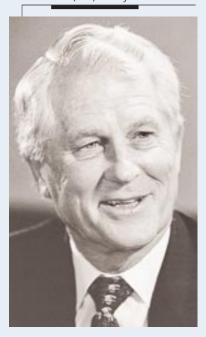
The Bank's focus is to help customers build and manage wealth, and to... Corporate Governance 24 Directors' Report 28 Five Year Summary 34 Financial Statements 36 Directors' Statement 45 Audit Report 45

Corporate Governance

MA (Tim) Besley, ao CHAIRMAN



Mr Besley has been Chairman and a member of the Board since 1988. He holds Bachelor degrees in Civil Engineering and Legal Studies and has forty five years' experience in engineering, finance and public service. Mr Besley is Chairman of the Remuneration, Risk and Nominations Committees.

Chairman: Leighton Holdings Limited. Director: O'Connell Street Associates Pty Ltd and Chancellor Investment Group Pty Ltd.

Other Interests: Macquarie University (Chancellor), Australian Academy of **Technological Sciences and** Engineering (President), Australian National Gallery Foundation (Council of Governors), Legacy Torch Bearers Committee (Member), Salvation Army -**NSW Advisory Board and Red Shield** Appeal Committee (Member), Royal **Botanic Gardens Sydney Foundation** (Trustee), Sir Ian McLennan Achievement for Industry Award (Trustee), Metal Trades Industry Association (NSW State and National Councillor) and World Vision of Australia Board of Reference (Member). Mr Besley is a resident of New South

Board of Directors

The Board of Directors assumes responsibility for corporate governance of the Bank. It oversees the business and affairs of the Bank, establishes the strategies and financial objectives to be implemented by management and monitors standards of performance directly and through its committees.

The Board currently consists of ten Directors. Membership of the Board and its Committees is set out below. Details of experience, qualifications, special responsibilities and attendance at meetings of the Directors are set out on pages 24 to 33.

Mr Swan was appointed as a non executive director on 11 July 1997 and Mr Cowley was appointed as a non executive director with effect from 30 September 1997. In accordance with the Bank's Articles of Association, Mr Swan and Mr Cowley stood for election as directors at the Annual General Meeting held on 30 October 1997. Both were elected at that meeting.

The Articles of Association of the Bank specify that:

- the Managing Director and any other executive directors shall not be eligible to stand for election as Chairman of the Bank;
- the number of directors shall be not less than 9 nor more than 13 (or such lower number as the Board may from time to time determine).
 The Board has determined that for the time being the number of directors shall be 10;
- at each Annual General Meeting, one third of directors (other than the Managing Director) shall retire from office and may stand for re-election; and
- a person of or over the age of 70
 years shall not be appointed or
 re-appointed as a director.
 The Nominations Committee of the
 Board critically reviews the corporate
 governance procedures of the Bank
 and the composition and
 effectiveness of the Commonwealth

Bank Board and the boards of the

| DIRECTOR | BOARD N | 1EMBERSHIP | COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP | | | |
|----------------|---------------|-------------------|----------------------|--------------|----------|----------|
| | | | Nominations | Remuneration | Audit | Risk |
| M A Besley, Ao | Non executive | Chairman | Chairman | Chairman | | Chairman |
| J T Ralph, Ao | Non executive | Deputy Chairman | Member | | Chairman | |
| D V Murray | Executive | Managing Director | Member | Member | | Member |
| N R Adler | Non executive | | | Member | | |
| A C Booth | Non executive | | | Member | | |
| J M Schubert | Non executive | | | | Member | |
| G H Slee, AM | Non executive | | | | | Member |
| F J Swan | Non executive | | | | | Member |
| B K Ward | Non executive | | | | Member | |
| K E Cowley, Ao | Non executive | | | | | |

Wales. Age 71.

major wholly owned subsidiaries. The policy of the Board is that the Committee shall consist of a majority of non executive directors, and that the Chairman of the Bank shall be chairman of the Committee.

The Nominations Committee has developed a set of criteria for director appointments which have been adopted by the Board. These criteria, which are reviewed annually, ensure that any new appointment is able to contribute to the ongoing effectiveness of the Board, has the ability to exercise sound business judgment, to think strategically and has demonstrated leadership experience, high levels of professional skill and appropriate personal qualities.

Candidates for appointment as directors are considered by the Nominations Committee, recommended for decision by the Board and, if appointed, stand for election, in accordance with the Articles, at the next general meeting of shareholders.

Remuneration Arrangements

The Articles of Association specify that the aggregate remuneration of non executive directors shall be determined from time to time by a general meeting. An amount not exceeding the amount determined, is divided between the directors as they agree. The policy of the Board is that the aggregate amount should be set at a level which provides the Bank with the necessary degree of flexibility to enable it to attract and retain the services of directors of the highest calibre. The latest determination was at the annual

general meeting held on 30 October 1997 when shareholders approved an aggregate remuneration of \$1,000,000 per year. The Nominations Committee reviews the fees payable to non executive directors. Details of individual directors' remuneration and the bands of remuneration are set out in Note 43. These fees do not incorporate performance based elements. The remuneration of Mr Murray (Managing Director) is fixed by the Board, pursuant to the Articles of Association, as part of the terms and conditions of his appointment. Those terms and conditions are subject to review, from time to time, by the Board. There is in place a retirement scheme which provides for benefits to be paid to non executive directors after service of a qualifying period. The terms of this scheme, which were approved by shareholders at the 1997 Annual General Meeting, allow for a benefit on a pro rata basis to a maximum of four

The Board has established a Remuneration Committee to:

years' service.

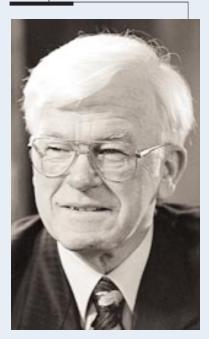
 consider remuneration policy for the Bank's senior executives and executives:

years' total emoluments after twelve

- consider senior executive appointments; and
- consider arrangements in the level or structure of remuneration and benefits for staff generally.

The policy of the Board is that the Committee shall consist of a majority of non executive directors.

John Ralph, ao DEPUTY CHAIRMAN



Mr Ralph has been a member of the Board since 1985 and is Chairman of the Audit Committee and member of the Nominations Committee. He is a Fellow of the Australian Society of Certified Practising Accountants and has over forty six years' experience in the mining and finance industries. Chairman: Foster's Brewing Group Limited and Pacific Dunlop Limited. Deputy Chairman: Telstra Corporation Limited. **Director: Pioneer International** Limited and BHP Limited. Other Interests: Australia-Japan **Business Co-operation Committee** (President), Constitutional Centenary Foundation Inc (Director), Melbourne University Business School (Board of Management), The Queen's Trust for Young Australians (National Chairman), Australian Foundation for Science (Chairman) and Australian Institute of Company Directors (Fellow). Mr Ralph is a resident of Victoria. Age 65.

David Murray MANAGING DIRECTOR



Mr Murray has been a member of the Board and Managing Director since June 1992. He holds a Bachelor of Business and Master of Business Administration and has thirty two years' experience in banking. Mr Murray is a member of the Remuneration, Risk and Nominations Committees.

Chairman: Commonwealth Life
Limited, Commonwealth Investment
Services Limited, Commonwealth
Connect Insurance Limited,
Commonwealth Custodial Services
Limited and Commonwealth Funds
Management Limited.
Director: International Monetary
Conference.

Other Interests: Asian Bankers' Association (Member), Australian Bankers' Association (Member), Asian Pacific Bankers' Club (Member), **Australian Coalition of Service** Industries (Member), Australian Institute of Banking and Finance (President), Business Council of Australia (Member), World Economic Forum (Member), St Mary's Cathedral Appeals Committee (Chairman), Macquarie University Graduate School of Management (Advisory Board) and **General Motors Australian Advisory** Council (Member). Mr Murray is a resident of New South Wales. Age 49.

The Bank's remuneration policy in respect of executives includes provisions that remuneration will be competitively set so that the Bank can seek to attract, motivate and retain high quality local and international executive staff and that remuneration will incorporate, to a significant degree, variable pay for performance elements. A full statement of the Bank's remuneration policy for executives and details of the remuneration paid to five members of the senior executive team who were officers of the Bank at 30 June 1998 are set out in Note 44.

Audit Arrangements

Ernst & Young was appointed as the auditor of the Bank at the 1996 Annual General Meeting and continues to fulfil that office. The Board's Audit Committee consists entirely of non executive Directors and the chairman of the Committee is not Chairman of the Bank. This structure reflects the Board's policy. The Managing Director attends Committee meetings by invitation. The Committee oversees the adequacy of the overall internal control functions and the internal audit functions within the Group and their relationship to external audit. In carrying out these functions, the Committee:

- reviews the financial statements and reports of the Group;
- reviews accounting policies to ensure compliance with current laws, relevant regulations and accounting standards;
- reviews, as necessary, the policy in relation to internal audit services within the Group and reviews internal audit plans for Group members;

- reviews reports from external auditors and the Group's internal auditor; and
- conducts any investigations relating to financial matters, records, accounts and reports which it considers appropriate.

