

February 2024

# cbus news



## Making hard work pay off since 1984

40TH ANNIVERSARY EDITION

**Getting  
the right  
advice**

> page 3

**The win for workers  
that transformed  
Australia**

> page 4

**Investing in  
social and affordable  
housing**

> page 11



# Proudly serving members for 40 years

## A message from our CEO Kristian Fok



It's an exciting time to lead Cbus Super as we move further into 2024 and toward the 40th anniversary of our foundation.

We were originally created in 1984 as the Building Unions Superannuation Scheme, by workers for workers, who started out by setting aside \$9 a week for super. We now manage more than \$85 billion of retirement savings so that members like you can enjoy a hard-earned retirement.

Many members reading this will have been on this journey as members of their Fund for decades.

In this special anniversary issue, we celebrate the stories of founding members and their connection to Cbus Super. Their vision and hard work has created a legacy for our members now and into the future.

Before Cbus Super was established, it was common for building and construction workers to work for the same company for decades and leave with a silver pen as a gift – nothing more for retirement. The creation of our fund changed that. See page 4 for these inspiring stories.

**Getting financial advice is one of the keys to retiring well and feedback from you shows you value advice from your super fund.**

We've seen an increase in the number of requests for advice from our Advice Services team.

There is much discussion in the media about advice and Cbus Super continues to advocate that we are well placed to provide appropriate retirement advice to members and that the scope of the advice we offer should be expanded. See the next page for our advice update.

### Returns update

Our Investments team continue their focus on delivering strong long-term returns for members. The Market Update on page 10 is worth reading for insights about the current state of the investment environment.

### A win for members

We were pleased to publish our retirement strategy in 2022 and have maintained our focus on delivering the retirement you, our members, are looking for.

Developments in the past year have included updating our retirement calculators and contacting you at key points near and during retirement. These contacts, combined with easy access to webinars can help you plan for the retirement you'd like to have.

I look forward to updating you again in September and send good wishes to all readers for continued prosperity in 2024.



All figures as at 30 June 2023 unless otherwise noted.

# Getting the right advice

If you've recently retired or are nearing retirement, you might have a lot on your mind. We can help you plan for the future and make setting yourself up for this next phase of life easy and straight forward.

Financial advice has been a hot topic lately and with good reason. It's estimated that over the next five years, 670,000 Australians intend to retire, taking the total number of retirees to almost five million\*.

More than ever, members need our advice, guidance and assistance.

The Government issued its final response to the *Quality of Advice Review* in December 2023. The purpose of the review was to ensure Australians have access to high quality, accessible and affordable financial advice.

While there are likely to be changes ahead in this space, we recognise the importance of advice in our member's lives.

We've brought on more in-house Advice staff across Australia and are working on some exciting changes that we hope to bring to you soon.

## Want to chat?

We can talk to you about:

- planning for your retirement, or getting the most out of your retirement
- choosing an investment option that's right for you
- how Centrelink payments (including the Age Pension) could work alongside an income stream account
- nominating beneficiaries so your retirement savings are provided to your loved ones if you pass away.

**Speak to one of our financial advisers over the phone – our service is included as part of your membership.**

Our team can also refer you to an accredited financial planner who meets strict professional qualification and service criteria as set by Cbus Super and the Financial Advice Association Australia (FAAA).

## In the 2022-23 financial year:

We've had  
**more than 20,000**  
advice conversations with members



We've organised  
**892 referrals**  
to financial planners through the Cbus Super and Financial Advice Association Australia (FAAA) referral program



Members who completed surveys scored us  
**8.4 out of 10**  
for their experiences interacting with our Advice Services team.



Call us on **1300 361 784** from 8am to 6pm, Monday to Friday.

\* Australian Bureau of Statistics. *Retirement and Retirement Intentions*, Australia, Released 29 August 2023.  
[www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/retirement-and-retirement-intentions-australia/latest-release](https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/retirement-and-retirement-intentions-australia/latest-release)



# The win for workers that transformed Australia

Back in 1984 superannuation was only for the privileged few but the creation of Cbus Super – by workers, for workers – changed that forever.

On 1 July 1984 what's now known as Cbus Super was created as the Building Unions Superannuation Scheme, also known as BUSS.

