

## BOARD OF GOVERNORS OF THE FEDERAL RESERVE SYSTEM

G.16

July 10, 1956

## RETAIL FURNITURE REPORT FOR MAY 1956

Instalment accounts outstanding at furniture stores were unchanged during May, but at the end of the month were 5 per cent above a year earlier. The instalment collection ratio, estimated at 12 per cent, was the same as both a month ago and a year ago.

Sales of all types increased from April to May, when some rise is usual. Instalment and charge-account sales were up 12 per cent and cash sales were up 14 per cent. Sales continued above a year ago, and in the first five months of this year totaled 4 per cent more than in the corresponding period of last year. This reflected gains of 4 per cent in instalment sales, 7 per cent in charge-account sales, and 2 per cent in cash sales.

The retail value of furniture store inventories decreased 2 per cent during May, but at the month-end was 5 per cent above a year ago. Stocks on hand amounted to about a 4 months' supply at the May rate of sales.

## Furniture Store Statistics for May 1956

Item	Percentage change from:		
	Month ago	Year ago	Jan.-May 1955 to Jan.-May 1956
Net sales during month			
Total	+12	+ 3	+ 4
Cash	+14	+ 1	+ 2
Instalment	+12	+ 3	+ 4
Charge account	+12	+10	+ 7
Accounts receivable, at end of month			
Total	0	+ 6	xxx
Instalment	0	+ 5	xxx
Charge account	+ 1	+10	xxx
Inventories, end of month, at retail value	- 2	+ 5	xxx
	May 1956	Apr. 1956	May 1955
Collection ratios on instalment accounts <sup>1/</sup>	12	12	12

<sup>1/</sup> Collections during month as percentage of accounts outstanding at beginning of month.

## RETAIL FURNITURE STORES - MAY 1956

Sales by Type of Transaction  
(Percentage changes)

Federal Reserve District	Total net sales		Cash sales		Instalment sales		Charge-account sales	
	Month ago	Year ago	Month ago	Year ago	Month ago	Year ago	Month ago	Year ago
Boston	+13	-4	-2	-14	+10	-2	+29	-5
New York	+9	-2	+14	+4	+9	-6	+1	+16
Philadelphia	+15	+2	+13	-1	+17	+2	+10	+6
Cleveland	+10	+4	+14	+1	+9	+4	+30	-4
Richmond	+19	+15	+27	+11	+21	+12	+10	+27
Atlanta	+20	0	+11	-5	+21	0	+17	-8
Chicago	+10	+2	+14	-3	+8	-1	+14	+25
St. Louis	+4	-1	+3	-7	+1	-4	+9	+9
Minneapolis	+11	+14	+14	+13	+9	+11	+22	+30
Kansas City	+7	-10	+19	-11	+8	-9	-1	-11
Dallas	+15	+8	+23	+8	+19	+5	+5	+16
San Francisco	+10	+10	+15	+8	+10	+11	+8	+8
U. S. Total	+12	+3	+14	+1	+12	+3	+12	+10

Cumulative Sales by Type of Transaction, Instalment Accounts Receivable, and Inventories  
(Percentage changes)

Federal Reserve District	Cumulative sales, Jan.-May, change from 1955 to 1956				Instalment receivables, end of month		Inventories end of month, at retail value	
	Total	Cash	Instalment	Charge-account	Month ago	Year ago	Month ago	Year ago
Boston	-2	-6	+1	-7	-3	-3	-2	+4
New York	-2	0	-3	+8	-3	-10	-2	+1
Philadelphia	+5	+1	+5	+7	0	+1	-4	+5
Cleveland	+8	+9	+9	-9	+1	+10	-2	+2
Richmond	+10	+2	+8	+22	-1	+8	-2	+4
Atlanta	+3	+2	+3	-5	0	+11	-4	+4
Chicago	+5	+2	+3	+16	+1	+8	-3	+3
St. Louis	+2	-3	+2	+3	+1	+9	+1	+9
Minneapolis	+9	+3	+6	+32	+2	+10	0	+13
Kansas City	-4	-10	-6	+2	-1	-7	-1	-4
Dallas	+3	+8	0	+8	+1	+8	+1	+3
San Francisco	+9	+6	+10	+8	0	+20	0	+12
U. S. Total	+4	+2	+4	+7	0	+5	-2	+5