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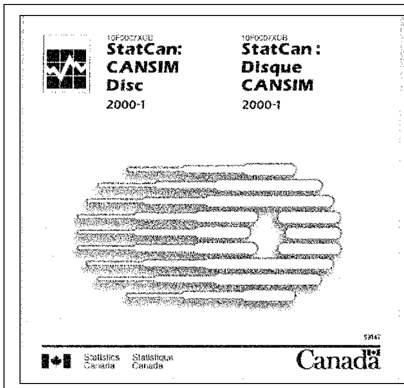
The Daily

Statistics Canada

Tuesday, March 21, 2000
For release at 8:30 a.m.

MAJOR RELEASES

(continued on following page)



StatCan: CANSIM Disc

March 2000

The final issue of the *StatCan: CANSIM Disc* is a valuable source of socio-economic information about Canada. It contains a comprehensive collection of almost 800,000 time series of current and historical data. This CD-ROM contains the CANSIM time series directory, a guide to the data contained in the CANSIM time series database. It also includes the latest version of the Statistics Canada Thesaurus and the Statistical Data Documentation System (SDDS), a database of the surveys and statistical programs used in Statistics Canada.

Specially designed dialogue boxes in this Windows version of the *StatCan: CANSIM Disc* guide users through the most typical searches. An entire CANSIM matrix or SDDS survey can be searched as a single entity. Hyperlinks between the CANSIM matrices, and the SDDS surveys allow quick access to more detail for both. You can link directly to the Beyond 20/20™ browser included on the CD-ROM to retrieve and view the CANSIM time series and to graph and export them to other popular software packages.

The March 2000 edition of the *StatCan: CANSIM Disc* (10F0007XCB, $1,995) is now available. The CANSIM time series database is still available on Statistics Canada's Web site (www.statcan.ca).

To order a copy, or for more information, contact your nearest Statistics Canada Regional Reference Centre.

OTHER RELEASES

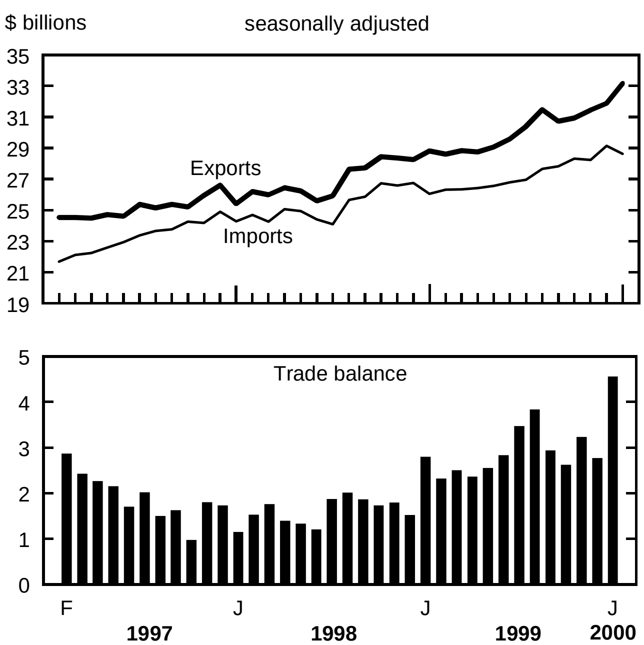
MAJOR RELEASES

Canadian international merchandise trade
January 2000

An increase in car exports, combined with a drop in imports of trucks due to snowstorms and auto parts shortages in the United States, pushed the trade balance to a record $4.53 billion in January. This compares with the $2.74 billion balance recorded in December. The previous record monthly balance was $4.47 billion, posted in May 1996.

The $1.79 billion increase from December was driven by a 4.0% rise in exports, particularly of automobiles, computers and telecommunications equipment, combined with a 1.8% decrease in imports.

Exports, imports and trade balance



Strong automotive exports explained half the monthly growth

January marked the fourth consecutive increase in exports of automotive products. While all subsectors grew, the largest rise was in exports of cars (+$401 million), 9.0% higher than in December. This growth in car exports also contributed nearly half of the increase in total exports. Continuing American demand for certain Canadian-made models largely explains this trend. Exports of parts and trucks, though more modest, also recorded gains in January, (3.6% and 0.7%, respectively, compared with December).

