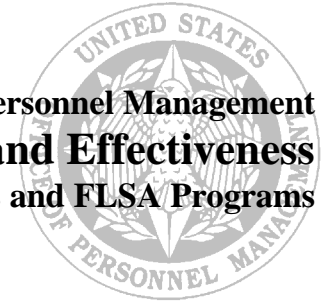


**U.S. Office of Personnel Management
Office of Merit Systems Oversight and Effectiveness
Classification Appeals and FLSA Programs**



Chicago Oversight Division
230 South Dearborn Street, DPN 30-6
Chicago, IL 60604

**Job Grading Appeal Decision
Under Section 5346 of Title 5, United States Code**

Appellant: [Appellant's name]

Agency classification: Aircraft Mechanic Supervisor
WS-8852-14

Organization: National Guard Bureau
State Adjutant General
[Squadron name]
Component Repair Flight
[City, State]

OPM decision: **WS-8801-13**
Title according to agency discretion

OPM Decision Number: C-8801-13-01

/s/

Frederick J. Boland
Classification Appeals Officer

January 29, 1998

Date

As provided in section S7-8 of the Operating Manual, Federal Wage System, this decision constitutes a certificate that is mandatory and binding on all administrative, certifying, payroll, disbursing, and accounting officials of the government. There is no right of further appeal. This decision is subject to discretionary review only under conditions specified in section 532.705(f) of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations (address provided in the Introduction to the Position Classification Standards, appendix 4, section H).

Decision sent to:

[appellant's name and address]

Mr. Steve Nelson
Director for Human Resources
National Guard Bureau
4501 Ford Avenue
Alexandria, Virginia 22302-1454

[name and address of appellant's servicing
personnel office]

Mr. William Duffy
Chief, Classification Branch (CPMS-ASAP)
Field Advisory Services Division
Defense Civilian Personnel Management
Service
1400 Key Boulevard
Arlington, Virginia 22209-2199

INTRODUCTION

The appellant contests the series and grading determination of his agency. He is assigned to job number 80162000, Aircraft Mechanic Supervisor, WS-8852-14, located in the Component Repair Flight, [Squadron name], State Adjutant General, National Guard Bureau at [City, State].

The appellant requests that his job be graded as Electronic Integrated Systems Mechanic Supervisor, WS-2610-17. He disagrees with his agency's assessment of the base level of work performed by the employees under his supervision (Factor II of the standard), but agrees that his official job description accurately lists his major duties.

JOB INFORMATION

As Chief of the Component Repair Flight, the appellant supervises about 46 employees engaged in the maintenance and repair of aircraft systems and components. The Flight is divided into three elements: Avionics, Accessory, and Propulsion, with each element having specialized shops.

The Avionics Element includes three shops: Precision Measurement Equipment Laboratory (PMEL), Avionics Intermediate Maintenance (AIS), and Electronic Countermeasures (ECM). The Accessory Element includes five shops: Repair/Reclamation, Fuel Systems, Electronic and Environmental Systems, Pneudraulics, and Egress Systems. The Propulsion Element includes two shops: Engine and Hush House. The work operations of each element are directed by subordinate supervisors. Four of the ten shops under the direction of these subordinate supervisors have an intervening level of supervision.

The nonsupervisory work force in the three shops in the Avionics Element includes one WG-14, four WG-13, and six WG-12 Electronic Integrated Systems Mechanics. The nonsupervisory work force in the five shops in the Accessory Element includes two Aircraft Mechanics, six Aircraft Pneudralic Systems Mechanics, five Aircraft Electricians, and three Aircraft Ordnance Systems Mechanics. Four of these subordinates are small shop chiefs at the WG-11 grade level; the remainder are at the WG-10 grade level. The two shops in the Propulsion Element have a total of about twelve nonsupervisory Aircraft Engine Mechanics at the WG-10 level.

ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

Pay System Determination

A job is exempt from the General Schedule only if the paramount requirement of the job is knowledge and experience in trades, crafts, or laboring. The primary duty for the appellant's job is direction of workers in various trades. The chief requirement of his job is knowledge and experience in trades and labor related to aircraft systems maintenance. Consequently, his job is exempt from the General Schedule and falls under the Federal Wage System (FWS).

Code and Title Determination

The appellant believes that the highest graded work performed in his organization should be reflected in his own grade and title by assigning his job to the Electronic Integrated Systems Mechanic, WG-2610, occupation.

The occupational code of a supervisory job is normally the same as the code for the kind of work that is supervised. When work of more than one occupation is supervised, the occupational code of a supervisory job is the same as the code of the occupation that best reflects the overall nature of the work of the occupations supervised and/or that is the most important for recruitment, selection, placement, and other personnel purposes. Usually this is the occupational code appropriate for the highest level of nonsupervisory work supervised, as the appellant suggests. However, if no single occupation predominates, the 01 code of the most appropriate job group (or a job code that includes the multiple occupations) is used.

The appellant supervises work in a variety of occupational groups, including Electronic Equipment Installation and Maintenance, WG-2600, Electrical Installation and Maintenance, WG-2800, Armament Work, WG-6600, Fluid Systems Maintenance, WG-8200, Engine Overhaul, WG-8600, and Aircraft Overhaul, WG-8800. Assignment of his job to a single specialization, such as the Electronics Integrated Systems Mechanic, WG-2610, occupation might be warranted if he supervised mostly this type work and it dominated all other occupations in the organization, which it does not, as it represents but roughly a quarter of the Flight's overall work operations. The wide variety of work overseen demands broader technical skills than a specialized occupation code suggests. The WG-2610 work impacts the appellant's grade, as noted under Factor II, but its highly specialized nature fails to convey the main purpose of the appellant's job and the range of trade knowledges required. Even though this occupation has the highest skill and knowledge requirements of the trades supervised, it masks the broader range of technical knowledges the appellant's job demands.

No single occupation predominates the range of work operations that the appellant oversees. The Aircraft Overhaul, WG-8800, group, however, better conveys the mixture of work than any of the other, narrower groups. Within the WG-8800 group, the WG-8852 occupational code includes work involving a variety of aircraft systems, assemblies, and surfaces such as fuel and hydraulic systems, landing gear assemblies, and elevators. Because the appellant directs a wider range of work than the 8852 occupation encompasses, the 01 code of the WG-8800 group better reflects the multitude of work operations and skills under his direction. Therefore, the most appropriate occupational code for the appellant's job is WS-8801.

Supervisory jobs are identified by the job title of the occupation selected for code determination, followed by the supervisory designation. OPM has not prescribed a job title for the WG-8801 occupation. Consequently, the job title is at the agency's discretion, but must accord with the instructions in Section III, Part I, B of the *Federal Wage System for Trades and Labor Occupations*.

GRADE DETERMINATION

Jobs responsible for the technical and administrative supervision of trades and labor work are graded by the OPM *Job Grading Standard for Supervisors*, dated December 1992, when such responsibility is a regular and recurring part of the job and exercised on a substantially full-time and continuing basis. The grading plan for wage grade supervisors consists of three factors: Nature of Supervisory Responsibility, Level of Work Supervised, and Scope of Work Operations Supervised.

Factor I: Nature of Supervisory Responsibility

This factor covers the nature of supervisory duties performed and the type and degree of responsibility for control over the work supervised. Four basic supervisory situations are described in terms of planning, work direction, and administrative responsibility. To be credited, the level of supervisory responsibility described for a situation must be fully met.

The appellant's responsibilities fully meet Situation #3, where work operations are carried out by subordinate supervisors in two or more separate organizational segments or groups and controlled through one or more levels of supervision. The appellant does not dispute this assignment and we concur with his agency's analysis of this factor in its internal appeal decision.

We evaluate this factor at Situation #3.

