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2002-03 MID-YEAR REPORT

INTRODUCTION

The Fiscal Integrity and Transparency Act requires the Treasurer to prepare and publicly release a mid-year fiscal outlook report each year. For 2002-2003, this report is required to be tabled by 28 February 2003. This report also meets the Territory's obligations under the Uniform Presentation Framework Agreement.

The information contained in this report includes the information required by the Act, together with detailed financial statements prepared in accordance with the principles laid down as part of the Government Finance Statistics (GFS).

ECONOMIC ASSUMPTIONS

The financial projections contained in this report have been prepared in respect of 2002-2003 and the three subsequent years (the forward estimates period). The projections are based on economic assumptions which reflect the current economic outlook for the Territory.

Recent economic activity in the Territory has been encouraging, with improving conditions in the construction sector, largely related to the Alice Springs to Darwin Railway, with a slight upturn in the property, business services and defence sectors, offset to some extent by a decline in offshore oil production and the setback to tourism from international terrorism events. With work on the railway proceeding, the overall level of activity experienced over the past few months is expected to continue for the remainder of the financial year.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

The 2003-03 financial year marked a substantial change for financial management in the Northern Territory. The Territory moved from a cash framework to an accrual budgeting, accounting and reporting framework. The new fiscal strategy adopted in 2002-03 has both cash and accrual based fiscal targets, primarily a cash deficit reduction strategy which has the general government sector in balance by 2004-05, and a target for the net operating balance to be zero within 10 years. The emphasis in the early years will remain on the cash target while improved reliability in the accrual based data is achieved.

The Territory is the smallest jurisdiction in the Federation in terms of population and relies heavily on the system of horizontal fiscal equalisation to ensure it has the capacity to provide government services.

The largest source of revenue to the Territory Government is GST revenue paid by the Commonwealth. While the GST revenue base should grow more strongly over time than was the case under previous arrangements, it is subject to greater volatility than the previous Financial Assistance Grants.

The Territory is very reliant on GST revenues from the Commonwealth and hence any revision to State and Territory relativities or population data (upon which the Territory's share of GST revenue is based) has the potential to have a material financial effect. The Territory's population is very difficult to estimate for two reasons. The high level of interstate migration makes intercensal estimation difficult and the high proportion of the Territory's population in remote areas also results in higher levels of uncertainty in census estimates. Population estimates for the Territory have recently been revised downward from the 2002-03 Budget forecast due to higher estimates of interstate migration from the Territory. This has resulted in a \$6 million reduction in the GST revenue estimate for 2002-03. This lower than expected population growth compounds throughout the

forward estimates period with GST revenue estimates declining by \$19 million in 2005-06 and an overall reduction of \$51 million over the forward estimates period.

The final determination of the Territory's population for the purposes of calculating its 2002-03 GST revenue will not occur until June 2003 when the Australian Statistician makes a final determination. This estimate will also be affected by revisions to census estimates due in the first quarter of 2003.

The Commonwealth Grants Commission is due to release its 2003 Annual Update of Relativities in late February 2003. These updated relativities will be a matter of consideration at the Treasurer's Conference scheduled in late March 2003. No change has been made to relativities for 2002-2003 and future years pending consideration of the Commission's Report.

TAX EXPENDITURES

Tax concessions are provided to benefit a specified activity or class of taxpayer. They are expenditures in the sense that their impact on the budget is similar to direct outlays, and they can be used to achieve similar goals as spending programs. No policy decisions have been made in the intervening period that affect the information provided in the 2002-03 Budget Papers.

RISKS AND CONTINGENT LIABILITIES

All forecasts are subject to a degree of risk. Hence some risk must also attach to Budget and forward estimates for both revenues and expenses, as the Budget and forward estimates are based on information on a range of factors about which consensus exists at the time the Budget is reviewed. Notwithstanding this, subsequent events in the last half of the year may affect the actual outcome in the remainder of the year and in the forward estimates period.

In addition to changes in economic or other parameters, such as changes in inflation rates, interest rates, exchange rates and population determinations, other factors that can affect the final Budget outcome include:

- the exclusion of some items from forecasts because of uncertainty about their timing, magnitude or probability; and
- the crystallisation of contingent liabilities.

