

## Tab B

### CLASSIFICATION GUIDANCE

#### USACE Real Estate Appraisers At Major Subordinate Commands

##### 1. References:

- a. USOPM PCS Appraising Series, GS-1171, November, 1992.
- b. Memorandum, CEHR-E, dated 16 January 2001, SUBJECT: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Position Classification Review.
- c. USACE IG Inspection Report on Position Classification and Staffing Requirements, April 2000.

##### 2. Background Information:

- a. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) currently has a Review Appraiser position in seven MSCs. The Pacific Ocean Division is the exception. Despite geographic differences, MSC Review Appraisers throughout USACE perform similar duties and responsibilities. Positions that primarily perform appraisal and appraisal review duties are classified by reference (a). This guidance should be used as supplemental guidance to Review Appraiser positions that manage MSC Appraisal programs.
- b. Each MSC Review Appraiser oversees three to six district Real Estate appraisal offices, and encompasses projects within six to seventeen states. Some MSCs also have responsibility for appraisal work in foreign countries. The Review Appraisers covered by this guidance manage the MSC appraisal program. This program is an integral but independent function of the Division Real Estate program. In addition to program management responsibilities, MSC Review Appraisers are the central point of expertise for review and approval of appraisal reports for the acquisition, disposal, exchange and lease of real property within the MSC area of operations. These positions manage MSC appraisal program and function as the technical authority to the MSC for appraisal guidance, procedures and programs.
- c. As the result of an EIG review, inconsistencies were noted between MSC Review Appraiser positions. Because of these inconsistencies, Headquarters initiated a review to find out why. Position descriptions were reviewed for all GS-14 MSC Review Appraisers covered by this guidance. Questionnaires were sent to each MSC for additional information. The questionnaires focused on Factor 2, Supervisory Controls, and Factor 3, Guidelines.

### 3. Series and Title Determination:

- a. This position manages the appraisal program for an MSC and its subordinate districts. The incumbent reviews appraisals above the dollar limit delegated to the district when completed by staff and fee appraisers and provides program and policy guidance to ensure compliance with appraisal practices and precedents.
- b. Reference (a) is an occupation-specific classification guide designed to evaluate non-supervisory work that involves appraising and reviewing appraisals of real or personal property or property interests. These positions require technical knowledge and skill in the application of the principles, practices and techniques of appraisal. This standard is used to evaluate full performance level positions at GS-09 and above.
- c. This position should be titled Review Appraiser. This is the appropriate title for all non-supervisory positions in this series primarily responsible for reviewing staff and fee appraisal reports. Review Appraisers analyze appraisal reports to ensure property values are estimated accurately, logically, objectively and with adequate support. They study appraisal reports from district appraisers to ensure compliance with appraisal practices and standards.

### 4. Grade Determination:

Review Appraiser positions are properly classified using reference (a). All nine factors are addressed in the discussion below. A more in-depth analysis is provided for Factor 2, Supervisory Controls; and Factor 3, Guidelines. The discussion below provides information that supports Factor Levels 2-5 and 3-5. Due to differences in MSCs, some Review Appraiser positions may not meet levels 2-5 and 3-5 as described below. This guidance should be applied judiciously to individual positions.

Factor 1 - Knowledge Required by the Position

Level 1-8 1550 points

The duties of this position require mastery of appraisal concepts, principles and methodologies. Review Appraisers at this level appraise and review a broad range of properties with extremely complex characteristics similar to those of a large military base or a variety of diverse recreational, commercial, industrial or residential properties.

This Review Appraiser serves as the technical authority to the MSC and subordinate districts in providing program and policy guidance on the application of new theories and standards to appraisal problems or assignments where conflicts exist between policy and program objectives. The duties of the position require thorough knowledge of Federal and applicable state and local policies, laws, regulations and methodologies pertaining to the appraisal of real property.

The incumbent provides expert advice and guidance to the subordinate districts. Areas of expertise may include the impact of new legislation and policies on current and projected appraisal and realty programs, implementation of new programs and procedures, and use of diverse appraisal methods and techniques to appraise properties with very complex or unique characteristics.

## Factor 2 - Supervisory Controls

Level 2-5 650 points

The incumbent's supervisor considers the work technically authoritative and normally accepts the results without change. The supervisor does not provide technical assistance. The supervisor provides general administrative direction with assignments in terms of broadly defined missions and functions. The supervisor does not formulate and issue the appraisal program or policy guidance. Work products are reviewed for overall impact on the command. The MSC Review Appraisers independently plan and carry out the appraisal and appraisal review program within their respective MSC, and provide program oversight and quality assurance to each District. The supervisor evaluates recommendations for new or altered projects or objectives regarding the availability of resources, and impact on broad program goals. The supervisor may analyze extremely complex, precedent-setting, or controversial appraisal work products for their impact on policies and conflicts with legal premises. Factor 2 meets level 2-5 in most, if not all, MSC Review Appraiser positions.

