

14. GUARANTEES (CONTINUED)

For purposes of loss allocation, Participant defaults are grouped together chronologically into discrete event periods of 10 business days. Participants are grouped into three different tiers for purposes of loss allocation as well: Tier 1, Tier 2, and Sponsored Members. If there is remaining loss or liability from one or more Participant default events that occurred within the same event period, the division will divide such obligation between Tier 1 Participants and Tier 2 Participants. Tier 1 Participants will be assessed ratably in accordance with their respective average daily required deposits to the Clearing Fund over the prior 70 business days. Tier 2 Participants will only be subject to such loss or liability to the extent they traded with the defaulting Participant. Sponsored Members are not obligated for loss allocation. If the loss arises in connection with Sponsored Member trades, the loss shall be allocated to Tier 1 Participants. GSD Participants who act as inter-dealer brokers are limited to a loss allocation of \$5 million per event period in respect of their inter-dealer broker activity.

15. OFF BALANCE SHEET AND CONCENTRATION OF CREDIT RISKS

As a CCP, FICC is exposed to significant credit risk to third-parties including its Participants, which extends to companies within the global financial services industry. Credit risk represents the potential for loss due to the default or deterioration in credit quality of a Participant. The Company's exposure to credit risk is primarily derived from providing clearing and settlement service operations. FICC's global Participant base includes participating brokers, dealers, banks, qualified institutional buyer clients via the sponsored membership service and other financial intermediaries.

Credit risk also comes from the investment of financial assets, which consist principally of cash and cash equivalents, investments, accounts receivable and the Clearing Fund. Concentrations of credit risk may arise due to large connected individual exposures and significant exposures to groups of Participants whose likelihood of default is driven by common underlying factors including economic conditions affecting the securities industry and debt-issuing countries.

Cash and cash equivalents. The Company maintains cash and cash equivalents with various financial institutions including the Federal Reserve Bank of New York. The Company's investment policy is designed to limit its exposure with any one financial institution. As part of its credit and risk management processes, the Company performs periodic evaluations of the relative credit standing of the financial institutions with whom it places funds. The Company generally makes deposits with financial institutions having a credit rating of at least BBB+/Baa1 or better from recognized rating agencies and that are approved via its internal credit review process. The Company also monitors the credit ratings of the financial institutions with whom it places funds on an ongoing basis to identify any significant change in a financial institution's condition. If such a change takes place, the amounts deposited in such financial institutions may be adjusted.

Marketable securities. In addition to investing in reverse repurchase agreements, money market funds and bank deposits, the Company also directly invests in U.S. Treasury securities and debt obligations of the U.S. government or those U.S. government agencies guaranteed by the U.S. government, pursuant to its investment policy. Credit risk related to investments in marketable securities involves the risk of nonperformance by the counterparty, which could result in a material loss.

Accounts receivable. Credit risk related to accounts receivable involves the risk of non-payment by the counterparty. Credit risk is diversified due to the large number of Participants. The Company also performs ongoing credit evaluations of the financial conditions of its Participants and evaluates the delinquency status of the receivables.

Clearing Fund. In addition to risk management policies described above for cash and cash equivalents, when Participants provide cash deposits to the Clearing Fund, the Company may invest the cash in reverse repurchase agreements (reverse repos). The Company bears credit risk related to reverse repos only to the extent cash advanced to the counterparty exceeds the value of collateral received. Securities purchased under reverse repos are generally U.S. Treasury and Agency securities having minimal credit risk due to low probability of U.S. government default, coupled with the highly liquid nature of these securities. Reverse repos are collateralized and the collateral must have a market value greater than or equal to 102% of the cash invested. Additionally, reverse repos are typically placed with financial institutions with a credit rating of BBB+/Baa1 or better from recognized rating agencies and that are approved through the Company's credit review process. To avoid concentration of credit risk exposures, the Company sets credit limits for each investment counterparty.

15. OFF BALANCE SHEET AND CONCENTRATION OF CREDIT RISKS (CONTINUED)

Clearing Fund cash deposits may also be invested in money market mutual funds under Rule 2a-7 of the Investment Company Act of 1940 having a credit rating of AAA/Aaa from recognized rating agencies. Credit risk is mitigated by investing in highly rated money market mutual funds with a stable net asset value of \$1.00 and having cash returned daily.

The Company is exposed to credit risk on a daily basis. This risk arises at FICC as it guarantees certain obligations of its Participants under specified circumstances pursuant to its rules. The Company manages and mitigates this risk by identifying, measuring and responding to these risks in order to protect the safety and soundness of the FICC clearing and settlement system. Various tools are utilized to mitigate these risks including, but not limited to: setting capital adequacy standards; assessing new applicants for membership; performing continuous monitoring of Participants' financial condition; reviewing Participants' daily trading activity and determining appropriate collateral requirements; maintaining its risk-based Clearing Fund; trade and netting and settlement; marking unsettled trades to market; and utilizing a variety of advanced quantitative analytical methodologies, such as back and stress testing.

To become a Participant, an applicant must meet minimum eligibility criteria that are specified in the Company's rules. All applicants must provide the Company with certain financial and operational information to be a Participant. This information is reviewed to ensure the applicant has sufficient financial resources to make anticipated contributions to the Clearing Fund and to meet its obligations to the Company. The credit quality of the Participant is evaluated at the time of application and monitored on an ongoing basis to determine if the Participant continues to be financially stable and able to meet the financial requirements of membership. As part of its review, the Company utilizes an internal credit risk-rating matrix and/or other forms of surveillance to risk rate or monitor Participants. The resulting rating or degree of surveillance determines the level of financial review to be performed on each Participant and may impact their Clearing Fund requirements.

The Company collects Clearing Fund deposits from its Participants using a risk-based margin methodology. The risk-based methodology enables the Company to identify the risks posed by a Participant's unsettled portfolio and to quickly adjust and collect additional deposits as needed to cover those risks. At multiple times during the day, Clearing Fund requirements are calculated for each Participant based on their then-current unsettled and pending transactions. Security pricing is updated on an intraday basis and additional charges may be collected to cover significant price movements from those Participants with a significant exposure in the identified security. The Company monitors Participants' overall trading activities throughout the trading day to determine whether exposures exist that would require special actions to increase their Clearing Fund deposits.

The Company regularly performs back and stress testing of the quality and accuracy of its risk management systems to ensure the adequacy of Clearing Fund requirements and to respond to other risk factors that the tests may reveal.

FICC maintains a rules-based, committed liquidity resource (i.e., the capped contingency liquidity facility) for each division to support potential liquidity needs in the event of a netting member default.

The Company also limits its exposure to potential losses from default by Participants through its multilateral netting contract and limited cross-guaranty agreement with DTC, NSCC and OCC. This arrangement is designed to provide a mechanism for the sharing of excess net resources of a common defaulting Participant held at one clearing agency to cover losses incurred at another clearing agency.

16. SUBSEQUENT EVENTS

The Company evaluated events and transactions occurring after December 31, 2020 through February 26, 2021, the date these financial statements are available to be issued, for potential recognition or disclosure. No additional events or transactions, other than as disclosed below, occurred during such period that would require recognition or disclosure in these financial statements.

On February 1, 2021, the Company settled with the New York City tax authorities with respect to ongoing state income tax audits related to the years 2010-2014. See Note 11 for additional information.