U.S. Department of Transportation
United States Coast Guard

Commandant (G-PC-4)
United States Coast Guard

MAILING ADDRESS:
Washington, DC 20593-0001
Phone: (202) 267-1705

13 NOV 1990

COMDTNOTE 12510

COMMANDANT NOTICE 12510 CANCELLED: 15 MAY 1990

Subj: Ch-1 to COMDTINST M12510.6B, Position Classification Manual

1. PURPOSE. This Notice provides changes to COMDTINST M12510.6B. Position Classification Manual.

2. SUMMARY OF CHANGES. Significant changes are marked by a vertical line in the left margin. Editorial changes are not marked. The following is a summary of the significant changes. The changes provided below formally establish a role for the servicing civilian personnel office as part of the evaluative process in determining whether the Coast Guard will retain or contract out functions under the authority of Office of Management and Budget Circular A-76. Specific analytical duties are provided as part of this role. In addition, procedures are established to ensure that modifications (e.g., position upgrading, position conversion) of Most Efficient Organizations (MEO's) established as a result of these studies are fully coordinated with all necessary authorities. A policy statement is also provided which identifies the use of the Statement of Difference as appropriate where a classification allocation is made for the higher graded full performance level position. Further clarification is provided as to the necessity for an evaluation statement when a position is mixed as to the grade level of different assignments.

DISTRIBUTION—SDL No. 128

	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	k	l	m	n	o	p	q	r	s	t	u	v	w	x	y	z
A																										
B		8	20*		12	10	2	2	3	2	5	2	2	4	2			2	2	1	1	1	2	1		
C	2	*		2	1						3	1	3													
D											1												1			
E											1	1			1											
F																										
G																										
H																										

NON-STANDARD DISTRIBUTION: B:c: MLCPAC, MLCLANT (6 extra); C:b: Port Angeles and Sitka only (1)

3. ACTION. Remove and insert the following pages:

Remove	Insert
i and ii	i through iii, Ch-1
1-3 and 1-4	1-3 and 1-4, Ch-1
2-3 and 2-4	2-3 and 2-4, Ch-1
2-7 and 2-8	2-7 and 2-8, Ch-1

G. F. WOOLEVER
Acting Chief, Office of
Personnel and Training

Encl: (1) Ch-1 to COMDTINST M12510.6B

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter 1 - General Provisions

A. Coast Guard Policy.....1-1
1. Civilian Pay Systems.....1-1
2. Formats.....1-1
3. Equal Opportunity.....1-1
4. Position Descriptions.....1-1

B. Coverage.....1-1
1. General Schedule and Federal Wage System Exceptions.1-1
2. Pay Setting Exceptions.....1-1

C. Authorities.....1-1
1. Office of Personnel Management.....1-1
2. Coast Guard.....1-2
3. Prevailing Rate Advisory Committee.....1-2

D. Responsibilities.....1-2
1. Personnel Officers and Personnel Specialists.....1-3
2. Supervisors.....1-3
3. Employees.....1-4

E. Office of Management and Budget Circular A-76
Organizational Studies.....1-4
1. Classification Impact.....1-4
2. Compensation.....1-4
3. Position Management.....1-4
4. Organizational Analysis.....1-4

F. Changes to Most Efficient Organizations (MEOs).....1-4

Chapter 2 - Position Classification

A. General.....2-1
1. Requirement.....2-1
2. Preparation.....2-1
3. Approval.....2-1

B. Use of the Position Description.....2-1
1. By the Manager.....2-1
2. By the Classifier.....2-1

C. Position Description Content.....2-2
1. General.....2-2
2. Supervisory Positions.....2-2
3. Format.....2-2
4. Research Positions.....2-3
5. Federal Wage System (FWS).....2-3
6. Statements of Difference.....2-3

D. The General Schedule Classification System.....2-3
1. Objectives.....2-3
2. Other Uses.....2-3
3. The System.....2-4

E. Federal Wage System Jobs.....2-4
1. General.....2-4
2. Legal Authorities.....2-4
3. Exclusions.....2-5

F. Job Grading.....2-5
1. Elements of the System.....2-5
2. Job Grading Standards.....2-5
3. Grade Structure.....2-6
4. Evaluation.....2-6
5. Standards Development.....2-6

