Chapter Twenty-two

Construction and Housing

Contents **Page**

CONSTRUCTION 595
- Significance in the economy 595
- The structure of the Construction Industry 595
  - Private sector construction 596
  - Public sector construction 596
- Trends in the Construction Industry 600
- Residential building 603
  - New houses 603
  - Other residential building 604
  - Value of residential building 606
- Non-residential building 606
  - Value of non-residential building 606
- Building activity at constant prices 607
- Engineering construction 607
- Price indexes of materials used in building 608
- Price Index of Materials Used in House Building 608
- Price Index of Materials Used in Building Other than House Building 609
- Labour costs 609
- Industrial disputes 610
- Trade union membership 611
- Training expenditure 612

HOUSING 613
- Number and types of dwellings 613
  - Number of dwellings 613
  - Type of dwellings 614
- Standard of housing and facilities 614
  - Material of outer walls 614

Number of rooms, by purpose 615
On-site parking 618
Dwelling problems 619
Time and mode of travel 619
Household energy usage and conservation 620

HOME OWNERSHIP AND RENTING 621

ACCESSIBILITY AND AFFORDABILITY OF HOUSING 623
Home buyers 624
House Price Index 627
Housing finance 628
Housing decisions 629
Ongoing cost of housing 630

GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES 632
National Housing Strategy 632
The National Urban Development Program 633
The Australian Housing Industry Development Council 633
Indicative Planning Council for the Housing Industry 633
Commonwealth and State government housing assistance 633

BIBLIOGRAPHY 634

This chapter covers two main subjects. First, there is an account of the industry activity involved in construction, ranging from house building to large-scale construction projects such as roads, power plants and other public facilities. Second, it focuses on housing and associated characteristics. The chapter concludes with an outline of main government activities in the field of housing.

CONSTRUCTION

The construction sector engages in three broad areas of activity — residential building (houses, flats, etc.), non-residential building (offices, shops, hotels, etc.), and engineering construction (roads, bridges, water and sewerage, etc.). In this section an overview of the structure, operations and trends is presented of the construction industry as a whole, based on statistical collections undertaken about every five years, 1988–89 being the latest period for which this overall data is available. This is followed by more recent and detailed statistics on residential building, non-residential building and engineering construction activities obtained from other ongoing statistical collections. Because of the different sources and methods used for the various collections the resulting statistics are not always comparable with each other.

Significance in the economy

The construction industry is an important sector of the Australian economy. Not only is it significant in its own right, but it has an influential effect on other sectors of the economy.

At average 1984–85 prices the construction industry has, over the last 12 years, contributed on average 7.5 per cent of total gross product. This contribution has fluctuated between 6.3 per cent and 8.6 per cent which reflects the cyclical nature of the industry. The 1991–92 contribution of 6.3 per cent is the lowest relative contribution of the last 12 years.

Employment within the construction industry also varies and has ranged from 6.4 per cent to 7.7 per cent of total employment, with an average of 7.2 per cent. The 1991–92 contribution of 6.8 per cent is the lowest figure of the last eight years and reflects the decline in construction activity and the depressed economic conditions over the last two years.

22.1 CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY: CONTRIBUTION TO ALL INDUSTRY AGGREGATES

	Construction industry		*Construction industry's contribution to all industry aggregates for*	
Year	*Gross product at average 1984–85 prices*	*Employment*	*Gross product at average 1984–85 prices*	*Employment*
	$m	'000	%	%
1980–81	16,558	490.3	8.5	7.7
1981–82	17,282	476.4	8.6	7.4
1982–83	15,297	437.1	7.9	6.9
1983–84	15,342	409.8	7.5	6.4
1984–85	16,662	456.7	7.7	7.0
1985–86	17,396	474.1	7.7	6.9
1986–87	17,069	499.6	7.4	7.1
1987–88	17,837	503.8	7.4	7.0
1988–89	19,199	567.5	7.6	7.5
1989–90	19,836	600.1	7.5	7.7
1990–91	17,504	571.3	6.7	7.3
1991–92	16,337	518.2	6.3	6.8

Source: Australian National Accounts: Gross Product, Employment and Hours Worked (5211.0); Employed Wage and Salary Earners, Australia (6248.0).

The structure of the Construction Industry

Construction activity is undertaken by both the private and public sector in Australia. Private sector activity is concentrated in the residential and non-residential (offices, hotels, etc.) building sectors, while the public sector plays a key role in initiating and undertaking engineering construction activity.

The ABS conducts construction industry surveys about every five years. For the most recent survey period, 1988–89, two collections were undertaken: the Construction Industry Survey of private sector construction establishments and a survey of construction activities undertaken by public sector enterprises. Key statistics for the two sectors are presented below. Because of the different concepts used in the collection of these data, the public sector results cannot be validly aggregated with those for the private sector.

Private sector construction. Australia wide, there were 98,100 private sector construction establishments operating at some time during 1988–89 (table 22.3). These establishments employed 395,000 persons, 287,000 (73%) as employees and the remaining 108,000 (27%) as working proprietors and partners, the latter occurring predominantly among special trade construction establishments. Total turnover was $46,755.9 million and value added, $15,690.7 million.

The special trade construction industries, while comprising 76 per cent of the number of establishments, contributed 66 per cent to employment and 54 per cent to value added. Non-residential construction (that is, the sum of non-residential building construction and non-building construction) on the other hand, while comprising only 8 per cent of the number of establishments, contributed 21 per cent to employment and 31 per cent to value added.

An estimated 294,600 people were employed on-site by private sector construction establishments at 30 June 1989 (table 22.2). The largest occupational group was Building trades which accounted for 33 per cent of on-site employment. This was followed by Managers, supervisors and technicians with 15 per cent, Finishing trades with 14 per cent and Labourers, and Electrical and electronic trades both with 11 per cent.

22.2 PRIVATE SECTOR CONSTRUCTION: NUMBER OF ON-SITE WORKERS BY OCCUPATION, 30 JUNE 1989

Occupation	*'000*	*%*
Managers, supervisors and technicians	42.7	14.5
Building trades	96.7	32.8
Finishing trades	40.9	13.9
Electrical and electronic trades	32.0	10.9
Metal trades	13.8	4.7
Other trades	4.9	1.7
Plant and machine operators	22.5	7.6
Labourers	32.2	10.9
Other occupations	9.0	3.1
Total	**294.6**	**100.0**

Source: Construction Industry, Australia: Summary of Private Sector Operations, 1988–89 (8771.0).

Public sector construction. The Public Sector Construction Activity Survey provided details on the construction and/or repair and maintenance activities of all public sector enterprises which had expenditure of $250,000 or more. This includes hospitals and universities administered by relevant public authorities.

Australia wide, $20,567.3 million was spent by the public sector on construction and repair and maintenance activity in 1988–89 (table 22.4). Of this, $8,087.7 million (39%) represents payments to private sector contractors, $7,135.6 million (35%) was spent on materials and other expenses, with the remaining $5,343.9 million (26%) spent on wages and salaries of public sector employees. State Government was responsible for the bulk of the expenditure with $12,335.1 million (60%). The Commonwealth Government outlayed $5,214.9 million (25%) and local government $3,017.3 million (15%).

22.3 PRIVATE SECTOR CONSTRUCTION ESTABLISHMENTS: SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS BY INDUSTRY CLASS, 1988–89

ASIC code	Description	Establishments operating during the year ('000)	Employment: Working proprietors and partners ('000)	Employment: Employees ('000)	Employment: Total ('000)	Wages and salaries ($m)	Total turnover (a) ($m)	Stocks: Opening ($m)	Stocks: Closing ($m)	Total purchases and selected expenses (b) ($m)	Value added ($m)
4111	House construction	13.9	13.9	29.4	43.4	566.5	8,488.7	691.4	1,077.1	7,029.8	1,844.6
4112	Residential building construction n.e.c.	1.8	1.5	6.3	7.8	136.4	1,851.0	206.9	309.5	1,543.9	409.8
4113	Non-residential building construction	3.9	2.8	44.5	47.3	1,349.2	13,749.2	790.8	1,082.8	11,069.3	2,971.9
411	*Total building construction*	*19.6*	*18.2*	*80.2*	*98.4*	*2,052.1*	*24,088.9*	*1,689.1*	*2,469.4*	*19,643.0*	*5,226.2*
4121	Road and bridge construction	0.8	0.5	11.5	12.0	324.1	2,214.7	75.6	98.2	1,481.0	756.3
4122	Non-building construction n.e.c.	3.1	2.9	22.1	25.0	662.5	3,076.0	130.8	116.8	1,868.2	1,193.8
412	*Total non-building construction*	*3.9*	*3.4*	*33.6*	*37.0*	*986.6*	*5,290.7*	*206.4*	*215.0*	*3,349.2*	*1,950.1*
41	*Total general construction*	*23.5*	*21.6*	*113.8*	*135.4*	*3,038.7*	*29,379.6*	*1,895.5*	*2,684.4*	*22,992.2*	*7,176.3*
4231	Concreting	4.1	4.3	12.1	16.4	275.8	1,452.6	16.5	*23.5	835.2	624.4
4232	Bricklaying	7.7	10.4	10.3	20.8	198.1	763.6	5.5	7.6	232.4	533.4
4233	Roof tiling	1.5	1.9	3.2	5.1	52.6	343.2	8.4	8.9	218.2	125.5
4234	Floor and wall tiling	2.9	3.7	2.2	5.9	39.6	240.6	3.7	5.6	103.8	138.6
4241	Structural steel erection	1.2	1.1	7.1	8.2	195.0	506.8	11.7	11.8	180.4	326.6
4242	Plumbing	10.6	11.1	25.1	36.2	522.6	2,451.3	45.4	56.3	1,294.1	1,168.2
4243	Electrical work	8.5	8.2	30.5	38.7	735.3	2,753.9	86.7	88.9	1,458.3	1,297.8
4244	Heating and air conditioning	1.3	0.9	12.7	13.5	312.7	1,595.9	72.1	86.1	1,002.2	607.8
4245	Plastering and plaster fixing	4.5	5.4	10.5	15.9	204.2	1,040.2	14.3	21.3	587.9	459.4
4246	Carpentry	12.7	16.8	13.6	30.4	280.3	1,288.6	24.9	29.0	539.2	753.5
4247	Painting	8.9	11.3	13.1	24.4	273.3	1,085.4	14.3	14.8	427.8	658.1
4248	Earthmoving and dredging	4.5	4.9	12.3	17.2	290.7	1,662.8	42.6	47.7	860.7	807.3
4249	Special trades n.e.c.	6.3	6.4	20.6	27.0	483.8	2,191.3	50.2	58.2	1,185.6	1,013.7
42	*Total special trade construction*	*74.5*	*86.4*	*173.2*	*259.6*	*3,863.8*	*17,376.3*	*396.3*	*459.9*	*8,925.6*	*8,514.4*
41,42	**Total construction**	**98.1**	**108.0**	**287.0**	**395.0**	**6,902.5**	**46,755.9**	**2,291.8**	**3,144.4**	**31,917.7**	**15,690.7**

(a) Includes contract construction revenue; sales of speculative construction projects; capital work done for own use, rental or lease; and other operating revenue. (b) Includes purchases of materials and plant fuels; transfers in; payments to contractors and sub-contractors; rent, leasing and hiring expenses; motor vehicle running expenses; outward freight and cartage; and commission expenses.

Source: Construction Industry, Australia: Summary of Private Sector Operations, 1988–89 (8771.0).

22.4 PUBLIC SECTOR ENTERPRISES UNDERTAKING CONSTRUCTION: EXPENDITURE BY LEVEL OF GOVERNMENT, 1988–89
($ million)

	Expenditure on construction, repair and maintenance				
	Work done by own employees				
Level of government	*Wages and salaries*	*Materials and other expenses*	*Total*	*Work done by private sector contractors*	*Total expenditure*
Commonwealth	1,491.8	1,991.3	3,483.1	1,731.8	5,214.9
State	2,800.6	3,853.9	6,654.5	5,680.6	12,335.1
Local	1,051.5	1,290.4	2,341.9	675.4	3,017.3
Total	**5,343.9**	**7,135.6**	**12,479.6**	**8,087.8**	**20,567.3**

Source: Public Sector Construction Activity, Australia, 1988–89 (8775.0).

The largest construction expenditure component across all governments was $3,663.8 million (18%) spent on roads, highways and subdivisions (table 22.5). Of this, $2,228.4 million (61%) was spent on construction of new roads and the remaining $1,435.4 million (39%) on the repair and maintenance of existing roads.

State Governments' largest construction outlay of $2,627.8 million (21%) was on the repair and maintenance of non-road engineering structures. Electricity generation, transmission and distribution was next with $1,314.2 million (11%) and construction of roads, highways and

22.5 PUBLIC SECTOR ENTERPRISES UNDERTAKING CONSTRUCTION: TOTAL EXPENDITURE BY TYPE OF WORK, 1988–89

	Commonwealth Government		*State Government*		*Local Government*		*Total*	
	$m	*%*	*$m*	*%*	*$m*	*%*	*$m*	*%*
New work, alterations, additions, improvements and renovations								
Building								
Residential	73.7	1.4	768.5	6.2	11.0	0.4	853.1	4.1
Non-residential	1,319.7	25.3	2,843.6	23.1	232.8	7.7	4,396.1	21.4
Total building	*1,393.4*	*26.7*	*3,612.1*	*29.3*	*243.8*	*8.1*	*5,249.2*	*25.5*
Engineering								
Roads, highways and subdivisions	95.5	1.8	1,298.6	10.5	834.3	27.7	2,228.4	10.8
Electricity generation, transmission and distribution	40.4	0.8	1,314.2	10.7	228.5	7.6	1,583.0	7.7
Telecommunications	1,899.7	36.4	25.5	0.2	0.2	—	1,925.4	9.4
Other engineering	130.5	2.5	1,741.1	14.1	443.8	14.7	2,315.5	11.3
Total engineering	*2,166.1*	*41.5*	*4,379.4*	*35.5*	*1,506.8*	*49.9*	*8,052.3*	*39.2*
Total new work, alterations, additions, improvements and renovations	*3,559.4*	*68.3*	*7,991.4*	*64.8*	*1,750.6*	*58.0*	*13,301.5*	*64.7*
Repair and maintenance								
Building	552.3	10.6	1,089.5	8.8	114.8	3.8	1,756.6	8.5
Roads, highways and subdivisions	33.5	0.7	621.9	5.0	780.0	25.9	1,435.4	7.0
Other repair and maintenance	1,069.5	20.5	2,627.8	21.3	371.4	12.3	4,068.7	19.8
Total repair and maintenance	*1,655.4*	*31.7*	*4,339.2*	*35.2*	*1,266.2*	*42.0*	*7,260.7*	*35.3*
Total demolition	0.1	—	4.4	—	0.6	—	5.1	—
Total construction, repair, maintenance and demolition	**5,214.9**	**100.0**	**12,335.1**	**100.0**	**3,017.3**	**100.0**	**20,567.3**	**100.0**

Source: Public Sector Construction Activity, Australia, 1988–89 (8775.0).

subdivisions accounted for $1,298.6 million (11%). An additional $621.9 million (5%) was spent on the repair and maintenance of existing roads, highways and land subdivisions. In contrast, the Commonwealth Government's largest construction outlay was $1,899.7 million (36%) on telecommunications. The repair and maintenance of non-road engineering structures accounted for $1,069.5 million (21%). Expenditure on buildings (new and alterations and additions) was $1,393.4 million (27%) with expenditure of $552.3 million (11%) on the repair and maintenance of existing buildings.

