

Embargoed until 10:45am – 14 December 2009

## Retail Trade Survey: October 2009

### Highlights

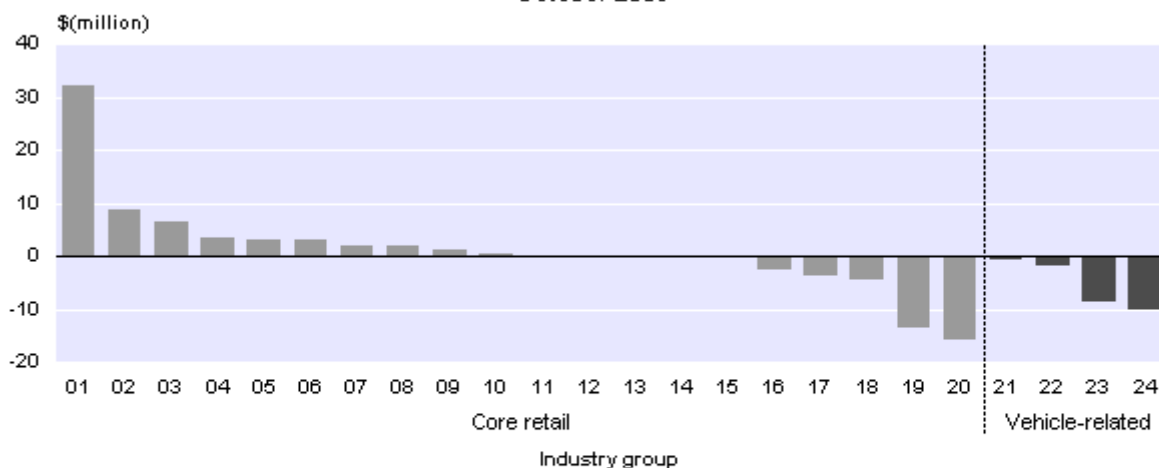
For October 2009 compared with September 2009 (on a seasonally adjusted basis):

- Total retail sales were flat (up less than 0.1 percent or \$2 million).
- Core retail sales were up 0.5 percent (\$23 million).
- The four vehicle-related industries had a combined 1.5 percent decrease (\$21 million).
- The biggest increase was in cafes and restaurants, up 10.0 percent (\$32 million).
- Three-quarters of the core industries had little or no movement.

The total retail sales trend has been rising since February 2009.

### Retail Industry Contributions to the Change in Seasonally Adjusted Sales

Change from previous month  
October 2009



01 Cafes and restaurants

02 Accommodation

03 Department stores

04 Bars and clubs

05 Other personal services

06 Chemist retailing

07 Household equipment repair services

08 Recreational goods retailing

09 Other retailing

10 Hardware retailing

11 Furniture and floor coverings retailing

12 Personal and household goods hiring

13 Fresh produce retailing

14 Footwear retailing

15 Takeaway food retailing

16 Liquor retailing

17 Appliance retailing

18 Other food retailing

19 Supermarket and grocery stores

20 Clothing and softgoods retailing

21 Motor vehicle retailing

22 Automotive repair and services nec

23 Automotive electrical, smash repair, tyres

24 Automotive fuel retailing

Geoff Bascand  
Government Statistician

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## Commentary

All references to sales movements are to seasonally adjusted series unless otherwise stated.

### October 2009

In October 2009, total retail sales were flat (up less than 0.1 percent or \$2 million). Sales in core retail, which excludes the vehicle-related industries, rose slightly, up 0.5 percent (\$23 million). This increase, of which \$11 million came from the food-related industries, was largely offset by a 1.5 percent decrease (\$21 million) across the vehicle-related industries.

The largest increases were:

- cafes and restaurants – up 10.0 percent (\$32 million)
- accommodation – up 4.2 percent (\$9 million)
- department stores – up 2.2 percent (\$7 million).

The largest offsetters were:

