

# BUILDING ACTIVITY

**AUSTRALIAN  
CAPITAL  
TERRITORY**

EMBARGO: 11:30AM (CANBERRA TIME) FRI 31 JULY 1998

## MARCH QTR KEY FIGURES

<b>SEASONALLY ADJUSTED</b>	<b>Mar qtr 98</b>	<b>Dec qtr 97 to Mar qtr 98 % change</b>	<b>Mar qtr 97 to Mar qtr 98 % change</b>
Value of work done(a) (\$m)	123.8	4.8	-10.4
New residential building (\$m)	32.4	-5.5	-13.1
Alterations and additions(b) (\$m)	11.2	0.0	1.8
Non-residential building (\$m)	82.3	10.9	-10.4
Total dwelling units commenced (no.)	341	-7.1	-35.4
New private sector houses (no.)	279	-6.7	-3.8

(a) At average 1989-90 prices. (b) To residential buildings.

## MARCH QTR KEY POINTS

### VALUE OF WORK DONE

- In seasonally adjusted average 1989-90 prices the value of new residential building work done in the quarter fell by 5.5% to \$32.4m, continuing the generally downward trend since the September quarter 1994 peak. Work done on new houses rose by 16.6% to \$28.1m.
- Work done on non-residential building increased by 10.9% to \$82.3m, following a fall of 18.9% in the December quarter.

### VALUE OF WORK COMMENCED

- In average 1989-90 prices the value of new residential building work commenced during the March quarter fell by 31.4% to \$26.0m, following an increase of 53.4% in the December quarter. New house commencements fell by 24.0% to \$23.1m and new other residential dwelling commencements fell by 61.3% to \$2.9m.
- Non-residential building increased by 67.7% to \$100.1m, following rises of 15.7% in the December quarter and 22.6% in the September quarter. Commencements in the Shops and Entertainment and recreational categories were the main contributor to the increase in the March quarter.

### NUMBER OF DWELLING UNITS COMMENCED

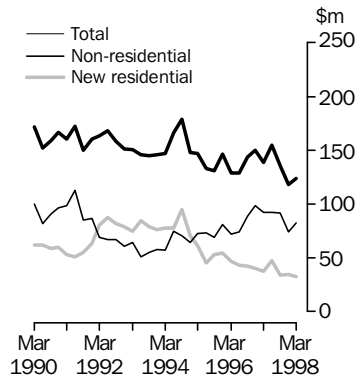
- In seasonally adjusted terms the total number of dwelling units commenced during the March quarter fell by 7.1% to 341, following a 20.3% rise in the December quarter.

### VALUE OF WORK YET TO BE DONE

- The value of work yet to be done on jobs under construction at the end of March 1998 increased by 15.6% to \$279.3m. This is 2.35 times the value of work done for the quarter.

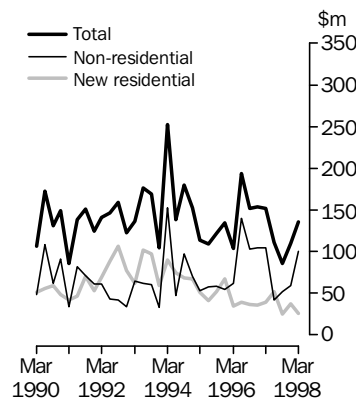
### Value of work done

At average 1989-90 prices  
Seasonally adjusted



### Value of work commenced

At average 1989-90 prices



- For further information about these and related statistics, contact Martin Yard on Adelaide 08 8237 7494, or any ABS office shown on the back cover of this publication.

# NOTES

## FORTHCOMING ISSUES

*ISSUE (Quarter)*

*RELEASE DATE*

June 1998

27 October 1998

## CHANGES IN THIS ISSUE

There have been some changes to the layout of the publication, however the tables are unchanged.

130 dwelling units (conversions etc.) have been revised in the December quarter 1997 from 'Under construction at end of period' to 'Completed', with consequential revisions occurring to the value of alterations and additions to residential buildings in these two tables. Value of work done was largely unaffected.

## DATA NOTES

Caution should be exercised in interpreting time series data because of under reporting of building approvals prior to July 1996.

## SYMBOLS AND OTHER USAGES

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
n.a.	not available
RSE	relative standard error
SE	standard error
..	not applicable
—	nil or rounded to zero

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

Dalma Jacobs  
Regional Director  
Australian Capital Territory

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**TABLE 1. VALUE OF BUILDING WORK COMMENCED, AVERAGE 1989-90 PRICES(a)**  
(\$ million)

Period	New residential building			Alterations and additions to residential buildings	Non-residential building		Total building
	Houses	Other residential building	Total		Private sector	Total	
1994-95	128.6	98.6	227.2	50.7	87.6	277.9	555.8
1995-96	110.5	82.4	192.9	45.1	126.8	315.6	553.6
1996-97	103.9	59.2	163.1	49.9	108.5	355.0	568.0
1996 Dec. qtr	25.7	9.9	35.6	13.3	22.4	104.8	153.7
1997 Mar. qtr	24.5	14.7	39.2	8.0	27.4	105.0	152.2
June qtr	26.9	24.9	51.8	16.6	30.7	42.1	110.5
Sept. qtr	19.6	5.1	24.7	9.3	28.3	51.6	85.6
Dec. qtr	30.4	7.5	37.9	12.1	39.5	59.7	109.7
1998 Mar. qtr	23.1	2.9	26.0	9.6	74.8	100.1	135.7

(a) See paragraphs 24 and 25 of the Explanatory Notes. Constant price estimates are subject to revision each quarter as more up to date information on prices and commodity compositions becomes available.

**TABLE 2. VALUE OF BUILDING WORK DONE, AVERAGE 1989-90 PRICES(a)**  
(\$ million)

Period	New residential building			Alterations and additions to residential buildings	Non-residential building		Total building
	Houses	Other residential building	Total		Private sector	Total	
ORIGINAL							
1994-95	135.9	140.1	276.0	51.5	96.1	279.8	607.3
1995-96	113.6	84.5	198.1	41.9	114.2	296.2	536.2
1996-97	107.5	59.1	166.6	47.6	137.3	373.0	587.2
1996 Dec. qtr	28.2	16.6	44.8	14.6	44.5	110.5	169.9
1997 Mar. qtr	22.2	10.6	32.8	8.6	29.1	76.2	117.6
June qtr	29.6	13.1	42.7	12.2	31.4	97.0	151.9
Sept. qtr	23.2	14.1	37.3	10.7	34.6	91.5	139.5
Dec. qtr	26.5	11.6	38.1	13.1	41.9	83.4	134.6
1998 Mar. qtr	23.9	4.6	28.5	8.7	37.7	68.0	105.2
SEASONALLY ADJUSTED							
1996 Dec. qtr	25.7	n.a.	40.3	12.5	n.a.	98.6	149.5
1997 Mar. qtr	26.0	n.a.	37.3	11.0	n.a.	91.9	138.2
June qtr	28.9	n.a.	47.0	11.6	n.a.	92.6	154.7
Sept. qtr	22.7	n.a.	33.9	10.7	n.a.	91.5	135.6
Dec. qtr	24.1	n.a.	34.3	11.2	n.a.	74.2	118.1
1998 Mar. qtr	28.1	n.a.	32.4	11.2	n.a.	82.3	123.8

(a) See paragraphs 24 to 26 of the Explanatory Notes. Constant price estimates are subject to revision each quarter as more up to date information on prices and commodity compositions becomes available.

