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STATISTICAL RELEASE

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Motor trade sales (Preliminary)

November 2023

Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) publishes monthly data for the motor trade industry. The publication currently contains total seasonally adjusted sales at current and constant prices (direct seasonal adjustment of the totals). As part of its improvement programme in economic statistics, Stats SA will introduce seasonally adjusted sales (at current and constant prices) by type of activity in the next publication (December 2023). Total sales will be computed as the sum of components (indirect seasonal adjustment of the totals).

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Sales at constant 2019 prices: results for November 2023

Table A – Key growth rates in motor trade sales at constant 2019 prices

	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23
Year-on-year % change, unadjusted	5,8	2,2	-2,4	-7,8	-2,6	-2,9
Month-on-month % change, seasonally adjusted	0,7	-0,7	-0,3	-2,0	0,1	1,0
3-month % change, seasonally adjusted ¹	-0,3	0,4	0,4	-0,9	-1,9	-2,1

¹ Percentage change between the previous three months and the three months ending in the month indicated.

Measured in real terms (constant 2019 prices), motor trade sales decreased by 2,9% year-on-year in November 2023. The largest negative annual growth rates were recorded for:

- new vehicle sales (-11,2%); and
- workshop income (-8,3%) – see Table 5.

The largest negative contributor to this decrease was new vehicle sales (contributing -3,0 percentage points) – see Table 6.

Seasonally adjusted motor trade sales increased by 1,0% in November 2023 compared with October 2023. This followed month-on-month changes of 0,1% in October 2023 and -2,0% in September 2023. In the three months ended November 2023, seasonally adjusted motor trade sales decreased by 2,1% compared with the previous three months.

Table B – Motor trade sales at constant 2019 prices for the latest three months by type of activity

Type of activity	Sep – Nov 2022 (R million)	Weight (%)	Sep – Nov 2023 (R million)	% change between Sep – Nov 2022 and Sep – Nov 2023	Contribution (% points) to the total % change
New vehicle sales	48 481	25,9	44 014	-9,2	-2,4
Used vehicle sales	39 126	20,9	36 206	-7,5	-1,6
Workshop income	9 209	4,9	8 267	-10,2	-0,5
Income from the sales of accessories	36 614	19,6	37 434	2,2	0,4
Income from fuel sales	49 203	26,3	48 464	-1,5	-0,4
Income from convenience store sales ¹	4 216	2,3	4 133	-2,0	0,0
Total	186 849	100,0	178 518	-4,5	-4,5

¹ Includes 'other' sales and trading income.

Motor trade sales decreased by 4,5% in the three months ended November 2023 compared with the three months ended November 2022. The main negative contributors to this decrease were:

- new vehicle sales (-9,2% and contributing -2,4 percentage points); and
- used vehicle sales (-7,5% and contributing -1,6 percentage points) – see Table B.

