

**OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT  
WASHINGTON OVERSIGHT DIVISION  
WASHINGTON, DC 20415**

**CLASSIFICATION APPEAL DECISION  
Under Section 5112(b) of Title 5, United States Code**

Appellant: [Appellant]

Position: Support Services Supervisor  
GS-342-13  
Position Number S-77024

Organization: Department of State  
Bureau of Administration  
Office of Foreign Buildings Operations  
Resource Management Office  
Administrative Management Division  
Administrative Services Branch  
[installation city state]

Decision: Support Services Supervisor  
GS-342-12  
(Appeal denied, position downgraded)

**OPM decision number:** C- 0342-12-01

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Linda Kazinetz  
Classification Appeals Officer  
Washington Oversight Division  
(December 13, 1996)

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Date

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Copy of decision transmitted to:

## INTRODUCTION

On August 30, 1996, the Washington Oversight Division accepted a position classification appeal from [appellant], who is employed as a Support Services Supervisor, GS-342-13, in the Administrative Management Division of the Resource Management Office, Office of Foreign Buildings Operations (FBO), Bureau of Administration, at the Department of State in [city state]. [appellant] requested that her position be classified as Support Services Manager, GS-340-14. Her initial appeal to the Department of State was denied and her position certified as GS-342-13 on March 18, 1996.

This is the final administrative decision of the Government, subject to discretionary review only under the conditions and time limits specified in Part 511, subpart F, of title 5, U.S. Code of Federal Regulations.

## SOURCES OF INFORMATION

In deciding this appeal, we considered information obtained from the following sources:

1. The appellant's letter of appeal dated August 21, 1996, with attachments.
2. The information submitted by the servicing personnel office at the Department of State on September 23, 1996.
3. The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) desk audit of the appellant's position on October 8, 1996, and an interview with the immediate supervisor, on November 1, 1996.
4. Additional written materials and work samples furnished by the appellant during the OPM review.

## POSITION INFORMATION

The appellant's duties and responsibilities are described in position description number S-77024, which was classified as Support Services Supervisor, GS-342-13, by the Department of State on November 21, 1995.

The appellant is the Chief of the Administrative Services Branch and is responsible for planning, coordinating, and securing a variety of support services for FBO staff located either in the [installation] facility or at Foreign Service posts worldwide. The primary services provided, either personally or through supervision of the subordinate staff, include travel and transportation, facilities and equipment maintenance, property management, passport and visa services, mail operations, purchasing, space and telephone management, imprest fund, American Express card oversight, communications, permit parking, and coordination of Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests. The appellant is also personally responsible for developing and maintaining the budget for the Administrative Management Division (excluding salaries and benefits) and for participating in

occasional special projects related to program planning and workload analysis in response to projected staffing or fund reductions. These various services and functions are defined in the appellant's position description and were described in detail in the Department's appeal decision, and will not be reiterated here.

The appellant's position description is accurate and adequate for classification purposes.

### SERIES AND TITLE DETERMINATION

#### Series

The appellant's position is directly covered under the Support Services Administration Series, GS-342, which includes "all positions the primary duties of which involve supervising, directing, or planning and coordinating a variety of services functions that are principally work-supporting," with such functions including (but not limited to) "communications, procurement of administrative supplies and equipment, printing, reproduction, property management, space management, records management, mail service, facilities and equipment maintenance, and transportation." The appellant does not perform any other duties on a continuing basis and for a substantial portion of time such to remove her position from the realm of this series.

The position does not meet the requirements or the intent of the Program Management Series, GS-340. That series includes "all classes of positions the duties of which are to manage or direct, or to assist in a line capacity in managing or directing, one or more programs, including appropriate supporting service organizations, when the paramount qualification requirement of the positions is management and executive knowledge and ability and when the positions do not require competence in a specialized subject-matter or functional area." In short, the two key components of this definition are that the programs directed must represent "line" functions (i.e., the direct mission-oriented work which is assigned to the organization by statute), and that the work must involve the exercise of management and executive functions and responsibilities.

The appellant oversees the conduct of general office support activities rather than any "line" functions. Further, her position involves primarily the performance of supervisory duties and responsibilities in assigning, directing, and reviewing the work of subordinates and resolving operating problems that arise during the course of the work. It does not include the performance of management and executive functions involved in determining the overall direction of an organization, developing its controlling policies, adjusting funding and resources among program components in response to public needs or political imperatives, and committing resources to the resolution of identified problems. These types of management skills and authorities would typically be exercised within the context of a large, complex program of national significance and impact. In contrast, the appellant directs a small, self-contained organizational unit whose activities are established, well-defined, and governed by fairly comprehensive procedures and regulations. Thus, she has neither the opportunity nor the authority to effect the types of policy and program changes normally relegated to management and executive positions.