**TABLE 3. VALUE OF BUILDING WORK DONE: SEASONALLY ADJUSTED SERIES**  
(\$ million)

<i>Period</i>	<i>New residential building</i>		<i>Alterations and additions to residential buildings</i>	<i>Non-residential building</i>	<i>Total building</i>
	<i>Houses</i>	<i>Total</i>			
1996 Dec. qtr	33.0	48.7	16.1	105.9	168.5
1997 Mar. qtr	33.8	45.6	14.4	99.0	156.8
June qtr	36.0	56.2	14.4	100.5	174.6
Sept. qtr	27.7	39.8	13.0	99.4	152.0
Dec. qtr	29.9	40.9	14.0	80.1	133.2
1998 Mar. qtr	34.7	39.3	13.8	89.1	139.9

**TABLE 4. NUMBER OF DWELLING UNITS COMMENCED AND COMPLETED: SEASONALLY ADJUSTED SERIES**

<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>	
	<i>Commenced</i>	<i>Completed</i>	<i>Commenced</i>	<i>Completed</i>	<i>Commenced</i>	<i>Completed</i>	<i>Commenced</i>	<i>Completed</i>
1996 Dec. qtr	287	269	298	375	397	448	376	487
1997 Mar. qtr	290	272	310	237	462	299	528	308
June qtr	283	346	288	323	543	734	578	758
Sept. qtr	216	318	219	313	274	417	305	430
Dec. qtr	299	199	311	271	389	361	367	467
1998 Mar. qtr	279	334	267	277	321	347	341	344

**TABLE 5. NUMBER AND VALUE OF BUILDING COMMENCED: ORIGINAL**

Period	Number of dwelling units				Value (\$m)						
	New houses	New other residential building	Conversions etc.	Total dwelling units	New houses	New other residential building	New residential building	Alterations and additions to residential buildings	Total residential building	Total non-residential building	Total building
<b>PRIVATE SECTOR</b>											
1994-95	1,522	1,072	5	2,599	170.9	94.6	265.5	65.0	330.5	91.9	422.4
1995-96	1,250	839	—	2,089	138.7	82.2	220.9	48.3	269.2	133.7	402.9
1996-97	1,117	711	5	1,833	127.4	62.5	189.8	54.4	244.3	116.4	360.7
1996 Dec. qtr	288	116	1	405	32.0	10.6	42.6	16.7	59.3	23.9	83.1
1997 Mar. qtr	253	157	1	411	28.5	15.5	44.0	10.0	53.9	29.5	83.4
June qtr	294	250	3	547	33.2	26.8	60.0	12.7	72.7	33.4	106.1
Sept. qtr	232	63	—	295	24.7	5.1	29.8	11.6	41.4	31.0	72.4
Dec. qtr	300	98	—	398	38.0	8.3	46.4	15.1	61.4	43.4	104.8
1998 Mar. qtr	245	40	2	287	29.1	3.2	32.3	12.0	44.3	82.3	126.6
<b>PUBLIC SECTOR</b>											
1994-95	11	122	—	133	1.1	9.7	10.8	2.2	13.0	199.5	212.5
1995-96	39	88	70	197	3.7	5.2	8.9	9.3	18.2	199.1	217.3
1996-97	41	18	60	119	3.9	1.4	5.3	8.3	13.6	263.5	277.2
1996 Dec. qtr	2	—	—	2	0.5	—	0.5	—	0.5	87.9	88.4
1997 Mar. qtr	30	4	—	34	2.5	0.4	2.9	—	2.9	83.6	86.5
June qtr	7	6	60	73	0.7	0.4	1.1	8.2	9.3	12.4	21.7
Sept. qtr	—	8	—	8	—	0.6	0.6	—	0.6	25.5	26.1
Dec. qtr	2	—	—	2	0.2	—	0.2	—	0.2	22.2	22.4
1998 Mar. qtr	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	27.8	27.8
<b>TOTAL</b>											
1994-95	1,533	1,194	5	2,732	172.0	104.3	276.3	67.3	343.5	291.4	634.9
1995-96	1,289	927	70	2,286	142.4	87.4	229.9	57.6	287.4	332.8	620.2
1996-97	1,158	729	65	1,952	131.3	63.9	195.2	62.7	257.9	379.9	637.8
1996 Dec. qtr	290	116	1	407	32.5	10.6	43.1	16.7	59.8	111.8	171.6
1997 Mar. qtr	283	161	1	445	31.0	15.9	46.9	10.0	56.8	113.0	169.9
June qtr	301	256	63	620	33.8	27.2	61.0	20.9	82.0	45.8	127.8
Sept. qtr	232	71	—	303	24.7	5.7	30.4	11.6	41.9	56.5	98.4
Dec. qtr	302	98	—	400	38.2	8.3	46.5	15.1	61.6	65.6	127.2
1998 Mar. qtr	245	40	2	287	29.1	3.2	32.3	12.0	44.3	110.1	154.4

