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DECISION



Brown - Air Pass
**THE COMPTROLLER GENERAL
OF THE UNITED STATES**
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20548

FILE: B-186115

DATE: February 4, 1977

MATTER OF: Joseph P. Crowley - Reimbursement of cost
of shipping privately owned vehicle

DIGEST: Employee of U.S. Customs Service who was transferred from Boston, Massachusetts, to Nogales, Arizona, and traveled by air, may not be reimbursed for cost of shipping automobile and for automobile rental. However, employee is eligible for cost of travel from airport in Tucson to duty station in Nogales.

Mr. Peter F. Gonzalez, an authorized certifying officer with the U.S. Customs Service, Department of the Treasury, requests an advance decision regarding the propriety of paying the reclaim of Mr. Joseph P. Crowley for the cost of shipping a privately owned vehicle and cost of the rental of a vehicle pending delivery of his privately owned one. The claim incident to a permanent change of duty station, is in the amount of \$290.85.

The record shows that Mr. Crowley, an Inspector with the U.S. Customs Service, was transferred from Boston, Massachusetts, to Nogales, Arizona, in November 1975. Mr. Crowley was authorized travel, transportation, and other allowable relocation expenses. At the time of the transfer the employee's wife was pregnant and had been advised by her doctor not to travel by automobile. Mr. Crowley and his wife both chose to travel by air and shipped their automobile by a commercial carrier. Mr. Crowley has been reimbursed for the cost of airline tickets from Boston to Tucson, Arizona.

The certifying officer inquires as to whether he may pay Mr. Crowley's reclaim for the cost of shipping his automobile and the cost of renting an automobile for 6 days until the shipped automobile arrived. Mr. Crowley states that the cost of air transportation plus the additional cost of automobile shipment and automobile rental are less than the constructive

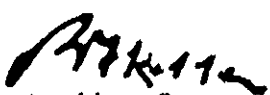
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cost of travel by automobile for two persons from Boston to Nogales, Arizona. Hence, Mr. Crowley believes that he is entitled to his actual expenses not to exceed the constructive cost of travel by automobile.

The transportation of privately owned vehicles at Government expense in connection with a transfer between duty stations is prohibited by 5 U.S.C. 5727(a) (1970) in the absence of specific authorization by statute. The only situation in which transportation of privately owned vehicles has been authorized is in connection with assignments to duty or return from duty, other than temporary, at posts outside the continental United States. See 5 U.S.C. 5727(b). We are unaware of any statutes or regulations which permit reimbursement for the cost of shipment of an automobile by commercial carrier within the continental United States.

With regard to the claim for the cost of renting an automobile, rental of automobiles is permitted only if the automobile is to be used on official business and then only if such rental is specifically authorized. See Federal Travel Regulations (FPMR 101-7) para. 1-3.2a (May 1973).

Accordingly, the travel voucher of Mr. Crowley may not be certified for payment. However, we note that the record indicates Mr. Crowley and his wife have been reimbursed only for the cost of traveling from his old duty station to Tucson, Arizona. The employee has not been reimbursed for the cost of travel from the airport in Tucson to Nogales, Arizona, as is permitted by FTR para. 1-2.3c (May 1973). Accordingly, we would not object to Mr. Crowley's being reimbursed the cost of the rental car for the part of the trip from Tucson to Nogales not to exceed the usual taxicab cost as authorized by the FTR. However, since the map shows that Nogales is approximately 65 miles from the Tucson Airport, if taxicab or limousine service is not available for the trip, we would not object to Mr. Crowley's being reimbursed on a pro rata basis the cost of the rental car for the trip.


Deputy Comptroller General
of the United States