

**BEFORE THE PERSONNEL RESOURCES BOARD
STATE OF WASHINGTON**

PETER GRANUM,

Appellant,

vs.

DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS,

Respondent.

CASE NO. R-ALLO-15-004

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 February 9, 2015. The hearing was held on June 3, 2015.

Appearances. Appellant Peter Granum was present and represented by Sarena Davis, with Teamsters Local Union 117, Respondent Department of Corrections (DOC) was represented by Nicole Baker, Human Resources Consultant.

Background. Appellant is employed by DOC as an Electronics Technician 4 (ET4). On July 23, 2014, Appellant submitted a Position Review Request (PRR) asking DOC to reallocate his position to the Information Technology Specialist 3 (ITS3) classification. By letter dated August 19, 2014, Respondent determined that Appellant's position was properly allocated to the ET4 classification.

On September 16, 2014, Appellant filed a request for director's review of DOC's determination. By letter dated February 9, 2015, the director's designee determined that Appellant's position was properly allocated to the ET4 classification.

1 On March 9, 2015, Appellant filed exceptions to the director's determination asserting that his
2 position should be reallocated to the ITS3 level. Appellant's exceptions are the subject of this
3 proceeding.

4
5 Appellant is a senior level technician and he works in (DOC's) Plant Maintenance Department at
6 Clallam Bay Corrections Center (CBCC). At the time of his review, he reported to the Facility
7 Manager, and acted as lead to an Electronics Technician 3 position. The purpose of his position is
8 to maintain the safety and security of the CBCC facility. This is done by the use of advanced
9 hardware and software diagnostic tools and system diagnostics to identify issues and prevent
10 problems from developing. The majority of his duties include installing, testing, troubleshooting
11 and maintaining security and surveillance electronic systems and installing, testing, repairing,
12 programming and maintaining electronic and low voltage systems and sub-systems for building
13 automation, fire, safety, sanitation and telecommunications.

14
15 **Summary of Appellant's Arguments.** In summary, Appellant contends that with the advent of
16 technology, his duties and responsibilities have moved into the IT realm and that while electronic
17 technician work is still performed at the facility, his work has evolved to where he primarily
18 performs IT duties. He argues that he programs, installs, troubleshoots and maintains security
19 applications within a Medium Security Complex (MSC). Appellant asserts that he monitors
20 heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) daily and that he is responsible for
21 troubleshooting, quality assurance and additional programming to assure the comfort of staff and
22 inmates. He further asserts that he is the system administrator for all the touch screen systems and
23 HVAC systems. He contends that he spends most of his time writing code for changing weather,
24 performing quality assurance, designing, programming and maintaining systems. He contends that
25 he programs, troubleshoots, diagnoses and corrects malfunctions for two touch screens that
26 control the MSC slider gate project, the MSC security cameras and the new recording system.
27 Appellant argues he uses various software programs for security systems, some of which require
28 him to manually update software and apply patches to assure the systems work.

1 Appellant asserts that he develops documents to assist in defining the services and equipment
2 needed for jobs, orders supplies for jobs and projects. While the Appellant does not write
3 programs, he argues that he does modify systems to make sure that database designs meet
4 institutional needs, reconfigures systems and determines if systems need to be updated. Appellant
5 contends that he independently installs and configures system hardware and software and oversees
6 the work performed by vendors. Appellant further contends that he analyzes, troubleshoots,
7 diagnoses and corrects malfunctions for three separate networks. In addition, Appellant contends
8 that he conducts trend analyses to identify potential problems and to proactively repair problems
9 before they occur.

10 Appellant asserts that the majority of his duties and responsibilities go beyond the scope of the
11 ET4 class and that his position more closely aligns with the ITS3 classification and believes that it
12 is a better fit based on work performed.

13
14 **Summary of Respondent's Arguments.** Respondent recognizes that technologies change over
15 time but maintains the scope of work assigned to the Appellant's position fits within the
16 Electronics Technician class series. Respondent argues that the IT work that the Appellant
17 performs is encompassed in the ET4 classification and that the IT work is a tool to facilitate
18 accomplishing his work in the ET field. Respondent argues that the focus and purpose of his work
19 is best defined by the Electronics Technician class series which includes supporting the testing,
20 maintenance, troubleshooting, and installation of electronic security and safety systems.
21 Respondent asserts that the majority of Appellant's duties as a whole are to provide support to a
22 variety of electronic and computer equipment and components that support or control the security
23 functions and systems within CBCC. Respondent asserts that the IT series does not address the
24 broader scope of the Appellant's position of providing support to CBCC's electronic and security
25 systems. Therefore, DOC asserts that his position is best described by the ET4 classification.

