

Markets

SFE 200 Futures (9.30am AEST)	7051	15	0.2
NZX 50	12675	38	0.3
DJIA Futures	33932	9	0.0
S&P 500 Futures	4164	1	0.0
NASDAQ Futures	14014	0	0.0

Local Markets Commentary

The Australian market commences Friday trade with a batch of influential economic indicators due out of China middle of the day, following data released by China after yesterday's ASX trade.

Overnight, US equities markets rallied from open, and most key commodities recorded price gains.

Locally today, no major economic indicators are scheduled for release.

Stocks trading ex-dividend include **CCL**. Please see p3 for a detailed ex-dividends list.

Regionally today, **China** reports March quarter **GDP**, **midday AEST**, together with **fixed asset investment**, **industrial production**, **retail sales** and employment updates.

A March residential **property price index** is also expected today.

Post-ASX trade yesterday, China revealed **foreign direct investment** (FDI) had grown 39.9% year-on-year during January – March. This followed a January-February year-on-year increase reported at 31.5%.

In overnight commodities trade, **oil** extended Wednesday's gains at a more moderate pace.

US **gold** futures turned and rallied.

Qingdao **iron ore** (CFR 62% fines) rose \$US4.87/t to \$US178.41/t. Brazil-origin CFR 65% fines hit \$US211.10/t after rising by \$US6.10/t.

Nymex (CFR China, 62% Fe) iron ore continued higher, surpassing \$US171.40/t.

LME **copper** picked up the pace of this week's gains. **Nickel** turned to settle slightly lower. **Aluminium** continued higher.

The **\$A** declined to ~US77.50c after trading at ~US77.55c early yesterday evening.

Overseas Markets.

INDEX	CLOSE	+/-	%
Dow Jones	34036	305	0.9
S&P 500	4170	46	1.1
NASDAQ	14039	181	1.3
FTSE 100	6984	44	0.6
DAX 30	15255	46	0.3
Shanghai Comp	3399	-18	-0.5

Today's Stock Watch
Suncorp Group (SUN)

Proceedings were filed against SUN subsidiary AAI in the Supreme Court of Victoria yesterday regarding the sale of add-on insurance through MTA Insurance.

SUN confirms the group intends to defend the class action.

Monadelphous Group (MND) / Rio Tinto (RIO)

MND has settled a RIO claim regarding a fire at a RIO iron ore processing facility, Cape Lambert, WA, early 2019.

The claim was settled out of court and is confidential.

MND says the settlement is covered by insurance proceeds.

Mayne Pharma Group (MYX)

US FDA approval in hand for the new drug application for the NEXTSTELLIS oral contraceptive.

Brambles Ltd (BXB)

BXB has completed the merger of its Kegstar keg rental business with US keg specialist MicroStar.

Auckland International Airport (AIA)

February traffic statistics included a 71% year-on-year drop in the total passenger tally, due to Covid-19 – related restrictions imposed by both New Zealand and Australia.

Resources
Alumina Ltd (AWC)

AWC's AWAC JV partner Alcoa reported a \$US175M March quarter net profit and \$US2.87B revenue in the US overnight.

The AWAC average realised price rose \$26/t during the March quarter to \$298/t.

AWC's net cash flow came in at \$62M.

AWC says Handysize freight costs are coming down following a February jump.

Neometals Ltd (NMT)

MoU secured with titanium slag producer Jiuxing Titanium Materials, for NMT to potentially supply a mixed gravity concentrate, or separate ilmenite and iron vanadium concentrate, from the Barrambie titanium-vanadium project, Western Australia.

Mineral Resources (MIN)

Shipped 4.117Mt of iron ore during the March quarter, against 2897Mt for the March quarter 2020, and following 4364Mt for the December quarter 2020.

The average realised price rose 5% for the quarter, to \$US144.8/t.

Mt Marion lithium output fell 16% for the quarter, due to ore yields. Against the March quarter 2020, production was up 22%, to 108.696t.

Overseas Markets Commentary

European, UK and US equities markets opened higher overnight, and despite some chop on the European side of the Atlantic, all major indices continued through to positive settlements, following several encouraging material data releases and some stronger-than-anticipated earnings reports.

The US administration announced multiple sanctions against Russia, citing an array of grievances including US election meddling, illegal cyber activity, and further Ukraine menacing in addition to the Crimea occupation.

