

Ontario Securities Commission

Companion Policy 48-501CP

Unofficial consolidation current to 2015-11-02.

This document is not an official statement of law or policy and should be used for reference purposes only.

Any forms referenced in this document are available separately on the Ontario Securities Commission website.

**COMPANION POLICY 48-501CP
TRADING DURING DISTRIBUTIONS, FORMAL BIDS AND SHARE EXCHANGE
TRANSACTIONS**

Contents

Part 1 Introduction

Purpose

Part 2 Definitions and Interpretations

"connected security"

End of "dealer-restricted period" and "issuer-restricted period" — distribution of securities and exercise of over-allotment option

Part 3 Restricted Persons

Meaning of "acting jointly or in concert"

Exclusion of "related party"

Part 4 Marketplace and Marketplace Rules

Meaning of "marketplace"

Meaning of "marketplace rules"

Part 5 Exemptions

Fraud and Manipulation

Market Stabilization and Market Balancing

Exchange-traded funds

Short-position Exemption

Part 6 Research

Section 53 of the Act

Meaning of "reasonable regularity"

Meaning of "similar coverage" and of "substantial number of companies"

PART 1 INTRODUCTION

Purpose

1.1 Ontario Securities Commission Rule 48-501 Trading during Distributions, Formal Bids and Share Exchange Transactions (the "Rule") imposes trading restrictions on dealers, issuers and certain related parties involved in a distribution of securities, take-over bids and certain other transactions. The Rule generally prohibits purchases of or bids for restricted securities in circumstances where there is heightened concern over the possibility of manipulation by those with an interest in the outcome of the distribution or transaction. This Companion Policy sets out the views of the Ontario Securities Commission (the "Commission") as to the interpretation of various terms and provisions in the Rule.

PART 2 DEFINITIONS AND INTERPRETATIONS

"connected security"

2.1 The definition of "connected security" in section 1.1 of the Rule includes, among other things, a security of the issuer of the offered security or another issuer that, according to the terms of the offered security, may *significantly determine* the value of the offered security. The Commission takes the view that, absent other mitigating factors, a connected security "significantly determines" the value of the offered security, if, in whole or in part, it accounts for more than 25% of the value of the offered security.

2.2 [Repealed]

End of "dealer-restricted period" and "issuer-restricted period" — distribution of securities and exercise of over-allotment option

2.3 The definitions of "dealer-restricted period" and "issuer-restricted period", with respect to a prospectus distribution and a "restricted private placement", refer to the end of the period as the date that the selling process ends and all stabilization arrangements relating to the offered security are terminated. Paragraph (a) of subsection 1.2(5) provides interpretation as to when the selling process is considered to end. As further clarification, the selling process is considered to end for a prospectus distribution when the receipt for the prospectus has been issued, the dealer has distributed all securities allocated to it and is no longer stabilizing, all selling efforts have ceased and the syndicate is broken. Selling efforts have ceased when the dealer is no longer making efforts to sell, and there is no intention to exercise an over-allotment option other than to cover the syndicate's short position. If the dealer or syndicate subsequently exercises an over-allotment option in an amount that exceeds the syndicate short position, the selling efforts would not be considered to have ceased. Securities allocated to a dealer that are held and transferred to their inventory account at the end of the distribution are considered distributed. Subsequent sales of such securities are secondary market transactions and should occur on a marketplace subject to any applicable exemptions (unless the subsequent sale transaction is a distribution by prospectus). To provide certainty around when the distribution has ended, appropriate steps should be taken to move the securities from the syndication account to the dealer's inventory account.

PART 3 RESTRICTED PERSONS

Meaning of "acting jointly or in concert"

3.1 The definitions of "dealer-restricted person" and "issuer-restricted person" in section 1.1 of the Rule include a person or company acting jointly or in concert with a person or company that is also a dealer-restricted person or an issuer-restricted person for a particular transaction. For the purposes of the Rule, "acting jointly or in concert" has a similar meaning to that phrase as defined in section 91 of the Act, with necessary modifications. In the context of this Rule only, it is a question of fact whether a person or company is acting jointly or in concert with a dealer- or issuer-restricted person and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, every person or company who, as a result of an agreement, commitment or understanding, whether formal or informal, with a dealer-restricted person or an issuer-restricted person, bids for or purchases a restricted security will be presumed to be acting jointly or in concert with such dealer-restricted person or issuer-restricted person.

Exclusion of "related party"

3.2 The definition of "dealer-restricted person" in clause 1.1(b) excludes a related entity where certain conditions are met. Subclause (i)(B) requires the dealer to obtain an annual assessment of the operation of the policies and procedures referred to in subclause (i)(A). In the Commission's view, this assessment may be conducted as part of the annual policy and procedure review of the supervision system as required by Policy 7.1 of the Universal Market Integrity Rules.

PART 4 MARKETPLACE AND MARKETPLACE RULES

Meaning of "marketplace"

4.1 In this Rule, marketplace means all marketplaces as defined in section 1.1 of National Instrument 21-101 — *Marketplace Operation*.

Meaning of "marketplace rules"

4.2 Marketplace rules refer to the rules, policies and other similar instruments adopted by a recognized stock exchange or recognized quotation and trade reporting system as approved by the applicable securities regulatory authority but not including any rules, policies or other similar instruments relating solely to the listing of securities on a stock exchange or to the quoting of securities on a quotation and trade reporting system.