G. Classification Process.....2-7
1. Cover Sheet.....2-7
2. Request for Personnel Action.....2-7
3. Civilian Personnel Office Review.....2-7
4. Determination of the Civilian Personnel Office.....2-8
5. Final Decision.....2-8
6. Appeals.....2-8

H. Evaluation Statements.....2-8
1. General (GS) Evaluations.....2-8
2. Federal Wage System (FWS) Evaluations.....2-10

I. Maintenance Reviews.....2-12
1. Audit Requirement.....2-12
2. Structure for Review.....2-12
3. Position Description Review Report.....2-12
4. Correction of Inaccurate Position Descriptions.....2-12
5. Maintenance of Current Position Descriptions.....2-12

Chapter 3 - Classification Appeals

A. Coverage/Exclusions.....3-1

B. Employee Options.....3-1

C. Appealable/Nonappealable Items.....3-1

D. General Schedule Employee Requirements.....3-1

E. Federal Wage System Employee Requirements.....3-2

F. Employee Representative.....3-2

G. Contents of an Appeal.....3-2

H. Appeal Processing.....3-3

I. Cancellation of Appeals.....3-4

J. Effect of Appeal Decision.....3-4

K. Mandatory General Schedule Appeal Referrals.....3-4

1.D.1. Personnel officers and personnel specialists to whom classification authority has been delegated are responsible for:

a. Evaluating positions and wage jobs in terms of the proper application of standards and placing an authorized title, series, and grade on all positions within the coverage of this manual;

b. Providing advice to supervisors in the development of position and job descriptions and assisting where necessary. (An increasingly important area of involvement is during the development of position descriptions for the Most Efficient Organization (MEO) during A-76 activities.);

c. Explaining the interpretation of position classification and job grading standards and criteria in the classification process as requested by employees or supervisors;

d. Specifying the format to be used in writing position and job descriptions;

e. Conducting reviews with supervisors to ensure current and accurate position descriptions and classifications;

f. Advising managers and supervisors on position management concepts such as exercising grade control, restructuring of jobs, and maximum use of skills; and

g. Paying and administering authorized wage rates for wage grade employees.

2. Supervisors are responsible for:

a. Developing organizations, planning and assigning work to individual positions within personnel and funding limitations;

b. Approving position descriptions and certifying their accuracy;

c. Reviewing official position descriptions with employees on an ongoing basis to assess their accuracy and currency;

d. Assuring that new position descriptions are submitted in a timely fashion whenever functions or assignments change; and

e. Assuring that employees fully understand the duties, responsibilities, and other factors in the description of their jobs.

1.D.2. f. Ensuring the proper determination of position sensitivity of all positions established under their jurisdiction. The designation process involves four steps and is documented on DOT Form 1630.2.

3. Employees are responsible for:

a. Ensuring they understand the intent and content of their assigned duties and responsibilities; and

b. Participating in a periodic review with the supervisor to verify the accuracy of their position description.

E. Office of Management and Budget Circular A-76 Organizational Studies. Under the provisions of Circular A-76 and as directed by the Commandant (G-CPE) organizations review specific functions to determine the most economical structure for their performance by the Coast Guard. Identified as the Most Efficient Organization (MEO), these organizational proposals are then compared to private contractor proposals to determine whether the function will be performed by the Coast Guard or contracted out. The Commanding Officer of the unit under (A-76) review shall contact the servicing civilian personnel office at the beginning of the development of the Management Study (MEO documentation) to ensure that this office provides the following minimum information:

1. Classification Impact. This includes a determination of the pay plan, title, series and grade of all positions in the MEO as well as the support structure proposed in the event the function is contracted out.

2. Compensation. This includes identification of the proper hourly rates, per annum salaries, premium pay and allowances and differentials to be received by affected positions.

3. Position Management. As required by regulation and individual Position Classification Standards, a determination must be provided as to any position management problems or issues requiring further analysis.

4. Organizational Analysis. Additional information may be provided regarding treatment in other organizations of similar situations, potential conflict with other organizational missions and related analyses.

