

EXPOSURE DRAFT EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

Issued by authority of the Assistant Treasurer and Minister for Financial Services

Corporations Act 2001

Competition and Consumer Act 2010

Corporations and Competition (CS Services) Instrument 2024

Part 7.3A of the *Corporations Act 2001* (the Corporations Act) provides for the regulation of CS services. Under section 828A of the Corporations Act the Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC) may make CS services rules imposing requirements dealing with the activities, conduct and governance arrangements of CS facility licensees and associated entities, in relation to CS services. However, such requirements can only be imposed in relation to services of a type covered by determination made by the Minister under section 828B of the Corporations Act.

Subsection 828B(2) of the Corporations Act provides that the Minister may, by legislative instrument, make a determination specifying one or more classes of CS services in relation to which requirements may be imposed under the CS service rules.

Part XICB of the *Competition and Consumer Act 2010* (the CCA) provides for a negotiation and arbitration regime for persons seeking access to CS services. Under Part XICB of the CCA the negotiation and arbitration regime is only open to access seekers seeking access to a declared CS service. A CS service is a declared CS service if the CS service is covered by a Ministerial declaration made under section 153ZEF of the CCA.

Subsection 153ZEF(1) of the CCA provides that the Minister may, by legislative instrument, make a declaration specifying one or more CS services, or one or more classes of CS services, as CS services to which access may be the subject of negotiation or arbitration under Part XICB.

The purpose of the *Corporations and Competition (CS Services) Instrument 2024* (Instrument) is to:

- determine a class of CS services in relation to which ASIC may impose CS services rules.
- declare a class of CS services to which access may be the subject of negotiation or arbitration under Part XICB of the CCA.

Subsection 828B(5) of the Corporations Act provides that, in making a determination, the Minister must have regard to certain matters in relation to the effect of the determination, including the likely:

- effect on the Australian economy, and on the efficiency, integrity, and stability of the Australian financial system;
- regulatory impact of making the determination; and

- effect on the safety, fairness and effectiveness of competition in the provision of CS services.

The Minister must consider any matters raised in advice provided by ASIC, the ACCC or the RBA (collectively, the regulators) in relation to the determination. The Minister may also have regard to any other matters that they consider relevant (for example any relevant international standards or international commitments).

Subsection 828B(6) provides that the regulators may, on their own initiative, provide advice on whether the determination should be made. They must provide this advice in response to a request from the Minister. Regulators providing advice through the CFR on potential determinations following a public consultation process could be considered a provision of advice to the Minister. This would give the regulators an opportunity to provide input in determining the scope and text of the determination. Before making the determination, the Minister must have regard to such advice.

Subsection 153ZEF(4) of the CCA provides that, in making the declaration, the Minister must have regard to the following matters:

- the likely effect on the Australian economy, and on the efficiency, integrity and stability of the Australian financial system, of making the declaration;
- the likely regulatory impact of the declaration; and
- the extent to which a provider of a CS service that will be affected by the declaration has a monopoly or significant market power over the provision of the CS service.

Subsection 153ZEF(5) provides that the ACCC must advise the Minister when requested, or may provide advice at its discretion, relating to whether the declaration should be made.

The Minister must have regard to any matters raised by the ACCC in its advice. The Minister may also have regard to any other matters that they consider relevant (for example any relevant international standards or international commitments).

Subsections 153ZEF(6) and (7) provide that ASIC and the RBA may provide advice to the ACCC without being requested or the ACCC may request advice from the ASIC and the RBA for the purposes of advising the Minister on whether the declaration should be made.

This consultation on the exposure draft Instrument (covering both the determination and declaration) can be used by stakeholders to make submissions which will be considered by the regulators in forming any advice, particularly related to the matters to which the Minister must have regard in making the determination or declaration, as outlined in section 828B of the Corporations Act and section 153ZEF of the CCA.

All submissions to this consultation on the exposure draft Instrument will be shared with the regulators unless the submission is explicitly marked otherwise. This includes submissions that the submitter requests are not made public (confidential submissions). These submissions will only be shared with regulators with the caveat that they cannot be shared more widely. If stakeholders wish for their submission to be considered by Treasury only, they will need to specify this in their submission. Regulators may request follow up bilateral meetings with stakeholders if they require more information to form any advice they may give to the Minister.

Details of the exposure draft Instrument are set out in [Attachment A](#).

The Instrument is intended to be a legislative instrument for the purposes of the *Legislation Act 2003*.

The Instrument is intended to commence on the day after it is registered on the Federal Register of Legislation.

Details of the *Corporations and Competition (CS Services) Instrument 2024*

Part 1 – Preliminary

Section 1 – Name

This section provides that the name of the Instrument is the *Corporations and Competition (CS Services) Instrument 2024* (the Instrument).

Section 2 – Commencement

The Instrument commenced on the day after it is registered on the Federal Register of Legislation.

Section 3 – Authority

The Instrument is made under the *Corporations Act 2001* (the Corporations Act) and the *Competition and Consumer Act 2010* (the CCA).

Section 4 – Definitions

This section contains definitions of terms used in the Instrument.

A reference to ***cash equity*** is a reference to any financial product that is:

- a share in a body;
- an interest in a managed investment scheme or notified foreign passport fund;
- a legal or equitable right or interest in a share in a body, or an interest in a managed investment scheme or notified foreign passport fund;
- an option to acquire, by way of issue, a share in a body, an interest in a managed investment scheme or notified foreign passport fund, or a legal or equitable right in a share in a body or interest in a managed investment scheme or notified foreign passport fund; or
- a right (whether existing or future and whether contingent or not) to acquire, by way of issue, any of the above.

This definition is intended to match what industry generally considers is a financial product covered by the term ‘cash equity’. For example, the definition is intended to capture transferable custody receipts and depository interests such as shares issued by a foreign company. The definition is not intended to capture warrants or securities based on debt instruments such as debentures or Commonwealth Government Securities (CGS) depository interests.

Treasury seeks views during this exposure draft consultation on whether the definition of ‘cash equity’ adequately covers the financial products which would ordinarily be considered cash equities.

A reference to ***CCA*** in the Instrument is a reference to the *Competition and Consumer Act 2010*. A reference to ***Corporations Act*** in the Instrument is a reference to the *Corporations Act 2001*.

Part 2 – CS services in relation to which ASIC may impose rules

Section 5 – Determined classes of CS services

Section 5 specifies a class of CS services in relation to which CS services rules may impose requirements. The class of CS services covered by the Instrument is a CS service relating to cash equities (being a type of financial product). The effect of this section is that ASIC may make CS services rules imposing requirements dealing with the activities, conduct and governance arrangements of CS facility licensees and associated entities, in relation to a CS service relating to cash equities.

Part 3 – CS services to which access may be subject to negotiation or arbitration

Section 6 – Declared CS services

Section 6 declares a class of CS services to which access may be the subject of negotiations or arbitration under Part XICB of the CCA. The class of CS services covered by the Instrument is a CS service relating to cash equities. The effect of this section is that, under Part XICB, access seekers can negotiate access in relation to a CS service relating to cash equities and, where parties are unable to agree on one or more matters related to access to that CS service, the ACCC may conduct binding arbitration to resolve disputes regarding access to that CS service.