

## CHAPTER I.—RETAIL PRICES AND PRICE INDEX-NUMBERS.

### § 1. Collection of Information as to Retail Prices.

The retail prices of the extensive range of articles and services in common demand used in compiling the All Items ("C" series) retail price index (see list on pages 10-12 hereof) have been ascertained at frequent and regular intervals since 1923 for each of the six capital cities and for 27 of the more important towns of Australia. Comparable information is available for the month of November in each year 1914 to 1922 for each of the six capital cities.

The prices of food and groceries in approximately 200 towns throughout Australia were collected as at November of each year from 1913 to 1942 when collection was temporarily suspended as a war-time economy.

Retail prices of food and groceries and average rentals of houses for earlier years extending back to 1901 were collected by this Bureau, and in some cases have been recorded by the Statisticians of various States as far back as 1864.

The methods by which prices used in the "C" series retail price index-numbers are ascertained and the measures adopted to ensure their accuracy and comparability are briefly as follows:—

- (i) Representative and reputable retailers are selected for each city and town covered by the collection and each is required to furnish a return of prices monthly in respect of food and groceries and quarterly in respect of other items. Prices for each item are obtained where practicable from about ten retailers in each of the capital cities, and from about five retailers in each of the provincial towns.
- (ii) These returns are collected under authority of the *Census and Statistics Act 1905-1938* which requires that returns be supplied accurately and promptly and ensures that particulars supplied by individual retailers will not be divulged to competitors or to any other person or Government authority. Penalties are provided against failure to supply returns, against supplying false information, and against failure to answer truthfully any question asked by an authorized officer in respect of the contents of the return.
- (iii) The actual collection of returns is carried out by qualified Field Officers of the Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics working under the supervision of the Statisticians of the respective States. These Field Officers have very wide powers of investigation, including entry of premises and inspection of goods, records, etc.
- (iv) The Field Officers not only receive and check returns but visit the retail shops concerned, whenever necessary, to verify returns. In respect of articles of clothing and the like where variation of quality may be considerable Field Officers are equipped with samples of the goods used for price comparisons. In such cases the Field Officers visit every retail informant at each quarterly collection and personally inspect the relevant goods and prices thereof.

- (v) Before each quarterly collection Supervising Field Officers review the whole of the items for which prices are collected after making extensive inquiries among manufacturers, wholesalers and retailers. These Supervising Field Officers periodically accompany Field Officers at their price collections and check their work. This not only ensures accuracy and assiduity but also that all Field Officers work on uniform lines and that, as far as care and effort can make it possible, prices for identical goods and quality will be recorded at all times and for all places.
- (vi) The list of items in the regimen and the standards thereof are revised from time to time to keep them in harmony with changing conditions. Where such changes become necessary suitable adjustment is made in computing the retail price index to ensure that it reflects changes in price with due precision and that it is not vitiated by the influence of other changes.
- (vii) Returns of rents for unfurnished houses of four and five rooms are made at the middle of each quarter by a representative number (ranging up to 30) of house agents in each city and town, for brick and wooden houses respectively, classified according to number of rooms. These returns show the weekly rental of a substantial number of individual houses each of which is selected by the Field Officer as suitable for inclusion in a sample designed to measure quarterly ratio of change in weekly rentals. The aim is to measure variations which may be equivalent to change in price for a constant standard. The ratio of change is used to vary basic average rentals derived from the Census of 1933 and other records. Although expressed in money terms, the average rentals as published are essentially indexes. As such they do not necessarily indicate the average amount of rental actually paid for all rented houses, and still less do they indicate the rental at which vacant or new houses can be rented.

## § 2. Retail Price Index-Numbers.

**1. General.**—The basic principle of a retail price index-number is relatively simple. It is to select commodities representative of the field to be covered and to combine their prices at regular intervals in accordance with their relative importance in that field. The aim is to measure the degree of change in prices for the selected field taken as a whole.

In practice the application of this principle over a term of years presents great difficulty by reason of the numerous changes which occur in the type, grade and quantities of many of the items commonly used.

A full explanation of the methods adopted and an analysis of problems involved is contained in the Appendix to Labour Report No. 9.

For convenience the group of selected items is called a "regimen", and the quantities of each item used in the index are called "mass units" or "weights". These terms are used herein. In compiling the index the price of each item is multiplied by its "weight" and the sum of these products for all items at any given date represents an "aggregate expenditure". The "aggregate expenditures" for successive periods are converted into an index by denoting the aggregate of a selected or "base" period as 1000, and calculating all index-numbers to such base by the proportion which their aggregates bears to that of the base period.

2. **Essential Features.**—Apart from clear thinking, common sense and sound arithmetic, the prime essentials in compiling a retail price index are—

- (a) that prices be accurately ascertained at regular intervals for goods of constant grade and quality ;
- (b) that the regimen be as representative as possible of the field to be covered ;
- (c) that the weights be in approximate proportion to quantities actually used in the selected field.

3. **The Regimen.**—The regimen must be a selected regimen because it is impossible in practice to ascertain at regular intervals prices of every item of goods and services entering into household expenditure. Even in normal times there is considerable difficulty in ensuring that the selected items are always a true sample. Some items which it would be desirable to include must be excluded because comparative prices cannot be accurately ascertained for them at different times and different places. It is deemed better to limit the regimen of the index to items for which price variations can be ascertained with reasonable accuracy than to distend the regimen by including items for which price comparisons are necessarily inaccurate. Similarly, many items of small aggregate or individual importance are excluded. The regimen of the index therefore is not (as is sometimes erroneously supposed) a basic wage regimen nor yet is it a full list of component items in a standard of living. It does not imply that any particular goods or any selected grades or quantities of these goods should enter into determination of a basic or living wage. In fact the regimen used for the "C" series retail price index-number is simply a selected list of items combined in certain proportions for purpose of measuring price variations. The items are representative of the fields covered, and the proportions approximate to those in average consumption so far as can be ascertained.

The "regimen" and "weights" used in the "C" series retail price index-numbers are published in full on a later page of this Chapter.

4. **Purpose of Retail Price Index-Numbers.**—The retail price indexes are designed to measure the extent of changes in price levels only. While they may be used as indicating proportionate variations in cost of a *constant* standard of living, they do not measure the absolute cost of any standard of living, nor the cost of changes in the standard of living. In other words, they measure as nearly as may be the proportionate change in the aggregate cost of specified quantities of the selected "regimen" of items included in the index. The regimen is representative of a high proportion of the expenditure of wage-earner households.

5. **Effects of War Conditions on Index.**—Under war-time conditions scarcity of certain types of goods, erratic supply and changes of grade due to standardization have created unusual difficulty in obtaining the data necessary for measuring variations in prices. In some instances, this has rendered it necessary to substitute new grades, qualities or types of articles for those formerly used as indicators of changes in price. This has been the case more particularly in the clothing, household drapery and household utensils sections of the index. Substitutions of similar kind were necessary at times under normal conditions in order to meet changes of fashion and usage. In themselves, such substitutions are not injurious to the index provided the transitional difficulties can be solved as they arise. No change in principle is involved. The index continues to measure, as accurately

as may be, price variations, and price variations only. Just as in the pre-war period, application of multipliers (called "grafting factors") serves to neutralize those differences in prices which are solely due to substitution of a new item for one which has ceased to be available or in common use. The net effect of this process is that the price of the old item is taken as typical of price variation in its class up to the time of substitution, and the prices of the new item as typical of such changes in price thereafter.

In normal times, popular usage of items in general consumption changes slowly and the weight of items and groups in the regimen is changed only at long intervals. In war-time scarcity of supplies of some goods, rationing and kindred factors actually produce substantial changes in usage both long term and short term. The weights of the retail price indexes have not been changed and continue as in pre-war years. (See § 9 (2) hereof.)

The "C" series retail price index, as published, measures the aggregate variation in prices of the regimen of items adopted in peace times in peacetime proportion. This ensures comparability of the index on that specific basis. Its practical significance under war conditions is limited because a single index cannot take into account all changes that occur.

If it were practicable, it would be desirable to compile an additional index to measure variations over the war period, having regard to the fact that the relative consumptions of some items of the regimen have been altered by war conditions, and that the prices of some items not included in the regimen have moved differently from the variations recorded by the "C" series index. This would provide an alternative method of comparison presenting another aspect of price movement in war-time. Some appraisal of the problem and issues is published in a supplement to this Report.

### § 3. Various Series of Retail Price Index-Numbers.

Two main series of retail price index-numbers are compiled and shown in some detail in the following pages, viz. :—

- (i) the "B" series relating only to food, groceries and housing, continuously available since 1907;
- (ii) the All Items ("C" series) relating to food, groceries, housing, clothing, household drapery and utensils, fuel and light, and other miscellaneous items of household expenditure, continuously available from 1914.

The "B" series comprises only the food, groceries and housing sections of the All Items ("C" series) index. Reference is made on pages 33 to 35 of this Report to the "A" series and the "D" series (no longer compiled), the "Court" series and various other series of retail price index-numbers.

Although considerable space is given herein to the "B" series index-numbers (see page 25), reference to them should be made only in respect of the movement in prices in the three sections (food, groceries and rent) which they embrace.

Subject to consideration of special war-time influences, the "C" series in total provides a reliable measure of aggregate variations in retail prices as well as of group indexes for component sections. This index is compiled for :—

- (a) the capital city of each of the six States,
- (b) four other principal towns in each of the six States,
- (c) weighted average of five towns (including capital city) in each of the six States,

- (d) weighted average for the Six Capital Cities combined,  
 (e) weighted average for the Thirty Towns (including capital cities),  
 (f) separate indexes for Warwick, Port Augusta and Canberra.

This index forms the basis of the "Court" series index used by the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration for the "cost of living" adjustments of wages prescribed by awards made by the Court. (See §§ 10 and 11 of this Chapter.)

#### § 4. Retail Price Levels 1914-1944.

The aggregate indexes for 1914, 1921 and 1938 to 1943 for the Thirty Towns are published in summary form on page 20 hereof, while the following table furnishes the relevant index-numbers for the Six Capital Cities as a whole, for certain significant dates since November, 1914—the earliest date for which this index is available.

##### ALL ITEMS ("C" SERIES) RETAIL PRICE INDEX-NUMBERS. WEIGHTED AVERAGE OF SIX CAPITAL CITIES.

(Base: 1923-27 = 1,000.)

1914, November	.. ..	687	(Beginning of War I.)
1918, November	.. ..	905	(End of War I.)
1920, November	.. ..	1,166	(Post-War peak)
1922, November	.. ..	975	(Post-War trough)
1929, Year	.. ..	1,033	(Pre-Depression peak)
1933, Year	.. ..	804	(Depression trough)
1939, September Quarter	.. ..	916	(Pre-War II.)
1943, March Quarter	.. ..	1,123	(Pre-Price Stabilization)
1943, June Quarter	.. ..	1,143	(War II. peak)
1944, March Quarter	.. ..	1,124	
1945, March Quarter	.. ..	1,123	

These indexes reveal a rise of approximately 32 per cent. during the first world war, followed by a further rise of 29 per cent. in the two post-war years (November, 1918, to November, 1920). From November, 1920 to November, 1922, there was a fall of 16 per cent., and the index remained relatively stable until the onset of the depression in 1929. During the four years of the depression 1929 to 1933 the index fell by 22 per cent., rising thereafter steadily until 1939 when it was nearly 14 per cent. above the level of 1933, and approximately at the level it had occupied at the date of the Armistice of 1918. Between the outbreak of the present war (September, 1939) and March, 1943, the index rose by approximately 23 per cent. to a level slightly below that reached at the height of the post-war boom in 1920.

Price control was established by the Government immediately after the outbreak of the war under Regulations dated 28th September, 1939, and a national policy of price stabilization was applied as from 12th April, 1943, backed by more stringent price control and price subsidies. The retail price level, as measured by the index, remained relatively steady throughout the year 1944 and during the first quarter 1945 at the level of March, 1943. This stabilized level is approximately 23 per cent. above that of 1939 and 63 per cent. above the level prevailing at the beginning of the first world war in 1914.

An account of price control measures and of price stabilization in Australia is published in the *Official Year Book of the Commonwealth* No. 35, page 455.

The movement in the various sections of the index, and in the index as a whole for each year for which it has been compiled is shown in the following table:—

**The All Items ("C" Series) Retail Price Index and its Sectional or "Group" Index-Numbers for the Six Capital Cities combined, 1914 to 1944.**

(Base of Each Section: Weighted Average of Six Capital Cities, 1923-27 = 1,000) (a).

Period.	Food and Groceries.	Rent (4 and 5 Rooms).	Food, Groceries and Rent (4 and 5 Rooms) "B" Series).	Clothing.	Miscellaneous.	All Items ("C" Series).
1914 (b) .. ..	641	649	644	754	749	687
1915 (b) .. ..	842	659	777	792	786	782
1916 (b) .. ..	812	665	760	881	802	795
1917 (b) .. ..	836	685	782	992	882	847
1918 (b) .. ..	861	722	812	1,097	972	905
1919 (b) .. ..	1,026	768	934	1,238	1,036	1,022
1920 (b) .. ..	1,209	851	1,082	1,365	1,194	1,166
1921 (b) .. ..	950	877	924	1,246	1,010	1,013
1922 (b) .. ..	945	929	939	1,052	999	975
1923 .. ..	1,009	950	988	1,045	999	1,003
1924 .. ..	969	988	975	1,003	1,004	987
1925 .. ..	998	1,008	1,002	991	992	997
1926 .. ..	1,023	1,026	1,024	986	998	1,011
1927 .. ..	1,000	1,020	1,011	975	1,008	1,002
1928 .. ..	985	1,066	1,014	997	1,010	1,009
1929 .. ..	1,044	1,073	1,054	995	1,007	1,033
1930 .. ..	941	1,047	978	951	999	975
1931 .. ..	826	901	852	853	973	873
1932 .. ..	796	817	803	804	958	830
1933 .. ..	751	804	768	787	950	804
1934 .. ..	783	810	792	785	944	817
1935 .. ..	806	839	818	783	946	812
1936 .. ..	825	879	844	792	947	850
1937 .. ..	851	912	872	811	960	873
1938 .. ..	886	942	906	829	961	897
1939 .. ..	927	965	939	841	962	920
1940 .. ..	939	973	950	956	998	957
1941 .. ..	947	976	956	1,118	1,060	1,008
1942 .. ..	1,031	976	1,007	1,308	1,112	1,091
1943 .. ..	1,037	975	1,011	1,440	1,160	1,131
1944 .. ..	1,026	976	1,004	1,435	1,165	1,126
Quarter—						
1939—March .. ..	935	959	942	832	960	919
June .. ..	925	961	938	836	961	917
September .. ..	920	967	936	836	961	916
December .. ..	927	969	941	858	967	926
1940—March .. ..	917	971	936	888	973	930
June .. ..	944	972	953	936	997	954
September .. ..	937	973	949	959	1,007	959
December .. ..	956	974	961	1,040	1,013	986
1941—March .. ..	958	976	963	1,057	1,039	995
June .. ..	939	976	951	1,104	1,047	1,000
September .. ..	936	976	949	1,128	1,073	1,009
December .. ..	954	976	960	1,182	1,080	1,029
1942—March .. ..	991	977	983	1,216	1,095	1,053
June .. ..	1,025	976	1,003	1,285	1,099	1,081
September .. ..	1,055	976	1,022	1,342	1,110	1,106
December .. ..	1,051	976	1,019	1,388	1,144	1,122
1943—March .. ..	1,040	975	1,012	1,409	1,149	1,123
June .. ..	1,058	975	1,023	1,466	1,158	1,143
September .. ..	1,036	975	1,010	1,450	1,165	1,133
December .. ..	1,015	975	997	1,436	1,168	1,123
1944—March .. ..	1,020	976	1,000	1,434	1,166	1,124
June .. ..	1,026	976	1,004	1,429	1,164	1,125
September .. ..	1,036	975	1,010	1,433	1,164	1,120
December .. ..	1,022	975	1,002	1,442	1,163	1,126

(a) See Note on page 9.

(b) November.

### § 5. Increases in Retail Prices over War Period.

I. **Australia.**—The following statement shows for the Six Capitals separately, and as a whole, the percentage increases which have taken place in retail prices over the war period, from September quarter 1939, to the December quarter 1944, inclusive. The proportionate increase in the total index for each capital city is shown in the line marked "Total". The column headed "C" series index dissects the total percentage rise to show what part of it was due to the rise in prices in each of the four main groups of items. Thus, of the 22.4 per cent. increase for Sydney 3.5 was due to food and groceries, 0.1 to house rent, 14.2 to clothing and 4.6 to miscellaneous items. The column headed "Group Index" shows the percentage increase in prices of items in each group considered as a group. Thus, for Sydney prices in the food and groceries group increased by 9.9 per cent., house rents by 0.4 per cent., prices of clothing by 71.3 per cent. and prices of miscellaneous items by 24.5 per cent. These when weighted and combined in the proportions of the "C" series index showed a rise of 22.4 per cent. For the Six Capital Cities as a whole the increase over the war period shown was 22.9 per cent.

