

## CHAPTER 3

### POSITION MANAGEMENT PLAN AND POSITION CLASSIFICATION GENERAL PROVISIONS

#### 3-1. Authority and Responsibility for Establishing Positions.

Federal agencies are created by law and Executive order to accomplish specific missions in the furtherance of national goals. The head of each agency is vested with the authority and responsibility for organizing the agency within this framework and within requirements of pertinent statutes and directives. The Chief, NGB and the Directors of the Army National Guard and Air National Guard, through subordinate officials to which they delegate authority; are responsible for structuring the National Guard technician program in a manner which will assure that assigned missions are legally and properly accomplished.

3-2. Policy Governing Establishment of Positions. The policy of the Adjutant General of Mississippi is to organize subordinate units in a manner that will make optimum use of manpower resources. Efficient and economical operations are inherent parts of the continuing general management responsibilities of the head of each agency. These responsibilities are shared in turn by all subordinate management and supervisory personnel who are responsible for the work of others. Limited manpower resources and rising personnel and equipment costs make it increasingly important that human resources and material be economically managed. Therefore, positions that become obsolete because of changes, in functions and assignments, organization, methods and procedures, or workload should be eliminated.

3-3. Definition of Position Management. Position management is the process by which management decisions are made as to what duties will be incorporated into the position. This process involves consideration of the organizational structure into which the position will be placed, consideration of the workflow and distribution, consideration of the methods and procedures. It also involves personnel, qualifications, manpower, and budgetary considerations.

3-4. Policy Governing Position Management. All supervisory and managerial levels, with the participation guidance of the HRO staff, are responsible for taking steps to assure that technicians are performing in accordance with their official position descriptions, that proper supervisor/subordinate ratios are maintained, that only essential positions are filled, and that unnecessary fragmentation or duplication of higher level duties is not encouraged or permitted. Management, at all levels, is responsible for determining the duty assignment of each position and for assuring the accuracy of the position description. Effective management and sound administration of positions require that operating officials and first-line supervisors understand and accept their responsibilities for maintaining current and accurate descriptions of assignments and for adhering to basic personnel management principles. Each manager and supervisor will establish and maintain within their area of responsibility an effective position structure consistent with approved mission, manpower authorizations, and administrative authorities.

### PROGRAM RESPONSIBILITIES

3-5. National Guard Bureau. National Guard Bureau Manpower Divisions working in concert with the Offices of Primary Responsibility (OPR) and utilizing established manpower procedures, determine technician requirements in support of equipment and missions for Federally recognized National Guard units, new Programs, and support activities within each State. These requirements are identified on the Support Personnel Manning Document (SPMD). Technician authorizations are then distributed to State Adjutants General who allocate these within the priorities they establish and within certain constraints imposed by NGB.

3-6. Office of Human Resources (NGB-HR). The Office of Human Resources in the National Guard Bureau is a joint office serving the Army and the Air National Guard. It functions in the capacity of directorate for personnel for the National Guard technician program. It provides guidance and assistance in technician personnel matters to the Chief, National Guard Bureau, and the adjutants general of the states, Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands, and District of Columbia. The office serves as the channel of communication between the States and the Services as provided in Section 3015 of title 10, United States Code, on all National Guard technician personnel matters. It formulates and establishes personnel plans, policies, and implementing directives in accordance with public laws, Office of Personnel Management and Department of Defense directives. Through the Classification Division (NGB-HRC) a position management and classification program is administered.

3-7. National Guard Bureau Human Resources Classification Activity (NGB-HR-CA). The overall management of positions and the use of nationwide standardized position descriptions will be monitored by NGB-HR-CA. In instances of improper utilization steps may be taken to withdraw the positions and/or manpower spaces. NGB-HR-CA will:

- a. Ensure compliance with all pertinent directives, policies, position classification and job standards, etc.
- b. Provide interpretation and implementation guidance on pertinent Publications.
- c. Provide position classification and position management guidance.
- d. Conduct on-site position reviews to ensure that all positions are properly described and classified.
- e. Develop and classify position descriptions for implementation nationwide.
- f. Review classification appeals and make recommendations to the Civilian Personnel Management Service (CPMS), Department of Defense.
- g. Conduct position classification and position management education programs for HRO representatives and for supervisors and managers.
- h. Provide other services as required.
- i. Request elimination of any position determined to be unnecessary.
- j. Perform any other position management services as required.

3-8. Human Resources Office (HRO). Ensure that an effective position management program is established and maintained.

- a. Prepare and implement position descriptions and evaluation statements for local exception positions within delegated classification authority.
- b. Implement multiple grade-level nationwide position descriptions within delegated authority.
- c. Restructure positions to grades below journeyman level for staffing, training and upward mobility purposes, preparing required statements of difference. Prepare amendments to standard position descriptions as required.
- d. Coordinate position changes with ARNG and ANG Manpower.
- e. Maintain organizational charts and manning documents.
- f. Assist in the allocation of personnel resources to managers and assure ceilings are not exceeded.

- g. Upon request from NGB, assist in the development of position descriptions for national application.
- h. Prepare position descriptions and evaluation reports for proposed reclassification of standardized positions.
- i. Ensure periodic position reviews are conducted.
- j. Review SF-52s (Request for Personnel Action) prior to release to Staffing Specialist.
- k. Advise technicians of appeal rights and make sure appeals meet criteria.
- l. Prepare evaluation reports on appealed positions and forward with the appeal through appropriate channels for adjudication.
- m. Works with local managers to achieve a mix of a variety of authorized positions in a classification package based on local conditions and sound position management and classification principles.

