



STATE OF WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

STATE HUMAN RESOURCES DIVISION | DIRECTOR'S REVIEW PROGRAM

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September 22, 2016

TO: Connie Goff
Rules and Appeals Section Chief

FROM: Nancy Jacobski
Director's Review Specialist

SUBJECT: Todd Newlean v. Department of Transportation (DOT)
Allocation Review Request ALLO-16-022

Director's Determination

This position review is based on the work performed for the six-month period prior to July 31, 2015, the date that DOT Human Resources (DOT HR) received Todd Newlean's request for a reallocation from Information Technology Specialist 4 (ITS 4) to ITS 5. As the Director's Review Specialist, I carefully considered all the exhibits, any written communication provided and the information obtained during the Director's Review Conference. Based on my review and analysis of Mr. Newlean's assigned job duties, I conclude his position is properly allocated to ITS 4.

Background

On August 24, 2015, Todd Newlean's supervisor, Pat Shrout, Information Technology Systems/Applications Specialist 6 (ITSAS 6), submitted a request to DOT HR for review of Mr. Newlean's ITS 4 position.

By letter dated March 4, 2016, Amy Fermo, HR Consultant, DOT, notified Mr. Newlean that his position remained allocated to an ITS 4 (Exhibit B-1).

On April 1, 2016, Office of Financial Management, State Human Resources (OFM SHR), received Mr. Newlean's request for a written Director's Review of DOT's allocation determination (Exhibit A-1).

The Director's Review Conference was held on August 23, 2016, by telephone. Present at the hearing were Todd Newlean, Amy Fermo, and Mr. Newlean's supervisor, Pat Shrout, ITSAS 6.

Rationale for Director's Determination

The purpose of a position review is to determine which classification best describes the overall duties and responsibilities of a position. A position review is neither a measurement of the volume of work performed, nor an evaluation of the expertise with which that work is performed. A position review is a comparison of the duties and responsibilities of a particular position to the available classification specifications.

This review results in a determination of the class that best describes the overall duties and responsibilities of the position. *Liddle-Stamper v. Washington State University*, PAB Case No. 3722-A2 (1994).

Organizational Structure

This position is located in the Information Technology (IT) Division. Mr. Newlean is one of two staff in the Electronic Document & Project Management Services unit. He reports to an IT Systems/Applications Specialist 6 (ITSAS 6), who in turn reports to a WMS 3 divisional manager.

Position Purpose

As stated in the position description (PD) (Exhibit B-2), Mr. Newlean's position purpose is as follows:

As a senior level technical specialist, this position applies advanced technical knowledge to independently administer and consult on the agency's Electronic Document, Workflow and Project Management server systems. This position is part of a team that manages a large number of highly complex mission critical services that include:

- Enterprise Content Management, e.g., Oracle Imaging and Process Management (IPM), Open Text Content Server, ILINX Content store
- Project Management (e.g., Oracle P6, Oracle Contract Management)
- Engineering Content Management and Collaboration (e.g., Bentley ProjectWise).
- Document Capture (e.g., Kofax Capture, ILINX Capture).
- IT Service and Asset Management (e.g., BMC Remedy).
- Environmental Data Management (e.g., Earth Soft EquiS).

This position also works with other server support staff to provide cross-team support for complex mission essential services and tools that include:

- Geographic Information Management (e.g., Esri ArcGIS).
- Communications (e.g., Microsoft Lync for meetings, instant messaging, and voice and video calls).

The position's support of the enterprise server infrastructure contributes to the organization's commitment to providing a technical infrastructure that is reliable, adaptable and is driven by WSDOT business needs.

Duties and Responsibilities | Position Description (Exhibit B-2)

75% Responsible for the system administration (installation, maintenance, monitoring and troubleshooting) of the agency's electronic document, workflow and project management system environments.

