

U.S. Office of Personnel Management
Division for Human Capital Leadership & Merit System Accountability
Classification Appeals Program

Dallas Field Services Group
1100 Commerce Street, Room 441
Dallas, TX 75242

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

Appellant: [appellant's name]

Agency classification: DCPS Civilian Payroll Manager
GM-501-13

Organization: Civilian Pay Division
Civilian Pay Operations
Pay Operations
Military and Civilian Pay Services
Defense Finance and Accounting Service
Department of Defense
[city, state]

OPM decision: GS-501-12
title at agency discretion

OPM decision number: C-0501-12-02

RECONSIDERATION

This decision reopened, reconsidered, and overturned OPM decision number C-0501-11-04, dated March 29, 2002.

/s/ Bruce E. McGilvray

Bruce E. McGilvray
Acting Manager

May 9, 2003

Date

As provided in section 511.612 of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), 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 lowers the grade of the appealed position, it is to be effective no later than the beginning of the sixth pay period after the date of this decision, as permitted by 5 CFR 511.702. The appellant's human resources office must submit a compliance report containing the corrected position description and a Standard Form 50 showing the personnel action taken. The report must be submitted within 30 days from the effective date of the personnel action.

The human resources office must also determine if the appellant is entitled to grade or pay retention, or both, under sections 5362 and 5363 of title 5, United States Code, and 5 CFR 536. If the appellant is entitled to grade retention, the two-year retention period begins on the date this decision is implemented.

Decision sent to:

[appellant's name and address]

[appellant's human resources office]

Director, Human Resources
Defense Finance and Accounting Service
1931 Jefferson Davis Highway, Room 312
Arlington, Virginia 22240-5291

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

Deputy Undersecretary
Civilian Personnel Policy/Civilian Personnel Director for Defense
Department of Defense
4000 Defense Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301-4000

Introduction

On May 14, 2002, the Dallas Oversight Division, now the Dallas Field Services Group, of the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) received a request from the Director of the Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS) for reconsideration of appeal decision number C-0501-11-04 issued on March 29, 2002. As provided in section 511.613 of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations, OPM reopened and reconsidered the original appeal decision. Based on new and material information that was not previously available, the original decision is being overturned and superseded.

Background information

On April 20, 2001, OPM accepted a classification appeal from [appellant]. The appellant believed that his GM-501-13 position should be classified at the grade 14 level. The appellant serves as the deputy to the Defense Civilian Pay Systems (DCPS) Civilian Payroll Manager, GS-501-14, in the Civilian Pay Division, Civilian Pay Operations, Pay Operations, Military and Civilian Pay Services, DFAS, Department of Defense, [city, state]. In its decision of March 29, 2002, OPM determined that GS-12 was the correct grade level for the DCPS Civilian Payroll Manager position and that GS-11 is the correct grade for the deputy position.

When the initial appeal decision was issued, DFAS used a standard position description (PD) for the Civilian Payroll Manager division head positions in its three civilian payroll centers: Denver, Charleston, South Carolina, and Pensacola, Florida. The Civilian Payroll Manager PD addresses only the supervisory duties and responsibilities for these three positions. The PD for the deputy position also was a standard PD written as a statement of difference to the PD for the Civilian Payroll Manager.

DFAS did not contest OPM's evaluation of the supervisory duties and responsibilities for the Civilian Payroll Manager position. DFAS based its request for reconsideration on the belief that an accurate portrayal of the scope, complexity, and technical requirements of the position was not provided to OPM during the initial fact-finding. DFAS indicated that these other functions would support a higher grade level than the supervisory responsibilities. With its request for reconsideration, DFAS provided a list of programmatic and technical duties common to all three of the Civilian Payroll Manager positions. On June 14, 2002, OPM received (by facsimile machine) a redescribed PD from DFAS that reflects the programmatic and technical duties for the three Civilian Payroll Manager positions. That redescribed PD did not address the supervisory aspects of the position, although these duties and responsibilities occupy a significant part of the position's work time.

