



**THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
OF TEXAS**

AUSTIN, TEXAS 78711

**WAGGONER CARR
ATTORNEY GENERAL**

April 28, 1966

Honorable Jerry Sadler
Commissioner
General Land Office
Austin, Texas

Opinion No. C-671

Re: Whether appraisers employed by the Veterans' Land Board may attend an appraisal school at Texas A&M University and have their registration fees paid by the State.

Dear Mr. Sadler:

You have requested the opinion of this office regarding the subject question. In this connection, your letter of request is quoted, in part, as follows:

"The American Society of Farm Managers and Rural Appraisers anticipates holding an appraisal school at A&M University, College Station, Texas, between June 13 - 17, 1966, with a registration fee of \$75 being charged per person taking the course. Such a training school would be most beneficial to the appraisers employed by the Veterans' Land Board of the State of Texas. I feel that such a training school would reap benefits to the state, and it is my desire to send several appraisers from this office to this school if we can legally register them in the name of the State of Texas and pay their registration fee."

Further investigation has revealed that Texas A&M University is sponsoring the appraisal school, but that the school is being conducted under the direction of the American Society of Farm Managers and Rural Appraisers. Membership in the said Society is limited, and it is not required that one be a member of the Society to attend the appraisal school. Further, the registration fees for the school are to be paid to the Society, and not to Texas A&M.

In prior questions of this nature, this office has consistently employed two basic criteria: (1) Whether the training described will be directly and substantially used to

facilitate the governmental duties and functions of the State agency requesting such training; and (2) Do the facts establish that there is a reasonable, substantial and direct relationship between the purpose of the training and the accomplishment of the governmental functions entrusted to the employee? Attorney General's Opinions WW-83 (1957), WW-223 (1957), WW-433 (1958).

In Attorney General's Opinion WW-505 (1958), this office approved the attendance of the Chief Appraiser, the Executive Secretary, and an attorney of the Veterans' Land Board at an appraisal conference, utilizing basically the same criteria set forth above. From the facts presented, we see no distinction between the fact situation and that presented in Attorney General's Opinion WW-505.

Accordingly, you are advised that it is the opinion of this office that Attorney General's Opinion WW-505 (1958) controls the question of whether the attendance of Veterans' Land Board appraisers at appraisal schools constitutes a compliance with the criteria set forth, supra. The attendance of your appraisers at the school would facilitate the governmental duties and functions of the State, and there is a direct relationship between the purpose of the training and the accomplishment of the governmental functions of the employee.

Section 18, Article V, General Appropriation Act of the 59th Legislature, 1965, pertaining to expenditure of money for dues or registration in joining or attending any type of organization, has no application to the facts submitted by you, so long as the State employees do not join the organization. Merely taking a course of instruction is not joining or attending any type of organization.

S U M M A R Y

Appraisers employed by the Veterans' Land Board may attend an appraisal school at Texas A&M University, and have their registration fees paid by the State.

Yours very truly,

WAGGONER CARR
Attorney General

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MLQ:ms:mkh

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APPROVED:
OPINION COMMITTEE

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