

CHAPTER I.—RETAIL PRICES AND PRICE INDEXES.

§ 1.—Collection of Returns of Retail Prices and Rents.

One of the most important functions of the Labour Section of the Bureau is the regular collection and tabulation of returns of retail prices and house rentals.

The retail prices of an extensive range of articles and services in common demand are collected at frequent intervals from representative retail establishments in the more important towns throughout Australia. The prices of a less extensive range of commodities are also collected at annual intervals from most towns of any significant size, the total number of towns so covered reaching approximately 200.

Definite standards of quality have been established for each article in order to ensure that, as far as care and effort can make it possible, prices for articles of identical grade or quality will be recorded at all times and for all places. These standards, which are incorporated in printed "specifications", are closely watched and revised from time to time to keep them in harmony with changing trade practices and conditions.

The actual collection of the data is carried out, under the direct supervision of the State Statisticians, by specially qualified officers of the Bureau, while two supervising field officers are provided to assist in the co-ordination of activities in the several States. The prices of foods are obtained, where practicable, from about ten retailers in each of the capital cities, and from about five retailers in the provincial towns. Tradespeople and agents are carefully selected in order to ensure the supply of representative figures for the whole of each town, and returns are carefully verified if there should be any doubt as to the accuracy of the information supplied.

Returns of rents are made at the middle of each quarter by a representative number of house-agents in each town, for brick and wooden houses respectively, classified according to the number of rooms. These returns show the rents of individual houses, all of which are inspected by the Bureau's field officers.

§ 2. Compilation of Indexes of Retail Prices and Rents.

1. **General.**—The methods adopted for the compilation of indexes of retail prices and rents are briefly described in the following pages. For a more detailed explanation, and an analysis of the problems involved, the reader should refer to the Appendix to Labour Report No. 9.

2. The "Regimen".—The "regimen" from which the retail price indexes are compiled consists of a list of those commodities and services which most commonly enter into the consumption of the average household. The regimen is divided into the following distinct Groups and Sections:—

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

An index (the "All Items" or "C" series) is compiled for the whole of the foregoing Groups, but for many purposes indexes are required for each Group or Section separately. For this reason the following indexes are regularly compiled at the intervals shown, and published in this Report and other publications issued by the Bureau:—

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

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

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

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

No.	Item.	Unit.	Mass Unit (per capita).	Cost of Items in Regimen as percentage of aggregate cost—Melbourne, Dec. Quarter, 1940. (a)
SECTION A.—GROCERIES.				
1	Bread, white flour (cash delivered) ..	2-lb. loaf ..	100	3.54
2	Flour, ordinary	2 lb. ..	25	0.67
3	Flour, self-raising	2-lb. pkt. . .	12	0.61
4	Tea	1-lb. pkt. . .	8	1.60
5	Sugar, white granulated, IA ..	1 lb. ..	100	2.53
6	Rice, polished (Australian) ..	1 lb. ..	8	0.18
7	Sago, seed tapioca	1 lb. ..	1	0.03
8	Jam, plum	1½-lb. tin ..	8	0.48
9	Golden Syrup	2-lb. tin ..	1	0.05
10	Oats, flaked, loose	1 lb. ..	8	0.15
11	Raisins, seeded	1-lb. pkt. . .	5	0.34
12	Currants, loose, 2-Crown ..	1 lb. ..	2	0.12
13	Apricots, dried, loose, 2-Crown	1 lb. ..	1	0.11
14	Peaches, canned	30-oz. tin ..	3	0.20
15	Pears, canned	30-oz. tin ..	1	0.07
16	Salmon, in tins	1-lb. tin ..	3	0.31
17	Potatoes, new and old	7 lb. ..	18	1.80
18	Onions, brown	1 lb. ..	14	0.19
19	Soap	1 lb. ..	16	0.72
20	Kerosene, lighting, bulk ..	quart ..	4	0.14
} 13.84				
SECTION B.—DAIRY PRODUCE.				
21	Butter, factory "choicest" ..	1 lb. ..	30	3.73
22	Cheese, ordinary, mild	1 lb. ..	4	0.34
23	Eggs, standard, new laid ..	1 doz. ..	6	0.62
24	Bacon, rashers, best middle ..	1 lb. ..	12	1.57
25	Milk, condensed, sweetened ..	1 tin ..	5	0.30
26	Milk, fresh—in sealed bottles or not bottled	quart ..	72	3.15
} 9.71				
SECTION C.—MEAT.				
Beef (fresh)—				
27	Sirloin (Roast)	1 lb. ..	18	1.33
28	Prime Rib (Roast) including bone	1 lb. ..	22	1.32
29	Steak—Rump	1 lb. ..	11	1.22
30	Steak—Chuck (stewing) ..	1 lb. ..	20	1.02
31	Sausages	1 lb. ..	7	0.28
Beef (corned)—				
32	Silverside	1 lb. ..	14	0.89
33	Brisket, rolled	1 lb. ..	15	0.74
Mutton (fresh)—				
34	Leg	1 lb. ..	20	1.00
35	Forequarter	1 lb. ..	15	0.45
36	Loin	1 lb. ..	4	0.19
37	Chops—Loin	1 lb. ..	30	1.68
38	Chops—Leg	1 lb. ..	10	0.59
Pork (fresh)—				
39	Leg	1 lb. ..	3	0.24
40	Loin	1 lb. ..	3	0.25
41	Chops	1 lb. ..	3	0.27
} 11.47				
GROUP II.—HOUSING.—SECTION D.—RENT.				
42	House Accommodation(b) ..	week ..	52(c)	22.73 } 22.73

(a) "C" Series continued on page 7.

(b) Four and five roomed houses.

(c) Per household

Retail Price Indexes—Regimen—continued.

GROUP III.—CLOTHING.*

No.	Item.	Mass Unit (per capita).	No.	Item.	Mass Unit (per capita).
SECTION E.—CLOTHING—MAN.			SECTION G.—CLOTHING—BOY (10½ YEARS)—contd.		
1	Suit, ready-made, Worsted (Australian)	0.67	46	Overcoat, ready-made, Tweed (Australian)	0.33
2	Trousers, working, Cotton Tweed (Australian)	2.00	47	Cap, Skull, Cloth	1.50
3	Overcoat, ready-made, Tweed (Australian)	0.25	48	Shirt, Sports	5.00
4	Hat, Fur Felt (Australian) ..	1.00	49	Singlet, Wool and Cotton (short sleeves)	1.00
5	Shirt, Fashion, with two collars ..	1.67	50	Singlet, Cotton (athletic) ..	1.00
6	Shirt, working—Drill	4.00	51	Braces	1.00
7	.. .. .	.. .. .	52	Stockings, Golf, All Wool ..	4.00
8	Singlet, Wool and Cotton (short sleeves)	1.00	53	Pyjamas, Winceyette	1.50
9	Singlet, Cotton (athletic)	1.00	54	Pullover, All Wool	0.50
10	Underpants, Wool and Cotton (full length)	1.00	55	Shoes (for best wear), Box Yearling	3.00
11	Underpants, Cotton "Shorts" (plain)	1.00	56	.. .. .	.. .. .
12	Sox, All Wool (fancy)	2.00	57	.. .. .	.. .. .
13	Sox, Wool and Cotton (fancy) ..	4.00	SECTION H.—CLOTHING—GIRL (7 YEARS).		
14	Braces	1.33	58	Tunic, Wool	1.00
15	Handkerchief, Cotton	5.00	59	Dress, Cotton	3.00
16	Pyjamas, Winceyette	1.50	60	Top Coat, Tweed (Australian) ..	0.33
17	Pullover, All Wool	1.00	61	Hat, Wool Felt (Australian) ..	1.00
18	Shoes (for best wear), Box Call ..	0.50	62	Hat, Straw	2.00
19	Boots, working, Box Hide	1.50	63	.. .. .	.. .. .
SECTION F.—CLOTHING—WOMAN.			64	Petticoat, Art Silk	1.00
20	Costume, ready-made, Tweed (Australian)	0.50	65	Singlet, Silk and Wool	0.50
21	Skirt, ready-made, Tweed (Australian)	1.25	66	Singlet, Art Silk	0.50
22	.. .. .	.. .. .	67	Bloomers, Cotton and Art Silk, fleecy-lined	2.00
23	Hat, Fur Felt (Australian)	0.75	68	Bloomers, Art Silk	2.00
24	Hat, Straw	1.50	69	Stockings, Cashmere	4.00
25	Frock, ready-made, Cotton	1.50	70	Pyjamas, Winceyette	0.33
26	Frock, ready-made, Art Silk ..	1.50	71	Pyjamas, Art Silk	0.33
27	Brasiers, Cotton Brocade	4.50	72	Pullover, All Wool	0.50
28	Undervest, Wool and Art Silk ..	1.50	73	Shoes (for best wear), Patent Leather	0.67
29	Undervest, Art Silk	1.50	74	.. .. .	.. .. .
30	.. .. .	.. .. .	75	Shoes (school), Box Yearling ..	1.50
31	Bloomers, Art Silk	4.50	SECTION I.—CLOTHING—BOY (3½ YEARS).		
32	Princess Slip, Art Silk	1.00	76	Mouse Coat	3.00
33	Stockings, Silk	6.00	77	Pants, ready-made, Tweed (Australian)	3.00
33A	Stockings, Twin Silk	6.00	78	Overcoat, ready-made, Tweed (Australian)	0.33
34	Stockings, Lisle	3.00	79	Hat, Cloth	1.33
35	Gloves, Fabric	2.25	80	Singlet, Wool and Cotton	1.00
36	Gloves, Nappa	0.75	81	Singlet, Cotton (athletic)	1.00
37	Nightdress, Art Silk	1.50	82	Sox, Art Silk and Lisle	4.00
38	Pyjamas, Winceyette	1.50	83	Pyjamas, Winceyette	2.00
39	Dressing Gown, Art Silk	0.50	84	Pullover, All Wool	0.50
40	Apron, Cotton	5.00	85	Shoes (for best wear), Patent Leather	1.00
41	Cardigan, All Wool	0.50	86	Shoes (for ordinary wear), Tan Yearling	2.00
42	Shoes (for best wear), Glace Kid ..	1.50	SECTION G.—CLOTHING—BOY (10½ YEARS).		
43	Shoes (for ordinary wear), Box Call	1.50	44	Suit, ready-made, Tweed (Australian)	1.00
SECTION G.—CLOTHING—BOY (10½ YEARS).			45	Pants, ready-made, Tweed (Australian)	3.00

* The total cost of each section is multiplied by a section "weight" representing the proportion of the population covered by the section.

Retail Price Indexes—Regimen—continued.

GROUP IV.—MISCELLANEOUS.