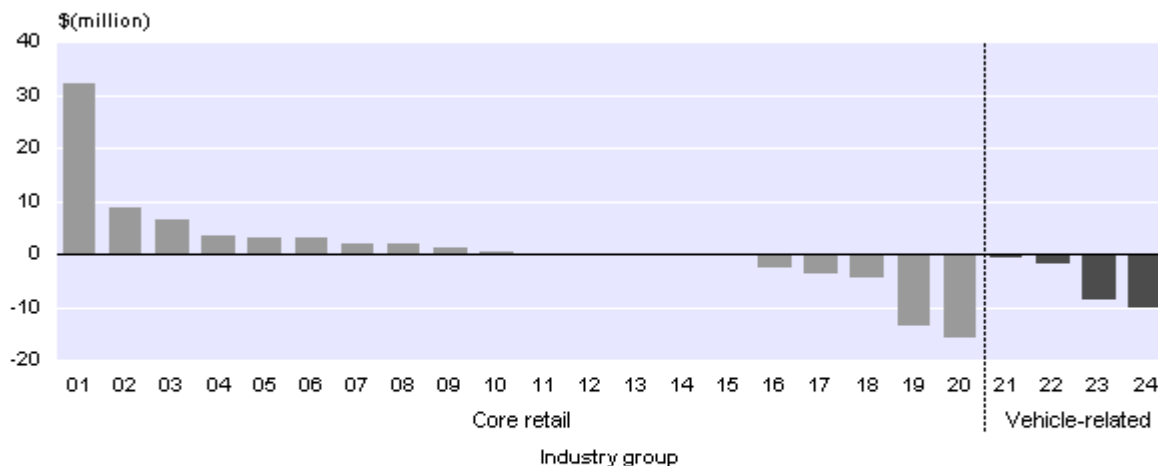
- clothing and softgoods retailing – down 6.7 percent (\$16 million)
- supermarket and grocery stores – down 1.1 percent (\$14 million)
- automotive fuel retailing – down 1.9 percent (\$10 million)
- automotive electrical, smash repairs, tyres – down 7.0 percent (\$8 million).

The rest of the retail industries moved up or down by less than \$5 million.

### Retail Industry Contributions to the Change in Seasonally Adjusted Sales

*Change from previous month*

October 2009



01 Cafes and restaurants

02 Accommodation

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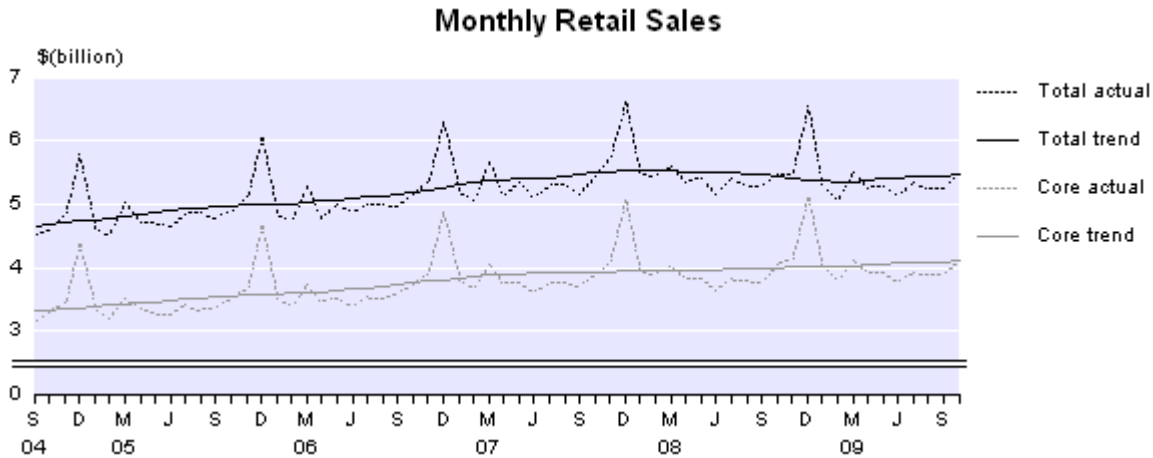
23 Automotive electrical, smash repair, tyres

24 Automotive fuel retailing

## Sales trend

The total retail sales trend has been rising since February 2009 (up 1.9 percent), following a 13-month period of decline. However, the rate of increase appears to have eased slightly in recent months.

The core retail sales trend has been rising since September 1995 at an average of 0.4 percent per month. The average rate of increase has slowed to 0.2 percent per month since mid-2007.



## Food related retailing

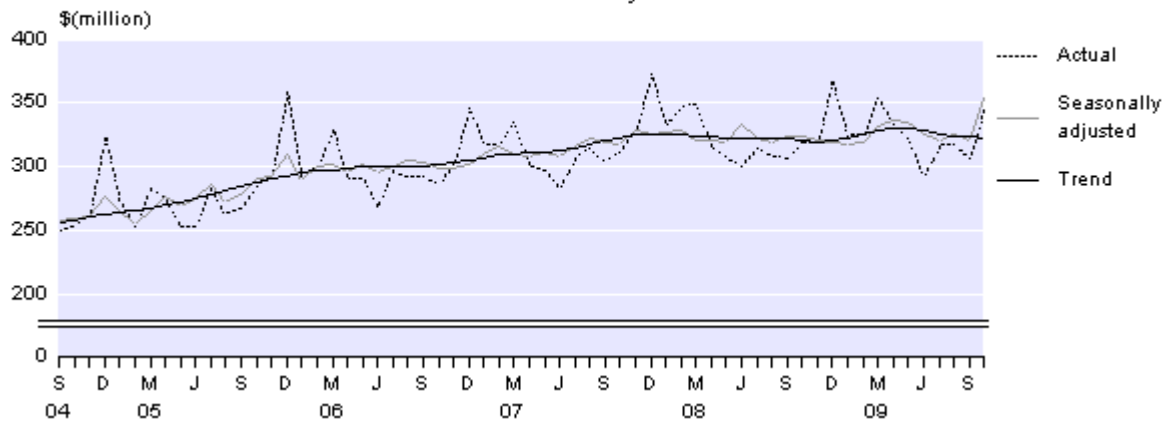
The latest figures indicate mixed results across the food related industries. Combined sales increases for this group amounted to \$11 million – up 0.6 percent compared with September 2009 – with a \$32 million increase in cafes and restaurants only partly offset by decreasing sales in the other industries.

