



RETAIL SALES OF GOODS : AUSTRALIA
MONTH OF MAY 1974 (Provisional)

MAIN FEATURES

- The provisional estimate of the value of retail sales (excl. motor vehicles, parts, petrol, etc.) for May 1974 is \$1,235.0m.
- Seasonally adjusted, the May 1974 estimate is 18.2% greater than May 1973.
- Seasonally adjusted, the May 1974 estimate is 0.5% less than April 1974.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

Introduction

The table overleaf gives a provisional estimate of the total value of retail sales in Australia (excluding motor vehicles, parts, petrol, etc.) for the month of May 1974. Figures for a number of earlier months are also shown for purposes of comparison. All figures in this bulletin are on a basis comparable with the 1968-69 Census of Retail Establishments.

The monthly sub-sample

2. The provisional monthly estimates of retail sales are obtained from a *sub-sample* of those establishments included in the quarterly sample of retail establishments. The *monthly sub-sample* is comparatively small since it is designed to provide prompt estimates of the total value of retail sales (excluding motor vehicles, parts, petrol, etc.) without placing an undue burden on either the resources of the Bureau or upon retail establishments.

Reliability of estimates

3. As the provisional monthly estimates are derived from returns received from a sample of retail establishments they may differ somewhat from the results which would have been obtained from a comparable complete collection. A measure of the likely difference is given by the *standard error* of the estimate. There are about 2 chances in 3 that a sample estimate will differ from results which would be obtained from a comparable complete collection by less than 1 standard error and 19 chances in 20 that the difference would be less than 2 standard errors. If, for example a sample gives an estimate of \$1,000 million and the standard error of this estimate is 1 per cent, i.e. \$10 million, then there are 2 chances in 3 that a comparable complete collection would give a figure within the range of \$990 million to \$1,010 million and 19 chances in 20 that the figure would be within the range of \$980 million to \$1,020 million.

4. The standard error of the provisional estimates of the total value of monthly retail sales (excluding motor vehicles, parts, petrol, etc.) is about 1.0 per cent. The standard error of the *month-to-month movement* of the provisional estimates of the value of retail sales is generally about 0.3 per cent of the *current monthly estimate*. For example, the movement in the value of retail sales between the months of April and May 1974 is shown by the original series in the table overleaf as an increase of \$103.0 million. The standard error of this movement is about 0.3 per cent of the May 1974 estimate, i.e. approximately \$3.7 million. Therefore there are 2 chances in 3 that the movement in the value of retail sales between April and May 1974 was between \$99.3 million and \$106.7 million, and 19 chances in 20 that it was between \$95.6 million and \$110.4 million. Expressed in another way the estimates show a *proportionate movement* in the value of retail sales between April and May 1974 of 9.1 per cent and this has a standard error of about 0.3 percentage points, i.e. there are 2 chances in 3 that the proportionate movement was between 8.8 per cent and 9.4 per cent and 19 chances in 20 that it was between 8.5 per cent and 9.7 per cent.

5. The provisional monthly estimates may also differ from those which would be obtained from a sample as large as that used to provide quarterly estimates. Hence, the sum of the provisional estimates for the three months comprising a quarter may differ from the estimate obtained for that quarter from the full quarterly sample. The standard error of this difference is approximately 0.8 per cent of the quarterly estimate. The monthly estimates are subsequently adjusted in accordance with the quarterly estimates as they become available.