Local governments' principal construction expenditure was on roads, highways and subdivisions with $834.3 million (28% of total expenditure) spent on new work and $780.0 million (26%) spent on their repair and maintenance. Other major expenditure was $371.4 million (12%) on the repair and maintenance of non-road engineering structures.

Overall, 1,502 Commonwealth, State and local government enterprises, employing 203,600 people in construction-related occupations, were involved in significant construction and/or repair and maintenance activity during 1988–89 (table 22.6). Of the 203,600 public sector personnel involved in construction activity, 51 per cent were employed by State Government, 25 per cent by local government and 24 per cent by the Commonwealth Government. A total of 164,200 employees (81%) were engaged in on-site construction activities, and 39,400 employees (19%) worked off-site — a ratio of one off-site support employee for every four employees working on-site.

22.6 PUBLIC SECTOR ENTERPRISES UNDERTAKING CONSTRUCTION: EMPLOYMENT BY LEVEL OF GOVERNMENT, JUNE 1989(a)

Level of government	*Number of enterprises*	*Employment ('000)*		
		On-site	*Off-site*	*Total*
Commonwealth	176	41.7	6.8	48.5
State	498	79.3	24.8	104.1
Local	828	43.2	7.8	51.0
Total	**1,502**	**164.2**	**39.4**	**203.6**

(a) During last pay period in June 1989. Includes apprentices.
Source: Public Sector Construction Activity, Australia, 1988–89 (8775.0).

The largest occupational category of on-site employees was Electrical and electronic trades with 47,500 employees (29%) (table 22.7). This was followed by Labourers with 41,300 (25%), Plant and machine operators with 28,200 (17%) and Managers, supervisors and technicians with 20,400 (12%).

22.7 PUBLIC SECTOR ENTERPRISES UNDERTAKING CONSTRUCTION: NUMBER OF ON-SITE EMPLOYEES BY OCCUPATION, JUNE 1989(a)

Occupation	*'000*	*%*
Managers, supervisors and technicians	20.4	12.4
Building trades	12.8	7.8
Finishing trades	3.7	2.3
Electrical and electronic trades	47.5	28.9
Metal trades	3.0	1.8
Other trades	6.7	4.1
Plant and machine operators	28.2	17.2
Labourers	41.3	25.2
Other occupations	0.7	0.4
Total	**164.2**	**100.0**

(a) During the last pay period in June 1989. Includes apprentices.
Source: Public Sector Construction Activity, Australia, 1988–89 (8775.0).

Trends in the Construction Industry

Table 22.8 sets out some selected items and operating ratios at average 1984–85 prices, by industry for 1988–89 and 1984–85. Although the construction industry has suffered the effects of a downturn since 1988–89, these statistics provide a general view of the level of the performance and the relationship between various key statistics of the industry.

The number of establishments fell four per cent from 100,800 in 1984–85 to 96,600 in 1988–89. However, employment increased by 21 per cent from 326,000 to 395,000 in the same period. This indicates a rationalisation within the construction industry with fewer but larger establishments. The employment per establishment ratio of 3.2 in 1984–85 rose 28 per cent to 4.1 in 1988–89.

Turnover at average 1984–85 prices rose significantly from $24,949 million in 1984–85 to $33,903 million in 1988–89, a 36 per cent increase. This increase was most pronounced in the non-residential building construction (up 76%) and the residential building construction n.e.c. (up 59%) industries. Turnover in the non-building construction n.e.c. industry fell 11 per cent from $2,499 million in 1984–85 to $2,219 million in 1988–89.

22.8 PRIVATE SECTOR CONSTRUCTION: SELECTED ITEMS AND OPERATING RATIOS AT AVERAGE 1984–85 PRICES BY INDUSTRY, 1988–89 AND 1984–85

	General construction industry									
	Building construction industry				*Non-building construction industry*					
	House	*Residential building n.e.c.*	*Non-residential building*	*Total*	*Road and bridge*	*Non-building n.e.c.*	*Total*	*Total*	*Special trade construction industry*	*Total construction industry*
ITEMS										
Establishments operating										
At 30 June 1989 (number)	13,791	1,770	3,861	19,422	777	3,105	3,882	23,304	73,301	96,605
At 30 June 1985 (number)	19,438	1,536	2,987	23,961	844	2,519	3,362	27,323	73,467	100,789
Movement (%)	*–29.1*	*15.2*	*29.3*	*–18.9*	*–7.9*	*23.3*	*15.5*	*–14.7*	*–0.2*	*–4.2*
Employment										
At 30 June 1989 ('000)	43.3	7.8	47.3	98.4	12.0	25.0	37.0	135.4	259.6	395.0
At 30 June 1985 ('000)	47.5	4.9	31.9	84.4	12.1	22.8	34.9	119.3	206.9	326.2
Movement (%)	*–8.8*	*59.2*	*48.3*	*16.6*	*–0.8*	*9.6*	*6.0*	*13.5*	*25.5*	*21.1*
Turnover										
1988–89 ($ million)	5,907.3	1,323.1	10,043.2	17,273.6	1,809.4	2,219.4	4,028.8	21,302.4	12,600.7	33,903.1
1984–85 ($ million)	5,107.0	830.3	5,717.0	11,654.3	1,655.5	2,498.6	4,154.2	15,808.5	9,140.0	24,948.5
Movement (%)	*15.7*	*59.4*	*75.7*	*48.2*	*9.3*	*–11.2*	*–3.0*	*34.8*	*37.9*	*35.9*
OPERATING RATIOS										
Employment per establishment										
At 30 June 1989 (number)	3.1	4.4	12.3	5.1	15.4	8.1	9.5	5.8	3.5	4.1
At 30 June 1985 (number)	2.4	3.2	10.7	3.5	14.3	9.1	10.4	4.4	2.8	3.2
Movement (%)	*29.2*	*37.5*	*15.0*	*45.7*	*7.7*	*–11.0*	*–8.7*	*31.8*	*25.0*	*28.1*
Turnover per establishment										
1988–89 ($'000)	428.3	747.5	2,601.2	889.4	2,328.7	714.8	1,037.8	914.1	171.9	350.9
1984–85 ($'000)	262.7	540.4	1,914.0	486.4	1,961.5	991.9	1,235.6	578.6	124.4	247.5
Movement (%)	*63.0*	*38.3*	*35.9*	*82.9*	*18.7*	*–27.9*	*–16.0*	*58.0*	*38.2*	*41.8*
Turnover to employment										
1988–89 ($'000)	136.4	169.6	212.3	175.5	150.8	88.8	108.9	157.3	48.5	85.8
1984–85 ($'000)	107.5	169.4	179.2	138.1	136.8	109.6	119.0	132.5	44.2	76.5
Movement (%)	*26.9*	*0.1*	*18.5*	*27.1*	*10.2*	*–19.0*	*–8.5*	*18.7*	*9.7*	*12.2*

Source: Construction Industry, Australia: Summary of Private Sector Operations, 1988–89 (8771.0).

Trends over more recent years in the level of activity of the construction industry as a whole are shown below.

After being in decline since the September quarter 1989, construction activity at average 1984–85 prices recorded modest increases in the March and June quarters 1992, but fell again in the September quarter 1992. There has been some recovery in residential building, but engineering construction and non-residential building has continued to decline.

In the 1991–92 financial year, estimated construction activity at average 1984–85 prices was $22,410 million. This was 10 per cent less than the 1990–91 estimate of $24,963 million and was the lowest level of activity since 1984–85. The decline in activity was concentrated mainly in non-residential building, which recorded a 24 per cent fall from $8,948 million in 1990–91 to $6,844 million in 1991–92. Engineering construction fell by six per cent (from $7,861 million to $7,362 million), while residential building showed a marginal increase from $8,154 million to $8,204 million.

22.9 CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITY AT AVERAGE 1984–85 PRICES, SEASONALLY ADJUSTED ($ million)

Year/quarter	*Residential building*	*Non-residential building*	*Engineering construction*	*Total construction*
1990				
September	2,095	2,361	1,976	6,432
December	2,076	2,313	1,944	6,333
1991				
March	2,028	2,155	1,938	6,121
June	1,949	2,102	2,007	6,058
September	1,898	1,866	1,784	5,548
December	2,050	1,650	1,848	5,548
1992				
March	2,082	1,687	1,832	5,601
June	2,181	1,636	1,888	5,705
September	2,331	1,471	1,698	5,500

Source: Construction Activity at Constant Prices, Australia (8782.0).

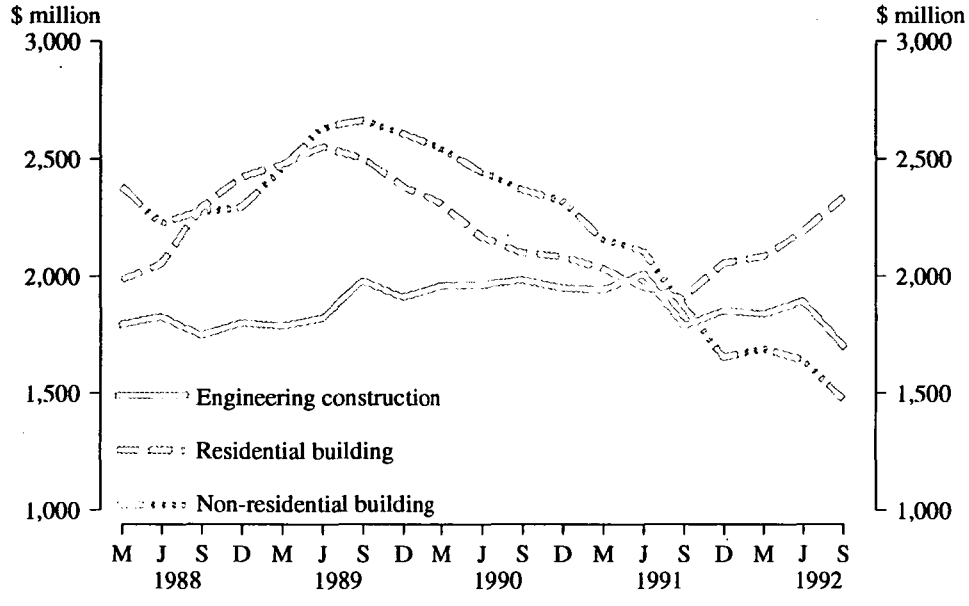
The area of construction with the largest contribution to total activity in 1991–92 was residential building with 37 per cent of the total, while engineering construction and non-residential building accounted for 33 per cent and 31 per cent respectively (graph 22.10). By contrast, in 1990–91 non-residential building was the largest sector, accounting for 36 per cent of total construction work done followed by residential building (33%) and engineering construction (31%).

Of the $22,410 million of construction expenditure in 1991–92, $14,506 million (65%) was work done for the private sector. Of this, $7,758 million (53%) was on residential building, $4,564 million (31%) on non-residential building and the remaining $2,184 million (15%) on engineering construction.

Public sector construction expenditure displayed a different pattern, with $5,178 million (66%) out of a total expenditure of $7,904 million being on engineering construction. Non-residential building ($2,280 million) accounted for almost 29 per cent of total expenditure, with the remaining $446 million (6%) being spent on residential building.

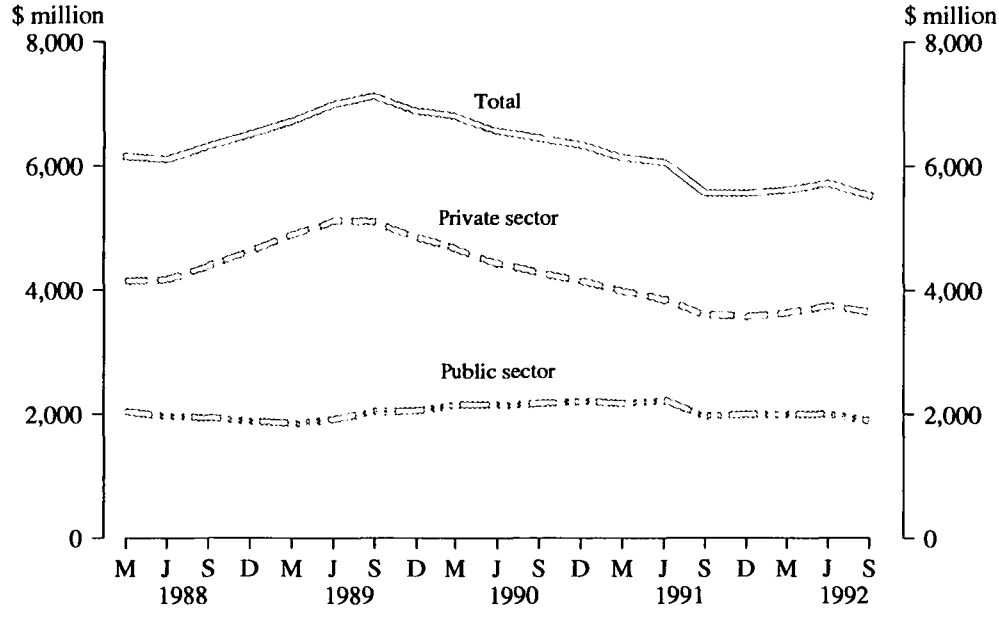
Construction activity for the public sector has remained relatively constant (graph 22.11) at around $2,000 million each quarter over the last 10 years. The volatility evident in the total construction series is dominated by the trends in the private sector construction activity series.

22.10 CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITY AT AVERAGE 1984–85 PRICES, SEASONALLY ADJUSTED



Source: Construction Activity at Constant Prices, Australia (8782.0).

22.11 PRIVATE AND PUBLIC CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITY AT AVERAGE 1984–85 PRICES SEASONALLY ADJUSTED



Source: Construction Activity at Constant Prices, Australia (8782.0).

