

CATALOGUE NO. 5320.0

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**MERCHANDISE IMPORTS (BALANCE OF PAYMENTS BASIS)
AUSTRALIA, MAY 1996**

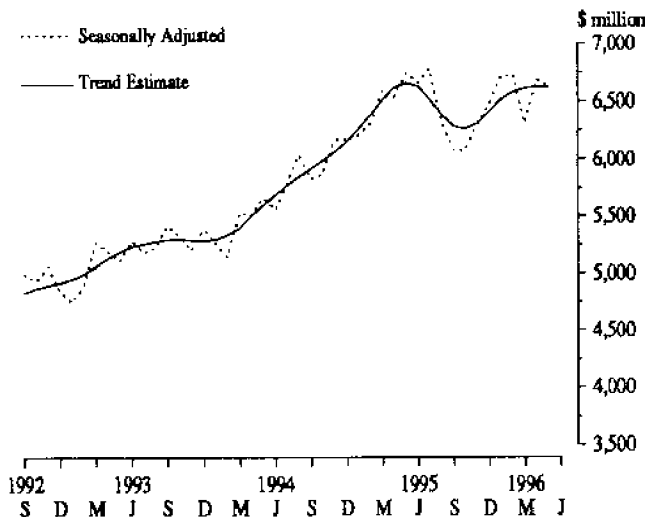
MAIN FEATURES

May 1996 compared with April 1996

The provisional trend estimate of *merchandise imports* fell \$3 million to \$6,621 million.

In *seasonally adjusted terms*, *merchandise imports* for May fell \$70 million, or 1 per cent, to \$6,621 million. *Consumption goods* rose \$56 million, or 3 per cent, to \$1,721 million. *Capital goods* rose \$63 million, or 4 per cent, to \$1,794 million. *Intermediate and other goods* fell \$189 million, or 6 per cent, to \$3,106 million.

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



In *original terms*, *imports* rose \$384 million, or 6 per cent, to \$6,705 million.

Imports of *consumption goods*, in original terms, rose \$89 million, or 6 per cent, to \$1,645 million. The largest increases were recorded in:

- non-industrial transport equipment, up \$45 million or 12 per cent (due to increased imports of passenger motor cars);
- consumption goods nes, up \$23 million or 5 per cent; and
- toys, books and leisure goods, up \$20 million or 12 per cent.

These increases were partly offset by a decrease in textiles, clothing and footwear, down \$12 million or 6 per cent.

Imports of *capital goods*, in original terms, rose \$146 million, or 9 per cent, to \$1,751 million. The largest increases were recorded in:

- civil aircraft, up \$73 million or 104 per cent (which includes the import of a Qantas aircraft valued at \$119 million);
- machinery and industrial equipment, up \$43 million or 6 per cent; and
- ADP equipment, up \$35 million or 11 per cent.

These increases were partly offset by a decrease in telecommunications equipment, down \$17 million or 11 per cent.

Imports of *intermediate and other goods*, in original terms, rose \$149 million, or 5 per cent, to \$3,309 million. The largest increases were recorded in:

- "other" parts for capital goods, up \$68 million or 14 per cent;
- "other" goods, up \$37 million (mainly due to increased imports of military equipment);
- textile yarn and fabrics, up \$31 million or 22 per cent; and
- parts for transport equipment, up \$25 million or 6 per cent.

The largest decrease was recorded in fuels and lubricants, down \$34 million or 8 per cent.

Eleven months ended May 1996 compared with eleven months ended May 1995

In original terms, *merchandise imports* rose \$3,078 million, or 4 per cent, to \$71,572 million:

- *consumption goods* rose \$552 million (3 per cent);
- *capital goods* rose \$795 million (5 per cent); and
- *intermediate and other goods* rose \$1,731 million (5 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 (a)

