

SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
(Release No. 34-76221; File No. SR-C2-2015-029)

October 22, 2015

Self-Regulatory Organizations; C2 Options Exchange, Incorporated; Notice of Filing and Immediate Effectiveness of a Proposed Rule Change Relating to Exchange Rule 6.15

Pursuant to Section 19(b)(1) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (the “Act”),¹ and Rule 19b-4 thereunder,² notice is hereby given that on October 21, 2015, C2 Options Exchange, Incorporated (the “Exchange” or “C2”) filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission (the “Commission”) the proposed rule change as described in Items I and II below, which Items have been prepared by the Exchange. 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 the Substance of the Proposed Rule Change

The Exchange proposes to extend a pilot program related to Rule 6.15 (Nullification and Adjustment of Options Transactions including Obvious Errors) and to clarify that the pilot program does not prevent the nullification or adjustment of electronic transactions arising from a “verifiable disruption or malfunction”. The text of the proposed rule change is available on the Exchange’s website (<http://www.cboe.com/AboutCBOE/CBOELegalRegulatoryHome.aspx>), at the Exchange’s Office of the Secretary, 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, the Exchange 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

¹ 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(1).

² 17 CFR 240.19b-4.

Item IV below. The Exchange 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

Pilot Extension

The purpose of this filing is to extend the effectiveness of the Exchange's current rule applicable to obvious errors Interpretation and Policy .01 to Rule 6.15, explained in further detail below, is currently operating on a pilot program set to expire on October 23, 2015. The Exchange proposes to extend the pilot program so that it coincides with the pilot period for the Plan to Address Extraordinary Market Volatility Pursuant to Rule 608 of Regulation NMS under the Act ("Limit Up-Limit Down Plan" or "Plan"), including any extensions to the pilot period for the Plan. Currently the Plan Participants have proposed the 9th amendment to the Plan which, if approved, would extend the pilot period of the Plan to April 22, 2016.³

On April 8, 2013, the Commission approved, on a pilot basis, amendments to Exchange Rule 6.15 that stated that options executions will not be adjusted or nullified if the execution occurs while the underlying security is in a limit or straddle state as defined by the Plan.⁴ Under the terms of this current pilot program, though options executions will generally not be subject to review as an Obvious Error or Catastrophic Error while the underlying security is in a limit or straddle state, such executions may be reviewed by the Exchange should the Exchange decide to

³ See Securities Exchange Act Release No. 75917 (September 14, 2015), 80 F.R. 56515 (September 18, 2015) (File No. 4-631).

⁴ Securities Exchange Act Release No. 69345 (April 8, 2013), 78 FR 21985 (April 12, 2013) (SR-C2-2013-013). See also Exchange Rule 6.15.01.

do so under its own motion pursuant to sub-paragraph (c)(3) of Rule 6.15, or a bust or adjust pursuant to paragraphs (e) through (j) of Rule 6.15.⁵

Pursuant to a comment letter filed in connection with the order approving the establishment of the pilot, the Exchange committed to submit monthly data regarding the program.⁶ In addition, the Exchange agreed to submit an overall analysis of the pilot in conjunction with the data submitted under the Plan and any other data as requested by the Commission.⁷ Pursuant to a rule filing, approved on April 3, 2014, each month, the Exchange committed to provide the Commission, and the public, a dataset containing the data for each straddle and limit state in optionable stocks that had at least one trade on the Exchange.⁸ The Exchange will continue to provide the Commission with this data on a monthly basis from October 2015 through the end of the pilot. For each trade on the Exchange, the Exchange will provide (a) the stock symbol, option symbol, time at the start of the straddle or limit state, an indicator for whether it is a straddle or limit state, and (b) for the trades on the Exchange, the executed volume, time-weighted quoted bid-ask spread, time-weighted average quoted depth at the bid, time-weighted average quoted depth at the offer, high execution price, low execution price, number of trades for which a request for review for error was received during straddle and limit states, an indicator variable for whether those options outlined above have a price change exceeding 30% during the underlying stock's limit or straddle state compared to the last available option price as reported by OPRA before the start of the limit or straddle state (1 if

⁵ Id.

⁶ See letter from Angelo Evangelou, Associate General Counsel, Chicago Board Options Exchange, Incorporated, date April 4, 2013.

⁷ Id.

⁸ Securities Exchange Act Release No. 71856 (April 3, 2014), 79 FR 19676 (April 9, 2014) (SR-C2-2014-008).

observe 30% and 0 otherwise), and another indicator variable for whether the option price within five minutes of the underlying stock leaving the limit or straddle state (or halt if applicable) is 30% away from the price before the start of the limit or straddle state.

In addition, the Exchange will provide to the Commission, and the public, assessments relating to the impact of the operation of the obvious error rules during limit and straddle states including: (1) an evaluation of the statistical and economic impact of limit and straddle states on liquidity and market quality in the options markets, and (2) an assessment of whether the lack of obvious error rules in effect during the straddle and limit states are problematic. The Exchange agrees to provide the analysis and data, to the commission, to help evaluate the impact of the pilot program no later than five months prior to the expiration of the pilot program, including any extensions. If the Plan extension is approved, the next data assessment will be submitted no later than December 18, 2015.

The Exchange is now proposing to extend the pilot period so that it coincides with the pilot period for the Plan, including any extensions to the pilot period for the Plan. The pilot will no longer have a fixed expiration date. The Exchange believes the benefits to market participants from this provision should continue on a pilot basis to coincide with the Plan. The Exchange continues to believe that adding certainty to the execution of orders in limit or straddle states will encourage market participants to continue to provide liquidity to the Exchange, and, thus, promote a fair and orderly market during these periods. Barring this provision, the provisions of Rule 6.15 would likely apply in many instances during limit and straddle states. The Exchange believes that continuing the pilot will protect against any unanticipated consequences in the options markets during a limit or straddle state. Thus, the Exchange believes that the protections of current Rule should continue while the industry gains further experience operating the Plan.

