

In this example, the inflation rate will have its earliest impact in June 2004, when interest from May accrues, three months after the end of the six-month CPI-U period that ends March 31, 2004.

(3) As another example, the May 1, 2004, rate will apply similarly to a bond purchased in October 1999. Series I bonds issued in October begin new semiannual rate periods in the months of April and October. Thus, for this bond, the May 1, 2004, composite rate (which includes the inflation rate) will not go into effect until a new semi-annual rate period begins on October 1, 2004. This rate, therefore, will determine the inflation-indexed portion of each interest accrual from November 2004 through April 2005. In this example, the inflation rate will have its latest impact in April 2005, 13 months following the six-month CPI-U period that ended March 31, 2004.

(c) *Liquidity.* A Series I bond may be redeemed beginning six months after its issue date or at any time thereafter. However, a bond redeemed less than five years from its issue date will be subject to a three-month interest penalty.

(d) *Early redemption penalty.* If a Series I bond is redeemed less than five years following the date of issue, the overall earning period from the date of issue will be reduced by three months. For example, if a bond issued January 1, 1999, is redeemed nine months later on October 1, 1999, the redemption value will be determined by applying the redemption value calculation procedures described in § 359.2(e)(4) and the Series I composite rate for that bond as if the redemption date were three months earlier (July 1, 1999). The redemption value of a bond subject to the three-month interest penalty shall not be reduced below the issue price. This penalty does not apply to bonds redeemed five years or more after the date of issue.

[63 FR 38044, July 14, 1998, as amended at 63 FR 45947, Aug. 28, 1998]

§ 359.4 Registration and issue.

(a) *Registration.* Bonds may be registered as set forth in 31 CFR part 360, subpart B, also published as Department of the Treasury Circular, Public Debt Series No. 2-98. Generally, bonds

may be registered in the names of natural persons in single owner, coowner (for example: "John Doe 123-45-6789 OR Mary Doe"), or beneficiary ("John Doe 123-45-6789 payable on death to (POD) Mary Doe") forms of registration.

(b) *Validity of issue.* A bond is validly issued when it is registered as provided in Circular No. 2-98, and when it bears an issue date, as well as the validation indicia of an authorized issuing agent.

(c) *Taxpayer Identifying Number (TIN).* The inscription of a bond must include the TIN of the owner or first-named co-owner. If the bond is being purchased as a gift or award and the owner's TIN is not known, the TIN of the purchaser must be included in the inscription on the bond.

(d) *Prohibition on chain letters.* The issuance of bonds in the furtherance of a chain letter or pyramid scheme is against the public interest and is prohibited. An issuing agent is authorized to refuse to issue a bond or accept a purchase order if there is reason to believe that a purchase is in connection with a chain letter. The agent's decision is final.

§ 359.5 Limitation on purchases.

The amount of Series I bonds which may be purchased in the name of any one person, in any one calendar year, is limited to \$30,000 par value. Circular No. 2-98 (31 CFR part 360, subpart C) contains the rules governing the computation of amounts and the special limitation for employee plans.

§ 359.6 Purchase of bonds.

(a) *Payroll sales—(1) Payroll savings plans.* Bonds may be purchased through deductions from the pay of employees of organizations that maintain payroll savings plans. The bonds must be issued by an authorized issuing agent.

(2) *Employee thrift, savings, vacation, and similar plans.* Bonds registered in the names of employee plans may be purchased in book-entry form in authorized denominations through a designated Federal Reserve Bank after Bureau of the Public Debt approval of the plan as eligible for the special limitation under 31 CFR 360.13, also published as § 360.13 of Department of the Treasury Circular, Public Debt Series No. 2-98.

§ 359.7

(b) *Over-the-counter sales*—(1) *Eligible issuing agents.* Bonds may be purchased through any issuing agent, except that an organization serving as an issuing agent because of its status as an employer or an organization operating an employer's payroll savings plan under 31 CFR 317.2(c) may sell bonds only through payroll savings plans.

(2) *Manner of sale.* An application for the purchase of a bond must be accompanied by a remittance to cover the issue price. The purchase application and remittance may be submitted to an issuing agent by any means acceptable to the issuing agent. An application may authorize purchases on a recurring basis. The issuing agent bears the burden of collection and the risk of loss for non-collection or return of the remittance.

§ 359.7 Delivery of bonds.

Issuing agents are authorized to arrange for the delivery of Series I bonds. Mail deliveries are made at the risk and expense of the United States to the address given by the purchaser, if it is within the United States, its territories or possessions, or the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. No mail deliveries elsewhere will be made, except to residents of Mexico and Canada who participate in payroll saving plans. Bonds purchased by a citizen of the United States residing abroad will be delivered only to such address in the United States as the purchaser directs.

§ 359.8 Payment or redemption.

(a) *Incorporated banks, savings and loan associations and other financial institutions*—(1) *Payment in general.* A financial institution qualified as a paying agent under the provisions of 31 CFR part 321, also published as Department of the Treasury Circular No. 750, will pay the current redemption value of a Series I bond presented for payment by an individual whose name is inscribed on the bond as owner or co-owner, provided:

(i) The bond is in order for payment; and

(ii) The presenter establishes his or her identity to the satisfaction of the agent, in accordance with Treasury instructions and identification guide-

31 CFR Ch. II (7-1-02 Edition)

lines, and signs and completes the request for payment.

(2) *Payment to beneficiary or legal representative.* A paying agent may (but is not required to) pay the current redemption value of a Series I bond upon the request of a beneficiary, if he or she survives the owner, or a legal representative designated in the bond registration by name and capacity, or a court-appointed representative of the last-deceased registrant's estate provided:

(i) The bond is in order for payment; and

(ii) The presenter establishes his or her identity to the satisfaction of the agent in accordance with Treasury instructions and identification guidelines, and otherwise complies with evidentiary requirements.

(b) *Federal Reserve Banks and Branches.* A Federal Reserve Bank or Branch referred to in § 359.14 will pay the current redemption value of a Series I bond presented for payment, provided the bond is in order for payment and the request for payment on the bond is properly signed and certified in accordance with Circular No. 2-98.

§ 359.9 Taxation.

(a) *General.* The increment in value, represented by the difference between the face (par amount) of a Series I bond and the redemption value received for it, is interest. This interest is subject to all taxes imposed under the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended. The bonds are subject to estate, inheritance, gift, or other excise taxes, whether Federal or State, but are exempt from all other taxation now or hereafter imposed on the principal or interest by any State, any possession of the United States or any local taxing authority.

(b) *Federal income tax on bonds.* (1) An owner of Series I bonds may use either of the following two methods for reporting the increase in the redemption value of the bond for Federal income tax purposes:

(i) *Cash basis.* Defer reporting the increase to the year of final maturity, redemption, or other disposition, whichever is earlier; or

(ii) *Accrual basis.* Elect to report the increase each year as it accrues, in