



United States Office of Personnel Management

Office of Merit Systems Oversight and Effectiveness

Digest of Significant Classification Decisions and Opinions

October 1989

No. 13-06

Standards: [Laundry Worker, WG-7304](#) (September 1968) and
[Materials Handler, WG-6907](#) (September 1990)

Factor: Series selection

Issue: Intended use of Laundry Worker vs. Materials Handler Series

Identification of the Classification Issue

The issue arose in the adjudication of an appeal from a wage grade supervisor of the linen control and repair section of a military hospital. The section was responsible for receiving and sorting linen, transporting linen to and from the post laundry, assuring the availability of an adequate supply of linen, and issuing the linen. The appellant supervised five Materials Handlers, two Motor Vehicle Operators, and one Fabric Worker. The Office of Personnel Management region had decided that the positions of the Materials Handlers and the supervisor should be classified in the Laundry Worker Series, WG-7304, rather than the Materials Handler Series, WG-6907. The request to the Classification Appeals Office for reconsideration of the Region's decision was based, in part, on the exclusion stated in the Laundry Worker standard which indicates that duties such as collecting and transporting soiled linen to the laundry or distributing clean linen to hospital wards are graded by standards for that type of work, e.g., Motor Vehicle Operator, WG-5703; Janitor, WG-3566. The agency and the appellant believed that the duties involving receiving, storing, and distributing linen made the Materials Handler Series, WG-6907, more appropriate.

Resolution

The Classification Appeals Office noted that two positions had been authorized as Motor Vehicle Operators in recognition of the primacy of the vehicle driving duties in those positions. Thus, the agency had, in effect, recognized that the work of the five subordinates performing the primary functions of the section was not the physical movement of laundry. While the workers in question did move linen carts to and from hospital wards, it represented only one aspect of their duties and

did not relate to the knowledges, skills, and abilities required to weigh linen carts and record the weights; sort dirty linen into bundles of like items and sort clean laundry for size; sort, fold, and wrap for sterilization; etc. Reference to Definitions of Trades and Labor Job Families and Occupations, Appendix B, TS 38, October 1979, revealed that the definition of the WG-7304 Laundry Worker Series encompasses the former U.S. Civil Service Commission's Handbook definitions for WG-7302, 7303, 7304, and 7353. WG-7302 referred to laundry working, classifying, and sorting; WG-7303 referred to laundry receiving and shipping; and WG-7353 referred to marking, sorting, and checking. Accordingly, the WG-7304 Series appropriately covers the primary work of the positions used as the basis for determining the series and grade of the appellant's position.

The positions classified as Materials Handlers were dealing with a relatively small number of visually identifiable items which were referenced by name and did not involve the more complex procedures for storing, consideration of stock numbers and/or codes, and matching specific items with various supply documents as described in the Materials Handler standard. The duties, which included weighing and recording the weight of dirty and clean laundry; sorting, counting, and bundling like items; folding and bundling rough-dried baby items for sterilization; and weighing, filling to listed stock levels and reweighing the linen exchange carts were best represented by the WG-7304 Series which in its definition lists receiving, sorting, and marking soiled linen and apparel; processing flatwork and roughdry items; assembling, wrapping, and issuing clean laundry. Therefore, the Region's decision to change the classification of the supervisor's position and the five Materials Handler positions to the Laundry Worker Series was affirmed.