Its origin goes back to a major industrial dispute in the building and construction industry. Building union leaders and Australian Council of Trade Union officials agreed to settle the dispute, converting an agreed wage increase into super. BUSS was established and would be controlled by an equal board of employer and employee union representatives.

The building unions campaigned, encouraging workers and employers to join, with the theme 'Make '84 a Super Year'. Many other industry super funds were formed following the creation of BUSS.



Since those early days, and due to the work of visionaries such as Tom McDonald, Garry Weaven, Mavis Robertson and many others, the super system has grown dramatically to manage \$3.5 trillion of Australians' retirement savings\*.

To celebrate the year of our 40th, we speak with founding members Allan Hughes and Albert Littler, who reflect on our origins and what Cbus Super means to them.

## Fighting for what matters

"Cbus is the best thing since sliced bread," says long-time member and retired Trustee Director Albert Littler.

Albert, known to his mates as Alby, proudly rates campaigning for the introduction of super back in 1984 as the highlight of his career.

"I only wish it was 20 years earlier. People would have been much better off."

It was while Alby was Federal Secretary of the Operative Painters' and Decorators' Union that he became involved in the fight for super.

Originally a painter and decorator, Alby later became Federal Secretary of the union and then National Senior Vice President of the CFMEU after the unions amalgamated.

**"Some people said it wouldn't work but others got behind it. With employers, when we explained that the fund would reinvest in the industry as it built up, they could see the benefits."**



**Albert (Alby) Littler**

Alby joined the Cbus Trustee Board in 1988, a role he held until his retirement in 2014. He's still passionate about super and educating the next generation.

"Education campaigns, run with the unions, are vital for helping younger people understand the importance of super."

Even in retirement Alby keeps a close eye on the industry and sometimes pays surprise visits to local sites to renew contact with his old mates.

Alby's grandchildren keep him busy in retirement and he still loves going fishing in his boat. He also enjoys the flexibility of the Super Income Stream account he set up when he retired.

"I'm happy with that as I can get an income and still take some out as a lump sum to do things if I need to."

\* Super Statistics, ASFA, [superannuation.asn.au/resources/superannuation-statistics](https://superannuation.asn.au/resources/superannuation-statistics)



## There for you when it counts

Allan Hughes was working as a carpenter when he joined Cbus Super in July 1984. He didn't take much interest in super initially, but when he became a Building Workers' Industrial Union delegate a part of his role was to monitor employers' compliance with their super obligations.

**"If the employers hadn't paid super, the guys would be told to down tools until it was paid. We always made sure the workers got their super."**

That focus on compliance continued when Allan became a Cbus Coordinator in 1994. Now that members can check their account online or in the Cbus Super app, Allan says it's much easier for members to see if their super's gone in.

"As a coordinator I used to start my car in the morning and think: 'How many people can Cbus help today?'"

"The most significant change was the mining boom in the north west of WA which resulted in a huge increase in membership. I travelled to remote areas to hold meetings with members on



**Carmel and Allan Hughes**

the camps, some of which had over 3,000 on any one night. Our members really appreciated the effort we made visiting them. Looking back, they're my most treasured memories of my time with Cbus."

As well as sharing important financial information, there were also many sad personal situations. "There were tragic deaths, including suicides, where I visited the families' homes and helped them fill in forms, often when they didn't speak English. It was very hard but good that we were able to help them."

Today, in retirement, Allan is a proud Super Income Stream member. He enjoys tending to his Balinese style garden, spending time with his grandchildren, eating out and holidaying, all with his wife Carmel who is also a member.

"I go to my local shopping centre and the retired Italian Cbus Super members come and say hello and thank us. We all owe so much to Cbus. It's given us the opportunity to retire with dignity."



# How far we've come

We've had a few names (BUSS, C+BUS, Cbus) along the way. We've merged with other funds like Media Super and EISS Super, helping us build a bigger, better fund for all. While we're big now, we've never forgotten where we came from and why we do it. Our focus is our members, so they can eventually enjoy the retirement they've worked hard for.

## Back in 1984

Australia's population:  
**15.4 million\***

Average full time annual earnings:  
**\$18,990\***

**Bob Hawke** was the  
Australian Prime Minister



**Jon Sieben** won gold in the  
200 metre butterfly at the  
Los Angeles Olympics



**INXS** had a hit with  
*Original Sin*



**Jennifer** and **Michael** were the  
most popular baby names



**1 July 1984**

BUSS is established, providing eligible workers with super and death cover. By December 1984, more than 800 employers and more than 30,000 workers are part of the scheme.



