

This communication is filed pursuant to Rule 425 under The Securities Act of 1933, as amended, and deemed filed pursuant to Rule 14d-2 of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended.

Subject Company: Royal Dutch Petroleum Company

Registration Number: 333-125037

Date: May 25, 2005

LEGAL INFORMATION

Holders of ordinary shares of Royal Dutch Petroleum Company (N.V. Koninklijke Nederlandsche Petroleum Maatschappij) ("Royal Dutch") are urged to carefully review the registration statement on Form F-4 (including the prospectus) and other documents relating to the Royal Dutch exchange offer (the "Royal Dutch Offer") that have been or will be filed with, or furnished to, the US Securities and Exchange Commission (the "SEC") by Royal Dutch Shell plc ("Royal Dutch Shell") and the related solicitation/recommendation statement on Schedule 14D-9 that has been filed with the SEC by Royal Dutch and, as the case may be, the Royal Dutch Offer document and the prospectus which will be filed with, or furnished to, Euronext Amsterdam N.V. and the Dutch Authority for the Financial Markets by Royal Dutch Shell, regarding the Royal Dutch Offer, because each of these documents will contain important information relating to the Royal Dutch Offer. A free copy of these documents filed with the SEC (once filed) and other documents made public or filed with, or furnished to, the SEC by Royal Dutch Shell, Royal Dutch and The "Shell" Transport and Trading Company, p.l.c ("Shell Transport") can be obtained at the SEC's website at www.sec.gov. These documents may also be obtained at the Royal Dutch Shell website at www.shell.com/unification free of charge by contacting Investor Relations, Shell International B.V., FSK, PO Box 162, 2501 AN The Hague, The Netherlands.

NOT FOR RELEASE, PUBLICATION OR DISTRIBUTION IN WHOLE OR IN PART INTO ITALY OR JAPAN

The Royal Dutch Offer and the Scheme are not being and will not be made, directly or indirectly, in or into or by the use of the mails or any other means or instrumentality (including, without limitation, facsimile transmission, telex, telephone or internet) of interstate or foreign commerce of, or any such facilities of a national securities exchange of, Japan, and are not and will not be capable of acceptance by any such use, means, instrumentality or facilities from or within Japan. The Royal Dutch Offer and the Scheme are not being made to residents of Japan or in Japan. This document and other documents related to the Transaction must not be electronically provided to, nor accessed by, residents of Japan or persons who are in Japan. Copies of this document and any other documents related to the Transaction are not being, and must not be, mailed or otherwise distributed or sent to any person or company in or from Japan. Persons receiving this document (including custodians, nominees and trustees) or other documents related to the Transaction must not distribute or send them to any person or company in or from Japan.

The Royal Dutch Offer and the Scheme have not been notified to the Commissione Nazionale per le Società e la Borsa pursuant to applicable Italian securities laws and implementing regulations. Absent such notification, no public offer can be carried out in the Republic of Italy. Consequently, this document and other documents relating to the Transaction have not been, and not cannot be, disclosed to any Italian residents or person or entity in the Republic of Italy and no other form of solicitation has been and can be, carried out in the Republic of Italy. This document and any document relating to the Transaction may not be mailed, distributed, disseminated or otherwise disclosed to any Italian residents or persons or entities in the Republic of Italy.

The Royal Dutch Offer is not to be made in New Zealand and may not be accepted by persons in New Zealand except as set out below. No prospectus has been registered with the New Zealand Registrar of Companies in accordance with the Securities Act 1978 (New Zealand) (the "New Zealand Securities Act"). Accordingly, neither the Royal Dutch Offer Document nor any other offering materials or advertisement in relation to the Royal Dutch Offer may be received by a person in New Zealand nor may Royal Dutch Shell Shares be offered directly or indirectly in New Zealand except in circumstances where there is no contravention of the New Zealand Securities Act (or any statutory modification or re-enactment of, or statutory substitution for, the New Zealand Securities Act).