F. Changes to Most Efficient Organizations (MEO's). If a cost comparison results in the decision to accomplish a particular function with Government employees, the MEO on which the comparison is based will be implemented. The individual position descriptions within the MEO will be established to adequately accomplish the function and will generally be obligated to remain unchanged for a period of 5 years. As a result, any proposed changes to MEO position descriptions that could effect the integrity of the initial cost comparison will require Commandant (G-CCS) approval. Accordingly, the change by management to the positions in an MEO must be provided through the servicing civilian personnel office, to Commandant (G-CCS) for review and approval.

2.C.4. Research Positions. Professional positions involving basic or applied research are required to be described in a manner eliciting the points covered in 2.C.3. above and, in addition, the degree of expertise enjoyed and scientific contributions expected of the employee.

5. Federal Wage System (FWS). Descriptions for positions in the trades and crafts occupations must contain, in addition to the characteristics stated in 2.C.3. above, the physical requirements and any unusual working environment conditions.

6. Statements of Difference. Where a complete position description and evaluation statement are prepared for the full performance level in a career ladder position and the intermediate grade level in the career ladder progression of the position is identified, a statement of difference may be used in lieu of a complete position description for the intermediate grade level.

D. The General Schedule Classification System. The Federal position classification system is based on the Classification Act of 1949 (now Chapter 51 of Title 5, United States Code) which, although amended, remains the principal legal authority for classifying positions within the Federal Government.

1. Objectives. The primary objectives of the Federal classification plan for General Schedule positions are:

a. The need to identify positions with appropriate qualification standards;

b. The principle of equal pay for substantially equal work; and

c. The principle that variations in ranges of basic pay for different employees should be in proportion to substantial differences in the difficulty, responsibility, and qualifications of the work performed.

2. Other Uses. Position classification is also used to:

a. Aid in testing, selecting, and recruiting employees;

b. Provide uniform terminology for record keeping, statistical, and budgetary purposes;

c. Identify the content and requirements of positions for promotion, reassignment, transfer, and reduction-in-force purposes;

d. Contribute to employee morale by assuring employees that they are receiving fair and equitable treatment;

e. Eliminate conflict in lines of authority and facilitate verifying work assignments;

f. Denote positions exempt or nonexempt from the Fair Labor Standards Act, as amended (PL 93-259).

2.D.3. The System. Under the General Schedule classification system, positions are first sorted into occupational groups and each of these groups is divided into series. Each series is then divided into classes and each class placed in its appropriate grade which has a salary range provided by law. The product is the position classification plan. Its structure is outlined in the Handbook of Occupational Groups and Series of Classes established under the Federal position classification plan which serves as the official guide for determining the occupational category within which a position falls. The detailed definitions of the occupational groups, series, and classes, which appear as a separate publication, are the classification standards. With their aid, positions can be placed in classes and grades on a uniform basis.

E. Federal Wage System Jobs. The Federal Wage System (FWS) provides common policies, systems, practices, and job grading standards for uniform application by all executive departments and agencies in fixing pay for wage grade employees as nearly as is consistent with the public interest in accordance with prevailing rates. The authority to fix wage grade pay rates is vested in the heads of the individual departments and agencies.

1. General.

a. Presidential Directive. The President's memorandum of 16 November 1965 directed the heads of executive departments and agencies, under the leadership of the Chairman, Civil Service Commission (Office of Personnel Management), to develop a common wage system that would eliminate pay differences among agencies for the same trade and labor jobs in the same local wage areas and to bring about equitable coordination of wage grade practices.

b. Basic Principles. The President asked for the development of common job standards and wage policies and practices to ensure interagency equity in wage rates based upon statistically valid wage surveys. The President established as basic principles that wages shall be fixed and adjusted from time to time as nearly as is consistent with the public interest and in accordance with prevailing rates and there shall be equal pay for substantially equal work with pay distinctions being maintained in relationship to work distinctions.

