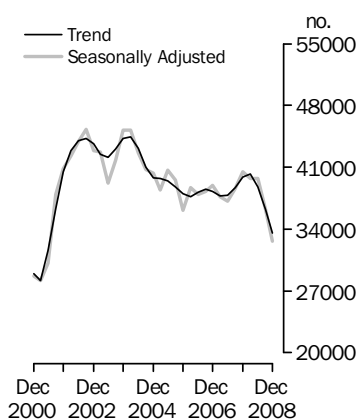


DWELLING UNIT COMMENCEMENTS

AUSTRALIA
PRELIMINARY

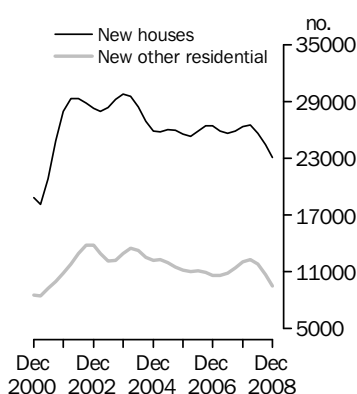
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Dwelling units commenced



Private dwellings commenced

Trend estimates



INQUIRIES

For further information about these and related statistics, contact the National Information and Referral Service on 1300 135 070 or Willie Hynd on Adelaide (08) 8237 7645.

KEY FIGURES

	Dec qtr 08 no.	Sep qtr 08 to Dec qtr 08 %	Dec qtr 07 to Dec qtr 08 %
TREND ESTIMATES			
Total dwelling units commenced	33 546	-7.5	-16.0
New private sector houses	23 078	-5.5	-12.5
New private sector other residential building	9 488	-11.6	-21.3
SEASONALLY ADJUSTED ESTIMATES			
Total dwelling units commenced	32 637	-9.9	-19.5
New private sector houses	22 803	-4.9	-16.0
New private sector other residential building	8 856	-20.7	-25.4

KEY POINTS

TOTAL DWELLING UNITS

- The trend estimate for the total number of dwelling units commenced fell 7.5% in the December quarter 2008 following a fall of 6.4% in the September quarter 2008.
- The seasonally adjusted estimate for the total number of dwelling units commenced fell 9.9% in the December quarter which follows a revised fall of 8.9% in the September quarter.

NEW HOUSES

- The trend estimate for new private sector house commencements fell 5.5% in the December quarter following a fall of 4.8% in the September quarter.
- The seasonally adjusted estimate for new private sector house commencements fell 4.9% in the December quarter following a revised fall of 10.7% in the September quarter.

OTHER RESIDENTIAL BUILDING

- The trend for new private sector other residential building commencements fell 11.6% in the December quarter which follows a fall of 8.9% in the September quarter.
- The seasonally adjusted estimate for new private sector other residential building fell 20.7% in the December quarter following a revised fall of 4.8% in the September quarter.

NOTES

FORTHCOMING ISSUES

<i>ISSUE (Quarter)</i>	<i>RELEASE DATE</i>
March 2009	17 June 2009
June 2009	15 September 2009

.....

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 17 April 2009.

SIGNIFICANT REVISIONS THIS ISSUE

Compared to the estimates published in *Building Activity, Australia*, September quarter 2008 (cat. no. 8752.0) released on 21 January 2009:

- the total number of dwellings commenced in Australia during September quarter 2008 has been revised upwards by 1331 (+3.6%).
 - the number of new private sector houses commenced in Australia during the September quarter 2008 has been revised upwards by 70 (+0.3%).
 - the number of new private sector other residential dwelling units commenced in Australia during the September quarter 2008 has been revised upwards by 1218 (+11.6%).
-

