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

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

Classification Appeal Decision
Under Section 5346 of Title 5, United States Code

Appellants:	[appellant's name]
Agency classification:	Aircraft Electrician WG-2892-11
Organization:	Electro/Environmental Shop Accessories Flight Section [number] Maintenance Squadron [name] Air Reserve Station Air Force Reserve [location]
OPM decision:	Aircraft Electrician WG-2892-11
OPM decision number:	C-2892-11-01

Robert D. Hendler
Classification Appeals Officer

/s/ 6/7/99
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 appendix 4, section H).

Decision sent to:

PERSONAL
[appellant's name]
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[name] Air Reserve Station
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Introduction

On March 3, 1999, the Philadelphia Oversight Division of the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) accepted a job grading appeal from [appellant's name]. [appellant's name] occupies a job currently graded as Aircraft Electrician, WG-2892-11. The appellant believes his job should be evaluated as Aircraft Electrician Supervisor, WS-2892-9. In an appeal decision issued by the U.S. Department of Defense, Civilian Personnel Management Service, on February 23, 1999, the agency concluded the job was properly graded as Aircraft Electrician, ***WG-2892-11. The appellant*** works in the Accessories Flight Section, Electro/Environmental Shop, 911 Maintenance Squadron, Pittsburgh Air Reserve Station, Coraopolis, PA. We have accepted and decided his appeal under section 5346 of title 5, United States Code (U.S.C.).

General issues

In his October 23, 1998, appeal letter to his agency, the appellant said his job should be upgraded to Aircraft Electrician Supervisor, WS-2892-9. The record shows the appellant does not disagree with the accuracy of his official position description (PD), (position number 79650), but claims that the supervisory duties and responsibilities he performs have not been evaluated correctly. In particular, he stressed his responsibility for the planning, directing, and administering the day-to-day work of his two subordinate Aircraft Electricians, WG-2892-10. He believes that his job is covered by the Job Grading Standard (JGS) for Federal Wage System (FWS) Supervisors because, as stated in his agency appeal decision, he spends close to 50 percent of his time on supervisory duties, primarily the administrative responsibilities.

By law, we must grade jobs solely by comparing their current duties and responsibilities to OPM job grading standards (JGS's), 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 a de novo 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 JGS's 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 the information provided by the appellant and his agency, including the appellant's PD of record. In addition, we conducted a telephone audit with the appellant and with his supervisor, [name] on April 28, 1999. We find the PD of record contains the major duties and responsibilities assigned by management and performed by the appellant and is hereby incorporated by reference into this decision.

Job information

The purpose of the appellant's job is to serve as Small Shop Chief (SSC) of the Electro/Environmental Shop, exercising technical and administrative supervisory responsibility over two employees who occupy identical additional Aircraft Electrician, WG-2892 jobs (position number 8-79985). The appellant receives his assignments from his supervisor, the Aircraft Overhaul Supervisor, WS-8801-10. Work also is assigned through inspections scheduled in advance or through flight line work dispatched through the Maintenance Control Unit. The

appellant then assigns the daily work on a job or project basis to the subordinates. He reviews work in progress and upon completion ensures the adequacy of the work performed. The SSC keeps the Aircraft Overhaul Supervisor informed of work status.

The appellant takes time and attendance and notifies the Aircraft Overhaul Supervisor of personnel available for duty. He establishes performance standards and conducts formal appraisals of subordinates. The appellant counsels employees and when possible adjusts complaints before they become formalized. He maintains time and attendance records, prepares and coordinates leave schedules with the supervisor, and approves short term routine leave. The appellant resolves minor disciplinary problems and enforces safety rules and regulations. He maintains the supervisor's record of employee training, time and leave schedules, and other records as required.

The appellant operates under the general supervision of the Aircraft Overhaul Supervisor, WS-8801-10, who exercises general supervision over four shops, three hangars, and a loading dock comprising the Accessories Flight Section. The Aircraft Overhaul Supervisor sets overall section and shop priorities. Under his authority priorities can be changed due to new mission or flight time requirements. The appellant has authority to approve routine leave, but the Aircraft Overhaul Supervisor has final authority over leave, awards, discipline, and all administrative matters.

Occupation, title, and standards determination

The agency has allocated the appellant's job as Aircraft Electrician, while the appellant states it should be allocated as Aircraft Electrician Supervisor.

All aspects of the classification criteria (i.e., coverage, percentage of time, grading factors, as well as the full intent of the JGS) must be fully met for jobs to be evaluated under the FWS JGS for Supervisors. Appropriate application of the JGS requires full and careful analysis of all relevant factors. The central coverage criteria in the JGS, i.e., the ongoing requirement that supervisors perform supervisory duties on a substantially full-time and continuing basis are stringent. Substantially full-time means performing supervisory/leader duties to such an extent that, for all intents and purposes, it is considered to be comparable to full time or 100 percent. Consequently, jobs that perform supervisory functions on less than a substantially full-time basis (i.e., less than 85 percent) do not meet the basic criteria for coverage and should not be evaluated under the FWS JGS for Supervisors. Although such employees have supervisory responsibilities as a regular and recurring part of their jobs, the supervisory responsibility is not exercised on a substantially full-time basis as required under the supervisory JGS. When such a situation occurs, the job is graded under the regular nonsupervisory grading structure and not under the FWS JGS for Supervisors.