## Title

The authorized title for supervisory positions covered by this series is Support Services Supervisor.

## GRADE DETERMINATION

The GS-342 series standard instructs that positions be graded based on application of the criteria contained in that standard, or as determined by use of the Supervisory Grade-Evaluation Guide (since superseded by the General Schedule Supervisory Guide), whichever is higher.

### Support Services Administration Series Standard, GS-342

Grade-level criteria in this standard are expressed in terms of three factors: (1) Nature of Services; (2) Organizational Environment; and (3) Level of Responsibility. Positions are evaluated in terms of the criteria presented in the various level and element definitions within each of the three factors. Point values for the levels and elements assigned are then totalled and corresponding grade levels are derived through use of the conversion chart provided in the standard. For a position to warrant a particular point value, it must substantially meet the described criteria for that level or element.

#### *Factor 1 - Nature of Services*

This factor includes five levels designed to measure the nature and scope of the support services provided to the organization and the extent of program planning and advisory services required. Many support services programs contain support functions or operations that are typical of more than one level. To warrant assignment of a particular level, the position must be responsible for supervision of substantial work comparable in difficulty and responsibility to that represented by the illustrative examples provided in the standard. Substantial work in support services organizations is defined as the work which the organization was established to perform.

Many of the functions supervised by the appellant correspond or are equivalent in difficulty to the routine clerical functions described at Level A (mail operations, equipment maintenance), or the more substantive clerical operations described at Level B (travel and passport services, imprest fund, purchasing, American Express card oversight, telephone management, communications services.) However, the position includes some elements that are more consistent with the specialized support services functions described at Level C (space management, providing for office renovations, property management for nonexpendable equipment, and developing or testing automated information management systems related to the functions directed.)

The position does not meet Level D. For one, the position does not include all or most of the procedural and substantive functions typical of the preceding Level C (e.g., records management, forms management, photographic services, library services.) Further, the position does not involve the performance of analyses and studies designed to determine the level of services needed by the organization as expected at Level D. For example, the appellant does not conduct "extensive factfinding and analysis" to determine special categories of supply needs (such as automation of operations or advances in laboratory equipment); to identify space requirements based on anticipated

volume of operations and potential changes in functions; to set up a mail system (including automated mail handling equipment) to process very large volumes of mail (comparable to an organization that receives applications for benefits from a Statewide area); or to plan and design the graphic exhibits or printed material to be used in an organization's public information program.

Level C is credited. 24 points

### *Factor 2 - Organizational Environment*

This factor measures the impact of the organization on the level and difficulty of the position in terms of the following three elements:

#### Element 1 - Nature of Demands Placed on the Support Services Programs

This element measures the complexities involved in providing services to the organization and the stability of the organization, and is expressed in terms of three described levels (Levels A,C, and E).

The position exceeds Level A, which describes a relatively simple and stable organization consisting of a small number of functional subdivisions, requiring few adaptations in the services provided and only occasional expansions or contractions of existing services. It is comparable in difficulty to Level C, where the organization serviced is more complex, frequently involving satellites or different organizational levels, and where considerable adaptation and variation are necessary in the manner in which support services are provided. At this level, organizational and functional changes occur at frequent intervals and require substantial changes in both the nature and scope of the services provided (e.g., the introduction of entirely new services.) By comparison, about half of the FBO work force is located in the appellant's building, the other half is distributed at Foreign Service posts worldwide. The appellant must adapt procedures and level of support to accommodate the diverse nature of the serviced population (i.e., approximately equally divided among Civil Service, Foreign Service, and personal service contractor personnel.) Although the types of support services provided by her Branch do not change substantially over time, FBO has undergone significant growth in recent years, requiring that she make corresponding adjustments in the services provided. Thus, in this one aspect her position falls between Levels A and C, with Level C being otherwise substantially met.

The position does not meet Level E, where the serviced organization comprises most or all of the functions performed by an agency, department, or bureau, is nationwide in scope, and where the support services chief is concerned primarily with policy development and program direction rather than management of operating-level support services activities. By contrast, FBO is a comparatively small component of the Department of State. While the appellant may occasionally provide input to policy development related to the functions directed, actual authority for such resides in a separate organizational unit within FBO.

Level C is credited. 8 points

### Element 2 - Scope of the Support Services Program

This element measures the scope of the support services program in terms of the total number of employees in the serviced organization.

The position falls within the Level C range (726-1550 employees.)

