

Classification Appeal Decision
Under section 5112 of title 5, United States Code

Appellant: [Name of appellant]

Agency classification: Production Controller (Automotive)
GS-1152-7

Organization: [Appellant's organization/location]
Department of the Air Force

OPM decision: Transportation Assistant
GS-2102-7
(Parenthetical title at agency discretion)

OPM decision number: C-2102-07-03

Kevin Mahoney
Acting Deputy Associate Director
Center for Merit System Accountability

July 26, 2007

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).

Since this decision changes the classification of the appealed position, it is to be effective no later than the beginning of the fourth pay period after the date of this decision (5 CFR 511.702). As indicated in this decision, the appellant's position description (PD) (Core Personnel Document) (CPD) is not accurate in that it discusses several major duties that the appellant does not perform. Since PDs must meet the standard of adequacy addressed in Section III.E. of the *Introduction to the Position Classification Standards*, the appellant's PD must be revised to reflect our findings. The servicing human resources office must submit a compliance report containing the corrected position description and a Standard Form 50 showing the personnel action taken within 30 days from the effective date of the personnel action to the OPM office which accepted the appeal.

Decision sent to:

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Introduction

On March 8, 2007, the San Francisco Field Services Group of the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) accepted a classification appeal from [name of appellant]. On April 9, 2007, we received the agency's complete administrative report. The appellant's position is currently classified as Production Controller (Automotive), GS-1152-7, but he believes it should be classified as Transportation Specialist, GS-2101-9. The appellant works at the [appellant's organization/work location], Department of the Air Force (AF). We have accepted and decided this appeal under section 5112(b) of title 5, United States Code (U.S.C.).

General Issues

The appellant's supervisor has certified to the accuracy of the appellant's official CPD [number]. However, the appellant indicated the CPD lists duties he does not perform and does not fully describe his fleet management tasks on which he spends all of his time. Our review of the CPD disclosed that it describes major duties and responsibilities which the appellant does not perform. Specifically, the appellant does not consider the availability of shop personnel and equipment, does not ensure workload is balanced among various shops and crews, and does not initiate orders for parts. He does not perform scheduling and dispatching of jobs for manufacturing/repair activities on the basis of production line or shop capacity, status of work in progress, time required to complete the activity, availability of materials and tools, and urgency of need. In addition, he performs his work with greater independence than that described in the CPD under Factor 2, Supervisory Controls. Therefore, the appellant's CPD does not meet the standard of adequacy addressed in section III.E of the *Introduction to the Position Classification Standards*, and the agency must correct the CPD to reflect our findings.

The appellant compares his duties to similar but higher-graded positions at other AFBs, thus indicating that his position should be higher-graded. In adjudicating this appeal, our responsibility is to make our own independent decision on the proper classification of this position. By law, we must make that decision solely by comparing his current duties and responsibilities to OPM position classification standards and guidelines (5 U.S.C. 5106, 5107, and 5112). Since comparison to standards is the exclusive method for classifying positions, we cannot compare the appellant's position to others that may or may not be properly classified as a basis for deciding his appeal.

Like OPM, the appellant's agency must classify positions based on comparison to OPM standards and guidelines. However, the agency also has primary responsibility for ensuring that its positions are classified consistently with OPM appeal decisions. If the appellant considers his position so similar to others that they all warrant the same classification, he may pursue the matter by writing to his agency's human resources headquarters. In doing so, he should specify the precise organizational location, classification, duties, and responsibilities of the positions in question. If the positions are found to be basically the same as his, the agency must correct its classification to be consistent with this appeal decision. Otherwise, the agency should explain to him the differences between his position and the others.

