

March 11, 2011

TO: Amy Achilles, Council Representative  
Stacie Leanos, Council Representative  
Washington Federation of State Employees (WFSE)

FROM: Teresa Parsons, SPHR  
Director's Review Program Supervisor

SUBJECT: Gary Dale v. Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS)  
Allocation Review Request ALLO-10-028

On January 11, 2011, I conducted a Director's review telephone conference regarding the allocation of Mr. Dale's position. Both you and Mr. Dale participated in the Director's review conference, as well as Council Representative Stacie Leanos, WFSE. Robert Swanson, Classification and Compensation Specialist, represented DSHS. Additionally, Brenda Moen, Human Resources Manager at Rainier School, Vicki Chambers, Human Resources Consultant, and Reagan Charuhas, Quality Assurance Staff Safety Program Director at Rainier School, participated in the conference as well.

### **Director's Determination**

This position review was based on the updated Position Description Form (PDF) for Mr. Dale's position, received in DSHS's Classification and Compensation Unit on May 3, 2010. As the Director's designee, I carefully considered all of the documentation in the file, the exhibits presented during the Director's review conference, and the verbal comments provided by both parties. Based on my review and analysis of Mr. Dale's assigned duties and responsibilities, I conclude the Administrative Assistant 2 classification best describes the overall duties and responsibilities assigned to his position.

### **Background**

Mr. Dale's position (#E931) is assigned to the Maintenance Department at Rainier School. In March 2005, Mr. Dale's position had been allocated to the Secretary Administrative classification (Exhibit B-3). As part of Department of Personnel's (DOP's) class consolidation, the Secretary Administrative was replaced by the Administrative Assistant 3 (AA 3) class, effective July 1, 2007. As a result, the classification for Mr. Dale's position changed to the AA 3 classification on July 1, 2007. At that time, Mr. Dale had been

reporting to a Washington Management Service (WMS) Band 2 position serving as a Plant Manager (referred to as the Plant Manager 3) in charge of the Maintenance Department. At one time, the WMS Plant Manager (position #FE50) had reported directly to the Assistant Superintendent. However, as reflected on the Plant Manager's 2008 PDF, the Plant Manger later reported to the Professional Support Services (PSS) Director (Exhibit B-5). The PSS Director position later became the Quality Assurance (QA) Staff Safety Program Director (Exhibit B-1-a). In February 2010, the WMS Plant Manager position became vacant, and Mr. Dale's position began reporting directly to the QA Staff Safety Program Director, Mr. Charuhas.

On April 15, 2010, DSHS's Classification and Compensation Unit received an updated PDF for Mr. Dale's position (Exhibit B-2). The updated PDF resulted from DSHS's ongoing effort to review and update all PDFs. After receiving the updated PDF for Mr. Dale's position, Classification and Compensation Manager Pamela Pelton concluded the PDF was vague and needed more clarification. As a result, Ms. Pelton spoke with Brenda Moen, HR Manager at Rainier School, who then discussed Mr. Dale's assigned duties and responsibilities with Mr. Charuhas. In consultation with Ms. Moen, Mr. Charuhas completed a new, updated PDF, received in the Classification and Compensation Unit on May 3, 2010 (Exhibit B-1).

On June 17, 2010, Ms. Pelton issued two allocation determination letters that resulted in a downward reallocation of Mr. Dale's position from the AA 3 classification to the Secretary Senior classification (Exhibits A-1 and B-4). Specifically, Ms. Pelton concluded the majority of work performed was "varied secretarial duties in support of the activities of [Mr. Dale's] immediate supervisor's position [vacant WMS, Plant Manager 3], the PSS Director and section staff (Exhibit B (R) – 4, page 4). Further, Ms. Pelton concluded Mr. Dale's responsibilities were "not a major element of a substantive nature of the Plant Manger 3 or delegated from the PSS Director's position . . ." (Exhibit B-4, page 5). Therefore, Ms. Pelton determined the duties and responsibilities assigned to Mr. Dale's position did not meet the criteria for allocation to the AA 3 classification, and she reallocated his position downward to the Secretary Senior classification. Mr. Dale's salary was "Y-rated," and he continued to be compensated at the same dollar amount.

