

# Board of Contract Appeals

General Services Administration  
Washington, D.C. 20405

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August 2, 2000

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GSBCA 15340-RELO

In the Matter of DAVID L. DILLINGHAM

David L. Dillingham, Hawthorne, NV, Claimant.

Ray E. York, Chief, Finance Systems and Procedures Division, Defense Finance and Accounting Service, Indianapolis, IN, appearing for Department of Defense.

**DeGRAFF**, Board Judge.

The claimant asks to be reimbursed for the amount he paid to a moving company to transport his household goods from his old duty station to his new duty station. We conclude that he is entitled to be reimbursed for the amount that he paid to the moving company, not to exceed the amount that he would be paid using the commuted rate method of reimbursement.

## Background

In April 2000, the Department of Defense (DoD) transferred David L. Dillingham from California to Nevada. In connection with the transfer, DoD issued travel orders which said that Mr. Dillingham was authorized to ship his household goods to Nevada. The travel orders did not say how Mr. Dillingham was supposed to accomplish this shipment and DoD did not provide Mr. Dillingham with any advice or direction concerning what he needed to do in order to ship his goods from one location to another. After giving the matter some thought, Mr. Dillingham decided to hire a moving company to transport his household goods. The moving company charged Mr. Dillingham \$2852, which he paid.

When Mr. Dillingham asked to be reimbursed for the \$2852, DoD decided to see what it would have cost to ship Mr. Dillingham's household goods if DoD had arranged to do so using a government bill of lading (GBL). DoD determined that it would have cost only \$1198.37 to ship Mr. Dillingham's goods via a GBL, so it reimbursed him for that amount. Mr. Dillingham thinks that he should be reimbursed for the entire \$2852, and he asks us to review DoD's decision.

## Discussion

As we have explained numerous times, household goods can be moved using the GBL method, in which case the agency arranges with a carrier to move the goods and then pays for the move according to a contract between the carrier and the agency. Household goods can also be moved using the commuted rate method, in which case the employee is responsible for making arrangements for the move and paying for the move, and the agency is responsible for reimbursing the employee according to a schedule of established rates. Agencies are required to use the commuted rate method when individual transfers are involved, unless they determine in advance of the move that the cost of using the GBL method will result in savings to the agency of \$100 or more. If no cost comparison is made before an employee moves, the employee is usually entitled to be reimbursed in accordance with the commuted rate method. These rules apply to civilian employees of DoD as well as to employees of other agencies. Thomas A. McAfoose, GSBCA 15295-RELO (June 22, 2000); Steven C. Mantooh, GSBCA 14824-RELO, 99-2 BCA ¶ 30,424; Charles E. Stevens, GSBCA 15010-RELO, 99-2 BCA ¶ 30,420; Richard P. Fyne, 14742-RELO, 99-1 BCA ¶ 30,293; T. Scott Frick, GSBCA 14228-RELO, 98-1 BCA ¶ 29,428 (1997); Samuel L. Marr, GSBCA 14039-RELO, 97-1 BCA ¶ 28,788; Jeffrey P. Herman, GSBCA 13832-RELO, 97-1 BCA ¶ 28,704 (1996).

Because DoD did not make a cost comparison before Mr. Dillingham moved and did not require him to utilize the GBL method for moving his household goods, he is entitled to be reimbursed at the commuted rate. Mr. Dillingham is not asking, however, to be reimbursed at the commuted rate. He wants to be reimbursed for the amount that he paid to the moving company. DoD should reimburse Mr. Dillingham for the amount that he paid to the moving company, not to exceed the amount he would be paid at the commuted rate.

Decision

The claim is granted.

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MARTHA H. DeGRAFF  
Board Judge