

ASX RELEASE.

BELL FINANCIAL GROUP

BELL FINANCIAL GROUP FULL-YEAR PROFIT UP 20% TO \$24.7 MILLION

- Net profit after tax \$24.7 million, up 20%
- Revenue \$220 million, up 7%
- Earnings per share 8.5 cents
- Final dividend 4.25 cents per share, fully franked
- Full year dividend 7 cents per share, fully franked

Wednesday, 20 February 2019 – Bell Financial Group Ltd (ASX: BFG) has recorded a full-year net profit after tax of (NPAT) of \$24.7 million, an increase of 20% on the prior corresponding period. Group revenue increased by 7% to \$220 million.

A final dividend of 4.25 cents per share (cps) has been declared, bringing the full-year dividend to 7 cps on the expanded capital base post the entitlement offer (completed July 2018). Based on the closing BFG share price at 31 December 2018 of 85 cents, this represents a grossed up dividend yield of 11.8%.

Managing Director Alastair Provan said: “2018 was another significant year for Bell Financial Group, delivering a strong operating performance, and making significant progress on a number of growth initiatives.

“All businesses within the Group were again profitable, with Bell Potter Securities’ Equity Capital Markets (ECM) division making a particularly strong contribution completing 120 transactions and raising \$1.7 billion in new equity capital.

“The Group increased its ownership of online broking business Third Party Platform Pty Ltd (TPP) from 56.63% to 100%. TPP’s award winning online broking platform is used by retail clients (Bell Direct) and by financial planners and institutions (Desktop Broker). The technology is also white labeled by HSBC, by Macquarie, and by Bell Potter Online.

“We anticipate TPP will be a strong contributor to the Group going forward, and we expect the acquisition to deliver meaningful regulatory capital savings, and ongoing operating synergies as TPP’s platform and technologies are rolled out and integrated across the Group.

“Technology is the key to our future growth. It has applications for marketing, business development, compliance, trade execution, clearing and settlement, customer service, price discovery, adviser efficiency and education, and it delivers efficiencies across all areas of our business. We have a large team (approx. 70 employees) of programmers, developers and IT specialists.

“During the year, we developed and launched a new investment service, the Bell Potter Guided Portfolio Service (GPS). The GPS is an efficient, cost effective way for clients to invest in a number of professionally designed model portfolios while retaining ownership and control of the underlying assets.

“We also opened our New York office in July, having received approval for our broker-dealer license from the SEC. We are confident New York will be a positive addition to the Group and will provide a new dimension to our international institutional capabilities.”

Outlook

“There are presently too many variables in play to make an accurate assessment of likely market outcomes for 2019,” Mr Provan said. “What we do know is our business and business model are both robust which has enabled us to successfully navigate many different economic cycles over the last four decades. Additionally, we have a solid pipeline of work and we remain committed to investing in and growing our business.