

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX AUSTRALIA

EMBARGO: 11:30AM (CANBERRA TIME) WED 29 APR 1998

MARCH QTR KEY FIGURES

	% change Dec Qtr 1997 to Mar Qtr 1998	% change Mar Qtr 1997 to Mar Qtr 1998
Weighted average of eight capital cities		
Food	0.8	1.6
Clothing	-0.4	0.4
Housing	-0.8	-6.8
Household equipment and operation	0.0	0.3
Transportation	-0.9	-1.8
Tobacco and alcohol	0.7	2.3
Health and personal care	1.2	2.8
Recreation and education	2.0	3.2
All groups	0.3	-0.2
All groups excluding housing	0.4	1.0

MARCH QTR KEY POINTS**THE ALL GROUPS CPI**

- rose 0.3% between the December quarter 1997 and the March quarter 1998.
- fell 0.2% between the March quarters 1997 and 1998.

OVERVIEW OF CPI MOVEMENTS

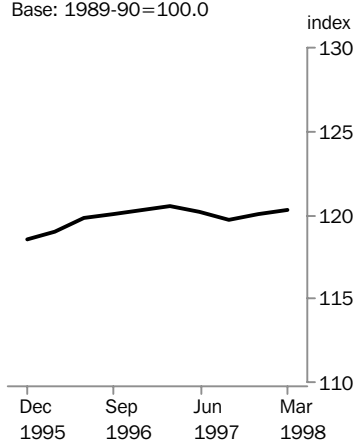
- contributing most to the overall increase this quarter were the cost of fresh vegetables (+15.7%), education fees (+5.9%), holiday travel and accommodation in Australia (+5.7%), take away foods (+1.6%), cigarettes and tobacco (+1.3%) and pharmaceuticals (+6.3%).
- partially offsetting the above were falls in the price of automotive fuel (-4.3%), local government rates and charges (-4.8%), fresh fruit (-6.7%), fresh potatoes (-11.8%) and holiday travel and accommodation overseas (-3.1%) .
- contributing most to the annual decrease were falls in mortgage interest charges (-20.1%), automotive fuel (-5.6%), motor vehicles (-4.2%), fresh fruit (-14.9%) and consumer credit charges (-3.8%). Offsets were provided by increases in cigarettes and tobacco (+4.3%), privately-owned dwelling rents (+3.1%), hospital and medical services (+3.2%), vehicle insurance (+4.1%) and entertainment (+3.8%).

Treasury's Measure of Underlying Inflation

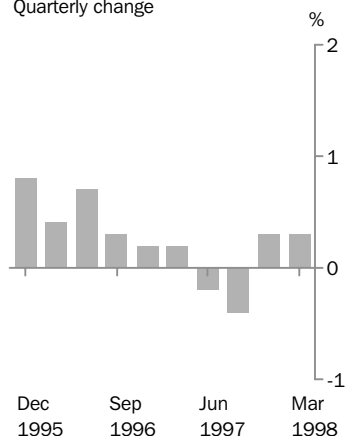
The index of underlying inflation, as defined by the Commonwealth Treasury, increased 0.5% between the December quarter 1997 and the March quarter 1998, and 1.5% between the March quarters 1997 and 1998.

All Groups

Base: 1989-90=100.0

**All Groups**

Quarterly change



- For further information about these and related statistics, contact any ABS Office as shown on the back cover of this publication.

NOTES

FORTHCOMING ISSUES

ISSUE (Quarter)

RELEASE DATE

June 1998

22 July 1998

September 1998

28 October 1998



CHANGES IN THIS ISSUE

There are no changes in this issue.



ROUNDING

Any discrepancies between totals and sums of components in this publication are due to rounding. For similar reasons quarterly movements shown by sub-group or group index numbers in Table 6 do not necessarily correspond exactly with those shown by the relevant index points.



W. McLennan
Australian Statistician

ANALYSES AND COMMENTS

MAIN CONTRIBUTIONS TO CHANGE

RECREATION AND EDUCATION: +2.0% The increase this quarter is mainly attributable to increases in education fees (+5.9%, associated with the new school year), holiday travel and accommodation in Australia (+5.7%, largely seasonal) and entertainment (+1.3%). The most significant offset was provided by a seasonal fall in the cost of holiday travel and accommodation overseas (-3.1%).

Over the 12 months to March quarter 1998, the cost of recreation and education has increased 3.2%. Increases in education fees (+5.9%), entertainment (+3.8%) and books, newspapers and magazines (+6.3%) accounted for most of the annual movement. The largest offset was provided by video and sound equipment, which fell 5.0%, with drops registered in each of the last four quarters.

FOOD: +0.8% The increase this quarter results mainly from increases for fresh vegetables (+15.7%), take away foods (+1.6%), soft drinks and cordials (+1.4%), bread (+1.1%) and tea, coffee and food drinks (+3.2%). For fresh vegetables, this is the second consecutive quarterly rise. Adverse growing conditions were reflected in higher prices for many types of vegetables. Partially offsetting the rises were decreases in the price of fresh fruit (-6.7%) and fresh potatoes (-11.8%).

Food prices in the March quarter 1998 were 1.6% higher than in the March quarter 1997. Increases for confectionery (+5.1%), soft drinks and cordials (+5.0%) and tea, coffee and food drinks (+17.5%) were partially offset by decreases in fresh fruit (-14.9%) and cheese (-2.4%). The decrease for fresh fruit is the cumulative effect of consecutive falls for the last four quarters with low prices for apples and bananas being the main contributors.

TRANSPORTATION: -0.9% The fall in transportation costs this quarter has been caused entirely by a reduction in the price of petrol (-4.3%). This resulted from a small rise in October (+0.2%) and in November (+1.0%), a fall in December (-0.4%), then larger falls in January (-1.9%), in February (-2.6%) and again in March (-2.6%). These falls were caused by the flow of lower crude oil costs into wholesale and retail petrol prices, together with sustained retail discounting in the major capital cities. The quarterly fall in petrol prices was the largest since June quarter 1991. Offsetting the price fall in petrol were rises in other transportation costs. The price of motor vehicles rose by 0.8%, motoring charges by 0.6% and vehicle insurance by 0.5%.

Over the 12 months to March quarter 1998, the price of petrol fell by 5.6% and the price of motor vehicles fell by 4.2%. This is the first quarter since December quarter 1976 (when 'Transportation' became a separate group in the CPI) that both petrol and motor vehicles have simultaneously shown annual price falls.

ANALYSES AND COMMENTS

MAIN CONTRIBUTIONS TO CHANGE *continued*

HOUSING: -0.8%

The Housing group has recorded a significant slowing in the rate of decrease experienced over the past eighteen months. This quarter there was only a slight fall in mortgage interest charges (-0.5%) resulting from the flow-on effect of a reduction in interest rates in the previous quarter. The main influence on this quarter's decrease was a drop in Melbourne local government rates and charges (-15.9%) reflecting changes in water charges. Partially offsetting the falls this quarter were increases for privately-owned dwelling rents (+0.6%) and, to a lesser degree, government rents (+0.1%).

In annual terms, the cost of housing has fallen by 6.8%. This is primarily due to a decrease of 20.1% in mortgage interest charges through the year. The decrease in Melbourne local government rates and charges also contributed to the annual decrease.

HEALTH AND PERSONAL CARE: +1.2%

The main contributor to the increase in health and personal care costs was pharmaceuticals (+6.3%). This increase is mainly due to the cyclical reduction in the effect of the PBS safety net scheme. The other significant contributor to this movement was a rise in the cost of hospital and medical services (+0.6%). This mainly reflects rises in general practitioners' fees.

Annually, health and personal care costs rose by 2.8%, mainly due to the increase in the cost of hospital and medical services (+3.2%).

TOBACCO AND ALCOHOL: +0.7%

The increase in the tobacco and alcohol group this quarter resulted from increases in all 8 cities. The main contributor to the quarterly increases was a rise of 1.3% in the cost of cigarettes and tobacco. This followed a rise in the wholesale price and a flow-on increase from the government imposed value based surcharge, in late February.

Annually, tobacco and alcohol costs increased by 2.3%. This rise was principally due to rises in cigarettes and tobacco prices occurring in the December 1997 and March 1998 quarters.

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX, All groups percentage changes

PERCENTAGE CHANGE BETWEEN

*Dec Qtr 1997 and
Mar Qtr 1998* *Mar Qtr 1997 and
Mar Qtr 1998*

	0.5	0.1
Sydney	-0.2	-0.4
Melbourne	0.4	0.3
Brisbane	0.4	-0.7
Adelaide	0.3	-0.2
Perth	0.2	-0.3
Hobart	0.6	-0.1
Darwin	0.7	-0.7
Canberra		
Weighted average of eight capital cities	0.3	-0.2

ALL GROUPS, Index Numbers(a)

