

**SUMMARY:** This announcement of the membership of the National Science Foundation's Office of Inspector General and National Science Board Office Senior Executive Service Performance Review Board is made in compliance with 5 U.S.C. 4314(c)(4).

**ADDRESSES:** Comments should be addressed to Division Director, Division of Human Resource Management, National Science Foundation, Room 315, 4201 Wilson Boulevard, Arlington, VA 22230.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Dr. Judith S. Sunley at the above address or (703) 292-8180.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The membership of the National Science Board's Senior Executive Service Performance Review Board is as follows: Ruth David, Chair, Audit and Oversight Committee, National Science Board

Joanne Tornow, Head, Office of Information and Resource Management, and Chief Human Capital Officer

Plus two members to be selected from the IG community.

Dated: October 2, 2015.

**Judith S. Sunley,**

*Division Director, Division of Human Resource Management.*

[FR Doc. 2015-25722 Filed 10-8-15; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 7555-01-M**

## SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

[Release No. 34-76075; File No. SR-NSCC-2015-803]

### Self-Regulatory Organizations; National Securities Clearing Corporation; Notice of No Objection to Advance Notice Filing To Enhance NSCC's Margining Methodology as Applied to Family-Issued Securities of Certain NSCC Members

October 5, 2015.

National Securities Clearing Corporation ("NSCC") filed on August 14, 2015 with the Securities and Exchange Commission ("Commission") advance notice SR-NSCC-2015-803 ("Advance Notice") pursuant to Section 806(e)(1) of the Payment, Clearing, and Settlement Supervision Act of 2010 ("Payment, Clearing and Settlement Supervision Act")<sup>1</sup> and Rule 19b-

<sup>1</sup> 12 U.S.C. 5465(e)(1). The Financial Stability Oversight Council designated NSCC a systemically important financial market utility on July 18, 2012. See Financial Stability Oversight Council 2012 Annual Report, Appendix A, <http://www.treasury.gov/initiatives/fsoc/Documents/2012%20Annual%20Report.pdf>. Therefore, NSCC is required to comply with the Payment, Clearing

4(n)(1)(i)<sup>2</sup> under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 ("Exchange Act") to change its margin charge with respect to a member's positions in securities that are issued by such member or its affiliate (*i.e.*, "family-issued securities") by excluding positions in these securities, when the member is on NSCC's Watch List,<sup>3</sup> from its volatility margining model. The Advance Notice was published for comment in the **Federal Register** on September 17, 2015.<sup>4</sup> The Commission did not receive any comments on the Advance Notice. This publication serves as notice of no objection to the Advance Notice.

#### I. Description of the Advance Notice

As described by NSCC in the Advance Notice, NSCC has proposed to enhance its margin methodology as applied to the family-issued securities of its members that are on its Watch List<sup>5</sup> by excluding these securities from the volatility component, or "VaR" charge, and then charging an amount calculated by multiplying the absolute value of the long net unsettled positions in that member's family-issued securities by a percentage that is no less than 40%. The haircut rate to be charged will be determined based on the member's rating on the credit risk rating matrix and the type of family-issued security submitted to NSCC. Fixed income securities that are family-issued securities will be charged a haircut rate of no less than 80% for firms that are rated 6 or 7 on the credit risk rating matrix, and no less than 40% for firms that are rated 5 on the credit risk rating matrix; and equity securities that are

and Settlement Supervision Act and file advance notices with the Commission. See 12 U.S.C. 5465(e).

<sup>2</sup> 17 CFR 240.19b-4(n)(1)(i).

<sup>3</sup> As part of its ongoing monitoring of its membership, NSCC utilizes an internal credit risk rating matrix to rate its risk exposures to its members based on a scale from 1 (the strongest) to 7 (the weakest). Members that fall within the weakest three rating categories (*i.e.*, 5, 6, and 7) are placed on NSCC's "Watch List" and, as provided under NSCC's Rules and Procedures ("Rules"), may be subject to enhanced surveillance or additional margin charges. See Section 4 of Rule 2B and Section I(B)(1) of Procedure XV of NSCC's Rules, available at [http://dtcc.com/~media/Files/Downloads/legal/rules/nsc\\_rules.pdf](http://dtcc.com/~media/Files/Downloads/legal/rules/nsc_rules.pdf).

