

**U.S. Office of Personnel Management
Office of Merit Systems Oversight and
Effectiveness
Classification Appeals and FLSA Programs**

Atlanta Oversight Division
75 Spring Street, SW., Suite 972
Atlanta, GA 30303-3109

**Pay Category Appeal Decision
Under section 5103 of title 5, United States Code**

Appellant: [Appellants]

Agency classification: Materials Examiner and Identifier
WG-6912-07

Organization: [Branch]
[Division]
Marine Corps Logistics Base
Department of the Navy
[Location]

OPM decision: Federal Wage System

OPM decision number: C-6912-00-01

/s/

Timothy P. Heath
Classification Appeals Officer

4/23/01

Date

As provided in section 511.612 of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations, this decision constitutes a certificate that is mandatory and binding on all administrative, certifying, payroll, disbursing, and accounting officials of the government. The agency is responsible for reviewing its classification decisions for identical, similar, or related positions to ensure consistency with this decision. There is no right of further appeal. This decision is subject to discretionary review only under conditions and time limits specified in the Introduction to the Position Classification Standards, appendix 4, section G (address provided in appendix 4, section H).

Decision sent to:

[Appellants]

Director
Human Resources Service Center Southeast
Department of the Navy
9110 Leonard Kimble Road
Stennis Space Center, MS 39522-0002

Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of
the Navy (Civilian personnel and Equal
Employment Opportunity)
Nebraska Avenue Complex
321 Somer Court NW., Suite 40101
Washington, DC 22310-3398

Chief, Classification Appeals
Adjudication Section
Department of Defense
Civilian Personnel Management Service
1400 Key Boulevard, Suite B-200
Arlington, VA 22209-5144

Introduction

On January 12, 2001, the Atlanta Oversight Division of the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) received a group pay category appeal from appellants assigned to Federal Wage System (FWS) jobs as Materials Examiner Identifiers, WG-6912-7, in the [Branch], [Division], Marine Corps Logistics Base, Department of the Navy, [Location]. Their jobs were previously located in the [Section], [Branch], until an October 2000 realignment of the [Division].

The appellants' jobs were also previously classified as General Equipment Inspectors, WG-6901-7. The appellants believed that their jobs should be placed in the General Schedule (GS) and appealed to their agency requesting classification in the Quality Assurance Series, GS-1910. In a decision issued by the Department of Defense (DoD) Civilian Personnel Management Service (CPMS) on March 20, 1997, the jobs were classified as Materials Examiner Identifiers, WG-6912-7. The agency decision included an explanation as to why classification in the Quality Assurance Series, GS-1910, the Equipment Specialist Series, GS-1670, or evaluation using the FWS Job Grading Standard for Inspectors TS-47, April 1982, was inappropriate. The appellants submitted another appeal to CPMS requesting classification in the GS. This request was rejected by CPMS on December 19, 2000, on the basis that the appeal packet did not indicate that there had been any significant change in their duties since the previous decision. The appellants subsequently appealed to OPM requesting classification in the GS as Equipment Specialist, GS-1670-9. We have accepted and decided their appeal under section 5103 of title 5, United States Code (U.S.C.).

General issues

In their appeal, the appellants contend that their primary responsibility is to gather information on Principal End Items (PEI's) during receiving inspections and provide it to parties responsible for or involved in the manufacture, testing, procurement operation, repair, or disposal of these items. They further contend that these duties are more appropriate for inclusion in GS and classifiable as Equipment Specialist, GS-1670-9.

The appellants make various statements regarding the accuracy of their agency's interpretation of their duties as shown in their job descriptions. In adjudicating this appeal, our only concern is to make our own independent decision on the proper classification of the appellants' jobs. By law, we must make that decision solely by comparing their current duties and responsibilities to OPM standards and guidelines (5 U.S.C. 5106, 5107, and 5112). Therefore, we have considered the appellant's statements only insofar as they are relevant to making that comparison.

We have evaluated the work assigned by management in the job descriptions of record [Number]. In reaching our decision, we carefully reviewed the information provided by the appellants, their supervisor, and the agency.

Job information

The agency and the supervisor certified the accuracy of the job description; however, the appellants did not.

OPM considers a position description adequate for classification purposes when the major duties and responsibilities of the position are listed, and proper classification can be made when the description is supplemented by otherwise accurate, available, and current information on the organization's structure, mission, and procedures. We find the current position description adequate.

