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Press Release

## Foreign Exempt Companies to become eligible for Index Inclusion

**Sydney, 11 August, 2008** - Standard & Poor's Index Services (S&P) and the Australian Securities Exchange (ASX) today announced, after consulting the market, that Foreign Exempt companies listed on ASX will be eligible for index inclusion, effective 1 September 2008.

Under this change, Foreign Exempt companies listed on ASX will now be eligible for index inclusion, provided the primary listing of the stock is on a major exchange within a developed market. Foreign Exempt companies will still be required to meet all the standard index inclusion criteria in the S&P Index methodology such as capitalisation and liquidity thresholds.

Current index methodology extends index eligibility to Foreign Domiciled companies, but Foreign Exempt companies (which are a sub-category of Foreign Domicile companies) are not eligible. The ineligibility of Foreign Exempt companies – due to previously held concerns about the nature and timing of disclosure of corporate actions – is an anomaly for companies listed on exchanges in developed markets whose disclosure requirements for corporate actions are broadly comparable with those of ASX.

Foreign Exempt companies currently listed on ASX, and which may be eligible for future index inclusion includes, Alcoa Inc (AAI), AngloGold Ashanti Ltd (AGG), Constellation Brands Inc (CBR), Coca-Cola Hellenic Bottling Company S.A. (CHB), and Newmont Mining Corporation (NEM).

While the change is not expected to have an immediate impact on the index constituency, it will create a more favourable environment for the listing of international companies in Australia, and give Australian investors access to broader investment opportunities in the local market.

S&P's Associate Director Simon Karaban said, *"This is a positive step toward ensuring that Australia's benchmark equity market indices reflect the increasing globalisation of the Australian market. The end result is more representative indices which better meet the needs of index users."*

ASX General Manager Equity Markets, Richard Murphy, said, *"This change removes a key impediment to large international listings on ASX. Australian fund managers, investment banks, brokers and ASX all have a strong interest in growing the international side of ASX-listed equities so that our market keeps pace with the growth in Australian superannuation."*

More information on the amended index methodology reflecting the change can be found at [www.standardandpoors.com/au/indices](http://www.standardandpoors.com/au/indices).

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**About Standard & Poor's**

Standard & Poor's, a division of The McGraw-Hill Companies (NYSE:MHP), is the world's foremost provider of independent credit ratings, indices, risk evaluation, investment research and data. With approximately 6,300 employees located in 20 countries and markets, Standard & Poor's is an essential part of the world's financial infrastructure and has played a leading role for more than 140 years in providing investors with the independent benchmarks they need to feel more confident about their investment and financial decisions.

For more information, visit <http://www.standardandpoors.com>.

**About ASX**

As one of the world's top-10 listed exchange groups measured by market capitalisation, the ASX Group (ASX:ASX) was created through the merger of the Australian Stock Exchange and the Sydney Futures Exchange. The ASX Group operates under the brand Australian Securities Exchange.

The Australian Securities Exchange spans the markets for corporate control, capital formation and price discovery, and functions as an operator, supervisor, central counterparty clearer and payments system facilitator. The diverse domestic and international customer base of the Australian Securities Exchange includes issuers of a variety of listed securities, corporates, investment banks, trading banks, fund managers, hedge funds, commodity trading advisers, and proprietary and retail traders.

More information on ASX can be found on our website [www.asx.com.au](http://www.asx.com.au)