> ***Note to readers***
>
> *Merchandise trade is one component of the current account of Canada's balance of payments, which also includes trade in services. The* Annual review 1999 *will be published in the January 2000 issue of* Canadian international merchandise trade *(65-001-XPB).*

Exports of machinery and equipment also experienced a net recovery. The strong increase in exports of aeronautic and telecommunications technology, especially to Europe and the United States, is mainly due to a number of long-term contracts in these industries. The recovery of aircraft and computer exports was mainly due to delays in the reporting of exports.

Exports of crude oil increased 8.4% in January. This gain, in conjunction with greater exports of liquid methane, pushed exports of energy products up 9.0%. After declining for three months, exports of natural gas increased slightly. Natural gas has become a more competitive energy source as crude oil has become more expensive.

Exports to the United States of wood products, notably oriented strandboard, together with recovering lumber and wood pulp prices, boosted the whole forestry products sector. However, this increase was tempered by the persistent slump in newsprint exports, owing to low Asian demand and the overproduction on world markets.

Imports down in January

Imports dropped 1.8% in January to $28.6 billion. The significant decrease in imports of trucks, automotive parts, Italian ceramics, crude oil, kerosene and vaccines accounted for most of this decline. The decrease was mitigated by higher imports of aircraft and industrial machinery.

Truck imports, after very strong increases in November and December, dropped 13.5% in January. Heavy snowstorms across the southern United States, plus a shortage of automobile parts, considerably slowed exports of American trucks into Canada. Despite this drop, truck imports this January were still considerably higher than in January 1999, owing to the strong sales performance of the Canadian automobile retail industry.

The decrease in imports of Italian ceramics, electricity, resin, and iron and steel products put downward pressure on the whole industrial products sector. Imports of ceramics, electricity and resin tend to be volatile. As well, Europe and Japan are becoming bigger exporters of iron and steel products to Canada.

After three months of consecutive increases, crude oil imports declined in January. Significant price increases limited growth of crude oil inventories. Lower volumes of kerosene and other petroleum and coal products also contributed to the overall decline in imports of energy products.

For the second consecutive month, imports of machinery and equipment rose. The main factors were: the recovery of imports of aircraft, particularly from Europe; and higher imports of hydraulic shovels, tractors and excavators. This growth was partly offset by lower imports of electronic tubes, semiconductors and printed circuits, which returned from extremely high levels last month to more usual volumes.

Revisions

In general, merchandise trade data are revised regularly for each month of the current year. Factors influencing revisions include: late receipt of import and export documentation, incorrect information on customs forms, replacement of estimates with actual data (once they are available), changes in classification of merchandise based on new information, and seasonal adjustments. Consult the appropriate CANSIM matrices for revised data.

Available on CANSIM: matrices 3618, 3619, 3651, 3685-3699, 3701-3711, 3713, 3720, 3887-3913, 8430-8435 and 8438-8447.

This release contains a summary of the merchandise trade data to be published shortly in *Canadian international merchandise trade* (65-001-XIB, $14/$141, or 65-001-XPB, $19/$188). The publication will include tables by commodity and country on a customs basis. Current account data (which incorporate merchandise trade statistics, service transactions, investment income and transfers) are available quarterly in *Canada's balance of international payments* (67-001-XIB, $29/$93, or 67-001-XPB, $38/$124). See *How to order publications*.

