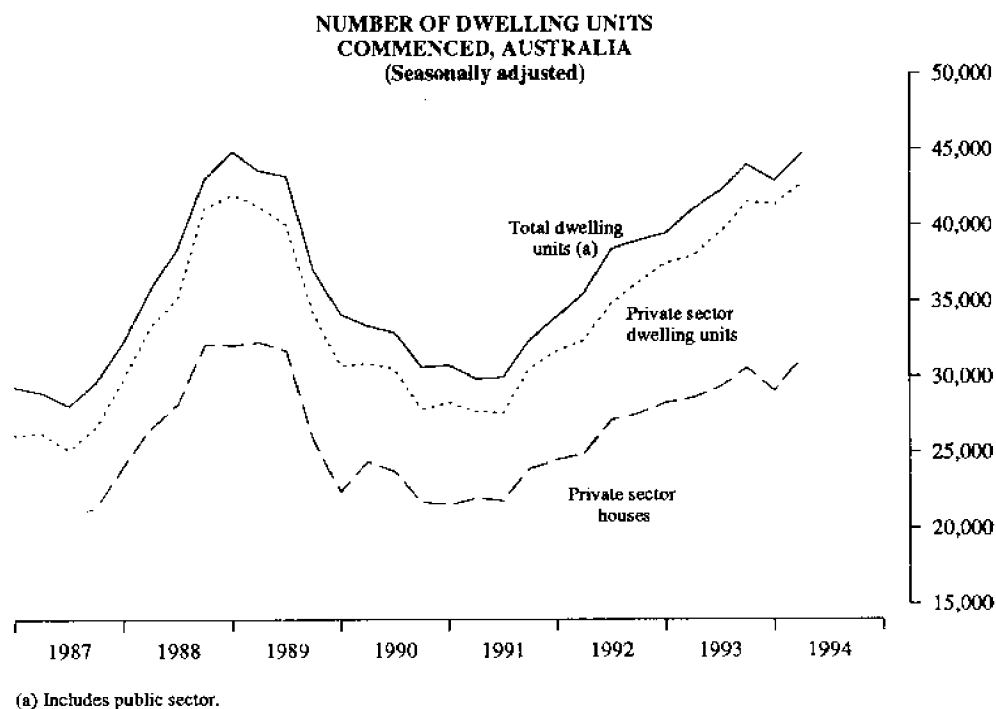


**BUILDING ACTIVITY, AUSTRALIA: DWELLING UNIT COMMENCEMENTS,
MARCH QUARTER 1994, PRELIMINARY**

MAIN FEATURES



In *seasonally adjusted* terms, the preliminary estimate of the number of dwelling units commenced in the March quarter 1994 was 44,710, up 4.1 per cent over the December quarter 1993 estimate and 8.9 per cent above the March quarter 1993 estimate. The March quarter 1994 estimate was the highest number of dwelling commencements in a quarter since the 44,856 dwellings commenced in the December quarter 1988. The highest number of dwelling commencements ever recorded in a quarter was the 45,457 commencements in the June quarter 1973. Private sector house commencements rose by 7.2 per cent to 31,162 in the March quarter 1994, and remained 8.9 per cent above the March quarter 1993 estimate.

Dwelling unit commencements rose in New South Wales (5.4%), Victoria (4.3%), Western Australia (5.3%), Tasmania (14.3%) and the Australian Capital Territory (70.3%, from a low December quarter 1993 base). These rises more than offset small falls in Queensland (-1.3%) and South Australia (-1.5%). Total commencements in the March quarter 1994 were higher than the corresponding 1993 estimates in all States except South Australia.

In *original* terms, there were 40,808 dwelling units commenced in the March quarter 1994, a decrease of 8.2 per cent from the high December quarter 1993 estimate of 44,469. Total private sector commencements fell by 8.9 per cent consistent across both house and other residential buildings. Total public sector commencements rose by 10.0 per cent, mainly due to a 42.0 per cent rise in public other residential building commencements (from a low December quarter 1993 base). Public sector house commencements fell by 15.3 per cent.

