

December 7, 2009

TO: Tony Puckett

FROM: Teresa Parsons, SPHR
Director's Review Program Supervisor

SUBJECT: Tony Puckett v. Department of Corrections (DOC)
Allocation Review Request ALLO-09-025

On October 5, 2009, I conducted a Director's review telephone conference regarding the allocation of your position, as well as Stanley Huling's position at the Washington State Penitentiary (WSP). Both you and Mr. Huling participated in the conference, as well as Human Resources Consultant Tina Cooley on behalf of DOC.

Director's Determination

This position review was based on the work performed for the six-month period prior to August 15, 2008, the date your Position Description Form (PDF) was submitted to the Human Resources (HR) Office. 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 your assigned duties and responsibilities, I conclude your position is properly allocated to the Electronics Technician 4 classification.

Background

On August 15, 2008, a PDF was submitted to the HR Office at WSP, requesting that your position (#WP23) be reallocated from an Electronics Technician (ET) to the Information Technology Specialist 3 (ITS 3) classification (Exhibit B-1). On April 2, 2009, Human Resources Consultant Joanne Harmon issued an allocation determination, concluding that the Electronics Technician 4 classification best described the duties and responsibilities assigned to your position. Specifically, Ms. Harmon determined that even though you used information technology tools to perform your assigned work, the majority of your duties supported the testing, maintenance, troubleshooting, and installation of electronic security and safety systems at WSP.

On May 1, 2009, the Department of Personnel received your request for a Director's review of DOC's allocation determination. The following summarizes your perspective, as well as your employer's.

Summary of Employees' (Puckett & Huling) Perspectives

The employees contend that since the opening of the West complex at WSP in April 2008, the institution uses new Building Automation Systems, which are IP [Internet Protocol] based and networked together in a closed loop system. The employees describe the security system as a Local Area Network (LAN) owned by the institution; they describe their positions as the network administrators. As such, the employees state that they assign passwords, maintain firewalls, routers and switches, and perform server and network maintenance for digital security systems, as opposed to analog systems. The employees further state that they use and maintain SQL servers that store digital data to control movement through touch screens, voice and video functions. The employees assert their positions are responsible for loading and upgrading software and performing all maintenance on the LAN security system. The employees contend they use the same servers and client stations that Information Technology (IT) positions use and that the only IT involvement with the security LAN is control over the fiber optic runs between buildings and the fiber patch panels connecting to the security network. The employees assert that IT positions will not perform any maintenance on security computers; rather, the employees contend their positions have responsibility for performing daily, preventive network maintenance, using specialized network hardware/software products. The employees contend that similar positions at other institutions have been allocated to the IT series, and they believe their positions should be reallocated, as well as compensated, to reflect the IT functions they perform.

Summary of DOC's Reasoning

DOC recognizes that technologies change over time but maintains the scope of work assigned to the employees' positions fits within the Electronics Technician class series. DOC contends the employees' positions exist to support safety and security systems at the facility and that they use computer technology as a tool to accomplish their tasks. DOC indicates these systems include security of the perimeter, video surveillance, fire alarms, door and fence controls. As such, DOC asserts the employees use skills to support testing, troubleshooting, installation and layout of equipment used to support safety and communication systems. For example, DOC indicates the employees install, modify, troubleshoot, and test equipment for computer based electronic systems used in touch screen control, surveillance, door access, radio communications, lighting control, closed circuit television, audio/visual systems, electronic fence alarms, and fire alarms. DOC indicates they also instruct personnel working with cameras or in control rooms. DOC further indicates the employees customize software, coordinate with vendors, work with schematic drawings, and repair and test the electronic components of the security systems. DOC recognizes the work performed by the employees is exemplary, as well as critical to the institution. However, DOC believes the Electronics Technician 4 classification is the best fit for the overall duties and responsibilities assigned to the positions.

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).

The PDF submitted for reallocation (August 2008) describes, in part, the Position Objective for your position as follows (Exhibit B-1):

. . . under the direct supervision of the electronic shop supervisor, conducts installations, modifications, troubleshooting, repairs, preventative maintenance . . . adjustments and testing of all . . . computer based electronic and electrical systems used in touch-screen control, logic relay controls, security surveillance, metal detectors, radio communication systems, lighting control, fence alarm, door access, locking and fire alarm systems, fire suppression systems, audio/visual systems and offender television system at the Washington State Penitentiary.

