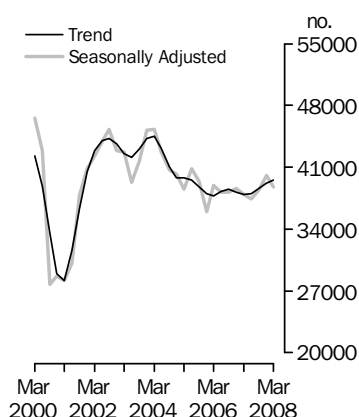


DWELLING UNIT COMMENCEMENTS

AUSTRALIA
PRELIMINARY

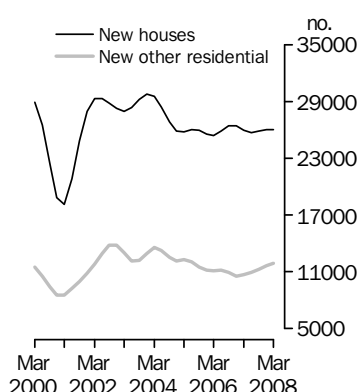
EMBARGO: 11.30AM (CANBERRA TIME) TUES 17 JUN 2008

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

	Mar qtr 08 no.	Dec qtr 07 to Mar qtr 08 %	Mar qtr 07 to Mar qtr 08 %
TREND ESTIMATES			
Total dwelling units commenced	39 537	0.9	4.3
New private sector houses	26 067	—	0.5
New private sector other residential building	11 874	2.0	11.2
SEASONALLY ADJUSTED ESTIMATES			
Total dwelling units commenced	38 811	-3.3	2.4
New private sector houses	25 365	-6.0	-2.5
New private sector other residential building	11 844	3.0	12.2

— nil or rounded to zero (including null cells)

KEY POINTS

TOTAL DWELLING UNITS

- The trend estimate for the total number of dwelling units commenced rose 0.9% in the March quarter 2008 following a revised increase of 1.6% in the December quarter 2007.
- The seasonally adjusted estimate for the total number of dwelling units commenced fell 3.3% in the March quarter which follows a revised increase of 4.2% in the December quarter.

NEW HOUSES

- The trend estimate for new private sector house commencements was flat in the March quarter. This follows a revised increase of 0.6% in the December quarter.
- The seasonally adjusted estimate for new private sector house commencements fell 6.0% in the March quarter. This follows a revised increase of 5.7% in the December quarter.

OTHER RESIDENTIAL BUILDING

- The trend for new private sector other residential building commencements rose 2.0% in the March quarter which follows a revised increase of 3.2% in the December quarter.
- The seasonally adjusted estimate for new private sector other residential building rose 3.0% in the March quarter following a revised fall of 1.8% in the December quarter.

NOTES

FORTHCOMING ISSUES

ISSUE (Quarter)

RELEASE DATE

June 2008 15 September 2008

September 2008 16 December 2008

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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 15 July 2008.

SIGNIFICANT REVISIONS THIS ISSUE

Compared to the estimates published in *Building Activity, Australia*, December quarter 2007 (cat. no. 8752.0) released on 18 April 2008:

- the total number of dwellings commenced in Australia during December quarter 2007 has been revised upwards by 404 (+1.0%).
- the number of new private sector houses commenced in Australia during the December quarter 2007 has been revised downwards by 328 (-1.2%).
- the number of new private sector other residential dwelling units commenced in Australia during the December quarter 2007 has been revised upwards by 737 (+6.3%).

As a survey of approved building jobs, outcomes from the Building Activity Survey are subject to the accuracy of Building Approvals information used in preparing the collection. Some errors have been identified in Building Approvals information for a number of regions in Australia over recent years. Adjustments were made to the affected Building Approvals series and revisions were incorporated into the March 2008 issue of Building Approvals, Australia (cat. no. 8731.0), released on 1 May 2008.

