

§ 1.7704-1 Publicly traded partnerships.

(a) *In general*—(1) *Publicly traded partnership*. A domestic or foreign partnership is a publicly traded partnership for purposes of section 7704(b) and this section if—

(i) Interests in the partnership are traded on an established securities market; or

(ii) Interests in the partnership are readily tradable on a secondary market or the substantial equivalent thereof.

(2) *Partnership interest*—(i) *In general*. For purposes of section 7704(b) and this section, an interest in a partnership includes—

(A) Any interest in the capital or profits of the partnership (including the right to partnership distributions); and

(B) Any financial instrument or contract the value of which is determined in whole or in part by reference to the partnership (including the amount of partnership distributions, the value of partnership assets, or the results of partnership operations).

(ii) *Exception for non-convertible debt*. For purposes of section 7704(b) and this section, an interest in a partnership does not include any financial instrument or contract that—

(A) Is treated as debt for federal tax purposes; and

(B) Is not convertible into or exchangeable for an interest in the capital or profits of the partnership and does not provide for a payment of equivalent value.

(iii) *Exception for tiered entities*. For purposes of section 7704(b) and this section, an interest in a partnership or a corporation (including a regulated investment company as defined in section 851 or a real estate investment trust as defined in section 856) that holds an interest in a partnership (lower-tier partnership) is not considered an interest in the lower-tier partnership.

(3) *Definition of transfer*. For purposes of section 7704(b) and this section, a transfer of an interest in a partnership means a transfer in any form, including a redemption by the partnership or the entering into of a financial instrument or contract described in paragraph (a)(2)(i)(B) of this section.

(b) *Established securities market*. For purposes of section 7704(b) and this section, an established securities market includes—

(1) A national securities exchange registered under section 6 of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (15 U.S.C. 78f);

(2) A national securities exchange exempt from registration under section 6 of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (15 U.S.C. 78f) because of the limited volume of transactions;

(3) A foreign securities exchange that, under the law of the jurisdiction where it is organized, satisfies regulatory requirements that are analogous to the regulatory requirements under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 described in paragraph (b) (1) or (2) of this section (such as the London International Financial Futures Exchange; the Marche a Terme International de France; the International Stock Exchange of the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland, Limited; the Frankfurt Stock Exchange; and the Tokyo Stock Exchange);

(4) A regional or local exchange; and

(5) An interdealer quotation system that regularly disseminates firm buy or sell quotations by identified brokers or dealers by electronic means or otherwise.

(c) *Readily tradable on a secondary market or the substantial equivalent thereof*—(1) *In general*. For purposes of section 7704(b) and this section, interests in a partnership that are not traded on an established securities market (within the meaning of section 7704(b) and paragraph (b) of this section) are readily tradable on a secondary market or the substantial equivalent thereof if, taking into account all of the facts and circumstances, the partners are readily able to buy, sell, or exchange their partnership interests in a manner that is comparable, economically, to trading on an established securities market.

(2) *Secondary market or the substantial equivalent thereof*. For purposes of paragraph (c)(1) of this section, interests in a partnership are readily tradable on a secondary market or the substantial equivalent thereof if—

(i) Interests in the partnership are regularly quoted by any person, such

as a broker or dealer, making a market in the interests;

(ii) Any person regularly makes available to the public (including customers or subscribers) bid or offer quotes with respect to interests in the partnership and stands ready to effect buy or sell transactions at the quoted prices for itself or on behalf of others;

(iii) The holder of an interest in the partnership has a readily available, regular, and ongoing opportunity to sell or exchange the interest through a public means of obtaining or providing information of offers to buy, sell, or exchange interests in the partnership; or

(iv) Prospective buyers and sellers otherwise have the opportunity to buy, sell, or exchange interests in the partnership in a time frame and with the regularity and continuity that is comparable to that described in the other provisions of this paragraph (c)(2).