**1987**

Total and permanent disability cover is made available to eligible members.



**1996**

We open to the public, allowing members from all walks of life to join.



**2006**

Cbus Property launches – a wholly owned entity that invests in industries that employ many of our members. Since then, over 100,000 jobs have been created†.



**2007**

Cbus Super Income Stream launches, allowing eligible members to take retirement income payments from their super, while keeping it invested for the long term.



**2009**

Income Protection cover is made available to eligible sole trader members. It's later expanded and made available to more members in 2017 and 2021.



**2014**

The Cbus Super app is launched, helping members manage their super on the go.



**2017**

Front counter services expand nationally, helping members when and where they need it.



## Cbus Super now



More than  
**910,000**  
members



More than  
**215,000**  
employers



More than  
**\$85 billion** funds  
under management

As at 30 June 2023

\* mccrindle.com.au/article/topic/demographics/australia-then-and-now-30-years-of-change/

† Cbus Property Pty Ltd is a wholly owned entity of Cbus Super and is responsible for the development and management of a portfolio of Cbus Super's property investments. Estimated jobs since 2006 to June 2023 based on inductions for completed and committed developments.

# Making hard work pay off since 1984

Through strong long-term returns we've successfully grown the retirement savings of hundreds of thousands of members.

When Cbus Super started, super was a novel concept to most people. As we know, a lot's happened since then. We've had periods of very low interest rates, solid growth and rapid technological innovation, but also stock market crashes, recessions, inflation, wars, terrorism, tsunamis and even a pandemic. They've all had an impact on investment returns.

We've been through plenty of ups and downs and, together, we've got through them. Ups and downs are a normal part of investing.

## Our long-term focus

Cbus Super Chief Executive Officer Kristian Fok explains the importance of diversification and patience.

"We build broad diverse investment portfolios across a range of different asset classes including infrastructure, property, share markets, bonds, and cash – so members don't have to have all their eggs in one basket. The assets generally perform differently at any one time and, overall, your super is better off."

Since its inception in 2013, our Conservative Growth investment option (the default for Super Income Stream) has delivered an average return of 6.93% per year\*.

## The power of compound returns

Compound returns are the investment returns you get on:

- ☒ the money initially deposited in your super,
- ☒ the regular contributions you made; and
- ☒ any investment returns that get credited to your account.

Compound returns can help your retirement savings grow faster, and the best part is that you don't need to do anything – it happens automatically with super.

The effect is more significant when your super stays invested for a long time.



Since Cbus Super Income Stream launched, members have drawn down more than

**\$2.8 billion**  
in retirement income payments.

Cbus Super Income Stream members have drawn down more than \$2.8 billion for the period July 2009 to January 2024. The payments include retirement income payments, partial and full withdrawals.

\*Since inception in December 2013 to 30 June 2023. The crediting rate is based on returns minus investment fees, taxes, and until 31 January 2020, the percentage-based administration fee. Excludes fees and costs that are deducted directly from members' accounts. Past performance is not a reliable indicator of future performance.

# Pick up some super tips

After an extended break, in-person retirement planning seminars are now back.

There are now more options to suit you – whether you prefer logging on from home or meeting us face-to-face.

Our seminars are relaxed and informal sessions that anyone can join.

We've been running them online for a while now, and for many people logging on from home is easy and convenient. But there's nothing like meeting up in person and having a chat.

## Why come along?

We cover issues important to you at different stages of life, so you can get the information you need right now.

No matter where you're at right now, there's often something you can do to make your super work harder.

Choose a session time that suits you – daytime or in the evening. Partners are welcome to attend and there's no cost. The seminars are provided as part of your membership.

## Our information sessions



Retirement planning seminars



Retiree Information Forum

Face-to-face and online	Face-to-face
<b>What we'll cover:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Accessing your super in retirement</li> <li>■ How much is enough?</li> <li>■ Tax effective ways to save for retirement</li> <li>■ Retirement products and how they can work with the Age Pension</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Contribution opportunities for retired people</li> <li>■ Investment options and returns</li> <li>■ The impact of drawing down on super</li> <li>■ Making the most of Centrelink benefits and the Age Pension</li> </ul>
<b>Good for:</b>	
If you're preparing to retire, or are transitioning to retirement	If you're fully retired



Head to [cbussuper.com.au/seminars](https://cbussuper.com.au/seminars) to register for a session.



