



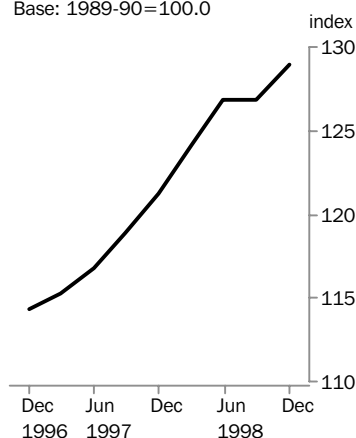
HOUSE PRICE INDEXES

EIGHT
CAPITAL
CITIES

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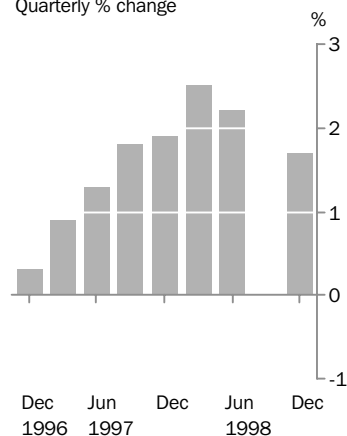
Established house prices

Base: 1989-90=100.0



Established house prices

Quarterly % change



DECEMBER QTR KEY FIGURES

ESTABLISHED HOUSE PRICES	% change Sep Qtr 1998 to Dec Qtr 1998	% change Dec Qtr 1997 to Dec Qtr 1998
	Weighted average of eight capital cities	1.7
Sydney	2.7	9.4
Melbourne	2.8	9.8
Brisbane	-2.0	0.7
Adelaide	-0.1	2.0
Perth	2.3	4.7
Hobart	-1.7	-1.8
Darwin	3.1	-3.7
Canberra	0.9	1.3

DECEMBER QTR KEY POINTS

ESTABLISHED HOUSE PRICES

QUARTERLY CHANGES

- The price index of established houses in Australia rose 1.7 per cent between the September and December quarters 1998.
- The price rises in Darwin (+3.1%), Melbourne (+2.8%), Sydney (+2.7%), Perth (+2.3%) and Canberra (+0.9%) more than offset falls in Brisbane (-2.0%), Hobart (-1.7%) and Adelaide (-0.1%).

ANNUAL CHANGES

- Over the year to December 1998, the established house price index rose 6.4 per cent.
- The price increases in Melbourne (+9.8%), Sydney (+9.4%), Perth (+4.7%), Adelaide (+2.0%), Canberra (+1.3%) and Brisbane (+0.7%) more than offset falls in Darwin (-3.7%) and Hobart (-1.8%).

- For further information about these and related statistics, contact Steve Whennan on Canberra 02 6252 6251, or any ABS office shown on the back cover of this publication.

NOTES

FORTHCOMING ISSUES

ISSUE (Quarter)

RELEASE DATE

March 1999

3 June 1999

June 1999

2 September 1999



CHANGES IN THIS ISSUE

There are no changes in this issue.



Dennis Trewin
Acting Australian Statistician

ESTABLISHED HOUSE PRICE INDEX NUMBERS(a)

<i>Period</i>	<i>Sydney</i>	<i>Melbourne</i>	<i>Brisbane</i>	<i>Adelaide</i>	<i>Perth</i>	<i>Hobart</i>	<i>Darwin</i>	<i>Canberra</i>	<i>Weighted average of eight capital cities</i>
1995-96	115.8	97.6	136.8	108.3	108.2	129.8	188.0	127.8	112.7
1996-97	118.9	101.4	137.2	108.2	109.2	128.5	196.9	126.4	115.1
1997-98	128.5	114.3	138.9	112.1	113.3	125.4	198.9	126.2	122.8
1995									
June	113.2	98.6	137.7	111.2	109.7	130.1	183.0	128.1	112.4
September	115.8	96.9	137.0	110.0	108.6	129.2	184.2	128.0	112.6
December	115.2	97.3	137.0	107.5	108.3	129.1	187.9	128.6	112.4
1996									
March	115.4	97.1	136.2	107.7	107.5	129.8	190.0	127.0	112.2
June	116.7	99.1	137.1	107.9	108.2	131.2	190.0	127.4	113.6
September	117.5	99.4	137.5	107.8	108.0	130.2	191.8	127.2	114.0
December	118.0	101.2	136.1	106.7	107.5	128.5	195.1	126.6	114.3
1997									
March	119.4	101.3	136.0	109.3	110.4	130.4	198.4	124.3	115.3
June	120.5	103.6	139.0	109.0	110.9	124.9	202.2	127.3	116.8
September	123.6	107.8	137.8	109.8	112.2	123.5	199.5	125.1	118.9
December	125.0	113.5	138.6	110.8	112.8	123.9	202.4	126.2	121.2
1998									
March	130.9	115.6	137.9	114.0	113.7	129.5	199.7	127.1	124.2
June	134.4	120.2	141.1	113.7	114.4	124.8	193.8	126.4	126.9
September	133.2	121.2	142.5	113.1	115.4	123.8	189.2	126.7	126.9
December	136.8	124.6	139.6	113.0	118.1	121.7	195.0	127.8	129.0

