Purchases Report

September 2026

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Important notes:
As of November 2016, unless explicitly specified otherwise, RTA uses 3-month moving average for reporting on inventory (including historical data), hence, affecting calculated values of purchases and Inventory-to-Sales Ratio. In this way, any exaggerations that might be manifest in monthly purchases data, due to regular inventory counts by members, are not emphasized.

Highlighted areas in the graphs represent time of recessions.

Explanation about how to read box plots and histograms can be found in the Appendix section.

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Disclaimer: The data and report presented herein are based solely on RTA member monthly reports on production and inventory. Occasionally, members send corrections to previously submitted data. If and when these corrections are received they are incorporated at that time. Users of this report should note while all care is taken to accurately compile the data submitted by member companies, that no warranty is made as to the accuracy of any RTA member reports.

Highlights

In September, the twelve-month rolling total for production continued to decline compared with a year earlier while purchases were trending higher. Quarterly data indicate that production was significantly below expectations, while purchases were near the seasonal median. In September, production was significantly below seasonal median value, almost in the outlier territory. Purchases were near the seasonal median. The inventory-to-sales ratio improved.

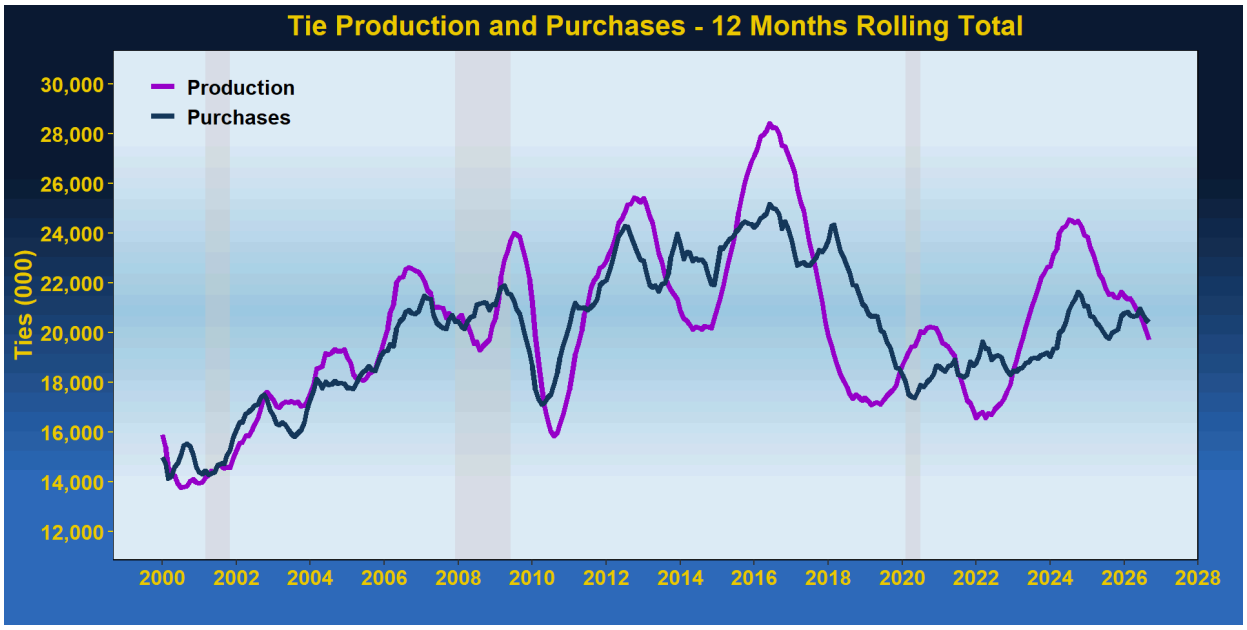
Long-Term Trends

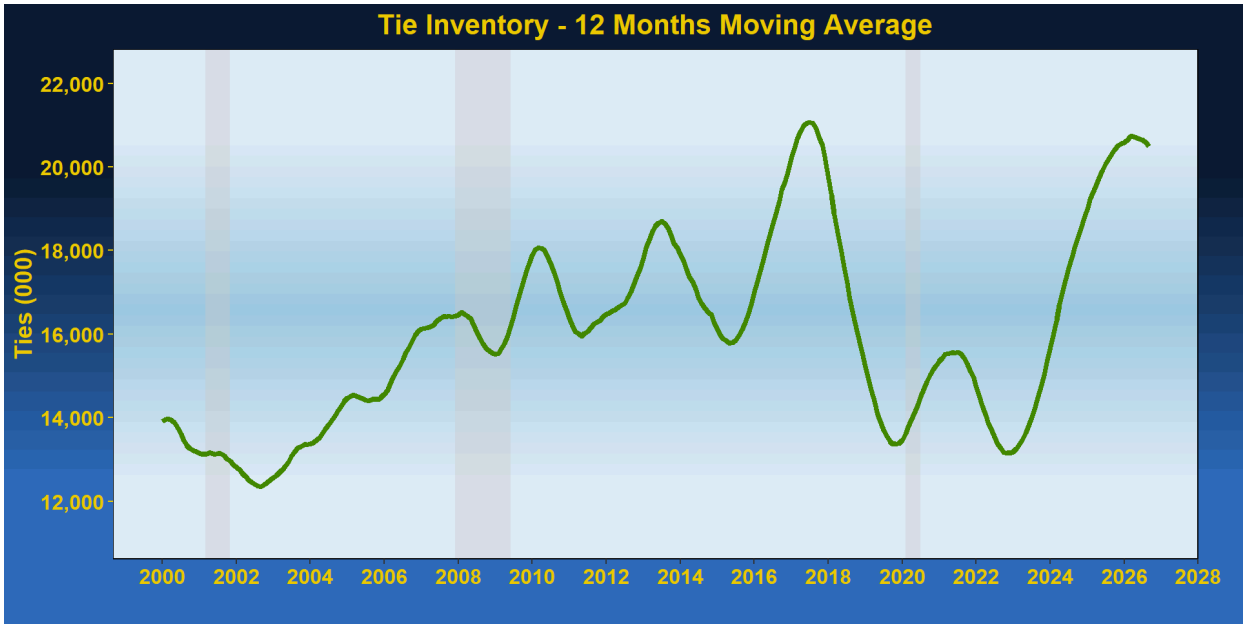
Production dropped at a 8.6% annual rate.
Purchases advanced at a 2% annual rate.
Inventory's 12 month moving average (12MMA) advanced by 0.9% from a year ago levels.
Inventory-to-Sales Ratio's 12MMA expanded from 0.98 to 1.

