



MARKET RELEASE

9 December 2008

Westpac Banking Corporation

TRADING HALT

The securities of Westpac Banking Corporation (the "Company") will be placed in pre-open at the request of the Company, pending the release of an announcement by the Company. Unless ASX decides otherwise, the securities will remain in pre-open until the earlier of the commencement of normal trading on Thursday, 11 December 2008 or when the announcement is released to the market.

Security Codes: WBC
 WBCPA

Kimberley Brown
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9 December 2008

Warren Zhang
Adviser – Issuers
ASX Limited
20 Bridge Street
Sydney NSW 2000

Dear Mr Zhang,

**Westpac Banking Corporation (ASX Codes: WBC, WBCPA, WCTPA)
Request for Trading Halt**

Westpac Banking Corporation (*Westpac*) requests that a trading halt be granted by the ASX from the commencement of trading on 9 December 2008 with respect to the following:

- (a) Westpac fully paid ordinary shares (ASX code: WBC);
- (b) Westpac stapled preferred securities (ASX code: WBCPA); and
- (c) Westpac trust preferred securities (ASX code: WCTPA).

For the purposes of Listing Rule 17.1, Westpac provides the following information:

- (d) the trading halt is necessary as Westpac will be making an announcement to the market in relation to the placement of shares involving institutional and sophisticated investors;
- (e) Westpac requests that the trading halt remain in place until the opening of trading on 10 December 2008, unless before that time Westpac makes an announcement concerning the outcome of the placement or requests that the trading halt be lifted; and
- (f) Westpac is not aware of any reason why the trading halt should not be granted.

Yours sincerely



Alex Crompton
Acting Head of Group Secretariat