

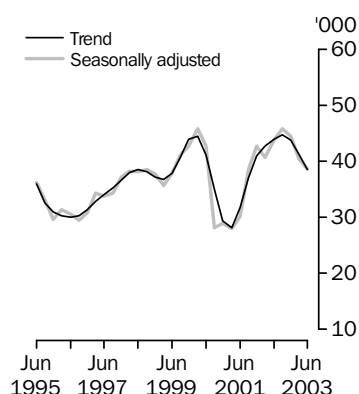
**BUILDING ACTIVITY**  
**DWELLING UNIT  
COMMENCEMENTS**

**AUSTRALIA**  
**PRELIMINARY**

EMBARGO: 11:30AM (CANBERRA TIME) FRI 12 SEP 2003

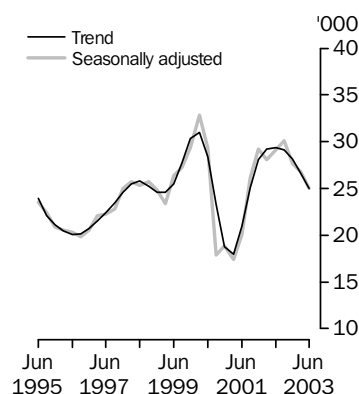
**Dwelling units commenced**

Total



**New houses commenced**

Private sector



**JUNE QTR KEY FIGURES**

**TREND ESTIMATES**

Dwelling units commenced

New private sector houses

Total dwelling units

**Jun qtr 03**

25 004

38 477

**% change  
Mar qtr 03 to  
Jun qtr 03**

-6.1

-6.8

**% change  
Jun qtr 02 to  
Jun qtr 03**

-14.7

-12.4

**SEASONALLY ADJUSTED**

Dwelling units commenced

New private sector houses

Total dwelling units

**Jun qtr 03**

24 972

38 662

**% change  
Mar qtr 03 to  
Jun qtr 03**

-6.8

-4.2

**% change  
Jun qtr 02 to  
Jun qtr 03**

-14.2

-11.6

**JUNE QTR KEY POINTS**

**TREND ESTIMATES**

- The trend estimate for the total number of dwelling units commenced fell 6.8% in the June quarter 2003, the third successive quarterly decline. New private sector houses fell 6.1%, the fourth successive quarterly decline.
- The decline may be halted in the September quarter 2003, due to continued strength in the number of building approvals, particularly for new private sector houses.

**SEASONALLY ADJUSTED ESTIMATES**

- In seasonally adjusted terms, the total number of dwelling units commenced fell for the third successive quarter, by 4.2% in the June quarter, to 38,662. This level was the lowest since the September quarter 2001.
- New private sector house commencements fell 6.8% to 24,972, the lowest for two years.

**ORIGINAL ESTIMATES**

- The total number of dwelling units commenced rose 1.1% in the June quarter to 38,523.
- Within the private sector, the total number of dwellings commenced rose by a marginal 0.1% to 37,454. New house commencements fell 1.7% to 24,957 (14.5% fewer than a year earlier) but other dwellings rose 3.9% to 12,497, to be 8.9% fewer than a year earlier.
- In the latest quarter, Queensland, South Australia and Tasmania recorded increases in the total number of private sector dwellings commenced. The decrease in new house commencements was due to falls in Victoria (-12.6%) and Western Australia (-8.8%), with the largest increase being Queensland (+12.8%). The increase in other dwellings was due mainly to Queensland (+22.5%) and Victoria (+19.3%), while the main falls were in New South Wales (-8.2%) and Western Australia (-26.5%).
- Within the public sector, the total number of dwellings commenced rose 53.4% to 1,069.

**I N Q U I R I E S**

- For further information about these and related statistics, contact Tony Bammann on Adelaide 08 8237 7316, or the National Information and Referral Service on 1300 135 070.

