

**BUILDING ACTIVITY**  
**DWELLING UNIT  
COMMENCEMENTS**

**AUSTRALIA**  
PRELIMINARY

EMBARGO: 11:30AM (CANBERRA TIME) MON 16 DEC 2002

**SEPTEMBER QTR KEY FIGURES**

TREND ESTIMATES	Sep qtr 02	% change	% change
		Jun qtr 02 to Sep qtr 02	Sep qtr 01 to Sep qtr 02
Dwelling units commenced			
New private sector houses	29 592	2.2	16.9
Total dwelling units	44 883	3.9	20.4
.....			
SEASONALLY ADJUSTED	Sep qtr 02	% change	% change
		Jun qtr 02 to Sep qtr 02	Sep qtr 01 to Sep qtr 02
Dwelling units commenced			
New private sector houses	30 806	10.4	15.3
Total dwelling units	46 483	9.3	19.3

**SEPTEMBER QTR KEY POINTS**

**TREND ESTIMATES**

- The trend estimate for the total number of dwellings commenced rose 3.9% in the September quarter 2002, the sixth successive quarterly increase.
- Commencements of new private sector houses also rose in the latest quarter (+2.2%). This compares to a 0.5% increase in the previous quarter and 21.5% in the September quarter 2001.

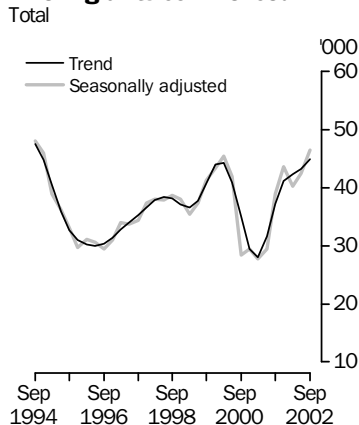
**SEASONALLY ADJUSTED ESTIMATES**

- In seasonally adjusted terms, the total number of dwellings commenced rose 9.3% in the September quarter to 46,483, the most since the record high in the September quarter 1994.
- New private sector house commencements rose 10.4% to 30,806, which, other than the March quarter 2000, was also the highest number for eight years. The increase follows declines of 5.1% and 0.7% in the March and June quarters of 2002 respectively.

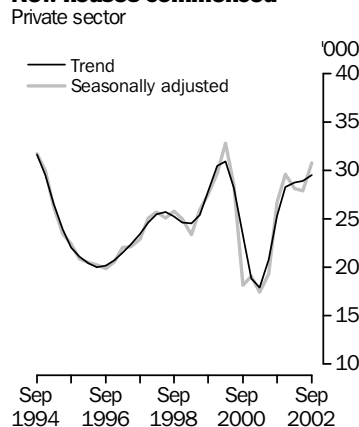
**ORIGINAL ESTIMATES**

- Total number of dwellings commenced rose 11.1% in the September quarter to 48,369.
- Within the private sector, the total number of dwellings commenced rose 10.4% to 47,263, with new house commencements up 7.6% to 31,361 (15.3% more than a year earlier) and other dwellings up 16.5% to 15,902 (31.3% more than a year earlier).
- The increase in new private sector houses in the latest quarter was mainly in Queensland (+17.8%) and Western Australia (+16.0%). For private sector other dwellings, the largest percentage gains were recorded in the Australian Capital Territory (+122.1%), Victoria (+33.0%) and Queensland (+19.7%).

**Dwelling units commenced**



**New houses commenced**



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

## NOTES

### FORTHCOMING ISSUES

<i>ISSUE (Quarter)</i>	<i>RELEASE DATE</i>
December 2002	19 March 2003
March 2003	20 June 2003

### ABOUT THIS ISSUE

This publication provides an early indication of trends in the number of dwelling units commenced. The data are estimates based on a response rate of approximately 90% of a sample of building jobs collected in the Building Activity Survey. More comprehensive and updated results will be released in *Building Activity, Australia* (cat. no. 8752.0) on 17 January 2003.

### SIGNIFICANT REVISIONS THIS ISSUE

The total number of dwelling units commenced in Australia during the June quarter 2002 has been revised upwards by 360 (+0.8%) from the estimate published in *Building Activity, Australia, June quarter 2002* (cat. no. 8752.0) released on 11 October 2002. This was mainly the result of upward revisions of 367 (+2.9%) in Victoria and 112 (+1.2%) in Queensland being partly offset by a downward revision of 146 (-1.2%) in New South Wales.

