

comments will be available for public inspection at the PBGC's Communications and Public Affairs Department, suite 240 at the same address, between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. on business days.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Deborah C. Murphy, Attorney, office of the General Counsel, Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, 1200 K Street, NW., Washington, DC 20005-4026, 202-326-4024. (For TTY and TDD, call 800-877-8339 and request connection to 202-326-4024).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Sections 4203(f) and 4208(e)(3) of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 ("ERISA") provide for the PBGC's issuance of regulations under which the PBGC may approve a multiemployer pension plan's adoption of special rules for determining whether a complete or partial withdrawal from the plan has occurred. Section 4203(f) also sets standards for the approval of such special rules.

The PBGC's regulation on Extension of Special Withdrawal Liability Rules (29 CFR Part 4203) requires the plan sponsor of a plan that adopts special rules to submit information about the rules, the plan, and the industry in which the plan operates with its request for PBGC approval of the rules. The PBGC uses that information in determining whether the plan's special withdrawal liability rules meet the requirements of ERISA. (The regulation may be accessed on the PBGC's home page at <http://www.pbgc.gov>.)

The collection of information under the regulation has been approved by OMB under control number 1212-0023 through March 31, 1998. The PBGC intends to request that OMB extend its approval for another three years. An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. The PBGC estimates that the total annual hour burden of the regulation is one hour and that the total annual cost burden is \$2,400.

The PBGC is soliciting public comments to—

- Evaluate whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information will have practical utility;
- Evaluate the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used;

- Enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and
- Minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, including through the use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology, e.g., permitting electronic submission of responses.

Issued in Washington, DC, this 18th day of December, 1997.

David M. Strauss,

Executive Director, Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation.

[FR Doc. 97-33577 Filed 12-23-97; 8:45 am]

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SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

Submission for OMB Review; Comment Request

Upon Written Request, Copies Available From: Securities and Exchange Commission, Office of Filings and Information Services, Washington, DC 20549

Extension:

Rule 17a-23 SEC File No. 270-387, OMB Control No. 3235-0442

Notice is hereby given that pursuant to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3501 *et seq.*), the Securities and Exchange Commission ("Commission") has submitted to the Office of Management and Budget a request for extension of the previously approved collection of information discussed below.

Rule 17a-23 and Form 17A-23 Recordkeeping and Reporting Requirements Relating to Broker-Dealer Trading Systems

Rule 17a-23 and Form 17A-23 under the Securities Exchange Act of 1935 establish recordkeeping and reporting requirements for approximately 143 registered broker-dealers that operate certain automated trading systems ("Broker-Dealer Trading System" or "BDTS"). Rule 17a-23 requires any registered broker-dealer that sponsors a BDTS to maintain participant, volume, and transaction records. Rule 17a-23 and Form 17A-23 also require system sponsors to submit three reports to the Commission and, under certain circumstances, to an appropriate self-regulatory organization. These recordkeeping requirements assist the Commission with monitoring broker-

dealers that operate BDTSs and with ensuring compliance with Rule 17a-23.

The Commission staff estimates the average number of hours necessary for each BDTS sponsor to comply with Rule 17a-23 is 46 hours annually. The total burden is 6,542 hours annually for the broker-dealers operating BDTSs, based upon past submissions. The average cost per hour is approximately \$7.00. Therefore, the total annual cost of compliance for the 143 broker-dealers operating BDTSs is \$46,046.00.

The retention period for the recordkeeping requirement under Rule 17a-23 is three years following the date of a record or notice prepared pursuant to the rule. The recordkeeping requirement under Rule 17a-23 is mandatory to assist the Commission with monitoring broker-dealers that operate BDTSs and with ensuring compliance with the rule. Rule 17a-23 does involve the collection of confidential information. Please note that an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid control number.

General comments regarding the estimated burden hours should be directed to the following persons: (i) Desk Officer for the Securities and Exchange Commission, Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget, Room 3208, New Executive Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20503; and (ii) Michael E. Bartell, Associate Executive Director, Office of Information Technology, Securities and Exchange Commission, 450 Fifth Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20549. Comments must be submitted to OMB within 30 days of this notice.

Dated: December 17, 1997.

Margaret H. McFarland,

Deputy Secretary.

[FR Doc. 97-33585 Filed 12-23-97; 8:45 am]

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SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

Submission for OMB Review; Comment Request

Upon Written Request, Copies Available From: Securities and Exchange Commission Office of Filings and Information Services Washington, DC 20549

Extension:

Rule 15c3-3, SEC File No. 270-87, OMB Control No. 3235-0078

Notice is hereby given that pursuant to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3501 et seq.) the Securities and Exchange Commission ("Commission") has submitted to the Office of Management and Budget a request for extension of the previously approved collection of information discussed below.