No.	Item.	Mass Unit (per household).	No.	Item.	Mass Unit (per household).
SECTION K.—HOUSEHOLD DRAPERY.			SECTION L.—HOUSEHOLD UTENSILS—continued.		
1	Blankets, D.B. (pair) ..	0.07	26	Kulfe, Table (stainless) ..	0.10
2	Blankets, S.B. (pair) ..	0.14	27	Spoon, Tea ..	0.08
3	Quilt, D.B. Marcella ..	0.25	28	Spoon, Dessert ..	0.08
4	.. ..	..	29	Fork, Table ..	0.10
5	Sheets, D.B. (pair) ..	0.50	30	Globe, Electric Light (gas-filled) ..	2.00
6	Sheets, S.B. (pair) ..	1.00	31	Iron, Electric (full size) ..	0.10
7	Pillow Slip, Cotton ..	5.00	SECTION M.—FUEL AND LIGHT.		
8	Towel ..	3.00	32	Firewood (blocks) (cwt.) (a) ..	40
9	Table Cloth ..	0.20	33	Gas, cooking (units) (a) ..	1,518
10	Tea Towel (yard) ..	4.00	34	Electric lighting (units) ..	130
SECTION L.—HOUSEHOLD UTENSILS.			35	Electric power (units) (a) ..	130
11	Cup and Saucer (Stone China) ..	2.00	SECTION N.—OTHER MISCELLANEOUS.		
12	Plate, Dinner (Stone China) ..	2.00	No.	Item.	Amount per week (per household).
13	Jug, Quart (Earthenware) ..	1.00	36	Union Dues ..	d.
14	Teapot, Brownware (2-pint) ..	0.25	37	Lodge Dues ..	(b)
15	Basin, Pudding (Enamel), 6½-inch ..	1.00	38	Medicine ..	24
16	Tumbler (8-oz.) ..	1.00	39	Newspapers ..	(b)
17	Kettle, Enamel (6-pint) ..	0.40	40	Recreation ..	24
18	.. ..	..	41	Smoking ..	(b)
19	Saucepan, Enamel (3-pint) ..	0.40	42	Fares ..	(b)
20	Bucket, Galvanized (12-inch) ..	0.20	43	School requisites ..	4½
21	Dipper, Galvanized (2-quart) ..	0.20			
22	Broom, Mfllet ..	0.50			
23	Broom, Hair, complete (12-inch) ..	0.33			
24	Brush, Scrubbing (10-inch) ..	1.50			
25	Mop, Polishing, complete ..	0.20			

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

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

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

It will be noted that the “mass units” are all shown on the basis of consumption per head or per household. In the tabulation for index-number purposes, the figures are weighted on a “total population” basis, by multiplying the aggregate cost of each Group or Section by the relative

numbers of the population properly applicable to it. Thus Group I. (Food and Groceries) is multiplied by the whole population; Group II. (Housing) by the total number of households; Sections E to J (Clothing) by the proportions of the population applicable to each; and Sections K to N (Miscellaneous) by the total number of households.

The five sections into which the clothing group is divided are somewhat arbitrary, but they are those adopted by the Royal Commission on the Basic Wage (see § 7, p. 24). The sections for men and women are now regarded as being applicable to persons aged seventeen years and upwards. The section for a boy aged ten and a half years is taken as representative of both sexes from ten to sixteen years; the section for a girl aged seven as representative of both sexes from five to nine years; and the section for the boy aged three and a half years is taken as representative of children aged four years and under.

In estimating the annual average consumption per head of food and groceries for household purposes, small adjustments in the crude average consumption were made in two ways. Consumption by factories, when the product did not go into household use in Australia, was deducted. On the other hand, the weights given to some foods, such as dried apricots and canned peaches, cover also the consumption of other similar foods. Foods of some importance, such as fresh fish, and fruit and vegetables other than potatoes and onions, are not included in the regimen, owing to the fact that comparable prices for a standard grade for these items cannot be obtained; a further difficulty arises from the seasonal character of their production and consumption. The inclusion of such items, therefore, would impair the accuracy and stability of the index, and even if accurate information could be obtained, the index would probably not be materially affected by their inclusion. In the original regimen certain omissions were made partly on account of the difficulty of securing comparable prices. Some of the joints of meat, for example, are not only insufficiently standardized, but anomalies in price are not uncommon. In making these omissions, however, the appropriate total weight for meat is distributed amongst the more standardized joints.

The estimated annual consumption per head of articles of clothing and miscellaneous household requirements is based largely on the results of the Royal Commission on the Basic Wage, which reported in 1920 and 1921. After exhaustive inquiries the Commission established what it considered a desirable "regimen" for an average working family of five persons, and set out the constituent items in its "Indicator List". This list, so far as it related to the articles in question, was followed substantially in the original compilation of the "All Items" index, but, as old articles were deleted and new ones substituted, appropriate modifications were introduced. In these revisions the principle has been followed of redistributing the mass-units in the manner most conformable to the original findings of the Commission.

The mass-units used for fuel and light are also based, indirectly, on the findings of the Commission. Until the September quarter of 1936 flat amounts were used for the miscellaneous items of Section N, their chief function—apart from a slight stabilizing influence on the index-numbers—being to vary in accordance with the Commission's findings the relative heights of the index-numbers for the several States. Since the date mentioned, provision has been made to vary the amounts set down for three of these items periodically, in accordance with ascertained changes:

4. **Relative Importance of the Items and Groups.**—The relative importance in the grand aggregate of any item of the regimen will, of course, change slightly with the variation of prices. The relative importance of all the groups and sections in the "All Items" ("C" series) index can be roughly gauged from the figures for Melbourne for the December quarter, 1940, as shown in the following table, while in the last column of the regimen for Group I. (Food and Groceries) on page 3, the relative importance of each item in this group is shown:—

Group.	Section.	Percentage of Total Aggregate Cost.
I. Food and Groceries	{ A Groceries	13.84
	{ B Dairy Produce	9.71
	{ C Meat	11.47
		} 35.02
II. Housing	D House Rent (4 and 5 rooms)	22.73
		22.73
III. Clothing	{ E Man	8.98
	{ F Woman	10.42
	{ G Boy, 10½ years	1.81
	{ H Girl, 7 years	1.20
	{ J Boy, 3½ years	0.71
		} 23.12
IV. Miscellaneous	{ K Household Drapery	1.71
	{ L Household Utensils	0.55
	{ M Fuel and Light	4.88
	{ N Other Miscellaneous	11.99
		} 19.13
		100.00

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

(a) November.

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

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

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

Relative Population Weights Used for Different Towns.

New South Wales.		Victoria.		Queensland.		South Australia.		Western Australia.		Tasmanis.	
Town.	Weight.	Town.	Weight.	Town.	Weight.	Town.	Weight.	Town.	Weight.	Town.	Weight.
Sydney ..	1235	Melbourne	992	Brisbane	300	Adelaide	313	Perth, etc.	208	Hobart	60
Newcastle	103	Ballarat ..	38	T'woomba	26	Kadina, etc.	13	Kalg'lie, etc	17	Launceston	53
Broken Hill	27	Bendigo ..	29	Rockham'n	29	Pt. Pirie	12	Northam	5	Burnie ..	4
Goulburn	15	Geelong ..	39	†Townsville	26	Mt. Gamb't	5	Bunbury	5	Devonport	5
Bathurst	16	W'nambool	9	†Bundaberg	11	Peterbor'gh	3	Geraldton	5	Queenst'wn	4
Total ..	1392	Total ..	1107	†Total ..	392	Total ..	344	Total ..	240	Total ..	106

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

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

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

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

8. Basis of Retail Price Index-Numbers.—The foregoing description indicates that these index-numbers are based on a fixed list of items (regimen) of specified grades. This regimen is subject to minor modifications from time to time to maintain the items as far as possible in harmony with current fashion or usage. The "consumption weights" are kept constant over the comparatively long periods which have elapsed between revisions. The weights for food and groceries were originally based on the experience of the years 1906 to 1910, but were revised in 1932, on the basis of *per capita* consumption in the years 1927 to 1929. In the "B" series (food, groceries and rent of 4 and 5 roomed houses) and the "C" series (food and groceries, rent of 4 and 5 roomed houses; clothing and miscellaneous household requirements) indexes, changing distribution of population and households enter into consideration, and the weights were originally based on the 1911 Census, but were revised in 1936, on the basis of the 1933 Census. Excepting for these modifications, therefore, the index-numbers represent the proportionate change in cost from time to time of a constant regimen. They are primarily constructed to measure fluctuations in retail prices of commodities and services which commonly enter into what is colloquially referred to as "cost of living". The regimen does not embrace all items which enter into cost of living, but includes representative items whose grade and price can be ascertained with due precision in the various cities and towns of Australia month by month and quarter by quarter. While the "C" series retail price index-numbers are used by Industrial Tribunals for purposes of assessing the amount of quarterly variation in basic wage rates, the amount of the wage itself is determined by the Court without any regard whatsoever to the retail price regimen or its cost.

§ 3. The Food, Groceries and Rent ("B" Series) Index of Retail Prices.

1. General.—This index measures the prices of food and groceries and the rent of 4 and 5-roomed houses. It was first compiled in respect of the year 1925, and index-numbers were retrospectively computed for the several earlier years shown below. It was designed to replace the "A" series index (food, groceries and rent of all houses), which was the original index first compiled by this Bureau in 1912. Owing, however, to the continued use of the latter index by Industrial Tribunals for the purpose of adjusting wages to variations in retail prices, the "B" series index never replaced the "A" series* in this connexion.

2. Retail Price Index-Numbers: Capital Cities, 1907 to 1940.—Index numbers computed separately for each section of the regimen, and the weighted average for all sections together, for the capital city of each State are shown in the next table.

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

The index-numbers given in the separate sections of the table cannot be compared with each other in order to show the relative cost of housing and food and groceries, since each section or combination has its own base, viz., the weighted average cost for the six capital cities taken together during the five-yearly period 1923-1927 for that section or combination.

* The compilation of this index was discontinued after June quarter, 1938.

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

TOWN.	1907.	1911.	1914.	1921.	1936	1937.	1938.	1939.	1940.
SECTION A.—GROCERIES.									
Sydney	510	574	627	1,115	859	872	887	994	968
Melbourne	461	521	562	1,070	829	829	835	957	947
Brisbane	547	614	607	1,105	868	860	871	944	942
Adelaide	510	541	598	1,076	814	838	831	939	913
Perth	572	720	628	1,103	864	906	897	966	940
Hobart	501	566	604	1,087	840	871	874	947	930
Weighted Average (a) ..	499	564	599	1,093	846	857	864	960	945
SECTION B.—DAIRY PRODUCE.									
Sydney	551	574	656	1,080	791	817	850	851	864
Melbourne	571	597	635	1,087	773	813	861	885	880
Brisbane	495	581	588	983	709	768	791	793	800
Adelaide	548	651	705	1,018	728	774	802	800	800
Perth	709	733	735	1,152	816	830	864	870	873
Hobart	564	587	695	1,091	702	765	802	844	855
Weighted Average (a) ..	563	591	654	1,072	771	807	843	853	857
SECTION C.—MEAT.									
Sydney	519	501	668	960	881	906	969	935	1,008
Melbourne	557	485	663	1,030	809	857	960	968	1,028
Brisbane	535	488	610	897	764	825	834	822	898
Adelaide	553	541	784	1,095	839	851	950	929	972
Perth	789	824	881	1,103	867	887	926	958	1,026
Hobart	668	638	780	1,244	928	964	957	961	1,041
Weighted Average (a) ..	558	522	691	1,010	842	877	948	936	1,002
SECTIONS A, B AND C COMBINED.—FOOD AND GROCERIES.									
Sydney	523	553	646	1,061	848	868	904	936	952
Melbourne	517	523	610	1,063	809	836	884	942	947
Brisbane	530	569	603	1,034	791	823	838	864	889
Adelaide	532	570	679	1,066	798	826	861	897	900
Perth	670	753	728	1,116	853	881	899	938	949
Hobart	565	592	678	1,133	827	870	880	923	944
Weighted Average (a) ..	533	559	640	1,064	825	851	886	927	939
SECTION D.—HOUSING (4 AND 5 ROOMS).									
Sydney	593	701	760	989	930	965	1,004	1,035	1,042
Melbourne	455	569	628	820	882	909	935	955	969
Brisbane	283	373	466	630	766	822	841	854	857
Adelaide	510	706	655	809	795	832	868	888	892
Perth	458	524	589	739	844	861	872	881	882
Hobart	405	452	518	881	908	899	913	925	933
Weighted Average (a) ..	497	612	662	862	879	912	942	965	973
ALL SECTIONS COMBINED.—FOOD, GROCERIES, AND HOUSING.									
Sydney	548	606	687	1,036	878	904	941	972	985
Melbourne	495	539	616	977	835	862	902	945	953
Brisbane	442	500	554	877	781	824	838	858	875
Adelaide	524	618	671	975	796	826	862	891	895
Perth	594	672	679	982	849	871	887	914	921
Hobart	508	542	621	1,044	856	879	891	922	938
Weighted Average (a) ..	520	578	648	992	844	872	906	939	950

(a) For Six Capital Cities

3. **Retail Price Index-Numbers: Thirty Towns, 1936 to 1941.**—The following tables give index-numbers representing the variations in the prices of food and groceries (41 commodities) in 30 of the more important towns at yearly, quarterly and monthly intervals. In addition, index-numbers are given showing for the years specified the quarterly and yearly variations in house rents (4 and 5-rooms) and in the combined prices of food, groceries and housing.