PART 5 EXEMPTIONS

Fraud and Manipulation

5.1 Provisions against manipulation and fraud are found in securities legislation, specifically, Part 3 of National Instrument 23-101 — *Trading Rules* (NI 23-101) and section 126.1 of the *Securities Act* (Ontario) (when that provision comes into force). NI 23-101 prohibits manipulative or deceptive trading, including activities that may create misleading pricing or

trading activity that is detrimental to investors and the integrity of the markets. The Rule specifically prohibits certain trading activities in circumstances where there is heightened concern over the possibility of manipulation by those with an interest in the outcome of the distribution or transaction. The Rule also provides certain exemptions to permit purchases and bids in situations where there is no, or a very low, possibility of manipulation. However, the Commission is of the view that notwithstanding that certain trading activities are permitted under the Rule these activities continue to be subject to the general provisions relating to manipulation and fraud found in securities legislation such that any activities carried out in accordance with the Rule must still meet the spirit of the general anti-manipulation and anti-fraud provisions.

Market Stabilization and Market Balancing

5.2 Subsection 3.1(1) of NI 23-101 prohibits manipulation or fraud which includes, among other things, a transaction or series of transactions that a person or company knows, or ought reasonably to have known, would contribute to a misleading appearance of trading activity or an artificial price for a security. Companion Policy 23-101CP to NI 23-101 states that the Canadian securities regulatory authorities do not consider market stabilization activities carried out in connection with a distribution of securities to be activities in breach of subsection 3.1(1) provided such activities are carried out in accordance with applicable marketplace rules or provisions of securities legislation that permit market stabilization activities. Clause 3.1(1)(a) of the Rule provides dealer-restricted persons with an exemption for market stabilization and market balancing activities subject to price limitations. Market stabilization and market balancing activities should be engaged in for the purpose of maintaining a fair and orderly market in the offered security by reducing the price volatility of or addressing imbalances in buying and selling interest for the restricted security.

The Commission considers it to be inappropriate for a dealer to engage in market stabilization activities in circumstances where the dealer knows or should reasonably know that the market price is not fairly and properly determined by supply and demand. This might exist where, for example, the dealer is aware that the market price is a result of inappropriate activity by a market participant or that there is undisclosed material information regarding the issuer.

Market balancing activities should contribute to a fair and orderly market by contributing to price continuity and depth and by minimizing supply-demand disparity. Market balancing does not seek to prevent or unduly retard any price movements, but merely to prevent erratic or disorderly changes in price.

Exchange-traded funds

5.2.1 Section 1.1 of the Rule defines an "exchange-traded fund" as an open-ended mutual fund, the units of which are listed or quoted securities. Generally trading in exchange-traded funds has not given rise to concerns of a misleading appearance of trading activity or artificial price and the Rule exempts trading in exchange-traded funds. However, if the Investment Industry Regulatory Organization of Canada makes a designation that trading in a particular fund is subject to the corresponding provisions of the Universal Market Integrity Rules because it is concerned that trading in units of the fund may be susceptible to manipulation, trading in that exchange-traded fund will be subject to the Rule.

Short-position Exemption

5.3 Subclause 3.1(1)(h) provides an exemption from the Rule for a dealer-restricted person in connection with a bid for or purchase to cover a short position provided it was entered into before the commencement of the dealer-restricted period. Short positions entered into during

the dealer-restricted period may be covered by purchases made in reliance upon the market stabilization exemption in clause 3.1(1)(a), subject to the price limits set out in that exemption.

PART 6 RESEARCH

Section 53 of the Act

6.1 Part 4 of the Rule provides exemptions from section 53 of the Act which prohibits providing research that in the Commission's view constitutes an act, advertisement, solicitation, conduct or negotiation directly or indirectly in furtherance of a trade prior to the filing and receipt of the preliminary prospectus and prospectus. The Commission is of the view that although sections 4.1 and 4.2 do permit dealer-restricted persons to disseminate research reports, this dissemination continues to be subject to the usual restrictions applicable to dealer-restricted persons when they are in possession of material inside information regarding the issuer.

Meaning of "reasonable regularity"

6.2 Sections 4.1 and 4.2 of the Rule provides circumstances where a dealer-restricted person may publish or disseminate information, an opinion, or a recommendation relating to the issuer of a restricted security. Clause 4.1(a) and section 4.2 require that the information, opinion or recommendation is contained in a publication which is disseminated with reasonable regularity in the normal course of business of the dealer-restricted person. The Commission considers that it is a question of fact whether a publication was disseminated "with reasonable regularity" and whether it was in the "normal course of business". A research publication would not likely be considered to have been published with reasonable regularity if it had not been published within the previous twelve month period or there had been no coverage of the issuer within the previous twelve month period. The nature and extent of the published information should also be consistent with prior publications and the dealer should not undertake new initiatives in the context of the distribution. For example, the inclusion of projections of issuers' earnings and revenues would likely only be permitted if they had previously been included on a regular basis. In considering whether it was "in the normal course of business", the Commission may consider the distribution channels. The research should be distributed through the dealer-restricted person's usual research distribution channels and should not be targeted or distributed specifically to prospective investors in the distribution as part of a marketing effort. However, the research may be distributed to a prospective investor if that investor was previously on the mailing list for the research publication.

Meaning of "similar coverage" and of "substantial number of companies"

6.3 Clause 4.1(b) of the Rule requires that the information, opinion or recommendation includes similar coverage in the form of information, opinions or recommendations with respect to a substantial number of issuers in the issuer's industry. This should not be interpreted as requiring that the opinions and recommendations relating to the issuer and other issuers in the issuer's industry must be similar or the same. In this context, in determining what is a "substantial number of issuers", reference should be made to the relevant industry. Generally, the Commission would consider a minimum of six issuers to be a sufficient number. However, where there are less than six issuers in an industry, then all issuers should be included in the research report. In any event the number of issuers should not be less than three.