

Statistics Weekly

Thursday, 17 February 1994

The week in statistics ...

- Unemployment trend falling 2
- Building materials index marked by higher timber prices in 1993 3
- Time use survey will become a regular feature 4
- Lid still on employee earnings 5
- Finance in brief ... 5
- Australia's sporting involvement 6
- New car sales continue slow growth 6
- Expected releases over the fortnight to 1 March 7
- The latest ...
— key national/State indicators 8



statistics

Unemployment trend falling

The provisional trend estimate of unemployment fell for the third successive month in January 1994, after increasing between June 1993 and October 1993. The trend estimate of employment continued the succession of monthly increases since January 1993 and now stands at 7 867 800, the highest level since September 1990. The trend in full-time employment has been increasing generally since September 1992 while the part-time employment trend has increased in each of the last nine months. The trend estimate of the unemployment rate was 10.8 per cent, unchanged from December 1993 while the trend participation rate rose slightly to 63.2 per cent.



Employment

The January 1994 seasonally adjusted estimate of employed persons was 7 874 600, an increase of 22 000 since December 1993. Full-time employment fell by 26 800 to 5 973 700, mainly due to a decrease of 17 800 in the number of females employed full time, which now stands at 1 916 300. Male full-time employment fell by 9 000 to 4 057 400. Part-time employment rose by 48 700 to 1 900 900, with similar increases for males and females.

Unemployment

The seasonally adjusted estimate of unemployed persons in January 1994 was 929 100, a fall of 8 200 since December 1993. The number of unemployed persons seeking full-time work fell by 16 100 to 768 600, mainly due to a fall of 12 400 in the number of unemployed males seeking full-time work.

LABOUR FORCE SURVEY ESTIMATES
Seasonally adjusted

	<i>Employed</i>			<i>Un- employed</i>	<i>Unem- ployment rate</i>	<i>Partici- pation rate</i>
	<i>Full-time workers</i>	<i>Part-time workers</i>	<i>Total</i>			
	— '000 —				— per cent —	
1993						
August	5 908.9	1 820.7	7 729.6	963.5	11.1	62.6
September	5 916.8	1 857.9	7 774.7	947.2	10.9	62.7
October	5 964.4	1 842.6	7 807.0	982.0	11.2	63.1
November	5 980.7	1 848.8	7 829.5	978.4	11.1	63.2
December	6 000.5	1 852.2	7 852.6	937.4	10.7	63.0
1994						
January	5 973.7	1 900.9	7 874.6	929.1	10.6	63.1

Unemployment rate

In January 1994, the seasonally adjusted estimate of the unemployment rate was 10.6 per cent, compared with 10.7 per cent in December 1993. For males and females, the unemployment rate fell slightly to 10.9 per cent and 10.1 per cent respectively.

Participation rate

The seasonally adjusted estimate of the labour force participation rate in January 1994 was 63.1 per cent, compared with 63.0 per cent in December 1993. The male participation rate rose slightly to 74.0 per cent, while for females it was unchanged at 52.4 per cent.

For further information, order the publication *Labour Force, Australia, Preliminary (6202.0)*, or contact Heather Crawford on (06) 252 6525.

Building materials index marked by higher timber prices in 1993

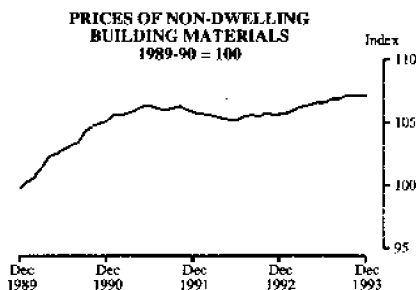
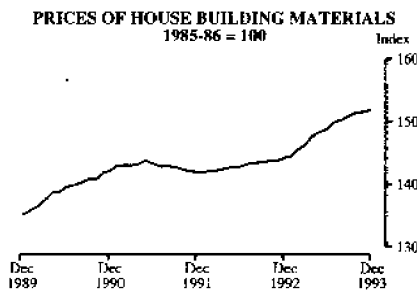
Prices of materials used in house building increased by 5.4 per cent from December 1992 to December 1993 while prices of materials used in other forms of building increased by 1.4 per cent.

Increases in timber, board and joinery accounted for about 80 per cent of the annual price increase of materials used in house building and about 20 per cent of the total price increase in materials used in other forms of building. The variation in the impact of timber and timber products reflects the greater use of timber in house building.

