

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

Philadelphia Oversight Division
600 Arch Street, Room 3400
Philadelphia, PA 19106-1596

Classification Appeal Decision
Under section 5112 of title 5, United States Code

Appellant: [appellant's name]

Agency classification: Support Services Supervisor
GS-342-12

Organization: Logistics Management Office
[name] District
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Department of the Army
[location]

OPM decision: Support Services Supervisor
GS-342-12

OPM decision number: C-0342-12-03

/s/ Robert D. Hendler

Robert D. Hendler
Classification Appeals Officer

10/11/01

Date

As provided in section 511.612 of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), 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* (PCS's), appendix 4, section G (address provided in appendix 4, section H).

Decision sent to:

PERSONAL

[appellant's name]

Army Corps of Engineers

[name]

Logistics Management Office[acronym]

[address]

[location]

[name]

Civilian Personnel Support Center

Department of the Army

[name] District

[address]

[location]

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Introduction

On May 4, 2001, the Philadelphia Oversight Division of the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) accepted a classification appeal from [appellant's name]. His position is currently classified as a Support Services Supervisor, GS-342-12. He believes the classification should be Supervisory Logistics Management Specialist or Logistics Office, at the GS-13 grade level in either the 346 or 2000 series. The appellant initially appealed his position to his agency, which issued its decision on November 20, 1995. On March 28, 2001, the agency declined to re-evaluate his position, advising him that he could appeal the classification of his position to OPM. The appellant works in the Logistics Management Office, [name] District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Department of the Army, [location]. We received the initial appeal administrative report on June 22, 2001. We accepted and decided this appeal under section 5112(b) of title 5, United States Code (U.S.C.).

General issues

In his April 15, 2001, appeal to OPM sent through his servicing human resources office, the appellant asked that his command conduct a consistency review of Chief, Logistics Management Office positions. The basis of his request was that his position is in the GS-342 series while other command positions are in the GS-346 series. He believes that his position should be upgraded based on the application of the General Schedule Supervisory Guide (GSSG).

OPM is required by law to classify positions on the basis of their duties, responsibilities, and qualification requirements by comparison to the criteria specified in the appropriate PCS or guide (5 U.S.C. 5106, 5107, and 5112). The law does not authorize use of other methods or factors of evaluation, such as comparison to other positions that may or may not have been classified correctly.

Like OPM, the appellant's agency must classify positions based on comparison to OPM's PCS's and guidelines. Agencies are obligated to review their own classification decisions for identical, similar or related positions to insure consistency with OPM appeal certificates (5 CFR 511.612). The agency has primary responsibility for ensuring that its positions are classified consistently with OPM appeal decisions. If the appellant considers the appealed position so similar to others that they warrant the same classification, he may pursue this matter by writing to his agency's human resources management headquarters. He should specify the precise organizational location, classification, duties and responsibilities of the positions in question. If the positions are found to be basically the same as the appealed position, or warrant similar application of the controlling PCS's, the agency must correct their classification to be consistent with this appeal decision. Otherwise, the agency should explain to him the differences between the appealed position and the others.

Position information

The appellant serves as the Chief, Logistics Management Office, and is the principal advisor on program issues to the District Commander, including supply, material maintenance, transportation, and facilities service management for District mission and administrative office

operations. These services include managing the assigned administrative motor pool and managing the vehicle fleet including special purpose vehicles such as mobile cranes and generator trailers. He serves as point of contact for General Services Administration and other non-civil works project leased space, and manages the property disposal program. Based on District requirements and higher level policy and regulation, he establishes District-wide guidance for his assigned programs. Responding to audits and program reviews, he implements program changes to bring logistics programs and operations into compliance.

We conducted a telephone audit with the appellant on August 3, 2001, and a telephone interview with his immediate supervisor, [name and title], on August 22, 2001. On September 20, 2001, we interviewed [name], Chief, [name] Branch, [name] Division, to discuss how operational materiel support requirements are determined. The appellant's position description (PD) ([number]) of record, certified as current and accurate by the appellant and his supervisor, furnishes more details about the appellant's duties and responsibilities and how they are performed. The initial appeal administrative report included delegations of personnel management authority not contained in the PD of record. Information sent to us on August 28, 2001, further clarified the appellant's delegations of authority and reporting relationships within the District.

