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The Daily

Statistics Canada

Friday, January 23, 1998
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MAJOR RELEASES

OTHER RELEASES

Travel-log

Winter 1998

The Winter 1998 issue of *Travel-log*, Statistics Canada's quarterly tourism newsletter, features the article "Tourism in census metropolitan areas: New possibility for the Tourism Statistics Program." For the first time, using 1996 Canadian Travel Survey (CST) data, it is possible to paint a complete picture (at the regional level) of places visited between origin and final destination. Information on all places visited by foreign travellers in Canada was already gathered by the International Travel Survey (ITS). Although the economic impact of the tourism sector has often been examined at the national and provincial levels, the impact on regional communities has been overlooked. However, by combining data from the CTS and the ITS it is now possible to examine the direct economic contribution of Canadian and foreign visitors to select census metropolitan areas.

Each quarter, *Travel-log* features the latest travel indicators and the international travel account. It also examines the trends of the Travel Price Index. *Travel-log* also features a summary page on tourism indicators for tourism demand in Canada and employment generated by tourism.

The Winter 1998 issue of *Travel-log* , Vol. 17, no. 1 (87-003-XPB, $13/$42), is now available. See *How to order publications*. For further information on this release, contact Monique Beyrouti (613-951-1673; fax: 613-951-2909; Internet: *beyrmon@statcan.ca*), Culture, Tourism and the Centre for Education Statistics.

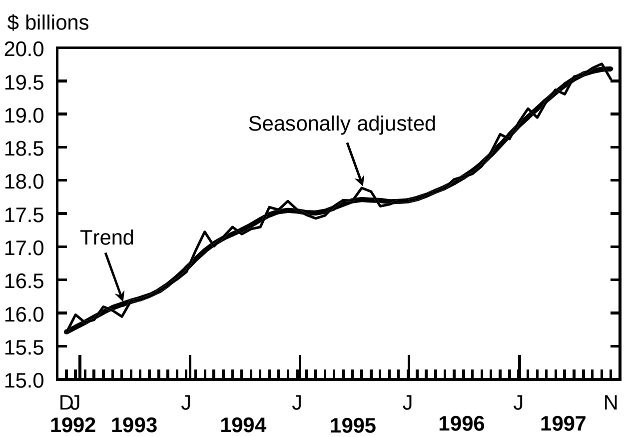
MAJOR RELEASES

Retail sales

November 1997

Retail sales dropped 1.2% in November to $19.5 billion. This followed a 0.3% increase in October. The decline was broadly based across almost all retail sectors and all provinces. In constant dollars, retail sales fell by 1.0% in November.

Retail sales retreat in November



A number of factors may have contributed to the November retreat. Some retailers suggested that a delay in the onslaught of typical winter weather may have resulted in consumers deferring some of their seasonal purchases. Economic events in November, such as the increase in the prime lending rate, the weakening of the Canadian dollar in relation to the U.S. dollar and turbulence in stock markets, may have influenced consumer behaviour.

Although retail sales have generally been rising since early 1996, strong advances were posted from the fall of 1996 to the fall of 1997. Retailers have been experiencing smaller advances in recent months. The level of sales in November was 4.4% higher than during the same month in 1996.

While growth in retail sales may have been spurred by increases in employment, income has been slow to advance. Household survey data indicate a 2.3% gain in employment between October 1997 and October 1996. Other business survey data revealed a 0.3% increase in average weekly earnings over the same period.

The level of consumer credit from October 1996 to October 1997 (the last month for which data are available) increased by 7.3%.

Big-ticket items continue to sell

While November's retreat in sales was broadly based, there were advances in furniture stores and motor and recreational vehicle dealers, both of whom have been offering favourable financing arrangements. These sectors have been strong performers through all of 1997.

Sales in furniture stores advanced 0.7% on the strength of household furniture and appliance stores (+1.1%). Sales in furniture stores were 7.1% higher in November compared with the same month in 1996. Furniture store sales have generally been rising from the spring of 1996 after a slump, which began at the start of 1995.

