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ADVANCE REPORT ON DURABLE GOODS MANUFACTURERS' SHIPMENTS AND ORDERS
March 1996

(All figures in text below are in seasonally adjusted current dollars)

• **NEW ORDERS** New orders for manufactured durable goods in March increased \$2.3 billion or 1.4 percent to \$167.6 billion, the Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census reported today. This follows a 2.3 percent February decline, and is the first increase since December. Excluding transportation, new orders decreased \$1.3 billion or 1.0 percent to \$126.0 billion, the first decrease since November. Year-to-date new orders are 2.3 percent above the same period in 1995.

Transportation equipment, up for the first month since December, had the largest increase, \$3.6 billion or 9.4 percent to \$41.6 billion as a large increase in aircraft and parts more than offset a decline in motor vehicles and parts. This follows a 12.1 percent February decrease. Electronic and other electrical equipment, up for the first month since December, increased \$1.3 billion or 4.8 percent to \$28.2 billion, following a 1.8 percent February decline. Industrial machinery and equipment, down for the first month since December, decreased \$1.4 billion or 4.1 percent to \$32.9 billion. This follows a 4.6 percent February increase. Primary metals, down four of the last five months, decreased \$0.6 billion or 3.9 percent to \$13.8 billion, following a slight February increase.

• **SHIPMENTS** Shipments of durable goods in March decreased \$1.0 billion or 0.6 percent to \$163.2 billion, following a 1.3 percent February increase. This is the second decrease in the last three months. Year-to-date shipments are 1.2 percent above the same period in 1995.

Transportation equipment, down two of the last three months, had the largest decrease, \$1.5 billion or 3.9 percent to \$36.3 billion, due to motor vehicles and parts. This follows a 1.2 percent February increase. Industrial machinery and equipment, down two of the last three months, decreased \$0.4 billion or 1.2 percent to \$33.1 billion, following a 4.6 percent February increase. Primary metals, down for the sixth consecutive month, decreased \$0.2 billion or 1.1 percent to \$14.1 billion. Electronic and other electrical equipment, up four of the last five months, increased \$0.5 billion or 1.8 percent to \$28.2 billion, following a 2.5 percent February increase.

• **UNFILLED ORDERS** Unfilled orders for durable goods in March increased \$4.4 billion or 1.0 percent to \$456.6 billion. This follows a 0.2 percent February increase and is the seventh consecutive monthly increase.

Transportation equipment, up for the fifth consecutive month, increased \$5.3 billion or 2.5 percent to \$217.1 billion, due to aircraft and parts. This follows a 0.1 percent February increase. Primary metals decreased \$0.3 billion or 1.0 percent to \$28.4 billion, following a 0.4 percent February increase. Industrial machinery and equipment, down for the first month since December, decreased \$0.2 billion or 0.3 percent to \$74.1 billion. This follows a 1.1 percent February increase. Electronic and other electrical equipment, down four of the last five months, decreased slightly to \$54.1 billion, following a 1.5 percent February decrease.

• **CAPITAL GOODS INDUSTRIES, DEFENSE** New orders in March, up three of the last four months, increased \$4.3 billion or 73.0 percent to \$10.3 billion, following a 21.1 percent February decrease. Shipments, up for the first month since December, increased \$0.1 billion or 2.1 percent to \$6.4 billion, following a 0.6 percent February decrease. Unfilled orders, up three of the last four months, increased \$3.9 billion or 3.6 percent to \$112.6 billion, following a 0.3 percent February decrease.

• **CAPITAL GOODS INDUSTRIES, NONDEFENSE** New orders in March increased slightly to \$46.6 billion. This follows a 2.4 percent February decrease and is the first increase since December. Shipments, up four of the last five months, increased \$0.2 billion or 0.5 percent to \$44.6 billion. This follows a 6.4 percent February increase. Unfilled orders increased \$2.0 billion or 0.9 percent to \$223.3 billion, the seventh consecutive monthly increase. Excluding aircraft and parts, new orders decreased \$0.5 billion or 1.1 percent to \$40.6 billion, the first decline since December; shipments, up four of the last five months, increased \$0.1 billion or 0.3 percent to \$40.0 billion, following a 6.0 percent February increase; unfilled orders increased \$0.6 billion or 0.6 percent to \$101.5 billion, the sixth increase in the last seven months.

• **REVISED FEBRUARY DATA** Revised seasonally adjusted February figures for all manufacturing industries are: shipments, \$303.7 billion (revised from \$304.0 billion); new orders, \$304.5 billion (revised from \$304.4 billion); unfilled orders, \$475.3 billion (revised from \$474.9 billion); and total inventories, \$422.3 billion (unrevised).

