

CHAPTER 3

POSITION MANAGEMENT AND CLASSIFICATION

Refer to the collective bargaining agreement with AFGE Local 1770 for additional provisions pertaining to bargaining unit employees.

3-1. OBJECTIVES.

a. To advise and assist management with their role of Delegated Classification Authority (DCA).

b. To provide continuing advice and guidance to the commanders, managers and supervisors that is consistent with the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), Department of Defense (DOD), Department of Army (DA), major commands (e.g., FORSCOM, TRADOC, MEDCOM, USASOC, etc.) requirements, regarding implementation and execution of activities associated with Position Management and Position Classification.

c. To coordinate training and orientation for activity commanders, managers and supervisors on all aspects of their Delegated Classification Authority consistent with Assistant Secretary of the Army (Manpower and Reserve Affairs) Civilian Personnel Policy (SAMR-CPP), including training on position management and position classification.

d. To provide advisories to assist supervisors in support of effective and economical position management structures.

e. To assist the DCA with Human Resource Management advisories for the following procedures:

(1) To establish a position structure which provides optimum balance between economy, efficiency, skills utilization, attraction and retention of competent employees, and employee motivation and development through the coordinated efforts of managers and supervisors at all levels.

(2) To support equal employment opportunity, affirmative action goals, merit placement and upward mobility programs, and others and to assist in improving supervisor and employee understanding and acceptance of each program.

(3) To contribute to Federal objectives of continuing increase in employee productivity by full and economical utilization of civilian positions and by minimal use of supervisory and administrative support positions.

(4) To avoid position actions which will unnecessarily (1) increase payroll costs for a given mission, (2) reduce the utilization of essential skills, (3) increase the relative proportion of managerial and supervisory employees to total employment (DOD goal is 1 supervisor per 14 employees), or (4) spread higher-grade duties among positions.

(5) To avoid retaining positions which become vacant if the duties can be redistributed, eliminated, or reduced in cost without seriously affecting the accomplishment of essential functions.

(6) To remain cognizant of possibilities for improving position structures, and the utilization of competent staff assistance to line management in the analysis of personnel management considerations and alternatives as a basis for improved position structures.

(7) To assure the duties and responsibilities of positions are clearly delineated and neither conflicts with nor duplicates the duties of other positions.

(8) To ensure (1) that civilian positions are accurately classified in accordance with OPM position classification and job grading standards and guidance provided by higher commands, and (2) that job descriptions are adequate and current.

3-2. REQUIREMENTS.

a. Each civilian position will be reviewed for (1) necessity, (2) economical distribution of duty assignments, (3) accuracy/adequacy of job descriptions, and (4) proper classification and grade prior to submission of the Request for Personnel/Position Action (RPA) to the Civilian Personnel Advisory Center (CPAC) or the Civilian Personnel Operations Center (CPOC).

b. Changing (upgrading or downgrading) and establishing new positions are submitted with consideration for (1) need, (2) impact to supervisory ratio, (3) manpower and budget controls, (4) and related clearances and/or controls.

c. When employees in trainee/developmental positions satisfactorily complete time-in-grade, experience and training plan requirements, full performance of higher-grade duties will be confirmed prior to recommending them for promotion.

d. Employees will be afforded the opportunity to seek adjustments (through classification/appeal procedures) of the pay

category, title, series, and/or grade of their official position without fear of reprisal or prejudice.

e. No position will be reclassified during a period of reduction in force. Position action will not be taken which would bring an employee into or take him/her out of reduction in force.

f. Significant temporary changes will not exceed 30 days without formal action to place an employee on a detail or given a temporary promotion. Competitive or non-competitive procedures to effect action will be in accordance with regulatory controls.

g. Each vacant position will be reviewed to determine whether the position should be retained, modified, consolidated, engineered to ensure employment of a new employee at a lower practicable level, or eliminated as an unnecessary position.

h. Job descriptions will be in the proper format and contain clear and concise statements of duties and responsibilities, percentages of time for each major duty, and an unnumbered statement "Performs other duties as assigned."

3-3. DELEGATED CLASSIFICATION AUTHORITY (DCA).

a. The Installation Commander may delegate position classification authority for civilian personnel resources to the lowest practicable level of management.

(1) Delegation of position classification authority enhances the personnel management authority and accountability of line supervisors by providing optimum control over the grades and the salary structure of their organizations consistent with the classification policies and standards. This delegation also increases the supervisors' knowledge of the classification system and, with the assistance of the staff assigned to the CPAC and CPOC, strives to make the system more responsive to the needs of management.

(2) A key principle of delegated classification authority is that the supervisors' authority does not exceed that of the commander. This also means that classification standards still govern and that prior decisions (appeal decisions) by OPM, DoD, DA, and MACOM headquarters on substantially identical jobs may not be overruled as these decisions are binding.

(3) Classification standards, regulations, and other guidance are available to supervisors and employees. Access to classification and related information is possible through

automated information systems at local installation, major command, Departments of Defense and Army, United States Office of Personnel Management and other web sites.

b. Accountability.

