

Internal Revenue Service

Department of the Treasury

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Person to Contact:

Telephone Number:

Refer Reply To:
CC:DOM:CORP:1-PLR-117942-99
Date:
April 18, 2000

Legend

Purchaser =

Target =

Company Official =

Tax Professional =

Date A =

Date B =

Date C =

Date D =

Country 1 =

:

This letter responds to your authorized representative's letter, dated November 1, 1999 on behalf of the above taxpayers, requesting an extension of time under §§ 301.9100-1 through 301.9100-3 of the Procedure and Administration Regulations to file an election. The extension is being requested for Purchaser to file an election under § 338(g) of the Internal Revenue Code and §§ 1.338-1(d) and 1.338-1(g) of the Income Tax Regulations. Additional information was submitted in letters dated February 3, 2000 and March 2, 2000. All citations in this letter to regulations under § 338 are to the regulations as in effect for Date A.

Purchaser is the common parent of a consolidated group that has a calendar taxable year and uses the accrual method of accounting. Target is a Country 1 corporation.

On Date A, Purchaser acquired solely for cash in a fully taxable acquisition,

100% of the stock of Target from two individual residents of Country 1. The stock acquisition of Target was made with the intention of electing to characterize the acquisition as an asset acquisition under § 338(g) (the "Election"). It is represented that the acquisition of Target constituted a qualified stock purchase within the meaning of § 338(d)(3), and that Purchaser was not related to the sellers within the meaning of § 338(h)(3). The period of limitations on assessments under § 6501(a) has not expired for Purchaser's taxable year(s) in which the acquisition occurred, the taxable year in which the Election should have been filed, or any taxable years that would have been affected by the Election had they been timely filed.

Additionally, Purchaser has made the following representations with respect to this transaction:

a. Target is a foreign corporation, within the meaning of § 7701(a)(3) and (5) and does not intend to file an election under § 301.7701-3(c) to be treated as either a disregarded entity or a partnership for U.S. federal income tax purposes.

b. Target did not own a "U.S. real property interest," within the meaning of § 897(c), immediately prior to Purchaser's acquisition of all of the outstanding common stock of Target.

c. Target will not be required under § 1.6012-2(g) to file a U.S. income tax return for its Date D short year in connection with the deemed sale of all of its assets at the close of the acquisition date under § 338(a)(1).

d. Foreign income taxes attributable to the foreign taxable income earned by Target during the foreign taxable year will be allocated to old Target and new Target in accordance with the principles of § 1.338-5(d).

e. Neither of the sellers are United States persons within the meaning of § 7701(a)(30) for U.S. tax purposes, nor are they subject to tax on the sale of such individuals' stock under § 871(b).

The Election was due on Date B. However, for various reasons, the Election was not made. On Date C (which is shortly after the due date for the Election), Company Official and Tax Professional discovered that the Election had not been filed. Subsequently, this request was submitted, under § 301.9100-1, for an extension of time to file the Election.

Section 338(a) permits certain stock purchases to be treated as asset purchases if the purchasing corporation makes or is treated as having made a "section 338 election" under § 338(g) and the acquisition is a "qualified stock purchase." Section 338(d)(3) defines a "qualified stock purchase" as any transaction or series of transactions in which stock (meeting the requirements of § 1504(a)(2)) of one

corporation is acquired by another corporation by purchase during the 12 month acquisition period.

Section 338(h)(3)(A) provides that the term "purchase" means any acquisition of stock, but only if (i) the basis of the stock in the hands of the purchasing corporation is not determined in whole or in part by reference to the adjusted basis of such stock in the hands of the person from whom acquired, or under § 1014(a) (relating to property acquired from a decedent); (ii) the stock is not acquired in an exchange to which §§ 351, 354, 355, or 356 applies and is not acquired in any other transaction described in regulations in which the transferor does not recognize the entire amount of the gain or loss realized on the transaction; and (iii) the stock is not acquired from a person the ownership of whose stock would, under § 318(a), be attributed to the person acquiring such stock.

Section 1.338-1(d) provides that a purchasing corporation makes a "section 338 election" for target by filing a statement of "section 338 election" on Form 8023 in accordance with the instructions on the form. The "section 338 election" must be filed not later than the 15th day of the ninth month beginning after the month in which the acquisition date occurs. A "section 338 election" is irrevocable.

Section 1.338-2(b)(4) provides that if an election under § 338 is made for Target, old Target is deemed to sell Target's assets and new Target is deemed to acquire those assets.

Under § 301.9100-1(c), the Commissioner has discretion to grant a reasonable extension of time to make a regulatory election, or a statutory election (but no more than six months except in the case of a taxpayer who is abroad), under all subtitles of the Internal Revenue Code except subtitles E, G, H, and I.

