

LB&I International Practice Service Transaction Unit

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Unit Name	License of Intangible Property from U.S. Parent to a Foreign Subsidiary		

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Issue and Transaction Overview

License of Intangible Property from U.S. Parent to a Foreign Subsidiary

- Many U.S. businesses have developed valuable intangible property ("IP") over time which is essential to their business operations and may be the main source of enterprise value. As these U.S. businesses expand globally to become Multinational Enterprises ("MNEs"), they often transfer their IP to related foreign entities. Such IP transfers can take several forms (e.g. sale, license, contribution to equity or in conjunction with a Cost Sharing Agreement ("CSA")). This practice unit will focus only on transfer of IP by license. Licenses of intangible property from a U.S. person to a related foreign subsidiary are subject to transfer pricing rules that require the license to be arm's length.
- Many U.S. MNE's are organized with a U.S. parent ("USP") which conducts all research and development, owns all valuable intangible property, and performs sales and distribution activities for the U.S. market. A USP may have a wholly-owned controlled foreign corporation ("CFC") in a country with a low corporate tax rate and/or low labor costs to manufacture products. Often, the CFC will also perform sales and distribution activities outside of the U.S. market. Bear in mind that although this Practice Unit uses a low tax jurisdiction CFC in it's example the issue is not limited to CFCs in low tax jurisdictions. The issue covered in this Practice Unit can exist with a CFC in any tax jurisdiction, including those with high tax rates. However, some U.S. taxpayers that own valuable intangible assets may transfer them offshore to a CFC in a lower tax jurisdiction as part of a strategy to reduce their effective tax rate.
- Using this basic fact pattern, this unit will look at a CFC's use of licensed intangible property owned by USP and consider whether the CFC paid an arms length amount to USP for use of the intangible property. In general, the licensing of intangible property is governed by the rules in Treas. Reg. 1.482-4. Treas. Reg. 1.482-4 discusses a variety of methods to determine the arm's length consideration. If a foreign subsidiary compensates a U.S. parent at lower than an arm's length consideration, the U.S. parent will report less than its true taxable income. In such a case, it is appropriate for the examiner to allocate income between the parties (an increase to the US parent and a corresponding decrease to the foreign subsidiary) under IRC Section 482 so that both parties clearly reflect their income

Issue and Transaction Overview (cont'd)

License of Intangible Property from U.S. Parent to a Foreign Subsidiary



CONSULTATION: If a license of intangibles exists (or should exist due to transfer of IP without any legal mechanism), the examiner should consider making a referral for economic assistance if the case potentially involves a significant valuation adjustment. Economic assistance can range from an informal consultation to assignment of an economist to the case. If a valuation adjustment is pursued and gives rise to double taxation, the taxpayer may have access to double tax relief under Article 9 of a relevant treaty and the Mutual Agreement Process. Make sure you consult with APMA.



TREATY IMPLICATIONS: Tax treaty implications for withholding tax issues might be applicable to payments for the use of intangible property. U.S. recipients of royalties must take advantage of any available treaty reduction in withholding rate since any overpayment of withholding tax would not be eligible as a foreign tax credit.

Transaction and Fact Pattern

License of Intangible Property from U.S. Parent to a Foreign Subsidiary			
Diagram of Transaction		ction	Facts
License of Intangible Property	USP CFC (Low Tax Country)	License Payment	 USP is the parent company of a worldwide group that designs, develops, manufactures, sells and distributes products worldwide USP conducts all research and development and owns all intellectual property including patents, trademarks, trade names, trade secrets, etc. USP sells and distributes products into the U.S. market USP license of IP to CFC CFC manufactures all products for sale and distribution worldwide CFC sells and distributes products into all non-U.S. markets

Effective Tax Rate Overview

License of Intangible Property from U.S. Parent to a Foreign Subsidiary

ETR of Company

• When a U.S. taxpayer successfully transfers significant income producing intangibles under a licensing arrangement outside of the U.S. to a CFC in a low tax jurisdiction for little or no compensation, the taxpayer's worldwide effective tax rate may decrease substantially. This occurs when the income from these intangibles is deemed to be permanently reinvested offshore for U.S. GAAP financial statement purposes. If repatriated as a dividend the accumulated offshore earnings would be subject to U.S. taxation.