Figure 1 – Motor trade sales at constant 2019 prices

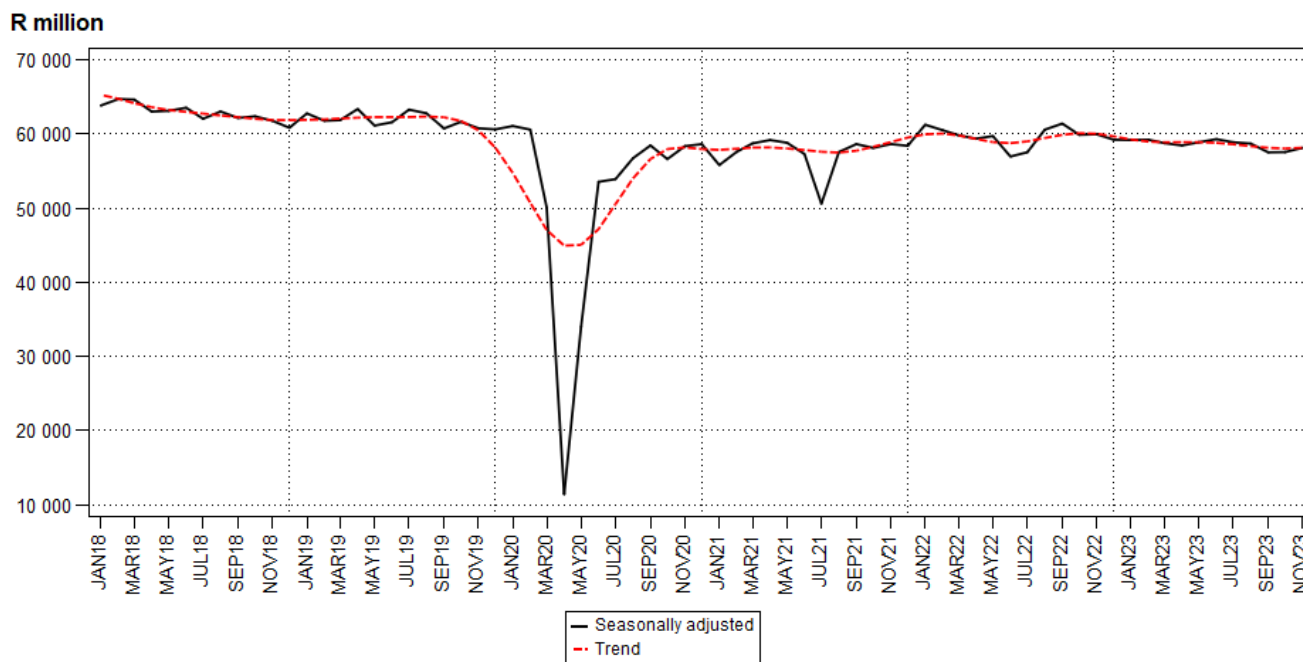
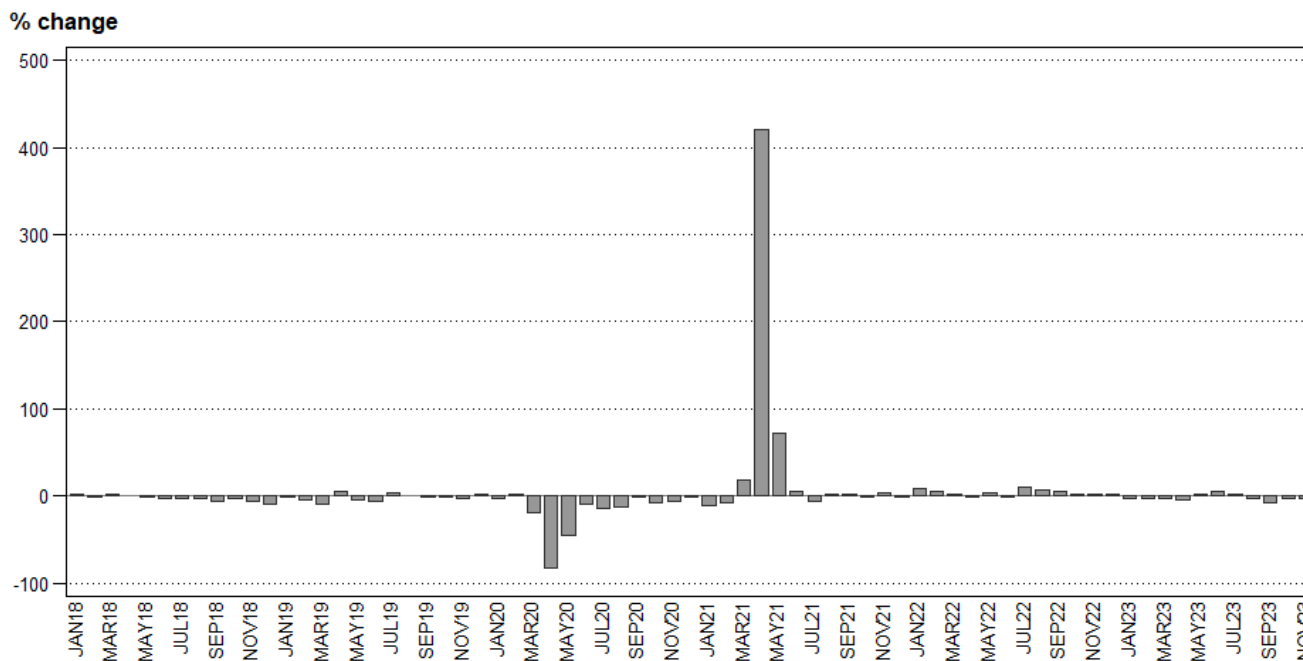


Figure 2 – Motor trade sales at constant 2019 prices: year-on-year percentage change



Sales at current prices: results for November 2023

Table C – Key growth rates in motor trade sales at current prices

	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23
Year-on-year % change, unadjusted	9,2	2,8	0,4	-1,8	5,7	2,6
Month-on-month % change, seasonally adjusted	1,2	-0,8	0,4	-0,3	3,8	-0,8
3-month % change, seasonally adjusted ¹	1,5	1,8	1,6	0,6	1,3	1,9

¹ Percentage change between the previous three months and the three months ending in the month indicated.

