



MLC MasterKey Investment Service

MLC MasterKey Unit Trust

Annual distribution commentary

May 2011

The following table outlines the cents per unit (cpu) distributions paid for the May 2011 quarter and for the full year for each of the MLC MasterKey Unit Trust funds (including those available in the MLC MasterKey Investment Service¹).

For a breakdown of the taxation components of the distribution for the full 2010/11 financial year, please refer to the document titled MLC Unit Trust/Investment Service Distribution Tax Components 2010/2011 available on the *Performance and other data* section of mlc.com.au.

Fund	Quarter	Full year cpu (yield)			
	May 2011	2010/11	2009/10	2008/9	2007/8
MLC Horizon 1 – Bond Portfolio	2.95	4.67 (4.9%)	3.44 (3.3%)	5.48 (5.7%)	5.0 (5.1%)
MLC Horizon 2 – Income Portfolio	3.15	4.65 (4.8%)	3.98 (4.4%)	5.11 (4.8%)	6.0 (5.1%)
MLC Horizon 3 – Conservative Growth Portfolio	3.28	3.98 (4.9%)	3.93 (5.1%)	4.46 (4.5%)	8.57 (7.9%)
MLC Horizon 4 – Balanced Portfolio	4.40	5.44 (5.0%)	4.46 (4.5%)	6.15 (4.1%)	15.12 (9.4%)
MLC Horizon 5 – Growth Portfolio	3.25	5.06 (5.4%)	3.08 (3.6%)	5.39 (3.9%)	14.43 (9.6%)
MLC Horizon 6 – Share Portfolio	4.13	4.13 (5.8%)	3.03 (4.7%)	3.97 (4.0%)	12.71 (10.3%)
MLC Horizon 7 – Accelerated Growth Portfolio	3.77	3.77 (5.4%)	3.76 (6.2%)	3.57 (3.4%)	14.29 (10.1%)
MLC Australian Share Fund	2.88	4.82 (3.2%)	3.20 (2.5%)	7.23 (3.9%)	27.23 (11.5%)
MLC Australian Share Value Style Fund	1.33	2.83 (3.2%)	2.30 (3.0%)	6.42 (5.8%)	13.89 (9.7%)
MLC Australian Share Growth Style Fund	2.19	2.95 (3.0%)	1.70 (2.0%)	1.28 (1.1%)	7.74 (5.8%)
MLC IncomeBuilder	2.77	7.88 (3.6%)	6.68 (3.6%)	8.99 (3.5%)	14.05 (4.3%)
MLC Global Share Fund	0.03	0.03 (0%)	-	-	0.61 (0.4%)

¹ Please note, MLC MasterKey Investment Service Fundamentals invests in MLC Wholesale funds, which have a June year end. Similarly, the MLC Long-Term Absolute Return Portfolio, MLC Diversified Debt Fund, MLC Global Property Fund and MLC Hedged Global Share Fund in MLC MasterKey Investment Service are accessed via the MLC Wholesale funds, and therefore also have a June year end. These products are therefore not covered by this communication.



Fund	May 2011 Quarter cpu	2010/11 cpu (yield)	2009/10 cpu (yield)	2008/9 cpu (yield)	2007/8 cpu (yield)
MLC Global Share Value Style Fund	0.05	0.05 (0%)	-	-	2.75 (2.0%)
MLC Global Share Growth Style Fund	-	-	-	-	-
MLC Property Securities Fund	1.08	1.97 (3.7%)	3.29 (7.1%)	4.54 (3.9%)	11.7 (7.4%)
MLC Platinum Global Fund	-	-	6.90 (5.6%)	13.67 (9.9%)	18.58 (10.3%)
MLC-Capital International Global Share Fund	-	-	0.30 (0.5%)	1.04 (1.5%)	3.54 (4.2%)
MLC-Vanguard Australian Share Index Fund	2.63	6.62 (3.3%)	6.46 (3.6%)	37.45 (12.5%)	17.16 (4.9%)

Individual Fund Commentaries

MLC Horizon Series of Portfolios (MLC Horizon 1 – 7)

The MLC Horizon Series are a complete range of multi-manager, multi-asset class Portfolios tailored to meet the needs of investors with different return expectations, time-frames and tolerance for volatility. The income distributions for these portfolios are largely based on the income received from the underlying asset classes². The allocations to the asset classes are different for each of the MLC Horizon Portfolios.

