

INCIDENT BUSINESS PRACTICES WORKING TEAM (IBPWT)
AD TASK GROUP – FINAL REPORT
JUNE 1, 2004

Task Group: Interagency AD Pay Plan

Group Leader: Judy Carvelho

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Reporting Period: April 14, 2003 – May 31, 2004

Phase: Final

The Incident Business Practices Working Team (IBPWT) established a task group in 2001 to review the 2001 AD Pay Plan and propose language changes, rate changes, position classification changes, and any condition of hire changes. That task group completed that assignment in December 2001. In 2002 the IBPWT established another task group to provide additional analysis of the AD Pay Plan to review rates and classification of positions. That task group was unable to complete their assignment, so in April of 2003 a second task group was established to complete the tasks requested. This is the final report from that task group. The assignment to this task group was amended February 2004 to only provide an analysis of the classification (hereinafter called 'leveling') of the established AD-1 through AD-5 positions.

Research indicated that a formal leveling process of AD positions was never established. Therefore the task group had to develop a process that would provide fair and equitable treatment to all positions. It was recognized early in the process that utilizing established agency personnel processes would not always be applicable to these efforts, and a combination of all available classification tools would be necessary. In consultation with agency experts, the group made several attempts at leveling efforts before arriving at a final solution.

Once the process was established, 'mini' teams were formed to work on positions by functional area. The resulting documents were reviewed by agency classification specialists for soundness of process and equity in leveling. A large percentage of positions were completed by December 2003, however through discussion with the IBPWT it was agreed to complete the leveling process on all positions before modifying the pay plan.

All 'baseline' leveling documents were completed by March 2004. A call went out for subject matter experts to provide review and comments during April 2004. Their comments and suggestions were reviewed by a smaller team of task group members, (two classification specialists, task group leader, and task group member). Where appropriate and justified, changes were made to the position leveling documents.

LEVELING TOOLS

The task group was unable to locate documentation on previous efforts, therefore relied on a number of tools to assist with this task:

1. Same or similar established positions classified by federal and state governments.
Task group members contacted various state and federal agencies, to obtain

INCIDENT BUSINESS PRACTICES WORKING TEAM (IBPWT)
AD TASK GROUP – FINAL REPORT
JUNE 1, 2004

classified position descriptions that had same or similar job responsibilities as the AD positions. Portions of these classified documents were used in preparation of baseline leveling efforts where appropriate.

2. Department of Labor Wage classification site. Task group members retrieved information from the DOL wage site to use in baseline leveling efforts where appropriate and a match of duties could be made.
3. Position Task Books. Position Task Books were used to obtain duty requirements of the position. This information was then transferred to the baseline leveling documents to establish an official position description to work from.
4. PMS 310-1 and FSH 5109.17. The PMS 310-1 was used to obtain qualification criteria for each position. When the position was not listed in the PMS 310-1, the FSH 5109.17 was referenced. This information was listed on each position description as "Position Needs".
5. Interagency Guides. Interagency Guides were referenced for particulars of a position if the information could not be found elsewhere. When utilized a reference was made on the position description.
6. Interagency Standards for Fire and Fire Aviation Operations 2003. This publication was used as a reference for current operational policies, procedures and guidelines for managing wildland fire and fire aviation operations where applicable.
7. Position Classification Guides. These guides are issued by the Office of Personnel Management and were utilized, where applicable, to evaluate positions beyond the primary standard.
8. Wage System Standard. This guide was utilized for comparison purposes on those positions that were primarily "blue collar" in nature.
9. Primary Standard. This was the main tool utilized on the Factor Evaluation System (FES). Each position was rated against nine FES factors to arrive at an appropriate point value and level. Each of the factors were awarded a point value, then the total points converted to a level based on the conversion chart in the primary standard. These factors are:
 - a. **Knowledge Required By The Position**. Measures the nature and extent of information or facts that a worker must understand to do acceptable work. What kind and level of knowledge/skills are needed and how are they used in doing the work. This also includes special knowledge/skill requirements that are essential to successful performance.
 - b. **Supervisory Controls**. Measures how the work is assigned, what the employee's responsibility is for carrying out the work, and how the work is reviewed. Does the supervisor provide detailed instructions or instructions on only new/difficult aspects or only on objectives, etc; what is the

