

## **Review by Legal Costs Committee**

### **Legal Practitioners (Solicitors Costs) Determination 2015**

### **Legal Practitioners (Solicitors Non- Contentious Probate Costs) Determination 2015**

### **Legal Practitioners (Public Notaries Costs) Determination 2015**

**To**

Legal Costs Committee  
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**Date**

THURSDAY, 18 MAY 2017

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**Review by Legal Costs Committee**  
**Legal Practitioners (Solicitors Costs) Determination 2015**  
**Legal Practitioners (Solicitors Non-Contentious Probate Costs) Determination 2015**  
**and**  
**Legal Practitioners (Public Notaries Costs) Determination 2015**

**1 Introduction**

- 1.1 The Law Society of Western Australia (**Society**) is the peak association for the legal profession in Western Australia.
- 1.2 Section 276(1) of the *Legal Profession Act 2008* (**Act**) requires the Legal Costs Committee to review each costs determination in force at least once in the period of 2 years after the determination was made and in each period of 2 years after that period.
- 1.3 Section 278(1)(a) of the Act requires the Legal Costs Committee to give written notice to the Society of its intention to make or review a costs determination.
- 1.4 Written notice to the Society was made by letter dated 15 December 2016 from the Chair of the Legal Costs Committee, Clare Thompson.
- 1.5 The Society comments as follows.

**2 Maximum allowable hourly rates**

- 2.1 The table below shows the current maximum allowable hourly rates in item 7 of the Legal Practitioners (*Solicitors Costs*) *Determination 2015* (**Solicitors Costs Scale**), subparagraph 4(e)(1) of the Legal Practitioners (*Non-Contentious Probate Costs*) *Determination 2015* (**Probate Scale**) and Table A of the Legal Practitioners (*Supreme Court*) (*Contentious Business*) *Determination 2016* (**Supreme Court Scale**).

Practitioner	Maximum Rate 2015 Solicitors Costs Scale Item 7 – commenced 1 July 2015	Maximum Rate 2015 Probate Scale 4(e)(1) – commenced 1 July 2015	Maximum Rate 2016 Supreme Court Scale Table A – commenced 1 July 2016
Senior Practitioner Admitted for 5 years or more	\$484	\$484	\$484
Junior Practitioner Admitted for less than 5 years	\$341	\$341	\$341
Restricted Practitioner Obtaining required experience as set out in s 50 of the Legal Profession Act 2008			\$297
Clerk/Paralegal	\$231	\$231	\$231
Counsel			\$396
Senior Counsel			\$682

- 2.2 The 2015 Solicitors Costs Scale and the Probate Scale came into operation on 1 July 2015. The Solicitors Costs Scale and Probate Scale to issue following this review are expected to commence on 1 July 2017, to next be reviewed in 2019.
- 2.3 In 2016 the Legal Costs Committee increased the 2014 Supreme Court Scale by approximately 2% inclusive of GST. The current Supreme Court Scale commenced on 1 July 2016 and will be reviewed in 2018.
- 2.4 The 2016 Supreme Court Scale includes:
- i. An allowance for Senior Counsel in items 10 and 11 in recognition of the increasing complexity of matters covered by those items in the Determination;
  - ii. New item 34 which makes an allowance for travel; and
  - iii. The new category Restricted Practitioner. This category includes all Australian legal practitioners engaging in restricted legal practice pursuant to section 50 of the *Legal Profession Act 2008* (WA) (the Act), during the period when that person is undertaking the “required experience”, as defined in section 50 of the Act, and whilst an endorsement to that effect remains on their practising certificate.
- 2.5 As the Legal Costs Committee’s biennial review of the Solicitors Costs Scale and Probate Scale is historically conducted in the year between reviews of the Supreme Court Scale, historically the maximum allowable hourly rates in the Solicitors Costs Scale and Probate Scale are increased, following the biennial review, to amounts higher than the maximum allowable hourly rates in the current Supreme Court Scale. The Society would support this approach continuing.

### 3 Consumer Price Index and Wages Index

- 3.1 In reviewing and determining the maximum allowable hourly rates in a costs scale it is appropriate that the Legal Costs Committee take into account the movement in the Consumer Price Index and Wages Index. Increases in the Consumer Price Index and Wages Index necessarily impact heavily on the costs of running a law practice and therefore on the provision of professional legal services in all areas of legal work.
- 3.2 **Annexure 1** to this submission is the Australian Bureau of Statistics Consumer Price Index Tables from September 2015 to September 2016. Index numbers for Perth were as follows:

Quarter	Percentage change All industries	Percentage change Private sector
June 2015	107.7	
September 2015	108.1	0.4
December 2015	108.6	0.5
March 2016	107.9	-0.6
June 2016	108.2	0.3
September 2016	108.6	0.4
December 2016	109.00	0.4
March 2017	109.00	0
Total % increase	1.4%	1.3%

- 3.3 Based on an average quarterly increase of 0.5% between April 2017 and June 2017, the CPI index at June 2017 could increase by a further 0.5%, a total of 1.8% between June 2015 and June 2017.

3.4 **Annexures 2, 3 and 4** are Australian Bureau of Statistics Wage Index Tables showing percentage changes for:

- a. March 2016 to June 2016;
- b. June 2016 to September 2016;
- c. September 2016 to December 2016.

The percentage changes in the private sector were:

Quarter	Percentage change Private sector
June 2016	2.0
September 2016	0.4
December 2016	0.4
Total % increase	2.8%

Given the general CPI of 1.8% and the wages growth of 2.8%, the Society submits that an increase in the hourly rates in an amount of 2.5% (rounded up or down to be divisible by 11) is warranted.

#### **4 Solicitors Costs Scale Item 4 (Settlement of a Contract for the Sale of Land under the Transfer of Land Act 1893) and Settlement Agents (Remuneration) Notice 2013 (Settlement Agents Scale)**

- 4.1 Solicitors have a higher standard of care than do settlement agents. In *Cusamo v Pinner (1998) 157 ALR 61* Justice Carr of the Federal Court held that the duty of care of a settlement agent in representing a purchaser of real property is less than the duty of care of a solicitor acting in the same capacity. A solicitor is expected to advise the purchaser of his/her rights under the contract. Settlement agents are required, when non-routine matters arise, to recommend to their clients that they seek the advice of a solicitor.
- 4.2 On 2 February 2016, the *Settlement Agents (Remuneration) Revocation Notice 2015* was gazetted, revoking the *Settlement Agents (Remuneration) Notice 2013* from 3 February 2016. That notice has not been replaced and as such the fees charged by settlement agents are no longer regulated.
- 4.3 Prior to the revocation of the *Settlement Agents (Remuneration) Notice 2013*, the difference between what a settlement agent and a solicitor was entitled to charge (pursuant to the 2015 review) was between 1% and 5%. Such an uplift does not adequately reflect the higher standard of care imposed on a solicitor as opposed to a settlement agent.
- 4.4 Alternatively, Item 5 could be removed entirely to reflect the fact that the competition, in the form of settlement agents, have had their costs deregulated.

#### **5 Probate Scale Paragraph 4 – Costs**

- 5.1 Subparagraphs 4(a) to (d) set maximum fixed costs for various legal services.
- 5.2 Subparagraph 4(a) sets a maximum amount of \$1,749 (inclusive of GST) in the case of an application for a Grant of Probate to the Supreme Court of Western Australia or to reseal a Grant of Probate made outside Western Australia within another Australian jurisdiction.
- 5.3 Section 263(a) of the Act (Exceptions to requirement for disclosure) provides that “...if a law practice becomes aware that the total legal costs are likely to exceed \$1 500 (exclusive of GST) or the amount prescribed by the regulations (whichever is higher), the law practice

*must disclose the matters in section 260 or 261 (as the case requires) to the client as soon as practicable.”*

- 5.4 It is stated in the *Legal Practitioners (Non-Contentious Probate Costs) Report 2010*, in which the fixed costs were introduced to the Probate Scale that:

*“The Committee recognises that there can be degrees of complexity associated with the Applications described in paragraph (a) of this clause 4. In those cases, law practices should be entitled to charge the hourly rates described in sub-paragraphs (e)(1) or (2) (as the case requires) of clause 5 of the Determination. However, the Committee considers it is inappropriate for law practices to be able to charge for time spent on satisfying requisitions issued by the Supreme Court of Western Australia in connection with any of the Applications described in paragraph (a) of this clause 4 where those requisitions relate to matters in respect of which a competent local legal practitioner practising in the Probate Jurisdiction of the Supreme Court of Western Australia would not have overlooked or erred.”*

- 5.5 The Society does not disagree with these comments. However, increases in the costs of running a law practice apply to the provision of all legal services. The maximum amount payable by a client to a law practice for the legal service described in subparagraph 4(a) has only increased by \$99 or about 6% since March 2010, a period of 7 years. The next review is not due until 2019.
- 5.6 If the amount in subparagraph 4(a) is increased, a law practice can choose to charge less than the fixed maximum amount if it does not want to comply with disclosure obligations under the Act or if market forces so dictate.
- 5.7 The Society would support the inclusion of the Restricted Practitioner category into this scale to bring the scale in line with other more recent determinations.