Global Shares, Australian Shares and Global Property Securities have shown signs of improvement in distributions when compared to last year. This is seen through a marginal rise in company profits and the gradual recovery of company dividend payout ratios. Even though sharemarkets have generally been recovering, any capital gains generated during the year were off-set against capital losses resulting in no assessable capital gains being distributed this year. The strengthening of the Australian dollar (AUD) provided income to Portfolios with a AUD hedged global exposure as net income from gains on hedging contracts were distributed.³ While there are many variables impacting distributions, all the MLC Horizon Portfolios increased distributions for the year when compared to FY2010.

MLC Horizon 1 – Bond Portfolio

MLC Horizon 1 – Bond Portfolio delivered a distribution of 4.67 cpu, compared to 3.44 cpu for FY2010. The 2011 distribution largely comprised of interest earned on the Portfolio’s investments in Enhanced Cash and Australian and Global Bonds. There were some offsetting effects within the Portfolio however the main contributor to the distribution this year was the Enhanced Cash allocation:

Helped

- Interest rates in Australia increased by 0.25% over the year leading to a slight increase in income from the Portfolio’s investments in Enhanced Cash (approximately 25% of the Portfolio).

² Gains realised on the sale of units may also contribute to distributions.

³ After off-setting quarantined currency losses from prior years.



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- Yields on bonds have fallen slightly in most major global bonds markets (both investment grade and non-investment grade) when compared to last year. In bond markets, when yields (interest rates) fall, values rise. Higher values result in higher distributions.
- Gains from AUD hedging contracts on global bond exposures were helped by the strengthening in the AUD over the year.

Hurt

- A slight increase in yields in Australia hurt the values of Australian bonds with shorter terms to maturity. This resulted in lower domestic income flowing through to distributions when compared to last year.

MLC Horizon 2 – Income Portfolio

MLC Horizon 2 – Income Portfolio delivered a 2011 distribution of 4.65 cpu, compared to 3.98 cpu for FY2010. The 2011 distribution comprised interest earned on the Portfolio's investments in Enhanced Cash, and Australian and Global Bonds. There were some offsetting effects within the Portfolio however the main contributor to the distribution this year was domestic interest from Enhanced Cash and gains made from AUD hedging:

Helped

- Interest rates in Australia increased by 0.25% over the year leading to a slight increase in income from the Portfolio's investments in Enhanced Cash (approximately 10% of the Portfolio).
- Yields on bonds have fallen slightly in most major global bonds markets (both investment grade and non-investment grade) when compared to last year. In bond markets, when yields (interest rates) fall, values rise. Higher values result in higher distributions.
- Gains from AUD hedging contracts on global bond, shares and property exposures were helped by the strengthening in the AUD over the year.
- A slight increase in dividends from Australian Shares

Hurt

- A slight increase in yields in Australia hurt the values of Australian Bonds with shorter terms to maturity. This resulted in lower domestic income flowing through to distributions when compared to last year.
- Reduced income from Australian Property Securities.

MLC Horizon 3 – Conservative Growth Portfolio

MLC Horizon 3 – Conservative Growth Portfolio delivered a 2011 distribution of 3.98 cpu, compared to 3.93 cpu for FY2010. The 2011 distribution comprised interest earned on the Portfolio's investments in bonds (approximately 50% of the Portfolio) and dividends from shares. There were some offsetting effects within the Portfolio however the main contributor to the distribution this year was increased dividend income received from Australian Shares, followed by interest earned on the Portfolio's investments in Global Bonds:

Helped

- Dividends received from shares, particularly Australian, have increased this year primarily due to generally improving corporate profits and the gradual recovery of company dividend pay-out ratios. For example dividends from the banking sector increased and the Portfolio participated in a BHP share buy back.
- Yields on bonds have fallen slightly in most major global bond markets (both investment grade and non-investment grade) when compared to last year. In bond markets, when yields (interest rates) fall, values rise. Higher values result in higher distributions.
- Gains from AUD hedging contracts on global bonds, shares and property exposures were helped by the strengthening in the AUD over the year.



MLC Investment Management

Hurt

- A slight increase in yields in Australia hurt the values of Australian bonds with shorter terms to maturity. This resulted in lower domestic income flowing through to distributions when compared to last year.
- A strong AUD, while positive for hedged investments, did have a negative impact on dividends from Global Shares (Unhedged) allocations.

