

COMMONWEALTH BUREAU OF CENSUS AND STATISTICSCANBERRA, AUSTRALIA

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CONSUMER PRICE INDEXMARCH QUARTER, 1961

1. Variations in retail prices as measured by the Consumer Price Index for the six State capital cities of Australia are shown herein.

2. Compared with the previous quarter, the All Groups index for March Quarter, 1961 increased by 0.7% for the weighted average of the six capital cities. Changes in individual cities were: Sydney +0.7%, Melbourne +0.5%, Brisbane +1.3%, Adelaide +0.8%, Perth +0.9%, Hobart +0.9%.

3. Recent quarterly changes in the All Groups index have been as follows:-

Quarter	Percentage Change from Preceding Quarter						
	Sydney	Melbourne	Brisbane	Adelaide	Perth	Hobart	Six Capitals (a)
	Per cent	Per cent	Per cent	Per cent	Per cent	Per cent	Per cent
1959 September	+ 0.4	+ 0.3	+ 0.9	+ 0.9	+ 0.3	+ 0.3	+ 0.4
December	+ 0.8	+ 0.5	+ 0.5	+ 0.5	- 0.2	+ 0.3	+ 0.6
1960 March	+ 0.9	+ 0.8	+ 0.7	+ 1.2	+ 1.2	+ 0.6	+ 0.8
June	+ 1.2	+ 2.7	+ 0.6	+ 1.9	+ 1.6	+ 1.5	+ 1.8
September	+ 1.0	+ 1.5	+ 1.1	+ 0.7	+ 0.7	+ 2.6	+ 1.2
December	+ 0.7	+ 0.5	+ 1.2	+ 0.7	+ 0.8	+ 1.0	+ 0.7
1961 March	+ 0.7	+ 0.5	+ 1.3	+ 0.8	+ 0.9	+ 0.9	+ 0.7

(a) Weighted average.

4. The weighted average retail price index for the six capital cities increased by 4.4 per cent. over the last four quarters. Recent quarterly changes in each of the groups of this index have been as follows:-

Quarter	Percentage Change from Preceding Quarter (a)					
	Food	Clothing and Drapery	Housing	Household Supplies and Equipment	Miscellaneous	All Groups
	Per cent	Per cent	Per cent	Per cent	Per cent	Per cent
1959 September	+ 0.7	+ 0.4	+ 0.5	+ 0.3	+ 0.3	+ 0.4
December	+ 0.4	+ 0.8	+ 1.1	+ 0.2	+ 0.6	+ 0.6
1960 March	+ 0.4	+ 0.3	+ 0.7	+ 0.4	+ 0.7	+ 0.8
June	+ 0.9	+ 0.9	+ 3.4	+ 0.2	+ 2.1	+ 1.8
September	+ 0.2	+ 1.4	+ 0.4	+ 0.4	+ 0.2	+ 1.2
December	+ 0.7	+ 1.9	+ 0.4	+ 0.4	+ 0.4	+ 0.7
1961 March	+ 0.7	+ 0.2	+ 1.1	+ 0.3	+ 0.2	+ 0.7

(a) Weighted average six capital cities.

5. For current statistical purposes the Consumer Price Index replaces both the "C" Series Retail Price Index first compiled in 1921 and the Interim Retail Price Index constructed as a transitional index in 1954. The "C" Series Retail Price Index was last issued for December Quarter, 1960. By that date it had outlived its capacity to serve as a reliable measure of retail price changes, although it had sustained that capacity through many vicissitudes over nearly 40 years. Only a completely new index of flexible design could meet the new and changing circumstances that had become customary by 1960. Issue of the "C" Series Retail Price Index has therefore ceased.

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6. A brief account of the Consumer Price Index was given at the time of its first issue in Statistical Bulletin 837 of 12th August, 1960. A more comprehensive description is contained in Statistical Bulletin 891 issued in January, 1961, and entitled "A Description of the Consumer Price Index".

7. The Consumer Price Index measures quarterly variations in prices of commodities and services as affecting a high proportion of the expenditure of wage earner households. Changes in the pattern of this expenditure since 1950 have been such as to render it necessary to construct the index with additional items and changes in weighting patterns at intervals (rather than on the basis of a list of items and set of weights which remain unchanged throughout the period). Four series for short periods viz., September Quarter, 1948 to June Quarter, 1952; June Quarter, 1952 to June Quarter, 1956; June Quarter, 1956 to March Quarter, 1960; and from March Quarter, 1960 have therefore been constructed and linked to form a continuous retail price index series published herein as the Consumer Price Index. At times of linking the weighting pattern was altered and, in addition, new items that had become significant in household expenditure were introduced. In each period between links the items and weighting have remained unchanged.

8. These new indexes measure price movements in each city individually. They do not provide a comparison of the retail price level in any city with the retail price level of any other city.

