



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

40329

B-178908

January 4, 1974

Staff Sergeant Nathan R. Connor
U.S. Army Strategic Communications Command
Signal Support Agency Taiwan
APO San Francisco, California 96263

Dear Sergeant Connor:

Reference is made to your letter dated May 6, 1973, in which you request further consideration of your claim for travel allowance for miscellaneous transportation expenses during the period October 30, 1971, through February 9, 1972, and for plane fare for travel from Seoul, Korea, to Taipei, Taiwan, on February 9, 1972, which was denied by our Transportation and Claims Division on January 26, 1973.

Letter Ordera Number 10-355, dated October 18, 1971, as amended on October 28, 1971, ordered you to Korea with a reporting date of not later than October 30, 1971, for the purpose of performing temporary duty for approximately 6 months. Repeated travel was authorized if necessary. Travel within and around the temporary duty station also was authorized. On December 13, 1971, the basic order was again amended to indicate that the use of Government quarters and messing facilities would adversely affect the mission. The orders authorized the use of special conveyances, travel by extra fare aircraft or trains, and changes in itinerary and travel to additional places, as might be necessary to the accomplishment of the mission. The amendment also authorized the use of common carriers, Government owned vehicles and aircraft and foreign flag carriers if military aircraft were not available.

In your travel voucher dated April 17, 1972, for the period from October 30, 1971, to February 9, 1972, you listed as reimbursable expenses for transportation, taxi, bus, train and plane fares in the sum of \$347. In addition, for February 9, 1972, you also claimed plane fare from Seoul, Korea, to Taipei, Taiwan, in the sum of \$103.60. Your claim for reimbursement of both of these sums was disallowed by our Transportation and Claims Division. On the voucher prepared by this Office on January 26, 1973, it was stated as follows:

"Reimbursement for miscellaneous transportation expenses, in the absence of an itemization and receipts

[Claim for Travel Expenses]

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for any item in excess of \$15.00, as provided for in Chapter 4, part I of the Joint Travel Regulations, is not authorized. Reimbursement of plane fare is not authorized in the absence of a statement of the name of the airline used. Also if the airline used was of foreign registry a statement by the proper authority that no military air was available, would be required to support payment."

Paragraph M4400-6 of the Joint Travel Regulations, provides in pertinent part as follows:

"RECEIPTS. A receipt to support claim for a reimbursable item of travel expenses will be furnished for any item in excess of \$15 when it is practicable to obtain it. Failure to furnish receipts must be fully explained on the reimbursement voucher. Inadvertence or inconvenience will not be accepted as a satisfactory explanation for failure to furnish receipts. * * *"

It has long been held that the burden is upon claimants to furnish evidence clearly and satisfactorily establishing their claims and in the absence of such evidence, this Office has no authority to certify claims for payment. See Charles v. United States, 19 Ct. Cl. 316 (1884); Longwill v. United States, 17 Ct. Cl. 288 (1881); and 31 Comp. Gen. 340 (1952). Claims against the United States cannot be allowed on the statement of the claimant unless they be verified or corroborated by Government records or documentary evidence.

Consequently, in the absence of itemization of various transportation expenses totaling \$347, or of receipts or corroborating evidence of such expenses, or similar evidence to support your claim for commercial air travel on February 9, 1972, no legal authority exists for payment to you of the amounts claimed.

Therefore, in the absence of evidence clearly establishing that part of your claim for reimbursement of transportation expenses, we must sustain the prior disallowance of your claim.

Sincerely yours,

R.F.KELLER

Deputy Comptroller General
of the United States