

BRB No. 93-0182

RAS B. WALLEY)	
)	
Claimant-Respondent)	
)	
v.)	DATE ISSUED:
)	
INGALLS SHIPBUILDING,)	
INCORPORATED)	
)	
Self-Insured)	
Employer-Petitioner)	DECISION and ORDER

Appeal of the Supplemental Decision and Order Awarding Attorney Fees of A. A. Simpson, Jr., Administrative Law Judge, United States Department of Labor.

John F. Dillon (Maples and Lomax, P.A.), 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 Fees (90-LHC-2033) of Administrative Law Judge A. A. Simpson, 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 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 \$3,375, representing 27 hours at \$125 per hour, plus expenses of \$80.25, 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 \$1,453.76, representing 6.63 hours of work performed in 1990 at an hourly rate of \$85, and 9.38 hours of work performed in 1991 at an hourly rate of \$95, plus expenses of \$80.25. Employer appeals the administrative law judge's fee award, incorporating by reference the arguments it made below into its appellate brief. Claimant, incorporating his reply brief below, 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 been 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).¹ 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]*, 463 F.3d 66 (5th Cir. 1995) (unpublished).

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 argued below that pursuant to 33 U.S.C. §928(a) it could not be held liable for fees incurred prior to November 7, 1989, when employer received formal notice of the claim, no fees were claimed prior to this date.