

Thursday, 28 February 1991

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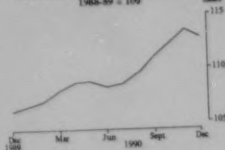
Lower oil prices lead to turnaround in manufacturing index

Prices of manufactured goods fell by 0.6 per cent in December 1990.

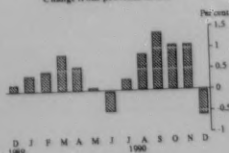
The decrease in the index was mainly due to a 10.8 per cent fall in prices for refined petroleum products. This reduction, like the successive rises of the previous four months (16%, 21.2%, 11.5% and 5.4%) was associated with the movements in world oil prices. Lower prices for basic non-ferrous metals also contributed to the fall in the index. These decreases were partly offset by price rises for most other items included in the index, the most significant of which are shown in the table below.

Prices of manufactured goods rose by 6.3 per cent between December 1989 and December 1990, down substantially on the 7.2 per cent annual change recorded in November 1990.

PRICES OF MANUFACTURED GOODS
1989-89 = 100



Change from previous month



PRICES OF MANUFACTURED GOODS, DECEMBER 1990
Percentage change

Manufacturing sector	Percentage change	
	From previous month	From corresponding month of previous year
Food, beverages and tobacco	0.1	2.5
Other industrial machinery and equipment	0.2	3.0
Basic metal products	-1.5	4.4
Chemical products	1.2	4.3
Transport equipment	0.2	4.6
Clothing and footwear	0.8	4.9
Fabricated metal products	0.6	6.5
Paper, printing and publishing	1.6	8.8
Petroleum products	-10.8	48.6
Total manufacturing	-0.6	6.3

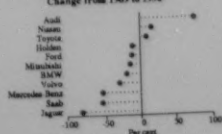
For further information, order the publication *Price Indexes of Articles Produced by Manufacturing Industry, Australia* (6412.0), or contact Peter Cordy on (06) 252 5541.

Big changes in market share as motor vehicle registrations keep falling

Final figures for December 1990 indicate new motor vehicle registrations totalled 42,209, a fall of 11.1 per cent from the November figure of 47,484. In seasonally adjusted terms this equated to a decline of 7.1 per cent, while the trend fell by 2.3 per cent. This was the eighth consecutive month that the trend declined.

There were 239,090 cars and station wagons registered in the six months to December 1990, a fall of 2.2 per cent compared with registrations for the same period in 1989 (244,378). Mitsubishi, Ford and Holden recorded falls of 16.2 per cent, 13.7 per cent and 12.4 per cent respectively. In contrast, Nissan and Toyota registrations increased by 16.7 per cent and 9.2 per cent respectively. These five vehicle makes accounted for 82.6 per cent of car and station wagon registrations in the July to December period in 1990 and for 85.4 per cent in the same period in 1989.

NEW MOTOR VEHICLE REGISTRATIONS
Six months ending December
Change from 1989 to 1990



Registrations of the six leading European makes (Audi, BMW, Jaguar, Mercedes-Benz, Saab and Volvo) totalled 4,280 in the six months to December 1990, compared with 6,705 in the same period in 1989. Jaguar registrations fell by 82.2 per cent to 81 vehicles, Saab declined by 56.1 per cent to 382, Mercedes-Benz by 55.3 per cent to 654, Volvo 32.1 per cent to 1,007 and BMW by 21.9 per cent to 1,702. Audi registrations rose by 78.0 per cent to 454.

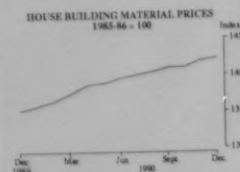
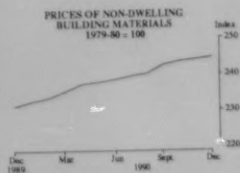
For further information, order the publication *Motor Vehicle Registrations, Australia* (9303.0), or contact Kevin Yealton on (06) 252 6255.

Price increases ease for building materials

Prices for house building materials increased by 0.3 per cent, while materials used in other than house building showed an increase of 0.2 per cent in December 1990.

The main price increases in both categories were for ready mixed concrete and reinforcing steel, while the only significant decreases were for timber in house building and for electrical cable and circuitry in other building.

