ARRIVE
WEALTH MANAGEMENT

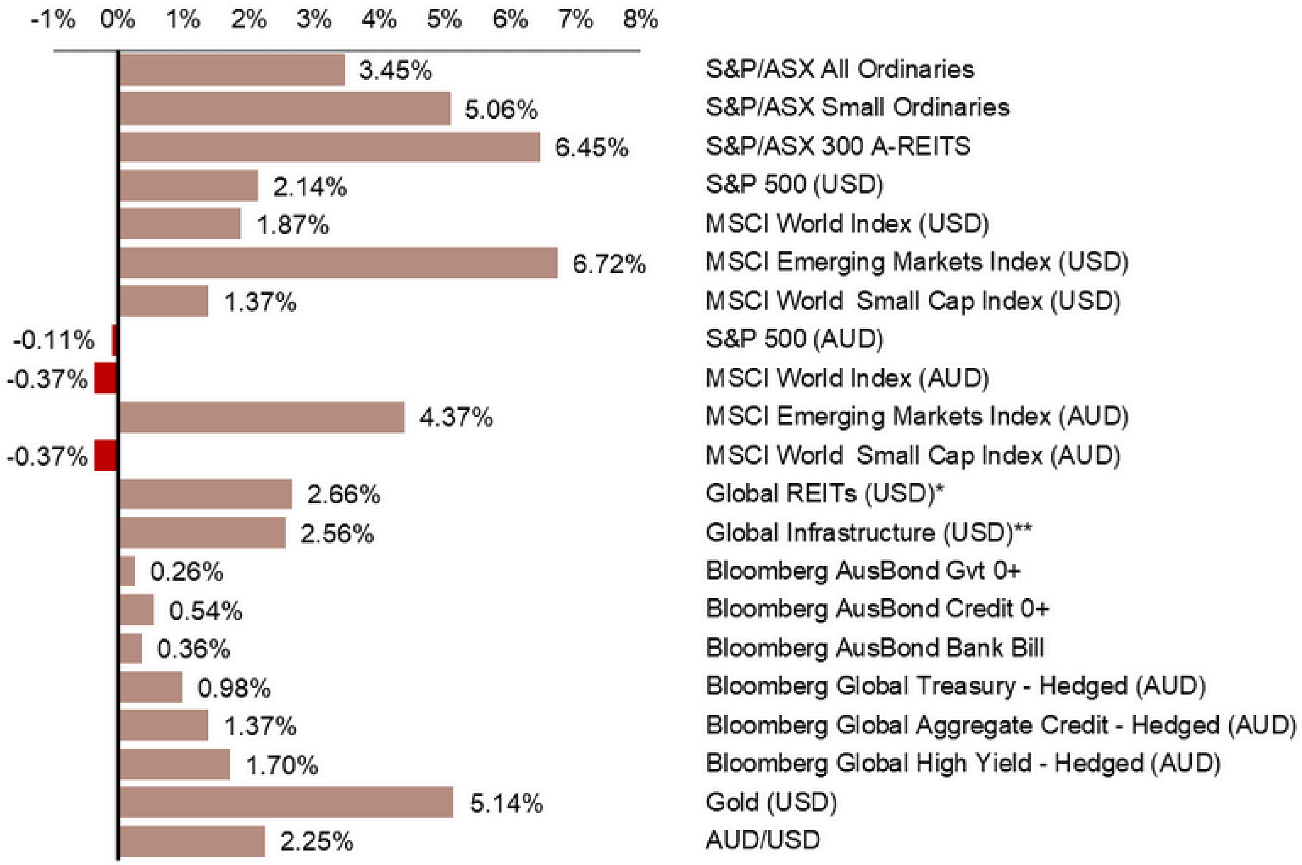
INVESTMENT AND ECONOMIC SNAPSHOT

SEPTEMBER 2024

HIGHLIGHTS

- The Australian share market reached all-time highs during September.
- The U.S. Federal Reserve cut interest rates by 50 bps.
- China announced major monetary and fiscal policy stimulus packages.
- Chinese shares surged with the Shanghai Composite Index rallying 21%.

SELECTED MARKET RETURNS (%) SEPTEMBER 2024



Sources: *FTSE EPRA Nareit DEVELOPED, **FTSE Global Core Infrastructure 50/50 Index

FINANCIAL DEVELOPMENTS

A STRONG END TO THE THIRD QUARTER

The MSCI World Index (USD) reached all-time highs in September, closing the month 1.87% higher. Returns remained flat in Australian dollar terms, as the AUD/USD exchange rate appreciated by 2.25%.