(1) The commander is ultimately responsible and accountable for the integrity of the position management program. Commanders are expected to ensure procedures are in place which will keep them aware of trends and special circumstances associated with classification decisions by subordinate supervisors, particularly those cases which may (a) be precedent setting in nature, (b) result in inconsistent grading when compared to substantially identical positions in the activity or within the agency, or (c) disrupt sound alignment of grades. The commander is expected to ensure through these procedures that binding decisions (by OPM, DoD, DA, and/or MACOMs) are observed and that errant situations are corrected, to include, as warranted, revocation of delegated classification authority from supervisors. Failure to conform to DOD, DA and OPM standards for the activity classification program may result in revocation of the commanders' delegated classification authority.

(2) Delegation of classification authority does not in any way absolve the commander or subordinate supervisors of responsibility for classification accuracy (the DA standard of adequacy is a 90 percent position classification and job description accuracy rate) or adherence to statute, prevailing OPM Position Classification Standards (General Schedule and Federal Wage System), precedent appeal decisions, or official DOD/DA position classification guidance.

(3) Performance standards of civilian and military supervisors will reflect accountability, which is inherent in the delegation of classification authority. In rendering performance appraisals for military and civilian supervisors raters will give full consideration to the performance of supervisors in exercising delegated classification authority.

c. Requirements.

(1) Supervisors will complete appropriate training for position classification and position management as provided by the Civilian Personnel Advisory Center (CPAC) in a group or desk-side briefing. The training must be completed prior to the exercise of delegated position classification authority. Training previously received (e.g., from a prior assignment at another installation) is acceptable provided a copy of the memorandum assigning Delegated Classification Authority is provided to the CPAC.

(2) Commanders will delegate classification authority by memorandum to a position. When a new manager assumes a position with delegated classification authority, the required training must be obtained prior to exercising classification authority. Each new Commander will review existing delegation of classification authority and sign new delegation of authority memorandums. This memorandum will contain the title of the position and will outline specific statutory and regulatory responsibilities. Supervisors may not classify their own position and they may not classify a position that will affect their own grade. Actions of this type will be classified at a higher level of command. A sample memorandum is at Figure 3-1.

(3) When a Commander decides not to exercise Delegated Classification Authority, they may delegate their authority to the CPOC.

(4) For all classification actions, the CPOC will make final determinations of Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) designation, eligibility for environmental differential, hazard pay differential, and other pay and/or compensation actions such as premium pay. The CPOC is responsible for the assignment and record keeping of Competitive Levels for Reduction-in-Force and other classification program data/information associated with classification actions.

(5) The timely application of new position classification standards published by OPM is the responsibility of the DCA. The CPOC will provide any assistance necessary to ensure application is within prescribed time frames (generally 120 days upon receipt of standards).

(6) Position Management.

(a) DCA offers unique opportunities for supervisors to assign work to positions with as much freedom as possible within dollar limitation based upon the needs of the organization. Resulting position structures should support recruitment, a balanced mix of skills, provide logical career ladders to provide support employee development and career progression, and motivate employees to achieve mission goals. Positions and organizations should also be structured consistent with EEO and affirmative action goals and objectives

(b) The Assistant Secretary of the Army (Manpower and Reserve Affairs) Civilian Personnel Policy (SAMR-CPP) directs that:

Commanders, directors, managers and supervisors must design organizations to accomplish the mission; provide for career progression when possible; eliminate excessive layers of supervision; and avoid the assignment of employees to position descriptions that do not match the work assigned and performed. Commanders, directors, managers and supervisors must comply with related directives for position management, including supervisory ratios and senior grade controls when exercising their delegated classification authority.

d. Procedures.

(1) Supervisors are encouraged to consult informally with personnel/human resource specialists/consultants to discuss organization and position structures and other position management, classification and personnel issues prior to electronic submission of paperwork and throughout the process.

(2) Supervisors with delegated classification authority submit Requests for Personnel/Position Action (RPA) through established channels within their organizations to CPAC accompanied by attachments (word documents) and information entered into the notes section of the electronic RPA. The CPAC staff conducts a cursory review of attachments prior to forwarding the RPA to CPOC. CPOC classification has the formal classification review and approval responsibility. If there is a disagreement on the classification by the DCA, an evaluation will be attached to the RPA and returned to the DCA.

(3) For actions where the supervisor does not accept the CPOC classification, she/he will classify the position, attach an evaluation statement and returns the package to the CPOC for processing. The supervisor's evaluation statement outlines the rationale for the decision and cites appropriate position classification standards and specific criteria within the standards that served as the basis for the decision.

3-4. DESIGNATION OF POSITION MANAGEMENT OFFICER.

The Garrison Commander or his designee is designated by the Commanding General as the Position Management Officer to modify, approve, or disapprove controversial position management actions for garrison activities. Identical responsibilities are assigned to designated Position Management Officers of tenant organizations.

