

**EMBARGOED UNTIL 11.30AM AEDT FRIDAY 24 MARCH**

## **New verification tool to help improve interaction between financial counsellors and super funds**

A new service provider portal that allows super funds to verify the identity and contact details of financial counsellors has been launched at the **AIST Conference of Major Superannuation Funds** today.

**Financial Counselling Australia (FCA) CEO Fiona Guthrie** said the new portal would streamline interactions between financial counsellors and super funds.

“Financial counsellors, who assist people in financial difficulty, interact with superannuation funds on behalf of their clients for lots of reasons - early access to superannuation, insurance claims, and amalgamation” said Ms Guthrie.

“By law, a super fund dealing with a third party, such as a financial counsellor, needs to make sure that the financial counsellor has the client’s authority to talk to the fund on their behalf.”

**Australian Institute of Superannuation Trustees (AIST) CEO Eva Scheerlinck** said that the portal – which will be administered by FCA – was an initiative that received strong support at the Indigenous Super Summit held in Melbourne in 2016.

“A number of financial counsellors assist Indigenous people in rural and remote communities and often need to contact super funds,” said Ms Scheerlinck. “The new service provider portal will make for a more efficient process.”

“The service provider portal is a big step forward for the financial counselling profession,” said Ms Guthrie. “It will make the process of interacting with financial counsellors more efficient and simpler.”

### **Further media enquiries:**

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***AIST is the peak industry body for the \$700 billion profit-to-member super sector which includes industry, corporate and public sector funds.***