

GENERAL ELECTRIC CAPITAL CORP
Form 10-K
February 18, 2009

UNITED STATES SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20549

FORM 10-K

(Mark One)

Annual Report Pursuant to Section 13 or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934

For the fiscal year ended December 31, 2008

or

Transition Report pursuant to Section 13 or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934

For the transition period from _____ to _____

Commission file number 1-6461

General Electric Capital Corporation
(Exact name of registrant as specified in charter)

Delaware
(State or other jurisdiction of
incorporation or organization)

13-1500700
(I.R.S. Employer Identification
No.)

3135 Easton Turnpike, Fairfield,
CT

06828-0001

203/373-2211

(Address of principal executive
offices)

(Zip Code)

(Registrant's Telephone No.,
including area code)

Securities Registered Pursuant to Section 12(b) of the Act:

| Title of each class | Name of each exchange on which registered |
|--|--|
| 6.625% Public Income Notes Due June 28, 2032 | New York Stock Exchange |
| 6.10% Public Income Notes Due November 15, 2032 | New York Stock Exchange |
| 5.875% Notes Due February 18, 2033 | New York Stock Exchange |
| Step-Up Public Income Notes Due January 28, 2035 | New York Stock Exchange |
| 6.45% Notes Due June 15, 2046 | New York Stock Exchange |
| 6.00% Public Income Notes Due April 24, 2047 | New York Stock Exchange |
| 6.50% GE Capital InterNotes due August 15, 2048 | New York Stock Exchange |

Securities Registered Pursuant to Section 12(g) of the Act:
(Title of each class)

NONE

Indicate by check mark if the registrant is a well-known seasoned issuer, as defined in Rule 405 of the Securities Act. Yes No

Indicate by check mark if the registrant is not required to file reports pursuant to Section 13 or Section 15(d) of the Act. Yes No

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant (1) has filed all reports required to be filed by Section 13 or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 during the preceding 12 months (or for such shorter period that the registrant was required to file such reports), and (2) has been subject to such filing requirements for the past 90 days. Yes No

Indicate by check mark if disclosure of delinquent filers pursuant to Item 405 of Regulation S-K is not contained herein, and will not be contained, to the best of registrant's knowledge, in definitive proxy or information statements incorporated by reference in Part III of this Form 10-K or any amendment to this Form 10-K.

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant is a large accelerated filer, an accelerated filer, a non-accelerated filer, or a smaller reporting company. See definition of "large accelerated filer", "accelerated filer" and "smaller reporting company" in Rule 12b-2 of the Exchange Act. (Check one):

Large accelerated filer Accelerated filer Non-accelerated filer Smaller reporting company

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant is a shell company (as defined in Rule 12b-2 of the Exchange Act). Yes No

Aggregate market value of the outstanding common equity held by nonaffiliates of the registrant as of the last business day of the registrant's recently completed second fiscal quarter: None.

At February 17, 2009, 3,985,403 shares of voting common stock, which constitute all of the outstanding common equity, with a par value of \$14 were outstanding.

DOCUMENTS INCORPORATED BY REFERENCE

The consolidated financial statements of General Electric Company, set forth in the Annual Report on Form 10-K of General Electric Company for the year ended December 31, 2008, are incorporated by reference into Part IV hereof.

REGISTRANT MEETS THE CONDITIONS SET FORTH IN GENERAL INSTRUCTION I(1)(a) AND (b) OF FORM 10-K AND IS THEREFORE FILING THIS FORM 10-K WITH THE REDUCED DISCLOSURE FORMAT.

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PART I

Item 1. Business.

General Electric Capital Corporation

General Electric Capital Corporation (GE Capital or GECC) was incorporated in 1943 in the State of New York under the provisions of the New York Banking Law relating to investment companies, as successor to General Electric Contracts Corporation, which was formed in 1932. Until November 1987, our name was General Electric Credit Corporation. On July 2, 2001, we changed our state of incorporation to Delaware. All of our outstanding common stock is owned by General Electric Capital Services, Inc. (GE Capital Services or GECS), formerly General Electric Financial Services, Inc., the common stock of which is in turn wholly-owned by General Electric Company (GE Company or GE). Financing and services offered by GE Capital are diversified, a significant change from the original business of GE Capital, which was, financing distribution and sale of consumer and other GE products. Currently, GE manufactures few of the products financed by GE Capital.

