The plan's vesting schedule had been amended on July 1, 1988. Under the schedule in effect before the amendment, a participant with 5 years of service was 100 percent vested. There have been no other pertinent amendments. The proposed termination date is December 31, 1992.

Estimated guaranteed benefit. No reduction is required under § 4022.61 (b) or (c) because the participant's benefit does not exceed either her accrued benefit at normal retirement age or the maximum guaranteeable benefit. The plan's change of vesting schedule created a new benefit for the participant. Because the amendment was in effect for 4 full years before the proposed termination date, the second row of Table I is used to determine the applicable multiplier for estimating the amount of the participant's guaranteed benefit. Because the participant did not receive any benefit improvement during the 12-month period ending on the proposed termination date, column (b) of the table is used. Therefore, the multiplier is 0.80, and the amount of the participant's estimated guaranteed benefit is $200 (0.80×$250) per month.

Example 3. Facts. A participant who is a substantial owner retired prior to the proposed termination date after 5½ years of active participation in the plan. The benefit under the terms of the plan when he first began active participation was $800 per month. On the proposed termination date of April 30, 1992, he was entitled to receive a benefit of $2,000 per month. No reduction of this benefit is required under § 4022.61 (b) or (c).

Estimated guaranteed benefit. Paragraph (d)(2) of this section is used to compute the amount of the estimated guaranteed benefit of substantial owners with 5 or more years of active participation prior to the proposed termination date. Consequently, the amount of this participant's estimated guaranteed benefit is the lesser of—

(i) The amount calculated as if he had been an active participant in the plan for fewer than 5 full years on the proposed termination date, or $333.33 ($2,000×5/30) per month, or

(ii) The amount to which he would have been entitled as of the proposed termination date under the terms of the plan when he first began participation, as limited by § 4022.61 (b) and (c), multiplied by 2 times the number of years of active participation and divided by 30, or $266.67 ($800×2 ×5/30) per month. Therefore, the amount of the participant's estimated guaranteed benefit is $266.67 per month.

[61 FR 34028, July 1, 1996; 61 FR 36626, July 12, 1996]

§ 4022.63 Estimated title IV benefit.

(a) *General.* If the conditions specified in paragraph (b) exist, the plan administrator shall determine each participant's estimated title IV benefit. The estimated title IV benefit payable with respect to each participant who is not a substantial owner is computed under paragraph (c) of this section. The estimated title IV benefit payable with respect to each participant who is a substantial owner is computed under paragraph (d) of this section.

(b) *Conditions for use of this section.* The conditions set forth in this paragraph must be satisfied in order to make use of the procedures set forth in this section. If the specified conditions exist, estimated title IV benefits must be determined in accordance with these procedures (or in accordance with alternative procedures authorized by the PBGC under § 4022.61(f)) for each participant and beneficiary whose benefit under the plan exceeds the limitations contained in § 4022.61(b) or (c) or who is a substantial owner or the beneficiary of a substantial owner. If the specified conditions do not exist, title IV benefits may be estimated by the plan administrator in accordance with procedures authorized by the PBGC, but no such estimate is required. The conditions are as follows:

(1) An actuarial valuation of the plan has been performed for a plan year beginning not more than eighteen months before the proposed termination date. If the interest rate used to value plan liabilities in this valuation exceeded the applicable valuation interest rates and factors under appendix B to part 4044 of this chapter in effect on the proposed termination date, the value of benefits in pay status and the value of vested benefits not in pay status on the valuation date must be converted to the PBGC's valuation rates and factors.

(2) The plan has been in effect for at least five full years before the proposed termination date, and the most recent actuarial valuation demonstrates that the value of plan assets, reduced by employee contributions remaining in the plan and interest credited thereon under the terms of the plan, exceeds the present value, adjusted as required

under paragraph (b)(1), of all plan benefits in pay status on the valuation date.