3-9. Management Responsibilities. Managers are the focal point between units/activities under their jurisdiction and HRO. They are delegated the authority to take action affecting position management within their area of responsibility as follows:

- a. Provide recommendations to HRO to modify position management structures in order to meet mission requirements, improve efficiency and economy, or to meet local requirements. While it is not the intention of the HRO to restrict restructuring of an organization to provide better mission accomplishment and therefore, proper utilization of federal funds; the proposed restructuring of an organization not initiated at NGB level must be coordinated with HRO PRIOR TO RESTRUCTURING because it may effect the classification of positions. When a change in organizational structure is desired, the proposed change will be requested in writing through technician channels to the HRO. Each request will contain appropriate justification and a statement of the supervisory chain.
- b. Approve or disapprove all requests for recruitment or reassignment (SF 52) which affect organizational structure such as recruiting for vacancies, restructuring positions to lower grades, eliminating positions, or establishing new positions. Consideration must be given to the availability of funding to support the positions. If all conditions are met, then the request may be forwarded to HRO. Management's signature on the SF-52 will indicate he/she, as the activity Position Management Officer (PMO), is satisfied these requirements are met.
- c. Review position structures periodically to determine the organization is not unnecessarily split into too many small organizations, does not have too many levels in the chain of command, has no unnecessary positions, and does not have more supervisory positions than are necessary.
- d. Certify the accuracy of each position description for which accountable.
- e. Familiarize themselves with the basic concepts of position classification and position management so as to:
  - (1) Accomplish annual reviews effectively.
  - (2) Answer technician questions concerning classification.
  - (3) Assist NGB-HR Classification Activity and HRO by providing pertinent information on proposed changes necessary for the organization.

- f. Perform other position management duties as required.

3-10. Supervisory Responsibilities.

- a. Ensure positions are essential and accurately described in position descriptions and currently certified.
- b. Ensure incumbents are performing the full range of duties and responsibilities of their official position description and identify those positions to which higher level duties are spread too thinly.
- c. Recognize changes in position content and recommend revisions to HRO. (The recommendations must be in the form of a draft position description or addendum)
- d. Become familiar with the principles and procedures of position management, and explain them to technicians as needed.
- e. Inform technicians of classification actions affecting them.
- f. Review all vacant positions, as well as positions that later become vacant, to determine if the position can be eliminated and duties absorbed by other positions, or modified to permit filling at a lower grade.
- g. Consider restructuring vacant positions to lower grades for upward mobility, for economical purposes, or lack of potential qualified applicants; and if the duties may be assigned to positions of equal or higher grade.
- h. Conduct annual review of position descriptions with subordinates.
- i. Ensure paperwork to fill vacant authorized positions, is processed in a timely manner.
- j. Certify all new or redescribed position descriptions.
- k. Maintain a copy of current position description, amendments and/or Statement of Differences on each technician under their supervision. If more than one technician occupies a particular position, only one copy need be maintained.
- l. Provide copy of position description to each technician.
- m. Provide up-to-date organizational charts to the HRO including all full-time manning.

ASSIGNMENT OF DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES TO A POSITION

3-11. Objectives.

- a. Primary Objective. The primary objective of assigning duties and responsibilities to individual positions is to provide the basis for orderly, efficient and economical accomplishment of work. This objective requires striking an optimum balance among a number of competing factors such as management's desire for economy and productivity; and the technician's desire for work that is challenging and stimulating as well as monetarily rewarding, and which provides an opportunity for increasing their skills and advancing to higher positions. The failure of management to provide a reasonable measure of these opportunities can result in high turnover, increased training costs, and lower efficiency; therefore, management must seek a proper balance among the needs for economy, productivity, skills utilization, and technician development and motivation.

b. Lines of Progression. To the extent possible, positions should be planned so that there are logical levels and logical career patterns for progression to more skilled and higher graded positions.

c. Results of Careful Design. Careful design of a position provides a solid foundation for selecting and utilizing properly qualified technicians at all skill levels. It also assures that assignments requiring higher level and/or scarce skills are concentrated in as few positions as possible; that there is a proper ratio of support positions to professional, administrative, and technician positions; and that proper use is made of jobs at all levels in a career pattern to achieve economical operations and provide a source of trained technicians for higher level positions. Thus, careful design of positions provides a basis for balanced and economical staffing.

### 3-12. Planning a Position.

a. Position defined, is the work consisting of all the duties and responsibilities currently assigned or delegated by competent authority and requiring full-time or part-time employment of one person.

b. Steps in the planning process. Planning a position requires an orderly procedure of arriving at a sound basis for assigning duties and responsibilities. Analysis must be made of the work to be accomplished and a decision made on production methods to be used. The volume and nature of production to be accomplished may affect the division of work specialization. Also, consideration must be given to the requirements for supervision and training, specialized technical support, quantity and quality control, and review and evaluation.

c. Factors to be considered. Each position must be systematically planned so that it is logical and consistent internally and fits with other positions into an orderly, productive, and efficient organization. Poor position planning can result in unsatisfactory productivity, high unit cost, confusion of responsibility, technician dissatisfaction, grievances, and high turnover. The following factors should be given careful consideration in position design:

- (1) Delegating authority commensurate with assigned responsibilities.
- (2) Establishing reasonable supervisory span of control.
- (3) Distinguishing supervision from production.
- (4) Making effective use of technicians' skills.
- (5) In positions comprised of a variety of duties, assigning duties that is approximately the same skill level.
- (6) Concentrating duties requiring special skills or training into as few positions as possible.
- (7) Determining the impact of technological changes in machinery, systems, and facilities on manpower requirements.
- (8) Defining the requirements for contacts with others.
- (9) Identifying requirements for training and skills upgrading.

3-13. Position Description. Defined, it is a written record of the major duties and responsibilities assigned to a position and must be prepared before a technician can be hired or assigned. A well-designed position has clearly defined operations, tasks, duties, authorities and responsibilities, provisions for supervisory control and supervisory requirements. National Guard position descriptions, although similar to those of other Federal employees, are unique in that they identify many of the diverse duties technicians must perform within the military organization to which assigned. The positions are designed to relate to specific military functions in compliance with the technician legislation which stated that: "The concept of the technician program is that the technicians will serve concurrently in three different ways: (a) perform full-time civilian work in their units; (b) perform military training and duty in their units; and (c) be available to enter active Federal Service at any time their units are called."