Table of Annual Observations

Production and Purchases are 12 months rolling totals, Inventory and ISR are 12MMA

Date	Production	Purchases	Inventory	ISR
September 2025	21,563	20,010	20,319	0.98
September 2026	19,712	20,412	20,493	1.00







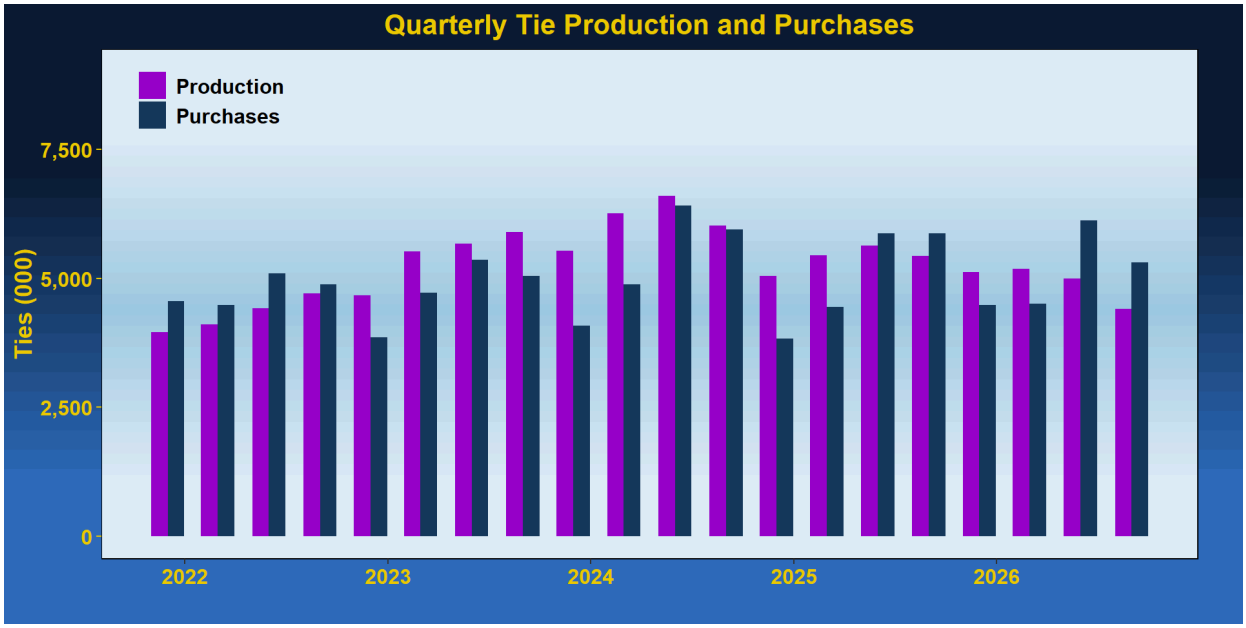
Analysis of Quarterly Data

Production in Q3 came down by 11.8% from previous quarter and dropped by 18.8% from a year ago.
For the same intervals, purchases dwindled by 13.4% and decreased by 9.6% respectively.
Inventory's 3MMA came down by 4.4% from previous quarter and came down by 3.5% from a year ago levels.
From Q2 2026 to Q3 2026, the 3MMA of Inventory-to-Sales Ratio dwindled from 1.01 to 0.96. One year ago, the ratio was 1.02.

