

SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

[Release No. 34-51464; File No. SR-NYSE-2005-20]

Self-Regulatory Organizations; Notice of Filing and Immediate Effectiveness of Proposed Rule Change by the New York Stock Exchange, Inc. To Extend for Additional Four Months Its Pilot Program Permitting a Floor Broker To Use an Exchange Authorized and Provided Portable Telephone on the Exchange Floor

March 31, 2005.

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 March 11, 2005, the New York Stock Exchange, Inc. (“NYSE” 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 seeks to extend its pilot program that amends NYSE Rule 36 (Communication Between Exchange and Members’ Offices) to allow a Floor broker’s use of an Exchange authorized and provided portable telephone on the Exchange Floor upon approval by the Exchange (“Pilot”) for an additional four months, until July 31, 2005. The last extension of the Pilot was in effect on a four-month pilot basis expiring on March 31, 2005.³ The text of the proposed rule change is available on the Exchange’s Web site (<http://www.nyse.com>), at the Exchange’s principal office, 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 Exchange 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 these 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 Commission originally approved the Pilot to be implemented as a six-month pilot⁴ beginning no later than June 23, 2003.⁵ Since the inception of the Pilot, the Exchange has extended the Pilot three times, with the current Pilot expiring on March 31, 2005.⁶ The Exchange represents that no regulatory actions or administrative or technical problems, other than routine telephone maintenance issues, have resulted from the Pilot over the past few months.⁷ Therefore, the Exchange seeks to extend the Pilot for an additional four months, until July 31, 2005.

NYSE Rule 36 governs the establishment of telephone or electronic communications between the Exchange’s Trading Floor and any other location. Prior to the Pilot, NYSE Rule 36.20 prohibited the use of portable telephone communications between the Trading Floor and any off-Floor location, and the only way that voice communication could be conducted by Floor brokers between the Trading Floor and an off-Floor location was by means of a telephone located at a broker’s booth. These communications often involved a customer calling a broker at the booth for “market look” information. Prior to the Pilot, a broker could not use a portable phone at the point of sale in the trading crowd to

⁴ See Securities Exchange Act Release No. 47671 (April 11, 2003), 68 FR 19048 (April 17, 2003) (SR-NYSE-2002-11) (“Original Order”).

⁵ See Securities Exchange Act Release No. 47992 (June 5, 2003), 68 FR 35047 (June 11, 2003) (SR-NYSE-2003-19) (delaying the implementation date for portable phones from on or about May 1, 2003 to no later than June 23, 2003).

⁶ See Securities Exchange Act Release Nos. 48919 (December 12, 2003), 68 FR 70853 (December 19, 2003) (SR-NYSE-2003-38) (extending the Pilot for an additional six months ending on June 16, 2004); 49954 (July 1, 2004), 69 FR 41323 (July 8, 2004) (SR-NYSE-2004-30) (extending the Pilot for an additional five months ending on November 30, 2004); and 50777, *supra* note 3.

⁷ The Commission notes that the Exchange currently has not been receiving incoming telephone numbers from the telephone records of the Exchange authorized and provided portable telephones since the inception of the Pilot. Telephone conversation between Jeffrey Rosenstock, Senior Special Counsel, NYSE, and Cyndi N. Rodriguez, Special Counsel, Division of Market Regulation (“Division”), Commission, dated March 31, 2005.

speak with a person located off the Floor.

The Exchange proposes to extend the Pilot for an additional four months, expiring on July 31, 2005. The Pilot would amend NYSE Rule 36 to permit a Floor broker to use an Exchange authorized and issued portable telephone on the Floor. Thus, with the approval of the Exchange, a Floor broker would be permitted to engage in direct voice communication from the point of sale to an off-Floor location, such as a member firm’s trading desk or the office of one of the broker’s customers. Such communications would permit the broker to accept orders consistent with Exchange rules, provide status and oral execution reports as to orders previously received, as well as “market look” observations as have historically been routinely transmitted from a broker’s booth location. Use of a portable telephone on the Exchange Floor other than one authorized and issued by the Exchange would continue to be prohibited.