# People aren't always who they say they are

Most scams that are reported\* involve impersonation — criminals pretending to be people we should trust. Being aware is the best way to protect yourself.



## Learn how to recognise, avoid and report scams

Have you...	What you should do	How this will help
Seen a strange number on your phone? Speaking to someone but you're not sure who it is?	Ignore the call, let it go to voicemail or hang up. Call the organisation directly using contact details on their official website or app.	You'll have more time to figure out who's calling and if they're genuine.
Received an email or SMS with a link? Does it ask you to make a payment or update your details?	Never click on links, provide personal details or make payments without checking they're genuine.	It's safer to be cautious and contact an organisation directly.
Spoken to your family members about scams?	Speak to your children (and/or your parents) about the importance of keeping personal information safe.	Scammers have targeted children online, leading them to share financial information about family members.
Looked at your statements recently? Do you know what's coming out of your account?	Check your bank and super statements regularly. Speak to your service provider if you see unfamiliar transactions or payments to unknown people.	It's best to act quickly if there's an issue.



### If something bad happens, always report it

Reporting a scam helps the government, law enforcement agencies and companies stop scams and prevent them. Visit [scamwatch.gov.au](https://scamwatch.gov.au) for more information, how you can protect yourself and how to report.

## Keeping you informed

We work hard to get your super summary, annual statement and important updates to you as soon as we can. Moving forward we'll generally email you when they're ready.

- If you'd prefer to receive your super summaries and statements by post, no problem — log into your account at [cbussuper.com.au/login](https://cbussuper.com.au/login) and change your *View statements online* preference to 'no'.
- If you'd prefer to receive important updates by post you can also update your *Get Important updates electronically* preference to 'no'.

If you'd like more information, give us a call and we can help.



\* From 1 January 2023 to 30 September 2023. Scamwatch, [scamwatch.gov.au/research-and-resources/scams-awareness-week-2023](https://scamwatch.gov.au/research-and-resources/scams-awareness-week-2023)

# Understanding recent market volatility

Market ups and downs can be unsettling but they are a normal part of investing your super for the long term.

Financial markets have been volatile in recent months as inflation remains above central bank targets and the escalation of Middle East tensions affected the mood of investors. Both share and fixed interest markets have experienced periods of weakness, which is unusual as fixed interest can often provide some protection when share markets fall.

## Inflation was a key concern

For most of 2023 inflation has remained above central bank target levels and the pace of slowing was proving more gradual than central banks would like. It looked like interest rates would need to remain at current levels for longer to bring inflation under control. This was viewed as bad news for share markets, as higher interest rates could hurt both growth and profits.

The sharp rise in oil prices also added inflationary risk back into the market outlook, and the escalation of Middle East tensions contributed to global uncertainty.

In Australia, consumer demand slowed during the year, but the Reserve Bank of Australia (RBA) implemented another 0.25% interest rate rise in early November following disappointing inflation data. Encouragingly, the RBA's statement considered 'whether further tightening' is required, raising expectations that this might be the final interest rate increase.

## Looking into 2024

There was quite a strong market recovery in December in response to signs that inflation may finally be falling back to more normal levels. This has improved the economic outlook and markets are now factoring in a higher likelihood that central banks will start to lower interest rates in 2024.

## Focusing on the long term

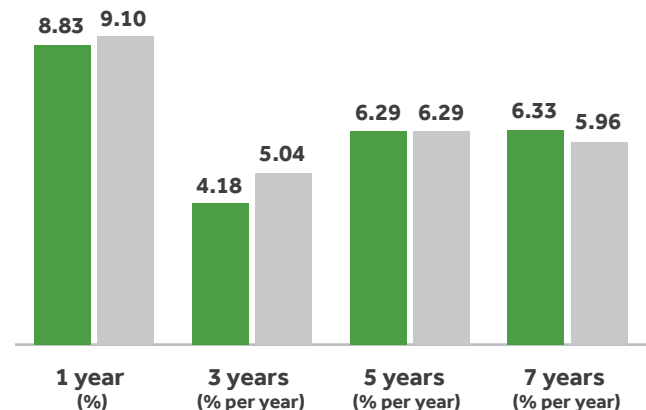
We understand market weakness can be unsettling, but it's important to remember that market ups and downs are a normal part of investing.