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

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

Period.	NEW SOUTH WALES.						VICTORIA.					
	Sydney.	Newcastle.	Broken Hill.	Goulburn.	Rathurst.	Weighted Average, N.S.W.	Melbourne.	Ballaarat.	Bendigo.	Geelong.	Warrnambool.	Weighted Average, Victoria.
1936 ..	848	860	949	847	848	851	809	839	824	806	823	810
1937 ..	868	880	1,001	874	835	872	836	857	811	834	834	817
1938 ..	904	925	1,092	931	898	909	884	885	889	889	889	884
1939 ..	936	905	1,106	901	940	942	942	920	930	944	955	942
1940 ..	952	885	1,069	1,001	881	958	947	935	819	939	885	946
1940 Mar. Qtr.	933	901	1,052	978	928	938	922	918	919	918	923	922
June "	957	885	1,074	1,002	900	950	954	943	928	946	962	954
Sept. "	945	980	1,061	1,002	950	950	949	936	948	944	960	949
Dec. "	974	1,015	1,089	1,019	966	980	961	941	963	948	964	960
1941 Mar. Qtr.	982	1,014	1,152	1,016	967	988	949	966	953	940	951	948
June "	949	992	1,133	1,007	954	957	938	923	943	918	941	937
1910.	925	933	1,046	973	919	930	909	911	907	907	928	909
January ..	931	960	1,050	979	921	936	922	920	916	920	932	911
February ..	942	972	1,057	985	947	947	935	923	913	929	938	924
March ..	968	986	1,074	1,004	962	972	947	939	953	941	953	947
April ..	952	965	1,073	1,019	959	958	958	946	937	948	964	957
May ..	951	983	1,074	1,015	958	957	959	944	958	948	970	958
June ..	941	973	1,070	1,002	952	948	949	934	956	945	958	949
July ..	941	974	1,047	1,000	950	946	944	933	957	948	960	944
August ..	950	993	1,060	1,004	950	956	954	939	959	944	966	953
September ..	969	1,012	1,064	1,013	959	974	957	934	939	944	960	950
October ..	973	1,107	1,020	1,020	963	979	963	940	964	950	962	956
November ..	982	1,014	1,095	1,024	977	987	964	950	967	950	964	963
December ..	988	1,019	1,095	1,024	977	987	964	950	967	950	964	963
1941.	1,005	1,025	1,160	1,028	980	1,009	969	958	968	956	968	968
January ..	973	1,013	1,151	1,012	962	979	943	928	950	926	948	943
February ..	968	1,004	1,145	1,008	958	975	935	928	942	938	938	943
March ..	963	999	1,147	1,011	961	970	946	923	946	927	943	944
April ..	948	993	1,131	1,008	955	956	936	924	942	919	943	935
May ..	936	983	1,121	1,002	946	944	932	921	941	908	939	931
June ..	936	983	1,121	1,002	946	944	932	921	941	908	939	931

HOUSING—(4 AND 5 ROOMS).

1936 ..	980	837	653	879	814	918	882	683	762	861	836	860
1937 ..	905	830	669	873	816	947	909	699	750	836	832	804
1938 ..	1,004	866	730	873	822	985	933	692	789	876	911	836
1939 ..	1,035	860	744	874	843	1,023	958	713	793	884	933	850
1940 ..	1,082	900	778	872	885	1,023	958	705	785	884	933	850
1940 Mar. Qtr.	1,041	899	776	870	845	1,022	964	706	735	880	931	846
June "	1,041	889	778	872	845	1,022	964	704	724	882	932	849
Sept. "	1,042	901	779	872	843	1,023	973	704	730	888	932	851
Dec. "	1,042	901	779	874	843	1,023	973	704	730	888	932	851
1941 Mar. Qtr.	1,043	901	779	875	843	1,024	976	705	737	892	938	857
June "	1,043	901	772	880	843	1,024	974	705	737	892	938	856

FOOD, GROCERIES, AND HAIRING.

1936 ..	878	858	837	854	829	875	835	780	777	825	827	831
1937 ..	904	858	866	872	838	899	862	794	798	833	842	857
1938 ..	941	868	948	908	867	937	902	808	817	882	898	895
1939 ..	972	912	934	925	942	906	943	849	831	917	938	938
1940 ..	985	960	953	950	900	980	953	843	884	915	944	948
1940 Mar. Qtr.	973	935	942	934	893	968	936	833	845	901	930	929
June "	988	949	956	955	913	983	957	838	867	919	949	950
Sept. "	980	947	948	949	907	976	955	843	869	919	947	948
Dec. "	998	968	965	960	917	994	964	847	873	922	951	950
1941 Mar. Qtr.	1,003	968	1,004	990	917	999	957	844	867	919	944	950
June "	984	954	990	953	909	999	950	830	861	906	944	942

(a) See explanatory note on page 9.

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

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

Period.	QUEENSLAND.						SOUTH AUSTRALIA.					
	Brisbane.	Toowoomba	Rockhampton.	Townsville.	Bundaberg.	Weighted Average, Queensland	Adelaide.	Kadina, Moonta, and Wallaroo.	Port Pirie.	Mt. Gambier.	Peterborough.	Weighted Average, S.A.
FOOD AND GROCERIES.												
1936 ..	791	761	846	880b	781c	795	798	874	864	804	838	803
1937 ..	828	794	863	901	861	835	826	901	912	845	870	832
1938 ..	838	794	879	931	884	846	861	907	937	877	900	866
1939 ..	864	823	904	961	912	872	897	903	996	937	981	904
1940 ..	889	852	921	969	931	896	900	967	985	919	976	906
1940 Mar. Qtr.	874	831	918	961	921	882	881	951	965	895	961	887
June ..	883	852	927	977	932	892	913	909	995	926	984	918
Sept. ..	879	841	908	963	918	885	902	909	985	922	974	908
Dec. ..	920	883	931	974	954	923	903	979	993	932	985	910
1941 Mar. Qtr.	933	878	952	1,004	969	936	918	970	995	922	980	923
June ..	899	851	924	973	952	904	897	958	1,002	911	970	904
1940.												
January ..	868	823	918	959	914	876	872	956	951	897	957	879
February ..	877	829	917	956	925	883	883	948	961	893	960	889
March ..	877	839	919	966	926	885	888	946	980	894	963	894
April ..	889	858	934	982	938	898	900	961	995	910	988	906
May ..	882	850	929	982	935	892	919	969	991	932	980	924
June ..	877	847	920	967	922	885	919	977	999	935	985	925
July ..	866	837	906	969	915	876	900	969	990	925	973	906
August ..	878	840	906	965	918	884	904	968	982	918	973	910
September ..	892	847	911	956	920	895	900	971	982	922	975	906
October ..	909	865	914	956	941	910	903	974	989	927	984	909
November ..	909	877	918	961	931	912	911	988	996	929	991	917
December ..	943	907	961	1,006	970	947	897	976	994	939	980	904
1941.												
January ..	956	918	968	1,014	981	959	908	973	995	927	984	914
February ..	926	860	949	1,009	970	930	926	972	993	924	980	930
March ..	916	855	939	990	957	920	920	966	998	915	977	925
April ..	912	855	928	977	935	915	908	953	996	913	968	913
May ..	899	851	927	971	934	904	895	953	1,006	912	974	902
June ..	887	846	916	968	948	893	889	966	1,005	908	968	897
HOUSING—(4 AND 5 ROOMS).												
1936 ..	766	798	608	510b	622c	748	795	381	629	648	721	772
1937 ..	822	840	728	844	575	810	832	371	659	685	737	808
1938 ..	841	834	744	857	626	828	868	366	689	687	739	843
1939 ..	854	847	753	861	640	840	888	388	710	686	753	862
1940 ..	857	852	755	861	642	843	892	387	716	692	773	866
1940 Mar. Qtr.	855	850	754	862	643	841	892	387	716	687	774	865
June ..	857	850	755	861	643	843	892	387	716	690	774	866
Sept. ..	858	850	755	860	641	844	892	387	716	690	772	866
Dec. ..	859	859	755	861	642	844	892	387	715	699	772	866
1941 Mar. Qtr.	859	853	757	861	643	845	893	387	715	701	770	866
June ..	860	854	764	861	642	846	893	386	714	709	770	867
FOOD, GROCERIES AND HOUSING.												
1936 ..	781	774	757	741b	721c	777	796	689	775	745	793	791
1937 ..	824	810	808	877	732	823	826	692	811	780	816	821
1938 ..	838	806	825	900	781	837	862	702	848	801	836	855
1939 ..	858	830	843	929	804	858	891	743	882	838	890	885
1940 ..	875	849	854	925	817	873	895	739	877	828	895	888
1940 Mar. Qtr.	865	836	852	920	811	864	883	729	865	812	886	877
June ..	871	849	858	929	817	871	903	740	884	831	900	896
Sept. ..	869	843	846	921	808	867	896	740	878	829	893	889
Dec. ..	894	869	860	928	830	890	897	746	882	838	900	891
1941 Mar. Qtr.	902	866	874	946	840	899	906	741	883	834	896	899
June ..	882	850	859	927	829	879	894	733	888	830	890	887

(a) See note on page 9.

(b) Charters Towers.

(c) Warwick.