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

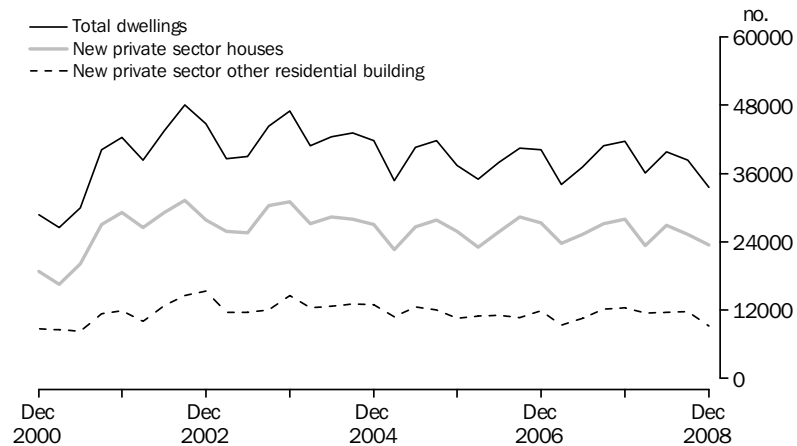
Peter Harper
Acting Australian Statistician

DWELLING UNIT COMMENCEMENTS ORIGINAL

ORIGINAL ESTIMATES

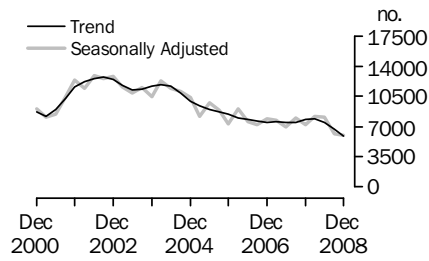
	Dec qtr 08	Sep qtr 08 to Dec qtr 08	Dec qtr 07 to Dec qtr 08
	no.	%	%
New private sector houses	23 464	-7.2	-16.0
New private sector other residential building	9 204	-21.6	-25.8
Private sector conversion, etc.	190	-22.8	-62.4
Public sector dwellings	721	-37.0	-18.7
Total dwelling units	33 578	-12.6	-19.5

- The total number of dwelling units commenced fell 12.6% in the December quarter 2008, to 33,578.
- New private sector house commencements fell 7.2%, to 23,464. Commencements fell in all states and territories other than Western Australia, Tasmania, the Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory.
- New private sector other residential building fell 21.6%, to 9,204. This follows a revised rise of 0.4%, to 11,738 in the September quarter.
- The total number of public sector dwellings commenced fell 37.0%, to 721. Commencements rose in Victoria, South Australia, Tasmania, the Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory.



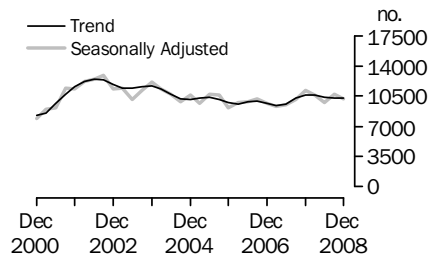
DWELLING UNIT COMMENCEMENTS STATES & TERRITORIES

NEW SOUTH WALES



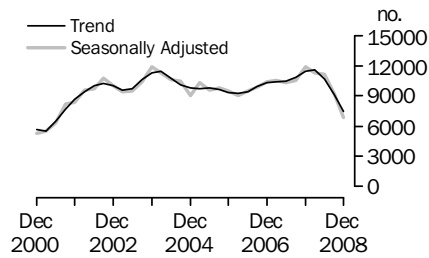
The trend estimate of the number of total dwelling unit commencements has fallen for the last three quarters.

VICTORIA



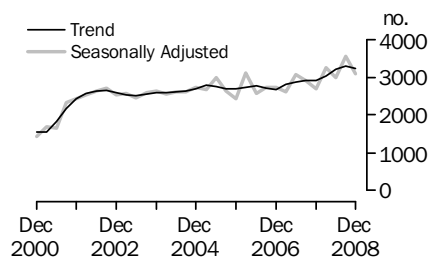
The trend estimate of the number of total dwelling unit commencements is now showing a rise after falling for three quarters.

QUEENSLAND



The trend estimate of the number of total dwelling unit commencements is showing falls for three quarters.

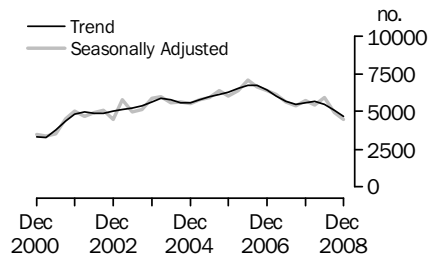
SOUTH AUSTRALIA



The trend estimate of the number of total dwelling unit commencements is now showing a fall after rising for seven quarters.