ETR Impact of Adjustment

- A company's overall effective tax rate is the aggregate "rate of tax accrued on its worldwide income" as the U.S. GAAP calculation of ETR is based on tax accrual not cash payment.
- In this Practice Unit example, the overall effective tax rate will be reduced since income will be shifted to the low-tax foreign corporation from the US.

Summary of Potential Issues

License o	License of Intangible Property from U.S. Parent to a Foreign Subsidiary			
<u>Issue 1</u>	What intangible property rights have been licensed from USP by CFC?			
<u>Issue 2</u>	Did USP receive arms length consideration for the license of intangibles to CFC?			
<u>Issue 3</u>	Was the consideration commensurate with income ("CWI") attributable to the intangible?			

All Issues, Step 1: Initial Factual Development

License of Intangible Property from U.S. Parent to a Foreign Subsidiary

Taxpayers use licensing of intangibles to overseas operations for a variety of reasons (tax savings, low labor costs, location of clients or supply chain). It is important to establish the facts and supporting documentation that substantiates that a license of intangible property took place.

Fact Element	Resources	6103 Protected Resources
 Did USP transfer IP under a licensing agreement to its CFC? What type of intangibles did USP license to CFC? Are the intangibles routine in nature or nonroutine type intangibles? What form of consideration was received by USP? Lump Sum Contingent Payment Installment Payment 	 Transfer Pricing Studies Organizational Chart License Agreements Intercompany Agreements Invoices Taxpayer's Financial Statements Transfer Pricing Roadmap Taxpayer's Internet Site Mandatory Transfer Pricing IDR 	
 Does Form 5471 represent that rents, royalties and license fees were paid by CFC? 	 Form 5471, Schedule M Line 20 	

Issue 1, Step 2: Review Potential Issues

License of Intangible Property from U.S. Parent to a Foreign Subsidiary

Issue 1

Explanation of Issue	Resources
 For purposes of section 482, an intangible is an asset that comprises any of the following items and has substantial value independent of the services of any individual: Patents, inventions, formulae, processes, designs, patterns, or know-how; Copyrights and literary, musical, or artistic compositions; Trademarks, trade names, or brand names; Franchises, licenses, or contracts; Methods, programs, systems, procedures, campaigns, surveys, studies, forecasts, estimates, customer lists, or technical data; and Other similar items. For purposes of section 482, an item is considered similar to those listed in paragraph (b)(1) through (5) of this section if it derives its value not from its physical attributes but from its intellectual content or other intangible properties. A controlled transfer of Intangible Property means any transaction or transfer of such property between two or more members of the same group of controlled taxpayers. Determine if in fact an intangible as defined in Treas. Reg. 1.482-4(b) has been transferred from USP to CFC under a licensing arrangement. 	 Treas. Reg. 1.482-1(i)(7) Treas. Reg. 1.482-1(i)(8) Treas. Reg. 1.482-4(b)

Issue 1, Step 2: Review Potential Issues (cont'd)

License of Intangible Property from U.S. Parent to a Foreign Subsidiary

Issue 1

Explanation of Issue	Resources
 Determine what rights to the intangibles were transferred? Here are examples of the type of rights that may be transferred under a licensing arrangement. 	
-Exclusive v. Non Exclusive	
-Sublicensing Rights	
-Geographic Rights	
-Manufacturing, Marketing, Distribution (Make/Sell)	
-Research Rights	
 (The above is not an all inclusive list of rights that can be granted under a licensing arrangement). 	