Level C is credited. 6 points

### Element 3 - Program Coordinating Responsibilities

This element provides additional credit for those positions responsible for coordinating and reviewing support services programs and functions within subordinate or satellite organizations. This does not apply to the appellant's position since FBO support services are centralized and there are no subordinate organizational levels.

#### *Factor 3 - Level of Responsibility*

This factor measures the degree of supervisory control under which the support services chief operates, and the extent of delegated authority vested in the position, in terms of three levels.

The position meets Level C in regard to the independence with which the appellant operates. Her supervisor indicated that she is fully relied upon to carry out the assigned functions, providing only informal progress reports on major projects or sensitive issues. She is responsible for adapting procedures within the overall intent of regulatory guidelines to apply to the large personal service contractor work force, and for participating with the FBO's policy unit in developing new program guidelines as needed. Her contacts with managers are not as difficult as envisioned at this level, in that she is not authorized to negotiate major changes in the level of support services to be provided or to make binding commitments for the program. However, she does coordinate the activities of subordinate supervisors and develop internal plans for career development, performance appraisal, and equal employment opportunity. Thus, Level C is substantially met.

The position does not meet Level D, where support services chiefs are responsible for planning, establishing, and coordinating their programs within the broad administrative framework of an agency.

Level C is credited. 32 points

### Grade Level Determination

## Summary of Factors

<u>Factor</u>	<u>Level</u>	<u>Points</u>
1. Nature of Services	C	24
2. Organizational Environment		
Element 1	C	8
Element 2	C	6
Element 3	-	-
3. Level of Responsibility	C	<u>32</u>
TOTAL POINTS		70

The total of 70 points for the three factors falls within the gap between GS-10 and GS-11 on the grade conversion chart provided in the standard.

## General Schedule Supervisory Guide (GSSG)

This guide uses a factor-point evaluation method that assesses six factors common to all supervisory positions. To grade a position, each factor is evaluated by comparing the position to the factor level definitions for that factor and crediting the points designated for the highest factor level which is met in accordance with the instructions specific to the factor being evaluated. The total points accumulated under all factors are then converted to a grade by using the point-to-grade conversion table in the guide.

### *Factor 1, Program Scope and Effect*

This factor assesses the general complexity, breadth, and impact of the program areas and work directed, including the organizational and geographic coverage. It also assesses the impact of the work both within and outside the immediate organization. To credit a particular factor level, the criteria for both scope and effect must be met.

#### a. Scope

This element addresses the general complexity and breadth of: (1) the program (or program segment) directed; and (2) the work directed, the products produced, or the services delivered. The geographic and organizational coverage of the program (or program segment) within the agency structure is considered under Scope.

At Level 1-2, the program segment or work directed is administrative, technical, complex clerical, or comparable in nature. The services provided have limited geographic coverage and support most of the activities comprising a typical agency field office, an area office, a small to medium military installation, or comparable activities within agency program segments.

At Level 1-3, the supervisor directs a program segment that performs technical, administrative, protective, investigative, or professional work. The program segment and work directed typically

have coverage which encompasses a major metropolitan area, a State, or a small region of several States; or, when most of an area's taxpayers or businesses are involved, coverage comparable to a small city. Providing complex administrative, technical, or professional services directly affecting a large or complex multimission military installation is also creditable at this level.

A large military installation is defined in the GSSG as a military base with one or a few missions or a group of activities with a total serviced or supported employee-equivalent population exceeding 4,000 personnel, and with a variety of serviced technical functions. These personnel are directly affected by the position under evaluation. Federal civilian and military employees, estimated contractor personnel, volunteers, and similar personnel may be used to derive the population total.

A complex, multimission installation includes four or more of the following: a garrison; a medical center or large hospital and medical laboratory complex; multimillion dollar (annual) construction, civil works, or environmental cleanup projects; a test and evaluation center or research laboratory of moderate size; an equipment or product development center; a service school; a major command higher than that in which the servicing position is located or comparable tenant activity of moderate size; a supply or maintenance depot; or equivalent activities.

The appellant directs administrative and complex clerical activities comparable to Level 1-2 in scope. The serviced population totals only about 1,000 positions, and of these, full service is provided to only the 500 or so duty-stationed in the [installation] facility. For the remaining employees stationed at Foreign Service posts, the appellant provides only travel and transportation services (e.g., change of post moves, home leave, visitation travel), passport and visa assistance, limited purchasing support, and property oversight. This is more comparable in size to the types of organizations cited at Level 1-2 than to those at Level 1-3. The population directly serviced by the appellant's position (i.e., all FBO employees) does not meet the definitions for a large or complex multimission military installation. It does not approach those examples either in terms of their magnitude (i.e., over 4,000 employees) or their complexity (i.e., a number of major organizational components with disparate missions and functions.) The FBO is a comparatively small organization with only one basic mission (the construction, maintenance, and rental of Foreign Service facilities abroad.)

