



Secretariat

ST/AI/344
3 August 1987

ADMINISTRATIVE INSTRUCTION

To: Members of the staff

From: The Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management

Subject: CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM FOR FIELD SERVICE CATEGORY POSTS

1. The Secretary-General has approved job classification standards for the Field Service Category based on a seven-level grading structure. The purpose of this instruction is to set out the policy and procedures for the implementation and maintenance of the Field Service Category post classification system, based on the approved standards and grade structure.
2. The basic principle of the Field Service Category post classification system is that it is job-oriented. The classification of each post depends on the nature of the duties and responsibilities assigned to it, together with its qualification requirements, and is not related to the personal qualifications or experience of the incumbent of, or of any candidate for, the post.

Classification procedures

3. The Field Service Category post classification system is composed of a set of classification standards consisting of a point-factor standard, a glossary of terms, benchmark job descriptions with a related analysis and a grade level conversion chart.
4. The point-factor standard consists of five factors: work difficulty, impact of work, knowledge required, contacts and supervision.
5. In addition to the point-factor standard, benchmark posts have been identified on the basis of the results of the analysis of the questionnaires completed by staff members in the Field Service Category during the process of developing the standards and of all the information gathered both at Headquarters and in the field, including on-site interviews. The benchmark job descriptions are established to ensure consistent application of the standards. Each benchmark job

description includes a brief summary, a list of the principal duties with the percentage of time devoted to each duty and a statement describing each of the factors and their elements applicable to the post. They include an evaluation, in terms of the standard, of duties and functions which are typical for some jobs within an occupational group. The benchmark job descriptions serve as yardsticks or measuring instruments for the allocation of the point-values to the factors or elements relating to a job. Any post determined to be similar or comparable to a benchmark post will be classified at the same level as the benchmark job description.

6. To ensure fair and equitable evaluations of jobs, the standard must be applied consistently and uniformly. An analysis of a post is made by determining, for each factor, which of the levels most closely matches the characteristics of the post and the corresponding points are assigned. The level of the post is determined on the basis of the total number of points of the post.

7. The classification analysis will be conducted by the Classification Section of the Office of Human Resources Management (OHRM). The results of the classification analysis will be reviewed and approved by the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management. A notice of the classification results will be submitted to the Office for Field Operational and External Support Activities of the Office of General Services (OGS), which will provide a copy to the officials and staff member concerned. The Classification Section, OHRM, will also notify the Budget Division, Office for Programme Planning, Budgeting, Monitoring and Evaluation (OPPBME), of the results of the classification analysis as approved by the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management. Cases in which the Office for Field Operational and External Support Activities, OGS, or the staff member does not agree with the classification of a particular post may be the subject of an appeal to the Classification Appeals Committee (see para. 13 below).

Post description

8. A complete, clear and accurate description of the duties and responsibilities is required for each Field Service Category post or group of identical posts on post description form P. 289, which is being distributed separately. The correctness of the post description must be certified by the immediate supervisor 1/ and confirmed by the Chief of Administration. It will then be submitted to the Office for Field Operational and External Support Activities, OGS, for approval and submission to the Classification Section, OHRM.

9. The supervisor/Chief of Administration shall review the post description, whenever the post is under consideration for recruitment, promotion, or reassignment of staff, or when the post description is used for other purposes. If necessary, the job description should be revised for approval by Office for Field Operational and External Support Activities, OGS, and submission to the Classification Section, OHRM.

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IMPLEMENTATION

10. For the initial classification review of Field Service Category posts involved, the classification analysis will be based on the Field Service Category questionnaires that were prepared and signed by the Field Service Category staff members, the respective supervisors and the chiefs of administration during the process of developing the standards. For posts for which no prepared questionnaires exist the classification analysis will be based on post descriptions to be submitted in accordance with the procedures in paragraph 8.
11. After the initial classification, post descriptions should be submitted for classification review every time there is a change of incumbent or when the functions of the post change. The procedures in paragraphs 7 and 8 above apply.
12. Classification of a post to a level numerically higher or lower than that of the incumbent will not affect the existing contractual status, salary or other related entitlements of the incumbent. Staff members whose posts are graded at levels numerically below their personal grades will retain their present grade and entitlements and will continue to serve in the posts until a suitable reassignment opportunity arises. Staff members whose posts are graded at levels numerically above their personal grades will also retain their existing grades and entitlements. If incumbents continue in their posts they will be reviewed for either the grant of a special post allowance or promotion if appropriate.