### RELIABILITY OF ESTIMATES

The estimates in this publication are based on a sample survey of private sector residential building jobs and a complete enumeration of public sector residential building jobs. Because data are not collected for all private sector residential building jobs, 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, total new other dwellings and total dwellings commenced in the September quarter 2002 are given below. There is 67% confidence that the actual number would be within one standard error of the sample estimate, and 95% confidence that it lies within two standard errors.

#### RELATIVE STANDARD ERRORS—September Quarter 2002

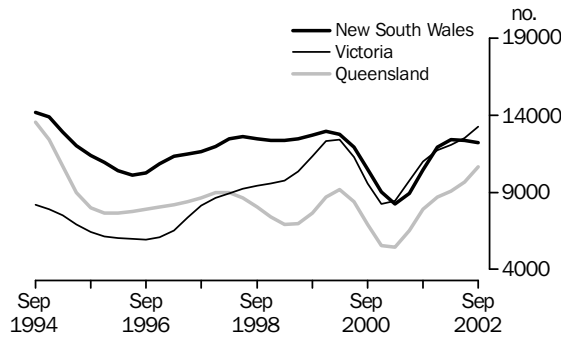
	<i>New private sector houses</i>	<i>Total new other dwellings</i>	<i>Total dwellings</i>
	%	%	%
New South Wales	3.6	1.3	1.9
Victoria	3.5	1.2	2.4
Queensland	2.9	0.4	1.9
South Australia	3.1	3.1	2.6
Western Australia	2.9	1.2	2.4
Tasmania	2.8	..	2.7
Northern Territory	..	..	..
Australian Capital Territory	2.5	..	1.1
<b>Australia</b>	<b>1.5</b>	<b>0.6</b>	<b>1.0</b>

Dennis Trewin  
Australian Statistician

# DWELLING UNIT COMMENCEMENTS(a) TREND ESTIMATES

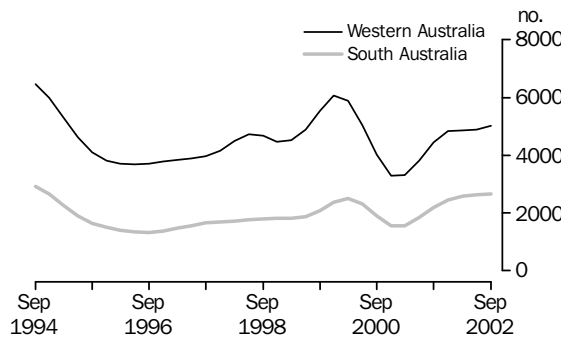
NEW SOUTH WALES  
VICTORIA  
QUEENSLAND

The trend estimates of commencements in Victoria and Queensland have shown strong growth over the last six quarters and the rate of growth has increased over the last two quarters. New South Wales also showed strong growth for the first four quarters, but the trend estimate has actually fallen for the last two quarters, the only state to do so.



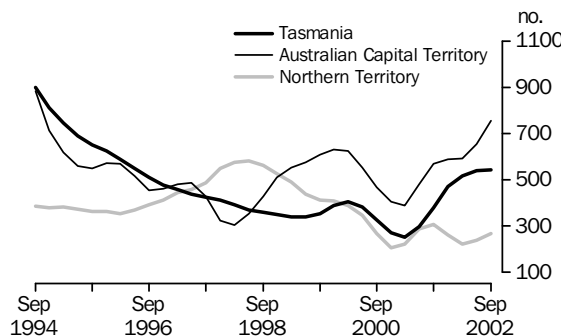
WESTERN AUSTRALIA  
SOUTH AUSTRALIA

The trend estimates of commencements in South Australia and Western Australia have grown over the last six quarters, strongly for the first three, but more moderately in the most recent three quarters.



TASMANIA  
AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY  
NORTHERN TERRITORY

The trend estimates of commencements in Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory have grown over the last six quarters. While the rate of growth in Tasmania has continued to decline, it has grown strongly in the Australian Capital Territory for the last two quarters. The trend in the Northern Territory has risen in the last two quarters following two quarters of decline.



(a) Includes conversions etc.