Issue 1, Step 3: Additional Factual Development

License of Intangible Property from U.S. Parent to a Foreign Subsidiary

Issue 1

Fact Element	Resources	6103 Protected Resources
Is there a license of intangible property between controlled parties?	Request and/or Review the following:	
	 Transfer Pricing Roadmap 	
	 Transfer Pricing Studies 	
	 License Agreement 	
	 Other Intercompany Agreements 	
	 Taxpayer's Internet Site 	
What type of intangible property is being licensed?	 Transfer Pricing Roadmap 	
	 Transfer Pricing Studies 	
	 License Agreement 	
	 Other Intercompany Agreements 	
	 Taxpayer's Internet Site 	
Determine what rights to the intangibles were	 Transfer Pricing Roadmap 	
licensed?	 Transfer Pricing Studies 	
	License Agreement	
	 Other Intercompany Agreements 	

Issue 1, Step 4: Develop Arguments

License of Intangible Property from U.S. Parent to a Foreign Subsidiary

Issue 1

Explanation of Adjustment	Resources	6103 Protected Resources
 The analysis for whether intangible property has been licensed is based on the facts and circumstances of each specific case. 	 Treas. Reg. 1.482-1(i)(7) Treas. Reg. 1.482-1(i)(8) 	
 The examiner needs to establish that there is a controlled transfer of intangible property under a licensing arrangement pursuant to Treas. Reg.1.482-1(i)(7), (i)(8) and 1.482-4(a) and (b). In the analysis, the examiner must determine the type of intangible, the rights associated with that intangible and was the US compensated for the transfer of such intangible under the licensing arrangement. 		
 If a transfer of intangible property has taken place under Treas. Reg. 1.482-7, 1.482-9 or IRC 367, see related Practice Units referenced in the index of other related issues that cover such transfers. 		

Issue 1, Step 4: Develop Arguments (cont'd)

License of Intangible Property from U.S. Parent to a Foreign Subsidiary

Issue 1

Explanation of Adjustment	Resources	6103 Protected Resources
DECISION POINT: Determine whether to proceed with this issue based on the results of the facts gathered (i.e., was there a license of intangible property rights that required an arms length consideration to the USP from CFC?)	 Treas. Reg. 1.482-1(i)(7) Treas. Reg. 1.482-1(i)(8) Treas. Reg. 1.482-4(a) and (b) 	

Issue 2, Step 2: Review Potential Issues

License of Intangible Property from U.S. Parent to a Foreign Subsidiary

Issue 2

Explanation of Issue	Resources
 Arms length consideration in a controlled transfer of intangible property must be determined under one of four methods listed in Treas. Reg. 1.482-4(a) (i.e., CUT, CPM, Profit Split, Unspecified Method). Each method must be applied according to the provisions of Treas. Reg. 1.482-1, including the Best Method Rule of Treas. Reg. 1.482-1(c), comparability analysis of Treas. Reg. 1.482-1(d) and the arms length range of Treas. Reg. 1.482-1(e). If the Taxpayer applies one of the methods in Treas. Reg. 1.482-4(a), and that method achieves the most reliable measure of an arms length result, it will be considered the best method. If the CUT Method is selected as the best method, additional comparability analysis under Treas. Reg. 1.482-4(c)(2) needs to be considered as well If the consideration received by USP falls within the arms length range under the best method, no adjustment is necessary. CONSULTATION: You should consult with an economist and/or engineer to determine whether the method applied by the Taxpayer is the best method 	 Treas. Reg. 1.482-1(c) - Best Method Rule Treas. Reg. 1.482-1(d)- Comparability Treas. Reg. 1.482-1(e) - Arms Length Range Treas. Reg. 1.482-1(i)(8) - Controlled Transaction Treas. Reg. 1.482-4(a) - Methods Treas. Reg. 1.482-4(c) - CUT Method Treas. Reg. 1.482-4(d) - Unspecified Method Treas. Reg. 1.482-5 - CPM Treas. Reg. 1.482-6 - Profit Split

