

**NASDAQ BX, INC.**  
**LETTER OF ACCEPTANCE, WAIVER AND CONSENT**  
**NO. 2015046278304**

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

RE: Citadel Securities LLC, Respondent  
Broker-Dealer  
CRD No. 116797

Pursuant to Rule 9216 of the Nasdaq BX, Inc. (“BX”) Code of Procedure, Citadel Securities LLC (“Citadel Securities” 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, BX 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 BX, or to which BX 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 BX:

**BACKGROUND**

Citadel Securities is a U.S. broker-dealer and a market maker in equity securities and U.S.-listed options. It became a member of, and Options Participant on, BX in January 2004 and its registration remains in effect. The firm, which employs approximately 450 registered individuals, maintains its headquarters in Chicago, IL and has seven other branch offices.

**RELEVANT PRIOR DISCIPLINARY HISTORY**

On October 23, 2015, the Cboe Exchange, Inc. (“Cboe”) Business Conduct Committee issued a decision sanctioning Citadel Securities \$100,000 for violations of Rule 15c3-5(c) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (the “Exchange Act”) and Cboe Rule 4.2 as the firm failed to establish appropriate pre-set credit thresholds and failed to have in place a system of risk management controls and supervisory procedures reasonably designed to prevent the entry of erroneous orders by rejecting orders that exceeded appropriate price or size parameters or that assured appropriate surveillance personnel received immediate post-trade execution reports.

On June 16, 2014, FINRA, Cboe BYX Exchange, Inc., Cboe BZX Exchange, Inc., The Nasdaq Stock Market LLC, and NYSE Arca, Inc. sanctioned the firm \$800,000 and

imposed an undertaking for violations of Exchange Act Rule 15c3-5 and relevant supervision rules as Citadel Securities failed to establish, maintain, and enforce supervisory procedures and risk management controls reasonably designed to check for order accuracy, reject orders that exceeded appropriate price and/or size parameters, reject duplicate orders, and monitor appropriate message level activity.

### **SUMMARY**

This matter arose from reviews conducted by FINRA’s Department of Market Regulation, on behalf of BX and other self-regulatory organizations (“SROs”).<sup>1</sup> The conduct described herein occurred between August 15, 2014 and May 2, 2018 (the “review period”), or more specific time periods within the review period as described below.

During the review period, Citadel Securities had market access, as defined in Exchange Act Rule 15c3-5. As such, the firm was required 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. In certain scenarios, however, Citadel Securities’s risk management controls and supervisory procedures were not reasonably designed to prevent the entry of erroneous orders, in violation of Exchange Act Rule 15c3-5, BX Rules 3010 and 2110 (for conduct that occurred prior to October 23, 2019), BX General 9 Sections 1 and 20 (for conduct that occurred on or after October 23, 2019), Chapter III §§ 1, 2(a), 2(a)(i) of the BX Rules (for conduct that occurred prior to October 23, 2019), and BX Options 9 Sections 2(a) and (b) (for conduct that occurred on or after October 23, 2019).

### **FACTS AND VIOLATIVE CONDUCT**

1. Exchange Act Rule 15c3-5(b) requires broker-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.”
2. Exchange Act Rule 15c3-5(c)(1)(ii) requires broker-dealers with market access to establish written supervisory procedures (“WSPs”) and financial risk management controls that are reasonably designed to “[p]revent the entry of erroneous orders, by rejecting orders that exceed appropriate price or size parameters, on an order-by-order basis or over a short period of time, or that indicate duplicative orders.”
3. BX Rule 3010, now General 9 Section 20, requires members to “establish and maintain a system to supervise the activities of each registered representative and

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<sup>1</sup> The other SROs include Cboe BYX Exchange, Inc., Cboe BZX Exchange, Inc., Cboe EDGA Exchange, Inc., Cboe EDGX Exchange, Inc., The Nasdaq Stock Market LLC, Nasdaq GEMX, Inc., Nasdaq ISE, LLC, Nasdaq MRX LLC, The Nasdaq Options Market LLC, Nasdaq PHLX LLC, The New York Stock Exchange LLC, and NYSE Arca Inc.

associated person that is reasonably designed to achieve compliance with applicable securities laws and regulations and with applicable Exchange rules.”<sup>2</sup>

