


Reg. Section 1.537-1(b)(1)

Reasonable needs of the business

(a) In general. The term "reasonable needs of the business" includes (1) the reasonable anticipated needs of the business (including product liability loss reserves, as defined in paragraph (f) of this section), (2) the section 303 redemption needs of the business, as defined in paragraph (c) of this section, and (3) the excess business holdings redemption needs of the business as described in paragraph (d) of this section. See paragraph (e) of this section for additional rules relating to the section 303 redemption needs and the excess business holdings redemption needs of the business. An accumulation of the earnings and profits (including the undistributed earnings and profits of prior years) is in excess of the reasonable needs of the business if it exceeds the amount that a prudent businessman would consider appropriate for the present business purposes and for the reasonable anticipated future needs of the business. The need to retain earnings and profits must be directly connected with the needs of the corporation itself and must be for bona fide business purposes. For purposes of this paragraph the section 303 redemption needs of the business and the excess business holdings redemption needs of the business are deemed to be directly connected with the needs of the business and for a bona fide business purpose. See §1.537-3 for a discussion of what constitutes the business of the corporation. The extent to which earnings and profits have been distributed by the corporation may be taken into account in determining whether or not retained earnings and profits exceed the reasonable needs of the business. See §1.537-2, relating to grounds for accumulation of earnings and profits.

(b) Reasonable anticipated needs.



(1) In order for a corporation to justify an accumulation of earnings and profits for reasonably anticipated future needs, there must be an indication that the future needs of the business require such accumulation, and the corporation must have specific, definite, and feasible plans for the use of such accumulation. Such an accumulation need not be used immediately, nor must the plans for its use be consummated within a short period after the close of the taxable year, provided that such accumulation will be used within a reasonable time depending upon all the facts and circumstances relating to the future needs of the business. Where the future needs of the business are uncertain or vague, where the plans for the future use of an accumulation are not specific, definite, and feasible, or where the execution of such a plan is postponed indefinitely, an accumulation cannot be justified on the grounds of reasonably anticipated needs of the business.

(2) Consideration shall be given to reasonably anticipated needs as they exist on the basis of the facts at the close of the taxable year. Thus, subsequent events shall not be used for the purpose of showing that the retention of earnings or profits was unreasonable at the close of the taxable year if all the elements of reasonable anticipation are present at the close of such taxable year. However, subsequent events may be considered to determine whether the taxpayer actually intended to consummate or has actually consummated the

plans for which the earnings and profits were accumulated. In this connection, projected expansion or investment plans shall be reviewed in the light of the facts during each year and as they exist as of the close of the taxable year. If a corporation has justified an accumulation for future needs by plans never consummated, the amount of such an accumulation shall be taken into account in determining the reasonableness of subsequent accumulations.

(c) Section 303 redemption needs of the business.

(1) The term "section 303 redemption needs" means, with respect to the taxable year of the corporation in which a shareholder of the corporation died or any taxable year thereafter, the amount needed (or reasonably anticipated to be needed) to redeem stock included in the gross estate of such shareholder but not in excess of the amount necessary to effect a distribution to which section 303 applies. For purposes of this paragraph, the term "shareholder" includes an individual in whose gross estate stock of the corporation is includible upon his death for Federal estate tax purposes.

(2) This paragraph applies to a corporation to which section 303(c) would apply if a distribution described therein were made.

(3) If stock included in the gross estate of a decedent is stock of two or more corporations described in section 303(b)(2)(B), the amount needed by each such corporation for section 303 redemption purposes under this section shall, unless the particular facts and circumstances indicate otherwise, be that amount which bears the same ratio to the amount described in section 303(a) as the fair market value of such corporation's stock included in the gross estate of such decedent bears to the fair market value of all of the stock of such corporations included in the gross estate. For example, facts and circumstances indicating that the allocation prescribed by this subparagraph is not required would include notice given to the corporations by the executor or administrator of the decedent's estate that he intends to request the redemption of stock of only one of such corporations or the redemption of stock of such corporations in a ratio which is unrelated to the respective fair market values of the stock of the corporations included in the decedent's gross estate.

(4) The provisions of this paragraph apply only to taxable years ending after May 26, 1969.

(d) Excess business holdings redemption needs.