Issue 2, Step 3: Additional Factual Development

License of Intangible Property from U.S. Parent to a Foreign Subsidiary

Issue 2

Fact Element	Resources	6103 Protected Resources
 What was the amount of the consideration paid? What was the form of the consideration? Lump Sum Installment Contingent Payment <i>e.g.</i> Royalty 	 Transfer Pricing Studies License Agreement Form 5471 – Sch M Line 20 General Ledger Trial Balance Journal Entries 	
 What method did USP select in determining the arms length compensation to receive from CFC? Comparable Uncontrolled Transaction Comparable Profits Method Profit Split Unspecified Method 	 Transfer Pricing Studies License Agreement Commercial Databases – <i>e.g.</i>, Capital IQ, Compustat, etc. – Including Market Studies SIC – NAICS Codes Descriptions and financial statements of comparable transactions Consider use of an Economist 	

Issue 2, Step 3: Additional Factual Development (cont'd)

License of Intangible Property from U.S. Parent to a Foreign Subsidiary

Issue 2

Fact Element	Resources	6103 Protected Resources
 What are the functions, risks and assets employed respectively by USP and CFC? Was the method selected the best method based on facts and circumstances? Comparability Completeness and Accuracy of Data Reliability of Assumptions Sensitivity of Results 	 Transfer Pricing Roadmap Transfer Pricing Studies Intercompany Agreements License Agreement Commercial Databases – e.g., Capital IQ, Compustat, etc. – Including Market Studies SIC – NAICS Codes Descriptions and segmented financial statements of comparable transactions Consider use of an Economist SEC Filings and comments about taxpayer's business segments Annual Reports Functional Analysis Questionnaire Interview key employees Internet Searches on taxpayer and industry – does taxpayer have a competitive advantage? 	Back to Table Of Contents

Issue 2, Step 3: Additional Factual Development (cont'd)

License of Intangible Property from U.S. Parent to a Foreign Subsidiary

Issue 2

Fact Element	Resources	6103 Protected Resources
 What was the arm's length range under the best method selected? Comparables Multiple Year Data Interquartile Range 	 Transfer Pricing Roadmap Transfer Pricing Studies Workpapers with Supporting Computations 	

Issue 2, Step 4: Develop Arguments

License of Intangible Property from U.S. Parent to a Foreign Subsidiary

Issue 2

Explanation of Adjustment	Resources	6103 Protected Resources
 After establishing that there is a controlled transfer of Intangible property by USP to CFC under a licensing arrangement, the examiner must determine whether arms length consideration was received by USP from CFC. Arms Length consideration must be determined under one of four methods listed in Treas. Reg.1.482-4(a): CUT, CPM, Profit Split or Unspecified Method Each of the methods must be applied in accordance with all the provisions of Treas. Reg. 1.482-4(a),(c) and (d) and Treas. Reg. 1.482-5 and -6. All licensed intangibles must be identified and valued. 	 Treas. Reg. 1.482-1(c) Treas. Reg. 1.482-1(d) Treas. Reg. 1.482-1(e) Treas. Reg. 1.482-1(i)(8) Treas. Reg. 1.482-4(a) Treas. Reg. 1.482-4(c) Treas. Reg. 1.482-4(d) Treas. Reg. 1.482-5 Treas. Reg. 1.482-6 	
 Whether the method chosen is the best method must be based on all the relevant facts and circumstances. A functional analysis will assist both in the identification of the licensed Intangibles and selection of the best method. 		Back to Table Of Contents

Issue 2, Step 4: Develop Arguments (cont'd)

License of Intangible Property from U.S. Parent to a Foreign Subsidiary

Issue 2

Explanation of Adjustment	Resources	6103 Protected Resources
 In addition, ensure the taxpayer's selection of comparables are truly comparable to their line of business and controlled transaction. Any adjustments that can be made to increase the reliability of the results for the method chosen should be accomplished. If the consideration received by USP is not within the arms length range, an adjustment to income is warranted. 	 Treas. Reg. 1.482-1(c) Treas. Reg. 1.482-1(d) Treas. Reg. 1.482-1(e) 	
CONSULTATION: If you have an economist or engineer assigned to your case, make sure you incorporate their reports into the Facts, Law and Analysis sections of your NOPA.		