On July 26, the Acting Assistant Director for the Office of Merit Systems Oversight (a function since assumed by the Division for Human Capital Leadership and Merit System Accountability), the OPM Program Manager for Classification Appeals, and [an OPM] Classification Appeals Officer met with the Deputy Undersecretary, Civilian Personnel Policy/Civilian Personnel Director for Defense, Department of Defense, to further discuss the supervisory and nonsupervisory aspects of the position and to ensure that all appropriate sources of information relevant to the appealed position were explored. Subsequent to that meeting, DFAS developed a new PD for the Civilian Payroll Manager and deputy positions in [location]. The new PD's were received by electronic mail [an OPM] office on December 12, 2002. Both PD's contain

statements regarding supervisory duties and responsibilities and nonsupervisory work. DFAS evaluated the manager position as Civilian Payroll Manager, GS-501-13, and the deputy position as Deputy Civilian Payroll Manager, GS-501-12, based on their nonsupervisory functions. To determine the grade level for the deputy position, DFAS used the Job Family Position Classification Standard for Professional and Administrative Work in the Accounting and Budget Group, GS-0500 (GS-500 JFS).

In its request for reconsideration, DFAS asked OPM to talk with the Civilian Payroll Manager in [location], since the manager position in [location] was vacant. DFAS later asked OPM to also talk with the Director for Pay Operations in Kansas City, the immediate supervisor for the Civilian Payroll Managers for the civilian payroll centers in Denver, Charleston, and Pensacola. An OPM representative talked with the Director for Pay Operations by telephone on June 21 and interviewed the [location] manager on July 9 by telephone to clarify the nonsupervisory aspects of the position.

Since DFAS did not dispute OPM's original decision on the classification of the supervisory duties and responsibilities of the appealed position, that decision is reaffirmed and is incorporated here by reference. We agree with the agency that the appellant spends 25 percent or more of the time performing nonsupervisory work. Our evaluation of the personally performed work considers all information of record, including the new deputy PD received in December 2002, and information obtained through on-site meetings and telephone interviews.

Position information

The appellant's position serves as the deputy to the Defense Civilian Payroll Manager, Civilian Pay Division, in [location]. The organization provides the full range of payroll processes for more than 200,000 Department of Defense (DoD) civilians and non-DoD accounts in the continental United States and locations overseas. The appellant oversees the daily civilian payroll operations, including implementation and technical oversight of the e-Government payroll initiative for the serviced accounts. The number of employees within the organization fluctuates between 80 to 100, depending on the agency's streamlining and restructuring efforts. A summary of the appellant's nonsupervisory work follows.

The appellant uses commercial off-the-shelf (COTS) software (for example, Oracle and PeopleSoft) to devise functional and technical long-term solutions under the e-Government payroll initiative for application to the civilian payroll accounts of serviced organizations. He develops standardized policies and procedures for use in administering civilian payroll accounts and performs cost-analysis work when DFAS adds new customer payrolls (for example, the Department of Energy and the Broadcast Board of Governors) that have unique functional requirements. The appellant resolves complex problems and issues raised by the organization's serviced customers and devises "work-around" solutions as necessary. He works with the Civilian Payroll Manager to resolve complex functional problems within the pay system and with their customers. The appellant also provides technical guidance to the payroll system designer and recommends solutions to problems.

The appellant devises and monitors his organization's internal control program to ensure conformance with Government accounting and legal principles and requirements imposed by DFAS, DoD, and other Government agencies. He responds to findings of all internal and

external audits, for example, those conducted by the DoD Inspector General, Army, Navy, and Air Force.

The appellant monitors the organization's internal metrics and other performance measurement indicators, such as imaging/remedy trouble ticket and backlog reporting. He also reviews annual internal and external customer surveys and takes appropriate actions to improve results. He handles formal feedback to customers for timeliness of human resources actions, time and attendance, and debt tracking.

The appellant participates in quarterly Configuration Control Board, Civilian Payroll Liaison Committee, and Payroll/Accounting meetings to discuss customer servicing and future initiatives, provide technical information to voting members, and vote in the absence of the Civilian Payroll Manager. The Configuration Control Board makes all decisions involving the automated systems used to process civilian pay.

