

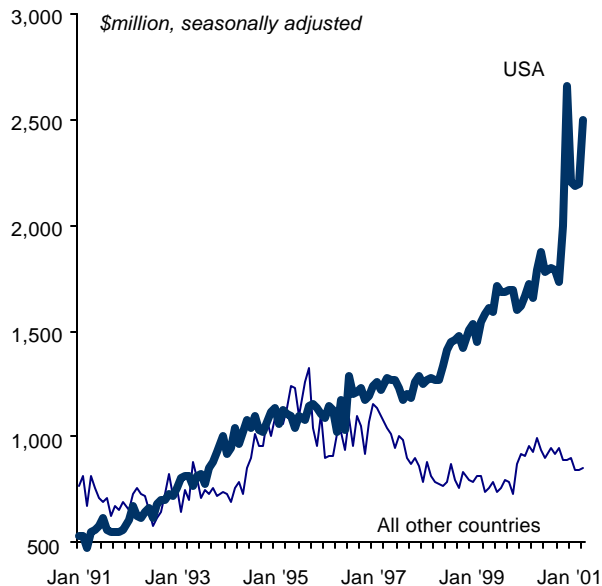
Current Statistics ♦ June 2001

- **Exports of BC products rose between March and April, increasing 10.4% (seasonally adjusted).** The strength in BC's exports continued to come from the US market, as energy exports remained strong. Total shipments rose by 14.0% as increases in forestry (+11.1%), mineral (including natural gas) (+20.5%) and other (including electricity) (+13.8%) export products were only partly offset by a slight decline in exports of agriculture and fish products (-0.6%).

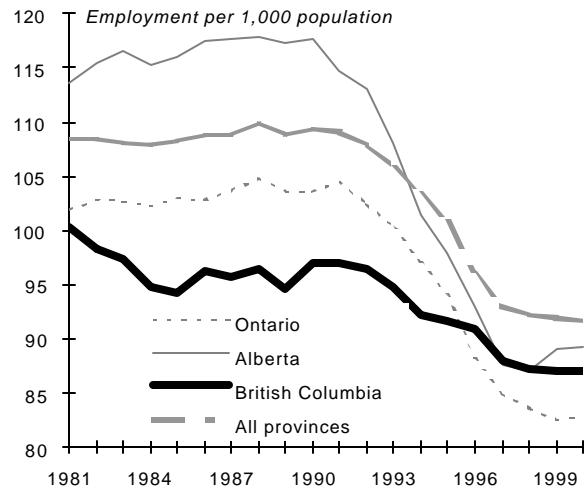
Exports to other countries, excluding the US, were also up in April (+1.2%). The increase resulted mainly from a slight rise in international shipments of forestry and related products (+0.2%), combined with a 28.8% jump in mineral exports. Declines were seen in exports of agriculture and fishing (-2.5%) and other (-12.1%) products.

Source: BC STATS

Exports of BC products to the US rose sharply in April, driven largely by energy products



Public sector employment rates in BC remained unchanged between 1999 and 2000



- **The number of public sector jobs in the province increased slightly (+0.5%) to 352,105 in 2000.** Employment decreased in the local (-0.4%) sector, but this was more than offset by gains in the number of people working in both the federal (+1.5%) and provincial (+1.2%) government sectors. The increase in provincial government employment was due to more workers in all three major areas: government ministries and agencies (+1.8%), universities and colleges (+1.3%), and health and social services (+0.8%). However, federal, provincial and local crown corporations (-1.2%) in BC decreased the size of their workforce in 2000.

Source: Statistics Canada

- **The number of public sector jobs per 1,000 population remained unchanged in BC last year.** There were 87 employees per 1,000 population, the same number as in 1998 and 1999. Along with BC, Ontario (83) and Alberta (89) were the only provinces where the public sector employment rate was below the Canadian average (92) in 2000. The highest employment to population ratios were found in Manitoba (122), PEI (118) and Saskatchewan (111).