As a result of the changes in the Building Approvals series there will be corresponding revisions to other building series. These changes have been incorporated into this issue going back to the September Quarter 2001. The revisions are more significant for some states.

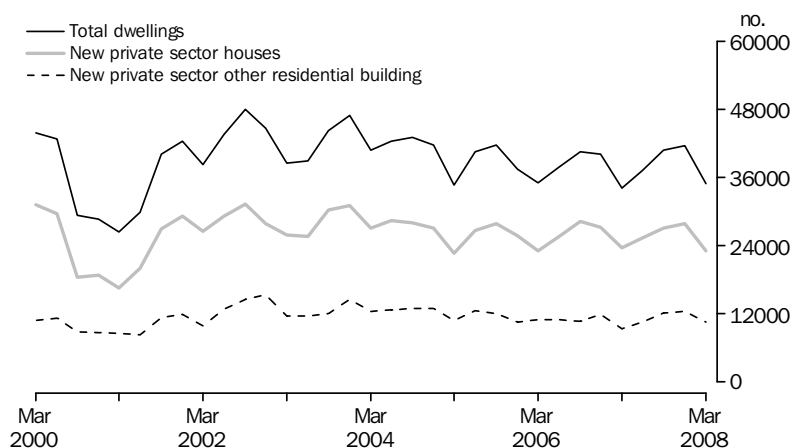
Ian Ewing
Acting Australian Statistician

DWELLING UNIT COMMENCEMENTS ORIGINAL

ORIGINAL ESTIMATES

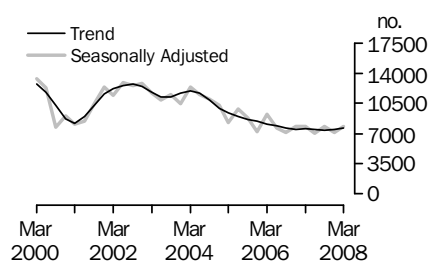
	Mar qtr 08	Dec qtr 07 to Mar qtr 08	Mar qtr 07 to Mar qtr 08
	no.	%	%
New private sector houses	23 107	-17.0	-2.4
New private sector other residential building	10 526	-15.1	12.0
Private sector conversion, etc.	381	-24.4	44.7
Public sector dwellings	950	7.1	13.9
Total dwelling units	34 963	-16.0	2.3

- The total number of dwelling units commenced fell 16.0% in the March quarter 2008, to 34,963.
- New private sector house commencements fell 17.0%, to 23,107. Commencements fell in states and territories other than South Australia.
- New private sector other residential building fell 15.1%, to 10,526. This follows a revised increase of 1.9%, to 12,398 in the December quarter.
- The total number of public sector dwellings commenced rose 7.1%, to 950. Commencements rose in states and territories other than Victoria, Queensland, South Australia and the Australian Capital Territory.



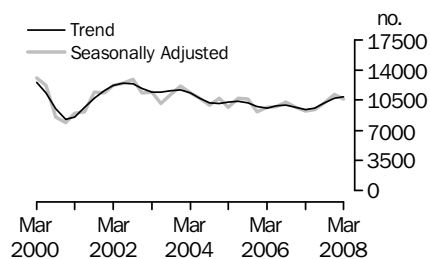
DWELLING UNIT COMMENCEMENTS STATES & TERRITORIES

NEW SOUTH WALES



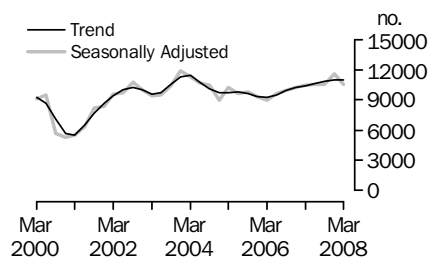
The trend estimate of the number of total dwelling unit commencements is now showing rises for two quarters following falls for two quarters.