Position information

The appellant performs a variety of duties in support of the acquisition, care, accountability, maintenance, and safe operation of the vehicle fleet. The fleet is comprised of approximately 553 vehicles owned by the base, 42 General Services Administration (GSA) leased vehicles, and 10 AF vehicles located overseas in Korea, Cypress (Greece), the United Arab Emirates and Kuwait. The fleet consists of a variety of vehicles including pick-up trucks, buses, police cars, fire trucks, cranes, sweepers, and aircraft re-fueling trucks. The appellant is responsible for planning and scheduling vehicle maintenance, and inputting and maintaining automated records in various systems; i.e., Online Vehicle Integrated Management System (OLVIMS), Automated Fleet Management System (AFMS) and Standard Base Supply System (SBSS). From these systems he is able to gather information on the condition and age of the vehicle fleet, and extract status reports on a daily, weekly, monthly, and annual basis. He gathers information and makes determinations concerning priority vehicle purchase and vehicle utilization. He also provides training and guidance to unit Vehicle Control Officers (VCOs) who are responsible for ensuring that operation, maintenance, and use of assigned vehicles complies with AF policy. The appellant also ensures that vehicle maintenance contracts are accurately maintained and that authorized expenditures are correct prior to forwarding for payment. The appellant spends all of his work time performing the preceding duties.

In reaching our classification decision, we have carefully reviewed all information furnished by the appellant and his agency, including the official CPD which, although not entirely accurate, is incorporated by reference into this decision. In addition, to help decide the appeal we conducted separate telephone interviews with the appellant and his immediate supervisor.

Series, title, and standard determination

The agency has classified the appellant's position in the Production Control Series, GS-1152, titling it Production Controller (Automotive), GS-1152. Positions classified in the GS-1152 series covers work involving the supervision or performance of planning, estimating, scheduling, and expediting the use of labor, machines, and materials in specific manufacturing or remanufacturing operations that employ mechanical or automated production systems and methods in the fabrication, rebuilding, overhaul, refurbishing, or repair of any type of Government-owned, controlled, or operated equipment, systems, facilities, and supplies.

As discussed in the "Occupational Information" section of the GS-1152 position classification standard (PCS), production control is the planning of production in advance of actual operations; establishing the exact route of each individual item, part, or assembly; setting the start and completion dates for each important item and assembly, as well as the finished product; determining the specific type of labor and number of hours required for each phase of the operation; and calculating all the materials, services, and the production schedule lead time required. Depending on the size of the industrial facility and the complexity of the product, controllers may specialize in either the planning or production phases, or be assigned to both phases. Regardless of grade level, all GS-1152 positions have the same basic duties in common as they all are required to perform almost all of the following listed functions:

- (1) Prepare production plans for specific projects and operations through the compilation of customer requirements, engineering designs, specification, and machining process data;
- (2) Compile estimates for different types of skilled labor and the number of worker-hours required for production operations;
- (3) Advise procurement or supply activities on a variety of material requirements and production schedule due dates;
- (4) Schedule and control primary work assignments to manufacturing activities based upon production line or shop capacity, priority, and due date;
- (5) Determine the status of work in progress, time required to complete the job, the availability of materials, tools required, and reassess priorities;
- (6) Expedite jobs in progress by any appropriate means; and
- (7) Monitor, record, and report the status of production funding.

The appellant believes his position should be assigned to the Transportation Specialist Series, GS-2101 which includes all administrative positions the duties of which are to advise on, supervise, or perform work which involves two or more specialized transportation functions or other transportation work not specifically included in other series of the GS-2100 Transportation Group. The GS-2101 series is a two-grade interval series.

Classification guidance in the *Introduction to the Position Classification Standards* and *The Classifier's Handbook* describe distinctions between positions properly classified in one-grade interval support series and two-grade interval administrative series. Support work usually involves proficiency in one or more functional areas or in certain limited phases of a specified program. Normally a support position can be identified with the mission of a particular organization or program. The work usually does not require knowledge of the interrelationships among functional areas or organizations. Employees who perform support work follow established methods and procedures. They may occasionally develop work plans or recommend new procedures, but these typically are related to the employee's individual assignment or immediate work unit. Support work can be performed based on a practical knowledge of the purpose, operation, procedures, techniques, and guidelines of the specific program area or functional assignment. Support personnel typically learn to do the work on the job and also may attend specific training courses related to their work.

