

INLAND STEEL COMPANY

and

UNITED STEELWORKERS OF AMERICA
Local Union 1010

Grievance No. 7-F-10
Docket No. IH-146-146-2/19/57
Arbitration No. 211

Opinion and Award

Appearances:

For the Company:

L. E. Davidson, Assistant Superintendent, Labor Relations
D. L. Gott, Job Analyst, Wage and Salary
E. J. Gaston, Job Analyst, Wage and Salary
E. J. Cooney, Assistant Superintendent, Plant No. 2 Mills
R. J. Stanton, Divisional Supervisor, Labor Relations

For the Union:

Cecil Clifton, International Staff Representative
Joseph Wolanin, Acting Chairman, Grievance Committee
C. Kriviekas, Grievance Committee

This dispute is over the job description and classification of the Slab Piler Operator in the No. 2 Blooming Mill. During the Wage Rate Inequity Agreement program the occupation of Billet Conveyor Operator was described and classified in Job Class 9, with 59 points, and for a number of years this remained in effect. In 1956 No. 2 Blooming Mill was modernized and expanded, and the equipment and methods of several jobs were changed. Among them was the job of the Billet Conveyor Operator, sometimes called Transfer Operator, the title of which was changed to Slab Piler Operator. The codings of some of the factors were revised, resulting in the job being placed in Job Class 8, with 54 points. This led to a grievance on October 1, 1956 in which the Union complained that the "job is improperly described and classified" and requesting that an upward revision be made in the classification.

In Grievance No. 7-F-11 we dealt with another of the jobs changed in the 1956 program and ruled on the Union's contention that interim rates established by the Company may not be discontinued until the job description and classification are determined by the arbitrator. The Union's contention was rejected, and the same contention in this case will be rejected for the reasons stated in the previous award.

As the case was presented at the hearing, the Union seeks to have the codings of three factors raised, by a total of seven points which would place the job in Job Classification 10, with 61 points. At the

second step hearing, two factors, Experience and Physical Exertion, were questioned by the Union; at the third step there were four factors in question: the two above named and Judgment and Environment. In the arbitration hearing, Environment was not questioned. The nature of the dispute may be seen in the following:

<u>Factor</u>	<u>Company's Coding</u>	<u>Union's Request</u>
Judgment	B-1	C-2
Experience	2-B-4	2-D-8
Physical Exertion	2-D-4	2-C 4-A-6

The revisions in codings were made because equipment and methods were changed. As summarized by the Company, there was a change in the method of handling slabs at the transfer. The Billet Conveyor Operator operated a Treadwell slab conveyor, electric piler car controller, apron plate, billet transfer and run-out table. The Operator is no longer required to operate the Treadwell slab conveyor, run-out table, and apron plate. He now operates a tilting table and billet cradle. The stake cars, formerly used as piler cars, requiring the operation of a heavy control, have been replaced by a "table type" piler car which is operated by a light control.

The primary function of the Billet Conveyor Operator was stated in its job description to be:

"Operates highline on slabs, and billet conveyor on blooms, to take steel off tables"

In the job description of the newly titled occupation of Slab Piler Operator, it is stated as follows:

"Operate controls to transport slabs on piler run-in table to piler car and pile in lift form or to transport blooms or billets from piler run-in table to billet cradle."

The new job description is more concise, and there are a number of changes, but some duties have been carried over into the changed job. It is worth noting that the codings of the factors of Judgment and Experience are identically the same for the prior and the present occupations, being 5-B-1 and 2-B-4 respectively, and that the coding of Physical Exertion was changed from "Operate heavy controls" and "Operate light controls", 3-B and 2-B-6, to "Operate light controls, observe, assist in roll and knife changes, wait, etc." 2-D-4. Other factors or elements changed, but which are not questioned by the Union are: Physical Strength raised from 1-B-1 to 1-C-2, Accident Exposure decreased from 2-C-4 to 2-B-2, and, in Environment, Temperature, Wetness has been dropped from 1-C-2 to 1-B-1 and Dirt-Fumes has been reduced from 3-C-2 to 3-B-1.

As the dispute was presented, we must confine our consideration to the factors of Judgment, Experience, and Physical Exertion. The first two have remained as they were, and the Union must demonstrate why they should be evaluated higher than they have been for many years. Physical Exertion has been downgraded two points, and the Company must indicate that there have been changes meriting this.

The Union believes Judgment should be 5-C-2 rather than 5-B-1 because these employees formerly had only three controllers to operate (Treadwell conveyor, conveyor apron, and piling car) while now they have two tables, two sideguards, tilting table, piling car, billet pusher, and billet pusher table. Management, however, points out that there were previously five pieces of equipment to be controlled rather than three, and that the concentration of the controls now in one pulpit has tended to simplify the operation.

