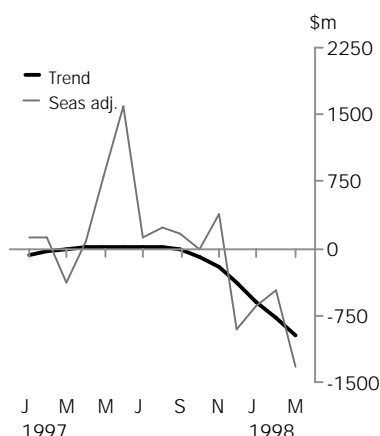


INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN GOODS AND SERVICES

AUSTRALIA

EMBARGO: 11:30AM (CANBERRA TIME) MON 4 MAY 1998

Balance on goods and services



MARCH KEY FIGURES

TREND ESTIMATES

	Jan 98 \$m	Feb 98 \$m	Mar 98 \$m	Feb 98 to Mar 98 % change
Balance on goods and services	- 590	- 785	- 970	..
Credits (exports of goods and services)	9 360	9 293	9 210	-1
Debits (imports of goods and services)	9 949	10 079	10 181	1

SEASONALLY ADJUSTED

	Jan 98 \$m	Feb 98 \$m	Mar 98 \$m	Feb 98 to Mar 98 % change
Balance on goods and services	- 644	- 462	-1 327	..
Credits (exports of goods and services)	9 231	9 468	8 980	-5
Debits (imports of goods and services)	9 875	9 930	10 307	4

MARCH KEY POINTS

TREND ESTIMATES

- The provisional trend estimate of the balance on goods and services was a deficit of \$970 million in March, an increase of \$185 million on the deficit in February.
- Goods and services credits fell \$83 million and goods and services debits rose \$102 million.

SEASONALLY ADJUSTED ESTIMATES

- The balance on goods and services was a deficit of \$1,327 million, an increase of \$865 million on the deficit in February.
- Goods and services credits fell \$488 million, or 5%, on the February figure. Goods and services debits rose \$377 million or 4%.

ORIGINAL ESTIMATES

- In original terms, the balance on goods and services in March was a deficit of \$1,143 million. While seasonally adjusted exports of goods fell 6%, in part reflecting irregular factors, in original terms they rose 9%. Volatility in month to month movements in this series, in original terms, makes interpretation difficult, but with the exception of Japan and Hong Kong, exports to each of our major south east Asia and north Asia trading partners rose in March, most by 15% or more, suggesting no further deterioration in export performance in March due to financial instability in the region. See the analysis on page 4 for details.

TAKE CARE!
See page 2 for a note on the reliability and volatility of these series.

- For further information about these and related statistics, contact Carol Trickett on 02 6252 5540, or any ABS Office.

NOTES

FORTHCOMING ISSUES

ISSUE	EXPECTED RELEASE DATE
April 1998	29 May 1998
May 1998	30 June 1998
June 1998	29 July 1998
July 1998	31 August 1998
August 1998	29 September 1998
September 1998	30 October 1998

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CHANGES IN THIS ISSUE

In original terms, revisions since the last issue of this publication have:

- increased the surplus on goods and services for 1996-97 by \$6 million; and
- increased the deficit on goods and services for the eight months to February 1998 by \$236 million, largely due to a downward revision to travel credits reflecting the latest available data on overseas arrivals and departures.

Other minor revisions have also been made to the classification and presentation of information that do not affect the goods and services credits and debits aggregates, or the balance on goods and services. First, for 1994-95 to 1996-97, some minor amounts (\$11 million per month or less) relating to goods taken on board by international carriers have been reclassified from transportation services to goods, consistent with the basis of compilation from July 1997. Second, in the quarterly trade in services statistics shown in Table 6, confidentiality considerations mean that the split of freight debits between shipping and air modes of transport can no longer be provided.

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RELIABILITY AND VOLATILITY

As noted in paragraph 4 of the explanatory notes in this publication, care should be exercised in interpreting month-to-month movements in original and seasonally adjusted series. This is because the series in this publication are volatile, and irregular factors unrelated to the trend generally account for more than half the seasonally adjusted monthly movements. For example, on 90% of all occasions the irregular will account for more than half the movement in the seasonally adjusted balance on goods and services. The increase in this seasonally adjusted balance in March 1998 was (rounded) \$0.9 billion, with 80% of that increase attributable to irregular factors. Similarly, in both January and February 1998 this same seasonally adjusted balance shows falls while the trend continues to rise.

Because of the irregularity in the series in this publication, care should also be exercised in interpreting trend estimates for the most recent 3 months which will be most affected by additional information becoming available.

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W. McLennan
Australian Statistician

ANALYSIS AND COMMENTS

BALANCE ON GOODS AND SERVICES

The trend estimate of the balance on goods and services was a deficit of \$970 million in March, an increase of \$185 million on the deficit in February.

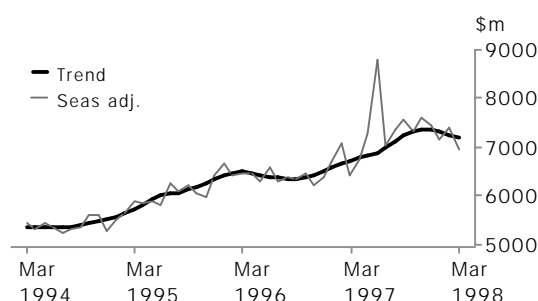
In seasonally adjusted terms, this balance was a deficit of \$1,327 million, an increase of \$865 million on the deficit in February.

EXPORTS OF GOODS AND SERVICES

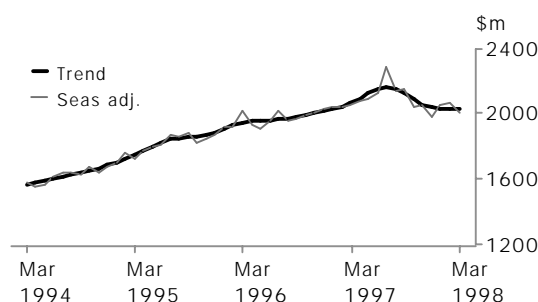
The trend estimate of goods and services credits fell \$83 million, to \$9,210 million, continuing a downward movement since November 1997.

