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U.S. Department of Homeland Security
U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services
Administrative Appeals Office (AAO)
20 Massachusetts Ave., N.W., MS 2090
Washington, DC 20529-2090



U.S. Citizenship
and Immigration
Services

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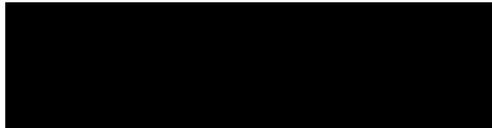


DATE: JUL 02 2012 Office: CALIFORNIA SERVICE CENTER FILE: [REDACTED]

IN RE: Petitioner: [REDACTED]
Beneficiary: [REDACTED]

PETITION: Petition for a Nonimmigrant Worker Pursuant to Section 101(a)(15)(L) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1101(a)(15)(L)

ON BEHALF OF PETITIONER:



INSTRUCTIONS:

Enclosed please find the decision of the Administrative Appeals Office in your case. All of the documents related to this matter have been returned to the office that originally decided your case. Please be advised that any further inquiry that you might have concerning your case must be made to that office.

If you believe the AAO inappropriately applied the law in reaching its decision, or you have additional information that you wish to have considered, you may file a motion to reconsider or a motion to reopen in accordance with the instructions on Form I-290B, Notice of Appeal or Motion, with a fee of \$630. The specific requirements for filing such a motion can be found at 8 C.F.R. § 103.5. **Do not file any motion directly with the AAO.** Please be aware that 8 C.F.R. § 103.5(a)(1)(i) requires any motion to be filed within 30 days of the decision that the motion seeks to reconsider or reopen.

Thank you,

Perry Rhew
Chief, Administrative Appeals Office

DISCUSSION: The Director, California Service Center, denied the nonimmigrant visa petition. The matter is now before the Administrative Appeals Office (AAO) on appeal. The AAO will dismiss the appeal.

The petitioner filed this nonimmigrant petition seeking to classify the beneficiary as a nonimmigrant intracompany transferee pursuant to section 101(a)(15)(L) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (the Act), 8 U.S.C. § 1101(a)(15)(L). The petitioner, a California corporation, states that it operates a natural herbs processing, extractions, nutrients, and food supplements import business. It claims to be a subsidiary of [REDACTED]. The petitioner is seeking initial employment for the beneficiary in L-1A status for a period of three years.

The director denied the petition, concluding that the petitioner failed to establish that the beneficiary will be employed in the United States in a primarily managerial or executive capacity.

The petitioner subsequently filed an appeal. The director declined to treat the appeal as a motion and forwarded the appeal to the AAO for review. On appeal, counsel for the petitioner asserts that the evidence of record establishes that all of the beneficiary's job duties are executive and managerial in nature. Counsel submits a brief and additional evidence in support of the appeal.

I. The Law

To establish eligibility for the L-1 nonimmigrant visa classification, the petitioner must meet the criteria outlined in section 101(a)(15)(L) of the Act. Specifically, a qualifying organization must have employed the beneficiary in a qualifying managerial or executive capacity, or in a specialized knowledge capacity, for one continuous year within three years preceding the beneficiary's application for admission into the United States. In addition, the beneficiary must seek to enter the United States temporarily to continue rendering his or her services to the same employer or a subsidiary or affiliate thereof in a managerial, executive, or specialized knowledge capacity.

The regulation at 8 C.F.R. § 214.2(l)(3) states that an individual petition filed on Form I-129 shall be accompanied by:

- (i) Evidence that the petitioner and the organization which employed or will employ the alien are qualifying organizations as defined in paragraph (l)(1)(ii)(G) of this section.
- (ii) Evidence that the alien will be employed in an executive, managerial, or specialized knowledge capacity, including a detailed description of the services to be performed.
- (iii) Evidence that the alien has at least one continuous year of full-time employment abroad with a qualifying organization within the three years preceding the filing of the petition.
- (iv) Evidence that the alien's prior year of employment abroad was in a position that was managerial, executive or involved specialized knowledge and that the alien's prior education, training, and employment qualifies him/her to perform the intended

services in the United States; however, the work in the United States need not be the same work which the alien performed abroad.