## **6 Notaries Scale**

- 6.1 An increase in the rates in the Notaries Scale is warranted in accordance with CPI.

## **7 Submission**

- 7.1 The Society submits that the increases as itemised below are fair and reasonable, particularly given that increases will be prospective.
- (1) The maximum allowable hourly rates in Item 7 of the Solicitors Costs Scale should be increased by 2.5% (inclusive of GST) rounded up or down to be divisible by 11.
  - (2) The maximum amounts in Item 5 of the Solicitors Costs Scale should be increased by 2.5% (inclusive of GST) rounded up or down to be divisible by 11.
  - (3) The maximum cost of \$1,749 (inclusive of GST) in subparagraph 4(a) of the Probate Scale should be increased by 10% rounded up or down to be divisible by 11.
  - (4) The fixed allowances in Parts 4(b) to (d) of the Probate Scale should be increased by 6% inclusive of GST, rounded up or down to be divisible by 11.
  - (5) The maximum allowable hourly rates in subparagraph 4(e)(1) of the Probate Scale should be increased by 2.5% inclusive of GST, rounded up or down to be divisible by 11.

- (6) The rates in the Notaries Scale should be increased by 2.5% (inclusive of GST), rounded up or down to be divisible by 11.



Alain Musikanth  
**President**

# **Annexure 1**

ABS Consumer Price Index Tables September  
2015 to September 2016





# Australian Bureau of Statistics

## 6401.0 - Consumer Price Index, Australia, Sep 2015 Quality

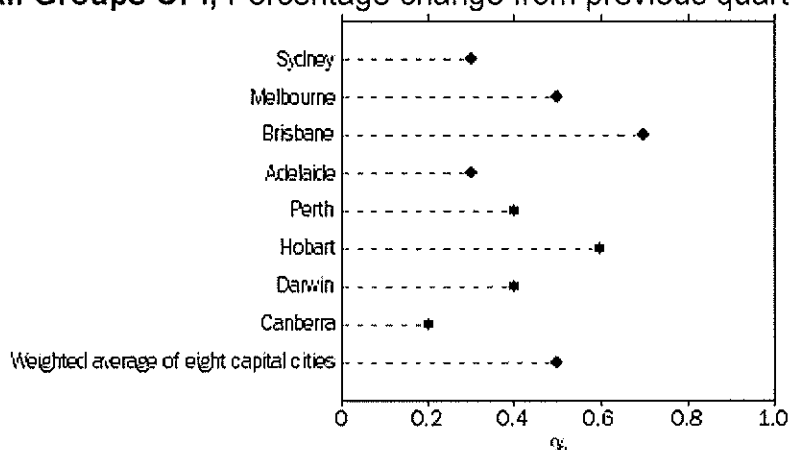
Declaration

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### CAPITAL CITIES COMPARISON

#### ALL GROUPS CPI

All Groups CPI, Percentage change from previous quarter



At the All groups level, the CPI rose in all eight capital cities this quarter.

The housing group (+0.6%) is the most significant contributor to the All groups quarterly movement, driven by rises in property rates and charges (+4.6%) in all capital cities. The rise is due to increases in general property rates, emergency services levies and waste management costs. New dwelling purchase by owner-occupiers (+0.7%) recorded a rise as the current prolonged period of low interest rates, combined with strong demand, are putting upward pressure on prices for the construction of new dwellings in a number of capital cities. At the group level, six of the eight capital cities have shown rises with Hobart (+1.9%) and Melbourne (+1.2%) recording the most significant increases. The rise this quarter is partially offset by a fall in electricity (-1.4%), following the Australian Energy Regulator's decision to lower the network charges for electricity distribution for some States and Territories.

The alcohol and tobacco group (+1.3%) is the second most significant positive contributor to the All groups quarterly movement. The rise is driven by rises in tobacco (+2.1%) and beer (+1.5%) across all eight capital cities. The increase in tobacco is mainly due to the effects of the federal excise tax increase effective from 1 September 2015.

The recreation and culture group (+0.8%) is the third most significant positive contributor to the All groups quarterly movement. The rise is driven by international holiday travel and

accommodation (+4.6%), which is typical of the peak summer holiday season in Europe and North America.

The most significant negative contributor to the quarterly movement is the communication group (-2.0%) with falls across all capital cities. The fall is driven by telecommunication equipment and services (-2.0%) as competition intensifies among the providers to offer mobile plans with increased data allowance.

Over the last twelve months, the All groups CPI has risen in all eight capital cities with Sydney (+1.9%) recording the largest positive movement. Darwin (+0.4%) has recorded the smallest rise over the last twelve months.

### All Groups CPI, All groups index numbers and percentage changes

	Index number	Percentage change	
	(a) Sep Qtr 2015	Jun Qtr 2015 to Sep Qtr 2015	Sep Qtr 2014 to Sep Qtr 2015
Sydney	108.6	0.3	1.9
Melbourne	107.6	0.5	1.4
Brisbane	108.1	0.7	1.5
Adelaide	107.1	0.3	1.1
Perth	108.1	0.4	1.1
Hobart	105.7	0.6	1.1
Darwin	108.7	0.4	0.4
Canberra	105.8	0.2	0.6
Weighted average of eight capital cities	108.0	0.5	1.5

(a) Index reference period: 2011-12 = 100.0.

#### SYDNEY (+0.3%)

The main contributors to the rise in Sydney this quarter are fruit (+9.7%), international holiday travel and accommodation (+4.6%) and new dwelling purchase by owner-occupiers (+1.1%). The Sydney housing market remains strong due to increases in the cost of materials and labour and strong demand, which is putting upward pressure on dwelling construction. The rise is partially offset by falls in vegetables (-8.7%), electricity (-4.5%) and gas and other household fuels (-13.6%). The falls in electricity and gas and other household fuels is due to the Australian Energy Regulator's decision to lower the network charges for electricity and gas distribution, as well as the introduction of a gas rebate for eligible households by the NSW government on 1 July.

#### MELBOURNE (+0.5%)

The main contributors to the rise in Melbourne this quarter are international holiday travel and accommodation (+4.9%), fruit (+10.9%) and property rates and charges (+5.5%). The rise in property rates and charges is due to an increase in general property rates and the fire services levy. The rise is partially offset by a fall in automotive fuel (-2.7%).

#### BRISBANE (+0.7%)

The main contributors to the rise in Brisbane this quarter are international holiday travel

and accommodation (+5.6%), other financial services (+2.9%) and tobacco (+2.7%). The increase in other financial services is due to a rise in the real estate agent fees over the quarter. The rise is partially offset by a fall in vegetables (-6.8%).

### **ADELAIDE (+0.3%)**

The main contributors to the rise in Adelaide this quarter are international holiday travel and accommodation (+5.3%), tobacco (+2.9%) and property rates and charges (+5.0%). The rise in property rates and charges is due to annual revaluations of property prices and an increase in the emergency services levy. The rise is partially offset by a fall in electricity (-7.7%) following the Australian Energy Regulator's decision to lower network charges for electricity distribution.

### **PERTH (+0.4%)**

The main contributors to the rise in Perth this quarter are electricity (+6.1%), which typically increases on 1 July, motor vehicles (+2.6%) and tobacco (+2.3%). The rise is partially offset by falls in vegetables (-6.0%), telecommunication equipment and services (-2.0%) and rents (-0.9%).

### **HOBART (+0.6%)**

The main contributors to the rise in Hobart this quarter are new dwelling purchase by owner-occupiers (+3.4%), fruit (+16.7%) and international holiday travel and accommodation (+5.3%). The extension of the first home builders grant, low interest rates and increasing dwelling construction activity have put upward pressure on the prices of new dwelling construction, following several years of modest growth. The rise is partially offset by falls in domestic holiday travel and accommodation (-3.1%) and vegetables (-6.1%).

### **DARWIN (+0.4%)**

The main contributor to the rise in Darwin this quarter is domestic holiday travel and accommodation (+12.4%), due to the peak travel season in Darwin. Tobacco (+2.9%) and international holiday travel and accommodation (+5.6%) also recorded rises. The rise is partially offset by falls in accessories (-8.2%) and rents (-1.0%).

### **CANBERRA (+0.2%)**

The main contributors to the rise in Canberra this quarter are property rates and charges (+11.5%), fruit (+12.5%) and international holiday travel and accommodation (+4.4%). The rise in property rates and charges has been impacted by the ACT government tax reform to phase out stamp duty over a number of years. The rise is partially offset by falls in electricity (-4.6%), following the Australian Energy Regulator's decision to lower network charges for electricity distribution, and other financial services (-4.2%), which fell due to the phasing out of stamp duty in the ACT.