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

Period.	WESTERN AUSTRALIA.						TASMANIA.							
	Perth.	Kalgoorlie.	Northam.	Dunbury.	Geraldton.	Weighted Average, W.A.	Hobart.	Launceston	Burnie.	Devonport.	Queenstown	Weighted Average, Tasmania.	Weighted Average, 6 Capital Cities.	Weighted Average, 30 Towns, Australia.
1936	853	998	898	866	910	866	827	866	847	831	929	919	825	828
1937	881	1,012	928	891	901	892	879	902	847	891	937	938	851	854
1938	899	1,049	935	917	925	911	889	916	908	915	1,034	938	886	890
1939	938	1,092	972	967	945	931	923	944	923	1,018	1,029	927	927	931
1940	949	1,104	986	969	952	961	944	944	961	959	1,029	945	936	936
1940 Mar. Qtr.	920	1,072	951	945	973	932	907	930	930	945	1,010	919	917	921
1940 June "	956	1,089	981	975	941	966	932	945	945	945	1,034	938	944	947
1940 Sept "	972	1,125	1,013	981	969	983	951	972	972	1,030	952	937	956	947
1940 Dec. "	949	1,130	997	972	976	964	954	996	991	1,052	971	956	960	960
1941 Mar. Qtr.	955	1,156	1,010	981	985	972	952	995	993	1,061	971	958	962	962
1941 June "	997	1,181	1,054	1,003	1,002	1,012	950	997	983	1,045	961	939	943	943
1940.														
January	912	1,065	945	941	921	925	897	924	924	1,003	912	908	912	912
February	919	1,074	952	944	923	932	910	930	927	1,007	923	917	930	930
March	923	1,075	954	948	923	939	918	935	934	1,018	921	927	930	930
April	953	1,080	971	964	930	962	932	947	940	1,030	936	945	948	948
May	954	1,091	981	981	942	965	933	947	941	1,056	938	944	944	947
June	901	1,095	989	981	952	972	938	953	953	1,026	941	944	947	947
July	901	1,097	1,019	985	948	990	936	966	960	1,018	940	935	939	939
August	971	1,136	1,012	979	976	984	938	974	977	1,038	955	955	958	958
September	961	1,142	1,009	979	972	962	949	976	981	1,034	962	942	945	945
October	949	1,133	997	972	975	965	917	985	980	1,032	968	951	944	944
November	948	1,127	995	976	979	963	913	998	996	1,052	971	956	956	956
December	950	1,131	999	976	978	966	902	1,004	991	1,067	973	961	961	965
1941.														
January	946	1,143	1,004	979	982	964	928	1,006	1,002	1,068	976	975	978	978
February	953	1,163	1,013	979	982	971	950	984	987	1,054	974	953	957	957
March	904	1,164	1,013	986	982	981	921	997	989	1,061	962	947	951	951
April	984	1,169	1,049	1,007	997	1,000	916	996	986	1,067	969	949	943	943
May	1,006	1,210	1,041	1,007	1,003	1,022	957	1,001	991	1,048	961	938	942	942
June	1,003	1,144	1,051	1,002	1,007	1,014	936	995	968	1,019	952	930	935	935
1940.														
January	844	1,174	794	886	1,010	872	868	811	756	725	838	879	866	866
February	866	1,190	876	895	1,064	901	899	836	816	728	788	861	872	867
March	875	1,209	879	903	1,094	913	850	830	830	793	806	875	942	935
April	881	1,138	886	1,204	1,085	911	913	837	837	806	875	905	947	947
May	881	1,135	890	1,003	1,086	920	856	847	767	813	893	913	953	953
June	882	1,135	890	1,003	1,086	920	856	847	767	813	893	913	953	953
1940 Mar. Qtr.	883	1,131	888	1,003	1,065	921	853	850	767	814	893	917	933	933
1940 June "	882	1,136	890	1,001	1,067	920	853	846	765	812	893	924	934	934
1940 Sept "	882	1,134	890	1,001	1,066	920	857	842	769	812	894	924	936	936
1941 Mar. Qtr.	882	1,131	893	1,002	1,066	920	858	842	768	812	894	926	938	938
1941 June "	883	1,131	893	1,002	1,066	920	858	842	768	812	894	926	938	938
1936	849	1,064	858	873	945	867	856	807	810	790	844	844	841	841
1937	871	1,116	899	924	999	894	873	843	866	824	844	874	880	880
1938	867	1,152	911	945	974	909	891	867	880	846	900	882	906	902
1939	914	1,178	936	979	990	936	887	887	898	865	922	908	930	930
1940	921	1,184	946	979	995	943	938	901	914	882	932	923	950	955
1940 Mar. Qtr.	903	1,166	924	966	976	926	922	885	897	864	931	907	936	931
1940 June "	925	1,175	943	984	988	946	932	900	921	873	930	919	948	948
1940 Sept "	934	1,196	963	984	1,005	956	942	905	921	889	933	927	940	944
1940 Dec. "	921	1,200	953	981	1,009	945	954	914	934	903	939	961	956	956
1941 Mar. Qtr.	925	1,215	962	986	1,015	949	954	912	934	903	939	963	958	958
1941 June "	951	1,229	989	1,000	1,025	974	946	912	934	903	961	939	963	967

FOOD, GROCERIES AND HOUSING.

HOUSING—(4 AND 5 ROOMS).

(a) See note on page 9.

§ 4. The All Items ("C" Series) Index of Retail Prices.

1. **General.**—This index measures the prices of food and groceries, rent of 4 and 5-roomed houses, clothing and miscellaneous household requirements, and for convenience of reference has been designated the "All Items" ("C" series) index. It has become more important in recent years because of its adoption by the Commonwealth Arbitration Court from 1st May, 1934, for the adjustment of wages controlled by that Court. It is used at present as the basis of the "Court" series of index-numbers adopted from July, 1937, by the same Court.

The compilation of this series was undertaken by the Bureau following a recommendation of the Royal Commission on the Basic Wage, which reported in 1920 and 1921. A short account of its inquiries and findings is contained in § 7 of this chapter. The Commission itself had collected data on prices in the capital cities for the month of November, 1914 to 1920 inclusive. In consequence, the Bureau commenced its own more comprehensive inquiries in the five principal towns of each State, as from November, 1921, and continued them at quarterly intervals thereafter.

2. **Retail Price Index-Numbers: Capital Cities, 1914 to 1920.**—The table published on page 24 gives index-numbers representing the variations in the prices, in each capital city, of (i) food and groceries; (ii) housing (4 and 5 rooms); (iii) food, groceries and housing combined; (iv) clothing; (v) miscellaneous household requirements, and (vi) all items of household consumption combined, in the years 1914 to 1920 inclusive. The index-numbers for the clothing and miscellaneous groups for these years were compiled from data collected by the Royal Commission on the Basic Wage.

3. **Retail Price Index-Numbers: Thirty Towns, November, 1914 to June Quarter 1941.**—The following tables give index-numbers representing the variations in the prices, in 30 of the more important towns, of (i) food and groceries; (ii) housing; (iii) food, groceries and housing combined; (iv) clothing; (v) miscellaneous requirements; and (vi) all items of household consumption combined.

Food and Groceries.—Retail Price Index-Numbers. ("C" Series.)

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

Period.	NEW SOUTH WALES.						VICTORIA.					
	Sydney.	Newcastle.	Broken Hill.	Goulburn.	Bathurst.	Weighted Average, N.S.W.	Melbourne.	Ballarat.	Bendigo.	Geelong.	Warrnambool.	Weighted Average, Victoria.
Nov. 1914 (a)	638	..	..	..	..	..	616	..	..	..	..	..
" 1921 ..	964	977	972	950	935	964	923	928	919	941	948	924
Year 1935 ..	840	860	935	822	824	843	784	812	809	797	816	786
" 1936 ..	818	860	919	841	838	841	809	824	806	806	823	810
" 1937 ..	868	880	1,001	874	855	872	836	857	851	834	834	837
" 1938 ..	904	925	1,092	933	898	909	884	882	889	889	891	884
" 1939 ..	936	965	1,106	991	940	942	942	939	930	946	955	942
" 1940 ..	952	985	1,069	1,003	951	958	947	935	949	939	955	946
1940 Mar. Qtr.	933	961	1,052	978	928	938	922	918	910	918	933	922
" June "	957	985	1,074	1,013	960	963	954	943	956	946	962	954
" Sept. "	945	980	1,061	1,002	950	950	949	936	953	944	960	949
" Dec. "	974	1,015	1,089	1,019	966	980	961	941	963	948	964	960
1941 Mar. Qtr.	982	1,014	1,152	1,016	967	988	949	936	953	949	951	948
" June ..	949	992	1,133	1,007	954	957	938	923	943	918	941	937

(a) For index-numbers for Capital Cities, November, 1914 to 1920, see page 22.

Food and Groceries.—Retail Price Index-Numbers. ("C" Series)—continued.

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

Period.	QUEENSLAND.						SOUTH AUSTRALIA.					
	Brisbane.	Toowoomba.	Rock-hampton.	Townsville.	Bundaberg.	Weighted Average, Queensland.	Adelaide.	Kadina, Moolta, and Wallara.	Port Pirie.	Mt. Gambler.	Peterborough.	Weighted Average, S.A.
Nov. 1914 (a)	614	..	..	..	..	..	683	..	..	..	..	..
" 1921 ..	955	895	949	981b	936c	950	941	945	968	923	997	943
Year 1935 ..	763	732	803	849b	754c	765	780	860	813	777	812	784
" 1936 ..	791	761	816	880b	781c	795	798	874	864	804	838	803
" 1937 ..	828	794	863	901	869	835	826	901	912	845	870	832
" 1938 ..	838	794	879	931	884	846	861	907	937	877	900	866
" 1939 ..	864	823	904	961	912	872	897	973	996	937	981	904
" 1940 ..	889	852	921	969	931	896	900	967	985	919	976	906
1940 Mar. Qtr.	874	831	918	961	921	882	881	951	965	895	961	887
" June "	883	852	927	977	932	892	913	969	995	926	984	918
" Sept. "	879	841	968	963	918	885	902	969	985	922	974	908
" Dec. "	920	883	931	974	954	923	903	979	993	932	985	910
1941 Mar. Qtr.	933	878	952	1,004	969	936	918	970	995	922	980	923
" June "	899	851	924	972	952	904	897	958	1,002	911	970	904

Period.	WESTERN AUSTRALIA.						TASMANIA.							
	Perth and Fremantle.	Kalgoorlie and Boulder.	Northam.	Bunbury.	Geraldton.	Weighted Average, W.A.	Hobart.	Launceston.	Burnie.	Devonport.	Queenstown.	Weighted Average, Tas.	Weighted Average, Six Capital Cities.	Weighted Average, 30 Towns, Australia.
Nov. 1914 (a)	746	..	..	..	..	..	687	..	..	..	..	..	641	..
" 1921 ..	1,005	1,120	1,054	1,049	1,031	1,033	1,027	958	1,108	996	1,077	1,011	950	954
Year 1935 ..	821	977	852	850	846	834	792	780	830	808	905	797	806	810
" 1936 ..	853	998	898	860	910	866	827	867	847	831	898	824	825	828
" 1937 ..	881	1,012	928	891	961	892	870	856	891	891	927	870	851	854
" 1938 ..	898	1,049	935	918	925	911	880	889	916	908	974	889	886	890
" 1939 ..	958	1,092	972	969	917	931	923	914	941	933	1,018	945	927	931
" 1940 ..	949	1,104	986	969	952	961	944	933	961	959	1,029	945	939	942
1940 Mar. Qtr.	920	1,072	951	945	923	932	918	907	930	929	1,010	919	917	921
" June "	956	1,089	981	975	941	966	935	932	945	945	1,024	938	944	947
" Sept. "	971	1,125	1,013	981	969	983	951	940	972	972	1,030	952	937	941
" Dec. "	949	1,130	997	973	976	964	972	954	996	991	1,052	971	956	960
1941 Mar. Qtr.	955	1,156	1,010	981	985	972	972	952	995	993	1,061	971	958	962
" June "	997	1,181	1,054	1,003	1,002	1,012	958	950	997	982	1,045	961	939	943

(a) For index-numbers for Capital Cities, November 1914 to 1920, see page 22.

(b) Charters Towers

(c) Warwick.

Housing (4 and 5 rooms)—Retail Price Index-Numbers. ("C" Series.)

