

Date: 06 November 2020  
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Dear Sir/Madam,

**Re: Consultation regarding Corporations Amendment (Virtual Meetings and Electronic Communications) Bill 2020 – ‘Making permanent reforms in respect of virtual meetings and electronic document execution’**

We welcome the opportunity to be able to respond to the above-mentioned consultation. Legal & General Investment Management ("LGIM") is a large and constructive investor in Australian equities and is one of the largest international investors with assets under management of USD 1.37 trillion (as at 30 June 2020). We manage assets for a wide range of global clients, including pension schemes, sovereign wealth funds, fund distributors and retail investors. As a significant investor, we share a responsibility to ensure that global markets operate efficiently and uphold the highest level of corporate governance and sustainability standards to protect the integrity of the market over the long term.

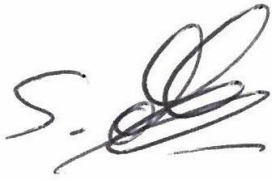
We welcome the positive reaction and steps that the Australian Government has taken to respond to the coronavirus pandemic. Specifically, in this case, through providing temporary flexibility to allow corporates to conduct their Annual General Meetings through a virtual format, only. The proposal to make these temporary changes permanent through amending the *Corporations Act 2001* would, however, seriously risk weakening shareholder rights.

The Annual General Meeting is fundamental in maintaining transparency and accountability between the corporate and its shareholders. It is the only event at which all shareholders (Institutional and Retail) have an equal opportunity to pose questions to the entire board, to hold them accountable and an audience to share their concern about the way the company is managed/operates. This is particularly important to retail investors who do not have the same access to corporates that Institutional investors have. Moving to virtual meetings only would undermine the quality of engagement.

As a pragmatic solution, we would suggest that the Treasury allow ‘hybrid’ meetings as a minimum standard. We would also recommend that the Treasury also consider extending the consultation period to allow stakeholders sufficient time to respond. We are not alone in our concerns and support the various comments made by the Australian Council of Superannuation Investors (ASCI) in their submission to your team on 30<sup>th</sup> October 2020.

If you would like to discuss any of our responses further, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Sadan', with a stylized flourish at the end.

**Sacha Sadan**  
Director of Investment Stewardship  
Legal & General Investment Management

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Burr', with a simple, clean style.

**Alexander Burr**  
ESG Policy Lead  
Investment Stewardship  
Legal & General Investment Management

