

GAZIFÈRE INC.
Prime Rate Forecasting Process
2013 Rate Case

Overview

A consensus forecast is used to estimate the prime rate charged by commercial banks. As the prime rate is subject to competitive pressures faced by individual lenders and is set on an individual financial institution basis, the effective interest rate is not widely forecast.

However, the prime rate shares a consistent relationship with the Bank of Canada's overnight interest rate target (or the "overnight rate") which is a widely forecasted data series. To provide a reasonable estimate of the prime rate, the consensus view of the overnight rate is used as a proxy.

Process

Overnight Rate Forecast

A consensus approach is used to establish the overnight rate forecast. Six major Canadian financial institutions¹ views of the overnight rate target are provided multiple times throughout the year. In most cases, projections are published over a two-year horizon which allows for a 24-month consensus forecast.²

Figure 1 displays the six financial institutions' forecasts of the overnight rate for the remainder of 2012 and 2013, as of April 25, 2012:

FIGURE 1: Overnight Rate Forecasts by Six Canadian Financial Institutions

	BMO Capital Markets	CIBC Economics	Desjardins Economic Studies	RBC Economics Research	Scotiabank Group	TD Economics	Average
	FORECAST DATE:						
	9-Apr-12	27-Mar-12	Spring 2012	1-Apr-12	4-Apr-12	19-Mar-12	2012 Q2
2011 Q4	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
2012 Q1	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
2012 Q2	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
2012 Q3	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
2012 Q4	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.25	1.00	1.00	1.04
2013 Q1	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.50	1.00	1.00	1.08
2013 Q2	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.75	1.00	1.25	1.17
2013 Q3	1.35	1.00	1.00	2.00	1.25	1.75	1.39
2013 Q4	1.50		1.00	2.00	1.50	2.00	1.60

¹ The following six Canadian Financial Institutions are considered: BMO – Capital Markets, CIBC – Economics, Desjardins – Economic Studies, RBC – Economics Research, Scotiabank Group, TD – Economics.

² CIBC – Economics traditionally publishes 18-month forecasts.

GAZIFÈRE INC.
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2013 Rate Case

To determine an average that is representative of the overnight lending rate, a few considerations are made:

1. The Bank of Canada increases/decreases the overnight rate in 25 basis point increments.³
2. The Bank of Canada decides to increase/decrease the overnight rate each year on eight (8) predetermined dates.⁴

Recognizing the Bank of Canada's mechanism for setting the overnight rate is important since the aim of this forecast is to closely mimic the process used by the Bank of Canada to arrive at a reasonable estimate of the overnight rate.

To satisfy this, the average quarter-end overnight rate forecast as determined in Figure 1 is then rounded to the nearest 25-basis points. Figure 2 displays the average quarter-end forecast of the consensus group rounded to the nearest 25 basis points:

FIGURE 2: Average Quarter-End Overnight Rate
Forecast Rounded to Nearest 25 bps

	Average	Rounded to Nearest 25 bps
	FORECAST DATE:	
	2012 Q2	2012 Q2
2011 Q4	1.00	1.00
2012 Q1	1.00	1.00
2012 Q2	1.00	1.00
2012 Q3	1.00	1.00
2012 Q4	1.04	1.00
2013 Q1	1.08	1.00
2013 Q2	1.17	1.25
2013 Q3	1.39	1.50
2013 Q4	1.60	1.50

The next step in the process is to generate the expected overnight rate on the rate announcement dates based on the adjusted consensus quarterly forecasts.

Drawing on the average quarter-end view of the forecasters rounded to the nearest 25 basis points, and considering the eight dates on which rate announcements will take place, Figure 3 and Figure 4 display the daily expected overnight rate for 2012⁵ and 2013, respectively:

³ Since August 9, 1996 the Bank of Canada has adjusted the overnight rate by increments of base 25.

⁴ Example of the Bank of Canada's Interest Rate Announcement Schedule for 2012:

<http://www.bankofcanada.ca/en/monetary/schedule.html>. Note that February, June, August and November have no scheduled rate announcement.

⁵ January 2012, February 2012, and March 2012 are actual data.

