

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

Appellant: [Appellant]

Agency classification: Ordnance Equipment Mechanic
WG-6641-10

Organization: [Name/Organization]
[Name/Organization]
Directorate of Maintenance
[Organization] Army Depot
Department of the Army
[Location]

OPM decision: Ordnance Equipment Mechanic
WG-6641-10

OPM decision number: C-6641-10-01

_____/s/_____
Robert D. Hendler
Classification and Pay Claims
Program Manager
Merit System Audit and Compliance

3/15/10

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 and time limits specified in section 532.705(f) of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR). Addresses are provided in the *Introduction to the Position Classification Standards*, appendix 4, section H.

Decision sent to:

[Name]

[Address]

[Location]

[Name]

[Name]

[Address]

[Organization] Army Depot

[Location]

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Introduction

On October 20, 2009, Philadelphia Oversight, formerly the Philadelphia Oversight and Accountability Group of the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) accepted a job grading appeal from [Appellant]. [Appellant] is currently assigned to the [Name/Organization], [Name/Organization]; Directorate of Maintenance; [Organization] Army Depot, Department of the Army; in [Location]. His job is currently graded as Ordnance Equipment Mechanic, WG-6641-10. He believes his job should be graded as an Electronics Mechanic, WG-2604-11. We received the agency's administrative report (AAR) on November 13, 2009. We have accepted and decided this appeal under section 5346 of title 5, United States Code (U.S.C.).

Background information

The appellant submitted a job grading appeal to the Defense Civilian Personnel Management Service's (CPMS) Classification Appeals Adjudication Section in June 2009. Their September 18, 2009 decision changed the title and series of the appellant's job from Electronics Mechanic, WG-2604-10 to Ordnance Equipment Mechanic, WG-6641-10. However the appellant's Human Resources Office (HRO) did not effect the change prior to the appeal's submission to and acceptance by OPM.

General issues

The appellant takes issue with the actions of his immediate supervisor when CPMS was reviewing the grading of his job. Because an OPM appeal decision sets aside any previous agency decision, the agency's job grading practices are not germane to the job-grading appeal process. The job grading appeal process does not extend to issues of investigating the motivation of individuals as the appellant appears to believe. Our responsibility is to determine the actual duties and responsibilities assigned by management and performed by the appellant and grade those duties and responsibilities by application of published OPM job grading standards (JGS) (5 U.S.C. 5346).

Integral to the appellant's rationale is that the agency only provided information to the CPMS evaluator to grade the electronics work duties at grade 8. He also appears to believe management allowed the electronics work to be graded lower by not providing higher-level duties to the appellant. OPM has no jurisdiction or authority over an agency's operating programs to determine work assignments. The authority to assign work is vested by statute in agency management (5 U.S.C. 5342(a) (3) and 7106(a)).

A job description (JD) is the official record of the major duties and responsibilities assigned to a job by an official with the authority to assign work. A job is the duties and responsibilities which make up the work performed by an employee. Appeal regulations permit OPM to investigate or audit a job (5 CFR 532.705(c)), and decide an appeal on the basis of the actual duties and responsibilities currently assigned by management and performed by the employee. An OPM appeal decision grades a real operating job, and not simply the JD.

The appellant compares his position to the grade 11 electronics mechanic positions where he works in the [Name/Organization]. By law, we must grade positions solely by comparing their current duties and responsibilities to OPM JGSs and guidelines (5 U.S.C. 5346(a)). Since comparison to JGSs is the exclusive method for grading positions, we cannot compare the appellant's position to others that may or may not have been properly graded as a basis for deciding his appeal.