II. The Issue on Appeal

The sole issue addressed by the director is whether the petitioner established that the beneficiary will be employed in the United States in a primarily managerial or executive capacity.

Section 101(a)(44)(A) of the Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1101(a)(44)(A), defines the term "managerial capacity" as an assignment within an organization in which the employee primarily:

- (i) manages the organization, or a department, subdivision, function, or component of the organization;
- (ii) supervises and controls the work of other supervisory, professional, or managerial employees, or manages an essential function within the organization, or a department or subdivision of the organization;
- (iii) if another employee or other employees are directly supervised, has the authority to hire and fire or recommend those as well as other personnel actions (such as promotion and leave authorization), or if no other employee is directly supervised, functions at a senior level within the organizational hierarchy or with respect to the function managed; and
- (iv) exercises discretion over the day-to-day operations of the activity or function for which the employee has authority. A first-line supervisor is not considered to be acting in a managerial capacity merely by virtue of the supervisor's supervisory duties unless the employees supervised are professional.

Section 101(a)(44)(B) of the Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1101(a)(44)(B), defines the term "executive capacity" as an assignment within an organization in which the employee primarily:

- (i) directs the management of the organization or a major component or function of the organization;
- (ii) establishes the goals and policies of the organization, component, or function;
- (iii) exercises wide latitude in discretionary decision-making; and
- (iv) receives only general supervision or direction from higher-level executives, the board of directors, or stockholders of the organization.

The petitioner filed the Form I-129, Petition for a Nonimmigrant Worker, on November 27, 2009. The petitioner indicated that it operates a natural herbs processing, extractions, nutrients, and food supplements import business with one employee and a gross annual income of \$1,745,064.

In a letter dated November 16, 2009, the petitioner explained that as President, the beneficiary will be responsible for "overall management of company's business and business development as per the plan" prepared by the parent company. Specifically, the petitioner stated that the beneficiary performs the following duties:

- Overall responsibility for firm's business, products, planning, market positioning and revenue goals.
- Develop and drive execution of herbs marketing and business enhancement plan.
- Identify and target key partners in vertical market and build relationship with key players in each market segment;
- Identify new market opportunities for products and services and evaluate from the futuristic business growth of the group;
- Attend and participate in appropriate industry meetings.
- Establishes budgets and conducts financial market planning; Establishes overall annual financial goals and targets for the company;
- Reviews analyses of activities, costs, operations, etc., to determine progress towards goals; maximization of returns on investments and increase productivity; Establishes or updates existing purchasing agreements, negotiates prices, and develops and expands the company's business activities.
- Exercises discretionary decision-making, such as hiring, firing, promotions, reward systems, performance-based incentives, bonuses, and oversee the other various needs to ensure the corporation thrives and prospers;

The petitioner submitted an existing organizational chart showing one employee reporting to the beneficiary. The reporting employee's title is Manager. The petitioner also submitted an organizational chart showing the proposed structure of the company with 13 management level position and "workers" reporting to the management level positions. Counsel for the petitioner explained that the primary purpose of the transfer is for the beneficiary to "implement that plan to invest US \$2.00 Million." Meeting minutes from the parent company show a company resolution for a \$2 Million investment in the petitioning entity to "buy a warehouse and to set up a Nutrient and Food Supplement plant in next six to nine months."

The director issued a request for additional evidence ("RFE") on December 9, 2009 in which she instructed the petitioner to submit, *inter alia*, the following: (1) a copy of the United States company's organizational chart, as well as complete position descriptions for the petitioner's employees including job title, educational level, and annual salaries/wages; and (2) a more detailed description of the beneficiary's duties in the United States indicating the percentage of time to be spent on each listed duty and a list of all employees under the beneficiary's supervision.

In a response dated December 10, 2009, counsel for the petitioner provided a list of duties for the beneficiary with a percentage breakdown of time as follows: overall responsibility for the petitioner's business, projects, products, planning, and implementation (25%); exercise discretionary decision-making including hiring and firing (20%); develop and drive product marketing and business enhancement plan (20%); attend and participate in industry meeting (5%); establish budgets and conduct financial planning (15%); review analysis of activities, costs, operations, etc. to determine progress towards goals as well as review, establish or update purchase agreements and negotiate prices (15%).

