

**Markets**

<b>SFE 200 Futures</b> (9.30am AEDT)	6741	-38	-0.6
<b>NZX 50</b>	12313	-47	-0.4
<b>DJIA Futures</b>	31236	-122	-0.4
<b>S&amp;P 500 Futures</b>	3817	-51	-1.3
<b>NASDAQ Futures</b>	12682	-374	-2.9

**Local Markets Commentary**

The Australian market commences today's trade with an overnight \$A fall, a plethora of large-cap and high-profile domestic stocks trading ex-dividend today, and material domestic data due late morning, ahead of further key international data and reports tonight.

Overnight, US equities and key commodities trade sentiment mostly declined.

**Locally** today, the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) publishes finalised **trade balance** and **retail sales** for February, **11.30am AEDT**.

In addition today, **Reserve Bank of Australia (RBA)** financial stability head Jonathan Kearns is scheduled to participate in an online credit trends forum, **2.25pm**.

Stocks trading **ex-dividend** today include: **ASX, BHP, CSL, JIN, MND, PPT, RIO** and **WOW**. *Please see pp3-4 for a detailed list.*

**Regionally** today, Japan hosts a 30-year bond auction 2.45pm. A consumer confidence reading is also due, as the ASX closes.

In overnight commodities trade, **oil** turned decidedly higher.

US **gold** futures were pushed lower after rising for the first time in six sessions Tuesday.

Qingdao **iron ore** (CFR 62% fines) added US85c/t to \$US176.40/t.

LME **copper** and most other key metals swung lower overnight, **nickel** plunging below \$US17,260/t.

The **\$A** fell to ~US77.95c after rising to ~US78.30c early yesterday evening.

This morning the \$A has traded below US77.75c.

**Overseas Markets.**

INDEX	CLOSE	+/-	%
<b>Dow Jones</b>	31270	-121	-0.4
<b>S&amp;P 500</b>	3820	-51	-1.3
<b>NASDAQ</b>	12998	-361	-2.7
<b>FTSE 100</b>	6675	62	0.9
<b>DAX 30</b>	14080	40	0.3
<b>Shanghai Comp</b>	3577	68	2.0

**Overseas Markets Commentary**

Opening and intra-session sentiment diverged across major European, UK and US equities markets overnight, amid key report

**Australia – finalised February trade balance & retail sales – 11.30am AEDT**

**Monday 8 March – ASX trade and settlement as normal. Public holidays across the ACT and several States.**

**Today's Stock Watch**
**Myer Holdings (MYR)**

76.3% higher, \$43.0M interim NPAT.

13% lower, \$1.398.0B sales revenue.

\$201.1M net cash.

**QBE Insurance Group (QBE)**

QBE has appointed Beazley Plc CEO Andrew Horton as CEO, to take over from interim CEO Richard Pryce 1 September.

Mr Pryce will remain with QBE in an advisory role until the end of December.

**Synlait Milk (SM1)**

Withdrawing FY21 guidance, due to several factors adversely impacting earnings.

Details lodged this morning.

Planning to lodge interim results 29 March.

**4DMedical Ltd (4DX)**

\$40M worth of commitments received for a \$A1.55-per-share placement, in support of the commercialisation of the 4DX lung function scanner.

4DX will also host a \$3M SPP at \$A1.55 per share.

A webinar was scheduled to commence 9.30am AEDT, to also highlight the MRFF grant awarded to 4DX.

4DX traded at \$1.60 - \$1.92 the five sessions prior to calling a trading halt.

**WestStar Industrial (WSI)**

WSI's SIMPEC has secured with JV partner IronMerge a \$15M contract with Pilbara Minerals' (ASX: PLS) Pilgangoora lithium-tantalum project.

**Resources**
**Black Rock Mining (BKT)**

Australia's Foreign Investment Review Board (FIRB) will not oppose POSCO's proposed acquisition of 15% of BKT.