Merchandise trade data are also available by fax on the morning of release.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods, and data quality of this release, contact Jocelyne Elibani, (613-951-9647; 1-800-294-5583), Marketing and Client Services Section, International Trade Division. □

Merchandise trade

	Dec. 1999[r]	Jan. 2000	Dec. 1999 to Jan. 2000	Jan. 1999 to Jan. 2000	1998	1999	1998 to 1999
	seasonally adjusted, $ current						
	$ millions		% change		$ millions		% change
Principal trading partners							
Exports							
United States	27,287	28,482	4.4	15.7	269,496	309,665	14.9
Japan	749	775	3.5	-9.0	9,513	9,211	-3.2
European Union	1,597	1,623	1.6	10.0	17,796	18,205	2.3
Other OECD countries[1]	758	711	-6.2	32.9	7,511	7,155	-4.7
All other countries	1,501	1,569	4.5	16.9	17,943	16,364	-8.8
Total	31,893	33,160	4.0	15.1	322,262	360,599	11.9
Imports							
United States	21,877	21,588	-1.3	6.0	233,635	249,174	6.7
Japan	1,002	882	-12.0	13.2	9,651	10,593	9.8
European Union	2,670	2,571	-3.7	28.2	25,448	28,523	12.1
Other OECD countries[1]	1,266	1,272	0.5	33.6	11,369	13,209	16.2
All other countries	2,337	2,315	-0.9	19.0	23,298	25,168	8.0
Total	29,151	28,628	-1.8	9.9	303,402	326,661	7.7
Balance							
United States	5,410	6,894	...	...	35,861	60,491	...
Japan	-253	-107	...	...	-138	-1,382	...
European Union	-1,073	-948	...	...	-7,652	-10,318	...
Other OECD countries[1]	-508	-561	...	...	-3,858	-6,054	...
All other countries	-836	-746	...	...	-5,355	-8,804	...
Total	2,742	4,532	...	...	18,860	33,938	...
Principal commodity groupings							
Exports							
Agricultural and fishing products	2,202	2,183	-0.9	4.0	25,142	25,613	1.9
Energy products	3,030	3,303	9.0	82.1	23,902	30,310	26.8
Forestry products	3,432	3,530	2.9	13.6	35,172	38,902	10.6
Industrial goods and materials	5,125	5,135	0.2	11.5	57,453	56,942	-0.9
Machinery and equipment	7,385	7,793	5.5	13.0	78,823	84,960	7.8
Automotive products	8,286	8,777	5.9	10.0	77,417	96,143	24.2
Other consumer goods	1,153	1,169	1.4	0.5	12,426	13,591	9.4
Special transactions trade[2]	708	670	-5.4	6.9	5,564	7,883	41.7
Other BOP adjustments	571	601	5.3	15.1	6,366	6,257	-1.7
Imports							
Agricultural and fishing products	1,499	1,525	1.7	3.5	17,262	17,637	2.2
Energy products	1,192	1,047	-12.2	73.1	8,679	10,647	22.7
Forestry products	237	248	4.6	17.5	2,499	2,741	9.7
Industrial goods and materials	5,720	5,559	-2.8	11.5	60,286	62,142	3.1
Machinery and equipment	9,462	9,575	1.2	10.9	101,303	108,231	6.8
Automotive products	6,620	6,446	-2.6	4.6	66,762	75,902	13.7
Other consumer goods	3,288	3,198	-2.7	7.5	34,575	36,963	6.9
Special transactions trade[2]	594	476	-19.9	-4.2	6,297	6,217	-1.3
Other BOP adjustments	539	552	2.4	8.4	5,736	6,181	7.8

r *Revised figures.*
. . . *Figures not appropriate or not applicable.*
1 *Includes Australia, Iceland, Mexico, New Zealand, Norway, Switzerland, Turkey, Poland, South Korea, Hungary and the Czech Republic.*
2 *These are mainly low valued transactions, value of repairs to equipment, and goods returned to country of origin.*

■

Wholesale trade

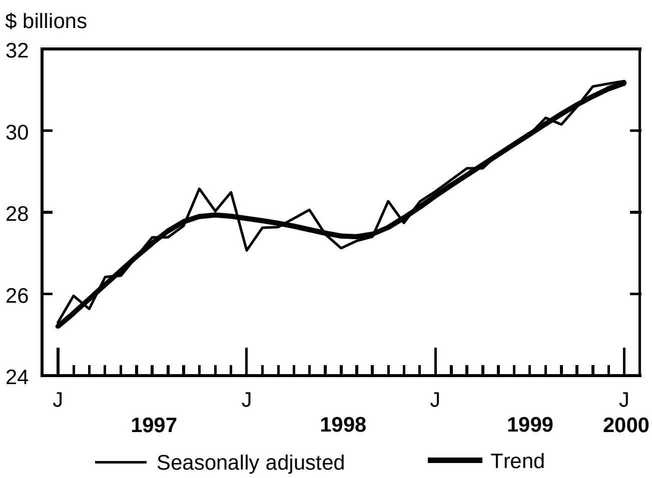
January 2000 (preliminary)