Counsel for the petitioner responded to the director's inquiry regarding employees under the beneficiary's supervision by reiterating that at present there is only one employee whose title is Manager. The petitioner failed to provide a position description and educational requirements for the manager position. The petitioner provided a list of education and experience requirements for positions to be hired by the beneficiary in the future.

The director denied the petition on December 28, 2009 concluding that the petitioner failed to establish that the beneficiary would be employed in a primarily managerial or executive capacity. The director determined that the duties described by the petitioner did not support a finding that the position would be either executive or managerial. Furthermore, the organizational structure provided shows that the beneficiary would be "assisting with the day to day non-supervisory duties."

On appeal, counsel asserts that the director overlooked the \$2 million investment of the petitioner. As such, the beneficiary will be performing both managerial and executive functions by "creating various departments," as well as hiring, overseeing employee performance, and monitoring overall company progress. The beneficiary "will hold the highest position in the multimillion dollar organization to carry out its operations." Counsel for the petitioner contends that the duties of the beneficiary are necessary for a manager to carry out at "the initial stage of setting up a manufacturing facility." Counsel provides the same breakdown of the beneficiary's job duties as submitted on appeal, with additional explanations for each task.

Upon review, and for the reasons stated herein, the petitioner has not established that the beneficiary will be employed in a primarily managerial or executive capacity.

When examining the executive or managerial capacity of the beneficiary, the AAO will look first to the petitioner's description of the job duties. *See* 8 C.F.R. § 214.2(l)(3)(ii). The petitioner's description of the job duties must clearly describe the duties to be performed by the beneficiary and indicate whether such duties are in either an executive or a managerial capacity. *Id.*

The definitions of executive and managerial capacity each have two parts. First, the petitioner must show that the beneficiary performs the high-level responsibilities that are specified in the definitions. Second, the petitioner must show that the beneficiary *primarily* performs these specified responsibilities and does not spend a majority of his time on day-to-day functions. *Champion World, Inc. v. INS*, 940 F.2d 1533 (Table), 1991 WL 144470 (9th Cir. July 30, 1991). The fact that the beneficiary manages a business does not necessarily establish eligibility for classification as an intracompany transferee in a managerial or executive capacity within the meaning of sections 101(a)(15)(L) of the Act. *See* 52 Fed. Reg. 5738, 5739-40 (Feb. 26, 1987) (noting that section 101(a)(15)(L) of the Act does not include any and every type of "manager" or "executive").

The statutory definition of the term "executive capacity" focuses on a person's elevated position within a complex organizational hierarchy, including major components or functions of the organization, and that person's authority to direct the organization. Section 101(a)(44)(B) of the Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1101(a)(44)(B). Under the statute, a beneficiary must have the ability to "direct the management" and "establish the goals and policies" of that organization. Inherent to the definition, the organization must have a subordinate level of managerial employees for the beneficiary to direct and the beneficiary must primarily focus on the broad goals and policies of the organization rather than the day-to-day operations of the enterprise. An individual

will not be deemed an executive under the statute simply because they have an executive title or because they "direct" the enterprise as the owner or sole managerial employee. The beneficiary must also exercise "wide latitude in discretionary decision making" and receive only "general supervision or direction from higher level executives, the board of directors, or stockholders of the organization." *Id.*

The petitioner described the beneficiary's proposed position in very broad terms, including such duties as "[o]verall responsibility for firm's business," "[r]eviews analyses of activities...to determine progress towards goals," and "exercises discretionary decision making, such as hiring, firing, promotions," etc. These duties merely paraphrase the statutory definition of executive capacity. See section 101(a)(44)(B) of the Act. Conclusory assertions regarding the beneficiary's employment capacity are not sufficient. Merely repeating the language of the statute or regulations does not satisfy the petitioner's burden of proof. *Fedin Bros. Co., Ltd. v. Sava*, 724 F. Supp. 1103, 1108 (E.D.N.Y. 1989), *aff'd*, 905 F.2d 41 (2d. Cir. 1990); *Avyr Associates, Inc. v. Meissner*, 1997 WL 188942 at *5 (S.D.N.Y.).