Administrative work, on the other hand, primarily requires a high order of analytical ability combined with a comprehensive knowledge of (1) the functions, processes, theories, and principles of management; and (2) the methods used to gather, analyze, and evaluate information. Administrative work also requires skill in applying problem solving techniques and skill in communicating effectively both orally and in writing. Administrative positions do not require specialized education, but they do involve the types of skills (analysis, research, writing, judgment) typically gained through college-level education or through progressively responsible experience. Administrative work often involves planning for and developing systems, functions, and services; formulating, developing, recommending, and establishing policies, operating methods, or procedures; and adapting established policy to the unique requirements of a particular program.

The appellant's position does not meet the GS-2101 series definition as he does not perform work involving two or more specialized transportation functions, or other transportation work not specifically included in other series of the GS-2100 Transportation Group. Additionally, his duties are not characteristic of two-grade interval administrative work as they do not require a high order of analytical ability and comprehensive knowledge of the functions and principles of management, and the methods used to gather, analyze, and evaluate information. Although the appellant makes vehicle maintenance, rotation, and replacement decisions based on analysis of vehicle utilization, such actions are straightforward and readily apparent after review of vehicle usage data. The appellant's fleet management duties are characteristic of one-grade interval technical support positions in that he follows established methods, procedures, and AF guidelines to monitor the status and conditions of the vehicles, applying a high degree of technical skill to ensure fleet readiness. Like one-grade interval work, he performs his duties based on a practical knowledge of the purpose, techniques, and agency guidelines of the specific program area of fleet management, and has primarily learned to do the work through on-the-job experience and attending directly related training courses.

We find the appellant does not perform any of the duties typical of the GS-1152 series including planning, estimating, scheduling, and expediting the use of labor, machines, and materials in specific manufacturing or remanufacturing operations. He is not directly involved with the planning, estimating, and scheduling of the repair or overhaul of Government-owned vehicles. Moreover, he performs none of the typical duties and functions of GS-1152 positions previously listed in this decision including preparing production plans, compiling estimates, advising on material requirements and production schedules, scheduling and controlling primary work assignments, determining status of work in progress and expediting jobs as necessary, and monitoring and reporting on the status of production funding. Any actions regarding the flow of automotive/vehicle shop repair are the responsibility of the appellant's supervisor.

We find that the appellant's position is best classified in the Transportation Clerk and Assistant Series, GS-2102. That series includes one-grade interval technical support positions that involve supervising or performing work to arrange transportation for or perform other actions in connection with the movement of freight, passengers, or personal property by Government or commercial means. It also includes other transportation support work not covered specifically by another one-grade interval series in the Transportation Group, e.g., fleet management. The work requires a practical knowledge of the regulations and methods governing traffic management or transportation programs.

Under the "Occupational Information" section of the GS-2102 PCS, the fleet management functional area is described as involving the management of Government-owned or leased passenger cars, trucks, and special purpose vehicles. It includes duties such as reviewing, recording, or compiling information related to vehicle assignment and use, mileage reports, preventative maintenance services, accidents, billing or other program data; developing and maintaining accident case files; conducting or assisting in inspections of assigned vehicles; and ensuring optimum vehicle availability and use by rotating or reassigning vehicles between units. These duties and responsibilities closely match those performed by the appellant. Therefore, the appellant's position is titled Transportation Assistant, GS-2102. As indicated in the titling instructions of the GS-2102 standard, agencies may add a parenthetical title when further

distinctions in the work are necessary to reflect a specialized transportation function. The GS-2102 PCS contains grading criteria which must be used to evaluate positions in that series.

Grade determination

The GS-2102 PCS uses the Factor Evaluation System (FES), which employs nine factors. Each factor is evaluated separately and is assigned a point value consistent with factor-level definitions described in the standard. The total points are converted to a grade by use of a grade conversion table. Under the FES, each factor-level description describes the minimum characteristics needed to receive credit for the described level. Therefore, if a position fails to meet the criteria in a factor-level description in any significant aspect, it must be credited at a lower level. Conversely, the position may exceed those criteria in some aspects and still not be credited at a higher level. Our evaluation with respect to the nine FES factors follows.

