



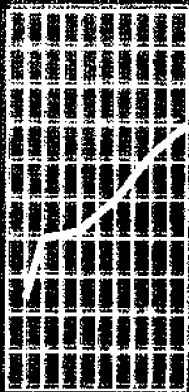
December Quarter 1995

EMBARGOED UNTIL 11:30 AM FRIDAY 15 MARCH 1996

Building Activity Australia

Dwelling Unit Commencements

Preliminary



ABS Catalogue No. 8750.0

BUILDING ACTIVITY NOTES

FORTHCOMING ISSUES

ISSUE (Quarter)

RELEASE DATE

March 1996

19 June 1996

June 1996

11 September 1996

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CHANGES TO THE CONTENT AND FORMAT OF THIS ISSUE

There are no changes in this issue.

SIGNIFICANT REVISIONS THIS QUARTER

The seasonally adjusted estimates to September quarter 1995 in Tables 1 and 2 have been revised as a result of the annual reanalysis of seasonal factors. See paragraphs 10–12 of the Explanatory Notes.

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 December 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	4.5	2.7
Victoria	2.9	2.4
Queensland	2.5	1.9
South Australia	4.6	3.6
Western Australia	3.5	2.7
Tasmania	3.4	2.7
Northern Territory
Australian Capital Territory	3.1	1.6
Australia	1.6	1.2

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For further information about statistics in this publication and the availability of related unpublished statistics, contact Information Services on Canberra (06) 252 6627 or any ABS State office.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 December quarter 1995, in seasonally adjusted terms, and percentage changes from the September quarter 1995 and December quarter 1994 are summarised in the table below.

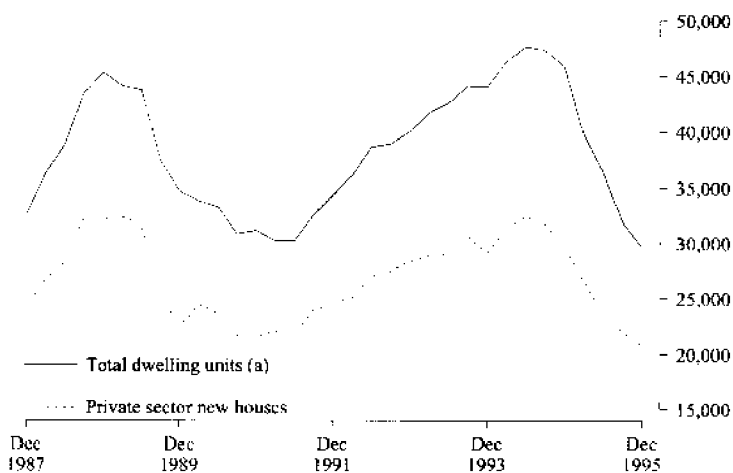
	Dec qtr 95	% change Sep qtr 95 to Dec qtr 95	% change Dec qtr 94 to Dec qtr 95
Dwelling units commenced			
New private sector houses	20 756	- 5.9	- 30.1
Total dwelling units	29 633	- 7.3	- 35.4

Australian estimates

The preliminary estimate of the number of dwelling units commenced in the December quarter 1995 was 29,633. This was a decrease of 7.3% from the September quarter 1995 and was 35.4% below the December quarter 1994 estimate.

The number of new private sector house commencements in the December quarter 1995 fell by 5.9% to 20,756. This was 30.1% below the December 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 with falls in New South Wales (-12.4%), Victoria (-12.6%), Queensland (-6.5%) and South Australia (-7.9%) being the most significant, with Tasmania (-2.8%) and finally, Western Australia (-0.4%) down only marginally. The Australian Capital Territory recorded an increase of 63.7%.

ORIGINAL ESTIMATES

In original terms, there were 30,470 dwelling units commenced in the December quarter 1995. This was a decrease of 9.8% from the September quarter 1995 estimate of 33,780.

Total new private sector commencements fell 7.5% in the December quarter 1995 (house commencements down 4.4%; other residential building commencements down 16.3%).

Total new public sector commencements fell 41.7% in the December quarter 1995 (house commencements down 24.1%; other residential building commencements down 49.0%).

There were 444 dwelling units commenced in the December 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 484 in the September quarter 1995 and 1,509 in the December 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	..	37,389	1,480	152,577	..
1993-94	123,228	..	46,518	3,862	173,608	..
1994-95	111,966	..	47,053	3,522	162,541	..
1994 Sept. qtr	32,971	31,691	13,801	616	47,388	45,228
Dec. qtr	31,333	29,679	13,152	1,496	45,981	44,077
1995 Mar. qtr	23,814	26,681	9,978	663	34,455	38,279
June qtr	23,848	23,567	10,122	747	34,718	34,415
Sept. qtr	22,926	22,051	8,152	475	31,553	30,106
Dec. qtr p	21,910	20,756	6,824	444	29,178	27,968
PUBLIC SECTOR						
1992-93	3,471	..	7,037	3	10,511	..
1993-94	3,285	..	4,891	37	8,213	..
1994-95	2,611	..	4,858	61	7,530	..
1994 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.	1,402	16	2,176	n.a.
Sept. qtr	648	n.a.	1,570	9	2,227	n.a.
Dec. qtr p	492	n.a.	800	—	1,292	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	114,577	..	51,911	3,583	170,071	..
1994 Sept. qtr	33,777	32,571	15,560	640	49,977	47,295
Dec. qtr	31,867	30,279	13,860	1,509	47,236	45,906
1995 Mar. qtr	24,327	27,180	10,967	671	35,965	39,895
June qtr	24,606	24,220	11,524	763	36,894	36,431
Sept. qtr	23,574	22,740	9,722	484	33,780	31,951
Dec. qtr p	22,402	21,290	7,624	444	30,470	29,633