While such responsibilities generally suggest that the beneficiary is responsible for oversight of the company, it provides little insight into how he would actually allocate his tasks on a day-to-day basis. Reciting the beneficiary's vague job responsibilities or broadly-cast business objectives is not sufficient; the regulations require a detailed description of the beneficiary's daily job duties. The petitioner failed to provide any detail or explanation of the beneficiary's activities in the course of his daily routine. The actual duties themselves will reveal the true nature of the employment. *Fedin Bros. Co., Ltd. v. Sava*, 724 F. Supp. 1103, 1108 (E.D.N.Y. 1989), *aff'd*, 905 F.2d 41 (2d. Cir. 1990).

In response to the RFE, counsel provides a general percentage breakdown of time for the beneficiary's proposed tasks with further detail regarding the beneficiary's duties. A number of the proposed job duties do not establish that the beneficiary will be working in a managerial or executive level position. Duties such as attending and participating in industry meetings, building relationships with "key players in each market segment," establishing or updating purchasing agreements, and negotiating prices, are not duties typically performed by a manager or executive. The percentages of time given by the petitioner do not specify the amount of time the beneficiary will spend performing these non-qualifying functions.

An employee who primarily performs the tasks necessary to produce a product or to provide services is not considered to be "primarily" employed in a managerial or executive capacity. *Boyang, Ltd. v. I.N.S.*, 67 F.3d 305 (Table), 1995 WL 576839 (9th Cir. 1995)(citing *Matter of Church Scientology International*, 19 I&N Dec. 593, 604 (Comm'r 1988)). Based on the current record, the AAO is unable to determine whether the claimed managerial duties constitute the majority of the beneficiary's duties, or whether the beneficiary primarily performs non-managerial administrative or operational duties. Although specifically requested by the director, the petitioner's description of the beneficiary's job duties does not establish what proportion of the beneficiary's duties is managerial in nature, and what proportion is actually non-managerial. See *Republic of Transkei v. INS*, 923 F.2d 175, 177 (D.C. Cir. 1991).

The petitioner has failed to establish any clear distinctions between the proposed qualifying and non-qualifying duties of the beneficiary. Specifically, the petitioner submitted no information to establish the percentage of time the beneficiary actually performs or will perform the claimed managerial or executive duties. It has been noted in the record that there is only one employee working for the petitioner, and that the beneficiary will maintain a full-time position. There is no mention in the record of any administrative,

marketing, financial, sales, or import/export personnel working for the petitioning enterprise. Collectively, this brings into question how much of the beneficiary's time can actually be devoted to managerial or executive duties. As stated in the statute, the beneficiary must be primarily performing duties that are managerial or executive. *See* sections 101(a)(44)(A) and (B) of the Act. The petitioner bears the burden of documenting what portion of the beneficiary's duties will be managerial or executive and what proportion will be non-managerial or non-executive. *Republic of Transkei v. INS*, 923 F.2d 175, 177 (D.C. Cir. 1991). Given the lack of these percentages, the record does not demonstrate that the beneficiary will function primarily as a manager or executive.

Beyond the required description of the job duties, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) reviews the totality of the record when examining the claimed managerial or executive capacity of a beneficiary, including the petitioner's organizational structure, the duties of the beneficiary's subordinate employees, the presence of other employees to relieve the beneficiary from performing operational duties, the nature of the petitioner's business, and any other factors that will contribute to a complete understanding of a beneficiary's actual duties and role in a business.

The statutory definition of "managerial capacity" allows for both "personnel managers" and "function managers." *See* section 101(a)(44)(A)(i) and (ii) of the Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1101(a)(44)(A)(i) and (ii). Personnel managers are required to primarily supervise and control the work of other supervisory, professional, or managerial employees. Contrary to the common understanding of the word "manager," the statute plainly states that a "first line supervisor is not considered to be acting in a managerial capacity merely by virtue of the supervisor's supervisory duties unless the employees supervised are professional." Section 101(a)(44)(A)(iv) of the Act; 8 C.F.R. § 214.2(l)(1)(ii)(B)(2). If a beneficiary directly supervises other employees, the beneficiary must also have the authority to hire and fire those employees, or recommend those actions, and take other personnel actions. 8 C.F.R. § 214.2(l)(1)(ii)(B)(3). Therefore, although the beneficiary is not required to supervise personnel, if it is claimed that his duties involve supervising employees, the petitioner must establish that the subordinate employees are supervisory, professional, or managerial. *See* § 101(a)(44)(A)(ii) of the Act.