3-14. Standard Position Description. Defined as position descriptions that reflect specific organizational arrangements and functional assignments as determined by NGB functional specialists. Deviation from standardized position descriptions and organizational arrangements are not permitted without consultation between the HRO, and NGB OPR/functional specialists and the appropriate ARNG/ANG NGB manpower office. When new standardized position descriptions are issued, supervisors must make every effort to arrange their assignments in conformance with the new position descriptions - existing work arrangements notwithstanding. Therefore, supervisors must promptly certify new standardized position descriptions and the HRO must implement standardized packages within stated time limitations. A supervisor may not refuse to sign an appropriate standardized position description unless it is virtually impossible to use. In such cases, an exception position description may be needed.

3-15. Local Exception Position Description. Defined as position descriptions that are implemented as replacements for standardized position descriptions when circumstances are such that the standardized position cannot be accurately applied. HRO may not delay implementation of new standardized position classification packages while considering the development of replacement local exception position descriptions since standardized position descriptions reflect NGB management intent. There may be rare instances when it becomes obvious that the only way to secure an accurate statement of duties is through the use of an exception position description. Supervisors must not knowingly certify inaccurate position descriptions. Neither may they refuse to certify a standardized position description simply because they disagree with NGB management intent or the classification of the job(s).

- a. Restatements of standardized duties are prohibited. Insignificant changes having no bearing on the classification process should not be incorporated in the PD. Significant minor changes are best described utilizing local amendments to existing PDs.
- b. Exception position descriptions will be implemented only within existing manning authorizations.
- c. No local exception PD will be issued without full consideration of the impact on other existing positions.

3-16. Steps in Establishing Local Exception Position Descriptions.

- a. The manager or supervisor drafts the duties and responsibilities, mission and function statement, and points out how the proposed PD is different from the standardized PD and forwards draft PD to HRO.
- b. HRO Classifier performs one or more desk audits to determine work performed, position management issues, temporary vs. permanent work assignments, origin of new duties and do the managers of major functional areas at State level concur. Classification of the draft exception PD will be accomplished.
- c. HRO Classifier coordinates draft exception PD with NGB-HRC ( Human Resources Classification Division). NGB-HRC coordinates with the respective NGB-OPR and NGB Manpower Office to verify that the PD reflects validated work to be performed by a NG technician and to make sure that a deviation from the standardized duty statement is authorized.

- d. HRO Classifier checks with Staffing Specialist to ensure that qualification requirements have been established, and assist in preparation of qualification requirements if needed.
- e. HRO Classifier coordinates the proposed military compatibility for the position with the appropriate ARNG or ANG manpower Office.
- f. HRO Classifier issues the PD for use and sends copies to the NGB-HR-Classification Activity, full-time manpower support, and the OPR.

3-17. Amendments to Existing Position Descriptions. As positions are reviewed periodically, some will be found to have changed so that their descriptions are no longer accurate. Many changes require only inserting a sentence or two, striking out a few lines, or adding a paragraph to bring the existing description up to date. An amendment may be prepared for any one of several reasons; e.g.) to differentiate between organizational locations of otherwise identical positions, to place an additional duty in one of two or more identical positions. Local amendments to existing position descriptions should result in an accurate statement of assigned duties and responsibilities. Amendments may be developed on a separate page or by inserting the amendment onto the existing position description. Since amendments are considered an official extension of a position description, the following procedures apply:

- a. Supervisors will submit proposed amendments to HRO with a statement from the supervisor that the amendment was proposed and accomplished with supervisory concurrence.
- b. No more than two amendments should be added to an existing position description.
- c. Each approved local amendment must reflect an effective date and the authority (HRO) that established the amendment. Copies of the amendment and the pertinent position description will be furnished to the supervisor and incumbents.

3-18. Statement of Differences (SODs). A statement of differences may be prepared for a position description for any one of several reasons, e.g., to differentiate between organizational locations of otherwise identical positions, or to temporarily lower the grade of a position to aid in recruiting and/or fill at trainee level. Reference Annex B for restructuring positions to lower grade levels.

3-19. Establishment of Positions. National Guard Bureau manpower divisions working in concert with the Offices of Primary Responsibility (OPR) and utilizing established manpower procedures, determine technician requirements in support of equipment and missions for federally recognized National Guard units within the State. The requirements are identified on technician manning documents. The number of positions, which can be filled, is determined by allocations received from NGB-Manpower Division. The Adjutant General, in turn, distributes allocations within the priorities they establish and within certain constraints imposed by NGB.

3-20. Conditions Perquisite to Filling Positions.

- a. Basic requirements. Before filling a position other than by detail, nominating officers should ensure themselves the position is properly authorized and classified, funding is available, the position is not scheduled to be abolished or changed through reorganization or other management action, and the duties and responsibilities of the position description are still accurate.
- b. Action in absence of vacancy. When a technician is absent for an extended period but has not vacated the position, arrangements to carry on the work of the position may be made by detailing another technician to the position. Also, temporary additional (overhire) positions may be established for periods up to 60 days. These positions must be identical to those listed on existing manning documents, and are funded through

existing manpower authorizations. With NGB approval, an identical authorization can be established for longer periods of time.

3-21. Implementation of National Guard Position Descriptions.

a. Accurate position descriptions are necessary for authorizing payment of public funds. To emphasize this requirement, the following supervisory certification statement is required all official position descriptions subject to the General Schedule or Wage System and signed by the first and second level supervisors in Block 20, OF 8: "I certify that this is an accurate statement of the major duties and responsibilities of this position and its organizational relationships, and that the position is necessary to carry out Government functions for which I am responsible. This certification is made with the knowledge that this information is to be used for statutory purposes relating to appointment and payment of public funds, and that false and misleading statements may constitute violations of such statutes or their implementing regulations."

b. Standardized nationwide position descriptions reflect specific organizational arrangements and functional assignments as determined by NGB functional specialists. Deviation from standardized position descriptions and organizational arrangements are not permitted without prior consultation between the HRO, NGB-HR-CA, and NGB functional specialists. When new standardized position descriptions are issued, supervisors must make every effort to arrange their assignments in conformance with the new position descriptions - existing work arrangements notwithstanding. Therefore, supervisors must promptly certify new standardized position descriptions and HRO must implement standardized packages within stated time limitations. A supervisor may not refuse to sign an appropriate standardized position description unless it is virtually impossible to use. In such cases, a local position description may be needed. HRO may not delay implementation of new standardized position classification packages while considering the development of replacement local position descriptions since standardized position descriptions reflect NGB management intent. There may be rare instances when it becomes obvious that the only way to secure an accurate statement of duties is through the use of a local position description. Such cases will be referred immediately through the HRO to NGB-HR-CA, who may grant a short delay in implementing all or portions of new classification packages. Supervisors must not knowingly certify inaccurate position descriptions, nor may they refuse to certify a standardized position description because they disagree with management intent or the classification of the job(s).

