

Board of Contract Appeals
General Services Administration
Washington, D.C. 20405

January 21, 2004

GSBCA 16237-TRAV

In the Matter of LANA J. REAVES

Lana J. Reaves, APO Area Pacific, Claimant.

Rick Miller, Civilian Travel and Allowances, Personnel Resources, Legislation and Entitlements Division, Office of the Chief of Staff, Department of the Air Force, Washington, DC, appearing for Department of the Air Force.

DeGRAFF, Board Judge.

Lana J. Reaves is a civilian employee of the Department of Defense (DoD) and her permanent duty station is in Korea. In April 2003, DoD issued travel orders to Ms. Reaves so she and her husband could attend the funeral of a family member in the United States. When Ms. Reaves presented the orders to a DoD transportation office in order to obtain two airline tickets for the trip, the transportation office told her it did not issue tickets to civilian employees and suggested she contact a DoD international tour and travel office, which she did. An employee in the international tour and travel office told Ms. Reaves to purchase airline tickets using her government-issued charge card, and also told her she would be reimbursed for the cost of the tickets. Ms. Reaves purchased two tickets and traveled with her husband to the United States and back to Korea. Subsequently, she submitted a voucher for the cost of the tickets, lodging, dry cleaning, and transportation while in the United States. DoD decided not to reimburse Ms. Reaves for the cost of her trip, and she asked us to review DoD's decision.

DoD correctly decided to deny Ms. Reaves's claim. Civilian employees can be reimbursed for travel expenses if they travel "on official business." 5 U.S.C. § 5702(a) (2000); Joint Travel Regulations C1050-B.1.a, C3300-D. Civilian employees cannot be reimbursed, however, for the expenses of personal travel. The trip Ms. Reaves made was personal and was not made in connection with the performance of her official duties. Thus, DoD cannot reimburse her for the cost of her trip. Although it is unfortunate that someone in a DoD travel office provided Ms. Reaves with incorrect information regarding the reimbursement of her expenses, erroneous advice does not permit DoD to expend public

funds contrary to statute and regulation. Masood Badizadegan, GSBCA 14393-RELO, 98-2
BCA ¶ 29,789.

MARTHA H. DeGRAFF
Board Judge