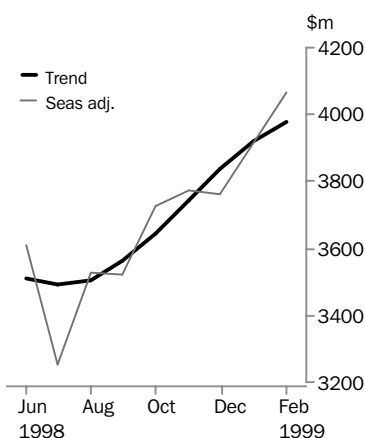


LENDING FINANCE

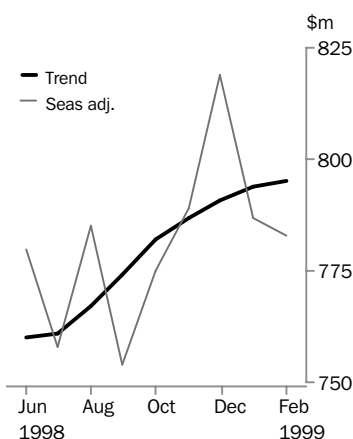
AUSTRALIA

EMBARGO: 11:30AM (CANBERRA TIME) TUES 13 APR 1999

Personal finance



Lease finance



FEBRUARY KEY FIGURES

TREND ESTIMATES	Jan 1999 \$m	Feb 1999 \$m	% change Jan 1999 to Feb 1999
Housing finance for owner occupation	5 077	5 168	1.8
Personal finance	3 921	3 980	1.5
Commercial finance	14 294	14 065	-1.6
Lease finance	794	795	0.1

SEASONALLY ADJUSTED	Jan 1999 \$m	Feb 1999 \$m	% change Jan 1999 to Feb 1999
Housing finance for owner occupation	5 156	5 059	-1.9
Personal finance	3 915	4 064	3.8
Commercial finance	12 724	14 612	14.8
Lease finance	787	783	-0.5

FEBRUARY KEY POINTS

HOUSING FINANCE FOR OWNER OCCUPATION

- The trend estimate for the value of commitments for owner occupied dwellings rose by 1.8% to \$5 168 million in February.
- The monthly seasonally adjusted estimate decreased by 1.9% to \$5 059 million.

PERSONAL FINANCE

- The trend estimate rose by 1.5% during February. The revolving credit component increased by 2.5% and fixed loan facilities rose by 0.3%. Revolving credit commitments were 22.5% higher than a year earlier, while fixed lending commitments were 4.0% lower.
- The seasonally adjusted estimate for total personal finance commitments increased by 3.8% in February to \$4 064 million.

COMMERCIAL FINANCE

- The trend estimate decreased by 1.6% to \$14 065 million in February. Revolving credit commitments declined by 3.3%.

LEASE FINANCE

- The trend series was static in February.
- Seasonally adjusted, commitments fell slightly.

- For further information about these and related statistics, contact Karen Young on Sydney 02 9268 4784, or any ABS office shown on the back cover of this publication.

NOTES

FORTHCOMING ISSUES

ISSUE

RELEASE DATE

March 1999

14 May 1999

April 1999

15 June 1999

May 1999

13 July 1999

June 1999

11 August 1999

July 1999

10 September 1999

August 1999

13 October 1999

.....

CHANGES IN THIS ISSUE

There are no changes in this issue.

.....

W. McLennan

Australian Statistician

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

HOUSING FINANCE FOR OWNER OCCUPATION

The February 1999 trend estimate for the value of housing finance commitments rose by 1.8% to \$5 168 million from January, the sixth consecutive monthly increase. The seasonally adjusted estimate for total commitments decreased by 1.9% to \$5 059 million in February, the first decrease since September 1998.

For further information, refer to Housing Finance for Owner Occupation, Australia (5609.0).

