

highlights

a weekly digest of recently released British Columbia statistics

Population

- **During the third quarter of 1999, BC gained 9,276 people as a result of net migration from all sources.** This compares to an increase of 1,640 in the same period last year. A turnaround in net interprovincial migration was the primary reason for the increase.

The third quarter marked the first net inflow (+186) of people from the rest of Canada to BC in almost two years, as more people came to the province, and fewer left it for other parts of Canada. BC continued to lose people to Alberta (with a net loss of 1,197 people), but the outflow was the smallest it has been since late 1996. The province gained people from most other parts of Canada. Ontario (+769) was the biggest net contributor, followed by Quebec (+293) and Manitoba (+221).

Net international migration to the province also registered an increase in the third quarter, with a net inflow of 9,540 people, up 22% over the same quarter last year.

Source: BC STATS

- **BC's population increased 0.8% during the twelve month period ending October 1st.** Alberta (+1.7%), Ontario (+1.2%) and PEI (+1.0%) all grew faster than the national average (+0.8%), but Nunavut (+2.4%) and the Northwest Territories (+1.8%) had the strongest population growth.

Source: Statistics Canada

The Economy

- **Retail sales in the province fell 1.1% (seasonally adjusted) between September and October, continuing a pattern of ups and downs in the province's retailing industry this year.** Sales had risen 1.7% in September.

Retail sales were down in all parts of the country except NWT, where they increased 1.9% in October. Retailers in Manitoba (-5.4%), Saskatchewan (-3.3%) and Alberta (-3.1%) chalked up the the biggest declines. Nationally, sales fell 1.4%, reflecting reduced purchases from automotive (-4.8%) and general merchandise stores (-0.6%).

Source: Statistics Canada

- **After a two-month long hiatus, the number of EI beneficiaries in the province resumed its downward slide in October.** There were 58,840 people (seasonally adjusted) receiving regular EI benefits in that month, 3.6% less than in September. The decline in the number of EI recipients follows a national trend that saw the number of beneficiaries fall in all but three regions: Nova Scotia (+0.3%), Yukon (+1.3%) and NWT/Nunavut (+2.7%). Canada-wide, there were 515,410 EI beneficiaries in October, 1.7% less than in the previous month.

Source: Statistics Canada

Public Sector Employment

- **In the third quarter of 1999, there were 81 public sector employees in BC for every 1,000 people living in the province.** BC had the second-lowest public sector employment rate in the country. Ontario (80) and Alberta (84) were the only other provinces where public sector employment rates were below the national average (88). Public sector employment includes all those who work for federal, provincial and local government ministries and agencies, as well as employees at public institutions such as hospitals, schools or universities, or crown corporations.
- **In September, about two-thirds (223,200) of the federal government's employees worked in one of Canada's 25 census metropolitan**

Source: Statistics Canada and BC STATS

Did you know...

There are 7.3 million children aged 9 and under living in BC, Yukon, and the westernmost states of the US. Assuming that Santa allows himself about an hour in each time zone (so he can circle the globe within a 24 hour period), and that 80% of the children celebrate Christmas, that means that on Christmas Eve, he has to fill about 1,600 stockings—then drink the milk and eat the cookies left out for him by hopeful kids—each second. After all that work, it's no wonder that it takes him a whole year to recover from his marathon.

We're taking a break too. The next issue of highlights will be released January 7, 2000.

areas (those with a population of at least 100,000). Forty-two percent (93,347) of them were located in Ottawa-Hull. After Ottawa, Montreal (10%), Toronto (8%), and Halifax (7%) had the largest number of federal government employees. Vancouver was next, with 6% of the CMA workforce, while Victoria (4%) was eighth among the CMAs.

Since 1991, the number of federal government employees in CMAs has decreased 17%, but Saskatoon (-1%), Vancouver (-2%) and Kitchener (-3%) have been only marginally affected. In Victoria, the number of federal government workers fell nearly a third (-29%), more than in all but four other CMAs.

Source: SC, Public Institutions Division

AIDS & HIV Infection

- **Year-to-date, there have been 38 new cases of AIDS reported in BC, bringing the cumulative number of new AIDS diagnoses in the province since 1983 to 2,755.** Thirty-two of the people newly diagnosed with AIDS were male and 6 were female. Most of them had contracted the disease as a result of engaging in high-risk activities such as homosexual contact (16) or intravenous drug use (14). So far this year, 68,807 people have been tested for HIV infection, and there have been 224 newly positive test results.

