

Easton Investments Limited ABN 48 111 695 357

Level 2, 115 Pitt Street Sydney NSW 2000

T: 1300 655 695 or +612 9221 6666 E: info@eastoninvestments.com.au

eastoninvestments.com.au

**ASX Code: EAS** 

Via ASX Online

ASX ANNOUNCEMENT - 22 November 2016

ASX Market Announcements Office ASX Limited

#### 2016 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Easton Investments Limited (**Easton** or **the Company**) will today address shareholders at its Annual General Meeting to be held in Sydney, commencing at 10:30am AEDT.

Attached is a copy of the Address to be delivered by the Chairman, Mr Kevin White, and the Presentation to be delivered by the Managing Director, Mr Greg Hayes.

Enquiries and further information:

Greg Hayes
Ph. 02 9221 6666
Mobile 0419 298 536
Email greg.hayes@eastoninvestments.com.au



#### 2016 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

#### **CHAIRMAN'S ADDRESS**

Whilst I will leave it to our Managing Director to report on fiscal 2016 and provide an update on progress in the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of the current year, I want to briefly draw shareholders' attention to the Company's excellent growth prospects over coming years as a result of its unique distribution capability in the accounting channel that has been purposefully built and developed through targeted investment and initiatives over recent years.

The positive outlook for Easton is principally underpinned by:

1. The **Knowledge Shop** business where we intend to continue to grow the subscriber base and build on web-based training for accountants, together with other services that meet the needs of this channel.

#### Key Drivers of Growth:

- A current customer base of around 2,000 accounting firms
- Support service for small & medium accounting firms delivering strong subscription income
- On-line training to assist accountants to meet their compulsory professional development.
- 2. The **Merit Wealth** business where we expect further growth in the number of Limited Authorisations issued to accountants, as well as the number of full service advisers operating under our Referral Model with the accounting channel.

#### Key Drivers of Growth:

- Requirement for accountants to be authorised from 1 July 2016 to provide SMSF advice to their clients (i.e. removal of what is commonly termed "the Accountants' Exemption")
- The provision of Authorisation services to accountants on an annual subscription basis, generating
  a new revenue stream for the Company. Currently, we are one of the largest providers of this
  service in the market
- Accountants connecting with our full advisers to provide extended financial advice to their clients. We have a strong pipeline of adviser prospects seeking to participate in our Referral Model.
- 3. The **Law Central** and **Panthercorp** businesses which respectively provide on-line and full service corporate documentation capability to accountants and advisers and which we expect will make a positive contribution to earnings for the first time in fiscal 2017.

#### Key Drivers of Growth.

- Through Knowledge Shop's relationship with the accounting channel more than 350 accounting firms now registered as new customers with Law Central
- Cross-sell and synergistic opportunities between Law Central and Panthercorp
- New product initiatives.



4. Acquisition opportunities which we will continue to identify and investigate, but always remaining extremely selective and at all times consistent with the Company's strategic direction and intent to build a scale distribution capability in the Australian accounting and financial services sector.

#### Key Drivers of Growth:

 Broad base of strategic acquisition opportunities across accounting, wealth and distribution businesses.

In terms of acquisitions and decision-making generally, I can assure our shareholders that the Board remains focused on creating value for you and that we will only transact where we clearly perceive sustainable value for our Company and shareholders.

It is pleasing to note that Easton has experienced an above market appreciation in the Company's share price over the last 18 months despite the divestment of non-core assets during 2015/16 and the recent loss of the Harmony Distribution Agreement, both of which will impact the Company's earnings growth in fiscal 2017.

However, we now have a much simpler and a more streamlined Company with less uncertainty and risk and with a narrow focus on core businesses. Moreover and as noted above, there are a number of compensating factors at work which Directors believe provide the Company with a strong platform for sustained growth over coming years.

The Board is intent on successfully executing the Company's distribution strategy and lifting profitability, operating cash flow and return on equity as we believe that this will result in a continued re-rating of the Company and a further up-lift in share price over time.

In handing over to Greg Hayes, our Managing Director, I would like to acknowledge Greg's untiring commitment to our Company's future success and similarly acknowledge the hard work and efforts of our management team and staff who, under Greg's leadership, have been responsible for the Company's growth and performance over the last 12 months and who are integral to our future success.