Factor II: Level of Work Supervised

This factor concerns the level and complexity of the work operations supervised and their effect on the difficulty and responsibility of the supervisor's job. All substantive work for which the supervisor is technically accountable (either directly or indirectly through subordinate supervisors, team leaders, or others) is considered. Excluded from consideration is support or facilitating work, work that is graded based upon supervisory or leader standards, work that is graded higher than normal because of extraordinary independence from supervision, and work personally performed by the supervisor. When the supervisor is accountable for two or more functions, each with its own primary purpose or mission, the different occupations directly involved in carrying out the separate functions must be identified and evaluated separately.

The appellant believes the higher graded electronics work carried out in his organization should be considered as representative of the work that he directs even though more employees are engaged in the WG-10 level work his agency has credited. He notes that the primary mission of the Component Repair Flight is the on-aircraft repair of various systems and the component repair of parts and assemblies removed from the aircraft, with the primary focus on component repair, and claims that:

- ▶ the work performed by WG-12s in the PMEL shop, who repair and calibrate precision measurement equipment, was improperly excluded as support work by his agency and states that the work is integral to the Flight's mission and effectiveness;

- ▶ the work performed by WG-13s in the AIS shop, who inspect, troubleshoot, and repair aircraft components, should be included because the shop is engaged in the Flight's main mission and only provides repair services to other base functions as time permits;
- ▶ each shop in his organization performs as the technical specialist for its individual systems and should be considered to have its own mission, rather than any supporting role;
- ▶ the nature of the work operations of the Flight dictates that the only logical level of work supervised that should be credited to his job is at least WG-12, more appropriately WG-13.

The appellant directs about 46 subordinates, consisting of 7 supervisors, 6 small shop chiefs, 3 WG-13 employees, 6 WG-12 employees, and 24 WG-10 employees. Because Factor II credits the direction of mission related work and excludes other work as noted in the italicized paragraph above, not all of the work performed within the Flight may be considered here. (Factors I and III may recognize some of the work properly excluded from Factor II.)

Excluded Work

The work of the seven subordinate supervisors in his organization, who spend virtually all their time directing maintenance and repair work (versus personally performing that work), is excluded because it is graded based on the supervisory standard. The work of four WG-12 employees in the PMEL Shop is also excluded because they perform the supporting function of calibrating and maintaining test equipment used by the appellant's organization to accomplish its main mission, the repair and maintenance of aircraft. Unlike AIS and other units in the appellant's organization, the PMEL unit's mission does not directly concern the repair and maintenance of aircraft, but rather support of the mechanics who are so directly engaged.

Included Work

Of the remaining work performed by approximately 35 other employees, that of the six small shop chiefs, who devote a portion of their time to quasi-supervisory duties, must be adjusted downward one grade level to properly reflect its non-supervisory value. The end result is that about 20 percent (about seven electronics related jobs) of the properly included work for which the appellant is technically responsible (through subordinate supervisors) may be found above the WG-10 level.

Highest Grade of Overall Operations

Factor II of the standard credits the highest grade level representative of the overall work operations supervised. It does not specify a minimum workload percentage for such operations, but cautions against using a single job as the basis for credit. Such caution would be demanded, for example, when grading first level supervisors who direct only a few jobs in the same occupation, any one of which might represent an equally significant portion of a small workforce, but not necessarily the overall difficulty of work operations for which the supervisor is responsible.

In the appellant's case, the work performed by the seven higher graded electronics workers cited above is important and critical work, but not a significant portion of the overall operations of the 35 included members. These seven workers perform functions requiring special occupational expertise and operate with a level of skill and independence atypical of the overall organization. This difference is reflected in their higher grades, which are exceptional within the overall organization, where the highest graded work is typically WG-10. Hence, these several jobs can only marginally affect the difficulty and responsibility of the appellant's supervisory duties.