GAZIFÈRE INC.
Prime Rate Forecasting Process
2013 Rate Case

FIGURE 3: 2012 Daily Overnight Rate Forecast

First Quarter		Second Quarter		Third Quarter		Fourth Quarter	
Day	Overnight Rate Target (%)	Day	Overnight Rate Target (%)	Day	Overnight Rate Target (%)	Day	Overnight Rate Target (%)
1/1/2012	1.00	3/31/2012	1.00	6/30/2012	1.00	9/30/2012	1.00
1/2/2012	1.00	4/1/2012	1.00	7/1/2012	1.00	10/1/2012	1.00
1/3/2012	1.00	4/2/2012	1.00	7/2/2012	1.00	10/2/2012	1.00
1/4/2012	1.00	4/3/2012	1.00	7/3/2012	1.00	10/3/2012	1.00
1/5/2012	1.00	4/4/2012	1.00	7/4/2012	1.00	10/4/2012	1.00
1/6/2012	1.00	4/5/2012	1.00	7/5/2012	1.00	10/5/2012	1.00
1/7/2012	1.00	4/6/2012	1.00	7/6/2012	1.00	10/6/2012	1.00
1/8/2012	1.00	4/7/2012	1.00	7/7/2012	1.00	10/7/2012	1.00
1/9/2012	1.00	4/8/2012	1.00	7/8/2012	1.00	10/8/2012	1.00
1/10/2012	1.00	4/9/2012	1.00	7/9/2012	1.00	10/9/2012	1.00
1/11/2012	1.00	4/10/2012	1.00	7/10/2012	1.00	10/10/2012	1.00
1/12/2012	1.00	4/11/2012	1.00	7/11/2012	1.00	10/11/2012	1.00
1/13/2012	1.00	4/12/2012	1.00	7/12/2012	1.00	10/12/2012	1.00
1/14/2012	1.00	4/13/2012	1.00	7/13/2012	1.00	10/13/2012	1.00
1/15/2012	1.00	4/14/2012	1.00	7/14/2012	1.00	10/14/2012	1.00
1/16/2012	1.00	4/15/2012	1.00	7/15/2012	1.00	10/15/2012	1.00
1/17/2012	1.00	4/16/2012	1.00	7/16/2012	1.00	10/16/2012	1.00
1/18/2012	1.00	4/17/2012	1.00	7/17/2012	1.00	10/17/2012	1.00
1/19/2012	1.00	4/18/2012	1.00	7/18/2012	1.00	10/18/2012	1.00
1/20/2012	1.00	4/19/2012	1.00	7/19/2012	1.00	10/19/2012	1.00
1/21/2012	1.00	4/20/2012	1.00	7/20/2012	1.00	10/20/2012	1.00
1/22/2012	1.00	4/21/2012	1.00	7/21/2012	1.00	10/21/2012	1.00
1/23/2012	1.00	4/22/2012	1.00	7/22/2012	1.00	10/22/2012	1.00
1/24/2012	1.00	4/23/2012	1.00	7/23/2012	1.00	10/23/2012	1.00
1/25/2012	1.00	4/24/2012	1.00	7/24/2012	1.00	10/24/2012	1.00
1/26/2012	1.00	4/25/2012	1.00	7/25/2012	1.00	10/25/2012	1.00
1/27/2012	1.00	4/26/2012	1.00	7/26/2012	1.00	10/26/2012	1.00
