

Cases should be combined when correct adjudication of the issues depends on frequent cross reference between the files. OWCP procedures provide for the doubling of a claim when a new injury case is reported for an employee who previously filed an injury claim for a similar condition for the same part of the body and also where two or more separate injuries (not recurrences) have occurred on the same date.² As it has accepted a left ear hearing loss under File No. xxxxxx286 but has denied a left ear hearing loss in the instant claim, for a full and fair adjudication of appellant's claims pertaining to injuries or illness involving hearing loss the files should be doubled. On remand, OWCP shall combine the instant claim, File No. xxxxxx691 and File No. xxxxxx286. Following this and such other development as deemed necessary, OWCP shall issue a *de novo* decision on appellant's claim for compensation for a left ear hearing loss.

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED THAT the November 9, 2010 decision of the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs is set aside and the case remanded to OWCP for further proceedings consistent with this order of the Board.

Issued: April 12, 2012
Washington, DC

Colleen Duffy Kiko, Judge
Employees' Compensation Appeals Board

Michael E. Groom, Alternate Judge
Employees' Compensation Appeals Board

James A. Haynes, Alternate Judge
Employees' Compensation Appeals Board

² Federal (FECA) Procedure Manual, Part 2 -- Claims, *File Maintenance & Management*, Chapter 2.400.8(c) (February 2000).