#### b. Effect

This element addresses the impact of the work, the products, and/or the programs described under "Scope" on the mission and programs of the customer(s), the activity, other activities in or outside of the Federal Government, the agency, other agencies, the general public, or other entities.

At Level 1-2, the services or products support and significantly affect installation-level, area office-level, or field office operations and objectives, or comparable program segments; or provide services to a moderate, local, or limited population of clients or users comparable to a major portion of a small city or rural county. An example of this kind of effect would be directing budget, staffing, supply, protective, library, payroll, or similar services which support a small Army, Navy, or Air Force base with no extensive research, development, testing, or comparable missions, a typical national park, a hospital, or a nondefense agency field office of moderate size and limited complexity.



At Level 1-3, activities, functions, or services accomplished directly and significantly impact a wide range of agency activities, the work of other agencies, the operations of outside interests, or the general public. At the field activity level (involving large, complex, multimission organizations and/or very large serviced populations), the work directly involves or substantially impacts the provision of essential support operations to numerous, varied, and complex technical, professional, and administrative functions. An example of this kind of effect could include the level of support provided by the chief personnel or budget officer for a bureau or major military command headquarters, a large or complex multimission military installation, or an organization of similar magnitude.

An agency is defined in the GSSG as an Executive or military department which has primary authority and responsibility for the administration of substantive national programs enacted by Congress or a comparable independent agency, for example, the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, Agriculture, the General Services Administration, and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

The effect of the appellant's position meets but does not exceed Level 1-2. Hers is an administrative position whose direct effect is internal to the organization. In this sense, the services provided are comparable to the installation-level or area office-level operations cited at Level 1-2. The services provided do not directly and significantly impact a wide range of agency activities (FBO being a subdivision of the Department of State, which represents the agency level), the work of other agencies, the operations of outside interests, or the general public as expected at Level 1-3. In that Level 1-3 is the highest level at which administrative work may be credited, it represents the broadest and most difficult work situations of that nature. For example, at the field activity level, Level 1-3 would be represented by the director of an entire personnel management program, budget administration program, or supply operation for a bureau, major military command headquarters, or large or complex multimission military installation. In contrast, the appellant's work products do not directly support or substantially impact the provision of essential support operations to numerous, varied, and complex technical, professional, and administrative functions of the scope and complexity that would typically exist at a large, complex, multimission organization as defined under Scope above.

The appellant noted that other supervisory positions within FBO have been credited with Level 1-3 under this factor. However, it is assumed that many of these other positions are directly responsible for accomplishment of the mission-oriented work of the organization. By way of contrast, the appellant supervises certain limited administrative and general services functions that support the externally-oriented, line program operations that FBO was established to carry out. Thus, those other positions may be credited with a scope and effect that extends beyond the confines of the FBO organization itself to the broader Department of State community.

Since both Scope and Effect are evaluated at Level 1-2, Factor 1 is correctly evaluated at that level.

Level 1-2 is credited. 350 points

### *Factor 2 - Organizational Setting*

This factor considers the organizational situation of the supervisory position in relation to higher levels of management.

The appellant reports to the Chief of the Administrative Management Division, who in turn reports to an SES position. Thus, the appellant's position meets Level 2-2, in that it is accountable to a position that is one reporting level below the first SES-level position in the direct supervisory chain.

The appellant argues that since the Division Chief's position description designates her as Deputy Director of the Resource Management Office (RMO), that the appellant's position should be credited as reporting directly to the Director in accordance with instructions provided in the GSSG.

A deputy position is defined in the GSSG as a position that serves as an alter ego to a manager of high rank or level and either fully shares with the manager the direction of all phases of the organization's program and work, or is assigned continuing responsibility for managing a major part of the manager's program when the total authority and responsibility for the organization is equally divided between the manager and the deputy. A deputy's opinion or direction is treated as if given by the chief.

The Chief of the Administrative Management Division reported that for the past two years (during the tenure of the current Director, RMO), she has not served as deputy in any capacity. Even before that time, she served as "deputy" only in the absence of the Director. She did not otherwise occupy an ongoing position in the supervisory line such that she would have fully shared in directing all phases of the organization's work, where her direction would have been accepted as if given by the chief. Further, given that the Administrative Management Division is one of four divisions under the Resource Management Office, responsibility for managing the overall Resource Management Office was not equally divided between her and the Director. Thus, her position does not meet the definition of "deputy" as provided in the GSSG and cannot be regarded as such in evaluating the appellant's position.

