

BUILDING ACTIVITY
DWELLING UNIT
COMMENCEMENTS

AUSTRALIA
PRELIMINARY

EMBARGO: 11:30AM (CANBERRA TIME) FRI 15 DEC 2000

SEPTEMBER QTR KEY FIGURES

TREND ESTIMATES	Sep qtr 00	% change	% change
		Jun qtr 00 to Sep qtr 00	Sep qtr 99 to Sep qtr 00
Dwelling units commenced			
New private sector houses	21 956	-20.2	-20.5
Total dwelling units	33 158	-16.3	-18.5
.....			
SEASONALLY ADJUSTED	Sep qtr 00	% change	% change
		Jun qtr 00 to Sep qtr 00	Sep qtr 99 to Sep qtr 00
Dwelling units commenced			
New private sector houses	17 981	-38.3	-33.5
Total dwelling units	28 467	-32.7	-31.3

SEPTEMBER QTR KEY POINTS

TREND ESTIMATES

- The trend estimate for the total number of dwelling units commenced fell by 16.3% in the September quarter 2000, following falls of 0.7% and 9.3% in the March and June quarters respectively.
- For new private sector houses the fall was more marked, with commencements down 20.2% compared with the June quarter.

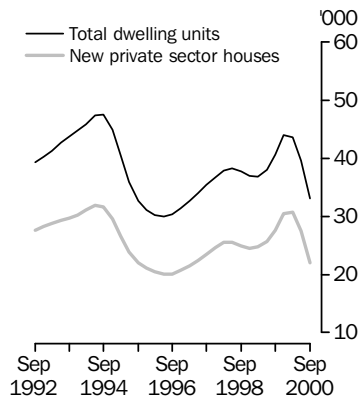
SEASONALLY ADJUSTED ESTIMATES

- In seasonally adjusted terms, the total number of dwelling units commenced during the September quarter fell by 13,810 (32.7%) to 28,467. This was the lowest number of commencements since the June quarter 1987 and 31.3% fewer than for the September quarter 1999.
- The fall was more significant for new private sector houses, down 38.3% to 17,981, the lowest number since the March quarter 1983. September quarter commencements were just over half the record 34,125 commenced in the March quarter 2000.

ORIGINAL ESTIMATES

- The total number of dwelling units commenced fell by 13,469 (31.5%) to 29,300, the lowest number since the March quarter 1996. New house commencements were down 36.7% to 18,972 and other dwellings were down 19.3% to 10,328.

Dwelling units commenced
Number, Trend



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

NOTES

FORTHCOMING ISSUES

<i>ISSUE (Quarter)</i>	<i>RELEASE DATE</i>
December 2000	19 March 2001
March 2001	21 June 2001

SIGNIFICANT REVISIONS THIS ISSUE

The total number of dwelling units commenced during the June quarter 2000 has been revised upwards by 657 (+1.6%) for Australia. This included upward revisions of 912 (+10.2%) in Queensland, 231 (+1.9%) in Victoria and 192 (+4.2%) in Western Australia and downward revisions of 580 (-4.7%) in New South Wales and 153 (-6.1%) in South Australia.

SAMPLING ERRORS

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

RELATIVE STANDARD ERRORS

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

	<i>New private sector houses</i>	<i>Total dwellings</i>
	%	%
New South Wales	4.4	2.4
Victoria	3.9	2.7
Queensland	3.7	2.1
South Australia	4.9	3.7
Western Australia	4.7	3.4
Tasmania	2.7	2.5
Northern Territory
Australian Capital Territory	2.2	1.3
Australia	2.0	1.2

