

January 2, 2009

TO: Sherri-Ann, Senior Field Representative
Washington Federation of State Employees (WFSE)

FROM: Teresa Parsons
Director's Review Program Supervisor

SUBJECT: Judith Hanson v. Department of Information Services (DIS)
Allocation Review Request ALLO-07-113

On November 6, 2008, I conducted a Director's review conference at the Department of Personnel, 2828 Capitol Boulevard, Olympia, Washington, concerning the allocation of Judith Hanson's position. Present at the Director's review conference were you and Ms. Hanson; Nancy Widders, Human Resource Consultant, representing DIS; Starleen Parsons, Human Resource Manager; Theresa Burkheimer, Human Resource Consultant; Michael Martel; Chief Division Manager for the Telecommunications Division; Mike Lilly, Telecommunications Operations Manager; and Bruce Shurtz, Data Network Services Manager. Mr. Shurtz is Ms. Hanson's current supervisor and replaced Kathy Hernandez-Bell, her supervisor at the time of the request for a position review.

Director's Determination

This position review was based on the work performed for the six-month period prior to August 13, 2007, the date DIS's Human Resources Office received Ms. Hanson's completed Position Review Request. As the Director's designee, I carefully considered all of the documentation in the file, the exhibits presented during the Director's review conference, and the verbal comments provided by both parties. Based on my review and analysis of Ms. Hanson's assigned duties and responsibilities, I conclude her position is properly allocated to the Information Technology Specialist 3 classification.

Background

Ms. Hanson completed a Position Review Request (PRR) form, which she and her supervisor, Kathy Hernandez-Bell, signed on May 9, 2007. Ms. Hanson indicated that Ms. Hernandez-Bell walked her paperwork over to HR on or around May 9, 2007. This is supported by an email from Ms. Hernandez-Bell on May 21, 2007 (Exhibit D/E-1, attachment 5). DIS's Human

Resources Office date stamped the PRR as received on August 13, 2007 (Exhibit C-4). Ms. Hanson requested that her Information Technology Specialist 3 (ITS 3) position be reallocated to the Information Technology Specialist 4 (ITS 4) classification. On September 12, 2007, Ms. Widders and Human Resource Consultant Leah Maurseth conducted a desk audit of Ms. Hanson's position. In addition, Ms. Widders and Ms. Maurseth interviewed Ms. Hernandez-Bell and Mr. Lilly. By letter dated October 15, 2007, DIS determined Ms. Hanson was properly allocated as an ITS 3. Specifically, DIS concluded Ms. Hanson was not performing design or programming work or complex tasks envisioned in the ITS 4 class.

On November 15, 2007, the Department of Personnel received Ms. Hanson's request for a Director's review of DIS's allocation determination. Ms. Hanson provided a copy of the envelope with a postmark of October 16, 2007, the date DIS placed the allocation determination in the mail. Therefore, her request was timely filed.

Summary of Ms. Hanson's Perspective

Ms. Hanson works in the Wide-Area Network (WAN) Provisioning Engineers Unit within the Telecommunication Services Division (TSD Planning and Design) of DIS. Ms. Hanson asserts she has been working at a senior-level since June 2005. Ms. Hanson states that at that time, the Provisioning Unit was short-staffed and she handled customer orders for state agency projects, while a co-worker handled the K-20 (educational) project. Ms. Hanson states DIS filled the vacant ITS 4 position in her unit approximately six months later, and she asserts she trained the individual in that position. Ms. Hanson also states that she backs up the K-20 project.

Specifically, Ms. Hanson states that customers may be internal or external and that she receives a work order from one of the project managers facilitating the installation of services. Ms. Hanson asserts that she builds on information she receives from the project managers and that she then designs how the circuits are connected. In that process, Ms. Hanson contends she designs circuits and pathways, provides input, and works with telecommunications companies (Telco's) like Verizon and Quest, to ensure customer services are not interrupted. Ms. Hanson describes her work as a critical function of Telecommunication Services and asserts her work requires a level of sophistication and skill to complete a job and connect service from one point to the next. Ms. Hanson contends that she performs the same level of work as the ITS 4 positions in her unit, and she believes the level of work she performs exceeds the ITS 3 level.

Summary of DIS's Reasoning

DIS asserts that the project managers facilitate the installation of services for customers and that Ms. Hanson receives customer orders from TSD staff and then follows her own procedures for processing that information. DIS describes Ms. Hanson's work as provisioning, meaning that she coordinates the resources to build the circuit, based on job order. DIS contends that in provisioning the elements are already in place and Ms. Hanson's portion of the job is to find the applicable path from start to finish. DIS distinguishes the provisioning piece as selecting from existing components rather than designing by creating and putting elements in place. DIS states that Ms. Hanson performs provisioning tasks such as taking a standard document and working with a customer or vendor to make changes to fit customer needs. In that capacity, DIS agrees

Ms. Hanson has a working knowledge of the process and equipment needed to complete a job from start to finish. DIS also acknowledges Ms. Hanson's work is complex and that she does a very good job of handling a high volume of work. However, DIS asserts Ms. Hanson's duties and knowledge of the process are characteristic of the ITS 3 classification.

