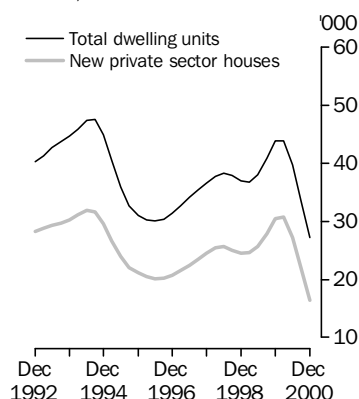


BUILDING ACTIVITY
DWELLING UNIT
COMMENCEMENTS

AUSTRALIA
PRELIMINARY

EMBARGO: 11:30AM (CANBERRA TIME) MON 19 MAR 2001

Dwelling units commenced
Number, Trend



DECEMBER QTR KEY FIGURES

	<i>Dec qtr 00</i>	<i>% change Sep qtr 00 to Dec qtr 00</i>	<i>% change Dec qtr 99 to Dec qtr 00</i>
TREND ESTIMATES			
Dwelling units commenced			
New private sector houses	16 402	-25.7	-46.2
Total dwelling units	27 182	-19.3	-38.1
.....			
	<i>Dec qtr 00</i>	<i>% change Sep qtr 00 to Dec qtr 00</i>	<i>% change Dec qtr 99 to Dec qtr 00</i>
SEASONALLY ADJUSTED			
Dwelling units commenced			
New private sector houses	18 355	-1.7	-35.1
Total dwelling units	29 218	-0.6	-30.2

DECEMBER QTR KEY POINTS

TREND ESTIMATES

- The trend estimate for the total number of dwelling units commenced fell by 19.3% in the December quarter 2000, following falls in the June and September quarters.
- Over the same period, the fall in new private sector houses has been more marked, with commencements down 25.7% compared with the September quarter.

SEASONALLY ADJUSTED ESTIMATES

- In seasonally adjusted terms, the total number of dwelling units commenced during the December quarter fell slightly (-0.6%), following large falls in the June (-6.7%) and September (-30.9%) quarters. The number of commencements recorded in the December quarter was the lowest since June 1987.
- Commencements of private sector houses fell by 1.7% in the December quarter to 18,355. This was the lowest number of commencements since the March quarter 1983 and 35.1% down on the December quarter 1999.

ORIGINAL ESTIMATES

- The total number of dwelling units commenced fell by 214 (0.7%) to 29,703. New house commencements rose by 2.3% to 19,426 but other dwellings were down 5.9% to 10,277.

- For further information about these and related statistics, contact Andrea Woods on Adelaide 08 8237 7350, or the National Information Service on 1300 135 070.

NOTES

FORTHCOMING ISSUES

ISSUE (Quarter)

RELEASE DATE

March 2001

21 June 2001

June 2001

13 September 2001

SIGNIFICANT REVISIONS THIS ISSUE

The total number of dwelling units commenced in the September quarter 2000 has been revised upwards by 617 (+2.1%) for Australia. This included upward revisions of 489 (+9.0%) in Queensland and 96 (1.1%) in New South Wales.

The seasonally adjusted and trend series have been revised as a result of the annual re-analysis of seasonal factors. For more details, see Explanatory Notes 10–15.

SAMPLING ERRORS

The estimates in this publication are based on a sample survey of private sector house building activity and a complete enumeration of other building activity. Because data are not collected for all private sector house building jobs, the published estimates are subject to sampling variability. Relative standard errors give a measure of this variability and therefore indicate the degree of confidence that can be attached to the data.

RELATIVE STANDARD ERRORS

Relative standard errors for the number of new private sector houses and total dwelling units commenced in the December quarter 2000 are given below. There is 67% confidence that the actual value would be within one standard error of the sample estimate, and 95% confidence that it lies within two standard errors.

.....

	<i>New private sector houses</i>	<i>Total dwellings</i>
	%	%

.....

New South Wales	3.9	1.9
Victoria	3.3	1.7
Queensland	2.4	1.5
South Australia	3.5	3.1
Western Australia	3.9	3.5
Tasmania	2.2	2.2
Northern Territory
Australian Capital Territory	0.7	1.5
Australia	1.6	1.3

.....

