

Classification and the EC Conversion Speaking Notes

1. The EC conversion dates back to the end of the Universal Classification Standard project.
2. The conversion project was initiated in 2003, when the Treasury Board Secretariat – TBS – decided to establish new classification standards for each of the federal government’s professional groups.
3. TBS decided to implement the project in stages, starting with three standards: the FS standard, the PA standard, and the EC standard. The EC standard was therefore conceived at the very first stage in the process to modernize public service classifications.
4. Between 2003 and 2006, the employer consulted CAPE about various aspects of the standard itself, as well as about the project to implement it. However, though the employer heard CAPE, it was under no obligation to apply its recommendations. The EC standard is a classification instrument for the EC group that reflects the employer’s interests.
5. It must be said that the employer did apply some of CAPE’s recommendations, though most were rejected.
6. In spite of everything, CAPE considers the EC standard to be an adequate classification instrument, for the time being.
7. However, we will only be able to evaluate the EC standard once it has been in place for a few years. It is only by applying a standard repeatedly, in different circumstances, that we really see whether it works well.
8. You have a new EC collective agreement, in addition to new pay rates. In the collective agreement, there are EC pay rates that come into effect on June 22, 2009. This means that no public service position will be an EC position before June 22.
9. You should receive your Official Personal Notification the week prior to June 22, that is, between June 15 and 19, and no later than June 22.
10. The Official Personal Notification will advise you that your substantive or current position was converted to a position in the EC group.
11. The Notification will provide you with at least the following information: your name and position title, the ES or SI classification level for the period before the conversion, the EC level that applies as of June 22, 2009, a notice regarding your right to file a grievance, and the name and contact information of your department’s conversion project coordinator.
12. Individual departments are responsible for converting their own employees’ positions, and there may be variations from one department to the next. There may also be variations in the content and distribution dates of notification letters.
13. Each department has a coordinator, who is in charge of the conversion.
14. If you have questions about the conversion in your specific department, please contact your department’s coordinator.

15. Since TBS did not negotiate pay rates for the conversion, your pay will remain the same, with only the prescribed 1.5% annual increase.
16. Some 2% of ES-SI members will have their positions classified at a higher EC level than the equivalent level set by TBS. They will therefore receive a pay increase.
17. In the event of upward classification, pay will be established in accordance with TBS regulations governing pay on reclassification or conversion (see the ["EC Classification Notices"](#) link on the CAPE website); the employee's pay will be increased to the next-highest level, but will not be less his/her current salary.
18. Some 2% of ES-SI members will have their positions classified at a lower EC level than the equivalent level set by TBS.
19. In the event of downward classification, employees will be entitled to the rights defined under article 27.06 of the EC collective agreement. In other words, an employee's pay will remain what it would have been had their position remained classified at their former level.
20. Such employees will be eligible for pay protection, provided they remain in the same positions.
21. In the event an employee agrees to change position, for example accepts a deployment to a different position, his/her pay will no longer be protected.
22. The expected number of downward classifications amount to some 2% of the entire group.
23. That projection was made in May 2008, however. We believe the actual figure will be much lower, since managers in a number of departments have sought to avoid downward classifications by transferring affected employees to positions that will not be classified downward.
24. If you have problems relating to your new EC classification, please contact your supervisor to discuss them.
25. Should you decide that your only option is to file a grievance, you must do so within 35 calendar days of receiving your Official Personal Notification. The 35-day period includes weekends and holidays.
26. To file a grievance, submit the grievance form to your supervisor or to an HR manager. You may call Claude Vézina (LRO, Classification) or another CAPE LRO for more information on filing grievances.
27. I repeat, you only have 35 calendar days to file a grievance.
28. Do not wait until the last day. An unexpected event could delay your filing, and you would find yourself deprived of your right to file a grievance.
29. CAPE will prepare and post wording for a sample classification grievance on its website. You can obtain a grievance form from your Human Resources or Staff Relations Advisor.
30. Since the employer controls both the classification process and the classification grievance process, you also have the right to represent yourself, or to retain an expert to represent you at your own expense.
31. Grievances filed during a conversion generally take a very long time before a final decision is made by the employer.

32. This is because a great many grievances all enter the system at the same time.
33. CAPE expects it will take two years after the date of the first hearing for all the EC conversion grievances to be heard.
34. At present, TBS is scheduling classification grievance hearing dates in January 2010. This means that conversion grievances could be heard as late as the end of 2012, or even 2013.
35. CAPE will soon take action on the government's refusal to negotiate pay rates for the conversion.
36. Thus, if you are considering filing a grievance, I encourage you to do so only if you believe that the EC classification level of your position is incorrect.
37. The interests of members who have legitimate complaints about their EC classification will be prejudiced if other members file grievances by way of protest, and clog the system.
38. CAPE will contest the government's refusal to negotiate pay for the conversion for you, but through a process that will not delay grievance decisions and is likely to produce tangible results for all members.
39. The Advance Personal Notification letters were sent out about one year ago. You should already know at what EC level your position will be classified.
40. You should also have, or have access to, a copy of the work description that will come into effect on June 22, 2009.
41. If you haven't already done so, I encourage you to use the information CAPE has made available to you on its website.
42. In the right-hand column of the home page, you will find a link that reads "EC Classification Notices." The link will take you to a page that provides access to a number of articles on the conversion.
43. Toward the bottom of the list, you will find a document entitled "EC Work Description Writing, June 28, 2007."
44. This article will help you determine whether your work description was correctly classified.
45. The preceding link on the list will take you to the EC Classification Standard you will need to evaluate your work description.
46. These documents were made available to you two years ago, so that you could use the period between the Advance Notification and the Official Notification to determine whether there were problems with the EC classification of your work description.
47. The employer intended this period to provide time for discussion between employees and managers, so that problems could be addressed before the conversion.
48. If there is a drop in level between the classification indicated in your Advance Notification and the one indicated in your Official Notification, please contact Claude Vézina immediately.
49. The level indicated to you one year ago should correspond to the level communicated to you in the Official Personal Notification, except where the level has been raised following discussions with your manager.