

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



Atlanta Oversight Division  
75 Spring Street, SW., Room 972  
Atlanta, GA 30303

**Job Grading Appeal Decision**  
**Under Section 5346 of Title 5, United States Code**

<b>Appellant:</b>	[Appellant]
<b>Agency classification:</b>	Sheet Metal Mechanic (Aircraft) WG-3806-11
<b>Organization:</b>	U.S. Department of the Air Force
<b>OPM decision:</b>	Sheet Metal Mechanic (Aircraft) WG-3806-11
<b>OPM decision number:</b>	C-3806-11-01

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Kathy W. Day  
Classification Appeals Officer

/s/ 7-28-99  
Date

As provided in section S7-8 of the Operating Manual, Federal Wage System, this decision constitutes a certificate that is mandatory and binding on all administrative, certifying, payroll, disbursing, and accounting officials of the government. There is no right of further appeal. This decision is subject to discretionary review only under conditions specified in section 532.705(f) of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations (address provided in the Introduction to the Position Classification Standards, appendix 4, section H).

**Decision sent to:**

[Appellant]

[Civilian Personnel Officer]

[Position Classification Specialist  
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**Introduction**

On April 9, 1999, the Atlanta Oversight Division, U. S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM),

accepted a job grading appeal for the position of Sheet Metal Mechanic (Aircraft), WG-3806-11, [organizational location] [base]. The appellant believes his job should be classified as Sheet Metal Mechanic (Aircraft) Supervisor, WS-3806-9.

The appeal has been accepted and processed under section 5346 of title 5, United States Code. This is the final administrative decision on the classification of the position subject to discretionary review only under limited conditions and time outlined in part 532, subpart G of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations.

### **General issues**

The appellant occupies a position which was upgraded to Sheet Metal Mechanic (Aircraft) Supervisor, WS-3806-9, from Sheet Metal Mechanic (Aircraft), WG-3806-11, on July 15, 1998, as the result of a Department of Defense Civilian Personnel Management Service (CPMS) appeal decision. Based on an OPM classification advisory, CPMS reversed that decision by letter dated February 24, 1999, and determined that the appellant's job was properly classified as Sheet Metal Mechanic (Aircraft), WG-3806-11.

The appellant contends that, as supervisor of the Structural Repair Section, he is held accountable 100 percent of the time for the supervision of his shop and his position should be evaluated accordingly. The appellant also disagrees with the use of the Pest Controller Job Grading Standard (JGS) by CPMS as a reference for small shop chief position grading criteria.

Classification guidance provides that, under certain conditions, standards covering work similar to the work being evaluated may be used for cross reference. In the case of the Pest Controller JGS, the standard includes a discussion concerning work which requires program operation responsibilities and the appropriate assignment of an additional grade level to such work. That standard was appropriately referenced by CPMS in their evaluation of the appellant's shop operation and program duties.

We are required, by law, to grade jobs solely by comparison of their current duties and responsibilities to OPM standards, guidelines (5 U.S.C. 5346), and instructions. Therefore, we have considered the appellant's statements only insofar as they are relevant to making that comparison. The job grading appeal process is an independent, third party review that includes a determination as to the duties and responsibilities assigned by management and performed by the appellant, and constitutes the proper application of the JGS to those duties and responsibilities. We have evaluated the work assigned by management and performed by the appellant according to these job grading requirements. In reaching our decision, we carefully reviewed information provided by the appellant and his agency, including the job description of record. Additionally, we also conducted telephone audits with the appellant on June 15, 1999, and his supervisor on July 12, 1999. This information has been incorporated into this decision.

### **Job information**

The appellant is assigned to core document number [#]. The appellant, his supervisor and the agency certified the accuracy of the position description.

The appellant functions as a Sheet Metal Mechanic (Aircraft), WG-3806-11, in an Air Reserve Technician position, with the organizational title of Small Shop Chief, in the [Section]. In this capacity, he is responsible for directing the activities and operations of a small shop involved in the inspection, evaluation, fabrication, modification, repair, assembly, and installation of sheet metal and fiberglass parts, and composite structures of structural systems and components for unit assigned aircraft and aerospace ground equipment (AGE). This section is also responsible for the application and removal of paints and coatings, and the inspection, removal and treatment of corrosion for the unit's aircraft and AGE. The appellant spends approximately 90 percent of his time in activities related to overseeing the operation of his shop and providing technical and administrative supervision to 3 subordinate Sheet Metal Mechanics (Aircraft), WG-3806-10. The remaining 10 percent of his time is spent in administrative work related to the scheduling, training, and supervision of 7 reservists assigned to his shop who train one weekend, and occasionally other days, during each month. He receives work assignments either orally or in writing from the Aircraft Overhaul Supervisor, WS-8801-10, with whom he meets each morning. Scheduled maintenance and inspection activities are received from the Maintenance Control Center through the Core Automated Maintenance System computer, or his supervisor. Assignments involving flight line work on aircraft transiting the base that experience problems prior to, during, or following a flight are written up and relayed from the Dispatch and Debrief Section (DDS). The appellant is contacted by DDS and is responsible for dispatching personnel to resolve the problem.

