

§ 779.214

more than one person, or corporation, or other business organization, which are directed to the same business objective or to similar objectives in which the group has an interest. The scope of the term "enterprise" encompasses a single business entity as well as a unified business system which performs related activities for a common business purpose. What is a "common business purpose" in any particular case involves a practical judgment based on the facts in the light of the statutory provisions and the legislative intent. The answer ordinarily will be readily apparent from the facts. The facts may show that the activities are related to a single business objective or that they are so operated or controlled as to form a part of a unified business system which is directed to a single business objective. In such cases, it will follow that they are performed for a common business purpose. Where, however, the facts show that the activities are not performed as a part of such enterprise but for an entirely separate and unrelated business, they will be considered performed for a different business purpose and will not be a part of that enterprise. The application of these principles is considered in more detail in part 776 of this chapter.

§ 779.214 "Business" purpose.

The activities described in section 3(r) are included in an enterprise only when they are performed for a "business" purpose. Activities of eleemosynary, religious, or educational organization may be performed for a business purpose. Thus, where such organizations engage in ordinary commercial activities, such as operating a printing and publishing plant, the business activities will be treated under the Act the same as when they are performed by the ordinary business enterprise. (See *Mitchell v. Pilgrims Holiness Church Corp.*, 210 F. 2d 879 (CA-7); cert. den. 347 U.S. 1013.) However, the nonprofit educational, religious, and eleemosynary activities will not be included in the enterprise unless they are of the types which the last sentence of section 3(r), as amended in 1966, declares shall be deemed to be performed for a business purpose. Such activities were not regarded as performed for a business pur-

29 CFR Ch. V (7-1-06 Edition)

pose under the prior Act and are not so considered under the Act as it was amended in 1966 except for those activities listed in the last sentence of amended section 3(r). (See § 779.21.)

UNIFIED OPERATION OR COMMON CONTROL

§ 779.215 General scope of terms.

(a) Under the definition related activities performed for a common business purpose will be a part of the enterprise when they are performed either through "unified operation" or "common control." It should be noted that these conditions are stated in the alternative. Thus if it is established that the described activities are performed through "common control," it is unnecessary to show that they are also performed through "unified operation," although frequently both conditions may exist.

(b) Under the definition the terms "unified operation" and "common control" refer to the performance of the "related activities." They do not refer to the ownership of the activities. Although ownership may be a significant factor in determining control (see § 779.222), the related activities will be a part of the enterprise even if they are not under common ownership, so long as they are performed for a common business purpose through unified operation or common control. Further, under the definition the terms "unified operation" and "common control" refer to the performance only of the particular related activities and not to other activities which may be performed by the various persons, corporations, or other business organizations, comprising the enterprise. Thus where two or more individual or business organizations perform certain of their activities through unified operation or common control, these activities will be part of a single enterprise, assuming of course they are related activities performed for a common business purpose. Finally, the definition in section 3(r) makes clear that the described activities may be performed through unified operation or common control "in one or more establishments or by one or more corporate or other organizational units." The Senate Report on

Wage and Hour Division, Labor

§ 779.218

the 1966 amendments makes the following comment with respect to this:

Also, the operations through substantial ownership or control of a number of firms engaged in similar types of business activities constitute, in the committee's view, related activities performed through unified operation or common control within the meaning of the definition of enterprise. The fact the firms are independently incorporated or physically separate or under the immediate direction of local management, as in *Wirtz v. Hardin*, 16 Wage Hour Cases 722 (N.D. Ala.), is not determinative of this question. (Sen. Rept. No. 1487, 89th Congress, 2nd session, page 7.)

But where, as in the case of a retail store owned by a partnership and another store owned by one of the partners providing similar goods or services, it appears that the activities of the separate stores have no functional interdependence and that they are separately conducted to serve the business purpose of the partnership on the one hand and the business purpose of the individual on the other hand, the requirement of performance "through common control" of "related activities" for a "common business purpose" may not be sufficiently met.

§ 779.216 Statutory construction of the terms.

The terms "unified operation" and "common control" do not have a fixed legal or technical meaning. As used in the definition, these and other terms must be given an interpretation consistent with the Congressional intention to be ascertained from the context in which they are used, the legislation of which they form a part, and the legislative history. In extending coverage of the Act on an "enterprise" basis, the Congress intended, by the 1961 and 1966 amendments to cover, among others, business organizations and chain store systems which may perform their related activities through complex business arrangements or business structures, whether they perform their activities for a common business purpose through unified operation or through the retention or exercise of control. For these reasons, the definition of the term "enterprise" is stated in broad general terms. This legislative intent is evidenced both by the statements in the Committee Reports and by the defi-

inition itself, particularly the broad references to the inclusion in the "enterprise" of "all such activities" whether performed "in one or more establishments" or "by one or more corporate or other organizational units." When the Act was amended in 1966 the Congress further broadened coverage by redefining an enterprise engaged in commerce or in the production of goods for commerce in section 3(s). (See § 779.22.) Where the Congress intended to exclude certain arrangements or activities from the "enterprise" it did so by specific provision under the prior and amended Act.

§ 779.217 "Unified operation" defined.

Webster defines the word "unify" to mean "to cause to be one; to make into a unit; to unite." The pertinent definition of "operation" is a method or way of operating, working or functioning. Since the term "unified operation" has reference to the method of performing the related activities, it means combining, uniting, or organizing their performance so that they are in effect a single business unit or an organized business system which is an economic unit directed to the accomplishment of a common business purpose. The term "unified operation" thus includes a business which may consist of separate segments but which is conducted or operated as a unit or as a single business for a common business purpose.

§ 779.218 Methods to accomplish "unified operation."

There are many instances where several establishments, persons, corporations, or other business organizations, join together to perform some or all of their activities as a unified business or business system. They may accomplish such unification through agreements, franchises, grants, leases, or other arrangements which have the effect of aligning or integrating the activities of one company with the activities of others so that they constitute a single business or unified business system. Whether in any particular case the activities are performed through "unified operation" and have the effect of creating a single enterprise, will depend