

PPTEU

NATIONAL JOURNAL EDITION 2 2025





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EARLE SETCHES

Strong representation, secure redundancy funds, training investment, apprentice pathways, and a voice for working people do not happen by accident.



The plumbing and fire protection industry has lost one of its true giants with the passing of Scott Dowsett. Scott was not only a respected employer and successful businessman through Cooke and Dowsett, he was a steady voice for our entire sector and a fierce advocate for skilled trades. His contribution to our industry and to the PPTEU will be remembered for generations.

Scott served as President of the Master Plumbers for more than a decade, a role he carried with purpose and conviction. He understood the responsibility of leadership and he used that position to push for higher standards, stronger training pathways, and better outcomes for workers and employers alike.

He believed deeply in the value of partnership across the industry and was always willing to sit at the table, have the hard conversations, and find the solutions that worked in the real world.

One of Scott's most significant legacies was his work on the PICAC board. He was an important driver in strengthening protection and apprenticeship schemes, ensuring that young people entering the trade had real opportunities, and a pathway into long careers. Scott cared a great deal about the future of the trade and put in the hard yards to support it.

He was also instrumental at a national level through his defence of Incolink during several Senate inquiries. At times when conservative governments tried to interfere with redundancy funds, Scott stood firm. He made the case for the essential services these funds provide: income stability for members between jobs, drug and alcohol programs, suicide prevention, training supports, and long term security for families. His arguments were clear and grounded in industry reality. He helped convince crossbench senators to protect the system that workers rely on today.

Scott also played a central role negotiating the last four EBAs. The gains secured in those agreements have shaped the conditions, security, and benefits that members enjoy now. He fought for fairness and for a sustainable industry that values the tradespeople who build and maintain the nation's infrastructure.

A particularly special part of Scott's legacy is his work creating meaningful pathways for Indigenous apprentices. Through initiatives like NUDJ in Western Australia and Pathway in Victoria, he championed employment opportunities for young Aboriginal men and women. These programs have grown into strong, community-led organisations that are now creating long term careers and opening doors across the industry. Scott believed that everyone deserved a fair shot, and he backed that belief with action.

Scott's commitment to this industry will remain with us. His influence is interwoven throughout the fabric of our industry, and the workforces he helped build will carry his legacy forward. Those of us who had the privilege of working alongside him will continue to honour him by defending the values he fought for and strengthening the industry he cared for so deeply.

It is also timely to acknowledge the strength of Incolink today, something Scott helped protect. This year, Victorian and New South Wales members will receive a dividend from the redundancy fund. It is a significant return for workers and a reminder of what can be

achieved when unions and industry partners manage these funds responsibly and with the interests of members front and centre. These benefits exist because people like Scott stood up when it mattered.

Strong representation, secure redundancy funds, training investment, apprentice pathways, and a voice for working people do not happen by accident. They happen because of the collective strength of the union and the commitment of people across our industry.

As we come to the end of the year, I want to acknowledge the hard work of every member across the country. You have continued to deliver quality work in challenging conditions, and the unity of our trade remains one of our greatest strengths. I thank you for everything you have contributed throughout the year and wish you and your families a safe, restful, and well-deserved break over Christmas. I look forward to seeing everyone ready for a strong start in the new year.

In solidarity,

Earle Setches

PADDY MCCRUDDEN

As we approach the end of another demanding year, it is impossible to ignore the pressures facing working people across Australia.



Families everywhere are feeling the strain of increasing rents, higher interest rates and the growing expense of everyday essentials. Groceries, fuel and utilities continue to bite hard. Many of our members tell us they feel like they are running faster just to stay in the same place. These are not isolated stories, they are a reflection of a national economic climate that is testing households in every state and territory.

