Company: **Australian Ethical Investment Limited**

Date: **10 November 2025**

Time: **19:00pm AEDT**

[START OF TRANSCRIPT]

[Video playing]

Steve Gibbs: Good evening and welcome. My name is Steve Gibbs. I would like to open our meeting by first acknowledging the Traditional Custodians of the country on which we meet. Here in Sydney, it's the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation. I would also like to acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of all of the lands wherever you are today. I'd like to recognise and celebrate their continuing connection to land, waters and culture and I pay my respects to their Elders past and present.

Welcome to our members. We're delighted to have the opportunity to update you on the progress and achievements of Australian Ethical Super over the past year. It's a privilege for us to be connected with our community of like-minded investors who share our commitment to making a positive impact through ethical investing. This meeting is an important occasion for us to reflect on our collective journey, discuss key initiatives and share how we're continuing to deliver on our purpose to invest for a better world. So, thank you for joining us and for your ongoing support and engagement with our fund.

Financial year '25 was a year of change as we moved one tranche of members from Mercer to GROW for administration services, successfully navigated market volatility and productively advocated for change with some of Australia's largest organisations.

It also marked a change of leadership of our fund. You may already be aware that I've handed over the Chair of Australian Ethical Trustee Board to Fiona Reynolds, one of the industry's most respected, ethical and responsible investment professionals. Fiona joined the Australian Ethical Trustee Board in July 2024 and has already made an enormous contribution over the past year. She joined us after returning to Australia from the United Kingdom, where she served as Chief Executive Officer of the United Nations' Principles of Responsible Investment, a global initiative supporting responsible and sustainable investment practices.

I'm also pleased to introduce Maria Loyez, who took on the role of Group Executive Super from 1 July. Maria is responsible for leading the strategic direction of the Superannuation Division, ensuring that the fund delivers exceptional outcomes and maintains a competitive, innovative and member-centric superannuation offering. Maria has been in a leadership position within Australian Ethical for the past five years and is a seasoned financial services professional with nearly 30 years of commercial experience.

Karen Hughes has taken on the role of the Head of the Office of Super Trustee, providing strategic and operational support to the Trustee Board and its committees, and has been with Australian Ethical for over eight years, previously leading our risk function.

Fiona will be leading the proceedings today, while I will remain present to answer any questions given when all of these changes took place. Thank you, Fiona.

Fiona Reynolds: Well, thanks, Steve. I'm honoured to take on this role and to be able to be with you today.

Before I kick off the rest of the proceedings, I'd really like to thank Steve for his leadership and commitment to our members over the last 12 years. Steve, you leave the role of Chair having made an enormous difference for our community, and I'm excited to build on the work as the fund's new Chair.

So, my career has been shaped by a deep commitment to ethical leadership, transparency and accountability, and I bring the same commitment to this role. So, I'm proud to lead the Trustee Board for the fund that is so committed to investing for a better future for people, planet and animals while also working to deliver positive retirement outcomes for our members.

I was delighted to see such strong 12-month investment performance at the end of the financial year, with double-digit performance across our balanced growth, high growth Australian shares and international investment options. Australian Ethical Superannuation has always stood for strong governance and putting members first.

In recent years, the Board has embraced a philosophy of continuous improvement, actively strengthening oversight arrangements through regular renewal of Board composition, enhancement of conflict management protocols and independent validation of key frameworks. So, my appointment as Chair is part of this ongoing renewal and I'm committed not only to maintaining our ethical investment approach, but also to leading the way in governance standards across the industry. We strive to set benchmarks for best practice, ensuring our members benefit from long-term value, while we support a thriving future for people, planet and animals.

So, to kick off proceedings, let me first introduce our team. So, we have Michael Anderson, who's a Non-Executive Director of the Australian Ethical Superannuation Board, who's joining us online. From the executive team, in addition to Maria Loyez, who's the Group Executive of Super and Karen Hughes, who's the Head of the Office of Superannuation Trustees, we're also joined by John Woods, who's our Deputy CIO and Head of Multi-Assets, and Alison George, who's our Chief Impact & Ethics Officer.

I can also confirm that our auditor, who is Andrew Reeves, a partner of KPMG, is attending this meeting.

Please note that we're recording this evening's meeting and the video will be available on our website within the next month, along with the minutes of the meeting.

So, in terms of our agenda, the order of business will be as follows. Maria's going to start with an update on what's been happening with the fund over the past year and the milestones we've achieved. Then John's going to provide you with insights of the performance of the fund's investment options for the year. We'll have a presentation from Alison who'll update you on the impact and advocacy work of the ethics team over the year.

We've received plenty of questions prior to the meeting and following the presentations, Karen will ensure that as many of your questions are answered as possible, bearing in mind that some of them will probably be covered in our presentations.

You can also ask a question during the meeting, and we'll answer as many as we can get through during the proceedings once we've responded to the ones that you've already sent us. If we receive a question and don't have time to get to it, we'll answer your question and post the meeting page on our website shortly. If you'd like to ask a question, please click on the Ask a Question button.

One thing to note is that we can't answer any questions tonight that you ask us where you're giving us personal information. We will have to do that separately.

So, now it's time to get underway and handing over to you, Maria.

Maria Loyez: Thank you, Fiona. Good evening, everyone. It's a privilege to join you today for our Annual Members' Meeting. My name's Maria Loyez, and I'm honoured to step into the role of Group Executive Super at Australian Ethical. I want to begin by thanking you for your continued trust and commitment to investing with purpose.

Tonight, I'd like to share some highlights from the past year and talk about where we'll be focusing our efforts in the coming months. Australian Ethical has experienced a lot of important changes lately, but before we dive into those, I'd like to take a moment to reflect on the core values that drive us.

Our purpose is clear. We invest for a better world, and while many super funds have a responsible investment or sustainable investment option, we go further. Investing ethically is the only way our Super Fund invests, and for nearly 40 years, we've been entirely committed to allocating capital, advocating for systemic change and growing our influence in line with the 23 principles of our Ethical Charter.

Our approach to investing is as important now as it ever has been, possibly more important. The 2025 Planetary Health Check revealed that seven of the nine planetary boundaries have been breached, with greenhouse gas concentrations rising, overuse of nutrients, deforestation, ocean acidity and biodiversity all reaching levels that are unsustainable and that will challenge our way of life.

In Australia, we've seen firsthand the economic and personal cost of the climate crisis, with more frequent extreme weather events, bushfires, coral bleaching and more recently, the significant algal bloom in South Australia. Australia's first National Climate Risk Assessment published last month was sobering reading, flagging the future risks and costs that the country may bear. It's clear that to protect our future, we must protect our planet.