### 2016 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING MANAGING DIRECTOR'S PRESENTATION

Thank you Mr Chairman.

Good morning ladies and gentlemen and thank you for joining us today.

I will now take you through my presentation, which provides a review of fiscal 2016 and a brief update on 1<sup>st</sup> quarter progress.

- Presentation follows -

# **Easton Investments Limited 2016 Annual General Meeting** Greg Hayes – Managing Director



A leveraged distribution business in the accounting & financial services business channel

## Operational highlights -2016

- Launch of Limited Authorisation service for accountants (LARs)
- 52% increase in number of online training programs delivered
- Knowledge Shop increases subscriber numbers by 10.5%
- Secured the Hayes Knight brand nationally
- Divested interest in Chesterfields to release capital for more aligned investments
- Increased equity stake in Law Central to 45.6%
- Unexpected Harmony Distribution Agreement finalised on 31 August 2016
- Emphasis on online distribution with new initiatives



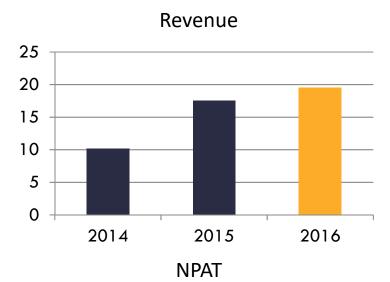
## Financial highlights - 2016

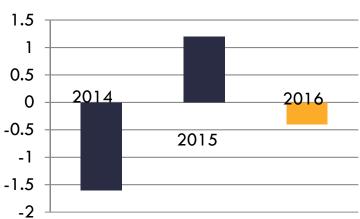
- □ Group revenue \$19.46 mill up 11%
- Normalised EBITA \$3.33 mill up 28%
- □ NPAT (\$352K) − down 128% (primarily due to non cash impairment charge)
- Net cash flow from operations \$2.62 mill
- Debt Nil with undrawn bank facility \$5 mill
- Cash position \$3.94 mill
- Available tax losses fully absorbed

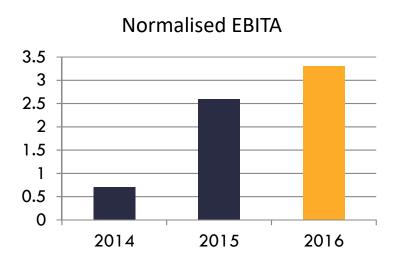


## Overview of financial performance

#### **Financial Performance trend over 3 years**



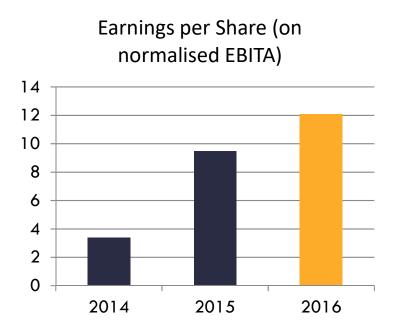


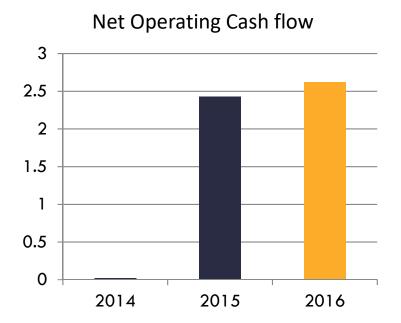




## Overview of financial performance

#### **Financial Performance trend over 3 years**







# Operating metrics - 2016

Training hours delivered – 22,630	Funds under advice - \$1.35 bill
On line documents delivered – 5,879	Risk premium - > \$11 mill Loan book - \$420 mill
LARs - > 200	Accounting firms signed up to Law Central - 347
Knowledge Shop accounting channel (subscribers + training) - 1,985 firms	SMSFs under administration — 1,120



Post June 30 activity

## Easton Asset Management

- Harmony Distribution Agreement finalised August
   31
- Business wound down
- Short term earnings setback, but not a core business



## Acquisition of Panthercorp

- Completed on 31 August
- Earnings contribution from 1 September onwards (normalised earnings at time of acquisition \$550K per annum)
- Business transitioned and set up for its historically strong 2<sup>nd</sup> half year trading
- With this acquisition we also increased our stake in Law Central to 56%
- Synergy opportunities now being pursued