In seasonally adjusted terms, goods and services credits fell \$488 million, or 5%, to \$8,980 million. Goods fell \$429 million, or 6%, to \$6,968 million, while services fell \$59 million or 3%.

GOODS CREDITS



SERVICES CREDITS



RURAL GOODS The trend estimate of rural goods fell \$59 million, or 3%, to \$1,704 million. In seasonally adjusted terms, rural goods fell \$182 million, or 10%, to \$1,587 million.

Rural goods, in original terms, rose \$88 million, or 5%, to \$1,774 million. The largest increases were in:

- 'other' rural goods, up \$105 million or 16%; and
- meat and meat preparations, up \$27 million or 9%.

These increases were partly offset by a decrease in cereals, down \$33 million or 8%.

ANALYSIS AND COMMENTS

NON-RURAL AND OTHER GOODS The trend estimate of non-rural and other goods fell \$22 million to \$5,479 million. In seasonally adjusted terms, non-rural and other goods fell \$246 million, or 4%, to \$5,381 million.

Non-rural and other goods, in original terms, rose \$498 million, or 10%, to \$5,548 million. The largest increases were in:

- metals (excluding gold), up \$121 million or 22%;
- 'other' manufactures, up \$119 million or 16%;
- metals ores and minerals, up \$115 million or 14%; and
- gold, up \$85 million or 14%.

These increases were partly offset by decreases in coal, coke and briquettes, down \$53 million or 7%; and 'other' mineral fuels, down \$49 million or 11%.

MERCHANDISE EXPORTS BY COUNTRY

The table below shows Australia's recorded merchandise exports for the months of 1997–98 (in original terms, not adjusted for BOP purposes) to 10 selected south east Asia and north Asia trading partners that together account for about half of Australia's goods exports. Movements in the individual series reflect a range of seasonal and irregular influences, but generally suggest weaker export performance to many of these trading partners in January and February 1998. For example, exports to these 10 countries fell 20% in January, slightly more than the 19% fall in total exports; and in February, these 10 countries slipped a further 1% when total exports rose 6%. However, with 3 exceptions, in March 1998 the individual series show increases well above the average 9% rise in exports for the month. Exports to Taiwan rose 6%. The lower value of exports to Japan (down 9% on February) is still above the average monthly export value achieved for the first half of 1997. Exports to Hong Kong fell 15% in the month.

AUSTRALIA'S MERCHANDISE EXPORTS(a) TO SELECTED MAJOR TRADING PARTNERS

	<i>Jul 1997</i>	<i>Aug 1997</i>	<i>Sept 1997</i>	<i>Oct 1997</i>	<i>Nov 1997</i>	<i>Dec 1997</i>	<i>Jan 1998</i>	<i>Feb 1998</i>	<i>Mar 1998</i>	<i>Feb 1998 to Mar 1998 % change</i>
	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	
China	375	305	369	328	349	386	251	271	313	15
Hong Kong	274	309	398	376	421	392	353	367	313	-15
Indonesia	323	309	298	345	230	283	167	134	172	28
Japan	1 425	1 540	1 433	1 497	1 528	1 667	1 444	1 439	1 306	-9
Korea, Republic of	719	590	590	519	639	473	407	342	440	29
Malaysia	206	189	194	210	264	187	132	112	157	40
Philippines	101	117	116	133	122	97	86	65	91	40
Singapore	330	323	280	312	381	358	184	266	335	26
Taiwan	339	302	338	333	395	382	323	305	322	6
Thailand	163	126	109	149	136	103	95	88	104	18
All other countries	2 876	3 076	3 079	3 424	3 180	3 487	2 854	3 293	3 760	14
Total	7 131	7 186	7 204	7 626	7 631	7 815	6 296	6 682	7 313	9

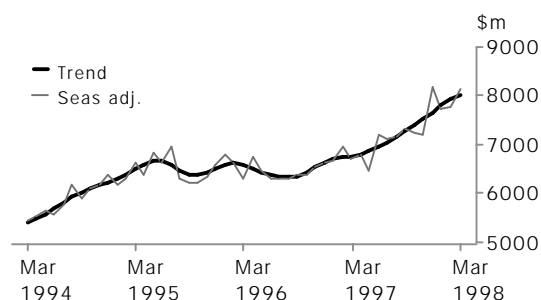
(a) Merchandise exports, in original terms, as recorded in ABS international trade statistics, not adjusted to a balance of payments basis

ANALYSIS AND COMMENTS

IMPORTS OF GOODS AND SERVICES

The trend estimate of goods and services debits rose \$102 million, or 1%, to \$10,181 million, continuing an upward movement since August 1996. In seasonally adjusted terms, goods and services debits rose \$377 million, or 4%, to \$10,307 million. Goods rose \$389 million, or 5%, while services fell \$11 million.

GOODS DEBITS



CONSUMPTION GOODS The trend estimate of consumption goods rose \$32 million, or 1%, to \$2,283 million, continuing the upward movement since March 1996. In seasonally adjusted terms, consumption goods rose \$91 million, or 4%, to \$2,292 million.

Consumption goods, in original terms, rose \$342 million, or 17%, to \$2,300 million. The largest increases were in:

- non-industrial transport equipment, up \$187 million or 37% (due mainly to increased imports of passenger motor vehicles); and
- consumption goods n.e.s., up \$78 million or 15%.

CAPITAL GOODS The trend estimate of capital goods rose \$24 million, or 1%, to \$1,853 million. In seasonally adjusted terms, capital goods rose \$142 million, or 8%, to \$1,907 million.

Capital goods, in original terms, rose \$401 million, or 27%, to \$1,867 million. The largest increases were in:

- ADP equipment, up \$140 million or 48%; and
- machinery and industrial equipment, up \$138 million or 22%.