## NOTES

### FORTHCOMING ISSUES

#### ISSUE (Quarter)

#### RELEASE DATE

September 2003

16 December 2003

December 2003

18 March 2004

### 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 13 October 2003.

### SIGNIFICANT REVISIONS THIS ISSUE

The total number of dwelling units commenced in Australia during the March quarter 2003 has been revised downwards by 525 (–1.4%) from the estimate published in *Building Activity, Australia, March quarter 2003* (cat. no. 8752.0) released on 17 July 2003. This was mainly the result of downward revisions of 256 (–3.1%) in Queensland and 136 (–1.3%) in both New South Wales and Victoria.

Seasonally adjusted and trend estimates have been revised as a result of the adoption of new seasonal adjustment methodology. Concurrent seasonal adjustment has replaced forward factor methodology for all seasonally adjusted series in this publication. See paragraphs 12 and 13 of the Explanatory Notes.

### RELIABILITY OF ESTIMATES

The estimates in this publication are based on a sample survey of private sector residential building jobs and a complete enumeration of such public sector jobs. Because data are not collected for all private sector residential building jobs, 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 for dwellings commenced in the June quarter 2003 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—June Quarter 2003

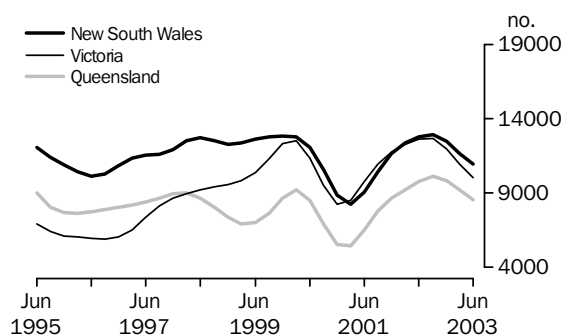
	New private sector houses	Total new other dwellings	Total dwellings
	%	%	%
NSW	4.0	1.9	2.2
Vic.	4.1	2.8	2.8
Qld	3.9	0.8	2.6
SA	3.3	1.5	2.5
WA	3.2	1.6	2.6
Tas.	2.8	..	2.1
NT	..	..	..
ACT	2.3	..	1.6
<b>Aust.</b>	<b>1.8</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>1.2</b>

Dennis Trewin  
Australian Statistician

## DWELLING UNIT COMMENCEMENTS(a) TREND ESTIMATES

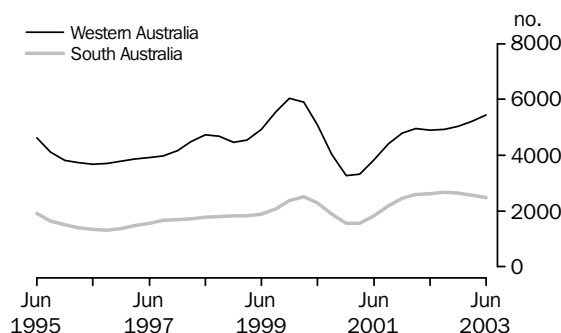
NEW SOUTH WALES  
VICTORIA  
QUEENSLAND

The trend estimates of commencements in New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland have declined for the last three quarters.



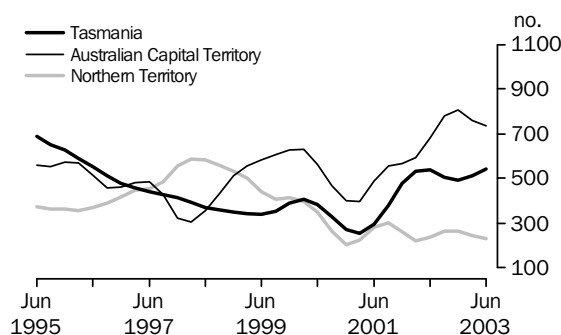
WESTERN AUSTRALIA  
SOUTH AUSTRALIA

The trend estimates of commencements in South Australia have declined for the last three quarters. In Western Australia the trend has shown growth in all but one quarter since the December quarter 2000.



TASMANIA  
AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY  
NORTHERN TERRITORY

The trend estimates of commencements in the Northern Territory have declined for the last three quarters and for the last two quarters in the Australian Capital Territory. On the other hand, Tasmania has recorded growth for the last two quarters, following two quarters of decline.