At the time of the review of the Budget and forward estimates all known events were taken into account. There are no known events that would lead to further revisions of the estimates. At the same time, there are no contingent liabilities, beyond those disclosed at the time of the Budget in August 2002 which are known to exist, and no increase in the probability that recorded contingent liabilities will require the Treasurer to assume an actual liability.

OVERVIEW OF ACCOMPANYING REPORTS

Figures 1 to 6 set out the budgeted Operating Statement, Balance Sheet and Cash Flow Statement for the General Government Sector and the Non Financial Public Sector for 2002-2003 and the forward estimates period.

GENERAL GOVERNMENT SECTOR

Operating Statement

As outlined above, the 2002-03 financial year is the first year of accrual budgeting accounting and reporting in the Northern Territory Public Sector. As a result, there is some refinement to the financial information included in these statements. In particular, asset valuations are being improved and this process is expected to continue over the next 12-18 months. The effect of these changes to date on the Operating Statement has

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been an increase of \$6 million in the depreciation expense. There has also been some recategorisation of items as part of the refinement of some accrual data. The significant items reclassified were:

- capital Community Service Obligations (CSO) paid to PowerWater were treated as capital expenditure rather than capital grants (\$10 million); and
- the Commonwealth's contribution towards the supplementary financing to the railway Consortium was treated as a grant revenue, rather than an advance, in accordance with the Commonwealth's initial advice (\$5 million).

These increases have affected the total operating expenses and hence the net operating balance but have minimal effect on the Cash Flow Statement.

There has been a slight drop in estimated operating revenue from the time of the Budget to the mid-year report. This is due largely to the decline in GST revenues associated with lower population estimates (as outlined above) but offset by increased own source revenues, notably increased stamp duties associated with one off business related transactions and small increases in the value of transactions as well as small increases in payroll tax and royalties. Similar changes are expected during the forward estimates period. The above mentioned treatment of Commonwealth railway funding also contributes to the decline in operating revenue.

The revised operating expenses for 2002-03 are higher than the Budget estimate. This is largely due to the items mentioned above (depreciation and reclassification of CSO). Other revisions have only marginally affected total expenses.

The impact on the Net Operating Balance of the various revisions and adjustments made to the General Government sector since the Budget is an increase in the deficit by \$23.1 million to \$51.6 million for the year.

Balance Sheet

Since the publication of the Budget, progress has been made with the valuation of assets for the purposes of financial reporting. As a consequence, the net value of land and fixed assets (after allowing for the value of accumulated depreciation) has risen by \$111.5 million to \$3 814.9 million. This increase has been offset slightly by an expected increase in liabilities, and is a major factor in the budgeted increase in net worth of \$240.6 million to \$2119.2 million.

Cash Flow Statement

The changes outlined above have also caused consequential adjustments in the components of the Cash Flow Statement, however the overall cash deficit for the General Government Sector is forecast to remain unchanged at \$94.2 million.

NON-FINANCIAL PUBLIC SECTOR

As with the General Government Sector, minimal change is estimated to the Cash Flow outcome for the Non Financial Public Sector. For the other financial statements, similar changes have occurred as those for the General Government Sector.

LOAN COUNCIL ALLOCATION

In addition to revised financial statements there is a requirement to provide an updated Loan Council Allocation in the mid-year report. This revised estimated for 2002-03 is provided at Figure 8.

At the time of the August 2002 Budget, the Allocation was estimated to be \$102 million, with the revised 2002-03 Budget resulting in an increase in the Allocation of \$12 million to \$114 million. For 2002-03 the tolerance limit applicable to the Loan Council Allocation is \$44 million and therefore the revised estimate is within this tolerance limit.