**TABLE 6. VALUE OF NON-RESIDENTIAL BUILDING COMMENCED: ORIGINAL**  
(\$ million)

<i>Period</i>	<i>Hotels etc.</i>	<i>Shops</i>	<i>Factories</i>	<i>Offices</i>	<i>Other business premises</i>	<i>Educational</i>	<i>Religious</i>	<i>Health</i>	<i>Entertainment and recreational</i>	<i>Miscellaneous</i>	<i>Total non-residential building</i>
<b>PRIVATE SECTOR</b>											
1994-95	4.6	14.5	2.8	29.3	12.1	2.3	0.7	0.8	23.9	0.8	91.9
1995-96	—	9.7	10.0	88.5	4.2	3.3	—	5.1	7.4	5.5	133.7
1996-97	0.4	16.1	1.2	47.3	11.0	7.2	1.7	11.7	18.7	1.1	116.4
1996 Dec. qtr	0.3	4.0	0.2	9.0	2.7	3.1	—	3.1	0.9	0.6	23.9
1997 Mar. qtr	0.1	0.9	0.7	5.4	0.9	3.7	0.6	6.2	11.1	—	29.5
June qtr	—	8.9	—	16.4	4.5	0.1	0.8	2.3	0.3	0.1	33.4
Sept. qtr	—	14.6	—	8.6	0.1	4.3	0.9	0.4	2.0	—	31.0
Dec. qtr	3.6	9.5	—	7.4	4.6	1.4	0.5	15.0	0.7	0.6	43.4
1998 Mar. qtr	5.2	63.2	—	4.1	0.4	—	1.5	0.8	6.8	0.3	82.3
<b>PUBLIC SECTOR</b>											
1994-95	—	1.2	—	108.1	8.8	31.7	—	7.3	4.7	37.7	199.5
1995-96	—	0.9	—	130.7	7.5	46.2	—	4.2	6.3	3.4	199.1
1996-97	—	0.3	—	181.6	2.0	49.2	—	5.4	17.1	7.9	263.5
1996 Dec. qtr	—	0.1	—	59.2	—	21.7	—	2.3	4.3	0.3	87.9
1997 Mar. qtr	—	0.1	—	51.6	—	16.2	—	1.8	8.8	5.2	83.6
June qtr	—	—	—	7.1	—	2.5	—	1.4	0.5	1.0	12.4
Sept. qtr	—	0.1	—	10.7	0.4	7.6	—	—	—	6.7	25.5
Dec. qtr	—	0.1	—	6.2	—	15.5	—	0.1	—	0.3	22.2
1998 Mar. qtr	—	—	—	6.7	0.5	4.2	—	0.4	15.9	0.1	27.8
<b>TOTAL</b>											
1994-95	4.6	15.7	2.8	137.4	20.9	33.9	0.7	8.1	28.6	38.5	291.4
1995-96	—	10.6	10.0	219.2	11.7	49.5	—	9.3	13.7	8.9	332.8
1996-97	0.4	16.4	1.2	228.9	13.1	56.4	1.7	17.2	35.8	9.0	379.9
1996 Dec. qtr	0.3	4.1	0.2	68.2	2.7	24.9	—	5.4	5.2	0.9	111.8
1997 Mar. qtr	0.1	1.0	0.7	57.0	0.9	19.9	0.6	8.0	19.9	5.2	113.0
June qtr	—	8.9	—	23.5	4.5	2.5	0.8	3.7	0.8	1.1	45.8
Sept. qtr	—	14.7	—	19.3	0.5	11.9	0.9	0.4	2.0	6.7	56.5
Dec. qtr	3.6	9.7	—	13.6	4.6	16.9	0.5	15.1	0.7	0.9	65.6
1998 Mar. qtr	5.2	63.2	—	10.8	0.9	4.2	1.5	1.2	22.7	0.3	110.1

**TABLE 7. NUMBER AND VALUE OF BUILDING UNDER CONSTRUCTION AT END OF PERIOD: ORIGINAL**

	Number of dwelling units				Value (\$m)						
	New houses	New other residential building	Conversions etc.	Total dwelling units	New houses	New other residential building	New residential building	Alterations and additions to residential buildings	Total residential building	Total non-residential building	Total building
<b>PRIVATE SECTOR</b>											
1994-95	509	559	6	1,074	69.8	50.9	120.7	23.2	143.9	43.5	187.4
1995-96	420	473	2	895	56.7	45.3	102.0	13.9	115.8	113.4	229.2
1996-97	375	422	4	801	47.3	43.9	91.2	17.3	108.4	103.4	211.8
1996 Dec. qtr	349	351	3	703	48.7	24.2	72.9	14.5	87.5	112.5	199.9
1997 Mar. qtr	397	484	4	885	52.4	38.9	91.2	16.6	107.8	100.1	207.8
June qtr	375	422	4	801	47.3	43.9	91.2	17.3	108.4	103.4	211.8
Sept. qtr	284	389	4	677	36.8	40.8	77.7	16.7	94.3	101.4	195.7
Dec. qtr	320	256	4	580	43.5	29.0	72.5	15.5	88.1	73.7	161.8
1998 Mar. qtr	312	284	5	601	44.2	31.4	75.6	17.3	92.9	131.0	223.9
<b>PUBLIC SECTOR</b>											
1994-95	3	68	—	71	0.4	5.4	5.8	2.0	7.9	273.5	281.4
1995-96	37	58	70	165	3.4	2.7	6.1	8.6	14.8	372.8	387.6
1996-97	8	2	130	140	0.8	0.2	1.0	16.8	17.8	380.4	398.2
1996 Dec. qtr	3	—	70	73	0.6	—	0.6	8.7	9.3	360.5	369.8
1997 Mar. qtr	22	4	70	96	2.3	0.4	2.7	8.7	11.4	396.1	407.5
June qtr	8	2	130	140	0.8	0.2	1.0	16.8	17.8	380.4	398.2
Sept. qtr	—	8	130	138	—	0.6	0.6	16.8	17.4	361.3	378.7
Dec. qtr	2	—	130	2	0.2	—	0.2	16.8	0.2	295.1	295.3
1998 Mar. qtr	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	281.7	281.7
<b>TOTAL</b>											
1994-95	512	627	6	1,145	70.2	56.3	126.5	25.2	151.7	317.0	468.7
1995-96	457	531	72	1,060	60.1	48.0	108.1	22.5	130.6	486.2	616.8
1996-97	383	424	134	941	48.1	44.0	92.2	34.1	126.2	483.8	610.0
1996 Dec. qtr	352	351	73	776	49.4	24.2	73.5	23.2	96.7	472.9	569.7
1997 Mar. qtr	419	488	74	981	54.7	39.3	93.9	25.2	119.2	496.2	615.3
June qtr	383	424	134	941	48.1	44.0	92.2	34.1	126.2	483.8	610.0
Sept. qtr	284	397	134	815	36.8	41.4	78.2	33.5	111.7	462.7	574.4
Dec. qtr	322	256	4	582	43.7	29.0	72.7	15.5	88.2	368.8	457.0
1998 Mar. qtr	312	284	5	601	44.2	31.4	75.6	17.3	92.9	412.7	505.6