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

Period.	NEW SOUTH WALES.						VICTORIA.							
	Sydney.	Newcastle.	Broken Hill.	Goulburn.	Bathurst.	Weighted Average, N.S.W.	Melbourne.	Ballarat.	Bendigo.	Geelong.	Warrambool.	Weighted Average, Victoria.		
Nov. 1914 (a)	758	..	..	..	..	..	608	..	..	..	..	..
" 1921 ..	1,000	885	559	881	596	966	845	479	527	668	685	789		
Year 1935 ..	891	839	644	860	777	881	850	666	688	812	843	838		
" 1936 ..	930	857	653	879	814	918	882	683	702	861	836	869		
" 1937 ..	965	870	660	873	816	947	900	699	720	836	859	894		
" 1938 ..	1,004	860	730	873	822	985	935	695	709	851	915	917		
" 1939 ..	1,035	890	761	871	843	1,015	955	714	731	876	921	938		
" 1940 ..	1,042	900	778	872	845	1,023	969	705	735	884	933	950		
1940 Mar. Qtr.	1,041	899	776	870	845	1,022	964	706	735	880	931	946		
" June "	1,041	899	778	872	845	1,022	967	704	734	883	933	949		
" Sept. "	1,042	901	777	872	845	1,023	970	704	733	884	933	951		
" Dec. "	1,042	901	779	874	845	1,023	973	704	736	888	936	954		
1941 Mar. Qtr.	1,043	901	779	875	845	1,024	976	705	737	892	938	957		
" June "	1,043	901	772	880	845	1,024	974	705	737	892	939	956		
Period.	QUEENSLAND.						SOUTH AUSTRALIA.							
	Brisbane.	Toowoomba.	Rockhampton.	Townsville.	Bundaberg.	Weighted Average, Queensland.	Adelaide.	Kadina, Mounta. and Wallaroo.	Port Pirie.	Mt. Gambler.	Peterborough.	Weighted Average, S.A.		
Nov. 1914 (a)	463	..	..	..	..	..	611	..	..	..	..	..
" 1921 ..	629	547	470	528b	535c	594	819	566	603	492	566	791		
Year 1935 ..	720	746	596	530b	645c	707	736	393	625	626	663	719		
" 1936 ..	766	798	608	410b	622r	748	705	381	629	618	721	772		
" 1937 ..	822	840	728	844	575	810	812	371	659	685	737	808		
" 1938 ..	841	834	744	857	626	828	868	386	689	687	739	843		
" 1939 ..	854	847	753	861	640	840	888	388	710	686	753	862		
" 1940 ..	857	852	755	861	642	843	892	387	716	692	773	866		
1940 Mar. Qtr.	855	850	754	862	643	841	892	387	716	687	774	865		
" June "	857	850	755	861	643	843	892	387	716	690	774	866		
" Sept. "	858	850	755	860	641	844	892	387	716	690	772	866		
" Dec. "	859	859	755	861	642	844	892	387	715	699	772	866		
1941 Mar. Qtr.	859	853	757	861	643	845	893	387	715	701	776	866		
" June "	860	854	764	861	642	846	893	386	714	709	776	867		
Period.	WESTERN AUSTRALIA.						TASMANIA.							
	Perth and Fremantle.	Kalgoorlie and Boulder.	Northern.	Dunbury.	Geraldton.	Weighted Average, W.A.	Hobart.	Launceston.	Burnie.	Devonport.	Queenstown.	Weighted Average, Tas.	Weighted Average, Six Capital Cities.	Weighted Average, 30 Towns, Australia.
Nov. 1914 (a)	586	525	649	..
" 1921 ..	754	578	616	649	779	769	870	676	294	150	495	729	877	823
Year 1935 ..	792	1,050	767	810	940	813	890	778	698	736	730	836	839	828
" 1936 ..	844	1,174	794	886	1,010	872	908	811	750	726	755	858	879	866
" 1937 ..	861	1,309	860	983	1,064	901r	899	826	816	723	795	861	912	897
" 1938 ..	872	1,310	879	994	1,055	911r	913	838	830	756	788	875	942	925
" 1939 ..	881	1,318	886	1,005	1,064	919	925	851	836	763	806	887	965	947
" 1940 ..	882	1,315	890	1,003	1,066	920	933	856	847	767	813	893	973	955
1940 Mar. Qtr.	883	1,314	888	1,005	1,065	921	932	855	850	767	814	893	971	953
" June "	882	1,316	890	1,004	1,067	920	932	855	848	767	812	893	972	954
" Sept. "	882	1,314	890	1,001	1,067	919	932	855	846	765	812	893	973	955
" Dec. "	882	1,314	890	1,001	1,066	920	933	857	847	769	812	894	974	956
1941 Mar. Qtr.	882	1,313	893	1,000	1,066	920	933	858	842	769	812	894	976	958
" June "	883	1,311	893	1,002	1,066	920	933	858	842	768	812	894	976	958

(a) For index-numbers for Capital Cities, November 1914 to 1920, see page 22.

(b) Charters Towers.

(c) Warwick.

Food, Groceries and Housing Combined (4 and 5 rooms).—Retail Price Index-Numbers. ("B"(d) and "C" Series.)

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

Period.	NEW SOUTH WALES.						VICTORIA.							
	Sydney.	Newcastle.	Broken Hill.	Goulburn.	Bathurst.	Weighted Average, N.S.W.	Melbourne.	Ballarat.	Bendigo.	Geelong.	Warram-bool.	Weighted Average, Victoria.		
Nov. 1914 (a)	680	..	..	..	..	..	613	..	..	..	..	..
" 1921 ..	977	944	825	926	815	965	895	769	780	844	855	866		
Year 1935 ..	858	853	832	895	868	857	808	766	766	802	826	805		
" 1936 ..	878	858	837	851	829	875	835	780	777	825	827	831		
" 1937 ..	904	858	866	872	838	899	862	794	798	833	842	857		
" 1938 ..	941	868	970	908	867	937	902	808	817	872	898	895		
" 1939 ..	972	934	948	942	900	969	945	849	851	917	940	938		
" 1940 ..	985	950	953	950	908	980	953	843	864	915	944	946		
1940 Mar. Qtr.	973	935	946	934	893	968	936	833	845	901	930	929		
" June ..	988	949	952	955	913	983	957	848	867	919	949	950		
" Sept. ..	986	947	948	949	907	976	955	843	869	919	947	948		
" Dec. ..	998	968	965	960	917	994	964	847	873	922	951	950		
1941 Mar. Qtr.	1,003	968	1,004	959	917	999	957	844	867	919	944	950		
" June ..	984	954	999	955	909	981	950	856	861	906	938	942		
Period.	QUEENSLAND.						SOUTH AUSTRALIA.							
	Brisbane.	Toowoomba.	Rock-hampton.	Townsville.	Bundaberg.	Weighted Average, Queensland.	Adelaide.	Kadina, Mounta, and Wallaroo.	Port Pirie.	Mt. Gambler.	Peter-borough.	Weighted Average, S.A.		
Nov. 1914 (a)	560	..	..	..	..	..	658	..	..	..	..	..
" 1921 ..	840	771	779	820b	794c	824	898	811	839	770	844	885		
Year 1935 ..	747	737	730	736b	716c	745	764	694	746	733	759	761		
" 1936 ..	781	740	757	741b	721c	777	796	689	775	745	793	791		
" 1937 ..	824	810	808	877	752	823	826	692	811	780	816	821		
" 1938 ..	838	806	825	900	781	837	862	702	838	801	836	855		
" 1939 ..	858	830	813	920	804	858	891	743	882	838	890	885		
" 1940 ..	873	849	854	925	817	873	895	739	877	828	895	888		
1940 Mar. Qtr.	865	836	852	920	811	864	883	729	865	812	886	877		
" June ..	871	849	858	929	817	871	903	740	884	831	900	896		
" Sept. ..	869	843	846	921	808	867	896	740	878	829	893	889		
" Dec. ..	894	869	860	928	830	890	897	746	882	838	900	891		
1941 Mar. Qtr.	902	866	874	946	840	899	906	741	883	834	896	899		
" June ..	882	850	859	927	829	879	894	733	888	830	890	887		
Period.	WESTERN AUSTRALIA.						TASMANIA.							
	Perth and Fremantle.	Kalgoorlie and Boulder.	Northam.	Bunbury.	Geraldton.	Weighted Av'ge, W.A.	Hobart.	Launceston.	Burnie.	Devonport.	Queenstown.	Weighted Av'ge, Tas.	Weighted Average, Six Capital Cities.	Weighted Average, 30 Towns, Australia.
Nov. 1914 (a)	689	630
" 1921 ..	916	928	898	907	942	918	971	858	819	696	871	911	844	907
Year 1935 ..	810	1,003	822	836	879	826	827	785	783	783	843	811	818	816
" 1936 ..	849	1,064	858	873	945	867	856	807	810	790	844	835	844	841
" 1937 ..	871	1,126	899	924	999	894	879	843	866	824	874	865	872	869
" 1938 ..	887	1,152	911	945	974	909	891	867	880	846	900	882	906	902
" 1939 ..	914	1,178	936	979	990	936	922	887	898	865	933	908	939	935
" 1940 ..	921	1,184	946	979	995	943	938	901	914	882	942	923	950	945
1940 Mar. Qtr.	903	1,166	924	966	976	926	922	885	897	864	931	907	936	931
" June ..	925	1,175	943	984	988	946	932	900	905	873	939	919	953	948
" Sept. ..	934	1,196	963	980	1,005	956	942	905	921	889	943	927	949	944
" Dec. ..	921	1,200	953	981	1,009	945	954	914	934	902	956	939	961	956
1941 Mar. Qtr.	925	1,215	962	986	1,015	949	954	913	934	903	967	939	963	958
" June ..	951	1,229	989	1,000	1,025	974	946	912	935	896	952	933	951	947

(a) For index-numbers for Capital Cities, November 1914 to 1920, see page 22. (b) Charters Towers.
 (c) Warwick. (d) The index-numbers in this table are the same as those of the "B" Series (p. 10).

Clothing.—Retail Price Index-Numbers. ("C" Series.)
(Base: Weighted average of Six Capital Cities, 1923-27 = 1,000.)

