

Markets

SFE 200 Futures (9.30am AEDT)	6203	16	0.3
NZX 50	9442	6	0.1
DJIA Futures	25762	19	0.1
S&P 500 Futures	2810	3	0.1
NASDAQ Futures	7277	10	0.1

Local Markets Commentary

The Australian market opens Friday trade following marked vacillating overnight international equities trade amid broad unresolved political tension, and with no scheduled major domestic data releases.

In decidedly mixed overnight commodities trade, **Brent crude** pulled back and **WTI** rose further.

US **gold** futures (April) turned and fell.

Iron ore (China port, 62% Fe) rallied.

LME **copper** and **nickel** fell. **Aluminium** settled little changed.

The **\$A** effectively trod water after falling to ~US70.65c early yesterday evening.

Regionally today, the Bank of **Japan** is due to announce outcomes from its policy meeting **2pm** AEDT.

China reports February home prices **12.30pm** AEDT.

Locally, stocks trading **ex-dividend** today include **MIN** and **TRS**.
 Please see pp3-4 for a detailed list.

Overseas Markets

INDEX	CLOSE	+/-	%
Dow Jones	25710	7	0.0
S&P 500	2808	-2	-0.1
NASDAQ	7631	-13	-0.2
FTSE 100	7185	26	0.4
DAX 30	11587	15	0.1
Shanghai Comp	2991	-36	-1.2

Overseas Markets Commentary

Marked vacillations featured across major European and US equities markets overnight, amid political and trade strain, plus lacklustre data, on both sides of the Atlantic.

In addition, earlier yesterday, China had released a mixed set of industrial production, retail sales and fixed asset investment figures that spawned varying interpretations.

Speculation also abounded regarding the status of China-US trade talks, with the US president offering there was 'no rush' to sign an agreement as media reports emerged suggesting any US-China leaders' meeting was unlikely to occur before April.

In the US Senate, the president's emergency declaration in association with Mexico-US border security was voted down.

Bank of Japan - policy meeting outcomes statement 2pm AEDT
Governor Haruhiko Kuroda is scheduled to speak publicly 7.55pm

Today's Stock Watch

Elders Ltd (ELD)

Anticipating \$72M - \$75M underlying EBIT for the full year to 30 September, following \$74.6M for FY 2018.

Underlying NPAT is expected to come in at \$61M - \$64M, against \$63.7M.

For the six months to 31 March however, ELD expects much lower EBIT than FY 2018's \$45.7M, due to reduced wool volumes and higher costs.

ELD has settled lower the past five trading sessions, closing at \$6.08 yesterday.

Villa World (VLW)

In receipt of an unsolicited indicative proposal from AVID Property Group Australia, which proposes to pay the equivalent of \$2.23 per share.

Conditions include unanimous VLW board approval and Australian Foreign Investment Review Board (FIRB) approval. VLW has traded at \$1.92 - \$2.06 over the past five trading sessions.

Freelancer.com Ltd (FLN)

FLN has secured an exclusive strategic alliance with NYSE-listed Arrow Electronics, for the launch of an electronics and electrical engineering services marketplace, ArrowPlus.

Teleconference scheduled for 2pm AEDT Monday.

Cimic Group (CIM) / Woodside Petroleum (WPL)

CIM's UGL has won a \$A190M new contract secured with WPL, for WA Karratha gas plant services.

UGL has been similarly under contract to the facility since 2015.

Resources

Battery Minerals (BAT)

BAT has appointed former Atlas Iron (ASX: AGO) COO Jeremy Sinclair as MD, effective 8 April, replacing David Flanagan who will become executive chairman.

Current chair Jeff Dowling will be lead independent director.

Non-executive director Brett Smith is planning not to seek re-election at BAT's May AGM, at which time fellow non-executive director Gilbert George intends to retire from the BAT board.

Mr Flanagan will take an ~57% salary cut, and with the slimmer board, BAT's board remuneration and the company's corporate and administrations costs will not increase.

Mr George will be a BAT consultant, in particular with regards to Japanese relationships.



Meanwhile, the UK House of Commons voted (412 – 202) to push back the UK-EU separation date from 29 March until at least 30 June.

This pushed down the British pound from this week's nine-month peaks.

Earlier, European Council president Donald Tusk appeared to promote an extended pushback to EU members.

Among new data releases, **Germany's** final February CPI growth reading was calculated at 0.4% for the month and 1.5% year-on-year, following 0.8% deflation for January.

In the **US**, weekly new unemployment claims defied forecasters, rising by 6000, three times more than predicted.

January new home sales tumbled 6.9% for the month and 4% year-on-year. December sales had improved by 3.8%.

February import prices were reported 0.6% higher for the month, mostly on higher energy costs, following a 0.1% January gain.

Initially, the January figure had been reported as a 0.5% fall.

Year-on-year, February import prices represented a 1.3% drop.

