

Memorandum of Understanding
between
Australian Securities and Investments Commission
and
ASX Limited ABN 98 008 624 691

PART ONE: BACKGROUND

1. This MOU aims to promote cooperation, sharing of information and mutual assistance between ASIC and ASX to facilitate the efficient discharge of their respective roles and responsibilities under the Corporations Act.
2. ASIC is responsible (among other things) for the administration of the Corporations Act. Under subsection 1(2) of the ASIC Act, in performing its functions or exercising its powers, ASIC must strive (among other things) to:
 - (a) maintain, facilitate and improve the performance of the financial system and the entities within that system in the interests of commercial certainty, reducing business costs and the efficiency and development of the economy;
 - (b) promote the confident and informed participation of investors and consumers in the financial system;
 - (c) administer the laws that confer functions and powers on it effectively and with a minimum of procedural requirements; and
 - (d) take whatever action it can take, and is necessary, in order to enforce and give effect to the laws of the Commonwealth that confer functions and powers on it.
3. Under Part 7.2A of the Corporations Act, ASIC has the function of supervising financial markets the operators of which are licensed under subsection 795B(1) of the Corporations Act.
4. ASIC has a broad range of enforcement powers and may take enforcement action for contraventions of the Corporations Act (including the market integrity rules) and the ASIC Act, including administrative action, civil litigation or referring a matter to the DPP for prosecution. ASIC also has the capacity to take action to enforce the operating rules of licensed markets and licensed CS facilities under paragraphs 793C(1)(a) and 822C(1)(a) of the Corporations Act.
5. ASX is an operator of licensed markets and licensed CS facilities under its Australian market licences and Australian CS facility licenses. ASX provides facilities and services to listed entities, participants, issuers and other organisations, subject to regulatory oversight by ASIC and, in the case of the CS facility licensees, the Reserve Bank of Australia.
6. ASX's operating rules have contractual force and are recognised in the Corporations Act. Among other things, ASX's operating rules (other than the listing rules) are given the force of a contract under seal between the relevant licensee and the listed entities, participants and issuers involved in those markets and facilities by sections 793B and 822B of the Corporations Act.
7. ASX has obligations derived from its licences as set out in the Corporations Act. These obligations include (but are not limited to): to the extent it is reasonably practicable to do so, to do all things necessary to ensure that the ASX's licensed markets are fair, orderly and transparent markets and to ensure that the services of ASX's licensed CS facilities are provided in a fair and effective manner. They also include, in the case of the market licensees, obligations to have adequate arrangements for operating the markets, including arrangements for monitoring and enforcing compliance with the operating rules of the markets, and in the case of the CS facility licensees, to have adequate arrangements for supervising the facilities, including arrangements for enforcing the operating rules of the facilities. ASX has powers derived from the operating rules (and recognised in the Corporations Act) to investigate and take enforcement action in respect of breaches of the operating rules.

8. There is potential for overlap and duplication between ASIC's regulatory functions and powers and ASX's obligations to monitor and enforce compliance with its operating rules.
9. Each ASX Group Licensee has appointed ASX Compliance to perform certain services on its behalf for the purpose of assisting it to satisfy its obligations under paragraphs 792A(c) and 821A(c) of the Corporations Act. The services performed by ASX Compliance on behalf of ASX include some of the matters covered by this MOU.
10. This MOU does not supersede or modify any law in force that applies to ASIC or ASX. This MOU does not create any enforceable rights, any legally binding obligations or agreement but is instead intended to be a statement of guiding principles covering the following aspects of the ASIC-ASX relationship:
 - (a) notification by ASIC and ASX of various matters in accordance with the functions and statutory obligations (respectively) of the parties;
 - (b) the sharing of information between the parties to assist each party to carry out functions (in the case of ASIC) and comply with obligations (in the case of ASX) under the Corporations Act;
 - (c) the co-ordination of compliance and enforcement activities for efficiency and to avoid duplication of effort; and
 - (d) the referral of matters by one party to the other where one party has reason to suspect that a person has committed, is committing or is about to commit a significant contravention of ASX's operating rules or the Corporations Act.
11. ASIC and ASX have agreed to form various joint-forums, including an ASIC-ASX Compliance Liaison Committee in which to exchange information and address at an operational level the arrangements and understandings set out in this MOU. The nature, purpose and frequency of the ASIC-ASX Compliance Liaison Committee and any other joint-forums will be:
 - (a) agreed from time to time by the parties to this MOU; and
 - (b) set out in a side letter, signed by the representatives named in paragraph 47.
12. This MOU supersedes the Memorandum of Understanding between ASIC and ASX Limited dated 30 June 2004 and the Memorandum of Understanding between ASIC and Sydney Futures Exchange Limited dated 1 June 1994.