### Cafes and restaurants

Cafes and restaurants was the largest contributor to the 0.5 percent increase in core retail sales, with an increase of \$32 million (10.0 percent) on the previous month. This strong increase is consistent across the industry. Previously, the highest percentage sales increase for this industry had been in December 2005 (up 6.5 percent on the previous month).

The trend has decreased 2.3 percent since May 2009, following a six-month period of increase. However, the rate of decrease has eased.

### Cafe and Restaurant Sales Monthly

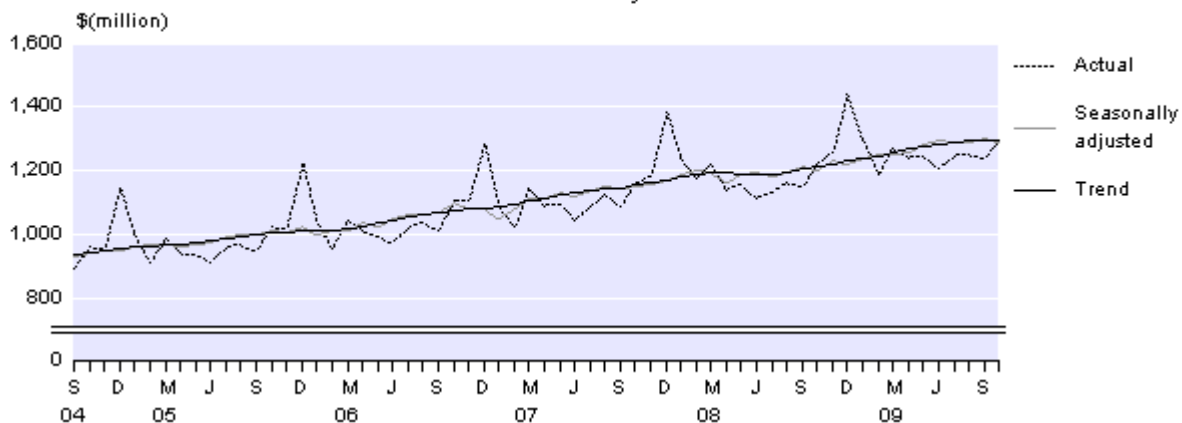


### Supermarket and grocery stores

Supermarket and grocery stores was down 1.1 percent (\$14 million) in October 2009 – the second-largest decrease in total retail sales. This followed a 1.0 percent increase in September 2009.

The average rate of increase in the supermarket and grocery stores sales trend has been easing since April 2009 and appears to have flattened in recent months. Initial trend estimates should be used with caution as they may be revised as more data points become available.

### Supermarket and Grocery Store Sales Monthly



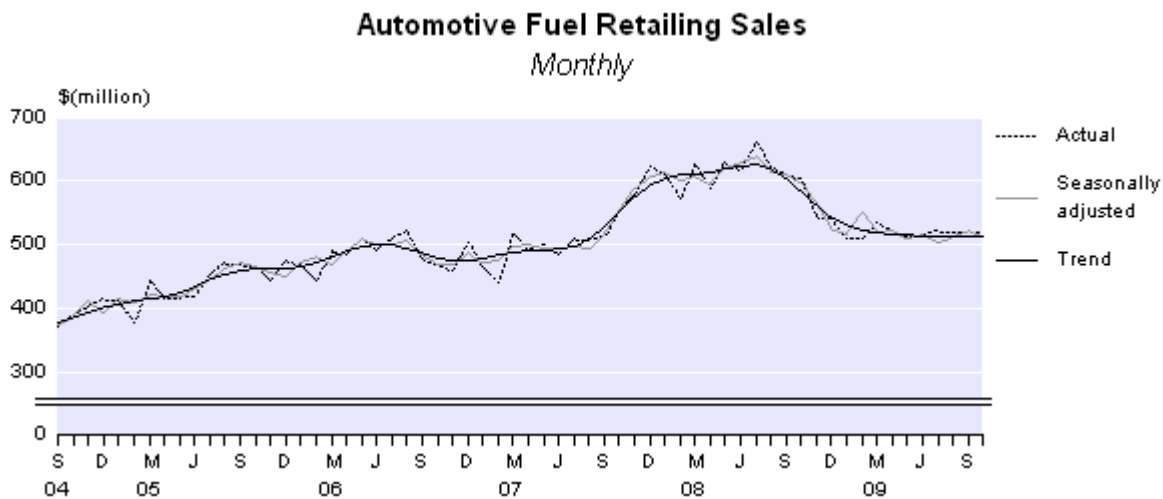
Movements in the other food-related industries were:

