

MLC Wholesale IncomeBuilder

Annual distribution commentary, 2025 financial year
7 July 2025

Summary

This financial year was a positive year for investors who rely on Australian shares for income. The distributions from dividend income were slightly lower in the 2025 financial year (FY2025). The increases in dividend payments made by Insurance companies, IAG, QBE and Suncorp, were offset by moderately lower dividends from BHP and Woodside Energy.

On Monday, 30 June 2025 the last cash distribution for FY2025 was made to investors in MLC Wholesale IncomeBuilder. Table 1 provides the annual cents per unit (cpu) distribution and its components for this financial year and the previous nine years for comparison.

Table 1: MLC Wholesale IncomeBuilder distributions history

Financial year ending 30 June	2024 /25	2023 /24	2022 /23	2021 /22	2020 /21	2019 /20	2018 /19	2017 /18	2016 /17	2015 /16
Total underlying income distribution* (cpu)	6.27	6.65	7.10	5.98	3.49	6.76	8.05	7.39	7.56	7.87
Capital gains (cpu)**	18.36	8.95	4.53	12.07	2.80	2.13	7.99	2.50	5.87	3.93
Total distributions (cpu)	24.63	15.60	11.63	18.05	6.29	8.89	16.04	9.89	13.43	11.80
Franking level of distributed income (excluding non-assessable capital gains)	36%	53%	77%	48%	70%	79%	62%	82%	75%	86%
Franking level of dividend income	89%	88%	101%	97%	99%	92%	93%	96%	101%	99%

* Underlying distribution consists of dividend and other income and excludes capital gains.

**Part of the capital gains are concessional capital gains which are non-tax assessable for individuals and superannuation investors as follows:

- Individual investors: approximately half of the capital gains are concessional capital gains which are not tax-assessable
- Superannuation fund investors: approximately a third of the capital gains are concessional capital gains which are not tax-assessable.

The above amounts are historical distributions and are not indicative of future distributions.

In summary, for the FY2025, the fund's:

- total distribution is significantly higher than last year mainly due to an increase in capital gains income.
- franked dividends provide investors with a tax-efficient income stream.
- capital gains were higher than the prior year's. Half of the capital gains are concessional capital gains and are therefore not tax-assessable for individuals, and a third are not tax-assessable for superannuation fund investors. The remainder of the distributed capital gains is taxed at the investor's marginal tax rate.

Underlying income distribution

We manage the fund to allow all dividends and any other income generated by the fund's investments to flow through to investors rather than 'engineering' an income stream through more frequent portfolio turnover, hybrid investments or using derivatives. In more normal environments the fund's distributions from dividends tend to be stable over the medium term, reflecting the dividend policies of the companies the fund invests in.