<sup>4</sup> See Securities Exchange Act Release No. 75899 (September 11, 2015), 80 FR 55883 (September 17, 2015) (File No. SR-NSCC-2015-803). NSCC also filed a proposed rule change with the Commission pursuant to Section 19(b)(1) of the Exchange Act and Rule 19b-4 thereunder, seeking approval of changes to its Rules necessary to implement the Advance Notice. 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(1) and 17 CFR 240.19b-4, respectively. This proposed rule change was published in the **Federal Register** on September 2, 2015. Securities Exchange Act Release No. 75768 (August 27, 2015), 80 FR 53219 (September 2, 2015) (SR-NSCC-2015-003).

<sup>5</sup> See Section 4 of Rule 2B and Section I(B)(1) of Procedure XV of NSCC's Rules, *supra* Note 3.

family-issued securities will be charged a haircut rate of 100% for firms that are rated 6 or 7 on the credit risk rating matrix, and no less than 50% for firms that are rated 5 on the credit risk rating matrix. NSCC will have the authority to adjust these haircut rates from time to time within these parameters as described in Procedure XV of NSCC's Rules without filing a proposed rule change with the Commission pursuant to Section 19(b)(1) of the Exchange Act,<sup>6</sup> and the rules thereunder, or an advance notice with the Commission pursuant to Section 806(e)(1) of the Payment, Clearing and Settlement Supervision Act,<sup>7</sup> and the rules thereunder.

As described by NSCC in the Advance Notice, NSCC, as a central counterparty ("CCP"), occupies an important role in the securities settlement system by interposing itself between counterparties to financial transactions and thereby reducing the risk faced by participants and contributing to global financial stability. The effectiveness of a CCP's risk controls and the adequacy of its financial resources are critical to achieving these risk-reducing goals. In that context, NSCC continuously reviews its margining methodology in order to ensure the reliability of its margining in achieving the desired coverage. In order to be most effective, NSCC must take into consideration the risk characteristics specific to certain securities when margining those securities.

Among the various risks that NSCC considers when evaluating the effectiveness of its margining methodology are its counterparty risks and identification and mitigation of "wrong-way" risk, particularly specific wrong-way risk, defined as the risk that an exposure to a counterparty is highly likely to increase when the creditworthiness of that counterparty deteriorates.<sup>8</sup> NSCC has identified an exposure to wrong-way risk when it acts as a CCP to a member with respect to positions in securities that are issued by that member or that member's affiliate. These positions are referred to as "family-issued securities." In the event that a member with unsettled long positions in family-issued securities defaults, NSCC would close out those positions following a likely drop in the

<sup>6</sup> 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(1).

<sup>7</sup> 12 U.S.C. 5465(e)(1).

<sup>8</sup> See *Principles for financial market infrastructures*, issued by the Committee on Payment and Settlement Systems and the Technical Committee of the International Organization of Securities Commissions 47 n.65 (April 2012), available at <http://www.bis.org/publ/cpss101a.pdf>.

credit-worthiness of the issuer, possibly resulting in a loss to NSCC.

Therefore, the overall impact of NSCC's proposal, as described above, on risks presented by NSCC will be to reduce NSCC's exposure to this type of wrong-way risk by enhancing its margin methodology as applied to the family-issued securities of its members that are on its Watch List, and present a heightened credit risk to the clearing agency or have demonstrated higher risk related to their ability to meet settlement. NSCC believes a reduction in its exposures to wrong-way risk through a margining methodology that more effectively captures the risk characteristics of these positions will contribute to the goal of maintaining financial stability in the event of a member default and reduce systemic risk overall. Because NSCC members that are on its Watch List present a heightened credit risk to the clearing agency or have demonstrated higher risk related to their ability to meet settlement, NSCC believes that this charge will more effectively capture the risk characteristics of these positions and can help mitigate NSCC's exposure to wrong-way risk.