For tradespeople, the picture is mixed. The broader economy is still absorbing the impact of global instability, fluctuating commodity prices and a slowing domestic market. We are seeing more caution from developers and a tightening of private investment. This has led to less work in some regions and industries, and we know that too many skilled workers are currently out of a job. As a union, the hardest thing to witness is a member with bills to pay and no hours coming in. We see you, and we are fighting every day to make sure the pipeline of work grows, not shrinks.

At the same time, there are areas of the economy that remain incredibly active. Nationally, public infrastructure is one of the strongest drivers of employment for our trades. Major transport projects, hospital upgrades, precinct redevelopments and expansions of essential services continue to provide thousands of quality jobs. These projects not only keep people employed but also build the next generation of public assets that communities rely on. Our members are central to this work. Whether it is a regional health facility or a capital city rail project, qualified plumbers and fire protection workers are on the tools every day turning plans into reality.

Another major source of employment is the explosion of data centres across the country. Australia is now considered a key Asia Pacific hub for data infrastructure. Global demand for cloud services, digital security and high-capacity computing has surged, and companies are expanding at record pace. Data centres require highly specialised plumbing, fire systems, cooling, mechanical services and ongoing maintenance. These are large projects with long construction programs, and our members have been crucial to delivering them safely and at the highest standard. In every state, new facilities are either underway or at planning stage, which means ongoing opportunities for our trades.

Across the union, we are working closely with employers, government and industry partners to make sure these pipelines remain strong. We advocate for sensible investment, proper regulation, high safety standards and fair wages. We push back when governments or companies try to cut corners or undermine conditions. And we continue to build strong relationships with contractors to ensure that when work becomes available, our members are first in line.

The strength of the PPTEU comes from solidarity. Even in tough economic times, our membership remains strong and our branches continue to work together. The national office is coordinating closely with state leadership to anticipate where the workload is heading and to make sure members in quieter regions are not left behind. We know that some states are in a stronger position than others. That is why cooperation between branches is so important. A job in one state helps keep our national industry healthy and builds momentum everywhere.

Looking ahead, the signs for the next twelve months are encouraging. Infrastructure projects already funded by state and federal governments will roll forward. Data centre growth is set to continue. Several major precinct and hospital projects are expected to move into construction.

These will support thousands of trade jobs and generate opportunities for apprentices and new entrants to the industry. As a union, we will continue to push for more public investment, stronger industry standards and secure, well-paid work for every member.

To all PPTEU members across Australia, thank you for your hard work and your resilience this year. It has not been easy for many families, but your commitment to the trade and to each other keeps our industry strong.

As we wind down for the festive season, I want to encourage everyone to make the most of the Christmas break. Take the time to switch off, enjoy the company of family and friends and recharge after a long year on the tools. You have earned every moment of rest.

On behalf of the national leadership, I wish all members a safe and happy holiday period. We look forward to seeing you back in 2026 ready to hit the ground running with the strength and solidarity that define our union.

Paddy McCrudden
National President

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN

VICTORIA
VICTORIA
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VICTORIA
VICTORIA
VICTORIA



EARLE SETCHES

Our union continues to grow because members understand the power of collective action.



This year has been one of the most demanding and productive periods our industry has seen in recent memory. Worksites across Victoria have been running at full stretch, and our members have continued to prove their value on the biggest and most complex projects in the country. The scale of activity has reaffirmed something we already know, plumbers are essential to the strength, safety and growth of our state.



Throughout the year we have worked closely with government, industry partners and peak bodies to push for better conditions, stronger protections and fairer outcomes for our members. These partnerships matter; they help shape policy, guide investment and ensure that the voices of working people are heard where it counts. Our union continues to grow because members understand the power of collective action. When we stand together, we secure better rights, stronger agreements and a safer future for everyone on site.

Training remains central to everything we do. The demand for highly skilled tradespeople has never been greater, and our responsibility is to make sure Victorian plumbers and sprinkler fitters have access to world class training that keeps them ahead of industry change. PICAC continues to lead the way with programs that set national benchmarks, and this year saw the announcement of a new training facility in Western Melbourne. This centre will expand our capability to deliver specialist courses that respond to the needs of a rapidly evolving industry.

