

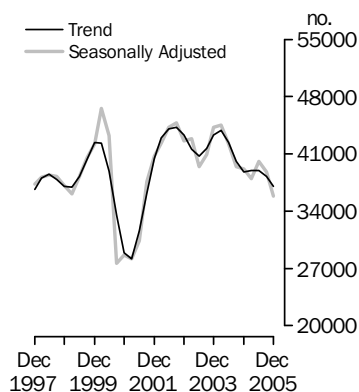
DWELLING UNIT COMMENCEMENTS

AUSTRALIA
PRELIMINARY

EMBARGO: 11.30AM (CANBERRA TIME) TUES 21 MAR 2006

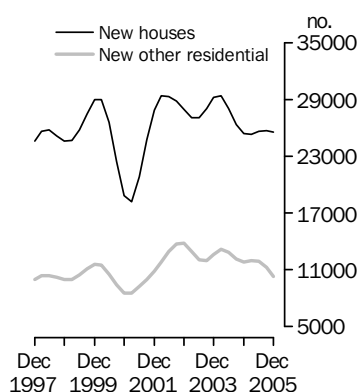
Dwelling units commenced

Total



Private dwellings commenced

Trend



INQUIRIES

For further information about these and related statistics, contact the National Information and Referral Service on 1300 135 070 or Tamra Guiver on Adelaide (08) 8237 7655.

KEY FIGURES

	Dec qtr 05 no.	Sep qtr 05 to Dec qtr 05 %	Dec qtr 04 to Dec qtr 05 %
TREND ESTIMATES			
Total dwelling units commenced	37 058	-3.1	-4.6
New private sector houses	25 553	-0.5	0.7
New private sector other residential building	10 268	-8.7	-13.0
SEASONALLY ADJUSTED ESTIMATES			
Total dwelling units commenced	35 846	-7.5	-8.4
New private sector houses	25 060	-2.9	-2.6
New private sector other residential building	9 617	-16.6	-16.6

KEY POINTS

TREND ESTIMATES

- The trend estimate for the total number of dwelling units commenced fell 3.1% in the December quarter 2005.
- New private sector house commencements fell 0.5% in the latest quarter.
- The trend for new private other residential building commencements fell 8.7% in December 2005 and is now showing falls for the past three quarters.

SEASONALLY ADJUSTED ESTIMATES

- In seasonally adjusted terms, the total number of dwelling units commenced fell 7.5%, to 35,846, in the December quarter 2005. Falls were recorded in all states.
- New private sector house commencements fell 2.9%, to 25,060.
- New private other residential building fell 16.6%, to 9,617, in the December quarter 2005. This is the lowest level since the June quarter 2001.

NOTES

FORTHCOMING ISSUES

ISSUE (Quarter)

RELEASE DATE

March 2006

22 June 2006

June 2006

14 September 2006

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ABOUT THIS ISSUE

This publication provides an early indication of trends in the number of dwelling units commenced. The data are estimates based on a response rate of approximately 90% of a sample of building jobs collected in the Building Activity Survey. More comprehensive and updated results will be released in *Building Activity, Australia* (cat. no. 8752.0) on 21 April 2006.

SIGNIFICANT REVISIONS THIS ISSUE

Compared to the estimates published in *Building Activity, Australia*, September quarter 2005 (cat. no. 8752.0), released on 20 January 2006:

- the number of new private sector other residential dwelling units commenced in Australia during the September quarter 2005 has been revised upwards by 193 (+1.6%).

The seasonally adjusted and trend series have been revised as a result of the annual review of concurrent seasonal factors. See paragraphs 9 to 15 of the Explanatory Notes.

.....