Export prices rose 0.6% for the month, and 0.3% year-on-year, after falling 0.5% and 0.2% respectively in January.

Tonight in the **US**, a New York business activity index, initial March University of Michigan consumer sentiment estimate, January job openings and January industrial production are due.

Elsewhere, a final February CPI reading is due for the euro zone

Companies scheduled to report earnings or provide an update include: Barclays and Prada.

In overnight corporate news, **General Electric** provided guidance that undershot expectations.

Adobe, Broadcom and **Oracle** reported post-US trade, guidance, sales and promised shareholder returns initially spawning mixed reactions.

Commodities

COMMODITY	CLOSE	\$US/	+/-	%
Gold (NY) (Apr)	1295.1	oz	-14.2	-1.1
Silver (NY) (May)	15.17	oz	0.29	-1.8
Gold (LON)	1307	oz	10	0.8
Platinum	822	oz	-19	-2.3
WTI Crude (Apr)	58.61	bbbl	0.35	0.6
Brent Crude (May)	67.23	bbbl	-0.32	-0.5
Iron Ore (CHN port 62%)	87.26	t		2.9
Copper (LME,3mth,PM)	6386	t	-83	-1.3
Nickel	12895	t	-295	-2.2
Aluminium	1906	t	1	0.1
Lead	2106	t	-17	-0.8
Zinc	2819	t	-20	-0.7
Tin	21170	t	20	0.1
CBT Wheat (May)	4.55	bshl	0.07	1.6

Commodities Commentary

Oil – OPEC's monthly report, published overnight, revealed February output had dropped by a daily 221,000bbbl to 30.55MMbbbl/d

Pre-Open Announcements

IRESS Ltd (** IRE)

IRE UK MD Simon Bradley plans to leave IRE at the end of June.

Sky Network Television (* SKT)

CFO and company secretary Jason Hollingworth has resigned, effective 21 May, in favour of a CFO position with NZ-listed Vector Ltd.

Mr Hollingworth has been with SKT for the past 16 years.

SKT chief legal officer Sophie Moloney has been appointed company secretary, effective immediately.

Fonterra Shareholders' Fund (* FSF)

Fonterra Co-op is lowering 2018/19 forecast milk collection to 1.51B kgMS, due to lower-than-average New Zealand rainfall.

Zoono Group (ZNO)

EU and other markets sales and distribution agreement secured with Germany-headquartered Midas Pharma.

Windlab Ltd (WND)

WND has won an asset management services contract with the 131.8MWdc Nevertire solar farm, north-west NSW.

Animoca Brands (AB1)

AB1 subsidiary Pixowl has launched a *Wonder Park*-movie related game.

Ramsay Health Care (RHC)

RHC has this morning lodged a Ramsay Générale de Santé presentation delivered in Stockholm overnight.

RHC traded as high as \$65.63 yesterday after lodging an RHC investor presentation from earlier this week.

GI Dynamics (GID)

the UK National Health Service (NHS) has concluded the first 12-months' use of GID's EndoBarrier had produced several favourable outcomes for patients.

The NHS presented the data-backed conclusions at a Diabetes UK conference in Liverpool last week.

GID has lodged data summaries this morning.

Resources

Lucapa Diamond Company (* LOM)

The Lesotho Mothae project has delivered an 83.9 carat diamond.

Additional details lodged this morning.

Jupiter Mines (* JMS)

JMS CFO and company secretary Melissa North has been appointed finance director, effective yesterday.



OPEC also predicted 30.46MMbbl/d demand for OPEC oil this year, ~1MMbbl/d below 2018 demand, and 130,000bbl/d fewer than last month's forecast.

However, the organisation raised its non-OPEC output increase prediction by a daily 60,000bbl, to 2.24MMbbl/d, against its forecast 1.24MMbbl/d rise in overall global demand.

The International Energy Agency's (IEA) monthly report is scheduled for release tonight.

A weekly US petroleum drilling rig count is also due.

Gold – some disappointing data out of China (a major gold consumer), and a strong \$US, detracted from overnight gold interest, Comex futures settling back below \$US1300/oz.

The UK parliament vote to delay leaving the European Union came post-settlement.

Base metals – yesterday, **China** reported January-February industrial production (+5.3% year-on-year, after +5.7%), retail sales (+8.2%, flat) and fixed asset investment (+6.1%, after 5.9%). For February, industrial output rose just 0.4%, but this was largely attributed to Lunar New Year.

In industry-specific news, China reported producing 5.69Mt of primary *aluminium* during January-February, 5% more than for the same period in 2018.

China's steel output rose 9.2% to 149.58Mt.

Total nonferrous metals (includes aluminium, copper, lead, nickel and zinc) production rose 6.2% to 9.03Mt.