PERSONAL FINANCE

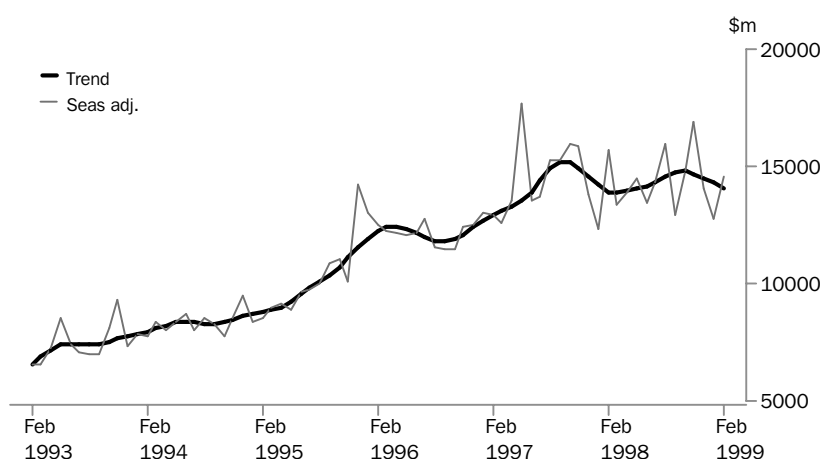
The trend estimate for personal finance commitments increased by 1.5% to \$3 980 million in February 1999. Commitments for fixed loan facilities increased by 0.3% in February, the sixth consecutive monthly increase. Revolving credit facilities increased 2.5% in February, continuing an upward trend that commenced in July 1998.

On a seasonally adjusted basis, total commitments increased by 3.8% to \$4 064 million. Commitments for fixed loan facilities decreased by 1.8% while revolving credit facilities rose by 8.7% in February, the seventh consecutive monthly increase.

COMMERCIAL FINANCE

The trend estimate for commercial finance commitments decreased by 1.6% in February 1999. While there was minimal change in the level of fixed loan commitments, revolving credit commitments declined 3.3%, the fourth consecutive monthly decrease.

Readers should exercise caution when interpreting the seasonally adjusted data. For further information, see Explanatory Note 10.



LEASE FINANCE

The trend estimate for lease finance commitments was little different from last month. The trend series has been increasing since July 1998, with the rate of increase slowing since October 1998. The seasonally adjusted estimate for commitments decreased by 0.5% in February.

FINANCE COMMITMENTS, Summary

Month	SECURED HOUSING(a).....		PERSONAL.....			COMMERCIAL.....			LEASE
	Construction and purchase of dwellings	Alterations and additions	Fixed loan facilities	Revolving credit facilities(b)	Total	Fixed loan facilities	Revolving credit facilities(b)(c)	Total	Total
	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m
ORIGINAL									
1998									
February	4 440	243	1 836	1 421	3 258	7 151	6 207	13 358	666
March	4 779	256	1 964	1 672	3 636	6 748	6 016	12 764	836
April	4 596	224	1 743	1 745	3 488	6 637	7 083	13 720	682
May	4 614	225	1 812	1 816	3 627	7 696	6 507	14 202	734
June	5 159	245	1 987	1 892	3 879	10 038	6 318	16 356	1 163
July	4 959	222	1 838	1 903	3 741	9 002	7 652	16 654	904
August	4 436	200	1 634	1 857	3 491	6 984	7 665	14 649	687
September	4 514	203	1 745	1 921	3 666	7 129	6 949	14 078	755
October	4 574	216	1 692	2 059	3 751	7 261	6 352	13 612	720
November	4 966	219	1 740	1 952	3 692	7 618	7 732	15 350	704
December	4 964	218	1 735	2 175	3 910	8 822	7 344	16 166	902
1999									
January	4 010	184	1 604	1 645	3 249	5 284	5 255	10 539	544
February	4 914	249	1 752	1 852	3 604	6 278	6 221	12 499	675
SEASONALLY ADJUSTED									
1998									
February	4 567	n.a.	1 866	1 753	3 619	8 588	7 132	15 720	775
March	4 401	n.a.	1 811	1 812	3 623	6 881	6 489	13 371	816
April	4 691	n.a.	1 806	1 778	3 585	7 262	6 595	13 857	744
May	4 606	n.a.	1 831	1 805	3 637	7 677	6 779	14 456	731
June	4 872	n.a.	1 810	1 800	3 610	7 814	5 620	13 434	780
July	4 552	n.a.	1 731	1 520	3 250	7 802	6 546	14 348	758
August	4 496	n.a.	1 713	1 812	3 525	7 408	8 557	15 964	785
September	4 417	n.a.	1 689	1 835	3 523	6 615	6 307	12 922	754
October	4 579	n.a.	1 796	1 933	3 729	7 756	7 037	14 793	775
November	4 948	n.a.	1 824	1 949	3 772	8 301	8 591	16 892	789
December	5 078	n.a.	1 728	2 036	3 763	7 407	6 676	14 083	819
1999									
January	5 156	n.a.	1 811	2 104	3 915	7 156	5 568	12 724	787
February	5 059	n.a.	1 777	2 287	4 064	7 529	7 083	14 612	783
TREND ESTIMATES									
1998									
February	4 556	n.a.	1 869	1 785	3 655	7 600	6 306	13 906	780
March	4 577	n.a.	1 849	1 781	3 630	7 546	6 296	13 842	777
April	4 601	n.a.	1 824	1 766	3 590	7 548	6 388	13 936	771
May	4 607	n.a.	1 796	1 749	3 545	7 543	6 507	14 050	765
June	4 589	n.a.	1 771	1 737	3 508	7 518	6 645	14 162	760
July	4 561	n.a.	1 753	1 739	3 492	7 498	6 844	14 341	761
August	4 554	n.a.	1 743	1 763	3 506	7 506	7 070	14 576	767
September	4 596	n.a.	1 744	1 816	3 560	7 516	7 249	14 765	774
October	4 695	n.a.	1 754	1 891	3 645	7 514	7 272	14 786	782
November	4 828	n.a.	1 768	1 975	3 743	7 535	7 156	14 691	787
December	4 961	n.a.	1 780	2 056	3 836	7 546	6 965	14 512	791
1999									
January	5 077	n.a.	1 788	2 133	3 921	7 533	6 761	14 294	794
February	5 168	n.a.	1 794	2 186	3 980	7 527	6 539	14 065	795