Table D – Motor trade sales at current prices for the latest three months by type of activity

Type of activity	Sep – Nov 2022 (R million)	Weight (%)	Sep – Nov 2023 (R million)	% change between Sep – Nov 2022 and Sep – Nov 2023	Contribution (% points) to the total % change
New vehicle sales	57 295	24,0	56 649	-1,1	-0,3
Used vehicle sales	45 850	19,2	45 728	-0,3	-0,1
Workshop income	10 316	4,3	9 621	-6,7	-0,3
Income from the sales of accessories	45 515	19,0	49 562	8,9	1,7
Income from fuel sales	75 092	31,4	77 198	2,8	0,9
Income from convenience store sales ¹	5 088	2,1	5 473	7,6	0,2
Total	239 157	100,0	244 233	2,1	2,1

¹ Includes 'other' sales and trading income.

Risenga Maluleke
Statistician-General

Tables

Table 1 – Motor trade sales at constant 2019 prices (R million)

Month	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023 ¹
Jan	61 436	62 312	61 753	59 702	52 879	57 639	56 393
Feb	62 749	62 692	59 753	60 040	55 693	58 531	57 321
Mar	68 520	68 754	62 693	51 126	60 913	62 043	60 688
Apr	57 569	57 551	60 446	10 861	56 575	56 417	53 792
May	65 043	64 236	61 985	33 714	58 216	60 095	60 198
Jun	64 194	62 367	58 869	53 146	56 275	56 175	59 426
Jul	64 418	63 154	65 249	55 759	52 518	57 738	59 000
Aug	65 841	64 255	64 265	56 059	57 647	61 553	60 076
Sep	64 449	60 591	59 748	58 770	59 193	62 870	57 946
Oct	67 808	65 909	65 621	60 169	59 648	61 234	59 641
Nov	69 411	65 580	63 553	59 843	62 098	62 745	60 931
Dec	62 913	57 263	57 716	57 097	56 602	57 923	
Total	774 351	754 664	741 651	616 286	688 257	714 963	

¹ Figures for the latest month are preliminary.

Table 2 – Year-on-year percentage change in motor trade sales at constant 2019 prices

Month	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2023 year-to-date
Jan	1,4	-0,9	-3,3	-11,4	9,0	-2,2	-2,2
Feb	-0,1	-4,7	0,5	-7,2	5,1	-2,1	-2,1
Mar	0,3	-8,8	-18,5	19,1	1,9	-2,2	-2,1
Apr	0,0	5,0	-82,0	420,9	-0,3	-4,7	-2,7
May	-1,2	-3,5	-45,6	72,7	3,2	0,2	-2,1
Jun	-2,8	-5,6	-9,7	5,9	-0,2	5,8	-0,9
Jul	-2,0	3,3	-14,5	-5,8	9,9	2,2	-0,4
Aug	-2,4	0,0	-12,8	2,8	6,8	-2,4	-0,7
Sep	-6,0	-1,4	-1,6	0,7	6,2	-7,8	-1,5
Oct	-2,8	-0,4	-8,3	-0,9	2,7	-2,6	-1,7
Nov	-5,5	-3,1	-5,8	3,8	1,0	-2,9	-1,8
Dec	-9,0	0,8	-1,1	-0,9	2,3		
Total	-2,5	-1,7	-16,9	11,7	3,9		

