INTRODUCTION

Recent falls in the value of the Australian dollar in relation to other currencies has renewed interest in the currencies used in invoices for Australia's exports and imports. This article provides an analysis of the major invoice currencies used for Australia's international merchandise trade for the five quarters from March quarter 2000 to March quarter 2001.

Data for the five quarters are compared for both exports and imports to identify any changes in the composition of the currencies in which goods are invoiced. The article also examines the invoice currencies of major commodities exported from and imported into Australia, classified according to the Standard International Trade Classification Revision 3 (SITC Rev3). All values in this article are reported in Australian dollars.

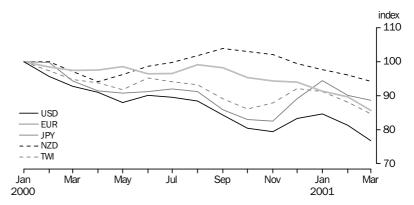
An article in the March quarter 1998 issue of this publication provided a similar analysis of invoice currencies for the period from March quarter 1997 to March quarter 1998. The results of that analysis are also referred to in this article in order to examine changes that have occurred over the longer time period.

Comparisons between the two periods are affected by the introduction of the Euro as a scriptural currency on 1 January 1999. Euro banknotes and coin will commence circulation on 1 January 2002.

Graph 1 shows movements in the value of the Australian dollar against selected other currencies since the beginning of 2000, which is the period covered by the analyses in this article. The Trade Weighted Index (TWI) is also included. The graph shows that the Australian dollar has depreciated substantially against the currencies of most of our major trading partners over this period, but particularly against the United States (US) dollar.

During the period covered, the Australian dollar depreciated 23% against the US dollar, 14% against the Euro and 11% against the Japanese yen. Movements against the New Zealand (NZ) dollar were far less pronounced.

1 MOVEMENTS IN SELECTED EXCHANGE RATES, JANUARY 2000 TO MARCH 2001



Note: Monthly average buy/sell rate indexed in January 2000

Source: Reserve Bank of Australia

**EXCHANGE RATES** 

**EXCHANGE RATES continued** 

With a depreciating currency, Australian exports invoiced in Australian dollars become more attractive to foreign buyers, as it takes less of their currency to purchase Australian goods. Or, alternatively, Australian exports invoiced in other currencies provide larger Australian dollar returns to exporters, and increase the nominal value of Australian exports. Australian imports of foreign goods invoiced in other currencies requires more Australian dollars, making imports less attractive to domestic consumers.

DATA COLLECTION

Information on the invoice currencies used in export and import transactions is collected by the Australian Customs Service (Customs) and passed to the ABS with other international trade information.

For exports, goods invoiced in US dollars, Japanese yen, Pounds sterling, Euros, NZ dollars or Deutsche marks, are reported in those foreign currencies. Amounts invoiced in other currencies are converted to Australian dollars by the exporter and this value is reported on the Customs entry. The invoice currency is also reported. The ABS receives the exports data as reported to Customs and converts values reported in one of the six major foreign currencies to Australian dollars using the exchange rate prevailing on the date of departure of the goods from Australia.

For imports, the value of the goods is reported to Customs in the invoice currency of the transaction. The Customs system automatically converts the value to Australian dollars using exchange rates prevailing on the reported date of departure of the goods from the overseas country. The ABS receives details of the reported invoice currency, together with the value of the import transaction in Australian dollars.

While currencies are converted to Australian dollars at exchange rates applicable on the day of shipment, the Australian exporter or importer may undertake the conversion for the actual receipt or payment using a different exchange rate, or one applying on a different day. As well, many exporters and importers hedge transactions and the actual exchange rate applied may differ from that applicable on the shipment date.

Tables 2 and 3 show the major invoice currencies used for Australia's merchandise exports and imports for the period from March quarter 2000 to March quarter 2001. For both exports and imports, the predominant invoice currency was the US dollar, accounting for 69% of exports and 51% of imports in the period. The next most significant currency was the Australian dollar, accounting for 28% of both exports and imports in the period.

