



COMPTROLLER GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20548

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MAY 21 1973

Lieutenant Colonel Roy E. Wratzlaw, FC
Finance and Accounting Officer
Headquarters III Corps and Fort Hood
Department of the Army
Fort Hood, Texas 76544

Dear Colonel Wratzlaw:

This refers to your letter of October 6, 1972, reference ALBBCT-FI-A, forwarded here by the Per Diem, Travel and Transportation Allowance Committee (PDTATAC Control No. 72-59) requesting an advance decision on the legality of reimbursing Mr. Burt R. Travis, a civilian employee of the Department of the Army, for use of his privately owned automobile for round-trip travel between Fort Hood, Texas, and the airport at Austin, Texas, incident to the performance of temporary duty in Washington, D. C., during the period August 7, 1972, through August 9, 1972.

Mr. Travis' voucher which you enclosed states a claim for reimbursement for mileage at 11 cents per mile for 124 miles (\$13.64) representing his round-trip mileage between Fort Hood and Austin, Texas, plus a parking fee of \$3.75 incurred at the Austin Airport during his absence on temporary duty. (The voucher also states claim for rental of an automobile in Washington and for per diem, about which no question is raised.)

It is not entirely clear from the submission whether the transportation officer involved in the exercise of his authority under paragraph C10200-1, JTR, regards travel as performed by Mr. Travis as travel via a usually traveled or direct route, or, whether he has determined that such travel was via an indirect route for the convenience of the traveler. If the latter determination has been made reimbursement would be proper on a constructive basis under paragraph C6000, JTR, and section 2.5, Office of Management and Budget Circular No. A-7.

Under the rules applicable to constructive cost determinations it appears that Mr. Travis would be entitled to the full mileage claimed if, as indicated in the travel cost comparison included with the submission, the cost of indirect travel was less than the cost of travel

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by the usually traveled route. Regarding reimbursement for the parking fee we note that paragraph C10157-2b, JTR, precludes the reimbursement of such fees when the employee is entitled to reimbursement on a constructive cost basis.

The designation of usually traveled routes and modes of travel is primarily the responsibility of the agency concerned under section 2.2 of Circular No. A-7. The provisions of paragraph C6001, JTR, implement that regulation within the Department of Defense.

In view of all the considerations affecting the designation of usually traveled routes and the choice of modes of transportation as identified in the cited regulations it appears that the selection made by Mr. Travis may have been of greatest advantage to the Government and that travel by that route should be considered travel by a usually traveled route. If responsible officials in the Department concur in that view and thus consider travel by automobile to Austin and thence to Washington by air a usually traveled route, reimbursement would be allowable as claimed for mileage between Fort Hood and Austin and for the parking fee incurred at the Austin airport in accordance with paragraph C10157-1, JTR, based upon mixed modes of transportation for the travel in question.

Concerning the applicability of paragraph C10153, JTR, and section 4.2c of Circular No. A-7, under which employees may be reimbursed mileage and parking fees for travel to common carrier terminals in lieu of reimbursement of taxi fares, it does not appear that the Austin airport would be considered a terminal serving Fort Hood since there are common carrier terminals much nearer to that installation. In the circumstances travel from Fort Hood to Austin would be considered one leg of the authorized travel rather than travel to a terminal. We do not view the regulations concerning travel to terminals as applicable to travel between the point of origin and a distant terminal which serves an area other than the point of origin.

The voucher which is returned herewith together with supporting papers is for handling in accordance with the above based upon an

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appropriate determination of the usually traveled route or routes between Fort Hood and Washington, D. C.

Sincerely yours,

Paul G. Dombing

For the
Comptroller General
of the United States