



Australian Bureau of Statistics

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MERCHANDISE IMPORTS (BALANCE OF PAYMENTS BASIS) AUSTRALIA, NOVEMBER 1996

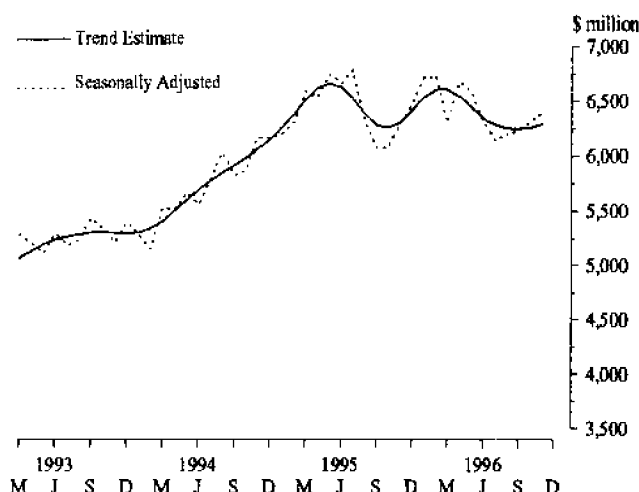
MAIN FEATURES

November 1996 compared with October 1996

The provisional **trend estimate** of *merchandise imports* rose \$33 million, or 1 per cent, to \$6,295 million.

In **seasonally adjusted terms**, *merchandise imports* for November rose \$77 million, or 1 per cent, to \$6,400 million. *Consumption goods* rose \$32 million, or 2 per cent, to \$1,740 million. *Capital goods* rose \$87 million, or 6 per cent, to \$1,487 million. *Intermediate and other goods* fell \$42 million, or 1 per cent, to \$3,173 million.

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



In **original terms**, *imports* fell \$530 million, or 7 per cent, to \$6,640 million.

Imports of *consumption goods*, in original terms, fell \$196 million, or 9 per cent, to \$1,884 million. Falls were recorded in all groups except household electrical items, which rose \$5 million or 2 per cent. The largest decreases were recorded in:

- non-industrial transport equipment, down \$71 million or 15 per cent (due mainly to decreased imports of passenger motor cars);
- food and beverages, mainly for consumption, down \$41 million or 14 per cent (with most components recording decreases);
- toys, books and leisure goods, down \$38 million or 14 per cent; and

- consumption goods nes, down \$34 million or 6 per cent.

Imports of *capital goods*, in original terms, fell \$21 million, or 1 per cent, to \$1,575 million. The largest decreases were recorded in:

- machinery and industrial equipment, down \$54 million or 8 per cent (with most components recording decreases); and
- capital goods nes, down \$17 million or 8 per cent.

These decreases were largely offset by civil aircraft, up \$63 million or 103 per cent (which includes the import of an Ansett aircraft valued at \$57 million and a Qantas aircraft valued at \$38 million).

Imports of *intermediate and other goods*, in original terms, fell \$313 million, or 9 per cent, to \$3,181 million. Decreases were recorded in 12 of the 14 groups, with the largest being:

- fuels and lubricants, down \$134 million or 24 per cent (due mainly to decreased imports of crude petroleum);
- organic and inorganic chemicals, fell \$57 million or 22 per cent (with most components recording decreases); and
- processed industrial supplies nes, down \$44 million or 6 per cent.

The largest increase was recorded in iron and steel, up \$20 million or 20 per cent.

Five months ended November 1996 compared with five months ended November 1995

In **original terms**, *merchandise imports* fell \$99 million to \$33,693 million, with:

- *consumption goods* rising \$437 million (5 per cent);
- *capital goods* falling \$257 million (3 per cent); and
- *intermediate and other goods* falling \$279 million (2 per cent).

INQUIRIES • for further information about these and related unpublished statistics, contact Dorian Bontempelli on Canberra (06) 252 5543, or any ABS State office.
• for information about other ABS statistics and services please refer to the back page of this publication.

TABLE 1. MERCHANDISE IMPORTS (BALANCE OF PAYMENTS BASIS) — ORIGINAL, SEASONALLY ADJUSTED AND TREND ESTIMATES (a)
(\$ million)

