

CATALOGUE NO. 5320.0

EMBARGOED UNTIL 11.30 AM 19 FEBRUARY 1996

**MERCHANDISE IMPORTS (BALANCE OF PAYMENTS BASIS)  
AUSTRALIA, JANUARY 1996**

**MAIN FEATURES**

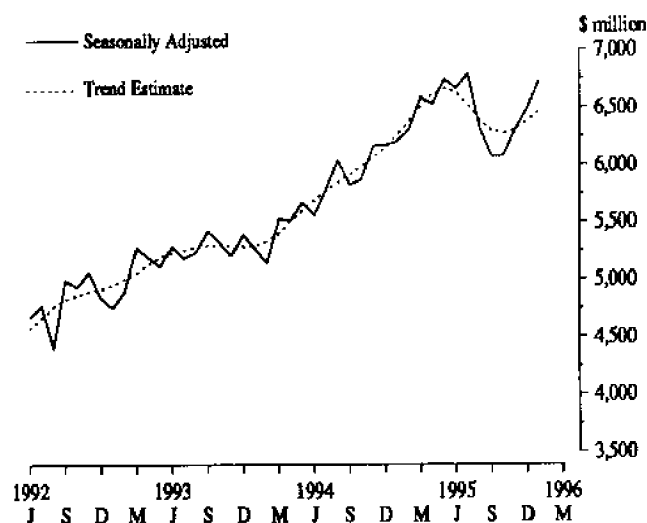
The seasonally adjusted and trend estimates of merchandise imports have been revised in this issue as a result of the annual seasonal reanalysis. The reanalysis took account of additional information that had become available since the previous reanalysis in early 1995. For information about the availability of seasonal factors for 1996 refer to paragraph 7 of the Explanatory Notes.

**January 1996 compared with December 1995**

The provisional trend estimate of *merchandise imports* rose \$87 million, or 1 per cent, to \$6,467 million.

In seasonally adjusted terms, *merchandise imports* for January rose \$244 million, or 4 per cent, to \$6,723 million. *Consumption goods* fell \$127 million, or 7 per cent, to \$1,604 million. *Capital goods* rose \$271 million, or 18 per cent, to \$1,752 million. *Intermediate and other goods* rose \$100 million, or 3 per cent, to \$3,367 million.

GRAPH 1: MERCHANDISE - IMPORTS F.O.B.



Imports of *capital goods*, in original terms, rose \$57 million, or 4 per cent, to \$1,554 million. The largest increase was recorded in machinery and industrial equipment, up \$51 million or 7 per cent (with most components recording increases).

Imports of *intermediate and other goods*, in original terms, rose \$509 million, or 18 per cent, to \$3,376 million. Increases were recorded in 12 of the 14 groups. The largest increases were recorded in:

- processed industrial supplies, up \$94 million or 14 per cent (with most components recording increases);
- fuels and lubricants, up \$85 million or 27 per cent (due mainly to increased imports of crude petroleum);
- organic and inorganic chemicals, up \$81 million or 42 per cent (with all components recording increases);
- "other" parts for capital goods, up \$71 million or 15 per cent (with most components recording increases); and
- parts for transport equipment, up \$54 million or 16 per cent.

**Seven months ended January 1996 compared with seven months ended January 1995**

In original terms, *merchandise imports* rose \$2,810 million, or 6 per cent, to \$46,211 million:

- *consumption goods* rose \$558 million (5 per cent);
- *capital goods* rose \$444 million (4 per cent); and
- *intermediate and other goods* rose \$1,808 million (9 per cent).

In original terms, *imports* rose \$514 million, or 9 per cent, to \$6,461 million.

Imports of *consumption goods*, in original terms, fell \$52 million, or 3 per cent, to \$1,531 million. The largest decrease was recorded in non-industrial transport equipment, down \$98 million or 26 per cent (due mainly to decreased imports of passenger motor cars). The largest increase was recorded in textiles, clothing and footwear, up \$72 million or 38 per cent (due mainly to increased imports of articles of apparel).

**INQUIRIES** • for further information about these and related unpublished statistics, contact Ms Patricia Mahony on Canberra (06) 252 6012, or any ABS State office.  
• for information about other ABS statistics and services please refer to the back page of this publication.