Total dwelling unit commencements in the March quarter 1994 were up 8.9 per cent over the same period in 1993. Commencements of other residential dwellings have increased by 12.6 per cent, while house commencements have increased by 7.5 per cent.

INQUIRIES

- for further information about these statistics in this publication and the availability of related unpublished statistics contact Paul Seville on Canberra (06) 252 6067 or any ABS State office.
- for information about other ABS statistics and services please refer to the back page of this publication.

TABLE 1. NUMBER OF DWELLING UNITS COMMENCED IN NEW RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS,
ORIGINAL AND SEASONALLY ADJUSTED, AUSTRALIA

Period	Houses		Other residential buildings	Total	
	Original	Seasonally adjusted		Original	Seasonally adjusted
PRIVATE SECTOR					
1990-91	87,038	..	24,448	111,486	..
1991-92	100,572	..	28,896	129,468	..
1992-93	113,708	..	37,389	151,097	..
1992—					
Dec. qtr	30,003	28,289	8,899	38,902	37,516
1993—					
Mar. qtr	25,827	28,612	8,983	34,810	38,013
June qtr	29,306	29,322	10,612	39,918	39,453
Sept. qtr	31,791	30,602	11,284	43,075	41,531
Dec. qtr	30,843	29,076	12,082	42,925	41,389
1994—					
Mar. qtr p	28,108	31,162	11,001	39,109	42,737
PUBLIC SECTOR					
1990-91	3,415	..	6,445	9,860	..
1991-92	3,500	..	7,279	10,779	..
1992-93	3,471	..	7,037	10,508	..
1992—					
Dec. qtr	592	n.a.	1,370	1,962	n.a.
1993—					
Mar. qtr	1,022	n.a.	1,645	2,667	n.a.
June qtr	1,223	n.a.	1,484	2,707	n.a.
Sept. qtr	889	n.a.	1,993	2,882	n.a.
Dec. qtr	860	n.a.	684	1,544	n.a.
1994—					
Mar. qtr p	728	n.a.	971	1,699	n.a.
TOTAL					
1990-91	90,453	..	30,893	121,346	..
1991-92	104,072	..	36,175	140,247	..
1992-93	117,179	..	44,426	161,605	..
1992—					
Dec. qtr	30,595	28,986	10,269	40,864	39,465
1993—					
Mar. qtr	26,849	29,621	10,628	37,477	41,038
June qtr	30,529	30,392	12,096	42,625	42,260
Sept. qtr	32,680	31,593	13,277	45,957	44,024
Dec. qtr	31,703	30,024	12,766	44,469	42,963
1994—					
Mar. qtr p	28,836	31,845	11,972	40,808	44,710

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

Period	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Australia
1992—									
Dec. qtr	11,056	7,089	11,087	2,820	5,138	1,019	n.a.	1,166	39,465
1993									
Mar. qtr	11,390	7,086	11,858	3,045	5,566	1,023	n.a.	937	41,038
June qtr	11,564	7,342	12,818	3,112	5,320	940	n.a.	1,106	42,260
Sept. qtr	11,495	7,356	13,179	3,132	5,714	1,056	n.a.	1,041	44,024
Dec. qtr	10,956	7,951	13,252	2,710	6,103	1,005	n.a.	788	42,963
1994									
Mar. qtr p	11,548	8,292	13,083	2,670	6,428	1,149	n.a.	1,342	44,710

(a) Seasonally adjusted data are not available for the Northern Territory.