# 1

## DWELLING UNIT COMMENCEMENTS, Australia

Period	NEW HOUSES.....				TOTAL DWELLING UNITS(a).....			
	Private sector.....		Total.....		Private sector.....		Total.....	
	no.	% change from previous period	no.	% change from previous period	no.	% change from previous period	no.	% change from previous period
ORIGINAL								
<b>1999-00</b>	118 378	18.0	120 128	16.4	167 748	16.6	171 865	15.0
<b>2000-01</b>	74 128	-37.4	75 330	-37.3	110 977	-33.8	114 945	-33.1
<b>2001-02</b>	112 319	51.5	114 026	51.4	161 500	45.5	165 255	43.8
<b>2001</b>								
Jun qtr	20 187	22.1	20 449	21.9	29 003	12.5	30 092	13.1
Sep qtr	27 192	34.7	27 501	34.5	39 302	35.5	40 492	34.6
Dec qtr	29 353	7.9	29 962	8.9	41 776	6.3	42 705	5.5
<b>2002</b>								
Mar qtr	26 625	-9.3	27 024	-9.8	37 621	-9.9	38 519	-9.8
Jun qtr	29 149	9.5	29 539	9.3	42 801	13.8	43 538	13.0
Sep qtr	31 361	7.6	31 845	7.8	47 263	10.4	48 369	11.1
SEASONALLY ADJUSTED								
<b>2001</b>								
Jun qtr	19 359	11.1	19 676	11.4	28 357	5.6	29 416	6.1
Sep qtr	26 714	38.0	26 910	36.8	37 968	33.9	38 957	32.4
Dec qtr	29 620	10.9	30 302	12.6	42 476	11.9	43 594	11.9
<b>2002</b>								
Mar qtr	28 116	-5.1	28 490	-6.0	39 276	-7.5	40 238	-7.7
Jun qtr	27 912	-0.7	28 381	-0.4	41 815	6.5	42 523	5.7
Sep qtr	30 806	10.4	31 159	9.8	45 606	9.1	46 483	9.3
TREND ESTIMATES								
<b>2001</b>								
Jun qtr	20 847	16.2	21 121	16.1	30 658	13.2	31 652	13.1
Sep qtr	25 324	21.5	25 687	21.6	36 217	18.1	37 284	17.8
Dec qtr	28 268	11.6	28 729	11.8	40 078	10.7	41 113	10.3
<b>2002</b>								
Mar qtr	28 802	1.9	29 288	1.9	41 348	3.2	42 284	2.8
Jun qtr	28 955	0.5	29 391	0.4	42 363	2.5	43 206	2.2
Sep qtr	29 592	2.2	29 925	1.8	44 118	4.1	44 883	3.9

(a) Includes conversions etc.

