

**POLICY STATEMENT TO REGULATION 55-101 RESPECTING  
INSIDER REPORTING EXEMPTIONS**

*Securities Act*  
(R.S.Q., c. V-1.1, s. 274)

**PART 1            PURPOSE**

**1.1                Purpose**

The purpose of this Policy is to set out the views of the Canadian Securities Administrators (the CSA or we) on various matters relating to *Regulation 55-101 respecting Insider Reporting Exemptions* (the Regulation).

**PART 2            SCOPE OF EXEMPTIONS**

**2.1                Scope of Exemptions**

The exemptions under the Regulation are only exemptions from the insider reporting requirement and are not exemptions from the provisions in Canadian securities legislation imposing liability for improper insider trading.

**PART 3            EXEMPTION FOR CERTAIN DIRECTORS AND SENIOR OFFICERS**

**3.1                Exemption for Certain Directors**

Section 2.1 of the Regulation contains an exemption from the insider reporting requirement for a director of a subsidiary of a reporting issuer in respect of securities of the reporting issuer if the director

- (a) does not in the ordinary course receive or have access to information as to material facts or material changes concerning the reporting issuer before the material facts or material changes are generally disclosed; and
- (b) is not an ineligible insider.

The exemption in section 2.1 is available for a director of a subsidiary of a reporting issuer but is not available for a director of a reporting issuer or for an insider who otherwise comes within the definition of “ineligible insider”. This is because such insiders, by virtue of their positions, are presumed to routinely have access to information as to material facts or material changes concerning the reporting issuer before the material facts or material changes are generally disclosed.

The definition of “ineligible insider” includes an insider who is a director of a “major subsidiary” of the reporting issuer. In view of the significance of a major subsidiary of a reporting issuer to the reporting issuer, we believe that it is appropriate to treat directors of such subsidiaries in an analogous manner to directors of the reporting issuer. Accordingly, directors of major subsidiaries are included in the definition of “ineligible insider”.

In the case of directors of subsidiaries of a reporting issuer that are not major subsidiaries of the reporting issuer, although such individuals, by virtue of being directors of the subsidiary, routinely have access to material undisclosed information about the subsidiary, such

information generally will not constitute material undisclosed information about the reporting issuer since the subsidiary is not a major subsidiary of the reporting issuer.

### **3.2 Exemption for Certain Senior Officers**

- (1) Section 2.2 of the Regulation contains an exemption from the insider reporting requirements for a senior officer of a reporting issuer or a subsidiary of a reporting issuer if the senior officer
  - (a) does not in the ordinary course receive or have access to information as to material facts or material changes concerning the reporting issuer before the material facts or material changes are generally disclosed; and
  - (b) is not an ineligible insider.
- (2) The exemption contained in section 2.2 of the Regulation is available to senior officers of a reporting issuer as well as to senior officers of any subsidiary of the reporting issuer, regardless of size, so long as such individuals meet the criteria contained in the exemption. Accordingly the scope of the exemption is somewhat broader than the scope of the exemption contained in section 2.1 for directors of subsidiaries that are not major subsidiaries.

In the case of individuals who are “senior officers”, we accept that many such individuals do not routinely have access to information as to material facts or material changes concerning the reporting issuer before the material facts or material changes are generally disclosed. For example, the term “senior officer” generally includes an individual who holds the title of “vice-president”. We recognize that, in recent years, it has become industry practice, particularly in the financial services sector, for issuers to grant the title of “vice-president” to certain employees primarily for marketing purposes. In many cases, the title of “vice-president” does not denote a senior officer function, and such individuals do not routinely have access to material undisclosed information prior to general disclosure. Accordingly, we accept that it is not necessary to require all persons who hold the title of “vice-presidents” to file insider reports.

### **3.3 Exemption for Certain Insiders of Investment Issuers**

Section 2.3 of the Regulation contains an exemption for a director or senior officer of an “insider issuer” who meets certain criteria in relation to trades in securities of an “investment issuer”. The criteria are as follows:

- the director or senior officer of the insider issuer does not in the ordinary course receive or have access to information as to material facts or material changes concerning the investment issuer before the material facts or material changes are generally disclosed; and
- the director or senior officer is not otherwise an “ineligible insider” of the investment issuer.