Dennis Trewin
Australian Statistician

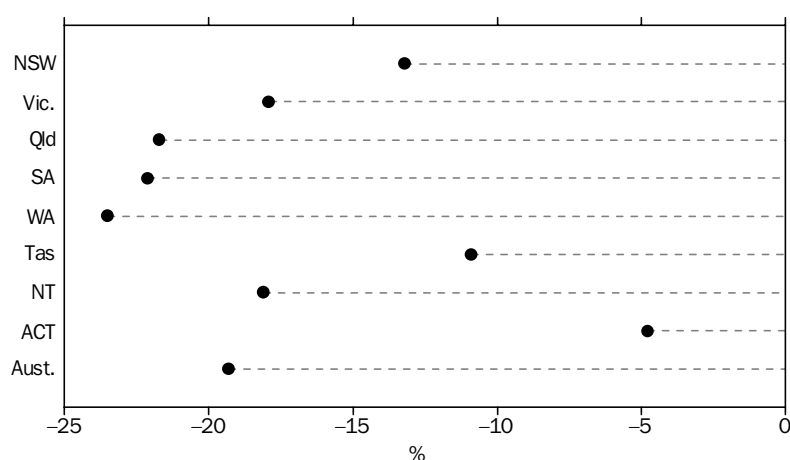
STATE ESTIMATES

TOTAL NUMBER OF DWELLING UNITS COMMENCED

Trend estimates

- The trend estimate of the total number of dwelling units commenced during the December quarter 2000 fell for all States and Territories for the third successive quarter. For the latest quarter, the largest fall was for Western Australia (–23.5%) followed by South Australia (–22.1%), Queensland (–21.7%), the Northern Territory (–18.1%), Victoria (–17.9%), New South Wales (–13.2%) and Tasmania (–10.9%), while the Australian Capital Territory (–4.8%) fell the least.

Trend percentage change from previous quarter



Seasonally adjusted estimates

- In seasonally adjusted terms, South Australia recorded the largest fall (–12.5%) in the total number of dwelling units commenced, followed by Victoria (–8.5%), Queensland (–7.7%) and Western Australia (–6.6%). In contrast, rises were recorded in the Australian Capital Territory (+19.7%), Tasmania (+17.2%), and New South Wales (+14.3%).

Original estimates

- The Northern Territory recorded the largest fall in the total number of dwelling units commenced in the December quarter, down 38.9%, having increased in the previous quarter. The next largest fall was in South Australia (–7.8%), followed by Victoria (–7.4%) and Western Australia (–6.6%). Increases were recorded in Tasmania (+44.5%), the Australian Capital Territory (+33.7%), New South Wales (+8.0%) and Queensland (+1.0%).
- New house commencements rose by 2.3%, with the highest rises in the Australian Capital Territory (31.9%) and Tasmania (31.8%). Other dwellings fell 5.9%.
- Public sector dwelling commencements fell by 49.4%, with all States and Territories recording a decrease.

TABLE 1. NUMBER OF DWELLING UNITS COMMENCED

<i>Period</i>	<i>New houses</i>		<i>Total dwelling units (includes conversions etc)</i>	
	<i>Private sector</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Private sector</i>	<i>Total</i>
ORIGINAL				
1999 Sep. qtr	27,938	28,472	41,197	42,659
Dec. qtr	29,480	29,983	41,547	42,509
2000 Mar. qtr	31,293	31,675	42,956	43,892
Jun qtr	29,666	29,997	42,048	42,805
Sep. qtr	18,583	18,996	28,546	29,917
Dec. qtr	19,138	19,426	29,009	29,703
SEASONALLY ADJUSTED				
1999 Sep. qtr	28,023	28,381	40,812	41,986
Dec. qtr	28,297	28,907	40,588	41,843
2000 Mar. qtr	33,580	34,011	44,609	45,632
Jun qtr	28,794	29,151	41,917	42,577
Sep. qtr	18,681	18,967	28,241	29,407
Dec. qtr	18,355	18,716	28,325	29,218
TREND ESTIMATES				
1999 Sep. qtr	27,821	28,313	39,601	40,843
Dec. qtr	30,478	30,970	42,749	43,886
2000 Mar. qtr	30,757	31,200	42,886	43,879
Jun qtr	27,277	27,644	38,739	39,664
Sep. qtr	22,067	22,383	32,756	33,683
Dec. qtr	16,402	16,971	26,209	27,182