(a) Includes conversions etc.

Period	NEW HOUSES.....				TOTAL DWELLING UNITS(a).....			
	Private sector.....		Total.....		Private sector.....		Total.....	
	% change from previous period		% change from previous period		% change from previous period		% change from previous period	
	no.		no.		no.		no.	
ORIGINAL								
<b>2000-01</b>	74 128	-37.4	75 330	-37.3	110 977	-33.8	114 945	-33.1
<b>2001-02</b>	112 370	51.6	114 077	51.4	161 613	45.6	165 368	43.9
<b>2002-03</b>	109 562	-2.5	111 412	-2.3	165 701	2.5	169 454	2.5
<b>2002</b>								
Mar qtr	26 625	-9.3	27 024	-9.8	37 621	-9.9	38 519	-9.8
Jun qtr	29 200	9.7	29 590	9.5	42 914	14.1	43 651	13.3
Sep qtr	31 383	7.5	31 893	7.8	47 099	9.8	48 232	10.5
Dec qtr	27 828	-11.3	28 354	-11.1	43 730	-7.2	44 584	-7.6
<b>2003</b>								
Mar qtr	25 394	-8.7	25 764	-9.1	37 418	-14.4	38 115	-14.5
Jun qtr	24 957	-1.7	25 401	-1.4	37 454	0.1	38 523	1.1
SEASONALLY ADJUSTED								
<b>2002</b>								
Mar qtr	28 068	-3.9	28 527	-4.1	39 688	-4.6	40 706	-4.6
Jun qtr	29 113	3.7	29 574	3.7	42 986	8.3	43 728	7.4
Sep qtr	30 076	3.3	30 536	3.3	44 885	4.4	45 764	4.7
Dec qtr	27 646	-8.1	28 087	-8.0	43 463	-3.2	44 435	-2.9
<b>2003</b>								
Mar qtr	26 794	-3.1	27 232	-3.0	39 541	-9.0	40 352	-9.2
Jun qtr	24 972	-6.8	25 467	-6.5	37 585	-4.9	38 662	-4.2
TREND ESTIMATES								
<b>2002</b>								
Mar qtr	29 213	4.1	29 692	4.2	41 806	4.9	42 739	4.6
Jun qtr	29 320	0.4	29 796	0.4	43 044	3.0	43 922	2.8
Sep qtr	29 119	-0.7	29 566	-0.8	43 912	2.0	44 761	1.9
Dec qtr	28 151	-3.3	28 595	-3.3	42 831	-2.5	43 718	-2.3
<b>2003</b>								
Mar qtr	26 633	-5.4	27 086	-5.3	40 324	-5.9	41 265	-5.6
Jun qtr	25 004	-6.1	25 550	-5.7	37 486	-7.0	38 477	-6.8

(a) Includes conversions etc.

