Monthly Retail Credit Update - August 2024 (July 2024 data, unless otherwise stated)

Outstanding lending

- The trend of increasing non-performing loans continued, notably for owner-occupiers. Banks view that arrears are at a low and manageable level, and growing property values broadly prevent loss given default. The impact of stage 3 tax cuts increasing household income has not yet fed through, with early-stage arrears and hardship volumes remaining high. However, any future weakening in the labour market may put further pressure on borrowers.
- However, prepayment buffers have started an increasing trend, indicating this stress is only experienced in a subset of borrowers.

New lending

- Investors are driving strong growth in new lending, with the value of new commitments now about 2.4 times pre-pandemic levels. Softening rental yields suggest these investors may be increasingly targeting capital gains.
- Owner-occupiers, including first-home buyers, are also active, with the number of new loans around pre-pandemic levels despite higher interest rates eroding borrowing capacity. Competition remains healthy and margins continue to narrow, suggesting the availability of new credit is robust.
- The high volume of new lending does not come with any observed reduction in lending standards. The share of new loans with high-LVRs loan was broadly stable and lending with a low net-income-surplus is declining.

