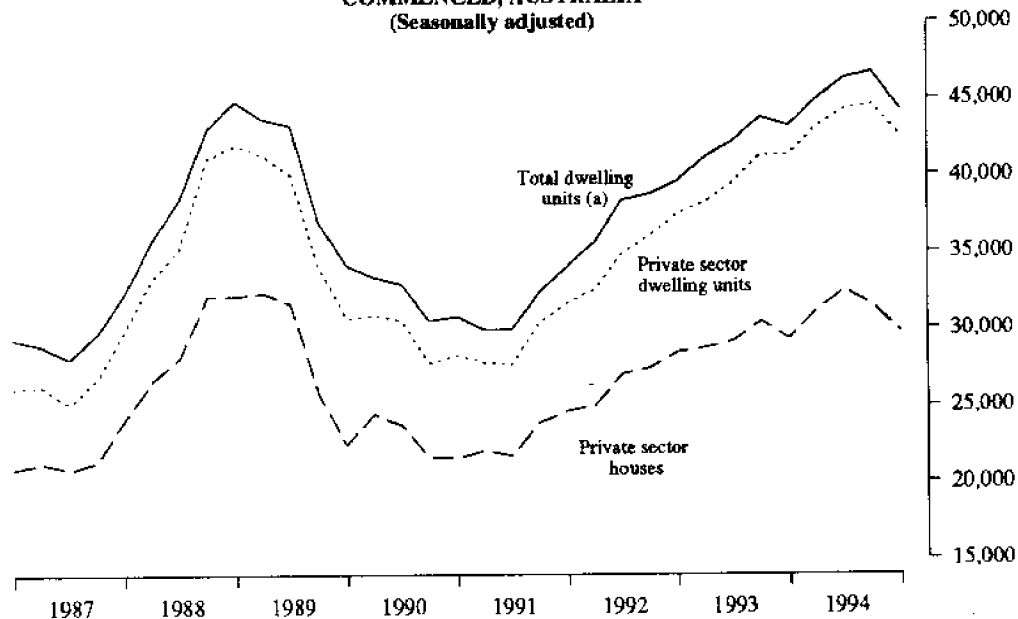


**BUILDING ACTIVITY, AUSTRALIA: DWELLING UNIT COMMENCEMENTS,
DECEMBER QUARTER 1994, PRELIMINARY**

MAIN FEATURES

**NUMBER OF DWELLING UNITS
COMMENCED, AUSTRALIA**
(Seasonally adjusted)



(a) Includes public sector.

In *seasonally adjusted* terms, the preliminary estimate of the number of dwelling units commenced in the December quarter 1994 was 44,236, a decrease of 5.3 per cent from the record high September quarter 1994 estimate of 46,688, but 2.5 per cent above the December quarter 1993 estimate. Private sector house commencements fell 5.6 per cent to 29,745 in the December quarter 1994, but were 1.6 per cent above the December quarter 1993 estimate. However, with dwelling unit approvals series showing declining trends in the second half of 1994, dwelling unit commencements can be expected to decline further in future quarters.

Dwelling unit commencements fell in New South Wales (-9.3%), Queensland (-7.8%), South Australia (-5.8%) and Western Australia (-4.0%). These falls more than offset rises in Victoria (1.8%), Tasmania (4.7%) and the Australian Capital Territory (32.8% from a low September quarter estimate).

In *original* terms, there were 45,487 dwelling units commenced in the December quarter 1994, a decrease of 7.4 per cent from the record September quarter 1994 estimate of 49,140. Total private sector commencements fell 5.3 per cent (house commencements down 5.1%; other residential building commencements down 5.6%). Total public sector commencements fell 47.1 per cent (house commencements down 33.0%; other residential building commencements down 53.5%).

There were 182,190 new dwelling units commenced in Australia in calendar year 1994, an increase of 6.9 per cent over 1993. Of the 1994 commencements, 127,722 (70.1%) were separate houses and 54,468 were other residential (flats, units, townhouses, apartments, etc.) developments. Queensland recorded the most dwelling commencements in 1994 with 53,260, or 29.2 per cent of the national total, followed by New South Wales with 51,257 (28.1%), Victoria with 31,860 (17.5%) and Western Australia with 25,442 (14.0%) dwelling units commenced.