- Fresh produce – flat sales (down less than \$1 million, less than 0.1 percent); the trend has been declining since May 2009.
- Takeaway food retailing – flat sales (down less than \$1 million, 0.2 percent); the trend has been rising since December 2008, but appears to have flattened in recent months.
- Liquor retailing – sales down (\$3 million, 2.6 percent); the trend has been decreasing at an average of 0.5 percent since May 2009.
- Other food retailing – sales down (\$4 million, 6.7 percent); the sales trend may have reached a turning point in July 2009, with the sales level down 0.5 percent since then. Initial trend estimates should be used with caution as they may be revised as more data points become available.

## Vehicle-related industries

Sales for all four vehicle-related industries fell, with a combined \$21 million drop (down 1.5 percent).

Automotive fuel retailing was the largest decrease in vehicle-related industries, down 1.9 percent (\$10 million). Having fallen since July 2008, the trend has been flat since June 2009. The latest figures show that the sales trend is 17.9 percent lower than its July 2008 peak.



Movements in the other vehicle-related industries were:

- Automotive electrical, smash repair, and tyres – sales were down \$8 million (7.0 percent), following another fall in the previous month (down 1.8 percent). The trend began rising in November 2008, but has been flat in recent months.
- Automotive repair and services nec – slight decrease in sales (less than \$2 million); the trend had been rising since December 2008, but has flattened in the latest months.
- Motor vehicle retailing – slight decrease in sales (less than \$1 million); although the trend shows a 5.6 percent increase since March 2009, the level is 23.4 percent lower than May 2007, which marked the beginning of a period of 22 months of decline.

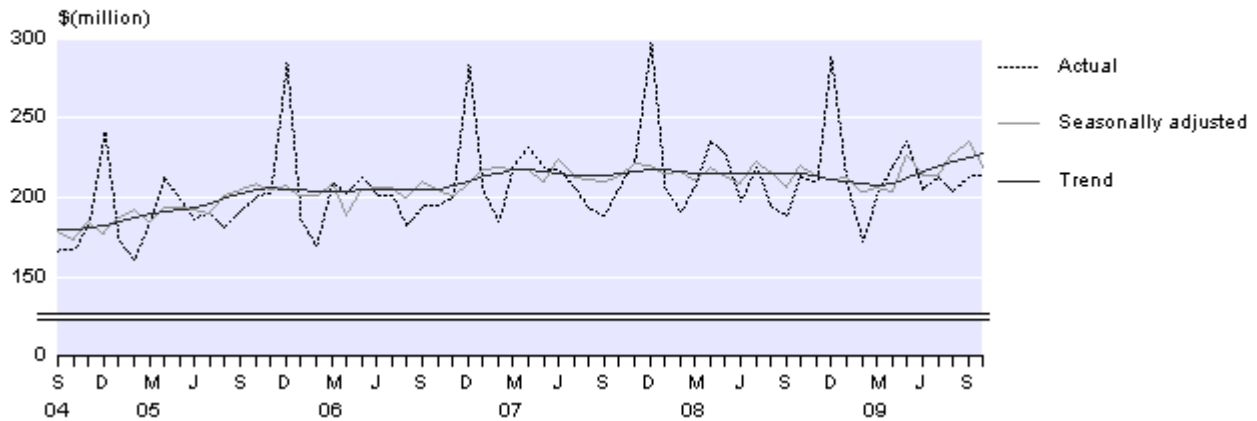
## Clothing and softgoods retailing

Clothing and softgoods retailing sales were down \$16 million (6.7 percent), and had the biggest decrease in retail sales in October 2009, following a 2.9 percent increase in the previous month.

As illustrated in the graph below, the month-to-month sales can be changeable. Despite greater variability than normal in recent months, the trend has been rising since March 2009, and is up 9.2 percent since then. Whilst the average monthly rate of decrease between September 2008 and March 2009 was 0.5 percent, the average monthly rate of increase since then has been 1.3 percent.