Most importantly, super is a long-term investment and our investment options are well diversified and designed to withstand periods of short-term market volatility.

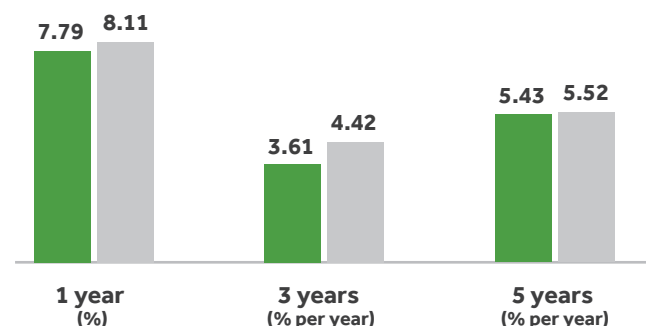
## Performance (%) to 31 December 2023

■ Conservative Growth (default)\*  
■ SuperRatings fund median†

### Fully Retired



### Transition to Retirement



Past performance is not a reliable indicator of future performance.

\* Returns are as at 31 December 2023. The return for the Conservative Growth option is based on the crediting rate, which is returns minus investment fees, taxes and until 31 January 2020, the percentage-based administration fee. Excludes fees and costs that are deducted directly from members' accounts.

† The average median return is taken from the SuperRatings PFCRS SRP25 Conservative Balanced (41-59) Index Survey, for the period ending 31 December 2023 for the Fully Retired option, and SuperRatings FCRS SR25 Conservative Balanced (41-59) Index Survey, for the period ending 31 December 2023 for Transition to Retirement option. SuperRatings is a ratings agency that collects information from super funds to enable performance comparisons – visit [superratings.com.au](https://superratings.com.au).



# Investing in social and affordable housing

Responsible investment is not only important for members' long-term returns, it also helps safeguard their quality of life in retirement.



Our investment in social and affordable housing is helping more Australians to access affordable, safe and secure housing, whilst making sense for our members from a returns perspective.

We have a long history in advocating for and investing in social and affordable housing. We're currently one of the largest individual supporters of Housing Australia's\* bond issuances, having acquired just over \$160 million out of the \$2.6 billion of bonds issued since 2018†.

## Responsible Investment – our key beliefs



We act in our members' best interest



We aim to apply a 'whole of fund' approach across our total portfolio



We advocate for a more sustainable future

## How the scheme works

Housing Australia provides loans to community housing providers to enable them to finance the development of new social and affordable dwellings. It funds these loans by issuing fixed interest bonds to investors such as Cbus Super.

We've directly provided a debt facility to a property developer in Victoria to finance the construction of 150 social and affordable apartments. This funding enabled the developer to build the apartments, which on completion have been acquired by a community housing provider.

## A range of benefits

These investments not only support new home developments for vulnerable Australians, they support the economy through job creation and deliver strong risk-adjusted returns for our members.

We're actively engaged with a range of stakeholders in this sector. We've participated in working groups focussed on supporting community housing providers to deliver more social and affordable housing. We've also participated in the Treasurer's Investor Round Table, which led to Cbus Super supporting the National Housing Accord.



**We're proud to be one of 10 super funds to be recognised as a 2023 Responsible Super Fund Leader in the Responsible Investment Association Australasia's (RIAA) latest Responsible Investment Super Study.**

Explore the insights in RIAA's latest report at [responsibleinvestment.org/resources/super-study/](https://responsibleinvestment.org/resources/super-study/)



You can read more about our approach to responsible investment at [cbussuper.com.au/sustainability](https://cbussuper.com.au/sustainability).

\* Prior to 12 October 2023, Housing Australia was known as the National Housing Finance and Investment Corporation.

† As at November 2023.

# Thank you

Our workplace coordinators play a pivotal role in providing education and support to members all over Australia.

We'd like to honour **Nick Fodor, Mark Dymock, Ian Marris, Todd Lambert and Mick McDermott** who've retired after long careers spent putting members first.

Coordinators offer support to Super Income Stream members. Visit **[cbussuper.com.au/contact](http://cbussuper.com.au/contact)** for your local Coordinator's contact details.



