

# Merlon Australian Share Income Fund

Monthly Fact Sheet – February 2020

For queries, please call Investor Services on 13 51 53



Performance <sup>i</sup> (%)	Month	Quarter	FYTD	Year	3 Years (p.a.)	5 Years (p.a.)	7 Years (p.a.)	10 Years (p.a.)
Fund Total Return (net of fees)	-6.9	-7.5	-1.8	1.8	4.3	5.4	6.8	7.4
70% ASX200/30% Bank Bills	-5.3	-3.4	0.9	7.5	7.6	6.1	7.4	7.6
ASX200	-7.5	-5.0	0.8	10.0	10.1	7.7	9.5	9.5
Average Daily Exposure	67%	68%	67%	68%	68%	69%	70%	70%
Gross Distribution Yield	0.7	1.5	4.4	7.1	7.2	7.4	7.6	8.9

\* Past performance is not a reliable indicator of future performance. All returns above are grossed up for franking credits. Portfolio inception date is 30/09/2005. The source of fund returns and benchmark returns is Fidante Partners Limited, 29 February 2020.

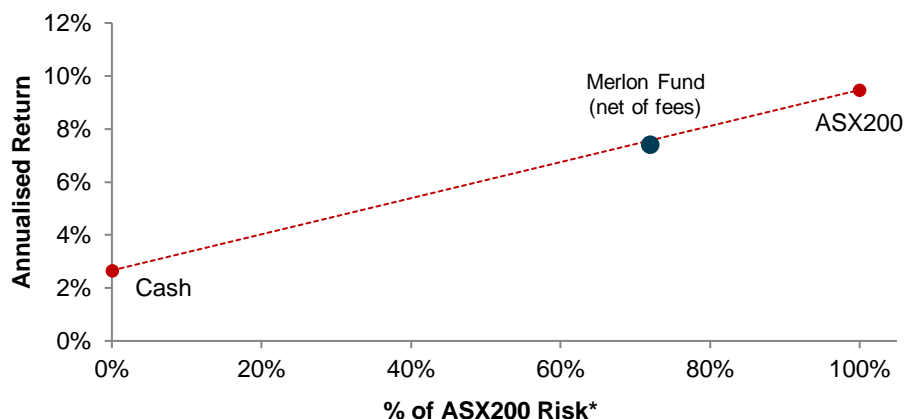
## Monthly Performance Commentary

After reaching all-time highs in February the ASX200 fell sharply in the final week of the month, to close down 7.5%, erasing 2020 gains. The spread of COVID-19 outside of China was the catalyst for the sharp reversal, with uncertainty on the timing of a vaccine and the short term impacts to global growth leading to the sharp falls.

The Fund returned -6.9% (net of fees) during the month. As designed the hedge overlay contributed positively, insulating the Fund from some of the falls in the underlying share portfolio. The best performing stocks in a relative sense were QBE Insurance, Viva Energy and Caltex.

The Fund's non-benchmark construction approach was a headwind with the largest companies outperforming during the period. Positions in Southern Cross Media, IOOF, Woodside and Origin Energy detracted the most.

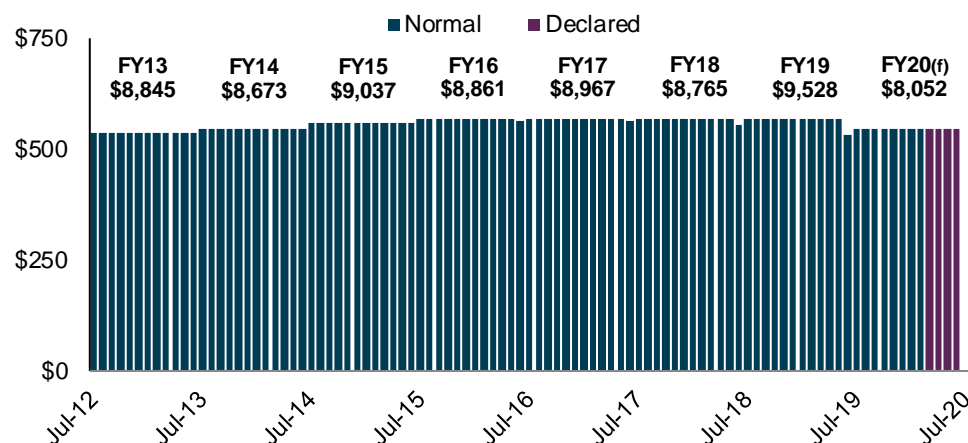
## Rolling Ten Year Performance History <sup>ii</sup>



## Top Ten Holdings (%)

QBE Insurance	5.5
Caltex	5.2
Coles Group	5.1
AMP	5.1
Westpac	5.1
Origin Energy	5.0
Woodside	4.6
News Corp	4.6
Boral	3.8
Woolworths	3.2

## Monthly Income from \$100,000 invested in July 2012 <sup>iii</sup>



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Fund Details <sup>^</sup>		Portfolio Analytics <sup>iv</sup>		
Fund size	\$ 528m		<b>Fund</b>	<b>ASX200</b>
Firm-wide FUM	\$ 998m	Number of Equity Positions	35	200
APIR Code	HBC0011AU	Active Share	76%	0%
ASX Code	MLO02	Net Equity Exposure	66%	100%
Inception Date	30 September 2005	Beta	0.7	1.0
Distribution Frequency	Monthly	EV / EBITDA	8.5x	13.7x
Minimum Investment	\$ 10,000	Price / Earnings Ratio	15.7x	19.2x
Buy / Sell Spread	+/- 0.20%	Trailing Free Cash Flow Yield	4.9%	4.4%

<sup>^</sup> Source: Fidante Partners Limited, 29 February 2020.

