

COMMONWEALTH BUREAU OF CENSUS AND STATISTICSCANBERRA, AUSTRALIA

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WHOLESALE PRICE (BASIC MATERIALS AND FOODSTUFFS) INDEXJANUARY, 1963

1. The summary overleaf contains particulars of the Wholesale Price (Basic Materials and Foodstuffs) Index from 1936-37 to the present time.
2. A list of the commodities and other information concerning the index is set out in Labour Report No. 48, 1960. (See also paragraph 6 below.)
3. Commodities in the index are priced in their primary or basic form wherever possible and as nearly as may be at the point where they first make effective impact on the Australian price structure. The prices of imported goods, for instance, are on an ex-bond or into factory basis.
4. The prices used have, in the main, been obtained directly from manufacturers and merchants. With a few important exceptions, they are from Melbourne sources.
5. The weights are based on estimates of the average annual consumption of the commodities in Australia during the period 1928-29 to 1934-35. The index is constructed on the aggregative fixed weights formula.
6. During 1956, supplies and prices of potatoes and onions fluctuated violently upwards and downwards between abnormally wide limits. These fluctuations were so great as to dominate the movement of the sections of the index in which these items were included, namely, "Foodstuffs and Tobacco", "Goods Principally Home Produced" and "Total All Groups". In the circumstances, neither seasonal adjustment nor conversion of the index to a "changing weights" formula could be applied to eliminate these transient fluctuations. Accordingly, in order to provide a representative measure of general trend in wholesale prices, the index was reconstructed as from the base period by omitting potatoes and onions.
7. Consideration is being given to the enlargement of the index to cover additional groups and to revision of the weighting pattern of the index.

WHOLESALE PRICE (BASIC MATERIALS AND FOODSTUFFS) INDEX NUMBERS
 (Base of each Index : Average of 3 years ended June, 1939 = 100)

Period	Basic Materials							Food-stuffs and Tobacco (b)	Basic Materials and Foodstuffs		
	Metals and Coal (a)	Oils, Fats and Waxes	Textiles	Chemicals	Rubber and Hides	Building Materials	Total		Goods Principally Imported (c)	Goods Principally Home Produced (b)	Total All Groups (b)
1936-37	96	99	118	99	111	99	99	98	99	98	99
1937-38	101	101	100	100	97	104	102	102	102	101	101
1938-39	103	100	82	101	92	97	99	101	99	100	100
1952-53	392	234	607	350	224	404	350	293	292	331	319
1953-54	388	222	566	323	191	363	332	308	271	339	319
1954-55	391	214	510	314	246	372	330	315	277	340	322
1955-56	404	220	456	317	328	415	345	325	292	352	334
1956-57	409	241	520	344	302	463	367	324	311	357	344
1957-58	398	238	437	349	280	453	355	325	301	355	339
1958-59	392	231	362	327	293	423	340	332	283	358	336
1959-60	395	225	403	331	379	431	347	348	281	375	348
1960-61	399	222	387	331	341	439	346	372	278	394	360
1961-62	392	212	400	333	302	439	340	332	270	363	336
1961-62 -											
Dec.	393	211	385	333	286	439	339	326	270	358	332
Jan.	393	211	386	333	292	439	339	329	268	361	334
Feb.	390	211	402	333	288	439	339	329	267	362	334
March	390	211	410	334	297	439	340	328	269	360	332
April	390	211	410	334	304	439	340	327	267	361	333
May	392	211	410	334	299	439	340	330	271	361	334
June	389	211	410	333	293	439	339	337	269	367	338
1962-63 -											
July	389	211	405	317	290	439	337	342	269	370	340
Aug.	387	211	390	317	284	439	335	346	270	371	341
Sept.	389	210	390	317	281	439	336	342	270	367	339
Oct.	389	210	400	317	274	439	336	342	272	367	339
Nov.	387	208	405	317	268	439	334	337	272	363	336
Dec.	387	208	p420	317	267	439	p335	340	272	p365	p338
Jan.	387	208	p458	317	259	439	p337	p343	p274	p368	p340

- (a) The special purpose index number for the "Metals and Coal" group excluding Coal and Briquettes for January, 1963, is 431.
- (b) Excluding potatoes and onions (see paragraph 6 overleaf). Index numbers including potatoes and onions for January, 1963, are:-
 Foodstuffs and Tobacco p338
 Goods Principally Home Produced ... p364
 Total All Groups p338
- (c) Represents only such imported commodities as are included in the Wholesale Price Index and does not measure changes in prices of all imports.
- p - preliminary, subject to revision.

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COMMONWEALTH BUREAU OF CENSUS AND STATISTICS
 CANBERRA, A.C.T. 7TH MARCH, 1963

NOTE:- Inquiries concerning these statistics may be made in Canberra by telephoning UO413 Extension 455 or, in each State capital, by telephoning the office of the Bureau of Census and Statistics.