VICTORIA



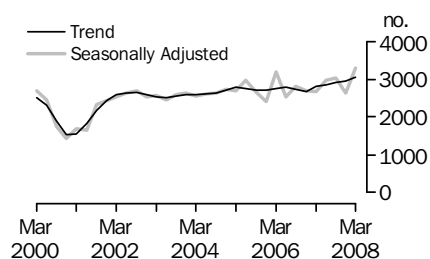
The trend estimate of the number of total dwelling unit commencements has risen for the last four quarters.

QUEENSLAND



The trend estimate of the number of total dwelling unit commencements was flat in March following rises for the previous seven quarters.

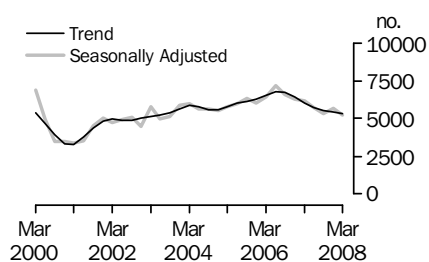
SOUTH AUSTRALIA



The trend estimate of the number of total dwelling unit commencements is now showing rises for the last five quarters.

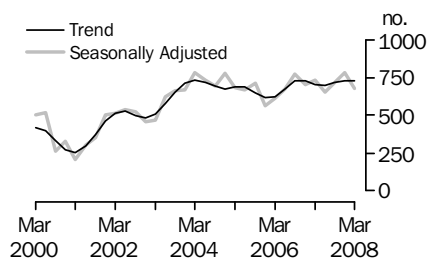
DWELLING UNIT COMMENCEMENTS STATES & TERRITORIES *continued*

WESTERN AUSTRALIA



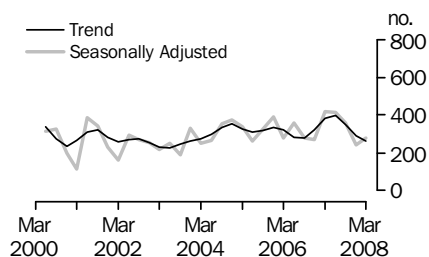
The trend estimate of the number of total dwelling unit commencements is showing falls for the last seven quarters.

TASMANIA



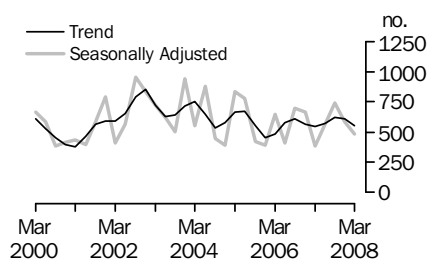
The trend estimate of the number of total dwelling unit commencements has fallen this quarter after rising for the previous two quarters.

NORTHERN TERRITORY



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

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY



The trend estimate of the number of total dwelling unit commencements is now showing falls for the last 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						
2004-05	104 483	49 364	156 028	106 597	51 589	160 387
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
2006						
Dec Qtr	27 262	11 948	39 517	27 692	12 248	40 255
2007						
Mar Qtr	23 679	9 399	33 341	24 057	9 847	34 175
Jun Qtr	25 336	10 518	36 297	25 867	10 902	37 216
Sep Qtr	27 150	12 171	39 665	27 810	12 744	40 911
Dec Qtr	27 843	12 398	40 746	28 312	12 812	41 632
2008						
Mar Qtr	23 107	10 526	34 013	23 622	10 934	34 963
SEASONALLY ADJUSTED						
2006						
Dec Qtr	26 414	11 062	37 860	26 839	11 425	38 656
2007						
Mar Qtr	26 010	10 557	36 909	26 478	11 069	37 896
Jun Qtr	25 451	10 605	36 494	26 001	10 996	37 439
Sep Qtr	25 546	11 704	37 491	26 085	12 142	38 481
Dec Qtr	26 996	11 499	39 135	27 469	12 003	40 116
2008						
Mar Qtr	25 365	11 844	37 702	25 997	12 295	38 811
TREND						
2006						
Dec Qtr	26 415	10 550	37 329	26 864	10 953	38 184
2007						
Mar Qtr	25 937	10 680	36 975	26 420	11 106	37 891
Jun Qtr	25 719	10 940	37 022	26 230	11 384	37 984
Sep Qtr	25 898	11 285	37 595	26 425	11 736	38 581
Dec Qtr	26 057	11 645	38 185	26 600	12 107	39 203
2008						
Mar Qtr	26 067	11 874	38 474	26 636	12 351	39 537