ABBREVIATIONS

ABS Australian Bureau of Statistics

ACT Australian Capital Territory

Aust. Australia

NSW New South Wales

NT Northern Territory

qtr quarter

Qld Queensland

SA South Australia

Tas. Tasmania

Vic. Victoria

WA Western Australia

Peter Harper

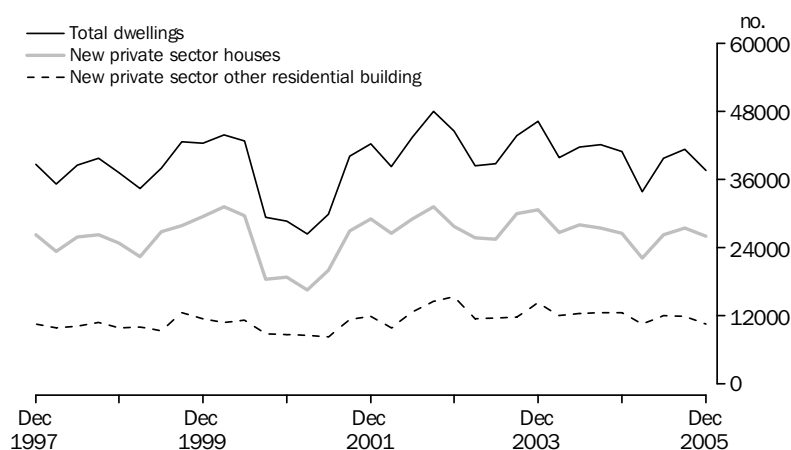
Acting Australian Statistician

DWELLING UNIT COMMENCEMENTS ORIGINAL

ORIGINAL ESTIMATES

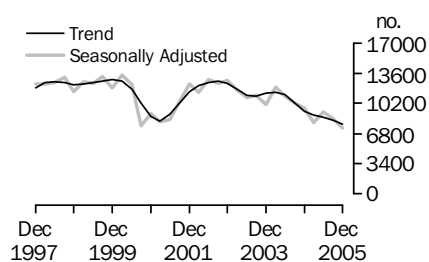
	Dec qtr 05	Sep qtr 05 to Dec qtr 05	Dec qtr 04 to Dec qtr 05
	no.	%	%
New private sector houses	25 979	-5.5	-2.4
New private sector other residential building	10 538	-11.9	-16.6
Private sector conversion, etc.	230	-68.1	-42.6
Public sector dwellings	845	-26.5	-33.4
Total dwelling units	37 592	-9.0	-8.1

- The total number of dwelling units commenced fell 9.0% in the December quarter 2005, to 37,592.
- New private sector house commencements fell 5.5%, to 25,979. Commencements rose in New South Wales (+1.5%), South Australia (+5.9%) and the Northern Territory (+2.0%), and fell in all other states and territories.
- New private sector other residential building fell 11.9%, to 10,538. Queensland, South Australia, the Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory recorded rises.
- The total number of public sector dwellings commenced fell 26.5%, to 845.



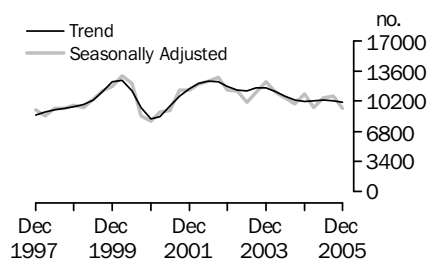
DWELLING UNIT COMMENCEMENTS STATES & TERRITORIES

NEW SOUTH WALES



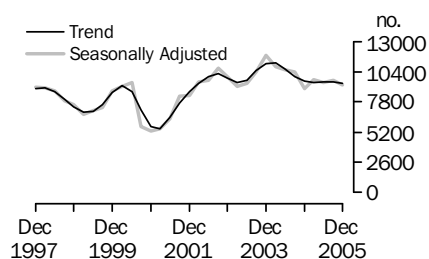
The trend estimate of total dwelling unit commencements has fallen for the past seven quarters.

VICTORIA



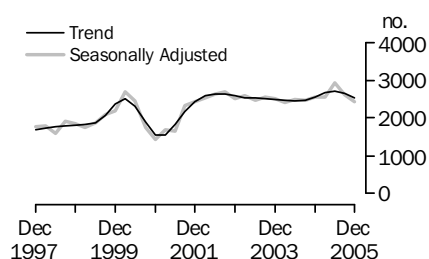
The trend estimate of total dwelling unit commencements is now showing falls for the last two quarters.

QUEENSLAND



The trend estimate of total dwelling unit commencements has fallen this quarter, after two quarters of increase.

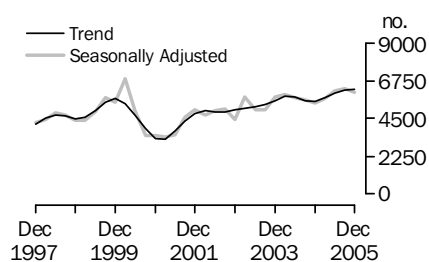
SOUTH AUSTRALIA



The trend estimate of dwelling unit commencements is now showing falls for the past two quarters.

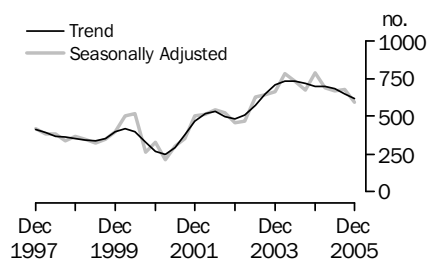
DWELLING UNIT COMMENCEMENTS STATES & TERRITORIES *continued*

WESTERN AUSTRALIA



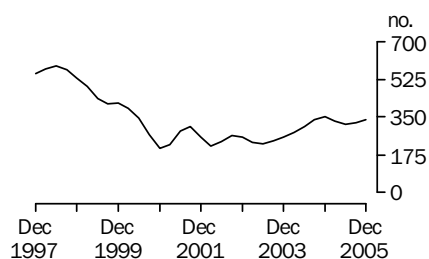
The trend estimate of total dwelling unit commencements has risen for the past four quarters.