(a) For owner occupation.

(c) See Explanatory Note 10 on page 11 for further information on the seasonally adjusted data for this series.

(b) New increased credit limits during the period; includes credit cards.

HOUSING AND PERSONAL FINANCE COMMITMENTS, By Type of Lender: **Original**HOUSING
FINANCE(a).....

PERSONAL FINANCE.....

	<i>All banks</i>	<i>Permanent building societies</i>	<i>Mortgage managers</i>	<i>Other lenders</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>All banks</i>	<i>Credit co-operatives</i>	<i>Finance companies</i>	<i>Other lenders</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>Month</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>
1997										
December	3 684	158	363	255	4 460	2 678	302	602	136	3 718
1998										
January	3 049	128	291	214	3 682	2 158	240	587	110	3 094
February	3 606	175	406	254	4 440	2 305	254	585	113	3 258
March	3 792	205	503	279	4 779	2 615	275	629	117	3 636
April	3 668	192	474	262	4 596	2 540	257	583	107	3 488
May	3 725	182	452	256	4 614	2 671	260	575	121	3 627
June	4 244	206	471	238	5 159	2 816	300	641	122	3 879
July	4 069	185	451	253	4 959	2 648	310	672	112	3 741
August	3 671	163	381	221	4 436	2 518	249	593	131	3 491
September	3 739	178	364	233	4 514	2 659	253	622	133	3 666
October	3 811	175	362	226	4 574	2 762	258	597	135	3 751
November	4 188	188	371	219	4 966	2 685	272	612	122	3 692
December	4 219	187	318	240	4 964	2 865	294	624	128	3 910
1999										
January	3 334	150	326	200	4 010	2 359	240	539	112	3 249
February	4 092	193	399	230	4 914	2 649	269	562	124	3 604

(a) Excludes alterations and additions.

COMMERCIAL AND LEASE FINANCE COMMITMENTS, By Type of Lender: **Original**

COMMERCIAL FINANCE.....

LEASE FINANCE.....

	<i>All banks</i>	<i>Money market corporations</i>	<i>Finance companies</i>	<i>Other lenders</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>All banks</i>	<i>General financiers</i>	<i>Finance companies</i>	<i>Other lessors(a)</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>Month</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>
1997										
December	13 328	1 276	515	617	15 736	270	152	337	43	802
1998										
January	8 147	1 089	397	552	10 186	162	116	271	26	575
February	10 051	2 047	419	841	13 358	204	159	284	19	666
March	9 798	1 742	454	770	12 764	266	181	344	45	836
April	9 279	3 351	385	705	13 720	239	108	313	23	682
May	11 070	1 939	388	805	14 202	297	113	306	18	734
June	13 560	1 533	370	893	16 356	466	166	461	68	1 163
July	13 445	1 732	371	1 107	16 654	348	155	343	58	904
August	12 083	1 504	370	691	14 649	232	131	287	38	687
September	10 370	2 653	396	658	14 078	257	171	300	27	755
October	11 401	1 094	355	762	13 612	254	151	287	27	720
November	11 841	2 285	445	779	15 350	280	138	266	20	704
December	13 219	1 700	436	810	16 166	373	164	325	40	902
1999										
January	8 698	975	338	528	10 539	204	100	217	23	544
February	9 621	1 745	352	781	12 499	291	92	265	27	675

(a) Includes money market corporations.