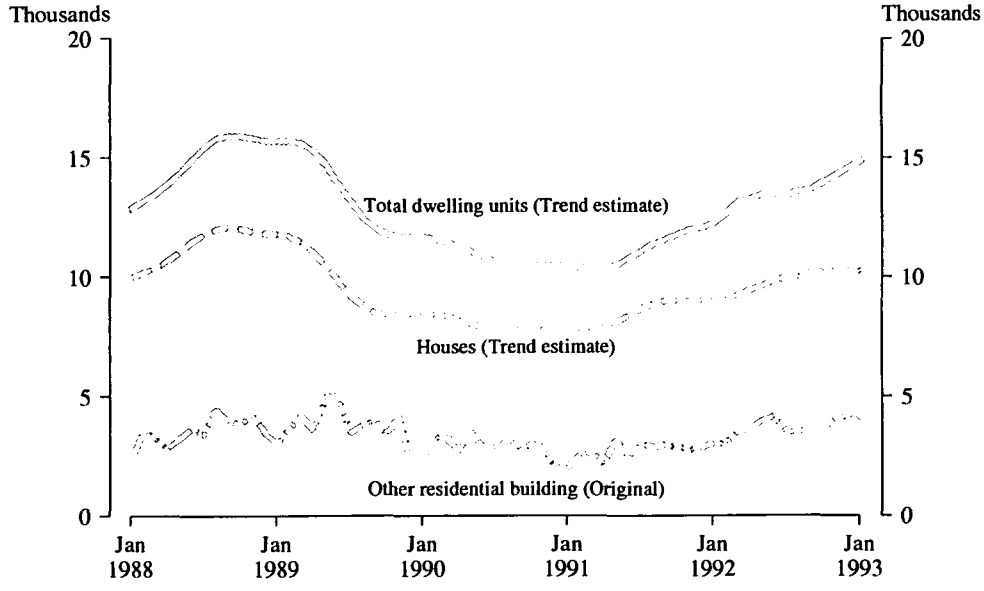
Up to this point, this chapter has provided an overview of the construction industry as a whole. The industry has three broad areas of activity — residential building, non-residential building and engineering construction. These sectors are examined in more detail below.

Residential building

Residential building involves the construction of dwelling units, which are separated into new houses and other residential building (flats, appartments, villa units, town houses, and other dwelling units).

As can be seen from the following graph, after a period of decline throughout 1989 and 1990, total dwelling unit approvals grew steadily during 1991 and 1992. However, the level of approvals was still well below that of the last peak in the trend series in September 1988. Approvals for separate houses, which account for over 70 per cent of all dwelling units approved, followed a similar pattern.

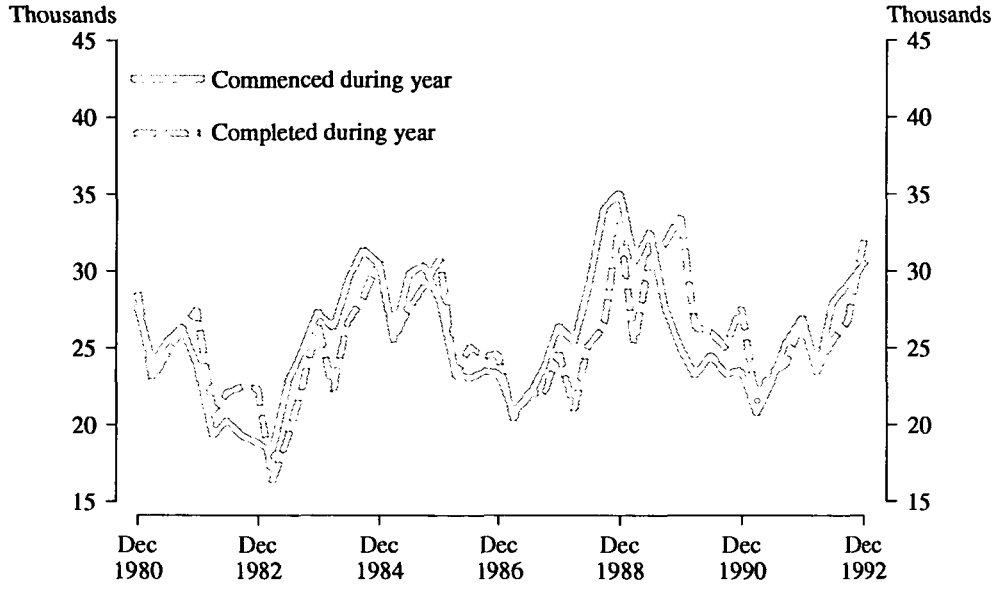
22.12 NUMBER OF DWELLING UNITS APPROVED



Source: Building Approvals, Australia (8731.0).

New houses. Graph 22.13 illustrates to some extent the cyclical nature of new house commencements. These follow a cyclical pattern which lasts for approximately four years. Lows were recorded in 1982–83, 1986–87 and 1990–91, with peaks in 1984–85 and 1988–89. In 1991–92 new house construction was in a growth phase, with a moderate increase in the number of commencements. House completions generally follow a similar cyclical pattern to commencements.

22.13 NEW HOUSE BUILDING ACTIVITY: NUMBER OF HOUSES



Source: Building Activity, Australia (8752.0).

Table 22.14 shows that the number of new houses approved in 1991–92 was 110,900, an increase of 18 per cent on the 1990–91 figure of 94,100. Private sector approvals dominated, contributing 97 per cent to the total number of new houses approved.

The estimated number of new houses commenced in 1991–92 was 104,100, an increase of 15 per cent on the 1990–91 figure (90,500). The increase in commencements is not quite as large as the increase in approvals, reflecting the lag between these series and the fact that not all house approvals are realised as commencements.

New house completions (99,900) increased by a modest two per cent over the 1990–91 estimate of 97,800. The small increase compared with both approvals and commencements is evidence that the increases in these series had not yet flowed on into completions, and suggests that completions should increase significantly in 1992–93. The figures for the first two quarters (*see* graph 22.13) confirm this expectation.

Other residential building. The level of activity of other residential building construction is highly variable and does not follow the regular pattern experienced in house construction. This is, partly, because of the generally larger size of other residential building construction jobs and also by the extent of speculative building of private flats, home units and similar other residential building projects.

Table 22.14 shows that, in 1991–92, 39,300 new other residential dwelling units were approved, 23 per cent more than in 1990–91. Of these, 79 per cent were owned by the private sector, compared with 82 per cent in the previous year. In 1991–92 public sector owned other residential approvals were 45 per cent higher than in 1990–91, compared with an 18 per cent increase for the private sector.

The number of new other residential dwelling units commenced in Australia during 1991–92 was 36,200, 17 per cent higher than the 1990–91 figure of 30,900. The number of

commencements increased in all States and Territories except South Australia.

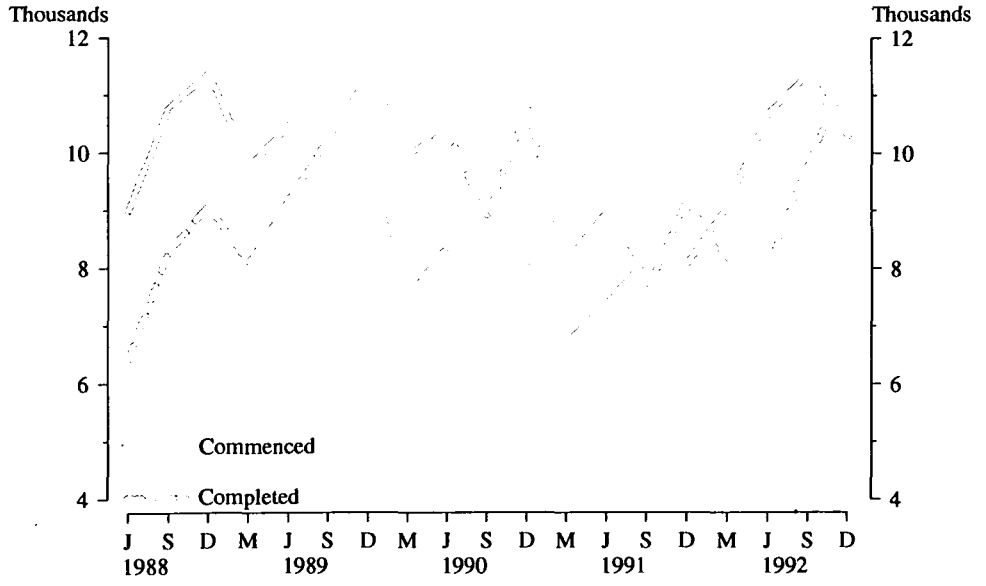
New other residential completions in 1991–92 totalled 32,800, a fall of 12 per cent on the 1990–91 figure of 36,700. As with houses, this reflects the lag between commencements and completions, which were expected to show a sizable increase in 1992–93. This expectation is being realised (*see* graph 22.15).

22.14 RESIDENTIAL BUILDING, 1991–92
('000)

	New houses	*New other residential building*
Private Sector		
Approved	107.2	31.0
Commenced	100.6	28.9
Completed	96.2	26.8
Public Sector		
Approved	3.7	8.3
Commenced	3.5	7.3
Completed	3.7	6.0
Total		
Approved	110.9	39.3
Commenced	104.1	36.2
Completed	99.9	32.8

Source: Building Approvals, Australia (8731.0) and Building Activity, Australia (8752.0).

22.15 OTHER RESIDENTIAL BUILDING ACTIVITY: NUMBER OF DWELLING UNITS



Source: Building Activity, Australia (8752.0).

Value of residential building. Approvals for total new residential building were valued at $12,005.9 million in 1991–92. New house approvals were valued at $9,388.5 million, or 78.2 per cent of the total value of new residential building approvals. Approvals for alterations and additions totalled $1,973.9 million.

The value of work done on new residential buildings in 1991–92 was $11,341.0 million, making up 48.6 per cent of the total value of building work done, and the value of alterations and additions to residential buildings was $2,053.0 million.

22.16 VALUE OF RESIDENTIAL BUILDING, 1991–92
($ million)

Class of building	*Approved*	*Work done(a)*
New residential buildings		
New houses	9,388.5	8,968.5
New other residential buildings	2,617.4	2,372.5
Total new residential building	*12,005.9*	*11,341.0*
Alterations and additions to residential buildings(b)	1,973.9	2,053.0

(a) During period. (b) Valued at $10,000 or more.
Source: Building Approvals, Australia (8731.0) and Building Activity, Australia (8752.0).

Non-residential building

Value of non-residential building. The value of non-residential building approved in Australia in 1991–92 was $7,208.7 million, a 20 per cent decrease on the 1990–91 figure of $8,957.4 million. Falls were recorded in all categories except Entertainment and recreational which rose by $140.6 million, and Religious and Educational which were up marginally by $3.3 million and $2.2 million respectively. In absolute terms the largest fall was in the approvals of Offices, which decreased from $2,383.3 million to $1,745.7 million, a drop of $637.6 million (or 27%). This followed a 56 per cent drop from 1989–90 to 1990–91. Other significant falls were in Factories, down from $1,111.7 million in 1990–91 to $704.9 million in 1991–92 (37%), and Shops which fell from $1,256.2 million to $885.2 million (30%).

22.17 VALUE OF NON-RESIDENTIAL BUILDING, 1990–91 AND 1991–92
($ million)

	1990–91		*1991–92*	
Class of building	*Approved*	*Work done(a)*	*Approved*	*Work done(a)*
Hotels, etc.	526.0	1,193.8	406.3	664.7
Shops	1,256.2	1,584.2	885.2	1,093.5
Factories	1,111.7	1,312.6	704.9	1,011.7
Offices	2,383.3	4,730.6	1,745.7	3,223.1
Other business premises	1,054.3	1,608.9	774.7	922.8
Educational	928.1	1,225.6	930.3	1,039.4
Religious	76.1	81.2	79.4	81.5
Health	526.2	676.0	497.5	624.6
Entertainment and recreational	536.0	649.9	676.6	602.9
Miscellaneous	559.4	665.0	508.0	657.7
Total non-residential building(b)	**8,957.4**	**13,727.8**	**7,208.7**	**9,922.1**

(a) During period. (b) Valued at $50,000 or more.
Source: Building Approvals, Australia (8731.0) and Building Activity, Australia (8752.0).

The total value of work done on non-residential building in 1991–92 was $9,922.1 million, a decrease of 28 per cent on the 1990–91 figure of $13,727.8 million. This follows a 12 per cent fall from 1989–90 to 1990–91. All categories of non-residential building recorded decreases in the value of work done in 1991–92, except the Religious category which remained unchanged. Significant falls in relative terms were in the categories Hotels, etc. (44%), Other business premises (43%), Offices (32%), Shops (31%) and Factories (23%).

Building activity at constant prices

Estimates of the value of building (residential and non-residential) work done at average 1984–85 prices are presented in table 22.18 below. Constant price estimates measure changes in value after the direct effects of price changes have been eliminated.

At average 1984–85 prices, the value of total building work done fell significantly in 1991–92. Following a fall of 13 per cent in 1990–91 the value of building work done declined by $2,054 million (or 12%) to $15,048 million in 1991–92.

The bulk of this fall occurred in non-residential building, which declined from $8,948 million in 1990–91 to $6,844 million in 1991–92, a drop of 24 per cent. The value of work done on alterations and additions to residential buildings also fell (by 4%), while work done on new residential building rose marginally by two per cent.

22.18 VALUE OF BUILDING WORK DONE AT AVERAGE 1984–85 PRICES ($ million)

	New residential building					
Year	*Houses*	*Other residential buildings*	*Total*	*Alterations and additions to residential buildings*	*Non-residential building*	*Total building*
1986–87	4,808.2	1,116.2	5,924.4	951.9	8,045.3	14,921.6
1987–88	5,314.9	1,170.2	6,485.1	1,071.2	9,223.6	16,779.9
1988–89	6,696.9	1,784.2	8,481.1	1,228.2	9,620.1	19,329.4
1989–90	6,038.4	1,983.7	8,022.1	1,314.2	10,239.3	19,575.6
1990–91	5,192.4	1,689.5	6,881.9	1,271.9	8,947.9	17,101.7
1991–92	5,390.8	1,596.8	6,987.6	1,216.5	6,844.0	15,048.1

Source: Building Activity, Australia (8752.0).

Engineering construction

This section contains estimates of engineering construction activity in Australia by both public and private sector organisations. These estimates, together with the preceding data on residential and non-residential building, complete the picture of construction activity in Australia.

The total value of engineering construction work done during 1991–92 was $11,091 million, a $584 million (or 5%) fall on the 1990–91 figure of $11,675 million (table 22.19). This fall was almost entirely in work done for the public sector, which declined by $602 million (7%) to $7,923 million. Engineering construction work done for the private sector rose marginally by $18 million to $3,168 million.

Overall, significant expenditure occurred in the categories of Roads, highways and subdivisions (30% of total expenditure), Telecommunications (16%), Heavy industry (15%) and Electricity generation, transmission and distribution (14%).

For the private sector, engineering construction activity centred around the categories of Heavy industry, which accounted for 48 per cent of total activity (up from 42% in 1990–91), Roads, highways and subdivisions which was 33 per cent (the same as in 1990–91) and Recreation, 6 per cent (down from 10%).

For the public sector, major construction activity was undertaken in the categories of Roads, highways and subdivisions (28% of total expenditure, the same as in 1990–91), Telecommunications (23%, down from 27% in 1990–91) and Electricity generation, transmission and distribution (19%, up from 17%).