Dennis Trewin
Australian Statistician

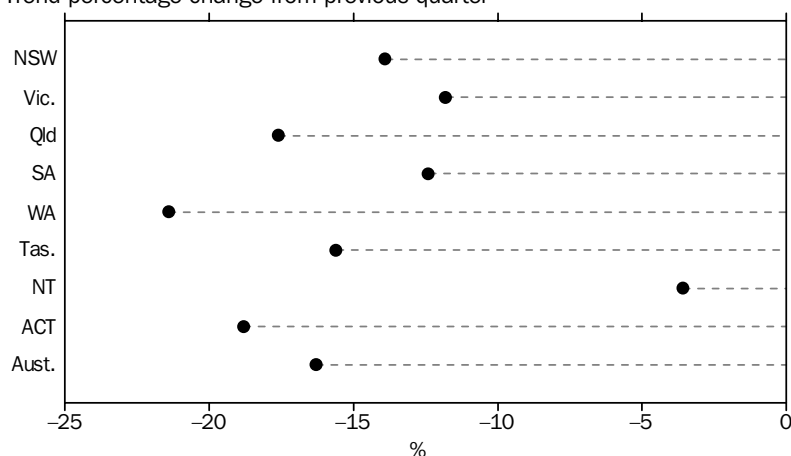
STATE ESTIMATES

TOTAL NUMBER OF DWELLING UNITS COMMENCED

Trend estimates

- The trend estimate of the total number of dwelling units commenced during the September quarter 2000 fell for all States and Territories, the largest fall being in Western Australia (-21.4%) followed by the Australian Capital Territory (-18.8%), Queensland (-17.6%), Tasmania (-15.6%) and New South Wales (-13.9%). The Northern Territory (-3.6%) fell the least.

Trend percentage change from previous quarter



Seasonally adjusted estimates

- In seasonally adjusted terms, the total number of dwelling units commenced fell in all States and the Australian Capital Territory, with the largest fall being recorded in Tasmania (-53.1%), followed by Queensland (-42.9%), the Australian Capital Territory (-38.0%), New South Wales (-33.8%), South Australia (-33.7%), Victoria (-28.4%) and Western Australia (-22.2%).

Original estimates

- Tasmania recorded the largest fall in the total number of dwelling units commenced in the September quarter, down 53.8%, having increased in each of the previous three quarters. The next largest fall was in Queensland (-45.1%), followed by the Australian Capital Territory (-32.7%), New South Wales (-29.5%), Victoria (-28.2%), South Australia (-24.7%) and Western Australia (-20.3%). Only the Northern Territory recorded an increase (+5.6%), having fallen in each of the previous three quarters.
- New house commencements fell in all States and Territories. However, other dwellings rose in the Northern Territory (+23.7%), South Australia (+3.2%) and the Australian Capital Territory (+3.0%) and fell by only 3.3% in New South Wales.
- Public sector dwelling commencements rose by 79.8% in the September quarter to 1,361, with most States and Territories recording an increase.

TABLE 1. NUMBER OF DWELLING UNITS COMMENCED

<i>Period</i>	<i>New houses</i>		<i>Total dwelling units (includes conversions etc)</i>	
	<i>Private sector</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Private sector</i>	<i>Total</i>
ORIGINAL				
1999 Jun qtr	26,844	27,426	36,685	38,075
Sep. qtr	27,938	28,472	41,197	42,659
Dec. qtr	29,480	29,983	41,547	42,509
2000 Mar. qtr	31,293	31,675	42,956	43,892
Jun qtr	29,637	29,968	42,012	42,769
Sep. qtr	18,566	18,972	27,939	29,300
SEASONALLY ADJUSTED				
1999 Jun qtr	26,403	26,948	36,332	37,606
Sep. qtr	27,051	27,621	40,318	41,447
Dec. qtr	28,529	28,968	40,611	41,994
2000 Mar. qtr	34,125	34,569	45,404	46,364
Jun qtr	29,148	29,445	41,642	42,277
Sep. qtr	17,981	18,411	27,340	28,467
TREND ESTIMATES				
1999 Jun qtr	25,612	26,131	36,766	38,013
Sep. qtr	27,611	28,138	39,455	40,699
Dec. qtr	30,509	30,981	42,841	43,999
2000 Mar. qtr	30,692	31,096	42,675	43,673
Jun qtr	27,518	27,889	38,708	39,602
Sep. qtr	21,956	22,494	32,302	33,158

