NGB PAMPHLET 690-1
ANG PAMPHLET 40-1

HEADQUARTERS
Departments of the Army and Air Force
Washington, DC 20310, 30 November 1983

Civilian Personnel
POSITION CLASSIFICATION AND POSITION MANAGEMENT
A GUIDE FOR TECHNICIAN MANAGERS AND SUPERVISORS

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Chapter 1
General

1–1. Purpose
To identify the major features of position classification and position management as they apply to the National Guard technician program.

1–2. Application
These procedures are applicable to all organizations and activities.

1–3. Responsibilities
The Chief, National Guard Bureau in a letter to State adjutants general concerning position classification and position management made the following statements:

> "Classification of National Guard Technician positions has been a continuing area of interest in the National Guard, especially since the conversion of technicians to Federal employee status following the passage of the National Guard Technicians Act of 1968 (PL 90-486). It will most likely continue to be an area of interest because so many factors affect it... All Federal departments are being encouraged to get actively involved in these programs to reduce or eliminate the drain on the economy caused by unnecessary or overgraded positions... We have been assured by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) that position classification and position management will be a matter of special emphasis during future Personnel Management Evaluations (PME) they periodically conduct of all Federal activities. In fact, position classification and position management have now been tied directly to the elimination of fraud, waste and abuse in the Federal Government... Managers (and Supervisors) need to understand that their position management accountability is the same as the accountability associated with other resource management responsibilities."
> (Emphasis added).

The Chief's message expresses his strong interest in the Guard Bureau's technician personnel management activities and his reliance on all managers to carry out an effective and efficient technician personnel management program.

1–4. Definition
Personnel management has been defined simply as management of people (positions) - the organization's most valuable resource. More specifically, personnel management in the Federal service is defined as planning for, getting, developing, utilizing and keeping people with the knowledge, skills and abilities necessary to get the job accomplished, while adhering to public policy requirements.

MAJOR PROBLEMS

- TECHNICIANS PERFORMING OUTSIDE THEIR POSITION DESCRIPTIONS
- TECHNICIANS NOT PERFORMING THE MAJOR DUTIES LISTED IN THEIR POSITION DESCRIPTION
- HIGHER LEVEL POSITIONS NOT SUPERVISING THE REQUIRED NUMBER OF SUBORDINATES

REMEDIES

1. REITERATE AND REEMPHASIZE - LOCAL RESPONSIBILITIES TO COMPLY WITH PUBLISHED GUIDANCE.
2. ON-SITE AUDITS BY CLASSIFICATION ACTIVITIES.
3. ASSIST STATES IN MAKING CHANGES - DICTATED BY LOCAL SITUATION.
4. CORRECT CLASSIFICATION PROBLEMS WHEN FOUND.
5. MORE CLASSIFICATION TRAINING FOR SPMO's, MANAGERS AND SUPERVISORS.
6. ENSURE MAXIMUM COMPLIANCE WITH OPM STANDARDS.
7. PLACE TECHNICIANS AT GRADES COMMENSURATE WITH QUALIFICATIONS POSSESSED.
8. ASSURE THAT TECHNICIANS PERFORM DUTIES AS OUTLINED IN POSITION DESCRIPTION.

Figure 1-1. Major Problems/Remedies

Chapter 2
Guidelines for Administering and Monitoring Position Management Classification

2–1. General

The authority to classify positions and establish pay grades for both the Army and Air National Guard technicians is the responsibility of the Chief, NGB. This includes authority to designate which positions require membership in the National Guard, which do not, and which are optional with the State Adjutant General. The authority to classify and grade positions has not been delegated to the various States. This is accomplished for the Chief, NGB by the Office of Technician Personnel (NGB-TN) and the three classification activities. However, the adjutants general will be accountable for program success in those areas which are clearly within their authority. Intensified attention will be given to the execution of sound position management with special attention given to the areas outlined in this chapter.

a. Vacant positions. Review all vacant positions, as well as positions that later become vacant, to determine if the duties can be eliminated, assigned to other positions, or modified to permit filling at a lower grade, used in upward mobility programs, or advertised as part of FEORP responsibilities.

b. Supervisory positions. Evaluate all supervisory positions, with special attention to wage supervisors (WS and WL), and small shop chiefs, to ensure that the minimum number of subordinate positions are filled on a permanent basis in order to justify the supervisory position. If not, appropriate action must be taken.

c. Unnecessary layers of supervision. Identify unnecessary layers of supervision and report deficiencies to the appropriate classification activity.

d. Review of position descriptions. Review position descriptions and identify higher level duties spread too thinly among several positions.

e. Optimum position and grade structure. Seek ways to achieve the optimum technician position and grade structure compatible and consistent with mission objectives and requirements.

f. Selection and training. Ensure that technicians are selected for positions at grade levels appropriate to their qualifications. Also, make certain that technicians receive training which will enable them to progress to full performance levels required by the position description.

NOTE: The overall management of positions will be monitored by the NGB and the classification activities and, in instances of improper utilization of positions, steps may be taken to withdraw the manpower spaces. Figure 1-1 shows recurring major problems and the remedies required to correct them.