**TABLE 8. VALUE OF NON-RESIDENTIAL BUILDING UNDER CONSTRUCTION AT END OF PERIOD: ORIGINAL**  
(\$ million)

	<i>Hotels etc.</i>	<i>Shops</i>	<i>Factories</i>	<i>Offices</i>	<i>Other business premises</i>	<i>Educational</i>	<i>Religious</i>	<i>Health</i>	<i>Entertain- ment and recreational</i>	<i>Miscel- laneous</i>	<i>Total non-resi- dential building</i>
<b>PRIVATE SECTOR</b>											
1994-95	1.0	2.4	1.3	14.5	3.0	0.5	1.0	—	19.6	0.3	43.5
1995-96	—	1.0	4.5	73.7	1.2	1.2	0.4	3.3	23.7	4.3	113.4
1996-97	—	8.4	0.1	64.1	4.3	3.5	1.3	11.4	10.1	0.1	103.4
1996 Dec. qtr	0.3	1.2	0.5	70.7	4.2	2.9	—	3.1	25.9	3.4	112.5
1997 Mar. qtr	—	1.2	0.8	61.6	3.2	4.6	0.6	9.3	15.6	3.2	100.1
June qtr	—	8.4	0.1	64.1	4.3	3.5	1.3	11.4	10.1	0.1	103.4
Sept. qtr	—	21.3	0.1	58.2	2.8	6.0	1.6	2.6	8.7	—	101.4
Dec. qtr	3.6	21.0	0.1	20.2	5.5	4.7	2.1	15.2	0.5	0.6	73.7
1998 Mar. qtr	9.0	82.8	—	10.9	0.2	2.1	3.6	15.3	7.1	—	131.0
<b>PUBLIC SECTOR</b>											
1994-95	—	—	—	171.1	6.8	34.9	—	24.0	1.9	34.8	273.5
1995-96	—	0.2	—	253.5	5.7	52.2	—	24.8	6.6	29.9	372.8
1996-97	—	—	—	296.8	—	43.6	—	22.0	12.2	5.8	380.4
1996 Dec. qtr	—	—	—	271.6	7.2	54.4	—	22.3	4.0	1.0	360.5
1997 Mar. qtr	—	0.1	—	293.6	6.5	53.6	—	24.5	12.5	5.4	396.1
June qtr	—	—	—	296.8	—	43.6	—	22.0	12.2	5.8	380.4
Sept. qtr	—	—	—	295.2	—	43.7	—	1.2	9.5	11.6	361.3
Dec. qtr	—	—	—	235.2	—	41.4	—	0.9	10.8	6.8	295.1
1998 Mar. qtr	—	—	—	241.5	—	18.6	—	1.2	15.9	4.5	281.7
<b>TOTAL</b>											
1994-95	1.0	2.4	1.3	185.6	9.8	35.4	1.0	24.0	21.5	35.1	317.0
1995-96	—	1.2	4.5	327.2	6.9	53.4	0.4	28.2	30.2	34.2	486.2
1996-97	—	8.4	0.1	360.9	4.3	47.1	1.3	33.4	22.3	5.8	483.8
1996 Dec. qtr	0.3	1.2	0.5	342.3	11.4	57.3	—	25.4	29.9	4.5	472.9
1997 Mar. qtr	—	1.3	0.8	355.2	9.6	58.2	0.6	33.8	28.1	8.6	496.2
June qtr	—	8.4	0.1	360.9	4.3	47.1	1.3	33.4	22.3	5.8	483.8
Sept. qtr	—	21.3	0.1	353.4	2.8	49.7	1.6	3.8	18.2	11.6	462.7
Dec. qtr	3.6	21.0	0.1	255.4	5.5	46.1	2.1	16.1	11.3	7.4	368.8
1998 Mar. qtr	9.0	82.8	—	252.4	0.2	20.7	3.6	16.5	23.0	4.5	412.7

**TABLE 9. NUMBER AND VALUE OF BUILDING COMPLETED: ORIGINAL**

Period	Number of dwelling units				Value (\$m)						
	New houses	New other residential building	Conversions etc.	Total dwelling units	New houses	New other residential building	New residential building	Alterations and additions to residential buildings	Total residential building	Total non-residential building	Total building
<b>PRIVATE SECTOR</b>											
1994-95	1,611	2,298	4	3,913	187.7	190.5	378.2	68.7	447.0	126.5	573.5
1995-96	1,334	925	4	2,263	150.2	91.1	241.3	58.4	299.7	76.3	376.0
1996-97	1,160	762	3	1,925	137.7	65.4	203.0	52.0	255.0	153.9	408.9
1996 Dec. qtr	355	254	—	609	42.5	22.4	64.9	19.3	84.2	65.8	150.0
1997 Mar. qtr	206	24	—	230	27.4	1.9	29.3	7.9	37.2	42.3	79.5
June qtr	316	312	3	631	37.6	21.9	59.6	12.7	72.2	30.9	103.1
Sept. qtr	323	96	—	419	35.0	8.4	43.4	13.0	56.4	36.6	93.0
Dec. qtr	264	231	—	495	30.3	23.9	54.1	16.4	70.6	78.8	149.3
1998 Mar. qtr	253	12	1	266	28.7	0.8	29.5	10.4	39.9	25.4	65.3
<b>PUBLIC SECTOR</b>											
1994-95	52	90	—	142	4.2	7.2	11.4	0.3	11.6	241.7	253.4
1995-96	5	98	—	103	0.7	8.6	9.3	2.7	12.0	106.6	118.6
1996-97	70	53	—	123	6.5	3.9	10.4	0.1	10.6	258.0	268.5
1996 Dec. qtr	10	36	—	46	0.9	2.5	3.4	—	3.4	35.3	38.7
1997 Mar. qtr	11	—	—	11	0.8	—	0.8	—	0.8	53.2	54.0
June qtr	21	8	—	29	2.2	0.6	2.8	0.1	2.9	26.4	29.3
Sept. qtr	8	2	—	10	0.8	0.1	0.9	—	0.9	46.7	47.6
Dec. qtr	—	8	130	138	—	0.6	0.6	8.5	9.1	97.9	107.0
1998 Mar. qtr	2	—	—	2	0.2	—	0.2	—	0.2	42.5	42.7
<b>TOTAL</b>											
1994-95	1,663	2,388	4	4,055	191.9	197.7	389.6	69.0	458.6	368.2	826.8
1995-96	1,339	1,023	4	2,366	151.0	99.7	250.6	61.1	311.7	182.9	494.6
1996-97	1,230	815	3	2,048	144.2	69.3	213.5	52.1	265.5	411.9	677.4
1996 Dec. qtr	365	290	—	655	43.4	24.9	68.3	19.3	87.6	101.1	188.7
1997 Mar. qtr	217	24	—	241	28.2	1.9	30.1	7.9	38.0	95.5	133.5
June qtr	337	320	3	660	39.8	22.6	62.4	12.7	75.1	57.3	132.4
Sept. qtr	331	98	—	429	35.8	8.5	44.4	13.0	57.3	83.3	140.7
Dec. qtr	264	239	130	633	30.3	24.4	54.7	24.9	79.6	176.7	256.4
1998 Mar. qtr	255	12	1	268	28.9	0.8	29.7	10.4	40.0	68.0	108.0