PERSONAL FINANCE COMMITMENTS, Fixed Loan Facilities: **Original**

	<i>New motor cars and station wagons</i>	<i>Used motor cars and station wagons</i>	<i>Total motor vehicles(a)</i>	<i>Individual residential blocks of land</i>	<i>Unsecured owner occupied housing finance(b)</i>	<i>Debt consolidation</i>	<i>Refinancing</i>	<i>Other(c)</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>Month</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>
1997									
December	281	479	810	138	58	161	254	470	1 891
1998									
January	247	463	755	113	46	152	238	446	1 750
February	249	462	760	135	50	162	252	477	1 836
March	283	479	816	145	64	163	255	520	1 964
April	245	444	739	121	56	152	238	437	1 743
May	253	446	750	136	53	158	253	461	1 812
June	320	476	852	132	48	190	272	492	1 987
July	309	468	840	120	49	146	249	434	1 838
August	265	436	752	117	44	122	206	392	1 634
September	272	468	796	127	48	138	230	407	1 745
October	265	449	766	119	45	132	222	408	1 692
November	267	437	764	125	47	138	223	443	1 740
December	275	440	771	114	46	138	212	455	1 735
1999									
January	234	425	714	89	37	129	205	431	1 604
February	255	435	744	119	44	151	220	475	1 752

(a) Includes motor cycles and other motor vehicles.

(c) Includes boats, caravans and trailers, household goods, travel and holiday and other purposes.

(b) Includes alterations and additions.

PERSONAL FINANCE COMMITMENTS, Revolving Credit Facilities: **Original**

	NEW AND INCREASED CREDIT LIMITS			CREDIT LIMITS AT END OF MONTH.....		
	<i>Secured</i>	<i>Unsecured</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Cancellations and reductions</i>	<i>Total available</i>	<i>Used</i>
<i>Month</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>
1997						
December	951	876	1 827	629	57 939	24 238
1998						
January	695	649	1 345	540	58 723	24 462
February	745	676	1 421	549	59 582	25 323
March	909	763	1 672	604	60 658	25 807
April	934	811	1 745	668	61 739	26 230
May	1 007	809	1 816	603	62 891	26 945
June	1 078	814	1 892	668	64 279	28 124
July	991	912	1 903	951	63 919	27 599
August	970	887	1 857	504	65 250	28 392
September	1 120	801	1 921	520	66 683	28 587
October	1 184	875	2 059	680	68 034	29 804
November	1 121	831	1 952	516	69 499	31 174
December	1 308	867	2 175	532	71 108	31 908
1999						
January	954	691	1 645	781	72 072	32 273
February	1 079	773	1 852	509	73 422	32 728

COMMERCIAL FINANCE COMMITMENTS, Fixed Loan Facilities: **Original**

	<i>Construction finance</i>	<i>Purchase of real property</i>	<i>Wholesale finance</i>	<i>Purchase of plant and equipment</i>	<i>Factoring</i>	<i>Refinancing</i>	<i>Other</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Commitments not drawn at end of month</i>
<i>Month</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>
1997									
December	915	2 564	420	635	130	961	2 899	8 523	7 302
1998									
January	681	2 090	335	534	95	607	1 227	5 568	6 918
February	726	2 239	666	507	113	983	1 917	7 151	7 247
March	895	2 324	423	717	137	714	1 537	6 748	8 024
April	595	2 209	451	692	176	1 030	1 485	6 637	7 781
May	966	2 289	511	500	175	989	2 266	7 696	9 091
June	1 299	3 008	615	541	131	1 527	2 918	10 038	8 147
July	848	2 718	617	662	164	952	3 041	9 002	8 828
August	783	2 035	510	564	155	676	2 261	6 984	9 263
September	600	2 308	526	744	142	959	1 851	7 129	8 566
October	505	2 166	448	622	150	586	2 784	7 261	8 545
November	514	2 261	642	608	135	1 102	2 356	7 618	9 343
December	710	2 372	836	662	159	1 387	2 696	8 822	8 768
1999									
January	465	1 768	425	477	160	417	1 572	5 284	8 766
February	578	2 136	596	575	128	1 038	1 226	6 278	9 014

REVOLVING COMMERCIAL FINANCE AND LEASE FINANCE COMMITMENTS: **Original**

REVOLVING CREDIT FACILITIES.....

