

Markets

SFE 200 Futures (9.30am AEDT)	6778	5	0.1
NZX 50	13054	Public	Holiday
DJIA Futures	31042	0	0.0
S&P 500 Futures	3880	0	0.0
NASDAQ Futures	13598	0	0.0

Local Markets Commentary

The Australian market opens a new week's trade with fresh data in hand from China, ahead of the busiest two weeks in the current domestic reporting season and the commencement of lunar new year season later this week.

Overnight Friday commodities trade leads are largely positive, but international equities trade proved less decisive.

Over the weekend, China reported \$US3.211 trillion worth of foreign exchange reserves, in line with expectations, and from \$US3.217 trillion for December.

Locally today, the Reserve Bank of Australia (RBA) is scheduled to release card transactions and fees, 11.30am AEDT.

In addition, **AFI** is one of two stocks trading ex-dividend. *Please see p4 for a detailed list.*

Regionally, Japan reports December bank lending, 10.50am.

China is expected to report January foreign direct investment anytime from later today.

In overnight Friday commodities trade, **oil** rallied further.

US **gold** futures seesawed higher, trading above \$US1810/oz.

Iron ore (Nymex CFR China, 62% Fe) declined to \$US153.90/t.

Qingdao **iron ore** (CFR 62% fines) reportedly settled \$US1.02/t lower, at \$US157.01/t.

LME **copper** and other key base metals rallied.

The **\$A** rose further, to ~US76.75c, after appreciating to ~US76.20c early Friday evening.

New Zealand's markets are closed today due to a public holiday.

Overseas Markets

INDEX	CLOSE	+/-	%
Dow Jones	31148	92	0.3
S&P 500	3887	15	0.4
NASDAQ	13856	79	0.6
FTSE 100	6489	-14	-0.2
DAX 30	14050	-2	-0.0
Shanghai Comp	3496	-6	-0.2

Overseas Markets Commentary

Choppy, swinging trade featured across most European, UK and US equities markets overnight Friday, traders considering key data releases, Covid-19 management prospects and progress towards

* Minerals exploration listing 10.30am AEDT – OZM *

Today's Stock Watch
Vocus Group (VOC)

Confirming receipt of a confidential, indicative proposal from Macquarie Infrastructure and Real Assets Holdings (MIRA) and its managed funds. MIRA is proposing to acquire VOC via a scheme of arrangement at \$5.50 per share.

Conditions include MIRA securing debt finance and completing satisfactory due diligence.

VOC has appointed legal and financial advisors.

VOC traded at \$3.99 - \$4.48 last week.

Argo Investments (ARG)

14c fully franked interim dividend, against 16c a year ago.

43.3% lower, \$A67.368M interim NPAT.

43.6% lower, \$74.885M income.

Index Ltd (IMD)

26% lower, \$13.48M interim NPAT. 2.7% lower, \$124.39M revenue. Flat 1c interim dividend. 36.14c NTA, against 42.08c.

Charter Hall Long WALE REIT (CLW)

146.65 higher, \$198.59M interim NPAT. 25.2% higher, \$74.63M revenue. 14.5c interim distribution, against 14c.

\$4.70 NTA against \$4.47.

News Corporation (NWS)

Confirmation of July-December results lodged in appendix 4D/form 10-Q format this morning. 287% higher, \$US265M full year NPAT. 6% lower, \$US4.53B revenue. Flat, US10c dividends. \$US4.82 NTA, against \$US4.92.

United Malt Group (UMG)

Closing a Grantham, UK malt facility in March, and consolidating production utilising the Witham and under-commissioning 20,000tpa Arbroath facilities.

Anticipating a \$A2M impairment and \$1M redundancy cost.

The Inverness, Scotland plant upgrade is expected to be completed May 2022, rather than by the end of 2021, due to Covid-19 containment restrictions.

Resources
Argosy Minerals (AGY)

Resuming from a trading halt with commitments for a \$30M, 13c-per-share institutional placement in support of the Rincon lithium project. AGY traded at 14c – 21.5c over the five trading sessions prior to calling the halt.

Bardoc Gold (BDC)

Heralding additional results from North Kanowna Star, indicating a recently-determined gold trend, with multiple target zones, extends over 3km in length.



achieving additional legislated US Covid-19 relief funding, and fluid international relations.

US January employment statistics included 49,000 additional jobs, against a reported loss of 227,000 for December.

