



STATE OF WASHINGTON  
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRIES

Prevailing Wage  
PO Box 44540 • Olympia, Washington 98504-4540  
360/902-5335 Fax 360/902-5300

November 27, 2007

Bob Kotjan  
Technical Systems Inc.  
2303 196<sup>th</sup> Street SW  
Lynnwood, WA 98036

Re: Shop Panel Fabrication.

Dear Mr. Kotjan:

You have asked for a determination of prevailing wage requirements applicable to the control panel fabrication work for TSI's products. TSI is a control systems integrator or "panel shop."

The answer below is based on the information you provided. References to the Revised Code of Washington (RCW) and the Washington Administrative Code (WAC) are included. Again, this answer is based on your fact set. If the facts differ from those you provided, the answers may be different.

Case law has provided direction on the application of prevailing wage requirements to off-site work for a public works project. The Washington State Supreme Court considered the question of whether the prevailing wage requirement of RCW 39.12 applies to an employer who fabricates items specifically designed for a particular public works project regardless of where the fabrication occurs or of whether the employer is considered a subcontractor or a material man in the Everett Concrete Products case.

Washington's prevailing wage law, RCW 39.12.010 ET SEQ., provides that the wages paid to workers on public works projects must be not less than the prevailing wage for similar work in the locality where the labor on the public works project is performed. RCW 39.12.020. This case presents the issue of whether the prevailing wage law applies to the off-site manufacture of prefabricated items for use on a particular public works project.

Everett Concrete v. L&I, 109 Wn.2d 819, 820 (1988).

The court held that the prevailing wage law does apply to off-site work where the work is production of a "nonstandard item specifically for a public works project."

RCW 39.12.020 provides that prevailing wages must be paid to workers "upon all public works". This language must be construed to require application of the prevailing wage requirement to off site manufacturers, when they are producing nonstandard items specifically for a public works project. In this way the use of cheap labor from distant areas is avoided and the purpose of RCW 39.12 is not circumvented. Here ECP's manufacture of tunnel liners for the Mt. Baker Ridge Tunnel Public Works Project constituted the manufacture of nonstandard items for a public works project. The ALJ correctly held that ECP was required to pay employees who manufactured the tunnel liners prevailing wages in accordance with the requirements of RCW 39.12.

Everett, at 831-32.

Some years ago, the department, the Washington State Department of Transportation, and the Prevailing Wage Advisory Committee (PWAC) worked to better define the issue of standard and non-standard. A six part checklist was developed.

**Washington State Department of Labor and Industries Policy Statement  
(Regarding the Production of "Standard" or "Non-standard" Items)**

Below is the department's (State L&I's) list of criteria to be used in determining whether a prefabricated item is "standard" or "non-standard". For items not appearing on WSDOT's predetermined list, these criteria shall be used by the Contractor (and the Contractor's subcontractors, agents to subcontractors, suppliers, manufacturers, and fabricators) to determine coverage under RCW 39.12. The production, in the State of Washington, of non-standard items is covered by RCW 39.12, and the production of standard items is not. The production of any item outside the State of Washington is not covered by RCW 39.12.

1. Is the item fabricated for a public works project? If not, it is not subject to RCW 39.12. If it is, go to question 2.
2. Is the item fabricated on the public works jobsite? If it is, the work is covered under RCW 39.12. If not, go to question 3.
3. Is the item fabricated in an assembly/fabrication plant set up for, and dedicated primarily to, the public works project? If it is, the work is covered by RCW 39.12. If not, go to question 4.
4. Does the item require any assembly, cutting, modification or other fabrication by the supplier? If not, the work is not covered by RCW 39.12. If yes, go to question 5.
5. Is the prefabricated item intended for the public works project typically an inventory item which could reasonably be sold on the general market? If not, the work is covered by RCW 39.12. If yes, go to question 6.

6. Does the specific prefabricated item, generally defined as standard, have any unusual characteristics such as shape, type of material, strength requirements, finish, etc? If yes, the work is covered under RCW 39.12.

Any firm with questions regarding the policy, WSDOT's Predetermined List, or for determinations of covered and non-covered workers shall be directed to State L&I at (360) 902-5330.

The list provides a framework of thought for analyzing if and when prevailing wage requirements may attach to work such as your production of panels. As you note, the mere furnishing of standard hardware is not covered. However, the production of a non-standard item out of such hardware is covered by the requirement to pay the prevailing rate of wage.

As you describe the work, your workers read prints and construct panels for a specific design and application. Walking through the checklist above, the answer to # 1 is "yes" and we proceed to question two. The answer to # 2 is "no" and we proceed to question three. The answer to # 3 is "no" and we proceed to question four. The answer to # 4 is "yes" and we proceed to question five. The answer to # 5 is "no" This means prevailing wages are required for your shop manufacture of what is now a non-standard panel although it is manufactured out of standard components.

The appropriate trade and occupation classifications (scopes of work) for your work may include Electronic Technicians (WAC 296-127-01322) and Inside Wireman Electricians (WAC 296-127-01323). The Electronic Technician scope is limited to certain low voltage circumstances. Copies of both scopes are enclosed.

Washington State prevailing wage information, including the WACs, are available on the Department's web site: <http://www.lni.wa.gov/TradesLicensing/PrevWage/default.asp>

I hope this answers your questions. If you need additional information or have questions, please call or email me at 360 902-5330 or [somd235@lni.wa.gov](mailto:somd235@lni.wa.gov).

