

**STATISTICS OFFICE
CAYMAN ISLANDS, B.W.I.**

DATE: 6 May 2004

**CONSUMER PRICES UP 1.2 PERCENT OVER THE FIRST QUARTER OF
2003**

The price consumers paid for the goods and services contained in the Consumer Price Index (CPI) basket increased by 1.2 percent in comparison with the first quarter of 2003. The all items index increased from 126.2 in the first quarter of 2003 to 127.7 for the quarter ending March 2004. The previous quarter saw an increase of 0.7 percent over the fourth quarter 2002.

Seven of the eight major groups indexes increased when compared with the same period one year ago, with five increasing by more than 2 percent. Two of the other groups increased by 0.6 and 0.2 percent respectively while one decreased by 3.4 percent. It should be noted that the overall importance of each of these groups is reflected in their respective weight. Weights are shown beside each group in the attached table 3.

- The Education & Medical Group index registered the highest increase, 4.2 percent, moving from 240.0 in the first quarter of 2003 to 250.2 in the first quarter of 2004. Higher medical fees were mainly responsible for this increase. This group accounts for 6.5% of the overall all items weight.
- Food increased by 3.2 percent, moving from 122.1 in the first quarter of 2003 to 125.9 in March 2004. Higher costs in meat and fish played a part in the overall increase of this group.
- Personal Goods and Services and Household Equipment increased both by 2.5 percent in the quarter ending March 2004. Increases in holiday expenses explained the rise in personal goods and services whereas higher prices in cleaning material explained part of the rise in household equipment.
- The indexes for Clothing, Alcohol and Tobacco and Housing increased by 2.4, 0.6 and 0.2 percent respectively.

The Transport and Communications group registered a decline of 3.4 percent. A substantial decrease in communications prices associated with the liberalization of the Telecommunications industry explains the overall drop of this group.

When compared with the previous quarter, the All Items Index decreased by 0.3 percent moving from 128.1 in the quarter ending December 2003 to 127.7 at the end of March 2004.

Four of the index groups decreased compared to the fourth quarter and were led by the decrease in the Transport and Communications group (-1.5 percent) associated with the Telecommunications industry. Other decreases occurred in Personal Goods and Services (-1.1 percent), Clothing (-0.9 percent) and Housing (-0.4 percent).

Household Equipment registered the strongest quarterly increase with 3.1 percent. The remaining groups increased at a much slower pace: Food (0.8 percent), Education and medical (0.6 percent) and Alcohol and Tobacco (0.3 percent).

Tables 3 and 4 provide more detail.

Further information and the latest statistics on the Consumer Price index can be obtained from the Government Economics and Statistics Office, located on the fourth floor of the Elizabethan Square (Phase Four) Building. The Office's telephone number is 949-0940.

NOTES ON THE INDEX COMPILATION

1. For one month in each quarter of the year namely March, June, September and December, staff of the Economics and Statistics Office collect prices for more than 500 different items on which consumers spend their money, from over 100 different shops and other outlets in Grand Cayman. Every kind of spending is included, from weekly supermarket trips, school lunches, rental payments and insurance to the prices of cars and bicycles. In total about 1,800 prices are collected each quarter.
2. The items have been assigned weights depending upon their importance in the total pattern of consumer spending based on the 1990/91 Household Income and Expenditure survey. The item weights combined with the prices are then compiled to arrive at the published index.

TABLE 1
CAYMAN ISLANDS CONSUMER PRICE INDEX **MARCH 1995 - MARCH 2004**

(SEPTEMBER 1994 = 100)