TABLE 2. NUMBER OF DWELLING UNITS COMMENCED, PERCENTAGE CHANGE

<i>Period</i>	<i>New houses</i>		<i>Total dwelling units (includes conversions etc)</i>	
	<i>Private sector</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Private sector</i>	<i>Total</i>
ORIGINAL (% change from previous quarter)				
1999 Sept. qtr	4.1	3.8	12.3	12.0
Dec. qtr	5.5	5.3	0.8	-0.4
2000 Mar. qtr	6.2	5.6	3.4	3.3
June qtr	-5.2	-5.3	-2.1	-2.5
Sept. qtr	-37.4	-36.7	-32.1	-30.1
Dec. qtr	3.0	2.3	1.6	-0.7
SEASONALLY ADJUSTED (% change from previous quarter)				
1999 Sept. qtr	7.5	6.5	11.8	11.1
Dec. qtr	1.0	1.9	-0.6	-0.3
2000 Mar. qtr	18.7	17.7	9.9	9.1
June qtr	-14.3	-14.3	-6.0	-6.7
Sept. qtr	-35.1	-34.9	-32.6	-30.9
Dec. qtr	-1.7	-1.3	0.3	-0.6
TREND ESTIMATES (% change from previous quarter)				
1999 Sept. qtr	8.6	8.4	7.5	7.2
Dec. qtr	9.5	9.4	8.0	7.4
2000 Mar. qtr	0.9	0.7	0.3	—
June qtr	-11.3	-11.4	-9.7	-9.6
Sept. qtr	-19.1	-19.0	-15.4	-15.1
Dec. qtr	-25.7	-24.2	-20.0	-19.3

TABLE 3. TOTAL NUMBER OF DWELLING UNITS (a) COMMENCED BY STATE

<i>Period</i>	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic.</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>Tas.</i>	<i>NT</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>Australia</i>
SEASONALLY ADJUSTED									
1999 Sep. qtr	13,253	11,696	7,606	2,117	5,939	359	n.a.	634	41,986
Dec. qtr	12,443	11,480	8,491	2,151	5,460	377	n.a.	686	41,843
2000 Mar. qtr	12,798	13,067	9,120	2,673	6,805	498	n.a.	592	45,632
Jun. qtr	12,396	12,152	9,341	2,521	4,730	531	n.a.	570	42,577
Sep. qtr	8,118	8,903	6,062	1,737	3,726	276	n.a.	405	29,407
Dec. qtr	9,275	8,144	5,597	1,520	3,479	323	n.a.	485	29,218
TREND ESTIMATES									
1999 Sep. qtr	12,833	11,305	7,660	2,076	5,578	353	418	622	40,843
Dec. qtr	13,049	12,251	8,632	2,352	6,083	387	407	644	43,886
2000 Mar. qtr	12,554	12,453	9,058	2,499	5,882	404	382	617	43,879
Jun. qtr	11,270	11,437	8,339	2,326	5,037	382	341	534	39,664
Sep. qtr	9,793	9,785	6,975	1,946	4,066	341	291	474	33,683
Dec. qtr	8,496	8,032	5,464	1,515	3,109	304	238	452	27,182

(a) Includes conversions, etc.

TABLE 4. TOTAL NUMBER OF DWELLING UNITS(a) COMMENCED BY STATE, PERCENTAGE CHANGE

<i>Period</i>	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic.</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>Tas.</i>	<i>NT</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>Australia</i>
SEASONALLY ADJUSTED (% change from previous quarter)									
1999 Sept. qtr	6.3	12.5	7.3	9.7	23.8	8.2	13.0	29.0	11.1
Dec. qtr	-6.1	-1.8	11.6	1.6	-8.1	5.0	-18.2	8.2	-0.3
2000 Mar. qtr	2.8	13.8	7.4	24.2	24.6	32.1	6.5	-13.7	9.1
June qtr	-3.1	-7.0	2.4	-5.7	-30.5	6.7	-21.1	-3.8	-6.7
Sept. qtr	-34.5	-26.7	-35.1	-31.1	-21.2	-48.1	5.1	-28.9	-30.9
Dec. qtr	14.3	-8.5	-7.7	-12.5	-6.6	17.2	-42.6	19.7	-0.6
TREND ESTIMATES (% change from previous quarter)									
1999 Sept. qtr	2.4	8.5	8.8	9.8	14.2	2.9	-5.6	8.9	7.2
Dec. qtr	1.7	8.4	12.7	13.3	9.1	9.6	-2.7	3.5	7.4
2000 Mar. qtr	-3.8	1.6	4.9	6.2	-3.3	4.4	-6.0	-4.2	—
June qtr	-10.2	-8.2	-7.9	-6.9	-14.4	-5.5	-10.7	-13.4	-9.6
Sept. qtr	-13.1	-14.4	-16.4	-16.4	-19.3	-10.6	-14.8	-11.3	-15.1
Dec. qtr	-13.2	-17.9	-21.7	-22.1	-23.5	-10.9	-18.1	-4.8	-19.3

(a) Includes conversions, etc.