Period	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.
ORIGINAL (Number)									
<b>2001</b>									
Jun qtr	8 147	9 369	6 502	1 628	3 380	307	384	376	30 092
Sep qtr	11 009	12 192	8 634	2 400	5 002	339	364	551	40 492
Dec qtr	13 335	11 332	8 588	2 613	5 190	534	239	875	42 705
<b>2002</b>									
Mar qtr	10 792	11 488	8 490	2 335	4 374	515	148	378	38 519
Jun qtr	12 481	12 825	9 496	2 649	4 675	546	283	582	43 538
Sep qtr	13 326	13 765	11 317	2 729	5 553	497	296	886	48 369
ORIGINAL (% change from previous quarter)									
<b>2001</b>									
Jun qtr	5.4	10.8	31.2	1.9	7.1	46.8	258.8	-5.8	13.1
Sep qtr	35.1	30.1	32.8	47.4	48.0	10.3	-5.1	46.6	34.6
Dec qtr	21.1	-7.1	-0.5	8.9	3.8	57.6	-34.3	58.6	5.5
<b>2002</b>									
Mar qtr	-19.1	1.4	-1.1	-10.6	-15.7	-3.5	-38.1	-56.8	-9.8
Jun qtr	15.7	11.6	11.9	13.5	6.9	5.9	90.8	54.1	13.0
Sep qtr	6.8	7.3	19.2	3.0	18.8	-9.0	4.6	52.2	11.1
SEASONALLY ADJUSTED (Number)									
<b>2001</b>									
Jun qtr	8 508	8 998	5 918	1 726	3 422	301	n.a.	427	29 416
Sep qtr	10 092	12 053	8 745	2 273	4 740	370	n.a.	556	38 957
Dec qtr	13 762	11 491	8 378	2 567	5 078	496	n.a.	807	43 594
<b>2002</b>									
Mar qtr	10 990	11 959	9 577	2 376	4 668	523	n.a.	360	40 238
Jun qtr	13 040	12 308	8 624	2 809	4 744	535	n.a.	665	42 523
Sep qtr	12 188	13 609	11 477	2 583	5 254	543	n.a.	891	46 483
SEASONALLY ADJUSTED (% change from previous quarter)									
<b>2001</b>									
Jun qtr	8.1	2.2	5.9	5.9	1.6	42.1	n.a.	11.7	6.1
Sep qtr	18.6	34.0	47.8	31.7	38.5	22.7	n.a.	30.4	32.4
Dec qtr	36.4	-4.7	-4.2	12.9	7.1	34.0	n.a.	45.0	11.9
<b>2002</b>									
Mar qtr	-20.1	4.1	14.3	-7.4	-8.1	5.5	n.a.	-55.4	-7.7
Jun qtr	18.7	2.9	-10.0	18.2	1.6	2.4	n.a.	85.0	5.7
Sep qtr	-6.5	10.6	33.1	-8.1	10.7	1.4	n.a.	34.0	9.3
TREND ESTIMATES (Number)									
<b>2001</b>									
Jun qtr	8 955	9 757	6 504	1 855	3 810	297	288	482	31 652
Sep qtr	10 473	11 022	7 883	2 182	4 441	380	309	569	37 284
Dec qtr	11 957	11 729	8 690	2 444	4 831	471	262	591	41 113
<b>2002</b>									
Mar qtr	12 409	12 079	9 105	2 572	4 874	518	221	594	42 284
Jun qtr	12 385	12 534	9 688	2 628	4 887	539	238	655	43 206
Sep qtr	12 218	13 252	10 645	2 665	5 024	544	269	757	44 883
TREND ESTIMATES (% change from previous quarter)									
<b>2001</b>									
Jun qtr	8.7	15.4	19.1	19.7	14.6	17.1	28.5	24.1	13.1
Sep qtr	17.0	13.0	21.2	17.6	16.6	27.9	7.4	18.0	17.8
Dec qtr	14.2	6.4	10.2	12.0	8.8	24.2	-15.4	3.9	10.3
<b>2002</b>									
Mar qtr	3.8	3.0	4.8	5.2	0.9	9.9	-15.5	0.5	2.8
Jun qtr	-0.2	3.8	6.4	2.2	0.3	4.1	7.8	10.2	2.2
Sep qtr	-1.3	5.7	9.9	1.4	2.8	0.9	12.9	15.6	3.9

(a) Includes conversions, etc.

