



EC Work Description Writing

CAPE's Perspective: Part I (revised) and Part II

Part I: General Advice

Preliminary Remarks

CAPE's role in the development and implementation of the new EC standard has been limited to providing advice and comments. The Association wishes to recognize that Treasury Board and then the Public Service Human Resources Management Agency (PSHRMA) *cum* Canada Public Service Agency (CPSA) have given consideration to many of the Association's observations, and have in many instances facilitated our advocacy efforts on behalf of our EC community. But it is also important to note that CAPE has laboured under the usual constraints of consultation: it has worked outside the decision making process and it has been dependent on the Employer for information. The preparation of the document that you are about to read is no exception.

Because the ministerial approval process for the standard must be completed before crucial information can be released, and because the timing of the work description writing process coincides to some extent with the approval process, it has been difficult for CPSA to provide CAPE with information in a timely manner. In turn, CAPE has not been in a position to provide all the support and information that it has wished to provide its members over the past few months of conversion preparation.

It is the Association's understanding that CPSA will make the new EC standard and the application guidelines public once it has secured approval for the standard. Public service employees benefit from access to their respective classification standards when they write or review their work descriptions. CAPE has argued and will continue to argue that the same information be made accessible to EC employees.

The implementation process will include a step called Advanced Personal Notification (APN). Each ES and SI employee will be provided with the EC level of classification of their work description. In most instances, the employee will also be provided with a copy of his or her work description for discussion with her or his supervisor. Talks can continue from the date of the APN to the date of the Official Personal Notification (OPN), which will occur shortly after a new EC collective agreement has been signed by CAPE and Treasury Board probably some time in 2008.

CAPE will continue to encourage departments and agencies to provide all ES and SI employees with *all* relevant information, which would include the work description, the point rating or the degree for each element. Reading the point rating of a position or the corresponding degree through the lens of the new EC standard would allow both employee and manager to pinpoint where corrections to a work description may be needed.

Your Interests and Rights

The Canada Public Service Agency has completed work on the new EC classification standard. The standard has been approved by the Treasury Board Ministers. The standard will become effective only after new pay scales are negotiated in the coming round of collective bargaining, probably sometime in 2008. At that time all ES and SI positions in the federal public service will be converted to a new EC classification and you will receive the OPN of the content of your work description, its level of classification, the point rating, and the appropriate organizational chart.

The conversion requires that all ES and SI work descriptions be reviewed well in advance. Departments have been advised that it is preferable that they are written in a manner that will facilitate evaluation and rating according to the new EC standard. Departments and agencies are currently engaged in a process of reviewing and writing ES and SI work description for conversion to the EC classification.

It is the responsibility of the employer to write work descriptions. Accordingly, each department and agency has developed a course of action to ensure that all EC work descriptions are completed by September 2007. In some cases, "consultants" will be asked to write the work descriptions. In some cases, managers will be asked to write work descriptions, hopefully in consultation with employees. Sometimes, ES and SI employees will be asked to draft work descriptions which will be reviewed and authorized by their respective supervisors.

The course of action chosen to prepare work descriptions will vary from one department to the next. It may even vary from division to division within a department. It is important that you are informed of how your work description will be written. Irrespective of the

chosen process, employers are required to give ES and SI employees advanced personal notification, which means that all ES and SI employees will have an opportunity to review and comment on the EC classification of their work descriptions.. Prepare yourself.

If you have not been told how your work description will be prepared for conversion to the EC group, ask now.

For various reasons departments and agencies will try to fit as many positions as possible into generic work descriptions (work descriptions that apply to several positions without regard to differences that management considers marginal) or national work descriptions (work descriptions that apply to all positions that share a given title within a department or agency), or job families (term sometimes used to designate generic work descriptions). Moreover, you may find that not all work descriptions are prepared with the same degree of care and attention. It is not in your interest that your manager writes your work description hastily, or leaves out elements of your work that make it unique, for reasons of convenience.

