

decision.⁴⁰ Finally, FINRA noted that the proposed rule change also specifies that arbitrators would not be required to provide an explained decision in cases resolved under the simplified or default arbitration rules.⁴¹

FINRA concluded by stating that the proposal will increase investor confidence in the fairness of the arbitration process, and should be approved.⁴²

IV. Discussion and Findings

After careful review of the proposed rule change, the comments, and FINRA's response to the comments, the Commission finds that the proposed rule change is consistent with the requirements of the Act, and the rules and regulations thereunder that are applicable to a national securities association.⁴³ In particular, the Commission believes the proposed rule change is consistent with the provisions of Section 15A(b)(6) of the Act,⁴⁴ which requires among other things, that FINRA rules must be designed to prevent fraudulent and manipulative acts and practices, to promote just and equitable principles of trade, and, in general, to protect investors and the public interest. The proposed rule change should address complaints that FINRA has received from non-prevailing parties regarding the absence of explanations in arbitration awards, by providing a framework through which parties could jointly require arbitrators to write an explained decision.

In general, the Commission believes that FINRA has responded to the comments adequately and appropriately, and has explained how the proposed rule change is consistent with the requirements of the Act, and the rules and regulations thereunder that are applicable to a national securities association.

The Commission's oversight of the securities arbitration process is directed at ensuring that it is fair and efficient. The Commission shares the concerns expressed by a commenter that the proposal may not increase investors' perceptions of fairness in circumstances in which an industry party does not agree to an investor's request for an explained decision. Nevertheless, the Commission believes that the even-handed approach of providing parties a means of jointly requesting a decision

represents a reasonable compromise between the status quo, whereby the Codes offer parties no formal means of requesting an explained decision, and the original proposal, whereby claimants alone would have the right to request an explained decision. Further, the Commission believes that the procedures set forth in FINRA's proposed rule (including, procedures related to: Deadlines for submitting a request; designating the chairperson as the writer of explained decisions; compensation for writing explained decisions; substance of the explained decision; and eligibility of cases for explained decisions) will contribute to the efficiency of the securities arbitration process by setting forth clear guidelines for parties and arbitrators in instances where parties have jointly requested an explained decision.

At the same time, the Commission is concerned that it may be difficult for parties to mutually agree to request an explained decision, because the decision of whether to request an explained decision (or whether to refuse to request an explained decision) may ultimately be a strategic decision. In order to gauge the effectiveness of the proposal, the Commission has requested that FINRA gather statistics for a period of one year from the effective date of this proposal, on the number of joint requests for explained decisions made in arbitration. Further, the Commission has asked FINRA to report on any anecdotal evidence it receives during this one-year period that may shed light on how often parties are unable to agree to request an explained decision.

V. Conclusions

It is therefore ordered, pursuant to Section 19(b)(2) of the Act,⁴⁵ that the proposed rule change (SR-FINRA-2008-051) be, and hereby is, approved.

For the Commission, by the Division of Trading and Markets, pursuant to delegated authority.⁴⁶

Florence E. Harmon,

Deputy Secretary.

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SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

[Release No. 34-59362; File No. SR-Phlx-2009-10]

Self-Regulatory Organizations; NASDAQ OMX PHLX, Inc.; Notice of Filing and Immediate Effectiveness of a Proposed Rule Change Relating to Sponsored Access

February 5, 2009.

Pursuant to Section 19(b)(1) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 ("Act")¹ and Rule 19b-4 thereunder,² notice is hereby given that on January 29, 2009, NASDAQ OMX PHLX, Inc. ("Phlx" or "Exchange") filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission ("Commission") the proposed rule change as described in Items I and II below, which Items have been prepared by the Exchange. The Commission is publishing this notice to solicit comments on the proposed rule change from interested persons.

