

U.S. Office of Personnel Management  
Division for Human Capital Leadership & Merit System Accountability  
Classification Appeals Program

San Francisco Field Services Group  
120 Howard Street, Room 760  
San Francisco, CA 94105-0001

**Job Grading Appeal Decision**  
**Under section 5346 of title 5, United States Code**

**Appellant:** [Appellant's name]

**Agency classification:** Materials Handler (Fork Lift/Motor  
Vehicle Operator), WG-6907-5

**Organization:** [Appellant's organization/location]  
U.S. Department of the Air Force

**OPM decision:** Materials Handler, WG-6907-5

**OPM decision number:** C-6907-05-03

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Michael J. Wilkin  
Deputy Associate Director  
Center for Merit System Compliance

August 19, 2005

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Date

As provided in section S7-8 of the *Operating Manual: Federal Wage System* (FWS), 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 further appeal. This decision is subject to discretionary review only under conditions and time limits 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).

Since this decision changes the title of the appealed job, it is to be effective no later than the beginning of the first pay period that begins after the 60<sup>th</sup> day from the date the appellant filed an appeal with the agency (5 CFR 532.705(d)). The servicing human resources office must submit a compliance report containing the corrected job description and a Standard Form 50 showing the personnel action taken. The report must be submitted within 30 days from the date of this decision to the San Francisco Field Services Group.

**Decision sent to:**

[Name and address of appellant's representative]

[Appellant's servicing human resources office]

Director of Civilian Personnel  
HQ USAF/DPCC  
Department of the Air Force  
1040 Air Force Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20330-1040

Chief, Classification Appeals  
Adjudication Section  
Department of Defense  
Civilian Personnel Management Service  
1400 Key Boulevard, Suite B-200  
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## **Introduction**

On March 25, 2005, the San Francisco Field Services Group of the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) accepted a job grading appeal from [name of appellant]. On April 12, 2005, we received the agency's administrative report. The appellant's job is currently graded as Materials Handler (Fork Lift/Motor Vehicle Operator), WG-6907-5, but he believes it should be upgraded to grade 6. The appellant works in the [appellant's organization/location], U.S. Department of the Air Force. We have accepted and decided this appeal under section 5346 of title 5, United States Code (U.S.C.).

This decision is based on a thorough review of all information submitted by the appellant and his agency. In addition, to help decide the appeal we conducted separate telephone interviews with the appellant, his immediate supervisor, and the commander of the [name of appellant's unit].

## **General issues**

Although the appellant believes his job description is accurate, he also compares his work to a grade 6 Materials Handler job described in an Air Force Core Personnel Document (CPD). Our job grading decision must be based solely upon a comparison between the actual duties and responsibilities of the job and the appropriate job grading standards (JGSs) (5 U.S.C. 5346). Other methods or factors of evaluation may not be used in the job grading process. These include comparing the appellant's job to others that may or may not be graded correctly, or comparing the appellant's job description (also referred to as CPD) to others. Therefore, our evaluation of the appellant's work will be based on our independent application of the appropriate JGSs to his duties and responsibilities.

## **Job information**

Both the appellant and his supervisor have certified to the accuracy of the appellant's CPD [number]. We find that his CPD contains the major duties and responsibilities assigned to and performed by the appellant, and we incorporate it by reference into this decision.

Under general supervision, the appellant performs warehousing functions in a medical warehouse/storage facility in the lower level of the [name of installation] hospital. The hospital is part of the [appellant's organizational group], and the [name of command] largest medical treatment facility serving 81,000 beneficiaries and functioning as the referral medical center for all [name of state] Department of Defense (DoD) Veterans Affairs patients. The appellant's primary function is to receive, store, select, and deliver general or specialized bulk and bin materials and equipment. He uses a computer terminal to read, store, track, and prepare materials documentation.

The appellant handles a variety of items in the warehouse including pharmacy, emergency room and bulk supplies. He performs a broad range of standard receiving assignments including verifying shipments by checking shipping documents. The appellant unloads incoming shipments, scans bar codes, or keys receipt information into an automated record system; groups items together based on receiving voucher information or segregates items according to such

factors as condition of damaged or deteriorating incoming shipments; and transports materials from receiving to storage areas.