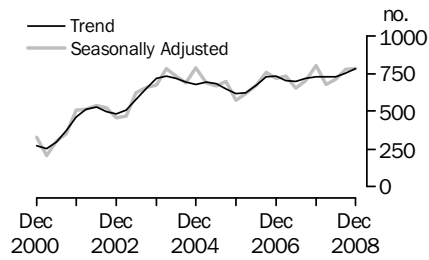
DWELLING UNIT COMMENCEMENTS STATES & TERRITORIES *continued*

WESTERN AUSTRALIA



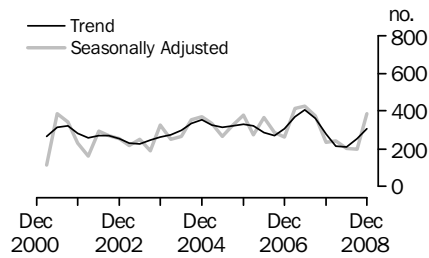
The trend estimate of the number of total dwelling unit commencements has fallen for three quarters.

TASMANIA



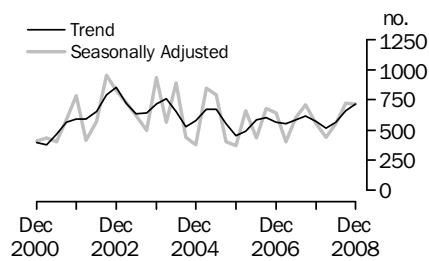
The trend estimate of the number of total dwelling unit commencements has risen for the last three quarters.

NORTHERN TERRITORY



The trend estimate of the number of total dwelling unit commencements is now showing a rise for two quarters.

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY



The trend estimate of the number of total dwelling unit commencements has risen for the last three quarters.

LIST OF TABLES

page

TABLES

1	Dwelling unit commencement	7
2	Dwelling unit commencements, change from previous period	8
3	Dwelling unit commencements, states and territories	9
4	Dwelling unit commencements, states and territories, change from previous period	10
5	Dwelling unit commencements, states and territories, original	11
6	Dwelling unit commencements, states and territories, private sector, original	12
7	Dwelling unit commencements, states and territories, public sector, original	13

DWELLING UNIT COMMENCEMENTS

	PRIVATE SECTOR			TOTAL SECTORS		
	<i>New houses</i>	<i>New other residential building</i>	<i>Total dwelling units(a)</i>	<i>New houses</i>	<i>New other residential building</i>	<i>Total dwelling units(a)</i>
	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.
ORIGINAL						
2005-06	102 432	44 628	148 760	104 264	46 249	152 315
2006-07	104 641	42 530	148 665	106 538	44 127	152 177
2007-08	105 298	47 725	154 538	107 269	49 592	158 536
2007						
Sep Qtr	27 150	12 171	39 665	27 810	12 744	40 911
Dec Qtr	27 922	12 404	40 832	28 391	12 818	41 718
2008						
Mar Qtr	23 274	11 462	35 117	23 812	11 868	36 087
Jun Qtr	26 952	11 688	38 924	27 256	12 162	39 820
Sep Qtr	25 283	11 738	37 267	25 583	12 522	38 411
Dec Qtr	23 464	9 204	32 857	23 863	9 506	33 578
SEASONALLY ADJUSTED						
2007						
Sep Qtr	25 715	11 628	37 601	26 291	12 050	38 612
Dec Qtr	27 145	11 870	39 596	27 582	12 378	40 544
2008						
Mar Qtr	25 526	12 587	38 579	26 170	13 066	39 727
Jun Qtr	26 835	11 725	38 846	27 155	12 209	39 768
Sep Qtr	23 970	11 161	35 321	24 234	11 738	36 221
Dec Qtr	22 803	8 856	31 871	23 175	9 230	32 637
TREND						
2007						
Sep Qtr	25 890	11 378	37 685	26 443	11 825	38 687
Dec Qtr	26 374	12 055	38 894	26 922	12 515	39 918
2008						
Mar Qtr	26 482	12 321	39 238	26 965	12 824	40 273
Jun Qtr	25 677	11 776	37 783	26 074	12 285	38 759
Sep Qtr	24 433	10 731	35 386	24 760	11 220	36 267
Dec Qtr	23 078	9 488	32 757	23 365	9 945	33 546