<i>Period</i>	<i>Sydney</i>	<i>Melbourne</i>	<i>Brisbane</i>	<i>Adelaide</i>	<i>Perth</i>	<i>Hobart</i>	<i>Darwin</i>	<i>Canberra</i>	<i>Weighted average of eight capital cities</i>
1993-94	109.2	111.1	110.6	113.4	108.5	111.7	111.5	111.4	110.4
1994-95	113.0	114.1	114.7	116.9	112.3	115.2	114.7	115.1	113.9
1995-96	118.7	118.4	119.1	121.2	116.7	119.6	119.5	120.3	118.7
1996-97	120.4	119.9	121.0	122.3	118.3	121.4	121.6	121.2	120.3
1994									
March	109.1	111.2	110.8	113.6	108.6	111.9	111.4	111.4	110.4
June	110.0	112.0	111.5	114.4	109.1	112.4	112.4	112.0	111.2
September	111.0	112.2	112.5	114.9	110.1	113.3	113.0	112.6	111.9
December	111.8	113.1	113.7	116.0	111.0	114.2	113.7	113.8	112.8
1995									
March	113.7	115.0	115.8	117.8	113.0	116.1	115.3	116.3	114.7
June	115.4	116.2	116.9	118.8	114.9	117.1	116.8	117.6	116.2
September	117.3	117.6	117.9	120.1	115.6	118.4	118.0	119.1	117.6
December	118.3	118.5	118.6	121.1	116.3	119.2	119.2	120.0	118.5
1996									
March	119.1	118.3	119.6	121.6	117.1	120.1	119.8	120.8	119.0
June	119.9	119.2	120.4	122.0	117.9	120.6	120.8	121.4	119.8
September	120.2	119.6	120.6	122.2	118.3	121.1	121.6	121.4	120.1
December	120.4	119.9	120.8	122.6	118.4	121.3	121.7	121.4	120.3
1997									
March	120.6	120.1	121.5	122.6	118.2	121.9	121.6	121.4	120.5
June	120.2	119.9	121.1	121.9	118.1	121.3	121.5	120.4	120.2
September	119.8	119.5	120.7	121.2	117.5	120.6	121.0	119.8	119.7
December	120.1	119.8	121.4	121.2	117.6	121.2	120.8	119.8	120.0
1998									
March	120.7	119.6	121.9	121.7	118.0	121.5	121.5	120.6	120.3

(a) Base of each index: 1989-90 = 100.0

ALL GROUPS, Percentage Changes

<i>Period</i>	<i>Sydney</i>	<i>Melbourne</i>	<i>Brisbane</i>	<i>Adelaide</i>	<i>Perth</i>	<i>Hobart</i>	<i>Darwin</i>	<i>Canberra</i>	<i>Weighted average of eight capital cities</i>
PERCENTAGE CHANGE (from previous year)									
1993-94	1.4	2.0	1.9	2.0	2.2	2.9	1.8	1.7	1.8
1994-95	3.5	2.7	3.7	3.1	3.5	3.1	2.9	3.3	3.2
1995-96	5.0	3.8	3.8	3.7	3.9	3.8	4.2	4.5	4.2
1996-97	1.4	1.3	1.6	0.9	1.4	1.5	1.8	0.7	1.3
PERCENTAGE CHANGE (from corresponding quarter of previous year)									
1994									
March	0.8	1.6	1.6	1.8	2.1	2.6	1.5	1.2	1.4
June	1.5	1.7	1.6	1.9	2.2	2.7	2.2	1.5	1.7
September	2.1	1.5	2.4	2.0	2.0	2.1	2.2	1.4	1.9
December	2.8	2.1	3.2	2.8	2.3	2.3	1.8	2.2	2.5
1995									
March	4.2	3.4	4.5	3.7	4.1	3.8	3.5	4.4	3.9
June	4.9	3.8	4.8	3.8	5.3	4.2	3.9	5.0	4.5
September	5.7	4.8	4.8	4.5	5.0	4.5	4.4	5.8	5.1
December	5.8	4.8	4.3	4.4	4.8	4.4	4.8	5.4	5.1
1996									
March	4.7	2.9	3.3	3.2	3.6	3.4	3.9	3.9	3.7
June	3.9	2.6	3.0	2.7	2.6	3.0	3.4	3.2	3.1
September	2.5	1.7	2.3	1.7	2.3	2.3	3.1	1.9	2.1
December	1.8	1.2	1.9	1.2	1.8	1.8	2.1	1.2	1.5
1997									
March	1.3	1.5	1.6	0.8	0.9	1.5	1.5	0.5	1.3
June	0.3	0.6	0.6	-0.1	0.2	0.6	0.6	-0.8	0.3
September	-0.3	-0.1	0.1	-0.8	-0.7	-0.4	-0.5	-1.3	-0.3
December	-0.2	-0.1	0.5	-1.1	-0.7	-0.1	-0.7	-1.3	-0.2
1998									
March	0.1	-0.4	0.3	-0.7	-0.2	-0.3	-0.1	-0.7	-0.2
PERCENTAGE CHANGE (from previous quarter)									
1994									
March	0.3	0.4	0.5	0.7	0.1	0.3	-0.3	0.1	0.4
June	0.8	0.7	0.6	0.7	0.5	0.4	0.9	0.5	0.7
September	0.9	0.2	0.9	0.4	0.9	0.8	0.5	0.5	0.6
December	0.7	0.8	1.1	1.0	0.8	0.8	0.6	1.1	0.8
1995									
March	1.7	1.7	1.8	1.6	1.8	1.7	1.4	2.2	1.7
June	1.5	1.0	0.9	0.8	1.7	0.9	1.3	1.1	1.3
September	1.6	1.2	0.9	1.1	0.6	1.1	1.0	1.3	1.2
December	0.9	0.8	0.6	0.8	0.6	0.7	1.0	0.8	0.8
1996									
March	0.7	-0.2	0.8	0.4	0.7	0.8	0.5	0.7	0.4
June	0.7	0.8	0.7	0.3	0.7	0.4	0.8	0.5	0.7
September	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.4	0.7	0.0	0.3
December	0.2	0.3	0.2	0.3	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.0	0.2
1997									
March	0.2	0.2	0.6	0.0	-0.2	0.5	-0.1	0.0	0.2
June	-0.3	-0.2	-0.3	-0.6	-0.1	-0.5	-0.1	-0.8	-0.2
September	-0.3	-0.3	-0.3	-0.6	-0.5	-0.6	-0.4	-0.5	-0.4
December	0.3	0.3	0.6	0.0	0.1	0.5	-0.2	0.0	0.3
1998									
March	0.5	-0.2	0.4	0.4	0.3	0.2	0.6	0.7	0.3

CPI GROUPS, Weighted Average of Eight Capital Cities—Index Numbers(a)

<i>Period</i>	<i>Food</i>	<i>Clothing</i>	<i>Housing</i>	<i>Household equipment and operation</i>	<i>Trans- portation</i>	<i>Tobacco and alcohol</i>	<i>Health and personal care</i>	<i>Recreation and education</i>	<i>All groups</i>
1993-94	109.4	106.7	94.2	107.8	113.8	133.7	129.0	111.9	110.4
1994-95	112.1	106.7	100.0	109.2	117.5	141.0	135.5	114.6	113.9
1995-96	116.0	107.0	105.9	111.7	122.6	156.1	141.8	117.7	118.7
1996-97	119.7	107.3	101.6	113.5	124.3	161.4	149.1	119.7	120.3
1994									
March	109.8	106.3	93.7	107.9	113.2	134.5	130.7	112.1	110.4
June	109.5	106.4	94.4	108.2	115.2	136.2	131.9	113.0	111.2
September	110.4	106.6	94.9	108.2	117.0	137.4	133.4	112.9	111.9
December	110.9	106.8	97.5	108.9	116.8	139.1	133.7	114.1	112.8
1995									
March	113.2	106.2	102.8	109.3	117.3	141.1	136.5	115.3	114.7
June	113.7	107.2	104.7	110.2	118.8	146.4	138.5	115.9	116.2
September	115.4	106.7	105.4	111.0	122.0	151.4	139.0	116.1	117.6
December	115.7	107.1	106.1	111.6	122.3	155.3	140.8	117.3	118.5
1996									
March	115.9	106.8	105.7	111.6	122.4	157.8	143.5	119.2	119.0
June	117.1	107.4	106.3	112.5	123.8	159.8	143.7	118.2	119.8
September	118.3	107.2	106.1	113.1	123.4	160.4	145.0	118.2	120.1
December	119.4	107.5	103.2	113.6	124.5	161.2	146.7	118.8	120.3
1997									
March	120.2	107.0	100.2	113.5	125.2	161.7	150.6	121.0	120.5
June	120.8	107.3	96.9	113.9	123.9	162.1	154.0	120.9	120.2
September	120.8	107.1	95.9	113.4	124.4	161.9	148.6	122.0	119.7
December	121.1	107.8	94.2	113.8	124.0	164.3	153.0	122.4	120.0
1998									
March	122.1	107.4	93.4	113.8	122.9	165.4	154.8	124.9	120.3

