

## Perpetual Investment Funds

# PERPETUAL CREDIT INCOME FUND

January 2024

### FUND FACTS

**Investment objective:** Aims to provide investors with regular income by investing in a diversified range of income generating assets, and outperform the Bloomberg AusBond Bank Bill Index\*\* over rolling three-year periods before fees and taxes.

**Benchmark:** Bloomberg AusBond Bank Bill Index\*\*  
**Inception date:** November 2004  
**Size of fund:** \$147.4 million as at 31 December 2023  
**APIR:** PER0263AU  
**Mgmt Fee:** Please contact us for a copy of the disclosure document.  
**Benchmark Yield:** 4.327% as at 31 January 2024  
**Suggested minimum investment period:** Three years or longer

### FUND BENEFITS

Provides investors with the potential for regular income, above cash returns and lower volatility than other income strategies through an actively managed and liquid investment.

### FUND RISKS

All investments carry risk and different strategies may carry different levels of risk. The relevant product disclosure statement or offer document for a fund should be considered before deciding whether to acquire or hold units in that fund. Your financial adviser can assist you in determining whether a fund is suited to your financial needs.

### TOTAL RETURNS % (AFTER FEES) AS AT 31 January 2024

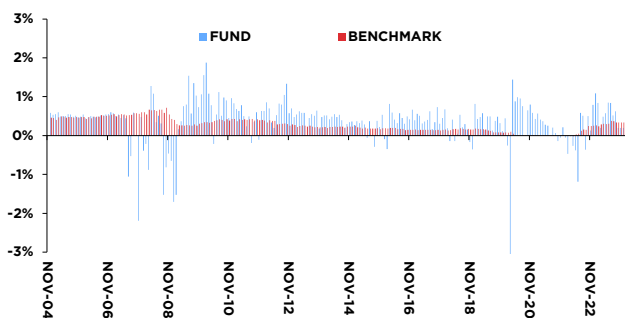
	1 MTH	3 MTHS	6 MTHS	1 YR	2 YRS PA	3 YRS PA	5 YRS PA	7 YRS PA	INCEPT PA
Perpetual Credit Income Fund	0.84	3.45	4.85	8.86	4.80	3.91	3.84	3.80	4.57
Bloomberg AusBond Bank Bill Index**	0.37	1.09	2.15	4.00	2.75	1.83	1.44	1.55	3.36

Please note: Performance for Perpetual's complete list of investment funds is available on [www.perpetual.com.au](http://www.perpetual.com.au). Past performance is not indicative of future performance.

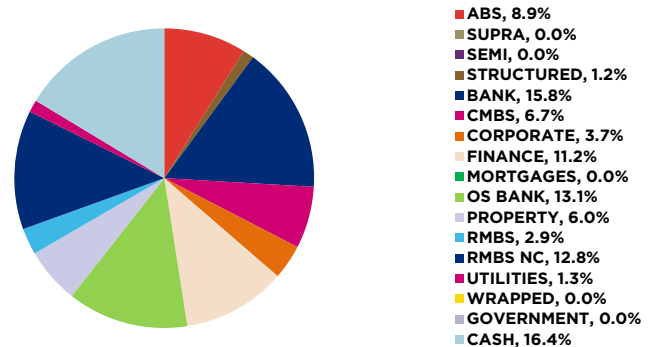
### POINTS OF INTEREST

- Bond yields consolidate, domestic yield curve steepens;
- Domestic spreads rangebound; USD and EUR spreads tighten;
- Primary market unseasonably busy; demand robust;
- The outlook for credit improves to neutral.

### MONTHLY PERFORMANCE SINCE INCEPTION



### PORTFOLIO SECTORS



### PORTFOLIO COMPOSITION

	BREAKDOWN
Senior Debt	51.93%
Subordinated Debt	44.31%
Hybrid Debt	3.76%
Modified Duration	-0.02
Running Yield <sup>#</sup>	6.12%
Portfolio Weighted Average Life	3.43 yrs
No. Securities	84

\* Information on Management Costs (including estimated indirect costs) is set out in the Fund's PDS.