1/28/2012	1.00	4/27/2012	1.00	7/27/2012	1.00	10/27/2012	1.00
1/29/2012	1.00	4/28/2012	1.00	7/28/2012	1.00	10/28/2012	1.00
1/30/2012	1.00	4/29/2012	1.00	7/29/2012	1.00	10/29/2012	1.00
1/31/2012	1.00	4/30/2012	1.00	7/30/2012	1.00	10/30/2012	1.00
2/1/2012	1.00	5/1/2012	1.00	7/31/2012	1.00	10/31/2012	1.00
2/2/2012	1.00	5/2/2012	1.00	8/1/2012	1.00	11/1/2012	1.00
2/3/2012	1.00	5/3/2012	1.00	8/2/2012	1.00	11/2/2012	1.00
2/4/2012	1.00	5/4/2012	1.00	8/3/2012	1.00	11/3/2012	1.00
2/5/2012	1.00	5/5/2012	1.00	8/4/2012	1.00	11/4/2012	1.00
2/6/2012	1.00	5/6/2012	1.00	8/5/2012	1.00	11/5/2012	1.00
2/7/2012	1.00	5/7/2012	1.00	8/6/2012	1.00	11/6/2012	1.00
2/8/2012	1.00	5/8/2012	1.00	8/7/2012	1.00	11/7/2012	1.00
2/9/2012	1.00	5/9/2012	1.00	8/8/2012	1.00	11/8/2012	1.00
2/10/2012	1.00	5/10/2012	1.00	8/9/2012	1.00	11/9/2012	1.00
2/11/2012	1.00	5/11/2012	1.00	8/10/2012	1.00	11/10/2012	1.00
2/12/2012	1.00	5/12/2012	1.00	8/11/2012	1.00	11/11/2012	1.00
2/13/2012	1.00	5/13/2012	1.00	8/12/2012	1.00	11/12/2012	1.00
2/14/2012	1.00	5/14/2012	1.00	8/13/2012	1.00	11/13/2012	1.00
2/15/2012	1.00	5/15/2012	1.00	8/14/2012	1.00	11/14/2012	1.00
2/16/2012	1.00	5/16/2012	1.00	8/15/2012	1.00	11/15/2012	1.00
2/17/2012	1.00	5/17/2012	1.00	8/16/2012	1.00	11/16/2012	1.00
2/18/2012	1.00	5/18/2012	1.00	8/17/2012	1.00	11/17/2012	1.00
2/19/2012	1.00	5/19/2012	1.00	8/18/2012	1.00	11/18/2012	1.00
2/20/2012	1.00	5/20/2012	1.00	8/19/2012	1.00	11/19/2012	1.00
2/21/2012	1.00	5/21/2012	1.00	8/20/2012	1.00	11/20/2012	1.00
2/22/2012	1.00	5/22/2012	1.00	8/21/2012	1.00	11/21/2012	1.00
2/23/2012	1.00	5/23/2012	1.00	8/22/2012	1.00	11/22/2012	1.00
2/24/2012	1.00	5/24/2012	1.00	8/23/2012	1.00	11/23/2012	1.00
2/25/2012	1.00	5/25/2012	1.00	8/24/2012	1.00	11/24/2012	1.00
2/26/2012	1.00	5/26/2012	1.00	8/25/2012	1.00	11/25/2012	1.00
2/27/2012	1.00	5/27/2012	1.00	8/26/2012	1.00	11/26/2012	1.00
2/28/2012	1.00	5/28/2012	1.00	8/27/2012	1.00	11/27/2012	1.00
