

RELEASE

TSX:GWO

Readers are referred to the cautionary notes regarding Forward-Looking Information and Non-IFRS Financial Measures at the end of this release. All figures are expressed in Canadian dollars, except as noted.

Great-West Lifeco reports second quarter 2012 results

Winnipeg, August 1, 2012 ... Great-West Lifeco Inc. (Lifeco) has reported net earnings attributable to common shareholders of \$491 million for the three months ended June 30, 2012, compared to \$526 million in the second quarter of 2011. On a per common share basis, this represents \$0.517 per common share for the three months ended June 30, 2012, compared to \$0.553 per common share for the same period in 2011.

For the six months ended June 30, 2012, net earnings attributable to common shareholders were \$942 million, compared to \$941 million a year ago. This represents \$0.992 per common share for the six months ended June 30, 2012, compared to \$0.991 per common share for the same period in 2011.

During the second quarter, the Company concluded on certain income tax matters which positively impacted net earnings by \$47 million. The second quarter 2011 comparative results included a release of a legal provision of \$55 million. The six months 2011 results also included catastrophe provisions of \$75 million relating to earthquake events in Japan and New Zealand.

Consolidated assets under administration at June 30, 2012 were \$524 billion, up \$22 billion from December 31, 2011.

Highlights

- Sales in Canada for Individual participating life insurance were up 22% and Group sales were up 58% compared to the second guarter of 2011.
- Sales in U.S. Financial Services were US\$2.0 billion compared to US\$1.5 billion in the second quarter of 2011 reflecting continued strong sales in both Individual Markets and Retirement Services.
- Sales in UK Payout Annuity products increased by \$103 million or 47% compared to the same period of 2011 resulting from the Company's improved competitive position.
- The Company raised \$200 million of 5.15% fixed rate perpetual preferred share capital on July 6, 2012.
- The Company's ROE continues to lead the industry at 16.8% based on net earnings and 15.8% based on operating earnings.
- The Company's capital position remained very strong. The Great-West Life Assurance Company reported a Minimum Continuing Capital and Surplus Requirements (MCCSR) ratio of 205% at June 30, 2012.
- Credit experience remained favourable. There were no new impaired securities in the quarter.
- The Company declared a quarterly common dividend of \$0.3075 per common share payable September 28, 2012.

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OPERATING RESULTS

Consolidated net earnings for Lifeco comprise the net earnings of The Great-West Life Assurance Company (Great-West Life), Canada Life Financial Corporation (CLFC), London Life Insurance Company (London Life), Great-West Life & Annuity Insurance Company (GWL&A), and Putnam Investments, LLC (Putnam), together with Lifeco's corporate results.

CANADA

Net earnings attributable to common shareholders for the second quarter of 2012 were \$254 million compared to \$262 million in the second quarter of 2011. Net earnings for the second quarter of 2012 include the impact of strengthening of reinvestment risk margins of \$49 million and a conclusion on certain income tax matters which positively impacted net earnings by \$22 million. For the six months ended June 30, 2012 net earnings attributable to common shareholders were \$496 million compared to \$507 million for the same period in 2011.

Total sales in the second quarter of 2012 were \$2.1 billion compared to \$2.2 billion in 2011. Individual Insurance product sales increased 8%, Group sales increased 58% driven by large case sales in both the Creditor and Life and Health segments, Wealth Management group retirement sales were up 12% and sales of proprietary retail investments funds were down 7% compared to the second quarter of 2011. Total sales for the six months ended June 30, 2012 were \$4.6 billion compared to \$4.8 billion in 2011.

Total assets under administration at June 30, 2012 were \$133 billion, compared to \$129 billion at December 31, 2011.

UNITED STATES

Net earnings attributable to common shareholders for the second quarter of 2012 were \$86 million compared to \$128 million in the second quarter of 2011. The 2011 comparative results included a release of a legal provision of \$55 million from a settlement of a lawsuit in Putnam. For the six months ended June 30, 2012 net earnings attributable to common shareholders were \$161 million compared to \$216 million for the same period in 2011.