		INDEX	Percentage change from:	
			3 months ago	one year ago
1995	March	101.1	0.4	1.8
	June	101.8	0.7	2.3
	September	103.4	1.6	3.4
	December	103.1	-0.3	2.4
1996	March	103.6	0.5	2.5
	June	104.9	1.3	3.0
	September	105.2	0.2	1.7
	December	106.4	1.1	3.2
1997	March	107.4	0.9	3.6
	June	107.2	-0.2	2.2
	September	107.3	0.1	1.9
	December	109.5	2.0	2.9
1998	March	110.5	0.9	2.9
	June	110.6	0.1	3.2
	September	111.1	0.5	3.5
	December	112.1	0.8	2.3
1999	March	113.9	1.5	3.0
	June	119.9	5.3	8.4
	September	120.2	0.3	8.2
	December	120.8	0.5	7.8
2000	March	121.1	0.2	6.3
	June	121.5	0.3	1.3
	September	122.3	0.7	1.7
	December	122.6	0.2	1.5
2001	March	123.3	0.6	1.8
	June	123.6	0.2	1.7
	September	122.7	-0.7	0.3
	December	123.5	0.7	0.7
2002	March	125.9	2.0	2.1
	June	125.9	0.0	1.9
	September	126.3	0.3	2.9
	December	127.2	0.7	3.0
2003	March	126.2	-0.8	0.2
	June	126.6	0.3	0.6
	September	127.3	0.6	0.8
	December	128.1	0.6	0.7
2004	March	127.7	-0.3	1.2

NOTE: The index changes shown in the "one year ago" column on this page reflect the period to period changes and do not take into account fluctuations in price levels which may have occurred during the interim.

TABLE 2**CAYMAN ISLANDS CONSUMER PRICE INDEX****ANNUAL AVERAGES 1994 TO 2003****(SEPTEMBER 1994 = 100)**

YEAR	INDEX	Percentage change from a year ago
1994	99.9	
1995	102.4	2.5
1996	105.0	2.6
1997	107.9	2.7
1998	111.1	3.0
1999	118.7	6.9
2000	121.9	2.7
2001	123.3	1.1
2002	126.3	2.4
2003	127.1	0.6

NOTE: The annual average consumer price index is the average of the March, June, September and December index values shown in Table 1.

TABLE 3: CONSUMER PRICE INDEX BY MAJOR GROUPS - MARCH 2004

Major Group	(Weight)	Index	Percentage change	
			3 months ago	one year ago
01 Food	119	125.9	0.8	3.2
Bread and Cereal	10	115.9	-0.7	2.5
Meat	17	135.7	1.7	12.7
Fish	3	110.6	0.9	13.2
Diary Products and Eggs	9	130.7	1.3	3.6
Oils & Fats	2	129.8	2.5	9.5
Fruit and Vegetables	12	121.9	-3.4	-8.0
Drinks (non-alcoholic)	12	117.0	-1.5	-0.1
Sugar Products	2	115.6	0.0	0.9
Other Foods	53	128.0	2.0	2.9
02 Alcohol and Tobacco	16	123.8	0.3	0.6
Alcoholic Drinks	13	120.6	0.5	0.7
Tobacco	3	139.5	-0.3	0.2
03 Housing	311	116.6	-0.4	0.2
Rent, Maintenance, Insurance etc	258	118.3	-0.7	0.1
Utilities	53	108.0	1.4	0.6
04 Clothing	46	111.9	-0.9	2.4
Men and Womens Clothing	29	110.2	-0.9	2.3
Boys and Girls Clothing	6	135.0	0.7	9.2
Other Clothing	2	93.6	0.0	1.8
Footwear	9	106.8	-2.1	-1.8
05 Household Equipment	59	133.3	3.1	2.5
Furniture and Floor Coverings	22	132.4	3.4	2.0
Household Appliances	13	103.2	-0.4	-2.1
Household Equipment	24	150.1	4.2	4.7
06 Transport and Communications	168	113.1	-1.5	-3.4
Household Vehicles	128	121.7	0.8	-1.3
Travel	7	150.0	16.7	11.6
Communications	33	72.4	-18.7	-18.7
07 Education and Medical	65	250.2	0.6	4.2
Education	25	375.7	0.0	2.2
Medical Care	40	171.3	1.4	7.2

08 Personal Goods and Services	216	121.7	-1.1	2.5
Home Entertainment	21	95.2	-3.6	-14.8
Outside Entertainment	1	148.9	1.1	0.0
Culture, Pastimes, Hobbies	30	112.0	-3.3	-5.3
Holiday Expenses	71	138.4	-0.8	13.4
Personal Services	38	135.5	-0.1	-0.1
Personal Goods	16	109.7	-1.2	-0.5
Domestic Services	39	103.1	0.0	0.5
Gifts and Subscriptions	1	125.0	0.0	0.0
ALL ITEMS	1,000	127.7	-0.3	1.2