Future proofing the trade is a priority. Heat pump technology is becoming a major part of the transition to cleaner and more efficient energy systems. Our dedicated training program ensures members are prepared for that shift and ready to lead in an energy environment that is changing fast. We are also investing heavily in the next generation of plumbers and sprinkler fitters. Getting apprentices into the industry and onto a stable pathway matters not only for their careers but for the long-term capability of the trade.

A new project, Building Futures: Breaking Barriers, is helping increase the number of women entering the industry. It is encouraging broader participation, breaking down old barriers and building a workforce that reflects the community we serve.



This year also brought significant news for members through Incolink. The strong performance of the fund means members will receive a dividend, providing real financial support at a time when the cost of living continues to put pressure on households. Incolink has always been a safety net that workers can rely on. The dividend is a direct result of disciplined fund management and the ongoing strength of the industry. It is a reminder of the value that collective structures provide and the importance of maintaining systems that protect workers and their families.

In solidarity,

Earle Setches



2026 RDO

VICTORIAN CALENDAR

JANUARY

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Public Holiday Annual Leave RDO Lock Down Weekends School Holidays Picnic Day World Plumbing Day Return to work – 12 Jan 2026

VICTORIAN SCHOOL TERM DATES

TERM 1: 28 January 2026 – 2 April 2026
 TERM 2: 20 April 2026 – 26 June 2026
 TERM 3: 13 July 2026 – 18 September 2026
 TERM 4: 5 October 2026 – 18 December 2026

PUBLIC HOLIDAY DATES

New Year's Day: Thursday 1 January
 Australia Day: Monday 26 January
 Labour Day: Monday 9 March
 Good Friday: Friday 3 April

Easter Saturday: Saturday 4 April
 Easter Sunday: Sunday 5 April
 Easter Monday: Monday 6 April
 Anzac Day: Saturday 25 April
 King's Birthday: Monday 8 June

Grand Final Eve: Friday 25 September (TBC)
 Melbourne Cup Day: Tuesday 3 November
 Christmas Day: Friday 25 December
 Boxing Day: Monday 28 December

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN

NSW + ACT
NSW + ACT
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NSW + ACT
NSW + ACT
NSW + ACT



THEO SAMARTZOPOULOS

Your efforts keep our industries strong,
our workplaces safe, and our standards high.



As State Secretary, it gives me great pride to highlight the remarkable momentum across New South Wales in hospital infrastructure and major metro projects. These developments directly involve and benefit our members working across Fire Protection, Plumbing, Drainage, Gas-fitting, Roofing, HVAC installations, and Civil Plumbing.

The scale of construction currently underway is unlike anything we've seen in recent years. Health Infrastructure NSW is reporting a record number of hospital builds and upgrades, spanning both metropolitan and regional areas. These projects not only represent critical public investment in health services, but also secure thousands of hours of skilled trade work for our members across every discipline.

In Sydney, key health projects include the **new Rouse Hill Hospital**, a \$700 million investment designed to meet the growing demand across the north-west corridor. The project is expected to be awarded in the first quarter of 2026 and

will include extensive mechanical and hydraulic systems requiring the highest level of trade expertise. Alongside this, **Royal Prince Alfred, Ryde**, and **Nepean (Stage 2) Hospitals** are all progressing strongly, creating steady and ongoing employment opportunities for members working across large, complex installations.

Regional NSW is also benefiting from a major wave of construction activity. Projects at **Eurobodalla, Shoalhaven**, and **John Hunter** are now well underway, with **Shellharbour Hospital** ramping up. Meanwhile, **Gunnedah, Bathurst**, and **Manning Base Hospitals** are preparing to commence, further expanding job prospects and providing opportunities for apprentices and tradespeople to gain invaluable experience on major regional builds.

