



United States Office of Personnel Management

Office of Merit Systems Oversight and Effectiveness
Digest of Significant Classification Decisions and Opinions
October 1997
No. 20-03

Standard: [General Schedule Supervisory Guide](#) (April 1993)
Factor: Factor 1, Program Scope and Effect
Issue: Distinguishing Between Level 1-2 and 1-3 in Support Work

Identification of the Classification Issue

This issue arose because of the reorganization of information systems support work in an agency's regional office. The position initially directed a multifaceted information systems management program supporting a region covering approximately one-third of the continental United States. The region was staffed with more than 4,000 Government employees at multiple sites besides the regional center. The functions directed were: (1) computer operations, including systems analysis and programming for regionally controlled systems; (2) telecommunications within the region; (3) line program information advisory services provided to the serviced public by contact representatives; and (4) a forms center that supplied forms for all agency programs to the serviced public. Forms development functions were an integral part of the form distribution center function. Ancillary functions included the regional occupational safety and health program staffed with one position and the Freedom of Information Act program staffed with two positions. The position supervised approximately 62 combined staff years of supervisory and nonsupervisory work. The agency had evaluated the position at Level 1-3.

After restructuring, the functions directed were limited to computer operations (eight staff years); telecommunications (three staff years); Freedom of Information Act program (two staff years); occupational safety and health (one staff year); and, clerical support (one staff year). The issue was whether the reconfigured position continued to support Level 1-3.

Resolution

Scope

The Level 1-3 definition for internally focused support work is described within a Department of Defense setting, i.e., "Providing complex administrative or technical or professional services directly affecting a large or complex multimission military installation also falls at this level." The third illustration for Level 1-3 expands upon the factor level definition: "Directs administrative services (personnel, supply management, budget, facilities management, or similar) which support and directly affect the operations of a bureau or a major military command headquarters; a large or complex multimission military installation; an organization of similar magnitude; or a group of organizations which, as a whole, are comparable."

The oversight division found the program segment directed by the position approached Level 1-3 in that the organization internally serviced was equivalent to a large or complex multimission military installation. The program segment directed after the reorganization, however, was more limited in its scope than intended at Level 1-3, e.g., the full range of human resource management services or the full range of budget and financial operations in organizations that are not delegated authorized accounting activity functions. The reorganization reduced the functions vested in the position from providing a full range of information resource management services to those related preponderantly to providing computer operations and related communications services.

The oversight division also learned that control over telecommunications functions was limited to two staff years of work evaluable as complex clerical and technician in nature, i.e., equipment operations. The one staff year of two-grade interval communications work was administratively under the control of the position, but was technically managed by a position at the agency headquarters. Thus, the telecommunications program segment itself was not equivalent to the "complex" technical services "directly" affecting the organization serviced to the extent envisioned at Level 1-3. The oversight division concluded the position did not meet the threshold for Level 1-3 because of the restricted nature of program functions directed, and was evaluated properly at Level 1-2.

Effect

At Level 1-3, the work directly and significantly impacts a wide range of agency activities, the work of other agencies, or the operations of outside interests. For agency support work, e.g., work supporting large, complex, multimission organizations, the work directly involves or substantially impacts the provision of essential support operations to numerous, varied, and complex technical, professional, and administrative functions. The oversight division found the organization supported consisted of the numerous, varied, and complex functions envisioned at Level 1-3. The reorganization, however, limited the effect of the services provided to a significant but narrow area of information systems support, i.e., computer operations and related telecommunications equipment operations, the Freedom of Information Act, and the unrelated

occupational safety and health program. The oversight division concluded the depth and breadth of support services provided were not equivalent to those envisioned at Level 1-3 and, thus, the impact was not equivalent to the provision of essential support operations envisioned at Level 1-3, e.g., the impact of the full range of human resource management, or budget and financial management services to a large, complex organization. Therefore, because the residual functions supervised did not meet Level 1-3 fully, they were evaluated properly at Level 1-2.

Thus, the Office of Personnel Management found that both *Scope* and *Effect* were evaluated properly at Level 1-2.