**TABLE 10. VALUE OF NON-RESIDENTIAL BUILDING COMPLETED: ORIGINAL**  
(\$ million)

<i>Period</i>	<i>Hotels etc.</i>	<i>Shops</i>	<i>Factories</i>	<i>Offices</i>	<i>Other business premises</i>	<i>Educational</i>	<i>Religious</i>	<i>Health</i>	<i>Entertain- ment and recreational</i>	<i>Miscel- laneous</i>	<i>Total non-resi- dential building</i>
<b>PRIVATE SECTOR</b>											
1994-95	4.7	18.1	2.5	49.6	9.7	1.8	1.9	9.4	23.0	5.9	126.5
1995-96	1.0	11.1	7.1	30.5	6.5	2.8	0.7	1.8	13.1	1.6	76.3
1996-97	0.4	8.9	6.0	81.8	8.1	5.4	0.7	3.7	33.1	5.9	153.9
1996 Dec. qtr	—	4.2	4.6	45.6	1.4	0.5	0.6	3.4	3.5	2.0	65.8
1997 Mar. qtr	0.4	1.0	0.4	14.5	2.0	2.4	—	—	21.4	0.2	42.3
June qtr	—	1.8	0.7	14.4	3.4	1.2	0.1	0.2	5.9	3.2	30.9
Sept. qtr	—	1.7	—	18.5	1.7	1.8	0.6	8.9	3.4	0.1	36.6
Dec. qtr	—	10.3	—	51.4	1.8	2.7	—	2.8	9.7	—	78.8
1998 Mar. qtr	—	2.1	0.1	13.2	5.8	2.6	—	0.6	0.2	0.9	25.4
<b>PUBLIC SECTOR</b>											
1994-95	—	1.2	—	134.9	7.9	31.7	—	51.5	2.9	11.5	241.7
1995-96	—	0.8	—	49.6	9.5	32.1	—	2.2	2.0	10.5	106.6
1996-97	—	0.5	—	136.6	8.5	61.1	—	7.9	11.5	31.9	258.0
1996 Dec. qtr	—	0.2	—	12.9	0.3	12.8	—	3.7	4.6	0.7	35.3
1997 Mar. qtr	—	—	—	30.4	1.5	19.9	—	0.3	0.4	0.7	53.2
June qtr	—	0.1	—	3.9	6.5	11.9	—	2.7	0.7	0.7	26.4
Sept. qtr	—	0.1	—	12.2	0.4	10.1	—	20.9	2.2	0.8	46.7
Dec. qtr	—	0.1	—	75.1	—	17.5	—	0.3	—	4.9	97.9
1998 Mar. qtr	—	—	—	0.9	0.5	27.3	—	0.2	11.3	2.5	42.5
<b>TOTAL</b>											
1994-95	4.7	19.3	2.5	184.6	17.6	33.5	1.9	60.8	25.9	17.4	368.2
1995-96	1.0	11.9	7.1	80.1	16.1	34.9	0.7	3.9	15.0	12.2	182.9
1996-97	0.4	9.4	6.0	218.3	16.6	66.5	0.7	11.6	44.6	37.8	411.9
1996 Dec. qtr	—	4.4	4.6	58.6	1.7	13.3	0.6	7.1	8.1	2.7	101.1
1997 Mar. qtr	0.4	1.0	0.4	44.9	3.5	22.4	—	0.3	21.8	0.9	95.5
June qtr	—	1.9	0.7	18.3	9.9	13.1	0.1	2.9	6.6	3.8	57.3
Sept. qtr	—	1.8	—	30.7	2.1	11.9	0.6	29.8	5.6	0.9	83.3
Dec. qtr	—	10.5	—	126.4	1.8	20.2	—	3.1	9.8	4.9	176.7
1998 Mar. qtr	—	2.1	0.1	14.0	6.3	29.8	—	0.7	11.5	3.3	68.0

**TABLE 11. VALUE OF BUILDING WORK DONE: ORIGINAL**  
(\$ million)

<i>Period</i>	<i>New houses</i>	<i>New other residential building</i>	<i>New residential building</i>	<i>Alterations and additions to residential buildings</i>	<i>Total residential building</i>	<i>Total non-residential building</i>	<i>Total building</i>
<b>PRIVATE SECTOR</b>							
1994-95	180.6	142.5	323.2	68.1	391.2	102.4	493.6
1995-96	147.6	82.7	230.2	52.3	282.6	121.9	404.5
1996-97	131.2	60.4	191.6	54.6	246.2	147.9	394.1
1996 Dec. qtr	36.0	15.9	51.9	17.1	69.0	47.8	116.8
1997 Mar. qtr	27.3	11.3	38.6	9.6	48.2	31.3	79.5
June qtr	34.9	13.7	48.6	13.9	62.5	34.1	96.7
Sept. qtr	28.2	15.3	43.4	12.0	55.4	37.6	93.1
Dec. qtr	32.9	12.1	45.1	15.9	60.9	45.3	106.2
1998 Mar. qtr	29.4	5.0	34.4	10.8	45.1	40.8	86.0
<b>PUBLIC SECTOR</b>							
1994-95	2.6	7.0	9.6	1.2	10.9	195.9	206.8
1995-96	2.0	7.8	9.8	2.9	12.6	194.4	207.1
1996-97	5.6	3.2	8.8	6.0	14.8	253.9	268.7
1996 Dec. qtr	0.3	1.9	2.2	1.7	3.8	70.9	74.7
1997 Mar. qtr	1.5	0.1	1.6	1.6	3.2	50.7	53.9
June qtr	2.0	0.5	2.5	1.2	3.7	71.2	74.9
Sept. qtr	0.2	0.3	0.4	1.1	1.5	61.8	63.4
Dec. qtr	—	0.4	0.5	0.4	0.9	44.8	45.6
1998 Mar. qtr	0.2	—	0.2	—	0.2	32.8	32.9
<b>TOTAL</b>							
1994-95	183.2	149.5	332.8	69.3	402.1	298.3	700.4
1995-96	149.6	90.4	240.0	55.2	295.2	316.4	611.5
1996-97	136.8	63.6	200.4	60.5	260.9	401.8	662.8
1996 Dec. qtr	36.3	17.8	54.1	18.8	72.9	118.7	191.5
1997 Mar. qtr	28.8	11.4	40.2	11.2	51.4	82.1	133.5
June qtr	36.9	14.2	51.1	15.1	66.2	105.3	171.5
Sept. qtr	28.3	15.6	43.9	13.1	57.0	99.5	156.4
Dec. qtr	32.9	12.6	45.5	16.3	61.8	90.0	151.8
1998 Mar. qtr	29.6	5.0	34.5	10.8	45.3	73.6	118.9