Group.	Sydney.		Melbourne.		Brisbane.	
	"C" Series Index.	Group Index.	"C" Series Index.	Group Index.	"C" Series Index.	Group Index.
	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.
Food and groceries	3.5	9.9	4.5	12.2	4.3	12.2
House rent ..	0.1	0.4	0.4	1.7	0.2	0.9
Clothing ..	14.2	71.3	15.4	77.9	15.1	71.5
Miscellaneous ..	4.6	24.5	3.7	18.9	3.8	18.7
<b>Total ..</b>	<b>22.4</b>	<b>22.4</b>	<b>24.0</b>	<b>24.0</b>	<b>23.4</b>	<b>23.4</b>

Group.	Adelaide.		Perth.		Hobart.		Six Capitals.(a)	
	"C" Series Index.	Group Index.	"C" Series Index.	Group Index.	"C" Series Index.	Group Index.	"C" Series Index.	Group Index.
	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.
Food and groceries	4.0	11.3	4.2	11.1	4.9	13.4	4.0	11.1
House rent ..	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.6	0.1	0.6	0.2	0.8
Clothing ..	13.5	64.5	14.0	68.9	13.9	67.1	14.6	72.5
Miscellaneous ..	4.0	18.9	3.8	19.5	3.3	16.9	4.1	21.0
<b>Total ..</b>	<b>21.6</b>	<b>21.6</b>	<b>22.1</b>	<b>22.1</b>	<b>22.2</b>	<b>22.2</b>	<b>22.9</b>	<b>22.9</b>

(a) Weighted average.

The foregoing comparisons refer to two points of time (i.e., the months immediately preceding the war and the closing months of 1944), at each of which special temporary factors may have influenced relative price levels. For instance, prices of certain foods (e.g., meat) fluctuate with seasonal conditions. The percentage increases shown do not, therefore, necessarily indicate the degree of increase due solely to war causes.

2. **International Comparisons.**—In the following table, comparisons are made for both the present and the last war periods of the increases which occurred in the several countries shown:—

**Retail Price Index-Numbers.**

(FOOD, RENT, CLOTHING, MISCELLANEOUS HOUSEHOLD EXPENDITURE.)

Date.	Australia.	Great Britain.	Canada.	New Zealand.	Union of South Africa.	United States of America.
(A): 1914-1919.						
1914 July .. ..	(a) 100	100	100	100	(b) 100(c)	100
1915 Year .. ..	114	125	97	108	103	102
1916 " .. ..	116	148	102	115	106	109
1917 " .. ..	123	180	130	125	114	128
1918 " .. ..	132	203	146	135	118	156
1919 " .. ..	149	208	155	145	126	175

(a) November.

(b) Food, Fuel, Light and Rent.

(c) Average for year 1914.

(B): 1939-1944.

1939—					(a)	
September Quarter	100	100	100	100	100	100
1942—						
March .. ..	115	129	115	109	115	112
June .. ..	118	128	115	110	117	115
September ..	121	129	117	112	119	117
December ..	123	129	118	114	121	119
1943—						
March .. ..	123	128	116	115(b)	127	121
June .. ..	125	128	117	114(b)	125	124
September ..	124	128	118	113(b)	126	123
December ..	123	128	118	114(b)	127	124
1944—						
March .. ..	123	129	118	114	128	123
June .. ..	123	129	118	114	130	124
September ..	123	130	118	114	129	126
December ..	123	129	118	114	132	126

(a) Food, Rent and Miscellaneous Expenditure.  
(Base December Quarter, 1942 = 100).

(b) Old Index as varied by New War-time Index

At various stages during the war of 1914-18 most of these countries introduced some measures of price control. But at an early stage in the present war these countries introduced price control measures which became more stringent as the war progressed, culminating in a policy of price stabilization.

Immediately after the outbreak of war, the Commonwealth Government took steps to control prices, and, by proclamations issued from day to day, pegged prices of various commodities at those ruling on 31st August, 1939. The National Security (Prices) Regulations were proclaimed on 28th September, 1939, under the authority of the National Security Act, and established the basic principles of war-time price control, provided for the appointment of a Commonwealth Prices Commissioner and conferred upon him extensive powers to control the price of goods declared for that purpose by the Minister for Trade and Customs.

A brief summary of the development of this control is published in the *Official Year Book of the Commonwealth* for 1942 and 1943, No. 35, page 455.



### § 6. Construction of "C" Series Retail Price Index.

I. The "Regimen".—The "regimen" from which the "C" series retail price indexes are compiled consists of a list of commodities and services which commonly enter into the consumption of the average household in respect of which comparative prices can be ascertained with due precision from time to time and place to place. (See Section 2 (3.) hereof.) The regimen is divided into the following Groups and Sections:—

Group.	Section.
I. Food and Groceries .. .. .	{ A.—Groceries. B.—Dairy Produce. C.—Meat.
II. Housing .. .. .	D.—House Rent.
III. Clothing .. .. .	{ E.—Clothing—Man. F.—Clothing—Woman. G.—Clothing—Boy (10½ years). H.—Clothing—Girl (7 years). J.—Clothing—Boy (3½ years).
IV. Miscellaneous .. .. .	{ K.—Household Drapery. L.—Household Utensils. M.—Fuel and Light. N.—Other Miscellaneous.

The All Items "C" series index includes the whole of the foregoing Groups, but for many purposes indexes are required for individual Groups or Sections.\* For this reason the following indexes are regularly compiled at the intervals shown, and published in this Report and other publications issued by the Bureau:—

Group.	Content.	Frequency.
I.	Food and Groceries .. .. .	Monthly
II.	Housing (4 and 5 rooms) .. .. .	Quarterly
I. and II.	Food, Groceries and Housing (4 and 5 rooms) ("B" Series) .. .. .	Quarterly
III.	Clothing .. .. .	Quarterly
IV.	Miscellaneous Household Requirements .. .. .	Quarterly
I., II., III. and IV.	Food, Groceries, Housing (4 and 5 rooms), Clothing and Miscellaneous ("C" series) .. .. .	Quarterly
I.	Food and Groceries ("200 Towns" series) (a)	Yearly

(a) Compilation suspended as a war-time economy after November, 1942.

For convenience of reference several of the indexes mentioned above have been given the "series" designation shown against them. These indexes are dealt with in turn in the following pages.

\* "Group" or "Sectional" index numbers in the various tables throughout this Report cannot be compared with each other in order to show the relative cost of Food and Groceries, Housing, Clothing or Miscellaneous requirements, since each "Group" or "Section" (or combination thereof) has its own base = 1,000, viz., the weighted average cost for the Six Capital Cities as a whole during the five-yearly period 1923-1927 for that "Group" or "Section".

The articles and services included in the various regimens now used for the purposes of the indexes referred to are shown in the following table:—

**Retail Price Indexes—Regimen.**  
**GROUP I.—FOOD AND GROCERIES.**

No.	Item.	Unit.	"Weight" or Mass Unit (per capita.)	Cost of Items in Regimen as percentage of aggregate cost—Melbourne, Dec. Quarter, 1943. (a)
<b>SECTION A.—GROCERIES.</b>				
1	Bread, white flour (cash delivered) ..	2-lb. loaf ..	100	3.10
2	Flour, ordinary .. ..	2 lb. ..	25	0.60
3	Flour, self-raising .. ..	2-lb. pkt... ..	12	0.50
4	Tea .. ..	1-lb. pkt... ..	8	1.21
5	Sugar, white granulated, IA ..	1 lb. ..	100	2.24
6	Rice, polished (Australian) ..	1 lb. ..	8	0.16
7	Sago, seed tapioca .. ..	1 lb. ..	1	0.04
8	Jam, plum .. ..	1½-lb. tin ..	8	0.51
9	Golden Syrup .. ..	2-lb. tin ..	1	0.04
10	Oats, flaked, loose .. ..	1 lb. ..	8	0.16
11	Raisins, seeded .. ..	1-lb. pkt... ..	5	0.35
12	Currants, loose, 2-Crown ..	1 lb. ..	2	0.11
13	Apricots, dried, loose, 2-Crown ..	1 lb. ..	1	0.10
14	Poaches, canned .. ..	30-oz. tin ..	3	0.22
15	Pears, canned .. ..	30-oz. tin ..	1	0.08
16	Salmon, in tins .. ..	1-lb. tin ..	3	0.36
17	Potatoes, new and old .. ..	7 lb. ..	18	0.85
18	Onions, brown .. ..	1 lb. ..	14	0.20
19	Soap .. ..	1 lb. ..	16	0.64
20	Kerosene, lighting, bulk ..	quart ..	4	0.15
<b>SECTION B.—DAIRY PRODUCE.</b>				
21	Butter, factory "choicest" ..	1 lb. ..	30	3.44
22	Cheese, ordinary, mild .. ..	1 lb. ..	4	0.36
23	Eggs, standard, new laid ..	1 doz. ..	6	0.74
24	Bacon, rashers, best middle ..	1 lb. ..	12	1.67
25	Milk, condensed, sweetened ..	1 tin ..	5	0.28
26	Milk, fresh—in sealed bottles or not bottled .. ..	quart ..	72	2.96
<b>SECTION C.—MEAT.</b>				
<b>Beef (fresh)—</b>				
27	Sirloin (Roast) including bone ..	1 lb. ..	18	1.41
28	Prime Rib (Roast) including bone ..	1 lb. ..	22	1.37
29	Steak—Rump .. ..	1 lb. ..	11	1.27
30	Steak—Chuck (stewing) ..	1 lb. ..	20	1.10
31	Sausages .. ..	1 lb. ..	7	0.30
<b>Beef (corned)—</b>				
32	Silverside .. ..	1 lb. ..	14	0.95
33	Brisket, rolled .. ..	1 lb. ..	15	0.73
<b>Mutton (fresh)—</b>				
34	Leg .. ..	1 lb. ..	20	1.17
35	Forequarter .. ..	1 lb. ..	15	0.44
36	Loin, without flap .. ..	1 lb. ..	4	0.19
37	Chops—Loin .. ..	1 lb. ..	30	1.60
38	Chops—Leg .. ..	1 lb. ..	10	0.63
<b>Pork (fresh)—</b>				
39	Leg .. ..	1 lb. ..	3	0.27
40	Loin, best end .. ..	1 lb. ..	3	0.28
41	Chops .. ..	1 lb. ..	3	0.30
<b>GROUP II.—HOUSING.—SECTION D.—RENT.</b>				
42	House Accommodation(b)	week ..	52(c)	19.94

(a) "C" Series continued on pages 14 and 15. (b) Four and five roomed houses. (c) Per household.

**Retail Price Indexes—Regimen—continued.**  
**GROUP III.—CLOTHING.**

No.	Item.	"Weight" or Mass Unit (per capita).	No.	Item.	"Weight" or Mass Unit (per capita).
<b>SECTION E.—CLOTHING—MAN.</b>			<b>SECTION G.—CLOTHING—BOY (10½ YEARS)—contd.</b>		
1	Suit, ready-made, Worsted (Australian)	0.67	46	Overcoat, ready-made, Tweed (Australian)	0.33
2	Trousers, working, Woollen Tweed (Australian)	2.00	47	Cap, Skull, Cloth	1.30
3	Overcoat, ready-made, Tweed (Australian)	0.25	48	Shirt, Sports	5.00
4	Hat, Fur Felt (Australian)	1.00	49	Singlet, Wool (short sleeves)	1.00
5	Shirt, Fashion, with two collars	1.67	50	Singlet, Cotton (athletic)	1.00
6	Shirt, Working, Drill	4.00	51	Braces	1.00
7	Singlet, Wool (short sleeves)	1.00	52	Stockings, GOLF, All Wool	4.00
8	Singlet, Cotton (athletic)	1.00	53	Pyjamas, Winceyette	1.50
9	Underpants, Wool (full length)	1.00	54	Pullover, All Wool	0.50
10	Underpants, Cotton "Shorts"	1.00	55	Shoes, Box Yearling	1.00
11	Sox, All Wool	a (4.65)	56		
12			57		
13	Braces	1.33			
14	Handkerchief, Cotton	6.00			
15	Pyjamas, Winceyette	1.50			
16	Pullover, All Wool	1.00			
17	Shoes (for best wear), Box Calf	0.50			
18	Boots, working, Box Hide	1.50			
19					
<b>SECTION F.—CLOTHING—WOMAN.</b>			<b>SECTION H.—CLOTHING—GIRL (7 YEARS).</b>		
20	Costume, ready-made, Tweed (Australian)	0.50	58	Tunic, Wool	1.00
21	Skirt, ready-made, Tweed (Australian)	1.25	59	Dress, Cotton	3.00
22	Hat, Fur Felt (Australian)	0.75	60	Top Coat, Tweed (Australian)	0.33
23	Hat, Straw	1.50	61	Hat, Wool Felt (Australian)	1.00
24	Frock, ready-made, Cotton	1.50	62	Hat, Straw	2.00
25	Frock, ready-made, Art Silk	1.50	63	Petticoat, Art Silk	1.00
26	Brasero, Cotton Brocade	4.50	64	Singlet, Silk and Wool	0.50
27	Undervest, Wool and Art Silk	1.50	65	Singlet, Art Silk	0.50
28	Undervest, Art Silk	1.50	66	Bloomers, Cotton, fleece-lined	2.00
29			67	Bloomers, Art Silk	2.00
30	Bloomers, Art Silk	4.50	68	Sox, Ankle, Cotton and Art Silk	4.00
31	Princess Slip, Art Silk	1.00	69	Pyjamas, Winceyette	0.33
32	Stockings, Art Silk	6.00	70	Pullover, All Wool	0.50
33			71	Shoes (for best wear), Patent Leather	0.67
34	Stockings, Lisle	3.00	72	Shoes (school), Box Yearling	1.50
35	Gloves, Fabric	2.25			
36	Gloves, Nappa	0.75			
37	Nightdress, Art Silk	a (2.49)			
38	Pyjamas, Winceyette	1.50			
39	Apron, Cotton	6.00			
40	Cardigan, All Wool	0.50			
41	Shoes (for best wear), Glace Kid	1.50			
42	Shoes (for ordinary wear), Box Calf	1.50			
43					
<b>SECTION G.—CLOTHING—BOY (10½ YEARS).</b>			<b>SECTION I.—CLOTHING—BOY (3½ YEARS).</b>		
44	Suit, ready-made, Tweed (Australian)	1.00	76	Shirt, Ranger	3.00
45	Pants, ready-made, Tweed (Australian)	3.00	77	Pants, ready-made, Tweed (Australian)	3.00
			78	Overcoat, ready-made, Tweed (Australian)	0.33
			79	Hat, Cloth	1.35
			80	Singlet, Wool	1.00
			81	Singlet, Cotton (athletic)	1.00
			82	Sox, Ankle, Cotton and Art Silk	4.00
			83	Pyjamas, Winceyette	2.00
			84	Pullover, All Wool	0.50
			85	Shoes (for best wear), Patent Leather	1.00
			86	Shoes (for ordinary wear), Tan Yearling	2.00

\* The Mass Units were raised by 50 per cent. throughout this Section to restore its due proportionate "weight" in the Clothing Group of the Index as from September quarter, 1935.

(a) Mass Unit actually applicable, and includes "weight" transferred from similar article now deleted.

## Retail Price Indexes—Regimen—continued.

## GROUP IV.—MISCELLANEOUS.

No.	Item	"Weight" of Mass Unit (per household).	No.	Item.	"Weight" of Mass Unit (per household).
SECTION K.—HOUSEHOLD DRAPERY.			SECTION L.—HOUSEHOLD UTENSILS—continued.		
1	Blankets, D.B. (pair) ..	0.07	26	Knife, Table (stainless) ..	0.10
2	Blankets, S.B. (pair) ..	0.14	27	Spoon, Tea ..	0.08
3	Quilt, D.B. Marcella ..	0.25	28	Spoon, Dessert ..	0.08
4	.. ..	..	29	Fork, Table ..	0.10
5	.. ..	..	30	Globe, Electric Light (gas-filled) ..	1.00
6	Sheets, D.B. (pair) ..	0.50	31	Iron, Electric (full size) ..	0.10
7	Sheets, S.B. (pair) ..	1.00	SECTION M.—FUEL AND LIGHT.		
8	Pillow Slip, Cotton ..	5.00	32	Firewood (blocks) (cwt.) (b) ..	40
9	Towel ..	3.00	33	Gas, cooking (units) (b) ..	1,518
10	Table Cloth ..	0.20	34	Electric lighting (units) ..	130
	Tea Towel (yard) ..	4.00	35	Electric power (units) (b) ..	730
SECTION L.—HOUSEHOLD UTENSILS.			No.	Item.	Amount per week (per household).
11	Cup and Saucer (Stone China) ..	1.00	SECTION N.—OTHER MISCELLANEOUS.		
12	Plate, Dinner (Stone China) ..	2.00	36	Union Dues ..	d.
13	Jug, Quart (Earthenware) ..	1.00	37	Lodge Dues ..	(0)
14	Teapot, Brownware (2-pint) ..	0.25	38	Medicine ..	24
15	Basin, Fudging (Enamel), 64-inch ..	1.00	39	Newspapers ..	(0)
16	Tumbler (8-oz.) ..	1.00	40	Recreation ..	24
17	Kettle, Enamel (4-pint) a (0 37) ..	0.20	41	Smoking ..	(0)
18	.. ..	..	42	Fares ..	(0)
19	Saucepan, Enamel (3-pint) ..	0.40	43	School requisites ..	44
20	Bucket, Galvanized (17-inch) ..	0.20			
21	Dipper, Galvanized (2-quart) ..	0.20			
22	Broom, Millet ..	0.50			
23	Broom, Hair, complete (12-inch) ..	0.33			
24	Brush, Scrubbing (10-inch) ..	1.50			
25	Mop, Polishing, complete ..	0.20			

(a) Mass Unit actually applicable, and includes "weight" transferred from similar article now deleted.