Motor and recreational vehicle dealers posted a 0.4% increase in sales in November. The number of new motor vehicles sold in November rose by 2.9%. Sales by these vehicle dealers have experienced strong growth from the last quarter of 1996 and have been a major contributor to the improvement in retail sales over the same period.

Despite advancing sales by vehicle dealers, declining sales by automotive parts, accessories and service stores (-7.6%) and gasoline service stations (-2.4%) resulted in an overall decrease in sales in the automotive sector (-1.3%). The weather, along with a decline in the price of gasoline, may have contributed to slumping sales for this group. Sales in the automotive sector have been flat since the summer of 1997, after rising from early 1995.

Department store sales rose marginally (+0.2%), offsetting October's decline. Sales by department stores were strong from the end of 1996 through almost all of 1997. In November, the level of sales by department stores was 10.5% greater than the same month in 1996. Other general merchandise stores did not fare as well, with a 0.7% decline in sales. Sales by general merchandise stores have generally been rising since the end of 1994.

Other sectors see losses

Drugstores experienced a large decline in sales in November (-3.9%). This was the third straight monthly decline in drugstore sales, with monthly sales dropping 4.8% from the August peak. Sales by drugstores had been rising from the spring of 1995 with pauses in the summer of 1996 and the spring of 1997.

Sales by clothing stores also posted a large decline (-2.2%). Sales dropped in shoe stores (-9.9%), men's clothing stores (-0.5%) and stores classified as "other clothing stores" (-1.9%). Sales in women's clothing stores remained unchanged in November. Apart from a pause in the first half of 1997, sales in clothing stores have generally been rising from early 1996.

Food stores also experienced a decline in sales in November (-0.5%). Despite this decline, sales by food stores have generally been rising from the spring of 1996.

Declining sales from coast to coast

Sales in Atlantic Canada dropped by 2.1%. As a result, the level of sales for November was only 0.4% greater than that for the same month in 1996. Sales in Atlantic Canada hit a peak in July, but have been declining ever since (-4.7%).

The weak performance by retailers in Quebec, observed since the summer of 1997, continued with a 1.1% decline in sales. Sales had, in general, been rising through 1996 to plateau in the summer of 1997.

Despite the 0.7% decline in November for Ontario, retail sales have been rising since the end of 1996. The level of sales in November was 7.4% higher than the same month in 1996.

The Prairie provinces posted a 2.0% decline in sales in November. As a region, the level of sales in November was 7.2% higher than the same month in 1996. Alberta has been leading retail growth in the Prairies through most of 1997. The level of sales for Alberta in November was 9.3% higher than the same month in 1996.

British Columbia retailers posted a drop in sales (-1.1%). Retail sales in British Columbia have lagged behind most of the rest of the country. Retail sales in British Columbia have been weak since the end of 1994.

Related indicators of December sales

Initial estimates indicate an increase in the number of new motor vehicles sold in December. The number of employees in retail trade increased by 0.4% in December from the previous month. Total employment rose by 0.4% in the same period. The number of housing starts in December rose by 0.2% from November.

Available on CANSIM: matrices 2299, 2398-2417 and 2420.

The November 1997 issue of *Retail trade* (63-005-XPB, $21/$206) will be available shortly. See *How to order publications*.

For further information on this release, contact Louise Généreux (613-951-3549; Internet: *logener2@statcan.ca*). For analytical information, contact Greg Peterson (613-951-3592; Internet: *petegre@statcan.ca*), Retail Trade Section, Distributive Trades Division. □

