

SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
(Release No. 73927; File No. SR-Phlx-2014-80)

December 23, 2014

Self-Regulatory Organizations; NASDAQ OMX PHLX LLC; Notice of Filing and Immediate Effectiveness of Proposed Rule Change Relating to Strategy Fee Caps

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 December 18, 2014, NASDAQ OMX PHLX LLC (“Phlx” or “Exchange”) filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission (“SEC” or “Commission”) the proposed rule change as described in Items I, II, and III, 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 the Substance of the Proposed Rule Change

The Exchange proposes to amend Strategy Fee Caps which are currently located in the Exchange Fee Schedule at Section II, entitled “Multiply Listed Options.”

While changes to the Pricing Schedule pursuant to this proposal are effective upon filing, the Exchange has designated the proposed amendment to be operative on January 2, 2015.

The text of the proposed rule change is available on the Exchange’s website at <http://nasdaqomxphlx.cchwallstreet.com/>, at the principal office of the Exchange, 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

¹ 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(1).

² 17 CFR 240.19b-4.

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 purpose of this filing is to amend the Strategy Fee Caps which are currently located in Section II, entitled "Multiply Listed Options."³ Today, the Exchange caps transaction fees for certain dividend,⁴ merger,⁵ short stock interest,⁶ reversal and conversion,⁷ jelly roll⁸ and box spread⁹ floor option transaction strategies.

³ This includes options overlying equities, ETFs, ETNs and indexes which are Multiply Listed.

⁴ A dividend strategy is defined as transactions done to achieve a dividend arbitrage involving the purchase, sale and exercise of in-the-money options of the same class, executed the first business day prior to the date on which the underlying stock goes ex-dividend.

⁵ A merger strategy is defined as transactions done to achieve a merger arbitrage involving the purchase, sale and exercise of options of the same class and expiration date, executed the first business day prior to the date on which shareholders of record are required to elect their respective form of consideration, i.e., cash or stock.

⁶ A short stock interest strategy is defined as transactions done to achieve a short stock interest arbitrage involving the purchase, sale and exercise of in-the-money options of the same class.

⁷ Reversal and conversion strategies are transactions that employ calls and puts of the same strike price and the underlying stock. Reversals are established by combining a short stock position with a short put and a long call position that shares the same strike and expiration. Conversions employ long positions in the underlying stock that accompany long puts and short calls sharing the same strike and expiration.

⁸ A jelly roll strategy is defined as transactions created by entering into two separate positions simultaneously. One position involves buying a put and selling a call with the

Today, fees paid by Specialist,¹⁰ Market Maker,¹¹ Professional,¹² Firm¹³ and Broker-Dealer¹⁴ for floor option transaction in Multiply Listed Options are capped at \$1,250 for dividend, merger and short stock interest strategies executed on the same trading day in the same options class when such members are trading in their own proprietary accounts. The Exchange proposes to increase this cap from \$1,250 to \$1,500. The Exchange will continue to cap at \$700 the fees paid by Specialist, Market Maker, Professional, Firm and Broker-Dealer for reversal and conversion, jelly roll and box spread floor option transaction strategies that are executed on the same trading day in the same options class.

Today, the Exchange further separately caps dividend, merger, short stock interest, reversal and conversion, jelly roll and box spread floor option transaction strategies in Multiply Listed Options, combined in a month when trading in their own proprietary accounts (“Monthly

same strike price and expiration. The second position involves selling a put and buying a call, with the same strike price, but with a different expiration from the first position.

⁹ A box spread strategy is a strategy that synthesizes long and short stock positions to create a profit. Specifically, a long call and short put at one strike is combined with a short call and long put at a different strike to create synthetic long and synthetic short stock positions, respectively.

¹⁰ A “Specialist” is an Exchange member who is registered as an options specialist pursuant to Rule 1020(a).

¹¹ A “Market Maker” includes Registered Options Traders (Rule 1014(b)(i) and (ii)), which includes Streaming Quote Traders (see Rule 1014(b)(ii)(A)) and Remote Streaming Quote Traders (see Rule 1014(b)(ii)(B)). Directed Participants are also market makers.

¹² The term “Professional” means any person or entity that (i) is not a broker or dealer in securities, and (ii) places more than 390 orders in listed options per day on average during a calendar month for its own beneficial account(s). See Rule 1000(b)(14).

¹³ The term “Firm” applies to any transaction that is identified by a member or member organization for clearing in the Firm range at OCC.

¹⁴ The term “Broker-Dealer” applies to any transaction which is not subject to any of the other transaction fees applicable within a particular category.