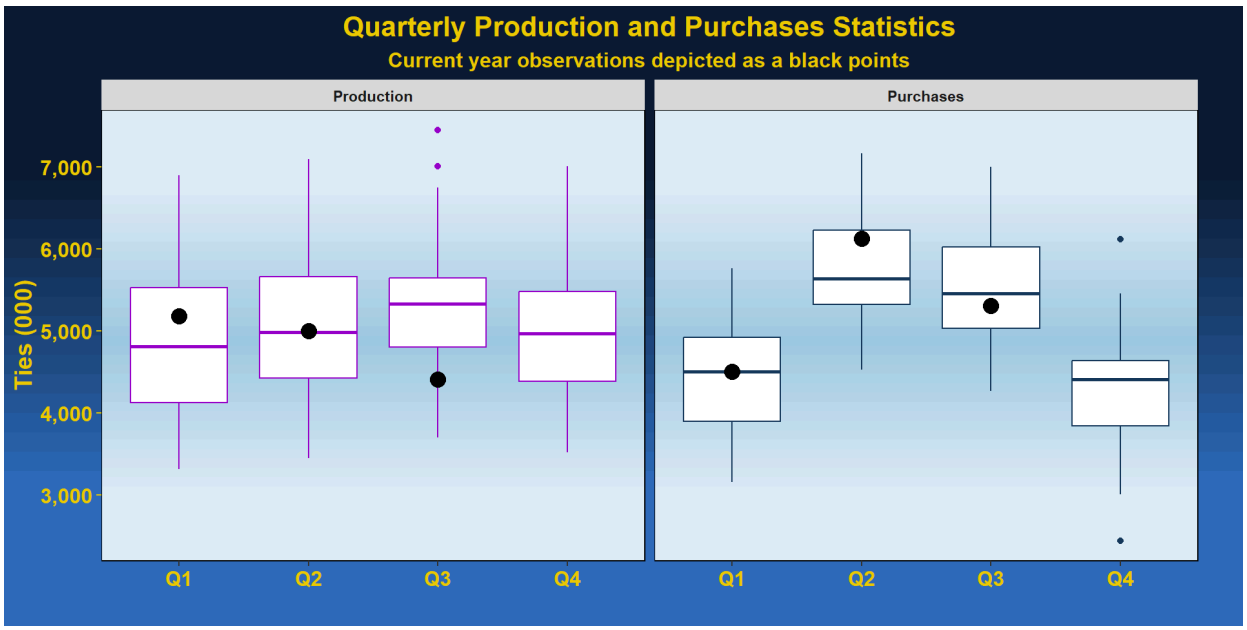
Table of Quarterly Observations

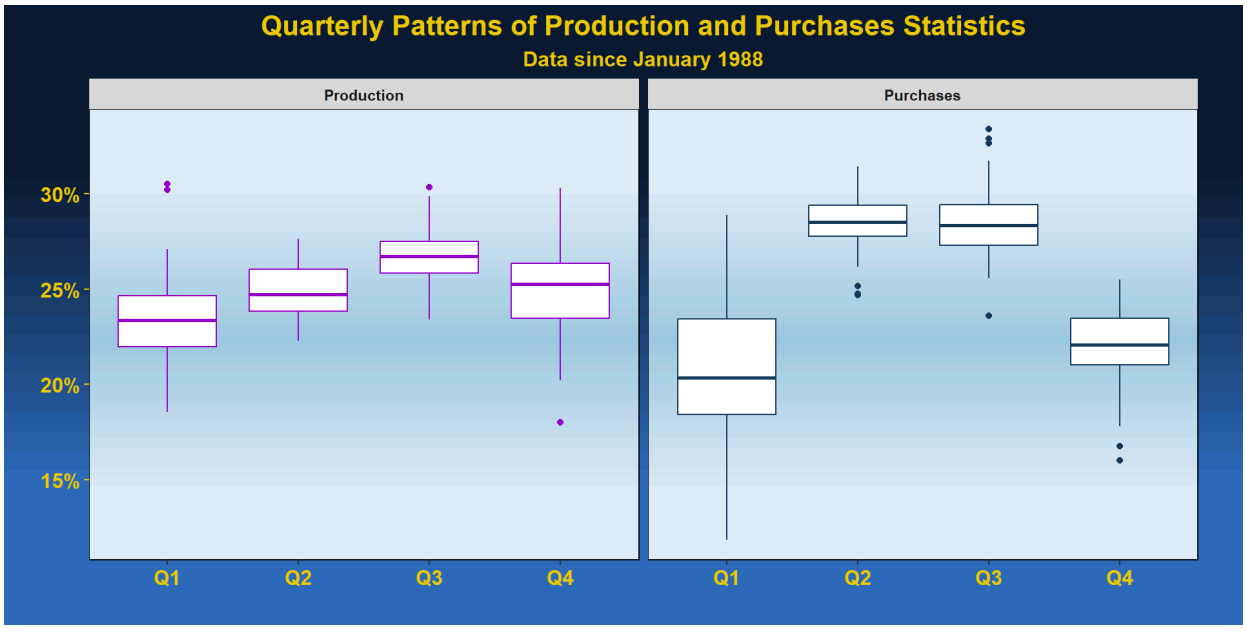
Production and Purchases Quarterly Sum, Inventory and ISR - 3MMA

Date	Production	Purchases	Inventory	ISR
September 2025	5,435	5,869	20,127	1.02
June 2026	5,000	6,127	20,322	1.01
September 2026	4,412	5,306	19,428	0.96



Quarterly pattern of production and purchases uses data from January 2000. The top graph shows data analysis within each quarter. It shows the median, upper quartile and lower quartile boundary (a more detailed explanation is available in the Appendix section). It also displays what the production and purchases were in each quarter of reporting year represented by black points in relation to quarterly statistical values. The second graph shows the contribution of each quarter to the total annual production and purchases.