PART TWO: DEFINITIONS

13. For the purposes of this MOU:

"ASIC" means the Australian Securities and Investments Commission.

"ASIC-ASX Compliance Liaison Committee" means the central coordinating committee referred to in paragraph 11 of this MOU.

"ASIC Act" means the Australian Securities and Investments Commission Act 2001.

"ASX" means any one or more of the ASX Group Licensees, as the case requires.

"ASX 24" means Australian Securities Exchange Limited (formerly known as Sydney Futures Exchange Limited) ABN 83 000 943 377.

"ASX Clear" means ASX Clear Pty Limited (formerly known as Australian Clearing House Pty Limited) ABN 48 001 314 503.

"ASX Clear (Futures)" means ASX Clear (Futures) Pty Limited (formerly known as SFE Clearing Corporation Pty Ltd) ABN 91 050 615 864.

"ASX Compliance" means ASX Compliance Pty Limited (formerly known as ASX Markets Supervision Pty Limited) ABN 26 087 780 489 and includes any independent person or related entity of the ASX Group Licensees or any business unit of the ASX Group that succeeds to the function of having the primary role of ensuring that the ASX Group Licensees have adequate arrangements, in the case of licensed markets, for monitoring and enforcing compliance with their operating rules and, in the case of licensed CS facilities, for enforcing compliance with their operating rules.

"ASX Group" means ASX Limited and its related bodies corporate.

"ASX Group Licensee" means any member of the ASX Group that holds an Australian market licence or CS facility licence from time to time (being, at the date of this MOU, ASX Limited, ASX 24, ASX Clear, ASX Clear (Futures), ASX Settlement and Austraclear).

"ASX Limited" means ASX Limited ABN 98 008 624 691.

"Austraclear" means Austraclear Limited ABN 94 002 060 773

"Corporations Act" means the Corporations Act 2001.

"DPP" means the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions.

"issuer" means an issuer of financial products in respect of which a CS facility licensee provides its services.

"listed entity" means an entity which is admitted to the official list of a financial market operated by an ASX Group Licensee.

"listing applicant" means an entity which is applying to be admitted to the official list of a financial market operated by an ASX Group Licensee.

"MOU" means this Memorandum of Understanding.

"notification" means a written notification given to ASX by ASIC described in paragraph 17 of this MOU.

"party" means a party to this MOU, being either ASIC or an ASX Group Licensee.

"Privacy Act" means the *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth).

"referral" has the meaning given by paragraph 14 of this MOU.

"related body corporate" has the meaning given by section 9 of the Corporations Act.

"report" has the meaning given by paragraph 20 of this MOU.

Each of the following terms has the meaning given by section 761A of the Corporations Act:

"Australian CS facility licence"

"Australian market licence"

"CS facility licensee"

"licensed CS facility"

"licensed market"

"market integrity rules"

"market licensee"

"operating rules"

"participant"

PART THREE: REFERRALS, NOTIFICATIONS AND REPORTS

14. Under paragraphs 792B(2)(c) and 821B(2)(c) of the Corporations Act, ASX is required to give written notice (a "referral") to ASIC as soon as practicable if it has reason to suspect that a person has committed, is committing or is about to commit a significant contravention of:
 - (a) its operating rules; or
 - (b) the Corporations Act (it being acknowledged for these purposes that a contravention of the market integrity rules is also a contravention of section 798H of the Corporations Act).
15. ASIC and ASX may agree guidelines or protocols for inclusion of information in referrals additional to the information ASX is required to give ASIC under paragraph 792B(2)(c) of the Corporations Act. Those guidelines or protocols will seek to ensure the most efficient use of resources by both ASIC and ASX in making or reviewing a referral.
16. ASIC will review all referrals from ASX within a reasonable time and, where appropriate, may do the following:
 - (a) in those cases where ASIC is satisfied that a significant contravention has occurred and where sufficient evidence exists, take enforcement action or administrative action;
 - (b) decide to discuss the matter with the relevant participant, issuer or listed entity in order to encourage compliance but not take any additional action; or
 - (c) decide not to take any specific action (other than to record information relating to the matter in its files or databases for future reference).

