

CBOE BZX EXCHANGE, INC.
LETTER OF ACCEPTANCE, WAIVER AND CONSENT
NO. 20140414439-03

TO: Cboe BZX Exchange, Inc.
c/o Department of Enforcement
Financial Industry Regulatory Authority (“FINRA”)

RE: Wolverine Trading, LLC, Respondent
Broker-Dealer
CRD No. 36848

Pursuant to Rule 8.3 of the Rules of Cboe BZX Exchange, Inc. (“BZX”)¹, Wolverine Trading, LLC (“Wolverine” or the “firm”) submits this Letter of Acceptance, Waiver and Consent (“AWC”) for the purpose of proposing a settlement of the alleged rule violations described below. This AWC is submitted on the condition that, if accepted, BZX will not bring any future actions against the firm alleging violations based on the same factual findings described herein.

I.

ACCEPTANCE AND CONSENT

- A. The firm hereby accepts and consents, without admitting or denying the findings, and solely for the purposes of this proceeding and any other proceeding brought by or on behalf of BZX, or to which BZX is a party, prior to a hearing and without an adjudication of any issue of law or fact, to the entry of the following findings by BZX:

BACKGROUND

Wolverine is a registered broker-dealer that was approved for BZX membership on October 3, 2011. Its registration remains in effect. The firm does not have any relevant formal disciplinary history.

SUMMARY

1. FINRA’s Department of Market Regulation (the “Staff”), on behalf of BZX and various other options exchanges, conducted a review of the firm’s compliance with Rule 15c3-5 promulgated under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended (the “Exchange Act”), and related supervision rules of various exchanges, including BZX, during the period between September 2012 and the present (the “Review Period”).
2. As detailed further below, the firm had failed to establish and maintain an adequate system of risk management controls and supervisory procedures, including written

¹ Effective October 17, 2017, Bats BZX Exchange, Inc. was renamed to Cboe BZX Exchange, Inc.

supervisory procedures (“WSPs”), and an adequate system of follow-up and review, reasonably designed to manage the financial, regulatory, and other risks of providing market access, including, but not limited to, risk management controls and supervisory procedures reasonably designed to: (i) prevent the entry of erroneous orders by rejecting orders that exceed appropriate price or size parameters or that indicate duplicative orders; (ii) prevent the entry of orders that do not comply with regulatory requirements that must be satisfied on a pre-order entry basis; (iii) manage the risk of unintended or inadvertent quotations generated by a malfunctioning system; (iv) address or otherwise codify the firm’s obligation to prevent the entry of excessive messages on a pre-trade basis, or document changes to pre-defined quoting parameters set by users of the firm’s real-time quote-monitoring and alert application; and (v) codify and address material malfunctions in the firm’s automated trading systems and/or algorithms.

3. On November 3, 2010, the SEC adopted SEC Rule 15c3-5 (sometimes referred as the “Market Access Rule”) under the Exchange Act to address concerns relating to the practice of broker-dealers affording direct market access to customers. SEC Rule 15c3-5 requires, among other things, that a broker-dealer with market access establish risk management controls and supervisory procedures that are reasonably designed to limit the financial exposure of the broker-dealer and ensure compliance with all regulatory requirements applicable to market access. The rule became effective on July 14, 2011.
4. Rule 15c3-5(b) requires brokers and dealers with market access to “establish, document, and maintain a system of risk management controls and supervisory procedures reasonably designed to manage the financial, regulatory, and other risks of this business activity.”
5. Rule 15c3-5(c) requires, among other things, broker-dealers with market access to have risk management controls and supervisory procedures that are reasonably designed to prevent the entry of erroneous or duplicative orders and ensure compliance with all pre-trade regulatory requirements.
6. BZX Rule 3.1 requires a member, in the conduct of its business, to observe high standards of commercial honor and just and equitable principles of trade.
7. BZX Rule 3.2 prohibits members from engaging in conduct in violation of the Exchange Act, the rules and regulations promulgated thereunder, the By-Laws, Exchange Rules and any policy or written interpretation of the By-Laws or Exchange Rules of the BZX. BZX Rule 3.2 further requires every member to supervise persons associated with the member to assure compliance with those requirements.
8. BZX Rule 5.1 requires, in pertinent part, that a member establish, maintain, and enforce written procedures which will enable it to supervise properly the activities of the firm and to assure its compliance with applicable securities laws, rules and regulations.

9. BZX Rule 5.2 specifies that final responsibility for proper supervision shall rest with the Member, which shall designate a partner, officer, or manager to carry out the Member's WSPs.