Period.	NEW SOUTH WALES.						VICTORIA.							
	Sydney.	Newcastle.	Broken Hill.	Goulburn.	Bathurst.	Weighted Average, N.S.W.	Melbourne.	Ballaarat.	Bendigo.	Geelong.	Warrnambool.	Weighted Average, Victoria.		
Nov. 1914 (a)	755	..	..	..	..	..	780	..	..	..	..	..
" 1921 ..	1,255	1,327	1,269	1,374	1,261	1,264	1,271	1,599	1,573	1,463	1,612	1,326		
Year 1935 ..	746	810	680	922	790	751	794	856	884	843	912	802		
" 1936 ..	778	809	753	878	811	782	797	845	816	843	863	795		
" 1937 ..	818	796	824	833	812	817	803	831	819	809	822	805		
" 1938 ..	833	810	833	848	824	831	820	843	832	833	831	822		
" 1939 ..	843	823	850	861	840	842	832	851	841	846	842	833		
" 1940 ..	950	941	970	960	964	951	969	990	986	963	966	970		
1940 Mar. Qtr.	884	862	902	899	897	883	897	921	911	893	903	898		
" June "	923	921	952	933	925	924	959	965	966	949	948	959		
" Sept. "	948	942	971	953	993	949	976	1,005	1,003	963	965	977		
" Dec. "	1,046	1,037	1,056	1,056	1,069	1,046	1,042	1,069	1,065	1,047	1,043	1,044		
1941 Mar. Qtr.	1,058	1,043	1,068	1,081	1,079	1,058	1,068	1,092	1,073	1,071	1,068	1,069		
" June "	1,109	1,110	1,115	1,136	1,133	1,110	1,100	1,122	1,101	1,104	1,105	1,101		
Period.	QUEENSLAND.						SOUTH AUSTRALIA.							
	Brisbane.	Toowoomba.	Rockhampton.	Townsville.	Bundaberg.	Weighted Average, Queensland.	Adelaide.	Kadina, Mounts, and Wallaroo.	Port Pirie.	Mt. Gambier.	Peterborough.	Weighted Average, S.A.		
Nov. 1914 (a)	657	..	..	..	..	..	756	..	..	..	..	..
" 1921 ..	1,125	1,408	1,452	1,568b	1,519c	1,235	1,195	1,435	1,480	1,697	1,180	1,238		
Year 1935 ..	772	818	824	761b	791c	779	853	810	803	937	927	852		
" 1936 ..	777	779	831	794b	767c	782	833	803	810	890	851	832		
" 1937 ..	794	805	826	812	806	799	821	804	811	818	814	826		
" 1938 ..	823	826	840	833	831	825	857	848	846	846	844	850		
" 1939 ..	840	838	856	855	852	843	803	852	854	852	844	862		
" 1940 ..	952	951	973	968	956	955	961	940	943	947	936	959		
1940 Mar. Qtr.	894	888	912	915	904	897	895	877	882	877	866	893		
" June "	930	921	948	945	931	932	934	910	909	910	899	932		
" Sept. "	956	953	971	968	957	958	972	953	953	962	955	971		
" Dec. "	1,027	1,043	1,059	1,043	1,031	1,032	1,041	1,019	1,029	1,039	1,025	1,040		
1941 Mar. Qtr.	1,037	1,050	1,074	1,063	1,048	1,043	1,052	1,025	1,043	1,052	1,036	1,051		
" June "	1,103	1,110	1,132	1,123	1,116	1,107	1,115	1,074	1,102	1,109	1,104	1,113		
Period.	WESTERN AUSTRALIA.						TASMANIA.							
	Perth and Fremantle.	Kalgoorlie and Boulder.	Northam.	Bunbury.	Geraldton.	Weighted Average, W.A.	Hobart.	Launceston.	Burnie.	Devonport.	Queenstown.	Weighted Average, Tas.	Weighted Average, Six Capital Cities.	Weighted Average, 80 Towns, Australia.
Nov. 1914 (a)	698	825	754	..
" 1921 ..	1,231	1,376	1,382	1,454	1,320	1,277	1,427	1,670	1,525	1,405	1,504	1,513	1,246	1,290
Year 1935 ..	825	1,056	775	912	899	843	903	938	813	827	987	910	783	790
" 1936 ..	815	959	802	878	851	827	857	873	807	826	875	859	792	786
" 1937 ..	806	832	819	828	827	809	821	823	820	832	820	822	811	811
" 1938 ..	823	846	835	845	841	826	848	839	835	845	842	844	829	830
" 1939 ..	832	855	842	849	847	834	856	853	843	844	853	854	841	841
" 1940 ..	926	959	933	938	936	929	956	964	947	938	943	957	846	956
1940 Mar. Qtr.	853	869	856	863	862	854	888	893	883	879	885	889	888	888
" June "	913	954	924	931	923	917	940	949	930	921	923	941	936	936
" Sept. "	926	967	932	933	935	929	956	963	940	938	935	956	959	960
" Dec. "	1,010	1,046	1,020	1,024	1,022	1,014	1,038	1,051	1,030	1,013	1,027	1,040	1,040	1,041
1941 Mar. Qtr.	1,029	1,059	1,036	1,045	1,037	1,032	1,050	1,069	1,041	1,026	1,036	1,054	1,057	1,057
" June "	1,075	1,111	1,089	1,093	1,086	1,079	1,123	1,117	1,103	1,125	1,125	1,121	1,104	1,105

(a) For index-numbers for Capital Cities, November 1914 to 1920, see page 22. (b) Charters Towers.

(c) Warwick.

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

Period.	NEW SOUTH WALES.						VICTORIA.					
	Sydney.	Newcastle.	Broken Hill.	Goulburn.	Bathurst.	Weighted Average, N.S.W.	Melbourne.	Dallarat.	Bendigo.	Geelong.	Warrnambool.	Weighted Average, Victoria.
Nov. 1914 (a)	766	709	710	711	709	701	738	711	712	733	880	815
" 1921 ..	1,000	995	1,102	991	989	1,011	1,023	956	1,012	1,033	880	1,015
Year 1935 ..	976	927	964	888	867	970	922	880	922	873	831	918
" 1936 ..	949	900	1,007	887	881	945	947	958	977	947	922	948
" 1937 ..	939	895	1,061	901	902	937	978	1,006	1,011	995	933	988
" 1938 ..	936	903	1,053	908	892	931	982	1,006	1,021	984	924	983
" 1939 ..	940	901	1,048	908	888	938	977	990	1,004	980	951	978
" 1940 ..	984	948	1,101	942	936	982	1,009	1,023	1,037	1,011	905	1,010
1940 Mar. Qtr.	949	919	1,072	918	903	948	988	1,009	1,021	997	975	980
" June ..	935	950	1,107	942	937	984	1,006	1,019	1,031	1,007	978	980
" Sept. ..	996	958	1,109	949	947	994	1,021	1,032	1,045	1,050	1,000	1,030
" Dec. ..	1,004	904	1,110	900	955	1,003	1,021	1,033	1,050	1,021	998	1,022
1941 Mar. Qtr.	1,030	988	1,141	905	983	1,028	1,047	1,060	1,076	1,042	1,044	1,047
" June ..	1,039	982	1,148	928	988	1,036	1,051	1,071	1,079	1,047	1,029	1,052
QUEENSLAND.												
Period.	WESTERN AUSTRALIA.						TASMANIA.					
	Brisbane.	Toowoomba.	Rock-hampton.	Townsville.	Bundaberg.	Weighted Average, Queensland.	Adelaide.	Kadina, Moonta, and Wallaroo.	Port Pirie.	Mt. Gambler.	Peterborough.	Weighted Average, S.A.
Nov. 1914 (a)	738	935	877	1,013	928	903	770	733	1,065	1,025	1,000	1,026
" 1921 ..	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	988	958	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
Year 1935 ..	904	909	877	1,013	928	903	973	941	921	937	966	969
" 1936 ..	917	929	920	1,067	993	922	993	978	921	937	1,003	991
" 1937 ..	941	988	1,000	1,007	1,007	954	1,022	981	995	1,013	1,015	1,020
" 1938 ..	947	990	971	1,000	1,001	957	1,023	991	1,001	1,017	1,011	1,021
" 1939 ..	935	963	979	996	992	967	1,022	989	990	1,017	994	1,019
" 1940 ..	979	1,003	1,001	1,026	1,002	985	1,051	1,021	1,031	1,033	1,015	1,049
1940 Mar. Qtr.	967	989	982	1,005	984	972	1,038	1,007	1,011	1,035	1,000	1,035
" June ..	978	1,002	1,023	1,000	984	984	1,049	1,013	1,023	1,030	1,011	1,047
" Sept. ..	965	1,004	1,031	1,007	990	995	1,055	1,028	1,043	1,061	1,021	1,054
" Dec. ..	966	1,012	1,020	1,043	1,016	995	1,060	1,034	1,064	1,064	1,027	1,059
1941 Mar. Qtr.	1,012	1,038	1,043	1,066	1,044	1,021	1,089	1,067	1,070	1,064	1,050	1,087
" June ..	1,020	1,052	1,051	1,074	1,052	1,029	1,109	1,087	1,090	1,104	1,060	1,087

(a) For index-numbers for Capital Cities, November 1914 to 1920, see page 22.

(b) Charities Towers

(c) Warwick.

All Items of Household Expenditure.—Retail Price Index-Numbers. ("C" Series.)

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

Period.	NEW SOUTH WALES.						VICTORIA.							
	Sydney.	Newcastle.	Broken Hill.	Goulburn.	Bathurst.	Weighted Average, N.S.W.	Melbourne.	Hallarat.	Bendigo.	Geelong.	Warrnambool.	Weighted Average, Victoria.		
Nov. 1914 (a)	712	..	..	..	..	..	671	..	..	..	..	..
" 1921 ..	1,046	1,041	975	1,033	947	1,042	1,003	992	1,002	1,019	1,034	1,003		
Year 1935 ..	852	856	819	360	814	852	824	803	820	824	850	874		
" 1936 ..	866	853	848	864	833	865	844	826	821	848	851	843		
" 1937 ..	889	849	893	867	842	886	868	839	840	855	856	866		
" 1938 ..	913	877	940	893	860	911	866	850	854	854	892	893		
" 1939 ..	930	901	955	916	883	933	924	871	875	911	918	920		
" 1940 ..	974	945	981	949	923	972	964	906	920	941	954	960		
1940 Mar. Qtr.	946	914	954	921	894	943	934	882	889	915	931	930		
" June ..	970	941	980	946	918	968	963	903	916	939	951	959		
" Sept. "	973	945	980	947	924	970	968	911	928	944	956	964		
" Dec. "	1,008	981	1,011	980	956	1,005	939	928	946	966	978	985		
1941 Mar. Qtr.	1,018	986	1,041	990	963	1,015	996	936	949	974	984	992		
" June ..	1,019	991	1,044	1,001	971	1,017	999	940	952	974	990	995		
Period.	QUEENSLAND.						SOUTH AUSTRALIA.							
	Brisbane.	Toowoomba.	Rockhampton.	Townsville.	Bundaberg.	Weighted Average, Queensland.	Adelaide.	Radike, Moonka, and Wallaroo.	Port Pirie.	Mt. Gambier.	Peterborough.	Weighted Average, S.A.		
Nov. 1914 (a)	611	..	..	..	..	..	699	..	..	..	..	..
" 1921 ..	923	949	972	1,025b	994c	941	989	998	1,025	1,029	948	992		
Year 1935 ..	780	785	776	789b	769c	780	820	769	789	809	833	817		
" 1936 ..	804	802	802	810b	779c	803	839	765	813	818	843	835		
" 1937 ..	837	840	840	883	809	840	859	760	844	830	851	855		
" 1938 ..	852	843	853	902	831	854	858	786	868	849	868	883		
" 1939 ..	870	858	867	918	847	871	906	810	866	872	897	902		
" 1940 ..	908	898	905	950	879	909	936	833	919	894	924	931		
1940 Mar. Qtr.	887	874	887	932	860	888	912	811	894	866	901	907		
" June ..	900	890	900	947	873	902	934	826	914	887	918	929		
" Sept. "	906	895	900	949	875	906	939	838	923	899	928	935		
" Dec. "	938	932	932	972	907	939	957	858	943	923	950	953		
1941 Mar. Qtr.	950	937	947	991	921	951	970	862	953	928	954	965		
" June ..	954	943	953	995	931	955	951	872	971	941	967	976		
Period.	WESTERN AUSTRALIA.						TASMANIA.							
	Perth.	Kalgoorlie.	Northam.	Bunbury.	Geraldton.	Weighted Av'ge, W.A.	Hobart.	Launceston.	Burnie.	Devonport.	Queensdown.	Weighted Av'ge, Tas.	Weighted Average, Six Capital Cities.	Weighted Average, 30 Towns, Australia.
Nov. 1914 (a)	707	687	687	..
" 1921 ..	1,008	1,048	1,030	1,045	1,056	1,020	1,070	1,067	1,003	904	1,031	1,057	1,013	1,013
Year 1935 ..	834	1,011	839	865	886	848	849	834	792	801	873	841	832	831
" 1936 ..	856	1,027	860	880	933	870	860	840	814	809	850	850	850	848
" 1937 ..	869	1,030	890	897	970	884	875	856	854	833	857	866	873	871
" 1938 ..	882	1,048	900	914	957	897	887	872	865	848	875	879	897	894
" 1939 ..	901	1,066	915	936	995	915	908	888	879	861	903	868	920	917
" 1940 ..	932	1,099	947	962	990	946	945	926	917	896	936	936	957	954
1940 Mar. Qtr.	902	1,064	912	934	958	916	918	898	890	869	914	909	930	927
" June ..	932	1,092	943	963	993	945	938	921	907	886	929	929	954	951
" Sept. "	941	1,109	958	965	998	955	948	929	921	900	935	938	959	956
" Dec. "	953	1,131	973	985	1,022	969	970	955	950	927	967	966	986	983
1941 Mar. Qtr.	965	1,148	987	997	1,033	981	982	963	956	935	976	975	995	992
" June ..	993	1,170	1,017	1,017	1,052	1,008	994	973	971	953	991	985	1,000	990

(a) For Index-numbers for Capital Cities, November 1914 to 1920, see p. 22.