TABLE 3. NUMBER OF DWELLING UNITS COMMENCED
IN NEW RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS

<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>
HOUSES									
1990-91	23,185	21,094	23,566	8,177	10,319	2,401	596	1,115	90,453
1991-92	26,387	22,392	29,016	8,344	12,279	2,702	921	2,029	104,072
1992-93	27,397	25,717	33,516	9,416	15,011	2,878	828	2,417	117,179
<i>1992—</i>									
Dec. qtr	7,031	6,935	8,908	2,356	3,704	791	199	672	30,595
<i>1993—</i>									
Mar. qtr	6,304	5,852	7,497	2,204	3,651	703	176	462	26,849
June qtr	7,120	6,753	8,629	2,504	3,978	716	254	576	30,529
Sept. qtr	7,603	6,779	9,329	2,776	4,531	731	323	607	32,680
Dec. qtr	6,764	7,478	9,182	2,388	4,462	756	263	410	31,703
<i>1994—</i>									
Mar. qtr p	6,432	6,707	8,008	2,030	4,222	793	285	359	28,836
OTHER RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS									
1990-91	12,307	2,486	8,203	2,644	3,059	875	258	1,061	30,893
1991-92	14,351	3,029	9,525	2,327	4,044	962	436	1,501	36,175
1992-93	17,064	2,438	13,469	2,219	5,778	1,099	366	1,993	44,426
<i>1992—</i>									
Dec. qtr	4,625	464	2,574	551	1,324	282	76	373	10,269
<i>1993—</i>									
Mar. qtr	4,125	757	2,909	706	1,458	249	81	343	10,628
June qtr	4,142	634	4,463	520	1,441	246	101	549	12,096
Sept. qtr	4,521	708	4,728	478	1,683	319	162	678	13,277
Dec. qtr	4,801	830	4,500	405	1,516	301	121	292	12,766
<i>1994</i>									
Mar. qtr p	4,132	1,021	3,487	526	1,667	278	68	793	11,972
TOTAL									
1990-91	35,492	23,580	31,769	10,821	13,378	3,276	854	2,176	121,346
1991-92	40,738	25,421	38,541	10,671	16,323	3,664	1,357	3,530	140,247
1992-93	44,461	28,155	46,985	11,635	20,789	3,977	1,194	4,410	161,603
<i>1992—</i>									
Dec. qtr	11,656	7,399	11,482	2,907	5,028	1,073	275	1,045	40,864
<i>1993—</i>									
Mar. qtr	10,429	6,609	10,406	2,910	5,109	952	257	805	37,477
June qtr	11,262	7,387	13,092	3,024	5,419	962	355	1,125	42,625
Sept. qtr	12,124	7,487	14,057	3,254	6,214	1,050	485	1,285	45,957
Dec. qtr	11,565	8,308	13,682	2,793	5,978	1,057	384	702	44,469
<i>1994—</i>									
Mar. qtr p	10,564	7,728	11,495	2,556	5,889	1,071	353	1,152	40,808

TABLE 4. NUMBER OF PRIVATE SECTOR DWELLING UNITS COMMENCED
IN NEW RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS

<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>
HOUSES									
1990-91	22,632	20,032	22,654	7,863	9,971	2,310	465	1,111	87,038
1991-92	25,412	21,827	28,068	8,036	11,921	2,609	669	2,028	100,572
1992-93	26,554	24,633	32,793	9,122	14,615	2,840	744	2,408	113,708
<i>1992—</i>									
Dec. qtr	6,896	6,715	8,788	2,325	3,628	786	196	670	30,003
<i>1993—</i>									
Mar. qtr	6,105	5,484	7,314	2,136	3,479	687	160	462	25,827
June qtr	6,779	6,414	8,363	2,369	3,879	716	211	576	29,306
Sept. qtr	7,403	6,553	9,155	2,611	4,420	731	314	603	31,791
Dec. qtr	6,677	7,114	8,983	2,329	4,357	750	225	408	30,843
<i>1994—</i>									
Mar. qtr p	6,335	6,459	7,912	1,984	4,130	759	210	319	28,108
OTHER RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS									
1990-91	9,939	1,883	6,496	1,810	2,453	771	189	907	24,448
1991-92	11,542	1,887	8,595	1,572	2,657	877	390	1,376	28,896
1992-93	14,225	2,155	12,096	1,759	3,955	997	353	1,849	37,389
<i>1992—</i>									
Dec. qtr	3,976	340	2,439	477	973	257	76	361	8,899
<i>1993—</i>									
Mar. qtr	3,518	735	2,712	568	910	185	81	274	8,983
June qtr	3,562	558	4,093	426	1,084	246	94	549	10,612
Sept. qtr	3,840	662	4,026	376	1,234	319	160	667	11,284
Dec. qtr	4,557	822	4,300	338	1,363	301	119	282	12,082
<i>1994—</i>									
Mar. qtr p	3,856	811	3,416	429	1,418	234	68	769	11,001
TOTAL									
1990-91	32,571	21,915	29,150	9,673	12,424	3,081	654	2,018	111,486
1991-92	36,954	23,714	36,663	9,608	14,578	3,486	1,059	3,404	129,468
1992-93	40,779	26,788	44,889	10,881	18,570	3,837	1,097	4,257	151,097
<i>1992—</i>									
Dec. qtr	10,872	7,055	11,227	2,802	4,601	1,043	272	1,031	38,902
<i>1993—</i>									
Mar. qtr	9,623	6,219	10,026	2,704	4,389	872	241	736	34,810
June qtr	10,341	6,972	12,456	2,795	4,963	962	305	1,125	39,918
Sept. qtr	11,243	7,215	13,181	2,987	5,654	1,050	474	1,270	43,075
Dec. qtr	11,234	7,936	13,283	2,667	5,720	1,051	344	690	42,925
<i>1994—</i>									
Mar. qtr p	10,191	7,270	11,328	2,413	5,548	993	278	1,088	39,109

