Reader’s Guide

For the Review and Feedback Process

For Career Group Descriptions

Thank you for participating in the review and feedback process for draft Career Group Descriptions. Your participation will help validate that the most current occupational source data for the positions in your agency is considered. Please read this document before beginning your review. All comments should be submitted to your Human Resource Office.

Job Organization Structure
What do I need to consider before I begin the review process?

A checklist to help you organize your thoughts and comments is attached. It may also help you to know the following:

- The Commonwealth’s new Compensation Management System introduces the concept of career growth. Career Group Descriptions (CGD’s) give the reader an indication of career paths that are typically associated with a chosen career. More specific Career Progression Models will be developed.

- The CGD’s being produced in this effort are considered to be “transitional documents” in preparation for the implementation of the Reform of the Classified Compensation Plan. Future fine-tuning is planned.

- The current 23 Salary Grades will be collapsed into 9 pay bands. The current 1650 Job Classes and the positions assigned to them will be collapsed into broad Roles within approximately 80 Career Groups based on their new pay band assignment.

- The “crosswalk” described above was included in the recommendations made by the Joint Commission on Reform of the Classified Compensation Plan and was approved by the 2000 Session of the General Assembly. The crosswalk established important developmental parameters for the interagency teams.

What is a Career Group Description?

CGD’s are one of several key tools that managers and human resource professionals will use to assign (allocate) individual positions to an Occupational Family, to a Career Group, and to a Role within that group. In the current system, Class Specifications have been used to determine the assignment of positions to job classes. Career Group Descriptions will replace Class Specifications.

How is a Career Group Description different from a Class Spec?

CGD’s have been designed to communicate a general concept of the nature of work associated with a particular career. They describe a broad range of work related to a career, and identify progressively higher levels (Roles) within a career field. Sometimes, Roles will encompass multiple class series. Career Groups provide lateral and upward movement to other Career Groups.
Career Group Descriptions are much less precise than Class Specifications, which were designed to describe narrowly defined groups of jobs assigned to much narrower pay ranges. Career Group Descriptions enable flexibility, a simplified process for assigning positions to Roles, and they provide a tool that can easily respond to changes that occur within an occupation over time.

- What are Career Groups and Roles?

A Career Group is a sub-group of an Occupational Family. It identifies a specific occupational field common to the labor market. For example, within the Administrative Services Family, you will find Career Groups for Financial Services, Procurement, Policy and Planning, and Human Resource jobs just to name a few. The Commonwealth will have approximately 80 Career Groups in all.

Each Career Group is comprised of a number of Roles. Roles describe a broad group of occupationally related positions that perform a range of work at progressively more skilled or knowledgeable levels. This is because most Roles are comprised of several job classes that perform work in a related field, which were formerly assigned to a number of different salary grades. Within the CGD, each Role is described in a manner that suggests career progression within the same or higher level Role for the same or different Career Group.

All of the positions within a Role will be assigned to the same pay band. The consolidation of the former job classes into the new broader Roles will help provide greater consistency in position allocation for the same or similar work across the Commonwealth. Each pay band is much broader than the current salary grade with a greater than 100% range spread.

- What are Compensable Factors?

The evaluation of jobs for compensation purposes requires an objective set of standards or measurements in order to determine the relative value of related work. These standards, known as Compensable Factors, can be applied to the development of broad groups of jobs (Role) or to the evaluation of a single position that must be allocated to a Role.
Compensable Factors describe the nature of the work in terms of complexity, results (or outcomes), and accountability. These factors help distinguish one Role from another and provide broad descriptive parameters for the range of work within a Role. Together with the Role Description, the factors serve as the basis for allocating a position to a Role.

**Complexity of Work**

This factor describes the nature of work in terms of resources (e.g., machines, manuals, guidelines and forms) used or encountered and the processes applied. This factor takes into account the number and variety of variables considered, the depth and breadth of activity and the originality exercised.

- **Difficulty** - the relative character of the work process and the corresponding, thinking, analysis and judgment required while doing the work.
- **Scope and Range of Assignments** - the breadth and variety of employee’s assignments.
- **Knowledge, Skills and Abilities** - the level of information, experience and qualifications needed by the incumbent in order to perform the assigned duties.
- **Nature of Contacts** - human interactions within and/or outside the organization in terms of both frequency and the depth of information exchanged.

**Results**

This factor describes the work outcomes and the range and impact of effects, the benefit or harm to citizens, the gain or loss of resources and the goodwill created.

