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### TRADE UNION STATISTICS, AUSTRALIA 30 JUNE 1986

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#### MAIN FEATURES

At 30 June 1986 there were 326 reporting trade unions with a total membership of 3,186,200 or 55 per cent of all employees. By comparison, at 30 June 1985 there were 323 trade unions with a combined membership of 3,154,200 which accounted for 57 per cent of total employees.

Eight unions, with 80,000 or more members each, accounted for 31 per cent of total membership. The 112 unions with fewer than 500 members each, accounted for only 0.6 per cent of total membership.

#### EXPLANATORY NOTES

##### Introduction

The figures in this publication have been compiled from questionnaires completed by individual trade unions in respect of their membership and State of operation as at 30 June from 1985 and as at 31 December in previous years. The collection was changed to an end of June basis to correspond with other statistics which are on a financial year basis.

##### Scope and coverage

2. Current lists of reporting trade unions are maintained by reference to lists used in previous years and to trade unions registered under the provisions of the various Federal and State industrial arbitration Acts, trade union Acts, etc.; from names of unions reported to be engaged in conciliation and arbitration proceedings, etc.; and from reports in trade journals, trade union and employer periodicals, newspapers and other publications. It should be noted that not all reporting trade unions are registered under the relevant Federal or State industrial arbitration legislation or State trade union Acts (see paragraph 11 below).

3. For trade unions that are branches of larger trade unions, only the larger organisation is counted to reduce the possibility of duplication in the figures of the number of unions and members. An interstate or federated trade union (i.e. a union with members in more than one State or Territory) is treated as a separate union in each State or Territory in which it has members, but is counted only once in the Australian total (see Table 1). Unions with interstate associations which are not strictly branches of a common organisation are counted as separate unions in the totals for Australia.

4. The published number of reporting trade unions varies from year to year as a result of amalgamations of unions, unions ceasing to operate, new unions being formed, existing organisations changing their status such that it brings them within the scope of the definition of a trade union (see paragraph 5), and existing unions reporting for the first time. At 30 June 1986, there were 326 reporting trade unions compared with 323 at 30 June 1985. This increase resulted from the inclusion of 10 unions (total membership of 9,902) reporting for the first time, the amalgamation of 6 unions with other existing unions and 1 union ceasing to operate.

##### Definitions

5. For the purpose of these statistics a *trade union* is defined as an organisation, consisting predominantly of employees, the principal activities of which include the negotiation of rates of pay and conditions of employment for its members. Non-operating unions or branches, i.e. those with no members at the date of collection, are not included in the statistics.

6. *Membership of trade unions. Financial members* are dues paying members who are no more than 6 months in arrears in payment of dues. *The total number of members* includes all persons (financial, unfinancial, honorary, etc.) regarded as members by unions.

7. Persons who are members of more than one union cannot be separately identified and are therefore counted more than once in the totals. The extent of this duplication is not known. Members of unions who work overseas are excluded from the reported membership data. Membership figures may be affected by differences in the concept of membership adopted by different unions or by the same union at different times. (See paragraph 9 below.)

8. *Proportion of total employees.* The approximate percentages of wage and salary earners in employment (i.e. employees) who were members of trade unions are shown in Table 3. From 30 June 1985, the proportions of employees have been calculated from estimates of employees from the Survey of Employment and Earnings published in *Employed Wage and Salary Earners, Australia* (6248.0). These estimates of employees have been adjusted by adding estimates of employees in private sector agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting and in private households employing staff, from the Labour Force Survey. Prior to 30 June 1985, estimates of employees from the *Labour Force, Australia* (6203.0),



have been used. The percentages shown should be regarded as giving only a broad indication of the extent of union membership among employees, because they are based on estimates of *employed* wage and salary earners and the degree of unemployment of reported union members will affect the percentages for a particular year and comparisons over time.