Retail sales

	Nov. 1996	Aug. 1997[r]	Sept. 1997[r]	Oct. 1997[r]	Nov. 1997[p]	Oct. to Nov. 1997	Nov. 1996 to Nov. 1997
	seasonally adjusted						
	$ millions					% change	
Food	**4,559**	**4,770**	**4,761**	**4,731**	**4,706**	**-0.5**	**3.2**
Supermarkets and grocery stores	4,196	4,432	4,416	4,396	4,367	-0.7	4.1
All other food stores	363	338	345	335	339	1.0	-6.6
Drug and patent medicine stores	**1,042**	**1,078**	**1,077**	**1,068**	**1,026**	**-3.9**	**-1.5**
Clothing	**1,069**	**1,116**	**1,111**	**1,122**	**1,097**	**-2.2**	**2.7**
Shoe stores	147	145	141	154	138	-9.9	-5.9
Men’s clothing stores	130	134	135	131	131	-0.5	0.3
Women’s clothing stores	346	350	355	351	351	0.0	1.4
Other clothing stores	445	487	480	486	477	-1.9	7.2
Furniture	**935**	**1,012**	**999**	**995**	**1,002**	**0.7**	**7.1**
Household furniture and appliance stores	732	791	781	777	785	1.1	7.4
Household furnishings stores	204	221	218	218	217	-0.7	6.4
Automotive	**7,100**	**7,320**	**7,474**	**7,515**	**7,415**	**-1.3**	**4.4**
Motor vehicle and recreational vehicle dealers	4,653	4,790	4,883	4,985	5004	0.4	7.5
Gasoline service stations	1,373	1,358	1,374	1,381	1,349	-2.4	-1.8
Automotive parts, accessories and services	1,074	1,172	1,217	1,149	1,062	-7.6	-1.1
General merchandise stores	**2,046**	**2,200**	**2,205**	**2,228**	**2,224**	**-0.1**	**8.7**
Retail stores not elsewhere classified	**1,945**	**2,099**	**2,066**	**2,098**	**2,055**	**-2.0**	**5.7**
Other semi-durable goods stores	643	666	659	665	661	-0.6	2.8
Other durable goods stores	473	523	508	527	503	-4.4	6.4
All other retail stores not elsewhere classified	828	909	899	906	891	-1.7	7.5
Total, retail sales	**18,695**	**19,595**	**19,692**	**19,757**	**19,526**	**-1.2**	**4.4**
Total excluding motor vehicle and recreational vehicle dealers	**14,042**	**14,805**	**14,809**	**14,772**	**14,522**	**-1.7**	**3.4**
Provinces and territories							
Newfoundland	292	307	305	300	300	-0.1	2.9
Prince Edward Island	79	88	85	86	83	-3.1	5.7
Nova Scotia	589	598	602	585	568	-2.9	-3.5
New Brunswick	442	457	467	466	455	-2.2	2.9
Quebec	4,482	4,635	4,655	4,612	4,561	-1.1	1.8
Ontario	6,703	7,182	7,181	7,250	7,201	-0.7	7.4
Manitoba	674	694	700	709	698	-1.6	3.6
Saskatchewan	627	651	667	668	653	-2.2	4.3
Alberta	2,017	2,161	2,200	2,250	2,205	-2.0	9.3
British Columbia	2,726	2,754	2,758	2,762	2,731	-1.1	0.2
Yukon	24	25	26	25	26	2.6	5.8
Northwest Territories	41	43	44	44	44	-0.8	8.0