The appellant's JD shows he overhauls components such as antenna elements, regulators, relay assemblies and slip rings used in ground guidance systems for Patriot and Hawk missile systems. Since Federal Wage System (FWS) jobs are graded based on the duties performed, it is not enough just to work on a complex piece of equipment. As stated in the *Introduction to the FWS Job Grading System (Introduction)*, the method of grading involves consideration of the total job. When comparing a job with the factor information and grade level definitions in JGSs, a determination should be made as to the most appropriate grade value, overall, of the total job rather than making judgments on each individual factor. This follows the basic principle that the grade value of a job is determined by its relative worth as a whole in comparison with all other jobs and their grade values. This means grading considers such factor as the skill and knowledge required to perform the assigned work on the equipment and the level of responsibility for doing so, not just the complexity of the equipment in and of itself.

Job information

The appellant's JD of record states that he rebuilds, modifies and tests electronic subassemblies in addition to performing electro-mechanical work associated with fluid pumping, fluid cooling and flow detecting equipment. He overhauls components and equipment such as antenna elements, regulators, relay assemblies, printed circuit cards, rotary pumps, hydraulic pumps, and slip rings. The appellant disassembles, inspects, measures clearances, reassembles and conducts bench tests through the use of schematics, test layouts, blueprints and drawings to replace individual parts such as resistors, transistors, transformers, printed circuit boards, connectors, gears, bearings and seals. These items are used in the ground guidance systems for the Patriot and Hawk missile systems.

To help decide the appeal, we conducted telephone interviews with the appellant on December 22, 2009, and with his immediate supervisor on January 28, 2010. The appellant and his immediate supervisor certified to the accuracy of the appellant's JD, [number]. We find the JD includes the major duties and responsibilities of the job, is adequate for job grading purposes when supplemented with other information of record, and we hereby incorporate it into our decision. In reaching our decision, we have carefully reviewed all the information in the written record including that provided by the appellant and the agency as well as the information obtained in our interviews.

Occupational code and title determination

As stated in the *Introduction*, the appealed position is considered a mixed series job because it involves performance on a regular and recurring basis the duties in two or more occupations at the same or different grade level. A mixed job is graded in keeping with the duties that (1)

involve the highest skill and qualification requirements of the job, and (2) are a regular and recurring part of the job, even if the duties are not performed for a majority of the time.

The appellant's electronics repair work occupies approximately 60 percent of his time and is covered by the 2604 Electronics Mechanic occupation. This work covers his repairing of circuit cards. His electromechanical work which comprises approximately 40 percent of his time is covered by the 6641 Ordnance Equipment Mechanic occupation. This type of work is covered by his maintaining and overhauling slip ring assemblies, flow rate detectors and rotary pumps.

The appellant's HRO found the work he performs in both occupational series to be graded at the 10 level. Since the electronics repair work was determined most important for recruitment, selection, placement, promotion and reduction-in-force purposes, the job was placed in the 2604 Electronics Mechanic occupation. However, CPMS found the highest graded work performed is covered by the 6641 Ordnance Equipment Mechanic occupation at the 10 level. Based on our review of the record, we agree the highest graded work is covered by the 6641 series and properly titled Ordnance Equipment Mechanic based on the grade determination that follows.

Grade determination

JGSs evaluate work using four factors: *Skill and Knowledge, Responsibility, Physical Effort, and Working Conditions*. The factors provide a framework within which each occupation is structured as well as specifically applicable criteria for evaluating the level of work. *Physical Effort* and *Working Conditions* are typically identical at all defined grade levels in higher-graded trades and crafts jobs. These two factors generally have grade-level significance only for lower-graded jobs; e.g., heavier physical demands help distinguish between 3502 Laboring work at grades 2 and 3. Since both standards define *Physical Effort* and *Working Conditions* identically at all grade levels, we will not discuss these two factors further in this decision.

Evaluation using the 2604 Electronics Mechanic JGS

The 2604 JGS covers nonsupervisory work involved in fabricating, overhauling, modifying, installing, troubleshooting, repairing and maintaining ground, airborne and marine electronic equipment, such as: radio, radar, sonar, cryptographic, satellite, microwave, microcomputers and peripherals, laser, infrared, industrial x-ray, marine, aeronautical, and space navigation aid, TV receiver, surveillance and similar devices.

