



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

B-179133

November 14, 1973

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Mr. George J. Albrecht
P.O. Box 456
Sparta, Wisconsin 54656

Dear Mr. Albrecht:

We refer further to your letter of June 4, 1973, wherein you request review of the action in Certificate of Settlement dated September 6, 1972, issued by our Transportation and Claims Division, disallowing your claim for reimbursement for cost of two airline tickets and in part for taxi fare claimed incident to your permanent change of station during 1970 as an employee of the Department of the Army.

With respect to your use of commercial airline for transportation between Bangkok, Thailand, and Tokyo, Japan, you state:

"Travel reservations were arranged by the Central Civilian Personnel Office, Bangkok, and I was notified by telephone that my wife and I were booked on flight WOT6Y, 9 June 1970. I was not provided with either travel orders or a transportation request, since my duty station at Udorn RTAFB was approximately 350 miles up-country.

"I picked up travel orders from the Bangkok Civilian Personnel Office the day of the flight and was informed that my travel request was at the airport held by the passenger service representative at the booking desk.

"The passenger service representative booking flight WOT6Y would not issue a boarding pass since my travel request was not included among the reservations being held. He asked me to step out of the line and suggested that I consult the tri-service ATCO representative on duty.

"By the time the ATCO representative determined that a travel request should have been issued and the booking reserved, the flight manifest was closed and my reservations forfeited. The NCOIC of passenger booking told me he could not reopen the manifest since the flight was completely filled due to the large number of stand-by passengers.

[Disallowance of Claims for Travel Costs]

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"The earliest possible reservations next available were on the same flight WOT67 on 12 June 1970. Because this is a late evening flight, I was not assured that it would allow sufficient time to connect with flight B284 from Yokota to Travis AFB.

"On the basis of the above information, I secured tourist accommodations on the next available commercial flight and request reimbursement."

Travel Order A-134, issued May 21, 1970, authorized your travel from Bangkok, Thailand—duty station Udorn Airfield—to Camp McCoy, Wisconsin. A delay en route of 5 days in Japan was authorized. Use of commercial transportation was limited to travel within the United States with travel authorization otherwise limited to Government transportation.

The denial of your claim for reimbursement of commercial air fare from Bangkok to Tokyo was based in part on the provisions of paragraph C6000 of the Joint Travel Regulations (JTR), Volume 2, and Section 3.3 of the Standardized Government Travel Regulations. The regulations provide that when a person, for his own convenience, travels by an indirect route or interrupts travel by a direct route, the extra expense shall be borne by him. Reimbursement for expenses shall be based only on such charges as would have incurred by a usually traveled route. The administrative report on your claim indicates that direct flights from Bangkok to Travis Air Force Base, California, were available at the time you performed travel. The record also indicates that you departed Yokota Air Force Base on June 15, 1970. It thus would appear that acceptance of the reservation on June 12, 1970, would have resulted in shortening your leave in Japan but would have permitted you to proceed to Travis by the flight you later used. Additionally, the administrative office indicated that in view of your entitlement to free Government transportation from Bangkok to Travis and you only utilized such transportation from Japan to Travis, reimbursement of the difference, at the actual cost to the Government at the time travel was performed would be reimbursed upon your claim.

You enclosed a copy of paragraph C9004.3, JTR, Volume 2. That regulation was numbered C9003.3 at the time of your travel and read as follows:

"3. WHEN TRANSPORTATION REQUESTS ARE AVAILABLE BUT NOT USED AND TRANSPORTATION COSTS EXCEED \$15. When transportation requests are available but due to conditions beyond the control of the traveler they were not utilized, reimbursement of the actual cost of authorized travel and accommodations is authorized. In all other cases, when transportation requests are available but not used and the cost of commercial transportation purchased by the traveler exceeds \$15, reimbursement may be allowed not to exceed the cost to the Government for authorized transportation and accommodations had a transportation request been used."

Although your situation is not within the terms of that regulation, the administrative allowance of your claim appears consistent therewith in that you were allowed reimbursement of the actual cost to the Government of travel by the mode authorized. On the record before us we find no authority by which you may be reimbursed for the commercial air fare from Bangkok to Japan.

Your claim for \$28 taxi fare from Travis Air Force Base to San Leandro, California, was allowed in the amount of \$6 for the reasons set forth in the Certificate of Settlement of September 6, 1972. Your request for review of the settlement indicates acceptance of that part of the settlement.

In view of the above we must sustain the disallowance of your claim.

Sincerely yours,

Paul G. Demblin

For the Comptroller General
of the United States