

C. Self-Regulatory Organization's Statement on Comments on the Proposed Rule Change Received From Members, Participants or Others

The Exchange has neither solicited nor received comments on the proposed rule change.

III. Solicitation of Comments

Interested persons are invited to submit written data, views, and arguments concerning the foregoing, including whether the proposed rule change is consistent with the Act. Comments may be submitted by any of the following methods:

Electronic Comments

- Use the Commission's Internet comment form (<http://www.sec.gov/rules/sro.shtml>); or
- Send an e-mail to rule-comments@sec.gov. Please include File Number SR-BSE-2004-37 on the subject line.

Paper Comments

- Send paper comments in triplicate to Jonathan G. Katz, Secretary, Securities and Exchange Commission, 450 Fifth Street, NW., Washington, DC 20549-0609.

All submissions should refer to SR-BSE-2004-37. This file number should be included on the subject line if e-mail is used. To help the Commission process and review your comments more efficiently, please use only one method. The Commission will post all comments on the Commission's Internet Web site (<http://www.sec.gov/rules/sro.shtml>). Copies of the submission, all subsequent amendments, all written statements with respect to the proposed rule change that are filed with the Commission, and all written communications relating to the proposed rule change between the Commission and any person, other than those that may be withheld from the public in accordance with the provisions of 5 U.S.C. 552, will be available for inspection and copying in the Commission's Public Reference Room, 450 Fifth Street, NW., Washington, DC 20549. Copies of the filing also will be available for inspection and copying at the principal office of the Exchange. All comments received will be posted without change; the Commission does not edit personal identifying information from submissions. You should submit only information that you wish to make available publicly. All submissions should refer to SR-BSE-2004-37 and should be submitted on or before September 16, 2004.

IV. Commission's Findings and Order Granting Accelerated Approval of the Proposed Rule Change

The Commission finds that the proposed rule change is consistent with the Act and the rules and regulations under the Act applicable to a national securities exchange. In particular, the Commission finds that the proposed rule change is consistent with Section 6(b)(5) of the Act,⁷ in that it is designed to promote just and equitable principles of trade, to remove impediments to and to perfect the mechanism of a free and open market and a national market system, to prevent fraudulent and manipulative acts, and, in general, to protect investors and the public interest.⁸

The rule change will allow a member to initiate a clean cross transaction in an exchange-listed security of 5,000 shares or more at a price at or within the prevailing bid or offer. The Commission believes that such a rule strikes a reasonable balance between allowing floor brokers on the Exchange to execute crossing transactions and allowing specialists and market makers to provide price improvement. The Commission also believes that the 5,000 share threshold will ensure that the proposed rule change will apply primarily to larger block-sized orders where the depth of the prevailing bid or offer may be less likely to satisfy either side of the clean cross. The Commission notes that the proposed rule change preserves the auction market principle of price improvement by permitting the cross transaction to be broken up at a better price.

The Commission finds good cause for approving the proposed rule change prior to the thirtieth day after the date of publication of notice thereof in the **Federal Register**.

Because it previously has approved similar rules on other exchanges⁹ as well as a substantively identical BSE rule that provides for clean cross transactions in Nasdaq securities,¹⁰ the

⁷ 15 U.S.C. 78f(b)(5).

⁸ In approving this rule change, the Commission has considered its impact on efficiency, competition, and capital formation. See 15 U.S.C. 78c(f).

⁹ See, e.g., Amex Rule 126, Commentary .02. See also Securities Exchange Act Release No. 44123 (March 28, 2001), 66 FR 18124 (April 5, 2001) (SR-Amex-01-02) (approving Amex Rule 126, Commentary .02); Securities Exchange Act Release No. 47345 (February 11, 2003), 68 FR 8316 (February 20, 2002) (SR-Amex-2002-89) (reducing minimum number of shares eligible for Amex Clean Cross Rule to 5,000).

¹⁰ See Chapter XXXV, section 6 of the BSE Rules. See also Securities Exchange Act Release No. 44952 (October 18, 2001), 66 FR 54039 (October 25, 2001) (SR-BSE-2001-01) (approving Chapter XXXV, section 6 of the BSE Rules).

Commission believes that accelerated approval of a BSE rule that provides for clean cross transactions in exchange-listed securities is appropriate.

V. Conclusion

Is it therefore ordered, pursuant to Section 19(b)(2) of the Act,¹¹ that the proposed rule change (SR-BSE-2004-37) be, and it hereby is, approved on an accelerated basis.

For the Commission by the Division of Market Regulation, pursuant to delegated authority.¹²

Margaret H. McFarland,

Deputy Secretary.

[FR Doc. E4-1930 Filed 8-25-04; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 8010-01-P

SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

[Declaration of Disaster #3616]

State of North Carolina

Dare County and the contiguous counties of Currituck, Hyde, and Tyrell in the State of North Carolina constitute a disaster area as a result of Hurricane Alex on August 3, 2004. Applications for loans for physical damage as a result of this disaster may be filed until the close of business on October 18, 2004 and for economic injury until the close of business on May 19, 2005 at the address listed below or other locally announced locations: U.S. Small Business Administration, Disaster Area 2 Office, One Baltimore Place, Suite 300, Atlanta, GA 30308.

The interest rates are:

	Percent
For Physical Damage:	
Homeowners with credit available elsewhere	6.375
Homeowners without credit available elsewhere	3.187
Businesses with credit available elsewhere	5.800
Businesses and non-profit organizations without credit available elsewhere	2.900
Others (including non-profit organizations) with credit available elsewhere	4.875
For Economic Injury:	
Businesses and small agricultural cooperatives without credit available elsewhere	2.900

The number assigned to this disaster for physical damage is 361608 and for economic damage is 9ZP800.