(c) *Estimated title IV benefit payable with respect to a participant who is not a substantial owner*. For benefits payable with respect to a participant who is not a substantial owner, the estimated title IV benefit is the estimated priority category 3 benefit computed under this paragraph. Priority category 3 benefits are payable with respect to participants who were, or could have been, in pay status three full years prior to the proposed termination date. The estimated priority category 3 benefit is computed by multiplying the benefit payable with respect to the participant under § 4022.62 (b)(1) and (b)(2) by a fraction, not to exceed one—

(1) The numerator of which is the benefit that would be payable with respect to the participant at normal retirement age under the provisions of the plan in effect on the date five full years before the proposed termination date, based on the participant's age, service, and compensation as of the earlier of the participant's benefit commencement date or the proposed termination date, and

(2) The denominator of which is the benefit that would be payable with respect to the participant at normal retirement age under the provisions of the plan in effect on the proposed termination date, based on the participant's age, service, and compensation as of the earlier of the participant's benefit commencement date or the proposed termination date.

(d) *Estimated title IV benefit payable with respect to a substantial owner*. For benefits payable with respect to a participant who is a substantial owner, the estimated title IV benefit is the higher of the benefit computed under paragraph (c) of this section or the benefit computed under this paragraph.

(1) The plan administrator shall first calculate the estimated guaranteed benefit payable with respect to the substantial owner as if he or she were not a substantial owner, using the method set forth in § 4022.62(c).

(2) The benefit computed under paragraph (d)(1) shall be multiplied by the priority category 4 funding ratio. The category 4 funding ratio is the ratio of x to y, not to exceed one, where—

(i) In a plan with priority category 3 benefits, x equals plan assets minus employee contributions remaining in the plan on the valuation date, with interest credited thereon under the terms of the plan, and the present value of benefits in pay status, and y equals the present value of all vested benefits not in pay status minus such employee contributions and interest; or

(ii) In a plan with no priority category 3 benefits, x equals plan assets minus employee contributions remaining in the plan on the valuation date, with interest credited thereon under the terms of the plan, and y equals the present value of all vested benefits minus such employee contributions and interest.

(e) *Examples*. This section is illustrated by the following examples:

Example 1. Facts. A participant who is not a substantial owner was eligible to retire 3½ years before the proposed termination date. The participant retired 2 years before the proposed termination date with 20 years of service. Her final 5 years' average salary was $45,000, and she was entitled to an unreduced early retirement benefit of $1,500 per month payable as a single life annuity. This retirement benefit does not exceed the limitation in § 4022.61 (b) or (c).

On the participant's benefit commencement date, the plan provided for a normal retirement benefit of 2 percent of the final 5 years' salary times the number of years of service. Five years before the proposed termination date, the percentage was 1½ percent. The amendments improving benefits were put into effect 3½ years prior to the proposed termination date. There were no other amendments during the 5-year period.

The participant's estimated guaranteed benefit computed under § 4022.62(c) is $1,500 per month times 0.90 (the factor from column (b) of Table I in § 4022.62(c)(2)), or $1,350 per month. It is assumed that the plan meets the conditions set forth in paragraph (b) of this section, and the plan administrator is therefore required to estimate the title IV benefit.

Estimated title IV benefit. For a participant who is not a substantial owner, the amount of the estimated title IV benefit is the estimated priority category 3 benefit computed under paragraph (c) of this section. This amount is computed by multiplying the participant's benefit under the plan as of the later of the proposed termination date or the benefit commencement date by the ratio of (i) the normal retirement benefit under the provisions of the plan in effect 5 years before

the proposed termination date and (ii) the normal retirement benefit under the plan provisions in effect on the proposed termination date.

