

# WEALTHFOCUS PERPETUAL SMALLER COMPANIES

February 2025

## FUND FACTS

**Investment objective:** Aims to provide long-term capital growth and income through investment in quality Australian industrial and resource shares which, when first acquired, do not rank in the S&P/ASX 50 Index.

## FUND BENEFITS

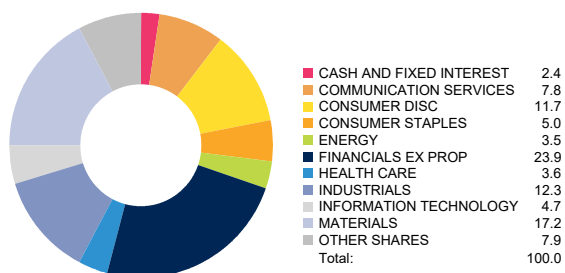
Provides investors with the potential to benefit from the growth of quality smaller or emerging companies, through active management by one of Australia's most experienced investment management teams.

## FUND RISKS

All investments carry risk and different strategies may carry different levels of risk. The relevant product disclosure statement or offer document for a fund should be considered before deciding whether to acquire or hold units in that fund. Your financial adviser can assist you in determining whether a fund is suited to your financial needs.

**Benchmark:** S&P/ASX Small Ordinaries Accum. Index  
**Inception Date:** May 1995  
**Size of Portfolio:** \$196.89 million as at 31 Dec 2024  
**APIR:** PER0039AU  
**Management Fee:** 1.28%\*  
**Investment style:** Active, fundamental, bottom-up, value  
**Suggested minimum investment period:** Five years or longer

## PORTFOLIO SECTORS



## TOP 5 STOCK HOLDINGS

Stock Holding	% of Portfolio
Pacific Current Group Ltd	7.7%
Capricorn Metals Ltd	3.1%
Gold Road Resources Ltd	3.0%
EVT Limited	2.9%
EQT Holdings Limited	2.6%

## NET PERFORMANCE - periods ending 28 February 2025

	Fund	Benchmark #	Excess
1 month	-1.19	-2.80	+1.60
3 months	1.16	-1.46	+2.63
1 year	5.39	7.33	-1.95
2 year p.a.	3.97	7.59	-3.62
3 year p.a.	3.60	2.13	+1.47
4 year p.a.	7.01	2.85	+4.16
5 year p.a.	10.86	5.57	+5.29
7 year p.a.	8.04	4.70	+3.35
10 year p.a.	8.26	6.49	+1.76

Past performance is not indicative of future performance. Returns may differ due to different tax treatments.

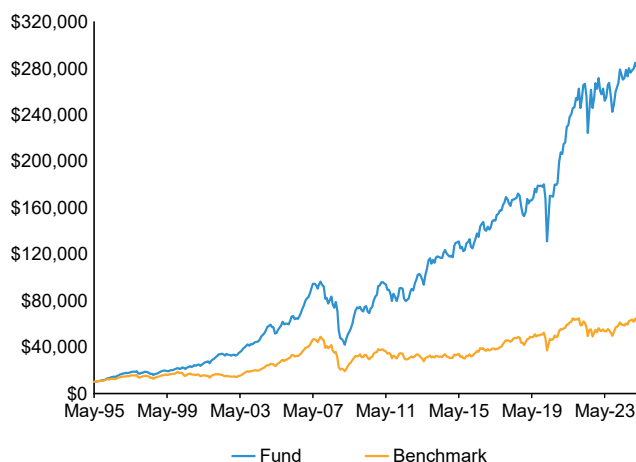
## PORTFOLIO FUNDAMENTALS<sup>^</sup>

	Portfolio	Benchmark
Price / Earnings*	14.3	18.6
Dividend Yield*	4.3%	3.9%
Price / Book	1.5	1.7
Debt / Equity	24.5%	30.5%
Return on Equity*	11.5%	10.5%

<sup>^</sup> Portfolio Fundamentals are compiled using our methodology and provided only for the purpose of illustrating the Fund's investment style in action. These figures are forecast estimates, calculated based on consensus broker estimates where available, and should not be relied upon. Dividend Yield is a dividend forecast of underlying securities for the portfolio and does not reflect the distributions to be determined for the fund.

\* Forward looking 12-month estimate.