Financial Services sales in the second quarter of 2012 were US\$2.0 billion compared to US\$1.5 billion in 2011 reflecting increases in both Retirement Services and Individual Markets. Sales for the six months ended June 30, 2012 were US\$4.4 billion compared to US\$3.7 billion in 2011.

Putnam average assets under management for the three months ended June 30, 2012 were US\$121 billion compared to US\$128 billion a year ago. The decrease was primarily due to net asset outflows during the previous four quarters and the impact of negative market performance during that period. Net asset outflows in second quarter 2012 were US\$271 million, an improvement of US\$1.7 billion over the previous quarter.

Putnam average assets under management for the six months ended June 30, 2012 were US\$121 billion down from US\$126 billion a year ago. Net asset outflows for the six months ended 2012 were US\$2.2 billion compared to net inflows of US\$3.5 billion a year ago.

Total United States segment assets under administration at June 30, 2012 were \$320 billion compared to \$303 billion at December 31, 2011.

EUROPE

Net earnings attributable to common shareholders for the second quarter of 2012 were \$160 million compared to \$147 million in the second quarter of 2011. Net earnings for the second quarter of 2012 include the impact of strengthening of reinvestment risk margins of \$39 million and a conclusion on certain income tax matters which positively impacted net earnings by \$25 million. For the six months ended June 30, 2012 net earnings attributable to common shareholders were \$301 million compared to \$233 million for the same period in 2011. The 2011 results included catastrophe provisions of \$75 million relating to earthquake events in Japan and New Zealand.

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Sales for the second quarter of 2012 were \$828 million compared to \$876 million in 2011. Sales in single premium savings products in the Isle of Man decreased by \$138 million compared to 2011, reflecting the generally difficult market environment and normal fluctuations in the number of large cases. Sales of U.K. payout annuities grew by \$103 million compared to 2011, resulting from the Company's improved competitive position. Sales of guaranteed variable annuity products in Ireland, which were launched in the fourth quarter of 2011, grew by 40% from the previous quarter.

Total sales for the six months ended June 30, 2012 were \$1.6 billion compared to \$2.0 billion in 2011 due mainly to the decline in single premium savings products in both the U.K. and Isle of Man reflecting the general market slowdown and normal fluctuations in the number of large cases in the Isle of Man.

Total assets under administration at June 30, 2012 increased to \$71 billion from \$70 billion at December 31, 2011.

CORPORATE

Net earnings in the Lifeco corporate segment attributable to common shareholders was a net loss of \$9 million in the second quarter of 2012 compared to a net loss of \$11 million for the second quarter of 2011. For the six months ended June 30, 2012 net earnings attributable to common shareholders was a net loss of \$16 million compared to a net loss of \$15 million for the same period in 2011.

QUARTERLY DIVIDENDS

At its meeting today, the Board of Directors approved a quarterly dividend of \$0.3075 per share on the common shares of the Company payable September 28, 2012 to shareholders of record at the close of business August 31, 2012.

For purposes of the Income Tax Act (Canada), and any similar provincial legislation, the dividends referred to above are eligible dividends.

In addition, the Directors approved quarterly dividends on:

- Series F First Preferred Shares of \$0.36875 per share;
- Series G First Preferred Shares of \$0.3250 per share;
- Series H First Preferred Shares of \$0.30313 per share;
- Series I First Preferred Shares of \$0.28125 per share:
- Series J First Preferred Shares of \$0.3750 per share;
- Series L First Preferred Shares of \$0.353125 per share;
- Series M First Preferred Shares of \$0.36250 per share;
- Series N First Preferred Shares of \$0.228125 per share;
- Series P First Preferred Shares of \$0.3375 per share; and
- Series Q First Preferred Shares of \$0.30336 per share

all payable September 28, 2012 to shareholders of record at the close of business August 31, 2012.