**TABLE 12. VALUE OF NON-RESIDENTIAL BUILDING WORK DONE: ORIGINAL**  
(\$ million)

<i>Period</i>	<i>Hotels etc.</i>	<i>Shops</i>	<i>Factories</i>	<i>Offices</i>	<i>Other business premises</i>	<i>Educational</i>	<i>Religious</i>	<i>Health</i>	<i>Entertainment and recreational</i>	<i>Miscellaneous</i>	<i>Total non-residential building</i>
<b>PRIVATE SECTOR</b>											
1994-95	5.0	17.0	2.9	34.8	11.7	2.1	2.2	5.7	16.1	5.0	102.4
1995-96	0.1	11.5	8.8	62.8	4.5	3.1	0.3	4.0	23.5	3.2	121.9
1996-97	0.4	9.2	3.6	83.9	8.0	7.1	0.7	9.4	21.3	4.2	147.9
1996 Dec. qtr	0.1	4.0	0.3	30.6	2.3	1.4	0.1	1.1	6.4	1.4	47.8
1997 Mar. qtr	0.3	1.3	0.4	13.7	2.1	3.6	—	4.0	5.2	0.6	31.3
June qtr	—	2.1	0.3	20.0	1.3	1.3	0.4	3.7	4.8	0.3	34.1
Sept. qtr	—	6.3	—	19.6	3.4	1.8	0.6	2.2	3.7	—	37.6
Dec. qtr	1.8	7.0	—	21.3	3.9	3.4	0.3	3.5	3.6	0.4	45.3
1998 Mar. qtr	3.3	18.7	—	7.4	1.7	0.7	0.5	7.2	0.8	0.5	40.8
<b>PUBLIC SECTOR</b>											
1994-95	—	1.2	—	93.6	10.3	45.5	—	17.7	3.1	24.5	195.9
1995-96	—	0.9	—	108.8	6.9	41.8	—	10.2	7.4	18.4	194.4
1996-97	—	0.3	—	165.2	7.8	55.4	—	10.0	10.0	5.1	253.9
1996 Dec. qtr	—	0.1	—	51.0	2.1	11.8	—	1.0	4.1	0.8	70.9
1997 Mar. qtr	—	—	—	24.4	3.1	17.6	—	3.3	1.6	0.8	50.7
June qtr	—	0.1	—	50.4	0.2	12.0	—	4.2	2.9	1.3	71.2
Sept. qtr	—	0.1	—	39.1	0.4	12.6	—	1.8	2.5	5.4	61.8
Dec. qtr	—	0.1	—	22.2	—	13.9	—	0.3	4.6	3.6	44.8
1998 Mar. qtr	—	—	—	16.3	0.5	6.9	—	0.3	6.7	2.1	32.8
<b>TOTAL</b>											
1994-95	5.0	18.2	2.9	128.5	21.9	47.6	2.2	23.4	19.2	29.5	298.3
1995-96	0.1	12.4	8.8	171.6	11.4	44.9	0.3	14.2	31.0	21.7	316.4
1996-97	0.4	9.6	3.6	249.1	15.8	62.5	0.7	19.4	31.3	9.3	401.8
1996 Dec. qtr	0.1	4.1	0.3	81.7	4.5	13.2	0.1	2.1	10.4	2.2	118.7
1997 Mar. qtr	0.3	1.3	0.4	38.2	5.1	21.2	—	7.3	6.8	1.4	82.1
June qtr	—	2.2	0.3	70.4	1.5	13.3	0.4	7.9	7.7	1.7	105.3
Sept. qtr	—	6.4	—	58.7	3.8	14.4	0.6	4.0	6.2	5.4	99.5
Dec. qtr	1.8	7.1	—	43.6	3.9	17.4	0.3	3.7	8.2	4.0	90.0
1998 Mar. qtr	3.3	18.7	—	23.7	2.2	7.6	0.5	7.5	7.5	2.6	73.6

**TABLE 13. VALUE OF BUILDING WORK YET TO BE DONE AT END OF PERIOD: ORIGINAL  
(\$ million)**

	<i>New houses</i>	<i>New other residential building</i>	<i>New residential building</i>	<i>Alterations and additions to residential buildings</i>	<i>Total residential building</i>	<i>Total non-resi- dential building</i>	<i>Total building</i>
<b>PRIVATE SECTOR</b>							
1994-95	32.5	24.9	57.4	7.6	65.0	21.3	86.3
1995-96	23.1	27.6	50.8	4.8	55.5	45.5	101.0
1996-97	20.6	31.2	51.8	5.7	57.5	41.5	99.0
1996 Dec. qtr	19.1	12.7	31.8	5.9	37.7	42.9	80.6
1997 Mar. qtr	22.8	18.0	40.8	6.3	47.1	41.5	88.5
June qtr	20.6	31.2	51.8	5.7	57.5	41.5	99.0
Sept. qtr	17.0	21.3	38.2	6.1	44.3	38.6	82.9
Dec. qtr	21.0	21.2	42.2	5.5	47.7	44.4	92.1
1998 Mar. qtr	21.1	19.4	40.4	6.9	47.3	86.3	133.6
<b>PUBLIC SECTOR</b>							
1994-95	0.2	3.6	3.8	1.0	4.8	167.0	171.8
1995-96	1.9	1.7	3.6	7.5	11.1	178.6	189.7
1996-97	0.2	0.1	0.3	9.8	10.2	196.7	206.8
1996 Dec. qtr	0.4	—	0.4	4.5	4.9	215.4	220.3
1997 Mar. qtr	1.5	0.3	1.8	2.8	4.6	257.0	261.6
June qtr	0.2	0.1	0.3	9.8	10.2	196.7	206.8
Sept. qtr	—	0.4	0.4	8.7	9.2	162.4	171.6
Dec. qtr	0.2	—	0.2	—	0.2	149.4	149.6
1998 Mar. qtr	—	—	—	—	—	145.8	145.8
<b>TOTAL</b>							
1994-95	32.7	28.5	61.1	8.7	69.8	188.3	258.1
1995-96	25.0	29.4	54.4	12.2	66.6	224.1	290.7
1996-97	20.7	31.4	52.1	15.5	67.6	238.2	305.8
1996 Dec. qtr	19.5	12.7	32.2	10.4	42.5	258.3	300.8
1997 Mar. qtr	24.3	18.2	42.5	9.1	51.6	298.5	350.1
June qtr	20.7	31.4	52.1	15.5	67.6	238.2	305.8
Sept. qtr	17.0	21.7	38.7	14.8	53.5	201.0	254.4
Dec. qtr	21.2	21.2	42.3	5.5	47.9	193.8	241.7
1998 Mar. qtr	21.1	19.4	40.4	6.9	47.3	232.0	279.3