The scope of the audit is agreed between the Committee and the auditor. The external audit partner attends meetings of the Audit Committee by invitation and attends the Board meetings when the annual and half yearly accounts are signed.

Risk Management

The Risk Committee oversights credit, market and operational risks assumed by the Bank in the course of carrying on its business.

The Committee considers the Group's credit policies and ensures that management maintains a set of credit underwriting standards designed to achieve portfolio outcomes consistent with the Group's risk/return expectations. In addition, the Committee reviews the Group's credit portfolios and recommends provisioning for bad and doubtful debts.

The Committee examines risk management policies and procedures for market, funding and liquidity risks incurred or likely to be incurred in the Group's business. The Committee reviews progress in implementing management procedures and identifying new areas of exposure relating to market, funding and liquidity risk. Details of the Bank's management of market risk are set out in Note 37 to the accounts. The Committee ratifies the Group's operational risk policies for approval by the Board and reviews and informs the Board of the measurement and

management of operational risk.

Operational risk is a basic line
management responsibility within the
Group consistent with the policies
established by the Committee. A
range of insurance policies
maintained by the Group mitigates
some operational risks.

Independent Professional Advice

The Bank has in place a procedure whereby, after appropriate consultation, directors are entitled to seek independent professional advice, at the expense of the Bank, to assist them to carry out their duties as directors. The policy of the Bank provides that any such advice is made available to all directors.

Access to Information

The Board has an agreed policy on the circumstances in which directors are entitled to obtain access to company documents and information.

Ethical Standards

The Bank has adopted a Statement of Professional Practice which sets standards of behaviour required including:

- to act properly and efficiently in pursuing the objectives of the Bank;
- to avoid situations which may give rise to a conflict of interests;
- to know and adhere to the Bank's Equal Employment Opportunity policy and programs;
- to maintain confidentiality in the affairs of the Bank and its customers;
 and
- to be absolutely honest in all professional activities.

These standards are regularly communicated to staff. In addition,

the Bank has established insider trading guidelines for staff to ensure that unpublished price sensitive information about the Bank or any other company is not used in an illegal manner.

The restrictions imposed by law on dealings by directors in the securities of the Bank have been supplemented by the Board of Directors adopting guidelines which further limit any such dealings by directors, their spouses, any dependent child, family company and family trust. The guidelines provide that, in addition to the requirement that directors not deal in the securities of the Bank or any related company when they have or may be perceived as having relevant unpublished price sensitive information, directors are only permitted to deal within certain periods. These periods include between 3 and 30 days after the announcement of half yearly and final results and from 3 days after release of the Annual Report until 30 days after the Annual General Meeting. Further, the guidelines require that directors not deal on the basis of considerations of a short term nature or to the extent of trading in those securities. Non executive directors are not entitled to participate in current employee share plans. In accordance with the Articles and the Corporations Law, directors disclose to the Board any material contract in which they may have an interest. In compliance with section 232A of the Corporations Law, any director with a material personal interest in a matter being considered

by the Board will not be present when the matter is being considered and

will not vote on the matter.

Ross Adler



Mr Adler has been a member of the Board since 1990 and is a member of the Remuneration Committee. He holds a Bachelor of Commerce and a Master of Business Administration. Mr Adler is currently Managing Director of Santos Limited. He has experience in various commercial enterprises, more recently in the oil and gas industry. **Director: QCT Resources Limited** Group Companies, Santos Limited (Group) Companies, Telstra Corporation Limited and Australian Institute of Petroleum Limited. Other Interests: Art Gallery of South Australia (Chairman), National Institute of Labour Studies, Flinders University of South Australia (Governor), University of Adelaide (Council Member), Business Council of Australia (Member), and Corporations and Securities Panel (Member). Mr Adler is a resident of South Australia. Age 53.

Directors' Report

Anna Booth



Ms Booth has been a member of the Board since 1990 and is a member of the Remuneration Committee. She holds a Bachelor of Economics (Hons) and has seventeen years' experience in the trade union movement and most recently as General Manager Corporate Communications of Star City. Director: Ausflag Limited. Other Interests: Tourism Council of Australia (National Councillor), **Shopping Centres Council of Australia** (Special Adviser), Breast Cancer Institute of Australia Research for Life Appeal (Member), Sydney Organising Committee for the Olympic Games (Member) and Labour Management Studies Foundation of Macquarie University (Fellow). Ms Booth is a resident of New South Wales. Age 42.

The Directors of the Commonwealth Bank of Australia submit their report, together with the financial statements of the Commonwealth Bank of Australia (the Chief Entity) and of the Economic Entity, being the Chief Entity and its controlled entities, for the year ended 30 June 1998. The names of the Directors holding office at the date of this report are set out on pages 24 to 33 together with details of Directors' experience, qualifications, special responsibilities and organisations in which each of the Directors has declared an interest.

Directors' Meetings

The number of Directors' meetings (including meetings of committees of Directors) and number of meetings attended by each of the Directors of the Commonwealth Bank during the financial year were:

| DIRECTOR DIRECTORS' MEETINGS | | | | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|--|--|--|
| | No. of Meetings Held* | No. of Meetings Attended | | | |
| M A Besley, Ao | 11 | 11 | | | |
| J T Ralph, Ao | 11 | 10 | | | |
| D V Murray | 11 | 11 | | | |
| I K Payne + | 1 | 1 | | | |
| N R Adler | 11 | 10 | | | |
| A C Booth | 11 | 11 | | | |
| K E Cowley ++ | 8 | 7 | | | |
| J M Schubert | 11 | 10 | | | |
| G H Slee, AM | 11 | 11 | | | |
| F J Swan +++ | 10 | 10 | | | |
| B K Ward | 11 | 11 | | | |

- The number of meetings held during the time the Director held office during the year.
- + Mr Payne retired on 11 July 1997.
- ++ Mr Cowley was appointed a Director on 30 September 1997.
- +++ Mr Swan was appointed a Director on 11 July 1997.

| DIRECTOR | COMMITTEE MEETINGS | | | | | |
|----------------|--------------------|---|----|--|---|--|
| | | DMMITTEE No. of Meetings Attended | | MMITTEE No. of Meetings Attended | REMUNERATIO No. of Meetings Held* | N COMMITTEE No. of Meetings Attended |
| M A Besley, Ao | ı | | 13 | 9 | 9 | 6 |
| J T Ralph, Ao | 4 | 4 | | | | |
| D V Murray | | | 13 | 13 | 9 | 9 |
| I K Payne+ | | | | | 2 | - |
| N R Adler | | | | | 9 | 9 |
| A C Booth | | | | | 9 | 9 |
| J M Schubert | 4 | 3 | | | | |
| G H Slee, AM | | | 13 | 13 | | |
| F J Swan | | | 13 | 13 | | |
| B K Ward | 4 | 4 | | | | |

- * The number of meetings held during the time the Director was a member of the relevant committee.
- + Mr Payne retired on 11 July 1997.

| DIRECTOR | | COMMITTE | COMMITTEE MEETINGS | | | | |
|----------------|--|--|--|---|--|--|--|
| | BANK STRUCTU No. of Meetings Held* | IRE COMMITTEE No. of Meetings Attended | NOMINATION No. of Meetings Held* | IS COMMITTEE No. of Meetings Attended | | | |
| M A Besley, ao | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 | | | |
| J T Ralph, ao | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 | | | |
| D V Murray | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 | | | |
| J M Schubert | 2 | 2 | | | | | |
| C LI Sloo AM | า | 2 | | | | | |

^{*} The number of meetings held during the time the Director was a member of the relevant committee.

Principal Activities

The principal activities of the Commonwealth Bank Group during the financial year were:

Banking & Financial Services Division – provides marketing

Division – provides marketing services, product development and brand management and focuses on assessing customer needs and servicing those needs for banking, insurance, funds management and related products and services for individuals and small to medium size businesses

Customer Service Division – provides distribution/delivery channels for products and services to customers and is focused on managing the branch and agency networks and electronic delivery such as ATM, EFTPOS, telephone and direct/on line services.

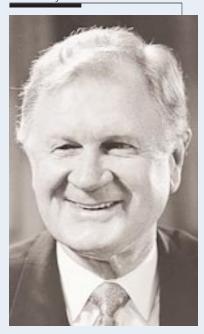
Institutional Banking – provides corporate and general banking, international financing (including trade and project financing), merchant and investment banking and stockbroking to large corporate clients in Australia and select offshore clients.

ASB Bank Limited – provides personal, business, corporate and rural banking services in New Zealand. Whilst there have been no significant changes in the nature of these activities during the year, a restructure was completed during the year to enhance and broaden product and service availability.