GREAT-WEST LIFECO

Great-West Lifeco Inc. (TSX:GWO) is an international financial services holding company with interests in life insurance, health insurance, retirement and investment services, asset management and reinsurance businesses. Great-West Lifeco has operations in Canada, the United States, Europe and Asia through The Great-West Life Assurance Company, London Life Insurance Company, The Canada Life Assurance Company, Great-West Life &

Annuity Insurance Company and Putnam Investments, LLC. Great-West Lifeco and its companies have \$524 billion in assets under administration and are members of the Power Financial Corporation group of companies.

Cautionary note regarding Forward-Looking Information

This release contains some forward-looking statements about the Company, including its business operations, strategy and expected financial performance and condition. Forward-looking statements include statements that are predictive in nature, depend upon or refer to future events or conditions, or include words such as "expects", "anticipates", "intends", "plans", "believes", "estimates" and similar expressions or negative versions thereof. In addition, any statement that may be made concerning future financial performance (including revenues, earnings or growth rates), ongoing business strategies or prospects, and possible future actions by the Company including statements made with respect to the expected benefits of acquisitions and divestitures are also forward-looking statements. Forward-looking statements are based on expectations and projections about future events that were current at the time of the statements and are inherently subject to, among other things, risks, uncertainties and assumptions about the Company, economic factors and the financial services industry generally, including the insurance and mutual fund industries. They are not guarantees of future performance, and actual events and results could differ materially from those expressed or implied by forward-looking statements due to, but not limited to, important factors such as sales levels, premium income, fee income, expense levels, mortality experience, morbidity experience, policy lapse rates and taxes, as well as general economic, political and market factors in North America and internationally, interest and foreign exchange rates, global equity and capital markets, business competition, technological change, changes in government regulations, changes in accounting policies and the effect of applying future accounting policy changes, unexpected judicial or regulatory proceedings, catastrophic events, and the Company's ability to complete strategic transactions and integrate acquisitions. The reader is cautioned that the foregoing list of important factors is not exhaustive, and there may be other factors, including factors set out under "Risk Management and Control Practices" in the Company's Annual Management's Discussion and Analysis and any listed in other filings with securities regulators, which are available for review at www.sedar.com. The reader is also cautioned to consider these and other factors carefully and to not place undue reliance on forward-looking statements. Other than as specifically required by applicable law, the Company has no intention to update any forward-looking statements whether as a result of new information, future events or otherwise.

Cautionary note regarding Non-IFRS Financial Measures

This release contains some non-IFRS financial measures. Terms by which non-IFRS financial measures are identified include but are not limited to "operating earnings", "constant currency basis", "premiums and deposits", "sales", and other similar expressions. Non-IFRS financial measures are used to provide management and investors with additional measures of performance. However, non-IFRS financial measures do not have standard meanings prescribed by IFRS and are not directly comparable to similar measures used by other companies. Please refer to the appropriate reconciliations of these non-IFRS financial measures to measures prescribed by IFRS.

Further information
Selected financial information is attached.

Great-West Lifeco's second quarter conference call and audio webcast will be held Thursday, August 2, 2012 at 9:00 a.m. (ET). The call and webcast can be accessed through www.greatwestlifeco.com or by phone at:

• Participants in the Toronto area: 416-340-8018

Participants from North America: 1-866-223-7781

Participants from Overseas: Dial international access code first, then 800-6578-9898

A replay of the call will be available from August 2 to 9, 2012, and can be accessed by calling 1-800-408-3053 or 905-694-9451 in Toronto (passcode: 1367585#). The archived webcast will be available on www.greatwestlifeco.com from approximately 2:00 p.m. (ET) on August 2, 2012 until August 2, 2013.

Additional information relating to Lifeco, including the most recent interim unaudited consolidated financial statements, interim Management's Discussion and Analysis (MD&A), and CEO/CFO certificates will be filed on SEDAR at www.sedar.com.

