The SEC has extended for the second time the NASD rule that allows arbitrating parties in California to waive state arbitrator ethics standards. The rule will be in effect until September 30, 2005. The SEC is awaiting the outcome of the appeal of the decision in NASD Dispute Resolution, Inc. v. Judicial Council of California to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit. (Story begins on page 135.)

The National Arbitration Forum (NAF) recently released updated arbitration rules for cases filed on or after January 1, 2005. The updated provisions of the 2005 Code of Procedure include an authorization for arbitrators to provide injunctive relief and restraining orders in business-to-business cases, revised rules on injunctive relief generally that allow for an expedited hearing, and giving arbitrators the discretion to value large claims early in the arbitration. (Story begins on page 135.)

A California Court of Appeal has ruled in Woolls that California regulations requiring the disclosure of a binding arbitration clause in the contract do not violate the FAA and are not preempted by federal law. (Story begins on page 136.)

The National Arbitration Forum (NAF) Case Summaries address a wide variety of issues in arbitration law, including: the waiver of the right to arbitrate, the validity of arbitration agreements, jurisdictional boundaries between the courts and arbitrators, the effect of choice-of-law in arbitration, the selection of arbitral venues, fee-shifting provisions, and federal preemption of state law. (The Summaries begin on page 137.)

In the JAMS Arbitration Column, the Honorable Lawrence C. Waddington (Ret.) addresses “Federal Jurisdiction in Arbitration.” He states that the “Congressional enactment of the Federal Arbitration Act in 1925 and its subsequent interpretation by the U.S. Supreme Court pre-empting state anti-arbitration law, and in some cases enjoining state courts from refusing to enforce arbitration agreements, reflect the continuing tension of sovereignty....” (The JAMS Arbitration Column begins on page 149.)

Finally, in the Mediation Column created and directed by Nadja Alexander, WAMR’s Editor for International Mediation, Serge Loode discusses a number of empirical findings regarding mandatory mediation in Germany. In 2000, an experimental scheme for mandatory mediation in small claims was introduced. The results of its operation in three German states provide an understanding of the advantages and disadvantages of mandatory mediation frameworks. (The Mediation Column begins on page 153.)
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Publication and Subscription Information
The WORLD ARBITRATION AND MEDIATION REPORT is published monthly by JurisNet LLC, 71 New Street, Huntington, New York 11743; telephone: (631) 673-3330; fax: (631) 673-9117; (800) 887-4064; e-mail: subscriptions@jurispub.com. Visit our website at http://www.jurispub.com. The Report is distributed worldwide by JurisNet LLC Subscription price: In the United States: $650.00 yearly; International: $710.00 yearly. Prices include shipping & handling and complete online access to the full archive of all WAMR issues. ISSN # 0960-0949.

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