

COMMONWEALTH BUREAU OF CENSUS AND STATISTICS
CANBERRA, AUSTRALIA

To be treated as strictly CONFIDENTIAL and NOT to be published, broadcast or cabled before 3 P.M. on FRIDAY, 22ND JANUARY, 1960.

THE "C" SERIES RETAIL PRICE INDEX
DECEMBER QUARTER, 1959

- Particulars concerning variations in retail prices as measured by the "C" Series Retail Price Index for thirty-three cities and towns of Australia are given herein. The base of the index is: Weighted average of six capital cities in 1923-27 = 1,000.
- Seasonal fluctuations in prices of potatoes and onions materially affect the movement of the Aggregate All Groups Index. An All Groups Index which excludes the effects of price changes of potatoes and onions is shown in paragraph 3 and on page 4 hereof in comparison with the Aggregate All Groups Index calculated in the customary manner.
- An analysis for each capital city of the approximate effect of price movements of potatoes and onions is shown hereunder and a corresponding analysis for the weighted average of the six capital cities is shown on page 2.

Quarter	"C" Series Index Points								
	Exclud- ing Potatoes and Onions (a)	Cumulative Movement due to Potatoes and Onions (a)	Aggre- gate All Groups	Exclud- ing Potatoes and Onions (a)	Cumulative Movement due to Potatoes and Onions (a)	Aggre- gate All Groups	Exclud- ing Potatoes and Onions (a)	Cumulative Movement due to Potatoes and Onions (a)	Aggre- gate All Groups
	SYDNEY			MELBOURNE			BRISBANE		
1956-March	2,461	+ 29	2,490	2,447	+ 34	2,481	2,234	+ 26	2,260
June	2,501	+ 55	2,556	2,497	+ 58	2,555	2,263	+ 36	2,299
Sept.	2,559	+ 106	2,665	2,506	+ 122	2,628	2,287	+ 83	2,370
Dec.	2,578	+ 46	2,624	2,519	+ 84	2,603	2,305	+ 30	2,335
1957-March	2,602	+ 2	2,604	2,536	+ 10	2,546	2,330	- 9	2,321
June	2,611	+ 7	2,618	2,558	+ 15	2,573	2,349	- 12	2,337
Sept.	2,628	- 6	2,622	2,567	+ 1	2,568	2,362	- 19	2,343
Dec.	2,630	- 17	2,613	2,559	+ 1	2,560	2,402	- 31	2,371
1958-March	2,677	- 12	2,665	2,566	- 2	2,564	2,432	- 21	2,411
June	2,676	- 15	2,661	2,581	- 7	2,574	2,492	- 30	2,462
Sept.	2,671	- 17	2,654	2,597	- 9	2,588	2,508	- 24	2,484
Dec.	2,682	- 9	2,673	2,634	+ 1	2,635	2,547	- 22	2,525
1959-March	2,682	- 1	2,681	2,648	+ 14	2,662	2,562	- 12	2,550
June	2,696	- 6	2,690	2,678	+ 6	2,684	2,575	- 23	2,552
Sept.	2,719	- 8	2,711	2,700	+ 6	2,706	2,613	- 18	2,595
Dec.	2,754	- 10	2,744	2,729	+ 9	2,738	2,644	- 29	2,615
	ADELAIDE			PERTH			HOBART		
1956-March	2,369	+ 19	2,388	2,612	- 7	2,605	2,569	+ 29	2,598
June	2,413	+ 39	2,452	2,646	-	2,646	2,616	+ 23	2,639
Sept.	2,426	+ 100	2,526	2,671	+ 9	2,680	2,645	+ 58	2,703
Dec.	2,424	+ 73	2,497	2,681	+ 9	2,690	2,659	+ 53	2,712
1957-March	2,434	- 2	2,432	2,708	+ 6	2,714	2,685	+ 3	2,688
June	2,466	+ 4	2,470	2,746	+ 4	2,750	2,704	+ 3	2,707
Sept.	2,492	- 7	2,485	2,741	+ 5	2,746	2,699	- 18	2,681
Dec.	2,473	- 8	2,465	2,708	- 1	2,707	2,707	- 23	2,684
1958-March	2,472	- 6	2,466	2,718	- 6	2,712	2,716	- 9	2,707
June	2,537	- 15	2,522	2,753	- 6	2,747	2,735	- 23	2,712
Sept.	2,577	- 14	2,563	2,764	- 6	2,758	2,755	- 28	2,727
Dec.	2,593	- 2	2,591	2,758	- 3	2,755	2,788	- 21	2,767
1959-March	2,605	+ 4	2,609	2,771	- 1	2,770	2,793	+ 2	2,795
June	2,632	- 7	2,625	2,801	+ 2	2,803	2,797	- 10	2,787
Sept.	2,672	- 7	2,665	2,821	+ 9	2,830	2,825	- 6	2,819
Dec.	2,689	+ 1	2,690	2,821	+ 3	2,824	2,851	- 5	2,846

(a) Cumulative from (and including) September Quarter, 1955.
(+) Denotes increase, (-) decrease.

