

Interpretation of the Statutory Accounting Principles Working Group

INT 21-01: Accounting for Cryptocurrencies

INT 21-01 Dates Discussed

March 15, 2021, May 20, 2021

INT 21-01 References

SSAP No. 2R—Cash, Cash Equivalents, Drafts, and Short-Term Investments

INT 21-01 Issue

1. This agenda item is to address questions regarding statutory accounting treatment for cryptocurrencies, which are defined as a digital currency in which transactions are verified and records maintained by a decentralized system using cryptography, rather than by a centralized authority. Cryptocurrencies are purchased and exchanged using a limited number of unregulated digital currency exchanges and are not held or offered by major banks.
2. The most valuable cryptocurrency as of February 2021 is Bitcoin, which has been in circulation since 2009, and there are approximately 4,000 different cryptocurrencies available on 200 different cryptocurrency exchanges. Cryptocurrencies have seen significant price volatility and have experienced an extreme increase in value over the past year, with the value of the total outstanding cryptocurrencies nearing \$1 trillion as of February 2021. The total market value and increased popularity has led to increased interest in the market by traditional financial institutions and insurance companies.
3. No NAIC Committees or groups have taken any action or established a position on cryptocurrencies. Currently, auditors must rely on guidance provided by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants through a nonauthoritative practice guide.
4. This Interpretation intends to clarify that directly held cryptocurrencies are nonadmitted assets for statutory accounting.

INT 21-01 Discussion

5. Directly held cryptocurrencies have not been identified in the *Accounting Practices and Procedures Manual* (AP&P Manual) as an admitted asset, and do not meet the definition of any admitted asset that is defined in the AP&P Manual. Accordingly, by default they are a nonadmitted asset per *SSAP No. 4—Assets and Nonadmitted Assets*, paragraph 3, as they are not specifically identified in the *Accounting Practices and Procedures Manual* as an admitted asset.
6. Cash is defined in *SSAP No. 2R—Cash, Cash Equivalents, Drafts, and Short-Term Investments* as a “medium of exchange that a bank or other similar financial institution will accept for deposit and allow an immediate credit to the depositor’s account.” Cryptocurrencies are currently not accepted by major banks and do not operate like a traditional currency, and as such do not meet the definition of cash in *SSAP No. 2R*.

INT 21-01 Consensus

7. The Statutory Accounting Principles (E) Working Group reached a consensus that directly held cryptocurrencies do not meet the definition of an admitted asset and are therefore considered to be a nonadmitted

asset for statutory accounting. The Working Group intends to rely on this interpretation for statutory accounting and will address cryptocurrencies further once FASB has provided definitive guidance.

INT 21-01 Status

8. No further discussion is planned.
9. The Statutory Accounting Principles (E) Working Group will continue to monitor the evolution of cryptocurrencies and subsequently review this interpretation as appropriate as part of the normal maintenance process.

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