

April 7, 2003

Ms. Katherine A. England
Assistant Director
Division of Market Regulation
Securities and Exchange Commission
450 Fifth Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20549-1001

Re: File No. SR-NASD-2003-69; Proposed Rule Change Regarding Failure to Pay Arbitration Awards

Dear Ms. England:

Pursuant to Rule 19b-4, enclosed please find the above-numbered rule filing. Also enclosed is a 3-1/2" disk containing the rule filing in Microsoft Word 7.0 to facilitate production of the Federal Register release.

If you have any questions, please contact Sarah J. Williams, Office of General Counsel, Regulatory Policy and Oversight, at (202) 728-8083; e-mail sarah.williams@nasd.com. The fax number of the Office of General Counsel is (202) 728-8264.

Very truly yours,

Barbara Z. Sweeney
Senior Vice President
and Corporate Secretary

Enclosures

File No. SR-NASD-2003-69
Consists of 17 Pages
April 7, 2003

SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

Washington, D.C.

Form 19b-4

Proposed Rule Change

by

National Association of Securities Dealers, Inc.

Pursuant to Rule 19b-4 under the
Securities Exchange Act of 1934

1. Text of Proposed Rule Change

(a) Pursuant to the provisions of Section 19(b)(1) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (“Act”),¹ the National Association of Securities Dealers, Inc. (“NASD”) is filing with the Securities and Exchange Commission (“SEC” or “Commission”) a proposed rule change to (1) amend Article V, Section 4 of the NASD By-Laws to permit NASD to suspend for failure to pay an arbitration award or settlement, for a period of two years after the award is entered, former associated persons who terminated their registration before the award was entered; and (2) amend Article VI, Section 3 of the NASD By-Laws to clarify that NASD may suspend the association, and not just the registration, of any person who fails to pay an arbitration award.

Below is the text of the proposed rule change. Proposed new language is underlined; proposed deletions are in brackets.

* * * * *

Article V

REGISTERED REPRESENTATIVES AND ASSOCIATED PERSONS

* * * * *

Retention of Jurisdiction

Sec. 4. (a) A person whose association with a member has been terminated and is no longer associated with any member of [the] NASD or a person whose registration has been revoked or canceled shall continue to be subject to the filing of a complaint under the NASD Rules [of the Association] based upon conduct [which] that commenced prior to the termination, revocation, or cancellation or upon such person’s failure, while subject to [the] NASD’s

¹ 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(1).

jurisdiction as provided herein, to provide information requested by [the] NASD pursuant to the NASD Rules [of the Association], but any such complaint shall be filed within:

[(a)] (i) two years after the effective date of termination of registration pursuant to Section 3, provided, however that any amendment to a notice of termination filed pursuant to Section 3(b) that is filed within two years of the original notice [which] that discloses that such person may have engaged in conduct actionable under any applicable statute, rule, or regulation shall operate to recommence the running of the two-year period under this subsection;

[(b)] (ii) two years after the effective date of revocation or cancellation of registration pursuant to the NASD Rules [of the Association]; or

[(c)] (iii) in the case of an unregistered person, [within] two years after the date upon which such person ceased to be associated with the member.

(b) A person whose association with a member has been terminated and is no longer associated with any member of NASD shall continue to be subject to a proceeding to suspend, consistent with Article VI, Section 3 of the By-Laws, his or her ability to associate with a member based on such person's failure to comply with an arbitration award or a written and executed settlement agreement obtained in connection with an arbitration or mediation submitted for disposition pursuant to the NASD Rules, provided that such proceeding is instituted within two years after the date of entry of such award or settlement.

* * * * *

Article VI

DUES, ASSESSMENTS, AND OTHER CHARGES

* * * * *

Suspension or Cancellation [of Membership or Registration]

Sec. 3. (a) [The] NASD after 15 days notice in writing, may suspend or cancel the membership of any member or the registration of any person in arrears in the payment of any fees, dues, assessments, or other charges or for failure to furnish any information or reports requested pursuant to Section 2 [, or for failure to comply with an award of arbitrators properly rendered pursuant to the Rules of the Association, where a timely motion to vacate or modify such award has not been made pursuant to applicable law or where such a motion has been denied, or for failure to comply with a written and executed settlement agreement obtained in connection with an arbitration or mediation submitted for disposition pursuant to the Rules of the Association].

