



UNITED STATES GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20548

110497

LOGISTICS AND COMMUNICATIONS
DIVISION

B-195897

OCTOBER 2, 1979

The Honorable Lawton Chiles
United States Senate



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Dear Senator Chiles:

Subject: Manner in Which ~~the~~ Net Weight of a Constituent's Household Goods Was Determined (LCD-79-229)

Your letter of July 25, 1979, asked us to comment on a constituent's inquiry concerning the manner in which the weight of his household goods was determined. The constituent, Mr. James J. Carroll, had his effects shipped at Government expense from Subic Bay in the Phillippines to Florida. He was concerned that an inaccurate weight calculation would result in excess costs to him and to the Government.

We have examined the procedures ^{*Ab-Covered*} and circumstances surrounding the computation of the weight of Mr. Carroll's household goods as the Navy reported to him, and we are satisfied that the methodology employed was sound and in accordance with the provisions of applicable travel regulations. Net weight, the basis for carrier billing, was determined by subtracting the tare weight (the weight of the containers and packing material) from the gross weight (the combined weight of the household goods, containers, and packing material).

Since the weight of the packing material and the containers was known, the provisions of the Joint Travel Regulations, which stipulate that the net weight shall be 85 percent of the gross weight less the container weight, are not applicable. The fact that the total weight (200 pounds) of packing material was arbitrarily applied--20 pounds each to nine containers and 10 pounds each to the two additional containers--would not distort the net weight of the total shipment.

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We note that Mr. Carroll's letter was written before any determination was made concerning either his or the Government's liability for the movement of his household goods. Certainly, if Mr. Carroll had any question concerning the accuracy of the determination of net weight, he should have--as officials at Subic Bay suggested--requested that his shipment be reweighed at destination. Not only would this have protected the interests of all involved, but also would have verified the accuracy of the method used to determine weights at Subic Bay. If not too late, we strongly recommend that the shipment be reweighed at destination to satisfy Mr. Carroll's concern. This can be done at no expense to Mr. Carroll.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "R. W. Gutmann".

R. W. Gutmann
Director