INTERMEDIATE AND OTHER GOODS The trend estimate of intermediate and other goods rose \$42 million, or 1%, to \$3,894 million. In seasonally adjusted terms, intermediate and other goods rose \$156 million, or 4%, to \$3,952 million.

Intermediate and other goods, in original terms, rose \$684 million, or 19%, to \$4,196 million. There were increases in 12 of the 14 groups, with the largest being:

- fuels and lubricants, up \$117 million or 42%, after a relatively low February result;
- non-monetary gold, up \$112 million or 47%; and
- 'other' parts for capital goods, up \$101 million or 19%.

GOODS AND SERVICES(a), Summary: **Seasonally Adjusted and Trend**

CREDITS.....

DEBITS.....

Period	Balance on goods and services \$m	Total goods and services \$m	Total goods \$m	Rural goods(b) \$m	Non-rural and other goods(b) \$m	Total services \$m	Total goods and services \$m	Total goods \$m	Con- sumption goods \$m	Capital goods \$m	Inter- mediate and other goods \$m	Total services \$m
SEASONALLY ADJUSTED												
1997												
January	124	8 768	6 722	1 836	4 886	2 046	-8 644	-6 682	-1 711	-1 683	-3 289	-1 962
February	131	9 118	7 067	1 946	5 122	2 051	-8 987	-6 971	-1 861	-1 584	-3 527	-2 016
March	-373	8 472	6 412	1 755	4 657	2 059	-8 844	-6 733	-1 755	-1 637	-3 341	-2 111
April	89	8 840	6 765	1 874	4 891	2 076	-8 752	-6 802	-1 798	-1 734	-3 270	-1 950
May	802	9 368	7 274	1 854	5 419	2 094	-8 567	-6 476	-1 713	-1 544	-3 219	-2 090
June	1 597	10 933	8 802	1 880	6 922	2 131	-9 337	-7 206	-1 991	-1 787	-3 428	-2 131
July	127	9 315	7 021	1 904	5 117	2 294	-9 188	-7 110	-2 023	-1 512	-3 576	-2 077
August	226	9 494	7 349	1 944	5 404	2 146	-9 269	-7 150	-1 964	-1 656	-3 530	-2 119
September	172	9 711	7 558	1 948	5 610	2 152	-9 538	-7 339	-2 039	-1 656	-3 645	-2 199
October	-16	9 386	7 336	1 923	5 412	2 050	-9 401	-7 263	-2 051	-1 696	-3 516	-2 138
November	383	9 654	7 602	1 938	5 664	2 052	-9 272	-7 190	-2 000	-1 644	-3 547	-2 081
December	-901	9 415	7 432	1 941	5 491	1 983	-10 316	-8 171	-2 227	-1 947	-3 997	-2 145
1998												
January	-644	9 231	7 169	1 829	5 340	2 061	-9 875	-7 740	-2 281	-1 739	-3 720	-2 135
February	-462	9 468	7 397	1 769	5 627	2 071	-9 930	-7 762	-2 201	-1 765	-3 796	-2 168
March	-1 327	8 980	6 968	1 587	5 381	2 012	-10 307	-8 151	-2 292	-1 907	-3 952	-2 157
TREND ESTIMATES												
1997												
January	-72	8 636	6 600	1 774	4 826	2 036	-8 708	-6 704	-1 753	-1 603	-3 348	-2 004
February	-40	8 721	6 672	1 817	4 855	2 049	-8 761	-6 744	-1 761	-1 633	-3 350	-2 016
March	-4	8 797	6 731	1 848	4 883	2 067	-8 801	-6 770	-1 779	-1 652	-3 340	-2 031
April	18	8 872	6 777	1 864	4 913	2 095	-8 853	-6 805	-1 809	-1 656	-3 341	-2 048
May	11	8 950	6 821	1 875	4 947	2 128	-8 939	-6 869	-1 852	-1 650	-3 367	-2 070
June	5	9 045	6 887	1 887	5 000	2 158	-9 040	-6 947	-1 901	-1 639	-3 407	-2 093
July	15	9 169	6 998	1 907	5 091	2 171	-9 154	-7 040	-1 947	-1 632	-3 460	-2 114
August	12	9 292	7 131	1 929	5 202	2 161	-9 281	-7 152	-1 990	-1 640	-3 523	-2 128
September	-17	9 390	7 259	1 947	5 312	2 132	-9 407	-7 272	-2 029	-1 659	-3 583	-2 136
October	-91	9 437	7 344	1 945	5 399	2 093	-9 528	-7 392	-2 066	-1 693	-3 633	-2 137
November	-212	9 444	7 384	1 922	5 462	2 060	-9 655	-7 520	-2 107	-1 731	-3 681	-2 135
December	-389	9 414	7 374	1 879	5 495	2 040	-9 803	-7 666	-2 157	-1 770	-3 738	-2 137
1998												
January	-590	9 360	7 328	1 824	5 505	2 031	-9 949	-7 808	-2 208	-1 803	-3 798	-2 141
February	-785	9 293	7 264	1 763	5 501	2 029	-10 079	-7 932	-2 251	-1 829	-3 852	-2 146
March	-970	9 210	7 184	1 704	5 479	2 027	-10 181	-8 030	-2 283	-1 853	-3 894	-2 150

(a) For sign conventions, see paragraph 7 of the Explanatory Notes.

(b) For all time periods, estimates for *Sugar, sugar preparations and honey* are included in *Other non-rural*.

GOODS AND SERVICES(a), Summary: Original

CREDITS.....

DEBITS.....

