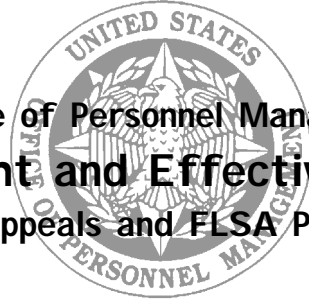


U.S. Office of Personnel Management  
Office of Merit Systems Oversight and Effectiveness  
Classification Appeals and FLSA Programs



Philadelphia Oversight Division  
600 Arch Street, Room 3400  
Philadelphia, PA 19106-1596

**Classification Appeal Decision**  
**Under Section 5346 of Title 5, United States Code**

**Appellant:** [Appellant's name]

**Agency classification:** Motor Vehicle Operator  
WG-5703-6

**Organization:** Roads and Grounds Maintenance Section  
Roads and Railroads Branch  
Operations & Maintenance Division  
U.S. Army Garrison  
[installation name and location]

**OPM decision:** Motor Vehicle Operator  
WG-5703-6

**OPM Decision Number:** C-5703-06-01

\_\_\_\_\_  
Robert D. Hendler  
Classification Appeals Officer

\_\_\_\_\_  
2/3/98

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

As provided in section S7-8 of the Operating Manual, Federal Wage System, this decision constitutes a certificate that is mandatory and binding on all administrative, certifying, payroll, disbursing, and accounting officials of the government. There is not right of further appeal. This decision is subject to discretionary review only under conditions specified in section 532.705(f) of tile 5, Code of Federal Regulations (address provided in appendix 4, section H).

### **Decision sent to:**

PERSONAL

[appellant's name]

[organizational location]

[installation location]

Chief, Classification Division  
 U.S. Department of the Army  
 Office of the Assistant Secretary  
 Manpower and Reserve Affairs  
 Civilian Personnel Operations Center,  
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Director of Civilian Personnel  
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Chief, Civilian Personnel Policy Division  
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## **Introduction**

On December 4, 1997, the Philadelphia Oversight Division of the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) received a job grading appeal from [appellant's name]. His job currently is graded as Motor Vehicle Operator, WG-5703-6. However, he believes the grading should be Motor Vehicle Operator, WG-5703-7. He works in the Roads and Grounds Maintenance Section of the Operations and Maintenance Division at the U.S. Army Garrison, [installation name and location]. We have accepted and decided his appeal under section 5346 of title 5, United States Code (U.S.C.).

## **General issues**

In his appeal letter dated September 30, 1997, and subsequent telephone audits, the appellant maintains that his job requires him to perform work outside the typical duties of a Motor Vehicle Operator, including operating a fork lift to install, repair, and replace signs and to perform snow removal, laying sod, planting small shrubs; prior to the installation of signs, performing "research of underground utilities which involves the use of sketches, blueprints, maps, and locator services"; and, inspecting the signs to ensure that they meet the customer's needs and both military and Federal highway regulations. In addition, the appellant's job description (JD) was amended on May 5, 1997, to reflect increased gross vehicle weight (GVW) (weight of the vehicle plus weight of the load) from 26,000 pounds to 39,500 pounds for the dump truck he operates. He maintains that these additional duties should be considered in determining the proper grading of his job.

In his appeal letter, and in the subsequent telephone audits, the appellant did not dispute that the primary and paramount work of his job is motor vehicle operation, but maintains his job requires performing work in other occupations. He claims this ancillary work, outside his primary occupation, should be considered in determining the grade of his job.

The operating principle for jobs within the Federal Wage System (FWS) that perform work in two or more occupations is that they are allocated to the occupation which is most important for recruitment, selection, placement, promotion, or reduction-in-force purposes. This ordinarily is the occupation having the highest skill and knowledge requirements. In this case, that occupation is Motor Vehicle Operator.