The sanctions followed US-Russia presidential discussions earlier in the week, and elicited a sharp and immediate response from Russia's foreign ministry, which summonsed the US ambassador to hear Russia's grievances.

Among overnight **data** releases, the final March CPI estimate for **Germany** confirmed 0.5% growth for the month and 1.7% year-on-year.

A batch of largely forecast-beating **US** releases included March retail sales, which jumped 9.8% for the month, following a 2.7% February drop and expectations of a 4.5% improvement.

Against March 2020, sales were 27.7% higher.

The Philadelphia Fed manufacturing index rose to an expansionary 50.2 from a contraction-mode 44.5, against expectations of continued contraction.

The New York Fed (State Empire) manufacturing index came in at 26.3, from 17.4, following forecasts of a decline to 17.0.

Weekly new unemployment claims tallied 576,000, against expectations of 715,000 and following 769,000 the previous week.

March industrial production rose 1.4% for the month, after a 2.6% February fall, but a 3.1% rise had been anticipated.

Against March 2020, output proved 1.0% higher.

February business inventories came in 0.5% higher, following forecasts for a 0.3% rise.

The NAHB housing market index rose by one point to 83.

Tonight in the **US**, March building permits and housing starts are due, together with the University of Michigan's preliminary April consumer sentiment reading.

Elsewhere, the euro zone reports February trade figures.

Companies scheduled to report earnings later today and tonight include: BNY Mellon, HDFC Bank, Honeywell, Morgan Stanley, PNC Financial Services, Reliance Industries and Will Semiconductor.

In overnight corporate news, **Bank of America** and **Citigroup** reported profit and revenue that exceeded expectations.

Commodities

COMMODITY	CLOSE	\$US/	+/-	%
Gold (NY) (Jun)	1766.8	oz	30.5	1.8
Silver (NY) (May)	25.96	oz	0.44	1.7
Gold (LON) (14 Apr)	1736	oz		
Platinum	1189	oz	21	1.8
WTI Crude (NYMEX May)	63.46	bbbl	0.31	0.5
Brent Crude (ICE EUR Jun)	66.94	bbbl	0.36	0.5
Iron Ore (NYMEX,CHN,62%)	171.42	t	1.59	0.6

Pre-Open Announcements

Antara Lifesciences (* ANR)

Australian patent for ANR's Detach animal product in hand, entitled *Anti-diarrhea formulation which avoids antimicrobial resistance*.

Exopharm Ltd (EX1)

March quarter activities report lodged pre-trade.

Prime Media Group (PRT)

Anticipating \$17M - \$19M FY21 NPAT.

Expecting \$33M - \$35M EBITDA, including JobKeeper payments and a public interest news gathering grant.

Total advertising revenue has fallen 2.1% year-on-year during 1 July 2020 - 31 March 2021.

\$35.7M net cash at 31 March.

In addition, PRT has appointed recent Cochlear (ASX: COH) CFO Brent Cubis as an independent non-executive director, effective yesterday.

Sensen Networks (SNS)

Virtual technology conference presentation lodged post-trade yesterday.

Resources

Consolidated Zinc (* CZL)

Zinc and lead concentrate production underway from the Plomos facility.

Output also continues from the third party Aldama plant.

Talisman Mining (TLM) / Mineral Resources (MIN) / Fortescue Metals Group (FMG)

MIN has paid an initial Wonmunna iron ore mine royal royalty, from March sales, to TLM.

FMG is contesting the validity of the Wonmunna mining leases.

Energy

Buru Energy (BRU)

Corporate presentation, outlining WA Canning Basin exploration and production activity, lodged post-trade yesterday.

92 Energy (* 92E)

Uranium explorer completed an enviable ASX listing yesterday, following a \$7M IPO at 20c per share.

Opened at 35c and traded at 27.5c – 37c before settling at 28.5c.

21.33M shares changed hands across 2305 transactions.

33.39M quoted shares.

TSX-V – listed IsoEnergy held 16.25% on listing.



Copper (LME Ind)	9286	t	212	2.3
Nickel	16360	t	-18	-0.1
Aluminium	2338	t	13	0.6
Lead	2025	t	28	1.4
Zinc	2869	t	45	1.6
Tin	26250	t	38	0.1

Commodities Commentary

Oil – positive US economic indicators, a further weakening for the \$US and new price forecasts supported overnight trade sentiment. Goldman Sachs predicted \$US80/bbl for Brent crude during the September quarter.