Table 3 – Seasonally adjusted motor trade sales at constant 2019 prices

Month	R million				Month-on-month % change			
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2020	2021	2022	2023
Jan	61 077	55 809	61 256	59 192	0,7	-4,8	4,9	-0,1
Feb	60 595	57 602	60 511	59 225	-0,8	3,2	-1,2	0,1
Mar	50 100	58 738	59 836	58 770	-17,3	2,0	-1,1	-0,8
Apr	11 382	59 183	59 371	58 454	-77,3	0,8	-0,8	-0,5
May	33 995	58 824	59 722	58 890	198,7	-0,6	0,6	0,7
Jun	53 547	57 298	56 962	59 308	57,5	-2,6	-4,6	0,7
Jul	53 912	50 593	57 539	58 884	0,7	-11,7	1,0	-0,7
Aug	56 735	57 576	60 587	58 709	5,2	13,8	5,3	-0,3
Sep	58 456	58 639	61 409	57 528	3,0	1,8	1,4	-2,0
Oct	56 616	58 122	59 893	57 563	-3,1	-0,9	-2,5	0,1
Nov	58 360	58 644	59 967	58 135	3,1	0,9	0,1	1,0
Dec	58 636	58 409	59 234		0,5	-0,4	-1,2	

Table 4 – Motor trade sales at constant 2019 prices by type of activity (R million)

Type of activity	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23 ¹
New vehicle sales	15 142	14 279	14 574	14 241	15 050	14 723
Used vehicle sales	11 638	11 503	12 271	11 487	11 963	12 756
Workshop income	2 928	2 691	2 896	2 659	2 773	2 835
Income from the sales of accessories	12 873	12 713	12 663	11 966	12 753	12 715
Income from fuel sales	15 565	16 480	16 312	16 209	15 756	16 499
Income from convenience store sales ²	1 280	1 334	1 360	1 384	1 346	1 403
Total	59 426	59 000	60 076	57 946	59 641	60 931

¹ Figures are preliminary.

² Includes 'other' sales and trading income.

Table 5 – Year-on-year percentage change in motor trade sales at constant 2019 prices by type of activity

Type of activity	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23
New vehicle sales	11,2	4,4	-10,7	-13,3	-2,8	-11,2
Used vehicle sales	-6,9	-10,0	-5,6	-11,6	-8,7	-2,1
Workshop income	1,8	-7,9	-3,6	-17,4	-4,3	-8,3
Income from the sales of accessories	12,2	8,2	2,1	-4,4	10,1	1,7
Income from fuel sales	7,9	8,1	5,6	-0,6	-5,6	1,9
Income from convenience store sales ¹	-0,5	-2,3	-0,8	-1,6	-7,9	4,0
Total	5,8	2,2	-2,4	-7,8	-2,6	-2,9

¹ Includes 'other' sales and trading income.

Table 6 – Contribution of each type of activity to the year-on-year percentage change in motor trade sales at constant 2019 prices

Type of activity	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23
New vehicle sales	2,7	1,0	-2,8	-3,5	-0,7	-3,0
Used vehicle sales	-1,5	-2,2	-1,2	-2,4	-1,9	-0,4
Workshop income	0,1	-0,4	-0,2	-0,9	-0,2	-0,4
Income from the sales of accessories	2,5	1,7	0,4	-0,9	1,9	0,3
Income from fuel sales	2,0	2,1	1,4	-0,2	-1,5	0,5
Income from convenience store sales ¹	0,0	-0,1	0,0	0,0	-0,2	0,1
Total	5,8	2,2	-2,4	-7,8	-2,6	-2,9

¹ Includes 'other' sales and trading income.

Table 7 – Motor trade sales at current prices (R million)

Month	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023 ¹
Jan	55 031	58 657	59 541	60 290	54 016	65 933	71 808
Feb	56 698	58 963	57 901	60 690	57 837	67 781	73 197
Mar	61 868	64 527	61 534	51 552	64 253	73 561	78 787
Apr	51 807	54 884	60 799	10 237	60 682	68 150	70 413
May	59 408	61 995	62 861	31 301	62 612	73 534	78 795
Jun	58 428	61 110	59 989	51 939	60 618	70 764	77 244
Jul	57 917	62 377	65 542	56 241	56 989	75 235	77 318
Aug	59 579	63 692	64 618	56 829	63 528	79 174	79 511
Sep	59 031	60 197	60 231	59 720	65 406	79 964	78 544
Oct	62 681	66 798	66 304	60 910	66 285	78 039	82 456
Nov	64 479	66 810	64 044	60 418	70 375	81 154	83 233
Dec	58 969	56 927	58 296	57 354	65 177	76 054	
Total	705 896	736 937	741 660	617 481	747 778	889 343	

¹ Figures for the latest month are preliminary.