Source: BC Centre for Disease Control Semi-Annual Report

Violent Crime Among Youth

- **In 1998, 106,984 youth (aged 12 to 17) in Canada were charged with a criminal code offence.** One in five of them were charged with a violent crime. Although the violent crime rate for youth declined slightly last year (to 90 per 10,000 population), the rate is 77% higher than it was a decade ago. This compares to a 6% increase in the violent crime rate among adults. The most rapid increase has been among young girls, where the violent crime rate has risen 127%, compared to 65% for boys. Despite this, males (131 charges per 10,000 youth) were nearly three times as likely as females (47 per 10,000)

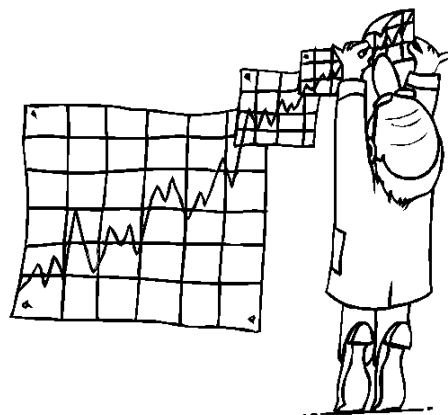
to be charged with a violent crime.

Source: SC, Juristat, Catalogue 85-002, Vol 19, No 1

- **In BC, 2,891 youth (2,089 boys and 802 girls) were charged with violent crimes in 1998.** Common assault was the most frequently committed crime. Nearly two-thirds (64%) of the females, and 44% of the males were charged with this crime. About a fifth of the males and females faced a major assault charge, with robbery and other violent crimes making up smaller shares of the total. BC's youth violent crime rate was marginally higher than the Canadian average, at 91 per 10,000 population in 1998. Among the provinces, Manitoba (153), Saskatchewan (134) and Ontario (103) have the highest incidence of violent crime among young people.

Source: SC, Juristat, Catalogue 85-002, Vol 19, No 1

Best Wishes for a Merry Christmas and a Happy, Bug-Free Y2K



from all of us at BC STATS

highlights, Issue 99-51
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Contact: George Dufour / (250) 387-0376

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British Columbia exports to Asia fell steadily through 1997, bottoming out in early 1998. Asia as defined here includes Japan, China (with Hong Kong), South Korea, Taiwan, and the ASEAN countries.

It is noteworthy that the decline began early in 1997, months before the Asian economic crisis was triggered by the collapse of the Thai baht in August of that year. Through all of 1998 and through 1999 up to September at least (September is the latest month available at time of writing), monthly exports to Asia have remained at levels well below those of early 1997.

But while monthly exports to Asia as a whole have yet to show consistent signs of recovery, exports to some individual markets within Asia have been rising more or less steadily. Unfortunately, the effects of these gains has been largely nullified by declines in exports to other Asian destinations, and particularly to Japan.