(a) Base of each index 1989-90 = 100.0

ESTABLISHED HOUSE PRICE INDEXES, Percentage Changes

Period	Sydney	Melbourne	Brisbane	Adelaide	Perth	Hobart	Darwin	Canberra	Weighted average of eight capital cities
PERCENTAGE CHANGE (from previous year)									
1995-96	1.8	-0.3	-1.8	-3.0	-0.7	0.6	5.6	-2.0	0.1
1996-97	2.7	3.9	0.3	-0.1	0.9	-1.0	4.7	-1.1	2.1
1997-98	8.1	12.7	1.2	3.6	3.8	-2.4	1.0	-0.2	6.7
PERCENTAGE CHANGE (from corresponding quarter of previous year)									
1995									
June	1.6	2.4	-1.1	0.5	3.1	3.3	11.2	-4.3	1.4
September	1.3	-0.3	-1.7	-2.9	0.6	0.8	6.5	-3.3	0.0
December	2.5	-0.6	-2.1	-3.0	-0.7	0.7	6.1	-1.5	0.3
1996									
March	0.4	-0.9	-2.9	-3.5	-1.5	0.3	6.1	-2.9	-0.9
June	3.1	0.5	-0.4	-3.0	-1.4	0.8	3.8	-0.5	1.1
September	1.5	2.6	0.4	-2.0	-0.6	0.8	4.1	-0.6	1.2
December	2.4	4.0	-0.7	-0.7	-0.7	-0.5	3.8	-1.6	1.7
1997									
March	3.5	4.3	-0.1	1.5	2.7	0.5	4.4	-2.1	2.8
June	3.3	4.5	1.4	1.0	2.5	-4.8	6.4	-0.1	2.8
September	5.2	8.5	0.2	1.9	3.9	-5.1	4.0	-1.7	4.3
December	5.9	12.2	1.8	3.8	4.9	-3.6	3.7	-0.3	6.0
1998									
March	9.6	14.1	1.4	4.3	3.0	-0.7	0.7	2.3	7.7
June	11.5	16.0	1.5	4.3	3.2	-0.1	-4.2	-0.7	8.6
September	7.8	12.4	3.4	3.0	2.9	0.2	-5.2	1.3	6.7
December	9.4	9.8	0.7	2.0	4.7	-1.8	-3.7	1.3	6.4
PERCENTAGE CHANGE (from previous quarter)									
1995									
June	-1.5	0.6	-1.8	-0.4	0.5	0.5	2.2	-2.1	-0.7
September	2.3	-1.7	-0.5	-1.1	-1.0	-0.7	0.7	-0.1	0.2
December	-0.5	0.4	0.0	-2.3	-0.3	-0.1	2.0	0.5	-0.2
1996									
March	0.2	-0.2	-0.6	0.2	-0.7	0.5	1.1	-1.2	-0.2
June	1.1	2.1	0.7	0.2	0.7	1.1	0.0	0.3	1.2
September	0.7	0.3	0.3	-0.1	-0.2	-0.8	0.9	-0.2	0.4
December	0.4	1.8	-1.0	-1.0	-0.5	-1.3	1.7	-0.5	0.3
1997									
March	1.2	0.1	-0.1	2.4	2.7	1.5	1.7	-1.8	0.9
June	0.9	2.3	2.2	-0.3	0.5	-4.2	1.9	2.4	1.3
September	2.6	4.1	-0.9	0.7	1.2	-1.1	-1.3	-1.7	1.8
December	1.1	5.3	0.6	0.9	0.5	0.3	1.5	0.9	1.9
1998									
March	4.7	1.9	-0.5	2.9	0.8	4.5	-1.3	0.7	2.5
June	2.7	4.0	2.3	-0.3	0.6	-3.6	-3.0	-0.6	2.2
September	-0.9	0.8	1.0	-0.5	0.9	-0.8	-2.4	0.2	0.0
December	2.7	2.8	-2.0	-0.1	2.3	-1.7	3.1	0.9	1.7