Rule 15c3-3 Customer Protection—Reserves and Custody of Securities

Rule 15c3-3 ("Rule") requires registered broker-dealers to maintain certain records in connection with their compliance with the Rule's requirements that broker-dealers maintain possession and control of and segregate customer funds and securities. Commission staff estimates that the average number of hours necessary for each broker-dealer to make the required computations pursuant to the Rule is 2.5 hours per response. In order to demonstrate compliance with the Rule, approximately 326 broker-dealers choose to make a weekly computation and 127 broker-dealers choose to make a monthly computation. Accordingly, the total is approximately 48,290 hours annually for all broker-dealers, based upon past submissions. The average cost per hour is approximately \$60. Consequently, the staff estimates that the total cost of compliance with the Rule for all broker-dealers is \$2,897,400.

The retention period for the recordkeeping requirement under the Rule is three years following the date of a report prepared pursuant to the rule. The recordkeeping requirement under the Rule is mandatory to assist the Commission with monitoring broker-dealers and ensuring compliance with the Rule. The information collected under this Rule is kept confidential to the extent permitted by the Freedom of Information Act and any other applicable law. Please note that an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid control number.

Written comments regarding the above information should be directed to the following persons: (i) Desk Officer for the Securities and Exchange Commission, Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget, Room 3208, New Executive Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20503; and (ii) Michael E. Bartell, Associate Executive Director, Office of Information Technology, Securities and Exchange Commission, 450 Fifth Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20549. Comments

must be submitted to OMB within 30 days of this notice.

Dated: December 15, 1997.

Margaret H. McFarland,

Deputy Secretary.

[FR Doc. 97-33586 Filed 12-23-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 8010-01-M

SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

[Investment Company Act Release No. 22947; 812-10890]

Merrill Lynch & Co., Inc., et al.; Notice of Application

December 19, 1997.

AGENCY: Securities and Exchange Commission ("SEC").

ACTION: Notice of application for exemption under section 6(c) of the Investment Company Act of 1940 (the "Act") from section 15(a) of the Act.

Summary of Application: Applicants seek an order to permit the implementation, without shareholder approval, of new investment advisory or sub-advisory agreements ("New Agreements") between Mercury Asset Management International Limited ("MAM International") and Mercury Asset Management International Channel Islands Ltd. ("MAM Channel Islands") (collectively, the "Advisers") and various registered investment companies (each a "Fund" and collectively, the "Funds") in connection with the acquisition of Mercury Asset Management Group plc ("Mercury") by Merrill Lynch & Co., Inc. ("Merrill Lynch"). The order would cover a period of up to 150 days following the later of the date on which the assignment of the existing investment advisory contracts is deemed to have occurred (i.e., the date Merrill Lynch is deemed to control the issued share capital of Mercury (the "Assignment Date")) or the date upon which the requested order is issued (but in no event later than July 15, 1998) (the "Interim Period"). The order also would permit the Advisers to receive all fees earned under the New Agreements during the Interim Period following shareholder approval.

Applicants: Merrill Lynch, Mercury, and the Advisers.

Filing Dates: The application was filed on December 10, 1997. Applicants have agreed to file an amendment during the notice period, the substance of which is included in this notice.

Hearing or Notification of Hearing: An order granting the application will be issued unless the SEC orders a hearing.

Interested persons may request a hearing by writing to the SEC's Secretary and serving applicants with a copy of the request, personally or by mail. Hearing requests should be received by the SEC by 5:30 p.m. on January 9, 1998, and should be accompanied by proof of service on applicants in the form of an affidavit or, for lawyers, a certificate of service. Hearing requests should state the nature of the writer's interest, the reason for the request, and the issues contested. Persons who wish to be notified of a hearing may request notification by writing to the SEC's Secretary.

ADDRESSES: Secretary, SEC, 450 Fifth Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20549. Applicants: Merrill Lynch, World Financial Center, North Tower, 250 Vesey Street, New York, New York 10281-1318; Mercury and MAM International, 33 King William Street, London, England EC4R 9AS; MAM Channel Islands, Forum House, Grenville Street, St. Helier, Jersey JE48RL, Channel Islands.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: John K. Forst, Attorney Advisor, at (202) 942-0569, or Mary Kay Frech, Branch Chief, at (202) 942-0564 (Office of Investment Company Regulation, Division of Investment Management).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The following is a summary of the application. The complete application may be obtained for a fee at the SEC's Public Reference Branch, 450 Fifth Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20549 (tel. 202-942-8090).

Applicant's Representations

1. Merrill Lynch, through its subsidiaries, provides investment, financing, insurance, and related services on a global basis. Mercury, a holding company whose shares are listed on the London Stock Exchange, provides investment and related services through its subsidiaries on a global basis. The Advisers are investment advisers registered under the Investment Advisers Act of 1940. MAM International provides discretionary international investment portfolio management services to individual and institutional clients. MAM International provides investment advice to its wholly-owned subsidiary, MAM Channel Islands. MAM Channel Islands acts as investment adviser and MAM International acts as sub-adviser for The Europe Fund, Inc. and The United Kingdom Fund Inc., each a management investment company registered under the Act. MAM International also acts as investment sub-adviser to the Global Bond Series of Fortis Series Fund, Inc.,