LEASE FINANCE FACILITIES..

	<i>New and increased credit limits</i>	<i>Cancellations and reductions</i>	<i>Total credit limits at end of month</i>	<i>Credit limits used at end of month</i>	<i>Total commitments</i>	<i>Commitments not drawn at end of month</i>
<i>Month</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>
1997						
December	7 212	4 949	204 877	113 134	802	326
1998						
January	4 617	4 410	193 087	112 454	575	310
February	6 207	4 055	196 251	114 976	666	329
March	6 016	4 448	196 542	115 222	836	334
April	7 083	4 419	198 522	117 142	682	325
May	6 507	4 398	199 662	117 430	734	321
June	6 318	4 426	201 628	120 293	1 163	337
July	7 652	5 651	208 799	118 537	904	415
August	7 665	4 788	211 809	120 781	687	376
September	6 949	5 025	212 930	119 990	755	320
October	6 352	5 593	213 079	123 210	720	298
November	7 732	4 708	216 090	124 224	704	294
December	7 344	5 677	217 346	126 716	902	329
1999						
January	5 255	5 070	206 934	119 087	544	310
February	6 221	4 288	208 681	119 581	675	314

FINANCE COMMITMENTS FOR HOUSING(a): Original

SECURED, FOR OWNER OCCUPATION.....						UNSECURED, PERSONAL FINANCE		COMMERCIAL FINANCE.....			
	Construction of dwellings	Purchase of newly erected dwellings	Purchase of established dwellings under new finance	Refinancing for established dwellings	Alterations and additions	Purchase and construction of dwellings	Alterations and additions	Construction of dwellings for rent or resale	Purchase of dwellings for rent or resale by individuals	Purchase of dwellings for rent or resale by others	Total
Month	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m
1997											
December	673	261	2 804	721	222	26	32	482	1 550	298	7 069
1998											
January	554	191	2 311	626	190	19	26	371	1 258	280	5 827
February	687	225	2 756	772	243	23	27	345	1 462	295	6 835
March	741	254	2 992	793	256	32	32	330	1 519	282	7 229
April	702	224	2 920	750	224	26	30	248	1 416	248	6 788
May	714	226	2 901	772	225	23	30	380	1 432	308	7 012
June	832	256	3 165	905	245	20	28	328	1 750	436	7 966
July	779	259	3 036	885	222	22	28	352	1 487	303	7 371
August	695	236	2 756	749	200	19	25	264	1 321	255	6 520
September	756	234	2 779	745	203	18	30	375	1 452	298	6 890
October	721	230	2 905	719	216	16	29	293	1 363	234	6 726
November	712	246	3 215	794	219	18	29	292	1 555	231	7 310
December	730	236	3 242	757	218	17	29	254	1 550	281	7 313
1999											
January	561	169	2 656	625	184	14	23	172	1 218	186	5 807
February	750	213	3 158	793	249	18	26	204	1 487	220	7 119

(a) Includes commitments to refinance loans where the principal purpose is for alterations and/or additions to dwellings.

FINANCE COMMITMENTS FOR MOTOR VEHICLES(a): Original

PERSONAL FINANCE.....

	New motor cars and station wagons	Used motor cars and station wagons	Motor cycles	Other motor vehicles	Total	Commercial finance	Lease finance	Total
Month	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m
1997								
December	281	479	16	34	810	374	441	1 625
1998								
January	247	463	15	31	755	301	333	1 390
February	249	462	16	32	760	309	361	1 430
March	283	479	16	37	816	362	467	1 645
April	245	444	17	33	739	296	409	1 444
May	253	446	18	33	750	295	417	1 462
June	320	476	18	38	852	321	611	1 784
July	309	468	24	38	840	312	505	1 656
August	265	436	15	36	752	276	380	1 408
September	272	468	20	37	796	393	399	1 588
October	265	449	18	35	766	323	386	1 475
November	267	437	16	43	764	340	385	1 489
December	275	440	16	39	771	377	445	1 593
1999								
January	234	425	21	34	714	290	310	1 314
February	255	435	16	38	744	306	355	1 405

(a) Excludes revolving credit facilities.

