

BOARD OF GOVERNORS OF THE FEDERAL RESERVE SYSTEM

G.17

July 3, 1957

DEPARTMENT STORE CREDIT - MAY 1957

Instalment accounts outstanding at department stores at the end of May were unchanged from a month ago, but continued 9 per cent above a year earlier. Collections on instalment accounts amounted to 15 per cent of first-of-month balances, the same as was reported for both a month ago and a year ago.

Charge accounts receivable also remained at the level of the preceding month-end, but increased 2 per cent from the corresponding month last year. The collection ratio on charge accounts increased 1 point in May to 46 per cent, the same as a year earlier.

Total sales at reporting department stores in May were maintained at the level of the previous month. Declines in charge-account sales were offset by increases in cash and instalment sales. Compared with a year ago, total sales were down 1 per cent, reflecting slight declines in cash and charge-account sales; instalment sales were up 5 per cent.

Changes in Department Store Sales and Accounts Receivable

Item	Percentage change from:	
	April 1957	May 1956
	to May 1957	to May 1957
Sales during month: Total	0	-1
Cash	+1	-1
Charge	-2	-2
Instalment	+1	+5
Accounts receivable, end of month: Charge	0	+2
Instalment	0	+9

Collection Ratios and Percentage Distribution of Sales

Item	May 1957	April 1957	May 1956
Collection ratios ¹ / ₂ : Charge accounts	46	45	46
Instalment accounts	15	15	15
Percentage distribution of sales: Cash	44	44	44
Charge	43	43	44
Instalment	13	13	12

¹/₂Collections during month as a percentage of accounts receivable at beginning of month.

DEPARTMENT STORE CREDIT - MAY 1957

Sales by type
(Percentage changes)

Federal Reserve District	Total sales		Cash sales		Charge-account sales		Instalment sales	
	Apr. '57 to May '57	May '56 to May '57	Apr. '57 to May '57	May '56 to May '57	Apr. '57 to May '57	May '56 to May '57	Apr. '57 to May '57	May '56 to May '57
	Boston	-1	+2	-1	+3	0	0	-7
New York	0	0	+1	-1	0	-1	-4	+8
Philadelphia	+1	0	+1	+4	0	-2	+2	+2
Cleveland	-5	-3	-4	-4	-6	-5	-4	+4
Richmond	-1	+1	-1	0	-3	-1	+2	+9
Atlanta	+4	+2	+1	+1	+8	+4	+5	0
Chicago	+5	0	+7	0	-2	-5	+12	+7
St. Louis	+3	-4	+1	-6	+5	-2	+5	-1
Minneapolis	+6	+2	-1	+4	+9	0	+14	+5
Kansas City	+1	-2	+1	-3	+3	-2	-5	+4
Dallas	+9	+1	+7	+2	+9	0	+12	+4
San Francisco	-7	0	-4	0	-11	-3	-3	+8
U. S. Total	0	-1	+1	-1	-2	-2	+1	+5

Accounts receivable, end of month
(percentage changes)

Federal Reserve District	Charge accounts		Instalment	
	Apr. '57 to May '57	May '56 to May '57	Apr. '57 to May '57	May '56 to May '57
	Boston	+1	0	-2
New York	-2	+7	0	+21
Philadelphia	-2	+4	-1	-2
Cleveland	-1	0	0	+6
Richmond	+1	+6	0	+14
Atlanta	+2	0	-1	+3
Chicago	+1	+8	+2	+11
St. Louis	+2	-2	+1	+10
Minneapolis	+6	0	+1	+19
Kansas City	+2	+4	-1	-13
Dallas	+3	+1	-1	-5
San Francisco	-1	0	-2	+20
U. S. Total	0	+2	0	+9