4. BX Rule 2110, now General 9 Section 1, requires members, in the conduct of their business, to observe high standards of commercial honor and just and equitable principles of trade.<sup>3</sup>
5. Chapter III § 1 of the BX Rules, now Options 9 Section 2(a), states that “[n]o Options Participant shall engage in conduct in violation of the Exchange Act or Rules thereunder, the Rules of the Exchange or the Rules of the Clearing Corporation insofar as they relate to the reporting or clearance of any Exchange transaction, or any written interpretation thereof. Every Options Participant shall supervise persons associated with the Participant to assure compliance therewith.”<sup>4</sup>
6. Chapter III §§ 2(a) and 2(a)(i) of the BX Rules, now Options 9 Section 2(b), state that “[e]ach Options Participant shall be responsible for ensuring that all arrangements made and systems used in connection with business conducted on BX Options, and the transaction of such business itself, comply with the Options Participant’s and associated persons’ obligations under the Rules of the Exchange, the Rules of the Clearing Corporation and any other relevant laws, rules, interpretations and obligations. In accordance with the BX Options Rules and in connection with business conducted on BX Options, each Options Participant shall: (i) have adequate arrangements to ensure that all staff involved in the conduct of business on BX Options are suitable, adequately trained and properly supervised.”<sup>5</sup>

#### The Firm Did Not Apply Certain Pre-Trade Erroneous Order Controls to Certain Options Limit Orders

7. During the review period, the firm’s pre-trade erroneous order controls applicable to option limit orders included a price control (the “Price Control”) that would reject limit orders that were priced at a certain percentage away from the National Best Bid or Offer (“NBBO”).<sup>6</sup> However, from August 2014 through November 2017, when an option order was canceled and replaced, the Price Control was not applied to the replaced option order. Moreover, from August 15, 2014 through June 2015, the Price Control was not applied to option orders placed prior to market open, and from August 15, 2014 through May 2017, it was not applied to child option orders.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> As of October 23, 2019, BX Rule 3010 was renumbered to BX General 9 Section 20.

<sup>3</sup> As of October 23, 2019, BX Rule 2110 was renumbered to BX General 9 Section 1.

<sup>4</sup> As of October 23, 2019, Chapter III § I of the BX Rules was renumbered to BX Options 9 Section 2(a).

<sup>5</sup> As of October 23, 2019, Chapter III §§ 2(a) and 2(a)(i) of the BX Rules were renumbered to BX Options 9 Section 2(b).

<sup>6</sup> A limit order is an order to purchase or sell a security at, or better than, a stated price.

<sup>7</sup> A “parent” order is the full order size, and may be executed by slicing the order into smaller lots, or “child” orders.

8. After the Price Control was applied to option orders placed prior to market open starting in June 2015, if a pre-open option limit order that was determined not to be erroneous was re-routed to another exchange at or after market open, this price control was not reapplied to the re-routed option limit order. As a result, option limit orders received prior to the market open that were later re-routed to various markets were not subjected to reasonably designed pre-trade erroneous order controls.
9. For example, on May 17, 2017 at 6:50:02 a.m., the firm received an option limit order to buy 2 XYZ May 109 puts at \$0.55.<sup>8</sup> The order as received was not erroneous and was priced within the firm's price control threshold, as the end-of-day quote on the prior trading day was \$0.44 x \$0.46. At 7:43:06 a.m., the firm routed the order to The Nasdaq Options Market LLC ("NOM"). When the opening print occurred at 9:30:41 a.m., the NBBO was \$2.22 x \$2.40. At 9:30:42 a.m., the NBBO was \$1.18 x \$3.60. At 9:32:07 a.m., the firm's order remained unexecuted on NOM. The firm canceled the order on NOM and, at 9:32:08 a.m., re-routed it to Cboe EDGX Exchange, Inc. with the original limit price of \$0.55, without reapplying the price control. The NBBO at the time was \$2.14 x \$2.60. Because the firm did not re-apply the price control to option limit orders that were re-routed after the market opened, this order was sent to the market at a price that was not reasonably related to the current NBBO. This issue did not result in any Clearly Erroneous Filings.