In each case, ASIC will provide timely advice to ASX as to whether ASIC proposes to take action of a type referred to in paragraph (a) in relation to the referral and, if not, the reasons for not taking action. ASX acknowledges that the reasons provided to it by ASIC in accordance with this paragraph are confidential information.

17. Where ASIC has reason to suspect that a person has committed, is committing or is about to commit a significant contravention of an ASX Group Licensee's operating rules, ASIC will, subject to the Privacy Act and section 127 of the ASIC Act, as soon as practicable, provide written notification ("notification") of the matter to ASX, together with information and documentation to assist ASX in assessing the matter. Such matters may include:
 - (a) a suspected breach of the continuous disclosure requirements under the listing rules, for review and discussion with the relevant listed entity;
 - (b) a suspected breach of the operating rules of a licensed market or licensed CS facility, which may be more appropriately dealt with under ASX's enforcement powers, with the following information to be included:
 - (i) the name of the participant(s) or issuer(s);
 - (ii) the names of the individual or individuals involved;
 - (iii) the names of clients affected (if any);
 - (iv) the dates that the suspected contravention or contraventions occurred;
 - (v) a meaningful description of the matter;
 - (vi) the ASIC team handling the matter; and

(vii) the name of the ASIC case officer handling the matter.

18. ASX will review notifications from ASIC within a reasonable time and, where appropriate, may do the following:
- (a) in those cases where ASX is satisfied that enforcement action is appropriate and where sufficient evidence exists, take enforcement action;
 - (b) subject to any obligations imposed by section 127 of the ASIC Act in relation to information disclosed to ASX by ASIC, decide to discuss the matter with the relevant participant, issuer or listed entity in order to encourage compliance but not take any additional action; or
 - (c) decide not to take any specific action (other than to record information relating to the matter in its files or databases for future reference).

In each case, ASX will provide timely advice to ASIC as to whether ASX proposes to take enforcement action or other action to encourage compliance in relation to the notification and, if not, the reasons for not taking action. ASIC acknowledges that reasons provided to it by ASX in accordance with this paragraph are confidential information.

19. In the case of referrals and reports by ASX to ASIC and the notification by ASIC to ASX under paragraph 17, the parties agree, subject to the Privacy Act and section 127 of the ASIC Act, to undertake early discussion to:
- (a) assist ASIC or ASX to decide whether to investigate the matter and/or take enforcement action;
 - (b) determine which party should undertake any investigation or enforcement action; and
 - (c) identify any necessary information and assistance (including the provision of evidence, where appropriate) that can be provided by the other party.

Such discussion should take place at the first meeting of the ASIC-ASX Compliance Liaison Committee after the referral or notification is received if it has not taken place earlier.

20. Under subsection 792B(3) of the Corporations Act, ASX is required to give a written report ("report") to ASIC if ASX becomes aware of a matter which ASX considers has adversely affected, is adversely affecting or may adversely affect the ability of a participant in the market, who is a financial services licensee, to meet the participant's obligations as a financial services licensee or a matter, concerning a participant in the market who is a financial services licensee, that is of a kind prescribed by regulations ASX agrees to include the following information in a report:
- (a) the licensee's name;
 - (b) all information relevant to the matter that is known to ASX the time of making the report; and
 - (c) ASX's reasons for making the report.
21. ASIC and ASX may agree further guidelines or protocols for:
- (a) the content of reports and referrals given to ASIC by ASX;
 - (b) the content of notifications given to ASX by ASIC;
 - (c) the content of written notices (however called) required to be given to ASIC by ASX under the market integrity rules; and
 - (d) the data feed ASX must provide to ASIC under the market integrity rules.

