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C. Browne  
C/O Paris

**DECISION**



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

**FILE:** B-189270

**DATE:** March 14, 1978

**MATTER OF:** Albert L. Pendleton - Shipment of Mobile  
Home and Household Goods - Limitation

**DIGEST:** Employee of the National Weather Service, who was transferred from Montana to North Carolina, shipped a mobile home by Government bill of lading, as provided by FTR para. 2-7.1a. Mobile home was wrecked in Kansas. Employee's personal effects were subsequently shipped by Government bill of lading from Kansas to North Carolina. Employee's total allowance for both methods of transportation may not exceed cost which would have been incurred had either method been used for the entire distance. See 55 Comp. Gen. 526 (1975).

By letter of June 2, 1977, Ms. Kathryn M. Toney, an authorized certifying officer with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce, requested an advance decision regarding the computation of the transportation allowance of Mr. Albert L. Pendleton. Mr. Pendleton, an employee of the National Weather Service, was transferred without dependents, from Glasgow, Montana, to Greensboro, North Carolina. Under the provisions of the Federal Travel Regulations (FPMR 101-7), para. 2-8.2a he was entitled to a maximum allowance of 5,000 pounds net weight plus temporary storage of household goods.

The record shows that the employee elected to ship a mobile home in lieu of household goods, as provided by FTR para. 2-7.1a. The mobile home was shipped by Government bill of lading (GBL). Enroute in Manhattan, Kansas, the mobile home was wrecked. Subsequently, the employee's goods and effects weighing 1,000 pounds were placed in temporary storage and then shipped by GBL from Manhattan to Greensboro.

Specifically, the certifying officer asks the following question:

"Under the circumstances, would allowances be computed at 5,000 pounds plus storage for the total distance and compared to the actual cost to the Government on the two GBLs or would the allowance be for 5,000 pounds from Glasgow, Mt. to Manhattan, Ks. and then 1,000 pounds plus storage from Kansas to Greensboro, N.C. and compared to the actual cost to the Government?"

B-189270

In a similar case, 39 Comp. Gen. 40 (1959), a civilian employee, because of breakdown en route, was unable to complete the towing of his housetrailer loaded with his household goods and personal effects to his new duty station. We held that the employee could be paid a commuted allowance for transportation of his effects for the distance from the point of breakdown to the new duty station as well as mileage for the distance the trailer was hauled, provided that the total amount did not exceed the cost which would have been payable for the transportation of the trailer by commercial hauler. In response to the agency's questions about authorizing the transportation of household goods and housetrailer in the future, we stated the following at page 42:

"It would seem to be within the administrative discretion to issue a travel authorization providing for both the transportation of the employee's household goods or, in lieu thereof, the transportation of the house trailer under the applicable statute and regulations. We believe, however, as indicated above, that the statute and regulations contemplate, generally, that only one of the two authorities will be used for the entire distance rather than a combination thereof for different portions of the trip. If, as in the situation here, because of circumstances beyond the control of the individual and acceptable to the department concerned, use of both authorizations is necessary, but for different portions of the trip, allowance under the separate authorizations for the respective portions may be made in accordance with the applicable regulations. The total payment in such cases should not exceed the cost which would have been incurred by the Government had either of the authorities been used for the entire distance."

The rationale of that case would be applicable here where the housetrailer and the household effects were shipped by GBLs. Cf. 44 Comp. Gen. 809 (1965). Under paragraph 2-8.3b(3) of the FTR, where the actual expense method is used the employee is entitled to transportation of the household goods within the authorized weight limit. In computing the constructive cost of the shipment

B-189270

of the household goods there should be used the 1,000-pound weight that was actually shipped, plus storage, if any, for the total distance as compared to the actual cost to the Government on the two GBLs. However, under our decisions the total payment due the employee may not exceed the cost which would have been incurred by the Government had either of the methods of transportation been used for the entire distance. See 55 Comp. Gen. 526 (1975).

Your question is answered accordingly.

*R. F. K. 11m.*  
Deputy Comptroller General  
of the United States