A significant 50 bps interest rate cut by the U.S. Federal Reserve and a blitz of fiscal and monetary policy stimulus by Chinese authorities lifted global equity markets.

ASX POSTS STRONGEST SEPTEMBER QUARTER SINCE 2013

The S&P/ASX All Ordinaries rose by 3.45%, reaching new highs and posting the best September quarter since 2013. Small caps outperformed with the S&P/ASX Small Ordinaries gaining 5.06%. The Materials sector led the gains, rising by 13% buoyed by Chinese stimulus measures that ignited a rotation from Financials to Materials. The Information Technology sector also had a strong month, rising by 7.36%, followed by Real Estate which ended 6.6% higher. Defensive sectors were the weakest, with Healthcare and Consumer Staples falling by 3.2% and 1.7% respectively.

U.S. MARKETS REACH ALL-TIME HIGHS AMID FED RATE CUTS

U.S. equity markets hit all-time highs, benefitting from an aggressive start of the Fed rate cutting cycle, easing in inflation and resilient economic data. The S&P 500 (USD) and Nasdaq (USD) gained 2.14% and 2.68%, respectively, while the small-cap Russell 2000 underperformed, rising just 0.56%.

Interest rate sensitive sectors showed strong gains adding further to their robust quarterly performances. The Consumer Discretionary sector was the best performer, rising by 7.09%. This was followed by Utilities, which gained 6.6% in the month and closed off the quarter as the strongest performing sector. Energy continued to underperform, falling by 2.7% following weaker global energy prices. Healthcare and Financials also lagged, ending lower for the month.

Chinese authorities unveiled the most aggressive economic stimulus package since the Pandemic, driving a significant rerating in Chinese shares. The Hang Seng (HKD) rallied by 17.5% and the Shanghai Composite (CNY) surged 21.1%. European markets were mixed but sectors exposed to Chinese economic activity such as luxury goods, performed well. Germany, as a significant trading partner to China, also saw strong gains with the DAX (EUR) gaining 2.2%, reaching all-time highs. The Nikkei (YEN) fell 1.2% as the Japanese market continued to experience heightened volatility in the face of an unexpected election result and mixed economic data.

COMMODITIES SURGE ON RATE CUTS AND CHINESE STIMULUS

Commodities rallied, driven by expectations of increased demand following U.S. rate cuts and Chinese stimulus. Copper and iron ore gained 12.9% and 8.4% respectively. Precious metals also rallied supported by further Middle Eastern geopolitical tensions. Gold, once again, traded at all-time highs, rising by 6.2% to close at $2685 an ounce. In contrast, crude oil dropped 7.7% to $72 per barrel due to soft demand and excess supply concerns.

AUSTRALIAN BOND YIELDS STEADY, WHILE U.S. YIELDS FALL AMID RATE CUT EXPECTATIONS

With little change in the Australian interest rate outlook and inflation data matching expectations, the Australian 10-year bond yield remained unchanged in September at 3.98%.

In the U.S. bond market, a larger than expected interest rate cut, coupled with expectations for two further rate cuts by year-end, helped push yields lower with the U.S. benchmark 10-year yield falling 13 bps to close at 3.79%.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS

THE RBA REMAINS ON HOLD AS INFLATION TRENDS LOWER

The RBA held the cash rate steady at 4.35%, as expected, and retained its hawkish stance. Governor Bullock reiterated that the RBA did not see interest rate cuts in the near term but, in what seemed a dovish tilt, the Board was not explicitly considering a rate hike. Inflation continues to concern the RBA despite monthly CPI falling as expected to 2.7% year-on-year, down from 3.5%. This large drop was largely attributed to the effects of temporary government electricity subsidies, although excluding these, the overall disinflationary trend is still intact.

Second-quarter GDP data showed a 1% annual growth rate, the slowest pace since the 1990s (excluding the pandemic period). Within this report, consumer indicators were weaker across spending, saving and income metrics. Labour market conditions remained stable, with the unemployment rate steady at 4.2% and job growth of 47,000 exceeding expectations. The participation rate remained elevated at 67.1%.