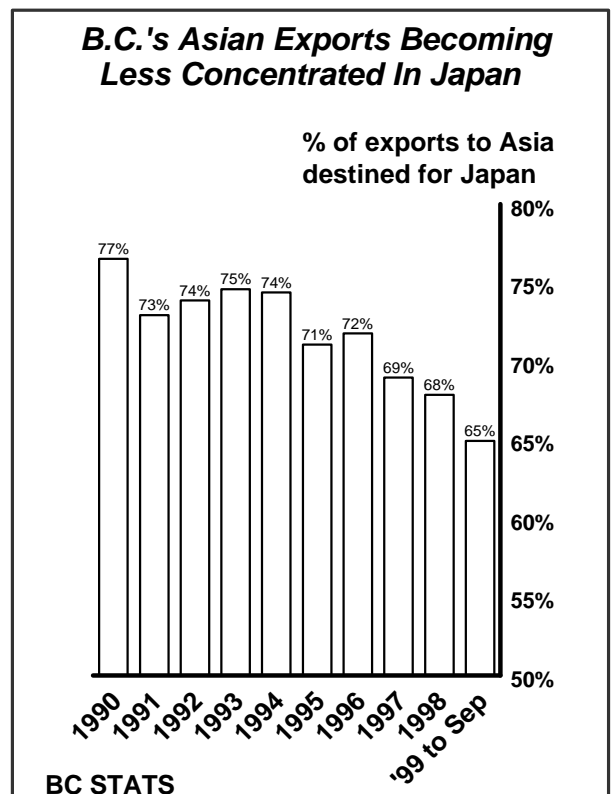
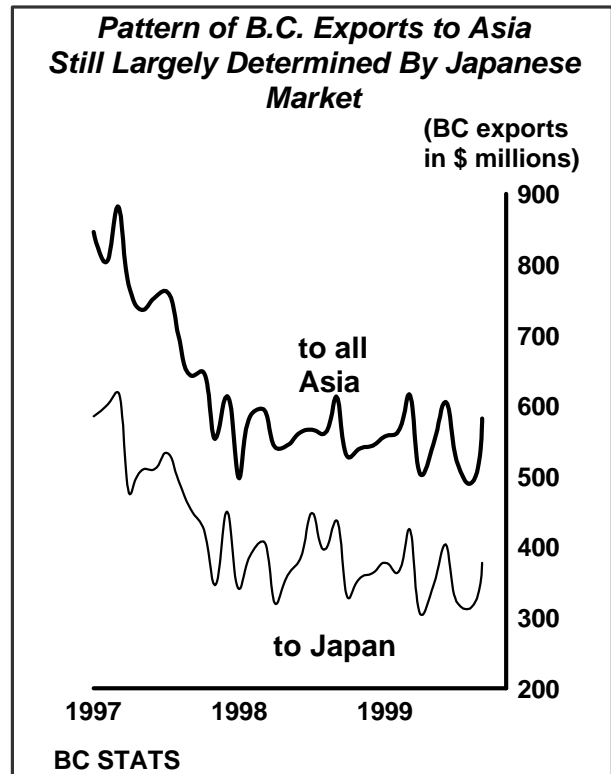
Long Decline In Exports to Japan

Japan accounted for over two thirds of all British Columbia exports to Asia in 1998, so that developments in the Japanese market still largely determine the trend for exports to Asia as a whole.

But exports to Japan have grown more slowly than exports to other Asian destinations, leading to a steady diversification of British Columbia's Asian export destinations in the second half of the 1990s.

In 1994, 74 per cent of British Columbia's Asian exports were destined for the Japanese market. This ratio dropped to 68 per cent in 1998, and to 65 per cent in September year to date of 1999.

Much of this has been the result of poor economic conditions in Japan. As the Japanese



economy posted weak or negative growth, other Asian economies were rapidly expanding, at least up to the 1997 Asian economic crash. Now that the crisis is behind them, some Asian economies have once again begun to post strong growth rates, while Japan still shows limited signs of economic recovery.

International Monetary Fund figures released in May 1999 projected Japanese real gross domestic product (gdp) growth at -1.4 per cent in 1999, and 0.3 per cent in 2000. By contrast, Korean growth was put at 2.0 per cent in 1999 and 4.6 per cent in 2000. Taiwanese growth was put at 3.9 per cent in 1999 and 4.8 per cent in 2000.

The effects of weak Japanese growth are reflected in exports to that market. Shipments to Japan have continued to decline this year, falling 7 per cent in September year to date. In dollar terms, British Columbia exports to Japan were down \$253,560 million from September year to date 1998. This year's declines have followed a 1997 to 1998 drop in annual exports of 25 per cent, and a 1996 to 1997 drop of 6 per cent.

The long trend of declining exports to Japan may be the result of more than just a languid Japanese economy and low world prices for resource products. Another possible factor could be a shift of primary industrial production out of Japan to countries where labour costs are lower - the de-industrialisation process that necessitated such painful adjustments in North America during the 1970s, 1980s, and early 1990s. Such a process would account for at least some of the apparent weakness in Japanese markets for coal and metallic mineral products.