2. Legal Authorities.

a. Exclusion from the General Schedule. Title 5, USC 5102(c)(7) excludes from the General Schedule pay and classification system all employees in recognized trades or crafts, or other skilled mechanical crafts, or in unskilled, semi-skilled, or skilled manual labor occupations, and other employees including foremen and supervisors in positions having trades, crafts, or laboring experience and knowledge as the paramount qualification requirements.

2.F.5. a. Standards. Standards are developed in collaboration with technical line managers and employees in the occupation. Major users in the occupation are thus provided opportunity to assist in structuring the criteria and for making the document as realistic and current as possible. Coast Guard organizations shall participate fully in standard studies, reviews, and development of standards when requested by the Office of Personnel Management. All standards reviews shall be coordinated by Commandant (G-PC).

b. Status. There may be occasions when standards are unique to, and developed by, the Coast Guard. However, without approval of the Office of Personnel Management, these standards have no official status. If approved, the internally developed standards have the same effect as those issued by the Office of Personnel Management.

c. Technology. Managers and personnel officials have the responsibility to request revisions, modifications, or establishment of new standards if technology surpasses the criteria now in existence or if new disciplines develop. Such requests must be referred to Commandant (G-PC) for further evaluation.

d. Binding Standards. When standards are issued by the Office of Personnel Management, they are binding. Application of the standard must take place within the time specified by the Office of Personnel Management, usually a 6 month period.

e. Availability of Standards. Position classification standards are available for review by employees in the civilian personnel offices.

G. Classification Process. The following represents the stages of development of a typical position description.

1. Cover Sheet. After preparation, the description is attached to a "cover sheet" (Optional Form 8), and is certified by the first and second level supervisor. While there is space for the employee's signature, the employee does not have to sign the OF-8 to make the description valid. It is the supervisor's responsibility to distribute and assign duties and responsibilities and apprise the employee accordingly.

2. Request for Personnel Action. The position description with the "cover sheet" (Optional Form 8) is forwarded to the appropriate civilian personnel office as an attachment to an executed "Request for Personnel Action" (Standard Form 52).

3. Civilian Personnel Office Review. The Civilian Personnel Office will review the description, perform any fact finding necessary to clarify the submission, and evaluate the position using published Office of Personnel Management or internally developed and approved classification criteria. This evaluation results in a specific title, series, and grade level for the position.

2.G.4. Determination of the Civilian Personnel Office. The determination, if different from that proposed by management, is tentative pending discussion with the supervisor. The classifier will discuss the manner in which the determination was made, any deficiencies, and request more facts, if necessary. The classifier shall make every effort to assist the supervisor in understanding the basis for the decision and, where possible, offer recommendations relating to redesign of functions, responsibilities, and internal position management principles and consider all other elements such as recruitment and retention problems.

5. Final Decision. If, after these efforts, the requested grade level is not supportable, the determination of title, series, and grade by the servicing civilian personnel office becomes final and the position is officially classified.

6. Appeals. Affected employees may, if dissatisfied with the classification determination of their position, initiate a formal classification appeal in accordance with Chapter 3 of this instruction.

H. Evaluation Statements. An evaluation statement contains the reasons for a classification action and/or recommendations. It provides a written record of the analysis of the duties and responsibilities and their comparison with classification criteria. The evaluation statement is prepared and signed by the classification specialist conducting the evaluation analysis. A written evaluation statement is required to be prepared for all positions for which there are not published standards, all supervisory positions, all General Schedule positions reflecting an accretion of duties, positions which are mixed (representative of two or more series or with different duties classifiable to different grade levels), the full performance level in a career ladder position, all non-standard position descriptions GS-12 and above, all positions that do not meet the grade level requested by management, positions classified using the Primary Standard, those positions classified by extrapolation, and all Federal Wage System jobs at or above the journeyman level.

1. General Schedule (GS) Evaluations.

a. Contents and Format. The following format and contents are required for all evaluation statements for General Schedule positions not currently under the Factor Evaluation System (FES).

(1) Identification of Positions. Show the classification of the position based upon the conclusion reached in the evaluation. Indicate the organizational information, e.g., "Position is that of a Clerk-Typist, GS-322-3, Fiscal Branch, Comptroller Division, Tenth Coast Guard District, Little Stone, Nevada."