



The Comptroller General
of the United States

Washington, D.C. 20548

Decision

Matter of: Reimbursement for Permanent Change of Station
Travel by Privately Owned Aircraft
File: B-225296
Date: June 2, 1987

DIGEST

An employee who was authorized to perform permanent duty travel by privately owned automobile as advantageous to the Government but instead flew his privately owned airplane may be reimbursed his expenses only to the extent those expenses do not exceed the constructive cost of such travel by common carrier.

INTRODUCTION

This decision is in response to a request from a certifying officer with the National Security Agency (NSA), for our opinion concerning the entitlement of an employee to reimbursement for permanent change-of-station travel he performed in his own airplane. The employee submitted a voucher by which he requested reimbursement for his mileage, per diem, and an airplane tie-down fee in the amount of \$1,177.80. In accordance with provisions of Volume 2 of the Joint Travel Regulations (JTR), the NSA limited his reimbursement to \$194.75--the amount of the expenses he would have incurred had he used a commercial carrier. Given the circumstances of the case, the NSA has correctly determined the employee's entitlement.

FACTS

By a travel order dated June 14, 1985, the employee was transferred from Fort Meade, Maryland, to Sunnyvale, California, with a reporting date of August 1, 1985. That order authorized permanent duty travel by privately owned automobile as advantageous to the Government. The employee's wife and daughter each drove an automobile to Sunnyvale between July 25 and July 30 and were granted a per diem allowance and mileage for their travel. The employee flew his privately owned airplane to his new duty station between July 23 and 25.

Because the employee had not been authorized to use his privately owned airplane the NSA, citing JTR paragraph

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C4661-2, compared the expense of his travel by privately owned airplane with the cost of common carrier transportation and limited his reimbursement to the lesser amount. The NSA calculated those expenses as follows:

Privately Owned Airplane	Commercial Carrier
Total per diem: \$ 125.00	23 July Depart
Mileage Allowance: 1,045.80	Baltimore 0830
Tie-down fee: 7.00	23 July Arrive
Grand Total \$1,177.80	San Francisco 1200
	Total per diem \$ 5.75
	Airfare 179.00
	Taxi 10.00
	Grand Total \$194.75

DECISION

The NSA correctly interpreted the JTR's in determining the employee's entitlement to reimbursement. Paragraph C4250-1 of JTR part F, Chapter 4, which concerns allowances for the use of privately owned conveyances for permanent duty travel, provides as follows:

"Reimbursement for all permanent duty travel by privately owned airplane or motorcycle and renewal agreement travel by privately owned automobile, including per diem, is determined under par. C2151-3 and will not exceed the cost of travel by common carrier."

While paragraph C2151-3a provides that the use of a privately owned automobile for permanent change-of-station travel will be considered as advantageous to the Government and mileage reimbursement allowed for that method of travel, paragraph C2151-3b provides that the use of a privately owned aircraft will be considered as advantageous to the Government only "when it is determined that the cost of such travel at the rate of \$0.45 per mile * * *, including per diem for the actual travel period, not in excess of the time required to complete the trip at a rate of 300 miles per calendar day, is less than the cost of travel by common carrier." Paragraph C2151-3 provides further that computation for reimbursement of travel by privately owned airplane is to be as outlined in paragraph C4661.

Paragraph C4661-2d provides that when travel by a privately owned airplane is not advantageous to the Government (in this situation as determined by paragraph C2150-3), the total amount of mileage and per diem, computed on the basis of travel by a privately owned conveyance, is to be compared with the total constructive travel cost including per diem by common carrier, and the employee is to be reimbursed in the lesser amount.

The NSA compared the cost of the employee's travel by privately owned aircraft and the cost of the same trip by common carrier and correctly determined he was entitled only to the lesser, constructive cost by common carrier. There is no basis upon which this Office can waive or otherwise change the application of these regulations.

for 
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