For more information contact:

Marlene Klassen, APR Assistant Vice-President, Communication Services 204-946-7705



FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS (unaudited)

(in Canadian \$ millions except per share amounts)

	As at or for the three months ended							For the six months ended				
		June 30 2012	March 31 2012			June 30 2011	June 30 2012			June 30 2011		
Premiums and deposits:												
Life insurance, guaranteed annuities												
and insured health products	\$	4,524	\$	4,529	\$	4,272	\$	9,053	\$	8,567		
Self-funded premium equivalents												
(ASO contracts)		673		685		664		1,358		1,334		
Segregated funds deposits:												
Individual products		1,436		1,559		1,636		2,995		3,541		
Group products		1,595		1,770		1,427		3,365		2,920		
Proprietary mutual funds and												
institutional deposits		4,898		5,939		8,289		10,837		17,372		
Total premiums and deposits		13,126		14,482		16,288		27,608		33,734		
Fee and other income		734		724		739		1,458		1,459		
Paid or credited to policyholders		5,979		4.743		5,298		10,722		9,877		
Net earnings - common shareholders		491		451		526		942		941		
Per common share												
Basic earnings	\$	0.517	\$	0.475	\$	0.553	\$	0.992	\$	0.991		
Dividends paid		0.3075		0.3075		0.3075		0.615		0.615		
Book value		12.97		12.69		11.72						
Return on common shareholders' eq	uity (trailing four	qua	rters*):								
Operating earnings		15.8%		16.5%		17.1%						
Net earnings		16.8%		17.5%		15.2%						
Total assets	\$	245,297	\$	243,702	\$	232,137						
Proprietary mutual funds and												
institutional net assets		129,028		131,140		130,066	_					
Total assets under management		374,325		374,842		362,203	_'					
Other assets under administration		149,258		148,068		134,822						
Total assets under administration	\$	523,583	\$	522,910	\$	497,025	-					
Total equity	\$	16,692	\$	16,406	\$	15,079	•					
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The Company uses operating earnings, a non-IFRS financial measure, which excludes the impact of certain litigation provisions described in note 30 to the Company's December 31, 2011 consolidated financial statements.

^{*}Return on common shareholders' equity is the trailing four quarter calculation of net earnings divided by common shareholders' equity.



CONSOLIDATED STATEMENTS OF EARNINGS (unaudited)

(in Canadian \$ millions except per share amounts)

	For the t	hree months en	For the six months ended				
	June 30 2012	March 31 2012	June 30 2011	June 30 2012	June 30 2011		
Income							
Premium income							
Gross premiums written Ceded premiums	\$ 5,233 \$ (709)	5,198 \$ (669)	4,980 \$ (708)	10,431 \$ (1,378)	9,921 (1,354)		
Total net premiums	4,524	4,529	4,272	9,053	8,567		
Net investment income	•	,	•	•	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·		
Regular net investment income Changes in fair value through	1,428	1,439	1,416	2,867	2,843		
profit or loss	1,106	(196)	707	910	520		
Total net investment income	2,534	1,243	2,123	3,777	3,363		
Fee and other income	734	724	739	1,458	1,459		
	7,792	6,496	7,134	14,288	13,389		
Benefits and expenses	1,102	0,100	7,101	1-1,200	.0,000		
Policyholder benefits Insurance and investment contracts							
Gross	4,311	4,606	4,006	8,917	8,429		
Ceded	(367)	(387)	(316)	(754)	(649)		
	3,944	4,219	3,690	8,163	7,780		
Policyholder dividends and	0,0	.,	0,000	0,100	.,. 55		
experience refunds Change in insurance and	367	364	377	731	730		
investment contract liabilities	1,668	160	1,231	1,828	1,367		
Total paid or credited to	•		•	•	<u> </u>		
policyholders	5,979	4,743	5,298	10,722	9,877		
Commissions	415	410	390	825	767		
Operating and administrative	713	410	330	023	101		
expenses	637	640	558	1,277	1,203		
Premium taxes	72	72	68	144	1,203		
Financing charges	72	72 72	72	144	144		
Amortization of finite life intangible		12	12	177	144		
assets	28	26	25	54	48		
Earnings before income taxes	589	533	723	1,122	1,226		
Income taxes	72	57	161	129	230		
Net earnings before		<u> </u>	101	123	200		
non-controlling interests Attributable to non-controlling	517	476	562	993	996		
interests	(2)	_	12	(2)	7		
Net earnings	519	476	550	995	989		
Perpetual preferred share dividends	28	25	24	53	48		
Net earnings - common							
shareholders	\$ 491 \$	451 \$	526 \$	942 \$	941		
Earnings per common share							
Basic	\$ 0.517 \$	0.475 \$	0.553 \$	0.992 \$	0.991		
Diluted	\$ 0.517 \$ \$ 0.513 \$	0.472 \$	0.550 \$	0.985 \$	0.986		
		<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>			