22.19 VALUE OF ENGINEERING CONSTRUCTION WORK DONE, 1990–91 AND 1991–92 ($ million)

	1990–91			1991–92		
	For the private sector	*For the public sector*	*Total*	*For the private sector*	*For the public sector*	*Total*
Roads, highways and subdivisions	1,024.1	2,380.3	3,404.4	1,038.2	2,252.6	3,290.8
Bridges	11.0	229.5	240.5	12.0	245.1	257.0
Railways	17.7	406.8	424.4	33.3	443.3	476.6
Harbours	49.0	99.0	148.0	30.1	56.6	86.7
Water storage and supply	100.2	663.6	763.8	59.8	695.4	755.2
Sewerage and drainage	93.8	582.7	676.5	56.6	541.6	598.3
Electricity generation transmission and distribution	94.6	1,460.8	1,555.4	99.9	1,497.2	1,597.0
Pipelines	68.3	104.6	172.9	99.3	52.7	152.0
Recreation	321.2	158.5	479.8	183.4	155.5	338.9
Telecommunications	8.8	2,285.3	2,294.1	6.9	1,801.6	1,808.5
Heavy industry	1,335.4	123.1	1,458.5	1,517.5	156.7	1,674.2
Other	26.4	30.3	56.7	31.4	24.4	55.8
Total	**3,150.4**	**8,524.5**	**11,674.9**	**3,168.2**	**7,922.7**	**11,091.0**

Source: Engineering Construction Activity, Australia (8762.0).

Price indexes of materials used in building

Two price indexes measure the changes in prices of selected materials used in the construction of buildings — one for materials used in house building, the other for materials used in building other than house building.

Price Index of Materials Used in House Building

The following table shows the changes in prices of selected materials used in the construction of houses in each capital city Statistical Division.

The All groups index (weighted average of the six State capital cities) increased a mere 0.2 per cent (0.3 index points) from 1990–91 to 1991–92. This follows a 4.6 per cent (6.3 index points) increase in the previous financial year.

Hobart (up 3.1 index points), Canberra (up 2.9 index points) and Brisbane (up 2.0 index points) recorded the largest increases. Melbourne (down 0.6 points) and Adelaide (down 0.5 points) recorded falls.

22.20 PRICE INDEX OF MATERIALS USED IN HOUSE BUILDING (Reference base year 1985–86 = 100.0)

	Weighted average of six State capital cities	*Sydney*	*Melbourne*	*Brisbane*	*Adelaide*	*Perth*	*Hobart*	*Canberra (a)*
	INDEX NUMBERS							
1989–90	135.8	139.1	133.5	134.1	129.7	140.8	128.0	130.5
1990–91	142.1	145.7	138.1	141.9	136.2	148.7	134.2	136.4
1991–92	142.4	146.1	137.3	144.7	135.5	149.3	138.3	140.3

(a) Reference base year 1986–87 = 100.0.

Source: Price Index of Materials Used in House Buildings, Six State Capital Cities and Canberra (6408.0).

Price Index of Materials Used in Building Other than House Building

The All groups index (weighted average of six State capital cities) increased by 0.6 per cent (or 1.5 index points) from 1990–91 to 1991–92. This follows a 5.1 per cent (11.8 index points) increase between 1989–90 and 1990–91.

Large increases in the index occurred in Hobart (up 3.1%), Darwin (up 3.0%), Brisbane (up 2.5%) and Canberra (up 2.4%). Melbourne (down 1.0%) and Perth (down 0.3%) were the only capital cities to record falls.

22.21 PRICE INDEX OF MATERIALS USED IN BUILDING OTHER THAN HOUSE BUILDING ALL GROUPS
(Reference base year 1979–80 = 100.0)

	Weighted average of six State capital cities	*Sydney*	*Melbourne*	*Brisbane*	*Adelaide*	*Perth*	*Hobart*	*Darwin (a)*	*Canberra (b)*
	INDEX NUMBERS								
1989–90	231.9	231.3	227.8	233.9	237.1	240.0	216.8	171.9	132.2
1990–91	243.7	244.2	238.0	245.2	249.6	253.2	225.2	181.1	140.4
1991–92	245.2	247.8	235.6	251.3	250.0	252.5	232.1	186.6	143.7

(a) Reference base year 1981–82 = 100.0. (b) Reference base year 1986–87 = 100.0.
Source: Price Index of Materials Used in Building Other Than House Buildings, Eight Capital Cities (6407.0).

Labour costs

After growing by 20.1 per cent to $10,314 million in 1989–90, total major labour costs in the construction industry fell 17.1 per cent to $8,548 million in 1990–91, reflecting the decline in employment and activity in the industry. However, the distribution between the components has remained relatively constant with earnings accounting for 88.2 per cent of this figure. Superannuation accounted for 5.6 per cent, payroll tax 3.5 per cent, workers' compensation 2.1 per cent and fringe benefits the remaining 0.7 per cent.

22.22 MAJOR LABOUR COSTS OF CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY

				1990–91	
				Percentage distribution of labour costs by type	
Type of labour cost	*1988–89*	*1989–90*	*1990–91*	*Construction*	*All industries*
	$m	$m	$m	%	%
Earnings	7,606	9,103	7,450	87.2	88.2
Other labour costs	980	1,211	1,097	12.8	11.8
Superannuation	386	537	492	5.8	5.6
Emerging cost	64	80	40	0.5	0.8
Ongoing cost	322	457	452	5.3	4.8
Payroll tax	254	316	278	3.3	3.5
Workers' compensation	303	304	267	3.1	2.1
Fringe benefits tax	36	53	60	0.7	0.7
Total major labour costs	**8,586**	**10,314**	**8,548**	**100.0**	**100.0**

Source: Labour Costs, Australia (6348.0).

Following an increase of 19.9 per cent from 1988–89 to 1989–90, the average labour cost per employee in the construction industry fell by 7.2 per cent to $31,666 in 1990–91.

The average labour cost per employee in the construction industry in 1990–91 was 6.5 per cent higher than the all industries average of $29,734. Earnings at $27,602 were 5.3 per cent higher, superannuation at $1,821 was 10.6 per cent higher and workers' compensation costs, at $991, were 57.3 per cent higher than the all industries average.

22.23 AVERAGE LABOUR COST PER EMPLOYEE IN CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY, BY TYPE ($)

			Construction	*All industries*
	1988–89	*1989–90*	*1990–91*	*1990–91*
Earnings	25,210	30,126	27,602	26,225
Other labour costs	3,248	4,006	4,064	3,509
Superannuation	1,280	1,777	1,821	1,647
Payroll tax	842	1,045	1,031	1,029
Workers compensation	1,005	1,008	991	630
Fringe benefits tax	121	177	221	203
Total major labour costs	**28,458**	**34,132**	**31,666**	**29,734**

Source: Labour Costs, Australia (6348.0).

Industrial disputes

Of the 1,058 industrial disputes in progress during 1991, 63 or six per cent affected the construction industry. These 63 disputes involved (either directly or indirectly) 100,000 construction industry employees and resulted in the loss of 121,000 working days.

22.24 CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY: INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES IN PROGRESS DURING 1991

Industry	*Total industrial disputes in progress (no.)*	*Employees involved (directly & indirectly) ('000)*	*Working days lost ('000)*
Construction	63	100.4	120.7
Total industries	**1,058**	**1,181.5**	**1,610.5**

Source: Industrial Disputes, Australia (6322.0).

Table 22.25 shows that, Australia wide, the construction industry recorded an average of 428 working days lost per thousand employees, a figure 62 per cent higher than the Australian all industries average of 265 working days lost per thousand employees. New South Wales was the most strike affected State with 626 working days lost per thousand construction industry employees. This figure is 46 per cent higher than the Australian average for the construction industry of 428 working days lost per thousand employees, and 19 per cent higher than the New South Wales all industries average of 528 working days lost per thousand employees. Tasmania was the least strike affected State with only 22 working days lost per thousand construction industry employees which was 79 percent of the Tasmanian all industries average of 28 working days lost or 5 per cent of the Australian construction industry average of 428 working days lost per thousand employees.

22.25 CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY: INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES IN PROGRESS DURING 1991
(working days lost per thousand employees)

State/Territory	*Construction*	*All industries*
New South Wales	626	528
Victoria	312	128
Queensland	222	114
South Australia	586	112
Western Australia	501	223
Tasmania	22	28
Northern Territory	66	51
Australian Capital Territory	205	18
Australia	**428**	**265**

Source: Industrial Disputes, Australia (6322.0).

Trade union membership

The proportion of construction industry employees who are trade union members has been falling steadily since 1986.

In 1986, 48 per cent of construction industry employees were trade union members. This figure fell to 47 per cent in 1988, 45 per cent in 1990 and 42 per cent in 1992.

This fall in trade union membership participation was not restricted to the construction industry. In all industries the estimated average trade union membership has also been falling steadily from 46 per cent in 1986 to 42 per cent (1988), 41 per cent (1990) and 40 per cent (1992).

As might be expected, in the construction industry permanently employed males were most likely to belong to trade unions with 55 per cent of this category belonging to a union. Females employed in the construction industry were less likely to belong to trade unions with only 10 per cent of permanently employed and no casually employed females being trade union members (table 22.27).

22.26 CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY: EMPLOYEES WHO WERE TRADE UNION MEMBERS AUGUST 1986, 1988, 1990 AND 1992

	Construction	*All industries*
August 1986(a)		
No. of members ('000)	145.3	2,593.9
Proportion of employees who are in trade unions (%)	48.0	45.6
August 1988(a)		
No. of members ('000)	157.5	2,535.9
Proportion of employees who are in trade unions (%)	47.1	41.6
August 1990		
No. of members ('000)	170.7	2,659.6
Proportion of employees who are in trade unions (%)	45.4	40.5
August 1992		
No. of members ('000)	123.9	2,508.8
Proportion of employees who are in trade unions (%)	42.4	39.6
Total number of employees ('000)	292.6	6,334.8

(a) Estimates from 1986 to 1988 have been revised to exclude persons aged 70 years and over.
Source: Trade Union Members, Australia (6325.0).

22.27 CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY: EMPLOYEES WHO WERE TRADE UNION MEMBERS AUGUST 1992 (per cent)

	Construction	*All industries*
Males		
Permanent	55.1	48.1
Casual	23.4	18.4
Total	*47.2*	*43.4*
Females		
Permanent	*9.7	42.9
Casual	*0.0	16.5
Total	*5.9	*34.8*
Persons		
Permanent	50.7	46.0
Casual	19.4	17.2
Total	*42.4*	*39.6*

Source: Trade Union Members, Australia (6325.0).

Training expenditure

In the three month period July 1990 to September 1990, average training expenditure per employee in the construction industry was $140. This was 14 per cent lower than the all industries average of $163.

Although the two construction subdivisions Non-building construction and Other construction spent similar amounts ($140) on training per employee, the number of paid training hours per employee varied significantly. Average training hours per employee in the Non-building construction industry was only 4.6 hours, substantially less than the 10.3 hours recorded by the Other construction industry.

Even though the construction industry spent less on training per employee than the average for all industries, construction industry employees received, on average, a higher number of paid training hours. Construction industry employees recorded 9.0 paid training hours per employee, 53 per cent higher than the all industries average of 5.9 paid training hours per employee.

22.28 CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY: AVERAGE TRAINING EXPENDITURE PER EMPLOYEE JULY TO SEPTEMBER 1990

	Private			*Total*		
Industry	*In-house*	*External*	*Total*	*In-house*	*External*	*Total*
	DOLLARS PER EMPLOYEE					
Construction	35.5	85.1	120.6	57.6	82.7	140.3
Non-building construction	45.4	40.9	86.3	97.8	41.9	139.7
Other construction(a)	34.3	90.6	124.9	46.4	94.1	140.4
All industries	**85.5**	**46.6**	**132.1**	**112.2**	**50.6**	**162.8**
	HOURS PER EMPLOYEE					
Construction	1.1	8.4	9.5	1.8	7.3	9.0
Non-building construction(a)	1.2	*1.8	3.0	3.0	1.6	4.6
Other construction(a)	1.1	9.2	10.3	1.4	8.8	10.3
All industries	**2.7**	**2.2**	**4.9**	**3.6**	**2.3**	**5.9**

For footnotes *see* end of table.

22.28 CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY: AVERAGE TRAINING EXPENDITURE PER EMPLOYEE JULY TO SEPTEMBER 1990 — *continued*

	Private			Total		
Industry	*In-house*	*External*	*Total*	*In-house*	*External*	*Total*
	DOLLARS PER HOUR					
Construction	32.0	10.2	12.7	32.8	11.4	15.6
Non-building construction	36.8	22.7	28.5	33.0	26.0	30.5
Other construction(a)	31.3	9.9	12.1	32.6	10.7	13.7
All industries	**31.6**	**20.7**	**26.7**	**31.0**	**21.9**	**27.5**

(a) Comprises building and special trades construction.
Source: Employer Training Expenditure, Australia (6353.0).

HOUSING

Since Federation, Australian Governments, through their policies, have encouraged home ownership. A high level of home ownership is seen as promoting a stable, healthy and productive society. In addition, a strong housing construction industry provides substantial employment both within the industry and in associated sectors of the economy, such as banking, real estate and manufacturing.

In recent times, adequate, affordable housing was identified as a government priority with the establishment of a National Housing Strategy in June, 1990.

This part of the chapter provides a profile of the various aspects of housing in Australia, based on information from the five-yearly Census of Population and Housing and from periodic surveys. Care should be taken when comparing statistics from different sources because of differences in the timing of individual statistical collections and in the conceptual bases for respective topics.

Number and types of dwellings

Number of dwellings. The number of occupied dwellings is distributed broadly according to the population of each State and Territory. However the growth in the number of occupied dwellings in each State/Territory between 1986 and 1991 was variable. Queensland and Western Australia had the highest growth (18%), followed by the Australian Capital Territory (17%), then the Northern Territory (15%). The remainder, New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia and Tasmania grew by less than nine per cent. The average growth for Australia over the five year period was 11 per cent.

The number of caravans, etc. in caravan parks and occupied boats in marinas has increased in all States/Territories except Victoria where the number decreased 2.4 per cent. The Northern Territory had the highest growth rate (37%), with the growth rate in New South Wales (19%), South Australia (17%) and Queensland (16%) above the Australian average. The remainder were all below eight per cent. The average growth for Australia was 13 per cent.

The number of unoccupied dwellings increased in all States/Territories except the Northern Territory where the number decreased 15 per cent. Growth in Victoria (15%), Tasmania (12%), New South Wales and South Australia (both 10%) were at or above the average for Australia (10%).

