



NULIS Annual Member Meeting Transcript

Thursday, 3 March 2022

Introduction and Chair's Address - Lindsay Smartt, Chairman

Good evening everyone and welcome to the 2021 Annual Member Meeting. I'm Lindsay Smartt and I'm the chair of NULIS Nominees Australia which is trustee for MLC Super Fund, the MLC Superannuation Fund, the Premium Choice Retirement Service and the DPM Retirement Service and all these are now part of the Insignia Financial Group.

First, our Acknowledgment of Country. In the spirit of reconciliation, we acknowledge the traditional custodians of country throughout Australia and their connections to land, sea and community. We pay our respect to their elders, past and present and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples today.

I'd like to thank you for joining us tonight and more importantly, for trusting us to look after your superannuation. The role of trustee is an important one. We are the Board of Directors responsible for your fund and we have a legal and fiduciary responsibility to put your interests first. For example, we as the trustee needed to decide if bringing the MLC funds into what is now the Insignia Financial Group was in member's best interests.

It wasn't just approval from APRA and other regulators that was needed. As an independent trustee we had to take a comprehensive look at those transactions and be sure that they were in your interests, which they were. And of course, we'll continue to work to deliver improved outcomes that are in your best interests.

Now here's an interesting stat. Australia ranks 55th in the world by national population, yet we have the world's fourth largest pot of superannuation savings. Now that's a good thing, but it also means super is big news. It's a big political issue and so there's lots of noise from super funds, the media, politicians, regulators, unions, and that can mean a lot of conflicting messages.

What we're going to do tonight is to keep it simple and focus on what really matters when it comes to making the right decisions about your super. First, our Chief Investment Officer Jonathan Armitage, will discuss the returns from your superannuation funds and look at the economic and investment outlook. Our Chief Distribution Officer, Mark Oliver, will talk about how we're making it easier for you to engage with and manage your super. Our Head of ESG Steve Black, will discuss our approach to sustainable investing and then we're running a special session where some of Insignia Financial's best thinkers, people who work with members every day talk about financial wellness. Now, that's not necessarily about making brilliant investment decisions or how to cut taxes. It's about how to think about money in a way that makes managing it easier and more enjoyable, and that in the end delivers the financial security you want. And we know that this session will provide you with useful insights, insights that you can easily turn into actions that will make a difference to your financial wellbeing.

Perhaps the most important session is the Q&A. It's your chance to ask questions about your super, about performance, investment strategy and much more. And thanks to everyone who's submitted questions. They've been individually reviewed, and we've tried to answer as many of your questions in these speeches and in the Q&A session that will follow. And you can also ask questions live right now via your screen and any questions that we can't cover tonight we'll answer on our website in the next few weeks.

The one big thing I'd like to talk to you about is you, the members of the different funds we have online tonight. You should know that combined, you're part of one of the five largest superannuation organisations in Australia with well over 2 million members. Not only that, you're part of a major financial services organisation that's listed on the Australian Stock Exchange, and that provides you with an additional layer of protection because we're subject to additional reporting and disclosure requirements from the ASX and to the scrutiny that comes from being a public company. As a listed company, Insignia Financial is also able to raise further capital to use for expansion, new services, new product development and innovation, and that access to capital is something many of our competitors just don't have. And I believe that over the long term this backing can be a real advantage for members.

Now consolidation is happening in super but we believe that can be a good thing because scale can mean more value and benefits for all members, as the funds within our group grow together over time. And that's something other speakers will touch on later. In just a second, I'll introduce Our Chief Investment Officer, Jonathan Armitage, who's going to talk you through an eventful year in financial markets.

Now, I don't want to steal his thunder, but the great news is that investing in and engaging with your super is paying off for all Australians. The independent superannuation researcher Chant West recently pointed out that the typical growth super fund has generated a positive return every year for 10 years and over the past 20 years, which included the tech wreck, the GFC and COVID. The median growth fund has still returned over 7% a year and that's way ahead of inflation. Now these aren't just theoretical numbers, they're real returns, which means millions of Australians can have the kind of retirement they've dreamed of.

On that positive note, I'll ask Jonathan to take up the microphone and talk about your fund and what's happening in investment markets.