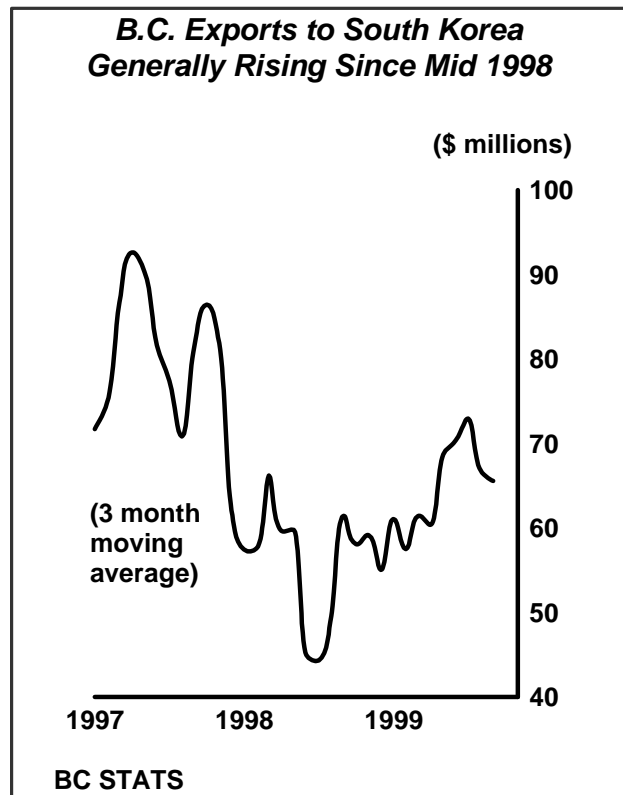
Declining coal exports have produced the single most important recent drop in exports to Japan. Coal shipments to Japan fell by \$257 million (minus 34 per cent) between September year to date 1998 and the same months of this year. Declines in metallic mineral exports to Japan have also been considerable, amounting to a \$161 million (29 per cent) drop in September year to date.

Exports to Japan of most other products suffered

less severe year to date declines. Pulp exports to Japan were down \$ 16 million (4 per cent), and fisheries exports were down \$22 million (12 per cent). On the positive side, there were rises of \$249 million (21 per cent) for solid wood products and \$14 million (13 per cent) for agriculture and food products.

Exports to South Korea Recovering With Strong Gains In Pulp Shipments

September year to date exports to South Korea were up a substantial 16 per cent from the same months of 1998.



Almost half (47 per cent) of British Columbia exports to South Korea in 1998 were coal, with most of the rest concentrated in metallic mineral products and forest products. Pulp accounted for 19 per cent. Another 14 per cent was aluminum; and metallic ores accounted for another 6 per cent.

The value of pulp exports South Korea jumped 129 per cent in September year to date,

providing much of the boost behind the 16 per cent jump in overall exports to that market.

Metallic mineral exports to South Korea also rose slightly, edging up 7 per cent to reach \$99 million in September year to date. On the negative side, coal exports dropped 32 per cent from \$250 million in September year to date of 1998 to \$170 million in the same months of 1999.

Exports to South East Asia Climbing Back

British Columbia exports to the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) countries were among the worst affected by the Asian economic crisis, dropping sharply through most of 1997 and into early 1998. Since then, they have improved considerably. September year to date exports to ASEAN countries rose 26 per cent, extending a recovery trend that began in April 1998.

destinations climbed 29 per cent in September year to date to reach \$121 million.

Metallic mineral products were another major component of British Columbia exports to ASEAN, accounting for another 24 per cent of the total in 1998. They rose 5 per cent in September year to date this year, to \$60 million.

Exports of non-newsprint paper were also important, accounting for 4 per cent of the total in 1998. Shipments jumped 70 per cent in September year to date this year, raising the non-newsprint paper portion of total exports to ASEAN to 6 per cent.

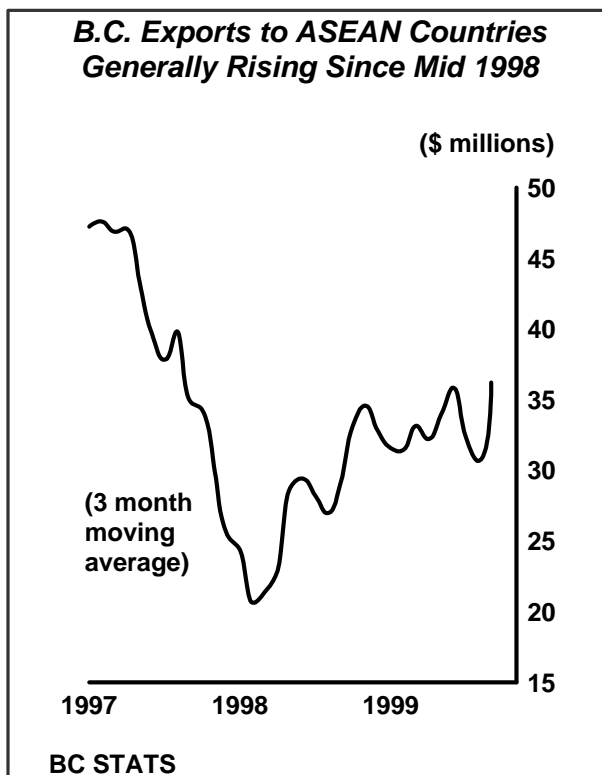
Recovery Less Certain For Exports to Other Asian Destinations

