



Negotiable / Transferable Instruments Conventions

Contents

Preface: AFMA Code of Conduct.....	2
1. Description.....	3
2. Products.....	3
2.1. Negotiable Certificates of Deposit (NCDs)	3
2.2. Bills of Exchange.....	3
2.2.1. Bank Accepted and Bank Endorsed Bills of Exchange (Bank Bills).....	3
2.3. Promissory Notes	3
2.4. Treasury Notes	4
3. Dealing.....	4
3.1. Methods of Dealing	4
3.2. Electronic Dealing.....	4
3.3. Business Days	4
3.3.1. Good Business Day.....	4
3.3.2. Non-Business Day	4
3.4. Standard Transaction Size (market parcel)	4
3.5. Two Way Pricing.....	5
3.6. Quotation and Dealing	5
3.7. Other Instrument Conventions	6
3.7.1. Denominations.....	6
3.8. Basis.....	6
3.9. Maturity Conventions.....	6
3.9.1.1. Straight Run Maturity Date.....	6
3.9.1.2. Rolling Maturity Pool	7
3.10. Settlement Rate or Index	7
3.11. Premium Payment Date(s)	7
3.12. Expiry Conventions.....	7
3.13. Broker Conventions.....	7
3.14. Confidentiality	7
3.15. Credit.....	7
3.16. Exercise of Options.....	7
3.17. Data Source	8
3.18. Pricing Formulae.....	8
4. Confirmations	8
4.1. Timing - Reporting of Stock Details	8
4.1.1. Same day settlement	8
4.1.2. Next day settlement.....	8
4.2. Obligations of Dealers	8
4.3. Documentation.....	9
5. Settlements.....	9
5.1. Physical Settlements.....	9
5.2. Cash Settlements.....	9
5.3. Premium Payments	9
5.4. Exercise of Options.....	9
5.5. Settlement Failures	9

Preface: AFMA Code of Conduct

AFMA promotes efficiency, integrity and professionalism in Australia's financial markets. The AFMA Code of Conduct (the Code) clearly articulates the ethical principles for minimum acceptable standards of behaviour and supports responsible decision making by firms and individuals engaged in financial markets activities.

All AFMA Financial Markets Members and Partner Members¹ are expected to observe the Code and operate with integrity, professionalism and competence. The Code is designed to support behaviors that put the interests of clients, the firm and the wider community ahead of personal or individual interests and promotes confident participation by users in Australia's OTC markets.

The Code is presented in two parts – the [Ethical Principles](#) and the [Guidelines](#).

Market participants are reminded that they are generally expected to observe and adhere to the market standards and conventions as set out below when engaging in any form of market dealing.

¹ As defined in the AFMA Constitution

1. Description

The Negotiable/Transferable Instruments Conventions (the NTI Conventions) represent industry promoted standards in Australia's short-term securities market and establish the trading protocols to be followed by market participants when transacting in this market.

Products² traded are senior unsecured discount securities³ having a residual maturity of 365 days or less⁴. While this market includes certain government securities, it is primarily underpinned by the issuance of senior unsecured bank securities and the secondary trading that subsequently occurs in these securities. Products are all discount securities, meaning that they do not bear interest. Instead, the discounted value implies the current yield to maturity relative to the holder receiving full face value at maturity.

2. Products

2.1. Negotiable Certificates of Deposit (NCDs)

Predominantly issued electronically in large denominations and settled through Austraclear, Negotiable Certificates of Deposit (NCDs) are issued by banks and available to be traded in the secondary market. Each NCD is issued for a specific term, generally 6 months or less, however maturity may extend to 1 year.

2.2. Bills of Exchange

A bill of exchange as defined in the Bills of Exchange Act 1909 is *an unconditional order in writing, addressed by one person to another, signed by the person giving it, requiring the person to whom it is addressed to pay on demand or at a fixed or determinable future time, a sum certain in money or to the order of a specific person, or to bearer.*

At a practical level a bill of exchange is generally described as a negotiable instrument maturing within six months (at which time it will be redeemed for its face value). It is sold at a discount to face value.

2.2.1. Bank Accepted and Bank Endorsed Bills of Exchange (Bank Bills)

A Bill of Exchange on which the name of a bank appears as either acceptor or endorser. Where a bank is the acceptor the bill is referred to as a bank accepted bill. Where the bank has endorsed the bill on the back, either through buying the bill in the market or for a fee to raise the bill's status, it is referred to as a bank endorsed bill.