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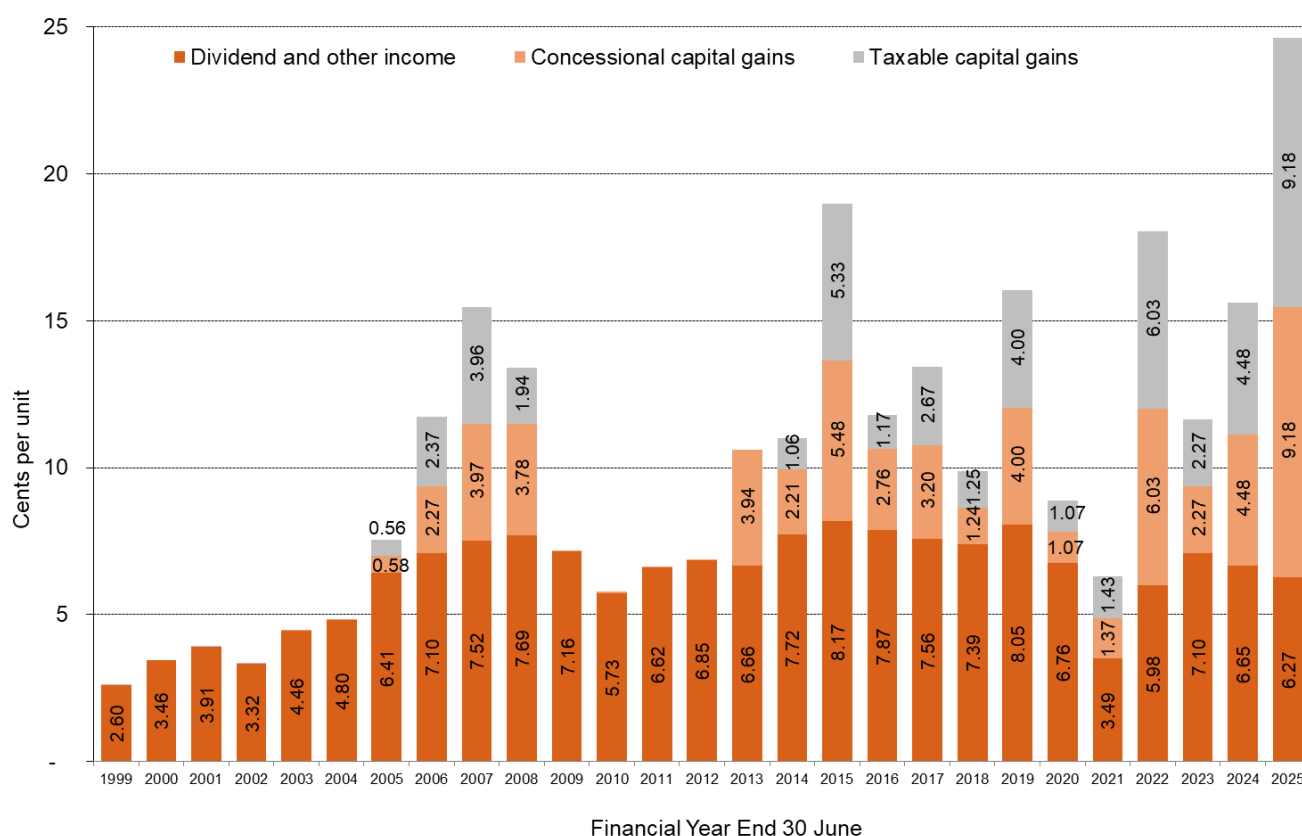
We continue to believe the investment approaches of our investment managers and regular fund distributions provides a more reliable way of delivering sustainable long-term tax efficient income to investors.

However, there have been times when the fund's underlying income growth (shown by the orange bars in Chart 1) slows or reduces as company earnings slow. Due to the nature of the economic shutdown required to contain COVID-19, dividends were significantly impacted in 2021. However as the economy normalised, many companies recommenced paying their regular dividends in 2022, although some companies continued to experience challenges post the COVID-19 period.

In FY2025 the fund's net income was adequate to distribute in each quarter (September, December, March and June).

Chart 1 shows that when you look back over the almost 30 years since the fund's inception, that it has a history of achieving its primary objective of producing a growing, tax-efficient income stream.

Chart 1: MLC Wholesale IncomeBuilder annual distributions



Source: MLC Wholesale IncomeBuilder. Distributions are calculated net of fees. Concessional capital gains are shown for individual investors; superannuation fund investors will have lower concessional capital gains and higher taxable capital gains than shown in the chart. Figures are rounded to two decimal places.

The above amounts are historical distributions and are not indicative of future distributions.

The fund's underlying income excludes capital gains and currently comprises mostly dividend income with a small exposure to distributions of Australian Real Estate Investment Trusts (REITs) and interest income from the immaterial cash exposure. Most of the dividend income is franked, which provides investors with a tax-efficient income stream.