Verifiable Disruptions or Malfunctions

The Exchange is also proposing to clarify that the pilot program outlined in Interpretation and Policy .01 to Rule 6.15 does not prevent the nullification or adjustment of electronic transactions arising from a verifiable disruption or malfunction. Interpretation and Policy .06 to Rule 6.15 specifies that electronic transactions arising out of a verifiable disruption or malfunction in the use or operation of any Exchange automated quotation, dissemination, execution or communication system will either be nullified or adjusted by an Official. The Exchange believes the provisions of Interpretation and Policy .06 would apply regardless of whether an underlying security to a transaction was in a limit state or straddle state. However, because Interpretation and Policy .01 specifies the other instances in which executions may be reviewed and nullified or adjusted (regardless of the pilot program), the Exchange believes adding a reference to Interpretation and Policy .06 will promote clarity in the Rule.

2. Statutory Basis

The Exchange believes the proposed rule change is consistent with the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (the “Act”) and the rules and regulations thereunder applicable to the Exchange and, in particular, the requirements of Section 6(b) of the Act.⁹ Specifically, the Exchange believes the proposed rule change is consistent with the Section 6(b)(5)¹⁰ requirements that the rules of an exchange be designed to prevent fraudulent and manipulative acts and practices, to promote just and equitable principles of trade, to foster cooperation and coordination with persons engaged in regulating, clearing, settling, processing information with respect to, and facilitating transactions in securities, to remove impediments to and perfect the mechanism of a free and open market and a national market system, and, in general, to protect

⁹ 15 U.S.C. 78f(b).

¹⁰ 15 U.S.C. 78f(b)(5).

investors and the public interest. Additionally, the Exchange believes the proposed rule change is consistent with the Section 6(b)(5)¹¹ requirement that the rules of an exchange not be designed to permit unfair discrimination between customers, issuers, brokers, or dealers.

In particular, the Exchange further believes that it is necessary and appropriate in the interest of promoting fair and orderly markets to exclude transactions executed during a limit or straddle state from certain aspects of the Exchange Rule 6.15. The Exchange believes the application of the current rule will be impracticable given the lack of a reliable NBBO in the options market during limit and straddle states, and that the resulting actions (i.e., nullified trades or adjusted prices) may not be appropriate given market conditions. The Exchange now proposes to extend the pilot program so that it coincides with the pilot period for the Plan, including any extensions to the pilot period for the Plan. Extension of this pilot would ensure that limit orders that are filled during a limit or straddle state would have certainty of execution in a manner that promotes just and equitable principles of trade, removes impediments to, and perfects the mechanism of a free and open market and a national market system. Thus, the Exchange believes that the protections of the pilot should continue while the industry gains further experience operating the Plan.

The proposed rule change relating to verifiable disruptions or malfunctions is consistent with these provisions as it will more accurately reflect the intentions of the Exchange regarding adjustments and nullifications while an underlying security is in a limit or straddle state. The purpose of the proposed change is to add clarity to the rule text, however, the current practices of the Exchange will remain the same. The Exchange believes the proposed rule change will help

¹¹ Id.

avoid confusion, thereby removing impediments to and perfecting the mechanism of a free and open market and national market system.

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

C2 does not believe that the proposed rule change will impose any burden on competition that is not necessary or appropriate in furtherance of the purposes of the Act. Specifically, the Exchange believes that, by extending the expiration of the pilot, the proposed rule change will allow for further analysis of the pilot and a determination of how the pilot shall be structured in the future. In doing so, the proposed rule change will also serve to promote regulatory clarity and consistency, thereby reducing burdens on the marketplace and facilitating investor protection.

C. Self-Regulatory Organization's Statement on Comments on the Proposed Rule Change Received from Members, Participants, or Others

The Exchange neither solicited nor received comments on the proposed rule change.

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

Because the 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 as the Commission may designate if consistent with the protection of investors and the public interest, the proposed rule change has become effective pursuant to Section 19(b)(3)(A) of the Act¹² and Rule 19b-4(f)(6)(iii) thereunder.¹³

¹² 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(3)(A).

¹³ 17 CFR 240.19b-4(f)(6)(iii). 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, along with a brief description and the 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.

The Exchange has asked the Commission to waive the 30-day operative delay so that the proposal may become operative immediately upon filing. The Commission believes that waiving the 30-day operative delay is consistent with the protection of investors and the public interest, as it will allow the obvious error pilot program to continue uninterrupted while the industry gains further experience operating under the Plan, and avoid any investor confusion that could result from a temporary interruption in the pilot program. For this reason, the Commission designates the proposed rule change to be operative upon filing.¹⁴

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. If the Commission takes such action, the Commission shall institute proceedings to determine whether the proposed rule should be approved or disapproved.

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:

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-C2-2015-029 on the subject line.

¹⁴ For purposes only of waiving the 30-day operative delay, the Commission has also considered the proposed rule's impact on efficiency, competition, and capital formation. See 15 U.S.C. 78c(f).

Paper comments:

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

All submissions should refer to File Number SR-C2-2015-029. 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, D.C. 20549 on official business days between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. Copies of such filing also will be available for inspection and copying at the principal office of the Exchange. 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-C2-2015-029, 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.¹⁵

Brent J. Fields
Secretary

¹⁵ 17 CFR 200.30-3(a)(12).