

("NASD"), the Commission, and other enforcement agencies a computer database reflecting all municipal securities transactions reported to the Board.

The proposed rule change would require brokers, dealers and municipal securities dealers to (1) obtain an executing broker symbol, if one has not already been assigned, from the NASD, within thirty days after Commission approval of the proposed rule change; (2) provide the Board, on or before July 1, 1997, with the name and telephone number of a person responsible for testing the dealer's capabilities to report customer transaction information; (3) test its capabilities to report such information, between July and December 1997; and (4) report to the Board each day its municipal securities transactions with customers by January 1, 1998. Under the rule proposal, the Program would be fully effective by January 1, 1998.

III. Discussion

After careful review, the Commission finds that the proposed rule change generally is consistent with the requirements of the Act and the rules and regulations thereunder. In particular, the Commission believes the proposal is consistent with Section 15B(b)(2)(C) of the Act, which requires that the Board's rules be designed to prevent fraudulent and manipulative acts and practices, promote just and equitable principals of trade, and protect investors and the public interest.

The proposed rule change will enhance price transparency in the municipal securities market by providing trade information on frequently traded securities. The principle of transparency is a fundamental aspect of investor protection and efficient markets. There are many benefits associated with enhanced market transparency. First, transparency enhances investor protection and encourages greater investor participation in the markets. Second, by encouraging investor participation in the municipal securities market, transparency promotes liquidity. Third, transparency fosters the efficiency of securities markets by facilitating price discovery and open competition, and counteracting the effects of fragmentation. Each of these benefits in turn promotes the fairness of the markets.

It is therefore ordered, pursuant to Section 19(b)(2) of the Act, that the proposed rule change (SR-MSRB-96-10) is approved.

For the Commission by the Division of Market Regulation, pursuant to delegated authority, 17 CFR 200.30-(a)(12).

Margaret H. McFarland,

Deputy Secretary.

[FR Doc. 96-31016 Filed 12-5-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 8010-01-M

[Release No. 34-37999; File No. SR-NSCC-96-18]

Self-Regulatory Organizations; National Securities Clearing Corporation; Order Granting Approval of a Proposed Rule Change to Modify Procedures Relating to the Reconfirmation and Pricing Service

December 2, 1996.

On September 30, 1996, the National Securities Clearing Corporation ("NSCC") filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission ("Commission") the proposed rule change (File No. SR-NSCC-96-18) 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 November 1, 1996.² On November 21, 1996, NSCC filed an amendment to the proposed rule change.³ No comment letters were received. For the reasons discussed below, the Commission is granting approval of the proposed rule change.

I. Description

The proposed rule change modifies NSCC's procedures relating to NSCC's Reconfirmation and Pricing Service ("RECAPS").⁴ NSCC's Procedure II(G) currently provides that after the processing of initial RECAPS input members have an opportunity to submit supplemental input during the same RECAPS cycle. Prior to this amendment, supplemental input included only advisories, deletes, and as-of trades. An advisory allows a member to acknowledge a contraside submission that has not been reconfirmed. A delete permits a member to delete its own submission from RECAPS. An as-of trade enables a member to submit a transaction to RECAPS if the member failed to submit the transaction as initial

RECAPS input at the start of the RECAPS cycle.

The proposed rule change makes several modifications to NSCC's Procedure II(G) regarding RECAPS supplemental input. First, the proposed rule change expands the range of responses by a member to a contraside submission that has been reconfirmed to include "don't knows" (DKs) and rejects. A member must respond to a contraside submission that has not been reconfirmed on the next business day after the initial submission date by submitting an advisory, a DK, or a reject and in the case of a reject by also indicating the reasons for the rejection (e.g., trade previously settled or different quantity).

The proposed rule change provides that failure to respond to a contraside submission that has not been reconfirmed by the next business day after the initial submission date results in the transaction being deemed DK'ed. The proposed rule change also provides that a DK'ed transaction extinguishes the rights, if any, of the DK'ing member with respect to the transaction. Transactions of a member that have been DK'ed will be subject to the rules of the appropriate marketplace.

The proposed rule change also eliminates deletes as a type of RECAPS supplemental input. In practice, members do not use the delete function.

The proposed rule change adds a RECAPS activity report which NSCC will make available to members at the end of the RECAPS cycle. The RECAPS activity report will contain summary information regarding a member's overall activity during a particular RECAPS cycle, including the number of transactions submitted, the number of transactions that were reconfirmed, and the number of transactions that were DK'ed, rejected, or for which there was no response.

II. Discussion

Section 17A(b)(3)(F) provides that the rules of a clearing agency must be designed to promote that prompt and accurate clearance and settlement of securities transactions.⁵ Prior to this amendment, members which had transactions submitted against them by another party could only submit an advisory to acknowledge the trade. If the member chose not to acknowledge the trade, the contraside did not learn the reason for the trade not being reconfirmed. The expansion in the range of responses to a transaction submitted by a contraside that has not been reconfirmed will help to clarify why

¹ 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(1) (1988).

² Securities Exchange Act Release No. 37877 (October 28, 1996), 61 FR 56595.

³ Letter from Anthony Davidson, Associate Counsel, NSCC, to Christine Sibille, Special Counsel, Division of Market Regulation, Commission (November 20, 1996). This amendment was a technical amendment that did not require republication of notice.

⁴ RECAPS is NSCC's automated system which provides the ability to a member on a quarterly basis to reconfirm and reprice transactions that have been compared but have failed to settle.