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# Australian Bureau of Statistics

## 6401.0 - Consumer Price Index, Australia, Dec 2015 Quality

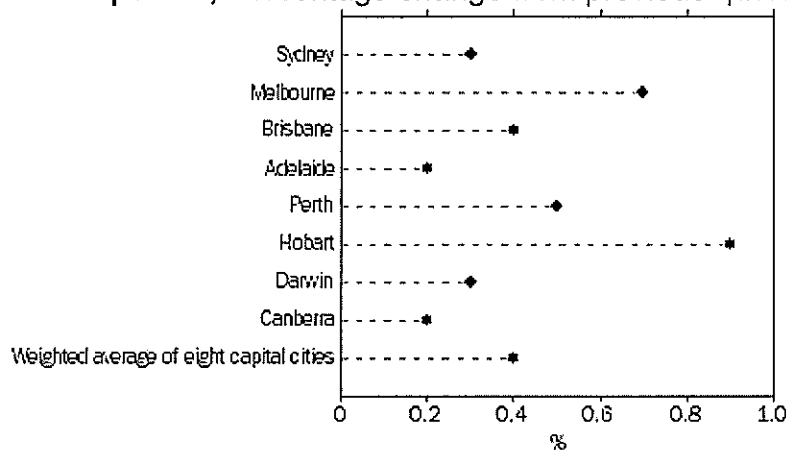
Declaration

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### CAPITAL CITIES COMPARISON

#### ALL GROUPS CPI

All Groups CPI, Percentage change from previous quarter



At the All groups level, the CPI rose in all eight capital cities this quarter.

The alcohol and tobacco group (+2.7%) is the most significant positive contributor to the All groups quarterly movement. This is driven by a rise in tobacco (+7.4%) across all eight capital cities. The rise in tobacco is due to flow on effects from the federal excise tax increase effective from 1 September 2015.

The recreation and culture group (+1.6%) is the second most significant contributor to the All groups quarterly movement. This is driven by rises in domestic holiday travel and accommodation (+5.9%) and is due to the October school holiday period and the lead up to the peak holiday period.

The clothing and footwear group (+1.6%) is the third most significant positive contributor to the All groups quarterly movement. This is driven by a rise in accessories (+4.5%).

The transport group (-1.4%) is the most significant negative contributor to the All groups quarterly movement, with falls across all capital cities. The fall is driven by automotive fuel (-5.7%) and is attributed to falls in world oil prices.

Over the last twelve months, the All groups CPI has risen in all eight capital cities with

Sydney (+2.0%) recording the largest positive movement. Darwin (+0.5%) has recorded the smallest rise over the last twelve months.

### All Groups CPI, All groups index numbers and percentage changes

	Index number	Percentage change	
	(a) Dec Qtr 2015	Sep Qtr 2015 to Dec Qtr 2015	Dec Qtr 2014 to Dec Qtr 2015
Sydney	108.9	0.3	2.0
Melbourne	108.3	0.7	1.9
Brisbane	108.5	0.4	1.7
Adelaide	107.3	0.2	1.0
Perth	108.6	0.5	1.5
Hobart	106.6	0.9	1.8
Darwin	109.0	0.3	0.5
Canberra	106.0	0.2	0.7
Weighted average of eight capital cities	108.4	0.4	1.7

(a) Index reference period: 2011-12 = 100.0.

#### **SYDNEY (+0.3%)**

The main contributors to the rise in Sydney this quarter are tobacco (+7.3%), domestic holiday travel and accommodation (+6.0%) and vegetables (+4.4%). The rise in vegetables is due to drought conditions in Queensland affecting the supply of a number of types of vegetable, putting upward pressure on prices. The rise is partially offset by falls in automotive fuel (-6.4%), telecommunication equipment and services (-2.4%) and wine (-2.5%). The fall in telecommunication equipment and services is attributed to competition intensifying among the providers to offer mobile plans with higher data allowances.

#### **MELBOURNE (+0.7%)**

The main contributors to the rise in Melbourne this quarter are tobacco (+7.0%), domestic holiday travel and accommodation (+7.7%) and international holiday travel and accommodation (+2.9%). The rise in international holiday travel and accommodation is due to increased demand for international travel over the peak holiday period. The rise is partially offset by falls in automotive fuel (-4.4%), telecommunication equipment and services (-2.5%) and fruit (-4.4%). The fall in fruit is due to seasonal increases in supply of summer fruits.

#### **BRISBANE (+0.4%)**

The main contributors to the rise in Brisbane this quarter are tobacco (+7.5%), domestic holiday travel and accommodation (+4.4%) and accessories (+4.0%). The rise is partially offset by falls in automotive fuel (-7.1%), telecommunication equipment and services (-2.4%) and other financial services (-1.9%). The fall in other financial services is due to decreases in real estate commissions following deregulation.

#### **ADELAIDE (+0.2%)**

The main contributors to the rise in Adelaide this quarter are tobacco (+6.7%), domestic holiday travel and accommodation (+4.7%) and international holiday travel and accommodation (+1.8%). The rise is partially offset by falls in automotive fuel (-4.3%), telecommunication equipment and services (-2.4%) and wine (-3.6%). The fall in wine is due to the continued oversupply of grapes, resulting in an increased supply of wine which is putting downward pressure on prices.

#### **PERTH (+0.5%)**

The main contributors to the rise in Perth this quarter are tobacco (+8.1%), domestic holiday travel and accommodation (+4.2%) and international holiday travel and accommodation (+3.6%). The rise is partially offset by falls in automotive fuel (-6.5%), rents (-1.3%) and telecommunication equipment and services (-2.4%). The fall in rents is due to excess supply of housing stock, with high vacancy rates as seen throughout Perth.

#### **HOBART (+0.9%)**

The main contributors to the rise in Hobart this quarter are domestic holiday travel and accommodation (+11.6%), tobacco (+6.9%) and accessories (+8.8%). The rise in domestic holiday travel and accommodation is attributed to airfares increasing strongly in the lead up to the peak holiday period. The rise is partially offset by falls in automotive fuel (-4.2%), telecommunication equipment and services (-2.4%) and motor vehicles (-1.5%). The fall in motor vehicles is due to end of year sales.

#### **DARWIN (+0.3%)**

The main contributors to the rise in Darwin this quarter are tobacco (+7.7%), sports participation (+15.1%) and accessories (+7.7%). The rise is partially offset by falls in domestic holiday travel and accommodation (-5.0%), rents (-1.3%) and automotive fuel (-2.7%). The fall in rents is due to excess supply of housing stock, with high vacancy rates as seen throughout Darwin.

#### **CANBERRA (+0.2%)**

The main contributors to the rise in Canberra this quarter are domestic holiday travel and accommodation (+6.2%), tobacco (+6.6%) and accessories (+4.4%). The rise is partially offset by falls in automotive fuel (-6.0%), wine (-2.9%) and telecommunication equipment and services (-2.4%).

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# Australian Bureau of Statistics

## 6401.0 - Consumer Price Index, Australia, Mar 2016 Quality

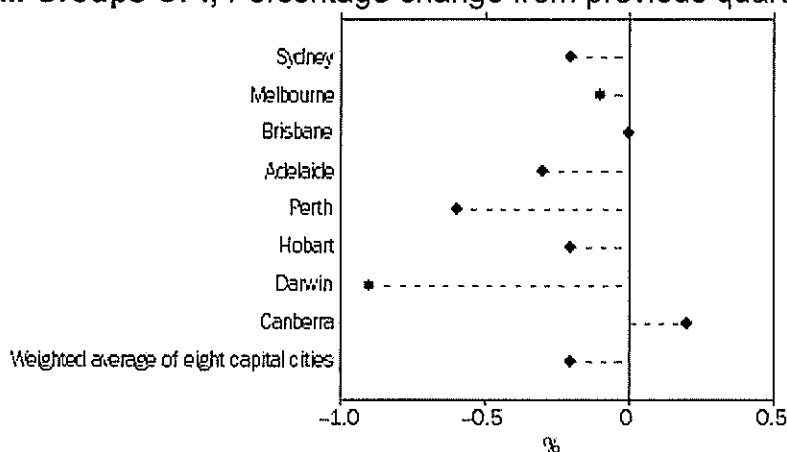
Declaration

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### CAPITAL CITIES COMPARISON

#### ALL GROUPS CPI

All Groups CPI, Percentage change from previous quarter



At the All groups level, the CPI fell in six out of eight capital cities during this quarter.

The transport group (-2.5%) is the most significant negative contributor to the All groups quarterly movement, with falls across all eight capital cities. This is driven by falls in automotive fuel (-10.0%) reflecting world oil prices hitting 12-year lows.

The recreation and culture group (-1.0%) is the second most significant negative contributor to the All groups quarterly movement, with falls across all eight capital cities. This is being driven by falls in international holiday travel and accommodation (-2.0%) and domestic holiday travel and accommodation (-1.9%). The fall is typical of March quarters with airlines decreasing prices after peak Christmas and new year holiday periods.