CONSOLIDATED BALANCE SHEETS (unaudited) (in Canadian \$ millions)

	June 30 2012		December 31 2011
Assets	4 = 0.0	_	
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 1,739	\$	2,056
Bonds	82,120		78,073
Mortgage loans	17,200		17,432
Stocks	6,670		6,704
Investment properties	3,298		3,201
Loans to policyholders	 7,153		7,162
From the bodd has been deed to be a second	118,180		114,628
Funds held by ceding insurers	10,121		9,923
Goodwill	5,401		5,401
Intangible assets	3,150		3,154
Derivative financial instruments	927		968
Owner occupied properties	509 147		491
Fixed assets			137
Reinsurance assets	1,946		2,061
Other assets Deferred tax assets	4,596 1,112		4,283 1,140
Segregated funds for the risk of unitholders	 99,208		96,582
Total assets	\$ 245,297	\$	238,768
Liabilities			
Insurance contract liabilities	\$ 116,985	\$	114,730
Investment contract liabilities	762		782
Debentures and other debt instruments	4,398		4,313
Funds held under reinsurance contracts	167		169
Derivative financial instruments	399		316
Other liabilities	4,265		4,287
Deferred tax liabilities	948		929
Repurchase agreements	1,120		23
Capital trust securities	353		533
Investment and insurance contracts on account of unitholders	 99,208		96,582
Total liabilities	228,605		222,664
Equity			
Non-controlling interests			
Participating account surplus in subsidiaries	2,227		2,227
Non-controlling interests in capital stock	3		3
Shareholders' equity			
Share capital			
Perpetual preferred shares	2,144		1,894
Common shares	5,829		5,828
Accumulated surplus	6,680		6,327
Accumulated other comprehensive income (loss)	(253)		(233)
Contributed surplus	 62		58
Total equity	 16,692		16,104
Total liabilities and equity	\$ 245,297	\$	238,768



Segmented Information (unaudited)

Consolidated Net Earnings

For the three months ended June 30, 2012

	Canada		United States		ре	Lifeco Corporat	Total	
Income:								
Premium income	\$	2,351	\$ 706	\$ 1	,467	\$. ;	4,524
Net investment income								
Regular net investment income		621	327		477	;	3	1,428
Changes in fair value through profit or loss		412	177		517	-	3	1,106
Total net investment income Fee and other income		1,033 270	504 306		994 158	,	•	2,534 734
Total income		3,654	1,516		2,619		<u>. </u>	7,792
		3,034	1,310		.,013	,		1,132
Benefits and expenses:		0.004	4 005	_				5.070
Paid or credited to policyholders		2,681	1,025	2	2,273			5,979
Other Financing charges		636 34	333 34		149 4		5	1,124 72
Amortization of finite life intangible assets		3 4 11	3 4 14		3			72 28
•								
Earnings before income taxes		292	110		190	(3)	589
Income taxes		43	22		7	ı	•	72
Net earnings before non-controlling								
interests		249	88		183	(3)	517
Non-controlling interests		(4)	(2)		4		•	(2)
Net earnings		253	90		179	(3)	519
Perpetual preferred share dividends		19	-		5		1	28
Net earnings before capital allocation		234	90		174	(7)	491
Impact of capital allocation		20	(4)		(14)	(2)	
Net earnings - common shareholders	\$	254	\$ 86	\$	160	\$ (9) (491