Consolidated Profit

Consolidated operating profit after abnormal items, tax and outside equity interests for the financial year ended 30 June 1998 was \$1,090 million (1997: \$1,078 million). Following announced rationalisation of processing and administration functions, implementation of a new organisational structure and reconfiguration of delivery systems, an abnormal expense for restructuring costs of \$128 million after tax was recorded. Further, with effect from 1 January 1998, the general provision for bad and doubtful debts is assessed

Ken Cowley, Ao



Mr Cowley has been a member of the Board since September 1997. He has thirty three years' experience in the media industry, having been Director of News Limited since 1976 and until July 1997, was Executive Chairman of that company. Chairman: PMP Communications Limited, R M Williams Holdings Limited, Ansett New Zealand Limited and Ansett International Limited. **Director: The News Corporation** Limited, Independent Newspapers Limited, Ansett Australia Limited and Foxtel Management Pty Limited. Other Interests: Australian Stockman's Hall of Fame & Outback Heritage Centre NSW (Chairman), Melbourne Storm Football Club Pty Limited and Royal Agricultural Society (Councillor). Mr Cowley is a resident of New South Wales. Age 63.

John Schubert



Dr Schubert has been a member of the Board since 1991 and is a member of the Audit Committee. He holds a Bachelor Degree and PhD in Chemical Engineering and has experience in the petroleum, mining and building materials industries. Dr Schubert is currently Managing Director and Chief **Executive Officer of Pioneer** International Limited. Director: Australian Graduate School of Management Ltd. Other Interests: Business Council of Australia (Vice President) and Academy of Technological Science Dr Schubert is a resident of New

South Wales. Age 55.

using a statistical dynamic provisioning methodology. An abnormal expense for bad and doubtful debts of \$370 million in this regard has been charged to profit and loss. Following this change in general provisioning methodology, the general provision was tax effected resulting in an abnormal tax credit of \$337 million. The consolidated operating profit before abnormal items and income tax was \$1,912 million, representing a 5% increase on the prior year. The principal contributing factors to this increase were a growth in banking fees and trading income. Net interest income remained steady despite a 10% growth in lending assets.

Dividends

The Directors have declared a fully franked (at 36%) final dividend of 58 cents per share amounting to \$535 million. The dividend will be payable on 30 September 1998. Dividends paid since the end of the previous financial year:

- as provided for in last year's report, a fully franked final dividend of 57 cents per share amounting to \$530 million was paid on 30 September 1997. The payment comprised cash disbursements of \$261 million with \$269 million being reinvested by participants through the Dividend Reinvestment Plan; and
- in respect of the current year, a fully franked interim dividend of 46 cents per share amounting to \$420 million was paid on 27 March 1998. The payment comprised cash disbursements of \$239 million with \$181 million being reinvested by participants through the Dividend Reinvestment Plan.

Review of Operations

An analysis of operations for the financial year is set out in the Message to Shareholders.

Changes in State of Affairs

On 12 November 1997 the Bank announced a reorganisation of its core business functions to drive growth through more effective organisation of marketing, product development and delivery of financial services to individuals and small to medium size businesses. The previous business units of Personal Banking, Business Banking and Commonwealth Financial Services were reorganised into two new divisions. The Bank's various distribution arms to these segments have been brought together to form Customer Service Division. The specialist areas of marketing, customer segmentation and product development have become Banking and Financial Services Division.

Effective 26 September 1997, the Bank entered a long term outsourcing/joint venture partnership with EDS Australia, which is a key initiative aimed at reducing longer term technology costs and to generally assist with the development of business applications.

The Bank's shareholders' equity was reduced by \$651 million on 29 December 1997 pursuant to the buy back of 38.1 million shares.

There were no other significant changes in the state of affairs of the Economic Entity during the financial year.

Events Subsequent to Balance Date

In July 1998, the Bank entered into a strategic alliance with Woolworths

which will provide customers with increased accessibility and flexibility for their financial services needs.

The Directors are not aware of any other matter or circumstance that has occurred since the end of the financial year that has significantly affected or may significantly affect the operations of the Economic Entity, the results of those operations or the state of affairs of the Economic Entity in subsequent financial years.

Future Developments and Results

Major developments which may affect the operations of the Economic Entity in subsequent financial years are referred to in the Message to Shareholders on pages 5 to 10. In the opinion of the Directors, disclosure of any further information on likely developments in operations would be unreasonably prejudicial to the interests of the Economic Entity.

Directors' Shareholdings

Particulars of shares in the Commonwealth Bank or in a related body corporate are set out in a separate section titled 'Shareholding Information' on page 46 which is to be regarded as contained in this report.

Options

An Executive Option Plan was approved by shareholders at the Annual General Meeting on 8 October 1996. On 11 December 1997, the Bank granted options over 2,875,000 unissued ordinary shares to 27 executives under the Executive Option Plan. Full details of the Plan are disclosed in Note 28 to the financial statements.

The names of persons who currently hold options in the Plan are entered in the register of options kept by the Bank pursuant to Section 170 of the Corporations Law. The register may be inspected free of charge.

Pursuant to ASC Class Order 97/1011 dated 9 July 1997, the directors have taken advantage of relief available from the requirement to disclose the names of persons, not being directors, to whom options are issued and the number of options issued to each person.

For details of the options granted to a director, refer to the separate section titled 'Shareholding Information' on page 46 which is to be regarded as contained in this report.

Directors' Interests in Contracts

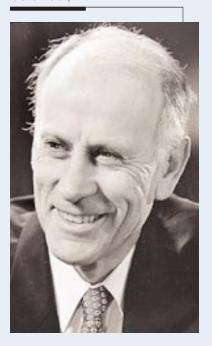
A number of Directors have given written notices, in accordance with Section 231(1) of the Corporations Law, stating that they hold office in specified companies and accordingly are to be regarded as having an interest in any contract or proposed contract that may be made between the Bank and any of those companies.

Directors' Benefits

During or since the financial year, no Director of the Commonwealth Bank has received or has become entitled to receive a benefit other than:

- a benefit included in the aggregate amount of remuneration received or due and receivable by the Directors shown in the consolidated financial statements; and
- normal benefits as a full time employee of the Commonwealth Bank or of a related body corporate and in the case of Mr I K Payne, the

Graham Slee, AM



Mr Slee has been a member of the Board since 1986 and is a member of the Risk Committee. He holds a Bachelor of Mechanical Engineering and has thirty seven years' experience in engineering and manufacturing industries.

Chairman: McNee Holdings Pty Limited and Sheet Metal Supplies Pty Ltd. Mr Slee is a resident of New South Wales. Age 61.

Frank Swan



Mr Swan has been a member of the Board since July 1997 and is a member of the Risk Committee. He holds a Bachelor of Science degree and has twenty three years' senior management experience in the food and beverage industries.

Director: Foster's Brewing Group Limited and National Foods Limited. Mr Swan is a resident of Victoria.

Age 57.

payment of his final entitlement and other payments upon his retirement as a Director of the Bank in accordance with his past services; by reason of a contract made by the Commonwealth Bank, its controlled entities, or a related body corporate with the Director, a firm of which the Director is a member, or with an entity in which the Director has a substantial financial interest.

Directors' and Officers' Indemnity

Article 19 of the Commonwealth Bank's Articles of Association provides: 'To the extent permitted by law, the company indemnifies every director, officer and employee of the company against any liability incurred by that person (a) in his or her capacity as a director, officer or employee of the company and (b) to a person other than the company or a related body corporate of the company. The company indemnifies every director, officer and employee of the company against any liability for costs and expenses incurred by the person in his or her capacity as a director, officer or employee of the company (a) in defending any proceedings, whether civil or criminal, in which judgment is given in favour of the person or in which the person is acquitted or (b) in connection with an application, in relation to such proceedings, in which the Court grants relief to the person under the Corporations Law, provided that the director, officer or employee has obtained the company's prior written approval (which shall not be unreasonably withheld) to incur the costs and expenses in relation to the proceedings'.

The Corporations Law (Section 241) prohibits a company from indemnifying directors, secretaries and executive officers against a liability, except for liability to another person (other than the company or a related body corporate) where the liability does not arise out of conduct involving a lack of good faith and except for a liability for costs and expenses incurred in defending proceedings in which the person is successful. An indemnity for employees, who are not directors, secretaries or executive officers, is not expressly restricted in any way by the Corporations Law.

The Directors, as named on pages 24 to 33 of the Annual Report, and the Secretaries of the Commonwealth Bank, being J D Hatton (Secretary) and K G Bourke (Assistant Company Secretary) are indemnified under Article 19 as are all the executive officers and employees of the Commonwealth Bank.

Deeds of Indemnity have been executed by Commonwealth Bank in terms of Article 19 above in favour of

Directors' and Officers' Insurance

each director.

The Commonwealth Bank has, during the financial year, paid an insurance premium in respect of an insurance policy for the benefit of those named above and the directors, secretaries, executive officers and employees of any related bodies corporate as defined in the insurance policy. The insurance grants indemnity against liabilities permitted to be indemnified by the company under Section 241A(1) of the Corporations Law. In

accordance with commercial practice, the insurance policy prohibits disclosure of the terms of the policy including the nature of the liability insured against and the amount of the premium.