TASMANIA



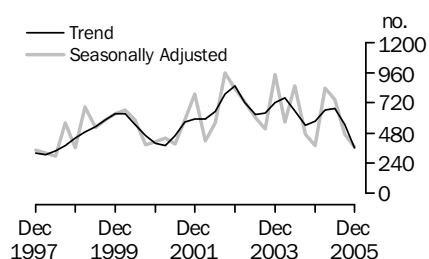
The trend estimate of total dwelling unit commencements has fallen for the past six quarters.

NORTHERN TERRITORY



The trend estimate of total dwelling unit commencements has risen for the past two quarters.

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY



The trend estimate of total dwelling unit commencements has fallen for the past two quarters.

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DWELLING UNIT COMMENCEMENTS

	PRIVATE SECTOR			TOTAL SECTORS		
	New houses	New other residential building	Total dwelling units(a)	New houses	New other residential building	Total dwelling units(a)
	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.
ORIGINAL						
2002-03	110 385	53 000	166 262	112 228	54 827	169 945
2003-04	115 603	50 513	168 364	117 168	52 365	171 791
2004-05	102 521	47 839	152 533	104 468	49 997	156 657
2004						
Sep Qtr	27 509	12 620	41 058	28 087	13 136	42 159
Dec Qtr	26 614	12 640	39 655	27 177	13 342	40 923
2005						
Mar Qtr	22 226	10 515	33 090	22 596	10 984	33 932
Jun Qtr	26 241	12 087	38 815	26 677	12 558	39 728
Sep Qtr	27 480	11 967	40 169	28 014	12 522	41 319
Dec Qtr	25 979	10 538	36 746	26 458	10 901	37 592
SEASONALLY ADJUSTED						
2004						
Sep Qtr	25 787	12 096	38 540	26 291	12 459	39 414
Dec Qtr	25 724	11 534	37 806	26 221	12 374	39 147
2005						
Mar Qtr	24 601	11 884	36 914	25 064	12 518	38 013
Jun Qtr	26 343	12 329	39 145	26 818	12 799	40 096
Sep Qtr	25 808	11 532	37 845	26 271	11 924	38 761
Dec Qtr	25 060	9 617	34 992	25 486	10 042	35 846
TREND						
2004						
Sep Qtr	26 368	12 136	39 050	26 831	12 686	40 067
Dec Qtr	25 365	11 800	37 705	25 842	12 452	38 835
2005						
Mar Qtr	25 344	11 986	37 829	25 833	12 622	38 962
Jun Qtr	25 651	11 888	38 002	26 119	12 412	39 013
Sep Qtr	25 680	11 247	37 362	26 135	11 665	38 262
Dec Qtr	25 553	10 268	36 211	25 993	10 649	37 058

(a) Includes Conversions, etc.

DWELLING UNIT COMMENCEMENTS—Change from previous period

	PRIVATE SECTOR			TOTAL SECTORS		
	New houses	New other residential building	Total dwelling units(a)	New houses	New other residential building	Total dwelling units(a)
	%	%	%	%	%	%
ORIGINAL						
2002–03	–1.4	15.5	3.5	–1.2	14.4	3.4
2003–04	4.7	–4.7	1.3	4.4	–4.5	1.1
2004–05	–11.3	–5.2	–9.4	–10.8	–4.5	–8.8
2004						
Sep Qtr	–2.0	1.4	0.2	–1.0	1.5	0.9
Dec Qtr	–3.3	0.2	–3.4	–3.2	1.6	–2.9
2005						
Mar Qtr	–16.5	–16.8	–16.6	–16.9	–17.7	–17.1
Jun Qtr	18.1	15.0	17.3	18.1	14.3	17.1
Sep Qtr	4.7	–1.0	3.5	5.0	–0.3	4.0
Dec Qtr	–5.5	–11.9	–8.5	–5.6	–12.9	–9.0
SEASONALLY ADJUSTED						
2004						
Sep Qtr	–8.6	–5.2	–7.0	–7.9	–6.0	–6.7
Dec Qtr	–0.2	–4.6	–1.9	–0.3	–0.7	–0.7
2005						
Mar Qtr	–4.4	3.0	–2.4	–4.4	1.2	–2.9
Jun Qtr	7.1	3.7	6.0	7.0	2.2	5.5
Sep Qtr	–2.0	–6.5	–3.3	–2.0	–6.8	–3.3
Dec Qtr	–2.9	–16.6	–7.5	–3.0	–15.8	–7.5
TREND						
2004						
Sep Qtr	–6.0	–5.8	–5.9	–5.8	–4.7	–5.4
Dec Qtr	–3.8	–2.8	–3.4	–3.7	–1.8	–3.1
2005						
Mar Qtr	–0.1	1.6	0.3	—	1.4	0.3
Jun Qtr	1.2	–0.8	0.5	1.1	–1.7	0.1
Sep Qtr	0.1	–5.4	–1.7	0.1	–6.0	–1.9
Dec Qtr	–0.5	–8.7	–3.1	–0.5	–8.7	–3.1

