

GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

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TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS ON HOME LEAVE

The following note by the Executive Secretary has been discussed by the Budget Working Party and a reference to this question will be made in the Working Party's report:

1. The present United Nations staff rules and administrative practice on home leave journeys by private car are based on reimbursement of a mileage rate and travel subsistence allowance limited to the maximum travel expenses claimable by the most economical route and normal standard and mode of accommodation whether they would be rail or air.
2. The procedure involves a full and detailed cost comparison of three modes of travel, i.e. car, air and rail, in order to determine what is the cheapest.
3. The amount of time spent on working out entitlements on this basis for staff members and their eligible dependants is often considerable and in any case entirely disproportionate to the importance of the question.
4. The Executive Secretary has therefore studied the possibility of simplifying the current procedure and in this connexion has examined the practices of other organizations.
5. As a result, the Executive Secretary recommends that for reasons of administrative simplicity, the following method which is used in the WHO be adopted by the secretariat:

Staff members proceeding on home leave by private car are to receive the equivalent of one return fare (tourist or economy class) for one person and two return air fares for two or more persons travelling together (in case one of the two persons mentioned above is a child under the age of 12 the airfare would be calculated on the basis of the rates chargeable by the air companies). Where any portion of the journey cannot be made by air, the equivalent of first class rail fare is added to the air fare. Where there is no scheduled air service operating between the duty station and the home station, first class day train would be the base for calculation.

6. In addition, the Executive Secretary recommends that, regardless of the mode of travel, a lump sum payment of \$10 for the staff member and \$5 for each eligible dependant for each day of allowable travel time would

replace the present arrangements on payment of subsistence allowance and incidental expenses on home leave journeys. In exceptional and compelling circumstances, the Executive Secretary may authorize an additional payment on the basis of itemized expenses.

7. Allowable travel time would in every case be based on air travel.

8. The above proposal would not involve additional expenditure to the budget and is likely to result in a saving.