The proportion of trade denominated in currencies other than US and Australian dollars is therefore quite small (3% for exports and 20% for imports). No other export invoice currency exceeded 1% of total exports over the period. In the case of import invoice currencies, the Japanese yen, Euros, Pounds sterling, Deutsche marks and NZ dollars all individually exceeded 1% of total imports over the period.

While the proportions generally remained fairly steady over the five quarters, the proportion of export transactions invoiced in US dollars increased slightly, while the proportion of import transactions invoiced in US dollars decreased slightly. The quarterly movements are affected by seasonal and other changes in the commodity and country composition of trade. Given the general nature of trading relationships and markets, and the forward contracting arrangements used by traders, it is likely that any substantial changes will only be observable over longer time periods.

MAJOR CURRENCIES

HISTORICAL COMPARISON

Table 4 shows the proportion of exports and imports invoiced in the major currencies in the previous and current analyses. Over this longer period, trends in the data are more readily apparent. The proportion of merchandise exports invoiced in US dollars increased from 64% to 69% over the three year period between the two studies. Virtually all of this increase was at the expense of exports invoiced in Australian dollars (down from 33% to 28%).

The proportion of imports invoiced in US dollars fell marginally, while those invoiced in Australian dollars grew strongly from 25% to 28%. The introduction of the Euro between the two periods analysed resulted in roughly offsetting falls for the European national currencies that would have previously been used for this trade. Use of other import invoice currencies declined between the two periods.

**EXPORT COMMODITIES** 

Table 5 summarises, for the period from March quarter 2000 to March quarter 2001, the invoice currencies used for export commodities classified at the one digit SITC level. Table 6 shows a wider range of invoice currencies for selected two digit SITC level export commodities.

While most export commodities were invoiced predominantly in US dollars, SITC 1 Beverages and tobacco, SITC 7 Machinery and transport equipment, and SITC 8 Miscellaneous manufactured articles were invoiced predominantly in Australian dollars. For SITC 1 other invoice currencies, primarily Pounds sterling, contributed substantially. At the finer commodity levels shown in Table 6, there is greater variation in the proportions and types of currency used.

IMPORT COMMODITIES

Table 7 summarises, for the period from March quarter 2000 to March quarter 2001, the invoice currencies used for import commodities classified at the one digit SITC level. Table 8 shows a wider range of invoice currencies for selected two digit SITC level import commodities.

While most import commodities were invoiced predominantly in US dollars, SITC 1 *Beverages and tobacco* was invoiced predominantly in Australian dollars. Other invoice currencies contributed substantially to many SITC categories, particularly SITC 9 *Commodities and transactions not elsewhere classified in the SITC.* 

At the finer commodity levels shown in Table F1.8, there is greater variation in the proportions and types of currency used. Two of the largest ten import categories were invoiced predominantly in Australian dollars. These were SITC 54 Medicinal and pharmaceutical products and SITC 78 Road vehicles (incl. air-cushion vehicles).

Currencies other than US or Australian dollars contributed significantly to some import commodities. The Japanese yen contributed 9% to SITC 72 Machinery specialised for certain industries, 9% to SITC 74 General industrial machinery and equipment, and 20% to SITC 78 Road vehicles (incl. air-cushion vehicles). Pounds sterling contributed 7% to SITC 71 Power generating machinery and equipment and 21% to SITC 79 Transport equipment. Deutsche marks contributed 11% of SITC 72 Machinery specialised for particular industries and 7% of SITC 74 General industrial machinery and equipment.

