



UNITED STATES  
CIVILIAN BOARD OF CONTRACT APPEALS

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April 30, 2015

CBCA 4365-RELO

In the Matter of CHRISTOPHER P. MEIER

Christopher P. Meier, APO Area Europe, Claimant.

Susanne Lombard, Employee Development Specialist, 86<sup>th</sup> Airlift Wing, Department of the Air Force, APO Area Europe, appearing for Department of the Air Force.

**STERN**, Board Judge.

The United States Air Force (Air Force) transferred claimant to Germany and authorized a temporary quarters subsistence allowance (TQSA). Claimant was authorized and received temporary quarters subsistence payments for expenses that he incurred from April 7 to July 1, 2014. The Air Force denied reimbursement of claimant's expenses for value added taxes, foreign currency charges, and the cost of meals during his temporary quarters stay at a hotel.

The Department of State Standardized Regulations (DSSR), which govern the expenses of overseas temporary quarters reimbursements, provide that the TQSA payable to an employee transferred to an overseas post includes the reasonable cost of temporary quarters and meals incurred by an employee at his post assignment. DSSR 121, 125.

Claimant seeks 160 euros per night for room charges while at the hotel and submits the hotel invoice in support of these costs. However, the hotel bill labeled this charge as "Arrangement" and not lodging. Upon inquiry at the hotel, the Air Force was informed that the charge included a 19.90 euro breakfast fee. The Air Force paid claimant a separate meal

reimbursement and therefore deducted the 19.90 charge from the 160 amount charged by the hotel.

Claimant claims that the information received by the Air Force was incorrect and submits a letter from the hotel stating that the 160 euro charge was for the room only. The hotel writes that the breakfast was complementary. If the Air Force had separately paid claimant for breakfast (evidence not before the Board), it may be able to recover amounts so paid. Based on the record before us however, claimant is entitled to be paid the room charge of 160 euros per night.

Claimant also seeks payment of a value added tax set forth on the hotel bill. However, the amount actually charged to his credit card does not include these taxes. Therefore, claimant is not entitled to payment for this item.

Finally, claimant seeks an amount charged to his credit card by the government credit card bank for foreign currency conversion. These charges were applied by the credit card company to convert the charges from euros to dollars, on the otherwise reimbursable expenses incurred by claimant. The Air Force claims that the DSSR provides that expenses not directly related to lodging and meals are not reimbursable and therefore it is not allowed to pay the currency conversion charge. DSSR 125. We find that this regulation does not prohibit the reimbursement of the foreign conversion charge imposed upon claimant's otherwise reimbursable expenses. Claimant is entitled to be paid these amounts.

### Decision

Claimant is entitled to be paid the 160 euro charge for each night of lodging that he incurred. Claimant is also entitled to be reimbursed the amounts charged on his credit card for foreign currency conversion. Claimant is not entitled to reimbursement for the value added tax that was not actually charged to his credit card.

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JAMES L. STERN  
Board Judge