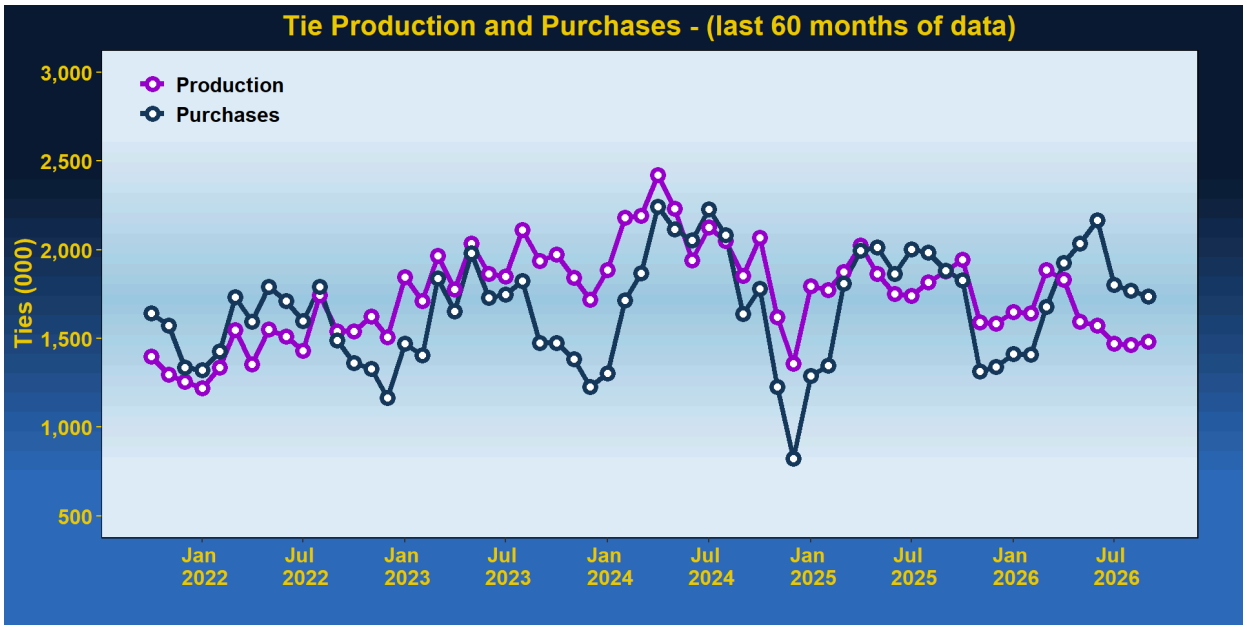


Analysis of Monthly Data

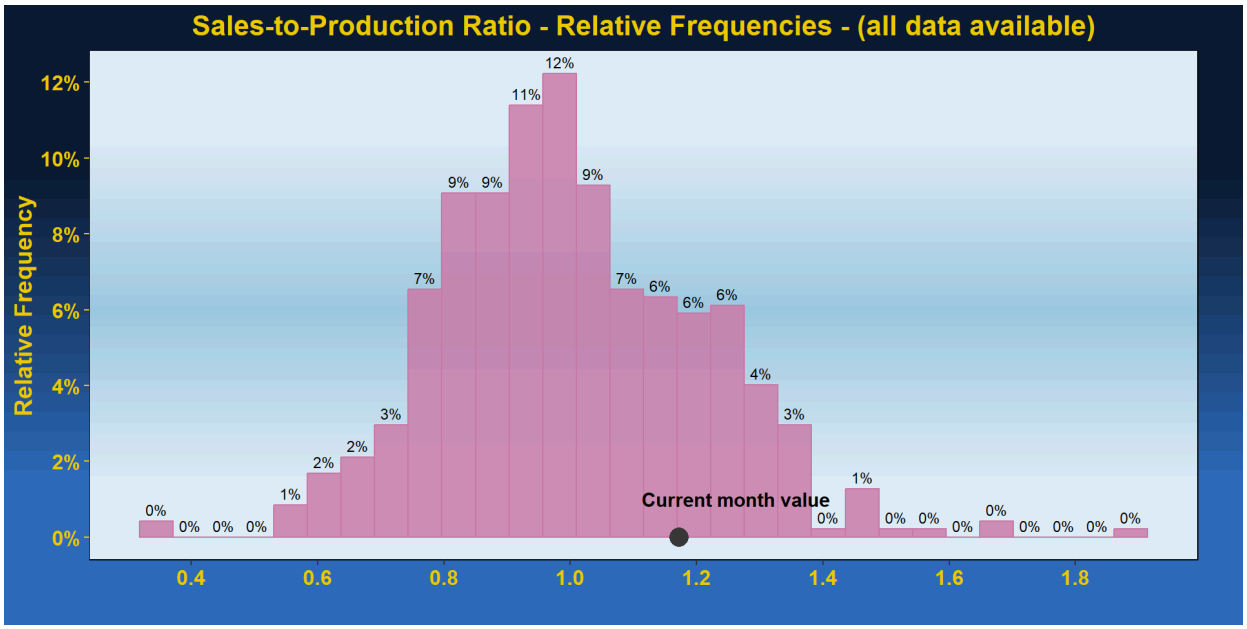
Production increased by 1.2% from previous month and dropped by 21.3% from a year ago.
For the same time intervals, purchases dwindled by 2% and dwindled by 7.8% respectively.
Inventory levels dwindled by 1.3% from previous month and dropped by 3.5% from a year ago levels.
The Inventory-to-Sales Ratio decreased from 0.96 to 0.95 compared to month ago, and dwindled from 1.01 a year ago.

Table of Monthly Observations

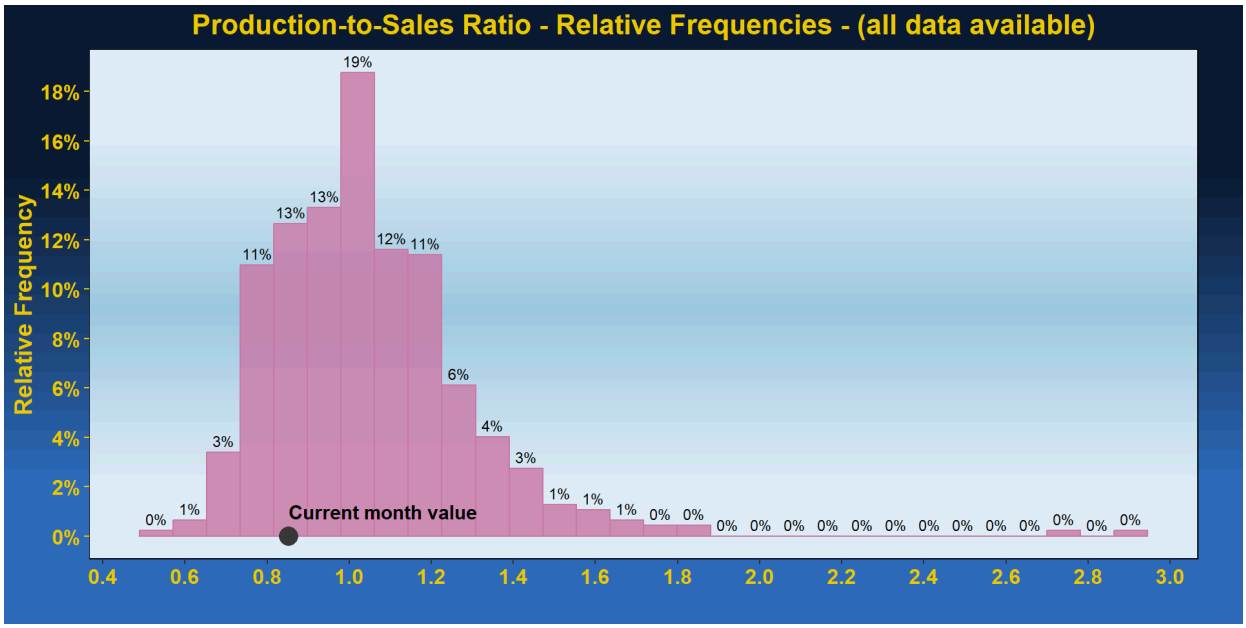
Date	Production	Purchases	Inventory	ISR
September 2025	1,880	1,882	20,127	1.01
August 2026	1,462	1,770	19,683	0.96
September 2026	1,480	1,735	19,428	0.95