Issue 3, Step 2: Review Potential Issues

License of Intangible Property from U.S. Parent to a Foreign Subsidiary

Issue 3

Explanation of Issue	Resources
 The arm's length consideration for the transfer of an intangible from USP to CFC must be commensurate with the income attributable to the intangible. There are exceptions to applying CWI to the compensation charged by USP if the requirements under Treas. Reg. 1.482-4(f)(2)(ii)(A),(B),(C),(D) and (E) are met. Typically, if USP retained a substantial interest in the licensed intangible property, the arms length consideration subject to CWI shall be in the form of a periodic (usually annual) royalty, calculated at the time of the license using forecasted profits or cost savings attributed to the licensed intangible. Generally, if the licensing arrangement between USP and CFC covers more than one year, it may be possible to make an adjustment to the compensation charged in each taxable year under the method chosen to ensure that it is commensurate with the income being generated from the use of the intangible by the CFC. Such adjustment may be possible if all of the requirements for applying CWI are met and the taxpayer does not qualify for one of the exceptions. 	 Treas. Reg. 1.482-4(a) Treas. Reg. 1.482-4(f)(1) Treas. Reg. 1.482-4(f)(2)(i) and (ii) AM 2007-007 (3/15/2007) – General Legal Advice Memorandum on CWI

Issue 3, Step 2: Review Potential Issues (cont'd)

License of Intangible Property from U.S. Parent to a Foreign Subsidiary

Issue 3

Explanation of Issue	Resources
The questions that need to be answered by the examiner when considering CWI:	
 Are the profits being earned by the CFC materially disproportionate (in the manner described in the section 482 regulations) to the projected profits that both parties anticipated at the time of original transfer or intangibles? 	
 2. Does the taxpayer meet any of the exceptions to application of CWI? If the answer to question 1 is yes and the answer to question 2 is no, then it may be possible to make a CWI adjustment. 	
CONSULTATION: Economic assistance may be necessary to determine if CWI applies.	

Issue 3, Step 3: Additional Factual Development

License of Intangible Property from U.S. Parent to a Foreign Subsidiary

Issue 3

Fact Element	Resources	6103 Protected Resources
 Does the license arrangement cover more than one year? Was nominal or no consideration charged by USP to CFC for the licensed intangible at the inception of the license? Did USP retain a substantial interest in the licensed intangible? Does the license agreement require CFC to make periodic payments to USP for use of the intangible? 	 Transfer Pricing Studies Contracts Intercompany Agreements Annual Report Transfer Pricing Roadmap 	

Issue 3, Step 3: Additional Factual Development (cont'd)

License of Intangible Property from U.S. Parent to a Foreign Subsidiary

Issue 3

Fact Element	Resources	6103 Protected Resources
 Do any of the exceptions to CWI apply? CUT with same intangible CUT with Comparable Intangible or Other Method Written contract, defined terms and time period, no substantial changes in functions performed, and actual profits or cost savings fall within 80% to 120% of forecasts. Extraordinary events that could not reasonably have been anticipated. No CWI adjustments made after 5 years beginning with the first year in which substantial periodic consideration was required to be paid under the license agreement 	 Transfer Pricing Studies Treas. Reg. 1.482-4(f)(2)(ii)(A), (B), (C), (D) and (E) 	
CONSULTATION: Exam and Field Counsel should consult with Associate Chief Counsel (International) Branch 6 for advice on making a CWI adjustment.		Pook to Table Of Contents

Issue 3, Step 4: Develop Arguments

License of Intangible Property from U.S. Parent to a Foreign Subsidiary

Issue 3

Explanation of Adjustment	Resources	6103 Protected Resources
 The consideration charged by US to CFC in each taxable year might be adjusted to ensure it is commensurate with the income attributable to such intangible under Treas. Reg. 1.482-4(f)(2) if all of the requirements for applying the CWI principle have been met and the taxpayer does not qualify for any exceptions to the CWI principle. 	 Treas. Reg. 1.482-4(a) Treas. Reg. 1.482-4(f)(1) Treas. Reg. 1.482-4(f)(2) 	
 For exceptions to the periodic adjustment rule, Treas. Reg. 1.482-4(f)(2)(ii) must be considered. In determining whether to make such adjustments in the year under exam, the examiner may consider all relevant facts and circumstances throughout the period the intangible is used. A periodic adjustment may be made in a subsequent taxable year without regard to whether the taxable year of the original transfer remains open for statute of limitations purposes. 		

