

Retail sales strong except in Canterbury

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Seasonally adjusted total retail sales values increased 2.0 percent in the March 2011 quarter, Statistics New Zealand said today. This is the largest increase recorded since the March 2007 quarter. Increases were recorded in all regions, except in Canterbury, down 2.2 percent.

“We do not normally comment on regional information for the Retail Trade Survey because the survey is not designed to produce regional estimates,” business statistics manager Louise Holmes-Oliver said. “However, the information we have shows that sales movements in several retail industries in Christchurch were significantly lower than at the national level as a result of the 22 February earthquake.

“We would like to thank all respondents for their quarterly retail trade information, and especially the many from Canterbury who were able to provide information despite the impact of the February 2011 earthquake on their businesses,” added Mrs Holmes-Oliver.

In the March 2011 quarter, the two vehicle-related industries were by far the largest contributors to the 2.0 percent (\$324 million) increase in sales values:

- motor vehicles and parts retailing, up 5.9 percent (\$110 million)
- fuel retailing , up 5.6 percent (\$99 million).

Core retail sales values rose 0.9 percent (\$115 million), with seven of the 13 industries recording increases.

The volume of total retail sales rose 0.9 percent in the March 2011 quarter. This is the biggest increase in sales volumes since the December 2009 quarter, and follows two quarters of falls. Motor vehicles and parts retailing recorded the largest dollar movement in volumes, up 6.3 percent; while fuel retailing had the largest sales volumes decrease, down 3.9 percent.

The volume of core retail sales rose 0.7 percent.

This is the first quarterly Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification 2006 (ANZSIC06) survey of retail sales and stocks, collecting sales for the quarter rather than every month.

Due to the impact of the 13 June 2011 earthquake on Statistics NZ's Christchurch operations, there is no accompanying commentary available for the March 2011 quarterly release. This commentary will be available at a later date. Please refer to the attached tables or contact us for further information.

Note that the Retail Trade Survey for the June 2011 quarter will be available on 25 August 2011. For more information on the methodological impact of the Christchurch earthquake on the Retail Trade Survey, see [Impact of the 22 February 2011 earthquake on the Retail Trade Survey](#).

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