The effect of these several jobs is further weakened because of the diminished technical review exercised in second and higher level supervisory jobs, particularly in mixed occupation organizations like the appellant's. First level supervisors bear most of the burden of technical supervision, which further mitigates the impact the seven higher graded employees' work has on the appellant's job. (Even though a second level supervisor has personal knowledge of the highest level work being performed, as in the appellant's case, the second level supervisory job must be evaluated based on the requirements of the total job and not the individual qualifications of the supervisor. Therefore, a first level supervisor credited for technical oversight of an organization's highest graded, but smallest function would not automatically get the same credit when promoted to a second level position over the function's umbrella organization.) Crediting this marginal portion of work operations, then, as representative of the appellant's overall technical responsibility is inappropriate and would result in a pay disparity unintended by the standard, which does not permit interpolation of its grading criteria and which requires that every aspect of the criteria be fully met because of the richness of the supervisory pay levels.

We evaluate this factor at WG-10.

Factor III: Scope of Work Operations Supervised

This factor considers supervisory responsibilities in terms of: (1) the scope of the assigned work function and organizational authority; (2) the variety of functions supervised; and (3) the physical dispersion, work coordination, and location of subordinate employees.

Subfactor A: Scope of Assigned Work Function and Organizational Authority.

This subfactor covers the purpose of the job in the organization, the extent and nature of the job's authority, and the importance of the job's decisions.

At Level A-3, supervisors have second level or higher supervisory and decision authority. The appellant has been credited by his agency with such authority and does not dispute this determination. We concur with the analysis provided in his agency's appeal decision.

We evaluate this subfactor at Level A-3 and credit 75 points.

Subfactor B: Variety of Functions.

This subfactor covers the difficulties of technical supervision of work functions. Similar or related work functions have a common or related body of knowledges, skills, work procedures, and tools

(e.g., pipefitting and plumbing, carpentry and woodworking, etc.) Work that is incidental or in support of the primary function is not considered.

The appellant directs subordinates in dissimilar occupations, e.g., Aircraft Engine Mechanic and Electronic Integrated Systems Mechanic, etc., at grades between WG 8 and 13. This is typical of Level B-4.

We evaluate this subfactor at Level B-4 and credit 60 points.

Subfactor C: Workforce Dispersion.

This subfactor covers the difficulty of monitoring and coordinating work of nonsupervisory and supervisory personnel based upon the duration of work projects, the number of work sites, the frequency of dispersion, and the necessity to monitor and coordinate the work. No points are credited for this subfactor if subordinates are located in the same contiguous work area with the supervisor, when dispersion occurs infrequently, or when dispersion is inherent and the work is performed in the absence of direct supervision (e.g., as when operating a motor vehicle).

The appellant's subordinates work in ten different shops, all located on the base. Five of the shops are located in the same hangar complex as the appellant. The Engine Shop is across the street; the Repair/Reclamation, ECM, and Fuel shops are located one, two and three blocks, respectively, from the appellant's work site. The Hush House is located approximately three miles away. Each shop has either a small shop chief, who is responsible for technical direction of the work, or a wage supervisor, who provides administrative and technical direction of the work. For those shops with chiefs, not supervisors, the supervisor of the element under which the shop is aligned provides administrative direction for the work.

Much of the work in the shops geographically distant from the appellant is cyclical in nature, i.e., it consists of periodic inspection, maintenance, and repair. Projects generally run from less than a day in duration to several days for complex repairs. Shop staff are occasionally required to effect on-aircraft maintenance and repairs. Such on-aircraft work is coordinated between the Maintenance Operations Center (MOC), a staff function of the Logistics Group, and either the shop chief or supervisor.

At Level C-1, subordinate employees are located in several buildings or at work sites within a defined location such as a military base, National Park, or large Federal complex consisting of many multifloor buildings and support facilities. Work assignments vary in terms of duration; however, most assignments at this level are of a limited duration (e.g., assignments are typically accomplished within a few days or weeks). In addition, this level also includes off-base (i.e., within the local commuting area) facility support and maintenance assignments.

