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**Inspection of  
SS&G Financial Services, Inc.**

**Issued by the**

**Public Company Accounting Oversight Board**

**June 08, 2006**

**THIS IS A PUBLIC VERSION OF A PCAOB INSPECTION REPORT**

**PORTIONS OF THE COMPLETE REPORT ARE OMITTED  
FROM THIS DOCUMENT IN ORDER TO COMPLY WITH  
SECTIONS 104(g)(2) AND 105(b)(5)(A)  
OF THE SARBANES-OXLEY ACT OF 2002**

PCAOB RELEASE NO. 104-2006-135



### **Notes Concerning this Report**

1. Portions of this report may describe deficiencies or potential deficiencies in the systems, policies, procedures, practices, or conduct of the firm that is the subject of this report. The express inclusion of certain deficiencies and potential deficiencies, however, should not be construed to support any negative inference that any other aspect of the firm's systems, policies, procedures, practices, or conduct is approved or condoned by the Board or judged by the Board to comply with laws, rules, and professional standards.
2. Any references in this report to violations or potential violations of law, rules, or professional standards should be understood in the supervisory context in which this report was prepared. Any such references are not a result of an adversarial adjudicative process and do not constitute conclusive findings of fact or of violations for purposes of imposing legal liability. Similarly, any description herein of a firm's cooperation in addressing issues constructively should not be construed, and is not construed by the Board, as an admission, for purposes of potential legal liability, of any violation.
3. Board inspections encompass, among other things, whether the firm has failed to identify departures from Generally Accepted Accounting Principles ("GAAP") in its audits of financial statements. This report's descriptions of any such auditing failures necessarily involve descriptions of the related GAAP departures. The Board, however, has no authority to prescribe the form or content of an issuer's financial statements. That authority, and the authority to make binding determinations concerning an issuer's compliance with GAAP, rests with the Securities and Exchange Commission ("SEC" or "Commission"). Any description, in this report, of perceived departures from GAAP should not be understood as an indication that the Commission has considered or made any determination regarding these GAAP issues unless otherwise expressly stated.

## **INSPECTION OF SS&G FINANCIAL SERVICES, INC.**

The Public Company Accounting Oversight Board ("PCAOB" or "the Board") has conducted an inspection of the registered public accounting firm SS&G Financial Services, Inc.<sup>1/</sup> ("the Firm"). The Board is issuing this report of that inspection in accordance with the requirements of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002 ("the Act").

The Board is making portions of the report publicly available. Specifically, the Board is releasing to the public Part I of the report and portions of Part IV of the report. Part IV of the report consists of the Firm's comments, if any, on a draft of the report.<sup>2/</sup>

The Board has elsewhere described in detail its approach to making inspection-related information publicly available consistent with legal restrictions.<sup>3/</sup> A substantial portion of the Board's criticisms of a firm (specifically criticisms of the firm's quality control system), and the Board's dialogue with the firm about those criticisms, occurs out of public view, unless the firm fails to make progress to the Board's satisfaction in addressing those criticisms. In addition, the Board generally does not disclose otherwise nonpublic information, learned through inspections, about the firm or its clients. Accordingly, information in those categories generally does not appear in the publicly available portion of an inspection report.

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<sup>1/</sup> At the time of the inspection field work, the Firm's name was Saltz, Shamis & Goldfarb, Inc.

<sup>2/</sup> The Board does not make public any of a firm's comments that address a nonpublic portion of the report. In addition, pursuant to section 104(f) of the Act, 15 U.S.C. § 7214(f), and PCAOB Rule 4007(b), if a firm requests, and the Board grants, confidential treatment for any of the firm's comments on a draft report, the Board does not include those comments in the final report at all. The Board notes that it routinely grants confidential treatment, if requested, for any of a firm's comments that identify factually inaccurate statements in the draft that the Board corrects in the final report.

<sup>3/</sup> See Statement Concerning the Issuance of Inspection Reports, PCAOB Release No. 104-2004-001 (August 26, 2004).