The reference to “material facts or material changes concerning the investment issuer” in the exemption is intended to include information that originates at the insider issuer level but which concerns or is otherwise relevant to the investment issuer. For example, in the case of an issuer that has a subsidiary investment issuer, a decision at the parent issuer level that the subsidiary investment issuer will commence or discontinue a line of business would generally represent a “material fact or material change concerning the investment issuer”. Similarly, a decision at the parent issuer level that the parent issuer will seek to sell its holding in the

subsidiary investment issuer would also generally represent a “material fact or material change concerning the investment issuer.” Accordingly, a director or senior officer of the parent issuer who routinely had access to such information concerning the investment issuer would not be entitled to rely on the exemption for trades in securities of the investment issuer.

#### **PART 4 INSIDER LISTS AND POLICIES**

- (1) Section 4.1 of the Regulation describes certain steps that must be taken before an insider of a reporting issuer may rely on an exemption in Part 2 or Part 3 of the Regulation. Section 4.1 requires
  - (a) the insider to have advised the reporting issuer that the insider intends to rely on the exemption, and
  - (b) the reporting issuer to have advised the insider that the reporting issuer has established policies and procedures relating to restricting the trading activities of its insiders and other persons with access to material undisclosed information relating to the reporting issuer or to an investment issuer of the reporting issuer, and the reporting issuer will, as part of such policies and procedures, maintain:
    - (i) a list of insiders of the reporting issuer exempted from the insider reporting requirement by a provision of the Regulation, and
    - (ii) a list of insiders of the reporting issuer not exempted by a provision of the Regulation.

An insider is not required to advise the reporting issuer each time the insider intends to rely on an exemption from the insider reporting requirement. An insider may advise the reporting issuer that the insider intends to rely on a specified exemption from the insider reporting requirement for present and future transactions for so long as the insider otherwise remains entitled to rely on the exemption.

If an insider has previously advised the reporting issuer that the insider intends to rely on an exemption that is substantially similar to an exemption contained in the Regulation, such as an exemption contained in the previous version of the Regulation or an exemption contained in an exemptive relief order, we would consider that this previous notification constitutes notification for the purposes of the condition in section 4.1 of the Regulation. Accordingly, it would not be necessary for an insider in these circumstances to again notify the reporting issuer after the Regulation comes into force.

If a reporting issuer advises an insider that the reporting issuer will maintain the lists described in section 4.1, but the reporting issuer subsequently fails to do so, we would accept that continued reliance by the insider on the exemptions would be reasonable so long as the insider did not know and could not reasonably be expected to know that the reporting issuer had failed to maintain the necessary lists.

- (2) As an alternative to maintaining the lists described in subparagraphs 4.1(b) (i) and (ii) of the Regulation, a reporting issuer may file an undertaking with the regulator or securities regulatory authority instead. The undertaking requires the reporting issuer to make available to the regulator or securities regulatory authority, promptly upon request, a list containing the information described in subparagraphs 4.1(b) (i) and (ii) as at the time of the request.

The principal rationale behind the requirement to maintain a list of exempt insiders and a list of non-exempt insiders is to allow for an independent means to verify whether individuals who are relying on an exemption are in fact entitled to rely on the exemption. If a reporting issuer determines that it is not necessary to maintain such lists as part of its own policies and procedures relating to insider trading, and is able to prepare and make available such lists promptly upon request, the rationale behind the list requirement would be satisfied.

- (3) Sections 4.1 and 4.2 of the Regulation require (as a condition to the availability of the exemptions in Parts 2 and 3) that a reporting issuer establish and maintain certain policies and procedures relating to insider trading. The Regulation does not prescribe the content of such policies and procedures. It merely requires that such policies and procedures exist and that the issuer maintain the lists described in subparagraphs 4.1(b)(i) and (ii) or file an undertaking in relation to such lists.

The CSA have articulated in National Policy 51-201, *Disclosure Standards* detailed best practices for issuers for disclosure and information containment and have provided a thorough interpretation of insider trading laws. The CSA recommend that issuers adopt written disclosure policies to assist directors, officers and employees and other representatives in discharging timely disclosure obligations. Written disclosure policies also should provide guidance on how to maintain the confidentiality of corporate information and to prevent improper trading on inside information. The CSA best practices offer guidance on broad issues including disclosure of material changes, timely disclosure, selective disclosure, materiality, maintenance of confidentiality, rumours and the role of analysts' reports. In addition, guidance is offered on such specifics as responsibility for electronic communications, forward-looking information, news releases, use of the Internet and conference calls. We believe that adopting the CSA best practices as a standard for issuers would assist issuers to ensure that they take all reasonable steps to contain inside information.