[r] *Revised figures.*
[p] *Preliminary figures.*

Retail sales

	Nov. 1996	Oct. 1997[r]	Nov. 1997[p]	Nov. 1996 to Nov. 1997
	unadjusted			
	$ millions			% change
Food	**4,573**	**4,822**	**4,564**	**-0.2**
Supermarkets and grocery stores	4,227	4,491	4,239	0.3
All other food stores	346	332	325	-6.2
Drug and patent medicine stores	**1,042**	**1,103**	**999**	**-4.1**
Clothing	**1,235**	**1,187**	**1,234**	**-0.1**
Shoe stores	181	171	165	-8.6
Men's clothing stores	162	134	157	-2.8
Women's clothing stores	379	365	377	-0.6
Other clothing stores	514	516	534	4.0
Furniture	**1,043**	**1,045**	**1,097**	**5.2**
Household furniture and appliance stores	814	812	861	5.8
Household furnishings stores	229	233	236	3.3
Automotive	**6,869**	**7,726**	**6,942**	**1.1**
Motor vehicle and recreational vehicle dealers	4,313	5,101	4,489	4.1
Gasoline service stations	1,343	1,418	1,299	-3.3
Automotive parts, accessories and services	1,214	1,207	1,154	-4.9
General merchandise stores	**2,585**	**2,337**	**2,777**	**7.4**
Retail stores not elsewhere classified	**2,010**	**2,021**	**2,061**	**2.5**
Other semi-durable goods stores	683	638	685	0.2
Other durable goods stores	484	471	508	4.9
All other retail stores not elsewhere classified	843	912	868	3.0
Total, retail sales	**19,358**	**20,241**	**19,674**	**1.6**
Total excluding motor vehicle and recreational vehicle dealers	**15,046**	**15,140**	**15,185**	**0.9**
Provinces and territories				
Newfoundland	315	305	313	-0.6
Prince Edward Island	81	87	83	2.3
Nova Scotia	618	593	578	-6.4
New Brunswick	473	485	472	-0.2
Quebec	4,597	4,780	4,531	-1.4
Ontario	7,062	7,407	7,381	4.5
Manitoba	706	739	708	0.2
Saskatchewan	659	709	667	1.2
Alberta	2,076	2,294	2,220	7.0
British Columbia	2,711	2,771	2,657	-2.0
Yukon	22	25	23	1.5
Northwest Territories	39	44	41	6.5

[r] *Revised figures.*
[p] *Preliminary figures.*

■

Control and sale of alcoholic beverages
1995/96

For a second consecutive year, the volume of sales of alcoholic beverages, measured in litres, increased for all three types of alcoholic beverages: spirits, wine and beer.

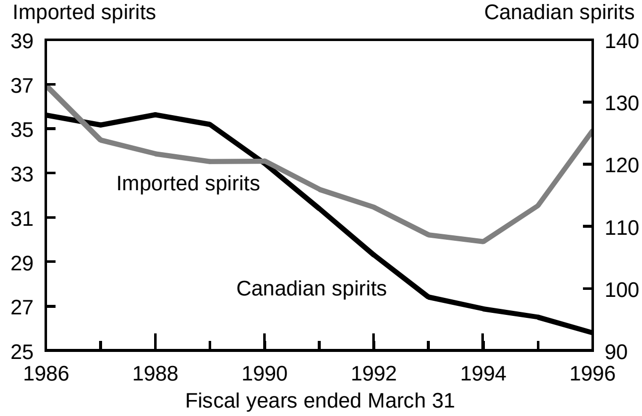
For the fiscal year ended March 31, 1996, the volume of sales increased by 1.1% to 2.4 billion litres. The sales of Canadian products edged up 0.5%, while those of imported products grew by 6.3% over the previous year. The ratio of the volume of sales of imported alcoholic beverages to total sales showed gains for all three types of imported alcoholic beverages.

Ratio of the volume of sales of imported alcoholic beverages to total
Fiscal years 1987/88 to 1995/96

	Spirits	Wine	Beer	Total
1987/88	20.9	45.9	1.9	7.7
1988/89	21.0	47.6	2.6	8.3
1989/90	21.8	50.0	4.2	9.7
1990/91	22.2	51.6	3.8	9.5
1991/92	23.0	51.2	3.8	9.4
1992/93	23.5	51.3	3.2	9.1
1993/94	23.6	53.7	2.9	8.9
1994/95	24.9	54.2	3.3	9.4
1995/96	27.3	54.3	3.5	9.9

Driven by sales of red wines, which averaged increases of 10.8% over the last four years, the volume of sales of wine continued to progress for a third consecutive year. Sales of wine increased by 3.6% over last year, the largest increase in six years. Sales also advanced for beer (+0.8%) and spirits (+0.7%). Higher sales of spirits was attributable to a 10.6% increase in sales for imported products and a concurrent 2.6% drop in sales of domestic products. In 1995/96, products from the United Kingdom and Brazil each accounted for 19% of the imports of spirits, followed by Guyana (12%), the United States (11%), France (10%) and other countries (29%). Whisky, rum and vodka accounted for more than 67% of sales of spirits.

