



APRA and ASIC host Superannuation CEO Roundtable

20 October 2023

APRA and ASIC held a Superannuation CEO Roundtable on Wednesday, 27 September 2023. There were two focus areas for this discussion: sustainable finance disclosures and the Retirement Income Covenant (**covenant**).

Hosted by Margaret Cole, Deputy Chair, APRA, and Jane Eccleston, Senior Executive Leader, ASIC, the Roundtable was attended by 10 superannuation trustee Chief Executive Officers (**CEOs**) and other executives, representing a broad cross-section of the industry (see [Appendix I](#) for the full list of attendees).

Sustainable Finance Disclosures

Recent [guidance](#) issued by ASIC and subsequent disclosure related enforcement actions have highlighted the need for product issuers, such as superannuation funds, to ensure that their sustainable finance disclosures are true and accurate.

APRA and ASIC emphasised that the introduction of mandatory climate-related financial disclosure requirements in Australia aim to enhance transparency and boost informed decision-making by investors. Both agencies stressed the importance of preparing for this change. This involves implementing systems and processes, establishing governance practices that meet any new climate reporting requirements applying to superannuation funds, and adopting measures to prevent misleading disclosures.

The CEOs agreed that maintaining a static stance regarding disclosure and transparency requirements is no longer viable, particularly as members expect Trustees to stay true to their commitments. Additionally, the CEOs acknowledged that the management of sustainable finance issues has evolved, involving not only the investment team but increasingly also other internal teams like legal, marketing, risk, and compliance. A takeaway was the need to embed engagement with these issues across the fund.

The CEOs outlined steps they have undertaken to improve sustainable finance disclosures. This included working with independent experts, organising internal workshops to promote awareness about greenwashing risks, and using due diligence Board sub-committees to properly scrutinise disclosures made. Common challenges of funds include obtaining the right expertise internally and externally, the lack of standardised taxonomy, ensuring investment screens operate effectively, oversight of third-party providers, and ensuring accurate wording in all marketing materials.

Retirement Income Covenant

With approximately six million Australians at or above the superannuation preservation age and an additional three million becoming eligible to withdraw from their super in the next decade, there is an urgent need to enhance the outcomes for individuals approaching or in retirement.

APRA and ASIC have engaged with the industry on retirement practices in a previous Roundtable and have since released the joint APRA ASIC thematic review [report \(report\)](#) into the implementation of the covenant. In the next few months, APRA will issue a short survey to all Trustees to understand what improvements have been or will soon be undertaken across the key priority areas identified by the report to check Trustees are acting with sufficient urgency in improving retirement outcomes.



During the Roundtable the CEOs discussed their responses to areas of improvement outlined in the report. They shared ideas on achieving quick wins in delivering cost-effective retirement income solutions, such as leveraging external service providers and technology. The CEOs stressed the importance of using data to understand their members' needs and build their confidence in the retirement phase, highlighting the need for adopting strong data security practices if collecting personal data. A positive development noted was an increasing understanding and focus on retirement across funds, rather than retirement being seen as a niche area. Although progress has been made, the CEOs collectively recognised that significant efforts are still required to develop retirement offerings for members that will truly meet their needs.

Appendix I – CEO Roundtable attendees

Superannuation Executives

Andrew Peterson	Chief Executive Officer, Diversa Trustees Limited
Anton Kapel	Chief Executive Officer, Challenger Retirement and Investment Services Limited
Christopher Davies	Chief Executive Officer, Telstra Super Pty Ltd
Dani Murrie	Chief Marketing and Growth Officer, Unisuper Limited
Ningning Lyons	Chief Strategy Officer, Motor Trades Association of Australia Superannuation Fund Pty Limited (Spirit Super)
Katherine Kaspar	Chief Executive Officer, Meat Industry Employees Superannuation Fund Pty Ltd
Lachlan Baird	Chief Executive Officer, Prime Super Pty Ltd
Luke Symons	Chief Executive Officer, Legal Super Pty Ltd
Matthew Rady	Chief Executive Officer, BT Funds Management Limited
Ross Piper	Chief Executive Officer, Australian Ethical Superannuation Pty Ltd

APRA attendees

Margaret Cole	Deputy Chair
Carmen Beverley Smith	Executive Director, Superannuation
Adrian Rees	General Manager, Superannuation
Katrina Ellis	General Manager, Superannuation
Nancy Ma	Senior Manager, Superannuation

ASIC attendees

Jane Eccleston	Senior Executive Leader, Superannuation
Susan Wieckiewicz	Senior Manager, ASIC
Mel Smith	Senior Specialist, ASIC

Signed

Margaret Cole

Deputy Chair

Australian Prudential Regulation
Authority

www.apra.gov.au

Jane Eccleston

Senior Executive Leader

Australian Securities
and Investments Commission

www.asic.gov.au