



September Quarter 1995

EMBARGOED UNTIL 11:30 AM THURSDAY 14 DECEMBER 1995

Building Activity Australia

Dwelling Unit Commencements

Preliminary

Statistics

1995	1994	1993	1992	1991	1990	1989	1988	1987	1986	1985	1984	1983	1982	1981	1980	1979	1978	1977	1976	1975	1974	1973	1972	1971	1970	1969	1968	1967	1966	1965	1964	1963	1962	1961	1960	1959	1958	1957	1956	1955	1954	1953	1952	1951	1950	1949	1948	1947	1946	1945	1944	1943	1942	1941	1940	1939	1938	1937	1936	1935	1934	1933	1932	1931	1930	1929	1928	1927	1926	1925	1924	1923	1922	1921	1920	1919	1918	1917	1916	1915	1914	1913	1912	1911	1910	1909	1908	1907	1906	1905	1904	1903	1902	1901	1900	1899	1898	1897	1896	1895	1894	1893	1892	1891	1890	1889	1888	1887	1886	1885	1884	1883	1882	1881	1880	1879	1878	1877	1876	1875	1874	1873	1872	1871	1870	1869	1868	1867	1866	1865	1864	1863	1862	1861	1860	1859	1858	1857	1856	1855	1854	1853	1852	1851	1850	1849	1848	1847	1846	1845	1844	1843	1842	1841	1840	1839	1838	1837	1836	1835	1834	1833	1832	1831	1830	1829	1828	1827	1826	1825	1824	1823	1822	1821	1820	1819	1818	1817	1816	1815	1814	1813	1812	1811	1810	1809	1808	1807	1806	1805	1804	1803	1802	1801	1800	1799	1798	1797	1796	1795	1794	1793	1792	1791	1790	1789	1788	1787	1786	1785	1784	1783	1782	1781	1780	1779	1778	1777	1776	1775	1774	1773	1772	1771	1770	1769	1768	1767	1766	1765	1764	1763	1762	1761	1760	1759	1758	1757	1756	1755	1754	1753	1752	1751	1750	1749	1748	1747	1746	1745	1744	1743	1742	1741	1740	1739	1738	1737	1736	1735	1734	1733	1732	1731	1730	1729	1728	1727	1726	1725	1724	1723	1722	1721	1720	1719	1718	1717	1716	1715	1714	1713	1712	1711	1710	1709	1708	1707	1706	1705	1704	1703	1702	1701	1700	1699	1698	1697	1696	1695	1694	1693	1692	1691	1690	1689	1688	1687	1686	1685	1684	1683	1682	1681	1680	1679	1678	1677	1676	1675	1674	1673	1672	1671	1670	1669	1668	1667	1666	1665	1664	1663	1662	1661	1660	1659	1658	1657	1656	1655	1654	1653	1652	1651	1650	1649	1648	1647	1646	1645	1644	1643	1642	1641	1640	1639	1638	1637	1636	1635	1634	1633	1632	1631	1630	1629	1628	1627	1626	1625	1624	1623	1622	1621	1620	1619	1618	1617	1616	1615	1614	1613	1612	1611	1610	1609	1608	1607	1606	1605	1604	1603	1602	1601	1600	1599	1598	1597	1596	1595	1594	1593	1592	1591	1590	1589	1588	1587	1586	1585	1584	1583	1582	1581	1580	1579	1578	1577	1576	1575	1574	1573	1572	1571	1570	1569	1568	1567	1566	1565	1564	1563	1562	1561	1560	1559	1558	1557	1556	1555	1554	1553	1552	1551	1550	1549	1548	1547	1546	1545	1544	1543	1542	1541	1540	1539	1538	1537	1536	1535	1534	1533	1532	1531	1530	1529	1528	1527	1526	1525	1524	1523	1522	1521	1520	1519	1518	1517	1516	1515	1514	1513	1512	1511	1510	1509	1508	1507	1506	1505	