On July 8, 2010, Mr. Dale requested a Director's review of DSHS's allocation determination.

### **Summary of Mr. Dale's Perspective**

Mr. Dale asserts that his duties and responsibilities have not changed except that he now reports directly to the QA Staff Safety Program Director (formerly the PSS Director). Mr. Dale contends that he continues to perform administrative, office management, and secretarial assistance to the Maintenance Department at Rainier School. Mr. Dale describes the majority of his work as prioritizing and entering maintenance work orders into the computer system so maintenance staff can go out and perform the work. Mr. Dale further states that he organizes, coordinates, and manages all of the office functions for the Maintenance Department. Mr. Dale asserts his position should remain allocated to the AA 3 classification.

### **Summary of DSHS's Reasoning**

DSHS asserts Mr. Dale's position had not been delegated work appropriate to be performed by his supervisor, formerly the WMS Plant Manger 3 and more recently the QA Staff Safety Program Director. DSHS asserts the QA Staff Safety Program Director has not delegated administrative or program responsibilities to Mr. Dale's position, noting that Mr. Dale does not have signature authority. Instead, DSHS contends Mr. Dale's position provides clerical and secretarial support to the QA Staff Safety Program Director, the shop supervisors, and the Maintenance Department as a whole. DSHS asserts Mr. Dale's duties and responsibilities fit within the class series concept and definition of the Secretary Senior classification.

### **Rationale for Director's Determination**

The purpose of a position review is to determine which classification best describes the overall duties and responsibilities of a position. A position review is neither a measurement of the volume of work performed, nor an evaluation of the expertise with which that work is performed. A position review is a comparison of the duties and responsibilities of a particular position to the available classification specifications. This review results in a determination of the class that best describes the overall duties and responsibilities of the position. Little-Stamper v. Washington State University, PAB Case No. 3722-A2 (1994).

### **Duties and Responsibilities**

The 2005 PDF and the updated PDF, date stamped April 15, 2010, summarize the scope of work for Mr. Dale's position as performing administrative and secretarial support duties for a manager or administrator (Exhibits B-3 and B-2). The PDF, date stamped May 3, 2010, which is the basis for the downward reallocation of Mr. Dale's position describes the position's scope of work as follows (Exhibit B-1):

As the Administrative Assistant 3 of an institution the scope of work includes, but is not limited to: performing administrative, office management duties in addition to secretarial functions for the Services for the purpose of facilitating the supervisor[']s and/or staff members[']own work and relieving the supervisor and/or staff members of the day-to-day clerical detail; applies knowledge of supervisor[']s and/or staff members[']work commitments including status of projects and nature of contacts. Secretarial duties including scheduling meetings, taking notes and transcribing minutes, screening calls and visitors, typing reports/correspondence, etc.

The May 3, 2010 PDF further describes the majority of assigned duties and responsibilities as follows (Exhibit B-1):

75% The Secretary will prepare reports and/or proposals; attend meetings taking minutes and maintaining as appropriate; modifies work flow

processes to achieve efficient use of space, equipment and personnel; serves as liaison between supervisor and other staff members, transmitting assignments and requesting [status] information; provides direct secretarial support to supervisor; coordinates office operations; coordinates arrangements for meetings. Maintain ongoing system for obtaining and tracking information. Schedule appointments for maintenance staff.

- 20% Develop/maintain timekeeping system ensuring Daily Attendance Records [DAR] and leave usage is accurate. Input work orders as well as completion dates. Complete pay vouchers for contracted professional services and forward billing to appropriate department for payment. Ordering/receiving supplies/equipment. Remain current in all required Rainier School Training. Compose memos, answer telephones and take messages.

During the Director's review conference, Mr. Charuhas indicated that the Maintenance Department is under his direction and that he assumed the responsibilities of the former WMS, Plant Manager 3 position. Mr. Charuhas is not physically located in the same office as Mr. Dale, and there is no administrator onsite. There are shop supervisors who supervise approximately 56 maintenance staff in total. The shop supervisors are assigned to a particular shop, based on the type of maintenance, but some shops do not have a supervisor.

