

SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
(Release No. 34-68076; File No. SR-FINRA-2012-047)

October 22, 2012

Self-Regulatory Organizations; Financial Industry Regulatory Authority, Inc.; Notice of Filing and Immediate Effectiveness of Proposed Rule Change to Extend a TRACE Pilot Program in FINRA Rule 6730(e)(4)

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 October 12, 2012, the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority, Inc. (“FINRA”) filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission (“SEC” or “Commission”) the proposed rule change as described in Items I and II below, which Items have been prepared by FINRA. FINRA has designated the proposed rule change as constituting a “non-controversial” rule change under paragraph (f)(6) of Rule 19b-4 under the Act,³ which renders the proposal effective upon receipt of this filing by the Commission. 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

FINRA is proposing to extend the pilot program in FINRA Rule 6730(e)(4) to October 25, 2013. The pilot program exempts from reporting to the Trade Reporting and Compliance Engine (“TRACE”) transactions in TRACE-Eligible Securities that are executed on a facility of the New York Stock Exchange (“NYSE”) in accordance with NYSE Rules 1400, 1401 and 86 and reported to NYSE in accordance with NYSE’s applicable trade reporting rules and disseminated publicly by NYSE.

¹ 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(1).

² 17 CFR 240.19b-4.

³ 17 CFR 240.19b-4(f)(6).

The text of the proposed rule change is available on FINRA's website at <http://www.finra.org>, at the principal office of FINRA 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, FINRA 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. FINRA 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 pilot program set forth in FINRA Rule 6730(e)(4) exempts from reporting to TRACE transactions in TRACE-Eligible Securities that are executed on a facility of NYSE in accordance with NYSE Rules 1400, 1401 and 86 and reported to NYSE in accordance with NYSE's applicable trade reporting rules and disseminated publicly by NYSE, provided that a data sharing agreement between FINRA and NYSE related to transactions covered by the Rule remains in effect.⁴ The pilot program is currently scheduled to expire on October 25, 2012.

⁴ See Securities Exchange Act Release No. 54768 (November 16, 2006), 71 FR 67673 (November 22, 2006) (Order Approving Proposed Rule Change; File No. SR-NASD-2006-110) (pilot program in FINRA Rule 6730(e)(4), subject to the execution of a data sharing agreement addressing relevant transactions, became effective on January 9, 2007); Securities Exchange Act Release No. 59216 (January 8, 2009), 74 FR 2147 (January 14, 2009) (Notice of Filing and Immediate Effectiveness of Proposed Rule Change; File No. SR-FINRA-2008-065) (pilot program extended to January 7, 2011); Securities Exchange Act Release No. 63673 (January 7, 2011), 76 FR 2739 (January 14, 2011) (Notice of Filing and Immediate Effectiveness of Proposed Rule Change; File No.

FINRA is proposing to extend the pilot program until October 25, 2013 to continue to exempt transactions in TRACE-Eligible Securities on an NYSE facility (and as to which all the other conditions of the exemption are met) from the TRACE reporting requirements. The extension will provide additional time to analyze the impact of the exemption. Without the extension, members would be subject to both FINRA's and NYSE's trade reporting requirements with respect to these securities. The proposed change thus serves to eliminate duplicative reporting requirements for these securities and the resulting compliance costs and burdens.

The proposed rule change would not expand or otherwise change the pilot. FINRA notes that the success of the pilot program remains dependent on FINRA's ability to continue to effectively conduct surveillance on debt trading in the over-the-counter market. In this regard, the parties continue to share data related to the transactions covered by FINRA Rule 6730(e)(4) as required by the Rule. However, FINRA supports a regulatory construct that, in the future, consolidates all last sale transaction information to provide better price transparency and a more efficient means to engage in market surveillance of TRACE-Eligible Securities transactions. The proposed extension would allow the pilot program to continue to operate without interruption while FINRA and NYSE continue to assess the effect of the exemption and issues regarding the consolidation of market data, market surveillance and price transparency.

FINRA has filed the proposed rule change for immediate effectiveness and has requested that the SEC waive the requirement that the proposed rule change not become operative for 30

SR-FINRA-2011-002) (pilot program extended to July 8, 2011); Securities Exchange Act Release No. 64665 (June 14, 2011), 76 FR 35933 (June 20, 2011) (Notice of Filing and Immediate Effectiveness of Proposed Rule Change; File No. SR-FINRA-2011-025) (pilot program extended to January 27, 2012); Securities Exchange Act Release No. 66018 (December 21, 2011), 76 FR 81549 (December 28, 2011) (Notice of Filing and Immediate Effectiveness of Proposed Rule Change; File No. SR-FINRA-2011-072) (pilot program extended to October 26, 2012).

days after the date of the filing, such that FINRA can implement the proposed rule change immediately.

2. Statutory Basis

FINRA believes that the proposed rule change is consistent with the provisions of Section 15A(b)(6) of the Act,⁵ which requires, among other things, that FINRA rules must be designed to prevent fraudulent and manipulative acts and practices, to promote just and equitable principles of trade, and, in general, to protect investors and the public interest. FINRA believes that the extension of the exemptive provision protects investors and the public because transactions will be reported, transparency will be maintained for these transactions, and NYSE's agreement to share data with FINRA allows FINRA to continue to conduct surveillance in the debt securities market. In addition, extending the exemptive provision permits members that are subject to both FINRA's and NYSE's trade reporting requirements to avoid a duplicative regulatory structure and the increased costs that may be incurred as a result of duplicative requirements.

B. Self-Regulatory Organization's Statement on Burden on Competition

FINRA does not believe that the proposed rule change will result in 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

Written comments were neither solicited nor received.

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

⁵ 15 U.S.C. 78o-3(b)(6).

as the Commission may designate, it has become effective pursuant to Section 19(b)(3)(A) of the Act⁶ and Rule 19b-4(f)(6) thereunder.⁷

FINRA has requested that the Commission waive the 30-day operative delay so that the pilot program, which exempts transactions in TRACE-Eligible Securities on an NYSE facility (and as to which all the other conditions of the exemption are met) from the TRACE reporting requirements, remains in effect without interruption. The Commission believes that waiving the 30-day operative delay is consistent with the protection of investors and the public interest because such action will allow the benefits of the pilot program to continue without interruption. Therefore, the Commission hereby waives the 30-day operative delay and designates the proposal operative upon filing.⁸

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.

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:

⁶ 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(3)(A).

⁷ 17 CFR 240.19b-4(f)(6). In addition, Rule 19b-4(f)(6) requires a self-regulatory organization to give the Commission written notice of its intent to file the proposed rule change, along with a brief description and text of the proposed rule change, at least five business days prior to the date of filing of the proposed rule change, or such shorter time as designated by the Commission. FINRA has satisfied this requirement.

⁸ For purposes only of waiving the 30-day operative delay, the Commission has considered the proposed rule's impact on efficiency, competition, and capital formation. See 15 U.S.C. 78c(f).

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-FINRA-2012-047 on the subject line.

Paper comments:

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

All submissions should refer to File Number SR-FINRA-2012-047. 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, DC 20549, on official business days between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. Copies of the filing also will be available for inspection and copying at the principal office of FINRA. 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-FINRA-2012-047 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.⁹

Kevin M. O'Neill
Deputy Secretary

⁹ 17 CFR 200.30-3(a)(12).