(b) NASD after 15 days notice in writing, may suspend or cancel the membership of any member or suspend from association with any member any person, for failure to comply with an award of arbitrators properly rendered pursuant to the NASD Rules, where a timely motion to vacate or modify such award has not been made pursuant to applicable law or where such a motion has been denied, or for failure to comply with a written and executed settlement agreement obtained in connection with an arbitration or mediation submitted for disposition pursuant to the NASD Rules.

* * * * *

(b) Not applicable.

(c) Not applicable.

2. Procedures of the Self-Regulatory Organization

(a) The proposed rule change, which involves amendments to the NASD By-Laws, was approved and authorized for filing with the SEC in accordance with Article XVI, Section 1 of the NASD By-Laws. Specifically, at their meetings on November 20, 2002 and November 21, 2002, respectively, the Board of Directors of NASD Regulation, Inc. and the Board of Governors of NASD approved the proposed rule change, its submission to the membership for approval by vote, and assuming membership approval, its submission to the SEC. On January 10, 2003, NASD issued Notice to Members 03-04 seeking membership vote on the proposed rule change, and the membership approved the proposed rule change by vote completed on February 10, 2003. Counsel for The Nasdaq Stock Market, Inc. and NASD Dispute Resolution, Inc. have been provided an opportunity to consult with respect to the proposed rule change, pursuant to the Plan of Allocation and Delegation of Functions by NASD to its Subsidiaries. No other action by NASD is necessary for the filing of the proposed rule change.

NASD will announce the effective date of the proposed rule change in a Notice to Members to be published no later than 60 days following Commission approval. The effective date will be 30 days following publication of the Notice to Members announcing Commission approval.

(b) Questions regarding this rule filing may be directed to Sarah J. Williams, Associate General Counsel, Office of General Counsel, Regulatory Policy and Oversight, at (202) 728-8083.

3. Self-Regulatory Organization's Statement of the Purpose of, and Statutory Basis for, the Proposed Rule Change

(a) Purpose

Amendment Regarding Former Associated Persons Who Fail to Pay Arbitration Awards

Article VI, Section 3 of the NASD By-Laws (Dues, Assessments and Other Charges)

allows NASD to seek suspensions or cancellations for failure to comply with an award or settlement agreement relating to an arbitration or mediation.² If a person becomes subject to an arbitration award or enters into a settlement agreement in arbitration while associated with a member, then terminates his or her association with the member before paying the arbitration award or settlement, NASD may bring an action against that former associated person based on his or her failure to pay. Such actions are permissible because Article V, Section 4 of the NASD By-Laws (Retention of Jurisdiction) provides that a person whose association with a member has terminated continues to be subject to NASD proceedings based on conduct that began before the termination, provided such proceeding is brought within two years after the termination.

In 1998, the NASD Board of Governors directed the Office of Hearing Officers to dismiss, for lack of jurisdiction, a proceeding alleging failure to pay an arbitration award against a person who terminated his association after the arbitration proceeding commenced but before an arbitration award was entered against him.³ The Board held that because the conduct underlying the proceeding (*i.e.* the failure to pay an arbitration award) did not begin until after the person's

² The Rule 9510 Series describes the process by which NASD may suspend or cancel the membership of any member or the registration of any person for failure to pay an arbitration award or settlement agreement executed in connection with an arbitration or mediation occurring under NASD Rules.

³ See Department of Enforcement v. Jonathan Winston, Non-Summary Proceeding No. ARB980006 (Office of Hearing Officers, December 15, 1998).

association terminated, NASD did not have jurisdiction over the person under Article V, Section 4 of NASD By-Laws.