By law, we must classify positions solely by comparing their current duties and responsibilities to OPM job grading standards (JGS's) and guidelines (5 U.S.C. 5346). We will evaluate the work assigned by management and performed by the appellant according to this job grading requirement. In reaching our decision, we carefully reviewed the information provided by both the appellant and his agency, including the appellant's JD of record (JD #5237), which both he and his supervisor agree is accurate. In addition, we conducted telephone audits with the appellant on January 6 and 12, 1998 and with his immediate supervisor, [supervisor's name], on January 5 and 13, 1998. Our audits found the JD contains the major duties and responsibilities assigned by management and performed by the appellant.

**Job information**

The appellant's job is located in the Grounds Maintenance Section, Roads and Railroads Branch, Public Works Operations and Maintenance Division, [installation name and location]. The major duties of the appellant's job are to install, repair, and remove signs; to operate motor vehicles in support of the same; to remove snow; and, to operate fork lifts for the purposes of loading or moving materials or equipment in the performance of these major duties.

He operates a pickup truck (GVW 10,000 pounds), a dump truck (GVW 39,500 pounds), a bucket truck (GVW 27,500 pounds), fork lift (up to 10,000 pounds capacity), bucket loader (GVW 27,900 pounds), and occasionally a bobcat (GVW substantially less than 26,000 pounds) for the purpose of hauling traffic signs, informational signs, building identification signs, and tools, equipment, and materials for cutting, breaking and removing concrete as required for the installation, repair, and replacement of various signs. He also operates the bucket loader and dump truck for snow removal operations.

These motor vehicles are operated throughout the [name of] installation and, at times, on some local highways. Most driving is on the [name of] installation; approximately 80 percent of which is over paved, mostly flat roads and approximately 20 percent of which is over unpaved, somewhat hilly roads. Speed limits range from 25 miles per hour to 45 miles per hour over these roads.

The appellant operates fork lifts up to 10,000 pounds capacity, as well as bucket loaders, to maneuver, move, and place signs; maintains vehicle logbooks, preventive maintenance records, and accident reports; and performs preventive maintenance checks and services in accordance with established rules and regulations.

Prior to installing signs, the appellant locates underground utilities by reading and interpreting blueprints and coordinating with a variety of shops throughout the installation, as well as "Underground Locators," assuring that sign installations or preparatory excavations will not damage any underground utility installations. He ensures preparation of "Excavation Permit" before taking any action.

Pursuant to installing, repairing, removing, or moving signs, he operates pneumatic and hydraulic tools for cutting, breaking, and removing concrete around signs, as well as various saws, drills, and hammers to repair or replace various signs. When he is assisted by other employees, he takes the lead in conducting the work to ensure it is done properly and in accordance with established practices and procedures. When the signs have been installed, he performs finishing work such as leveling the area around the sign, adding gravel or top soil, and planting shrubs.

During the winter season, the appellant may operate a dump truck with a snow plow attachment and sanding unit, pickup truck with a plow attachment, or scoop loader to load a sand truck during winter snow removal operations.

The appellant is also required to obtain and maintain a valid State driver's license, a Federal Government driver's license, and a [name of] State "class B" commercial driver's license to operate motor vehicles exceeding 26,000 pounds GVW, with or without attached trailers.

### **Occupation, title, and standard determination**

The appellant's job is a mixed job, entailing motor vehicle operation and other work, including fork lift operation, determining and obtaining digging clearances, and laborer work. The Job Grading System for Trades and Labor Occupations states that a mixed job involves performance on a regular and recurring basis of duties in two or more occupations at the same or different grade levels. Such a job should be graded in keeping with the duties that (1) involve the highest skill and qualification requirements of the job, *and* (2) are a regular and recurring part of the job, even if the duties involved are not performed for a majority of the time. The motor vehicle operator and related work is evaluated by application of the Motor Vehicle Operator, WG-5703 JGS and the fork lift operator and related work by application of the Fork Lift Operator, WG-5704 JGS. The manual work functions performed by the appellant are evaluated properly by reference to the Laborer, WG-3502 JGS. Based on the grade level analysis that follows, we find the appellant's job is allocated properly as Motor Vehicle Operator, WG-5703.