For the three months ended June 30, 2011			Jnited			Lifeco			
	С	anada	States		urope	Corporate		Total	
Income:									
Premium income	\$	2,353	\$ 602	\$	1,317	\$ -	\$	4,272	
Net investment income		040	200		400	4		4 440	
Regular net investment income Changes in fair value through profit or loss		618 315	328 126		466 266	4		1,416 707	
Total net investment income		933	454		732	4		2,123	
Fee and other income		277	318		144	-		739	
Total income		3,563	1,374		2,193	4		7,134	
Benefits and expenses:									
Paid or credited to policyholders		2,585	890		1,823	-		5,298	
Other		598	251		156	11		1,016	
Financing charges		34	34		4	-		72	
Amortization of finite life intangible assets		11	12		2			25	
Earnings before income taxes		335	187		208	(7)		723	
Income taxes		69	55		37	-		161	
Net earnings before non-controlling									
interests		266	132		171	(7)		562	
Non-controlling interests		6	2		4	-		12	
Net earnings		260	130		167	(7)		550	
Perpetual preferred share dividends		18	-		6	-		24	
Net earnings before capital allocation		242	130		161	(7)		526	

20

\$

262 \$

(2)

128 \$

(14)

147 \$

(4)

(11) \$

526

Impact of capital allocation

Net earnings - common shareholders



For t	the six	months	ended	June	30.	2012
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·				United States			Lifeco Corporate		
	Canada					rope			Total
Income: Premium income	\$	4,716	\$	1,527	\$	2,810	\$ -	\$	9,053
Net investment income Regular net investment income Changes in fair value through profit or loss		1,275 262		651 198		940 450	1		2,867 910
Total net investment income Fee and other income		1,537 547		849 608		1,390 303	1		3,777 1,458
Total income		6,800		2,984		4,503	1		14,288
Benefits and expenses: Paid or credited to policyholders Other Financing charges		4,866 1,283 68		2,028 663 67		3,828 290 9	- 10 -		10,722 2,246 144
Amortization of finite life intangible assets		22		27		5	-		54_
Earnings before income taxes		561		199		371	(9)		1,122
Income taxes		77		31		23	(2)		129
Net earnings before non-controlling interests		484		168		348	(7)		993
Non-controlling interests		(10)		-		8	-		(2)
Net earnings		494		168		340	(7)		995
Perpetual preferred share dividends		37		-		11	5		53
Net earnings before capital allocation		457		168		329	(12)		942
Impact of capital allocation		39		(7)		(28)	(4)		
Net earnings - common shareholders	\$	496	\$	161	\$	301	\$ (16)	\$	942



For the six months ended June 30, 2011									
	_	anada	United				Lifeco		Total
Income:		anada		States		Europe	Corporate		Total
Premium income	\$	4,632	\$	1,354	\$	2,581	\$ -	\$	8,567
Net investment income	•	1,00=	*	,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,	*	_, -,	•	•	-,
Regular net investment income		1,234		656		947	6		2,843
Changes in fair value through profit or loss		251		157		112	-		520
Total net investment income		1,485		813		1,059	6		3,363
Fee and other income		553		632		274	-		1,459
Total income		6,670		2,799		3,914	6		13,389
Benefits and expenses:									
Paid or credited to policyholders		4,766		1,840		3,271	-		9,877
Other		1,213		586		281	14		2,094
Financing charges		68		67		9	-		144
Amortization of finite life intangible assets		21		23		4	-		48
Earnings before income taxes		602		283		349	(8)		1,226
Income taxes		91		64		75	-		230
Net earnings before non-controlling									
interests		511		219		274	(8)		996
Non-controlling interests		6		-		1	-		7
Net earnings		505		219		273	(8)		989
Perpetual preferred share dividends		37		-		11	-		48
Net earnings before capital allocation		468		219		262	(8)		941
Impact of capital allocation		39		(3)		(29)	(7)		
Net earnings - common shareholders	\$	507	\$	216	\$	233	\$ (15)	\$	941