FACTS AND VIOLATIVE CONDUCT

10. During the Review Period, Wolverine used its proprietary applications, "System 1" (prior to January 2014) and "System 2" (during and after January 2014) to disseminate two-sided quotations to BZX and other options exchanges.
11. During the Review Period, Wolverine's risk management system and supervisory procedures were not reasonably designed to monitor, regulate, detect and prevent the dissemination of excessive, erroneous, and duplicative orders, quotations and/or cancellations, or otherwise ensure compliance with Rule 15c3-5 promulgated under the Exchange Act.
12. Specifically, during the Review Period, the firm's: (i) risk management controls and supervisory procedures were not adequate to prevent the entry of at least 23 limit orders that were erroneously priced between 68% and 1,612,753% through the prevailing national best offer; and (ii) T+1 quote surveillance report, which the firm implemented in 2012 to compare aggregate daily quote count by options across multiple options exchanges, was not reasonably designed to: (a) provide real-time monitoring of quoting activity; (b) detect and generate real-time alerts regarding intraday spurts in quoting activity or when pre-defined quote count thresholds were exceeded; (c) monitor and detect quote cancellations; and (d) provide real-time surveillance of quoting activity across multiple options exchanges.
13. Additionally, during the Review Period, the firm's quoting applications, including their built-in controls, and modifications to their logic and functionalities, were not adequately designed to detect and prevent the unintended entry of excessive, erroneous, or duplicative quotations and cancellations to the Exchange. For example, during the Review Period, the firm implemented and deployed certain quoting logics and functionalities that caused unintended submissions of excessive, erroneous, and/or duplicative quotations and/or cancellations to the Exchange while the applications were disseminating quotes at the widest permissible quote width. However, the applications were not reasonably configured, and their built-in safety controls, such the throttling mechanism and duplicate quote-prevention functionality, were not reasonably designed to operate, detect or prevent excessive or duplicative quotations and quote cancellations generated while quoting at the widest permissible quote width.
14. Finally, the firm's risk management controls and WSPs were inadequate, in that they did not: (i) codify the firm's obligation to prevent the entry of excessive messages on a pre-trade basis, or to document changes and reviews of changes to the pre-defined parameters set by users of its real-time automated alert system; (ii) have pre-trade

controls to prevent the entry of orders that exceeded appropriate price parameters on an order-by-order basis; (iii) have controls to prevent the inadvertent entry of messages that exceeded configurable thresholds; (iv) specify how the firm manages access to its trading systems or regulate the possible overriding or evasion of system restrictions; (v) outline the steps to taken, or identify the individual(s) responsible for taking such steps, to address major system-related problems, including how and by whom manual shut-offs, kill switches, or other means of disabling malfunctioning systems and/or algorithms are to be deployed; and (vi) specify the frequency at which shut-offs, kill switches, or other automated or manual means of disabling malfunctioning systems and algorithms are to be tested, and the results of such test documented, in order to ensure proper implementation and functioning of such shut-offs, kill switches and other disabling mechanisms.

15. The conduct described in paragraphs 10 through 14 constitutes a violation of Rules 15c3-5(b) and 15c3-5(c) promulgated under the Exchange Act, and BZX Rules 3.1.3.2, 5.1, and 5.2.

B. The firm also consents to the imposition of the following sanctions:

1. a censure;
2. a total fine of \$450,000, of which \$90,000 shall be paid to BZX;¹ and
3. an undertaking requiring Respondent to address the supervisory deficiencies described in this AWC and to ensure that it has implemented controls and procedures that are reasonably designed to achieve compliance with the rules and regulations cited herein. Within 60 days after this AWC becomes final, Respondent shall submit to the COMPLIANCE ASSISTANT, LEGAL SECTION, MARKET REGULATION DEPARTMENT, 9509 KEY WEST AVENUE, ROCKVILLE, MD 20850, a written representation from a senior management firm executive, to MarketRegulationComp@finra.org that provides the following information:
 - i. a reference to this matter;
 - ii. a representation that Respondent has revised its written supervisory procedures as indicated above; and
 - iii. the date(s) this was completed.

Acceptance of this AWC is conditioned upon acceptance of similar settlement

¹ The balance of the fine shall be paid to Cboe EDGX Exchange, Inc. (f/k/a Bats EDGX Exchange, Inc.), Boston Options Exchange LLC, NASDAQ BX, Inc., NASDAQ Options Market LLC, NASDAQ PHLX LLC, NYSE Arca, Inc., and NYSE American LLC (f/k/a NYSE MKT LLC).

agreements in related matters between the firm and Boston Options Exchange LLC, Cboe EDGX Exchange, Inc. (f/k/a Bats EDGX Exchange, Inc.), NASDAQ BX, Inc., NASDAQ Options Market LLC, NASDAQ PHLX LLC, NYSE Arca, Inc., and NYSE American LLC (f/k/a NYSE MKT LLC).