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This report presents advance information on two key business indicators: durable goods manufacturers' shipments and orders. Revised and more detailed estimates plus nondurable goods and inventory data will be published May 2, 1996. The advance report on durable goods for April is scheduled for May 24, 1996. This report is available on the day of issue through the Department of Commerce's online Economic Bulletin Board (N-8-1) (202-482-3870) and through the Census Bureau's online information service-CENDATA. Further information about accessing CENDATA can be obtained from Dialog Information Services, Inc. (1-800-334-2564) and CompuServe (1-800-848-8199). The CENDATA staff at the Bureau of the Census (301-457-1214) can provide content information and general guidance.

Table 1. DURABLE GOODS MANUFACTURERS' SHIPMENTS AND ORDERS
(Millions of dollars)

Item	Seasonally adjusted						Not seasonally adjusted ¹			
	Monthly			Percent Change			Monthly			Percent change Mar.96/95
	Mar. 1996 ²	Feb. 1996 ²	Jan. 1996	Feb.- Mar. ²	Jan.- Feb. ²	Dec.- Jan.	Mar. 1996 ²	Feb. 1996 ²	Mar. 1995	
DURABLE GOODS										
Total :										
Shipments	163,237	164,286	162,126	-0.6	+1.3	-2.3	175,953	164,971	174,202	+1.0
New orders	167,622	165,307	169,238	+1.4	-2.3	-0.6	181,819	167,364	176,497	+3.0
Unfilled orders	456,596	452,211	451,190	+1.0	+0.2	+1.6	461,244	455,378	442,098	+4.3
Excluding defense :										
Shipments	156,845	158,024	155,826	-0.7	+1.4	-2.4	169,104	158,957	167,192	+1.1
New orders	157,365	159,377	161,722	-1.3	-1.5	-0.8	168,681	162,364	167,563	+0.7
Unfilled orders	344,026	343,506	342,153	+0.2	+0.4	+1.8	346,008	346,431	327,669	+5.6
With unfilled orders :										
Shipments	132,611	132,753	130,411	-0.1	+1.8	-2.8	143,263	130,665	138,707	+3.3
New orders	136,996	133,774	137,523	+2.4	-2.7	-0.7	149,129	133,058	141,002	+5.8
Primary metals :										
Shipments	14,105	14,268	14,422	-1.1	-1.1	-1.2	14,825	14,682	16,123	-8.1
New orders	13,825	14,393	14,390	-3.9	0.0	-2.8	15,290	15,599	16,873	-9.4
Unfilled orders	28,351	28,631	28,506	-1.0	+0.4	-0.1	30,262	29,797	31,069	-2.6
Industrial machinery and equipment:										
Shipments	33,115	33,525	32,058	-1.2	+4.6	-1.5	38,806	32,757	35,220	+10.2
New orders	32,894	34,307	32,792	-4.1	+4.6	+3.2	37,504	33,877	35,741	+4.9
Unfilled orders	74,052	74,273	73,491	-0.3	+1.1	+1.0	74,142	75,444	71,753	+3.3
Electronic and other electrical equipment :										
Shipments	28,177	27,684	27,013	+1.8	+2.5	-4.5	29,745	26,724	26,568	+12.0
New orders	28,175	26,882	27,381	+4.8	-1.8	-0.6	28,720	26,072	27,159	+5.7
Unfilled orders	54,067	54,069	54,871	0.0	-1.5	+0.7	53,689	54,714	50,320	+6.7
Transportation equipment :										
Shipments	36,316	37,804	37,349	-3.9	+1.2	-4.1	39,098	40,936	43,438	-10.0
New orders	41,618	38,047	43,286	+9.4	-12.1	-3.0	46,774	40,717	44,351	+5.5
Unfilled orders	217,141	211,839	211,596	+2.5	+0.1	+2.9	219,621	211,945	204,234	+7.5
CAPITAL GOODS INDUSTRIES³										
Total :										
Shipments	50,979	50,627	48,004	+0.7	+5.5	-6.0	57,728	48,414	53,936	+7.0
New orders	56,888	52,541	55,295	+8.3	-5.0	-1.0	65,112	50,000	56,162	+15.9
Unfilled orders	335,847	329,938	328,024	+1.8	+0.6	+2.3	338,633	331,249	318,990	+6.2
Nondefense :										
Shipments	44,587	44,365	41,704	+0.5	+6.4	-6.7	50,879	42,400	46,926	+8.4
New orders	46,631	46,611	47,779	0.0	-2.4	-1.9	51,974	45,000	47,228	+10.0
Unfilled orders	223,277	221,233	218,987	+0.9	+1.0	+2.9	223,397	222,302	204,561	+9.2
Excluding aircraft and parts :										
Shipments	40,023	39,904	37,638	+0.3	+6.0	-5.3	45,793	38,090	41,263	+11.0
New orders	40,625	41,078	39,178	-1.1	+4.8	+1.4	45,446	39,618	42,225	+7.6
Unfilled orders	101,532	100,930	99,756	+0.6	+1.2	+1.6	101,652	101,999	96,900	+4.9
Defense :										
Shipments	6,392	6,262	6,300	+2.1	-0.6	-0.9	6,849	6,014	7,010	-2.3
New orders	10,257	5,930	7,516	+73.0	-21.1	+4.9	13,138	5,000	8,934	+47.1
Unfilled orders	112,570	108,705	109,037	+3.6	-0.3	+1.1	115,236	108,947	114,429	+0.7

