

**OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT**  
**MERIT SYSTEMS OVERSIGHT AND EFFECTIVENESS**  
**DALLAS OVERSIGHT DIVISION**  
**CLASSIFICATION APPEAL DECISION**

Under section 5112(b) of title 5, United States Code

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**Appellant:** [appellant]

**Position:** Services Squadron Deputy, GS-301-12

**Organization:** Air Force Base

**Decision:** GS-301-12. Title to be constructed by the agency.  
(Appeal denied.)

**OPM decision number:** C-0301-12-01

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**Approved by:**

/s/ Bonnie J. Brandon  
Bonnie J. Brandon

3/8/96  
Date

## **INTRODUCTION**

The appellant serves as the deputy to the commander of the Air Force Base (AFB). The agency has classified his position as Services Squadron Deputy, GS-301-12. The appellant believes his position should be graded at a higher level and placed in the GS-342 series. Consequently, he appealed the classification of his position to this office under the provisions of chapter 51 of title 5, United States Code.

This is the final administrative decision of the Government, subject to discretionary review only under the conditions and time limits specified in subpart F of Part 511 of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations.

## **GENERAL ISSUES**

The appellant cites the classification of higher graded positions similar to his own as part of the basis for his appeal. He provided copies of position descriptions from other [AFBs]; and one other unidentified AFB and a draft position description from [ AFB]. By law, positions are classified based upon their duties, responsibilities, and qualification requirements compared to the criteria specified in the appropriate Office of Personnel Management (OPM) classification standard or guide. Other methods of evaluation, including comparison to other positions, are not permitted. Agencies are, however, required to apply classification standards and OPM decisions consistently to ensure equal pay for equal work. Section 511.612 of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations, requires agencies to review their internal classification decisions for identical, similar, and related positions to ensure consistency with OPM certificates. Accordingly, our letter transmitting this decision advises the agency to respond to this issue.

## **POSITION INFORMATION**

The appellant disagrees with some of the statements in his official position description (PD) and has presented information reflecting his efforts to resolve these differences. The appellant's statement regarding accuracy of his position description focuses primarily on the three areas discussed below.

The appellant states that he assumes full responsibility for managing all squadron functions during the absence of the commander except for those military functions specifically prohibited by the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ) and says this assumption of responsibility has been omitted from his PD. In our interview with the squadron commander, he substantiated the appellant's statement. The appellant's PD alludes to assumption of the commander's duties in his absence with such statements as "serves as deputy to the Services Squadron Commander . . . jointly supervises all flight chiefs . . . represents the squadron commander at meetings and briefings . . . assists the Services Squadron Commander in initiating and implementing plans . . . ."

Clearly, the intent is for the deputy position to function as a full deputy except for those areas reserved by the commander. In this case, the commander has restricted the deputy's activities only in those areas dealing with military personnel.

The appellant objects to statements in paragraph seven of his PD that relate to extensive preparation "with the assistance of supporting flight chiefs" being required before making some of his contacts. He states that he does not need the assistance from the flight chiefs when making these contacts. Available information indicates that this passage simply means the appellant may occasionally need information from the flight chiefs in carrying out the squadron's mission. It does not imply that the appellant cannot make these contacts without the flight chiefs' assistance.

The appellant contends that appropriate consideration has not been given to his management of the [operation] in grading his position. He states that this is a unique mission and that the number of personnel serviced by the [operation] should be 600 instead of 400 as stated in his PD. Even considering these areas of disagreement presented by the appellant, his position description of record is adequate for classification purposes. The issue concerning the [operation] is addressed in the Grade Determination section of this decision.

The Services Squadron is responsible for planning, implementing, and managing a comprehensive program of activities to meet the physical, recreational, youth and child care, lodging, and social needs and mortuary affairs of assigned military personnel and their dependents, Department of Defense personnel, and authorized patrons in communities surrounding the [ AFB]. The Services Squadron program is accomplished through 55 indoor and outdoor facilities, including the following: Officer's Open Mess, Enlisted Open Mess, enlisted dining facility, 18-hole golf complex, two fitness centers, six outdoor tennis courts, bowling center, library, auto skills center, arts and crafts skills center, wood skills center, 157-bed lodging complex, child development center, family camping facility, two outdoor picnic facilities, indoor swimming pool, and conference facility. In addition, the squadron operates Iron Eagle Foods, a central kitchen which prepares, packages, stores, and ships meals to 400-600 personnel at four missile wings (one at [AFB] and one each at three other bases) spread over a three-state area. At the time of the appeal, the squadron provided services to approximately 3,700 military personnel and 4,400 dependents and 2,000 military retirees.