1504	1503	1502	1501	1500	1499	1498	1497	1496	1495	1494	1493	1492	1491	1490	1489	1488	1487	1486	1485	1484	1483	1482	1481	1480	1479	1478	1477	1476	1475	1474	1473	1472	1471	1470	1469	1468	1467	1466	1465	1464	1463	1462	1461	1460	1459	1458	1457	1456	1455	1454	1453	1452	1451	1450	1449	1448	1447	1446	1445	1444	1443	1442	1441	1440	1439	1438	1437	1436	1435	1434	1433	1432	1431	1430	1429	1428	1427	1426	1425	1424	1423	1422	1421	1420	1419	1418	1417	1416	1415	1414	1413	1412	1411	1410	1409	1408	1407	1406	1405	1404	1403	1402	1401	1400	1399	1398	1397	1396	1395	1394	1393	1392	1391	1390	1389	1388	1387	1386	1385	1384	1383	1382	1381	1380	1379	1378	1377	1376	1375	1374	1373	1372	1371	1370	1369	1368	1367	1366	1365	1364	1363	1362	1361	1360	1359	1358	1357	1356	1355	1354	1353	1352	1351	1350	1349	1348	1347	1346	1345	1344	1343	1342	1341	1340	1339	1338	1337	1336	1335	1334	1333	1332	1331	1330	1329	1328	1327	1326	1325	1324	1323	1322	1321	1320	1319	1318	1317	1316	1315	1314	1313	1312	1311	1310	1309	1308	1307	1306	1305	1304	1303	1302	1301	1300	1299	1298	1297	1296	1295	1294	1293	1292	1291	1290	1289	1288	1287	1286	1285	1284	1283	1282	1281	1280	1279	1278	1277	1276	1275	1274	1273	1272	1271	1270	1269	1268	1267	1266	1265	1264	1263	1262	1261	1260	1259	1258	1257	1256	1255	1254	1253	1252	1251	1250	1249	1248	1247	1246	1245	1244	1243	1242	1241	1240	1239	1238	1237	1236	1235	1234	1233	1232	1231	1230	1229	1228	1227	1226	1225	1224	1223	1222	1221	1220	1219	1218	1217	1216	1215	1214	1213	1212	1211	1210	1209	1208	1207	1206	1205	1204	1203	1202	1201	1200	1199	1198	1197	1196	1195	1194	1193	1192	1191	1190	1189	1188	1187	1186	1185	1184	1183	1182	1181	1180	1179	1178	1177	1176	1175	1174	1173	1172	1171	1170	1169	1168	1167	1166	1165	1164	1163	1162	1161	1160	1159	1158	1157	1156	1155	1154	1153	1152	1151	1150	1149	1148	1147	1146	1145	1144	1143	1142	1141	1140	1139	1138	1137	1136	1135	1134	1133	1132	1131	1130	1129	1128	1127	1126	1125	1124	1123	1122	1121	1120	1119	1118	1117	1116	1115	1114	1113	1112	1111	1110	1109	1108	1107	1106	1105	1104	1103	1102	1101	1100	1099	1098	1097	1096	1095	1094	1093	1092	1091	1090	1089	1088	1087	1086	1085	1084	1083	1082	1081	1080	1079	1078	1077	1076	1075	1074	1073	1072	1071	1070	1069	1068	1067	1066	1065	1064	1063	1062	1061	1060	1059	1058	1057	1056	1055	1054	1053	1052	1051	1050	1049	1048	1047	1046	1045	1044	1043	1042	1041	1040	1039	1038	1037	1036	1035	1034	1033	1032	1031	1030	1029	1028	1027	1026	1025	1024	1023	1022	1021	1020	1019	1018	1017	1016	1015	1014	1013	1012	1011	1010	1009	1008	1007	1006	1005	1004	1003	1002	1001	1000	999	998	997	996	995	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BUILDING ACTIVITY NOTES