To do that, the world needs to continue to reduce its reliance on emissions-intensive energy to slow warming in line with science-based targets. This message is getting through. For the first time this year, global renewable energy generation surpassed coal, with solar expansion and steady wind growth driving the world's shift away from fossil fuels.

Because we focus on sectors that are shaping a better tomorrow like renewable energy, but also healthcare, technology and more, we're investing in future-forward industries, growing your retirement savings while also ensuring our investments don't harm the world we share. We're focused on delivering strong, long-term returns and actively influencing progress towards a future that's more sustainable, equitable and hopeful for all.

This commitment to ethical investing isn't just something we aspire to. It's something we deliver. And the results speak for themselves. The FY25 financial year was anything but dull. Investors faced a whirlwind of global events from trade tensions in the US to conflicts in the Middle East, all of which stirred sharp market selloffs, followed by swift recoveries.

Yet, despite these ups and downs, our ethical approach proved resilient. As Fiona's mentioned, we're proud that our team achieved double-digit growth in our balanced growth and high-growth options, ranking us among the top 20 super funds in Australia for the year. And over the past decade, with one exception, every multi-asset investment option has met or exceeded performance expectations. Our Retail Australian Shares Fund celebrated its 30-year anniversary during the year and has delivered an amazing 9.7% per annum investment return net of fees over that 30 years, which is around 2% per annum compound above the ASX 300. This is strong evidence of our successful long-term investment capability delivering strong outcomes for you, our members. We look forward to hearing more on this from John Woods, our Deputy CIO and Head of Multi-Asset Investments.

Of course, these outcomes send a powerful message. Ethical investing isn't just about doing the right thing; it's about achieving robust financial returns too. Australian Ethical is a great example that you don't have to choose between investing with heart and achieving strong results. Our ethical approach is proof that purpose and performance can go hand in hand and that aligning your investment with your values is not only possible but profitable for investors.

Let's also remember that superannuation is far more than just a vehicle for retirement savings. It's a powerful lever for change, a way for each of us to shape the world we want to live in. Over the past 12 months, our fund has grown strongly with funds under management rising from $8.25 billion to $9.52 billion as at 30 June 2025. This impressive growth is a reflection not just of solid performance but of a thriving community of like-minded Australians who believe in the power of ethical investing.

As we continue to grow it's inspiring to witness the extraordinary power of collective action. Individually, we each have the ability to make a difference but together, our voices and our investments carry even greater weight. Together, we're able to shape industries, influence corporate behaviour and accelerate the transition to a more ethical and sustainable economy.

Our ethics research team works hard to assess positive impacts in a world that's often complex and nuanced, and while things are rarely black or white, our approach remains steadfast and uncompromising. This year our stewardship initiatives led to significant wins, and I'm excited for Alison George, our Chief Impact & Ethics Officer, to share more about these successes with you later tonight.

We're always striving to deliver better experiences, and we're proud to rank third in the superannuation industry for customer advocacy, thanks to your engagement and feedback. But let me be clear, we don't take this advocacy and loyalty for granted. We continue to listen to your feedback and enhance our offering.

This year has been one of momentum and transformation. We've made significant strides in our administration transition, with the majority of members now using our new administration platform, GROW. The remaining members are set to transition next month.

This isn't just a change in technology; it's a step towards giving you more control over your super, improving digital touchpoints and enabling straight-through processing for faster, more accurate service. It also brings economies of scale, which will help us to reduce fees and costs over time, which is a win for everyone.

We've also upgraded our insurance offering. Following a competitive process, we selected MetLife as our insurer and negotiated a new policy with standard default cover, representing better value for most members.

The rollout of our new insurance policy began a few months ago and once the final administration transition is complete next month, we'll offer a unified insurance experience. This includes a dedicated online insurance portal, giving you greater control and transparency over your cover. The new technology stack will uplift the digital experience for members, making it easier to manage your insurance and super all in one place.

We'll also be upgrading our login procedures to make it easier for members, especially those overseas, to access their accounts securely and conveniently. We understand that these transitions can be disruptive and we appreciate your patience and support throughout this process. Rest assured; we're working diligently to ensure that these changes are delivered smoothly with minimal disruption to you.

Another important upgrade this year has been the insourcing of claims and complaints handling. By bringing these critical interactions in-house, we're able to provide a higher touch, more empathetic service. This shift has led to a dramatic improvement in outcomes, with the percentage of claims resolved within 90 days tripling compared to our previous outsourced model.

We recognise that submitting claims or complaints can be stressful and we're committed to supporting you with care and understanding every step of the way. Our efforts and dedication have not gone unnoticed. In the past year, we were named Sustainable Fund of the Year 2025 by both SuperRatings and Super Review, and our pension product was rated Best ESG Pension Product by *Money* magazine. And most recently, we received Finder's People's Choice for Green Innovation.

These accolades reflect our commitment to ethical investing, innovation and member-first service. We're proud to be a super fund that doesn't just talk the talk but truly walks the walk, and looking ahead, we're excited to continue building a super fund that's fit for the future.

With enhanced digital tools, we're making it easier for you to stay informed, engaged and empowered. Our focus will be on further improving member experience, expanding our impact initiatives and ensuring our fund remains resilient and adaptable in a changing world.

I want to reiterate how grateful we are for your support and trust. Your commitment enables us to stay true to our purpose and deliver on our promise, to grow your retirement savings while working to create a better future for people, planet and animals. Together, we're proving that ethics and performance truly can go hand in hand and that when we act collectively, we can create real and lasting change. This makes us optimistic about the future, and I hope you are too. Thank you for being part of this remarkable journey and with your ongoing support, we'll continue to innovate, lead and invest for a better world, one that we can all be proud to pass on to future generations.

It's now my great pleasure to hand over to John Woods, our Deputy Chief Investment Officer and Head of Multi-Asset Investments. Thank you and have a wonderful evening.

John Woods: Thank you, Maria. Generating strong returns for our members by investing assets chosen to influence a better future is the heart of what we do at Australian Ethical. We have a sophisticated two-stage process where our ethics team assesses assets we'd like to invest in against the 23 principles of our 40-year-old Ethical Charter. If assets pass that step, my colleagues in the investment team can apply their expertise with the goal of maximising returns for members.

As Maria said, this means we're more exposed to future-focused sectors, such as renewable energy, technology and healthcare, and far less to mining, weapons, manufacturing, retail or cosmetics than other super funds.

For almost four decades, this approach has been delivering strong results and, as Maria said, financial year '25 was no exception. Over the 12 months to June 30, the investment options in our Super Fund have delivered results ahead of most peers and have outperformed their investment objectives in all bar one case.