3-22. Local Procedures for Processing Standardized Position Classification Packages.

a. Upon receipt - from NGB of a new standardized position classification package, the HRO Position Classification Specialist will establish a suspense date (usually four pay periods from receipt of the package) for completion of all personnel actions. The package will then be reviewed and a "Summary of Changes" prepared. The "Summary of Changes" will consist of a list of the present positions) affected by the package, changes to those positions, nature of action(s) required, and incumbents of the positions).

b. The HRO Position Classification Specialist forwards a copy of the classification package, including the revised position descriptions along with the "Summary of Changes" to the manager of the activity/unit in which the affected positions are located. Managers in most cases are given fifteen calendar days to review the package, and have the immediate supervisors certify the position descriptions. All position descriptions must be properly certified by appropriate supervisors. Any other actions, which may be required such as reduction-in-force are, explained in the "Summary of Changes." If deemed necessary, the HRO Position Classification Specialist will meet with the activity manager and any other appropriate personnel to discuss the changes resulting in the implementation of the classification package. At this time, the first level supervisor will review and revise performance standards.

c. When the certified position descriptions are returned, the HRO Position Classification Specialist reviews them to ensure they have been properly certified. Standard Form(s) 52, Request for Personnel Action is prepared and an effective date is established. The effective date is the beginning of the first pay period after receipt of the certified position descriptions. Completed Standard Form(s) 52 are forwarded to the



Employee Services Section of the HRO for processing of the Standard Form(s) 50, Notification of Personnel Action. Standard Form(s) 50 and position descriptions are then distributed according to standard distribution procedures.

3-23. Position Control Records. NGB-HR is the office of record for the master file of all position descriptions and evaluation statements. HRO will maintain a master file of all position descriptions and evaluation statements. In addition to the State master file, all standards used in classification of positions will be maintained, and upon request, furnish supervisors and technicians copies to assist in determining proper classification of duties and responsibilities. Distribution of standardized and local position descriptions will be made by HRO as follows:

a. Employee copy. Each technician will be given a copy of his/her position description. A copy of the technician's position description will be attached to the appointment SF 50, Notification of Personnel Action. When a position change occurs, the HRO will attach a copy of the new position description to the technician's copy of SF 50 effecting the change.

b. Supervisor copy. Supervisors will receive and maintain a copy of the current position description in the supervisory record for each technician under their supervision. The employee's name will be annotated in Block 17 of the OF 8. The technician's signature is required in Block 19 to certify receipt of his official position description and performance standards.

3-24. Local SPMD Management Policy. All units must manage their full-time force (military technicians and military duty personnel) within the numbers and positions established in the unit's Support Personnel Manning Document (SPMD) unless other authority is granted by NGB. Units have the flexibility to change full-time manning requirements to meet local mission needs. Such deviations from standardized SPMD allocations must be held to a minimum. In most cases, NGB-Manpower Division must be consulted in writing before any changes can be made. Actions must be coordinated with HRO to ensure that position classification inequities are not created and changes properly documented.

#### CLASSIFICATION CONCEPTS

3-25. Definition of Position Classification. Classification is merely a logical grouping of positions by kind of work, level of difficulty and responsibility, and qualifications required. Its purpose is to determine the qualifications and salary to be paid to someone for doing the work described in the position description.

3-26. Mandatory Use of Standards. The law requires that agencies classify positions in conformance with, or consistent with, standards published by OPM. The official class titles published in a standard must be used; however, an agency may use organizational titles for internal administration. Each position shall be placed in its appropriate class. The basis for determining the class in which the position shall be placed shall be the duties and responsibilities of such position and the qualifications required by such duties and responsibilities. Each class will be placed in its appropriate grade. The basis for determining the grade in which each class shall be placed shall be level of difficulty, responsibility, and the qualification requirements of the work of such class.

3-27. Authority and Responsibility for Standards. The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) has final authority over developing and publishing standards. OPM is required to keep classification standards up-to-date and to ensure, to the extent practicable, that existing positions are covered by current published standards. OPM develops and publishes standards, which provide the criteria for assigning grades to positions. The grade definitions indicate the key characteristics, which distinguish different levels of work within an occupation. The standards do not try to describe every work assignment of each position in the occupation covered. With rapid technological changes taking place in many occupations, this would be an impossibility. Rather, based on fact-finding and study of selected work situations, the standards identify and describe those key characteristics of occupations, which are significant for distinguishing different levels of work. They define these key characteristics in such a way as to provide a basis for assigning the appropriate grade levels to all positions in the occupations to which the standards apply.

3-28. Relationship Between Qualification and Classification Standards. A position classification standard describes the occupational characteristics at various grade levels for a class of positions. It distinguishes one class of positions from another under the position classification plan. A qualification standard describes the knowledge, skills, and ability required to predict potential for successful performance of the duties of a class of positions as well as a means for determining that applicants possess this potential. Both standards are interdependent products of one overall study, and are normally prepared concurrently after a thorough occupational survey.

3-29. Availability of Standards. Position classification and job grading standards are on the OPM web site [www.opm.gov](http://www.opm.gov) or you may contact the HRO.

3-30. The Classification Process. The classification of a standardized position begins when the NGB OPR (functional manager) assigns duties and responsibilities to the position. The assignment of duties may be made by consideration of several factors: recommendations from States/units; NGB-sponsored advisory councils/committees; special studies or, in the case of new positions, as dictated by the Federal mission. A position is classified when initially established, or when there is a significant change in duties or responsibilities, or its location in the organization changes. When NGB assigns duties and responsibilities to positions under their program control, they establish the foundation of the classification process. A classification specialist reviews the position description (and the work of the position as necessary) and provides the technical expertise to determine its proper grade, series, and title for the position NGB has described. This division of authority is simple. NGB has the authority to assign duties and responsibilities and the classification specialist has the authority to classify positions.