In 1993, prices for softwoods increased by 33 per cent. A world shortage of timber led to increased prices for imported timber; price increases flowed on to locally sourced timber and timber products. Hardwood prices increased by 10 per cent during the year.

Apart from timber and timber products, other house building materials to record significant increases in 1993 were installed appliances (6.5%), plumbing materials (3.2%) and ready mixed concrete (2.3%).

In general, prices of materials used in other forms of buildings recorded minimal price movements in 1993, largely as a result of the low level of activity in this sector.



PRICES OF BUILDING MATERIALS
December 1992 to December 1993
Percentage change

City	House building	Other than house building
Sydney	5.1	0.2
Melbourne	6.8	2.4
Brisbane	3.1	1.0
Adelaide	12.1	3.2
Perth	1.8	1.1
Hobart	2.3	2.2
Weighted average of six State capitals	5.4	1.4
Canberra	5.7	1.5

For further information, order the publications *Price Index of Materials Used in House Building, Six State Capital Cities and Canberra (6408.0)* and *Price Index of Materials Used in Building Other Than House Building, Six State Capital Cities and Canberra (6407.0)*, or contact Mark Dickson (06) 252 6198.

Time use survey will become a regular feature

The first national time use survey was conducted over four periods (to cover seasonal patterns of time use) during 1992. Revised results of the survey were published this week under the title *How Australians Use Their Time*.

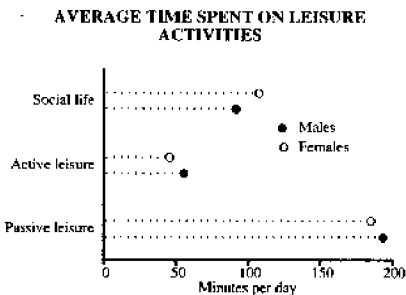
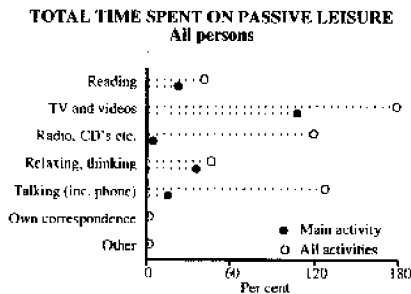
The table below provides the broad outline of how Australians use their time on average. It will be seen that major differences emerge in the proportion of time spent by males and females in labour force and household activities. The total time spent in the 'work' component of Australians' lives, however, is remarkably even for males and females, although men spend a greater proportion of their time in paid work.

While it was found that unpaid household work involved more time in the day than labour force activity, the combination of paid and unpaid work jointly accounted for an average of seven hours each day. An average six hours per day was spent on leisure activities.

The survey found that many people indulged in passive leisure activities in conjunction with other activities. It is worth noting in the graph at left that listening to radio and other sources of music and the like was listed as a primary activity for a very short time per day, but occupied about two hours a day as a secondary or minor activity.

Another widely held theory was also confirmed by the survey. Australians sleep on average just over half an hour longer on Saturdays and Sundays (measured from midnight to midnight) than they do on weeknights.

The data will be used to derive a monetary value for unpaid work, as part of the development of a system of satellite national accounts for the household economy. For this reason and because of the usefulness of time use data as a social indicator, the survey will be conducted every five years, the next one being scheduled for 1997.



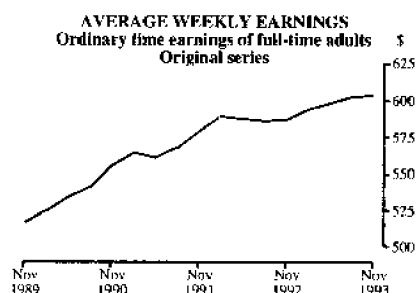
PROPORTION OF DAY SPENT ON MAIN ACTIVITY GROUPS, ALL PERSONS
(Per cent)

Activity group	Males	Females	Persons
Labour force	18.7	8.8	13.7
Household	10.4	20.2	15.3
Personal (includes sleep)	43.1	43.5	43.3
Education	2.3	2.0	2.2
Community	1.7	1.8	1.8
Social	6.4	7.5	6.9
Active leisure	3.9	3.2	3.5
Passive leisure	13.5	12.9	13.2
All activities	100.0	100.0	100.0

Lid still on employee earnings

Most categories of employee average earnings increased only slightly in both trend and original terms in the three months to November 1993, continuing the restrained upward movement evident since February.