NSCC stated in the Advance Notice that it will continue to evaluate its exposures to wrong-way risk, specifically wrong-way risk presented by family-issued securities, including by reviewing the impact of expanding the application of the proposed margining methodology to the family-issued securities of those members that are not on the Watch List. NSCC is proposing to apply the enhanced margining methodology to the family-issued securities of members that are on the Watch List at this time because, as stated above, these members present a heightened credit risk to the clearing agency or have demonstrated higher risk related to their ability to meet settlement. As such, there is a clear and more urgent need to address NSCC's exposure to wrong-way risk presented by these firms' family-issued securities. However, any future change to the margining methodology as applied to the family-issued securities of members that are not on the Watch List would be subject to a separate proposed rule change pursuant to Section 19(b)(1) of the Exchange Act,<sup>9</sup> and the rules thereunder and an advance notice pursuant to Section 806(e)(1) of the Payment, Clearing and Settlement Supervision Act,<sup>10</sup> and the rules thereunder.

## II. Discussion and Commission Findings

Although the Payment, Clearing and Settlement Supervision Act does not specify a standard of review for an advance notice, the Commission believes that the stated purpose of the Payment, Clearing and Settlement Supervision Act is instructive.<sup>11</sup> The stated purpose of the Payment, Clearing and Settlement Supervision Act is to mitigate systemic risk in the financial system and promote financial stability by, among other things, promoting uniform risk management standards for systemically important financial market utilities and strengthening the liquidity of systemically important financial market utilities.<sup>12</sup>

Section 805(a)(2) of the Payment, Clearing and Settlement Supervision Act<sup>13</sup> authorizes the Commission to prescribe risk management standards for the payment, clearing, and settlement activities of designated clearing entities and financial institutions engaged in designated activities for which it is the supervisory agency or the appropriate financial regulator. Section 805(b) of the Payment, Clearing and Settlement Supervision Act<sup>14</sup> states that the objectives and principles for the risk management standards prescribed under Section 805(a) shall be to:

- Promote robust risk management;
- promote safety and soundness;
- reduce systemic risks; and
- support the stability of the broader financial system.

The Commission has adopted risk management standards under Section 805(a)(2) of the Payment, Clearing and Settlement Supervision Act ("Clearing Agency Standards") and the Exchange Act.<sup>15</sup> The Clearing Agency Standards became effective on January 2, 2013, and require registered clearing agencies to establish, implement, maintain, and enforce written policies and procedures that are reasonably designed to meet certain minimum requirements for their operations and risk management practices on an ongoing basis.<sup>16</sup> As such, it is appropriate for the

Commission to review advance notices against these Clearing Agency Standards, and the objectives and principles of these risk management standards as described in Section 805(b) of the Payment, Clearing and Settlement Supervision Act.<sup>17</sup>

The Commission believes the proposal in the Advance Notice is consistent with the objectives and principles described in Section 805(b) of the Payment, Clearing and Settlement Supervision Act,<sup>18</sup> and the Clearing Agency Standards, in particular, Rule 17Ad-22(b)(1)<sup>19</sup> and Rule 17Ad-22(b)(2)<sup>20</sup> under the Exchange Act, as described in detail below.

*Consistency with Section 805(b) of the Act.* The objectives and principles of Section 805(b) of the Payment, Clearing and Settlement Supervision Act are to promote robust risk management, promote safety and soundness, reduce systemic risks, and support the stability of the broader financial system.<sup>21</sup> By enhancing the margin methodology applied to family-issued securities of members that are on NSCC's Watch List, the proposal will assist NSCC in collecting margin that more accurately reflects NSCC's exposure to a clearing member that clears family-issued securities and will assist NSCC in its continuous efforts to improve the reliability and effectiveness of its risk-based margining methodology by taking into account specific wrong-way risk. As such, the proposal will help NSCC, as a CCP, promote robust risk management, and thus contributing to the goal of maintaining financial stability in the event of a member default.