### **Grade determination**

In FWS, if a job involves regular and recurring duties at the same level in two or more occupations, such a mixed job is graded at the same level. For example, the appellant's fork lift work would only affect the grade determination of his job if it were at a higher grade than his motor vehicle operator work. Grade levels of jobs are not determined by accumulation of grade levels of work performed, but by the highest grade of work that is regular and recurring as defined by established OPM job grading guidance.

In addition, the grade level of a job is not based solely on the equipment operated, but also on the skills and knowledges exercised in operating that equipment. That is to say, we do not grade equipment; we grade the difficulty and complexity entailed in the operations the employee conducts in using that equipment.

The grade of a job may only be based on the performance of regular and recurring work. It is an established FWS job grading principle that although there is no specified percentage-of-time requirement for grade controlling regular and recurring duties, special care must be exercised if the percentage of time devoted to the highest graded duties is low, e.g., 15 percent. In this case, there is a tendency to make the following errors: (1) crediting duties which are not repetitively performed on a continuing basis and, therefore, should not be credited in any way; (2) incorrectly assuming that the duties require the full range of work and qualifications necessary to warrant the grade level being considered; and (3) incorrectly assuming that the duties performed are under normal supervision for the grade being considered when they are performed under closer supervision and, therefore, overgrading the job.

The requirement that employees be licensed or certified to perform work, or that they certify with their signatures that standards of quality and safety have been met in performing work, does not in itself affect the grades of their jobs.

### ***Evaluation using the WG-5703 JGS***

The Motor Vehicle Operator, WG-5703 JGS covers nonsupervisory work involved in the operation of gasoline, diesel, or electric powered wheeled vehicles to haul cargo and fuel, transport passengers, or to tow or recover equipment. The vehicles are driven in restricted traffic environments on Government installations, over public roads and highways, or under cross-country conditions. Also included are motor vehicles which have special-purpose or auxiliary devices where a knowledge of such devices does not exceed the level of knowledge and skill required to operate the vehicle safely.

The WG-5703 JGS utilizes four factors for grade determination: *Skill and Knowledge, Responsibility, Physical Effort, and Working Conditions*. These factors are definitive for the grade evaluation of motor vehicle operator work. They serve to provide both the framework within which the occupation is structured and specifically applicable criteria for the appraisal of levels of work.

The underlying premise in grades above WG-4 is that vehicles are driven on Government installations and on public roads in a full range of traffic conditions or in installation environments that exhibit the same driving characteristics as public roads on a regular and recurring basis. Such public road characteristics would include widely dispersed urban and rural roadway systems; two-lane and four-lane highways; various weight limits and vehicle prohibitions on certain roads or bridges; a range of driving speeds as well as highway speed limits on some roads; various traffic signals and multiple types of intersections; frequently heavy traffic congestion; and sharp curves and blind or steep hills. Situations within the confines of an installation, such as driving in congested industrial areas, impose skill and knowledge requirements on motor vehicle operators similar to the demands of driving on public roads in all kinds of traffic. The requirement that vehicles are operated on public roads or the equivalent in terms of driving characteristics is consistent with the key ranking job descriptions for Truck Driver (Light), Truck Driver (Medium), Truck Driver (Heavy) and Truck Driver (Trailer) set forth in Part I, Appendix 2 of the Job Grading System for Trades and Labor Occupations. In instances where drivers do not use their vehicles on public roads (or the equivalent), a lower grade level than the one depicted in this standard for the type of vehicle driven is appropriate. This is primarily because the knowledge and skill required for the driver to operate the vehicle competently and safely is not as high.

Formerly, indicators such as GVW, load capacity, number of forward speeds, number of driving (powered) wheels, and passenger capacity have been routinely used as the primary criteria for determining grade levels of motor vehicle operator jobs. These indicators were found insufficient for determining the grade of the total job since they do not give consideration to all features of the job which affect the four grade determining factors of skill and knowledge, responsibility, physical effort, and working conditions involved in performing the work. However, GVW provides a frame of reference from which to conduct a complete analysis and evaluation of jobs. Therefore, GVW was

retained in the JGS as a means of establishing a framework in grade analysis for straight-in-line vehicles, i.e., vehicles that are unitized with the axles, power source or cab portion of the vehicle and load carrying body all on the same chassis. This indicator does not directly apply to passenger buses, passenger ambulance buses, or motor coaches. Since the appellant does not operate these passenger vehicles, we will not address those related grading criteria in our analysis of his job. The final grade level for all vehicle operating positions must be based on a thorough consideration of the four grading factors of the total job.

### *Skill and Knowledge*

At the WG-6 level, drivers may operate platform, van or stake trucks and cargo vans to pick up and deliver materials and equipment or tow equipment to various locations and work sites. They maneuver vehicles over uneven terrain, over improved or unimproved roads, and through congested areas exercising caution when backing to load or unload at docks, ramps, and similar locations. They determine the manner and sequence of loading cargo to achieve load balance and adequate protection for fragile items. The drivers secure the cargo with tie-down ropes or a tarpaulin to prevent shifting and to protect the load, and mark dangerous or protruding cargo with flags, placards, or reflection lights. They check material loaded or delivered against various documents to prevent errors and to certify the condition of the items and obtain signatures from receiving personnel. They also perform operator maintenance on one or more motor vehicles including platform trucks, van trucks, stake trucks, dump trucks, and cargo vans which typically have an approximate gross vehicle weight of more than 4,500 kilograms (10,000 pounds) and up to 11,700 kilograms (26,000 pounds). Some of these vehicles are equipped with air brakes. Vehicles are driven on the basis of either specific trip assignments or regularly established schedules over public roads (or the equivalent) at highway speeds under the same types of traffic and driving conditions as typical of the WG-5 level; i.e., adjusting driving methods to the practices of surrounding traffic to avoid accidents and operate safely according to State and local safety regulations and rules, and the rules of surrounding jurisdictions, e.g., surrounding States. Other drivers at this grade level operate dump trucks to haul earth, gravel, sand, and similar construction materials or debris such as logs, stumps, and stone over roads, streets, and through open field areas and over difficult terrain around construction sites or similar operating environments. They also operate a hydraulic dumping mechanism to unload or spread the materials in the dump bed.

At the WG-6 level, the vehicles operated are typically higher, wider, longer, and heavier than those at the WG-5 level. Therefore, the driver must apply knowledge to make more difficult judgments concerning loading and arranging cargo, overhead and side clearances, the turning radius, braking distance, and the distance to be maintained from other vehicles. Also, the drivers must be selective in determining which routes to take because of the size and weight of the vehicle and the laws restricting the use of some roads by such vehicles.

Drivers of dump trucks have skill in manipulating the hydraulic controls to raise and lower the bed of the truck. They know how to adjust the tailgate for spreading construction material from the dump truck bed. They are responsible for backing the vehicle over ground which is uneven and soft into

areas difficult to access safely and without causing damage to property. These drivers use side mirrors and respond to the hand signals from a spotter to maneuver the vehicle, and follow the proper procedures for dumping the load to prevent the truck from tipping over. Drivers of vehicles equipped with special-purpose accessory equipment know how to use the power takeoff device to transfer engine power to the equipment, and have skill in manipulating a variety of controls and understanding equipment gauges. For example, the driver may operate a winch on a flatbed truck or a snow auger or plow with a salt or sand spreader on a dump truck. Also included at this level are the drivers of vehicles equipped with a power takeoff device for transferring engine power to special-purpose accessory equipment, such as winches, power lifts, and plows and spreaders.