**PART I**

**INSPECTION PROCEDURES AND CERTAIN OBSERVATIONS**

Members of the Board's inspection staff ("the inspection team") conducted fieldwork for the inspection from September 28, 2005 to September 30, 2005. The fieldwork included procedures tailored to the nature of the Firm, certain aspects of which the inspection team understood at the outset of the inspection to be as follows:

Number of offices	5 (Akron, Cincinnati, Columbus, and Solon, Ohio; Erlanger, Kentucky)
Ownership structure	Professional corporation
Number of partners	18
Number of professional staff <sup>4/</sup>	168
Number of issuer audit clients <sup>5/</sup>	2

Board inspections are designed to identify and address weaknesses and deficiencies related to how a firm conducts audits. To achieve that goal, Board inspections include reviews of certain aspects of selected audits performed by the firm and reviews of other matters related to the firm's quality control system.

In the course of reviewing aspects of selected audits, an inspection may identify ways in which a particular audit is deficient, including failures by the firm to identify, or to address appropriately, respects in which an issuer's financial statements do not present

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<sup>4/</sup> "Professional staff" includes all personnel of the Firm, except partners or shareholders and administrative support personnel. The number of partners and professional staff is provided here as an indication of the size of the Firm, and does not necessarily represent the number of the Firm's professionals who participate in audits of issuers or are "associated persons" (as defined in the Act) of the Firm.

<sup>5/</sup> The number of issuer audit clients shown here is based on the Firm's self-reporting and the inspection team's review of certain information for inspection planning purposes. It does not reflect any Board determination concerning which, or how many, of the Firm's audit clients are "issuers" as defined in the Act.

fairly the financial position, results of operations, or cash flows of the issuer in conformity with GAAP.<sup>6/</sup> It is not the purpose of an inspection, however, to review all of a firm's audits or to identify every respect in which a reviewed audit is deficient. Accordingly, a Board inspection report should not be understood to provide any assurance that the firm's audits, or its issuer clients' financial statements, are free of any deficiencies not specifically described in an inspection report.

A. Review of Audit Engagements

The scope of the inspection procedures performed included reviews of aspects of the performance of both of the Firm's audits of the financial statements of issuers. Those aspects were selected according to the Board's criteria, and the Firm was not allowed an opportunity to limit or influence the selection process.

The inspection team identified matters that it considered to be audit deficiencies.<sup>7/</sup> The deficiencies identified in both of the audits reviewed included deficiencies of such significance that it appeared to the inspection team that the Firm did not obtain sufficient competent evidential matter to support its opinion on the issuer's financial statements. Those deficiencies included –

- (1) the failure to perform and document sufficient testing with respect to the valuation of certain investments; and

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<sup>6/</sup> When it comes to the Board's attention that an issuer's financial statements appear not to present fairly, in a material respect, the financial position, results of operations or cash flows of the issuer in conformity with GAAP, the Board reports that information to the SEC, which has jurisdiction to determine proper accounting in issuers' financial statements.

<sup>7/</sup> PCAOB standards require a firm to take appropriate actions to assess the importance of audit deficiencies identified after the date of the audit report to the firm's present ability to support its previously expressed opinions. See AU 390, *Consideration of Omitted Procedures After the Report Date*, and AU 561, *Subsequent Discovery of Facts Existing at the Date of the Auditor's Report* (both included among the PCAOB's interim auditing standards, pursuant to PCAOB Rule 3200T). Failure to comply with these PCAOB standards could be a basis for Board disciplinary sanctions.

(2) the failure to perform and document sufficient audit procedures to assess controls at a service organization.

**B. Review of Quality Control System**

In addition to evaluating the quality of the audit work performed on specific audits, the inspection included review of certain of the Firm's practices, policies and procedures related to audit quality. This review addressed practices, policies and procedures concerning audit performance, training, compliance with independence standards, client acceptance and retention, and the establishment of policies and procedures. As described above, any defects in, or criticisms of, the Firm's quality control system are discussed in the nonpublic portion of this report and will remain nonpublic unless the Firm fails to address them to the Board's satisfaction within 12 months of the date of this report.