3. (continued)

WEIGHTED AVERAGE OF SIX CAPITAL CITIES

Quarter	"C" Series Index Points		
	Excluding Potatoes and Onions (a)	Cumulative Movement due to Potatoes and Onions (a)	Aggregate All Groups
1955 - September	2,394	+ 17	2,411
December	2,413	+ 22	2,435
1956 - March	2,437	+ 28	2,465
June	2,480	+ 48	2,528
September	2,511	+ 101	2,612
December	2,526	+ 57	2,583
1957 - March	2,547	+ 3	2,550
June	2,565	+ 7	2,572
September	2,578	- 4	2,574
December	2,576	- 11	2,565
1958 - March	2,601	- 9	2,592
June	2,620	- 13	2,607
September	2,630	- 14	2,616
December	2,652	- 6	2,646
1959 - March	2,660	+ 3	2,663
June	2,681	- 4	2,677
September	2,707	- 3	2,704
December	2,735	- 3	2,732

(a) Cumulative from (and including) September Quarter, 1955.

(+ Denotes increase, (-) decrease.

4. Comparative average retail prices of potatoes for the six capital cities are shown hereunder:-

AVERAGE RETAIL PRICES OF POTATOES

Pence per 7 lbs.

Period	Sydney	Melbourne	Brisbane	Adelaide	Perth	Hobart	Weighted Average of Six Capitals
December Quarter, 1953	61	53	58	52	29	65	55
" " 1954	29	18	30	23	29	29	25
" " 1955	56	56	46	54	33	60	53
" " 1956	81	99	76	88	44	88	85
" " 1957	33	34	30	26	38	31	33
March " 1958	37	33	40	28	35	43	35
June " "	35	29	32	22	35	32	31
September " "	34	28	39	23	35	28	31
December " "	40	37	41	34	38	35	38
March " 1959	46	47	49	38	39	53	45
June " "	40	40	38	28	41	43	39
September " "	35	35	38	24	41	42	35
December " "	37	39	35	31	40	44	37
Month of December, 1959	34	42	28	36	40	51	37

5. The "C" Series Retail Price Index is based on pre-war weights and components. It is compiled without significant change in the principles and procedures followed in pre-war years. These are set out in "Labour Report" No. 41 (1952) published by this Bureau.

6. In March, 1954, an Interim Retail Price Index (1952-53 base year) was instituted with post-war weights and components. This index is published quarterly and is described in "Labour Report" No. 46 (1958). For December Quarter, 1959, it is published in a separate document containing an analysis similar to that made herein.

7. The observations in these Statistical Bulletins are made, as is customary, to assist public understanding of the trends in retail prices within the definition of the respective indexes.

8. Tribunals and other authorities concerned with wage adjustment and other purposes decide in the light of their own requirements what price index (if any) is relevant to their purposes and how it shall be applied. The Statistician's function is to supply indexes and information thereon as required by those authorities. The Statistician expresses no view as to the merits or demerits of the use of price indexes in this connection.

9. The main movements in average quarterly prices affecting the "C" Series retail price index numbers for the capital cities from September Quarter, 1959 to December Quarter, 1959 were:-

In the food and groceries group, prices of meat rose in three capital cities and decreased in three. Prices of bacon rose in each capital and bread prices increased in four capitals. Potato prices rose in four capitals and decreased in two. Prices of eggs decreased in each capital and prices of onions decreased in five capitals. The food and grocery group of the index (average of six capital cities) showed an overall quarterly increase of 0.9% including potatoes and onions, and of 1.0% excluding potatoes and onions.

The index of prices of the clothing group for the six capital cities showed a quarterly increase of 1.4%.

In the miscellaneous group, there were rises in some fares in Adelaide and Perth. The overall quarterly movement in the group for the average of the six capital cities was an increase of 0.3%.

Rents in the index showed increases in each of the capital cities. The weighted average increase in the rent group for the six capital cities was 1.5%.

10. The rental component used in these retail price indexes has been continued on the basis described on pages 2 and 10 of "Labour Report" No. 41 (1952). Analysis of data of the Census of 1954 and recent surveys show that in all cities the numbers of houses privately rented have diminished substantially and that rents of the residual houses (alone) are no longer sufficiently representative as the housing component of the retail price indexes. The housing component is under consideration.

This document is published by the Commonwealth Statistician and contains statistics or abstracts thereof compiled and tabulated by the Commonwealth Statistician pursuant to the Census and Statistics Act 1905-1949.