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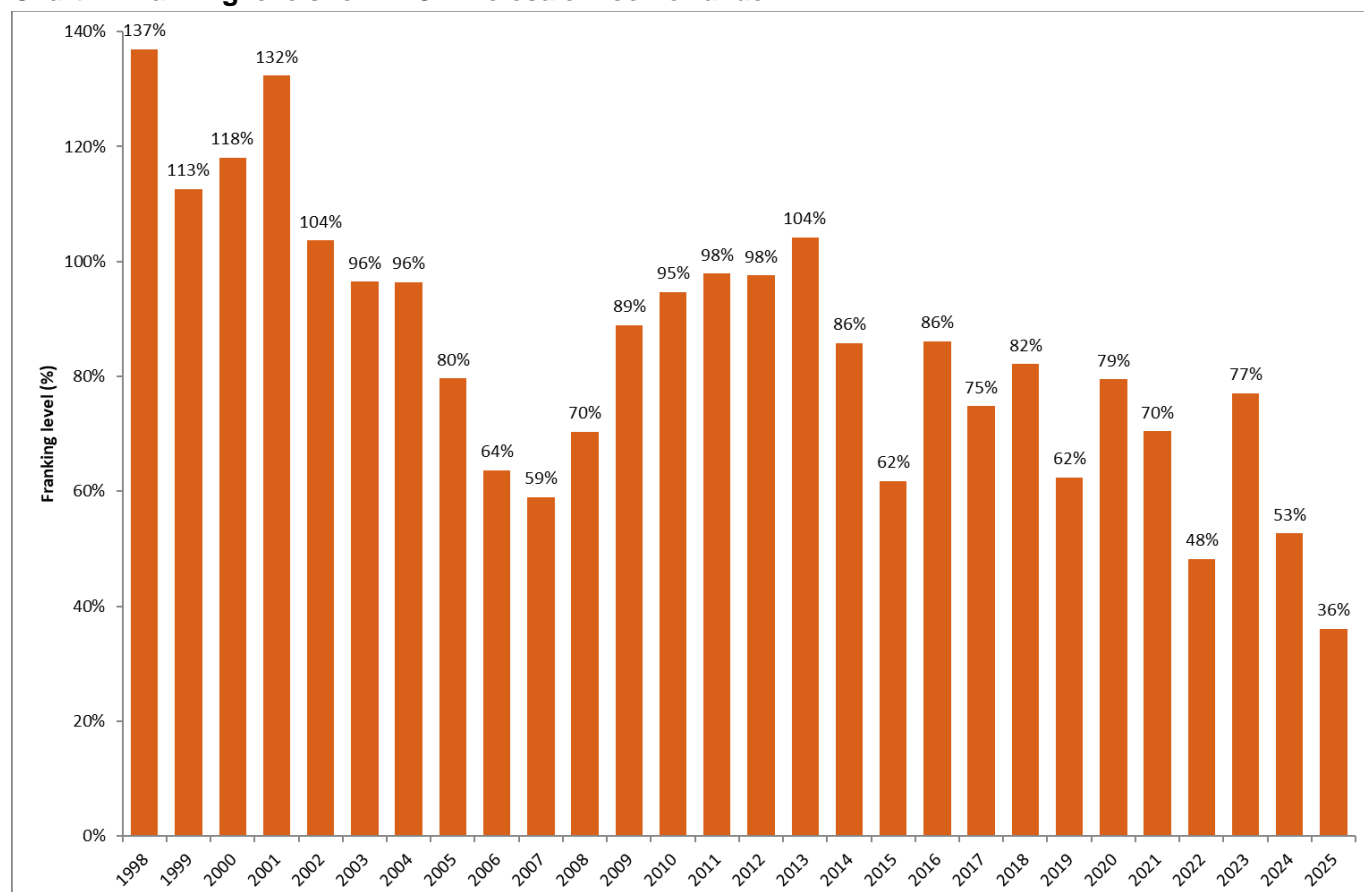
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Franking levels

The franking level of distributed income (excluding non-assessable capital gains) was 36% this year (Chart 2).

Since its inception, the fund has maintained a high franking level by investing in Australian companies that derive most of their earnings from Australian sources, and therefore pay domestic tax on those earnings. The franking level of dividend income was 89% in FY2025.