Wholesalers saw their sales rise slightly in January, up 0.2% over December. Inventories also rose 0.2%. Except for a period of stagnant sales from late 1997 until the middle of 1998, wholesale sales have generally been increasing for several years.

After two months of declines, wholesalers of farm machinery, equipment and supplies reported the strongest percentage increase in sales across all groups, up 4.3% in January. Wholesalers of household goods also showed a notable increase, up 4.1%, followed by wholesalers in the other product group (+3.1%), who accounted for the largest dollar value increase. The other product group includes wholesalers of goods such as paper and paper products, waste materials and a variety of chemicals.

Among the four groups showing decreased sales in January, wholesalers of apparel and dry goods registered the most severe percentage decline, down 7.7%. This is the second consecutive monthly drop, following unusually high sales in November. In terms of dollars, wholesalers of food products and of motor vehicles, parts and accessories had notable declines.

Wholesale sales generally up since mid-1998



Computer sales up following Y2K transition

Wholesalers of computers, packaged software and other electronic machinery started the year with sales up 1.8% in January. This comes after declining sales in November and December. Exports of office machinery and equipment, which include computers and related equipment, were up 4.8% in January. After an extended period of generally increasing sales, wholesale sales of computers, packaged software and other electronic machinery have followed a downward trend since the fall of 1999.

Since mid-1999, wholesale sales of farm machinery, equipment and supplies have generally levelled off. This comes on the heels of overall declining sales during the previous two years. The recent results may be due in part to efforts by companies to reduce their dependence on sales of agricultural equipment by boosting sales of other equipment such as forestry and construction equipment.

Sales by wholesalers of food products were down 2.7% which is in line with the reduced manufacturing in this sector (-0.6%) and reduced exports of agricultural and fish products (-0.9%). These reduced sales follow unusually high sales in December, possibly related to millennium celebrations and/or some consumer stockpiling. Though January sales have retreated, the general trend for sales has continued upward since the spring of 1998.

In recent months, wholesalers of motor vehicles, parts and accessories have seen their sales level off. This follows just over a year of generally increasing sales from the fall of 1998 until late 1999. January's decline (-1.5%) is the second consecutive drop; inventories increased 1.5%.

A number of factors appear to have influenced this month's decline in value of sales: automotive manufacturing was virtually unchanged in January from December; the number of new motor vehicles sold in Canada was down; the strengthening Canadian dollar reduced the value of exported vehicles; and overall prices in this sector fell.

Note to Readers

Every January, wholesale sales estimates undergo historic revisions. The unadjusted monthly estimates have now been revised for 1997, 1998, and 1999. The seasonally adjusted series for wholesale trade data was re-examined in January 2000 and improvements to the basis of the time series were introduced. Seasonally adjusted estimates have been revised from 1996 onwards.

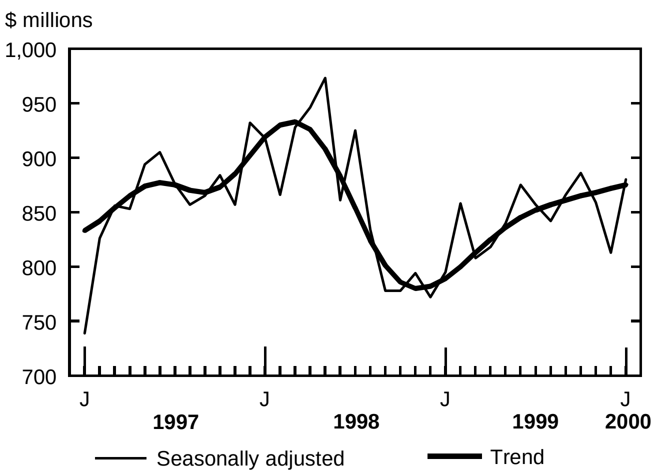
Factors which influence the need for revisions include the late receipt of respondent information, correction of information on data provided, the replacement of estimated figures with actual values (once available), and the re-classification of companies into and out of the wholesale trade industry. Revised data can be obtained by consulting the appropriate CANSIM matrices, or on request from the Client Services Unit, Distributive Trades Division.