NASD is concerned that a person associated with a member will terminate his or her association with the member once aware that an arbitration award may be entered against him or her in order to avoid sanction by NASD for failure to pay any award or settlement agreement resulting from the proceeding. Accordingly, the proposed rule change provides that for the limited purpose of instituting proceedings for failure to pay arbitration awards or settlements, NASD retains, for a period of two years after the entry of the award or settlement, jurisdiction to impose suspensions against former associated persons if the award or settlement resulted from a claim submitted for arbitration or mediation pursuant to the NASD Rules. Suspending these persons will prevent them from re-entering the industry until the award is paid.

Amendment Regarding Sanctions Against Associated Persons Who Fail to Pay Arbitration Awards

The Rule 9510 Series, which provides a procedural framework for actions taken pursuant to Article VI, Section 3 of the NASD By-Laws, states that NASD may seek a suspension or cancellation for failure to comply with an award or settlement agreement relating to an arbitration or mediation pursuant to Article VI, Section 3 of the NASD By-Laws. Article VI, Section 3 specifies that NASD may suspend or cancel the registration of any person for failure to comply with arbitration awards or settlements. Persons suspended from registration with NASD for failing to pay arbitration awards arguably may seek to associate with member firms in unregistered capacities. NASD proposes amending Article VI, Section 3 of the NASD By-Laws to clarify that NASD may suspend any person from associating with a member in any capacity for failure of such person to comply with an arbitration award or settlement.

(b) Statutory Basis

NASD believes that the proposed rule change is consistent with the provisions of Section 15A(b)(6) of the Act,⁴ which requires, among other things, that NASD rules 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. Specifically, the proposed rule change strengthens NASD's ability to prevent persons who fail to honor securities-related arbitration awards from seeking to re-enter the securities business, and clarifies that persons who fail to honor such awards may be suspended from associating with NASD members in any capacity.

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

NASD 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, as amended.

5. 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. NASD issued Notice to Members 03-04 on January 10, 2003 soliciting its members to vote on the proposed rule change. NASD members approved the proposed rule change by vote completed on February 10, 2003.

6. Extension of Time Period for Commission Action

NASD does not consent at this time to an extension of the time period for Commission action specified in Section 19(b)(2) of the Act.⁵

⁴ 15 U.S.C. 78o-3(b)(6).

⁵ 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(2).

7. Basis for Summary Effectiveness Pursuant to Section 19(b)(3) or for Accelerated Effectiveness Pursuant to Section 19(b)(2)

Not applicable.

8. Proposed Rule Change Based on Rules of Another Self-Regulatory Organization or of the Commission

Not applicable.

9. Exhibits

1. Completed notice of proposed rule change for publication in the Federal Register.

2. Notice to Members 03-04 seeking membership vote on the proposed rule change.

Pursuant to the requirements of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, NASD has duly caused this filing to be signed on its behalf by the undersigned thereunto duly authorized.

NASD

BY: _____
Barbara Z. Sweeney
Senior Vice President and Corporate Secretary

Date: April 7, 2003

SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
(Release No. 34- ; File No. SR-NASD-2003-69)

Self-Regulatory Organizations; Notice of Filing of Proposed Rule Change by National Association of Securities Dealers, Inc. Regarding Regulation of Activities of Members Experiencing Financial and/or Operational Difficulties

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 , the National Association of Securities Dealers, Inc. (“NASD”) 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 NASD. 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

NASD is proposing to (1) amend Article V, Section 4 of the NASD By-Laws to permit NASD to suspend for failure to pay an arbitration award or settlement, for a period of two years after the award is entered, former associated persons who terminated their registration before the award was entered; and (2) amend Article VI, Section 3 of the NASD By-Laws to clarify that NASD may suspend the association, and not just the registration, of any person who fails to pay an arbitration award.

¹ 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(1).

² 17 CFR 240.19b-4.

Below is the text of the proposed rule change. Proposed new language is underlined; proposed deletions are in brackets.