PROJECT HOME PRICE INDEX NUMBERS(a)

<i>Period</i>	<i>Sydney</i>	<i>Melbourne</i>	<i>Brisbane</i>	<i>Adelaide</i>	<i>Perth</i>	<i>Hobart</i>	<i>Darwin</i>	<i>Canberra</i>	<i>Weighted average of eight capital cities</i>
1995-96	110.2	107.3	113.7	112.8	101.6	123.4	129.9	124.7	109.5
1996-97	110.4	107.7	112.7	108.3	101.3	123.3	136.0	123.6	109.2
1997-98	112.2	108.6	112.4	113.1	102.2	123.3	137.3	123.5	110.3
1995									
June	108.7	106.4	112.9	114.6	100.8	123.1	127.3	127.2	108.7
September	110.2	107.3	113.4	113.2	102.2	123.5	129.6	126.4	109.6
December	109.9	107.1	113.8	112.7	101.6	123.5	129.7	124.6	109.4
1996									
March	110.3	107.2	113.8	113.1	101.3	123.3	130.0	123.8	109.5
June	110.4	107.4	113.9	112.1	101.4	123.3	130.4	123.9	109.6
September	109.5	107.3	113.9	111.3	101.5	123.3	134.4	123.8	109.4
December	110.3	107.7	112.4	107.3	101.4	123.3	135.1	123.7	109.1
1997									
March	110.4	107.9	112.6	107.7	101.2	123.3	136.8	123.6	109.2
June	111.3	107.9	111.9	106.9	101.2	123.3	137.6	123.1	109.2
September	112.0	108.4	112.2	111.9	101.3	123.3	137.8	123.3	109.9
December	112.0	108.5	112.3	112.5	101.4	123.3	137.2	123.3	110.0
1998									
March	112.2	108.4	112.5	113.7	102.5	123.3	137.0	123.7	110.4
June	112.5	109.0	112.6	114.4	103.6	123.3	137.0	123.7	110.8
September	113.5	109.6	112.5	114.2	104.9	123.3	137.4	123.7	111.4
December	113.6	111.9	112.8	116.2	105.8	123.3	138.5	124.3	112.3

