

Pendal Focus Australian Share Fund

ARSN: 113 232 812

Equity Strategies

June 2020

About the Fund

The Pendal Focus Australian Share Fund (**Fund**) is an actively managed concentrated portfolio of Australian shares.

Investment Return Objective

The Fund aims to provide a return (before fees, costs and taxes), that significantly exceeds the S&P/ASX300 (TR) Index over the medium to long term. The suggested investment timeframe is five years or more.

Description of Fund

This Fund is designed for investors who want the potential for long term capital growth and tax effective income from a concentrated portfolio of primarily 15-30 Australian shares and are prepared to accept higher variability of returns. The Fund may also hold cash and may use derivatives.

Pendal's investment process for Australian shares is based on our core investment style and aims to add value through active stock selection and fundamental company research. Pendal's core investment style is to select stocks based on our assessment of their long term worth and ability to outperform the market, without being restricted by a growth or value bias. Our fundamental company research focuses on valuation, franchise, management quality and risk factors (both financial and non-financial risk).

Derivatives may be used to reduce risk and can act as a hedge against adverse movements in a particular market and/or in the underlying assets. Derivatives can also be used to gain exposure to assets and markets.

Fund Positioning

The Fund is designed to complement a conventional, core share portfolio by providing satellite exposure to selected Australian equities with the potential for performance enhancement.

Investment Team

Pendal's nineteen member Equity team is one of the largest in the Australian fund's management industry. The portfolio manager for the Fund is Crispin Murray, who has more than 28 years' industry experience. Crispin is also Head of Equity.

Other Information

| | |
|--|---------------|
| Fund size (as at 30 Jun 2020) | \$709 million |
| Date of inception | April 2005 |
| Minimum investment | \$25,000 |
| Buy-sell spread ¹ | |
| For the Fund's current buy-sell spread information, visit www.pendalgroup.com | |
| Distribution frequency | Half-yearly |
| APIR code | RFA0059AU |

Investment Guidelines

| | |
|---|-------------|
| Ex-ante tracking error | 4.5% - 8.0% |
| Max absolute stock position | 15% |
| Min/max sector position relative to index | +/- 15% |
| Min/Max BARRA style factors | +/- 0.5 SD |
| SIRA style factors | Within 1 SD |
| Maximum cash level | 30% |
| Shorting | No |
| Borrowing | No |

Performance

| (%) | Total Returns | | Benchmark Return |
|--------------|---------------|-----------|------------------|
| | (post-fee) | (pre-fee) | |
| 1 month | 1.23 | 1.09 | 2.43 |
| 3 months | 16.97 | 17.13 | 16.79 |
| FYTD | -4.20 | -3.23 | -7.61 |
| 6 months | -9.27 | -8.77 | -10.55 |
| 1 year (pa) | -4.20 | -3.23 | -7.61 |
| 2 years (pa) | 2.06 | 2.96 | 1.46 |
| 3 years (pa) | 6.48 | 7.51 | 5.24 |
| 5 years (pa) | 7.44 | 8.52 | 6.00 |

Sector Allocation (as at 30 June 2020)

| | |
|-------------------------------|-------|
| Energy | 6.4% |
| Materials | 19.9% |
| Industrials | 15.5% |
| Consumer Discretionary | 5.2% |
| Consumer Staples | 4.0% |
| Health Care | 10.4% |
| Information Technology | 3.9% |
| Telecommunication Services | 7.2% |
| Financials ex Property Trusts | 21.2% |
| Property Trusts | 2.8% |
| Cash & other | 3.5% |

Top 10 Holdings (as at 30 June 2020)

| | |
|------------------------------------|------|
| CSL Limited | 8.5% |
| BHP Billiton Limited | 8.0% |
| Westpac Banking Corporation | 5.7% |
| Commonwealth Bank of Australia Ltd | 5.1% |
| ANZ Banking Group Limited | 4.8% |
| Telstra Corporation Limited | 4.8% |
| Atlas Arteria | 4.7% |
| Evolution Mining Limited | 4.2% |
| Metcash Trading Limited | 4.0% |
| Santos Limited | 3.6% |

Management Costs²

| | |
|------------------------------|---|
| Issuer fee ³ | 0.75% pa |
| Performance fee ⁴ | 15% x the Fund's performance (before fees) in excess of the performance hurdle. |

¹ The buy-sell spread represents transaction costs incurred whenever you invest or withdraw funds, and may vary from time to time without notice.