FORTHCOMING ISSUES

<i>ISSUE (Quarter)</i>	<i>RELEASE DATE</i>
December 1995	15 March 1996
March 1996	19 June 1996
June 1996	11 September 1996
September 1996	13 December 1996

CHANGES TO THE CONTENT AND FORMAT OF THIS ISSUE

The seasonally adjusted estimates for the number of dwelling units commenced, shown in Tables 1 and 2, include dwelling units commenced as part of alterations and additions to existing buildings (including conversions to dwelling units) and as part of the construction of non-residential building. Previously, only new dwelling units commenced as part of the construction of new residential buildings were included in these statistics. The number of dwelling units commenced as a result of alterations and additions is now shown separately, in original terms, in Tables 1, 3, 4 and 5 under the heading Conversions, etc..

SAMPLING ERRORS

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

Relative standard errors for the number of new private sector houses and total dwelling units commenced in the September quarter 1995 are given below. There is 67% confidence that the actual value would be within one standard error of the sample estimate, and 95% confidence that it lies within two standard errors.

RELATIVE STANDARD ERRORS

	<i>New private sector houses</i>	<i>Total dwellings</i>
	%	%
New South Wales	4.6	3.9
Victoria	2.6	2.5
Queensland	3.1	2.8
South Australia	3.9	3.4
Western Australia	4.0	3.6
Tasmania	3.7	3.4
Northern Territory	1.4	1.1
Australian Capital Territory	4.9	4.6
Australia	1.7	1.5

INQUIRIES

For further information about statistics in this publication and the availability of related unpublished statistics, contact Information Services on Canberra (06) 252 6627 or any ABS State office.

W. McLennan
Australian Statistician

MAIN FEATURES

SEASONALLY ADJUSTED
ESTIMATES

NUMBER OF DWELLING UNITS COMMENCED

The number of dwelling units commenced in the September quarter 1995, in seasonally adjusted terms, and percentage changes from the June quarter 1995 and September quarter 1994 are summarised in the table below.

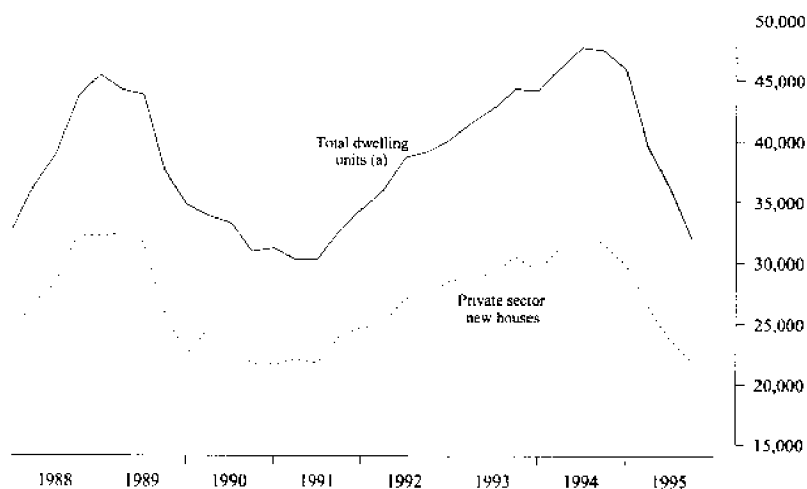
	Sep qtr 95	% change Jun qtr 95 to Sep qtr 95	% change Sep qtr 94 to Sep qtr 95
Dwelling units commenced			
New private sector houses	21 956	- 7.3	- 30.4
Total dwelling units	31 959	- 11.5	- 32.7

Australian estimates

The preliminary estimate of the number of dwelling units commenced in the September quarter 1995 was 31,959. This was a decrease of 11.5% from the June quarter 1995 and was 32.7% below the September quarter 1994 estimate.

The number of new private sector house commencements in the September quarter 1995 fell by 7.3% to 21,956. This was 30.4% below the September quarter 1994 estimate.

NUMBER OF DWELLING UNITS COMMENCED, AUSTRALIA (Seasonally adjusted)



(a) Includes Conversions, etc

State estimates

Total dwelling unit commencements fell in all States and Territories: New South Wales (- 13.1%), Victoria (- 7.3%), Queensland (- 14.5%), South Australia (- 6.8%), Western Australia (- 14.1%), Tasmania (- 9.5%) and the Australian Capital Territory (- 8.5%).

ORIGINAL ESTIMATES

In original terms, there were 33,665 dwelling units commenced in the September quarter 1995. This was a decrease of 7.7% from the June 1995 estimate of 36,478.