## Clothing and Softgoods Retailing Sales

Monthly



### Regional estimates

Sales were up in the North Island (up 0.5 percent) and flat in the South Island (up 0.1 percent), compared with September 2009. Changes by region were as follows:

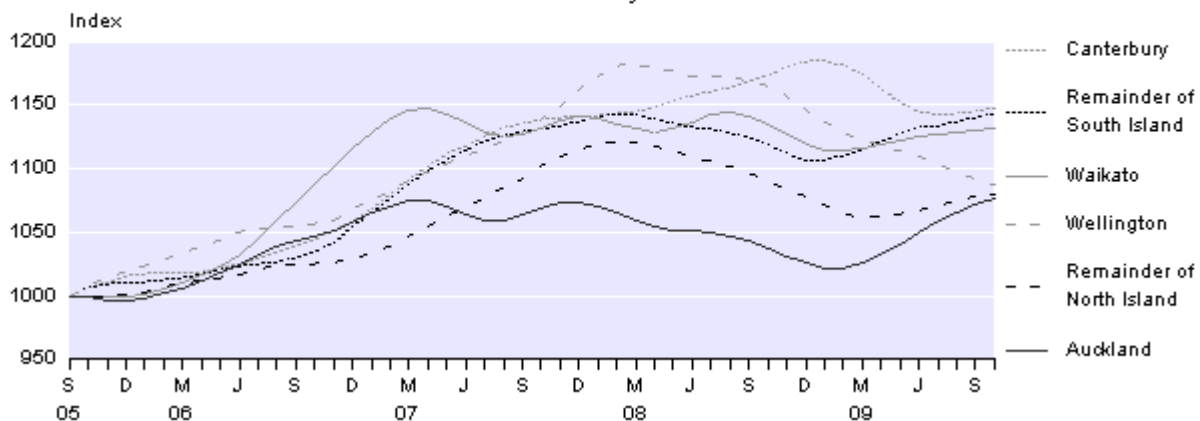
- Auckland – up 0.1 percent
- Waikato – down 0.3 percent
- Wellington – no change, sales rose less than 0.1 percent
- Remainder of the North Island – up 1.7 percent
- Canterbury – up 0.5 percent
- Remainder of the South Island – down 0.4 percent.

By region, sales were flat in Wellington and Auckland, up in the 'remainder of the North Island' and Canterbury, and slightly down in the 'remainder of the South Island' and Waikato. The trend for the North Island has been rising at an average of 0.3 percent per month since February 2009, while the South Island sales trend has shown little change for the last two years.

### Indexed Retail Sales Trend by Geographical Region

Base: September 2005 (=1000)

Monthly



Illustrated in the graph above, the regional sales trends are as follows:

- Auckland – the trend has been rising, up 5.3 percent since February 2009
- Waikato – the trend has also been rising, up 1.6 percent since February 2009

- Wellington – down 8.0 percent since it began falling in April 2008
- Remainder of the North Island – the trend reached a turning point in April 2009, up 1.7 percent since then
- Canterbury – the trend has fallen 3.3 percent since January 2009, but has flattened in the latest months
- Remainder of the South Island – the trend has been rising since January 2009, up 3.2 percent.

## Revisions

There were no revisions to the Retail Trade Survey in the October 2009 month.

## Comparison statistics

For October 2009 compared with September 2009:

- The food price index fell 1.5 percent.
- New registrations of cars and station wagons (including vehicles previously registered overseas) rose 2.1 percent.
- Seasonally adjusted short-term overseas visitor arrivals fell 0.7 percent.
- As first published (on 10 November 2009), the seasonally adjusted value of the retail Electronic Card Transaction (ECT) series fell 0.2 percent, and the seasonally adjusted value of the core retail ECT series fell 0.4 percent.

Other:

- The Reserve Bank of New Zealand's Official Cash Rate was unchanged at 2.50 percent throughout October 2009.

## Measurement errors

All statistical estimates are subject to measurement errors. These include both sample errors and non-sample errors. In addition, the survey applies imputation methodologies to cope with small firms and non-response. These measurement errors should be considered when analysing the results from the survey. For more information on measurement errors, please refer to the 'Technical notes' of this release.

## Sample errors

The postal survey was designed to give statistics at the following levels of accuracy (at the 95 percent confidence interval limit):

- 2 percent for sales at the total national retail trade level
- 10 percent for sales at the published national retail industry level.

This means, for example, that there is a 95 percent chance that the true value of total retail trade sales lies within 2 percent of the published estimate

At the industry level, the following sample errors occurred in the October 2009 month (at the 95 percent confidence interval limit):

<b>Retail Trade Survey: October 2009 Month Sample Errors by Industry</b> <i>At the 95 percent confidence interval limit</i>		
<b>Retail industry</b>	<b>Level (relative percent)</b>	<b>Movement (absolute percent)</b>
Supermarket and grocery stores	4.2	4.1
Fresh meat, fish, poultry, fruit, and vegetables	8.7	5.8
Liquor retailing	8.8	1.6
Other food retailing	10.6	5.0
Takeaway food retailing	6.2	4.2
Department stores	0.0	0.0
Furniture and floor coverings	10.3	6.0
Hardware	5.8	2.7
Appliance retailing	9.1	6.3
Recreational goods	8.5	4.8
Clothing and softgoods	5.9	3.0
Footwear	10.7	3.0
Chemist	5.4	1.6
Household equipment repair services	12.5	6.5
Other retailing	7.0	5.7
Motor vehicle retailing	8.9	3.1
Automotive fuel retailing	3.8	1.4
Automotive electrical services, smash repairing, tyre retailing	5.5	2.1
Automotive repair and services, nec	7.8	4.7
Accommodation	5.0	3.2
Bars and clubs	9.0	7.1
Cafes and restaurants	5.5	2.7
Personal and household goods hiring	13.1	3.3
Other personal services	6.0	1.9
Total retail trade	1.6	1.2
<b>Note:</b> nec = not elsewhere classified		

Industries with zero sample error are full-coverage industries. In these industries, all large firms are surveyed and all small to medium-sized firms are modelled using administrative data sourced from Inland Revenue.