Skill and Knowledge

At the grade 8 level, electronics workers require knowledge of electrical and electronic theory sufficient to locate and repair malfunctions and test completed work. They have the ability to recognize types and sizes of resistors, capacitors, wiring, and transistors and follow signal paths through simple printed circuit and wired circuitry, recognizing actual circuit configurations which are shown in schematics and diagrams. Grade 8 electronics workers are skilled in the operation and applications of computerized automatic test equipment, oscilloscopes, signal/ pulse generators, frequency counters, and voltmeters to follow specified check-out procedures and compare readings with specified values. They have skill in the use of tools to remove and

replace circuit parts where accurate positioning, appearance, mechanical strength and electrical integrity are important.

At the grade 10 level, electronics mechanics apply a thorough knowledge of operating electronic principles in order to troubleshoot and repair malfunctions where circuit theory must be used to understand the operation, not only of individual circuits but also the interaction of other circuits to create a malfunction. They evaluate and perform functional tests on items to determine the extent of repairs required, make repairs and replace defective components and parts. Grade 10 electronics mechanics have the ability to interpret and apply a variety of technical information while testing and repairing functionally independent electronic equipment. They are skilled in the set-up and operation of computer controlled automatic test equipment to test and troubleshoot various components and assemblies of electronic equipment or printed circuit boards. They assist engineering personnel in developing, debugging or modifying diagnostic programs by recommending changes where necessary.

As at the grade 8 level, the appellant applies knowledge of construction practices of electronic equipment sufficient to conduct visual examinations and recognize types and sizes of parts such as resistors, capacitors and transistors in order to identify damaged circuit boards and broken or frayed wires. As at this level, he follows signal paths through circuit boards to ensure continuity is flowing throughout the system. He applies detailed information found in schematics, blue prints and Depot Maintenance Work Requirement (DMWR) manuals to complete work assignments. Typical of the grade 8 level, the appellant is skilled in applying computerized test equipment used to the check and subsequently repair circuit boards such as a bite tester and a network analyzer. The bite tester is used to perform a bench test on the antenna element of the Patriot radar system. The results of pressing a button show if the antenna element passes or fails. The network analyzer measures radio frequency energy passing through an antenna element assembly. A horizontal line on the display screen provides information to the appellant. If the line is above a specified point, the assembly passes. If the line is below the specified point, a ceramic piece at the end of the antenna element tube is substituted with another. Typical of the grade 8 level, the appellant has skill using hand tools such as wrenches, soldering irons, wire strippers and screwdrivers in order to repair circuit boards, wires, connectors and make adjustments to antennal element assemblies.

The appellant's work falls short of the grade 10 level. Unlike this level, the appellant's work is oriented towards a replacement or repair of circuit boards and adjustments of antenna element assemblies. This work does not require applying knowledge of operating electronic principles such as microminiaturized digital and solid state integrated circuits, transistors, diodes, tube circuits, oscillation and amplification. These knowledges are applied to troubleshoot and repair malfunctions where circuit theory is used to understand the operation, not only of individual circuits, but also the interaction of other circuits to create a malfunction. The appellant does not troubleshoot malfunctions to this depth. Instead, he performs visual inspections and tests to see what needs to be replaced to make the antenna element assembly work. Unlike the 10 level, the appellant's work does not require skill in interpreting and applying technical information such as technical orders, manufacturer's handbooks and repair manuals while testing and repairing functionally independent electronic equipment. Instead, when the appellant encounters a bad component, he replaces it. He finds the new part to install by looking at an assembly print and

parts list. No analysis is conducted. The printed circuit boards the appellant repairs are not functionally independent items of electronic equipment as defined in the JGS. Also, the appellant's work does not require use of electronic test equipment such as pulse and signal generators, distortion and wave analyzers, digital data generators and frequency generators since they are not needed to perform his work. Therefore, this factor is credited at the grade 8 level.

