BEFORE THE PERSONNEL RESOURCES BOARD

STATE OF WASHINGTON

MICHAEL (JOE) NOVO, Appellant, vs. EASTERN WASHINGTON UNVERSITY, Respondent.	CASE No. R-ALLO-15-003 ORDER OF THE BOARD FOLLOWING HEARING ON EXCEPTIONS TO THE DETERMINATION OF THE DIRECTOR

Hearing on Exceptions. This appeal came before the Personnel Resources Board, NANCY HOLLAND YOUNG, Chair, SUSAN MILLER, Vice Chair; and VICKY BOWDISH, Member, for a hearing on Appellant's exceptions to the director's determination dated January 22, 2015. The hearing was held on May 27, 2015.

Appearances. Appellant Michael (Joe) Novo was present and was represented by Desiree Desselle, Labor Advocate with the Washington Federation of State Employees. Respondent Eastern Washington University (EWU) was represented by Lori Livingstone, Human Resource Associate.

Background. Appellant requested reallocation of his Information Technology Specialist (ITS) 3 position on July 30, 2013. Appellant asked that his position be reallocated to the ITS5 level. By letter dated November 12, 2013, EWU determined that Appellant's position was properly allocated to the ITS3 classification.

On December 5, 2013, Appellant filed a request for a director's review of EWU's determination. By letter dated January 22, 2015, the director's designee determined that Appellant's position was properly allocated to the ITS3 classification.

On February 20, 2015, Appellant filed timely exceptions to the director's determination asserting that his position should be reallocated to the ITS5 level. Appellant's exceptions are the subject of this proceeding.

Appellant works as a Desktop Engineer for the Enterprise Infrastructure and Technology Services Division at EWU. At the time of his review, he reported to the Technical Support Manager within the Technical Support Services Section. His primary function was to serve as the Desktop Engineer for every physical and virtual desktop computer across EWU's multiple campuses. During the time period relevant to his appeal, Appellant was working on the design, implementation and deployment of the Microsoft System Center Configuration Manager (SCCM) software. This was a complex project and Appellant performed his day-to-day tasks independently under the direction and goals set by his supervisor and in collaboration with others such as the IT Pro Supervisors.

Summary of Appellant's Arguments. Appellant argues that the duties he performs are complex and mission critical and have enterprise-wide impact on every one of the computers in the University's computing environment. Appellant contends that he is EWU's expert for desktop engineering, that he provides expert consultation to staff, students and management and that he provides leadership and expert consultation for large-scale, enterprise systems. Appellant contends that in his capacity as the Desktop Engineer, he independently performs specialized analysis, design, development, testing, quality assurance, acquisition, installation, programing and consultation without supervisory oversight. Appellant further contends that he uses his expertise to act as a project leader and to plan projects, direct work and write policy/directives utilized by others. He asserts that he established and implemented a whole new structure for EWU's computing environment which included the Active Directory, setting policy, deploying the SCCM software and designing the system for the specific needs of EWU. Appellant argues that he independently performs at the expert level a majority of the time and that the majority of the duties he performs, the scope of his work and his level of responsibility clearly fit within the ITS4 level. However, he asserts

that because he basically transformed EWU's desktop environment, his duties rise to the level of the ITS5 classification.

Summary of Respondent's Arguments. Respondent argues that the work Appellant performs, the tasks he is assigned, the efficiencies he implements and the outcomes he produces are consistent with the ITS3 level. Respondent contends that Appellant does not have independent responsibility for organization-wide systems such as the Active Directory. Respondent asserts that Appellant is a consumer of the Active Directory. Respondent explains that the SCCM is moderate in size and sits on top of the Active Directory. Respondent further explains that Appellant could not perform his duties independent of the data center staff who are responsible for server administration at the enterprise level. Respondent acknowledges that SCCM is important but asserts that it is not critical to the mission of the University. Respondent explains that the goal of the SCCM project was to consolidate images, processes and procedures to create efficiencies and centralize functions. Respondent further explains that Appellant did not set, design or build the structure for the SCCM but rather he developed a new way to use the product. Respondent argues that Appellant performed independently in collaboration with Active Directory engineers and system administrators to set the direction for the work needed to done to accomplish the goals of the SCCM project. Respondent asserts that Appellant did not provide leadership or set goals for the project and that he did not make enterprise level decisions. Respondent contends that Appellant is not a lead or a supervisor and is not responsible for enterprise level systems. Respondent argues that the majority of Appellant's work is consistent with the ITS3 classification.

