase orders).

The appellants state that they have extensive monitoring and oversight responsibility to resolve complex problems, as at Level 1-5. When asked for specific examples, they cited having to reissue a contract because the original contract servicing company went out of business, instructing others on using the computer to amend existing contracts, monitoring the progress of telephone repair services, or making sure that the Center is not being double billed for orders. These examples are on par with the definition given for Level 1-4, where Purchasing Agents monitor vendor performance through personal contact, review progress reports, and discuss reasons for delays, failures, or price changes. Such discussions with vendors do not equate to resolving problems such as contractor protests, claims, etc., where bidders might object to upward correction of the low bid, allege faulty evaluation of technical proposals or their cost effectiveness, protest unduly restrictive competition, etc.

With respect to the appellants' claim that they negotiate and use clauses that are not usually found in small purchase orders, their orders rarely employ default termination or similar clauses and the OSHA regulations and progress payment clauses occasionally used are well precedented. For example, the lead abatement and asbestos removal projects handled by the appellants requiring the use of OSHA regulations are "boiler plate" statements according to their supervisor. In another example given by the appellants, an Engineer Hygienist at the Center was consulted to determine the appropriate OSHA regulations required. The appellants then used the FAR matrices to pull the specific citations needed for the contract. Progress payment clauses that they employ are straight forward. For example, in an asbestos removal/manhole repair construction project, payment was made to the contractor after the first phase (asbestos removal) and then after completion of the remainder of the project. Such well precedented and straightforward application of procurement procedures do not exceed Level 1-4.

We evaluate this factor at Level 1-4 and credit 550 points.

Factor 2: Supervisory Controls

This factor covers the nature and extent of direct and indirect controls exercised by the supervisor, the employee'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 employee 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 recommend 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.

The appellants state:

- [We] believe it should have been the 2-4, due to the fact that [our] supervisor assigns the work to [us] and only consults with [us] upon request. [We] have expertise in purchasing & administrating orders that many times [we] guide [our] supervisor through the process it takes to complete a request. [We] do keep the supervisor informed of [our] progress, or if there is a controversial matter, but in doing so, [we] also propose the solution that [we] plan to use.

Although the appellants state that they only consult with their supervisor at their request and that their work is not reviewed, the nature of the problems they regularly handle do not entail the responsibility expected at Level 2-4. Level 2-4 involves responsibility for work regularly resolving conflicts in administering purchase orders such as protests, claims, and terminations for convenience or default. In contrast, the examples used by the appellants include how to process contracts through use of the Medical Center's computer system and how to amend contracts that had already been entered into the system. Regardless of the degree of independence associated with the appellants' position, it lacks the corresponding level of responsibility requisite for Level 2-4 credit.

Consistent with Level 2-3, the appellants' work assignments are received through computer requests and assigned by the supervisor. Standing instructions and deadlines are determined by the nature and dollar amount of the order. The appellants plan and carry out successive steps necessary to make purchases using accepted practices.

We evaluate this factor at Level 2-3 and credit 275 points.

Factor 3: Guidelines

This factor covers the nature of guidelines and the judgement needed to apply them.

The appellants state:

- Since there are no reference sources or standard descriptions in catalogs or procurement files, [we] use interpretation & expertise to follow proper guidelines, procedures, to resolve specific problems.

The appellants' guidelines include the FAR, VA Acquisition Regulation (VAAR), CDROM files, and past practices. The appellants use judgment in determining the appropriate procurement methods and selecting appropriate contract clauses. Procedures guiding the method of selection are normally determined by the nature and amount of the order.