Training and Additional Resources

Chapter 1.2.1 License or Sale		
Type of Resource	Description(s) and/or Instructions for Accessing	References
CENTRA sessions	 2012 (TPO) CENTRA – Overview and Introduction to 482 2012 (TPO) CPE CENTRA - High Value Services 	
Issue Toolkits	 IRM 4.61.3-4 Functional Analysis Questionnaire Transfer Pricing Checklist IRM 4.61.3 Development of IRC section 482 Cases Transfer Pricing Audit Roadmap Mandatory Transfer Pricing IDR 	
White Papers / Guidance	 AM 2007-007 (3/15/2007) – General Legal Advice Memorandum on CWI. 	

Training and Additional Resources (cont'd)

Chapter 1.2.1 License or Sale		
Type of Resource	Description(s) and/or Instructions for Accessing	References
Podcasts / Videos	 2011 (TPO) CPE – Intangibles Migration, Economic Analysis, Risk and Comparability, and Audit Techniques. 	
Reference Materials – Treaties	 Bittker and Lokken Chapter 79: Reallocation of Income and Deductions OECD Transfer Pricing Guidelines 	
Other Training Materials	Economist Phase V Training – Legal Matters	

Glossary of Terms and Acronyms

Term/Acronym	Definition	
APMA	Advanced Pricing Mutual Agreement	
CFC	Controlled Foreign Corporation	
СРМ	Comparable Profits Method	
CUT	Comparable Uncontrolled Transaction Method	
CSA	Cost Sharing Agreement	
CWI	Commensurate With Income	
IP	Intangible Property	
MNE	Multi-National Entity	
NAIC	North American Industrial Classification	
NOPA	Notice of Proposed Adjustment (Form 5701)	
RAR	Revenue Agent Report	
SEC	Securities and Exchange Commission	
SIC	Standard Industrial Classification	
USP	United States Parent	

Index of Related Issues

Issue	Associated UIL(s)	References
Deemed Royalty Income	• 9411.02	 Practice Unit, "Deemed Annual Royalty Income Under IRC 367(d)," DCN: ISO/9411.02_01(2013)
Distinguishing between a sale, license and other transfers of intangibles.	• 9411.02	 Practice Unit, "Distinguishing Between a Sale, License and Other Transfers of Intangibles to CFCs by US Transferors," DCN: ISO/9411.02_02 (2013)
IRC 482	• 9411.07	 Practice Unit, "Overview of IRC Section 482," DCN: ISO/9411.07_01(2013)
Functional Analysis	• 9422.07	 Practice Unit, "Comparability Analysis for Tangible Goods Transactions – Inbound," DCN: ISI/PUO/V_6_01(2014)
Comparable Profits Method (CPM)	• 9422.07	 Practice Unit, "CPM Simple Distributor Inbound," DCN: ISI/9422.07_07(2013)
Requirements of IRC 482	• 9422.09	 Practice Unit, "Three Requirements of IRC 482," DCN: ISI/9422.09_02(2013)
Best Method	• 9422.09	 Practice Unit, "Best Method Determination for an Inbound Distributor," DCN: ISI/9422.09_04(2013)
Arm's Length Standard	• 9422.09	 Practice Unit, "Arms Length Standard," DCN: ISI/9422.09_06(2013)
Rev. Proc. 99-32	• 9422.09	 Practice Unit, "Revenue Procedure 99-32 Inbound Guidance," DCN: ISI/9422.09_08(2014)