The appellant also performs a broad range of standard storage assignments including storing, stacking, palletizing, and/or rotating items considering their use, size, shape, quantity, and special handling requirements. He applies material handling techniques in storing items providing for easy retrieval, convenience in handling, protection from damage, and ease of movement. The appellant matches, checks, and compares data on items stored with materials to be stored. He consolidates and arranges specific items in designated areas; uses automated material identification equipment to move, stack, bin, and select storage locations for items being shipped or received; and responds to inquiries on the status of items. He assists in inventories by counting items and completing tally listings and other inventory documents.

The appellant performs tasks involved in issuing/shipping items including selecting and assembling items based on priority, type of material, mode of transportation, destination, and other type of transaction. He segregates and moves materials to a holding area or dock and verifies item identification on request forms.

The appellant operates fork lift trucks and automated material handling and identification equipment including stock selectors and electromechanical automated equipment, such as high-rise automated storage and retrieval vehicles, to move, stack and unstack, load and unload, bin, and position material. He maneuvers fork lifts in confined places over concrete floors.

The appellant also drives one or more types of trucks, such as pickup, panel, and flatbed trucks that typically have a gross vehicle weight of 10,000 pounds or less, both on the base and on public roads at highway speeds. He picks up items from base supply and local vendors or suppliers and delivers items to work sites. The appellant checks routine items on the vehicle checklist such as oil and tire pressure, windshield washer fluids, power steering fluids, gasoline level, etc.. He keeps his assigned vehicle in good appearance and assures it is in good condition for periodic vehicle inspections.

The results of our interviews, information from his CPD and other material of record, furnish more information about the appellant's duties and responsibilities and how they are performed.

### **Series, title, and standard determination**

The agency has allocated the appellant's job to the 6907 Materials Handling occupation which is the primary work of the job, but recognizes that the job also requires as a secondary skill and knowledge the ability to operate certain types of fork lifts and motor vehicles. Therefore, the agency assigned the title and series as Materials Handler (Fork Lift/Motor Vehicle Operator), WG-6907, and the appellant does not disagree.

We concur with the agency's basic title and occupational determination, but the addition of the parenthetical title is not appropriate. As discussed in the *Job Grading System for Trades and Labor Occupations*, specializations are added to basic titles only when needed for a specific personnel purpose in distinguishing between jobs on the basis of qualifications and other special

requirements. The 6907 JGS recognizes that skill in operating fork lifts and motor vehicles frequently is included in materials handler jobs, and specifically addresses certain types of those vehicles in the grading criteria. While the appellant is required to operate fork lifts and motor vehicles, based on our review of the relevant job grading criteria for those occupations, we find that those duties would not exceed the grade 5 level. Therefore, they are fully covered for both titling and grading purposes by the 6907 JGS, and we have not evaluated that work separately in this decision. Because this work has no impact on the final grade of the job, a parenthetical title is not needed to reflect additional qualification requirements. Our evaluation of the appellant's work by application of the grading criteria in the 6907 JGS follows.

### **Grade determination**

This JGS covers non-supervisory work involved in receiving, storing, and assembling for issue, shipment, and distribution, a wide variety of bin and bulk supplies, materials, equipment, and commodities using mechanized, automated, and manual material moving equipment devices and systems. The work requires general knowledge of the methods used in processing, handling, and storing of materials and equipment through a supply facility; the ability to log receipt, storage, and shipment data; and the ability to use manual or mechanized equipment to move, stack, bin, and position materials and equipment. The work also requires the ability to organize, arrange, and remove stock in storage areas in accordance with established procedures to prevent damage, deterioration, and loss. Most work requires the incidental or regular use of fork lifts and motor vehicles. The JGS uses four factors to determine the grade level: *Skill and Knowledge*, *Responsibility*, *Physical Effort*, and *Working Conditions*.