We operate in five segments described below. These operations are subject to a variety of regulations in their respective jurisdictions. Our services are offered primarily in North America, Europe and Asia.

Our principal executive offices are located at 3135 Easton Turnpike, Fairfield, CT, 06828-0001. At December 31, 2008, our employment totaled approximately 73,000.

Our financial information, including filings with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), is available at www.ge.com/secreports. Copies are also available, without charge, from GE Corporate Investor Communications, 3135 Easton Turnpike, Fairfield, CT, 06828-0001. Reports filed with the SEC may be viewed at www.sec.gov or obtained at the SEC Public Reference Room in Washington, D.C. Information regarding the operation of the Public Reference Room may be obtained by calling the SEC at 1-800-SEC-0330. References to our website addressed in this report are provided as a convenience and do not constitute, or should be viewed as, an incorporation by reference of the information contained on, or available through, the website. Therefore, such information should not be considered part of this report.

Operating Segments

A summary description of each of our operating segments follows.

Within our operating segments, we operate the businesses described below along product lines. Additionally, in 2008, we increased our focus on core operations, ability to self-fund and restructuring low return businesses.

We also continue our longstanding practice of providing supplemental information for certain businesses within the segments.

Commercial Lending and Leasing (CLL)

CLL (38.8%, 39.4% and 43.6% of total GECC revenues in 2008, 2007 and 2006, respectively) offers a broad range of financial services worldwide. We have particular mid-market expertise, and offer loans, leases and other financial services to customers, including manufacturers, distributors and end-users for a variety of equipment and major capital assets. These assets include industrial-related facilities and equipment; vehicles; corporate aircraft; and equipment used in many industries, including the construction, manufacturing, transportation, telecommunications and healthcare

industries. During 2008, we made a number of acquisitions, the most significant of which were Merrill Lynch Capital and CitiCapital. In January 2009, we acquired Interbanca S.p.A., a leading Italian corporate bank.

We operate in a highly competitive environment. Our competitors include commercial banks, investment banks, leasing companies, financing companies associated with manufacturers, and independent finance companies. Competition related to our lending and leasing operations is based on price, that is interest rates and fees, as well as deal structure and terms. Profitability is affected not only by broad economic conditions that affect customer credit quality and the availability and cost of capital, but also by successful management of credit risk, operating risk and market risks such as interest rate and currency exchange risks. Success requires high quality risk management systems, customer and industry specific knowledge, diversification, service and distribution channels, strong collateral and asset management knowledge, deal structuring expertise and the ability to reduce costs through technology and productivity.

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Our headquarters are in Norwalk, Connecticut with offices throughout North America, Europe, Asia and Latin America.

For further information about revenues, segment profit and total assets for CLL, see the Segment Operations section of Part II, Item 7. "Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations" and note 18 to the consolidated financial statements in Part II, Item 8. "Financial Statements and Supplementary Data" of this Form 10-K Report.

Capital Solutions

Capital Solutions offers a broad range of financial services worldwide, and has particular mid-market expertise, offering loans, leases, inventory finance, transport solutions and other financial services to customers, including manufacturers, dealers and end-users for a variety of equipment and major capital assets. These assets include retail facilities; vehicles; corporate aircraft; and equipment used in many industries, including the construction, transportation, technology, and manufacturing industries.

GE Money

GE Money (36.8%, 37.0% and 33.9% of total GECC revenues in 2008, 2007 and 2006, respectively), through consolidated entities and associated companies, is a leading provider of financial services to consumers and retailers in over 50 countries around the world. We offer a full range of innovative financial products to suit customers' needs. These products include, on a global basis, private-label credit cards; personal loans; bank cards; auto loans and leases; mortgages; debt consolidation; home equity loans; deposit and other savings products; and small and medium enterprise lending. In 2008, we acquired a controlling interest in Bank BPH.