# 2 INVOICE CURRENCIES FOR EXPORTS, March qtr 2000 to March qtr 2001

Currency	Mar qtr 2000	Jun qtr 2000	Sep qtr 2000	Dec qtr 2000	Mar qtr 2001	Total		
		CURRENCY (\$million)						
US dollars	16 278	18 287	19 311	21 567	19 769	95 212		
Australian dollars	6 882	7 510	8 305	8 874	7 555	39 124		
Pound sterling NZ dollars	185 172	270 193	279 193	212 217	214 187	1 160 963		
Japanese yen	152	230	301	230	172	1 084		
Euros	91	98	37	67	87	380		
Deutsche marks	53	39	33	41	62	227		
Other	63	55	61	70	53	302		
Total	23 876	26 682	28 520	31 276	28 099	138 453		
• • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • •		• • • • • • • •	PROPORTIO	N (%)	• • • • • • • •	• • • • • •		
US dollars	68.2	68.5	67.7	69.0	70.4	68.8		
Australian dollars	28.8	28.1	29.1	28.4	26.9	28.3		
Pound sterling	0.8	1.0	1.0	0.7	0.8	0.8		
NZ dollars	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7		
Japanese yen	0.6	0.9	1.1	0.7	0.6	0.8		
Euros	0.4	0.4	0.1	0.2	0.3	0.3		
Deutsche marks Other	0.2 0.3	0.1 0.2	0.1 0.2	0.1 0.2	0.2 0.2	0.2 0.2		
Oute	0.5	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2		

.....

## 3 INVOICE CURRENCIES FOR IMPORTS, March qtr 2000 to March qtr 2001

Currency	Mar qtr 2000	Jun qtr 2000	Sep qtr 2000	Dec qtr 2000	Mar qtr 2001	Total			
• • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • •	CURRENCY (\$million)								
US dollars	13 725	15 370	15 220	15 787	13 844	73 946			
Australian dollars	7 009	7 531	9 078	9 426	8 126	41 170			
Japanese yen	1 403	1 500	1 703	1 513	1 143	7 262			
Euros	518	595	716	842	1 023	3 693			
Pounds sterling	828	889	829	1 092	728	4 365			
Deutsche marks	707	749	686	664	596	3 402			
NZ dollars	358	396	366	359	349	1 826			
Selected Asian currencies (a)	357	347	417	364	436	1 921			
Other	1 507	1 435	1 310	1 364	1 255	6 870			
Total	26 411	28 810	30 324	31 410	27 500	144 455			
•••••	• • • • • • • •	• • • • • • • •	• • • • • • • •		• • • • • • • • •	• • • • • • •			
			PROPORTIO	ON (%)					
US dollars	52.0	53.3	50.2	50.3	50.3	51.2			
Australian dollars	26.5	26.1	29.9	30.0	29.6	28.5			
Japanese yen	5.3	5.2	5.6	4.8	4.2	5.0			
Euros	2.0	2.1	2.4	2.7	3.7	2.6			
Pounds sterling	3.1	3.1	2.7	3.5	2.6	3.0			
Deutsche marks	2.7	2.6	2.3	2.1	2.2	2.4			
NZ dollars	1.4	1.4	1.2	1.1	1.3	1.3			
Selected Asian currencies (a)	1.4	1.2	1.4	1.2	1.6	1.3			
Other	5.7	5.0	4.3	4.3	4.6	4.8			

<sup>(</sup>a) Selected Asian currencies include currencies for the following countries: China, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Republic of Korea, Malaysia, Phillipines, Singapore, Taiwan and Thailand.