The purpose of the work description, in relation to classification, is to make every dimension of your work that gives value to the employer visible. Work with your manager wherever possible to write your work description. Generic work descriptions are often in the interest of employees, as long as they capture all of the duties and responsibilities of each individual position covered by the generic work description.

Remember: the content of your work description determines your classification level, which in turn determines your salary.

Do not lose sight of your specific interest as an employee: a complete and current work description. In fact, pursuant to Article 34 of your collective agreement

you have a right to a complete and accurate work description.

The advanced personal notification should give you an opportunity to see your EC work description. You will be provided with the EC level of your work description. Review the work description carefully. Provide your manager with input. Remember: your work description is important. It is a written statement of the work assigned to you, and for which you are paid. Concomitantly, its level of classification determines how much you are paid for the work.

How to Write or Review a Work Description

Here is a list of suggestions that should help you make your new work description work for you.

1. Make sure that your department or agency makes tools or training that may have been developed for work description writing available to you. Each organization is responsible for its own work descriptions. Your organization may have put together various tools for managers, which should be shared with employees. Ask.

You can also find on the CPSA website:

- the *Guidelines on Work Description Writing*
http://www.psagency-gencefp.gc.ca/Classification/Tools/ClassPolicyGuide/WorkDesc/Workdescription_e.asp

and

- *Description Plus 2*
<http://www.hrmm-mgrh.psagency-agencefp.gc.ca/DescriptionPlus2/Index.aspx>

The *Guidelines* give background information and general advice on what to consider when writing a work description. *Description Plus 2* is a set of templates that facilitate organizing information for the purpose of writing a work description.

Using both these tools in conjunction with the advice provided herewith should facilitate the exercise of writing or reviewing your work description.

It would be useful to have access to both a copy of the new EC standard and the application guidelines for the standard. While both these documents are meant as evaluation and rating tools, they provide information that can facilitate reviewing or writing your work description. The standard explains what is required of a work description in order for it to be evaluated and rated. It defines the criteria for the point rating of each of the nine elements of the standard. It describes the requirements of each degree of each element.

The guidelines provide further clarification as well as indications of how to differentiate the degrees of an element. In addition the guidelines provide several examples of work activities (EWAs) for each degree of each element. The EWAs replace the benchmark position descriptions (BMPDs) of the current ES and SI classification standard. Whereas the ES and SI standards give examples of full

work descriptions for the various levels of the ES and SI classifications (the BMPDs), the new standard gives no examples. Examples or illustrations are only found in the guidelines. These examples are not examples of work descriptions, but of the degrees of each element of the EC standard.

You should be provided with the appropriate tools without which you cannot write or review your work description.

2. Do not write or review your work description in complete isolation. You work with colleagues and for clients within your department or agency. Talk to them about your work. Ask them about how they see your work. You may want to sit down with your colleagues and review your descriptions together. You will find that there are aspects of your work that are more visible to others than to you.

Furthermore, you may find it useful to consult other work descriptions, either in the *Description Plus 2* database, or within your department or agency. Reviewing other work descriptions may give you a better idea of what can be included in a work description.

You should review your work description with the people with whom you work, and you should take a look at other work descriptions.

3. Make sure that you are given reasonable time to write and/or review your work description. The conversion exercise is an important exercise not only for your department or agency but also for you. Writing a work description requires careful thought; and careful thought on such a complex matter requires time. Your department or agency should allow you to take paid time during your normal hours of work to carry out work on your work description.

If you are assigned the task of writing or reviewing your work description, you have the right to paid time to carry out the assignment.

4. Please note that CAPE cautions against the use of model work descriptions. The general principal for writing work descriptions is to focus on the specific work of the position, i.e. to write from observation of the concrete specificity of the work, not from some abstract model that may or may not relate adequately to the work that is actually required.

Use your own detailed knowledge of your work rather than a model.

