



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

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B-178505

JUN 27 1973

Mr. James F. Wagner, Chief  
Central Accounts Branch  
Office of the Controller  
United States Atomic Energy Commission

Dear Mr. Wagner:

We refer to your letter of April 18, 1973, requesting the opinion of this Office as to the propriety of reimbursing Mr. C. B. Bastin the additional expense of shuttle service incurred by him for shipment of household effects incident to his change of permanent duty station from Aiken, South Carolina, to Blue Ridge Summit, Pennsylvania, in February or March of 1972. Mr. Bastin has been reimbursed for the transportation of household effects on a commuted rate basis.

Upon its arrival in Blue Ridge Summit, the moving van was unable to negotiate the disrepaired private road leading to the employee's residence. Mr. Bastin's household effects were therefore transferred to a smaller vehicle capable of driving over the road and were delivered to his residence at the additional charge of \$296.61 which is the subject of his claim.

Mr. Bastin states that as an alternative to having his household effects shuttled by the smaller truck, he could have placed them in storage until the road was repaired. Had he done so, it is his contention that he would have been entitled to reimbursement for temporary storage as well as subsistence expenses for occupancy of temporary quarters for himself and his five dependents. He contends that because this would have been considerably more costly than the \$296.61 incurred for shuttle service he should be reimbursed such amount.

In your opinion reimbursement of expenses in the nature of the shuttle service fee here involved is precluded by decisions of this Office. We assume that you refer to B-159836, August 12, 1966; B-172017, March 16, 1971; and B-173357, July 14, 1971, which hold that the additional cost of a small shuttle van necessitated by road conditions is not reimbursable where transportation expenses are authorized or approved on a commuted rate basis. The rationale of those holdings is that the additional expense is nevertheless a transportation expense which under

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5 U.S.C. 5724(c) is deemed compensated by payment of transportation expenses on a commuted rate basis.

Mr. Bastin argues that those decisions are inapplicable to his case in that they fail to take into account the substantial savings to the Government effected by his use of the shuttle service as compared to the expense of temporary storage and temporary quarters subsistence. There is no authority by which an expense which is clearly for transportation of household effects may be reimbursed on the basis or in lieu of temporary storage or other expense. Neither does the fact that the employee's actions may have resulted in a savings to the Government provide a legal basis for the payment requested. As pointed out in our previous decisions, supra, expenses of transportation are deemed compensated by payment therefor on a commuted rate basis. The fact that a particular employee's actual transportation expenses may exceed the amount of his entitlement determined on a commuted rate basis does not entitle him to additional payment.

In view of the above, the voucher returned herewith may not be certified for payment.

Sincerely yours,

PAUL G. DEMBLING

For the            Comptroller General  
of the United States