## Referral Rights Agreement

- New agreement completed for Newcastle/Central Coast area
- Two other agreements completed in late June
- Further agreements under discussions
- Program accelerated to meet the demand coming from accountants under our Limited Authorisation model



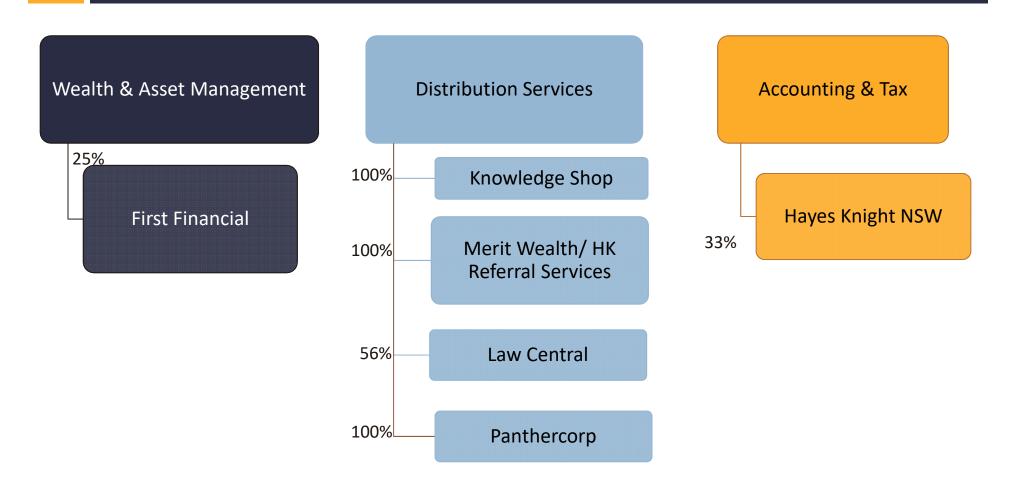
#### Limited Authorised Representatives

- Allows accountants to continue to advise in the SMSF space
- Merit Wealth has one of the largest LAR advice groups in Australia
- Continued growth expected
- Subscriber income a new annuity revenue stream
- Linking LARs with full advisers allows us to provide wealth services to the clients of accountants



Group overview

# Group Businesses





#### Brands the market trusts















## Business strategy

To build a significant and strategic distribution capability in the accounting and financial services sector.

#### We achieve this by:

- Being a material supplier to the accounting channel
- Developing a strong accounting brand
- Building a material wealth business through the accounting channel & being a leading LARs group
- Building a significant training business
- Leveraging online distribution
- Strong organic growth supported by selective acquisitions



Outlook & growth

#### Outlook for 2017

Strong growth in -LAR space

- Referral Rights Agreements Continued growth in Knowledge Shop members & on line training

Proposed changes in superannuation legislation will drive advice enquiries in 2017

Increase engagement of accountants with Law Central & Panthercorp



## 2017 year trading update

- First half will be impacted by
  - Closure of EAM business including some one off, non recurring wind up costs
  - Only part period contribution from Panthercorp
- Second half will benefit from
  - Full period contribution from Panthercorp together with synergy benefits from our other business units
  - Continuing organic growth from Knowledge Shop & Merit Wealth
  - Expected increase in number of Referral Rights Agreements



## And importantly

- Our thanks to all of our management & team
- The company is fortunate to have a great group of people and culture across our business units
- Your company is in good hands with these people



#### Disclaimer

The information contained in this presentation is not intended to be exhaustive and must be considered in conjunction with all other publicly available information disclosed by Easton to the Australia Securities Exchange from time to time.

This presentation does not take into consideration the investment objectives, financial situation or circumstances of any particular investor.

Certain statements in the presentation relate to the future. Such statements involve known and unknown risks and uncertainties and other important factors that could cause the actual results, performance or achievements to be materially different from expected future results, performance or achievements expressed or implied by those statements. Easton does not give any representation, assurance or guarantee that the events expressed or implied in any forward looking statements in this presentation will actually occur and you are cautioned not to place undue reliance on such forward looking statements.

This presentation has not been subject to auditor review.