(a) Base of each index: 1989-90 = 100.0

CPI GROUPS, Weighted Average of Eight Capital Cities—Percentage Changes

<i>Period</i>	<i>Food</i>	<i>Clothing</i>	<i>Housing</i>	<i>Household equipment and operation</i>	<i>Trans- portation</i>	<i>Tobacco and alcohol</i>	<i>Health and personal care</i>	<i>Recreation and education</i>	<i>All groups</i>
PERCENTAGE CHANGE (from previous year)									
1993-94	1.9	-0.7	-0.4	0.5	2.2	7.5	4.0	2.6	1.8
1994-95	2.5	0.0	6.2	1.3	3.3	5.5	5.0	2.4	3.2
1995-96	3.5	0.3	5.9	2.3	4.3	10.7	4.6	2.7	4.2
1996-97	3.2	0.3	-4.1	1.6	1.4	3.4	5.1	1.7	1.3
PERCENTAGE CHANGE (from corresponding quarter of previous year)									
1994									
March	0.7	-1.1	-0.7	0.9	1.7	6.7	4.1	2.1	1.4
June	1.4	-1.6	-0.8	0.7	2.8	6.4	4.4	2.4	1.7
September	1.5	-0.5	0.0	0.7	3.4	5.0	5.5	2.0	1.9
December	1.3	0.0	4.2	1.4	2.9	4.5	5.3	2.0	2.5
1995									
March	3.1	-0.1	9.7	1.3	3.6	4.9	4.4	2.9	3.9
June	3.8	0.8	10.9	1.8	3.1	7.5	5.0	2.6	4.5
September	4.5	0.1	11.1	2.6	4.3	10.2	4.2	2.8	5.1
December	4.3	0.3	8.8	2.5	4.7	11.6	5.3	2.8	5.1
1996									
March	2.4	0.6	2.8	2.1	4.3	11.8	5.1	3.4	3.7
June	3.0	0.2	1.5	2.1	4.2	9.2	3.8	2.0	3.1
September	2.5	0.5	0.7	1.9	1.1	5.9	4.3	1.8	2.1
December	3.2	0.4	-2.7	1.8	1.8	3.8	4.2	1.3	1.5
1997									
March	3.7	0.2	-5.2	1.7	2.3	2.5	4.9	1.5	1.3
June	3.2	-0.1	-8.8	1.2	0.1	1.4	7.2	2.3	0.3
September	2.1	-0.1	-9.6	0.3	0.8	0.9	2.5	3.2	-0.3
December	1.4	0.3	-8.7	0.2	-0.4	1.9	4.3	3.0	-0.2
1998									
March	1.6	0.4	-6.8	0.3	-1.8	2.3	2.8	3.2	-0.2
PERCENTAGE CHANGE (from previous quarter)									
1994									
March	0.3	-0.5	0.1	0.5	-0.3	1.1	2.9	0.2	0.4
June	-0.3	0.1	0.7	0.3	1.8	1.3	0.9	0.8	0.7
September	0.8	0.2	0.5	0.0	1.6	0.9	1.1	-0.1	0.6
December	0.5	0.2	2.7	0.6	-0.2	1.2	0.2	1.1	0.8
1995									
March	2.1	-0.6	5.4	0.4	0.4	1.4	2.1	1.1	1.7
June	0.4	0.9	1.8	0.8	1.3	3.8	1.5	0.5	1.3
September	1.5	-0.5	0.7	0.7	2.7	3.4	0.4	0.2	1.2
December	0.3	0.4	0.7	0.5	0.2	2.6	1.3	1.0	0.8
1996									
March	0.2	-0.3	-0.4	0.0	0.1	1.6	1.9	1.6	0.4
June	1.0	0.6	0.6	0.8	1.1	1.3	0.1	-0.8	0.7
September	1.0	-0.2	-0.2	0.5	-0.3	0.4	0.9	0.0	0.3
December	0.9	0.3	-2.7	0.4	0.9	0.5	1.2	0.5	0.2
1997									
March	0.7	-0.5	-2.9	-0.1	0.6	0.3	2.7	1.9	0.2
June	0.5	0.3	-3.3	0.4	-1.0	0.2	2.3	-0.1	-0.2
September	0.0	-0.2	-1.0	-0.4	0.4	-0.1	-3.5	0.9	-0.4
December	0.2	0.7	-1.8	0.4	-0.3	1.5	3.0	0.3	0.3
1998									
March	0.8	-0.4	-0.8	0.0	-0.9	0.7	1.2	2.0	0.3

CONTRIBUTION TO CHANGE IN ALL GROUPS INDEXES, Mar Qtr 1998(a)

Group, sub-group and expenditure class	Sydney	Melbourne	Brisbane	Adelaide	Perth	Hobart	Darwin	Canberra	Weighted average of eight capital cities
Food	0.22	0.19	0.26	0.16	0.13	—	0.42	0.08	0.19
Dairy products	0.03	0.04	0.01	0.04	-0.01	-0.02	0.03	0.03	0.02
Milk and cream	—	0.04	—	0.03	—	-0.01	—	—	0.02
Cheese	0.01	—	0.01	0.01	—	-0.01	0.01	0.02	0.01
Butter	—	—	—	0.01	—	—	—	—	—
Other dairy products	0.01	—	—	—	-0.01	—	0.01	0.01	0.01
Cereal products	0.01	0.01	-0.02	-0.01	0.05	-0.03	0.04	0.01	0.01
Bread	0.02	0.02	-0.01	0.01	0.03	-0.03	0.04	0.02	0.02
Cakes and biscuits	-0.01	0.01	-0.01	-0.01	0.02	—	—	-0.01	—
Breakfast cereals	—	-0.01	-0.01	—	—	-0.01	-0.01	—	—
Other cereal products	—	—	—	-0.01	-0.01	—	0.01	—	—
Meat and seafoods	-0.03	0.04	-0.01	0.03	-0.02	—	0.02	-0.02	—
Beef and veal	0.01	—	—	0.04	-0.01	-0.01	0.01	—	—
Lamb and mutton	-0.02	0.01	—	—	0.01	—	-0.01	-0.01	—
Pork	—	—	—	—	—	-0.01	0.01	—	—
Poultry	—	0.01	-0.01	—	-0.01	-0.01	0.02	-0.02	—
Bacon and ham	—	—	0.01	—	0.02	—	-0.01	—	—
Processed meat	-0.01	0.01	0.02	-0.01	-0.02	0.02	-0.02	0.01	—
Fish	—	0.01	—	0.01	—	-0.01	0.01	0.01	—
Fresh fruit and vegetables	0.03	-0.02	0.13	-0.02	0.01	—	0.26	-0.04	0.03
Fresh fruit	-0.09	-0.06	-0.04	-0.03	-0.03	-0.05	0.05	-0.14	-0.06
Fresh potatoes	-0.03	-0.03	-0.02	-0.06	-0.01	0.01	-0.02	-0.02	-0.03
Fresh vegetables	0.15	0.09	0.18	0.08	0.05	0.03	0.24	0.13	0.12
Processed fruit and vegetables	0.01	0.01	—	0.01	0.01	—	0.01	0.01	0.01
Processed fruit	0.01	—	0.01	0.01	—	0.01	—	—	—
Fruit juice	-0.01	0.01	—	-0.01	—	—	—	—	—
Processed vegetables	0.01	—	—	—	0.01	0.01	—	—	0.01
Soft drinks, ice cream and confectionery	0.02	0.01	0.09	0.02	0.07	-0.01	0.03	-0.01	0.02
Soft drinks and cordials	0.01	0.01	0.07	0.01	0.03	0.05	0.02	-0.01	0.02
Ice cream and ice confectionery	—	—	0.01	-0.01	0.01	—	0.01	—	—
Confectionery	—	—	0.02	0.01	0.02	-0.05	—	—	—
Meals out and take away foods	0.09	0.08	0.06	0.06	0.01	0.09	0.01	—	0.07
Meals out	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.01
Take away foods	0.08	0.07	0.06	0.04	-0.01	0.07	-0.01	-0.01	0.06
Other food	0.06	0.02	—	0.02	0.01	-0.02	0.02	0.08	0.03
Eggs	—	—	-0.02	—	—	—	—	0.01	—
Sugar	—	—	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	—	0.01	0.01
Jams, honey and sandwich spreads	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.01	0.01	—
Tea, coffee and food drinks	0.01	0.01	—	0.02	0.02	0.02	—	0.01	0.01
Food additives, sauces and spices	0.01	—	0.02	0.01	0.01	—	0.01	0.01	—
Margarine	0.01	0.02	—	—	-0.01	-0.01	0.01	0.03	—
Cooking oils and fats	—	—	—	—	-0.01	—	-0.01	—	—
Other food	0.02	—	-0.01	—	—	-0.05	—	0.01	—
Clothing	-0.01	-0.02	-0.05	-0.07	-0.05	-0.03	-0.01	0.01	-0.02
Men's and boys' clothing	-0.01	—	-0.02	-0.01	—	-0.02	-0.01	—	-0.01
Men's outer clothing	-0.01	-0.01	-0.02	-0.01	0.01	—	—	-0.01	-0.01
Men's knitwear	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Men's shirts	-0.01	—	-0.01	—	—	—	-0.01	—	—
Men's underwear, nightwear and socks	—	—	0.01	0.01	—	-0.01	-0.01	—	—
Boys' clothing	—	—	—	-0.01	—	—	-0.01	-0.01	—
Women's and girls' clothing	-0.01	—	—	—	-0.01	—	—	0.01	—
Women's outer clothing	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Women's knitwear	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Women's underwear, nightwear and hosiery	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.01	—
Girls' clothing	-0.01	—	-0.01	—	-0.01	—	—	—	—
Fabrics and knitting wool	—	—	0.01	-0.01	0.01	—	0.01	0.01	0.01
Footwear	—	-0.02	-0.03	-0.04	-0.04	-0.01	—	—	-0.01
Men's footwear	-0.01	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Women's footwear	—	-0.01	-0.02	-0.02	-0.02	-0.01	-0.01	-0.01	-0.01
Children's footwear	—	—	-0.01	-0.01	-0.02	—	—	0.01	-0.01
Dry cleaning and shoe repairs	0.01	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