In contrast, WG-7 level drivers operate one or more motor vehicles including platform trucks, van trucks, fuel trucks, stake trucks, dump trucks, and trash removal trucks which typically have an approximate gross vehicle weight of more than 11,700 kilograms (26,000 pounds) and up to 14,400 kilograms (32,000 pounds). All of these vehicles are usually equipped with air brakes. Vehicles are driven on the basis of either specific trip assignments or regularly established schedules over public roads (or the equivalent) at highway speeds to transport, patients, supplies, materials, or equipment and tools or to tow equipment throughout rural or urban areas. Drivers perform operator maintenance on all vehicles operated (e.g., monitoring fluid levels, replacing air filters and interior lights, checking tire pressure and hose connections, and washing the vehicle). WG-7 level drivers may operate platform, van, stake, and dump trucks in the same manner as at the WG-6 level except that these vehicles are higher, wider, longer, and heavier than those driven at the lower grade level, and carry bulkier and heavier loads which are more likely to fall or shift if not properly loaded and secured or are more difficult to safely dump or spread. Vehicles operated at this level are driven over rough terrain, in close quarters, and in heavy traffic on both long and short hauls.

At the WG-7 level, drivers know how to operate vehicles that are larger and longer than those driven at the lower grade levels; have heavier loads to secure and control; have air brakes and are more susceptible to sliding and tipping; and are difficult to maneuver, especially when turning and backing. Drivers have skill and knowledge to operate these vehicles over a variety of roads including interstate highways, narrow country roads, and on steep winding grades. Also, because of the size and weight of these vehicles, drivers are knowledgeable about which routes may be legally driven and the overpass clearances and other restrictions on such routes.

The drivers of vehicles equipped with special-purpose accessory equipment know how to operate power takeoff controls of equipment with more complex functions than the equipment at the WG-6 level. Also, this equipment has more intricate operating characteristics than equipment at the lower levels which makes its manipulation and control more difficult. For example, the driver may operate a large snow blower or very large snow plows such as rollover or v-blades for removing deep snow. Consequently, considerable judgment and experience are used to perform supplemental operations.

The appellant's job fully meets the intent of the WG-6 level skill and knowledge requirements, and exceeds them in regard to the weight of the dump trucks driven. However, it must be noted that less demanding driving conditions, i.e., where drivers do not use their vehicles on public roads (or the



equivalent), calls for a lower grade level than the one otherwise attained in the standard, whatever grade level that might turn out to be when the overall job is examined.

The appellant's job meets, and exceeds, some of the general requirements for the WG-7 level in that the largest vehicles that he operates are large dump trucks of 39,500 pounds GVW which, during the winter months, may be fitted with snow plows used to maintain installation roads and parking areas. Driving these 39,500 pound GVW vehicles, in combination with smaller dump trucks of 28,000 pounds GVW, constitutes approximately 20 percent of his time. These trucks, however, are rarely used off the installation grounds, where the posted speed limits do not exceed 45 miles per hour, and virtually never on interstate highways. Therefore, even if they were operated on a regular and recurring basis, their operation does not entail the application of highway high speed driving skills and knowledges, or, based on the topography of the area, the skills and knowledges required for dealing with winding roads and steep grades, required for evaluation at the WG-7 level. The dump trucks, driven approximately 20 percent of the time, and the scoop loader, which has a combination of air and hydraulic brakes and is driven approximately 10 percent of the time, are the only vehicles the appellant drives which have air brakes. The remaining vehicles are equipped with hydraulic brakes. In contrast, most of the vehicles driven at the WG-7 level are equipped with air brakes.

The loads the appellant drives are primarily signs, some of which are very large and may be more conveniently loaded and unloaded from the large dump truck because of their length and width; sand and gravel for backfill; bags of concrete mix; lumber (2 by 4 and 2 by 8 boards); oxy-acetylene torch sets; and a towed air compressor and air tools. The sign frames need some securing but neither the lumber, which is in relatively small quantities, i.e., not full loads, nor any of the other loads need much securing. There is little danger of load shifting or falling nor are the loads difficult to dump. None of the remaining materials require skill or knowledge beyond the WG-6 level to load, secure, or unload.

The appellant also operates vehicles equipped with special-purpose accessory equipment such as a snow plow with a sand spreader on a dump truck, rock drills, chippers, jack hammer, cut-off and chain saws, auger (e.g., for digging signpost holes). This accessory equipment meets the WG-6 level. This accessory equipment, however, does not meet the more demanding requirements, typical of the WG-7 level, of operating power takeoff controls of equipment with more complex takeoff controls and more intricate operating characteristics such as very large snow plows or snow blowers for removing deep snow.