Factor 1, Knowledge required by the position

This factor measures the nature and extent of information or facts which the employee must understand to do acceptable work (e.g., steps, procedures, practices, rules, policies, theories, principles, and ideas) and the nature and extent of skills needed to apply that knowledge.

At Level 1-4, the highest level for this factor described in the PCS, work requires knowledge and application of an extensive body of transportation regulations, methods, and practices to perform a wide variety of interrelated or nonstandard transportation support assignments and resolve a wide range of problems. At this level, employees in the fleet management function assist in evaluating the overall program. For example, employees collect data and review a variety of reports relating to vehicle use, expenses, and income to identify problems or trends for further review. They assist in such things as auditing vehicle files and motor vehicle accident records.

The appellant's position meets but does not exceed Level 1-4. Like that level, his work requires knowledge and application of extensive regulations governing the use, maintenance, and replacement of a wide variety of Government-owned or leased vehicles, including resolution of a wide range of related problems. He essentially acts as the fleet manager in overseeing, evaluating, and monitoring the overall status of the fleet program. He provides training and guidance to VCOs who have responsibility for ensuring that operations, maintenance, and use of assigned vehicles comply with AF policy, and redistributes vehicles from units with underutilized assets or lower priority needs. He prepares and submits for approval the annual Priority Vehicle Buy. On an annual basis, he prepares a utilization/rotation analysis which involves determining whether vehicles are used in accordance with the minimum authorization requirements, e.g., hours and miles used per month, functions performed, etc. This document is used by the appellant and installation managers to make decisions and identify situations where vehicle authorizations must be re-justified, or vehicles should be rotated to increase their longevity. The appellant participates in the annual Staff Assistance Visits (SAV) of each unit having assigned vehicles to ensure proper maintenance of records, review accident records, discuss vehicle utilization histories and authorization needs, and perform inspections on vehicles to ensure they are properly maintained. He provides a written summary of his site visit findings to the unit commander.

This factor is evaluated at Level 1-4, and 550 points are credited.

Factor 2, Supervisory controls

This factor covers the nature and extent of direct or indirect controls exercised by the supervisor, the individual employee's responsibilities, and review of completed assignments.

At Level 2-3, the highest level for this factor described in the PCS, the supervisor outlines objectives, priorities, and deadlines and provides guidance on dealing with unusually involved or one-of-a kind situations. Employees independently plan and carry out the successive steps to complete transportation support duties and use accepted practices to resolve problems and deviations which may result because of the specialized nature of the problems, the existence of various conflicting documentation, lack of documentation or information available, or other conditions. The supervisor reviews completed work for technical soundness, appropriateness, and conformity to policy and requirements. In some situations, work can be reviewed only after the fact in response to complaints from customers. The methods the employee uses to complete the assignments usually are not reviewed in detail.

The appellant's position meets but does not exceed Level 2-3. Like that level, the supervisor outlines the general objectives, priorities, and deadlines for the appellant's work, and furnishes guidance on unusual problems. The appellant independently plans and carries out all fleet management-related duties, applying accepted practices, current regulations, and his extensive fleet management experience to resolve most problems and deviations. The supervisor reviews the appellant's work, most of which are requirements and tasks generated from the ACC system, for appropriateness, meeting of suspense dates, and conformity to fleet management policy and requirements. Work is not reviewed in detail.

This factor is evaluated at Level 2-3, and 275 points are credited.

Factor 3, Guidelines

This factor covers the nature of guidelines and the judgment needed to apply them.

At Level 3-3, the highest level for this factor described in the PCS, guidelines are similar to those described in Level 3-2 (e.g., transportation regulations, manuals, operating procedures) but not completely applicable to many aspects of the work because of the problem-solving or complicated nature of the assignments. Employees use judgment to interpret guidelines, adapt procedures, decide approaches, and resolve specific problems.