Classification appeal

13. Review of a classification decision may be requested either by the Office for Field Operational and External Support Activities, OGS, or the staff member who is encumbering the classified post. Appeals shall relate to the application of the classification standards and the correctness or completeness of the post descriptions.
14. The committee to review classification appeals and its terms of reference will be established along the lines of the provisions of the annex to administrative instruction ST/AI/277 of 10 November 1980, which is reproduced in the annex to the present administrative instruction.
15. The appeal procedures are as follows:
- (a) Cases for appeal must be submitted in writing to the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management. Such a request must state the reasons for the appeal and be accompanied by the job description on the basis of which the post was classified and, if appropriate, by a revised post description;
 - (b) The Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management will ask the Classification Section, OHRM, to review the case;
 - (c) If the Classification Section, OHRM, does not concur with a change in the post classification as requested, the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management will submit the case to the Classification Appeals Committee for advice;

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(d) The Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management will communicate his decisions as well as the findings and recommendations of the Classification Appeals Committee to the Head of Office for Field Operational and External Support Activities, OGS, and to the appellant.

Classification of posts submitted with the budget requests

16. In accordance with the established procedures, the Office for Field Operational and External Support Activities, OGS, must submit, with the budget requests, post descriptions for new posts to be established and for existing posts to be reclassified. On the basis of these post descriptions, the Classification Section, OHRM, will conduct an analysis and inform the Budget Division, OPPBME, and the Office for Field Operational and External Support Activities, OGS, of the classification results.

Classification audits

17. The functions and responsibilities of posts may be subject to change. In order to ensure that the posts are accurately described and evaluated, classification audits may be necessary. The Classification Section, OHRM, will therefore conduct classification audits from time to time where appropriate. A classification audit will, in particular, review the functions and responsibilities of the posts through inquiries with the supervisors and with the incumbents if necessary. On the basis of this review and consideration of the post description, a classification analysis will be conducted in accordance with the established classification procedures and the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management will inform the Office of Field Operational and External Support Activities, OGS, of the results.

Notes

1/ The immediate supervisor is the individual who signs the performance evaluation report of the incumbent as first reporting officer.

Annex

CLASSIFICATION APPEALS AND REVIEW COMMITTEE

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Composition

1. A Secretariat-wide Classification Appeals and Review Committee is established with effect from 1 November 1980.
2. The Committee shall consist of:
 - (a) A chairperson appointed by the Secretary-General on the recommendation of the Staff-Management Co-ordination Committee;
 - (b) Two members designated by the Secretary-General;
 - (c) Two members designated by the staff representatives on the Staff-Management Co-ordination Committee.
3. The terms of office of the members of the Committee shall be two years.
4. A secretary shall be assigned to the Committee by the Assistant Secretary-General for Personnel Services.

Functions

5. The Committee shall review all classification appeals. Such appeals shall relate to the application of the classification standards and the correctness or completeness of the job descriptions.
6. The Committee shall make recommendations to the Assistant Secretary-General for Personnel Services on all cases referred to it for review and shall as necessary keep under review the list of benchmark posts.
7. The Committee shall establish its own procedures. It shall determine the information it requires to carry out its task in addition to the written submissions of the party registering the appeal. At the request of any of its members, the Committee may invite a member of the Classification Section, Office of Personnel Services, or any other staff member to provide any information it may require.
8. At major duty stations away from Headquarters, the Assistant Secretary-General for Personnel Services may establish sub-committees of the Classification Appeals and Review Committee with a composition similar to that of the Committee, to report to the Committee on appeals relating to posts at the duty stations concerned.