The clothing and footwear group (-2.6%) is the third most significant negative contributor to the All groups quarterly movement, with falls across all eight capital cities. This is driven by a fall in accessories (-4.3%) due to post Christmas sales.

Other significant contributing movements for this quarter include fruit (-11.1%) and telecommunications equipment and services (-1.7%), with falls across all eight capital cities. The fall in fruit is due to plentiful supplies of both year-round and summer fruits. The fall in telecommunications equipment and services is being driven by competition between telecommunication providers.

The most significant offsetting contributor to the quarterly movement is the education



group (+3.1%) due to rises in fees at the beginning of the new school year. The movement is driven by secondary education (+4.6%). The rise this quarter is lower in comparison to previous March quarters and is mainly due to subdued growth in fees for tertiary education (+1.5%).

Annually, the All groups CPI has risen in seven out of eight capital cities with Melbourne (+1.7%) and Brisbane (+1.7%) recording the largest positive movements. Darwin (-0.3%) was the only city to record a fall.

### All Groups CPI, All groups index numbers and percentage changes

	Index number	Percentage change	
	(a)	Dec Qtr 2015 to Mar Qtr	Mar Qtr 2015 to Mar Qtr
	Mar Qtr 2016	2016	2016
Sydney	108.7	-0.2	1.3
Melbourne	108.2	-0.1	1.7
Brisbane	108.5	0.0	1.7
Adelaide	107.0	-0.3	0.7
Perth	107.9	-0.6	0.7
Hobart	106.4	-0.2	1.3
Darwin	108.0	-0.9	-0.3
Canberra	106.2	0.2	1.0
Weighted average of eight capital cities	108.2	-0.2	1.3

(a) Index reference period: 2011-12 = 100.0.

#### SYDNEY (-0.2%)

The main contributors to the fall in Sydney this quarter are automotive fuel (-12.1%) and fruit (-11.4%). The fall is partially offset by cyclical rises in pharmaceutical products (+5.5%) and secondary education (+4.4%). A freeze in NSW TAFE fees for 2016 led a lower than expected rise in education this quarter.

#### MELBOURNE (-0.1%)

The main contributors to the fall in Melbourne this quarter are automotive fuel (-9.3%), fruit (-12.1%) and electricity (-2.0%). Electricity fell this quarter following the Australian Energy Regulator's decision to lower the network charges for electricity distribution across Victoria. The fall is partially offset by a rise in gas and other household fuels (+6.6%).

#### BRISBANE (0.0%)

Brisbane recorded no movement this quarter. The main positive contributors are cyclical rises in medical and hospital services (+2.2%) and secondary education (+4.3%). The most significant offsetting falls are automotive fuel (-8.0%) and fruit (-11.2%).

#### ADELAIDE (-0.3%)

The main contributors to the fall in Adelaide this quarter are automotive fuel (-11.6%) and fruit (-14.1%). The movement is partially offset by rises in electricity (+4.9%) and

secondary education (+4.3%). The rise in electricity is due to the seasonal switch to peak pricing.

### **PERTH (-0.6%)**

The main contributors to the fall in Perth this quarter are automotive fuel (-8.4%), new dwelling purchase by owner-occupiers (-2.2%) and rents (-2.3%). The fall in new dwelling purchase by owner-occupiers is due to falling demand as the mining boom continues to slow. The fall in rents is due to high vacancy rates as seen throughout Perth. The fall is partially offset by rises in medical and hospital services (+1.5%) and secondary education (+3.8%).

### **HOBART (-0.2%)**

The main contributors to the fall in Hobart this quarter are automotive fuel (-8.8%) and fruit (-12.2%). The movement is partially offset by a rise in new dwelling purchase by owner-occupiers (+1.5%). The rise in new dwelling purchase by owner-occupiers is influenced by a reduction in the First Home Owner Grant, which has increased the prices paid by consumers.

### **DARWIN (-0.9%)**

The main contributors to the fall in Darwin this quarter are domestic holiday travel and accommodation (-9.0%), rents (-2.2%) and electricity (-5.5%). The fall in domestic holiday travel and accommodation is due to lower airfares as the wet season impacts tourist numbers in Darwin. The fall in electricity is due to decreases in power costs implemented by the Northern Territory government.

### **CANBERRA (+0.2%)**

Canberra is the only city to record a rise this quarter. The main contributors to the rise are medical and hospital services (+2.5%), new dwelling purchase by owner-occupiers (+1.7%) and child care (+4.1%). The rise in new dwelling purchase by owner-occupiers is influenced by a reduction in the First Home Owner Grant, which has increased the prices paid by consumers. The rise is partially offset by a fall in automotive fuel (-5.8%), however the fall in Canberra is the smallest of any of the capital cities.

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# Australian Bureau of Statistics

## 6401.0 - Consumer Price Index, Australia, Jun 2016 Quality

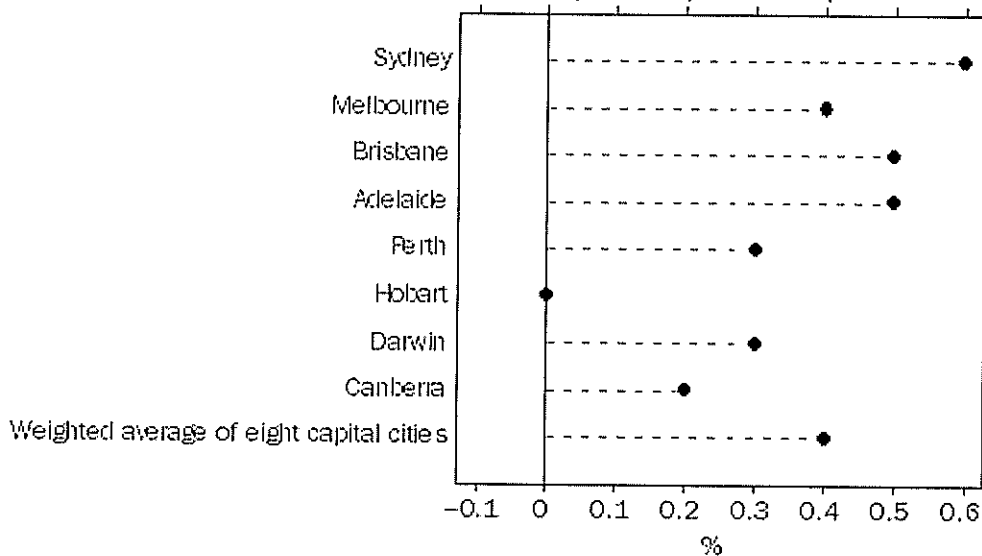
Declaration

Previous ISSUE Released at 11:30 AM (CANBERRA TIME) 27/07/2016

### CAPITAL CITIES COMPARISON

#### ALL GROUPS CPI

All Groups CPI, Percentage change from previous quarter



At the All groups level, the CPI rose in seven out of eight capital cities this quarter.

The health group (+2.6%) is the most significant positive contributor to the All groups quarterly movement, with rises across all eight capital cities. This is driven by rises in medical and hospital services (+4.2%) due to increases in private health insurance premiums from 1 April 2016.

The transport group (+1.0%) is the second most significant positive contributor to the All groups quarterly movement, with rises in five of the eight capital cities. The rise is driven by increases in automotive fuel (+5.9%) in Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Adelaide and Perth, while Darwin, Hobart and Canberra recorded partially offsetting falls. A number of factors are contributing to the rise in fuel prices this quarter, including a recovery of world oil prices after hitting 12-year lows in the March quarter 2016.

The housing group (+0.4%) is the third most significant positive contributor to the All groups quarterly movement, with rises in five of the eight capital cities. The rise is driven by an increase in new dwelling purchase by owner-occupiers (+0.9%) and is due to increasing costs of materials in some cities.

The most significant offsetting negative contributor to the All groups quarterly movement is the recreation and culture group (-0.7%). The fall is driven by domestic holiday travel and accommodation (-3.7%) which is due to seasonal falls in domestic travel.

Annually, the All groups CPI has risen in seven out of eight capital cities with Brisbane (+1.5%) and Melbourne (+1.4%) recording the largest positive movements.

### All Groups CPI, All groups index numbers and percentage changes

	Index number	Percentage change	
	(a) Jun Qtr 2016	Mar Qtr 2016 to Jun Qtr 2016	Jun Qtr 2015 to Jun Qtr 2016
Sydney	109.3	0.6	0.9
Melbourne	108.6	0.4	1.4
Brisbane	109.0	0.5	1.5
Adelaide	107.5	0.5	0.7
Perth	108.2	0.3	0.5
Hobart	106.4	0.0	1.2
Darwin	108.3	0.3	0.0
Canberra	106.4	0.2	0.8
Weighted average of eight capital cities	108.6	0.4	1.0

(a) Index reference period: 2011-12 = 100.0.

