

comparison fees for the trade month.⁷ After the Exchange has adjusted each member's account to reflect the reconciliation, then members will no longer be required to pay transaction fees and recording and comparison fees associated with transactions in AMEX-listed issues.⁸ The changes to the transaction fee schedule and the recording and comparison fee schedule will be effective as of the January 1998 trade month.

The fee change is intended to make the Exchange more competitive by reducing the costs incurred by customers in executing transactions on the Exchange, thus making the Exchange a more cost-effective market center to which to send order flow.

(b) *Waiver of Independent Broker Charge.* The Exchange currently charges Independent Floor Brokers a fee of \$0.02 per option contract executed by the Independent Floor Broker. The Exchange is proposing to waive its current Independent Broker Charge until further notice.⁹ The changes to the Independent Broker Charge will be effective as of the January 1998 trade month.

The Exchange is waiving this charge to help offset the high cost that Independent Floor Brokers incur while conducting business on the Options Floor. The Exchange notes that Independent Floor Brokers perform an important function on the Options Floor, particularly when a large influx of orders needs to be executed. The fee change will help stabilize the number of Independent Floor Brokers on the Options Floor.

(c) *Options Floor Badge Replacement Fee.* The Exchange is proposing to establish an Options Floor Badge Replacement Fee of \$100. Currently, all Options Floor Members and all employees of Member Firms who need to enter the Options Trading Floor are provided, for an initial issuance fee of

\$30, a floor security badge. The badge includes a photograph of the Member or employee of a Member Firm. The badge also includes an electronic code that allows the holder to pass through the turnstiles leading to the Options Floor. The Exchange is proposing to establish a one-time replacement fee of \$100 for these badges. The fee is designed to cover the Exchange's cost of replacing lost, stolen or damaged badges.

(2) Statutory Basis

These proposals are consistent with Section 6(b) of the Act,¹⁰ in general, and Section 6(b)(4),¹¹ in particular, in that they are designed to provide for the equitable allocation of reasonable dues, fees and other charges among its members.

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

The Exchange 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.

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

Written comments on the proposed rule change were neither solicited nor received.

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

The foregoing rule change establishes or changes a due, fee, or other charge imposed by the Exchange, and, therefore, has become effective pursuant to Section 19(b)(3)(A) of the Act¹² and subparagraph (e)(2) of Rule 19b-4¹³ thereunder. At any time within 60 days of the filing of such proposed rule change, the Commission may summarily abrogate 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.

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.¹⁴

¹⁰ 15 U.S.C. 78f(b).

¹¹ 15 U.S.C. 78f(b)(4).

¹² 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(3)(A).

¹³ 17 CFR 240.19b-4(e)(2).

¹⁴ In reviewing these rules, the Commission has considered the proposed rule change's impact on

Persons making written submissions should file six copies thereof with the Secretary, Securities and Exchange Commission, 450 Fifth Street, NW., Washington, DC 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 PCX. All submissions should refer to File No. SR-PCX-98-09 and should be submitted by March 24, 1998.

For the Commission, by the Division of Market Regulation, pursuant to delegated authority.¹⁵

Margaret H. McFarland,

Deputy Secretary.

[FR Doc. 98-5400 Filed 3-2-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 8010-01-M

SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

Small Business Size Standards; Notice of Termination of Waiver of the Nonmanufacturer Rule

AGENCY: Small Business Administration.

ACTION: Notice of termination of waiver of the Nonmanufacturer Rule for pineapple juice.

SUMMARY: The Small Business Administration (SBA) is terminating the waiver of the Nonmanufacturer Rule for pineapple juice. The class of products of pineapple juice is identified under Product and Service Code (PSC) 8915 and Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) Code 2033. SBA announced the waiver for pineapple juice in the **Federal Register** on October 2, 1991 (56 FR 49841). This decision to terminate the waiver of the Nonmanufacturer Rule is based on our recent discovery of a small business manufacturer for this class of products. Terminating the waiver will require recipients of contracts set-aside for small or 8(a) businesses to provide the products of small business manufacturers or processors.

efficiency, competition, and capital formation. 15 U.S.C. 78c(f).

¹⁵ 17 CFR 200.30-3(a)(12).

⁷ The Exchange currently cannot match a member's transactions in AMEX-listed securities with the exact amount of the associated transaction fees. To determine the transaction fee credit, the Exchange initially will calculate the blended per share transaction fee rate for all of a member's equity transactions in a trade month, and multiply that blended rate by the total volume of AMEX-listed shares the member transacted that month. Once the Exchange is able to exactly match transactions with the associated credits, the Exchange will reconcile prior discrepancies between the fees and the credits associated with transactions in AMEX-listed shares. The Exchange anticipates that it will reconcile such prior discrepancies no later than April 1, 1998.

⁸ See Telephone conversation between Michael Pierson, PCX, and Joshua Kans, Attorney, Division, Commission February 23, 1998.

⁹ Before reinstating the Independent Broker Charge, the Exchange would be required to submit a proposed rule change to the Commission.

DATES: Submit comments and sources on or before March 10, 1998.