British Columbia exports to China (including Hong Kong) rose 10 per cent in September year to date. The improvement is still too modest and recent to be taken as proof of a sustained export recovery.

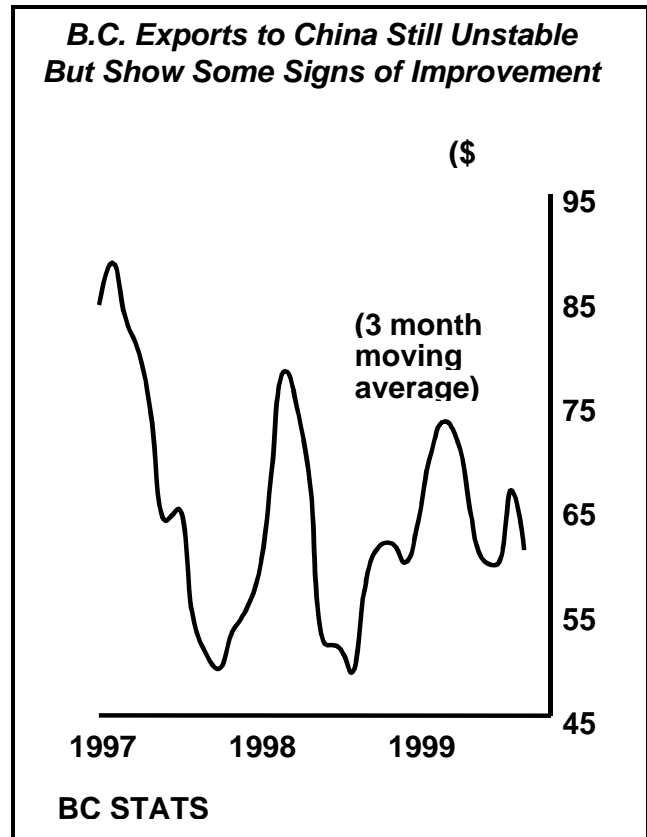
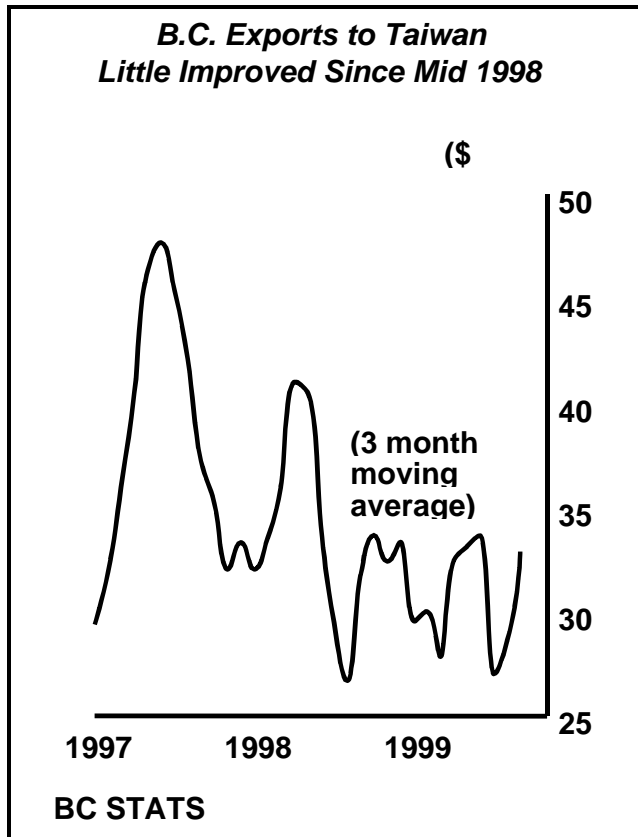
Exports to China are generally liable to more extreme changes in value and commodity mix from month to month and year to year than are exports to other major Asian destinations.