Meanwhile, Malaysia is reportedly requiring new environmental impact assessments of each *bauxite* ('raw' aluminium) operation, ahead of the 31 March expiry of a bauxite mining moratorium.

Exchange Rates

CURRENCIES	LAST	+/-	%
AUD – USD	0.7067	0.0001	0.02
EUR – USD	1.1307	0.0002	0.02

US Data Tonight

NY (Empire State) Fed manufacturing	Mar
JOLTS job openings	Jan
Industrial production	Jan
University of Michigan consumer sentiment (initial)	Mar

Other Overseas Data Today & Tonight

China	Home price index	Feb
Japan	BoJ policy meeting outcomes	Mar
Euro zone	CPI (final)	Feb

Need More Information?

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Trading Halts

Company	Code	Resuming
Alara Resources	AUQ	15 Mar
Blackham Resources	BLK	15 Mar
Environmental Clean Technologies	ECT	15 Mar
Metminco Ltd	MNC	15 Mar
Alliance Resources	AGS	18 Mar
Bowen Coking Coal	BCB	18 Mar
Cazaly Resources	CAZ	18 Mar
Infinity Lithium Corporation	INF	18 Mar
Kingsgate Consolidated	KCN	18 Mar
Metals Australia	MLS	18 Mar
Northern Minerals	NTU	18 Mar
Skin Elements	SKN	18 Mar
Total Brain	TTB	18 Mar
Venturex Resources	VXR	18 Mar

Suspensions (select)

Company	Code	Since
American Patriot Oil & Gas	AOW	14 Mar
Carnegie Clean Energy	CCE	1 Mar
Elk Petroleum	ELK	1 Mar
IOT Group	IOT	13 Mar
LandMark White	LMW	19 Feb
Medigard Ltd	MGZ	8 Mar
Niuminco Group	NIU	21 Feb
Novatti Group	NOV	14 Mar
Reva Medical	RVA	20 Feb
Serpentine Technologies	S3R	6 Mar
Shree Minerals	SHH	20 Feb
Threat Protect Australia	TPS	11 Mar

Ex-Dividends

Code	Ex-Div	Div (c)	Franking (%)	Yield (%)
GC1	Today	1	100	4.65
GDG	Today	1	0	3.36
HLS	Today	3.8	100	3.50
MIN	Today	13	100	3.32
TRS	Today	10	100	7.64
AQZ	Mon	6.8	100	4.78
BWR	Mon	5	0	6.64
CNU	Mon	9.07	0	3.76
FFI	Mon	10	100	4.91
IBC	Mon	1.8	100	5.20
ONT	Mon	12.5	100	3.95
PSQ	Mon	2.3	100	4.98
SHM	Mon	3	100	10.22

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SLK	Mon	6.5	100	3.75
TNK	Mon	6.5	100	3.65
AHX	Tue	0.8	100	3.37
ASB	Tue	3	0	2.56
BBL	Tue	1	100	2.17
BWF	Tue	2	100	4.69
CAR	Tue	20.5	100	3.52
REH	Tue	6	100	2.07
TOP	Tue	0.66	100	2.50
ACF	Wed	1	0	3.85
AEG	Wed	2	100	4.71
CEN	Wed	14.41	0	5.07
CGR	Wed	1	100	3.24
CWN	Wed	30	60	5.15
EAI	Wed	1	100	2.00
KSC	Wed	2	100	2.57
PPK	Wed	1	100	1.33
RXP	Wed	1.75	100	7.65
SNL	Wed	6	100	3.78
VLS	Wed	2.25	100	4.29
WEB	Wed	8.5	100	1.36

March quarter S&P/ASX indices re-balance

The following changes will be effective from the opening of trade Monday (18 March):

S&P/ASX 100

Out: IFL

In: SOL

S&P/ASX 200

Out: AHG, IFN

In: HUB, PNI

S&P/ASX 300

Out: BLA, SRV, WBA

In: AUB, BBN, CVN, JIN, MAH, MGX, PDN, RMS, RDC, SLR

S&P/ASX All Ordinaries

Out: AXP, ALK, AUZ, BKY, BNI, BLY, BRN, BSA, CRD, IPD, NTC, RND, SOM, TPE, NZM, DNA, EDE, OVT, GCY, ARV, GSW, RVA, BLA, ADA, MDC, RKN, XAM, OMN, SIV, RFG, BUL, YOJ, TTM, ISD

In: APD, AVG, CRN, SPO, RDC, CVN, ED1, PDN, NIC, LVT, SM1, COI, OTW, TGN, TER, CLV, SMR, AC8, CCX, PET, SFX, AD8, SFG, SFC, VHT, MEZ, AVH, AEF, BYE, GZL, RHP, VTH, AML, BGL, SNL, HE8, ISX, GNE, MOY, EGN, HZN, OPT, RCT, PVS, KSL, COG, MCP, PAR, STX, GLL, WHA, ELO, SHJ, PPE