**Retail Trade Survey: October 2009 Month Sample Errors by Region**  
*At the 95 percent confidence interval limit*

<b>Region</b>	<b>Level (relative percent)</b>	<b>Movement (absolute percent)</b>
Auckland	3.6	3.2
Waikato	10.4	2.8
Wellington	5.0	2.2
Remainder of the North Island	6.1	1.8
Canterbury	7.4	2.1
Remainder of the South Island	7.3	2.8

## **Imputation**

### **Small firms**

Small to medium-sized firms are generally not surveyed. Their variables are instead modelled from administrative data (GST) sourced from Inland Revenue. Ratios calculated from the postal sample units are applied to the administrative data to provide an estimate of their variables.

### **Non-response imputation**

Although every attempt is made to achieve a 100 percent response rate, in practice this does not occur. Values for non-responding businesses are estimated by a number of methods, including:

- regression imputation
- historic imputation
- mean imputation.

Regression imputation involves estimating sales from the unit's administrative data (GST sales) based on the relationship shown by similar businesses. Historic imputation involves multiplying their response in the previous period by a non-response factor. The non-response factor is the average movement of similar businesses over the month. Mean imputation involves estimating a value for a unit by using the average value for a set of similar businesses.

### **Postal response rate**

The response rate describes the proportion of geographic units that provided survey responses. Note that the calculation of this response rate relates only to data for the postal sample. The Retail Trade Survey has a target response rate of 85 percent. The response rate achieved for the October 2009 survey was 91 percent.

The table below indicates the percentage of sales imputed in the October 2009 month:

<b>Sales Imputed in the October 2009 Month</b>		
<b>Retail industry</b>	<b>Tax modelled</b>	<b>Non-response</b>
	Percentage of sales	
Supermarket and grocery stores	5.3	7.2
Fresh meat, fish, poultry, fruit, and vegetables	7.8	11.7
Liquor retailing	8.4	12.9
Other food retailing	8.4	9.9
Takeaway food retailing	8.4	11.4
Department stores	0.0	0.0
Furniture and floor coverings	11.0	8.8
Hardware	4.8	8.4
Appliance retailing	7.5	4.8
Recreational goods	7.8	7.1
Clothing and softgoods	8.9	5.0
Footwear	8.8	5.3
Chemist	4.8	14.6
Household equipment repair services	8.9	9.4
Other retailing	13.2	13.1
Motor vehicle retailing	11.8	7.5
Automotive fuel retailing	2.6	7.8
Automotive electrical services, smash repairing, tyre retailing	9.2	12.9
Automotive repair and services, nec	10.8	8.4
Accommodation	8.4	13.2
Bars and clubs	10.4	5.1
Cafes and restaurants	10.7	14.6
Personal and household goods hiring	11.5	13.1
Other personal services	15.5	14.6
Total retail trade	7.5	8.6
<b>Note:</b> nec = not elsewhere classified		

For technical information contact:  
 Chris Stephenson or Yannick Monteyne  
 Christchurch 03 964 8700  
**Email:** [info@stats.govt.nz](mailto:info@stats.govt.nz)

**Next release ...**

*Retail Trade Survey: November 2009* will be released on 21 January 2010.

## Technical notes

### Background to the survey

The Retail Trade Survey (RTS) is designed to provide short-term economic indicators of the retail trade sector. In addition, the data is used for the compilation of the retail trade sector component of quarterly national accounts (on the production side) and in the compilation of household consumption expenditure (on the expenditure side). The survey was last redesigned for the September 2003 quarter. For more details about the redesign refer to [Retail Trade Survey – Redesign: September 2003](#) and the [Retail Trade Survey – Survey design information paper](#).

### Population

The target population for this survey is all geographic units (GEOs) operating in New Zealand that are classified on Statistics New Zealand's Business Frame to the Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification (ANZSIC96) below:

- Retail trade (ANZSIC division G)
- Accommodation, cafes and restaurants (ANZSIC division H)
- Personal services (ANZSIC subdivision 95 of division Q).

Only enterprises with a turnover of \$30,000 or more are eligible for selection.