The record established that the beneficiary will be one of only two employees available to provide the services of the import business. An employee who "primarily" performs the tasks necessary to produce a product or to provide services is not considered to be "primarily" employed in a managerial or executive capacity. *See* sections 101(a)(44)(A) and (B) of the Act (requiring that one "primarily" perform the enumerated managerial or executive duties); *see also Matter of Church Scientology Int'l.*, 19 I&N Dec. 593, 604 (Comm'r 1988). The actual duties themselves reveal the true nature of the employment. *Fedin Bros. Co., Ltd. v. Sava*, 724 F. Supp. 1103, 1108 (E.D.N.Y. 1989), *aff'd*, 905 F.2d 41 (2d. Cir. 1990).

Although requested by the director in the request for evidence, the petitioner did not provide the level of education required for the position of manager. The petitioner only provided information related to the prospective hiring of employees once a future investment has taken place by the parent corporation. Any failure to submit requested evidence that precludes a material line of inquiry shall be grounds for denying the petition. 8 C.F.R. § 103.2(b)(14). The petitioner has not established that the employee at the time of filing possesses or requires a bachelor's degree, such that they could be classified as professionals. Nor has the petitioner provided evidence that the employee supervised by the beneficiary in turn supervises subordinate staff members or manages a clearly defined department or function of the petitioner, such that he could be

classified as a manager or supervisor. Thus, the petitioner has not shown that the beneficiary's subordinate employee as of the date of filing the petition is supervisory, professional, or managerial, as required by section 101(a)(44)(A)(ii) of the Act.

The petitioner provides for the first time on appeal a position description for the beneficiary's sole subordinate although this information was previously requested by the director. The petitioner provided no explanation as to why this position description was previously unavailable at the time of filing or in response to the RFE. Where, as here, a petitioner has been put on notice of a deficiency in the evidence and has been given an opportunity to respond to that deficiency, the AAO will not accept evidence offered for the first time on appeal. *See Matter of Soriano*, 19 I&N Dec. 764 (BIA 1988); *see also Matter of Obaigbena*, 19 I&N Dec. 533 (BIA 1988). If the petitioner had wanted the submitted evidence to be considered, it should have submitted the documents in response to the director's request for evidence. *Id.* Under the circumstances, the AAO need not and does not consider the sufficiency of the evidence submitted on appeal.

The petitioner provides information in response to the RFE regarding the educational and experience requirements for staff to be hired by the beneficiary in the future. To the extent that the petitioner plans to staff the company with additional employees, the record shows that those employees were not hired as of the date of filing the Form I-129. The petitioner must establish eligibility at the time of filing the nonimmigrant visa petition. A visa petition may not be approved based on speculation of future eligibility or after the petitioner or beneficiary becomes eligible under a new set of facts. *See Matter of Michelin Tire Corp.*, 17 I&N Dec. 248 (Reg. Comm'r. 1978); *Matter of Katigbak*, 14 I&N Dec. 45, 49 (Comm'r. 1971). The AAO concurs with the director's determination that the petitioner has not grown to the point where the beneficiary is primarily engaged in managerial or executive duties.

The AAO notes that a company's size alone, without taking into account the reasonable needs of the organization, may not be the determining factor in denying a visa to a multinational manager or executive. *See* § 101(a)(44)(C) of the Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1101(a)(44)(C). In reviewing the relevance of the number of employees a petitioner has, however, federal courts have generally agreed that USCIS "may properly consider an organization's small size as one factor in assessing whether its operations are substantial enough to support a manager." *Family Inc. v. U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services* 469 F. 3d 1313, 1316 (9th Cir. 2006) (citing with approval *Republic of Transkei v. INS*, 923 F.2d. 175, 178 (D.C. Cir. 1991); *Fedin Bros. Co. v. Sava*, 905 F.2d 41, 42 (2d Cir. 1990)(per curiam); *Q Data Consulting, Inc. v. INS*, 293 F. Supp. 2d 25, 29 (D.D.C. 2003)). It is appropriate for USCIS to consider the size of the petitioning company in conjunction with other relevant factors, such as a company's small personnel size, the absence of employees who would perform the non-managerial or non-executive operations of the company, or a "shell company" that does not conduct business in a regular and continuous manner. *See, e.g. Systronics Corp. v. INS*, 153 F. Supp. 2d 7, 15 (D.D.C. 2001).