(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Program Nos. 59002 and 59008.)

¹¹ 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(2).

¹² 17 CFR 200.30-3(a)(12).

Dated: August 19, 2004.

Hector V. Barreto,
Administrator.

[FR Doc. 04-19500 Filed 8-25-04; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 8025-01-P

SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

Advisory Committee on Veterans Business Affairs; Public Meeting

The SBA Advisory Committee on Veterans Business Affairs

The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA), pursuant to the Veterans Entrepreneurship and Small Business Development Act of 1999 (Public Law 106-50), will be hosting its third meeting of fiscal year 2004, the Advisory Committee on Veterans Business Affairs. The meeting will begin on Wednesday, September 8, 2004, until Thursday, September 9, 2004, starting at 9 a.m. until 5 p.m. The meeting will be held at the U.S. Small Business Administration Headquarters, located at 409 3rd Street, SW., Washington, DC 20416, in the Eisenhower Conference Room, located on the 2nd floor, Side B.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this meeting, please contact Cheryl Clark in the Office of Veterans Business Development (OVBD) at (202) 205-6773.

Matthew K. Becker,
Committee Management Officer.

[FR Doc. 04-19499 Filed 8-25-04; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 8025-01-P

OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES TRADE REPRESENTATIVE

African Growth and Opportunity Act Implementation Subcommittee of the Trade Policy Staff Committee; Public Comments on Annual Review of Country Eligibility for Benefits Under the African Growth and Opportunity Act

AGENCY: Office of the United States Trade Representative.

ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: The African Growth and Opportunity Act Implementation Subcommittee of the Trade Policy Staff Committee (the "Subcommittee") is requesting written public comments for the annual review of the eligibility of sub-Saharan African countries to receive the benefits of the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA). The Subcommittee will consider these comments in developing

recommendations on AGOA country eligibility for the President. Comments received related to the child labor criteria may also be considered by the Secretary of Labor for the preparation of the Department of Labor's report on child labor as required under section 412(c) of the Trade and Development Act of 2000. This notice identifies the eligibility criteria that must be considered under AGOA, and lists those sub-Saharan African countries that are currently eligible for AGOA and those that are currently ineligible for the AGOA.

DATES: Public comments are due at the Office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR) by noon, Friday, September 17, 2004.

ADDRESSES: Submission by electronic mail: FR0444@ustr.gov. Submissions by facsimile: Gloria Blue, Executive Secretary, Trade Policy Staff Committee, at (202) 395-6143. The public is strongly encouraged to submit documents electronically rather than by facsimile. See requirements for submissions below.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For procedural questions, please contact Gloria Blue, Office of the United States Trade Representative, 600 17th Street, NW., Room F516, Washington, DC 20508, (202) 395-3475. All other questions should be directed to Constance Hamilton, Senior Director for African Affairs, Office of the United States Trade Representative, 600 17th Street, NW., Washington, DC 20508, (202) 395-9514.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The AGOA (Title I of the Trade and Development Act of 2000, Public Law 106-200) (19 U.S.C. 3721 *et seq.*), as amended, authorizes the President to designate sub-Saharan African countries as beneficiary sub-Saharan African countries eligible for duty-free tariff treatment for certain products under the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) (Title V of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2461 *et seq.*) (the "1974 Act")), as well as for the preferential treatment the AGOA provides for certain textile and apparel articles.

The President may designate a country as a beneficiary sub-Saharan African country eligible for both the additional GSP benefits and the textile and apparel benefits of the AGOA (if the country also meets certain statutory requirements intended to prevent unlawful transshipment of such articles) if he determines that the country meets the eligibility criteria set forth in: (1) Section 104 of the AGOA; and (2) section 502 of the 1974 Act. For 2004, 37 countries have been designated as

beneficiary sub-Saharan African countries. These countries, as well as the 11 currently ineligible countries, are listed below. Section 506A of the 1974 Act provides that the President shall monitor, review, and report to Congress annually on the progress of each sub-Saharan African country in meeting the foregoing eligibility criteria in order to determine whether each beneficiary sub-Saharan African country should continue to be eligible, and whether each sub-Saharan African country that is currently not a beneficiary sub-Saharan African country should be designated as such a country. The President's determinations will be included in the annual report submitted to Congress as required by Section 106 of the AGOA. Section 506A of the 1974 Act requires that, if the President determines that a beneficiary sub-Saharan African country is not making continual progress in meeting the eligibility requirements, he must terminate the designation of the country as a beneficiary sub-Saharan African country.

The Subcommittee is seeking public comments in connection with the annual review of the eligibility of beneficiary sub-Saharan African countries for the AGOA's benefits. The Subcommittee will consider any such comments in developing recommendations on country eligibility for the President. Comments related to the child labor criteria may also be considered by the Secretary of Labor in making the findings required under section 504 of the 1974 Act.

Beneficiary Sub-Saharan African Countries

The following have been designated as beneficiary sub-Saharan African countries for 2004:

Republic of Angola, Republic of Benin, Republic of Botswana, Republic of Cameroon, Republic of Cape Verde, Republic of Chad, Republic of the Congo, Republic of Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Republic of Djibouti, Ethiopia, Gabonese Republic, Republic of The Gambia, Republic of Ghana, Republic of Guinea, Republic of Guinea-Bissau, Republic of Kenya, Kingdom of Lesotho, Republic of Madagascar, Republic of Malawi, Republic of Mali, Islamic Republic of Mauritania, Republic of Mauritius, Republic of Mozambique, Republic of Namibia, Republic of Niger, Federal Republic of Nigeria, Republic of Rwanda, Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe, Republic of Senegal, Republic of Seychelles, Republic of Sierra Leone, Republic of South Africa, Kingdom of Swaziland,