5. Keep in mind the logical structure of the Work Description (WD) and how you must make the structure work for you.

The WD is divided into three sections that are similar to the sections of the work description format designed a few years ago for the UCS project (in addition, the WD will include a covering page with information identifying the organisation, the position number, the position title, the supervisor, etc.).

The first two sections are called: Client-Service Results and Key Activities. Following the Key Activities section is a description of the demands of the position in terms of each of the nine elements of the EC classification standard, usually organized under the headings of the four factors identified in the *Canadian Human Rights Act* for the evaluation of work. The factors and elements are as follows:

- Factor 1: Responsibility.
 - Element 1: Decision Making
 - Element 2: Leadership and Operational Management
- Factor 2: Skill.
 - Element 3: Communication
 - Element 4: Knowledge of Specialized Fields
 - Element 5: Contextual Knowledge
 - Element 6: Research and Analysis
- Factor 3: Effort.
 - Element 7: Physical Effort
 - Element 8: Sensory Effort
- Factor 4: Working Conditions.
 - Element 9: Working Conditions

Each of the three sections of the WD (Client-Services Results, Key Activities, and the demands according to each element) subsumes the next section. For example, the section that describes the elements for classification will include

only descriptions that are subsumed by at least one of the activities described in the Key Activities section. The activities in the Key Activities section must contribute to providing at least one service and/or product identified in the Client-Service Results section.

The easiest way to proceed is to begin identifying what you do, i.e. your activities. Once you feel that you have a fairly complete list of activities, put together a tentative list of services and products that result from the activities. Then, move on to describing what the activities and results imply for the elements.

For example, if one of your key activities is to “develop policy information and provide advice on the effects of changes in departmental programs and policies on the ability of the department to manage risk”, ask yourself what results from this activity. One result may be “research and information for senior staff or departmental management”.

Ask yourself also what the activity requires in terms of each of the nine elements of the EC classification standard. Under the element Communication, it may require “reading skills to comprehend ideas, concepts and facts presented in complex legislation, policy documents or technical reports”. There may be more to include under Communication for this or another activity. There will be more to include under the other elements.

There is no linear way to proceed in the preparation or review of your work description. You will need to move back and forth from one section to the next in order to add, adjust and reconsider the information included in each section. Your work description writing or review will be complete only when you have produced a document that describes accurately and completely the work that you do, the results of your work and what this entails in terms of each of the nine elements.

While it is the elements that are evaluated and rated in order to determine the level of classification of the work description, the element descriptions are interpreted in the context of the activities and results. The activities and results sections are not simply fluff. They contextualize and give meaning to the element descriptions.

The entire work description should hold together tightly and clearly.

6. The Key Activities sections must be complete. You would not normally list

activities such as turning on a computer, or opening a door. Conversely, you do not want to omit something like “participates in the efficient delivery of a complete range of legal services” or “attends departmental meetings to assist in the discussion of files” or “oversees the works of consultants”. These are all examples of activities considered significant or key to different work descriptions. They are all activities that are important to the delivery of services and products for each of their respective positions. If your current work description is written in the UCS format, you may want to use the listed key activities as a starting point and ask yourself whether the list is complete.

You may find it useful to list as many activities as you can imagine for your work description, then work on the Client-Service Results section and the element descriptions, and come back to the key activities to see whether there are activities that do not seem to fit. Activities that cannot be clearly tied to a product or a service should be reconsidered or should elicit reflection on the completeness of the list found in the Client-Service Results section. You want the list of activities to be complete and tied to the rest of the work description. An activity that is out of place in respect to the rest of the work description will not be part of the evaluation process that will lead to the classification of the position. Therefore, it may as well be excluded from the work description.

How many activities should be listed? The number is less important than the inclusiveness. The list must include all activities that are of some significance. Whether the list includes as few as seven or eight activities or whether the list includes fifteen activities, it must be clear to you that it includes everything of value that you do in order to provide the services and products required of the position. The list must be complete.