THE U.S. FED DELIVERS AN OUTSIZED INTEREST RATE CUT

The U.S. Federal Reserve initiated its easing cycle with a 50 bps cut to the Fed Funds rate, larger than the 25 bps anticipated by economists, but largely in line with market pricing. Markets are currently pricing in a 50% probability of 75 bps worth of cuts by the end of the year, but Fed Chair Powell indicated that two cuts of 25 bps is the most likely trajectory. This move has been in response to continuing moderation in inflation, further evidenced by August CPI which dipped as expected to 2.5% year-on-year from 2.9%. The Fed’s preferred gauge of inflation, Core PCE, remained unchanged at 2.8% year-on-year.

Weakness in the labour market has also provided some justification for the Fed’s actions, as it becomes increasingly cognisant of weakening economic growth. Nonfarm payrolls were revised lower, and August numbers showed a lower than expected increase.

Payroll growth is now tracking at close to a four-year low. However, GDP data was resilient, showing the U.S. economy grew by an annualised 3% for the second quarter, ahead of the 2.9% expected. Broadly, September economic data releases provided a mixed picture of U.S. economic activity.

CHINA UNVEILS AGGRESSIVE STIMULUS AMID WEAK ECONOMIC DATA

Chinese economic data weakened further in September, with lower-than-expected retail sales, industrial production, and Purchasing Manager (PMI) figures. Further demand weakness was reflected in lower than expected inflation data, with CPI rising by 0.6% year-on-year. House prices continued to fall, with August data indicating prices fell by 5.3% year-on-year. Additionally, the unemployment rate rose unexpectedly to 5.3% from 5.2%.

Chinese authorities announced a comprehensive stimulus package aimed at reviving economic growth and stabilising the property market. The package included cuts to the policy rate, mortgage rates and bank's reserve requirement ratio. Downpayments for second home purchases were also reduced to historic lows of 15%. Several equity market support measures were also introduced, providing funding to both financial institutions to purchase stocks and to listed companies to facilitate share buybacks. Additionally, the Politburo pledged to deploy fiscal spending to meet their 5% economic growth target.

OUTLOOK

Many global markets are trading close to all-time highs supported by several factors that have combined to buoy investor sentiment. Moderating inflation and resilient economic growth occurring at the same time as global central banks embark on the early stages of monetary policy easing provides a supportive backdrop for financial markets and a soft economic landing.

There are risks though that can shift the growth outlook. Weakening labour markets and softening consumer trends are increasing the probability that major economies could enter a recession. These concerns are recognised by governments and central banks who are actively attempting to support economies through decisive policy actions.

Given the current market dynamics, a balanced approach to portfolio management is crucial. Maintaining a diversified portfolio that considers both risks and potential returns will help navigate the evolving economic landscape effectively.

MAJOR MARKET INDICATORS

	30-Sep-24	31-Aug-24	31-Jul-24	Qtr change	1 year change
Interest Rates (at close of period)					
Aus 90 day Bank Bills	4.42%	4.38%	4.46%	+3.0	+29.0
Aus 10 yr Bond	3.98%	3.98%	4.33%	-25.8	-22.7
US 90 day T Bill	4.52%	4.98%	5.15%	-70.0	-80.0
US 10 yr Bond	3.79%	3.92%	4.06%	-58.1	-78.3
Currency (against the AUD)					
US Dollar	0.694	0.679	0.653	3.88%	7.49%
British Pound	0.518	0.517	0.505	-1.28%	-2.02%
Euro	0.621	0.614	0.600	0.19%	1.67%
Japanese Yen	99.32	98.93	98.27	-7.45%	3.40%
Trade-Weighted Index	62.80	62.60	61.40	-0.79%	2.78%
Equity Markets					
Australian All Ordinaries	3.4%	0.4%	3.8%	7.9%	22.2%
MSCI Australia Value (AUD)	3.2%	0.1%	3.6%	7.1%	20.4%
MSCI Australia Growth (AUD)	1.0%	1.0%	5.2%	7.3%	26.7%
S&P 500 (USD)	2.1%	2.4%	1.2%	5.9%	36.4%
MSCI US Value (USD)	1.7%	2.9%	4.8%	9.7%	29.6%
MSCI US Growth (USD)	2.5%	2.0%	-1.9%	2.6%	42.5%
MSCI World (USD)	1.9%	2.7%	1.8%	6.5%	33.0%
Nikkei (YEN)	-1.2%	-1.1%	-1.2%	-3.5%	21.2%
CSI 300 (CNY)	21.1%	-3.3%	0.6%	17.9%	12.1%
FTSE 100 (GBP)	-1.5%	0.9%	2.5%	1.8%	12.4%
DAX (EUR)	2.2%	2.2%	1.5%	6.0%	25.6%
Euro 100 (EUR)	-0.8%	0.8%	0.5%	0.4%	16.0%
MSCI Emerging Markets (USD)	6.7%	1.6%	0.4%	8.9%	26.5%
Commodities					
Iron Ore (USD)	8.4%	-0.5%	-4.2%	3.3%	-8.8%
Crude Oil WTI U$/BBL	-7.7%	-6.1%	-4.2%	-17.0%	-24.3%
Gold Bullion $/t oz	5.1%	3.4%	4.1%	13.2%	41.9%