The Services Squadron Commander and the appellant, who is considered a full deputy, carry out the following duties and responsibilities:

- direct the various functions of the Services Squadron;

- brief the installation commander and the squadron flight chiefs on problems and determine courses of action to pursue, resolving technical problems at the squadron level;
- formulate basic policy encompassing the squadron's operational, technical, and administrative matters;
- develop, implement, and evaluate Services Squadron program goals and objectives; and
- deal with installation and higher command personnel, the general public, members of the business community, employees of local governments, and contractors.

The deputy also assumes the duties of the flight chiefs during their absences. At the time of the appeal, there were six flight chiefs (two military and four civilian at the GS-12 level).

To accomplish the responsibilities of the position, the employee must have a general knowledge of management principles and practices, a thorough understanding of and experience in hospitality management and recreation work, and knowledge of financial planning and funds management. In addition, the experience must reflect the ability to supervise and make oral and written presentations.

The appellant's official position description, the description written for the commander's position, and other material of record provide further details about the appellant's duties and responsibilities and how they are carried out.

## **SERIES AND TITLE DETERMINATION**

The appellant contends that his position should be classified in the GS-342 series because the Support Services flight chiefs supervise "the work of large groups of employees engaged in the provision of varied services functions." He also states, "the number and type of functions performed and services provided through a support services program will vary according to the specific operational needs of each organization." He provides no further rationale for placing the position in the GS-342 series.

Primary duties of positions in the GS-342 series involve supervising, directing, or planning and coordinating a variety of services functions that are principally work-supporting, i.e., those functions without which the operations of an organization or services to the public would be impaired, curtailed, or stopped. Such service functions typically include communications, procurement of administrative supplies and

equipment, printing, reproduction, property management, space management, records management, mail service, facilities and equipment maintenance, and transportation.

Clearly, the mission of the squadron and the primary functions of the appellant's position as previously discussed do not involve the common support services described in the GS-342 series. Therefore, the position must be classified in a series that best reflects the paramount knowledge and skill requirements of the position.

The agency has classified the appellant's position, as well as the Services Squadron Commander position, in the Miscellaneous Administration and Program Series, GS-301. This series includes positions where the duties are to perform, supervise, or manage nonprofessional, two-grade interval work for which no other series is appropriate. The GS-301 standard indicates that positions should be classified in this series when one of the following situations applies:

- the position involves specialized work for which no appropriate occupational series has been established;
- there are too few positions involved in the work to have been recognized as a separate line of work; or
- the position involves new or emerging work, or, more rarely, mixtures of work that cannot be identified with an established series.

The commander directs, through subordinate supervisors, positions classified in many different occupational groups and series. Among others, these include GS-030, GS-301, GS-303, GS-334, GS-501, GS-525, GS-560, GS-601, GS-1101, GS-1410, GS-1701, WG-4819, WG-7404, WS-5823, and WG-4605. Thus, the subject matter, knowledge, and skills required by the commander's position relate to many occupational groups with no one group or series within a group being predominant. Therefore, the commander's position and, in turn, the appellant's position meet the third criterion for the GS-301 series, i.e., the position involves mixtures of work that cannot be identified with any one established series that is predominant in the work of the squadron. Accordingly, the GS-301 series is appropriate for allocation of both the commander's and appellant's positions.

There are no specified titles for positions in the GS-301 series. Therefore, the agency is permitted to construct a title for the commander's and appellant's positions in accordance with instructions in the Introduction to the Position Classification Standards (section III.H.2). The existing titles, Services Squadron Commander and Services Squadron Deputy, respectively, are acceptable and properly descriptive titles.

## GRADE DETERMINATION

The General Schedule Supervisory Guide (GSSG), dated January 1993, is used to determine the grade level of the appellant's position. As indicated on page nine of the GSSG, the evaluation criteria are not designed to be applied directly to deputy positions. The grade of a full deputy should normally be set one grade lower than the grade of the supervisory duties of the position to which it reports. Consequently, the grade of the appellant's position must be based on an initial evaluation of the duties and responsibilities of the Services Squadron Commander position. The grade of the appellant's position will then be placed one grade lower than the commander's.

The GSSG uses a point-factor evaluation approach with six evaluation factors designed specifically for supervisory positions. If one level of a factor or element is exceeded but the next higher level is not met, the lower level must be credited. The total points accumulated under all factors are then converted to a grade by using the point-to-grade conversion table in the GSSG. Each factor is evaluated as follows for the Services Squadron Commander's position.