(b) Charters Towers.

(c) Warwick.

Retail Price Index-Numbers. ("C" Series.) All Items of Household Consumption.

Relative Cost of Each Group of Items.

(Base: Weighted Average Cost of All Groups in each Town = 1,000.)

Town.	1919.					1940.				
	Food and Groceries.	Housing (4 and 5 Rooms).	Clothing.	Miscellaneous.	Total Household Expenditure.	Food and Groceries.	Housing (4 and 5 Rooms).	Clothing.	Miscellaneous.	Total Household Expenditure.
New South Wales—										
Sydney	360	253	199	186	1,000	352	248	215	185	1,000
Newcastle	386	228	201	185	1,000	376	220	219	185	1,000
Broken Hill	418	164	195	203	1,000	392	184	217	207	1,000
Goulburn	390	220	206	184	1,000	381	213	223	183	1,000
Bathurst	383	221	210	186	1,000	372	211	230	187	1,000
Weighted Average, 5 Towns	363	252	198	187	1,000	355	243	215	187	1,000
Victoria—										
Melbourne	368	239	197	196	1,000	354	233	220	193	1,000
Ballarat	387	180	214	210	1,000	371	180	239	210	1,000
Bendigo	383	194	210	213	1,000	372	185	235	208	1,000
Geelong	375	222	204	199	1,000	359	217	225	199	1,000
Warrnambool	375	232	201	192	1,000	361	226	222	191	1,000
Weighted Average, 5 Towns	368	236	199	197	1,000	354	229	222	195	1,000
Queensland—										
Brisbane	357	227	213	203	1,000	352	218	230	200	1,000
Toowoomba	345	228	215	212	1,000	342	218	233	207	1,000
Rockhampton	375	201	218	206	1,000	367	192	235	206	1,000
Townsville	377	217	205	201	1,000	368	209	223	200	1,000
Bundaberg	387	175	221	217	1,000	381	170	238	211	1,000
Weighted Average, 5 Towns	361	222	213	204	1,000	354	215	230	201	1,000
South Australia—										
Adelaide	357	226	208	209	1,000	347	220	227	206	1,000
Kadina, etc.	432	111	231	220	1,000	418	108	247	227	1,000
Port Pirie	401	183	210	206	1,000	387	179	226	208	1,000
Mount Gambier	387	182	215	216	1,000	370	178	234	218	1,000
Peterborough	394	194	207	205	1,000	380	194	223	203	1,000
Weighted Average, 5 Towns	361	221	208	210	1,000	350	215	227	208	1,000
Western Australia—										
Perth, etc.	375	225	203	197	1,000	367	219	219	195	1,000
Kalgoorlie, etc.	369	280	176	169	1,000	362	277	192	169	1,000
Northam	383	224	202	191	1,000	375	217	218	190	1,000
Bunbury	372	248	200	180	1,000	363	240	215	182	1,000
Geraldton	353	255	194	198	1,000	346	249	208	197	1,000
Weighted Average, 5 Towns	374	233	200	193	1,000	366	225	217	192	1,000
Tasmania—										
Hobart	366	235	207	192	1,000	360	228	222	190	1,000
Launceston	370	222	211	197	1,000	363	214	229	194	1,000
Burnie	386	219	210	185	1,000	377	214	227	182	1,000
Devonport	390	205	216	189	1,000	386	198	231	185	1,000
Queenstown	406	200	207	181	1,000	395	201	222	182	1,000
Weighted Average, 5 Towns	371	228	208	193	1,000	364	221	225	190	1,000
Weighted Average for 30 Towns	365	239	202	194	1,000	355	232	220	193	1,000
Weighted Average 6 Capital Cities	363	242	201	194	1,000	353	235	219	193	1,000
Charters Towers (Q.)	395	152	215	238	1,000	377	156	233	234	1,000
Warwick (Q.)	371	185	220	224	1,000	362	184	235	219	1,000
Port Augusta (S.A.)	405	175	212	208	1,000	398	170	224	208	1,000

Retail Price Index-Numbers: Capital Cities ("C" Series). All Items of Household Consumption.

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

Period.	Sydney.	Melbourne.	Brisbane.	Adelaide.	Perth.	Hobart.	Six Capitals.
GROUP I.—FOOD AND GROCERIES.							
Nov. 1914 ..	638	616	614	683	746	687	641
" 1915 ..	844	835	860	858	819	858	842
" 1916 ..	833	791	748	835	854	807	812
" 1917 ..	877	798	825	805	828	949	836
" 1918 ..	877	843	882	862	816	918	861
" 1919 ..	1,073	975	1,069	1,012	987	1,041	1,026
" 1920 ..	1,225	1,220	1,117	1,225	1,113	1,293	1,209
GROUP II.—HOUSING (4 AND 5 ROOMS).							
Nov. 1914 ..	758	608	463	611	586	525	649
" 1915 ..	780	611	472	574	581	571	659
" 1916 ..	791	625	407	573	592	574	665
" 1917 ..	797	657	492	606	602	586	685
" 1918 ..	832	699	526	656	619	614	722
" 1919 ..	866	744	604	707	650	746	768
" 1920 ..	980	807	634	783	718	904	851
GROUPS I. AND II.—FOOD, GROCERIES AND HOUSING.							
Nov. 1914 ..	680	613	560	658	689	630	644
" 1915 ..	825	756	722	758	734	756	777
" 1916 ..	818	732	648	742	761	724	760
" 1917 ..	848	748	707	734	748	820	782
" 1918 ..	861	792	756	789	746	810	812
" 1919 ..	1,000	893	904	904	867	936	934
" 1920 ..	1,138	1,074	945	1,068	973	1,155	1,082
GROUP III.—CLOTHING.							
Nov. 1914 ..	755	780	657	756	698	825	754
" 1915 ..	805	797	690	821	760	833	792
" 1916 ..	903	870	779	919	849	940	881
" 1917 ..	1,009	976	899	1,049	980	1,041	992
" 1918 ..	1,102	1,103	1,025	1,066	1,135	1,200	1,097
" 1919 ..	1,237	1,213	1,192	1,303	1,277	1,344	1,238
" 1920 ..	1,323	1,422	1,274	1,384	1,359	1,430	1,365
GROUP IV.—MISCELLANEOUS.							
Nov. 1914 ..	766	728	728	770	780	699	749
" 1915 ..	798	770	756	803	822	770	786
" 1916 ..	808	784	766	832	869	780	802
" 1917 ..	889	879	836	883	926	865	882
" 1918 ..	988	950	931	988	1,035	945	972
" 1919 ..	1,059	1,016	968	1,035	1,120	1,006	1,036
" 1920 ..	1,209	1,181	1,139	1,200	1,262	1,124	1,194
GROUPS I. TO IV.—ALL ITEMS OF HOUSEHOLD CONSUMPTION.							
Nov. 1914 ..	712	671	611	699	707	687	687
" 1915 ..	816	768	721	780	755	776	782
" 1916 ..	836	773	698	798	800	783	795
" 1917 ..	892	823	773	832	832	879	847
" 1918 ..	938	890	848	887	885	923	905
" 1919 ..	1,065	988	981	1,018	1,005	1,042	1,022
" 1920 ..	1,193	1,172	1,054	1,164	1,111	1,213	1,166

§ 5. Retail Price Index-Numbers, 200 Towns.

1. **General.**—To supplement the information collected monthly for the 30 towns specified in the preceding sections, a special investigation into prices in 70 additional towns was undertaken in November, 1913. This investigation was repeated in November, 1914, and again in November, 1915, when the number of additional towns was increased to 120. In November, 1923, the number was further increased to 170. Information in regard to prices obtained in November each year relates at present, therefore, to 200 towns. The results of the first investigation were published in Labour Bulletin No. 5 (pp. 26 to 33), and details respecting succeeding investigations are incorporated in the Labour Bulletins and Reports issued subsequently by this Bureau.

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

Although the tabulation of this series of index-numbers will be continued, their publication will be suspended for the period of the war, owing to the need for economy in official publications.

§ 6. Publication of Prices and Price Index-Numbers.

The results of inquiries into price movements are available in the following publications:—

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

(ii) **Quarterly.**—A mimeographed statement is issued each quarter giving the "C" series index-numbers. The *Quarterly Summary of Australian Statistics* contains annual, quarterly and monthly index-numbers to the latest available date. This publication also contains the average prices of the items comprising the Food and Groceries regimen, for each month of the last available quarter, in the 30 towns covered by the investigation. The weighted average rents of 4 and 5-roomed houses in these towns are also shown therein.

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

§ 7. Royal Commission on the Basic Wage, 1920.

The Report of the Royal Commission on the Basic Wage is a valuable source of reference for information on retail prices during the years 1914 to 1920. It was also largely responsible for the extension of the prices investigations of the Bureau from food, groceries and housing only to all items of household consumption. The direct use of the Commission's data made in the "All Items" index has already been referred to in earlier sections of this chapter. The Commission was appointed in 1919 to inquire into and report upon the following matters:—

- (i) The actual cost of living at the present time, according to reasonable standards of comfort, including all matters comprised in the ordinary expenditure of a household, for a man with a wife and three children under fourteen years of age, and the several items and amounts which make up that cost.
- (ii) The actual corresponding cost of living during each of the last five years.
- (iii) How the basic wage may be automatically adjusted to the rise and fall from time to time of the purchasing-power of money.

The Commission issued two reports—the first in November, 1920, and the second in April, 1921. These reports show that, according to the standard assumed by the Commission, the cost of living as at the 1st November, 1920, for a family consisting of man, wife, and three children under fourteen years of age, was as follows:—

Royal Commission on Basic Wage : Cost of Living, 1st November, 1920.

Particulars.	Sydney.	Melbourne.	Brisbane.	Adelaide.	Perth.	Hobart.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Rent ..	1 2 0	1 0 6	0 17 0	0 19 6	0 19 0	0 19 0
Food ..	2 6 9	2 6 2	2 3 1	2 7 2	2 4 11	2 8 11
Clothing ..	1 7 0	1 9 0	1 6 0	1 8 3	1 7 9	1 9 2
Miscellaneous ..	1 1 4	1 0 10	1 0 1	1 1 2	1 2 3	0 19 10
Total (a) ..	5 17 1	5 16 6	5 6 2	5 16 1	5 13 11	5 16 11

(a) Weighted Average Six Capitals—£5 15s. 6d., but no recommendation made.

The corresponding costs of the commodities and services included (which are fully set out in the first Report) for the years 1914 to 1920 were as follows:—

Royal Commission on Basic Wage : Cost of Living, 1914 to 1920.

Years.	Sydney.	Melbourne.	Brisbane.	Adelaide.	Perth.	Hobart.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
1914 ..	3 12 11	3 7 9	3 4 0	3 11 2	3 12 9	3 6 9
1915 ..	4 1 6	3 16 9	3 11 3	3 19 0	3 17 1	3 15 1
1916 ..	4 4 6	3 17 5	3 13 10	3 19 7	4 1 2	3 15 6
1917 ..	4 9 8	4 2 2	3 19 3	4 3 2	4 4 2	4 4 10
1918 ..	4 14 8	4 8 10	4 6 0	4 10 11	4 9 2	4 8 6
1919 ..	5 5 3	4 18 5	4 15 10	5 2 6	5 0 9	5 0 4
1920 ..	5 17 1	5 16 6	5 6 2	5 16 1	5 13 11	5 16 11

In answer to the third clause of the inquiry, the Commission recommended that "a Bureau of Labour should be organized from existing members of the Public Service, which should ascertain from time to time

the rise and fall in the purchasing-power of money in relation to the reasonable standard of comfort for the typical family (i.e., such a family as is described in Clause 1)". After consulting the Commonwealth Statistician as to methods of collection and tabulation, the Government decided that the recommendation would be met by widening the scope of inquiries of this nature already made by the Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics.