#### Comparability of series

9. Comparability of figures for different years may be affected by a number of factors. As stated in paragraph 7, there may be duplication in the count of members. This duplication may vary over time. Union rules on membership may follow different concepts and practices and this may be reflected in the level and fluctuations of the figures reported. Unions reported financial and total membership separately for the first time as at 30 June 1985, in previous years some unions confined their reported membership to 'financial' members whilst others included various other members. Individual unions may or may not include in their reported membership unemployed members, members who have retired from the labour force, disabled members, members with dues in arrears (who may be kept on union books for varying lengths of time), etc.

10. Membership of trade unions is shown separately for males and females for each State and Territory. The subdivision of total membership into males and females is not precise because some trade unions are unable to state the exact number of males and females among their members. The subdivision of total membership by States and Territories is also not precise because some unions in the Territories are affiliated with State organisations and their membership is reported under the heading of that State.

#### Organisations registered under industrial arbitration legislation

11. Details of employee organisations registered under the *Federal Conciliation and Arbitration Act 1904* as at

30 June 1986 (with comparable figures for 30 June 1985 shown in brackets) are: 146 (149) employee unions with membership of 2,571,500 (2,581,800) representing 81 (82) per cent of total membership of all reporting trade unions in Australia.

12. Industrial legislation in most States also provides for the registration of employee associations. Some employee associations are registered under more than one Act.

#### Related publications

*Employed Wage And Salary Earners, Australia* (6248.0) — issued quarterly

*The Labour Force, Australia* (6203.0) — issued monthly (\$1.20, \$2.10 incl. postage)

*Trade Union Members, Australia, March to May 1982* (6325.0)

*Labour Statistics, Australia* (6101.0)

13. Current publications produced by the ABS are listed in the *Catalogue of Publications, Australia* (1101.0). The ABS also issues, on Tuesdays and Fridays, a *Publications Advice* (1105.0) which lists publications to be released in the next few days. The Catalogue and Publications Advice are available from any ABS office.