LEASE FINANCE COMMITMENTS FOR MOTOR VEHICLES: Original

	MOTOR CARS & STATION WAGONS....		LIGHT TRUCKS.....		HEAVY TRUCKS		Other motor vehicles	Total
	New	Used	New	Used	New	Used		
Month	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m
1997								
December	258	69	37	13	38	11	16	441
1998								
January	188	59	30	9	26	10	11	333
February	199	62	32	9	23	12	24	361
March	246	76	38	9	58	26	14	467
April	220	66	34	9	40	21	19	409
May	223	71	38	10	35	22	17	417
June	330	93	65	18	55	18	32	611
July	262	107	45	12	45	14	19	505
August	225	63	37	9	23	10	14	380
September	226	62	37	7	35	11	19	399
October	215	63	33	8	36	14	17	386
November	207	62	36	7	35	21	16	385
December	252	70	40	10	43	13	17	445
1999								
January	177	53	25	6	24	10	15	310
February	203	62	34	8	20	11	16	355

FINANCE COMMITMENTS FOR PLANT AND EQUIPMENT(a): Original

COMMERCIAL FINANCE.....

	<i>Transport equipment(b)</i>	<i>Other plant and equipment</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Lease finance</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>Month</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>
1997					
December	36	224	261	361	622
1998					
January	37	196	233	242	474
February	32	166	198	305	503
March	122	234	356	369	725
April	82	314	396	272	668
May	31	174	205	317	522
June	39	181	220	552	772
July	63	287	350	399	749
August	146	142	288	308	596
September	62	288	350	356	707
October	38	260	298	334	632
November	48	220	267	319	587
December	55	229	284	457	741
1999					
January	25	162	187	234	420
February	63	207	270	320	589

(a) Excludes revolving credit facilities.

(b) Excludes motor vehicles, see Table 9.

LEASE FINANCE COMMITMENTS FOR PLANT AND EQUIPMENT: Original

	<i>Transport equipment(a)</i>	<i>Construction and earthmoving equipment</i>	<i>Agricultural machinery and equipment</i>	<i>Manufact- uring equipment</i>	<i>Electronic data processing equipment</i>	<i>Office machines</i>	<i>Shop and office furniture, fittings and equipment</i>	<i>Other goods</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>Month</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>	<i>\$m</i>
1997									
December	13	41	29	57	83	64	29	44	361
1998									
January	7	18	30	35	63	39	18	31	242
February	10	28	44	41	43	88	18	32	305
March	13	31	62	43	76	89	20	34	369
April	15	28	48	41	57	41	20	23	272
May	22	32	49	40	64	44	22	45	317
June	19	65	109	86	111	64	36	61	552
July	16	35	62	50	87	67	27	55	399
August	10	36	32	43	68	53	18	49	308
September	14	24	40	56	88	57	41	37	356
October	18	29	52	43	76	48	26	42	334
November	13	22	32	43	83	48	28	50	319
December	13	30	55	99	101	58	36	65	457
1999									
January	6	21	26	27	52	48	18	36	234
February	12	29	33	68	58	49	22	48	320

(a) Excludes motor vehicles, see tables 9 and 10.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

SCOPE

1 Commitments made by the following types of lenders are included in these statistics:

- Banks;
- Permanent building societies;
- Credit unions/co-operative credit societies;
- Life or general insurance companies;
- General government enterprises;
- Organisations raising funds through the secondary mortgage market for approved home buyers under State government housing schemes;
- Superannuation funds;
- Other corporations registered under the *Financial Corporations Act 1974*; and
- Other providers of consumer finance registered with State credit tribunals, including mortgage managers.

COVERAGE

2 The statistics cover significant lenders only. Significant lenders account in aggregate for at least 95% of the Australian total and at least 90% of each State total of the value of commitments for secured housing finance for owner occupation, other personal finance, commercial finance and lease finance, each calculated separately.

3 An annual collection is conducted to maintain coverage of significant lenders. In addition, new lenders are included in the series as their level of lending becomes significant. All banks qualify as significant lenders and are therefore included.

CATEGORIES OF LENDING FINANCE

4 *Secured housing finance for owner occupation* is secured finance to individuals for purchase or construction of dwellings for owner occupation, and for alterations and additions to existing owner-occupied dwellings. Refinancing, involving a change of lender, is also included.

