

Blackstone's recently acquired Australian Private Wealth Platform receives further accolades amid continued growth story

La Trobe Financial Fund operations ranked by SQM Ratings as the highest in Australia

Friday, 13 April 2018 - Leading independent fund ratings agency, SQM Research, has released its annual review of the Australian Mortgage Trust Sector. La Trobe Financial was yet again the highest rated Fund, with an independent rating of 4.25 stars ("Superior") for its 12 Month Term investment offering. One of the Fund's other offerings, a peer-to-peer (P2P) Select Investment Account, was rated the second highest Fund in Australia, with a rating of 4.0 stars ("Superior").

In assigning ratings, SQM Research deploys a rigorous methodology taking into account a number of key operational and risk return factors, including management, corporate governance, process, fees and returns.

SQM Research singled out a number of key strengths in La Trobe Financial's Fund operations for investors, including its:

- strong distribution network and market niche;
- "very knowledgeable and experienced staff";
- diversification across geographical sectors and borrowers;
- effective arrears management; and
- "returns, which have consistently been over and above peers and benchmarks".

Chris Andrews, La Trobe Financial's Chief Investment Officer, commented: *"We welcome Louis Christopher and his research team's results and findings. SQM have been a mainstay of property and fund management assessment now for many years, and have an outstanding reputation for accuracy and reliability in their data sets."*

Whilst the recognition is pleasing we remain resolutely committed to the highest standards of credit and investment discipline across our organisation on both our institutional investment mandates covering \$5 billion, and our \$2.1 billion retail Credit Fund.

We understand that this is what our 43,000 clients and their financial advisers demand of us. We are particularly pleased that our \$400m peer-to-peer offerings has been recognised as Australia's largest and longest-operating peer to peer platform. This form of investment continues to attract interest from investors and advisers and we have developed enormous conviction in its merits over our two decades in the peer-to-peer space", said Andrews.

Cheree Pedley, La Trobe Financial's Executive General Manager Head of Operations - Private Wealth added: *"We are pleased to have received such strong ratings. Investors are increasingly looking to build on their wealth, and we are seeing continuous and increasing demand for our offerings. We are experiencing weekly growth through our online investment platform La Trobe Direct, having opened over 1,100 new accounts."*

"This rating comes at a particularly important time for investors with higher interest rates and increased share market volatility likely to be experienced across the global economy. Investors are becoming increasingly focused on generating better risk adjusted returns, diversifying their portfolios and obtaining access to stronger related credit exposures", said Caterina Nesci, Executive General Manager Head of Marketing at La Trobe Financial. *"In 2017 we saw a 33 per cent increase in flows to our credit fund strategies when compared to 2016",* she said. This rating announcement comes on the back of La Trobe Financial's recent success at the International Alternative Investment Review Awards (IAIR) in Hong Kong, where La Trobe Financial was judged the "Best Investment Company in the Asia Pacific".

La Trobe Financial will be making further announcements shortly.

About La Trobe Financial

La Trobe Financial is Australia's largest Credit Specialist providing funding and investment solutions to a diverse range of customers since 1952. We are 80% owned by Blackstone, the world's largest alternative asset manager, with over US\$434 Billion of Funds under Management worldwide. We are a proven and trusted investment partner for institutional and retail investors alike with over 65 years' experience, managing investment mandates in excess of \$14 billion. La Trobe Financial holds all requisite regulatory licences: La Trobe Financial Services Pty Limited ACN 006 479 527 Australian Credit Licence 392385 and La Trobe Financial Asset Management Limited ACN 007 332 363 Australian Financial Services Licence 222213 Australian Credit Licence 222213. For further details please visit our website www.latrobefinancial.com. For details of our ratings please view our Awards & Ratings link on our website.

About Blackstone

Blackstone is one of the world's leading investment firms. It seeks to create positive economic impact and long-term value for its investors, the companies it invests in, and the communities in which it works. Blackstone does this by using extraordinary people and flexible capital to help companies solve problems. Its asset management businesses, with over US\$400 billion in assets under management, include investment vehicles focused on private equity, real estate, public debt and equity, non-investment grade credit, real assets and secondary funds, all on a global basis. Further information is available at www.blackstone.com. Follow Blackstone on Twitter @Blackstone.

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