The appellant's position meets but does not exceed Level 3-3. Although he uses a variety of guidelines such as AF regulations, technical manuals, and Federal and State laws, his assignments are significantly complicated because of the utilization, redistribution, and rotation requirements impacting the entire installation's fleet and dealing with special problems which occur, e.g., assessing requests for vehicle modifications. In such cases, guidelines are not always completely applicable, and at times precedents are lacking. Such situations require him to

research and interpret additional guidance, improvising solutions as needed to resolve particular fleet management and reporting issues.

This factor is evaluated at Level 3-3, and 275 points are credited.

Factor 4, Complexity

This factor covers the nature, number, variety, and intricacy of tasks, steps, processes, or methods in the work performed; the difficulty in identifying what needs to be done; and the difficulty and originality involved in performing the work.

At Level 4-3, the highest level for this factor described in the PCS, work involves performing one or more transportation support functions that require the use of different and unrelated procedures and methods. The use of different procedures may result because assignments received are relatively broad and varied; work methods are not completely standardized; or transactions are interrelated with other systems and often require extensive coordination with various, different personnel. Employees identify the nature of the request, problem, or issue, and determine the need for and obtain additional information through oral or written contacts and review of regulations and manuals. Employees may have to consider previous actions and understand how these actions differ from or are similar to the issue at hand before deciding on an approach. Employees make recommendations or take actions based on a case-by-case review of pertinent transportation regulations and documents. For example, employees involved in fleet management review and prepare various manual and automated products related to vehicle use, coordinate vehicle assignment or other actions (e.g., maintenance, safety inspections, repairs), monitor for misuse or negligence, and maintain current inventories of assigned vehicles.

The appellant's position meets but does not exceed Level 4-3. Like that level, his work requires different and unrelated procedures involving a variety of assignments covering the full range of fleet management tasks. Due to the many different fleet management actions which occur, work methods are not completely standardized and vary according to the particular issue or problem encountered, e.g., vehicle accidents or misuse, reporting and billing requirements involving GSA leased vehicles. Comparable to Level 4-3, the appellant identifies the nature of the client's (VCOs) request, problem, or issue, and determines and gathers additional information through both oral and written contacts and review of governing fleet management regulations. This is particularly important when vehicle accidents occur and the appellant must handle all regulatory requirements to ensure the unit is appropriately charged for all repairs. Similar to the work illustration under Level 4-3, the appellant reviews and prepares various manual and automated reports concerning the maintenance, use, inspection and repair of the [name of base] vehicle fleet.

This factor is evaluated at Level 4-3, and 150 points are assigned.

Factor 5, Scope and effect

This factor covers the relationship between the nature of the work; i.e., the purpose, breadth, and depth of the assignment, and the effect of work products or services both within and outside of the organization.

At Level 5-3, the highest level for this factor described in the PCS, the purpose of the work is to apply conventional practices to treat a variety of problems in transportation transactions. The employee treats problems encountered by applying established procedures. In some situations, the work results in recommendations, actions, or reports which affect the ability of serviced programs to conduct business adequately. In other work situations, the quality of the transportation advice and decisions may affect the operation of certain programs. In still other situations, the work may affect the physical well-being of persons, or it may affect substantial costs incurred by the agency or activity.

The appellant's position meets but does not exceed Level 5-3. Like that level, he applies conventional practices and techniques to address a variety of problems associated with fleet management transactions. These include actions involving the use, maintenance, repair, redistribution, and replacement of Government-owned or leased vehicles. Similar to Level 5-3, his work affects the ability of units with assigned vehicles to achieve their missions, training, the goals of specific programs, and conduct day-to-day activities. His work also affects the costs incurred by the installation in that based on his analysis of vehicle use and maintenance expenses, he may recommend repair or salvage of vehicles, or procurement of new vehicles.

This factor is evaluated at Level 5-3, and 150 points are credited.

Factors 6 and 7, Personal contacts and Purpose of contacts

These factors include face-to-face contacts and telephone dialogue with persons not in the supervisory chain and pertain to reasons the contacts are made. To determine the total points assigned for these two factors, match the level of regular and recurring personal contacts with the corresponding purpose of the contacts, and credit the point value where the two levels intersect in the chart provided in the PCS.