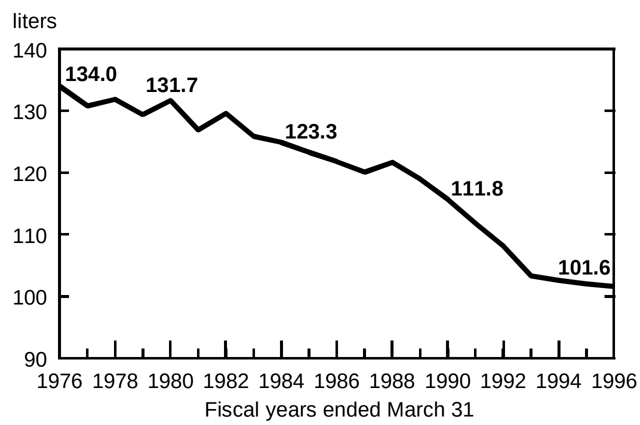
Volume of sales of spirits
(Millions of litres)



Per capita decrease in the volume of sales of alcoholic beverages

The downward trend of the per capita (15 years of age and over) volume of sales in Canada continued in all regions except the Yukon, Saskatchewan, Prince Edward Island, Quebec and Ontario. For the fiscal year 1995/96, the most important decreases occurred in the Northwest Territories (-8.0%), Newfoundland (-2.8%), British Columbia (-2.1%) and Alberta (-1.5%). Yukon and Saskatchewan had increases of 7.3% and 1.5% respectively.

Per capita volume of sales for the three types of alcoholic beverages



On average in 1995/1996, Canadians aged 15 years and over bought 5.4 litres of spirits, 10.2 litres of wine and 86.0 litres of beer. For the first time in 11 years, per capita sales increased in one of the three types of alcoholic beverages; namely, wine.

Per capita volume of sales of alcoholic beverages
Fiscal year ended March 31, 1996

	Spirits	Wine	Beer	Total
	litres			
Canada	**5.4**	**10.2**	**86.0**	**101.6**
Newfoundland	7.0	3.5	91.4	101.9
Prince Edward Island	5.9	4.6	75.6	86.1
Nova Scotia	6.8	5.7	74.6	87.1
New Brunswick	4.7	5.4	76.7	86.8
Quebec	2.5	12.4	91.0	105.9
Ontario	5.7	9.5	85.3	100.5
Manitoba	8.1	6.3	77.0	91.4
Saskatchewan	7.6	4.3	70.8	82.6
Alberta	7.7	9.4	86.7	103.8
British Columbia	6.9	14.7	87.9	109.5
Yukon	11.9	18.2	153.1	183.2
Northwest Territories	9.5	5.4	81.7	96.6

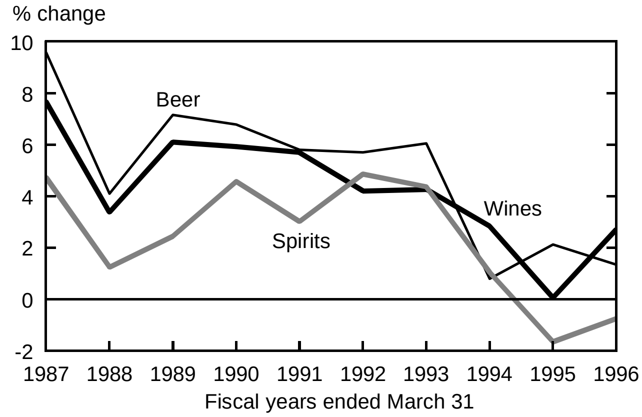
Note: *Data may not add to totals due to rounding.*

