



Policy Priorities 2026

Delivering dignity in retirement

Shaping a simpler, safer and more stable superannuation system



CEO Foreword

Mary Delahunty

Australia's superannuation system is one of our national strengths and the envy of the world.

The Association of Superannuation Funds of Australia (ASFA) has been the voice of superannuation since 1962.

ASFA brings together the full superannuation ecosystem, providing a whole of system perspective on policy design, implementation and capability. Our role is to strengthen Australia's world class retirement system so Australians can retire with confidence and dignity.

As the system continues to evolve, the challenge is no longer simply about growth, but about how well the system works in practice.

This is where ASFA's role is distinct.

In representing funds, administrators, service providers and industry participants, we provide a whole of system perspective on policy and implementation. In a system that is highly interconnected, that perspective is critical.

ASFA sits at the centre of how the system is shaped and implemented in practice.

Our work is grounded in sector expertise and informed by real world experience. We see how policy settings operate across the system, where complexity can emerge, and how outcomes are ultimately delivered for members.

We work across the full policy lifecycle, from identifying emerging risks, to shaping and testing policy, through to supporting implementation across the system. This end-to-end perspective ensures that policy is not only well designed, but capable of being delivered effectively in practice. At the centre of this is a clear focus on members.

Supporting informed decision making and enabling choice is fundamental to maintaining trust and confidence in the system, and to ensuring superannuation continues to operate in members' best financial interests.

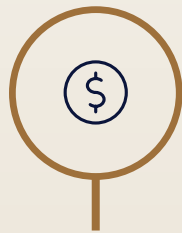
The policy priorities set out in this document reflect this whole of system approach. They are focused on the next phase of the system, ensuring superannuation continues to operate effectively, adapt to change, and deliver strong outcomes over the long term.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mary Delahunty'.

Mary Delahunty
ASFA CEO

A system at scale

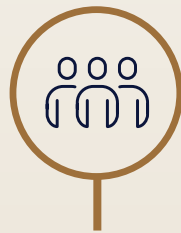
Australia's superannuation system is one of the largest and most successful retirement savings systems in the world.



\$4.5 trillion in assets



Approximately **145 per cent of GDP**



18 million Australians with superannuation



\$4.25 billion entering the system weekly



\$2.5 billion paid in retirement benefits every week

Superannuation is central to Australia's retirement system and is now a major source of long-term capital across the economy.

It supports higher retirement incomes, reduces reliance on the Age Pension, and enables long term investment in infrastructure, housing and national priorities.

A system at a turning point

The superannuation system is entering its next phase of maturity.

It is larger, more sophisticated and more interconnected than ever before. It is also operating in an environment of rising expectations, new risks and significant reform.

Huge reforms have been achieved in the last year. The superannuation guarantee is now 12%, super is now included on government-paid parental leave, the Low Income Super Tax Offset has been unfrozen after 10 years. Each one of these reforms will substantially improve equitable outcomes in retirement for millions of Australians.

- ➔ **Payday Super will reshape how contributions flow through the system.**
- ➔ **Consumer protection settings are evolving.**
- ➔ **Cyber risks and financial crime are increasing in scale and sophistication.**

At the same time, the system is maturing. More Australians are entering retirement with superannuation as their primary or sole source of income, and the focus is shifting from accumulation to decumulation.

The next phase of superannuation requires a coordinated approach to ensure the system is well designed, adaptable and able to continue delivering on its legislated objective to help millions of Australians achieve a dignified retirement. Our sector will strive to create the world's best retirement system.

A framework for the next phase

The sector's policy priorities are anchored in a clear objective, to ensure Australia's superannuation system is:



Simpler
to operate and
navigate



Safer
for members



Stable
over the
long term

This reflects a shift from building the system to ensuring it remains fit for purpose into the future.



Simpler super

Making the system work in practice

As superannuation has matured, complexity has increased across the system, affecting members, employers and funds.

A simpler system reduces duplication, improves consistency, makes it easier for members to navigate and for the sector to operate.

Where ASFA is focused



Improving retirement and member outcomes



Supporting major system changes



Reducing regulatory complexity



Strengthening the link between policy and implementation





Making financial advice more accessible

Supporting Australians to use their super

Superannuation has been highly effective at building the retirement savings of millions of working Australians.

The next challenge is helping members use those savings with confidence.