Group, sub-group and expenditure class	Sydney	Melbourne	Brisbane	Adelaide	Perth	Hobart	Darwin	Canberra	Weighted average of eight capital cities
Housing	0.04	-0.44	-0.04	-0.05	-0.04	-0.03	0.07	-0.08	-0.13
Rents	0.06	0.02	0.02	—	0.01	—	0.02	—	0.03
Privately-owned dwelling rents	0.06	0.03	0.01	—	0.01	—	0.01	-0.01	0.04
Government-owned dwelling rents	—	—	—	—	—	-0.01	—	—	0.01
Home ownership	-0.02	-0.47	-0.06	-0.04	-0.06	-0.02	0.06	-0.08	-0.17
Mortgage interest charges	-0.01	-0.03	-0.05	-0.05	-0.05	-0.03	0.04	-0.09	-0.03
Local government rates and charges	—	-0.43	—	—	—	—	—	—	-0.13
House repairs and maintenance	-0.01	-0.01	-0.01	0.02	—	—	0.02	0.02	—
House insurance	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Household equipment and operation	0.04	-0.06	0.01	0.02	0.01	-0.05	0.03	0.05	—
Fuel and light	—	—	—	—	-0.01	-0.02	0.01	0.01	—
Electricity	—	—	—	—	—	-0.01	—	—	—
Gas	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Other fuel	—	—	—	—	-0.01	-0.01	—	0.01	—
Furniture and floor coverings	0.03	-0.01	-0.03	-0.01	—	0.01	—	-0.01	0.01
Furniture	0.04	-0.02	-0.03	-0.01	-0.01	—	0.01	-0.02	-0.01
Floor coverings	—	0.01	—	—	0.01	0.01	—	0.01	0.01
Appliances	-0.01	-0.01	-0.01	-0.01	0.02	—	-0.01	0.01	—
Household textiles	-0.01	0.01	—	0.02	0.02	0.01	—	0.01	0.01
Bedding	-0.01	0.01	—	0.01	0.02	—	—	—	—
Towels, linen and curtains	—	—	—	0.01	—	—	—	0.01	0.01
Household utensils and tools	0.01	—	0.03	0.01	-0.01	-0.01	0.01	0.04	0.01
Tableware, glassware and cutlery	—	-0.01	0.02	0.01	—	-0.02	—	0.01	—
Kitchen and cooking utensils	—	—	—	—	-0.01	—	—	—	—
Cleaning utensils	—	—	—	—	—	-0.01	—	—	—
Tools	0.01	-0.01	0.01	—	—	0.01	—	—	—
Household supplies and services	0.01	-0.05	-0.02	0.02	0.02	-0.04	—	—	-0.01
Household cleaning agents	—	—	0.01	—	0.01	0.01	—	-0.01	0.01
Household paper products	0.01	-0.01	0.01	0.02	—	-0.03	0.01	—	0.01
Other household non-durables	-0.01	-0.01	-0.04	—	-0.01	-0.01	—	—	-0.01
Stationery	-0.01	-0.01	—	—	—	—	-0.01	-0.01	—
Watches and clocks	0.01	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Veterinary services	—	—	—	—	0.01	—	—	—	—
Pet foods	—	-0.02	—	0.01	—	-0.01	0.01	0.01	-0.01
Travel goods	—	—	-0.01	—	—	-0.01	—	—	—
House contents insurance	—	—	0.03	—	-0.01	—	—	—	0.01
Repairs to appliances	—	—	—	—	0.01	—	—	—	—
Postal and telephone services	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Postal services	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Telephone services	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Consumer credit charges	—	0.01	0.02	-0.01	-0.02	-0.01	0.02	0.01	0.01
Transportation	-0.09	-0.35	-0.19	-0.18	-0.05	-0.06	-0.05	—	-0.18
Private motoring	-0.08	-0.36	-0.20	-0.19	-0.05	-0.06	-0.05	—	-0.18
Motor vehicles	0.04	0.02	0.04	0.06	0.06	0.02	-0.01	0.03	0.04
Automotive fuel	-0.14	-0.40	-0.32	-0.27	-0.13	-0.09	-0.01	-0.02	-0.24
Vehicle insurance	0.04	-0.01	0.06	—	—	-0.01	-0.01	-0.01	0.01
Motoring charges	0.02	—	0.01	—	—	—	—	—	0.01
Tyres and tubes	—	—	—	—	0.01	—	—	-0.01	—
Vehicle servicing, repairs and parts	-0.03	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.01	0.01	-0.01	0.01	—
Urban transport fares	—	—	0.01	—	0.01	—	—	—	0.01
Tobacco and Alcohol	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.14	0.13	0.17	0.18	0.07	0.07
Alcoholic drinks	0.03	-0.01	-0.02	0.07	0.02	0.09	0.07	0.02	0.01
Beer	0.02	-0.02	-0.02	0.03	0.01	0.06	0.06	-0.03	0.01
Wine	—	—	0.01	0.02	0.02	0.03	0.01	0.05	0.01
Spirits	0.01	0.01	—	0.02	-0.02	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01
Cigarettes and tobacco	0.03	0.07	0.08	0.07	0.12	0.08	0.10	0.04	0.06

<i>Group, sub-group and expenditure class</i>	<i>Sydney</i>	<i>Melbourne</i>	<i>Brisbane</i>	<i>Adelaide</i>	<i>Perth</i>	<i>Hobart</i>	<i>Darwin</i>	<i>Canberra</i>	<i>Weighted average of eight capital cities</i>
Health and personal care	0.09	0.08	0.16	0.26	0.10	0.12	0.11	0.10	0.11
Health services	0.05	0.02	0.05	0.19	0.02	0.04	0.05	0.03	0.04
Hospital and medical services	0.03	0.01	0.04	0.16	0.01	0.03	0.03	0.02	0.04
Optical services	—	—	—	0.01	—	0.01	0.01	0.01	—
Dental services	0.02	0.01	—	0.02	0.01	—	0.01	0.01	0.01
Personal care products	0.02	0.06	0.11	0.08	0.07	0.08	0.06	0.05	0.06
Pharmaceuticals	0.05	0.06	0.09	0.06	0.06	0.08	0.05	0.07	0.06
Toiletries and personal products	-0.02	—	0.02	0.02	—	-0.02	0.02	-0.01	—
Hairdressing services	0.01	—	0.01	—	0.02	—	—	0.01	0.01
Recreation and education	0.20	0.38	0.31	0.20	0.13	0.12	-0.05	0.53	0.26
Books, newspapers and magazines	0.02	0.01	0.01	0.02	0.01	0.06	—	0.07	0.02
Recreational goods	—	0.02	0.04	0.03	-0.02	-0.01	0.01	0.04	0.01
Video and sound equipment	—	-0.01	—	—	—	-0.01	-0.01	—	-0.01
Records, cassettes and tapes	—	0.01	0.03	0.02	0.01	0.01	—	0.01	0.01
Sports and photographic equipment and toys	0.01	—	0.02	0.02	-0.02	—	0.02	0.03	—
Holiday travel and accommodation	0.01	0.12	0.07	—	0.01	0.03	-0.17	0.18	0.05
Holiday travel and accommodation in Australia	0.09	0.14	0.07	0.02	0.01	0.04	-0.09	0.18	0.09
Holiday travel and accommodation overseas	-0.09	-0.02	-0.01	-0.01	—	-0.01	-0.08	—	-0.03
Recreational services	0.04	0.05	0.05	—	0.05	-0.06	0.08	0.13	0.04
Photographic services	—	—	—	0.01	—	-0.04	-0.01	—	—
Repairs to recreational goods	—	—	0.01	—	—	—	—	0.01	0.01
Entertainment	0.03	0.06	0.04	-0.01	0.05	-0.01	0.09	0.12	0.04
Education and child care	0.13	0.17	0.15	0.14	0.08	0.10	0.02	0.12	0.14
Education fees	0.10	0.18	0.13	0.14	0.09	0.10	—	0.10	0.12
Child care fees	0.03	—	0.02	—	-0.01	—	0.01	0.01	0.01
All groups	0.6	-0.2	0.5	0.5	0.4	0.3	0.7	0.8	0.3
Selected State and local government charges(b)	0.02	-0.43	—	—	—	—	—	—	-0.13

(a) Base of each index: 1989-90 = 100.0

(b) Refer to paragraph 14 of the Explanatory Notes for a description of this series

GROUP, SUB-GROUP & EXPENDITURE CLASS, Weighted Average of Eight Capital Cities

Group, sub-group and expenditure class	INDEX NUMBERS(a).....			PERCENTAGE CHANGE BETWEEN.....		CONTRIBUTION TO TOTAL CPI (ALL GROUPS INDEX POINTS)		
	Mar Qtr	Dec Qtr	Mar Qtr	Dec Qtr	Mar Qtr	Dec Qtr	Mar Qtr	Change between
	1997	1997	1998	1998	1997 and	1997 and	1998	Dec Qtr 1997 and Mar Qtr 1998
Food	120.2	121.1	122.1	0.8	1.6	22.48	22.67	0.19
Dairy products	131.1	132.3	134.0	1.3	2.2	1.90	1.92	0.02
Milk and cream	143.4	147.0	148.6	1.1	3.6	1.23	1.25	0.02
Cheese	114.4	110.2	111.7	1.4	-2.4	0.41	0.42	0.01
Butter	99.8	98.8	99.7	0.9	-0.1	0.07	0.07	—
Other dairy products	122.9	124.5	127.8	2.7	4.0	0.18	0.19	0.01
Cereal products	134.1	135.3	135.8	0.4	1.3	2.70	2.71	0.01
Bread	146.5	148.4	150.1	1.1	2.5	1.22	1.24	0.02
Cakes and biscuits	125.2	125.7	125.5	-0.2	0.2	0.93	0.93	—
Breakfast cereals	129.4	129.2	128.0	-0.9	-1.1	0.30	0.30	—
Other cereal products	121.2	124.1	124.2	0.1	2.5	0.25	0.25	—
Meat and seafoods	108.9	109.5	109.6	0.1	0.6	3.51	3.51	—
Beef and veal	103.2	104.3	104.6	0.3	1.4	0.80	0.80	—
Lamb and mutton	122.2	121.7	120.8	-0.7	-1.1	0.49	0.49	—
Pork	115.9	114.8	114.3	-0.4	-1.4	0.21	0.21	—
Poultry	97.8	96.2	96.3	0.1	-1.5	0.46	0.46	—
Bacon and ham	115.0	113.4	114.2	0.7	-0.7	0.37	0.37	—
Processed meat	112.0	114.8	114.7	-0.1	2.4	0.79	0.79	—
Fish	102.7	105.4	106.1	0.7	3.3	0.39	0.39	—
Fresh fruit and vegetables	107.1	99.5	100.8	1.3	-5.9	1.86	1.89	0.03
Fresh fruit	124.5	113.6	106.0	-6.7	-14.9	0.90	0.84	-0.06
Fresh potatoes	95.4	112.0	98.8	-11.8	3.6	0.24	0.21	-0.03
Fresh vegetables	96.1	85.2	98.6	15.7	2.6	0.72	0.84	0.12
Processed fruit and vegetables	116.3	116.5	117.4	0.8	0.9	0.96	0.97	0.01
Processed fruit	118.1	119.7	122.0	1.9	3.3	0.16	0.16	—
Fruit juice	122.0	123.3	122.7	-0.5	0.6	0.50	0.50	—
Processed vegetables	107.3	105.1	107.7	2.5	0.4	0.30	0.31	0.01
Soft drinks, ice cream and confectionery	130.7	136.0	136.9	0.7	4.7	3.70	3.72	0.02
Soft drinks and cordials	125.9	130.4	132.2	1.4	5.0	1.45	1.47	0.02
Ice cream and ice confectionery	145.3	149.4	150.1	0.5	3.3	0.51	0.51	—
Confectionery	131.9	138.3	138.6	0.2	5.1	1.73	1.73	—
Meals out and take away foods	119.8	120.2	121.6	1.2	1.5	5.73	5.80	0.07
Meals out	120.4	122.5	123.1	0.5	2.2	2.21	2.22	0.01
Take away foods	120.3	119.8	121.7	1.6	1.2	3.52	3.58	0.06
Other food	120.5	125.0	126.8	1.4	5.2	2.12	2.15	0.03
Eggs	140.5	145.9	143.0	-2.0	1.8	0.19	0.19	—
Sugar	102.5	99.5	106.6	7.1	4.0	0.07	0.08	0.01
Jams, honey and sandwich spreads	133.4	140.7	142.1	1.0	6.5	0.19	0.19	—
Tea, coffee and food drinks	119.4	135.9	140.3	3.2	17.5	0.42	0.43	0.01
Food additives, sauces and spices	115.7	117.9	121.4	3.0	4.9	0.28	0.28	—
Margarine	113.1	112.0	118.3	5.6	4.6	0.15	0.15	—
Cooking oils and fats	129.1	122.6	120.3	-1.9	-6.8	0.11	0.11	—
Other food	119.7	121.7	121.8	0.1	1.8	0.71	0.71	—
Clothing	107.0	107.8	107.4	-0.4	0.4	6.74	6.72	-0.02
Men's and boys' clothing	111.3	111.7	111.0	-0.6	-0.3	1.87	1.86	-0.01
Men's outer clothing	109.3	110.0	108.7	-1.2	-0.5	0.75	0.74	-0.01
Men's knitwear	114.0	115.0	115.0	—	0.9	0.18	0.18	—
Men's shirts	108.1	108.5	108.0	-0.5	-0.1	0.34	0.34	—
Men's underwear, nightwear and socks	113.8	113.3	113.6	0.3	-0.2	0.16	0.16	—
Boys' clothing	113.8	113.8	113.4	-0.4	-0.4	0.44	0.44	—
Women's and girls' clothing	106.8	108.9	108.8	-0.1	1.9	2.77	2.77	—
Women's outer clothing	104.2	106.6	106.6	—	2.3	1.77	1.77	—
Women's knitwear	106.3	106.8	106.8	—	0.5	0.21	0.21	—
Women's underwear, nightwear and hosiery	120.9	123.0	122.7	-0.2	1.5	0.40	0.40	—
Girls' clothing	107.7	109.2	108.7	-0.5	0.9	0.39	0.39	—
Fabric and knitting wool	100.3	99.2	99.6	0.4	-0.7	0.75	0.76	0.01