TABLE 2. NUMBER OF DWELLING UNITS COMMENCED, PERCENTAGE CHANGE

<i>Period</i>	<i>New houses</i>		<i>Total dwelling units (includes conversions etc)</i>	
	<i>Private sector</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Private sector</i>	<i>Total</i>
ORIGINAL (% change from previous quarter)				
1999 June qtr	19.8	19.9	10.4	10.6
Sept. qtr	4.1	3.8	12.3	12.0
Dec. qtr	5.5	5.3	0.8	-0.4
2000 Mar. qtr	6.2	5.6	3.4	3.3
June qtr	-5.3	-5.4	-2.2	-2.6
Sept. qtr	-37.4	-36.7	-33.5	-31.5
SEASONALLY ADJUSTED (% change from previous quarter)				
1999 June qtr	8.0	7.9	3.3	3.3
Sept. qtr	2.5	2.5	11.0	10.2
Dec. qtr	5.5	4.9	0.7	1.3
2000 Mar. qtr	19.6	19.3	11.8	10.4
June qtr	-14.6	-14.8	-8.3	-8.8
Sept. qtr	-38.3	-37.5	-34.3	-32.7
TREND ESTIMATES (% change from previous quarter)				
1999 June qtr	3.2	2.8	3.5	3.1
Sept. qtr	7.8	7.7	7.3	7.1
Dec. qtr	10.5	10.1	8.6	8.1
2000 Mar. qtr	0.6	0.4	-0.4	-0.7
June qtr	-10.3	-10.3	-9.3	-9.3
Sept. qtr	-20.2	-19.3	-16.6	-16.3

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

<i>Period</i>	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic.</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>Tas.</i>	<i>NT</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>Australia</i>
SEASONALLY ADJUSTED									
1999 Jun qtr	12,417	10,439	7,119	1,963	4,752	339	n.a.	509	37,606
Sep. qtr	13,450	11,568	7,354	2,053	5,761	340	n.a.	555	41,447
Dec. qtr	12,023	11,308	8,609	2,129	5,596	381	n.a.	710	41,994
2000 Mar. qtr	13,082	13,376	9,274	2,754	6,936	505	n.a.	641	46,364
Jun qtr	12,341	12,216	9,384	2,555	4,647	545	n.a.	576	42,277
Sep. qtr	8,165	8,746	5,362	1,693	3,615	256	n.a.	357	28,467
TREND ESTIMATES									
1999 Jun qtr	12,571	10,436	7,026	1,894	4,848	337	443	569	38,013
Sep. qtr	12,832	11,249	7,609	2,059	5,543	349	419	606	40,699
Dec. qtr	12,993	12,237	8,691	2,352	6,120	422	407	647	43,999
2000 Mar. qtr	12,523	12,370	8,990	2,484	5,879	471	377	637	43,673
Jun qtr	11,302	11,547	8,262	2,366	5,036	451	348	542	39,602
Sep. qtr	9,726	10,182	6,812	2,073	3,956	381	336	440	33,158

(a) Includes conversions, etc.

