



RETAIL SALES OF GOODS, AUSTRALIA DECEMBER QUARTER 1981 (PRELIMINARY)

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MAIN FEATURES

The preliminary estimate of the value of retail sales (excl. motor vehicles, parts, petrol, etc.) at current prices for Australia for December quarter 1981 is \$10,312.4m, and at constant (average 1974-75) prices is \$5,455.2m.

At current prices, the seasonally adjusted December quarter 1981 preliminary estimate is 2.5 per cent greater than September quarter 1981 and 11.7 per cent greater than December quarter 1980.

At constant (average 1974-75) prices, the seasonally adjusted December quarter 1981 preliminary estimate is 0.3 per cent greater than September quarter 1981 and 3.2 per cent greater than December quarter 1980.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

Introduction

The tables in this publication contain preliminary estimates of the value of retail sales for the December quarter 1981. Figures for some earlier quarters are also shown for purposes of comparison.

2. Quarterly estimates are compiled on the basis of returns received from a sample of retail establishments. However, to allow prompt publication, the preliminary estimates for the December quarter are based on returns received from approximately 80 per cent of sample establishments. Detailed estimates based on a more complete response will be published in *Retail Sales of Goods, Australia* (8503.0) December quarter 1981.

Scope and coverage of the statistics

3. All figures in this publication are on a basis comparable with the 1973-74 Retail Census. Further information relating to the basis on which the statistics of retail sales of goods are compiled is contained in the September quarter 1981 publication (8503.0).

Reliability of estimates

4. As the preliminary estimates are based on returns received from a sample of retail establishments, they may differ from the results which would be obtained by a comparable complete collection. A measure of the likely difference is given by the standard error of the estimates. There are about 2 chances in 3 that the difference would be 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 would be 2 chances in 3 that a comparable complete collection would give a figure within the range \$990 million to \$1,010 million, and 19 chances in 20 that the figure would be within the range \$980 million to \$1,020 million.

5. The standard error of the preliminary estimate of the total value of retail sales (excluding motor vehicles, parts, petrol, etc.) for Australia is about 0.4 per cent, and for the corresponding estimates for individual States is about 0.6 per cent for N.S.W., 0.7 per cent for South Australia, 0.8 per cent for Victoria and Western Australia, 0.9 per cent for Tasmania and 1.1 per cent for Queensland. The standard error of the preliminary estimate of the value of retail sales of commodity groups is about 0.5 per cent for 'food and drink' and 'clothing, hardware, electrical and furniture', and about 0.9 per cent for 'other'.

6. The preliminary estimates may also differ from the final quarterly estimates, which are based on returns received from the full sample. The standard error of the difference between the preliminary estimates and the corresponding final estimates of the total value of retail sales (excluding motor vehicles, parts, petrol, etc.) for Australia is about 0.4 per cent of the final estimate, and the standard error of the difference between the corresponding preliminary and final estimates for individual States is about 0.8 per cent. The standard error of the difference between preliminary and final estimates of commodity groups for Australia varies between 0.3 and 1.3 per cent of the final estimate.

7. Estimates of retail sales are also subject to non-sampling errors. The major source of such possible error is the necessity to make forward estimates for every period, to take account of the probable commencement of new retail businesses. These estimates can only be projected forward on the basis of past information obtained at regular annual intervals by new business censuses. However, this information is of necessity approximately 1½ to 2 years out of date before the total estimates of retail sales can finally be adjusted, and the adequacy of new business provisions assessed. The difficulty of making proper allowance for the value of retail sales of new businesses is increased in a period of substantial price increases.

Seasonal adjustment

8. Seasonally adjusted statistics are also shown in the tables in this publication. In addition to being adjusted for normal seasonal factors, all series have been adjusted for 'trading-day' effects arising from the varying numbers of Sundays, Mondays, Tuesdays, etc. in each quarter. While the normal seasonal factors should change only gradually from year to year, the trading-day adjustment for any quarter will vary from year to year in accordance with the combination of days which occur in the quarter. Adjustment has also been made in some series for the effects of movement in the date of Easter. It should be noted that the seasonally adjusted figures reflect the sampling errors to which the original figures are subject, and do not remove random influences (e.g. abnormal weather, strikes). Details of the methods used in seasonally adjusting these and other series are given in *Seasonally Adjusted Indicators, Australia* (1308.0).

9. Seasonally adjusted figures for Australian broad commodity groups and total retail sales are derived by aggregative adjustment i.e. by summation of the adjusted series for the corresponding individual commodity groups.

10. Seasonally adjusted figures for States for total retail sales have been seasonally adjusted independently. As a consequence, while the unadjusted components in the original series add to the totals, the adjusted components may not add to the adjusted totals.

Estimates at constant prices

11. This publication includes estimates of the value of retail sales of goods at constant (average 1974-75) prices. Quarterly figures for Australia are presented, in both original and seasonally adjusted form. The scope of the series at constant prices is identical to that of the series at current prices.