The *Guidelines on Work Description Writing* found on the CPSA web site suggests that five to seven activities should suffice. Be careful. It is your right to have a complete WD. While it is true that only the elements are rated and have a direct impact on the classification of the position, you will not be allowed to include descriptions that are not subsumed by at least one key activity. Therefore, it is crucial that the Key Activities section account for all your activities.

And remember: writing the Key Activities section is not an exercise in choice, i.e. choosing the most important activities. It is an exercise in logic, i.e. choosing the appropriate phrases to cover all your activities.

The list of activities included in your work description must be complete.

7. In the Key Activities section, it is important to be as accurate as possible. Keep in mind that an activity description that is formulated in general terms could allow your present manager, or the next manager, to require that you carry out duties that you are not presently carrying out. For example if you write "analyses economic policy", your manager can require that you analyse any economic policy your employer chooses. But, if you write "analyses the department's economic policies relating to education and health", then both you and your manager will share a clearer understanding of the duties of your position.

It is important to you that the description of each activity is accurate.

8. The Client-Service Results section of the work description lists a series of products and/or services that are expected from the incumbent of the position. The list presents the purpose of the position, the reason it was created. Don't be afraid of overstating the contributions expected from the incumbent of your position.

Usually, the problem with work descriptions is that they tend to understate results. In the end, it is your supervisor who will authorize the content of the work description. If the content of the Client-Service Results section does not fit the rest of the work description, or if the content does not correspond to the expectations of management, then it will be readjusted. But it is important to recognize all services and products required of the position's incumbent.

You should make sure that your work description does not understate the services and/or products expected of you.

In short, the evaluation and rating of your work description will determine the level of your position within the EC group. The level of your position will determine your pay. Evaluation and rating focus on the elements, within the context set by the activities and results. The element descriptions are therefore of particular importance.

In closing this section, it is important to note that some departments may for various reasons hesitate to re-write work descriptions in the format that corresponds to the new standard. It is unlikely that an old WD will reveal all that must be revealed in order to provide the full value of your work under the new EC classification standard. If your department has not re-written your WD for the APN, you should try to engage your supervisor in a collaborative effort with you to re-write your WD in the appropriate format during the period beginning with the APN and ending with the OPN.

What to do when there is Disagreement about the Content of your WD

With or without your participation in the writing process, eventually your supervisor should provide you with a new work description no later than the OPN.

As soon as you are made aware of the content of a new work description, if you are not satisfied that it is complete and current, you should consider the following course of action.

Immediately, ask your supervisor to meet with you to discuss the contentious parts of your work description. In many cases, a supervisor will prefer reviewing the content of the work description one more time and will agree to some changes rather than face the possibility of a grievance with all its complications and time delays.

If your supervisor refuses to discuss the matter with you, or if you are not satisfied with your supervisor's response to your concerns, call your Labour Relations Officer (LRO) at CAPE's national office for advice immediately.

After a period of consultation during which you should be given an opportunity to provide comments, and after the next round of EC bargaining has been completed, possibly some time in 2008, you will be given the final version of your new work description.

At that time you will be told that the work description comes into effect. This will be your official personal notification (OPN).

Remember that it is your right, under the authority of your collective agreement, to have a complete and current work description. If at that time you feel that your work description is not complete and current, your collective agreement gives you the right to grieve management's decision of the content of the work description.

But remember: you have **25 working days** (25 days excluding Saturdays, Sundays and designated paid holidays) from when you are made aware that the new work description is effective to file a grievance on the matter of the content of the work description. You have **35 calendar days** to file a classification grievance.

Do not wait to the final week to call your LRO. Get advice early. Your LRO may be able to help you avoid a grievance.