I. Self-Regulatory Organization's Statement of the Terms of Substance of the Proposed Rule Change

The Exchange proposes to adopt a sponsored access rule for a pilot period ending on July 29, 2009. The text of the proposed rule change is available on the Exchange's Website at <http://www.nasdaqtrader.com/micro.aspx?id=PHLXRrulefilings>, at the principal office of the Exchange, and at the Commission's Public Reference Room.

II. Self-Regulatory Organization's Statement of the Purpose of, and Statutory Basis for, the Proposed Rule Change

In its filing with the Commission, the self-regulatory organization included statements concerning the purpose of, and basis for, the proposed rule change and discussed any comments it received on the proposed rule change. The text of those statements may be examined at the places specified in Item IV below. The Exchange has prepared summaries, set forth in sections A, B, and C below, of the most significant aspects of such statements.

A. Self-Regulatory Organization's Statement of the Purpose of, and Statutory Basis for, the Proposed Rule Change

1. Purpose

The purpose of the proposed rule change is to attract additional business by adopting a sponsored access rule

⁴⁰ *Id.*

⁴¹ *Id.*

⁴² *Id.*

⁴³ In approving this proposal, the Commission has considered the proposed rule's impact on efficiency, competition, and capital formation. See 15 U.S.C. 17c(f).

⁴⁴ 15 U.S.C. 78o-3(b)(6).

⁴⁵ 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(2).

⁴⁶ 17 CFR 200.30-3(a)(12).

¹ 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(1).

² 17 CFR 240.19b-4.

similar to that of other exchanges. A Sponsored Participant is a non-member of the Exchange, such as an institutional investor, that gains access to the Exchange and trades under a Sponsoring Member's execution and clearing identity pursuant to a sponsorship arrangement between such non-member and a member organization. Specifically, the Exchange proposes to permit Sponsored Participants to be sponsored by Sponsoring Member Organizations, and thereby access the Exchange, subject to certain requirements. These requirements are intended to confirm that the Sponsored Participant is required to and had procedures in place to comply with Exchange rules, and that the Sponsoring Member Organization takes responsibility for the Sponsored Participant's activity on the Exchange.

First, the Sponsored Participant and its Sponsoring Member Organization must have entered into and maintained an Access Agreement with the Exchange. The Sponsoring Member Organization must designate the Sponsored Participant by name in an addendum to the Access Agreement.

Second, there must be a Sponsored Participant Agreement between the Sponsoring Member Organization and the Sponsored Participant that contains the following sponsorship provisions, enumerated in full in Rule 1094(b)(ii):

(i) The orders of the Sponsored Participant are binding in all respects on the Sponsoring Member Organization;

(ii) The Sponsoring Member Organization is responsible for the actions of the Sponsored Participant;

(iii) In addition to the Sponsoring Member Organization being required to comply with the Exchange Certificate of Incorporation, By-laws, Rules and procedures of the Exchange, the Sponsored Participant shall do so as if such Sponsored Participant were an Exchange member organization;

(iv) The Sponsored Participant shall maintain, keep current and provide to the Sponsoring Member Organization a list of individuals authorized to obtain access to the Exchange on behalf of the Sponsored Participant;

(v) The Sponsored Participant shall familiarize its authorized individuals with all of the Sponsored Participant's obligations under this Rule and will assure that they receive appropriate training prior to any use or access to the Exchange;

(vi) The Sponsored Participant may not permit anyone other than authorized

individuals to use or obtain access to the Exchange;³

(vii) The Sponsored Participant shall take reasonable security precautions to prevent unauthorized use or access to the Exchange, including unauthorized entry of information into the Exchange, and agrees that it is responsible for any and all orders, trades and other messages and instructions entered, transmitted or received under identifiers, passwords and security codes of authorized individuals, and for the trading and other consequences thereof;

(viii) The Sponsored Participant acknowledges its responsibility to establish adequate procedures and controls that permit it to effectively monitor its employees', agents' and Participants' use and access to the Exchange for compliance with the terms of this agreement;

(ix) The Sponsored Participant shall pay when due all amounts, if any, payable to Sponsoring Member Organization, the Exchange, or any other third parties that arise from the Sponsored Participant's access to and use of the Exchange. Such amounts include, but are not limited to applicable exchange and regulatory fees.

