

Monthly Investment Reports

January 2019



Funds Update

Global markets staged a strong rebound during January, recovering a good part of the losses incurred in the last quarter of 2018. World financial markets have been volatile since peaking last September, with three main concerns:

- Tightening US monetary policy,
- President Trump's trade wars, and
- China's economic slowdown.

The US Federal Reserve (the Fed) has been on a well-articulated path of "normalizing" rates following strong economic growth. The most recent rate increase in December was anticipated, but the big question for markets was this: Will the Fed continue on the rate rise path, or pause and wait to see how the economy responds to earlier actions? The answer was delivered in the Fed's January Statement as follows:

"In light of global economic and financial developments and muted inflation pressures, the Committee will be patient as it determines what future adjustments to the target range for the federal funds rate may be appropriate."

While questions remain whether the Fed will apply the right balance between ensuring the US economy continues to grow, and tapping the brakes to protect against the return of inflation, markets have been reassured that Fed Chairman Powell is alert to the risks of "over-shooting" with its rate rises. There is a good chance the Fed will do whatever is needed to maintain steady growth, albeit a bit slower than in 2018.

President Trump's trade measures have been the subject of much discussion, but not all that much has actually happened so far: skirmishes with Canada, Mexico and, mostly, China rather than full-out trade war. The IMF has estimated that to date, announced actions might take around half a percent off growth in the US and China, but these measures have not yet been implemented. The threatened increase in US tariffs on \$200 billion of imports from China, from 10% to 25%, has not yet occurred. It is possible that a deal with China may still be negotiated. Certainly it is difficult to imagine why Xi Jinping and Donald Trump would not want to put this battle behind them.

There are legitimate concerns about China's economic slowdown. China has provided a third of global growth in recent decades. Debt levels in China are uncomfortably high. For decades, the dynamism of the private sector has offset inefficient state-owned enterprises, but this beneficial transition could be reversing under Xi. There are other imbalances which need correction, especially investment which remains unsustainably high.

Yet China has demonstrated resilience and capacity to correct imbalances, and further growth is likely albeit at more moderate rates. China has a superb track record

of managing even the most difficult challenges, and its "command economy" means that it is better able to manage its transition than most other economies.

In Australia, there can be few doubts that the domestic economy is slowing more sharply than expected. A range of data has weakened recently: retail sales have slowed; car sales slumped to a 6 year low; sentiment measures have fallen below average. Households are being forced to curb growth in spending as a result of weak income growth, and confidence has taken a beating from heightened volatility in financial markets and falling house prices. The forthcoming Federal election is certain to make matters even worse.

For the Reserve Bank of Australia (the RBA), the data comes on top of third quarter national accounts that already showed disappointing conditions across the consumer and confirms that the weakness appears to be ongoing. The RBA has left official rates steady at "emergency low levels" of 1.5% for two and a half years. Market expectations have been that the next move in rates would be an increase. But following recent economic weakness, including an acceleration in the fall in house prices across Sydney and Melbourne, it is now equally likely that the next move in rates will be a cut.

Much will hinge on the strength of the jobs market, with unemployment at 5%. Despite the low jobless rate, this has not translated into a significant lift in wages. Some measures of job advertisements have recently turned negative for the first time in three years. If the job market tightened, and inflation picked up, then rates would have to rise. But if the economy is softer than anticipated, and income and consumption growth disappoint, then the RBA would be forced to reassess the situation. At present, the probabilities are finely poised.

While global and local uncertainties remain, we continue to apply our rigorous investment process and retain cash buffers in portfolios to reduce risk and to fund new opportunities. We utilise volatile market conditions to selectively increase exposure to high quality companies when they are trading at attractive prices.

We expect global market volatility to continue for a while longer as asset markets adjust to an incrementally higher cost of money. And yet we are impressed with the range of investment opportunities still available for long term capital. Our view is that the market environment remains supportive of steady but not spectacular growth.

Thank you for your continued support of Clime.