— nil or rounded to zero (including null cells)

(a) Includes Conversions, etc.

DWELLING UNIT COMMENCEMENTS, States & territories

	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.
<i>Period</i>	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.
ORIGINAL									
2002-03	48 065	45 840	39 281	10 283	20 281	2 067	987	3 140	169 945
2003-04	43 789	45 285	43 523	10 011	22 420	2 820	1 046	2 896	171 791
2004-05	37 403	41 020	38 408	10 502	22 788	2 814	1 349	2 458	156 742
2004									
Sep Qtr	10 721	10 399	11 117	2 392	6 125	652	383	371	42 159
Dec Qtr	10 426	11 058	9 342	2 855	5 575	809	427	430	40 923
2005									
Mar Qtr	7 256	8 610	8 644	2 228	5 386	689	303	817	33 932
Jun Qtr	9 001	10 953	9 305	3 027	5 702	664	236	840	39 728
Sep Qtr	8 868	11 224	10 430	2 546	6 872	662	364	354	41 319
Dec Qtr	7 955	9 513	9 752	2 691	6 228	609	425	418	37 592
SEASONALLY ADJUSTED									
2004									
Sep Qtr	10 240	9 940	10 372	2 459	5 595	671	na	470	39 414
Dec Qtr	9 663	10 979	8 951	2 560	5 427	786	na	381	39 147
2005									
Mar Qtr	8 068	9 467	9 720	2 541	5 668	686	na	839	38 013
Jun Qtr	9 240	10 558	9 481	2 923	6 155	670	na	746	40 096
Sep Qtr	8 459	10 773	9 680	2 619	6 269	680	na	469	38 761
Dec Qtr	7 390	9 429	9 246	2 440	6 068	591	na	370	35 846
TREND									
2004									
Sep Qtr	10 277	10 301	9 973	2 470	5 569	716	338	540	40 067
Dec Qtr	9 347	10 187	9 569	2 549	5 530	699	351	575	38 835
2005									
Mar Qtr	8 899	10 270	9 436	2 667	5 742	698	332	661	38 962
Jun Qtr	8 639	10 317	9 528	2 716	6 012	681	318	678	39 013
Sep Qtr	8 303	10 224	9 536	2 654	6 173	650	324	549	38 262
Dec Qtr	7 875	10 085	9 370	2 525	6 224	617	339	364	37 058
na not available									

DWELLING UNIT COMMENCEMENTS, States & territories—Change from previous period

	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.
Period	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
ORIGINAL									
2002-03	2.2	-3.3	10.4	3.4	6.0	7.9	-3.9	32.3	3.4
2003-04	-8.9	-1.2	10.8	-2.6	10.5	36.4	5.9	-7.8	1.1
2004-05	-14.6	-9.4	-11.8	4.9	1.6	-0.2	28.9	-15.1	-8.8
2004									
Sep Qtr	0.7	-5.2	6.8	-5.3	15.0	-10.7	56.7	-60.2	0.9
Dec Qtr	-2.7	6.3	-16.0	19.4	-9.0	24.2	11.6	16.0	-2.9
2005									
Mar Qtr	-30.4	-22.1	-7.5	-22.0	-3.4	-14.9	-29.2	90.0	-17.1
Jun Qtr	24.1	27.2	7.6	35.9	5.9	-3.6	-22.0	2.9	17.1
Sep Qtr	-1.5	2.5	12.1	-15.9	20.5	-0.3	54.1	-57.9	4.0
Dec Qtr	-10.3	-15.2	-6.5	5.7	-9.4	-8.0	16.8	18.1	-9.0
SEASONALLY ADJUSTED									
2004									
Sep Qtr	-6.7	-6.1	-2.0	-1.4	-2.5	-8.6	na	-45.2	-6.7
Dec Qtr	-5.6	10.5	-13.7	4.1	-3.0	17.1	na	-18.9	-0.7
2005									
Mar Qtr	-16.5	-13.8	8.6	-0.7	4.4	-12.7	na	120.2	-2.9
Jun Qtr	14.5	11.5	-2.5	15.0	8.6	-2.3	na	-11.1	5.5
Sep Qtr	-8.5	2.0	2.1	-10.4	1.9	1.5	na	-37.1	-3.3
Dec Qtr	-12.6	-12.5	-4.5	-6.8	-3.2	-13.1	na	-21.1	-7.5
TREND									
2004									
Sep Qtr	-7.9	-3.9	-6.2	0.6	-3.7	-2.5	10.8	-17.7	-5.4
Dec Qtr	-9.0	-1.1	-4.1	3.2	-0.7	-2.4	3.8	6.5	-3.1
2005									
Mar Qtr	-4.8	0.8	-1.4	4.6	3.8	-0.1	-5.4	15.0	0.3
Jun Qtr	-2.9	0.5	1.0	1.8	4.7	-2.4	-4.2	2.6	0.1
Sep Qtr	-3.9	-0.9	0.1	-2.3	2.7	-4.6	1.9	-19.0	-1.9
Dec Qtr	-5.2	-1.4	-1.7	-4.9	0.8	-5.1	4.6	-33.7	-3.1
na not available									