## About Merlon

Merlon Capital Partners is an Australian based fund manager established in May 2010. The business is majority owned by its five principals, with strategic partner Fidante Partners Limited providing business and operational support.

Merlon's **investment philosophy** is based on:

**Value:** We believe that stocks trading below fair value will outperform through time. We measure value by sustainable free cash flow yield. We view franking credits similarly to cash and take a medium to long term view.

**Markets are mostly efficient:** We focus on understanding why cheap stocks are cheap, to be a good investment market concerns need to be priced in or invalid. We incorporate these aspects with a "conviction score"

## About the Fund

The Merlon Australian Share Income Fund's investment approach is to construct a portfolio of undervalued companies, based on sustainable free cash flow, whilst using options to overlay downside protection on holdings with poor short-term momentum characteristics. An outcome of the investment style is a higher level of tax-effective income than the broader market, paid monthly, along with the potential for capital growth over the medium-term.

## Differentiating Features of the Fund

**Deep fundamental research** with a track record of outperformance. This is where we spend the vast majority of our time and ultimately how we expect to deliver superior risk-adjusted returns for investors.

**Portfolio diversification** with no reference to index weights. The benchmark unaware approach to portfolio construction is a key structural feature, especially given the concentrated nature of the ASX200 index.

**Downside protection** through fundamental research and the hedge overlay. In addition to placing a heavy emphasis on capital preservation through our fundamental research, we use derivatives to reduce the Fund's market exposure and risk by 30% whilst still retaining all of the dividends and franking credits from the portfolio.

**Sustainable income**, paid monthly and majority franked. As the Fund's name suggests, sustainable above-market income is an outcome of our investment approach and a key objective of the Fund.

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## Footnotes

### <sup>i</sup> Performance (%)

*Average Daily Market Exposure* is calculated as the daily net market exposure divided by the average net asset value of the Fund.

*Fund franking<sup>^</sup>*: Month 0.2%, Qtr 0.2%, FYTD 0.9%, Year 1.8%, 3 Years 1.7% p.a., 5 Years 1.8% p.a., 7 Years 1.8% p.a., 10 Years 2.1% p.a.

*ASX200 franking<sup>^</sup>*: Month 0.2%, Qtr 0.2%, FYTD 0.9%, Year 1.4%, 3 Years 1.5% p.a., 5 Years 1.5% p.a., 7 Years 1.5% p.a., 10 Years 1.5% p.a.

Composite benchmark is calculated as 70% S&P/ASX200 Accumulation Index and 30% Bloomberg AusBond Bank Bills Index. The Fund reduces exposure to share market volatility to a typical range of 60-80% through the use of derivatives with the remaining 20-40% option protection seeking to deliver a cash-like risk/return profile.

<sup>^</sup> Source: Fidante Partners Limited, 31 January 2020.

### <sup>ii</sup> Rolling Five Year Performance History

Past performance is not a reliable indicator of future performance. Returns for the Fund and ASX200 grossed up for accrued franking credits and the Fund return is stated after fees as at the date of this report. Merlon Australian Share Income Fund franking 2.0% p.a., ASX200 franking 1.5% p.a. % of ASX200 Risk represents the Fund's statistical beta relative to the ASX200

### <sup>iii</sup> Monthly Income from \$100,000 invested in July 2012

Past performance is not a reliable indicator of future performance. Income returns exclude 'bonus income' from above-normal hedging gains of \$849 in FY13 and assume no bonus income in FY17 estimate. Income includes franking credits of: \$2,420 (FY13), \$2,120 (FY14), \$2,356 (FY15), \$2,057 (FY16), \$2,159 (FY17), \$1,981 (FY18), \$2,752 (FY19) and \$1,499 (FY20 estimate).

### <sup>iv</sup> Portfolio Analytics

Source: Merlon, Active share is the sum of the absolute value of the differences of the weight of each holding in the portfolio versus the benchmark, and dividing by two. It is essentially stating how different the portfolio is from the benchmark. Net equity exposure represents the Fund's net equity exposure after cash holding's and hedging. Beta measures the volatility of the fund compared with the market as a whole. EV / EBITDA equals a company's enterprise value (value of both equity and debt) divided by earnings before interest, tax, depreciation, and amortization, a commonly used valuation ratio that allows for comparisons without the effects of debt and taxation.

## Disclaimer

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