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

<i>Period</i>	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic.</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>Tas.</i>	<i>NT</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>Australia</i>
SEASONALLY ADJUSTED (% change from previous quarter)									
1999 June qtr	-0.7	7.2	4.8	10.3	8.3	-3.2	n.a.	-24.7	3.3
Sept. qtr	8.3	10.8	3.3	4.6	21.2	0.4	n.a.	9.1	10.2
Dec. qtr	-10.6	-2.2	17.1	3.7	-2.9	11.8	n.a.	28.0	1.3
2000 Mar. qtr	8.8	18.3	7.7	29.3	23.9	32.6	n.a.	-9.8	10.4
June qtr	-5.7	-8.7	1.2	-7.2	-33.0	8.0	n.a.	-10.1	-8.8
Sept. qtr	-33.8	-28.4	-42.9	-33.7	-22.2	-53.1	n.a.	-38.0	-32.7
TREND ESTIMATES (% change from previous quarter)									
1999 June qtr	2.2	5.8	1.0	2.5	6.7	-1.5	-9.0	2.5	3.1
Sept. qtr	2.1	7.8	8.3	8.7	14.3	3.6	-5.5	6.4	7.1
Dec. qtr	1.3	8.8	14.2	14.2	10.4	20.8	-2.9	6.8	8.1
2000 Mar. qtr	-3.6	1.1	3.4	5.6	-3.9	11.6	-7.3	-1.7	-0.7
June qtr	-9.8	-6.7	-8.1	-4.7	-14.3	-4.2	-7.7	-14.9	-9.3
Sept. qtr	-13.9	-11.8	-17.6	-12.4	-21.4	-15.6	-3.6	-18.8	-16.3

(a) Includes conversions, etc.

TABLE 5. TOTAL NUMBER OF DWELLING UNITS COMMENCED

<i>Period</i>	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic.</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>Tas.</i>	<i>NT</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>Australia</i>
NEW HOUSES									
1997-1998	26,764	26,004	23,754	5,823	14,790	1,387	1,219	1,022	100,764
1998-1999	27,548	29,165	20,150	6,296	15,948	1,264	1,427	1,364	103,164
1999-2000	30,754	34,716	24,218	7,857	18,621	1,538	936	1,460	120,098
1999 Jun qtr	7,205	7,910	5,492	1,661	4,157	304	318	379	27,426
Sep. qtr	7,368	8,155	5,439	1,792	4,879	301	279	261	28,472
Dec. qtr	7,142	8,817	6,315	2,007	4,698	359	249	396	29,983
2000 Mar. qtr	8,364	8,975	5,941	2,064	5,303	431	217	380	31,675
Jun qtr	7,880	8,769	6,523	1,994	3,741	447	191	423	29,968
Sep. qtr	4,512	6,206	3,263	1,395	2,949	233	178	237	18,972
NEW OTHER RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS									
1997-1998	19,852	7,598	11,222	741	2,360	231	952	236	43,192
1998-1999	20,821	8,307	8,962	1,062	2,407	107	532	615	42,813
1999-2000	19,432	11,725	10,130	1,398	3,913	185	594	948	48,325
1999 Jun qtr	4,549	2,466	1,973	161	731	23	97	114	10,114
Sep. qtr	6,203	3,354	1,890	369	1,088	18	178	322	13,422
Dec. qtr	4,902	2,680	2,679	315	875	52	152	311	11,966
2000 Mar. qtr	4,456	2,856	2,261	422	934	70	138	181	11,318
Jun qtr	3,871	2,835	3,300	292	1,016	45	126	134	11,619
Sep. qtr	3,652	2,458	2,142	370	805	5	160	137	9,729
CONVERSIONS, ETC									
1997-1998	1,821	1,340	441	89	115	3	14	2	3,826
1998-1999	1,359	1,566	213	57	92	6	15	133	3,442
1999-2000	723	1,894	225	156	266	44	27	71	3,406
1999 Jun qtr	236	259	18	4	15	1	2	—	535
Sep. qtr	214	290	120	5	128	4	4	—	765
Dec. qtr	264	224	40	5	19	5	1	2	560
2000 Mar. qtr	117	539	20	58	78	1	17	69	899
Jun qtr	128	841	45	88	41	34	5	—	1,182
Sep. qtr	214	266	17	22	72	5	2	1	599
TOTAL									
1997-1998	48,437	34,942	35,418	6,653	17,265	1,622	2,185	1,260	147,781
1998-1999	49,728	39,038	29,325	7,416	18,447	1,377	1,974	2,112	149,419
1999-2000	50,909	48,335	34,573	9,411	22,800	1,766	1,557	2,479	171,829
1999 Jun qtr	11,990	10,634	7,483	1,826	4,903	328	417	493	38,075
Sep. qtr	13,785	11,799	7,449	2,166	6,095	323	461	583	42,659
Dec. qtr	12,308	11,721	9,034	2,327	5,592	415	402	709	42,509
2000 Mar. qtr	12,937	12,370	8,222	2,544	6,315	502	372	630	43,892
Jun qtr	11,879	12,445	9,868	2,374	4,798	526	322	557	42,769
Sep. qtr	8,378	8,930	5,422	1,787	3,826	243	340	375	29,300