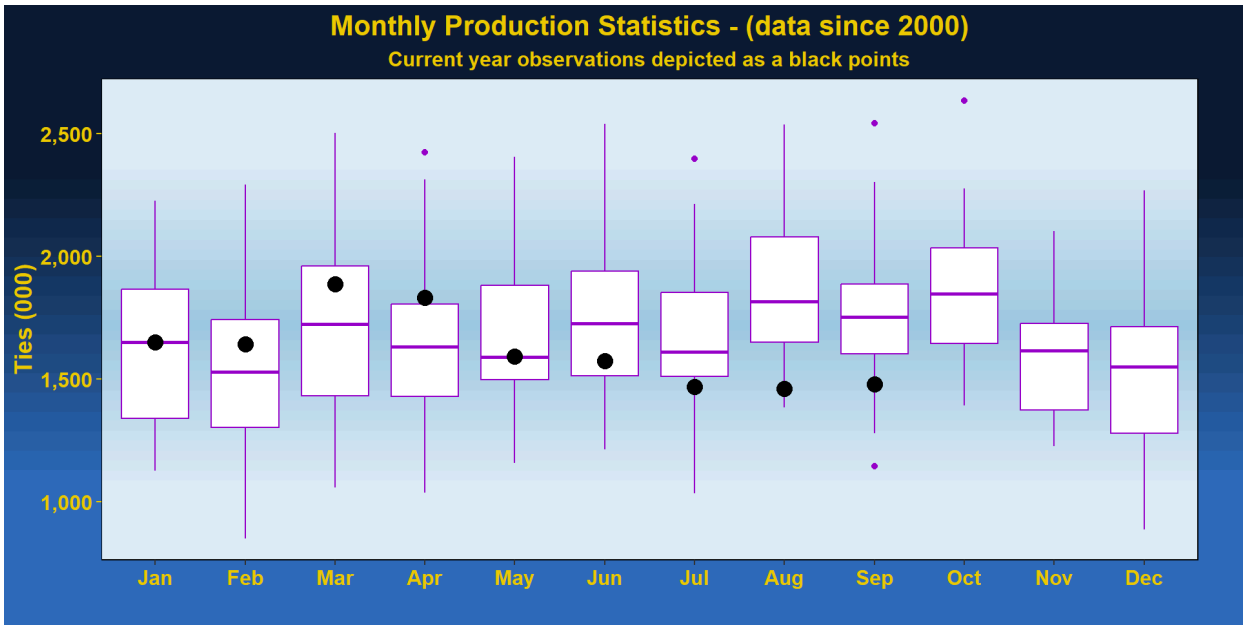


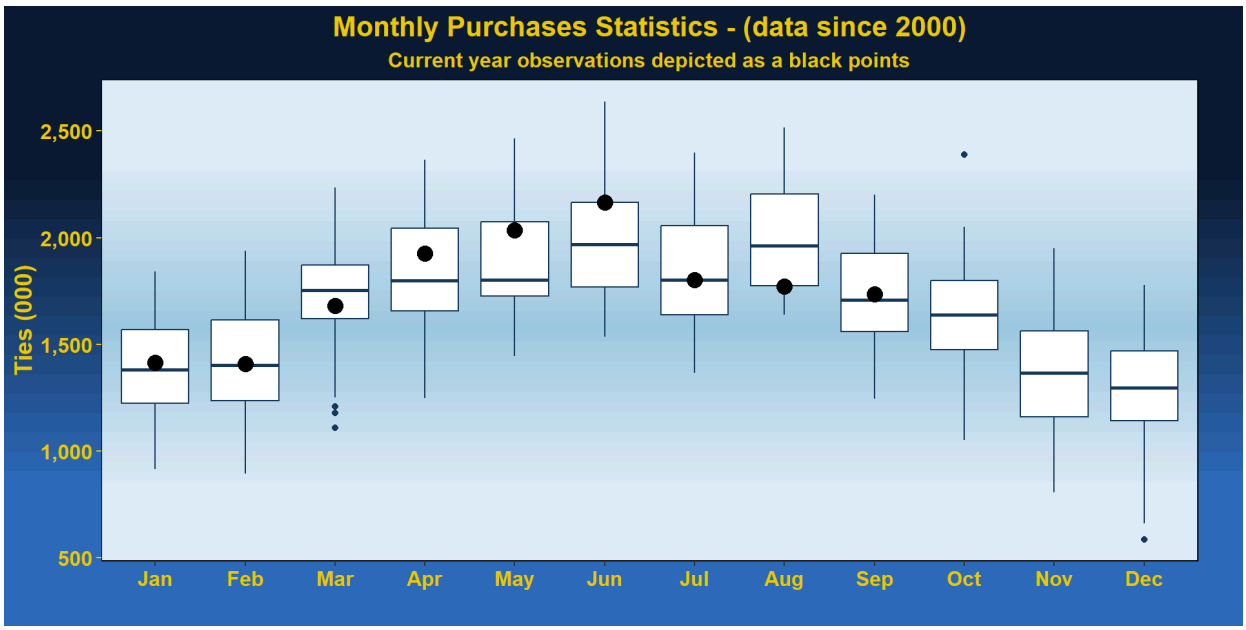
Sales-to-Production Ratio shows the replenishment/diminishment of inventory. Ratio above one signals diminishment and ratio below one replenishment of inventory stock.