22.29 NUMBER OF DWELLINGS BY STATE/TERRITORY

State/Territory	30 June 1986 Occupied	30 June 1986 Caravans, etc.(a)	30 June 1986 Unoccupied	6 August 1991 Occupied	6 August 1991 Caravans, etc.(a)	6 August 1991 Unoccupied
New South Wales	1,817,392	21,916	174,467	1,961,229	26,036	192,140
Victoria	1,351,118	9,475	143,264	1,466,150	9,243	164,754
Queensland	838,122	27,310	94,714	986,013	31,787	99,014
South Australia	474,456	3,162	48,546	511,995	3,710	53,534
Western Australia	458,762	10,749	53,851	539,024	10,907	57,643
Tasmania	149,484	658	19,470	162,321	680	21,764
Northern Territory	39,779	3,456	3,639	45,805	4,737	3,075
Australian Capital Territory	79,363	368	5,588	92,485	395	5,658
Australia(b)	**5,208,476**	**77,094**	**543,539**	**5,765,022**	**87,496**	**597,582**

(a) Occupied caravans, etc. in caravan parks were counted as occupied private dwellings in the 1976 and 1981 Censuses. (b) Excludes off-shore and migratory dwellings.

Source: 1991 Census of Population and Housing, 6 August, CVC2033.

Type of dwellings. The standard suburban cottage remains the dominant form of housing in Australia. 'Separate houses' represent 77 per cent of all dwellings found by the 1991 Census. Of the other categories of dwellings the majority are semi-detached dwellings (8%) and flats (12%).

Tasmania has the highest proportion of separate houses (85%) while the Northern Territory has the lowest (57%).

A relatively high proportion of dwellings in South Australia and Western Australia, (13 and 12% respectively) and the Australian Capital Territory (11%) are semi-detached houses, compared with the average for Australia of eight per cent. South Australia and Western Australia together account for 30 per cent of all semi-detached houses in Australia.

Australia has just over 12 per cent of its dwellings in the form of flats, units and apartments (low and high-rise). In New South Wales, 17 per cent of dwellings are flats, and nearly half (47%) of all flats in Australia are in that State. This compares to New South Wales' 34 per cent of all dwellings in Australia.

22.30 STRUCTURE OF DWELLINGS BY STATE/TERRITORY, 6 AUGUST 1991

State/Territory	Separate house	Semi-detached (a)	Flat or apartment (b)	Caravan in caravan park	Other(c)	Total
New South Wales	1,584,335	155,115	369,752	26,036	44,167	2,179,405
Victoria	1,308,552	130,027	166,040	9,243	26,285	1,640,147
Queensland	873,876	47,596	137,716	31,787	25,840	1,116,815
South Australia	437,934	75,448	43,248	3,710	8,899	569,239
Western Australia	471,921	74,660	39,194	10,907	10,892	607,574
Tasmania	156,687	11,229	12,054	680	4,115	184,765
Northern Territory	30,355	4,169	7,932	4,737	6,424	53,617
Australian Capital Territory	77,950	10,520	8,947	395	726	98,538
Australia(d)	**4,941,610**	**508,764**	**784,883**	**87,495**	**127,348**	**6,450,100**

(a) Includes row/terrace houses, townhouses, of one or more storeys. (b) Includes blocks of one or more storeys; and flats attached to houses. (c) Includes caravans, etc. not in caravan parks, improvised homes, campers out, houses or flats attached to shop, office, etc., and not stated. (d) Excludes non-private dwellings, and off-shore and migratory dwellings.

Source: 1991 Census of Population and Housing, 6 August 1991, CVC2039.

Standard of housing and facilities

The following information on certain physical features and facilities of dwellings provides some indication of the standard of housing conditions in Australia.

Material of outer walls. The use of certain materials for outer walls is dictated by such

factors as availability, cost, durability, appearance and climatic conditions. Changes in the materials used over time indicate changes in the characteristics of the housing stock.

The majority of new houses approved in Australia in 1991–92 were constructed using brick veneer (64%). Double brick was the next most common material (17%), followed by timber (6%) and fibre cement (4%).

In the States and Territories, brick veneer is the most popular material except in Western Australia and the Northern Territory, where double brick is the most common material. In Western Australia, 88 per cent of new houses approved are double brick; in the Northern Territory, 61 per cent are double brick. Tasmania has the largest percentage for timber construction (18% of Tasmanian approvals).

In the Northern Territory, the second most popular materials are aluminium and steel which are included in 'Other' (35%).

22.31 NUMBER OF NEW HOUSES APPROVED, BY MATERIAL OF OUTER WALLS, AS A PROPORTION OF TOTAL STATE/TERRITORY, 1991–92
(per cent)

Material of outer wall	*NSW*	*Vic.*	*Qld*	*SA*	*WA*	*Tas.*	*NT*	*ACT*	*Aust.*
Double brick(a)	11.2	1.2	5.3	3.7	88.3	8.9	60.6	0.9	16.7
Brick veneer	76.3	60.4	78.2	74.0	3.8	67.5	0.7	91.0	63.7
Timber	6.5	6.7	8.5	1.9	2.9	18.0	2.1	—	6.4
Fibre cement	4.7	0.9	6.0	3.6	3.1	2.5	1.6	—	3.8
Other	1.2	1.5	2.0	0.3	1.8	2.8	35.0	2.5	1.8
Not stated	—	29.2	—	16.5	—	0.3	—	5.5	7.5
Total	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**

(a) Includes houses constructed with outer walls of stone and concrete.
Source: Building Approvals Microfiche Service, Australia (8734.0).

Number of rooms, by purpose. The most readily available indicator of dwelling size is the number of bedrooms. The table below shows the preponderance of three bedroom houses. Sixty per cent of all separate houses, and half of all dwellings, have three bedrooms. About half of semi-detached homes, and 62 per cent of flats, units and apartments have two bedrooms.

22.32 NUMBER OF DWELLINGS BY DWELLING STRUCTURE AND NUMBER OF BEDROOMS OCTOBER–DECEMBER 1990
('000)

		Semi-detached(a)		*Flat/unit*			
Number of bedrooms	*Separate house*	*1 storey*	*2 or more storeys*	*1–3 storeys*	*4 or more storeys*	*Other*	*All households*
None	12.5	3.5	*1.1	10.0	2.3	2.4	31.9
One	60.8	36.9	11.0	180.6	18.2	14.1	321.7
Two	817.9	182.3	50.9	413.9	25.7	14.1	1,504.8
Three	2,949.2	95.6	39.9	47.6	6.5	10.1	3,148.8
Four	959.2	4.4	6.3	2.5	—	3.6	976.0
Five or more	158.1	1.8	1.7	1.9	—	*0.4	163.9
Total	**4,957.6**	**324.6**	**110.9**	**656.5**	**52.7**	**44.8**	**6,147.2**

(a) Includes row/terrace houses, townhouses, of one or more storeys.
Source: Unpublished data from the ABS 1990 Survey of Income, and Housing Costs and Amenities.

However, while 60 per cent of all houses have three bedrooms, only 37 per cent of households in separate houses use three bedrooms as bedrooms. Similarly, in the majority of two bedroom dwellings only one bedroom is used for that purpose.

22.33 NUMBER OF ROOMS USED AS BEDROOMS, BY DWELLING STRUCTURE OCTOBER–DECEMBER 1990 ('000)

Number of rooms used as bedrooms	*Separate house*	*Semi-detached(a)*		*Flat/unit*		*Other*	*All households*
		1 storey	*2 or more storeys*	*1–3 storeys*	*4 or more storeys*		
None	34.0	4.0	2.5	9.2	3.8	2.0	55.4
One	1,152.3	148.7	44.7	375.2	34.0	21.4	1,776.3
Two	1,416.9	120.6	37.9	246.3	12.0	11.9	1,845.7
Three	1,818.8	45.9	20.7	22.9	2.9	6.5	1,917.8
Four	468.0	4.3	4.0	*1.0	—	2.9	480.2
Five or more	67.7	*1.2	*1.1	1.9	—	—	71.8
Total	**4,957.6**	**324.6**	**110.9**	**656.5**	**52.7**	**44.8**	**6,147.2**

(a) Includes row/terrace houses, townhouses, of one or more storeys.

Source: Unpublished data from the ABS 1990 Survey of Income, and Housing Costs and Amenities.

A further indication of living standards is the number of bathrooms. While most dwellings have only one bathroom, 23 per cent of separate houses have two bathrooms. Likewise, semi-detached dwellings and flats with more than one or two storeys are more likely to have two bathrooms. This includes 20 per cent of semi-detached dwellings of two or more storeys, and 15 per cent of flats in blocks of four or more storeys. All other types of dwelling structure have insignificant numbers of dwellings with two or more bathrooms.

In general, bathrooms are less likely to have bathtubs in semi-detached dwellings and flats.

Seventy-three per cent of all households have no separate toilet room in their dwelling. Separate toilet rooms are still found in 32 per cent of separate houses but are rare in low-rise flats (3%).

Only 25 per cent of dwellings have dual flush toilets. Separate houses and semi-detached homes (26%) are slightly more likely to have dual flush toilets.

An average of 11 per cent of all households have no laundry in their dwelling. This situation is less common for separate houses (4%) and most common for high-rise flats (65%). The other categories of dwelling structure range from 19 per cent to 46 per cent having no laundry.

Table 22.34 presents a profile of the number of rooms for various purposes contained in different types of dwelling.

22.34 PERCENTAGE OF DWELLINGS, BY TYPE OF ROOM AND DWELLING STRUCTURE OCTOBER–DECEMBER 1990
(per cent)

	Separate house	Semi-detached(a)		Flat/unit		Other	All households
		1 storey	2 or more storeys	1–3 storeys	4 or more storeys		
Number of bedrooms							
None	0.3	1.1	*1.0	1.5	4.4	5.4	0.5
One	1.2	11.4	9.9	27.5	34.5	31.6	5.2
Two	16.5	56.2	45.9	63.0	48.7	31.5	24.5
Three	59.5	29.5	35.9	7.2	12.3	22.6	51.2
Four	19.3	1.4	5.7	0.4	—	8.1	15.9
Five or more	3.2	0.5	1.6	0.3	—	*0.9	2.7
Number of rooms used as bedrooms							
None	0.7	1.2	2.2	1.4	7.1	4.4	0.9
One	23.2	45.8	40.3	57.2	64.5	47.8	28.9
Two	28.6	37.2	34.2	37.5	22.8	26.7	30.0
Three	36.7	14.1	18.7	3.5	5.5	14.6	31.2
Four	9.4	1.3	3.6	*0.1	—	6.5	7.8
Five or more	1.4	*0.4	*1.0	0.3	—	—	1.2
Number of kitchens							
None	0.3	*0.4	2.7	1.6	4.4	8.1	0.6
One	98.5	99.4	96.3	97.8	95.6	91.9	98.3
Two	1.1	*0.2	*1.0	0.2	—	—	0.9
Three or more	0.1	*0.1	—	0.3	—	—	0.1
Number of bathrooms							
None	0.4	0.6	*1.0	1.5	—	20.2	0.7
One	73.1	95.4	76.8	95.1	83.3	73.4	76.8
Two	22.9	3.9	20.2	3.1	14.9	6.6	19.6
Three or more	3.6	*0.1	2.2	0.3	*1.8	—	3.0
Number of bathtubs							
None	8.9	24.0	13.8	30.4	23.2	45.0	12.5
One	88.1	75.4	85.5	69.2	74.4	53.6	85.0
Two	2.8	0.6	*0.7	*0.1	*2.5	*1.4	2.3
Three or more	0.2	*0.1	—	0.3	—	—	0.2
Number of bathtubs with shower facility							
None	63.1	55.4	48.9	60.6	50.3	66.7	62.1
One	36.0	44.3	50.8	39.0	48.4	33.3	37.1
Two	0.8	*0.2	*0.3	*0.1	*1.3	—	0.7
Three or more	0.1	*0.1	—	0.3	—	—	0.1
Number of separate shower cubicles							
None	29.3	43.0	42.9	40.0	44.1	47.9	31.7
One	49.8	54.1	46.6	57.4	44.8	48.9	50.7
Two	18.1	2.8	7.8	2.3	11.1	*3.2	15.3
Three or more	2.8	*0.1	2.8	0.3	—	—	2.3
Number of separate toilets (rooms)							
None	68.1	89.1	60.2	96.8	90.9	91.9	72.5
One	20.8	9.0	27.0	2.1	5.9	*2.9	18.0
Two	10.2	1.4	12.9	0.8	3.1	4.1	8.6
Three or more	0.9	*0.5	—	0.3	—	*1.1	0.8

... continued

22.34 PERCENTAGE OF DWELLINGS, BY TYPE OF ROOM AND DWELLING STRUCTURE OCTOBER–DECEMBER 1990 — *continued*
(per cent)

		Semi-detached(a)		*Flat/unit*			
	Separate house	*1 storey*	*2 or more storeys*	*1–3 storeys*	*4 or more storeys*	*Other*	*All house-holds*
Number of dual flush toilets							
None	73.9	74.1	73.3	81.1	86.3	89.1	74.9
One	17.8	22.8	13.1	17.3	12.0	9.7	17.8
Two	6.7	2.7	11.3	1.2	*0.6	*1.3	5.9
Three or more	1.6	*0.5	2.3	0.4	*1.1	—	1.4
Number of laundries							
None	4.2	19.4	26.0	45.6	64.8	41.1	10.6
One	95.4	80.5	74.0	54.1	34.0	58.9	89.0
Two	0.3	—	—	*0.1	*1.3	—	0.3
Three or more	0.1	*0.1	—	0.3	—	—	0.1
Number of lounge/dining/family rooms							
None	1.7	7.0	8.5	12.1	10.9	19.7	3.4
One	47.8	72.3	67.2	82.1	80.1	61.0	53.5
Two	34.6	19.8	17.9	5.3	9.0	19.3	30.0
Three or more	15.9	0.9	6.5	0.5	—	—	13.0
Total	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**

(a) Includes row/terrace houses, townhouses, of one or more storeys.
Source: Unpublished data from the ABS 1990 Survey of Income, and Housing Costs and Amenities.

On-site parking. Parking is a valued facility in most urban areas, particularly in the inner suburbs of cities. Twelve per cent of dwellings have only open space parking on-site and a further nine per cent have no on-site parking.

Just over half (51%) of high-rise flats, which tend to be concentrated in inner urban areas, have no undercover parking; of these high-rise flats, 32 per cent have no on-site car parking.

For semi-detached dwellings and low-rise flats approximately one-third have no undercover car parking, and of these, one-fifth have no on-site car parking.

22.35 NUMBER OF DWELLINGS, BY TYPE OF DWELLING BY TYPE OF ON-SITE PARKING AVAILABLE, OCTOBER–DECEMBER 1990
('000)

		Semi-detached(a)		*Flat/unit*			
	Separate house	*1 storey*	*2 or more storeys*	*1–3 storeys*	*4 or more storeys*	*Other*	*All house-holds*
None	340.6	67.8	21.3	119.3	16.7	13.9	579.5
Carport only	1,244.4	104.1	30.9	194.7	17.1	8.0	1,599.2
Garage only	2,248.1	97.0	41.9	204.0	8.8	11.9	2,611.6
Both	622.5	7.2	3.3	5.4	—	1.6	640.1
Total undercover parking	*4,115.0*	*208.3*	*76.0*	*404.1*	*25.9*	*21.5*	*4,850.9*
Open space only	502.0	48.5	13.6	133.1	10.2	9.3	716.8
Total	**4,957.6**	**324.6**	**110.9**	**656.5**	**52.7**	**44.8**	**6,147.2**

(a) Includes row/terrace houses, townhouses, of one or more storeys.
Source: Unpublished data from the ABS 1990 Survey of Income, and Housing Costs and Amenities.