(b) Standard mass-units. In certain provincial towns where gas and/or electricity are not used the mass-units differ from the standard.

(c) A definite basic amount per week is provided for each of these items, and varied in accordance with Resolution 20 of the Conference of Statisticians, 1936.

2. **The Mass Units.**—(i) The "mass units" are multipliers representing the approximate average annual consumption per head or per household under normal conditions. Thus the *per capita* "mass unit" of bread is 100 2-lb. loaves and of sugar 100 lb., and of towels three per household. In the case of Food and Groceries (Group I.) the "mass units" adopted are, approximately, the annual average consumption per head for household purposes of the various articles during the years 1927 to 1929. In the case of Housing (Group II.), the "mass unit" is the multiplier applied to the weekly rental to raise it to an annual basis. In the case of Sections E to J, the "mass units" represent the estimated annual consumption per head of the articles mentioned prior to the introduction of rationing. In the case of Sections K to M, the "mass units" represent the estimated consumption per household prior to the war; while in Section N are shown the actual amounts provided to cover the estimated cost of the services included for an average household.

For tabulating purposes some of these "mass units" are varied when necessary to make up a deficiency or cancel out an excess in the aggregate resulting from a *change in the standard* of any item upon which prices are

collected, to ensure that such changes shall not be wrongly recorded by the index as *variations* in prices. The "mass units" published above, however, still continue to show the correct *relative* consumption "weights" actually applicable to the commodities and services in the regimen for the *constant standards* used in the index. See also Sections 2 (3) and 6 (3) of this chapter.

(ii) The "mass units" are all shown on the basis of consumption per head or per household. In order to combine the prices in due proportion for index-number purposes, the figures are weighted on a "standard population" basis, by multiplying the aggregate cost of each Group or Section (i.e., Prices  $\times$  Mass Units) by the relative numbers of the population properly applicable to it. Thus Group I. (Food and Groceries) is multiplied by the whole population; Group II. (Housing) by the total number of households; Sections E to J (Clothing) by the numbers of the population applicable to each; and Sections K to N (Miscellaneous) by the total number of households.

(iii) The five sections into which the clothing group is divided are somewhat arbitrary, but they follow those adopted by the Royal Commission on the Basic Wage (see p. 88). The sections for men and women are now regarded as being applicable to persons aged seventeen years and upwards. The section for a boy aged ten and a half years is taken as representative of both sexes from ten to sixteen years; the section for a girl aged seven as representative of both sexes from five to nine years; and the section for the boy aged three and a half years is taken as representative of children aged four years and under.

(iv) In estimating the annual average consumption per head of food and groceries for household purposes, small adjustments in the crude average consumption were made in two ways. Consumption by factories, when the product did not go into household use in Australia, was deducted. On the other hand, the weights given to some foods, such as dried apricots and canned peaches, cover also the consumption of other similar foods. The "weight" of individual food items has not been adjusted to take account of war-time scarcities and rationing. Foods which are unavailable temporarily or intermittently are retained in the index at the latest recorded price. This matter is discussed in a supplement to this Report.

(v) Foods of some importance, such as fresh fish, and fruit and vegetables other than potatoes and onions, are not included in the regimen because comparable prices for a standard grade cannot be obtained from time to time or place to place and because of marked seasonal fluctuations in supplies and consumption. The inclusion of such items, therefore, would impair the accuracy of the index. This matter is referred to more fully in a supplement to this Report where consideration is given to the position arising when prices of such excluded items diverge from the general trend. In the original regimen certain omissions were made partly on account of the difficulty of securing comparable prices. Some cuts of meat, for example, are excluded because they are not uniformly standardized. Mutton is included and not lamb because the latter, in many places, is available only seasonally. However, the appropriate total weight for meat is distributed amongst the "cuts" included in the index. Proprietary lines of breakfast foods are excluded because they are not universally available.

(vi) The "weights" allotted to articles of clothing and miscellaneous household requirements are based largely on the results of the inquiries of the Royal Commission on the Basic Wage, which reported in 1920 and 1921.

After exhaustive inquiries the Commission published a "regimen" for an average working family of five persons, and set out the constituent items in its "Indicator List". This list, so far as it related to the articles in question was followed substantially in the original compilation of the All Items ("C" series) index, and has been adjusted by subsequent investigations of the Bureau to accord with changes in popular usage. The "weight" allotted to the group has not been adjusted to take account of war-time shortages or rationing.

(vii) The mass-units used for fuel and light are based, indirectly, on the findings of the Commission. Until the September quarter of 1936 fixed amounts were used for the miscellaneous items of Section N, but since the date mentioned, provision has been made to vary the amounts periodically, in accordance with ascertained changes.

(viii) The "mass-units" and regimen have been kept substantially as in pre-war years and the index therefore measures war-time price changes in relation to a normal (or pre-war) apportionment of household expenditure. (See § 2 (5) and § 9 (2) hereof.) The problem of measuring war-time price changes in relation to war-time apportionment of household expenditure is discussed in a supplement to this Report.

3. **Relative "Aggregate Expenditure" of Items and Groups.**—In the base period of the index (average of years 1923-27) the relative importance of each of the four main groups expressed as a proportion of the "aggregate expenditure" of the index was—Food and groceries, 38.2 per cent.; House rent, 21.3 per cent.; clothing, 23.4 per cent., and miscellaneous, 17.1 per cent. These percentages relate to Melbourne but are also approximately the weighted average of the Six Capital Cities—the base of the series. Although the "weights" of each item in the index are kept virtually constant, the "aggregate expenditure" of the various items and groups will, of course, vary from time to time as relative prices change. The proportion of total "aggregate expenditure" represented by each group of items for successive years has been published in previous issues of this Labour Report, and the respective proportions for December quarter, 1943, in comparison with those of the base period 1923-27 are published below on the basis of the aggregates for Melbourne:—

Group.	Section.	Percentage of Aggregate Expenditure.	
		1923-27. (Base)	Dec. Qtr., 1943.
I. Food and Groceries	A Groceries .. ..	16.82	11.62
	B Dairy Produce .. ..	10.21	9.45
	C Meat .. ..	11.13	12.01
II. Housing .. ..	D House Rent (4 and 5 rooms)	21.31	19.94
	E Man .. ..	8.91	10.49
	F Woman .. ..	9.35	12.99
III. Clothing .. ..	G Boy, 10½ years .. ..	2.86	2.69
	H Girl, 7 years .. ..	1.35	1.61
	J Boy, 3½ years .. ..	0.97	0.81
	K Household Drapery .. ..	1.11	1.97
IV. Miscellaneous .. ..	L Household Utensils .. ..	0.51	0.59
	M Fuel and Light .. ..	5.22	4.39
	N Other Miscellaneous .. ..	10.25	12.04
			100.00

Percentage price variations of groups are measured from the aggregates of the *base period* of the index, and the percentage distribution shown for the base period is simply the aggregates in percentage form. The percentages shown in the foregoing table for 1923-27, therefore, are the proportionate "weights" applicable in measuring aggregate variations in price subsequent to the base period, and *not* the percentage "weights" of any subsequent period (e.g., those shown for the December quarter, 1943).

**4. Base Periods of the Indexes.**—The base period originally adopted by the Bureau for its retail price indexes was the year 1911. When the collection of the prices of clothing and miscellaneous items was undertaken for the purposes of the "All Items" ("C" series) index, the month of November, 1914, was adopted as the base period for this series. The desirability of computing retail price indexes to a post-war base was considered by a Conference of Statisticians in 1929, and it was resolved that from 1st January, 1930, the five years 1923-27 should be adopted as the base period. Commencing with Labour Report No. 21 for 1930, therefore, the retail price indexes have been published on this base. The aggregate to which all index-numbers are related is the weighted aggregate cost of the regimen in the Six Capital Cities during the period taken as base.

Index-numbers on the earlier bases mentioned will be found in previous issues of the Labour Report, as follows:—

(i) 1911 *Base*.—Food and groceries; rent of all houses; and food, groceries and rent of all houses ("A" series)—Labour Reports Nos. 1 to 15.\* Food and groceries; rent of 4 and 5-roomed houses; and food, groceries and rent of 4 and 5-roomed houses ("B" series)—Labour Reports Nos. 16 to 20.

(ii) 1914 *Base*.—Food and groceries; rent of all houses; clothing; miscellaneous; all items of household expenditure (subsequently retrospectively revised to include rents of 4 and 5-roomed houses only)—Labour Reports Nos. 12 to 16. Food and groceries; rent of 4 and 5-roomed houses; clothing; miscellaneous; all items of household expenditure ("C" series)—Labour Reports Nos. 17 to 20.

The conversion of these index-numbers from one base to another may be readily effected by multiplying the index-number to be converted by the appropriate factor shown in the following table:—

Group.	1911 to 1914 (a).	1914 (a) to 1911.	1911 to 1923-27.	1923-27 to 1911.	1914 (a) to 1923-27.	1923-27 to 1914 (a).
Food and Groceries ..	0.87230	1.14639	0.55929	1.78800	0.64116	1.55970
Rent (4 and 5 Rooms) ..	0.94279	1.06068	0.61161	1.63500	0.64872	1.54150
Food, Groceries and Rent ("B" Series)	0.89750	1.11420	0.57785	1.73060	0.64384	1.55320
Clothing .. ..	..	..	..	..	0.75412	1.32610
Miscellaneous .. ..	..	..	..	..	0.74891	1.33530
All Items ("C" Series)	..	..	..	..	0.68715	1.45530

(a) November.

\* These index-numbers appear in the Appendix to each Labour Report from Nos. 16 to 28 and also in the Quarterly Summaries of Australian Statistics up to No. 155, June, 1938.

The results obtained by the method above will, of course, be only approximate, but the error will not be greater than one point in the unit figure.

5. **The Methods of Tabulation.**—The prices (converted to pence) received from each retailer for each item of the regimen are added together and divided by the number of individual prices. These averages are then multiplied by their respective "mass units". The sum of these products for each section or group of the regimen is then multiplied by the population factor applicable to such section or group. The aggregate so produced for any section, group or combination thereof for the period taken as the base of the indexes is regarded as equal to 1,000. The index-number for any other period is then calculated by applying to 1,000 the ratio which the aggregate for such period bears to the base aggregate.

6. **Relative Population Weights for Towns.**—Weighted averages for any combination of towns or States may be calculated approximately by multiplying the index-numbers\* of the towns or States to be included by their population weights, and dividing the sum of the products by the sum of the multipliers. The population weights used in the computations of these weighted averages for 1934 and succeeding years are as follows:—

Relative Population Weights Used for Different Towns.

New South Wales.		Victoria.		Queensland.		South Australia.		Western Australia.		Tasmania	
Town.	Weight.	Town.	Weight.	Town.	Weight.	Town.	Weight.	Town.	Weight.	Town.	Weight.
Sydney ..	1235	Melbourne	992	Brisbane	300	Adelaide	313	Perth, etc.	208	Hobart	60
Newcastle	105	Ballarat ..	38	T'woomba	26	Kadina, etc.	17	Kalg'lie, etc.	17	Launceston	33
Broken Hill	27	Bendigo ..	29	Rockham'n	29	Pt. Pirie	12	Northam	5	Burnie ..	4
Goulburn	15	Geelong ..	39	†Townsville	26	Mt. Gamb'r	5	Bunbury	5	Devonport	5
Bathurst	10	W'nambool	9	†Bundaberg	11	Peterbor'gh	3	Geraldton	5	Queenst'wn	4
Total ..	1392	Total ..	1107	†Total ..	392	Total ..	344	Total ..	240	Total ..	106

† Townsville and Bundaberg were substituted for Charters Towers (7) and Warwick (7) in the "five towns" tabulation in the March Quarter of 1937.

The weights used are based on the 1933 Census results, and represent to the nearest 1,000 the actual population at that date.

The new weights given above produce results which differ only very slightly from those obtained from the weights previously in use. The latter were based upon the 1921 Census results, and were last published in Labour Report, No. 23.

\* The official index-numbers are calculated by operating on the "aggregates" of the towns concerned a procedure which may produce slightly different results from the above.



### § 7. Tabular Statements of Retail Price Index-Numbers.

I. **General.**—The results of inquiries into price movements are available in the following publications:—

(i) *Monthly.*—A mimeographed statement is published each month giving index-numbers for Food and Groceries. The *Monthly Review of Business Statistics* contains annual, quarterly and monthly index-numbers to the latest available date.

(ii) *Quarterly.*—A mimeographed statement is issued about three weeks after the end of each quarter giving the “C” series index-numbers for that quarter and immediately preceding quarters in respect of each of the 30 cities and towns originally adopted and for certain other places, e.g., Canberra, for which “C” series index is now compiled. The *Quarterly Summary of Australian Statistics* contains annual, quarterly and monthly index-numbers to the latest available date. This publication also contains the average prices of the items comprising the Food and Groceries region, for each month of the last available quarter, in the 30 towns covered by the investigation. Comparative average rents of 4 and 5 roomed houses in these towns are also shown therein.

(iii) *Annual.*—The Labour Report contains index-numbers over the past five years, and the monthly and quarterly results for the last available year. The average prices for the last year of the items of food and groceries, and average house rents, are also published in this Report. The *Official Year Book* also contains information similar to, but in less detail than that published in the Labour Report.

2. **All Items (“C” Series) Index.**—On a previous page in this Report is published a table of “C” series retail price index-numbers in the form of weighted averages for the six capital cities combined, for each year 1914-1944.

In the pages which follow are published:—

- (i) the “C” series index-number for the last quarter of each year 1938 to 1944 and for the month of November, 1914-1920, for each capital city and for the six capital cities combined, showing separate indexes for each of the four main groups of items;
- (ii) the “C” series index numbers 1914, 1921 and 1938-1943 for each of the 30 towns with the weighted average for each State and the weighted average of the six capital cities and 30 towns;
- (iii) index-numbers for each of the four main Groups of items in the “C” series index for dates and places mentioned in (ii) above.

## All Items ("C" Series) Retail Price Index—Numbers (a) : Capital Cities.

(Base of each Group : Weighted average of Six Capital Cities, 1923-27=1,000.)

Period.	Sydney.	Mel- bourne.	Brisbane.	Adelaide.	Perth.	Hobart.	Six Capitals (b)
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## GROUP I.—FOOD AND GROCERIES.

Dec. Qtr. 1938 ..	917	907	835	866	898	894	899
" " 1939 ..	940	942	859	888	926	941	927
" " 1940 ..	974	961	920	903	949	972	956
" " 1941 ..	969	949	920	915	982	986	954
" " 1942 ..	1,060	1,069	977	1,027	1,048	1,082	1,051
" " 1943 ..	1,015	1,037	950	985	1,045	1,058	1,015
" " 1944 ..	1,022	1,046	959	988	1,049	1,039	1,022

## GROUP II.—HOUSING (4 AND 5 ROOMS).

Dec. Qtr. 1938 ..	1,020	943	849	878	877	917	953
" " 1939 ..	1,040	960	855	891	882	930	969
" " 1940 ..	1,042	973	859	892	882	933	974
" " 1941 ..	1,044	975	860	893	884	933	976
" " 1942 ..	1,042	974	862	893	885	932	976
" " 1943 ..	1,042	974	862	893	885	931	975
" " 1944 ..	1,043	973	863	892	886	933	975

## GROUPS I AND II.—FOOD, GROCERIES AND HOUSING.

Dec. Qtr. 1938 ..	955	919	839	869	888	901	918
" " 1939 ..	977	947	855	887	907	935	941
" " 1940 ..	998	964	894	897	921	954	961
" " 1941 ..	996	957	895	904	942	963	960
" " 1942 ..	1,051	1,030	930	973	982	1,021	1,019
" " 1943 ..	1,023	1,010	914	947	980	1,006	997
" " 1944 ..	1,027	1,015	919	948	983	995	1,002

## GROUP III.—CLOTHING.

Dec. Qtr. 1938 ..	834	819	829	861	826	852	831
" " 1939 ..	854	862	865	869	840	867	858
" " 1940 ..	1,046	1,042	1,027	1,041	1,010	1,038	1,040
" " 1941 ..	1,179	1,186	1,186	1,182	1,169	1,184	1,182
" " 1942 ..	1,382	1,423	1,355	1,357	1,355	1,384	1,388
" " 1943 ..	1,449	1,435	1,433	1,422	1,395	1,430	1,436
" " 1944 ..	1,441	1,404	1,430	1,416	1,412	1,424	1,442

## GROUP IV.—MISCELLANEOUS.

Dec. Qtr. 1938 ..	935	981	949	1,021	952	930	961
" " 1939 ..	943	983	960	1,027	957	945	967
" " 1940 ..	1,004	1,021	986	1,060	993	977	1,013
" " 1941 ..	1,072	1,083	1,043	1,058	1,058	1,080	1,080
" " 1942 ..	1,140	1,144	1,109	1,209	1,127	1,095	1,144
" " 1943 ..	1,179	1,157	1,140	1,212	1,140	1,109	1,108
" " 1944 ..	1,169	1,158	1,134	1,213	1,139	1,099	1,163

## GROUPS I. TO IV.—ALL ITEMS OF HOUSEHOLD EXPENDITURE.

Dec. Qtr. 1938 ..	922	906	855	893	884	893	905
" " 1939 ..	943	932	874	906	899	919	920
" " 1940 ..	1,008	989	938	957	953	976	986
" " 1941 ..	1,048	1,028	985	1,010	1,012	1,023	1,029
" " 1942 ..	1,138	1,136	1,055	1,100	1,090	1,113	1,122
" " 1943 ..	1,143	1,128	1,068	1,099	1,100	1,117	1,123
" " 1944 ..	1,142	1,138	1,069	1,098	1,104	1,106	1,126

(a) See footnote on page 9.