Level 2-2 is credited. 250 points

### *Factor 3 - Supervisory and Managerial Authority Exercised*

This factor covers the delegated supervisory and managerial authorities that are exercised on a recurring basis. To be credited with a level under this factor, a position must meet the authorities and responsibilities to the extent described for the specific level.

The appellant's supervisory duties match Level 3-3b. As required for this level, the appellant exercises all of the delegated supervisory authorities and responsibilities described for the lower Level 3-2c, which includes the full range of first-level supervisory duties such as planning, assigning, and evaluating work, interviewing candidates for positions, hearing and resolving employee complaints, effecting minor disciplinary measures, and providing for training and development. In addition, the appellant exercises 8 of the 15 authorities and responsibilities listed for Level 3-3b. Specifically, the

appellant's supervisory duties involve the following authorities and responsibilities that correspond to Level 3-3b: (1) using subordinate supervisors and team leaders to direct and coordinate work of the Branch; (3) assuring reasonable equity (among subordinate units) of performance standards and rating techniques developed by subordinate supervisors and team leaders; (5) making decisions on work problems presented by subordinate supervisors and team leaders; (6) evaluating subordinate supervisors and leaders and serving as the reviewing official on evaluations of nonsupervisory employees rated by subordinate supervisors; (7) making selections for subordinate nonsupervisory positions; (8) making selections for subordinate supervisory and team leader positions; (12) determining whether contractor performed work meets standards of adequacy necessary for authorization of payment; and (14) recommending awards for nonsupervisory personnel and changes in position classification, subject to approval by higher levels.

The appellant's position does not meet the requirements described in Level 3-4a. Those criteria include responsibility for approving multiyear and longer-range work plans developed by subordinate supervisors or managers and managing major changes to the structure and content of the program segments directed, managing the development of policy changes in response to changes in appropriation levels or other legislated changes, and exercising discretionary authority to approve the allocation and distribution of funds in the organization's budget. The appellant does not have this degree of managerial authority. The subordinate supervisors and team leaders do not develop and submit for approval the kind of long-range work plans envisioned at Level 3-4, requiring overall integration by the appellant. Further, given that the organizational structure and content of the appellant's functions are basically stable, and the work processes themselves largely procedural and established, there is no requirement for the appellant to manage major policy, program, and structural changes as would be needed in a large organization with continually evolving functions. Within the Branch supervised by the appellant, funds are expended primarily on salary and related expenses for the existing staff and on supplies and equipment maintenance for the broader FBO organization. However, the Division Chief is responsible for dealing directly with her counterpart in the FBO budget office to procure funds for these various categories of expenses, based on prior year figures and projected needs. The appellant thus does not have "discretionary authority" to decide for what purposes the Branch's overall funds are to be used since this is defined at a higher organizational level.

Likewise, the appellant's supervisory authorities fail to meet Level 3-4b. She does not have final authority for the full range of personnel actions and organization design proposals recommended by subordinate supervisors. Although her opinion may be given considerable weight in such matters as promotions, awards, and major disciplinary actions, the Division Chief still exercises final approval authority. Further, the relatively small size of the organization she supervises does not afford her much latitude in terms of organizational design. As the subordinate supervisors each supervise only a few employees, they are precluded from recommending any substantial structural changes beyond relatively minor reassignments of duties.

Level 3-3 is credited. 775 points

#### *Factor 4 - Personal Contacts*

This is a two-part factor which assesses the nature and the purpose of personal contacts related to supervisory and managerial responsibilities. The same contacts that serve as the basis for the level credited under Subfactor 4A must be used to determine the correct level under Subfactor 4B.

##### Subfactor 4A - Nature of Contacts

This subfactor covers the organizational relationships, authority or influence level, setting, and difficulty of preparation associated with making personal contacts involved in supervisory and managerial work. To be credited, the level of contacts must contribute to the successful performance of the work, be a recurring requirement, have a demonstrable impact on the difficulty and responsibility of the position, and require direct contact.

At Level 4A-2, there are frequent contacts with higher-ranking managers, supervisors, and staff of program, administrative, and other work units throughout the field activity, installation, command (below major command level) or major organization level of the agency. These contacts may be informal, occur in conferences and meetings or over the telephone, and sometimes require special preparation.

At Level 4A-3, there are frequent contacts with high-ranking managers, supervisors, and technical staff at bureau and major organization levels of the agency, with agency headquarters administrative support staff, or with comparable personnel in other Federal agencies. These contacts include those which take place in meetings and conferences and unplanned contacts for which the employee is designated as the contact point by higher management. They often require extensive preparation of briefing materials or up-to-date technical familiarity with complex subject matter.