Total new private sector commencements fell 8.4% in the September quarter 1995 (house commencements down 3.6%; other residential building commencements down 19.8%).

Total new public sector commencements rose 3.7% in the September quarter 1995 (house commencements down 12.9%; other residential building commencements up 12.7%).

There were 469 dwelling units commenced in the September quarter 1995 as part of alterations and additions to existing buildings (including conversions to dwelling units) and as part of the construction of non-residential building. This compares with 528 in the June quarter 1995 and 640 in the September quarter 1994.

**TABLE 1. TOTAL NUMBER OF DWELLING UNITS COMMENCED,
ORIGINAL AND SEASONALLY ADJUSTED, AUSTRALIA**

Period	New houses		New other residential buildings	Conversions etc.	Total dwelling units	
	Original	Seasonally adjusted			Original	Seasonally adjusted
PRIVATE SECTOR						
1992-93	113,708	..	17,389	1,480	152,577	..
1993-94	123,228	..	46,518	3,862	173,608	..
1994-95	111,951	..	46,891	3,287	162,129	..
1994 June qtr	32,703	32,494	11,957	1,423	46,083	45,685
Sept. qtr	32,971	31,534	13,801	616	47,388	45,330
Dec. qtr	31,333	29,819	13,152	1,496	45,981	44,277
1995 Mar. qtr	23,814	26,555	9,978	663	34,455	37,960
June qtr	23,833	23,673	9,960	512	34,306	34,015
Sept. qtr p	22,971	21,956	7,989	460	31,420	30,024
PUBLIC SECTOR						
1992-93	3,471	..	7,037	3	10,511	..
1993-94	3,285	..	4,891	37	8,213	..
1994-95	2,611	..	4,854	61	7,526	..
1994 June qtr	809	n.a.	1,271	10	2,090	n.a.
Sept. qtr	806	n.a.	1,759	24	2,589	n.a.
Dec. qtr	534	n.a.	708	13	1,255	n.a.
1995 Mar. qtr	513	n.a.	989	8	1,510	n.a.
June qtr	758	n.a.	1,398	16	2,172	n.a.
Sept. qtr p	660	n.a.	1,576	9	2,245	n.a.
TOTAL						
1992-93	117,179	..	44,426	1,483	163,088	..
1993-94	126,513	..	51,409	3,899	181,821	..
1994-95	114,562	..	51,745	3,348	169,655	..
1994 June qtr	33,512	33,141	13,228	1,433	48,173	47,688
Sept. qtr	33,777	32,442	15,560	640	49,977	47,483
Dec. qtr	31,867	30,397	13,860	1,509	47,236	45,937
1995 Mar. qtr	24,327	27,059	10,967	671	35,965	39,568
June qtr	24,591	24,307	11,358	528	36,478	36,105
Sept. qtr p	23,631	22,685	9,565	469	33,665	31,959

**TABLE 2. TOTAL NUMBER OF DWELLING UNITS COMMENCED (a), STATES (b) AND AUSTRALIA
SEASONALLY ADJUSTED**

Period	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Australia
1994 June qtr	14,121	8,425	13,476	2,938	6,626	974	n.a.	930	47,688
Sept. qtr	14,322	7,889	13,885	2,930	6,362	852	n.a.	717	47,483
Dec. qtr	13,705	8,208	12,771	2,813	6,077	864	n.a.	951	45,937
1995 Mar. qtr	12,905	7,218	10,280	2,193	5,391	719	n.a.	619	39,568
June qtr	12,122	7,092	9,122	1,812	4,570	718	n.a.	468	36,105
Sept. qtr p	10,537	6,574	7,799	1,689	3,926	650	n.a.	428	31,959

(a) Includes conversions, etc. (b) Seasonally adjusted data are not available for the Northern Territory.