Table 8 – Year-on-year percentage change in motor trade sales at current prices

Month	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2023 year-to-date
Jan	6,6	1,5	1,3	-10,4	22,1	8,9	8,9
Feb	4,0	-1,8	4,8	-4,7	17,2	8,0	8,4
Mar	4,3	-4,6	-16,2	24,6	14,5	7,1	8,0
Apr	5,9	10,8	-83,2	492,8	12,3	3,3	6,8
May	4,4	1,4	-50,2	100,0	17,4	7,2	6,9
Jun	4,6	-1,8	-13,4	16,7	16,7	9,2	7,3
Jul	7,7	5,1	-14,2	1,3	32,0	2,8	6,6
Aug	6,9	1,5	-12,1	11,8	24,6	0,4	5,7
Sep	2,0	0,1	-0,8	9,5	22,3	-1,8	4,8
Oct	6,6	-0,7	-8,1	8,8	17,7	5,7	4,9
Nov	3,6	-4,1	-5,7	16,5	15,3	2,6	4,7
Dec	-3,5	2,4	-1,6	13,6	16,7		
Total	4,4	0,6	-16,7	21,1	18,9		

Table 9 – Seasonally adjusted motor trade sales at current prices

Month	R million				Month-on-month % change			
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2020	2021	2022	2023
Jan	62 262	57 596	69 971	75 247	1,6	-3,3	4,3	-3,8
Feb	63 332	60 185	70 251	75 728	1,7	4,5	0,4	0,6
Mar	49 841	61 702	71 025	76 069	-21,3	2,5	1,1	0,5
Apr	14 526	64 373	72 325	75 905	-70,9	4,3	1,8	-0,2
May	30 721	62 192	72 366	76 811	111,5	-3,4	0,1	1,2
Jun	52 241	61 335	71 730	77 760	70,0	-1,4	-0,9	1,2
Jul	54 055	55 317	74 709	77 142	3,5	-9,8	4,2	-0,8
Aug	56 418	62 296	77 067	77 453	4,4	12,6	3,2	0,4
Sep	58 561	64 083	78 049	77 195	3,8	2,9	1,3	-0,3
Oct	57 710	64 325	76 402	80 098	-1,5	0,4	-2,1	3,8
Nov	57 928	66 588	77 460	79 492	0,4	3,5	1,4	-0,8
Dec	59 538	67 057	78 184		2,8	0,7	0,9	

Table 10 – Motor trade sales at current prices by type of activity (R million)

Type of activity	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23 ¹
New vehicle sales	18 976	18 282	18 697	18 241	19 388	19 020
Used vehicle sales	14 387	14 301	15 340	14 439	15 109	16 180
Workshop income	3 390	3 117	3 360	3 085	3 227	3 309
Income from the sales of accessories	16 641	16 548	16 749	15 800	16 876	16 886
Income from fuel sales	22 190	23 329	23 588	25 163	26 070	25 965
Income from convenience store sales ²	1 661	1 740	1 776	1 815	1 786	1 872
Total	77 244	77 318	79 511	78 544	82 456	83 233

¹ Figures are preliminary.

² Includes 'other' sales and trading income.

Table 11 – Year-on-year percentage change in motor trade sales at current prices by type of activity

Type of activity	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23
New vehicle sales	20,6	14,8	-1,8	-4,9	6,1	-4,1
Used vehicle sales	3,5	-0,7	3,4	-3,9	-1,6	4,6
Workshop income	6,8	-4,1	0,4	-14,4	-0,6	-4,5
Income from the sales of accessories	17,8	15,8	10,8	2,4	17,3	7,5
Income from fuel sales	-0,7	-9,5	-6,4	0,4	4,2	3,8
Income from convenience store sales ¹	12,0	9,0	9,3	7,8	1,1	14,2
Total	9,2	2,8	0,4	-1,8	5,7	2,6

¹ Includes 'other' sales and trading income.