Group, sub-group and expenditure class	INDEX NUMBERS(a).....			PERCENTAGE CHANGE BETWEEN.....		CONTRIBUTION TO TOTAL CPI (ALL GROUPS INDEX POINTS)		
	Mar Qtr 1997	Dec Qtr 1997	Mar Qtr 1998	Dec Qtr 1997 and Mar Qtr 1998	Mar Qtr 1997 and Mar Qtr 1998	Dec Qtr 1997	Mar Qtr 1998	Change between Dec Qtr 1997 and Mar Qtr 1998
Clothing continued								
Footwear	100.0	99.5	97.9	-1.6	-2.1	1.06	1.05	-0.01
Men's footwear	98.8	95.0	94.6	-0.4	-4.3	0.33	0.33	—
Women's footwear	103.0	103.6	101.3	-2.2	-1.7	0.48	0.47	-0.01
Children's footwear	97.0	99.0	97.2	-1.8	0.2	0.25	0.24	-0.01
Dry cleaning and shoe repairs	130.2	132.5	133.6	0.8	2.6	0.28	0.28	—
Housing	100.2	94.2	93.4	-0.8	-6.8	16.56	16.43	-0.13
Rents	115.3	118.1	118.8	0.6	3.0	5.73	5.76	0.03
Privately-owned dwelling rents	114.7	117.6	118.3	0.6	3.1	5.27	5.31	0.04
Government-owned dwelling rents	121.5	122.6	122.7	0.1	1.0	0.45	0.46	0.01
Home ownership	93.9	84.6	83.3	-1.5	-11.3	10.83	10.66	-0.17
Mortgage interest charges	77.3	62.1	61.8	-0.5	-20.1	5.42	5.39	-0.03
Local government rates and charges	133.1	136.6	130.1	-4.8	-2.3	2.74	2.61	-0.13
House repairs and maintenance	118.3	120.5	120.2	-0.2	1.6	2.12	2.12	—
House insurance	150.8	157.0	157.0	—	4.1	0.55	0.55	—
Household equipment and operation	113.5	113.8	113.8	—	0.3	20.75	20.75	—
Fuel and light	121.5	122.6	122.5	-0.1	0.8	2.77	2.77	—
Electricity	119.3	120.1	120.1	—	0.7	2.04	2.04	—
Gas	128.9	131.5	131.5	—	2.0	0.67	0.67	—
Other fuel	117.7	113.4	112.8	-0.5	-4.2	0.06	0.06	—
Furniture and floor coverings	117.0	119.1	119.2	0.1	1.9	5.07	5.08	0.01
Furniture	119.6	122.1	122.1	—	2.1	4.10	4.09	-0.01
Floor coverings	109.7	110.1	110.9	0.7	1.1	0.97	0.98	0.01
Appliances	109.4	109.0	108.5	-0.5	-0.8	1.71	1.71	—
Household textiles	117.7	119.9	120.4	0.4	2.3	0.91	0.92	0.01
Bedding	119.5	123.3	123.3	—	3.2	0.41	0.41	—
Towels, linen and curtains	116.6	117.7	118.5	0.7	1.6	0.50	0.51	0.01
Household utensils and tools	104.6	104.6	105.3	0.7	0.7	1.29	1.30	0.01
Tableware, glassware and cutlery	99.4	96.8	98.3	1.5	-1.1	0.28	0.28	—
Kitchen and cooking utensils	103.8	104.7	105.0	0.3	1.2	0.39	0.39	—
Cleaning utensils	106.0	107.5	108.8	1.2	2.6	0.10	0.10	—
Tools	107.6	108.2	108.5	0.3	0.8	0.53	0.53	—
Household supplies and services	124.4	125.2	124.9	-0.2	0.4	4.86	4.85	-0.01
Household cleaning agents	125.3	119.8	120.1	0.3	-4.2	0.77	0.78	0.01
Household paper products	110.6	112.2	113.3	1.0	2.4	0.52	0.53	0.01
Other household non-durables	122.7	124.3	123.1	-1.0	0.3	1.04	1.03	-0.01
Stationery	120.1	122.7	121.4	-1.1	1.1	0.57	0.57	—
Watches and clocks	128.8	130.4	130.0	-0.3	0.9	0.17	0.17	—
Veterinary services	142.2	145.3	146.4	0.8	3.0	0.16	0.16	—
Pet foods	128.9	131.4	129.8	-1.2	0.7	0.62	0.61	-0.01
Travel goods	104.0	101.4	101.0	-0.4	-2.9	0.28	0.28	—
House contents insurance	152.3	156.2	157.1	0.6	3.2	0.51	0.52	0.01
Repairs to appliances	130.9	138.0	139.3	0.9	6.4	0.22	0.22	—
Postal and telephone services	106.4	106.8	106.8	—	0.4	1.83	1.83	—
Postal services	111.3	111.3	111.4	0.1	0.1	0.19	0.19	—
Telephone services	105.8	106.1	106.2	0.1	0.4	1.65	1.65	—
Consumer credit charges	93.8	90.1	90.2	0.1	-3.8	2.29	2.30	0.01
Transportation	125.2	124.0	122.9	-0.9	-1.8	19.59	19.41	-0.18
Private motoring	123.7	122.2	120.9	-1.1	-2.3	17.97	17.79	-0.18
Motor vehicles	116.3	110.5	111.4	0.8	-4.2	4.54	4.58	0.04
Automotive fuel	123.9	122.3	117.0	-4.3	-5.6	5.60	5.36	-0.24
Vehicle insurance	139.7	144.7	145.4	0.5	4.1	3.05	3.06	0.01
Motoring charges	144.7	148.9	149.8	0.6	3.5	1.17	1.18	0.01
Tyres and tubes	106.1	105.9	105.9	—	-0.2	0.39	0.39	—
Vehicle servicing, repairs and parts	120.3	118.7	118.8	0.1	-1.2	3.23	3.23	—
Urban transport fares	151.2	153.7	154.0	0.2	1.9	1.61	1.62	0.01