	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.
Period	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.
NEW HOUSES									
<b>1999-00</b>	30 753	34 716	24 218	7 856	18 650	1 538	936	1 460	120 128
<b>2000-01</b>	17 751	24 166	14 505	5 390	10 895	1 035	577	1 011	75 330
<b>2001-02</b>	25 555	35 002	25 252	8 285	16 326	1 770	645	1 191	114 026
<b>2001</b>									
Jun qtr	4 600	6 614	4 357	1 443	2 722	292	182	239	20 449
Sep qtr	5 827	8 436	6 473	1 857	4 112	324	186	287	27 501
Dec qtr	7 201	8 811	6 391	2 273	4 365	470	161	291	29 962
<b>2002</b>									
Mar qtr	6 001	8 332	6 006	1 949	3 865	494	130	248	27 024
Jun qtr	6 527	9 424	6 382	2 207	3 984	482	168	365	29 539
Sep qtr	6 944	9 270	7 499	2 377	4 692	475	174	414	31 845
NEW OTHER RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS									
<b>1999-00</b>	19 430	11 725	10 130	1 398	3 916	185	594	948	48 326
<b>2000-01</b>	14 829	9 584	7 814	1 120	2 592	60	446	634	37 079
<b>2001-02</b>	20 874	11 610	9 638	1 652	2 839	154	386	1 186	48 339
<b>2001</b>									
Jun qtr	3 441	2 551	2 021	180	562	12	201	137	9 106
Sep qtr	4 916	3 414	2 097	535	877	10	178	263	12 289
Dec qtr	5 927	2 374	2 165	310	820	63	77	584	12 320
<b>2002</b>									
Mar qtr	4 488	2 698	2 376	376	499	17	15	123	10 592
Jun qtr	5 543	3 124	3 001	431	643	64	115	216	13 138
Sep qtr	5 911	4 259	3 504	324	860	19	120	473	15 470
CONVERSIONS, ETC.									
<b>1999-00</b>	723	1 896	229	156	266	44	27	71	3 411
<b>2000-01</b>	849	871	347	46	404	14	4	1	2 536
<b>2001-02</b>	1 190	1 225	317	59	76	10	4	9	2 890
<b>2001</b>									
Jun qtr	105	204	124	5	95	3	1	—	537
Sep qtr	267	343	65	8	13	5	—	1	701
Dec qtr	208	147	33	30	5	1	1	—	424
<b>2002</b>									
Mar qtr	303	458	108	10	10	4	3	7	904
Jun qtr	412	277	112	11	48	—	—	1	861
Sep qtr	471	235	314	28	—	3	2	—	1 053
TOTAL									
<b>1999-00</b>	50 906	48 337	34 577	9 410	22 832	1 767	1 557	2 479	171 865
<b>2000-01</b>	33 429	34 620	22 666	6 556	13 891	1 109	1 027	1 646	114 945
<b>2001-02</b>	47 617	47 837	35 208	9 996	19 240	1 934	1 035	2 386	165 255
<b>2001</b>									
Jun qtr	8 147	9 369	6 502	1 628	3 380	307	384	376	30 092
Sep qtr	11 009	12 192	8 634	2 400	5 002	339	364	551	40 492
Dec qtr	13 335	11 332	8 588	2 613	5 190	534	239	875	42 705
<b>2002</b>									
Mar qtr	10 792	11 488	8 490	2 335	4 374	515	148	378	38 519
Jun qtr	12 481	12 825	9 496	2 649	4 675	546	283	582	43 538
Sep qtr	13 326	13 765	11 317	2 729	5 553	497	296	886	48 369

(a) Includes conversions, etc.

## 4

DWELLING UNIT COMMENCEMENTS, Private Sector: **Original**

	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.
Period	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.
NEW HOUSES									
<b>1999-00</b>	30 565	34 269	23 823	7 729	18 310	1 519	732	1 430	118 378
<b>2000-01</b>	17 618	23 921	14 260	5 303	10 590	1 028	434	973	74 128
<b>2001-02</b>	25 455	34 591	24 994	8 034	15 876	1 712	514	1 141	112 319
<b>2001</b>									
Jun qtr	4 558	6 562	4 287	1 422	2 686	292	158	221	20 187
Sep qtr	5 811	8 340	6 420	1 835	4 005	320	178	282	27 192
Dec qtr	7 136	8 628	6 293	2 217	4 242	468	108	262	29 353
<b>2002</b>									
Mar qtr	5 990	8 249	5 955	1 853	3 772	463	110	232	26 625
Jun qtr	6 518	9 373	6 326	2 130	3 857	461	118	365	29 149
Sep qtr	6 935	9 215	7 455	2 289	4 476	469	132	390	31 361
NEW OTHER RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS									
<b>1999-00</b>	18 646	11 502	9 645	1 381	3 264	181	523	898	46 040
<b>2000-01</b>	13 791	9 435	7 289	1 097	1 968	55	307	562	34 504
<b>2001-02</b>	20 256	11 264	9 361	1 614	2 246	143	280	1 156	46 320
<b>2001</b>									
Jun qtr	3 174	2 529	1 852	178	376	12	133	74	8 329
Sep qtr	4 786	3 310	1 930	522	527	8	83	263	11 428
Dec qtr	5 795	2 332	2 137	296	738	63	75	564	12 000
<b>2002</b>									
Mar qtr	4 257	2 586	2 356	369	395	8	6	117	10 094
Jun qtr	5 418	3 036	2 939	427	586	64	115	212	12 798
Sep qtr	5 808	4 169	3 338	310	623	19	108	473	14 849
CONVERSIONS, ETC.									
<b>1999-00</b>	702	1 874	228	156	230	43	27	71	3 330
<b>2000-01</b>	841	868	345	42	234	11	3	1	2 345
<b>2001-02</b>	1 188	1 224	298	59	69	10	4	9	2 861
<b>2001</b>									
Jun qtr	104	204	124	5	47	3	—	—	487
Sep qtr	267	343	47	8	12	5	—	1	682
Dec qtr	207	147	33	30	4	1	1	—	422
<b>2002</b>									
Mar qtr	302	458	108	10	10	4	3	7	903
Jun qtr	412	276	111	11	43	—	—	1	854
Sep qtr	471	235	314	28	—	3	2	—	1 053
TOTAL									
<b>1999-00</b>	49 913	47 645	33 696	9 266	21 804	1 743	1 282	2 399	167 748
<b>2000-01</b>	32 251	34 224	21 895	6 442	12 792	1 094	744	1 536	110 977
<b>2001-02</b>	46 898	47 079	34 655	9 707	18 192	1 865	798	2 306	161 500
<b>2001</b>									
Jun qtr	7 837	9 295	6 264	1 605	3 110	307	291	295	29 003
Sep qtr	10 864	11 993	8 396	2 365	4 544	333	261	546	39 302
Dec qtr	13 137	11 108	8 463	2 543	4 984	532	184	826	41 776
<b>2002</b>									
Mar qtr	10 550	11 294	8 419	2 232	4 177	475	119	356	37 621
Jun qtr	12 347	12 685	9 377	2 568	4 487	525	233	578	42 801
Sep qtr	13 214	13 619	11 107	2 627	5 099	490	242	862	47 263