#### SYDNEY (+0.6%)

The main contributors to the rise in Sydney this quarter are automotive fuel (+7.5%), medical and hospital services (+4.4%) and new dwelling purchase by owner-occupiers (+1.5%). The rise in new dwelling purchase by owner-occupiers is due to a rise in the costs of materials. The rise is partially offset by falls in domestic holiday travel and accommodation (-4.0%) and motor vehicles (-2.4%). The fall in motor vehicles is due to end of the financial year sales.

#### MELBOURNE (+0.4%)

The main contributors to the rise in Melbourne this quarter are automotive fuel (+7.8%), medical and hospital services (+4.1%) and new dwelling purchase by owner-occupiers (+0.9%). The rise is partially offset by falls in domestic holiday travel and accommodation (-4.9%) and snacks and confectionery (-3.4%). The rise for automotive fuel in Melbourne is the highest across the capital cities this quarter.

#### BRISBANE (+0.5%)

The main contributors to the rise in Brisbane this quarter are medical and hospital services (+4.1%), automotive fuel (+5.3%) and new dwelling purchase by owner-occupiers (+0.9%). The most significant offsetting falls are domestic holiday travel and accommodation (-3.5%) and motor vehicles (-1.9%).

#### ADELAIDE (+0.5%)

The main contributors to the rise in Adelaide this quarter are medical and hospital services (+5.3%), automotive fuel (+5.1%) and furniture (+5.6%). The movement is partially offset by falls in electricity (-4.7%), domestic holiday travel and accommodation (-2.4%) and motor vehicles (-2.4%). The fall in electricity is due to the seasonal switch to off-peak pricing from 1 April.

### **PERTH (+0.3%)**

The main contributors to the rise in Perth this quarter are medical and hospital services (+3.6%), tobacco (+2.7%) and automotive fuel (+1.6%). The movement is partially offset by falls in vegetables (-3.6%), telecommunication equipment and services (-1.5%) and rents (-0.7%). The fall in rents is due to a continuation of high vacancy rates.

### **HOBART (0.0%)**

Hobart recorded no movement this quarter. Rises in medical and hospital services (+5.7%), tobacco (+1.5%) and rents (+1.0%) were offset by falls in domestic holiday travel and accommodation (-10.3%) and motor vehicles (-3.5%). The fall in domestic holiday travel and accommodation is due to the off-peak tourist season.

### **DARWIN (+0.3%)**

The main contributors to the rise in Darwin this quarter are medical and hospital services (+5.4%), tobacco (+3.0%) and domestic holiday travel and accommodation (+3.1%). The rise in domestic holiday travel and accommodation is due to the beginning of the Northern Territory peak tourist season. The rise is partially offset by falls in rents (-2.0%) and automotive fuel (-3.6%). The fall in rents is due to a continuation of high vacancy rates across the city.

### **CANBERRA (+0.2%)**

The main contributors to the rise in Canberra this quarter are medical and hospital services (+3.4%), tobacco (+4.0%) and garments for women (+5.1%). The rise is partially offset by falls in domestic holiday travel and accommodation (-3.9%) and motor vehicles (-3.4%).

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# Australian Bureau of Statistics

## 6401.0 - Consumer Price Index, Australia, Sep 2016 Quality

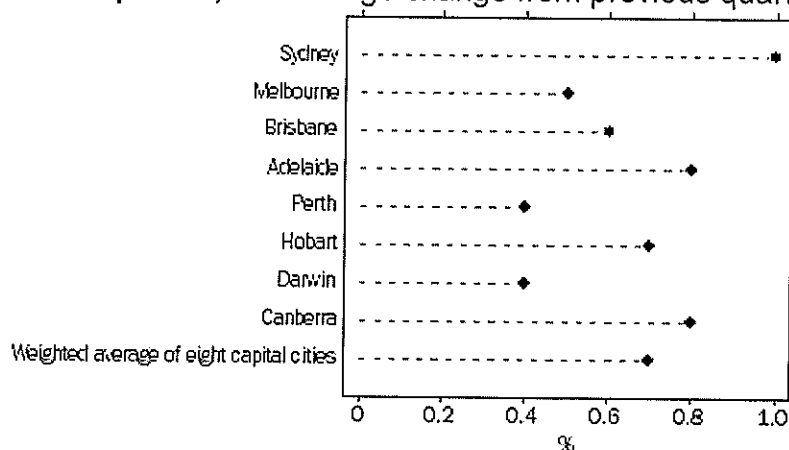
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### CAPITAL CITIES COMPARISON

#### ALL GROUPS CPI

All Groups CPI, Percentage change from previous quarter



At the All groups level, the CPI rose in all eight capital cities this quarter.

The food and non-alcoholic beverages group (+1.7%) is the most significant positive contributor to the All groups quarterly movement, with rises across all eight capital cities. The rise in fruit and vegetable prices is due to adverse weather conditions, including floods, in major growing areas, impacting supply. However, Perth recorded a smaller rise than other cities due to WA fruit growing regions being much less impacted by adverse weather than growing regions in eastern Australia.

The housing group (+1.0%) is the second most significant positive contributor to the All groups quarterly movement, with rises in six of eight capital cities. This is driven by rises in electricity (+5.4%), due to electricity supply constraints and wholesale cost increases across the eastern and southern states. Property rates and charges (+4.0%) also contributed to the rise this quarter, as rates are adjusted annually in September quarters.

The alcohol and tobacco group (+1.1%) is the third most significant positive contributor to the All groups quarterly movement, with rises in all eight capital cities. The rise is driven by increases in tobacco (+2.3%), mainly due to the effects of the federal excise tax increase effective from 1 September 2016.

The most significant offsetting negative contributor to the All groups quarterly movement is

the communication group (-2.3%). The fall is driven by telecommunication equipment and services (-2.5%) and is due to strong continued competition amongst service providers.

Over the last twelve months to September quarter 2016, the All groups CPI has risen in seven out of eight capital cities with Sydney (+1.7%) recording the largest positive movement. Darwin (0.0%) recorded no movement.

#### All Groups CPI, All groups index numbers and percentage changes

	Index number	Percentage change	
	(a) Sep Qtr 2016	Jun Qtr 2016 to Sep Qtr 2016	Sep Qtr 2015 to Sep Qtr 2016
Sydney	110.4	1.0	1.7
Melbourne	109.1	0.5	1.4
Brisbane	109.7	0.6	1.5
Adelaide	108.4	0.8	1.2
Perth	108.6	0.4	0.5
Hobart	107.1	0.7	1.3
Darwin	108.7	0.4	0.0
Canberra	107.3	0.8	1.4
Weighted average of eight capital cities	109.4	0.7	1.3

(a) Index reference period: 2011-12 = 100.0.

#### SYDNEY (+1.0%)

The main contributors to the rise in Sydney this quarter are electricity (+10.4%), fruit (+23.5%) and vegetables (+6.5%). The rise in electricity is due to increases in wholesale electricity costs. The rise is partially offset by falls in automotive fuel (-2.6%), water and sewerage (-7.4%) and telecommunication equipment and services (-2.5%).

#### MELBOURNE (+0.5%)

The main contributors to the rise in Melbourne this quarter are fruit (+21.3%), tobacco (+2.8%), vegetables (+6.8%) and property rates and charges (+5.0%). The rise in property rates and charges is due to increases in general rates, garbage charges and other levies. The rise is partially offset by falls in automotive fuel (-4.2%) and motor vehicles (-2.9%). The fall in motor vehicles is due to dealerships offering extended end of financial year sales.

#### BRISBANE (+0.6%)

The main contributors to the rise in Brisbane this quarter are fruit (+19.4%), tobacco (+2.4%) and electricity (+3.2%). The rise in electricity is due to market adjustments following price deregulation in South-East Queensland on 1 July 2016. The most significant offsetting falls are automotive fuel (-4.5%) and telecommunication equipment and services (-2.5%).

#### ADELAIDE (+0.8%)

The main contributors to the rise in Adelaide this quarter are electricity (+11.6%), fruit (+23.8%), vegetables (+8.5%) and tobacco (+2.5%). The rise in electricity is due to supply constraints and wholesale cost increases. The rise is partially offset by falls in gas and other household fuels (-10.0%), water and sewerage (-6.3%) and telecommunication equipment and services (-2.6%). The fall in gas and other household fuels is driven by retailers passing on reductions in network costs.

### **PERTH (+0.4%)**

The main contributors to the rise in Perth this quarter are insurance (+11.2%) and tobacco (+2.5%). The rise in insurance is due to the introduction of universal catastrophic injury insurance for all motorists in WA, resulting in an additional charge for all new and existing compulsory third party premiums. The rise is partially offset by falls in rents (-2.2%) and telecommunication equipment and services (-2.5%). The fall in rents is due to a continuation of high vacancy rates. Fruit (+3.6%) recorded a small rise when compared to other cities, as WA fruit growing regions have been much less affected by adverse weather than growing regions in eastern Australia.