9. Table 1 on page 4 of this Bulletin shows Consumer Price Index numbers for each fiscal year from 1949-50 to 1959-60, for June quarters of each year from 1949 to 1958 and for each quarter from December, 1958. Table 2 on page 5 shows Group Index numbers quarterly from December, 1959 to March, 1961.

10. The following analysis is provided to assist interpretation of movements shown by the Consumer Price Index from December Quarter, 1960 to March Quarter, 1961.

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (a)

Approximate Number of Points Change, December Quarter, 1960 to March Quarter, 1961

<u>Group</u>	<u>Sydney</u>	<u>Melbourne</u>	<u>Brisbane</u>	<u>Adelaide</u>	<u>Perth</u>	<u>Hobart</u>	<u>Weighted Average of Six Capitals</u>
Food							
Potatoes	+ 0.4	+ 0.1	+ 0.8	+ 0.2	..	+ 1.0	+ 0.3
Other	+ 0.2	+ 0.3	+ 0.4	+ 0.5	+ 0.8	- 0.3	+ 0.3
Clothing and Drapery	..	..	+ 0.1	..	..	..	..
Housing	+ 0.1	+ 0.2	+ 0.2	+ 0.2	+ 0.2	+ 0.2	+ 0.2
Household Supplies and Equipment	+ 0.1	..	+ 0.1	..	..	+ 0.1	..
Miscellaneous	+ 0.1	..	..	+ 0.1	+ 0.1	+ 0.2	+ 0.1
Total Change (Index Points)	+ 0.9	+ 0.6	+ 1.6	+ 1.0	+ 1.1	+ 1.2	+ 0.9

(a) For each city, the total change in index points since the preceding quarter is the arithmetical difference between the All Groups index numbers for the two quarters (e.g. Sydney - December Quarter, 1960, 121.6, March Quarter, 1961, 122.5 - difference of 0.9 index points). The dissection in this table shows how much each group has contributed to this total movement.

11. The main movements in average quarterly prices affecting group indexes are summarized below:-

In the food group, changes were:- very large seasonal increases in potato prices in three capital cities with smaller increases in two capitals and no change in Perth; increases in the price of eggs in every capital city; substantial increases in meat prices in Adelaide and Perth and decreases in Melbourne, Brisbane and Hobart. The food group of the index (average of six capital cities) showed a quarterly increase of 1.5%.

The index of prices of the clothing and drapery group for the six capital cities showed a quarterly increase of 0.2%.

In the housing group, there were increases in all capital cities in house price and rents of privately owned houses. The movement of the housing component as a whole was +1.1% for the weighted average of the six capital cities.

The index of prices of the household supplies and equipment group for the six capital cities showed a quarterly increase of 0.3%.

The index of prices of the miscellaneous group for the six capital cities showed a quarterly increase of 0.2%.

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S. R. CARVER
COMMONWEALTH STATISTICIAN

COMMONWEALTH BUREAU OF CENSUS AND STATISTICS

CANBERRA, A. C. T.

20TH APRIL, 1961

TABLE 1.

CONSUMER PRICE INDEXSIX CAPITAL CITIES, SEPARATELY AND COMBINED

(Base of Index for Each City and for Six Capitals : Year 1952-53 = 100.0) (a)

Period	Sydney	Melbourne	Brisbane	Adelaide	Perth	Hobart	Six Capital Cities (b)
Year ended June -							
1950	65.6	66.2	67.1	66.2	66.2	64.7	66.0
1951	74.5	74.6	75.1	74.7	74.4	73.3	74.6
1952	91.9	91.0	91.8	91.4	90.4	90.4	91.4
1953	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
1954	101.6	102.0	102.0	102.3	103.0	105.0	102.0
1955	102.3	102.0	102.9	103.5	105.2	104.9	102.6
1956	105.7	108.1	106.3	106.9	107.9	110.2	106.9
1957	112.9	114.0	112.0	111.7	112.9	116.9	113.1
1958	114.5	114.4	114.4	111.9	113.6	117.0	114.2
1959	115.3	116.6	118.2	114.5	114.7	118.7	116.0
1960	117.8	120.0	121.2	118.0	116.9	120.8	118.9
Quarter -							
1949 - June	62.6	62.9	63.8	63.2	63.1	62.8	62.9
1950 "	68.0	68.8	69.0	68.7	68.6	66.3	68.4
1951 "	80.7	80.7	80.5	81.2	80.3	79.6	80.7
1952 "	98.0	96.4	96.8	97.5	96.0	95.5	97.2
1953 "	101.2	101.6	100.9	101.4	101.7	102.3	101.4
1954 "	101.5	102.0	102.1	102.4	104.3	104.4	102.1
1955 "	103.0	103.1	103.9	104.7	106.6	105.9	103.6
1956 "	108.8	112.0	109.5	109.9	110.5	113.6	110.2
1957 "	113.7	114.2	112.6	111.3	114.2	117.5	113.7
1958 "	115.1	114.6	115.9	112.7	114.1	117.3	114.8
Dec.	115.2	116.4	117.9	114.2	114.3	118.7	115.8
1959 - March	115.5	117.1	119.0	115.0	114.7	119.1	116.3
June	115.8	117.9	119.1	115.3	115.5	119.3	116.8
Sept.	116.3	118.2	120.2	116.3	115.9	119.7	117.3
Dec.	117.2	118.8	120.8	116.9	115.7	120.1	118.0
1960 - March	118.2	119.8	121.6	118.3	117.1	120.8	119.0
June	119.6	123.0	122.3	120.6	119.0	122.6	121.1
Sept.	120.8	124.9	123.6	121.5	119.8	125.8	122.5
Dec.	121.6	125.5	125.1	122.4	120.8	127.1	123.3
1961 - March	122.5	126.1	126.7	123.4	121.9	128.3	124.2