12. The series are measures of the value of retail sales after the direct effects of price changes since the base year (1974-75) have been eliminated. Measures of this type are subject to approximations and assumptions and should not be interpreted in any precise quantitative sense.

13. Further details of the nature and concepts of these measures are given in pages 4-6 of the Explanatory notes of the March quarter 1978 publication (8503.0).

Related publications

14. Monthly details of retail sales are shown in *Retail Sales of Goods, Australia* (8501.0).

15. Current publications produced by the ABS are listed in the *Catalogue of Publications, Australia* (1101.0). The ABS also issues, on Tuesdays and Fridays, a *Publications Advice* (1105.0) which lists publications to be released in the next few days. The Catalogue and Publications Advice are available from any ABS office.

Symbols and other usages

p preliminary—figure or series subject to revision
r revised

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TABLE 1. TOTAL VALUE OF RETAIL SALES OF GOODS
(EXCLUDING MOTOR VEHICLES, PARTS, PETROL, ETC.) AT CURRENT PRICES
(\$ million)

Quarter	N.S.W.	Vic.	Qld	S.A.	W.A.	Tas.	Aust. (a)
			Original				
1980-81—							
September	2,935.2	1,998.3	1,202.4	659.2	692.7	206.6	7,694.4
December	3,514.0	2,439.1	1,422.4	789.3	821.2	246.6	9,232.6
March	2,952.5	2,066.2	1,219.8	680.2	711.1	210.3	7,840.1
June	3,186.6	2,181.0	1,338.2	723.4	764.8	222.2	8,416.2
1981-82—							
September	3,283.2	2,226.4	1,401.3	741.3	792.2	225.2	8,669.6
December p	3,946.3	2,681.6	1,625.3	873.5	917.5	268.2	10,312.4
			Seasonally adjusted				
1980-81—							
September	3,031.2	2,079.5	1,223.9	682.9	713.1	215.4	7,947.9
December	3,104.5	2,157.1	1,277.9	710.3	732.6	220.3	8,203.2
March	3,210.8	2,219.4	1,322.0	727.2	766.5	224.9	8,461.2
June	3,253.2	2,237.9	1,366.3	733.5	783.2	225.8	8,603.6
1981-82—							
September	3,392.9	2,306.8	1,421.1	768.3	810.6	233.7	8,941.2
December p	3,481.6	2,376.7	1,461.8	784.1	819.2	240.5	9,161.9

(a) Excludes Northern Territory and Australian Capital Territory.

TABLE 2. VALUE OF RETAIL SALES OF GOODS BY BROAD COMMODITY GROUPS AT CURRENT AND CONSTANT (AVERAGE 1974-75) PRICES : AUSTRALIA (a)
(\$ million)

Quarter	Food and drink(b)	Clothing, hardware, electrical and furniture(c)	Other(d)	Total (excluding motor vehicles, parts, petrol, etc.)
ORIGINAL				
Current Prices				
1980-81—				
September	3,813.7	2,549.4	1,331.3	7,694.4
December	4,326.5	3,206.8	1,699.3	9,232.6
March	4,043.7	2,439.7	1,356.7	7,840.1
June	4,130.2	2,889.8	1,396.2	8,416.2
1981-82—				
September	4,292.5	2,908.9	1,468.2	8,669.6
December p	4,792.6	3,610.0	1,909.8	10,312.4
Constant (Average 1974-75) Prices				
1980-81—				
September	2,089.4	1,599.4	775.6	4,464.4
December	2,314.6	1,990.9	980.4	5,285.9
March	2,109.2	1,504.0	765.2	4,378.4
June	2,129.0	1,720.2	777.9	4,627.1
1981-82—				
September	2,152.2	1,721.8	796.3	4,670.3
December p	2,348.9	2,097.4	1,008.9	5,455.2
SEASONALLY ADJUSTED				
Current prices				
1980-81—				
September	3,912.0	2,637.6	1,398.3	7,947.9
December	4,030.7	2,742.1	1,430.4	8,203.2
March	4,163.8	2,831.7	1,465.7	8,461.2
June	4,230.4	2,876.4	1,496.8	8,603.6
1981-82—				
September	4,386.5	3,013.2	1,541.5	8,941.2
December p	4,470.7	3,085.0	1,606.2	9,161.9
Constant (Average 1974-75) Prices				
1980-81—				
September	2,141.7	1,655.9	811.1	4,608.7
December	2,152.9	1,701.9	825.8	4,680.6
March	2,171.8	1,728.6	830.6	4,731.0
June	2,186.1	1,725.8	833.0	4,744.9
1981-82—				
September	2,197.2	1,784.1	831.7	4,813.0
December p	2,187.4	1,791.9	850.0	4,829.3

(a) Excludes Northern Territory and Australian Capital Territory. (b) Includes Groceries; Meat; Other food; and Beer, wine and spirits. (c) Includes Clothing and drapery; Footwear; Hardware, china and glassware; Electrical goods; and Furniture and floor coverings. (d) Includes Chemists' goods; Newspapers, books and stationery; and Other goods.