### **HOBART (+0.7%)**

The main contributors to the rise in Hobart this quarter are fruit (+26.6%), tobacco (+3.8%) and electricity (+3.5%). The rise in electricity is due to increases in wholesale electricity costs. The rise is partially offset by domestic holiday travel and accommodation (-2.3%), due to increases in airline capacity following the addition of services to Hobart from Sydney and Melbourne.

### **DARWIN (+0.4%)**

The main contributors to the rise in Darwin this quarter are domestic holiday travel and accommodation (+7.7%), fruit (+18.9%), vegetables (+6.8%) and tobacco (+2.5%). The rise in domestic holiday travel and accommodation is due to the peak tourist season in Darwin. The rise is partially offset by falls in rents (-2.4%) and other financial services (-3.6%). The fall in other financial services is due to the introduction of a First Home Owner Discount on stamp duty.

### **CANBERRA (+0.8%)**

The main contributors to the rise in Canberra this quarter are fruit (+20.0%), property rates and charges (+8.2%) and electricity (+6.3%). The rise in property rates and charges is typical for this time of year. The rise is partially offset by falls in garments for women (-6.3%) and gas and other household fuels (-4.5%). The fall in gas and other household fuels is due to lower network and distribution charges in the ACT.

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## **Annexure 2**

ABS Wage Price Index March 2016 to June 2016

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## 6345.0 - Wage Price Index, Australia, Jun 2016 Quality Declaration

Previous ISSUE Released at 11:30 AM (CANBERRA TIME) 17/08/2016

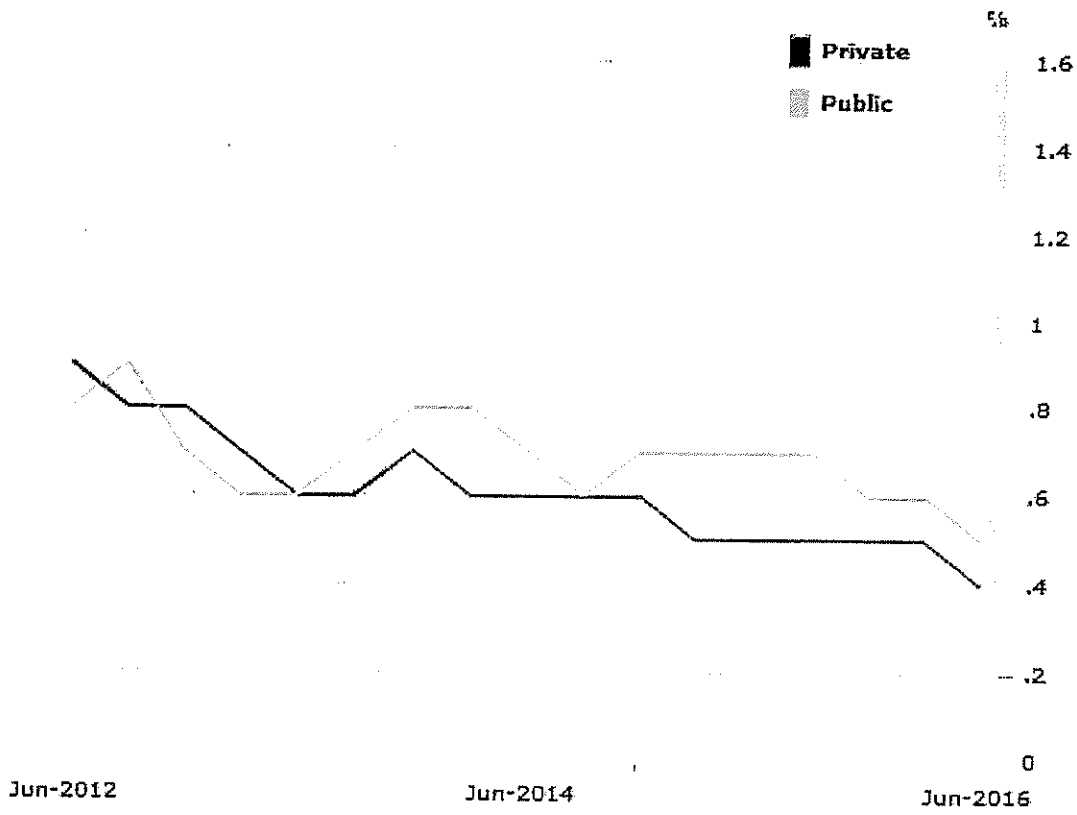
### JUNE KEY FIGURES

	Mar Qtr 2016 to Jun Qtr 2016 % change	Jun Qtr 2015 to Jun Qtr 2016 % change
Wage Price Index (WPI)		
Total hourly rates of pay excluding bonuses		
Trend(a)		
Australia	0.5	2.1
Sector		
Private	0.4	1.9
Public	0.5	2.3
Seasonally Adjusted(b)		
Australia	0.5	2.1
Sector		
Private	0.5	2.0
Public	0.6	2.4
Original		
Australia	(c)0.4	2.1
Sector		
Private	0.3	1.9
Public	0.3	2.4

(a) See Explanatory Notes paragraphs 39-40, 42. (c) See Explanatory Notes paragraph 27.

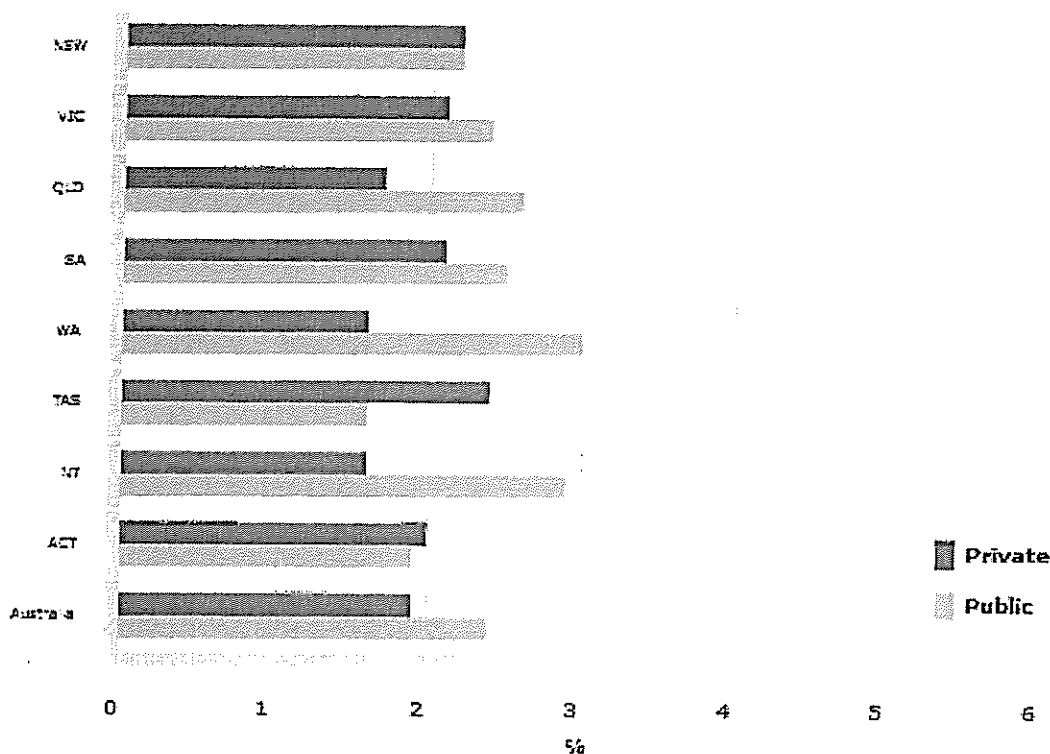
(b) See Explanatory Notes paragraphs 32-38, 42.

Quarterly changes, Trend, Total hourly rates of pay excluding bonuses



Source(s): Quarterly changes, Trend, Total hourly rates of pay excluding bonuses-Web Page Graph 1

### Annual change, Original, Total hourly rates of pay excluding bonuses - States & Territories



Source(s): Annual change, Original, Total hourly rates of pay excluding bonuses - States and Territories-Web Page Graph 2 - Annual change Original

## JUNE KEY POINTS

### TOTAL HOURLY RATES OF PAY EXCLUDING BONUSES

#### QUARTERLY CHANGE (MAR QTR 2016 TO JUN QTR 2016)

- The trend index and the seasonally adjusted index for Australia both rose 0.5% in the June quarter 2016.
- The Private sector rose 0.5% and the Public sector rose 0.6%, seasonally adjusted.
- The rises in indexes at the industry level (in original terms) ranged from 0.1% for Retail trade to 0.9% for Wholesale trade.

#### ANNUAL CHANGE (JUN QTR 2015 TO JUN QTR 2016)

- The trend and seasonally adjusted indexes for Australia both rose 2.1% through the year to the June quarter 2016.
- Rises in the original indexes through the year to the June quarter 2016 at the industry level ranged from 1.3% for Mining to 2.6% for Electricity, gas, water and waste services.