Credit for this level is appropriate only when workforce dispersion significantly complicates the supervisor's job. The appellant's shop chiefs and first-line supervisors are primarily responsible for monitoring the performance of work at all shop locations and would be primarily involved in any coordination of that work with other shops and the MOC. While workforce dispersion may impose additional demands on some of the appellant's subordinate supervisors, it does not significantly add

to the coordination and monitoring he would face were they not dispersed. This is not to say the appellant's job lacks significant demands in this area, only that the demands are no greater than what has already been credited under other factors of the standard and that they relate to the work operations themselves, rather than to dispersion.

The purpose of Subfactor C is to recognize the *additional* demands monitoring and coordinating a geographically dispersed workforce may impose. Under some situations, a dispersed workforce requires continual attention to the available staff, skills, tools, equipment, supplies, and schedule in order to ensure the timely accomplishment of work at multiple sites. The more these factors are subject to change, e.g., as when staff or work moves from site to site, the more difficult monitoring and coordinating become and the greater the supervisor's involvement in such activities. Such activities contrast with the long range planning and priority setting that typically occupy the recurring attention of a higher level supervisor regardless of whether or not the workforce is dispersed.

The additional demands dispersion presents involve more than contributing staff or equipment to various work sites. They require the supervisor's personal attention in determining the workload demands of each site, the staff and skills that may be drawn from multiple units without jeopardizing work accomplishment of the supplying organizations, the tools, supplies, equipment, and material that must be available, the schedule that will accommodate such requirements, and the adjustments necessary to adhere to the schedule. These additional demands are not present to any significant degree in the appellant's job; hence, no credit under this subfactor is warranted.

We credit no additional points for Subfactor C.

The total credit for Factor III is 135 points, which matches Level C (115 to 135 points) of the conversion chart on page 20 of the standard.

Tentative Grade Assignment

According to the Grading Table on page 24 of the standard, Supervisory Situation #3 coupled with a WG-10 level of work supervised and Level C work scope equates to the WS-13 grade level.

Grade Level Adjustment

Both upward and downward grade adjustments from the tentative grade are required based on certain circumstances. A situation requiring a downward adjustment is offset by an upward adjustment. Grade level adjustments may not exceed one grade level.

Downward

A downward adjustment is indicated when the tentative grade of the appellant's job would be the same grade as his superior. The appellant's supervisor is paid under the General Schedule rather than the Federal Wage System; hence this provision is not pertinent.

Upward

Upward grade adjustments are indicated for borderline jobs and work situations that impose special or unusual demands.

Borderline Jobs

An upward adjustment is indicated when the supervisory job substantially exceeds the situation credited under Factor I and the base level of work determined under Factor II is not the highest level of subordinate work for which the supervisor has full technical responsibility. The appellant's work situation meets, but does not exceed, Situation #3, for which he received full credit. Therefore, no upward adjustment is warranted.

Special or Unusual Demands

In some situations, special staffing requirements may impose a substantially greater than normal responsibility for job design, job engineering, work scheduling, training, counseling, motivating, and maintaining security. This may occur under special employment programs and at correctional institutions having *exceptionally* difficult attitudinal, motivational, control, and security problems. An upward grade adjustment is indicated when exceptional conditions affect the majority of the subordinate workforce and: 1) are permanent and continuing; 2) require the tailoring of assignments, tasks, training, security, and other supervisory actions to individuals; and, 3) require regular and recurring counseling and motivational activities.

The appellant suggests that new employees who are inexperienced may be assigned at sub-journeyman levels and place greater demands on his supervisory responsibilities. This is a common, rather than unusual, situation that all supervisors are expected to accommodate.

Neither downward nor upward adjustments to the WS-13 tentative grade are indicated.

DECISION

For the reasons stated above, the proper grading of the appellant's job is WS-8801-13, with the title according to agency discretion.