Group, sub-group and expenditure class	INDEX NUMBERS(a).....			PERCENTAGE CHANGE BETWEEN.....		CONTRIBUTIONS TO TOTAL CPI (ALL GROUPS INDEX POINTS)		
	Mar Qtr	Dec Qtr	Mar Qtr	Dec Qtr	Mar Qtr	Dec Qtr	Mar Qtr	Change between
	1997	1997	1998	1998	1997 and	1997	1998	Dec Qtr 1997 and Mar Qtr 1998
Tobacco and alcohol	161.7	164.3	165.4	0.7	2.3	11.28	11.35	0.07
Alcoholic drinks	131.9	132.7	133.1	0.3	0.9	6.38	6.39	0.01
Beer	133.5	133.7	133.9	0.1	0.3	3.68	3.69	0.01
Wine	124.0	128.3	128.8	0.4	3.9	1.33	1.34	0.01
Spirits	135.1	134.0	134.5	0.4	-0.4	1.36	1.37	0.01
Cigarettes and tobacco	232.4	239.4	242.4	1.3	4.3	4.90	4.96	0.06
Health and personal care	150.6	153.0	154.8	1.2	2.8	9.22	9.33	0.11
Health services	169.2	173.5	174.9	0.8	3.4	5.78	5.82	0.04
Hospital and medical services	180.7	185.2	186.4	0.6	3.2	4.70	4.74	0.04
Optical services	120.7	122.6	123.1	0.4	2.0	0.22	0.22	—
Dental services	140.8	145.2	147.3	1.4	4.6	0.86	0.87	0.01
Personal care products	127.3	125.8	128.6	2.2	1.0	2.46	2.52	0.06
Pharmaceuticals	128.5	124.7	132.5	6.3	3.1	0.94	1.00	0.06
Toiletries and personal products	126.7	126.5	126.3	-0.2	-0.3	1.52	1.52	—
Hairdressing services	125.3	129.8	130.7	0.7	4.3	0.98	0.99	0.01
Recreation and education	121.0	122.4	124.9	2.0	3.2	13.41	13.67	0.26
Books, newspapers and magazines	146.6	154.1	155.8	1.1	6.3	1.62	1.64	0.02
Recreational goods	97.3	94.8	95.3	0.5	-2.1	2.58	2.59	0.01
Video and sound equipment	77.7	74.4	73.8	-0.8	-5.0	0.71	0.70	-0.01
Records, cassettes and tapes	98.5	97.1	100.0	3.0	1.5	0.31	0.32	0.01
Sports and photographic equipment and toys	109.3	107.0	107.6	0.6	-1.6	1.56	1.56	—
Holiday travel and accommodation	104.7	105.7	107.8	2.0	3.0	2.80	2.85	0.05
Holiday travel and accommodation in Australia	111.7	109.2	115.4	5.7	3.3	1.59	1.68	0.09
Holiday travel and accommodation overseas	96.0	101.4	98.3	-3.1	2.4	1.20	1.17	-0.03
Recreational services	135.9	138.9	140.5	1.2	3.4	3.70	3.74	0.04
Photographic services	115.9	115.5	115.7	0.2	-0.2	0.29	0.29	—
Repairs to recreational goods	121.8	124.4	126.0	1.3	3.4	0.14	0.15	0.01
Entertainment	139.0	142.5	144.3	1.3	3.8	3.26	3.30	0.04
Education and child care	150.1	152.1	160.0	5.2	6.6	2.71	2.85	0.14
Education fees	160.8	160.8	170.3	5.9	5.9	2.15	2.27	0.12
Child care fees	121.7	130.0	133.0	2.3	9.3	0.56	0.57	0.01
All groups	120.5	120.0	120.3	0.3	-0.2	120.0	120.3	0.3

(a) Base of each index: 1989-90 = 100.0

SPECIAL SERIES, Weighted Average of Eight Capital Cities

	INDEX NUMBERS(a).....			PERCENTAGE CHANGE BETWEEN.....		CONTRIBUTION TO TOTAL CPI (ALL GROUPS INDEX POINTS)		
	<i>Mar Qtr</i>	<i>Dec Qtr</i>	<i>Mar Qtr</i>	<i>Dec Qtr</i>	<i>Mar Qtr</i>	<i>Dec Qtr</i>	<i>Mar Qtr</i>	<i>Change between</i>
	<i>1997</i>	<i>1997</i>	<i>1998</i>	<i>1997 and</i>	<i>1997 and</i>	<i>1997</i>	<i>1998</i>	<i>Dec Qtr 1997</i>
			<i>Mar Qtr</i>	<i>Mar Qtr</i>				<i>and</i>
			<i>1998</i>	<i>1998</i>				<i>Mar Qtr 1998</i>
All groups	120.5	120.0	120.3	0.3	-0.2	120.0	120.3	0.3
Selected components								
Mortgage interest and consumer credit charges	81.6	68.9	68.7	-0.3	-15.8	7.71	7.68	-0.03
Goods component(b)	122.3	122.5	122.6	0.1	0.2	74.03	74.12	0.09
Services component(b)	117.8	116.3	116.8	0.4	-0.8	45.99	46.21	0.22
Selected State and local government charges(b)	129.6	131.9	129.8	-1.6	0.2	8.12	7.99	-0.13
All groups excluding								
Food	120.6	119.8	120.0	0.2	-0.5	97.54	97.65	0.11
Clothing	121.4	120.9	121.2	0.2	-0.2	113.28	113.61	0.33
Housing	124.5	125.2	125.7	0.4	1.0	103.46	103.90	0.44
Household equipment and operation	122.1	121.5	121.8	0.2	-0.2	99.27	99.58	0.31
Transportation	119.7	119.3	119.9	0.5	0.2	100.43	100.92	0.49
Tobacco and alcohol	117.4	116.6	116.9	0.3	-0.4	108.74	108.98	0.24
Health and personal care	118.7	118.0	118.2	0.2	-0.4	110.79	110.99	0.20
Recreation and education	120.5	119.8	119.8	0.0	-0.6	106.61	106.65	0.04
Home ownership	124.1	124.9	125.5	0.5	1.1	109.19	109.66	0.47
Mortgage interest and consumer credit charges	125.1	126.1	126.5	0.3	1.1	112.31	112.64	0.33
Hospital and medical services	118.9	118.3	118.6	0.3	-0.3	115.31	115.59	0.28
Selected State and local government charges(b)	120.0	119.3	119.8	0.4	-0.2	111.90	112.33	0.43

(a) Base of each index: 1989-90 = 100.0

(b) Refer to paragraph 14 of the Explanatory Notes for a description of this series

INTERNATIONAL COMPARISONS, All Groups Excluding Housing—Index Numbers(a)(b)

<i>Period</i>	<i>United States of America</i>	<i>Japan</i>	<i>Germany</i>	<i>Canada</i>	<i>United Kingdom</i>	<i>Hong Kong</i>	<i>Korea, Republic of</i>	<i>Taiwan</i>	<i>Indonesia</i>	<i>Singapore</i>	<i>Australia</i>	<i>New Zealand</i>
1993-94	114.8	107.9	113.2	112.0	122.0	140.1	130.4	114.2	137.8	110.9	113.5	109.4
1994-95	118.0	107.8	115.2	113.4	124.8	151.4	138.0	119.1	150.3	114.5	116.5	110.5
1995-96	120.9	107.3	116.3	116.0	128.3	160.8	144.4	122.5	163.7	116.0	121.1	111.9
1996-97	124.3	108.2	117.7	118.8	131.5	168.2	151.3	125.7	174.1	118.1	123.9	113.7
1994												
March	115.1	107.7	113.6	111.8	121.8	140.8	132.2	114.4	140.9	111.4	113.6	109.3
June	115.9	108.1	114.1	111.5	123.5	143.7	134.0	116.6	141.6	112.5	114.4	109.5
September	116.9	107.7	114.9	112.2	123.4	147.6	136.6	119.3	145.3	113.6	115.1	109.8
December	117.4	108.2	114.6	112.4	123.9	149.6	136.2	117.2	147.5	114.4	115.7	110.4
1995												
March	118.2	107.4	115.3	113.9	125.1	152.9	138.4	118.8	152.6	114.5	116.9	110.6
June	119.4	107.8	115.8	115.1	126.6	155.5	140.7	121.0	155.9	115.3	118.3	111.3
September	119.7	107.3	116.1	115.3	127.0	158.6	141.8	121.4	157.9	115.4	119.8	111.2
December	120.2	107.3	115.7	115.3	127.7	159.6	142.3	122.0	161.6	115.6	120.8	111.6
1996												
March	121.2	106.9	116.4	116.0	128.5	160.7	145.2	122.3	167.0	116.3	121.5	112.0
June	122.6	107.8	116.9	117.3	130.0	164.1	148.1	124.3	168.1	116.8	122.3	112.8
September	123.1	107.3	117.3	117.5	130.3	165.5	149.6	126.1	168.5	117.3	122.7	113.0
December	124.1	107.5	117.1	118.5	131.2	167.4	149.5	126.3	173.1	117.7	123.6	113.8
1997												
March	124.7	107.2	118.0	119.2	131.6	168.9	152.4	124.7	177.1	118.4	124.5	113.9
June	125.1	110.7	118.2	119.8	132.8	170.8	153.8	125.7	177.7	118.8	124.8	114.1
September	125.3	112.3	119.3	120.3	133.5	173.7	155.4	127.6	183.3	119.9	124.4	114.5
December	125.9	112.5	118.9	120.1	134.3	174.2	157.9	125.7	195.7	120.0	125.2	114.9
1998												
March	125.6	n.y.a.	n.y.a.	n.y.a.	134.5	n.y.a.	n.y.a.	126.7	n.y.a.	n.y.a.	125.7	115.0

(a) Base of each index: Year 1989-90 = 100.0

(b) Refer to paragraphs 15-20 of the Explanatory Notes for further information

INTERNATIONAL COMPARISONS, All Groups Excluding Housing—Percentage Changes(a)