*Consistency with Rule 17Ad-22(b)(1).* Rule 17Ad-22(b)(1)<sup>22</sup> under the Exchange Act requires a CCP, such as NSCC, to "establish, implement, maintain and enforce written policies and procedures reasonably designed to . . . limit its exposures to potential losses from defaults by its participants under normal market conditions . . . ." NSCC faces specific wrong-way risk in all circumstances where a member submits family-issued securities to NSCC for clearance, including under normal market conditions. By enhancing the margin methodology applied to family-issued securities of NSCC's members that are on its Watch List, the proposal will limit NSCC's exposure to potential losses from the

<sup>11</sup> See 12 U.S.C. 5461(b).

<sup>12</sup> *Id.*

<sup>13</sup> 12 U.S.C. 5464(a)(2).

<sup>14</sup> 12 U.S.C. 5464(b).

<sup>15</sup> 17 CFR 240.17Ad-22.

<sup>16</sup> The Clearing Agency Standards are substantially similar to the risk management standards established by the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System governing the operations of designated financial market utilities that are not clearing entities and financial institutions engaged in designated activities for which the Commission or the Commodity Futures Trading Commission is the Supervisory Agency. See Financial Market Utilities, 77 FR 45907 (August 2, 2012).

<sup>17</sup> 12 U.S.C. 5464(b).

<sup>18</sup> *Id.*

<sup>19</sup> 17 CFR 240.17Ad-22(b)(1).

<sup>20</sup> 17 CFR 240.17Ad-22(b)(2).

<sup>21</sup> 12 U.S.C. 5464(b).

<sup>22</sup> 17 CFR 240.17Ad-22(b)(1).

<sup>9</sup> 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(1).

<sup>10</sup> 12 U.S.C. 5465(e)(1).

default of a member on NSCC's Watch List with family-issued securities under normal market conditions. As such, the Commission believes that the proposal is consistent with Rule 17Ad-22(b)(1).

*Consistency with Rule 17Ad-22(b)(2).* Rule 17Ad-22(b)(2)<sup>23</sup> under the Exchange Act requires a CCP, such as NSCC, to "establish, implement, maintain and enforce written policies and procedures reasonably designed to . . . [u]se margin requirements to limit its credit exposures to participants under normal market conditions and use risk-based models and parameters to set margin requirements . . ." By enhancing the margin methodology applied to family-issued securities of NSCC's members that are on its Watch List, the proposal will better account for and cover NSCC's credit exposure to less creditworthy members. In addition, by taking into account specific wrong-way risk arising from family-issued securities submitted to NSCC, the proposal is consistent with using risk based models and parameters to set margin requirements. As such, the Commission believes that the proposal is consistent with Rule 17Ad-22(b)(2).

### III. Conclusion

*It is therefore noticed*, pursuant to Section 806(e)(1)(I) of the Payment, Clearing and Settlement Supervision Act,<sup>24</sup> that the Commission *does not object* to Advance Notice and that NSCC is *authorized* to implement the proposal.

By the Commission.

**Robert W. Errett,**

*Deputy Secretary.*

[FR Doc. 2015-25700 Filed 10-8-15; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 8011-01-P**

## SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

[Release No. 34-76081; File No. 265-29]

### Equity Market Structure Advisory Committee

**AGENCY:** Securities and Exchange Commission.

**ACTION:** Notice of meeting.

**SUMMARY:** The Securities and Exchange Commission Equity Market Structure Advisory Committee is providing notice that it will hold a public meeting on Tuesday, October 27, 2015, in Multi-Purpose Room LL-006 at the Commission's headquarters, 100 F Street NE., Washington, DC. The meeting will begin at 9:30 a.m. (EDT) and will

be open to the public, except for a period of approximately 60 minutes when the Committee will meet in an administrative work session during lunch. The public portions of the meeting will be webcast on the Commission's Web site at [www.sec.gov](http://www.sec.gov). Persons needing special accommodations to take part because of a disability should notify the contact person listed below. The public is invited to submit written statements to the Committee. The meeting will focus on Rule 610 of SEC Regulation NMS and the regulatory structure of trading venues.

