

Understanding UK Corporate Tax Residency: Key Points and Implications

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By **Paul Webb**, 31st May 2024

From a UK perspective, the determination of corporate tax residency is crucial for understanding a company's tax obligations. A company is considered a UK tax resident if it is either incorporated in the UK or if its central management and control (CMC) actually resides in the UK. This residency status dictates the scope of the UK's taxing rights over the company.

Criteria for UK Tax Residency

- **Incorporation in the UK:** Any company incorporated in the UK is automatically deemed a UK tax resident.
- **Central Management and Control:** A company not incorporated in the UK can still be considered a UK tax resident if its central management and control abides in the UK. This criterion involves determining where the company's 'paramount authority' is exercised, which typically involves the board of directors.

Tax Implications for UK Tax Resident Companies

UK tax resident companies are subject to UK corporation tax on their worldwide income and gains. This means that all profits, regardless of where they are generated, are taxable under UK law. In contrast, non-UK tax resident companies are generally only subject to UK corporation tax on profits attributable to a UK permanent establishment.

Additionally, they are liable for UK income tax on certain UK-source income.

Determining Central Management and Control

The question of where a company's central management and control resides is a factual one. Key points to consider include:

- **Exercise of Paramount Authority:** The central management and control is where the company's paramount authority is exercised, usually by the board.

- **Influence vs. Control:** Influencing the board does not equate to controlling it. The distinction is crucial in determining the true locus of control.

- **Rubber Stamping:** Courts are vigilant against scenarios where the board merely rubber-stamps decisions made by others, which would indicate that the real management and control lie elsewhere.

Dual Tax Residency

A company can be dual tax resident, meaning it is considered a tax resident in two countries. In such cases, the corporate residency rules of both countries must be examined. If a dual residency situation arises, a tax treaty (if one exists) between the two countries will typically determine which country has the primary taxing rights. These treaties often provide mechanisms to resolve dual residency conflicts to prevent double taxation.

Conclusion

Understanding where a company's central management and control resides is essential for determining its tax residency and, consequently, its tax obligations in the UK. Companies must carefully assess their management structures and operations to ensure compliance with UK tax laws and to navigate the complexities of dual tax residency effectively. This explanation is a simplified overview, and there are many additional factors that can come into play. Therefore, it is always advisable to contact a tax professional to obtain tailored advice and ensure all specific circumstances and nuances are properly addressed.

For more information from us, or if you wish to discuss corporate tax residency, please use our [enquiry form](#) or email us at advice.uk@dixcart.com.

The content of this article is intended to provide a general guide to the subject matter. Specialist advice should be sought about your specific circumstances.