### Industry descriptions

A geographic unit is included in an industry based on its predominant activity in terms of sales. For example, a footwear store will sell shoes and boots, but it may also sell bags and other accessories. The store will be classified to the footwear industry if most of its sales income comes from the sale of shoes and boots. The 24 industries are defined as follows:

Retail Trade Survey Industry Descriptions	
Industry	ANZSIC96 code
G0111 Supermarket and grocery stores	G511010 Supermarkets
	G511020 Groceries and dairies
G0121 Fresh meat, fish, poultry, fruit, and vegetable retailing	G512100 Fresh meat, fish, and poultry retailing
	G512200 Fruit and vegetable retailing
G0122 Liquor retailing	G512300 Liquor retailing
G0123 Other food retailing	G512400 Bread and cake retailing
	G512600 Milk vending
	G512900 Specialised food retailing nec

<b>Industry</b>	<b>ANZSIC96 code</b>
G0124 Takeaway food retailing	G512510 Fish and chips, hamburger and ethnic food, takeaway stores
	G512520 Chicken takeaway stores
	G512530 Ice-cream parlours and mobile ice-cream vendors
	G512540 Pizza takeaway stores
	G512590 Other takeaway food stores (including sandwiches and savouries) nec
G0131 Department stores	G521000 Department stores
G0141 Furniture and floor coverings retailing	G523100 Furniture retailing
	G523200 Floor covering retailing
G0142 Hardware retailing	G523300 Domestic hardware and houseware retailing
G0143 Appliance retailing	G523400 Domestic appliance retailing
	G523500 Recorded music retailing
G0144 Recreational goods retailing	G524100 Sport and camping equipment retailing
	G524200 Toy and game retailing
	G524300 Newspaper, book, and stationery retailing
	G524400 Photographic equipment retailing
	G524500 Marine equipment retailing
G0151 Clothing and softgoods retailing	G522100 Clothing retailing
	G522300 Fabrics and other soft good retailing
G0152 Footwear retailing	G522200 Footwear retailing
G0153 Chemist retailing	G525100 Pharmaceutical, cosmetic, and toiletry retailing
G0154 Household equipment repair services	G526100 Household equipment repair services (electrical)
	G526900 Household equipment repair services nec
G0159 Other retailing	G525200 Antique and used good retailing
	G525300 Garden supplies retailing
	G525400 Flower retailing
	G525500 Watch and jewellery retailing
	G525900 Retailing nec

<b>Industry</b>	<b>ANZSIC96 code</b>
G0161 Motor vehicle retailing	G531100 Car retailing
	G531200 Motor cycle dealing
	G531300 Trailer and caravan dealing
G0162 Automotive fuel retailing	G532100 Automotive fuel retailing
G0163 Automotive electrical services, smash repairing, and tyre retailing	G532200 Automotive electrical services
	G532300 Smash repairing
	G532400 Tyre retailing
G0164 Automotive repair and services nec	G532900 Automotive repair and services nec
H0111 Accommodation	H571010 Hotels (accommodation)
	H571020 Motels and motor inns
	H571030 Hosted accommodation
	H571040 Backpacker and youth hostels
	H571050 Caravan parks and camping grounds
	H571090 Accommodation nec
H0121 Bars and clubs	H572000 Pubs, taverns, and bars
	H574000 Clubs (hospitality)
H0122 Cafes and restaurants	H573000 Cafes and restaurants
Q0111 Personal and household goods hiring	Q951100 Video hire outlets
	Q951900 Personal and household goods hiring nec
Q0112 Other personal services	Q952100 Laundries and dry-cleaners
	Q952200 Photographic film processing
	Q952300 Photographic studios
	Q952400 Funeral directors, crematoria, and cemeteries
	Q952500 Gardening services
	Q952600 Hairdressing and beauty salons
	Q952900 Personal services nec
<b>Note:</b> nec = not elsewhere classified	

## Sample design

The survey population is stratified according to:

- industries defined by the ANZSIC-based ANZIND classification at the inter-industry level
- size (in terms of rolling-mean employment)
- turnover (annualised GST sales).

Each ANZIND inter-industry contains between two and four substrata. Because of the contribution that large units make to the economic activity within each industry, they are all

included in the sample. A portion of the remaining medium to large units is also included in the sample. In addition, small to medium-sized businesses have their data modelled from administrative data (GST) sourced from Inland Revenue. The Inland Revenue data have been forecast two to three months ahead. All retailing GEOs belonging to a selected 'enterprise' are included.

There are approximately 70,000 retail outlets in New Zealand. Around 3,500 enterprises (between 9,000 and 10,000 GEOs) have been selected in the RTS postal sample. The postal sample is supplemented by GST data representing smaller retailers, approximately 36,200 enterprises (36,600 GEOs).

## **Sample maintenance**

Sample maintenance is the process that maintains the sample over time, to reflect 'births', 'deaths' and other structural changes identified on the Business Frame. The information for Business Frame changes can be from a variety of sources, including GST registrations and respondent contact.