S.R. CARVER
COMMONWEALTH STATISTICIAN

"C" SERIES RETAIL PRICE INDEX FOR QUARTER ENDED DECEMBER, 1959
Food, Groceries, Rents, Clothing and Miscellaneous Household Expenditure
(BASE: Weighted average of six capital cities in 1923-27 = 1,000)

1. INDIVIDUAL TOWNS

Town	Aggregate - All Groups					All Groups EXCLUDING price movement of Potatoes and Onions (b)				
	1958		1959			1958		1959		
	Dec. Qtr.	March Qtr.	June Qtr.	Sept. Qtr.	Dec. Qtr.	Dec. Qtr.	March Qtr.	June Qtr.	Sept. Qtr.	Dec. Qtr.
NEW SOUTH WALES										
Sydney	2673	2681	2690	2711	2744	2682	2682	2696	2719	2754
Newcastle	2595	2607	2621	2654	2686	2616	2616	2636	2668	2702
Broken Hill	2660	2681	2674	2682	2722	2678	2680	2686	2694	2726
Goulburn	2676	2675	2680	2690	2741	2683	2676	2695	2705	2749
Bathurst	2590	2608	2632	2646	2697	2612	2619	2646	2664	2708
FIVE TOWNS (a)	2666	2675	2684	2706	2738	2677	2677	2691	2714	2749
VICTORIA										
Melbourne	2635	2662	2684	2706	2738	2634	2648	2678	2700	2729
Ballarat	2605	2618	2626	2660	2692	2616	2614	2636	2666	2691
Bendigo	2637	2662	2685	2698	2734	2642	2656	2691	2705	2736
Geelong	2605	2620	2635	2640	2662	2609	2618	2648	2653	2665
Warrnambool	2645	2656	2666	2695	2721	2655	2657	2676	2702	2725
FIVE TOWNS (a)	2633	2659	2680	2702	2734	2633	2646	2676	2697	2726
QUEENSLAND										
Brisbane	2525	2550	2552	2595	2615	2547	2562	2575	2613	2644
Toowoomba	2488	2497	2494	2537	2555	2508	2504	2513	2553	2581
Rockhampton	2510	2558	2561	2608	2623	2533	2564	2581	2629	2651
Townsville	2629	2700	2695	2737	2781	2660	2714	2718	2758	2811
Bundaberg	2498	2532	2538	2571	2596	2519	2537	2557	2596	2625
FIVE TOWNS (a)	2527	2557	2558	2600	2622	2550	2568	2580	2619	2650
SOUTH AUSTRALIA										
Adelaide	2591	2609	2625	2665	2690	2593	2605	2632	2672	2689
Kadina, etc.	2408	2416	2431	2461	2482	2409	2413	2435	2466	2480
Port Pirie	2503	2509	2510	2550	2585	2501	2503	2512	2551	2576
Mount Gambier	2479	2501	2507	2553	2560	2478	2491	2510	2555	2556
Peterborough	2495	2499	2493	2529	2567	2493	2492	2495	2531	2559
FIVE TOWNS (a)	2579	2596	2612	2652	2676	2581	2593	2619	2658	2675
WESTERN AUSTRALIA										
Perth, etc.	2755	2770	2803	2830	2824	2758	2771	2801	2821	2821
Kalgoorlie, etc.	2670	2679	2698	2734	2736	2669	2676	2701	2724	2728
Northam	2711	2711	2728	2767	2754	2713	2711	2725	2761	2752
Bunbury	2785	2805	2825	2852	2850	2788	2805	2823	2841	2844
Geraldton	2974	2994	3051	3100	3112	2977	2995	3050	3091	3108
FIVE TOWNS (a)	2753	2767	2800	2828	2823	2756	2768	2798	2819	2819
TASMANIA										
Hobart	2767	2795	2787	2819	2846	2788	2793	2797	2825	2851
Launceston	2684	2698	2709	2725	2750	2688	2692	2708	2720	2746
Burnie	2645	2664	2666	2700	2709	2654	2653	2659	2694	2707
Devonport	2702	2698	2696	2702	2712	2705	2691	2696	2698	2707
Queenstown	2628	2639	2641	2638	2653	2637	2626	2631	2632	2648
FIVE TOWNS (a)	2729	2750	2749	2774	2796	2743	2746	2754	2775	2799
THIRTY TOWNS (a)	2640	2658	2671	2698	2726	2647	2655	2676	2702	2730
SIX CAPITALS (a)	2646	2663	2677	2704	2732	2652	2660	2681	2707	2735

SPECIAL TOWNS (NOT INCLUDED IN WEIGHTED AVERAGES ABOVE)

Port Augusta (South Aust.)	2495	2513	2523	2550	2576	2496	2506	2523	2553	2569
Whyalla (South Australia)	2597	2596	2602	2641	2677	2589	2590	2602	2645	2672
Canberra (A.C.T.)	2721	2720	2763	2773	2814	2731	2724	2773	2783	2812

(a) Weighted Average. (b) Cumulative from (and including) September Quarter, 1955.

This document is published by the Commonwealth Statistician and contains statistics or abstracts thereof compiled and tabulated by the Commonwealth Statistician pursuant to the Census and Statistics Act 1905-1949.

COMMONWEALTH BUREAU OF CENSUS AND STATISTICS
CANBERRA. A.C.T. 22ND JANUARY, 1960

S.R. CARVER
COMMONWEALTH STATISTICIAN