Adrian Ezquerro
Chief Investment Officer

Clime Australian Income Fund

The equity market had a strong start in 2019, while the Fund registered a positive return of +1.34%. Given that CAIF is a medium risk fund with emphasis on price stability, the +1.34% net return is a satisfactory outcome on a risk adjusted basis.

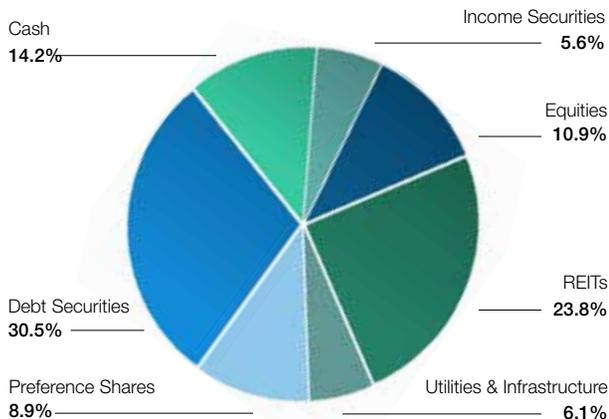
The US 10y treasury yield continued to fall slightly as investors noted the US Federal Reserve's more dovish view about the economy, finishing the month at 2.63%. The Australian 10y bond yield also finished lower at 2.24%. In these uncertain times, the Fund's strategy is to focus on the gradual accumulation of best risk-adjusted yield assets across the entire capital structure to balance income with price stability.

With the expectation that the fund rate will probably be maintained at 2.25% to 2.5% for some time, both the US and Australia's 10-year notes retreated from their levels of late November 2018. This is positive for yield / income securities such as REITs, Utilities and Infrastructure, and income notes.

In January, the Fund topped up several high-quality income names, including Australian Unity Office (AOF), Arena REIT (ARF) and NAB Income Securities (NABHA) prior to it going ex-distribution.

Consistent with the Fund's objective of providing capital stability while generating regular quarterly income, the Fund's one-year volatility of 2.83% remains markedly below that of the ASX200 Index (9.68% measured over the same period).

Asset Allocation



Snapshot

Portfolio Return (January)	Recent Distribution	Income (Annual)	Fund Size (Cum Distribution)
1.34%	0.8859 (cents per unit)	4.0%	\$21.0m

Performance and Volatility of Return (31/01/19)

	1 month	3 months	6 months	1 year	2 years	3 years	Inception
Portfolio Return [^]	1.34%	1.65%	1.22%	2.35%	5.21%	7.08%	6.34%
Income	0.00%	0.82%	1.55%	3.95%	3.92%	3.96%	3.53%
Capital Growth	1.34%	0.83%	-0.32%	-1.54%	1.24%	3.00%	2.72%
Volatility	-	-	-	2.83%	2.50%	3.08%	3.29%

Note: Compound (geometric) returns are used in the above table's segmentation of Income and Capital Growth. This may result in small differences when compared with a simple addition of Income and Capital Growth components.

[^]Portfolio return is based on the change of the unit price including distributions but excluding franking credits. Franking credits will enhance this portfolio return, and historically this has added about 0.30% pa to the return of the Fund.

*Inception: Wholesale Units: 1 July 2015. Performance figures for more than 1 year are annualised, calculated after all applicable fees and taxes. Performance figures compare unit price to unit price for the given period. The returns do not include the benefit of franking credits.

** Volatility is based on the annualised standard deviation of weekly price movements.

Distributions

Period Ending	Wholesale Units (cents per unit)
31 December 2018	0.8859
30 September 2018	0.8045
30 June 2018	1.8352 (+0.2025 franking credits)
31 March 2018	0.7455

Top 5 Holdings

Security	Weight%
Multiplex Convertible Note	2.8%
National Bank NABHA	2.6%
MBLHB Perp Notes	2.6%
Centuria Diversified Property Fund	2.5%
Elanor 7.1% 171022	2.5%