Part II: The EC Classification Standard

Preliminary Remarks Regarding Classification and Qualification Standards

There are currently four major standards that affect ES and SI careers in the federal public service of Canada:

1. the ES Occupational Group Qualification Standards;
2. the SI Occupational Group Qualification Standards;
3. the SI Classification Standard;
4. the ES Classification Standard.

see: http://www.psagency-agencefp.gc.ca/hrmm-mgrh/QualStandard/section02_e.asp

Qualification Standards set the minimum requirement for entry into occupational groups. For example, the minimum qualification required of a person entering the ES group is “graduation with a degree from a recognized university with acceptable specialization in economics, sociology or statistics”. However, the standard does add that while “candidates must always have a university degree.”, “the courses for the specialization do not necessarily have to be part of a degree program in the required specialization. The specialization may also be obtained through an acceptable combination of education, training and/or experience.”

The minimum qualification for the SI group is “successful completion of two years of post-secondary school training with acceptable specialization in statistics, accounting, economics, business administration, history, sociology, law-related field or some other specialty relevant to the position.” However, the standard notes that “the manager may offer the following alternative: an acceptable combination of education, training and/or experience. When the education qualification is met through such a combination, it is met for the specific position only.”

It should be underscored in passing that the qualification standards define the minimum qualifications required for entry into the group. A department may add to the minimum for a position if it can justify higher qualifications for the specific duties of the position. As a result, some positions may require a Master degree or even a PhD. But the important point to be made here is that qualification standards and classification standards are very different instruments.

A qualification standard sets the minimum requirements for an individual to enter an occupational group. A classification standard defines the relative value of positions within an occupational group. They are different instruments that serve different purposes.

It is true that the increased use of generic work descriptions as well as the evaluation of ES and SI work descriptions with a single EC classification standard should increase opportunities for mobility, in particular deployments. But neither the new EC classification standard nor the wider use of generic work descriptions will in themselves or by themselves reduce, increase or change in any way the current qualifications of positions that will be converted from ES and SI to EC.

The new EC classification standard will establish a new internal relativity of each ES and SI position to every other ES and SI position in the federal public service. In practice though, there may not be significant changes overall. The new classification standard may result in re-establishing for the most part the existing relativities.

In addition, the new EC classification standard will require that managers pay attention to more dimensions of EC work in the evaluation of positions. The new EC classification standard will reveal value that is not visible when the ES and SI standards are applied to a work description. It is CAPE's contention, with which the employer may disagree, that this would require appropriate adjustments in pay.

The new EC standard and work descriptions will reveal value that is not visible with the ES and SI standards and work descriptions.

The Classification Tools and the Classification Task

Classification is the exercise of evaluating the duties that are assigned by the employer by means of a work description. Classification is the exercise of evaluating work descriptions.

In real life, sometimes an employee has greater skills and/or knowledge than is required to carry out the duties of the position that the employee encumbers. Sometimes an employee does more than what is required by the work description. Neither of these circumstances have an impact on the employee's classification. In fact, ES, SI and EC employees do not have classifications: positions have classifications, according to their respective work descriptions. The objective of a classification exercise is to classify a work description.

Classification is about work descriptions not performance or qualifications.

In passing, please note that a discrepancy between what is in a work description and the work that is actually carried out is a serious matter. If you are doing work that is not covered by your work description, you should consider consulting one of CAPE's Labour Relations Officers. Remember: you get paid only for work described in the work description.

Tools

The work description and work description format

The employer will determine the classification of EC positions by applying its new EC classification standard to ES and SI work descriptions that should be re-written in a format that corresponds to the EC standard.

Currently, in the public service there are ES and SI work descriptions that are written in the UCS format, with its sixteen elements. You can also find work description written in the format that pre-dates UCS and which corresponds in form to the ES and SI standards. Neither of these formats reveals all of the information required for a complete application of the EC standard. Neither reveals the entire value as defined by the nine EC elements.

If your department neglects to re-write your work description in the appropriate format, there is a very real risk that some of the value which the EC standard is supposed to account for will be missed. CAPE strongly recommends its members ensure that their new EC work descriptions are written in the EC format. CPSA will not force departments to do so. But, CAPE is on the record objecting to what it considers as the possibility of short-changing ES and SI employees with inappropriate work descriptions. CAPE has also advised departments that it would recommend to its ES and SI members that they consider filing grievances in circumstances where they fear that their work description does not appropriately account for the nine elements of the standard.