The appellant operates a program to respond to Congressional and hotline inquiries and command-level correspondence involving civilian pay. He has frequent contact with DFAS staff attorneys, paralegals, and client executives; Government agency attorneys and private attorneys; the DoD Civilian Personnel Management Service; the Department of the Treasury, including the Internal Revenue Service; OPM; the Thrift Savings Board; and State and local taxing authorities.

Series, title, and standard determination

We agree with the agency's determination that the appellant's position is properly assigned to the GS-501 Financial Administration and Program Series with which the appellant also agrees. OPM has no prescribed titles for positions in the GS-501 series. Therefore, the agency may construct a title consistent with guidance in the *Introduction to the Position Classification Standards*. The appellant's personally-performed work is properly evaluated by application of the GS-500 JFS.

Grade determination

The GS-500 JFS is written in the Factor Evaluation System format, under which factor levels and accompanying point values are to be assigned for nine factors. The total is then converted to a grade level by use of the grade conversion table provided in the JFS. The factor point values mark the lower end of the ranges for the indicated factor levels. For a position to warrant a given point value, it must be fully equivalent to the overall intent of the selected factor level description. If the position fails in any significant aspect to meet a particular factor level description, the point value for the next lower factor level must be assigned, unless the deficiency is balanced by an equally important aspect that meets a higher level.

Factor 1, Knowledge required by the position

This factor measures the nature and extent of information an employee must understand in order to do the work, and the skills needed to apply that knowledge.

Comparable to positions at Level 1-7, the appellant's work requires detailed, intensive knowledge of the financial policies, precedents, goals, objectives, regulations, and guidelines to oversee the day-to-day operations of the civilian payroll office. At this level, the knowledge is used to analyze and evaluate continual changes in program plans and funding and their effect on program milestones. Similarly, the knowledge required for the appellant's position is used to develop recommendations for actions under uncertain conditions and short and rapidly changing program deadlines, facilitate the resolution of controversial civilian payroll problems for the serviced organizations, and help ensure proper interfaces with appropriate DoD and other financial systems. The appellant's work involving resolution of or recommendation for resolution of a variety of civilian pay problems or issues is equivalent to the work described for Level 1-7.

The appellant's position does not require mastery of the concepts, principles, practices, laws, and regulations of budgeting or financing and the relationships between subordinate and senior-levels of financial management within the employing entity and the programs of other organizations typical of positions at Level 1-8. At this level, the work involves such activities as developing, recommending, and implementing policies; interpreting and assessing the impact of new and revised Congressional legislation; projecting the potential effect of actions on program viability and attainment of program objectives; rendering authoritative interpretations of executive orders, policies, and procedures; and developing new methods for the forecasting of long-range funding needs. In contrast, the appellant's work does not require that he serve as an expert on the DCPS, to analyze revisions to laws and regulations to determine how the DCPS will be affected, to recommend and implement pay policy and procedural changes, or to prepare a multiyear budget based on trend analysis and statistical reporting. Although the appellant's position requires knowledge of the DCPS sufficient to help ensure it interfaces with other DoD financial systems, responsibility for this function is vested in the Civilian Payroll Manager position and/or other higher level DFAS positions. The appellant's position is responsible for developing recommendations for changes rather than developing system functional requirements for modifications and enhancements.

Level 1-7 is credited (1,250 points).

Factor 2, Supervisory controls

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

Similar to Level 2-4, the appellant and the Civilian Payroll Manager together establish timeframes, the scope of the assignment, and possible approaches. Consistent with positions at this level, the appellant oversees the day-to-day civilian payroll operations by implementing program plans, directing subordinate functional specialists, resolving civilian payroll issues, making policy and regulatory interpretations, coordinating with higher echelon personnel and customers on operational issues, and recommending program improvements. Comparable to Level 2-4, the appellant is considered a technical authority in the administration of civilian payroll programs. The appellant's supervisor reviews the work on the basis of its impact on the civilian pay program and adherence to regulations and directives governing civilian payroll operations. The appellant's level of independence with which he performs assigned work and the level of review of his work fully meet the intent of Level 2-4.