DWELLING UNIT COMMENCEMENTS, States & territories: Original

	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.
Period	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.
NEW HOUSES									
2002-03	24 218	32 607	26 157	8 263	16 814	1 866	526	1 778	112 228
2003-04	22 129	34 615	29 447	8 014	18 501	2 487	515	1 458	117 168
2004-05	19 067	30 355	24 720	8 251	18 129	2 427	633	955	104 537
2004									
Sep Qtr	5 484	7 826	7 145	1 933	4 752	538	169	238	28 087
Dec Qtr	5 365	7 974	6 067	2 157	4 545	673	179	216	27 177
2005									
Mar Qtr	3 810	6 260	5 461	1 793	4 324	644	132	172	22 596
Jun Qtr	4 408	8 296	6 045	2 368	4 507	571	153	328	26 677
Sep Qtr	4 281	7 926	7 098	2 028	5 655	574	167	285	28 014
Dec Qtr	4 322	7 542	6 065	2 176	5 430	537	165	220	26 458
NEW OTHER RESIDENTIAL BUILDING									
2002-03	22 442	12 324	12 754	1 976	3 328	190	452	1 361	54 827
2003-04	20 584	9 973	13 971	1 823	3 826	259	497	1 432	52 365
2004-05	17 552	9 602	13 631	2 172	4 546	311	704	1 500	50 019
2004									
Sep Qtr	4 967	1 991	3 953	434	1 334	113	211	132	13 136
Dec Qtr	4 858	2 999	3 263	674	1 021	72	242	212	13 342
2005									
Mar Qtr	3 389	2 128	3 167	417	1 033	35	170	645	10 984
Jun Qtr	4 337	2 483	3 247	647	1 158	92	81	511	12 558
Sep Qtr	4 375	2 929	3 287	395	1 189	83	196	67	12 522
Dec Qtr	3 565	1 880	3 666	510	758	65	258	197	10 901
CONVERSIONS, ETC.									
2002-03	1 405	909	371	44	139	11	10	1	2 890
2003-04	1 076	697	105	173	93	74	34	6	2 258
2004-05	784	1 063	57	78	113	76	12	3	2 186
2004									
Sep Qtr	269	582	18	25	38	1	3	—	937
Dec Qtr	203	85	12	24	9	64	6	2	405
2005									
Mar Qtr	57	223	15	18	29	10	1	—	352
Jun Qtr	256	173	12	12	37	1	2	1	493
Sep Qtr	212	369	44	122	28	5	1	2	783
Dec Qtr	67	90	21	5	40	7	2	1	233
TOTAL									
2002-03	48 065	45 840	39 281	10 283	20 281	2 067	987	3 140	169 945
2003-04	43 789	45 285	43 523	10 011	22 420	2 820	1 046	2 896	171 791
2004-05	37 403	41 020	38 408	10 502	22 788	2 814	1 349	2 458	156 742
2004									
Sep Qtr	10 721	10 399	11 117	2 392	6 125	652	383	371	42 159
Dec Qtr	10 426	11 058	9 342	2 855	5 575	809	427	430	40 923
2005									
Mar Qtr	7 256	8 610	8 644	2 228	5 386	689	303	817	33 932
Jun Qtr	9 001	10 953	9 305	3 027	5 702	664	236	840	39 728
Sep Qtr	8 868	11 224	10 430	2 546	6 872	662	364	354	41 319
Dec Qtr	7 955	9 513	9 752	2 691	6 228	609	425	418	37 592

— nil or rounded to zero (including null cells)