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CAUTIONARY STATEMENTS CONCERNING FORWARD LOOKING STATEMENTS

This document contains forward-looking statements that are subject to risk factors associated with the oil, gas, power, chemicals and renewables business as well as risks related to the proposed transaction pursuant to which Royal Dutch Shell will become the holding company of Royal Dutch and Shell Transport (the "Transaction"). It is believed that the expectations reflected in these statements are reasonable, but they may be affected by a variety of variables which could cause actual results, trends or reserves replacement to differ materially, including, but not limited to: the failure of the conditions to the Transaction to be satisfied (including the failure of the Royal Dutch general meeting of shareholders to approve the implementation agreement between Royal Dutch Shell, Royal Dutch and Shell Transport and the failure of Shell Transport shareholders to approve the scheme of arrangement of Shell Transport (the "Scheme")); the costs related to the Transaction; the failure of the Transaction to achieve the expected benefits; changes in dividend policy; the development of the trading market in Royal Dutch Shell shares; tax treatment of dividends paid to shareholders; the accounting implications of the Transaction and other factors affecting the Royal Dutch/Shell Group's businesses generally, including, but not limited to, price fluctuations, actual demand, currency fluctuations, drilling and production results, reserve estimates, loss of market, industry competition, environmental risks, physical risks, risks associated with the identification of suitable potential acquisition properties and targets and successful negotiation and consummation of such transactions, the risk of doing business in developing countries, legislative, fiscal and regulatory developments including potential litigation and regulatory effects arising from recategorisation of reserves, economic and financial market conditions in various countries and regions, political risks, project delay or advancement, approvals and cost estimates. Each forward-looking statement speaks only as of the date of the particular statement. Please refer to the Annual Report on Form 20-F for the year ended 31 December 2004 (as amended) for a description of certain important factors, risks and uncertainties that may affect the Royal Dutch/Shell Group's businesses. None of Royal Dutch Shell, Royal Dutch, Shell Transport nor any member of the Royal Dutch/Shell Group undertakes any obligation to publicly update or revise any forward-looking statements as a result of new information, future events or other information. In light of these risks, the results of Royal Dutch Shell, Royal Dutch, Shell Transport, the Royal Dutch/Shell Group or the Royal Dutch Shell Group could differ materially from the forward-looking statements contained in this document.

THE FOLLOWING IS A FORM LETTER SENT TO AUSTRALIAN PARTICIPANTS IN THE ROYAL DUTCH AND SHELL TRANSPORT AUSTRALIAN EMPLOYEE SHARE AND SAVE PLAN BEGINNING ON MAY 25, 2005

The Shell Company of
Australia Limited
GPO Box 872K
Melbourne VIC 3001
Australia
Tel + 61 3 9666 5444

Participant
HOME ADDRESS
(Need an alert that tells people that need to check the system for address or
also send email)

24 May 2005

Dear Ms/Mr X

Shell Employee Share & Save Plan
Important information about your Tax Exempt Shares

I am writing to you because you are a participant in the "Australian Employee Share and Save Plan" (**AESSP**) — Tax Exempt Scheme, administered by CitiStreet (formerly Watson Wyatt). Under the AESSP you have been contributing pre-tax funds of up to \$1,000 a year to acquire Tax Exempt Shares in Royal Dutch Petroleum Company (**Royal Dutch or RD**).

The recently announced restructure of the Shell corporate group has implications for your shareholding. This letter explains what choices you have under the restructure and the potential tax implications. ***The information below is a general guide only and should not be interpreted as personal tax advice. You may wish to seek independent professional advice on the tax implications of the restructure, taking into account your own personal circumstances.***

Your Shareholding

We have enclosed your latest Statement Advice from CitiStreet with details of your current shareholding as at 23 May 2005. This Statement outlines how many of your shares are Restricted Tax Exempt Shares (still subject to the 3 year disposal restriction) and how many are Unrestricted Tax Exempt Shares (no longer subject to the 3 year disposal restriction). The tax treatment of **restricted** and **unrestricted** shares may be different and you need to consider each of these shares accordingly.

If you have any queries regarding the Shareholding information contained in this Advice including when your shares became or will become unrestricted, please contact Steven Sutton at CitiStreet Australia Limited on 1800 888 195 or (03) 9655 5188. Alternatively use email: shareplan@citistreet.com.au.

For information on market value of RD shares, please refer to the following website:

http://www.shell.com/home/investor-en/html/iwgen/share_price/app_summary_share_price.html.

The AESSP was suspended on 20 May 2005 because of the restructure. The pre-tax funds deducted from the May payroll will be paid to you in the June payroll. No further deductions of pre-tax funds will be made. You will receive information about the future of the AESSP after the restructure.