PART FOUR: INFORMATION SHARING

22. In addition to referrals, reports and notifications referred to in this MOU, and subject to all applicable laws including but not limited to the Privacy Act and the ASIC Act, ASIC and ASX will, where appropriate, share other information. Sharing of information will usually take place by written or email communication or by communication at an ASIC-ASX Compliance Liaison Committee meeting. It is agreed that information sharing should occur in the following circumstances, subject to all applicable legal considerations and restrictions:
- (a) where ASIC receives a complaint alleging a significant breach by a listed entity, participant or issuer of ASX's operating rules and ASIC reasonably believes that ASX may wish to consider taking further action in relation to the complaint (notwithstanding that ASIC may not otherwise have sufficient information about the subject matter of the complaint to give a notification under paragraph 17 of this MOU);
 - (b) where ASX receives a complaint alleging a significant breach of the Corporations Act or the market integrity rules and ASX reasonably believes that ASIC may wish to consider taking further action in relation to the complaint (notwithstanding that ASX may not otherwise have sufficient information about the subject matter of the complaint to ground a referral);
 - (c) where one party becomes aware of information which is materially relevant to an investigation or enforcement action being conducted by the other party;
 - (d) where, through the conduct of an enforcement action, either party acquires or develops new knowledge of the interpretation or legal consequences of particular market behaviour or other knowledge which may be of assistance to the other party in current or future enforcement actions;
 - (e) where either party has reason to believe that a listed entity may be insolvent;
 - (f) where either party has reason to believe that a participant may be insolvent or may be at risk of defaulting on any of its financial obligations under the Corporations Act or relevant operating rules or to clients generally; and
 - (g) where either party has reason to believe that a CS facility participant may be insolvent or may be at risk of defaulting on any of its financial obligations under the Corporations Act or relevant operating rules or to clients generally.

ASIC and ASX may agree guidelines or protocols detailing the timing, nature and scope of the provision of information relating to the examples set out in this paragraph.

23. ASIC and ASX also agree, subject to all applicable laws including but not limited to the Privacy Act and the ASIC Act, to share information on a real time basis on matters which are likely to assist in their respective market surveillance activities. ASIC and ASX may agree guidelines or protocols detailing the timing, nature and scope for the sharing of this information.
24. The examples set out in this MOU do not limit the parties' intention or ability to share information or to cooperate with respect to other matters, where appropriate and subject to applicable legal constraints.
25. ASX will publish on its website a list of the waivers it has granted to participants from its operating rules. The list will be updated by ASX at least once a month and include:
- (a) the name of the listing applicant, listed entity, participant or issuer receiving the waiver;
 - (b) the date the waiver was granted;
 - (c) the operating rules waived; and
 - (d) a summary of the basis for granting the waiver.

Limitations on information sharing

26. The provision of any information by ASIC or ASX to the other under this MOU is subject to all relevant legal considerations and restrictions including, for example, the restrictions imposed by the Privacy Act and the ASIC Act and considerations relating to legal professional privilege, natural justice, criminal contempt and breach of confidence.
27. Each party acknowledges the confidentiality requirements imposed on ASIC, and on recipients of information from ASIC, under section 127 of the ASIC Act.
28. ASIC acknowledges that ASX may not be in a position to disclose information held by ASX without first receiving a notice from ASIC under the ASIC Act or the Corporations Act to produce the information. Where that is the case, ASX will notify ASIC in a timely manner and the parties will co-operate to ensure that an appropriate notice is issued.
29. ASX acknowledges that in some circumstances, including circumstances in which a person has provided ASIC with information in confidence, ASIC may be required to afford procedural fairness prior to releasing information to ASX. The rules of procedural fairness may require that ASIC advise persons who may be affected and seek submissions concerning ASIC's intention to release the information to ASX as well as any conditions which may be attached to the release, and to take any submissions made into account..
30. Subject to paragraphs 32, 39 and 40 of this MOU, neither ASIC nor ASX will disclose any confidential information obtained under this MOU to a third party:
 - (a) unless it has obtained the prior consent of the other party to disclosing the confidential information; or
 - (b) disclosure is required, authorised or permitted by law; or
 - (c) the information is disclosed in the course of, and for the purposes of, enforcement proceedings or by that party, or administrative action by ASIC.

If paragraph (b) applies, the party seeking to disclose will, wherever practicable, notify the other party in sufficient time ahead of the intended disclosure so as to enable that party to take action to protect the release of the confidential information.

31. ASIC may disclose confidential information obtained under this MOU to the responsible Minister or in response to a request by a House or a Committee of the Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia.