Thus, the numerator of the ratio is the benefit that would be payable to the participant under the normal retirement provisions of the plan 5 years before the proposed termination date, based on her age, service, and compensation on her benefit commencement date. The denominator of the ratio is the benefit that would be payable to the participant under the normal retirement provisions of the plan in effect on the proposed termination date, based on her age, service, and compensation as of the earlier of her benefit commencement date or the proposed termination date. Since the only different factor in the numerator and denominator is the salary percentage, the amount of the estimated title IV benefit is $1,125 (0.015/0.020 × $1,500) per month. This amount is less than the estimated guaranteed benefit of $1,350 per month. Therefore, in accordance with § 4022.61(d), the benefit payable to the participant is $1,350 per month.

Example 2. Facts. A participant who is a substantial owner retires at the plan's normal retirement age, having completed 5 years of active participation in the plan, on October 31, 1992, which is the proposed termination date. Under provisions of the plan in effect 5 years prior to the proposed termination date, the participant is entitled to a single life annuity of $500 per month. Under the most recent plan amendments, which were put into effect 1½ years prior to the proposed termination date, the participant is entitled to a single life annuity of $1,000 per month. The participant's estimated guaranteed benefit computed under § 4022.62(d)(2) is $166.67 per month.

It is assumed that all of the conditions in paragraph (b) of this section have been met. Plan assets equal $2 million. The present value of all benefits in pay status is $1.5 million based on applicable PBGC interest rates. There are no employee contributions and the present value of all vested benefits that are not in pay status is $0.75 million based on applicable PBGC interest rates.

Estimated title IV benefit. Paragraph (d) of this section provides that the amount of the estimated title IV benefit payable with respect to a participant who is a substantial owner is the higher of the estimated priority category 3 benefit computed under paragraph (c) of this section or the estimated priority category 4 benefit computed under paragraph (d) of this section.

Under paragraph (c), the participant's estimated priority category 3 benefit is $500 ($1,000 × $500/$1,000) per month.

Under paragraph (d), the participant's estimated priority category 4 benefit is the estimated guaranteed benefit computed under § 4022.62(c) (*i.e.*, as if the participant were not a substantial owner) multiplied by the priority category 4 funding ratio. Since the plan has priority category 3 benefits, the ratio is determined under paragraph (d)(2)(i). The numerator of the ratio is plan assets minus the present value of benefits in pay status. The denominator of the ratio is the present value of all vested benefits that are not in pay status. The participant's estimated guaranteed benefit under § 4022.62(c) is $1,000 per month times 0.90 (the factor from column (b) of Table I in § 4022.62(c)(2)), or $900 per month. Multiplying $900 by the category 4 funding ratio of ⅔ (($2 million—$1.5 million)/$0.75 million) produces an estimated category 4 benefit of $600 per month.

Because the estimated category 4 benefit so computed is greater than the estimated category 3 benefit so computed, the estimated category 4 benefit is the estimated title IV benefit. Because the estimated category 4 benefit so computed is greater than the estimated guaranteed benefit of $166.67 per month, in accordance with § 4022.61(d), the benefit payable to the participant is the estimated category 4 benefit of $600 per month.

[61 FR 34028, July 1, 1996; 61 FR 36626, July 12, 1996]

Subpart E—PBGC Recoupment and Reimbursement of Benefit Overpayments and Underpayments

§ 4022.81 General rules.

(a) *Recoupment of benefit overpayments.* If at any time the PBGC determines that net benefits paid with respect to any participant in a PBGC-trusteed plan exceed the total amount to which the participant (and any beneficiary) is entitled up to that time under title IV of ERISA, and the participant (or beneficiary) is, as of the termination date, entitled to receive future benefit payments, the PBGC will recoup the net overpayment in accordance with paragraph (c) of this section and § 4022.82. Notwithstanding the previous sentence, the PBGC may, in its discretion, recover overpayments by methods other than recouping in accordance with the rules in this subpart. The PBGC will not normally do so unless net benefits paid after the termination date exceed those to which a participant (and any beneficiary) is entitled under the terms of the plan before any reductions under subpart D.