

**FINANCIAL INDUSTRY REGULATORY AUTHORITY
LETTER OF ACCEPTANCE, WAIVER AND CONSENT
NO. 20060051583-07**

TO: Department of Market Regulation
Financial Industry Regulatory Authority ("FINRA")

RE: Eric Ridder III, Respondent
CRD No. 2948466

Pursuant to FINRA Rule 9216 of FINRA's Code of Procedure, I, Eric Ridder III ("Ridder"), submit this Letter of Acceptance, Waiver and Consent ("AWC") for the purpose of proposing a settlement of the alleged rule violations described below. This AWC is submitted on the condition that, if accepted, FINRA will not bring any future actions against me alleging violations based on the same factual findings described herein.

I.

ACCEPTANCE AND CONSENT

- A. I hereby accept and consent, without admitting or denying the findings, and solely for the purposes of this proceeding and any other proceeding brought by or on behalf of FINRA, or to which FINRA is a party, prior to a hearing and without an adjudication of any issue of law or fact, to the entry of the following findings by FINRA:

BACKGROUND

Ridder, during all times relevant to this AWC, was a broker of credit default swaps ("CDS") employed by Creditex Group Inc., and its predecessor, Creditex, Inc., ("Creditex Group"). At all times during the review period, Ridder was a FINRA-registered individual registered with Creditex Group. Ridder currently maintains his FINRA registration through Creditex Securities Corporation, where he has been registered since November 2006. Ridder currently is employed with Creditex Group, and acts as a CDS broker with Creditex LLC. During all times relevant to this AWC, Ridder was registered as a general securities representative. He continues to hold that license. He has worked in the financial industry for more than a decade.

RELEVANT DISCIPLINARY HISTORY

Ridder understands that his disciplinary history may be a factor that will be considered in deciding whether to accept this AWC. Ridder has no relevant disciplinary history.

SUMMARY

The subject matter of this AWC concerns communications between Ridder and personnel at certain other interdealer brokers regarding CDS dealers' proposed brokerage fee rate reductions. In Matter No. 20060051583, the staff of the Department of Market Regulation (the "staff") reviewed conduct by Ridder that appeared to the staff to be an improper attempt by Ridder to influence other CDS interdealer brokers about CDS dealers' proposed brokerage fee rates during the review period of July 1, 2005 through December 1, 2006 (the "review period").

CDS instruments generally enable counterparties to purchase/sell "risk protection" associated with the risk of credit events (such as bankruptcies, defaults, or credit downgrades in underlying instruments). The risk protection purchaser generally pays a periodic fee to the seller for the life of the CDS. The risk protection seller agrees to pay the purchaser a set amount should a credit event occur during the CDS term. Creditex and other CDS interdealer brokers provided an intermediary brokerage service to major commercial and investment banks that are wholesale CDS dealers, by identifying and matching counterparties for transactions between such CDS dealers. Creditex received an agreed upon brokerage fee for successfully matching buying and selling counterparties (its clients).

FACTS AND VIOLATIVE CONDUCT

During the review period, Ridder communicated with personnel at certain other CDS interdealer brokers about CDS dealers' proposed brokerage fee rate reductions on several occasions. These communications arose after individual CDS dealers sought to renegotiate the CDS brokerage fees they paid by transmitting schedules of their proposed brokerage rate reductions to various interdealer brokers. Ridder's communications with personnel at other interdealer brokers about the proposed rate schedules included, among other things, reactions to the proposed rate reductions and statements concerning actual or contemplated interdealer broker responses to the schedules. While some of the communications involved one-to-one discussions between Ridder and personnel from other CDS interdealer brokerage firms, on two occasions the communications also referred to similar types of interactions about the schedules involving additional interdealer brokerage firms.

CONCLUSION

As a result of the conduct described above, Ridder, during the review period, repeatedly engaged in improper communications with other interdealer brokers about CDS dealers' brokerage rate proposals concerning CDS instruments and, therefore, failed to abide by the firm's, and his, duties to observe high standards of commercial honor and just and equitable principles of trade. This conduct described in this paragraph constitutes a violation of both NASD Rule 2110 and the prohibition in IM-2110-5 against engaging in conduct that "attempts improperly to influence another member or person associated with a member."

B. I also consent to the imposition of the following sanctions:

A suspension from associating with any member of FINRA in any capacity for a period of two months, and a fine of \$250,000.

