

with the Commission. The burden under either rule associated with adding this disclosure to written offering documents is minimal and is non-recurring. The foreign issuer, underwriter or broker-dealer can redraft an existing prospectus or other written offering material to add this disclosure statement, or may draft a sticker or supplement containing this disclosure to be added to existing offering materials. In either case, based on discussions with representatives of the Canadian fund industry, the staff estimates that it would take an average of 10 minutes per document to draft the requisite disclosure statement. The staff estimates the annual burden as a result of the disclosure requirements of rules 7d-2 and 237 as follows.

a. Rule 7d-2

The staff estimated that there are approximately 1,300 publicly offered Canadian funds that potentially would rely on the rule to offer securities to participants and sell securities to their Canadian retirement accounts without registering under the Investment Company Act. The staff estimates that approximately 65 (5 percent) additional Canadian funds may rely on the rule each year to offer securities to Canadian/U.S. Participants and sell securities to their Canadian retirement accounts, and that each of those funds, on average, distributes 3 different written offering documents concerning those securities, for a total of 195 offering documents. The staff therefore estimates that approximately 65 respondents would make 195 responses by adding the new disclosure statement to approximately 195 written offering documents. The staff therefore estimates that the annual burden associated with the rule 7d-2 disclosure requirement would be approximately 32.5 hours (195 offering documents \times 10 minutes per document). The total annual cost of these burden hours is estimated to be \$2,155.08 (32.5 hours \times \$66.31 per hour of professional time).⁴

b. Rule 237

Canadian issuers other than funds. The Commission understands that there are approximately 3,500 Canadian issuers other than funds that may rely on rule 237 to make an initial public offering of their securities to Canadian/

U.S. Participants.⁵ The staff estimates that in any given year approximately 35 (or 1 percent) of those issuers are likely to rely on rule 237 to make a public offering of their securities to participants, and that each of those 35 issuers, on average, distributes 3 different written offering documents concerning those securities, for a total of 105 offering documents.

The staff therefore estimates that during each year that rule 237 is in effect, approximately 35 respondents⁶ would be required to make 105 responses by adding the new disclosure statements to approximately 105 written offering documents. Thus, the staff estimates that the total annual burden associated with the rule 237 disclosure requirement would be approximately 17.5 hours (105 offering documents \times 10 minutes per document). The total annual cost of burden hours is estimated to be \$1,160.43 (17.5 hours \times \$66.31 hour of professional time).⁷

Other foreign issuers other than funds. In addition, issuers from foreign countries other than Canada could rely on rule 237 to offer securities to Canadian/U.S. Participants and sell securities to their accounts without becoming subject to the registration requirements of the Securities Act. Because Canadian law strictly limits the amount of foreign investments that may be held in a Canadian retirement account, however, the staff believes that the number of issuers from other countries that relies on rule 237, and that therefore is required to comply with the offering document disclosure requirements, is negligible.

These burden hour estimates are based upon the Commission staff's experience and discussions with the fund industry. The estimates of average burden hours are made solely for the purposes of the Paperwork Reduction Act. These estimates are not derived from a comprehensive or even a

representative survey or study of the costs of Commission rules.

Written comments are invited on: (a) Whether the collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the Commission, including whether the information has practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the Commission's estimate of the burdens of the collection of information; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information collected; and (d) ways to minimize the burdens of the collection of information on respondents, including through the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology. Consideration will be given to comments and suggestions submitted in writing within 60 days of this publication.

Please direct your written comments to R. Corey Booth, Director/Chief Information Officer, Office of Information Technology, Securities and Exchange Commission, 450 5th Street, NW., Washington, DC 20549.

Dated: March 31, 2005.

Margaret H. McFarland,

Deputy Secretary.

[FR Doc. E5-1666 Filed 4-11-05; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 8010-01-P

SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

Proposed Collection; Comment Request

Upon written request, copies available from: Securities and Exchange Commission, Office of Filings and Information Services, Washington, DC 20549.

Extension: Rule 17a-2, SEC File No. 270-189, OMB Control No. 3235-0201.

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") is soliciting comments on the collection of information summarized below. The Commission plans to submit this existing collection of information to the Office of Management and Budget for extension and approval.

Rule 17a-2 requires underwriters to maintain information regarding stabilizing activities, syndicate covering transactions, and penalty bids. The Commission estimates that 519 respondents collect information under Rule 17a-2 and that approximately 2,595 hours in the aggregate are required annually for these collections.

⁴ The Commission's estimate concerning the wage rate for professional time is based on salary information for the securities industry compiled by the Securities Industry Association. See Securities Industry Association, Report on Management and Professional Earnings in the Securities Industry 2003 (September 2003).