#### *Skill and Knowledge*

At the grade 5 level, materials handlers are assigned a wide variety and range of duties requiring specialized knowledge of warehouse plans, methods, procedures, and techniques of material handling. They are able to operate mechanized equipment including utility vehicles, standard size fork lifts, mobile stock selectors, and electromechanical automated equipment, such as high-rise automated storage and retrieval vehicles, which use remote computer terminals to receive and transmit storage, inventory, and requisition data in automated warehouses. In both automated and non-automated warehouses they are able to process and independently complete shipping and receiving documents to insure correctness of quantities, identification criteria, and labeling. They may use automated equipment, such as optical readers and scanners (bar code wands) and computer keyboards to develop computerized inventory data, access materials, and fill item requisitions. They are skilled in stacking, moving, and arranging items on pallets and must consider height, weight, and special handling requirements. They are able to use pallet measuring gauges and automated devices to insure that proper height, weight, and other load and storage requirements are met and damage in storage or in transit is prevented.

Unlike grade 5 materials handlers who generally work under established guidelines and instructions requiring general knowledge of warehouse functions, grade 6 materials handlers must have an in-depth knowledge of the overall warehousing plan, documentation requirements, and accepted warehousing methods, procedures, and techniques. As senior workers, they often work independently and may be assigned functional responsibilities for a major commodity

segment or equipment group in a larger warehouse or may serve as the primary materials handler in a small warehouse such as a base or post supply facility. They are able to lay out storage space and establish item and material locations in accordance with agency regulations. Grade 6 materials handlers are able to prepare inventory and production reports, screen and identify shipping and receiving documents for discrepancies, and direct shipments to shipping or storage areas. They have a thorough knowledge of the physical distribution functions of a warehouse, such as material receiving, storage, issuing, and preservation. They determine sequences for loading materials and are skilled in the use of onsite automated equipment and systems. Grade 6 materials handler are able to operate the larger material moving equipment and vehicles inside the warehouse and run fork lifts and related vehicles in outside holding areas on unpaved, unimproved, or difficult terrain.

The skill and knowledge required by the appellant's job favorably compares to the grade 5 level. Like that level, he performs a wide variety and range of duties requiring a specialized knowledge of the warehouse plans, methods, procedures, and techniques of materials handling. He operates mechanized equipment including standard size fork lifts, and uses computer terminals to receive and transmit storage, inventory, and requisition data. The appellant uses this level of skill and knowledge to: query the supply system and reroute items erroneously sent to the [name of warehouse] to the correct destination; calculate weight and cube and apply dimensional limitations in planning vehicle loads; and prepare shipments based on carrier weights, packing material, and dimensional limitations. Like the grade 5 level, he independently processes and completes shipping and receiving documents, insuring correctness of quantities, identification criteria, and labeling.

Similar to the grade 5 level, the appellant rotates and stores materials, especially new items, based on established space assignment practices. For example, he may put slow moving items in the back of the warehouse and faster moving items in the front near the loading dock. As permitted, or on his own initiative, he may assign a temporary location for items that, based on pending material release orders, will be shipped shortly after receipt. Working within established procedures, the appellant consolidates stock as floor space is cleared. The appellant moves items misidentified by size into smaller or larger bins as needed, and puts the new location into the automated system. He uses automated equipment, including optical readers, scanners and computer keyboards to develop computerized inventory data, access materials and fill item requisitions based on established procedures. Comparable to the grade 5 level, the appellant is skilled in stacking, moving, and arranging items on pallets and must consider height, weight, and special handling requirements to prevent damage in storage or in transit, e.g., lights in [name of warehouse] ceilings are only six feet from top warehouse shelf.

The skill and knowledge required by the appellant's job does not meet the grade 6 level. While the appellant must have overall knowledge of the warehouse functions and documentation requirements covering storage, requisition, and retrieval, this knowledge is not applied in the manner described at the grade 6 level. He is not a senior worker with functional responsibilities for a major commodity segment or equipment group in a larger warehouse, or the primary materials handler in a small warehouse. Although he notes that he has informally provided training and assistance to new employees, particularly military personnel working at the warehouse, he is not delegated senior worker leadership responsibilities. Additionally, he is not

delegated authority or responsibility for work control, materials accountability, and storage decisions (including inventory and production reports) characteristic of that level. Unlike the grade 6 level, the appellant's duties do not require the skill and knowledge to operate the larger fork lifts and related vehicles inside or outside of the warehouse.