(3) *Secondary market safe harbors.* The fact that a transfer of a partnership interest is not within one or more of the safe harbors described in paragraph (e), (f), (g), (h), or (j) of this section is disregarded in determining whether interests in the partnership are readily tradable on a secondary market or the substantial equivalent thereof.

(d) *Involvement of the partnership required.* For purposes of section 7704(b) and this section, interests in a partnership are not traded on an established securities market within the meaning of paragraph (b)(5) of this section and are not readily tradable on a secondary market or the substantial equivalent thereof within the meaning of paragraph (c) of this section (even if interests in the partnership are traded or readily tradable in a manner described in paragraph (b)(5) or (c) of this section) unless—

(1) The partnership participates in the establishment of the market or the inclusion of its interests thereon; or

(2) The partnership recognizes any transfers made on the market by—

(i) Redeeming the transferor partner (in the case of a redemption or repurchase by the partnership); or

(ii) Admitting the transferee as a partner or otherwise recognizing any rights of the transferee, such as a right of the transferee to receive partnership distributions (directly or indirectly) or

to acquire an interest in the capital or profits of the partnership.

(e) *Transfers not involving trading—(1) In general.* For purposes of section 7704(b) and this section, the following transfers (private transfers) are disregarded in determining whether interests in a partnership are readily tradable on a secondary market or the substantial equivalent thereof—

(i) Transfers in which the basis of the partnership interest in the hands of the transferee is determined, in whole or in part, by reference to its basis in the hands of the transferor or is determined under section 732;

(ii) Transfers at death, including transfers from an estate or testamentary trust;

(iii) Transfers between members of a family (as defined in section 267(c)(4));

(iv) Transfers involving the issuance of interests by (or on behalf of) the partnership in exchange for cash, property, or services;

(v) Transfers involving distributions from a retirement plan qualified under section 401(a) or an individual retirement account;

(vi) Block transfers (as defined in paragraph (e)(2) of this section);

(vii) Transfers pursuant to a right under a redemption or repurchase agreement (as defined in paragraph (e)(3) of this section) that is exercisable only—

(A) Upon the death, disability, or mental incompetence of the partner; or

(B) Upon the retirement or termination of the performance of services of an individual who actively participated in the management of, or performed services on a full-time basis for, the partnership;

(viii) Transfers pursuant to a closed end redemption plan (as defined in paragraph (e)(4) of this section);

(ix) Transfers by one or more partners of interests representing in the aggregate 50 percent or more of the total interests in partnership capital and profits in one transaction or a series of related transactions; and

(x) Transfers not recognized by the partnership (within the meaning of paragraph (d)(2) of this section).

(2) *Block transfers.* For purposes of paragraph (e)(1)(vi) of this section, a block transfer means the transfer by a

partner and any related persons (within the meaning of section 267(b) or 707(b)(1)) in one or more transactions during any 30 calendar day period of partnership interests representing in the aggregate more than 2 percent of the total interests in partnership capital or profits.

(3) *Redemption or repurchase agreement.* For purposes of section 7704(b) and this section, a redemption or repurchase agreement means a plan of redemption or repurchase maintained by a partnership whereby the partners may tender their partnership interests for purchase by the partnership, another partner, or a person related to another partner (within the meaning of section 267(b) or 707(b)(1)).

(4) *Closed end redemption plan.* For purposes of paragraph (e)(1)(viii) of this section, a redemption or repurchase agreement (as defined in paragraph (e)(3) of this section) is a closed end redemption plan only if—

(i) The partnership does not issue any interest after the initial offering (other than the issuance of additional interests prior to August 5, 1988); and

(ii) No partner or person related to any partner (within the meaning of section 267(b) or 707(b)(1)) provides contemporaneous opportunities to acquire interests in similar or related partnerships which represent substantially identical investments.