(b) Weighted average.

**All Items ("C" Series) Retail Price Index-Numbers(a) : Capital Cities.**  
 (Base of each Group : Weighted average of Six Capital Cities, 1923-27 = 1,000.)

Period.	Sydney.	Melbourne.	Brisbane.	Adelaide.	Perth.	Hobart.	Six Capitals. (b)
<b>GROUP I.—FOOD AND GROCERIES.</b>							
Nov. 1914 ..	638	616	614	683	746	687	641
" 1915 ..	844	835	860	858	819	858	842
" 1916 ..	833	791	748	835	854	807	812
" 1917 ..	877	798	825	805	828	949	836
" 1918 ..	877	843	882	862	816	918	861
" 1919 ..	1,073	975	1,069	1,012	987	1,041	1,026
" 1920 ..	1,225	1,220	1,117	1,225	1,113	1,293	1,209
<b>GROUP II.—HOUSING (4 AND 5 ROOMS).</b>							
Nov. 1914 ..	758	608	463	611	586	525	649
" 1915 ..	780	611	472	574	581	571	659
" 1916 ..	791	625	467	573	592	574	665
" 1917 ..	797	657	492	606	602	586	685
" 1918 ..	831	699	526	656	619	614	722
" 1919 ..	866	744	604	707	650	746	768
" 1920 ..	980	807	634	783	718	904	851
<b>GROUPS I. AND II.—FOOD, GROCERIES AND HOUSING.</b>							
Nov. 1914 ..	680	613	560	658	689	630	644
" 1915 ..	825	756	722	758	734	756	777
" 1916 ..	818	732	648	742	761	724	760
" 1917 ..	848	748	707	734	748	820	782
" 1918 ..	861	792	756	789	746	810	812
" 1919 ..	1,000	893	904	904	867	936	934
" 1920 ..	1,138	1,074	945	1,068	973	1,155	1,082
<b>GROUP III.—CLOTHING.</b>							
Nov. 1914 ..	755	780	657	756	698	825	754
" 1915 ..	805	797	690	821	760	833	792
" 1916 ..	903	870	779	919	849	940	881
" 1917 ..	1,009	976	899	1,049	980	1,041	992
" 1918 ..	1,102	1,103	1,025	1,066	1,135	1,200	1,097
" 1919 ..	1,237	1,213	1,192	1,303	1,277	1,344	1,238
" 1920 ..	1,323	1,422	1,274	1,384	1,359	1,430	1,365
<b>GROUP IV.—MISCELLANEOUS.</b>							
Nov. 1914 ..	766	728	728	770	780	699	749
" 1915 ..	798	770	756	803	822	770	786
" 1916 ..	808	784	766	832	869	780	802
" 1917 ..	889	879	836	883	926	865	882
" 1918 ..	988	950	931	988	1,035	945	972
" 1919 ..	1,059	1,016	968	1,035	1,120	1,006	1,036
" 1920 ..	1,209	1,181	1,139	1,200	1,262	1,124	1,194
<b>GROUPS I. TO IV.—ALL ITEMS OF HOUSEHOLD EXPENDITURE.</b>							
Nov. 1914 ..	712	671	611	699	707	687	687
" 1915 ..	816	768	721	780	755	776	782
" 1916 ..	836	773	698	798	800	783	795
" 1917 ..	892	823	773	832	832	879	847
" 1918 ..	938	890	848	887	885	923	905
" 1919 ..	1,065	988	981	1,018	1,005	1,042	1,022
" 1920 ..	1,193	1,172	1,054	1,164	1,111	1,213	1,166

(a) See footnote on page 9.  
 years 1921 to 1943.

(b) Weighted average. See page 20 for corresponding figures for

## ALL ITEMS ("C" SERIES) RETAIL PRICE INDEX-NUMBERS.

## All Items ("C" Series) Retail Price Index-Numbers.

(Base: Weighted Average of Six Capital Cities, 1923-27=1,000.)

Period.	NEW SOUTH WALES.						VICTORIA.						
	Sydney.	Newcastle.	Broken Hill.	Goulburn.	Bathurst.	Weighted Average, N.S.W.	Melbourne.	Ballarat.	Bendigo.	Geelong.	Warrambool.	Weighted Average Victoria.	
Nov. 1914 (a)	712	..	..	1,033	..	..	671	..	..	..	..	..	
" 1921 ..	1,046	1,041	975	1,033	947	1,042	1,003	992	1,002	1,019	1,034	1,003	
Year 1938 ..	913	877	940	893	860	911	896	850	854	884	892	893	
" 1939 ..	936	901	955	916	883	933	924	874	875	911	918	920	
" 1940 ..	974	945	981	949	923	972	964	906	920	941	954	960	
" 1941 ..	1,028	997	1,049	1,005	974	1,026	1,008	950	963	984	998	1,004	
" 1942 ..	1,107	1,069	1,132	1,087	1,050	1,104	1,100	1,037	1,054	1,065	1,078	1,095	
" 1943 ..	1,151	1,109	1,172	1,125	1,091	1,147	1,139	1,084	1,096	1,110	1,126	1,135	
1942 Sept. Qtr.	1,122	1,079	1,144	1,103	1,060	1,118	1,118	1,054	1,069	1,083	1,093	1,113	
" Dec. "	1,138	1,098	1,159	1,118	1,080	1,135	1,130	1,070	1,082	1,098	1,116	1,130	
1943 Mar. Qtr.	1,147	1,101	1,148	1,116	1,080	1,137	1,136	1,074	1,088	1,099	1,121	1,137	
" June "	1,165	1,126	1,185	1,140	1,107	1,162	1,153	1,099	1,104	1,125	1,147	1,149	
" Sept. "	1,154	1,112	1,179	1,126	1,096	1,151	1,139	1,087	1,097	1,117	1,128	1,136	
" Dec. "	1,143	1,098	1,175	1,116	1,082	1,139	1,128	1,075	1,094	1,100	1,115	1,125	
Period.	QUEENSLAND.						SOUTH AUSTRALIA.						
	Brisbane.	Toowoomba.	Rockhampton.	Townsville.	Bundaberg.	Weighted Average, Queensland.	Adelaide.	Keating, Mounta. and Wallaroo.	Port Pirie.	Mt. Gambler.	Peterborough.	Weighted Average, S.A.	
Nov. 1914 (a)	611	..	..	..	..	..	699	..	..	..	..	..	
" 1921 ..	923	949	972	1,035 <sup>b</sup>	994 <sup>c</sup>	941	989	998	1,025	1,029	948	992	
Year 1938 ..	852	845	853	902	831	854	888	786	868	849	868	883	
" 1939 ..	870	858	867	918	847	871	906	810	896	872	897	902	
" 1940 ..	908	898	905	950	879	909	936	833	919	894	924	931	
" 1941 ..	963	951	959	1,004	938	964	988	882	976	940	974	983	
" 1942 ..	1,033	1,033	1,032	1,075	1,015	1,035	1,073	962	1,057	1,024	1,053	1,069	
" 1943 ..	1,072	1,080	1,073	1,057	1,057	1,075	1,102	998	1,037	1,061	1,087	1,107	
1942 Sept. Qtr.	1,044	1,043	1,035	1,081	1,021	1,045	1,093	977	1,072	1,034	1,067	1,087	
" Dec. "	1,055	1,056	1,052	1,098	1,038	1,057	1,100	988	1,086	1,063	1,082	1,095	
1943 Mar. Qtr.	1,063	1,068	1,059	1,103	1,047	1,066	1,093	983	1,079	1,051	1,078	1,088	
" June "	1,083	1,089	1,086	1,124	1,068	1,086	1,111	1,008	1,097	1,069	1,097	1,106	
" Sept. "	1,074	1,078	1,074	1,114	1,058	1,076	1,106	1,004	1,091	1,067	1,090	1,101	
" Dec. "	1,068	1,083	1,073	1,113	1,053	1,072	1,099	998	1,081	1,056	1,083	1,094	
Period.	WESTERN AUSTRALIA.						TASMANIA.						
	Perth.	Kalgoorlie.	Northam.	Bunbury.	Geraldton.	Weighted Av'ge, W. A.	Hobart.	Launceston.	Burnie.	Devonport.	Queensdown.	Weighted Av'ge, Tas.	Weighted Average, Six Capital Cities.
Nov. 1914 (a)	707	..	..	..	..	..	687	..	..	..	..	..	..
" 1921 ..	1,008	1,048	1,030	1,045	1,056	1,020	1,070	1,067	1,003	904	1,031	1,057	1,013
Year 1938 ..	882	1,048	900	914	957	897	887	872	865	848	875	879	897
" 1939 ..	901	1,066	915	936	965	915	908	888	879	861	903	898	920
" 1940 ..	932	1,099	947	962	990	946	945	926	917	896	936	936	957
" 1941 ..	993	1,165	1,017	1,018	1,055	1,008	1,000	974	971	957	987	984	1,008
" 1942 ..	1,061	1,175	1,079	1,065	1,114	1,070	1,078	1,040	1,012	1,043	1,060	1,060	1,091
" 1943 ..	1,104	1,192	1,111	1,102	1,165	1,112	1,117	1,079	1,088	1,058	1,096	1,101	1,131
1942 Sept. Qtr.	1,077	1,178	1,089	1,074	1,126	1,085	1,089	1,050	1,048	1,019	1,057	1,071	1,108
" Dec. "	1,090	1,182	1,103	1,086	1,138	1,097	1,113	1,072	1,068	1,044	1,077	1,094	1,122
1943 Mar. Qtr.	1,092	1,178	1,098	1,091	1,138	1,099	1,108	1,069	1,073	1,048	1,086	1,091	1,123
" June "	1,115	1,202	1,122	1,112	1,171	1,123	1,118	1,081	1,095	1,060	1,098	1,103	1,143
" Sept. "	1,110	1,197	1,117	1,109	1,179	1,118	1,125	1,086	1,094	1,069	1,103	1,108	1,133
" Dec. "	1,100	1,189	1,107	1,097	1,171	1,108	1,117	1,076	1,089	1,056	1,098	1,106	1,123

(a) For index-numbers for Capital Cities, November, 1914 to 1920, see page 19. (b) Charters Towers.

(c) Warwick.

Retail Price "Group" Index Numbers(d) : Food and Groceries—Group I.

(Base : Weighted average of Six Capital Cities, 1923-27 = 1,000.)

Period.	NEW SOUTH WALES.					VICTORIA.								
	Sydney.	Newcastle.	Broken Hill.	Goulburn.	Bathurst.	Weighted Average, N.S.W.	Melbourne.	Ballarat.	Bendigo.	Geelong.	Warrnambool.	Weighted Average, Victoria.		
Nov. 1914 (a)	638	..	..	..	..	..	616	..	..	..	..	..		
" 1921 ..	964	977	972	950	935	964	923	928	929	941	948	924		
Year 1938 ..	904	925	1,092	933	898	909	884	882	889	889	891	884		
" 1939 ..	936	965	1,166	991	940	942	942	939	930	946	955	942		
" 1940 ..	952	985	1,069	1,003	951	958	947	935	949	939	955	946		
" 1941 ..	962	1,000	1,134	1,010	955	969	943	930	954	928	946	942		
" 1942 ..	1,040	1,074	1,244	1,095	1,031	1,047	1,042	1,017	1,038	1,002	1,018	1,039		
" 1943 ..	1,042	1,066	1,234	1,090	1,027	1,048	1,055	1,049	1,044	1,013	1,035	1,053		
1942 Sept. Qtr.	1,067	1,090	1,267	1,109	1,049	1,067	1,074	1,048	1,056	1,027	1,033	1,070		
" Dec. "	1,060	1,088	1,264	1,114	1,047	1,066	1,069	1,041	1,053	1,021	1,047	1,066		
1943 Mar. Qtr.	1,050	1,071	1,225	1,091	1,028	1,055	1,055	1,031	1,039	1,007	1,040	1,051		
" June "	1,065	1,085	1,245	1,114	1,050	1,071	1,073	1,057	1,058	1,035	1,057	1,071		
" Sept. "	1,039	1,065	1,230	1,086	1,025	1,045	1,056	1,044	1,040	1,017	1,033	1,054		
" Dec. "	1,015	1,042	1,236	1,070	1,005	1,022	1,037	1,023	1,032	994	1,011	1,034		
Period.	QUEENSLAND.					SOUTH AUSTRALIA.								
	Brisbane.	Toowoomba.	Rockhampton.	Townsville.	Bundaberg.	Weighted Average, Queensland.	Adelaide.	Kadina, Moonta, and Wallaroo.	Port Pirie.	Mt. Gambler.	Peterborough.	Weighted Average, S.A.		
Nov. 1914 (a)	614	..	..	..	..	..	583	..	..	..	..	..		
" 1921 ..	953	895	949	981b	936c	950	941	945	968	923	997	943		
Year 1938 ..	838	794	879	931	884	846	861	907	937	877	900	866		
" 1939 ..	864	823	904	961	912	872	897	973	906	937	901	904		
" 1940 ..	889	852	921	969	931	896	900	967	985	919	976	906		
" 1941 ..	911	862	931	981	958	915	905	967	1,005	912	977	912		
" 1942 ..	972	951	992	1,048	1,024	979	1,012	1,053	1,004	988	1,056	1,016		
" 1943 ..	975	974	995	1,041	1,033	982	1,003	1,044	1,076	984	1,039	1,007		
1942 Sept. Qtr.	985	961	986	1,056	1,029	989	1,049	1,082	1,118	1,007	1,080	1,052		
" Dec. "	977	946	990	1,055	1,022	982	1,027	1,075	1,114	1,019	1,076	1,032		
1943 Mar. Qtr.	983	967	989	1,048	1,037	988	1,000	1,041	1,079	982	1,044	1,004		
" June "	998	989	1,018	1,056	1,056	1,004	1,022	1,062	1,098	993	1,059	1,026		
" Sept. "	968	956	985	1,031	1,024	975	1,003	1,041	1,075	986	1,035	1,007		
" Dec. "	950	985	988	1,027	1,015	962	985	1,030	1,053	974	1,016	989		
Period.	WESTERN AUSTRALIA.					TASMANIA.								
	Perth and Fremantle.	Kalgoorlie and Boulder.	Northam.	Bunbury.	Geraldton.	Weighted Av'ge. W.A.	Hobart.	Launceston.	Burnie.	Devonport.	Queenstown.	Weighted Av'ge. Tas.	Weighted Average, Six Capital Cities.	Weighted Average, 30 Towns, Australia.
Nov. 1914 (a)	746	..	..	..	..	..	687	..	..	..	..	..	641	..
" 1921 ..	1,005	1,120	1,054	1,049	1,031	1,033	1,027	958	1,108	996	1,077	1,011	950	964
Year 1938 ..	899	1,049	935	918	925	911	880	889	916	908	975	889	886	890
" 1939 ..	938	1,092	972	967	947	951	923	914	941	933	1,018	925	927	931
" 1940 ..	949	1,104	986	969	952	961	944	933	961	939	1,029	945	939	942
" 1941 ..	941	1,153	1,039	996	1,000	995	970	957	984	1,037	968	947	947	951
" 1942 ..	1,029	1,176	1,078	1,034	1,043	1,041	1,047	1,008	1,034	1,079	1,035	1,031	1,031	1,033
" 1943 ..	1,059	1,179	1,071	1,039	1,080	1,068	1,062	1,017	1,066	1,057	1,137	1,052	1,037	1,040
1942 Sept. Qtr.	1,049	1,194	1,086	1,045	1,059	1,060	1,059	1,014	1,077	1,042	1,096	1,046	1,055	1,057
" Dec. "	1,048	1,190	1,087	1,044	1,052	1,059	1,082	1,032	1,088	1,058	1,107	1,066	1,051	1,053
1943 Mar. Qtr.	1,050	1,179	1,071	1,043	1,040	1,059	1,051	1,009	1,077	1,044	1,124	1,041	1,040	1,042
" June "	1,080	1,196	1,090	1,061	1,087	1,088	1,065	1,020	1,113	1,058	1,142	1,055	1,058	1,060
" Sept. "	1,062	1,178	1,070	1,036	1,104	1,071	1,075	1,029	1,103	1,068	1,147	1,064	1,036	1,039
" Dec. "	1,045	1,163	1,054	1,025	1,088	1,054	1,058	1,009	1,090	1,057	1,133	1,047	1,015	1,019

(a) For Index-numbers for Capital Cities, November 1914 to 1920, see page 19.

