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DECISION

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

FILE: B-190044 **DATE:** November 21, 1977

MATTER OF: Donald E. Rogalla - Transportation of mobile home

DIGEST: Pursuant to Federal Travel Regulations para. 2-7.4, agency computed limitation on employee's allowance for transportation of mobile home on basis of distance shown in standard highway mileage guide. Employee claims that above limitation on reimbursement should be computed on actual mileage traveled pursuant to FTR para. 2-7.3. While employees may explain substantial deviations in distance for purpose of FTR para. 2-7.3, in computing maximum limitation under FTR para. 2-7.4, employees are bound by rules pertaining to movement of household goods on a commuted rate contained in FTR chapter 2, Part 8.

This action is in response to the request for an advance decision by Ronald L. Carter, an authorized certifying officer of the Bureau of Reclamation concerning the computation of the allowance for the transportation of a mobile home under the following circumstances.

Incident to a transfer from Victoria, Texas, to Pierre, South Dakota, Mr. Donald E. Rogalla, an employee of the Bureau of Reclamation, was authorized and moved his mobile home from his former duty station to his new duty station. Because of the size of his mobile home the agency reports that the mover was required to travel a route designated by the various states that it was required to travel through. This necessitated that the mover traveled a distance which exceeded that listed in the Household Goods Carrier's Bureau Mileage Guide by 188 miles. Pursuant to Federal Travel Regulations (FPMR 101-7) para. 2-7.3 (May 1973), the Bureau of Reclamation originally computed Mr. Rogalla's allowance for the movement of his mobile home for which he was paid as follows:

Mileage	1417 @	\$1.47 per mile	\$2082.99
Various State and permit license fees			137.80
Escort vehicle			708.50
Total			<u>\$2929.29</u>

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However, pursuant to FTR para. 2-7.4, the Bureau of Reclamation recomputed Mr. Rogalla's reimbursement for the shipment of his mobile home and limited the total reimbursement to the cost of transportation and 60 days' temporary storage of 11,000 pounds of household goods, computed as follows:

Commuted rate for 1,229 miles	\$2332.00
Temporary storage	503.80
	<u>\$2835.80</u>

Mr. Rogalla was requested to refund the difference of \$93.49 but he claims that amount on the basis that the mileage to be used in computing the limitation on reimbursement pursuant to FTR para. 2-7.4 should be the actual distance traveled of 1,417 miles, rather than the 1,229 miles shown in the standard highway mileage guide.

Regulations for the computation of the allowance for the transportation of an employee's mobile home are set forth in FTR para. 2-7.3. Paragraph 2-7.3a(1) provides as follows:

"Tariff rates. The allowance shall include the carrier's charges for actual transportation of the mobile home in an amount not exceeding the applicable tariff as approved by the Interstate Commerce Commission (or appropriate State regulatory body for intrastate movements) for transportation of a mobile home of the size and type involved for the distance involved, provided any substantial deviation from mileage shown in the standard highway mileage guides shall be explained."

As can be seen, the regulations specifically state that in computing the subject allowance, an agency has discretion to allow substantial deviations in mileage from those shown in standard highway mileage guides. In the instant case, the Bureau of Reclamation has apparently either determined that the 188-mile deviation does not constitute a "substantial deviation" or accepted Mr. Rogalla's explanation for the deviation. However, FTR para. 2-7.4 provides for an over-all limitation on the reimbursement of the allowance for the transportation of a mobile home. It provides that:


"The total amount allowable under 2-7.3 shall not exceed the maximum amount which would be allowable for

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transportation and 60 days' temporary storage of the employee's household goods if, instead of moving a mobile home, the maximum quantity of household goods allowable for the employee involved under 2-8.2 had been moved."

In the present case Mr. Rogalla has already been paid the constructive cost on a commuted rate basis for shipment of 11,000 pounds of household effects plus 2 months' temporary storage which is the maximum amount permitted under the regulations. Therefore, he is not entitled to the additional amount of \$93.49 claimed on the basis of the mileage actually used for the transportation of his mobile home. See B-167758, September 17, 1969; 54 Comp. Gen. 335 (1974).

Accordingly, the reclaim voucher may not be certified for payment, and the debt for the additional amount paid to Mr. Rogalla should be collected.


Deputy Comptroller General
of the United States