Period	Balance on goods and services	Total goods and services	Total goods	Rural goods(b)	Non-rural and other goods(b)	Total services	Total goods and services	Total goods	Con- sumption goods	Capital goods	Inter- mediate and other goods	Total services
	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m
1994-95	-9 916	87 509	67 101	17 315	49 786	20 408	-97 425	-75 317	-19 418	-18 541	-37 358	-22 108
1995-96	-1 891	99 004	76 146	19 588	56 558	22 858	-100 895	-77 729	-19 860	-19 183	-38 686	-23 166
1996-97	1 777	105 318	80 934	21 045	59 889	24 384	-103 541	-79 438	-21 293	-18 884	-39 261	-24 103
1997												
January	-112	8 365	6 016	1 671	4 345	2 349	-8 477	-6 455	-1 565	-1 554	-3 336	-2 022
February	927	8 934	6 425	1 852	4 573	2 509	-8 007	-6 235	-1 656	-1 319	-3 260	-1 772
March	629	8 743	6 670	1 963	4 707	2 073	-8 114	-6 175	-1 541	-1 527	-3 107	-1 939
April	-197	8 639	6 654	1 904	4 750	1 985	-8 836	-6 886	-1 779	-1 656	-3 451	-1 950
May	863	9 415	7 624	2 030	5 594	1 791	-8 552	-6 508	-1 656	-1 580	-3 272	-2 044
June	1 454	10 589	8 686	1 878	6 808	1 903	-9 135	-6 952	-1 759	-1 900	-3 293	-2 183
July	-467	9 607	7 129	1 841	5 288	2 478	-10 074	-7 825	-2 228	-1 663	-3 934	-2 249
August	130	9 512	7 540	1 759	5 781	1 972	-9 382	-7 253	-2 043	-1 637	-3 573	-2 129
September	-613	9 368	7 493	1 785	5 708	1 875	-9 981	-7 595	-2 213	-1 755	-3 627	-2 386
October	-555	9 660	7 628	1 941	5 687	2 032	-10 215	-8 021	-2 404	-1 862	-3 755	-2 194
November	423	9 736	7 710	1 965	5 745	2 026	-9 313	-7 291	-2 110	-1 660	-3 521	-2 022
December	-115	9 877	7 813	2 126	5 687	2 064	-9 992	-7 871	-2 244	-1 913	-3 714	-2 121
1998												
January	-685	8 720	6 356	1 673	4 683	2 364	-9 405	-7 227	-2 036	-1 582	-3 609	-2 178
February	432	9 273	6 736	1 686	5 050	2 537	-8 841	-6 936	-1 958	-1 466	-3 512	-1 905
March	-1 143	9 328	7 322	1 774	5 548	2 006	-10 471	-8 363	-2 300	-1 867	-4 196	-2 108

FINANCIAL YEAR TO DATE

9 months to Mar 1997	-343	76 675	57 970	15 233	42 737	18 705	-77 018	-59 092	-16 099	-13 748	-29 245	-17 926
9 months to Mar 1998	-2 593	85 081	65 727	16 550	49 177	19 354	-87 674	-68 382	-19 536	-15 405	-33 441	-19 292

(a) For sign conventions, see paragraph 7 of the Explanatory Notes.

b) For all time periods, estimates for *Sugar, sugar preparations and honey* are included in *Other non-rural*.

GOODS CREDITS: Original

RURAL GOODS.....

	<i>Total goods</i>	<i>Total rural goods(a)</i>	<i>Meat and meat preparations</i>	<i>Cereal grains and cereal preparations</i>	<i>Sugar, sugar preparations and honey(a)</i>	<i>Wool and sheepskins</i>	<i>Other rural</i>
<i>Period</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>
1994-95	67 101	17 315	3 654	2 523	n.p.	4 216	6 922
1995-96	76 146	19 588	3 292	4 926	n.p.	3 664	7 706
1996-97	80 934	21 045	2 957	5 954	n.p.	3 744	8 390
1997							
January	6 016	1 671	186	657	n.p.	277	551
February	6 425	1 852	252	685	n.p.	313	602
March	6 670	1 963	258	685	n.p.	362	658
April	6 654	1 904	283	567	n.p.	308	746
May	7 624	2 030	292	470	n.p.	343	925
June	8 686	1 878	270	466	n.p.	281	861
July	7 129	1 841	294	340	n.p.	391	816
August	7 540	1 759	296	398	n.p.	288	777
September	7 493	1 785	293	401	n.p.	324	767
October	7 628	1 941	343	385	n.p.	411	802
November	7 710	1 965	332	439	n.p.	436	758
December	7 813	2 126	342	549	n.p.	428	807
1998							
January	6 356	1 673	220	519	n.p.	298	636
February	6 736	1 686	301	417	n.p.	320	648
March	7 322	1 774	328	384	n.p.	309	753

FINANCIAL YEAR TO DATE

9 months to Mar 1997	57 970	15 233	2 112	4 451	n.p.	2 812	5 858
9 months to Mar 1998	65 727	16 550	2 749	3 832	n.p.	3 205	6 764

(a) For all time periods, estimates for *Sugar, sugar preparations and honey* are included in *Other non-rural*.

GOODS CREDITS: **Original** *continued*

NON-RURAL GOODS.....

<i>Period</i>	<i>Total non-rural goods(a)</i>	<i>Metal ores and minerals</i>	<i>Coal, coke and briquettes</i>	<i>Other mineral fuels</i>	<i>Metals (excl. gold)</i>	<i>Machinery</i>	<i>Transport equipment</i>	<i>Other manufactures</i>	<i>Other non-rural(a)</i>	<i>Other goods(b)</i>
<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>
1994-95	44 224	7 968	6 936	3 794	6 097	6 035	2 047	7 907	3 440	5 562
1995-96	50 021	9 088	7 843	4 165	6 799	7 119	2 500	8 755	3 752	6 537
1996-97	52 334	9 407	8 005	5 154	6 054	7 001	3 649	9 108	3 956	7 555
1997										
January	3 804	709	762	422	505	375	178	576	277	541
February	4 139	723	644	507	505	512	276	701	271	434
March	4 285	819	621	430	474	624	262	800	255	422
April	4 312	848	731	411	508	543	288	748	235	438
May	5 146	840	767	419	569	628	797	839	287	448
June	4 480	915	578	492	493	667	308	766	261	2 328
July	4 757	762	751	485	525	700	237	863	434	531
August	5 086	940	755	457	608	667	340	876	443	695
September	4 948	836	807	470	540	667	232	911	485	760
October	5 099	904	745	510	601	654	280	877	528	588
November	5 132	893	783	469	644	672	330	887	454	613
December	5 146	966	878	524	610	764	287	831	286	541
1998										
January	4 181	840	866	400	593	419	165	611	287	502
February	4 370	814	772	434	540	547	218	745	300	680
March	4 784	929	719	385	661	619	232	864	375	764

FINANCIAL YEAR TO DATE

9 months to Mar 1997	38 396	6 804	5 929	3 832	4 484	5 163	2 256	6 755	3 173	4 341
9 months to Mar 1998	43 503	7 884	7 076	4 134	5 322	5 709	2 321	7 465	3 592	5 674

(a) For all time periods, estimates for *Sugar, sugar preparations and honey* are included in *Other non-rural*.