(NA) Not available. ¹ Revised.¹ Shipments and new orders are the totals for the period and are adjusted for trading-day and calendar-month variations; unfilled orders are as of the end of the period and are not adjusted for trading-day or calendar-month variations.² Based on advance sample. Estimates of manufacturers' shipments, inventories, and orders are subject to survey error and revision. One major component of survey error is nonsampling error, which includes errors of coverage, response and nonreporting. Since the survey panel is not a probability sample, estimates of sampling error cannot be calculated. Further details on survey design, methodology, and data limitations are contained in our most recent annual benchmark publication, Current Industrial Reports: M3-1(92), "Manufacturers' Shipments, Inventories, and Orders: 1982-1992."³ The Capital Goods Industries include Nondefense : ordnance and accessories, steam engines and turbines, internal combustion engines, construction mining and material handling equipment, metalworking machinery, special industry machinery, general industrial machinery, computer and office equipment, refrigeration, heating and service industry machinery, electrical transmission and distribution equipment, electrical industrial apparatus, communication equipment, complete aircraft, missiles, and space vehicles, aircraft missiles, and space vehicle engines and parts, ships and tank components, railroad equipment, and search and navigation equipment.
Defense capital goods include : ordnance, communication equipment, aircraft, missiles, space vehicles, and parts, ships, tanks and tank components, search and navigation equipment.

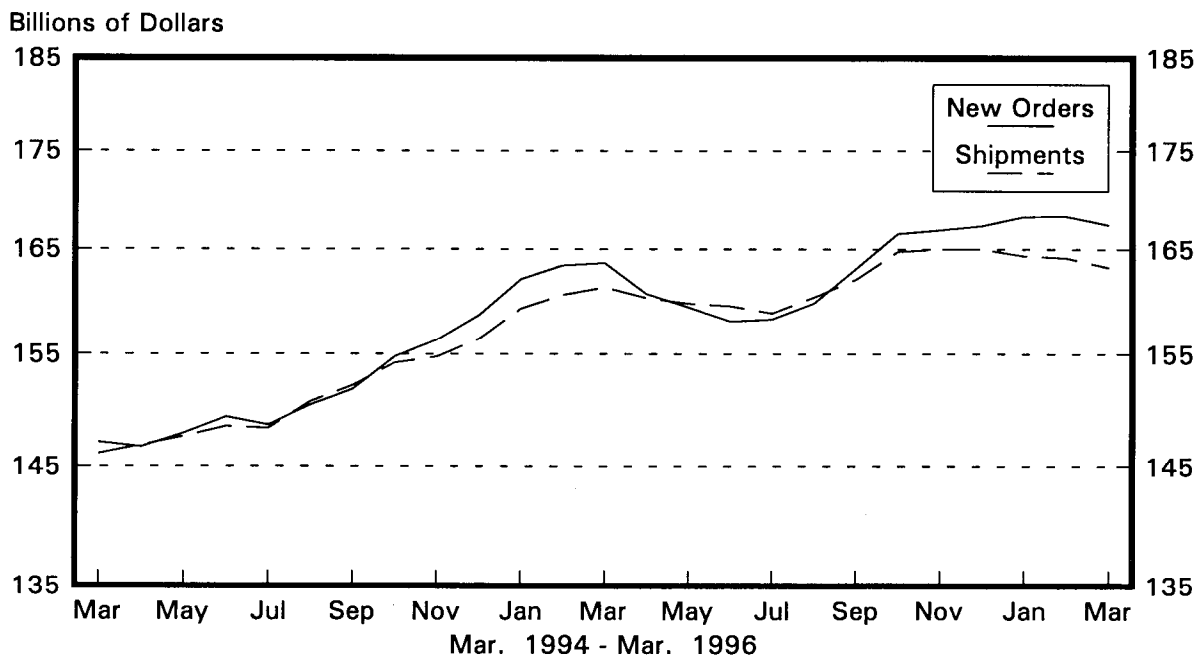
Table 2. AVERAGE REVISIONS TO PREVIOUSLY PUBLISHED MONTHLY PERCENT CHANGES
(Based on seasonally adjusted data)