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- for further information about statistics in this publication and the availability of related unpublished statistics contact Information Services on Canberra (06) 252 6627 or any ABS State office.
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TABLE 1. NUMBER OF DWELLING UNITS COMMENCED IN NEW RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS,
ORIGINAL AND SEASONALLY ADJUSTED (a), AUSTRALIA

Period	Houses		Other residential buildings	Total	
	Original	Seasonally adjusted		Original	Seasonally adjusted
PRIVATE SECTOR					
1991-92	100,572	..	28,896	129,468	..
1992-93	113,708	..	37,389	151,097	..
1993-94	123,228	..	46,518	169,746	..
<i>1993</i>					
Sept. qtr	31,791	30,442	11,284	43,075	41,292
Dec. qtr	30,782	29,273	12,088	42,870	41,287
<i>1994</i>					
Mar. qtr	27,952	31,148	11,189	39,141	43,071
June qtr	32,703	32,494	11,957	44,660	44,274
Sept. qtr	32,941	31,505	13,654	46,595	44,571
Dec. qtr p	31,255	29,745	12,886	44,141	42,505
PUBLIC SECTOR					
1991-92	3,500	..	7,279	10,779	..
1992-93	3,471	..	7,037	10,508	..
1993-94	3,285	..	4,891	8,176	..
<i>1993</i>					
Sept. qtr	889	n.a.	1,993	2,882	n.a.
Dec. qtr	848	n.a.	684	1,532	n.a.
<i>1994</i>					
Mar. qtr	739	n.a.	943	1,682	n.a.
June qtr	809	n.a.	1,271	2,080	n.a.
Sept. qtr	792	n.a.	1,753	2,545	n.a.
Dec. qtr p	531	n.a.	815	1,346	n.a.
TOTAL					
1991-92	104,072	..	36,175	140,247	..
1992-93	117,179	..	44,426	161,605	..
1993-94	126,513	..	51,409	177,922	..
<i>1993</i>					
Sept. qtr	32,680	31,423	13,277	45,957	43,737
Dec. qtr	31,630	30,163	12,772	44,402	43,147
<i>1994</i>					
Mar. qtr	28,691	31,880	12,132	40,823	44,887
June qtr	33,512	33,141	13,228	46,740	46,270
Sept. qtr	33,733	32,400	15,407	49,140	46,688
Dec. qtr p	31,786	30,320	13,701	45,487	44,236

(a) Series have been revised due to annual re-analysis of seasonal adjustment factors.

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

Period	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Australia
<i>1993</i>									
Sept. qtr	11,437	7,449	13,124	3,092	5,755	1,067	n.a.	1,065	43,737
Dec. qtr	11,065	7,825	13,235	2,741	6,052	1,011	n.a.	826	43,147
<i>1994</i>									
Mar. qtr	11,351	8,324	13,363	2,696	6,432	1,069	n.a.	1,317	44,887
June qtr	13,325	7,896	13,397	2,935	6,607	971	n.a.	927	46,270
Sept. qtr	13,838	7,760	13,786	2,922	6,326	846	n.a.	691	46,688
Dec. qtr p	12,547	7,898	12,704	2,753	6,073	886	n.a.	918	44,236

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

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									
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
1993-94	29,162	27,904	35,751	9,590	18,118	3,020	1,205	1,764	126,513
<i>1993</i>									
Sept. qtr	7,603	6,779	9,329	2,776	4,531	731	323	607	32,680
Dec. qtr	6,786	7,428	9,140	2,395	4,449	752	263	417	31,630
<i>1994—</i>									
Mar. qtr	6,247	6,688	8,054	2,023	4,221	791	297	371	28,691
June qtr	8,526	7,009	9,229	2,396	4,917	746	322	368	33,512
Sept. qtr	8,254	7,087	9,684	2,519	4,849	651	197	492	33,733
Dec. qtr p	7,511	7,432	8,787	2,415	4,321	748	234	339	31,786
OTHER RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS									
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
1993-94	18,019	3,562	17,334	1,891	6,682	1,092	446	2,383	51,409
<i>1993—</i>									
Sept. qtr	4,521	708	4,728	478	1,683	319	162	678	13,277
Dec. qtr	4,815	828	4,500	403	1,512	301	121	292	12,772
<i>1994—</i>									
Mar. qtr	3,922	1,144	3,720	526	1,660	256	69	835	12,132
June qtr	4,761	882	4,386	484	1,827	216	94	578	13,228
Sept. qtr	6,389	701	5,110	557	1,986	186	139	339	15,407
Dec. qtr p	5,647	917	4,290	397	1,661	174	168	447	13,701
TOTAL									
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	161,605
1993-94	47,181	31,466	53,085	11,481	24,800	4,112	1,651	4,147	177,922
<i>1993</i>									
Sept. qtr	12,124	7,487	14,057	3,254	6,214	1,050	485	1,285	45,957
Dec. qtr	11,601	8,256	13,640	2,798	5,961	1,053	384	709	44,402
<i>1994—</i>									
Mar. qtr	10,169	7,832	11,774	2,549	5,881	1,047	366	1,206	40,823
June qtr	13,287	7,891	13,615	2,880	6,744	962	416	946	46,740
Sept. qtr	14,643	7,788	14,794	3,076	6,835	837	336	831	49,140
Dec. qtr p	13,158	8,349	13,077	2,812	5,982	922	402	786	45,487

