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MERCHANDISE IMPORTS (BALANCE OF PAYMENTS BASIS) AUSTRALIA, MARCH 1996

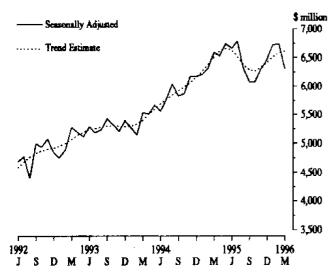
MAIN FEATURES

March 1996 compared with February 1996

The provisional trend estimate of merchandise imports rose \$40 million, or 1 per cent, to \$6,617 million.

In seasonally adjusted terms, merchandise imports for March fell \$428 million, or 6 per cent, to \$6,310 million. Consumption goods fell \$155 million, or 9 per cent, to \$1,532 million. Capital goods fell \$173 million, or 9 per cent, to \$1,660 million. Intermediate and other goods fell \$100 million, or 3 per cent, to \$3,118 million.

GRAPH 1: MERCHANDISE - IMPORTS F.O.B.



In original terms, imports fell \$160 million, or 3 per cent, to \$6,104 million.

Imports of consumption goods, in original terms, fell \$133 million, or 8 per cent, to \$1,452 million. The largest decreases were recorded in:

- textiles, clothing and footwear, down \$67 million or 23 per cent (due mainly to decreased imports of articles of apparel);
- non-industrial transport equipment, down \$30 million or 9 per cent (due to decreased imports of passenger motor cars); and

 toys, books and leisure goods, down \$22 million or 12 per cent.

Imports of *capital goods*, in original terms, fell \$76 million, or 5 per cent, to \$1,509 million. The largest decreases were recorded in:

- machinery and industrial equipment, down \$59 million or 8 per cent; and
- civil aircraft, down \$46 million or 60 per cent on the February figure which included a Qantas aircraft valued at \$52 million.

These decreases were partly offset by increases in telecommunications equipment, up \$32 million or 23 per cent; and ADP equipment, up \$9 million or 3 per cent.

Imports of intermediate and other goods, in original terms, rose \$49 million, or 2 per cent, to \$3,143 million. The largest increases were recorded in:

- primary industrial supplies nes, up \$45 million or 73 per cent;
- processed industrial supplies nes, up \$45 million or 6 per cent (mainly due to increased imports of noncrude fertilizers); and
- organic and inorganic chemicals, up \$33 million or 15 per cent.

These increases were partly offset by decreases in 10 of the 14 groups. The largest decrease was recorded in paper and paperboard, down \$32 million or 22 per cent.

Nine months ended March 1996 compared with nine months ended March 1995

In original terms, merchandise imports rose \$2,744 million, or 5 per cent, to \$58,566 million:

- consumption goods rose \$473 million (3 per cent);
- capital goods rose \$549 million (4 per cent); and
- intermediate and other goods rose \$1,722 million (6 per cent).

INQUIRIES

- for further information about these and related unpublished statistics, contact Mr Frank Bingham on Canberra (06) 252 7193, or any ABS State office.
- for information about other ABS statistics and services please refer to the back page of this publication.