2/29/2012	1.00	5/29/2012	1.00	8/28/2012	1.00	11/28/2012	1.00
3/1/2012	1.00	5/30/2012	1.00	8/29/2012	1.00	11/29/2012	1.00
3/2/2012	1.00	5/31/2012	1.00	8/30/2012	1.00	11/30/2012	1.00
3/3/2012	1.00	6/1/2012	1.00	8/31/2012	1.00	12/1/2012	1.00
3/4/2012	1.00	6/2/2012	1.00	9/1/2012	1.00	12/2/2012	1.00
3/5/2012	1.00	6/3/2012	1.00	9/2/2012	1.00	12/3/2012	1.00
3/6/2012	1.00	6/4/2012	1.00	9/3/2012	1.00	12/4/2012	1.00
3/7/2012	1.00	6/5/2012	1.00	9/4/2012	1.00	12/5/2012	1.00
3/8/2012	1.00	6/6/2012	1.00	9/5/2012	1.00	12/6/2012	1.00
3/9/2012	1.00	6/7/2012	1.00	9/6/2012	1.00	12/7/2012	1.00
3/10/2012	1.00	6/8/2012	1.00	9/7/2012	1.00	12/8/2012	1.00
3/11/2012	1.00	6/9/2012	1.00	9/8/2012	1.00	12/9/2012	1.00
3/12/2012	1.00	6/10/2012	1.00	9/9/2012	1.00	12/10/2012	1.00
3/13/2012	1.00	6/11/2012	1.00	9/10/2012	1.00	12/11/2012	1.00
3/14/2012	1.00	6/12/2012	1.00	9/11/2012	1.00	12/12/2012	1.00
3/15/2012	1.00	6/13/2012	1.00	9/12/2012	1.00	12/13/2012	1.00
3/16/2012	1.00	6/14/2012	1.00	9/13/2012	1.00	12/14/2012	1.00
3/17/2012	1.00	6/15/2012	1.00	9/14/2012	1.00	12/15/2012	1.00
3/18/2012	1.00	6/16/2012	1.00	9/15/2012	1.00	12/16/2012	1.00
3/19/2012	1.00	6/17/2012	1.00	9/16/2012	1.00	12/17/2012	1.00
3/20/2012	1.00	6/18/2012	1.00	9/17/2012	1.00	12/18/2012	1.00
3/21/2012	1.00	6/19/2012	1.00	9/18/2012	1.00	12/19/2012	1.00
3/22/2012	1.00	6/20/2012	1.00	9/19/2012	1.00	12/20/2012	1.00
3/23/2012	1.00	6/21/2012	1.00	9/20/2012	1.00	12/21/2012	1.00
3/24/2012	1.00	6/22/2012	1.00	9/21/2012	1.00	12/22/2012	1.00
3/25/2012	1.00	6/23/2012	1.00	9/22/2012	1.00	12/23/2012	1.00
3/26/2012	1.00	6/24/2012	1.00	9/23/2012	1.00	12/24/2012	1.00
3/27/2012	1.00	6/25/2012	1.00	9/24/2012	1.00	12/25/2012	1.00
3/28/2012	1.00	6/26/2012	1.00	9/25/2012	1.00	12/26/2012	1.00
3/29/2012	1.00	6/27/2012	1.00	9/26/2012	1.00	12/27/2012	1.00
3/30/2012	1.00	6/28/2012	1.00	9/27/2012	1.00	12/28/2012	1.00
		6/29/2012	1.00	9/28/2012	1.00	12/29/2012	1.00
				9/29/2012	1.00	12/30/2012	1.00

