

Dated: February 28, 2001.

James McDivitt,
Deputy Assistant Secretary—Indian Affairs
(Management).
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PENSION BENEFIT GUARANTY CORPORATION

29 CFR Parts 4022 and 4044

Benefits Payable in Terminated Single-Employer Plans; Allocation of Assets in Single-Employer Plans; Interest Assumptions for Valuing and Paying Benefits

AGENCY: Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation.

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: The Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation’s regulations on Benefits Payable in Terminated Single-Employer Plans and Allocation of Assets in Single-Employer Plans prescribe interest assumptions for valuing and paying benefits under terminating single-employer plans. This final rule amends the regulations to adopt interest assumptions for plans with valuation dates in April 2001. Interest assumptions are also published on the PBGC’s web site (<http://www.pbgc.gov>).

EFFECTIVE DATE: April 1, 2001.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Harold J. Ashner, Assistant General Counsel, Office of the General Counsel, Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, 1200 K Street, NW., Washington, DC 20005, 202–326–4024. (For TTY/TDD users, call the Federal relay service toll-free at 1–800–877–8339 and ask to be connected to 202–326–4024.)

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The PBGC’s regulations prescribe actuarial assumptions—including interest assumptions—for valuing and paying plan benefits of terminating single-employer plans covered by title IV of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974. The interest assumptions are intended to reflect current conditions in the financial and annuity markets.

Three sets of interest assumptions are prescribed: (1) A set for the valuation of benefits for allocation purposes under section 4044 (found in Appendix B to part 4044), (2) a set for the PBGC to use to determine whether a benefit is payable as a lump sum and to determine lump-sum amounts to be paid by the PBGC (found in Appendix B to part 4022), and (3) a set for private-sector pension practitioners to refer to if they wish to use lump-sum interest rates determined using the PBGC’s historical methodology (found in Appendix C to part 4022).

Accordingly, this amendment (1) Adds to Appendix B to part 4044 the interest assumptions for valuing benefits for allocation purposes in plans with valuation dates during April 2001, (2) adds to Appendix B to part 4022 the interest assumptions for the PBGC to use for its own lump-sum payments in plans with valuation dates during April 2001, and (3) adds to Appendix C to part 4022 the interest assumptions for private-sector pension practitioners to refer to if they wish to use lump-sum interest rates determined using the PBGC’s historical methodology for valuation dates during April 2001.

For valuation of benefits for allocation purposes, the interest assumptions that the PBGC will use (set forth in Appendix B to part 4044) will be 6.40 percent for the first 20 years following the valuation date and 6.25 percent thereafter. These interest assumptions are unchanged from those in effect for March 2001.

The interest assumptions that the PBGC will use for its own lump-sum payments (set forth in Appendix B to part 4022) will be 4.75 percent for the period during which a benefit is in pay status, and 4.00 percent during any years preceding the benefit’s placement in pay status. These interest assumptions are unchanged from those in effect for March 2001.

For private-sector payments, the interest assumptions (set forth in Appendix C to part 4022) will be the same as those used by the PBGC for determining and paying lump sums (set forth in Appendix B to part 4022).

The PBGC has determined that notice and public comment on this amendment

are impracticable and contrary to the public interest. This finding is based on the need to determine and issue new interest assumptions promptly so that the assumptions can reflect, as accurately as possible, current market conditions.

Because of the need to provide immediate guidance for the valuation and payment of benefits in plans with valuation dates during April 2001, the PBGC finds that good cause exists for making the assumptions set forth in this amendment effective less than 30 days after publication.

The PBGC has determined that this action is not a “significant regulatory action” under the criteria set forth in Executive Order 12866.

Because no general notice of proposed rulemaking is required for this amendment, the Regulatory Flexibility Act of 1980 does not apply. See 5 U.S.C. 601(2).

List of Subjects

29 CFR Part 4022

Employee benefit plans, Pension insurance, Pensions, Reporting and recordkeeping requirements.

29 CFR Part 4044

Employee benefit plans, Pension insurance, Pensions.

In consideration of the foregoing, 29 CFR parts 4022 and 4044 are amended as follows:

PART 4022—BENEFITS PAYABLE IN TERMINATED SINGLE-EMPLOYER PLANS

1. The authority citation for part 4022 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 29 U.S.C. 1302, 1322, 1322b, 1341(c)(3)(D), and 1344.

2. In appendix B to part 4022, Rate Set 90, as set forth below, is added to the table. (The introductory text of the table is omitted.)