OPR RESPONSIBILITIES

PROVIDE NGB-TN WITH:

ORGANIZATIONAL CHARTS

FUNCTIONAL STATEMENTS

PROPOSED STANDARDIZED POSITION DESCRIPTIONS (Info From States/Units, etc)

CONSIDERING SUCH FACTORS AS:

- o INDIVIDUAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES/EEO RESPONSIBILITIES
- o FUNCTIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE ORGANIZATION
- o MILITARY CONSIDERATIONS
- o COST EFFECTIVENESS
- o MANPOWER AUTHORIZATIONS

NGB-TN RESPONSIBILITIES (THROUGH CLASSIFICATION ACTIVITIES)

PROVIDE OPR WITH:

POSITION DESCRIPTION WRITING ASSISTANCE

POSITION MANAGEMENT GUIDANCE

FINAL POSITION DESCRIPTIONS

Figure 2-1. OPR Responsibilities/NGB-TN Responsibilities

2-2. Organization.

a. National Guard Bureau. National Guard Bureau manpower divisions working in concert with the Office of Primary Responsibility (OPR) and utilizing established manpower procedures, determine technician requirements in support of equipment and missions for federally recognized National Guard units within each State. These requirements are identified on technician manning documents. Technician authorizations are then distributed to State adjutants general who allocate these within the priorities they establish and within certain constraints imposed by NGB. Figure 2-1 shows the relationship of an NGB OPR with NGB-TN. To carry out the administration of this unique group of employees, and to assure the uniformity of policies and procedures expressed by the Congress in the Act of 1968, the National Guard Bureau has established a personnel policy office to perform this function for the Army and the Air National Guard technician program.

b. Office of Technician Personnel (NGB-TN). NGB-TN is a joint office serving the Army and the Air National Guard. It functions in the capacity of directorate of personnel for the National Guard technician program, comprised of approximately 42,500 Army and Air National Guard technicians. It provides guidance and assistance in technician personnel matters to the Chief, National Guard Bureau, and the adjutants general of the several States, Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and District of Columbia. This office serves as the channel of communication between the several States and the Services as provided in Section 3015 of Title 10, United States Code, on all National Guard technician personnel matters. It formulates and establishes personnel plans, policies, and implementing directives in accordance with public laws, Office of Personnel Management and Department of Defense directives, to include placement and staffing, position classification, employee-management relations, employee entitlements and benefits, development and training, inspection and audit, and personnel information systems. Figure 2-2 shows a portion of the NGB-TN organizational structure. Figure 2-3 identifies the classification activity areas of responsibility. Figure 2-4 shows what the classification activities do. Also, to assist the State adjutants general in fulfilling their responsibilities for employment, administration, and management of Army and Air National Guard technicians, a consolidated personnel activity has been established in each jurisdiction concerned.

c. Support Personnel Management Office (SPMO). The SPMO is a joint (ARNG/ANG) State personnel organization responsible for: (1) development and administration of State-level personnel management programs, policies, and procedures for all full-time personnel resources, (2) providing advisory services to management concerning administration and management of full-time personnel resources, (3) development, coordination, and execution of statewide programs for full-time personnel resources in such areas as career management, performance management, staffing, training and development, benefits and entitlements, etc., (4) management of equal employment opportunity, social actions, and affirmative action programs, (5) development and execution of labor management relations programs, (6) position management, (7) manning control, and (8) manning document maintenance and authorization accountability. Figure 2-5 shows what the SPMOs do in working with the classification activities on position classification and position management matters.

2-3. Position and pay management. All technician positions are classified in accordance with OPM standards based on the duties and responsibilities required of incumbents to perform the Federal mission. Position descriptions, although similar to those of other Federal

employees, are unique in that they identify many of the diverse duties technicians must perform within the military organization to which assigned. The positions are designed to relate to specific military functions in compliance with the technician legislation, which stated that: "The concept of the technician program is that the technicians will serve concurrently in three different ways: (a) Perform full-time civilian work in their units; (b) perform military training and duty in their units; and (c) be available to enter active Federal service at any time their units are called." The salaries for technicians are paid in accordance with the appropriate grade on the General Schedule or area Federal Wage System, as are other Federal civilian employees, and the laws and regulations governing pay of civilian employees are applied in the technician program.

2–4. Standards. Classification standards are designed to apply to all Federal employees, and they are used to classify the positions of all excepted and competitive technicians.

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

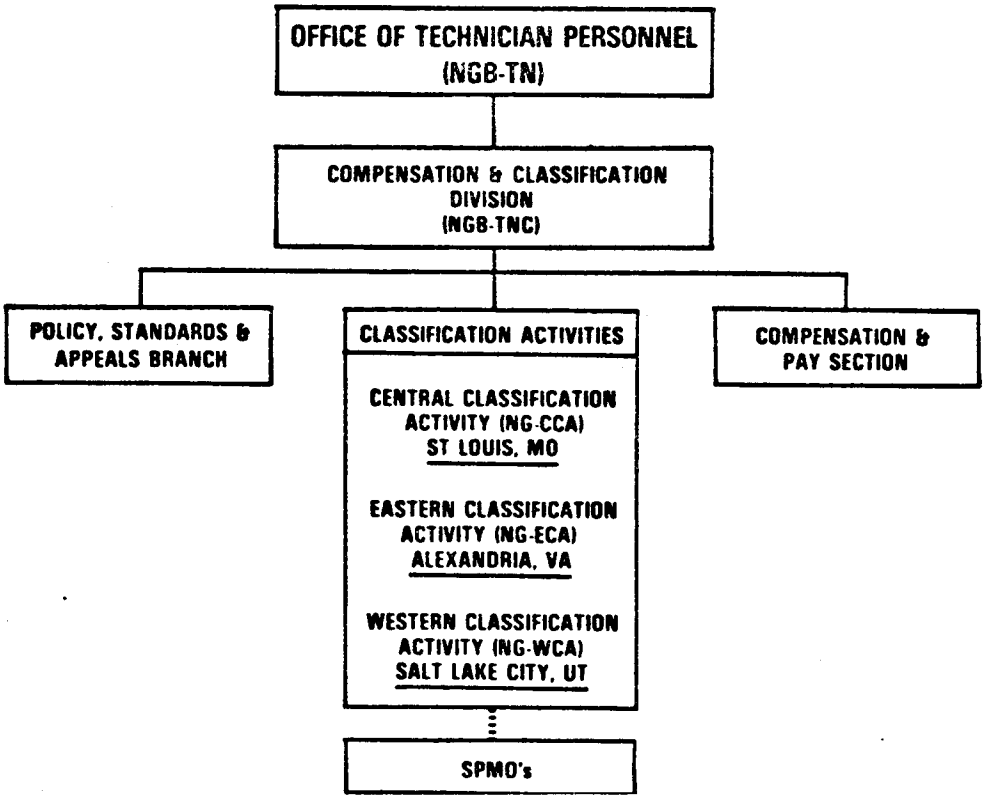

Figure 2-2. NGB-TN Organization Chart(Partial)