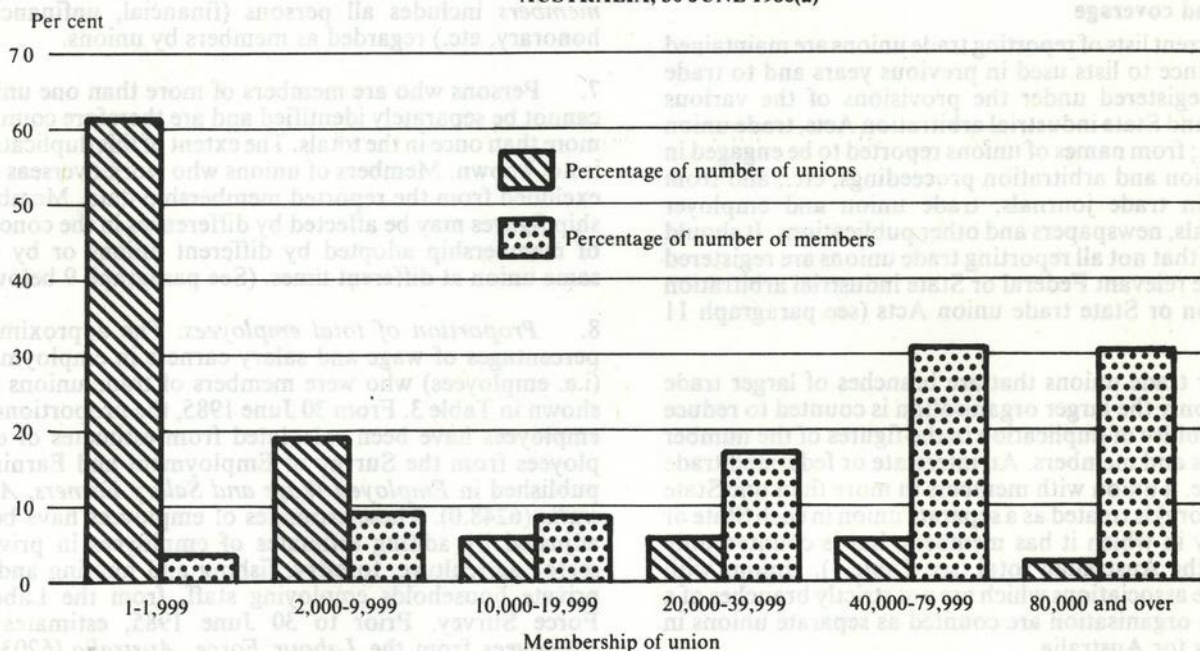
#### Symbols and other usages

— Break in continuity of series

14. Where figures have been rounded, discrepancies may occur between sums of the component items and totals.

IAN CASTLES  
Australian Statistician

TRADE UNIONS : PERCENTAGE OF UNIONS AND MEMBERS ACCORDING TO MEMBERSHIP  
AUSTRALIA, 30 JUNE 1986(a)



(a) For details see tables 5 and 6, page 5.



TABLE 1. TRADE UNIONS : NUMBER OF SEPARATE UNIONS, STATES, TERRITORIES AND AUSTRALIA

|             | <i>N.S.W.</i> | <i>Vic.</i> | <i>Qld</i> | <i>S.A.</i> | <i>W.A.</i> | <i>Tas.</i> | <i>N.T.</i> | <i>A.C.T.</i> | <i>Aust.(a)</i> |
|-------------|---------------|-------------|------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|---------------|-----------------|
| 31 December |               |             |            |             |             |             |             |               |                 |
| 1981        | 191           | 173         | 138        | 141         | 149         | 123         | 75          | 91            | 324             |
| 1982        | 187           | 175         | 142        | 143         | 148         | 124         | 78          | 93            | 322             |
| 1983        | 186           | 174         | 138        | 141         | 146         | 123         | 75          | 92            | 319             |
| 1984        | 190           | 179         | 138        | 142         | 148         | 127         | 75          | 89            | 329             |
| 30 June     |               |             |            |             |             |             |             |               |                 |
| 1985        | 183           | 177         | 138        | 143         | 146         | 130         | 76          | 83            | 323             |
| 1986        | 182           | 176         | 141        | 144         | 147         | 135         | 78          | 87            | 326             |

(a) Australian totals do not equal the sum of the States and Territories, see paragraph 3 of the Explanatory Notes.

TABLE 2. TRADE UNIONS : NUMBER OF MEMBERS, STATES, TERRITORIES AND AUSTRALIA ('000)