The appellant is responsible for the internal scheduling of work and use of resources within the section involving the maintenance, repair, and corrosion treatment of structural components on the 4 fixed wing C-130 aircraft and 9 HH-60 helicopters assigned to the unit. He develops daily work plans and assigns work to subordinates; provides technical guidance when needed and interpretation of technical materials and directives; and ensures proper work and safety procedures are in place and used. He also relays priorities and deadlines established by higher level supervisors. The appellant periodically reviews work in progress or upon completion to ensure the adequacy of the quality and quantity of the work produced. He writes updates to procedures for his shop; conducts required inventories and inspections of shop equipment; reviews documentation of work performed each day to ensure it is properly entered into and matches that contained in the automated maintenance system; maintains records and prepares reports related to hazardous materials used by his shop; and reviews requirements and ensures that required training on safety, respiratory protection, etc., is received by subordinates. The appellant coordinates the work of his shop with other shops when necessary to expedite work on aircraft. He schedules and approves leave, writes performance standards and evaluates the performance of subordinates, makes recommendations for awards and the selection of personnel, and takes minor disciplinary actions.

## Occupation, title and standard determination

The agency determined that the appellant's job was properly allocated to the Sheet Metal Mechanic (Aircraft) series, WG-3806. The appellant agrees with the series determination but contends that the job should be designated supervisory.

Appropriate application of the JGS for Federal Wage System (FWS) Supervisors requires full and careful analysis of all relevant factors. The central requirement in the JGS for FWS Supervisors, i.e., the ongoing requirement that supervisors have substantially full-time and continuing responsibility for the technical and administrative supervision of subordinate workers, is stringent. An advisory opinion issued by OPM's Classification Policy Division has defined *substantially full-time* as 85 percent or more of the time. Our audit found that the appellant spends most of his time overseeing shop operations and performing administrative tasks in support of the shop. He clearly does not spend 85 percent of the time supervising the WG-10 subordinates in the performance of their work, i.e., he does not spend substantially full-time reviewing work for technical accuracy, making daily work assignments, assessing performance, taking time and attendance, approving leave, taking disciplinary action, etc. *To be credited at the WG-10 level*, the employees are expected to work independently and once given their assignments, to determine how best to complete them, to resolve technical discrepancies, and to recommend solutions to problems. The appellant makes random worksite visits to perform quality control checks for availability of technical orders, proper tools and test equipment, and adherence to proper safety and work procedures. He does not have to routinely monitor his subordinates as they are carrying out assignments and will normally become directly involved only when they encounter unusual problems, there is a need to involve other shops, or a higher level individual must certify the work performed. Daily priorities are essentially established by dispatch from the Maintenance Control Center based on aircraft needs and emergencies. The appellant makes assignments and changes them as notified of new problems or emergencies by the Maintenance Control Center. His subordinates independently plan their work sequences and determine what tools, equipment, and work methods will be used.

The administrative duties he performs, i.e., inspecting and inventorying tools and equipment and ensuring they are properly secured; coordinating work assignments with other shops; ensuring that Technical Orders are available and have the most recent changes posted; ordering supplies; reviewing the input of the work performed each day against Maintenance Control Center system documents to ensure accuracy; ensuring adherence to safety and work procedures; monitoring and reporting the status of work assignments; etc., take a large part of the appellant's time and are associated with the operations of his shop.

The appellant's job clearly falls short of coverage by the JGS for FWS Supervisors.

## **Grade determination**

When the supervisory responsibilities, i.e., those responsibilities described in Factor 1 of the JGS for FWS Supervisors, are not exercised on a substantially full-time basis, the job is graded under the regular nonsupervisory grading structure and not under the supervisory standard. We find the appellant functions as a Small Shop Chief. Therefore, his job is appropriately evaluated by reference to the WG-3806 JGS with reference to WG-5026, Pest Controller, JGS for a discussion of proper crediting for planning, organizing, and directing the programs of his shop.

The agency determined that the WG-3806 work for which the appellant has responsibility is appropriately graded at the WG-10 level. The appellant does not contest the accuracy of that determination. We have reviewed the job description and agree with the agency determination.

The WG-5026 JGS recognizes that pest controllers, i.e., employees, with responsibility for planning, organizing, directing, and performing complete pest control programs (or in the appellant's case, the programs of the [Section]); for determining the approaches, methods, and courses of action to take in dealing with program issues; for assuring that methods and results adhere to regulatory requirements; and for advising management on program needs exercise a level of responsibility that is graded one full level above the full performance level. The appellant functions as a Small Shop Chief and exercises similar responsibilities in overseeing the operations of his shop. With the full performance level of the WG-3806 work for which he is technically responsible credited at WG-10, adding one grade level results in crediting the appellant's Small Shop Chief duties at the WG-11 level.

## **Decision**

We find the appellant's job is properly graded as Sheet Metal Mechanic (Aircraft), WG-3806-11.