26 **Primary Issue.** Whether the director's determination that Appellant's position is properly allocated
27 to the Electronics Technician 4 classification should be affirmed.

1 **Relevant Classifications.** Electronics Technician 4, class code 592M; Information Technology
2 Specialist 3, class code 479K.

3
4 **Decision of the Board.** It is clear from the record and the arguments of the parties that the
5 Appellant is a conscientious, respected employee with the skill and knowledge to support and
6 maintain the security systems and devices within CBCC, which is critical to the safety and
7 operations of the facility.

8
9 The purpose of a position review is to determine which classification best describes the overall
10 duties and responsibilities of a position. A position review is neither a measurement of the volume of
11 work performed nor an evaluation of the expertise with which that work is performed. A position
12 review is a comparison of the duties and responsibilities of a particular position to the available
13 classification specifications. This review results in a determination of the class that best describes the
14 overall duties and responsibilities of the position. See *Liddle-Stamper v. Washington State*
15 *University*, PAB Case No. 3722-A2 (1994).

16
17 Most positions within the civil service system occasionally perform duties that appear in more
18 than one classification. However, when determining the appropriate classification for a specific
19 position, the duties and responsibilities of that position must be considered in their entirety and
20 the position must be allocated to the classification that provides the best fit overall for the majority
21 of the position's duties and responsibilities. See *Dudley v. Dept. of Labor and Industries*, PRB
22 Case No. R-ALLO-07-007 (2007).

23
24 When comparing the assignments of work and the level of responsibility to the available class
25 specifications, the class series concept (if one exists) followed by definition and distinguishing
26 characteristics are primary considerations. While examples of the typical work identified in class
27 specifications do not form the basis for an allocation, they lend support to the work envisioned
28 within the classification. In a broad context, tasks the Appellant performs may fit into the

1 Information Technology Specialist classes. As technology advances and many tasks that were
2 once performed by technicians become computerized, many functions and disciplines utilize
3 computers to perform tasks that were once performed using less computerized processes.
4 However, this does not change the purpose or nature of the work being performed. Rather, only
5 the tools being used and the processes necessary to employ those tools have changed. While some
6 aspects of the work the Appellant performs appear to be described by the IT classes, the primary
7 focus of the Appellant's position falls within the scope of the Electronics Technician series as
8 stated by the definition of the ET class. The ET class series specifically addresses installing,
9 maintaining, repairing and testing electrical and electronic systems used in security and alarm
10 surveillance which is the purpose and focus of his position. The Appellant's duties and
11 responsibilities of his position are envisioned by the definition of the Electronics Technician 4
12 classification.

13
14 Appellant's duties and responsibilities meet the intent of the distinguishing characteristics of the
15 Electronics Technician series. The Appellant's position has primary responsibility for electrical and
16 electronic systems used in security and alarm surveillance which includes the use of information
17 technology as a means to accomplish the work. These duties are encompassed in the ET4 class.

18
19 We agree with the director's designee that the overall scope of duties and responsibility assigned
20 to Appellant's position best fit the Electronics Technician 4 classification.

21
22 However, while classification revisions are outside of the Board's jurisdiction, we strongly
23 encourage DOC to work with State Human Resources staff in the Office of Financial
24 Management to update the IT and ET class series to more accurately reflect the technology
25 advances in the work performed.

26
27 In a hearing on exceptions, the appellant has the burden of proof. WAC 357-52-110. Appellant
28 has failed to meet his burden of proof.

ORDER

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that the appeal on exceptions by Peter Granum is denied and the director’s determination dated February 9, 2015, is affirmed.

DATED this ____ day of _____, 2015.

WASHINGTON PERSONNEL RESOURCES BOARD

NANCY HOLLAND YOUNG, Chair

SUSAN MILLER, Vice Chair

VICKY BOWDISH, Member