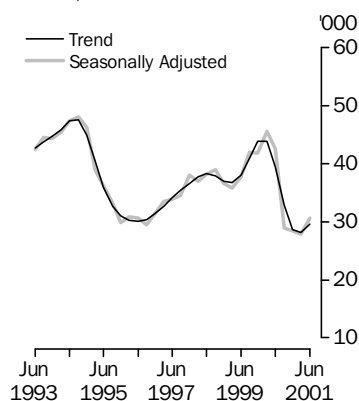


**BUILDING ACTIVITY**  
**DWELLING UNIT**  
**COMMENCEMENTS**

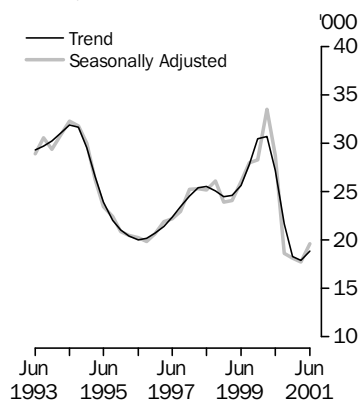
**AUSTRALIA**  
**PRELIMINARY**

EMBARGO: 11:30AM (CANBERRA TIME) THURS 13 SEPT 2001

**Dwelling units commenced**  
Number, Total



**New houses commenced**  
Number, Private sector



**JUNE QTR KEY FIGURES**

<b>TREND ESTIMATES</b>	<b>Jun qtr 01</b>	<b>% change Mar qtr 01 to Jun qtr 01</b>	<b>% change Jun qtr 00 to Jun qtr 01</b>
Dwelling units commenced			
New private sector houses	18 890	5.4	-30.7
Total dwelling units	29 553	5.0	-25.2
.....			
<b>SEASONALLY ADJUSTED</b>	<b>Jun qtr 01</b>	<b>% change Mar qtr 01 to Jun qtr 01</b>	<b>% change Jun qtr 00 to Jun qtr 01</b>
Dwelling units commenced			
New private sector houses	19 615	10.6	-31.9
Total dwelling units	30 601	10.0	-28.1

**JUNE QTR KEY POINTS**

**TREND ESTIMATES**

- The trend estimate for the total number of dwelling units commenced rose 5.0% in the June quarter 2001, following falls in each of the previous four quarters.
- The growth in private sector houses (5.4%) has been the major driver of the growth in total dwelling units commencements.

**SEASONALLY ADJUSTED ESTIMATES**

- In seasonally adjusted terms, the total number of dwelling units commenced rose 10.0% to 30,601 in the June quarter. The March estimate (27,816) was the lowest level of commencements since the March quarter 1983.
- Commencements of new private sector houses rose 10.6% in the June quarter to 19,615. This was still 31.9% below the level of a year earlier.

**ORIGINAL ESTIMATES**

- The total number of dwelling units commenced rose 14.8% to 30,733 in the June quarter, from the lowest number since the March quarter 1983. While new houses rose 21.9% to 20,478, other dwellings rose 2.7% to 10,255.

- 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>
September 2001	14 December 2001
December 2001	19 March 2002

### 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 the number of building jobs. More comprehensive and updated results will be released in *Building Activity, Australia* (Cat. no. 8752.0) on 12 October 2001.

### SIGNIFICANT REVISIONS THIS ISSUE

The total number of dwelling units commenced in Australia during the March quarter 2001 has been revised upwards by 107 (+0.4%) from the estimate published in *Building Activity, Australia, March quarter 2001* (Cat. no. 8752.0) released on 19 July 2001. This was the result of upward revisions of 112 (+1.5%) in New South Wales and 106 (+3.5%) in Western Australia being partially offset by downward revisions of 74 (-0.9%) in Victoria and 37 (-0.7%) in Queensland.