# 4 EXPORTS AND IMPORTS BY MAJOR CURRENCIES, March qtr 1997–98 and March qtr 2000–01

 5 QUARTERS TO MAR 1998.......
 \$ QUARTERS TO MAR 2001.......

 EXPORTS

 EXPORTS

 US dollars
 66 793
 63.6
 95 212
 68.8

 Australian dollars
 34 957
 33.3
 39 124
 28.3

 Japanese yen
 797
 0.8
 1 084
 0.8

 Pounds sterling
 776
 0.7
 1 160
 0.8

 NZ dollar
 681
 0.6
 963
 0.7

 Euros
 0
 0.0
 380
 0.3

 Other
 1 065
 1.0
 529
 0.4

 Total
 105 068
 100.0
 138 453
 100.0

 IMPORTS

 US dollars
 54 799
 51.9
 73 946
 51.2

 Australian dollars
 26 192
 24.8
 41 170
 28.5

 Japanese yen
 6 366
 6.0
 7 262
 5.0

 Deutsch Marks
 4 614
 4.4
 3 402
 2.4

 Pounds Sterling
 3 758
 3.6

## 5 EXPORTS BY SITC (1 digit) BY SELECTED CURRENCIES, March qtr 2000 to March qtr 2001

	Value	US dollars	Australian dollars	Other
SITC (Rev3) code and commodity	\$m	%	%	%
•••••	• • • • • • • •	• • • • • • •	• • • • • • •	• • • • • • •
0 Food and live animals	23 311	63.2	32.5	4.3
1 Beverages and tobacco	2 214	16.2	55.0	28.8(a)
2 Crude materials, inedible, except fuels	26 873	78.4	20.7	0.8
3 Mineral fuels, lubricants and related materials	28 916	91.2	8.8	0.0
4 Animal and vegetable oils, fats and waxes	376	77.8	18.5	3.8
5 Chemicals and related products, n.e.s.	5 964	46.5	46.3	7.2
6 Manufactured goods classified chiefly by material	16 973	68.8	27.5	3.6
7 Machinery and transport equipment	15 428	44.1	50.5	5.4
8 Miscellaneous manufactured articles	5 161	35.2	59.8	5.0
9 Commodities and transactions not classified elsewhere				
in the SITC	13 237	70.3	28.9	0.8
Total exports	138 453	68.8	28.3	3.0

(a) Mostly Pounds sterling; see Table 6.

.....

# 6 SELECTED EXPORT COMMODITIES BY SITC (2 digit), March qtr 2000 to March qtr 2001

	Value	US dollars	Australian dollars	Pounds sterling	NZ dollars	Japanese yen	Euros	Deutsche marks	All other currencies
SITC (Rev3) code and commodity	\$m	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
						• • • • •			
01 Meat and meat preparations	6 338	63.6	30.6	1.4	0.3	2.5	0.5	0.4	0.6
02 Dairy product and birds' eggs 03 Fish (not marine mammals), crustacean, molluscs	3 484	70.1	27.8	0.6	0.3	0.8	0.3	0.0	0.0
and aquat invertebrates, and preparations thereof	2 039	38.5	50.2	0.0	0.0	11.1	0.0	0.0	0.1
04 Cereals and cereal preparations	6 431	89.6	9.0	0.0	0.2	0.7	0.0	0.5	0.0
11 Beverages	2 142	15.7	54.8	24.4	2.0	0.8	0.9	0.0	1.4
26 Textile, fibres and wastes (not manufactured into yarn or fabric)	6 124	55.1	42.0	0.3	0.0	0.1	1.3	0.2	1.0
28 Metalliferous ores and metal scrap	16 846	90.3	9.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
32 Coal, coke and briquettes	11 924	93.3	6.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
33 Petroleum, petroleum products and related materials	12 824	86.5	13.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
34 Gas, natural and manufactured	4 169	99.6	0.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
54 Medicinal and pharmaceutical products	2 573	38.7	53.1	4.0	2.9	0.1	0.3	0.3	0.6
68 Non-ferrous metals	11 033	86.0	13.3	0.5	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
78 Road vehicles (incl. air-cushion vehicles) 93 Special transactions and commodities not classified	4 172	61.9	30.3	0.3	5.0	1.9	0.2	0.4	0.0
according to kind 97 Gold, non-monetary (excl. gold ores and	2 146	49.5	49.0	0.1	1.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
concentrates)	6 302	96.2	3.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Other	39 907	41.9	53.4	0.8	1.4	1.3	0.6	0.3	0.3
		,							***
Total	138 453	68.8	28.3	0.8	0.7	0.8	0.3	0.2	0.2