(b) Includes non-monetary gold.

GOODS DEBITS(a): Original

CONSUMPTION GOODS.....

	<i>Total goods</i>	<i>Total consumption goods</i>	<i>Food and beverages, mainly for consumption</i>	<i>Household electrical items</i>	<i>Non- industrial transport equipment</i>	<i>Textiles, clothing and footwear</i>	<i>Toys, books and leisure goods</i>	<i>Consumption goods n.e.s.</i>
<i>Period</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>
1994-95	-75 317	-19 418	-2 592	-1 744	-4 758	-2 566	-2 545	-5 213
1995-96	-77 729	-19 860	-2 760	-1 766	-4 436	-2 726	-2 534	-5 638
1996-97	-79 438	-21 293	-2 879	-1 890	-5 143	-2 880	-2 567	-5 934
1997								
January	-6 455	-1 565	- 243	- 121	- 342	- 263	- 178	- 418
February	-6 235	-1 656	- 225	- 121	- 364	- 303	- 180	- 463
March	-6 175	-1 541	- 219	- 130	- 407	- 209	- 166	- 410
April	-6 886	-1 779	- 228	- 157	- 427	- 241	- 204	- 522
May	-6 508	-1 656	- 211	- 145	- 413	- 199	- 209	- 479
June	-6 952	-1 759	- 223	- 152	- 475	- 201	- 219	- 489
July	-7 825	-2 228	- 270	- 171	- 618	- 322	- 258	- 589
August	-7 253	-2 043	- 264	- 152	- 519	- 307	- 246	- 555
September	-7 595	-2 213	- 261	- 177	- 557	- 295	- 288	- 635
October	-8 021	-2 404	- 314	- 212	- 600	- 283	- 315	- 680
November	-7 291	-2 110	- 296	- 196	- 501	- 256	- 265	- 596
December	-7 871	-2 244	- 299	- 189	- 631	- 281	- 249	- 595
1998								
January	-7 227	-2 036	- 255	- 133	- 633	- 320	- 199	- 496
February	-6 936	-1 958	- 246	- 145	- 499	- 341	- 196	- 531
March	-8 363	-2 300	- 285	- 178	- 686	- 316	- 226	- 609

FINANCIAL YEAR TO DATE

9 months to Mar 1997	-59 092	-16 099	-2 217	-1 436	-3 828	-2 239	-1 935	-4 444
9 months to Mar 1998	-68 382	-19 536	-2 490	-1 553	-5 244	-2 721	-2 242	-5 286

(a) For sign conventions, see paragraph 7 of the Explanatory Notes.

GOODS DEBITS(a): **Original** *continued*

CAPITAL GOODS.....

	<i>Total capital goods</i>	<i>Machinery and industrial equipment</i>	<i>ADP equipment</i>	<i>Telecomm- unications equipment</i>	<i>Civil aircraft</i>	<i>Industrial transport equipment n.e.s.</i>	<i>Capital goods n.e.s.</i>
<i>Period</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>
1994-95	-18 541	-7 897	-3 232	-1 804	- 529	-2 714	-2 365
1995-96	-19 183	-8 326	-3 593	-1 996	- 688	-2 214	-2 366
1996-97	-18 884	-8 020	-3 719	-1 748	- 784	-2 178	-2 435
1997							
January	-1 554	- 687	- 268	- 109	-13	- 298	- 179
February	-1 319	- 600	- 253	- 111	-8	- 159	- 188
March	-1 527	- 645	- 335	- 124	-64	- 174	- 185
April	-1 656	- 708	- 358	- 184	-11	- 170	- 225
May	-1 580	- 631	- 352	- 147	-16	- 163	- 271
June	-1 900	- 620	- 426	- 177	-213	- 252	- 212
July	-1 663	- 727	- 360	- 163	-6	- 178	- 229
August	-1 637	- 732	- 315	- 144	-23	- 189	- 234
September	-1 755	- 753	- 374	- 188	-52	- 163	- 225
October	-1 862	- 747	- 358	- 208	-15	- 286	- 248
November	-1 660	- 689	- 336	- 176	-17	- 203	- 239
December	-1 913	- 830	- 353	- 194	-36	- 204	- 296
1998							
January	-1 582	- 726	- 324	- 131	-1	- 193	- 207
February	-1 466	- 617	- 293	- 126	-36	- 200	- 194
March	-1 867	- 755	- 433	- 184	-24	- 217	- 254

FINANCIAL YEAR TO DATE

9 months to Mar 1997	-13 748	-6 061	-2 583	-1 240	- 544	-1 593	-1 727
9 months to Mar 1998	-15 405	-6 576	-3 146	-1 514	- 210	-1 833	-2 126

(a) For sign conventions, see paragraph 7 of the Explanatory Notes.

GOODS DEBITS(a): **Original** *continued*

INTERMEDIATE AND OTHER MERCHANDISE GOODS.....