It is most unlikely that a work description written in an inappropriate format would provide all the information required for a complete and accurate EC classification decision.

It is important to remember that, from a pay perspective, there is no intrinsic or objective value to the work carried out by employees. In the case of our ES and SI members, the

value is determined by the nine elements, as it is only in the evaluation of these nine “dimensions” of work that an EC level of pay will be established for the work.

The standard and the application guidelines

The ES and SI standards use a series of factors for evaluating job descriptions. Work descriptions were called, prior to UCS, job descriptions. Job descriptions were written as a list of duties. Today’s work descriptions are less task oriented. They are in fact result oriented.

The old job descriptions were task oriented, while today’s new work descriptions are result oriented.

Work descriptions include not only a section defining the client-service results, but also the key activities (a work description activity is a more general category than a job description task) that are subsumed by the results, and also a description of the nine aspects, dimensions or elements of the work described in the work description. It is these nine elements that are valued by the employer, and that are consequently evaluated by the employer. It is these nine aspects, dimensions or elements that determine the classification of the position and, in the end, the pay of the incumbent of the position.

The old job descriptions included a summary of duties to be carried-out under the recognized supervision of an identified manager, and a detailed list of the sub-tasks for each duty. The ES standard includes 5 factors, while the SI standard includes 4 factors. Some factors are presented as one-dimensional. Evaluation of each of these factors is carried out with a single separate scale. Some factors are presented as the composite of two elements, and evaluation occurs along two scales that are cross tabulated to give the intersection points for each combination possible of values for the two scales.

For example, in the ES standard, we find the factor “professional responsibility”. The factor is defined as a composite of two elements: “advice” and “planning and analysis”. The 4 degrees of planning and analysis are presented on a vertical axis, while the four degrees of advice are presented on the horizontal axis. The end result is a table with sixteen cells. The score is the value for the factor once the appropriate cell has been identified. The ES and SI standards include a description of the factors, as well as a presentation of the scales including a description of the degrees of each element.

As mentioned earlier in Part I, the ES and SI classification standards also include rated BMPDs, i.e. rated Benchmark Position Descriptions, or examples of work descriptions for their respective groups. Thus the ES standard includes 20 rated BMPDs that cover levels 2 to 7 of the ES group (level 1 is defined as training level; ES-01 work can only be carried out in a training program and there can be no work description classified as ES-

01). The SI standard includes 18 BMPDs that cover levels 1 to 8 of the SI group. In evaluating work descriptions, in order to facilitate the application of the ES and also the SI standard, evaluators use the BMPDs as examples.

There are no rated BMPDs in the EC standard. The standard itself includes no examples at all. It includes nine single scaled elements, with as many as eight degrees for one element and as few as four degrees for another. Each degree, similarly to the degrees of the ES and SI standard include short descriptions of the degree. But there are no examples.

CPSA has not decided that examples were unnecessary or useless. It has simply moved the examples out of the standard to the application guidelines, and has decided to give examples not of entire work descriptions but of each degree of each element (they are called EWAs or examples of work activities). Thus, it is important to keep in mind that the evaluation of an EC work description requires the use of the EC classification standard as well as the use of another document, called the Application Guidelines.

To evaluate and rate an EC work description, it is necessary to use both the EC classification standard and the Application Guidelines.

The most important tool is the standard. The application guidelines serve the self evident purpose of facilitating the application of the standard with illustrations. As it is clearly written on page 3 of the guidelines:: “In case of discrepancy between the standard and the guidelines, the standard will prevail.” Therefore, it is important to keep in mind that the guidelines are a secondary yet important tool. The actual evaluation and rating occur as a result of the application of the standard.

“In case of discrepancy between the standard and the guidelines, the standard will prevail.”