	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.
Period	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.
NEW HOUSES									
<b>1999-00</b>	188	447	395	127	340	19	204	30	1 750
<b>2000-01</b>	133	245	245	87	305	7	143	38	1 202
<b>2001-02</b>	100	411	258	251	448	58	131	50	1 707
<b>2001</b>									
Jun qtr	42	52	70	21	36	—	24	18	262
Sep qtr	16	95	53	22	106	4	8	5	309
Dec qtr	65	183	98	56	123	2	53	29	608
<b>2002</b>									
Mar qtr	10	82	51	96	93	31	20	16	399
Jun qtr	9	51	56	77	126	21	50	—	390
Sep qtr	9	55	44	89	216	6	42	24	485
NEW OTHER RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS									
<b>1999-00</b>	784	223	485	17	652	4	71	50	2 286
<b>2000-01</b>	1 038	149	525	23	624	5	139	72	2 575
<b>2001-02</b>	618	346	277	38	593	11	106	30	2 019
<b>2001</b>									
Jun qtr	267	22	169	2	186	—	68	63	777
Sep qtr	130	104	167	13	350	2	95	—	861
Dec qtr	132	41	28	14	82	—	2	20	319
<b>2002</b>									
Mar qtr	231	112	20	7	104	9	9	6	498
Jun qtr	125	88	62	4	57	—	—	4	340
Sep qtr	103	90	166	14	237	—	12	—	622
CONVERSIONS, ETC.									
<b>1999-00</b>	21	22	1	—	36	1	—	—	81
<b>2000-01</b>	8	3	2	4	170	3	1	—	191
<b>2001-02</b>	2	1	19	—	7	—	—	—	29
<b>2001</b>									
Jun qtr	1	—	—	—	48	—	1	—	50
Sep qtr	—	—	18	—	1	—	—	—	19
Dec qtr	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	2
<b>2002</b>									
Mar qtr	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
Jun qtr	—	1	1	—	5	—	—	—	7
Sep qtr	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
TOTAL									
<b>1999-00</b>	993	692	881	144	1 028	24	275	80	4 117
<b>2000-01</b>	1 179	397	772	114	1 099	15	283	110	3 968
<b>2001-02</b>	720	758	554	289	1 048	69	237	80	3 754
<b>2001</b>									
Jun qtr	310	74	239	23	270	—	93	81	1 089
Sep qtr	146	200	238	35	457	6	103	5	1 190
Dec qtr	198	224	126	70	206	2	55	49	930
<b>2002</b>									
Mar qtr	242	194	71	103	197	40	29	22	898
Jun qtr	134	140	119	81	188	21	50	4	737
Sep qtr	112	145	210	102	453	6	54	24	1 107



# EXPLANATORY NOTES

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## INTRODUCTION

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

**2** The statistics were compiled on the basis of returns collected from builders and other individuals and organisations engaged in building activity. From the March quarter 2002, the quarterly survey consists of a sample survey of private sector residential building jobs valued at \$10,000 or more and a complete enumeration of all such public sector residential building jobs. Estimates in respect of commencements of private sector dwellings and total dwellings are therefore subject to sampling variability. The relative standard errors for these estimates are shown on page 2. Also, some returns containing jobs not known to have commenced are not received in time for inclusion in these estimates. Allowance is made for a proportion of these jobs, based on past experience, to have commenced. Estimates in this issue are therefore subject to revision.