Appendix B to Part 4022—Lump Sum Interest Rates For PBGC Payments

* * * * *

Rate set	For plans with a valuation date		Immediate annuity rate (percent)	Deferred annuities (percent)				
	On or after	Before		i_1	i_2	i_3	n_1	n_2
90	4–1–01	5–1–01	4.75	4.00	4.00	4.00	7	8

3. In appendix C to part 4022, Rate Set 90, as set forth below, is added to the table. (The introductory text of the table is omitted.)

Appendix C to Part 4022—Lump Sum Interest Rates for Private-Sector Payments

* * * * *

Rate set	For plans with a valuation date		Immediate annuity rate (percent)	Deferred annuities (percent)				
	On or after	Before		i_1	i_2	i_3	n_1	n_2
90	* 4-1-01	* 5-1-01	* 4.75	* 4.00	* 4.00	* 4.00	* 7	* 8

PART 4044—ALLOCATION OF ASSETS IN SINGLE-EMPLOYER PLANS

4. The authority citation for part 4044 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 29 U.S.C. 1301(a), 1302(b)(3), 1341, 1344, 1362.

5. In appendix B to part 4044, a new entry, as set forth below, is added to the

table. (The introductory text of the table is omitted.)

Appendix B to Part 4044—Interest Rates Used to Value Benefits

* * * * *

For valuation dates occurring in the month—	The values of i_t are:					
	i_t	for $t =$	i_t	for $t =$	i_t	for $t =$
* April 2001	* .0640	* 1-20	* .0625	* >20	* N/A	* N/A

Issued in Washington, DC, on this 12th day of March 2001.

John Seal,

Acting Executive Director, Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation.

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DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

Mine Safety and Health Administration

30 CFR Part 57

RIN 1219-AB11

Diesel Particulate Matter Exposure of Underground Metal and Nonmetal Miners; Delay of Effective Dates

AGENCY: Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA), Labor.

ACTION: Final rule; delay of effective dates and conforming amendments.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the memorandum dated January 20, 2001, from Andrew H. Card, Jr., the Assistant to the President and Chief of Staff, entitled "Regulatory Review Plan," published in the **Federal Register** on January 24, 2001 (66 FR 7702), the Mine Safety and Health Administration is delaying for 60 days the effective date of the rule entitled, "Diesel Particulate Matter Exposure of Underground Metal and Nonmetal Miners," published in the

Federal Register on January 19, 2001 (66 FR 5706). This temporary delay will allow the Department an opportunity for further consideration of this rule.

EFFECTIVE DATE: The effective date of the rule amending 30 CFR Part 57 published on January 19, 2001, at 66 FR 5706 is delayed from March 20, 2001, until May 21, 2001.

In the final rule that addresses the exposure of underground metal and nonmetal miners to diesel particulate matter, the effective date of the rule is delayed. The rule will become effective May 21, 2001. Section 57.5067 will become effective May 21, 2001. However, § 57.5060(a) will continue to apply on July 19, 2002 and § 57.5060(b) will continue to apply on January 19, 2006.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: David L. Meyer, Director; Office of Standards, Regulations, and Variances; MSHA, 4015 Wilson Boulevard, Arlington, Virginia 22203-1984. Mr. Meyer can be reached at dmeyer@msha.gov (E-mail), 703-235-1910 (Voice), or 703-235-5551 (fax).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On January 19, 2001, MSHA published the final rule addressing diesel particulate matter exposure of underground miners. The final rule establishes new health standards for underground metal and nonmetal mines that use equipment powered by diesel engines and requires

operators of these underground mines to train miners about the hazards of being exposed to diesel particulate matter.

In accordance with the January 20, 2001, memorandum from Andrew H. Card, this notice announces the 60-day delay of the effective date of certain provisions of the final regulations.

I. Delayed Effective Dates

To the extent that 5 U.S.C. 553 applies to this action, it is exempt from notice and comment because it constitutes a rule of procedure under 5 U.S.C. 553(b)(A). The Department's implementation of this rule without opportunity for public comment, effective immediately upon publication today in the **Federal Register**, is also based on the good cause exceptions in 5 U.S.C. 553(b)(B) and 553(d)(3), in that seeking public comment is impracticable, unnecessary and contrary to the public interest. The 60-day delay in effective dates is necessary to give Department officials the opportunity for further review and consideration of new regulations, consistent with the Assistant to the President's memorandum of January 20, 2001. Given the imminence of the effective date, seeking prior public comment on this delay is impractical, as well as contrary to the public interest in the orderly promulgation and implementation of regulations.