



MEDIA RELEASE

Link AGM Snapshot: digital tools the key to unlocking greater investor engagement for ASX companies

Monday March 5, 2018: Leading global share registry provider, Link Market Services, today encouraged Australian listed companies to take greater advantage of online and digital platforms to drive shareholder engagement.

The call follows the release of new data showing that digital engagement with millions of Australian retail investors remains in its infancy.

The Link Market Services annual *AGM Snapshot* for 2017 provides unique insights into AGM trends and investor behaviour in the Australian market and shows that Australian retail shareholders need encouragement to both participate in and influence the outcomes of resolutions raised at Annual General Meetings for the companies that they are investing in.

Link's *AGM Snapshot* leverages data from some 400 Australian listed entities, ranging from S&P/ASX 100 companies to S&P/ASX 200+ entities and collates this data for the benefit of its clients, offering insights that can improve AGM practices.

Link Market Services Chief Executive Officer Lysa McKenna said: "Link's AGM Snapshot has identified a number of trends from the most recent AGM season and our review of the data indicates there is considerable opportunity to engage shareholders to increase participation at AGMs.

"The message from the data is clear: Companies can take greater advantage of all of the digital engagement tools that are available to them in order to maximise the input from their shareholders."

Investors geographically dispersed both across Australia and internationally benefit most from these tools as it allows them to feel part of the AGM whether it be by lodging a vote prior to the meeting or logging in and participating on the day of the meeting.

The AGM Snapshot reported that on average only 3.94 per cent of all investors returned AGM voting forms.

The Snapshot also showed a marked decrease in the percentage of issued capital voting across all indices in 2017 with the biggest drop of 13.1 per cent in the S&P/ASX200+ bracket, to 53.14 per cent. The S&P/ASX 100 also saw decrease in the volume of issued capital participating in voting from an average of 69.7 per cent to 65.51 per cent.

Ms McKenna said: "These figures show there is a lot more that can be done to improve shareholder engagement and embracing digital will deliver the best returns.

"It is abundantly clear that a significant proportion of shareholders aren't exercising their rights as investors and a greater access to the AGMs and voting platforms is an important part of

the solution. There is clearly huge potential for companies to lift their engagement,” said Ms McKenna.

“Online voting is one way to get all shareholders engaged and it is an effective and accessible method to give all shareholders equal access to the annual general meetings and the voting rights that come with being an investor.

“Virtual AGMs (Hybrid meetings in Australia) and digital engagement such as webcasting are proving to be drivers of engagement in the AGM season and will undoubtedly continue to rise. In 2017 more than 30 per cent of proxy votes were received online which is consistent with online voting trends since its inception in 2004. We expect to see a larger increase in online voting in the coming years,” said Ms McKenna.

The Link AGM Snapshot can be accessed at www.agmsnapshot.com

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About Link Market Services

Link Market Services is a member of ASX-listed Link Group (ASX: LNK), a leading global administrator of financial ownership data within the pension fund industry and across corporate markets. Underpinned by our investment in technology, people and processes, we deliver comprehensive data and information solutions for companies, large asset owners and trustees across the globe. We are a market-leading provider of technology-enabled administration solutions, continually developing our offerings to expand with our clients' needs.

Link Group's Corporate Markets division delivers a suite of services that assist organisations globally to meet the obligations that come with the public ownership of their companies or products, as well as managing their interactions with the capital markets. Our uniquely integrated range of corporate markets capabilities includes registry, employee share plans, investor relations and stakeholder engagement, company secretarial services and insolvency solutions.

For more information, please visit: www.linkmarketservices.com.au