TABLE 5. NUMBER OF PUBLIC SECTOR DWELLING UNITS COMMENCED
IN NEW RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS

<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>
HOUSES									
1990-91	553	1,062	912	314	348	91	131	4	3,415
1991-92	975	565	948	308	358	93	252	1	3,500
1992-93	843	1,084	723	294	396	38	84	9	3,471
<i>1992—</i> Dec. qtr	135	220	120	31	76	5	3	2	592
<i>1993—</i> Mar. qtr	199	368	183	68	172	16	16	—	1,022
June qtr	341	339	266	135	99	—	43	—	1,223
Sept. qtr	200	226	174	165	111	—	9	4	889
Dec. qtr	87	364	199	59	105	6	38	2	860
<i>1994—</i> Mar. qtr p	97	248	96	46	92	34	75	40	728
OTHER RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS									
1990-91	2,368	603	1,707	834	606	104	69	154	6,445
1991-92	2,809	1,142	930	755	1,387	85	46	125	7,279
1992-93	2,839	283	1,373	460	1,823	102	13	144	7,037
<i>1992—</i> Dec. qtr	649	124	135	74	351	25	—	12	1,370
<i>1993—</i> Mar. qtr	607	22	197	138	548	64	—	69	1,645
June qtr	580	76	370	94	357	—	7	—	1,484
Sept. qtr	681	46	702	102	449	—	2	11	1,993
Dec. qtr	244	8	200	67	153	—	2	10	684
<i>1994—</i> Mar. qtr p	276	210	71	97	249	44	—	24	971
TOTAL									
1990-91	2,921	1,665	2,619	1,148	954	195	200	158	9,860
1991-92	3,784	1,707	1,878	1,063	1,745	178	298	126	10,779
1992-93	3,682	1,367	2,096	754	2,219	140	97	153	10,508
<i>1992—</i> Dec. qtr	784	344	255	105	427	30	3	14	1,962
<i>1993—</i> Mar. qtr	806	390	380	206	720	80	16	69	2,667
June qtr	921	415	636	229	456	—	50	—	2,707
Sept. qtr	881	272	876	267	560	—	11	15	2,882
Dec. qtr	331	372	399	126	258	6	40	12	1,544
<i>1994—</i> Mar. qtr p	373	458	167	143	341	78	75	64	1,699

TABLE 6. NUMBER OF DWELLING UNITS COMMENCED, MARCH QUARTER 1994
RELATIVE STANDARD ERRORS (PER CENT)

<i>State and Territory</i>	<i>Private sector</i>		<i>Total</i>	
	<i>Houses</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Houses</i>	<i>Total</i>
NSW	4.1	2.5	4.0	2.4
Vic.	2.4	2.1	2.3	2.0
Qld	2.4	1.7	2.4	1.7
SA	3.2	2.6	3.1	2.5
WA	3.6	2.7	3.5	2.5
Tas.	2.5	1.9	2.4	1.7
NT	0.7	0.5	0.5	0.4
ACT	2.9	0.9	2.6	0.8
Australia	1.4	1.0	1.4	1.0

EXPLANATORY NOTES

Introduction

This publication contains preliminary estimates of the number of dwelling units commenced during the March quarter 1994. More comprehensive results from the quarterly survey will be published in ABS publication 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. Relative standard errors for the March quarter 1994 are shown in Table 6. More details regarding sampling variability for the survey are shown in publication 8752.0.