A major organization is defined in the GSSG as an organizational level next below bureau level, the head of which reports directly to the bureau director. At agency headquarters, major organizations include the offices of the heads of major staff functions at the agency level (e.g., agency personnel, budget, or administrative services directorates), and major line organizations, the heads of which report directly to an Assistant Secretary or other office next below the Secretary of the agency.

A bureau is defined in the GSSG as an organizational unit next below the agency level, headed by an appointed executive who reports to the agency director.

The appellant's personal contacts, which are primarily with managers and staff throughout FBO, match Level 4A-2. The FBO is a component of the Bureau of Administration, which is itself an additional level below agency level (i.e., the Bureau head does not report directly to the agency director.) It is, however, headed by a Deputy Assistant Secretary who reports directly to an Assistant Secretary. Thus, FBO may be regarded as meeting the definition for "major organization" as defined above. The appellant does not have frequent contacts with high-ranking managers and technical staff at the bureau level, or with comparable personnel in other Federal agencies, as expected at Level 4A-3. Her contacts at other bureaus within the Department (e.g., Financial Management and Planning or Consular Affairs) are primarily with technical or operating-level employees. Her most frequent

contacts outside the Department are with technical counterparts, rather than high-level program officials, at the General Services Administration. Her contacts at the Defense Intelligence Agency are with those few staff who are co-located at the Arlington FBO facility and thus use their communications services. Other contacts external to the Department (e.g., the Environmental Protection Agency and the Central Intelligence Agency) are infrequent, with the appellant generally playing a subordinate role. Further, although the appellant's contacts with managers and supervisors and any of these other individuals may sometimes require the preparation of background materials to discuss operating problems related to the functions supervised, they would seldom require the kind of extensive preparation of briefing materials for formal presentations expected at Level 4A-3.

Level 4A-2 is credited. 50 points

#### Subfactor 4B - Purpose of Contacts

This subfactor covers the purpose of the personal contacts credited in Subfactor 4A, including the advisory, representational, negotiating, and commitment-making responsibilities related to supervision and management.

The purpose of the appellant's contacts matches Level 4B-2. Consistent with this level, the appellant's contacts with the individuals identified under Subfactor 4A are for the purposes of planning and coordinating the provision of support services (e.g., coordinating the actions necessary to accomplish office moves and renovations) and resolving differences between her subordinates and clients related to procedural and regulatory requirements.

The purposes of the appellant's contacts do not meet Level 4B-3. At that level, the purpose of the contacts is to justify, defend, or negotiate in representing the program or unit, in obtaining or committing resources, and in gaining compliance with established policies, regulations, or contracts. Level 4B-3 requires the necessary level of authority to be able to commit resources and gain compliance with established policies of the organization. In order to represent the organization in program defense or negotiations, a supervisor must necessarily have the requisite control over resources and the authority necessary to gain support and compliance on policy matters. The appellant does not have this level of authority. Although she is required to justify her staffing requirements, she does not engage in contacts to obtain financial resources for her unit. Since the support functions she directs are established, provided equally to all serviced units, and are reactive to the needs of the organization, she is neither called upon, nor would she have the authority, to negotiate the commitment of resources for particular projects. For example, if another agency were to request support services from FBO (as is provided on a limited basis to certain staff co-located at the Arlington FBO facility), she would not have the authority to commit the organization to such an arrangement or cooperative agreement. Further, in those cases where a higher-level manager challenges the interpretation or application of established policies or regulations related to the support services provided, these matters are generally elevated to the appellant's first-level (or higher) supervisor, who plays a major role in defending the actions taken and negotiating to gain compliance.

Level 4B-2 is credited. 75 points

### *Factor 5 - Difficulty of Typical Work Directed*

This factor measures the difficulty and complexity of the basic work most typical of the organization directed, as well as other line, staff, or contracted work for which the supervisor has technical or oversight responsibility, either directly or through subordinate supervisors, team leaders, or others.

Under the GSSG, the base level of work supervised by second level supervisors may be determined in two different ways. First, the method used for first level supervisors can be used to determine the correct base level of work for second (and higher) level supervisors as well. Using this method, the base level of the typical work directed is the highest grade which: (1) best characterizes the nature of the basic (mission-oriented) nonsupervisory work performed or overseen by the organization directed, and (2) constitutes 25 percent or more of the workload or duty time of the organization. Excluded from consideration in determining the base level are supervisory positions whose grades are based on the supervisory duties performed, and lower-level positions that primarily support the basic work of the unit.

In cases where a heavy supervisory or managerial workload related to work above the base level is present, an alternative method may be used to determine the base level for second (and higher) level supervisors. In such cases, the highest grade of nonsupervisory work directed that requires at least 50 percent of the duty time of the supervisory position may be used as the base level, provided that it results in sound grade level alignment with other supervisory positions in the organization and agency.