In December 2007, we sold our U.S. mortgage business (WMC). In September 2007, we committed to a plan to sell our Japanese personal loan business (Lake). During the second quarter of 2008, this planned sale was expanded to GE Money Japan, which comprises Lake and our Japanese mortgage and card businesses, excluding our minority ownership in GE Nissen Credit Co., Ltd. This sale was completed in the third quarter of 2008.

In June 2008, we committed to sell the GE Money businesses in Germany, Austria and Finland, the credit card and auto businesses in the U.K., and the credit card business in Ireland. In October 2008, we completed the sale of the GE Money business in Germany. In January 2009, we completed the sale of the remaining businesses, which are included in assets and liabilities of businesses held for sale on the Statement of Financial Position at December 31, 2008.

In December 2008, we committed to sell a portion of our Australian residential mortgage business. This sale is expected to be executed during the first quarter of 2009.

Our operations are subject to a variety of bank and consumer protection regulations. Further, a number of countries have ceilings on rates chargeable to consumers in financial service transactions. We are subject to competition from various types of financial institutions including commercial banks, leasing companies, consumer loan companies, independent finance companies, manufacturers' captive finance companies, and insurance companies. Industry participants compete on the basis of price, servicing capability, promotional marketing, risk management, and cross selling. The markets in which we operate are also subject to the risks from fluctuations in retail sales, interest and currency exchange rates, and the consumer's capacity to repay debt.

Our headquarters are in London, England and our operations are located in North America, South America, Europe, Australia and Asia.

For further information about revenues, segment profit and total assets for GE Money, see the Segment Operations section of Part II, Item 7. “Management’s Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations” and note 18 to the consolidated financial statements in Part II, Item 8. “Financial Statements and Supplementary Data” of this Form 10-K Report.

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Real Estate

Real Estate (9.8%, 10.4% and 8.6% of total GECC revenues in 2008, 2007 and 2006, respectively) offers a comprehensive range of capital and investment solutions, including equity capital for acquisition or development, as well as fixed and floating rate mortgages for new acquisitions or re-capitalizations of commercial real estate worldwide. Our business finances, with both equity and loan structures, the acquisition, refinancing and renovation of office buildings, apartment buildings, retail facilities, hotels, parking facilities and industrial properties. Our typical real estate loans are intermediate term, senior, fixed or floating-rate, and are secured by existing income-producing commercial properties. We invest in, and provide restructuring financing for, portfolios of mortgage loans, limited partnerships and tax-exempt bonds.

In the normal course of our business operations, we sell certain real estate equity investments when it is economically advantageous for us to do so. However, as real estate values are affected by certain forces beyond our control (e.g., market fundamentals and demographic conditions), it is difficult to predict with certainty the level of future sales or sales prices.

We operate in a highly competitive environment. Our competitors include banks, financial institutions, real estate companies, real estate investment funds and other financial companies. Competition in our equity investment business is primarily based on price, and competition in our lending business is primarily based on interest rates and fees, as well as deal structure and terms. As we compete globally, our success is sensitive to the economic and political environment of each country in which we do business.

Our headquarters are in Norwalk, Connecticut with offices throughout North America, Mexico, Europe, Australia and Asia.

For further information about revenues, segment profit and total assets for Real Estate, see the Segment Operations section of Part II, Item 7. "Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations" and note 18 to the consolidated financial statements in Part II, Item 8. "Financial Statements and Supplementary Data" of this Form 10-K Report.

Energy Financial Services

Energy Financial Services (5.4%, 3.6% and 2.9% of total GECC revenues in 2008, 2007 and 2006, respectively) offers structured equity, debt, leasing, partnership financing, project finance and broad-based commercial finance to the global energy and water industries and invests in operating assets in these industries. Energy Financial Services also owns a controlling interest in Regency Energy Partners LP, a midstream master limited partnership engaged in the gathering, processing, transporting and marketing of natural gas and gas liquids.