Mr. Charuhas indicated that he does not require direct secretarial support from Mr. Dale's position. For example, Mr. Charuhas explained he does not ask Mr. Dale to maintain his calendar, schedule appointments for him, or prepare correspondence for him. Instead, Mr. Charuhas stated that he relies on Mr. Dale to coordinate the day-to-day operations of the maintenance office, since Mr. Charuhas is not located in that office. Mr. Charuhas described the day-to-day office functions as overseeing the incoming maintenance and repair work orders, as well as prioritizing some of the work orders. Mr. Dale stated that he assigns a priority code for every work order before he enters the work orders into a maintenance software program. This relieves the supervisor of having to prioritize the maintenance requests coming into the office, which is supported by Mr. Dale's performance expectations indicating he "establishes and maintains schedules of priority" (Exhibit A-6). Mr. Dale described the priority coding for maintenance work as follows:

1. May pose a health or safety issue and requires a response within 1 – 24 hours;
2. Important but not urgent and requires a response within 1 – 48 hours;
3. Normal or routine maintenance;
4. Maintenance to be performed when staff has time to do the work.

In general, Mr. Dale stated the majority of his time is spent taking phone calls for requested maintenance and repairs and prioritizing and entering work orders in the system so the maintenance crew can go out and perform the work for the situations that arise. Mr. Dale indicated he enters new preventive maintenance functions into the system, which become

automatically scheduled as regular ongoing maintenance. Mr. Dale prints out coversheets for the work orders as well as the weekly routine/preventive maintenance functions. The maintenance supervisors pick up the coversheets from the maintenance office and decide how to distribute the work among staff. Once the work orders are complete, Mr. Dale closes them out in the computer system.

In addition, Mr. Dale indicated he completes the Daily Attendance Records (DARs) for maintenance staff. Mr. Charuhas acknowledged Mr. Dale tracks and processes DARs and leave slips for all maintenance staff with the exception of staff on alternate assignment from another department. However, both Mr. Dale and Mr. Charuhas clarified that Mr. Dale does not have the authority to approve or sign leave slips. Mr. Dale also tracks and coordinates training needs for all maintenance staff; processes paperwork for personnel actions, such as staff transfers, resignations, or new hires; tracks evaluation due dates on a spreadsheet; informs supervisors when evaluations are due; and follows up with supervisors to ensure timely evaluations occur. Mr. Dale then provides a report to Mr. Charuhas so he can complete his own report. In performing these functions, Mr. Dale may coordinate with other departments like Staff Development or HR (Exhibit A-8). Mr. Charuhas acknowledged either he or one of the shop supervisors would need to perform these functions, if not performed by Mr. Dale.

Mr. Dale's other duties include screening and distributing mail, notifying all maintenance staff about important communications, maintaining an emergency telephone list, scheduling and arranging meetings that include all shops as needed, and scheduling the conference room for internal and external use. Mr. Dale orders office and toiletry supplies for the Maintenance Department by determining the need and preparing the requisition for approval and signature by one of the maintenance supervisors or Mr. Charuhas. The maintenance supervisors order materials specifically needed to accomplish the maintenance work. At times, Mr. Dale may assist the maintenance supervisors by preparing memos or other correspondence.

In addition to the PDFs, Mr. Dale provided copies of his Performance Development Plan (PDP) expectations. The PDP expectations for April 2010 through April 2011 reflect the same expectations documented in 2005 – 2006 by Mr. Dale's former supervisor, the WMS Plant Manager 3 (Exhibits A-6 and A-7). Despite the same description of expectations, Mr. Charuhas acknowledged Mr. Dale may not have the full scope of authority he had under his previous supervisor. Mr. Charuhas emphasized that he or one of the shop supervisors retained approval and signature authority for items such as supply orders or leave approval. Mr. Dale also commented that he did not maintain and monitor all expenditures for the Maintenance Department, as indicated in the PDP expectations. Rather, he clarified that he forwarded vendor invoices to Accounting for payment. Mr. Dale also confirmed that supplies and materials other than office or toiletry supplies are ordered directly by the shop supervisors. In reaching my decision, I reviewed the documents describing Mr. Dale's duties and responsibilities in conjunction with the comments from the parties during the Director's review conference.

When comparing the assignment of work and level of responsibility to the available class specifications, the class series concept (if one exists) followed by definition and distinguishing characteristics are primary considerations. While examples of typical work identified in a class specification do not form the basis for an allocation, they lend support to the work envisioned within a classification.