The firm agrees to pay the monetary sanction(s) upon notice that this AWC has been accepted and that such payment(s) are due and payable. It has submitted an Election of Payment form showing the method by which it proposes to pay the fine imposed.

The firm specifically and voluntarily waives any right to claim that it is unable to pay, now or at any time hereafter, the monetary sanction(s) imposed in this matter.

The sanctions imposed herein shall be effective on a date set by BZX.

II.

WAIVER OF PROCEDURAL RIGHTS

The firm specifically and voluntarily waives the following rights granted under BZX Rules:

- A. To have a Statement of Charges issued specifying the allegations against the firm;
- B. To be notified of the Statement of Charges and have the opportunity to answer the allegations in writing;
- C. To defend against the allegations in a disciplinary hearing before a Hearing Panel, to have a written record of the hearing made and to have a written decision issued; and
- D. To appeal any such decision to the Appeals Committee of the BZX's Board of Directors and then to the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission and a U.S. Court of Appeals.

Further, the firm specifically and voluntarily waives any right to claim bias or prejudgment of the Chief Regulatory Officer ("CRO"), in connection with the CRO's participation in discussions regarding the terms and conditions of this AWC, or other consideration of this AWC, including acceptance or rejection of this AWC.

The firm further specifically and voluntarily waives any right to claim that a person violated the ex parte prohibitions of BZX Rule 8.16, in connection with such person's or body's participation in discussions regarding the terms and conditions of this AWC, or other consideration of this AWC, including its acceptance or rejection.

III.

OTHER MATTERS

The firm understands that:

- A. Submission of this AWC is voluntary and will not resolve this matter unless and until it has been reviewed and accepted by the CRO, pursuant to BZX Rule 8.3;
- B. If this AWC is not accepted, its submission will not be used as evidence to prove any of the allegations against the firm; and
- C. If accepted:
 - 1. this AWC will become part of the firm's permanent disciplinary record and may be considered in any future actions brought by BZX or any other regulator against the firm;
 - 2. this AWC will be published on a website maintained by BZX in accordance with BZX Rule 8.18. In addition, this AWC will be made available through FINRA's public disclosure program in response to public inquiries about the firm's disciplinary record; and
 - 3. The firm may not take any action or make or permit to be made any public statement, including in regulatory filings or otherwise, denying, directly or indirectly, any finding in this AWC or create the impression that the AWC is without factual basis. The firm may not take any position in any proceeding brought by or on behalf of BZX, or to which BZX is a party, that is inconsistent with any part of this AWC. Nothing in this provision affects the firm's: (i) testimonial obligations; or (ii) right to take legal or factual positions in litigation or other legal proceedings in which BZX is not a party.
- D. The firm may attach a Corrective Action Statement to this AWC that is a statement of demonstrable corrective steps taken to prevent future misconduct. The firm understands that it may not deny the charges or make any statement that is inconsistent with the AWC in this Statement. This Statement does not constitute factual or legal findings by BZX, nor does it reflect the views of BZX or its staff.

The undersigned, on behalf of the firm, certifies that a person duly authorized to act on its behalf has read and understands all of the provisions of this AWC and has been given a full opportunity to ask questions about it; that it has agreed to the AWC's provisions voluntarily; and that no offer, threat, inducement, or promise of any kind, other than the terms set forth herein and the prospect of avoiding the issuance of a Complaint, has been made to induce the firm to submit it.

23 February 2018
Date


Wolverine Trading, LLC
Respondent

By: 

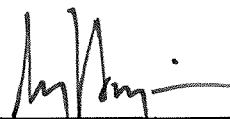
Name: David L. Cavicke

Title: Chief Legal Officer

Reviewed by: Cathy Murray


Counsel for Respondent
Firm Name
Address
City/State/Zip
Phone Number

4/13/2018
Date


Greg Hoogasian
Senior Vice President & Chief Regulatory
Officer
Cboe BZX Exchange, Inc.

ELECTION OF PAYMENT FORM


The firm intends to pay the fine proposed in the attached Letter of Acceptance, Waiver and Consent by the following method (check one):

- A firm check or bank check for the full amount; or
- Wire transfer.

Respectfully submitted,

Respondent
Wolverine Trading, LLC

23 February 2018
Date

By: 
Name: David H. Cavicke
Title: Chief Legal Officer