² You should refer to the latest Product Disclosure Statement for full details of fees and other costs you may be charged.

³ This is the fee we charge for overseeing the operations of the Fund and managing the assets of the Fund. The Issuer fee is paid from the assets of the Fund and is reflected in the unit price of your investment.

⁴ The Fund's performance fee is 15% of the Fund's performance in excess of the performance hurdle. The performance hurdle is the performance of the benchmark (S&P/ASX 300 (TR) Index) plus the issuer fee of 0.75% pa. If a performance fee is payable, it is charged in addition to the issuer fee. The fee is calculated each Business Day based on the investment performance and value of the Fund on that day. If we are entitled to a performance fee, it is paid to us as at 30 June each year.

Risks

An investment in the Fund involves risk, including:

- **Market risk:** The risk that factors affecting one or more countries that can influence the direction and volatility of an overall market, as opposed to security-specific risks.
- **Security specific risk:** The risks associated with an individual security.
- **Concentrated portfolio risk** - The Fund's investment strategy of seeking to generate high returns by investing in a concentrated portfolio of Australian shares makes the Fund more volatile than a diversified Australian share fund.

Please read the Fund's Product Disclosure Statement (**PDS**) for a detailed explanation of each of these risks.

Market review

The S&P/ASX 300 continued to benefit from positive sentiment around the pace of the economic rebound and the degree of fiscal and monetary policy support. It gained +2.4% in June, to cap a very strong +16.8% return for the quarter. The index is now down -10.6% for the calendar year to date.

This came despite some wobbles late in June as the market expressed some concern over the rise in cases in the US as it rolled back restrictions.

There was strong rotation from growth and defensives to value and more cyclical stocks during the quarter as confidence around the economy improved – although this rotation stalled late in the period.

Economic data continued to reflect the material blows inflicted by the shutdown. However in most respects it is not as bad as many as expected – while the rebound in activity and confidence indicators has also been sharp.

Real Estate (-1.5%) was the weakest sector over the month. In particular, rising concerns over the implications of a second wave weighed on the retail malls in the latter part of June.

The outcome for Energy was mixed. It was the third best sector in the quarter (+28.4%) but the worst performer in June (-2.0%). Supply discipline from OPEC and Russia and capacity closure in US shale have helped a recovery in the oil price – as has improved expectations around demand. This has driven outperformance from the oil/LNG names over several months, however sentiment was tempered in the final weeks of June.

Consumer Discretionary (+5.4%) was the best performing sector over June; and the second best performing over the quarter (+30.8%). The suppression of the virus in Australia has raised expectations that restrictions could be rolled back further and faster than many expected. At the same time, recent retail sales data is signalling a strong rebound. This has helped retail names such as Wesfarmers (WES, +11.0%), JB Hi-Fi (JBH, +15.9%) and Harvey Norman (HVN, +10.5%). The uptick in Victorian cases late in June bears watching in this regard. However at this point a return to broad-based nation-wide lockdowns looks unlikely.

Consumer Staples (+4.8%) also outperformed in June. Woolworths (WOW, +5.5%) and Coles (COL, +11.8%) did relatively well in the back end of the month as risk aversion rose, having lagged the index for a couple of months.

Health care was the worst performer over the quarter (+2.3%) although it fared relatively well in June (+3.5%). Trends have diverged within the sector. Some companies are benefiting from Covid-related demand, while the restrictions on elective surgeries have had a negative impact on others.

Technology was the best performing sector over the quarter (+48.7%), and outperformed in June alone (+3.7%). This is due in large part to the unrelenting surge from Afterpay (APT) which gained another +224% over the quarter. However the backdrop of low bond yields – and little expectation of a material increase in interest rates any time soon – is providing a tailwind to the broader growth sector.

Fund performance

The Fund underperformed its benchmark over the month of June.

Contributors

Overweight Viva Energy (VEA, +10.6%)

Viva Energy, which operates the Shell-branded petrol stations released a trading update which revealed that volumes were recovering much faster than expected as the economy re-opens. Margins were also better than consensus estimates – as was the updated profit guidance. Capital return to shareholders from the sale of the stake in Viva Energy REIT – initially delayed by the impact of Covid-19 – now looks set to resume.

Overweight JB Hi-Fi (JBH, +15.9%)

JB Hi-Fi continued to demonstrate its relative resilience in the face of the economic downturn. Management indicated that sales for the second half were 20% higher for JB Hi-Fi Australia – and up +23.5% for The Good Guys - than the prior corresponding period. This has more than offset the drag from JB Hi-Fi New Zealand, which was forced to shut during the pandemic. As a result, management upgraded their FY20 profit guidance from its pre-Covid level.