NGB CLASSIFICATION ACTIVITIES

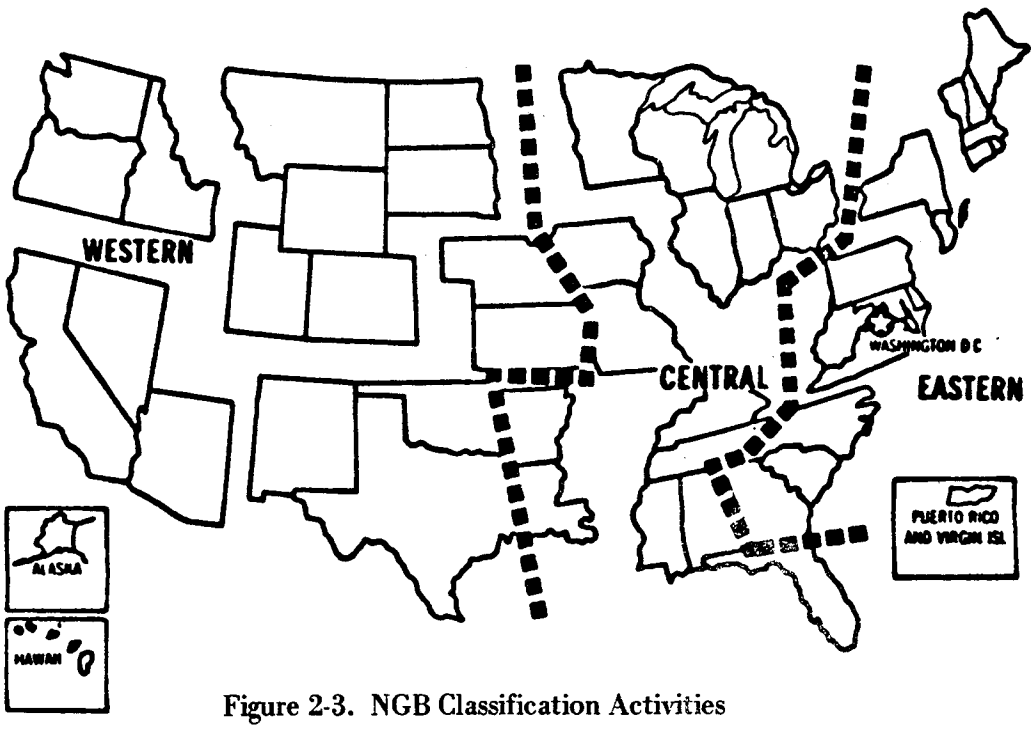

Figure 2-3. NGB Classification Activities

WHAT THE CLASSIFICATION ACTIVITIES DO:

- POSITION CLASSIFICATION/POSITION MANAGEMENT ADVICE AND ASSISTANCE
- ON-SITE DESK AUDITS OF WORK
- ASSIST STATES IN REWRITING POSITION DESCRIPTIONS AND/OR RESTRUCTURING ORGANIZATIONS TO MEET LOCAL REQUIREMENTS
- RECOMMEND SOLUTIONS TO AND ASSIST IN CLASSIFICATION APPEALS
- GENERAL CLASSIFICATION ASSISTANCE
- CLASSIFICATION TRAINING

Figure 2-4. What the Classification Activities Do

- REVIEW STAFFING REQUESTS
- INSURE SUPERVISORS ARE ASSIGNED THE APPROPRIATE NUMBER OF SUBORDINATES
- INSURE ANNUAL REVIEWS ARE HANDLED PROPERLY
- ADVISE TECHNICIANS IN FILING APPEALS MAKING SURE APPEALS MEET CRITERIA AND FORWARD THEM TO THE CLASSIFICATION ACTIVITY

IN ADDITION THE SPMO MAY INITIATE POSITION REVIEWS AND EVALUATIONS
THEY ALSO WORK WITH LOCAL MANAGERS TO SUGGEST THE MIX
OF A VARIETY OF AUTHORIZED POSITIONS IN A CLASSIFICATION PACKAGE

Figure 2-5. What SPMOs Do

RESPONSIBILITIES OF MANAGERS AND SUPERVISORS

1. MAINTAIN WITHIN THEIR AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY AN EFFECTIVE POSITION STRUCTURE CONSISTENT WITH APPROVED MISSION, MANPOWER AUTHORIZATIONS, AND ADMINISTRATIVE AUTHORITIES.
2. ADVISE THE SUPPORT PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT OFFICE AS PROMPTLY AS POSSIBLE OF PROPOSED ORGANIZATIONAL AND POSITION STRUCTURE CHANGES AND FURNISH THEM CHARTS, PROPOSED POSITION DESCRIPTIONS, OR OTHER MATERIAL PERTINENT TO THE NEEDED CHANGE.
3. CERTIFY THE ACCURACY OF EACH POSITION DESCRIPTION FOR WHICH ACCOUNTABLE.
4. FAMILIARIZE THEMSELVES WITH THE BASIC CONCEPTS OF POSITION CLASSIFICATION AND POSITION MANAGEMENT SO AS TO:
   - A. ACCOMPLISH ANNUAL REVIEWS EFFECTIVELY.
   - B. ANSWER EMPLOYEE QUESTIONS CONCERNING CLASSIFICATION.
   - C. ASSIST THE CLASSIFICATION ACTIVITY BY PROVIDING PERTINENT INFORMATION ON PROPOSED CHANGES NECESSARY FOR THE ORGANIZATION.

Figure 2-6. Responsibilities of Managers and Supervisors

Chapter 3
Position Management

3-1. Position management - a process. Position management is the process of organizing and assigning work to and among positions (describing duties and responsibilities) to accomplish mission requirements most effectively and economically.