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. Data from this series, unlike those compiled from the Building Activity Survey, 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) 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.

(b) 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. *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).

8. *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

9. 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.

10. 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.

Unpublished data and related publications

11. 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.

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

Building Approvals, Australia (8731.0) — issued monthly

Building Activity, Australia (8752.0) — issued quarterly

Construction Activity at Constant Prices Australia (8782.0) — issued quarterly

Engineering Construction Activity, Australia (8762.0) — issued quarterly

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

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

Price Index of Materials Used in Building Other Than House Building, Eight 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 *Publications Advice* (1105.0) which lists publications to be released in the next few days. The *Catalogue* and *Publications Advice* are available from any ABS office.

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

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

Electronic services

PC-AUSSTATS. Thousands of up-to-date time series are available on this ABS on-line service. For further information phone the PC-AUSSTATS Help Desk on (06) 252 6017.

TELESTATS. This service provides:

- foreign trade statistics tailored to users' requirements. Further information is available on (06) 252 5404.
- text and tables for selected Main Economic Indicator publications. Further information is available on (06) 252 5405.

Floppy disk service

Selected ABS statistics are available on floppy disk. Further information is available on (06) 252 6684.

IAN CASTLES
Australian Statistician



For more information ...

The ABS publishes a wide range of statistics and other information on Australia's economic and social conditions. Details of what is available in various publications and other products can be found in the *ABS Catalogue of Publications and Products* available at all ABS Offices (see below for contact details).

Information Consultancy Service

Information tailored to special needs of clients can be obtained from the Information Consultancy Service available at ABS Offices (see Information Inquiries below for contact details).

National Dial-a-Statistic Line

0055 86 400

(Steadycom P/L: premium rate 25c/21.4 secs.)

This number gives 24-hour access, 365 days a year for a range of statistics.

Electronic Data Services

DISCOVERY (Key *656#): The ABS intends discontinuing its statistical information service on DISCOVERY. Please contact Peter Davidson (Phone 06 252 6684) to discuss possible alternatives for acquiring statistics or if you wish to comment on this proposal. For details on electronic data services available, contact Information Services in any of the ABS Offices (see Information Inquiries below for contact details).

Bookshops and Subscriptions

There are over 400 titles of various publications available from ABS bookshops in all ABS Offices (see below Bookshop Sales for contact details). The ABS also provides a subscription service through which nominated publications are provided by mail on a regular basis at no additional cost (telephone Publications Subscription Service toll free on 008 02 0608 Australia wide).

Sales and Inquiries

Regional Offices	Information Inquiries	Bookshop Sales
SYDNEY (02)	268 4611	268 4620
MELBOURNE (03)	615 7000	615 7829
BRISBANE (07)	222 6351	222 6350
PERTH (09)	323 5140	323 5307
ADELAIDE (08)	237 7100	237 7582
HOBART (002)	20 5800	20 5800
CANBERRA (06)	207 0326	207 0326
DARWIN (089)	43 2111	43 2111
National Office		
ACT (06)	252 6007	008 020 608

ABS Email Addresses

Keylink	STAT.INFO/ABS
X.400	(C:AU:A.TELMEMO.O:ABS,SN:INFO,FN:STAT)
Internet	STAT.INFO@ABS. TELEMEMO.AU



Information Services, ABS, PO Box 10, Belconnen ACT 2616

Printed by Alan Law, Commonwealth Government Printer, Canberra
© Commonwealth of Australia 1994



2875000003942
ISSN 0818-3511