### RELIABILITY OF ESTIMATES

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 June quarter 2001 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: JUNE QUARTER 2001

	<i>New private sector houses</i>	<i>Total dwellings</i>
	%	%
New South Wales	3.8	2.2
Victoria	2.7	1.9
Queensland	1.9	1.2
South Australia	2.8	2.4
Western Australia	4.1	3.2
Tasmania	2.1	2.1
Northern Territory	..	..
Australian Capital Territory	0.4	0.2
<b>Australia</b>	<b>1.4</b>	<b>1.0</b>

R.W. Edwards  
Acting Australian Statistician

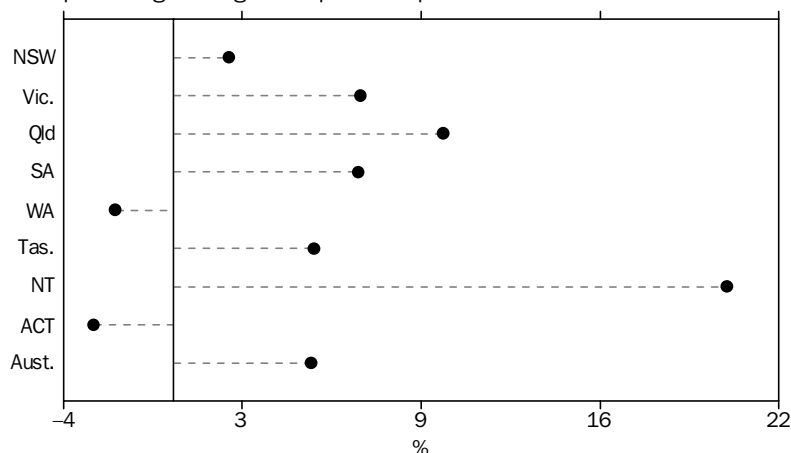
# STATE ESTIMATES

## TOTAL NUMBER OF DWELLING UNITS COMMENCED

### Trend estimates

- The trend estimate of the total number of dwelling units commenced during the June quarter 2001 rose in most States and Territories after large falls in the previous year. The Northern Territory recorded the largest percentage increase (+20.1%), followed by Queensland (+9.8%), Victoria (+6.8%), South Australia (+6.7%), Tasmania (+5.1%) and New South Wales (+2.0%). Falls in both Western Australia (-2.1%) and the Australian Capital Territory (-2.9%) were the sixth successive quarterly falls.

Trend percentage change from previous quarter



### Seasonally adjusted estimates

- In seasonally adjusted terms, the biggest increase in the total number of dwelling units commenced in the June quarter was recorded by Tasmania (+50.4%), followed by Queensland (+17.4%) and New South Wales (+13.7%). Western Australia was the only State or Territory to fall, recording a decline of 3.7%.

### Original estimates

- There were increases in the total number of dwelling units commenced in the June quarter 2001 in all States and Territories except the Australian Capital Territory. The biggest percentage increase was in the Northern Territory (+264.8%), followed by Tasmania (+47.9%), Queensland (+37.6%), Victoria (+11.0%), New South Wales (+7.3%), Western Australia (+6.0%) and South Australia (+2.0%).
- Percentage movements between 1999-00 and 2000-01 in the number of dwelling units commenced by type of dwelling unit by State were:

	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
New houses	-42.2	-30.2	-40.2	-31.0	-41.8	-32.5	-38.4	-30.8	-37.3
Other dwellings	-21.6	-20.9	-18.0	-25.2	-28.4	-66.4	-27.9	-37.7	-22.0
<b>Total dwellings</b>	<b>-34.0</b>	<b>-27.6</b>	<b>-33.6</b>	<b>-30.1</b>	<b>-39.3</b>	<b>-36.9</b>	<b>-34.2</b>	<b>-33.6</b>	<b>-32.6</b>