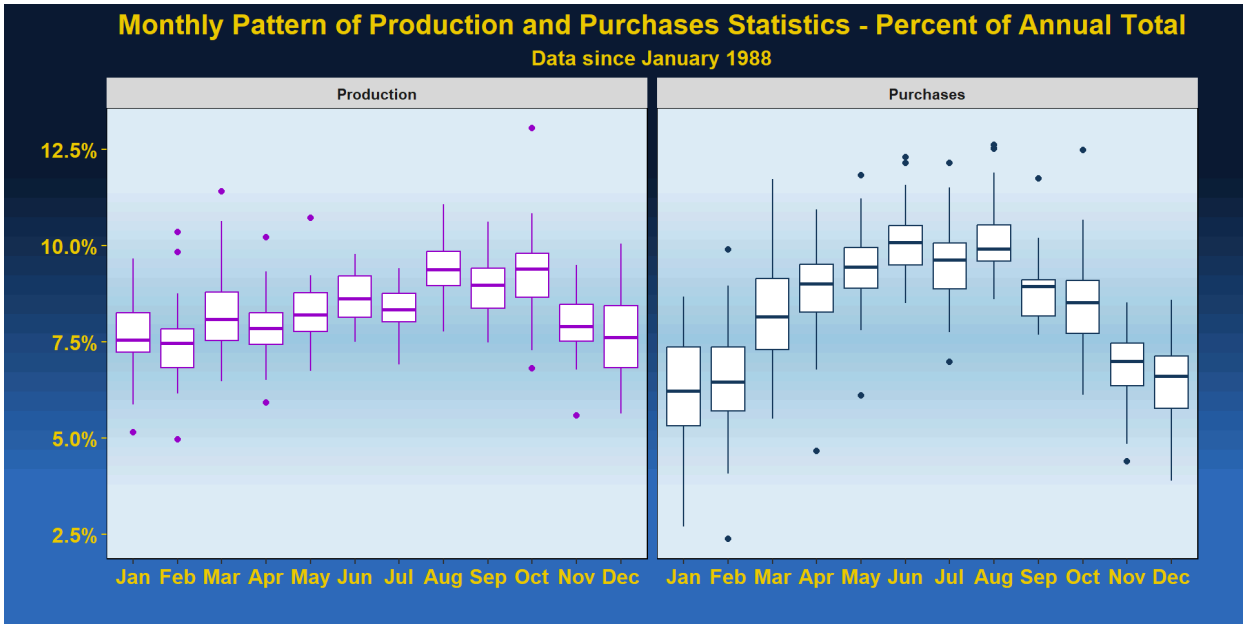


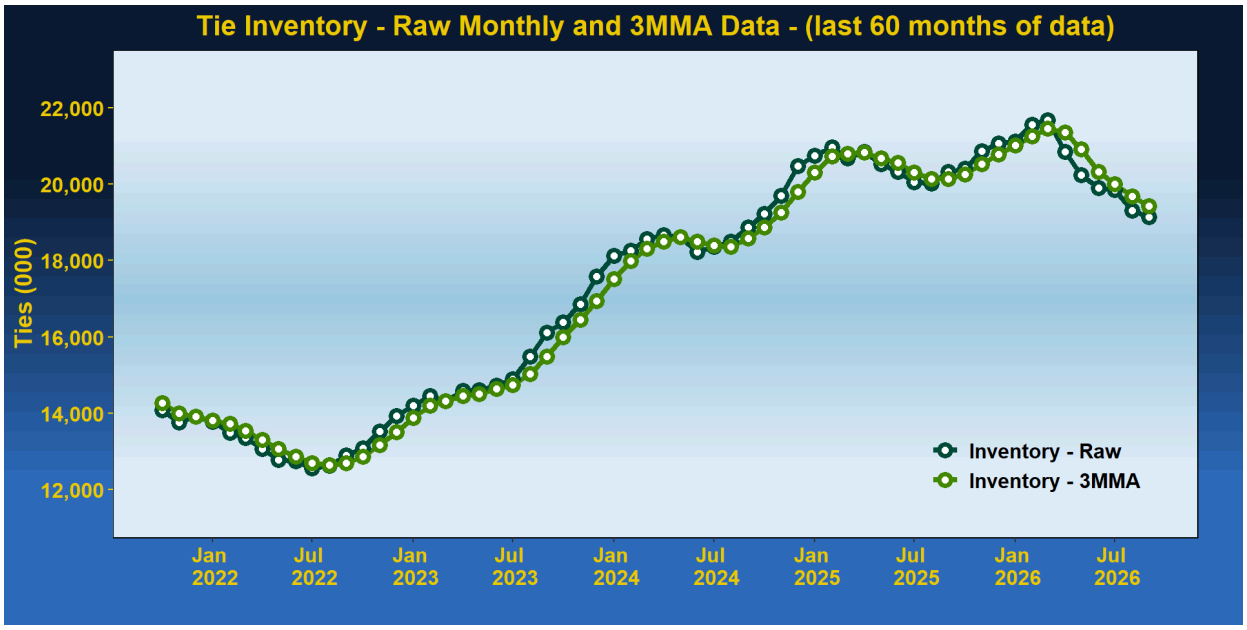
The folowing graph tells the same story as the graph above, just the ratio is reversed - Production-to-Sales Ratio.

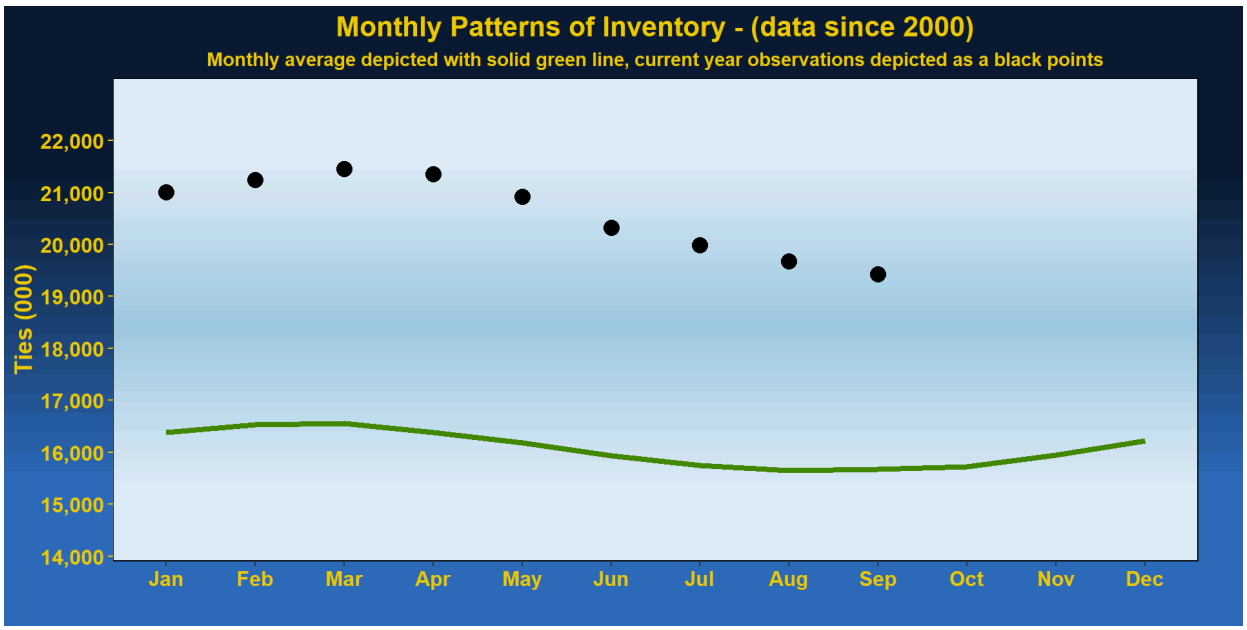

Production-to-Sales Ratio - Relative Frequencies - (all data available)
Relative Frequency
18%
16%
14%
12%
10%
8%
6%
4%
2%
0%
19%
13%
13%
11%
12%
11%
6%
4%
3%
3%
1%
1%
1%
0%
0%
0%
1%
3%
0%
Current month value
0.4
0.6
0.8
1.0
1.2
1.4
1.6
1.8
2.0
2.2
2.4
2.6
2.8
3.0

