Value-at-risk

JPMorgan Chase utilizes VaR, a statistical risk measure, to estimate the potential loss from adverse market moves in the current market environment. The Firm has a single VaR framework used as a basis for calculating Risk Management VaR and Regulatory VaR.

The framework is employed across the Firm using historical simulation based on data for the previous 12 months. The framework's approach assumes that historical changes in market values are representative of the distribution of potential outcomes in the immediate future. The Firm believes the use of Risk Management VaR provides a daily measure of risk that is closely aligned to risk management decisions made by the LOBs and Corporate and, along with other market risk measures, provides the appropriate information needed to respond to risk events.

The Firm's Risk Management VaR is calculated assuming a one-day holding period and an expected tail-loss methodology which approximates a 95% confidence level. Risk Management VaR provides a consistent framework to measure risk profiles and levels of diversification across product types and is used for aggregating risks and monitoring limits across businesses. VaR results are reported to senior management, the Board of Directors and regulators.

Under the Firm's Risk Management VaR methodology, assuming current changes in market values are consistent with the historical changes used in the simulation, the Firm would expect to incur VaR "back-testing exceptions," defined as losses greater than that predicted by VaR estimates, an average of five times every 100 trading days. The number of VaR back-testing exceptions observed can differ from the statistically expected number of back-testing exceptions if the current level of market volatility is materially different from the level of market volatility during the 12 months of historical data used in the VaR calculation.

Underlying the overall VaR model framework are individual VaR models that simulate historical market returns for individual risk factors and/or product types. To capture material market risks as part of the Firm's risk management framework, comprehensive VaR model calculations are performed daily for businesses whose activities give rise to market risk. These VaR models are granular and incorporate numerous risk factors and inputs to simulate daily changes in market values over the historical period; inputs are selected based on the risk profile of each portfolio, as sensitivities and historical time series used to generate daily market values may be different across product types or risk management systems. The VaR model results across all portfolios are aggregated at the Firm level.

As VaR is based on historical data, it is an imperfect measure of market risk exposure and potential future losses. In addition, based on their reliance on available historical data, limited time horizons, and other factors, VaR measures are inherently limited in their ability to measure certain risks and to predict losses, particularly those associated with market illiquidity and sudden or severe shifts in market conditions.

For certain products, specific risk parameters are not captured in VaR due to the lack of inherent liquidity and availability of appropriate historical data. The Firm uses proxies to estimate the VaR for these and other products when daily time series are not available. It is likely that using an actual price-based time series for these products, if available, would affect the VaR results presented. The Firm therefore considers other nonstatistical measures such as stress testing, in addition to VaR, to capture and manage its market risk positions.

The daily market data used in VaR models may be different than the independent third-party data collected for VCG price testing in its monthly valuation process. For example, in cases where market prices are not observable, or where proxies are used in VaR historical time series, the data sources may differ. Refer to Valuation process in Note 2 for further information on the Firm's valuation process. As VaR model calculations require daily data and a consistent source for valuation, it may not be practical to use the data collected in the VCG monthly valuation process for VaR model calculations.

The Firm's VaR model calculations are periodically evaluated and enhanced in response to changes in the composition of the Firm's portfolios, changes in market conditions, improvements in the Firm's modeling techniques and measurements, and other factors. Such changes may affect historical comparisons of VaR results. Refer to Estimations and Model Risk Management on page 135 for information regarding model reviews and approvals.

The Firm calculates separately a daily aggregated VaR in accordance with regulatory rules ("Regulatory VaR"), which is used to derive the Firm's regulatory VaR-based capital requirements under Basel III. This Regulatory VaR model framework currently assumes a ten business-day holding period and an expected tail loss methodology which approximates a 99% confidence level. Regulatory VaR is applied to "covered" positions as defined by Basel III, which may be different than the positions included in the Firm's Risk Management VaR. For example, credit derivative hedges of accrual loans are included in the Firm's Risk Management VaR, while Regulatory VaR excludes these credit derivative hedges. In addition, in contrast to the Firm's Risk Management VaR, Regulatory VaR currently excludes the diversification benefit for certain VaR models.