The Nine EC Elements

Not all elements are created equal. Four of the nine EC elements account for 74% of the total possible points allocated by the EC classification standard. Another two elements, two knowledge elements, account together for 21%:

- Decision Making (21%);
- Research and Analysis (21%);
- Communication (18%);
- Leadership and Operational Management (14%);
- Knowledge of Specialized Fields (10.5%);
- Contextual Knowledge (10.5%);
- Working Conditions (2.5%);
- Physical Effort (1.5%), and
- Sensory Effort (1%).

The old SI classification standard, which will continue to be used for the classification of SI positions until the Official Personal Notification, has the following factors:

- Skill and Knowledge at 40%,
- Problem Solving at 40%;
- Responsibility for Contacts at 10% and
- Supervision at 10%.

The old ES classification standard, which will continue to be used for the classification of ES positions until the Official Personal Notification, has the following factors:

- Nature and Complexity of Work at 30%;
- Professional Responsibility at 30%;
- Supervision/Coordination at 15%;
- Impact at 15% and
- Representation at 10%.

While a one-on-one comparison of the respective elements and factors of these standards is not possible, it can be noted that more value is being given to the communication skills and leadership responsibilities of ES and SI employees under the new EC standard than is the case with the ES and SI standards.

The new EC standard recognizes the supervisory and managerial responsibilities of ES and SI positions more clearly.

The information provided below is **CAPE's description** and to some extent **interpretation** of the EC standard. The employer may or may not agree. The most comprehensive and definite tool is the standard itself. What follows is offered simply to facilitate working with the standard in a manner that CAPE considers to be in your interests.

Element 1: Decision Making (21%):

- Element 1 (E1) measures latitude applied and impact of decision-making, the scope to make decisions and the risk involved.
- There are 8 degrees to the element, where Degree 1 (D1) is the lowest and Degree 8 is the highest.
- There appears to be a significant notional break with the description of Degree 4 where for the purpose of decision making, precedents are lacking, and new approaches are required which is less the case for lower degrees.
- Degree 5 implies decisions and recommendations that relate to multiple subject matter areas, for example, and impact either on multiple projects, or, a specific departmental program in contrast to a unit policy.
- If an exact fit with a degree description is not possible, then you should go with a best fit.

Element 6: Research and Analysis (21%):

- Element 6 measures the various levels of complexity of work carried out in the process of researching information or analysing data.
- It ranges from ensuring accuracy of information with information searches and reviews, to adapting or even creating conceptual frameworks.
- There are 6 degrees.
- There appears to be a significant break with the description of D4, where the standard distinguishes between the manipulation of

information through research and analysis and its actual transformation.

- D5 appears to account for a greater degree of critical thinking that requires a confrontation of conceptual frameworks.
- If an exact fit with a degree description is not possible, then you should go with a best fit.

Element 3: Communication (18%):

- Element 3 measures the skills required both to communicate to other persons and to understand other persons, verbally and in writing.
- It also takes into account the scope of communication as well as the action or purpose: is it to convey information, explain, defend a position, or persuade an unreceptive interlocutor?
- There are 7 degrees.
- There appears to be two significant breaks: Degree 4 involves adapting specialized terminology to the un-initiated while lower degrees imply that the adaptation is not as important.
- Degree 6 involves, in addition to the above, defending an argument, promoting interests, influencing approaches.
- Here it is important to choose the highest level that is applicable to the work description.

Element 2: Leadership and Operational Management (14%):

- Element 2 measures the responsibility for leading, planning and being accountable for all types of resources: human, financial and material.
- There are 5 degrees.
- The descriptions are cumulative, where a higher degree subsumes to a large extent the responsibilities of the degrees below it.
- The appropriate level is the level where the majority of responsibilities are described by a degree.
- But, be careful: because the descriptions are cumulative, a lower degree will always or almost always have more of responsibilities described in the work description; the evaluator should be looking for the highest degree with a majority of statements.
- There appears to be two significant breaks: D3 is the level of supervision.