- a. The classification specialist classifies positions by use of a comparison method of the position description against standards published by OPM. If an OPM standard exists, the description as written is matched and measured against the standard, which most nearly approximates it for series and job level. If no OPM standard exists, the description is then classified by the most nearly applicable standards or by cross comparison. The appropriate occupation series is selected based on a study of the position to include its purpose and relationship to other positions and analysis of the work done and its basic knowledge and skill requirements. Determination of the grade is made by comparison with grade definitions in appropriate standards.
- b. The method of grade determination involves consideration of the total position. When comparing a position with the factor information and grade level definitions in classification standards, a determination should be made as to the most appropriate grade value, overall, of the total position rather than a mechanical addition of individual factor judgements. In grading positions, no one factor should be considered by itself. Care is taken to avoid any tendency to over grade a position on the basis of a predominant characteristic, or to under grade it because it does not contain a particular element. This follows the basic principle that the grade value of a position is determined by its relative worth as a whole in comparison with all other positions and their grade values.

3-31. Classification of Mixed Positions. A mixed position involves performance on a regular and recurring basis of duties in two or more occupations at the same or different grade levels. In classifying the great majority of positions, the principal duties and responsibilities will govern, i.e. those that take up at least a majority of the employee's work time. Sometimes; however, a mixed grade position may involve a set of duties and responsibilities or a task, which although enhancing the relative value of the position and paramount influence or weight, does not consume a majority of the employee's time. To assure consistency and equity in the grading of such positions, the following rules apply:

- a. Duties are a regular and recurring part of the position and occupy a substantial portion of the employee's working time. Duties performed only in the absence of another employee, to meet emergency workloads, or for training purposes to gain qualifying experience for a higher graded position should not be considered as "regular and recurring duties."

- b. Such duties are so different from other duties and responsibilities as to require materially higher skill and/or qualification requirements. If a position involves regular and recurring duties at the same level in two or more occupations, such a mixed position is graded to that same level.

3-32. Pay Plan Determination. Normally there is little difficulty in determining whether a position is General Schedule (GS) or Wage Grade (WG). GS positions clearly have, as the paramount requirement for the performance of their primary duties, knowledge and experience of an administrative, clerical, scientific, or technical nature not connected with trades or crafts. Examples of GS positions are supply clerks, computer operators, management analysts, and budget officers. WG positions require the performance of physical work, which clearly has as the paramount requirement for the primary duty, trades, crafts, or manual labor knowledge and experience. Examples of WG positions are material handlers and automotive mechanics. When a position of a borderline nature is found for which the proper pay category cannot be determined clearly by direct application of the law, and for which more specific guidance is not provided elsewhere in published standards, it is necessary to look deeper into the position and its surroundings for help in resolving its pay category. In these circumstances the total working environment within such a borderline position functions often serves as the best indicator of the appropriate pay category for the position. Environmental indicators such as the nature of the organization, working relationships with other positions in the organization, normal lines of career progression, equitable pay relationships with other positions in the immediate organization, normal lines of career progression, equitable pay relationships with other positions in the organization, and management's intent or purpose in creating the position should be examined and considered in determining the pay category of the position.

3-33. Position Versus the Incumbent. A basic tenant of position classification is that it is the position, which is classified, not the particular person who is performing the work of the position. Classification standards are guides for the evaluation of positions, not directly the people in them.

3-34. Change to Lower Grade Based on Classification or Job-Grading Determination.

- a. General. The following procedures apply when a technician is changed to lower grade because of a classification determination to downgrade the technician's position either to correct a classification or job-grading error or because the applicable standard has changed. Also covered are downgrading actions resulting from changes brought about by, for example, weapon systems conversions, or the combining or realignment of functions. In these cases, the downward classification of certain positions may be required because of the loss or reduction in supervisory duties or the lesser complexity of equipment or systems serviced.

- (1) When it is determined that a position warrants reclassification to a lower grade, it does not follow that the technician occupying the position should necessarily be reduced in grade.
- (2) The HRO will consider reassigning the technician to those vacancies, identified and funded for use in placement, for which the technician is qualified. The HRO need not consider the technician for a position that will not last at least three months.
- (3) The HRO will consider the technician for vacancies in intervening grades when there are no appropriate vacancies at the same grade, and the downward reclassification is more than one grade. A technician may not be offered a position with a grade or representative rate higher than their current position.
- (4) Technicians entitled to grade retention will be afforded priority placement.
- (5) If the technician is ineligible for grade retention, consideration for assignment to another position must continue until the effective date of the change to lower grade.

b. **Reclassification Action.** In reclassification actions that result in a position being reclassified to a lower grade, the technician will be given a 30-day notice of Reclassification Action. HRO is the agent for issuing and signing reclassification action notices. This notice will inform the technician:

- (1) Specifically and in detail, why the position is being downgraded, and includes a copy of the new position description. In most cases, the required information will be reflected in the Evaluation Statement attached to the new position description.
- (2) What efforts HRO made to reassign the technician to other positions of the same grade and why these efforts failed. If the downward classification is more than one grade, the notice must explain what efforts the HRO made to reassign the technician at intervening grades and why these efforts failed.
- (3) If eligible, inform the technician of the grade and/or pay retention benefits, the conditions under which those benefits terminate, and of the technician's coverage under the placement plan while serving in grade retention status.
- (4) Contain a statement of the technician's right to file a classification appeal. It will be pointed out that the adverse classification action may not be appealed through grievance channels and that a technician may only appeal the classification decision. The notice will state that the appeal must be filed no later than 15 days after the effective date of the change to lower grade in order to preserve any retroactive benefits. Reference Annex C for additional information on classification appeals.