Tasks Include:

- Installs, configures and maintains the multiple-server environments for these complex computing systems that are used agency-wide. Provides day-to-day operational support including system administration.
- Uses system management software (e.g., Microsoft System Center Operations Manager, WhatsUp Gold) to monitor service availability and send incident alerts for notification of potential problems. Monitors system logs and performance metrics to analyze trends which could adversely impact capacity and reliability.
- Uses advanced hardware and software diagnostic tools, e.g., Wireshark, Performance Monitor, Performance Analysis of Log (PAL), to identify and resolve complex system problems related to supported technologies.
- Researches knowledge base articles and user forums for potential error resolution.
- Develops and maintains installation and configuration documentation to include troubleshooting tips and best practices.
- Instructs Tier 1 support on basic troubleshooting issue and operational tasks.

20% Consults with customers, managers, and other IT staff on matters relevant to the health and reliability of the Electronic Document, Workflow and Project Management systems.

Task Include:

- Briefs customers and managers regarding technical problems, questions and situations regarding supported technologies.
- Confers with other IT staff to coordinate maintenance activities (i.e., patch management and scheduled software maintenance).
- Collaborates with team members to provide for cross-coverage of supported server infrastructure and service technologies.

5% Other duties as assigned.

Summary of Pat Shrout's Perspective

Since Mr. Newlean's supervisor, Pat Shrout, ITSAS 6, submitted the position review request to DOT HR, I wanted her perspective on why Mr. Newlean should be reallocated to an ITS 5.

In the review conference Ms. Shrout asserted Mr. Newlean is the primary person customers contact to troubleshoot a variety of problems in the Electronic Document, Workflow & Project Management Services Unit.

She stated she is typically the first point of contact but assigns work to Mr. Newlean who in turn troubleshoots issues around installation, maintenance, repair and updates. She contends Mr. Newlean is the primary contact, or expert, for the programs listed in the 75% portion of Mr. Newlean's PD.

When asked about the differences between Mr. Newlean's PD and hers, Ms. Shrout explained she used to do more of Mr. Newlean's duties, but has gradually turned them over to Mr. Newlean. Ms. Shrout contends she spends the majority of her time supervising Mr. Newlean, including assigning and overseeing his work. She further explains the word "senior" was used in Mr. Newlean's PD, but "expert" more accurately defines his role during the review period since he works directly with customers to troubleshoot problems. Ms. Shrout states she is the first point of contact but assigns technical work to Mr. Newlean where he independently takes the necessary steps to completion. The two work together on the production runs after the work is completed so that Ms. Shrout is appraised of the changes. Mr. Newlean regularly updates Ms. Shrout throughout the process.

Ms. Shrout asserts Mr. Newlean is the recognized expert for Remedy and ProjectWise. As stated in the Position Review Determination letter (Exhibit B-1), "Mr. Newlean takes the lead in implementing additional software. The administrators of the business side have recognized Todd's role as the technical expert for these products and routinely contact him with questions and for assistance with problem resolution."

Summary of Mr. Newlean's Perspective

Mr. Newlean asserts he works independently to install, update and maintain several programs or applications. He further asserts he works without the help of Ms. Shrout, with the exception of including her on production runs so that she is appraised of the changes/updates. Mr. Newlean states he is tier 3 support, mostly working with IT staff who need assistance with helping customers.

Mr. Newlean agrees with Ms. Shrout's explanation that he has been given many of the tasks previously handled by her and considers himself an expert on many of the programs of the unit.

Summary of DOT's Perspective

Ms. Fermo asserts Mr. Newlean spends approximately 52.5% of the 75% portion on his PD supporting ILINX, P6, Contract Management, ArcGIS and IPM. She goes on to say in the Position Review Determination:

"Although some of the primary duties are associated with high risk or high impact services, the majority of your time (more than 50%) is not spent as the recognized expert who is sought out by others in resolving or assessing controversial or precedent-setting issues, in a project management leadership role, or performing highly/most complex tasks."

Comparison of Duties to Class Specifications

I carefully reviewed the exhibits submitted by the parties. Allocating criteria consists of the class specification's class series concept (if one exists), the definition and the distinguishing characteristics. Typical work is not an allocating criterion, but may be used to better understand the definition or distinguishing characteristics.

ITS 4

Definition

Performs analysis, system design, acquisition, installation, maintenance, programming, project management, quality assurance, troubleshooting, problem resolution, and/or consulting tasks for complex computing system, application, data access/retrieval, multi-functional databases or database management systems, telecommunication, project or operational problems.

