

United States Taxes

This section describes the material U.S. federal income tax consequences of the ownership of shares or ADSs by U.S. holders, as defined below. It applies only to persons who hold shares or ADSs as capital assets for tax purposes.

This section is based on the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended (the “Code”), its legislative history, existing and proposed regulations, published rulings and court decisions, all as currently in effect, as well as on the U.S.-Japan Tax Treaty (the “Treaty”). These authorities are subject to change, possibly on a retroactive basis. In addition, this section is based in part upon the representations of the Depositary and the assumption that each obligation in the Deposit Agreement and any related agreement will be performed in accordance with its terms.

For purposes of the Treaty and the Code, U.S. holders of ADRs evidencing ADSs will be treated as the owners of the shares represented by those ADRs. Exchanges of shares for ADRs and ADRs for shares generally will not be subject to U.S. federal income tax. For purposes of this discussion, a “U.S. holder” is a beneficial owner of shares or ADSs that is, for U.S. federal income tax purposes, (i) a citizen or resident individual of the United States, (ii) a domestic corporation, (iii) an estate whose income is subject to United States federal income tax regardless of its source, or (iv) a trust if a United States court can exercise primary supervision over the trust’s administration and one or more United States persons are authorized to control all substantial decisions of the trust; and that, for purposes of the Treaty, is not ineligible for benefits under the Treaty with respect to income and gain from the shares or ADSs.

This section does not apply to a person who is a member of a special class of holders subject to special rules, including a dealer in securities, a trader in securities that elects to use a mark-to-market method of accounting for its securities holdings, a tax-exempt organization, a life insurance company, a person liable for alternative minimum tax, a person that actually or constructively owns 10% or more of the combined voting power of the voting stock or of the total value of the stock of Honda, a person that holds shares or ADSs as part of a straddle or a hedging or conversion transaction, a person that purchases or sells shares or ADSs as part of a wash sale for tax purposes, or a person whose functional currency is not the U.S. dollar.

If a partnership holds the shares or ADSs, the U.S. federal income tax treatment of a partner will generally depend on the status of the partner and the tax treatment of the partnership. A partner in a partnership holding the shares or ADSs should consult its tax advisor with regard to the U.S. federal income tax treatment of an investment in the shares or ADSs.

This summary is not a comprehensive description of all the tax considerations that may be relevant with respect to a U.S. holder’s shares or ADSs. Each beneficial owner of shares or ADSs should consult its own tax advisor regarding the U.S. federal, state and local and other tax consequences of owning and disposing of shares and ADSs in its particular circumstances.

Taxation of Dividends

Under the U.S. federal income tax laws, and subject to the passive foreign investment company, or PFIC, rules discussed below, the gross amount of any dividend paid by Honda out of its current or accumulated earnings and profits (as determined for U.S. federal income tax purposes) to a U.S. holder is subject to U.S. federal income taxation. A U.S. holder must include any Japanese tax withheld from the dividend payment in this gross amount even though it does not in fact receive it.

Dividends paid to a noncorporate U.S. holder that constitute qualified dividend income will be taxable to such U.S. holder at the preferential rates applicable to long-term capital gains provided that the noncorporate U.S. holder holds the shares or ADSs with respect to which the dividends are paid for more than 60 days during the 121-day period beginning 60 days before the ex-dividend date and meets other holding period requirements.

Dividends that Honda pays with respect to the shares or ADSs generally will be qualified dividend income. A U.S. holder must include the dividend in its taxable income when the holder, in the case of shares, or the Depositary, in the case of ADSs, receives the dividend, actually or constructively. The dividend will not be eligible for the dividends-received deduction generally allowed to U.S. corporations in respect of dividends received from other U.S. corporations. The amount of the dividend distribution that a U.S. holder must include in its income will be the U.S. dollar value of the Japanese yen payments made, determined at the spot Japanese yen/U.S. dollar rate on the date of the dividend distribution, regardless of whether the payment is in fact converted into U.S. dollars. Generally, any gain or loss resulting from currency exchange fluctuations during the period from the date the U.S. holder includes the dividend payment in income to the date it converts the payment into U.S. dollars will be treated as ordinary income or loss and will not be eligible for the special tax rate applicable to qualified dividend income. The gain or loss generally will be income or loss from sources within the U.S. for foreign tax credit limitation purposes. Distributions in excess of current and accumulated earnings and profits, as determined for U.S. federal income tax purposes, will be treated as a non-taxable return of capital to the extent of U.S. holder's basis in the shares or ADSs and thereafter as capital gain. However, Honda does not expect to calculate earnings and profits in accordance with U.S. federal income tax principles. Accordingly, a U.S. holder should expect to generally treat distributions that Honda makes as dividends.