GENERAL GUIDE FOR PREPARATION OF POSITION DESCRIPTIONS

1. Style and Format. The position description should be clear and concise, using simple, direct, and meaningful statements. Be specific avoid the use of ambiguous words such as “assist,” “handles,” etc. Action words such as classifies, sorts, and routes are more precise. Generalities and repetition should be avoided. Positions should be described in such a way so as to avoid the need for a new description only when minor changes occur, or when additional identical positions, differing only in minor respects, are established. Quantitative data should be given in terms of approximate quantities or as ranges, but not extending beyond the criteria for a single grade level. As much as possible position descriptions should not extend beyond two or three pages in length. For the purpose of uniformity and brevity, descriptions are written in the third person, singular, present tense, and active voice with the subject omitted.

2. Standard of Adequacy for Position Descriptions for Classification Purposes. The following format will be used in describing positions:

a. Non-factor evaluation systems format for General Schedule Position Descriptions.

(1) INTRODUCTION. It should consist of a short paragraph explaining the exact location (section) in the organization and the basic purpose for establishing the position. If the position is supervisory, include the size and scope of the unit supervised.

(2) DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES. This section should give an overall view of the significant duties and responsibilities of the position, which are essential to the classification of the position and to the determination of placement. Duties and responsibilities, which do not affect recruitment, placement, or classification, are considered minor, tend to confuse the reader, and should not be included in position descriptions.

Duties vs. Responsibilities. Duties cover the difficulty aspects of work and are concerned with what is done and how it is done. Duties are statements of job content and reflect tasks assigned to an employee by responsible management authority. Responsibilities are less tangible. They concern an individual’s accountability. Examples are the responsibility of a supervisor for meeting deadlines; the responsibility of a supply officer for seeing that adequate stock levels are maintained; or an employee’s responsibility for preparing a report which is confined to matters of format and style.

Major Duty vs. Minor Duty. A major duty is any duty or responsibility that plays a part in determining qualification requirements or occupies a significant amount of time. A minor duty is an incidental duty or responsibility that does not play a part in determining qualifications, does not occupy a significant amount of time, or are performed infrequently.

Duties and responsibilities will be described reflecting what is done and the manner in which the work is accomplished. Include only those duties, which are the responsibility of the position, not those of the unit or section. Position characteristics include the effects of decisions, recommendations and actions taken, initiative and originality required and exercised, equipment used, skills involved, personal work contacts and their purposes, among others will be described. The duties may be listed in order of their importance or in the sequence in which they occur. Related duties may be grouped according to function. Normally, duties will be listed in descending order of importance or work sequence.

Each duty and responsibility paragraph under this heading will be numbered. For those positions where the time spent on different kinds of work may influence the classification, time percentages will be estimated and shown to the right of each paragraph. When considered necessary, such as to establish percentages of time indicating full performance, minor duties may be summarized in one paragraph that will follow all other duty paragraphs.

Descriptions for supervisory positions will reflect information regarding the work force supervised. The kinds of positions supervised may be listed in series such as clerks, editorial clerks, typists, and file clerks. Nature of supervision exercised should reflect how work is planned and assigned, how work is reviewed, administrative responsibilities, participation in management, etc.

(3) SUPERVISORY CONTROLS. Identify the incumbent's immediate supervisor (e.g., facility manager); and describe the supervision received before, during, and upon completion of the assignment or project. Describe the guidelines available such as directives, manuals, and standard operating procedures. Indicate the extent to which the position requires initiative (taking action without specific instructions, originality, and judgement).

b. Factor Evaluation System (FES) Format for General Schedule Positions. Positions that are classified by reference to FES standards must be prepared in the factor format. The description of major duties and the nine evaluation factors must complement one another. The major duties section of the position description will be followed by description of the following nine factors.

Factor	1.	Knowledge Required by the Position
Factor	2.	Supervisory Controls
Factor	3.	Guidelines
Factor	4.	Complexity
Factor	5.	Scope and Effect
Factor	6.	Personal Contacts
Factor	7.	Purpose of Contacts
Factor	8.	Physical Demands
Factor	9.	Work Environment

c. Format for Non-supervisory Wage Grade Positions. In addition to the format described in paragraphs 2a(1) and (2), position descriptions shall contain sufficient information on the following four grading factors to allow proper application of OPM job grading standards:

Skill and Knowledge	Physical Effort
Responsibility	Working Conditions

d. Format for Supervisory Wage Grade Positions.

#### Introduction

Duties (state number and kinds of subordinates supervised. Duties must also describe the foreman's range of responsibility using the following six factors)

Planning	Physical Effort
Work Direction	Working Conditions
Administration	Responsibility

WHERE TO START

Four Steps:

Figure out what you need to know

Organize the material

Gather the facts

Write the job description

Checklist to Help You Decide What You Want to Know:

What are the principal job duties?

What special requirements or skills are involved; how and when are they used to get the job done?

Where does the work come from; what is its stage of completion when received; what does the employee contribute towards its completion?

What is the degree of responsibility?

What personal contacts are involved and why?

Does the employee supervise others if so, what jobs and to what extent?

How closely is the employee supervised?

What part of his work does he check with the supervisor?

What decisions does he make on his own?

TIME PERCENTAGE TABLE

This Time Percentage Table is to be used as a guide for estimating time percentages for each separate and/or different duty on a Position Description. Percentages of time are usually necessary to an auditor to determine “preponderance,” “substantial,” major/minimum combinations, and relationships of each of the component parts of the work of the position before a reasonably accurate evaluation can be accomplished. Bear in mind that estimates are just that approximations based upon opinion or judgement.

<u>DAILY</u>			<u>WEEKLY</u>		<u>MONTHLY</u>	
<u>%</u>	<u>Hrs.</u>	<u>Min.</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Hrs.</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Hrs.</u>
5	0	24	5	2	5	8
10	0	48	10	4	10	16
15	1	12	15	6	15	24
20	1	36	20	8	20	32
25	2	0	25	10	25	40
30	2	24	30	12	30	48
35	2	48	35	14	35	56
40	3	12	40	16	40	64
45	3	36	45	18	45	72
50	4	0	50	20	50	80
55	4	24	55	22	55	88
60	4	48	60	24	60	96
65	5	12	65	26	65	104
70	5	36	70	28	70	112
75	6	0	75	30	75	120
80	6	24	80	32	80	128
85	6	48	85	34	85	136
90	7	12	90	36	90	144
95	7	36	95	38	95	156
100	8	0	100	40	100	160

Terms/Definitions

Significant/substantial	25%
Majority/preponderance	50% +
Major duty	10% or is a positive recruitment skill
Minor duty	Less than 10%
Primary duty	Main purpose for job
Paramount	Most important item required for a job
Grade level criteria	Statements of norms/intent



### Tips on Writing Position Descriptions

#### Try to:

Be clear, concise, and descriptive.