Over the year to December 1990 prices for house building materials increased by 5.3 per cent and prices for materials used in other buildings increased by 5.8 per cent. These increases continued the downward trend in the annual rate over recent periods.



PRICES OF BUILDING MATERIALS, DECEMBER 1990
Percentage change

City	House building		Other than house building	
	From previous month	From corresponding month of previous year	From previous month	From corresponding month of previous year
Sydney	0.1	6.1	0.0	6.4
Melbourne	0.4	3.5	0.4	4.8
Brisbane	0.4	5.8	0.2	6.2
Adelaide	0.3	5.3	0.3	6.0
Perth	0.3	6.5	0.4	5.8
Hobart	0.0	4.7	0.4	4.3
Weighted average of six State capitals	0.3	5.3	0.2	5.8
Darwin	— not available —		-0.2	5.0
Canberra	0.8	5.5	0.8	7.4

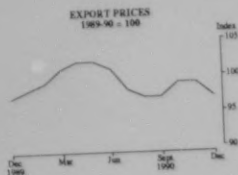
For further information, order the publications *Price Index of Materials Used in House Building, Six State Capital Cities and Canberra* (6408.0) and *Price Index of Materials Used in Building Other Than House Building, Eight Capital Cities* (6407.0), or contact Peter Sturgeon on (06) 252 6198.

Export prices fall

Export prices fell by 2.0 per cent between November and December 1990, bringing them back to the same level as one year earlier.

The main price decreases in December were for petroleum products (reflecting falls in world oil prices), wheat and aluminium products.

These decreases were partly offset by increases in the prices of approximately 40 per cent of the items in the index. The main increases were for iron ore and sugar.



EXPORT PRICES, DECEMBER 1990
Percentage change

Commodity	From previous month	From corresponding month of previous year
Products of chemical or allied industries	0.0	16.1
Mineral products	-2.7	13.4
Motor vehicles, aircraft and vessels	-1.0	2.0
Machinery and mechanical appliances	-1.0	-2.0
Prepared foodstuffs	2.2	-3.3
Live animals and animal products	-1.0	-4.0
Base metals	-4.1	-4.1
Gold, diamonds and coin	0.0	-4.8
Wool and cotton fibres	-1.2	-18.0
Vegetable products	-7.3	-23.2
All exports	-2.0	0.0

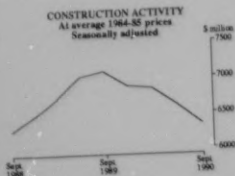
For further information, order the publication Export Price Index, Australia (6405.0) or contact Peter Cordy on (06) 252 5541.

Construction activity falls to 1988 level

Total construction activity fell by \$227 million or 3.5 per cent to \$6,343 million between June and September quarters 1990, in constant price seasonally adjusted terms. This fall brought construction activity back to a level similar to that of September quarter 1988. The latest data continued the 12 month decline which followed six years of growth between 1983 and 1989.

The decline in September quarter construction activity reflects falls across nearly all components. There were falls in private (4.2%) and public (1.8%) construction activity, and declines in both residential building (3.5%) and non-residential building (3.8%).

Growth in public sector activity has been more than offset by falls in private sector activity over the last year. Public sector construction activity increased to \$2,140 million, a rise of more than \$140 million compared with September quarter 1989. In contrast, private sector activity, at \$4,203 million in September quarter 1990, was \$880 million less than the corresponding quarter in 1989.



Engineering construction activity (not seasonally adjusted) also fell in the September quarter, by 6.7 per cent, but was at approximately the same level as in September quarter 1989.

For further information, order the publication *Construction Activity at Constant Prices, Australia (8782.0)*, or contact Janet Flynn on (06) 252 6067.

NSW more energy conscious

The number of NSW households using insulation increased significantly over the five years October 1984 to October 1989. A new Australian Bureau of Statistics publication has revealed homes with roof insulation rose from 663,200 (37%) to 810,000 (42%) while homes with wall insulation increased from 179,200 (10%) to 251,100 (13%) over the same period.

Of the three main fuels used for heating, gas recorded the only increase, rising from 199,800 households (11%) in 1984 to 330,000 (17%) in 1989. Decreases were recorded by both electricity and oil.