Over half of all separate houses have garages (58%) and over a third have carports (38%). Thirteen per cent have both, while 17 per cent have neither. Ten per cent have no undercover car parking and of these dwellings, seven per cent have no on-site car parking.

Dwelling problems. Over half of all households in the four cities included in a 1991 survey reported at least one problem with their dwelling. The main problems reported were a leaky roof, holes or cracks in walls or ceiling, peeling paint or plaster, plumbing and infestations by pests other than white ants.

For Sydney, the worst problems were infestations by pests other than white ants (35% of households) and plumbing (21%). In Melbourne, the worst problems were with the plumbing (21%), and holes or cracks in walls or ceiling (19%). Adelaide had good roofs but had the most problems with the plumbing (29%), and had holes or cracks in walls or ceiling (20%); while Canberra dwellings had problems with plumbing (25%) and infestations by pests other than white ants (17%).

22.36 HOUSEHOLDS WITH A PROBLEM WITH THEIR DWELLING, 1991

	Sydney	*Melbourne*	*Adelaide*	*Canberra*
		— per cent —		
Leaky roof	16.6	17.6	9.8	11.8
Holes in floor	3.6	3.9	1.7	0.7
Holes or cracks in walls or ceiling	16.1	19.3	19.6	13.2
Peeling paint or plaster	16.7	13.1	11.6	10.1
Plumbing	21.2	20.9	28.8	25.4
Electrical	8.9	8.0	6.8	11.2
Heating/cooling	3.7	8.0	6.9	13.0
Salt damp	5.4	4.6	5.8	2.0
White ants	3.0	2.9	3.6	0.4
Infestations by other pests	35.1	17.8	11.1	17.0
Other problems	5.8	5.9	1.4	3.7
Total households with dwelling problems	62.2	56.0	55.5	57.4
Households with no dwelling problems	37.8	44.0	44.5	42.6
		— households —		
Number of households	1,195,000	1,055,000	358,000	89,000

Source: Housing Characteristics and Decisions, A Comparative Study of Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide and Canberra, 1991 (8710.0).

Time and mode of travel. Not surprisingly, the median travel time to work was highest in the largest cities and declined as city size declined. In all cities, males took longer to travel to work than females. The median travel time to work for males in Sydney was 30 minutes, in Melbourne it was 25 minutes, in Adelaide it was 20 minutes, while in Canberra it was 17 minutes. For females, a similar pattern emerged although the range of times taken was narrower. Working females in Sydney and Melbourne usually took a median time of 20 minutes to get to work, compared with 15 minutes in Adelaide and Canberra.

These data on travel time to work seem to reflect that many people live relatively close to where they work. Only around five per cent of all Sydney travellers reported taking more than 60 minutes to get to work. In Melbourne, this proportion was less than two per cent, while in the other two cities, the proportion was negligible.

22.37 PERSONS WHO USE A MODE OF TRANSPORT TO GO TO WORK, BY TIME SPENT TRAVELLING, BY SEX, 1991

	Sydney		*Melbourne*		*Adelaide*		*Canberra*	
Travel time and mode	*Males*	*Females*	*Males*	*Females*	*Males*	*Females*	*Males*	*Females*
				— per cent —				
Less than 16 minutes	27.0	37.8	29.4	43.4	40.0	50.4	45.0	57.3
16 to 30 minutes	28.7	31.3	34.9	32.3	34.1	31.1	40.5	34.1
31 to 45 minutes	14.8	13.0	14.9	12.4	11.1	10.9	4.4	3.5
46 to 60 minutes	9.8	8.4	7.2	6.0	3.8	3.3	2.5	1.3
More than 60 minutes	5.7	4.4	2.2	1.5	0.3	0.6	0.5	—
Variable workplace	14.1	5.1	11.3	4.3	10.7	3.7	7.1	3.8
				— minutes —				
Median travel time(a)	30	20	25	20	20	15	16.5	15
				— persons —				
Number of persons	920,000	569,000	761,000	531,000	248,000	187,000	79,000	62,000

(a) The data collected on travel time to work was the number of minutes usually taken. Given this concept, a high proportion of respondents reported travel time rounded to the nearest five minutes, which is reflected in the median data presented. However, the rounding procedure may also tend to minimise the differences between cities in median travel time.

Source: Housing Characteristics and Decisions, A Comparative Study of Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide and Canberra, 1991 (8710.0).

Household energy use and conservation. Electricity is the most commonly used energy source for all households. More than 64 per cent of households in Australia use electricity for their hot water service and 43 per cent use electricity for heating their home. The next most commonly used energy source was the use of mains gas for hot water (28%) and room heating (27%).

22.38 NUMBER OF DWELLINGS WITH ROOM AND/OR WATER HEATING, BY TYPE OF FUELS USED, OCTOBER–DECEMBER 1990 ('000)

	Type of fuel used in household					*Number of house-holds*
	Electricity	*Mains gas*	*Solar*	*Wood, coal and oil*	*Other*	
Room heating	2,664.3	1,688.3	5.1	1,553.7	435.0	5,277.8
Hot water service	3,954.5	1,734.3	350.4	169.4	179.8	6,057.7

Source: Unpublished data from the ABS 1990 Survey of Income, and Housing Costs and Amenities.

Forty per cent of separate houses have insulation only in the roof, three per cent have insulation only in the walls and 15 per cent have insulation in the roof and walls. This leaves 41 per cent of separate houses where the respondent did not know whether there was insulation in either the roof and/or the walls or whether there was none.

The high number of surveyed households in this last group, who do not know or have no insulation, reduces the usefulness of the data. In general, households were more confident of knowing whether there was insulation in the roof of the dwelling. Thirty-two per cent of respondents living in one storey semi-detached dwellings were aware of insulation in their roof, as were 18 per cent of respondents living in semi-detached dwellings with two or more storeys, and 13 per cent of respondents living in one to three storey flats. Only a very small number of respondents living in flats with four or more storeys were able to answer the question, which is not surprising given that the insulation in such dwellings is less apparent to individual households than in houses. Information on household energy usage and related household appliances and facilities during the 1980s is contained in the 1992 Year Book.

22.39 NUMBER OF DWELLINGS, BY TYPE AND LOCATION OF INSULATION
OCTOBER–DECEMBER 1990
('000)

	Type of insulation				
Type of dwelling	Wall	Roof	Both	None or unknown	All households
Separate house	139.5	2,005.5	755.3	2,057.3	4,957.6
Semi-detached(a)					
1 storey	2.5	103.6	11.7	206.7	324.6
2 or more storeys	2.2	19.9	1.6	87.2	110.9
Flat/unit					
1–3 storeys	3.1	84.3	13.0	556.1	656.5
4 or more storeys	—	*0.2	—	52.5	52.7
Other	—	9.6	4.9	30.3	44.8
Total	**147.4**	**2,223.2**	**786.5**	**2,990.1**	**6,147.2**

(a) Includes row/terrace houses, townhouses, of one or more storeys.
Source: Unpublished data from the ABS 1990 Survey of Income, and Housing Costs and Amenities.

HOME OWNERSHIP AND RENTING

Seventy-two per cent of Australians either own or are purchasing their own home. The most common type of tenancy is outright ownership of a separate house (38%). The next most common tenancy is households purchasing separate houses (27%). These two groups account for 65 per cent of all households.

22.40 NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS, BY DWELLING STRUCTURE AND NATURE OF OCCUPANCY
OCTOBER–DECEMBER 1990
('000)

	Nature of occupancy						
			Renters				
	Owners	Purchasers	Government	Private	Other	Rent-free	All households
Separate house	2,349.6	1,665.9	184.3	498.3	131.6	128.1	4,957.6
Semi-detached(a)							
1 storey	85.6	48.0	72.1	102.3	8.5	8.0	324.6
2 or more storeys	21.2	20.9	11.9	52.2	3.9	*0.9	110.9
Flat/unit							
1–3 storeys	120.8	54.1	71.9	360.9	30.3	18.5	656.5
4 or more storeys	14.3	2.0	14.5	17.7	*1.2	3.0	52.7
Other	12.7	7.6	—	18.3	3.4	2.8	44.8
Total	**2,604.2**	**1,798.3**	**354.6**	**1,049.7**	**179.0**	**161.4**	**6,147.2**

(a) Includes row/terrace houses, townhouses, of one or more storeys.
Source: Unpublished data from the ABS 1990 Survey of Income, and Housing Costs and Amenities.

For other dwelling types, those households that rent their dwelling outnumber those who have equity in their dwelling (that is, owners and purchasers) — twice as many in the case of high-rise flats or units, 2.6 times as many in the case of low-rise flats or units, and one and a half times as many in the case of semi-detached houses.

Twenty-six per cent of Australians rent their home, of which less than a quarter rent from a public housing authority. Those renting

through a private landlord form the largest proportion regardless of the type of dwelling. In particular, tenants renting through private landlords in low-rise flats or units accounted for 78 per cent of all rental tenants in that type of dwelling. However, government rental tenants formed a high proportion of those renting one storey semi-detached homes (39%) and those renting flats, units or apartments in four or more storey blocks of flats (43%).

Table 22.41 shows the type of households in various tenancy situations in 1990. Two-thirds of all outright owners were married couples, of which nearly one-half were married couples without children in the home (32% of all households). Single people made up nearly one-quarter of households that owned their dwelling outright.

Over three-quarters (77%) of purchasers were married couples, of which 61 per cent were married couples with dependent children only (47% of all households).

The three main household types renting from government housing authorities are single people (28%), married couple families with dependent children only (20%), and one parent families with dependent children only (19%). For private renters, the four main groups are group households (26%), single people (25%), married couple families with dependent children only (20%), and married couples without children in the household (19%).

Among married couple households, the level of home ownership is very high. In 1990, 81 per cent of all married couples, either owned or were purchasing their own home. It is particularly high for married couples with non-dependent children (90%), and lowest for married couple families with dependent children only (78%) and married couples without children in the household (79%).

22.41 NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS BY TYPE OF HOUSEHOLD AND TENURE OCTOBER–DECEMBER 1990 ('000)

	Nature of occupancy						
			Renters				*All*
Types of household	*Owners*	*Purchasers*	*Government*	*Private*	*Other*	*Rent-free*	*house-holds*
Married couple only	837.7	347.7	45.3	195.5	31.0	35.1	1,492.4
Married couple with dependent children only	470.8	846.0	71.4	207.0	53.4	34.8	1,683.4
Married couple with dependent children and non-dependent children only	132.9	106.7	9.1	16.8	5.0	1.5	271.9
Married couple with non-dependent children only	281.3	91.5	7.1	22.5	8.1	3.3	413.7
Single parent with dependents only	40.2	62.0	67.1	64.6	8.3	7.1	249.4
Single parent with dependents and non-dependents only	11.8	11.2	9.6	4.6	*0.5	—	37.7
Single person only	586.3	168.0	100.7	264.1	37.9	60.2	1,217.3
Other(a)	243.2	165.4	44.2	274.7	34.7	19.3	781.4
Total	**2,604.2**	**1,798.3**	**354.6**	**1,049.7**	**179.0**	**161.4**	**6,147.2**

(a) Includes multi-family households, related adult households and group households, as well as married couple and single parent households not defined above.

Source: Unpublished data from the ABS 1990 Survey of Income, and Housing Costs and Amenities.

In contrast, 62 per cent of single person households were equity holders, while 43 per cent of one parent families, especially those with only dependent children (41%) were in this position. For one parent families with dependent and non-dependent children, 61 per cent had equity in their home.

Approximately one-quarter of one parent households — with or without dependent children — were government rental tenants (27%), purchasers (25%), private tenants (24%) or outright owners (18%). The number of one parent households renting from government housing authorities is much higher than the

proportion of public tenants (6%) among the total population. The proportion renting from private landlords is slightly ahead of the proportion of private tenants (17%) among the total population.

Some three-tenths of one parent households with dependent and non-dependent children were purchasers (30%) and a similar proportion were outright owners (31%). Also in contrast with the general picture for one parent families only 12 per cent were private tenants.

The pattern of different types of tenure varies across States and Territories (table 22.42).

Victoria had the highest level of home ownership with nearly 79 per cent either owning outright or paying off their home. In contrast, while most States and Territories are over 70 per cent, the Northern Territory has only 39 per cent of its households in a home they own or are paying off.

Purchasers are roughly a consistent proportion (between 27 and 34%) of the population across all States and Territories, except for the Australian Capital Territory where nearly 45 per cent are paying off their home.

Outright home ownership levels across all States are about 40 to 46 per cent, except for the Australian Capital Territory (25%) and in the Northern Territory (12%), reflecting a combination of the relatively recent development of the Territories, and a generally younger and more mobile population.

22.42 PERCENTAGE OF HOUSEHOLDS, BY TYPE OF TENURE, OCTOBER–DECEMBER 1990
(per cent)

Nature of occupancy	*NSW*	*Vic.*	*Qld*	*SA*	*WA*	*Tas.*	*NT*	*ACT*	*All households*
Owners	44.3	45.8	43.6	41.6	39.6	44.3	11.7	24.9	42.7
Purchasers	31.1	32.8	28.1	32.0	34.3	30.4	27.2	44.5	31.7
Renters									
Government	4.4	2.9	2.8	10.9	6.9	8.3	17.0	13.2	5.5
Private	16.2	14.9	18.7	10.6	13.3	12.4	19.2	15.2	15.0
Other	2.1	1.8	4.3	2.8	3.5	2.1	18.5	1.8	2.9
Total renters	*22.7*	*19.6*	*25.7*	*24.3*	*23.6*	*22.8*	*54.7*	*30.3*	*23.5*
Rent-free/other	1.9	1.9	2.6	2.1	2.5	2.5	6.4	0.3	2.2
Total	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**

Source: Unpublished data from the ABS' 1990 Survey of Income, and Housing Costs and Amenities.

The Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory have a high proportion of renters, 55 per cent and 30 per cent respectively, compared with the Australian average of 24 per cent. The Territories also have the highest proportion of government tenants, along with South Australia, all over 10 per cent, compared with an Australian average of only six per cent. The Northern Territory and Queensland have the highest proportion of private tenants at 19 per cent, compared with an Australian average of only 15 per cent.

ACCESSIBILITY AND AFFORDABILITY OF HOUSING

The ability of people to acquire housing depends on two considerations — their ability to buy or rent housing in the first instance (housing accessibility) and their ability to subsequently maintain their housing financial commitments (housing affordability). The cost of acquiring and/or maintaining housing is a major component in the cost of living. Some measures of the cost and financing of housing are shown in the following statistics.