Series, title, and standard determination

The appellant says that his position is excluded from the Support Services Administration Series, GS-342, and is covered by the Logistics Management Series, GS-346, because of significant mission changes since his agency issued its appeal decision. He points to his Logistics Planning Response Team (PRT) Leader functions over a team typically consisting of 16 people. This involves securing and providing hotel space, vehicle, maintenance, warehousing, traffic management, equipment and similar support to Army Corps of Engineers functions during emergencies. He cites his involvement in budget planning for his assigned programs, and responsibility for an over \$2 million stock record inventory account. The appellant also points to his responsibility managing the maintenance plan automated system and lead responsibility for implementing the Facility Equipment Maintenance System (FEMS).

The GS-346 series covers positions that develop, direct, or perform logistics management operations that involve planning, coordinating, or evaluating the logistical actions required to support a specified mission, weapons system, or other designated program. This work involves identifying the specific requirements for money, manpower, materiel, facilities, and services needed to support a program, and correlating those requirements with program plans to assure that needed support at the right time and place. Logistics work requires the ability to coordinate and evaluate the efforts of functional specialists to identify specific requirements and to develop and adjust plans and schedules for the actions.

Primary logistics management responsibilities include identifying all activities that will be involved in providing needed logistical support, and integrating the actions required of each activity into a comprehensive logistics plan in support of or to be incorporated into overall program plans. Logistics management specialists monitor progress toward meeting the logistics plan and identifying the cause and impact of delays or other problems, which may include

varying degrees of responsibility for taking actions to prevent or overcome such problems. They adjust plans and schedules for all related actions as required by delays or changes to logistical requirements; and evaluate plans for and the provision of logistical support for feasibility, efficiency and economy, and develop alternatives when required. The work involves determining detailed requirements, within available or allocated resources, for funds, manpower, facilities, equipment, supplies, and services. It includes: (1) designing, developing, procuring, producing, storing, distributing, maintaining, transporting, utilizing and disposing of materiel; (2) procuring or designing and constructing, operating, maintaining and disposing of facilities; (3) acquiring and training of personnel; and, (4) acquiring or furnishing of services such as communications and those required to meet personal needs, e.g., housing, commissary services, food services.

The appellant's PD of record states that he ensures that logistic support requirements are met for District missions, including area engineer, operations, and construction project sites. However, the record shows that other District organizations have primary responsibility for determining and acquiring their mission support technical requirements. For example, [name] Branch engineers determine facility upgrade, major maintenance, and repair requirements and contract for those services under delegated Contracting Officer authority. Those positions also determine stock needs and plan for the acquisition of long lead time stock items based on projected work schedules. These same positions identify excess equipment and turn it over to the appellant's organization for disposal. In contrast, the primary and paramount purpose of the appellant's position is to provide materiel and related support services, e.g., FEMS, to line District lock, dam, construction and related missions that are controlled by other District organizations. The authorities and responsibilities retained by District line components preclude the appellant's position from coverage by the GS-346 series.

Because the services that he provides are substantially broader than Supply Group, GS-2000 work, the appellant's position is covered by the GS-342 series as discussed in Exclusion 1 in the GS-342 PCS. Typical of that series, his organization provides travel, transportation and other support services to District components. The GS-342 series covers emergency planning, including planning and studying an organization's programs for continuing operations during periods of natural disaster or other emergencies, e.g., PRT work. It covers the requisition, purchase, storage and issuance of office supplies and equipment, management and disposal of property. Although the appellant provides similar support for non-administrative equipment and services, these duties constitute supervising, directing, planning and coordinating a variety of work supporting service functions covered by the GS-342 series.

Support Services Supervisor is the approved title in the GS-342 PCS covering positions, like the appellant's, that meet the supervisory criteria in the GS-342 PCS or the GSSG. However, the appellant's activity may use the title Logistics Officer for internal administration, program management or similar purposes. Therefore, the position is properly allocated as Support Services Supervisor, GS-342.

The agency has determined that the position is properly classified by application of the GSSG with which the appellant agrees and we concur. We find that the appellant does not supervise the range of functions required for applying the GS-342 PCS grading criteria to his position.