**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									
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
1993-94	28,547	26,970	35,102	9,159	17,739	2,974	1,035	1,703	123,228
<i>1993</i>									
Sept. qtr	7,403	6,553	9,155	2,611	4,420	731	314	603	31,791
Dec. qtr	6,699	7,076	8,941	2,336	4,344	746	225	415	30,782
<i>1994 -</i>									
Mar. qtr	6,153	6,442	7,956	1,977	4,130	757	222	316	27,952
June qtr	8,292	6,899	9,051	2,235	4,845	740	274	368	32,703
Sept. qtr	8,071	6,958	9,544	2,406	4,629	651	190	492	32,941
Dec. qtr p	7,404	7,310	8,716	2,283	4,279	744	190	330	31,255
OTHER RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS									
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
1993-94	16,385	3,130	16,187	1,534	5,495	1,031	430	2,326	46,518
<i>1993 -</i>									
Sept. qtr	3,840	662	4,026	376	1,234	319	160	667	11,284
Dec. qtr	4,571	820	4,300	336	1,359	301	119	382	12,088
<i>1994 -</i>									
Mar. qtr	3,642	971	3,654	429	1,413	212	69	799	11,189
June qtr	4,332	677	4,207	393	1,489	199	82	578	11,957
Sept. qtr	5,855	611	4,541	442	1,589	182	139	295	13,654
Dec. qtr p	5,410	822	4,116	365	1,531	167	160	315	12,886
TOTAL									
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
1993-94	44,932	30,100	51,289	10,693	23,234	4,005	1,465	4,029	169,746
<i>1993 -</i>									
Sept. qtr	11,243	7,215	13,181	2,987	5,654	1,050	474	1,270	43,075
Dec. qtr	11,270	7,896	13,241	2,672	5,703	1,047	344	697	42,870
<i>1994 -</i>									
Mar. qtr	9,795	7,413	11,610	2,406	5,543	969	291	1,115	39,141
June qtr	12,624	7,576	13,258	2,628	6,334	939	356	946	44,660
Sept. qtr	13,926	7,569	14,085	2,848	6,218	833	329	787	46,595
Dec. qtr p	12,814	8,132	12,832	2,648	5,810	911	350	645	44,141

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

Period	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Australia
HOUSES									
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
1993-94	615	934	649	431	379	46	170	61	3,285
1993—									
Sept. qtr	200	226	174	165	111		9	4	889
Dec. qtr	87	352	199	59	105	6	38	2	848
1994—									
Mar. qtr	94	246	98	46	91	34	75	55	739
June qtr	234	110	178	161	72	6	48	—	809
Sept. qtr	183	129	140	113	220		7	—	792
Dec. qtr p	107	122	71	132	42	4	44	9	531
OTHER RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS									
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
1993-94	1,634	432	1,147	357	1,187	61	16	57	4,891
1993—									
Sept. qtr	681	46	702	102	449		2	11	1,993
Dec. qtr	244	8	200	67	153	—	2	10	684
1994—									
Mar. qtr	280	173	66	97	247	44	—	36	943
June qtr	429	205	179	91	338	17	12	—	1,271
Sept. qtr	534	90	569	115	397	4	—	44	1,753
Dec. qtr p	237	95	174	32	130	7	8	132	815
TOTAL									
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
1993-94	2,249	1,366	1,796	788	1,566	107	186	118	8,176
1993—									
Sept. qtr	881	272	876	267	560		11	15	2,882
Dec. qtr	331	360	399	126	258	6	40	12	1,532
1994—									
Mar. qtr	374	419	164	143	338	78	75	91	1,682
June qtr	663	315	357	252	410	23	60	—	2,080
Sept. qtr	717	219	709	228	617	4	7	44	2,545
Dec. qtr p	344	217	245	164	172	11	52	141	1,346

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

State and Territory	Private sector		Total	
	Houses	Total	Houses	Total
NSW	3.8	2.2	3.7	2.1
Vic.	2.6	2.3	2.6	2.3
Qld	2.3	1.6	2.3	1.5
SA	3.1	2.6	2.9	2.5
WA	3.3	2.4	3.2	2.3
Tas.	2.8	2.3	2.8	2.2
NT	2.2	1.1	1.8	1.0
ACT	4.9	2.5	4.8	2.1
Australia	1.4	1.0	1.3	0.9

EXPLANATORY NOTES

Introduction

This publication contains preliminary estimates of the number of dwelling units commenced during the December quarter 1994. More comprehensive results from the quarterly survey will be available shortly.

2. The statistics were compiled on the basis of returns collected from builders and other individuals and organisations engaged in building activity. The quarterly survey comprises a sample survey of private sector house building activity and a complete enumeration of other building activity. Estimates in respect of commencements of private sector houses are therefore subject to sampling variability. Relative standard errors for the December quarter 1994 are shown in Table 6.

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 and special products which are available on request:

Building Approvals, Australia (8731.0) — issued monthly

Building Activity, Australia (8752.0.40.001) — issued quarterly

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

Engineering Construction Activity, Australia (8762.0.40.001) — 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

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- r figures or series revised since previous issue
- . . not applicable
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14. Where figures have been rounded, discrepancies may occur between sums of the component items and totals.

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