A weekly US petroleum drill rig count is due tonight.

Gold – overnight price rallies were attributed to a mix of buying as a hedge against inflation and on safe-haven demand.

Further positive US data bolstered views that inflation could rise sharply, even while the US Fed kept admonishing this week that strong gains would be temporary.

In addition, new US sanctions against Russia, in relation to alleged cyber activity, following this week's warnings on argy-bargy with Ukraine, added to fluid China – US and Middle East tensions.

Base metals – positive longer-term demand predictions (from investment banks and industry) out of a major *copper* conference this week appeared to propel broadening institutional activity overnight, further boosting LME copper.

Copper received support earlier this week also from China's March copper imports.

In addition, copper inventories in LME-registered warehouses turned lower again after growing more than 100% since February.

In the meantime, the US sanctions against Russia raised concerns for *aluminium* supply from Rusal.

Nickel was impacted by a directive from Philippines administrators, effectively ending a moratorium on new mineral agreements. China imports the majority of its nickel ore from the Philippines.

The China influence is expected to continue tonight. China's March quarter GDP, plus industrial production, retail sales, residential property prices and fixed asset investment updates, all due today, are expected to influence at least some end-of-week considerations.

Exchange Rates

CURRENCIES	LAST	+/-	%
AUD – USD	0.7751	0.0036	0.47
EUR – USD	1.1969	-0.0005	-0.04

US Data Tonight

Building permits	Mar
Building starts	Mar
Uni of Michigan consumer sentiment (prelim)	Apr

Trading Halts

Company	Code	Resuming
Empire Energy Group	EEG	16 Apr
Prospect Resources	PSC	16 Apr
Viking Mines	VKA	16 Apr
Carpentaria Resources	CAP	19 Apr
Elementos Ltd	ELT	19 Apr
Field Solutions Holdings	FSG	19 Apr
LawFinance Ltd	LAW	19 Apr
Magnis Energy Technologies	MNS	19 Apr
Nanollose Ltd	NC6	19 Apr
Province Resources	PRL	19 Apr
Rumble Resources	RTR	19 Apr
Strike Energy	STX	19 Apr
Tilt Renewables	TLT	19 Apr
Vimy Resources	VMY	19 Apr
WooBoard Technologies	WOO	19 Apr
Zenith Minerals	ZNC	19 Apr
Exopharm Ltd	EX1	20 Apr

Suspensions (select)

Company	Code	Since
Tubi Ltd	2BE	8 Apr
Advanced Human Imaging	AHI	1 Apr
Infinity Lithium Corporation	INF	13 Apr
Syntonic Ltd	SYT	25 Mar
Wellfully Ltd	WFL	15 Apr

Ex-Dividends

Code	Ex-Div	Div (c)	Franking (%)	Yield (%)
ATM	Today	0.6	0	0.12
CCL	Today	18	100	0.67
EAS	Today	1.5	100	3.64
IMA	Mon	2	0	0.00
KAT	Mon	0.5	100	1.56
NHC	Mon	4	100	4.35
KPG	Wed	0.33	100	2.37
SOL	Wed	26	100	1.81
ACF	Thu	0.75	100	2.80
MFF	Fri (23 Apr)	3	100	2.04
CDM	29 Apr	2	100	3.69
SST	29 Apr	~28	0	2.18

**Other Overseas Data Today & Tonight**

China	GDP	Mar Q
China	Fixed asset investment	Jan-Mar
China	Industrial production	Mar
China	Retail sales	Mar
China	Residential property prices	Mar
Euro zone	Trade balance	Feb
Euro zone	CPI (final)	Mar

Need More Information?

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Reports & Events

(selected; all times AEST)

When	Company	Report/Event
Today	AIA	Feb
	EX1	Mar Q
	MIN	Mar Q
Tue	GOR	Mar Q (w/cast tele 10.30am)
	PRU	Mar Q (webinar/tele 9am)
	RIO	Mar Q
	SXY	Mar Q (tele 10am)
Wed	BHP	Mar Q (& 9mths review)
	GXY	Mar Q (tele 10am)
Thu	EVN	Mar Q
	OZL	Mar Q
	STO	Mar Q
	WPL	Mar Q