## NOTES

### FORTHCOMING ISSUES

<b>ISSUE (QUARTER)</b>	<b>Release Date</b>
September 2016	16 November 2016
December 2016	22 February 2017
March 2017	17 May 2017
June 2017	16 August 2017

### DATA REFERENCES

Data referenced in the Key Points and Commentary are available from the tables shown in this publication or in the corresponding tables of this publication on the ABS website <<http://www.abs.gov.au>>.

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## **Annexure 3**

ABS Wage Price Index June 2016 to September  
2016



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## 6345.0 - Wage Price Index, Australia, Sep 2016 Quality Declaration

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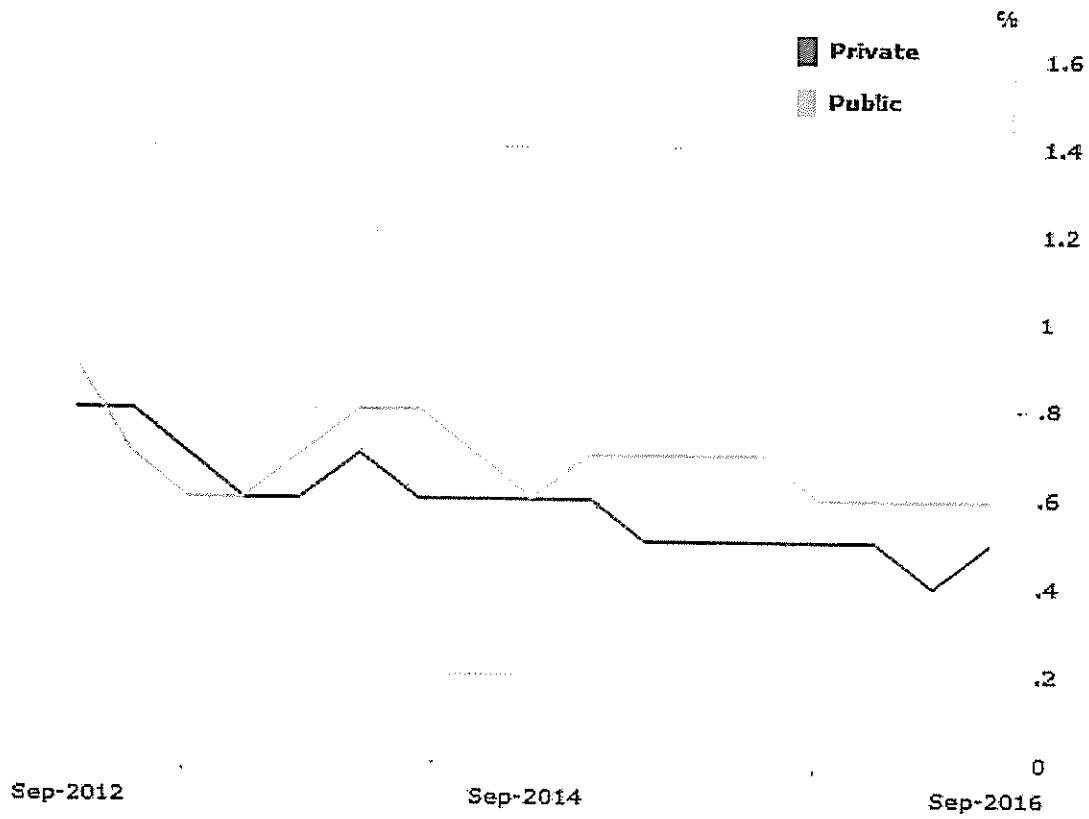
### SEPTEMBER KEY FIGURES

	Jun Qtr 2016 to Sep Qtr 2016 % change	Sep Qtr 2015 to Sep Qtr 2016 % change
Wage Price Index (WPI)		
Total hourly rates of pay excluding bonuses		
Trend(a)		
Australia	(c)0.4	1.9
Sector		
Private	0.5	1.9
Public	0.6	2.3
Seasonally Adjusted(b)		
Australia	0.4	1.9
Sector		
Private	0.4	1.9
Public	0.6	2.3
Original		
Australia	(c)0.7	2.0
Sector		
Private	0.8	1.9
Public	0.9	2.3

(a) See Explanatory Notes paragraphs 39-40, 42. (c) See Explanatory Notes paragraph 27.

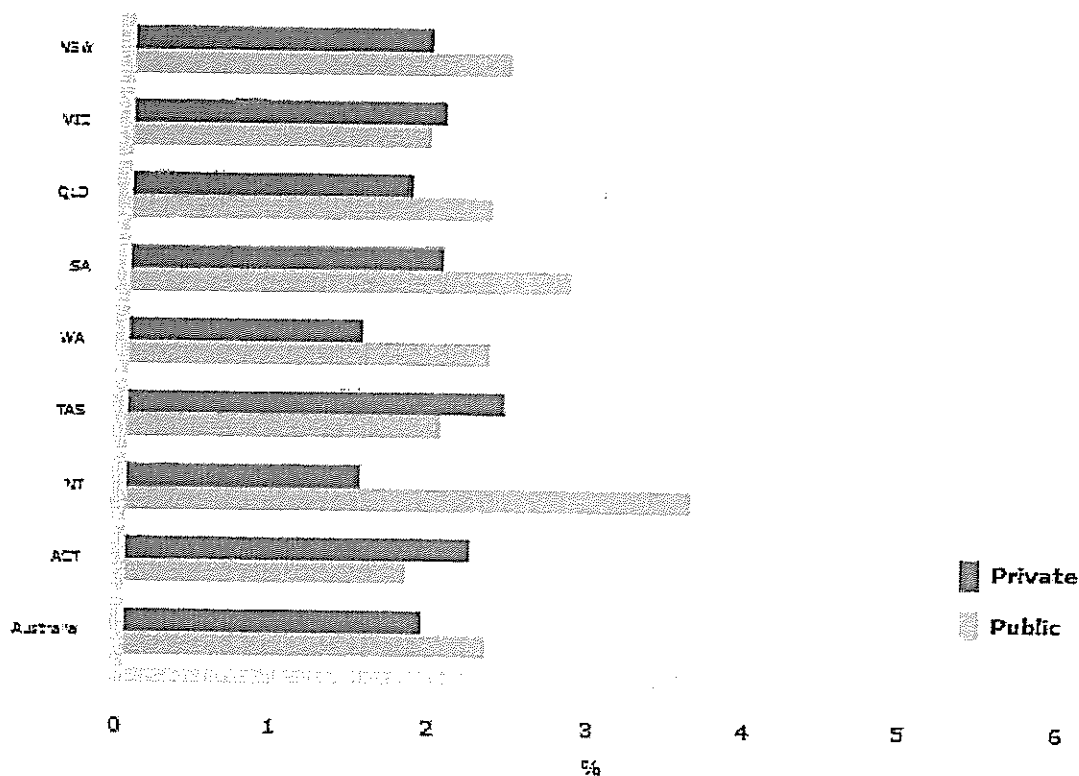
(b) See Explanatory Notes paragraphs 32-38, 42.

Quarterly changes, Trend, Total hourly rates of pay excluding bonuses



Source(s): Quarterly changes, Trend, Total hourly rates of pay excluding bonuses-Web Page Graph 1

### Annual change, Original, Total hourly rates of pay excluding bonuses - States & Territories



Source(s): Annual change, Original, Total hourly rates of pay excluding bonuses - States and Territories-Web Page Graph 2 - Annual change Original

## SEPTEMBER KEY POINTS

### TOTAL HOURLY RATES OF PAY EXCLUDING BONUSES

#### QUARTERLY CHANGE (JUN QTR 2016 TO SEP QTR 2016)

- The trend index and the seasonally adjusted index for Australia both rose 0.4% in the September quarter 2016.
- The Private sector rose 0.4% and the Public sector rose 0.6%, seasonally adjusted.
- The rises in indexes at the industry level (in original terms) ranged from 0.1% for Mining to 1.7% for Accommodation and food services.

#### ANNUAL CHANGE (SEP QTR 2015 TO SEP QTR 2016)

- The trend and seasonally adjusted indexes for Australia both rose 1.9% through the year to the September quarter 2016.
- Rises in the original indexes through the year to the September quarter 2016 at the industry level ranged from 1.0% for Mining to 2.4% for Health care and social assistance.

## NOTES

### FORTHCOMING ISSUES

ISSUE (QUARTER)	Release Date
December 2016	22 February 2017
March 2017	17 May 2017
June 2017	16 August 2017
September 2017	15 November 2017

### CHANGES IN THIS ISSUE

This issue contains a feature article titled "The Size and Frequency of Wage Changes" which is based on the research undertaken by James Bishop, Research Economist, Reserve Bank of Australia on secondment to the ABS. The article explores some of the factors underpinning the decline in wage growth over recent years from analysis of micro level WPI data. The article is available on the ABS website <<http://www.abs.gov.au>>.