**TABLE 4: CONSUMER PRICE INDEX BY MAJOR GROUP MARCH 1996 - MARCH 2004
(SEPTEMBER 1994=100)**

PERIOD/MAJOR GROUP	FOOD	ALCOHOL & TOBACCO	HOUSING	CLOTHING	HOUSEHOLD EQUIPMENT	TRANSPORT & COMMUNICATION	EDUCATION & MEDICAL	PERSONAL GOODS & SERVICES.	ALL ITEMS
WEIGHT	119	16	311	46	59	168	65	216	1,000
1997									
MARCH	107.1	105.3	110.1	104.0	107.1	108.2	107.5	103.9	107.4
JUNE	106.7	106.4	110.6	105.2	102.6	108.3	107.7	103.3	107.2
SEPTEMBER	106.9	106.8	110.5	104.3	104.6	106.5	109.2	104.4	107.3
DECEMBER	107.3	107.0	113.5	104.9	107.3	109.7	107.5	107.2	109.5
ANNUAL AVERAGE	107.0	106.4	111.2	104.6	105.4	108.2	108.0	104.7	107.9
% CHANGE PREV YEAR	1.5	2.6	5.2	0.6	-0.8	0.9	6.1	1.5	2.7
1998									
MARCH	107.9	106.7	113.3	106.8	106.5	109.5	105.8	112.5	110.5
JUNE	107.5	107.4	113.3	109.3	110.5	109.4	107.3	110.6	110.6
SEPTEMBER	108.8	107.6	116.0	107.9	112.0	107.1	107.9	110.3	111.1
DECEMBER	110.0	118.3	116.5	108.6	116.7	109.3	108.5	109.4	112.1
ANNUAL AVERAGE	108.6	110.0	114.8	108.2	111.4	108.8	107.4	110.7	111.1
% CHANGE PREV YEAR	1.4	3.4	3.2	3.4	5.7	0.6	-0.6	5.7	3.0
1999									
MARCH	111.6	122.1	117.1	114.7	117.0	110.2	111.3	112.5	113.9
JUNE	109.4	123.5	118.0	114.3	118.5	111.9	200.7	112.0	119.9
SEPTEMBER	111.2	122.1	117.9	110.9	121.6	112.4	201.6	111.8	120.2
DECEMBER	110.8	120.2	120.0	114.2	121.4	110.4	200.4	112.9	120.8
ANNUAL AVERAGE	110.8	122.0	118.3	113.5	119.6	111.2	178.5	112.3	118.7
% CHANGE PREV YEAR	2.0	10.9	3.0	5.0	7.4	2.2	66.2	1.4	6.9
2000									
MARCH	111.7	120.6	119.8	112.6	118.7	111.1	200.1	114.9	121.1
JUNE	112.7	118.8	119.6	113.8	119.1	110.4	202.1	116.2	121.5
SEPTEMBER	111.9	120.3	118.2	113.8	121.9	111.6	207.4	119.1	122.3
DECEMBER	114.1	120.8	118.4	112.1	121.9	112.9	209.4	117.7	122.6
ANNUAL AVERAGE	112.6	120.1	119.0	113.1	120.4	111.5	204.8	117.0	121.9
% CHANGE PREV YEAR	1.7	-1.5	0.6	-0.4	0.6	0.2	14.7	4.2	2.7
2001									
MARCH	114.4	120.2	118.5	111.6	121.5	113.6	211.5	119.4	123.3
JUNE	117.6	119.8	116.7	112.1	122.6	113.4	211.0	121.4	123.6
SEPTEMBER	117.3	119.5	117.1	110.8	121.9	112.0	212.8	118.3	122.7
DECEMBER	116.7	119.8	118.6	110.0	123.7	112.8	213.5	119.0	123.5
ANNUAL AVERAGE	116.5	119.8	117.7	111.1	122.4	113.0	212.2	119.5	123.3