The unit used in the statistics on housing accessibility and affordability varies between 'household' and 'income unit', depending on the subject. For statistical purposes a household is a

social unit, a group of people who live together in a single dwelling with common housekeeping arrangements. An income unit, in simple terms, is more in the nature of an economic unit, which may comprise only some members of one or more households, for example, a married couple owning, buying or maintaining the cost of a dwelling, but excluding dependent or non-dependent children living with them. However, as it is estimated that there were 5.6 million households and 6.2 million income units in 1990, these figures are close enough to allow general compatibility between the various statistics whether based on the household or income unit.

Home buyers

In late 1990, nearly 28 per cent of all 6.4 million income units were paying off their dwelling. Of the 1.8 million home purchasers, nearly 62 per cent had bought their home from 1985 to 1990 inclusive. Only about nine per cent of all income units paying off their home loan had purchased before 1975.

Nearly four-fifths of purchasers (78%) who had bought their home from 1985 to 1990 inclusive owed up to $70,000, while 58 per cent owed up to $50,000. For those purchasers who had bought their home from 1980 to 1984 inclusive, the roughly equivalent amounts outstanding dropped to under $50,000 owed (88% of purchasers), and under $30,000 owed (59% of purchasers). For those purchasers who had bought their home from 1975 to 1979 inclusive, these figures drop further to under $30,000 owed (81% of purchasers), and under $20,000 owed (62% of purchasers). Finally, for purchasers who had bought their home before 1970, amounts outstanding drop away to under $10,000 owed by 83 per cent of purchasers.

22.43 NUMBER PURCHASING THEIR HOME, BY AMOUNT OUTSTANDING BY YEAR OF PURCHASE, OCTOBER–DECEMBER 1990
('000 income units)

Amount of mortgage outstanding	*Before 1970*	*1970–74*	*1975–79*	*1980–84*	*1985 or later*	*Total*
Less than $10,000	72.2	49.0	48.4	56.2	119.5	345.4
$10,000–19,999	5.9	11.6	54.1	70.2	72.2	214.1
$20,000–29,999	3.3	7.6	31.7	84.6	112.2	239.4
$30,000–39,999	2.4	*1.2	9.8	62.7	180.9	256.9
$40,000–49,999	*1.3	*0.6	8.8	40.6	158.2	209.5
$50,000–59,999	—	3.4	5.3	13.0	117.3	138.9
$60,000–69,999	*0.3	*1.0	2.0	10.2	107.2	120.7
$70,000–79,999	*0.3	—	*0.6	7.8	69.7	78.5
$80,000–89,999	—	2.0	*0.5	3.5	54.3	60.2
$90,000–99,999	—	1.7	*0.6	3.5	32.9	38.7
$100,000 or more	*0.9	*0.7	4.1	6.7	84.4	96.9
Total	**86.7**	**78.8**	**165.9**	**359.1**	**1,108.8**	**1,799.2**

Source: Unpublished data from the ABS 1990 Survey of Income, and Housing Costs and Amenities.

Table 22.44 shows the relationship between mortgage payments and income for people paying off their home. Married couple income units paid, on average, more in mortgage payments ($160 per week) than one parent income units ($108 per week) and one person income units ($135 per week). However, one parent and one person income units paid the greatest proportion of their income in mortgage payments, on average just under one-quarter of their income.

For married couple income units, the average weekly mortgage payment was generally higher for those in semi-detached homes, flats, units and apartments than for those in houses.

22.44 MORTGAGE PAYMENTS AND INCOME OF THOSE PURCHASING THEIR HOME IN OCTOBER–DECEMBER 1990, BY TYPE OF DWELLING AND INCOME UNIT

	Separate house	*Semi-detached(a)*		*Flat/unit*		*Other*	*All households*
		1 storey	*2 or more storeys*	*1–3 storeys*	*4 or more storeys*		
Married couple							
Mean weekly mortage payments ($)	156	299	212	170	(b)*102	210	160
Mean weekly income ($)	902	1,087	1,100	971	(b)*438	781	907
Mortgage payments as a proportion of income (%)	17.3	27.5	19.3	17.5	23.4	26.9	17.6
One parent							
Mean weekly mortgage payments ($)	108	101	(b)*132	80	—	(b)*175	108
Mean weekly income ($)	459	453	(b)*389	325	—	(b)*242	455
Mortagage payments as a proportion of income (%)	23.5	22.4	33.9	24.5	—	72.3	23.7
One person							
Mean weekly mortagage payments ($)	129	146	210	141	(b)*80	(a)*200	135
Mean weekly income ($)	515	547	974	621	(b)*378	(a)*598	547
Mortgage payments as a proportion of income (%)	25.0	26.7	21.6	22.8	21.2	33.4	24.6
Number of income units ('000)	1,663.5	50.1	21.3	54.9	2.0	7.4	1,799.2

(a) Includes row/terrace houses, townhouses, of one or more storeys. (b) Not considered sufficiently reliable to provide typical payments and relative size of housing costs, because there were too few respondents in this kind of income unit who were in this type of dwelling structure in the sample.

Source: Unpublished data from the ABS 1990 Survey of Income, and Housing Costs and Amenities.

The total number of households who bought a home during 1988–90 was approximately 942,400. Approximately 290,200 households bought a home for the first time. This was about five per cent of all households in Australia, which accounted for almost 31 per cent of all homes bought during the period. These households are termed first home buyers. The remaining 652,200 households who bought during 1988–90 had previously owned or part-owned a home (change-over buyers).

The typical first home buyer household was a married couple on a high income. They were usually aged between 25 and 34 years, were well-qualified and were born in Australia. Generally they bought three bedroom separate houses with some form of undercover parking. The prices paid for the houses ranged fairly evenly across the market. Some comparisons can be drawn on certain characteristics of first home buyers and changeover buyers during the period 1988–90, and of the Australian population as a whole (table 22.45).

There was a slightly higher proportion of married couples among first home buyers (69%) than in the general population (62%) and an even higher proportion among recent changeover buyers (73%). First home buyers had higher incomes than all households.

Well over two-thirds (70%) of first home buyer households earned more than $30,381 and 43 per cent earned over $45,014 per annum. This was much higher than the general population, of which just over half earned more than $30,381 and only 31 per cent earned more than $45,014. For recent changeover buyers, 41 per cent earned more than $45,014 and 21 per cent between $30,381 and $45,014.

On the whole, first home buyers were younger than home owners generally. Well over half of first home buyers were aged between 25 and 34 years (54%), compared with only 20 per cent of households generally (*see* footnote to table 22.45).

First home buyers (87%) and recent changeover buyers (86%) were more likely to have a separate house than Australian households as a whole (79%).

Over half of first home buyers had post-secondary qualifications (55%), close to the national figure of 49 per cent. However, only 29 per cent of first home buyers did not

complete secondary schooling compared to 41 per cent for households generally.

For first home buyers, 72 per cent were born in Australia which was close to the 71 per cent for all households. There was a greater proportion of first home buyer households born in Asia than for the general population (10% first home buyers born in Asia, 4% for all households). Europeans were less likely to be first home buyers (13% of first home buyers were born in Europe, 21% for all households).

First home buyers were more likely to buy lower value houses than recent changeover buyers (11% of first home buyers estimated the value of their house as less than $62,500, compared with 5% of recent changeover buyers). For households in general, 35 per cent valued their dwellings at less than $62,500. At the higher end of the market (houses estimated at more than $120,000) the proportion of first home buyers was around 40 per cent (the figure estimated for all households was 41%) and 63 per cent for recent changeover buyers.

First home buyers were more likely to buy a three bedroom house (62%) than recent changeover buyers (52%). A greater proportion of recent changeover buyers bought houses with more than three bedrooms (28% of recent changeover buyers compared to 12% of first home buyers).

22.45 SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS OF HOUSEHOLDS WHICH BOUGHT HOMES (OCTOBER–DECEMBER 1990) COMPARED WITH ALL HOUSEHOLDS

Selected characteristics(a)	*First home buyers*	*Changeover buyers*	*All households*
		— per cent —	
Income more than $45,014	43	41	31
Income between $30,381 and $45,014	27	22	21
Married/de facto			
Income more than $45,014	72	88	81
Income less than $9,259	35	22	14
Total	*69*	*73*	*62*
Home buyers aged 25–34			
Income more than $45,014	61	29	23
Total	*54*	*24*	*20*
Home buyers aged 35–64			
Income more than $45,014	24	68	69
Total	*30*	*63*	*54*
Separate houses	87	86	79
Post secondary qualifications			
Income more than $45,014	66	68	63
Total	*55*	*57*	*49*
Did not complete secondary qualification	29	33	41
Birthplace of home buyers			
Australia	72	68	71
Asia	10	4	4
Europe	13	23	21

... *continued*

22.45 SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS OF HOUSEHOLDS WHICH BOUGHT HOMES (OCTOBER–DECEMBER 1990) COMPARED WITH ALL HOUSEHOLDS — *continued*

Selected characteristics(a)	*First home buyers*	*Changeover buyers*	*All house-holds*
		— per cent —	
Estimated value of house			
More than $120,000	40	63	41
Less than $62,500	11	5	35
Number of bedrooms			
Three	62	52	50
More than three	13	28	20
Less than three	25	20	30
Undercover car parking	74	85	79
Number of households ('000)	290.2	652.2	6,244.1

(a) Where the home buyer is a partnership the personal characteristics of age, qualifications, and birthplace usually relate to the oldest partner. The same statistical convention applies to all households.

Source: Unpublished data from the ABS 1990 Survey of Income, and Housing Costs and Amenities.

House Price Index

Established house prices rose dramatically in Brisbane and Canberra over the period from 1988–89 to 1991–92. The price index for Brisbane rose by around 14 per cent each year, while for Canberra it increased by 7 per cent during 1989–90 and 1990–91 after which it jumped 16 per cent during 1991–92.

Project home prices in Brisbane recorded an average yearly increase of about 12 per cent in 1989–90 followed by 4 per cent and then 1 per cent increases in subsequent years. In Canberra the index for project homes grew at around 10 per cent each year.

Both Melbourne and Perth showed a negative movement in the price index after 1989–90, except for project homes in Melbourne during 1990–91 which increased by 3 per cent. Prices for the other cities increased by relatively small increments.

The price indexes of established houses and project homes over recent years are shown in the following tables.

22.46 ESTABLISHED HOUSE PRICE INDEX NUMBERS
(Reference base year 1989–90 = 100.0)

Period	*Sydney*	*Melbourne*	*Brisbane*	*Adelaide*	*Perth*	*Hobart*	*Darwin*	*Canberra*
1988–89	95.2	91.4	86.2	91.3	89.0	93.1	98.8	93.9
1989–90	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
1990–91	100.5	95.2	114.3	106.2	94.8	106.3	109.3	107.3
1991–92	104.9	94.8	128.2	106.5	94.1	112.0	115.6	124.4
PERCENTAGE CHANGE FROM PREVIOUS YEAR								
1989–90	5.1	9.4	16.0	9.5	12.4	7.3	1.2	6.5
1990–91	0.5	−4.8	14.3	6.2	−5.2	6.3	9.2	7.3
1991–92	4.4	−0.4	12.1	0.3	−0.8	5.4	5.8	15.9

Source: House Price Indexes: Eight Capital Cities (6416.0).

22.47 PROJECT HOME PRICE INDEX NUMBERS
(Reference base year 1989–90 = 100.0)

Period	*Sydney*	*Melbourne*	*Brisbane*	*Adelaide*	*Perth*	*Hobart*	*Darwin*	*Canberra*
1988–89	91.4	91.0	89.1	96.1	93.8	93.5	84.3	91.6
1989–90	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
1990–91	102.9	103.2	104.3	104.5	91.9	106.4	105.3	110.6
1991–92	103.1	101.8	105.2	105.4	90.6	110.1	107.8	123.7
PERCENTAGE CHANGE FROM PREVIOUS YEAR								
1989–90	9.4	9.9	12.2	4.1	6.6	7.0	18.6	9.2
1990–91	2.9	3.2	4.3	4.5	– 8.1	6.4	5.3	10.6
1991–92	0.2	– 1.4	0.9	0.9	– 1.4	3.5	2.4	11.8

Source: House Price Indexes: Eight Capital Cities (6416.0).

The price index of materials used in house building is contained in the chapter on Prices.

Housing finance

Table 22.48 presents statistics of secured housing finance commitments made by significant lenders to individuals for the construction or purchase of dwellings for owner occupation.

In 1991–92, a total of $28,538.4 million was committed for the purchase of 379,306 dwellings. This represents strong growth on the 1990–91 figures, an increase of 37.4 per cent in dollars and 29.1 per cent in the number of loans. Of this, 77.3 per cent of the money was used to purchase established dwellings, 16.9 per cent to finance construction of new dwellings and the remainder (5.7%) was used to purchase newly erected dwellings.

Banks continue to be the predominant lenders and in 1991–92 provided $22,262.3 million (78%) to 298,123 individuals (78.6%) in finance commitments. This represents a 47.1 per cent increase in lending, and a 36.9 per cent increase in the number of loans.

The permanent building societies remain significant lenders, providing $3,797.3 million (13.3%) to 47,712 individuals (12.6%) in finance commitments during 1991–92. This represents a 32.9 per cent growth in the dollars committed by the permanent building societies, and a 28.6 per cent growth in the number of loans.

In 1991–92, the average size loan from banks was $74,700, from permanent building societies $79,600, and from all types of lenders the average was $75,200.

22.48 HOUSING FINANCE FOR OWNER OCCUPATION: NUMBER OF DWELLING UNITS AND VALUE OF COMMITMENTS TO INDIVIDUALS, BY TYPE OF LENDER

	Banks	*Permanent building societies*	*Other lenders (a)*	*Total*
CONSTRUCTION OF DWELLINGS				
			— number —	
1989–90	52,091	3,576	6,916	62,583
1990–91	52,256	4,979	5,890	63,125
1991–92	60,229	7,372	6,941	74,542
			— $ million —	
1989–90	2,862.0	245.2	428.5	3,535.7
1990–91	3,043.9	372.9	404.4	3,821.2
1991–92	3,749.5	564.4	514.3	4,828.2

For footnotes *see* end of table.

22.48 HOUSING FINANCE FOR OWNER OCCUPATION: NUMBER OF DWELLING UNITS AND VALUE OF COMMITMENTS TO INDIVIDUALS, BY TYPE OF LENDER — *continued*

	Banks	*Permanent building societies*	*Other lenders (a)*	*Total*
PURCHASE OF NEWLY ERECTED DWELLINGS				
			— number —	
1989–90	8,148	1,309	4,861	14,318
1990–91	10,117	2,260	4,034	16,411
1991–92	11,925	3,481	4,360	19,766
			— $ million —	
1989–90	589.8	108.0	387.5	1,085.3
1990–91	773.2	201.5	345.5	1,320.2
1991–92	949.8	310.3	376.1	1,636.2
PURCHASE OF ESTABLISHED DWELLINGS				
			— number —	
1989–90	150,276	21,179	31,720	203,175
1990–91	155,369	29,853	28,963	214,185
1991–92	225,969	36,859	22,170	284,998
			— $ million —	
1989–90	10,607.2	1,525.7	2,205.9	14,338.8
1990–91	11,320.0	2,283.4	2,030.8	15,634.3
1991–92	17,563.0	2,922.6	1,588.4	22,073.9
TOTAL				
			— number —	
1989–90	210,515	26,064	43,497	280,076
1990–91	217,742	37,092	38,887	293,721
1991–92	298,123	47,712	33,471	379,306
			— $ million —	
1989–90	14,059.1	1,878.9	3,021.9	18,959.9
1990–91	15,137.2	2,857.9	2,780.7	20,775.7
1991–92	22,262.3	3,797.3	2,478.8	28,538.4

(a) Includes cooperative housing societies.