Incorporation of Additional Material

This report incorporates the Message to Shareholders.

Roundings

The Chief Entity is a company of the kind referred to in Corporations Regulation 3.6.05(6) and, in accordance with an ASC Class Order No. 97/1005 dated 9 July 1997, amounts in this report and the accompanying financial statements have been rounded off to the nearest million dollars, unless otherwise stated.

Signed in accordance with a resolution of the Directors.

Ma Baley, AO
Chairman

D V Murray

Managing Director

12 August 1998

Barbara Ward



Ms Ward has been a member of the Board since 1994 and is a member of the Audit Committee. She holds a Bachelor of Economics and Master of Political Economy and has six years' experience in policy development and public administration as a senior ministerial adviser and 12 years' experience in the transport and aviation industries, most recently as Chief Executive of Ansett Worldwide Aviation Services.

Director: Delta Electricity, Rail Services Australia, Data Advantage Limited and Australia Day Council of New South Wales.

Other Interests: Allen, Allen and Hemsley (Board member) and Appeal Committee for the Breast Cancer Institute of Australia (Member). Ms Ward is a resident of New South Wales. Age 44.

Five year summary

| | 1998 \$M | 1997 \$M | 1996 \$M | 1995 \$M | 1994 \$M |
|--|-------------------|----------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Profit and Loss | | | | | |
| Net interest income | 3,397 | 3,392 | 3,397 | 3,164 | 2,844 |
| Other operating income | 1,885 | 1,524 | 1,382 | 1,364 | 1,308 |
| Total operating income | 5,282 | 4,916 | 4,779 | 4,528 | 4,152 |
| Charge for bad and doubtful debts | 233 | 98 | 113 | 182 | 321 |
| Total operating expenses (including goodwill) | 3,137 | 3,002 | 2,890 | 2,823 | 2,777 |
| Operating profit before abnormal items and income tax expense | 1,912 | 1,816 | 1,776 | 1,523 | 1,054 |
| Abnormal items | (570) | (200) | - | - | - |
| Income tax expense (credit) | | | | | |
| Operating profit before abnormal items | 641 | 588 | 635 | 493 | 358 |
| Abnormal items | (409) | (72) | - | 28 | |
| Operating profit after income tax | 1,110 | 1,100 | 1,141 | 1,002 | 696 |
| Outside equity interests | 20 | 22 | 22 | 19 | 14 |
| Operating profit after income tax attributable to shareholders | 1,090 | 1,078 | 1,119 | 983 | 682 |
| Contributions to profit | | | | | |
| Banking | | | | | |
| Australia | 1,096 | 1,028 | 984 | 907 | 597 |
| New Zealand (ASB Bank) | 98 | 85 | 71 | 63 | 44 |
| Other countries | (30) | 21 | 20 | (2) | (1) |
| | 1,164 | 1,134 | 1,075 | 968 | 640 |
| Life insurance and funds management | 87 | 75 | 59 | 49 | 47 |
| Finance | 66 | 62 | 48 | 52 | 48 |
| Profit on operations | 1,317 | 1,271 | 1,182 | 1,069 | 735 |
| Goodwill amortisation | (46) | (43) | (41) | (39) | (39) |
| Outside equity interests | (20) | (22) | (22) | (19) | (14) |
| Operating profit after income tax before abnormal items | 1,251 | 1,206 | 1,119 | 1,011 | 682 |
| Abnormal expense (after income tax) | (161) | (128) | - | (28) | - |
| Operating profit after income tax and abnormal items | 1,090 | 1,078 | 1,119 | 983 | 682 |
| Balance sheet | | 04.400 | 70010 | | |
| Loans, advances and other receivables | 89,816 | 81,632 | 70,042 | 62,707 | 57,992 |
| Total assets | 130,544 | 120,103 | 109,285 | 102,774 | 91,321 |
| Deposits and other public borrowings | 83,886 | | | 67,824 | |
| Total liabilities | 123,655 | 113,079 | 101,918 | 96,079 | 85,250 |
| Shareholders' equity | 6,712 | 6,846 | 7,190 | 6,568 | 5,965 |
| Net tangible assets | 6,358 | 6,450 | 6,793 | 6,087 | 5,424 |
| Risk weighted assets | 94,431 | 86,468 | 77,246 | 70,383 | 66,938 |
| Average interest earning assets | 102,165 | 96,163 | 84,770 | 78,461 | 74,733 |
| Average interest bearing liabilities | 91,650 | 85,296 | 74,879 | 69,300 | 66,723 |
| Assets (on balance sheet) | 110 120 | 101 202 | 02.454 | 04 101 | 70 217 |
| Australia Now Zealand | 110,120 10,846 | 101,202 | 92,456 | 86,191 | 79,217 |
| New Zealand Other | 9,578 | 9,994 8,907 | 7,903 | 6,986 | 5,058 |
| | | | 8,926 | 9,597 | 7,046 |
| Total Assets | 130,544 | 120,103 | 109,285 | 102,774 | 91,321 |

| | 1998 | 1997 | 1996 | 1995 | 1994 |
|--|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Shareholders Summary | | | | | |
| Dividends per share (cents) - fully franked | 104 | 102 | 90 | 82 | 60 |
| Dividends provided for, reserved or paid (\$million) | 955 | 941 | 832 | 772 | 539 |
| Dividend cover (times) | 1.1 | 1.1 | 1.3 | 1.3 | 1.3 |
| Earnings per share (cents) | | | | | |
| before abnormal items | 134.5 | 131.5 | 115.5 | 109.4 | 76.9 |
| after abnormal items | 117.2 | 117.5 | 115.5 | 106.4 | 76.9 |
| Dividend payout ratio (%) (1) | | | | | |
| before abnormal items | 77.3 | 77.6 | 77.9 | 75.0 | 78.0 |
| after abnormal items | 88.7 | 86.8 | 77.9 | 77.1 | 78.0 |
| Net tangible assets per share (\$) | 6.70 | 6.74 | 6.68 | 6.28 | 5.88 |
| Weighted average number of shares (basic) | 930m | 917m | 969m | 924m | 887m |
| Number of shareholders | 419,926 | 426,229 | 275,204 | 274,247 | 274,355 |
| Share prices for the year (\$) | | | | | |
| Trading high | 19.66 | 16.00 | 12.05 | 9.58 | 10.20 |
| Trading low | 13.70 | 9.93 | 9.20 | 7.05 | 7.35 |
| End (closing price) | 18.84 | 16.00 | 10.46 | 9.33 | 7.73 |
| Performance Ratios (%) | | | | | |
| Return on average shareholders' equity (2) | | | | | |
| before abnormal items | 18.48 | 18.16 | 16.27 | 16.13 | 11.83 |
| after abnormal items | 16.10 | 16.39 | 16.27 | 15.69 | 11.83 |
| Return on average total assets ⁽²⁾ | | | | | |
| before abnormal items | 1.01 | 1.05 | 1.06 | 1.04 | 0.75 |
| after abnormal items | 0.88 | 0.94 | 1.06 | 1.01 | 0.75 |
| Capital adequacy - Tier 1 | 8.07 | 8.64 | 10.05 | 10.25 | 9.79 |
| Capital adequacy - Tier 2 | 2.82 | 2.82 | 2.97 | 1.30 | 1.30 |
| Deductions | (0.40) | (0.57) | (0.31) | (0.40) | |
| Capital adequacy - Total | 10.49 | 10.89 | 12.71 | 11.15 | 10.97 |
| Net interest margin | 3.33 | 3.53 | 4.01 | 4.03 | 3.79 |
| Other Information (numbers) | | | | | |
| Full time staff | 28,034 | 30,566 | 31,455 | 31,333 | 32,983 |
| Part time staff | 6,968 | 7,364 | 7,964 | 7,602 | 6,962 |
| Full time staff equivalent | 30,743 | 33,543 | 34,518 | 34,383 | 35,544 |
| Branches/service centres (Australia) | 1,218 | 1,334 | 1,390 | 1,474 | 1,612 |
| Agencies (Australia) | 4,015 | 4,205 | 4,214 | 4,282 | 4,305 |
| ATMs | 2,501 | 2,301 | 2,113 | 1,643 | 1,486 |
| EFTPOS terminals | 83,038 | 63,370 | 43,703 | 20,250 | 6,600 |
| Productivity | | | | | |
| Total Operating Income per full time (equivalent) employee (\$) | 171,811 | 146,558 | 138,450 | 131,693 | 116,813 |
| Staff Expense/Total Operating Income (%) | 30.7 | 33.8 | 33.1 | 33.6 | 39.1 |
| Total Operating Expenses ⁽³⁾ / Total Operating Income (%) | 58.5 | 60.2 | 59.6 | 61.5 | 66.0 |

⁽¹⁾ Dividends per share divided by earnings per share.