(a) Base of each index 1989-90 = 100.0

PROJECT HOME PRICE INDEXES, Percentage Changes

Period	Sydney	Melbourne	Brisbane	Adelaide	Perth	Hobart	Darwin	Canberra	Weighted average of eight capital cities
PERCENTAGE CHANGE (from previous year)									
1995-96	2.1	1.4	1.1	-1.6	1.6	1.7	3.8	-3.5	1.3
1996-97	0.2	0.4	-0.9	-4.0	-0.3	-0.1	4.7	-0.9	-0.3
1997-98	1.6	0.8	-0.3	4.4	0.9	0.0	1.0	-0.1	1.0
PERCENTAGE CHANGE (from corresponding quarter of previous year)									
1995									
June	2.0	1.3	1.9	2.0	2.0	3.1	4.8	-3.6	1.7
September	2.9	2.2	1.4	-1.0	3.2	2.8	4.8	-3.4	2.0
December	1.3	1.2	1.2	-2.0	2.0	2.5	4.0	-4.1	1.0
1996									
March	3.0	1.2	0.9	-1.1	0.9	1.4	3.9	-3.9	1.4
June	1.6	0.9	0.9	-2.2	0.6	0.2	2.4	-2.6	0.8
September	-0.6	0.0	0.4	-1.7	-0.7	-0.2	3.7	-2.1	-0.2
December	0.4	0.6	-1.2	-4.8	-0.2	-0.2	4.2	-0.7	-0.3
1997									
March	0.1	0.7	-1.1	-4.8	-0.1	0.0	5.2	-0.2	-0.3
June	0.8	0.5	-1.8	-4.6	-0.2	0.0	5.5	-0.6	-0.4
September	2.3	1.0	-1.5	0.5	-0.2	0.0	2.5	-0.4	0.5
December	1.5	0.7	-0.1	4.8	0.0	0.0	1.6	-0.3	0.8
1998									
March	1.6	0.5	-0.1	5.6	1.3	0.0	0.1	0.1	1.1
June	1.1	1.0	0.6	7.0	2.4	0.0	-0.4	0.5	1.5
September	1.4	1.1	0.2	2.1	3.6	0.0	-0.3	0.3	1.4
December	1.4	3.1	0.4	3.3	4.3	0.0	0.9	0.8	2.1
PERCENTAGE CHANGE (from previous quarter)									
1995									
June	1.5	0.5	0.1	0.2	0.4	1.2	1.8	-1.2	0.6
September	1.4	0.8	0.4	-1.2	1.4	0.3	1.8	-0.6	0.8
December	-0.3	-0.2	0.4	-0.4	-0.6	0.0	0.1	-1.4	-0.2
1996									
March	0.4	0.1	0.0	0.4	-0.3	-0.2	0.2	-0.6	0.1
June	0.1	0.2	0.1	-0.9	0.1	0.0	0.3	0.1	0.1
September	-0.8	-0.1	0.0	-0.7	0.1	0.0	3.1	-0.1	-0.2
December	0.7	0.4	-1.3	-3.6	-0.1	0.0	0.5	-0.1	-0.3
1997									
March	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.4	-0.2	0.0	1.3	-0.1	0.1
June	0.8	0.0	-0.6	-0.7	0.0	0.0	0.6	-0.4	0.0
September	0.6	0.5	0.3	4.7	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.2	0.6
December	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.5	0.1	0.0	-0.4	0.0	0.1
1998									
March	0.2	-0.1	0.2	1.1	1.1	0.0	-0.1	0.3	0.4
June	0.3	0.6	0.1	0.6	1.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.4
September	0.9	0.5	-0.1	-0.1	1.3	0.0	0.3	0.0	0.5
December	0.1	2.1	0.3	1.8	0.9	0.0	0.8	0.5	0.8

SELECTED HOUSING PRICE INDEX NUMBER SERIES(a)–Australia

<i>Period</i>	<i>Established houses</i>	<i>Project homes</i>	<i>Materials used in house building</i>	<i>National accounts private housing investment</i>
1995-96	112.7	109.5	115.7	112.4
1996-97	115.1	109.2	116.1	112.6
1997-98	122.8	110.3	118.2	113.0
1995				
June	112.4	108.7	116.5	111.3
September	112.6	109.6	116.2	111.7
December	112.4	109.4	115.7	112.5
1996				
March	112.2	109.5	115.3	112.9
June	113.6	109.6	115.5	112.6
September	114.0	109.4	115.6	112.8
December	114.3	109.1	115.8	112.7
1997				
March	115.3	109.2	116.1	112.5
June	116.8	109.2	117.0	112.4
September	118.9	109.9	117.3	112.4
December	121.2	110.0	117.9	112.9
1998				
March	124.2	110.4	118.7	113.2
June	126.9	110.8	119.0	113.4
September	126.9	111.4	119.4	113.8
December	129.0	112.3	119.7	114.4