(f) *Redemption and repurchase agreements.* For purposes of section 7704(b) and this section, the transfer of an interest in a partnership pursuant to a redemption or repurchase agreement (as defined in paragraph (e)(3) of this section) that is not described in paragraph (e)(1) (vii) or (viii) of this section is disregarded in determining whether interests in the partnership are readily tradable on a secondary market or the substantial equivalent thereof only if—

(1) The redemption or repurchase agreement provides that the redemption or repurchase cannot occur until at least 60 calendar days after the partner notifies the partnership in writing of the partner's intention to exercise the redemption or repurchase right;

(2) Either—

(i) The redemption or repurchase agreement requires that the redemption or repurchase price not be estab-

lished until at least 60 calendar days after receipt of such notification by the partnership or the partner; or

(ii) The redemption or repurchase price is established not more than four times during the partnership's taxable year; and

(3) The sum of the percentage interests in partnership capital or profits transferred during the taxable year of the partnership (other than in private transfers described in paragraph (e) of this section) does not exceed 10 percent of the total interests in partnership capital or profits.

(g) *Qualified matching services—(1) In general.* For purposes of section 7704(b) and this section, the transfer of an interest in a partnership through a qualified matching service is disregarded in determining whether interests in the partnership are readily tradable on a secondary market or the substantial equivalent thereof.

(2) *Requirements.* A matching service is a qualified matching service only if—

(i) The matching service consists of a computerized or printed listing system that lists customers' bid and/or ask quotes in order to match partners who want to sell their interests in a partnership (the selling partner) with persons who want to buy those interests;

(ii) Matching occurs either by matching the list of interested buyers with the list of interested sellers or through a bid and ask process that allows interested buyers to bid on the listed interest;

(iii) The selling partner cannot enter into a binding agreement to sell the interest until the 15th calendar day after the date information regarding the offering of the interest for sale is made available to potential buyers and such time period is evidenced by contemporaneous records ordinarily maintained by the operator at a central location;

(iv) The closing of the sale effected by virtue of the matching service does not occur prior to the 45th calendar day after the date information regarding the offering of the interest for sale is made available to potential buyers and such time period is evidenced by contemporaneous records ordinarily

maintained by the operator at a central location;

(v) The matching service displays only quotes that do not commit any person to buy or sell a partnership interest at the quoted price (nonfirm price quotes) or quotes that express interest in a partnership interest without an accompanying price (nonbinding indications of interest) and does not display quotes at which any person is committed to buy or sell a partnership interest at the quoted price (firm quotes);

(vi) The selling partner's information is removed from the matching service within 120 calendar days after the date information regarding the offering of the interest for sale is made available to potential buyers and, following any removal (other than removal by reason of a sale of any part of such interest) of the selling partner's information from the matching service, no offer to sell an interest in the partnership is entered into the matching service by the selling partner for at least 60 calendar days; and

(vii) The sum of the percentage interests in partnership capital or profits transferred during the taxable year of the partnership (other than in private transfers described in paragraph (e) of this section) does not exceed 10 percent of the total interests in partnership capital or profits.

(3) *Closing.* For purposes of paragraph (g)(2)(iv) of this section, the closing of a sale occurs no later than the earlier of—

(i) The passage of title to the partnership interest;

(ii) The payment of the purchase price (which does not include the delivery of funds to the operator of the matching service or other closing agent to hold on behalf of the seller pending closing); or

(iii) The date, if any, that the operator of the matching service (or any person related to the operator within the meaning of section 267(b) or 707(b)(1)) loans, advances, or otherwise arranges for funds to be available to the seller in anticipation of the payment of the purchase price.

(4) *Optional features.* A qualified matching service may be sponsored or operated by a partner of the partner-

ship (either formally or informally), the underwriter that handled the issuance of the partnership interests, or an unrelated third party. In addition, a qualified matching service may offer the following features—

(i) The matching service may provide prior pricing information, including information regarding resales of interests and actual prices paid for interests; a description of the business of the partnership; financial and reporting information from the partnership's financial statements and reports; and information regarding material events involving the partnership, including special distributions, capital distributions, and refinancings or sales of significant portions of partnership assets;

(ii) The operator may assist with the transfer documentation necessary to transfer the partnership interest;

(iii) The operator may receive and deliver funds for completed transactions; and

(iv) The operator's fee may consist of a flat fee for use of the service, a fee or commission based on completed transactions, or any combination thereof.

