

Department of Defense (DoD)
Civilian Personnel Management Service (CPMS)
Field Advisory Services - *FAS*
Classification Appeal Decision

DoD Decision:	Supervisory Computer Specialist, GS-0334-12
Initial classification:	Supervisory Computer Specialist, GS-0334-12
Organization:	Army Corps of Engineers District Information Management Office Automation Support Branch
Date:	October 31, 1995

POSITION INFORMATION

The duties and responsibilities assigned to the appellant's position are described in, Supervisory Computer Specialist, GS-334-12, Automation Support Branch, Information Management Office, District, . In brief, the appellant serves as Chief of the Automation Support Branch, one of two branches comprising the Information Management Office. He supervises computer specialists and a computer operator providing computer operations, programming, systems analysis, and network systems support to District staff, which includes a "help desk" for LAN problems. The appellant reports to the Chief of the Information Management Office.

The appellant is requesting that his position be classified with the same title and series at the GS-13 level, and points out that the position had previously been classified at the GS-13 level. Our adjudication, however, constitutes a de novo review which looks at the duties and responsibilities currently assigned to a position. A position may have functioned differently in the past or been incorrectly classified. The appellant disputes the allocation of Factor Level 3-2 of the General Schedule Supervisory Guide (GSSG) to his position, contending that Factor Level 3-3b should have been assigned.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Our determination is based on the written record submitted by the appellant and the Human Resource Office and information obtained in telephone interviews with the appellant and his supervisor.

SERIES AND TITLE DETERMINATION

The appellant does not dispute the title or series of the position. The appellant's responsibilities match work in the GS-334 Computer Specialist Series, which includes responsibility for analyzing, managing, supervising, or performing work necessary to plan, design, develop, acquire, document, test, implement, integrate, maintain, or modify systems for solving problems or accomplishing work processes by using computers. Supervisory Computer Specialist is the correct title for all positions that meet the criteria for classification by the GSSG. The proper title and series are, therefore, Supervisory Computer Specialist, GS-334.

GRADE LEVEL DETERMINATION

The GSSG provides criteria for determining the General Schedule grade level of supervisory positions in grades GS-5 through GS-15. It uses a point-factor evaluation approach with six evaluation factors designed specifically for supervisory positions. Under each factor there are several factor level definitions which are assigned specific point values. The points for all levels are fixed and no interpolation or extrapolation of them is permitted. Work of positions at different organizational levels often will be properly credited at the same level of a factor. If one level of a factor is exceeded, but the next higher level is not completely met or equaled, only the lower level may be credited.

Factor 1, Program Scope and Effect

This factor assesses the general complexity, breadth, and impact of the program areas and work directed, including its organizational and geographic coverage. It also assesses the impact of the work both within and outside the immediate organization. To assign a factor level, the criteria dealing with both scope and effect, as defined below, must be met.

a. SCOPE. This addresses the general complexity and breadth of:

- the program (or program segment) directed;

- the work directed, the products produced, or the services delivered.

The geographic and organizational coverage of the program (or program segment) within the agency structure is included under Scope.

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

The appellant does not dispute the allocation of this factor. The District credited Level 1-2. At Level 1-2, the administrative or technical functions, activities, or services comprising the program segment directed by the supervisor have limited geographic coverage and support most of the activities comprising a typical agency field office, an area office, a small to medium military installation, or comparable activities within agency program segments. At Level 1-3, the supervisor directs a program segment performing administrative, technical, or professional work which encompasses a major metropolitan area, a State, or a small region of several States; or, when most of an area's taxpayers or businesses are covered, coverage comparable to a small city. Providing complex administrative or technical or professional services directly affecting a large or complex multimission military installation also falls at this level. A large military installation is defined in the GSSG as a military base with one or a few missions or groups of activities with a serviced population exceeding 4,000 personnel. A complex, multimission installation or a group of several organizations (directly supported by the position under evaluation) includes four or more of the following: a garrison; a medical center or large hospital and medical laboratory complex; multimillion dollar (annual) construction, civil works, or environmental cleanup projects; a test and evaluation center or research laboratory of moderate size; an equipment or product development center; a service school; a major command higher than that in which the servicing position is located or a comparable tenant activity of moderate size; a supply or maintenance depot; or equivalent activities.

We find that the scope of the appellant's duties meets the criteria for Level 1-2 in terms of the breadth of the program segment. The appellant provides automation support services, which comprise a segment of the District's information management program, to about 1100 District personnel in district, project and resident offices located in portions of several States. The District does not encompass an entire State or several States as depicted at Level 1-3. Neither the supported population or activities meet the criteria for credit comparable to a large or complex multimission military installation as defined at Level 1-3.

The work directed by the appellant also does not meet the effect of Level 1-3. At Level 1-3, activities, functions, or services accomplished directly and significantly impact a wide range of agency activities, the work of other agencies, or the operations of outside interests (e.g., a

segment of a regulated industry), or the general public. At the field activity level (involving large, complex, multimission organizations and/or very large serviced populations) the work directly involves or substantially impacts the provision of essential support operations to numerous, varied, and complex technical, professional, and administrative functions. Illustrative of this level is direction of administrative services (personnel, supply management, budget, facilities management, or similar) which support and directly affect the operations of a bureau or a major military command headquarters; a large or complex multimission military installation; an organization of similar magnitude; or a group of organizations which, as a whole, are comparable.

