

29 C.F.R. § 779.222

Ownership as factor.

As pointed out in § 779.215 “unified operation” and “common control” do not refer to the ownership of the described activities but only to their performance. It is clear, however, that ownership may be an important factor in determining whether the activities are performed through “unified operation or common control.” Thus common control may exist where there is common ownership. Where the right to control, one of the prerogatives of ownership, exists, there may be sufficient “control” to meet the requirements of the statute. Ownership, or sufficient ownership to exercise control, will be regarded as sufficient to meet the requirement of “common control.” Where there is such ownership, it is immaterial that some segments of the related activities may operate on a semiautonomous basis, superficially free of actual control, so long as the power to exercise control exists through such ownership. (See *Wirtz v. Barnes Grocer Co.*, 398 F. 2d 718 (C.A. 8).) For example, a parent corporation may operate a chain of retail or service establishments which, for business reasons, may be divided into several geographic units. These units may have certain autonomy as to purchasing, marketing, labor relations, and other matters. They may be separately incorporated, and each unit may maintain its own records, including records of its profits or losses. All the units together, in such a case, will constitute a single enterprise with the parent corporation. They would constitute a single business organization under the “common control” of the parent corporation so long as they are related activities performed for a common business purpose. The common ownership in such cases provides the power to exercise the “control” referred to in the definition. It is clear from the Act and the legislative history that the Congress did not intend that such a chain organization should escape the effects of the law with respect to any segment of its business merely by separately incorporating or otherwise dividing the related activities performed for a common business purpose.

This document is only available to subscribers. Please log in or purchase access.

[Purchase Login](#)