Note: Yellow highlights indicate rate announcements. 2012 dates correspond with 2012 rate announcement schedule.

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2013 Rate Case

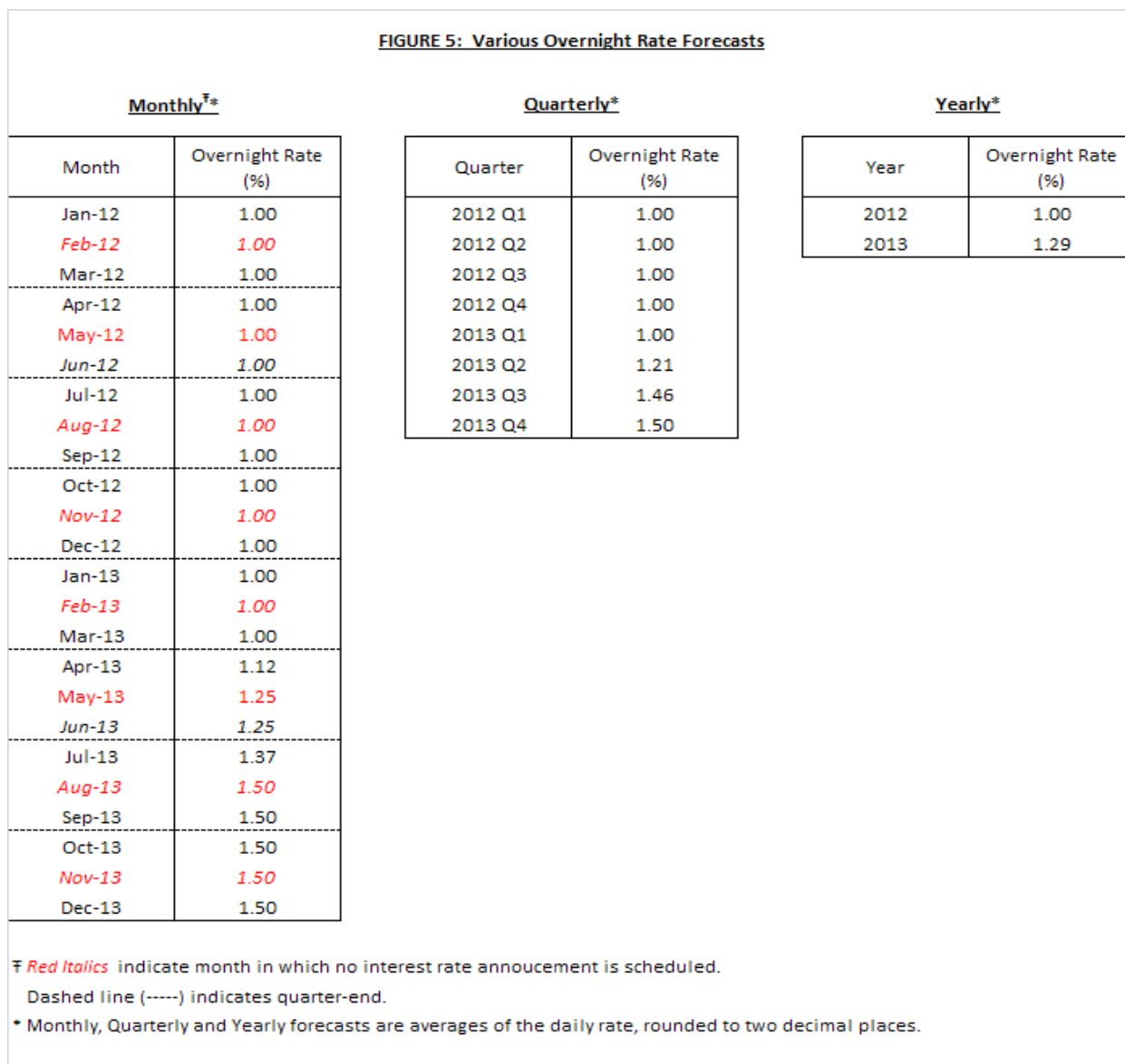
FIGURE 4: 2013 Daily Overnight Rate Forecast

