



6 November 2020

Manager
Market Conduct Division
The Treasury
Langton Crescent
Parkes ACT 260

By email: businesscomms@treasury.gov.au

Dear Sir/Madam

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute to Treasury's review of virtual annual meetings and electronic documents.

In addition to verbal representations already made to Treasury with AIRA on 27 October 2020, AMP would like to make a short submission.

1. VIRTUAL MEETINGS

AMP are strongly supportive of the proposal to make permanent the ability of a company to have a virtual members' meeting. We believe it is important that the virtual AGM option be incorporated in the Corporations Act to provide organisations with a clear choice of conducting an AGM in the future.

The format for members' meetings should not be prescribed and it should be up to the company to determine the most appropriate format based on the composition of its register of members/shareholders.

AMP's conducted a virtual AGM on 8 May 2020. For the last 10 years, we have offered shareholders the option to view and ask questions at the AGM through our webcast. The 2020 meeting saw one of our highest participation rates with more than 850 viewing the webcast, and 35 questions asked prior to and during the meeting. Shareholders in New Zealand and across Australia participated. We on average have around 400 shareholders attend physical meetings.

We have seen some commentary which raises concerns that questions can be vetted at virtual meetings. From our experience, shareholders who normally would not participate in an AGM (stand-up at a microphone) feel comfortable lodging their questions online. We had very positive feedback from our shareholders to the online meeting.

The AGM process is more than the actual meeting. It involves the ability for all shareholders to vote on items of business, prior to or at the meeting. Shareholders also have the opportunity to ask a question of a company at any time, not just at the AGM. AMP offers shareholders this option by letter, phone and email.

It is also evident by the outcome of AGM voting that virtual meetings have not impacted the shareholder voice, with AMP and others receiving a strike on their remuneration report in 2020.

2. ELECTRONIC NOTICES OF MEETING

AMP is strongly in favour of the proposed amendment to the Corporations Act, to allow for the Notice of Meeting to be issued electronically. The format of the electronic notice should not be prescribed but should be a matter for industry best practice guidelines. While email is currently the most common form of electronic communication, the law should ensure that other electronic channels such as text messaging should be allowed into the future. For companies like AMP with large share registers, the cost saving in printing and postage is around \$400,000 a year. This is shareholder money. The environmental benefits speak for themselves.

IMPACT OF CHANGE

It should be noted that in 2005, when changes were made to allow shareholders to opt in to receiving a company full annual report, many believed this would impact shareholder engagement. What has resulted is a refresh of company reporting which is targeted to retail shareholders. This has seen an increase in online reports, plain english printed summaries and the use of video. For AMP, only 4,300 of our 715,000 shareholders request the full report (0.6%). We think the opportunity to refresh the AGM process will also see improved benefits for retail shareholders by giving the majority greater access to company meetings.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback.

Yours sincerely



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