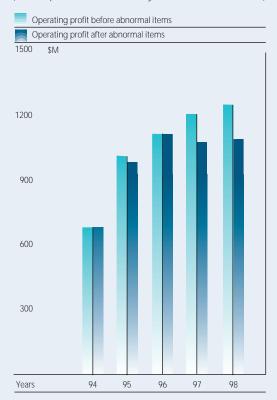
⁽²⁾ Calculations based on operating profit after tax and outside equity interests. Averages are based on current and previous year end balances adjusted for buy back.

⁽³⁾ Total Operating Expenses excluding goodwill amortisation.

Comments on the Profit and Loss

for the year ended 30 June 1998

(All comparisons are with the year ended 30 June 1997)



The Commonwealth Bank Group achieved a net profit after tax but before abnormal items of \$1,251 million (1997: \$1,206 million) and after tax and abnormal items of \$1,090 million (1997: \$1,078 million).

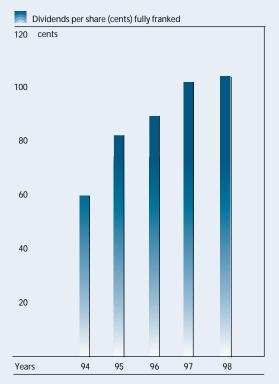
The net abnormal expense was \$161 million after tax (1997: \$128 million). The abnormal items are explained in Note 2 to these concise financial statements, but principally relate to:

- restructuring costs associated with reorganising the Bank's back office processing and administration functions; and
- a change in the Bank's bad and doubtful debts provisioning methodology which increased the general provision and led to the Bank booking a related future income tax benefit.

The operating profit before abnormal items and tax was \$1,912 million, representing a 5% increase (\$96 million) on the prior year.

This increase was principally due to:

• banking fees increasing by \$187 million to \$1,202 million



associated with increased housing lending and increased credit card transactions;

- trading income from foreign exchange and interest rate securities and derivatives increased by \$69 million to \$243 million; and
- net gains on investment securities increased by \$97 million,

which were offset by:

- an increase in the charge for bad and doubtful debts by \$135 million to \$233 million, principally associated with Asian loans; and
- operating expenses increasing by \$132 million. Net interest income remained steady. A 10% growth in lending assets was offset by a decline in the interest margin from 3.53% to 3.33%.

The Directors have declared a fully franked (at 36%) final dividend of 58 cents per share amounting to \$535 million. The dividend will be payable on 30 September 1998. This combined with the interim dividend of 46 cents per share represents a dividend payout ratio of 77.3% on net profit after tax before abnormal items for the full year.

Statements of Profit and Loss for the year ended 30 June 1998

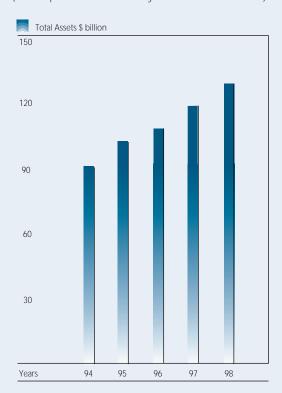
| | | ECONOMIC ENTITY | | CHIEF ENTITY | |
|--|------|-----------------|-----------|--------------|-------|
| | | 1998 | 1997 | 1998 | 1997 |
| | Note | \$M | \$M | \$M | \$M |
| Interest income | | 7,605 | 7,989 | 6,012 | 6,561 |
| Interest expense | | 4,208 | 4,597 | 3,227 | 3,733 |
| Net interest income | | 3,397 | 3,392 | 2,785 | 2,828 |
| Other operating income | | 1,885 | 1,524 | 1,691 | 1,390 |
| Total operating income | | 5,282 | 4,916 | 4,476 | 4,218 |
| Charge for bad and doubtful debts | | 233 | 98 | 224 | 85 |
| Total operating income after charge for bad and doubtful debts | | 5,049 | 4,818 | 4,252 | 4,133 |
| Total operating expenses | | 3,091 | 2,959 | 2,663 | 2,546 |
| Operating profit before goodwill amortisation, abnormal items an | d | | | | |
| income tax | | 1,958 | 1,859 | 1,589 | 1,587 |
| Goodwill amortisation | | 46 | 43 | 39 | 40 |
| Operating profit before abnormal items and income tax | | 1,912 | 1,816 | 1,550 | 1,547 |
| Abnormal expense | 24 | 570 | 200 | 570 | 200 |
| Operating profit before income tax | | 1,342 | 1,616 | 980 | 1,347 |
| Income tax expense (credit) | | | | | |
| Operating profit | | 641 | 588 | 506 | 471 |
| Abnormal items | 24 | (409) | (72) | (409) | (72) |
| Income tax expense | | 232 | 516 | 97 | 399 |
| Operating profit after income tax | | 1,110 | 1,100 | 883 | 948 |
| Outside equity interests in operating profit after income tax | | 20 | 22 | - | - |
| Operating profit after income tax attributable to members of | | | | | |
| the Commonwealth Bank of Australia | | 1,090 | 1,078 | 883 | 948 |
| Retained profits at the beginning of the financial year | | 908 | 794 | 472 | 465 |
| Adjustment on adoption of ISC Life Insurance Rules | | - | (11) | - | - |
| Buy back | | (384) | - | (384) | - |
| Transfers from reserves | | 170 | 74 | 200 | - |
| Total available for appropriation | | 1,784 | 1,935 | 1,171 | 1,413 |
| Transfers to reserves | | 74 | 86 | | - |
| Dividends (fully franked) | | | | | |
| Transfer to dividend reinvestment plan reserve | | 403 | 419 | 403 | 419 |
| Provided for payment in cash or paid | | 552 | 522 | 552 | 522 |
| Dividends provided for, reserved or paid | 4 | 955 | 941 | 955 | 941 |
| Retained profits at the end of the financial year | | 755 | 908 | 216 | 472 |
| | | | | - | |
| | | Cents | per share | | |
| Earnings per share based on operating profit after | | | | | |
| income tax attributable to members of the Commonwealth Bank | _ | | | | |
| of Australia: | 55 | 117.2 | 117.5 | | |
| Dividends provided for, reserved or paid per share attributable | | | | | |
| to members of the Commonwealth Bank of Australia: | 44 | 104 | 102 | | |

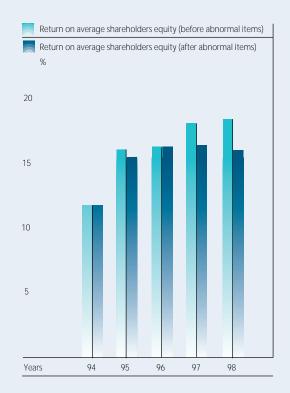
For further information, refer Annual Report to Shareholders – 1998 Financial Statements.

Comments on the Balance Sheets

as at 30 June 1998

(All comparisons are with the year ended 30 June 1997)





The Group's assets increased by \$10.4 billion to \$130.5 billion (1997: \$120.1 billion) over the year.

This increase principally comprises a 10% growth in lending assets. Loans and advances increased by \$8.2 billion to \$89.8 billion. This growth in assets was principally funded by a \$6 billion growth in deposits.

Within loans and advances, Australian housing loans increased by \$3.7 billion to \$41.1 billion and term loans increased by \$2.7 billion to \$25.7 billion. Overseas term loans increased by \$1.2 billion to \$5.2 billion, primarily in New Zealand.

This balance sheet growth increased net interest earnings by \$279 million, however, this was offset by a decline in net interest rates reducing net interest income by \$274 million. In Australia, interest rates charged on loans and advances decreased by 1.4% to an average rate of 7.5%, while rates on time deposits decreased by 1.2% to 5.4%, savings deposits by 0.7% to 1.8% and other demand deposits by 1.2% to 4.0%. As a result, the net interest margin in Australia decreased to 3.61% from 3.87% and at a Group level to 3.33% from 3.53%.

The Group Balance Sheet, off balance sheet uncommitted facilities and derivatives facilities, include total Asian Exposures of \$5.9 billion, with 73% of this exposure (\$4.3 billion) to Japan, Hong Kong and Singapore. Total Asian exposures have reduced 12% since 31 December 1997.

The capital adequacy ratio reduced to 10.49% from 10.89% (still well above the Reserve Bank guideline of 8%) following the buy back of \$651 million of share capital in December 1997.