We operate in a highly competitive environment. Our competitors include banks, financial institutions, energy and water companies, and other finance and leasing companies. Competition is primarily based on price, that is interest rates and fees, as well as deal structure and terms. As we compete globally, our success is sensitive to the economic and political environment of each country in which we do business.

Our headquarters are in Stamford, Connecticut with offices throughout North America, Europe, Asia and the Middle East.

For further information about revenues, segment profit and total assets for Energy Financial Services, see the Segment Operations section of Part II, Item 7. "Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations" and note 18 to the consolidated financial statements in Part II, Item 8. "Financial Statements and

Supplementary Data” of this Form 10-K Report.

GE Commercial Aviation Services (GECAS)

GECAS (7.2%, 7.2% and 7.6% of total GECC revenues in 2008, 2007 and 2006, respectively) is a global leader in commercial aircraft leasing and finance, delivering fleet and financing solutions for commercial aircraft. Our airport financing unit makes debt and equity investments, primarily in mid-sized regional airports. We also co-sponsor an infrastructure private equity fund, which invests in large infrastructure projects including gateway airports. GECAS also has in its portfolio a wide array of products including leases, debt and equity investments to the global transportation industry (marine, rail and intermodal).

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We operate in a highly competitive environment. Our competitors include aircraft manufacturers, banks, financial institutions, equity investors, and other finance and leasing companies. Competition is based on lease rate financing terms, aircraft delivery dates, condition and availability, as well as available capital demand for financing.

Our headquarters are in Stamford, Connecticut and Shannon, Ireland with offices throughout North America, Europe, Middle East, Asia and South America.

For further information about revenues, segment profit and total assets for GECAS, see the Segment Operations section of Part II, Item 7. "Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations" and note 18 to the consolidated financial statements in Part II, Item 8. "Financial Statements and Supplementary Data" of this Form 10-K Report.

Discontinued Operations

Discontinued operations comprised GE Money Japan; WMC; GE Life, our U.K.-based life insurance operation; and Genworth Financial, Inc. (Genworth), our formerly wholly-owned subsidiary that conducted most of our consumer insurance business, including life and mortgage insurance operations.

For further information about discontinued operations, see the Segment Operations section of Part II, Item 7. "Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations" and note 2 to the consolidated financial statements in Part II, Item 8. "Financial Statements and Supplementary Data" of this Form 10-K Report.

Regulations and Competition

Our activities are subject to a variety of U.S. federal and state regulations including, at the federal level, the Consumer Credit Protection Act, the Equal Credit Opportunity Act and certain regulations issued by the Federal Trade Commission. A majority of states have ceilings on rates chargeable to customers on retail loan transactions, installment loans and revolving credit financing. Our insurance activities are regulated by various state insurance commissions and non-U.S. regulatory authorities. We are a unitary diversified savings and loan holding company by virtue of owning a federal savings bank in the U.S.; as such, we are subject to holding company supervision by the Office of Thrift Supervision. Our global operations are subject to regulation in their respective jurisdictions. To date, compliance with such regulations has not had a material adverse effect on our financial position or results of operations.

The businesses in which we engage are highly competitive. We are subject to competition from various types of financial institutions, including banks, thrifts, investment banks, broker-dealers, credit unions, leasing companies, consumer loan companies, independent finance companies, finance companies associated with manufacturers and insurance and reinsurance companies.

Business and Economic Conditions

Our businesses are generally affected by general business and economic conditions in countries in which we conduct business. When overall economic conditions deteriorate in those countries, there generally are adverse effects on our operations, although those effects are dynamic and complex. For example, a downturn in employment or economic growth in a particular national or regional economy will generally increase the pressure on customers, which generally will result in deterioration of repayment patterns and a reduction in the value of collateral. However, in such a downturn, demand for loans and other products and services we offer may actually increase. Interest rates, another macro-economic factor, are important to our businesses. In the lending and leasing businesses, higher real interest

rates increase our cost to borrow funds, but also provide higher levels of return on new investments. For our operations, such as the insurance activities, that are linked less directly to interest rates, rate changes generally affect returns on investment portfolios.