Period	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.
ORIGINAL (Number)									
<b>2002</b>									
Mar qtr	10 792	11 488	8 490	2 335	4 374	515	148	378	38 519
Jun qtr	12 517	12 867	9 533	2 644	4 674	550	284	582	43 651
Sep qtr	13 272	13 729	11 188	2 732	5 627	499	289	896	48 232
Dec qtr	13 952	11 459	10 131	2 759	4 588	480	275	940	44 584
<b>2003</b>									
Mar qtr	10 604	10 500	7 883	2 361	5 441	467	196	663	38 115
Jun qtr	10 333	10 150	9 113	2 468	4 936	627	231	665	38 523
ORIGINAL (% change from previous quarter)									
<b>2002</b>									
Mar qtr	-19.1	1.4	-1.1	-10.6	-15.7	-3.5	-38.1	-56.8	-9.8
Jun qtr	16.0	12.0	12.3	13.3	6.9	6.8	91.7	54.1	13.3
Sep qtr	6.0	6.7	17.4	3.3	20.4	-9.3	1.8	53.8	10.5
Dec qtr	5.1	-16.5	-9.4	1.0	-18.5	-3.9	-5.1	4.9	-7.6
<b>2003</b>									
Mar qtr	-24.0	-8.4	-22.2	-14.4	18.6	-2.6	-28.6	-29.5	-14.5
Jun qtr	-2.6	-3.3	15.6	4.5	-9.3	34.3	17.9	0.3	1.1
SEASONALLY ADJUSTED (Number)									
<b>2002</b>									
Mar qtr	11 492	11 973	9 387	2 478	4 601	548	182	401	40 706
Jun qtr	13 191	12 575	9 196	2 644	5 022	514	273	677	43 728
Sep qtr	12 935	13 154	10 680	2 652	5 249	541	251	932	45 764
Dec qtr	12 791	11 804	10 030	2 687	4 379	449	277	748	44 435
<b>2003</b>									
Mar qtr	11 365	10 898	8 682	2 506	5 714	500	243	721	40 352
Jun qtr	10 883	9 942	8 847	2 463	5 342	581	221	777	38 662
SEASONALLY ADJUSTED (% change from previous quarter)									
<b>2002</b>									
Mar qtr	-6.7	3.2	10.9	-2.6	-7.4	10.1	-23.7	-44.0	-4.6
Jun qtr	14.8	5.0	-2.0	6.7	9.1	-6.2	50.2	68.8	7.4
Sep qtr	-1.9	4.6	16.1	0.3	4.5	5.3	-8.0	37.7	4.7
Dec qtr	-1.1	-10.3	-6.1	1.3	-16.6	-17.1	10.1	-19.7	-2.9
<b>2003</b>									
Mar qtr	-11.1	-7.7	-13.4	-6.7	30.5	11.4	-12.3	-3.6	-9.2
Jun qtr	-4.2	-8.8	1.9	-1.7	-6.5	16.2	-9.0	7.7	-4.2
TREND ESTIMATES (Number)									
<b>2002</b>									
Mar qtr	12 367	12 271	9 220	2 583	4 949	533	221	593	42 739
Jun qtr	12 796	12 614	9 777	2 621	4 903	537	237	681	43 922
Sep qtr	12 947	12 666	10 098	2 659	4 927	504	263	781	44 761
Dec qtr	12 490	11 956	9 805	2 630	5 040	492	263	806	43 718
<b>2003</b>									
Mar qtr	11 660	10 957	9 228	2 550	5 220	510	245	760	41 265
Jun qtr	10 925	10 006	8 549	2 470	5 449	542	231	737	38 477
TREND ESTIMATES (% change from previous quarter)									
<b>2002</b>									
Mar qtr	6.2	4.6	6.7	5.3	3.6	11.8	-15.5	4.7	4.6
Jun qtr	3.5	2.8	6.0	1.5	-0.9	0.6	7.1	14.9	2.8
Sep qtr	1.2	0.4	3.3	1.4	0.5	-6.0	11.1	14.7	1.9
Dec qtr	-3.5	-5.6	-2.9	-1.1	2.3	-2.4	-0.1	3.1	-2.3
<b>2003</b>									
Mar qtr	-6.6	-8.4	-5.9	-3.0	3.6	3.6	-6.6	-5.6	-5.6
Jun qtr	-6.3	-8.7	-7.4	-3.1	4.4	6.2	-5.7	-3.0	-6.8

(a) Includes conversions, etc.