January sales were up 3.1% for wholesalers in the other products group, which includes products such as livestock, chemicals and paper products. Much of the strength was from sales by wholesalers of paper and paper-related products. Manufacturing in the paper and allied products sector was up 2.6% in January, while industry reports indicate that the demand for pulp in Asia and Europe was very high; this put pressure on prices to rise.

Saskatchewan and Manitoba post largest increases in monthly sales

Saskatchewan saw the largest increase in month-to-month sales due to relatively strong sales in the farm machinery and equipment sector. Manitoba had the second largest increase, also due to sales in the farm machinery and equipment sector. In addition to the increased diversification of some of the major companies in this sector, there may be more sales of agricultural equipment due to increased farm cash receipts in 1999 compared with 1998 and recently announced aid packages to farmers.

Saskatchewan wholesalers slowly regaining lost ground



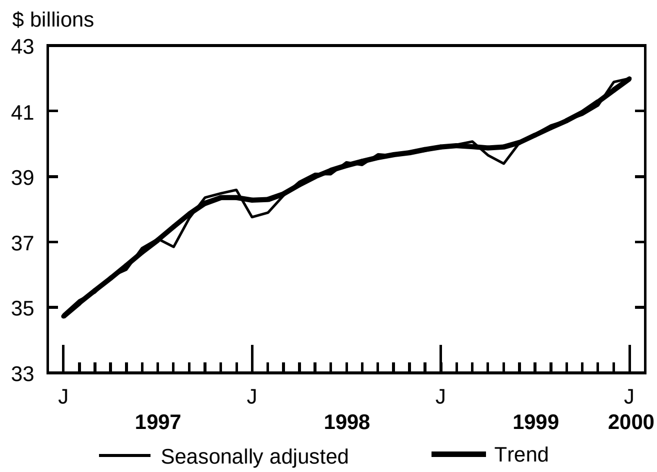
The biggest decline was recorded by wholesalers in Nova Scotia after very high December sales. December sales were unusually high due to greater than normal sales of lobster and other seafoods, likely linked to millennium celebrations. Sales generally increased from mid-1998 through to the spring of 1999, but have followed a downward trend since.

Despite recent announcements about various exploration and development projects in northern Alberta and the Northwest Territories, sales by wholesalers in Alberta fell in January, down 0.7%. Nevertheless, sales generally continue to rise and January sales are 13.3% higher than in January 1999 .

Value of inventories edges upward

The value of inventories held by wholesalers rose 0.2% in January to $42.0 billion. Except for a brief dip during the first quarter of 1999, the value of inventories has been building for several years. Wholesalers in 6 of 11 trade groups reported reduced inventories in January. The steepest decline was among wholesalers of beverage, drug and tobacco products, down 5.4%.

Inventories increase slightly in January



Available on CANSIM: matrices 59, 61, 648 and 649.

The January 2000 issue of *Wholesale trade* (63-008-XIB, $14/$140) will be available shortly. See *How to order publications*.