TABLE 1. MERCHANDISE IMPORTS (BALANCE OF PAYMENTS BASIS) — ORIGINAL, SEASONALLY ADJUSTED AND TREND ESTIMATES  
(\$ million)

	Months												July to Jan.						
	1994-95						1995-96												
	1992-93	1993-94	1994-95	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.		Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	1994-95	1995-96
<i>Consumption goods job (a) —</i>																			
Food and beverages, mainly for consumption	-2,261	-2,430	-2,592	-260	-235	-227	-199	-236	-168	-181	-245	-233	-231	-255	-263	-243	-252	-1,578	-1,722
Household electrical items	-1,382	-1,436	-1,744	-181	-156	-121	-119	-147	-132	-129	-157	-167	-138	-179	-177	-139	-119	-1,072	-1,076
Non-industrial transport equipment	-3,478	-3,800	-4,758	-407	-409	-337	-313	-462	-391	-413	-469	-426	-346	-423	-404	-376	-278	-2,733	-2,722
Textiles, clothing and footwear	-2,178	-2,320	-2,566	-225	-192	-246	-249	-235	-179	-157	-266	-274	-220	-213	-229	-190	-262	-1,557	-1,654
Toys, books and leisure goods	-2,238	-2,496	-2,546	-249	-183	-181	-156	-199	-170	-193	-246	-252	-252	-260	-256	-184	-190	-1,623	-1,640
Consumption goods nes	-4,389	-4,751	-5,213	-521	-385	-390	-360	-445	-381	-481	-518	-524	-486	-529	-540	-451	-430	-3,171	-3,478
<b>Total consumption goods</b>	<b>-15,926</b>	<b>-17,233</b>	<b>-19,419</b>	<b>-1,843</b>	<b>-1,560</b>	<b>-1,502</b>	<b>-1,396</b>	<b>-1,724</b>	<b>-1,421</b>	<b>-1,696</b>	<b>-1,901</b>	<b>-1,876</b>	<b>-1,673</b>	<b>-1,859</b>	<b>-1,869</b>	<b>-1,583</b>	<b>-1,531</b>	<b>-11,734</b>	<b>-12,292</b>
<i>Capital goods job (a) —</i>																			
Machinery and industrial equipment	-5,446	-6,414	-7,897	-675	-620	-637	-618	-745	-616	-733	-718	-691	-616	-723	-727	-688	-739	-4,480	-4,902
ADP equipment	-2,319	-2,629	-3,232	-251	-217	-189	-195	-325	-243	-392	-338	-325	-253	-273	-282	-272	-267	-1,684	-2,010
Telecommunications equipment	-1,224	-1,182	-1,804	-310	-127	-119	-119	-153	-117	-173	-164	-163	-207	-178	-200	-170	-171	-1,092	-1,253
Civil aircraft	-828	-241	-529	-9	-33	-6	-57	-18	-43	-48	-28	-81	-11	-31	-104	-29	-30	-347	-314
Industrial transport equipment nes	-1,838	-2,084	-2,714	-239	-518	-150	-197	-190	-189	-234	-179	-222	-198	-148	-197	-180	-158	-1,725	-1,268
Capital goods nes	-2,000	-2,293	-2,365	-221	-180	-173	-170	-205	-189	-215	-234	-213	-183	-213	-213	-173	-189	-1,393	-1,418
<b>Total capital goods</b>	<b>-13,655</b>	<b>-14,843</b>	<b>-18,541</b>	<b>-1,705</b>	<b>-1,695</b>	<b>-1,274</b>	<b>-1,356</b>	<b>-1,636</b>	<b>-1,397</b>	<b>-1,713</b>	<b>-1,718</b>	<b>-1,671</b>	<b>-1,418</b>	<b>-1,615</b>	<b>-1,706</b>	<b>-1,497</b>	<b>-1,554</b>	<b>-10,721</b>	<b>-11,165</b>
<i>Intermediate and other goods job (a) —</i>																			
Food and beverages, mainly for industry	-436	-509	-774	-58	-57	-110	-90	-59	-53	-68	-61	-65	-65	-55	-77	-43	-76	-443	-446
Primary industrial supplies nes	-677	-701	-901	-96	-55	-80	-79	-63	-62	-83	-85	-73	-71	-66	-83	-76	-64	-529	-509