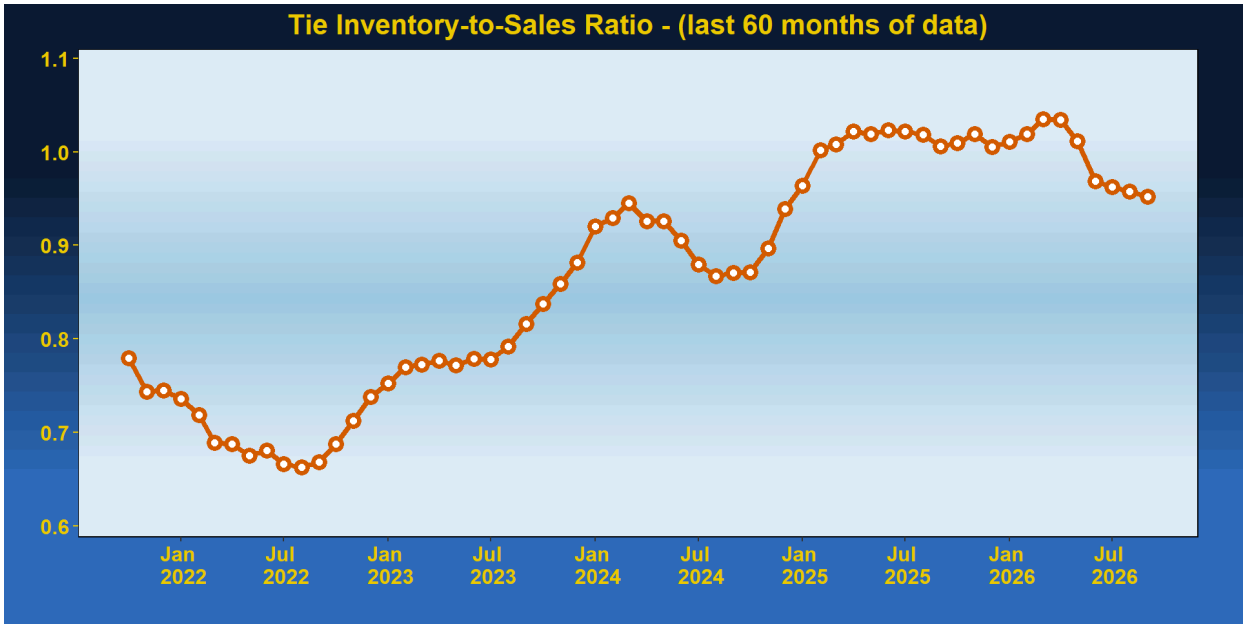

Monthly Production Statistics - (data since 2000)
Current year observations depicted as a black points
Ties (000)
2,500
2,000
1,500
1,000
Jan
Feb
Mar
Apr
May
Jun
Jul
Aug
Sep
Oct
Nov
Dec


Monthly Purchases Statistics - (data since 2000)
Current year observations depicted as a black points
Ties (000)
2,500
2,000
1,500
1,000
500
Jan
Feb
Mar
Apr
May
Jun
Jul
Aug
Sep
Oct
Nov
Dec

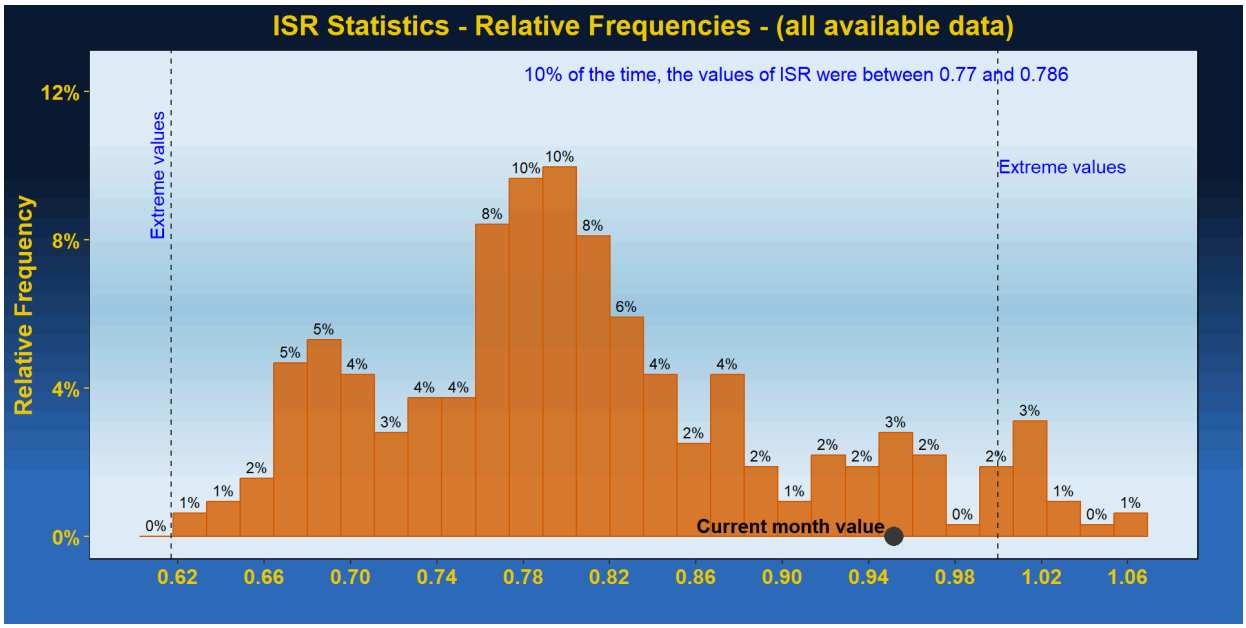

Monthly Pattern of Production and Purchases Statistics - Percent of Annual Total
Data since January 1988
Production
Purchases
12.5%
10.0%
7.5%
5.0%
2.5%
Jan Feb Mar Apr May Jun Jul Aug Sep Oct Nov Dec
Jan Feb Mar Apr May Jun Jul Aug Sep Oct Nov Dec


Tie Inventory - Raw Monthly and 3MMA Data - (last 60 months of data)
Ties (000)
22,000
20,000
18,000
16,000
14,000
12,000
Inventory - Raw
Inventory - 3MMA
Jan 2022
Jul 2022
Jan 2023
Jul 2023
Jan 2024
Jul 2024
Jan 2025
Jul 2025
Jan 2026
Jul 2026

