



Secretariat

ST/AI/358
31 July 1989

ADMINISTRATIVE INSTRUCTION

To: Members of the staff at Headquarters

From: The Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management

Subject: PROCEDURES FOR APPEAL OF CLASSIFICATION DECISIONS FOR
POSTS IN THE GENERAL SERVICE AND RELATED CATEGORIES
IN NEW YORK

1. The processing of appeals related to the initial classification exercise for posts in the General Service and related categories in New York, which were dealt with under the procedures established in administrative instruction ST/AI/301 and Add.1 and information circular ST/IC/86/27 and Amend.1 and Add.1-6, will shortly be completed. The purpose of the present circular is to inform the staff of the procedures for appeal of classification decisions for posts in the General Service, Security Service and Trades and Crafts categories at United Nations Headquarters in the context of the maintenance of the classification system after the initial classification exercise.

Background

2. The basic principle of the post classification system remains that it is job oriented. The classification of each post depends on the nature of the duties and responsibilities assigned to it and not on the personal qualifications or experience of the incumbent or of any candidate for the post.
3. The classification system for the General Service category in New York consists of a set of classification standards and related procedures promulgated by the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC). The standards differentiate the seven levels of posts according to the factors of complexity, guidelines, work relationships, responsibility for the work of others, review of work and the knowledge/skills required. A post is analysed by determining which of the seven levels, in terms of each factor, most closely matches the characteristics of the post.
4. The classification systems for the Security Service and Trades and Crafts categories in New York consist of sets of grade level definitions and benchmark job

descriptions at each grade level. The grade level of a post is established by determining which benchmark or grade level definition most closely matches the characteristics of the post.

Transitional measures, 1985-1986

5. Following the completion of the initial classification exercise, transitional measures for staff in the General Service and related categories appointed or reassigned to new functions in 1985 or 1986 were set out in information circular ST/IC/87/59. These transitional arrangements were made to allow such staff to be placed, if appropriate, at a higher level. Each department or office conducted an internal review of all staff in these categories who were so appointed or reassigned in that period. Posts already classified under the initial exercise were not subject to these transitional measures. Only posts that had not previously been classified or that needed to be classified in view of a change of functions (i.e., for which revised post descriptions had been submitted) were eligible for classification review and, hence, for appeal of the classification decision. The deadline for submission of such cases by departments or offices for review was 30 September 1988. The procedure for classification review followed by the Compensation and Classification Service is described in paragraph 9 below.

6. Appeals against the classification of posts that were classified in the context of the transitional measures referred to in paragraph 5 will be taken up by the New York General Service Classification Appeals and Review Committee (the Review Committee), following a review by the Compensation and Classification Service. Such appeals, if not already filed, must be submitted in writing in accordance with the procedures set out in paragraphs 10 to 13 and the annex to the present administrative instruction, by 30 September 1989.

Vacancy management and staff redeployment, 1987 onwards

7. Since 1 January 1987, vacancy management and staff redeployment procedures have been in effect (ST/SGB/221 and ST/AI/338 and Add.2-5). As a result of the initial classification exercise and subsequent changes in some jobs during 1985 and 1986, which were reflected in revised post descriptions that have been classified, an overall post structure has been established for each department or office. Departments or offices may submit a request for a classification review of a post in the following cases:

(a) Where the post is vacant and is being submitted for filling through the vacancy management and staff redeployment procedures;

(b) Where the duties of the post have changed substantially as a result of mandated changes in the work programme, as approved by the General Assembly in the programme budget and as reflected in the authorized staffing tables;

(c) Where the duties of the post have changed as a result of restructuring within the department/office.

In the latter case, all posts within the area where the restructuring occurs will be reviewed by the Compensation and Classification Service in order to determine the effect of restructuring on these posts. Such restructuring is being carried

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out in the context of General Assembly resolution 41/213 of 19 December 1986 and, in particular, recommendation 15 of the Group of High-level Intergovernmental Experts to Review the Efficiency of the Administrative and Financial Functioning of the United Nations. 1/

8. A description of duties and responsibilities is required for each post or group of identical posts, using form P.270. The post description should be prepared and signed by the supervisor (first reporting officer) and by the incumbent of a post, if any, and approved by, or on behalf of, the head of the department or office. In the context of the initial classification exercise, instruction ST/AI/301 permitted classification appeals related to the application of the classification standards and to the correctness or completeness of the post description. In the context of the maintenance of the classification system, the description of the duties of a post should also reflect accurately the programme functions performed by the department or office concerned.

9. A classification review for a post will be conducted independently by two classification officers. The review may result in an upgrading or downgrading of a post, or a confirmation of the present level. The results of the classification analysis will be reviewed and approved by, or on behalf of, the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management. A notice of the classification results will be submitted to the department or office concerned which, in turn, will forward copies of the notice and the post description to the incumbent.

Appeal procedures

10. An appeal against a classification decision may be presented either by the head of the department or office concerned, or by an individual incumbent of the post at the time of its classification, within 60 days of receipt of the classification decision concerning the post. The appeal must be submitted in writing to the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management and must specify the basis of the appeal, in particular why it is considered that the application of the General Service classification standards was in error. The Assistant Secretary-General will request the Compensation and Classification Service to review the case under appeal. If, after that review, the Assistant Secretary-General does not agree with the appeal, he will send the case to the Review Committee for advice.

11. The terms of reference of the Review Committee are set out in the annex to the present instruction.

12. The Assistant Secretary-General will communicate the recommendations of the Review Committee, together with his decision thereon, to the parties concerned.

13. Paragraphs 6, 9 and 10 of instruction ST/AI/301 and the annex thereof concerning appeals procedures are hereby superseded.

Notes

1/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-first Session, Supplement No. 49 (A/41/49).

Annex

Terms of reference of the New York General Service
Classification Appeals and Review Committee

Composition

1. A New York General Service Classification Appeals and Review Committee (the Review Committee) is established with effect from
2. The Committee shall consist of:
 - (a) A chairperson appointed by the Secretary-General on the recommendation of the Joint Advisory Committee;
 - (b) Two members and two alternates representing the administration;
 - (c) Two members and two alternates representing the staff at Headquarters.
3. The terms of office of the members of the Review Committee shall be two years.
4. A secretary shall be assigned to the Review Committee by the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management.

Functions

5. The Review Committee shall review all appeals pertaining to classification decision of posts in the General Service and related categories at United Nations Headquarters. Such appeals shall relate to the application of the classification standards and the correctness or completeness of the post descriptions.
6. The Review Committee shall make recommendations to the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management on all cases referred to it for review and shall, as necessary, keep under review the list of benchmark post descriptions.
7. The Review Committee shall establish its own procedures. It shall determine the information it requires to carry out its tasks in addition to the written submissions of the party registering the appeal. At the request of any of the members, the Committee may invite a member of the Compensation and Classification Service, Office of Human Resources Management, or any other staff member to provide any information it may require.