Forward-Looking Statements

This document contains “forward-looking statements”- that is, statements related to future, not past, events. In this context, forward-looking statements often address our expected future business and financial performance and financial condition, and often contain words such as “expect,” “anticipate,” “intend,” “plan,” “believe,” “seek,” or “will.” Forward-looking statements by their nature address matters that are, to different degrees, uncertain. For us, particular uncertainties that could cause our actual results to be materially different than those expressed in our forward-looking statements include: the severity and duration of current economic and financial conditions, including volatility in interest and exchange rates, commodity and equity prices and the value of financial assets; the impact of U.S. and foreign government programs to restore liquidity and stimulate national and global economies; the impact of conditions in the financial and credit markets on the availability and cost of GE Capital’s funding and on our ability to

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reduce GE Capital's asset levels and commercial paper exposure as planned; the impact of conditions in the housing market and unemployment rates on the level of commercial and consumer credit defaults; our ability to maintain our current credit rating and the impact on our funding costs and competitive position if we do not do so; the soundness of other financial institutions with which GE Capital does business; the adequacy of our cash flow and earnings and other conditions which may affect GE's ability to maintain GE's quarterly dividend at the current level; the level of demand and financial performance of the major industries GE serves, including, without limitation, air and rail transportation, energy generation, network television, real estate and healthcare; the impact of regulation and regulatory, investigative and legal proceedings and legal compliance risks; strategic actions, including acquisitions and dispositions and our success in integrating acquired businesses; and numerous other matters of national, regional and global scale, including those of a political, economic, business and competitive nature. These uncertainties are described in more detail in Part I, Item 1A. "Risk Factors" of this Form 10-K Report. We do not undertake to update our forward-looking statements.

Item 1A. Risk Factors

The following discussion of risk factors contains "forward-looking statements," as discussed in Item 1. "Business". These risk factors may be important to understanding any statement in this Annual Report on Form 10-K or elsewhere. The following information should be read in conjunction with Part II, Item 7. "Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations" (MD&A), and the consolidated financial statements and related notes in Part II, Item 8. "Financial Statements and Supplementary Data" of this Form 10-K Report.

Our businesses routinely encounter and address risks, some of which will cause our future results to be different - sometimes materially different - than we presently anticipate. Discussion about important operational risks that our businesses encounter can be found in the MD&A section and in the business descriptions in Item 1. "Business" of this Form 10-K Report. Below, we describe certain important operational and strategic risks. Our reactions to material future developments as well as our competitors' reactions to those developments will affect our future results.

The unprecedented conditions in the financial and credit markets may affect the availability and cost of GE Capital's funding.

The financial and credit markets have been experiencing unprecedented levels of volatility and disruption, putting downward pressure on financial and other asset prices generally and on the credit availability for certain issuers. The U.S. Government and the Federal Reserve Bank recently created a number of programs to help stabilize credit markets and financial institutions and restore liquidity. Many non-U.S. governments have also created or announced similar measures for institutions in their respective countries. These programs have improved conditions in the credit and financial markets, but there can be no assurance that these programs, individually or collectively, will continue to have beneficial effects on the markets overall, or will resolve the credit or liquidity issues of companies that participate in the programs.

A large portion of GE Capital's borrowings have been issued in the commercial paper and term debt markets. GE Capital has continued to issue commercial paper and, as planned, has reduced its outstanding commercial paper balance to \$67 billion at the end of 2008. GE Capital has also issued term debt, mainly debt guaranteed by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation under the Temporary Liquidity Guarantee Program (TLGP) and, to a lesser extent, on a non-guaranteed basis. Although the commercial paper and term debt markets have remained available to GE Capital to fund its operations and debt maturities, there can be no assurance that such markets will continue to be available or, if available, that the cost of such funding will not substantially increase. If current levels of market disruption and volatility continue or worsen, or if we cannot further reduce GE Capital's asset levels as planned in 2009, we would seek to repay commercial paper and term debt as it becomes due or to meet our other liquidity needs by using the

Federal Reserve's Commercial Paper Funding Facility (CPFF) and the TLGP, applying the net proceeds of GE's October 2008 equity offering and the investment by Berkshire Hathaway Inc., drawing upon contractually committed lending agreements primarily provided by global banks and/or seeking other sources of funding. There can be no assurance, however, that the TLGP and the CPFF will be extended beyond their scheduled expiration, or that, under such extreme market conditions, contractually committed lending agreements and other funding sources would be available or sufficient.