	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.
Period	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.
NEW HOUSES									
<b>2000-01</b>	17 751	24 166	14 505	5 390	10 895	1 035	577	1 011	75 330
<b>2001-02</b>	25 548	35 039	25 274	8 281	16 324	1 774	646	1 191	114 077
<b>2002-03</b>	24 162	32 552	25 265	8 224	17 004	1 873	531	1 800	111 412
<b>2002</b>									
Mar qtr	6 001	8 332	6 006	1 949	3 865	494	130	248	27 024
Jun qtr	6 520	9 460	6 404	2 202	3 982	486	169	365	29 590
Sep qtr	6 948	9 311	7 397	2 403	4 764	476	171	423	31 893
Dec qtr	6 425	8 565	6 475	2 004	3 762	450	132	542	28 354
<b>2003</b>									
Mar qtr	5 327	7 836	5 365	1 904	4 397	452	103	380	25 764
Jun qtr	5 462	6 840	6 028	1 913	4 080	495	126	456	25 401
NEW OTHER RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS									
<b>2000-01</b>	14 829	9 584	7 814	1 120	2 592	60	446	634	37 079
<b>2001-02</b>	20 908	11 617	9 653	1 651	2 839	154	385	1 186	48 395
<b>2002-03</b>	22 590	12 356	12 667	2 036	3 449	190	449	1 361	55 097
<b>2002</b>									
Mar qtr	4 488	2 698	2 376	376	499	17	15	123	10 592
Jun qtr	5 578	3 131	3 016	431	643	64	115	216	13 194
Sep qtr	5 847	4 174	3 477	321	863	19	117	473	15 291
Dec qtr	7 220	2 726	3 617	740	769	30	140	398	15 639
<b>2003</b>									
Mar qtr	5 017	2 481	2 512	453	1 010	13	89	283	11 858
Jun qtr	4 506	2 975	3 061	522	807	128	103	207	12 309
CONVERSIONS, ETC.									
<b>2000-01</b>	849	871	347	46	404	14	4	1	2 536
<b>2001-02</b>	1 196	1 224	318	59	76	10	4	9	2 897
<b>2002-03</b>	1 410	930	383	62	140	10	10	2	2 947
<b>2002</b>									
Mar qtr	303	458	108	10	10	4	3	7	904
Jun qtr	419	276	112	11	48	—	—	1	868
Sep qtr	477	244	314	8	—	4	2	—	1 048
Dec qtr	308	168	40	16	57	—	3	—	592
<b>2003</b>									
Mar qtr	260	183	6	4	34	2	4	—	493
Jun qtr	365	335	24	34	49	4	1	2	814
TOTAL									
<b>2000-01</b>	33 429	34 620	22 666	6 556	13 891	1 109	1 027	1 646	114 945
<b>2001-02</b>	47 653	47 880	35 245	9 991	19 239	1 938	1 036	2 386	165 368
<b>2002-03</b>	48 161	45 838	38 315	10 320	20 592	2 073	991	3 163	169 454
<b>2002</b>									
Mar qtr	10 792	11 488	8 490	2 335	4 374	515	148	378	38 519
Jun qtr	12 517	12 867	9 533	2 644	4 674	550	284	582	43 651
Sep qtr	13 272	13 729	11 188	2 732	5 627	499	289	896	48 232
Dec qtr	13 952	11 459	10 131	2 759	4 588	480	275	940	44 584
<b>2003</b>									
Mar qtr	10 604	10 500	7 883	2 361	5 441	467	196	663	38 115
Jun qtr	10 333	10 150	9 113	2 468	4 936	627	231	665	38 523

(a) Includes conversions, etc.