Strategy Cap”), at \$50,000.¹⁵ The Exchange proposes to increase the Monthly Strategy Cap from \$50,000 to \$60,000.

Despite the increased caps proposed herein, the Exchange believes that offering members and member organizations the opportunity to continue to cap transaction fees will benefit Phlx members and the Phlx market by encouraging members to transact greater liquidity.

2. Statutory Basis

The Exchange believes that the proposed rule change is consistent with the provisions of Section 6 of the Act,¹⁶ in general, and with Section 6(b)(4) and 6(b)(5) of the Act,¹⁷ in particular, in that it provides for the equitable allocation of reasonable dues, fees and other charges among members and issuers and other persons using any facility or system which the Exchange operates or controls, and is not designed to permit unfair discrimination between customers, issuers, brokers, or dealers.

The Exchange believes that increasing the fee cap for dividend, merger and short stock interest strategies from \$1,250 to \$1,500 is reasonable because the Exchange desires to continue to incentivize market participants to transact dividend, merger and short stock interest floor

¹⁵ Reversal and conversion, jelly roll and box spread strategy executions are not included in the Monthly Strategy Cap for a Firm. Reversal and conversion, jelly roll and box spread strategy executions (as defined in this Section II) are included in the Monthly Firm Fee Cap. All dividend, merger, short stock interest, reversal and conversion, jelly roll and box spread strategy executions (as defined in this Section II) are excluded from the Monthly Market Maker Cap. Firms are subject to a maximum fee of \$75,000 (“Monthly Firm Fee Cap”). Specialists and Market Makers are subject to a “Monthly Market Maker Cap” of \$550,000 for: (i) electronic and floor Option Transaction Charges; (ii) QCC Transaction Fees (as defined in Exchange Rule 1080(o) and Floor QCC Orders, as defined in 1064(e)); and (iii) fees related to an order or quote that is contra to a PIXL Order or specifically responding to a PIXL auction.

¹⁶ 15 U.S.C. 78f.

¹⁷ 15 U.S.C. 78f(b)(4) and (5).

option transactions in Multiply Listed Options and believes this proposal will continue to offer Specialists, Market Makers, Professionals, Firms and Broker-Dealers competitive fee caps

The Exchange believes that increasing the fee cap for dividend, merger and short stock interest strategies from \$1,250 to \$1,500 is equitable and not unfairly discriminatory because the Exchange is offering the fee cap for floor option transaction charges in Multiply Listed Options to all market participants that pay transaction fees for these strategies in a uniform manner. Customers are not assessed transaction fees for these types of strategies.

The Exchange believes that continuing to offer a lower fee cap (\$700) for reversal and conversion, jelly roll and box spread strategies and not requiring that the transactions be executed in the member's own proprietary account, as compared to other dividend, merger and short stock interest strategy executions, which have a higher cap (\$1,500, as proposed) and require members execute transactions in their own proprietary accounts, is equitable and not unfairly discriminatory because the Exchange believes this incentive is necessary to create further trading opportunities for members on the Exchange's trading floor and is being offered uniformly to all floor members. The Exchange believes a similar incentive is not necessary for dividend, merger and short stock interest strategies. Also, today, the cap is higher for dividend, merger and short stock interest strategies (\$1,250 as compared to \$700). In addition, the Exchange believes that it is equitable and not unfairly discriminatory to continue to require that all fee cap strategies, which combine executions for purposes of the Monthly Strategy Cap, must be traded in a member's own proprietary account.

The Exchange's proposal to increase the Monthly Strategy Cap from \$50,000 to \$60,000 is reasonable because the Exchange seeks to continue to incentivize members to transact a greater number of strategies on the Exchange to benefit from the fee cap, despite the increase to the cap.

