

BOARD OF GOVERNORS OF THE FEDERAL RESERVE SYSTEM

G.17.3

May 8, 1953

DEPARTMENT STORE CREDIT - MARCH 1953

Instalment accounts outstanding at department stores showed little change during March. Balances outstanding at the end of the month were 1 per cent above the preceding month end, but were 28 per cent above March a year earlier. Collections on instalment accounts during the month amounted to 17 per cent of balances outstanding at the beginning of the month, 2 points above the February collection ratio, but 3 points below March last year.

Charge accounts outstanding declined slightly in March, a month during which these accounts usually show little change. Compared with a year ago, charge accounts outstanding were up 5 per cent. The charge-account collection ratio increased 5 points to 49 per cent in March, 1 point above a year ago.

Sales of all types increased sharply from February to March--cash sales by 28 per cent, charge-account sales by 31 per cent, and instalment sales by 20 per cent. The percentage distribution of sales indicates that credit sales in March increased slightly relative to cash sales in comparison with both a month ago and a year ago.

Changes in Department Store Sales and Accounts Receivable

Item	Percentage change from:	
	Feb. 1953 to Mar. 1953	Mar. 1952 to Mar. 1953
Sales during month: Total	+27	+9
Cash	+28	+6
Charge	+31	+10
Instalment	+20	+17
Accounts receivable, end of month: Charge	-2	+5
Instalment	+1	+28

Collection Ratios and Percentage Distribution of Sales

Item	Mar. 1953	Feb. 1953	Mar. 1952
Collection ratios $\frac{1}{2}$: Charge accounts	49	44	48
Instalment accounts	17	15	20
Percentage distribution of sales: Cash	46	47	48
Charge	43	42	42
Instalment	11	11	10

$\frac{1}{2}$ Collections during month as a percentage of accounts receivable at beginning of month.

NOTE:--Figures for March 1953 are preliminary.

DEPARTMENT STORE CREDIT - MARCH 1953*

Sales by type
(Percentage changes)

Federal Reserve District	Total sales		Cash sales		Charge-account sales		Instalment sales	
	Feb. '53 to Mar. '53	Mar. '52 to Mar. '53	Feb. '53 to Mar. '53	Mar. '52 to Mar. '53	Feb. '53 to Mar. '53	Mar. '52 to Mar. '53	Feb. '53 to Mar. '53	Mar. '52 to Mar. '53
	Boston	+39	+ 9	+40	+ 7	+50	+12	+ 3
New York	+30	+ 5	+30	+ 2	+35	+ 9	+23	+11
Philadelphia	+34	+ 9	+36	+ 6	+37	+ 7	+21	+23
Cleveland	+34	+11	+33	+10	+41	+12	+14	+14
Richmond	+30	+ 8	+33	+ 8	+33	+ 8	+14	+13
Atlanta	+30	+11	+31	+ 9	+35	+11	+15	+15
Chicago	+25	+ 9	+25	+ 4	+25	+15	+25	+23
St. Louis	+25	+10	+27	+13	+23	+11	+24	+ 7
Minneapolis	+15	+19	+23	+12	+ 9	+20	+ 5	+41
Kansas City	+22	+10	+24	+ 8	+26	+ 9	+ 5	+23
Dallas	+26	+11	+24	+ 6	+27	+11	+25	+30
San Francisco	+22	+10	+19	+ 9	+25	+10	+19	+23
U. S. Total	+27	+ 9	+28	+ 6	+31	+10	+20	+17
Number of stores	570	570	570	570	533	533	495	495

Accounts Receivable and Collection Ratios

Federal Reserve District	Accounts receivable, end of month (Percentage changes)				Collection ratios ^{1/}					
	Charge accounts		Instalment		Charge accounts		Instalment			
	Feb. '53 to Mar. '53	Mar. '52 to Mar. '53	Feb. '53 to Mar. '53	Mar. '52 to Mar. '53	Mar. 1953	Feb. 1953	Mar. 1952	Mar. 1953	Feb. 1953	Mar. 1952
Boston	- 3	+ 5	0	+27	50	42	49	15	14	19
New York	- 3	+ 7	- 1	+14	47	42	45	17	14	18
Philadelphia	0	+10	0	+22	43	40	44	16	14	19
Cleveland	- 1	+ 5	+12	+28	49	44	48	16	15	19
Richmond	- 2	+ 3	- 1	+23	42	40	39	14	13	16
Atlanta	+ 1	+ 9	0	+22	38	34	36	16	14	17
Chicago	- 1	+ 5	- 2	+22	56	49	53	20	18	24
St. Louis	- 4	+ 2	- 3	+23	49	46	47	19	19	20
Minneapolis	- 2	+ 7	- 1	+20	55	54	53	19	19	22
Kansas City	- 4	+ 3	- 1	+32	50	48	51	17	16	21
Dallas	- 2	+ 9	+ 1	+55	49	45	49	13	11	19
San Francisco	- 6	+ 9	- 2	+43	49	44	49	17	16	19
U. S. Total	- 2	+ 5	+ 1	+28	49	44	48	17	15	20
Number of stores	483	483	393	393	472	470	473	384	379	378

*--March 1953 figures are preliminary and subject to revision.

^{1/} Collections during month as a percentage of accounts receivable at beginning of month.