Judgment is defined in the Wage Rate Inequity Agreement as a measure of the discretion or discernment necessary to make such decisions as are required by conditions of the job, and should not be confused with the measure of control of the physical senses required by the usual conditions of the job which is included in the element of Muscular Coordination. As the job is now constituted, compared with its former characteristics, I see no basis for raising the coding of the Judgment factor. I do not believe the comparison suggested by the Union with the job of Slab Pile Operator in the No. 3 Blooming Mill is of sufficient significance to overcome the comparison with this very job as it was constituted without criticism for several years.

The Union would raise the point value of Experience from 2-B-4 to 2-D-8, on the ground that, as in the case of the job with a similar title in the No. 3 Mill, 24 months of experience, rather than 12 months, should be recognized as necessary. It urges that more experience is required to operate eight rather than three controllers, to handle blooms and slabs rather than slabs only, to know steel so that the right size can be put out, and to use the new piling equipment. The Company counters these points by stressing the facts that the new equipment is operated under more favorable physical conditions, that the Union is in error as to the number of controllers previously operated, and that these employees have always used metal signs to instruct the Cranemen. The differential of four points in Experience between this job and that in the No. 3 Blooming Mill was due to the fact that in the No. 3 Mill job the Slab Piler Operator operates three slab pushers, three piling racks, three elevators, and two sections of run-out tables, thus entitling him to greater credit for the Experience factor. These differences still prevail.

The job as previously constituted called for 12 months of experience, and the same now applies to the changed job. The experience factor is intended to establish quantitatively the value or experience which affects the ability of the worker to qualify for the job. It has not been shown that 12 months of experience, the long accepted period, is insufficient for this job, despite the fact that a 24 month period has long been agreed upon in the No. 3 Blooming Mill to meet the conditions applicable there.

Physical Exertion, formerly 3-B, 2-B-6, has been coded 2-D-4 by the Company, and the Union requests 2-C, 4-A-6. The Union rests its request on the larger number of controllers, and the work entailed in roll changes and shear knife changes, insisting that there are about two roll changes a week rather than only three per month as asserted by Management.

Management's reason for lowering the coding of Physical Exertion by two points is that formerly these employees were required to operate a heavy electric controller to jog the piling cars to help in piling the slabs and to run the piler cars out to the side, while in the changed job all the electric controllers operated are now of the light type.

It is true that the operation of heavy controls and light controls was specifically indicated under the heading of Physical Exertion with respect to the former job. But it is also an accurate statement that the job descriptions of both the old and changed job call for the employees to assist in changing rolls and shear knives when necessary, and it is not disputed that this constitutes work of Level 4: "Above normal exertion, i.e. work with heavy tools, handle medium weight material at moderate pace or light weight material at sustained pace or fast speed, perform some heavy work at intervals." The Company resists the use of Level 4 on two grounds: (1) it was not used on the prior job; (2) the amount of time spent in roll changes and knife changes is insignificant, being something like two to six per cent of the Operator's time.

As previously stated, the Company raised Physical Strength from 1-B-1 to 1-C-2, although the only change in the job classification statement under this heading is from "Assist on roll and knife change" to "Use heavy wrenches during roll or knife changes." This factor is merely an indication of the potential physical capacity an employee must have to qualify for a job, but one may wonder why it was considered proper to raise this coding if the changed job has the same requirements as to roll and knife changes. The Union insists that roll changes are considerably more frequent than the Company admits, occasioned by the use of wide flange beams in the No. 2 Mill, whereas no shapes are rolled in the No. 1 or No. 3 Mills, those operations being restricted largely to slabs. It also claims that the so-called former "heavy controls" were electrical controls which were not materially different in strength required from the present light controls.

In any event, the percentage of time spent at a higher level of exertion has a bearing only on the degree. Degree A is stated to apply "up to and including 1/4 of total time." Management would disregard any amount of time below 10% as insignificant. Perhaps a rule of common sense would justify such an approach if the amount of time were so insignificant as to be what lawyers call "de minimis", but there is nothing in the Wage Rate Inequity Agreement which supports a position that 10% of the time should be disregarded in a category calling for a certain degree allowance for "up to and including 1/4 of total time."

It seems, therefore, on the evidence that these employees are entitled to 4-A for the above normal exertion they use for periods of less than one-fourth of their total time, but definitely more than an insignificant amount of time. For the remaining three-fourths of their

time they are clearly merited in claiming 2-C ("below normal exertion; i.e. operate light controls, walk" etc.). This adds up to support for the Union's request for a 2-C, 4-A-6 coding.

The benchmarks suggested have only slight similarities in job characteristics to the occupation here under consideration; the dissimilarities are more striking. The definitions in the Wage Rate Inequity Agreement, and the comparison with this very job as formerly constituted, are the most cogent and persuasive considerations in this case.

AWARD

1. The Company's discontinuance of the interim rate was not a violation of Article V, Section 6E;

2. The coding of all factors and elements shall remain undisturbed, except that the factor Physical Exertion shall be given the coding 2-C, 4-A-6, thus raising the total points to 56 for this occupation and moving it into Job Class 9.

Dated: December 4, 1957

David L. Cole
Permanent Arbitrator