

**HD S&P/ASX 200 Potentially Nervous After FOMC Minutes -- Market Talk****WC** 1,752 words**PD** 21 August 2014**ET** 09:58**SN** Dow Jones Institutional News**SC** DJDN**LA** English**CY** Copyright © 2014, Dow Jones & Company, Inc.**LP**

1958 GMT [Dow Jones] Australia's S&P/ASX 200 may trade nervously as it nears the 6-year peak at 5644.2 after Fed minutes indicated officials debated whether to raise interest rates sooner than expected. U.S. shares shrugged off the minutes, with the S&P 500 rising 0.4%, but U.S. 10 year bond yields rose 3 basis points to 2.43%. Downside may be limited as the market awaits Fed chief Janet Yellen's Jackson Hole speech on Friday, but the Fed minutes may inject enough caution about an earlier-than-expected tightening to cap equities in coming days. Focus remains on domestic earnings reports, with four major brokers downgrading Wesfarmers (WES.AU) today. BHP (BHP.AU) may be another source of nervousness after it fell 3.8% on Wednesday. Focus turns to HSBC's **China** manufacturing data at 0145 GMT. Index last 5634.6. (david.rogers@wsj.com; Twitter: @DavidRogersWSJ)

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2357 GMT [Dow Jones]--New Zealand's annual net migration has now crossed the 40,000 threshold, and "the major factor driving this migration cycle has been movements by both New Zealanders and Australians across the Tasman as the Australian job market has cooled," says Westpac Bank senior economist Felix Delbruck. He expects net immigration to peak around 50,000 early next year and says it will likely support a revival in the housing market over the next year or so. "However any resurgence in the housing market is likely to be temporary" as by next year job prospects in Australia will likely improve and the Reserve Bank is also likely to resume hiking interest rates next year. "As mortgage rates continue to rise, we wouldn't be surprised to see house prices actually fall in the second half of the decade," he adds. (rebecca.howard@wsj.com; Twitter: @FarroHoward)

1957 GMT [Dow Jones] J.P. Morgan cuts Coca Cola Amatil (CCL.AU) target to A\$9.75/share from A\$10.10. Says 1H headline numbers were in line with broker's forecasts but the near term earnings outlook remains uncertain, with no specific full-year guidance provided. Indonesian volumes grew strongly but pricing was weak. "We are concerned that in an attempt to improve its relationship with The Coca Cola **Company**, CCL is sacrificing sustainable margin and pursuing a volume based strategy in Indonesia." Keeps Neutral rating. "Despite the stock price in our view presenting reasonable value on a long-term basis, uncertainty around near-term earnings and the potential for a multiple de-rating make it difficult for us to have an Overweight recommendation on the stock until we can have greater faith in the sustainability of CCL's earnings base, management's strategy and the **company's** competitive position in cold drinks." (rebecca.thurlow@wsj.com; @beckthurlow)

2355 GMT [Dow Jones] Offshore accounts at 5 foreign brokerages place net sell orders for 1.5 **million** Japanese shares overnight, according to traders. The first day of premarket selling after 6 days of buying may be negative for the market at the open, although the yen value basis of the figures is unknown. Sell orders total 8.8 **million** shares, with **buy** orders amounting to 7.3 **million** shares. (bradford.frischkorn@wsj.com)

2353 GMT [Dow Jones]--Japan stocks are likely to gain ground Thursday, extending their current year-long eight-session winning streak, as the dollar continues to ratchet higher against the yen (USD/JPY now 102.68)--a strong **buy** signal for exporters. The currency market reacted to hints from U.S. Federal Reserve officials that a surprisingly strong jobs market recovery could **lead** it to raise interest rates earlier than it had been anticipating. "A strong dollar remains the single most powerful Japan stock-buying catalyst--as clearly illustrated in 2013," says Rakuten Securities senior market analyst Masayuki Doshida. There isn't a great deal of short-term room for more yen weakness, but there is enough to keep the current rally going." He puts the Nikkei's range for the session at 15450 to 15600. Nikkei 225 September futures ended yesterday's Chicago trading up 60 points at 15560 vs. their close at

15420 earlier in Osaka. In the cash market, the Nikkei closed up fractionally at 15,454.45 on Wednesday. (bradford.frischkorn@wsj.com)

2350 GMT [Dow Jones] The M&A drums are beating louder for Woodside Petroleum (WPL.AU), which is cash rich due to strong revenues from its Australian gas-export projects and the recent rejection by minority shareholders of a US\$2.68 billion buyback of most of Royal Dutch Shell's (RDSB) stake in the company. Macquarie notes Woodside is now speaking of less competition for assets and more reasonable prices. At the same time, Woodside's targeted deal size appears to be drifting higher to US\$5 billion, from previous guidance of US\$1 billion to US\$5 billion. "All of which seemingly points to nearer-term newsflow on the acquisition front," Macquarie says. It figures Woodside could fund a US\$8.5 billion cash acquisition while keeping gearing under the 30% ceiling. "What's more, depending on the asset's subsequent capex requirements, the payout ratio could potentially also remain at 80%," Woodside says. WPL last traded at A\$43.38. (david.winning@wsj.com; @dwinningWSJ)