These statistics on sales of alcoholic beverages by volume should not be equated with data on the consumption of alcoholic beverages. The sales volumes include sales by liquor authorities and their agents, and sales by wineries and breweries and their outlets that operate under licence from the liquor authorities. Data on the consumption of alcoholic beverages would include all of these sales, as well as data on homemade wine and beer, wine and beer manufactured through brew-on-premises operations, sales to Canadian residents in duty-free shops, and any unrecorded transactions.

Value of sales of alcoholic beverages increased

The 1995/96 value of sales reached $11.0 billion, an increase of $0.3 billion (+2.3%) over the previous year. The value of sales of spirits declined slightly (-0.8%) as sales of Canadian products continued to decline (-2.0%) and sales of imported products grew by 4.6% — despite a 5.5% decline in average sales price. Wine sales increased by 6.4% to $2.1 billion, while beer sales rose 2.1% to $6.0 billion.

Average price changes by type of alcoholic beverage



Net income of liquor authorities and revenue from the control of alcoholic beverages by provincial and territorial governments grew 1.5% to reach $3.3 billion, which is slightly below the five-year average of 1.9%.

Available on CANSIM: matrices 2728, 2730 and 2731.

The control and sale of alcoholic beverages in Canada, fiscal year ended March 31, 1996 (63-202-XPB, $38) is now available. See *How to order publications*.

Data are also available through custom and special tabulations. For information or general inquiries, contact Viola Jabbour (613-951-0767, Public Institutions Division.

For further information on this release, contact Richard Sauriol (613-951-1829) or Jean-François Carbonneau (613-951-8561), Public Institutions Division. □

Sales of alcoholic beverages
Fiscal years ended March 31

	Value				Volume			
	Spirits	Wine	Beer	Total	Spirits	Wine	Beer	Total
	Millions of dollars				Millions of litres			
1985/86	3,004	1,454	3,761	8,220	165	257	2,067	2,488
1986/87	3,069	1,542	4,135	8,745	161	253	2,074	2,487
1987/88	3,126	1,664	4,417	9,207	162	264	2,128	2,553
1988/89	3,165	1,706	4,714	9,585	160	255	2,119	2,534
1989/90	3,181	1,735	5,015	9,931	154	245	2,112	2,510
1990/91	3,094	1,769	5,231	10,094	145	236	2,082	2,463
1991/92	3,059	1,805	5,430	10,294	137	231	2,045	2,413
1992/93	3,006	1,863	5,556	10,425	129	229	1,973	2,331
1993/94	2,985	1,902	5,636	10,523	127	227	1,986	2,340
1994/95	2,942	1,950	5,840	10,732	127	233	2,015	2,375
1995/96	2,940	2,076	5,965	10,981	128	241	2,031	2,400

Note: *Data may not add to totals due to rounding.*

■

OTHER RELEASES

Deliveries of major grains

December 1997

Data on December grain deliveries are now available.

Available on CANSIM: matrices 976-981.

The delivery data are contained in the December issue of *Cereals and oilseeds review* (22-007-XPB, $15/$149), which will be available in March. See *How to order publications* .

For further information on this release, contact Rick Burroughs (613-951-2890) or Les Macartney (613-951-8714), Grain Marketing Unit, Agriculture Division. ■

Air fare statistics

First quarter 1997 (preliminary)

The average domestic air fare (all types) paid by passengers in the first quarter of 1997 was $177, down 13% from the record average air fare of $204 recorded in the second quarter of 1995, and 3% below the same quarter of 1996.

The decrease in average fares was in part the result of a first-quarter record of 80.4% of passengers travelling on discount fares on domestic scheduled services, up 5.1% from the previous first-quarter record of 75.3% in 1996.