Fuels and lubricants	-3,623	-3,317	-3,566	-208	-235	-280	-314	-323	-317	-379	-286	-283	-290	-264	-353	-312	-397	-1,947	-2,284
Parts for transport equipment	-3,675	-4,183	-4,714	-437	-340	-401	-329	-409	-385	-424	-351	-446	-338	-406	-340	-344	-398	-2,816	-2,720
Parts for ADP equipment	-1,423	-1,681	-1,858	-165	-136	-133	-138	-172	-142	-189	-172	-159	-158	-155	-161	-138	-160	-1,045	-1,092
Other parts for capital goods	-4,236	-5,047	-5,975	-514	-442	-462	-456	-561	-484	-583	-520	-619	-583	-510	-563	-471	-542	-3,371	-3,839
Organic and inorganic chemicals	-2,056	-2,102	-2,431	-216	-177	-201	-201	-245	-203	-228	-234	-242	-249	-194	-224	-193	-274	-1,320	-1,621
Paper and paperboard	-1,381	-1,465	-1,794	-160	-142	-151	-133	-164	-137	-179	-145	-189	-172	-194	-174	-151	-162	-1,036	-1,231
Textile yarn and fabrics	-1,763	-1,869	-2,036	-191	-139	-170	-142	-176	-137	-194	-165	-189	-187	-154	-167	-137	-167	-1,222	-1,173
Iron and steel	-946	-1,039	-1,285	-113	-85	-97	-112	-124	-96	-137	-122	-117	-143	-129	-125	-133	-121	-694	-893
Plastics	-1,272	-1,375	-1,646	-149	-127	-140	-134	-155	-133	-160	-129	-170	-155	-146	-158	-149	-151	-935	-1,058
Non-monetary gold	-1,019	-978	-705	-58	-74	-69	-56	-90	-30	-66	-55	-55	-78	-56	-51	-74	-66	-408	-428
Processed industrial supplies nes	-7,135	-7,783	-8,680	-753	-650	-700	-652	-856	-684	-818	-687	-824	-728	-749	-752	-662	-756	-4,983	-5,233
Other goods	-208	-286	-391	-17	-11	-16	-22	-54	-17	-57	-44	-50	-38	-25	-28	-14	-42	-197	-227
<b>Total intermediate and other goods</b>	<b>-29,850</b>	<b>-32,335</b>	<b>-36,756</b>	<b>-3,135</b>	<b>-2,670</b>	<b>-3,012</b>	<b>-2,858</b>	<b>-3,451</b>	<b>-2,880</b>	<b>-3,565</b>	<b>-3,056</b>	<b>-3,407</b>	<b>-3,028</b>	<b>-3,228</b>	<b>-3,263</b>	<b>-2,867</b>	<b>-3,376</b>	<b>-20,946</b>	<b>-22,754</b>
<b>Total imports job</b>	<b>-59,431</b>	<b>-64,411</b>	<b>-74,716</b>	<b>-6,683</b>	<b>-5,925</b>	<b>-5,788</b>	<b>-5,610</b>	<b>-6,811</b>	<b>-5,698</b>	<b>-6,974</b>	<b>-6,222</b>	<b>-7,190</b>	<b>-6,954</b>	<b>-6,119</b>	<b>-6,702</b>	<b>-6,838</b>	<b>-5,947</b>	<b>-43,401</b>	<b>-46,211</b>
Consumption goods				-1,612	-1,628	-1,621	-1,557	-1,698	-1,682	-1,717	-1,670	-1,789	-1,691	-1,623	-1,571	-1,657	-1,731	-1,604	
Capital goods				-1,559	-1,600	-1,490	-1,641	-1,714	-1,596	-1,679	-1,754	-1,558	-1,496	-1,400	-1,451	-1,535	-1,481	-1,752	
Intermediate and other goods				-2,995	-2,943	-3,089	-3,108	-3,177	-3,254	-3,351	-3,239	-3,441	-3,130	-3,053	-3,111	-3,267	-3,367		
<b>Total imports job</b>				<b>-6,166</b>	<b>-6,171</b>	<b>-6,200</b>	<b>-6,306</b>	<b>-6,589</b>	<b>-6,532</b>	<b>-6,747</b>	<b>-6,663</b>	<b>-6,788</b>	<b>-6,537</b>	<b>-6,076</b>	<b>-6,078</b>	<b>-6,303</b>	<b>-6,479</b>		
<b>Total imports job</b>				<b>-6,063</b>	<b>-6,153</b>	<b>-6,257</b>	<b>-6,382</b>	<b>-6,512</b>	<b>-6,616</b>	<b>-6,663</b>	<b>-6,630</b>	<b>-6,521</b>	<b>-6,389</b>	<b>-6,296</b>	<b>-6,271</b>	<b>-6,307p</b>	<b>-6,280p</b>	<b>-6,467p</b>	