**3** The use of sample survey techniques in the Building Activity Survey means that reliable estimates of the number of private sector dwelling commencements are generally available only at state, territory and Australia levels. Although subject to higher relative standard errors, a range of sub-state estimates of dwelling commencements may be available. Reliable small area data are available for the Northern Territory, which has been completely enumerated since the June quarter 1991. Detailed data on Building Approvals, based on information reported by local government and other reporting authorities, are available for regions below state and territory level from the Building Approvals series compiled by the ABS.

## DEFINITIONS

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

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

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

■ A *house* is defined as a detached building predominantly used for long-term residential purposes and consisting of only one dwelling unit. Thus, detached granny flats and detached dwelling units such as caretakers' residences associated with non-residential buildings are defined as houses for the purpose of these statistics.

■ An *other residential building* is defined as a building which is predominantly used for long-term residential purposes and which contains (or has attached to it) more than one dwelling unit (e.g. includes townhouses, duplexes, apartment buildings, etc.).

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

## EXPLANATORY NOTES *continued*

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### DEFINITIONS *continued*

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

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

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

### SEASONAL ADJUSTMENT

**10** Seasonally adjusted building statistics are shown in tables 1 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.

**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. Thus, for example, the figures which can be derived by subtracting seasonally adjusted private sector dwelling units from the seasonally adjusted total dwelling units should not be used to represent seasonally adjusted public sector dwelling units.

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

### TREND ESTIMATES

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

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

## EXPLANATORY NOTES *continued*

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### TREND ESTIMATES *continued*

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

### ACKNOWLEDGMENT

**16** ABS publications draw extensively on information provided freely by individuals, businesses, governments and other organisations. Their continued cooperation is very much appreciated: without it, the wide range of statistics published by the ABS would not be available. Information received by the ABS is treated in strict confidence as required by the *Census and Statistics Act 1905*.

### RELATED PRODUCTS

**17** Users may also wish to refer to the following publications which are available from ABS Bookshops:

- Building Activity, Australia* (cat. no. 8752.0) Quarterly
- Building Approvals, Australia* (cat. no. 8731.0) Monthly
- Construction Work Done, Australia, Preliminary* (cat. no. 8755.0) Quarterly
- House Price Indexes: Eight Capital Cities* (cat. no. 6416.0) Quarterly
- Housing Finance for Owner Occupation, Australia* (cat. no. 5609.0) Monthly
- Producer Price Indexes, Australia* (cat. no. 6427.0) Quarterly
- Private Sector Construction Industry, Australia, 1996–97* (cat. no. 8772.0).

**18** Current publications and other products released by the ABS are listed in the *Catalogue of Publications and Products* (cat. no. 1101.0). The Catalogue is available from any ABS office or the ABS web site <<http://www.abs.gov.au>>. The ABS also issues a daily Release Advice on the web site which details products to be released in the week ahead.

### ABS DATA AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

**19** As well as the statistics included in this and related publications, the ABS may have other relevant data available on request. Inquiries should be made to the National Information and Referral Service on 1300 135 070.

### SYMBOLS AND OTHER USAGES

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

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

## FOR MORE INFORMATION...

- INTERNET* **www.abs.gov.au** the ABS web site is the best place to start for access to summary data from our latest publications, information about the ABS, advice about upcoming releases, our catalogue, and Australia Now—a statistical profile.
- LIBRARY* A range of ABS publications is available from public and tertiary libraries Australia-wide. Contact your nearest library to determine whether it has the ABS statistics you require, or visit our web site for a list of libraries.
- CPI INFOLINE* For current and historical Consumer Price Index data, call 1902 981 074 (call cost 77c per minute).
- DIAL-A-STATISTIC* For the latest figures for National Accounts, Balance of Payments, Labour Force, Average Weekly Earnings, Estimated Resident Population and the Consumer Price Index call 1900 986 400 (call cost 77c per minute).

### INFORMATION SERVICE

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