The class series concept for the **Secretary** classifications reads as follows:

In support of a supervisor and/or staff members, provides secretarial services and assistance for the purpose of facilitating the supervisor's and/or staff members' own work and relieving the supervisor and/or staff members of day-to-day clerical detail. Applies knowledge of supervisor's and/or staff members' work commitments including status of projects and nature of contacts. Secretarial duties include making travel arrangements, scheduling meetings, taking notes and transcribing minutes, screening calls and visitors, keeping supervisor's and/or staff members calendar(s) and committing supervisor's and/or staff members' time.

The **Secretary Senior** definition includes the following:

Perform complex secretarial duties such as independently planning, organizing and prioritizing work . . . compiling reports . . . establishing office procedures, standards, priorities, and deadlines, and coordinating office operations. Positions initiate action to ensure work unit and/or office goals are met and have frequent contacts with clients . . . staff members from other departments . . .

Assignments and projects are of a complex nature. Independent performance of complex secretarial assignments requires substantive knowledge of a variety of regulations, rules, policies, procedures, processes, materials, or equipment. Problems are resolved by choosing from established procedures and/or devising work methods. Guidance is available for new or unusual situations. Deviation from established parameters requires approval. Work is periodically reviewed to verify compliance with established policies and procedures.

The PDF DSHS used to reallocate Mr. Dale's position contains some of the duties described by the Secretary class series concept and Secretary Senior definition. For example, Mr. Dale has been tasked with coordinating the day-to-day office operations for the Maintenance Office. However, the PDF also contains aspects of work described in the Administrative Assistant classes. For example, the position's scope of work states that Mr. Dale's position performs "administrative, office management duties in addition to secretarial functions." Further, duties included in the work described as 75% state that his position "modifies work flow processes to achieve efficient use of space, equipment and personnel; serves as liaison between supervisor and other staff members, transmitting assignments and requesting [status] information . . ." (Exhibit B-1). In addition, Mr. Charuhas indicated

he does not require direct secretarial support from Mr. Dale's position. Overall, the focus of Mr. Dale's position does not involve making travel arrangements, scheduling meetings, taking notes and transcribing minutes, screening calls and visitors, keeping supervisor's or staff members' calendars and committing supervisor's or staff members' time, as included in the Secretary class series concept.

Rather, Mr. Charuhas indicated he relies on Mr. Dale to coordinate the day-to-day operations of the maintenance office since Mr. Charuhas is not located in the maintenance office. Mr. Dale is the first point of contact in the maintenance office and coordinates office operations to facilitate the work for 56 maintenance workers located in different shops, depending on the type of maintenance. In processing the maintenance work orders, he assigns a priority code and enters the information into a computer system. The examples of work he provided show interactions with other departments to facilitate the best method for processing maintenance work orders at Rainier School. In addition, Mr. Dale tracks and coordinates training needs for all maintenance staff, processes paperwork for personnel actions, tracks evaluation due dates and reminds supervisors when evaluations are due, and coordinates these functions with Mr. Charuhas or the HR/Staff Development Office (Exhibit A-8).

Both the Personnel Appeals Board (PAB) and the Personnel Resources Board (PRB) have addressed the concept of best fit. In Allegri v. Washington State University, PAB Case No. ALLO-96-0026 (1998), the Board noted that while the appellant's duties and responsibilities did not encompass the full breadth of the duties and responsibilities described by the classification to which his position was allocated, on a best fit basis, the classification best described the level, scope and diversity of the overall duties and responsibilities of his position. Salsberry v. Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission, PRB Case No. R-ALLO-06-013 (2007).

The **Administrative Assistant 3 (AA 3)** definition states that positions "perform varied administrative and secretarial support duties or positions are responsible for one or more major program activities under a second line supervisor." The AA 3 distinguishing characteristics include the following:

Positions are delegated higher-level administrative support duties or positions are delegated one or more major program activities that would be performed under a second-level professional supervisor, manager or administrator in WMS Band II or above . . . Only one position will be allocated to an individual second-line supervisor for those positions performing one or more major program activities.

A major program activity is defined as a function that is a major element of the supervisor's job. The duty must stand alone and would create significant adverse consequences if poorly performed. . . .