Shell Corporate Restructure — Background

The Boards of RD and The “Shell” Transport and Trading Company plc (*Shell Transport*) have announced their intention to unify the companies under a single parent company (the *Restructure*).

If the Restructure is completed the new parent company will be known as Royal Dutch Shell plc (*Royal Dutch Shell or RDS*).

Under UK law, Shell Transport shares can be dealt with under a “Scheme of Arrangement” that allows the shares to be cancelled and new RDS shares issued to Shell Transport shareholders in exchange. However, under Dutch law the Restructure requires RDS to make a “takeover” bid for RD shares. To this end, RDS is making a “public exchange offer” to RD shareholders to swap their RD shares for RDS shares (*Royal Dutch Offer*).

If RD shareholders with more than 95% of the shares in RD choose to participate in the Royal Dutch Offer, RDS may initiate court proceedings under Dutch law to compulsorily acquire the remaining RD shares. This process is called ‘squeeze out’. Under Dutch law shareholders in the ‘squeeze out’ group cannot receive RDS shares in return for their RD shares but must receive cash instead. The cash amount will be determined by the Dutch court.

If RD shareholders with less than 95% of the shares in RD choose to participate in the Royal Dutch Offer, RDS has the discretion whether to proceed with the Royal Dutch Offer or not.

More information about the Restructure is contained in a number of detailed disclosure documents which can be viewed and/or downloaded from www.shell.com/unification.

Implications for your Shareholding

This letter sets out:

1. The impact of the Restructure on the plan rules that relate to your Restricted Tax Exempt Shares, including some recent amendments to the plan rules.
2. The effect of the Restructure on your Restricted Tax Exempt Shares including the likely tax implications.
3. The choices you have to make in relation to your Unrestricted Tax Exempt Shares (whole numbers only) including the likely tax implications of those choices, and how you must communicate those choices to the trustee.
4. What will happen to your fractions of Unrestricted Tax Exempt Shares.

Note: The following discussion assumes that you **signed** a tax 'election to pay income tax' in each year you acquired your Tax Exempt Shares. As set out in the Share Plan booklet, you had to sign the election notice in order to claim the tax exemption on the discount received on your Tax Exempt Shares in the year you acquired them. A copy of the election notice is available to you by accessing the Shell Intranet at <http://sww.sope.shell.com/australia/forms/en/572/7807-1-0/category.aspx>.

It would generally be expected that you would have signed the election notice unless you also participated in another employee share/option plan in the same tax year as your Tax Exempt Shares were acquired. The election notice did not (does not) have to be lodged with the Australian Taxation Office but should be kept with your tax records.

Restricted Tax Exempt Shares

1. Plan rules

We have recently confirmed with the Australian Taxation Office (**ATO**) that in their view, if participants with Restricted Tax Exempt Shares participate in public exchange offers like the offer being made by RDS for all the ordinary shares in RD as part of the Restructure, their tax exemption will be retrospectively lost.

Therefore, to ensure that the Restructure does not result in participants with Restricted Tax Exempt Shares losing the tax exemption claimed by them in the year they acquired the Restricted Tax Exempt Shares, the Share Plan rules have been amended to ensure that Tax Exempt plan participants cannot voluntarily participate in the Royal Dutch Offer.

2. Effect of the Restructure on your Restricted Tax Exempt Shares

Summary

- You **do not have to do anything** in relation to your Restricted Tax Exempt Shares.
- You will **keep the tax exemption** on the acquisition of your Restricted Tax Exempt Shares.
- In the event that your Restricted Tax Exempt Shares are compulsorily acquired under Dutch law, you will receive **cash** for your shares. You may make a **taxable capital gain** if the cash you receive exceeds the cost base of your Restricted Tax Exempt Shares.
- If your Restricted Tax Exempt Shares are not compulsorily acquired under Dutch law, you will keep your Restricted Tax Exempt Shares (but will be able to sell them when they become Unrestricted Tax Exempt Shares).

Detailed Explanation

You cannot tender your Restricted Tax Exempt Shares for acceptance into the Royal Dutch Offer (see point 1.).

(a) You will receive cash if 'squeeze out' occurs

If as a result of the Royal Dutch Offer, RDS acquires 95% or more of the issued and outstanding share capital of RD, RDS may initiate 'squeeze out' proceedings under Dutch law to acquire the remaining RD shares.