The PDF also includes the following summary of job duties:

- 20% Provides service and equipment needs for client applications, hardware/software products, network infrastructure equipment, or telecommunications software or hardware. Accesses/retrieves data and analyzes and solves problems. Processes equipment and service orders.
- 10% Installs system hardware/software and performs standard and preventative maintenance, modification, and testing.
- 5% Maintains backup, batch queuing, directory maintenance, capacity and resource management and printing systems.
- 5% Reviews system logs and messages to identify events and errors.
- 10% Runs tests using hardware/software diagnostic tools and resolves or refers problems to other staff.
- 15% Provides help desk technical support and/or responds to trouble reports from users and identifies and resolves problems. Performs component level diagnostics to determine need for replacement. Calibrates and/or tests for proper operation. Advises on how to use systems, software/hardware.
- 10% Operates and maintains multiple server systems.

- 15% Creates video archives and distributes as required.
- 10% Configures hardware/software on computers associated with electronic systems.

The previous PDF for your position (March 2007) describes the same position objective as the one submitted for reallocation. The key activities, identified as 60%, include duties to install, maintain, and repair Communication, Computer and Electronics Security Control Systems.

When comparing the assignment of work and level of responsibility to the available class specifications, the class series concept (if one exists) followed by definition and distinguishing characteristics are primary considerations.

The class series concept for the Information Technology series reads as follows:

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.

Positions which perform information technology-related work to accomplish tasks but are non-technical in nature would not be included in this occupational category.

The definition for an **Information Technology Specialist (ITS) 3** indicates the following:

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.

I recognize that some of the work described in the ITS 3 class specification may contain similar aspects of the work you perform. Although your position works with information technology to carry out the functions assigned to your position, the work assigned is described by the Electronics Technician classifications. In determining which class series provided the best fit, I also considered the organizational structure in which your position reports to the Plant Manger (Exhibit B-3).

I also reviewed past Board decisions. In a broad context, the services you provide may fit into the Information Technology Specialist classes. However, The PRB has previously determined that while one class appeared to cover the scope of a position, there was another classification that not only encompasses the scope of the position, but specifically encompassed the unique functions performed. Alvarez v. Olympic College, PRB No. R-ALLO-08-013 (2008). Further, the Board has consistently held that “[w]hen there is a definition that specifically includes a particular assignment and there is a general classification that has a definition which could also apply to the position, the position will be allocated to the class with the definition that includes the position” Mikitik v Depts. of Wildlife and Personnel, PAB No. A88-021 (1989).

The definition for the **Electronics Technician (ET) 4** states, in relevant part, that positions serve as a lead or senior level technician and perform work in layout, construction and installation of electronic and safety equipment. Troubleshoots, maintains, repairs and tests, analog, and/or digital electronic equipment. Delivers and installs equipment, calibrates test equipment. Implements and evaluates workflow priorities. Develops and disseminates instructions and information to unit personnel.

To gain a greater understanding of positions allocated to the Electronics Technician classes, I also reviewed lower level ET classifications. The ET 2 is defined, in part, as performing journey-level work in “layout, construction and installation of radio communications, electronic and safety equipment,” which includes maintaining digital electronic equipment and delivering, installing, and calibrating test equipment. The ET 3 is defined, in part, as independently performing complex electronics work, such as “constructing computer-interfaced prototypes; designing computer interfaces with existing apparatus; modifying and installing commercially-built electronic and mechanical apparatus.” Finally, the Electronics Technician classification has been specifically defined as installing, maintaining, repairing and testing electrical and electronic systems used in security and alarm surveillance and instructing personnel in the proper operation and minor maintenance of this equipment. Further, while work examples do not form the basis for an allocation, they lend support to the work envisioned within a classification. The typical work statement indicating Electronics Technician positions maintain or repair security system computers to include

servers, switches, and/or local area network (LAN) maintenance supports the work assigned to your position.