Period	United States of America	Japan	Germany	Canada	United Kingdom	Hong Kong	Korea, Republic of	Taiwan	Indonesia	Singapore	Australia	New Zealand
PERCENTAGE CHANGE (from previous year)												
1993-94	2.4	1.0	2.6	1.1	2.9	7.1	5.6	2.5	6.8	2.6	2.3	0.6
1994-95	2.8	-0.1	1.8	1.3	2.3	8.1	5.8	4.3	9.1	3.2	2.6	1.0
1995-96	2.5	-0.5	1.0	2.3	2.8	6.2	4.6	2.9	8.9	1.3	3.9	1.3
1996-97	2.8	0.8	1.2	2.4	2.5	4.6	4.8	2.6	6.4	1.8	2.3	1.6
PERCENTAGE CHANGE (from corresponding quarter of previous year)												
1994												
March	2.1	1.0	2.3	0.5	2.9	6.6	6.8	2.8	5.5	2.8	1.8	0.4
June	2.3	0.5	2.0	0.0	2.2	6.6	6.0	2.7	6.3	3.3	2.1	0.4
September	2.8	-0.4	2.0	0.1	1.9	8.2	7.4	6.3	8.8	3.8	2.2	0.5
December	2.4	0.6	2.0	-0.2	2.1	7.4	6.2	3.4	9.3	3.7	2.2	0.9
1995												
March	2.7	-0.3	1.5	1.9	2.7	8.6	4.7	3.8	8.3	2.8	2.9	1.2
June	3.0	-0.3	1.5	3.2	2.5	8.2	5.0	3.8	10.1	2.5	3.4	1.6
September	2.4	-0.4	1.0	2.8	2.9	7.5	3.8	1.8	8.7	1.6	4.1	1.3
December	2.4	-0.8	1.0	2.6	3.1	6.7	4.5	4.1	9.6	1.1	4.4	1.1
1996												
March	2.5	-0.5	1.0	1.8	2.7	5.1	4.9	2.9	9.4	1.6	3.9	1.3
June	2.7	0.0	0.9	1.9	2.7	5.5	5.3	2.7	7.8	1.3	3.4	1.3
September	2.8	0.0	1.0	1.9	2.6	4.4	5.5	3.9	6.7	1.6	2.4	1.6
December	3.2	0.2	1.2	2.8	2.7	4.9	5.1	3.5	7.1	1.8	2.3	2.0
1997												
March	2.9	0.3	1.4	2.8	2.4	5.1	5.0	2.0	6.0	1.8	2.5	1.7
June	2.0	2.7	1.1	2.1	2.2	4.1	3.8	1.1	5.7	1.7	2.0	1.2
September	1.8	4.7	1.7	2.4	2.5	5.0	3.9	1.2	8.8	2.2	1.4	1.3
December	1.5	4.7	1.5	1.4	2.4	4.1	5.6	-0.5	13.1	2.0	1.3	1.0
1998												
March	0.7	n.y.a.	n.y.a.	n.y.a.	2.2	n.y.a.	n.y.a.	1.6	n.y.a.	n.y.a.	1.0	1.0
PERCENTAGE CHANGE (from previous quarter)												
1994												
March	0.4	0.1	1.1	-0.7	0.3	1.1	3.0	0.9	4.4	1.0	0.4	-0.1
June	0.7	0.4	0.4	-0.3	1.4	2.1	1.4	1.9	0.5	1.0	0.7	0.2
September	0.9	-0.4	0.7	0.6	-0.1	2.7	1.9	2.3	2.6	1.0	0.6	0.3
December	0.4	0.5	-0.3	0.2	0.4	1.4	-0.3	-1.8	1.5	0.6	0.5	0.5
1995												
March	0.7	-0.7	0.6	1.3	1.0	2.2	1.6	1.4	3.5	0.1	1.0	0.2
June	1.0	0.4	0.4	1.1	1.2	1.7	1.7	1.9	2.2	0.7	1.2	0.6
September	0.3	-0.5	0.3	0.2	0.3	2.0	0.8	0.3	1.3	0.1	1.3	-0.1
December	0.4	0.0	-0.3	0.0	0.6	0.6	0.4	0.5	2.3	0.2	0.8	0.4
1996												
March	0.8	-0.4	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.7	2.0	0.2	3.3	0.6	0.6	0.4
June	1.2	0.8	0.4	1.1	1.2	2.1	2.0	1.6	0.7	0.4	0.7	0.7
September	0.4	-0.5	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.9	1.0	1.4	0.2	0.4	0.3	0.2
December	0.8	0.2	-0.2	0.9	0.7	1.1	-0.1	0.2	2.7	0.3	0.7	0.7
1997												
March	0.5	-0.3	0.8	0.6	0.3	0.9	1.9	-1.3	2.3	0.6	0.7	0.1
June	0.3	3.3	0.2	0.5	0.9	1.1	0.9	0.8	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.2
September	0.2	1.4	0.9	0.4	0.5	1.7	1.0	1.5	3.2	0.9	-0.3	0.4
December	0.5	0.2	-0.3	-0.2	0.6	0.3	1.6	-1.5	6.8	0.1	0.6	0.3
1998												
March	-0.2	n.y.a.	n.y.a.	n.y.a.	0.1	n.y.a.	n.y.a.	0.8	n.y.a.	n.y.a.	0.4	0.1

(a) Refer to paragraphs 15-20 of the Explanatory Notes for further information

PRIVATE SECTOR GOODS
AND SERVICES(c).....

<i>Period</i>	<i>All groups</i>	<i>All groups excluding Housing</i>	<i>All groups excluding interest and 'volatile items'(c)</i>	<i>Goods</i>	<i>Services</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Treasury Underlying Rate(c)</i>
1993-94	110.4	113.5	115.2	113.9	110.8	113.1	112.7
1994-95	113.9	116.5	118.1	116.2	114.0	115.7	115.1
1995-96	118.7	121.1	122.4	120.6	118.6	120.1	118.8
1996-97	120.3	123.9	125.2	122.5	122.1	122.4	121.2
1994							
March	110.4	113.6	115.6	114.1	111.0	113.3	113.0
June	111.2	114.4	116.1	114.6	111.6	113.8	113.5
September	111.9	115.1	116.7	115.0	112.7	114.4	114.2
December	112.8	115.7	117.5	115.7	113.7	115.2	114.8
1995							
March	114.7	116.9	118.3	116.3	114.2	115.7	115.2
June	116.2	118.3	119.7	117.9	115.5	117.3	116.3
September	117.6	119.8	121.0	119.4	116.8	118.7	117.7
December	118.5	120.8	122.1	120.3	118.4	119.9	118.5
1996							
March	119.0	121.5	122.8	120.8	119.7	120.5	119.0
June	119.8	122.3	123.5	121.9	119.6	121.3	119.9
September	120.1	122.7	124.1	122.2	120.4	121.7	120.5
December	120.3	123.6	124.8	122.5	121.6	122.3	121.0
1997							
March	120.5	124.5	125.6	122.6	122.8	122.7	121.5
June	120.2	124.8	126.1	122.8	123.4	123.0	121.9
September	119.7	124.4	126.1	122.8	124.7	123.3	122.3
December	120.0	125.2	126.9	123.3	125.6	123.9	122.7
1998							
March	120.3	125.7	127.6	123.8	126.7	124.5	123.3

(a) Base of each index: Year 1989-90 = 100.0

(b) Refer to paragraphs 21-26 of the Explanatory Notes for further information

(c) Refer to paragraph 14 of the Explanatory Notes for a description of this series

ALTERNATIVE MEASURES OF CONSUMER PRICE INFLATION, Percentage Changes(a)

PRIVATE SECTOR GOODS
AND SERVICES(b).....

Period	All groups	All groups excluding Housing	All groups excluding interest and 'volatile items'(b)	Goods	Services	Total	Treasury Underlying Rate(b)
PERCENTAGE CHANGE (from previous year)							
1993-94	1.8	2.3	2.8	2.7	1.7	2.4	2.1
1994-95	3.2	2.6	2.5	2.0	2.9	2.3	2.1
1995-96	4.2	3.9	3.6	3.8	4.0	3.8	3.2
1996-97	1.3	2.3	2.3	1.6	3.0	1.9	2.0
PERCENTAGE CHANGE (from corresponding quarter of previous year)							
1994							
March	1.4	1.8	2.7	2.5	1.9	2.3	2.1
June	1.7	2.1	2.4	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.0
September	1.9	2.2	2.3	1.7	2.8	2.0	2.0
December	2.5	2.2	2.4	1.8	2.4	2.0	2.1
1995							
March	3.9	2.9	2.3	1.9	2.9	2.1	1.9
June	4.5	3.4	3.1	2.9	3.5	3.1	2.5
September	5.1	4.1	3.7	3.8	3.6	3.8	3.1
December	5.1	4.4	3.9	4.0	4.1	4.1	3.2
1996							
March	3.7	3.9	3.8	3.9	4.8	4.1	3.3
June	3.1	3.4	3.2	3.4	3.5	3.4	3.1
September	2.1	2.4	2.6	2.3	3.1	2.5	2.4
December	1.5	2.3	2.2	1.8	2.7	2.0	2.1
1997							
March	1.3	2.5	2.3	1.5	2.6	1.8	2.1
June	0.3	2.0	2.1	0.7	3.2	1.4	1.7
September	-0.3	1.4	1.6	0.5	3.6	1.3	1.5
December	-0.2	1.3	1.7	0.7	3.3	1.3	1.4
1998							
March	-0.2	1.0	1.6	1.0	3.2	1.5	1.5
PERCENTAGE CHANGE (from previous quarter)							
1994							
March	0.4	0.4	0.7	0.4	0.0	0.4	0.5
June	0.7	0.7	0.4	0.4	0.5	0.4	0.4
September	0.6	0.6	0.5	0.3	1.0	0.5	0.6
December	0.8	0.5	0.7	0.6	0.9	0.7	0.5
1995							
March	1.7	1.0	0.7	0.5	0.4	0.4	0.3
June	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.4	1.1	1.4	1.0
September	1.2	1.3	1.1	1.3	1.1	1.2	1.2
December	0.8	0.8	0.9	0.8	1.4	1.0	0.7
1996							
March	0.4	0.6	0.6	0.4	1.1	0.5	0.4
June	0.7	0.7	0.6	0.9	-0.1	0.7	0.8
September	0.3	0.3	0.5	0.2	0.7	0.3	0.5
December	0.2	0.7	0.6	0.2	1.0	0.5	0.4
1997							
March	0.2	0.7	0.6	0.1	1.0	0.3	0.4
June	-0.2	0.2	0.4	0.2	0.5	0.2	0.3
September	-0.4	-0.3	0.0	0.0	1.1	0.2	0.3
December	0.3	0.6	0.6	0.4	0.7	0.5	0.3
1998							
March	0.3	0.4	0.6	0.4	0.9	0.5	0.5

(a) Refer to paragraphs 21-26 of the Explanatory Notes for further information

(b) Refer to paragraph 14 of the Explanatory Notes for a description of this series

EXPLANATORY NOTES

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE CPI

1 The Consumer Price Index (CPI) measures quarterly changes in the price of a 'basket' of goods and services which account for a high proportion of expenditure by the CPI population group (i.e. metropolitan wage and salary earner households). This 'basket' covers a wide range of goods and services, arranged in the following eight groups:

- food
- clothing
- housing
- household equipment and operation
- transportation
- tobacco and alcohol
- health and personal care and
- recreation and education.