Seasonal adjustment

6. Seasonally adjusted statistics are also shown in the table overleaf. In the seasonal adjustment, account has been taken of both normal seasonal factors and "trading-day" effects (arising from the varying numbers of Sundays, Mondays, Tuesdays, etc. in the month). While the normal seasonal factors should change only gradually from year to year the trading-day adjustment for any month will vary from year to year in accordance with the combination of days which occur in the month. Adjustment has also been made for the effects of movement in the date of Easter and Australia Day. Figures in the bulletin are based on a re-analysis which was made to take into account a change in the December seasonal pattern of sales from December 1971. It should

be noted that the seasonally adjusted figures reflect the sampling errors to which the original figures are subject. Revised seasonally adjusted statistics are shown in this issue, following the annual re-analysis, details of which are shown in *Seasonally Adjusted Indicators 1974* (Reference No. 1.10) to be issued shortly. Details of the methods used in seasonally adjusting this and other series are given in *Seasonally Adjusted Indicators 1973* (Reference No. 1.10) of 3 August 1973 and the

appendix to *Retail Sales of Goods* (Reference No. 11.4) December quarter 1973 of 23 May 1974.

Further information

7. For further information relating to the basis of compilation of retail sales statistics see the quarterly bulletin *Retail Sales of Goods* (Reference No. 11.4) December quarter 1973 of 23 May 1974.

**TOTAL VALUE OF RETAIL SALES OF GOODS
(EXCLUDING MOTOR VEHICLES, PARTS, PETROL, ETC.)
MONTHLY ESTIMATES: AUSTRALIA (a)(b)
(All figures are on a basis comparable with the 1968-69 Retail Census)
(\$ million)**

Month	1969-70	1970-71	1971-72	1972-73	1973-74
ORIGINAL					
July	698.3	754.6	820.4	849.9	973.5
August	702.3	737.6	802.7	889.3	1,052.8
September	697.5	748.9	820.4	896.5	1,009.7
October	754.6	816.5	858.3	931.4	1,109.1
November	744.4	805.7	890.7	989.3	1,175.3
December	996.4	1,064.7	1,135.8	1,226.4	1,396.0
January	730.1	761.3	785.7	900.0	(c)1,083.0
February	679.1	713.8	804.5	856.7	(c)1,020.0
March	711.9	792.5	855.5	949.5	(c)1,103.0
April	737.4	802.5	821.5	931.3	(c)1,132.0
May	781.9	832.4	910.1	1,030.0	(c)1,235.0
June	726.5	791.9	861.5	985.6	
Total for year	8,960.4	9,622.4	10,367.1	11,435.9	
SEASONALLY ADJUSTED (d)					
July	720.8	768.3	838.5	902.4	1,034.0
August	725.4	772.2	840.3	907.9	1,059.3
September	725.3	778.0	847.0	918.7	1,069.9
October	733.6	794.9	846.1	930.0	1,084.4
November	731.5	790.8	849.8	937.4	(e)1,099.9
December	748.7	796.5	854.0	946.9	(e)1,092.4
January	756.3	800.2	847.2	951.7	(c)(e)1,141.1
February	759.4	807.2	870.6	959.6	(c)(e)1,142.7
March	759.2	821.5	873.9	969.1	(c)1,153.0
April	763.8	827.0	877.3	996.3	(c)1,188.1
May	769.5	829.5	888.0	1,000.5	(c)1,182.1
June	768.6	835.7	891.3	1,025.1	

(a) Excludes Northern Territory and Australian Capital Territory. (b) Figures from April 1971 are subject to revision when more precise information is available relating to trading by new businesses. (c) Provisional estimate (see paragraph 5, page 1). (d) See paragraph 6, page 1. (e) The declaration of an additional holiday on 31 December in some States, which is not taken into account in the seasonal adjustment procedure, may have affected the estimates for the months of December and January and the percentage movements between November, December, January and February. In addition, a reduction since December 1971 in December sales relative to other months may still be continuing. If this is so, the seasonal analysis would tend to understate the adjusted figure for December 1973.

Notes on sampling aspects and on seasonal adjustment are shown overleaf.

J. G. MILLER
Acting Commonwealth Statistician

Australian Bureau of Statistics
Canberra, A.C.T. 2600

NOTE. Inquiries concerning these statistics may be made in Canberra by telephoning Mr K. Busted on 49 0211 extension 290 or, in each State capital, by telephoning the office of the Australian Bureau of Statistics.