First Quarter		Second Quarter		Third Quarter		Fourth Quarter	
Day	Overnight Rate Target (%)	Day	Overnight Rate Target (%)	Day	Overnight Rate Target (%)	Day	Overnight Rate Target (%)
1/1/2013	1.00	4/2/2013	1.00	7/2/2013	1.25	10/2/2013	1.50
1/2/2013	1.00	4/3/2013	1.00	7/3/2013	1.25	10/3/2013	1.50
1/3/2013	1.00	4/4/2013	1.00	7/4/2013	1.25	10/4/2013	1.50
1/4/2013	1.00	4/5/2013	1.00	7/5/2013	1.25	10/5/2013	1.50
1/5/2013	1.00	4/6/2013	1.00	7/6/2013	1.25	10/6/2013	1.50
1/6/2013	1.00	4/7/2013	1.00	7/7/2013	1.25	10/7/2013	1.50
1/7/2013	1.00	4/8/2013	1.00	7/8/2013	1.25	10/8/2013	1.50
1/8/2013	1.00	4/9/2013	1.00	7/9/2013	1.25	10/9/2013	1.50
1/9/2013	1.00	4/10/2013	1.00	7/10/2013	1.25	10/10/2013	1.50
1/10/2013	1.00	4/11/2013	1.00	7/11/2013	1.25	10/11/2013	1.50
1/11/2013	1.00	4/12/2013	1.00	7/12/2013	1.25	10/12/2013	1.50
1/12/2013	1.00	4/13/2013	1.00	7/13/2013	1.25	10/13/2013	1.50
1/13/2013	1.00	4/14/2013	1.00	7/14/2013	1.25	10/14/2013	1.50
1/14/2013	1.00	4/15/2013	1.00	7/15/2013	1.25	10/15/2013	1.50
1/15/2013	1.00	4/16/2013	1.00	7/16/2013	1.25	10/16/2013	1.50
1/16/2013	1.00	4/17/2013	1.25	7/17/2013	1.50	10/17/2013	1.50
1/17/2013	1.00	4/18/2013	1.25	7/18/2013	1.50	10/18/2013	1.50
1/18/2013	1.00	4/19/2013	1.25	7/19/2013	1.50	10/19/2013	1.50
1/19/2013	1.00	4/20/2013	1.25	7/20/2013	1.50	10/20/2013	1.50
1/20/2013	1.00	4/21/2013	1.25	7/21/2013	1.50	10/21/2013	1.50
1/21/2013	1.00	4/22/2013	1.25	7/22/2013	1.50	10/22/2013	1.50
1/22/2013	1.00	4/23/2013	1.25	7/23/2013	1.50	10/23/2013	1.50
1/23/2013	1.00	4/24/2013	1.25	7/24/2013	1.50	10/24/2013	1.50
1/24/2013	1.00	4/25/2013	1.25	7/25/2013	1.50	10/25/2013	1.50
1/25/2013	1.00	4/26/2013	1.25	7/26/2013	1.50	10/26/2013	1.50
1/26/2013	1.00	4/27/2013	1.25	7/27/2013	1.50	10/27/2013	1.50
1/27/2013	1.00	4/28/2013	1.25	7/28/2013	1.50	10/28/2013	1.50
1/28/2013	1.00	4/29/2013	1.25	7/29/2013	1.50	10/29/2013	1.50
1/29/2013	1.00	4/30/2013	1.25	7/30/2013	1.50	10/30/2013	1.50
1/30/2013	1.00	5/1/2013	1.25	7/31/2013	1.50	10/31/2013	1.50
1/31/2013	1.00	5/2/2013	1.25	8/1/2013	1.50	11/1/2013	1.50
2/1/2013	1.00	5/3/2013	1.25	8/2/2013	1.50	11/2/2013	1.50
2/2/2013	1.00	5/4/2013	1.25	8/3/2013	1.50	11/3/2013	1.50
2/3/2013	1.00	5/5/2013	1.25	8/4/2013	1.50	11/4/2013	1.50
2/4/2013	1.00	5/6/2013	1.25	8/5/2013	1.50	11/5/2013	1.50
2/5/2013	1.00	5/7/2013	1.25	8/6/2013	1.50	11/6/2013	1.50
2/6/2013	1.00	5/8/2013	1.25	8/7/2013	1.50	11/7/2013	1.50
2/7/2013	1.00	5/9/2013	1.25	8/8/2013	1.50	11/8/2013	1.50
2/8/2013	1.00	5/10/2013	1.25	8/9/2013	1.50	11/9/2013	1.50
2/9/2013	1.00	5/11/2013	1.25	8/10/2013	1.50	11/10/2013	1.50
2/10/2013	1.00	5/12/2013	1.25	8/11/2013	1.50	11/11/2013	1.50
2/11/2013	1.00	5/13/2013	1.25	8/12/2013	1.50	11/12/2013	1.50
2/12/2013	1.00	5/14/2013	1.25	8/13/2013	1.50	11/13/2013	1.50
2/13/2013	1.00	5/15/2013	1.25	8/14/2013	1.50	11/14/2013	1.50
