

positions). Thus, a position account of a clearing member that had been added after the initial allocation of data base identification codes will not be clustered on the wheel adjacent to the other position accounts of that clearing member as is the case today.

Second, the skip interval calculation described above is slightly modified as follows:

- S = the total number of contracts being exercised for a particular series
 T = the total number of contracts on the wheel
 I = the assignment increment
1. $T1 = S/I$ (with decimals carried to six places; T1 is rounded up so that it is an integer)
 2. Initial Skip Interval = $(T/T1) - I$ (with decimals carried to six places and reserved for further use; decimals are truncated so that the initial skip interval is an integer)
 3. If the initial skip interval is < 0 , then the initial skip increment is $= 0$.

Assignments will be processed using the revised skip interval calculation. After the random starting point has been determined and the first 25 contracts have been assigned, the initial skip interval will be calculated. The decimals from the resulting total will be truncated to determine the first skip interval and will be stored to calculate the second skip interval. After first skip interval, the next 25 contracts will be assigned and the second skip interval will be calculated by adding the initial skip interval (including decimals) to the remaining decimal number from the truncated first skip interval. The decimals from the resulting total will be truncated and stored to calculate the third skip interval. This process will continue until all exercises have been assigned.

The proposed change in method by which positions are placed on an assignment wheel will substantially reduce the system processing time needed to create the assignment wheel, and would thereby improve overall system efficiency. The proposed change to the skip interval formula will further refine the calculation. Truncating the calculated skip interval to produce a uniform skip interval that is less than the calculated interval may cause a slightly smaller number of exercises to be assigned to positions at the end of the wheel (*i.e.*, just before the random starting point).⁵ The proposed modification to the skip interval formula will lessen the effect of truncating the calculated skip interval

and will thereby smooth the distribution of assignments.

OCC believes that the proposed rule change is consistent with Section 17A of the Act because it enhances OCC's procedures for random assignment processing and therefore, helps to perfect the mechanism of a national system for the prompt and accurate clearance and settlement of securities transactions.

(B) Self-Regulatory Organization's Statement on Burden on Competition

OCC does not believe that the proposed rule change would impose any burden on competition.

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

Written comments were not and are not intended to be solicited with respect to the proposed rule change, and none have been received.

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

The Commission finds that the proposed rule change is consistent with the requirements of the Act and the rules and regulations thereunder and particularly with the requirements of Section 17A(b)(3)(F).⁶ Section 17A(b)(3)(F) requires that the rules of a clearing agency be designed to remove impediments to and perfect the mechanism for a national system for the prompt and accurate clearance and settlement of securities transactions. The Commission believes that the proposed rule change is consistent with this requirement because the changes to the skip interval calculation will improve the efficiency of OCC's assignment process and will result in a more uniform distribution of assignments among OCC's clearing members with short positions.

OCC has requested that the Commission approve this rule change prior to the thirtieth day after the date of publication of notice of the filing. The Commission finds good cause for approving the proposed rule change prior to the thirtieth day after publication of notice because by so approving OCC will be able to implement the necessary system changes in connection with other system changes which are scheduled for implementation in early November 2002.

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. Persons making written submissions should file six copies thereof with the Secretary, Securities and Exchange Commission, 450 Fifth Street NW, Washington, DC 20549-0609. 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 Section, 450 Fifth Street NW, Washington, DC 20549. Copies of such filing will also be available for inspection and copying at the principal office of OCC. All submissions should refer to the File No. SR-OCC-2002-19 and should be submitted by November 26, 2002.

V. 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 with the requirements of Section 17A of the Act and the rules and regulations thereunder applicable.

It is therefore ordered, pursuant to Section 19(b)(2) of the Act, that the proposed rule change (File No. SR-OCC-2002-19) be, and hereby is, approved.

For the Commission by the Division of Market Regulation, pursuant to delegated authority.⁷

Margaret H. McFarland,
Deputy Secretary.

[FR Doc. 02-28099 Filed 11-4-02; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 8010-01-P

SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION

Agreement on Social Security between the United States and Australia; Entry Into Force

AGENCY: Social Security Administration (SSA).

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Commissioner of Social Security gives notice that an agreement

⁵ Truncating is necessary because fractional contracts cannot be assigned.

⁶ 15 U.S.C. 78q-1(b)(3)(I).

⁷ 17 CFR 200.30-3(a)(12).

coordinating the United States (U.S.) and Australian social security programs entered into force on October 1, 2002. The agreement with Australia, which was signed on September 27, 2001, is similar to U.S. social security agreements already in force with 19 other countries—Austria, Belgium, Canada, Chile, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Korea (South), Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom. Agreements of this type are authorized by section 233 of the Social Security Act.

The U.S.-Australian agreement eliminates dual coverage and contributions under the U.S. Social Security program and the Australian program of mandatory employer retirement contributions known as “Superannuation Guarantee.” U.S. companies that employ U.S. citizens or residents in Australia have frequently been required to pay contributions with respect to the employees’ wages under both the U.S. Social Security program and Australia’s Superannuation Guarantee program. Australian companies with Australian employees working in the United States have frequently faced the same dual contribution obligation. Under the U.S.-Australian agreement, workers are covered under one program or the other, but not both, and contributions are only due under that one program. A worker who is sent by an employer in one country to work in the other country for 5 years or less remains covered only by the program of the sending country. The agreement includes additional rules that eliminate dual U.S. and Australian coverage in other work situations.