TABLE 6. TOTAL NUMBER OF PRIVATE SECTOR DWELLING UNITS COMMENCED

<i>Period</i>	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic.</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>Tas.</i>	<i>NT</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>Australia</i>
NEW HOUSES									
1997-1998	26,585	25,701	23,411	5,628	14,170	1,379	949	1,020	98,844
1998-1999	27,155	28,512	19,714	6,091	15,383	1,263	933	1,300	100,353
1999-2000	30,566	34,269	23,823	7,730	18,281	1,519	732	1,430	118,348
1999 Jun qtr	7,150	7,832	5,361	1,591	4,038	304	235	333	26,844
Sep. qtr	7,330	8,040	5,340	1,752	4,746	289	197	246	27,938
Dec. qtr	7,091	8,694	6,167	1,947	4,638	358	195	390	29,480
2000 Mar. qtr	8,315	8,850	5,861	2,054	5,231	430	180	372	31,293
Jun qtr	7,830	8,685	6,455	1,977	3,666	442	160	422	29,637
Sep. qtr	4,472	6,149	3,205	1,356	2,810	227	121	227	18,566
NEW OTHER RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS									
1997-1998	18,681	7,060	10,657	720	1,855	220	877	228	40,298
1998-1999	19,673	7,878	8,292	1,039	1,982	107	485	611	40,067
1999-2000	18,648	11,502	9,645	1,381	3,261	181	523	898	46,039
1999 Jun qtr	4,321	2,343	1,655	161	615	23	83	114	9,315
Sep. qtr	5,897	3,290	1,605	359	869	18	178	302	12,518
Dec. qtr	4,814	2,596	2,646	312	693	52	112	287	11,512
2000 Mar. qtr	4,218	2,799	2,173	422	810	70	128	175	10,795
Jun qtr	3,719	2,817	3,221	288	889	41	105	134	11,214
Sep. qtr	3,344	2,402	1,940	370	482	3	132	128	8,801
CONVERSIONS, ETC									
1997-1998	1,807	1,317	419	89	115	3	14	2	3,767
1998-1999	1,336	1,542	211	55	92	6	15	133	3,391
1999-2000	702	1,872	224	156	230	43	27	71	3,325
1999 Jun qtr	230	257	17	4	15	1	2	—	526
Sep. qtr	201	288	120	5	119	4	4	—	741
Dec. qtr	264	223	40	5	15	5	1	2	555
2000 Mar. qtr	110	532	20	58	61	1	17	69	868
Jun qtr	127	829	44	88	35	33	5	—	1,161
Sep. qtr	209	265	17	19	55	4	2	1	572
TOTAL									
1997-1998	47,073	34,078	34,488	6,437	16,140	1,603	1,840	1,250	142,908
1998-1999	48,164	37,932	28,217	7,186	17,457	1,376	1,433	2,044	143,811
1999-2000	49,916	47,643	33,692	9,267	21,772	1,742	1,282	2,399	167,712
1999 Jun qtr	11,701	10,431	7,033	1,756	4,668	328	320	447	36,685
Sep. qtr	13,428	11,618	7,065	2,116	5,734	311	379	548	41,197
Dec. qtr	12,169	11,513	8,853	2,264	5,346	414	308	679	41,547
2000 Mar. qtr	12,643	12,181	8,054	2,534	6,102	501	325	616	42,956
Jun qtr	11,676	12,331	9,720	2,353	4,590	516	270	556	42,012
Sep. qtr	8,025	8,816	5,162	1,745	3,347	234	255	356	27,939

