



Speech by

Hon. D. HAMILL

MEMBER FOR IPSWICH

Hansard 27 August 1998

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Suncorp-Metway Ltd

Hon. D. J. HAMILL (Ipswich—ALP) (Treasurer) (9.48 a.m.), by leave: I wish to inform the House that this Government is honouring its pre-election commitment to proceed with the planned sell-down of the Government shareholding in Suncorp-Metway Ltd. Accordingly, the Government announced to the Australian Stock Exchange yesterday that it is proceeding with the planned one-for-two entitlement issue to Suncorp-Metway shareholders. This entitlement issue gives investors who are registered shareholders in Suncorp-Metway Ltd on 1 December 1998 the right to purchase one additional Suncorp-Metway share for every two held for a price of \$5 a share. This compares with a closing price for Suncorp-Metway shares yesterday of \$8.36.

I remind the House that the framework for this sell-down was put in place in 1996 as part of the previous Government's merger of Suncorp with Metway Bank and the Queensland Industry Development Corporation. This Government, when then in Opposition, had grave concerns about the process that the previous Borbidge Government adopted in forcing the merger through in the way that it did. Those concerns notwithstanding, we promised to honour the commitments they had made to reduce the Government's stake in the bank.

Accordingly, the Government is now settling a timetable for the offer with the Australian Stock Exchange. The offer will be non-renounceable, meaning that entitlements not taken up at the time of the offer will lapse. Shareholders who wish to derive value from the offer but are not in a position to take up the full amount should consult their financial advisers. Eligible shareholders will receive formal notification of their entitlement as soon as practicable after 1 December. This notification will outline all relevant details in terms of entitlement and payment date. Assuming the entitlement offer is taken up by all shareholders registered at 1 December, it is expected that the Government's holding in Suncorp-Metway will be reduced from about 45% to about 31%.
