

COMMONWEALTH BUREAU OF CENSUS AND STATISTICS  
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THE "C" SERIES RETAIL PRICE INDEX  
MARCH QUARTER, 1960

1. Particulars concerning variations in retail prices as measured by the "C" Series Retail Price Index for thirty principal cities and towns of Australia and three "special" towns are given herein. The base of the index is : Weighted average of six capital cities in 1923-27 = 1,000.

2. Compared with the previous quarter, the index for March Quarter, 1960 increased by 0.9% for the weighted average of the six capital cities and by 0.8% in the thirty towns combined. Changes in individual cities were:- Sydney +0.9%, Melbourne +0.6%, Brisbane +0.6%, Adelaide +1.8%, Perth +1.6%, Hobart +0.7%.

The weighted average index of the five towns for each State for March Quarter, compared with the previous quarter, showed the following changes:- New South Wales +0.9%, Victoria +0.6%, Queensland +0.5%, South Australia +1.8%, Western Australia +1.5%, Tasmania +0.5%.

3. The main movements in average quarterly prices affecting the "C" Series retail price index numbers for the capital cities from December Quarter, 1959 to March Quarter, 1960 were:-

In the food and groceries group, prices of meat rose in four capital cities. In two of these the increases were substantial. Eggs increased in price in all capitals, and bread increased in five. The food and groceries group of the index (average of six capital cities) showed an overall quarterly increase of 1.6%, including potatoes and onions, and of 1.9% excluding potatoes and onions.

The index of prices of the clothing group for the six capital cities was practically unchanged, the quarterly increase being 0.2%.

The index of prices for the miscellaneous group also showed an increase of 0.2%.

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 1.1%.

4. 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 on pages 2 and 4 hereof in comparison with the Aggregate All Groups Index calculated in the customary manner.

5. A comparative analysis of the movements of the "C" Series Retail Price Index is provided hereunder:-

Quarter	"C" Series Index Points								
	Excluding Potatoes and Onions (a)	Cumulative Movement due to Potatoes and Onions (a)	Aggregate All Groups	Excluding Potatoes and Onions (a)	Cumulative Movement due to Potatoes and Onions (a)	Aggregate All Groups	Excluding Potatoes and Onions (a)	Cumulative Movement due to Potatoes and Onions (a)	Aggregate All Groups
	SYDNEY			MELBOURNE			BRISBANE		
1955-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
1960-March	2,779	- 11	2,768	2,752	+ 3	2,755	2,657	- 27	2,630
	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	- 6	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	2,456	+ 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
1960-March	2,749	- 10	2,739	2,869	- 6	2,869	2,869	- 4	2,865

WEIGHTED AVERAGE OF SIX CAPITAL CITIES

Quarter	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
1960 - March	2,763	- 7	2,756

(a) Cumulative from (and including) Sept. Qtr., 1955. (+) Denotes increase, (-) decrease.

6. 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
March	Quarter, 1954	40	31	52	30	29	35	37
"	" 1955	38	27	44	29	28	43	34
"	" 1956	66	59	71	46	31	67	60
"	" 1957	47	41	45	30	44	52	43
"	" 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
March	" 1960	36	36	34	27	40	47	35

7. 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.

8. In March, 1954, an Interim Retail Price Index (1952-53 base year = 100.0) was instituted with post-war weights and components. This index is described in "Labour Report" No. 46 (1958). It is published quarterly in a separate Bulletin.

9. 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.

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). Data of the Census of 1954 and subsequent 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. In the annual "Labour Report" the "C" Series Retail Price Index is published inclusive and exclusive of rents. It is not proposed to reconstruct the "C" Series Retail Price Index, except at the instance of an industrial tribunal or other authority concerned.