Furthermore, both incoming and outgoing calls would continue to be allowed, provided the requirements of all other Exchange rules have been met. Under NYSE Rule 123(e), a broker would not be permitted to represent and execute any order received as a result of such voice communication unless the order was first properly recorded by the member and entered into the Exchange’s Front End Systemic Capture (“FESC”) electronic database.⁸ In addition, Exchange rules require that any Floor broker receiving orders from the public over portable phones must be properly qualified to engage in such direct access business under NYSE Rules 342 and 345, among others.⁹

Furthermore, orders in Investment Company Units (as defined in Section 703.16 of Listed Company Manual), also known as Exchange-Traded Funds (“ETFs”), would also be subject to the same FESC requirements as orders in any other security listed on the Exchange.¹⁰ As a result, the Pilot would

⁸ See Securities Exchange Act Release No. 43689 (December 7, 2000), 65 FR 79145 (December 18, 2000) (SR-NYSE-98-25). See also Securities Exchange Act Release No. 44943 (October 16, 2001), 66 FR 53820 (October 24, 2001) (SR-NYSE-2001-39) (discussing certain exceptions to FESC, such as orders to offset an error or a bona fide arbitrage, which may be entered within 60 seconds after a trade is executed).

⁹ See Information Memos 01-41 (November 21, 2001), 01-18 (July 11, 2001) (available on <http://www.nyse.com/regulation.html>) and 91-25 (July 8, 1991) for more information regarding Exchange requirements for conducting a public business on the Exchange Floor.

¹⁰ Previously, under an exception to NYSE Rule 123(e), orders in ETFs could first be executed and then entered into FESC. However, in SR-NYSE-

¹ 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(1).

² 17 CFR 240.19b-4.

³ See Securities Exchange Act Release No. 50777 (December 1, 2004), 69 FR 71090 (December 8, 2004) (SR-NYSE-2004-67).

continue to allow for the use of portable phones for orders in ETFs.¹¹

The Exchange believes that an extension of the Pilot for an additional four months would enable the Exchange to provide more direct, efficient access to its trading crowds and customers, increase the speed of transmittal of orders and the execution of trades, and provide an enhanced level of service to customers in an increasingly competitive environment.¹² By enabling customers to speak directly to a Floor broker in a trading crowd on an Exchange authorized and issued portable telephone, the Exchange believes that the proposed rule change would expedite and make more direct the free flow of information which, prior to the Pilot, had to be transmitted somewhat more circuitously via the broker's booth.

In addition, NYSE Rule 36.20, both prior to the Pilot, and as proposed to be amended, would not apply to specialists who are prohibited from speaking from the post to upstairs trading desks or customers. The Exchange notes that specialists are subject to separate restrictions in NYSE Rule 36 on their ability to engage in voice communications from the specialist post to an off-Floor location.¹³

The Exchange represents that no regulatory actions or administrative or technical problems, other than routine telephone maintenance issues, have resulted from the Pilot since its inception.¹⁴ The Exchange believes that

¹¹ 2003–09, the Exchange eliminated the exception to NYSE Rule 123(e) for ETFs, and, as part of its proposal in SR-NYSE-2002-11, allowed the use of portable phones for orders in ETFs. See Securities Exchange Act Release No. 47667 (April 11, 2003), 68 FR 19063 (April 17, 2003). NYSE Rule 123(e) provides that all orders in any security traded on the Exchange be entered into FESC before they can be represented in the Exchange's auction market.

¹² Telephone conversation between Jeffrey Rosenstock, Senior Special Counsel, NYSE, and Cyndi N. Rodriguez, Special Counsel, Division, Commission, dated March 31, 2005.

¹³ See, e.g., Securities Exchange Act Release Nos. 43493 (October 30, 2000), 65 FR 67022 (November 8, 2000) (SR-CBOE-00-04) (expanding the Chicago Board Options Exchange, Inc.'s existing policy and rules governing the use of telephones at equity option trading posts by allowing for the receipt of orders over outside telephone lines from any source, directly at equity trading posts) and 43836 (January 11, 2001), 66 FR 6727 (January 22, 2001) (SR-PCX-00-33) (discussing and approving the Pacific Exchange, Inc.'s proposal to remove current prohibitions against Floor brokers' use of cellular or cordless phones to make calls to persons located off the trading floor).