Pensioners and other social welfare recipients are not included in the CPI population group and the index does not reflect concessional prices paid by these people such as subsidised government dwelling rents, public transport fares and the like.

2 The capital city indexes measure price movements over time in each city individually. They do not measure differences in retail price levels between cities.

3 Further information about the CPI is contained in a booklet entitled *A Guide to the Consumer Price Index* (6440.0) which is available from the ABS on request. A more detailed account is contained in *The Australian Consumer Price Index, Concepts, Sources and Methods* (6461.0), contained on the CD-ROM *Statistical Concepts Reference Library* (1361.0).

PRICES

4 Prices of goods and services included in the CPI are generally collected quarterly. However, some important items are priced monthly or more frequently (e.g. bread, fresh meat and fish, fresh fruit and vegetables, petrol, alcohol and tobacco) and a small number annually (e.g. seasonal clothing).

5 In order to facilitate a more even spread of field collection workload the bulk of the items for which prices are collected quarterly are priced in the first two months of each quarter (i.e. July/August, October/November, January/February, April/May). With a few exceptions items priced in the third month are those subject to price changes at discrete points of time (e.g. electricity and postal charges); in these cases information about any changes in price during the quarter is obtained so that an average price for the whole quarter can be calculated.

WEIGHTING PATTERN

6 There are 107 expenditure classes (that is, groupings of like items) in the twelfth series CPI and each expenditure class has its own weight, or measure of relative importance. In calculating the index, price changes for the various expenditure classes are combined using these weights.

7 Changes in the weighting pattern have been made at approximately five-yearly intervals to take account of changes in household spending patterns. The CPI now comprises twelve series of price indexes which have been linked to form a continuous series.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

ANALYSIS OF CPI CHANGES

8 Movements in indexes from one period to another can be expressed either as changes in index points or as percentage changes. The following example illustrates the method of calculating changes in index points and percentage changes between any two periods: All groups CPI: Weighted average of eight capital cities.

	Index numbers:	
March Quarter 1998	120.3	(see Table 1)
less December Quarter 1997	120.0	(see Table 1)
Change in index points	0.3	
Percentage change =	$\frac{0.3}{120.0}$	x 100 = 0.3%

9 Percentage changes are calculated to illustrate three different kinds of movements in index numbers:

- movements between consecutive financial years (where the index numbers for financial years are simple averages of the quarterly index numbers),
- movements between corresponding quarters of consecutive years, and
- movements between consecutive quarters.

10 Table 6 provides a detailed analysis, for the weighted average of eight capital cities, of movements in the CPI since the previous quarter, including information on movements for groups, sub-groups and expenditure classes. It also shows the contribution which each makes to the total CPI. For instance, the dairy products sub-group contributed 1.92 index points to the total All groups index number of 120.3 for March Quarter 1998. The final column shows contributions to the change in All Groups index points by each group, sub-group and expenditure class.

11 Table 7 provides summary information about a range of Special series in a similar format to that provided in Table 6.

12 Information on the impact of changes in Selected State and local government charges on the CPI is included in Tables 5 and 7. Table 5 shows the contribution to the CPI made by changes in these charges for each capital city, while Table 7 shows index numbers for two special series 'Selected State and local government charges' and 'All groups excluding selected State and local government charges'.

SPECIAL SERIES

13 Various series are presented in this publication which are helpful for analytical purposes. These series are compiled by taking subsets of the CPI basket. A complete list of CPI groups, sub-groups and expenditure classes is contained in Tables 5 and 6.

14 Some of the compiled series are self explanatory, such as 'All groups, excluding food'. Other series and their composition are described below:

All Groups, goods component: comprises the Food group (except Meals out), Clothing group (except Dry cleaning and Shoe repairs), Household equipment and operation group (except Veterinary services, House contents insurance, Repairs to appliances, Postal and telephone services and Consumer credit charges), Tobacco and alcohol group, Materials used in house repairs and maintenance, Motor vehicles, Automotive fuel, Tyres and tubes, Parts used in vehicle services and repairs, Personal care products, Books, Newspapers and magazines, and Recreational goods. The resulting series accounted for approximately 61% of the All groups CPI in the June quarter 1992.

All Groups, services component: comprises all items not included in the 'All groups, goods component'.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

SPECIAL SERIES *continued*

Selected State and local government charges: comprises Government-owned dwelling rents, Water and sewerage rates, Council property rates and charges, Electricity prices, Gas prices (Melbourne and Perth only), Motor vehicle third party insurance premiums (except Canberra and in part only in Sydney and Brisbane), Motor vehicle registration fees, Drivers' licence fees, Urban bus fares (government bus fares only in Sydney and Melbourne, council fares only in Brisbane), Urban rail and tram fares (not applicable in Hobart, Canberra and Darwin).

All groups excluding interest and 'volatile items': comprises the All groups CPI excluding: Fresh fruit and vegetables, Mortgage interest charges, Automotive fuel, and Consumer credit charges. The resulting series covers approximately 85% of the total CPI basket.

Private sector goods and services: in addition to the items excluded from the series "All groups excluding interest and 'volatile items'", also excludes: Government-owned dwelling rents, Fuel and light, Local government rates and charges, Postal and telephone services, Motoring charges, Urban transport fares, Health services, Pharmaceuticals, and Education and child care. The resulting series covers approximately 69% of the total CPI basket.

Treasury underlying rate: excludes items from the CPI basket whose prices are highly volatile, exhibit marked seasonal patterns or are largely affected by policy decisions – in addition to the items excluded from the series 'Private sector goods and services', the Treasury underlying rate also excludes Meat and seafoods, Clothing group, Tobacco and alcohol group; and Holiday travel and accommodation; but includes Motoring charges. The resulting series covers approximately 51% of the total CPI basket.

INTERNATIONAL COMPARISONS

15 In analysing price movements in Australia, an important consideration is Australia's performance relative to other countries. However, due to the many differences in the structure of the housing sector in different countries and in the way that housing is treated in their CPIs, a simple comparison of All groups (or headline) CPIs is often inappropriate. To provide a better basis for international comparisons, the Fourteenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians adopted a resolution which called for countries to 'provide for dissemination at the international level of an index which excludes shelter, in addition to the all-items index'.

16 Table 8 presents indexes for selected countries on a basis consistent with the above resolution and comparable to the Australian series 'All groups excluding housing'. To facilitate comparisons all indexes in this table have, where necessary, been converted to a quarterly basis and re-referenced to a base of 1989–90 = 100.0.

17 The statistics for Germany refer to Western Germany (Federal Republic of Germany) before the unification of Germany.

18 From March quarter 1994 the statistics for New Zealand refer to 'all groups excluding housing and credit services'.

19 From 1 July 1997, Hong Kong became part of China. It is now known officially as: The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China. Taiwan is officially referred to as: Taiwan (Province of China).

20 In producing this table, the ABS is grateful for the assistance of the relevant national statistical agencies which have either directly supplied indexes for all items excluding shelter or data to enable their derivation.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

ALTERNATIVE MEASURES OF CONSUMER PRICE INFLATION

21 The various uses of the CPI may be grouped into two major categories. The first relates to uses of the CPI to assess changes in the purchasing power of household incomes, particularly as input to income adjustment processes. The second relates to uses as a general measure of inflation.

22 It is not possible to produce a single measure that is entirely suitable for both purposes, due to certain fundamental differences in requirements. For more details, see the Information Paper *The Australian Consumer Price Index, 12th Series Review* (6450.0).

23 While the removal of shelter costs from the CPI serves to improve international comparability there is a need for other measures for some purposes. In particular, there is a requirement for measures which seek to remove temporary influences and one-off changes in order to focus on the 'underlying' inflation rate.

24 There is no universally accepted methodology for deriving a measure of an 'underlying' inflation rate. The Reserve Bank of Australia (RBA) and the Commonwealth Department of the Treasury (Treasury) have developed several alternative measures which, while based on the CPI, exclude various components which have been assessed as contributing significant temporary influences from time to time.

25 Table 10 presents the All groups CPI, All groups excluding housing (the series recommended for international comparisons), and a number of possible 'underlying' measures including the Treasury measure. A description of the Treasury 'underlying' inflation rate was published in the Appendix to the September quarter 1994 issue of this publication.

26 No single series can be claimed to provide the ideal guide to 'underlying' inflation in every time period due to the variations in the sources of particular 'shocks'. Judgement will still be required in assessing the trend from period to period. However, Treasury and the RBA have agreed that the Treasury series provides the best available guide to 'underlying' inflation for macro-economic policy purposes.

RELATED PUBLICATIONS

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

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

- *The Australian Consumer Price Index: Concepts Sources and Methods* (6461.0), available on CD-ROM *Statistical Concept Reference Library* (1361.0)
- *A Guide to the Consumer Price Index* (6440.0)
- *Information Paper: The Australian Consumer Price Index: Treatment of Mortgage Interest Charges* (6442.0)
- *House Price Indexes: Eight Capital Cities* (6416.0)
- *Average Retail Prices of Selected Items Eight Capital Cities* (6403.0)
- *Information Paper: The Australian Consumer Price Index: 12th Series Review* (6450.0).

UNPUBLISHED STATISTICS

29 As well as the statistics included in this and related publications, the ABS may have other relevant unpublished data available. Inquiries should be made to Judy Henson on 02 6252 6251 or to any ABS office.

SYMBOLS AND OTHER USAGES

— nil or rounded to zero
n.a. not available
n.y.a. not yet available
r revised

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POST Client Services, ABS, PO Box 10, Belconnen, ACT 2616

EMAIL client.services@abs.gov.au



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