**Renascor Resources (RNU)**

South Australia Siviour battery anode material project update lodged this morning, including in-principle support for financing assistance.



releases and as the \$US and longer-term US bond yields rose.

In the **UK**, chancellor Rishi Sunak delivered an annual **budget** which included employee furlough and business rates holiday scheme extensions, additional grants for the self-employed, further rates concessions for businesses forced to close, and a 6% large business tax increase from 2023 tempered by investment-related concessions.

Associated updated forecasts included 4% GDP growth for 2021 and 7.3% for 2022.

Across the Atlantic, the **US Federal Reserve's** district-by-district economic roundup (beige book) concluded modest growth in economic activity for January through mid-February

Further, the report revealed businesses had expressed general optimism in relation to the potential effects of Covid-19 vaccination programs.

For its part, the Bundesbank (Germany's central bank) annual report release proved surprising, with no annual payment to go to the German Government for the first time since 1979, in favour of bolstering risk provisions.

The bank predicted GDP would return to pre - Covid-19 levels early 2022, but would drop for the March quarter this year.

Among a swag of overnight **data** releases, the **euro zone's** January producer prices came in flat for the month, after falling 1.1% during December. Prices were 1.4% higher year-on-year.

The region's overall February services PMI was finalised at 45.7, an improvement on January and better than forecast, but remaining decidedly contractionary.

**Germany's** 45.7 final services PMI undershot both expectations and the January reading.

In the **UK**, the 49.5 final February services PMI reading represented a 10-point jump from January.

Meanwhile, **Italy** reported a 1.9% drop in December quarter GDP for the three months. Against the December quarter 2019, the nation's GDP tumbled 6.6%.

In the **US**, in addition to the Fed's beige book, the ISM's February services sector activity index proved disappointing, falling to 55.3 from 58.7 and following forecasts of 58.2.

In addition, both the employment and new orders component indices declined.

A February private sector employment report estimated 117,000 additional jobs, against 195,000 for January and expectations of a new 155,000 increase.

Weekly mortgage applications rose 0.5%, after dropping 11.4% the previous week.

The increase came despite mean 30-year mortgage rates rising to 3.23% from 3.08%.

**Tonight** in the **US, Federal Reserve** chair Jerome Powell is scheduled to speak publicly middle of the day (EST).

Among US data releases, January factory orders, a February job cuts report, a final December quarter productivity reading and weekly new unemployment claims are due.

Elsewhere, the **European Central Bank** (ECB) publishes an economic bulletin.

Companies scheduled to report earnings later today and tonight include: Broadcom, Costco, CRH, Kroger, Merck and Thales.

## Pre-Open Announcements

### EZZ Life Science Holdings (\* EZZ)

Skin care products manufacturer and distributor completed a stellar ASX listing yesterday, following a \$6M IPO at 50c per share.

Opened at 68c and traded at 60c - \$1.25 before settling at \$1.16.

~9.33M shares changed hands across 2586 transactions.

12M quoted shares.

### Resources

#### Torian Resources (TNR)

TNR has extended by two months an exclusive call option agreement to acquire the 172,662ha Tarmoola Station and associated mining services business Carhill Contracting.

TNR anticipates the majority of the purchase price will be debt-funded.

TNR is seeking to fast-track Mt Stirling gold project activity.

#### Redbank Copper (RCP)

Three RCP board members, including executive chair Michael Hannington, have qualified for a combined 3M shares to be converted from performance rights following the completion of an ~\$7.43M placement at 7.25c per share.

RCP traded at 10c – 14c yesterday, settling at 13c.

### Energy

#### Brookside Energy (BRK)

Pleading ignorance in response to an ASX query.

BRK traded at 1.1c – 1.7c yesterday, settling at 1.4c following high-volume trade, and after closing the previous five sessions at 1c – 1.1c.

