

# Media Release

25 March 2026

## Australia poised for record futures month amid heightened market volatility

Australia's listed derivatives market is on track for its largest month of futures trading on record, as global volatility drives heightened demand from investors looking to manage their interest rate and energy price exposure.

Cash equity markets have also experienced heightened activity, where on Friday 20 March 2026, Australia's equity market recorded \$27.10 billion in traded value. This is the second-largest equities trading day ever by value of executed trades, as markets responded to global developments.

With less than a week of trading days remaining in March, futures volumes on ASX 24 have already surpassed 28 million contracts, exceeding the previous monthly record set during the height of the COVID-19 market shock in March 2020.

The strong monthly activity follows a series of historic volume milestones across both futures and cash equities markets.

**ASX General Manager, Market Operations Ben Jackson** said recent activity highlighted how markets were responding to global and domestic risk factors.

"This has been an extraordinary period of activity across our markets. We're seeing global geopolitical risk, energy price volatility and interest rate uncertainty translate directly into higher trading and hedging activity domestically."

On Wednesday 11 March 2026, ASX's futures market recorded its largest trading day ever by volume, with 4.04 million contracts traded, 5.75 per cent higher than the previous historic record set in December 2025. Trading activity was driven by elevated quarterly roll volumes and growing market expectations that interest rates will remain higher for longer.

Momentum has continued through the second half of March 2026, with futures markets recording twelve consecutive days of more than one million contracts traded, the longest such streak on record. Average daily futures volumes for 2026 have also tipped above one million contracts per day for the first time.

Cash equity market activity has also remained elevated, with transaction values rebounding above \$11 billion in recent sessions despite the S&P/ASX 200 index posting its lowest close since November 2025.

The surge in trading activity comes amid escalating geopolitical tensions in the Middle East, renewed oil price volatility and ongoing speculation over the path of domestic interest rates.

Markets are now also pricing in up to three additional interest rate increases in 2026, or around 75 basis points.

With interest rate markets pricing in further tightening and energy prices remaining highly sensitive to geopolitical developments, ASX is set to close March as the most active month for futures trading in Australia's history.

## Further enquiries

### Media

media@asx.com.au