(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						
2005-06	-2.0	-9.6	-4.7	-2.2	-10.4	-5.0
2006-07	2.2	-4.7	-0.1	2.2	-4.6	-0.1
2007-08	0.6	12.2	4.0	0.7	12.4	4.2
2007						
Sep Qtr	7.2	15.7	9.3	7.5	16.9	9.9
Dec Qtr	2.8	1.9	2.9	2.1	0.6	2.0
2008						
Mar Qtr	-16.6	-7.6	-14.0	-16.1	-7.4	-13.5
Jun Qtr	15.8	2.0	10.8	14.5	2.5	10.3
Sep Qtr	-6.2	0.4	-4.3	-6.1	3.0	-3.5
Dec Qtr	-7.2	-21.6	-11.8	-6.7	-24.1	-12.6
SEASONALLY ADJUSTED						
2007						
Sep Qtr	1.9	10.1	3.7	1.9	10.1	3.8
Dec Qtr	5.6	2.1	5.3	4.9	2.7	5.0
2008						
Mar Qtr	-6.0	6.0	-2.6	-5.1	5.6	-2.0
Jun Qtr	5.1	-6.8	0.7	3.8	-6.6	0.1
Sep Qtr	-10.7	-4.8	-9.1	-10.8	-3.9	-8.9
Dec Qtr	-4.9	-20.7	-9.8	-4.4	-21.4	-9.9
TREND						
2007						
Sep Qtr	0.9	5.1	2.2	1.0	4.9	2.3
Dec Qtr	1.9	6.0	3.2	1.8	5.8	3.2
2008						
Mar Qtr	0.4	2.2	0.9	0.2	2.5	0.9
Jun Qtr	-3.0	-4.4	-3.7	-3.3	-4.2	-3.8
Sep Qtr	-4.8	-8.9	-6.3	-5.0	-8.7	-6.4
Dec Qtr	-5.5	-11.6	-7.4	-5.6	-11.4	-7.5

(a) Includes Conversions, etc.

DWELLING UNIT COMMENCEMENTS, States & territories

	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT(a)	ACT(a)	Aust.
<i>Period</i>	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.
ORIGINAL									
2005-06	32 879	39 206	37 852	10 643	25 978	2 557	1 366	1 835	152 315
2006-07	29 842	38 651	41 141	11 185	24 818	2 865	1 363	2 311	152 177
2007-08	31 451	41 778	44 800	11 828	22 448	2 904	1 079	2 248	158 536
2007									
Sep Qtr	8 107	10 731	11 558	2 960	5 756	664	412	722	40 911
Dec Qtr	7 504	11 733	12 265	2 827	5 693	839	256	601	41 718
2008									
Mar Qtr	7 985	9 470	9 462	2 907	5 008	681	215	357	36 087
Jun Qtr	7 855	9 843	11 514	3 134	5 991	719	195	568	39 820
Sep Qtr	6 289	11 405	10 115	3 637	5 268	729	216	752	38 411
Dec Qtr	6 111	10 717	7 019	3 232	4 494	820	421	764	33 578
SEASONALLY ADJUSTED									
2007									
Sep Qtr	8 038	10 096	10 516	2 921	5 365	704	376	712	38 612
Dec Qtr	7 257	11 158	11 875	2 686	5 730	800	235	554	40 544
2008									
Mar Qtr	8 136	10 676	11 302	3 259	5 426	679	241	443	39 727
Jun Qtr	8 075	9 773	11 168	2 999	5 943	712	202	552	39 768
Sep Qtr	6 159	10 721	9 208	3 551	4 908	776	200	720	36 221
Dec Qtr	5 976	10 186	6 870	3 089	4 475	784	385	714	32 637
TREND									
2007									
Sep Qtr	7 478	10 264	10 863	2 907	5 502	716	361	614	38 687
Dec Qtr	7 805	10 659	11 408	2 919	5 564	728	277	569	39 918
2008									
Mar Qtr	7 914	10 619	11 582	3 032	5 678	727	212	514	40 273
Jun Qtr	7 448	10 373	10 668	3 207	5 494	728	211	563	38 759
Sep Qtr	6 719	10 266	9 130	3 282	5 082	752	255	660	36 267
Dec Qtr	5 947	10 320	7 474	3 240	4 649	784	304	716	33 546