## Contact us

Find us on 



**1300 361 784** 8am to 8pm (AEST/AEDT)  
Monday to Friday, closed on national public holidays



Cbus Super, Locked Bag 5056  
PARRAMATTA NSW 2124



**[cbusenq@cbussuper.com.au](mailto:cbusenq@cbussuper.com.au)** | **[cbussuper.com.au](http://cbussuper.com.au)**  
Log in to chat to us online



Visit us in person in Adelaide, Brisbane, Melbourne,  
Perth and Sydney. Details: **[cbussuper.com.au/contact](http://cbussuper.com.au/contact)**

Cbus Super has fact sheets available in your language to help you understand your superannuation. You can download a copy at **[cbussuper.com.au](http://cbussuper.com.au)**

Cbus Super 提供中文说明书，帮您了解退休金。您可以访问 **[cbussuper.com.au](http://cbussuper.com.au)** 下载说明书。

Cbus Super ima prospekte na vašem jeziku kako biste mogli lakše razumjeti sve što je vezano za vašu mirovinsku štednju (superannuation). Primjerak ovog prospekta možete učitati na internetskoj stranici **[cbussuper.com.au](http://cbussuper.com.au)**

Η Cbus Super έχει ενημερωτικά φυλλάδια στη γλώσσα σας για να σας βοηθήσει να καταλάβετε τα πάντα για τη συνταξιοδότησή σας. Μπορείτε να βρείτε και να κατεβάσετε ένα αντίγραφο στη διεύθυνση **[cbussuper.com.au](http://cbussuper.com.au)**

لدى سيواس صحائف حقائق بلغتك لمساعدتك على فهم ادخارك التقاعدي. بإمكانك زيارة موقع **[cbussuper.com.au](http://cbussuper.com.au)** لتنزيل نسخة.

Cbus Super ha a disposizione delle schede informative nella vostra lingua per aiutarvi a comprendere tutto quello che riguarda il vostro pensionamento. Potete scaricare una copia sul sito **[cbussuper.com.au](http://cbussuper.com.au)**

Cbus Super는 연금에 대한 이해를 돕고자 한국어로 된 안내서를 마련했습니다. **[cbussuper.com.au](http://cbussuper.com.au)** 로 가서 안내서를 다운로드 받으실 수 있습니다.

Cbus Super raspolaga so brošuri na vašem jeziku za da vi pomogne da razberete o vašim vašim penzijskim vlogovi. Dokolku sakate da prezemete kopije od ovih brošuri, posetete ro **[cbussuper.com.au](http://cbussuper.com.au)**

Cbus Super nudi informativne listove na vašem jeziku koji vam pomaju da razumete sve što se tiče vašeg penzijskog fonda. Primerak možete preuzeti na internetu prezentaciji **[cbussuper.com.au](http://cbussuper.com.au)**

Cbus Super tiene hojas de datos en su idioma que le permitirán comprender su super. Usted puede descargar una copia en **[cbussuper.com.au](http://cbussuper.com.au)**

Cbus Super có các tờ thông tin bằng ngôn ngữ của quý vị để giúp quý vị hiểu về hưu bổng của mình. Quý vị có thể truy cập trang web **[cbussuper.com.au](http://cbussuper.com.au)** để tải về bản sao.

Stories and images have been reproduced with the individuals' consent which has not been withdrawn at the publication date. All care has been taken to ensure that the information contained herein is correct, but neither the Trustee nor its advisers accept responsibility for the content, any error or misprint, or for any person who acts on this information. Cbus News is issued by United Super Pty Ltd ABN 46 006 261 623 AFSL 233792 as Trustee for the Construction and Building Unions Superannuation Fund ABN 75 493 363 262 (Cbus and/or Cbus Super). This information is about Cbus Super. It doesn't account for your specific needs. Please consider your financial position, objectives and requirements before making financial decisions. Read the relevant Product Disclosure Statement (PDS) and Target Market Determination to decide if Cbus Super is right for you. Call **1300 361 784** or visit **[cbussuper.com.au](http://cbussuper.com.au)**. Past performance isn't a reliable indicator of future performance. Insurance is issued under a group policy with our insurer TAL Life Limited ABN 70 050 109 450 AFSL 237848.