2/14/2013	1.00	5/16/2013	1.25	8/15/2013	1.50	11/15/2013	1.50
2/15/2013	1.00	5/17/2013	1.25	8/16/2013	1.50	11/16/2013	1.50
2/16/2013	1.00	5/18/2013	1.25	8/17/2013	1.50	11/17/2013	1.50
2/17/2013	1.00	5/19/2013	1.25	8/18/2013	1.50	11/18/2013	1.50
2/18/2013	1.00	5/20/2013	1.25	8/19/2013	1.50	11/19/2013	1.50
2/19/2013	1.00	5/21/2013	1.25	8/20/2013	1.50	11/20/2013	1.50
2/20/2013	1.00	5/22/2013	1.25	8/21/2013	1.50	11/21/2013	1.50
2/21/2013	1.00	5/23/2013	1.25	8/22/2013	1.50	11/22/2013	1.50
2/22/2013	1.00	5/24/2013	1.25	8/23/2013	1.50	11/23/2013	1.50
2/23/2013	1.00	5/25/2013	1.25	8/24/2013	1.50	11/24/2013	1.50
2/24/2013	1.00	5/26/2013	1.25	8/25/2013	1.50	11/25/2013	1.50
2/25/2013	1.00	5/27/2013	1.25	8/26/2013	1.50	11/26/2013	1.50
2/26/2013	1.00	5/28/2013	1.25	8/27/2013	1.50	11/27/2013	1.50
2/27/2013	1.00	5/29/2013	1.25	8/28/2013	1.50	11/28/2013	1.50
2/28/2013	1.00	5/30/2013	1.25	8/29/2013	1.50	11/29/2013	1.50
3/1/2013	1.00	5/31/2013	1.25	8/30/2013	1.50	11/30/2013	1.50
3/2/2013	1.00	6/1/2013	1.25	8/31/2013	1.50	12/1/2013	1.50
3/3/2013	1.00	6/2/2013	1.25	9/1/2013	1.50	12/2/2013	1.50
3/4/2013	1.00	6/3/2013	1.25	9/2/2013	1.50	12/3/2013	1.50
3/5/2013	1.00	6/4/2013	1.25	9/3/2013	1.50	12/4/2013	1.50
3/6/2013	1.00	6/5/2013	1.25	9/4/2013	1.50	12/5/2013	1.50
3/7/2013	1.00	6/6/2013	1.25	9/5/2013	1.50	12/6/2013	1.50
3/8/2013	1.00	6/7/2013	1.25	9/6/2013	1.50	12/7/2013	1.50
3/9/2013	1.00	6/8/2013	1.25	9/7/2013	1.50	12/8/2013	1.50
3/10/2013	1.00	6/9/2013	1.25	9/8/2013	1.50	12/9/2013	1.50
3/11/2013	1.00	6/10/2013	1.25	9/9/2013	1.50	12/10/2013	1.50
3/12/2013	1.00	6/11/2013	1.25	9/10/2013	1.50	12/11/2013	1.50
3/13/2013	1.00	6/12/2013	1.25	9/11/2013	1.50	12/12/2013	1.50
3/14/2013	1.00	6/13/2013	1.25	9/12/2013	1.50	12/13/2013	1.50
3/15/2013	1.00	6/14/2013	1.25	9/13/2013	1.50	12/14/2013	1.50
3/16/2013	1.00	6/15/2013	1.25	9/14/2013	1.50	12/15/2013	1.50
3/17/2013	1.00	6/16/2013	1.25	9/15/2013	1.50	12/16/2013	1.50
3/18/2013	1.00	6/17/2013	1.25	9/16/2013	1.50	12/17/2013	1.50
3/19/2013	1.00	6/18/2013	1.25	9/17/2013	1.50	12/18/2013	1.50
3/20/2013	1.00	6/19/2013	1.25	9/18/2013	1.50	12/19/2013	1.50
3/21/2013	1.00	6/20/2013	1.25	9/19/2013	1.50	12/20/2013	1.50
3/22/2013	1.00	6/21/2013	1.25	9/20/2013	1.50	12/21/2013	1.50
3/23/2013	1.00	6/22/2013	1.25	9/21/2013	1.50	12/22/2013	1.50
3/24/2013	1.00	6/23/2013	1.25	9/22/2013	1.50	12/23/2013	1.50
3/25/2013	1.00	6/24/2013	1.25	9/23/2013	1.50	12/24/2013	1.50
3/26/2013	1.00	6/25/2013	1.25	9/24/2013	1.50	12/25/2013	1.50
3/27/2013	1.00	6/26/2013	1.25	9/25/2013	1.50	12/26/2013	1.50
3/28/2013	1.00	6/27/2013	1.25	9/26/2013	1.50	12/27/2013	1.50
3/29/2013	1.00	6/28/2013	1.25	9/27/2013	1.50	12/28/2013	1.50
3/30/2013	1.00	6/29/2013	1.25	9/28/2013	1.50	12/29/2013	1.50
3/31/2013	1.00	6/30/2013	1.25	9/29/2013	1.50	12/30/2013	1.50
4/1/2013	1.00	7/1/2013	1.25	9/30/2013	1.50	12/31/2013	1.50
				10/1/2013	1.50		