**TABLE 1. NUMBER OF DWELLING UNITS COMMENCED**

<i>Period</i>	<i>New houses</i>		<i>Total dwelling units (includes conversions etc)</i>	
	<i>Private sector</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Private sector</i>	<i>Total</i>
<b>ORIGINAL</b>				
2000 Mar. qtr	31,293	31,675	42,956	43,892
Jun qtr	29,666	29,997	42,048	42,805
Sep. qtr	18,505	18,912	28,056	29,423
Dec. qtr	18,903	19,188	28,145	28,822
2001 Mar. qtr	16,551	16,799	25,945	26,780
Jun qtr	20,214	20,478	29,639	30,733
<b>SEASONALLY ADJUSTED</b>				
2000 Mar. qtr	33,580	34,011	44,609	45,632
Jun qtr	28,794	29,151	41,917	42,577
Sep. qtr	18,602	18,883	27,756	28,921
Dec. qtr	18,129	18,487	27,481	28,351
2001 Mar. qtr	17,741	18,018	26,915	27,816
Jun qtr	19,615	19,898	29,579	30,601
<b>TREND ESTIMATES</b>				
2000 Mar. qtr	30,765	31,209	42,907	43,902
Jun qtr	27,245	27,621	38,568	39,487
Sep. qtr	21,657	21,972	31,914	32,824
Dec. qtr	18,293	18,590	27,736	28,683
2001 Mar. qtr	17,918	18,213	27,180	28,134
Jun qtr	18,890	19,165	28,620	29,553

**TABLE 2. NUMBER OF DWELLING UNITS COMMENCED, PERCENTAGE CHANGE**

<i>Period</i>	<i>New houses</i>		<i>Total dwelling units (includes conversions etc)</i>	
	<i>Private sector</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Private sector</i>	<i>Total</i>
<b>ORIGINAL (% change from previous quarter)</b>				
2000 Mar. qtr	6.2	5.6	3.4	3.3
Jun qtr	-5.2	-5.3	-2.1	-2.5
Sep. qtr	-37.6	-37.0	-33.3	-31.3
Dec. qtr	2.2	1.5	0.3	-2.0
2001 Mar. qtr	-12.4	-12.5	-7.8	-7.1
Jun qtr	22.1	21.9	14.2	14.8
<b>SEASONALLY ADJUSTED (% change from previous quarter)</b>				
2000 Mar. qtr	18.7	17.7	9.9	9.1
Jun qtr	-14.3	-14.3	-6.0	-6.7
Sep. qtr	-35.4	-35.2	-33.8	-32.1
Dec. qtr	-2.5	-2.1	-1.0	-2.0
2001 Mar. qtr	-2.1	-2.5	-2.1	-1.9
Jun qtr	10.6	10.4	9.9	10.0
<b>TREND ESTIMATES (% change from previous quarter)</b>				
2000 Mar. qtr	0.9	0.8	0.3	—
Jun qtr	-11.4	-11.5	-10.1	-10.1
Sep. qtr	-20.5	-20.5	-17.3	-16.9
Dec. qtr	-15.5	-15.4	-13.1	-12.6
2001 Mar. qtr	-2.0	-2.0	-2.0	-1.9
Jun qtr	5.4	5.2	5.3	5.0

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

<i>Period</i>	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic.</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>Tas.</i>	<i>NT</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>Australia</i>
SEASONALLY ADJUSTED									
2000 Mar. qtr	12,798	13,067	9,120	2,673	6,805	498	n.a.	592	45,632
Jun qtr	12,396	12,152	9,341	2,521	4,730	531	n.a.	570	42,577
Sep. qtr	7,722	8,893	5,974	1,772	3,705	275	n.a.	405	28,921
Dec. qtr	9,614	7,689	5,046	1,398	3,465	314	n.a.	482	28,351
2001 Mar. qtr	7,628	9,097	5,490	1,687	3,402	209	n.a.	371	27,816
Jun qtr	8,674	9,338	6,443	1,747	3,277	315	n.a.	389	30,601
TREND ESTIMATES									
2000 Mar. qtr	12,511	12,479	9,085	2,508	5,881	404	383	617	43,902
Jun qtr	11,210	11,368	8,313	2,330	5,014	387	348	538	39,487
Sep. qtr	9,610	9,575	6,671	1,909	4,022	331	273	470	32,824
Dec. qtr	8,567	8,521	5,583	1,612	3,464	279	214	428	28,683
2001 Mar. qtr	8,284	8,591	5,477	1,584	3,342	263	215	401	28,134
Jun qtr	8,448	9,176	6,015	1,691	3,271	276	258	389	29,553

(a) Includes conversions, etc.