Source: Unpublished ABS housing finance statistics.

Housing decisions

In 1991, surveys conducted in Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide and Canberra revealed that, for all tenure categories, the three most important reasons given for moving were to purchase a home, to increase the size or quality of their dwelling, or because of life cycle, family or social reasons. This was consistent in Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide. In Canberra however, a relatively high proportion of movers said that the move was outside their personal control, or a result of work changes.

The relative importance of these reasons differs with tenure status.

For renters, life cycle, family and social reasons were given as the most important reasons in Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide, while work changes (such as moving to be closer to work) were the most important in Canberra, where one in four households gave this as the most important reason for moving.

The desire to purchase a home was the overwhelming reason for first home buyers to move in all cities, especially in Sydney where 70 per cent gave this as the most important reason for moving.

The most important reason for moving among changeover buyers in Sydney and Melbourne was to improve the size or quality of their home. In Canberra, the most important reason was the desire to purchase a home, while in Adelaide both reasons were equally important.

22.49 HOUSEHOLDS WHO HAVE RECENTLY MOVED (1986–1991), BY THE REASONS GIVEN FOR MOVING FROM THEIR PREVIOUS DWELLING, SYDNEY, MELBOURNE, ADELAIDE AND CANBERRA

	Sydney		*Melbourne*		*Adelaide*		*Canberra*	
Reason	*All reasons*	*Most important reason*	*All reasons*	*Most important reason*	*All reasons*	*Most important reason*	*All reasons*	*Most important reason*
				— per cent —				
Home purchase	21.6	19.1	18.8	18.1	22.2	20.7	21.0	19.0
Investment	3.7	1.1	5.1	1.7	1.7	0.7	2.7	1.6
Size or quality of home	28.8	18.4	31.5	18.8	20.9	14.7	20.2	11.6
Reduce costs	10.0	7.0	11.7	7.3	6.9	4.5	4.5	3.2
Family changes/social contacts	25.3	16.6	28.8	19.3	23.7	19.2	20.4	13.8
Neighbourhood services	3.1	1.1	3.2	0.7	1.0	0.3	1.9	0.2
Neighbourhood characteristics	10.2	4.4	10.9	3.6	6.9	3.4	5.2	2.2
Work changes	12.9	8.4	15.6	9.6	8.8	6.6	19.6	15.3
Outside personal control	11.8	10.5	9.9	8.4	11.3	11.0	18.8	17.7
Personal reasons	5.9	2.9	4.5	2.5	5.8	4.0	5.8	4.3
Other	8.0	6.2	7.8	5.7	16.7	13.9	13.6	9.9
Don't know or no reason	—	4.3	—	4.3	—	1.0	—	1.3
				— households —				
Number of households	..	497,000	..	428,000	..	168,000	..	51,000

Source: Housing Characteristics and Decisions, A Comparative Study of Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide and Canberra, 1991 (8710.0).

Some other interesting findings from this survey include the following points.

Households who had moved during 1986–91 gave the following reasons for choosing a particular dwelling (in order) — price, availability and architectural style.

The most common reason for purchasing a home was the security of ownership and the freedom it gave to households. The main reasons people did not buy a home were that they did not have the deposit or could not afford the repayments.

Reasons given for choosing an area in which to live, varied according to the type of tenure. For private renters it was mainly the need to be close to work and the affordability of rent, while first home buyers were mainly concerned with affordability and the characteristics of the area. Changeover buyers, though, were mainly concerned about the characteristics of the area before considering affordability.

Ongoing cost of housing

In addition to the initial cost of acquiring housing, there are the ongoing costs such as water and general rates, mortgage repayments, rent or board payments.

Table 22.50 shows mean weekly housing costs by type and size of income unit. Housing costs for married couples with dependent children show an average of $123 per week, and for single persons $62 per week. Generally, the cost of housing rose with the income, although there were some variations. In particular, the lowest income group (under $202) for married couple income units showed greater mean weekly housing costs than the next (higher) income group ($202 to $350).

Care should be taken in interpreting the data in the first income group (that is, income units earning less than $202 per week). The relatively high housing costs in this category can be explained partly by the fact that at the time of the survey interview, some income units did not include any person who had a job or was receiving income of any significance. This could be because they:

- are relying on irregular income;
- have recently become unemployed; or
- are in the process of changing their job.

22.50 MEAN WEEKLY HOUSING COSTS, BY TYPE AND SIZE OF INCOME UNIT(a) OCTOBER–DECEMBER 1990 ($)

	Gross weekly income groups					
Type of income unit	*<$202*	*$202–$350*	*$351–$531*	*$532–$848*	*>$848*	*Total*
	— housing costs —					
Married couples						
With dependent children	134	84	92	117	146	123
Without dependent children	51	28	52	79	133	76
One parent	57	70	93	117	156	81
One person	33	50	82	98	134	62
Total	**42**	**48**	**77**	**102**	**140**	**86**
Mean weekly income ($)	140	275	440	678	1,306	619
Number of income units ('000)	1,085.2	1,198.7	1,165.7	1,430.5	1,532.7	6,412.7

(a) Excludes one-person income units renting from parents/relatives in the same household, and income units living rent-free.
Source: Unpublished data from the ABS 1990 Survey of Income, and Housing Costs and Amenities.

Table 22.51 shows housing costs for income units by nature of occupancy. Housing costs are highest for purchasers who spent an average of $182 per week on housing and are lowest for outright owners who spent an average of $19 per week. Also, amongst renters, those renting privately on average pay almost twice as much as State housing authority tenants.

Ongoing housing costs as a proportion of income (table 22.52) are an effective way of looking at affordability of housing across income units. For all types of dwellings, income units pay about 14 per cent of mean weekly income on housing. For those living in separate houses, 13 per cent of income is spent on housing. However in flats, units and other dwellings, the percentages were higher (up to 19%).

New South Wales was the State with generally the greatest proportion of income spent on housing (15%) regardless of the type of dwelling while Tasmania was the lowest at 11 per cent.

The most expensive housing, in terms of the average proportion of income, were semi-detached homes in New South Wales (23%) and the Northern Territory (21%), and flats in buildings of one to three storeys (22%) in Queensland.

22.51 MEAN WEEKLY HOUSING COSTS, BY TYPE OF TENURE AND SIZE OF INCOME UNITS(a), OCTOBER–DECEMBER 1990
($)

	Gross weekly income groups					
Nature of occupancy	*<$202*	*$202–$350*	*$351–$531*	*$532–$848*	*>$848*	*Total*
	— housing costs —					
Owners	13	15	19	24	27	19
Purchasers	135	109	142	169	226	182
Renters						
Government	35	51	81	95	107	57
Private	80	95	100	120	156	108
Resident relatives	40	36	42	52	60	41
Other	44	45	53	54	52	50
Total	*53*	*61*	*73*	*96*	*128*	*75*
Total	**42**	**46**	**71**	**99**	**140**	**82**
Mean weekly income ($)	139	276	439	676	1,306	590
Number of income units ('000)	1,281.4	1,410.8	1,408.8	1,503.0	1,539.6	7,143.6

(a) Excludes income units living rent-free.
Source: Unpublished data from the ABS 1990 Survey of Income, and Housing Costs and Amenities.

22.52 PROPORTION OF MEAN WEEKLY INCOME SPENT ON HOUSING, BY DWELLING STRUCTURE BY STATE/TERRITORY(a), OCTOBER–DECEMBER 1990
(per cent)

		Medium density		*Flat/unit*				
State/Territory	*Separate house*	*1 storey*	*2 or more storeys*	*1–3 storeys*	*4 or more storeys*	*Other*	*Total*	*Number of income units*
	— housing costs as a percentage of mean weekly income —							'000
New South Wales	13.8	23.1	18.5	19.7	17.1	15.2	15.0	2,177.2
Victoria	13.1	16.5	16.6	17.4	4.2	23.3	13.7	1,651.4
Queensland	13.1	18.9	17.9	22.1	19.8	11.7	13.9	1,087.7
South Australia	12.0	15.1	17.0	15.1	*1.5	26.8	12.4	557.7
Western Australia	12.9	13.1	14.8	12.7	15.4	17.3	13.0	606.6
Tasmania	10.5	15.2	17.9	17.0	—	n.a.	11.0	170.1
Northern Territory	12.9	21.1	*19.1	14.3	*8.2	*2.0	13.5	53.2
Australian Capital Territory	13.3	13.9	18.6	18.3	*18.6	—	13.7	108.8
Total	**13.2**	**18.1**	**17.6**	**18.7**	**14.1**	**17.2**	**14.0**	**6,412.7**
Number of income units ('000)	5,091.2	352.8	144.0	716.3	54.4	53.9	6,412.7	6,412.7

(a) Excludes one-person income units renting from parents/relatives in the same household, and income units living rent-free.
Source: Unpublished data from the ABS 1990 Survey of Income, and Housing Costs and Amenities.

GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES

National Housing Strategy

The National Housing Strategy was established in June 1990 and its final issues paper was released in December 1992.

The Strategy's aims are to develop a policy of housing reform that responds to the diverse and changing needs of all Australians and which can be sustained over the next two decades. To achieve this, in line with its terms of reference it seeks to:

- gain a better understanding of Australia's housing needs now and in the future;
- examine innovative mechanisms that will make quality housing more affordable, particularly for people with low to moderate incomes;

- focus on what is appropriate housing, giving special attention to those who are poorly housed or disadvantaged, and to people's differing needs through their lives;
- determine mechanisms which can regulate and assist the efficient supply of housing; and
- explore ways of obtaining better links between housing, employment opportunities, community services and aspects of urban infrastructure, such as transportation, to ensure minimum locational disadvantage.

The Strategy was undertaken in close cooperation with State Housing Authorities and in consultation with relevant Commonwealth, State, Territory and local government, non-government and other agencies.

A list of issues papers can be found in the bibliography at the end of the chapter.

The National Urban Development Program (NUDP)

The NUDP was announced in the 1992 Commonwealth Budget, in order to achieve better integration and coordination of a range of urban reform initiatives. It encompasses and builds on a number of urban reform initiatives and includes the following key elements:

- continuation of the Housing Industry Development Program including development and implementation of the Australian Model Code for residential Development (AMCORD) and the higher density housing code (AMCORD: URBAN), the Green Street Program, the Local Approvals Review Program, research into housing industry and urban issues and demonstration activities;
- incorporation of integrated local area planning involving the development and adoption of strategic local area plans covering housing, transport, community services and employment opportunities; and
- analysis of information on the capacity of current urban infrastructure, to enable more efficient use of such resources.

The Australian Housing Industry Development Council

The Council which comprises representatives of industry, unions and the three levels of government, provides advice on urban reform initiatives, including those under NUDP and coordinates Commonwealth activity in this area. It carries this out through three working groups:

- Regulatory Reform which aims to improve the regulatory environment within which the housing industry operates;
- Urban Form which aims to promote effective and efficient investment in land and infrastructure and increase the range of choices available in the housing market including higher density housing forms; and
- Industry Development which aims to assist the industry and the house production process to become more flexible, efficient, internationally competitive and able to produce a range of affordable, quality housing.

Indicative Planning Council for the Housing Industry (IPC)

The IPC is a forum to promote and facilitate informed discussion between industry and government on short-term prospects for the industry, its supply of resources, projections of underlying demand for housing, and issues affecting industry activity and efficiency. In this context, the IPC undertakes special investigations on land and infrastructure in the urban environment. It is composed of government and industry representatives, and has State and Territory committees.

The IPC has also commissioned a number of studies on issues relating to long-term demand for housing: the factors that determine interstate and inter-regional migration; how to determine the optimum buffer stocks of residential land; and it is currently studying availability and use of data on infrastructure.

Commonwealth and State government housing assistance

A range of assistance programs has been developed to target assistance to households in the owner-occupied, public housing and private rental housing sectors. The Government provides funds for public housing, supported accommodation services, crisis accommodation, mortgage and rent relief and home purchase assistance to individuals and families.

The bulk of Commonwealth financial assistance for housing is provided to the States and Territories through the Commonwealth–State Housing Agreement (CSHA). A priority under the Agreement which was announced in the 1992–93 Budget

was the introduction of a new Community Housing Program. In addition, the Social Housing Subsidy Program was announced as a new initiative to increase the supply of affordable housing.

A housing authority exists in each State and Territory which is responsible for home construction, home loans, and the provision of homes on a rental basis, as follows:

- New South Wales — Department of Housing;
- Victoria — Department of Planning and Housing;
- Queensland — Department of Housing, Local Government and Planning;
- South Australia — South Australian Housing Trust;
- Western Australia — Homeswest;
- Tasmania — Department of Community Services;
- Northern Territory — Department of Lands and Housing; and
- Australian Capital Territory — The ACT Housing Trust.

The Defence Service Homes authority provides housing for the three military services (that is, Navy, Air Force and Army).

Details of their activities were contained in *Year Book Australia 1991*.

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Price Index of Materials Used in Building Other Than House Building, Eight Capital Cities (6407.0)

Price Index of Materials Used in House Building, Six State Capital Cities and Canberra (6408.0)

Public Sector Construction Activity, Australia, 1988–89 (8775.0)

Survey of Income & Housing Costs and Amenities: Characteristics of Dwellings, Australia, 1988 and 1990 (4133.0)

Survey of Income & Housing Costs amd Amenities: Housing Occupancy and Costs, Australia, 1988 and 1990 (4130.0)

Trade Union Members, Australia (6325.0)

Details for particular States and Territories are available from publications issued regularly by the Deputy Commonwealth Statistician in each State or as unpublished 'special tables' available from the ABS.

Other Publications

The issue papers published by the National Housing Strategy:

Issues Paper 1: Australian Housing: The Demographic, Economic and Social Environment

Issues Paper 2: The Affordability of Australian Housing

Issues Paper 3: Financing Australian Housing

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Issues Paper 4: Efficient Supply of Affordable Land & Housing

Issues Paper 5: Housing Location and Access to Services

Issues Paper 6: Housing Choice: Reducing the Barriers

Issues Paper 7: The National Housing Strategy: An Agenda for Action

The annual reports of the Commonwealth and State Government Housing Authorities show further details of government activities in the field of housing.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

The ABS has a far wider range of information on Australia than that contained in the *Year Book*. Information is available in the form of regular publications, electronic data services, special tables and from investigations of published and unpublished data.

For further information contact ABS Information Services at one of the addresses listed on the page facing the Introduction to the *Year Book*.