



United States Office of Personnel Management

Office of Merit Systems Oversight and Effectiveness
Digest of Significant Classification Decisions and Opinions
March 1999
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Standard: [General Schedule Supervisory Guide](#) (April 1998)
Factor: N/A
Issue: Coverage of the GSSG

Identification of the Classification Issue

This issue arose in an OPM oversight division's response to a request for technical guidance. The agency asked whether a position directing the work of two staff years of GS-11 level work performed by Federal civilian employees and approximately five staff years of contractor performed work would be covered by the GSSG. The functions performed by the contractor staff were substantially of the same kinds and levels as the work performed by the Federal employees. The position description of record showed that the employee spent 10 percent of the work time supervising the two **Federal** employees and approximately 25 percent of the time overseeing contractor performed work.

Resolution

The oversight division found the position was excluded from GSSG coverage. The Guide states that to be covered, a position must: (1) administratively and technically direct others; (2) spend at least 25 percent of the work time performing those functions; and (3) meet at least the lowest level of Factor 3 in the Guide based on supervising "Federal civilian employees, military or uniformed service employees, volunteers, or other *noncontractor* personnel." The GSSG also states positions with oversight responsibilities only over the work of private sector contractors are excluded from coverage of the Guide and are to be evaluated using the appropriate nonsupervisory standards or guides for the occupations involved.

The Guide is intended to measure the difficulty, complexity, and responsibility of work involved in the administrative and technical direction of others through the equivalent of an employer/employee relationship. Covered supervisors are expected to plan, schedule, and direct work

operations; evaluate work performance and assure work meets standards of quantity and quality; and exercise other personnel management authorities. Controls over military service, uniformed service, and/or volunteer subordinates may be more limited than for Federal civilian employees, e.g., recommending rather than taking disciplinary action. However, delegated authorities and responsibilities equivalent to the lowest level of Factor 3 typically are exercised over these noncontractor workloads and meet GSSG coverage requirements.

OPM found the level of work performed by the two Federal civilian employees involved the relative freedom from supervision that precluded the position from meeting the threshold required for coverage, i.e., spending 25 percent of the time technically and administratively supervising noncontractor work. Therefore, the GSSG could not be applied for grade level determination. The oversight division advised the agency that while the GSSG might be applied as the equivalent of a closely related standard for grade confirmation purposes, the position should be evaluated by application of an appropriate subject matter standard containing technical program management grading criteria.