The agreement also helps eliminate situations where workers suffer a loss of benefit rights under the social security system of one or both countries because they have divided their careers between the two countries. Under the agreement, workers may qualify for partial social security benefits from each country based on combined credits from both countries.

Individuals who wish to obtain copies of the agreement or want more information about its provisions may write to the Social Security Administration, Office of International Programs, Post Office Box 17741, Baltimore, MD 21235-7741 or visit the Social Security Web site at www.ssa.gov/international.

Dated: October 28, 2002.

Jo Anne B. Barnhart,

Commissioner of Social Security.

[FR Doc. 02-28027 Filed 11-4-02; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4191-02-P

SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION

Social Security Ruling, SSR 02-2p; Titles II and XVI: Evaluation of Interstitial Cystitis

AGENCY: Social Security Administration.

ACTION: Notice of Social Security Ruling.

SUMMARY: In accordance with 20 CFR 402.35(b)(1), the Commissioner of Social Security gives notice of Social Security Ruling, SSR 02-2p. This Ruling clarifies the policies of the Social Security Administration for developing and evaluating title II and title XVI claims for disability on the basis of Interstitial Cystitis (IC). IC is a complex, chronic bladder disorder characterized by urinary frequency, urinary urgency, and pelvic pain.

EFFECTIVE DATE: November 5, 2002.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Carolyn Kiefer, Office of Disability, Social Security Administration, 6401 Security Boulevard, Baltimore, MD 21235-6401, (410) 965-9104. For information on eligibility or filing for benefits, call our national toll-free number 1-800-772-1213 or TTY 1-800-325-0778, or visit our Internet web site, Social Security Online, at <http://www.ssa.gov>.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Although we are not required to do so pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 552(a)(1) and (a)(2), we are publishing this Social Security Ruling in accordance with 20 CFR 402.35(b)(1).

Social Security Rulings make available to the public precedential decisions relating to the Federal old-age, survivors, disability, supplemental security income, and black lung benefits programs. Social Security Rulings may be based on case decisions made at all administrative levels of adjudication, Federal court decisions, Commissioner’s decisions, opinions of the Office of General Counsel, and policy interpretations of the law and regulations.

Although Social Security Rulings do not have the same force and effect as the statute or regulations, they are binding on all components of the Social Security Administration, in accordance with 20 CFR 402.35(b)(1), and are relied upon as precedents in adjudicating cases.

If this Social Security Ruling is later superseded, modified, or rescinded, we will publish a notice in the **Federal Register** to that effect.

(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance, Programs 96.001 Social Security—Disability Insurance; 96.006 Supplemental Security Income.)

Dated: October 25, 2002.

Jo Anne B. Barnhart,

Commissioner of Social Security.

Policy Interpretation Ruling

Titles II and XVI: Evaluation of Interstitial Cystitis

Purpose: To provide guidance on SSA policy concerning the development and evaluation of interstitial cystitis (IC) in disability claims filed under titles II and XVI of the Social Security Act (the Act).

Citations: Sections 216(i), 223(d), 223(f), 1614(a), and 1614(c) of the Act, as amended; Regulations No. 4, subpart P, sections 404.1502, 404.1505, 404.1508, 404.1509, 404.1511, 404.1512, 404.1513, 404.1520, 404.1520a, 404.1521, 404.1523, 404.1525, 404.1526, 404.1528, 404.1529, 404.1530, 404.1545, 404.1546, 404.1561, 404.1594, and appendix 1; and Regulations No. 16, subpart I, sections 416.902, 416.905, 416.906, 416.908, 416.909, 416.911, 416.912, 416.913, 416.920, 416.920a, 416.921, 416.923, 416.924, 416.925, 416.926, 416.926a, 416.928, 416.929, 416.930, 416.945, 416.946, 416.961, 416.994, and 416.994a.

Introduction: The Act and our implementing regulations require that an individual establish disability based on the existence of a medically determinable impairment; that is, one that can be shown by medical evidence, consisting of symptoms, signs, and laboratory findings. Disability may not be established on the basis of an individual’s statement of symptoms alone.

This Ruling explains that IC (a complex, chronic bladder disorder), when accompanied by appropriate symptoms, signs, and laboratory findings, is a medically determinable impairment that can be the basis for a finding of “disability.” It also provides guidance for the evaluation of claims involving IC.

Policy Interpretation

General

1. What Is IC?

IC is a complex, chronic bladder disorder characterized by urinary frequency, urinary urgency, and pelvic pain. IC occurs most frequently in women (about 10 times more often than in men), and sometimes prior to age 18. IC may be associated with other disorders, such as fibromyalgia, chronic fatigue syndrome, allergies, irritable bowel syndrome, inflammatory bowel