Although some aspects of WG-7 level skill and knowledge requirements are met, others are not. For a grade level to be assigned, all of the requirements must be met. Moreover, those functions of the appellant's job that require aspects of WG-7 level skill and knowledge, such as operating the larger dump trucks, are not performed regularly on public roads (or the equivalent) and are not performed under the full range of driving conditions intrinsic at that level. Consequently, a lower grade level than the one depicted in the JGS for the type of vehicle driven is appropriate in that full WG-7 level knowledge and skill are not required by the appellant in operating these larger and more complex

vehicles competently and safely. Therefore, the skill and knowledge required by the appellant's position does not exceed the WG-6 level.

### *Responsibility*

At the WG-6 level drivers receive instructions from the dispatcher or supervisor as to the type of vehicle to be operated, destination, cargo, passengers or patients to be transported, deadlines to be met, and any special information important to the mission. Driving proficiency is assessed in terms of safe and expeditious completion of the assigned job. The driver is responsible for selecting routes and obeying all traffic laws and safety regulations, as well as the safe loading and unloading of the vehicle. Performance of preventive maintenance tasks and preparation of trip tickets are reviewed for adequacy and compliance with instructions.

WG-7 level drivers also receive instructions from the dispatcher or supervisor as to the type of vehicle to be operated, destination, cargo, passengers or patients to be transported, purpose of the trip, deadlines to be met, and any special information important to the mission. Additionally, some drivers determine the route to be followed, taking into consideration such factors as the clearance of underpasses, overhead power lines, weight limitations, highway restrictions, and alternate bypass routes. Other drivers who are assigned prescribed routes for such trips as work runs, shuttle runs, or medical transportation runs are responsible for knowing acceptable alternative routes for use in emergency situations which will legally accommodate the size and length of the vehicle being driven.

Some WG-7 drivers are responsible for performing or overseeing the loading and unloading of bulky, cumbersome cargo and assuring that it is properly located, distributed, and secured in the vehicle for balance and stability. These drivers exercise more responsibility than the drivers at lower levels because the weight of the cargo and the size and type of vehicle driven increase the tendency of the entire cargo to shift and the vehicle to tip. Drivers who operate special purpose accessory equipment are responsible for following a greater number of safety procedures and precautions than at the WG-6 level because the functions of the equipment are more complex. Drivers at the WG-7 level accomplish their assignments with considerable independence. Work is evaluated in terms of timeliness and driving competence.

The appellant's job fully meets the responsibility requirements of the WG-6 level, and meets some, but not all the responsibility requirements for the WG-7 level. While he determines the route to be followed, little driving is done outside the installation. Thus, overhead power lines, weight limitations, clearance of underpasses, and highway restrictions are not significant concerns. Because of the nature of the loads carried as discussed previously, the level of concern necessary at the WG-7 level for assuring that the loads are properly located, distributed, and secured for balance and stability is not met. The appellant is responsible for loads unlikely to shift and which, even were they to shift, are unlikely to either cause damage to the loads or upset the vehicle.

The appellant works essentially on his own, requesting advice from his supervisor only when encountering unusual circumstances. The appellant's work is reviewed by periodic spot check,

customer feedback, physical review of the completed work for quality, and monitoring of timeliness. The supervisor does not routinely check the completed work by the appellant on traffic control signs, but other installations, such as drilling identification signs, are checked by the supervisor on a more regular basis. On the surface, this responsibility level exceeds in some regards, such as independence of action, the WG-7 level. However, this work is comparable to the responsibility for the proper handling and unloading of cargo typical of drivers at all grade levels in the occupation. Responsibility in the application of the WG-5703 JGS pertains to operating vehicles, and not the erecting of signs. Therefore, because the vehicle operation requirements, as discussed previously, fail to meet the WG-7 level fully, this factor must be credited at the WG-6 level.