PART FIVE: PUBLICITY

32. The parties acknowledge that disclosure by ASIC of a report or referral given by ASX to ASIC, or disclosure by ASX of a notification given by ASIC to ASX, or disclosure by either party of information obtained by the other party in the course of conducting an investigation or enforcement action, is undesirable and may jeopardise investigations or enforcement actions.
33. The parties also acknowledge that in a limited number of cases, either or both of the parties may have to deal with inquiries from third parties about a matter of high public profile. In such circumstances, where time permits, each party will consult with the other before making public any information in relation to a current investigation or enforcement action or a possible future investigation or enforcement action being conducted by the other. Without limitation, this includes any matter where:
 - (a) a referral has been made by ASX to ASIC and ASIC has not communicated that it does not intend to conduct enforcement action in the matter; and
 - (b) a notification has been given by ASIC to ASX and ASX has not communicated that it does not intend to conduct enforcement action in the matter.

34. Where a party makes a public statement relating to a matter in relation to which the other party has made a referral or notification or given significant assistance, the first party will give public acknowledgment of that fact. When time permits, the wording of the acknowledgment will be settled with the other party before release.
35. Any publicity by ASIC in relation to a current ASIC investigation or enforcement action or a possible future ASIC investigation or enforcement action will be made in accordance with ASIC Regulatory Guide 47.
36. The parties acknowledge that it will sometimes be necessary for ASX to make public information regarding an enforcement activity in order to prevent uninformed trading, or to explain a suspension of trading.
37. ASX may from time to time publish:
 - (a) a summary of the number and type of referrals and reports made to ASIC, provided the summary does not name the persons or entities the subject of the referrals or reports or include other information that might allow the names of the persons or entities involved to be deduced; and
 - (b) after the conclusion of an enforcement action by ASIC initiated following a referral from ASX to ASIC, a statement about that enforcement action and the fact that ASX made that referral.

PART SIX: CO-OPERATING AROUND WHOLE OF MARKET SUPERVISION

38. ASX acknowledges that there may be circumstances where cooperation between it and other market operators, including by sharing information, may be necessary to promote market integrity.
39. Subject to the Privacy Act and section 127 of the ASIC Act, ASIC may request or obtain information from ASX and disclose it to other market operators.
40. Similarly, and subject to the Privacy Act and section 127 of the ASIC Act, ASIC may disclose to ASX confidential information obtained by ASIC from other market operators.
41. ASIC and ASX may agree to establish joint-forums involving other market operators, for example to discuss issues relating to co-ordination and cooperation among ASIC, ASX and other market operators. The purpose and scope of any joint-forum will be set out in a side letter signed by the parties' representatives named in paragraph 47 or by other authorised representatives of each party.
42. The parties may agree to establish a protocol or protocols pursuant to paragraph 46 and with other market operators to set out detailed arrangements for whole of market co-ordination and cooperation.

PART SEVEN: ADMINISTRATION

Implementation

43. This MOU comes into effect on the date it is executed and continues in effect until terminated under paragraph 44 or 45.
44. If an entity in the ASX Group (other than ASX Limited or ASX Compliance) ceases to be a market licensee or a CS facility licensee, this MOU terminates with respect to that entity on and from the date it ceases to be such a licensee. If another entity in the ASX Group becomes a market licensee or a CS facility licensee, ASX Limited will procure that the entity complies with this MOU as if named as a party to it.
45. This MOU may be terminated by written agreement of both parties, or six months after one party gives written notice to the other of an intention to terminate.

Guidelines, protocols and side letters

46. This MOU may be supplemented by guidelines, protocols or side letters specifying agreed operational arrangements to give effect to the arrangements and understandings in this MOU from time to time. These will include the guidelines, protocols and side letters foreshadowed in this MOU.

47. Any such guidelines or protocols and any written notices or side letter required or contemplated under this MOU may be signed by:
- (a) The Senior Executive Leader of Exchange Market Operators or the Senior Executive Leader of Market Participants & Stockbrokers, on behalf of ASIC; and
 - (b) the Group Executive and Chief Compliance Officer or Group General Counsel of ASX on behalf of ASX.
48. ASX Limited enters into this MOU for itself and as agent for and on behalf of each of the existing ASX Group Licensees and ASX Compliance.

SIGNED BY 
For and on behalf of ASIC

Dated this 28TH day of October 2011.

SIGNED BY 
For and on behalf of ASX Limited

Dated this 18TH day of OCTOBER 2011.

AMANDA HARKNESS
GROUP GENERAL COUNSEL
& COMPANY SECRETARY