2327 GMT [Dow Jones]--Treasury Wine (TWE.AU) just scrapes over the line to hit the bottom end of its FY guidance, potentially taking pressure off the private-equity firms bidding for the vintner to raise their evenly-matched 3.38-billion-Australian dollar (US\$3.14 billion) offers. Operating earnings of A\$184.6 million missed the company's own A\$190 million-A\$210 million guidance range, but would have been A\$193 million had FX rates remained steady as assumed by the company. One of the suitors is a venture between KKR & Co. and Rhone Group LLC, while a person familiar with the matter has named TPG as behind the second offer. Both approaches are indicative and subject to completion of due diligence. For now, it's uncertain whether either bidder will raise their initial A\$5.20-per-share offer, or walk away. TWE was last at A\$5.33. (Ross.Kelly@wsj.com)

2326 GMT [Dow Jones] Comments by Woodside (WPL.AU) CEO Peter Coleman poured cold water on the prospect of large-scale capital management, says J.P. Morgan, noting he highlighted Woodside's growth bent by talking up the prospect of M&A worth US\$5 billion. The CEO said more assets are coming on the market as Woodside's peer group refocuses toward America and some of the sector majors look to improve their balance sheet. Meanwhile, prices are improving as the appetite of national oil companies for deals fades. J.P. Morgan forecasts Woodside will be in a net cash position by year end and a US\$5 billion acquisition would see net gearing at a very manageable 22%. Lifts price target to A\$41.17 from A\$40.69, keeps Neutral rating. (rebecca.thurlow@wsj.com; @beckthurlow)

2325 GMT [Dow Jones] Bank of America Merrill Lynch keeps its underperform rating and A\$37.50 target price on Wesfarmers (WES.AU) as it trades at 22 times expected FY15 earnings, yet earnings are expected to fall next year. "In fiscal 2014, four Wesfarmers businesses went backwards in earnings--and in fiscal 2015 (combined with the elimination of Insurance earnings), three businesses are forecast to go backwards," the broker says. "For a conglomerate to deliver above market growth in earnings, to justify a premium valuation, we believe none of its businesses should post negative growth." WES last A\$45.66. (david.rogers@wsj.com; Twitter: @DavidRogersWSJ)

2310 GMT [Dow Jones]--USD/JPY may trade in a 103.50-104.00 range during Asian trading after it climbed higher following the release of minutes from the most recent FOMC meeting. The minutes showed the U.S. central bank was gradually shifting its stance in a more hawkish direction. "Eyes will now be on Fed Chairwoman Janet Yellen's speech Friday at Jackson Hole," says Junichi Ishikawa, market analyst at IG Securities. He said the pair could test the Y104 level and key resistance at Y104.13 if Yellen sticks to a hawkish tone. "Until then, I think we will be seeing the pair moving in a narrow range," he says. He tips EUR/USD in a 1.3230-1.3300 range. USD/JPY is at 103.73, and EUR/USD is at 1.3258. (alexander.martin@wsj.com)

2302 GMT [Dow Jones] The latest move by Brazil's central bank to spur greater lending may not do the trick according to Fitch Ratings. The reasons: Brazil's banks are nervous about deteriorating borrower credit quality as the country's economy slows. The central bank on Wednesday eased reserve requirements on certain deposits, the second time in a month that it has done so in an effort to jumpstart growth. But Fitch says Brazil's bankers are growing more conservative. The country's largest private banks, for example, are targeting higher-quality borrowers and looking to make shorter-term loans. Most analysts expect Brazil's economy to grow less than 1% this year; some are predicting recession. (marla.dickerson@wsj.com)

2300 GMT [Dow Jones]--Westpac Banking's (WBC.AU) third-quarter capital update indicates its asset-quality metrics continue to improve and domestic housing-credit growth has returned to the levels of the wider financial system, says J.P. Morgan. On the back of that, the brokerage is nudging up its fiscal 2014 earnings forecast by slightly less than 1% to just under A\$7.6 billion--which still leaves it modestly below consensus. It remains overweight and raised its price target to A\$35.38/share from A\$34.99. WBC last traded at A\$34.88. (robb.stewart@wsj.com; Twitter: @RobbMStewart)

To contact the Market Talk Editors,  
Kevin Kingsbury, 212 416-2354, kevin.kingsbury@wsj.com  
Cynthia Lin, 212 416-4403, Cynthia.lin@wsj.com  
John Shipman, 212 416-2181, john.shipman@wsj.com  
Patrick Sullivan, 212 416-2326, Patrick.sullivan@wsj.com

(END) Dow Jones Newswires

August 20, 2014 19:58 ET (23:58 GMT)

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