MLC Horizon 4 – Balanced Portfolio

MLC Horizon 4 – Balanced Portfolio delivered a 2011 distribution of 5.44 cpu, compared to 4.46 cpu for FY2010. The 2011 distribution comprised interest earned on the Portfolio's investments in bonds (approximately 30% of the Portfolio), dividends from shares (approximately 70% of the Portfolio) and income from hedging overseas assets into the AUD. There were some offsetting effects within the Portfolio however the main difference between this and last year's distribution was increased franked dividend income from Australian Shares. As per last year, gains from AUD hedging contracts were a large contributor to this year's distribution:

Helped

- Dividends received from shares, particularly Australian, have increased this year primarily due to generally improving corporate profits and the gradual recovery of company dividend pay-out ratios. For example dividends from the banking sector increased and the Portfolio participated in a BHP share buy back.
- Yields on bonds have fallen slightly in most major global bond markets (both investment grade and non-investment grade) when compared to last year. In bond markets, when yields (interest rates) fall, values rise. Higher values flow through to higher distributions.
- Gains from AUD hedging contracts on global bond, shares and property exposures were helped by the strengthening in the AUD over the year.

Hurt

- A slight increase in yields in Australia hurt the values of Australian bonds with shorter terms to maturity. This resulted in lower domestic income flowing through to distributions when compared to last year. This was offset to a degree by income generated by falling yields (and rising values) for bonds with longer terms to maturity.
- A strong AUD, while positive for hedged investments, did have a negative impact on dividends from Global Shares (Unhedged) allocations.

MLC Horizon 5 – Growth Portfolio

MLC Horizon 5 – Growth Portfolio delivered a 2011 distribution of 5.06 cpu, compared to 3.08 cpu for FY2010. The 2011 distribution comprised interest earned on the Portfolio's investments in bonds (approximately 15% of the Portfolio) and dividends from shares (approximately 85% of the Portfolio) and income from hedging overseas assets into the AUD. There were some offsetting effects within the Portfolio however the main difference between this and last year's distribution was increased franked dividend income from Australian Shares. As per last year, gains from AUD hedging contracts were a large contributor to this year's distribution:

Helped

- Dividends received from shares, particularly Australian, have increased this year primarily due to generally improving corporate profits and the gradual recovery of company dividend pay-out ratios. For example dividends from the banking sector increased and the Portfolio participated in a BHP share buy back.
- Yields on bonds have fallen slightly in most major global bond markets (both investment grade and non-investment grade) when compared to last year. In bond markets, when yields (interest rates) fall, values rise. Higher values result in higher distributions.



MLC Investment Management

- Gains from AUD hedging contracts on global bonds, shares and property exposures were helped by the strengthening in the AUD over the year.

Hurt

- A slight increase in yields in Australia hurt the values of Australian bonds with shorter terms to maturity. This resulted in lower domestic income flowing through to distributions when compared to last year. This was offset to a degree by income generated by falling yields (and rising values) for bonds with longer terms to maturity.
- A strong AUD, while positive for hedged investments, did have a negative impact on dividends from Global Shares (Unhedged) allocations.

MLC Horizon 6 – Share Portfolio

MLC Horizon 6 – Share Portfolio delivered a 2011 distribution of 4.13 cpu, compared to 3.03 cpu for FY2010 as a result of the Portfolio's exposure to Australian and Global Shares. In particular, dividends received from Australian shares have increased this year primarily due to generally improving corporate profits and the gradual recovery of company dividend pay-out ratios. For example dividends from the banking sector increased and the Portfolio participated in a BHP share buy back. Distributions also continue to be helped by gains from AUD hedging contracts on Global Shares exposures which benefited from the strengthening in the AUD over the year. However, the strong AUD did have a negative impact on dividends from Global Shares (Unhedged) allocations.

MLC Horizon 7 – Accelerated Growth Portfolio

The distribution for MLC Horizon 7 – Accelerated Growth Portfolio delivered a 2011 distribution of 3.77 cpu, compared to 3.76 cpu for FY2010 as a result of the Portfolio's 130% exposure to Australian and global shares. In particular, dividends received from Australian shares have increased this year primarily due to generally improving corporate profits and the gradual recovery of company dividend payout ratios. For example dividends from the banking sector increased and the Portfolio participated in a BHP share buy back. Distributions also continue to be helped from AUD hedging contracts on Global Shares exposures which benefited from the strengthening in the AUD over the year. However, the strong AUD did have a negative impact on dividends from Global Shares (Unhedged) allocations.

