

StatePlus leads the way with FPA Professional Practice program

Sydney, 17 November 2015: Retirement advice experts StatePlus has become Australia's largest adopter of the rigorous FPA Professional Practice program run by the Financial Planning Association of Australia (FPA), the peak professional financial planning body.

A total of 17 StatePlus regional offices, within which 138 planners operate, are now signed up to the program. This makes it the financial planning group with the highest number of FPA Professional Practices.

StatePlus, formerly State Super Financial Services, has a 25-year history of providing retirement planning services to the public sector. According to StatePlus General Manager of Marketing, Product and Advice, Jason Andriessen, committing to higher standards is another important step in StatePlus' overarching goal to lead professionalism in financial planning.

"Participating in the program is a vital piece of the bigger picture we're building: one in which our trusted, highly qualified advisers become the first port of call for clients with a variety of financial needs," said Mr Andriessen.

"This is about a commitment to higher standards, to delivering skilled, ethical and highly effective financial advice that supports clients in fulfilling their retirement and other life goals.

"It builds on other major initiatives to support our planners in delivering for their clients. That includes our recent \$50 million investment in a new digital business model that supports consistency, client convenience, quality and predictability in advice. Above all, it recognises our unwavering commitment to education and qualification in each and every one of our planners," said Mr Andriessen.

All StatePlus planners are members of the FPA and more than half have achieved the CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER® designation, the gold standard in financial planning. By 2019, all planners will be CFP® practitioners. StatePlus planners are not paid commissions; fees reflect the advice that clients need and the level of service they want.

"We want to build and be a part of a professional community in which we hold each other to the highest ethical and professional standards. And planners in our regional offices are at the heart of that, working on the ground to make a real difference to the lives of our fellow Australians," concluded Mr Andriessen.

According to Mark Rantall, Chief Executive Officer of the FPA, the FPA Professional Practice program recognises high quality financial businesses that provide best-practice financial advice in their local area.

"We are delighted to welcome StatePlus to the community and commend their commitment to high standards. The number of FPA Professional Practices around Australia continues to grow, and I think this is reflective of where our profession is heading. It is important that we recognise leaders who are raising the bar on education and professional standards," he said.

Qualifying criteria for the FPA Professional Practice program:

- 75% of practitioners within a practice are required to be FPA members; either Financial Planner AFP® or CFP® professionals.
- 50% of planners in each regional office are CFP® professionals or will be within three years of initial commitment.
- Each FPA Professional Practice will commit to upholding the FPA Code of Professional Practice.
- Each Professional Practice agrees to take part in a three-yearly review to confirm adherence to the criteria described above.

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Jason Andriessen will be available for media interviews at the FPA Professionals Congress in Brisbane from 18-20 November. To arrange an appointment please contact Jason on 0407 490 699 or email jason.andriessen@stateplus.com.au

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About StatePlus

StatePlus, formerly State Super Financial Services, is one of Australia's leading financial planning providers. As a specialist in the public sector, StatePlus has expert knowledge in all areas of financial advice, with a particular focus on the unique needs of the public sector such as Defined Benefit schemes and planning for retirement. It was established and operated as State Super Financial Services by SAS Trustee Corporation (State Super) in 1990. The new StatePlus brand is part of a broader business transformation to invest in people and technology – taking it to a new digital era where it is well positioned to offer the highest standards of advice and professionalism. StatePlus has approximately 60,500 clients and \$16.5 billion in funds under management (as at October 2015). It has 160 professional financial planners and relationship managers in 18 offices across Australia, with a regular presence in over 60 other sites across NSW, ACT, VIC, QLD and WA, and a Client Hub in Wollongong.