Figure 1

GENERAL GOVERNMENT SECTOR OPERATING STATEMENT

	Budget	Revised	Forward Estimates		es
	2002-03	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000
GFS Revenue					
Taxation revenue	226 924	243 946	246 238	246 335	247 775
Current grants and subsidies	1 798 397	1 783 483	1 852 289	1 863 017	1 967 649
Sales of goods and services	73 912	82 807	77 440	90 042	90 367
Capital grants	84 449	85 009	73 944	73 843	73 840
Interest income	14 012	14 012	14 966	14 934	14 954
Other	115 539	99 518	92 108	88 669	88 635
Total Revenue	2 313 233	2 308 775	2 356 985	2 376 840	2 483 220
less					
GFS Expenses					
Gross operating expenses	1 634 844	1 645 813	1 706 973	1 686 302	1 752 722
Depreciation	129 489	134 939	139 988	141 861	142 402
Employee expenses	896 951	896 751	921 917	937 870	948 510
Other operating expenses	608 404	614 123	645 068	606 571	661 810
Nominal superannuation interest expense	81 654	81 654	83 634	85 122	86 046
Other interest expense	154 490	154 490	152 715	152 657	153 024
Other property expenses					
Current transfers	417 286	420 385	401 851	410 410	417 957
Capital transfers	53 409	57 994	48 968	49 055	49 197
Total Expenses	2 341 683	2 360 336	2 394 141	2 383 546	2 458 946
equals					
GFS Net operating balance	- 28 450	- 51 561	- 37 156	- 6 706	24 274
less					
Net acquisition of non-financial assets					
Gross fixed capital formation	236 418	208 476	150 194	133 213	133 128
less Depreciation	129 489	134 939	139 988	141 861	142 402
plus Change in inventories					
plus Other movements in non-financial assets	- 1 472	14 528	8 528	8 528	8 528
equals Total net acquisition of non-financial assets	105 457	88 065	18 734	- 120	- 746
equals					
GFS Net lending / Borrowing (Fiscal balance)	- 133 907	- 139 626	- 55 890	- 6 586	25 020

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Figure 2

NON-FINANCIAL PUBLIC SECTOR OPERATING STATEMENT

	Budget	Revised	Forward Estimates		es
	2002-03	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000
GFS Revenue					
Taxation revenue	222 994	240 016	242 302	242 378	243 457
Current grants and subsidies	1 798 397	1 783 583	1 843 576	1 863 153	1 967 775
Sales of goods and services	418 319	431 472	426 665	436 452	480 266
Capital grants	84 449	85 009	73 944	73 843	73 840
Interest income	26 443	26 443	28 300	27 372	27 395
Other	133 311	93 817	90 512	87 359	86 774
Total Revenue	2 683 913	2 660 340	2 705 299	2 730 557	2 879 507
less					
GFS Expenses					
Gross operating expenses	2 019 371	2 034 635	2 087 605	2 074 357	2 171 721
Depreciation	197 561	203 011	209 589	211 498	195 295
Employee expenses	941 414	941 194	968 480	986 729	995 035
Other operating expenses	880 396	890 430	909 536	876 130	981 391
Nominal superannuation interest expense	81 654	81 654	83 634	85 122	86 046
Other interest expense	204 415	204 415	204 359	202 958	202 997
Other property expenses					
Current transfers	337 112	340 211	327 245	334 505	342 092
Capital transfers	54 397	48 945	37 919	38 006	38 148
Total Expenses	2 696 949	2 709 860	2 740 762	2 734 948	2 841 004
equals					
GFS Net operating balance	- 13 036	- 49 520	- 35 463	- 4 391	38 503
less					
Net acquisition of non-financial assets					
Gross fixed capital formation	300 454	253 512	197 023	176 720	176 653
less Depreciation	197 561	203 011	209 589	211 498	195 295
plus Change in inventories	5 652	5 652			
plus Other movements in non-financial assets	- 1 472	14 528	8 528	8 528	8 528
equals Total net acquisition of non-financial assets	107 073	70 681	- 4 038	- 26 250	- 10 114
equals					
GFS Net lending / Borrowing (Fiscal balance)	- 120 109	- 120 201	- 31 425	21 859	48 617

