

## Wage and Hour Division, Labor

## § 779.230

the following observations with respect to this:

Thus the mere fact that a group of independently owned and operated stores join together to combine their purchasing activities or to run combined advertising will not for these reasons mean that their activities are performed through unified operation or common control and they will not for these reasons be considered a part of the same "enterprise." This is also the case in food retailing because of the great extent to which local independent food store operators have joined together in many phases of their business. While maintaining their stores as independently owned units, they have affiliated together not just for the purchasing of merchandise, but also for providing numerous other services such as (1) central warehousing; (2) advertising; (3) sales promotions; (4) managerial advice; (5) store engineering; (6) accounting systems; (7) site locations; and (8) hospitalization and life insurance protection. (S. Rept. 145, 87th Cong., 1st Sess., p. 42.)

The report continues with the following observations:

Whether such arrangements bring the establishment within the franchisor's, lessor's, or grantor's "enterprise" is a question to be determined on all the facts. The facts may show that the arrangements reserve the necessary right of control in the grantor or unify the operations among the separate "franchised" establishments so as to create an economic unity of related activities for a common business purpose. In that case, the "franchised" establishment will be considered a part of the same "enterprise." For example, whether a franchise, lease, or other contractual arrangement between a distributor and a retail dealer has the effect of bringing the dealer's establishments within the enterprise of the distributor will depend upon the terms of the agreements and the related facts concerning the relationship between the parties.

There may be a number of different types of arrangements established in such cases. The key in each case may be found in the answer to the question, "Who receives the profits, suffers the losses, sets the wages and working conditions of employees, or otherwise manages the business in those respects which are the common attributes of an independent businessman operating a business for profit?"

For instance, a bona fide independent automobile dealer will not be considered a part of the enterprise of the automobile manufacturer or of the distributor. Likewise, the same result will also obtain with respect to the independent components of a shopping center.

In all of these cases if it is found on the basis of all the facts and circumstances that the arrangements are so restrictive as to products, prices, profits, or management as to deny the "franchised" establishment the essential prerogatives of the ordinary independent businessman, the establishment, the dealer, or concessionaire will be considered an integral part of the related activities of the enterprise which grants the franchise, right, or concession. (S. Rept. 145, 87th Cong., 1st Sess., p. 42.)

Thus, there may be a number of different types of arrangements established in such cases, and the determination as to whether the arrangements create a larger "enterprise" will necessarily depend on all the facts. Some arrangements which do not create a larger enterprise and some which do are discussed in §§779.230 through 779.235.

### § 779.230 Franchise and other arrangements.

(a) There are many different and complex arrangements by which businesses may join to perform their activities for a common purpose. A general discussion will be found in part 776 of this chapter. The quotation in §779.229 from the Senate Report shows that Congress recognized that some franchise, lease, or other arrangements have the effect of creating a larger enterprise and whether they do or not depends on the facts. The facts may show that the arrangements are so restrictive as to deprive the individual establishment of those prerogatives which are the essential attributes of an independent business. (Compare *Wirtz v. Lunsford*, 404 F. 2d, 693 (C.A. 6).) An establishment through such arrangements may transfer sufficient "control" so that it becomes in effect a unit in a unified chain operation. In such cases the result of the arrangement will be to create a larger enterprise composed of the various segments, including the establishment which relinquishes its control.

(b) The term "franchise" is not susceptible of precise definition. The extent to which a businessman relinquishes the control of his business or the extent to which a franchise results in the performance of the activities through unified operation or common control depends upon the terms of the

## § 779.231

contract and the other relationships between the parties. Ultimately the determination of the precise scope of such arrangements which result in creating larger enterprises rests with the courts.

### **§ 779.231 Franchise arrangements which do not create a larger enterprise.**

(a) While it is clear that in every franchise a businessman surrenders some rights, it equally is clear that every franchise does not create a larger enterprise. In the ordinary case a franchise may involve no more than an agreement to sell the particular product of the one granting the franchise. It may also prohibit the sale of a competing product. Such arrangements, standing alone, do not deprive the individual businessman of his "control" so as to bring him into a larger enterprise with the one granting the franchise.

(b) The portion of the Senate Report quoted in the § 779.229 cites a "bona fide independent automobile dealer" as an example of such a franchise arrangement. (It is recognized that salesmen, mechanics, and partsmen primarily engaged in selling or servicing automobiles, trucks, trailers, farm implements, or aircraft, employed by non-manufacturing establishments primarily engaged in the business of selling such vehicles to ultimate purchasers are specifically exempt from the overtime pay provisions under section 13(b)(10) of the Act. Section 779.372 discusses the exemption provided by section 13(b)(10) and its application whether or not the establishment meets the Act's definition of a retail or service establishment. The automobile dealer is used here only as an example of the type of franchise arrangement which, within the intent of the Congress, does not result in creating a larger enterprise.) The methods of operation of the independent automobile dealer are widely known. While he operates under a franchise to sell a particular make of automobile and also may be required to stock certain parts and to maintain specified service facilities, it is clear that he retains the control of the management of his business in those respects which characterize an independent businessman. He deter-

## 29 CFR Ch. V (7-1-10 Edition)

mines the prices for which he sells his merchandise. Even if prices are suggested by the manufacturer, it is well known that the dealer exercises wide discretion in this respect, free of control by the manufacturer or distributor. Also the automobile dealer retains control with respect to the management of his business, the determination of his employment practices, the operation of his various departments, and his business policies. The type of business in which he is engaged leaves him wide latitude for the exercise of his judgment and for decisions with respect to important aspects of his business upon which its success or failure depends. On the basis of these considerations, it is evident why the independent automobile dealer was cited as an example of the type of franchise which does not create a larger enterprise encompassing the dealer, the manufacturer or the distributor. Similar facts will lead to the same conclusion in other such arrangements.

### **§ 779.232 Franchise or other arrangements which create a larger enterprise.**

(a) In other instances, franchise arrangements do result in bringing a dealer's business into a larger enterprise with the one granting the franchise. Where the franchise arrangement results in vesting control over the operations of the dealer's business in the one granting the franchise, the result is to place the dealer in a larger enterprise with the one granting the franchise. Where there are multiple units to which such franchises have been granted, the several dealers are considered to be subject to the common control of the one granting the franchise and all would be included in the same larger enterprise.

(b) It is not possible to lay down specific rules to determine whether a franchise or other agreement is such that a single enterprise results because all the facts and circumstances must be examined in the light of the definition of the term "enterprise" as discussed above in this subpart. However, the following example illustrates a franchising company and independently owned retail establishments which would constitute a single enterprise: