

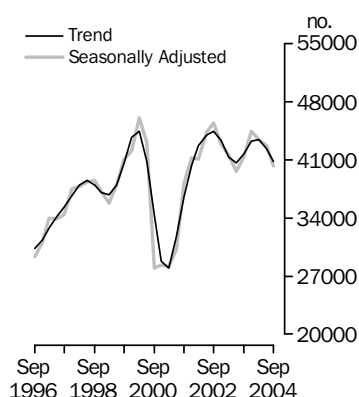
DWELLING UNIT COMMENCEMENTS

**AUSTRALIA
PRELIMINARY**

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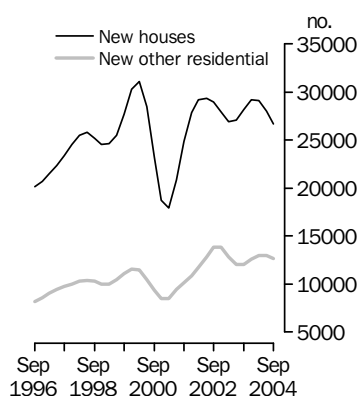
Dwellings units commenced

Total



Private dwellings commenced

Trend



KEY FIGURES

TREND ESTIMATES

	Sep qtr 04 no.	Jun qtr 04 to Sep qtr 04 %	Sep qtr 03 to Sep qtr 04 %
Total dwelling units commenced	40 780	-3.9	-2.3
New private sector houses	26 665	-5.0	-5.3
New private sector other residential building	12 674	-2.2	5.4

SEASONALLY ADJUSTED ESTIMATES

	Sep qtr 04 no.	Jun qtr 04 to Sep qtr 04 %	Sep qtr 03 to Sep qtr 04 %
Total dwelling units commenced	40 263	-5.8	-2.7
New private sector houses	26 104	-8.7	-8.0
New private sector other residential building	12 543	-2.7	8.9

KEY POINTS

TREND ESTIMATES

- The trend estimate for the total number of dwelling units commenced fell 3.9% in the September quarter 2004 and is now showing a fall over the last two quarters.
- New private sector house commencements fell 5.0% in the latest quarter, the third consecutive quarterly fall.
- New private other residential building commencements fell 2.2% in the September quarter 2004.

SEASONALLY ADJUSTED ESTIMATES

- In seasonally adjusted terms, the total number of dwelling units commenced fell 5.8%, to 40,263, in the September quarter 2004, the third consecutive quarterly fall.
- New private sector house commencements fell 8.7%, to 26,104.
- New private other residential building fell 2.7%, to 12,543, in the September quarter 2004, following a 2.5% fall in the June quarter.

INQUIRIES

- For further information about these and related statistics, contact the National Information and Referral Service on 1300 135 070 or Andrew Stidston on Adelaide (08) 8237 7668.

NOTES

FORTHCOMING ISSUES

ISSUE (Quarter)

RELEASE DATE

December 2004

22 March 2005

March 2005

20 June 2005

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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 21 January 2005.

CHANGES IN THIS ISSUE

There are no changes in this issue.

SIGNIFICANT REVISIONS THIS ISSUE

The total number of dwelling units commenced in Australia during the June quarter 2004 has been revised downwards by 461 (–1.1%) from the estimate published in *Building Activity, Australia, June quarter 2004* (cat. no. 8752.0) released on 13 October 2004.

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ABBREVIATIONS

ABS Australian Bureau of Statistics

ACT Australian Capital Territory

Aust. Australia

NSW New South Wales

NT Northern Territory

qtr quarter

Qld Queensland

SA South Australia

Tas. Tasmania

Vic. Victoria

WA Western Australia

Dennis Trewin

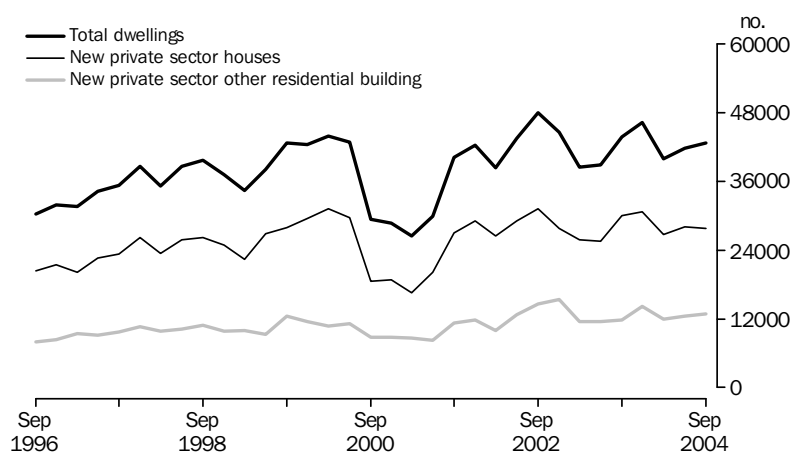
Australian Statistician

DWELLING UNIT COMMENCEMENTS ORIGINAL

ORIGINAL ESTIMATES

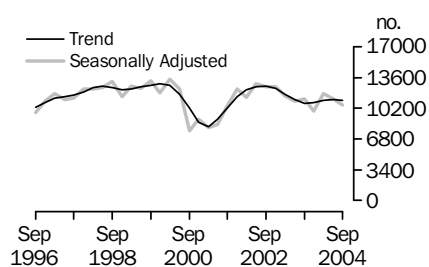
	Sep qtr 04	Jun qtr 04 to Sep qtr 04	Sep qtr 03 to Sep qtr 04
	no.	%	%
New private sector houses	27 793	-1.1	-7.6
New private sector other residential building	12 887	3.5	9.0
Private sector conversion, etc.	930	94.2	42.1
Public sector dwellings	1 103	37.9	-10.6
Total dwelling units	42 713	2.1	-2.5

- The total number of dwelling units commenced rose 2.1% in the September quarter 2004, to 42,713.
- New private sector house commencements fell 1.1%, to 27,793. Commencements fell in Victoria (-11.1%), South Australia (-0.5%), Tasmania (-17.7%) and the Australian Capital Territory (-13.9%).
- New private sector other residential building rose 3.5%, to 12,887. Rises in Queensland, Western Australia and the Northern Territory were partially offset by falls in the remaining states and territories.
- The total number of public sector dwellings commenced rose 37.9%, to 1,103.



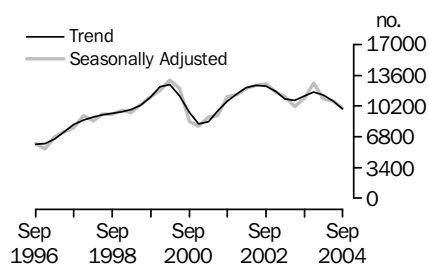
DWELLING UNIT COMMENCEMENTS STATES & TERRITORIES

NEW SOUTH WALES



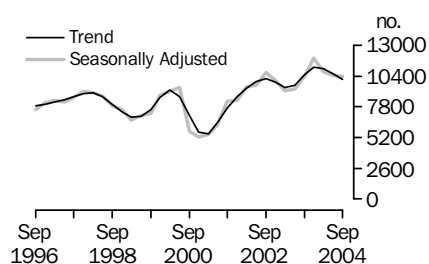
The trend estimate of commencements fell in the September quarter 2004 after three quarters of growth.

VICTORIA



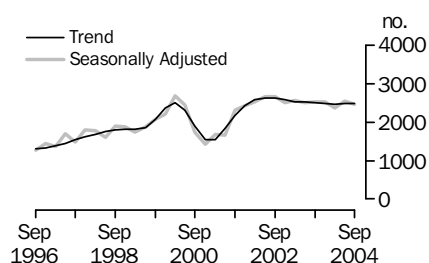
The trend estimate of commencements has fallen for the last three quarters.

QUEENSLAND



The trend estimate of commencements has fallen for the last three quarters, following three quarters of growth.

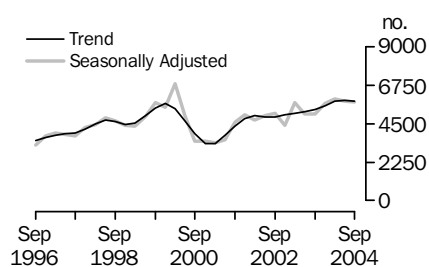
SOUTH AUSTRALIA



The trend estimate of commencements has been flat for the last two years.

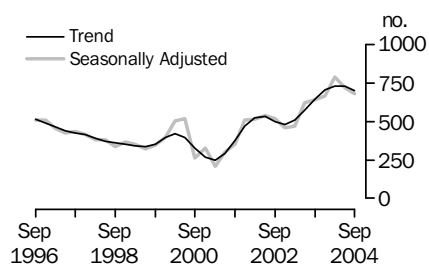
DWELLING UNIT COMMENCEMENTS STATES & TERRITORIES *continued*

WESTERN AUSTRALIA



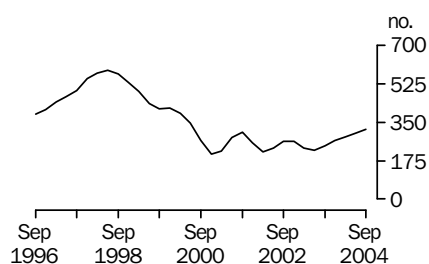
The trend estimate of commencements fell marginally in the latest quarter after a steady rise which began in the June quarter 2001.

TASMANIA



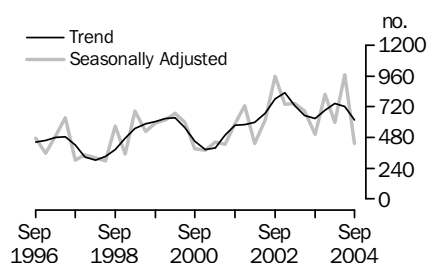
The trend estimate of commencements has fallen for the first time since the December quarter 2002.

NORTHERN TERRITORY



The trend estimate of commencements is now showing growth for past five quarters

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY



The trend estimate of commencements is now showing falls for the last two quarters.

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DWELLING UNIT COMMENCEMENTS

	PRIVATE SECTOR			TOTAL SECTORS		
	New houses	New other residential building	Total dwelling units(a)	New houses	New other residential building	Total dwelling units(a)
	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.
ORIGINAL						
2001-02	111 920	45 902	160 656	113 626	47 919	164 407
2002-03	110 385	53 000	166 262	112 228	54 827	169 945
2003-04	115 652	50 522	168 423	117 216	52 374	171 848
2003						
Jun Qtr	25 528	11 593	37 877	25 964	12 143	38 876
Sep Qtr	30 092	11 827	42 573	30 570	12 580	43 807
Dec Qtr	30 693	14 246	45 606	31 038	14 574	46 285
2004						
Mar Qtr	26 760	12 001	39 210	27 202	12 272	39 923
Jun Qtr	28 107	12 449	41 034	28 405	12 949	41 833
Sep Qtr	27 793	12 887	41 610	28 382	13 393	42 713
SEASONALLY ADJUSTED						
2003						
Jun Qtr	25 917	12 008	38 668	26 399	12 500	39 654
Sep Qtr	28 381	11 520	40 440	28 785	12 047	41 373
Dec Qtr	29 910	12 960	43 665	30 237	13 439	44 477
2004						
Mar Qtr	28 835	13 225	42 544	29 353	13 584	43 421
Jun Qtr	28 591	12 890	41 958	28 919	13 329	42 726
Sep Qtr	26 104	12 543	39 398	26 604	12 901	40 263
TREND						
2003						
Jun Qtr	27 068	12 033	39 726	27 505	12 525	40 661
Sep Qtr	28 148	12 022	40 834	28 560	12 517	41 747
Dec Qtr	29 189	12 598	42 412	29 588	13 064	43 280
2004						
Mar Qtr	29 112	12 981	42 664	29 518	13 402	43 493
Jun Qtr	28 056	12 960	41 590	28 485	13 351	42 413
Sep Qtr	26 665	12 674	39 947	27 121	13 047	40 780

(a) Includes Conversions, etc.

DWELLING UNIT COMMENCEMENTS—Change from previous period

	PRIVATE SECTOR			TOTAL SECTORS		
	New houses	New other residential building	Total dwelling units(a)	New houses	New other residential building	Total dwelling units(a)
	%	%	%	%	%	%
ORIGINAL						
2001-02	51.3	33.5	45.2	51.2	29.7	43.4
2002-03	-1.4	15.5	3.5	-1.2	14.4	3.4
2003-04	4.8	-4.7	1.3	4.4	-4.5	1.1
2003						
Jun Qtr	-0.9	0.4	0.2	-0.6	2.3	1.0
Sep Qtr	17.9	2.0	12.4	17.7	3.6	12.7
Dec Qtr	2.0	20.4	7.1	1.5	15.8	5.7
2004						
Mar Qtr	-12.8	-15.8	-14.0	-12.4	-15.8	-13.7
Jun Qtr	5.0	3.7	4.7	4.4	5.5	4.8
Sep Qtr	-1.1	3.5	1.4	-0.1	3.4	2.1
SEASONALLY ADJUSTED						
2003						
Jun Qtr	-6.3	-5.0	-5.2	-6.0	-4.3	-4.8
Sep Qtr	9.5	-4.1	4.6	9.0	-3.6	4.3
Dec Qtr	5.4	12.5	8.0	5.0	11.6	7.5
2004						
Mar Qtr	-3.6	2.0	-2.6	-2.9	1.1	-2.4
Jun Qtr	-0.8	-2.5	-1.4	-1.5	-1.9	-1.6
Sep Qtr	-8.7	-2.7	-6.1	-8.0	-3.2	-5.8
TREND						
2003						
Jun Qtr	0.5	-6.2	-1.6	0.4	-5.9	-1.6
Sep Qtr	4.0	-0.1	2.8	3.8	-0.1	2.7
Dec Qtr	3.7	4.8	3.9	3.6	4.4	3.7
2004						
Mar Qtr	-0.3	3.0	0.6	-0.2	2.6	0.5
Jun Qtr	-3.6	-0.2	-2.5	-3.5	-0.4	-2.5
Sep Qtr	-5.0	-2.2	-4.0	-4.8	-2.3	-3.9

(a) Includes Conversions, etc.

DWELLING UNIT COMMENCEMENTS, States & territories

	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.
<i>Period</i>	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.
ORIGINAL									
2001-02	47 035	47 384	35 592	9 943	19 136	1 916	1 028	2 373	164 407
2002-03	48 065	45 840	39 281	10 283	20 281	2 067	987	3 140	169 945
2003-04	43 805	45 307	43 545	10 010	22 423	2 814	1 047	2 898	171 848
2003									
Jun Qtr	10 516	10 349	9 365	2 465	4 664	628	231	658	38 876
Sep Qtr	11 544	11 764	11 150	2 543	5 550	617	205	433	43 807
Dec Qtr	10 816	12 373	12 275	2 772	5 974	689	368	1 019	46 285
2004									
Mar Qtr	10 785	10 181	9 689	2 172	5 570	784	228	513	39 923
Jun Qtr	10 661	10 988	10 431	2 524	5 328	723	245	933	41 833
Sep Qtr	10 922	10 555	11 114	2 471	6 239	662	381	368	42 713
SEASONALLY ADJUSTED									
2003									
Jun Qtr	10 993	10 166	9 311	2 508	5 064	623	na	690	39 654
Sep Qtr	11 210	11 122	10 418	2 518	5 053	641	na	507	41 373
Dec Qtr	9 934	12 771	11 934	2 524	5 701	667	na	821	44 477
2004									
Mar Qtr	11 840	10 992	10 792	2 380	5 937	788	na	598	43 421
Jun Qtr	11 216	10 740	10 436	2 555	5 801	720	na	971	42 726
Sep Qtr	10 607	9 978	10 370	2 477	5 769	680	na	434	40 263
TREND									
2003									
Jun Qtr	11 130	10 822	9 616	2 529	5 205	573	221	652	40 661
Sep Qtr	10 750	11 314	10 511	2 511	5 333	647	243	631	41 747
Dec Qtr	10 869	11 744	11 166	2 480	5 542	705	265	692	43 280
2004									
Mar Qtr	11 089	11 460	11 052	2 473	5 807	730	283	749	43 493
Jun Qtr	11 145	10 711	10 619	2 481	5 861	730	300	722	42 413
Sep Qtr	11 072	9 913	10 164	2 496	5 802	702	320	618	40 780
na not available									

DWELLING UNIT COMMENCEMENTS, States & territories—Change from previous period

	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.
Period	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
ORIGINAL									
2001–02	41.5	37.1	57.1	52.1	38.1	73.5	0.1	44.5	43.4
2002–03	2.2	–3.3	10.4	3.4	6.0	7.9	–3.9	32.3	3.4
2003–04	–8.9	–1.2	10.9	–2.7	10.6	36.1	6.0	–7.7	1.1
2003									
Jun Qtr	–1.4	–1.3	13.8	4.2	–14.0	34.5	17.9	–0.2	1.0
Sep Qtr	9.8	13.7	19.1	3.1	19.0	–1.7	–11.4	–34.2	12.7
Dec Qtr	–6.3	5.2	10.1	9.0	7.6	11.6	79.5	135.4	5.7
2004									
Mar Qtr	–0.3	–17.7	–21.1	–21.6	–6.8	13.9	–37.9	–49.7	–13.7
Jun Qtr	–1.1	7.9	7.7	16.2	–4.4	–7.8	7.2	82.0	4.8
Sep Qtr	2.4	–3.9	6.5	–2.1	17.1	–8.4	55.5	–60.6	2.1
SEASONALLY ADJUSTED									
2003									
Jun Qtr	–5.4	–9.8	1.6	–2.5	–11.9	32.3	na	–7.6	–4.8
Sep Qtr	2.0	9.4	11.9	0.4	–0.2	2.9	na	–26.5	4.3
Dec Qtr	–11.4	14.8	14.6	0.2	12.8	4.1	na	61.9	7.5
2004									
Mar Qtr	19.2	–13.9	–9.6	–5.7	4.1	18.1	na	–27.2	–2.4
Jun Qtr	–5.3	–2.3	–3.3	7.4	–2.3	–8.6	na	62.4	–1.6
Sep Qtr	–5.4	–7.1	–0.6	–3.1	–0.6	–5.6	na	–55.3	–5.8
TREND									
2003									
Jun Qtr	–5.5	–1.6	2.0	–0.2	1.6	12.6	–4.7	–10.7	–1.6
Sep Qtr	–3.4	4.5	9.3	–0.7	2.5	12.9	10.0	–3.2	2.7
Dec Qtr	1.1	3.8	6.2	–1.2	3.9	9.0	9.1	9.7	3.7
2004									
Mar Qtr	2.0	–2.4	–1.0	–0.3	4.8	3.5	6.8	8.2	0.5
Jun Qtr	0.5	–6.5	–3.9	0.3	0.9	—	6.0	–3.6	–2.5
Sep Qtr	–0.7	–7.5	–4.3	0.6	–1.0	–3.8	6.7	–14.4	–3.9
— nil or rounded to zero (including null cells)									
na not available									

DWELLING UNIT COMMENCEMENTS, States & territories: Original

	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.
Period	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.
NEW HOUSES									
2001-02	25 345	34 631	25 590	8 246	16 241	1 752	641	1 178	113 626
2002-03	24 218	32 607	26 157	8 263	16 814	1 866	526	1 778	112 228
2003-04	22 142	34 624	29 478	8 013	18 504	2 480	515	1 460	117 216
2003									
Jun Qtr	5 679	7 058	6 250	1 979	3 930	495	124	450	25 964
Sep Qtr	5 643	9 336	7 749	2 077	4 651	562	156	397	30 570
Dec Qtr	6 116	8 764	8 028	2 140	4 734	635	140	481	31 038
2004									
Mar Qtr	5 180	7 702	6 701	1 831	4 751	634	95	308	27 202
Jun Qtr	5 203	8 822	7 000	1 965	4 367	650	124	274	28 405
Sep Qtr	5 530	7 967	7 112	1 986	4 837	548	167	236	28 382
NEW OTHER RESIDENTIAL BUILDING									
2001-02	20 512	11 541	9 686	1 638	2 820	154	382	1 186	47 919
2002-03	22 442	12 324	12 754	1 976	3 328	190	452	1 361	54 827
2003-04	20 588	9 986	13 962	1 823	3 826	260	497	1 432	52 374
2003									
Jun Qtr	4 471	2 974	3 104	467	686	128	106	207	12 143
Sep Qtr	5 623	2 296	3 338	313	891	39	47	33	12 580
Dec Qtr	4 426	3 261	4 240	629	1 222	35	226	535	14 574
2004									
Mar Qtr	5 360	2 383	2 963	337	788	122	114	205	12 272
Jun Qtr	5 179	2 047	3 421	544	925	64	110	659	12 949
Sep Qtr	5 127	2 005	3 983	457	1 364	113	211	133	13 393
CONVERSIONS, ETC.									
2001-02	1 178	1 212	316	59	74	10	4	9	2 863
2002-03	1 405	909	371	44	139	11	10	1	2 890
2003-04	1 076	697	105	174	94	74	34	6	2 259
2003									
Jun Qtr	365	317	11	20	48	5	1	1	769
Sep Qtr	277	132	64	153	8	17	2	3	656
Dec Qtr	274	349	6	3	18	19	2	3	673
2004									
Mar Qtr	245	97	25	3	31	29	20	—	449
Jun Qtr	280	119	10	15	37	9	10	—	480
Sep Qtr	265	584	19	27	38	1	3	—	937
TOTAL									
2001-02	47 035	47 384	35 592	9 943	19 136	1 916	1 028	2 373	164 407
2002-03	48 065	45 840	39 281	10 283	20 281	2 067	987	3 140	169 945
2003-04	43 805	45 307	43 545	10 010	22 423	2 814	1 047	2 898	171 848
2003									
Jun Qtr	10 516	10 349	9 365	2 465	4 664	628	231	658	38 876
Sep Qtr	11 544	11 764	11 150	2 543	5 550	617	205	433	43 807
Dec Qtr	10 816	12 373	12 275	2 772	5 974	689	368	1 019	46 285
2004									
Mar Qtr	10 785	10 181	9 689	2 172	5 570	784	228	513	39 923
Jun Qtr	10 661	10 988	10 431	2 524	5 328	723	245	933	41 833
Sep Qtr	10 922	10 555	11 114	2 471	6 239	662	381	368	42 713

— nil or rounded to zero (including null cells)

DWELLING UNIT COMMENCEMENTS, States & territories—Private sector: **Original**

	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.
<i>Period</i>	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.

NEW HOUSES

2001-02	25 245	34 221	25 333	7 995	15 794	1 694	510	1 128	111 920
2002-03	24 089	32 363	25 852	7 922	16 241	1 838	397	1 684	110 385
2003-04	21 938	34 471	29 215	7 717	18 029	2 474	360	1 447	115 652
2003									
Jun Qtr	5 616	7 008	6 206	1 927	3 770	474	86	442	25 528
Sep Qtr	5 619	9 320	7 674	1 985	4 442	562	100	391	30 092
Dec Qtr	6 045	8 734	7 970	2 058	4 680	635	96	474	30 693
2004									
Mar Qtr	5 104	7 642	6 634	1 772	4 601	629	70	308	26 760
Jun Qtr	5 169	8 775	6 937	1 903	4 306	649	93	274	28 107
Sep Qtr	5 469	7 803	7 058	1 893	4 675	534	124	236	27 793

NEW OTHER RESIDENTIAL BUILDING

2001-02	19 894	11 197	9 409	1 600	2 227	143	276	1 156	45 902
2002-03	22 083	11 793	12 428	1 900	2 910	190	419	1 277	53 000
2003-04	20 159	9 707	13 568	1 742	3 278	260	429	1 378	50 522
2003									
Jun Qtr	4 353	2 725	3 048	449	609	128	89	191	11 593
Sep Qtr	5 377	2 226	3 166	294	649	39	43	33	11 827
Dec Qtr	4 368	3 190	4 193	605	1 126	35	206	523	14 246
2004									
Mar Qtr	5 314	2 299	2 899	327	739	122	114	187	12 001
Jun Qtr	5 100	1 993	3 310	516	764	64	66	635	12 449
Sep Qtr	5 024	1 982	3 897	439	1 163	51	199	133	12 887

CONVERSIONS, ETC.

2001-02	1 176	1 211	297	59	67	10	4	9	2 834
2002-03	1 405	897	370	44	139	11	10	1	2 877
2003-04	1 076	694	105	174	88	74	34	6	2 250
2003									
Jun Qtr	365	305	11	20	48	5	1	1	757
Sep Qtr	277	130	64	153	8	17	2	3	654
Dec Qtr	274	349	6	3	12	19	2	3	667
2004									
Mar Qtr	245	97	25	3	31	29	20	—	449
Jun Qtr	280	118	10	15	37	9	10	—	479
Sep Qtr	265	584	13	27	37	1	3	—	930