Primary Issue. Whether the director's determination that Appellant's position is properly allocated to the Information Technology Specialist 3 should be affirmed.

Relevant Classifications. Information Technology Specialist 3, class code 479K; Information Technology Specialist 4, class code 479L; and Information Technology Specialist 5, class codes 479M.

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. 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. See Liddle-Stamper v. Washington State University, PAB Case No. 3722-A2 (1994).

The definition for the ITS5 class states:

> 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.
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> 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.

Appellant's position does not fit within the definition of the ITS5 classification. His position does not have responsibility for providing leadership and expert consultation for large-scale projects or enterprise systems such as major organization-wide, high risk/high impact, mission-critical applications or systems. Nor does he serve as the project leader, have primary responsibility for conducting capacity planning including determining organization-wide or enterprise-wide needs, or write feasibility studies and decision packages for high visibility or high impact initiatives encompassing an organization-wide functional perspective. Rather, his work is one component of the total Active Directory. While the SCCM project was important, it is moderate in size and not mission critical. Appellant is not a supervisor, is not assigned complex, enterprise-level tasks, responsibilities and associated decision-making authority and does not perform highly-complex tasks with major organization-wide or enterprise-wide impact at the level anticipated by the ITS5 class. While Appellant performs some of the tasks included in the ITS5 class, he does not perform them for complex, large-scale, multi-platform/network, mission critical initiatives or projects. ITS5 classification is not the appropriate allocation for Appellant's position.

The definition for the ITS4 class states:

> 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.
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> 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.

During the review period, Appellant provided leadership to the SCCM deployment project which required the integration of new technology on multiple servers. He created an architectural drawing for a cluster of multiple production servers and worked with data center staff to test and document a procedure deployment. However, these activities do not rise to the level of complexity inherently included in directing large scale projects as anticipated by the ITS4 class. Further, Appellant is not responsible for routinely developing and implementing quality assurance testing and conducting performance monitoring; planning, administering, and coordinating organization-wide information technology training; developing security policies and standards; or representing institution-wide computing standards and philosophy as a senior-level specialist. The overall scope, level of authority and decision-making responsibilities assigned to Appellant's position do not rise to the ITS4 level.

The definition for the ITS3 class states:

> 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.

The majority of Appellant's duties and responsibilities focus on Desktop Management Systems Engineering. He functions independently to identify, test, engineer and maintain desktop and software management solutions. His responsibilities include consulting, designing, programming, installation, maintenance, quality assurance, troubleshooting and technical support for applications and software products such as SCCM. He uses innovative approaches to completing his assignments and collaborates and coordinates work with other IT staff. While the SCCM project was university-wide, it was moderate in size and his work related to the SCCM represented one component of the total Active Directory. The scope of work, the level of authority and majority of the overall responsibilities assigned to Appellant's position best fit the ITS3 classification.

In a hearing on exceptions, the Appellant has the burden of proof. WAC 357-52-110. Appellant has failed to meet his burden of proof.

ORDER

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that the appeal on exceptions by Michael (Joe) Novo and the director's determination dated January 22, 2015, is affirmed.

DATED this _____ day of _____, 2015.

WASHINGTON PERSONNEL RESOURCES BOARD

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NANCY HOLLAND YOUNG, Chair

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SUSAN MILLER, Vice Chair

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VICKY BOWDISH, Member