The services provided by the appellant do not significantly impact a wide range of agency, i.e., Army, activities, the work of other agencies, or the operations of outside interests. Neither do they directly affect the operations of a major military command headquarters, i.e., Corps Headquarters. Rather, as depicted at Level 1-2, the services or products support and significantly affect installation level, area office level, or field office operations and objectives, or comparable program segments. Level 1-2, 350 points, is assigned.

Factor 2, Organizational Setting

This factor considers the organizational situation of the supervisory position in relation to higher levels of management. The appellant does not dispute the allocation of this factor. The District credited this factor at Level 2-2. The appellant reports to the Chief, Information Management Office, who reports to the Deputy Commander/District Engineer, who is a full deputy to the District Commander. For the purposes of this factor, a position reporting to a full deputy is treated as reporting to the Chief. The District Commander/Engineer supervises a substantial number of GS-15 positions. This reporting relationship meets the intent of Level 2-2: the position is accountable to a position that is one reporting level below the first SES, flag or general officer, or equivalent or higher level position in the direct supervisory chain. Level 2-2, 250 points, is assigned.

Factor 3, Supervisory and Managerial Authority Exercised

This factor covers the delegated supervisory and managerial authorities which are exercised on a recurring basis. The appellant disputes the District crediting of this factor at Level 3-2c. The appellant contends that his position meets all but element 4 of the criteria in Level 3-3b; he is assisted in the day to day operations of the help desk by a senior computer specialist who functions as a quasi-leader by assigning help desk requests to Branch staff. To be credited at Level 3-3b, a position must exercise all or nearly all of the delegated supervisory authorities and responsibilities described at Level 3-2c of this factor and, in addition, at least 8 of the 15 authorities listed in 3-3b. Six of these authorities involve directing work through

subordinate supervisors, team leaders, or comparable personnel. However, assignment of these authorities requires supervision of more than one subordinate supervisor or leader performing the indicated tasks in these elements. Therefore, the appellant does not exercise the following six authorities from Level 3-3b:

1. Using any of the following to direct, coordinate, or oversee work: supervisors, leaders, team chiefs, group coordinators, committee chairs, or comparable personnel; and/or providing similar oversight of contractors;
3. Assuring reasonable equity (among units, groups, teams, projects, etc.) of performance standards and rating techniques developed by subordinates or assuring comparable equity in the assessment by subordinates of the adequacy of contractor capabilities or of contractor completed work;
5. Making decisions on work problems presented by subordinate supervisors, team leaders, or similar personnel, or by contractors;
6. Evaluating subordinate supervisors or leaders and serving as the reviewing official on evaluations of nonsupervisory employees rated by subordinate supervisors;
8. Recommending selections for subordinate supervisory positions and for work leader, group leader, or project director positions responsible for coordinating the work of others, and similar positions;
10. Reviewing and approving serious disciplinary actions (e.g., suspensions) involving nonsupervisory subordinates (which would have been initiated by subordinate supervisors).

The appellant also does not exercise the authorities depicted in elements 2 and 4:

2. Exercising significant responsibilities in dealing with officials of other units or organizations, or in advising management officials of higher rank;
4. Direction of a program or major program segment with significant resources (e.g., one at a multimillion dollar level of annual resources).

The significance of responsibilities stated in element 2 is characterized in Level 3-3a where the manager works with agency level personnel in the development of program goals and objectives, directing the development of data, securing legal opinions, preparing position papers or legislative proposals and comparable activities, and assuring implementation of the goals and objectives by managers of other units. Responsibilities of this magnitude are not

within the scope of the appellant's duties. Neither does he direct a program segment of the significance characterized by a multimillion dollar budget in element 4.

Because there are only 7 authorities left to consider and the position must meet at least 8 to be assigned to this level, Level 3-3b cannot be credited to the appellant's position. Therefore, Level 3-2c, 450 points, is assigned.

Factor 4, Personal Contacts

This is a two part factor which assesses the nature and the purpose of personal contacts related to supervisory and managerial responsibilities. The nature of the contacts, credited under Subfactor 4A, and the purpose of those contacts, credited under Subfactor 4B, must be based on the same contacts.

Subfactor 4A, Nature of Contacts

This subfactor covers the organizational relationships, authority or influence level, setting, and difficulty of preparation associated with making personal contacts involved in supervisory and managerial work. To be credited, the level of contacts must contribute to the successful performance of the work, be a recurring requirement, have a demonstrable impact on the difficulty and responsibility of the position, and require direct contact.