Over the last five years the number of households with microwave ovens more than doubled. In 1989, 1,072,500 (56%) of households had microwave ovens compared with 415,800 (23%) in October 1984. Households with gas ovens also increased slightly to 22 per cent.



Sixty-two per cent of NSW households with electrically heated, single hot water systems used off-peak electricity. In Sydney, 56 per cent of these households used off-peak electricity compared with 72 per cent of homes in the balance of NSW. About 65,000 NSW households used solar-powered hot water systems in 1989, although almost all of these were boosted by electricity or gas.

NSW HOUSEHOLD HOT WATER SYSTEMS, OCTOBER 1989

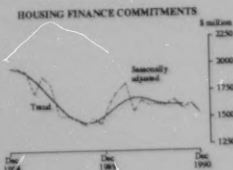
Type	Number '000	Per cent
Single non-shared systems		
Peak electric	541.3	28.0
Off-peak electric	900.2	46.6
Gas	293.2	15.2
Solar only	3.3	0.2
Solar, peak electric boosted	30.5	1.6
Solar, off-peak electric boosted	30.3	1.6
Solar, gas boosted	0.8	0.0
Wood/solid fuel	23.6	1.2
Total single non-shared systems	1,823.2	94.4
Other systems	98.2	5.1
No system	8.9	0.5
Total	1,930.2	100.0

For further information, order the publication *Domestic Energy Use, New South Wales (8217.1)*, or contact Jill Tomlinson on (02) 268 4388.

Housing finance turns down again

Seasonally adjusted housing finance commitments for December 1990 were \$1,533.8 million, a decrease of \$93.3 million (5.7%) on November 1990 but an increase of \$95.4 million (6.6%) compared with December 1989.

Commitments by banks, the major providers of housing finance, showed a decline in seasonally adjusted terms for the third successive month. Compared with November 1990, commitments were down 9.4 per cent. Permanent building societies showed a small decrease of 2.2 per cent while the other lenders category showed an increase of 9.5 per cent.



HOUSING FINANCE COMMITMENTS
DECEMBER 1990
Seasonally adjusted

Type of lender	\$ million	Percentage change	
		From previous month	From corresponding month of previous year
All banks	1,071.3	-9.4	4.5
Permanent building societies	199.4	-2.2	45.9
Other lenders	263.2	9.5	-4.8
Total	1,533.8	-5.7	6.6

While commitments for purchases of established dwellings fell by only 4.3 per cent (seasonally adjusted) in December, those for construction of dwellings and for newly erected buildings fell by 9.2 and 10.7 per cent respectively.

The overall decline in December followed a rise in November, a fall in October and a rise in September, emphasising the irregular nature of this series.

There was only a marginal fall in the trend estimates, which were just above the \$1,600 million mark for the month of September 1990.

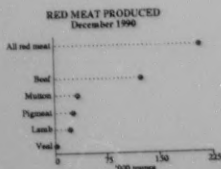
For further information, order the publication *Housing Finance for Owner Occupation, Australia (5609.0)*, or contact Derek Pike on (06) 252 7129.

Red meat production down

Red meat production for December 1990 fell by 14.7 per cent on the November figure in original terms, however seasonally adjusted production rose by 5.1 per cent. Over three-quarters of this increase can be attributed to beef production, which rose 6.0 per cent.

Chicken meat production increased in all States, with total production up in original terms by 12.3 per cent compared with November.

Calf slaughterings in Australia fell by 28.5 per cent in December 1990 on top of a large fall of 53.0 per cent in November 1990. However, the December figure of 34,400 was still 20.2 per cent higher than the December 1989 total.



Slaughterings in all other livestock categories except pigs, fell between November and December 1990 but as the table shows, only lamb numbers were down on the same month last year.

LIVESTOCK SLAUGHTERED
DECEMBER 1990
Percentage change

	From November 1990	From December 1989
Cattle slaughtered	-16.4	2.0
Calves slaughtered	-28.5	20.2
Sheep slaughtered	-13.3	20.2
Lambs slaughtered	-22.2	-5.0
Pigs slaughtered	2.7	0.9

Receipts of taxable wool in December 1990 decreased by 47.0 per cent in original terms and 5.4 per cent seasonally adjusted, over November 1990. When compared with December 1989 there was a decrease of 22.7 per cent in original terms and 20.9 per cent seasonally adjusted.