The Commission was concerned principally with ascertaining variations in the cost of an assumed regimen, which is described in the Report as the "Indicator List". It appeared, however, that the usefulness of the investigations of this Bureau would have been somewhat impaired had they been limited in the manner suggested by the Commission. It was decided, therefore, to apply to a more detailed inquiry the methods of index-number construction already used in the investigations into variations in the cost of food, groceries and housing.

It was decided to adopt for food, groceries and housing the commodities, methods and weighting already in use, which conformed very closely with those given in the "Indicator List" of the Commission. With regard to housing, the Commission adopted a certain type of 5-roomed house as its standard in determining the amount allowed for house rent. The figures used by this Bureau are the rents of 4 and 5-roomed houses, and are not confined to any particular type, but they fairly represent variations in the rent for the type of house described by the Commission.

Previous inquiries by this Bureau had been confined to food, groceries and housing. It became necessary, therefore, to investigate the prices of clothing and miscellaneous items. The results of these investigations are set out in earlier sections of this chapter.

§ 8. Changes in the Regimen.

Since the original compilation of retail price indexes by the Bureau, the regimens of the several Groups and Sections have undergone some modifications. These are briefly explained in the following paragraphs.

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

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

Since the December quarter of 1936, following on the resolutions of the 1936 Conference of Statisticians, the rentals of 4 and 5-roomed houses in certain towns have been collected and tabulated on a somewhat different basis from that previously used. The returns in the twelve more important cities and towns show the rents of individual houses, on the basis of which

* Revisions of collection and compilation methods have occupied a longer period, and are still proceeding. Proper precautions are taken to prevent such revisions from disturbing the essential principle of continuity.

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

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

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

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

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

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

* Revisions of collection and compilation methods have occupied a longer period, and are still proceeding. Proper precautions are taken to prevent such revisions from disturbing the essential principle of continuity.

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

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

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

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

§ 9. Retail Price Index-Numbers and Wage Variations.

In view of the fact that several "series" of retail price index-numbers are still associated with the variation of wages, the following short explanation of their significance is given.

It is desirable again to emphasize the fact that the retail price index-numbers compiled by the Bureau are designed to measure the *variations* in the cost of the definite regimen of commodities and services covered by each of the series. The use made of them by wage-fixing tribunals for the purpose of adjusting wage-rates is entirely the responsibility of the tribunals concerned, and not of the Bureau, although the Bureau fully realizes the great importance of the use to which these indexes are put in this connexion, and takes every care to make them as accurate as possible.

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

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

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

(ii) "*B* Series.—The "*B*" series covers the items food and groceries and rent of 4 and 5-roomed houses, with the prices ruling in the years 1923–1927 as the base (1,000). This series was first compiled in 1925, and is available for the six capital cities for the years 1907 and 1911, and for the month of November of the years 1914 to 1920, and quarterly thereafter for the 30 important towns of Australia. It was designed to replace the "*A*" Series, but up to date has not been used in connexion with the fixation or adjustment of wages by Industrial Tribunals. This series appears on pages 9 to 13 of this Report.

(iii) "*C* Series.—The "*C*" series covers all items of household expenditure, viz., food and groceries; rent of 4 and 5-roomed houses; clothing (man, wife and three children); household drapery, household utensils, fuel, lighting and other miscellaneous items, with the prices ruling in the years 1923–1927 as the base (1,000).

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

The series was not used in connexion with the variation of wages until its partial adoption by the Commonwealth Court in May, 1933, when that Court introduced the "*D*" series of indexes (for explanation of which see next page). In its judgment of 17th April, 1934, the Court adopted the "*C*" series as the sole basis for the adjustment of the wages declared in the judgment. In its judgment of 23rd June, 1937, the Commonwealth Court adopted this index as the basis of the "*Court*" series for the adjustment of the "*needs*" portion of the Court's new basic wage (see next page). The Court is, of course, quite free to alter the basis of the "*Court*" series at any time it thinks fit.

This series, covering as it does a far wider range of commodities, displays a different relationship between the towns from that shown in the preceding series ("A" and "B"). The series is published on pages 14 to 22 of this Report.

(iv) *The "Court" Series.*—The "Court" series of index-numbers was created by the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration in its basic wage judgment of 23rd June, 1937, and operated from 1st July, 1937. Its purpose was to provide a set of index-numbers which would be published by, and under the direct control of, the Court. It was created primarily for the purpose of removing conditions which tended to engender the impression that the Commonwealth Statistician was in some way responsible for the fixation and adjustment of wage-rates. Its introduction has the added advantage of enabling the index-numbers to be specially numbered in the manner most convenient for adjustment purposes, and of enabling the Statistician to change the base of his index-numbers without upsetting the wage and adjustment provisions of the Court's awards. It is at present based on the Commonwealth Statistician's "C" series index, and is obtained as follows:—The "C" series index-number for any town for the quarter in question is multiplied by .081, and the first three figures on the left of the product are taken as the corresponding number in the "Court" series. This number itself states in whole and decimal figures the number of shillings with current purchasing power equivalent to that of 81s. when the "C" series index-number is 1,000. The base of the series is, therefore, the weighted average of the six capital cities, 1923-27 = 81s. The judgment provides that the nearest whole number of shillings (a decimal of .5 or over being regarded as a whole number) shall be taken as the "needs" basic wage, to which will be added the relevant fixed "prosperity loadings" granted by the Court. The "Court" series entirely supersedes the "C" series for all wage adjustments decreed by the Commonwealth Court. A set of index-numbers under this series is reproduced in Appendix III. of this Report.

(v) *"D" Series.*—The "D" series is a combination of the "A" and "C" series, and was introduced by the Commonwealth Court for the adjustment of wages of those employees who were subject to the full 10 per cent. "cut" imposed by the Court in January, 1931. It came into operation from 1st May, 1933, and was devised in order to counteract the excessive drop in wages occasioned by the "A" series index after 1929.

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

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

(vi) *Food and Groceries.*—The regimen of food and groceries is a component part of each of the series of retail price index-numbers mentioned above. Details of the regimen will be found on page 3. This index was first compiled in 1912 and is available yearly for the six capital cities from 1901 to 1911 and monthly for the 30 important towns of Australia from 1912 to date. An index computed from the prices of food and groceries only was for a time used for the adjustment of old-age and invalid pensions, and also for the adjustment of the wages of members of the North Australian Workers' Union above the 20th parallel. Both these adjustments are now effected by means of the "C" Series Index.

(vii) *The "200 Towns" Series.*—This series is tabulated for the month of November each year in respect of 200 of the more important towns of the Commonwealth. Up to November, 1936 it covered the cost of food and groceries combined with the rent of 4 and of 5-roomed houses respectively, but thereafter the tabulation has been limited to food and groceries only. This table has been used mostly in discussions of suitable relative rates for country towns, but the index-numbers have not been directly employed by Industrial Tribunals in this connexion. The base of this table is the weighted average cost of food and groceries in the six capital cities in 1923-27 = 1,000. This series has been compiled for the month of November since 1913. It was originally confined to 100 towns, but was increased to 150 in 1915, and 200 in 1923. A reference to these index-numbers will be found on page 23.

(viii) *Relative Merits of Series.*—The relative merits of the various series of index-numbers have been much discussed. Prices of all commodities do not change simultaneously nor to the same degree. Consequently, over short periods there may be differences of some magnitude between the results ascertained from the different series, but over longer periods these differences tend to be much reduced.

Thus, taking the movement of the following retail price indexes for the six capital cities over the two periods 1911 to 1940 and 1929 to 1940, as disclosed by the table in Appendix VI. of this Report, the changes are substantially of the same order:—

			Increase per cent., 1911-1940.		Decrease per cent., 1929-1940.
Food and Groceries only .. ..	..	..	68	..	10
Rent of 4 and 5-roomed Houses .. ..	..	..	59	..	9
Food Groceries and Rent of 4 and 5-roomed Houses ("B" Series) .. ..	..	..	64	..	10
"All Items" of Household Expenditure ("C" Series) .. ..	..	..	59*	..	7

* Taken back to 1911 from base 1914 by means of "A" Series Index.

(ix) For information in regard to the different bases upon which the above index-numbers have been compiled, see page 7.

§ 10. Increases in Retail Prices over War Periods.

I. **Australia.**—The following statement shows for the six Capitals separately, and as a whole, the percentage increases which have taken place in retail prices over the two years since the outbreak of war, viz., from September quarter 1939, to the September quarter 1941, inclusive:—

Group	"C" Series Index. Increase per cent.	"Group" Index. Increase per cent.
SYDNEY.		
Food	0.7	1.8
Rent	0.1	0.4
Clothing	6.8	34.2
Miscellaneous	2.5	13.1
Total	10.1	10.1
MELBOURNE.		
Food	0.2	0.5
Rent	0.4	1.9
Clothing	7.1	36.3
Miscellaneous	2.2	11.1
Total	9.9	9.9
BRISBANE.		
Food	1.4	4.1
Rent	0.1	0.5
Clothing	7.9	37.2
Miscellaneous	1.7	8.5
Total	11.1	11.1
ADELAIDE.		
Food	0.1	0.3
Rent	0.1	0.3
Clothing	6.7	31.4
Miscellaneous	2.7	12.9
Total	9.6	9.6
PERTH.		
Food	1.8	4.8
Rent	0.1	0.3
Clothing	6.9	33.7
Miscellaneous	2.0	10.4
Total	10.8	10.8
HOBART.		
Food	1.9	5.2
Rent	0.2	0.6
Clothing	7.0	33.1
Miscellaneous	1.7	9.1
Total	10.8	10.8

Group.	"C" Series Index. Increase per cent.	"Group" Index. Increase per cent.
SIX CAPITAL CITIES.		
Food	0.6	1.7
Rent	0.2	0.9
Clothing	7.1	34.9
Miscellaneous	2.3	11.7
Total	10.2	10.2

The differences in the percentages in the various groups under the two indexes are explainable by the fact that in the case of the "Group" Index the percentage represents the increase in each group separately, and when these are subjected to the group "weights" for the production of the total "C" Series Index, the percentage distribution amongst the groups of the total increase is as shown under the "C" Series Index.

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

Retail Price Index-Numbers.

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

Date.	Australia.	Great Britain.	Canada.	New Zealand.	South Africa.	United States of America.
(A): 1914-1920.						
1914 July	100(a)	100	100	100	(b)	100
1915 Year	114(a)	125	97	108	103	102
1916 "	116(a)	148	102	115	106	109
1917 "	123(a)	180	130	125	114	128
1918 "	132(a)	203	146	135	118	156
1919 "	149(a)	208	155	145	126	175
1920 "	170	..	..	..	..	..

(a) November.

(b) Food, Fuel, Light and Rent.

(c) Average for year 1914.

(B): 1939-1941 (September).

1939—					(a)	
September Quarter	100	100	100	100	100	100
December	101	109	103	102	101	99
1940—						
March	102	114	103	102	103	99
June	104	116	104	103	104	100
September	105	120	105	105	104	100
December	108	124	107	106	105	100
1941—						
March	109	127	107	106	106	100
June	109	129	109	107	109	102
September	110	128(b)	..	108(b)	111(c)	105(b)

(a) Food, Rent, Clothing and Miscellaneous Expenditure.

(b) August.

(c) July.