The only statistically significant movement in the most recent quarter of the original series was for total average weekly earnings for full-time adults, which rose by 0.9 per cent.



AVERAGE WEEKLY EARNINGS, NOVEMBER 1993

	Average weekly earnings (\$)			Percentage change in 'Persons' from	
	Males	Females	Persons	Nov. '92	Aug '93
Full-time adults — trend					
Ordinary time	642.50	539.00	605.50	3.0	0.5
Total	690.60	551.60	640.90	3.2	0.5
All employees	620.50	412.40	523.50	3.2	0.2
Full-time adults — original					
Ordinary time	639.70	537.60	603.50	2.8	0.2
Total	691.20	551.00	641.50	3.3	0.9
All employees	620.20	411.10	523.40	3.8	0.5

For further information, order the publication *Average Weekly Earnings, Australia, Preliminary (6301.0)*, or contact Reg Gaull on (09) 323 5304.

Finance in brief ...

□ Personal finance

The provisional trend estimate for personal finance commitments for December 1993 was \$2 096.9 million, an increase of \$58.2 million (2.9%) on November 1993 and an increase of \$423.5 million (25.3%) on December 1992.

The trend estimates for fixed loan facilities increased by \$52.1 million (4.0%) and commitments under revolving credit facilities increased by \$6.1 million (0.8%) on November 1993.

□ Commercial finance

The provisional trend estimate for commercial finance commitments for December 1993 was \$8 020.3 million, an increase of \$168.7 million (2.2%) on November 1993 and an increase of \$1 613.4 million (25.2%) on December 1992.

The December 1993 trend estimate for commitments under fixed loan facilities increased by \$114.1 million (3.1%). The trend estimate for commitments under revolving credit facilities increased by \$54.6 million (1.3%).

□ Lease finance

The provisional trend estimate for lease finance commitments for December 1993 was \$462.6 million, a decrease of \$6.6 million (1.4%) on November 1993 but an increase of \$75.2 million (19.4%) on December 1992.

Australia's sporting involvement

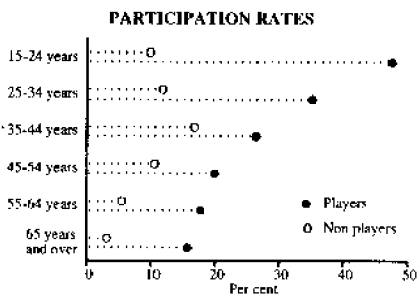
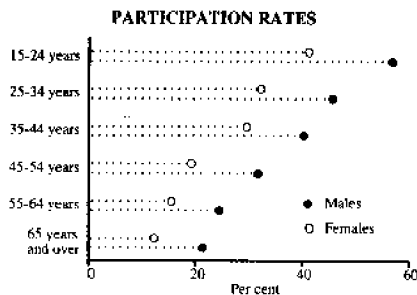
About one-third of the Australian population aged 15 years or more was involved in sport in some way in the year to March 1993.

Almost 4 million people played sport at some time during the year while just over 540 000 people were involved solely in non-playing capacities.

Overall, males had a participation rate 12.5 per cent higher than that of females. Most of this difference was attributable to players. Among those with only non-playing involvement, there was no significant difference between the participation rates of males and females.

These are among the results of the supplement to the March 1993 Monthly Population Survey, which collected data on paid and unpaid involvement in sport during the previous 12 months.

Survey results also revealed that the highest participation rate for persons playing sport occurred for 15–24 year-olds (47.6%). For non-players, the 35–44 years age group had the highest participation rate (16.9%). Their most common activities were as administrators or committee members.

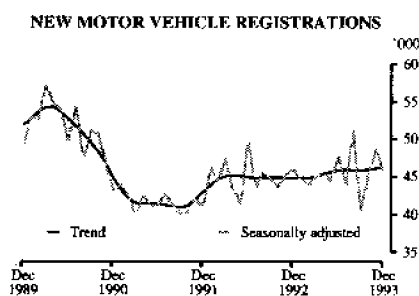


PERSONS WITH PAID AND UNPAID INVOLVEMENT IN SPORT

Characteristics	Some paid involvement		No paid involvement		All involvement	
	Total	Participation rate	Total	Participation rate	Total	Participation rate
	('000)	(%)	('000)	(%)	('000)	(%)
Sex						
Males	129.5	1.9	2 530.7	37.5	2 660.2	39.4
Females	83.8	1.2	1 760.9	25.7	1 844.7	26.9
Age group						
15 to 24 years	69.2	2.5	1 271.0	46.7	1 340.2	49.2
25 to 34 years	60.2	2.1	1 036.5	36.8	1 096.7	39.0
35 to 44 years	43.2	1.6	892.3	33.4	935.5	35.1
45 to 54 years	28.4	1.4	500.2	24.4	528.6	25.7
55 to 64 years	9.5	0.7	285.0	19.5	294.5	20.2
65 years and over	2.8	0.1	306.6	16.3	309.4	16.5
Total	213.3	1.6	4 291.6	31.6	4 504.9	33.1