### CHANGES IN FUTURE ISSUES

The expenditure weights used to compile the WPI will be updated in the December quarter 2016 using expenditure on wages and salaries from the 2016 Survey of Employee Earnings and Hours.

### DATA REFERENCES

Data referenced in the Key Points and Commentary are available from the tables shown in this publication or in the corresponding tables of this publication on the ABS website <<http://www.abs.gov.au>>.

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## **Annexure 4**

ABS Wage Price Index September 2016 to  
December 2016

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## 6345.0 - Wage Price Index, Australia, Dec 2016 Quality Declaration

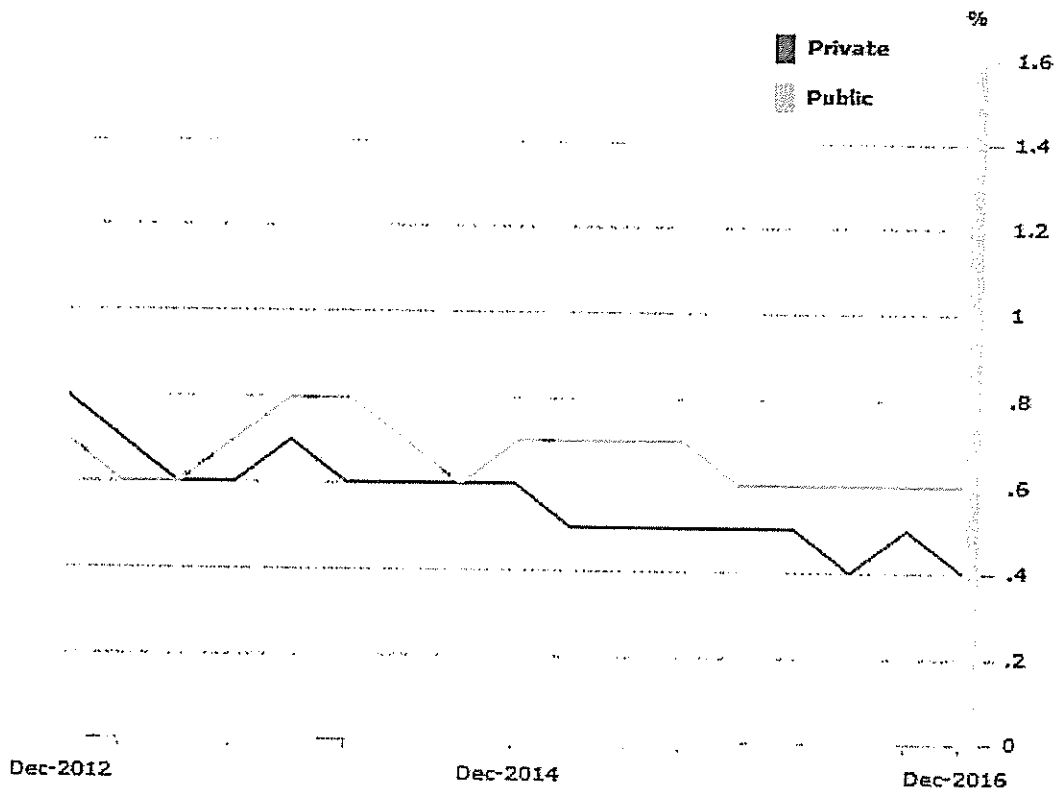
Latest ISSUE Released at 11:30 AM (CANBERRA TIME) 22/02/2017

### DECEMBER KEY FIGURES

	Sep Qtr 2016 to Dec Qtr 2016 % change	Dec Qtr 2015 to Dec Qtr 2016 % change
Wage Price Index (WPI)		
Total hourly rates of pay excluding bonuses		
Trend(a)		
Australia	0.5	1.9
Sector		
Private	0.4	1.8
Public	0.6	2.3
Seasonally Adjusted(b)		
Australia	0.5	1.9
Sector		
Private	0.4	1.8
Public	0.6	2.3
Original		
Australia	0.4	2.0
Sector		
Private	0.3	1.8
Public	0.6	2.3

(a) See Explanatory Notes paragraphs 39-40, 42. (b) See Explanatory Notes paragraphs 32-38, 42.

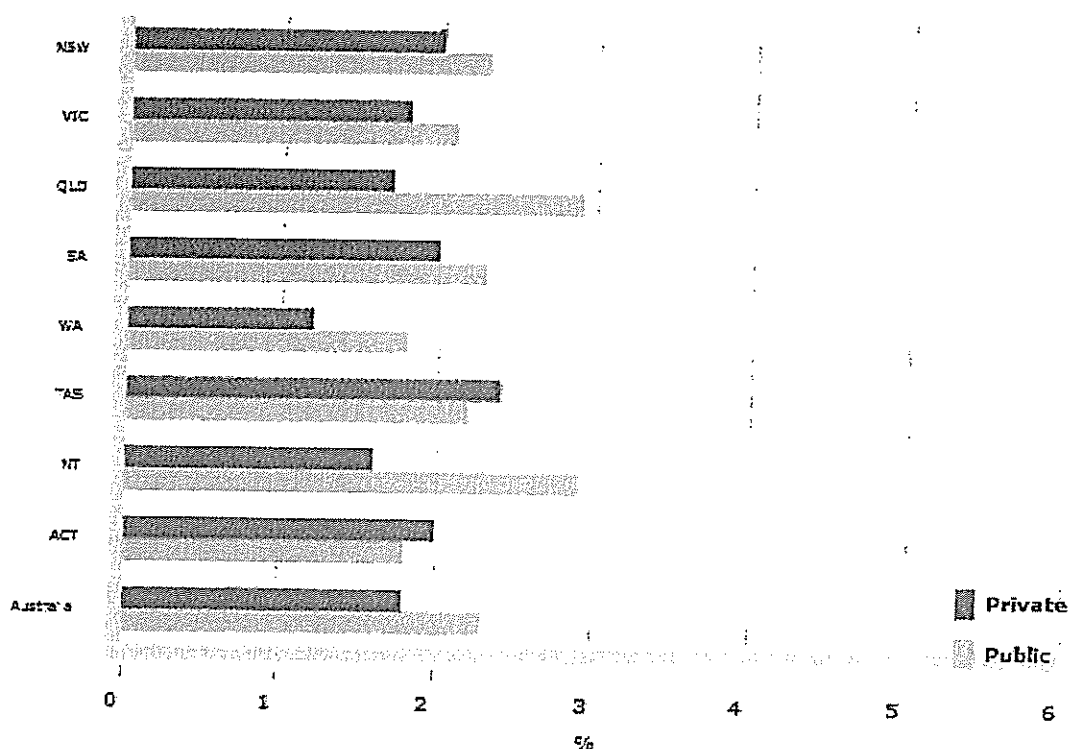
Quarterly changes, Trend, Total hourly rates of pay excluding bonuses



Source(s): Quarterly changes, Trend, Total hourly rates of pay excluding bonuses-Web Page Graph 1



## Annual change, Original, Total hourly rates of pay excluding bonuses - States &amp; Territories



Source(s): Annual change, Original, Total hourly rates of pay excluding bonuses - States and Territories-Web Page Graph 2 - Annual change Original

## DECEMBER KEY POINTS

### TOTAL HOURLY RATES OF PAY EXCLUDING BONUSES

#### QUARTERLY CHANGE (SEP QTR 2016 TO DEC QTR 2016)

- The trend and seasonally adjusted indexes for Australia both rose 0.5% in the December quarter 2016. This continues the subdued rate of wage growth recorded by the series over the last two years.
- The Private sector rose 0.4% and the Public sector rose 0.6%, seasonally adjusted.

#### ANNUAL CHANGE (DEC QTR 2015 TO DEC QTR 2016)

- The trend and seasonally adjusted indexes for Australia both rose 1.9% through the year to the December quarter 2016. This result equals the record low wages growth seen in the September quarter 2016.
- Rises in the original indexes through the year to the December quarter 2016 at the industry level ranged from 1.0% for Mining to 2.4% for Education and training and Health care and social assistance.

## NOTES

### FORTHCOMING ISSUES

<b>ISSUE (QUARTER)</b>	<b>Release Date</b>
March 2017	17 May 2017
June 2017	16 August 2017
September 2017	15 November 2017
December 2017	21 February 2018

### CHANGES IN THIS ISSUE

The weights used to compile the WPI have been updated in the December quarter 2016 using expenditure on wages and salaries from the 2016 Survey of Employee Earnings and Hours. Weights are updated every two years to reflect structural changes in the Australian economy. The 2016 weights are available in the Appendix in this publication and on the ABS website. Further information can be found in paragraphs 20-25 of the Explanatory Notes.

### DATA REFERENCES

Data referenced in the Key Points and Commentary are available from the tables shown in this publication or in the corresponding tables of this publication on the ABS website <<http://www.abs.gov.au>>.

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