(a) Definitions of the component series are given in the ABS Information Paper, *Change to Commodity Classification of Merchandise Imports in Balance of Payments Publications* (ABS Catalogue No. 5344.0).

Seasonally Adjusted

Trend Estimates

## EXPLANATORY NOTES

**Introduction**

1. This publication contains preliminary estimates of Australia's merchandise imports on a balance of payments basis for January 1996, together with estimates for previous months.

2. Descriptions of the classifications used for merchandise imports, detailed item definitions and long term historical data are presented in *Change to Commodity Classification of Merchandise Imports in Balance of Payments Publications* (5344.0).

3. Descriptions of the underlying concepts and structure of merchandise imports on a balance of payments basis and the sources and methods used in compiling the estimates are presented in *Balance of Payments, Australia: Concepts, Sources and Methods* (5331.0). That publication also provides explanations of seasonal adjustment and trend estimates; and an analysis of the quality of the estimates.

**Accuracy, reliability and volatility**

4. The latest estimates in this publication are preliminary and subject to revision as more complete and accurate information becomes available.

5. Particular care should be exercised in interpreting month-to-month movements in original and seasonally adjusted series as short term movements cannot be assumed to indicate changes in trend. The monthly estimates are volatile, being subject to seasonal factors (except where adjusted in the table) and large irregular influences. The irregular influences may reflect both random economic events and difficulties of statistical recording. Seasonal adjustment does not aim to remove the irregular or non-seasonal influences which may be present in any particular month. This means that the month-to-month movements of the seasonally adjusted estimates may not be reliable indicators of trend behaviour. For example, irregular factors unrelated to the trend account for more than half the seasonally adjusted monthly movements in merchandise imports fob in 9 out of 10 months.

6. The impact of the irregular influences upon the seasonally adjusted series is reduced by smoothing, as shown by the trend estimates in the table and graph. The trend estimates are generally derived by applying a 13-term Henderson-weighted moving average to the seasonally adjusted series.

**Seasonal adjustment**

7. The factors to be used in seasonally adjusting the monthly merchandise imports statistics, as well as the monthly balance of payments statistics, during 1996 can be obtained, for \$75.00, from Ms Karen McGuigan on Canberra (06) 252 6239.

8. The seasonally adjusted statistics in this publication should not be regarded as in any way definitive as results from seasonal adjustment vary according to the method used.

**More detailed and longer term series**

9. More detailed information than that shown in this publication is available for January 1996 and earlier months. Estimates for months prior to those shown in this publication are also available. These data can be obtained by contacting Mr Trevor Jolly on Canberra (06) 252 6820. There may be a charge for this information.

**Related products and services**

10. Preliminary estimates of Australia's balance of payments for January 1996 are due for release on 29 February 1996 in the monthly publication *Balance of Payments, Australia* (5301.0). The estimates of merchandise imports shown as part of the balance of payments in 5301.0 will normally be the same as those already released in the corresponding issue of this publication.

11. More detailed merchandise imports data, including dissections by commodity and country of origin, are also available on a foreign trade basis for January 1996 and previous months. These data series can be obtained by contacting International Trade Client Services on Canberra (06) 252 5400.

**Symbols and other usages**

fob	free on board
nes	not elsewhere specified
—	nil or rounded to zero
..	not applicable
p	provisional

**W. McLennan**  
Australian Statistician

**Release date for February 1996 issue**

The expected release date for the February issue of this publication is 19 March 1996. Any variations which might occur will be notified in the ABS Publications Advice (1105.0) and on DISCOVERY

The date can be confirmed a few days prior to release by telephoning  
Canberra (06) 252 6627.

## For more information . . .

The ABS publishes a wide range of statistics and other information on Australia's economic and social conditions. Details of what is available in various publications and other products can be found in the ABS Catalogue of Publications and Products available from all ABS Offices.

### ABS Products and Services

Many standard products are available from ABS bookshops located in each State and Territory. In addition to these products, information tailored to the needs of clients can be obtained on a wide range of media by contacting your nearest ABS Office. The ABS also provides a Subscription Service for standard products and some tailored information services.

### National Dial-a-Statistic Line

0055 86 400

*Steadycom P/L: premium rate 25c/21.4 secs.*

This number gives 24-hour access, 365 days a year, for a range of important economic statistics including the CPI.

### Internet

<http://www.statistics.gov.au>

A wide range of ABS information is available via the Internet, with basic statistics available for each State, Territory and Australia. We also have Key National Indicators, ABS product release details and other information of general interest.

## Sales and Inquiries

Keylink STAT.INFO/ABS  
X.400 (C:Australia,PUB:Telememo,O:ABS,FN:STAT,SN:INFO)  
Internet [stat.info@abs.telememo.au](mailto:stat.info@abs.telememo.au)

National Mail Order Service (06) 252 5249  
Subscription Service 1800 02 0608

	Information Inquiries	Bookshop Sales
SYDNEY	(02) 268 4611	268 4620
MELBOURNE	(03) 9615 7755	9615 7755
BRISBANE	(07) 3222 6351	3222 6350
PERTH	(09) 360 5140	360 5307
ADELAIDE	(08) 237 7100	237 7582
HOBART	(002) 205 800	205 800
CANBERRA	(06) 252 6627	207 0326
DARWIN	(089) 432 111	432 111



Client Services, ABS, PO Box 10, Belconnen ACT 2616

Produced by the Australian Government Publishing Service  
© Commonwealth of Australia 1996

Recommended retail price: \$13.00



2532000001964  
ISSN 1321-8271