

an election is made, the taxpayer must continue in subsequent taxable years to charge to capital account all circulation expenditures properly so chargeable, unless the Commissioner, on application made to him in writing by the taxpayer, permits a revocation of such election for any subsequent taxable year or years. Permission to revoke such election may be granted subject to such conditions as the Commissioner deems necessary.

(3) Elections filed under section 23(bb) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1939 shall be given the same effect as if they were filed under section 173. (See section 7807(b)(2).)

§ 1.174-1 Research and experimental expenditures; in general.

Section 174 provides two methods for treating research or experimental expenditures paid or incurred by the taxpayer in connection with his trade or business. These expenditures may be treated as expenses not chargeable to capital account and deducted in the year in which they are paid or incurred (see § 1.174-3), or they may be deferred and amortized (see § 1.174-4). Research or experimental expenditures which are neither treated as expenses nor deferred and amortized under section 174 must be charged to capital account. The expenditures to which section 174 applies may relate either to a general research program or to a particular project. See § 1.174-2 for the definition of research and experimental expenditures. The term *paid or incurred*, as used in section 174 and in §§ 1.174-1 to 1.174-4, inclusive, is to be construed according to the method of accounting used by the taxpayer in computing taxable income. See section 7701(a)(25).

§ 1.174-2 Definition of research and experimental expenditures.

(a) *In general.* (1) The term *research or experimental expenditures*, as used in section 174, means expenditures incurred in connection with the taxpayer's trade or business which represent research and development costs in the experimental or laboratory sense. The term generally includes all such costs incident to the development or improvement of a product. The term includes the costs of obtaining a pat-

ent, such as attorneys' fees expended in making and perfecting a patent application. Expenditures represent research and development costs in the experimental or laboratory sense if they are for activities intended to discover information that would eliminate uncertainty concerning the development or improvement of a product. Uncertainty exists if the information available to the taxpayer does not establish the capability or method for developing or improving the product or the appropriate design of the product. Whether expenditures qualify as research or experimental expenditures depends on the nature of the activity to which the expenditures relate, not the nature of the product or improvement being developed or the level of technological advancement the product or improvement represents.

(2) For purposes of this section, the term *product* includes any pilot model, process, formula, invention, technique, patent, or similar property, and includes products to be used by the taxpayer in its trade or business as well as products to be held for sale, lease, or license.

(3) The term *research or experimental expenditures* does not include expenditures for—

- (i) The ordinary testing or inspection of materials or products for quality control (quality control testing);
- (ii) Efficiency surveys;
- (iii) Management studies;
- (iv) Consumer surveys;
- (v) Advertising or promotions;
- (vi) The acquisition of another's patent, model, production or process; or
- (vii) Research in connection with literary, historical, or similar projects.

(4) For purposes of paragraph (a)(3)(i) of this section, testing or inspection to determine whether particular units of materials or products conform to specified parameters is quality control testing. However, quality control testing does not include testing to determine if the design of the product is appropriate.

(5) See section 263A and the regulations thereunder for cost capitalization rules which apply to expenditures paid or incurred for research in connection with literary, historical, or similar projects involving the production of