Such guidelines and judgement equate to Level 3-2. At this level, a number of established procedures and specific guidelines are available and apply to work assignments. Guidelines cover areas such as required and optional sources of supply, types and use of purchase orders, maximum ordering limitations, as well as information on appropriate standards to be used when consolidating contracts. Purchasing Agents at Level 3-2 use judgment in selecting the appropriate reference and procedure to make purchases. For example, Purchasing Agents select the appropriate purchasing and solicitation method, form, documentation, and standard terms. There may be minor gaps in guidelines, requiring Purchasing Agents to use some judgment and initiative in resolving aspects of the work not fully covered by instructions (e.g., when determining whether the important characteristics of an item match an item description in a mandatory schedule, or judging whether quotes are for equivalent items).

The appellants' position does not fully meet Level 3-3, at which guidelines are available but are not completely applicable to many aspects of the work because of the unique or complicating nature of the purchase requirements or circumstances. For example, when ensuring the adequacy of specialized purchase descriptions there may be no directly related reference source, such as standardized descriptions in catalogs or procurement history files. Purchasing Agents at this level use judgment to interpret guidelines, adapt procedures, decide approaches, and resolve specific problems. This includes, for example, reviewing detailed nonstandardized statements of work for adequacy, developing technical ranking factors for award determinations, or negotiating terminations for convenience or default. The appellants do not develop technical ranking factors for awards determination and only handle default terminations on an infrequent basis. The nature of their work does not require the higher level of judgement associated with interpreting and adapting guidelines to the procurement of specialized services where precedents are unclear.

We evaluate this factor at Level 3-2 and credit 125 points.

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.

The appellants state:

- The complexity of [our] work has changed so much in the past year and a half, [we] now use different processes and methods to complete a contract than before. [We] now make a variety of competitive and sole source small purchases. [Our] method of ordering & reporting now depend on the type, quantity, urgency and dollar value. [We] look more now for who [we] will solicit, what clauses must be in the specifications and how much time to give each contractor based on the above.

At Level 4-3, different processes and methods are used to make a variety of competitive small purchases. At this level, Purchasing Agents use different solicitation methods, ordering or reporting procedures, purchasing methods, or clauses and provisions depending on the type, quantity, dollar value, or urgency of the requirement. The appellants' work is similar to Level 4-3 in this respect, but unlike it in other respects.

The appellants select procurement methods by considering a few factors, such as price, available sources, and urgency of requirement, as at Level 4-2. They recommend awards based primarily on price and delivery, as at Level 4-2. Typical problems handled by the appellants include availability and delivery problems, such as orders not received on schedule, or obtaining exact specifications. One example was an order for a dishwasher for the Nutrition Service. In order to fit the dishwasher into the base floor, one appellant had to arrange a meeting between the end user and the engineer to examine blueprints to get exact measurements for plumbing parts and fixtures in order to install the dishwasher.

In contrast, Level 4-3 work entails greater analysis and evaluation. Purchasing Agents at Level 4-3 make choices from many alternatives, such as what terms and conditions apply to a procurement, based upon their analysis of interrelated factors, such as tradeoffs like lease vs. purchase, vendor reputation or previous performance, etc. They make awards based on an analysis of various tradeoffs. Such analyses are typically lacking in the appellants' work.

We evaluate this factor at Level 4-2 and credit 75 points.

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. Only the effect of properly performed work is considered.

Scope

The appellants generally fill orders using established guidance and procedures. Most orders are of a routine nature and suppliers and contractors are readily found. Purchasing advice given by the

appellants to user services is usually regarding alternative vendor sources that provide better prices for requested products.

The appellants' work best reflects the scope described by Level 5-2, where the work involves providing purchasing services that are covered by well-defined and precise procedures and regulations (e.g., repeat orders for commercial requirements). As at Level 5-2, they clarify what is needed and when and select purchasing methods and sources from a range of available options. Their specific work examples, already discussed, fail to meet Level 5-3, which involves applying conventional practices to resolve a variety of purchasing problems (e.g., lack of multiple suppliers, urgent need, and insufficient price history).

We evaluate Scope at Level 5-2.

Effect

The Services the appellants provide impact the daily work conducted by the Center. For example, they handle the food orders for the Center, medications for patients, as well as medical devices such as implants which are used in patient surgery.

