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DEAN S. RUNYAN,

Appellant,

v.

Secretary, DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL  
RESOURCES, and Secretary,  
DEPARTMENT OF EMPLOYMENT  
RELATIONS,

Respondents.

Case No. 90-0234-PC

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DECISION  
AND  
ORDER

This matter is before the Commission for review of a reclassification denial. The parties agreed to the following issue for hearing:

Whether respondent's decision denying appellant's request for reclassification of his position from Automotive Mechanic 2 to Automotive Mechanic 3 was correct.

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. The definition statements for the Automotive Mechanic 2 and 3 classifications read as follows:

Automotive Mechanic 2

This is very responsible maintenance and repair work performed on motor vehicles. Employees in this class are required to perform major overhauls to drive trains and gasoline and/or diesel powered engines. Positions allocated to this class may be found in automotive shops working with mechanics at both the same or higher levels guiding other automotive mechanics in a shop not equipped to handle major overhauls, or may be found working alone in a shop equipped to handle major overhauls, or may be found working alone in a shop equipped to handle major engine overhauls and drive train repairs. Work is performed independently with supervision limited to reviews of the mechanic's progress and quality of work being performed.

### Automotive Mechanic 3

This is lead automotive maintenance and repair work. Employees in this class carry operational responsibilities for an automotive shop, including reviewing work and advising other automotive mechanics on special repair problems. Positions identified at this level are distinguished from other levels in the series by the fact that (1) they spend the majority of their time performing major overhauls on engines and drive trains, and (2) they have leadwork responsibility for other automotive mechanics. Work is performed under the general direction of an automotive shop supervisor, or higher level maintenance supervisor.

2. One of the work examples listed in the Automotive Mechanic 3 specification is: "Determines repairs needed and makes work assignments."

3. At all times relevant to the proceeding, the appellant has performed motor vehicle maintenance and repair work for DNR's Southern District Office. Appellant's first line supervisor has been William C. Jaeger, a National Resources Supervisor.

4. Prior to July of 1989, the leadworker for the Southern District's service shop was Louis Spink, Auto Mechanic 3.

5. Mr. Spink retired in July of 1989 and instead of refilling the position at the Auto Mechanic 3 level, the respondent used the position for hiring additional clerical support for the Southern District.

6. Since July of 1989, the appellant has picked up the repair and maintenance work previously performed by Mr. Spink.

7. For the most part, the appellant's duties are accurately described in a position description dated March 13, 1990, which includes the following listing of goals and worker activities.

- 70% A. Supervises the repair and preventive maintenance at a major service shop at Nevin
- 50% A.1 Perform repair and preventive maintenance on up to 100 cars, 40 trucks, and various other heavy equipment as caterpillars, tractors, trailers, etc.

- 10% A.2 Prepare and is responsible for all reports and records pertaining to the service shop as preventive maintenance reports, work orders, individual car and truck files, etc.
- 5% A.3 Perform repairs on light equipment as power tools, lawn mowers, garden tractors, etc.
- A.4 Keeps tools and equipment in good repair and shape.
- A.5 Prepares cars, trucks and heavy equipment for trade-out.
- A.6 Maintains an orderly and clean shop.
- A.7 Order garage supplies as oil, grease, tires, spark plugs, etc., and keep an inventory of such supplies ordered.
- 15% B. Supervise the construction of specialized equipment or part needs for the Southern District
  - 15% B.1. Fabricates specialized equipment and parts as automatic fish feeders, radio mounts, self-cleaning screens, etc.
  - B.2 Maintain material inventory needed for welding and other metal work.
  - B.3 Perform gas torch and arc welding.
- 10% C. Supervise the use of the carpenter and building maintenance shop
  - 5% C.1 Fabricates specialized equipment constructed of wood as stream shockers, fish measuring devices, educational displays, etc.
  - C.2 Perform minor building maintenance repairs.
  - C.3 Order supplies and maintain inventory.
  - C.4 Maintain an orderly and clean shop.
- 5% D. Assist in other District operations activities
  - D.1 Drive trucks and heavy equipment on habitat projects.
  - D.2 Haul fish for stocking.
  - D.3 Assist in electrofishing surveys.
  - D.4 Set and lift nets during fish surveys.

8. In addition to these responsibilities described in finding 7, the appellant spends approximately 5% of his time as the Southern District representative on the Statewide Fleet Committee, in helping to establish an annual training session for auto mechanics statewide, and working on auctions of surplus motor vehicles.

9. Appellant also provides training to DNR employes who use the service shop or carpentry shop on the proper use of shop tools and equipment. These employes include LTE's, a technician, supervised by Mr. Jaeger, who is responsible for maintenance and construction of electro-fishing equipment, and members of the district operations crew who carry out maintenance on heavy equipment, especially during the winter months. Name of these individuals are classified in the Automotive Mechanic series.

10. Leadwork refers to assigning, reviewing and evaluating the work of permanently assigned staff.

11. The appellant does not serve as a leadworker for other employes.

12. The only Automotive Mechanic 3 position which does not have leadwork responsibility over another Auto Mechanic position is the Herbert Casey position at the Kettle Moraine State Forest - South Unit. The 1984 position description for Mr. Casey's position includes the following position summary:

The automotive mechanic conducts corrective and preventative maintenance on heavy equipment, trucks and small engines in the Southeast District. Keeps maintenance records on this equipment. Orders parts and tools to provide proper care of equipment. This position is the lead worker for an LTE 4 months per year and a Ranger 1 when assigned to work with the mechanic (about 20% of R1's time).

13. The Department of Natural Resources has initiated review of the proper classification of Mr. Casey's position by requesting an updated position description from his supervisor. As of the date of hearing, a revised position description had not been received.

#### CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

1. This matter is properly before the Commission pursuant to §230.44(1)(b), Stats.

2. Appellant has the burden of proving that respondents erred in not reclassifying the appellant's position from Automotive Mechanic 2 to Automotive Mechanic 3.

3. Appellant having failed to sustain his burden, it must be concluded that the decision not to reclassify of his position from Automotive Mechanic 2 to Automotive Mechanic 3 was correct.

#### OPINION

The burden in this matter is on the appellant to show that his position is more appropriately classified as an Automotive Mechanic 3 than as an Automotive Mechanic 2.. The key distinction between the class specifications for the two levels is the requirement that the Automotive Mechanic 3 "have leadwork responsibility for other automotive mechanics."

The initial issue raised by this appeal is whether the above reference to "automotive mechanics" in the Mechanic 3 level is a generic reference to persons who perform automotive maintenance and repair work or whether the definition refers specifically to employees classified in the Automotive Mechanic series<sup>1</sup>. The appellant is the only employe assigned to the Automotive Mechanic series who is employed at the Southern District office. Therefore, to the extent the Mechanic 3 level definition refers to leadwork responsibility for other employes classified in the Automotive Mechanic series, the appellant would not meet this requirement. The key factor in determining the intent of

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<sup>1</sup>The respondent has taken the position the reference is to employes classified in the Automotive Mechanic series. The personnel specialist who reviewed the appellant's reclassification request offered the opinion that the Casey position described in finding of fact 12 was misclassified and the respondent's have taken steps to have the position reviewed for classification purposes. Given these actions on the part of the respondent and the absence of any other positions classified at the 3 level that do not have leadwork responsibility over another Auto Mechanic position, the Casey position has no value as a comparable for classification purposes.

the specification is that the words "automotive mechanics" found in the definition are not capitalized. If these words had been capitalized they would obviously refer back to the classification series. Because they are not capitalized, they must refer to the the more general category of employes who perform vehicle maintenance and repair.

The next question raised here is whether the appellant has leadwork responsibility over other persons who perform automotive mechanic responsibilities. The record reflects a disagreement between the parties as to what constitutes "leadwork." Appellant's second level supervisor, Gordon Priegel, testified the appellant was a leadworker, even though he was not identified as such in his position description. However, when asked to describe how the appellant exercised "leadwork" responsibility, Mr. Priegel testified it was by giving instructions to other persons who came into the shop in terms of how to use the shop equipment and correcting them when they were using the equipment improperly, i.e. unsafely. Appellant's immediate supervisor, William Jaeger, testified three Technician 1's on the district operations crew who used the shop were not classified as auto mechanics but "under [the appellant's] direction" they were auto mechanics. When asked to describe the appellant's role, Mr. Jaeger described the appellant as the "custodian" of the shop who would show other employes how to use various equipment, would make sure nothing happened to them in terms of their physical safety and would "check on them once in awhile." In contrast, the respondent's sole witness, Sue Steinmetz, a personnel specialist, testified "leadwork" is performed when someone is responsible on an ongoing basis for assigning, reviewing and evaluating the work of permanently assigned staff. The Commission adopts the respondent's definition, rather than the implicit suggestion by ap-

pellant's supervisors that leadwork only requires the training of other employees, because the respondent's definition is more consistent with the Automotive Mechanic 3 work example: "Determines repairs needed and makes work assignments." This result is also consistent with the Commission's decision in Davidson v. DP, 81-291-Pc, 1/20/83. In Davidson, the appellant was found not to be a leadworker as that term was used in the Management Information Technician 4 position standard where she provided training and technical advice for other technicians in the unit but there was no evidence indicating the appellant assigned work or was accountable for the majority of the work of the other technicians.

There is no evidence in the record that the appellant assigns work to any other persons who use the district shops, nor is there evidence indicating he reviews and evaluates the work of those persons. The testimony indicates the appellant's primary role relative to the other employees who periodically use the district shops is to insure the shop equipment is not used in an unsafe manner. Therefore, the Commission must conclude the appellant does not perform leadwork as that term is used in the Automotive Mechanic 3 class specification. This conclusion means the appellant does not meet one of the requirements for classification at the higher level.

During the course of the hearing, the appellant asked questions which called attention to the date the Automotive Mechanic specifications were promulgated (1973) and the wage rates paid to auto mechanics employed in the private sector. Issues of pay inequity and the appropriateness of the class specifications are beyond the scope of the Commission's authority. The Commission does not have the authority to rewrite specifications but must apply the existing standard to the duties and responsibilities of a position to deter-

mine the correctness of the decision being reviewed. Zhe et al. v. DHSS & DP, 80-285-PC, 11/19/81; affirmed by Dane County Circuit Court, Zhe et al. v. PC, 81-CV-6492, 11/2/82.

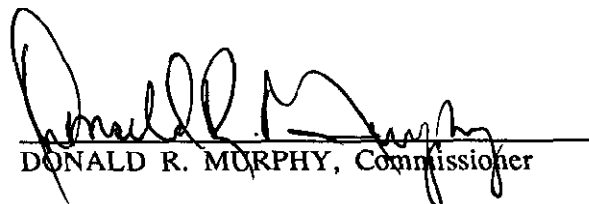
ORDER

The respondents' decision denying the appellant's request to reclassify his position from Automotive Mechanic 2 to 3 is affirmed and this matter is dismissed.

Dated: December 13, 1990 STATE PERSONNEL COMMISSION

  
LAURIE R. McCALLUM, Chairperson

KMS/gdt/2

  
DONALD R. MURPHY, Commissioner

  
GERALD F. HODDINOTT, Commissioner

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