Chart 2: Franking levels for MLC Wholesale IncomeBuilder



Source: MLC Wholesale IncomeBuilder. Franking levels shown in the graph are calculated net of fees and exclude non-assessable capital gains for individual investors, in accordance with FSC's standard. Superannuation fund investor franking levels would be lower than shown in the graph as their concessional capital gains will be lower, and taxable capital gains higher.

The above amounts are historical franking levels and are not indicative of future franking levels.

The fund's franking level is a measure of the imputation credits attached to its income distribution.

Capital gains

Over the long term the fund has demonstrated the majority of its distributions have been franked dividend income. However, the fund is also required to distribute any realised capital gains at the end of its financial year. Capital gains can arise when the fund sells shares at prices higher than their original purchase price.

When our active investment managers, Antares Equities and Maple-Brown Abbott, believe share values have reached their full potential, we expect the managers to seek better long-term risk and return opportunities. In this way our managers seek to grow and preserve investor's capital over the long term, from which future franked

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dividend income may be generated. However, these portfolio changes can result in the realisation of capital gains.

These gains typically feature in the fund's distribution after periods of very strong market performance and as a result of corporate actions such as takeovers and buybacks.

Our investment managers tend to hold shares for long periods of time and don't generally buy and sell the same company within a year. Therefore the benefit of the capital gain discount is passed onto investors. That's why half of the capital gains distributed this year (shown in Chart 1) were concessional capital gains, which are not tax-assessable for individuals, and a third are not tax-assessable for superannuation fund investors.

Dividends from the fund's investments

Table 2 shows dividends paid by MLC Wholesale IncomeBuilder's larger company holdings in FY2025 and how their dividend has changed compared to the same time last year. More than 70% of the fund is invested in the companies below. While some companies didn't change, or decreased, their dividends compared to this time last year, the majority have increased their dividends this financial year.

Table 2: Dividends paid in FY2025, by MLC Wholesale IncomeBuilder's largest company holdings, ordered from large to small exposures

Company	Dividend (\$ per share)	% change in dividend compared to FY2024
National Australia Bank	\$1.69	1%
ANZ Group Holdings	\$1.66	-5%
Westpac Banking Corporation	\$1.52	-6%
Telstra Group	\$0.19	6%
Commonwealth Bank	\$4.75	4%
Suncorp Group	\$1.07	75%
CSL	\$4.28	12%
BHP Group	\$1.88	-20%
Metcash Limited	\$0.17	-23%
Coles Group	\$0.69	5%
Insurance Australia Group	\$0.29	53%
QBE Insurance Group	\$0.87	40%
Endeavour Group	\$0.20	-8%
Woodside Energy Group	\$1.55	-28%
Dyno Nobel	\$0.11	-74%
Ansell	\$0.67	2%
Amcor Plc	\$0.79	2%
Scentre Group	\$0.17	4%
Nine Entertainment	\$0.08	-11%

Source: ASX, MLC Asset Management Services Limited. Securities mentioned in this commentary may no longer be held in MLC Wholesale IncomeBuilder.



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Outlook

The recent financial reporting period was one of the most volatile in history with some outsized share price movements accompanying many results. This is despite earnings being broadly in line with expectations on average.

There has been some softness in Earnings Per Share (EPS) forecasts over recent quarters and forecast EPS for calendar year 2025 has declined from 8% to 5%, with some further weakness likely. The consensus dividend forecasts have also been weaker with growth of <2% for FY2025. The softness in dividends reflects that capital expenditure spending has become a larger than usual proportion of cash flows.

The active investment style and deep company research practiced by both our managers, Antares Equities and Maple-Brown Abbott, will help position the fund's investments appropriately as the economy continues to face uncertainty regarding the potential impact on company earnings from US tariffs.

These managers' investment approaches when blended, have proven that they can provide a reliable way of delivering sustainable long-term tax efficient income to investors.

Up-to-date commentary on the performance of MLC Wholesale IncomeBuilder, including information on the dividends declared by underlying companies, is available on the Fund Profile Tool at mlcam.com.au

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