Australian Shares

MLC Australian Share Fund

The Fund's FY2011 distribution has increased from last year with the improvement in corporate profits and gradual recovery of company dividend pay-out ratios. However, it still remains low when compared to pre-GFC levels. Positive contributors to the Fund's distribution for this year included participation in the BHP share buy back. The majority of this year's distribution comprised fully franked dividends.

MLC Australian Share Value Style Fund

The Fund's FY2011 distribution has increased from last year with the increase in corporate profits and gradual recovery of company dividend pay-out ratios. However, it still remains low when compared to pre-GFC levels. The conservative approach to dividend payments in response to economic uncertainty is still present however, it has subsided. Positive contributors to the Fund's distribution for this year included dividend increases by the banking sector. The majority of this year's distribution comprised fully franked dividends.



MLC Australian Share Growth Style Fund

The Fund's FY2011 distribution has increased from last year with the increase in corporate profits and gradual recovery of company dividend pay-out ratios. However, it still remains low when compared to pre-GFC levels. The conservative approach to dividend payments in response to economic uncertainty is still present however, it has subsided. Positive contributors to the Fund's distribution for this year included participation in the BHP share buy back. The majority of this year's distribution comprised fully franked dividends.

MLC IncomeBuilder

The Fund provided a total distribution of 7.88 cpu for the financial year, with underlying dividend income representing 7.86 cpu. This is 19% higher than the previous year's underlying income of 6.62 cpu. This is a result of company profits, in general, improving and the further normalisation of dividend pay-out ratios as companies see less need to retain capital. There are still some companies whose dividends remain flat or, in some cases, were lower compared to those of recent years.

The capital gains portion of the annual distribution was again very low at 0.02 cpu and was made up entirely of concessional capital gains. Capital gains realised during the year were a result of normal buying and selling as well as cash components of takeovers of AXA and Crane Group. Capital gains were offset by capital losses during the period. The franking level of the distribution is 121% this year. It's higher than recent years due to the lower level of distributed capital gains.

For further details of the distribution of MLC IncomeBuilder please refer to the MLC IncomeBuilder™ Annual distribution commentary.

MLC-Vanguard Australian Share Index Fund

The Fund saw a slight increase in distributions, rising from 6.46 cpu last year to 6.62 cpu this year due to the pick-up in corporate profits and further normalisation of pay-out ratios. However, distributions still remain low when compared to pre-GFC levels. The conservative approach to dividend payments in response to economic uncertainty is still present however, it has subsided. Positive contributors to the Fund's distribution for this year included the dividend increases by the banking and finance sector. The majority of this year's distribution comprised fully franked dividends.



Global Shares

MLC Global Share Fund

Despite a rise in global company earnings, the rising AUD has resulted in a very small distribution of 0.03 cpu this year. Increases in the AUD lead to a decrease in the value of overseas income when converted back to AUDs.

MLC Global Share Value Style Fund

Despite a rise in global company earnings, the rising AUD has resulted in a very small distribution of 0.05 cpu this year. Increases in the AUD lead to a decrease in the value of overseas income when converted back to AUDs.

MLC Global Share Growth Style Fund

Despite a rise in global company earnings, the rising AUD has resulted in no distribution from the Fund this year, after deducting expenses. Increases in the AUD lead to a decrease in the value of overseas income when converted back to AUDs.

MLC-Platinum Global Fund

The Fund paid no distribution this year. This was due to minimal revenue from currency contracts, and capital losses on shares and share index futures. Aggregating these elements meant there was no income to distribute for the year after deducting expenses. Underlying income from dividends hasn't changed much but last year the majority of income distributed was generated from currency contracts.

This is the first year the fund has not provided a distribution since its inception in 1994. Historical returns (both income and growth) of the Fund, in previous years, have been good.

MLC-Capital International Global Share Fund

Despite a rise in global company earnings, the rising AUD has resulted in no distribution from the Fund this year, after deducting expenses. Increases in the AUD lead to a decrease in the value of overseas income when converted back to AUDs.

Property Securities / Real Estate Investment Trusts (REITs)

MLC Property Securities Fund

The distributions for the year were again lower compared to prior years largely due to:

- the continuing high cost of capital for REITs
- some capital raisings late in 2010 which had a dilutive effect on REIT values
- higher than normal vacancy rates in some sectors, further impacting income.
- The Fund has large holdings in REITs such as Westfield Group, Stockland Trust and Goodman Group which all had dividend reductions of -32%, -18% and -65% respectively when compared to last year.