DIS asserts Ms. Hanson spends the majority of her time ordering hardware for circuits and making sure the node sites are updated and customers have the equipment they need. DIS states that Ms. Hanson also works in the Operational Support System (OSS database) and inputs information into the Visio System database. DIS acknowledges Ms. Hanson has cross-trained other positions in her unit with regard to her specific duties but contends she does not have responsibility for training others on the ITS 4 level work assigned to those positions. DIS acknowledges Ms. Hanson backs up the K-20 project but states she has not been assigned project manager level responsibilities. DIS maintains that the majority of Ms. Hanson's assigned work falls within the scope of an ITS 3 position.

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).

Duties and Responsibilities

On the Position Review Request (PRR) form, Ms. Hanson describes her position's purpose as follows (Exhibit D/E-1, page 1):

I work "behind the scenes" for DIS TSD WAN Project Managers, by creating, designing and ordering hundreds of circuit orders that are critical to making large and small DIS TSD WAN Projects successful. I coordinate with the Project Manager on each order to facilitate what is needed to get each customer circuit ordered and working in a timely manner.

In summary, Ms. Hanson indicates that she performs the following job duties (Exhibit D/E-1, page 2):

- 30% Ordering, coordination, and assignment of network resources owned and/or managed by the WAN Services Group. This involves switching equipment ports and circuit bandwidth for the Sonet, leased-line, optical fibers and copper facilities.
- 30% Coordinating with different Telco's, such as Quest, AT&T, or Verizon to place new install orders, disconnects, CO remaps, and coordinate the new installation

for various circuits, routers, switches, and other equipment. Also coordinate with the Educational K-20 District, as well as DIS's NCC group (Network Control Center) to coordinate internal services.

20% Work with the OSS (Operational Support System) performing highly complex tasks including data analysis, design and development of applications, detail design of network infrastructure resources, and large amounts of intricate data with a high level of accuracy and precision.

20% Train new ITS 4 positions in the Provisioning Unit to provide back-up for her duties. Apply advance technical knowledge and considerable discretion to evaluate and resolve complex tasks, such as working with a project manager on large-scale projects.

In response to Ms. Hanson's characterization of her duties, her supervisor at the time, Kathy Hernandez-Bell, indicated that most of Ms. Hanson's responsibilities identified on page 2 of the PRR could be grouped together into one category. Ms. Hernandez-Bell identified 70% of Ms. Hanson's duties and responsibility as quality assurance for circuit acquisition and installation, as well as troubleshooting, problem resolution, and/or implementation consulting tasks for complex telecommunication installation activities. Ms. Hernandez-Bell then described 30% of Ms. Hanson's work as using the OSS to perform highly complex data searches, scrutinize network inventory, and maintain the OSS network data repository.

Ms. Hernandez-Bell also highlighted portions of Ms. Hanson's descriptions that were not clear to her that Ms. Hanson was performing (Exhibit D/E-1, page 5). The portions Ms. Hernandez-Bell *eliminated* from Ms. Hanson's list of job duties included the following:

- Perform analysis, system design, maintenance, programming, and project management.
- Duties and responsibilities for computing system, application, data access/retrieval, multi-functional databases or data management systems.
- Conducting capacity planning, designing multi-server systems, and facilitating installation of systems.
- Performance monitoring, planning, and coordinating the dissemination of organization wide information such as telecommunication standards.
- Design and development of applications for maintaining and review of repository information.
- Responsibility for detail design of work infrastructure resources owned and managed by the WAN group.
- Work with intricate data.