### *Physical Effort*

At the WG-5 level, in addition to the physical demands of lower grade levels, moderate physical effort may be required in making couplings between the vehicle and towed equipment because safety chains, towbars, and hooks must be lifted and properly secured. Considerable physical effort may be required to change tires and make limited emergency repairs, such as installing an emergency fan belt or replacing an electrical fuse on open highways. In addition to the requirements above, WG-6 level work requires greater physical effort to maneuver the longer and heavier vehicles, especially when backing these vehicles. At the WG-7 level, in addition to the requirements for the WG-6 level, the driver exerts moderate physical effort in operating, turning, backing, and controlling vehicles which carry heavier loads or larger numbers of people than vehicles at the WG-6 level.

The appellant's job fully meets the requirements of the WG-6 level, but fails to meet those of the WG-7 level since he drives some of the larger vehicles typical of that level, but does not carry the typical heavy loads of the WG-7 level. Therefore, he is not required to exert the extra physical effort which would be required were the larger vehicles also carrying their typical large loads. Therefore, the WG-6 level is credited for this factor.

### *Working Conditions*

This factor considers the physical hardships, environmental hazards, and working conditions to which workers are exposed in the performance of their assigned work. The standard distinguishes between the WG-4 level, where the driving is done on an installation and the WG-5 and higher levels where the vehicle is operated primarily on public roads. At the WG-4 level, drivers work mostly outside and operate vehicles in all kinds of weather in a controlled traffic environment throughout a Government installation or establishment. Drivers are exposed to dirt and fumes, and to the possibility of cuts, bruises, and broken bones as a result of accidents while driving or from falling objects when loading and unloading the vehicle.

In addition to the working conditions described at the WG-4 level, at the WG-5 level and above drivers operate vehicles in all types of traffic and weather on public roads (or the equivalent), and are exposed to the danger of serious accidents. They drive in heavy traffic and at highway speeds over

complicated road and interchange systems. The working conditions at the WG-6 and higher grade levels in the JGS are the same as those at the WG-5 level.

The appellant does not regularly operate vehicles at highway speeds, in heavy traffic, over complicated road and interchange systems. Consequently his job meets but does not exceed the WG-4 level on this factor.

Based on the preceding analysis, and applying the whole job grade criteria of the FWS, we find the appellant's motor vehicle operator work is graded properly at the WG-6 level.

### ***Evaluation using the WG-5704 JGS***

The Fork Lift Operator, WG-5704 JGS is used for grading nonsupervisory jobs that involve the operating electric, diesel, or gasoline powered fork lift trucks to move, stack and unstack, and load and unload materials in and about warehouses, storage areas, loading docks, and on and off vehicles, etc.

#### ***Skill and Knowledge***

Workers at the WG-5 level operate electric, gasoline, or diesel powered fork lift trucks which are capable of lifting loads weighing less than 4,500 kilograms (10,000 pounds) as high as 420 centimeters (168 inches). The fork lift trucks have automatic or manual transmissions with up to four forward speeds and controls to lift and lower loads. The operators drive fork lift trucks over wood, concrete, or similar type floor's through narrow aisles in buildings and in such confined places as railroad cars and trucks. They occasionally drive outside over rough surfaces.

In contrast, workers at the WG-6 level operate electric, gasoline, or diesel powered fork lift trucks which are capable of lifting loads weighing 4,500 kilograms (10,000 pounds) or more higher than 420 centimeters (168 inches). The operators drive fork lift trucks over rough and sometimes muddy terrain through narrow aisles in outside storage areas. The WG-6 operator must be more skilled than the WG-5 operator in the handling of controls for driving fork lift trucks and for lifting, lowering, and tilting forks since the fork lifts are able to lift more weight to greater heights. In addition the work is usually performed outside over rough terrain. Since items in an outside storage area are not usually arranged in neat rows and stacks as they are in a warehouse, the layout is more difficult to learn. Because of the larger size of the fork lift truck and load, moving about in places where there is very little room to stack and remove loads is more difficult.