(a) Figures appearing after the decimal point possess little significance for general statistical purposes. They are inserted mainly to avoid the minor distortions that would occur in rounding off the figures to the nearest whole number.

(b) Weighted average.

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TABLE 2.

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX

GROUP INDEXES - SIX CAPITAL CITIES SEPARATELY AND COMBINED

(Base of Each Group Index for Each City and for Six Capital Cities :

Year 1952-53 = 100.0) (a)

Quarter	Sydney	Melbourne	Brisbane	Adelaide	Perth	Hobart	Six Capital Cities (b)
FOOD GROUP							
1959 - Dec.	116.7	119.2	123.4	120.2	115.7	117.2	118.4
1960 - March	118.4	120.8	124.6	123.7	118.4	117.8	120.3
June	119.7	124.2	125.3	128.1	121.6	121.4	122.6
Sept.	122.8	129.1	126.9	130.4	122.9	128.4	126.0
Dec.	123.5	129.2	130.0	130.6	122.9	131.7	126.7
1961 - March	125.3	130.4	134.0	132.8	125.3	133.9	128.6
CLOTHING AND DRAPERY GROUP							
1959 - Dec.	108.4	110.6	111.4	106.5	107.7	110.4	109.2
1960 - March	108.6	110.9	112.2	107.0	108.0	110.8	109.5
June	109.4	111.6	113.9	108.1	109.6	111.6	110.5
Sept.	109.6	111.9	114.1	108.3	109.8	111.6	110.7
Dec.	110.2	112.7	115.0	109.5	110.8	112.3	111.5
1961 - March	110.3	112.9	115.3	109.7	110.9	112.5	111.7
HOUSING GROUP							
1959 - Dec.	133.2	133.0	132.2	139.5	132.6	147.4	133.9
1960 - March	133.9	134.3	132.7	140.3	134.2	150.1	134.8
June	136.5	144.3	134.0	141.3	135.6	151.7	139.4
Sept.	138.0	147.2	136.1	143.4	137.0	153.7	141.4
Dec.	139.7	150.2	137.0	149.1	141.6	155.9	144.1
1961 - March	140.7	152.5	138.4	151.1	143.5	158.0	145.7
HOUSEHOLD SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT GROUP							
1959 - Dec.	109.5	110.4	110.5	105.9	107.0	117.8	109.6
1960 - March	110.0	110.9	111.0	106.2	107.4	118.4	110.0
June	109.6	111.9	110.9	106.0	107.0	120.1	110.2
Sept.	110.2	112.3	110.6	106.0	107.4	121.3	110.6
Dec.	111.4	112.4	110.7	105.6	107.3	120.3	111.0
1961 - March	111.8	112.3	111.5	105.9	107.4	120.8	111.3
MISCELLANEOUS GROUP							
1959 - Dec.	123.1	124.1	125.6	118.2	120.4	123.2	123.0
1960 - March	123.8	125.3	125.9	118.8	121.2	123.3	123.8
June	126.4	128.9	126.2	121.0	123.3	123.7	126.4
Sept.	126.5	128.9	128.3	121.2	123.7	125.7	126.7
Dec.	126.8	129.2	129.5	121.2	125.6	125.9	127.2
1961 - March	127.4	129.2	129.7	121.6	125.8	126.7	127.5
ALL GROUPS							
1959 - Dec.	117.2	118.8	120.8	116.9	115.7	120.1	118.0
1960 - March	118.2	119.8	121.6	118.3	117.1	120.8	119.0
June	119.6	123.0	122.3	120.6	119.0	122.6	121.1
Sept.	120.8	124.9	123.6	121.5	119.8	125.8	122.5
Dec.	121.6	125.5	125.1	122.4	120.8	127.1	123.3
1961 - March	122.5	126.1	126.7	123.4	121.9	128.3	124.2

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