	Years			Months												July to Nov.			
	1993-1994-1995			1995-96												1996-97			
	94	95	96	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	
Consumption goods fob (b) —																			
Food and beverages, mainly for consumption	-2,430	-2,592	2,760	-230	-255	-263	-242	-252	-215	-203	-209	-220	-193	-263	-255	-225	-283	-242	-1,226
Household electrical items	-1,436	-1,744	-1,766	-138	-179	-178	-139	120	-129	-137	147	-151	-124	-170	-159	-177	-203	208	-819
Non-industrial transport equipment	-3,800	-4,758	-4,436	-346	-422	-403	-375	277	-325	-295	368	-411	-319	-435	-498	-389	-483	-412	-2,066
Textiles, clothing and footwear	2,320	2,566	-2,726	-220	-212	-229	-190	-261	-293	225	-207	-194	-155	284	-265	-244	-244	-227	-1,201
Toys, books and leisure goods	-2,496	-2,545	-2,535	-252	-260	-256	-185	-190	-191	170	-173	-192	-168	-243	-223	-250	274	-236	-1,266
Consumption goods nes	-4,751	-5,213	-5,638	-486	-529	-539	-450	-430	432	-422	-449	-473	-386	-542	-510	-515	-593	-559	-2,596
Total consumption goods	-17,233	-19,418	-19,861	1,672	-1,857	-1,868	-1,581	-1,530	-1,585	-1,452	-1,553	-1,641	-1,345	-1,937	-1,910	1,800	-2,080	-1,884	9,174
Capital goods fob (b) —																			
Machinery and industrial equipment	6,414	-7,897	-8,316	-615	-723	-726	-687	-738	710	-651	-667	-716	674	700	-707	-650	715	-661	-3,473
ADP equipment	-2,629	-3,232	-3,593	253	-273	-282	-272	-263	274	-283	-327	361	-342	-332	-261	-315	-271	-271	-1,471
Telecommunications equipment	-1,182	-1,804	1,996	-207	-179	-199	-169	170	-141	-173	-150	131	-150	-153	-121	-150	-168	164	-912
Civil aircraft	-241	-529	-688	-11	-31	104	-28	-44	-77	-31	70	-117	-66	-9	113	-108	-61	-124	-255
Industrial transport equipment nes	-2,084	-2,714	-2,214	-148	-197	-180	-165	-158	-193	-186	-198	-191	-178	-167	-166	-145	-170	-161	-945
Capital goods nes	2,293	-2,365	-2,365	183	-213	-213	-173	-189	-192	-185	-194	-206	-171	-208	-182	196	-211	-194	-1,055
Total capital goods	-14,843	-18,541	-19,172	-1,417	-1,616	-1,704	-1,494	-1,562	-1,587	-1,509	-1,606	-1,722	-1,581	-1,569	-1,550	-1,564	-1,596	-1,575	-8,111
Intermediate and other goods fob (b) —																			
Food and beverages, mainly for industry	-509	-774	-700	65	55	77	-44	-77	-51	46	-52	-63	-40	51	66	-43	-62	48	327
Primary industrial supplies nes	-701	-901	-879	66	-83	-76	-76	64	62	106	-75	-73	54	69	-66	70	-73	-78	-369
Fuels and lubricants	3,317	3,566	-4,163	290	-264	-353	314	387	-376	-374	-425	391	321	-412	-304	254	-548	-414	-1,575
Parts for transport equipment	-4,183	-4,714	4,601	-338	-406	-340	-344	-397	373	362	394	-420	334	490	415	-386	-383	-377	1,977
Parts for ADP equipment	-1,681	1,858	-1,857	155	161	-161	-137	-160	157	162	-156	154	137	160	-133	-136	136	-135	-794
Other parts for capital goods	5,047	5,975	-6,389	-509	-563	550	471	539	-525	526	490	558	454	565	535	526	-581	-558	-2,826
Organic and inorganic chemicals	-2,102	-2,431	2,734	-193	-225	245	-193	-274	215	248	243	-232	195	264	200	-240	-265	208	-1,154
Paper and paperboard	-1,465	1,794	-1,868	-172	-195	-173	-151	162	147	115	-141	131	103	151	-151	-149	168	-147	-918
Textile yarn and fabrics	1,869	-2,036	-1,922	154	-167	-172	137	167	151	142	141	172	143	-182	-158	162	-159	-151	-869
Iron and steel	-1,039	-1,285	-1,408	-129	-125	125	-132	-121	-113	109	100	-101	93	103	114	-109	-99	119	639
Plastics	-1,375	-1,646	-1,685	-146	-158	-149	-129	151	131	128	124	-133	111	145	135	-134	-146	-127	-778
Non-monetary gold	-978	-705	-702	56	-51	-74	48	-66	-64	-54	-52	52	52	-45	-45	-53	-60	-50	-314
Processed industrial supplies nes	-7,783	-8,680	8,793	-728	-747	-751	-660	-755	-710	752	745	-771	-588	-779	-744	748	-789	-745	-3,812
Other goods	-286	-391	-338	-25	28	14	-30	-42	-15	14	-13	-50	-19	-23	24	-14	-25	-24	155
Total intermediate and other goods	-32,335	-36,756	-38,059	3,026	-3,228	-3,260	-2,866	-3,362	-3,090	-3,138	-3,151	3,301	2,644	-3,439	-3,090	-3,024	3,494	-3,181	-16,507
Total imports fob	-64,411	-74,715	-77,092	-6,115	-6,701	-6,832	-5,941	-6,454	-6,262	-6,099	-6,310	-6,664	-5,570	-6,945	-6,550	-6,388	-7,170	-6,640	-33,792
Seasonally Adjusted																			
Consumption goods	..	..	..	-1,622	-1,570	1,656	1,729	-1,603	1,687	1,532	1,662	-1,717	-1,657	-1,680	1,813	-1,728	-1,708	-1,740	..
Capital goods	..	..	..	-1,399	-1,452	-1,533	-1,478	-1,761	1,835	-1,660	-1,732	-1,764	-1,625	-1,386	-1,439	-1,508	-1,400	-1,487	..
Intermediate and other goods	..	..	..	-3,051	3,056	-3,109	-3,266	3,353	-3,214	-3,113	-3,286	-3,098	3,037	3,072	2,947	-3,005	-3,215	3,173	..
Total imports fob	..	..	..	-6,072	-6,078	-6,298	-6,473	-6,717	-6,736	-6,305	-6,680	-6,579	-6,319	-6,138	-6,199	-6,241	-6,323	-6,400	..
Trend Estimates																			
Total imports fob	..	..	..	-6,284	-6,260	-6,312	-6,419	-6,534	-6,607	-6,606	-6,541	-6,444	-6,351	-6,289	-6,258	-6,252p	-6,262p	-6,295p	..

