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January retail sales up

Seasonally adjusted total retail sales rose 0.8 percent (\$42 million) in January 2010, Statistics New Zealand said today. “The increase in sales was led by the vehicle-related industries, with a lesser rise in core retailing,” business statistics manager Louise Holmes-Oliver said. Leading the increase were automotive fuel retailing (up 2.8 percent or \$15 million) and motor vehicle retailing (up 2.0 percent or \$12 million).

Core retail sales (which exclude the four vehicle-related industries) rose 0.3 percent (\$12 million), following a 2.0 percent fall in December 2009. “The increase in core retailing was led by recreational goods retailing and accommodation; these were the only two industries in core retailing with movements exceeding \$5 million,” Mrs Holmes-Oliver added.

The total retail sales trend has continued to rise, and has increased 3.3 percent since February 2009. Having been mostly flat between mid-2007 and early 2009, the core retail sales trend strengthened slightly in mid-2009. However, the sales trend has eased again since then, and is now flat.

Seasonally adjusted sales were up in the North Island (up 1.5 percent) and flat in the South Island (down just 0.2 percent). The only region with a sales decrease was Canterbury, down 0.9 percent. All regional trends have been rising at various rates, apart from Canterbury’s trend which has declined since October 2009.

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