### Trading Halts

Company	Code	Resuming
Ausmex Mining Group	AMG	4 Mar
Thomson Resources	TMZ	4 Mar
Core Lithium	CXO	5 Mar
Credit Intelligence	CI1	5 Mar
ioneer Ltd	INR	5 Mar
Kula Gold	KGD	5 Mar

### Suspensions *(select)*

Company	Code	Since
333D Ltd	T3D	26 Feb
Atrum Coal	ATU	11 Feb
Bellevue Gold	BGL	3 Mar
Calima Energy	CE1	16 Feb
MSM Corporation International	MSM	9 Feb



Berkeley Group, BHP, Rio Tinto, Standard Chartered trade ex-dividend on the FTSE 100.

### Commodities

COMMODITY	CLOSE	\$/oz	+/-	%
<b>Gold (NY) (Apr)</b>	<b>1715.8</b>	oz	-17.8	<b>-1.0</b>
<b>Silver (NY) (May)</b>	<b>26.387</b>	oz	-0.49	<b>-1.8</b>
<b>Gold (LON) (1 Mar)</b>	<b>1734</b>	oz		
<b>Platinum</b>	<b>1157</b>	oz	-41	<b>-3.4</b>
<b>WTI Crude (NYMEX Apr)</b>	<b>61.28</b>	bbbl	1.53	<b>2.6</b>
<b>Brent Crude (ICE EUR May)</b>	<b>64.07</b>	bbbl	1.37	<b>2.2</b>
<b>Iron Ore (NYMEX,CHN,62%) (2 Mar)</b>	<b>173.16</b>	t		
<b>Copper (LME Ind)</b>	<b>9110</b>	t	-58	<b>-0.6</b>
<b>Nickel</b>	<b>17255</b>	t	-1416	<b>-7.6</b>
<b>Aluminium</b>	<b>2204</b>	t	-10	<b>-0.5</b>
<b>Lead</b>	<b>2050</b>	t	-32	<b>-1.5</b>
<b>Zinc</b>	<b>2780</b>	t	-73	<b>-2.6</b>
<b>Tin</b>	<b>24445</b>	t	155	<b>0.6</b>

### Commodities Commentary

**Oil** – traders focused overnight on US data, and an OPEC+ meeting scheduled to commence later today, but from which some were reporting expectations of status quo regarding production curbs from next month.

Initially, a further easing of restrictions had been anticipated.

Overnight, Russia was reported to be continuing to push for this.

A weekly US petroleum inventories report, published overnight, included a 21.56MMbbl jump in stored crude, due in part to the impact of recent severe winter weather and associated power outages, which reduced overall refinery activity to ~56% of capacity.

In addition, net crude imports rose by 1.66MMbbl/d.

US petrol stocks were reported to have dropped by 13.62MMbbl, and distillate inventories by 9.72MMbbl, this also mostly attributed to the impacts of the severe weather across the US south east.

Overnight Tuesday, post-US settlement, an industry association report had included an estimated 7.36MMbbl rise in stored crude for last week.

**Gold** – Comex futures turned lower again overnight, as US treasury yields and the \$US rose.

UBS lowered forecasts by \$US150/oz, to \$US1650/oz by year's end.

**Base metals** – overnight LME trade appeared impacted by another \$US increase, some disappointing data releases and a general decline in equities sentiment.

**Aluminium** had jumped the previous session on speculation of further emissions restrictions to come out of this week's 'two sessions' annual parliamentary meeting.

Among data releases, yesterday Caixin released a 51.5 estimate for China's February services PMI, from 52.0 for January.

Influential January-February data expected out of China over the coming weekend could produce some additional caution from tonight's trade.

Japan's final February services PMI reading was reported yesterday at a remaining contractionary mode 46.3 from 46.1.

