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*Agayaria*  
*Civ. 130*

**DECISION**



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

FILE: B-182391

DATE: December 16, 1977

MATTER OF: John Patrick Reeder - Travel Expenses  
Incident to Transfer from Anchorage,  
Alaska, to Fort Meade, Maryland

- DIGEST:
1. Employee of National Security Agency who was authorized to use his privately owned automobile incident to transfer from Anchorage, Alaska, to Fort Meade, Maryland, transported automobile by rail from Whitehorse, Alaska, to Skagway, Alaska, and by ferry from Skagway to Seattle, Washington, is not entitled to reimbursement of cost of shipment by rail part way. While para. 2-10.4c of FTR provides for use of ferries where necessary when travel by automobile is authorized as advantageous to the Government there is nothing in FTR authorizing shipment of automobile by rail where adequate roads are available for passage.
  2. Employee authorized to travel by automobile from Anchorage, Alaska, to Fort George Meade, Maryland, incident to a permanent change of station is not entitled to reimbursement for travel expenses of two automobiles since 5 U.S.C. 5727 provides for the transportation of only one automobile between the continental United States and post of duty outside the continental United States.
  3. Employee of National Security Agency who was authorized to use automobile incident to transfer of station from Anchorage, Alaska, to Fort George Meade, Maryland, used train, ferry, and automobile, is entitled to reimbursement for mileage from Anchorage to Skagway, Alaska, ferry to Seattle, Washington, and mileage from Seattle to Fort George Meade, Maryland, plus applicable per diem.

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This action is at the request of Mr. W. Smallets, Chief, Finance and Accounting, of the National Security Agency, Central Security Service, Fort Meade, Maryland, for a decision as to the proper entitlement of Mr. John Patrick Reeder for travel and transportation expenses incurred incident to transfer from Anchorage, Alaska, to Fort Meade, Maryland. The request for a decision was forwarded to our Office by the Per Diem, Travel and Transportation Allowance Committee, PDTATAC Control No. 77-5.

The record shows that Mr. Reeder was authorized travel and transportation expenses for his transfer by Travel Order No. TPA 6A5998, dated February 18, 1976. The travel order authorized Mr. Reeder transportation and travel expenses including per diem, for himself, his wife, and their two children. Mr. Reeder and his dependents were authorized to travel by commercial carrier by the following modes: air, rail, ferry, and bus. In addition, travel by privately owned automobile was authorized at the rate of 15 cents per mile as being advantageous to the Government.

Incident to his transfer, Mr. Reeder and his dependents performed the travel during the period of July 9 to August 6, 1976. Mr. Reeder and his family traveled from Anchorage to Whitehorse, Yukon Territory, by privately owned automobiles. From Whitehorse to Skagway, Alaska, Mr. Reeder and his dependents traveled by rail aboard the Whitepass and Yukon Railroad, shipping his automobiles with him by rail. The total cost for the passengers and two automobiles was \$222. Mr. Reeder and his dependents traveled by transoceanic ferry and transported, one or two automobiles by this means. The cost was \$309 for passenger fare, \$298 for transportation of the automobile(s), and \$10 for the transportation of the family dog. The total cost for travel by Mr. Reeder and his dependents and for the transportation of the motor vehicles and dog was \$839. We note that the statutory authority for transportation of a privately owned automobile incident to transfer between the continental United States and a post of duty outside the continental United States, 5 U.S.C. 5727 (1970), provides for the transportation of one motor vehicle. Accordingly, reimbursement may only be allowed for the return transportation costs of one automobile. Also, we are aware of no authority for reimbursement of the expenses of transporting a pet incident to a transfer. Accordingly, such expense is of a personal nature and may not be allowed for payment. See Federal Travel Regulations (FTR) (FPMR 101-7) (May, 1973) para. 2-1.4h. The employee and his family completed

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their journey by traveling by privately owned automobile from Seattle to the new duty station at Fort Meade, Maryland.

The National Security Agency (NSA) now asserts that Mr. Reeder was not entitled to transportation of his privately owned vehicle. The NSA cited para. 2-10.4 of the FTR and para. C11003-1 of the Joint Travel Regulations (JTR), Volume 2, regarding the transportation of privately owned vehicles, respectively, which provide in pertinent part as follows:

"2-10.4. Allowable expenses.

\* \* \* \* \*

"c. When it is feasible to drive a vehicle.

When a privately owned vehicle may be driven on hard-surfaced, all weather highways, using ferries as necessary, for all or part of the distance between the allowable origin and destination, the agency head concerned or his designee may determine that it is reasonable to expect the employee or a member of his family to drive the privately owned vehicle for that distance. In case of such a determination, the Government will pay transportation charges to the extent driving the privately owned vehicle was not required. For the distance the privately owned vehicle is driven, the allowance provided in 2-3.3 applies \* \* \*."

C7153 in effect at the time the travel was performed and now renumbered C11003 provides:

"i. TRANSPORTATION NOT AUTHORIZED.

Transportation of a privately owned motor vehicle will not be authorized when:

- "1. the motor vehicle may be driven to the duty station over hard-surfaced all-weather highways, including ferries, and it is determined that the employee, or member of his immediate family, should reasonably be expected to drive the vehicle\* \* \*."

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We have been informally advised by the American Automobile Association Travel Department that travel from Anchorage to Seattle through Skagway with its ferry system is as popular a highway route as the Alcan highway and it is becoming more frequently used because of the poor conditions of portions of the Alcan highway. We were also informed that in traveling by automobile from Anchorage to Skagway, Whitehorse is usually bypassed and direct travel via Hains Junction by automobile is the usually traveled route.

Regarding the transportation of the automobile by transoceanic ferry and the travel of Mr. Reeder and his dependents by same, the NSA asserts that, at the time of Mr. Reeder's transfer, there was no authority for reimbursement for transportation and travel from Skagway, Alaska, to Seattle, Washington, by transoceanic ferry. The agency states that transoceanic ferry was not an authorized mode of travel between Alaska and the contiguous United States until Change 137 of the JTR, Volume 2, effective March 1, 1977, in which paragraphs C2156 and C11006, respectively, provided for the use of transoceanic ferry for permanent duty travel and for transportation of a privately owned vehicle incident to transfer. We do not agree with this view. On the contrary the Federal Travel Regulation in effect at the time the travel by automobile was performed specifically provided for the use of ferries for all or part of the distance between the allowable origin and destination points. However, there is nothing in the FTR to authorize cost of transporting an automobile by rail where adequate roads are available for passage.

Accordingly, Mr. Reeder may be reimbursed for mileage from Anchorage to Skagway, ferry fare from Skagway to Seattle, mileage from Seattle to Fort Meade, Maryland, plus applicable per diem.

Action should be taken on Mr. Reeder's reclaim in accordance with the above.

  
Deputy Comptroller General  
of the United States