3-5. RESPONSIBILITIES.

a. The Position Management Officer will:

(1) Continually survey the position structure trends of activities and direct appropriate action by line and staff officials when unjustifiable actions and/or trends are founds.

(2) Approve, modify, or disapprove the proposed establishment, continuance, or change in the duties and responsibilities of positions that will increase the average grade.

(3) Resolve any differences between line and staff participants in the selection of alternative structures, and adopt transitional plans to achieve an optimal structure.

b. Managers and supervisors will:

(1) Design positions to accomplish the mission and motivate employees.

(2) Design and structure organizations that are both effective and economical. Resolve oral complaints, when possible, of employees regarding assignment of duties, title, series, and grade of their positions. Obtain assistance of CPAC Personnel/Human Resource Specialists when needed.

(3) Participate in the timely application of position classification standards and review proposed new or changed (draft) position classification standards and guides IAW prescribed suspense dates.

c. Personnel/Human Resource Specialists/Consultants will:

(1) Provide advisories to managers and supervisors regarding position/personnel actions.

(2) Assist operating officials and supervisors in analyzing position structures and suggest alternative structures.

(3) Assist in the training of commanders, managers and supervisors including the use of automated information.

(4) Assure that classification objectives of the Department of the Army for a balance of economy and efficiency prior to completing position and personnel actions.

(5) Keep the commander and organization management

officials advised of trends toward or away from objectives of balance and economy and the effectiveness of supervisors in accomplishing their position management responsibilities.

(6) Explain the evaluation of jobs to commanders, managers and supervisors and/or employees upon their request.

(7) Perform the following functions on individual actions:

(a) Position change. Review request(s), revised job description and any supporting documentation. When appropriate, consult with management regarding request(s) for change(s).

(b) Position abolishment. Review for impact upon other positions within the immediate organization and other organization(s) and discuss impact with responsible operating official prior to processing action.

(c) Vacancy review: Recommend position structure changes as appropriate (e.g., re-engineer to lower grade for recruitment and subsequent short-term salary savings).

(8) Provide advice and assistance to employees, managers and supervisors on classification complaints and appeals.

(9) Make recommendations to the Position Management Officer on new or reclassified positions to support compliance with DA philosophy of balancing economy and efficiency.

3-6. CLASSIFICATION APPEALS AND ORAL COMPLAINTS.

a. Delegated Classification Authority in no way abrogates the right of an employee to appeal the classification of his or her position. An appeal is restricted to the pay plan, occupational series, title and/or grade level of the position to which the employee is officially assigned. An employee may not appeal (1) Assigned duties and responsibilities, (2) Details, (3) Standards or guides used to classify the position, (4) Proposed decisions or actions, or (5) Previous appeal decisions.

b. For positions where the Delegated Classification Authority is different from the advisory classification provided by the CPOC, the supervisor has responsibility for developing documentation to support his/her classification determination. Positions such as these are referred to as overrules and the evaluation of the position that supported the overrule should be on file with the official position description of record.

c. The DCA has responsibility for the timely processing of an oral complaint or an appeal with the employee or the employee's representative.

d. There are informal and formal appeals. The informal appeal is referred to as an oral complaint. A formal appeal is processed with assistance from the CPAC/CPOC staff.

(1) Oral Complaint. When the employee feels the pay plan, series, grade and/or title of the position to which they are officially assigned is incorrect, they will present their concern to the first line supervisor. This phase is called an oral complaint and the supervisor will:

(a) Discuss the matters and explain the classification of the position to the employee.

(b) Seek assistance from the CPAC staff to attempt resolution.

(c) Implement action if complaint is valid to correct classification.

(d) Advise employee to file a formal appeal if the employee seeks a higher level review.

(2) Appeal. The employee's avenue(s) of appeal depends on whether the employee is a General Schedule (GS) (white collar) or Federal Wage System (FWS) (blue-collar) employee.

(a) A GS employee has two avenues of appeal. The employee can appeal to either Department of Defense (DOD) or to the Office of Personnel Management (OPM). If the employee appeals first to DOD, the employee can later appeal to OPM if they are not satisfied with the decision by DOD. An appeal to OPM is the final administrative avenue of appeal.

(b) A FWS employee cannot appeal to OPM until they first appeal to DOD. If the employee is not satisfied with the decision by DOD, the employee can then appeal to OPM. Again, an appeal to OPM is the final administrative avenue of appeal.

(c) All classification appeals to DOD must be filed by the employee's servicing CPAC.

d. The appeal format is regulatory in nature. When an employee submits an appeal, the information is presented to DOD or OPM in a packet, the content and format of which, is prescribed by DOD and OPM. The format is contained in the

Standard Operating Procedure for Classification, Appeals Processing, SECPOC-SOP-P-97-08, 27 October 1997. It may be accessed through the following Web site: <http://www.cpol.mil/>. Click on Regional Pages, then click on Southeast Region, scroll down to CPOC Divisions, then click on Classification, and finally click on SOPs.