Pulp is the largest single component, accounting for 38 per cent of the total in 1998. Monthly pulp exports to China dropped sharply in late 1997 falling as low as \$6 million in November of that year. Since then they have recovered, but still vary considerably on a more or less seasonal basis. The rising trend for pulp exports has continued into 1999, producing a 40 per cent rise in September year to date of this year.

Taiwan is the only major Asian country other than Japan for which British Columbia exports appear to be still dropping. September year to date exports to Taiwan were down 9 per cent.



Pulp is the main British Columbia export to ASEAN countries, accounting for 44 per cent of the total in 1998. Pulp exports to ASEAN



Pulp and paper products are among the most important items in British Columbia's exports to Taiwan, accounting for about 35 per cent of the total in 1998. The value of pulp and paper products shipped to Taiwan has been generally declining since 1997.

During 1999, exports of all categories of pulp and paper products have continued to decline. In September year to date pulp exports to Taiwan fell 5 per cent; newsprint exports fell 26 per cent; and exports of non-newsprint papers fell 37 per cent.

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Kris Ovens Tel: (250) 387-0359 FAX: (250) 387-0380 or e-Mail Kris.Ovens@gems7.gov.bc.ca

Seasons Greetings

From all the staff at BC STATS a Merry Christmas and best wishes for the New Year to you and your family.

Infoline

December 23, 1999

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 also on the Internet at <http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca>

BC at a glance . . .

POPULATION (thousands)		% change on one year ago
	Oct 1/99	
BC	4,037.2	0.8
Canada	30,572.5	0.8
GDP and INCOME		% change on one year ago
<i>(BC - at market prices)</i>	1998	
Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (\$ millions)	110,948	-0.2
GDP (\$ 1992 millions)	99,708	0.2
GDP (\$ 1992 per Capita)	24,908	-0.8
Personal Disposable Income (\$ 1992 per Capita)	15,969	-1.6
TRADE (\$ millions)		
Manufacturing Shipments (seas. adj.) Oct	3,159	7.7
Merchandise Exports (raw) Sep	2,483	5.8
Retail Sales (seasonally adjusted) Oct	2,807	3.3
CONSUMER PRICE INDEX		% change on one year ago
<i>(all items - 1992=100)</i>	Nov '99	
BC	111.5	1.5
Canada	111.4	2.2
LABOUR FORCE (thousands)		% change on one year ago
<i>(seasonally adjusted)</i>	Nov '99	
Labour Force - BC	2,075	0.6
Employed - BC	1,910	0.5
Unemployed - BC	165	2.0
	Nov '98	
Unemployment Rate - BC (percent)	8.0	7.8
Unemployment Rate - Canada (percent)	6.9	8.0
INTEREST RATES (percent)	Dec 15/99	Dec 16/98
Prime Business Rate	6.50	6.75
Conventional Mortgages - 1 year	7.35	6.40
- 5 year	8.25	6.80
US/CANADA EXCHANGE RATE	Dec 15/99	Dec 16/98
<i>(avg. noon spot rate)</i> Cdn \$	1.4832	1.5387
US \$ <i>(reciprocal of the closing rate)</i>	0.6743	0.6496
AVERAGE WEEKLY WAGE RATE		% change on one year ago
<i>(industrial aggregate - dollars)</i>	Nov '99	
BC	634.58	0.7
Canada	603.73	3.2

SOURCES:

Population, Gross Domestic Product, Trade, } Statistics
 Prices, Labour Force, Wage Rate } Canada
 Interest Rates, Exchange Rates: Bank of Canada Weekly Financial Statistics
 For latest Weekly Financial Statistics see www.bank-banque-canada.ca/english/wfsgen.htm

1999 Index

Next week's transmission, on or before December 30, will be a single page **Index of 1999 Infoline Reports**. Highlights will resume on January 7, 2000.



Released this week by BC STATS

- Migration Highlights, Third Quarter, 1999
- Exports, October 1999

Next week

- Business Indicators, December 1999
- Current Statistics, December 1999

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Tel: (250) 387-0327 Fax: (250) 387-0329 Web: <http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca> E-mail: BC.Stats@gems8.gov.bc.ca