If 'squeeze out' occurs, your Restricted Tax Exempt Shares (including fractions) will be transferred to RDS and you will receive **cash** for your Restricted Tax Exempt Shares (including fractions). The cash amount will be determined by the Dutch court. You may make a **taxable capital gain** from the transfer of your Restricted Tax Exempt Shares if the cash you receive on 'squeeze out' is more than the cost base of your Restricted Tax Exempt Shares. The cost base of your Restricted Tax Exempt Shares is shown on the Statement Advices you receive from CitiStreet.

A ruling has been sought from the ATO to confirm the tax implications to you of your Restricted Tax Exempt Shares being transferred to RDS as a result of 'squeeze out' proceedings being successfully initiated. It is expected that the ruling will be issued by the end of June 2005. The outcome of the ruling will be communicated to you in a separate letter.

(b) You will keep Restricted Tax Exempt Shares if 'squeeze out' proceedings do not occur

If 'squeeze out' does not occur, your Restricted Tax Exempt Shares will continue to be subject to the same restrictions on disposal that currently apply to those shares. As soon as those restrictions lift (earlier of 3 years from acquisition and leaving Shell), you will be allowed to sell those shares.

If 'squeeze out' does not occur, RDS would have the right following the Restructure to use any other legally permitted method to obtain 100% of RD shares. For further information on the methods please refer to the detailed disclosure documents.

Unrestricted Tax Exempt Shares

3. Unrestricted Tax Exempt Shares (whole shares) — Your choices and the tax implications of those choices

Summary

- See Table 1 attached for a summary of the tax implications of your choices.
- You need to **make a choice** whether you want the trustee to accept the Royal Dutch Offer for your Unrestricted Tax Exempt Shares. **This choice has to be made by you completing and signing the attached instruction form and returning it to the trustee before 5th July 2005 using the reply envelope provided.**
- If you instruct the trustee to accept the Royal Dutch Offer for your Unrestricted Tax Exempt Shares, and the Restructure proceeds, you will receive new RDS shares in exchange for your existing Unrestricted Tax Exempt Shares. You will make a **capital gain or loss** depending on whether the market value of the RDS shares you receive exceeds the cost base of your Unrestricted Tax Exempt Shares. A ruling has been sought from the ATO on whether **capital gain tax** “roll-over” relief is available on any capital gains.
- **The only way you will receive RDS shares is if you instruct the trustee to accept the Royal Dutch Offer.**
- If you instruct the trustee not to accept the Royal Dutch Offer for your Unrestricted Tax Exempt Shares, you will keep your Unrestricted Tax Exempt Shares unless those shares are compulsorily acquired under Dutch law (‘squeeze out’). In the event that ‘squeeze out’ occurs, you will receive cash for your shares. You will make a **capital gain or loss** depending on whether the cash you receive exceeds the cost base of your Unrestricted Tax Exempt Shares.
- If you take no action, the trustee will choose on your behalf whether to accept the Royal Dutch Offer. However, if the trustee accepts the Royal Dutch Offer without your instructions, you will receive cash (not RDS shares) for your Unrestricted Tax Exempt Shares. This will result in potentially two tax events (refer to the detailed explanation below).

Detailed Explanation

You have the following choices regarding the Royal Dutch Offer that has been made for your Unrestricted Tax Exempt Shares (whole numbers only). You make your choice by completing the attached instruction form, signing it and returning it to the trustee by no later than 5th July 2005 using the reply paid envelope included in this letter.

(a) Instruct the trustee to accept the Royal Dutch Offer for your Unrestricted Tax Exempt Shares (whole numbers only).

If you instruct the trustee to accept the Royal Dutch Offer for your Unrestricted Tax Exempt Shares, and the Restructure proceeds, your Unrestricted Tax Exempt Shares will be exchanged for shares in RDS.

The exchange of your shares will be a **capital gains tax (CGT)** event. This will require you to calculate whether you have made a capital gain or loss on your Unrestricted Tax Exempt Shares. The capital gains tax event will occur in the tax year ended 30 June 2006).