These investment objectives are important as they hold us accountable for growing your money at a rate above inflation over time. By beating inflation by an amount based on your risk profile, it ensures you genuinely have more to spend in retirement. Share markets were the primary driver of these gains, as despite turbulence from tariff disputes to conflicts in the Middle East, global markets proved resilient. Even the sharp share market drawdown in early 2025, with the S&P 500 falling more than 20%, was reversed within a month, and new highs were reached by June.

Our systematic equity strategy performed exceptionally well. Our minimal exposure to the energy sector contributed positive performance, despite a short-lived rally in oil prices amid conflict in the Middle East. Our overweight exposure to information technology and healthcare and real estate investment trusts also assisted outperformance, demonstrating that an ethical approach, one that seeks to reduce harm and benefit stakeholders beyond financial returns, can also deliver strong performance. Fixed income allocations, both domestic and global, also outperformed their benchmark, while our defensive alternatives, including private credit, provided resilience and diversification.

While we always encourage our members to focus on the long-term rather than the short-term results, these results demonstrate how ethical investing can generate healthy returns while enabling you to feel confident that your money is a force for good.

As the demand for our style of investing grows, so too does the strength of our investment team we have driving these results. The investment options offered by Australian Ethical Super have a different mix of these asset classes. Some of our investment options only invest in shares or fixed interest, while others invest across multiple asset classes, including private markets and fixed-income assets.

Over the past year, we have attracted new, talented investment professionals to our team, specifically to increase our capability in equity markets, fixed income and private market asset management.

We've also expanded our partnerships, committing to new active investment strategies that enable us to unlock ethical investment opportunities across the world. And there are lots of opportunities, many of which stem from the challenges our world faces.

Recent additions to our portfolio reflect the opportunity we see as the world continues to move towards a lower-carbon future, including the Macquarie Green Energy and Climate Opportunities Fund, Climate Tech Partners Fund and a co-investment in Vertelo, a fleet electrification solutions platform focused on decarbonising transport in India with financing support from the United Nations' Green Climate Fund.

In Australia, we have been particularly engaged with our infrastructure debt partner, lending to solar, wind and battery assets across Australia. Our position is clear. We see climate solutions, nature protection and animal welfare not just as a responsibility, but as an opportunity.

As an investment leader, I am conscious that we remain in an environment with many potential risks. Equity valuations remain expensive and with an increasing degree of concentration, the very large companies continue to outperform smaller names globally. This setup has the potential for a disruptive unwind, but we remain aware that historically, valuations such as these have been able to be sustained for long periods of time. This highlights the importance of stock-picking expertise in our private markets and share market teams, which is key to accessing growth in this area in a risk-controlled manner.

I'd like to thank you for your trust and our investment team for their dedication and expertise. Together, we are proving that ethical investing can deliver strong performance.

Now I'd like to hand over to Alison to talk to the impact we're able to make on your behalf.

Alison George: Thanks, John, and good evening, everyone. Thank you for being here and for your commitment to Australian Ethical Super. I'm Alison George. I'm the Chief Impact & Ethics Officer. My role is to ensure we live our purpose of investing for a better world every day.

Tonight, I'd like to share how we've been doing exactly that by leading powerful stewardship and advocacy initiatives that support and complement our strong returns with the aim of ultimately securing a better world to retire into.

We believe that when we align our investments with our values, we create a virtuous cycle. We're achieving strong financial results, helps us to attract more like-minded members and amplify our positive impact as we scale. As John mentioned, our Ethical Charter shapes our portfolios and we evaluate the impact every year.

Compared to the benchmark, our investments in listed equities and debt had 2.3 times the level of revenue from sustainable impact solutions and 5.2 times the revenue from sustainable water, agriculture and pollution prevention. On the climate front, we have 75% lower emissions intensity and 4.2 times the level of investment in renewable energy solutions. In FY25, our reporting included impacts on nature for the first time. This shows our listed investments had 55% lower biodiversity impact than the benchmark.

But investing ethically is not just about what we avoid or what we include in the portfolio. It's also about how we behave as an active owner and custodian of your money. This is where ethical stewardship comes in. By stewardship, we mean engaging with companies, regulators and others to push for better practices and outcomes. It's a critical part of how we deliver on our mission by utilising our collective voice to advocate for systemic changes that benefit society and the environment and which, in turn, protect long-term investor returns.

This year, we cast over 5,000 proxy votes on your behalf at the annual general meetings of companies we invest in all around the world, achieving 100% of votable meetings. In 590 instances, we voted in support of increased diversity and inclusion. Most often, this was challenging a lack of diversity on company boards. We believe diverse leadership isn't just fair, it leads to better decision making, stronger risk oversight and ultimately, better outcomes for investors. When companies fall short, we use our voice to push for change.

Over the past year, we also undertook around 400 engagements on your behalf. These range from quiet conversations with company boards, to speaking up at annual general meetings, to collaborating with non-government organisations and meeting with government officials.

For the most part, we focus our efforts on four strategic initiatives seeking to move the dial on big challenges. These priorities are pursuing science-led climate policy; cutting off fossil fuel financing; stopping livestock-driven deforestation; and advancing alternatives to animal research. I'll briefly touch on each area to share what we've achieved together this year.

But before I do, let me pause here to reflect on how we do stewardship differently. We're seeing more activity from responsible investors, but we believe there's a critical gap in how most funds approach it. Too often, engagement is focused narrowly on improving the financial performance of individual companies, tweaking risk management or boosting returns only at the company level. But that misses the bigger picture.

At Australian Ethical, we focus on system-level risks, the kind that affect entire economies, ecosystems and ultimately, your portfolio as a whole. Take climate change. Many investors engage with fossil fuel companies to understand how they're managing transition risk, but they stop short of challenging the company's actual contribution to the climate crisis. We engage to address root causes, to push companies to stop expanding fossil fuels, to adopt credible transition plans and to align with science-based targets. That's why our stewardship is strategic, thematic and systems focused. We're not just nudging companies to be slightly better; we're working to reshape the conditions that define success for everyone. That's what sets Australian Ethical apart.

Tackling climate change is at the heart of our work. As Maria noted, the cost of inaction on climate change is unthinkable, ethically and economically. Australian Ethical has long been a climate action leader. We invest more in renewables and have a carbon footprint a fraction of the benchmark and we relentlessly push others to do more.