|                | <i>N.S.W.</i> | <i>Vic.</i> | <i>Qld</i> | <i>S.A.</i> | <i>W.A.</i> | <i>Tas.</i> | <i>N.T.</i> | <i>A.C.T.</i> | <i>Aust.</i> |
|----------------|---------------|-------------|------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|---------------|--------------|
| MALES          |               |             |            |             |             |             |             |               |              |
| 31 December    |               |             |            |             |             |             |             |               |              |
| 1981           | 772.3         | 522.9       | 285.6      | 178.0       | 156.4       | 63.4        | 14.2        | 36.6          | 2,029.4      |
| 1982           | 745.7         | 533.4       | 296.0      | 176.0       | 161.2       | 61.4        | 13.7        | 36.9          | 2,024.4      |
| 1983           | 730.6         | 529.1       | 299.6      | 174.3       | 162.2       | 61.1        | 13.9        | 36.4          | 2,007.2      |
| 1984           | 741.4         | 545.5       | 300.9      | 171.5       | 166.2       | 62.2        | 13.6        | 40.0          | 2,041.2      |
| 30 June(a)     |               |             |            |             |             |             |             |               |              |
| 1985—Financial | 660.0         | 488.3       | 283.3      | 161.0       | 148.9       | 57.5        | 11.1        | 37.2          | 1,847.4      |
| <i>Total</i>   | 756.2         | 568.0       | 328.8      | 183.2       | 166.3       | 64.1        | 13.9        | 41.2          | 2,121.6      |
| 1986—Financial | 664.4         | 527.4       | 270.6      | 162.1       | 152.4       | 60.9        | 11.4        | 42.9          | 1,892.1      |
| <i>Total</i>   | 757.0         | 586.9       | 309.7      | 178.7       | 167.8       | 65.2        | 13.9        | 47.2          | 2,126.5      |
| FEMALES        |               |             |            |             |             |             |             |               |              |
| 31 December    |               |             |            |             |             |             |             |               |              |
| 1981           | 373.3         | 248.8       | 135.4      | 85.1        | 72.7        | 26.3        | 6.0         | 17.0          | 964.7        |
| 1982           | 381.9         | 256.7       | 142.7      | 82.7        | 73.3        | 26.7        | 6.5         | 17.5          | 988.0        |
| 1983           | 378.1         | 259.1       | 130.6      | 83.5        | 75.3        | 27.6        | 6.7         | 17.2          | 978.0        |
| 1984           | 373.1         | 260.5       | 133.9      | 87.0        | 78.0        | 29.1        | 6.8         | 18.9          | 987.3        |
| 30 June(a)     |               |             |            |             |             |             |             |               |              |
| 1985—Financial | 357.0         | 269.0       | 113.7      | 85.7        | 74.4        | 29.4        | 7.0         | 19.2          | 955.4        |
| <i>Total</i>   | 392.7         | 290.5       | 124.1      | 89.9        | 78.2        | 29.8        | 7.4         | 20.0          | 1,032.6      |
| 1986—Financial | 357.0         | 277.6       | 123.6      | 85.8        | 80.8        | 28.8        | 6.2         | 18.7          | 978.4        |
| <i>Total</i>   | 391.3         | 299.5       | 137.7      | 89.7        | 84.4        | 29.2        | 7.3         | 20.5          | 1,059.7      |
| PERSONS        |               |             |            |             |             |             |             |               |              |
| 31 December    |               |             |            |             |             |             |             |               |              |
| 1981           | 1,145.6       | 771.7       | 421.0      | 263.1       | 229.1       | 89.8        | 20.1        | 53.7          | 2,994.1      |
| 1982           | 1,127.5       | 790.1       | 438.8      | 258.7       | 234.5       | 88.1        | 20.2        | 54.4          | 3,012.4      |
| 1983           | 1,108.7       | 788.2       | 430.2      | 257.8       | 237.5       | 88.6        | 20.6        | 53.6          | 2,985.2      |
| 1984           | 1,114.5       | 806.0       | 434.8      | 258.4       | 244.2       | 91.3        | 20.3        | 58.9          | 3,028.5      |
| 30 June(a)     |               |             |            |             |             |             |             |               |              |
| 1985—Financial | 1,016.9       | 757.4       | 397.1      | 246.8       | 223.3       | 86.9        | 18.1        | 56.3          | 2,802.8      |
| <i>Total</i>   | 1,148.9       | 858.5       | 452.9      | 273.1       | 244.5       | 93.9        | 21.3        | 61.2          | 3,154.2      |
| 1986—Financial | 1,021.4       | 805.0       | 394.1      | 247.9       | 233.2       | 89.7        | 17.5        | 61.6          | 2,870.5      |
| <i>Total</i>   | 1,148.2       | 886.4       | 447.5      | 268.5       | 252.2       | 94.4        | 21.2        | 67.7          | 3,186.2      |

(a) See paragraph 9 of the Explanatory Notes for details of the break in continuity of the series.