### **Factor 1, Program Scope and Effect**

This factor contains two elements: Scope and Effect. These elements assess the general complexity, breadth, and impact of the program areas and work directed, including the organizational and geographic coverage. They also assess the impact of the work both within and outside the immediate organization. To credit a particular factor level, the criteria for *both* scope and effect must be met.

#### Scope

This element addresses the general complexity and breadth of (1) the program (or program segment) directed and (2) the work directed, the products produced, or the services delivered. The geographic and organizational coverage of the program (or program segment) *within the agency structure* is to be addressed under Scope.

At Level 1-2, the program segment or work directed is administrative, technical, complex clerical, or comparable in nature. The functions, activities, or services provided have limited geographic coverage and support most of the activities comprising a typical agency field office, an area office, a small to medium military installation, or comparable activities within agency program segments.

The supervisor at Level 1-3 directs a program segment that performs technical, administrative, protective, investigative, or professional work. The program segment and work directed typically have coverage which encompasses a major metropolitan area, a State, or a small region of several States; or, when most of an area's taxpayers

or businesses are covered, coverage comparable to a small city. Providing complex administrative, technical, or professional services directly affecting a large or complex multimission military installation is also creditable at Level 1-3.

At Level 1-4, the supervisor directs work that (1) impacts the activities of an agency's headquarters, several bureauwide programs, or most of an agency's entire field establishment; (2) facilitates the agency's accomplishment of its primary mission of national significance; (3) impacts large segments of the nation's population or segments of one or a few large industries; or (4) receives frequent or continuing congressional or media attention.

A large military installation is defined in the GSSG as a military base with one or a few missions or a group of activities with a total serviced or supported employee-equivalent population exceeding 4,000 personnel, and with a variety of serviced technical functions. These personnel are directly affected by the position under evaluation. Federal civilian and military employees, estimated contractor personnel, volunteers, and similar personnel may be used to derive the population total.

A complex, multimission installation includes four or more of the following: a garrison, a medical center or large hospital and medical laboratory complex; multimillion dollar (annual) construction, civil works, or environmental cleanup projects; a test and evaluation center or research laboratory of moderate size; a supply or maintenance depot; or equivalent activities. These activities are individually smaller than the large installation described above.

The scope of the squadron commander's work exceeds Level 1-2 in that he directs administrative, technical, and professional work. The coverage meets Level 1-3 in that the commander's position is responsible for a services program that directly affects approximately 3,700 military personnel at [ AFB], more than 4,000 dependents, and approximately 2,000 military retirees. The personnel serviced by the Iron Eagle Foods operation may also be included when determining the total population serviced. In evaluating this element, the GSSG indicates that only the total population serviced directly and significantly may be considered. This is because only the population serviced directly and significantly has a major and direct effect on the difficulty of the supervisor's job. Overall, the squadron provides services to approximately 10,000 persons throughout a relatively large geographic area which meets the GSSG's definition of a large military installation. However, the total population serviced must be considered in context with other aspects of the work in determining if the position meets the full intent of Level 1-3. In view of the wide range of services provided by the squadron and the administrative and professional expertise required to accomplish its mission, such as operation of the youth programs and child care and development programs, the position does meet the intent of Level 1-3. For the commander's

position, both the scope of the program segment and the services delivered meet Level 1-3.

Level 1-4 is not met in that the commander's position does not direct work which involves the *development* of major aspects of *key* agency programs or involves major, highly technical operations.

Consequently, the commander's position is evaluated at Level 1-3 for Scope.

### Effect

This element addresses the impact of the work, the products, and/or the programs described under "Scope" on the mission and programs of the customer(s), the activity, other activities in or out of government, the agency, other agencies, the general public, or others.

At Level 1-2, the services or products support and significantly affect installation level, area office level, or field office operations and objectives, or comparable program segments; or provide services to a moderate, local, or limited population of clients or users comparable to a major portion of a small city or rural county.

At Level 1-3, activities, functions, or services accomplished directly and significantly impact a wide range of agency activities, the work of other agencies, the operations of outside interests, or the general public. At the field activity level (involving large, complex, multimission organizations and/or very large serviced populations), the work directly involves or substantially impacts the provision of essential support operations to numerous, varied, and complex technical, professional, and administrative functions.