3-2. Position management - What you do. Position management is what you, as a manager, do when you recommend or decide such things as:

a. How many technicians are needed to accomplish the work under your supervision.
b. Whether or not particular positions are needed.
c. How the positions (work) should be organized.
d. What duties and responsibilities should be assigned to individual positions.

3-3. Position management considerations. The aim of position management is to arrange work in a way that will serve mission needs most effectively and economically, considering such things as:

a. The mission.
Can you get the job done? Can you get it done on time?
b. Work simplification.
Are you using the best methods and work flow?
c. The labor market.
Can you get the people you need?
d. Technician utilization.
Are your technicians using their full capabilities?
e. Motivation.
Do your technicians want to do their best work?
f. Career opportunities.
Does your organization structure provide advancement opportunities?
g. Availability of funds and ceiling.
Are you working with controls established by higher authority?
h. Equal opportunity and affirmative action programs.
Have you followed through on the affirmative action plan to include the Federal Equal Opportunity Recruitment Plan (FEORP), American Indian Program (AIP), Federal Womens Program (FWP), Hispanic Employment Program (HEP), and Handicapped Program?

3-4. Some final words on position management. You can apply good position management techniques to any function, large or small, to a new organization, or to an existing organization which is changing only one position. You need to know that position management is involved in every work change or in absorbing new work or in losing work. These events have position management impact.

Here are some further tips on sound position management.

- You need a clear definition of your functions, objectives, and mission goals.

- All existing positions should be currently and accurately described and classified.

- A position chart is an important tool - it shows organization and work relationships among positions. You should create and maintain one for your organization.

- Use position classification standards and the activity classification specialist to help forecast the classification impact of your distribution/arrangement of duties and responsibilities.

- Consider the impact on grade, promotion opportunities, and homogeneity of work assigned to positions before making any final position management decision.

3-5. Resurgence of position management. There is currently a Federal-wide resurgence of interest in position management. Spiraling payroll costs, coupled with budget restraints, challenge our ability to more efficiently manage our work force. In addition, manpower-related concerns of the Congress and OMB have been manifested in arbitrary controls and reductions. Unless better position management is achieved, NGB anticipates more stringent controls which would result in a further reduction of the authority of individual managers. Responsibilities of managers and supervisors are shown in figure 2-6.

Chapter 4
Position Classification Concepts

4-1. Introduction
This chapter describes the basic concepts of position classification and position management which you need to know as a manager. It describes the classification process, hints on assigning duties and responsibilities to a position, and position description elements; it discusses tips on writing position descriptions and information on the classification of wage grade positions.

4-2. Position classification and standards
Classification to many people is a mysterious procedure understood only by classification specialists. Actually, it is merely a logical grouping of positions by kind of work, level of difficulty and responsibility, and qualifications required. Its purpose is to determine the qualifications and salary to be paid to someone for doing the work described in the position description. The NGB staff as functional managers actually determine the classification of a standardized nationwide position by the duties and responsibilities they assigned to them.

a. Statutory/Congressional requirements and limitations

(1) Basic authority for the establishment of the technician program is contained in Title 32, United States Code, Section 709, Public Law 90-486, The National Guard Technician Act of 1968 (Technician Act). Further, the Classification Act of 1949 requires that NGB have a description prepared for every position and that the position be classified. The basic objective of these and similar requirements is to achieve equal pay for substantially equal work.

(2) The intent of the Congress to support the technician concept is stated in the Technician Act and accompanying Senate Report No. 1446.

(3) Authority vested in the Secretary of the Army by the Technician Act is delegated to the Chief of Staff, Army by General Order. This authority is redelegated to the Chief, National Guard Bureau by memorandum.

(4) Authority vested in the Secretary of the Air Force by the technician Act is delegated by AFR 40-103 to the Chief, National Guard Bureau, who manages the National Guard Bureau technician program through the State adjutants general.

(5) Public Law 94-126 amends Section 8339 of Title 5, United States Code and provides 100% Civil Service retirement credit for technician service prior to 1 January 1969.

(6) Congressional appropriations impose a limitation on end strength for a particular fiscal year. End strength, in turn, affects the man years and funds available to support the technician program.

4-3. The classification process.
a. Who classifies standardized positions and When? The classification of a standardized position begins when the NGB OPR (functional manager) assigns duties and responsibilities to the position. The assignment of duties and responsibilities may be made by consideration of several factors: recommendations from State/units; NGB-sponsored advisory councils/committees; special studies; or, in the case of new positions, as dictated by the Federal mission. The classification is completed when the classification specialist, who is experienced in the classification process and who has delegated authority, officially classifies it.

(1) A position is classified when initially established, or when there is a significant change in duties or responsibilities, or its location in the organization changes. When NGB assigns duties and responsibilities to positions under their program control, they establish the foundation of the classification process. A classification specialist reviews the position description (and the work of the position as necessary) and provides the technical expertise to determine its proper grade, series, and

title for the position NGB has described. This division of authority is simple. NGB has the authority to assign duties and responsibilities, and the classification specialist has the authority to classify positions.

(2) It is important that positions be classified when they are initially established. This process must be completed before action may be taken to fill a position. Classification of a position is prerequisite to identifying qualifications and pay level.

(3) Figures 4-1 and 4-2 show how position descriptions are developed.

b. Who classifies local (non-standard) positions? The classification process for a local exception to standardized position begins when you, as a local manager, change or assign duties and responsibilities to a position under your local control. The kinds and levels of work that you can assign are, of course, limited. One limitation is the kind and level of work assigned for the mission. If your mission, for example, does not require depot level maintenance to be done, you will not assign depot level duties to a position. The same holds true for any other kind of work not required by the Federal mission. A second limitation will be whether or not the OPR "intends" that work be done at your level/unit. You will also be limited by the number of technicians to support the mission. There are never enough people, it seems, to get all the work done that needs to be done. Therefore, you have to set priorities and set up positions to get the most important work done first. NG classification specialists will review the proposed local position description for clarity and completeness (checking with you for any additional information needed). Once you are satisfied that the position adequately describes the work, the classification specialist will determine which published standard applies to the position, and will use the standard for the grade (level of difficulty of work being performed), series (type of work), and title to be assigned to the position. You may also use these standards to help understand the basis for classification of the position.

c. Figure 4-3 shows how classifiers make their determinations by comparing the position description to the standard.