The disclosure standards described in National Policy 51-201, *Disclosure Standards* represent best practices recommended by the CSA. An issuer's policies and procedures need not be consistent with National Policy 51-201 in order for the exemptions in Parts 2 and 3 of the Regulation to be available.

## **PART 5            AUTOMATIC SECURITIES PURCHASE PLANS**

### **5.1                Automatic Securities Purchase Plans**

- (1) Section 5.1 of the Regulation provides an exemption from the insider reporting requirement for acquisitions by a director or senior officer of a reporting issuer or of a subsidiary of a reporting issuer of securities of the reporting issuer pursuant to an automatic securities purchase plan (an ASPP).
- (2) The exemption does not apply to securities acquired under a cash payment option of a dividend or interest reinvestment plan, a lump-sum provision of a share purchase plan, or a similar provision under a stock option plan.
- (3) If a plan participant acquires securities under an ASPP and wishes to report the acquisitions on a deferred basis in reliance on the exemption in section 5.1 of the Regulation, the plan participant is required to file an alternative form of report(s) as follows:
  - (a) in the case of acquisitions of securities that are not disposed of or transferred during the year (other than as part of a "specified disposition of

securities”, discussed below) the participant must file a report disclosing all such acquisitions annually no later than 90 days after the end of the calendar year; and

- (b) in the case of acquisitions of securities that are disposed of or transferred during the year (other than as part of a “specified disposition of securities”, discussed below) the participant must file a report disclosing the acquisition and disposition within the normal time frame for filing insider reports, as contemplated by clause 5.3(1)(a) of the Regulation.

## 5.2 Specified Dispositions of Securities

- (1) A disposition or transfer of securities acquired under an ASPP is a “specified disposition of securities” if
  - (a) the disposition or transfer is incidental to the operation of the ASPP and does not involve a discrete investment decision by the director or senior officer; or
  - (b) the disposition or transfer is made to satisfy a tax withholding obligation arising from the distribution of securities under the ASPP and the requirements contained in clauses 5.4(b)(i) or (ii) are satisfied.
- (2) In the case of dispositions or transfers described in subsection 5.4(a) of the Regulation, namely a disposition or transfer that is incidental to the operation of the ASPP and that does not involve a discrete investment decision by the director or senior officer, we believe that such dispositions or transfers do not alter the policy rationale for deferred reporting of the acquisitions of securities acquired under an ASPP since such dispositions necessarily do not involve a discrete investment decision on the part of the participant.
- (3) The term “discrete investment decision” generally refers to the exercise of discretion involved in a specific decision to purchase, hold or sell a security. The purchase of a security as a result of the application of a pre-determined, mechanical formula does not represent a discrete investment decision (other than the initial decision to enter into the plan in question).

The reference to “discrete investment decision” in section 5.4 is intended to reflect a principles-based limitation on the exemption for permitted dispositions under an ASPP. Accordingly, in interpreting this term, you should consider the principles underlying the insider reporting requirement – deterring insiders from profiting from material undisclosed information and signalling insider views as to the prospects of an issuer – and the rationale for the exemptions from this requirement.

The term is best illustrated by way of example. In the case of an individual who holds stock options in a reporting issuer, the decision to exercise the stock options will generally represent a discrete investment decision. If the individual is an insider, we believe that this information should be communicated to the market in a timely fashion, since this decision may convey information that other market participants may consider relevant to their own investing decisions. A reasonable investor may conclude, for example, that the decision on the part of the insider to exercise the stock options now reflects a belief on the part of the insider that the price of the underlying securities has peaked.

- (4) The definition of “specified disposition of securities” contemplates, among other things, a disposition made to satisfy a tax withholding obligation arising from the acquisition of securities under an ASPP in certain circumstances. Under some types of ASPPs, an issuer or plan administrator may sell, on behalf of a plan participant, a portion of the securities that would otherwise be distributed to the plan participant in order to satisfy a tax withholding obligation. In such plans, the participant typically may elect either to provide the issuer or the plan administrator with a cheque to cover this liability, or to direct the issuer or plan administrator to sell a sufficient number of the securities that would otherwise be distributed to cover this liability. In many cases, for reasons of convenience, a plan participant will simply direct the issuer or the plan administrator to sell a portion of the securities.