In addition, I reviewed a previous decision by the Personnel Appeals Board, which supports the distinction of work assigned to your position. Though the specific facts differ, the PAB decision provided guidance as to the type of work performed by positions allocated to the Electronics Technician by concluding the following:

The specification for the Electronics Technician classification states that incumbents perform skilled journey level work which includes installing, maintaining, repairing and testing electrical and electronic systems used in security and alarm surveillance and instructing personnel in the proper operation and minor maintenance of this equipment. The typical work for this class includes the installation and maintenance of internal security systems, including electronic surveillance systems, and conducting inspections and tests to ensure the security systems are functional. The typical work also includes recommending purchases of security devices, consulting with contractors, and instructing employees in the use and repair of security systems. This class specifically addresses the maintenance and repair of electrical and electronic systems used in security and alarm surveillance such as those used at Fircrest School. Hafzalla v. Dep't. of Social and Health Services, PAB No. ALLO-00-0025 (2001).

Your position has been assigned the responsibility to install, configure, maintain, and repair systems used for surveillance and security at WSP, as envisioned by the Electronics Technician classes. The level of responsibilities assigned to your position fits the highest level of the series as an ET 4.

I understand that a portion of your argument has been the allocation of similar positions at other institutions. However, the PRB, has previously determined that although 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).

It is clear the work you and Mr. Huling perform is highly valued. A position's allocation does not diminish the quality of work performed and is not a reflection of performance. Rather, an allocation is based on the majority of work assigned to a position. Based on the level, scope and diversity of the overall duties and responsibilities assigned to your position, the Electronics Technician 4 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 mailing address for the Personnel Resources Board (PRB) is P.O. Box 40911, Olympia, Washington, 98504-0911. The PRB Office is located at 600 South Franklin, Olympia, Washington. The main telephone number is (360) 664-0388, and the fax number is (360) 753-0139.

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

c: Tina Cooley, DOC
Joanne Harmon, DOC
Lisa Skriletz, DOP

Enclosure: List of Exhibits

Tony Puckett v. Dept. of Corrections (DOC)

ALLO-09-025

List of Exhibits

A. Tony Puckett Exhibits

1. Letter requesting a Director's Review May 1, 2009
2. Request for Director's Review Form
3. Agency Allocation Determination letter dated April 2, 2009
4. Class Specification: Electronics Technician 2 (592K)

Exhibit Book submitted by Tony Puckett

The following list is included in the exhibit notebook:

- 1A. Outline of Security IP addresses and network function.
- 2A. Documents explaining DVTel Network Video Management software.
- 3A. SQL readme.txt file copied from Servers running on Security Network.
- 4A. MiroComm DXI troubleshooting Guide: Using Lon Works LAN communication
- 5A. User Guide to Digital Video. Explains changes that have occurred in electronics.

B. Dept. of Corrections Exhibits
Exhibit List with explanation

1. Position Description 8/15/2008
2. Position Description 3/6/2007
3. Plant Manager 3 Organizational Chart
4. Class Specifications: Electronics Technician
5. Class Specifications: Electronics Technician 4
6. Class Specifications: Information Technology Specialist 3

C. Email correspondence after Director's review conference

1. October 6, 2009 email response from Teresa Parsons to Lorna Ovena regarding confidential exhibits.
2. October 14, 2009 email from Tony Puckett to Tina Cooley & Teresa Parsons agreeing to withdraw his exhibit A IP address schematic (included in Mr. Puckett's exhibit notebook as part of exhibit 1A).
3. October 16, 2009 email from Teresa Parsons to parties, requesting that DOC comment on Mr. Puckett's October 14, 2009 email regarding stipulation of facts and his withdrawal of exhibit.
4. October 19, 2009 email from Tina Cooley to Teresa Parsons and Tony Puckett stipulating to the facts in Mr. Puckett's October 14, 2009 email.
5. October 21, 2009 email from Teresa Parsons to parties confirming the destruction/redaction of the confidential documents.
6. October 26, 2009 email from Teresa Parsons to parties confirming that the confidential document had been shredded and redacted.

D. Electronics Technician 3 class specification.