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

<i>Period</i>	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic.</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>Tas.</i>	<i>NT</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>Australia</i>
SEASONALLY ADJUSTED (% change from previous quarter)									
2000 Mar. qtr	2.8	13.8	7.4	24.2	24.6	32.1	n.a.	-13.7	9.1
Jun qtr	-3.1	-7.0	2.4	-5.7	-30.5	6.7	n.a.	-3.8	-6.7
Sep. qtr	-37.7	-26.8	-36.0	-29.7	-21.7	-48.3	n.a.	-29.0	-32.1
Dec. qtr	24.5	-13.5	-15.5	-21.1	-6.5	14.2	n.a.	19.1	-2.0
2001 Mar. qtr	-20.7	18.3	8.8	20.6	-1.8	-33.3	n.a.	-23.1	-1.9
Jun qtr	13.7	2.6	17.4	3.6	-3.7	50.4	n.a.	4.9	10.0
TREND ESTIMATES (% change from previous quarter)									
2000 Mar. qtr	-4.3	1.9	5.2	6.7	-3.3	4.5	-5.8	-4.2	—
Jun qtr	-10.4	-8.9	-8.5	-7.1	-14.8	-4.2	-9.0	-12.9	-10.1
Sep. qtr	-14.3	-15.8	-19.7	-18.1	-19.8	-14.7	-21.5	-12.7	-16.9
Dec. qtr	-10.8	-11.0	-16.3	-15.6	-13.9	-15.5	-21.6	-8.9	-12.6
2001 Mar. qtr	-3.3	0.8	-1.9	-1.7	-3.5	-6.0	0.2	-6.4	-1.9
Jun qtr	2.0	6.8	9.8	6.7	-2.1	5.1	20.1	-2.9	5.0

(a) Includes conversions, etc.

**TABLE 5. TOTAL NUMBER OF DWELLING UNITS COMMENCED**

<i>Period</i>	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic.</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>Tas.</i>	<i>NT</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>Australia</i>
<b>NEW HOUSES</b>									
1998-1999	27,548	29,165	20,150	6,296	15,948	1,264	1,427	1,364	103,164
1999-2000	30,754	34,716	24,218	7,857	18,650	1,538	936	1,460	120,127
2000-2001	17,771	24,215	14,483	5,419	10,863	1,038	577	1,011	75,377
2000 Mar. qtr	8,364	8,975	5,941	2,064	5,303	431	217	380	31,675
Jun qtr	7,880	8,769	6,523	1,994	3,770	447	191	423	29,997
Sep. qtr	4,404	6,138	3,389	1,419	2,915	235	179	235	18,912
Dec. qtr	4,669	5,903	3,588	1,350	2,944	306	121	307	19,188
2001 Mar. qtr	4,076	5,524	3,163	1,192	2,315	203	94	231	16,799
Jun qtr	4,622	6,650	4,343	1,458	2,689	294	183	238	20,478
<b>NEW OTHER RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS</b>									
1998-1999	20,821	8,307	8,962	1,062	2,407	107	532	615	42,813
1999-2000	19,430	11,725	10,130	1,398	3,916	185	594	948	48,326
2000-2001	14,956	9,899	8,048	1,116	2,591	63	444	634	37,752
2000 Mar. qtr	4,456	2,856	2,261	422	934	70	138	181	11,318
Jun qtr	3,869	2,835	3,300	292	1,019	45	126	134	11,620
Sep. qtr	3,433	2,430	2,376	378	813	6	157	138	9,731
Dec. qtr	4,611	1,746	1,674	160	594	36	78	190	9,090
2001 Mar. qtr	3,343	3,009	1,747	400	622	6	10	169	9,306
Jun qtr	3,569	2,714	2,251	178	562	15	199	137	9,625
<b>CONVERSIONS, ETC</b>									
1998-1999	1,359	1,566	213	57	92	6	15	133	3,442
1999-2000	723	1,896	229	156	266	44	27	71	3,412
2000-2001	846	872	443	46	404	14	4	1	2,629
2000 Mar. qtr	117	539	20	58	78	1	17	69	899
Jun qtr	128	843	49	88	41	34	5	—	1,188
Sep. qtr	224	392	61	22	72	5	2	1	779
Dec. qtr	210	190	120	2	18	4	—	—	544
2001 Mar. qtr	310	85	42	17	219	2	1	—	676
Jun qtr	102	205	220	5	95	3	1	—	630
<b>TOTAL</b>									
1998-1999	49,728	39,038	29,325	7,416	18,447	1,377	1,974	2,112	149,419
1999-2000	50,907	48,337	34,577	9,411	22,832	1,766	1,557	2,479	171,865
2000-2001	33,574	34,985	22,973	6,581	13,859	1,115	1,025	1,646	115,758
2000 Mar. qtr	12,937	12,370	8,222	2,544	6,315	502	372	630	43,892
Jun qtr	11,877	12,447	9,872	2,374	4,830	526	322	557	42,805
Sep. qtr	8,061	8,960	5,826	1,819	3,800	246	338	374	29,423
Dec. qtr	9,490	7,839	5,382	1,512	3,557	346	199	497	28,822
2001 Mar. qtr	7,729	8,617	4,952	1,609	3,156	211	105	400	26,780
Jun qtr	8,294	9,569	6,813	1,641	3,346	312	383	375	30,733