This year, we concentrated our efforts on two fronts, influencing the finance sector and influencing public policy. We set our sights on the big banks and insurers whose policies can make or break fossil fuel projects. Our theory of change here is simple. If banks refuse to finance harmful coal and gas expansions and insurers refuse to underwrite them, these projects will struggle to proceed. So, we've been urging major lenders to strengthen their climate commitments.

In 2024, we co-filed shareholder resolutions at Westpac and NAB, asking them to explain how they will align their lending with the *Paris Agreement* goals. Those resolutions saw a surge in support compared to previous years, reflecting the growing investor backing that we'd worked hard to rally.

Building on that momentum this past year, we took the campaign to Macquarie Bank, Australia's largest investment bank. The climate resolution we filed at Macquarie's AGM earned a strong 35% shareholder vote in favour. This was the first climate proposal ever at Macquarie Bank and one of the top five highest supported climate resolutions in the world this year.

Likewise, in that global top tier was Westpac, where support for our climate ask jumped to 34%. These are huge protest vote numbers in the context of shareholder activism and they sent an unmistakable message to bank executives. Both Westpac and NAB have responded by publishing enhanced climate criteria, addressing many of the points we raised.

But it's not mission accomplished yet. Gaps remain. Nonetheless, those changes indicate real progress and they happened because you, through Australian Ethical, were willing to speak up.

We similarly pushed insurers to stop underwriting new oil and gas projects that worsen climate change. We even took this public. When QBE's climate actions fell short, we spoke out at the AGM and in the media, connecting the dots between unchecked fossil fuel underwriting and the soaring insurance premiums homeowners face from climate-driven disasters. We aren't afraid to apply public pressure in defence of members' long-term interest.

The other front line for climate action is government policy. Australia needs science-based policies to guide a smooth transition to a low-carbon economy. This is vital for the prosperity of our members in the decades ahead.

This year, a major focus was advocating for an ambitious national emissions target for 2035. Australian Ethical took a leadership role through the Investor Group on Climate Change, coordinating a positive lobbying effort. We brought together investors and forward-thinking companies to amplify a pro-ambition message in Canberra. Then our Chair, Steve, and Deputy CIO, John, both travelled to Parliament to directly encourage policymakers to set a bold 2035 target.

When the Government announced Australia's new emissions reduction target in September, it landed at 62% to 70% below 2005 levels. While this was less than we had called for, it was notably more ambitious than the 50% to 60% target some business lobbies were pushing. That difference matters. It shows that our advocacy alongside others shifted the dial toward a stronger commitment.

The second major area of our stewardship this year was nature protection, particularly stopping deforestation driven by animal agriculture. Australia, unfortunately, has one of the worst deforestation rates in the developed world, largely due to land clearing for beef cattle grazing. This not only destroys wildlife habitat, contributing to Australia's tragic extinction rate, but also exacerbates climate change, since forests and bushlands are critical climate sinks.

Supermarkets like Woolworths and Coles are major purchasers of beef. They can insist on deforestation-free supply chains. We were the lead investor in a global initiative that pressed Coles on this issue, and they've now confirmed plans to eliminate deforestation risk beef in their own-brand products by the end of 2025. This commitment is a direct response to investor pressure. It's a crucial step towards stopping the tragic clearing of bushland.

Woolworths made similar commitments but has subsequently backpedalled on its no deforestation commitment by failing to classify Australian beef as high risk for deforestation, despite clearing for grazing being the number one driver of deforestation here. This shows the need for ongoing vigilance and effort so that positive progress leads to lasting change.

Our Australian Ethical Foundation, that receives 10% of our profits each year, has also moved to make nature its core focus, recognising that philanthropy can tackle aspects of these problems that investments alone cannot. A record $2.8 million was donated to the Foundation this year for granting to high-impact environmental projects.

One such example is the grant to the Australian Climate and Biodiversity Foundation, which is tackling deforestation at a systemic level by advocating for stronger policies and developing market-based solutions to protect critical biodiversity and carbon stores. By addressing the root causes of deforestation, this work aims to deliver long-term environmental and economic benefits.

Our stewardship doesn't stop at climate and the environment. Our ethical stewardship stands up for people and animals as well. I want to touch on two areas in particular, improving corporate practices around human rights and ending unnecessary animal suffering.

In the past year, we continued to engage companies on human rights issues, such as labour standards and freedom of expression. For example, we identified shortcomings in how a major healthcare company was managing the risk of modern slavery in its supply chain. Supply chains can hide worker exploitation and we felt this company was relying too much on supplier self-assessments.

We raised our concerns directly and they stepped up their due diligence, initiating on-site audits and deep-dive assessments of suppliers instead of just paperwork exercises. There's more to do, but that's a concrete improvement that means better protection for vulnerable workers who may be many tiers down in a supply chain.

We also joined forces with global investor groups to press for stronger action against forced labour. One coalition we're part of, Investors Against Slavery and Trafficking Asia Pac, engaged companies in our region, including that same healthcare firm, to keep the pressure on. The message we send is that no company should allow its quest for profit to rest on the back of exploited people, and as ethical investors, we will hold them to account if they do.

In another case, we engaged with Apple regarding reports of forced Uyghur labour in parts of its supplier network in China. We challenged them on whether their audits are truly effective, because an absence of any adverse findings, which Apple claimed, can be a red flag in itself. By having these frank dialogues, we keep human rights on the agenda of even the world's largest companies.

Let's talk about the animals pillar of our charter. While we've broken new ground through our initiative on alternatives to animal research, every year, millions of animals, mice, dogs, even primates, are used in laboratory experiments worldwide. Many suffer greatly, and increasing numbers could be replaced with modern alternatives.

Our Ethical Charter has always taken a strong stance on avoiding cruelty to animals. So, we asked, how can we, as an investor, help accelerate a shift toward more humane science? We approached this on two levels. First, with the companies we invest in, particularly pharma, biotech and medical device firms, setting clear expectations, saying, prove to us that you are actively working to reduce and replace animal testing. This means having robust animal welfare policies, funding development of alternatives and ensuring high standards where animal use is still necessary. If companies didn't meet our standards, we put them on watch for divestment.

Subsequently, Cochlear committed to establish its first formal animal ethics policy, and Opthea agreed to stricter oversight by only using research labs with the highest animal welfare accreditation. These were significant commitments from each company to do better, which will tangibly improve conditions for animals going forward.

The second level is industry-wide advocacy. Australian Ethical, together with our Foundation, cosponsored a landmark CSIRO study to create a roadmap for non-animal research models in Australia.

Building on that, we gathered stakeholders across academia, industry and NGOs to endorse a statement calling for action on developing alternatives. I'm proud to say, 27 leading organisations signed on, including universities, medical research institutes, biotech companies and health industry bodies. This kind of collective voice is unprecedented in Australia on this issue.