In response to Ms. Hernandez-Bell's elimination of duties, Ms. Hanson clarified what she meant by each of the duties eliminated by Ms. Hernandez-Bell (Exhibit D/E-7). In Exhibit D/E-7, the dark blue highlighting matches the yellow highlighting done by Ms. Hernandez-Bell in Exhibit D/E-1, page 5. The gray shading represents Ms. Hanson's points of clarification. Specifically, Ms. Hanson clarifies the above duties as follows:

- Analysis and system design: *Ms. Hanson states that she analyzes the best path for the circuit to take that optimizes the best use of DIS facilities and equipment and that she designs the circuit from start to finish by using OSS and the Bandwidth document to create the design in a Visio document.*
- Maintenance, programming, and project management: *Ms. Hanson states that she provides the NCC with programming data for the Tellabs, routers and other switching equipment and ensures the maintenance of vendor provided equipment is included in the order. She manages the order project from start through completion, including quality assurance and problem resolution of the installation.*
- Computing system, application, data access/retrieval, multi-functional databases or data management systems: *Ms. Hanson states that she uses HyperTerminal to access the Core or logs into Tellabs to look at connections for assigning or seeing if connections are already in use and where they are assigned.*
- Conduct capacity planning: *Ms. Hanson states that the project managers request the quantity of circuits and she performs capacity planning by determining if there is sufficient bandwidth for the circuit requested. She then coordinates with the HICAP technician for actuating additional bandwidth to complete the project.*
- Designing multiple-server systems: *Ms. Hanson states she completes the designing and ordering of the Ethernet circuit for DIS and other large agencies, as well as DIS internal projects. She then states that she facilitates the installation of the systems, hardware and network components. Ms. Hanson indicates that she also works with DIS's NCC group to coordinate installations, disconnects, moves internal circuit cutovers, CO remaps and changes. She also provides the NCC with the circuit engineering documentation needed to do their part.*
- Performance monitoring, planning, and coordinating the dissemination of organization wide information such as telecommunication: *Ms. Hanson states that she plans the installation and monitors the responsiveness of vendors on order completion, plans testing with the coordination of the NCC. She also states that she updates the circuit design records for network staff, provisioning, and the engineering staff to maintain DIS and telecommunication standards.*
- Design and development of applications for maintaining and reviewing repository information: *Ms. Hanson states that she uses Visio, Adobe Photoshop Elements 3, Microsoft Word and Excel daily to do her job. As an example, she states that she reviews or constructs network diagrams (Exhibit D/E-1, attachment 4).*
- Responsibility for the successful detail design of network infrastructure resources owned/managed by the WAN group: *Ms. Hanson states that she uses Visio and bandwidth documentation to create and update circuit design records to provide a visual*

depiction of the network infrastructure. As such, she states that she works with large amounts of intricate data, which she describes as very complex.

Ms. Hanson also noted that the duties eliminated by Ms. Hernandez-Bell involved much of her work relating to Point to Point Circuits (Exhibit D/E-1, attachment 2). During the Director's review conference, both Ms. Hanson and Mr. Shurtz, her current supervisor, indicated that Point to Point and Ethernet circuits are generally more complex because they have a higher capacity and involve taking input and mapping back to the DIS network by going through certain vendor and/or DIS equipment while avoiding certain node sites. In other instances, Ms. Hanson may work with frame relays, which allow some standardization by creating templates to speed up the process. A frame relay is also referred to as a T-1 line, which has the potential for being split or shared. While some designs are very similar, variables exist with every design. Mr. Shurtz then indicated that depending on type and location, Ms. Hanson's work involves figuring out the channel and path so when she places an order with a vendor, she can provide instructions on which channels are impacted.

Mr. Shurtz described the process as follows: The cell engineers in the Project Managers Group receive an order from the customer. The project managers then facilitate the installation and send a work order to the Provisioning Group to design the circuit. Ms. Hanson's portion of the job involves coordinating services for the installation and/or placing the order with the telecommunications companies. Once the correct connections are documented, the customer order is sent to Operations to complete the installation or modification of services. DIS asserts that the majority of Ms. Hanson's assigned work is accurately reflected on the Classification Questionnaire (CQ) for her position, dated May 24, 2006 (Exhibit C-2). On the CQ, the section identified as 60% summarizes the detail that is involved with Ms. Hanson's job in an effort to coordinate those services and ensure the customer's order is complete.

The description of work on the CQ is fairly consistent with Ms. Hanson's description of her duties, including coordination of projects, conducting needs assessments, and creating installation plans. The CQ also describes Ms. Hanson's work related to switching equipment ports and circuit bandwidths, as well as monitoring the use of DIS or customer network infrastructure resources and taking steps to resolve problems. The CQ, however, emphasizes that Ms. Hanson uses established work procedures, though she may develop her own innovative approach to accomplishing the work within the established guidelines. The CQ also notes that Ms. Hanson consults with higher-level technical staff to resolve complex problems.

The Class Series Concept for IT positions reads as follows (Exhibit E):

Positions in this category perform professional information technology systems and/or applications support for client applications, databases, computer hardware and software products, network infrastructure equipment, or telecommunications software or hardware.