(b) Charters Towers.

(c) Warwick.

(d) See footnote on page 9.

Retail Price "Group" Index-Numbers(d) : Housing (4 and 5 Rooms)—Group II  
(Base : Weighted average of Six Capital Cities, 1923-27 = 1,000.)

Period.	NEW SOUTH WALES.						VICTORIA.							
	Sydney.	Newcastle.	Broken Hill.	Goulburn.	Bathurst.	Weighted Average, N.S.W.	Melbourne.	Ballarat.	Dendigo.	Geelong.	Warrnambool.	Weighted Average, Victoria.		
Nov. 1914 (a)	758	..	..	..	..	..	608	..	..	..	..	..		
" 1921 ..	1,000	885	559	881	596	966	845	479	527	668	685	789		
Year 1938 ..	1,004	860	730	873	822	985	935	695	709	851	915	917		
" 1939 ..	1,035	890	764	871	845	1,015	955	714	751	876	921	938		
" 1940 ..	1,042	900	778	872	845	1,023	969	705	735	884	933	950		
" 1941 ..	1,043	901	773	879	845	1,024	975	706	738	892	930	956		
" 1942 ..	1,043	902	758	881	844	1,024	975	709	742	890	937	956		
" 1943 ..	1,042	902	753	882	844	1,023	974	709	742	889	934	956		
1942 Sept. Qtr.	1,042	902	752	881	844	1,023	974	709	742	890	934	956		
" Dec. "	1,042	902	752	881	844	1,023	974	709	742	890	934	956		
1943 Mar. Qtr.	1,042	902	753	881	844	1,023	974	709	742	890	934	956		
" June "	1,042	902	753	882	844	1,023	974	709	742	889	934	956		
" Sept. "	1,042	902	753	882	843	1,022	974	709	742	889	934	956		
" Dec. "	1,042	902	752	882	843	1,022	974	710	742	888	934	955		
Period.	QUEENSLAND.						SOUTH AUSTRALIA.							
	Brisbane.	Toowoomba.	Rockhampton.	Townsville.	Bundaberg.	Weighted Average, Queensland.	Adelaide.	Kadina, Mearns, and Wallaroo.	Port Pirie.	Mt. Gambier.	Peterborough.	Weighted Average, S. A.		
Nov. 1914 (a)	463	..	..	..	..	..	611	..	..	..	..	..		
" 1921 ..	629	547	470	528b	535b	594	819	566	603	492	566	781		
Year 1938 ..	841	834	744	857	626	828	868	386	689	687	739	843		
" 1939 ..	854	847	753	861	640	840	883	388	710	686	753	862		
" 1940 ..	857	852	755	861	642	843	892	387	716	692	773	866		
" 1941 ..	860	854	763	863	647	846	893	385	714	712	767	867		
" 1942 ..	862	858	766	865	651	849	893	381	713	715	755	866		
" 1943 ..	862	859	768	865	668	850	893	383	713	715	755	866		
1942 Sept. Qtr.	862	859	766	865	650	849	893	382	713	715	754	866		
" Dec. "	862	859	766	865	664	849	893	382	713	715	754	866		
1943 Mar. Qtr.	862	859	767	865	665	849	893	382	713	715	754	866		
" June "	862	859	767	865	667	849	893	382	713	715	754	866		
" Sept. "	862	859	768	865	668	850	892	384	713	715	756	866		
" Dec. "	862	859	768	865	670	850	893	384	713	715	756	866		
Period.	WESTERN AUSTRALIA.						TASMANIA.							
	Perth and Fremantle.	Kalgoorlie and Boulder.	Northam.	Bunbury.	Geraldton.	Weighted Average, W. A.	Hobart.	Lanceston.	Burnie.	Devonport.	Queenstown.	Weighted Average, Tas.	Weighted Average, Six Capital Cities.	Weighted Average, 30 Towns, Australia.
Nov. 1914 (a)	586	..	..	..	..	..	825	..	..	..	..	..	648	..
" 1921 ..	754	578	616	649	779	709	870	676	294	150	495	729	877	823
Year 1938 ..	872	1,319	879	994	1,055	911	913	838	830	756	788	875	942	925
" 1939 ..	881	1,318	886	1,005	1,061	919	925	851	836	763	806	887	965	947
" 1940 ..	882	1,315	890	1,003	1,066	920	933	856	847	767	813	893	973	955
" 1941 ..	883	1,308	894	1,001	1,068	921	933	859	845	769	812	895	976	958
" 1942 ..	885	1,167	879	983	1,062	910	933	860	850	770	806	895	976	957
" 1943 ..	885	1,038	898	970	1,058	902	931	859	850	770	805	894	975	958
1942 Sept. Qtr.	885	1,106	825	975	1,059	907	932	860	850	770	805	894	976	956
" Dec. "	885	1,065	898	973	1,058	904	932	860	850	770	805	894	976	958
1943 Mar. Qtr.	885	1,038	898	970	1,058	902	932	859	850	770	805	894	975	956
" June "	885	1,041	898	970	1,058	902	931	859	850	770	805	894	975	956
" Sept. "	885	1,038	898	970	1,058	902	931	859	850	770	805	894	975	956
" Dec. "	885	1,036	898	970	1,058	902	931	859	850	770	804	894	975	956

(a) For index-numbers for Capital Cities, November 1914 to 1920, see page 19.

(b) Charters Towers.

(c) Warwick.

(d) See footnote on page 9.

Retail Price "Group" Index-Numbers(d) : Clothing—Group III.

(Base : Weighted average of Six Capital Cities, 1923-27 = 1,000.)

Period.	NEW SOUTH WALES.						VICTORIA.							
	Sydney.	Newcastle.	Broken Hill.	Goulburn.	Bathurst.	Weighted Average, N.S.W.	Melbourne.	Ballaarat.	Bendigo.	Geelong.	Warrnambool.	Weighted Average, Victoria.		
Nov. 1914 (a)	755	..	..	..	..	..	780	..	..	..	..	..		
" 1921 ..	1,255	1,327	1,269	1,374	1,261	1,264	1,274	1,599	1,570	1,463	1,612	1,326		
Year 1938 ..	833	810	833	848	824	831	820	843	832	833	831	822		
" 1939 ..	843	823	850	861	840	842	832	851	841	846	842	833		
" 1940 ..	950	941	970	960	964	951	969	990	986	963	966	970		
" 1941 ..	1,119	1,113	1,125	1,144	1,137	1,119	1,119	1,142	1,119	1,132	1,115	1,120		
" 1942 ..	1,302	1,293	1,389	1,320	1,308	1,302	1,332	1,336	1,337	1,317	1,320	1,331		
" 1943 ..	1,450	1,446	1,438	1,463	1,471	1,450	1,455	1,473	1,466	1,450	1,462	1,456		
1942 Sept. Qtr.	1,337	1,324	1,314	1,367	1,330	1,336	1,366	1,366	1,376	1,353	1,362	1,366		
" Dec. "	1,382	1,380	1,360	1,405	1,400	1,382	1,423	1,418	1,412	1,403	1,415	1,422		
1943 Mar. Qtr.	1,408	1,410	1,367	1,427	1,419	1,407	1,444	1,446	1,439	1,420	1,437	1,443		
" June "	1,479	1,487	1,470	1,489	1,505	1,480	1,488	1,512	1,479	1,476	1,493	1,488		
" Sept. "	1,463	1,455	1,473	1,475	1,494	1,463	1,454	1,476	1,473	1,470	1,469	1,456		
" Dec. "	1,449	1,430	1,443	1,460	1,467	1,448	1,435	1,457	1,474	1,435	1,449	1,437		
Period.	QUEENSLAND.					SOUTH AUSTRALIA.								
	Brisbane.	Toowoomba.	Rockhampton.	Townsville.	Bundaberg.	Weighted Average, Queensland.	Adelaide.	Kadina, Moonta, and Wallaroo.	Port Pirie.	Mt. Gambier.	Peterborough.	Weighted Average, B.A.		
Nov. 1914 (a)	657	..	..	..	..	..	756	..	..	..	..	..		
" 1921 ..	1,125	1,408	1,452	1,568	1,519	1,135	1,195	1,435	1,480	1,697	1,180	1,236		
Year 1938 ..	823	826	840	833	831	825	857	848	846	846	844	856		
" 1939 ..	840	838	856	855	852	843	863	852	854	852	844	862		
" 1940 ..	952	951	973	968	956	955	961	940	943	947	936	959		
" 1941 ..	1,118	1,121	1,145	1,140	1,126	1,122	1,120	1,090	1,105	1,116	1,107	1,119		
" 1942 ..	1,289	1,297	1,323	1,312	1,308	1,294	1,290	1,247	1,273	1,286	1,278	1,288		
" 1943 ..	1,420	1,426	1,445	1,460	1,435	1,425	1,409	1,383	1,409	1,424	1,413	1,408		
1942 Sept. Qtr.	1,321	1,321	1,345	1,333	1,334	1,324	1,377	1,265	1,302	1,306	1,304	1,314		
" Dec. "	1,355	1,378	1,393	1,384	1,381	1,362	1,357	1,308	1,345	1,365	1,354	1,355		
1943 Mar. Qtr.	1,378	1,389	1,417	1,417	1,395	1,385	1,368	1,325	1,368	1,374	1,366	1,366		
" June "	1,479	1,443	1,484	1,480	1,450	1,441	1,420	1,406	1,422	1,451	1,426	1,420		
" Sept. "	1,434	1,447	1,482	1,473	1,452	1,442	1,424	1,414	1,429	1,450	1,428	1,425		
" Dec. "	1,433	1,423	1,408	1,471	1,445	1,433	1,422	1,405	1,417	1,420	1,430	1,421		
Period.	WESTERN AUSTRALIA.					TASMANIA.								
	Perth and Fremantle.	Kalgoorlie and Boulder.	Northam.	Bunbury.	Geraldton.	Weighted Ave., W.A.	Hobart.	Launceston.	Burnie.	Devonport.	Queenstown.	Weighted Ave., Tas.	Weighted Average, Six Capital Cities.	Weighted Average, 30 Towns, Australia.
Nov. 1914 (a)	698	..	..	..	..	..	825	..	..	..	..	..	754	..
" 1921 ..	1,212	1,376	1,382	1,454	1,330	1,277	1,427	1,670	1,525	1,405	1,504	1,513	1,246	1,290
Year 1938 ..	823	846	835	845	841	826	848	839	835	845	842	844	829	830
" 1939 ..	832	855	842	849	847	834	856	853	843	844	853	854	841	841
" 1940 ..	926	959	933	938	936	929	956	964	947	938	943	957	956	956
" 1941 ..	1,098	1,132	1,108	1,108	1,102	1,101	1,123	1,120	1,103	1,114	1,120	1,121	1,118	1,118
" 1942 ..	1,283	1,269	1,269	1,247	1,261	1,280	1,308	1,284	1,271	1,283	1,290	1,298	1,308	1,307
" 1943 ..	1,396	1,400	1,399	1,374	1,396	1,396	1,427	1,404	1,409	1,416	1,394	1,418	1,440	1,447
1942 Sept. Qtr.	1,323	1,289	1,304	1,278	1,295	1,319	1,342	1,316	1,300	1,307	1,321	1,330	1,342	1,341
" Dec. "	1,355	1,328	1,338	1,319	1,333	1,351	1,384	1,360	1,347	1,360	1,367	1,374	1,388	1,387
1943 Mar. Qtr.	1,367	1,346	1,339	1,320	1,345	1,359	1,402	1,379	1,369	1,387	1,374	1,391	1,402	1,408
" June "	1,413	1,420	1,400	1,385	1,416	1,413	1,433	1,415	1,416	1,421	1,400	1,425	1,466	1,466
" Sept. "	1,413	1,423	1,419	1,404	1,418	1,414	1,443	1,416	1,427	1,445	1,402	1,433	1,450	1,451
" Dec. "	1,395	1,412	1,400	1,379	1,406	1,396	1,430	1,405	1,424	1,412	1,400	1,420	1,436	1,436

(a) For index-numbers for Capital Cities, November 1914 to 1920, see page 19. (b) Charters Towers. (c) Warwick. (d) See footnote on page 9.

"GROUP" INDEX-NUMBERS OF RETAIL PRICES.

Retail Price "Group" Index-Numbers(d) : Miscellaneous—Group IV.  
(Base : Weighted Average of Six Capital Cities, 1923-27 = 1,000.)

Period.	NEW SOUTH WALES.						VICTORIA.							
	Sydney.	Newcastle.	Broken Hill.	Goulburn.	Bathurst.	Weighted Average, N.S.W.	Melbourne.	Ballarat.	Bendigo.	Geelong.	Warrnam-bool.	Weighted Average, Victoria.		
Nov. 1914 (a)	766	..	..	..	..	..	728	..	..	..	..	..		
" 1921 ..	1,009	995	1,102	951	989	1,011	1,021	956	1,012	1,033	886	1,015		
Year 1938 ..	936	903	1,053	909	892	935	982	1,006	1,011	994	954	983		
" 1939 ..	940	901	1,048	908	888	938	977	990	1,004	980	951	978		
" 1940 ..	984	948	1,101	942	936	982	1,009	1,023	1,037	1,011	985	1,010		
" 1941 ..	1,051	990	1,159	1,006	999	1,048	1,066	1,086	1,094	1,062	1,049	1,067		
" 1942 ..	1,105	1,018	1,214	1,009	1,049	1,100	1,115	1,146	1,154	1,122	1,102	1,117		
" 1943 ..	1,165	1,072	1,276	1,112	1,094	1,160	1,155	1,193	1,216	1,188	1,159	1,159		
1942 Sept. Qtr.	1,105	1,010	1,212	1,072	1,047	1,099	1,109	1,142	1,153	1,129	1,101	1,112		
" Dec. "	1,140	1,049	1,245	1,099	1,074	1,134	1,144	1,178	1,186	1,161	1,135	1,147		
1943 Mar. Qtr.	1,145	1,063	1,250	1,106	1,088	1,140	1,150	1,187	1,210	1,175	1,149	1,154		
" June "	1,162	1,075	1,285	1,116	1,095	1,157	1,150	1,195	1,214	1,190	1,163	1,166		
" Sept. "	1,176	1,074	1,283	1,114	1,096	1,169	1,156	1,195	1,219	1,195	1,164	1,161		
" Dec. "	1,179	1,076	1,287	1,112	1,095	1,172	1,157	1,195	1,221	1,192	1,161	1,164		
Period.	QUEENSLAND.						SOUTH AUSTRALIA.							
	Brisbane.	Toowoomba.	Rock-hampton.	Townsville.	Bundaberg.	Weighted Average, Queensland.	Adelaide.	Radiata, Moolta, and Wallaroo.	Port Pirie.	Mt. Gambler.	Peter-borough.	Weighted Average, S.A.		
Nov. 1914 (a)	728	..	..	..	..	..	770	..	..	..	..	..		
" 1921 ..	944	953	1,002	1,009b	988c	958	1,033	1,065	1,065	1,032	1,000	1,036		
Year 1938 ..	947	990	971	1,000	1,001	957	1,023	991	1,001	1,017	1,011	1,021		
" 1939 ..	955	983	969	996	992	962	1,022	980	999	1,017	994	1,010		
" 1940 ..	979	1,003	1,001	1,026	1,002	985	1,051	1,021	1,031	1,053	1,015	1,040		
" 1941 ..	1,028	1,059	1,067	1,085	1,080	1,037	1,127	1,106	1,109	1,118	1,084	1,125		
" 1942 ..	1,077	1,118	1,116	1,125	1,118	1,087	1,184	1,188	1,175	1,165	1,162	1,184		
" 1943 ..	1,129	1,167	1,163	1,180	1,159	1,138	1,211	1,229	1,207	1,229	1,224	1,211		
1942 Sept. Qtr.	1,073	1,120	1,118	1,120	1,116	1,084	1,180	1,186	1,172	1,177	1,162	1,180		
" Dec. "	1,109	1,151	1,146	1,151	1,150	1,118	1,209	1,210	1,201	1,235	1,194	1,209		
1943 Mar. Qtr.	1,115	1,161	1,156	1,160	1,153	1,125	1,213	1,226	1,206	1,236	1,218	1,218		
" June "	1,126	1,170	1,164	1,184	1,161	1,137	1,205	1,225	1,204	1,224	1,223	1,206		
" Sept. "	1,134	1,169	1,166	1,184	1,162	1,143	1,212	1,231	1,207	1,227	1,223	1,203		
" Dec. "	1,140	1,169	1,166	1,191	1,161	1,148	1,212	1,235	1,209	1,228	1,228	1,213		
Period.	WESTERN AUSTRALIA.						TASMANIA.							
	Perth and Fremantle.	Kalgoorlie and Boulder.	Northam.	Bunbury.	Geraldton.	Weighted Av'ge, W.A.	Hobart.	Launceston.	Burnie.	Devonport.	Queensdown.	Weighted Av'ge, Tas.	Weighted Average, Six Capital Cities.	Weighted Average, 30 Towns, 30 Towns, Australia.
Nov. 1914 (a)	780	..	..	..	..	..	699	..	..	..	..	..	749	..
" 1921 ..	1,029	1,030	1,016	977	1,102	1,029	937	985	941	960	959	959	1,010	1,009
Year 1938 ..	949	968	953	909	1,053	951	933	939	866	867	843	927	961	962
" 1939 ..	954	974	948	912	1,034	956	938	947	874	882	881	934	962	962
" 1940 ..	985	1,006	975	942	1,053	987	969	973	904	908	919	963	998	997
" 1941 ..	1,043	1,068	1,035	902	1,111	1,043	1,015	1,008	938	936	967	1,005	1,060	1,058
" 1942 ..	1,093	1,122	1,096	1,032	1,160	1,095	1,065	1,050	960	963	999	1,049	1,112	1,110
" 1943 ..	1,136	1,179	1,140	1,084	1,205	1,140	1,105	1,101	1,005	1,011	1,044	1,093	1,160	1,159
1942 Sept. Qtr.	1,097	1,121	1,094	1,029	1,156	1,099	1,058	1,053	954	956	994	1,046	1,110	1,108
" Dec. "	1,127	1,154	1,126	1,060	1,190	1,129	1,095	1,083	985	994	1,024	1,080	1,144	1,142
1943 Mar. Qtr.	1,129	1,172	1,133	1,071	1,197	1,133	1,104	1,097	1,010	1,014	1,034	1,092	1,149	1,148
" June "	1,135	1,176	1,149	1,079	1,203	1,139	1,101	1,096	1,001	1,011	1,036	1,089	1,158	1,157
" Sept. "	1,140	1,185	1,139	1,091	1,208	1,144	1,105	1,105	1,002	1,012	1,052	1,095	1,165	1,164
" Dec. "	1,140	1,184	1,139	1,093	1,210	1,144	1,109	1,104	1,005	1,008	1,055	1,097	1,168	1,166

(a) For index-numbers for Capital Cities, November, 1914 to 1920, see page 19. (b) Charters Towers.  
(c) Warwick. (d) See footnote on page 9.