	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.
Period	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.
NEW HOUSES									
<b>2000-01</b>	17 618	23 921	14 260	5 303	10 590	1 028	434	973	74 128
<b>2001-02</b>	25 448	34 628	25 017	8 030	15 875	1 716	515	1 141	112 370
<b>2002-03</b>	24 032	32 308	24 959	7 881	16 427	1 844	402	1 706	109 562
<b>2002</b>									
Mar qtr	5 990	8 249	5 955	1 853	3 772	463	110	232	26 625
Jun qtr	6 511	9 410	6 348	2 125	3 856	465	119	365	29 200
Sep qtr	6 939	9 255	7 353	2 302	4 537	469	129	399	31 383
Dec qtr	6 402	8 497	6 318	1 897	3 679	450	103	483	27 828
<b>2003</b>									
Mar qtr	5 293	7 766	5 304	1 822	4 295	452	83	377	25 394
Jun qtr	5 398	6 790	5 984	1 860	3 916	473	88	448	24 957
NEW OTHER RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS									
<b>2000-01</b>	13 791	9 435	7 289	1 097	1 968	55	307	562	34 504
<b>2001-02</b>	20 290	11 271	9 376	1 613	2 246	143	279	1 156	46 376
<b>2002-03</b>	22 231	11 823	12 344	1 959	2 987	190	414	1 277	53 225
<b>2002</b>									
Mar qtr	4 257	2 586	2 356	369	395	8	6	117	10 094
Jun qtr	5 453	3 043	2 954	427	586	64	115	212	12 854
Sep qtr	5 744	4 084	3 309	309	625	19	105	473	14 668
Dec qtr	7 180	2 645	3 558	724	710	30	136	330	15 312
<b>2003</b>									
Mar qtr	4 919	2 370	2 469	422	966	13	89	283	11 532
Jun qtr	4 388	2 724	3 008	504	686	128	84	191	11 713
CONVERSIONS, ETC.									
<b>2000-01</b>	841	868	345	42	234	11	3	1	2 345
<b>2001-02</b>	1 194	1 223	299	59	69	10	4	9	2 868
<b>2002-03</b>	1 410	918	382	44	140	10	10	2	2 916
<b>2002</b>									
Mar qtr	302	458	108	10	10	4	3	7	903
Jun qtr	419	275	111	11	43	—	—	1	861
Sep qtr	477	244	314	8	—	4	2	—	1 048
Dec qtr	308	168	39	16	57	—	3	—	591
<b>2003</b>									
Mar qtr	260	183	6	4	34	2	4	—	493
Jun qtr	365	323	24	16	49	4	1	2	784
TOTAL									
<b>2000-01</b>	32 251	34 224	21 895	6 442	12 792	1 094	744	1 536	110 977
<b>2001-02</b>	46 933	47 122	34 691	9 702	18 191	1 869	799	2 306	161 613
<b>2002-03</b>	47 673	45 049	37 686	9 885	19 553	2 044	826	2 985	165 701
<b>2002</b>									
Mar qtr	10 550	11 294	8 419	2 232	4 177	475	119	356	37 621
Jun qtr	12 383	12 728	9 414	2 563	4 486	529	234	578	42 914
Sep qtr	13 160	13 583	10 976	2 619	5 161	492	235	872	47 099
Dec qtr	13 889	11 310	9 915	2 636	4 446	480	242	813	43 730
<b>2003</b>									
Mar qtr	10 473	10 319	7 779	2 249	5 295	467	176	660	37 418
Jun qtr	10 151	9 837	9 017	2 380	4 651	605	173	641	37 454

	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.
<i>Period</i>	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.
NEW HOUSES									
<b>2000-01</b>	133	245	245	87	305	7	143	38	1 202
<b>2001-02</b>	100	411	258	251	448	58	131	50	1 707
<b>2002-03</b>	129	244	305	343	577	29	130	94	1 850
<b>2002</b>									
Mar qtr	10	82	51	96	93	31	20	16	399
Jun qtr	9	51	56	77	126	21	50	—	390
Sep qtr	9	56	44	101	228	7	42	24	510
Dec qtr	23	68	157	107	83	—	29	59	526
<b>2003</b>									
Mar qtr	33	70	60	82	102	—	20	3	371
Jun qtr	64	50	44	53	164	22	39	8	443
NEW OTHER RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS									
<b>2000-01</b>	1 038	149	525	23	624	5	139	72	2 575
<b>2001-02</b>	618	346	277	38	593	11	106	30	2 019
<b>2002-03</b>	359	533	323	76	463	—	35	84	1 872
<b>2002</b>									
Mar qtr	231	112	20	7	104	9	9	6	498
Jun qtr	125	88	62	4	57	—	—	4	340
Sep qtr	103	90	168	12	238	—	12	—	623
Dec qtr	40	81	59	16	59	—	4	68	327
<b>2003</b>									
Mar qtr	98	111	43	30	44	—	—	—	326
Jun qtr	118	251	53	18	122	—	19	16	596
CONVERSIONS, ETC.									
<b>2000-01</b>	8	3	2	4	170	3	1	—	191
<b>2001-02</b>	2	1	19	—	7	—	—	—	29
<b>2002-03</b>	—	12	1	18	—	—	—	—	31
<b>2002</b>									
Mar qtr	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
Jun qtr	—	1	1	—	5	—	—	—	7
Sep qtr	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Dec qtr	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	1
<b>2003</b>									
Mar qtr	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Jun qtr	—	12	—	18	—	—	—	—	30
TOTAL									
<b>2000-01</b>	1 179	397	772	114	1 099	15	283	110	3 968
<b>2001-02</b>	720	758	554	289	1 048	69	237	80	3 754
<b>2002-03</b>	488	789	628	436	1 040	29	165	178	3 753
<b>2002</b>									
Mar qtr	242	194	71	103	197	40	29	22	898
Jun qtr	134	140	119	81	188	21	50	4	737
Sep qtr	112	146	212	113	466	7	54	24	1 133
Dec qtr	63	149	217	123	142	—	33	127	854
<b>2003</b>									
Mar qtr	131	181	103	112	146	—	20	3	697
Jun qtr	182	313	96	88	286	22	58	24	1 069