(a) Seasonally adjusted numbers of dwelling unit commencements in Northern Territory and Australian Capital Territory should be used with caution. For further information, see paragraph 14 of the Explanatory Notes.

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

<i>Period</i>	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic.</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>Tas.</i>	<i>NT(a)</i>	<i>ACT(a)</i>	<i>Aust.</i>
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
ORIGINAL									
2005-06	-17.0	-4.4	-3.3	-3.5	13.2	-9.6	1.2	-25.4	-5.0
2006-07	-9.2	-1.4	8.7	5.1	-4.5	12.0	-0.2	26.0	-0.1
2007-08	5.4	8.1	8.9	5.7	-9.6	1.4	-20.9	-2.7	4.2
2007									
Sep Qtr	20.6	12.1	10.4	-6.6	2.6	0.7	7.0	15.8	9.9
Dec Qtr	-7.4	9.3	6.1	-4.5	-1.1	26.4	-37.8	-16.8	2.0
2008									
Mar Qtr	6.4	-19.3	-22.9	2.8	-12.0	-18.8	-16.1	-40.6	-13.5
Jun Qtr	-1.6	3.9	21.7	7.8	19.6	5.5	-9.3	59.2	10.3
Sep Qtr	-19.9	15.9	-12.2	16.1	-12.1	1.4	10.8	32.4	-3.5
Dec Qtr	-2.8	-6.0	-30.6	-11.1	-14.7	12.5	94.9	1.6	-12.6
SEASONALLY ADJUSTED									
2007									
Sep Qtr	16.2	6.4	2.2	-5.2	-4.4	7.8	-12.1	17.9	3.8
Dec Qtr	-9.7	10.5	12.9	-8.0	6.8	13.7	-37.4	-22.2	5.0
2008									
Mar Qtr	12.1	-4.3	-4.8	21.3	-5.3	-15.1	2.3	-20.1	-2.0
Jun Qtr	-0.7	-8.5	-1.2	-8.0	9.5	4.8	-16.0	24.6	0.1
Sep Qtr	-23.7	9.7	-17.6	18.4	-17.4	9.0	-1.0	30.6	-8.9
Dec Qtr	-3.0	-5.0	-25.4	-13.0	-8.8	1.0	92.4	-0.8	-9.9
TREND									
2007									
Sep Qtr	0.1	6.8	3.5	1.5	-3.4	2.9	-10.7	5.5	2.3
Dec Qtr	4.4	3.8	5.0	0.4	1.1	1.7	-23.3	-7.2	3.2
2008									
Mar Qtr	1.4	-0.4	1.5	3.9	2.1	-0.1	-23.3	-9.7	0.9
Jun Qtr	-5.9	-2.3	-7.9	5.8	-3.2	0.1	-0.5	9.5	-3.8
Sep Qtr	-9.8	-1.0	-14.4	2.3	-7.5	3.4	20.5	17.3	-6.4
Dec Qtr	-11.5	0.5	-18.1	-1.3	-8.5	4.3	19.4	8.4	-7.5

(a) Seasonally adjusted numbers of dwelling unit commencements in Northern Territory and Australian Capital Territory should be used with caution. For further information, see paragraph 14 of the Explanatory Notes.