**TABLE 3. TRADE UNION MEMBERS : PROPORTION OF TOTAL EMPLOYEES(a), STATES, TERRITORIES AND AUSTRALIA (per cent)**

|                | <i>N.S.W.</i> | <i>Vic.</i> | <i>Qld</i> | <i>S.A.</i> | <i>W.A.</i> | <i>Tas.</i> | <i>N.T.</i> | <i>A.C.T.</i> | <i>Aust.</i> |
|----------------|---------------|-------------|------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|---------------|--------------|
| <b>MALES</b>   |               |             |            |             |             |             |             |               |              |
| 31 December(b) |               |             |            |             |             |             |             |               |              |
| 1981           | 64            | 58          | 57         | 62          | 54          | 67          | 43          | 67            | 60           |
| 1982           | 64            | 61          | 59         | 63          | 55          | 70          | 41          | 71            | 62           |
| 1983           | 65            | 61          | 59         | 62          | 55          | 68          | 43          | 64            | 61           |
| 1984           | 64            | 60          | 60         | 60          | 55          | 68          | 42          | 66            | 61           |
| 30 June(c)(d)  |               |             |            |             |             |             |             |               |              |
| 1985           | 67            | 65          | 65         | 65          | 57          | 72          | 44          | 67            | 65           |
| 1986           | 66            | 63          | 61         | 63          | 55          | 71          | 40          | 73            | 63           |
| <b>FEMALES</b> |               |             |            |             |             |             |             |               |              |
| 31 December(b) |               |             |            |             |             |             |             |               |              |
| 1981           | 50            | 44          | 46         | 47          | 42          | 52          | 31          | 42            | 47           |
| 1982           | 53            | 46          | 48         | 46          | 40          | 52          | 32          | 45            | 48           |
| 1983           | 52            | 46          | 43         | 46          | 40          | 55          | 33          | 39            | 47           |
| 1984           | 48            | 44          | 43         | 46          | 40          | 53          | 35          | 40            | 45           |
| 30 June(c)(d)  |               |             |            |             |             |             |             |               |              |
| 1985           | 51            | 47          | 39         | 46          | 39          | 51          | 33          | 38            | 46           |
| 1986           | 48            | 44          | 41         | 45          | 39          | 47          | 26          | 38            | 44           |
| <b>PERSONS</b> |               |             |            |             |             |             |             |               |              |
| 31 December(b) |               |             |            |             |             |             |             |               |              |
| 1981           | 59            | 53          | 53         | 56          | 49          | 62          | 38          | 56            | 54           |
| 1982           | 60            | 55          | 55         | 56          | 50          | 63          | 38          | 60            | 56           |
| 1983           | 60            | 55          | 53         | 56          | 49          | 63          | 39          | 53            | 56           |
| 1984           | 57            | 54          | 53         | 55          | 49          | 62          | 39          | 55            | 55           |
| 30 June(c)(d)  |               |             |            |             |             |             |             |               |              |
| 1985           | 60            | 57          | 55         | 57          | 49          | 64          | 39          | 54            | 57           |
| 1986           | 58            | 55          | 53         | 55          | 48          | 61          | 34          | 57            | 55           |

(a) The method used to estimate total employees has been amended. For details see paragraph 8 of the Explanatory Notes. (b) Based on estimates of employees from the Labour Force Survey. (c) See paragraph 9 of the Explanatory Notes for details of the break in continuity of the series. (d) Based on estimates of employees from the Survey of Employment and Earnings.