The majority of the distribution represented tax deferred income and concessional capital gains.



Frequently Asked Questions

Q. What are distributions dependent on?

A. Distributions are made up of income from the underlying investments held by the managed fund and paid to investors once fees are deducted. These investments could be shares, property, bonds and/or cash. As such the distribution could include interest earned, franked and unfranked dividends, tax deferred income, rental income, and any realised capital gains (after offsetting any capital losses) made from selling investments that typically occur in the last quarter of the financial year. Currency movements can also impact income distributions on global investments.

Q. Why do distributions continue to be low for many funds this year?

A. Distributions for many funds dropped significantly during the global financial crisis and continue to be low because tough economic conditions are resulting in:

- o lower company earnings. This means funds invested in shares have received low levels of dividends so there's less to distribute to investors
- o lower rates of interest on cash and bond investments, and
- o a decline in the value of the AUD in 2008. Funds that invest overseas and hedge currency exposure to the AUD suffered large currency losses that year. Recent gains in the AUD have helped to reduce these losses however due to tax rules limiting the amount of losses that can be utilised or offset each year, many funds that hedge currency continue to have significant currency losses which unfortunately will continue to impact distributions for a few more years.

Q. Why are company dividend levels still relatively low?

A. Despite a pick up in corporate profits and further normalisation of pay-out ratios, company dividends still remain relatively low. Lower company dividends could be a result of a number of factors including pressure on profit margins, poor sales and the need for companies to fund their businesses by retaining profits. Companies may choose not to pay dividends as it's cheaper for them to keep and invest any profits back into their business, rather than raise money by borrowing.

Q. What about the recent market recovery?

A. The market has been improving since March 2009 with the AUD strengthening against most major currencies. Because of this, funds with overseas investments that hedge currency exposure, such as hedged global shares, property and bonds, have made recent gains from AUD hedging contracts. A strong AUD also means that income from unhedged overseas investments are worth less when converted back into AUDs.

Overall however, most companies are still suffering from reduced earnings and are wary of the economic outlook. That's why they're continuing to preserve capital and maintain more conservative dividends pay-out ratios.

Q. How does currency hedging provide protection from currency movements?

A. If you invest in funds that invest in overseas such as global shares, property and bonds, you'll be exposed to the impact of currency fluctuations on both your income and capital. This can impact the return you receive, both positively and negatively, depending on your exposure to various currencies and movements in their exchange rates. Funds that have an AUD currency hedging strategy help reduce the impact of currency movements on global exposures and

