

RECEIVED
RECEIVED

**FINANCIAL INDUSTRY REGULATORY AUTHORITY
LETTER OF ACCEPTANCE, WAIVER AND CONSENT**

NO. 20050023366-01 2009 APR 30 P 10:37
2009 MAR 31 P 1:17

REGISTRATION & DISCLOSURE

TO: Department of Market Regulation
Financial Industry Regulatory Authority ("FINRA")

RE: Sterne, Agee & Leach, Inc., Respondent
Broker-Dealer
CRD No. 791

Pursuant to FINRA Rule 9216 of FINRA's Code of Procedure, Sterne, Agee & Leach, Inc. (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, FINRA 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 FINRA, or to which FINRA 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 FINRA:

BACKGROUND

The firm has been a member of FINRA since 1936, and its registration remains in effect.

RELEVANT DISCIPLINARY HISTORY

The firm has no relevant disciplinary history.

FACTS AND VIOLATIVE CONDUCT

In Market Regulation Review No. 20050023366, the staff of FINRA's Department of Market Regulation (the "staff") conducted a review of the firm's compliance with NASD Rules 2440 and IM-2440 during the period April 1, 2005 through June 30, 2005.

In Market Regulation Review No. 20080136003, the staff conducted a review of the firm's compliance with NASD Rule 2320 during the period July 1, 2007 through September 30, 2007.

1. Between April 1, 2005 and June 30, 2005 in five transactions, the firm purchased or sold corporate bonds from or to customers and failed to purchase or sell such bonds at prices that were fair, taking into consideration all relevant circumstances, including market conditions with respect to each bond at the time of the transaction, the expense involved and that the firm was entitled to a profit. These transactions are identified on Exhibit A, which is attached hereto. The

conduct described in this paragraph constitutes separate and distinct violations of NASD Rules 2110, 2440 and IM-2440.

2. Between July 1, 2007 and September 30, 2007, in 12 transactions for or with a customer, the firm failed to use reasonable diligence to ascertain the best inter-dealer market and failed to buy or sell in such market so that the resultant price to the customer was as favorable as possible under prevailing market conditions. These transactions are identified on Exhibit B, which is attached hereto. The conduct described in this paragraph constitutes separate and distinct violations of NASD Rules 2110 and 2320.

B. The firm also consents to the imposition, at a maximum, of the following sanctions:

A censure and fine of \$10,000 (consisting of a fine of \$5,000 for violations of NASD Rules 2110, 2440 and IM-2440, and \$5,000 for violations of NASD Rule 2110 and 2320), and payment of restitution by Respondent to the customer accounts referenced on Exhibits A and B attached hereto in the amounts of \$1,848.13, and \$399.60, respectively, plus interest at the rate set forth in Section 6621(a) of the Internal Revenue Code, 26 U.S.C. 6621(a)(2), from the date of the violative conduct until the date this AWC is accepted by the National Adjudicatory Council ("NAC").

A registered principal of the firm shall submit satisfactory proof of payment of the restitution, or of reasonable and documented efforts undertaken to effect restitution, to the **COMPLIANCE ASSISTANT, LEGAL SECTION, MARKET REGULATION DEPARTMENT, 9509 KEY WEST AVENUE, ROCKVILLE, MD 20850** or in an e-mail from a work-related account of the registered principal to MarketRegulationComp@finra.org, no later than 120 days after acceptance of this AWC. If for any reason, Respondent cannot locate any customer after reasonable and documented efforts within such period, or such additional period agreed to by the staff, Respondent shall forward any undistributed restitution and interest to the appropriate escheat, unclaimed-property or abandoned-property fund for the state in which the customer is known to have last resided.

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 FINRA staff.

II.

WAIVER OF PROCEDURAL RIGHTS

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

- A. To have a Complaint issued specifying the allegations against the firm;
- B. To be notified of the 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 NAC 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 prejudice of the General Counsel, the NAC, or any member of the NAC, 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 FINRA Rule 9143 or the separation of functions prohibitions of FINRA 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 the NAC, a Review Subcommittee of the NAC, or the Office of Disciplinary Affairs ("ODA"), pursuant to FINRA 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 FINRA or any other regulator against the firm;
 - 2. this AWC will be made available through FINRA's public disclosure program in response to public inquiries about the firm's disciplinary record;
 - 3. FINRA may make a public announcement concerning this agreement and the subject matter thereof in accordance with FINRA Rule 8313; and
 - 4. 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 FINRA, or to which FINRA 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 FINRA 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 FINRA, nor does it reflect the views of FINRA 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.

3/27/09
Date

Respondent
Sterne, Agee & Leach, Inc.

By: 

Name: PATRICK S. DOGAN

Title: CFO

Reviewed by:



Attorney Name

Counsel for Respondent

Firm Name Haskell Slaughter Tany & Radiker, LLC

Address 2001 Park Place North, Suite 1400

City/State/Zip B'ham, AL 35203

Phone Number 205-251-1000

Accepted by FINRA:

4/22/09
Date

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


Thomas R. Glra
Executive Vice President
Department of Market Regulation

[illegible][illegible]

Sterne, Agee & Leach, Inc. ("SALI")
20080136003

Exhibit B

Item	Trade Date	MPID	Capacity	Buy/Sell	Volume	Issue	Execution Price	Execution Time	Report Time	Inside Bid	Inside Ask
1	7/2/2007	SALI	P	S	100	UVSE	1.7	14:49:22	14:49:22	1.66	1.67
2	7/19/2007	SALI	P	B	2200	WEGY	0.6	9:37:30	9:37:30	0.62	0.7
3	7/24/2007	SALI	P	B	2500	EDFY	0.64	15:23:08	15:23:08	0.65	0.71
4	7/26/2007	SALI	P	S	2000	DPDW	0.7	9:45:15	9:45:15	0.68	0.69
5	7/30/2007	SALI	P	B	2500	EDFY	0.59	15:33:58	15:33:58	0.6	0.63
6	8/6/2007	SALI	P	B	5000	IMMG	0.35	12:32:01	12:32:01	0.36	0.37
7	8/20/2007	SALI	P	B	93	NSBC	17.5	15:29:24	15:29:24	18.2	18.75
8	9/4/2007	SALI	P	S	500	MDVX	1.61	15:56:04	15:56:04	1.57	1.6
9	9/7/2007	SALI	P	S	25	NSBC	17.5	13:32:34	13:32:34	16.85	17
10	9/18/2007	SALI	P	S	5000	ENEL	0.4	9:56:42	9:56:42	0.39	0.395
11	9/19/2007	SALI	P	S	5000	ACGI	0.315	11:38:15	11:38:15	0.3	0.31
12	9/24/2007	SALI	P	S	5000	CPMM	0.25	11:20:56	11:20:56	0.205	0.23