**TABLE 14. VALUE OF NON-RESIDENTIAL BUILDING WORK YET TO BE DONE AT END OF PERIOD: ORIGINAL**  
 (\$ million)

	<i>Hotels etc.</i>	<i>Shops</i>	<i>Factories</i>	<i>Offices</i>	<i>Other business premises</i>	<i>Educational</i>	<i>Religious</i>	<i>Health</i>	<i>Entertain- ment and recreational</i>	<i>Miscel- laneous</i>	<i>Total non-resi- dential building</i>
<b>PRIVATE SECTOR</b>											
1994-95	0.1	1.9	0.5	5.5	0.5	0.1	0.3	—	12.2	0.2	21.3
1995-96	—	0.2	2.0	32.3	0.8	0.6	0.1	1.1	5.8	2.6	45.5
1996-97	—	7.3	—	20.6	3.9	1.1	1.0	3.5	4.0	—	41.5
1996 Dec. qtr	0.2	0.7	—	32.0	1.8	1.9	—	2.6	2.6	1.0	42.9
1997 Mar. qtr	—	0.3	0.3	23.7	0.6	2.4	0.6	4.8	8.5	0.3	41.5
June qtr	—	7.3	—	20.6	3.9	1.1	1.0	3.5	4.0	—	41.5
Sept. qtr	—	15.5	—	13.6	0.7	3.6	1.4	1.4	2.3	—	38.6
Dec. qtr	1.8	18.6	—	5.7	1.3	1.6	1.6	13.2	0.3	0.2	44.4
1998 Mar. qtr	3.8	63.7	—	2.1	—	0.9	2.6	6.8	6.2	—	86.3
<b>PUBLIC SECTOR</b>											
1994-95	—	—	—	124.1	3.5	12.8	—	10.5	1.7	14.5	167.0
1995-96	—	—	—	147.3	5.0	20.4	—	3.4	0.9	1.7	178.6
1996-97	—	—	—	164.8	—	17.5	—	2.1	8.0	4.3	196.7
1996 Dec. qtr	—	—	—	180.2	2.5	26.0	—	3.2	3.2	0.4	215.4
1997 Mar. qtr	—	0.1	—	208.1	0.2	27.6	—	6.0	10.5	4.6	257.0
June qtr	—	—	—	164.8	—	17.5	—	2.1	8.0	4.3	196.7
Sept. qtr	—	—	—	136.4	—	15.1	—	0.3	5.0	5.6	162.4
Dec. qtr	—	—	—	129.1	—	16.2	—	0.2	1.7	2.2	149.4
1998 Mar. qtr	—	—	—	120.1	—	13.8	—	0.2	11.5	0.2	145.8
<b>TOTAL</b>											
1994-95	0.1	1.9	0.5	129.6	4.0	12.9	0.3	10.5	13.8	14.6	188.3
1995-96	—	0.3	2.0	179.7	5.7	21.0	0.1	4.5	6.6	4.3	224.1
1996-97	—	7.3	—	185.4	3.9	18.6	1.0	5.5	12.1	4.3	238.2
1996 Dec. qtr	0.2	0.7	—	212.2	4.2	27.9	—	5.8	5.8	1.4	258.3
1997 Mar. qtr	—	0.4	0.3	231.8	0.8	29.9	0.6	10.8	19.0	5.0	298.5
June qtr	—	7.3	—	185.4	3.9	18.6	1.0	5.5	12.1	4.3	238.2
Sept. qtr	—	15.5	—	150.0	0.7	18.7	1.4	1.7	7.3	5.6	201.0
Dec. qtr	1.8	18.6	—	134.8	1.3	17.9	1.6	13.4	2.0	2.4	193.8
1998 Mar. qtr	3.8	63.7	—	122.2	—	14.7	2.6	7.0	17.7	0.2	232.0

**TABLE 15. BUILDING ACTIVITY RELATIVE STANDARD ERRORS, MARCH QUARTER 1998  
(Percentage)**

<i>Ownership and stage of construction</i>	<i>New residential building</i>				<i>Value</i>	
	<i>Houses</i>		<i>Total</i>		<i>Alterations and additions to residential buildings</i>	<i>Total building</i>
	<i>Number</i>	<i>Value</i>	<i>Number of dwelling units</i>	<i>Value</i>		
<b>TOTAL PRIVATE AND PUBLIC SECTORS</b>						
Commenced	1.5	1.8	1.3	1.6	5.2	1.8
Under construction at end of period	2.9	2.7	1.5	1.6	5.4	1.6
Completed	3.7	3.4	3.5	3.3	7.8	3.1
Value of work done	..	1.7	..	1.4	5.4	1.7
Value of work yet to be done	..	2.7	..	1.4	6.1	1.5



# EXPLANATORY NOTES

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## INTRODUCTION

**1** This publication contains detailed results from the quarterly Building Activity Survey. Each issue includes revisions to the previous quarter. Therefore data for the latest quarter should be considered to be preliminary only.

**2** The statistics are compiled on the basis of returns collected from builders and other individuals and organisations engaged in building activity. The quarterly survey consists of two components:

- a sample survey of private sector house building activity involving new house construction or alterations and additions valued at \$10,000 or more to houses; and
- a complete enumeration of jobs involving construction of new residential buildings other than private sector houses, all alterations and additions to residential buildings (other than private sector houses) with an approval value of \$10,000 or more, and all non-residential building jobs with an approval value of \$50,000 or more.

**3** Prior to the September quarter 1990, the cut-off for inclusion of non-residential building jobs (both new and alterations and additions) was \$30,000 or more, while prior to the September quarter 1985 it was \$10,000 or more. Care should be taken in interpreting data for specific classes of non-residential building.

**4** The use of sample survey techniques in the Building Activity Survey means that reliable estimates of private sector house building activity, including alterations and additions to houses, are generally only available at the State, Territory and Australia levels. However, estimates for capital city Statistical Divisions can be made available. Also, data for regions below State and Territory level are available from the building approvals series and from the monthly series of dwelling unit commencements compiled for South Australia and Western Australia by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS). Unlike data in this publication compiled from the Building Activity Survey, the series for smaller geographic areas are based on information reported by local and other government authorities.