Sincerely,

David J. Soma  
Industrial Statistician  
Prevailing Wage Program Manager

### WAC 296-127-01322 Electronic technicians.

For the purpose of the Washington state public works law, chapter 39.12 RCW, the scope of work for electronic technicians is as follows:

- (1) The installation, operation, inspection, maintenance, repair and service of:
  - (a) Radio, television and recording systems and devices.
  - (b) Systems for paging, intercommunication, public address, wired music, clocks, security and surveillance systems and mobile radio systems.
  - (c) Fire alarm and burglar systems.
- (2) The installation of nonmetallic conduits and incidental shielded metallic conduits of no longer than ten feet nor larger than one inch, when installed for the specific purpose of carrying low voltage wiring.
- (3) Pulling wiring through the type of conduit described under subsection (2) of this section, when the wiring is installed for the specific purpose of carrying low voltage electricity.
- (4) All the cleanup required in connection with electronic technician's work.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter 39.12 RCW, RCW 43.22.270 and 43.22.051. 00-15-077, § 296-127-01322, filed 7/19/00, effective 7/19/00.]

### WAC 296-127-01323 Inside wireman electrician.

For the purpose of the Washington state public works law, chapter 39.12 RCW, inside wireman electricians plan the layout, install and repair conduit, wiring, electrical fixtures, apparatus, and control equipment in buildings and adjacent yards to provide electricity for power and lighting.

- (1) They assemble, install and maintain all electrical lighting, electric heating and cooling equipment, standby motor generators, electric heat pumps, under-floor duct and luminous ceilings.

They install, repair and maintain highway and street lighting systems and highway and street traffic signal systems.

The work includes, but is not limited to:

- The handling and moving of any electrical materials, equipment and apparatus on the job site.
- Welding, burning, brazing, bending, drilling and shaping of all copper, silver, aluminum, angle iron and brackets to be used in connection with the installation and erection of electrical wiring and equipment.
- Measuring, cutting, bending, threading, forming, assembling and installing of electrical conduit, using such tools as hacksaw, pipe threader and conduit bender.
- Pulling wiring through conduit.
- The installation of conduit and interduct raceways for fiber optic cable and the pulling of fiber optic cable through these raceways, except telephone conduit and cable.

Cutting holes in floors and walls for electrical conduit:

- With point and hammer.
- Core-drilled.
- Chasing and channeling necessary to complete any electrical work, including the fabrication and installation of duct and manhole forms incidental to electrical installation.

- Splicing wires by stripping insulation from terminal leads with knife or pliers, twisting or soldering wires together and applying tape or terminal caps.

- Installation and maintenance of lighting fixtures.
- Connecting wiring to lighting fixtures and power equipment.

Assembling and installing of conduit switches, relays, junction boxes, circuit breaker panels, and related accessories and controls.

- Testing continuity of circuit to insure electrical compatibility and safety of components.
- All cleanup required in connection with electrical work.

(2) The following power line construction classifications may assist journeymen wireman in the installation, repair and maintenance of highway and signal lighting systems and highway and street traffic signal systems:

(a) Groundmen.

- Performs the following tasks:
- Manual digging of pole holes, anchor holes and trenches.
- Assembles and erects fixtures.
- Assists in framing of poles, pulling guys.
- Tamping and compacting.
- Driving of 1/2 or 3/4 ton pickup truck.

(b) Head groundman.

- Performs the following tasks:
- Manual digging of pole holes, anchor holes and trenches.
- Assists in framing of poles, pulling guys.
- Assembles and erects fixtures.
- Tamping and compacting.
- Driving of 1/3 or 3/4 ton pickup truck for materials or man haul.

(c) Line equipment operators. Operate caterpillars, trucks equipped with winch and/or boom, hydraulically operated backhoes with or without front end loaders, mounted booms, and any other equipment that does not come within the scope of heavy equipment operators.

(d) Heavy line equipment operators. Operate any piece of equipment which, in accordance with manufacturer's recommended specifications is capable of operating with one hundred or more aggregate feet of boom, be it crane, backhoe or clam shell, drag line, or shovel.

September 11, 2007

David Soma  
Prevailing Wage Section  
Department of Labor & Industries  
P.O. Box 44540  
Olympia, WA 98504-4540



2303 196th Street SW  
Lynnwood, WA, 98036  
Tel 425.775.5696  
Fax 425.775.9074  
TSIcontrols.com

RE: Shop Panel Fabrication

David,

We are writing this letter at the request of Laura Herman to resolve the issue of whether or not our shop personnel fall under a prevailing wage category. Our discussion with Laura started with the sample letter that L&I sent us that referenced the City of Lacey and GTECH Corporation. According to the letter the furnishing of hardware did not require prevailing wages.

TSI is what is known as a control systems integrator or sometimes simply called a panel shop. We perform engineering, programming, panel fabrication and field checkout of our equipment. Our equipment is primarily installed in water and wastewater treatment facilities although we also supply equipment to the private sector for factory automation.

The part of our operation that is in question is our fabrication shop. We mount pushbuttons, pilot lights, relays, terminals, etc. in an enclosure and provide interconnecting wiring within the panel. We are a UL508 certified shop so that every panel leaving our facility is designed and tested to UL standards and uses only UL listed components. For our wiremen there is no certification process that they go through. They simply are given on the job training that includes how to read prints and expected quality of workmanship. After fabrication the panels are shop tested and then shipped to the job site for installation by an electrical contractor. We are unaware of any labor category that our fabricators would fall into.

If you have questions or need additional information on the goods and services furnished by TSI please call us at 425-775-5696.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bob Kotjan". The signature is stylized and includes a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Bob Kotjan  
Sec/Treasurer  
Technical Systems Inc

Cc: Laura Herman

ES/PW RCVD SEP 14 '07 PM04:42