# 7 IMPORTS BY SITC (1 digit) BY SELECTED CURRENCIES, March qtr 2000 to March qtr 2001

	Value	US dollars	Australian dollars	Other
SITC (Rev3) code and commodity	\$m	%	%	%
0 Food and live animals	5 131	43.5	32.8	23.7
Beverages and tobacco     Crude materials, inedible, except fuels	1 005 2 473	20.2 59.9	61.0 22.9	18.8 17.1
3 Mineral fuels, lubricants and related materials	11 989	77.1	22.9	0.2
4 Animal and vegetable oils, fats and waxes 5 Chemicals and related products, n.e.s.	355 16 901	57.6 52.3	17.8 33.1	24.6 14.6
6 Manufactured goods classified chiefly by material	17 519	49.8	29.5	20.7
7 Machinery and transport equipment 8 Miscellaneous manufactured articles	66 440 20 392	45.9 55.3	30.3 22.2	23.8 22.5
9 Commodities and transactions not classified elsewhere in the SITC				
iii die Sito	2 251	55.4	3.2	41.3
Total exports	144 455	51.2	28.5	20.3

.....

# FEATURE ARTICLE

# EXPORT AND IMPORT CURRENCIES

# 8 SELECTED IMPORT COMMODITIES BY SITC (2 digit), March qtr 2000 to March qtr 2001

	Value	US dollars	Australian dollars	Japanese yen	Euros	Pound sterling	Deutsche marks	e NZ dollars	All other currencies
SITC (Rev3) code and commodity	\$m	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
•••••	• • • • • • •	• • • • •	• • • • • •	• • • • •	• • • •	• • • • •	• • • • •	• • • • •	• • • • •
33 Petroleum, petroleum products and related materials	11 801	76.8	23.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
51 Organic chemicals	3 624	63.7	28.8	0.8	1.3	1.3	1.1	0.1	2.8
54 Medicinal and pharmaceutical products	5 065	22.6	61.8	0.4	3.8	1.5	1.6	0.6	7.7
69 Manufactures of metals, nes	3 309	52.7	19.7	3.1	3.9	4.1	4.2	2.3	10.1
71 Power generating machinery and equipment	3 392	57.4	13.1	5.3	2.7	7.3	4.8	0.5	8.9
72 Machinery specialised for particular industries	4 893	44.0	14.0	9.0	6.1	3.6	11.2	1.3	10.9
74 General industrial machinery and equipment, nes									
and machine parts, nes	6 930	44.7	18.1	8.6	5.4	3.8	7.2	1.6	10.6
75 Office machines and automatic data processing									
machines	10 253	76.7	17.7	2.7	0.4	0.6	0.3	0.3	1.2
76 Telecommunications and sound recording and									
reproducing apparatus and equipment	9 734	46.5	41.3	5.3	1.6	2.9	0.6	0.2	1.6
77 Electrical machinery, apparatus, applicances, parts (incl. non-electric counterparts of electrical domestic									
equipment)	8 351	57.5	19.8	4.0	4.9	3.2	3.5	1.0	6.0
78 Road vehicles (incl air-cushion vehicles)	17 201	17.6	54.2	20.3	4.0	0.7	1.7	0.2	1.4
79 Transport equipment (excl. road vehicles)	5 145	56.0	17.4	0.3	0.3	20.6	0.3	0.9	4.3
84 Articles of apparel and clothing accessories	3 981	53.4	27.1	0.3	0.4	1.0	0.7	2.7	14.5
87 Professional, scientific and controlling instruments	3 333								
and apparatus, nes		58.3	15.8	3.4	4.8	5.4	5.1	1.0	6.2
89 Miscellaneous manufactured articles, nes	7 612	55.6	22.6	1.9	1.4	6.6	1.9	1.8	8.2
Other	39 832	52.9	25.6	2.5	2.4	2.3	2.2	2.6	9.4
Total	144 455	51.2	28.5	5.0	2.6	3.0	2.4	1.3	6.1