



MARKET RELEASE

17 February 2006

ASX RESULTS FOR THE HALF-YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2005

ASX ANNOUNCES STRONG PROFIT GROWTH, RECORD HALF-YEAR RESULT

SUMMARY vs. PREVIOUS CORRESPONDING PERIOD

- Record normal net profit after tax of \$64.1 million, an increase of 24.7%
- Interim dividend of 56.2 cents per share fully franked compared to 44.2 cents per share
- Normal earnings per share of 62.4 cents, compared with 50.0 cents per share
- Record normal revenue of \$148.8 million, an increase of 8.2%
- 6.9% decrease in normal expenses to \$66.2 million
- Capital expenditure remains low, at \$4.5 million
- Average daily SEATS trading volumes increase 31.8%
- Average daily Options contract volumes increase 6.8%
- Total new market capital raised increase 44.8%
- Total market capitalisation reaches \$1.1 trillion

** ASX's accounts for 6 months to 31 December 2005 were determined based on International Financial Reporting Standards as adopted in Australia (AIFRS). This is the first period for which ASX has applied AIFRS. ASX's accounts were previously prepared based on Australian Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (AGAAP).

It is important to note that comparisons to previous corresponding periods are relative to prior year accounts restated to AIFRS. Caution should be applied when comparing results presented under AIFRS against results presented under AGAAP.

ASX ANNOUNCES STRONG PROFIT GROWTH, RECORD HALF YEAR RESULT

ASX today announced a record normal profit of \$64.1 million for the six months ended 31 December 2005. The result is a 24.7% increase on the \$51.4 million achieved during the previous corresponding period to 31 December 2004. Including one-off significant items, net profit was \$71.1 million.

The profit was achieved on normal operating revenue of \$148.8 million, which excludes interest and dividend revenue and the profit on the sale of ASX's interest in ASX Perpetual Registrars Limited. Revenue was 8.2% higher than the \$137.5 million achieved during the previous corresponding period.

The ASX Board has also declared an interim dividend of 56.2 cents per share fully franked, a 27.1% increase on the previous interim dividend of 44.2 cents per share. This payment maintains the Board policy to pay 90% of normal net profit after tax as fully franked dividends to shareholders.

In addition, the Board has decided to return \$50 million of capital to shareholders, by way of either on-market share buy-back or capital reduction. The timing and arrangements for this will be announced shortly. This follows an assessment of ASX's capital requirements and is in keeping with ASX's policy to return capital that is surplus to operational and investment needs. The Board will continue to maintain an ongoing assessment of ASX's capital position.

Commenting on the results, ASX Managing Director and CEO, Tony D'Aloisio said: "I believe this is a very strong result, one that reflects the buoyant market conditions throughout the reporting period. It also shows management's commitment to appropriate cost control and efficiency measures to deliver better value for shareholders.

"I also believe it reflects the loyalty and efforts of our customers and ASX staff. They are our lifeblood and I thank them for their ongoing support."

Financial and operating performance (compared to previous corresponding period)

- Revenue from listings increased by 9.7% to \$38.3 million, and now accounts for just over a quarter of total operating revenue. There were 129 new listings, compared with 118 for the previous corresponding period. Subsequent capital raisings by existing listings was again a strong contributor.
- Revenue from equities trading, clearing and settlement increased by 6.1% to \$62.4 million. Daily average equities trades were 105,271, an increase of 31.8% over the previous corresponding period.
- Revenue from derivatives increased by 12.4% to \$23.5 million. Daily average options contracts were 88,186, a 6.8% increase on this period last year.
- 2,145 new warrants were listed compared to 1,484 during the previous corresponding period.
- Revenue from information services increased 10.2% to \$17.3 million.
- Normal expenses decreased by 6.9% to \$66.2 million.
- Normal EBIT increased to \$82.6 million, a 24.4% increase on the \$66.4 million recorded for the previous corresponding period.
- The sale of ASX's 50% share of ASX Perpetual Registrars Limited contributed \$9.8 million before tax.

Summary financial information

	Six months to 31 Dec 2005 \$m	Six months to 31 Dec 2004 \$m
Normal revenue	148.8	137.5
Normal expenses	66.2	71.1
Normal EBIT	82.6	66.4
Net profit after tax	64.1	51.4
Significant Items After Tax	6.9	0.0
Net profit after tax	71.1	51.4
	cents	cents
Earnings per share (EPS)	69.2	50.0
Interim Dividend per share (DPS)	56.2	44.2

Dividend information

- Ex date	27 February 2006
- Record Date	3 March 2006
- Payment date	17 March 2006

For further information

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