As a senior-level specialist in an assigned area of responsibility and/or as a team or project leader, applies advanced technical knowledge and considerable discretion to evaluate and resolve complex tasks such as planning and directing large-scale projects; conducting capacity planning; designing multiple-server systems; directing or facilitating the installation of complex systems, hardware, software, application interfaces, or applications; developing and implementing quality assurance testing and performance monitoring; planning, administering, and coordinating organization-wide information technology training; acting as a liaison on the development of applications; representing institution-wide computing and/or telecommunication standards and philosophy at meetings; or developing security policies and standards.

Incumbents understand the customer's business from the perspective of a senior business person and are conversant in the customer's business language. Projects assigned to this level impact geographical groupings of offices/facilities, and/or regional, divisional, or multiple business units with multiple functions. The majority of tasks performed have wide-area impact, integrate new technology, and/or affect how the mission is accomplished.

There are no distinguishing characteristics for ITS 4.

ITS 5

Definition

This is the supervisory or expert level. Provides expert consultation and specialized analysis, design, development, acquisition, installation, maintenance, programming, testing, quality assurance, troubleshooting, and/or problem resolution tasks for major organization-wide, high risk/high impact, or mission-critical applications computing and/or telecommunication systems, projects, databases or database management systems; support products, or operational problems.

Performs highly-complex tasks such as conducting capacity planning to determine organization-wide needs and make recommendations; designing complex agency- or institution-wide enterprise systems crossing multiple networks, platforms or telecommunication environments; overseeing the daily operations of large-scale or enterprise systems; identifying and resolving operational problems for major high risk systems with centralized, organization-wide functions;

testing multi-dimensional applications, providing quality assurance; developing standards or enhancing existing, high risk and impact, mission critical applications; integrating business solutions, or writing feasibility studies and decision packages for high visibility/impact initiatives.

Provides leadership and expert consultation for large-scale projects or enterprise systems that often integrate new technology and/or carry out organization-wide information technology functions, or impact other institutions or agencies. Provides project management leadership, technical expertise and demonstrates knowledge of project management practices, principles, and skills.

May supervise information technology specialists or function as a recognized expert who is sought out by others in resolving or assessing controversial or precedent-setting issues.

There are no distinguishing characteristic for ITS 5

Conclusion

A primary area of focus was deciphering the differences between Mr. Newlean and Ms. Shrout's job duties, as both have nearly identical responsibilities over the same services, including:

- Enterprise Content Management
- Project Management
- Engineering Co Management and Collaboration
- Document Capture
- IT Service and Asset Management

Ms. Shrout's PD (Exhibit D-1) under the Position Objective states, "Represents the agency's highest level expert in operation of electronic document and project management server systems as well as the technical lead for the Electronic Document, Workflow & Project Management Services team." As her PD indicates, 25% of Ms. Shrout's duties entail leading the development of the highly complex infrastructure architectures. Another 25% of her duties involve establishing and operating the enterprise Electronic Document, Workflow & Project Management Services.

Ms. Shrout stated in the review conference that Mr. Newlean's PD should list him as the expert, consistent with the ITS 5 job class, rather than the senior level, which is consistent with the ITS 4 job class. Based on Ms. Shrout's position objective and 50% of her duties listed on her PD, it appears her position carries out the supervisory/expert duties encompassed in the definition for ITS 5, including:

- Overseeing the daily operations of large-scale or enterprise systems.
- Providing leadership and expert consultation for large-scale projects or enterprise systems.
- May supervise information technology specialists or function as a recognized expert who is sought out by others in resolving or assessing controversial or precedent-setting issues.

Mr. Newlean functions as Ms. Shrout's right-hand person by performing complex tasks consistent with an ITS 4, such as planning and directing large-scale projects; conducting capacity planning; designing multiple-server systems; directing or facilitating the installation of complex systems, hardware, software, application interfaces, or applications; developing and implementing quality assurance testing and performance monitoring; planning, administering, acting as a liaison on the development of applications. However, when it comes to leadership and oversight, Ms. Shrout states she is the first point of contact for customers, assigns work to Mr. Newlean and relies on his advanced knowledge to carry out the assignments.