At Level 5-2, the quality of advice and award recommendations affect the normal flow of routine operations. At this level, advice given might compare sources to find the lowest price for the same or similar products. Instead of using the same source as the user service has always used, the appellants' introduce new vendors who can deliver the same product at a lower cost. The appellants' work fails to meet the effect described in Level 5-3 criteria, where the quality of purchasing advice affects the operation of certain programs. For example, at this level the Purchasing Agent conducts cost/price analysis of various vendors and products to determine which product provides the best overall value, not necessarily the product lowest in price.

We evaluate Effect at Level 5-2 and this factor as a whole at Level 5-2 and credit 75 points.

Factor 6: Personal Contacts and Factor 7: Purpose of Contacts

The Purchasing Series standard treats Factors 6 and 7 together. Contacts credited under Factor 6 must be the same contacts considered under Factor 7.

Factor 6 (Levels 1 to 3) includes face-to-face contacts and telephone and radio dialogue with persons not in the supervisory chain. Levels of 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 employee and those contacted recognize their relative roles and authorities).

Factor 7 (Levels A to C) addresses the purpose of personal contacts, which may range from factual exchange of information to situations involving significant or controversial issues and differing viewpoints or objectives.

The appellants state:

- In order to obtain detailed specifications and choose the proper method of procurement, [we] have met with the Chief's of Electric Shop and Maintenance and Repair. We then met with the contractor regarding the specialized installation. It is a daily task to meet with the using services to assure that the specifications and/or services are accurate for the contractor.

Personal Contacts

The appellants state that within the agency they are in regular communication with a variety of contacts ranging from clerks and engineers to Service Chiefs. Most of their contacts are with higher graded individuals. Outside the agency they are in contact with secretaries, sales representatives, distributors, and patients.

The appellants' personal contacts match Level 2, which involves contacts outside the agency such as commercial suppliers, contractors, and personnel at other agencies. They do not meet Level 3, however, which includes contact with technical or legal representatives of firms who are negotiating substantial purchase order changes, terminations for default or convenience, or who are protesting the basis of non-selection for award.

We evaluate Personal Contacts at Level 2.

Purpose of Contacts

As at Level B, the purpose of the appellants' outside contacts is to plan and coordinate actions to prevent, correct, or resolve delays or misunderstandings in the purchasing process. This includes contact with customers to discuss detailed specifications for equipment orders. In some situations, a moderate amount of persuasive skill may be needed to get agreement on changes affecting product, price, or delivery. Unlike Level C, the appellants are not settling conflicts or disputes that require skill in negotiating issues such as termination settlements or other significant changes. Problems at this level, when they occur, are handled by the supervisor.

We evaluate Purpose of Contacts at Level B.

We evaluate these factors at Level 2-B and credit 75 points.

Factor 8: Physical Demands

This factor covers the requirements and physical demands placed upon the employee by the work assignment. This includes physical characteristics and abilities and physical exertion involved in the work.

Level 8-1 work is sedentary and presents no special physical demands. Level 8-2 work involves considerable walking, stooping, bending, and climbing. The appellants' work is sedentary and free of special physical demands.

We evaluate this factor at Level 8-1 and credit 5 points.

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.

Level 9-1 work is in an office setting. Level 9-2 work involves moderate safety risk or discomfort that requires special precautions. The appellants' work is performed in an office setting and requires no special safety precautions.

We evaluate this factor at Level 9-1 and credit 5 points.

FACTOR LEVEL POINT SUMMARY

Factor	Level	Points
1	1-4	550
2	2-3	275
3	3-2	125
4	4-2	75
5	5-2	75
6 & 7	2-B	75
8	8-1	5
9	9-1	5
	Total:	1185

The table above summarizes our evaluation of the appellants' work. As shown on page 10 of the standard, a total of 1185 points converts to grade GS-6 (1105-1350).

DECISION

The proper classification of the appellants' position is Purchasing Agent, GS-1105-6.