4-4. Hints on assigning duties and responsibilities to a position

Figure 4-4 lists some helpful hints on what does and what does not count in classifying a position. More information about position classification is available in chapter 230, Organization of Government for Personnel Management; chapter 250, Personnel Management in Agencies; chapter 511, Classification Under the General Schedule; supplement 532-1, Job-Grading System (WG) of the Federal Personnel Manual, and NGB technician personnel letters and regulations which can be made available to you by the SPMO.

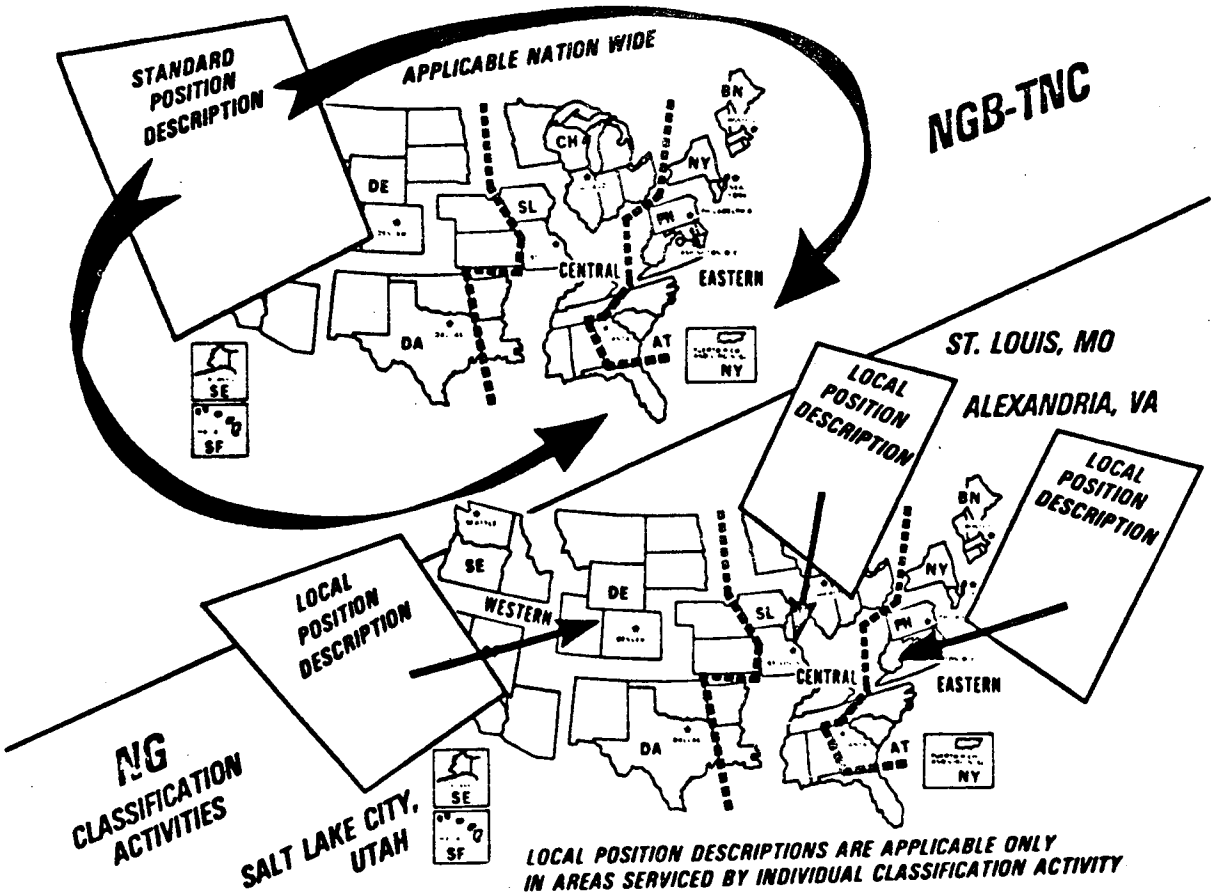

Figure 4-1. Standard/Local Position Descriptions

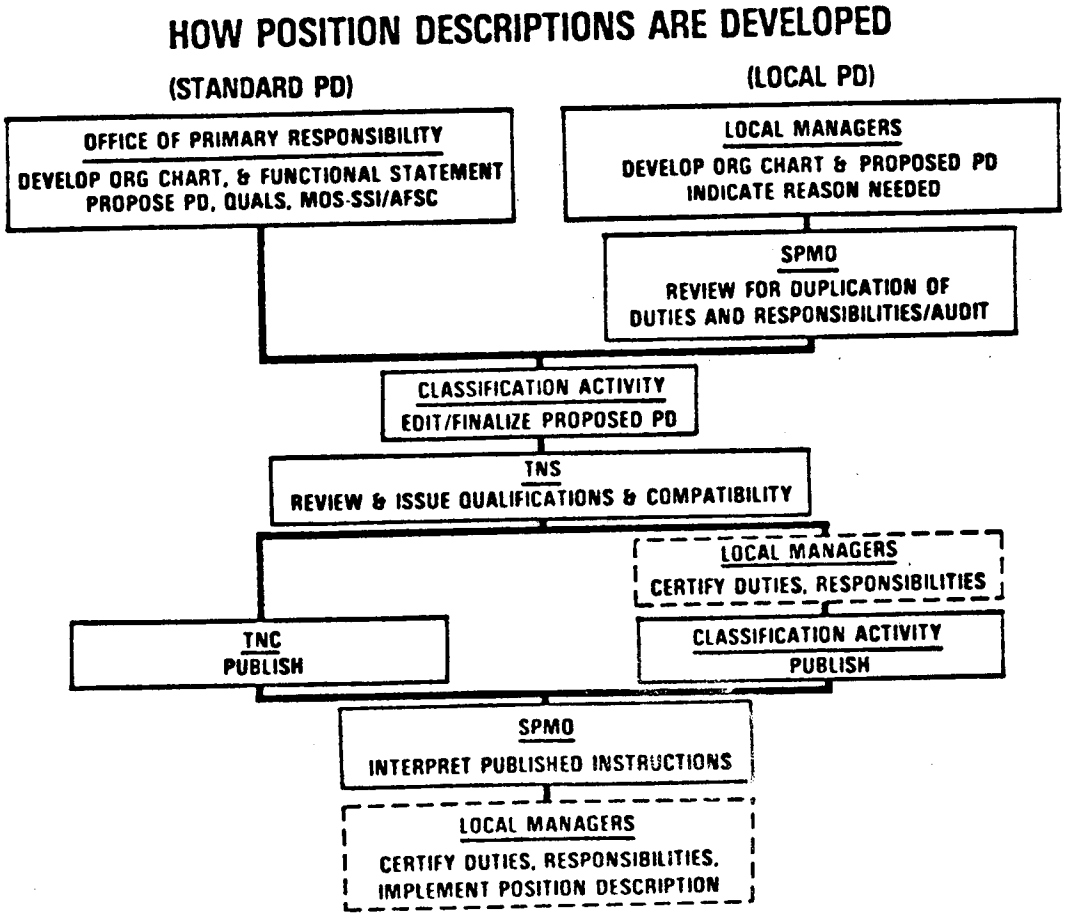

Figure 4-2. How Position Descriptions are Developed

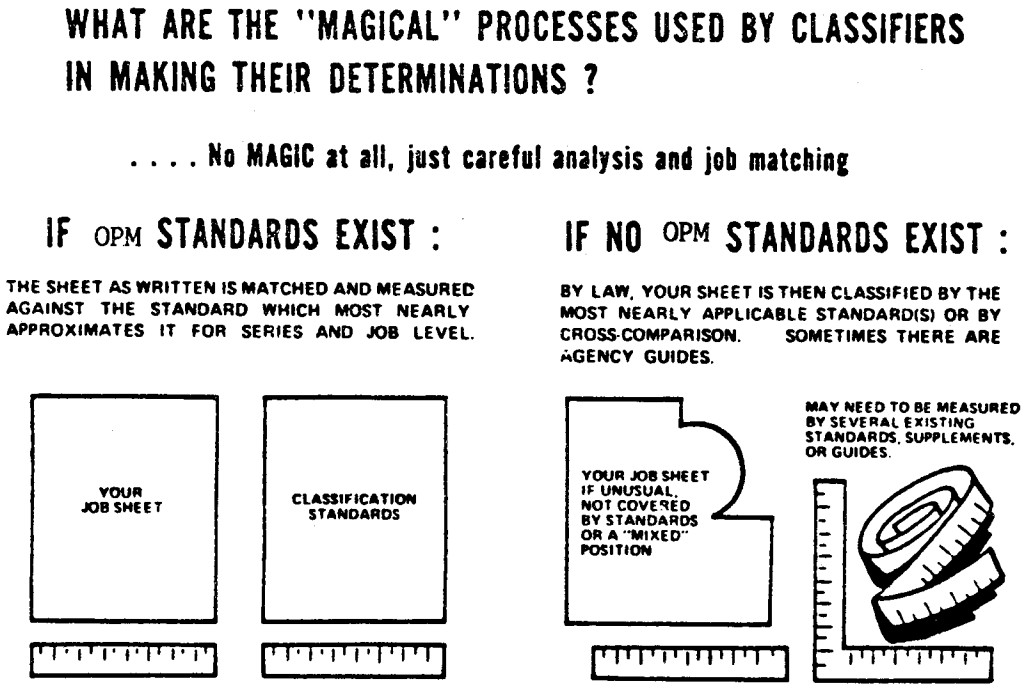

Figure 4-3. Magical Processes

WHAT COUNTS

- o Nature and variety of work
- o Difficulty of work
- o Authority and responsibility exercised
- o Extent of supervisory controls over work
- o Qualification requirements of the work

WHAT DOES NOT COUNT IN CLASSIFICATION

- o Length of service
- o Unusual deligency
- o Overtime
- o Financial need
- o Volume of work
- o Unusual qualifications
- o Relative efficiency
- o Scarcity of new employees
- o Personality

Figure 4-4. Helpful Hints

4-5. Position descriptions.

a. The official description of a position documents its basis for pay; that is, its duties and responsibilities. Each NG position must be classified before a technician may be assigned to the position or paid. You, as a manager, are responsible for ensuring that position descriptions are currently maintained for each technician position under your control.

b. Position descriptions are divided into the following major parts:

- Introduction -- Identifies the organizational location of the position and includes a short statement on the purpose of the position.

- Duties and responsibilities -- Includes the principal or major duties and responsibilities of the position.

- Supervisory controls -- Includes concise explanation of exactly how much supervision and guidance incumbent receives in terms of each function performed.

- Other significant facts -- Includes additional significant facts not covered elsewhere. In wage grade positions, this part is called "Working Conditions and Physical Effort."

4-6. Tips on writing position descriptions.

a. The following are tips you will want to consider when writing a position description.

- Be clear, concise, and descriptive.

- Be specific--avoid the use of ambiguous words such as "assists," "handles," etc. Use words that fully describe the duties performed. For example: classifies, sorts, and routes mail" is precise; "handles mail" is not.

- Provide examples of work if necessary to achieve clarity.

- Use simple terms. There are no magic words. Plain and understandable descriptions are the most effective.

- Prepare objectively, concretely, and precisely a factual word picture of the work which will be or is being done.