The greatest use of discount fares was on international scheduled services, where 88.4% of passengers travelled on a discount. The lowest use was in the northern domestic sector, where a record 61.8% of passengers travelled on a discount.

Preliminary estimates are now available for the first quarter of 1997. Information on the types of fares used by passengers is based on data from four Level I air carriers (AirBC, Air Canada, Canadian Airlines International Ltd. and Time Air) and from Inter-Canadien and Ontario Express.

These estimates will be published in the January 1998 issue of the *Aviation: Service bulletin* (51-004-XPB, $11/$109). See *How to order publications*.

For further information on this release, contact Bradley Snider (613-951-0071; Internet: *snidbra@statcan.ca*), Aviation Statistics Centre, Transportation Division. ■

Potato production

1997 (preliminary)

Data on the area harvested, the yield and the production of potatoes by province are now available for 1997.

Available on CANSIM: matrix 1044.

These data are available in *Canadian potato production* (22-008-UPB, $21). See *How to order publications*.

These data are also available on the Internet @ *www.statcan.ca*), under "Products and services," "Downloadable publications (free)," "Canadian potato publications."

For further information on this release, contact Mark Elward (613-951-8715), Agriculture Division. ■

Road motor vehicles: Registrations

1996

Road motor vehicle registrations totalled 17.2 million in 1996 compared with 17.0 million in 1995.

Available on CANSIM: matrices 356, 359, 360, 363-364, 367-368, 371-372, 375-376 and 379-380.

For further information, contact Robert Larocque (613-951-2486; fax: 613-951-0009; Internet: *laroque@statcan.ca*), Transportation Division.

The publication *Road motor vehicles: Registrations, 1996* (53-219-XPB, $28) will be available in February.■

PUBLICATIONS RELEASED

Infomat — A weekly review, January 23, 1998
Catalogue number 11-002-XPE
(Canada: $4/$145; outside Canada: US$ 4/US$145).

Pulpwood and wood residue statistics, November 1997
Catalogue number 25-001-XPB
(Canada: $8/$73; outside Canada: US$ 8/US$73).

Monthly Survey of Manufacturing, November 1997
Catalogue number 31-001-XPB
(Canada: $20/$196; outside Canada: US$ 20/US$196).

Primary iron and steel, November 1997
Catalogue number 41-001-XPB
(Canada: $7/$62; outside Canada: US$ 7/US$62).

Travel-log, Winter 1998
Catalogue number 87-003-XPB
(Canada: $13/$42; outside Canada: US$ 13/US$42).

All prices exclude sales tax.

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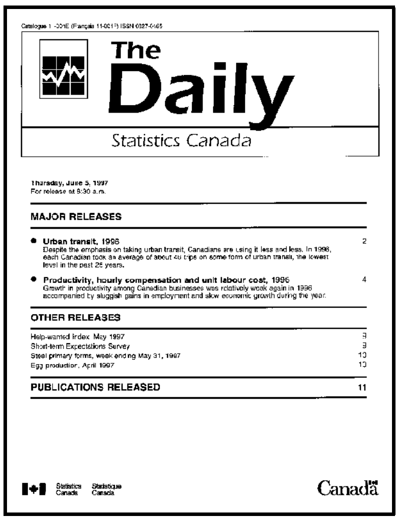

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Editor: Duncan Currie (613-951-1103, currdun@statcan.ca)
Head of Official Release: Chantal Prévost (613-951-1088, prevcha@statcan.ca)

RELEASE DATES

January 26 to January 30, 1998

(Release dates are subject to change.)

Release date	Title	Reference period
27	**Employment Insurance**	November 1997
27	**Juristat: Motor vehicle theft**	1996
28	**Industrial Product Price Index**	December 1997
28	**Raw Materials Price Index**	December 1997
28	**Employment, earnings and hours**	November 1997
29	**Television and radio audiences**	Fall 1996
29	**Marriage and divorce**	1996
30	**Real gross domestic product at factor cost by industry**	November 1997
30	**National Graduates Survey**	1997