

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

| | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Appellant: | [Appellant] |
| Agency classification: | Electronic Integrated Systems Mechanic WG-2610-13 |
| Organization: | U.S. Air Force |
| OPM decision: | Electronic Integrated Systems Mechanic WG-2610-13 |
| OPM decision number: | C-2610-13-01 |

Kathy W. Day
Classification Appeals Officer

/s/ 7-26-99
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
HQ AFRC/DPCC]

Mr. Robert E. Coltrin
Director, Civilian Personnel Operations
Department of the Air Force
AFPC/DPC
550 C Street West
Randolph Air Force Base, TX 89150-4759

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

Ms. Janice W. Cooper
Chief, Classification Branch
Field Advisory Services Division
Defense Civilian Personnel Management
Service
1400 Key Boulevard, Suite B-200
Arlington, VA 22209-5144

Introduction

On April 1, 1999, the Atlanta Oversight Division, U. S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM), accepted a job grading appeal for the position of Electronic Integrated Systems Mechanic, WG-2610-13, [organizational location] [base location]. The appellant believes his job should be classified as Electronic Integrated Systems Mechanic Supervisor, WS-2610-11.

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 Electronic Integrated Systems Mechanic Supervisor, WS-2610-11, from Electronic Integrated Systems Mechanic, WG-2610-13, May 25, 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 Electronic Integrated Systems Mechanic, WG-2610-13.

The appellant contends that, as supervisor of the [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 and his supervisor on June 16, 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 an Electronic Integrated Systems Mechanic, WG-2610-13, in an Air Reserve Technician position in the [organization]. He is responsible for directing the activities and operations of a small shop involved in the removal, repair, overhaul, testing, troubleshooting, calibration, cleaning, inspection, and installation of guidance and control system components of

units assigned and all transient aircraft. The appellant spends approximately 85 to 90 percent of each work day in activities related to overseeing the operation of his shop and providing limited technical and administrative supervision to 3 subordinate Electronic Integrated Systems Mechanics, WG-2610-12. The remaining 10 to 15 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. The appellant receives work assignments either orally or in writing from the [Supervisor], WS-2610-12. Scheduled inspection and maintenance activities are received from the Job Control Center through the GO81 computer system or his supervisor. Assignments involving flight line work on aircraft transiting the area of the base that experience problems prior to, during, or following a flight are relayed from the Flight Line Supervisor.

The appellant is responsible for the internal scheduling of work and use of personnel and resources within the section involving the maintenance and repair of avionics equipment on the 9 aircraft assigned to the wing. He develops daily work plans and assigns work to subordinates, provides technical guidance when needed, interpretation of technical materials and directives, and information regarding proper work and safety procedures when necessary. 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; ensures that diagnostic equipment is tested and other equipment is calibrated if necessary; reviews requirements and ensures that required training on safety, respiratory protection, etc., is received by subordinates. He 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. The appellant also reviews printouts of the previous day's work to ensure that the work performed is correct as reflected in the Job Control Center computer.

The appellant's shop is responsible for 25 systems on the aircraft they maintain and the majority of the work performed by the [Flight] is performed by his shop. A review of the work tracking report for the past five months reveals that the appellant personally performed and signed off on 33 jobs involving journey level electronic integrated systems mechanic work. This represents less than 22 percent of the jobs performed by his shop during this period.

Occupation, title and standard determination

The agency determined that the appellant's job was properly allocated to the Electronic Integrated Systems Mechanic series, WG-2610. The appellant agrees with the series determination but contends that his 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-12 subordinates in the performance of their work, i.e., he does not spend substantially full-time reviewing work for technical accuracy, providing instructions on how to approach assignments, assessing performance, taking time and attendance, approving leave, making daily work assignments, and taking disciplinary action. To be credited at the WG-12 level, the subordinate 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 Job Control Center based on aircraft needs and emergencies. The appellant makes assignments and changes them when notified of new problems by the Job Control Center or of emergencies by the Flight Line Supervisor. His subordinates independently plan their work sequences and determine what tools, equipment, and parts 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 printouts of work performed the previous day against Job Control Center system documents for accuracy; checking the system daily for assignments; 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. On some occasions, the appellant acts in his supervisor's absence. These duties, however, are temporary and cannot be considered in determining the applicability of the FWS Supervisors standard.

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 (85 percent of the time), the job is graded under the regular nonsupervisory grading structure and not under the supervisory standard. The appellant's subordinates function very independently at the WG-12 level and seldom, if ever, require any technical guidance or direction. Work priorities are for the most part established by the Maintenance Control Unit according to established guidance which the appellant cannot change. With only 3 civilian journey level employees, little turnover, and no discipline problems, the appellant spends almost no time on administrative activities such as advising employees on performance issues, handling disciplinary problems, investigating complaints, and recruiting. We find the appellant functions as a Small Shop Chief. Therefore, his job is appropriately evaluated by reference to the WG-2610 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-2610 work for which the appellant has responsibility is appropriately graded at the WG-12 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-2610 work for which he is technically responsible credited at WG-12, adding one grade level results in crediting the appellant's Small Shop Chief duties at the WG-13 level.

Decision

We find the appellant's job is properly graded as Electronic Integrated Systems Mechanic, WG-2610-13.