- Refrain from copying classification standards. They do not describe any particular job.

- Segregate duties by type of work and arrange by order of importance, according to work processes and other logical sequence.

- Show task time percentage, particularly on any position comprising a variety of tasks at different grade levels.

- Ensure that statements in positions are accurate.

b. You will be required to coordinate, review, and comment on the final version of a local position description. The classification activity reviews your comments and makes appropriate changes to the position description. You will be required to "certify" that the duties and responsibilities are correct before the classification specialist actually classifies the position.

4-7. Federal Wage System (FWS)

a. Wage grade (blue-collar) positions are classified using job-grading standards based upon four job grading factors for non-supervisory positions.

(1) Skill and knowledge
(2) Responsibilities
(3) Working conditions
(4) Physical effort

b. The FWS provides criteria for

determining the relative worth of jobs in terms of grade levels. This basic hierarchy or scale of jobs in turn leads to job grading standards which define grade levels in keeping with the scale. Inherent in each job grading standard is a journeyman grade-level definition. The exact grade level depends upon the place of the occupational series on the basic scale.

c. The emphasis on the Federal Wage System is quite understandable. We all know of the rate of increase in pay in both the public and private sectors in the past several years. As a result, each technician wants to be sure that he/she is receiving equal pay for equal work; OPM/NGB evaluators want to be sure that the salary portion of the budget is consistent with the public interest in accordance with prevailing rates; managers and supervisors want to be sure that their work force is happy and top management is happy too. The pursuit of happiness by these various groups inevitably leads to occasional misunderstanding and leaves managers and supervisors "in the middle."

d. Such misunderstandings evolve into major classification problems whenever there are questions about the nature of the FWS. Such misunderstandings are evident in the various appeals and requests received by NGB-TN. On more than one occasion, management members, seeking upgrade of a position or positions, have indicated that technicians are not "just journeymen", or that positions have been classified at "only a journeyman" level. On other occasions, OPM evaluators have taken exception to positions classified above journeyman levels either because incumbents were not performing all of the duties of the position or because the position was misclassified.

e. An essential ingredient in keeping misunderstandings from developing into major personnel problems is to ensure that all personnel have a firm understanding of the meaning of journeyman. A JOURNEYMAN in any trade or craft is highly skilled in the specialty, has a comprehensive knowledge of the field, is able to perform major repairs and modifications to assigned equipment with a minimum of supervision, does not require technical assistance, and customarily passes on trade knowledge to less skilled or experienced trade workers. Thus, thinking of "just" or "only" on journeyman is contradictory. Figure 4-5 lists the elements of a journeyman level position.

- o REQUIRES SKILL TO HANDLE DIFFICULT PROBLEMS
- o REQUIRES COMPREHENSIVE KNOWLEDGE
- o USES JUDGMENT IN DETERMINING ACTIONS
- o PERFORMS WITH ONLY LIMITED INSTRUCTIONS
- o PLANS AND LAYS OUT OWN WORK
- o CORRECTLY CHOOSES BETWEEN ALTERNATIVES
- o DOES WORK WITH LITTLE OR NO ADVICE
- o WORK IS NOT GENERALLY REVIEWED WHILE IN PROGRESS
- o INDEPENDENTLY DETERMINES NATURE OF ACTIONS

Figure 4-5. Elements of a Journeyman Level Position

4-8. Why and when are desk audits conducted?

Positions in the National Guard are constantly changing. New programs, new tools, different procedures, organization changes, and increased employee skill and knowledge are only a few ways that duties and responsibilities are affected. So, positions are looked at from time-to-time to assure equal pay for substantially equal work. Other examples of when this is done are:

a. A position is identified for audit during a routine classification survey. As required by Public Law, technician positions are reviewed annually. Most jobs are found to be correctly classified even though some position descriptions are updated to show changes in the work that is done;

b. New classification standards are to be applied to a position. There is a continuing program to revise position classification standards to reflect changes in work that is done by the Government. These new standards help keep the classification system current, and are applied as soon as possible after they are received by your classification activity; or

c. Reclassification of the position by a supervisor. In between the annual reviews, a supervisor may decide there have been major changes to a job and requests an audit to determine if reclassification is in order.

4-9. What happens after an audit?

The facts that your technicians provided about their jobs will be discussed first with you, the supervisor. Following this, the grade controlling characteristics of the duties and responsibilities will be examined in relation to the work and the position descriptions. If there is a problem, be assured that you and the SPMO will be given an opportunity to correct it. Likely, your present descriptions will be adequate. One final point. Remember that a desk audit objective is two-fold: to assure that positions are both correctly functioning and correctly classified. Your participation will help meet these objectives.

Chapter 5
Classification Appeals

5-1. General.
A technician (position incumbent) has the right to appeal his/her position within the guidelines this chapter discusses, and the right to appeal may not be surpressed. The more you know about the appeal procedures, the better equipped you will be to advise appellants or potential appellants.

a. Appeal definition. A classification appeal is a written petition made by a technician for a change in the classification of the position he/she occupies.

b. What can be appealed? A technician may, at any time, appeal the grade, title, or occupational series of the position of assignment; or the coverage of the position under the Federal Wage System or the General Schedule.

c. **Issues not appealable.** There are a number of issues that are not appealable, but that may be grieved. The most common issue that arises of this nature is the accuracy of the official position description. This is not an appealable issue because OPM cannot direct an agency to assign duties and responsibilities, and therefore, cannot determine the contents of a position description. OPM indicates that if an appeal is received where the accuracy of the position description is an issue as well as grade, series, or some other appealable matter, a decision will be made on a case-by-case basis as to whether the disagreement is so minor that the appeal may still be processed, or is over a significant matter that must be resolved by NGB before the appeal may be acted on by OPM. Other issues that may not be appealed include details out of the scope of the position description; use of agency classification guides; title of the position, unless specified in the classification standard, and merit pay coverage.