(1) The term "excess business holdings redemption needs" means, with respect to taxable years of the corporation ending after May 26, 1969, the amount needed (or reasonably anticipated to be needed) to redeem from a private foundation stock which-

(i) Such foundation held on May 26, 1969 (or which was received by such foundation pursuant to a will or irrevocable trust to which section 4943(c)(5) applies), and either

(ii) Constituted excess business holdings on such date or would have constituted excess business holdings as of that date if there were taken into account (a) stock received pursuant to a will or trust described in subdivision (i) of this subparagraph and (b) the reduction in the total outstanding stock of the

corporation which would have resulted solely from the redemption of stock held by the private foundation, or

(iii) Constituted stock redemption of which before January 1, 1975, or after October 4, 1976, and before January 1, 1977, is, by reason of section 101(l)(2)(B) of the Tax Reform Act of 1969, as amended by section 1309 of the Tax Reform Act of 1976, and §53.4941(d)-4(b), permitted without imposition of tax under section 4941, but only to the extent such stock is to be redeemed before January 1, 1975 or after October 4, 1976, and before January 1, 1977, or is to be redeemed thereafter pursuant to the terms of a binding contract entered into on or before such date to redeem all of the stock of the corporation held by the private foundation on such date.

(2) The purpose of subparagraph (1) of this paragraph is to facilitate a private-foundation's disposition of certain excess business holdings, in order for the private foundation not to be liable for tax under section 4943. See section 4943(c) and the regulations thereunder for the definition of excess business holdings. For purposes of section 537(b)(2) and this paragraph, however, any determination of the existence of excess business holdings shall be made without taking into account the provisions of section 4943(c)(4) which treat certain excess business holdings as held by a disqualified person (rather than by the private foundation), except that the periods described in section 4943(c)(4)(B), (C), and (D), if applicable, shall be taken into account in determining the period during which an excess business holdings redemption need may be deemed to exist. Thus, an excess business holdings redemption need may, depending upon the facts and circumstances, be deemed to exist for a part or all of the 20-year, 15-year, or 10-year period specified in section 4943(c)(4)(B) during which the interest in the corporation held by the private foundation is treated as held by a disqualified person rather than by the private foundation, and, if applicable, (i) any suspension of such 20-year, 15-year, or 10-year period as provided by section 4943(c)(4)(C) and (ii) the 15-year "second phase" specified in section 4943(c)(4)(D). The foregoing sentence is not to be construed to prevent an accumulation of earnings and profits for the purpose of effecting a redemption of excess business holdings at a time or times prior to expiration of the periods described in such sentence. This subparagraph is not to be construed to prevent an accumulation of earnings and profits for the purpose of effecting a redemption described in subdivision (iii) of subparagraph (1) of this paragraph.

(3) The extent of an excess business holdings redemption need cannot exceed the total number of shares of stock so held or received by the private foundation (i) redemption of which alone would sufficiently reduce such private foundation's proportionate share of the corporation's total outstanding stock in order for the private foundation not to be liable for tax under section 4943, or (ii) redemption of which is, by reason of §53.4941(d)-4(b), permitted without imposition of tax under section 4941 provided that such redemption is accomplished within the period and in the manner prescribed in subdivision (iii) of subparagraph (1) of this paragraph. Thus, excess business holdings of a private foundation attributable to an increase in the private foundation's proportionate share of the corporation's total outstanding stock by reason of a redemption of stock after May 26, 1969, from any person other than the private foundation do not give rise to an excess business holdings redemption need.

(4) For purposes of subdivision (ii) of subparagraph (1) of this paragraph, an excess business holdings redemption need can arise with respect to shares of the corporation's stock under section 537(a)(3) only following actual acquisition by the private foundation of such shares and their characterization as an excess business holding. Thus, this paragraph does not apply to an accumulation of earnings and profits in one taxable year in anticipation of redemption of excess business holdings to be acquired by a private foundation in a subsequent year pursuant to a will or irrevocable trust to which section 4943(c)(5) applies or in anticipation of shares held becoming excess business holdings of the private foundation in a subsequent year by reason of additional shares to be received by the private foundation in such subsequent year pursuant to a will or irrevocable trust to which section 4943(c)(5) applies. Once having arisen, however, an excess business holdings redemption need may continue until redemption of the private foundation's excess business holdings described in this paragraph or other disposition of such excess business holdings by the private foundation.

(5) Notwithstanding any other provision of this paragraph, an excess business holdings redemption need will not be deemed to exist with respect to stock held by a private foundation the redemption of which would subject any person to tax under section 4941.

(6) For purposes of subdivision (ii) of subparagraph (1) of this paragraph, the number of shares of stock held by a private foundation on May 26, 1969 (or received pursuant to a will or irrevocable trust to which section 4943(c)(5) applies), redemption of which alone would sufficiently reduce such foundation's proportionate share of a corporation's total outstanding stock in order for the foundation not to be liable for tax under section 4943 may be determined by application of the following formula:

$$\frac{X = PH - (YXSO)}{1 - Y}$$

X = Number of shares to be redeemed.

Y = Maximum percentage of outstanding stock which private foundation can hold without being liable for tax under section 4943.

PH = Number of shares of stock held by private foundation on May 26, 1969, or received pursuant to a will or irrevocable trust to which section 4943(c)(5) applies.

SO = Total number of shares of stock outstanding unreduced by any redemption from a person other than the private foundation.

