INTERAGENCY POLICY STATEMENT ON INCOME

TAX ALLOCATION IN A HOLDING COMPANY STRUCTURE

The Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, and the Office of Thrift Supervision ("the Agencies") are issuing this policy statement to provide guidance to banking organizations and savings associations regarding the allocation and payment of taxes among a holding company and its subsidiaries. A holding company and its depository institution subsidiaries will often file a consolidated group income tax return. However, each depository institution is viewed as, and reports as, a separate legal and accounting entity for regulatory purposes. Accordingly, each depository institution's applicable income taxes, reflecting either an expense or benefit, should be recorded as if the institution had filed on a separate entity basis.[1] Furthermore, the amount and timing of payments or refunds should be no less favorable to the subsidiary than if it were a separate taxpayer. Any practice that is not consistent with this policy statement may be viewed as an unsafe and unsound practice prompting either informal or formal corrective action.

Tax Sharing Agreements

A holding company and its subsidiary institutions are encouraged to enter into a written, comprehensive tax allocation agreement tailored to their specific circumstances. The agreement should be approved by the respective boards of directors. Although each agreement will be different, tax allocation agreements usually address certain issues common to consolidated groups. Therefore, such an

[1] Throughout this policy statement, the terms "separate entity" and "separate taxpayer" are used synonymously. When a depository institution has subsidiaries of its own, the institution's applicable income taxes on a separate entity basis include the taxes of the subsidiaries of the institution that are included with the institution in the consolidated group return.

agreement should:

- require a subsidiary depository institution to compute its income taxes (both current and deferred) on a separate entity basis;
- discuss the amount and timing of the institution's payments for current tax expense, including estimated tax payments;
- discuss reimbursements to an institution when it has a loss for tax purposes; and
- prohibit the payment or other transfer of deferred taxes by the institution to another member of the consolidated group.

Measurement of Current and Deferred Income Taxes

Generally accepted accounting principles, instructions for the preparation of both the Thrift Financial Report and the Reports of Condition and Income, and other guidance issued by the Agencies require depository institutions to provide for their current tax liability or benefit. Institutions also must provide for deferred income taxes resulting from any temporary differences and tax carryforwards.

When the depository institution members of a consolidated group prepare separate regulatory reports, each subsidiary institution should record current and deferred taxes as if it files its tax returns on a separate entity basis, regardless of the consolidated group's tax paying or refund status. Certain adjustments for statutory tax considerations that arise in a consolidated return, e.g., application of graduated tax rates, may be made to the separate entity calculation as long as they are made on a consistent and equitable basis among the holding company affiliates.

In addition, when an organization's consolidated income tax obligation arising from the alternative minimum tax (AMT) exceeds its regular tax on a consolidated basis, the excess should be consistently and equitably allocated among the members of the consolidated group. The allocation method should be based upon the portion of tax preferences, adjustments, and other items generated by each group member which causes the AMT to be applicable at the consolidated level.

Tax Payments to the Parent Company

Tax payments from a subsidiary institution to the parent company should not exceed the amount the institution has properly recorded as its current tax expense on a separate entity basis. Furthermore, such payments, including estimated tax payments, generally should not be made before the institution would have been obligated to pay the taxing authority had it filed as a separate entity. Payments made in advance may be considered extensions of credit from the subsidiary to the parent and may be subject to affiliate transaction rules, i.e., Sections 23A and 23B of the Federal Reserve Act.

A subsidiary institution should not pay its deferred tax liabilities or the deferred portion of its applicable income taxes to the parent. The deferred tax account is not a tax liability required to be paid in the current reporting period. As a result, the payment of deferred income taxes by an institution to its holding company is considered a dividend subject to dividend restrictions,[2] not the extinguishment of a liability. Furthermore, such payments may constitute an unsafe and unsound banking practice.

Tax Refunds from the Parent Company

An institution incurring a loss for tax purposes should record a current income tax benefit and receive a refund from its parent in an amount no less than the amount the institution would have been entitled to receive as a separate entity. The refund should be made to the institution within a reasonable period following the date the institution would have filed its own return, regardless of whether the

[2] These restrictions include the Prompt Corrective Action provisions of section 38(d)(1) of the Federal Deposit Insurance Act (12 U.S.C. 1831o(d)(1)) and its implementing regulations: for insured state nonmember banks, 12 CFR part 325, subpart B; for national banks, 12 CFR section 6.6; for savings associations, 12 CFR part 565; and for state member banks, 12 CFR 208.45.

consolidated group is receiving a refund. If a refund is not made to the institution within this period, the institution's primary federal regulator may consider the receivable as either an extension of credit or a dividend from the subsidiary to the parent. A parent company may reimburse an institution more than the refund amount it is due on a separate entity basis. Provided the institution will not later be required to repay this excess amount to the parent, the additional funds received should be reported as a capital contribution.

If the institution, as a separate entity, would not be entitled to a current refund because it has no carryback benefits available on a separate entity basis, its holding company may still be able to utilize the institution's tax loss to reduce the consolidated group's current tax liability. In this situation, the holding company may reimburse the institution for the use of the tax loss. If the reimbursement will be made on a timely basis, the institution should reflect the tax benefit of the loss in the current portion of its applicable income taxes in the period the loss is incurred. Otherwise, the institution should not recognize the tax benefit in the current portion of its applicable income taxes in the loss year. Rather, the tax loss represents a loss carryforward, the benefit of which is recognized as a deferred tax asset, net of any valuation allowance.

Regardless of the treatment of an institution's tax loss for regulatory reporting and supervisory purposes, a parent company that receives a tax refund from a taxing authority obtains these funds as agent for the consolidated group on behalf of the group members.[3] Accordingly, an organization's tax allocation agreement or other corporate policies should not purport to characterize refunds attributable to a subsidiary depository institution that the parent receives from a taxing authority as the property of the parent.

[3] See 26 CFR 1.1502-77(a).

Income Tax Forgiveness Transactions

A parent company may require a subsidiary institution to pay it less than the full amount of the current income tax liability that the institution calculated on a separate entity basis. Provided the parent will not later require the institution to pay the remainder of the current tax liability, the amount of this unremitted liability should be accounted for as having been paid with a simultaneous capital contribution by the parent to the subsidiary.

In contrast, a parent cannot make a capital contribution to a subsidiary institution by “forgiving” some or all of the subsidiary’s deferred tax liability. Transactions in which a parent “forgives” any portion of a subsidiary institution’s deferred tax liability should not be reflected in the institution’s regulatory reports. These transactions lack economic substance because the parent cannot legally relieve the subsidiary of a potential future obligation to the taxing authorities. Although the subsidiaries have no direct obligation to remit tax payments to the taxing authorities, these authorities can collect some or all of a group liability from any of the group members if tax payments are not made when due.