DWELLING UNIT COMMENCEMENTS, States & territories—Private sector: **Original**

	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.
<i>Period</i>	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.
NEW HOUSES									
2002-03	24 089	32 363	25 852	7 922	16 241	1 838	397	1 684	110 385
2003-04	21 926	34 462	29 184	7 719	18 026	2 481	359	1 445	115 603
2004-05	18 800	30 020	24 511	7 823	17 708	2 325	465	937	102 589
2004									
Sep Qtr	5 425	7 663	7 092	1 844	4 594	524	127	238	27 509
Dec Qtr	5 249	7 895	6 012	2 012	4 451	646	142	207	26 614
2005									
Mar Qtr	3 768	6 212	5 428	1 706	4 258	593	91	169	22 226
Jun Qtr	4 358	8 251	5 977	2 261	4 405	561	105	322	26 241
Sep Qtr	4 206	7 869	7 038	1 965	5 410	556	152	284	27 480
Dec Qtr	4 267	7 458	5 987	2 081	5 289	522	155	219	25 979
NEW OTHER RESIDENTIAL BUILDING									
2002-03	22 083	11 793	12 428	1 900	2 910	190	419	1 277	53 000
2003-04	20 156	9 694	13 577	1 742	3 277	259	429	1 378	50 513
2004-05	17 139	9 262	13 123	2 007	3 932	219	678	1 500	47 861
2004									
Sep Qtr	4 863	1 968	3 866	407	1 133	51	199	132	12 620
Dec Qtr	4 782	2 879	2 982	607	885	56	236	212	12 640
2005									
Mar Qtr	3 271	1 968	3 138	396	900	27	170	645	10 515
Jun Qtr	4 222	2 447	3 136	597	1 014	86	73	511	12 087
Sep Qtr	4 271	2 898	3 170	344	950	70	196	67	11 967
Dec Qtr	3 519	1 850	3 602	393	682	57	237	197	10 538
CONVERSIONS, ETC.									
2002-03	1 405	897	370	44	139	11	10	1	2 877
2003-04	1 076	694	105	173	87	74	34	6	2 249
2004-05	778	1 057	51	78	112	76	12	3	2 167
2004									
Sep Qtr	269	582	12	25	37	1	3	—	930
Dec Qtr	199	85	12	24	9	64	6	2	401
2005									
Mar Qtr	57	221	15	18	29	10	1	—	350
Jun Qtr	254	169	12	12	37	1	2	1	487
Sep Qtr	212	335	44	113	11	5	—	2	722
Dec Qtr	67	89	21	5	40	7	—	1	230
TOTAL									
2002-03	47 577	45 053	38 650	9 866	19 290	2 039	825	2 962	166 262
2003-04	43 157	44 850	42 866	9 634	21 391	2 814	822	2 829	168 364
2004-05	36 717	40 340	37 685	9 909	21 752	2 620	1 155	2 440	152 618
2004									
Sep Qtr	10 557	10 213	10 971	2 276	5 765	576	329	371	41 058
Dec Qtr	10 230	10 859	9 006	2 643	5 345	766	384	421	39 655
2005									
Mar Qtr	7 096	8 400	8 582	2 120	5 187	630	262	814	33 090
Jun Qtr	8 834	10 868	9 126	2 870	5 456	648	180	834	38 815
Sep Qtr	8 689	11 103	10 253	2 423	6 371	631	348	353	40 169
Dec Qtr	7 854	9 398	9 610	2 479	6 011	586	392	417	36 746

— nil or rounded to zero (including null cells)

DWELLING UNIT COMMENCEMENTS, States & territories—Public sector: **Original**

	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.
Period	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.

NEW HOUSES

2002–03	129	244	305	341	573	28	129	94	1 843
2003–04	204	153	263	295	475	6	156	13	1 565
2004–05	267	335	209	428	421	102	168	18	1 948
2004									
Sep Qtr	59	163	53	89	158	14	42	—	578
Dec Qtr	116	79	55	145	94	27	37	9	562
2005									
Mar Qtr	42	48	33	87	66	51	40	3	370
Jun Qtr	50	45	68	107	103	10	48	6	437
Sep Qtr	75	57	60	63	245	18	15	1	534
Dec Qtr	55	84	77	95	141	16	11	1	480

NEW OTHER RESIDENTIAL BUILDING

2002–03	359	531	326	76	418	—	33	84	1 827
2003–04	428	279	394	81	548	—	68	54	1 852
2004–05	413	339	508	165	614	92	26	—	2 157
2004									
Sep Qtr	104	23	87	27	201	62	12	—	516
Dec Qtr	76	120	281	67	136	16	6	—	702
2005									
Mar Qtr	118	160	29	21	133	8	—	—	469
Jun Qtr	115	36	111	50	144	6	8	—	470
Sep Qtr	104	31	117	51	239	13	—	—	555
Dec Qtr	46	30	65	117	76	8	21	—	363

CONVERSIONS, ETC.