## MARKET COMMENTARY

Financial markets remained buoyant throughout January, consolidating on a strong finish to 2023 for credit, bonds and equities. The easing macroeconomic outlook, the substantial repricing of US monetary policy expectations and the subsequent fall in discount rate has fuelled the robust rally in risk assets. Equity markets continued to rally with the recent fall in bond yields contributing to strong outperformance for higher duration cyclical growth sectors.

Domestic credit spreads were placid following a strong rally in the fourth quarter of 2023. Corporate spreads outperformed financials, bucking the recent trend which has seen sustained outperformance of financial spreads, led by domestic and offshore banks. Offshore spreads continued to rally with Euro denominated credit performing notably well.

Domestic bond yields were subdued in January. The yield curve steepened slightly as 10-year yields rose marginally to be back above 4% by month end. Global long term yields also saw rises most notably the UK where 10-year yield lifted 36bps. Most global yield curves remain inverted despite the easing recession concerns.

Primary markets were active during January – counter to the typical seasonal trend – with a number of financial issuers taking advantage of robust demand. Westpac and ANZ raised \$5.1B and \$5B respectively, of senior paper. Tier-two issuance was also robust with ANZ (\$2.285B) and NAB (\$1.75B) coming to market with subordinated deals.

## PORTFOLIO COMMENTARY

The Fund's income premium above bank bills remains a key source of outperformance. The portfolio's running yield was 6.1% at month end, with the spread (credit yield premium) measured at 1.7%.

Credit spread dynamics remain the most substantial contributing factor to outperformance over the month. Domestic credit spreads traded in range of recent levels, while offshore spreads – most notably EUR denominated – continued to rally. The Fund's exposure to domestic and offshore banks was the most significant contributing sector, led by USD and EUR denominated subordinated paper. Elsewhere, a small number of foreign denominated issues across utilities and railroad sectors also contributed. Note that all foreign currency exposures are hedged.

The Manager took the opportunity to rebalance, reducing the Fund's capital structure risk by taking profit on a number of strong performing hybrid positions. The Manager sees the upside in corporate hybrids as fully priced in and locked in recent gains. The Fund's weighted average life was also selectively shortened as the flattened credit curve is offering unsatisfactory reward for longer dated issues.

The Fund was active in primary and secondary markets during the month. The Manager added new issues from Credit Agricole and Banco Santander to the portfolio while monetising new issue concessions on benchmark deals from Westpac and ANZ. Throughout the month, the Manager actively traded government and semi-government bond positions, taking advantage of low transaction costs and high liquidity to express tactical duration positions. These positions performed well over the month, contributing to outperformance before liquidating by month end.

The Fund is positioned for what looks like an inflexion point in markets. The outlook for credit is improving but remains delicately balanced. The Manager continues to look for attractively priced issues and relative value opportunities while carefully managing credit and liquidity risks.

## OUTLOOK

The credit outlook remained unchanged in January before improving to neutral in the first week of February.

Valuation indicators remained marginally negative throughout January. US High Yield spreads are tight relative to recent levels, detracting from the outlook. Domestic swap spreads have widened from their recent lows and are now neutral.

Robust economic print and improving lending conditions have reduced the negative impact of macro indicators. The Fed's Senior Loan Officer's survey showed improving financial conditions while the resilient US economy and better-than-expected inflation data eased the pressure on the outlook for spreads.

Market demand has improved providing a tailwind for the credit, increasing the supply and demand outlook to neutral. Above seasonal trend issuance volumes over recent months continue to weigh on the outlook although market demand is healthy reflected in oversubscribed primary market deals and robust secondary market liquidity.

Technical indicators remained positive in January with US credit, equity and equity volatility all positive. Cash levels among real money accounts and intermediary positioning are neutral.

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No allowance has been made for entry or exit fees or taxation (except in the case of superannuation funds, as applicable). Past performance is not indicative of future performance.

\* Perpetual Group means Perpetual Limited ABN 86 000 431 827 and its subsidiaries.

\*\* UBS Australian Bond Index changed to Bloomberg AusBond Bank Bill Index effective 26 September 2014

## MORE INFORMATION

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