

Similarly, in the event an options specialist or a significant group of options market makers should fail or have a significant reduction in capital, the markets in the particular options in which the specialist or market makers traded could be adversely affected. The suspension by OCC of any Clearing Member that maintains significant positions in a particular options series in its accounts could also disrupt the market for that options series.

An options market could also become unavailable because of its own financial problems. For example, if an options market were to be declared bankrupt or if creditors were to take possession of its principal trading systems, it might be unable to continue to operate as an options market.

If a secondary market in a particular option were to become unavailable, a holder of that option would be able to realize his profits or limit his losses only by exercising at a time when the option is exercisable, and a writer of that option would remain subject to assignment until expiration. However, as noted above in paragraph 5 under "Risks of Options Holders," an options market may also restrict exercises of that option.

3. Disruptions in the markets for underlying interests could result in losses for options investors. Each of the options markets has discretion to halt trading in an option in certain circumstances—such as when the market determines that the halt would be advisable in maintaining a fair and orderly market in the option. If trading is halted or suspended in one or more of the markets for an underlying interest, the trading of options on that interest may also be halted. Similarly, if dissemination of the current level of an underlying index is interrupted, or if trading is interrupted in stocks accounting for a substantial portion of the value of an index, the trading of options on that index may be halted. In addition, the rules of the options markets may require them to halt trading in particular types of options in certain circumstances. At the date of this booklet, the U.S. options markets are required (1) to halt trading in all stock options and stock index options when trading in all stocks on the New York Stock Exchange ("NYSE") has been halted by the activation of "circuit breakers" by the NYSE, and (2) to halt trading in all stock options and stock index options for a specified period of time if the Dow Jones Industrial Average ("Average") is calculated at a value of 250 or more points below its closing value on the previous trading