Only 213 300 persons received some payment for their involvement, less than 5 per cent. Coaching, instructing or teaching of sport was the activity for which most persons were paid (97 800 people), while about 57 000 were paid for active sports participation.

For further information, order the publication *Involvement in Sport, Australia* (6285.0), or contact Roger Mableson on (08) 237 7449.



New car sales continue slow growth

The trend estimate for total new motor vehicle registrations has been rising steadily since March 1993, apart from flat months in August and September.

Inquiries

The ABS supplies a wide range of statistical information:

- through its bookshops
- by mail order (including subscription)
- by facsimile
- electronically.

To order any of the publications mentioned in *Statistics Weekly* or to inquire about the statistics and services available from the ABS, contact Information Services at any of the offices listed below. An Information Consultancy Service in each office provides assistance of a more extensive or complex nature.

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Statistics Weekly
17 February 1994

New passenger vehicle registrations have been rising slowly since January 1993, while 'other' vehicles recorded small falls in December 1992 to February 1993 and July to September 1993.

In seasonally adjusted terms, total registrations for December 1993 fell by 6.1 per cent from November, with passenger vehicles down by 6.8 per cent and 'other' vehicles by 2.4 per cent. All States recorded falls except Western Australia and the Australian Capital Territory.

Unadjusted total registrations for December 1993 fell by 3.1 per cent, to 48 536 vehicles. Passenger vehicles fell by 2.2 per cent, to 40 745 vehicles while 'other' vehicles recorded a fall of 7.8 per cent to 7 791 vehicles for December.

Minor rises in Victoria, Queensland, Western Australia and Tasmania were more than offset by falls in the other States and Territories, particularly New South Wales where registrations fell 13.4 per cent.

The three most popular models for passenger vehicles for December 1993 were the Ford Falcon/Fairmont with 6 950 vehicles followed by the Holden Commodore/Calais with 6 449 vehicles, and the Mitsubishi Magna with 2 927 vehicles. Collectively, these models accounted for 40.1 per cent of new passenger vehicle registrations.

For further information, order the publication Motor Vehicle Registrations, Australia (9303.0), or contact Kevin Yeadon on (06) 252 6255.

Order from the following:

Expected releases over the fortnight to 1 March

- 16** Price Indexes of Articles Produced by Manufacturing Industry, Australia, December 1993 (6412.0; \$11.00)
- 17** Housing Finance for Owner Occupation, Australia, December 1993 (5609.0; \$11.00)
- 18** Export Price Index, Australia, December 1993 (6405.0; \$8.50)
- 22** Price Indexes of Materials Used in Manufacturing Industries, Australia, December 1993 (6411.0; \$11.00)
Import Price Index, Australia, December 1993 (6414.0; \$8.50)
- 23** Company Profits, Australia, December Quarter 1993 (5651.0; \$11.00)
Registrations of New Motor Vehicles, Australia, January 1994, Preliminary (9301.0; \$12.00)
- 25** Manufacturing Production, Australia, January 1994, Preliminary (8301.0; \$11.00)