Source: Statistics Canada

- Manufacturing shipments in BC fell 0.5% between March and April (seasonally adjusted).** The drop in the value of shipments was the fourth in as many months. Shipments were down in six provinces including BC, with the largest decreases seen in Saskatchewan (-7.2%), Alberta (-3.6%) and Quebec (-3.6%). Overall, Canadian shipments dropped 0.6%.

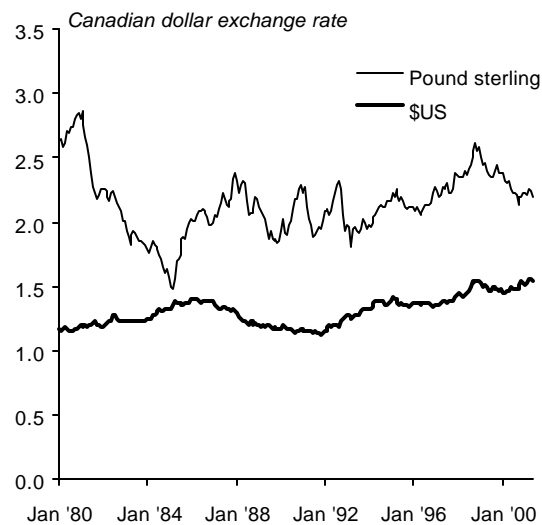
BC shipments of non-durable goods fell 5.0% in April, the largest decrease since October last year. The decline was largely due to a sharp drop in paper manufacturing (-11.8%), which was only partly offset by an increase in food shipments (+1.1%). The value of goods shipped by the clothing (-12.1%), leather and allied (-6.4%) and printing and related (-5.6%) industries also fell.

On the durable goods side, shipments rose 2.8%, ending a three-month long decline. Increases were seen in six of the major groups in this sector, including the largest industry, wood product manufacturing (+3.4%). Shipments also rose for transportation equipment (+9.6%), computer and electronic products (+5.1%) and electronic equipment, appliance and component manufacturing (+2.5%).

Source: Statistics Canada

- British Columbia's all-items consumer price index (CPI) was 2.5% higher in May than the same month in 2000.** This was the biggest year-over-year increase since January, but compared to the rest of the country, the May inflation rate was the lowest of all the provinces. Prices increased all across the country, with the largest rises recorded in Alberta (+5.7%) and Ontario (+4.2%). Nationally, the CPI jumped 3.9%. *Source: Statistics Canada*
- BC's unemployment rate edged down to 6.8% (seasonally adjusted) in May.** The dip in the unemployment rate was due to employment growth (+0.6%), which was more than strong enough to absorb a net addition of 10,900 people (+0.5%) to the labour force. *Source: Statistics Canada*

The Canadian dollar exchange rate has been far more variable against the UK pound than the US dollar over the last 20 years



- British Columbia's retail sales fell for the second straight month in April, declining 1.0% (seasonally adjusted).** Across the country, sales were generally weaker in the east, falling in Newfoundland (-3.9%), PEI (-0.3%) and Nova Scotia (-0.3%). All other provinces, except BC, saw increased sales, with the strongest figures reported in Quebec (+3.9%) and New Brunswick (+3.7%). Nationally, sales rose 1.6%. *Source: Statistics Canada*
- The number of consumer bankruptcies in BC rose 8.0% in April, relative to the same month in 2000.** There were 744 bankruptcies in the province, compared to 689 registered twelve months previously. Across the country, consumer bankruptcies increased in all provinces and in Yukon. The number fell in NWT and remained flat in Nunavut. In total, 6,539 consumers filed for bankruptcy in April, up 612 or 10.3% over the same month last year. *Source: Industry Canada*
- Business bankruptcies in the province rose 31.4% year-over-year in April.** The number of Canadian businesses filing bankruptcy papers also increased (+15.5%). In total, 910 businesses in Canada, and 92 in BC filed papers in April. *Source: Industry Canada*