**DATES:** The public meeting will be held on Tuesday, October 27, 2015. Written statements should be received on or before October 22, 2015.

**ADDRESSES:** The meeting will be held at the Commission's headquarters, 100 F Street NE., Washington, DC. Written statements may be submitted by any of the following methods:

#### *Electronic Statements*

- Use the Commission's Internet submission form (<http://www.sec.gov/rules/other.shtml>); or
- Send an email message to [rule-comments@sec.gov](mailto:rule-comments@sec.gov). Please include File Number 265-29 on the subject line; or

#### *Paper Statements*

- Send paper statements in triplicate to Brent J. Fields, Federal Advisory Committee Management Officer, Securities and Exchange Commission, 100 F Street NE., Washington, DC 20549-1090.

All submissions should refer to File No. 265-29. This file number should be included on the subject line if email is used. To help us process and review your statement more efficiently, please use only one method. The Commission will post all statements on the Commission's Internet Web site at SEC Web site at (<http://www.sec.gov/comments/265-29/265-29.shtml>).

Statements also will be available for Web site viewing and printing in the Commission's Public Reference Room, 100 F Street NE., Room 1580, Washington, DC 20549, on official business days between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. All statements received will be posted without change; we do not edit personal identifying information from submissions. You should submit only information that you wish to make available publicly.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Arisa Tinaves Kettig, Special Counsel, at (202) 551-5676, Division of Trading and Markets, Securities and Exchange

Commission, 100 F Street NE., Washington, DC 20549-7010.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** In accordance with Section 10(a) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act, 5 U.S.C.—App. 1, and the regulations thereunder, Stephen Luparello, Designated Federal Officer of the Committee, has ordered publication of this notice.

Dated: October 6, 2015.

**Brent J. Fields,**

*Committee Management Officer.*

[FR Doc. 2015-25759 Filed 10-8-15; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 8011-01-P**

## SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

[Release No. 34-76078; File No. SR-FINRA-2015-020]

### Self-Regulatory Organizations; Financial Industry Regulatory Authority, Inc.; Order Approving a Proposed Rule Change, as Amended by Amendment No. 1, To Expand FINRA's Alternative Trading System Transparency Initiative by Publishing OTC Equity Volume Executed Outside ATSS

October 5, 2015.

#### I. Introduction

On June 23, 2015, the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority, Inc. ("FINRA") filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission ("Commission"), pursuant to Section 19(b)(1) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 ("Act")<sup>1</sup> and Rule 19b-4 thereunder,<sup>2</sup> a proposed rule change to amend Rule 6110, Trading Otherwise than on an Exchange and 6610 regarding the OTC Reporting Facility to expand FINRA's alternative trading system ("ATS") transparency initiative. The changes would provide for publication of the remaining equity volume executed over-the-counter ("OTC") by FINRA members, including activity in non-ATS electronic trading systems and internalized trades. The proposed rule change was published for comment in the **Federal Register** on July 9, 2015.<sup>3</sup> The Commission received two comments on the proposal.<sup>4</sup> FINRA

<sup>1</sup> 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(1).

<sup>2</sup> 17 CFR 240.19b-4.

<sup>3</sup> See Securities Exchange Act Release No. 75356 (July 2, 2015), 80 FR 39463 ("Notice"). The Notice contains a detailed description of the proposal.

<sup>4</sup> See letter from Kerry Baker Relf, Head of Content Acquisition and Rights Management, Thomson Reuters to Brent J. Fields, Secretary, Commission, dated July 20, 2015, ("Thomson Reuters Letter") and letter from Theodore R. Lazo, Managing Director and Associate General Counsel,

<sup>23</sup> 17 CFR 240.17Ad-22(b)(2).

<sup>24</sup> 12 U.S.C. 5465(e)(1)(I).