The appellant does not dispute the allocation of this factor. The District has credited Level 4A-2. Level 4A-2 involves frequent contacts comparable to those with members of the business community or the general public; higher ranking managers, supervisors, and staff of program, administrative, and other work units and activities throughout the field activity, installation, command (below major command level) or major organization level of the agency. The appellant's everyday contacts with contractors, vendors, and managers and employees throughout the District are fully comparable to this level. The appellant does not have the frequent contacts with high ranking military or civilian managers, supervisors, and technical staff at bureau and major organization levels of the agency; with agency headquarters administrative support staff; or with comparable personnel in other Federal agencies typical of the next higher level. Therefore, Level 4-A2, 50 points, is assigned.

Subfactor 4B, Purpose of Contacts

This subfactor covers the purpose of the personal contacts credited in Subfactor 4b, including the advisory, representational, negotiating, and commitment making responsibilities related to supervision and management.

The appellant does not dispute the allocation of this factor. The District has credited this factor at Level 4B-3. We do not concur with the District evaluation of this factor. The purpose of contacts at Level 4B-3 is to justify, defend, or negotiate in representing the project, program segment(s), or organizational unit(s) directed, in obtaining or committing resources, and in gaining compliance with established policies, regulations, or contracts. Contacts usually involve active participation in conferences, meetings, hearings, or presentations involving problems or issues of considerable consequence or importance to the program or program segment(s) managed.

The appellant advises District managers on what they should look for in terms of software and equipment to meet their program needs. He advises on the capabilities of various systems, and points out any conflicts in potential purchases with higher level directives. The appellant indicates there are not many conflicts as most managers, particularly engineering personnel, are familiar with requirements. These routine contacts of the position do not take place through formal conferences, meetings, or hearings, nor is the nature of the work such that the incumbent is involved in resolving problems/issues of considerable consequence to the program segment directed as is typical of Level 4B-3. The purpose of the contacts for the appealed position meets the intent of Level 4B-2 where the purpose is to ensure that information provided to outside parties is accurate and consistent; to plan and coordinate the work directed with that of others outside the subordinate organization; and/or resolve differences of opinion among managers, supervisors, employees, contractors or others. Level 4B-2, 75 points, is assigned.

Factor 5, Difficulty of Typical Work Directed

This factor measures the difficulty and complexity of the basic work most typical of the organization(s) directed, as well as other line, staff, or contracted work for which the supervisor has technical or oversight responsibility, either directly or through subordinate supervisors, team leaders, or others. The highest grade which best characterizes the nature of the basic (mission oriented) nonsupervisory work performed or overseen by the organization directed and constitutes 25 percent or more of the workload (not positions or employees) of the organization is credited under this factor. The appellant does not dispute the allocation of this factor. The District has credited Level 5-6. At Level 5-6, the highest level of base work is GS-11. The GS-11 grade level constitutes at least 25 percent of the basic nonsupervisory work performed, which includes the computer operator work which is clearly mission oriented rather than supportive of work in the Branch. Therefore, Level 5-6, 800 points, is assigned.

Factor 6, Other Conditions

This factor measures the extent to which various conditions contribute to the difficulty/complexity of carrying out supervisory duties, authorities, and responsibilities. Conditions affecting work for which the supervisor is responsible (whether performed by Federal employees, assigned military, contractors, volunteers, or others) may be considered if they increase the difficulty of carrying out assigned supervisory or managerial duties and authorities. The appellant does not dispute the District's assignment of Level 6-4 to this factor. Supervision at this level requires substantial coordination and integration of a number of major work assignments of professional, scientific, technical, or administrative work comparable in difficulty to the GS-11 level.

The appellant's position does not meet the criteria for credit at Level 6-5 where supervision and oversight requires significant and extensive coordination and integration of a number of important projects or program segments of professional, scientific, technical, managerial, or administrative work comparable in difficulty to the GS-12 level. Supervision at this level involves major recommendations which have a direct and substantial effect on the organization and projects managed, for instance, making major recommendations on significant internal and external program and policy issues affecting the overall organization, such as those involving political, social, technological, and economic conditions; restructuring, reorienting, or recasting immediate and long range goals, objectives, plans, and schedules to meet substantial changes in legislation, program authority, and/or funding; and policy formulation and long range planning in connection with prospective changes in functions and programs. Therefore, Level 6-4, 1120 points, is assigned.

Summary of GSSG evaluation:

Factor Level Points

1. Program Scope and Effect 1-2 350
2. Organization Setting 2-2 250
3. Supervisory and Managerial Authority 3-2 450
4. Nature of Contacts 4A-2 50

Purpose of Contacts 4B-2 75

5. Difficulty of Typical Work 5-6 800

Directed

6. Other Conditions 6-4 1120

Total Points 3095

A total of 3095 points is credited to the supervisory duties of the appellant's position. According to the point-to-grade conversion chart on page 31 of the GSSG, this total falls within the GS-12 range (2755-3150). The appellant's supervisory duties are correctly evaluated at the GS-12 level.

DECISION

This position is properly classified as, Supervisory Computer Specialist, GS-334-12. This decision constitutes a classification certificate that is binding on all administrative, certifying, payroll, disbursing, and accounting offices within the Department of Defense.