
STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

1990 No. 593

The Companies (Northern Ireland) Order 1990

PART II

COMPANY ACCOUNTS

Provisions applying to companies generally

Group accounts

7.—(1) The following Article is inserted in Part VIII of the 1986 Order—

“Duty to prepare group accounts

235.—(1) If at the end of a financial year a company is a parent company the directors shall, as well as preparing individual accounts for the year, prepare group accounts.

(2) Group accounts shall be consolidated accounts comprising—

- (a) a consolidated balance sheet dealing with the state of affairs of the parent company and its subsidiary undertakings, and
- (b) a consolidated profit and loss account dealing with the profit or loss of the parent company and its subsidiary undertakings.

(3) The accounts shall give a true and fair view of the state of affairs as at the end of the financial year, and the profit or loss for the financial year, of the undertakings included in the consolidation as a whole, so far as concerns members of the company.

(4) A company’s group accounts shall comply with the provisions of Schedule 4A as to the form and content of the consolidated balance sheet and consolidated profit and loss account and additional information to be provided by way of notes to the accounts.

(5) Where compliance with the provisions of that Schedule, and the other provisions of this Order, as to the matters to be included in a company’s group accounts or in notes to those accounts, would not be sufficient to give a true and fair view, the necessary additional information shall be given in the accounts or in a note to them.

(6) If in special circumstances compliance with any of those provisions is inconsistent with the requirement to give a true and fair view, the directors shall depart from that provision to the extent necessary to give a true and fair view.

Particulars of any such departure, the reasons for it and its effect shall be given in a note to the accounts.”.

(2) Schedule 2 to this Order (form and content of group accounts) is inserted after Schedule 4 to the 1986 Order, as Schedule 4A.

(3) The following Articles are inserted in Part VIII of the 1986 Order—

“Exemption for parent companies included in accounts of larger group

236.—(1) A company is exempt from the requirement to prepare group accounts if it is itself a subsidiary undertaking and its immediate parent undertaking is established under the law of a member State of the European Economic Community, in the following cases—

- (a) where the company is a wholly-owned subsidiary of that parent undertaking;
- (b) where that parent undertaking holds more than 50 per cent. of the shares in the company and notice requesting the preparation of group accounts has not been served on the company by shareholders holding in aggregate—
 - (i) more than half of the remaining shares in the company, or
 - (ii) 5 per cent. of the total shares in the company.

Such notice must be served not later than 6 months after the end of the financial year before that to which it relates.

(2) Exemption is conditional upon compliance with all of the following conditions—

- (a) that the company is included in consolidated accounts for a larger group drawn up to the same date, or to an earlier date in the same financial year, by a parent undertaking established under the law of a member State of the European Economic Community;
- (b) that those accounts are drawn up and audited, and that parent undertaking’s annual report is drawn up, according to that law, in accordance with the provisions of the Seventh Directive (83/349/EEC);
- (c) that the company discloses in its individual accounts that it is exempt from the obligation to prepare and deliver group accounts;
- (d) that the company states in its individual accounts the name of the parent undertaking which draws up the group accounts referred to above and—
 - (i) if it is incorporated outside Northern Ireland, the country in which it is incorporated, and
 - (ii) if it is unincorporated, the address of its principal place of business;
- (e) that the company delivers to the registrar, within the period allowed for delivering its individual accounts, copies of those group accounts and of the parent undertaking’s annual report, together with the auditors’ report on them; and
- (f) that if any document comprised in accounts and reports delivered in accordance with sub-paragraph (e) is in a language other than English, there is annexed to the copy of that document delivered a translation of it into English, certified in the prescribed manner to be a correct translation.

(3) The exemption does not apply to a company any of whose securities are listed on a stock exchange in any member State of the European Economic Community.

(4) Shares held by directors of a company for the purpose of complying with any share qualification requirement shall be disregarded in determining for the purposes of paragraph (1)

(a) whether the company is a wholly-owned subsidiary.

(5) For the purposes of paragraph (1)(b) shares held by a wholly-owned subsidiary of the parent undertaking, or held on behalf of the parent undertaking or a wholly-owned subsidiary, shall be attributed to the parent undertaking.

(6) In paragraph (3) “securities” includes—

- (a) shares and stock,
- (b) debentures, including debenture stock, loan stock, bonds, certificates of deposit and other instruments creating or acknowledging indebtedness,

- (c) warrants or other instruments entitling the holder to subscribe for securities falling within sub-paragraph (a) or (b), and
- (d) certificates or other instruments which confer—
 - (i) property rights in respect of a security falling within sub-paragraph (a), (b) or (c),
 - (ii) any right to acquire, dispose of, underwrite or convert a security, being a right to which the holder would be entitled if he held any such security to which the certificate or other instrument relates, or
 - (iii) a contractual right (other than an option) to acquire any such security otherwise than by subscription.

Subsidiary undertakings included in the consolidation

237.—(1) Subject to the exceptions authorised or required by this Article, all the subsidiary undertakings of the parent company shall be included in the consolidation.

(2) A subsidiary undertaking may be excluded from consolidation if its inclusion is not material for the purpose of giving a true and fair view; but two or more undertakings may be excluded only if they are not material taken together.

- (3) In addition, a subsidiary undertaking may be excluded from consolidation where—
- (a) severe long-term restrictions substantially hinder the exercise of the rights of the parent company over the assets or management of that undertaking, or
 - (b) the information necessary for the preparation of group accounts cannot be obtained without disproportionate expense or undue delay, or
 - (c) the interest of the parent company is held exclusively with a view to subsequent resale and the undertaking has not previously been included in consolidated group accounts prepared by the parent company.

The reference in sub-paragraph (a) to the rights of the parent company and the reference in sub-paragraph (c) to the interest of the parent company are, respectively, to rights and interests held by or attributed to the company for the purposes of Article 266 (definition of “parent undertaking”) in the absence of which it would not be the parent company.

(4) Where the activities of one or more subsidiary undertakings are so different from those of other undertakings to be included in the consolidation that their inclusion would be incompatible with the obligation to give a true and fair view, those undertakings shall be excluded from consolidation.

This paragraph does not apply merely because some of the undertakings are industrial, some commercial and some provide services, or because they carry on industrial or commercial activities involving different products or provide different services.

(5) Where all the subsidiary undertakings of a parent company fall within the above exclusions, no group accounts are required.”.

(4) The following Article is inserted in Part VIII of the 1986 Order—

“Treatment of individual profit and loss account where group accounts prepared

238.—(1) The following provisions apply with respect to the individual profit and loss account of a parent company where—

- (a) the company is required to prepare and does prepare group accounts in accordance with this Order, and

- (b) the notes to the company's individual balance sheet show the company's profit or loss for the financial year determined in accordance with this Order.
- (2) The profit and loss account need not contain the information specified in paragraphs 52 to 57 of Schedule 4 (information supplementing the profit and loss account).
- (3) The profit and loss account must be approved in accordance with Article 241(1) (approval by board of directors) but may be omitted from the company's annual accounts for the purposes of the other provisions below in this Chapter.
- (4) The exemption conferred by this Article is conditional upon its being disclosed in the company's annual accounts that the exemption applies.”.