<i>Period</i>	<i>Total intermediate and other merchandise goods</i>	<i>Food and beverages, mainly for industry</i>	<i>Primary industrial supplies n.e.s.</i>	<i>Fuels and lubricants</i>	<i>Parts for transport equipment</i>	<i>Parts for ADP equipment</i>	<i>Other parts for capital goods</i>	<i>Organic and inorganic chemicals</i>
	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m
1994-95	-35 661	- 774	- 901	-3 566	-4 714	-1 858	-5 975	-2 431
1995-96	-36 964	- 700	- 879	-4 163	-4 600	-1 857	-6 393	-2 754
1996-97	-37 028	- 641	- 839	-5 004	-4 609	-1 759	-6 507	-2 743
1997								
January	-3 181	-72	-66	- 512	- 367	- 129	- 545	- 269
February	-2 971	-47	-71	- 477	- 326	- 134	- 525	- 205
March	-2 878	-61	-55	- 397	- 339	- 146	- 513	- 218
April	-3 184	-55	-79	- 354	- 433	- 169	- 568	- 242
May	-3 080	-54	-77	- 431	- 373	- 156	- 533	- 203
June	-3 082	-47	-71	- 405	- 382	- 184	- 556	- 223
July	-3 455	-69	-81	- 440	- 466	- 161	- 599	- 226
August	-3 176	-54	-71	- 353	- 431	- 147	- 553	- 207
September	-3 279	-71	-88	- 355	- 424	- 154	- 590	- 207
October	-3 496	-59	-75	- 394	- 440	- 157	- 640	- 242
November	-3 300	-69	-80	- 409	- 378	- 153	- 590	- 250
December	-3 426	-56	-84	- 360	- 462	- 162	- 677	- 219
1998								
January	-3 377	-63	-73	- 428	- 413	- 160	- 566	- 216
February	-3 118	-61	-80	- 279	- 411	- 144	- 533	- 250
March	-3 666	-68	-77	- 396	- 491	- 194	- 634	- 321

FINANCIAL YEAR TO DATE

9 months to Mar 1997	-27 682	- 485	- 612	-3 814	-3 421	-1 250	-4 850	-2 075
9 months to Mar 1998	-30 293	- 570	- 709	-3 414	-3 916	-1 432	-5 382	-2 138

(a) For sign conventions, see paragraph 7 of the Explanatory Notes.

GOODS DEBITS(a): **Original** *continued*INTERMEDIATE AND OTHER MERCHANDISE GOODS *continued*.....

<i>Period</i>	<i>Paper and paperboard</i>	<i>Textile yarn and fabrics</i>	<i>Iron and steel</i>	<i>Plastics</i>	<i>Processed industrial supplies n.e.s.</i>	<i>Other merchandise goods</i>	<i>Other goods(b)</i>
<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>
1994-95	-1 794	-2 036	-1 285	-1 646	-8 290	- 391	-1 697
1995-96	-1 868	-1 922	-1 408	-1 685	-8 398	- 337	-1 722
1996-97	-1 713	-1 817	-1 297	-1 577	-8 212	- 310	-2 233
1997							
January	- 136	- 156	- 112	- 126	- 676	-15	- 155
February	- 141	- 141	- 116	- 126	- 642	-20	- 289
March	- 126	- 119	- 110	- 123	- 627	-44	- 229
April	- 148	- 151	- 119	- 135	- 701	-30	- 267
May	- 131	- 158	- 106	- 130	- 699	-29	- 192
June	- 131	- 152	- 114	- 130	- 671	-16	- 211
July	- 147	- 189	- 122	- 158	- 778	-19	- 479
August	- 154	- 159	- 135	- 142	- 737	-33	- 397
September	- 164	- 167	- 130	- 149	- 760	-20	- 348
October	- 176	- 173	- 134	- 167	- 818	-21	- 259
November	- 146	- 165	- 137	- 151	- 741	-31	- 221
December	- 167	- 158	- 134	- 142	- 777	-28	- 288
1998							
January	- 159	- 175	- 149	- 152	- 793	-30	- 232
February	- 146	- 155	- 138	- 140	- 736	-45	- 394
March	- 173	- 168	- 147	- 163	- 812	-22	- 530
FINANCIAL YEAR TO DATE							
9 months to Mar 1997	-1 303	-1 356	- 958	-1 182	-6 141	- 235	-1 563
9 months to Mar 1998	-1 432	-1 509	-1 226	-1 364	-6 952	- 249	-3 148

(a) For sign conventions, see paragraph 7 of the
Explanatory Notes.

(b) Includes non-monetary gold.

SERVICES(a)(b): Original

CREDITS.....

DEBITS.....

<i>Period</i>	<i>Total services</i>	<i>Freight</i>	<i>Other transport- ation</i>	<i>Travel</i>	<i>Other services</i>	<i>Total services</i>	<i>Freight</i>	<i>Other transport- ation</i>	<i>Travel</i>	<i>Other services</i>
<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>
1994-95	20 408	1 127	4 858	9 956	4 467	-22 108	-4 360	-3 899	-6 272	-7 577
1995-96	22 858	1 221	5 305	11 252	5 080	-23 166	-4 405	-4 083	-6 988	-7 690
1996-97	24 384	951	5 697	11 926	5 810	-24 103	-4 373	-4 066	-7 769	-7 895
1997										
January	2 349	74	506	1 313	456	-2 022	-342	-339	-746	-595
February	2 509	73	506	1 480	450	-1 772	-336	-285	-507	-644
March	2 073	72	505	1 035	461	-1 939	-343	-339	-615	-642
April	1 985	78	457	945	505	-1 950	-369	-305	-623	-653
May	1 791	78	455	763	495	-2 044	-356	-344	-652	-692
June	1 903	79	454	836	534	-2 183	-361	-391	-738	-693
July	2 478	82	478	1 376	542	-2 249	-417	-377	-761	-694
August	1 972	82	478	881	531	-2 129	-381	-347	-712	-689
September	1 875	81	477	791	526	-2 386	-418	-394	-860	-714
October	2 032	84	498	911	539	-2 194	-448	-339	-757	-650
November	2 026	84	498	908	536	-2 022	-404	-306	-641	-671
December	2 064	84	497	928	555	-2 121	-418	-348	-650	-705
1998										
January	2 364	79	468	1 277	540	-2 178	-399	-330	-736	-713
February	2 537	79	468	1 462	528	-1 905	-372	-275	-545	-713
March	2 006	79	467	925	535	-2 108	-434	-312	-641	-721

FINANCIAL YEAR TO DATE

9 months to Mar 1997	18 705	716	4 331	9 382	4 276	-17 926	-3 287	-3 026	-5 756	-5 857
9 months to Mar 1998	19 354	734	4 329	9 459	4 832	-19 292	-3 691	-3 028	-6 303	-6 270

(a) For sign conventions, see paragraph 7 of the Explanatory Notes.

