

## **Meat Industry Employees' Superannuation Fund ('MIESF' or 'the Fund')**

### **Minutes of Annual Member Meeting**

**Held online via zoom**

**On 9 March 2023 at 4.00 p.m. (AEDT)**

#### **1. Attendance**

**Directors:** Chris White (Independent Chairperson)  
Paul Conway (Secretary)  
Bruce Ede  
Patricia Fernandez  
Robin Gilmour

**Executives:** Katherine Kaspar – Chief Executive Officer  
Chris Artis - Chief Investment Officer  
Chris Salamousas – Fund Accountant

**External Auditor:** Nicole Osborne – PricewaterhouseCoopers

#### **Various Members**

#### **2. Chairperson's address**

Chris White, the Trustee's Independent Chairperson, opened the meeting at 4.00 pm, welcomed members and gave a brief outline of the agenda.

The Chairperson acknowledged the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which we variously meet around the country today, and paid his respects to their Elders past and present. He extended that respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples participating in the meeting.

Chris White spoke of the important employee benefits provided by MIESF to workers in the meat industry – superannuation benefits, financial assistance at retirement, plus death and disablement insurance cover before retirement age. The Fund is focused on providing good, straightforward benefits with low costs and providing these benefits as efficiently as possible.

Chris advised that the following speakers will outline more about the Fund, and then would answer any questions.

- First is Paul Conway, who has been a director for over 26 years and is secretary of the Trustee. Paul is Victorian Branch Secretary of the Australasian Meat Industry Employees' Union ('AMIEU'), and cares deeply about the Fund and its members. He will give you some of the history of the Fund.

- Next is Katherine Kaspar, the Chief Executive Officer of the Fund, a role she has held since 1 April 2021. Katherine will give a review of the superannuation industry and the Fund in the 2021/22 year.
- MIESF's investment performance over the years of your membership is a critically important factor influencing the size of the benefit you ultimately get. The Fund's Chief Investment Officer, Chris Artis, will discuss the 2021/22 investment performance as well as the longer-term results.

As well as the three speakers, we'll be joined by all of the Fund's other directors plus the Fund's external auditor, Nicole Osborne, from PricewaterhouseCoopers.

And then we'll come to your questions.

Chris then handed over to Paul Conway to outline the Fund's history.

### **3. Trustee Secretary's address**

Paul Conway outlined how the Fund was established over 38 years ago by the Victorian Branch of the AMIEU and how industrial superannuation has developed since those early days.

The AMIEU began research into superannuation schemes and in 1980 the principle of a retirement scheme for meat workers was agreed to by the Industrial Court. During this time the AMIEU pressed the industry employers to set up an industry fund. When this did not happen, the AMIEU set up its own fund.

The principles having been decided, the work of establishing the fund was undertaken. Legal work was completed on the Trust Deed, a company incorporated and office organisation began. The Meat Industry Provident Fund came into existence.

By 1983, 12,500 members had joined the Fund. This meant that if these members left their jobs, they would leave the industry with some money in their pockets.

An Arbitration Commission decision in December 1986 gave Australian workers the right to a superannuation scheme and established 3% occupational superannuation.

In 1987, the Fund changed its name to the Meat Industry Employees' Superannuation Fund (MIESF) and altered its rules and deeds to accommodate the occupational superannuation introduced by the decision of December 1986.

In 1992 the Federal Labor Government resolved that all workers would be entitled to the benefits of superannuation under the superannuation guarantee charge and by August 1993 all employers would have contributed to that scheme.

The turning of a dream into a reality was the result of unionists' preparedness to support the leadership given by the Federal Executive, Branch Committee of Management and Executive, particularly the Victorian Branch that invested the first \$50,000 to make the Fund a reality. This is a fact that is often forgotten, the dream would not have become the reality that it is today.

**4. Chief Executive Officer's address**

Katherine Kaspar made the attached presentation to the meeting.

**5. Chief Investment Officer's address**

Chris Artis discussed the Fund's outstanding 2021/22 investment performance as well as the longer-term results. The presentation is attached.

**6. Member questions**

The meeting was opened for questions about the Fund.

All questions received and responses to those questions are in Appendix A.

**7. Meeting close**

Chris White thanked members for attending and informed them that the minutes (including answers to questions) of the proceedings would be made available to view on the MIESF website. The meeting was closed at 4.40 p.m.

Signed by the Chairperson as a true record.

.....

Chairperson

## Appendix A

### **Q1: *How is MIESF performing better than some of the larger superannuation funds like AustralianSuper?***

Chris Artis answered:

MIESF's investment operations tends to run quite lean due our no-frills offering. As a result, we have a very small investment team and we do a lot of the investment work in-house. This keeps costs down and keeping costs down is an important factor in maximising net investment returns.

In addition, our investment strategy is conservative, more defensive, because our members have relatively low retirement balances. This means that we tend to hold more real assets like property and infrastructure in our portfolio compared to other funds. For the year 2021/22 MIESF's real assets outperformed their respective benchmarks and added value.

In addition, MIESF's exposure to Fixed interest added significant value because it did not have any significant duration exposure. This produced positive returns whilst the fixed interest benchmark produced negative double digit returns, its worst return in decades.

Some of the larger funds also invest in Private Equity. PE values often lag (around 6 months) other asset classes. This can result in skewed returns and, in this financial year, many funds booked reduced valuations.

### **Q2: *Are more members attending AMMs this year?***

Nicole Osborne replied:

It's been a mixed bag. Some of the larger funds have held in-person AMMs and had reasonable numbers of attendees. For example, Australian Retirement Trust had over 600 members attend their in-person AMM. Other funds, who have held virtual AMMs, have mostly had lower numbers of attendees.

To encourage more members to attend MIESF's AMM next year the Board will consider hosting a hybrid meeting.