BEFORE THE PERSONNEL APPEALS BOARD

STATE OF WASHINGTON

M. STELLA BIRKLAND, Appellant, v. DEPARTMENT OF RETIREMENT SYSTEMS, Respondent.	)	Case No. ALLO-99-0019 ORDER OF THE BOARD FOLLOWING HEARING ON EXCEPTIONS TO THE DETERMINATION OF THE DIRECTOR

Hearing on Exceptions. Pursuant to RCW 41.64.060 and WAC 358-01-040, this matter came on for a hearing before the Personnel Appeals Board, LEANA D. LAMB, Member, on Appellant's exceptions to the Director's determination dated February 10, 1999. The hearing was held on March 17, 2000, in the Personnel Appeals Board hearing room in Olympia, Washington. GERALD L. MORGEN, Vice Chair, reviewed the record and participated in the decision in this matter. WALTER T. HUBBARD, Chair, did not participate in the hearing or in the decision in this matter.

Appearances. Appellant M. Stella Birkland was present and appeared *pro se*. Respondent Department of Retirement Systems (DRS) was represented by Sandy Parry, Human Resources Manager.

Background. On July 20, 1998, Appellant requested reallocation of her Computer Technical Specialist 2 position by submitting a classification questionnaire (CQ) to the Department of Personnel. The CQ was signed only by Appellant. On August 28, 1998, Appellant submitted a second CQ to Respondent's DRS Personnel Office that was signed by herself and her first- and second-line supervisors. Appellant requested that her position be reallocated to the Computer Information System Specialist (CISS) 1 classification.

By letter dated September 17, 1998, Respondent denied Appellant's request for reallocation. Appellant appealed the decision to the Department of Personnel (DOP). The Department of Personnel received Appellant's appeal on October 15, 1998. The Director's determination was issued on May 20, 1999 and

concluded that Appellant's position was properly allocated. On June 18, 1999, Appellant filed exceptions to the Director's determination with the Personnel Appeals Board. Appellant's exceptions are the subject of this proceeding.

Within Respondent's Information Technology Services division, Appellant functions as the agency's telecommunications coordinator and performs the duties of the agency's lead technical specialist/consultant for voice and data communications.

Summary of Appellant's Argument. Appellant argues that she responds directly to management requests for information and contends that she merely keeps her manager informed on issues. Appellant further asserts that she, rather than her manager, initiates activities, identifies needs and makes recommendations to executive management regarding the agency's telecommunications system. Appellant argues that her responsibilities for ensuring that the telecommunications system is fully operational and for providing information to executive management warrants reallocation to the CISS 1 classification.

Summary of Respondent's Argument. Respondent argues that Appellant functions independently but contends that she has not been given written designation as the highest technical specialist for telecommunications. Respondent asserts that Appellant makes recommendations to her manager and that her manager determines whether to take Appellant's recommendations to senior management. Respondent argues that Appellant researches information and provides technical assistance for the telephone system and that she participates in projects as a member of the project team. Respondent contends that allocation to the CISS 1 classification requires incumbents to make recommendations directly to senior management and argues that this responsibility lies with Appellant's manager or with the project leader, not with Appellant. Therefore, Respondent asserts that Appellant's position is properly allocated to the Computer Technical Specialist 2 classification.

Primary Issue. Whether the Director's determination that Appellant's position is properly allocated to the Computer Technical Specialist 2 classification should be affirmed.

Relevant Classifications. Computer Technical Specialist 2, class code 03650; and Computer Information System Specialist 1; class code 03260.

Decision of the Board. 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. Also, a position review is not a comparison of work performed by employees in similar positions. 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 which best describes the overall duties and responsibilities of the position. Liddle-Stamper v. Washington State University, PAB Case No. 3722-A2 (1994).

In relevant part, the definition and distinguishing characteristics for the Computer Information System Specialist 1 classification describe positions that are designated in writing as the highest technical specialist in an information technology technical specialty such as telecommunications. Appellant's CQ indicates that she is the lead, not the highest technical specialist/consultant for telecommunications. The classification also requires that positions allocated to the CISS 1 level serve as the senior consultant/advisor to senior management. Appellant functions as a member of various project teams. The teams develop proposals that are forwarded to senior management for action. Each team has a project leader who is responsible for reporting information to senior management. Furthermore, Appellant's CQ indicates that she is the lead technical specialist for telecommunications. Her CQ does not indicate that as the lead, she provides advice directly to senior management.

In relevant part, the definition and distinguishing characteristics for the Computer Technical Specialist (CTS) 2 classification describe positions that serve as senior technical consultants, assist other technical

specialists, or operate independently. Appellant's responsibilities as the agency's lead technical specialist/consultant for telecommunications on various project teams falls within this description. In addition, the level of her responsibilities as telecommunications coordinator fall within this description. Furthermore, CTS 2s typically report to a manager. Consistent with this description, Appellant reports to a Washington Management Service 2 position.

In conclusion, we find that the scope of Appellant's position and her assigned level of responsibilities are best described by the Computer Technical Specialist 2 classification.

Conclusion. The appeal on exceptions by Appellant should be denied and the Director's determination dated May 20, 1999, should be affirmed and adopted.

ORDER

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that the appeal on exceptions by Appellant is denied and the Director's determination dated May 20, 1999, is affirmed and adopted. A copy is attached.

DATED this _____ day of _____, 2000.

WASHINGTON STATE PERSONNEL APPEALS BOARD

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Gerald L. Morgen, Vice Chair

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Leana D. Lamb, Member

Personnel Appeals Board
2828 Capitol Boulevard
Olympia, Washington 98504