Persons contacted

The PCS describes two levels of persons contacted:

- (1) employees in the immediate organizational unit or in closely related support units, and/or employees outside the organization or with members of the general public in very highly-structured situations.
- (2) employees in the same agency or other agencies but outside the immediate organization, and/or contacts with members of the general public in a moderately-structured setting.

The appellant's position meets Level 2 in that he has contact with employees of his agency, both within and outside his immediate organization, and with individuals in other agencies. These include employees at ACC, VCOs (two in each squadron with a total of twenty-four squadrons), and GSA representatives in a moderately structured setting.

Purpose of contacts

The PCS describes two levels describing the purpose of contacts:

- A. The purpose of contacts is to obtain, clarify, or provide information related to transportation support assignments. For example, contacts may be to obtain missing information, advise on the status of actions, or verify transportation needs.
- B. The purpose of contacts is to plan and coordinate actions to prevent or correct errors, delays, or other complications from occurring. Examples include briefing personnel on their transportation entitlements, or advising on or discussing shipment requirements.

The appellant's position meets Level B. Like that level, he plans and coordinates actions with clients and higher headquarters level staff to preclude errors, delays, or other complications from occurring with fleet management activities. These include training VCOs and working with them on required and timely vehicle actions, briefing them on changes in fleet management requirements, and ensuring that recurring reports are submitted to ACC headquarters.

By reference to the chart in the PCS, when Level 2B is assigned a total of 75 points is credited for these two factors.

Factor 8, Physical demands

This factor covers the physical demands placed on the employee by the work assignment.

At Level 8-1, the work may require some physical effort, such as standing, walking, bending, or sitting. There are no special physical demands.

At Level 8-2, the work requires above average physical agility, such as regular and recurring periods of prolonged standing, bending, stretching, and lifting.

The appellant's position meets Level 8-1. On a recurring basis, he performs sedentary office type work where there are no special physical demands. During vehicle inspections the appellant is accompanied by an Automotive Mechanic Helper who physically performs the inspection. Unlike Level 8-2, his duties do not require above average physical agility.

This factor is evaluated at Level 8-1, and 5 points are credited.

Factor 9, Work environment

This factor considers the risk and discomfort in the employee's physical surroundings or the nature of the work assigned and the safety regulations required.

At Level 9-1, the employee works primarily in an office setting involving everyday risks or discomforts. Normal safety precautions are adequate.

At Level 9-2, the employee works in areas with moderate risks or discomforts (e.g., warehouses, loading docks) that require the use of special safety precautions.

The appellant's position meets Level 9-1. Like that level, he works primarily in an office setting involving everyday risks or discomforts. Although occasionally he visits various units on base, work is usually done in their respective offices where normal safety precautions are adequate.

This factor is evaluated at Level 9-1, and 5 points are credited.

Summary of FES factors

| <i>Factor</i> | <i>Level</i> | <i>Points</i> |
|--|--------------|---------------|
| 1. <i>Knowledge required by the position</i> | 1-4 | 550 |
| 2. <i>Supervisory controls</i> | 2-3 | 275 |
| 3. <i>Guidelines</i> | 3-3 | 275 |
| 4. <i>Complexity</i> | 4-3 | 150 |
| 5. <i>Scope and effect</i> | 5-3 | 150 |
| 6. & 7. <i>Personal contacts/Purpose of contacts</i> | 2-B | 75 |
| 8. <i>Physical demands</i> | 8-1 | 5 |
| 9. <i>Work environment</i> | 9-1 | <u>5</u> |
| <i>Total</i> | | 1485 |

A total of 1485 points falls within the GS-7 point range (1355-1600) on the grade conversion table in the GS-2102 PCS. Therefore, the appellant's position is graded at the GS-7 level.

Decision

The appellant's position is properly classified as Transportation Assistant, GS-2102-7. Addition of a parenthetical title to reflect a specialized transportation function is at the agency's discretion.