According to the official PD, which the appellant has stated is accurate and complete, the journey level duties comprise approximately 75 percent of the work time and the supervisory duties occupy approximately 25 percent of the work time. Both the appellant and his supervisor agree it is

difficult to determine the percentage of time spent on SSC duties, but both agree it is somewhat below 50 percent.

Duties and responsibilities assigned to a job flow from the mission assigned to the organization in which they are found. The jobs created to perform that assigned mission must be considered in relation to one another; i.e., each job reflects a part of the work assigned to the organization. Therefore, the duties and responsibilities assigned to the appellant's job and performed by him may not be considered in a vacuum.

The identical additional PD's occupied by the appellant's subordinates, contain duties and responsibilities typical of journey level jobs in the Aircraft Electrician, WG-2892 and Aircraft Pneudraulic Systems Mechanic, WG-8268 trades. As at the grade 10 level, detailed technical instructions or supervision is not necessary. The subordinates do their own planning and work independently. They receive their assignments with a minimum of accompanying instructions concerning the work methods or the materials to be used. The SSC; i.e., the appellant, is available for advice or assistance on very difficult problems.

Our discussions with the appellant and the Aircraft Overhaul Supervisor confirmed that the subordinate identical additional PD's are current and accurate, reflecting the need for very little supervision. The journey level concept within the FWS presumes that occupants of such jobs are delegated significant work planning responsibilities. For example, WG-2892-10 employees make decisions and judgments regarding troubleshooting techniques, modification and repair procedures; plan the sequence of work, and select the tools needed; determine the nature of repairs necessary to correct electrical faults; and exercise primary responsibility for checking out the complete aircraft wiring system and connections. If the appellant were to exercise the breadth and depth of supervision necessary to occupy the amount of time claimed in his appeal rationale, the subordinate jobs could not sustain their grading at the journey level. While the appellant may spend a significant amount of time on administrative functions to support the Aircraft Overhaul Supervisor, e.g., providing for shop facility and other support needs, his technical supervision over journey level work should be minimal. Based on the foregoing, we are persuaded that the appellant's job clearly falls short of coverage by the FWS JGS for Supervisors.

Grade determination

In the FWS, grade levels of jobs are not determined by accumulation of grade levels of work performed, but by the highest grade of work that is regular and recurring as defined by established OPM job grading guidance. To be credited, a level in a JGS must be met fully.

The Aircraft Electrician, WG-2892 JGS uses four factors for grade determination: *Skill and Knowledge, Responsibility, Physical Effort,* and *Working Conditions*.

Skill and Knowledge

We find the appellant's skill and knowledge to perform his journey level work fully meets the grade 10 level. At that level, aircraft electricians apply a comprehensive knowledge of electrical theory, principles, and circuitry; a thorough knowledge of aircraft electrical systems and their interrelationships; and a working knowledge of electronic principles (e.g., knowledge of construction practices of electronic equipment in order to recognize types and sizes of resistors, capacitors, wiring, and transistors; knowledge to follow signal paths through printed circuit and wired circuitry, recognizing actual circuit configurations which are shown in schematics and diagrams; and knowledge of the electromagnetic basis of alternating current and inductive and capacitive reactance, series and parallel tuned circuits, impedance matching, and operation of transistors) in order to troubleshoot, modify, repair, overhaul, and maintain complex electrical systems onboard aircraft such as anti skid, automatic flight control, and fuel indicating systems. They also apply a thorough knowledge of the interface of electrical systems with hydraulic, electronic armament, instrument, and mechanical systems and assemblies. They apply a comprehensive knowledge of testing and troubleshooting techniques and procedures utilizing a variety of test devices (e.g., meters, "breakout boxes," signal generators, oscilloscopes, phase indicators, and capacitance testers) to analyze, correct, and maintain essentially all electrical systems on fixed and rotary wing aircraft. As at the grade 10, the appellant uses this knowledge and skill to troubleshoot, modify, repair, and perform final functional and operational tests of complex electrical systems, components, and accessories, with intricate wiring systems under actual or ground power such as anti skid, power distribution, and other systems.