## 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).

**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 and a complete enumeration of all such public sector residential building jobs. Estimates in respect of commencements of private sector dwellings and total dwellings 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 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 Approvals series compiled by the ABS.

### 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 and 2. 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. 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. Thus, for example, 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** 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.

### TREND ESTIMATES

**14** 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.

## EXPLANATORY NOTES *continued*

### TREND ESTIMATES *continued*

**15** 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.

**16** 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': an Overview* (cat. no. 1348.0) or contact the Assistant Director, Time Series Analysis on Canberra 02 6252 6540 or email <timeseries@abs.gov.au>.

### ACKNOWLEDGMENT

**17** 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

**18** Users may also wish to refer to the following publications which are available from ABS Bookshops:

*Building Activity, Australia*, cat. no. 8752.0, quarterly  
*Building Approvals, Australia*, cat. no. 8731.0, monthly  
*Construction Work Done, Australia, Preliminary*, cat. no. 8755.0, quarterly  
*House Price Indexes: Eight Capital Cities*, cat. no. 6416.0, quarterly  
*Housing Finance for Owner Occupation, Australia*, cat. no. 5609.0, monthly  
*Producer Price Indexes, Australia*, cat. no. 6427.0, quarterly  
*Private Sector Construction Industry, Australia, 1996–97*, cat. no. 8772.0.

**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 any ABS office 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.

### SYMBOLS AND OTHER USAGES

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

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

## FOR MORE INFORMATION...

<i>INTERNET</i>	<b>www.abs.gov.au</b> the ABS web site is the best place to start for access to summary data from our latest publications, information about the ABS, advice about upcoming releases, our catalogue, and Australia Now—a statistical profile.
<i>LIBRARY</i>	A range of ABS publications is 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.
<i>CPI INFOLINE</i>	For current and historical Consumer Price Index data, call 1902 981 074 (call cost 77c per minute).
<i>DIAL-A-STATISTIC</i>	For the latest figures for National Accounts, Balance of Payments, Labour Force, Average Weekly Earnings, Estimated Resident Population and the Consumer Price Index call 1900 986 400 (call cost 77c per minute).

## INFORMATION SERVICE

Data which have been published and can be provided within five minutes are free of charge. Our information consultants can also help you to access the full range of ABS information—ABS user-pays services can be tailored to your needs, time frame and budget. Publications may be purchased. Specialists are on hand to help you with analytical or methodological advice.

<i>PHONE</i>	<b>1300 135 070</b>
<i>EMAIL</i>	<b>client.services@abs.gov.au</b>
<i>FAX</i>	1300 135 211
<i>POST</i>	Client Services, ABS, GPO Box 796, Sydney 2001

## WHY NOT SUBSCRIBE?

ABS subscription services provide regular, convenient and prompt deliveries of ABS publications and products as they are released. Email delivery of monthly and quarterly publications is available.

<i>PHONE</i>	1300 366 323
<i>EMAIL</i>	subscriptions@abs.gov.au
<i>FAX</i>	03 9615 7848
<i>POST</i>	Subscription Services, ABS, GPO Box 2796Y, Melbourne 3001



2875000006035  
ISSN 0818-3511

RRP \$18.50