Grade determination

The appellant believes that his position should be credited at Levels 2-3 and Level 3-3. After careful review of the record, we concur with the crediting of Levels 1-2, 4A2, 4B2, 5-5 and 6-3. The GSSG is a threshold PCS. A defined level must be fully met before it can be credited. Our analysis of the remaining factors follows.

Factor 2, Organizational setting

This factor considers the organizational situation of the supervisory position in relation to higher levels of management. The agency has determined that the District Commander is equivalent to an SES position for purposes of apply the GSSG, and we concur. The appellant reports to a Deputy Commander, who directly supervises the District's administrative support components. Another Deputy Commander (Program Manager, GS-340-15, PD #[number]) acts for the District Commander. This position provides program guidance and direction to District line mission managers.

The GSSG states that an assistant chief position that does not fully share in the authorities and responsibilities of the chief constitutes a separate, intervening level. A supervisory position reporting to such a position is treated as if reporting to a position one level below the chief. Since the appellant's supervisor is not a full deputy within the meaning of the GSSG, we find that the position meets Level 2-2 since he reports to a position properly identified as one reporting level below the first SES or equivalent position in the direct supervisory chain. Therefore, Level 2-2 (250 points) is assigned.

Factor 3, Supervisory and managerial authority exercised

This factor covers the delegated supervisory and managerial authorities that are exercised on a recurring basis. To be credited with a level under this factor, a position must meet the authorities and responsibilities to the extent described for the specific level. The agency credited Level 3-2c (450 points). The appellant believes that his position meets Levels 3-3, but did not address the reasons in detail for crediting Level 3-3a or 3-3b (775 points).

Level 3-3a involves: (1) exercising delegated managerial authority to set a series of annual, multiyear, or similar types of long-range work plans and schedules for in-service or contracted work; (2) assuring implementation (by lower and subordinate organizational units or others) of the goals and objectives for the program segment(s) or function(s) they oversee; (3) determining goals and objectives that need additional emphasis; (4) determining the best approach or solution for resolving budget shortages; and (5) planning for long range staffing needs, including such matters as whether to contract out work. Positions exercising these authorities are closely involved with high level program officials (or comparable agency level staff personnel) in the development of overall goals and objectives for assigned staff function(s), program(s), or program segment(s). For example, they direct development of data; provide expertise and insights; secure legal opinions; prepare position papers or legislative proposals; and execute

comparable activities that support development of goals and objectives related to high levels of program management and development or formulation.

The appellant's position is supervisory rather than managerial in nature. He executes staff support programs at the field level. In contrast, Level 3-3a covers program management work normally delegated to higher levels in the organization where the position is involved in making decisions related to overall program staffing, budgetary, policy, and regulatory matters. While the appellant provides input to higher levels of management on these issues, e.g., District fleet management program improvements, they relate to the District resource requirements and working environment. In contrast, Level 3-3a logistics program decisions are made at higher echelons within the Army Corps of Engineers. Lower and subordinate organizational units refers to organizations at lower echelons within an agency, e.g., programs carried out at multiple field installations. It does not cover employees directly supervised by the appellant. Therefore, the appellant is not responsible for managing the scale and scope of functions required for crediting Level 3-3a to his position.

To meet Level 3-3b, a position must exercise all or nearly all of the delegated authorities and responsibilities described at Level 3-2c and, in addition, at least 8 of the 15 responsibilities listed in the GSSG.

The activity credited the appellant's position with fully meeting Level 3-2c and with Level 3-3b responsibilities 1, 3, 5, 8, 10 and 14. The agency credited responsibilities 1, 3, 5, 8 and 10. Based on our review of the appeal record, we agree that the position fully meets Level 3-2c and is credited properly with responsibility 14 based on delegated award authority and position restructuring actions in the recent past. Our analysis of the remaining responsibilities follows.

