

REGULATORY UPDATE.

Not Everyone Hates SarbOx. The much maligned new rules are a big hit with investors. There has been no shortage of public outcry over Sarbanes-Oxley, the controversial 2002 accounting reform legislation that requires top corporate executives to fill out reams of new forms and personally certify their financial reports. http://www.businessweek.com/magazine/content/07_05/b4019053.htm?chan=top+news_top+news+index_companies

The SEC Division of Corporation Finance has published updated guidance on compliance with the Form 8-K reporting requirements, including the requirements relating to disclosure of executive compensation matters. <http://www.goodwinprocter.com/~media/6C91BA0FB2C64BCE8B05BE0D2B19BDD.B.ashx>

The International Organization of Securities Commissions (IOSCO) has today published the final report containing amendments to the Code of Conduct Fundamentals for Credit Rating Agencies (Code of Conduct). <http://www.iosco.org/news/pdf/IOSCONEWS120.pdf>

Cox at the XBRL conference. "Our main focus now must be on getting investors and other users to be aware of XBRL and what it can do for them." <http://www.sec.gov/news/speech/2008/spch050708cc-2.htm>

Corporate responsibility's staying power: Companies have made their environmental, social and ethical performance a priority over the past decade. Despite a softening economy, three forces guarantee that CR is here to stay http://www.brunswickgroup.com/documents/BG_talking_points_spring08_FINAL1.pdf

Credit where credit's due? What really constitutes 'value' in the UK listed market. The latest Hidden Gems report from Grant Thornton. <http://www.grantthornton.co.uk/pdf/HGI-Report-2008.pdf>

The Financial Reporting Council today announced that it will be updating the Combined Code to remove the restriction on an individual chairing more than one FTSE 100 company; and allow the chairman of a listed company below the FTSE 350 to be a member of, but not chair, the audit committee provided he or she was considered independent on appointment. <http://www.frc.org.uk/press/pub1628.html>

FSA Consultation CP08-10 extract "We are pursuing a range of work to improve our ability to tackle market abuse. This includes looking at ways to strengthen our formal powers and examining the range of tools at our disposal. Our efforts are also directed at improving the controls authorised firms put in place to safeguard against the misuse of information, and we are working to improve our ability to monitor the market and detect abnormal share price movements. But we have also made clear that we are prepared to bring more criminal prosecutions to achieve our goal of credible deterrence." http://www.fsa.gov.uk/pubs/cp/cp08_10.pdf

The **London Stock Exchange** announced the establishment of a new service to offer equity research on smaller quoted companies. PSQ Analytics, as the venture will be called, will be available to companies on AIM as well as smaller companies on the Main Market, and will provide information that improves investor understanding of their businesses. <http://www.londonstockexchange.com/NR/exeres/667D64A6-51B8-4418-BEE7-ACB9E93DAE22.htm>

Committee of European Securities Regulators launched a consultation on ensuring consistent application of the EU's Market Abuse Directive, focussing on suspicious transaction reporting, and requirements for insider lists. <http://www.cesr.eu/popup2.php?id=5054>

Former SEC accounting chief Donald Nicolaisen wants the commission to require U.S. companies to abandon GAAP in favour of another set of accounting guidelines, possibly international ones. <http://www.cfo.com/article.cfm/8810355>

McCreevy sees CESR advice on rating agencies as inadequate. Recommendations from national watchdogs in the European Union on improving oversight of credit rating agencies are insufficient and Brussels may yet propose new laws, the bloc's top regulator said. <http://uk.reuters.com/article/hotStocksNews/idUKL2173269320080521>

Sovereign funds have biggest impact on alternative assets. Sovereign wealth funds, which control up to \$3.7 trillion in assets, will ultimately have the biggest impact on private equity and hedge funds, analysts at JPMorgan Chase said in a report. State run investment funds currently own up to 7.5 percent of so-called alternative assets, or about \$340 billion, and this stake could grow to as high as 17 percent by the end of 2012, said JPMorgan analysts David Fernandez and Bernhard Eschweiler. <http://www.reuters.com/article/fundsFundsNews/idUSHKG14044720080522>

The Financial Services Authority (FSA) today publishes Market Watch 27, an update of the thematic review of controls over inside information, following the publication of Market Watch 21 in July last year. <http://www.fsa.gov.uk/pages/Library/Communication/PR/2008/054.shtml>

The first issuers required to comply with rules requiring them to publish their Annual Report and Accounts within four months of that year end, suggests that some companies have mistakenly believed that publishing Preliminary Results (required previously under the Listing Rules) within this period was enough to fulfil their obligations under DTR 4.1. This is not the case. UKLA. http://www.fsa.gov.uk/pubs/ukla/ukla_update.pdf