TABLE 5. TOTAL NUMBER OF DWELLING UNITS COMMENCED

<i>Period</i>	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic.</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>Tas.</i>	<i>NT</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>Australia</i>
NEW HOUSES									
1997-1998	26,764	26,004	23,754	5,823	14,790	1,387	1,219	1,022	100,764
1998-1999	27,548	29,165	20,150	6,296	15,948	1,264	1,427	1,364	103,164
1999-2000	30,754	34,716	24,218	7,857	18,650	1,538	936	1,460	120,127
1999 Sep. qtr	7,368	8,155	5,439	1,792	4,879	301	279	261	28,472
Dec. qtr	7,142	8,817	6,315	2,007	4,698	359	249	396	29,983
2000 Mar. qtr	8,364	8,975	5,941	2,064	5,303	431	217	380	31,675
Jun qtr	7,880	8,769	6,523	1,994	3,770	447	191	423	29,997
Sep. qtr	4,413	6,133	3,479	1,385	2,936	236	178	235	18,996
Dec. qtr	4,528	6,008	3,728	1,457	2,962	311	121	310	19,426
NEW OTHER RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS									
1997-1998	19,852	7,598	11,222	741	2,360	231	952	236	43,192
1998-1999	20,821	8,307	8,962	1,062	2,407	107	532	615	42,813
1999-2000	19,430	11,725	10,130	1,398	3,916	185	594	948	48,326
1999 Sep. qtr	6,203	3,354	1,890	369	1,088	18	178	322	13,422
Dec. qtr	4,902	2,680	2,679	315	875	52	152	311	11,966
2000 Mar. qtr	4,456	2,856	2,261	422	934	70	138	181	11,318
Jun qtr	3,869	2,835	3,300	292	1,019	45	126	134	11,620
Sep. qtr	3,836	2,446	2,371	375	813	6	155	138	10,140
Dec. qtr	4,422	2,040	2,113	185	590	41	83	190	9,664
CONVERSIONS, ETC									
1997-1998	1,821	1,340	441	89	115	3	14	2	3,826
1998-1999	1,359	1,566	213	57	92	6	15	133	3,442
1999-2000	723	1,896	229	156	266	44	27	71	3,412
1999 Sep. qtr	214	290	120	5	128	4	4	—	765
Dec. qtr	264	224	40	5	19	5	1	2	560
2000 Mar. qtr	117	539	20	58	78	1	17	69	899
Jun qtr	128	843	49	88	41	34	5	—	1,188
Sep. qtr	225	392	61	22	72	5	2	1	779
Dec. qtr	206	255	127	2	18	4	1	—	613
TOTAL									
1997-1998	48,437	34,942	35,418	6,653	17,265	1,622	2,185	1,260	147,781
1998-1999	49,728	39,038	29,325	7,416	18,447	1,377	1,974	2,112	149,419
1999-2000	50,907	48,337	34,577	9,411	22,832	1,766	1,557	2,479	171,865
1999 Sep. qtr	13,785	11,799	7,449	2,166	6,095	323	461	583	42,659
Dec. qtr	12,308	11,721	9,034	2,327	5,592	415	402	709	42,509
2000 Mar. qtr	12,937	12,370	8,222	2,544	6,315	502	372	630	43,892
Jun qtr	11,877	12,447	9,872	2,374	4,830	526	322	557	42,805
Sep. qtr	8,474	8,971	5,911	1,783	3,821	247	334	374	29,917
Dec. qtr	9,155	8,303	5,969	1,644	3,570	357	204	500	29,703