At the time of filing the petition, the petitioner was a four-year-old import and export company that claimed to have a gross annual income of \$1.7 Million. The firm intends to employ the beneficiary as president, plus a manager. The AAO notes that all of the employees have managerial or executive titles. The petitioner did not submit evidence that it employed any subordinate staff members who would perform the actual day-to-day, non-managerial operations of the company. Based on the petitioner's representations, it does not appear that the reasonable needs of the petitioning company might plausibly be met by the services of the beneficiary as president and one managerial employee. Regardless, the reasonable needs of the petitioner serve only as a

factor in evaluating the lack of staff in the context of reviewing the claimed managerial or executive duties. The petitioner must still establish that the beneficiary is to be employed in the United States in a primarily managerial or executive capacity, pursuant to sections 101(a)(44)(A) and (B) of the Act. As discussed above, the petitioner has not established this essential element of eligibility.

The reasonable needs of the petitioner will not supersede the requirement that the beneficiary be "primarily" employed in a managerial or executive capacity as required by the statute. *See* sections 101(a)(44)(A) and (B) of the Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1101(a)(44). The reasonable needs of the petitioner may justify a beneficiary who allocates 51 percent of his duties to managerial or executive tasks as opposed to 90 percent, but those needs will not excuse a beneficiary who spends the majority of his time on non-qualifying duties. Again, an employee who "primarily" performs the tasks necessary to produce a product or to provide services is not considered to be "primarily" employed in a managerial or executive capacity. *See* sections 101(a)(44)(A) and (B) of the Act (requiring that one "primarily" perform the enumerated managerial or executive duties); *see also Matter of Church Scientology Int'l*, 19 I&N Dec. 593, 604 (Comm'r. 1988).

The petitioner has not demonstrated that the beneficiary will be primarily supervising a subordinate staff of professional, managerial, or supervisory personnel. *See* section 101(a)(44)(A)(ii) of the Act. The petitioner has not established that it employs a staff that will relieve the beneficiary from performing non-qualifying duties so that the beneficiary may primarily engage in managerial duties. Regardless of the beneficiary's position title, the record is not persuasive that the beneficiary will function at a senior level within an organizational hierarchy. Based on the evidence furnished, it cannot be found that the beneficiary will be employed primarily in a qualifying managerial or executive capacity. For this reason, the petition may not be approved.

III. Qualifying Relationship

Beyond the decision of the director, the record does not establish that the United States and foreign entities have a qualifying relationship. To establish a "qualifying relationship" under the Act and the regulations, the petitioner must show that the beneficiary's foreign employer and the proposed U.S. employer are the same employer (i.e. one entity with "branch" offices), or related as a "parent and subsidiary" or as "affiliates." *See generally* section 101(a)(15)(L) of the Act; 8 C.F.R. § 214.2(l).

At the time of filing the petition, the petitioner claimed to have a qualifying relationship with "[REDACTED] limited" and indicated that this company is located in [REDACTED]. The petitioner indicated that the U.S. company is a wholly-owned subsidiary of the foreign entity.

It is incumbent upon the petitioner to resolve any inconsistencies in the record by independent objective evidence. Any attempt to explain or reconcile such inconsistencies will not suffice unless the petitioner submits competent objective evidence pointing to where the truth lies. *Matter of Ho*, 19 I&N Dec. 582, 591-92 (BIA 1988).

The petitioner did not provide documentary evidence of the ownership of the U.S. company. The petitioner provided the articles of incorporation, business license, and seller's license. None of these documents establish ownership of the U.S. entity. The petitioner failed to submit substantiating evidence such as stock certificates, a stock ledger, or an authorization to issue stock.

In response to the RFE, the petitioner submitted 2005 through 2008 Forms 1120, U.S. Corporate Income Tax Return. The Schedule K to the returns state that the beneficiary owns 100 percent of the U.S. company's voting stock.