(a) Base of each index 1989-90 = 100.0

SELECTED HOUSING PRICE INDEX NUMBER SERIES, Australia—Percentage Changes

<i>Period</i>	<i>Established houses</i>	<i>Project homes</i>	<i>Materials used in house building</i>	<i>National accounts private housing investment</i>
PERCENTAGE CHANGE (from previous year)				
1995-96	0.1	1.3	0.3	1.7
1996-97	2.1	-0.3	0.3	0.2
1997-98	6.7	1.0	1.8	0.4
PERCENTAGE CHANGE (from corresponding quarter of previous year)				
1995				
June	1.4	1.7	2.8	2.6
September	0.0	2.0	1.8	2.1
December	0.3	1.0	0.4	2.0
1996				
March	-0.9	1.4	-0.5	1.6
June	1.1	0.8	-0.9	1.2
September	1.2	-0.2	-0.5	1.0
December	1.7	-0.3	0.1	0.2
1997				
March	2.8	-0.3	0.7	-0.4
June	2.8	-0.4	1.3	-0.2
September	4.3	0.5	1.5	-0.4
December	6.0	0.8	1.8	0.2
1998				
March	7.7	1.1	2.2	0.6
June	8.6	1.5	1.7	0.9
September	6.7	1.4	1.8	1.2
December	6.4	2.1	1.5	1.3
PERCENTAGE CHANGE (from previous quarter)				
1995				
June	-0.7	0.6	0.5	0.2
September	0.2	0.8	-0.3	0.4
December	-0.2	-0.2	-0.4	0.7
1996				
March	-0.2	0.1	-0.3	0.4
June	1.2	0.1	0.2	-0.3
September	0.4	-0.2	0.1	0.2
December	0.3	-0.3	0.2	-0.1
1997				
March	0.9	0.1	0.3	-0.2
June	1.3	0.0	0.8	-0.1
September	1.8	0.6	0.3	0.0
December	1.9	0.1	0.5	0.4
1998				
March	2.5	0.4	0.7	0.3
June	2.2	0.4	0.3	0.2
September	0.0	0.5	0.3	0.4
December	1.7	0.8	0.3	0.5

EXPLANATORY NOTES

INTRODUCTION

1 This publication provides estimates of changes in house prices for each of the eight capital cities of Australia. The information is presented in the form of price indexes constructed separately for *Established Houses* and for *Project Homes* (see below for definitions). It is calculated on the reference base 1989–90 = 100.0 for the eight capital cities. The capital city indexes measure price movements over time in each city individually. They do not measure differences in price levels between cities.

2 The index for Project Homes is compiled by the ABS for use in calculating the House purchase component of the Consumer Price Index (CPI). The index for Established Houses, while not contributing to the CPI, is compiled and published along with the Project Homes index in recognition of the widespread interest in information specifically relating to housing.

3 To assist in the analysis of housing price movements at the national level, Australian series have also been compiled and are presented in tables 5 and 6 along with series for prices of building materials and private housing investment (from the Australian National Accounts). For information on the derivation of series in these tables see paragraph 13.

DEFINITIONS

ESTABLISHED HOUSES **4** Detached residential dwellings on their own block of land regardless of age (i.e. including new houses sold as a house/land package as well as second-hand houses). Price changes therefore relate to changes in the total price of dwelling and land.

PROJECT HOMES **5** Dwellings available for construction on a client's block of land. Price changes therefore relate only to the price of the dwelling (excluding land).

PRICE INDEXES

6 A price index is concerned with measuring pure price change—that is, it is concerned with isolating and measuring that element of price change which is not brought about by any change to either the quantity or the quality of the goods or services for which the index is required.

7 The techniques used to construct a price index for project homes are similar to those used for most other goods. A representative sample of project home models is selected in each city, prices obtained each quarter and the price movements for each model weighted together. Constant quality is preserved by calculating price movements on a matched sample basis (i.e. the price movements between adjacent quarters are based on the same models in each quarter). If the specification of an individual model changes substantially or a price is unable to be obtained then that model is excluded from the calculation of price movement. Adjustments are made to raw prices to compensate for any minor changes in specifications.

8 The construction of a price index for established houses, on the other hand, poses a number of problems. First, in addition to the physical characteristics of a dwelling (such as outer-wall construction, total overall size and number of rooms) its geographical location is a significant component of quality. Second, the only price data available relates to sales that have actually taken place during each quarter. Movements in the average price derived from total sales data in each period would not provide a measure of pure price change as the measure would be influenced by compositional changes (i.e. the prices from one period to the next would relate to houses of different quality).

EXPLANATORY NOTES

PRICE INDEXES *continued*

9 In order to minimise the effects of compositional change on these indexes, the raw sales price data is stratified by geographic area and physical characteristics of dwelling. The overall movement in the index is calculated by weighting together the price movements in individual strata. To reduce costs, this procedure is carried out for a sample of Local Government Areas in each city.

10 Price information for project homes is obtained at the end of each quarter from a sample of project home builders in each city. Sale prices of established houses are obtained from real estate organisations and government agencies and relate to actual sales transacted during the quarter.

