

Classification of joint arrangements: consideration of two joint arrangements with similar features that are classified differently (IFRS 11 *Joint Arrangements*)—March 2015

The Interpretations Committee discussed a circumstance in which two joint arrangements would be classified differently when they have similar features, apart from the fact that one is structured through a separate vehicle and the other is not (in circumstances in which the legal form confers separation between the parties and the separate vehicle). Two such joint arrangements could be classified differently because:

- a. the legal form of a joint arrangement structured through a separate vehicle must be overridden by other contractual arrangements or specific other facts and circumstances for the joint arrangement to be classified as a joint operation; but
- b. a joint arrangement that is not structured through a separate vehicle is classified as a joint operation.

The Interpretations Committee noted that IFRS 11 could lead to two joint arrangements being classified differently if one is structured through a separate vehicle and the other is not, but in other respects they have apparently similar features. This is because the legal form of the separate vehicle could affect the rights and obligations of the parties to the joint arrangement. The Interpretations Committee noted that the legal form of the separate vehicle is relevant in assessing the type of joint arrangement, as noted, for example, in paragraphs B22 and BC43 of IFRS 11.

The Interpretations Committee thought that such different accounting would not conflict with the concept of economic substance. This is because, according to the approach adopted in IFRS 11, the concept of economic substance means that the classification of the joint arrangement should reflect the rights and obligations of the parties to the joint arrangement and the presence of a separate vehicle plays a significant role in determining the nature of those rights and obligations.

The Interpretations Committee noted that the requirements of IFRS 11 provide the principles necessary for determining the classification of joint arrangements, including assessing the impact of a separate vehicle. The assessment of the classification would depend on specific contractual terms and conditions and requires a full analysis of features involving the joint arrangement.

On the basis of this analysis, the Interpretations Committee determined that, in the light of the existing IFRS requirements, sufficient guidance exists and that neither an Interpretation nor an amendment to a Standard was necessary.

Consequently, the Interpretations Committee decided not to add this issue to its agenda.