2002–03	—	12	1	—	—	—	—	—	13
2003–04	—	3	—	—	6	—	—	—	9
2004–05	6	6	6	—	1	—	—	—	19
2004									
Sep Qtr	—	—	6	—	1	—	—	—	7
Dec Qtr	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	4
2005									
Mar Qtr	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	2
Jun Qtr	2	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	6
Sep Qtr	—	34	—	9	17	—	1	—	61
Dec Qtr	—	1	—	—	—	—	2	—	3

TOTAL

2002–03	488	787	632	417	991	28	162	178	3 682
2003–04	632	435	657	376	1 029	6	224	67	3 426
2004–05	686	680	723	593	1 036	194	194	18	4 124
2004									
Sep Qtr	163	186	146	116	360	76	54	—	1 101
Dec Qtr	196	199	336	212	230	43	43	9	1 268
2005									
Mar Qtr	160	210	62	108	199	59	40	3	841
Jun Qtr	167	85	179	157	247	16	56	6	913
Sep Qtr	179	122	177	123	501	31	16	1	1 150
Dec Qtr	101	115	142	212	217	24	34	1	845

— nil or rounded to zero (including null cells)

EXPLANATORY NOTES

INTRODUCTION

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

SCOPE AND COVERAGE

2 The statistics were compiled on the basis of returns collected from builders and other individuals and organisations engaged in building activity. From the March quarter 2002, the quarterly survey consists of:

- a sample survey of private sector residential building jobs valued at \$10,000 or more
- a complete enumeration of all such public sector residential building jobs.

3 The use of sample survey techniques in the Building Activity Survey means that reliable estimates of the number of private sector dwelling commencements are generally available only at state, territory and Australia levels. Although subject to higher relative standard errors, a range of sub-state estimates of dwelling commencements may be available. Reliable small area data are available for the Northern Territory, which has been completely enumerated since the June quarter 1991. Detailed data on Building Approvals, based on information reported by local government and other reporting authorities, are available for regions below state and territory level from the Building Approval series compiled by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS).

CLASSIFICATION

4 *Ownership.* The ownership of a building is classified as either *private sector* or *public 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.

5 Building jobs are classified both by the TYPE OF BUILDING (e.g. 'house', 'other residential building') and by the TYPE OF WORK involved (i.e. 'new' and 'conversions, etc.'). These classifications are used in conjunction with each other and are defined in the Glossary.

RELIABILITY OF THE ESTIMATES

6 Since the estimates are based on a sample of approved private sector residential building jobs, the estimates of commencements of private sector dwellings and total dwellings 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.

7 Relative standard errors for the number of dwellings commenced in the December quarter 2005 are given below. There is 67% confidence that the actual number would be within one standard error of the sample estimate, and 95% confidence that it lies within two standard errors.

RELATIVE STANDARD ERRORS, December Quarter 2005

	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
New private sector houses	4.3	3.3	2.7	3.3	3.3	2.7	3.2	3.5	1.5
Total new other dwellings	3.7	6.0	2.7	5.0	4.2	7.3	0.5	—	1.9
Total dwellings	2.8	2.9	1.9	2.8	2.9	2.5	1.2	1.8	1.2

— nil or rounded to zero (including null cells)

8 In addition, 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 for the last two quarters are therefore subject to revision.

EXPLANATORY NOTES *continued*

SEASONAL ADJUSTMENT

9 Seasonally adjusted building statistics are shown in tables 1–3. In the seasonally adjusted series, account has been taken of normal seasonal factors, 'trading day' effects arising from the varying numbers of working days in a quarter and the effect of movement in the date of Easter which may, in successive years, affect figures for different quarters.

10 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. The seasonally adjusted series for total dwellings for Australia and each state and territory has been produced by summing the respective seasonally adjusted series for each of 'new houses', 'new other residential dwellings' and 'conversions, etc.' However, the states and Australia are adjusted independently, which means that the sum of the adjusted state series may not add to the adjusted Australian total.

11 From the June quarter 2003, the seasonally adjusted estimates are produced by the concurrent seasonal adjustment method which takes account of the latest available original estimates. The concurrent seasonal adjustment methodology replaces the forward factor methodology previously used, when seasonal factors were only revised following an annual re-analysis. The concurrent method improves the estimation of seasonal factors and, therefore, the seasonally adjusted and trend estimates for the current and previous quarters. As a result of this improvement, revisions to the seasonally adjusted and trend estimates will be observed for recent periods. In most instances, the only noticeable revisions will be to the previous quarter and the same quarter of a year earlier.