This work on animal welfare is a perfect illustration of Australian Ethical's uniqueness. Very few, if any, super funds are talking to biotech CEOs about the fate of lab animals. But we do it because it's integral to who we are. Our members' values demand it of us and our Ethical Charter guides us to these issues.

Moreover, there is a long-term financial logic too. Companies that pioneer non-animal testing methods can gain efficiencies and avoid compliance risks, and those stuck in old practices, may fall behind. We find that our ethical stance often foresees the direction of progress and by pushing companies ahead, we believe we're also fostering competitive advantage. Doing the right thing and delivering value can align.

I hope these examples give you a sense of how deeply and proactively Australian Ethical works to create positive change on your behalf. From the climate wins in boardrooms and the halls of parliament, to the new commitments to protect forests, to improve labour standards and animal welfare practices, we've made real steps this year and none of it would be possible without you, our members.

When you choose Australian Ethical, your Super Fund is part of a much larger force for good. It's not just sitting in an account growing, though it is doing that; it's also out there pushing companies to cut carbon emissions, protect nature, respect human dignity and innovate for a sustainable future.

And our influence is magnified by our growth. Every additional member, every extra dollar under management increases our clout. I want to thank you for being part of the movement we're creating. You're helping redefine what superannuation stands for; not just a secure retirement, but a better future for all. These are not competing objectives; they're deeply interconnected. After all, what good is a nest egg if the planet is in peril and society is in turmoil.

Thank you for your trust, your passion and for being on this journey with us. Now, handing back to Fiona. Thank you.

Fiona Reynolds: Well, thanks, Alison. Thanks, John and Maria. Hopefully, that's given you all a fantastic overview of the work that we're undertaking.

I'm really genuinely proud of what we've delivered this year, whether it's the transition of members to our new GROW Inc platform to set the foundation for a more digital member-centric service, our advocacy work across so many areas, all the results we're delivering to help you reach your retirement outcomes. These achievements show the impact of our collective efforts and the positive change we're driving together.

At the same time, we, of course, know that there is always more to be done and we remain committed to finding new ways to raise the bar, challenge ourselves and keep pushing for better outcomes for people, planet and animals.

The progress we've made is just the beginning. Our journey is ongoing, and your support is what keeps us striving for continual improvement. Once again, thank you for your ongoing support and engagement. It's what inspires us to keep driving change.

It's now my pleasure to field your questions, both those that you've submitted ahead of time and those that have come in live today. So, for those online, please feel free to continually click Ask a Question and we'll cover, as I said, as many as we can before we close at 8:30.

Just a reminder that any personal enquiries, we'll share with our customer services team rather than answering them here tonight. And if we don't get to your question, we'll also respond to you directly.

So now let's get to our first question, which is, with the recent gold rush frenzy, do you invest in gold? Whether you do or not, what is your view on the impact of long-term growth of Super?

So, John, that's a question for you.

John Woods: Yes. I think gold rush frenzy would be the way I'd characterise the returns in that asset over the last six months particularly, but really over the last two years. Look, gold's not investable under our Ethical Charter and we're not invested in gold, but there's been plenty of other opportunities for us to invest in. Specifically in the commodity space, we've been investing in European carbon credits, we've been investing in copper. They've all returned in the order of around 20% over the last 12 months, and they're critical to our transition.

In terms of really significant returns, our investments in data centres and AI over the last 12 months have eclipsed the frenzy we've seen in gold.

Fiona Reynolds: Thanks, John. So, we've also had a few questions about the difficulty that some members are having accessing our portal from overseas. One for example is, what are you doing about the ongoing member portal access issues for users based overseas in China? Are there any ongoing initiatives or a projected timeline to restore stable access to the AE portal for users in China.

So, Maria?

Maria Loyez: Yes, we are aware that there is still a challenge for some members from overseas to access the portal, and we're really sorry about that. We have implemented a fix that is working for many countries, but not all, and that includes China. We're working with our administrator, GROW, with a new feature that allows our members to access our portal using an authentication app, which will be an alternative to receiving an SMS. That's very well advanced and so we're looking forward to telling you more about that in due course, should be early in the new year. That will give all international members a much more consistent experience.

Fiona Reynolds: Okay. We've got a similar question from a member who wants to know when they'll be able to contact you with an email rather than only an Australian 1800 number.

So, also for you, Maria.

Maria Loyez: Yes. Well, this is an easy one because we can receive email enquiries today. The email address is members@australianethical.com.au and if you didn't capture that, it's also on our website and we'll publish the answers to all these questions. You can also send a secure message via the member online portal and members overseas can also contact us by phone. I won't read out that phone number but you can find that on our website.

We are working on other digital solutions but for now, we do actually encourage phone contact because it's actually much more efficient to verify members' identity, which we need to do if we're going to discuss any confidential information. So, that means that we can actually resolve your query more quickly.

Fiona Reynolds: Okay. So, next question. No matter how many solar panels, wind turbines are installed in Australia, there will still need to be dispatchable power, and the choices are oil, coal, gas or nuclear. So why is Australian Ethical determined to demonise all four?

So, I might go to you for that, Alison.

Alison George: Sure. Renewable energy certainly is stepping up to meet global demand for electricity. A report by climate think tank, Ember, found that in the first six months of 2025, renewable energy outpaced the increase in demand for electricity, leading to a small decline in coal and gas use. The world generated almost a third more solar power compared to the same period in 2024, meeting 83% of global electricity demand.

Going forward, forecasts suggest twice as much will be invested in renewables than there is in fossil fuel extraction. This investment in renewables follows a long-term trend over at least the last 10 years and it's a crucial support to an orderly transition of our economy over the next 25.

We are strongly invested in renewables but also in other energy solutions that support reliability. One example is Octopus Energy whose grid orchestration technology supports far higher levels of renewables, while maintaining reliability. We're also invested in geothermal, which is a low-carbon form of baseload, and in batteries.

We maintain our zero nuclear threshold because while nuclear power is low carbon, it has serious unresolved issues of proliferation, weapons and waste and, of course, it remains illegal in Australia.

We continue to allow some fossil fuel generation for companies that are aligning their businesses with the *Paris Agreement* goals. Our focus is to invest for a transition in line with science-based guidance.

Fiona Reynolds: Thanks, Alison. Next question, we've got a question, are there any ex-ALP politicians on the Board of Australian Ethical Super? If so, what are the plans to remove them?

So, I think I might take that one. So, no, we don't have any ex-politicians, ALP, Liberal or any other. A key threshold for us as we consider Board renewal is the skill set of directors and we're proud that our Trustee Board members are highly experienced in responsible investing and also in superannuation.