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									
2005-06	16 075	29 612	24 751	8 137	21 733	2 246	677	1 033	104 264
2006-07	15 722	29 524	28 241	8 686	19 896	2 447	761	1 262	106 538
2007-08	15 633	30 849	30 017	9 493	16 924	2 463	608	1 281	107 269
2007									
Sep Qtr	3 902	8 107	8 050	2 410	4 341	511	181	308	27 810
Dec Qtr	3 888	8 287	8 568	2 182	4 262	714	145	345	28 391
2008									
Mar Qtr	3 877	6 364	6 430	2 452	3 725	573	148	242	23 812
Jun Qtr	3 966	8 091	6 969	2 449	4 597	664	135	386	27 256
Sep Qtr	3 538	8 480	6 525	2 629	3 354	627	137	293	25 583
Dec Qtr	2 998	7 861	5 363	2 461	4 032	644	185	318	23 863
NEW OTHER RESIDENTIAL BUILDING									
2005-06	16 348	8 900	12 991	2 272	4 033	283	625	797	46 249
2006-07	13 616	8 514	12 797	2 426	4 752	382	593	1 047	44 127
2007-08	15 114	10 355	14 632	2 316	5 347	409	456	963	49 592
2007									
Sep Qtr	4 123	2 437	3 487	539	1 372	140	231	414	12 744
Dec Qtr	3 419	3 264	3 637	641	1 381	112	109	256	12 818
2008									
Mar Qtr	3 898	2 996	3 008	453	1 232	104	66	110	11 868
Jun Qtr	3 674	1 658	4 500	682	1 362	53	49	183	12 162
Sep Qtr	2 674	2 803	3 573	996	1 876	63	78	459	12 522
Dec Qtr	3 005	2 824	1 632	764	442	170	233	436	9 506
CONVERSIONS, ETC.									
2005-06	456	694	110	234	211	29	64	4	1 802
2006-07	504	613	102	73	171	36	9	2	1 512
2007-08	704	574	151	19	176	31	15	4	1 675
2007									
Sep Qtr	82	187	22	11	42	12	1	—	357
Dec Qtr	197	182	60	4	50	13	2	—	509
2008									
Mar Qtr	210	110	24	2	52	4	1	4	407
Jun Qtr	215	95	45	2	33	2	11	—	402
Sep Qtr	77	122	17	12	38	38	2	—	306
Dec Qtr	108	32	24	7	20	6	3	9	209
TOTAL									
2005-06	32 879	39 206	37 852	10 643	25 978	2 557	1 366	1 835	152 315
2006-07	29 842	38 651	41 141	11 185	24 818	2 865	1 363	2 311	152 177
2007-08	31 451	41 778	44 800	11 828	22 448	2 904	1 079	2 248	158 536
2007									
Sep Qtr	8 107	10 731	11 558	2 960	5 756	664	412	722	40 911
Dec Qtr	7 504	11 733	12 265	2 827	5 693	839	256	601	41 718
2008									
Mar Qtr	7 985	9 470	9 462	2 907	5 008	681	215	357	36 087
Jun Qtr	7 855	9 843	11 514	3 134	5 991	719	195	568	39 820
Sep Qtr	6 289	11 405	10 115	3 637	5 268	729	216	752	38 411
Dec Qtr	6 111	10 717	7 019	3 232	4 494	820	421	764	33 578