Table 12 – Contribution of each type of activity to the year-on-year percentage change in motor trade sales at current prices

Type of activity	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23
New vehicle sales	4,6	3,1	-0,4	-1,2	1,4	-1,0
Used vehicle sales	0,7	-0,1	0,6	-0,7	-0,3	0,9
Workshop income	0,3	-0,2	0,0	-0,6	0,0	-0,2
Income from the sales of accessories	3,6	3,0	2,1	0,5	3,2	1,5
Income from fuel sales	-0,2	-3,3	-2,0	0,1	1,3	1,2
Income from convenience store sales ¹	0,3	0,2	0,2	0,2	0,0	0,3
Total	9,2	2,8	0,4	-1,8	5,7	2,6

¹ Includes 'other' sales and trading income.

Survey information

Introduction	1	Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) conducts a monthly survey covering enterprises in the motor trade industry (see point 4 below). This survey is based on a sample drawn from Stats SA's 2023 statistical business register (SBR) that contains businesses registered at the South African Revenue Service (SARS) for value-added tax (VAT). Stats SA continuously updates its SBR, which is linked to the SARS administrative data.
	2	In order to improve timeliness, some information for the latest month had to be estimated due to late response. These estimates will be revised in future statistical releases as soon as information becomes available. Published motor trade sales estimates exclude VAT.
Purpose of the survey	3	The results of the monthly motor trade sales survey are used to compile estimates of the gross domestic product (GDP) and its components, which are used in monitoring the state of the economy and formulation of economic policy. These statistics are also used in the analysis of comparative business and industry performance.
Scope of the survey	4	The survey collects information from a sample of enterprises in South Africa that are predominantly involved in motor trade. These enterprises include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • motor vehicle dealers, filling stations and workshops; • motor cycle dealers; • spares and accessories; • tyre dealers; • automotive electricians; • radiator repairs; • panel beaters and spray painters; • 'other' specialised motor repair services; and • 'other' motor trade.
Classification	5	The 1993 edition of the <i>Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities</i> (SIC), Fifth Edition, Report No. 09-90-02, was used to classify the statistical units in the survey. The SIC is based on the 1990 <i>International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities</i> (ISIC) with suitable adaptations for local conditions. Each enterprise is classified to the industry which reflects its predominant activity. Statistics in this publication are presented at SIC group four-digit level.
Collection rate	6	The preliminary collection rate for the survey on motor trade sales for November 2023 was 63,9%. The improved collection rate for October 2023 was 70,8%.
Statistical unit	7	The statistical unit for which information is compiled and published is the enterprise, defined as a legal unit or a combination of legal units that includes and directly controls all functions necessary to carry out its sales and service activities.
Revised figures	8	Revised figures are mainly due to late submission of data to Stats SA, or respondents reporting revisions or corrections to their figures. Preliminary figures, as indicated in the relevant tables, are subject to change and when revised will not be indicated as such.
Related publications	9	Users may also refer to the following publication available from Stats SA: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Stats in Brief</i> issued annually.

- Rounding-off of figures** 10 Where figures have been rounded off, discrepancies may occur between sums of the component items and the totals.
- Historical data** 11 Historical motor trade data are available on the Stats SA website. To access the data electronically, use the following link: [Click to download historical data](#).
- Past publications** 12 Past motor trade releases are available on the Stats SA website. To access the releases electronically, use the following link: [Click to download past releases](#).

Technical notes

- Survey methodology and design** 1 The survey is conducted monthly. Questionnaires are sent to a sample of 978 enterprises from a population of 10 515 enterprises. Completed questionnaires are required to be returned to Stats SA within 10 days after the end of the reference month. Email, fax and telephone reminders are used to follow up on non-respondents.
- 2 A stratified random sample was drawn in April 2023 from Stats SA's statistical business register (SBR) at the SIC four-digit level. Strata were formed using a combination of SIC and the measure of size classes for enterprises (see point 3 below).

The Neyman optimal allocation formula given below was used to allocate samples to each stratum.

$$n_h = n * (N_h * S_h) / [\sum (N_i * S_i)].$$

Neyman allocation formula not only allocates sample sizes to each stratum but also calculates the relative precision for each stratum as well as the relative precision for all strata. The relative precision for these strata was 6,6%.

- Class limits** 3 Each motor trade classification group (SIC at four-digit level) is divided into four size groups. All large enterprises (size group one) are completely enumerated. Simple random sampling is applied to medium, small and very small enterprises (size groups two, three and four). The total value of sales of the large enterprises (size group one) per classification group is added to the weighted totals of size groups two, three and four to reflect the total value of sales.