TABLE 3. TOTAL NUMBER OF DWELLING UNITS COMMENCED

<i>Period</i>	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic.</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>Tas.</i>	<i>NT</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>Australia</i>
NEW HOUSES									
1992-93	27,397	25,717	33,516	9,416	15,011	2,878	828	2,417	117,179
1993-94	29,162	27,904	35,751	9,590	18,118	3,020	1,205	1,764	126,513
1994-95	28,200	25,830	31,049	8,217	16,238	2,562	943	1,523	114,562
1994 June qtr	8,526	7,009	9,229	2,396	4,917	746	322	368	33,512
Sept. qtr	8,256	7,098	9,686	2,526	4,850	651	202	508	33,777
Dec. qtr	7,486	7,521	8,788	2,435	4,297	722	245	373	31,867
1995 Mar. qtr	6,137	5,494	6,295	1,735	3,565	576	196	329	24,327
June qtr	6,321	5,718	6,280	1,519	3,527	613	300	314	24,591
Sept. qtr p	6,104	5,886	6,008	1,506	3,067	490	247	322	23,631
NEW OTHER RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS									
1992-93	17,064	2,438	13,469	2,219	5,778	1,099	366	1,993	44,426
1993-94	18,019	3,562	17,334	1,891	6,682	1,092	446	2,383	51,409
1994-95	23,103	3,600	15,113	1,533	6,079	584	539	1,194	51,745
1994 June qtr	4,761	882	4,386	484	1,827	216	94	578	13,228
Sept. qtr	6,482	707	5,151	557	1,986	186	139	352	15,560
Dec. qtr	5,762	909	4,315	399	1,650	171	212	442	13,860
1995 Mar. qtr	5,204	929	2,700	329	1,328	132	106	239	10,967
June qtr	5,655	1,055	2,947	248	1,115	95	82	161	11,358
Sept. qtr p	4,715	654	2,308	261	1,164	150	121	192	9,565
CONVERSIONS, ETC									
1992-93	1,152	21	160	11	76	7	6	50	1,483
1993-94	2,141	1,198	302	20	196	17	7	18	3,899
1994-95	1,879	1,037	209	61	135	12	11	5	3,348
1994 June qtr	794	528	81	3	20	3	1	3	1,433
Sept. qtr	417	112	63	2	39	6	—	1	640
Dec. qtr	1,125	247	43	39	39	6	10	—	1,509
1995 Mar. qtr	203	362	66	9	31	—	—	—	671
June qtr	134	316	37	11	25	—	1	4	528
Sept. qtr p	321	52	61	11	13	4	7	—	469
TOTAL									
1992-93	45,613	28,176	47,145	11,646	20,865	3,984	1,200	4,460	163,088
1993-94	49,322	32,664	53,387	11,501	24,996	4,129	1,658	4,165	181,821
1994-95	53,181	30,467	46,371	9,811	22,452	3,157	1,493	2,722	169,655
1994 June qtr	14,081	8,419	13,696	2,883	6,764	965	417	949	48,173
Sept. qtr	15,155	7,917	14,900	3,085	6,875	843	341	861	49,977
Dec. qtr	14,373	8,677	13,146	2,873	5,986	899	467	815	47,236
1995 Mar. qtr	11,544	6,785	9,061	2,073	4,924	708	302	568	35,965
June qtr	12,110	7,089	9,264	1,778	4,667	708	383	479	36,478
Sept. qtr p	11,140	6,592	8,377	1,778	4,244	644	375	514	33,665