¹⁴ See Securities Exchange Act Release No. 46560 (September 26, 2002), 67 FR 62088 (October 3, 2002) (SR-NYSE-00-31) (discussing restrictions on specialists' communications from the post).

the Pilot appears to be successful in that there is a reasonable degree of usage of portable phones, but as noted above, no regulatory, administrative, or other technical problems associated with their usage. The Exchange believes that the Pilot appears to facilitate communication on the Floor without any corresponding drawbacks. Therefore, the Exchange believes it is appropriate to extend the Pilot for an additional four months.

2. Statutory Basis

The Exchange believes that the proposed rule change is consistent with section 6(b) of the Act¹⁵ in general, and further the objectives of section 6(b)(5) of the Act¹⁶ 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. The Exchange believes that the amendment to NYSE Rule 36 would support the mechanism of free and open markets by providing for increased means by which communications to and from the Floor of the Exchange could take place.

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 that is 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

The Exchange has neither solicited nor received written comments on the proposed rule change.

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

Because the foregoing proposed rule change does not: (i) Significantly affect the protection of investors or the public interest; (ii) impose any significant burden on competition; and (iii) become operative for 30 days from the date on which it was filed, or such shorter time as the Commission may designate if consistent with the protection of investors and the public interest, it has become effective pursuant to section 19(b)(3)(A) of the Act¹⁷ and Rule 19b-4(f)(6) thereunder.¹⁸ At any time within

60 days of the filing of the proposed rule change, the 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.

The Exchange requests that the Commission waive the five-day pre-filing period and 30-day operative period under Rule 19b-4(f)(6)(iii).¹⁹ The Exchange believes that the continuation of the Pilot is in the public interest as it will avoid inconvenience and interruption to the public. The Commission has waived the five-day pre-filing requirement for this proposed rule change. In addition, the Commission believes that it is consistent with the protection of investors and the public interest to waive the 30-day operative delay and make this proposed rule change immediately effective upon filing on March 11, 2005.²⁰ The Commission believes that the waiver of the 30-day operative delay will allow the Exchange to continue, without interruption, the existing operation of its Pilot until July 31, 2005.

The Commission notes that proper surveillance is an essential component of any telephone access policy to an Exchange Trading Floor. Surveillance procedures should help to ensure that Floor brokers who are interacting with the public on portable phones are authorized to do so, as NYSE Rule 36 requires,²¹ and that orders are being handled in compliance with NYSE rules. The Commission expects the Exchange to actively review these procedures and address any potential concerns that have arisen during the extension of the Pilot. In this regard, the Commission notes that the Exchange should address whether telephone records, including incoming telephone records, are adequate for surveillance purposes.

The Commission also requests that the Exchange report any problems, surveillance, or enforcement matters associated with the Floor brokers' use of an Exchange authorized and provided portable telephone on the Floor. As stated in the Original Order, the NYSE should also address whether additional

¹⁹ 17 CFR 240.19b-4(f)(6)(iii).

²⁰ For purposes only of waiving the 30-day operative delay of this proposal, the Commission has considered the proposed rule's impact on efficiency, competition, and capital formation. 15 U.S.C. 78c(f).

²¹ See note 9 *supra* and accompanying text for other NYSE requirements that Floor brokers be properly qualified before doing public customer business.

¹⁵ 15 U.S.C. 78f(b).

¹⁶ 15 U.S.C. 78f(b)(5).

¹⁷ 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(3)(A).

¹⁸ 17 CFR 240.19b-4(f)(6).

surveillance would be needed because of the derivative nature of the ETFs. Furthermore, in any future additional filings on the Pilot, the Commission would expect that the NYSE submit information documenting the usage of the phones, any problems that have occurred, including, among other things, any regulatory actions or concerns, and any advantages or disadvantages that have resulted.

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-NYSE-2005-20 on the subject line.

Paper Comments

- Send paper comments in triplicate to Jonathan G. Katz, Secretary, Securities and Exchange Commission, 450 Fifth Street, NW., Washington, DC 20549-0609.

All submissions should refer to File Number SR-NYSE-2005-20. 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. Copies of such filing will also be available for inspection and copying at the principal office of NYSE. 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-NYSE-2005-20 and should

be submitted on or before April 28, 2005.

For the Commission, by the Division of Market Regulation, pursuant to delegated authority.²²

Jill M. Peterson,

Assistant Secretary.