TOTAL

2001-02	46 315	46 629	35 038	9 654	18 089	1 847	791	2 293	160 656
2002-03	47 577	45 053	38 650	9 866	19 290	2 039	825	2 962	166 262
2003-04	43 174	44 872	42 888	9 633	21 393	2 808	822	2 831	168 423
2003									
Jun Qtr	10 334	10 038	9 265	2 396	4 427	607	176	634	37 877
Sep Qtr	11 274	11 676	10 903	2 431	5 099	617	145	427	42 573
Dec Qtr	10 687	12 272	12 170	2 666	5 818	689	304	1 000	45 606
2004									
Mar Qtr	10 664	10 037	9 558	2 102	5 370	779	204	495	39 210
Jun Qtr	10 550	10 886	10 257	2 434	5 106	722	169	909	41 034
Sep Qtr	10 758	10 368	10 969	2 359	5 875	586	326	368	41 610

— nil or rounded to zero (including null cells)

DWELLING UNIT COMMENCEMENTS, States & territories—Public sector: **Original**

	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.
<i>Period</i>	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.

NEW HOUSES

2001–02	100	410	258	251	448	58	131	50	1 705
2002–03	129	244	305	341	573	28	129	94	1 843
2003–04	203	153	263	296	475	6	155	13	1 564
2003									
Jun Qtr	64	50	44	52	160	21	38	8	436
Sep Qtr	24	16	75	92	209	—	56	6	478
Dec Qtr	71	30	58	82	54	—	44	7	346
2004									
Mar Qtr	75	60	67	60	151	5	24	—	442
Jun Qtr	33	47	63	62	61	1	31	—	298
Sep Qtr	61	164	54	93	161	14	43	—	590

NEW OTHER RESIDENTIAL BUILDING

2001–02	618	344	277	38	593	11	106	30	2 017
2002–03	359	531	326	76	418	—	33	84	1 827
2003–04	428	279	394	81	548	—	68	54	1 852
2003									
Jun Qtr	118	249	56	18	77	—	17	16	551
Sep Qtr	246	70	172	19	242	—	4	—	753
Dec Qtr	58	71	47	24	96	—	20	12	328
2004									
Mar Qtr	46	84	64	10	49	—	—	18	271
Jun Qtr	78	54	111	28	161	—	44	24	500
Sep Qtr	104	23	86	18	201	62	12	—	506

CONVERSIONS, ETC.

2001–02	2	1	19	—	7	—	—	—	29
2002–03	—	12	1	—	—	—	—	—	13
2003–04	—	3	—	—	6	—	—	—	9
2003									
Jun Qtr	—	12	—	—	—	—	—	—	12
Sep Qtr	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	2
Dec Qtr	—	—	—	—	6	—	—	—	6
2004									
Mar Qtr	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Jun Qtr	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
Sep Qtr	—	—	6	—	1	—	—	—	7

TOTAL

2001–02	720	755	554	289	1 048	69	237	80	3 751
2002–03	488	787	632	417	991	28	162	178	3 682
2003–04	632	435	657	377	1 029	6	223	67	3 427
2003									
Jun Qtr	182	311	100	70	237	21	55	24	999
Sep Qtr	270	88	247	111	451	—	60	6	1 234
Dec Qtr	129	101	105	106	156	—	64	19	680
2004									
Mar Qtr	121	144	131	70	200	5	24	18	713
Jun Qtr	112	102	174	90	222	1	75	24	800
Sep Qtr	164	187	146	112	364	76	55	—	1 103

— nil or rounded to zero (including null cells)

EXPLANATORY NOTES

INTRODUCTION

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

SCOPE AND COVERAGE

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
- a complete enumeration of all such public sector residential building jobs.

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 Approval series compiled by the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

CLASSIFICATION

4 *Ownership.* The ownership of a building is classified as either *private sector* or *public 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.

5 Building jobs are classified both by the TYPE OF BUILDING (e.g. 'house', 'other residential building') and by the TYPE OF WORK involved (i.e. 'new' and 'conversions, etc.'). These classifications are used in conjunction with each other and are defined in the Glossary.

RELIABILITY OF THE ESTIMATES

6 Since the estimates are based on a sample of approved private sector residential building jobs, the estimates of commencements of private sector dwellings and total dwellings 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.

7 Relative standard errors for the number of dwellings commenced in the September quarter 2004 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 2004

	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
New private sector houses	3.8	3.9	3.2	3.4	3.4	2.5	—	2.5	1.7
Total new other dwellings	1.8	2.8	0.7	5.0	1.1	—	—	—	0.9
Total dwellings	2.1	2.9	2.0	2.8	2.6	2.0	—	1.6	1.1

— nil or rounded to zero (including null cells)

8 In addition, 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 for the last two quarters are therefore subject to revision.