Balance Sheets

as at 30 June 1998

| | ECONOM | ECONOMIC ENTITY | | FENTITY |
|---|-------------|-----------------|---------|---------|
| | 1998 \$M | 1997 | 1998 | 1997 |
| | φivi | \$M | \$M | \$M |
| Assets | | | | |
| Cash and liquid assets | 1,526 | 2,007 | 1,393 | 1,930 |
| Receivables due from other financial institutions | 3,448 | 4,839 | 3,205 | 4,627 |
| Trading securities | 4,009 | 2,635 | 2,698 | 2,673 |
| Investment securities | 6,858 | 9,233 | 5,949 | 7,406 |
| Loans, advances and other receivables | 89,816 | 81,632 | 72,949 | 65,731 |
| Bank acceptances of customers | 9,727 | 8,874 | 9,737 | 8,881 |
| Deposits with regulatory authorities | 832 | 797 | 828 | 786 |
| Shares in and loans to controlled entities | - | - | 5,583 | 5,140 |
| Property, plant and equipment | 1,662 | 2,010 | 1,438 | 1,750 |
| Investment in associates | 276 | - | 278 | - |
| Goodwill | 531 | 574 | 490 | 529 |
| Other assets | 11,859 | 7,502 | 11,402 | 7,141 |
| Total Assets | 130,544 | 120,103 | 115,950 | 106,594 |
| Liabilities | | | | |
| Deposits and other public borrowings | 83,886 | 77,880 | 72,944 | 67,836 |
| Payables due to other financial institutions | 3,397 | 3,621 | 3,008 | 3,240 |
| Bank acceptances | 9,727 | 8,874 | 9,737 | 8,881 |
| Due to controlled entities | - | - | 359 | 152 |
| Provision for dividend | 321 | 291 | 321 | 291 |
| Income tax liability | 1,099 | 925 | 642 | 554 |
| Other provisions | 875 | 835 | 830 | 797 |
| Debt issues | 10,608 | 10,154 | 9,239 | 8,755 |
| Bills payable and other liabilities | 10,746 | 7,698 | 10,234 | 7,369 |
| | 120,659 | 110,278 | 107,314 | 97,875 |
| Loan Capital | 2,996 | 2,801 | 2,996 | 2,801 |
| Total Liabilities | 123,655 | 113,079 | 110,310 | 100,676 |
| Net Assets | 6,889 | 7,024 | 5,640 | 5,918 |
| Shareholders' Equity | | | | |
| Share Capital | 1,845 | 1,860 | 1,845 | 1,860 |
| Reserves | 4,112 | 4,078 | 3,579 | 3,586 |
| Retained profits | 755 | 908 | 216 | 472 |
| Shareholders' equity attributable to members of the | | , 50 | | .,_ |
| Commonwealth Bank of Australia | 6,712 | 6,846 | 5,640 | 5,918 |
| Outside equity interests in controlled entities | 177 | 178 | 5,010 | 3,710 |
| Total Shareholders' Equity | 6,889 | 7,024 | 5,640 | 5,918 |
| Total onal cholders Equity | 0,007 | 7,024 | 3,040 | J,710 |

The liabilities of the Commonwealth Bank of Australia and its controlled entity, Commonwealth Development Bank of Australia, as at 30 June 1996 were guaranteed by the Commonwealth of Australia under a statute of the Australian Parliament. This guarantee is being progressively phased out following the Government sell down of its shareholding on 19 July 1996.

For further information, refer Annual Report to Shareholders - 1998 Financial Statements.

Statements of Cash Flows

for the year ended 30 June 1998

| for the year ended 30 June 1996 | ECONOMI | CENTITY | CHIE | FENTITY |
|--|---------|----------|---------|---------|
| | 1998 | 1997 | 1998 | 1997 |
| | \$M | \$M | \$M | \$M |
| Cash Flows from Operating Activities | | | | |
| Interest received | 7,557 | 8,054 | 6,084 | 6,604 |
| Dividends received | 18 | 18 | 106 | 200 |
| Interest paid | (4,065) | (4,342) | (3,187) | (3,482) |
| Other operating income received | 1,204 | 1,308 | 821 | 1,019 |
| Staff expenses paid | (1,705) | (1,614) | (1,467) | (1,396) |
| Occupancy and equipment expenses paid | (289) | (310) | (246) | (271) |
| Information technology services expenses paid | (503) | (251) | (476) | (224) |
| Other expenses paid | (468) | (399) | (365) | (320) |
| Income taxes paid | (216) | (629) | (134) | (507) |
| Tax losses purchased from controlled entities | - | - | (28) | (38) |
| Net decrease (increase) in trading securities | (646) | 556 | (591) | 487 |
| Net Cash provided by Operating Activities | 887 | 2,391 | 517 | 2,072 |
| Cash Flows from Investing Activities | | | | |
| Payments for acquisition of entities | - | (66) | - | (66) |
| Net movement in investment securities: | | | | |
| Purchases | (8,505) | (8,887) | (7,981) | (7,517) |
| Proceeds from sale | 1,787 | 1,172 | 1,666 | 1,172 |
| Proceeds at or close to maturity | 8,681 | 7,013 | 8,364 | 6,291 |
| Lodgement of deposits with regulatory authorities | (35) | (86) | (42) | (90) |
| Net increase in loans, advances and other receivables | (9,882) | (11,353) | (8,190) | (8,414) |
| Net amounts paid to controlled entities | - | - | (184) | (1,123) |
| Proceeds from sale of property, plant and equipment | 196 | 307 | 167 | 281 |
| Purchase of property, plant and equipment | (78) | (180) | (51) | (134) |
| Net decrease (increase) in receivables due from other financial | | | | |
| institutions not at call | 809 | 750 | 809 | 750 |
| Net decrease (increase) in securities purchased under agreements | | | | |
| to resell | 347 | 641 | 347 | 641 |
| Net decrease (increase) in other assets | 1,175 | (432) | 1,118 | (427) |
| Net Cash used in Investing Activities | (5,505) | (11,121) | (3,977) | (8,636) |
| Cash Flows from Financing Activities | | | | |
| Buy back of shares | (651) | (1,001) | (651) | (1,001) |
| Proceeds from issue of shares | 5 | 12 | 3 | 3 |
| Net increase in deposits and other borrowings | 6,683 | 6,892 | 5,177 | 5,793 |
| Proceeds from long term debt issues | 1,355 | 1,414 | 1,290 | 1,024 |
| Repayment of long term debt issues | (1,230) | (299) | (1,175) | (299) |
| Net increase (decrease) in short term debt issues | (970) | 1,905 | (1,005) | 1,351 |
| Dividends paid | (502) | (452) | (502) | (448) |
| Payments from provisions | (10) | (59) | (11) | (54) |
| Net increase (decrease) in payables due to other financial | | | | |
| institutions not at call | (869) | 325 | (869) | 325 |
| Net increase (decrease) in securities sold under agreements to | | | | |
| repurchase | (52) | (783) | (52) | (783) |
| Proceeds from (repayment of) loan capital | - | - | | - |
| Other | (496) | (207) | (185) | (208) |
| Net Cash provided by Financing Activities | 3,263 | 7,747 | 2,020 | 5,703 |
| Net Increase (Decrease) in Cash and Cash Equivalents | (1,355) | (983) | (1,440) | (861) |
| Cash and Cash Equivalents at beginning of year | 3,318 | 4,301 | 3,415 | 4,276 |
| Cash and Cash Equivalents at end of year | 1,963 | 3,318 | 1,975 | 3,415 |

Notes to and forming part of the accounts

for the year ended 30 June 1998

NOTE 1 Accounting Policies

The accompanying concise financial statements have been derived from the annual statutory financial statements of the Commonwealth Bank of Australia and its controlled entities, the Economic Entity, for the year ended 30 June 1998 provided in the Annual Report to Shareholders - 1998 Financial Statements. The statutory financial statements comply with the requirements of the Banking Act, Corporations Law, applicable Accounting Standards and other mandatory reporting requirements so far as they are considered appropriate to a banking corporation.

A full description of the accounting policies adopted by the Economic Entity is provided in the Annual Report to Shareholders - 1998 Financial Statements.

| | ECONOMIC | ENTITY |
|---|----------|--------|
| | 1998 | 1997 |
| | \$M | \$M |
| NOTE 2 Abnormal Items | | |
| Abnormal expense items: | | |
| Restructuring costs | 200 | - |
| General provision charge for bad and doubtful debts | 370 | - |
| Write down of computer equipment | | 200 |
| Total Abnormal Items Before Tax | 570 | 200 |
| Abnormal tax expense (credit) items: | | |
| Restructuring costs | (72) | - |
| Tax effecting general provision | (337) | - |
| Write down of computer equipment | | (72) |
| Total Abnormal Income Tax Expense (Credit) | (409) | (72) |
| Total Abnormal Items After Tax | 161 | 128 |

Restructuring Costs

Restructuring costs of \$200 million (\$128 million after tax) have been charged to profit and loss in the year ended 30 June 1998.

The components of this abnormal restructuring charge include the information technology transition to EDS (Australia) and other outsourcing arrangements, further rationalisation of processing and administration functions, implementation of the new organisational structure and reconfiguration of delivery systems. Each of these programmes has associated costs, principally in the areas of redundancy and property.

General Provision Charge for Bad and Doubtful Debts

With effect from 1 January 1998, the Economic Entity has refined the methodology used to estimate the provisions for impairment by adopting a statistically based technique referred to as Dynamic Provisioning. This takes into account historical loss experience and current economic factors to assess the provisioning requirement over the term to maturity of the existing credit portfolios. Initial adoption of this technique resulted in an abnormal expense for bad and doubtful debts of \$370 million in respect of the general provision which has been charged to profit and loss in the year ended 30 lune 1998

Subsequent requirements for specific provisions will be funded via the general provision. Accordingly, it is appropriate to tax effect the general provision, refer below.