The appellants are responsible for performing final verification inspections of new, rebuilt/repared and retrograde PEIs of Marine Corps Supply System stock during the receiving process. The PEIs with which they are primarily involved include, but are not limited to, motor transport, ordnance vehicles and equipment, generators, radio sets and radar units, tool sets, data processing units, water and bulk fuel systems, and a variety of non-technical items. As part of the receiving process, the appellants make positive identification of PEIs by researching and verifying National Stock Numbers, parts numbers, nomenclature, identification numbers, equipment configuration and other relevant information provided in accompanying documents or equipment data plates. They inspect for damages occurring during transit and ensure conformance with proper procedures regarding packing, preservation and marking. The appellants verify conformance with specifications regarding specific quantities and physical condition of PEIs through reviews of contracts, purchase orders/requests, specification documents, catalog drawings and computerized data. They perform inventories to ensure completeness of materials received by comparison with current stockage lists, technical manuals, manufacturers' lists, and equipment/material-specific logistics documents. The appellants assign appropriate condition codes; determine the level of protection necessary to prevent equipment damage/deterioration during handling or storage; assign lot contract numbers based on serviceability, reparability, manufacture, rebuild or cure date; and determine and assign next inspection date information based on storage plans preservation and test requirements.

The appellants prepare reports and forms reflecting inspection results and instructions for disposition or storage. This information is forwarded to various organizations responsible for taking appropriate action. When warranted, the appellants' reports may include instructions or recommendations to initiate discrepancy or quality deficiency reports. They have routine and recurring contacts with managers, specialists, technicians and personnel in other organizations (e.g. Life Cycle Management Center, Fleet Support Center, Contract Directorate, commercial vendors' repair facilities, etc.) to obtain documents or exchange information used in resolving or clarifying discrepancies.

The appellants receive general assignments and work schedules from their immediate supervisor. The appellants independently carry out assignments based on work schedules established by their supervisor in accordance with established guidelines, priorities and production requirements.

Pay category determination

The DoD CPMS determined that the appellants' jobs were properly placed in the FWS. We agree.

The work performed by the appellants most closely matches that described in the standard for the Materials Examiner and Identifier, WG-6912, series. The standard covers nonsupervisory work involved in the identification, examination, classification, acceptance, and disposition of materials and equipment. Materials examiners and identifiers determine physical condition, adherence to product specifications, and equipment defects utilizing shipping documents,

contracts, catalogs, drawings, and related documents. The work setting is usually within a warehouse facility, primarily in a receiving or shipping area, or in a property reutilization and disposal facility. The primary focus of the appellants' work is the performance of verification inspections of major equipment items at the time of receipt at the installation. These inspections are for the purpose of ensuring that PEIs are positively identified; configurations and modifications conform with those specified in contracts, purchase orders, etc.; all components required by contract or other documentation actually accompany the equipment; and in-transit damage is detected and noted. The appellants are responsible for determining the physical and mechanical condition and serviceability of PEIs and coding them appropriately; determining if preservation, packing, marking and other protective procedures are sufficient to prevent damage and deterioration during handling and storage, and providing reports of their findings to organizations having responsibility to accept, reject, or litigate based on the results of those findings.

The work performed by the appellants does not match that described in the standard for the Equipment Specialist Series, GS-1670. Positions in this series perform or supervise work primarily requiring an intensive, practical knowledge of equipment and its characteristics, properties, and uses in order to (1) collect, analyze, interpret, and provide specialized information about equipment together with related advice to those who design, test, produce, procure, supply, operate, repair, or dispose of equipment; (2) identify and recommend practical solutions to engineering design and manufacturing defects and recommend use of substitute testing or support equipment when the equipment is unavailable; or (3) develop, install, inspect, or revise equipment maintenance programs and techniques. The Equipment Specialist Series encompasses the broad equipment stages of preproduction, production, usage, and disposal. Within these stages, equipment specialists perform a wide variety of functions. They obtain, provide, and base recommendations on equipment information such as: manufacturing processes; materials; maintenance requirements; associated equipment and conditions needed to operate and repair it; equipment composition; and how each part interrelates with the other and adjacent parts, components, or within the larger overall system. They also consider equipment uses; design and operating characteristics and limitations; operating instructions; reliable and unreliable manufacturers; operating and repair capabilities of different organizational levels; and disposal procedures.

The appeal record does not contain any information to indicate that the appellants' work includes activities requiring the knowledge of the variety of areas in which Equipment Specialists routinely function. Their inspection work does not result in recommendations affecting manufacturing processes, materials, or maintenance requirements. They are not required to be knowledgeable of procedures or conditions related to the operation and repair of equipment or the interrelationship of parts or components as part of an overall system. Their responsibilities are limited to specific procedures related to determination of the acceptability of PEIs based on information contained in conditions, requirements and specifications which have been previously established.

Decision

The appellants' jobs are properly covered by the FWS.