TABLE 4. TOTAL NUMBER OF PRIVATE SECTOR DWELLING UNITS COMMENCED

<i>Period</i>	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic.</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>Tas.</i>	<i>NT</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>Australia</i>
NEW HOUSES									
1992-93	26,554	24,633	32,793	9,122	14,615	2,840	744	2,408	113,708
1993-94	28,547	26,970	35,102	9,159	17,739	2,974	1,035	1,703	123,228
1994-95	27,726	25,322	30,540	7,752	15,743	2,556	800	1,512	111,951
1994 June qtr	8,292	6,899	9,051	2,235	4,845	740	274	368	32,703
Sept. qtr	8,072	6,959	9,543	2,413	4,630	651	195	508	32,971
Dec. qtr	7,382	7,393	8,717	2,303	4,255	718	201	364	31,333
1995 Mar. qtr	6,090	5,360	6,170	1,631	3,469	574	192	328	23,814
June qtr	6,182	5,611	6,110	1,403	3,390	613	212	313	23,833
Sept. qtr p	6,030	5,705	5,849	1,412	2,964	488	201	321	22,971
NEW OTHER RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS									
1992-93	14,225	2,155	12,096	1,759	3,955	997	353	1,849	37,389
1993-94	16,385	3,130	16,187	1,534	5,495	1,031	430	2,326	46,518
1994-95	21,345	3,065	13,765	1,347	5,233	544	520	1,072	46,891
1994 June qtr	4,332	677	4,207	393	1,489	199	82	578	11,957
Sept. qtr	5,948	611	4,582	442	1,589	182	139	308	13,801
Dec. qtr	5,523	818	4,131	367	1,520	164	207	422	13,152
1995 Mar. qtr	4,922	722	2,468	303	1,108	132	106	217	9,978
June qtr	4,952	914	2,584	235	1,016	66	68	125	9,960
Sept. qtr p	4,088	321	2,044	247	879	127	121	162	7,989
CONVERSIONS, ETC.									
1992-93	1,150	21	160	11	76	7	6	49	1,480
1993-94	2,126	1,195	299	19	182	16	7	18	3,862
1994-95	1,848	1,030	200	48	134	12	11	5	3,287
1994 June qtr	788	526	81	2	19	3	1	3	1,423
Sept. qtr	401	112	56	2	38	6	—	1	616
Dec. qtr	1,125	247	43	26	39	6	10	—	1,496
1995 Mar. qtr	195	362	66	9	31	—	—	—	663
June qtr	127	309	35	11	25	—	1	4	512
Sept. qtr p	313	52	61	11	13	4	6	—	460
TOTAL									
1992-93	41,929	26,809	45,049	10,892	18,646	3,844	1,103	4,306	152,577
1993-94	47,058	31,295	51,588	10,712	23,416	4,021	1,472	4,047	173,608
1994-95	50,918	29,417	44,505	9,147	21,110	3,111	1,331	2,589	162,129
1994 June qtr	13,412	8,102	13,339	2,630	6,353	942	357	949	46,083
Sept. qtr	14,421	7,682	14,181	2,857	6,257	839	334	817	47,388
Dec. qtr	14,030	8,458	12,891	2,696	5,814	888	418	786	45,981
1995 Mar. qtr	11,207	6,444	8,704	1,943	4,608	706	298	545	34,455
June qtr	11,261	6,834	8,729	1,649	4,431	679	281	442	34,306
Sept. qtr p	10,431	6,078	7,954	1,670	3,856	619	328	483	31,420

TABLE 5. TOTAL NUMBER OF PUBLIC SECTOR DWELLING UNITS COMMENCED

<i>Period</i>	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic.</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>Tas.</i>	<i>NT</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>Australia</i>
NEW HOUSES									
1992-93	843	1,084	723	294	396	38	84	9	3,471
1993-94	615	934	649	431	379	46	170	61	3,285
1994-95	474	508	509	465	495	6	143	11	2,611
1994 June qtr	234	110	178	161	72	6	48	—	809
Sept. qtr	184	139	143	113	220	—	7	—	806
Dec. qtr	104	128	71	132	42	4	44	9	534
1995 Mar. qtr	47	134	125	104	96	2	4	1	513
June qtr	139	107	170	116	137	—	88	1	758
Sept. qtr p	74	181	159	94	103	2	46	1	660
NEW OTHER RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS									
1992-93	2,839	283	1,373	460	1,823	102	13	144	7,037
1993-94	1,634	432	1,147	357	1,187	61	16	57	4,891
1994-95	1,758	535	1,348	186	846	40	19	122	4,854
1994 June qtr	429	205	179	91	338	17	12	—	1,271
Sept. qtr	534	96	569	115	397	4	—	44	1,759
Dec. qtr	239	91	184	32	130	7	5	20	708
1995 Mar. qtr	282	207	232	26	220	—	—	22	989
June qtr	703	141	363	13	99	29	14	36	1,398
Sept. qtr p	627	333	264	14	285	23	—	30	1,576
CONVERSIONS, ETC									
1992-93	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	3
1993-94	15	3	3	1	14	1	—	—	37
1994-95	31	7	9	13	1	—	—	—	61
1994 June qtr	6	2	—	1	1	—	—	—	10
Sept. qtr	16	—	7	—	1	—	—	—	24
Dec. qtr	—	—	—	13	—	—	—	—	13
1995 Mar. qtr	8	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	8
June qtr	7	7	2	—	—	—	—	—	16
Sept. qtr p	8	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	9
TOTAL									
1992-93	3,684	1,367	2,096	754	2,219	140	97	154	10,511
1993-94	2,264	1,369	1,799	789	1,580	108	186	118	8,213
1994-95	2,263	1,050	1,866	664	1,342	46	162	133	7,526
1994 June qtr	669	317	357	253	411	23	60	—	2,090
Sept. qtr	734	235	719	228	618	4	7	44	2,589
Dec. qtr	343	219	255	177	172	11	49	29	1,255
1995 Mar. qtr	337	341	357	130	316	2	4	23	1,510
June qtr	849	255	535	129	236	29	102	37	2,472
Sept. qtr p	709	514	423	108	388	25	47	31	2,245