Source: Quilla and Refinitv

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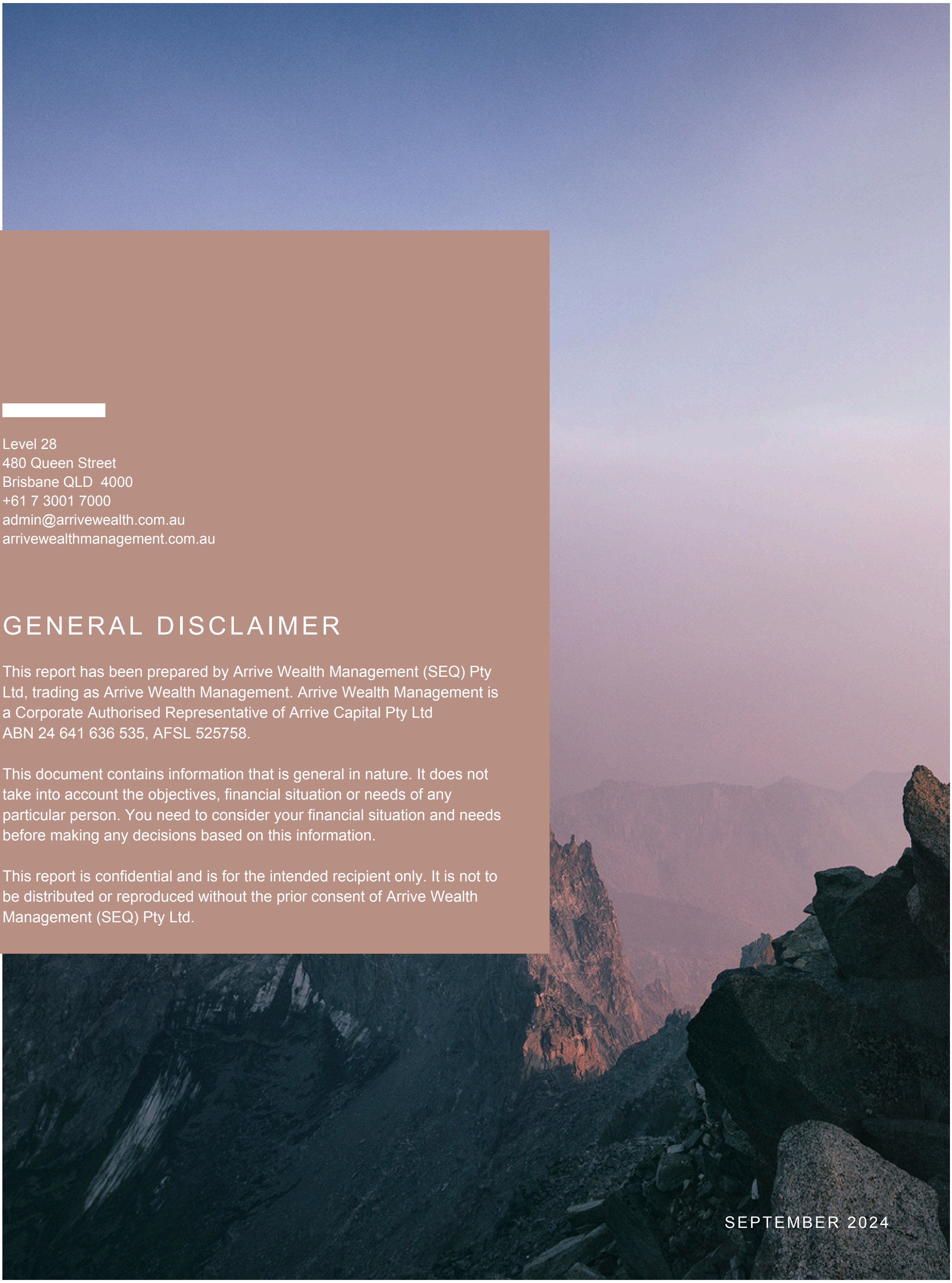

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