Tax Effecting General Provision for Bad and Doubtful Debts

The general provision for bad and doubtful debts has been tax effected as at 1 January 1998. This reflects the adoption of a balance sheet risk based dynamic provisioning methodology which satisfies the recognition requirement that utilisation of the provision be assured beyond reasonable doubt.

An abnormal credit to tax expense of \$337 million has been booked to profit and loss in the year ended 30 June 1998.

Notes to and forming part of the accounts

| | ECONOMIC ENTITY | | | | |
|---|-----------------|-------|--------------|-------|--|
| | | 1998 | | 1997 | |
| | \$M | % | \$M | % | |
| NOTE 3 Financial Reporting by Segments | | | | | |
| (a) Geographical segments | | | | | |
| Revenue | | | | | |
| Australia | 7,718 | 81.4 | 8,088 | 85.0 | |
| New Zealand | 1,115 | 11.7 | 977 | 10.3 | |
| Other Countries | 657 | 6.9 | 448 | 4.7 | |
| | 9,490 | 100.0 | 9,513 | 100.0 | |
| Operating profit before tax | | | | | |
| Australia | 1,221 | 91.0 | 1,454 | 90.0 | |
| New Zealand | 148 | 11.0 | 128 | 7.9 | |
| Other Countries | (27) | (2.0) | 34 | 2.1 | |
| | 1,342 | 100.0 | 1,616 | 100.0 | |
| Operating profit after tax and outside equity interests | | | | | |
| Australia | 1,044 | 95.8 | 990 | 91.9 | |
| New Zealand | 73 | 6.7 | 63 | 5.8 | |
| Other Countries | (27) | (2.5) | 25 | 2.3 | |
| | 1,090 | 100.0 | 1,078 | 100.0 | |
| Assets | • | | | | |
| Australia | 110,120 | 84.4 | 101,202 | 84.3 | |
| New Zealand | 10,846 | 8.3 | 9,994 | 8.3 | |
| Other Countries | 9,578 | 7.3 | 8,907 | 7.4 | |
| | 130,544 | 100.0 | 120,103 | 100.0 | |
| (b) Industry segments | | | | | |
| Revenue | | | | | |
| Banking | 8,767 | 92.4 | 8,897 | 93.5 | |
| Life Insurance and Funds Management | 214 | 2.3 | 202 | 2.1 | |
| Finance | 509 | 5.3 | 414 | 4.4 | |
| | 9,490 | 100.0 | 9,513 | 100.0 | |
| Operating profit before tax | | | | | |
| Banking | 1,158 | 86.3 | 1,443 | 89.3 | |
| Life Insurance and Funds Management | 81 | 6.0 | 74 | 4.6 | |
| Finance | 103 | 7.7 | 99 | 6.1 | |
| | 1,342 | 100.0 | 1,616 | 100.0 | |
| Operating profit after tax and outside equity interests | | | | | |
| Banking | 940 | 86.2 | 941 | 87.2 | |
| Life Insurance and Funds Management | 84 | 7.7 | 75 | 7.0 | |
| Finance | 66 | 6.1 | 62 | 5.8 | |
| | 1,090 | 100.0 | 1,078 | 100.0 | |
| Assets | | | | | |
| Banking | 124,765 | 95.6 | 115,368 | 96.1 | |
| Life Insurance and Funds Management | 427 | 0.3 | 359 | 0.3 | |
| Finance | 5,352 | 4.1 | 4,376 | 3.6 | |
| | 130,544 | 100.0 | 120,103 | 100.0 | |
| | | | . = 0, . 0 0 | | |

Other Countries are:

United Kingdom, United States of America, Japan, Singapore, Hong Kong, Grand Cayman, Netherlands Antilles and Papua New Guinea.

These operations have a greater proportion of wholesale business with a funding base from predominantly wholesale markets where margins are very fine. The overseas balance sheet also supports trading activities.

The geographical segments represent the location in which the transaction was booked.

| | ECONOMIC | ENTITY |
|---|-------------|-------------|
| | 1998 \$M | 1997 \$M |
| NOTE 4 Dividends Provided For, Reserved or Paid | | |
| Interim dividend (fully franked) of 46 cents per share | | |
| (1997: 45 cents) | | |
| Provision for interim dividend - cash component only | 231 | 231 |
| Declared final dividend (fully franked) of 58 cents per share | | |
| (1997: 57 cents) | | |
| Provision for final dividend - cash component only | 321 | 291 |
| Dividends provided for payments in cash or paid | 552 | 522 |
| Appropriations to Dividend Reinvestment Plan Reserve | | |
| Interim dividend | 189 | 180 |
| Final dividend | 214 | 239 |
| Dividends appropriated to Dividend Reinvestment Plan Reserve | 403 | 419 |
| Total Dividends Provided for, Reserved or Paid | 955 | 941 |
| | | |

Dividend Franking Account

The amount of franking credits available for subsequent financial years stands at \$474 million. This figure represents the extent to which future dividends could be fully franked at 36%, and is based on the Bank's franking account at 30 June 1998, which has been adjusted for franking credits that will arise from the payment of income tax payable on profits of the 1998 financial year, franking debits that will arise from the payment of dividends proposed as at the end of the financial year and franking credits that the Bank may be prevented from distributing in the subsequent financial year, including \$25 million as a result of a compromise with the Australian Tax Office in respect of the buy back.

| | ECONOMIC ENTITY | |
|--|------------------|-------|
| | 1998 | 1997 |
| | С | С |
| NOTE 5 Earnings Per Share | | |
| Earnings Per Ordinary Share (basic and fully diluted) | 117.2 | 117.5 |
| | \$M | \$M |
| Reconciliation of earnings used in the calculation of earnings per share | | |
| Operating profit after income tax | 1,110 | 1,100 |
| Less: Outside equity interests | (20) | (22) |
| Earnings used in calculation of earnings per share | 1,090 | 1,078 |
| | Number of Shares | |
| | M | M |
| Weighted average number of ordinary shares used | | |
| in the calculation of earnings per share | 930 | 917 |

Notes to and forming part of the accounts

NOTE 6 Year 2000 Systems Compliance

As reported to the Australian Stock Exchange in May 1998, the Bank expects to have all key applications fully Year 2000 compliant by the end of 1998, with the majority of in house applications having already achieved compliance by June 1998.

The Bank has estimated rectification costs of \$115 million, to be expended over three years commencing July 1996. Expenditure to 30 June 1998 on the total programme is \$47 million.

The Bank is confident it will be ready for the change of the century, and believes that depositors' funds will not be at risk as a result of the Year 2000 issue.

NOTE 7 Contingent Liabilities

The Commonwealth Bank and its controlled entities are involved in a range of transactions that give rise to contingent and/or future liabilities. These transactions meet the financing requirements of customers and include endorsed bills of exchange, letters of credit, guarantees and commitments to provide credit.

These transactions combine varying levels of credit, interest rate, foreign exchange and liquidity risk. In accordance with Bank policy, exposure to any of these transactions is not carried at a level which would have a material effect on the financial condition of the Bank and its controlled entities.

| | ECONOMIC ENTITY | | | |
|---|-----------------|------------|----------|-----------|
| | | Face Value | Credit E | quivalent |
| | 1998 | 1997 | 1998 | 1997 |
| | \$M | \$M | \$M | \$M |
| Details of contingent liabilities and off balance sheet business are: | | | | |
| Credit risk related instruments | | | | |
| Guarantees | 1,878 | 1,522 | 1,878 | 1,522 |
| Standby letters of credit | 396 | 808 | 396 | 808 |
| Bill endorsements | 455 | 525 | 455 | 525 |
| Documentary letters of credit | 474 | 423 | 95 | 85 |
| Performance related contingents | 1,120 | 957 | 560 | 478 |
| Commitments to provide credit | 22,693 | 19,346 | 8,069 | 6,851 |
| Other commitments | 975 | 1,993 | 945 | 1,939 |
| Total credit risk related instruments | 27,991 | 25,574 | 12,398 | 12,208 |
| Derivatives | | | | |
| Exchange rate related contracts | 172,506 | 155,023 | 8,625 | 4,561 |
| Interest rate related contracts | 129,533 | 126,870 | 1,733 | 1,250 |
| Equity risk related contracts | 449 | 558 | 10 | 9 |
| Total Derivatives Exposures | 302,488 | 282,451 | 10,368 | 5,820 |

Directors' Statement

The accompanying Profit and Loss Statement and Statement of Cash Flows for the year ended 30 June 1998 and the Balance Sheet as at 30 June 1998 and the notes thereto are in our opinion fairly presented as an abbreviation of the full financial report for the year. The full financial report is reported on by the Directors, who have stated that, in their opinion:

- The said Profit and Loss Statement and Statement of Cash Flows for the year ended 30 June 1998 and the Balance Sheet as at 30 June 1998 for the Commonwealth Bank of Australia are drawn up so as to give a true and fair view of the results and cash flows of the Company for the financial year and the state of affairs of the Company as at the end of the financial year and at the date of this statement there are reasonable grounds to believe that the Company will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.
- The said consolidated financial statements of the Economic Entity, constituted by the company and the entities it controlled, have been made out in accordance with Divisions 4A and 4B of Part 3.6 of the Corporations Law and in particular give a true and fair view of the matters with which they deal.