EXPLANATORY NOTES

INTRODUCTION

1 This publication contains preliminary estimates of the number of dwelling units commenced during the September quarter 1995. More comprehensive results from the quarterly survey will be available shortly.

2 The statistics were compiled on the basis of returns collected from builders and other individuals and organisations engaged in building activity. The quarterly survey comprises a sample survey of private sector house building activity and a complete enumeration of other building activity. Estimates in respect of commencements of private sector houses are therefore subject to sampling variability. Relative standard errors for the September quarter 1995 are shown on Page 2.

3 The use of sample survey techniques in the Building Activity Survey means that reliable estimates of private sector house commencements based on survey results are available only at the State/Territory and Australia levels. Further geographic disaggregations are not available. However, dwelling unit commencement data for regions below State/Territory level are shown in the monthly series of dwelling unit commencements compiled by the ABS. Unlike data in this publication compiled from the Building Activity Survey, the series for smaller geographic areas are based on information reported by local and other government authorities.

DEFINITIONS

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

SEASONAL ADJUSTMENT

10 Seasonally adjusted building statistics are shown in Tables 1 and 2. In the seasonally adjusted series, account has been taken of normal seasonal factors and the effect of movement in the date of Easter which may, in successive years, affect figures for different quarters. Details regarding the methods used in seasonally adjusting the series are available on request.

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

RELATED PUBLICATIONS

12 Users may also wish to refer to the following publications and special products which are available on request:

Building Approvals, Australia (8731.0) — issued monthly

Building and Construction Activity, Australia (8754.0) — to be issued quarterly from the September quarter 1995

Building Activity, Australia (8752.0.40.001) — previously issued quarterly

Construction Activity at Constant Prices Australia (8782.0.40.001) — previously issued quarterly

Engineering Construction Activity, Australia (8762.0.40.001) — previously issued quarterly

Housing Finance for Owner Occupation, Australia (5609.0) — issued monthly

Price Index of Materials Used in House Building, Six State Capital Cities (6408.0) — issued monthly

Price Index of Materials Used in Building Other Than House Building, Six Capital Cities (6407.0) — issued monthly

House Price Indexes: Eight Capital Cities (6416.0) — issued quarterly

13 Current publications produced by the ABS are listed in the *Catalogue of Publications and Products, Australia* (1101.0). The ABS also issues, on Tuesdays and Fridays, a *Release Advice* (1105.0) which lists publications to be released in the next few days. The Catalogue and Release Advice are available from any ABS office.

UNPUBLISHED STATISTICS

14 The ABS can also make available certain building activity data which are not published. Where it is not practicable to provide the required information by telephone, data can be provided in the following forms: microfiche, photocopy, computer printout, floppy disk and clerically extracted tabulation. A charge may be made for providing unpublished information in these forms.

ELECTRONIC SERVICES

15 A large range of data is available via on-line services, diskette, magnetic tape, tape cartridge and CD ROM. For more details about our electronic data services, contact the ABS Office.

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

SYMBOLS AND OTHER USAGES

— nil or rounded to zero
p preliminary — figures or series subject to revision
r figures or series revised since previous issue
. . not applicable
n.a. not available



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