However, in some circumstances, where a holder of shares exchanges shares in one company for shares in another company, and realises a capital gain, CGT “roll-over relief” is available. If CGT roll-over relief is available, and chosen, any capital gain arising on the exchange of your Unrestricted Tax Exempt Shares will be disregarded (effectively deferred until you sell the replacement shares in RDS).

As there is some uncertainty about whether CGT roll-over relief will be available, a ruling has been sought from the ATO. It is expected that the ruling will be issued by the end of June 2005. The outcome of the ruling will be communicated to you in a separate letter.

If the ATO ruling does provide for roll over relief, any capital gain arising on the exchange of your Unrestricted Tax Exempt Shares will be disregarded (effectively deferred until you sell the replacement RDS shares).

If the ATO ruling does not provide for CGT roll-over relief, a capital gain will arise to the extent that the capital proceeds exceeds the cost base of your Unrestricted Tax Exempt Shares. The capital proceeds will equal the market value of the RDS shares received. The cost base of your Unrestricted Tax Exempt Shares is shown on the Statement Advices you receive from CitiStreet. As you will have held the Unrestricted Tax Exempt shares for more than 12 months, you will be entitled to reduce any capital gain by 50%.

A capital loss will arise to the extent that the capital proceeds are less than the reduced cost base of your Unrestricted Tax Exempt Shares. Capital losses can be used to reduce other capital gains (and can be carried forward) but cannot be deducted against ordinary income.

If you instruct the trustee to accept the Royal Dutch Offer for only some of your Unrestricted Tax Exempt Shares, you will be deemed to instruct the trustee not to accept the Royal Dutch Offer for your remaining Unrestricted Tax Exempt Shares.

(b) Instruct the trustee not to accept the Royal Dutch Offer for your Unrestricted Tax Exempt Shares (whole numbers only).

(i) ‘Squeeze-out’ does not occur

If you instruct the trustee not to accept the Royal Dutch Offer for your Unrestricted Tax Exempt Shares, and ‘squeeze out’ does not occur, you will keep your Unrestricted Tax Exempt Shares and no capital gain or loss would generally arise until you choose to sell your Unrestricted Tax Exempt Shares.

(ii) ‘Squeeze-out’ occurs

If you instruct the trustee not to accept the Royal Dutch Offer for your Unrestricted Tax Exempt Shares, but ‘squeeze out’ occurs, your Unrestricted Tax Exempt Shares will be transferred to RDS and you will receive **cash** for those shares. You will make a **capital gain or loss** from the transfer of your Unrestricted Tax Exempt Shares depending on whether the cash you receive on ‘squeeze out’ is more than the cost base of your Unrestricted Tax Exempt Shares. The cost base of your Unrestricted Tax Exempt Shares

is shown on the Statement Advices you receive from CitiStreet. If you have held the Unrestricted Tax Exempt Shares for more than 12 months before 'squeeze out' occurs you will be entitled to reduce any capital gain by 50% Capital losses can be used to reduce other capital gains (and can be carried forward) but cannot be deducted against ordinary income.

(c) Take no action.

If you do nothing (ie you do not complete, sign and return the attached instruction form or for any other reason your properly completed and signed instruction form does not reach the trustee by the stated deadline), the trustee will have a discretion as to whether to accept the Royal Dutch Offer for your Unrestricted Tax Exempt Shares.

(i) Trustee accepts the Royal Dutch Offer

If the trustee decides to accept the Royal Dutch Offer, and the Restructure proceeds, the trustee will receive RDS shares for your RD shares. However, under the share plan rules the trustee must then sell the RDS shares and give you net **cash** proceeds for those shares. This may result in two tax events, ie on the exchange of your RD shares (if CGT roll-over is not available) and then the sale by the trustee of the RDS shares. In general terms only, you will make a **capital gain or loss** from these two CGT events depending on whether the cash you receive is more than the cost base of your Unrestricted Tax Exempt Shares.

(ii) Trustee does not accept the Royal Dutch Offer and 'squeeze out' does not occur

If the trustee decides to not accept the Royal Dutch Offer and 'squeeze out' does not occur, you will keep your Unrestricted Tax Exempt Shares. No capital gain or loss will generally arise until you choose to sell your Unrestricted Tax Exempt Shares.