Subject to certain limitations, the Japanese tax withheld in accordance with the Treaty and paid over to Japan will be creditable or deductible against a U.S. holder's United States federal income tax liability. Special rules apply in determining the foreign tax credit limitation with respect to dividends that are subject to the preferential tax rates. To the extent a refund of the tax withheld is available to a U.S. holder under Japanese law or under the Treaty, the amount of tax withheld that is refundable will not be eligible for credit against the U.S. holder's United States federal income tax liability.

Dividends will generally be income from sources outside the United States and will generally be "passive" income for purposes of computing the foreign tax credit allowable to such U.S. holder.

Taxation of Capital Gains

Subject to the PFIC rules discussed below, if a U.S. holder sells or otherwise disposes of its shares or ADSs, it will recognize capital gain or loss for U.S. federal income tax purposes equal to the difference between the U.S. dollar value of the amount that it realizes and its tax basis, determined in U.S. dollars, in its shares or ADSs. Capital gain of a noncorporate U.S. holder is generally taxed at preferential rates where the property is held for more than one year. The gain or loss will generally be income or loss from sources within the U.S. for foreign tax credit limitation purposes.

Passive Foreign Investment Company (PFIC) Rules

Honda believes its shares and ADSs should not be treated as stock of a PFIC for United States federal income tax purposes. This conclusion is a factual determination that is made annually and thus may be subject to change.

In general, Honda will be a PFIC with respect to a U.S. holder if for any taxable year in which such holder held shares or ADSs of Honda:

- at least 75% of Honda's gross income for the taxable year is passive income; or
- at least 50% of the value, determined on the basis of a quarterly average, of Honda's assets is attributable to assets that produce or are held for the production of passive income.

Passive income generally includes dividends, interest, royalties, rents (other than certain rents and royalties derived in the active conduct of a trade or business), annuities and gains from assets that produce passive income. If a foreign corporation owns at least 25% by value of the stock of another corporation, the foreign corporation is

treated for purposes of the PFIC tests as owning its proportionate share of the assets of the other corporation, and as receiving directly its proportionate share of the other corporation's income.

If Honda is treated as a PFIC, and a U.S. holder does not make a mark-to-market election, as described below, that U.S. holder will be subject to special rules with respect to:

- any gain it realizes on the sale or other disposition of its shares or ADSs; and
- any excess distribution that Honda makes to the U.S. holder (generally, any distributions to it during a single taxable year that are greater than 125% of the average annual distributions received by it in respect of the shares or ADSs during the three preceding taxable years or, if shorter, its holding period for the shares or ADSs).

Under these rules:

- the gain or excess distribution will be allocated ratably over the U.S. holder's holding period for the shares or ADSs,
- the amount allocated to the taxable year in which it realized the gain or excess distribution will be taxed as ordinary income,
- the amount allocated to each prior year, with certain exceptions, will be taxed at the highest tax rate in effect for that year, and
- the interest charge generally applicable to underpayments of tax will be imposed in respect of the tax attributable to each such year.

Special rules apply for calculating the amount of the foreign tax credit with respect to excess distributions by a PFIC.

If a U.S. holder owns shares or ADSs in a PFIC that are treated as marketable stock, such U.S. holder may make a mark-to-market election. If a U.S. holder makes this election, it will not be subject to the PFIC rules described above. Instead, in general, a U.S. holder will include as ordinary income each year the excess, if any, of the fair market value of its shares or ADSs at the end of the taxable year over its adjusted basis in its shares or ADSs. These amounts of ordinary income will not be eligible for the favorable tax rates applicable to qualified dividend income or long-term capital gains. A U.S. holder will also be allowed to take an ordinary loss in respect of the excess, if any, of the adjusted basis of its shares or ADSs over their fair market value at the end of the taxable year (but only to the extent of the net amount of previously included income as a result of the mark-to-market election). The U.S. holder's basis in the shares or ADSs will be adjusted to reflect any such income or loss amounts.

Shares or ADSs held by a U.S. holder will be treated as stock in a PFIC if Honda was a PFIC at any time during the U.S. holder's holding period in its shares or ADSs, even if Honda is not currently a PFIC, unless a U.S. holder has made a mark-to-market election with respect to its shares or ADSs or the U.S. holder has otherwise made a "purging election" with respect to its shares or ADSs.

In addition, notwithstanding any election that a U.S. holder makes with regard to the shares or ADSs, dividends that a U.S. holder receives from Honda will not constitute qualified dividend income to such U.S. holder if Honda is a PFIC (or is treated as a PFIC with respect to such U.S. holder) in either the taxable year of the distribution or the preceding taxable year. Dividends that a U.S. holder receives that do not constitute qualified dividend income are not eligible for taxation at the preferential rates applicable to qualified dividend income. Instead, the U.S. holder must include the gross amount of any such dividend paid by Honda out of Honda's accumulated earnings and profits (as determined for United States federal income tax purposes) in the U.S. holder's gross income, and it will be subject to tax at rates applicable to ordinary income.