For further information, order the publication *Livestock Products, Australia* (7215.0), or contact Cheryl Warry on (06) 252 5337.

Half the population covered by private health insurance

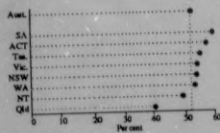
A Health Insurance Survey conducted in June 1990 showed that an estimated 8.9 million persons or about 52 per cent of the Australian population were covered by private health insurance.

The proportion of persons with private health insurance cover varied between the States and Territories, ranging from 59 per cent in South Australia to 41 per cent in Queensland. (Prior to the introduction of Medicare in 1984, Queensland had free shared-ward accommodation in public hospitals, with treatment by hospital doctors.) Overall, the proportion of residents of State capitals with private health insurance was similar to that for residents of other areas of the State.

COMPOSITION OF CONTRIBUTOR UNITS
JUNE 1990
Per cent

Composition of contributor units	With private health insurance	Without private health insurance
Contributor only	39	61
Contributor and dependent children	26	74
Contributor and partner only	55	45
Contributor, partner and dependent children	62	38
Total contributors	47	53

PERSONS WITH PRIVATE HEALTH INSURANCE,
JUNE 1990



Sixty-two per cent of contributor units comprising a contributor and partner with dependent children had private insurance, while 55 per cent of contributor and partner units with no dependent children had private insurance. In contrast, only 26 per cent of units consisting of a contributor (without partner) and dependent children were privately covered.

This comparison may be related to another finding, namely that as gross weekly income increased, so did the proportion of contributor units with private health insurance.

For further information, order the publication *Health Insurance Survey, Australia (4335.0)*, or contact Brian Richings on (06) 252 5786.

The biggest ever library of Australian history

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The Australian Bureau of Statistics two-part *Colonial and Historical Microfiche Series* is without doubt the biggest ever library of Australian historical facts and statistics. But by being available on microfiche, it might also claim to be the smallest.

The first part, *The Colonial Microfiche Series*, is the most comprehensive record of Australian history from 1804 to 1901 available in the world today. It includes government registers, statistical publications and 'blue books'.

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- the growth of wages in industry,
- fluctuations in the production of and prices paid for commodities, and
- significant data on the composition of Australia's towns, cities and rural regions.

In short it is a wealth of information.

For further details telephone Judith Miller on (06) 252 6610 or fax (06) 251 3352.

In brief ...

□ Shipping and air cargo

The value of total inward overseas cargo for the June quarter 1990 rose by \$108 million to \$11,672 million, a rise of 1 per cent compared with the March quarter 1990. The gross weight of this cargo was 8.3 million tonnes. The value of total outward overseas cargo for the June quarter 1990 was \$12,555 million, up \$318 million (3%) from the March quarter 1990. The gross weight of this cargo increased by 7 per cent to 72.7 million tonnes.

For sea cargo the value of inward overseas cargo for the June quarter 1990 was \$8,690 million, a fall of \$81 million (1%) compared with the March quarter 1990. The value of outward sea cargo for the June quarter 1990 was \$10,416 million, an increase of \$198 million (2%) over the March quarter 1990.

For air cargo, the value of inward overseas cargo for the June quarter 1990 was \$2,981 million, an increase of \$187 million (7%) compared with the March quarter 1990. The value of outward air cargo for the June quarter 1990 was \$2,138 million, an increase of \$119 million (6%) compared with the March quarter 1990.

Source: Shipping and Air Cargo Commodity Statistics, Australia, June Quarter 1990 (9206.0).

□ Super fund assets

Assets of superannuation funds and approved deposit funds (ADFs) totalled \$124,641 million at the end of September 1990, a decrease of \$76 million on June 1990. While assets in Australia increased by \$1,863 million, this was offset by a decrease in assets overseas of \$1,939 million.

At the end of September 1990 overseas assets were valued at \$13,419 million, a decrease of \$1,939 million on June 1990 figure of \$15,358 million.

For September 1990 the assets of superannuation funds and ADFs were concentrated in shares (23.7%), long term assets (20.6%), land and buildings (15.9%) and assets overseas (10.8%). This compares to the concentration in September 1989 of shares (26.6%), long term assets (17.9%), land and buildings (16.2%) and overseas assets (11.5%).