The commander's position falls short of Level 1-3 for Effect. The services of the squadron do not directly support or substantially impact the provision of *essential* support operations to numerous, varied, and complex technical, professional, and administrative functions of the scope and complexity that would typically exist at a large or complex, multimission military installation. While the [operation] may be a unique operation for the Services Squadron, its existence does not affect the overall mission of the installation. The focus of the Services Squadron is to provide a program of activities to meet the physical, social, and related needs of the military personnel assigned to [AFB], military dependents, retirees, etc. The work of the Services Squadron neither impacts a wide range of agency activities or the work of other agencies nor affects the general public as intended at Level 1-3. Therefore, Level 1-2 is assigned for this element.

The standard instructs that to assign a factor level, both scope and effect must be met. Since only the scope of the commander's work equates to Level 1-3, Factor 1 must be



evaluated at the next lower level. Therefore, Factor 1 is evaluated at Level 1-2 and credited with 350 points.

## **Factor 2, Organizational Setting**

This factor considers the organizational position of the supervisor in relation to higher levels of management (the rank of the person to whom the supervisor reports for direction and appraisal).

Under this factor, if the position being classified reports directly to a Senior Executive, flag officer, or the equivalent, it receives Level 2-3 credit. If not, but the second-level supervisor of the position being classified is a Senior Executive, flag officer, or the equivalent, it receives Level 2-2 credit. In all other cases, the position being classified receives minimum credit, Level 2-1. Full deputies are treated as being at the same level as the deputy's chief for this factor.

The Services Squadron Commander reports to the Support Group Commander who is a colonel. The colonel reports to the Wing Commander who is a general. This reporting structure matches Level 2-2 of the GSSG. Therefore, this factor is evaluated at Level 2-2 and is credited with 250 points.

## **Factor 3, Supervisory and Managerial Authority Exercised**

This factor covers the delegated supervisory and managerial authorities that are exercised on a recurring basis. To be credited with a level under this factor, a position must carry out the authorities and responsibilities to the extent described for the specific level. Levels under this factor apply equally to the direction of specialized program management organizations, line functions, staff functions, and operating and support activities.

The agency has evaluated this factor at Level 3-3. The appellant believes that the commander's position meets Level 3-4. He writes that the commander develops and approves multiyear work plans and manages policy changes in response to appropriation level variances and other legislated changes.

The factor level criteria for Level 3-4 are prefaced with the statement that this level is creditable when a position involves the delegated managerial (paragraph a of Level 3-3) *and* supervisory (paragraph b of Level 3-3) authorities included at lower levels of Factor 3, *in addition to* the criteria in either Level 3-4a or Level 3-4b. Thus, before examining the criteria in Level 3-4, it must first be determined if the commander's position involves *both* the managerial and supervisory authorities described at Level 3-3 before consideration can be given to crediting Level 3-4.

In some ways, the commander's position appears to meet Level 3-3a described on page 17 of the GSSG. For instance, the PD states that he develops and evaluates the Services Squadron program goals and objectives, ensuring that they conform to a multiyear operating plan. The PD also states that he delegates program responsibilities to subordinate program managers and assures that operations are effectively managed. However, because the criteria for Factor 3 indicate that a position must carry out the responsibilities described at a particular level *to the extent described* to be credited with that level, it would be inappropriate to credit a level when a significant aspect of the criteria is not present in a position. The criteria for Level 3-3a include a requirement for intensive involvement in program development/management activities, as reflected by the following duty: "These positions are closely involved with high level program officials (or comparable *agency-level staff personnel*) in the development of overall goals and objectives for *assigned staff function(s), program(s), or program segment(s)*. For example, they . . . [are responsible for the] execution of . . . activities which support development of goals and objectives related to high levels [e.g., command or staff level] of program management and development or formulation." OPM precedent has established that absent this level of involvement in the *agency's* overall program development and program activities, a position would not fully meet the intent of Level 3-3a. The commander's position does not meet the full intent of Level 3-3a; therefore, it cannot be credited with performing the managerial authorities found in Level 3-3a.

To meet Level 3-3b, the supervisory position must exercise all or nearly all of the delegated supervisory authorities and responsibilities described at Level 3-2c on pages 16 and 17 of the GSSG and, in addition, at least eight of the supervisory authorities and responsibilities described at Level 3-3b on pages 17 and 18. The record indicates that the commander exercises nearly all of the supervisory authorities described at Level 3-2c and Level 3-3b.

Since the commander's position does not involve all of the supervisory and managerial authorities in *both* paragraphs of Level 3-3, we need not address Level 3-4. The highest level that the position fully meets is Level 3-3.

Accordingly, Level 3-3b, worth 775 points, is assigned.

