



## United States Office of Personnel Management

**Office of Merit Systems Oversight and Effectiveness**  
*Digest of Significant Classification Decisions and Opinions*  
August 1993  
No. 18-02

**Standard:** [Fire Protection and Prevention Series, GS-0081](#) (September 1991)  
**Factor:** N/A  
**Issue:** Crediting "fill-in" time

### **Identification of the Classification Issue**

This issue arose in an Office of Personnel Management region's consideration of a group appeal. The four appellants functioned as fire protection inspectors and reported directly to the Fire Chief. Each appellant worked a weekly schedule consisting of four 8-hour days of inspection (and related) duties, including conducting technical fire protection and prevention training, reviewing construction plans, and conducting a client information program. Each appellant also worked one 24-hour day as a "fill-in" crew chief. If both the shift supervisor and senior permanent crew chief were absent, the appellants "filled in" as acting shift supervisor. The appellants contended that their "fill-in" time should be credited toward a higher grade level.

### **Resolution**

The region requested guidance on the proper classification treatment of leader or supervisory work performed in the absence of the permanently assigned employee. The Office of Personnel Management's Office of Classification advised the region that duties performed only in the absence of another employee who is on sick or annual leave do not contribute toward grade-level credit. However, duties performed on a "fill-in" basis may be grade controlling if they constitute a regularly scheduled tour. With respect to the appealed case, the Office of Classification further advised:

We do not believe that it is appropriate to credit two people with supervisory and leader duties over the same employees. The regular shift supervisors and crew chiefs have ongoing technical and administrative responsibility for their respective

crews; therefore, the "fill-in" employees are not required to exercise the full range of administrative responsibilities of the leader and supervisory positions. We see this as being different from the firefighters designated [to regularly "fill in"] as driver/operators since, in the case of a fire, they are required to drive firefighting equipment and perform the full scope of duties assigned to the position.

Applying this guidance to the appellants' work assignments, the region determined that none of the appellants' "fill-in" time was creditable toward a higher grade level. Thus, their positions were determined to be correctly evaluated on the basis of their nonsupervisory duties.