INCIDENT BUSINESS PRACTICES WORKING TEAM (IBPWT)
AD TASK GROUP – FINAL REPORT
JUNE 1, 2004

- employee's degree of independence; the extent of review on completed assignments.
- c. **Guidelines.** Measures the kind of guidelines used in doing the work and how much judgment is needed to use them.
 - d. **Complexity.** Measures the nature of the assignment, what the employee considers when deciding what must be done, and how difficult and original are the employee's actions or responses. This factor would illustrate how the employee applies the knowledge and skills; do they have little or no choice in how to perform the work or do they develop, analyze, and evaluate information before the work can progress. Is it mastered easily or does the level of difficulty increase as the employee considers differences in courses of action and refines methods or develops new techniques/concepts/theories or programs to solve problems.
 - e. **Scope and Effect.** Measures the purpose of the work and the impact of the work product. What are the objectives to be achieved, conclusions, decisions, etc. Who or what benefits from the employee's work and how is this benefit realized.
 - f. **Personal Contacts.** Measures people contacted and the conditions under which the contacts take place.
 - g. **Purpose of Contacts.** Measures the purpose such as give or exchange information, resolve problems, motivate/influence, justify/defend/negotiate or settle matters, etc.
 - h. **Physical Demands.** Measures the physical demands placed on the employee, how often and how intense is the activity, are special abilities needed, etc.
 - i. **Work Environment.** Measure the physical surroundings in which the employee works and any special safety regulations or precautions.
10. Subject Matter Experts. Extensive Interviews were conducted with subject matter experts to clarify position duties on baseline leveling efforts. Every position was reviewed with a qualified SME providing specific information related to that position responsibilities and the nine leveling factors. A second group of SMEs were provided the opportunity to review and comment on the final leveling documents.

POSITIONS NOT INCLUDED IN THE LEVELING PROCESS

SEC1 Security Specialist Level 1 – According to the 2003 National Interagency Mobilization Guide, this position is “authorized/equipped to make arrests, serve warrants or conduct searches and seizures”. Federal agencies cannot provide federal enforcement authorities to state/local peace officers, or private citizens hired as ADs. However, State/Local peace officers may provide assistance thru use of a service or cooperative agreements where reimbursements are pursuant to the Sisk Act (P.L. 92-82, 16 U.S.C. 551a). If these personnel were to be hired under the AD pay plan they would not be able to exercise their state law enforcement authority or perform any kind of law enforcement activities, not permitted to carry firearms, etc. Therefore, this position was eliminated from consideration in the AD pay plan leveling process, and units should be instructed on how to receive these services thru the service and cooperative agreements process.

INCIDENT BUSINESS PRACTICES WORKING TEAM (IBPWT)
AD TASK GROUP – FINAL REPORT
JUNE 1, 2004

CANH Canine Handler – We were informed in May of 2004 that this position has been dropped from the 2004 pay plan. Therefore was eliminated from our process.

CAMP Camp Crew Boss, Camp Squad Boss, Camp Crew Member – The same mnemonic for these three positions has been used in the previously issued pay plans. We were unable to locate any other mnemonics for these positions. There is a big difference in the duty requirements for these positions, and strongly suggest a separate mnemonic be established and assigned to each.

BUYM Buying Team Member – Through discussion with several subject matter experts this position is required to have some type of state or federal procurement or contracting authority. Federal agencies cannot delegate procurement authority to non-employees. Therefore, this position was eliminated from the leveling process. However, we do understand that buying teams utilize non-procurement personnel in positions such as runners, or ordering clerks. If a casual is hired to fulfill that position, then they must be ordered as a runner or clerk – NOT a buying team member.

THSP Technical Specialists – The difficulty applying any leveling process to these positions is the various interpretations of duty requirements by the agencies. Some agencies require certification processes, others don't. Unless specifically requested, this task group did not apply the leveling process to the many THSP positions created. Personnel with specific requests for a THSP leveling process were also required to provide documentation on duty and position requirements.

Other – Although there are many positions on the mnemonics listing, there a quite a number that have very little (or zero) information available as to duty and position requirements. Therefore, not every position made it thru the leveling process.

RECOMMENDATIONS

When the second task group is formed to apply payment rates, we recommend they take into consideration the total points for each position and not just the level. (Total points are shown in parenthesis on the matrix.)

Prior to hiring units establishing a THSP position, careful consideration should be given to the actual work to be performed that might fit a previously established position.

As position task books are developed/revised, and qualification criteria is developed/revised, the leveling process on the AD pay plan should be applied on an annual or semi-annual basis. Changes occur regularly, and responsive action is required to be fair and equitable.

Position qualification criteria has not kept pace with the increased use of automated systems. Recommend NWCG accelerate their review process.

The Fire Investigator position will be abolished in 2005 and replaced with three levels of fire investigation. The task books and qualification criteria for these positions are now in draft format. Recommend the leveling process be applied to these positions as soon as their documents are finalized.

INCIDENT BUSINESS PRACTICES WORKING TEAM (IBPWT)
AD TASK GROUP – FINAL REPORT
JUNE 1, 2004

CONCLUSION

This has been a very informative and interesting project. When conversing with the various subject matter experts, and others, it became quite evident that the majority of personnel have fixed opinions on the rates of pay that should be applied to casual hires. However, in few cases were they able to justify these opinions with verification of the factors that would substantiate a higher pay rate.

Attached, as a separate document is the position matrix showing the outcome of the leveling process and total points awarded to each position. A copy of every leveling document with our findings will be mailed to you via the standard mailing process.

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