* * * * *

Article V

REGISTERED REPRESENTATIVES AND ASSOCIATED PERSONS

* * * * *

Retention of Jurisdiction

Sec. 4. (a) A person whose association with a member has been terminated and is no longer associated with any member of [the] NASD or a person whose registration has been revoked or canceled shall continue to be subject to the filing of a complaint under the NASD Rules [of the Association] based upon conduct [which] that commenced prior to the termination, revocation, or cancellation or upon such person's failure, while subject to [the] NASD's jurisdiction as provided herein, to provide information requested by [the] NASD pursuant to the NASD Rules [of the Association], but any such complaint shall be filed within:

[(a)] (i) two years after the effective date of termination of registration pursuant to Section 3, provided, however that any amendment to a notice of termination filed pursuant to Section 3(b) that is filed within two years of the original notice [which] that discloses that such person may have engaged in conduct actionable under any applicable statute, rule, or regulation shall operate to recommence the running of the two-year period under this subsection;

[(b)] (ii) two years after the effective date of revocation or cancellation of registration pursuant to the NASD Rules [of the Association]; or

[(c)] (iii) in the case of an unregistered person, [within] two years after the date upon which such person ceased to be associated with the member.

(b) A person whose association with a member has been terminated and is no longer associated with any member of NASD shall continue to be subject to a proceeding to suspend, consistent with Article VI, Section 3 of the By-Laws, his or her ability to associate with a member based on such person's failure to comply with an arbitration award or a written and executed settlement agreement obtained in connection with an arbitration or mediation submitted for disposition pursuant to the NASD Rules, provided that such proceeding is instituted within two years after the date of entry of such award or settlement.

* * * * *

Article VI

DUES, ASSESSMENTS, AND OTHER CHARGES

* * * * *

Suspension or Cancellation [of Membership or Registration]

Sec. 3. (a) [The] NASD after 15 days notice in writing, may suspend or cancel the membership of any member or the registration of any person in arrears in the payment of any fees, dues, assessments, or other charges or for failure to furnish any information or reports requested pursuant to Section 2 [, or for failure to comply with an award of arbitrators properly rendered pursuant to the Rules of the Association, where a timely motion to vacate or modify such award has not been made pursuant to applicable law or where such a motion has been denied, or for failure to comply with a written and executed settlement agreement obtained in connection with an arbitration or mediation submitted for disposition pursuant to the Rules of the Association].

(b) NASD after 15 days notice in writing, may suspend or cancel the membership of any member or suspend from association with any member any person, for failure to comply with an award of arbitrators properly rendered pursuant to the NASD Rules, where a timely motion to vacate or modify such award has not been made pursuant to applicable law or where such a motion has been denied, or for failure to comply with a written and executed settlement agreement obtained in connection with an arbitration or mediation submitted for disposition pursuant to the NASD Rules.

* * * * *

II. SELF-REGULATORY ORGANIZATION'S STATEMENT OF THE PURPOSE OF, AND STATUTORY BASIS FOR, THE PROPOSED RULE CHANGE

In its filing with the Commission, NASD 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. NASD 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

(a) Purpose

Amendment Regarding Former Associated Persons Who Fail to Pay Arbitration Awards

Article VI, Section 3 of the NASD By-Laws (Dues, Assessments and Other Charges)

allows NASD to seek suspensions or cancellations for failure to comply with an award or

settlement agreement relating to an arbitration or mediation.³ If a person becomes subject to an arbitration award or enters into a settlement agreement in arbitration while associated with a member, then terminates his or her association with the member before paying the arbitration award or settlement, NASD may bring an action against that former associated person based on his or her failure to pay. Such actions are permissible because Article V, Section 4 of the NASD By-Laws (Retention of Jurisdiction) provides that a person whose association with a member has terminated continues to be subject to NASD proceedings based on conduct that began before the termination, provided such proceeding is brought within two years after the termination.

