

### Applicants' Legal Analysis

1. Section 9(a)(2) of the Act, in relevant part, prohibits a person who has been enjoined from engaging in or continuing any conduct or practice in connection with the purchase or sale of a security from acting, among other things, as an investment adviser or depositor of any registered investment company or a principal underwriter for any registered open-end investment company, registered unit investment trust ("UIT") or registered face-amount certificate company. Section 9(a)(3) of the Act makes the prohibition in section 9(a)(2) applicable to a company, any affiliated person of which has been disqualified under the provisions of section 9(a)(2). Section 2(a)(3) of the Act defines "affiliated person" to include any person directly or indirectly controlling, controlled by, or under common control with, the other person. Applicants state that Piper is an affiliated person of each of the other Applicants within the meaning of section 2(a)(3) of the Act. Applicants further state that the entry of the Injunctions would result in Applicants being subject to the disqualification provisions of section 9(a) of the Act.

2. Section 9(c) of the Act provides that the Commission shall grant an application for exemption from the disqualification provisions of section 9(a) if it is established that these provisions, as applied to Applicants, are unduly or disproportionately severe or that the Applicants' conduct has been such as not to make it against the public interest or the protection of investors to grant the application. Applicants have filed an application pursuant to section 9(c) seeking a temporary and permanent order exempting them from the disqualification provisions of section 9(a) of the Act.

3. Applicants believe they meet the standard for exemption specified in section 9(c). Applicants state that the prohibitions of section 9(a) as applied to them would be unduly and disproportionately severe and that the conduct of Applicants has been such as not to make it against the public interest or the protection of investors to grant the exemption from section 9(a).

4. Applicants state that the conduct giving rise to the Injunctions did not involve any of the Applicants acting in the capacity of investment adviser, depositor or principal underwriter for a Fund. Applicants state that the Complaint did not expressly reference the conduct of any current or former employee of any of the Applicants,<sup>3</sup>

who is or was involved in providing advisory, sub-advisory or underwriting services to the Funds advised or underwritten by Applicants.<sup>4</sup> While the Applicants' portfolio managers had access to research reports issued by the Research Department, there is no indication that the portfolio managers relied on these research reports more than any other data that would have been considered by the portfolio managers in making investment decisions for the Funds. Although some of the Funds held securities in their portfolios at the time that Piper issued research reports concerning the issuers of such securities, as far as Applicants are aware, none of the officers, portfolio managers, or any other investment personnel employed by the Applicants made any investment decisions based on any non-public information relating to the conduct underlying the Final Judgment. In addition, Piper and USBAM have policies and procedures, which were in effect at the time of the conduct described in the Complaint, which prohibit (a) prepublication disclosure of research opinions, (b) disclosure of certain information concerning investment banking transactions prior to public announcement, and (c) trading based on material non-public information. Each of the Applicants that serve as an investment adviser or sub-adviser to the Funds also has adopted policies regarding information barriers (the "Policies") designed to protect the Funds from any conflict of interest that may arise between portfolio managers and other employees of Piper. The Policies restrict communications between portfolio managers and certain employees of Piper.

5. The Applicants will distribute written materials, including an offer to meet in person to discuss the materials, to the board of directors or trustees of each Fund (each, a "Board"), including the directors who are not "interested persons," as defined in section 2(a)(19) of the Act, of the Fund, and their independent legal counsel, if any, regarding the Federal Injunction, any impact on the Funds, and this

referred to in the Complaint is now the chief executive officer of USBAM.

<sup>4</sup> The Complaint refers to general practices regarding the relationship between the Investment Banking and Research Departments. It is possible that one or more current or former officers of USBAM or Quasar, other than the individual discussed in footnote 3, who is or was involved in providing advisory, subadvisory or underwriting services to the Funds was at some time an officer or employee of the Investment Banking or Research Department.

application.<sup>5</sup> The Applicants will provide the Boards with all information concerning the Injunctions and this application that is necessary for the Funds to fulfill their disclosure and other obligations under the federal securities laws.

6. Applicants state that the inability to continue providing advisory services to the Funds and the inability to continue serving as principal underwriter to the Funds would result in potentially severe hardships for the Funds and their shareholders. Applicants also assert that, if they were barred from providing services to the Funds, the effect on their businesses and employees would be severe. The Applicants state that they have committed substantial resources to establish an expertise in advising and distributing Funds. Applicants state that no Applicant has previously applied for an exemption pursuant to section 9(c) of the Act.

### Applicants' Condition

Applicants agree that any order granting the requested relief will be subject to the following condition:

Any temporary exemption granted pursuant to the application shall be without prejudice to, and shall not limit the Commission's rights in any manner with respect to, any Commission investigation of, or administrative proceedings involving or against, Applicants, including without limitation, the consideration by the Commission of a permanent exemption from section 9(a) of the Act requested pursuant to the application or the revocation or removal of any temporary exemptions granted under the Act in connection with the application.

### Temporary Order

The Commission has considered the matter and finds that Applicants have made the necessary showing to justify granting a temporary exemption.

Accordingly,

*It Is Hereby Ordered*, pursuant to section 9(c) of the Act, that the Applicants are granted a temporary exemption from the provisions of section 9(a), effective forthwith, solely with respect to the Injunctions, subject to the condition in the application, until the date the Commission takes final action on their application for a permanent order or, if earlier October 31, 2005.

By the Commission.

**Margaret H. McFarland,**

*Deputy Secretary.*

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<sup>3</sup> Applicants state that the former head of the Research Department whose activities are generally

<sup>5</sup> Applicants will advise the Boards of any State Injunctions that are issued.