Figure 3

GENERAL GOVERNMENT SECTOR BALANCE SHEET

	Budget	Revised	Forward Estimates		es
	2002-03	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000
Assets					
Financial assets					
Cash and deposits	37 417	13 256	2 951	20 426	59 792
Advances paid	36 209	47 940	64 490	63 450	62 410
Investments, loans and placements	368 832	379 400	355 078	355 078	355 078
Other non-equity assets	98 902	98 166	62 814	62 590	61 534
Equity	1 320 628	1 420 098	1 439 832	1 462 960	1 500 647
Total financial assets	1 861 988	1 958 860	1 925 165	1 964 504	2 039 461
Non-financial assets					
Land and fixed assets	3 703 478	3 814 953	3 828 758	3 824 333	3 819 058
Other non-financial assets	200	200	200	200	200
Total non-financial assets	3 703 678	3 815 153	3 828 958	3 824 533	3 819 258
Total assets	5 565 666	5 774 013	5 754 123	5 789 037	5 858 719
Liabilities					
Deposits held	166 519	156 716	157 477	174 854	198 384
Advances received	117 518	2 981	2 829	2 774	2 774
Borrowing	1 598 557	1 703 377	1 702 289	1 698 124	1 696 878
Superannuation liability	1 429 473	1 398 347	1 423 019	1 428 702	1 414 435
Other employee entitlements and provisions	296 716	325 656	324 981	324 171	323 696
Other non-equity liabilities	78 224	67 687	39 789	39 458	39 325
Total liabilities	3 687 007	3 654 764	3 650 384	3 668 083	3 675 492
Net worth	1 878 659	2 119 249	2 103 739	2 120 954	2 183 227
Net financial worth (a)	-1 825 019	-1 695 904	-1 725 219	-1 703 579	-1 636 031
Net debt (b)	1 440 136	1 422 478	1 440 076	1 436 798	1 420 756

⁽a) Net financial worth equals total financial assets minus total liabilities

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⁽b) Net debt equals the sum of deposits held, advances received and borrowing, minus the sum of cash and deposits, advances paid and investments loans and placements

Figure 4

NON-FINANCIAL PUBLIC SECTOR BALANCE SHEET

	Budget	Revised	Forward Estimates		es
	2002-03	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000
Assets					
Financial assets					
Cash and deposits	40 318	16 734	8 626	28 809	71 414
Advances paid	212 637	227 474	238 416	231 767	225 118
Investments, loans and placements	367 526	379 779	355 457	355 457	355 457
Other non-equity assets	143 329	152 309	128 870	139 441	140 424
Equity	105 139	89 004	107 210	128 189	151 806
Total financial assets	868 949	865 300	838 579	883 663	944 219
Non-financial assets					
Land and fixed assets	5 358 650	5 591 555	5 601 440	5 589 737	5 593 943
Other non-financial assets	200	192	192	192	192
Total non-financial assets	5 358 850	5 591 747	5 601 632	5 589 929	5 594 135
Total assets	6 227 799	6 457 047	6 440 211	6 473 592	6 538 354
Liabilities					
Deposits held	90 344	85 080	107 343	131 813	161 539
Advances received	401 849	311 395	311 243	311 188	311 188
Borrowing	1 994 157	2 085 767	2 067 496	2 051 539	2 038 501
Superannuation liability	1 429 473	1 398 347	1 423 019	1 428 702	1 414 435
Other employee entitlements and provisions	327 898	353 244	356 767	360 163	359 688
Other non-equity liabilities	105 419	103 968	70 607	69 236	69 779
Total liabilities	4 349 140	4 337 801	4 336 475	4 352 641	4 355 130
Net worth	1 878 659	2 119 246	2 103 736	2 120 951	2 183 224
Net financial worth (a)	-3 480 191	-3 472 501	-3 497 896	-3 468 978	-3 410 911
Net debt (b)	1 865 869	1 858 255	1 883 583	1 878 507	1 859 239

⁽a) Net financial worth equals total financial assets minus total liabilities

⁽b) Net debt equals the sum of deposits held, advances received and borrowing, minus the sum of cash and deposits, advances paid and investments loans and placements