With respect to the ownership of [REDACTED] the petitioner provided a "Memorandum of Association and Article of Association." This document shows that the company had two owners at the time of formation, each owning 500 shares of the company. Those owners were the petitioner and [REDACTED]

The regulation and case law confirm that ownership and control are the factors that must be examined in determining whether a qualifying relationship exists between United States and foreign entities for purposes of this visa classification. *Matter of Church Scientology International*, 19 I&N Dec. 593 (BIA 1988); *see also Matter of Siemens Medical Systems, Inc.*, 19 I&N Dec. 362 (BIA 1986); *Matter of Hughes*, 18 I&N Dec. 289 (Comm'r 1982). In the context of this visa petition, ownership refers to the direct or indirect legal right of possession of the assets of an entity with full power and authority to control; control means the direct or indirect legal right and authority to direct the establishment, management, and operations of an entity. *Matter of Church Scientology International*, 19 I&N Dec. at 595.

As general evidence of a petitioner's claimed qualifying relationship, the Memorandum of Association and Articles of Association does not establish control of the foreign corporation by the beneficiary. The foreign entity must disclose all agreements relating to the voting of shares, the distribution of profit, the management and direction of the company, and any other factor affecting actual control of the entity. *See Matter of Siemens Medical Systems, Inc., supra*. Without full disclosure of all relevant documents, USCIS is unable to determine the elements of ownership and control of the foreign company.

If one individual owns a majority interest in a petitioner and a foreign entity, and controls those companies, then the companies will be deemed to be affiliates under the definition even if there are multiple owners. The record does not establish whether the beneficiary controls the foreign entity.

Due to the inconsistencies and deficiencies catalogued above, the petitioner has not met its burden to establish that the U.S. and foreign entities have a qualifying relationship. For this additional reason, the petition cannot be approved.

IV. Physical Premises

Beyond the decision of the director, a related issue is whether the petitioner has established that it secured sufficient physical premises to house the new office. The petitioner submitted a copy of its lease. The lease is without an English translation. Because the petitioner failed to submit a certified translation of the document, the AAO cannot determine whether the evidence supports the petitioner's claims. *See* 8 C.F.R. § 103.2(b)(3). Accordingly, the evidence is not probative and will not be accorded any weight in this proceeding.

The petitioner has not described its anticipated space requirements for its import business and the lease in question does not specify the amount or type of space secured. Based on the insufficiency of the information furnished, it cannot be concluded that the petitioner has secured sufficient space to house the new office.

The petitioner submitted photos of the interior and exterior of the alleged premises of the petitioner's office and warehouse space. The photos depict an office building and warehouse space without any signage or other evidence that the space is actually occupied by the petitioner. The only signage submitted with the petition appears to be a computer printout of the words [REDACTED] taped to the window of the building. This is not persuasive evidence that the petitioner has secured sufficient physical premises to house the new office. Doubt cast on any aspect of the petitioner's proof may, of course, lead to a reevaluation of the reliability and sufficiency of the remaining evidence offered in support of the visa petition. *Matter of Ho*, 19 I&N Dec. 582, 591 (BIA 1988). For this additional reason, the petition may not be approved.

An application or petition that fails to comply with the technical requirements of the law may be denied by the AAO even if the Service Center does not identify all of the grounds for denial in the initial decision. *See Spencer Enterprises, Inc. v. United States*, 229 F. Supp. 2d 1025, 1043 (E.D. Cal. 2001), *aff'd*, 345 F.3d 683 (9th Cir. 2003); *see also Soltane v. DOJ*, 381 F.3d 143, 145 (3d Cir. 2004)(noting that the AAO conducts appellate review on a *de novo* basis). When the AAO denies a petition on multiple alternative grounds, a plaintiff can succeed on a challenge only if it is shown that the AAO abused its discretion with respect to all of the AAO's enumerated grounds. *See Spencer Enterprises, Inc. v. United States*, 229 F. Supp. 2d at 1043.

The petition will be denied and the appeal dismissed for the above stated reasons, with each considered as an independent and alternative basis for the decision. In visa petition proceedings, the burden of proving eligibility for the benefit sought remains entirely with the petitioner. Section 291 of the Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1361. Here, that burden has not been met.

ORDER: The appeal is dismissed.