(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						
2004–05	–10.7	–4.8	–8.8	–10.2	–4.0	–8.2
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
2006						
Dec Qtr	–3.9	12.0	—	–4.3	10.0	–0.7
2007						
Mar Qtr	–13.1	–21.3	–15.6	–13.1	–19.6	–15.1
Jun Qtr	7.0	11.9	8.9	7.5	10.7	8.9
Sep Qtr	7.2	15.7	9.3	7.5	16.9	9.9
Dec Qtr	2.6	1.9	2.7	1.8	0.5	1.8
2008						
Mar Qtr	–17.0	–15.1	–16.5	–16.6	–14.7	–16.0
SEASONALLY ADJUSTED						
2006						
Dec Qtr	–1.3	7.7	1.3	–1.4	7.5	1.3
2007						
Mar Qtr	–1.5	–4.6	–2.5	–1.3	–3.1	–2.0
Jun Qtr	–2.1	0.4	–1.1	–1.8	–0.7	–1.2
Sep Qtr	0.4	10.4	2.7	0.3	10.4	2.8
Dec Qtr	5.7	–1.8	4.4	5.3	–1.1	4.2
2008						
Mar Qtr	–6.0	3.0	–3.7	–5.4	2.4	–3.3
TREND						
2006						
Dec Qtr	—	–3.3	–0.9	—	–3.0	–0.9
2007						
Mar Qtr	–1.8	1.2	–0.9	–1.7	1.4	–0.8
Jun Qtr	–0.8	2.4	0.1	–0.7	2.5	0.2
Sep Qtr	0.7	3.2	1.5	0.7	3.1	1.6
Dec Qtr	0.6	3.2	1.6	0.7	3.2	1.6
2008						
Mar Qtr	—	2.0	0.8	0.1	2.0	0.9

— nil or rounded to zero (including null cells)

(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									
2004-05	39 628	41 025	39 126	11 023	22 948	2 830	1 349	2 458	160 387
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
2006									
Dec Qtr	8 208	10 121	10 889	2 920	6 373	754	291	697	40 255
2007									
Mar Qtr	7 485	8 189	8 959	2 365	5 733	734	369	341	34 175
Jun Qtr	6 724	9 572	10 473	3 171	5 609	659	385	624	37 216
Sep Qtr	8 107	10 731	11 558	2 960	5 756	664	412	722	40 911
Dec Qtr	7 478	11 675	12 264	2 831	5 692	842	251	601	41 632
2008									
Mar Qtr	7 481	9 435	8 987	2 886	4 820	681	247	425	34 963
SEASONALLY ADJUSTED									
2006									
Dec Qtr	7 804	9 648	10 223	2 701	6 293	701	272	666	38 656
2007									
Mar Qtr	7 857	9 274	10 460	2 664	6 171	731	419	383	37 896
Jun Qtr	7 019	9 442	10 563	2 978	5 706	655	416	567	37 439
Sep Qtr	7 817	10 169	10 572	3 030	5 315	720	359	744	38 481
Dec Qtr	7 152	11 135	11 598	2 632	5 660	783	242	585	40 116
2008									
Mar Qtr	7 814	10 595	10 550	3 282	5 244	679	278	486	38 811
TREND									
2006									
Dec Qtr	7 483	9 680	10 245	2 680	6 406	730	322	568	38 184
2007									
Mar Qtr	7 603	9 403	10 377	2 807	6 014	702	381	546	37 891
Jun Qtr	7 500	9 604	10 616	2 855	5 735	699	398	569	37 984
Sep Qtr	7 412	10 195	10 850	2 903	5 537	720	349	624	38 581
Dec Qtr	7 493	10 682	10 989	2 954	5 421	730	289	612	39 203
2008									
Mar Qtr	7 645	10 909	10 992	3 047	5 331	728	261	550	39 537