12 A more detailed review of concurrent seasonal factors will be conducted annually, generally prior to the release of data for the December quarter.

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.

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. For further information, see *Information Paper: A Guide to Interpreting Time Series—Monitoring Trends, 2003* (cat. no. 1349.0) or contact the Assistant Director, Time Series Analysis on Canberra (02) 6252 6540 or email <timeseries@abs.gov.au>.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

16 ABS publications draw extensively on information provided freely by individuals, businesses, governments and other organisations. Their continued cooperation is very much appreciated: without it, the wide range of statistics published by the ABS would not be available. Information received by the ABS is treated in strict confidence as required by the *Census and Statistics Act 1905*.

RELATED PRODUCTS

17 All tables in this publication are available in electronic form on the ABS web site <<http://www.abs.gov.au>>.

EXPLANATORY NOTES *continued*

RELATED PRODUCTS *continued*

18 Users may also wish to refer to the following publications:

Building Activity, Australia, cat. no. 8752.0

Building Approvals, Australia, cat. no. 8731.0

Construction Work Done, Australia, Preliminary, cat. no. 8755.0

House Price Indexes: Eight Capital Cities, cat. no. 6416.0

Housing Finance for Owner Occupation, Australia, cat. no. 5609.0

Private Sector Construction Industry, Australia, 1996–97, cat. no. 8772.0

Producer Price Indexes, Australia, cat. no. 6427.0.

19 Current publications and other products released by the ABS are listed in the *Catalogue of Publications and Products* (cat. no. 1101.0). The Catalogue is available from the National Information and Referral Service on 1300 135 070 or the ABS web site <<http://www.abs.gov.au>>. The ABS also issues a daily Release Advice on the web site which details products to be released in the week ahead.

ABS DATA AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

20 As well as the statistics included in this and related publications, the ABS may have other relevant data available on request. Inquiries should be made to the National Information and Referral Service on 1300 135 070.

APPENDIX LIST OF ELECTRONIC TABLES

ELECTRONIC TABLES

The following tables are available electronically via the ABS web site
<<http://www.abs.gov.au>> and AusStats.

COMMENCEMENTS

	<i>Publication table no.</i>	<i>Electronic table no.</i>
Dwelling unit commencements	1	1
Dwelling unit commencements, change from previous period	2	n.a.
Dwelling unit commencements, states and territories	3	2
Dwelling unit commencements, states and territories, change from previous period	4	n.a.
Dwelling unit commencements, states and territories, original	5	3
Dwelling unit commencements, states and territories, private sector, original	6	4
Dwelling unit commencements, states and territories, public sector, original	7	5

GLOSSARY

Building	A building is 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.
Commenced	A building is 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).
Conversions, etc.	A conversion is building activity which converts a non-residential building to a residential building, e.g. conversion of a warehouse to residential apartments. Conversion is considered to be a special type of alteration. 'Conversions, etc.' are the number of dwelling units created as part of alterations and additions to, or conversions of, existing residential or non-residential buildings and as part of the construction of non-residential building. 'Conversions, etc.' are shown separately in tables 4 to 6 and are included in the total number of dwelling units.
Dwelling unit	A dwelling unit is a self-contained suite of rooms, including cooking and bathing facilities and intended for <i>long-term</i> 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.
House	A house is 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.
New	Building activity which will result in the creation of a building which previously did not exist.
Number of dwelling unit commencements	For other residential building, these statistics present the number of dwelling units in such buildings (and not the number of buildings). For example, if a new building with 25 apartments is commenced, then 25 is included in the number of dwelling unit commencements under 'new other residential building'. Residential building activity involving a number of residential buildings of the same type of building and which are being built on the same site are sometimes grouped. Thus, when a project involving the construction of, say, a group of 10 houses is commenced in the sense that work has started on the first one or two houses, then all 10 houses may be counted as commencements in the statistics.
Other residential building	An other residential building is a building other than a house primarily used for long-term residential purposes and which contains (or has attached to it) more than one dwelling unit (e.g. includes blocks of flats, home units, attached townhouses, villa units, terrace houses, semidetached houses, maisonettes, duplexes, apartment buildings, etc.).
Residential building	A residential building is a building predominantly consisting of one or more dwelling units. Residential buildings can be either <i>houses</i> or <i>other residential buildings</i> .

FOR MORE INFORMATION . . .

<i>INTERNET</i>	www.abs.gov.au the ABS web site is the best place for data from our publications and information about the ABS.
<i>LIBRARY</i>	A range of ABS publications are available from public and tertiary libraries Australia wide. Contact your nearest library to determine whether it has the ABS statistics you require, or visit our web site for a list of libraries.

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