- **Impact** - the range of people, things, and organizations directly affected.
- **Affect of Services** - the extent to which decisions and work products affect the level of service, quality of work, welfare of constituents, the organization’s image and cost of operations.
- **Consequence of Error** - the potential costs of mistakes in terms of financial and human costs, efficiency, morale, physical maintenance and image.
Accountability

This factor describes the responsibility or authority exercised in terms of guidance given to fellow workers, independence and autonomy of functioning and finality of decisions made.

- **Leadership** – the level of control over resources such as people, functions, facilities and budget.
- **Judgment and Decision-making** – the types and kinds of decisions and the finality of decisions and actions taken.
- **Independence of Action** – latitude or freedom of action.

FAQ: What is a “dual track”?

The Compensation Management System promotes growth and professional development. For that reason, models for career progression within each Role as well as to different Roles in the same or different career groups are in development. In the interim, CGD’s and more specifically Role descriptions identify the pattern of responsibilities generally associated with career movement within a Role, from one Role to another, or to a different Career Group.

With the concept of broad Roles and expanded pay bands, employees will have opportunities for career growth without having to change positions. Expert workers will be able to advance professionally and financially without having to move to supervisory or management positions. The banded salary structure allows for a dual track where supervisory and non-supervisory employees can progress through the same pay band to advance their careers. This structure allows employees to become more knowledgeable and proactive in their own self-development and permits agencies to retain key talent.

CGD’s typically identify Roles as “Practitioners” and “Managers”.

- **Practitioner** - Simply stated, a Practitioner is someone who applies the knowledge and skills of their profession or trade. In Career Group Descriptions, Practitioner Roles represent a progressively responsible range of positions that apply their knowledge and skills by either performing, leading, supervising, or consulting with respect to the career. This range or career track can include assistants, technicians, experts, consultants, lead workers, and supervisory positions of a professional or technical nature.
Manager - **Manager Roles** are distinguished by the responsibility for managing or directing an agency function(s) to include program planning, organizing, staffing, budgetary or fiscal responsibility, the assignment and review of work, and the responsibility to take necessary personnel actions. Management Roles, like the Practitioner Roles, represent a range or career track that can include managerial positions up to and including those at the executive level of an agency.

The first page of the Career Group Description displays the dual track for Practitioner and Manager Roles by pay band assignment.

- **Who writes Career Group Descriptions?**

  Interagency teams of human resource professionals were charged with developing the Commonwealth’s first CGD’s for all Career Groups. Every effort was made to ensure that the teams were comprised of staff who were knowledgeable of the career groups within the Occupational Family to which they were assigned. Your feedback as a Subject Matter Expert (SME) also contributes to the development and validity of these documents.

  SMEs can be employees, supervisors or managers currently employed in the Career Group under review, or other individuals within or outside of state government that have expertise in a given occupational area. Information can be obtained from SMEs in the development of a Career Group Description for their particular occupational field. Their role is to describe or confirm the Career Group Team’s draft description of a particular occupational field and career progression. SMEs may also be used to refine the Career Group Team’s understanding of the complexity and scope of the work performed, decision making processes, accountabilities, leadership, anticipated results of work performed, necessary knowledge and skills and self-improvement strategies that enhance career progression.

  Agencies and DPT will continue to partner in the development and maintenance of Career Group Descriptions.

  Please proceed to the step-by-step feedback checklist.
Feedback Checklist for CGD’s

1. Read the Concept of Work section of the CGD and then proceed to the first Role Description.

2. Refer to the History section on the last page of the CGD to understand which current job classes have been grouped into this first Role.

3. Review each Role description including the Compensable Factor Matrix.

4. Repeat these steps for each higher level Role.

5. Once again, read the Concept of Work section at the top of the first page of the CGD.

6. NOTE: SOC codes are still under review. You do not need to provide feedback on these codes.

7. Provide feedback on the following:

   Q Do the titles for the Career Group and individual Roles accurately describe the nature and range of work being described?

   Q Does the Concept of Work statement broadly describe the range of work to be performed by the positions assigned to this group?

   Q Overall, are the terms used to describe the work accurate and widely recognized by this profession?

   Q Do the Role descriptions adequately describe the range of work represented by each Role?

   Q Does the CGD effectively distinguish one Role from another within the Career Group?

   Q Do the Compensable Factors for each Role provide a greater understanding of the complexity of the work performed, the knowledge required to perform that work, the outcome or expected results, and the degree of accountability associated with the Role?

   Q Are formal regulatory requirements identified in the Code of Virginia (such as licensure or certification) for this profession clearly stated?

   Q Could you use this CGD in combination with job descriptions (or Employee Work Profiles) to (1) verify the position’s assignment to this Occupational Family, (2) verify the assignment to this Career Group, and to (3) assign or allocate the position to the correct Role?