Our 2009 funding plan anticipates approximately \$45 billion of senior, unsecured long-term debt issuance. In January 2009, we completed issuances of \$11.0 billion of funding under the TLGP. We also issued \$5.1 billion in non-guaranteed senior, unsecured debt with a maturity of 30 years under the non-guarantee option of the TLGP. These issuances, along with the \$13.4 billion of pre-funding done in December 2008, bring our aggregate issuances to \$29.5 billion or 66% of our anticipated 2009 funding plan. Additionally, we anticipate that we will be 90% complete with our 2009 funding plan by June 30, 2009.

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Difficult conditions in the financial services markets have materially and adversely affected the business and results of operations of GE Capital and we do not expect these conditions to improve in the near future.

Dramatic declines in the housing market, with falling home prices and increasing foreclosures and unemployment, have resulted in significant write-downs of asset values by financial institutions, including government-sponsored entities and major commercial and investment banks. These write-downs, initially of mortgage-backed securities but spreading to credit default swaps and other derivative securities, have caused many financial institutions to seek additional capital, to merge with other institutions and, in some cases, to fail. Many lenders and institutional investors have reduced and, in some cases, ceased to provide funding to borrowers including other financial institutions. This market turmoil and tightening of credit have led to an increased level of commercial and consumer delinquencies, lack of consumer confidence, increased market volatility and widespread reduction of business activity generally. If these conditions continue or worsen, there can be no assurance that we will be able to recover fully the value of certain assets such as goodwill and intangibles. In addition, although we have established allowances for losses in our portfolio of financing receivables that we believe are adequate, significant and unexpected further deterioration in the economy and in default and recovery rates could require us to increase these allowances and write-offs, which, depending on the amount of the increase, could have a material adverse effect on our business, financial position and results of operations.

The soundness of other financial institutions could adversely affect GE Capital.

GE Capital has exposure to many different industries and counterparties, and routinely executes transactions with counterparties in the financial services industry, including brokers and dealers, commercial banks, investment banks and other institutional clients. Many of these transactions expose GE Capital to credit risk in the event of default of its counterparty or client. In addition, GE Capital's credit risk may be increased when the collateral held by it cannot be realized upon sale or is liquidated at prices not sufficient to recover the full amount of the loan or derivative exposure due to it. GE Capital also has exposure to these financial institutions in the form of unsecured debt instruments held in its investment portfolios. GE Capital has policies relating to initial credit rating requirements and to exposure limits to counterparties (as described in note 20 to the consolidated financial statements in Part II, Item 8. "Financial Statements and Supplementary Data" of this Form 10-K Report), which mitigate credit and liquidity risk. There can be no assurance, however, that any losses or impairments to the carrying value of financial assets would not materially and adversely affect GE Capital's business, financial position and results of operations.

The real estate markets in which GE Capital participates are highly uncertain.

GE Capital participates in the commercial real estate market in two ways: it provides financing for the acquisition, refinancing and renovation of various types of properties and it also acquires an equity position in various types of properties. The profitability of real estate investments is largely dependent upon the specific geographic market in which the properties are located and the perceived value of that market at the time of sale. Such activity may vary significantly from one year to the next. Rising unemployment, a slowdown in general business activity and recent disruptions in the credit markets have adversely affected, and are expected to continue to adversely affect, the value of real estate assets GE Capital holds. Under current market and credit conditions, there can be no assurance as to the level of sales GE Capital will complete or the net sales proceeds it will realize. Also, there can be no assurance that occupancy rates and market rentals will continue at their current levels given the current economic environment during the period in which GE Capital continues to hold its equity investments in these properties which may result in an impairment to the carrying value of those investments.