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

Period	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Australia
1994 Sept. qtr	14,309	7,950	13,815	2,923	6,413	864	n.a.	734	47,295
Dec. qtr	13,921	8,083	12,662	2,802	6,102	849	n.a.	864	45,906
1995 Mar. qtr	12,963	7,302	10,461	2,213	5,326	723	n.a.	656	39,895
June qtr	12,286	7,113	9,116	1,796	4,542	701	n.a.	477	36,431
Sept. qtr	10,593	6,579	7,838	1,653	3,977	642	n.a.	465	31,951
Dec. qtr p	9,278	5,748	7,326	1,522	3,963	624	n.a.	761	29,633

(a) Includes conversions, etc. (b) Seasonally adjusted data are not available for the Northern Territory. (c) Series have been revised due to annual re-analysis of seasonal adjustment factors.

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	28,222	25,846	31,047	8,210	16,225	2,548	947	1,533	114,577
1994 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	6,343	5,734	6,278	1,512	3,514	599	304	323	24,606
Sept. qtr	5,992	5,808	6,115	1,487	3,095	479	260	337	23,574
Dec. qtr p	5,812	5,184	6,018	1,270	2,991	546	216	364	22,402
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	23,271	3,612	15,113	1,525	6,073	582	541	1,194	51,911
1994 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	5,823	1,067	2,947	240	1,109	93	84	161	11,524
Sept. qtr	4,884	673	2,296	248	1,144	142	131	204	9,722
Dec. qtr p	3,458	985	1,501	266	878	113	67	356	7,624
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	2,100	1,051	209	61	135	12	11	5	3,583
1994 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	355	330	37	11	25	—	1	4	763
Sept. qtr	334	53	61	11	13	5	7	—	484
Dec. qtr p	304	11	89	24	14	1	1	—	444
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	53,592	30,509	46,369	9,795	22,433	3,141	1,499	2,732	170,071
1994 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	12,521	7,131	9,262	1,763	4,648	692	389	488	36,894
Sept. qtr	11,210	6,534	8,472	1,746	4,252	626	398	541	33,780
Dec. qtr p	9,574	6,180	7,608	1,560	3,883	660	284	720	30,470

TABLE 4. TOTAL NUMBER OF PRIVATE SECTOR DWELLING UNITS COMMENCED

Period	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Australia
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	27,747	25,338	30,538	7,745	15,731	2,542	804	1,522	111,966
1994 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	6,203	5,627	6,108	1,396	3,378	599	216	322	23,848
Sept. qtr	5,918	5,625	5,959	1,393	2,988	477	229	336	22,926
Dec. qtr p	5,651	5,088	5,942	1,217	2,938	536	175	362	21,910
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	21,513	3,077	13,761	1,339	5,227	542	522	1,072	47,053
1994 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	5,120	926	2,580	227	1,010	64	70	125	10,122
Sept. qtr	4,257	340	2,038	234	859	119	131	174	8,152
Dec. qtr p	3,268	692	1,345	251	758	89	65	356	6,824
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	2,069	1,044	200	48	134	12	11	5	3,522
1994 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	348	323	35	11	25	—	1	4	747
Sept. qtr	326	53	61	11	13	5	6	—	475
Dec. qtr p	304	11	89	24	14	1	1	—	444
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	51,328	29,459	44,499	9,131	21,092	3,095	1,337	2,599	162,541
1994 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	11,671	6,876	8,723	1,634	4,413	663	287	451	34,718
Sept. qtr	10,501	6,018	8,058	1,638	3,860	601	366	510	31,553
Dec. qtr p	9,223	5,791	7,376	1,492	3,710	626	241	718	29,178

TABLE 5. TOTAL NUMBER OF PUBLIC SECTOR DWELLING UNITS COMMENCED

Period	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Australia
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	475	508	509	465	494	6	143	11	2,611
1994 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	140	107	170	116	136	—	88	1	758
Sept. qtr	74	183	156	94	107	2	31	1	648
Dec. qtr p	161	96	76	53	53	10	41	2	492
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	1,352	186	846	40	19	122	4,858
1994 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	367	13	99	29	14	36	1,402
Sept. qtr	627	333	258	14	285	23	—	30	1,570
Dec. qtr p	190	293	156	15	120	24	2	—	800
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 Sept. qtr	16	—	7	—	1	—	—	—	24
Dec. qtr	—	—	—	13	—	—	—	—	13
1995 Mar. qtr	8	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	8
June qtr	7	7	2	—	—	—	—	—	16
Sept. qtr	8	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	9
Dec. qtr p	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
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	2,264	1,050	1,870	664	1,341	46	162	133	7,530
1994 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	850	255	539	129	235	29	102	37	2,176
Sept. qtr	709	516	414	108	392	25	32	31	2,227
Dec. qtr p	351	389	232	68	173	34	43	2	1,292

EXPLANATORY NOTES

INTRODUCTION

1 This publication contains preliminary estimates of the number of dwelling units commenced during the December 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 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.

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

RELATED PUBLICATIONS

13 Users may also wish to refer to the following publications:

Building Approvals, Australia (8731.0) — issued monthly

Building and Construction Activity, Australia (8754.0) — issued quarterly

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

Price Index of Materials Used in House Building (6408.0) — issued monthly

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

14 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

15 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

16 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.

17 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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