**TABLE 6. TOTAL NUMBER OF PRIVATE SECTOR DWELLING UNITS COMMENCED**

<i>Period</i>	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic.</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>Tas.</i>	<i>NT</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>Australia</i>
NEW HOUSES									
1998-1999	27,155	28,512	19,714	6,091	15,383	1,263	933	1,300	100,353
1999-2000	30,566	34,269	23,823	7,730	18,310	1,519	732	1,430	118,377
2000-2001	17,638	23,970	14,238	5,332	10,558	1,031	433	973	74,173
2000 Mar. qtr	8,315	8,850	5,861	2,054	5,231	430	180	372	31,293
Jun qtr	7,830	8,685	6,455	1,977	3,695	442	160	422	29,666
Sep. qtr	4,363	6,081	3,332	1,380	2,774	228	124	225	18,505
Dec. qtr	4,653	5,843	3,530	1,345	2,832	306	93	301	18,903
2001 Mar. qtr	4,042	5,448	3,103	1,170	2,299	203	58	227	16,551
Jun qtr	4,580	6,598	4,273	1,437	2,653	294	158	220	20,214
NEW OTHER RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS									
1998-1999	19,673	7,878	8,292	1,039	1,982	107	485	611	40,067
1999-2000	18,646	11,502	9,645	1,381	3,264	181	523	898	46,040
2000-2001	13,918	9,750	7,520	1,093	1,967	58	305	562	35,174
2000 Mar. qtr	4,218	2,799	2,173	422	810	70	128	175	10,795
Jun qtr	3,717	2,817	3,221	288	892	41	105	134	11,215
Sep. qtr	3,125	2,374	2,171	378	488	4	129	129	8,798
Dec. qtr	4,432	1,699	1,624	152	527	33	43	190	8,701
2001 Mar. qtr	3,059	2,985	1,646	387	576	6	2	169	8,830
Jun qtr	3,302	2,692	2,079	176	376	15	131	74	8,845
CONVERSIONS, ETC									
1998-1999	1,336	1,542	211	55	92	6	15	133	3,391
1999-2000	702	1,874	228	156	230	43	27	71	3,331
2000-2001	838	869	441	42	234	11	3	1	2,438
2000 Mar. qtr	110	532	20	58	61	1	17	69	868
Jun qtr	127	831	48	88	35	33	5	—	1,167
Sep. qtr	219	391	61	19	55	4	2	1	752
Dec. qtr	208	190	120	1	18	4	—	—	541
2001 Mar. qtr	310	83	40	17	114	—	1	—	565
Jun qtr	101	205	220	5	47	3	—	—	580
TOTAL									
1998-1999	48,164	37,932	28,217	7,186	17,457	1,376	1,433	2,044	143,811
1999-2000	49,914	47,645	33,696	9,267	21,804	1,742	1,282	2,399	167,748
2000-2001	32,395	34,587	22,199	6,467	12,760	1,100	741	1,536	111,785
2000 Mar. qtr	12,643	12,181	8,054	2,534	6,102	501	325	616	42,956
Jun qtr	11,674	12,333	9,724	2,353	4,622	516	270	556	42,048
Sep. qtr	7,707	8,846	5,564	1,777	3,317	236	255	355	28,056
Dec. qtr	9,293	7,732	5,274	1,498	3,378	343	136	491	28,145
2001 Mar. qtr	7,411	8,515	4,789	1,574	2,989	209	61	396	25,945
Jun qtr	7,984	9,494	6,572	1,618	3,076	312	289	294	29,639