The employment rate dropped from 6.7% to 6.3%.

Average January earnings were reported 5.4% higher than for January 2020, and to have increased 0.2% for the month.

Earlier Friday, the US Senate had approved a US budget plan, underpinning the proposed \$1.9 trillion Covid-19 relief package.

In Covid-19 developments, the Oxford-AstraZeneca Covid-19 vaccine was reported to have demonstrated limited protection against mild versions of the South Africa mutation, hence raising questions regarding its ability to reduce transmission rates.

Over the weekend, scientists confirmed they were consequently working on a modified version of the vaccine and that this was expected to be available some time during the northern hemisphere autumn.

Among overnight Friday data releases, **Germany's** December factory orders were reported 1.9% lower for the month, following expectations of a 1.2% fall and against November's 2.7% rise.

In the **UK**, a Halifax residential property price index slipped 0.3% during January, following a 0.2% December gain, and against expectations of a further 0.2% increase.

The index was 5.4% higher than for January 2020, however.

In the **US**, in addition to January jobs figures, the December trade deficit was reported at \$US66.6B, from \$US69B at the end of November and following expectations of a \$US70B shortfall.

December consumer credit was estimated to have grown by \$US9.73B after increasing by \$US13.93B during November.

Tonight in the **US**, a consumer inflation expectations report is due.

Elsewhere, Germany reports December industrial production.

Companies scheduled to report earnings later today and tonight include: Global Payments, Hasbro, KKR, Loews, Lotte Shopping, Softbank Group, Take-Two Interactive Software and Toshiba Tec.

In overnight Friday and weekend corporate news, **Rolls-Royce** revealed plans to potentially shut down some civil aerospace operations for two weeks during the northern hemisphere summer, in an attempt to stem losses.

Commodities				
COMMODITY	CLOSE	\$US/	+/-	%
Gold (NY) (Apr)	1813	oz	21.8	1.2
Silver (NY) (Mar)	27.019	oz	0.79	3.0
Gold (LON)	1803	oz		
Platinum	1123	oz	29	2.7
WTI Crude (NYMEX Mar)	56.85	bbbl	0.62	1.1
Brent Crude (ICE EUR Apr)	59.34	bbbl	0.50	0.9
Iron Ore (NYMEX,CHN,62%)	153.90	t	-1.43	-0.9
Copper (LME Ind)	7910	t	88	1.1
Nickel	18036	t	382	2.2
Aluminium	2019	t	22	1.1
Lead	2055	t	8	0.4
Zinc	2669	t	39	1.5
Tin	23108	t	293	1.3

Pre-Open Announcements

Little Green Pharma (* LGP)

Initial commercial export shipment of cannabis flower medicine on its way to DemeCan, Germany.

The shipment is part of a three-year purchase agreement whereby LGP will export to DemeCan up to 1000kg of LGP-cultivated dried cannabis flower, or 48,000 units of LGP classic medicinal cannabis oil product, or any combination of the two, each year for three years.

LGP last traded at 93.5c, Thursday last week, before calling a trading halt.

LGP had closed out the previous week at 61c, and traded as high as \$1.0175 Thursday (4 February).

Proteomics International (* PIQ)

PIQ has lodged a pre-submission package with the US FDA for potential FDA approval of its diabetic kidney disease test PromarkerD.

GR Engineering Services (* GNG) / EcoGraf Ltd (* EGR)

EGR has selected GNG to design a proposed 20,000tpa battery graphite facility to be constructed in Western Australia.

Abacus Property Group (* ABP)

Entering a development JV with Walker Corporation, to collaboratively design, plan and obtain a development approval for 710 Collins Street, Melbourne.

Walker is outlaying \$56M to acquire a 50% holding in the entity owning the property.

ABP is providing vendor finance for up to five years at a 5.5% interest rate.

ABP says its current yield from the property is 5.5%.

Platinum Asset Management (* PTM)

\$23.818B FUM at 31 January, following \$23.598B at the end of December 2020.

Australian Foundation Investment Company (* AFI)

Top 25 AFI investments (and their values) as at 31 January lodged post-trade Friday.

AFI trades ex-dividend (10c) today.

Race Oncology (* RAC)

RAC has appointed former Royal Australasian College of Surgeons CEO Mary Harney as a non-executive director.

Ms Harney is chair of private biotech firm CTxONE.