Provide examples of work if necessary to achieve clarity.

Use simple terms. There are no magic words. Plain and understandable descriptions are, the most effective.

Prepare objectively, concretely, and precisely a factual word picture of the work which will be or is being done.

Segregate duties by type of work and arrange by order of importance, according to work processes and other logical sequence.

Show task time percentages, particularly on any position comprising a variety of tasks at different grade levels.

Ensure statements in positions are accurate.

#### Avoid:

Unnecessary words and phrases as in “Incumbent is responsible for the analysis of jobs and the writing of job descriptions that are ultimately used by the personnel department in order to select qualified employees.” This can be cut to: “Analyzes jobs and writes descriptions for use in selection of employees.”

The use of ambiguous words such as “assists,” “handles,” etc. Use words that fully describe the duties performed. For example: “sorts, classifies and routes mail” is precise; “handles mail” is not.

Quoting classification standards in place of the job.

References that tend to become obsolete; e.g., numerical references should be stated in approximate terms and preferably within a range - 15 to 20, and 400 to 600. When referencing forms it is better to refer to their purpose rather than the form number or title.

#### Omit:

Incidental, occasional, or miscellaneous duties which set no qualification requirement.

Discussion of the role or mission of the office in a subordinate job description if already covered in a supervisory position.

Repeating the duties of subordinates in describing the supervisory position.

RESTRUCTURING POSITIONS AT LOWER GRADE LEVELS

1. Positions may be restructured when appropriate, to achieve accurately classified positions, economical position structures, and the numerous associated staffing advantages, yet maintain the ability to accomplish the required workload. Using job restructuring methods and staffing appropriate positions at lower grade levels can provide expanded opportunities for recruitment of a wide variety of applicants in order to enhance upward mobility by providing transition positions for technicians, facilitate employment stability in high turnover positions by the establishment of career ladders, and provide employee incentive through career promotions and recognizing their professional growth as skill levels increase.
2. Three different approaches can be taken depending on the reason for restructuring the basic nature of work performed with the restructured grade level desired. They are: (a) decrease the difficulty/complexity of the duties and responsibilities; (b) increase the supervisory controls exercised; or (c) both. To determine the best approach, review the pertinent classification standards carefully to assure that work assignments to incumbents of restructured positions are commensurate with their grades.
3. Documentation. Statements of Differences (SODS) will be prepared by HRO using both OF 8 and a supplemental sheet that describes the differences from the basic position description. Block 2 of the OF 8 will be checked "Other" and marked "Statement of Differences." The HRO will certify the OF 8 by signing in Block 21 and appropriate supervisors' signatures in Block 20. SODs are designated by the addition of an alphabetic suffix to the position description control number. For positions lowered by one level, the suffix "A" is added; for two levels, a "B"; and for three levels, a "C." With the exception of entry level position in the upward mobility program, military appointment requirements and compatibility requirements cannot be altered from those of the basic description.
  - a. General Schedule Positions. In developing SODs for General Schedule positions, the meaning of the word "level" must be considered. "Level" refers to the normal grade progression pattern within a specific series. For general schedule positions classified in a series that follows a one-grade interval pattern (e.g., GS-3, 4, 5, 6, 7), one level equals one grade. For positions classified in series that follow a two grade interval pattern (e.g., GS-5, 7, 9, 11, 12), one level equals two grades through GS- 11; above GS- 11 level equals one grade.
  - b. Trades and Labor Positions. Trades and labor positions (wage grade) follow a somewhat different progression pattern than General Schedule positions, the exact pattern depending upon the established journeyman grade of the occupation as found in the Job Grading Standards (JGS) published by OPM. In those occupations where the journeyman grade is WG-9 or above, trainee and developmental levels are determined through the application of the JGS for Intermediate and/or Helper Jobs. To restructure the position to a still lower level, reference must be made to the JGS for Trades Helper Jobs, which identifies the helper grade level as WG-5 for all positions where the journeyman grade is WG-9 or above. For positions where the established journeyman grade is lower than WG-9, grade structuring is accomplished in one-grade increments.
4. Exceptions. SODs are designed for recruiting and developmental use to the journeyman level in Wage Grade positions as identified by the appropriate standard. In the case of General Schedule positions in a two-grade interval series, the maximum full performance level in the National Guard is usually GS- 11. Normally SODs should not be used for:
  - a. Supervisory positions, whether GS or WS.
  - b. Small shop chief positions.
  - c. General Schedule positions above the GS- 11 level.

- d. Above journeymen level WG-type positions (for example, Electronics Mechanic, WG- 12).

The use of statements of differences in the above situations is not precluded entirely. There may be special circumstances in which usage might be justified, in which case prior approval and instructions must be obtained from NGB-HR-CA through HRO.

CLASSIFICATION APPEALS

1. Classification Appeal. Defined, a classification appeal is a written petition made by a technician for a change in the classification of the position he/she occupies.

a. What may be appealed. Technicians employed under the General Schedule may appeal the grade or series of the position officially occupied or the coverage of the position under the General Schedule or Federal Wage System. There must be an agreement between the technician and the supervisor that the position description is accurate. When disputes concerning the description of duties arise, they must be resolved outside of the appeal channel. Final adjudication cannot take place until an accurate position description is implemented. Such cases should be handled as requests for re-description and/or reclassification rather than classification appeals.

b. Issues not appealable. There are a number of issues that are not appealable, but may be grieved. The most common issue that arises of this nature is the accuracy of the official position description. This is not an appealable issue because OPM cannot direct an agency to assign duties and responsibilities, and therefore, cannot determine the contents of a position description. OPM indicates that if an appeal is received where the accuracy of the position description is an issue as well as grade, series, or some other appealable matter, a decision will be made on a case-by-case basis whether the disagreement is so minor that the appeal may still be processed, or is over a significant matter that must be resolved by NGB before the appeal may be acted on by OPM. Other issues that may not be appealed include details out of the scope of the position description; use of agency classification guides; and title of the position, unless specified in the classification standard.

c. What can happen. Everyone, and especially the appellant, must be aware that three things can happen concerning the grade level of a position being appealed:

- (1) The position can be upgraded;
- (2) The position could retain the present graded level; or
- (3) It could be downgraded.