Level 2-5 is not met. At this level, the supervisor provides administrative and policy direction in terms of broadly defined missions or functions. An employee at this level is also responsible for a significant program or function; defines objectives and interprets policy promulgated by authorities senior to the immediate supervisor; independently plans, designs, and carries out the work to be done; and is a technical authority. Level 2-5 reflects administrative supervision only, with full technical authority delegated to the employee to define overall objectives, parameters, and activities of a significant program. While the appellant functions with a high degree of independence in overseeing the day-to-day pay activities, this is not the case involving long-term planning and civilian pay policy. With respect to the appellant's position, most policy decisions are made by the supervisor in a joint effort with other board/committee members and are approved by the Director for Pay Operations or higher authority. The Director for Pay Operations (currently an SES position) is ultimately responsible for policy direction and execution of all DFAS pay programs. The appellant's position does not have either the freedom from supervision or the level of decision making indicative of positions at Level 2-5.

Level 2-4 is credited (450 points).

Factor 3, Guidelines

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

Equivalent to Level 3-4, the guidelines available to the appellant include policy statements, laws, and regulations affecting civilian pay and require interpretation for application to daily civilian payroll operations. As at this level, the appellant uses judgment to identify trends; analyze data relevant to civilian payroll operations; interpret the intent of legislation, regulations, and directives and the impact they will have on local civilian payroll operations; and resolve civilian payroll issues. Typical of Level 3-4, policies developed at the local level cover only one of several functions within the agency (i.e., civilian payroll); they are not used to effect agency-wide instructions. Level 3-4 adequately captures the vague nature of the guidelines used by the appellant and his involvement in interpreting them.

Level 3-5 is not met in that the appellant is not required to exercise the broad latitude envisioned at this level where guidelines require extensive interpretation to effect agency-specific policy statements and instructions. At this level, the interpretations generally take the form of policy for use throughout a department or comparable organization. For example, the Office of the Secretary of Defense and the Civilian Personnel Management Service coordinate to identify issues that must be considered when there is legislation that affects personnel or pay.

Level 3-4 is credited (450 points).

Factor 4, Complexity

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

Similar to positions at Level 4-4, the appellant performs a variety of analytical, technical, and administrative work in overseeing the day-to-day civilian payroll operations for the [location]. The work requires substantial coordination and analysis to resolve a broad range of civilian payroll issues, for example, overseas entitlements, living quarters allowances, title 38 pay, DoD teachers' pay, pay for nonappropriated fund employees, and hazardous duty pay. Consistent with positions at Level 4-4, the appellant develops standardized policies and procedures for use in administering the civilian payroll accounts for the serviced organizations.

The appellant's position does not meet Level 4-5 where the work consists of selecting and using many different and unrelated analytical techniques and methods relative to substantive agency programs and widely varying needs, goals, objectives, work processes, and timetables. These programs relate to many echelons and components within a large Federal department or agency, to other agencies, to private industry, or to the public. This level may also involve budget execution work involving the most difficult funds control activities. At this level, the employee recommends changes in funding and budget plans that, if accepted, may require management to revise substantive programs. In contrast to positions at Level 4-5, the appellant's position does not require analysis and interpretation of laws and regulations to determine their effect on the DCPS and how to build legal and regulatory changes into the DCPS. Such functional analyses are the responsibility of the appellant's supervisor or higher levels within DFAS or DoD.

Level 4-4 is credited (225 points).

Factor 5, Scope and effect

This factor covers the relationship between the nature of the work and the effect of the work products or services both within and outside the organization.

The scope and effect of the appellant's position meet Level 5-4. Comparable to this level, the appellant's work involves interpretation of regulations and directives to analyze and resolve complex civilian pay issues. Similar to positions at Level 5-4 where work involves executing modifications to systems, programs, and operations, the appellant's position is responsible for implementing operational changes to the civilian payroll system. Administration of the day-to-day civilian pay operations affects the timely and accurate payment for the serviced civilian employees. The effect of this work is characteristic of Level 5-4 where the work affects the delivery of services, the payment of benefits, or the operation of various control or financial management systems and programs.