5-2. What can happen.
Everyone, and especially the appellant, must be aware that three things can happen concerning the grade level of a position being appealed.

a. The position can be upgraded,
b. The position could retain the present grade level,
c. It could be downgraded.

5-3. Appeal channel.
Unless the appellant is General Schedule (GS) and appeals directly to the OPM, the appeal will be forwarded through each supervisory level to the SPMO who will forward it through the Adjutant General to the supporting NG classification activity. Wage grade (WG-WS-WL) technicians must appeal to NGB prior to appealing to OPM.

5-4. Comments on appeals.
Reviewing supervisors can comment on the appeal; however, neither the supervisors nor the SPMO have authority to stop the appeal. Also, no more than 15 calendar days should elapse between the time the appeal is initiated and the time it is received in the servicing classification activity. Figure 5-1 shows the timeframes for the appeal process.

5-5. Timeframe.
As previously stated, a technician may file an appeal at any time. However, in order to receive retroactive pay in the case of a downgrade, the appeal must be filed within 15 calendar days of the effective date of the action. The technician may go to OPM first, but OPM advises that the technician has more leverage with the various timeframes involved if he or she goes through the agency appeal procedure first and then to OPM as necessary.

5-6. OPM responses.
If the OPM appeals office feels that a technician does not understand the reason for refusing to consider an appeal or the results thereof, they may call or write a special letter to the technician explaining the decision. OPM will perform desk or telephone audits if there is not enough information in the written record or if a downgrade is indicated by initial

review of the material. This is done to assure that the technician has every opportunity to present the facts supporting his or her case.

5-7. Appeal representation.
Another means for assuring that the technician can present the case is the provision that they may choose a representative to assist in presenting their case. The technician may choose anyone who does not have a conflict of interest in the case and who does not have classification authority over the position in question. This representative has access to all the material of record, but may not participate in any on-site fact-finding conducted by OPM.

5-8. The appeal letter.
An appeal letter must include:

- o Name and address of appellant.
- o Present title, occupational series, grade, and salary of the official position.
- o Title, occupational series, and grade the appellant believes to be proper.
- o Reasons why the present classification is considered to be incorrect.
- o A statement that the official position description is accurate.

Attachments to the appeal letter:

- o Functional statement.
- o Organizational chart which depicts the location of the position being appealed.
- o A copy of the position description.

5-9. Supervisory responsibility.
Supervisors must:

- o Ensure that subordinates are aware of their appeal rights.
- o Resolve questions as to the adequacy and accuracy of assigned duties and responsibilities in the positions description.
- o Promptly notify the support personnel management office of any major changes in the assigned duties.
- o Process the appeal promptly.

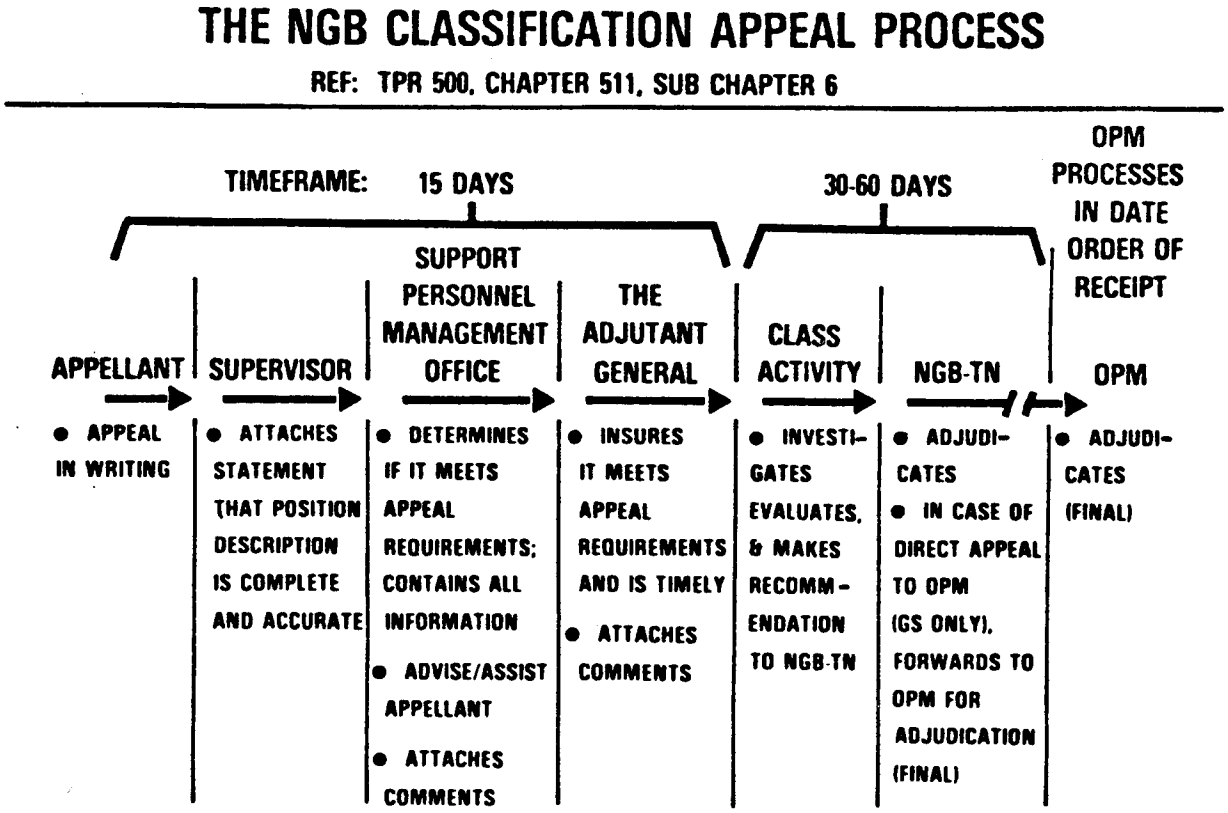

Figure 5-1. The NGB Classification Appeal Process

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