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Media Release: Prof Deborah Ralston is Acting Director of MCFS; new members join MCFS Industry Advisory Committee; AAMI renews as MCFS corporate sponsor

1. Melbourne Centre for Financial Studies (MCFS) is pleased to announce that Deborah Ralston, a Professor of Finance at Monash University, is its Acting Director during the first half of 2009. Professor Kevin Davis the inaugural MCFS Director is on a research sabbatical at the University of Manchester in England.

Prof Ralston was formerly a Pro Vice Chancellor and Professor of Finance at University of Canberra, and has held a number of other senior academic appointments.

Deborah's research interests include financial regulation, the strategy and management of financial institutions, and regional economic development and she has published widely in these areas. Prof Ralston is a Fellow of the Financial Services Institute of Australasia (Finsia), the Australian Institute of Company Directors, and CPA Australia. She is currently a Director of Mortgage Choice, an ASX listed mortgage broking company.

In the challenging environment of 2009 Deborah is well placed to lead MCFS and its efforts on behalf of the Melbourne community of finance academics and practitioners. She is available for comment or background assistance on +61 3 9666 1010, and deborah.ralston@melbournecentre.com.au.

2. MCFS is delighted to announce that the following industry leaders have joined its **Industry Advisory Committee** chaired by academic cum director and investor Professor (Emeritus) Bob Officer:

- Ann Byrne - CEO, Australian Council of Superannuation Investors (ACSI)
- Sally Capp - CEO, Committee for Melbourne
- Professor (Emeritus) Ian Harper - Senior Consultant, Access Economics
- Margaret Payn - Group Managing Director, Strategy and Marketing, ANZ
- Maria Wilton - Managing Director, Franklin Templeton Investments Australia

For people involved with MCFS refer: <http://www.melbournecentre.com.au/people.html>

3. MCFS is also pleased to announce that **AAMI**, the Melbourne-based national insurer, and MCFS inaugural corporate sponsor, will continue its financial support of the Centre in 2009.

4. MCFS chairman John Unkles welcomed the appointment of Prof Ralston and noted that "Cumulatively the support of such a cross-section of individuals and financial organizations amounts to a significant vote of confidence in MCFS's achievements to date, its current program and its future directions".

Unkles went on to say that "In the longer term it is vital that the finance industry take lead set by AAMI and Finsia and get behind the work of MCFS. The strong link to academe provides

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an ideal means for the local industry to leverage the same synergies enjoyed by other financial capitals such as London, Boston, Edinburgh and Zurich.”

Professor Ralston added that “Victorian Universities increasingly see MCFS with its industry network as a forum for generation and validation of research work and hence an important element in the drive to attract and retain talented academic finance researchers”.

Professor Davis has previously said that, “the best way to ensure quality teaching is to have a strong institutional reputation for research. In the war for talent, both in academe and industry MCFS plays a small but important role in ensuring that necessary research is conducted while fostering quality teaching and better prepared graduates.”

END

For more information:

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Melbourne Centre for Financial Studies is a not-for-profit partnership between academe and industry. Members of the consortium are Melbourne, Monash and RMIT Universities, and Finsia. With seed funding from the Victorian Government, they have joined together to enhance Melbourne’s national and international reputation for excellence in financial practice, research and education. MCFS facilitates knowledge transfer between, and builds research synergies between industry and academe by undertaking finance research, arranging consulting by academics, and organizing research-focused events.

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