The appellant's position does not meet Level 5-5 where the work involves isolating and defining unknown conditions, resolving critical problems, and developing new theories. The role for developing long-range plans and DCPS specifications and modifications to accommodate revisions in laws and regulations and to integrate various hardware and software systems rests with the appellant's supervisor or higher level positions. While the appellant may make

recommendations to the payroll system designer, he does not develop specifications and requirements for the contractual development of financial management systems that are integrated with administrative and management systems. Such work is vested in the Civilian Payroll Manager position or higher levels within DFAS. Although the appellant's work contributes to the overall management of the civilian pay program, which is a major program within DFAS, the outcome of his work does not affect the accuracy and timeliness of payment to *all* DoD civilian employees or ensure that the civilian pay program itself is in compliance with applicable laws and regulations, as is indicative of positions at Level 5-5. In contrast, the appellant's work primarily affects the components serviced by the [location] center.

Level 5-4 is credited (325 points).

Factor 6, Personal contacts, and Factor 7, Purpose of contacts

These two factors include face-to-face contacts with persons not in the supervisory chain, and the purpose of the contacts. The relationship between Factors 6 and 7 presumes that the same contacts will be evaluated under both factors.

At Level 3, contacts are nonroutine and include executives, officials, managers, professionals, taxpayers, employees of other agencies, and outside organizations and businesses. Examples include representatives of contractors, attorneys, representatives of State and local governments, other Federal agencies, various levels of agency management, and Congressional staff members making inquiries on behalf of constituents. Contacts at Level 3 take place in moderately unstructured settings, and the role and authority of each party must be recognized or learned during the course of the meeting or conversation. The appellant's personal contacts and the settings in which they occur match the description for Level 3. Contacts include DoD officials and managers both internal and external to DFAS; Congressional staff members; union representatives; attorneys; Federal, State, and local taxing authorities; and other Federal agencies such as OPM and the Office of Management and Budget. These contacts are not routine, and they may occur in moderately unstructured settings such as face-to-face meetings or by telephone or mail where roles and authority must be clarified based on the nature of the contact. Level 4 is not met because the appellant's contacts do not routinely include high-ranking officials at national or international levels, Congressional appropriations committee members, Presidential advisors, State governors, mayors of large cities, or nationally-recognized representatives of the news media in highly unstructured settings.

The purpose of the appellant's contacts matches Level C. As at this level, the appellant provides technical advice and influences and persuades program officials and service providers to accept the merits of an action or technical concept when there may be strong differences of opinion. Level D is not met since the appellant does not have the authority to negotiate matters at the highest level of the agency, justify the overall direction to be given for the organization's programs, or defend redistribution of appropriated funds and programs among components immediately below the agency level.

Level 3C is credited (180 points).

Factor 8, Physical demands

This factor covers the requirements and physical demands placed on the employee by the work situation.

The appellant's position matches Level 8-1; that is, the work is primarily sedentary. The work at this level also requires walking and standing in conjunction with travel to attend meetings and conferences away from the work site.

Level 8-1 is credited (5 points).

Factor 9, Work environment

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

The appellant's position matches Level 9-1 where the work is performed in an adequately lighted, heated, and ventilated office setting.

Level 9-1 is credited (5 points).

Summary

A summary of the assigned levels for the programmatic and technical aspects of the appealed position follows.

<i>Factor</i>	<i>Level</i>	<i>Points</i>
1. Knowledge required by the position	1-7	1,250
2. Supervisory controls	2-4	450
3. Guidelines	3-4	450
4. Complexity	4-4	225
5. Scope and effect	5-4	225
6. & 7. Personal contacts and Purpose of contacts	3C	180
8. Physical demands	8-1	5
9. Work environment	9-1	5
<i>Total</i>		2,790

A total of 2,790 points falls within the GS-12 range (2,755-3,150) on the grade conversion table provided in the GS-500 JFS.

Decision

The nonsupervisory work personally performed by the appellant is evaluated at the GS-12 grade level. As determined in OPM's decision issued on March 29, 2002, GS-11 is the correct grade for the supervisory aspects of the deputy position. Based on mixed-grade principles, the appellant's position is properly classified as GS-501-12, with the title at the agency's discretion.