EXPLANATORY NOTES *continued*

SEASONAL ADJUSTMENT

9 Seasonally adjusted building statistics are shown in tables 1–3. In the seasonally adjusted series, account has been taken of normal seasonal factors, 'trading day' effects arising from the varying numbers of working days in a quarter and the effect of movement in the date of Easter which may, in successive years, affect figures for different quarters.

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. The seasonally adjusted series for total dwellings for Australia and each state and territory has been produced by summing the respective seasonally adjusted series for each of 'new houses', 'new other residential dwellings' and 'conversions, etc.' However, the states and Australia are adjusted independently, which means that the sum of the adjusted state series may not add to the adjusted Australian total.

11 From the June quarter 2003, the seasonally adjusted estimates are produced by the concurrent seasonal adjustment method which takes account of the latest available original estimates. The concurrent seasonal adjustment methodology replaces the forward factor methodology previously used, when seasonal factors were only revised following an annual re-analysis. The concurrent method improves the estimation of seasonal factors and, therefore, the seasonally adjusted and trend estimates for the current and previous quarters. As a result of this improvement, revisions to the seasonally adjusted and trend estimates will be observed for recent periods. In most instances, the only noticeable revisions will be to the previous quarter and the same quarter of a year earlier.

12 A more detailed review of concurrent seasonal factors will be conducted annually, generally prior to the release of data for the December quarter.

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.

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. For further information, see *Information Paper: A Guide to Interpreting Time Series—Monitoring Trends, 2003* (cat. no. 1349.0) or contact the Assistant Director, Time Series Analysis on Canberra (02) 6252 6540 or email <timeseries@abs.gov.au>.

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 All tables in this publication are available in electronic form on the ABS web site <<http://www.abs.gov.au>>.

EXPLANATORY NOTES *continued*

RELATED PRODUCTS *continued*

18 Users may also wish to refer to the following publications:

Building Activity, Australia, cat. no. 8752.0

Building Approvals, Australia, cat. no. 8731.0

Construction Work Done, Australia, Preliminary, cat. no. 8755.0

House Price Indexes: Eight Capital Cities, cat. no. 6416.0

Housing Finance for Owner Occupation, Australia, cat. no. 5609.0

Private Sector Construction Industry, Australia, 1996–97, cat. no. 8772.0

Producer Price Indexes, Australia, cat. no. 6427.0.

19 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 the National Information and Referral Service on 1300 135 070 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

20 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.

GLOSSARY

Building	A building is 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.
Commenced	A building is 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).
Conversions, etc.	A conversion is building activity which converts a non-residential building to a residential building, e.g. conversion of a warehouse to residential apartments. Conversion is considered to be a special type of alteration. 'Conversions, etc.' are the number of dwelling units created as part of alterations and additions to, or conversions of, existing residential or non-residential buildings and as part of the construction of non-residential building. 'Conversions, etc.' are shown separately in tables 4 to 6 and are included in the total number of dwelling units.
Dwelling unit	A dwelling unit is a self-contained suite of rooms, including cooking and bathing facilities and intended for <i>long-term</i> 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.
House	A house is 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.
New	Building activity which will result in the creation of a building which previously did not exist.
Number of dwelling unit commencements	For other residential building, these statistics present the number of dwelling units in such buildings (and not the number of buildings). For example, if a new building with 25 apartments is commenced, then 25 is included in the number of dwelling unit commencements under 'new other residential building'. Residential building activity involving a number of residential buildings of the same type of building and which are being built on the same site are sometimes grouped. Thus, when a project involving the construction of, say, a group of 10 houses is commenced in the sense that work has started on the first one or two houses, then all 10 houses may be counted as commencements in the statistics.
Other residential building	An other residential building is a building other than a house primarily used for long-term residential purposes and which contains (or has attached to it) more than one dwelling unit (e.g. includes blocks of flats, home units, attached townhouses, villa units, terrace houses, semidetached houses, maisonettes, duplexes, apartment buildings, etc.).
Residential building	A residential building is a building predominantly consisting of one or more dwelling units. Residential buildings can be either <i>houses</i> or <i>other residential buildings</i> .

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2875000009043

ISSN 0818 3511

RRP \$20.00