Figure 5

GENERAL GOVERNMENT SECTOR CASH FLOW STATEMENT

	Budget	Revised	F	orward Estimate	es
	2002-03	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000
Cash receipts from operating activities					
Taxes received	226 924	243 942	246 234	246 324	247 771
Receipts from sales of goods and services	100 761	109 698	112 309	90 933	90 764
Grants/subsidies received	1 882 846	1 868 492	1 917 383	1 936 860	2 041 489
Other receipts	113 008	101 474	109 616	98 605	99 940
Total receipts	2 323 539	2 323 606	2 385 542	2 372 722	2 479 964
Cash payments for operating activities					
Payment for goods and services	-1 530 203	-1 534 564	-1 577 058	-1 597 938	-1 632 485
Grants and subsidies paid	- 462 880	- 470 288	- 442 826	- 451 215	- 457 932
Interest paid	- 154 696	- 154 512	- 152 573	- 152 511	- 152 527
Other payments	- 36 815	- 36 957	- 81 302	- 31 137	- 84 163
Total payments	-2 184 594	-2 196 321	<i>-2 253 759</i>	-2 232 801	-2 327 107
Net cash flows from operating activities	138 945	127 285	131 783	139 921	152 857
Net cash flows from investments in					
non-financial assets					
Sales of non-financial assets	28 078	28 090	25 062	25 235	25 235
Purchases of non-financial assets	- 262 114	- 250 466	- 182 874	- 166 066	- 165 981
Net cash flows from investments in non-financial assets	- 234 036	- 222 376	- 157 812	- 140 831	- 140 746
Net cash flows from investments in financial assets for policy purposes (a)	56 477	45 827	- 16 510	1 040	1 040
Net cash flows from investments in financial assets for liquidity purposes			24 322		
Net cash flows from financing activities	017	107	150		
Advances received (net)	- 817	- 187	- 152	- 55	2.157
Borrowing (net)	- 57 460	- 53 040	6 852	- 5 075	- 2 156
Deposits received (net) Distributions paid	3 651	- 1 937	- 1 248	22 475	28 371
Other financing (net)					
Net cash flows from financing activities	- 54 626	- 55 164	5 452	17 345	26 215
Net cash nows nom imancing activities	- 34 020	- 55 104	J 4J2	17 343	20 213
Net increase (decrease) in cash held	- 93 240	- 104 563	- 10 305	17 475	39 366
Net cash from operating activities and	- 95 091	- 95 091	- 26 029	- 910	12 111
investments in non-financial assets	- 70 071	- 73 07 1	- 20 029	- 710	12 111
Finance leases and similar arrangements	910	910	910	910	910
Surplus (+) / deficit (-) (c)	- 94 181	- 94 181	- 25 119		13 021

(a) Includes equity acquisitions, disposals and privatisations (net).

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Figure 6

NON-FINANCIAL PUBLIC SECTOR CASH FLOW STATEMENT

	Budget	Revised	Forward Estimates		es
	2002-03	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000
Cash receipts from operating activities					
Taxes received	222 994	240 012	242 298	242 367	243 453
Receipts from sales of goods and services	431 456	444 653	446 006	426 613	477 792
Grants/subsidies received	1 882 846	1 868 592	1 917 520	1 936 997	2 041 626
Other receipts	122 264	103 819	109 567	103 131	104 815
Total receipts	2 659 560	2 657 076	2 715 391	2 709 108	2 867 686
Cash payments for operating activities					
Payment for goods and services	-1 856 419	-1 869 320	-1 892 061	-1 915 720	-2 000 759
Grants and subsidies paid	- 383 015	- 380 386	- 356 495	- 363 583	- 370 300
Interest paid	- 204 419	- 204 419	- 204 475	- 203 264	- 202 638
Other payments	- 37 494	- 37 636	- 81 978	- 31 815	- 84 881
Total payments	-2 481 347	-2 491 761	-2 535 009	-2 514 382	-2 658 578
Net cash flows from operating activities	178 213	165 315	180 382	194 726	209 108
Net cash flows from investments in non-financial assets					
Sales of non-financial assets	50 432	50 444	47 919	48 529	48 529
Purchases of non-financial assets	- 339 004	- 327 356	- 262 060	- 242 367	- 242 300
Net cash flows from investments in	- 288 572	- 276 912	- 214 141	- 193 838	- 193 771
non-financial assets					
Net cash flows from investments in financial assets for policy purposes (a)	6 748	- 2 564	- 10 902	6 649	6 649
Net cash flows from investments in financial assets for liquidity purposes	- 380	- 380	24 322		
Net cash flows from financing activities					
Advances received (net)	- 6 565	- 187	- 152	- 55	
Borrowing (net)	- 19 686	- 21 014	- 10 331	- 16 867	- 13 948
Deposits received (net)	36 756	31 068	20 254	29 568	34 567
Distributions paid					
Other financing (net)					
Net cash flows from financing activities	10 505	9 867	9 771	12 646	20 619
Net increase (decrease) in cash held	- 93 486	- 104 809	- 8 108	20 183	42 605
Net cash from operating activities and investments in non-financial assets	- 110 359	- 111 597	- 33 759	888	15 337
Finance leases and similar arrangements	910	910	910	910	910
Surplus (+) / deficit (-) (c)	- 109 449	- 110 687	- 32 849	1 798	16 247