END OF PART I

PARTS II AND III OF THIS REPORT ARE NONPUBLIC  
AND ARE OMITTED FROM THIS PUBLIC DOCUMENT

## **PART IV**

### **RESPONSE OF THE FIRM TO DRAFT INSPECTION REPORT**

Pursuant to section 104(f) of the Act, 15 U.S.C. § 7214(f), and PCAOB Rule 4007(a), the Board provided the Firm an opportunity to review and comment on a draft of this report. The Firm provided a written response.

Pursuant to section 104(f) of the Act and PCAOB Rule 4007(b), if a firm requests, and the Board grants, confidential treatment for any of the firm's comments on a draft report, the Board does not include those comments in the final report. The Board routinely grants confidential treatment, if requested, for any of a firm's comments that identify factually inaccurate statements in the draft that the Board corrects in the final report.

Pursuant to section 104(f) of the Act and PCAOB Rule 4007(b), the Firm's response, minus any portion granted confidential treatment, is attached hereto and made part of this final inspection report. In any version of this report that the Board makes publicly available, any portions of the Firm's response that address nonpublic portions of the report are omitted.



May 3, 2006

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Mr. George H. Diacont  
Director  
Division of Registration and Inspections  
Public Company Accounting Oversight Board  
1666 K Street, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20006

**Re: Response to Part 1 of the Draft Report of Inspection of Saltz, Shamis & Goldfarb, Inc.**

Dear Mr. Diacont:

SS&G Financial Services, Inc. (formerly known as Saltz, Shamis, & Goldfarb, Inc. (SS&G)) is pleased to provide you with our response to the Draft Report of Inspection of the PCAOB dated April 3, 2006. We are appreciative of the time that your staff spent at our firm and fully support the mission of the PCAOB and the inspection process. SS&G has always been committed to performing quality audits and views the inspection process as a way to continue to improve our audit process.

In response to the matters raised in your report, we believe that, based on our professional judgment, we had performed sufficient overall audit procedures and obtained sufficient overall audit evidence to support our audit opinions and that our audit opinions as issued were appropriate. We recognize that significant professional judgment is involved in the performance of an audit.

In specific response to the points raised in the Draft Report of the PCAOB we offer the following:

**Point #1 - The failure to perform and document sufficient testing with respect to the valuation of certain investments**

Our testing of the valuation of the investments covered approximately 74% of the total investments held. In addition, we performed other audit procedures related to the valuation of the investments and investment returns which in total we believe provided sufficient overall audit evidence to support the valuation of the investments.

**Point #2 - The failure to document and perform sufficient audit procedures to assess controls at a service organization**

The SAS 70 Report we obtained in connection with our audit relating to the client's service organization covered 9 months of the 12 month period under audit. Our review of the controls at the service organization as documented in the Type II SAS 70 Report indicated that the controls relevant to our audits could be relied upon in connection with the determination of the scope of our audit procedures. In addition, nothing came to our attention as a result of any of our audit procedures that would have caused us to believe that there had been any changes in the procedures or controls at the service organization in the period not covered by the SAS 70 report.

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In further response to the points raised in the Draft Report, we have, in accordance with AU Section 390, performed additional audit procedures to further substantiate that the conclusions reached were appropriate. These procedures included obtaining audited financial statements of the investment funds not specifically tested which supported the valuation of the investments, and obtaining a Type II SAS 70 report on the service organization which covered the period not previously covered. These additional procedures did not result in any modifications to our original conclusions.

Please be advised that we notified [redacted] of the PCAOB Registration Dept. of the change of our firm name from Saltz, Shamis & Goldfarb, Inc. to SS&G Financial Services, Inc. effective February 2, 2006. \*

We would be pleased to discuss these matters further with your staff, and appreciate the opportunity to work with your staff in enhancing our overall system of quality controls.

Sincerely,

*SS&G Financial Services, Inc.*

CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS



**SS&G Financial Services**  
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\* As a matter of policy, the PCAOB redacts from firms' responses to draft inspection reports the names of PCAOB staff, other than senior staff to whom a response letter is addressed.