2.3. Promissory Notes

A promissory note (also known as commercial paper or one name paper) is defined in the Bills of Exchange Act as *an unconditional promise in writing made by one person to another, signed by the maker, engaging to pay on demand or at a fixed or determinable future time a sum certain in money for or to the order of a specified person or to bearer.*

² Refer to Section 2.

³ A zero-coupon security which does not bear interest. The discounted value implies the current yield to maturity relative to the holder receiving full face value at maturity.

⁴ Discount securities are also issued for terms greater than 365 days, however these are not subject to the NTI Conventions.

At a practical level promissory notes are usually issued for terms of 185 days or less, must be signed by the party making the promise, must be for a specific sum of money, must specify the time for repayment, must be in bearer form, are transferable by delivery without endorsement, are issued and traded at a discount and are redeemable at maturity.

2.4. Treasury Notes

Treasury Notes are a short-term discount security issued by the Australian Office of Financial Management (AOFM) on behalf of the Commonwealth of Australia, redeemable at face value on maturity. This security provides the purchaser with a single payment on maturity for terms generally less than six months, however which may extend to 12 months. All Treasury Notes are exempt from non-resident interest withholding tax (IWT).

Refer to the [AOFM website](#) for further information including the pricing formula and maturity profile of Notes on issue.

3. Dealing

Except as otherwise mutually agreed, the conventions set out below apply to all trading in securities listed under *2.0 Products*.

3.1. Methods of Dealing

Bilaterally via telephone, electronic dealing or intermediated via brokers.

3.2. Electronic Dealing

Any electronic dealing platform authorised for use by the counterparties to a transaction.

3.3. Business Days

3.3.1. Good Business Day

A good business day is defined as a day other than 'bank close days' as defined in Section 14B of the *Retail Trading Act 2008 (NSW)* that apply to the whole of the State of New South Wales.

3.3.2. Non-Business Day

Any day on which banks in the State of New South Wales are obliged or permitted to close, including Saturday and Sunday.

3.4. Standard Transaction Size (market parcel)

For maturities out to 6 months

The standard market parcel and maximum number of lines of stock which may be delivered are as follows:

Market Parcel Size	Interbank	Bilateral and Brokered Dealings with institutional Investors
– ASX Prime Bank Paper	\$20 million	\$10 million
<u>Treasury Notes</u>	As mutually agreed between parties	As mutually agreed between parties
<u>Other Product</u>	As mutually agreed between parties	As mutually agreed between parties
<u>Maximum Lines of Stock</u>	Interbank	Bilateral and Brokered Dealings with institutional Investors
<u>Prime Bank Paper</u>		
\$ millions	(\$m parcel dealt x 10%, rounded down)	
\$10	Not applicable, except as referenced in 3.7.1.	As mutually agreed between parties
\$20	2	
\$30	3	
\$40	4	
\$50	5	
\$100	10	
\$ 150+	15	

Lines of stock is defined as short term debt instruments with the same drawer, the same maturity date and in the case of bank accepted/endorsed bills, the same acceptor/endorser.

For maturities greater than 6 months and less than 12 months

The minimum interbank market parcel is AUD\$10million of acceptable short-term debt instruments, comprising of one line of stock per AUD\$10million.

3.5. Two Way Pricing

Dealers may quote a two-way market however are not obliged to, except as required under the BBSW Administrator's *Prime Bank Conventions*.

3.6. Quotation and Dealing

Standard tick size is 1 basis point.

Interest rate yield is quoted to 2 decimal places, or as otherwise agreed by the counterparties to the transaction.

Interest rate yield on Treasury Notes may be quoted to 4 decimal places, or as otherwise agreed by the counterparties to the transaction.

3.7. Other Instrument Conventions

3.7.1. Denominations

Unless mutually agreed otherwise the standard denominations for each line with an identical drawer, acceptor and maturity date on each bill or in the case of negotiable certificates of deposit and promissory notes, an identical issuer and maturity date, are:

- 10 securities of \$ 100,000 per million
- 2 securities of \$ 500,000 per million
- 1 security of \$ 1,000,000
- 1 security of \$ 5,000,000

3.8. Basis

All rates are quoted on an actual/365-day fixed basis. The standard convention denominator doesn't adjust for leap years unless otherwise stated.

3.9. Maturity Conventions

3.9.1. ASX Prime Bank Eligible Securities

As a means of promoting secondary market liquidity, Products issued by or accepted by an ASX Prime Bank⁵ and which are defined as Bank Paper⁶ are grouped and traded in monthly tenor⁷ daily rolling maturity buckets (referred to as the rolling maturity pool). Each pool is determined, firstly by the Straight Run Maturity Date, and secondly by the range of consecutive Good Business Days included in the pool.