TABLE 6. TOTAL NUMBER OF PRIVATE SECTOR DWELLING UNITS COMMENCED

<i>Period</i>	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic.</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>Tas.</i>	<i>NT</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>Australia</i>
NEW HOUSES									
1997-1998	26,585	25,701	23,411	5,628	14,170	1,379	949	1,020	98,844
1998-1999	27,155	28,512	19,714	6,091	15,383	1,263	933	1,300	100,353
1999-2000	30,566	34,269	23,823	7,730	18,310	1,519	732	1,430	118,377
1999 Sep. qtr	7,330	8,040	5,340	1,752	4,746	289	197	246	27,938
Dec. qtr	7,091	8,694	6,167	1,947	4,638	358	195	390	29,480
2000 Mar. qtr	8,315	8,850	5,861	2,054	5,231	430	180	372	31,293
Jun qtr	7,830	8,685	6,455	1,977	3,695	442	160	422	29,666
Sep. qtr	4,372	6,076	3,416	1,346	2,795	229	123	224	18,583
Dec. qtr	4,512	5,949	3,667	1,453	2,850	311	93	304	19,138
NEW OTHER RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS									
1997-1998	18,681	7,060	10,657	720	1,855	220	877	228	40,298
1998-1999	19,673	7,878	8,292	1,039	1,982	107	485	611	40,067
1999-2000	18,646	11,502	9,645	1,381	3,264	181	523	898	46,040
1999 Sep. qtr	5,897	3,290	1,605	359	869	18	178	302	12,518
Dec. qtr	4,814	2,596	2,646	312	693	52	112	287	11,512
2000 Mar. qtr	4,218	2,799	2,173	422	810	70	128	175	10,795
Jun qtr	3,717	2,817	3,221	288	892	41	105	134	11,215
Sep. qtr	3,528	2,390	2,167	375	490	4	126	129	9,210
Dec. qtr	4,243	1,989	2,060	178	520	33	48	190	9,261
CONVERSIONS, ETC									
1997-1998	1,807	1,317	419	89	115	3	14	2	3,767
1998-1999	1,336	1,542	211	55	92	6	15	133	3,391
1999-2000	702	1,874	228	156	230	43	27	71	3,331
1999 Sep. qtr	201	288	120	5	119	4	4	—	741
Dec. qtr	264	223	40	5	15	5	1	2	555
2000 Mar. qtr	110	532	20	58	61	1	17	69	868
Jun qtr	127	831	48	88	35	33	5	—	1,167
Sep. qtr	220	391	61	19	55	4	2	1	752
Dec. qtr	204	255	127	1	18	4	1	—	610
TOTAL									
1997-1998	47,073	34,078	34,488	6,437	16,140	1,603	1,840	1,250	142,908
1998-1999	48,164	37,932	28,217	7,186	17,457	1,376	1,433	2,044	143,811
1999-2000	49,914	47,645	33,696	9,267	21,804	1,742	1,282	2,399	167,748
1999 Sep. qtr	13,428	11,618	7,065	2,116	5,734	311	379	548	41,197
Dec. qtr	12,169	11,513	8,853	2,264	5,346	414	308	679	41,547
2000 Mar. qtr	12,643	12,181	8,054	2,534	6,102	501	325	616	42,956
Jun qtr	11,674	12,333	9,724	2,353	4,622	516	270	556	42,048
Sep. qtr	8,121	8,857	5,643	1,741	3,340	236	251	355	28,546
Dec. qtr	8,958	8,192	5,853	1,631	3,389	349	141	494	29,009