TABLE 1. MERCHANDISE IMPORTS (BALANCE OF PAYMENTS BASIS) — ORIGINAL, SEASONALLY ADJUSTED AND TREND ESTIMATES

-1,115 -2,013 -2,139 -1,338 -1,342 -3,508 -3,341 -2,041 -2,172 -1,978 -2,001 -3,976 -4,332 -6,693 59,431-64,411-74,716 -5,788 -5,610 -6,811 -5,698 -6,974 -6,222 -7,191 -6,953 -6,116 -6,701 -6,831 -5,946 -6,460 -6,264 -6,104 -55,822-58,566 -544 -678 -3,024 -3,454 2,084 2,084 -1,493 1.466 -1,317 -547 -1,565 435 -1,411 -3,366 -3,094 -3,143-27,255-28,977 6269 12563 1.64 -1,509 -13,713-14,262 -1,452 -14,854-15,327 1995 July to Mar. 1,766 1,766 1,766 1,540 1,540 1,2843 1,3643 1, -2,112 -1,768 ; -592 -671 -2,584 -3,554 -1,224 1994-25 -554 6,49 6,310 \$\$\$£# -186 -185 -128 -55 -756 -1,532 -1,660 .. -6,257 -6,382 -6,512 -6,616 -6,663 -6,630 -6,520 -6,381 -6,284 -6,266 -6,325 -6,423 -6,512p -6,577p -6,617p ង់**ដង់ង**ន់ង Mar. -1,833 -3,218 6,738 -1,687 -1,585 -1,585 -131 Feb 47.4 -1,763 -3,357 -1,531 -1,563 ₹ 7 430 6278 478 263 1-1-1-4 189 Jan -1,479 -3,268 6.4.8 87.8 -1,583 314 -344 -138 -193 -151 -137 -3,258 -2,868 -1,495 Dec. -6,297 1,687 1,533 3,107 -1,869 -77 -76 -353 -340 -161 -550 -250 -245 -173 -173 -149 -74 -750 -14 702/1 No. 84488 2,282 1,282 1,199 1,19 1 96-5661 £07 -1,570 -1,451 -3,056 -3,228 27-23 27-38 1-31 213-431 213-431 -1,615 Oct. -1.85825 65 65 65 1,622 -1,339 -3,052 6,663 -6,789 -6,316 -6,073 510 172 173 145 146 -29,850 -32,335 -36,756 -3,012 -2,858 -3,451 -2,880 -3,565 -3,056 -3,585 -3,408 -3,027 7/9/ -1,417 615 -253 -207 -11 -148 -183 K. 86,44,44 Seasonally Adjusted -3,131 -1,690 -1,495 -1,875 0/9/7-233 244 251 251 251 Months AWE Frend Estimates -1,790 4.6 55. -385. -159. -189. -189. -117 -170 Sub -1,902 42,44,438 -1,78 223 52,48,45,55 -1,670 -1,754 13,239 -1,718 June -1,448 (S raillion) 6,747 -1,679 -3,351 969'!--1,713 91-Мау 6,532 _1,682 _1,596 -3,254 -1,421 53 - 133 - 1 -168 -132 -391 -170 -170 -381 -1,397 ł 1994.95 -1,714 989'7-6283 Mar. -1,724 152 - 153 - 154 - 156 - -1.69884+44+44 84+44+44 84+44+44 -3,108-1,356 -1,557 -1,641 98.9 -195 -195 -197 -197 Feb. -1,396 .. -1,621 .. -1,490 .. -3,089 -1,274 87.99 9.79 -15,926-17,233-19,419 -1,502 257 257 257 257 388 389 4 2 2 2 2 Jan. -2,592 -1,744 -4,758 -2,566 -2,546 -5,213 -7,897 -3,232 -1,804 -529 -2,714 -2,365 13,655-14,843-18,541 1, 4, 1, 56 1, 7, 14 858 -5,975 -2,431 -1,794 -2,036 -1,2851,646 8 989. 97 787 : : : -3,800 -2,320 -4,496 -4,751 -509 -701 4,183 -5,047 -2,102 -1,869 -1,039 -1,375 -6,414 -2,629 -1,182 -241 -3.317-1,465 978 -7.783-1,436-2,084 1993-3 -1,681 Years -3,623 -3,675 -1,423 -2,056 -1,381 -1,763 -946 -1,272 -1,019 -7,135 -5,446 -2,319 -1,224 -828 -1,838 : : : -1,382 -1,382 -2,478 -2,178 -2,238 -4,389 1992-Intermediate and other goods fob (a) — Machinery and industrial equipment Total intermediate and other goods Non-industrial transport equipment Industrial transport equipment nes Organic and inorganic chemicals Processed industrial supplies nes elecommunications equipment Food and beverages, mainly for Food and beverages, mainly for Fextiles, clothing and footwear Primary industrial supplies nes Toys, books and leisure goods Parts for transport equipment Intermediate and other goods Other parts for capital goods Consumption goods fob (a) Household electrical items Parts for ADP equipment Total consumption goods Consumption goods nes Textile yam and fabrics Capital goods fob (a) — Paper and paperboard Fuels and lubricants Consumption goods Capital goods Non-monetary gold Total capital goods Total imports fob **Total imports fob** Total Imports fob Capital goods nes ADP equipment consumption Iron and steel Civil aircraft Other goods Plastics

