

Service for foreign/ADR issues will remain indicative.

In conjunction with the start-up of the Service in 1990, the NASD implemented a filing requirement (under Section 4 of Schedule H to the NASD By-Laws) and review procedures to verify member firms' compliance with Rule 15c2-11 under the Act. During the proposed extension, this review process will continue to be an important component of the NASD's oversight of broker-dealers' market making in OTC Equities. The NASD also expects to work closely with the Commission staff in developing further enhancements to the Service to fulfill the market structure requirements mandated by the Securities Enforcement Remedies and Penny Stock Reform Act of 1990, particularly Section 17B of the Act.⁵ The NASD notes that implementation of the Reform Act entails Commission rulemaking in several areas, including the development of mechanisms for gathering and disseminating reliable quotation/transaction information for "penny stocks."

2. Statutory Basis

The NASD believes that the proposed rule change is consistent with Sections 11A(a)(1), 15A(b) (6) and (11), and Section 17B of the Act. Section 11A(a)(1) sets forth the Congressional findings and policy goals respecting operational enhancements to the securities markets. Basically, the Congress found that new data processing and communications techniques should be applied to improve the efficiency of market operations, broaden the distribution of market information, and foster competition among market participants. Section 15A(b)(6) requires, among other things, that the NASD's rules promote just and equitable principles of trade, facilitate securities transactions, and protect public investors. Subsection (11) thereunder authorizes the NASD to adopt rules governing the form and content of quotations for securities traded over-the-counter for the purposes

of producing fair and informative quotations, preventing misleading quotations, and promoting orderly procedures for collecting and disseminating quotations. Finally, Section 17B contains Congressional findings and directives respecting the collection and distribution of quotation information on low-priced equity securities that are neither Nasdaq nor exchange-listed.

The NASD believes that extension of the Service through April 28, 1995, is fully consistent with the foregoing provisions of the Act.

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

The NASD believes that the rule change will not result in 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

Written comments were neither solicited nor received.

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

The NASD requests that the Commission find good cause, pursuant to Section 19(b)(2) of the Act, for approving the proposed rule change prior to the 30th day after its publication in the **Federal Register** to avoid any interruption of the Service. The current authorization for the Service was scheduled to extend through January 31, 1995. Hence it is imperative that the Commission approve the instant filing on or before that date. Otherwise, the NASD will be required to suspend operation of the Service pending Commission action on the proposed extension.

The NASD believes that accelerated approval is appropriate to ensure continuity in the Service's operation pending a determination on permanent status for the Service, as requested in File No. SR-NASD-92-7. Continued operation of the Service will ensure the availability of an electronic quotation medium to support member firms' market making in approximately 5,229 OTC Equities and the widespread dissemination of quotation information on these securities. The Service's operation also expedites price discovery and facilitates the execution of customer orders at the best available price. From a regulatory standpoint, the NASD's capture of quotation data from participating market makers

supplements the price and volume data reported by member firms pursuant to Part XII of Schedule D to the NASD By-Laws.

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 the NASD. All submissions should refer to the file number in the caption above and should be submitted by March 1, 1995.

V. Commission's Findings and Order Granting Accelerated Approval

The Commission finds that approval of the proposed rule change is consistent with the Act and the rules and regulations thereunder, and, in particular, with the requirements of Section 15A(b)(11) of the Act, which provides that the rules of the NASD relating to quotations must be designed to produce fair and informative quotations, prevent fictitious or misleading quotations, and promote orderly procedures for collecting, distributing, and publishing quotations.

The Commission finds good cause for approving the proposed rule change prior to the 30th day after the date of publishing notice of the filing thereof. Accelerated approval of the NASD's proposal is appropriate to ensure continuity in the Service's operation as an electronic quotation medium that supports NASD members' market making in these securities and that facilitates price discovery and the execution of customers' orders at the best available price. Additionally, continued operation of the Service will materially assist the NASD's surveillance of its members trading in OTC Equities that are eligible and quoted in the Service, and in non-Tape B securities that are listed on regional

⁵ On November 24, 1992, the NASD filed an application with the Commission for interim designation of the Service as an automated quotation system pursuant to Section 17B(b) of the Act. On December 30, 1992, the Commission granted Qualifying Electronic Quotation System ("QEQS") status for the Service for purposes of certain penny stock rules that became effective on January 1, 1993. On August 26, 1993, the Commission granted the NASD's request for an extension of QEQS status until such time as the OTCBB meets the statutory requirements of Section 17B(b)(2). Finally, on May 13, 1994, the NASD filed an application with the Commission for permanent designation of the Service as an automated quotations system for penny stocks pursuant to Section 17B(b).