(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

	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT(a)	ACT(a)	Aust.
Period	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
ORIGINAL									
2004–05	-12.9	-9.4	-11.3	5.6	1.8	-0.5	28.9	-15.1	-8.2
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
2006									
Dec Qtr	10.6	-6.0	0.6	7.0	-10.3	5.1	-8.6	7.2	-0.7
2007									
Mar Qtr	-8.8	-19.1	-17.7	-19.0	-10.0	-2.8	27.0	-51.1	-15.1
Jun Qtr	-10.2	16.9	16.9	34.0	-2.2	-10.1	4.4	83.2	8.9
Sep Qtr	20.6	12.1	10.4	-6.6	2.6	0.7	7.0	15.8	9.9
Dec Qtr	-7.8	8.8	6.1	-4.4	-1.1	26.8	-39.1	-16.8	1.8
2008									
Mar Qtr	—	-19.2	-26.7	1.9	-15.3	-19.1	-1.6	-29.3	-16.0
SEASONALLY ADJUSTED									
2006									
Dec Qtr	9.5	-5.8	3.0	-3.8	-4.2	-9.4	-2.2	-4.3	1.3
2007									
Mar Qtr	0.7	-3.9	2.3	-1.4	-1.9	4.3	54.0	-42.5	-2.0
Jun Qtr	-10.7	1.8	1.0	11.8	-7.5	-10.4	-0.7	48.0	-1.2
Sep Qtr	11.4	7.7	0.1	1.7	-6.9	9.9	-13.7	31.2	2.8
Dec Qtr	-8.5	9.5	9.7	-13.1	6.5	8.8	-32.6	-21.4	4.2
2008									
Mar Qtr	9.3	-4.8	-9.0	24.7	-7.3	-13.3	14.9	-16.9	-3.3
TREND									
2006									
Dec Qtr	-2.2	-2.8	3.5	-1.5	-4.6	—	16.2	-6.4	-0.9
2007									
Mar Qtr	1.6	-2.9	1.3	4.7	-6.1	-3.8	18.3	-3.9	-0.8
Jun Qtr	-1.4	2.1	2.3	1.7	-4.6	-0.4	4.5	4.2	0.2
Sep Qtr	-1.2	6.2	2.2	1.7	-3.5	3.0	-12.3	9.7	1.6
Dec Qtr	1.1	4.8	1.3	1.8	-2.1	1.4	-17.2	-1.9	1.6
2008									
Mar Qtr	2.0	2.1	—	3.1	-1.7	-0.3	-9.7	-10.1	0.9

— nil or rounded to zero (including null cells)