For data or general information, contact the Client Services Unit (613-951-3549; 1-877-421-3067; *wholesaleinfo@statcan.ca*). To enquire about the concepts, methods and data quality of this release, contact Greg Parsons (613-951-0062; *parsons@statcan.ca*), Wholesale Trade Section, Distributive Trades Division. □

Wholesale merchants' sales and inventories

	Jan. 1999[r]	Oct. 1999[r]	Nov. 1999[r]	Dec. 1999[r]	Jan. 2000[p]	Dec. 1999 to Jan. 2000	Jan. 1999 to Jan. 2000
	seasonally adjusted						
	$ millions					% change	
Sales, all trade groups	**28,519**	**30,592**	**31,085**	**31,151**	**31,215**	**0.2**	**9.5**
Food products	4,692	4,707	4,788	4,916	4,785	-2.7	2.0
Beverage, drug and tobacco products	1,833	1,923	1,905	1,923	1,900	-1.2	3.6
Apparel and dry goods	533	549	606	576	532	-7.7	-0.2
Household goods	758	829	865	864	899	4.1	18.6
Motor vehicles, parts and accessories	5,112	6,088	6,138	6,112	6,020	-1.5	17.8
Metals, hardware, plumbing and heating equipment and supplies	1,822	2,002	2,091	2,111	2,166	2.6	18.9
Lumber and building materials	2,193	2,346	2,511	2,567	2,593	1.0	18.3
Farm machinery, equipment and supplies	675	646	610	570	595	4.3	-11.9
Industrial and other machinery, equipment and supplies	4,324	4,455	4,603	4,587	4,621	0.7	6.9
Computers, packaged software and other electronic machinery	2,816	2,990	2,875	2,849	2,901	1.8	3.0
Other products	3,763	4,057	4,092	4,076	4,204	3.1	11.7
Sales by province and territory							
Newfoundland	206	209	217	214	215	0.8	4.6
Prince Edward Island	50	50	50	51	48	-4.4	-2.3
Nova Scotia	550	546	537	582	522	-10.3	-5.0
New Brunswick	351	389	394	405	402	-0.7	14.4
Quebec	5,854	6,260	6,302	6,420	6,442	0.3	10.0
Ontario	14,237	15,287	15,623	15,446	15,400	-0.3	8.2
Manitoba	857	854	879	877	901	2.7	5.1
Saskatchewan	795	886	859	813	880	8.2	10.7
Alberta	2,603	2,800	2,855	2,971	2,950	-0.7	13.3
British Columbia	2,988	3,285	3,345	3,349	3,431	2.4	14.8
Yukon	12	10	9	10	10	-3.9	-21.0
Northwest Territories	13	12	11	11	11	6.9	-15.9
Nunavut	2	3	3	2	3	20.4	32.9
Inventories, all trade groups	**39,885**	**40,887**	**41,168**	**41,889**	**41,990**	**0.2**	**5.3**
Food products	2,645	2,785	2,799	2,827	2,923	3.4	10.5
Beverage, drug and tobacco products	2,210	2,375	2,338	2,410	2,280	-5.4	3.2
Apparel and dry goods	1,253	1,234	1,223	1,189	1,168	-1.8	-6.8
Household goods	1,532	1,534	1,540	1,588	1,563	-1.6	2.1
Motor vehicles, parts and accessories	5,530	5,912	6,054	6,392	6,486	1.5	17.3
Metals, hardware, plumbing and heating equipment and supplies	3,489	3,697	3,750	3,732	3,718	-0.4	6.6
Lumber and building materials	3,587	3,875	3,942	4,022	4,126	2.6	15.0
Farm machinery, equipment and supplies	2,265	2,062	2,055	2,052	2,040	-0.6	-9.9
Industrial and other machinery, equipment and supplies	9,671	9,802	9,852	10,087	10,030	-0.6	3.7
Computers, packaged software and other electronic machinery	2,440	2,515	2,442	2,462	2,493	1.2	2.2
Other products	5,264	5,095	5,172	5,128	5,163	0.7	-1.9

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

■

OTHER RELEASES

Export and import price indexes
January 2000

Current- and fixed-weighted export and import price indexes (1992=100) on a balance of payments basis are now available. Price indexes are listed from January 1992 to January 2000 for the five commodity sections and the major commodity groups (62 exports and 61 imports).

Current- and fixed-weighted U.S. price indexes (1992=100) are also available on a customs basis. Price indexes are listed from January 1992 to January 2000. Included with the U.S. commodity indexes are the 10 all-countries and U.S.-only standard international trade classification section indexes.