These developments are not just construction projects, they are multi-faceted infrastructure programs requiring intricate coordination between fire and plumbing systems, HVAC, drainage, and medical gas installations. They represent the kind of complex, high-skill work that our members excel at, and they highlight the essential role our trades play in the delivery of modern, safe, and efficient public facilities.

On the transport front, major infrastructure continues to push forward. The **St Marys to Airport Metro** has now entered the systems fit-out stage, engaging over 15 EBA contractors across the 26-kilometre corridor. The **Metro West** line, linking the CBD to Westmead, is expected to have the fit-out awarded early next year, another project where our members will play a vital role in ensuring world-class outcomes. Meanwhile, the **Western Harbour Tunnel** — the first new harbour crossing for vehicles since 1992 — is progressing rapidly, with members from both Fire Protection and Mechanical HVAC trades recently commencing on site.

Beyond hospitals and transport, the ever-expanding **Data Centre sector** continues to be a major employer for our trades. Massive data facilities are under construction or in planning at Lane Cove, Artarmon, Macquarie Park, Huntingwood, Smeaton Grange, Erskine Park, and Smithfield. This sector has become one of the most technically demanding areas for plumbing and fire protection, with large-scale cooling systems, high-pressure water services, and complex mechanical installations requiring precision and reliability.

Our trades continue to stand at the forefront of these essential projects, delivering high-quality work safely, efficiently, and with pride. Each site represents the skill, dedication, and professionalism that define our union and our industries.

As we approach the end of another busy year, I want to extend my sincere thanks to all our members, delegates, and Health and Safety Representatives for their tireless work and commitment. Your efforts keep our industries strong, our workplaces safe, and our standards high.

I'd like to wish all our members and their families a happy and safe festive season, enjoy a well-earned break, and we'll see you back on the tools, refreshed and ready for another big year ahead.

In unity,

Theo Samartzopoulos

State Secretary, PPTEU NSW & ACT



2026 RDO

NSW CALENDAR

JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH
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APRIL	MAY	JUNE
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JULY	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER
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OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER
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25 26 27 28 29 30 31	22 23 24 25 26 27 28	20 21 22 23 24 25 26
	29 30	27 28 29 30 31

Public Holiday Designated Long Weekend Scheduled RDO Flexible RDO Picnic Day World Plumbing Day

SCHOOL TERM DATES

Autumn Holidays - 7th Apr 2026 to 17th Apr 2026
Winter Holidays - 6th Jul 2026 to 17th Jul 2026
Spring Holidays - 28th Sep 2026 to 9th Oct 2026
Summer Holidays - 18th Dec 2026 to 27th Jan 2026

PUBLIC HOLIDAY DATES

New Year's Day: Thursday 1 January
Australia Day: Monday 26 January
Good Friday: Friday 3 April
Easter Saturday: Saturday 4 April
Easter Sunday: Sunday 5 April
Easter Monday: Monday 6 April
Anzac Day: Saturday 25 April
King's Birthday: Monday 8 June
Labour Day: Monday 5 Oct
Christmas Day: Friday 25 December
Boxing Day: Monday 28 December

2026 RDO

ACT CALENDAR

JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH
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APRIL	MAY	JUNE
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JULY	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER
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OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER
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Public Holiday RDO Canberra Day World Plumbing Day Reconciliation Day

SCHOOL TERM DATES

Autumn Holidays - 7th Apr 2026 to 17th Apr 2026
Winter Holidays - 6th Jul 2026 to 17th Jul 2026
Spring Holidays - 28th Sep 2026 to 9th Oct 2026
Summer Holidays - 18th Dec 2026 to 27th Jan 2026

PUBLIC HOLIDAY DATES

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Australia Day: Monday 26 January
Canberra Day: Monday 9 March
Good Friday: Friday 3 April
Easter Saturday: Saturday 4 April
Easter Sunday: Sunday 5 April
Easter Monday: Monday 6 April
Anzac Day: Saturday 25 April
Reconciliation Day: Monday 1 June
King's Birthday: Monday 8 June
Labour Day: Monday 5 Oct
Christmas Day: Friday 25 December
Boxing Day: Monday 28 December

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN

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TROY SMART

Quality work, fair conditions and safety on-site remain the pillars of our craft.