Responsibility

At the grade 8 level, a higher-graded worker or supervisor provides work assignments. Detailed instructions and specific maintenance and repair procedures are provided. The grade 8 electronics worker works independently on routine and repetitive work assignments. Detailed instructions are provided on new assignments or when providing assistance on assignments involving complete electronics systems, subsystems or components.

At the grade 10 level, electronics mechanics work independently on functionally independent equipment or as part of a group working on a system. They prioritize the work, determine the work sequence, select test equipment, locate the malfunction and complete the repairs. Completed work is either self-certified or inspected by the supervisor or quality control personnel.

The appellant's work meets the grade 8 level. Similar to this level, the appellant receives his work assignments verbally from his supervisor or work leader during the start-up meeting held at the beginning of the shift. Specific repair procedures are provided and he works independently since the work is standard and repetitive. His work assignments are completed using established procedures and detailed instructions to include DMWR's, schematics and blueprints. .

The appellant's work does not meet the 10 level. Unlike the 10 level, the appellant's work is performed on subassemblies, i.e., circuit cards rather than on functionally independent equipment. He also does not prioritize his work nor establish work sequences for executing projects. The appellant follows established procedures and detailed instructions on standard and repetitive work assignments. As a result, he does not deal with the variety of issues or exercise the greater judgment and independent action over work found at the 10 grade level. The fact that the appellant works in a Certified Process Shop and self-inspects completed work is not sufficient to control the evaluation of this factor. Therefore, this factor is credited at the grade 8 level.

The appellant's electronics work is properly evaluated at the grade 8 level.

Evaluation using the 6641 Ordnance Equipment Mechanic JGS

The 6641 is used to grade work involved in maintaining and overhauling major items and assemblies of ordnance systems and equipment. The work requires the knowledge and application of mechanical and electrical principles and the skill to perform intricate repair and adjustment of hydraulic and pneumatic components and devices. The work also requires skill in such processes as troubleshooting, repairing, modifying, rebuilding, assembling, testing, and

installing a variety of equipment such as missiles, torpedoes, mines, depth charges, and associated testing equipment and transporting, handling, erecting, and launching devices

Skill and Knowledge

At grade 10, the highest grade described in the JGS, mechanics must be skilled in a variety of troubleshooting, defect isolation and repair processes related to complex ordnance equipment and multi-component devices. This involves complete or partial disassembly of equipment and making repairs often complicated by critical tolerances and dimensions. They apply sound judgment in the selection of repair techniques and achieving specified accuracies and tolerances. They must have the ability to independently interpret and apply requirements contained in blueprints, wiring diagrams, equipment specifications and other technical documents in order to plan, lay-out and effect disassembly, modification, repair and test of ordnance equipment. For example, this involves the ability to identify critical surfaces and dimensions, trace faulty wiring or components, and perform standardized operational tests to insure the functional and mechanical integrity of such items as transfer valves, relief valves, flow regulators and limiters, arming valves, hydraulic release devices, firing mechanisms and depth setting devices. Mechanics at this level must be able to measure and evaluate such characteristics as concentricity, eccentricity, angularity, and surface finishes.

Grade 10 mechanics use more complicated shop mathematics and handbook formulas to provide for critical dimensions and calculate angles, fits, clearances, flatness, parallelism and squareness. The work requires the ability to make adjustments to operating tolerances and connect and align the surfaces, assemblies and parts with one another. Grade 10 mechanics must be skilled in the use of more complex test consoles. They apply a working knowledge of the makeup, operation, and installation of ordnance systems and equipment usually containing a number of interrelated devices such as target detecting, arming, steering, power, and propulsion assemblies. The work requires the ability to make all adjustments to operating tolerances and connect and align the surfaces, assemblies, and parts with one another. They must be familiar with such factors as the sequence and impact of malfunctions on related components and assemblies and the electrical, mechanical, pneumatic, and hydraulic operating relationships of the equipment serviced.