(7) The provisions of this paragraph may be illustrated by the following example:
Example.

(i) On May 26, 1969, Private Foundation A holds 60 of the 100 outstanding shares of the capital stock of corporation X, which is not a disqualified person with respect to A. None of the remaining 40 shares is owned by a disqualified person within the meaning of section 4946(a). On June 1, 1975, X redeems 10 shares of its stock from individual B, thus reducing its outstanding stock to 90 shares. On June 1, 1976, A receives 20 additional shares of X stock by bequest under a will to which section 4943(c)(5) applies. As of June 1, 1976, then, A holds 80 of the 90 outstanding shares of X. Solely for purposes of this example and to illustrate the application of this paragraph, it will be assumed that in order not to be liable for the initial tax under section 4943, A must,

before the close of the "second phase" described in section 4943(c)(4)(D), reduce its proportionate stock interest in X to 35 percent. A requests X to redeem from it a sufficient number of its shares to so reduce its proportionate stock interest in X to 35 percent, and X agrees to effect such a redemption.

(ii) As of May 26, 1969, A's excess business holdings are 25 shares of X, the number of shares which A would be required to dispose of to a person other than X in order to reduce its proportionate holdings in X to no more than 35 percent. If the disposition is to be by means of a redemption, however, A's excess holdings on May 26, 1969, for purposes of determining X's excess business holdings redemption needs, are 39 shares, i.e., the number of shares X would be required to redeem in order to reduce A's proportionate stock interest to 35 percent. Although the redemption of 10 shares from B on June 1, 1975, creates additional excess business holdings of A because it effectively increases A's proportionate stock interest in X, this increase does not create an additional excess business holdings redemption need because it resulted from a redemption from a person other than A. The bequest of 20 shares of X received by A on June 1, 1976, creates a further excess business holdings redemption need as of that date in the amount needed (or reasonably anticipated to be needed) to redeem an additional 31 shares from A, i.e., the number of shares which, when added to the excess business holdings of A on May 26, 1969, would have to be redeemed to reduce A's proportionate stock interest in X to 35 percent without taking the earlier redemption from B into account.

(e)

(1) A determination whether and to what extent an amount is needed (or reasonably anticipated to be needed) for the purpose described in subparagraph (1) of paragraph (c) or (d) of this section is dependent upon the particular circumstances of the case, including the total amount of earnings and profits accumulated in prior years which may be available for such purpose and the existence of a reasonable expectation that a redemption described in paragraph (c) or (d) of this section will in fact be effected. Although paragraph (c) or (d) of this section may apply even though no redemption of stocks is in fact effected, the failure to effect such redemption may be taken into account in determining whether the accumulation was needed (or reasonably anticipated to be needed) for a purpose described in paragraph (c) or (d).

(2) In applying subparagraph (1) of paragraph (c) or (d) of this section, the discharge of an obligation incurred to make a redemption shall be treated as the making of the redemption.

(3) In determining whether an accumulation is in excess of the reasonable needs of the business for a particular year, the fact that one of the exceptions specified in paragraph (c) or (d) of this section applies in a subsequent year is not to give rise to an inference that the accumulation would not have been for the reasonable needs of the business in the prior year. Also, no inference is to be drawn from the enactment of section 537(a)(2) and (3) that accumulations in any prior year would not have been for the reasonable needs of the business in the absence of such provisions. Thus, the reasonableness of accumulations in years prior to a year in which one of the exceptions specified in paragraph (c) or (d) of this section applies is to be determined solely upon the facts and circumstances existing at the times the accumulations occur.

(f)Product liability loss reserves.

(1) The term "product liability loss reserve" means, with respect to taxable years beginning after September 30, 1979, reasonable amounts accumulated for the payment of reasonably anticipated product liability losses, as defined in section 172(j) and §1.172-13(b)(1).

(2) For purposes of this paragraph, whether an accumulation for anticipated product liability losses is reasonable in amount and whether such anticipated product liability losses are likely to occur shall be determined in light of all facts and circumstances of the taxpayer making such accumulation. Some of the factors to be considered in determining the reasonableness of the accumulation include the taxpayer's previous product liability experience, the extent of the taxpayer's coverage by commercial product liability insurance, the income tax consequences of the taxpayer's ability to deduct product liability losses and related expenses, and the taxpayer's potential future liability due to defective products in light of the taxpayer's plans to expand the production of products currently being manufactured, provided such plans are specific, definite and feasible. Additionally, a factor to be considered in determining whether the accumulation is reasonable in amount is whether the taxpayer, in accounting for its potential future liability, took into account the reasonably estimated present value of the potential future liability.

(3) Only those accumulations made with respect to products that have been manufactured, leased, or sold shall be considered as accumulations made under this paragraph. Thus, for example, accumulations with respect to a product which has not progressed beyond the development stage are not reasonable accumulations under this paragraph.