Access to affordable, high-quality financial advice is central to the success of the superannuation system and to supporting Australians to achieve a dignified retirement.

Too many Australians are currently unable to access advice when they need it most, due to cost, complexity and regulatory constraints that limit the availability of affordable, accessible advice. This limits peoples' ability to make informed decisions and fully benefit from the system.

Superannuation funds are often best placed to support their members with guidance at key stages, including the transition to retirement.

A modernised advice framework is needed to expand access, support scalable models and ensure advice is delivered in a way that is both accessible, affordable and underpinned by strong consumer protections.



ASFA calls for:

- ▶ Enhancing access to affordable financial advice
- ▶ Progressing Delivering Better Financial Outcomes legislative reforms without delay
- ▶ Ensuring an education pathway for the New Class of Advisers
- ▶ Enshrining collective charging for those who choose it
- ▶ Implementing strong consumer protections

Making the system simpler in practice

A simpler system also requires a deliberate focus on how policy translates into practice.



ASFA calls for:



Payday Super implementation

- ▶ Supporting effective implementation of Payday Super through clear and practical settings, and promoting system-wide readiness across employers, funds and service providers



Reducing regulatory duplication

- ▶ Undertaking a holistic review of superannuation reporting across APRA, ASIC the ATO, and other regulators to harmonise definitions and align reporting timeframes
- ▶ Reducing duplication across regulators and streamlining reporting requirements



A simpler retirement system

- ▶ Allowing greater flexibility for contributions into retirement phase products and improving usability of the system at retirement
- ▶ Preserving informed member choice while reducing duplicate accounts



Equity

- ▶ Addressing structural inequities including the gender gap
- ▶ Improving outcomes for First Nations Australians
- ▶ Extending Superannuation Guarantee coverage to all workers under 18
- ▶ Reducing the tax on withdrawals based on hardship and compassionate grounds for members experiencing significant hardship
- ▶ Improving equity and access for Pacific Island workers participating in the Australian labour market



Safer super

Protecting members and strengthening system resilience

A safer system protects trust.

As superannuation balances grow, so too does the expectation that the system will protect members' savings and personal data.

Risks are evolving in scale and sophistication. A safer system anticipates harm, prevents it where possible, and responds effectively when incidents occur. It also requires a forward-looking approach that keeps pace with emerging threats and aligns with broader government efforts to strengthen consumer protection and combat scams.

Where ASFA is focused



Strengthening system-wide resilience to external risks, like cyber threats



Improving member outcomes and consumer protection settings



Protecting vulnerable members



Superannuation Cyber and Financial Crime Coordination (SC3) Framework

A system-wide response to a system-wide risk

Superannuation operates as a deeply interconnected ecosystem. Funds, administrators, custodians and service providers are tightly linked.

Risks can propagate across shared infrastructure, service providers and operational dependencies.

Maintaining trust in a system of this scale requires a coordinated, sector-wide response.

As the voice of super, ASFA is bringing the sector together to develop the Superannuation Cyber and Financial Crime Coordination (SC3) Framework, a whole-of-sector initiative designed to strengthen collective resilience across the superannuation system.

The SC3 framework is built on four core pillars:



Superannuation Cyber and Financial Crime Exchange (SuperFCX)

A sector wide capability to gather, analyse and share actionable threat intelligence across the superannuation sector, improving early visibility of emerging risks.



Forums and specialist working groups

Ongoing collaboration across the system to share insights, address emerging risks and drive continuous improvement.



Super Sector Cyber Incident Playbook

A sector-wide cyber incident response playbook to support consistent escalation, coordination and communication during significant incidents.



Super Sector Response Exercises

Cross-sector simulation exercises to test readiness, strengthen coordination and embed lessons learned across the ecosystem.

Protecting members in practice

A safer system also requires stronger protections across the system.