### *Responsibility*

At the grade 5 level materials handlers are responsible for document processing and verification of the quantity and condition of materials and equipment handled and receive only general instructions from a supervisor. Assignments are usually completed without guidance on methods, procedures, or techniques, and work is reviewed for compliance with general guidelines and results achieved. Grade 5 materials handlers follow established methods and procedures, and work is spot-checked upon completion for accuracy, adherence to procedural requirements, thoroughness, and results. They may be responsible for operating mechanized and electromechanical systems, such as fork lift trucks, tugs, manned storage and retrieval vehicles, and high-rise platform lifts which may operate in narrow and constricted warehouse aisles. Whether using manual or computerized equipment, grade 5 materials handlers are responsible for processing documents or data. They work independently using computer terminals, keyboards, and optical scanners to develop coding data or with traditional printed shipping and receiving documents, making written entries, and verifying data in printed formats.

Grade 6 materials handlers are generally responsible for performing a full range of warehouse functions in either a major segment of a large warehouse or as the principal materials handler in a small warehouse. Their responsibilities include receiving, locating, storing, shipping, and re-warehousing materials, commodities, or equipment in accordance with established procedures and operating requirements. Unlike grade 5 materials handlers, they generally work with a high degree of independence in determining the sequences of loading and unloading, developing space utilization plans, and implementing the movement of materials from dock to bin or from storage to shipping. They guide lower-level workers in accessing and using remote computer terminals and equipment to verify inventory levels, filling orders, placing stock, and developing the necessary computerized documentation. They also make determinations as to the placement, unloading, timing, and general movement of materials within assigned areas. In smaller warehouses and storage facilities, they may be responsible for the movement of the stock, as well as the maintenance of stock level inventories. In larger warehouses, they have responsibility for insuring appropriate adherence to established documentation, safety, material movement, and preservation procedures and requirements.

Assignments of grade 6 employees may include responsibility for the rewarehousing of a large storage area, maintaining and arranging storage areas in accordance with warehouse plans and safety procedures, and the automated equipment and warehouse material movement vehicles. They may recommend the sequence of warehouse functions for an assigned area such as the order of receiving, shipping, and issuing of material. Grade 6 materials handlers perform this range of functions under the general direction of a supervisor or facility supervisor. Their work is reviewed based on results achieved including the meeting of schedules and priorities, accuracy of stock balances, orderliness of storage areas, and customer service effectiveness.

The appellant's responsibility meets the grade 5 level. Like that level, he is responsible for processing documents (using computer terminals) and verifying the quantity and condition of materials and equipment handled. The appellant receives only general instructions from his supervisor for assignments, and completes his work without guidance on the methods, procedures, or techniques to be used. The record shows that like the grade 5 level, his work is spot-checked upon completion for results, accuracy, thoroughness, and adherence to proper procedures. Similar to that level, he operates mechanized material handling systems, sometimes in narrow and constricted areas.

The appellant's responsibility does not meet the grade 6 level. Although he works under general supervisory direction because of the recurring nature of his assignments, as previously discussed, he does not operate as a senior worker assigned the variety of functional responsibilities for major commodities or equipment groups. He is not required to deal with the variety of receiving, storage, shipping, and retrieval issues described at the grade 6 level, and does not officially exercise the greater judgment and independent action on work control and delivery of materials found at that level. Although the appellant has provided informal job-related assistance to newly assigned military personnel at the warehouse, unlike the grade 6 level, he has not been officially assigned by management, on a regular and recurring basis within the meaning of the Federal Wage System job grading system, to direct, guide, oversee or train lower graded employees. Additionally, his work receives closer supervisory review than that described at the grade 6 level.

*Physical Effort and Working Conditions* are the same at both grade levels. Because they do not have grade level impact, and the appellant's work meets the levels described in the JGS, we will credit both factors as being met and will not address them further.

## **Decision**

The appealed job is properly graded as Materials Handler, WG-6907-5.