Source: Assets of Superannuation Funds and Approved Deposit Funds, September Quarter 1990 (5656.0).

□ Award rates of pay

Over the twelve months to December 1990, the weekly award rates of pay index for full-time adult employees rose by 4.2 per cent. For full-time adult males and full-time adult females the indexes rose by 4.0 per cent and 4.6 per cent respectively.

Source: Award Rates of Pay Indexes, Australia, December 1990 (6312.0).

□ Foreign investment

Australia's net foreign liabilities at 30 September 1990 totalled \$166,239 million, up \$5,925 million or 4 per cent on the position at the end of June. The ratio of net foreign liabilities at 30 September 1990 to Australia's gross domestic product (GDP) for the twelve months ended 30 September 1990 was 44.6 per cent, compared with 43.5 per cent a quarter earlier.

Source: Foreign Investment, Australia, September Quarter 1990 (5306.0).

Inquiries

The ABS supplies a wide range of statistical information:

- through its bookshops
- by mail order (including subscription)
- by facsimile
- electronically.

To order any of the publications that appear in *Statistics Weekly* or to inquire about the statistics and services available from the ABS, contact Information Services at any of the offices listed below. An Information Consultancy Service in each office provides assistance of a more extensive or complex nature.

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Suggestions

Any suggestions for improvement to this publication should be addressed to:

Robert Nixon
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Statistics Weekly
 (06) 252 6104

Statistics Weekly
28 February 1991

All the week's releases: 20 to 26 February 1991

General

- Statistics Weekly, 21 February 1991 (1318.0; \$4.00)
- Economic Indicators, WA, February 1991 (1307.5; \$5.50)
- Tasmanian Statistical Indicators, February 1991 (1303.6; \$9.00)
- Northern Territory Statistical Summary, 1991 (1306.7; \$15.00)

Census of Population and Housing

- Census 86 — The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People, June 1986 (2503.0; \$12.50) — *new issue*

Demography

- Overseas Arrivals and Departures, Aust., September 1990 (3401.0; \$5.00)
- Deaths, Vic, 1989 (3306.2; \$7.50)
- Estimated Resident Population and Area, Qld, 1990, Preliminary (3201.3; \$10.00)
- Demographic Summary, Qld, 1989 (3308.3; \$12.00) — *final issue*

National accounts, finance and foreign trade

- Foreign Investment, Aust., September Qtr 1990 (5306.0; \$16.50)
- Foreign Trade, Aust., Comparative and Summary Tables, 1989-90 (5410.0; \$19.00)
- Imports, Aust., December Qtr 1990 (5435.0; \$18.00)
- Housing Finance for Owner Occupation, Aust., December 1990 (5609.0; \$10.00)
- Foreign Trade, Tas., 1988-89 (5402.6; \$3.30)

Labour statistics and prices

- Export Price Index, Aust., December 1990 (6405.0; \$7.50)
- Price Index of Materials Used in Building Other Than House Building, Eight Capital Cities, December 1990 (6407.0; \$10.00)
- Price Index of Materials Used in House Building, Six State Capital Cities and Canberra, December 1990 (6408.0; \$7.50)
- Price Indexes of Articles Produced by Manufacturing Industry, Aust., December 1990 (6412.0; \$10.00)
- The Labour Force, NSW, November 1990 (6201.1; \$14.50)

Secondary industry and distribution

- Manufacturing Production, Aust., Building Materials and Fittings, December 1990 (8361.0; \$6.50)
- Manufacturing Production, Aust., Transport Equipment, December 1990 (8363.0; \$4.50)
- Manufacturing Production, Aust., Wood and Wood Products, December 1990 (8369.0; \$4.50)
- Construction Activity at Constant Prices, Aust., September Qtr 1990 (8782.0; \$10.00)
- Manufacturing in NSW, 1988-89 (8207.1; \$15.00) — *final issue*
- Tourist Accommodation, NSW, September Qtr 1990 (8635.1; \$10.00)
- Dwelling Unit Commencements Reported by Approving Authorities, Qld, November 1990 (8741.3; \$10.00)
- Tourist Accommodation, NT, September Qtr 1990 (8635.7; \$10.00)