GE Capital is also a residential mortgage lender in certain geographic markets, particularly in the United Kingdom, that have been and may continue to be adversely affected by declines in residential real estate values and home sale volumes, job losses, consumer bankruptcies and other factors that may negatively impact the credit performance of

our mortgage loans. Our allowance for loan losses on these mortgage loans is based on our analysis of current and historical delinquency and loan performance, as well as other management assumptions that may be inaccurate predictions of credit performance in this environment. There can be no assurance that, in this environment, credit performance will not be materially worse than anticipated and, as a result, materially and adversely affect GE Capital's business, financial position and results of operations.

Failure to maintain our "Triple-A" credit ratings could adversely affect our cost of funds and related margins, liquidity, competitive position and access to capital markets.

The major debt rating agencies routinely evaluate our debt. This evaluation is based on a number of factors, which include financial strength as well as transparency with rating agencies and timeliness of financial reporting. In December 2008, Standard & Poor's Ratings Services affirmed GE and GE Capital's "AAA" long-term and "A-1+" short-term corporate credit ratings but revised its ratings outlook from stable to negative based partly on the concerns regarding GE Capital's future performance and funding in light of capital market turmoil. On January 24, 2009, Moody's Investment Services placed the long-term ratings of GE and GE Capital on review for possible downgrade. The firm's "Prime-1" short-term ratings were affirmed. Moody's said the review for downgrade is based primarily upon heightened uncertainty regarding GE Capital's asset quality and earnings performance in future periods. In light of the difficulties in the financial services industry and the difficult financial markets, there can be no assurance that GE will

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successfully implement its 2009 operational and funding plan for GE Capital or, in the event of further deterioration in the financial markets, that completion of its plan and any other steps GE might take in response will be sufficient to allow us to maintain our “Triple-A” ratings. Failure to do so could adversely affect our cost of funds and related margins, liquidity, competitive position and access to capital markets. Various debt instruments, guarantees and covenants would require posting additional capital or collateral in the event of a ratings downgrade, but none are triggered if our ratings are reduced to AA-/Aa3 or A-1+/P-1 or higher.

Current conditions in the global economy and the major industries we serve also may materially and adversely affect the business and results of operations of GE’s non-financial businesses.

The business and operating results of GE’s technology infrastructure, energy infrastructure, consumer and industrial and media businesses have been and will continue to be affected by worldwide economic conditions and, in particular, conditions in the air and rail transportation, energy generation, healthcare, network television and other major industries we serve. As a result of slowing global economic growth, the credit market crisis, declining consumer and business confidence, increased unemployment, reduced levels of capital expenditures, fluctuating commodity prices, bankruptcies and other challenges currently affecting the global economy, GE’s customers may experience deterioration of their businesses, cash flow shortages, and difficulty obtaining financing. As a result, existing or potential customers may delay or cancel plans to purchase GE’s products and services, including large infrastructure projects, and may not be able to fulfill their obligations to GE in a timely fashion. Contract cancellations could affect GE’s ability to fully recover GE’s contract costs and estimated earnings. Further, GE’s vendors may be experiencing similar conditions, which may impact their ability to fulfill their obligations to GE. Although the new Administration in the United States is expected to enact various economic stimulus programs, there can be no assurance as to the timing and effectiveness of these programs. If the global economic slowdown continues for a significant period or there is significant further deterioration in the global economy, GE’s results of operations, financial position and cash flows could be materially adversely affected.

Our global growth is subject to economic and political risks.

We conduct our operations in virtually every part of the world. In 2008, approximately 55% of our revenues were attributable to activities outside the United States. Our operations are subject to the effects of global competition. They are also affected by local economic environments, including inflation, recession and currency volatility. Political changes, some of which may be disruptive, can interfere with our supply chain, our customers and all of our activities in a particular location. While some of these risks can be hedged using derivatives or other financial instruments and some are insurable, such attempts to mitigate these risks are costly and not always successful, and our ability to engage in such mitigation has decreased or become even more costly as a result of recent market developments.