(ii) Trustee does not accept the Royal Dutch Offer but 'squeeze out' occurs

If the trustee decides to not accept the Royal Dutch Offer but 'squeeze out' occurs, you will receive **cash** for your Unrestricted Tax Exempt Shares. You will make a **capital gain or loss** depending on whether the cash you receive is more than the cost base of your Unrestricted Tax Exempt Shares.

4. What will happen to your fractions of Unrestricted Tax Exempt Shares

You cannot instruct the trustee as to how the trustee should deal with the Royal Dutch Offer for fractions (ie less than 1 share) of Unrestricted Tax Exempt Shares that the trustee holds on your behalf. The trustee will have a discretion as to whether to accept the Royal Dutch Offer in relation to your fractions of Unrestricted Tax Exempt Shares.

If the trustee decides to accept the Royal Dutch Offer in respect of your fractions of Unrestricted Tax Exempt Shares, and the Restructure proceeds, you will receive **cash** proceeds from the sale of the RDS shares received by the trustee in exchange for your fractions of Unrestricted Tax Exempt Shares. Further, if the trustee decides not to accept the Royal Dutch Offer in respect of your fractions of Unrestricted Tax Exempt Shares, but 'squeeze out' occurs, you will also receive **cash** for your fractions of Unrestricted Tax Exempt Shares. In general terms only, you will make a

taxable capital gain from your fractions of Unrestricted Tax Exempt Shares if the cash you receive for those fractions is more than the cost base of those fractions.

If the trustee decides not to accept and 'squeeze out' does not occur, you will keep your fractions of RD shares and no tax impact will arise as a result of this event.

More Information

You will receive a further letter in June once the outcome of the ATO rulings are known. This further letter will contain worked examples of the potential tax implications of your different choices (where applicable). You may wish to take personal tax advice in the light of the current situation and the anticipated tight time frame for decision making (which is not in the control of Shell Australia).

Information sessions will be held in late June once the position is clearer — details will be provided with as much notice as possible.

If you have any questions regarding the information in this letter please contact Kate Coburn on 71 4377, or (03) 8823 4377.

Please bear in mind that Kate cannot answer the questions that have been referred to the ATO until we get definitive advice from them and is not permitted by law to provide any advice that is, or could be construed to be, personal financial advice.

Yours sincerely,

Kairen Harris
HR General Manager, Australia & New Zealand

This document does not constitute an offer to purchase nor the solicitation of an offer to sell any securities of RDS, STT or RD. The STT shareholders are urged to read the scheme document and listing particulars and the RD shareholders are urged to read the offer document and the prospectus because they contain important information that shareholders should consider before making any decision regarding the Transaction. The scheme document, the offer document and the listing particulars / prospectus are available free from RD and STT and through the SEC website www.sec.gov

**TABLE 1: UNRESTRICTED TAX EXEMPT SHARES (excluding fractions)
SUMMARY OF TAX IMPLICATIONS OF EMPLOYEE CHOICES**

Employee Choices	Consequences if "squeeze out" does not occur		Consequences if "squeeze out" occurs	
	Employee holds	Employee tax consequences	Employee holds	Employee tax consequences
(a) Instruct trustee <u>to accept</u> Royal Dutch Offer for ALL shares (Option A on the instruction form) or SOME shares (Option B on the instruction form)* *NB If instruction to accept is given for only <u>some</u> shares see (b) below for consequences for remaining shares	RDS shares	Capital gain or capital loss. Consequences of capital gain depend on ATO ruling: (a) If positive ATO ruling <u>and</u> employee chooses CGT roll-over — no taxable capital gain (effective deferral of tax on capital gain) (b) If negative ATO ruling — taxable capital gain	RDS shares	Capital gain or capital loss. Consequences of capital gain depend on ATO ruling: (a) If positive ATO ruling <u>and</u> employee chooses CGT roll-over — no taxable capital gain (effective deferral of tax on capital gain) (b) If negative ATO ruling — taxable capital gain
(b) Instruct trustee not to accept Royal Dutch Offer (Option C on the instruction form)	RD shares	No tax implications	Cash	Taxable capital gain or capital loss.
(c) Take no action				
(i) Trustee decides to accept Royal Dutch Offer	Cash	Taxable capital gain or capital loss.	Cash	Taxable capital gain or capital loss.
(ii) Trustee decides not to accept Royal Dutch Offer	RD shares	No tax implications	Cash	Taxable capital gain or capital loss.