Grade 10 aircraft electricians are skilled in testing, troubleshooting, analyzing, modifying, and repairing complex electrical systems and components. They are skilled in tracing hard to locate and intermittent electrical defects and problems using a variety of meters and test devices. They analyze fault indications obtained during testing and determine the type and location of the malfunction and perform necessary repairs. They apply skill in repairing or replacing electrical equipment and components throughout the aircraft. They are skilled in installing, relocating, and repositioning conventional electrical and electronic components and wiring to facilitate installation of nonconventional equipment. Grade 10 aircraft electricians have the ability to lay out connecting circuits and make connections in order to prevent equipment or circuit overload or malfunction by considering such factors as fuse and circuit breaker capacity, wire size and length, voltage drop, type of current, phasing and sequencing power tie-ins, and method of shielding. They are skilled in assembly of a variety of locally developed test devices (e.g., "breakout boxes and panels") utilizing switches, diodes, resistors, relays, terminal boards, wiring harnesses, and other similar components. They are skilled in calibrating and adjusting components such as amplifiers, proximity boxes, generators, and voltage regulators. Grade 10 aircraft electricians apply skill in performing initial and final functional and operational checks on the entire aircraft electrical system. They are skilled in installing, calibrating, and operational testing of fuel indicating, anti skid, autopilot, compass, and similar systems. They research aircraft modification history, technical orders, engineering change proposals, and manuals concerning wire codes, wiring configuration, and testing procedures. Aircraft electricians at this level must be able to

assist engineering personnel in developing modifications and changes on electrical, electronic, instrument, and other integrated electrical systems.

Grade 10 aircraft electricians are skilled in setup and operation of computerized multiple circuit analyzing equipment in manual, semiautomatic, or automatic mode to run existing and new (i.e., not fully "debugged") diagnostic programs to test and analyze aircraft electrical circuitry and interconnecting cabling of systems such as navigational computers, radar, and related equipment and to repair discrepancies. Aircraft electricians at this level must be able to work with or assist programming personnel in developing, debugging, or modifying diagnostic programs by recommending changes where necessary and identifying apparent contradictions between technical guides and test programs.

The appellant's SSC functions reflect the exercise of skill and knowledge that exceed the WG-10 level entailed in planning, accomplishing and maintaining the shop technical program. To perform that work, the appellant must be able to plan and schedule work for himself and his two subordinates; determine the best way to accomplish shop workload; make sure adequate tools, equipment, and materials are available; and provide input to the Aircraft Overhaul Supervisor on the full range of shop needs. OPM job grading guidance on SSC jobs refers to the Pest Controller, WG-5026 JGS. That JGS provides grading criteria for jobs that are responsible for a complete facility pest control program requiring a complete pest management program. The program is large enough to typically require the assistance of up to two other pest controllers, but are not large enough to require direction by a full time FWS supervisor. The WG-5026 JGS recognizes that the skill and knowledge demands required to perform this range of program management warrants the addition of one grade above the level of work led. We find the appellant exercises similar skill and knowledge in performing his SSC functions, resulting in evaluation of this factor at the grade 11 level.

Responsibility

We find the responsibility exercised by the appellant to perform his journey level work fully meets the grade 10 level. At that level, aircraft electricians receive work assignments from the supervisor in the form of written or oral instructions which are usually accompanied by appropriate blueprints, schematics, technical data, and engineering instructions. Blueprints, schematics, or technical data may be incomplete or absent on occasional assignments. In contrast to the predetermined methods and procedures at the grade 8 level for routine work assignments, they make more independent decisions and judgments regarding troubleshooting techniques, modification, and repair procedures. They plan the sequence in which the work will be accomplished, select tools, and carry out all work assignments in accordance with technical and engineering specifications, and complete assignments using a variety of electrical processes and techniques. Grade 10 aircraft electricians determine the extent and nature of repairs necessary to correct electrical faults in the aircraft electrical system. Work at this level typically includes primary responsibility for checking out the complete aircraft wiring system and connections, and

insuring that all settings, calibrations, functional and operational checks are within specifications and conform to specific ranges and characteristics.

The supervisor or a higher graded worker is usually available to provide technical assistance on unusual or difficult problems relating to deviations from standard work practices. Completed work may be subject to spot checks by the supervisor and quality control personnel to insure that work has been accomplished in accordance with accepted trade practices and is in compliance with specifications and procedures. Grade 10 aircraft electricians may be required to "sign off" or "self certify" that they have completed their work assignments properly and in accordance with specific engineering or technical specifications. They also are responsible for providing technical assistance to lower graded workers.

The WG-5026 JGS recognizes that pest controllers who plan, organize, direct and perform pest complete facility pest control programs; determine the approaches, methods, and courses of action in dealing with program issues; assure program methods and results adhere to regulatory requirements; and advise management on program needs exercise responsibility graded one level above the full performance level. The appellant exercises similar responsibilities in his SSC functions, resulting in the evaluation of this factor at the grade 11 level.

Physical Effort and *Working Conditions* described in the WG-2892 JGS are the same at all defined grade levels.

Summary

Based on the preceding analysis, and applying the whole job grade criteria of the FWS, we find the appellant's personally performed work is evaluated properly at the grade10 level and his SSC work is evaluated properly at the grade 11 level.

Decision

In applying established FWS and grading principles, we find the appellant's job is graded properly as Aircraft Electrician, WG-2892-11.