(b) For detailed trade in services by commodity, see Table 6 and paragraph 11 of the Explanatory Notes.

SERVICES(a)(b): Original—Quarterly

	CREDITS.....				DEBITS.....			
	Jun Qtr 1997	Sep Qtr 1997	Dec Qtr 1997	Mar Qtr 1998	Jun Qtr 1997	Sep Qtr 1997	Dec Qtr 1997	Mar Qtr 1998
SERVICES	5 679	6 325	6 122	6 907	-6 177	-6 764	-6 337	-6 191
Transportation services	1 601	1 678	1 745	1 640	-2 126	-2 334	-2 263	-2 122
Passenger	1 366	1 433	1 493	1 403	- 800	- 895	- 740	- 676
Freight	235	245	252	237	-1 086	-1 216	-1 270	-1 205
Other	n.p.	n.p.	n.p.	n.p.	- 240	- 223	- 253	- 241
Travel services	2 544	3 048	2 747	3 664	-2 013	-2 333	-2 048	-1 922
Business	172	123	173	181	- 600	- 360	- 308	- 294
Personal	2 372	2 925	2 574	3 483	-1 413	-1 973	-1 740	-1 628
Education-related	436	926	363	1 474	-90	- 201	- 121	- 142
Other	1 936	1 999	2 211	2 009	-1 323	-1 772	-1 619	-1 486
Communications services	221	291	254	257	- 265	- 277	- 266	- 264
Construction services	18	23	24	18	0	0	0	0
Insurance services	205	218	218	218	- 287	- 299	- 299	- 299
Financial services	127	143	143	143	-82	-85	-85	-85
Computer and information services	92	150	59	91	-77	-67	-54	-60
Royalties and licence fees	94	83	89	93	- 334	- 389	- 392	- 469
Other business services	472	453	591	525	- 696	- 689	- 628	- 659
Merchanting and other trade-related	102	111	128	115	-95	- 107	-84	-91
Operational leasing	2	2	4	4	- 200	- 189	- 175	- 179
Miscellaneous business, professional & technical	368	340	459	406	- 401	- 393	- 369	- 389
Legal, accounting, management consulting and public relations	70	73	69	68	-48	-40	-32	-31
Advertising, market research, and public opinion polling	16	20	22	17	-38	-35	-47	-55
Research and development	30	48	55	41	-47	-39	-30	-43
Architectural, engineering and other technical services	82	56	82	96	-75	-67	-68	-88
Agricultural, mining, and on-site processing	6	7	13	16	-24	-55	-7	-8
Services between affiliated enterprises n.i.e.	135	122	187	135	- 149	- 139	- 144	- 146
Other	29	14	31	33	-20	-18	-41	-18
Personal, cultural, and recreational services	124	116	120	130	- 139	- 160	- 150	- 180
Audiovisual and related services	90	62	76	69	- 119	- 141	- 128	- 154
Other personal, cultural and recreational services	34	54	44	61	-20	-19	-22	-26
Government services n.i.e.	181	122	132	128	- 158	- 131	- 152	- 131

(a) For sign conventions, see paragraph 7 of the Explanatory Notes.

(b) For further details on trade in services, see paragraph 11 of the Explanatory Notes.

PERIOD AVERAGE EXCHANGE RATES(a)

UNITS OF FOREIGN CURRENCY PER AUSTRALIAN DOLLAR

<i>Period</i>	<i>United States dollar</i>	<i>United Kingdom pound</i>	<i>German mark</i>	<i>Japanese yen</i>	<i>Special drawing right</i>	<i>Trade weighted index of value of the \$A(b)</i>
1994-95	0.7427	0.4705	1.120	70.35	0.4972	52.8
1995-96	0.7593	0.4909	1.109	77.66	0.5156	54.8
1996-97	0.7828	0.4851	1.251	90.51	0.5521	58.7
1997						
January	0.7791	0.4678	1.247	91.69	0.5484	58.5
February	0.7670	0.4717	1.283	94.34	0.5537	58.7
March	0.7888	0.4909	1.339	96.67	0.5726	60.6
April	0.7790	0.4777	1.332	97.82	0.5676	60.3
May	0.7753	0.4749	1.321	92.50	0.5605	59.4
June	0.7534	0.4581	1.300	86.17	0.5418	57.2
July	0.7425	0.4441	1.328	85.49	0.5387	57.2
August	0.7412	0.4618	1.365	87.39	0.5474	58.4
September	0.7211	0.4520	1.295	87.42	0.5322	57.7
October	0.7212	0.4422	1.267	87.35	0.5269	58.1
November	0.6954	0.4121	1.203	86.97	0.5055	57.0
December	0.6627	0.3986	1.178	85.80	0.4891	57.9
1998						
January	0.6543	0.4004	1.190	84.87	0.4871	60.2
February	0.6733	0.4107	1.221	84.75	0.4988	60.8
March	0.6699	0.4034	1.222	86.22	0.4981	60.2

(a) These exchange rates and the trade-weighted index are derived using rates provided by the Reserve Bank of Australia in respect of each trading day.

(b) May 1970=100.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

INTRODUCTION

1 This publication contains preliminary estimates of Australia's international trade in goods and services on a balance of payments basis. These estimates form part of Australia's balance of payments statistics.

2 More comprehensive quarterly estimates of Australia's trade in goods and services, together with comprehensive details of Australia's balance of payments and international investment position statistics are included in the quarterly publication, *Balance of Payments and International Investment Position, Australia* (5302.0).