## GROWTH OF \$10,000 SINCE INCEPTION



## MARKET COMMENTARY

The S&P/ASX Small Ordinaries fell -2.80% in February buffeted by wild swings as company results were reported. Small caps outperformed large caps over the month with most of the declines in relation to outlook rather than reported results. It also marked a major break in momentum with many companies that had had a strong run in the previous year struggling. Amongst the biggest reversals were Pinnacle Investment Management (-10.9%), Life 360 (-7.9%) and Breville Group Limited. On a sector basis Communication Services was the only sector to deliver a positive return during the month (+6.53%) while Energy (-13.6%), Healthcare (-6.9%) and Information Technology (-6.5%) were the weakest performing sectors. The sell-off in the market accelerated in the last half of the month in sympathy with a declining US market which increasingly worried about the frenetic and sometimes disruptive pace of White House initiatives, particularly in relation to tariffs.

## PORTFOLIO COMMENTARY

The portfolio's largest overweight positions include Pacific Current Group Ltd, EQT Holdings Ltd and Servcorp Limited. Conversely, the portfolio's largest underweight positions include Life360 Inc, Perseus Mining Limited and De Grey Mining Ltd, all of which are not held in the portfolio.

A2 Milk contributed strongly to returns in February, with the stock rising by 35.3%. The management team has proven its ability to execute strategically through supply constraints and other external and market headwinds. The company reported a stronger than expected first half 25 result and Financial Year 2025 guidance was upgraded and implies that A2 Milk sales and margins will accelerate and expand further in the second half of the year. We remain optimistic about A2 Milk, given its strong balance sheet, ongoing expansion into tier 2 and 3 cities in China, as well as its entry into the U.S., all of which present substantial growth opportunities.

EVT contributed to portfolio performance (+23.4%) after delivering a strong result with net profit significantly ahead of expectations. The outperformance was driven by stronger-than-expected earnings from both the hotel and cinema divisions. This should support a potential rerating, with asset sales, strategic reviews, improvements in film content, hotel earnings growth, and upside from Thredbo all acting as potential catalysts. Despite this, EVT continues to trade at a lower premium to its net tangible assets compared to historical levels. Cinema earnings have shown clear signs of recovery after a challenging start to the year, easing concerns about structural declines. Hotels demonstrated strong performance, benefiting from an increased focus on high-margin managed agreements, improved cost efficiencies, and steady revenue growth. EVT also announced plans to divest 525 George Street, with proceeds likely to be reinvested in hotels, while a special dividend and further strategic moves for key assets are under consideration.

The overweight to Myer detracted from portfolio performance (-17.4%) during February. Despite the noise, we believe cost synergies are highly likely from the announced combination which could come from debt refinancing, COGS sourcing, rent reductions, and CODB efficiencies, with additional optionality from internal margin initiatives. Revenue synergies, while harder to realise, could stem from integrating Apparel Brands online, expanding MyerOne, and store consolidation. Despite the noise, we view the combination with Premier's Apparel Brands Just Jeans, Jay Jays, Portmans, Dotti and Jacqui E as favourable. The combination has created a leading omni-channel retail platform that brings enhanced scale and significant operating leverage benefits. Myer will also benefit from the expected addition of Retail Stalwart Solomon Lew's potential addition to the board.

Enero Group Limited detracted from performance (-17.1%) after a weaker-than-expected first half, with revenue and earnings both coming in below forecasts, primarily due to softness in OBMedia. Group net revenue declined year-over-year, though revenue remained stable between the first and second quarters, in line with prior guidance. OBMedia's earnings, while lower, showed signs of stabilizing, with a more consistent trajectory expected moving forward. The agency segment faced revenue pressure but performed slightly ahead of expectations on the earnings front due to a lower cost base. Corporate costs remained flat, with leadership transitions underway as the CEO and CFO have exited, potentially leading to further cost efficiencies. Cash conversion remained strong, exceeding EBITDA, and the company ended the period with a solid net cash position, representing a significant portion of its market cap. A dividend of 1.5 cents per share was declared, reflecting prudent capital management.

## OUTLOOK

Equity markets had looked expensive going into February with Australian growth stocks, like their US counterparts, had been trading at elevated P/E ratios. Many of these stocks bore the brunt of the sell-off as the world market potentially enters a new phase. Markets had broadly welcomed the pro business Trump administration choosing to focus on a welcome agenda of tax cuts, de-regulation and budget savings which they expected would boost economic growth whilst also containing inflation. Meanwhile Trump's much vaunted love of tariffs was widely considered to be, in the most part, a bargaining tool in trade negotiations. However there are some fears that headline-grabbing cuts to government spending could be increasingly hurting consumer sentiment whilst on-and-off tariffs on allies and close trading partners could be having a more profound pre-emptive impact on business confidence and supply side chains than fully appreciated.

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# Benchmark prior to 1/4/2000 was the ASX Small Ordinaries Accumulation Index. From 1/4/2000 to current the benchmark is S&P/ASX Small Ordinaries Accumulation Index.  
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## MORE INFORMATION

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