Responsibilities 1, 3, 5, 6, and 8 are intended to credit only supervisors who direct two or more subordinate supervisors, team leaders or comparable personnel. To support these designations, these subordinate personnel must spend 25 percent or more of their time on supervisory, lead or comparable functions. These responsibilities may only be credited in situations where the subordinate organization is so large and its work so complex that it requires managing through these types of subordinate positions. A General Supply Specialist, GS-2001-11 leads approximately five staff years of full time work including a Property Disposal Specialist, GS-1104-9, a Supply Technician, GS-2005-7 and other positions below that grade level or an equivalent in the Federal Wage System. This position directs one year of contractor laboring work, and frequently supervises a full- or part-time student. An Equipment Specialist (General), GS-1670-9, oversees the work of a Supply Clerk, GS-2005-5, a Clerk, GS-303-3, a contractor performing stock room duties, and frequently supervises a full- or part-time student.

While it is reasonable to conclude that the GS-2001-11 incumbent spends 25 percent of his time leading work when his group is fully staffed, we cannot similarly credit the GS-1670-9 position. Contractor oversight is limited to accepting or rejecting work. The PD's for the two permanent positions show that the incumbents independently perform their day-to-day duties and this independence is important to their classification. Therefore, we conclude that the appellant's organization does not reflect the difficulty and complexity that would *require* using multiple

team leaders or supervisors who would devote at least 25 percent of their time to full leadership responsibilities.

One of the appellant's major functions is to advise management officials of higher rank on program matters affecting most District missions and functions. Therefore, responsibility 2 is met.

Responsibility 4 is credited to positions that exercise direct control over a multimillion dollar level of annual resources (in 1993 dollars). Because the appellant does not exercise **direct** control over major program funds, this responsibility may not be credited. The stock fund amounts cited by the appellant fall below the threshold for this responsibility.

Corps Division delegations of authority do not permit the appellant to select candidates for two-grade interval positions in his organization. Because the appellant does not have authority to make or approve selections for all non-supervisory positions, responsibility 7 is not met.

Although the appellant has the authority to respond to first level grievances, he does not have the authority to resolve group grievances or serious complaints required for crediting responsibility 9. His authority to issue letters of reprimand and propose more severe action falls short of the authority to review and approve serious disciplinary actions, e.g., suspensions, required for crediting responsibility 10.

While the appellant has the authority to approve routine training, costly training or controversial training, e.g., academic degree training costing more than \$1,000 and extended leadership training, require review by the appellant's supervisor and/or Training Committee. The limited workload and preponderantly technician structure of his organization cause us to conclude that non-routine and costly training proposals are not regular and recurring functions of his position. Because responsibility 11 is not met fully, it may not be credited.

Responsibility 12 applies to supervisory and managerial positions that oversee organizations in which contractors perform a significant amount of line work. The appellant's two staff years of laboring and supply support work do not reflect these contractor oversight demands. These responsibilities meet the demands of contracting out work and subsequent contractor oversight described at Level 3-2a. Therefore, this responsibility is not credited.

The appellant exercises within-grade increase and employee travel approval authority credited in responsibility 13. While he budgets for and approves overtime, the workload that he directs does not present the opportunity to grant extensive overtime as intended in this responsibility. In addition, the agency's policy requires that proposed overtime exceeding 20 percent of an employee's base pay must be reviewed before it can be authorized. Because responsibility 13 is not fully met, it may not be credited.

Responsibility 15 applies to supervisory and managerial positions that oversee organizations with workloads that are so large and complex as to require attention to team building, or comparable methodological or structural improvements. As discussed previously, the appellant does not oversee a workload of this magnitude and complexity. His efforts to improve office

operations meet the demands of finding ways to improve production or increase the quality of work directed described at Level 3-2c. Therefore, this responsibility is not credited.

In summary, we have credited the position with responsibilities 2 and 14. Because the position is not credited with 8 or more of the listed responsibilities, it fails to meet Level 3-3b and must be credited at Level 3-2c (450 points).

Summary

In summary, we have credited the position as follows:

	Factor	Level	Points
1.	Program scope and effect	1-2	350
2.	Organizational setting	2-2	250
3.	Supervisory and managerial authorities exercised	3-2c	450
4A	Nature of contacts	4A2	50
4B	Purpose of contacts.	4B2	75
5.	Difficulty of typical work directed	5-5	650
6.	Other conditions	6-3	<u>975</u>
		Total Points	2,800

A total of 2,800 points falls within the GS-12 grade level point range of 2,755-3150 points on the Grade Conversion Table in the GSSG.

Decision

The position is properly classified as Support Services Supervisor, GS-342-12.