2. Beginning 1 November 1993 the Defense Civilian Personnel Management Service (DCPMS), Department of Defense (DoD) assumed responsibility for adjudicating position classification appeals submitted by National Guard General Schedule and Federal Wage System employees. Appeal procedures are on the DCPMS web site [www.CPMS.osd.mil](http://www.CPMS.osd.mil) or by contacting the HRO.

## A GUIDELINE FOR EMPLOYEES

### WHAT IS A DESK AUDIT:

Sometimes called a job audit, it is a way of getting up-to-date facts about a position. Usually, the audit is held directly with the employee by the HRO Position Classification Specialist.

### IS IT IMPORTANT?

A desk audit is one of the most critical steps in the position classification process. Positions are classified accurately only when the information about duties and responsibilities is correct and well understood.

### WHY AND WHEN IS A DESK AUDIT CONDUCTED?

Positions in the National Guard are constantly changing. New programs, new tools, different procedures, organization changes, and increased employee skill and knowledge are only a few ways that duties and responsibilities are affected. So, positions are looked at from time-to-time to assure equal pay for substantially equal work. Other examples of when this is done are:

- (1) Your position is identified for audit during a routine classification survey. As required by Public Law, technician positions are reviewed annually. Most jobs are found to be correctly classified even though some position descriptions are updated to show changes in the work that is done;
- (2) New classification standards are to be applied to your position. There is a continuing program to revise position classification standards to reflect changes in work that is done by the government. These new standards help keep the classification system current, and are applied as soon as possible after they are received by your NGB Classification Activity; or
- (3) Reclassification of the position by a supervisor. In between the annual reviews, your supervisor may decide there have been major changes to a job and request an audit to determine if reclassification is in order.

### WHAT IS YOUR ROLE IN A DESK AUDIT?

This is the time to put your best foot forward. The job audit interview is not a time for modesty (or for that matter, for exaggeration).

Here are some ways that you can help yourself and the Position Classifier have complete and accurate information about your job.

You need some idea of what the Classifier wants. The important parts or "factors" of jobs are listed below to give you some general ideas. Some jobs; however, may require very specific information for that kind of work.

Eight basic job factors are still used in classifying most professional, technical, administrative, and clerical positions. They are:

- Nature & variety of the work
- Kind & extent of available guides
- Nature & extent of supervision exercised over the work of other employees
- Originality
- Supervision received by the worker
- Person-to-person work relationships
- Nature and scope of recommendations, decisions, commitments and conclusions
- Qualifications required

If a position has been classified using the Factor Evaluation System (FES) you will need information on the nine factors that comprise the FES for your position. The factors are:

- Knowledge Required by the Position
- Supervisory Controls
- Guidelines
- Complexity
- Scope and Effect
- Personal Contacts
- Purpose of Contacts
- Physical Demands
- Work Environment

For classifying trade, craft, or manual labor jobs, four basic factors are considered.

- Skill and Knowledge
- Physical Effort
- Responsibilities
- Working Conditions

Think about your position. How does it relate to basic elements shown above? Do you find that your present position description is a good reflection of your job? Is it accurate? What kind of assignments have you had in the last year? Can you group these into several categories so that you can talk about the different kinds of work that you do? What are the major duties, those that take most of your time and are related to the reason for your job? What are the minor duties? Have you had one-time only assignments? What were they? Can you determine rough percentages of time for the major categories of work that you do? What kind of responsibilities do you have? What written guidelines do you refer to? How does your supervisor review your completed work?

Organize the information about your job. Don't worry about the way that a position description may be written. What is important is the way that you want to tell someone about your job. What do you think is really important about the work that you do, or what is critical about your responsibilities? Where you start is not too important. But, be sure that you don't miss telling about some part of your job that is important. To avoid this pitfall, it is sometimes helpful to make some notes before the interview, or to outline how you want to tell the story. It might be helpful to write down reference numbers to the kinds of written guides you use. Having samples of your work at hand is sometimes useful.

Remember that it's your job that will be classified, not you as a person. Over the years there has been some "mystery" about job classification, and there are many misunderstandings about what is important. There are several issues that come up frequently; factors that can not be considered when positions are classified. Some examples are:

- The qualifications of the person on the job. The work is classified, not the abilities of people.
- Accuracy required on the job. Every employee is expected to do accurate work.
- The amount or volume of work done. Your supervisor sets the standard of performance that is expected. It's the kind and level of work that is important in classifying jobs.
- Length of government service. Within grade step pay increases compensate for your long and loyal service.
- Organizational titles of positions. Titles are based on the duties and responsibilities of jobs and are specified in classification standards.
- Other matters unrelated to the job. The Federal government is committed to equal employment/opportunity practices. An employee's race, color, religion, sex, or national origin, therefore, has no bearing on the way that a position is classified.

Be prepared for the audit. The desk audit is as important to you as almost any other kind of interview you may have had in your work life. Please don't treat it lightly. In most cases, the desk audit will not take more than an hour of your time. But, you should make arrangements so that you will not be interrupted. Some privacy can be helpful if it is possible. Be ready to demonstrate the factualness of the duties and responsibilities you are going to discuss and be prepared to show examples and illustrations.

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER AN AUDIT?

The facts that you have provided about your job will be discussed first with your supervisor. Following this, the grade controlling characteristics of your duties and responsibilities will be examined in relation to your work and the position description. If there is a problem rest assured that your supervisor will be given an opportunity to correct it. Likely your present description will be adequate.

One final point. Please remember that the desk audit objective is two fold: to assure that jobs are both correctly functioning and correctly classified. Your participation can help meet this objective.