	Months												July to May				
	Years			1995-96									1994-95		1994-95		
	1992-93	1993-94	1994-95	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	1994-95	96	
<i>Consumption goods fob (b) —</i>																	
Food and beverages, mainly for consumption	-2,261	-2,430	-2,592	-181	-245	-233	-230	-255	-263	-242	-252	-210	-203	-210	-220	-2,411	-2,567
Household electrical items	-1,382	-1,436	-1,744	-129	-157	-167	-138	-179	-177	-139	-119	-148	-137	-148	-151	-1,615	-1,641
Non-industrial transport equipment	-3,478	-3,800	-4,758	-446	-469	-426	-346	-422	-404	-375	-277	-368	-295	-368	-413	-4,345	-4,120
Textiles, clothing and footwear	-2,178	-2,320	-2,566	-189	-266	-274	-220	-212	-229	-190	-262	-207	-226	-207	-195	-2,409	-2,574
Toys, books and leisure goods	-2,238	-2,496	-2,545	-199	-247	-251	-252	-260	-256	-185	-190	-173	-169	-173	-193	-2,353	-2,367
Consumption goods nes	-4,389	-4,751	-5,213	-445	-518	-524	-486	-529	-539	-451	-430	-450	-422	-450	-473	-4,838	-5,254
<i>Total consumption goods</i>	<i>-15,926</i>	<i>-17,233</i>	<i>-19,418</i>	<i>-1,724</i>	<i>-1,902</i>	<i>-1,875</i>	<i>-1,672</i>	<i>-1,857</i>	<i>-1,868</i>	<i>-1,582</i>	<i>-1,530</i>	<i>-1,556</i>	<i>-1,452</i>	<i>-1,556</i>	<i>-1,645</i>	<i>-17,971</i>	<i>-18,523</i>
<i>Capital goods fob (b) —</i>																	
Machinery and industrial equipment	-5,446	-6,414	-7,897	-745	-705	-733	-718	-691	-723	-688	-738	-667	-650	-667	-710	-7,164	-7,637
ADP equipment	-2,319	-2,629	-3,232	-243	-393	-392	-338	-325	-253	-272	-263	-326	-283	-326	-361	-2,840	-3,250
Telecommunications equipment	-1,224	-1,182	-1,804	-153	-117	-150	-164	-163	-207	-169	-170	-150	-173	-150	-133	-1,631	-1,848
Civil aircraft	-828	-241	-529	-18	-48	-81	-11	-31	-104	-28	-44	-77	-31	-70	-143	-481	-648
Industrial transport equipment nes	-1,838	-2,084	-2,714	-190	-234	-179	-222	-198	-148	-165	-158	-198	-186	-198	-191	-2,535	-2,036
Capital goods nes	-2,000	-2,293	-2,365	-205	-189	-215	-193	-212	-183	-173	-189	-194	-185	-194	-213	-2,172	-2,199
<i>Total capital goods</i>	<i>-13,655</i>	<i>-14,843</i>	<i>-18,541</i>	<i>-1,636</i>	<i>-1,718</i>	<i>-1,718</i>	<i>-1,704</i>	<i>-1,616</i>	<i>-1,704</i>	<i>-1,495</i>	<i>-1,562</i>	<i>-1,508</i>	<i>-1,508</i>	<i>-1,508</i>	<i>-1,751</i>	<i>-16,823</i>	<i>-17,618</i>
<i>Intermediate and other goods fob (b) —</i>																	
Food and beverages, mainly for industry	-436	-509	-774	-59	-68	-61	-65	-65	-55	-44	-77	-50	-46	-51	-63	-713	-658
Primary industrial supplies nes	-677	-701	-901	-63	-83	-85	-73	-66	-83	-76	-64	-62	-106	-75	-73	-816	-825
Fuels and lubricants	-3,623	-3,317	-3,566	-323	-317	-379	-286	-283	-290	-314	-387	-375	-372	-426	-392	-3,280	-3,841
Parts for transport equipment	-3,675	-4,183	-4,714	-409	-385	-424	-351	-447	-446	-338	-344	-397	-362	-394	-419	-4,363	-4,266
Parts for ADP equipment	-1,423	-1,681	-1,858	-172	-142	-189	-172	-158	-155	-137	-160	-157	-162	-156	-155	-1,686	-1,721
Other parts for capital goods	-4,236	-5,047	-5,975	-561	-484	-583	-520	-584	-509	-471	-542	-526	-490	-558	-545	-5,939	-5,939
Organic and inorganic chemicals	-2,056	-2,102	-2,431	-245	-228	-234	-242	-249	-193	-193	-274	-215	-248	-243	-233	-2,197	-2,560
Paper and paperboard	-1,381	-1,465	-1,794	-164	-137	-179	-145	-189	-172	-151	-162	-147	-115	-142	-131	-1,649	-1,766