(a) Includes equity acquisitions, disposals and privatisations (net).

Figure 7

OPERATING EXPENSES BY AGENCY NORTHERN TERRITORY BUDGET SECTOR

	Budget	Revised	Forward Estimates		ies
	2002-03	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000
General Government	4 134 700	4 135 277	4 172 326	4 197 880	4 307 397
Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority	2 617	2 617	2 653	2 687	2 728
Auditor General's Office	2 379	2 535	2 583	2 663	2 700
Central Holding Authority	1 909 430	1 893 356	1 954 461	1 938 679	2 009 598
Centralian College	15 585	16 457	15 797	16 008	16 336
Construction Division	32 017	32 898	32 674	33 020	33 679
Department of Business, Industry and	78 569	84 042	72 854	72 033	72 960
Resource Development					
Department of Community Development, Sport and Cultural Affairs	211 816	218 267	200 573	200 935	200 821
Department of Corporate and Information Services	96 687	95 820	95 506	96 061	97 212
Department of Employment, Education and Training	504 667	500 530	506 640	521 620	533 369
Department of Health and Community Services	526 729	527 169	533 318	545 567	557 954
Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Environment	249 193	256 263	265 983	270 793	277 234
Department of Justice	104 273	103 504	103 589	104 467	105 736
Department of the Chief Minister	38 391	38 694	38 589	38 902	39 394
Department of the Legislative Assembly	15 982	16 077	16 279	16 505	16 751
Government Printing Office	6 013	6 077	6 136	6 190	6 278
Data Centre Services	17 494	17 965	17 107	16 317	16 910
Northern Territory Police, Fire and Emergency Services	142 170	143 177	143 280	148 533	150 310
Northern Territory Tourist Commission	28 164	27 886	26 311	26 040	26 262
Northern Territory Treasury	109 528	106 855	91 383	93 781	94 988
NT Fleet	20 136	22 228	23 400	23 486	22 062
Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment	6 148	6 148	6 328	6 589	6 714
Ombudsman's Office	1 765	1 765	1 775	1 779	1 797
Territory Discoveries	2 502	2 502	2 549	2 588	2 678
Territory Wildlife Park	11 131	11 131	11 250	11 346	11 625
Trade Development Zone Authority	1 314	1 314	1 308	1 291	1 301
Public Non Financial Corporations	117 898	119 425	115 531	117 460	103 748
Darwin Bus Service	5 973	6 007	6 109	6 250	6 485
Darwin Port Corporation	16 604	18 097	16 657	17 898	18 228
Territory Housing: Business Services	95 321	95 321	92 765	93 312	79 035
Public Financial Corporations	173 027	182 809	182 219	179 323	178 339
Northern Territory Treasury Corporation	173 027	182 809	182 219	179 323	178 339

Corrigendum:

This sheet is an amended replacement page for the original Page 10, Figure 7 of the Mid-Year Report.

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Figure 8

LOAN COUNCIL ALLOCATION

	Budget-time Estimate	Mid-Year Report Estimate
	\$M	\$M
General Government Sector Cash Deficit	94	94
Public Non-financial Corporations Sector Cash Deficit	15	17
Non-financial Public Sector Cash Deficit	109	111
minus		
Net Cash Flows from Investments in Financial Assets for Policy Purposes	7	- 3
plus		
Memorandum Items	-	-
Loan Council Allocation	102	114

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