CONCEPTS, SOURCES AND METHODS

3 The conceptual framework used in Australia's balance of payments and international investment position statistics is based on the Fifth Edition of the International Monetary Fund's *Balance of Payments Manual* (BPM5, 1993). This framework is summarised in the ABS publication *Information Paper: Implementing New International Statistical Standards in ABS International Accounts Statistics* (5364.0), which was released on 29 September, 1997. Descriptions of the underlying concepts and structure of the balance of payments and international investment position, and the sources, methods and terms used in compiling the estimates will be presented in *Balance of Payments and International Investment Position, Australia: Concepts, Sources and Methods* (5331.0) scheduled for release in mid-1998.

RELIABILITY AND VOLATILITY

4 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 Table 1) 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 with the following frequency:

balance on goods and services: 9 in 10 months
goods and services credits: 8 in 10 months
goods and services debits: 8 in 10 months.

TREND ESTIMATES

5 The trend estimates are derived by applying a 13-term Henderson moving average to the seasonally adjusted series. The 13-term Henderson average (like all Henderson averages) is symmetric, but as the end of a time series is approached, asymmetric forms of the average are applied. While the asymmetric weights enable trend estimates for recent months to be produced, it does result in revisions to the estimates for the most recent six months (the most recent three months in particular) as additional observations become available. There may also be revisions because of changes in the original data and as a result of the re-estimation of the seasonal factors. Details of trend-cycle weighting patterns are available on request from Time Series Analysis Section on Canberra (02) 6252 6103.

SEASONAL ADJUSTMENT

6 The factors used in seasonally adjusting the monthly goods and services statistics during 1998 can be obtained from Balance of Payments Section on Canberra (02) 6252 6224 at a cost of \$100.00.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

SIGN CONVENTION

7 In keeping with balance of payments conventions, credit entries are shown without sign and debit items are shown as negative entries. However, references to debit items in Key Figures, Key Points, and Analysis and Comments are made without regard to sign.

COMMODITY BREAKDOWNS OF GOODS

8 For details of the classification used for rural and non-rural goods see Table 3 in the 1996 edition of *Balance of Payments Australia: Summary of Concepts, Sources and Methods* (5351.0).

9 Most of the 25 commodity groups shown in Table 4 for merchandise goods debits are further sub-divided into a total of 106 commodity sub-groups. Although the information at this level is not published, it is available as a special data service, and can be obtained from Balance of Payments Section on Canberra (02) 6252 6419.

10 For more information on the commodity classification of merchandise goods debits, refer to *Information Paper: Change to Commodity Classification of Merchandise Imports in Balance of Payments Publications* (5344.0).

COMMODITY BREAKDOWNS OF SERVICES

11 The quarterly detailed services data published in Table 6 are consistent with the monthly aggregates shown in Table 5. A further 14 sub-commodities are available on request. Detailed annual data are published for 61 services commodities, and a further 4 are available. Services trade data by major partner countries and by Australian State of production/consumption are also published annually. Additional detail and additional presentations of the data may be available on request. For further information contact Balance of Payments Section on Canberra (02) 6252 5336.

RELATED PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

12 Detailed data of exports and imports of goods dissected by commodity and country are available on an international trade basis by contacting the General Sales and Inquiries telephone numbers shown on the back of this publication. There may be a charge for this information, depending on the volume of data requested.

13 Users may also wish to refer to the following publications which are available from ABS Bookshops:

- *Balance of Payments and International Investment Position, Australia* (5302.0)—issued quarterly
- *Balance of Payments, Australia: Summary of Concepts, Sources and Methods* (5351.0)
- *Information Paper: Quality of Australian Balance of Payments Statistics* (5342.0)
- *International Merchandise Trade, Australia* (5422.0)—issued quarterly
- *Information Paper: Implementing New International Statistical Standards in ABS International Accounts Statistics* (5364.0)—irregular, issued on 29 September 1997
- *Information Paper: Upgraded Balance of Payments and International Investment Position Statistics* (5365.0)—irregular, issued on 24 November 1997.

SYMBOLS AND OTHER USAGES

n.e.s. not elsewhere specified
p provisional
n.p. not published
. . not applicable

WHAT IF...? REVISIONS TO TREND ESTIMATES

EFFECT OF NEW SEASONALLY ADJUSTED ESTIMATES ON TREND ESTIMATES

Readers should exercise care in the interpretation of the trend data as the last three observations, in particular, are likely to be revised with the addition of subsequent months' data. For further information, see Explanatory Note 5.

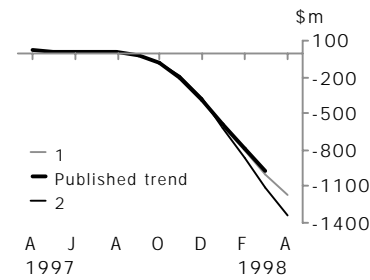
TREND REVISIONS

The graph below presents the effect of two possible scenarios on the previous trend estimates:

- 1** The April seasonally adjusted estimate of the balance on goods and services 'improves' by \$200 million when compared with the March seasonally adjusted estimate. (An 'improvement' refers to an increase in a surplus or a decrease in a deficit.)
- 2** The April seasonally adjusted estimate of the balance on goods and services 'deteriorates' by \$200 million when compared with the March seasonally adjusted estimate. (A 'deterioration' refers to a decrease in a surplus or an increase in a deficit.)

The change of \$200 million has been chosen because in the last decade the average monthly movement, without regard to sign, of the seasonally adjusted balance on goods and services series has been approximately \$200 million.

BALANCE ON GOODS AND SERVICES



	TREND AS PUBLISHED	WHAT IF NEXT MONTH'S SEASONALLY ADJUSTED ESTIMATE:	
		1 <i>improves by</i> \$200m on Mar 98 \$m	2 <i>deteriorates by</i> \$200m on Mar 98 \$m
September 1997	-17	-17	-17
October 1997	-91	-86	-78
November 1997	-212	-204	-190
December 1997	-389	-384	-378
January 1998	-590	-597	-614
February 1998	-785	-807	-867
March 1998	-970	-998	-1 109
April 1998		-1 165	-1 334

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