(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									
2004-05	20 092	30 361	25 250	8 642	18 227	2 437	633	955	106 597
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
2006									
Dec Qtr	4 145	7 684	7 097	2 296	5 212	690	139	428	27 692
2007									
Mar Qtr	3 913	6 004	6 520	1 954	4 646	647	168	206	24 057
Jun Qtr	3 351	7 381	7 291	2 338	4 443	570	224	270	25 867
Sep Qtr	3 902	8 107	8 050	2 410	4 341	511	181	308	27 810
Dec Qtr	3 835	8 256	8 568	2 189	4 261	717	141	345	28 312
2008									
Mar Qtr	3 817	6 269	6 386	2 505	3 685	573	142	245	23 622
NEW OTHER RESIDENTIAL BUILDING									
2004-05	18 740	9 602	13 816	2 302	4 608	316	704	1 500	51 589
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
2006									
Dec Qtr	3 913	2 349	3 773	621	1 117	57	149	269	12 248
2007									
Mar Qtr	3 475	2 133	2 404	401	1 019	84	199	132	9 847
Jun Qtr	3 227	1 988	3 160	821	1 120	74	158	354	10 902
Sep Qtr	4 123	2 437	3 487	539	1 372	140	231	414	12 744
Dec Qtr	3 445	3 237	3 637	637	1 381	112	108	256	12 812
2008									
Mar Qtr	3 453	3 056	2 578	379	1 084	104	104	176	10 934
CONVERSIONS, ETC.									
2004-05	795	1 063	60	78	113	77	12	3	2 201
2005-06	456	694	110	234	211	29	64	4	1 802
2006-07	504	613	102	73	171	36	9	2	1 512
2006									
Dec Qtr	151	88	19	3	44	8	3	—	315
2007									
Mar Qtr	97	52	35	11	68	3	2	2	270
Jun Qtr	146	203	22	12	46	15	4	—	447
Sep Qtr	82	187	22	11	42	12	1	—	357
Dec Qtr	197	182	59	4	50	13	2	—	508
2008									
Mar Qtr	211	109	23	2	52	4	1	4	407
TOTAL									
2004-05	39 628	41 025	39 126	11 023	22 948	2 830	1 349	2 458	160 387
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
2006									
Dec Qtr	8 208	10 121	10 889	2 920	6 373	754	291	697	40 255
2007									
Mar Qtr	7 485	8 189	8 959	2 365	5 733	734	369	341	34 175
Jun Qtr	6 724	9 572	10 473	3 171	5 609	659	385	624	37 216
Sep Qtr	8 107	10 731	11 558	2 960	5 756	664	412	722	40 911
Dec Qtr	7 478	11 675	12 264	2 831	5 692	842	251	601	41 632
2008									
Mar Qtr	7 481	9 435	8 987	2 886	4 820	681	247	425	34 963

— 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									
2004–05	19 823	30 026	25 039	8 058	17 800	2 335	465	937	104 483
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
2006									
Dec Qtr	4 087	7 663	7 048	2 168	5 101	688	131	377	27 262
2007									
Mar Qtr	3 859	5 982	6 497	1 814	4 561	642	123	201	23 679
Jun Qtr	3 268	7 314	7 251	2 198	4 351	567	166	222	25 336
Sep Qtr	3 799	8 001	7 999	2 268	4 146	511	159	266	27 150
Dec Qtr	3 796	8 181	8 458	2 099	4 152	716	118	324	27 843
2008									
Mar Qtr	3 700	6 179	6 335	2 456	3 554	568	85	231	23 107
NEW OTHER RESIDENTIAL BUILDING									
2004–05	18 325	9 262	13 296	2 086	3 994	221	678	1 500	49 364
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
2006									
Dec Qtr	3 862	2 333	3 721	580	1 020	46	117	269	11 948
2007									
Mar Qtr	3 377	2 126	2 234	371	879	82	198	132	9 399
Jun Qtr	3 029	1 968	3 080	810	1 045	74	158	354	10 518
Sep Qtr	3 993	2 417	3 285	499	1 191	140	231	414	12 171
Dec Qtr	3 342	3 182	3 547	608	1 254	112	98	256	12 398
2008									
Mar Qtr	3 293	3 036	2 492	345	978	102	104	176	10 526
CONVERSIONS, ETC.									
2004–05	789	1 057	54	78	112	77	12	3	2 182
2005–06	456	628	110	225	187	29	61	4	1 700
2006–07	502	606	102	73	161	36	9	2	1 493
2006									
Dec Qtr	149	82	19	3	44	8	3	—	307
2007									
Mar Qtr	97	52	35	11	61	3	2	2	263
Jun Qtr	146	202	22	12	43	15	4	—	443
Sep Qtr	72	186	20	11	42	12	1	—	344
Dec Qtr	197	180	59	3	50	13	2	—	504
2008									
Mar Qtr	195	101	23	2	50	4	1	4	381
TOTAL									
2004–05	38 937	40 345	38 389	10 223	21 906	2 633	1 155	2 440	156 028
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
2006									
Dec Qtr	8 097	10 078	10 788	2 751	6 164	742	251	646	39 517
2007									
Mar Qtr	7 333	8 160	8 766	2 196	5 501	726	323	336	33 341
Jun Qtr	6 443	9 484	10 353	3 020	5 438	656	327	576	36 297
Sep Qtr	7 864	10 605	11 303	2 778	5 379	664	391	680	39 665
Dec Qtr	7 334	11 544	12 064	2 709	5 455	841	218	580	40 746
2008									
Mar Qtr	7 187	9 316	8 850	2 804	4 581	674	190	411	34 013