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**"C" SERIES RETAIL PRICE INDEX FOR QUARTER ENDED MARCH, 1960**  
**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)				
	1959				1960	1959				1960
	March Qtr.	June Qtr.	Sept. Qtr.	Dec. Qtr.	March Qtr.	June Qtr.	Sept. Qtr.	Dec. Qtr.	March Qtr.	
<b>NEW SOUTH WALES</b>										
Sydney	2681	2690	2711	2744	2768	2682	2696	2719	2754	2779
Newcastle	2607	2621	2654	2686	2712	2616	2636	2668	2702	2736
Broken Hill	2681	2674	2682	2722	2749	2680	2686	2694	2726	2762
Goulburn	2675	2680	2690	2741	2750	2676	2695	2705	2749	2760
Bathurst	2608	2632	2646	2697	2701	2619	2646	2664	2708	2716
<b>FIVE TOWNS (a)</b>	<b>2675</b>	<b>2684</b>	<b>2706</b>	<b>2738</b>	<b>2762</b>	<b>2677</b>	<b>2691</b>	<b>2714</b>	<b>2749</b>	<b>2775</b>
<b>VICTORIA</b>										
Melbourne	2662	2684	2706	2738	2755	2648	2678	2700	2729	2752
Ballarat	2618	2626	2660	2692	2692	2614	2636	2666	2691	2701
Bendigo	2662	2685	2698	2734	2744	2656	2691	2705	2736	2755
Geelong	2620	2635	2640	2662	2674	2618	2648	2653	2665	2684
Warrnambool	2656	2666	2695	2721	2741	2657	2676	2702	2725	2751
<b>FIVE TOWNS (a)</b>	<b>2659</b>	<b>2680</b>	<b>2702</b>	<b>2734</b>	<b>2750</b>	<b>2646</b>	<b>2676</b>	<b>2697</b>	<b>2726</b>	<b>2748</b>
<b>QUEENSLAND</b>										
Brisbane	2550	2552	2595	2615	2630	2582	2575	2613	2644	2657
Toowoomba	2497	2494	2537	2555	2571	2504	2513	2553	2581	2594
Rockhampton	2558	2561	2608	2623	2640	2564	2561	2629	2651	2662
Townsville	2700	2695	2737	2781	2805	2714	2718	2758	2811	2833
Bundaberg	2532	2538	2571	2596	2609	2537	2557	2596	2625	2639
<b>FIVE TOWNS (a)</b>	<b>2557</b>	<b>2558</b>	<b>2600</b>	<b>2622</b>	<b>2638</b>	<b>2588</b>	<b>2580</b>	<b>2619</b>	<b>2650</b>	<b>2665</b>
<b>SOUTH AUSTRALIA</b>										
Adelaide	2609	2625	2665	2690	2739	2605	2632	2672	2689	2749
Kadina, etc.	2416	2431	2461	2482	2516	2413	2435	2466	2480	2527
Port Pirie	2509	2510	2550	2585	2603	2503	2512	2551	2576	2614
Mount Gambier	2501	2507	2553	2560	2602	2491	2510	2555	2556	2602
Peterborough	2499	2493	2529	2567	2574	2492	2495	2531	2559	2603
<b>FIVE TOWNS (a)</b>	<b>2596</b>	<b>2612</b>	<b>2652</b>	<b>2676</b>	<b>2724</b>	<b>2593</b>	<b>2619</b>	<b>2658</b>	<b>2675</b>	<b>2734</b>
<b>WESTERN AUSTRALIA</b>										
Perth, etc.	2770	2803	2830	2824	2869	2771	2801	2821	2821	2869
Kalgoorlie, etc.	2679	2698	2734	2736	2750	2676	2701	2724	2728	2747
Northam	2711	2728	2767	2754	2761	2711	2725	2761	2752	2761
Bunbury	2805	2825	2852	2850	2870	2805	2823	2841	2844	2869
Geraldton	2994	3051	3100	3112	3125	2995	3050	3091	3108	3126
<b>FIVE TOWNS (a)</b>	<b>2767</b>	<b>2800</b>	<b>2828</b>	<b>2823</b>	<b>2864</b>	<b>2768</b>	<b>2798</b>	<b>2819</b>	<b>2819</b>	<b>2863</b>
<b>TASMANIA</b>										
Hobart	2795	2787	2819	2846	2865	2793	2797	2825	2851	2869
Launceston	2698	2709	2725	2750	2754	2692	2708	2720	2746	2753
Burnie	2664	2666	2700	2709	2754	2653	2659	2694	2707	2751
Devonport	2698	2696	2702	2712	2721	2691	2696	2698	2707	2724
Queenstown	2639	2641	2638	2653	2666	2626	2631	2632	2648	2660
<b>FIVE TOWNS (a)</b>	<b>2750</b>	<b>2749</b>	<b>2774</b>	<b>2798</b>	<b>2813</b>	<b>2746</b>	<b>2754</b>	<b>2775</b>	<b>2799</b>	<b>2815</b>
<b>THIRTY TOWNS (a)</b>	<b>2658</b>	<b>2671</b>	<b>2698</b>	<b>2726</b>	<b>2749</b>	<b>2655</b>	<b>2676</b>	<b>2702</b>	<b>2730</b>	<b>2757</b>
<b>SIX CAPITALS (a)</b>	<b>2663</b>	<b>2677</b>	<b>2704</b>	<b>2732</b>	<b>2756</b>	<b>2660</b>	<b>2681</b>	<b>2707</b>	<b>2735</b>	<b>2763</b>

**SPECIAL TOWNS (NOT INCLUDED IN WEIGHTED AVERAGES ABOVE)**

Port Augusta (South Aust.)	2513	2523	2550	2576	2607	2506	2523	2553	2569	2614
Whyalla (South Australia)	2596	2602	2641	2677	2711	2590	2602	2645	2672	2716
Canberra (A.C.T.)	2720	2763	2773	2814	2825	2724	2773	2783	2812	2831

(a) Weighted Average. (b) Cumulative from (and including) September Quarter, 1959.

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