Transport

- Shipping and Air Cargo Commodity Statistics, Aust., June Qtr 1990 (9206.0; \$14.00)
- Motor Vehicle Registrations, Aust., December 1990 (9303.0; \$10.00)
- Road Traffic Accidents Involving Casualties Reported to the Police Department, WA, October Qtr 1987 to December Qtr 1989 (9405.5; \$4.00) — *final issue*

Calendar of key releases

Expected releases over the fortnight to 12 March 1991

February

- 27** Price Indexes of Materials Used in Manufacturing Industries, Australia, December 1990 (6411.0; \$10.00)
Manufacturing Production, Australia, January 1991, Preliminary (8301.0; \$10.00)
- 28** Foreign Investment, Australia, December Quarter 1990, Preliminary (5307.0; \$10.00)
Registrations of New Motor Vehicles, Australia, January 1991, Preliminary (9301.0; \$10.00)

March

- 4** Private New Capital Expenditure, Australia, Actual and Expected Expenditure, December Quarter 1990, Preliminary (5625.0; \$10.00)
Building Approvals, Australia, January 1990 (8731.0; \$12.50)
- 5** Company Profits, Australia, December 1990 (5651.0; \$10.00)
Average Weekly Earnings, Australia, November 1990, Preliminary (6301.0; \$3.50)
- 6** Stocks, Manufacturers' Sales, December Quarter 1990 and Expected Sales to December 1991, Australia (5629.0; \$10.00)
Balance of Payments, Australia, January 1991 (5301.0; \$15.00)
Import Price Index, Australia, December Quarter 1990 (6414.0; \$9.00)
- 8** Balance of Payments, Australia, December Quarter 1990 (5302.0; \$20.00)
- 12** Quarterly Indexes of Industrial Production, Australia, December Quarter 1990 (8125.0; \$10.00)

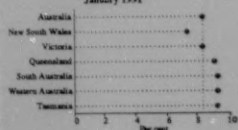
The latest ...

Changes to key State indicators — consolidated to 26 February 1991

	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.
	— Percentage change from same period previous year —								
New capital expenditure (Sept. qtr 90)*	-0.9	-10.9	5.4	11.2	-17.9	37.2	n.a.	n.a.	-3.4
Retail turnover (Dec. 90) (trend estimate)	3.6	-3.2	4.4	8.8	2.1	4.8	n.a.	7.6	2.4
New motor vehicle registrations (Dec. 90)†	-0.8	-36.9	7.8	1.3	-12.8	13.6	-10.6	3.2	-10.6
Number of dwelling unit approvals (Dec. 90)	4.0	-32.7	-12.0	-2.4	-27.5	32.5	4.6	72.5	-12.1
Value of total building work done (Sept. qtr 90)	-7.2	-7.7	-14.0	-6.3	-25.8	-18.8	-1.0	-9.0	-10.6
Employed persons (January 91)	0.6	-2.4	-0.6	0.3	0.7	1.2	-10.1	2.8	-0.5
Capital city consumer price index (Dec. qtr 90)	6.4	7.4	6.2	7.8	7.4	6.1	7.1	6.8	6.9
Average weekly earnings (full-time adult ordinary time) (August 90)	5.4	7.0	6.9	7.3	7.9	6.9	6.9	6.8	6.4
Population (June 90)	1.0	1.4	2.6	1.0	2.5	1.2	0.6	2.3	1.5
Room nights in licensed hotels and motels, etc (June qtr 90)	5.4	-0.9	5.7	5.5	-4.1	-1.2	8.5	14.8	3.6

* Seasonally adjusted except for NT and ACT. † Seasonally adjusted except for Tas., NT and ACT.