New enterprises are identified when they register for GST. Once a month, the new enterprises are selected into the sample using the same criteria as for the original sample. These are referred to as births. When an enterprise ceases trading, its retailing GEOs are removed from the survey. These are referred to as deaths.

Enterprises can also enter or leave the survey sample if they are reclassified to a different industry. Reclassifications occur when an enterprise changes its main form of activity (eg from wholesale trade to retailing). These are usually identified in the Annual Frame Update Survey conducted in February of each year.

## **Sample reselection**

The sample for the RTS is reselected each month to ensure the sample reflects changes occurring in the retailing population.

## **Measurement errors**

Errors in the survey are divided into two classes:

### **Non-sampling error**

Non-sampling error includes errors arising from biases in the patterns of response and non-response, inaccuracies in reporting by respondents, and errors in the recording and coding of data. The size of these errors is difficult to quantify. Statistics may be revised if significant errors are detected in subsequent quarters.

### **Sampling error**

Sampling error is a measure of the variability that occurs by chance because a sample, rather than an entire population, is surveyed.

## **Definitions**

### **ANZSIC96**

Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification system – New Zealand version 1996.

### **ANZIND**

An ANZSIC-based classification used to group industries for publication.

### **Business Frame**

A register of all economically significant businesses operating in New Zealand. The population of the RTS is drawn from the Business Frame.

### **Deflators**

Deflators are indexes that measure the rate of price change of goods and services sold by each RTS industry. Deflators are not calculated for the subtotal or all industries total. For information on how deflators are calculated follow the [link](#) from the technical notes of this release on the Statistics NZ website.

### **Enterprise**

An enterprise is a business entity operating in New Zealand, either as a legally constituted body such as a company, partnership, trust, local or central government trading organisation, or a self-employed individual.

### **Geographic unit**

A geographic unit is a subdivision of an enterprise. It is a separate operating unit engaged in New Zealand in one, or predominantly one, kind of economic activity from a single physical location or base.

### **Per head of population**

The population measure used for the RTS is the estimated residential population. It excludes short-term visitors to New Zealand.

### **Sales volumes expressed in September 1995 quarter prices**

A constant price estimate, from which the portion of the current price sales' movement caused by price changes has been removed.

### **Use of retail trade data in quarterly national accounts**

A key use of the RTS is in the calculation of retail trade value added for the compilation of quarterly gross domestic product (GDP).

The quarterly GDP retail trade indicator uses retail sales volumes expressed in September 1995 quarter prices, by industry series from the RTS. These series are chain-linked to give constant

price sales at the ANZSIC96 working industry level. The chain-linking weights are calculated using annualised quarterly current prices sales by RTS industry.

## **Seasonally adjusted series**

The X-12-ARIMA package has been used to produce the seasonally adjusted estimates and trend estimates for sales in all subdivisions. Seasonal adjustment aims to eliminate the impact of regular seasonal events (such as annual cycles in agricultural production, winter, or annual holidays) on time series. This makes the data for adjacent months more comparable.

All seasonally adjusted figures are subject to revision each month. This enables the seasonal component to be better estimated and removed from the series.

## **Estimated trend**

For any series, the survey estimates can be broken down into three components: trend, seasonal, and irregular. While seasonally adjusted series have had the seasonal component removed, trend series have had both the seasonal and the irregular components removed. Trend estimates reveal the underlying direction of movement in a series, and are likely to indicate turning points more accurately than are seasonally adjusted estimates.

The trend series are calculated using the X-12-ARIMA seasonal adjustment package. They are based on a five-term or a seven-term moving average of the seasonally adjusted series, with an adjustment for outlying values.

Trend estimates towards the end of the series incorporate new data as they become available and can therefore change as more observations are added to the series. Revisions can be particularly large if an observation is treated as an outlier in one month, but is found to be part of the underlying trend as further observations are added to the series. Typically, only the estimates for the most recent month will be subject to substantial revisions.

## **Regional estimates**

In the October 2003 month, the RTS sample of geographic units changed. Data prior to the October 2003 month is an analytical back series, which has been derived to preserve industry movements at the national level. However, previously published regional movements may not have been preserved. Care should be taken when interpreting movements of regional series around the period of the redesign.

## **More information**

For more information, follow the [link](#) from the technical notes of this release on the Statistics NZ website.

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## **Timing**

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## Tables

The following tables are printed with this Hot Off the Press and can also be downloaded from the Statistics New Zealand website in Excel format. If you do not have access to Excel, you may use the [Excel file viewer](#) to view, print, and export the contents of the file.

1. Actual retail sales by month, by industry
2. Seasonally adjusted retail sales by month, by industry
3. Retail sales trend by month, by industry
4. Actual retail sales by geographical region
5. Actual retail sales by geographical region, excluding motor vehicle retailing
6. Seasonally adjusted retail sales by geographical region
7. Retail sales trend by geographical region