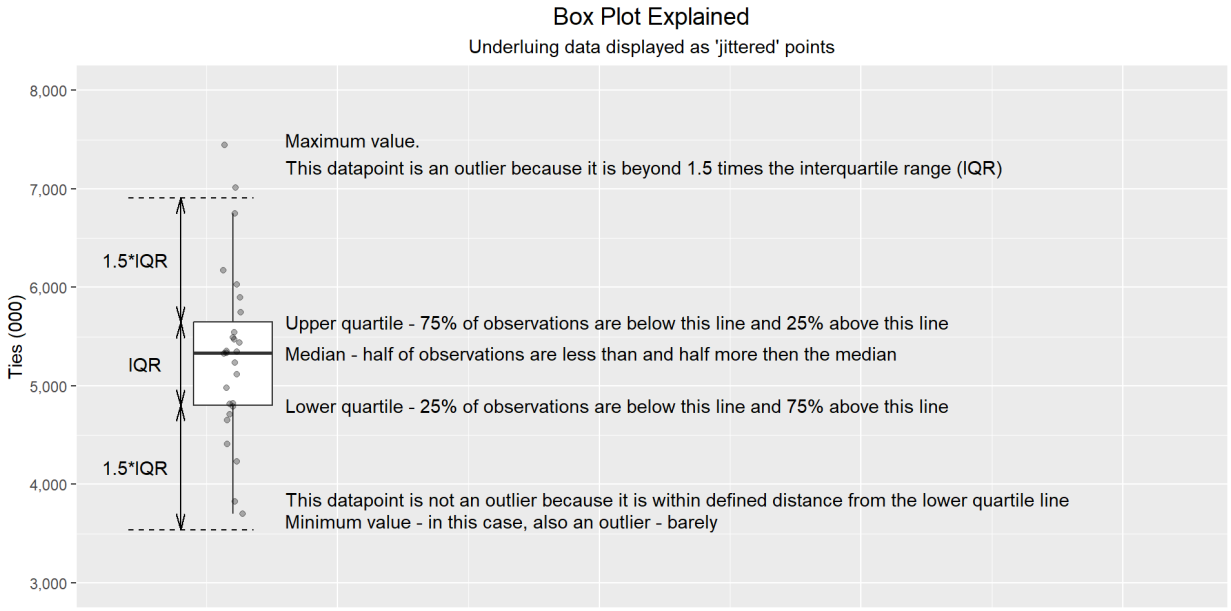

Monthly Patterns of Inventory - (data since 2000)
Monthly average depicted with solid green line, current year observations depicted as a black points
Ties (000)
22,000
21,000
20,000
19,000
18,000
17,000
16,000
15,000
14,000
Jan Feb Mar Apr May Jun Jul Aug Sep Oct Nov Dec

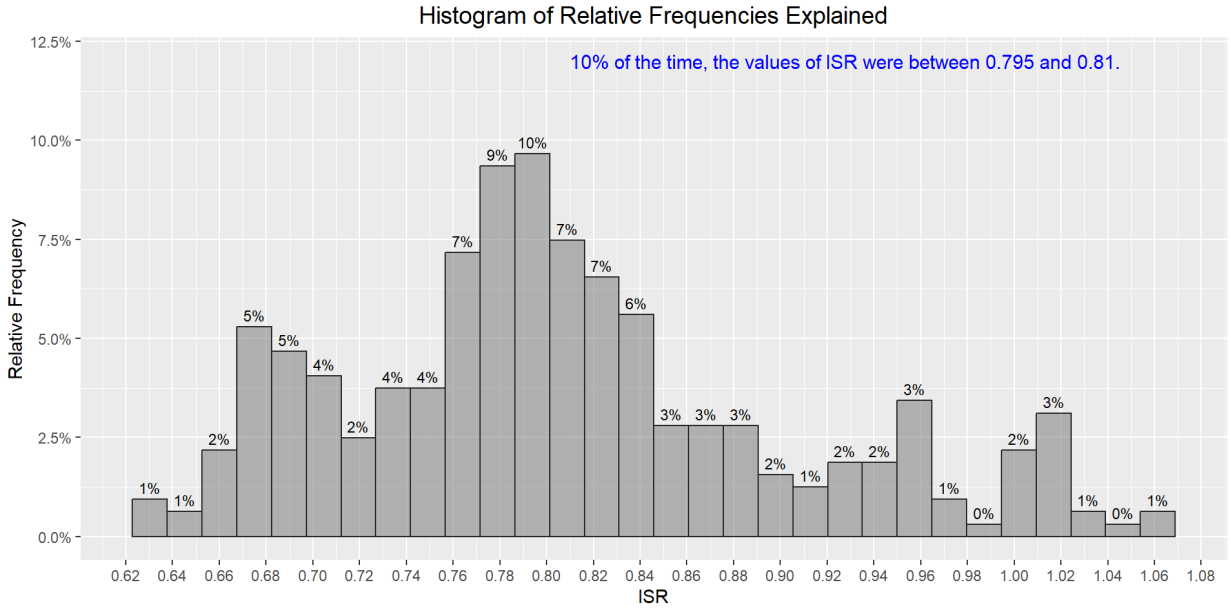


Inventory-to-Sales Ratio (ISR) histogram of relative frequencies shows the monthly ISR data distribution and the black point represents the value for the current reporting month.



Appendix


Box Plot Explained
Underluing data displayed as 'jittered' points
Ties (000)
8,000
7,000
6,000
5,000
4,000
3,000
1.5*IQR
IQR
1.5*IQR
Maximum value.
This datapoint is an outlier because it is beyond 1.5 times the interquartile range (IQR)
Upper quartile - 75% of observations are below this line and 25% above this line
Median - half of observations are less than and half more then the median
Lower quartile - 25% of observations are below this line and 75% above this line
This datapoint is not an outlier because it is within defined distance from the lower quartile line
Minimum value - in this case, also an outlier - barely


Histogram of Relative Frequencies Explained
10% of the time, the values of ISR were between 0.795 and 0.81.
Relative Frequency
12.5%
10.0%
7.5%
5.0%
2.5%
0.0%
1% 1% 2% 5% 5% 4% 2% 4% 4% 7% 9% 10% 7% 7% 6% 3% 3% 3% 2% 1% 2% 2% 3% 1% 0% 2% 3% 1% 0% 1%
0.62 0.64 0.66 0.68 0.70 0.72 0.74 0.76 0.78 0.80 0.82 0.84 0.86 0.88 0.90 0.92 0.94 0.96 0.98 1.00 1.02 1.04 1.06 1.08
ISR