The appellant operates fork lifts capable of lifting loads of up to 10,000 pounds to maneuver, move, or place signs, boxes, containers, lumber, sacks of cement, etc., throughout the installation and on the range areas of the installation in all kinds of weather and includes some operations over rough terrain. The appellant estimates he operates the fork lift up to heights of 15 feet (180 inches) but his supervisor estimates the maximum height as 12 feet (144 inches). Most of his maneuvering of the fork lift is in open areas, but occasionally he must maneuver between or around buildings. The

appellant does not generally drive a fork lift over rough terrain through narrow aisles, as is required at the WG-6 level. The material he loads is generally not placed high off the ground and is generally not such as to create a significant danger of slippage or overturning while loading. Consequently, the fork lift operations that the appellant performs no more than approximately 10 percent of his working time, do not meet the WG-6 level fully. Therefore, this factor must be evaluated at the WG-5 level.

### *Responsibility*

At the WG-5 level, fork lift operators follow oral instructions or written work orders concerning when and where loads are to be moved and placed. The operator handles materials safely; assures the fork lift truck is not used to lift any more of a load that it is able to lift; and, places heavy and bulky items at the bottom of the stack to prevent tipping, making sure that the forks are put into the pallets as far as possible to give the most support to the load. The operator drives carefully to avoid injuring others or damaging equipment and property. At the WG-6 level, the responsibility for safe handling of materials is greater. Operating over rough terrain requires greater care to make sure the load does not tip. Since the work operations, including site conditions, do not meet the WG-6 level fully, this factor must be evaluated at the WG-5 level.

### *Physical Effort*

At the WG-5 level, moderate physical effort is used in operating hand and foot controls while driving, turning, starting, and stopping, and raising, lowering, and tilting the loads to be moved. Strain is caused by the vibration of the fork lift truck. More physical effort is required at the WG-6 level. Rough terrain causes a greater vibration of the fork lift trucks requiring greater physical endurance to withstand the strain. Based on the operating conditions of this job, the WG-6 level is not met fully. Therefore, this factor is evaluated at the WG-5 level.

### *Working Conditions*

At the WG-5 level, operators normally work inside in areas that sometimes are damp and drafty, and occasionally outside in all kinds of weather. Cuts, bruises, and broken bones may result from shifting loads, toppling stacks, fork lift trucks overturning, falling objects, or accidents with other moving equipment. Working conditions at the WG-6 level are the same except that the operator usually works outside in all kinds of weather and is exposed to dust and dirt. Based on the operating conditions of this job, the WG-6 level is not met fully. Therefore, this factor is evaluated at the WG-5 level.

Based on the preceding analysis, and applying the whole job grade criteria of the FWS, we find the appellant's fork lift operator work is graded properly at the WG-5 level.

The laboring work performed by the appellant consists of using equipment such as jackhammers, air compressors, hydraulic tools, rock drill, etc., and performing finishing work after installing signs, such as leveling the area around the sign and planting shrubs. This work meets, but does not exceed, the

WG-3 level, which is highest grade level described in the Laborer, WG-3502 JGS. Work operations at the WG-3 level in the WG-3502 occupation is exemplified by using the aforementioned tools to break up pavement, mix and pour concrete, patch pavement, fill and level holes, and do grading and sloping. The WG-03 Laborer exerts very heavy physical effort in frequently lifting and moving objects weighing over 50 pounds, pushing heavy wheelbarrow loads of cement, etc., in all kinds of weather and utilizes equipment and tools which frequently require special care to avoid serious injury.

Determining and obtaining digging clearances, which entails reading maps of underground locations and obtaining pre-digging clearances from various Fort Drum shops and the outside locator service, are part of the basic work responsibilities in any FWS occupation; i.e., performing work safely and according to legal, regulatory and procedural requirements. Furthermore, reading underground maps is not intrinsically more difficult or demanding than reading road maps, inherent in Motor Vehicle Operator, WG-5703 jobs.

#### *Summary*

Applying FWS mixed occupation and grading principles, we find the appellant's job is graded properly as Motor Vehicle Operator, WG-5703-6.