The full financial report is accompanied by an independent audit report furnished by the Company's auditors, Ernst & Young, and the report is unqualified.

A copy of the full Annual Report to Shareholders will be provided without charge upon request at any time.

M A Besley AO Chairman

ma Bisley.

12 August 1998

D V Murray Managing Director

Independent Audit Report

To the members of the Commonwealth Bank of Australia.

Scope

We have audited the concise financial statements of the Commonwealth Bank of Australia for the year ended 30 June 1998 as set out on pages 36 to 45 in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards.

Audit Opinion

In our opinion, the information reported in the concise financial statements is consistent with the annual statutory financial statements from which it is derived and upon which we expressed an unqualified audit opinion in our report to the members dated 12 August 1998. For a better understanding of the scope of our audit, this report should be read in conjunction with our audit report on the annual statutory financial statements.

ERNST & YOUNG

S C Van Gorp

Partner

Sydney

Date: 12 August 1998

Shareholding Information

Top 20 Holders of Fully Paid Ordinary \$2 Shares as at 5 August 1998

| Rank | Name of Holder | Number of Shares | % |
|------|--|---------------------|------|
| 1 | Westpac Custodian Nominees Limited | 48,776,181 | 5.31 |
| 2 | Chase Manhattan Nominees Limited | 42,848,634 | 4.66 |
| 3 | National Nominees Limited | 31,734,783 | 3.45 |
| 4 | ANZ Nominees Limited | 22,312,262 | 2.43 |
| 5 | AMP Life Limited | 18,003,415 | 1.96 |
| 6 | Permanent Trustee Australia Limited | 16,972,584 | 1.85 |
| 7 | Queensland Investment Corporation Limited | 15,933,080 | 1.73 |
| 8 | SAS Trustee Corporation | 13,339,813 | 1.45 |
| 9 | Citicorp Nominees Pty Limited | 12,736,190 | 1.39 |
| 10 | Perpetual Trustees Victoria Limited | 8,687,893 | 0.95 |
| 11 | MLC Limited | 7,891,628 | 0.86 |
| 12 | National Mutual Trustees Limited | 6,022,778 | 0.66 |
| 13 | Mercantile Mutual Life Insurance Company Limited | 5,755,977 | 0.63 |
| 14 | CSS & PSS Board | 5,264,259 | 0.57 |
| 15 | Australian Foundation Investment Company Limited | 4,381,615 | 0.48 |
| 16 | Perpetual Trustees Nominees Limited | 3,847,651 | 0.42 |
| 17 | HKBA Nominees Limited | 3,687,386 | 0.40 |
| 18 | National Australia Financial Management Limited | 3,585,656 | 0.39 |
| 19 | Prudential Corporation Australia Limited | 3,237,874 | 0.35 |
| 20 | GIO Personal Investment Services Limited | 3,179,434 | 0.35 |

The twenty largest shareholders hold 278,199,093 shares which is equal to 30.29% of the total shares on issue.

Stock Exchange Listing

The shares of the Commonwealth Bank of Australia are listed on the Australian Stock Exchange under the trade symbol CBA, with Sydney being the home exchange. Details of trading activity are published in most daily newspapers, generally under the abbreviation of CBA or C'wealth Bank.

Directors' Shareholdings as at 12 August 1998

| | Shares | Options |
|----------------|--------|---------|
| M A Besley AO | 10,602 | - |
| J T Ralph AO | 10,942 | - |
| D V Murray | 44,372 | 800,000 |
| N R Adler | 5,628 | - |
| A C Booth | 1,021 | - |
| K E Cowley, AO | 8,000 | - |
| J M Schubert | 2,152 | - |
| G H Slee | 1,269 | - |
| F J Swan | 1,908 | - |
| B K Ward | 1,660 | |

Guidelines for Dealings by Directors in Shares

The restrictions imposed by law on dealings by Directors in the securities of the Bank have been supplemented by the Board of Directors adopting guidelines which further limit any such dealings by Directors, their spouses, any dependent child, family company and family trust. The guidelines provide, that in addition to the requirement that Directors not deal in the securities of the Bank or any related company when they have or may be perceived as having relevant unpublished price sensitive information, Directors are only permitted to deal within certain periods. Further, the guidelines require that Directors not deal on the basis of considerations of a short term nature or to the extent of trading in those securities.

Shareholding Information

Range of Shares (Fully Paid Ordinary \$2 Shares and Employee Shares): 5 August 1998

| | Range | Number of Shareholders | Percentage Shareholders | Number of Shares | Percentage Issued Capital |
|--------------------------------------|-------|---------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------|------------------------------|
| 1–1,000 | | 274,879 | 66.21 | 127,317,297 | 13.80 |
| 1,001–5000 | | 125,334 | 30.19 | 246,588,769 | 26.73 |
| 5,001–10,000 | | 10,245 | 2.47 | 70,558,871 | 7.65 |
| 10,001–100,000 | | 4,404 | 1.06 | 90,658,615 | 9.82 |
| 100,001-Over | | 303 | 0.07 | 387,534,722 | 42.00 |
| Totals | | 415,165 | 100.00 | 922,658,274 | 100.00 |
| Less than marketable parcel of \$500 | _ | 6,289 | | 83,016 | |

Voting Rights

Under the Bank's Articles of Association, each member present at a general meeting of the Bank in person or by proxy, attorney or official representative is entitled:

- on a show of hands to one vote; and
- on a poll to one vote for each share held or represented.

If more than one proxy, attorney or official representative is present for a member:

- none of them is entitled to a vote on a show of hands; and
- the vote of each one on a poll is of no effect unless each is appointed to represent a specified proportion of the member's voting rights, not exceeding in aggregate 100%.

Domestic Representation

The members of the Bank's Executive Committee, listed below, are located at:

Level 3 48 Martin Place Sydney NSW 1155

Banking & Financial Services

Head of Products Neville Cox

Telephone: (02) 9378 3237 Facsimile: (02) 9378 3087

Group Human Resources

General Manager

Les Cupper

Telephone: (02) 9378 3966 Facsimile: (02) 9378 3965

Institutional Banking

Head of Institutional Banking

Michael Katz

Telephone: (02) 9378 5903 Facsimile: (02) 9378 3023 Postal Address: GPO Box 2719 Sydney NSW 1155

Customer Service Division

Head of Customer Service Division

Alf Long

Telephone: (02) 9378 3372 Facsimile: (02) 9378 7007

Banking and Financial Services

Head of Banking and Financial Services

John Mulcahy

Telephone: (02) 9378 2673 Facsimile: (02) 9378 3585

Technology Operations and Property

Head of Technology Operations and Property

Russell Scrimshaw

Telephone: (02) 9378 3541 Facsimile: (02) 9378 3566

Financial and Risk Management

Group General Manager

Michael Ullmer

Telephone: (02) 9378 3211 Facsimile: (02) 9378 5201

International Representation

Australia Head Office

48 Martin Place (Level 3) Sydney NSW 1155 Telephone: (02) 9378 2000 Telex: AA 120345

Swift: CTBAAU2S Facsimile: (02) 9378 3023 **Head of Institutional Banking**

M A Katz

New Zealand Head Office

ASB Bank Ltd ASB Bank Centre Corner Albert & Wellesley Streets

Auckland Telephone: (64 9) 377 8930

Telex: NZ60881 Facsimile: (64 9) 358 3511

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R J Norris

Asia/Pacific Beijing, China

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Telephone: (86 10) 6505 5350 Facsimile: (86 10) 6505 5354

Chief Representative

YTAu

Shanghai, China

805 Union Building 100 Yan An Road (East) Shanghai 200002 People's Republic of China Telephone: (86 21) 6355 3939 Facsimile: (86 21) 6373 5066 Chief Representative

YTAu

Hong Kong

1405–1408 Two Exchange Square 8 Connaught Place Central

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Telex: (852) 60466 CTB HX Swift: CTB HK HH BKG Facsimile: (852) 2845 9194 General Manager

S R J Holden

Singapore

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G E J Forte

Vietnam

Suite 202–203A Central Building 31 Hai Ba Trung Hanoi Vietnam

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P R Milton

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P R Milton

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Telephone: (81 3) 5400 7280

Telex: J 28167 Swift: CTBA JP JTS Facsimile: (81 3) 5400 7288

Chief Representative

General Manager
A M Kershaw

Republic of Korea

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Vice President

Australia/Korea Business

Moon-Ki Jung

Europe

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Telephone: (44 171) 710 3999

Telex: 883864 Swift: CTBA GB 2L

Facsimile: (44 171) 710 3939 General Manager Europe

A J F Brown

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Telex: TRT 177666 Swift: CTBA US 33

Facsimile: (1 212) 336 7725 General Manager Americas

IM Phillips