3. "B" Series Retail Price Index-Numbers: Food, Groceries and Rent.—This index measures the prices of food and groceries and the rent of 4 and 5-roomed houses. It was first compiled for the year 1925, and retrospectively for several earlier years shown below. It was designed to replace the "A" series index (food, groceries and rent of all houses), which was the original index compiled in 1912. Industrial Tribunals initially used the "A" series index and increasingly the "C" series index since 1934 for the purpose of adjusting wages to variations in retail prices. The "B" series index has not been used in this connexion.

**Retail Price Index-Numbers(b): Capital Cities—"B" Series.**

(*Base of each Section: Weighted Average of Six Capital Cities, 1923-27 = 1,000.*)

Town.	1907.	1911.	1914.	1921.	1929.	1940.	1941.	1942.	1943.
<b>SECTION A.—GROCERIES.</b>									
Sydney .. .. .	510	574	627	1,115	994	969	989	1,082	1,016
Melbourne .. .. .	461	521	562	1,070	957	928	924	1,034	967
Brisbane .. .. .	547	614	607	1,105	944	943	957	1,066	989
Adelaide .. .. .	510	541	598	1,076	939	914	932	1,073	979
Perth .. .. .	572	720	628	1,103	966	941	983	1,048	1,007
Hobart .. .. .	501	566	604	1,087	947	930	950	1,048	921
Weighted Average (a) ..	499	564	599	1,093	960	945	958	1,061	992
<b>SECTION B.—DAIRY PRODUCE.</b>									
Sydney .. .. .	551	574	656	1,080	851	864	863	924	947
Melbourne .. .. .	571	567	635	1,087	885	880	893	943	971
Brisbane .. .. .	495	581	588	983	793	800	808	871	902
Adelaide .. .. .	548	651	705	1,018	800	800	798	861	888
Perth .. .. .	709	733	733	1,132	870	873	878	922	976
Hobart .. .. .	564	587	695	1,091	844	855	873	932	967
Weighted Average (a) ..	563	591	654	1,072	853	857	862	910	947
<b>SECTION C.—MEAT.</b>									
Sydney .. .. .	519	501	668	960	935	1,008	1,015	1,089	1,160
Melbourne .. .. .	557	485	663	1,030	968	1,028	1,007	1,142	1,242
Brisbane .. .. .	335	489	610	897	822	898	943	942	1,018
Adelaide .. .. .	553	541	784	1,095	929	972	969	1,074	1,138
Perth .. .. .	789	824	881	1,103	958	1,026	1,070	1,102	1,199
Hobart .. .. .	668	638	780	1,244	961	1,041	1,082	1,149	1,205
Weighted Average (a) ..	558	522	691	1,010	936	1,002	1,006	1,092	1,175
<b>SECTIONS A, B AND C COMBINED.—FOOD AND GROCERIES.</b>									
Sydney .. .. .	523	553	646	1,061	936	952	962	1,040	1,042
Melbourne .. .. .	377	523	610	1,063	942	947	943	1,047	1,055
Brisbane .. .. .	530	569	603	1,014	854	880	871	972	975
Adelaide .. .. .	532	570	679	1,066	867	900	905	1,012	1,003
Perth .. .. .	670	753	728	1,166	928	940	981	1,039	1,050
Hobart .. .. .	565	592	678	1,133	923	944	970	1,047	1,062
Weighted Average (a) ..	533	559	640	1,064	927	939	947	1,031	1,037
<b>SECTION D.—HOUSING (4 AND 5 ROOMS).</b>									
Sydney .. .. .	593	701	760	989	1,035	1,042	1,043	1,043	1,042
Melbourne .. .. .	455	569	628	820	955	969	975	975	974
Brisbane .. .. .	283	373	466	630	854	857	860	862	862
Adelaide .. .. .	510	706	655	809	883	802	803	893	895
Perth .. .. .	458	524	589	739	881	882	883	885	885
Hobart .. .. .	495	452	518	881	925	933	933	933	931
Weighted Average (a) ..	497	612	662	862	965	973	976	976	975
<b>ALL SECTIONS COMBINED.—FOOD, GROCERIES, AND HOUSING.</b>									
Sydney .. .. .	548	606	687	1,036	972	985	992	1,039	1,040
Melbourne .. .. .	495	539	616	977	945	953	963	1,014	1,021
Brisbane .. .. .	442	500	554	877	858	875	889	927	929
Adelaide .. .. .	524	618	671	975	891	895	899	963	958
Perth .. .. .	594	672	679	982	914	921	941	971	989
Hobart .. .. .	508	542	621	1,044	922	938	953	1,000	1,009
Weighted Average (a) ..	520	578	648	992	939	950	956	1,007	1,011

(a) For Six Capital Cities.

(b) See footnote on page 9.

## Retail Price Index-Numbers ("B" Series).

(Base of each Section (a): Weighted average of Six Capital Cities, 1933-27 = 1,000.)

Period.	NEW SOUTH WALES.							VICTORIA.				
	Sydney.	Newcastle.	Broken Hill.	Goulburn.	Pathurst.	Weighted Average, N.S.W.	Melbourne.	Ballarat.	Bendigo.	Geelong.	Warrnambool.	Weighted Average, Victoria.

## GROUP I.—FOOD AND GROCERIES.

1939	916	1,106	993	940	942	942	930	930	946	945	942
1940	932	1,069	1,073	951	958	947	935	949	939	942	949
1941	962	1,000	1,134	953	979	943	933	953	968	948	962
1942	1,040	1,074	1,244	1,055	1,044	1,042	1,038	1,042	1,062	1,048	1,059
1943	1,042	1,066	1,234	1,089	1,047	1,046	1,033	1,049	1,043	1,053	1,043
1942 Sept. Qtr.	1,061	1,099	1,267	1,109	1,049	1,057	1,074	1,048	1,056	1,027	1,033
Dec. "	1,066	1,088	1,264	1,114	1,047	1,066	1,069	1,041	1,053	1,021	1,047
1943 Mar. Qtr.	1,050	1,071	1,223	1,091	1,038	1,053	1,053	1,031	1,039	1,007	1,040
June "	1,065	1,085	1,245	1,114	1,050	1,072	1,073	1,037	1,058	1,033	1,037
Sept. "	1,039	1,065	1,233	1,086	1,025	1,045	1,065	1,044	1,040	1,027	1,034
Dec. "	1,035	1,042	1,236	1,079	1,003	1,022	1,037	1,023	994	1,011	1,034
1944.											
July	1,048	1,086	1,277	1,101	1,046	1,056	1,074	1,038	1,054	1,024	1,037
August	1,069	1,089	1,267	1,108	1,051	1,074	1,074	1,049	1,054	1,031	1,035
September	1,064	1,094	1,254	1,117	1,040	1,071	1,071	1,045	1,061	1,026	1,032
October	1,067	1,086	1,241	1,112	1,048	1,072	1,073	1,047	1,056	1,023	1,027
November	1,064	1,084	1,245	1,116	1,051	1,070	1,072	1,066	1,040	1,036	1,070
December	1,065	1,087	1,250	1,116	1,051	1,070	1,072	1,064	1,060	1,038	1,059
1943.											
January	1,039	1,055	1,220	1,078	1,016	1,044	1,039	1,014	1,027	992	1,027
February	1,043	1,071	1,225	1,083	1,022	1,049	1,054	1,027	1,036	1,005	1,041
March	1,068	1,087	1,231	1,108	1,047	1,073	1,071	1,053	1,053	1,023	1,052
April	1,067	1,086	1,241	1,112	1,048	1,072	1,073	1,047	1,056	1,023	1,052
May	1,064	1,084	1,245	1,116	1,051	1,070	1,072	1,066	1,040	1,036	1,070
June	1,065	1,087	1,250	1,116	1,051	1,070	1,072	1,064	1,060	1,038	1,059
July	1,071	1,095	1,240	1,115	1,055	1,076	1,077	1,070	1,060	1,039	1,074
August	1,056	1,052	1,212	1,014	1,014	1,032	1,048	1,033	1,022	1,008	1,042
September	1,020	1,048	1,238	1,072	1,007	1,026	1,044	1,038	1,039	1,003	1,019
October	1,021	1,045	1,235	1,072	1,007	1,026	1,044	1,028	1,039	1,000	1,040
November	1,013	1,041	1,236	1,068	1,003	1,020	1,035	1,025	1,033	992	1,006
December	1,010	1,041	1,239	1,073	1,005	1,017	1,033	1,017	1,024	990	1,000

## GROUP II.—HOUSING (4 AND 5 ROOMS).

1939	1,035	890	764	871	843	1,015	955	714	876	911	938
1940	1,042	900	778	872	845	1,023	969	703	884	933	950
1941	1,043	901	773	881	845	1,024	975	706	892	939	956
1942	1,043	902	758	881	844	1,024	975	709	890	937	950
1943	1,042	902	753	882	844	1,023	974	709	889	934	956
1942 Sept. Qtr.	1,042	902	752	881	844	1,023	974	709	890	934	956
Dec. "	1,042	902	752	881	844	1,023	974	709	890	934	956
1943 Mar. Qtr.	1,042	902	753	881	844	1,023	974	709	890	934	956
June "	1,042	902	753	882	844	1,023	974	709	889	934	950
Sept. "	1,042	902	753	882	843	1,022	974	709	889	934	956
Dec. "	1,042	902	752	882	843	1,022	974	710	888	934	955

## GROUPS I.-II.—FOOD, GROCERIES, AND HOUSING.

1939	972	934	970	942	900	960	945	849	851	917	910
1940	985	950	953	953	900	960	945	849	851	917	910
1941	992	959	991	957	910	988	933	843	868	913	944
1942	1,039	1,005	1,052	1,009	957	1,036	1,014	804	920	956	946
1943	1,040	1,000	1,044	1,007	953	1,036	1,021	908	923	962	993
1942 Sept. Qtr.	1,051	1,014	1,064	1,017	966	1,047	1,032	913	931	971	992
Dec. "	1,051	1,013	1,062	1,021	965	1,047	1,030	909	929	968	1,000
1943 Mar. Qtr.	1,045	1,003	1,038	1,007	954	1,040	1,021	903	921	959	996
June "	1,054	1,011	1,050	1,021	967	1,050	1,032	919	933	975	1,006
Sept. "	1,038	999	1,041	1,004	952	1,034	1,022	911	922	964	992
Dec. "	1,023	985	1,045	994	940	1,020	1,010	899	916	950	979

(a) See footnote on page 9.

Retail Price Index-Numbers ("B" Series)—continued.  
(Base of each Section (a) : Weighted Average of Six Capital Cities, 1923-27 = 1,000.)

Period.	QUEENSLAND.					SOUTH AUSTRALIA.						
	Brisbane.	Toowoomba	Rockhampton.	Townsville.	Dundaberg	Weighted Average, Queensland.	Adelaide.	Kadina, Moonta, and Wallaroo.	Port Pirie.	Mt. Gambler.	Peterborough.	Weighted Average, S.A.
1939 .. .. .	864	823	904	961	912	872	897	973	995	937	981	904
1940 .. .. .	889	852	921	969	931	896	900	967	985	919	976	906
1941 .. .. .	911	863	981	981	958	915	905	1,005	1,005	912	977	912
1942 .. .. .	922	974	992	1,048	1,024	979	1,012	1,053	1,004	984	1,056	1,016
1943 .. .. .	975	974	995	1,041	1,033	982	1,003	1,044	1,076	988	1,039	1,007
1942 Sept. Qtr.	985	961	986	1,056	1,029	989	1,049	1,082	1,118	1,007	1,080	1,052
Dec. "	977	946	990	1,055	1,022	982	1,027	1,075	1,114	1,019	1,076	1,052
1943 Mar. Qtr.	983	967	986	1,048	1,037	988	1,000	1,041	1,079	982	1,044	1,054
June "	998	987	1,018	1,056	1,056	1,004	1,022	1,062	1,075	993	1,059	1,066
Sept. "	968	956	985	1,027	1,024	975	1,003	1,041	1,075	986	1,035	1,033
Dec. "	950	985	988	1,027	1,015	985	985	1,030	1,053	974	1,010	1,010
1942. .. .. .	982	958	978	1,056	1,017	986	1,054	1,084	1,120	1,000	1,084	1,057
July .. .. .	989	962	966	1,056	1,038	993	1,048	1,081	1,117	1,011	1,078	1,051
August .. .. .	983	967	995	1,055	1,032	989	1,045	1,081	1,117	1,010	1,078	1,048
September .. .. .	968	951	988	1,051	1,016	975	1,029	1,081	1,118	1,019	1,079	1,043
October .. .. .	974	943	990	1,051	1,018	980	1,077	1,118	1,108	1,020	1,079	1,043
November .. .. .	987	945	992	1,063	1,032	991	1,014	1,068	1,108	1,016	1,072	1,050
1943. .. .. .	979	956	981	1,050	1,031	984	998	1,036	1,073	980	1,037	1,002
January .. .. .	975	967	976	1,043	1,029	980	993	1,036	1,076	975	1,042	998
February .. .. .	995	978	1,011	1,050	1,050	1,001	1,010	1,052	1,086	992	1,052	1,014
March .. .. .	996	985	1,018	1,056	1,057	1,002	1,021	1,060	1,097	990	1,055	1,025
April .. .. .	995	985	1,019	1,053	1,056	1,005	1,022	1,063	1,099	990	1,060	1,057
May .. .. .	998	992	1,018	1,053	1,054	1,005	1,022	1,063	1,099	990	1,060	1,058
June .. .. .	999	990	1,018	1,053	1,054	1,005	1,022	1,063	1,099	990	1,060	1,058
July .. .. .	1,002	991	1,012	1,061	1,051	1,008	1,024	1,063	1,100	1,003	1,059	1,058
August .. .. .	953	943	938	1,009	1,003	958	996	1,031	1,059	977	1,025	999
September .. .. .	950	938	984	1,023	1,017	958	990	1,028	1,059	978	1,022	984
October .. .. .	952	966	987	1,023	1,020	964	986	1,028	1,059	976	1,016	989
November .. .. .	946	983	988	1,025	1,032	968	984	1,032	1,053	973	1,017	989
December .. .. .	951	985	989	1,034	1,012	964	984	1,031	1,052	972	1,015	988

GROUP I.—FOOD AND GROCERIES.

Period.	GROUP I.—FOOD, GROCERIES AND HOUSING.				
	Brisbane.	Toowoomba	Rockhampton.	Townsville.	Dundaberg
1939 .. .. .	854	847	753	861	640
1940 .. .. .	857	824	785	861	642
1941 .. .. .	862	828	782	852	647
1942 .. .. .	862	828	760	865	651
1943 .. .. .	862	839	768	865	668
1942 Sept. Qtr.	862	859	766	865	659
Dec. "	862	859	766	865	654
1943 Mar. Qtr.	862	859	767	865	665
June "	862	859	767	865	667
Sept. "	862	859	768	865	668
Dec. "	862	859	768	865	679

GROUP II.—HOUSING (4 AND 5 ROOMS)

Period.	GROUP I.—FOOD, GROCERIES AND HOUSING.				
	Brisbane.	Toowoomba	Rockhampton.	Townsville.	Dundaberg
1939 .. .. .	858	830	843	920	804
1940 .. .. .	855	840	854	925	817
1941 .. .. .	889	863	857	933	835
1942 .. .. .	927	913	901	971	878
1943 .. .. .	929	927	904	970	888
1942 Sept. Qtr.	935	919	898	979	879
Dec. "	930	910	900	978	880
1943 Mar. Qtr.	934	923	901	974	889
June "	942	936	918	979	902
Sept. "	925	916	898	964	883
Dec. "	914	934	900	962	878

(a) See footnote on page 9.