This category broadly describes positions in one or more information technology disciplines such as: Application Development And Maintenance, Application Testing, Capacity Planning, Business Analysis and/or Process Re-Engineering, Data Base Design And Maintenance, Data Communications, Disaster Recovery/Data Security, Distributed

Systems/LAN/WAN/PC, Hardware Management And Support, Network Operations, Production Control, Quality Assurance, IT Project Management, Systems Software, Web Development, or Voice Communications.

Some of the IT functions overlap from class to class; however, the definition for each classification within the IT series distinguishes the level of work assigned to each class. When comparing the majority of Ms. Hanson's assigned work with the class specifications, her duties fall within the scope and intent of the ITS 3, which reads as follows:

Definition for the ITS 3 Classification

In support of information systems and users in an assigned area of responsibility, independently performs consulting, designing, programming, installation, maintenance, quality assurance, troubleshooting and/or technical support for applications, hardware and software products, databases, database management systems, support products, network infrastructure equipment, or telecommunications infrastructure, software or hardware.

Uses established work procedures and innovative approaches to complete assignments and coordinate projects such as conducting needs assessments; leading projects; creating installation plans; analyzing and correcting network malfunctions; serving as system administrator; monitoring or enhancing operating environments; or supporting, maintaining and enhancing existing applications.

The majority of assignments and projects are moderate in size and impact an agency division or large workgroup or single business function; or internal or satellite operations, multiple users, or more than one group. Consults with higher-level technical staff to resolve complex problems.

Ms. Hanson supports network infrastructure by working with the project managers who have the responsibility for facilitating new installations, as well as modifications. The project managers then provide Ms. Hanson with a work order for coordinating the services necessary to complete that order. In that capacity, Ms. Hanson independently performs her portion of the job to ensure customer needs are met. Consistent with the ITS 3 class, Ms. Hanson consults with NCC staff and outside vendors, accesses information to determine which connections are in use and determines the best method for installing or moving around existing circuits, routers, and other equipment. Ms. Hanson assesses the particular needs of an assignment based on the work order and customer needs, and she creates installation plans, analyzes network issues, ensures optimal services are provided, and resolves problems. Ms. Hanson also uses Visio and bandwidth documentation to create and update circuit design records. As such, she has a good understanding of the overall process and how servers connect to the core. While I recognize Ms. Hanson has a strong knowledge of the intricacies involved with the various types of designs, the level of design she performs is consistent with the ITS 3 class.

Definition for the ITS 4 Classification

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.

I realize that some of the functions identified at the ITS 3 level also fit within the ITS 4 level, such as analysis, design, and installation. However, positions at the ITS 4 level are assigned senior-level, advanced technical responsibilities and/or serve as project leaders for large-scale projects. While Ms. Hanson may work on large-scale projects, she has not been assigned project leader responsibilities. Ms. Hanson has not been assigned responsibility for planning or directing a project or design or programming of a system. Rather, Ms. Hanson has been assigned a segment of the design work that supports the project manager with the responsibility for facilitating installations affecting the network infrastructure.

During the Director's review conference, Ms. Hanson indicated she performs the same duties as the ITS 4 positions in her unit. However, the Board has consistently held the following:

While a comparison of one position to another similar position may be useful in gaining a better understanding of the duties performed by and the level of responsibility assigned to an incumbent, allocation of a position must be based on the overall duties and responsibilities assigned to an individual position compared to the existing classifications. The allocation or misallocation of a similar position is not a determining factor in the appropriate allocation of a position. Byrnes v. Dept's of Personnel and

Corrections, PRB No. R-ALLO-06-005 (2006), citing Flahaut v. Dept's of Personnel and Labor and Industries, PAB No. ALLO 96-0009 (1996).

Most positions within the civil service system occasionally perform duties that appear in more than one classification. However, when determining the appropriate classification for a specific position, the duties and responsibilities of that position must be considered in their entirety and the position must be allocated to the classification that provides the best fit overall for the majority of the position's duties and responsibilities. See Dudley v. Dept. of Labor and Industries, PRB Case No. R-ALLO-07-007 (2007).

Additionally, an employee is not promoted through the allocation process, though a reallocation of a position may result in a promotion if an incumbent remains in a position reallocated upward. It is clear Ms. Hanson's work is highly valued and considered a critical piece of the work performed in Provisioning and the TSD. A position's allocation, however, is not based on an incumbent's performance or ability to perform higher level work. Instead, an allocation is based on the assignment of work to a position and where that fits within the classification plan and available job classes. Based on the majority of Ms. Hanson's assigned duties and responsibilities, the Information Technology Specialist 3 classification is the best fit.

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 address for the Personnel Resources Board is 2828 Capitol Blvd., P.O. Box 40911, Olympia, Washington, 98504-0911.

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

c: Judith Hanson
Nancy Widders, DIS
Lisa Skriletz, DOP

Enclosure: List of Exhibits