**TABLE 4. TRADE UNIONS : NUMBER OF STATES AND/OR TERRITORIES OF OPERATION, AUSTRALIA**

|                                  | <i>One</i> | <i>Two</i> | <i>Three</i> | <i>Four</i> | <i>Five</i> | <i>Six or more</i> | <i>Two or more</i> | <i>Total all unions</i> |
|----------------------------------|------------|------------|--------------|-------------|-------------|--------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>NUMBER OF SEPARATE UNIONS</b> |            |            |              |             |             |                    |                    |                         |
| 31 December                      |            |            |              |             |             |                    |                    |                         |
| 1981                             | 183        | 9          | 6            | 13          | 24          | 89                 | 141                | 324                     |
| 1982                             | 178        | 11         | 3            | 12          | 16          | 102                | 144                | 322                     |
| 1983                             | 176        | 11         | 5            | 11          | 15          | 101                | 143                | 319                     |
| 1984                             | 186        | 12         | 3            | 11          | 17          | 100                | 143                | 329                     |
| 30 June                          |            |            |              |             |             |                    |                    |                         |
| 1985                             | 183        | 8          | 3            | 12          | 15          | 102                | 140                | 323                     |
| 1986                             | 187        | 6          | 3            | 13          | 14          | 103                | 139                | 326                     |
| <b>NUMBER OF MEMBERS ('000)</b>  |            |            |              |             |             |                    |                    |                         |
| 31 December                      |            |            |              |             |             |                    |                    |                         |
| 1981                             | 540.5      | 57.0       | 25.4         | 165.2       | 121.0       | 2,085.1            | 2,453.6            | 2,994.1                 |
| 1982                             | 502.9      | 21.2       | 55.7         | 132.2       | 135.4       | 2,165.0            | 2,509.5            | 3,012.4                 |
| 1983                             | 531.9      | 22.9       | 56.3         | 132.1       | 133.6       | 2,108.5            | 2,453.3            | 2,985.2                 |
| 1984                             | 540.7      | 23.9       | 53.7         | 138.7       | 143.2       | 2,128.4            | 2,487.9            | 3,028.5                 |
| 30 June(a)                       |            |            |              |             |             |                    |                    |                         |
| 1985                             | 541.7      | 20.9       | 52.7         | 142.4       | 208.7       | 2,187.7            | 2,612.5            | 3,154.2                 |
| 1986                             | 540.3      | 20.1       | 54.4         | 94.0        | 179.5       | 2,297.8            | 2,645.8            | 3,186.2                 |

(a) See paragraph 9 of the Explanatory Notes for details of the break in continuity of the series.



TABLE 5. TRADE UNIONS : NUMBER OF UNIONS ACCORDING TO SIZE, AUSTRALIA

| Number of members       | 31 December—     |            |            |            | 30 June(a)—      |                  |                          |                                     |
|-------------------------|------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------------|------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
|                         | Number of unions |            |            |            | 1985             |                  | 1986                     |                                     |
|                         | 1981             | 1982       | 1983       | 1984       | Number of unions | Number of unions | Per cent of total unions | Cumulative per cent of total unions |
| Under 100               | 36               | 46         | 41         | 41         | 35               | 40               | 12.3                     | 12.3                                |
| 100 and under 250       | 46               | 38         | 39         | 45         | 42               | 40               | 12.3                     | 24.5                                |
| 250 and under 500       | 26               | 25         | 25         | 24         | 30               | 32               | 9.8                      | 34.4                                |
| 500 and under 1,000     | 48               | 43         | 47         | 52         | 47               | 43               | 13.2                     | 47.5                                |
| 1,000 and under 2,000   | 45               | 45         | 41         | 41         | 41               | 45               | 13.8                     | 61.3                                |
| 2,000 and under 5,000   | 38               | 41         | 41         | 40         | 41               | 39               | 12.0                     | 73.3                                |
| 5,000 and under 10,000  | 22               | 21         | 21         | 22         | 22               | 23               | 7.1                      | 80.4                                |
| 10,000 and under 20,000 | 20               | 21         | 22         | 20         | 21               | 19               | 5.8                      | 86.2                                |
| 20,000 and under 30,000 | 12               | 9          | 13         | 13         | 10               | 12               | 3.7                      | 89.9                                |
| 30,000 and under 40,000 | 9                | 10         | 7          | 6          | 7                | 7                | 2.1                      | 92.0                                |
| 40,000 and under 50,000 | 7                | 9          | 8          | 11         | 10               | 10               | 3.1                      | 95.1                                |
| 50,000 and under 80,000 | 8                | 6          | 5          | 4          | 7                | 8                | 2.5                      | 97.5                                |
| 80,000 and over         | 7                | 8          | 9          | 10         | 10               | 8                | 2.5                      | 100.0                               |
| <b>Total</b>            | <b>324</b>       | <b>322</b> | <b>319</b> | <b>329</b> | <b>323</b>       | <b>326</b>       | <b>100.0</b>             |                                     |

(a) See paragraph 9 of the Explanatory Notes for details of the break in continuity of the series.