Third, the Sponsoring Member Organization must provide the Exchange with a Sponsored Participant Addendum to its Access Agreement acknowledging its responsibility for the orders, executions and actions of its Sponsored Participant at issue.

2. Statutory Basis

The Exchange believes that its proposal is consistent with Section 6(b) of the Act⁴ in general, and furthers the objectives of Section 6(b)(5) of the Act⁵ in particular, in that it is designed to promote just and equitable principles of trade, to remove impediments to and perfect the mechanism of a free and open market and a national market system, and, in general to protect investors and the public interest by helping market participants seeking access to a marketplace.

B. Self-Regulatory Organization's Statement on Burden on Competition

The Exchange does not believe that the proposed rule change will impose any burden on competition not

necessary or appropriate in furtherance of the purposes of the Act.

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

No written comments were either solicited or received.

III. Date of Effectiveness of the Proposed Rule Change and Timing for Commission Action

Because the foregoing rule change does not: (1) Significantly affect the protection of investors or the public interest; (2) impose any significant burden on competition; and (3) become operative for 30 days after the date of this filing, or such shorter time as the Commission may designate, it has become effective pursuant to Section 19(b)(3)(A) of the Act⁶ and Rule 19b-4(f)(6) thereunder.⁷

A proposed rule change filed under 19b-4(f)(6) normally may not become operative prior to 30 days after the date of filing.⁸ However, Rule 19b-4(f)(6)(iii)⁹ permits the Commission to designate a shorter time if such action is consistent with the protection of investors and the public interest. The Exchange has requested that the Commission waive the 30-day operative delay so that the proposal may become operative upon filing. The Commission believes that waiving the 30-day operative delay is consistent with the protection of investors and the public interest because such waiver would permit the Exchange to immediately begin to accommodate requests from its members regarding sponsored access. The Commission notes that the proposal is substantially similar to the rules of other national securities exchanges.¹⁰ Accordingly, the Commission hereby grants the Exchange's request and designates the proposal operative upon filing.¹¹

At any time within 60 days of the filing of such proposed rule change the

⁶ 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(3)(A).

⁷ 17 CFR 240.19b-4(f)(6).

⁸ 17 CFR 240.19b-4(f)(6)(iii). In addition, Rule 19b-4(f)(6)(iii) requires that a self-regulatory organization submit to the Commission written notice of its intent to file the proposed rule change, along with a brief description and text of the proposed rule change, at least five business days prior to the date of filing of the proposed rule change, or such shorter time as designated by the Commission. The Exchange has satisfied the five-day pre-filing notice requirement.

⁹ *Id.*

¹⁰ See, e.g., International Securities Exchange, LLC Rule 706 and NYSE Arca, Inc. Rule 7.29.

¹¹ For the purposes only of waiving the 30-day operative delay, the Commission has considered the proposed rule's impact on efficiency, competition, and capital formation. See 15 U.S.C. 78c(f).

³ If the Exchange determines that an authorized individual has caused a Member Organization to violate the Exchange's Rules, the Exchange could direct the Member Organization to suspend or withdraw the person's status as an authorized individual.

⁴ 15 U.S.C. 78f(b).

⁵ 15 U.S.C. 78f(b)(5).

Commission may summarily abrogate such rule change if it appears to the Commission that such action is necessary or appropriate in the public interest, for the protection of investors or otherwise in furtherance of the purposes of the Act.

IV. 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-Phlx-2009-10 on the subject line.

Paper Comments

- Send paper comments in triplicate to Elizabeth M. Murphy, Secretary, Securities and Exchange Commission, 100 F Street, NE., Washington, DC 20549-1090.

All submissions should refer to File Number SR-Phlx-2009-10. 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, on official business days between the hours of 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. 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 File Number SR-Phlx-2009-10 and should be submitted on or before March 4, 2009.

