

SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
(Release No. 34-50124; File No. SR-BSE-2004-32)

July 30, 2004

Self-Regulatory Organizations; Notice of Filing and Order Granting Accelerated Approval of the Proposed Rule Change by the Boston Stock Exchange, Inc. Relating to the Extension of the Linkage Fee Pilot Program

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 July 29, 2004, the Boston Stock Exchange, Inc. ("BSE" 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 from interested persons and is approving the proposed rule change on an accelerated basis.

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

BSE proposes to extend the current pilot program applicable to Options Intermarket Linkage ("Linkage") fees for one year until July 31, 2005.

The proposed fee schedule is available at the principal office of the Exchange and at the Commission' 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 III below. The Exchange has prepared summaries, set forth in Sections A, B, and C below, of the most

¹ 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(1).

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

BSE proposes to extend the current pilot program for Linkage fees on its Boston Options Exchange (“BOX”) facility through July 31, 2005. BOX’s current fee structure for Principal (“P”) and Principal Acting as Agent (“P/A”) Orders³ executed on BOX is operating under a pilot program which expires on July 31, 2004. Currently, because all Linkage Orders received by BOX are for the account of a broker-dealer market maker on another exchange, the fees applicable to P and P/A Orders are the same as fees applicable to market makers on other exchanges that submit orders to BOX outside of the Linkage. The side of a BOX trade opposite an inbound P or P/A order would be billed normally as any other BOX trade. Also, consistent with the Plan, no fees will be charged to a party sending a Satisfaction request (“S” order) to BOX. However, a fee will be charged to the BOX Options Participant that was responsible for the trade-through that caused the S order to be sent.

BSE now proposes to extend the pilot program to July 31, 2005, in order to remain consistent with the other options exchanges concerning these fees.

2. Statutory Basis

² 17 CFR 240.19b-4.

³ Under Section 2(16) of the Purpose of Creating and Operating an Options Intermarket Linkage (“Plan”) and Chapter XII of the BOX Rules, which tracks the language of the Plan, a “Linkage Order” means an Immediate or Cancel order routed through the Linkage as permitted under the Plan. There are three types of Linkage orders:

- (i) “P/A Order,” which is an order for the principal account of a Market Maker (or equivalent entity on another Participant Exchange that is authorized to represent Public Customer orders), reflecting the terms of a related unexecuted Public Customer order for which the specialist is acting as agent;
- (ii) “P Order,” which is an order for the principal account of a market maker (or equivalent entity on another Participant exchange) and is not a P/A Order; and
- (iii) “Satisfaction Order,” which is an order sent through the Linkage to notify a Participant Exchange of a Trade-Through and to seek satisfaction of the liability arising from that Trade-Through.

The Exchange believes that the proposal is consistent with the requirements of Section 6(b) of the Act,⁴ in general, and furthers the objectives of Section 6(b)(4),⁵ in particular, in that it provides for the equitable allocation of reasonable dues, fees, and other charges among its 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.

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. 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-2004-32 on the subject line.

⁴ 15 U.S.C. 78f(b).

⁵ 15 U.S.C. 78f(b)(4).

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-2004-32. 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 offices of 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-2004-32 and should be submitted on or before [insert date 21 days from publication in the Federal Register].

IV. Commission's Findings and Order Granting Accelerated Approval of Proposed Rule Change

After careful consideration, the Commission finds that the proposed rule change is consistent with the requirements of the Act and the rules and regulations thereunder, applicable to a

national securities exchange,⁶ and, in particular, with the requirements of Section 6(b) of the Act⁷ and the rules and regulations thereunder. The Commission finds that the proposed rule change is consistent with Section 6(b)(4) of the Act,⁸ which requires that the rules of the Exchange provide for the equitable allocation or reasonable dues, fees and other charges among its members and other persons using its facilities. The Commission believes that the extension of the Linkage fee pilot until July 31, 2005 will give the Exchange and the Commission further opportunity to evaluate whether such fees are appropriate.

The Commission finds good cause, pursuant to Section 19(b)(2) of the Act,⁹ for approving the proposed rule change prior to the thirtieth day after the date of publication of the notice of the filing thereof in the Federal Register. The Commission believes that granting accelerated approval will preserve the Exchange's existing pilot program for Linkage fees without interruption as BSE and the Commission further consider the appropriateness of Linkage fees.

⁶ In approving this rule, the Commission notes that it has considered its impact on efficiency, competition and capital formation. 15 U.S.C. 78c(f).

⁷ 15 U.S.C. 78f(b).

⁸ 15 U.S.C. 78f(b)(4).

⁹ 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(2).

V. Conclusion

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED, pursuant to Section 19(b)(2) of the Act¹⁰ that the proposed rule change (SR-BSE-2004-32) is hereby approved on an accelerated basis for a pilot period to expire on July 31, 2005.

For the Commission, by the Division of Market Regulation, pursuant to delegated authority.¹¹

Margaret H. McFarland
Deputy Secretary

¹⁰ Id.

¹¹ 17 CFR 200.30-3(a)(12).