— 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.
Period	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.
NEW HOUSES									
2005-06	15 873	29 340	24 519	7 704	21 158	2 211	637	990	102 432
2006-07	15 444	29 304	28 066	8 178	19 445	2 437	643	1 125	104 641
2007-08	15 346	30 533	29 755	9 152	16 383	2 456	484	1 189	105 298
2007									
Sep Qtr	3 799	8 001	7 999	2 268	4 146	511	159	266	27 150
Dec Qtr	3 848	8 213	8 458	2 091	4 153	713	122	324	27 922
2008									
Mar Qtr	3 763	6 273	6 379	2 401	3 575	568	90	226	23 274
Jun Qtr	3 936	8 046	6 920	2 392	4 510	663	113	373	26 952
Sep Qtr	3 514	8 458	6 483	2 589	3 248	612	121	258	25 283
Dec Qtr	2 969	7 798	5 278	2 403	3 957	635	161	263	23 464
NEW OTHER RESIDENTIAL BUILDING									
2005-06	16 022	8 796	12 587	2 013	3 550	260	604	797	44 628
2006-07	13 157	8 445	12 384	2 264	4 312	369	552	1 047	42 530
2007-08	14 583	10 241	14 123	2 202	4 760	407	446	963	47 725
2007									
Sep Qtr	3 993	2 417	3 285	499	1 191	140	231	414	12 171
Dec Qtr	3 315	3 209	3 547	612	1 254	112	99	256	12 404
2008									
Mar Qtr	3 737	2 976	2 922	420	1 128	102	66	110	11 462
Jun Qtr	3 538	1 638	4 369	671	1 187	53	49	183	11 688
Sep Qtr	2 467	2 728	3 341	992	1 611	63	78	459	11 738
Dec Qtr	2 947	2 775	1 508	748	403	156	231	436	9 204
CONVERSIONS, ETC.									
2005-06	456	628	110	225	187	29	61	4	1 700
2006-07	502	606	102	73	161	36	9	2	1 493
2007-08	585	563	128	18	174	31	11	4	1 514
2007									
Sep Qtr	72	186	20	11	42	12	1	—	344
Dec Qtr	197	180	60	3	50	13	2	—	505
2008									
Mar Qtr	194	102	24	2	50	4	1	4	381
Jun Qtr	122	95	24	2	33	2	7	—	284
Sep Qtr	21	119	16	12	38	38	2	—	246
Dec Qtr	91	30	24	7	20	5	3	9	190
TOTAL									
2005-06	32 351	38 764	37 216	9 942	24 895	2 499	1 302	1 792	148 760
2006-07	29 104	38 355	40 552	10 516	23 917	2 842	1 204	2 174	148 665
2007-08	30 514	41 337	44 006	11 372	21 318	2 895	941	2 156	154 538
2007									
Sep Qtr	7 864	10 605	11 303	2 778	5 379	664	391	680	39 665
Dec Qtr	7 360	11 602	12 065	2 705	5 456	838	224	580	40 832
2008									
Mar Qtr	7 694	9 351	9 324	2 823	4 752	675	157	341	35 117
Jun Qtr	7 596	9 778	11 313	3 066	5 730	718	169	555	38 924
Sep Qtr	6 003	11 304	9 840	3 592	4 897	714	200	717	37 267
Dec Qtr	6 007	10 604	6 810	3 158	4 379	796	395	709	32 857

— 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.
<i>Period</i>	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.
NEW HOUSES									
2005-06	201	272	232	432	575	35	40	43	1 831
2006-07	277	220	176	508	451	10	118	137	1 897
2007-08	287	316	262	341	541	7	124	92	1 971
2007									
Sep Qtr	103	106	51	142	195	—	21	42	660
Dec Qtr	40	74	110	91	109	1	23	21	469
2008									
Mar Qtr	114	91	52	51	150	5	58	16	537
Jun Qtr	30	45	49	57	87	1	22	13	304
Sep Qtr	23	22	42	41	106	15	16	35	300
Dec Qtr	29	62	85	58	76	9	24	55	399
NEW OTHER RESIDENTIAL BUILDING									
2005-06	326	104	404	259	483	23	21	—	1 621
2006-07	458	69	414	162	440	13	41	—	1 597
2007-08	531	114	509	114	587	2	10	—	1 867
2007									
Sep Qtr	130	20	202	40	181	—	—	—	573
Dec Qtr	104	55	90	29	127	—	10	—	414
2008									
Mar Qtr	161	20	86	34	104	2	—	—	406
Jun Qtr	137	20	131	11	175	—	—	—	474
Sep Qtr	207	76	232	4	265	—	—	—	784
Dec Qtr	58	49	123	16	39	14	2	—	302
CONVERSIONS, ETC.									
2005-06	—	66	—	9	24	—	3	—	102
2006-07	2	7	—	—	10	—	—	—	19
2007-08	119	11	23	2	2	—	4	—	161
2007									
Sep Qtr	10	1	2	—	—	—	—	—	13
Dec Qtr	—	2	—	2	—	—	—	—	4
2008									
Mar Qtr	16	8	—	—	2	—	—	—	26
Jun Qtr	93	—	21	—	—	—	4	—	118
Sep Qtr	56	3	1	—	—	—	—	—	60
Dec Qtr	17	2	—	—	—	1	—	—	20
TOTAL									
2005-06	528	442	636	701	1 083	58	64	43	3 555
2006-07	738	296	589	670	901	23	159	137	3 512
2007-08	937	442	794	456	1 131	9	138	92	3 998
2007									
Sep Qtr	243	126	255	182	376	—	21	42	1 246
Dec Qtr	144	131	200	121	236	1	33	21	887
2008									
Mar Qtr	291	119	138	85	256	7	58	16	970
Jun Qtr	260	65	201	68	262	1	26	13	896
Sep Qtr	286	101	275	45	371	15	16	35	1 144
Dec Qtr	104	113	209	74	115	25	26	55	721