## Retail Price Index-Numbers ("B" Series)—continued.

(Base of each Section (a): Weighted average of Six Capital Cities, 1923-27 = 1,000.)

Period	WESTERN AUSTRALIA.						TASMANIA.							
	Perth.	Kalgoorlie.	Northam.	Bunbury.	Geraldton.	Weighted Average, W.A.	Hobart.	Launceston	Burnie.	Devonport.	Queenstown.	Weighted Average, Tasmania.	Weighted Average, 6 Capital Cities.	Weighted Average, 30 Towns, Australia.
1939	938	1,092	972	957	947	951	923	914	941	933	1,018	925	947	931
1940	949	1,104	986	909	972	961	923	933	901	950	1,029	945	939	942
1941	951	1,113	1,039	905	1,000	995	970	970	999	984	1,037	968	947	951
1942	1,023	1,176	1,078	1,034	1,041	1,041	1,047	1,008	1,055	1,034	1,079	1,035	1,031	1,033
1943	1,059	1,179	1,071	1,038	1,080	1,068	1,062	1,017	1,096	1,057	1,137	1,052	1,037	1,040
1942 Sept. Qtr.	1,049	1,194	1,086	1,043	1,059	1,060	1,059	1,014	1,077	1,042	1,096	1,046	1,035	1,057
Dec. "	1,048	1,190	1,087	1,044	1,052	1,059	1,082	1,032	1,088	1,042	1,096	1,066	1,051	1,053
1943 Mar. Qtr.	1,050	1,179	1,071	1,043	1,040	1,059	1,051	1,009	1,077	1,044	1,124	1,041	1,040	1,042
June "	1,086	1,180	1,090	1,035	1,054	1,071	1,065	1,028	1,113	1,058	1,142	1,064	1,058	1,060
Sept. "	1,086	1,178	1,070	1,035	1,054	1,071	1,075	1,103	1,068	1,057	1,147	1,047	1,050	1,039
Dec. "	1,043	1,163	1,054	1,015	1,068	1,054	1,058	1,009	1,090	1,057	1,133	1,047	1,015	1,019
1942 July	1,043	1,192	1,084	1,049	1,050	1,055	1,046	1,013	1,059	1,027	1,105	1,036	1,050	1,052
August	1,040	1,185	1,083	1,048	1,050	1,052	1,060	1,011	1,078	1,050	1,097	1,040	1,059	1,050
September	1,043	1,185	1,090	1,035	1,077	1,074	1,071	1,018	1,050	1,050	1,116	1,050	1,054	1,050
October	1,040	1,182	1,090	1,041	1,073	1,058	1,067	1,035	1,090	1,054	1,106	1,070	1,054	1,053
November	1,040	1,189	1,084	1,041	1,042	1,059	1,079	1,035	1,080	1,058	1,104	1,065	1,053	1,053
December	1,050	1,168	1,080	1,047	1,041	1,060	1,081	1,026	1,086	1,064	1,112	1,064	1,047	1,049
1943 January	1,046	1,176	1,061	1,038	1,037	1,056	1,049	1,007	1,072	1,047	1,105	1,038	1,030	1,031
February	1,047	1,180	1,073	1,044	1,040	1,057	1,045	1,066	1,070	1,042	1,129	1,038	1,035	1,037
March	1,047	1,180	1,073	1,044	1,040	1,057	1,045	1,066	1,070	1,042	1,129	1,038	1,035	1,037
April	1,057	1,172	1,086	1,046	1,041	1,062	1,062	1,016	1,099	1,049	1,132	1,031	1,038	1,057
May	1,082	1,177	1,088	1,036	1,068	1,080	1,062	1,013	1,099	1,049	1,132	1,031	1,038	1,058
June	1,088	1,187	1,097	1,055	1,115	1,090	1,065	1,013	1,099	1,049	1,144	1,037	1,057	1,059
July	1,088	1,187	1,097	1,055	1,115	1,090	1,065	1,013	1,099	1,049	1,144	1,037	1,057	1,059
August	1,088	1,187	1,097	1,055	1,115	1,090	1,065	1,013	1,099	1,049	1,144	1,037	1,057	1,059
September	1,082	1,168	1,084	1,022	1,095	1,066	1,082	1,032	1,095	1,065	1,146	1,038	1,050	1,065
October	1,045	1,160	1,052	1,014	1,080	1,066	1,072	1,032	1,092	1,062	1,143	1,060	1,050	1,062
November	1,045	1,161	1,052	1,014	1,080	1,066	1,072	1,032	1,092	1,062	1,143	1,060	1,050	1,062
December	1,046	1,161	1,052	1,017	1,089	1,052	1,034	1,010	1,094	1,066	1,144	1,064	1,014	1,018
	1,046	1,163	1,054	1,017	1,089	1,052	1,034	990	1,081	1,090	1,115	1,024	1,014	1,015

## GROUP II.—HOUSING (4 AND 5 ROOMS).

1939	881	1,118	886	1,005	1,064	919	925	851	856	763	806	887	975	947
1940	885	1,315	890	1,003	1,066	920	923	856	827	767	813	883	973	955
1941	885	1,308	894	1,001	1,068	921	923	850	845	769	812	885	976	958
1942	885	1,307	870	983	1,062	910	933	850	850	770	806	895	976	957
1943	885	1,058	893	970	1,098	902	931	859	850	770	805	894	975	956
1942 Sept. Qtr.	885	1,166	825	975	1,059	907	932	850	850	770	805	894	976	956
Dec. "	885	1,065	898	973	1,058	904	932	856	850	770	805	894	976	956
1943 Mar. Qtr.	885	1,038	898	970	1,058	902	932	855	850	770	805	894	975	956
June "	885	1,041	898	970	1,058	902	931	855	850	770	805	894	975	956
Sept. "	885	1,038	898	970	1,058	902	931	855	850	770	804	894	975	956
Dec. "	885	1,036	898	970	1,058	902	931	855	850	770	804	894	975	956

## GROUP I.—FOOD, GROCERIES AND HOTELS.

1939	914	1,178	936	979	990	946	922	857	898	865	932	908	989	935
1940	921	1,184	936	978	995	946	922	857	898	865	932	908	989	935
1941	941	1,211	980	960	1,024	965	953	918	937	868	947	937	996	952
1942	971	1,160	1,005	1,011	1,048	988	1,000	915	932	928	970	1,011	1,001	1,001
1943	939	1,122	1,001	1,020	1,069	1,001	1,009	938	968	942	1,005	988	1,011	1,005
1942 Sept. Qtr.	932	1,157	1,010	1,015	1,057	998	1,007	951	983	934	987	984	1,032	1,015
Dec. "	985	1,158	1,011	1,014	1,052	996	1,021	965	995	943	980	997	1,032	1,015
1943 Mar. Qtr.	983	1,151	1,001	1,012	1,044	995	1,003	948	986	935	997	982	1,032	1,006
June "	1,001	1,153	1,013	1,023	1,073	1,013	1,010	955	1,008	943	1,008	990	1,033	1,017
Sept. "	991	1,151	1,000	1,008	1,084	1,003	1,016	961	1,002	949	1,011	995	1,010	1,004
Dec. "	980	1,111	991	995	1,074	992	1,006	948	994	942	1,002	984	1,010	992

(4) See footnote on page 9

### § 8. Retail Price Index-Numbers, 200 Towns.

To supplement the information collected monthly for the 30 towns specified in the preceding sections, a special investigation into prices in 70 additional towns was undertaken in November, 1913. This investigation was repeated in November, 1914, and again in November, 1915, when the number of additional towns was increased to 120. In November, 1923, the number was further increased to 170. Information in regard to prices obtained in November each year until 1942 related, therefore, to 200 towns. After 1942, collection of returns of these prices was temporarily suspended as a war-time economy. The results of the first investigation were published in Labour Bulletin No. 5 (pp. 26 to 33), and details respecting succeeding investigations are incorporated in the Labour Bulletins and Reports issued subsequently by this Bureau.

In issues of these publications prior to No. 28 of 1937, information was given regarding movements in the rents of 4-roomed and 5-roomed houses. While the index-numbers were useful in a general way as a measure of changes in rents in any one town from time to time, there has been an increasing tendency to regard them as an adequate measure of the relative absolute levels of rents in different towns at any given date. In order to prevent such a misuse of the figures, and because of increasing doubts as to the ability of the Bureau, except at prohibitive cost, to ensure that returns of rents from all these towns shall be based on continuously representative samples, it was decided to limit the information collected to the prices of food and groceries. Should any industrial tribunal desire further information on house rentals in any of these towns, the Bureau will be prepared to consider requests for special investigations by its field officers.

### § 9. Changes in the Regimen of Indexes.

1. **Revisions to 1936.**—Since the original compilation of retail price indexes by the Bureau, the regimens of the several Groups and Sections have undergone some modifications. These are briefly as follows:—

(i) *Food and Groceries.*—The regimen for food and groceries, originally introduced in 1912, was based upon the relative consumption of the years 1906 to 1910, and the first revision was made in the September quarter of 1932 and was based on the years 1927 to 1929. The regimen in use up to that date will be found on page 13 of Labour Report No. 23. A second revision took place in the September quarter of 1936, as part of the general revision of the regimen by the Conference of Statisticians of April, 1936. The main features of this revision are referred to in (iv) below.

(ii) *Housing.*—The housing constituent of the regimen has also been revised. Originally the rentals of all houses from "3 rooms and under" to "8 rooms and over" were tabulated, and they were continuously used in the "A" series index (food and rent of all houses) from 1912 to 30th June, 1938, when this series was discontinued. They were also used in the "All Items" index up to and including the year 1924. From the following year rentals of 4 and 5-roomed houses only were used in the "C" series index, and in the same year they were combined with food and groceries to form the "B" series index.

Since the December quarter of 1936, following on the resolutions of the 1936 Conference of Statisticians, the rentals of 4 and 5-roomed houses in certain towns have been collected and tabulated on a somewhat different basis from that previously used, and for convenience is known as the "Census" basis. The returns in the twelve more important cities and towns show the rents of individual houses, on the basis of which variations from a pre-determined standard are measured. This standard, the change

in which has affected the index-numbers only in respect of the relative levels of rents in the different towns, and in respect of their absolute height, was determined by means of a special investigation of the 1933 Census data relating to rentals of all 4 and 5-roomed wood and brick houses occupied by fully-employed wage and salary-earners. This method not being generally applicable to the circumstances of small country towns, on account of the greater diversity of average "quality" of houses, the level of rents in these towns has continued to be determined from a sample of houses selected by house-agents in accordance with definite standards laid down. The variations in rentals from this standard, however, are measured in the same manner as described above for the twelve more important cities and towns.

(iii) *Clothing and Miscellaneous*.—The regimen for clothing and miscellaneous household requirements was originally introduced in 1921, and the first revision was made in the March quarter of 1935. Details of the original regimen were never published, but the revised regimen of 1935 appeared in Labour Report No. 26. A second revision took place in the September quarter of 1936, as part of the general revision of the regimen by the Conference of Statisticians of April, 1936. The main features of this revision are referred to in (iv) below. Some minor alterations have since been made in the regimen.

(iv) *Revision of 1936*.—The revision of the regimen by the Conference of Statisticians of April, 1936, was of a comprehensive nature. The Resolutions of the Conference are reprinted in Appendix XI. of Labour Report No. 27.

This Conference not only recommended extensive revisions of the regimen from which the indexes are compiled, but also considered methods of collection and compilation. As a result of its deliberations, and subsequent discussions by correspondence, many improvements and refinements were introduced.

The changes in the regimen were made with a view to improving the index-numbers as measures of price variations. They comprised chiefly the elimination or replacement of articles no longer in demand, or which experience had shown to be unsuitable media for the measurement of price variations; the alteration of units of quantity in certain cases to conform with those in most general use; the adjustment of the mass-unit allotted to certain articles to bring them into accord with present-day consumption habits; and the re-adjustment of the population weights applicable to the several groups and sections of the regimen in accordance with the results of the 1933 Census. Definite grades or qualities were also established for each article in the regimen, to ensure that quotations should be given, as far as possible, for the same article at all times and in all places, and expert field officers were appointed to personally collect prices to the standard qualities laid down. Improved methods of collecting and weighting average house rentals were also adopted (see paragraph (ii) above).

(v) *Method of Effecting Changes*.—Changes of the nature mentioned are commonly made in price indexes without seriously impairing their continuity. In accordance with established principles of procedure in changing the regimen (see Labour Report No. 9, Appendix I., Part II., paragraphs 14 and 18), the general level of the index is taken as determined by the old regimen for the quarter in which the change is made, and the new regimen is used to measure variations in the price-level after that date. The linking up of the index-numbers on the old and the new basis is effected by the usual method of equating the respective weighted aggregate costs of the old and the new regimens in the six capital cities.

The method of effecting this is shortly as follows:—Up to the June quarter, 1942, all such changes were made by equating the new aggregate of the section embodying the changes to the former aggregate. This course

was adopted when items were added to or omitted from the regimen, and when a change was made in the standard of any item. From the September quarter, 1942, however, all changes of standard were effected by an appropriate adjustment of the "mass unit" or "weight" so as to preserve the percentage weight which the item carried in the aggregate from time to time, and wherever possible, the "weight" of any item dropped from the regimen was transferred to an article of a similar nature which would serve as a more appropriate medium for the measurement of the variations of the article dropped than the remaining items of the section—the "mass units" of which under the former procedure in effect were proportionately increased to carry the aggregate of the item dropped, or reduced to admit the new item added. See also par. 3 on pages 14 and 15.

While this involves no break of continuity in the index-numbers for the six capital cities as a whole, slight alterations of the relative positions of individual towns are inevitable on account of the alteration of former standards. The effect, however, is more noticeable in the Group index-numbers than in those covering a combination of groups, wherein the losses and gains tend to balance out. Thus, in comparing group index-numbers for individual towns in respect of periods including the dates of change referred to in paragraphs (i) to (iv) above, the following considerations should be kept in mind :—

*Food and Groceries.*—These index-numbers are substantially comparable throughout the period up to the June quarter of 1936. From and including the September quarter of 1936, the index-numbers for individual towns are comparable with each other, but are not strictly so with those for previous quarters.

*Housing.*—No change was ever made in the method of calculating the rentals of "All Houses", and consequently these index-numbers were comparable throughout the whole period of their existence.\* In regard to rentals of houses of 4 and 5 rooms, however, the index-numbers for individual towns are comparable with each other up to the June quarter of 1936. In the September quarter, 1936, a change was made in the weighting system which gave rise to slight disparities not due to rental fluctuations, and rendered the rent figures for individual towns not strictly comparable with those of former periods. The change, however, thereafter made the index-numbers for any one town more comparable with those of other towns. In the December quarter of 1936 the rent tabulations in the two principal towns of each State were placed on an entirely new basis, which rendered them incomparable individually with average rents of previous periods. This change was also introduced with the object of making the index-numbers for the principal towns more comparable *inter se* in any given quarter.

*Clothing and Miscellaneous.*—The index-numbers for individual towns up to and including 1934 are comparable with those for previous periods. Those for 1935, and the March and June quarters of 1936, are comparable for those periods, but not with the index-numbers of former or subsequent periods. From and including the September quarter of 1936, the index-numbers for individual towns are substantially comparable with each other, both from quarter to quarter and from town to town, but for individual towns they are not strictly continuous with those of previous periods.

**2. The Regimen under War Conditions.**—Between the comprehensive revision of 1936 and the outbreak of war in 1939 changes in conditions did not require any appreciable revision of the regimen or mass-units of items

\* The tabulation of the "A" Series Index for which these rents were used was discontinued after the issue for June quarter, 1938.

therein. The adjustments made in 1936 had brought the basis of the index "up-to-date" in the sense that it conformed reasonably closely to normal pre-war usage. Although the effects of the war produced some variations from normal consumption in 1940 and 1941, it was not until 1942 (as explained in Section 2 (5) of this Chapter) that fundamental changes began to occur. As there explained, the years 1942, 1943 and 1944 produced temporary changes of a far-reaching character which, if permanent and stable, must have necessitated fundamental re-adjustments in the regimen and mass-units of the index. But the resultant changes in the index would have been so extensive as virtually to create a new index which would not have been continuously comparable with the "C" series index either as compiled pre-war nor as it is likely to be compiled in post-war years. Consideration of the matter led to the conclusions—

- (i) that it was desirable to continue the "C" series index substantially on its pre-war regimen in order to ensure continuity of comparison of price movements on a clearly defined basis;
- (ii) that it was impossible to reconstruct the "C" series index to take account of recurrent temporary departures from normal consumption.

The problems involved are discussed in a supplement to this Report.

### § 10. Retail Price Index-Numbers and Wage Variations.

Two distinct procedures are adopted by the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration in fixing and varying basic or living wages as follows:—

- (i) the Court periodically *fixes* the amount of wage in the light of evidence submitted by parties appearing before it. Such evidence usually covers a wide range of facts as to economic conditions;
- (ii) having determined the amount of basic wage the Court further determines whether or not it shall be subject to automatic adjustment for changes in price level and, if so, by what method such *variation* shall be made. This again is decided in the light of evidence and of representations by the parties concerned.