Beston Global Food Company (BFC)

BFC has raised an initial \$9.238M from the recent entitlement offer, receiving applications for \$6.721M worth of shares and allocating \$2.517M worth to the underwriters and sub-underwriters.

The balance ~97.875M shares, worth ~\$6.361M at the 6.5c-per-share offer price, could be placed within three months.

BFC traded at 6.3c – 7.1c last week.



Commodities Commentary

Oil – overnight Friday trade appeared supported by optimism regarding the ultimate passage of US Covid-19 relief funding through the US Congress following intermediate budget plan approval.

Further, Saudi Arabia was reported to have lifted, by \$US1.40/bbl, Arab light crude for sale to north west Europe during March.

Brent crude traded as high as \$US59.79/bbl intra-session, the most since 20 February 2020, ultimately settling ~6% higher for the week.

WTI crude reached a \$US55.29/bbl intra-session peak, the most since 22 January 2020, before recording an ~9% weekly gain.

A weekly US petroleum drill rig, published overnight Friday, included four additional operational oil rigs.

Gold – a \$US pullback and mixed commentary on US January employment figures supported a swing higher for gold overnight Friday.

Base metals – overnight Friday LME trade appeared mostly influenced by the US Senate approving a budget plan, plus optimism regarding metals demand, in part should Covid-19 vaccination rollouts and additional vaccine research also prove successful in boosting economic activity.

In addition, *copper* inventories continued to indicate strong demand vs supply, LME-registered stocks ~50% lower than in October, at 76,550t. The approach of Lunar New Year appeared only to have boosted stocks in Shanghai Futures Exchange-monitored warehouses.

China's markets will be closed from Thursday (NYE) this week through 17 February, due to the Lunar New Year/Spring festival holiday season.

Exchange Rates

CURRENCIES	LAST	+/-	%
AUD – USD	0.7670	0.0000	0.01
EUR – USD	1.2042	0.0004	0.03

Australian Data Today

RBA	Card transactions	Jan
RBA	Card fees	Dec Q

US Data Tonight

Consumer inflation expectations	Jan
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Other Overseas Data Today & Tonight

Japan	Bank lending	Jan
Japan	Eco watchers survey (4pm AEDT)	Jan
Germany	Industrial production	Dec
Euro zone	Sentix investor confidence	Feb

DUG Technology (DUG)

DUG has appointed DUG assistant company secretary Jacqueline Barry as company secretary, effective Friday (5 February).

Prior to joining DUG in May 2020, Ms Barry was Magnum Mining & Exploration (ASX: MGU) joint company secretary.

The appointment follows Simon Davey's resignation as DUG company secretary, effective Friday.

Vonex Ltd (* VN8)

VN8 appreciated 25.5% Friday after announcing a wholesale agreement secured with Orange Group's Orange Business Services.

Under the agreement, VN8 will supply Orange with business-grade mobile broadband services across Australia.

Trade was paused ~two hours from commencement of trade Friday, and a trading halt subsequently called.

VN8 settled at 32c for the week, after trading as high as 33c intra-session Friday and closing out the previous week at 25c.

WestStar Industrial (WSI)

WSI has appointed Daniel Coletta as joint company secretary.

BikeExchange Ltd (* BEX)

Online bicycle products marketplace scheduled to list on the ASX 11am AEDT **tomorrow**, following a \$20M IPO at 26 per share.

137.68M quoted shares.

Resources

OzAurum Ltd (* OZM)

WA-based gold explorer scheduled to list on the ASX **10.30am** AEDT, following a \$12M IPO at 25c per share.

~52M quoted shares.

Venturex Resources (* VXR) / Northern Star Resources (NST) / Saracen Mineral Holdings (SAR)

VXR chair Tony Kiernan is retiring from the VXR board 31 March, due to his appointment, from Friday this week, as a NST non-executive director.

Mr Kiernan is SAR non-executive chair, and SAR and NST are expected to complete their merger this week.

NST is VXR's major shareholder (18.8%), with an existing VXR board representative.

VXR acting executive director Anthony Reilly will be interim VXR chair from 31 March.

Meanwhile, VXR has appointed Craig McGown as a non-executive director.

Kingsrose Mining (* KRM)

KRM has appointed Fabian Baker as CEO, effective immediately.

Mr Baker founded, and was CEO of, Tethyan Resource Corp, recently acquired by Adriatic Metals (ASX: ADT).