Textile yarn and fabrics	-1,763	-1,869	-2,036	-176	-137	-194	-165	-189	-187	-154	-167	-151	-142	-141	-172	-1,871	-1,779
Iron and steel	-946	-1,039	-1,285	-124	-96	-137	-122	-117	-143	-129	-125	-125	-109	-100	-101	-1,163	-1,315
Plastics	-1,272	-1,375	-1,646	-155	-133	-160	-129	-155	-146	-158	-149	-129	-131	-128	-124	-1,317	-1,573
Non-monetary gold	-1,019	-978	-705	-90	-30	-66	-55	-78	-56	-74	-66	-64	-55	-52	-52	-650	-651
Processed industrial supplies nes	-7,135	-7,783	-8,680	-856	-684	-818	-687	-824	-728	-747	-750	-752	-753	-753	-777	-7,993	-8,218
Other goods	-208	-286	-391	-54	-17	-57	-44	-50	-28	-30	-42	-15	-14	-13	-50	-347	-319
<i>Total intermediate and other goods</i>	<i>-29,850</i>	<i>-32,335</i>	<i>-36,756</i>	<i>-3,451</i>	<i>-3,565</i>	<i>-3,408</i>	<i>-3,585</i>	<i>-3,408</i>	<i>-3,228</i>	<i>-2,866</i>	<i>-3,364</i>	<i>-3,160</i>	<i>-3,137</i>	<i>-3,160</i>	<i>-3,309</i>	<i>-33,700</i>	<i>-35,431</i>
<i>Total imports fob</i>	<i>-59,431</i>	<i>-64,411</i>	<i>-74,715</i>	<i>-6,811</i>	<i>-6,974</i>	<i>-6,221</i>	<i>-7,191</i>	<i>-6,953</i>	<i>-6,115</i>	<i>-6,701</i>	<i>-6,831</i>	<i>-6,456</i>	<i>-6,097</i>	<i>-6,321</i>	<i>-6,705</i>	<i>-68,494</i>	<i>-71,572</i>
Consumption goods	..	..	..	-1,698	-1,682	-1,717	-1,669	-1,790	-1,690	-1,622	-1,570	-1,656	-1,532	-1,665	-1,721	..	..
Capital goods	..	..	..	-1,714	-1,596	-1,679	-1,754	-1,558	-1,495	-1,399	-1,452	-1,533	-1,479	-1,761	-1,834	-1,659	-1,794
Intermediate and other goods	..	..	..	-3,177	-3,254	-3,351	-3,239	-3,441	-3,131	-3,051	-3,108	-3,266	-3,112	-3,295	-3,106	..	..
<i>Total imports fob</i>	..	..	..	<i>-6,589</i>	<i>-6,532</i>	<i>-6,747</i>	<i>-6,662</i>	<i>-6,789</i>	<i>-6,316</i>	<i>-6,072</i>	<i>-6,078</i>	<i>-6,297</i>	<i>-6,475</i>	<i>-6,719</i>	<i>-6,733</i>	<i>-6,303</i>	<i>-6,691</i>
<i>Total imports fob</i>	..	..	..	<i>-6,512</i>	<i>-6,616</i>	<i>-6,663</i>	<i>-6,630</i>	<i>-6,520</i>	<i>-6,381</i>	<i>-6,284</i>	<i>-6,311</i>	<i>-6,413</i>	<i>-6,517</i>	<i>-6,581</i>	<i>-6,610p</i>	<i>-6,624p</i>	<i>-6,621p</i>

Trend Estimates

(a) In keeping with balance of payments conventions, debit items such as merchandise imports, are recorded as negative entries. (b) Definitions of the component series are given in the ABS Information Paper, Change to Commodity

EXPLANATORY NOTES

Introduction

1. This publication contains preliminary estimates of Australia's merchandise imports on a balance of payments basis for May 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.

5. 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-to-month 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 Melissa Marino on Canberra (06) 252 6419.

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 May 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 May 1996 are due for release on 2 July 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 an international merchandise trade basis for May 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
p	provisional

W. McLennan
Australian Statistician

Release date for June 1996 issue

The expected release date for the June issue of this publication is 17 July 1996. Any variations which might occur will be notified in the ABS *Release Advice* (1105.0)

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

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