Higher-level administrative duties are duties of a substantive nature that are appropriate to be performed by the supervisor, manager, administrator, or professional level employee but have been delegated to the administrative assistant to perform. Areas may include but are not limited to, the following: budget development and/or management, expenditure control, office space management, equipment purchases, budget development and/or management, public relations, personnel administration, records management, and report preparation.

Incumbents in these positions represent the supervisor's and/or unit's goals and interests and provide interpretation or explanation of the supervisor's policies or viewpoints.

Mr. Dale's position performs administrative support duties. However, Mr. Dale's level of administrative support for the majority of duties performed does not reach the level anticipated by the AA 3 distinguishing characteristics. For example, while Mr. Dale's position coordinates and prioritizes the maintenance work orders, he indicated the shop supervisors determine how to distribute the work. Similarly, the shop supervisors make decisions when ordering supplies or equipment used to accomplish the maintenance work. Further, although Mr. Dale tracks and coordinates time and attendance records, as well as other personnel-related actions, he has not been delegated the authority to approve these actions on behalf of Mr. Charuhas or the shop supervisors. Overall, Mr. Dale's position has not been fully delegated the level of authority or autonomy consistent with the AA 3 classification.

The **Administrative Assistant 2 (AA 2)** definition states positions "[p]rovide administrative and staff support services for a section or unit with delegated authority to act in supervisor's absence in areas of substance." The AA 2 distinguishing characteristics include "the delegation of authority to act for or in the regular place of the superior in substantive areas . . ."

Mr. Dale's position provides administrative and staff support services for the Maintenance Department, which is under Mr. Charuhas' authority and area of responsibility. Mr. Dale's position establishes and maintains schedules of priority when processing maintenance work orders. Mr. Charuhas is not physically located in the maintenance office, and he relies on Mr. Dale to coordinate the day-to-day office operations, which also includes tracking, coordinating, and processing personnel-related functions. This is further supported by Mr. Dale's examples of work (Exhibit A-8). Although Mr. Dale performs some duties that also align with the Secretary Senior classification, the Administrative Assistant 2 classification best describes the level, scope and diversity of the overall duties and responsibilities assigned to his position.

### **Appeal Rights**

RCW 41.06.170 governs the right to appeal. RCW 41.06.170(4) provides, in relevant part, the following:



An employee incumbent in a position at the time of its allocation or reallocation, or the agency utilizing the position, may appeal the allocation or reallocation to . . . the Washington personnel resources board . . . . Notice of such appeal must be filed in writing within thirty days of the action from which appeal is taken.

The mailing address for the Personnel Resources Board (PRB) is P.O. Box 40911, Olympia, Washington, 98504-0911. The PRB Office is located at 600 South Franklin, Olympia, Washington. The main telephone number is (360) 664-0388, and the fax number is (360) 753-0139.

If no further action is taken, the Director's determination becomes final.

c: Gary Dale  
Robert Swanson, DSHS  
Lisa Skriletz, DOP

Enclosure: List of Exhibits

**Gary Dale v. Social and Health Services**  
**ALLO-10-028**

A. Gary Dale's Director's Review Request Form  
Union Exhibits Booklet

1. Downward reallocation letter June 17, 2010
2. Allocation determination letter June 17, 2010
3. Position Description Form (PDF) May 3, 2010
4. Updated PDF dated April 15, 2010 (unsigned-provided to employee as current)
5. Previous PDF March 2005
6. Performance and Development Plan (PDP) Expectations April 12, 2010
7. Performance and Development Plan (PDP) Expectations November 22, 2006
8. Electronic mail messages between employee, supervision and co-workers describing work duties assigned and carried out regularly.

B. DSHS's Rationale for Allocation Decision  
Exhibit Booklet

1. Position Description Form (PDF) May 3, 2010
  - a. Organizational Chart
2. Updated PDF dated April 15, 2010
3. Previous PDF March 2005
4. Allocation determination letter June 17, 2010
5. WMS Plant Manager Supervisor's PDF –July 30, 2008 – Position #FE50
6. Secretary Class Series Concept
7. Secretary Senior Class Specification
8. Administrative Assistant 3 Class Specification

C. Administrative Assistant 2 Class Specification