5 *Personal finance* is finance provided to individuals for their personal, non-business, use. Both fixed loans and revolving credit finance are included; secured housing finance and loans for investment purposes are excluded.

6 *Commercial finance* is finance provided to individuals and corporations for business or investment purposes. Fixed loans, revolving credit and commercial hire purchase are included.

7 *Lease finance* includes finance and leverage leases. Operating lease finance data, though excluded, is available from the ABS on request.

REVISIONS

8 Revisions to previously published statistics are included as they occur.

SEASONAL ADJUSTMENT

9 Seasonal adjustment is a means of removing the estimated effects of normal seasonal variation and 'trading day effects' (arising from the varying amounts of activity on different days of the week and the varying reporting practices of the lenders). Adjustment is also made for Easter which may affect the March and April estimates differently. Seasonal adjustment does not remove the effect of irregular or non-seasonal influences (for example, a change in interest rates) from the series.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

SEASONAL ADJUSTMENT *continued*

10 There is some evidence that a change may be occurring in the seasonal patterns of both the fixed and revolving credit components of the commercial finance series. When changes are occurring in the seasonal patterns, larger revisions to the seasonally adjusted series can be expected at the time of the annual seasonal re-analysis. A number of years of data is required before changes in seasonal patterns are fully reflected in the seasonally adjusted series. In these circumstances, especially, the trend estimate is a more reliable indicator of underlying movements in the series, although it should be recognised that the more volatile the seasonally adjusted series, the larger the monthly revisions which can be expected in the most recently published trend series estimates.

TREND ESTIMATES

11 Smoothing seasonally adjusted series reduces the impact of the irregular component of the seasonally adjusted series and creates trend estimates. These trend estimates are derived by applying a 13-term Henderson-weighted moving average to all months of the respective seasonally adjusted series except the last six months. Trend series are created for the last six months by applying surrogates of the Henderson moving average to the seasonally adjusted series. For further information, refer to *A Guide to Interpreting Time Series—Monitoring ‘Trends’: an Overview* (Cat. no. 1348.0) or contact the Assistant Director, Time Series Analysis on Canberra (02) 6252 6345.

12 While the smoothing technique described in paragraph 11 enables trend estimates to be produced for the latest few months, it does result in revisions to the trend estimates as new data become available. Generally, revisions become smaller over time and, after three months, usually have a negligible impact on the series. Changes in the original data and re-estimation of seasonal factors may also lead to revisions to the trend.

RELATED PUBLICATIONS

13 Users may also wish to refer to the following publications:

- *Building Activity Australia: Dwelling Unit Commencements* (Cat. no. 8750.0)
- *Building Approvals, Australia* (Cat. no. 8731.0)
- *Housing Finance for Owner Occupation, Australia* (Cat. no. 5609.0)
- *Private New Capital Expenditure and Expected Expenditure, Australia* (Cat. no. 5625.0)
- *New Motor Vehicle Registrations, Australia: Preliminary* (Cat. no. 9301.0)

14 Users may also wish to refer to the *Reserve Bank of Australia, Bulletin* for further information on the lending position of banks and other financial institutions.

UNPUBLISHED DATA

15 Estimates for months prior to those shown in this publication and more detailed commitment series by purpose, type of facility and industry are available. There may be a charge for this information, depending on the volume of data requested.

16 Detailed data are also available from PC Ausstats, the ABS on-line time series data service under the subject *Financial Surveys*, then the titles *Housing Finance for Owner Occupation*, *Personal Finance*, *Commercial Finance* and *Lease Finance*.

EXPLANATORY NOTES



EFFECTS OF ROUNDING	17 Where figures have been rounded, discrepancies may occur between sums of the component items and totals.
SYMBOLS AND OTHER USAGES	n.a. not available n.p. not available for publication but included in totals where applicable n.y.a. not yet available