(h) *Private placements—(1) In general.* For purposes of section 7704(b) and this section, except as otherwise provided in paragraph (h)(2) of this section, interests in a partnership are not readily tradable on a secondary market or the substantial equivalent thereof if—

(i) All interests in the partnership were issued in a transaction (or transactions) that was not required to be registered under the Securities Act of 1933 (15 U.S.C. 77a et seq.); and

(ii) The partnership does not have more than 100 partners at any time during the taxable year of the partnership.

(2) *Exception for certain offerings outside of the United States.* Paragraph (h)(1) of this section does not apply to the offering and sale of interests in a partnership that was not required to be registered under the Securities Act of 1933 by reason of Regulation S (17 CFR 230.901 through 230.904) unless the offering and sale of the interests would not have been required to be registered under the Securities Act of 1933 if the interests had been offered and sold within the United States.

(3) *Anti-avoidance rule.* For purposes of determining the number of partners in the partnership under paragraph (h)(1)(ii) of this section, a person (beneficial owner) owning an interest in a partnership, grantor trust, or S corporation (flow-through entity), that owns, directly or through other flow-through entities, an interest in the partnership, is treated as a partner in the partnership only if—

(i) Substantially all of the value of the beneficial owner's interest in the flow-through entity is attributable to the flow-through entity's interest (direct or indirect) in the partnership; and

(ii) A principal purpose of the use of the tiered arrangement is to permit the partnership to satisfy the 100-partner limitation in paragraph (h)(1)(ii) of this section.

(i) [Reserved]

(j) *Lack of actual trading—(1) General rule.* For purposes of section 7704(b) and this section, interests in a partnership are not readily tradable on a secondary market or the substantial equivalent thereof if the sum of the percentage interests in partnership capital or profits transferred during the taxable year of the partnership (other than in transfers described in paragraph (e), (f), or (g) of this section) does not exceed 2 percent of the total interests in partnership capital or profits.

(2) *Examples.* The following examples illustrate the rules of this paragraph (j):

Example 1. Calculation of percentage interest transferred. (i) ABC, a calendar year limited partnership formed in 1996, has 9,000 units of limited partnership interests outstanding at all times during 1997, representing in the aggregate 95 percent of the total interests in capital and profits of ABC. The remaining 5 percent is held by the general partner.

(ii) During 1997, the following transactions occur with respect to the units of ABC's limited partnership interests—

(A) 800 units are sold through the use of a qualified matching service that meets the requirements of paragraph (g) of this section;

(B) 50 units are sold through the use of a matching service that does not meet the requirements of paragraph (g) of this section; and

(C) 500 units are transferred as a result of private transfers described in paragraph (e) of this section.

(iii) The private transfers of 500 units and the sale of 800 units through a qualified

matching service are disregarded under paragraph (j)(1) of this section for purposes of applying the 2 percent rule. As a result, the total percentage interests in partnership capital and profits transferred for purposes of the 2 percent rule is .528 percent, determined by—

(A) Dividing the number of units sold through a matching service that did not meet the requirements of paragraph (g) of this section (50) by the total number of outstanding limited partnership units (9,000); and

(B) Multiplying the result by the percentage of total interests represented by limited partnership units (95 percent)

$([50 / 9,000] \times .95 = .528 \text{ percent})$.

Example 2. Application of the 2 percent rule.

(i) ABC operates a service consisting of computerized video display screens on which subscribers view and publish nonfirm price quotes that do not commit any person to buy or sell a partnership interest and unpriced indications of interest in a partnership interest without an accompanying price. The ABC service does not provide firm quotes at which any person (including the operator of the service) is committed to buy or sell a partnership interest. The service may provide prior pricing information, including information regarding resales of interests and actual prices paid for interests; transactional volume information; and information on special or capital distributions by a partnership. The operator's fee may consist of a flat fee for use of the service; a fee based on completed transactions, including, for example, the number of nonfirm quotes or unpriced indications of interest entered by users of the service; or any combination thereof.