Note: Yellow highlights indicate rate announcements. 2013 dates assume 2012 rate announcement schedule.

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 Prime Rate Forecasting Process
 2013 Rate Case

Daily projections of the overnight rate from Figure 3 and Figure 4 are rolled up to determine the monthly, quarterly and yearly averages in Figure 5. Please note that January 2012-March 2012 are actual data.



Prime Rate Differential

Figure 6 on the next page displays the recent historical relationship between the overnight rate and the prime rate data series' extracted from Statistics Canada's CANSIM II database:

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 Prime Rate Forecasting Process
 2013 Rate Case

FIGURE 6: Historical Prime Rate Differential

	<i>col. 1</i>	<i>col. 2</i>	<i>col. 3</i>
	Overnight Rate Target (%)	Prime Rate (%)	Prime Rate - Overnight Rate
	<i>CANSIM II Series ID: v39079</i>	<i>CANSIM II Series ID: v122495</i>	<i>col. 2 - col 1</i>
Mar-09	0.50	2.50	2.00
Apr-09	0.50	2.25	1.75
May-09	0.25	2.25	2.00
Jun-09	0.25	2.25	2.00
Jul-09	0.25	2.25	2.00
Aug-09	0.25	2.25	2.00
Sep-09	0.25	2.25	2.00
Oct-09	0.25	2.25	2.00
Nov-09	0.25	2.25	2.00
Dec-09	0.25	2.25	2.00
Jan-10	0.25	2.25	2.00
Feb-10	0.25	2.25	2.00
Mar-10	0.25	2.25	2.00
Apr-10	0.25	2.25	2.00
May-10	0.25	2.25	2.00
Jun-10	0.50	2.50	2.00
Jul-10	0.50	2.75	2.25
Aug-10	0.75	2.75	2.00
Sep-10	1.00	3.00	2.00
Oct-10	1.00	3.00	2.00
Nov-10	1.00	3.00	2.00
Dec-10	1.00	3.00	2.00
Jan-11	1.00	3.00	2.00
Feb-11	1.00	3.00	2.00
Mar-11	1.00	3.00	2.00
Apr-11	1.00	3.00	2.00
May-11	1.00	3.00	2.00
Jun-11	1.00	3.00	2.00
Jul-11	1.00	3.00	2.00
Aug-11	1.00	3.00	2.00
Sep-11	1.00	3.00	2.00
Oct-11	1.00	3.00	2.00
Nov-11	1.00	3.00	2.00
Dec-11	1.00	3.00	2.00
Jan-12	1.00	3.00	2.00
Feb-12	1.00	3.00	2.00
Mar-12	1.00	3.00	2.00

GAZIFÈRE INC.
 Prime Rate Forecasting Process
 2013 Rate Case

Prime Rate Forecast

From March 2009 to March 2012 there has been a consistent 200 basis point differential between the prime rate and the overnight rate. Given the stability of this differential, it is reasonable to assume that this relationship will hold throughout the forecast period.

Of the six Canadian financial institutions that provide interest rate forecasts, the Bank of Montreal was the only one to provide a prime rate forecast. They similarly assumed a 200 basis point differential in their forecast.

Therefore, adding the 200 basis point differential to the overnight rate forecasts in Figure 5 results in the following prime rate forecasts. Please note that January 2012-March 2012 are actual data.

FIGURE 7: Various Prime Rate Forecasts

<u>Monthly</u>		<u>Quarterly</u>		<u>Yearly</u>	
Month	Prime Rate (%)	Quarter	Prime Rate (%)	Year	Prime Rate (%)
Jan-12	3.00	2012 Q1	3.00	2012	3.00
Feb-12	3.00	2012 Q2	3.00	2013	3.29
Mar-12	3.00	2012 Q3	3.00		
Apr-12	3.00	2012 Q4	3.00		
May-12	3.00	2013 Q1	3.00		
Jun-12	3.00	2013 Q2	3.21		
Jul-12	3.00	2013 Q3	3.46		
Aug-12	3.00	2013 Q4	3.50		
Sep-12	3.00				
Oct-12	3.00				
Nov-12	3.00				
Dec-12	3.00				
Jan-13	3.00				
Feb-13	3.00				
Mar-13	3.00				
Apr-13	3.12				
May-13	3.25				
Jun-13	3.25				
Jul-13	3.37				
Aug-13	3.50				
Sep-13	3.50				
Oct-13	3.50				
Nov-13	3.50				
Dec-13	3.50				

GAZIFÈRE INC.
Prime Rate Forecasting Process
2013 Rate Case

Overall

The prime rate is the rate commercial banks charge on loans to their best customers. Financial institutions set their own prime rates based on the cost of short-term funds and based on the competitive pressures among them.

A consensus view from financial institutions is used to forecast the prime rate. However, the prime rate is not widely forecasted, so an approach to arrive at a reasonable forecast of the prime rate is needed. Conveniently, the prime rate shares a consistent relationship with the Bank of Canada's overnight rate. The overnight rate is widely forecasted and, through a consensus view of overnight rate expectations, a prime rate forecast can be generated.

Forecasting of the overnight rate through a consensus approach requires consideration of the overnight rate setting mechanism used by the Bank of Canada. This process includes forecasting eight (8) interest rate announcements during a given year and ensuring that any expected interest rate change at those announcement dates is made in the order of 25 basis points.

Finally, determining the consistent relationship between the reported prime rate and the overnight rate, and then applying this differential to the overnight rate forecast, yields the prime rate forecast.