Michael Andrews will relinquish executive duties, with his chairman's role reverting to a non-executive one.

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Tombador Iron (TI1)

Overburden pre-stripping underway ahead of initial June quarter production from the Tombador iron ore project, Brazil.

The crushing and screening plant has been completed.

Suvo Strategic Minerals (SUV)

White Cloud kaolin project resource update lodged pre-trade.

Errawarra Resources (ERW)

Presentation lodged post-trade Friday.

Southern Hemisphere Mining (SUH)

SUH has appointed recent Tiger Resources (DRC) executive chairman David Frances as a director.

SUH has also appointed former StoneBridge corporate finance and equity capital markets head Richard Caldwell as a director.

The appointments have been made in association with the resignations of Keith Coughlan and David Lenigas from the SUH board, in favour of focusing on other business interests.

Mamba Exploration (* M24)

WA-focused copper, gold and nickel explorer completed a successful ASX listing Friday, following a \$7M IPO at 20c per share.

Opened at 32.5c and traded at 28.5c – 34.5c before settling at 30.5c.

~6.68M shares were traded across 523 transactions.

37M quoted shares.

Trading Halts

Company	Code	Resuming
Amani Gold	ANL	8 Feb
First Au	FAU	8 Feb
Cann Group	CAN	8 Feb
Macarthur Minerals	MIO	8 Feb
Magnis Energy Technologies	MNS	8 Feb
PolarX Ltd	PXX	8 Feb
Comet Resources	CRL	9 Feb
Cyprium Metals	CYM	9 Feb
Jadar Resources	JDR	9 Feb
Lindian Resources	LIN	9 Feb
Metals X	MLX	9 Feb
MSM Corporation International	MSM	9 Feb
Parkd Ltd	PKD	9 Feb
Vonex Ltd	VN8	9 Feb
Medibio Ltd	MEB	10 Feb

Suspensions (select)

Company	Code	Since
(The) Agency Group Australia	AU1	19 Jan



Archtis Ltd	AR9	27 Jan
Contrarian Value Fund	CVF	14 Jan
Impelus Ltd	IMS	27 Jan
Myanmar Metals	MYL	3 Feb
Pacific Nickel Mines	PNM	3 Feb
Pathfinder Resources	PF1	4 Feb
Red Emperor Resources	RMP	22 Jan
Skin Elements	SKN	28 Jan
Whitebark Energy	WBE	15 Jan

Ex-Dividends

Code	Ex-Div	Div (c)	Franking (%)	Yield (%)
AFI	Today	10	100	3.13
CAF	Today	4	100	0.00
AVA	Tomorrow	2	0	0.00
OCA	Tomorrow	1.02	0	1.95
MLT	Wed	5.75	100	3.59
RMD	Wed	3.58	0	0.59
PL8	Thu	0.4	100	4.26
VG1	Thu	1.5	100	1.15
QVE	15 Feb	1.1	100	5.91
JHG	16 Feb	(US)36	0	5.18
KOV	18 Feb	15	100	5.66
AMC	23 Feb	15.21	0	4.52

Reports & Events

(selected; all times AEDT)

When	Company	Report/Event
Today	ARG	Interim
	CLW	Interim
	IMD	Interim
Tomorrow	BLD	Interim
	CGF	Interim
	DXS	Interim (tele 9.30am)
	EHL	Interim (tele 11am)
	JHX	Dec Q (w/cast tele 9am)
	SCP	Interim
	SUN	Interim
Wed	AQZ	Interim
	CIM	Full year
	CBA	Interim
	IAG	Interim
	MIN	Interim
	MP1	Interim (w/cast webinar 11am)
	PPS	Interim (w/cast 9.30am)
	RXP	Interim (tele 9am)
	URW	Full year (post-ASX)



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Thu	AGL	Interim (w/cast tele 10.45am)
	AMP	Full year
	ASX	Interim (w/cast 10.30am)
	BTI	Interim
	BPT	Interim
	DOW	Interim
	GNC	AGM (10am)
	GUD	Interim
	KPG	Interim (tele 10am)
	MGF	Interim
	MFG	Interim (webinar & tele 11.30am)
	NCM	Interim
	TLS	Interim
TCL	Interim	
Fri	AVH	Dec Q
	BBN	Interim (tele 9.15am)
	CMW	AGM (3pm)
	GMA	Full year
	MGR	Interim (tele 10.30am)