ADDRESSES: David Wm. Loines, Procurement Analyst, U.S. Small Business Administration, 409 3rd Street S.W., Washington, DC 20416, Tel: (202) 205-6475.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: David Wm. Loines, Procurement Analyst, (202) 205-6475, FAX (202) 205-7324.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Public law 100-656, enacted on November 15, 1988, incorporated into the Small Business Act the previously existing regulation that recipients of Federal contracts set-aside for small businesses or SBA 8(a) Program procurements must provide the product of a small business manufacturer or processor if the recipient is other than the actual manufacturer or processor. This requirement is commonly referred to as the Nonmanufacturer Rule.

The SBA regulations imposing this requirement are found at 13 CFR 121.406(b). Section 303(h) of the law provides for waiver of this requirement by SBA for any "class of products" for which there are no small business manufacturers or processors in the Federal market. To be considered available to participate in the Federal market on these classes of products, a small business manufacturer must have submitted a proposal for a contract solicitation or received a contract from the Federal Government within the last 24 months. The SBA defines "class of products" based on two coding systems. The first is the Office of Management and Budget's *Standard Industrial Classification Manual (SIC)*. The second is the Product and Service Code (PSC) established by the Federal Procurement Data System.

The SBA has recently been advised of the existence of a small business manufacturer for pineapple juice. Thus, the waiver previously granted for pineapple juice under PSC 8915 and SIC 2033 is terminated.

Dated: February 13, 1998.

Judith A. Roussel,

Associate Administrator for Government Contracting.

[FR Doc. 98-5330 Filed 3-2-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 8025-01-P

OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES TRADE REPRESENTATIVE

Generalized System of Preferences (GSP); Initiation of a Review To Consider the Designation of State of Eritrea as a Beneficiary Developing Country Under the GSP; Solicitation of Public Comments Relating to the Designation Criteria

AGENCY: Office of the United States Trade Representative.

ACTION: Notice and solicitation of public comment with respect to the eligibility of the State of Eritrea for the GSP program.

SUMMARY: This notice announces the initiation of a review to consider the designation of the State of Eritrea as a beneficiary developing country under the GSP program and solicits public comment relating to the designation criteria by March 31, 1998.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: GSP Subcommittee, Office of the United States Trade Representative, 600 17th Street, N.W., Room 518, Washington, D.C. 20508. The telephone number is (202) 395-6971.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The government of the State of Eritrea has requested that it be granted eligibility for beneficiary status under the GSP program. The Trade Policy Staff Committee (TPSC) has initiated a review to determine if Eritrea should be designated as a beneficiary developing country under the GSP program. A country may not be designated a beneficiary developing country, absent a finding that such designation would be in the economic interests of the United States, if any one of several elements are found, including: the participation by the country in a commodity cartel that causes serious disruption to the world economy; the provision by the country of preferential treatment to products of other developed countries which has a significant adverse effect on U.S. commerce; the expropriation by the country of U.S.-owned property without compensation; a failure by the country to enforce arbitral awards in favor of U.S. persons; the support by the country of international terrorism; or a failure by the country to take steps to protect internationally recognized worker rights. Other factors taken into account in determining whether a country will be designated a beneficiary developing country include: the extent to which the country has assured the United States that it will provide market access for U.S. goods; the extent to which the country has taken action to reduce trade-distorting investment practices

and policies; and the extent to which the country is providing adequate and effective protection of intellectual property rights. The criteria for designation are set forth in full in section 502 of the Trade Act of 1974, as amended (19 U.S.C. 2461 *et. seq.*).

Interested parties are invited to submit comments regarding the eligibility of Eritrea for designation as a GSP beneficiary developing country. Submission of comments must be made in English in 14 copies to the Chairman of the GSP Subcommittee, Trade Policy Staff Committee, and be received in Room 518 at 600 17th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20508, no later than 5 p.m. on Tuesday, March 31, 1998. Except for submissions granted "business confidential" status pursuant to 15 CFR 2003.6, information and comments submitted regarding Eritrea will be subject to public inspection by appointment with the staff of the USTR Public Reading Room. For an appointment, please call Ms. Brenda Webb at 202/395-6186. If the document contains business confidential information, 14 copies of a nonconfidential version of the submission along with 14 copies of the confidential version must be submitted. In addition, the submission should be clearly marked "confidential" at the top and bottom of each page of the document. The version which does not contain business confidential information (the public version) should also be clearly marked at the top and bottom of each page (either "public version" or "non-confidential").

Frederick L. Montgomery,

Chairman, Trade Policy Staff Committee.

[FR Doc. 98-5430 Filed 3-2-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3190-01-M

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Coast Guard

[USCG 1998 3559]

Merchant Marine Personnel Advisory Committee

AGENCY: Coast Guard, DOT.

ACTION: Notice of meetings.

SUMMARY: The Merchant Marine Personnel Advisory Committee (MERPAC) will conduct two meetings to discuss various issues relating to the training and fitness of merchant marine personnel. MERPAC advises the Secretary of Transportation on matters relating to the training, qualifications, licensing, certification and fitness of seamen serving in the U.S. merchant