So, we've got another question here on, what happens to members' pensions account or the member's spouse's pensions account when a member or a member's spouse passes unexpectedly?

So, Maria?

Maria Loyez: Well, this is a really important question actually. So, a key component of our Super system is an obligation as a trustee to ensure that members' money is distributed in line with their wishes in the event of their death. But that's why it's really important to ensure that you've formally nominated who is to receive your funds and so you do need to complete forms and send them to us. And they're separate too, and in addition to having a will in place.

So, you can nominate a beneficiary on your account or make a binding death benefit nomination, and you can nominate one or more dependents or even a legal personal representative to be a beneficiary. Who you nominate depends on your personal circumstances and there's a lot more information on that in our Insurance Guide online.

Fiona Reynolds: Okay. We've had two related questions on whether we have an app and are there plans to develop an app and if so, when it will be available. So, I'll stick with you on this, Maria.

Maria Loyez: Sure. Well, we're moving all members to the GROW administration platform and that is going to give us the sort of tech infrastructure which is needed to be able to build an app and it's certainly on our roadmap.

We're hoping to have more news on that in the new year, but rest assured, we know it's really important to members and we're excited that the move to GROW will give us the ability to continuously uplift our digital service capability, including an app.

Fiona Reynolds: Okay. So, we've had two questions about G8 Education. So, given the recent and serious allegations regarding G8 Education, can you explain the rationale for continuing to hold shares in the company? How does this align with the publicly stated ethical investment policy.

So, Alison?

Alison George: First and foremost, let me say that our thoughts are with the families and the children affected. We recognise the need for sector-wide reform and are encouraged by the progress underway. We completed our exit of G8 Education early in September.

Fiona Reynolds: Okay. Are there plans to introduce new retirement-focused products, such as a lifetime income stream in the coming year, as this is something I'm very interested in having as a retirement option? Can you share more insights into how you are supporting those currently in or approaching retirement?

Again, we'll get you to respond, Maria.

Maria Loyez: Yes. We're really focused on supporting members as they approach and transition into retirement. So, we're pretty confident that we've got a solid retirement offering. Our pension product was rated Best ESG Pension product by *Money* magazine. It offers a range of options across different styles and risk appetites, including defensive, conservative, balanced growth, international and Australian shares.

Our research shows that while a guaranteed income can be attractive, most members actually prefer the flexibility of an account-based pension like the ones that we've got, because it allows them to adjust their withdrawals and maintain control over their investments. Lifetime income products actually restrict that flexibility, and they're also quite complex to design and manage, so it means that they can actually be really expensive for members. So, for that reason, less than 5% of retirees are currently using those products in the market.

There are regulatory developments afoot, and so we're kind of keeping an eye on those, and we'll assess whether such solutions could meet our members' needs in the future.

Fiona Reynolds: Okay. Let's get to some of the other questions. We've had two questions related to whether there are any investments we have in the occupied territories in Palestine and Israel.

Alison?

Alison George: Thank you for the question. We recognise the breadth of opinion and the level of conviction that would no doubt be present across our members on this issue. We are deeply saddened and concerned about the loss of life on both sides of this conflict.

We don't invest in Israeli government bonds, as Israel doesn't pass the external militarism test in our government's framework and we apply ethical investment restrictions to any company or asset we assess as supporting illegal occupation or manufacturing weapons. This means that we do not currently invest in any company identified in the military, heavy equipment, construction, transport, energy or tourism sectors within this year's CHR report from the UN. We continue to monitor the situation and the implications for our investments in line with our Ethical Charter.

Fiona Reynolds: Thanks, Alison. We've also had two questions related to whether members have the ability to control how they invest. So, do we offer members the ability to invest part of their super in a medium- to high-risk investment?

Maria Loyez: I think I'll take that. Yes?

Fiona Reynolds: Yes, take that. Yes.

Maria Loyez: So, there is flexibility within the range of super investment options that we offer. There's seven investment options. So, we've got five pre-mixed multi-asset options, so close to John's heart, which range from defensive to high growth. They're designed for people with different risk profiles. So, for example, the Balanced Fund is a mix of growth and defensive and it includes domestic and international equities, fixed interest, alternatives, property and infrastructure, as well as some cash-like investments. Anything else, John? Sorry.

We've got two single asset class options which are designed to give you exposure to just international equities or domestic equities. They've got less diversification than the pre-mixed multi-asset options and so they're classified as higher risk. So, you can choose how you're pushing your money across all of those options, but we don't currently offer the opportunity to invest directly into one specific company or share, if that's what the question was referring to.

The benefits of investing in our options is that, first of all, we've got our ethics research team who evaluated all aspects of a company according to our Charter, and then we have our investment team who've got really significant experience in assessing companies, picking stocks and delivering long-term returns. So, these options have the advantage of being able then to deliver an appropriate risk-adjusted return and be confident in what you're investing in.

Fiona Reynolds: Thanks, Maria. Just there's a similar question has been asked and it's about whether members can opt out of specific companies within our pre-mixed options.

Maria Loyez: Yes. Members can't opt out of specific companies for two reasons. Firstly, similarly, we have a dedicated ethics research team who conduct a comprehensive review of all stocks to ensure that the company's got an overall positive impact on people, planet, animals in line with the Charter.

The second reason is that the investment team are managing risk and return on behalf of our members, and then taking some stocks out can skew this negatively. So, you can switch between investment options and choosing an investment option that doesn't include the assets you'd like to avoid is a possibility. We list all of the holdings of our portfolios on our website.

Fiona Reynolds: Okay. Thanks. We've also had two questions which have similar questions regarding the trust structure of Super. So, the question is that we understand around 2018 that the Senate passed bank bail in laws, meaning that banks can take customer savings if they get into financial trouble instead of the government bailing them out. Does the same situation apply to superannuation funds, please?

So, I think I'll answer this one. So, APRA-regulated funds are subject to rigorous financial standards and consumer protections. So, superannuation funds are set up as trust under the *Superannuation Industry (Supervision) Act* or *SIS Act*, and that means your money is held in trust for you and other members separate from the assets of the trustee company.

So, the trustee manages the fund but does not own the members' money. If the trustee fails financially, which we're not at all concerned about, your super remains in the fund's trust structure.

So, another question we've got is, are there certain companies that you must invest in? Do we get to vote on a shareholder resolution as members and beneficiaries?

Alison?

