

BRB No. 93-1080

JOHN C. PARKER)
)
 Claimant-Respondent)
)
 v.)
)
 INGALLS SHIPBUILDING,) DATE ISSUED:
 _____INCORPORATED)
)
 Self-Insured)
 Employer-Respondent) DECISION and ORDER

Appeal of the Supplemental Decision and Order Awarding Attorney's Fee of James W. Kerr, Jr., Administrative Law Judge, United States Department of Labor.

Jack C. Pickett (Kitchens and Ellis), Pascagoula, Mississippi, for claimant.

Traci M. Castille (Franke, Rainey & Salloum), Gulfport, Mississippi, for self-insured employer.

Before: HALL, Chief Administrative Appeals Judge, SMITH and DOLDER, Administrative Appeals Judges.

PER CURIAM:

Employer appeals the Supplemental Decision and Order Awarding Attorney's Fee (90-LHC-600) of Administrative Law Judge James W. Kerr, Jr., rendered on a claim filed pursuant to the provisions of the Longshore and Harbor Workers' Compensation Act, as amended, 33 U.S.C. §901 *et seq.* (the Act). The amount of an attorney's fee award is discretionary and may be set aside only if the challenging party shows it to be arbitrary, capricious, an abuse of discretion, or not in accordance with law. *See, e.g., Muscella v. Sun Shipbuilding & Dry Dock Co.*, 12 BRBS 272 (1980).

Claimant's counsel sought an attorney's fee of \$2,978.75, representing 23.75 hours at \$125 per hour, for work performed before the administrative law judge in connection with claimant's hearing loss claim. The administrative law judge awarded counsel a fee of \$2,595, representing 23.5 hours at an hourly rate of \$110, plus expenses of \$10. Employer appeals the administrative law judge's fee award, incorporating by reference the arguments it made below into its appellate brief. Claimant responds, urging affirmance of the fee award.

Employer's objections to the number of hours and hourly rate awarded are rejected, as it has not shown that the administrative law judge abused his discretion in this regard. *See Ross v. Ingalls*

Shipbuilding, Inc., 29 BRBS 42 (1995); *Maddon v. Western Asbestos Co.*, 23 BRBS 55 (1989); *Cabral v. General Dynamics Corp.*, 13 BRBS 97 (1981). Employer's specific objection to counsel's method of billing in minimum increments of one-quarter hour also is rejected, as the administrative law judge considered this objection, and his award conforms to the criteria set forth in the decisions of the United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit in *Ingalls Shipbuilding, Inc. v. Director, OWCP [Fairley]*, No. 89-4459 (5th Cir. July 25, 1990) (unpublished) and *Ingalls Shipbuilding, Inc. v. Director, OWCP [Biggs]*, 46 F.3d 66 (5th Cir. 1995) (table).¹

Employer's contentions which were not raised below will not be addressed for the first time on appeal. *Bullock v. Ingalls Shipbuilding, Inc.*, 27 BRBS 90 (1993)(*en banc*)(Brown and McGranery, JJ., concurring and dissenting), *modified on other grounds on recon. en banc*, 28 BRBS 102 (1994), *aff'd mem. sub nom. Ingalls Shipbuilding, Inc. v. Director, OWCP [Biggs]*, 46 F.3d 66 (5th Cir. 1995); *Clophus v. Amoco Production Co.*, 21 BRBS 261 (1988).

Accordingly, the Supplemental Decision and Order of the administrative law judge is affirmed.

SO ORDERED.

BETTY JEAN HALL, Chief
Administrative Appeals Judge

ROY P. SMITH
Administrative Appeals Judge

NANCY S. DOLDER
Administrative Appeals Judge

¹Although employer objected to the April 26, 1990, May 7, 1990, and May 15, 1990, entries in the fee petition before the administrative law judge on the ground that the entries lacked the specifically required by the regulation, the administrative law judge considered this objection and did not abuse his discretion in awarding a fee for these entries. 20 C.F.R. §702.132.