[FR Doc. E5-1599 Filed 4-6-05; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 8010-01-P

SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

[Release No. 34-51454; File No. SR-ODD-2005-01]

Self-Regulatory Organizations; the Options Clearing Corporation; Order Granting Approval of Proposed Supplement to the Options Disclosure Document Regarding Volatility Options

March 30, 2005.

On March 29, 2005, the Options Clearing Corporation ("OCC") submitted to the Securities and Exchange Commission ("Commission"), pursuant to Rule 9b-1 under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 ("Act"),¹ five definitive copies of the supplement to its options disclosure document ("ODD") to accommodate trading of options on any index intended to measure the predicted volatility of the daily returns of a stock index.²

The ODD currently contains general disclosures on the characteristics and risks of trading standardized options. Recently, an options exchange amended its rules to permit trading of volatility options.³ This proposed supplement accommodates this change by amending the ODD to provide disclosure relating to indexes intended to measure the predicted volatility of the daily returns of a stock index ("volatility indexes") and options on such volatility indexes ("volatility options").⁴

Specifically, the proposed supplement amends existing general disclosure regarding the characteristics of indexes to include a description of the characteristics of volatility indexes. In addition, the proposed supplement adds a new section titled "Volatility Indexes." This new section is being

²² 17 CFR 200.30-3(a)(12).

¹ 17 CFR 240.9b-1.

² See letter from James R. McDaniel, Sidley Austin Brown & Wood LLP, to Sharon Lawson, Senior Special Counsel, Division of Market Regulation, Commission, dated March 23, 2005 ("OCC letter").

³ See Securities Exchange Act Release Nos. 49563 (April 14, 2004), 69 FR 21589 (April 21, 2004) (approving File No. SR-CBOE-2003-40), and 49698 (May 13, 2004), 69 FR 29152 (May 20, 2004) (approving File No. SR-CBOE-2004-09).

⁴ See OCC Letter, *supra* note 2.

added to the ODD to discuss in detail the characteristics of volatility indexes and volatility options.⁵ Finally, the proposed supplement amends the section of the ODD titled "Special Risks of Index Options" to include disclosure relating to the risks associated with the purchase and sale of volatility options.⁶

The Commission has reviewed the proposed supplement and finds that it complies with Rule 9b-1 under the Act.⁷ The proposed supplement is intended to be read in conjunction with the more general ODD, which, as described above, discusses the characteristics and risks of options generally.

Rule 9b-1(b)(2)(i) under the Act⁸ provides that an options market must file five copies of an amendment or supplement to the ODD with the Commission at least 30 days prior to the date definitive copies are furnished to customers, unless the Commission determines otherwise, having due regard to the adequacy of information disclosed and the public interest and protection of investors.⁹ In addition, five definitive copies shall be filed with the Commission not later than the date the amendment or supplement, or the amended options disclosure document, is furnished to customers. The Commission has reviewed the proposed supplement, and finds, having due regard to the adequacy of the information disclosed, it is consistent with the protection of investors and in the public interest to allow the distribution of this document as of the date of this order.

It is therefore ordered, pursuant to Rule 9b-1 under the Act,¹⁰ that the proposed supplement (SR-ODD-2005-01), which provides disclosure relating to volatility indexes and volatility options, is approved. The Commission has also determined that definitive

⁵ The Commission notes that the ODD will take existing disclosure on stock indexes and options on stock indexes and move it to a new, separate section titled "Stock Indexes."

⁶ The Commission notes that OCC must continue to ensure that the ODD is in compliance with the requirements of Rule 9b-1(b)(2)(i) under the Act, 17 CFR 240.9b-1(b)(2)(i), including when future changes relating to volatility indexes or volatility options are made. In addition, the Commission notes that any changes to the rules of the exchanges concerning volatility indexes or volatility options would need to be submitted to the Commission under Section 19(b) of the Act. 15 U.S.C. 78s(b).

⁷ 17 CFR 240.9b-1.

⁸ 17 CFR 240.9b-1(b)(2)(i).

⁹ This provision is intended to permit the Commission either to accelerate or extend the time period in which definitive copies of a disclosure document may be distributed to the public.

¹⁰ 17 CFR 240.9b-1.