Ms. Shrout has been and still serves as the designated expert over this unit. While Mr. Newlean does perform some of the work independently from Ms. Shrout, Ms. Shrout stated in the conference call that she is the one who consults with customers at the beginning of a project and oversees/supervises Mr. Newlean's work. When asked about the majority of her duties, Ms. Shrout stated that a good portion of time is spent supervising Mr. Newlean's tasks and projects and consulting with customers. As one who provides oversight and as the designated expert and highest level in the unit, Ms. Shrout is responsible for controversial or precedent-setting issues that arise.

In a two-person unit where both staff members are responsible for most of the the same projects and services, it is reasonable to have one expert. If the majority of work performed by Mr. Newlean was different from Ms. Shrout's, a second expert might be appropriate and allocation to an ITS 5 would be more plausible. While terms such as "expert" may be interpreted in multiple ways, for the purposes of allocation, I referred to the definition of "expert" in the *Glossary of Classification Terms*, which states:

Within the context of the class series, has the **highest level of responsibility** and extensive knowledge based on research and experience in a specific area. **Resolves the most complex, critical, or precedent-setting issues that arise. Positions act as a resource and provide guidance on specialized technical issues.** Although an employee may be considered by their peers as an expert or "go-to" person at any level, for purposes of allocation, the term is typically applied to an employee in a higher class level who has gained expertise through progression in the series.

Ms. Shrout is designated as the expert, having the highest level of responsibility over nearly all the same applications/programs as Mr. Newlean. Ms. Shrout is the first point of contact concerning projects and issues and assigns Mr. Newlean the work. Ms. Shrout's responsibility is to resolve the most complex, critical, or precedent-setting issues that arise. The fact that Mr. Newlean is in contact with IT staff and customers during the course of his work proves he is at the senior level, consistent with the definition of ITS 4, where he "...serves as a project leader, applies advanced technical knowledge and considerable discretion to evaluate and resolve complex tasks..." Being a project leader includes the work he does associated with managing a project, such as setting the implementation schedule; coordinating and participating in testing; and overseeing the daily operations.

For the reasons outlined above, allocation of Mr. Newlean's position to ITS 5 is inappropriate, as his duties and responsibilities best fit the ITS 4 job class.

Appeal Rights

RCW 41.06.170 governs the right to appeal. RCW 41.06.170(4) provides, in relevant part, the following:

An employee incumbent in a position at the time of its allocation or reallocation or the agency utilizing the position, may appeal the allocation or reallocation to the Washington personnel resources board. Notice of such appeal must be filed in writing within thirty days of the action from which appeal is taken.

The mailing address for the Personnel Resources Board (PRB) is PO Box 40911, Olympia, Washington, 98504-0911. The PRB Office is located on the 3rd floor of the Raad Building, 128 10th Avenue SW, Olympia, Washington. The main telephone number is (360) 407-4101 and the fax number is (360) 586-4694.

If no further action is taken, the Director's determination becomes final.

c: Todd Newlean, Appellant
Amy Fermo, HR Consultant

Enclosure: List of Exhibits

TODD NEWLEAN V. DOT
ALLO-16-022

LIST OF EXHIBITS

A. Todd Newlean Exhibits

1. Request for Directors Review

B. DOT Exhibits

1. Allocation Determination Letter dated March 4, 2016.
2. Position Description date stamped August 24, 2015.
3. Organizational Chart.
4. Position Description comparison by Amy Fermo.
5. Classification specifications for ITS 5 with comments from supervisor Pat Shrout.
6. Desk audit notes dated November 13, 2015, by Amy Fermo with comments from Todd Newlean and supervisor Pat Shrout.
7. Todd Newlean project assignments.
8. General service classified position description #03312 stamped September 11, 2013.
9. Email from Tim Crabb dated January 27, 2016.

C. Class Specifications

1. IT Specialist 4
2. IT Specialist 5
3. Procurement & Supply Specialist 3

D. Pre-conference exhibits requested by Director's Review Specialist

1. Position Description for position 00040.