LIMITATIONS OF HOUSE PRICE INDEXES

11 The reliability of each index is largely dependent upon the availability of sufficient pricing information each quarter. While not a problem for project homes, difficulties are sometimes encountered when compiling the indexes for established houses as the number of price observations available across the range of dwelling types depends on market activity in each quarter.

12 These series most effected by limited market scope is Darwin established house price index. Rather than suppress publication, the series is included here because it is believed that the long term trend is reliable. However, because of limitations in the reliability of individual quarter to quarter movement users are advised to exercise due caution when analysing such movements.

NATIONAL HOUSE PRICE AND OTHER INDEXES

13 These series are presented to facilitate analysis of price movements at a national level. Although coverage is not, in all cases, strictly national, this is not believed to significantly impair their usefulness. The derivation or source of each series is as follows:

Established houses: This series is derived by weighting together the indexes for each of the eight capital cities according to the value of secured finance commitments to individuals in each of the States and Territories for the purchase of newly erected and established houses in 1985–86 until June quarter 1996, and thereafter commitments in 1994–95. The source of weighting information is unpublished data from the ABS survey of Housing Finance for Owner Occupation.

Project homes: This series is derived by weighting together the indexes for each of the eight capital cities according to the value of secured finance commitments to individuals in each of the States and Territories for the construction of houses in 1985–86 until June quarter 1996, and thereafter commitments in 1994–95. The source of weighting information is unpublished data from the ABS survey of Housing Finance for Owner Occupation.

Although the capital city price indexes for project homes are used to measure price change for the CPI House purchase expenditure class, price movements exhibited in the respective series at the national level are not directly comparable. The weighting pattern used in the CPI House purchase index differs from that described above for project homes index. The CPI weights relate to the net acquisition of dwellings (excluding land) by private households in each of the eight capital cities (i.e. they include dwellings acquired from the government and business sectors, alterations and additions to existing dwellings and are capital city specific).

Materials used in house building: The series included here is that published for the weighted average of the six State capital cities in Price Index of Materials Used in House Building, Six State Capital Cities (Cat. no. 6408.0).

EXPLANATORY NOTES

NATIONAL HOUSE PRICE AND
OTHER INDEXES *continued*

Private Housing Investment: This series is the annually-reweighted chain Laspeyres price index for private capital expenditure (houses), as used (but not separately published) in *Australian National Accounts: National Income, Expenditure and Product* (Cat. no. 5206.0), referenced to 1989–90 = 100.0.

ANALYSIS OF CHANGES IN INDEX
NUMBERS

14 The indexes presented in this publication are calculated on a quarterly basis with a reference base of 1989–90 = 100.0. In compiling these indexes quarterly, the objective is to measure the change between average price levels during one quarter and average price levels during the next quarter.

15 Index numbers are also presented for financial years where the index numbers for financial years are simple (arithmetic) averages of the quarterly index numbers. Index numbers for calendar years may be derived in the same way.

16 Movements in indexes from one period to another can be expressed either as changes in *index points* or as percentage changes. The following example illustrates the method of calculating index points changes and percentage changes between any two periods:

Established houses: Sydney index numbers —

December Quarter 1998	136.8	(see Table 1)
less September Quarter 1998	133.2	(see Table 1)
Change in index points:	3.6	

$$\text{Percentage change} = \frac{3.6}{133.2} \times 100 = 2.7\%$$

17 In this publication, percentage changes are calculated to illustrate three different kinds of movements in index numbers:

- movements between consecutive financial years (change between average price levels during one financial year and average price levels during the next financial year)
- movements between corresponding quarters of consecutive years
- movements between consecutive quarters.

RELATED PUBLICATIONS

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

- *Australian National Accounts: National Income, Expenditure and Product* (Cat. no. 5206.0)—issued quarterly
- *Building Activity, Australia* (Cat. no. 8752.0)—issued quarterly
- *Building Approvals, Australia* (Cat. no. 8731.0)—issued monthly
- *Consumer Price Index* (Cat. no. 6401.0)—issued quarterly
- *Housing Finance for Owner Occupation, Australia* (Cat. no. 5609.0)—issued monthly
- *Price Index of Materials Used in House Building, Six State Capital Cities* (Cat. no. 6408.0)—issued quarterly.

19 Current publications issued 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 publications to be released in the next few days. The Catalogue and Release Advice are available from any ABS office.

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