Certain Pre-Trade Price and Size Controls Were Not Reasonably Designed Because the Accompanying Procedures Were Not Sufficiently Detailed

10. During the review period, the firm applied certain pre-trade erroneous order controls that incorporated soft blocks for certain broker-dealer options orders. In contrast to a hard block, which generally prevents an order from being submitted by automatically rejecting it, a soft block prevents an order from being routed to a market center until it is either overridden or confirmed by a person.
11. During the review period, Citadel Securities had in place soft blocks that were triggered when the parameters of the applicable price or size controls were met. Once triggered, the subject orders were required to be manually reviewed by certain firm personnel dedicated to this task to determine whether the order should be rejected or submitted to a market center.
12. From August 15, 2014 through November 2016, the firm's procedures failed to provide sufficient detail concerning how firm personnel were to review soft block alerts. The firm's procedures did not sufficiently detail the steps firm personnel were to take when reviewing a subject order or the circumstances under which a soft block should be overridden or confirmed. Furthermore, from August 15, 2014 through October 2019 for options orders, the firm failed to require that those persons responsible for reviewing soft block alerts contemporaneously document their review

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<sup>8</sup> A generic symbol is used in place of the name of the referenced security.

of orders that triggered a soft block, including documenting the rationale for releasing the subject orders into the market after completing the manual review.

13. Because the firm's procedures did not require a reasonable review of the orders that triggered soft block alerts, or require the person reviewing soft block alerts to contemporaneously document the rationale for resolving such alerts, the applicable pre-trade erroneous order controls were not reasonably designed. This issue did not result in any Clearly Erroneous Filings.
14. As a result of the firm's failure to establish and maintain reasonable risk management controls and supervisory procedures reasonably designed to prevent the entry of erroneous orders, by rejecting orders that exceed appropriate price or size parameters, the firm, between August 15, 2014 and October 2019, violated Section 15(c)(3) of the Exchange Act and Rules 15c3-5(b) and (c)(1)(ii) thereunder, BX Rules 2110 and 3010 (for conduct that occurred prior to October 23, 2019), BX General 9 Sections 1 and 20 (for conduct that occurred on or after October 23, 2019), Chapter III §§ 1, 2(a), and 2(a)(i) of the BX Rules (for conduct that occurred prior to October 23, 2019), and BX Options 9 Sections 2(a) and (b) (for conduct that occurred on or after October 23, 2019).

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

1. A censure;
2. A fine of \$15,000;<sup>9</sup> and
3. An undertaking to revise the firm's risk management controls and supervisory procedures with respect to the areas of 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 herein. Within 90 business days of acceptance of this AWC, a registered principal of the Firm shall submit to Carly Kostakos, Senior Counsel a signed, dated letter, or an email from a work-related account of the registered principal to Carly.Kostakos@finra.org, providing the following information: (a) a reference to this matter; (b) a representation that the Firm has addressed and corrected the deficiencies described above, including the specific measures or enhancements taken to address those deficiencies; and (c) the date the deficient controls and procedures were addressed and corrected by the Firm.

The firm agrees to pay the monetary sanction upon notice that this AWC has been accepted and that such payment is due and payable. It has submitted a Payment Information 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 imposed in this matter.

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<sup>9</sup> Citadel Securities consents to a fine payable to BX and the SROs referenced in footnote 1 above, totaling \$225,000.

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

**II.**

**WAIVER OF PROCEDURAL RIGHTS**

The firm specifically and voluntarily waives the following rights granted under BX's Code of Procedure:

- A. To have a Formal Complaint issued specifying the allegations against the firm;
- B. To be notified of the Formal Complaint 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 Exchange Review Council 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, the Exchange Review Council, or any member of the Exchange Review Council, 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 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 Rule 9143 or the separation of functions prohibitions of Rule 9144, 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 FINRA's Department of Enforcement and the Exchange Review Council, the Review Subcommittee, or the Office of Disciplinary Affairs ("ODA"), pursuant to BX Rule 9216;
- 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 BX or any other regulator against the firm;
  2. BX may release this AWC or make a public announcement concerning this agreement and the subject matter thereof in accordance with BX Rule 8310 and IM-8310-3; 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 BX, or to which BX is a party, that is inconsistent with any part of this AWC. Nothing in this provision affects the firm's right to take legal or factual positions in litigation or other legal proceedings in which BX 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 BX, nor does it reflect the views of the Exchange 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.

December 23, 2021

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Date

Citadel Securities LLC  
Respondent

By: Scott Kloin

Name: scott kloin

Title: Chief Compliance Officer and Senior Deputy GC

Reviewed by:

Paul R. Eckert

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Paul R. Eckert, Esq.  
Counsel for Respondent  
Wilmer Cutler Pickering Hale and Dorr LLP  
1875 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20006

Accepted by BX:

December 27, 2021

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Date

Carly M. Kostakos

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Carly M. Kostakos  
Senior Counsel  
Department of Enforcement

Signed on behalf of BX, by delegated authority from the Director of ODA