- Whereas D4 is the first level of management (i.e. planning resource allocation, including financial, human and material resources; leading evaluation of programs and operations rather than only evaluating employees which would be typical of a supervisor).

Element 4: Knowledge of Specialized Fields (10.5%):

- Element 4 measures “the required depth and breadth of knowledge of specialized fields including concepts, theories, principles, methods, techniques and practices.”
- There are 6 degrees.
- The highest applicable degree must be chosen.
- There appears to be significant break at D4, which is described as either an in-depth knowledge of theories or a higher level of knowledge of methods, i.e. an advanced level.
- D5 is the degree of the expert in several fields, the multidisciplinary expert capable of establishing relationships between knowledge from various specialized fields.
- D6 is the department or government expert, the reference within the department or the government.

Element 5: Contextual Knowledge (10.5%):

- Element 5 measures “the required breadth and depth of contextual knowledge such as subject matter, communities, organizations, networks, external environments, policies, legislation, regulations, management, etc”.
- There are 6 degrees.
- Subject matter is included in the definition of each degree; as a result, the standard establishes a very close relationship between comparable degrees of Element 4 and Element 5.
- The highest degree should be chosen.
- Be careful of the relation of E4 to E5: the evaluation of E4 takes on greater importance as it can determine to some extent the value of E5.
- Not surprisingly, it appears as if there is a significant break at D4 where in-depth knowledge of the subject matter is tied to a context that goes beyond the incumbent’s department.

Element 9: Working Conditions (2.5%):

- Element 9 measures the degree of unpleasantness that results from exposure to the physical and psychological surroundings that are an integral part of the work.
- There are 3 degrees: somewhat unpleasant, unpleasant, and very unpleasant.
- To each degree is attached a list of situations.
- The highest degree should be chosen.

Element 7: Physical Effort (1.5%):

- Element 7 measures the intensity and regularity of physical effort required to carry out work.
- There are 5 degrees.
- Regularity of effort has two values: regularly or occasionally being required to make the physical effort.
- Examples given of activities requiring physical effort: keyboarding, standing, walking, bending, reaching, carrying, lifting items up to or over 10 kg.
- Consider only work that occurs for more than an insignificant period of time.

Element 8: Sensory Effort (1%):

- Element 8 measures the intensity and regularity of effort of one or more senses.
- There are 4 degrees.
- Regularity of effort has two values: regularly or occasionally being required to make the physical effort.
- Examples given of activities requiring sensory effort: using senses to detect easily perceived differences between documents, data or things, or to detect fine distinctions or barely perceptible variations.
- Consider only work that occurs for more than an insignificant period of time.

Conclusion

It was mentioned at the beginning of the document that CAPE's role in the development and implementation of the new EC standard has been limited to providing advice and comments to the Canada Public Service Agency. In the end, the employer has sole authority over classification. CPSA will determine the content of the EC classification standard, as well as the implementation of the classification conversion.

CAPE's role has been, is and will continue to be to advocate on behalf of its members. Over the past three years or so, this advocacy has translated into providing CPSA with comments on the development of the new EC standard, and on the implementation process designed by the employer. Over the same period but most importantly in the past few months, advocacy has translated into providing members with information and practical advice, though CAPE has been limited by the usual constraints of consultation and has been dependent on the employer for information. In the coming three years or so, advocacy will take the form of bargaining new pay scales for the EC group, advising members on their individual work descriptions, and representing members where CAPE has determined that work descriptions are not complete or the classification of a position is incorrect.

There has been more. There will be more. For example, CAPE has advised departments that they should resist the temptation of reclassifying ES and SI positions into other occupational groups for the sole purpose of avoiding the work load of converting them to EC positions. CAPE has doggedly reminded the employer that ES and SI members have the same rights as other public service employees, and should be given access to the EC classification standard and application guidelines. CAPE has reminded your department that if it neglects to re-write your work description in the appropriate format, there is a very real risk that some of the value which the EC standard is supposed to account for will be missed. Rest assured that CAPE will continue to press the employer on these and other conversion matters.