#### **Factor 4, Personal Contacts**

This is a two-part factor that measures the nature and purpose of personal contacts related to supervisory and managerial responsibilities. The contacts used to determine the level under one subfactor must be the same used to determine credit under the other subfactor.

#### Subfactor 4A, Nature of Contacts

This subfactor covers the organizational relationships, authority or influence level, setting, and preparation difficulty involved in the supervisor's work. To be credited, contacts must be direct and recurring, contribute to the successful performance of the work, and have a demonstrable impact on the difficulty and responsibility of the position.

The agency assigned Level 4A-2 for this subfactor, and the appellant does not disagree. We agree that the nature of the commander's contacts warrants Level 4A-2. As described at that level, the commander has frequent contacts with all levels of base personnel, command personnel, the general public, and contractors. These contacts may be informal, occur in conferences and meetings or by telephone, and require special preparation.

This subfactor is evaluated at Level 4A-2 and is credited with 50 points.

#### Subfactor 4B, Purpose of Contacts

The purpose of the commander's contacts warrants Level 4B-3. As found at this level, the purpose of the commander's contacts is to justify, defend, reposition, or negotiate issues affecting objectives of the squadron's programs, obtaining or commit resources, and gain compliance with contract requirements. The commander's contacts do not meet Level 4B-4 where the purpose is to influence, motivate, or persuade persons or groups to accept opinions related to the fundamental goals and objectives of programs or commitment of major resources when resistance is encountered and persons contacted are fearful, skeptical, or uncooperative. These conditions are not regularly present in the commander's contacts.

This subfactor is evaluated at Level 4B-3 and is credited with 100 points.

### **Factor 5, Difficulty of Typical Work Directed**

This factor covers the difficulty and complexity of the basic (mission oriented) work most typical of the organization directed, as well as other line, staff, or contracted work for which the supervisor has technical or oversight responsibility (either directly or through subordinate supervisors, team leaders, or others).

For second-level supervisors, the level credited for this factor normally must constitute at least 50 percent of the workload of the organization supervised. The agency found that at least 50 percent of the workload is at the GS-9 level. The appellant does not disagree. For purposes of this evaluation, the base level of GS-9 is accepted. The chart on page 24 of the GSSG shows that a base level of GS-9 matches Level 5-5.

Level 5-5, worth 650 points, is assigned for this factor.

### **Factor 6, Other Conditions**

This factor measures the extent to which various conditions contribute to the difficulty of supervision. Conditions affecting work for which the supervisor is responsible (whether performed by Federal employees, assigned military, contractors, volunteers, or others) may be considered if they increase the difficulty of carrying out assigned supervisory or managerial duties and authorities. For credit, the condition must be present and dealt with on a regular basis. Positions at Level 6-3 are boosted one level if they meet at least three of the eight special situations described in the GSSG.

The agency assigned Level 6-3 to the commander's position based on its determination that GS-9 is the highest level of nonsupervisory work. According to instructions in the GSSG, Level 6-4 may be assigned when the position directs subordinate supervisors who each direct substantial workloads comparable to the GS-9 level. There is no evidence that *each* supervisor directs a substantial workload at or equivalent to the GS-9 level. Therefore, Level 6-3 is appropriate.

Since Level 6-3 is assigned, the commander's position is further compared to the special situations described in the GSSG under this factor. The agency found that three of the eight special situations are met: variety of work, shift operations, and physical dispersion. We agree with the agency's assessment. Therefore, the next higher level is assigned for this factor.

Accordingly, this factor is evaluated at Level 6-4 and assigned 1120 points.

### **Summary**

We have evaluated the commander's position as follows:

<u>Factor</u>	<u>Level</u>	<u>Points</u>
1. Program Scope and Effect	1-2	350
2. Organizational Setting	2-2	250
3. Supervisory and Managerial Authority Exercised	3-3b	775
4. Personal Contacts		
4A. Nature of Contacts	4A-2	50
4B. Purpose of Contacts	4B-3	100
5. Difficulty of Typical Work Directed	5-5	650
6. Other Conditions	6-4	<u>1120</u>
Total Points		3295

The 3295 total points fall within the GS-13 range of the point-to-grade conversion chart on page 31 of the GSSG. The adjustment conditions on page 32 do not apply. Therefore, the final grade for the commander's position is GS-13.

## **DECISION**

The commander's position is appropriately classified to the GS-301 series at the GS-13 grade level. Therefore, the appellant's position is properly classified as GS-301-12. A short descriptive title is left to the agency's discretion.