TABLE 7. TOTAL NUMBER OF PUBLIC SECTOR DWELLING UNITS COMMENCED

<i>Period</i>	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic.</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>Tas.</i>	<i>NT</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>Australia</i>
NEW HOUSES									
1997-1998	179	303	343	195	620	8	270	2	1,920
1998-1999	393	653	436	205	565	1	494	64	2,811
1999-2000	188	447	395	127	340	19	204	30	1,750
1999 Jun. qtr	55	78	131	70	119	—	83	46	582
Sep. qtr	38	115	99	40	133	12	82	15	534
Dec. qtr	51	123	148	60	60	1	54	6	503
2000 Mar. qtr	49	125	80	10	72	1	37	8	382
Jun. qtr	50	84	68	17	75	5	31	1	331
Sep. qtr	40	57	58	39	139	6	57	10	406
NEW OTHER RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS									
1997-1998	1,171	538	565	21	505	11	75	8	2,894
1998-1999	1,148	429	670	23	425	—	47	4	2,746
1999-2000	784	223	485	17	652	4	71	50	2,286
1999 Jun. qtr	228	123	318	—	116	—	14	—	799
Sep. qtr	306	64	285	10	219	—	—	20	904
Dec. qtr	88	84	33	3	182	—	40	24	454
2000 Mar. qtr	238	57	88	—	124	—	10	6	523
Jun. qtr	152	18	79	4	127	4	21	—	405
Sep. qtr	308	56	202	—	323	2	28	9	928
CONVERSIONS, ETC									
1997-1998	14	23	22	—	—	—	—	—	59
1998-1999	23	24	2	2	—	—	—	—	51
1999-2000	21	22	1	—	36	1	—	—	81
1999 Jun. qtr	6	2	1	—	—	—	—	—	9
Sep. qtr	13	2	—	—	9	—	—	—	24
Dec. qtr	—	1	—	—	4	—	—	—	5
2000 Mar. qtr	7	7	—	—	17	—	—	—	31
Jun. qtr	1	12	1	—	6	1	—	—	21
Sep. qtr	5	1	—	3	17	1	—	—	27
TOTAL									
1997-1998	1,364	864	930	216	1,125	19	345	10	4,873
1998-1999	1,564	1,106	1,108	230	990	1	541	68	5,608
1999-2000	993	692	881	144	1,028	24	275	80	4,117
1999 Jun. qtr	289	203	450	70	235	—	97	46	1,390
Sep. qtr	357	181	384	50	361	12	82	35	1,462
Dec. qtr	139	208	181	63	246	1	94	30	962
2000 Mar. qtr	294	189	168	10	213	1	47	14	936
Jun. qtr	203	114	148	21	208	10	52	1	757
Sep. qtr	353	114	260	42	479	9	85	19	1,361

EXPLANATORY NOTES

INTRODUCTION

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

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

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

DEFINITIONS

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

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

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

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

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

EXPLANATORY NOTES *continued*

DEFINITIONS *continued*

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

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

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

SEASONAL ADJUSTMENT

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

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

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

TREND ESTIMATES

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

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

EXPLANATORY NOTES *continued*

TREND ESTIMATES *continued*

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

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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

UNPUBLISHED DATA

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

RELATED PUBLICATIONS

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

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

SYMBOLS AND OTHER USAGES

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

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

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- INTERNET* **www.abs.gov.au** 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.
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287500009005
ISSN 0818-3511

RRP \$16.50

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