

businesses operating in Canada, whether they are Canadian-owned or subsidiaries of foreign companies and include both domestic and export sales. The total volume of trade measured by Statistics Canada cannot be equated with the value of goods passing through the wholesale sector of the economy because at times wholesale businesses sell to each other and thus the value of the same merchandise may be recorded more than once.

According to certain common characteristics, each wholesale establishment and location (wholesale outlet) is assigned to one of the following two principal types of operation:

Wholesale merchants — establishments or locations primarily engaged in buying and selling goods on their own account. Included in this category are wholesalers known as: drop shippers or desk jobbers, export merchants, import merchants, mail-order wholesalers, rack jobbers or voluntary general wholesale distributors.

Agents and brokers — establishments or locations primarily engaged in buying or selling, on a commission basis, products owned by others. They may be known as an auction company, commission merchant, import agent or broker, export agent or broker, manufacturer's agent, purchasing agent or resident buyer and selling agent.

17.3.1 Wholesale merchants

Wholesale merchants accounted for about 84% of the total volume of trade and had estimated sales of \$180.2 billion in 1984, up 13.4% from the \$158.9 billion volume reported the previous year. The most notable increases in volume of trade were reported by wholesalers of scrap and waste material (percentage cannot be disclosed due to confidentiality requirements), electrical machinery equipment and supplies (28.5%), motor vehicles and accessories (23.9%), paper and paper products (23.0%), hardware, plumbing and heating equipment (22.9%) and general merchandise (23.0%).

The share of the total volume of trade by selected groups of wholesale merchants has been fairly stable: wholesalers of electrical, farm and industrial machinery secured 18.3% of the total volume in 1984, 17.6% of the total volume in 1983 and 17.5% in 1982; the food group obtained 15.9% of the 1984 volume, 16.3% in 1983 and 15.9% in 1982; dealers in petroleum products (including coal and coke) accounted for 15.4% in 1984 as compared with 16.4% in 1983 and 17.4% in 1982; while wholesalers of

primary producers' farm products accounted for 11.0% in 1984, 11.7% in 1983 and 12.9% in 1982.

In terms of geographical distribution of the volume of trade, wholesale merchant establishments in Quebec and Ontario accounted for 61.3% of the total volume in 1984, up from 59.4% in 1983. Establishments in the Atlantic provinces claimed 4.1% in 1984, virtually unchanged from 1983, while merchants in Western Canada achieved 34.6% of the total volume of trade in 1984, down from 36.2% in 1983.

Tables 17.15 and 17.16 show the volume of trade of wholesale merchant establishments for the years 1981-84.

17.3.2 Agents and brokers

During 1984, establishments operating as agents and brokers reported earnings of \$969.8 million in gross commissions (compared with commissions of \$848.7 million in 1983) by facilitating the movement of goods valued at \$32,168.4 million (compared with goods valued at \$29,903.9 million in 1983). Commissions as a percentage of the value of goods bought or sold on commission increased to 3.0% in 1984 from 2.8% in 1983. In terms of the total volume of trade reported by the 4,470 establishments classified as agents or brokers, the volume of trade in 1984 totalled \$33.6 billion, an increase of 7.7% from the \$31.2 billion reported the previous year.

As in 1983, the greatest share in 1984 of total commissions was reported by the agent and broker establishments in the petroleum products group (including coal and coke) at 24.0%, with commissions of \$232.6 million on goods valued at \$4,773.8 million. In 1983, the petroleum products group had reported commissions of \$204.6 million on goods valued at \$4,347.3 million, for a 24.1% share of total commissions earned. The farm products industry group was the second largest source of agents' commission income in 1984, with \$164.6 million of commissions on goods valued at \$7,574.5 million, as compared with commissions of \$147.6 million and goods valued at \$6,759.4 million in 1983.

Table 17.17 shows the volume of trade of agent and broker establishments, for the years 1981-84. Table 17.18 shows the gross commissions earned by agent and broker establishments, for the years 1981-84.

17.3.3 Control and sale of alcoholic beverages

The retail sale of alcoholic beverages in Canada is controlled by provincial and territorial government liquor control authorities. Alcoholic