

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

Employees' Compensation Appeals Board

In the Matter of SAM B. DAVIS and TENNESSEE VALLEY AUTHORITY,
COBERT STEAM PLANT, Barton, Ala.

*Docket No. 96-2014; Submitted on the Record;
Issued June 10, 1998*

DECISION and ORDER

Before GEORGE E. RIVERS, WILLIE T.C. THOMAS,
A. PETER KANJORSKI

The issue is whether appellant has a hearing loss that is causally related to his exposure to noise in his Federal employment.

As reported by the employing establishment, appellant was exposed to loud noise in his employment as a laborer and warehouseman. The Office of Workers' Compensation Programs, therefore, consistent with its procedures,¹ referred appellant, his medical records and a statement of accepted facts to a Board-certified otolaryngologist, Dr. Edward E. Walker. In a report dated May 3, 1996, Dr. Walker noted that appellant "had a bilateral high frequency loss in the 30-40 dB range prior to employment," and that his "hearing was slightly worse at the end of exposure but not in excess of presbycusis." On this basis, Dr. Walker concluded that appellant's sensorineural hearing loss was not due to noise exposure encountered in his Federal employment. Dr. Walker, a Board-certified otolaryngologist, had available a complete and accurate history of appellant's noise exposure and of his audiograms performed at the employing establishment, and performed audiometric testing and evaluation on May 3, 1996. Dr. Walker concluded that appellant's loss of hearing was not due to his exposure to noise in his Federal employment and provided a basis for this conclusion. As there is no medical evidence that supports that appellant's hearing loss is related to his exposure to noise in his Federal employment, the Office properly determined that the evidence failed to demonstrate that appellant's hearing loss was related to his employment.

¹ "Unless the case file already contains a reliable medical report which fully meets Office requirements, OWCP refers the claimant for audiological evaluation and otological examination." Federal (FECA) Procedure Manual, Part 3 -- Medical, *Requirements for Medical Reports*, Chapter 3-600.8a (October 1990).

The decision of the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs dated May 10, 1996 is affirmed.

Dated, Washington, D.C.
June 10, 1998

George E. Rivers
Member

Willie T.C. Thomas
Alternate Member

A. Peter Kanjorski
Alternate Member