

not impose 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

The Exchange has not solicited, and does not intend to solicit, comments on this proposed rule change, as amended. The Exchange has not received any unsolicited written comments from members or other interested parties.

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

The proposed rule change, as amended, has been filed by the Exchange pursuant to section 19(b)(3)(A) of the Act¹⁵ and subparagraph (f)(6) of Rule 19b-4 thereunder.¹⁶ Because the foregoing proposed rule change: (1) Does not significantly affect the protection of investors or the public interest; (2) does not impose any significant burden on competition; and (3) does not become operative for thirty days from the date on which it was filed, or such shorter time as the Commission may designate if consistent with the protection of investors and the public interest, it has become effective pursuant to section 19(b)(3)(A) of the Act¹⁷ and Rule 19b-4(f)(6)¹⁸ thereunder.¹⁹

A proposed rule change filed under Rule 19b-4(f)(6)²⁰ normally does not become operative prior to thirty days after the date of filing. However, pursuant to Rule 19b-4(f)(6)(iii), the Commission may designate a shorter time if such action is consistent with the protection of investors and the public interest. The ISE has requested that the Commission accelerate the implementation of the proposed rule change to take effect prior to the thirty days specified in Rule 19b-4(f)(6)(iii)²¹ so that members will be subject to uniform CEA rules among the options exchanges.

The Commission believes that waiving the thirty-day operative date is consistent with the protection of

investors and the public interest.²² Accelerating the operative date will allow the ISE to immediately implement rules similar to ones already in place at the Amex,²³ and will simplify and clarify the process by which Members accept exercise decisions from options holders and submit such decisions to the Exchange. For these reasons, the Commission designates the proposed rule change as effective and operative immediately. At any time within 60 days of the filing of the proposed rule change, as amended, the Commission may summarily abrogate such proposed 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.²⁴

IV. Solicitation of Comments

Interested persons are invited to submit written data, views and arguments concerning the foregoing, including whether the proposed rule change, as amended, is consistent with the Act. Persons making written submissions should file six copies thereof with the Secretary, Securities and Exchange Commission, 450 Fifth Street, NW., Washington, DC 20549-0609. 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 the ISE. All submissions should refer to File No. SR-ISE-2003-20 and should be submitted by October 17, 2003.

For the Commission, by the Division of Market Regulation, pursuant to delegated authority.²⁵

Margaret H. McFarland,
Deputy Secretary.

[FR Doc. 03-24378 Filed 9-25-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 8010-01-P

SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

[Release No. 34-48514; File No. ISE-2003-21]

Self-Regulatory Organizations; Notice of Filing and Immediate Effectiveness of Proposed Rule Change by the International Securities Exchange, Inc. Relating to the Extension of the Pilot Program for Quotation Spreads

September 22, 2003.

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 September 22, 2003, the International Securities Exchange, Inc. ("ISE" or "Exchange") 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 the ISE. The proposed rule change has been filed by the ISE under Rule 19b-4(f)(6) of the Act.³ 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

The ISE proposes to extend until January 31, 2004, a pilot program permitting the allowable quotation spread for options on up to 50 equity securities to be \$5, regardless of the price of the bid ("Pilot Program"). The ISE proposes no substantive changes to the Pilot Program other than extending its operation through January 31, 2004. Pursuant to Rule 19b-4(f)(6) under the Act, the ISE requests that the Commission waive the 30-day pre-operative requirement contained in Rule 19b-4(f)(6)(iii).⁴

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 ISE included statements concerning the

¹⁵ 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(3)(A).

¹⁶ 17 CFR 240.19b-4(f)(6).

¹⁷ 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(3)(A).

¹⁸ 17 CFR 240.19b-4(f)(6).

¹⁹ As required under Rule 19b-4(f)(6)(iii), the Exchange provided the Commission with written notice of its intent to file the proposed rule change at least five business days prior to the filing date or such shorter period as designated by the Commission.

²⁰ 17 CFR 240.19b-4(f)(6).

²¹ 17 CFR 240.19b-4(f)(6)(iii).

²² For purposes only of accelerating the operative date of this proposal, the Commission has considered the proposed rule's impact on efficiency, competition, and capital formation. 15 U.S.C. 78c(f).

²³ See *supra* note .

²⁴ For purposes of calculating the sixty-day abrogation period, the Commission considers the period to commence on September 9, 2003, the date at which the Exchange filed Amendment No. 1.

²⁵ 17 CFR 200.30-3(a)(12).

¹ 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(1).

² 17 CFR 240.19b-4.

³ 17 CFR 240.19b-4(f)(6).

⁴ 17 CFR 240.19b-4(f)(6)(iii).