

THE ASSOCIATION OF GLOBAL CUSTODIANS

THE BANK OF NEW YORK MELLON CORPORATION
BROWN BROTHERS HARRIMAN
CITIBANK, N.A.
HSBC SECURITIES SERVICES
JPMORGAN CHASE BANK, N.A.
NORTHERN TRUST
RBC DEXIA INVESTOR SERVICES
STATE STREET BANK AND TRUST COMPANY

COUNSEL AND SECRETARIAT TO THE ASSOCIATION:
BAKER & MCKENZIE LLP
815 CONNECTICUT AVENUE, N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20006
TELEPHONE: 202/452-7000
FACSIMILE: 202/452-7074
WWW.THEAGC.COM

For immediate release:

ASSOCIATION OF GLOBAL CUSTODIANS COMPLETES THE 9TH ANNUAL DEPOSITORY INFORMATION-GATHERING PROJECT

April 7, 2009

On January 30, 2009, the Association of Global Custodians (“Association”) completed its 9th annual Depository Information-Gathering Project (“DIGP”) with the publication of “2008-2009 Depository Information-Gathering Project: A Report for Clients and Participating Depositories.” As in previous years, the Association has made an electronic copy of this report available to the industry media and other interested persons on its web site: www.theagc.com.

Since its inception in 2000, the Project has grown steadily in the number of depositories and jurisdictions included in the Project. In the first year of operation, for example, the questionnaire was sent to 131 depositories in 81 jurisdictions, while this past year, it was sent to 145 depositories in 93 jurisdictions. “DIGP is a very efficient information-gathering tool, which has made depository participation in the Project more feasible and attractive over time and the Project’s information base more valuable to Association members,” says Michael Underwood of HSBC Securities Services and 2008-2009 Chair of the Association’s Depository Information-Gathering Committee.

The Association launched DIGP in an effort to assist Association members in meeting regulatory compliance requirements under Investment Company Act Rule 17f-7. This Rule details how U.S. mutual funds may hold securities through foreign depositories and requires the ongoing monitoring of depositories. In addition, the Rule requires funds to receive an analysis of the custody risks associated with maintaining assets with a foreign depository. The member banks of the Association agreed to work together to gather information jointly through the Project, believing that this pooled approach would produce a high response rate from depositories and reduce the number of different information requests depositories receive from individual members. The members of the

THE ASSOCIATION OF GLOBAL CUSTODIANS

April 7, 2009

Page 2

Association are: The Bank of New York Mellon, Brown Brothers Harriman, Citibank, N.A., HSBC Securities Services, JPMorgan Chase Bank, N.A., Northern Trust, RBC Dexia Investor Services, and State Street Bank and Trust Company.

Edward Neeck, Chair of the Association of Global Custodians and Managing Director, JPMorgan Chase Bank, N.A. notes, “The Association is pleased that the DIGP will be moving into its 10th consecutive and successful year this fall.” Mr. Neeck further states, “Through the operation of the project, members have developed strong and meaningful relationships with representatives of depositories and depository associations – all of whom seek effective mechanisms for information disclosure. These expanding relationships enable the Association to obtain useful feedback from depositories, and they facilitate the Association’s efforts to periodically adjust the DIGP process and questionnaire, as occurred notably in 2008. In turn, the evolution and growth in the Project have materially enhanced the base of information accessible to members.”

In devising the DIGP, the Association evaluated and clarified the types of information members need in order to prepare the risk analyses required by Rule 17f-7. This needed information, which is obtained through the project questionnaire, falls into 9 broad areas of inquiry:

- Scope, structure, ownership, capital, regulation, and audit oversight.
- Participant identification and eligibility criteria.
- Functionality and services, including the use of agents.
- Account structures and recordkeeping.
- Settlement processes.
- Ownership of securities held in the depository.
- Standard of care, loss prevention, and asset recovery methods.
- Business recovery mechanisms.
- Cross-depository linkages.

To streamline and simplify the process in the most efficient way possible for all involved, the Association materially shortened the DIGP questionnaire in 2008 by consolidating questions and eliminating marginal matters.

THE ASSOCIATION OF GLOBAL CUSTODIANS

April 7, 2009

Page 3

Project questionnaires are distributed electronically to the universe of depositories through a secure extranet site designed by Baker & McKenzie LLP IT professionals and administered and coordinated through the firm. Baker & McKenzie LLP serves as counsel and secretariat to the Association. “DIGP is a valued part of the Association’s global work and visibility; and members very much appreciate the commitment of the participating depositories. Indeed, the project’s success is attributable in large measure to the active and timely cooperation of the participating depositories as well as the support of the depository associations,” says Mr. Neeck.

Details regarding the Association members, as well as the objectives and results of DIGP can be found in the report or online at www.theagc.com. For more information, please contact the Association's counsel, Dan W. Schneider at 312/861-2620; fax 312/861-2899; e-mail: dan.w.schneider@bakernet.com.

#