It is an honour to address you today as the newly elected State Secretary of the Plumbing & Pipe Trades Employees Union WA, an organisation to which I proudly belong not just in title but through decades of hands-on work in the plumbing trade. I want to thank every member who placed their trust in me; it's a privilege I carry with a deep sense of responsibility and commitment.

Quality work, fair conditions and safety on-site remain the pillars of our craft. As your State Secretary I've set out to build from that foundation, securing real results for plumbers, fitters and the pipe-trades community across Western Australia.

One of our biggest achievements this year has been negotiating Western Australia's first mechanical enterprise agreements (EBAs), a first for our state and a major milestone for the PPTEU. Four companies have already come on board, and more are in discussions to follow. These agreements set a new standard for our sector, giving recognition to the highly specialised work our members do in mechanical services, while delivering stronger wages, safety standards and conditions.

This progress sends a clear message: WA's mechanical trades are professional, skilled and ready to lead the next phase of growth across our state's construction and infrastructure sectors.

Another area of strong progress has been our ongoing work to secure licensing and proper recognition for sprinkler fitters in WA. At present, sprinkler fitters aren't required to register, a situation that doesn't reflect the critical safety role they play in protecting lives and property.

I recently met with Minister Roger Cook, alongside representatives from his office. It was a positive and constructive discussion about how we can finally address this gap. Since that meeting, we've been closely monitoring the Plumbers Licensing Amendment Bill 2025, which has now been introduced to Parliament.

The Bill is a significant step forward. As Minister Tony Buti noted in his parliamentary speech, the changes will "introduce flexibility to prescribe other aspects of plumbing, should the regulation of such aspects be considered necessary and appropriate in the future." In plain terms, this opens the door for trades like sprinkler fitting, firefighting water systems and mechanical services to be formally recognised under WA's plumbing legislation for the first time.

Our union will continue to engage with government through the Bill's progression and the drafting of associated regulations. This reform will help create a safer, more professional industry, one where qualified tradespeople are properly licensed, and their skills respected.

Membership in the PPTEU WA continues to grow as we gear up for a strong period of work across the state. A large pipeline of infrastructure and commercial projects means more opportunities for our members and apprentices. Our presence on-site and at the bargaining table is expanding every month, which gives us greater leverage to protect standards and secure better outcomes for everyone in our trade.

Leadership in this role isn't about titles or offices, it's about action, integrity and the strength of our members standing together. I'm proud of what we've achieved already, and I'm even more excited for what's ahead as we keep building a fairer, safer and more respected industry in Western Australia.

Thank you to every member for your support, your hard work and your trust. I'll keep working every day to make sure it's rewarded.

In solidarity,

Troy Smart



2026 RDO

WESTERN AUSTRALIA CALENDAR

JANUARY

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FEBRUARY

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MARCH

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JUNE

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Public Holiday RDO School Holidays

WA SCHOOL TERM DATES

TERM 1: 2 February 2026 - 2 April 2026
 TERM 2: 20 April 2026 - 3 July 2026
 TERM 3: 20 July 2026 - 25 September 2026
 TERM 4: 12 October 2026 - 17 December 2026

PUBLIC HOLIDAY DATES

New Year's Day: Thurs 1 January
 Australia Day: Mon 26 January
 Labour Day: Mon 2 March
 Good Friday: Fri 3 April

Easter Sunday: Sun 5 April
 Easter Monday: Mon 6 April
 Anzac Day: Mon 27 April
 Western Australia Day: Mon 1 June

King's Birthday: Mon 28 September
 Christmas Day: Thu 25 December
 Boxing Day: Fri 26 December

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN

QUEENSLAND
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QUEENSLAND



GARY O'HALLORAN

Supporting women entering the trade remains a core priority.