Indexes for the five commodity sections and the major commodity groups are also now available on a customs basis.

Available on CANSIM: matrices 3618, 3619, 3651, 3685, 8430-8435, and 8438-8447.

The January 2000 issue of *Canadian international merchandise trade* (65-001-XPB, $19/$188 or 65-001-XIB, $14/$141) will be available shortly. See *How to order publications*.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods and data quality of this release, contact Jocelyne Elibani (613-951-9647; 1-800-294-5583), Marketing and Client Services Section, International Trade Division. ■

Mineral wool including fibrous glass insulation
February 2000

Manufacturers shipped 1 879 513 square metres of R12 factor (RSI 2.1) mineral wool batts in February, down 26.8% from 2 566 724 square metres in February 1999 and down 14.8% from 2 206 111 square metres in January. Year-to-date shipments to the end of February totalled 3 560 137 square metres, a 36.0% drop from the same period in 1999.

Available on CANSIM: matrices 40 and 122 (series 32 and 33).

The February issue of *Mineral wool including fibrous glass insulation* (44-004-XIB, $5/$47) is now available. See *How to order publications*.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods, and data quality of this release, contact Bob Traversy (613-951-3531; *travrob@statcan.ca*), Manufacturing, Construction and Energy Division. ■

Construction-type plywood
January 2000

Canadian firms produced 162 310 cubic metres of construction-type plywood in January, an increase of 9.1% from the 148 725 cubic metres produced in January 1999.

Available on CANSIM: matrix 122.

The January 2000 issue of *Construction-type plywood* (35-001-XIB, $5/$47) is now available. See *How to order publications*.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods and data quality of this release, contact Gilles Simard (613-951-3516; *simales@statcan.ca*), Manufacturing, Construction and Energy Division. ■

Refined petroleum products
January 2000 (preliminary)

Data on the production, inventories and domestic sales of refined petroleum products are now available for January. Other selected data about these products are also available.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods and data quality of this release, contact Eleonore Harding (613-951-5708; *hardele@statcan.ca*), Manufacturing, Construction and Energy Division. ■

PUBLICATIONS RELEASED

Monthly Survey of Manufacturing, January 2000
Catalogue number 31-001-XPB
(Canada: $20/$196; outside Canada: US$20/US$196).

Construction-type plywood, January 2000
Catalogue number 35-001-XIB
(Canada: $5/$47).

Mineral wool including fibrous glass insulation, February 2000
Catalogue number 44-004-XIB
(Canada: $5/$47).

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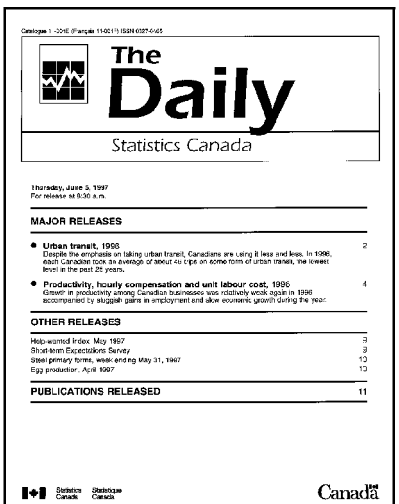
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The Daily

Statistics Canada

Thursday, June 5, 1997
For release at 8:30 a.m.

MAJOR RELEASES

- **Urban transit, 1996** 2
  Despite the emphasis on taking urban transit, Canadians are using it less and less. In 1996, each Canadian took an average of about 46 trips on some form of urban transit, the lowest level in the past 25 years.
- **Productivity, hourly compensation and unit labour cost, 1996** 4
  Growth in productivity among Canadian businesses was relatively weak again in 1996 accompanied by sluggish gains in employment and slow economic growth during the year.

OTHER RELEASES

Help-wanted Index, May 1997	9
Short-term Expectations Survey	9
Steel primary forms, week ending May 31, 1997	10
Egg production, April 1997	10

PUBLICATIONS RELEASED 11

Statistics Canada Statistique Canada

Canada

Statistics Canada's official release bulletin

Catalogue 11-001E.

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