The All Items ("C" series) retail price index is used by the Court to derive the "Court" series of retail price index-numbers upon which the basic or "needs" portion of the wages prescribed in awards is *varied* automatically for changes in price levels quarterly, half-yearly or yearly. These are commonly referred to as "cost of living adjustments" although in fact they relate only to that part of the change in cost of living which is due to variations in prices. The Court itself determines from time to time at public sittings the amount of the basic wage, having regard to evidence submitted in relation to other aspects of "cost of living" and other relevant considerations. In fixing the amount of the basic wage the Court does not have regard to either the regimen used in compiling the retail price index or the cost of such regimen. The regimen of the index would not be suited to such a purpose.

The considerations upon which the basic wage is fixed are set out in successive judgments of the Court and briefly summarised in Chapter III. (Section 3) of this Report. On this matter, reference should be made to the Basic Wage Judgments of the Court, particularly those of 1934, 1937 and 1941, and to the general statement of principles set out in the judgment on the "Munition Workers' Case" of 1943. Certain State industrial tribunals use the index numbers directly for automatic or quasi-automatic adjustment of the rates of wages determined by them as tribunals,



while some State tribunals have regard to the index-numbers and other factors in considering what "cost of living" variations they should make in rates of wages.

The use of index-numbers by industrial authorities for purposes of adjusting rates of wages for changes in price level is a practice of long standing, dating in the case of the Commonwealth Arbitration Court, for example, back to the year 1913. The tribunals form their own judgment as to relevance of the index-numbers to their purposes, and periodically hear the representatives of employers and employees on the issues involved, including questions as to whether the index is satisfactory for the purposes to which it is applied by the tribunal. In such proceedings the Statistician or his officers are called at times as witnesses on questions of fact and technical matters relating to the index-numbers.

The automatic adjustments in wages prescribed in awards of the Court on the basis of retail price index-numbers are sometimes referred to as "cost of living" adjustments and the index is popularly referred to as a "cost of living index". This at times creates misconceptions as to the nature of the retail price index since the term "cost of living" connotes not only change in cost of living due to changes in prices, but also changes in cost of living due to changes in standard of living. Beyond that, use of the term "cost of living" index sometimes creates the erroneous impression that the retail price index purports to embrace all that should be included in a desirable standard of living. As pointed out in the opening sections of this chapter, the "C" series index is a retail price index of specific meaning.

The following is a brief statement of the index-numbers used by the Commonwealth Arbitration Court from time to time:—

(i) "*A*" Series.—The "*A*" series of indexes cover the items food and groceries and the rent of all houses, with the year 1911 as the base (1,000). This series was first compiled in 1912, and is available yearly for the six capital cities from 1901 to 1911, and quarterly for 30 important towns of Australia from 1912 to the June quarter of 1938, after which it was discontinued.

The Commonwealth Arbitration Court adopted this series in 1913 to determine the relative basic wage for towns throughout Australia, and to vary what is popularly known as the "Harvester" Basic Wage of 1907—the wage (42s. per week for Melbourne) declared by Mr. Justice Higgins to be sufficient to meet the "normal needs of the average employee, regarded as a human being, living in a civilized community." For this purpose the base index number (1,000) of the series was selected by the Court as equivalent to a basic wage of 48s. per week. This series had very little application after May, 1933, because of the adoption by the Court successively of the "*D*" series at that date, the "*C*" series in May, 1934, and the "*Court*" series in July, 1937.

(ii) "*B*" Series.—The "*B*" series covers the items food and groceries and rent of 4 and 5-roomed houses, with the prices ruling in the years 1923–1927 as the base (1,000) and is actually the food and rent constituent of the "*C*" series described in (iii). This series was first compiled in 1925, and is available for the six capital cities for the years 1907 and 1911, and for the month of November of the years 1914 to 1920, and quarterly thereafter for the 30 important towns of Australia. It was designed to replace the "*A*" Series, but was never used in connexion with the adjustment of wages by Industrial Tribunals. This series appears on pages 25 to 28 of this Report.

(iii) "*C*" Series.—The All Items ("*C*" series) covers food and groceries; rent of 4 and 5-roomed houses; clothing (man, wife and three children);

household drapery, household utensils, fuel, lighting and other miscellaneous items, with the prices ruling in the years 1923-1927 as the base (1,000). The regimen is published in full in this chapter.

This series was constructed as the result of the recommendations of the Royal Commission on the Basic Wage of 1920, and the regimen adopted was substantially that of the "Indicator" Lists of the Commission with periodical adjustments as explained in this chapter. It was first compiled in 1921 and is available for the month of November for the six capital cities for the years 1914 to 1921, quarterly for these cities from June quarter, 1922, and quarterly for the 30 important towns from March quarter, 1925 to date.

The series was not used in connexion with the variation of wages until its partial adoption by the Commonwealth Court in May, 1933, when that Court introduced the "D" series of indexes explained on a previous page herof. In its judgment of 17th April, 1934, the Court adopted as from 1st May, 1934, the "C" series as the sole basis for the adjustment of the wages declared in the judgment, for which purpose the Court equated a "needs" basic wage of 81s. per week to the base index-number (1,000) of the series. In its judgment of 23rd June, 1937, the Commonwealth Court adopted this index as the basis of the "Court" series for the adjustment of the "needs" portion of the Court's new basic wage (see (iv))

(iv) *The "Court" Series.*—The "Court" series of index-numbers was created by the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration in its basic wage judgment of 23rd June, 1937, and operated from 1st July, 1937. Its purpose was to provide a set of index-numbers which would be published by, and under the direct control of, the Court. It was created primarily for the purpose of removing conditions which tended to engender the impression that the Commonwealth Statistician was in some way responsible for the fixation and adjustment of wage-rates. Its introduction has the added advantage of enabling the index-numbers to be specially numbered in the manner most convenient for adjustment purposes, and of enabling the Statistician to change the base of his index-numbers without upsetting the wage and adjustment provisions of the Court's awards. It is at present based on the Commonwealth Statistician's "C" series index, and is obtained as follows:—The Court in 1937 decided to equate to the base index-number of the "C" series index (1,000) the "Court" series index-number 81.0, and as this was the weekly rate in shillings allotted in 1934 by the Court to this base index-number as its "needs" basic wage (see (iii) above), each "C" series index-point is thus equal to .081s. By the simple process of multiplying any "C" series index-number by this factor, therefore, the result to the first decimal place (*as it stands*) is the corresponding "Court" series index-number, which also expresses in shillings the amount of the "needs" basic wage as fixed by the Court for that index-number—with the proviso that any decimal point of .5 or more shall be regarded as the next higher number of shillings. To this wage is then added the relevant "constant" and other loadings granted by the Court to make up the total basic wage for the awards concerned. In the normal course the Court hears and decides issues raised as to the suitability of the index-numbers for the purposes to which it applies them. The "Court" series entirely supersedes the "C" series for all wage adjustments decreed by the Commonwealth Court. A set of index-numbers under this series is reproduced in Appendix III. of this Report, while a "Ready Reckoner" for the weekly "needs" basic wage equivalents of "C" series and "Court" series index-numbers is shown at the end of the following section (see page 36.)

(v) "*D*" Series.—The "*D*" series is a combination of the "*A*" and "*C*" series, and was introduced by the Commonwealth Court for the adjustment of wages of those employees who were subject to the full 10 per cent. reduction in real wages determined by the Court in January, 1931. It came into operation from 1st May, 1933.

The series has for its base the "*A*" series index for each town for the December quarter of 1929, which is varied according to the ratio of change indicated by the "*C*" series index-number for the whole of 1929 and the corresponding "*C*" index-number of the town for the quarter for which the adjustment is to be made. It will thus be seen that, whereas the "*D*" index for each town from the December quarter of 1929 fluctuated in the same way as the "*C*" index for the same town, the relationship of different towns was that of the "*A*" series for the December quarter of 1929, slightly modified by the difference in movement between the "*A*" series and the "*C*" series index for each town since that quarter.

This series was superseded by the judgment of the Court referred to under "*C*" series. The index-numbers of this series were published in Appendix VIII. of Labour Reports Nos. 24 to 27.

(vi) *Food and Groceries*.—The regimen of food and groceries is a component part of each of the series of retail price index-numbers mentioned above. Details of the regimen will be found on page 10. This index was first compiled in 1912 and is available yearly for the six capital cities from 1901 to 1911 and monthly for the 30 important towns of Australia from 1912 to date. An index computed from the prices of food and groceries only was for a time used for the adjustment of old-age and invalid pensions, and also for the adjustment of the wages of members of the North Australian Workers' Union above the 20th parallel. Both these adjustments were later effected by means of the "*C*" Series Index, but the provisions for the adjustment of pensions were repealed as from 6th April, 1944.

(vii) *The "200 Towns" Series*.—This series was tabulated for the month of November each year in respect of 200 of the more important towns of the Commonwealth. Up to November, 1936, it covered the cost of food and groceries combined with the rent of 4 and of 5-roomed houses respectively, but thereafter the tabulation was limited to food and groceries only. This table has been used mostly in discussions of suitable relative rates for country towns, but the index-numbers have not been directly employed by Industrial Tribunals in this connexion. The base of this table is the weighted average cost of food and groceries in the six capital cities in 1923-27 = 1,000. This series has been compiled for the month of November since 1913. It was originally confined to 100 towns, but was increased to 150 in 1915, and 200 in 1923. The tabulation of this index was discontinued after November, 1942 as a war-time economy. A reference to these index-numbers will be found on page 29.

### § 11. Scales used for Automatic Wage Adjustment.

The following table shows the automatic scales of quarterly, half-yearly or yearly adjustment adopted by the Commonwealth Arbitration Court in its Basic Wage Judgments of 1934 and 1937 for the "needs" portion of its basic wage. From 1st May, 1934, to 30th June, 1937, the amount of wage shown constituted the basic wage payable exclusive of certain "loadings" legally regarded as part of the total basic wage.\* But from 1st July, 1937, the amount of wage shown by the scale was designated by the Court the "needs" basic wage, and a "loading" (generally referred to as the "prosperity" loading) determined by the Court was added

\* See first paragraph, p. 71.

to it. This is a "constant" (non-adjustable) loading, but at different rates according to locality and industry, and is fully described in Section 3 of Chapter III. of this Report. The method followed by the Court was to fix an amount of basic wage after hearing evidence and argument by representatives of employers and employees covering a wide range of relevant factors (primarily relating to "capacity of industry" to pay and general economic conditions), and then to determine an automatic adjustment scale.

**Automatic Scales for Quarterly, Half-yearly or Yearly Adjustment of "Needs" Basic Wage.**

(As adopted by Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration, April, 1934, and June, 1937.)

\* Basis—

- (a) "C" Series.—Index-number 1,000 = 81s. per week (1s. = 12.345679) (Operative 1st May, 1934).  
 (b) "Court" Series.—"C" series index-number 1,000 = "Court" series index-number 81.0 (Operative 1st July, 1937).

Index-number Divisions.		Wage Per week ("Needs").	Index-number Divisions.		Wage Per week ("Needs").
"C" Series.	"Court" Series.		"C" Series.	"Court" Series.	
		£ s. d.			£ s. d.
587-598 ..	47.5-48.4	2 8 0	933-944..	75.5-76.4	3 16 0
599-611 ..	48.5-49.4	2 9 0	945-956..	76.5-77.4	3 17 0
612-623 ..	49.5-50.4	2 10 0	957-969..	77.5-78.4	3 18 0
624-635 ..	50.5-51.4	2 11 0	970-981..	78.5-79.4	3 19 0
636-648 ..	51.5-52.4	2 12 0	982-993..	79.5-80.4	4 0 0
649-660 ..	52.5-53.4	2 13 0	994-1006..	80.5-81.4	4 1 0
661-672 ..	53.5-54.4	2 14 0	1007-1018..	81.5-82.4	4 2 0
673-685 ..	54.5-55.4	2 15 0	1019-1030..	82.5-83.4	4 3 0
686-697 ..	55.5-56.4	2 16 0	1031-1043..	83.5-84.4	4 4 0
698-709 ..	56.5-57.4	2 17 0	1044-1055..	84.5-85.4	4 5 0
710-722 ..	57.5-58.4	2 18 0	1056-1067..	85.5-86.4	4 6 0
723-734 ..	58.5-59.4	2 19 0	1068-1080..	86.5-87.4	4 7 0
735-746 ..	59.5-60.4	3 0 0	1081-1092..	87.5-88.4	4 8 0
747-759 ..	60.5-61.4	3 1 0	1093-1104..	88.5-89.4	4 9 0
760-771 ..	61.5-62.4	3 2 0	1105-1117..	89.5-90.4	4 10 0
772-783 ..	62.5-63.4	3 3 0	1118-1129..	90.5-91.4	4 11 0
784-796 ..	63.5-64.4	3 4 0	1130-1141..	91.5-92.4	4 12 0
797-808 ..	64.5-65.4	3 5 0	1142-1154..	92.5-93.4	4 13 0
809-820 ..	65.5-66.4	3 6 0	1155-1166..	93.5-94.4	4 14 0
821-833 ..	66.5-67.4	3 7 0	1167-1179..	94.5-95.4	4 15 0
834-845 ..	67.5-68.4	3 8 0	1180-1191..	95.5-96.4	4 16 0
846-858 ..	68.5-69.4	3 9 0	1192-1203..	96.5-97.4	4 17 0
859-870 ..	69.5-70.4	3 10 0	1204-1216..	97.5-98.4	4 18 0
871-882 ..	70.5-71.4	3 11 0	1217-1228..	98.5-99.4	4 19 0
883-895 ..	71.5-72.4	3 12 0	1229-1240..	99.5-100.4	5 0 0
896-907 ..	72.5-73.4	3 13 0	1241-1253..	100.5-101.4	5 1 0
908-919 ..	73.5-74.4	3 14 0	1254-1265..	101.5-102.4	5 2 0
920-932 ..	74.5-75.4	3 15 0	1266-1277..	102.5-103.4	5 3 0

\*Formulae for Construction of Tables—

(a) "C" Series.—Let N = number of shillings in wage per week. Then  $12.345679 \times (N - .5) + 1$  gives the first, and  $12.345679 \times (N + .5)$  gives the second of the pair of numbers in the index-number division for N shillings. Decimal fractions in result to be disregarded.

(b) "Court" Series.—Each "C" series index-number point = .081, and each of the first of the pair of index-number divisions for the "C" series in above table when multiplied by this factor gives to the first decimal place (as it stands) the first of the pair of index-number divisions for the "Court" series—from which the second of the pair becomes obvious. (NOTE.—All "Court" series index-numbers must be derived through their corresponding "C" series index-numbers.)

Both the amount of wage and the adjustment scale operate only until the Court otherwise determines, and representatives of employers and employees have the right to approach the Court for variation of the wage or for variation of the adjustment scale. Only the "needs" portion of the total basic wage is adjustable.

### § 12. International Comparisons : Retail Price Index-Numbers.

The tables giving index-numbers of retail prices for (i) cost of living, including articles other than food, and (ii) foodstuffs only, appearing in previous issues of this Report have been discontinued for the duration of the war, owing partly to the need for economy, and partly to the information for many countries being no longer available. The figures, which were taken chiefly from the League of Nations *Monthly Bulletin of Statistics*, and the International Labour Office *Year Book of Labour Statistics*, are of course still obtainable in part from the publications mentioned.

## CHAPTER II.—WHOLESALE PRICES AND PRICE INDEXES.

### § 1. Melbourne Wholesale Price Index.

1. **General.**—The data on which this chapter is based relate almost entirely to wholesale prices in Melbourne. An index of Sydney wholesale prices is compiled by the Government Statistician of New South Wales, and published in the *Year Book* and the *Monthly Summary of Business Statistics* of that State.

The index of Melbourne wholesale prices was first computed in 1912, and has been continued on the same lines since that year. The items included in the (old) Melbourne wholesale price index comprise chiefly basic materials which in the form of raw material, food, or as a source of power, enter into production for home consumption. The purpose of the index, therefore, is to measure the changes in the prices of these particular materials rather than the changes in prices generally. As Australia does not, to any extent, manufacture from imported raw materials commodities for export, the local consumption appears to give the most appropriate weighting. Any lack of uniformity in the variations of the index-numbers for these wholesale prices and for retail prices would indicate broadly changes in the relation of manufacturing and distributing charges to the cost of basic materials.

The scope of this wholesale price index can best be understood by an examination of the list of commodities included which is given on page 38. This list is, to a large extent, comparable with that used in the compilation of the *Economist* and *Statist* index-numbers for Great Britain, but differs largely from that used for the wholesale price index-numbers of the United States (Bureau of Labour) or Canada (Department of Labour).

2. **The Grouping of the Commodities.**—The commodities are divided into eight groups, as set out on page 38. The descriptions of the groups are given in the following tables with the proportional cost of each group for the year 1943. These proportions cannot be used with any degree of accuracy to combine "group" index-numbers owing to the possible wide differences in the proportions compared with those for the *base period*. See first paragraph, page 15.