I understand that if I am barred or suspended from associating with any FINRA member, I become subject to a statutory disqualification as that term is defined in Section 3(a)(39) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended. Accordingly, I may not be associated with any FINRA member in any capacity, including clerical or ministerial functions, during the period of the bar or suspension. (See FINRA Rules 8310 and 8311.)

I agree to pay the monetary sanction(s) upon notice that this AWC has been accepted and that such payment(s) are due and payable. I have submitted an Election of Payment form showing the method by which I propose to pay the fine imposed.

I specifically and voluntarily waive any right to claim that I am unable to pay, now or at any time hereafter, the monetary sanction(s) imposed in this matter.

The sanctions imposed herein shall be effective on a date set by FINRA staff.

II.

WAIVER OF PROCEDURAL RIGHTS

I specifically and voluntarily waive the following rights granted under FINRA's Code of Procedure:

- A. To have a Complaint issued specifying the allegations against me;
- B. To be notified of the Complaint and have the opportunity to answer the allegations in writing;

- C. To defend against the allegations in a disciplinary hearing before a hearing panel, to have a written record of the hearing made and to have a written decision issued; and
- D. To appeal any such decision to the National Adjudicatory Council (“NAC”) and then to the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission and a U.S. Court of Appeals.

Further, I specifically and voluntarily waive any right to claim bias or prejudice of the General Counsel, the NAC, or any member of the NAC, in connection with such person’s or body’s participation in discussions regarding the terms and conditions of this AWC, or other consideration of this AWC, including acceptance or rejection of this AWC.

I further specifically and voluntarily waive any right to claim that a person violated the ex parte prohibitions of FINRA Rule 9143 or the separation of functions prohibitions of FINRA Rule 9144, in connection with such person’s or body’s participation in discussions regarding the terms and conditions of this AWC, or other consideration of this AWC, including its acceptance or rejection.

III.

OTHER MATTERS

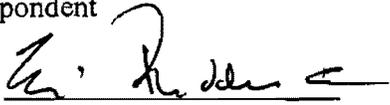
I understand that:

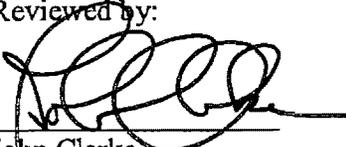
- A. Submission of this AWC is voluntary and will not resolve this matter unless and until it has been reviewed and accepted by the NAC, a Review Subcommittee of the NAC, or the Office of Disciplinary Affairs (“ODA”), pursuant to FINRA Rule 9216;
- B. If this AWC is not accepted, its submission will not be used as evidence to prove any of the allegations against me; and
- C. If accepted:
 - 1. this AWC will become part of my permanent disciplinary record and may be considered in any future actions brought by FINRA or any other regulator against me;
 - 2. this AWC will be made available through FINRA's public disclosure program in response to public inquiries about my disciplinary record;
 - 3. FINRA may make a public announcement concerning this agreement and the subject matter thereof in accordance with FINRA Rule 8313; and

4. I may not take any action or make or permit to be made any public statement, including in regulatory filings or otherwise, denying, directly or indirectly, any finding in this AWC or create the impression that the AWC is without factual basis. I may not take any position in any proceeding brought by or on behalf of FINRA, or to which FINRA is a party, that is inconsistent with any part of this AWC. Nothing in this provision affects my right to take legal or factual positions in litigation or other legal proceedings in which FINRA is not a party.
- D. I may attach a Corrective Action Statement to this AWC that is a statement of demonstrable corrective steps taken to prevent future misconduct. I understand that I may not deny the charges or make any statement that is inconsistent with the AWC in this Statement. This Statement does not constitute factual or legal findings by FINRA, nor does it reflect the views of FINRA or its staff.

I certify that I have read and understand all of the provisions of this AWC and have been given a full opportunity to ask questions about it; that I have agreed to its provisions voluntarily; and that no offer, threat, inducement, or promise of any kind, other than the terms set forth herein and the prospect of avoiding the issuance of a Complaint, has been made to induce me to submit it.

1/25/10
Date

Respondent
By: 
Eric Ridder III

Reviewed by:

John Clarke
DLA Piper
1251 Avenue of the Americas
New York, NY 10020-1104

Accepted by FINRA:

1/28/10
Date

Signed on behalf of the
Director of ODA, by delegated authority


Thomas R. Gira
Executive Vice President
Department of Market Regulation