Industry	Shipments			New Orders			Unfilled Orders		
	Year ago	Mar.	Mar. 1995-	Year ago	Mar.	Mar. 1995-	Year ago	Mar.	Mar. 1995-
	Mar. 1995	1991-1995	Feb. 1996	Mar. 1995	1991-1995	Feb. 1996	Mar. 1995	1991-1995	Feb. 1996
Durable goods	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.6	0.5	0.2	0.2	0.2
Primary metals	0.9	0.6	0.4	0.3	1.1	1.0	0.4	0.4	0.4
Industrial machinery and equipment	0.4	1.1	0.6	0.9	1.3	1.0	0.2	0.3	0.4
Electronic and other electrical equipment	0.2	0.3	0.5	1.2	1.1	0.8	0.7	0.4	0.3
Transportation equipment	0.7	0.8	0.6	2.3	2.4	1.3	0.3	0.3	0.3
Nondefense capital goods	0.0	1.0	0.7	1.7	2.0	1.1	0.3	0.3	0.2
Defense capital goods	0.0	0.4	0.9	1.3	2.1	5.5	0.0	0.1	0.3

Note : The revisions are the differences between the month-to-month percent changes of the advance and final estimates. The monthly averages are the simple averages of the differences, without regard to for the months specified.

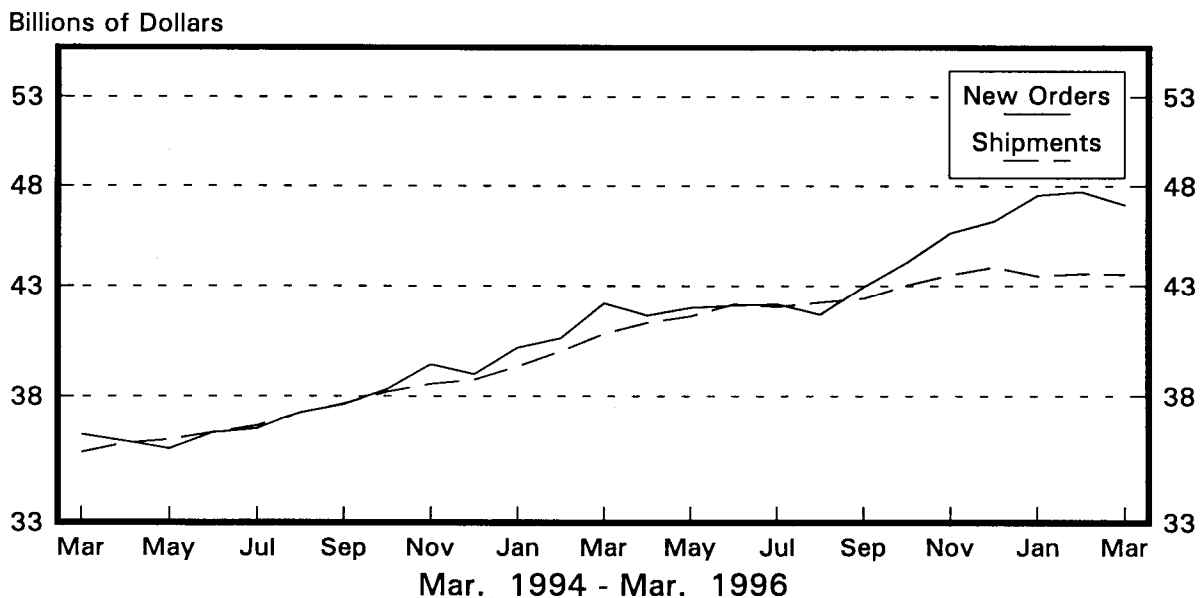
Total Durable Goods

New Orders and Shipments
Three Month Moving Averages



Nondefense Capital Goods

New Orders and Shipments
Three Month Moving Averages



Note: All Charts based on seasonally adjusted current dollars.