3.9.1.1. Straight Run Maturity Date

The Straight Run Maturity Date is determined through the application of the '*modified following*'⁸ method:

- A. In the first instance the Straight Run Maturity Date will be the same calendar day in the corresponding maturity month, provided this calendar day is a Good Business Day as defined in Section 3.3.1.
- B. If the calendar day is not a Good Business Day or is a Non-Business Day as defined in Section 3.3.2, then the Straight Run Maturity Date will be the following Good Business Day except when the following Good Business Day falls in the next calendar month, then

⁵ ASX Prime Banks are defined in the ASX Prime Bank Conventions

⁶ Bank Paper is defined in the ASX BBSW Conventions.

⁷ BBSW tenors are described in the ASX BBSW Conventions

⁸ "Modified following" is a globally accepted business day convention whereby payment days that fall on a holiday or a Saturday or a Sunday roll forward to the next business day. If that day falls in the next calendar month, the payment day rolls backward to the preceding business day.

- C. If the following Good Business day falls in the next calendar month, the Straight Run Maturity Date will be the preceding Good Business Day.

3.9.1.2. Rolling Maturity Pool

The Rolling Maturity Pool is described in the ASX BBSW Conventions.

3.9.2. Treasury Notes, Other Product

Secondary market maturity conventions are mutually agreed between the parties at the time of dealing.

3.10. Settlement Rate or Index

Not applicable.

3.11. Premium Payment Date(s)

Not applicable.

3.12. Expiry Conventions

Not applicable.

3.13. Broker Conventions

The conventions apply equally to brokered and bilaterally negotiated transactions.

3.14. Confidentiality

No specific conventions apply. Refer to the AFMA [Code of Conduct](#)

3.15. Credit

Market participants should accept Products subject to their available credit limits. The seller will provide the buyer with details of the transaction as prescribed in *Section 4.1. Timing*.

It is incumbent on the buyer to notify the seller of any rejection of the transaction due to lack of available credit limits in a timely manner (generally within 10 minutes of being advised of the details of the transaction).

3.16. Exercise of Options

Not applicable.

3.17. Data Source

Prime Banks will endeavour to make markets on Approved Venue screens in accordance with the pricing obligations described in the ASX Prime Bank Conventions.

The BBSW Administrator will endeavour to publish End of Day Rates for Prime Bank paper.

3.18. Pricing Formulae

Simple interest (or simple discounting) is the basis of the pricing of short term securities. The formula for pricing discount securities is as follows:

$$P = \frac{FV}{1 + (r \times t)}$$

FV = face value of the security
r = per annum yield to maturity
t = time to maturity in years (days/365)

4. Confirmations

Refer to the [AFMA Common Confirmation and Settlement Standards](#).

4.1. Timing - Reporting of Stock Details

4.1.1. Same day settlement

The stock details of Bank Paper transactions dealt inside the ASX VWAP Trading Window must be advised by the seller to the buyer no later than 10.10am (AEST/AEDT), or as otherwise prescribed in the ASX BBSW Trade and Trade Reporting Guidelines.

The stock details of all other Product dealt (amount, yield, maturity date, drawer & acceptor as applicable) for same day settlement should be agreed between the parties within 20 minutes of trade execution.

4.1.2. Next day settlement

The details of all Product transactions (amount, yield, maturity date, drawer & acceptor as applicable) dealt for next day settlement should be provided to the buying counterparty as soon as possible, but in any event, by no later than 8:30am (AEST/AEDT) on the day of settlement.

4.2. Obligations of Dealers

Dealers should ensure that deal tickets or inputs to front office dealing systems are completed in a timely fashion to allow for compliance with *Section 4.1*.

4.3. Documentation

As mutually agreed between market participants.

5. Settlements

Refer to the [AFMA Common Confirmation and Settlement Standards](#).

5.1. Physical Settlements

Unless mutually agreed otherwise, transactions negotiated before 12:00pm are for settlement on the same day and transactions negotiated after 12:00pm are for settlement on the following Good Business Day.

AFMA recommends that transactions should not be negotiated for settlement or price fixing (rollover) on a Non Business Day. Other conventions can be utilised if agreed upon at the time of dealing.

5.2. Cash Settlements

Not applicable.

5.3. Premium Payments

Not applicable.

5.4. Exercise of Options

Not applicable.

5.5. Settlement Failures

No specific convention.

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