The appellant's work meets but does not exceed grade 10. Like this level, he is skilled in troubleshooting, defect isolation and repair of slip ring assemblies, flow rate detector panels and rotary pumps of missile systems. He disassembles items and makes repairs that are complicated by critical tolerances and surface conditions of malfunctions on related components and assemblies. Typical of this level, the appellant disassembles, inspects, measures and compares rotary pumps to exacting tolerances indicated on drawings or schematics. Gear housing bores are inspected using a telescope gage and micrometers. If bores are found to be worn larger than 1.007 inches, the gear housing is replaced per DMWR. The valve housing mating surface is lapped a minimum amount below the existing surface to achieve flatness within 0.0005 inch maximum and removes any blemishes. The appellant ensures a minimum of 0.002 inch of bronze insert remains and the performed packing groove is 0.075 – 0.085 inches deep per DMWR. The pump gear is measured for wear using measurement over pins which are wires. The Life Test RR20100C Coolant Pump test determines the amount of acceptable wear which can be achieved before the two pump gears need replacing. The gears can show wear to an equivalent to 0.0006 inch over wire dimension for an approximate 5 percent loss in flow.

Minimum flow for overhauled units is 4.5 gallons per minute (GPM) flow at 0.004 inches under the low limit of 1.016 inches.

As grade 10, the appellant is skilled in the use of precision measurement instruments common to the trade. For example, the appellant uses dial calipers to measure the thickness of pump bearing plates. The surface thickness must be within .0001 inch Total Indicated Runout (TIR). Prior to measuring thickness, wear grooves in the plate surface are lapped out with 500 grit sand paper and oil then polished to a 20 Root-Mean-Square (RMS) surface. The appellant uses special test stands to measure and adjust elements such as pressure, flow, leakage, pneumatic impedance and control and response rates. The glycol/hydraulic test stand is used to generate and provide pressure and flow to the assembly being tested. High- and low-fluid flow and cross-feed pressure are adjusted during the test to determine if control relays are energizing and de-energizing at the correct time. Flow and pressure are monitored on the test stand to ensure there are no restrictions in the assembly being tested. The appellant tests high power radar cooler sub-assemblies such as the cooler filter unit, flow rate detector panel, flow control servo units and the pump unit. He uses a rotary hydraulic pump stand to test the rotary pump for flow through a flow meter and control valves to determine the pumps performance by simulating its actual use. Therefore, this factor is credited at the grade 10 level.

Responsibility

At grade 10, the highest grade described in the JGS, ordnance equipment mechanics receive work assignments from the immediate supervisor in the form of oral or written instructions for which drawings, specifications or technical manuals are provided or available. Grade 10 mechanics make more independent judgments than a grade 8 repairer regarding the sequence of repair operations, selection of appropriate technical references and determining the most suitable tools, equipment and materials required to complete assigned tasks. They evaluate malfunctions, isolate defects and perform repairs in equipment complicated by more numerous components and related working parts than the limited function devices at the grade 8 level. Completed work may be subject to spot check by the supervisor to ensure overall work conforms to specifications and accepted trade practices.

The appellant's work meets but does not exceed grade 10. Similar to this level, the appellant receives his work assignments verbally from his supervisor or work leader during the start-up meeting held at the beginning of the shift. References and guidance are available if needed. The appellant uses his judgment in making repairs and is skilled in troubleshooting, defect isolation and repair of slip ring assemblies, flow rate detector panels and rotary pumps of missile systems. He disassembles items and makes repairs that are complicated by critical tolerances and surface conditions of malfunctions on related components and assemblies, as mentioned in the previous section. Since the appellant works in a Certified Process Shop, he self-inspects completed work. Therefore, this factor is credited at the grade 10 level.

The appellant's ordnance equipment mechanic work is properly evaluated at the grade 10 level.

Summary

The appellant's 2604 Electronics Work is properly evaluated at the grade 8 level and his 6641 Ordnance Equipment Mechanic work at the grade 10 level. Since the highest level of regular and recurring work being performed is at the 10 level, the job is properly graded at the 10 level.

Decision

The appellant's job is properly graded as Ordnance Equipment Mechanic, WG-6641-10.