Section 301.9100-1(b) defines the term "regulatory election" as including an election whose due date is prescribed by a regulation, revenue ruling, revenue procedure, notice, or announcement. Sections 301.9100-1 through 301.9100-3 provide the standards the Commissioner will use to determine whether to grant an extension of time to make a regulatory election. See § 301.9100-1(a). Section 301.9100-2 provides automatic extensions of time for making certain elections. Section 301.9100-3 provides extensions of time for making regulatory elections that do not meet the requirements of § 301.9100-2. Requests for relief under § 301.9100-3 will be granted when the taxpayer provides evidence to establish that the taxpayer acted reasonably and in good faith, and that granting relief will not prejudice the interests of the government. See § 301.9100-3(a).

In this case, the time for filing the Election was fixed by the regulations (i.e., § 1.338-1(d)). Therefore, the Commissioner has discretionary authority under § 301.9100-1 to grant an extension of time for Purchaser to file the Election, provided

Purchaser shows it acted reasonably and in good faith, the requirements of §§ 301.9100-1 and 301.9100-3 are satisfied, and granting relief will not prejudice the interests of the government.

Information, affidavits, and representations submitted by Company Official and Tax Professional explain the circumstances that resulted in the failure to file the Election. The information establishes that Purchaser reasonably relied on a qualified tax professional and that relief was requested before the failure to make the Election was discovered by the Service. See §§ 301.9100-3(b)(1)(i) and (v).

Based on the facts and information submitted, including the representations that have been made, we conclude that Purchaser acted reasonably and in good faith in failing to timely file the Election, the requirements of §§ 301.9100-1 and 301.9100-3 are satisfied, and granting relief will not prejudice the interests of the government. Accordingly, subject to the below conditions, we grant an extension of time under § 301.9100-1, until 30 days from the date of issuance of this letter, for Purchaser to file the Election with respect to the acquisition of the stock of Target as described above.

The above extension of time to file the Election is conditioned on the taxpayer's (Purchaser and its subsidiaries and Target) and the sellers' (to the extent they have any U.S. tax liability) tax liability not being lower, in the aggregate for all years to which the Election applies, than it would have been if the Election had been timely made (taking into account the time value of money). No opinion is expressed as to the taxpayers' tax liability for the years involved. A determination thereof will be made by the District Director's office upon audit of the federal income tax returns involved. Further, no opinion is expressed as to the federal income tax effect, if any, if it is determined that the taxpayer's liability is lower. Section 301.9100-3(c).

Purchaser should file the Election in accordance with §§ 1.338-1(d) and 1.338-1(g). That is, a new election on Form 8023 must be executed on or after the date of this letter, which grants an extension, and filed in accordance with the instructions on the election form. A copy of this letter should be attached to the election form. Purchaser must file and amend its return (and Target must file a final return, if and as applicable) to report the stock acquisition/sale as a "section 338 transaction," and attach thereto a copy of this letter and a copy of the election form (also see §§ 1.338-1(g) and 1.338-5). That is, the "old" Target must file a separate final return (if and as applicable) and the "new" Target must be included in Purchaser's return (by being listed on Form 5471) for the first year following the acquisition. See §§ 1.338-1(e) and 1.338-1(g), and Announcement 98-2, 1998-1 C.B 282.

No opinion is expressed as to: (1) whether the acquisition of Target's stock qualifies as a "qualified stock purchase"; (2) whether the acquisition of Target's stock qualifies for § 338(a) treatment; (3) if the acquisition of Target's stock qualifies for § 338(a) treatment, as to the amount of gain or loss recognized (if any) by Target on the

deemed asset sale.

No opinion is expressed about the tax treatment of any conditions existing at the time of, or effects resulting from, the purchase of the stock of Target not specifically covered by the above rulings.

No opinion is expressed as to the tax effects or consequences of filing the Election late under the provisions of any other section of the Code and regulations, or as to the tax treatment of any conditions existing at the time of, or resulting from, filing the Election late that are not specifically set forth in the above ruling. For purposes of granting relief under § 301.9100-1, we relied on certain statements and representations made by the taxpayer, its employees and representatives. However, the District Director should verify all essential facts. In addition, notwithstanding that an extension is granted under § 301.9100-1 to file the election, penalties and interest that would otherwise be applicable, if any, continue to apply.

A copy of this letter is being sent to the authorized representatives designated on your power of attorney.

This letter is directed only to the taxpayer who requested it. Section 6110(k)(3) provides that it may not be used or cited as precedent.

Sincerely yours,
Philip J. Levine
Assistant Chief Counsel (Corporate)