(ii) The ABC service is not an established securities market for purposes of section 7704(b) and this section. The service is not an interdealer quotation system as defined in paragraph (b)(5) of this section because it does not disseminate firm buy or sell quotations. Therefore, partnerships whose interests are listed and transferred on the ABC service are not publicly traded for purposes of section 7704(b) and this section as a result of such listing or transfers if the sum of the percentage interests in partnership capital or profits transferred during the taxable year of the partnership (other than in transfers described in paragraph (e), (f), or (g) of this section) does not exceed 2 percent of the total interests in partnership capital or profits. In addition, assuming the ABC service complies with the necessary requirements, the service may qualify as a matching service described in paragraph (g) of this section.

(k) *Percentage interests in partnership capital or profits—(1) Interests considered—(i) General rule.* Except as otherwise provided in this paragraph (k), for

purposes of this section, the total interests in partnership capital or profits are determined by reference to all outstanding interests in the partnership.

(ii) *Exceptions*—(A) *General partner with greater than 10 percent interest.* If the general partners and any person related to the general partners (within the meaning of section 267(b) or 707(b)(1)) own, in the aggregate, more than 10 percent of the outstanding interests in partnership capital or profits at any one time during the taxable year of the partnership, the total interests in partnership capital or profits are determined without reference to the interests owned by such persons.

(B) *Derivative interests.* Any partnership interests described in paragraph (a)(2)(i)(B) of this section are taken into account for purposes of determining the total interests in partnership capital or profits only if and to the extent that the partnership satisfies paragraph (d) (1) or (2) of this section.

(2) *Monthly determination.* For purposes of this section, except in the case of block transfers (as defined in paragraph (e)(2) of this section), the percentage interests in partnership capital or profits represented by partnership interests that are transferred during a taxable year of the partnership is equal to the sum of the percentage interests transferred for each calendar month during the taxable year of the partnership in which a transfer of a partnership interest occurs (other than a private transfer as described in paragraph (e) of this section). The percentage interests in capital or profits of interests transferred during a calendar month is determined by reference to the partnership interests outstanding during that month.

(3) *Monthly conventions.* For purposes of paragraph (k)(2) of this section, a partnership may use any reasonable convention in determining the interests outstanding for a month, provided the convention is consistently used by the partnership from month to month during a taxable year and from year to year. Reasonable conventions include, but are not limited to, a determination by reference to the interests outstanding at the beginning of the

month, on the 15th day of the month, or at the end of the month.

(4) *Block transfers.* For purposes of paragraph (e)(2) of this section (defining block transfers), the partnership must determine the percentage interests in capital or profits for each transfer of an interest during the 30 calendar day period by reference to the partnership interests outstanding immediately prior to such transfer.

(5) *Example.* The following example illustrates the rules of this paragraph (k):

Example. Conventions. (i) ABC limited partnership, a calendar year partnership formed in 1996, has 1,000 units of limited partnership interests outstanding on January 1, 1997, representing in the aggregate 95 percent of the total interests in capital and profits of ABC. The remaining 5 percent is held by the general partner.

(ii) The following transfers take place during 1997—

(A) On January 15, 10 units of limited partnership interests are sold in a transaction that is not a private transfer;

(B) On July 10, 1,000 additional units of limited partnership interests are issued by the partnership (the general partner's percentage interest is unchanged); and

(C) On July 20, 15 units of limited partnership interests are sold in a transaction that is not a private transfer.

(iii) For purposes of determining the sum of the percentage interests in partnership capital or profits transferred, ABC chooses to use the end of the month convention. The percentage interests in partnership capital and profits transferred during January is .95 percent, determined by dividing the number of transferred units (10) by the total number of limited partnership units (1,000) and multiplying the result by the percentage of total interests represented by limited partnership units ($(10/1,000) \times .95$). The percentage interests in partnership capital and profits transferred during July is .7125 percent ($(15/2,000) \times .95$). ABC is not required to make determinations for the other months during the year because no transfers of partnership interests occurred during such months. ABC may qualify for the 2 percent rule for its 1997 taxable year because less than 2 percent (.95 percent + .7125 percent = 1.6625 percent) of its total interests in partnership capital and profits was transferred during that year.