TABLE 7. TOTAL NUMBER OF PUBLIC SECTOR DWELLING UNITS COMMENCED

<i>Period</i>	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic.</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>Tas.</i>	<i>NT</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>Australia</i>
NEW HOUSES									
1997-1998	179	303	343	195	620	8	270	2	1,920
1998-1999	393	653	436	205	565	1	494	64	2,811
1999-2000	188	447	395	127	340	19	204	30	1,750
1999 Sep. qtr	38	115	99	40	133	12	82	15	534
Dec. qtr	51	123	148	60	60	1	54	6	503
2000 Mar. qtr	49	125	80	10	72	1	37	8	382
Jun. qtr	50	84	68	17	75	5	31	1	331
Sep. qtr	41	57	64	39	141	7	55	10	413
Dec. qtr	16	59	62	5	112	—	28	6	288
NEW OTHER RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS									
1997-1998	1,171	538	565	21	505	11	75	8	2,894
1998-1999	1,148	429	670	23	425	—	47	4	2,746
1999-2000	784	223	485	17	652	4	71	50	2,286
1999 Sep. qtr	306	64	285	10	219	—	—	20	904
Dec. qtr	88	84	33	3	182	—	40	24	454
2000 Mar. qtr	238	57	88	—	124	—	10	6	523
Jun. qtr	152	18	79	4	127	4	21	—	405
Sep. qtr	308	56	203	—	324	2	28	9	930
Dec. qtr	179	51	54	7	70	8	35	—	403
CONVERSIONS, ETC									
1997-1998	14	23	22	—	—	—	—	—	59
1998-1999	23	24	2	2	—	—	—	—	51
1999-2000	21	22	1	—	36	1	—	—	81
1999 Sep. qtr	13	2	—	—	9	—	—	—	24
Dec. qtr	—	1	—	—	4	—	—	—	5
2000 Mar. qtr	7	7	—	—	17	—	—	—	31
Jun. qtr	1	12	1	—	6	1	—	—	21
Sep. qtr	5	1	—	3	17	1	—	—	27
Dec. qtr	2	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	3
TOTAL									
1997-1998	1,364	864	930	216	1,125	19	345	10	4,873
1998-1999	1,564	1,106	1,108	230	990	1	541	68	5,608
1999-2000	993	692	881	144	1,028	24	275	80	4,117
1999 Sep. qtr	357	181	384	50	361	12	82	35	1,462
Dec. qtr	139	208	181	63	246	1	94	30	962
2000 Mar. qtr	294	189	168	10	213	1	47	14	936
Jun. qtr	203	114	148	21	208	10	52	1	757
Sep. qtr	353	114	267	42	481	10	83	19	1,371
Dec. qtr	197	110	116	12	181	8	63	6	694

EXPLANATORY NOTES

INTRODUCTION

1 This publication contains preliminary estimates from the quarterly Building Activity Survey of the number of dwelling units commenced. More comprehensive updated results for the last two quarters will be available shortly in *Building Activity, Australia* (Cat. no. 8752.0).

2 The statistics were compiled on the basis of returns collected from builders and other individuals and organisations engaged in building activity. The quarterly survey comprises a sample survey of private sector house building activity and a complete enumeration of other building activity. Estimates in respect of commencements of private sector houses are therefore subject to sampling variability. The relative standard errors for these estimates are shown on page 2. Also, some returns containing jobs not known to have commenced are not received in time for inclusion in these estimates. Allowance is made for a proportion of these jobs, based on past experience, to have commenced. Estimates in this issue are therefore subject to revision.

3 The use of sample survey techniques in the Building Activity Survey means that reliable estimates of private sector house commencements based on survey results are available only at the State, Territory and Australia levels. Further geographic disaggregations are not available. However, data for regions below State and Territory level are available from the building approvals series compiled by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) and based on information reported by local government and other reporting authorities.

DEFINITIONS

4 A *building* is defined as a rigid, fixed and permanent structure which has a roof. Its intended purpose is primarily to house people, plant, machinery, vehicles, goods or livestock. An integral feature of a building's design, to satisfy its intended use, is the provision for regular access by persons.

5 A *dwelling unit* is defined as a self-contained suite of rooms, including cooking and bathing facilities and intended for *long-term* residential use. Units (whether self-contained or not) within buildings offering institutional care, such as hospitals, or temporary accommodation, such as motels, hostels and holiday apartments, are not defined as dwelling units.

6 A *residential building* is defined as a building predominantly consisting of one or more dwelling units. Residential buildings can be either *houses* or *other residential buildings*.

- A *house* is defined as a detached building predominantly used for long-term residential purposes and consisting of only one dwelling unit. Thus, detached granny flats and detached dwelling units such as caretakers' residences associated with non-residential buildings are defined as houses for the purpose of these statistics.
- An *other residential building* is defined as a building which is predominantly used for long-term residential purposes and which contains (or has attached to it) more than one dwelling unit (e.g. includes townhouses, duplexes, apartment buildings, etc.).

These statistics present the number of dwelling units in other residential buildings (and not the number of buildings).

EXPLANATORY NOTES *continued*

DEFINITIONS *continued*

7 *Conversions, etc.* Dwelling units can also be created as part of alterations and additions to existing buildings (including conversions to dwelling units) and as part of the construction of non-residential buildings. Such dwelling units are referred to in this publication under the heading of Conversions, etc.

8 *Commenced.* A building is regarded as commenced when the first physical building activity has been performed on site in the form of materials fixed in place and/or labour expended (this includes site preparation but excludes delivery of building materials, the drawing of plans and specifications and the construction of non-building infrastructures, such as roads).