 **ASFA calls for:**



System integrity

- ▶ Strengthening enforcement of Superannuation Guarantee compliance
- ▶ Increase resourcing for the recovery of unpaid superannuation
- ▶ Including unpaid superannuation in the Fair Entitlements Guarantee
- ▶ Ensuring Compensation Scheme of Last Resort settings are appropriate, and to ensure that people's retirement savings are not levied for losses in other sectors



Consumer protection

- ▶ Legislating reforms to prevent perpetrators of financial abuse accessing superannuation
- ▶ Strengthening consumer education to improve financial literacy, and scams & fraud prevention
- ▶ Recognise First Nations kinship structures in superannuation law and practice



Operational safeguards

- ▶ Centralising financial hardship withdrawal administration to improve oversight
- ▶ Working with government to strengthen member service standards and coordination to ensure they are practical, implementable and deliver consistent improvements in member outcomes
- ▶ Supporting the role of insurance in superannuation as a key protection for millions of Australians



Stable super

*Ensuring long term confidence
and certainty*

Superannuation is a long-term system by design.

It relies on consistent policy settings and a clear purpose.

Confidence from members and markets underpins how the system operates and how capital is invested.

Stable settings support long-term investment, planning and strong retirement outcomes.

Where ASFA is focused:



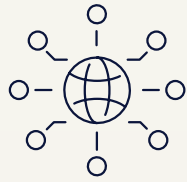
Maintaining strong system design



Ensuring policy stability after years of substantial reform



Supporting long term investment



Establishing a National Retirement Income Strategy

Working towards the world's best retirement system

 **ASFA calls for:** the establishment of a National Retirement Income Strategy (NRIS).

Australia's retirement income system is built on three pillars:

➔ superannuation ➔ the Age Pension ➔ voluntary savings

Each pillar plays a distinct role, but they are inherently interdependent. The effectiveness of the system depends on how well these components work together to support Australians through retirement.

More Australians are entering retirement with superannuation savings, and retirement decisions are becoming increasingly complex. However, policy development has often occurred in isolation across these pillars and adjacent policy areas. As the system matures, a more deliberate and coordinated approach is required.

A National Retirement Income Strategy would provide a structured framework to guide long term policy development across the system, ensuring settings are aligned, member outcomes are improved, and the system remains sustainable over the long term.

A national retirement income strategy should provide:

- ▶ A coordinated framework that aligns superannuation, the Age Pension and voluntary savings within a clear and consistent policy approach
- ▶ Stronger integration with housing, aged care and workforce policy to support better retirement outcomes
- ▶ A focus on long-term sustainability and intergenerational equity
- ▶ Regular review and assessment to ensure retirement income settings remain effective and responsive over time
- ▶ Greater public awareness and engagement to support informed retirement planning

Supporting long term system stability

 ASFA calls for:



Policy certainty

- ▶ Maintaining concessional tax treatment of superannuation
- ▶ Avoiding frequent or retrospective policy changes



Preservation and system purpose

- ▶ Maintaining preservation as a core design feature of superannuation
- ▶ Ensuring superannuation remains focused on its legislated objective



Investment and economic contribution

- ▶ Enabling the efficient deployment of long-term capital and institutional investment through appropriate tax and regulatory settings
- ▶ Providing clear and consistent policy frameworks to support investment in national priorities, including the energy transition, housing and infrastructure
- ▶ Ensuring regulatory settings for public and private markets support prudent institutional investment, strong governance and long-term capital formation
- Ensuring performance assessment settings support long-term investment and reflect member investment choices

Working with our members

Shaping the system together

ASFA's policy priorities are developed and delivered in close collaboration with members across the superannuation system.

This reflects the nature of the system itself. Superannuation is highly interconnected, with outcomes shaped not only by policy settings but by how those settings are implemented in practice across funds, administrators and service providers.

Effective system design depends on how well we work together

Our engagement with members is guided by a set of core principles that underpin our policy priorities and support a **simpler, safer** and **stable** system.



Equity

Ensuring the system works for all Australians and supports fair retirement outcomes



Preservation

Protecting superannuation as a system designed for retirement



Universality

Maintaining broad and consistent participation across the workforce



Choice

Supporting informed choice across investments, products and retirement

These principles underpin ASFA's policy priorities and provide a consistent lens for policy development and decision making.



A system that delivers

Australia's superannuation system is one of our national strengths.

30 years after becoming a reality for millions of Australians, superannuation is now a national icon.

Its success has been built over decades through consistent policy, strong institutions and a clear objective.

The next phase will be defined by how well the system works in practice.

ASFA's policy priorities provide a framework for that next phase.

A system that is **simpler** to navigate, **safer** for members and **stable** over the long term will ensure that superannuation can deliver dignity in retirement for all Australians.