(a) In keeping with balance of payments conventions, debit items such as merchandise imports, are recorded as negative entries. (b) Definitions of the component series are given in the ABS Information Paper, *Change to Commodity Classification of Merchandise Imports in Balance of Payments Publications* (ABS Catalogue No. 5344.0).

EXPLANATORY NOTES

Introduction

1. This publication contains preliminary estimates of Australia's merchandise imports on a balance of payments basis for November 1996, together with estimates for previous months.

2. Descriptions of the classifications used for merchandise imports and detailed item definitions are presented in *Change to Commodity Classification of Merchandise Imports in Balance of Payments Publications* (5344.0).

3. Descriptions of the underlying concepts and structure of merchandise imports on a balance of payments basis and the sources and methods used in compiling the estimates are presented in *Balance of Payments, Australia: Concepts, Sources and Methods* (5331.0). That publication also provides explanations of seasonal adjustment and trend estimates.

Accuracy, reliability and volatility

4. The latest estimates in this publication are **preliminary and subject to revision** as more complete and accurate information becomes available.

5. **Particular care should be exercised in interpreting month-to-month movements** in original and seasonally adjusted series as short term movements cannot be assumed to indicate changes in trend. The monthly estimates are volatile, being subject to seasonal factors (except where adjusted in the table) and large irregular influences. The irregular influences may reflect both random economic events and difficulties of statistical recording. Seasonal adjustment does not aim to remove the irregular or non-seasonal influences which may be present in any particular month. This means that the month-to-month movements of the seasonally adjusted estimates may not be reliable indicators of trend behaviour. For example, irregular factors unrelated to the trend account for more than half the seasonally adjusted monthly movements in merchandise imports fob in 9 out of 10 months.

6. **The impact of the irregular influences upon the seasonally adjusted series is reduced by smoothing**, as shown by the trend estimates in the table and graph. The trend estimates are generally derived by applying a 13-term Henderson-weighted moving average to the seasonally adjusted series.

Seasonal adjustment

7. The factors to be used in seasonally adjusting the monthly merchandise imports statistics, as well as the monthly balance of payments statistics, during 1996 can be obtained, for \$75.00, from Melissa Marino on Canberra (06) 252 6419.

8. The **seasonally adjusted** statistics in this publication should not be regarded as in any way definitive as results from seasonal adjustment vary according to the method used.

More detailed and longer term series

9. More detailed information than that shown in this publication is available for November 1996 and earlier months. Estimates for months prior to those shown in this publication are also available. These data can be obtained by contacting Trevor Jolly on Canberra (06) 252 6820. There may be a charge for this information.

Related products and services

10. Preliminary estimates of Australia's balance of payments for November 1996 are due for release on 6 January 1997 in the monthly publication *Balance of Payments, Australia* (5301.0). The estimates of merchandise imports shown as part of the balance of payments in 5301.0 will normally be the same as those already released in the corresponding issue of this publication.

11. More detailed merchandise imports data, including dissections by commodity and country of origin, are also available on an international merchandise trade basis for November 1996 and previous months. These data series can be obtained by contacting International Trade Client Services on Canberra (06) 252 5400.

Symbols and other usages

fob	free on board
nes	not elsewhere specified
—	nil or rounded to zero
..	not applicable
p	provisional

W. McLennan
Australian Statistician

Release date for December 1996 issue

The expected release date for the December issue of this publication is 20 January 1997. Any variations which might occur will be notified in the *ABS Release Advice* (1105.0)

The date can be confirmed a few days prior to release by telephoning
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