G L O S S A R Y

Agricultural machinery and equipment	Includes tractors, tillage implements, seeding planting and fertilising equipment, agricultural mowers, harvesters, etc.
Alterations and additions	Comprise all structural and non-structural changes which are integral to the functional and structural design of a dwelling. Examples are garages, carports, pergolas, reroofing, recladding, etc. Alterations and additions do not include swimming pools, ongoing repairs, or maintenance and home improvements which do not involve building work.
Commitment	A lending commitment is a firm offer of finance. It either has been, or is normally expected to be, accepted. Commitments accepted and cancelled in the same month are included. Commitments to non-residents are excluded.
Construction and earth moving equipment	Includes concrete mixers and pumpers, dozers, graders, mobile cranes, crawler tractors, dumpers, road rollers, earth packers, scarifiers, rippers, etc.
Construction of dwellings	For secured housing finance, comprises commitments made to individuals to finance, by way of progress payments, the construction of owner-occupied dwellings.
Debt consolidation	For personal finance, comprises commitments whose principle purpose is to consolidate and pay out amounts owing by the borrower to third parties.
Dwelling	Is a place of residence such as a house, semi-detached house, flat, home unit, town house, terrace house, etc. which includes bathing and cooking facilities.
Electronic data processing equipment	Includes computers, computer peripherals, data entry devices, word processing machines, etc.
Established dwelling	Is a dwelling which has been completed for more than 12 months prior to the lodgement of a loan application, or which has been previously occupied.
Finance lease	A finance lease refers to the leasing or hiring of tangible assets under an agreement, other than a hire purchase agreement, which transfers from the lessor to the lessee substantially all the risks and benefits incident to ownership of the asset without transferring the legal ownership.
Fixed loan facilities	Fixed loan facilities generally involve: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ a commitment for a fixed amount for a fixed period for a specific purpose; ▪ a schedule of repayments over a fixed period; and ▪ repayments which reduce the liability of the borrower but do not act to make further finance available.
Heavy trucks	Comprises all vehicles with a gross combination mass rating in excess of 3.5 tonnes, including prime movers registered without trailers.
Light trucks	Comprises vehicles constructed primarily for the carriage of goods which do not exceed 3.5 tonnes gross vehicle mass such as utilities, panel vans, trucks, cab-chassis, forward control vans and four-wheel drives used to carry goods.
Manufacturing equipment	Includes all plant and equipment used in the manufacture of goods except motor vehicles such as forklifts, work trucks and tractors.
Motor cars and station wagons	Includes cars, station wagons, four-wheel drive and forward control passenger vehicles with up to nine seats (including the driver).

G L O S S A R Y

Motor cycles	Includes two and three wheeled motor cycles and mopeds, scooters and motor cycles with side cars.
Newly erected dwelling	A new dwelling that has been completed within 12 months of the lodgement of a loan application, and the borrower will be the first occupant.
Office machines	Includes telephone systems (including PABX equipment), facsimile machines, cash registers, photocopiers, etc.
Purpose	The purpose of the loan is that specified by the borrower. Where possible multiple purpose loans are split and each component is reported in the appropriate purpose category; otherwise the whole loan is classified to the major purpose.
Refinancing	For personal and commercial finance, represents a commitment to refinance an existing loan. For secured housing finance, only those loans where the refinancing lender is not the original lender and the security is unchanged are included. The refinancing of a loan to fund a change of residence is treated as a new lending commitment.
Revolving credit facilities	Revolving credit facilities generally have the following characteristics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ a commitment for a credit or borrowing limit is given for a specific period after which the commitment is reviewed; ▪ the extent of the borrowing used at any time during the period may be for any amount up to the authorised limit; and ▪ repayments (other than of charges and interest) made during the period reduce the extent of the borrowing used and thereby increase the amount of unused credit available up to the authorised limit. Examples include credit cards, lines of credit and approved overdrafts.
Secured credit limits	Includes overdrafts, lines of credit, credit cards etc. backed by a mortgage or other assets owned by the borrower.
Secured housing finance	This comprises all secured commitments to individuals for the construction or purchase of dwellings for owner occupation, regardless of type of security. Commitments for housing that will be occupied by persons other than the owner(s) are excluded.
Significant lenders	Significant lenders are those lenders who, Australia wide during the calendar year 1997, committed funds of more than: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ \$34 million for Secured housing finance for owner-occupation; or ▪ \$51 million for Personal finance; or ▪ \$731 million for Commercial finance; or ▪ \$7 million for Lease finance.
Total credit limits at end of period	Comprises total approved credit limits available at the end of the reference month. In principle, this can be derived by adding new and increased lending commitments during the period less cancellations and reductions of credit limits during the period to the balance of credit limits at the end of the previous period. In practice, however, revisions and other adjustments such as the transfer of an existing fixed credit facility will mean that such a derivation is inexact.
Wholesale finance	Comprises finance for the purchase of goods by retailers and wholesalers.

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