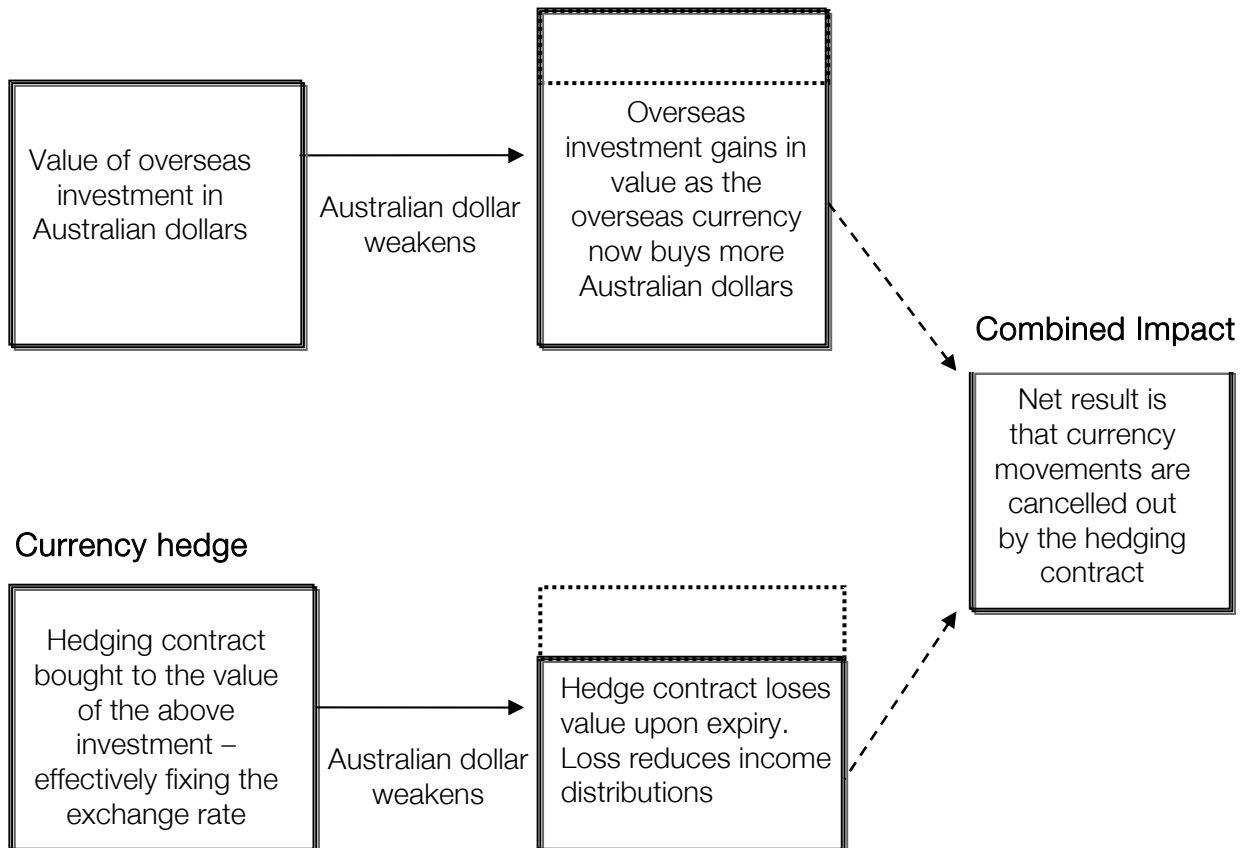


MLC Investment Management

smooth out the overall return on your investment. However the income and growth components of the overall return, particularly for share and property investments, can still be quite volatile.

When MLC hedges exposure to global investments, the intent is to remove the effect of currency losses and gains from your global exposures so overall returns are driven by the performance of the underlying investment. The example below explains how the hedging contract largely removes the impact of currency when the AUD depreciates or weakens in value.⁴

Underlying investment



When the AUD rises, as we've seen recently, the reverse occurs. The value of unhedged global assets held by Australian investors fall, but the value of the hedge contract rises. This increase in the hedge contract value compensates for the fall in value of the unhedged non-Australian assets.

The total return you receive is therefore dependant on the performance of the underlying investments.

Q. How does currency impact income distributions?

A. Currency hedging can help smooth the impact of foreign currency fluctuations on an investor's total return. At MLC, the length of the hedging contract can vary and typically will last for one month. Any hedging gains or losses the fund realises when the hedging contract expires impact the income distributions for investors. Hedging gains are treated as income whilst

⁴ In practice, the value of the hedging contract may differ slightly from the underlying investment value so the investment may not be 100% hedged at all times.



hedging losses are offset against other sources of income such as interest, dividends and hedging gains.

In 2008, we saw the AUD fall quite dramatically through the year relative to major currencies. The AUD fell sharply against the US dollar from highs above 98c to lows around 60c between July and October 2008, representing a decline in value of 40%. When the AUD falls in value, the value of unhedged global assets owned by an Australian investor will increase in value. However, this also results in a loss on the hedge contract. Funds that used hedge contracts to hedge the AUD therefore suffered losses on these contracts during that period.

Q. How will prior losses from hedging contracts impact future distributions?

A. Due to new tax changes in the treatment of foreign income that came into effect in 2009, losses that were obtained from hedging contracts in 2008 were not able to be fully offset by reciprocating hedging contract gains that occurred in ensuing years. Only 20% of foreign revenue losses occurring prior to 1 June 2009 were able to be offset against gains due to the tax rules. The rules stipulate that a maximum of 20% of foreign revenue losses occurring before 1 June 2009 can be offset each year for up to 5 years. Excess gains on hedging contracts over the 20% are therefore distributed. This means that foreign revenue losses incurred before 1 June 2009 will be carried forward and offset against gains over the next few years, adversely impacting distribution from funds that have hedged global exposures.

Fund Performance Commentaries

Further information on the performance of each of the funds is available on the Fund Profile Tool on mlc.com.au.



Important Information:

Past performance is not indicative of future performance. The future value of investments may rise and fall with changes in the market.

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