Key national indicators	Period	Units	Latest figure available		Percentage change (a) on	
			Original	Seasonally adjusted	Previous period	Corresponding period last year
National accounts						
Gross domestic product (GDP(A)) at 1989-90 prices	September qtr 93	\$m	95 378	96 256	0.4	3.4
International accounts						
Balance on current account (b)	December 93	\$m	-1 109	-1 765	-48	-68
Balance on merchandise trade (b)	"	"	32	-505	—	—
Balance on goods and services (b)	"	"	12	-620	—	—
Merchandise exports	"	"	5 329	5 035	-7	3
Merchandise imports	"	"	-5 297	-5 540	6	13
Net foreign debt	September qtr 93	\$m	177 805	n.a.	3.5	8.1
Net foreign liabilities	"	"	239 057	n.a.	6.6	14.6
Consumption and investment						
Retail turnover at current prices	December 93	\$m	11 348	8 341	-1.5	5.2
New capital expenditure at current prices	September qtr 93	"	6 368	6 495	3.5	6.9
New motor vehicle registrations	December 93	no.	48 541	45 857	-6.1	-0.2
Production						
Manufacturers' sales at 1989-90 prices	September qtr 93	\$m	36 435	35 751	1.6	8.3
Dwelling unit approvals	December 93	no.	13 693	15 243	2.4	1.7
Building approvals	December 93	\$m	2 080	2 254	7.7	6.0
Building work done at 1989-90 prices	September qtr 93	"	6 433	6 268	3.1	5.0
Prices						
Consumer price index	December qtr 93	1989-90 = 100.0	110.0	n.a.	0.2	1.9
Articles produced by manufacturing industry (d)	November 93	1988-89 = 100.0	115.8	n.a.	1.4	-0.1
Materials used in manufacturing industries	November 93	1984-85 = 100.0	126.0	n.a.	-1.3	-1.5
Labour force and demography						
Employed persons	January 94	'000	7 738.9	7 874.6	0.3	1.9
Participation rate †	"	%	62.5	63.1	0.0	0.2
Unemployment rate †	"	"	11.3	10.6	-0.1	-0.4
Job vacancies	November qtr 93	'000	38.2	38.9	5.1	31.0
Average weekly overtime per employee	"	hours	1.30	1.22	1.7	8.0
Estimated resident population	March qtr 93	million	17.6	n.a.	0.3	1.0
Short-term overseas visitor arrivals	October 93	'000	267	251	-3.3	14.5
Incomes						
Company profits before income tax	September qtr 93	\$m	5 283	5 073	10.6	21.9
Av. weekly earnings, full-time adults; ordinary time	November qtr 93	\$	603.50	n.a.	0.2	2.8
Financial markets						
Interest rates (c) (monthly average)						
90-day bank bills †	December 93	% per annum	4.85	n.a.	0.05	-1.05
10-year Treasury bonds †	"	"	6.70	n.a.	-0.1	-2.25
Exchange rate — \$US (c)	December 93	per \$A	0.6728	n.a.	1	-2

(a) Based on seasonally adjusted figures where available. (b) For percentage changes, a minus sign indicates an increase in the deficit; no sign means a decrease in the deficit or an increase in the surplus. (c) Source: Reserve Bank of Australia. (d) Later figures expected to be released Wednesday, 16 February 1994.

NOTES: † = change is shown in terms of percentage points. n.a. = not available.

Key State indicators	Period	Percentage change from same period previous year								
		NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.
New capital expenditure*	September qtr 93	-8.1	25.5	-4.0	27.3	16.9	7.5	n.a.	n.a.	6.9
Retail turnover (trend estimate)	December 93	2.8	3.6	5.0	6.7	9.2	3.2	n.a.	6.6	4.6
New motor vehicle registrations†	December 93	0.2	2.8	-1.3	-12.8	4.4	-14.2	-0.2	5.0	-0.2
Number of dwelling unit approvals*	December 93	-18.7	1.9	6.8	-19.3	24.7	2.5	-57.1	12.8	1.7
Value of total building work done	September qtr 93	0.4	4.1	9.2	10.3	20.9	13.3	1.1	-6.9	5.6
Employed persons*	January 94	1.4	0.8	3.8	0.7	4.5	1.9	-5.6	1.3	1.9
Capital city consumer price index	December qtr 93	1.3	2.4	1.9	1.9	2.3	3.3	2.3	2.1	1.9
Av. weekly earnings (full-time adult ordinary time)	August qtr 93	3.0	2.1	5.2	3.6	-0.1	2.7	2.6	3.4	2.8
Population	June qtr 93	0.8	0.3	2.7	0.4	1.2	0.4	0.7	1.6	1.0
Room nights in licensed hotels and motels, etc.	September qtr 93	6.3	0.1	9.1	2.4	9.0	5.4	18.4	12.0	6.7

* Seasonally adjusted except for NT and ACT. † Seasonally adjusted.

Figures have been taken from a variety of ABS publications. Copies may be obtained from Information Services (see page 7). Some of the figures shown are preliminary, some final, and some are revisions of previously published figures. Users should check the latest relevant publication or with the ABS Information Services if the status of the statistic is important. The ABS should be acknowledged as the source when reproducing or quoting any part of this publication.