Alison George: I can see where this question is coming from. We agree that being active owners and voting on issues aligned with our Ethical Charter is really important. We can only vote at meetings of the companies that we're invested in. So, we're voting at meetings for companies that have passed our ethical evaluation. I mentioned before that in FY25, we voted on 100% of the resolutions that we were eligible to vote on all around the world, more than 5,000 resolutions in total.

When you invest in shares through a super fund or other investment product, it's the manager, the fund manager or the asset manager that gets the opportunity to vote on shareholder resolutions. That's why their approach matters. Are they active owners who exercise their votes and do they do so in line with clear ethical values?

During the presentation today, I outlined how we vote on your behalf but if you'd like more information our recently published Stewardship Report gives a lot more detail both about our voting and our other efforts at driving positive change in portfolios and beyond.

Fiona Reynolds: Thanks, Al. Could you please explain what alternative assets are, I think this is one for you, John, and which investment options are investing in them and how will they financially affect each investment option?

John Woods: Yes. Look, alternative assets are investments outside traditional assets such as stocks or bonds. As part of a diversified investment strategy, we invest in alternative assets to increase diversification, access assets that aren't readily available in traditional asset classes. This includes a lot of renewable investments we make.

Alternatives might include real assets, private markets, investments that can return and provide returns and stability, even if share markets and other investment markets are more volatile, particular focus at the moment. We invest in alternatives through all our multi-asset super fund options such as the balance, growth and conservative options. These investments are considered as part of our rigorous ethics process. Same process for alternative assets as there is in bonds and shares, and that's a rigorous investment process as well, which covers all our investments, which includes the monitoring of the risk of potential loss from these assets.

Fiona Reynolds: Thanks. Next question is, given Australian Ethical's commitment to ethical investment, was MetLife the best choice of insurer given they have engaged in a number of unethical practices for which they have been sued?

So, I'll come to you for that, Maria.

Maria Loyez: Yes. So, we've had MetLife as our insurer for a number of years. We did do an insurance review recently, which meant that we went out to market to assess which insurer could provide our members with the best product. It was a pretty thorough tender process, and it involved third-party assessment, which did include ESG considerations as well as formal due diligence.

So, whenever we consider potential suppliers, we do consider their alignment with the Ethical Charter alongside their ability to deliver to our members' needs. MetLife was selected on the basis that they offered the best product solution for our members.

Fiona Reynolds: Great. So, we've had quite a few questions, not surprisingly, on AI from an ethics, investment and operations perspective. In the context of the unprecedented risk that it presents, what is Australian Ethical's approach to investing in or to using artificial intelligence?

So, over to you again, Alison.

Alison George: Okay, I'll kick off. So, it's important to remember that AI, especially generative AI, it's a very early-stage technology with substantial uncertainties and questions. There are many voices offering perspectives on the benefits and on the risks of AI. But the truth is much depends on how the technology evolves and that's something that can be influenced. That's why we see governance over AI, including global governance as key.

So, we're continuing to monitor developments and new information as it emerges, and we will keep looking for ways to positively influence the evolution of this technology.

Fiona Reynolds: So, a follow-up, I suppose. Australian Ethical exposed to the AI bubble and the negative climate impact that AI data centres are having globally. So maybe you can talk about that, John.

John Woods: Yes. Look, we actively explore opportunities in technology, including AI, but we do so with great care and we apply that rigorous ethical process.

Valuation is a really critical part of our investment process, and we maintain a strong focus on valuation discipline to avoid speculative bubbles. Equal alongside valuation is our Ethical Charter, which requires us to also consider the broader impact of AI on people, the planet and animals. We require high environmental standards of our AI investments, such as the extensive use of renewables and cool water recycling.

Fiona Reynolds: Thanks. So, next question is, what is the fund's stance on the ethics of investing in an industry that is impacting the environment via data centres with consumption of large quantities of water and energy?

So, might come to you for that, Alison.

Alison George: Yes. As John has already mentioned, we are highly selective about how we invest in data centres. We do seek high environmental standards, such as having 100% renewable energy and, in some cases, closed-loop cooling water technologies.

So, to give you an example of where we draw the line, during the year, we excluded from investment a company called Cogent Communications. They're responsible for just around 25% of internet traffic globally, so very heavily reliant on data centres. We excluded Cogent because it failed to demonstrate sufficient efforts to address the environmental impact of its business.

Fiona Reynolds: Okay. So, another question. Thank you for maintaining such strong performance. Can you tell me about the contingencies the International Share Fund is taking to overcome a crash of an AI shares bubble that a lot of investors are predicting, considering that the fund has around 33% of its portfolio and information technology.

So, John.

John Woods: Yes. So, as I mentioned we've got a really strong valuation discipline across our strategies. The AI boom has been a significant driver of global equities returns over the last 18 months, and technology has been a focus of equity investments globally and domestically for Australian Ethical. Valuations for AI companies are at a premium but on most metrics, not seen at levels in bubbles like the internet boom in the early 2000s and late '90s, or Japan in the 1980s.

In the multi-asset portfolios, which have a significant exposure to global equities, to protect the portfolio, a recent focus of the investment team has been to identify diversifying growth opportunities that are less exposed to the singular thematic, such as infrastructure and alternatives. Further, our investment approach is active, and valuation is a key consideration in that, in selecting which companies across that spectrum to invest in.

More broadly, a key part of the tactical positioning of the portfolio is to invest in assets like put options when they are cheap, or to utilise the defensive relationship between foreign currency and risk assets. So, our international shares option is unhedged. Both these strategies are aimed at reducing losses in extreme market moves, like an environment that might accompany a sudden repricing of AI-related companies.

Fiona Reynolds: Thanks, John. Another question here is, will Australian Ethical vote or instruct investors in Tesla to vote against the proposed $1 trillion remuneration for Elon Musk?

So, Alison?

Alison George: So, following a thorough review process, we divested Tesla from our portfolios and removed the company from our investable universe in May this year. In taking that decision to divest, we considered the conflicts of interest that were arising from Elon Musk's role in the newly created Department of Government Efficiency, as well as new evidence of possible worker mistreatment that was at odds with our ethical expectations.

We originally invested in Tesla based on its historically significant impact on the uptake of electric vehicles and development of battery storage technology. We actively used our votes during the time that we held the shares to seek positive change, including on CEO pay.

Having now divested, it means that we're unable to vote at Tesla shareholder meetings.

Fiona Reynolds: Thank you. So, we've also got a question about whether Australian Ethical invest in Russian entities or in entities outside of Russia that contribute to funding or sustaining Russia's continued invasion of Ukraine.

So, I might come to you on this, John.