The Exchange's proposal to increase the Monthly Strategy Cap from \$50,000 to \$60,000 is equitable and not unfairly discriminatory because the Exchange would offer members the opportunity to cap their floor equity options transaction in Multiply Listed Options fees for all strategies. Customers are excluded because they are not assessed a floor Options Transaction Charge.¹⁸ Excluding Firm floor options transaction in Multiply Listed Options related to reversal and conversion, jelly roll and box spread strategies from the Monthly Strategy Cap is reasonable, equitable and not unfairly discriminatory because these fees would continue to be capped as part of the Monthly Firm Fee Cap, which applies only to Firms. The Exchange believes that the exclusion of Firm floor options transaction charges in Multiply Listed Options related to reversal and conversion, jelly roll and box spread strategies from the Monthly Strategy Cap is equitable and not unfairly discriminatory because Firms, unlike other market participants, have the ability to cap transaction fees up to \$75,000 per month. The Exchange would include floor option transaction charges related to reversal and conversion, jelly roll and box spread strategies in the Monthly Strategy Cap for Professionals, and Broker Dealers, when such members are trading in their own proprietary accounts, because these market participants are not subject to the Monthly Firm Fee Cap or other similar cap. While Specialists and Market Makers are subject to a Monthly Market Maker Cap on both electronic and floor options transaction charges, reversal and conversion, jelly roll and box spread transactions are excluded from the Monthly Market Maker Cap.¹⁹ For the reasons described above, the Exchange believes continuing to include reversal and conversion, jelly roll and box spread strategies in the Monthly Firm Fee Cap is reasonable, equitable and not unfairly discriminatory because the cap

¹⁸ See Section II of the Pricing Schedule.

¹⁹ Id.

provides an incentive for Firms to transact floor transactions on the Exchange, which brings increased liquidity and order flow to the floor for the benefit of all market participants.²⁰

The Exchange believes that its proposal to continue to apply strategy fee caps to orders originating from the Exchange floor is reasonable because members pay floor brokers to execute trades on the Exchange floor. The Exchange believes that offering fee caps to members executing floor transactions would defray brokerage costs associated with executing strategy transactions and continue to incentivize members to utilize the floor for certain executions.²¹ The Exchange believes that its proposal to continue to apply the fee caps to orders originating from the Exchange floor is equitable and not unfairly discriminatory because today, the fee caps are only applicable for floor transactions. The Exchange believes that a requirement that both the buy and sell sides of the order originate from the floor to qualify for the fee cap constitutes equal treatment of members.

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 not necessary or appropriate in furtherance of the purposes of the Act because the proposed changes apply uniformly to all members that incur transaction charges.²² The Exchange believes the proposal is consistent with robust competition and does not provide any unnecessary burden on competition. Further, floor members pay floor brokers to execute trades on the Exchange floor. The Exchange believes that offering fee caps to members executing floor transactions and not

²⁰ Firms are eligible to cap floor options transactions charges and QCC Transaction Fees as part of the Monthly Firm Fee Cap. QCC Transaction Fees apply to QCC Orders as defined in Exchange Rule 1080(o) and Floor QCC Orders as defined in 1064(e). See Section II of the Pricing Schedule.

²¹ The Exchange's proposal would only apply the fee cap to options transaction charges where buy and sell sides originate from the Exchange floor. See proposed rule text in Section II of the Pricing Schedule.

²² Customers are not assessed options transaction charges in Section II of the Pricing Schedule.

electronic executions does not create an unnecessary burden on competition because the fee caps defray brokerage costs associated with executing strategy transactions. Also, requiring that both the buy and sell sides of the order originate from the floor to qualify for the fee cap constitutes equal treatment of members.

The Exchange operates in a highly competitive market, comprised of twelve exchanges, in which market participants can easily and readily direct order flow to competing venues if they deem fee levels at a particular venue to be excessive or rebates to be inadequate. Accordingly, the fees that are assessed and the rebates paid by the Exchange, as described in the proposal, are influenced by these robust market forces and therefore must remain competitive with fees charged and rebates paid by other venues and therefore must continue to be reasonable and equitably allocated to those members that opt to direct orders to the Exchange rather than competing venues.

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

No written comments were either solicited or received.

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

The foregoing rule change has become effective pursuant to Section 19(b)(3)(A)(ii) of the Act.²³ At any time within 60 days of the filing of the proposed rule change, the Commission summarily may temporarily suspend 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. If the Commission takes such action, the Commission shall institute proceedings to determine whether the proposed rule should be approved or disapproved.

²³ 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(3)(A)(ii).

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-Phlx-2014-80 on the subject line.

Paper comments:

- Send paper comments in triplicate to Secretary, Securities and Exchange Commission, 100 F Street, NE, Washington, DC 20549-1090.

All submissions should refer to File Number SR-Phlx-2014-80. 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 website (<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 website viewing and printing in the Commission's Public Reference Room, 100 F Street, NE, Washington, D.C. 20549 on official business days between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. Copies of such filing also will be available for inspection and copying at the

principal office of the Exchange. 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-Phlx-2014-80, and should be submitted on or before [insert date 21 days from publication in the Federal Register].

For the Commission, by the Division of Trading and Markets, pursuant to delegated authority.²⁴

Kevin O'Neill
Deputy Secretary

²⁴ 17 CFR 200.30-3(a)(12).