Oliver's Real Food	OLI	26 Feb
Pilot Energy	PGY	12 Feb
Torian Resources	TNR	26 Feb

### Ex-Dividends

Code	Ex-Div	Div (c)	Franking (%)	Yield (%)
<b>ABA</b>	Today	<b>19</b>	100	1.60
<b>AKG</b>	Today	<b>0.5</b>	100	8.81
<b>AMO</b>	Today	<b>1.5</b>	100	1.28
<b>ASX</b>	Today	<b>112.4</b>	100	3.48
<b>AUB</b>	Today	<b>16</b>	100	2.62
<b>BHP</b>	Today	<b>129.79</b>	100	3.44
<b>BLX</b>	Today	<b>4.2</b>	100	2.88
<b>CAJ</b>	Today	<b>0.5</b>	100	2.90
<b>CGO</b>	Today	<b>2</b>	100	2.78
<b>CSL</b>	Today	<b>134.14</b>	0	1.10
<b>DGH</b>	Today	<b>2.25</b>	0	3.60
<b>EBO</b>	Today	<b>35.12</b>	95.77	2.44
<b>EGN</b>	Today	<b>0.5</b>	100	3.67
<b>EPD</b>	Today	<b>1.5</b>	0	0.00
<b>FRI</b>	Today	<b>2</b>	100	3.14
<b>FWD</b>	Today	<b>6</b>	100	1.87
<b>HIT</b>	Today	<b>5.5</b>	100	4.10
<b>IEL</b>	Today	<b>8</b>	0	0.66
<b>JIN</b>	Today	<b>18</b>	100	2.57
<b>MND</b>	Today	<b>24</b>	100	3.01
<b>NEC</b>	Today	<b>5</b>	100	2.30
<b>NHF</b>	Today	<b>10</b>	100	2.46
<b>PAC</b>	Today	<b>10</b>	100	6.36
<b>PCG</b>	Today	<b>5</b>	100	4.17
<b>PME</b>	Today	<b>7</b>	100	0.26
<b>PNI</b>	Today	<b>11.7</b>	100	1.66
<b>PPE</b>	Today	<b>4.5</b>	100	1.32
<b>PPT</b>	Today	<b>84</b>	100	4.86
<b>RIO</b>	Today	<b>517.11</b>	100	4.36
<b>RMC</b>	Today	<b>2.4</b>	100	0.80
<b>SFC</b>	Today	<b>45</b>	100	3.94
<b>SSR</b>	Today	<b>4.84</b>	0	0.00
<b>SXY</b>	Today	<b>0.5</b>	96.5	0.00
<b>WOW</b>	Today	<b>53</b>	100	2.36
ALD	Tomorrow	23	100	3.15
ALI	Tomorrow	3.5	100	2.17
ECL	Tomorrow	2	100	2.63
LIC	Tomorrow	3	100	0.42
MLD	Tomorrow	2.5	100	4.65
SGM	Tomorrow	12	100	0.41
VEE	Tomorrow	0.43	0	0.41
AGD	Mon	0.8	0	0.00
IMD	Mon	1	100	0.99
KGN	Mon	16	100	0.94

**Exchange Rates**

CURRENCIES	LAST	+/-	%
<b>AUD – USD</b>	0.7774	-0.0047	<b>-0.60</b>
<b>EUR – USD</b>	1.2063	-0.0025	<b>-0.21</b>

**Australian Data Today**

ABS	Trade balance	Feb
ABS	Retail sales	Feb

**US Data Tonight**

Initial jobless claims	27 Feb
Challenger job cuts	Feb
Productivity (final)	Dec Q
Factory orders	Jan

**Other Overseas Data Today & Tonight**

<b>Japan</b>	Consumer confidence (4pm AEDT)	Feb
<b>UK</b>	Construction PMI	Feb
<b>UK</b>	Domestic vehicle sales	Feb
<b>Euro zone</b>	Retail sales	Jan
Euro zone	ECB economic bulletin	Mar
Euro zone	Unemployment	Jan
Euro zone	Construction PMI	Feb

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LBL	Mon	0.6	100	1.93
NCK	Mon	40	100	4.52
NST	Mon	9.5	100	1.71
PFP	Mon	6	100	3.30
REA	Mon	59	100	0.77
RHC	Mon	48.5	100	0.93
SIQ	Mon	32	100	2.57
SNZ	Mon	5.52	0	0.91

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