

**DECISION**

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

1/8630 Information  
Resource  
Mr. Morrow  
J. J. J. II

FILE: B-206354

DATE: June 8, 1982

MATTER OF: Argy L. Hager - Travel Expenses - Privately  
Owned Aircraft

**DIGEST:** Employee was transferred from Alaska and traveled by motor home to his new post of duty in West Virginia. He claims reimbursement for the actual travel expenses he incurred when he returned to his former post of duty to fly his privately owned aircraft to his new post of duty. The claim is denied because travel was authorized by only one privately owned vehicle. Shipment of an additional vehicle was not authorized. His travel expense entitlement and reimbursement became fixed when the employee traveled to his new duty station in West Virginia because travel to the official post of duty had been completed. FTR paragraph 2-2.2a.

This decision is in response to a request dated February 3, 1982, from Ms. V. Leist, Authorized Certifying Officer, Internal Revenue Service. Ms. Leist requests an advance decision concerning the propriety of certifying for payment a reclaim voucher for travel expenses by Mr. Argy L. Hager, an employee of the Internal Revenue Service. The issue we are presented is whether an employee is entitled to actual travel expenses incurred when he returned to his former post of duty to fly his personal aircraft to his current post of duty. The claim is denied since there is no authority for reimbursement.

Under travel authorization number 0424-81-4 dated July 13, 1981, Mr. Hager was authorized moving expenses for a change in post of duty from Anchorage, Alaska, to Parkersburg, West Virginia. Authorization was provided for the following reimbursable expenses: (1) temporary quarters for himself and his immediate family; (2) allowance for real estate transactions; (3) transportation including per diem; to his new post of duty, and (4) the transportation of household goods.

In his reclaim voucher, Mr. Hager requests reconsideration of \$1,440.28 in travel expenses disallowed by the certifying officer. These expenses consist of the cost of airfare from Parkersburg to Anchorage, mileage for transporting his private aircraft to Parkersburg, and food and lodging. Mr. Hager indicates that he was authorized transportation of his aircraft from Anchorage to Seattle. According to Mr. Hager, at the time he initiated travel, his wife was unable to fly his aircraft out of Alaska to Seattle or Parkersburg, and it would have been dangerous for her to drive to Parkersburg alone. Therefore, he states that it was essential for him to travel with her to Parkersburg and then return to Anchorage for the aircraft. Consequently, Mr. Hager and his wife traveled by motor home to Haines, Alaska, where they accompanied the shipment of their vehicle by ferry from Haines Port to Seattle. From there they traveled by motor home to Parkersburg. Before reporting for duty, Mr. Hager returned to Anchorage via commercial airline to transport his aircraft to Parkersburg.

Mr. Hager is mistaken as to the authority granted by his travel authorization. On the face of the authorization in section 2e, Mr. Hager was authorized transportation to his new post of duty by one privately owned vehicle. However, on the second page there is a section which provides that "if more than one vehicle, or travel by vehicle at different times is authorized in 2e, give justification." In this section it states:

"Employee will fly personally owned airplane from Anchorage to Seattle in lieu of flying on commercial airline. Automobile will be shipped from Alaska to Seattle on ferry (Marine Highway)."

Apparently, Mr. Hager interpreted these two provisions as authority for the transportation of his private aircraft. However, the statement quoted above seems to be more of an expression of the employee's plans rather than an authorization for travel because section 2e specifically authorizes travel by only one privately owned vehicle. Further, there is no authority to ship one of the vehicles since the section (2g) authorizing that mode is not checked.

When he traveled via motor home to his new duty station in Parkersburg, Mr. Hager's travel expense entitlement and reimbursement became fixed because travel to the official post of duty had been completed. FTR paragraph 2-2.2a. His return trip to Alaska for the purpose of transporting his privately owned aircraft to Parkersburg was made for personal reasons, and is considered a second trip. Further, the fact that Mr. Hager had to accompany his wife to Parkersburg is not considered as justifying payment by the Government of a second trip for the employee to the old duty station. See 54 Comp. Gen. 301 (1974); Johnnie Cain, B-188214, May 9, 1978.

In view of the foregoing, the voucher may not be certified for payment.

*Milton J. Amos*  
for Comptroller General  
of the United States