— 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									
2004–05	269	335	211	584	427	102	168	18	2 114
2005–06	201	272	232	432	575	35	40	43	1 831
2006–07	277	220	176	508	451	10	118	137	1 897
2006									
Dec Qtr	58	21	49	129	112	2	8	51	429
2007									
Mar Qtr	54	22	23	140	85	5	45	5	379
Jun Qtr	83	67	40	140	93	3	58	48	531
Sep Qtr	103	106	51	142	195	—	21	42	660
Dec Qtr	40	74	110	91	109	1	23	21	469
2008									
Mar Qtr	118	91	51	49	131	5	57	14	515
NEW OTHER RESIDENTIAL BUILDING									
2004–05	415	339	520	216	614	95	26	—	2 225
2005–06	326	104	404	259	483	23	21	—	1 621
2006–07	458	69	414	162	440	13	41	—	1 597
2006									
Dec Qtr	51	16	52	41	98	11	32	—	300
2007									
Mar Qtr	98	7	170	30	141	2	1	—	449
Jun Qtr	198	20	80	11	75	—	—	—	384
Sep Qtr	130	20	202	40	181	—	—	—	573
Dec Qtr	104	55	90	29	127	—	10	—	414
2008									
Mar Qtr	161	20	86	34	106	2	—	—	408
CONVERSIONS, ETC.									
2004–05	6	6	6	—	1	—	—	—	19
2005–06	—	66	—	9	24	—	3	—	102
2006–07	2	7	—	—	10	—	—	—	19
2006									
Dec Qtr	2	6	—	—	—	—	—	—	8
2007									
Mar Qtr	—	—	—	—	7	—	—	—	7
Jun Qtr	—	1	—	—	3	—	—	—	4
Sep Qtr	10	1	2	—	—	—	—	—	13
Dec Qtr	—	2	—	2	—	—	—	—	4
2008									
Mar Qtr	16	8	—	—	2	—	—	—	26
TOTAL									
2004–05	690	680	737	800	1 042	197	194	18	4 359
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
2006									
Dec Qtr	111	43	101	169	209	13	40	51	737
2007									
Mar Qtr	152	29	193	170	232	7	46	5	834
Jun Qtr	281	88	120	151	171	3	58	48	920
Sep Qtr	243	126	255	182	376	—	21	42	1 246
Dec Qtr	143	131	200	122	236	1	33	21	887
2008									
Mar Qtr	294	119	137	82	239	7	57	14	950

— 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 March 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, MARCH QUARTER 2008

	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
New private sector houses	6.0	4.1	4.6	4.7	5.5	3.8	5.0	5.9	2.2
Total new other dwellings	4.2	4.7	5.6	8.3	6.8	10.9	—	0.6	2.4
Total dwellings	3.5	3.1	3.6	4.1	4.4	3.6	1.8	3.3	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.

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

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 . . .

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