



UNITED STATES GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20548

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LOGISTICS AND COMMUNICATIONS
DIVISION

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MAR 5 1974

The Honorable
The Secretary of Defense

74-0408

Dear Mr. Secretary:

We have completed a limited survey of military regulations and procedures for transporting members of Reserve components to annual-training sites. Although we do not plan to formally report on our survey, we do have several observations to bring to your attention.

The various Reserve components' procedures for authorizing reservists to travel at personal expense differ substantially. For example, some Reserve units required reservists to absorb the cost of travel when such travel was for personal convenience. Other Reserve components allowed reservists to be reimbursed for travel, even though it was for personal convenience and other adequate travel arrangements could have been made at less cost to the Government. Still other Reserve components would not allow reservists to elect to travel at personal expense, even though the travel at personal expense with reimbursement would have been for the convenience of, or economically advantageous to, the Government.

DOD Joint Travel Regulations give the military services considerable latitude in establishing the priorities and circumstances under which Government conveyances, common carriers, and privately owned vehicles may be considered and authorized for travel to annual-training sites.

At the time of our review, Army regulations permitted up to 25 percent of the members of individual Army Reserve units to travel to annual-training sites at personal expense with reimbursement. After authorizations for travel at personal expense had been issued, Government vehicles and then common carriers, in that order, were considered the means of transporting the rest of the unit.

The Army regulations have since been revised and authorizations for individual travel are now based on a determination that such travel is for the convenience of the Government. Such factors as distance, effect on unit movement training, and conservation of fuel must be considered.

Navy procedures provide that Naval Air Reserve units will use Government air transportation, if available. The only other Navy-wide procedures we identified referred to DOD procedures for travel authorizations. We did

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note that, in the 9th Naval district at Great Lakes, Illinois, reservists were allowed to select their own transportation mode unless group travel was involved.

Under Air Force procedures, use of privately owned vehicles receives first consideration when less than 1 day is needed for travel. A requirement for Government-furnished transportation, if any, is established only after the reservists have been polled to determine if there are some who do not wish to use their private vehicles. When more than 1 day is needed for travel, the Air Force designates military air travel as the primary mode of transportation. If military air travel is not available, commercial air travel is used.

Under Marine Corps procedures, common carrier is the primary mode of travel for reservists. The use of Government conveyance either is directed by the Commandant or limited to certain types of units. Travel at personal expense for personal convenience with reimbursement generally is not authorized.

Procedures for both the Army and Air National Guards provide that Government-furnished transportation must be used to the maximum extent possible. Commanders are allowed to authorize the use of privately owned vehicles, with reimbursement, when it is for the convenience of the Government. When Government-furnished transportation is available and directed, but Reserve members elect to travel by privately owned vehicle, reimbursement is not authorized.

In a July 2, 1973, report the U.S. Army Audit Agency stated that use of available military transportation, particularly by Army Reserves, would conserve gasoline and would help alleviate the current domestic fuel crisis.

The variations and differences in military services' procedures, as described above, are brought to your attention for any action you may deem necessary. In light of the many emergency measures recently adopted to conserve fuel, you may wish to consider directing the military services to use military and public transportation to the maximum extent possible when moving reservists. However, authorization for travel at personal expense with reimbursement may at times be beneficial to the Government and should not automatically be excluded.

We would appreciate any comments you may have regarding the matters discussed in this report.

Sincerely yours,



F. J. Shafer
Director