⁵ Canadian funds can rely on both rule 7d-2 and rule 237 to offer securities to participants and sell securities to their Canadian retirement accounts without violating the registration requirements of the Investment Company Act or the Securities Act. Rule 237, however, does not require any disclosure in addition to that required by rule 7d-2. Thus, the disclosure requirements of rule 237 do not impose any burden on Canadian funds in addition to the burden imposed by the disclosure requirements of rule 7d-2. To avoid double-counting this burden, the staff has excluded Canadian funds from the estimate of the hourly burden associated with rule 237.

⁶ This estimate of respondents also assumes that all respondents are foreign issuers. The number of respondents may be greater if foreign underwriters or broker-dealers draft a sticker or supplement to add the required disclosure to an existing offering document.

⁷ See supra note 4.

Written comments are invited on: (a) 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; (b) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden of the collection of information; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information collected; and (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents, including through the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology. Consideration will be given to comments and suggestions submitted in writing within 60 days of this publication.

Please direct your written comments to R. Corey Booth, Director/Chief Information Officer, Office of Information Technology, Securities and Exchange Commission, 450 5th Street, NW., Washington, DC 20549.

Dated: March 31, 2005.

Margaret H. McFarland,

Deputy Secretary.

[FR Doc. E5-1668 Filed 4-11-05; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 8010-01-P

SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

Proposed Extension of Existing Collection; Comment Request

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

Extension:

Rule 17a-13; SEC File No. 270-27; OMB Control No. 3235-0035.

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") is soliciting comments on the collection of information summarized below. The Commission plans to submit this existing collection of information to the Office of Management and Budget for extension and approval. The Code of Federal Regulations citation to this collection of information is the following rule: 17 CFR 240.17a-13 Quarterly Security Counts to be Made by Certain Exchange Members, Brokers, and Dealers.

Rule 17a-13(b) generally requires that at least once each calendar quarter, all registered brokers and dealers physically examine and count all securities held and account for all other securities not in their possession, but

subject to the broker-dealer's control or direction. Any discrepancies between the broker-dealer's securities count and the firm's records must be noted and, within seven days, the unaccounted for difference must be recorded in the firm's records. Rule 17a-13(c) provides that under specified conditions, the securities counts, examination and verification of the broker-dealer's entire list of securities may be conducted on a cyclical basis rather than on a certain date. Although Rule 17a-13 does not require filing a report with the Commission, security count discrepancies must be reported on Form X-17a-5 as required by Rule 17a-5. Rule 17a-13 exempts broker-dealers that limit their business to the sale and redemption of securities of registered investment companies and interests or participation in an insurance company separate account and those who solicit accounts for federally insured savings and loan associations, provided that such persons promptly transmit all funds and securities and hold no customer funds and securities.

The information obtained from Rule 17a-13 is used as an inventory control device to monitor a broker-dealer's ability to account for all securities held, in transfer, in transit, pledged, loaned, borrowed, deposited or otherwise subject to the firm's control or direction. Discrepancies between the securities counts and the broker-dealer's records alert the Commission and the Self Regulatory Organizations ("SROs") to those firms having problems in their back offices.

Currently, there are approximately 5,907 respondents that must comply with Rule 17a-13. However, given the variability in their businesses, it is difficult to quantify how many hours per year each respondent spends on the rule. As noted, the rule requires a respondent to account for all securities in its possession. Many respondents hold few, if any, securities; while others hold large quantities. Therefore, the time burden of complying with the rule will depend on respondent-specific factors, including size, number of customers, and proprietary trading activity. The staff estimates that the average time spent per respondent on the rule is 100 hours per year. This estimate takes into account the fact that more than half the 5,907 respondents—according to financial reports filed with the SEC—may spend little or no time in complying with the rule, given that they do not do a public securities business or do not hold inventories of securities. For these reasons, the staff estimates that the total compliance burden per year is 590,700 hours (5,907

respondents \times 100 hours/respondent). It should be noted that most broker-dealers would engage in the activities required by Rule 17a-13 even if they were not required to do so.

Written comments are invited on: (a) Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information shall have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information collected; and (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents, including through the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology. Consideration will be given to comments and suggestions submitted in writing within 60 days of this publication.

Please direct your written comments to R. Corey Booth, Director/CIO, Office of Information Technology, Securities and Exchange Commission, 450 5th Street, NW., Washington, DC 20549.

Dated: March 30, 2005.

Margaret H. McFarland,

Deputy Secretary.

[FR Doc. E5-1669 Filed 4-11-05; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 8010-01-P

SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

Proposed Collection; Comment Request

Upon written request, copies available from: Securities and Exchange Commission, Office of Filings and Information Services, Washington, DC 20549.

Extension:

Rule 17Ac3-1(a), SEC File No. 270-96, OMB Control No. 3235-0151; Form TA-W(1669), SEC File No. 270-96, OMB Control No. 3235-0151.

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") is soliciting comments on the collection of information summarized below. The Commission plans to submit this existing collection of information to the Office of Management and Budget for extension and approval.

Subsection (c)(4)(B) of Section 17A of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 ("Exchange Act") authorizes transfer agents registered with an appropriate regulatory agency ("ARA") to withdraw