**TABLE 7. TOTAL NUMBER OF PUBLIC SECTOR DWELLING UNITS COMMENCED**

<i>Period</i>	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic.</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>Tas.</i>	<i>NT</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>Australia</i>
<b>NEW HOUSES</b>									
1998-1999	393	653	436	205	565	1	494	64	2,811
1999-2000	188	447	395	127	340	19	204	30	1,750
2000-2001	133	246	245	87	305	7	144	38	1,204
2000 Mar. qtr	49	125	80	10	72	1	37	8	382
Jun qtr	50	84	68	17	75	5	31	1	331
Sep. qtr	41	57	57	39	141	7	55	10	407
Dec. qtr	16	60	58	5	112	—	28	6	285
2001 Mar. qtr	34	76	60	22	16	—	36	4	248
Jun qtr	42	53	70	21	36	—	25	18	264
<b>NEW OTHER RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS</b>									
1998-1999	1,148	429	670	23	425	—	47	4	2,746
1999-2000	784	223	485	17	652	4	71	50	2,286
2000-2001	1,038	149	528	23	624	5	139	72	2,578
2000 Mar. qtr	238	57	88	—	124	—	10	6	523
Jun qtr	152	18	79	4	127	4	21	—	405
Sep. qtr	308	56	205	—	325	2	28	9	933
Dec. qtr	179	47	50	8	67	3	35	—	389
2001 Mar. qtr	284	24	101	13	46	—	8	—	476
Jun qtr	267	22	172	2	186	—	68	63	780
<b>CONVERSIONS, ETC</b>									
1998-1999	23	24	2	2	—	—	—	—	51
1999-2000	21	22	1	—	36	1	—	—	81
2000-2001	8	3	2	4	170	3	1	—	191
2000 Mar. qtr	7	7	—	—	17	—	—	—	31
Jun qtr	1	12	1	—	6	1	—	—	21
Sep. qtr	5	1	—	3	17	1	—	—	27
Dec. qtr	2	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	3
2001 Mar. qtr	—	2	2	—	105	2	—	—	111
Jun qtr	1	—	—	—	48	—	1	—	50
<b>TOTAL</b>									
1998-1999	1,564	1,106	1,108	230	990	1	541	68	5,608
1999-2000	993	692	881	144	1,028	24	275	80	4,117
2000-2001	1,179	398	775	114	1,099	15	284	110	3,973
2000 Mar. qtr	294	189	168	10	213	1	47	14	936
Jun qtr	203	114	148	21	208	10	52	1	757
Sep. qtr	354	114	262	42	483	10	83	19	1,367
Dec. qtr	197	107	108	14	179	3	63	6	677
2001 Mar. qtr	318	102	163	35	167	2	44	4	835
Jun qtr	310	75	242	23	270	—	94	81	1,094



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

**3** The use of sample survey techniques in the Building Activity Survey means that reliable estimates of private sector house commencements based on survey results are generally available only at the State, Territory and Australia levels. Although subject to higher relative standard errors than for State level estimates, details of the number of new houses and total number of new dwellings can be made available for Capital City Statistical Divisions and Rest of State. 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 Australian Bureau of Statistics (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 1–4. In the seasonally adjusted series, account has been taken of normal seasonal factors and the effect of movement in the date of Easter which may, in successive years, affect figures for different quarters. Details regarding the methods used in seasonally adjusting the series are available on request.

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

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

### TREND ESTIMATES

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

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

## EXPLANATORY NOTES *continued*

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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) — issued quarterly
- Building Approvals, Australia* (Cat. no. 8731.0) — issued monthly
- House Price Indexes: Eight Capital Cities* (Cat. no. 6416.0) — issued quarterly
- Housing Finance for Owner Occupation, Australia* (Cat. no. 5609.0)  
— issued monthly
- Producer Price Indexes, Australia* (Cat. no. 6427.0) — issued quarterly
- Private Sector Construction Industry, Australia, 1996–97* (Cat. no. 8772.0)

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

### 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).

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