Does not hold Brambles (BXB, -6.6%)

Brambles pulled back in June as the market continued to see a rotation away from defensives. We do not hold Brambles and this helped on relative performance. The latest quarterly update from the company in April showed that the outlook for the company remains challenging in the near-term.

Detractors

Overweight Evolution Mining (EVN, -7.1%)

The improvement in sentiment early in June saw some rotation out of defensives and stocks which had done well earlier in the crisis – including gold miners such as Evolution Mining. The sector did rebound in the latter half of the month on fears of a second wave of infections. The material risks and uncertainties present in the market means Evolution continues to play an important part in the more defensive segment of the portfolio.

Overweight Qantas (QAN, -5.3%)

Qantas (QAN, -5.3%) announced that it was raising \$1.9bn and weighed on portfolio performance. This is driving some short term volatility as it plays to the bear case that the company needed money to shore up the balance sheet. In our view this is not the case; we believe the company's actions earlier in the year left it able to weather an extended period of flight restrictions. Rather, management are taking advantage of this episode to accelerate a restructuring programme designed to address some legacy costs. QAN's strategy does not change our thesis and we maintain a position in as part of the portfolio's "recovery hedge" segment.

Underweight Wesfarmers (WES, +11.1%)

Australia's retail sales rose 16.3% month-on-month in May. While it remains to be seen how much of this was the result of pent up demand and how well the rebound can be sustained, it nevertheless underpinned performance from the retail names, including WES. The portfolio benefited from exposure to this via JB Hi-Fi, which we see as strategically better placed than WES.

Strategy and outlook

The economic rebound as restrictions roll off has generally beaten expectations. Coupled with supportive data and strong policy support, it has driven a rapid bounce in equity markets.

While second wave clusters in China and Germany appear to have been contained, cases continue to rise in the US. This in itself is not causing economic issues at this point. However the fear is that we will see a re-run of March/April, with cases leading to stress on hospitals and ICUs and a surge in mortality. This would likely be a material setback for market sentiment and confidence.

As China and Germany have demonstrated, a replay of April - in terms of case-loads, hospitalisations and mortality – is not a foregone conclusion. Today's situation is different from then in several important ways.

1. The outbreaks are in less densely populated areas than New York.
2. The age profile of new cases is a lot lower this time – an average of 20 years younger.
3. There is substantially more testing. This may result in worse-looking numbers but does mean that the problem is being identified earlier than in April.
4. There is more physical distancing and use of face masks – despite well-publicised incidents to the contrary.
5. Knowledge of how to treat the virus is far better now. Previously, treatment had focused on the lungs, which are now believed to be more symptomatic in nature. Instead, treatment is now focused more on anti-inflammatories, with better outcomes as a result.

If the US is able to successfully deal with this wave without reimposing broad-based restriction or a severe spike in mortality, then it should bolster market confidence. Nevertheless, this issue comes with material risk for sentiment and potential consequences for markets in the near term.

While we remain watchful on this issue, at this point we do not expect that recent weakness will morph into a second sharp drop in markets. We are mindful that:

1. We believe that sufficient measures are being - or will be taken - to avoid the resurgence in US cases from triggering material new shutdowns, which would see a large hit to confidence. However, this remains a key risk.
2. The Victorian outbreak should be containable and - while delaying border re-opening - does not represent a significant deterioration in the economic outlook.
3. The current case rise will likely cement the need for more policy stimulus in US and Australia.
4. Economic momentum is still positive.
5. Significant liquidity remains on the sidelines in cash, which can support equity markets.

That said, we do expect the current period of consolidation to continue as the rate of improvement in economic data is likely to slow down, the market's short term positioning remains bullish, and policy news flow is in a lull to the end of July.

At this point it appears the worst case scenario has been avoided and that Australia has been reasonably successful in suppressing Covid-19, paving the way to a resumption in domestic economic activity.

However there will be divergences between industries in terms of the degree to which they recover. Some will only partially recover, while others may get back to previous capacity – or more – in relatively quick time. The uncertainty here – and mis-pricing that results – coupled with the divergence in responses to the crisis at a company level, is driving material opportunity for active management.

For more information please call **1800 813 886**,
contact your key account manager or visit pendalgroup.com

PENDAL

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