TABLE 6. TRADE UNIONS : NUMBER OF MEMBERS ACCORDING TO SIZE OF UNION, AUSTRALIA

| Number of members       | 31 December—      |                |                |                | 30 June(a)—       |                   |                                     |                           |                                      |
|-------------------------|-------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------------|
|                         | Number of members |                |                |                | 1985              |                   | 1986                                |                           |                                      |
|                         | 1981              | 1982           | 1983           | 1984           | Number of members | Number of members | Average number of members per union | Per cent of total members | Cumulative per cent of total members |
|                         |                   |                |                |                | — '000—           |                   |                                     |                           |                                      |
| Under 100               | 1.7               | 2.5            | 2.0            | 2.0            | 1.7               | 2.0               | 0.1                                 | 0.1                       | 0.1                                  |
| 100 and under 250       | 7.3               | 6.1            | 6.0            | 7.0            | 6.7               | 6.6               | 0.2                                 | 0.2                       | 0.3                                  |
| 250 and under 500       | 9.8               | 9.1            | 8.9            | 8.4            | 10.7              | 11.8              | 0.4                                 | 0.4                       | 0.6                                  |
| 500 and under 1,000     | 33.4              | 28.8           | 33.9           | 37.2           | 33.9              | 31.1              | 0.7                                 | 1.0                       | 1.6                                  |
| 1,000 and under 2,000   | 64.3              | 61.3           | 57.7           | 56.8           | 56.1              | 63.0              | 1.4                                 | 2.0                       | 3.4                                  |
| 2,000 and under 5,000   | 129.0             | 132.0          | 132.0          | 127.3          | 128.9             | 130.1             | 3.3                                 | 4.1                       | 7.7                                  |
| 5,000 and under 10,000  | 156.1             | 147.3          | 149.3          | 156.1          | 149.4             | 158.8             | 6.9                                 | 5.0                       | 12.7                                 |
| 10,000 and under 20,000 | 287.4             | 305.6          | 328.1          | 289.5          | 301.3             | 275.0             | 14.5                                | 8.6                       | 21.3                                 |
| 20,000 and under 30,000 | 280.2             | 207.4          | 315.2          | 307.3          | 234.8             | 294.6             | 24.6                                | 9.2                       | 30.5                                 |
| 30,000 and under 40,000 | 316.5             | 354.6          | 254.7          | 207.1          | 242.1             | 251.3             | 35.9                                | 7.9                       | 38.4                                 |
| 40,000 and under 50,000 | 329.2             | 402.7          | 363.2          | 495.7          | 452.3             | 455.8             | 45.6                                | 14.3                      | 52.7                                 |
| 50,000 and under 80,000 | 531.6             | 405.6          | 320.9          | 244.5          | 408.6             | 529.4             | 66.2                                | 16.6                      | 69.3                                 |
| 80,000 and over         | 847.4             | 949.4          | 1,013.4        | 1,089.5        | 1,127.7           | 976.8             | 122.1                               | 30.7                      | 100.0                                |
| <b>Total</b>            | <b>2,994.1</b>    | <b>3,012.4</b> | <b>2,985.2</b> | <b>3,028.5</b> | <b>3,154.2</b>    | <b>3,186.2</b>    | <b>9.8</b>                          | <b>100.0</b>              |                                      |

(a) See paragraph 9 of the Explanatory Notes for details of the break in continuity of the series.