(4) Definitions of the component series are given in the ABS Information Paper, Change to Commodity Classification of Merchandias Imports in Balance of Payments Publications (ABS Catalogue No. 5344.0).

EXPLANATORY NOTES

Introduction

- 1. This publication contains preliminary estimates of Australia's merchandise imports on a balance of payments basis for March 1996, together with estimates for previous months.
- 2. Descriptions of the classifications used for merchandise imports, detailed item definitions and long term historical data are presented in Change to Commodity Classification of Merchandise Imports in Balance of Payments Publications (5344.0).
- 3. Descriptions of the underlying concepts and structure of merchandise imports on a balance of payments basis and the sources and methods used in compiling the estimates are presented in *Balance of Payments*, *Australia: Concepts, Sources and Methods* (5331.0). That publication also provides explanations of seasonal adjustment and trend estimates; and an analysis of the quality of the estimates.

Accuracy, reliability and volatility

- 4. The latest estimates in this publication are preliminary and subject to revision as more complete and accurate information becomes available.
- Particular care should be exercised in interpreting month-to-month movements in original and seasonally adjusted series as short term movements cannot be assumed to indicate changes in trend. The monthly estimates are volatile, being subject to seasonal factors (except where adjusted in the table) and large irregular influences. The irregular influences may reflect both random economic events and difficulties of statistical recording. Seasonal adjustment does not aim to remove the irregular or non-seasonal influences which may be present in any particular month. This means that the month-tomonth movements of the seasonally adjusted estimates may not be reliable indicators of trend behaviour. For example, irregular factors unrelated to the trend account for more than half the seasonally adjusted monthly movements in merchandise imports fob in 9 out of 10 months.
- 6. The impact of the irregular influences upon the seasonally adjusted series is reduced by smoothing, as shown by the trend estimates in the table and graph. The trend estimates are generally derived by applying a 13-term Henderson-weighted moving average to the seasonally adjusted series.

Seasonal adjustment

- 7. The factors to be used in seasonally adjusting the monthly merchandise imports statistics, as well as the monthly balance of payments statistics, during 1996 can be obtained, for \$75.00, from Ms Karen McGuigan on Canberra (06) 252 6239.
- 8. The seasonally adjusted statistics in this publication should not be regarded as in any way definitive as results from seasonal adjustment vary according to the method used.

More detailed and longer term series

9. More detailed information than that shown in this publication is available for March 1996 and earlier months. Estimates for months prior to those shown in this publication are also available. These data can be obtained by contacting Mr Trevor Jolly on Canberra (06) 252 6820. There may be a charge for this information.

Related products and services

- 10. Preliminary estimates of Australia's balance of payments for March 1996 are due for release on 2 May 1996 in the monthly publication *Balance of Payments*, Australia (5301.0). The estimates of merchandise imports shown as part of the balance of payments in 5301.0 will normally be the same as those already released in the corresponding issue of this publication.
- 11. More detailed merchandise imports data, including dissections by commodity and country of origin, are also available on a foreign trade basis for March 1996 and previous months. These data series can be obtained by contacting International Trade Client Services on Canberra (06) 252 5400.

Symbols and other usages

fob free on board
nes not elsewhere specified
nil or rounded to zero
not applicable

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Dennis Trewin Acting Australian Statistician

Release date for April 1996 issue

The expected release date for the April issue of this publication is 17 May 1996. Any variations which might occur will be notified in the ABS Publications Advice (1105.0) and on DISCOVERY

The date can be confirmed a few days prior to release by telephoning Canberra (06) 252 6627.

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