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE
Seasonally adjusted
January 1991



Key national indicators - consolidated to 26 February 1991

	i	Period	Latest figure available		Percentage change (a) in		
			Original	Seasonally adjusted	Previous period	Corresponding period last year	
National production							
Gross domestic product — current prices	\$m	Sept. qtr 90	93,635	93,427	-0.8	3.6	
— 1984-85 prices	"	"	63,732	63,670	-1.0	-0.7	
Industrial activity							
New capital expenditure — current prices	\$m	Sept. qtr 90	7,078	7,397	6.7	-3.4	
— 1984-85 prices	"	"	5,349	5,600	6.0	-5.7	
Expected new capital expenditure	"	Three months to Dec. 90	8,311	n.a.	n.a.	-5.7	
Retail turnover — current prices	"	December 90	9,395	7,085	-0.9	1.8	
— 1984-85 prices	"	Sept. qtr 90	14,213	14,858	0.4	0.4	
New motor vehicle registrations (f)	no.	December 90	42,204	43,607	-7.1	-10.6	
Dwelling unit approvals	"	December 90	8,438	9,798	-10.9	-12.1	
Value of all building approvals	\$m	"	1,371	1,497	-21.3	-16.5	
Value of total building work done — current prices	"	Sept. qtr 90	7,214	6,951	-3.7	-10.6	
— 1984-85 prices	"	"	4,556	4,390	-4.2	-14.4	
Manufacturers' sales	"	Sept. qtr 90	35,796	34,854	1.3	-0.9	
Expected manufacturers' sales	"	Three months to Dec. 90	37,757	n.a.	n.a.	0.3	
Labour							
Employed persons	'000	January 91	7,668.8	7,822.9	-0.4	-0.5	
Unemployment rate †	%	"	9.1	8.4	0.3	2.3	
Participation rate †	"	"	63.0	63.8	-0.1	0.3	
Job vacancies	'000	November 90	34.1	35.4	-27.8	-45.6	
Average weekly overtime per employee	hours	"	1.3	1.3	-1.9	-16.2	
Prices, profits and wages							
Consumer price index	1980-81 = 100.0	Dec. qtr 90	214.5	n.a.	2.7	6.9	
Price index of materials used in manufacturing industries (e)	1984-85 = 100.0	November 90	133.7	n.a.	-0.3	13.3	
Price index of articles produced by manufacturing industry	1988-89 = 100.0	December 90	112.8	n.a.	-0.6	6.3	
Company profits before income tax	\$m	Sept. qtr 90	3,449	3,337	-4.2	-23.2	
Average weekly earnings (Full-time adults; ordinary time)	\$	August 90	541.00	n.a.	1.3	6.4	
Interest rates (b) (monthly average)							
90-day bank bills †	% per annum	January 91	11.85	n.a.	-0.20	-4.80	
10-year Treasury bonds †	"	"	11.50	n.a.	-0.55	-1.30	
Balance of payments							
Exports of merchandise	\$m	December 90	4,317	4,104	-6.8	10.2	
Imports of merchandise	"	"	3,963	4,344	-1.9	-8.4	
Balance on merchandise trade (c)	"	"	354	-240	n.a.	15.8	
Balance of goods and services (c)	"	"	-1,069	-1,775	-30.2	5.8	
Balance on current account (c)	"	"	n.a.	105.3	0.3	-1.8	
Terms of trade (d)	1984-85 = 100.0	Sept. qtr 90					
Foreign investment							
Net foreign debt (f)	\$m	30 Sept. 90	124,715	n.a.	1.6	7.5	
Net foreign liabilities (f)	"	"	166,259	n.a.	3.7	7.8	
Exchange rates (monthly average)							
SUS	per \$A	December 90	0.7699	n.a.	-0.6	-2.1	
Trade weighted index	May 1970 = 100.0	"	56.7	n.a.	0.9	-7.1	
Other indicators							
Population (resident at end of qtr)	million	June 90	17.1	n.a.	0.3	1.5	
Overseas visitor arrivals	'000	September 90	163	190	-3.2	6.2	

(a) Based on seasonally adjusted figures where available. (b) Source Reserve Bank of Australia. (c) For percentage changes, a minus sign indicates an increase in the deficit, plus sign means a decrease in the deficit or an increase in the surplus. (d) The ratio of the price of goods and services for exports to that for imports. (e) Later figures expected to be released Wednesday, 27 February 1991. (f) Later figures expected to be released Thursday, 28 February 1991. NOTES: † = change is shown in terms of percentage points. n.a. = not available. Figures have been taken from a variety of ABS publications. Copies may be obtained from Information Services (see page 10). Some of the figures shown are preliminary, some final, and some are revisions of previously published figures. Users should check the latest relevant publication or with the ABS Information Services if the status of the statistic is important.

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