There are a total of nineteen positions in the Administrative Services Branch, representing a mix of Civil Service and Foreign Service employees and personal service contractors (PSC's). Of these, excluded from consideration under the base level are two supervisory positions (i.e., the General Services Officer position, which is classified at FS-3/GS-12 equivalent, and the contract mail room supervisor), plus three lower-graded secretarial/clerical support positions. Of the fourteen remaining staff members, six are Civil Service employees classified at the GS-9 level; an additional PSC employee performs essentially the same types of functions. These GS-9 employees are all on the same general position description (classified as Support Services Specialist, GS-342-9) encompassing a variety of functions, although they each have a primary area of responsibility, such as travel services, property management, or building/equipment maintenance. Many of these functional activities represent one-grade interval work that would be classifiable at no higher than the GS-7 level. For purposes of this evaluation, however, it is assumed that the employees each perform sufficient GS-9 level work to support that grade level. Also on the staff are three PSC's who work as "communications specialists" in the FBO Communications Center. Their work has been evaluated as GS-9 equivalent by the Department; substantiation of this grade is not possible due to security restrictions. There are two employees whose positions are classified at higher grade levels. These are a GS-12 Management Analyst (who functions as a team leader but whose grade was assigned by the Department based on nonsupervisory work performed) and a GS-11 Management Analyst. The remaining employees are two contract mail clerks whose work is no higher than GS-5 equivalent.

Thus, of the fourteen creditable positions, ten are either classified at or performing work equivalent to the GS-9 level; two are classified at the GS-11 and GS-12 levels; and two are performing no

higher than GS-5 level work. As such, if the ten GS-9 positions are assumed to be performing GS-9 level work for, at a minimum, 25 percent of their time, and if the GS-11 and GS-12 Management Analysts are performing nonsupervisory work at those grade levels for a substantial portion of their time, then GS-9 represents the base level of work supervised in that at least 25 percent of the organization's workload is at or above that level.

There is no justification for assigning a base level higher than GS-9. Of the two creditable (i.e., nonsupervisory) positions that are higher than GS-9, one (the GS-12 Management Analyst) has significant team leader responsibilities and spends only a portion of her time on nonsupervisory work. Thus, at most only one position (the GS-11 Management Analyst) and a portion of one other (the GS-12 Management Analyst) may be performing work above the base level, which does not approach 25 percent of the unit's workload.

Similarly, applying the alternative method for determining base level for second level supervisors does not yield a grade higher than GS-9. It is not conceivable that the appellant would consistently spend at least 50 percent of her time directing the non-lead work of the GS-12 Management Analyst (i.e., that work not related to travel services) and the GS-11 Management Analyst (over which position she is second level supervisor exercising limited direct supervision).

According to the chart provided in the GSSG, if the highest level of base work is GS-9 or 10, the factor level to be credited is Level 5-5.

Level 5-5 is credited. 650 points

#### *Factor 6 - Other Conditions*

This factor measures the extent to which various conditions contribute to the difficulty and complexity of carrying out supervisory duties, authorities, and responsibilities.

Level 6-3b covers positions that direct subordinate supervisors over positions in grades GS-7 or 8 which requires consolidation or coordination similar to that described at Level 6-2a within or among subordinate units. Such coordination is required to ensure consistency of product, service, interpretation, or advice, and conformance to formal standards or agency policy.

Level 6-4b covers positions that direct subordinate supervisors and/or contractors who each direct substantial workloads comparable to the GS-9 or 10 level. Such base work requires coordination similar to that described at Level 6-3a for first line supervisors. This coordination of analytical, interpretive, or judgmental work places significant demands on the supervisor to resolve conflicts and maintain compatibility of interpretation, judgment, and policy application, because the basic facts, information, and circumstances often vary substantially; guidelines are incomplete; or differences in judgments, interpretations, or decisions can have consequences or impact the work of other subordinates.

Thus, the distinction between these two levels for second line supervisors is in the grade level of the basic work of the organization. While Level 6-3b requires only that the work be represented by GS-7 or 8 positions in the subordinate work force, Level 6-4b imposes the additional requirement that the subordinate supervisors each direct substantial workloads at GS-9. In this respect, the appellant's position meets and partially exceeds Level 6-3b, in that her subordinate supervisors direct employees whose positions are classified at GS-9. However, her position does not meet Level 6-4b in that it is clear that GS-9 does not represent a substantial portion of the workloads of the subordinate units.