For the Commission, by the Division of Trading and Markets, pursuant to delegated authority.¹²

Florence E. Harmon,

Deputy Secretary.

[FR Doc. E9-2858 Filed 2-10-09; 8:45 am]

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SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

[Release No. 34-59321; File No. SR-NSCC-2008-08]

Self-Regulatory Organizations; National Securities Clearing Corporation; Order Granting Approval of a Proposed Rule Change To Amend Rules To Add an Agreement From Fund Members That Submit Mutual Fund Profile Information

January 30, 2009.

I. Introduction

On September 30, 2008, the National Securities Clearing Corporation ("NSCC") filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission ("Commission") proposed rule change SR-NSCC-2008-08 pursuant to Section 19(b)(1) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 ("Act").¹ Notice of the proposal was published in the **Federal Register** on December 29, 2008.² For the reasons discussed below, the Commission is granting approval of the proposed rule change.

II. Description

The Mutual Fund Profile Service ("Profile") is a central data source for comprehensive fund prospectus and operational information relating to mutual funds. The repository is a recognized industry standard for information critical to the distribution of mutual funds in the third-party market.

Profile is organized into three databases: (1) Security Issue Database (containing information such as Security ID number, security name, fee structure, investment objectives, breakpoint schedule data, and blue sky eligibility); (2) Participant Database (containing contact information, NSCC processing capabilities and restrictions or requirements); and (3) Distribution Database (containing projected or actual distributions, capital gains and dividend amounts and details, and commission information). NSCC fund members input data regarding their mutual funds into the Security Issue and Participant

Profile databases. Profile is then accessed by the NSCC members that are mutual fund distributors.

NSCC has recently enhanced the Security Issue Database in Profile to include new data fields needed by distributors and to re-engineer the structure of the data hierarchy to be easier for fund members to populate their data. Some of the enhancements to the Profile database were initiated in response to a recommendation in the Report ("Report") of The Joint NASD/ Industry Task Force on Breakpoints ("Task Force").³ NSCC has also adopted measures to assist funds members in validating their data once it is in the Profile database by developing reports that note probable inconsistencies among related data fields, by arranging for free access by fund members to a vendor tool that verifies Profile data, and by reaching out to fund members in the form of personal contacts and an on-line web demonstration on populating data into the Profile database.

Consistent with its efforts to expand Profile's capabilities as a comprehensive and accurate source for the mutual fund distribution industry, NSCC is now amending its rules to add an agreement that requires NSCC fund members to have taken reasonable steps to validate the accuracy of their data they submit to the Profile database. This agreement is not intended to be either a basis for independent legal rights against the fund member or is any third party intended or permitted to rely upon it as a representation to a third party or upon which a third-party can base any legal rights. NSCC requires similar agreements from its members elsewhere in its rules and in its membership agreement, such as the agreement required of a fund member in Section 2 of Rule 51 to not submit a transaction through NSCC's Mutual Fund Services in contravention of any applicable regulatory requirements.

³ The Task Force was formed in 2003 by the National Association of Securities Dealers ("NASD", now "FINRA") with the participation of major fund companies, broker-dealers, NSCC, the Securities Industries Association and the Investment Company Institute, in response to the NASD examination findings in which it was discovered that investors frequently failed to receive appropriate breakpoint discounts in front-end sales load mutual fund transactions. Recommendation (B) of the report stated that NSCC's Profile database should be expanded to include breakpoint aggregation terms and rules for all fund families and should include identification of both link-eligible products (for example, retirement plans, annuities, and insurance products and college savings plans with mutual fund holdings). The Report also noted that for this database to be effective, it must also be comprehensive. Accordingly, mutual funds must fully and accurately populate the database and must update the database on a timely basis.

¹² 17 CFR 200.30-3(a)(12).

¹⁵ U.S.C. 78s(b)(1).

² Securities Exchange Act Release No. 59105 (December 16, 2008), 73 FR 79530.