⁵ 15 U.S.C. 78q-1(b)(3)(F) (1988).

certain transactions have not been reconfirmed and therefore subsequently will not settle. By providing for the contraside to receive information on why the transaction was not reconfirmed, the proposal may enable the contraside to amend their submission in order to create a match. Thus, the proposal may increase the number of trades that settle. The modifications also encourage members to respond to contraside submissions to prevent a DK and the loss of a member's rights with respect to the transaction. This should result in more trades being resolved in the RECAPS process. Therefore, the Commission believes that the proposal could resolve a higher percentage of unreconfirmed trades and thus facilitate the prompt and accurate clearance and settlement of transactions.

III. Conclusion

On the basis of the foregoing, the Commission finds that the proposed rule change is consistent with the requirements of the Act and in particular Section 17A of the Act and the rules and regulations thereunder.

It is therefore ordered, pursuant to Section 19(b)(2) of the Act, that the proposed rule change (File No. SR-NSCC-96-18) be and hereby is approved.

For the Commission by the Division of Market Regulation, pursuant to delegated authority.⁶

Margaret H. McFarland,
Deputy Secretary.

[FR Doc. 96-31085 Filed 12-5-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 8010-01-M

SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION

Agency Information Collection Activities: Proposed Collection Request

The Social Security Administration publishes a list of information collection packages that will require submission to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for clearance in compliance with Public Law 104-13 effective October 1, 1995, The Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995. The information collection(s) listed below requires extension of the current OMB approval(s):

1. State Agency Schedule for Equipment Purchases for SSA Disability Program—0960-0406. The information collected on form SSA-871 is used by the Social Security Administration to budget and account for expenditures of funds for equipment purchases by the State Disability Determination Services

that administer the disability program. The respondents are State Disability Determination Services.

Number of Respondents: 54.

Frequency of Response: Annually.

Average Burden Per Response: 1 hour.

Estimated Annual Burden: 54 hours.

2. Work Reintegration Study—0960-0543. The purpose of the Work Reintegration Study is to identify those incentives and interventions that are most successful in assisting persons who are disabled due to a back condition to return to work. The information collected will be used primarily to complete a cross-national analysis of this issue. Data will also be gathered on subjects of particular importance in the U.S. The findings will provide policy-makers with information that will be highly useful in establishing disability policy. The respondents are persons entitled to Social Security Disability Insurance, Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or State Temporary Disability Insurance.

Number of Respondents: 800.

Frequency of Response: 1.

Average Burden Per Response: 1 hour.

Estimated Annual Burden: 800 hours.

3. Statement for Determining Continuing Eligibility for Supplemental Security Income Payments—0960-0416. The information collected by the Social Security Administration on form SSA-8203 is used to determine whether SSI recipients have met and continue to meet all statutory and regulatory requirements for SSI eligibility and whether they have been and are still receiving the correct payment amount. The information collected also will assist agencies administering Medicaid programs in ascertaining the legal liability of third parties to pay for care and services. The respondents are recipients of SSI benefits or their representative payees.

Number of Respondents: 552,000.

Frequency of Response: 1.

Average Burden Per Response: 17 minutes.

Estimated Annual Burden: 156,400 hours.

To receive a copy of the form(s) or clearance package(s), call the SSA Reports Clearance Officer on (410) 965-4125 or write to her at the address listed below. Written comments and recommendations regarding these information collections should be sent within 60 days from the date of this publication directly to the SSA Reports Clearance Officer at the following address: Social Security Administration, DCFAM, Attn: Judith T. Hasche, 1-A-21 Operations Bldg., 6401 Security Blvd., Baltimore, MD 21235.

In addition to your comments on the accuracy of the agency's burden

estimate, we are soliciting comments on the need for the information; its practical utility; ways to enhance its quality, utility and clarity; and on ways to minimize burden on respondents, including the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

Agency Information Collection Activities: Submission for OMB Review; Comment Request

The information collections listed below, which were published in the Federal Register on October 2 and October 11, 1996 have been submitted to OMB.

1. Privacy and Disclosure of Official Records and Information; Availability of Information and Records to the Public—20 CFR 401 and 402; 0960-NEW. The respondents are individuals requesting access to their SSA records, correction of their SSA records and disclosure of SSA records. The information is required to:

(a) Identify individuals who request access to their records.

Number of Respondents: 10,000.

Frequency of Response: On occasion.

Average Burden Per Response: 11 minutes.

Estimated Annual Burden: 1,833 hours.

(b) Designate an individual to receive and review a recordholder's sensitive medical records in accordance with 20 CFR 401.55, and for the disclosure of such records to the recordholder by his/her designee.

Number of Respondents: 3,000.

Frequency of Response: On occasion.

Average Burden Per Response: 2 hours (This includes the time needed for the designee to review the recordholder's medical records.)

Estimated Annual Burden: 6,000.

(c) Correct or amend records.

Number of Respondents: 100.

Frequency of Response: On occasion.

Average Burden Per Response: 10 minutes.

Estimated Annual Burden: 17 hours.

(d) Obtain consent from an individual to release his/her records to others.

Consents are submitted by letter in writing or by use of a form SSA-3288.

Number of Respondents: 200,000.

Frequency of Response: On occasion.

Average Burden Per Response: 3 minutes.

Estimated Annual Burden: 10,000 burden hours.

(e) Facilitate the release of information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

Number of Respondents: 15,000.

Frequency of Response: On occasion.

Average Burden Per Response: 5 minutes.

⁶ 17 CFR 200.30-3(a)(12) (1996).