Within the Administrative Services Branch, there are four separate functional units, three of which (mail operations, passport and travel, and general services) are headed by a subordinate supervisor or team leader. When the actual activities carried out in these units are considered, GS-7 emerges as best representing the grade value of these largely one-grade interval functions. Specifically, the most complex mail operations, involving the routing of all classes of mail throughout a large organization, do not exceed GS-5 in the GS-305 Mail and File Series Standard. The most difficult travel and transportation services do not exceed GS-7 in the GS-2102 Transportation Clerk and Assistant Series Standard. These would include arranging for domestic and foreign relocations; the shipment of oversized, fragile, hazardous, and security risk items; reviewing reimbursement claims resulting from such moves; and interpreting extensive and diverse regulations governing official, unofficial, military, civilian, foreign, domestic, and mobility deployment travel, or travel sponsored by non-Federal monies, foreign travel of employees under special appointments, and unilateral and bilateral travel agreements with foreign countries. Likewise, many of the activities carried out within the general services area, such as processing telephone change orders and requests for equipment and building maintenance, imprest fund, control of permit parking, camera checkouts, and subscriptions, and management of the supply room for expendable items, are low-graded clerical functions. There may be some higher-graded purchasing of specialized technical items, such as communications equipment or heating/cooling components, but the majority of the commodities purchased are standard office supplies, furniture, and equipment, and at least half of the purchasing is accomplished through such standardized methods as the use of blanket purchase agreements, GSA schedules, commercial credit cards, and the imprest fund. Thus, although for the purposes of this evaluation it has been assumed that the GS-9 base level is minimally supported, it is also evident that GS-9 level work does not constitute a substantial portion of the Branch's workload. As such, Level 6-3 is the highest level under this factor that is fully met by the appellant's position.

### Special Situations

The GSSG instructs that if the level selected under this factor is either 6-1, 6-2, or 6-3, a single level may be added if 3 or more of the following special situations apply:

1. Variety of Work - Applicable.
2. Shift Operations - Not applicable. Although the Communications Center is manned from 6:00 AM-6:00 PM by spreading out the tours of duty of the three Communications Specialists, this is regarded as an extension of regular duty hours rather than "two fully manned shifts" as described in the GSSG.



3. Fluctuating Work Force or Constantly Changing Deadlines - Not applicable. The size of the appellant's subordinate staff is stable and not subject to seasonal variations. Although work assignments change continually in response to service requests from clients, this is the inherent nature of operating-level administrative work and is not unexpected. The appellant's subordinates are cross-trained in the various functional areas and there is a system of back-up staff assignments in place to accommodate workload imbalances.

4. Physical Dispersion - Not applicable. The appellant's entire staff is duty-stationed at the Arlington facility. Although the Communications Center is located in a different part of the building, those three employees do not represent a "substantial portion of the workload" and there is no indication that this adds appreciably to the difficulty of supervision.

5. Special Staffing Situations - Not applicable. There is no regular and substantial involvement in special employment programs (e.g., handicapped or student employment or the employment of low-skilled workers) requiring special training, counseling, or motivational activities.

6. Impact of Specialized Programs - Not applicable. There are only two employees performing work above the GS-9 base level, one of whom is a team leader performing nonsupervisory work for only a portion of her time, thus not qualifying as a "significant technical or administrative workload."

7. Changing Technology - Not applicable. The appellant's work operations are not significantly and constantly impacted by new technology, such that extensive training of the subordinate staff would be required.

8. Special Hazard and Safety Conditions - Not applicable. There is no indication of such conditions in the appellant's work place.

Because only one special situation is applicable to the appellant's position, no additional credit can be allowed under this factor.

Level 6-3 is credited. 975 points

Summary of Factors

	<u>Factor</u>	<u>Level</u>	<u>Points</u>
1.	Program Scope and Effect	1-2	350
2.	Organizational Setting	2-2	250
3.	Supervisory and Managerial Authority Exercised	3-3	775
4.	Personal Contacts		
	4A. Nature of Contacts	4A-2	50
	4B. Purpose of Contacts	4B-2	75
5.	Difficulty of Technical Work Directed	5-5	650
6.	Other Conditions	6-3	<u>975</u>
	TOTAL POINTS		3125

The total of 3125 points falls within the GS-12 range (2755-3150 points) on the point-to-grade conversion chart provided in the GSSG.

DECISION

The appealed position is properly classified as Support Services Supervisor, GS-342-12.

This decision constitutes a classification certificate issued under the authority of section 5112(b) of title 5, United States Code. This decision is mandatory and binding on all administrative, certifying, payroll, disbursing, and accounting officials of the Government. In accordance with section 511.702 of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations, this decision must be implemented no earlier than the date of the decision and not later than the beginning of the sixth pay period following the date of the decision.