In 1998, the NASD Board of Governors directed the Office of Hearing Officers to dismiss, for lack of jurisdiction, a proceeding alleging failure to pay an arbitration award against a person who terminated his association after the arbitration proceeding commenced but before an arbitration award was entered against him.⁴ The Board held that because the conduct underlying the proceeding (i.e. the failure to pay an arbitration award) did not begin until after the person's association terminated, NASD did not have jurisdiction over the person under Article V, Section 4 of NASD By-Laws.

NASD is concerned that a person associated with a member will terminate his or her association with the member once aware that an arbitration award may be entered against him or her in order to avoid sanction by NASD for failure to pay any award or settlement agreement resulting from the proceeding. Accordingly, the proposed rule change provides that for the

³ The Rule 9510 Series describes the process by which NASD may suspend or cancel the membership of any member or the registration of any person for failure to pay an arbitration award or settlement agreement executed in connection with an arbitration or mediation occurring under NASD Rules.

limited purpose of instituting proceedings for failure to pay arbitration awards or settlements, NASD retains, for a period of two years after the entry of the award or settlement, jurisdiction to impose suspensions against former associated persons if the award or settlement resulted from a claim submitted for arbitration or mediation pursuant to the NASD Rules. Suspending these persons will prevent them from re-entering the industry until the award is paid.

Amendment Regarding Sanctions Against Associated Persons Who Fail to Pay Arbitration Awards

The Rule 9510 Series, which provides a procedural framework for actions taken pursuant to Article VI, Section 3 of the NASD By-Laws, states that NASD may seek a suspension or cancellation for failure to comply with an award or settlement agreement relating to an arbitration or mediation pursuant to Article VI, Section 3 of the NASD By-Laws. Article VI, Section 3 specifies that NASD may suspend or cancel the registration of any person for failure to comply with arbitration awards or settlements. Persons suspended from registration with NASD for failing to pay arbitration awards arguably may seek to associate with member firms in unregistered capacities. NASD proposes amending Article VI, Section 3 of the NASD By-Laws to clarify that NASD may suspend any person from associating with a member in any capacity for failure of such person to comply with an arbitration award or settlement.

(b) Statutory Basis

NASD 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 NASD rules be designed to

⁴ See Department of Enforcement v. Jonathan Winston, Non-Summary Proceeding No. ARB980006 (Office of Hearing Officers, December 15, 1998).

⁵ 15 U.S.C. 78o-3(b)(6).

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. Specifically, the proposed rule change strengthens NASD's ability to prevent persons who fail to honor securities-related arbitration awards from seeking to re-enter the securities business, and clarifies that persons who fail to honor such awards may be suspended from associating with NASD members in any capacity.

(B) Self-Regulatory Organization's Statement on Burden on Competition

NASD 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, as amended.

(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. NASD issued Notice to Members 03-04 on January 10, 2003 soliciting its members to vote on the proposed rule change. NASD members approved the proposed rule change by vote completed on February 10, 2003.

III. DATE OF EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROPOSED RULE CHANGE AND TIMING FOR COMMISSION ACTION

Within 35 days of the date of publication of this notice in the Federal Register or within such longer period (i) as the Commission may designate up to 90 days of such date if it finds such longer period to be appropriate and publishes its reasons for so finding or (ii) as to which the self-regulatory organization consents, the Commission will:

- A. by order approve such proposed rule change, or

B. institute proceedings to determine whether the proposed rule change should be disapproved.

IV. SOLICITATION OF COMMENTS

Interested persons are invited to submit written data, views, and arguments concerning the foregoing. Persons making written submissions should file six copies thereof with the Secretary, Securities and Exchange Commission, 450 Fifth Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20549. 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 Room. Copies of such filing will also be available for inspection and copying at the principal office of NASD. All submissions should refer to the file number in the caption above and should be submitted by [insert date 21 days from the date of publication].

For the Commission, by the Division of Market Regulation, pursuant to delegated authority.⁶

Margaret H. McFarland
Deputy Secretary

⁶ 17 CFR 200.30-3(a)(12).