

Bellwether appoints former VFMC CEO as Head of Investment Committee

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Bellwether adds ‘final piece’ to investment process with appointment of Investment Committee chair

Emerging boutique fund manager, Bellwether Partners, has strengthened its investment process by appointing Stephen Taylor as non-executive Chairman of the Bellwether Partners Limited Investment Committee.

Mr Taylor was formerly CEO of VFMC (Victorian Funds Management Corporation).

Bruce Bell, Managing Director of Bellwether Partners, described Taylor's alignment with Bellwether as a powerful validation of the business as it moves from establishing performance to a focus on growing funds under management (FUM).

“Stephen has an invaluable mix of funds management and strategic skills; his role as an independent Chairman of the Investment Committee will ensure we remain true to our investment philosophy of high discipline, concentrated investing”, Mr Bell said.

Bell said that the appointment of the Investment Committee Chair is the last piece of Bellwether's investment process to fall into place. “We have spent much time perfecting our investment methodology but required an independent oversight to validate that we are true to our proprietary investment process”.

“Stephen's portfolio management experience and independence will provide another layer of proof that what we say is what we do”, he said.

The role of Chairman of the Investment Committee was introduced by Bellwether to provide an independent compliance measure, ensuring that portfolios are managed in strict accordance with process. The Investment Committee meets monthly and involves a review of strategy and stock selection as well as risk adjustment and approval.

Stephen Taylor was CEO of VFMC from 1998 to 2004, growing FUM from \$8b to \$26b during his tenure. Prior to this he was held a number of roles at JP Morgan Investment Management Australia from 1980 to 1997, culminating in his appointment as Managing Director from 1993-1997.

Outside of his involvement with Bellwether, Taylor holds several company directorships and provides research consultancy as a member of Capital Research Services.

“Bellwether have spent considerable time and effort setting themselves up as a high quality investment manager and I am delighted to be on board with them as they enter an exciting period of growth” Taylor said.

Bellwether Partners is a boutique fund manager specialising in concentrated Australian equity portfolios, and is establishing itself as a high performer: its flagship Australian Share Fund returned 42.53% (Gross) for the year to 31 May 2006 and -1.50% during a volatile May. The Australian Share Fund's performance means that it has consistently been ranked in the top decile of Australian Equities funds since its inception, as measured by the Intech Australian Shares Survey.

“Bellwether” is a noun meaning one that takes the lead or initiative. Managing Director of the Bellwether Group of Companies, Bruce Bell, chose the name Bellwether for its definition in financial markets as a leading indicator of trends and as a market barometer. Bruce Bell has over 36 years experience in financial services, including senior roles in the United Kingdom, USA and Australia.

Bellwether Partners Ltd (AFSL 238460) was founded in 2004 as an independent, boutique fund manager that specialises in Australian Equities. Bellwether's investment team of five industry professionals has combined experience of more than 100 years, and is led by Colin Papcun, formerly Head of Quantitative Investments and Portfolio Manager at Deutsche Asset Management.

The Bellwether Partners Australian Share Fund is a wholesale fund employing a concentrated, high conviction investment approach drawing predominantly from the S&P/ASX 200. The resulting portfolio is derived from a unique process of both quantitative and qualitative analysis.

Visit www.bellwether.com.au for more details.