Although we are of the view that the election as to how a tax withholding obligation will be funded does contain an element of a discrete investment decision, we are satisfied that, where the election occurs sufficiently in advance of the actual distribution of securities, it is acceptable for a report of a disposition made to satisfy a tax withholding obligation to be made on an annual basis. Accordingly, a disposition made to satisfy a tax withholding obligation will be a “specified disposition” if it meets the criteria contained in clause 5.4(b) of the Regulation.

### 5.3 Reporting Requirements

- (1) Subsection 5.3(1) of the Regulation requires an insider who relies on the exemption for securities acquired under an ASPP to file an alternative report for *each* acquisition of securities acquired under the plan. We recognize that, in the case of securities acquired under an ASPP, the time and effort required to report each transaction *as a separate transaction* may outweigh the benefits to the market of having this detailed information. We believe that it is acceptable for insiders to report on a yearly basis aggregate acquisitions (with an average unit price) of the same securities through their automatic share purchase plans. Accordingly, in complying with the alternative reporting requirement contained in section 5.3 of the Regulation, an insider may report the acquisitions on either a transaction-by-transaction basis or in “acceptable summary form”. The term “acceptable summary form” is defined to mean a report that indicates the total number of securities of the *same type* (e.g. common shares) acquired under an ASPP, or under all ASPPs, for the calendar year as a single transaction using December 31 of the relevant year as the date of the transaction, and providing an average unit price. Similarly, an insider may report all specified dispositions of securities in a calendar year in acceptable summary form.
- (2) If securities acquired under an ASPP are disposed of or transferred, other than pursuant to a specified disposition of securities, and the acquisitions of these securities have not been previously disclosed in a report, the insider report should disclose, for each acquisition of securities which are disposed of or transferred, the particulars relating to the date of acquisition of such securities, the number of securities acquired and the acquisition price of such securities. The report should also disclose, for each disposition or transfer, the related particulars for each such disposition or transfer of securities. It would be prudent practice for the director or senior officer to indicate in such insider report, by way of the “Remarks” section, or otherwise, that he or she participates in an ASPP and that not all purchases under that plan have been included in the report.
- (3) The annual report that an insider files for acquisitions and specified dispositions under the ASPP in accordance with clause 5.3(1)(b) of the Regulation will reconcile the acquisitions under the plan with other acquisitions or dispositions by the director or senior officer so that the report provides an accurate listing of the director's or senior officer's total holdings. As required by securities legislation, the report filed by

the insider must differentiate between securities held directly and indirectly and must indicate the registered holder if securities are held indirectly. In the case of securities acquired pursuant to a plan, the registered holder is often a trustee or plan administrator.

#### **5.4 Exemption to the Alternative Reporting Requirement**

- (1) If a director or senior officer relies on the ASPP exemption contained in section 5.1 of the Regulation, the director or senior officer becomes subject, as a consequence of such reliance, to the alternative reporting requirement under subsection 5.3(1) to file one or more reports within 90 days of the end of the calendar year (the alternative reporting requirement).
- (2) The principal rationale underlying the alternative reporting requirement is to ensure that insiders periodically update their publicly disclosed holdings to ensure that their publicly disclosed holdings convey an accurate picture of their holdings. If an individual has ceased to be subject to the insider reporting requirements at the time the alternative reporting requirement becomes due, we are of the view that it is not necessary to ensure that the alternative report is filed. Accordingly, subsection 5.3(2) of the Regulation contains an exemption in this regard.

#### **5.5 Design and Administration of Plans**

Part 5 of the Regulation provides a limited exemption from the insider reporting requirement only in circumstances in which an insider, by virtue of participation in an ASPP, is not making discrete investment decisions for acquisitions under such plan. Accordingly, if it is intended that insiders of an issuer rely on this exemption for a particular plan of an issuer, the issuer should design and administer the plan in a manner which is consistent with this limitation.

### **PART 6 EXISTING EXEMPTIONS**

#### **6.1 Existing Exemptions**

Insiders can continue to rely on orders of Canadian securities regulatory authorities, subject to their terms and unless the orders provide otherwise, which exempt certain insiders, on conditions, from all or part of the insider reporting requirement, despite implementation of the Regulation.