

SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
(Release No. 34-50914; File No. SR-BSE-2004-56)

December 22, 2004

Self-Regulatory Organizations; Notice of Filing and Immediate Effectiveness of Proposed Rule Change by the Boston Stock Exchange, Inc. Relating to the Interpretation of a Boston Options Exchange Rule Relating to Directed Orders

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 7, 2004, the Boston Stock Exchange (“BSE” or “Exchange”) filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission (“Commission”) the proposed rule change as described in Items I, II, and III below, which Items have been prepared by the Exchange. The Exchange filed the proposed rule change pursuant to Section 19(b)(3)(A)(i) of the Act,³ and Rule 19b-4(f)(1) thereunder,⁴ which renders the proposal effective upon filing with the Commission. The Commission is publishing this notice to solicit comments on the proposed rule from interested persons.

I. Self-Regulatory Organization’s Statement of the Terms of Substance of the Proposed Rule Change

The Exchange proposes to amend the rules of the Boston Options Exchange (“BOX”) to clarify the application of BOX’s rules relating to Directed Orders. The text of the proposed rule change is available at the Office of the Secretary, the BSE, and at the Commission.

¹ 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(1).

² 17 CFR 240.19b-4.

³ 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(3)(A)(i).

⁴ 17 CFR 240.19b-4(f)(1).

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 purpose of the proposed rule change is to clarify that although a BOX Market Maker (as defined in Chapter I, Section 1(32) of the BOX rules) that receives a Directed Order (as defined in Chapter I, Section 1(21) of the BOX rules) has three seconds to submit the Directed Order to the PIP process (see Chapter V, Section 18 of the BOX rules) or send the Directed Order to the BOX Book before BOX automatically releases the Directed Order to the BOX Book (see Chapter VI, Section 5(c) of the BOX rules), Market Makers are expected to act upon Directed Orders as immediately as practicable, which must not exceed three seconds.

BOX has found that in practice, Market Makers act upon Directed Orders in less than one second. At this time, BOX does not wish to change how BOX's trading system is programmed because there could be circumstances where it would be appropriate for a Market Maker to take more time to act on a Directed Order. Instead, BSE wishes to put Market Makers on notice that they are expected to act upon Directed Orders as immediately as practicable, which must not exceed three seconds.

2. Statutory Basis

The Exchange believes that the proposed rule change is consistent with the requirements of Section 6(b) of the Act,⁵ in general, and Section 6(b)(5) of the Act,⁶ in particular, in that the proposed rule change is designed to promote just and equitable principles of trade, to prevent fraudulent and manipulative acts and, in general, to protect investors and the public interest.

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.

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 comments on the proposed rule change.

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

The proposed rule change has become effective pursuant to Section 19(b)(3)(A)(i) of the Act⁷ and Rule 19b-4(f)(1) thereunder,⁸ because the proposed rule change constitutes a stated policy, practice, or interpretation with respect to the meaning, administration, or enforcement of an existing BOX rule. At any time within 60 days of the filing of the proposed rule change, the Commission may summarily abrogate the rule change if it

⁵ 15 U.S.C. 78f(b).

⁶ 15 U.S.C. 78f(b)(5).

⁷ 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(3)(A)(i).

⁸ 17 CFR 240.19b-4(f)(1).

appears to the Commission that the action is necessary or appropriate in the public interest, for the protection of investors, or would otherwise further the purposes of the Act.

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-BSE-2004-56 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-BSE-2004-56. 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 Section, 450 Fifth Street, NW, Washington, DC 20549. Copies of such filing also will be available for inspection and copying at the principal office of the BSE. 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-BSE-2004-56 and should be submitted on or before [insert date 21 days from publication in the Federal Register].

For the Commission, by the Division of Market Regulation, pursuant to delegated authority.⁹

Margaret H. McFarland
Deputy Secretary

⁹ 17 CFR 200.30-3(a)(12).