Over the past twelve months, our union has continued to grow stronger, more active, and more united. Across Queensland, our members, delegates, and officials have shown what it means to stand up for safer workplaces, fair conditions, and a better future for the plumbing and pipe trades industry.

This year we have seen major progress across the Fixed Industry campaign for a 36-hour week, driven collectively with the BTG unions. Member turnout at industrial action, such as the Wacol Prison stoppage showed the power of workers standing together for a fairer balance between work and life. Our organisers have remained active on job sites every day, supporting members and strengthening workplace structures. Delegate numbers have grown again, ensuring more workers have representation when it matters most.

We've also expanded our coverage with new employers, councils, and regional worksites joining the union. Bargaining outcomes have remained strong, with conditions protected and

improved across multiple sectors. These gains reflect the trust members place in their union to secure fair outcomes, wherever they work.

Our Apprentice Mentor Program continues to be a cornerstone of support for young workers entering the trade. Mentors have been active across Queensland, working closely with apprentices and strengthening ties with the teams at PICAC Beenleigh. Additional training opportunities are now in development, ensuring apprentices continue to receive the right guidance, both on the job and in their training.

Supporting women entering the trade remains a core priority. The union continues to play an active role in the BTG Women's Group, and this year saw the launch of the Building Futures, Breaking Barriers initiative — a major national program aimed at driving cultural and structural reform in plumbing and allied industries. Encouraging more women into apprenticeships and ensuring they are supported throughout their training is essential to the future of our industry.

Training and skill development have continued to grow through our partnership with CEPUTECH and other industry stakeholders. Our union representatives work closely with training

providers to make sure apprentices and members have access to high-quality opportunities and feel supported through every stage of their career.

Throughout the year, organisers have travelled extensively across Queensland to maintain strong engagement with members. Site visits, meetings, training days, and calls have kept lines of communication open, while our relationships with super funds, redundancy schemes and industry partners have continued to strengthen.

One of the highlights of the year is the launch of our first Retired Members Function at PICAC Beenleigh. The event brings together long-serving members whose contributions have shaped our industry, with strong support from our industry partners. It's a proud moment to honour the legacy of those who built the foundations we stand on today.

Membership continues to grow steadily, with increasing numbers of apprentices joining early in their careers. This reflects both the strength of our on-site presence and the ongoing work to ensure members understand their rights, conditions, and the support available through their union.

Across all of this work, the union has maintained a strong and consistent voice on key issues affecting our industry. Through BTG campaigns, cross-union collaboration and targeted advocacy, we remain committed to safer worksites, fairer conditions and improved standards for training and employment.

Looking ahead, the focus remains clear: strengthening representation at the bargaining table, expanding training and development opportunities, growing our presence across regional Queensland, and building deeper partnerships across the industry.

Our union is built by members, and together we will continue to protect our rights, improve our conditions, and secure a stronger future for the plumbing and pipe trades.

In unity,

Gary O'Halloran
State Secretary, PPTEU QLD



2026 RDO

QLD/NT CALENDAR

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Public Holiday Industry RDOS EBA RDOS School Holidays Brisbane Holidays



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legal
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Despite our size, we haven't forgotten where we came from and why we're here. We are a proud industry super fund, representing hard-working Australians.

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Past performance isn't a reliable indicator of future performance. For further understanding on the Fund's performance please refer to cbussuper.com.au. Insurance is issued under a group policy with our insurer, TAL Life Limited ABN 70 050 109 450 AFSL 237848.

This information is about Cbus Super. It doesn't account for your specific needs. Please consider your financial position, objectives and requirements before making financial decisions. Read the relevant Product Disclosure Statement (PDS) and Target Market Determination to decide if Cbus Super is right for you. Call **1300 361 784** or visit cbussuper.com.au.

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PPTEU