% CHANGE PREV YEAR	3.5	-0.2	-1.1	-1.7	1.7	1.3	3.6	2.2	1.1
2002									
MARCH	116.5	122.3	119.0	113.6	124.0	114.1	227.6	123.3	125.9
JUNE	118.5	121.6	119.4	114.1	122.7	114.2	228.2	121.5	125.9
SEPTEMBER	120.2	122.6	121.3	109.4	125.9	113.3	230.8	119.9	126.3
DECEMBER	120.9	121.4	120.4	109.1	122.7	114.0	237.4	123.1	127.2
ANNUAL AVERAGE	119.0	122.0	120.0	111.6	123.8	113.9	231.0	122.0	126.3
% CHANGE PREV YEAR	2.2	1.8	2.0	0.4	1.1	0.8	8.9	2.0	2.4
2003									
MARCH	122.1	123.1	116.4	109.2	130.1	117.0	240.0	118.7	126.2
JUNE	122.2	121.5	115.8	109.4	133.1	115.6	241.1	120.9	126.6
SEPTEMBER	122.2	122.5	116.0	109.8	129.1	114.9	248.8	123.3	127.3
DECEMBER	125.0	123.4	117.0	112.8	129.4	114.8	248.7	123.1	128.1
ANNUAL AVERAGE	122.9	122.6	116.3	110.3	130.4	115.6	244.7	121.5	127.1
% CHANGE PREV YEAR	3.2	0.5	-3.1	-1.1	5.3	1.5	5.9	-0.4	0.6
2004									
MARCH	125.9	123.8	116.6	111.9	133.3	113.1	250.2	121.7	127.7

TABLE 5**CAYMAN ISLANDS: AVERAGE PRICES OF SELECTED FOOD ITEMS MARCH, 2004**

	ITEM	QUANTITY	AVERAGE PRICES (CI\$)		
			Mar 2004	Dec 2003	Mar 2003
101-04	Wholewheat bread(imported)	1 lb. 4 oz	1.83	1.89	1.80
107-01	Long grain rice	5 lb.	5.17	5.17	5.17
108-12	Cornflakes	24 oz	4.21	4.21	4.21
111-01	Stew beef	1 lb.	4.19	3.66	3.39
114-01	Bacon	1 lb.	5.74	5.71	5.28
125-02	Snapper fillets (frozen)	1 lb.	5.58	5.82	4.49
127-05	Canned Tuna in water	6.5 oz	1.09	1.18	1.11
130-02	Eggs(Grade A Large)	1 doz.	2.31	1.79	1.34
131-02	Anchor Butter	1 lb	2.56	2.66	2.23
133-05	Fresh milk(McArthur)	1 gal.	3.38	4.95	4.74
135-09	Evaporated milk	14.5 oz	0.78	0.74	0.74
139-19	Shortening	3 lb.	5.00	4.54	4.13
141-01	Plantains	1 lb.	0.75	0.79	0.76
142-07	Idaho potatoes	1 lb.	0.69	0.69	0.89
147-11	Lettuce	Head	1.46	2.92	1.19
146-15	Sweet potatoes	1 lb.	1.46	1.32	1.39
151-01	Tomatoes	1 lb.	1.59	2.25	2.69
152-03	Ripe bananas	1 lb.	0.62	0.67	0.67
153-01	Apples(Golden Delicious)	1 lb.	1.66	1.76	1.89
155-11	Oranges	each	0.38	0.48	0.65
161-01	Tea bags(Liptons)	48	2.42	2.35	2.22
163-02	Instant coffee(Maxwell House)	8 oz. 12 oz.	5.56	5.50	5.33
166-02	Soda	can	0.70	0.70	0.70
171-01	White sugar	2 kg.	1.73	1.86	1.86
172-02	Strawberry Preserves	12 ozs	2.71	2.69	2.34
181-02	Canned vegetable soup	10.5 oz	1.06	1.11	1.14
182-04	Corned beef hash	15 oz	2.19	2.13	2.13
186-16	Salt	8 oz	0.58	0.58	0.60