## Factor 3 - Guidelines

Level 3-5 650 points

The guidelines available for this position are broad, nonspecific policies and objectives that require extensive interpretation, judgment and ingenuity. MSC Review Appraisers interpret appraisal and related Federal and state legislation and agency objectives to develop specific procedures and plans for implementation within their area of responsibility. As program managers for the MSC-wide appraisal program, they evaluate existing appraisal and appraisal review programs and procedures for needed changes. They are the MSC technical authority in the development of appraisal guidelines, procedures and programs for their area of operations. They use judgment and expertise to interpret policies, plans and instructions for appraisal staffs and in preparing and/or reviewing extremely complex or highly controversial appraisals. They issue state-specific, project-specific or action-specific guidance to their districts as the need arises. The significant volume of cost-shared projects, the applicability of state-unique appraisal rules and real estate-specific laws require significant individualization of project and case or assignment guidance.

Each MSC Review Appraiser influences regional and national valuation issues, activities and programs. They are the regional representatives to other agencies, both state and federal. They may serve on national committees to update Corps regulations, procedures and policies. They originate and implement guidance on national programs (i.e. the Recruiting Program) for which USACE is the DOD executive agent, and for project-specific actions such as those implemented by the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA). They provide training to their district appraisers regarding appropriate appraisal techniques and changes in industry standards and guidelines.

The CPEA review included a portion of OPM Appeal Decision Number C-1171-12-01, regarding Factor 3. That position was credited level 3-4, because the appellant used agency procedures and rulings as well as industry appraisal standards, and used initiative and ingenuity

to adapt and modify standard appraisal processes to perform complex or unusual appraisals. The decision stated the position did not meet level 3-5 because the incumbent was not responsible for interpreting appraisal and other related legislation or agency objectives to develop specific procedures and plans to implement them. The appellant in this case did not interpret policies to prepare or review extremely complex or highly controversial appraisals. This particular position did not meet Level 1-8 for Factor 1, and that fact was stated as further evidence that the position did not meet Level 3-5. The MSC Review Appraisers are in fact responsible for interpreting agency policies, plans and instructions for the appraisal staff at their districts. MSC Review Appraisal positions are classified crediting Level 1-8, and this was not in dispute. Factor 3 can be credited level 3-5.

Factor 4 - Complexity

Level 4-5 325 points

The work involves independent technical approval/disapproval of district appraisal determinations involving areas such as large agricultural tracks, complete town sites, public utilities, railroads, military installations, commercial and industrial facilities and navigation projects. The work involves significant departures from established practices and procedures. At this level, employees appraise properties involving a broad range of unusual or controversial characteristics.

Factor 5 - Scope and Effect

Level 5-5 325 points

The work involves resolving critical, controversial and unusual problems referred to the division from the districts or not delegated to the district level. Decisions rendered by the incumbent become Division policy and may contribute to USACE policy as the entire package is forwarded and accepted by USACE headquarters.

Factors 6/7: Personal Contacts & Purpose of Contacts:

Level 3/D 280 points

Contacts are with individuals or groups from outside the employing agency, such as U.S. Air Force, GSA, NASA, DOE, DOI, NPS, USDA, DOJ, EPA and others. In addition contacts with the private sector include appraisers, brokers, attorneys, property owners, or state and local governments, local sponsors of projects, etc.

Contacts are for the purpose of justifying, defending, negotiating and settling appraisal actions involving controversial and significant topics concerning the appraisal decisions of property throughout the division. The persons contacted typically have diverse viewpoints, goals or objectives. Employees are required to achieve a common understanding of the problem and use strong interpersonal skills to arrive at a satisfactory solution. Contacts at this level usually involve active participation in conferences, meetings, hearings or presentations involving problems or issues of considerable consequence or importance.

Factor 8 - Physical Demands

Level 8-1 5 points

Work is primarily sedentary, and requires occasional travel to conduct site inspections.

Factor 9 - Work Environment

Level 9-1 5 points

Work is primarily performed in an office environment.

Total Points: 3790

Range: 3605-4050

Grade: GS-14

5. Final Classification: Review Appraiser, GS-1171-14