John Woods: Yes. Look, even before the invasion of Ukraine, we weren't invested in Russian assets. One of the benefits of being a value-based investing organisation like ours is that we're often ahead of the curve.

At the moment, we're examining indirect impacts in supply chains and that's challenging. A key part of doing this is we maintain an extensive in-house research capability within the ethics team and now that significant sanctions have been imposed, there are many others looking into these indirect links as well. We're able to leverage those data providers to assist keeping our funds from even indirect support of the war against Ukraine.

Fiona Reynolds: Thanks, John. Lots more questions. Does Australian Ethical invest in entities that contribute to the targeting or apprehension or deportation of individuals alleged to be undocumented residents of the United States of America by U.S. Customs and Border Patrol, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, ICE, or other US agencies? Such entities include, but are not limited to, Salesforce, GlobalX Airlines, Global Crossing Airlines.

Alison?

Alison George: So, our human rights assessment considers reported controversies like these. But it also goes further to look at the company's policies and their processes that they have to avoid involvement in human rights abuses. And of course, we look at the evidence that those are being robustly implemented.

When we're assessing companies, we do draw a distinction between products and services that are customised for harmful use, compared to more general-purpose products and services that can have both positive and negative applications, such as Salesforce's contact management software.

On the airlines, we don't invest in airlines because of their carbon footprint.

Fiona Reynolds: Okay. Another question, which is, will Australian Ethical stop investing in Alphabet, Meta, Microsoft, IBM, given that they're all military contractors?

So, we'll stay with you, Alison.

Alison George: Sure. So, we have strong and extensive restrictions on weapons. Many funds only restrict controversial weapons. We avoid investment if there's any revenue derived from the manufacturer of complete weapons, that's a 0% threshold. We also restrict investment if there's more than 5% revenue from the manufacture of critical weapons components, so things that are developed and sold for that component purpose.

Technologies that don't meet that definition may still be excluded, depending on our assessment of various factors, including the extent of revenue earned from militaristic uses, which for these companies remains small. For example, with Microsoft, their entire defence contracting revenue was less than 1%.

Fiona Reynolds: Okay. We've got quite a few more questions that we need to get through from the live questions that are coming through. So, we'll get started on those. So, the first one is to you, Maria. Do you offer super coaching or advice?

Maria Loyez: We are providing a lot of education and we're bolstering our education, so for both our accumulation and our retirees, we're providing a lot of information and education that will help them through those things. We don't provide advice directly. We think it's actually quite important not to provide advice and to be aligned, but we do provide on our website referrals to the RIAA advice network.

Fiona Reynolds: Okay, great. Steve, I might send this question to you. I've seen Australian Ethical as an investment option on the ASX. If shares are purchased, are we investing in the same assets as Super Fund members? Or are we investing in Australian Ethical itself as a company?

Steve Gibbs: If you buy Australian Ethical shares, you're investing in Australian Ethical as a company. The Company's revenue is derived from investments that are made both within superannuation and through our managed investment schemes.

Fiona Reynolds: Thanks, Steve. Okay, good question, what is Australian Ethical doing to listen to First Nations people to identify solutions for a sustainable future? How is Australian Ethical investing in First Nations companies, employing First Nations people and ensuring procurement of products and services from First Nations businesses?

So, Alison or Maria?

Alison George: I think that's me. Let me start and see if Maria wants to add on. Thank you for the question. So, as Australian Ethical Investment, the listed Company, we develop a RAP, so that's a Reconciliation Action Plan that looks at our connectivity to First Nations in Australia through all of the different parts of our business, through our investment, through our business operations, through our procurement. So, through that, we are identifying those connections and trying to find ways that we can do more.

I'm also proud to say that our Foundation's pivot towards nature includes a really explicit focus on First Nations and First Nations solutions. In fact, just today, a grant came across my desk for an amazing new initiative around First Nations, new kind of investment structures to have recognition of the First Nation ownership of renewable energy credits when they're being sold in the market. It's a real passion area for both our Head of Foundation and many other people across our business.

Fiona Reynolds: Did you want to add anything, Maria?

Maria Loyez: That's a great answer, Alison.

Fiona Reynolds: Okay. So, another good question. Given the current housing and cost-of-living crisis, how have investments been made to attempt to address and support Australians going forward?

So, John?

John Woods: Yes. So, look, Australian Ethical is an active investor in the Australian property market and that includes residential developments. We've actually got within our alternatives portfolio at the moment, a build-to-rent project in Brisbane, as well as specialist disability accommodation across the portfolio as well. So, it's been an active area of focus.

Fiona Reynolds: Okay. We have sort of talked about this, but there's some other questions here about what opportunities that we're seeing in critical minerals and rare earths. So, maybe I'll start with you, John. And, Alison, get you to jump in if you've got something else to contribute?

John Woods: Yes. Look, so transition minerals and metals are part of our investable universe. So, this includes areas like copper, cobalt, as well as lithium. In Australia, there are a number of opportunities for us to invest in that space, and we've been investing in those companies for a while now, and they've performed quite well.

Alison George: I suppose what I would add to that is while in principle, it can be possible to have an investment in those companies or directly in the minerals, we do examine really closely the way that those minerals are being extracted. So, individual mining companies have to meet our sustainable mining expectations.

Fiona Reynolds: Great. Also for you, Alison, there's a question about how do we ethic evaluate? So, what platform and criteria do we use?

Alison George: How long have you got?

Fiona Reynolds: Not long. We've got 10 minutes until we have to wrap up.

Alison George: So, the Ethical Charter guides everything that we do. But it doesn't answer all of the questions about where we can and can't invest. That's a big part of what my team's work is, to take those broad principles and turn them into investment decision-making criteria.

There's a lot more information on our website about this, including a guide of about 20, 25 pages long, that summarises the approach and all of the key topics that we consider. It is a mix of both quantitative and qualitative considerations. It looks both at what the Company does and how it does it, seeking that the balance of activities results in a net positive outcome.

Fiona Reynolds: Okay, thanks.

Maria Loyez: Just adding to that though, I think what's really important is that your team actually do that research as opposed to just taking an index which is bought and just applying it, which often, we've seen have some quite detrimental outcomes.

Alison George: Absolutely. Thank you.

Fiona Reynolds: Okay. So, we've had a lot of wonderful questions and thank you to all of those people who have sent questions through. Those that we haven't got to, we'll answer in the coming days and all of those will be posted on the website.

I'd really like to thank you all for your support and your interest in Australian Ethical and I can see that there's been a lot of that this evening. Thank you also to the Australian Ethical team who are present here tonight and for taking the time to answer everyone's questions.

So, thank you and goodnight.

[END OF TRANSCRIPT]