9 *Ownership.* The ownership of a building is classified as either public sector or private sector according to the sector of the intended owner of the completed building as evident at the time of approval. Residential buildings being constructed by private sector builders under government housing authority schemes whereby the authority has contracted, or intends to contract, to purchase the buildings on or before completion, are classified as public sector.

SEASONAL ADJUSTMENT

10 Seasonally adjusted building statistics are shown in tables 1–4. In the seasonally adjusted series, account has been taken of normal seasonal factors and the effect of movement in the date of Easter which may, in successive years, affect figures for different quarters. Details regarding the methods used in seasonally adjusting the series are available on request.

11 Since seasonally adjusted statistics reflect both irregular and trend movements, an upward or downward movement in a seasonally adjusted series does not necessarily indicate a change of trend. Particular care should therefore be taken in interpreting individual quarter-to-quarter movements. Each of the component series shown has been seasonally adjusted independently. As a consequence, while the unadjusted components in the original series shown add to the totals, the adjusted components may not add to the adjusted totals. Further, the difference between independently seasonally adjusted series does not necessarily produce series which are optimal or even adequate adjustments of the similarly derived original series. Thus the figures which can be derived by subtracting seasonally adjusted private sector dwelling units from the seasonally adjusted total dwelling units should not be used to represent seasonally adjusted public sector dwelling units.

12 As happens with all seasonally adjusted series, the seasonal factors are reviewed annually to take account of each additional year's data. For the Building Activity Survey, the results of the latest review are shown in the December quarter issue each year.

TREND ESTIMATES

13 Seasonally adjusted series can be smoothed to reduce the impact of the irregular component in the adjusted series. This smoothed seasonally adjusted series is called a trend estimate.

14 The trend estimates are derived by applying a 7-term Henderson moving average to the seasonally adjusted series. The 7-term Henderson average (like all Henderson averages) is symmetric but, as the end of a time series is approached, asymmetric forms of the average are applied. Unlike weights of the standard 7-term Henderson moving average, the weights employed here have been tailored to suit the particular characteristics of individual series.

EXPLANATORY NOTES *continued*

TREND ESTIMATES *continued*

15 While the smoothing technique described in paragraphs 13 and 14 enables trend estimates to be produced for recent quarters, it does result in revisions to the estimates for the most recent three quarters as additional observations become available. There may also be revisions because of changes in the original data and as a result of the re-estimation of the seasonal factors. For further information, see *Information Paper: A Guide to Interpreting Time Series — Monitoring 'Trends': an Overview* (Cat. no. 1348.0) or contact the Assistant Director, Time Series Analysis on Canberra (02) 6252 6076.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

16 ABS publications draw extensively on information provided freely by individuals, businesses, governments and other organisations. Their continued cooperation is very much appreciated. Information received by the ABS is treated in strict confidence as required by the *Census and Statistics Act 1905*.

UNPUBLISHED DATA

19 The ABS can also make available certain building approvals and activity data which are not published. Where the data cannot be provided by telephone, it can be provided via fax, photocopy, computer print-out, floppy disk and email. A charge may be made for providing unpublished information in these forms.

RELATED PUBLICATIONS

17 Users may also wish to refer to the following publications:
Building Activity, Australia (Cat. no. 8752.0)—issued quarterly
Building Approvals, Australia (Cat. no. 8731.0)—issued monthly
House Price Indexes: Eight Capital Cities (Cat. no. 6416.0)—issued quarterly
Housing Finance for Owner Occupation, Australia (Cat. no. 5609.0)
—issued monthly
Price Index of Materials Used in Building Other Than House Building
(Cat. no. 6407.0)—issued quarterly
Price Index of Materials Used in House Building (Cat. no. 6408.0)
—issued quarterly
Private Sector Construction Industry, Australia, 1996–97 (Cat. no. 8772.0)

18 Current publications produced by the ABS are listed in the *Catalogue of Publications and Products* (Cat. no. 1101.0). The ABS also issues, on Tuesdays and Fridays, a *Release Advice* (Cat. no. 1105.0) which lists publications to be released in the next few days. The Catalogue and Release Advice are available from any ABS office in your State or Territory.

SYMBOLS AND OTHER USAGES

ABS Australian Bureau of Statistics
n.a. not available
— nil or rounded to zero
.. not applicable

Where figures have been rounded, discrepancies may occur between sums of the component items and totals.

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