Measure of size classes (Rand)

Enterprise size	Size group	Lower limit	Upper limit
Very small	4	2 663 691	18 000 000
Small	3	18 000 001	85 500 000
Medium	2	85 500 001	175 500 000
Large	1	175 500 001	

- Sample weighting** 4 For those strata not completely enumerated, the weights to produce estimates are the inverse ratio of the sampling fraction, modified to take account of non-response in the survey. Stratum estimates are calculated and then aggregated with the completely enumerated stratum to form classification group estimates. These procedures are consistent with international best practice.

- Seasonal adjustment** **5** Seasonally adjusted estimates are generated each month using the X-12-ARIMA Seasonal Adjustment Program developed by the United States Census Bureau. Seasonal adjustment is a means of removing the estimated effects of normal seasonal variation from the series so that the effects of other influences on the series can be recognised more clearly. Seasonal adjustment does not aim to remove irregular or non-seasonal influences which may be present in any particular month. Influences that are volatile or unsystematic can still make it difficult to interpret the movement of the series even after adjustment for seasonal variations. Therefore, the month-to-month movements of seasonally adjusted estimates may not be reliable indicators of trend behaviour. The X-12-ARIMA procedure for motor trade sales is described in more detail on the Stats SA website at:
[Click to download seasonal adjustment motor trade sales January 2023.](#)
- Trend cycle** **6** The trend is the long-term pattern or movement of a time series. The X-12-ARIMA Seasonal Adjustment Program is used for smoothing seasonally adjusted estimates to estimates of the underlying trend cycle.
- Constant prices** **7** Motor trade sales at constant prices by type of activity are obtained by deflating estimated sales at current prices by the relevant weighted price index. To obtain total motor trade sales at constant prices, estimates of the deflated sales for each type of activity are aggregated.
- Reliability of estimates** **8** Data presented in this publication are based on information obtained from a sample and are, therefore, subject to sampling variability; that is, they may differ from the figures that would have been produced if the data had been obtained from all enterprises in the motor trade industry in South Africa. Estimates are subject to sampling and non-sampling errors.

9 Inaccuracies may occur because of imperfections in reporting by enterprises and errors made in the collection and processing of the data. Inaccuracies of this kind are referred to as non-sampling errors. Every effort is made to minimise non-sampling errors by careful design of questionnaires, testing them in pilot studies, editing reported data and implementing efficient operating procedures. Fluctuations may occur in consecutive months as a result of seasonal and economic factors.
- Relative standard error** **10** One measure is the standard error (SE), which indicates the extent to which an estimate might have varied by chance because only a sample of enterprises was used. The relative standard error (RSE) provides an immediate indication of the percentage errors likely to have occurred due to sampling, and thus avoids the need to refer to the size of the estimate.

Estimates of total motor trade sales within 95% confidence limits – November 2023

	Lower limit (R million)	Sales (R million)	Upper limit (R million)	Relative standard error (RSE) %
Motor trade sales	76 113	83 233	90 353	4,3

- Month-on-month percentage change** **11** The month-on-month percentage change in a variable for any given month is the change between that month and the previous month, expressed as a percentage of the latter.
- Year-on-year percentage change** **12** The year-on-year percentage change in a variable for any given period is the change between that period and the corresponding period of the previous year, expressed as a percentage of the latter.
- Contribution (percentage points)** **13** The contribution (percentage points) to the year-on-year percentage change is calculated by multiplying the percentage change of each type of activity by its corresponding weight, divided by 100. The weight is the percentage contribution of each type of activity to total motor trade sales in the corresponding period of the previous year.

Glossary

Enterprise

An enterprise is a legal entity or a combination of legal units that includes and directly controls all functions necessary to carry out its sales activities.

Industry

An industry is made up of enterprises engaged in the same or similar kinds of economic activity. Industries are defined in the *System of National Accounts (SNA)* in the same way as in the *Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities (SIC)*, Fifth Edition, Report No. 09-90-02 of January 1993.

Symbols and abbreviations

GDP	Gross domestic product
ISIC	International Standard Industrial Classification
SARS	South African Revenue Service
SBR	Statistical business register
SIC	Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities
Stats SA	Statistics South Africa
VAT	Value-added tax

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