— 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 June quarter 2005, the quarterly survey consists of:

- a sample survey of public and private sector residential building jobs valued at \$50,000 or more
- an indirect component based on building approval details for all residential building work approved from \$10,000 to less than \$50,000.

3 Building jobs included in each quarter in the Building Activity Survey comprise those jobs selected in previous quarters which have not been completed (or commenced) by the end of the previous quarter and those jobs newly selected in the current quarter. The population list from which jobs are selected for inclusion comprises all approved building jobs which were notified to the ABS (refer paragraph 2) up to but not including the last month of the reference quarter (i.e. up to the end of August in respect of the September quarter survey). This introduces a lag to the statistics in respect of those jobs notified and commenced in the last month of the reference quarter (i.e. for the month of September in respect of the September quarter survey). For example, jobs which were notified as approved in the month of June and which actually commenced in that month are shown as commencements in the September quarter. Similarly, building jobs which were notified in the month of September and which actually commenced in that month are shown as commencements in the December quarter.

4 The use of sample survey techniques in the Building Activity Survey means that reliable estimates of the number of 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. 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 Building Approvals, Australia (cat. no. 8731.0).

CLASSIFICATION

5 *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.

6 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

7 Since the estimates are based on a sample of approved residential building jobs, the estimates of commencements of 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.

8 Estimated relative standard errors for the number of dwellings commenced in the December quarter 2008 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.

EXPLANATORY NOTES *continued*

RELIABILITY OF THE ESTIMATES *continued*

RELATIVE STANDARD ERRORS, December quarter 2008

	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
New private sector houses	5.9	4.1	4.1	4.4	4.9	4.8	3.3	4.8	2.0
Total new other dwellings	3.7	6.3	5.4	6.6	9.6	11.2	—	1.1	2.5
Total dwellings	3.4	3.3	3.3	3.6	4.4	4.3	2.4	1.9	1.6

— nil or rounded to zero (including null cells)

9 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, likely to have commenced. Estimates in this issue for the last two quarters are therefore subject to revision.

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, '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.

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. 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.

12 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.

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

14 As a general rule, extreme care should be exercised in using the seasonally adjusted series for dwelling unit commencements in Northern Territory and Australian Capital Territory. The small numbers and volatile nature of these data makes reliable estimation of the seasonal pattern very difficult.

TREND ESTIMATES

15 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 series.

16 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

EXPLANATORY NOTES *continued*

TREND ESTIMATES *continued*

average, the weights employed here have been tailored to suit the particular characteristics of individual series.

17 While the smoothing technique described in paragraphs 14 and 15 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

18 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

19 All tables in this publication are available in electronic form on the ABS web site.

20 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, Australia, cat. no. 5609.0
Private Sector Construction Industry, Australia, cat. no. 8772.0
Producer Price Indexes, Australia, cat. no. 6427.0

ABS DATA AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

21 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. Not all series in the table go back to the earliest start date.

COMMENCEMENTS

	<i>Publication table no.</i>	<i>Electronic table no.</i>	<i>Start date</i>
Dwelling unit commencements	1	1	September 1955
Dwelling unit commencements, change from previous period	2	n.a.	..
Dwelling unit commencements, states and territories	3	2	September 1980
Dwelling unit commencements, states and territories, change from previous period	4	n.a.	..
Dwelling unit commencements, states and territories, original	5	3	September 1955
Dwelling unit commencements, states and territories, private sector, original	6	4	September 1955
Dwelling unit commencements, states and territories, public sector, original	7	5	September 1969

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 . . .

INTERNET **www.abs.gov.au** the ABS website is the best place for data from our publications and information about the ABS.

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