The success of our business depends on achieving our objectives for strategic acquisitions and dispositions.

With respect to acquisitions and mergers, we may not be able to identify suitable candidates at terms acceptable to us, or may not achieve expected returns and other benefits as a result of integration challenges, such as personnel and technology. We will continue to evaluate the potential disposition of assets and businesses that may no longer help us meet our objectives. When we decide to sell assets or a business, we may encounter difficulty in finding buyers or alternative exit strategies on acceptable terms in a timely manner (as was the case with GE’s Consumer & Industrial business in 2008), which could delay the accomplishment of our strategic objectives. Alternatively, we may dispose of a business at a price or on terms that are less than we had anticipated. These difficulties have been exacerbated in the current financial and credit environment because some potential sellers may hold onto assets pending a rebound in prices and buyers may have difficulty obtaining the necessary financing. In addition, there is a risk that we may sell a business whose subsequent performance exceeds our expectations, in which case our decision would have potentially sacrificed enterprise value.

We are subject to a wide variety of laws and regulations.

Our businesses are subject to regulation under a wide variety of U.S. federal, state and foreign laws, regulations and policies. There can be no assurance that, in response to current economic conditions, laws and regulations will not be changed in ways that will require us to modify our business models and objectives or affect our returns on investment by making existing practices more restricted, subject to escalating costs or prohibited outright. In particular, we expect U.S. and foreign governments to undertake a substantial review and revision of the regulation and supervision of bank and non-bank financial institutions and tax laws and regulation, which may have a significant effect on GE Capital's structure, operations and performance. We are also subject to regulatory risks from laws that reduce the allowable lending rate or limit consumer borrowing, local liquidity regulations that may increase the risk of not being able to retrieve assets, and changes to tax law that may affect our return on investments. For example, GE's effective tax rate is reduced because active business income earned and indefinitely reinvested outside the United States is taxed at less than the U.S. rate. A significant portion of this reduction depends upon a provision of U.S. tax law that defers the imposition of U.S. tax on certain active financial services income until that income is repatriated to the United States as a dividend. This provision is consistent with international tax norms and permits U.S. financial services companies to compete more effectively with foreign banks and other foreign financial institutions in global

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markets. This provision, currently scheduled to expire at the end of 2009, has been scheduled to expire and has been extended by Congress on five previous occasions, including in October of 2008, but there can be no assurance that it will continue to be extended. In the event this provision is not extended after 2009, the current U.S. tax imposed on active financial services income earned outside the United States would increase, making it more difficult for U.S. financial services companies to compete in global markets. If this provision is not extended, we expect our effective tax rate to increase significantly after 2010.

We are subject to legal proceedings and legal compliance risks.

We are subject to a variety of legal proceedings and legal compliance risks. We and our subsidiaries, our businesses and the industries in which we operate are at times being reviewed or investigated by regulators, which could lead to enforcement actions, fines and penalties or the assertion of private litigation claims and damages. These include investigations by the Department of Justice Antitrust Division and the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) of the marketing and sales of guaranteed investment contracts, and other financial instruments, to municipalities by certain subsidiaries of GE Capital and an investigation by the SEC of possible violations of the securities laws with respect to certain accounting issues, as described in Item 3. "Legal Proceedings" of this Form 10-K Report. Additionally, GE and its subsidiaries are involved in a sizable number of remediation actions to clean up hazardous wastes as required by federal and state laws. These include the dredging of polychlorinated biphenyls from a 40-mile stretch of the upper Hudson River in New York State. We are also subject to certain other legal proceedings described in Item 3. "Legal Proceedings" of this Form 10-K Report. While we believe that we have adopted appropriate risk management and compliance programs, the global and diverse nature of our operations means that legal compliance risks will continue to exist and additional legal proceedings and other contingencies, the outcome of which cannot be predicted with certainty, will arise from time to time.

Significant changes in actual investment return on pension assets, discount rates, and other factors could affect our results of operations, equity, and pension contributions in future periods.

Our results of operations may be positively or negatively affected by the amount of income or expense GE records for its defined bene