(iv) If ABC had chosen to use the beginning of the month convention, the interests in capital or profits sold during July would have been 1.425 percent ($(15/1,000) \times .95$) and ABC would not have satisfied the 2 percent rule for its 1997 taxable year because 2.375 percent (.95 + 1.425) of ABC's interests in

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partnership capital and profits was transferred during that year.

(1) *Effective date*—(1) *In general.* Except as provided in paragraph (1)(2) of this section, this section applies to taxable years of a partnership beginning after December 31, 1995.

(2) *Transition period.* For partnerships that were actively engaged in an activity before December 4, 1995, this section applies to taxable years beginning after December 31, 2005, unless the partnership adds a substantial new line of business after December 4, 1995, in which case this section applies to taxable years beginning on or after the addition of the new line of business. Partnerships that qualify for this transition period may continue to rely on the provisions of Notice 88-75 (1988-2 C.B. 386) (see §601.601(d)(2) of this chapter) for guidance regarding the definition of readily tradable on a secondary market or the substantial equivalent thereof for purposes of section 7704(b).

(3) *Substantial new line of business.* For purposes of paragraph (1)(2) of this section—

(i) Substantial is defined in §1.7704-2(c); and

(ii) A new line of business is defined in §1.7704-2(d), except that the applicable date is “December 4, 1995” instead of “December 17, 1987”.

(4) *Termination under section 708(b)(1)(B).* The termination of a partnership under section 708(b)(1)(B) due to the sale or exchange of 50 percent or more of the total interests in partnership capital and profits is disregarded in determining whether a partnership qualifies for the transition period provided in paragraph (1)(2) of this section.

[T.D. 8629, 60 FR 62029, Dec. 4, 1995]

§ 1.7704-2 Transition provisions.

(a) *Transition rule*—(1) *Statutory dates.* Section 7704 generally applies to taxable years beginning after December 31, 1987. In the case of an existing partnership, however, section 7704 and the regulations thereunder apply to taxable years beginning after December 31, 1997.

(2) *Effective date of regulations.* These regulations are effective for taxable years beginning after December 31, 1991.

(b) *Existing partnership*—(1) *In general.* For purposes of §1.7704-2, the term “existing partnership” means any partnership if—

(i) The partnership was a publicly traded partnership (within the meaning of section 7704(b)) on December 17, 1987;

(ii) A registration statement indicating that the partnership was to be a publicly traded partnership was filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) with respect to the partnership on or before December 17, 1987; or

(iii) With respect to the partnership, an application was filed with a state regulatory commission on or before December 17, 1987, seeking permission to restructure a portion of a corporation as a publicly traded partnership.

(2) *Changed status of an existing partnership.* A partnership will not qualify as an existing partnership after a new line of business is substantial.

(c) *Substantial*—(1) *In general.* A new line of business is substantial as of the earlier of—

(i) The taxable year in which the partnership derives more than 15 percent of its gross income from that line of business; or

(ii) The taxable year in which the partnership directly uses in that line of business more than 15 percent (by value) of its total assets.

(2) *Timing rule.* If a substantial new line of business is added during the taxable year (e.g., by acquisition), the line of business is treated as substantial as of the date it is added; otherwise a substantial new line of business is treated as substantial as of the first day of the taxable year in which it becomes substantial.

(d) *New line of business*—(1) *In general.* A new line of business is any business activity of the partnership not closely related to a pre-existing business of the partnership to the extent that the activity generates income other than “qualifying income” within the meaning of section 7704 and the regulations thereunder.

(2) *Pre-existing business.* A business activity is a pre-existing business of the partnership if—

(i) The partnership was actively engaged in the activity on or before December 17, 1987; or