## SCOPE AND COVERAGE

**5** The statistics relate to *building* activity which includes construction of new buildings and alterations and additions to existing buildings. Construction activity not defined as building (e.g. construction of roads, bridges, railways, earthworks, etc.) is excluded.

**6** Building jobs included in each quarter in the Building Activity Survey comprise those building jobs selected in previous quarters which have not been completed (or commenced) by the end of the previous quarter and those building jobs newly selected in the current quarter. The population list from which building jobs are selected for inclusion comprises all approved building jobs which were notified to the ABS up to but not including the last month of the reference quarter (e.g. up to the end of August in respect of the September quarter survey). This introduces a lag to the statistics in respect of those building jobs notified and commenced in the last month of the reference quarter (e.g. for the month of September in respect of the September quarter survey). For example, building jobs which were notified as approved in the month of June and which actually commenced in that month are shown as commencements in the September quarter. Similarly, building jobs which were notified in the month of September and which actually commenced in that month are shown as commencements in the December quarter.

### DEFINITIONS

**7** 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.

**8** 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. The value of units of this type is included in the appropriate category of non-residential building.

**9** 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 town houses, duplexes, apartment buildings, etc.).

**10** From the June quarter 1996 issue of this publication, 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, is shown separately in tables 5, 7, and 9 under the heading of 'Conversions, etc.', and is included in the total number of dwelling units shown in these tables. Previously, such dwellings were only included as a footnote.

**11** In addition, the seasonally adjusted estimates for the total number of dwelling units commenced and completed, shown in table 4, include these conversions, etc. Previously, only dwelling units created as part of the construction of new residential buildings were included in these estimates.

**12** *Commenced*. A building job 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).

**13** *Under construction*. A building job is regarded as being under construction at the end of a period if it has been commenced but has not been completed, and work on it has not been abandoned.

**14** *Completed*. A building job is regarded as completed when building activity has progressed to the stage when the building can fulfil its intended function. In practice, the ABS regards buildings as completed when notified as such by respondents to the survey.

### VALUATION OF BUILDING JOBS

**15** The value series in this publication are derived from estimates reported on survey returns as follows.

- *Value of building commenced or under construction* represents the anticipated completion value based, where practicable, on estimated market or contract price of building jobs excluding the value of land and landscaping. Site preparation costs are included. Where building jobs proceed over several quarters, the anticipated completion value reported on the return for the first (commencement) quarter may be amended on returns for subsequent (under construction) quarters as the job nears completion.
- *Value of building completed* represents the actual completion value based, where practicable, on the market or contract price of building jobs including site preparation costs but excluding the value of land and landscaping.
- *Value of building work done during the period* represents the estimated value of building work actually carried out during the quarter on building jobs which have commenced.
- *Value of building work yet to be done* represents the difference between the anticipated completion value and the estimated value of work done up to the end of the period on building jobs commenced but not completed.

### BUILDING CLASSIFICATION

**16** *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.

**17** *Functional classification of buildings*. A building is classified according to its intended major function. Hence, a building which is ancillary to other buildings or forms a part of a group of related buildings is classified to the function of the building and not to the function of the group as a whole. An example of this can be seen in the treatment of building work approved for a factory complex. In this case a detached administration building would be classified to Offices, a detached cafeteria building to Shops, while factory buildings would be classified to Factories. An exception to this rule is the treatment of group accommodation buildings where, for example, a student accommodation building on a university campus would be classified to Educational.

**18** Examples of the types of buildings included under each main functional heading are shown in the following list.

- *Houses*. Includes cottages, bungalows, detached caretakers'/managers' cottages, rectories.
- *Other residential buildings*. Includes blocks of flats, home units, attached townhouses, villa units, terrace houses, semi-detached houses, maisonettes.
- *Hotels, etc.* Includes motels, hostels, boarding houses, guesthouses, holiday apartment buildings.
- *Shops*. Includes retail shops, restaurants, cafes, taverns, dry cleaners, laundromats, hair salons, shopping arcades.
- *Factories*. Includes paper mills, oil refinery buildings, brickworks, foundries, powerhouses, manufacturing laboratories, workshops as part of a manufacturing process.

## EXPLANATORY NOTES *continued*

### BUILDING CLASSIFICATION *continued*

- *Offices*. Includes banks, post offices, council chambers, head and regional offices.
- *Other business premises*. Includes warehouses, storage depots, service stations, transport depots and terminals, electricity substation buildings, pumping station buildings, telephone exchanges, mail sorting centres, broadcasting stations, film studios.
- *Educational*. Includes schools, colleges, kindergartens, libraries, museums, art galleries, research and teaching laboratories, theological colleges.
- *Religious*. Includes churches, chapels, temples.
- *Health*. Includes hospitals, nursing homes, surgeries, clinics, medical centres.
- *Entertainment and recreational*. Includes clubs, theatres, cinemas, public halls, gymnasiums, grandstands, squash courts, sports and recreation centres.
- *Miscellaneous*. Includes law courts, homes for the aged (where medical care is not provided as a normal service), orphanages, gaols, barracks, mine buildings, glasshouses, livestock sheds, shearing sheds, fruit and skin drying sheds, public toilets, and ambulance, fire and police stations.

### RELIABILITY OF THE ESTIMATES

**19** Since the figures for private sector house building activity (including alterations and additions) are derived from information obtained from a sample of approved building jobs, they are subject to sampling error; that is, they may differ from the figures that would have been obtained if information for all approved jobs for the relevant period had been included in the survey. One measure of the likely difference is given by the standard error (SE), which indicates the extent to which an estimate might have varied by chance because only a sample of approved jobs was included. There are about two chances in three that a sample estimate will differ by less than one SE from the figure that would have been obtained if all approved jobs had been included, and about nineteen chances in twenty that the difference will be less than two SEs. Another measure of sampling variability is the relative standard error (RSE), which is obtained by expressing the standard error as a percentage of the estimate to which it refers. The RSE of estimates provide an indication of the percentage errors likely to have occurred due to sampling, and are shown in table 15.

**20** An example of the use of RSEs is as follows. Assume that the estimate of the number of new private sector houses commenced during the latest quarter is 2,000 (for actual estimate see table 5) and that the associated RSE is 2.5 per cent (for actual percentage see table 15). There would then be about two chances in three that the number which would have been obtained if information had been collected about all approved private sector house jobs would have been within the range 1,950 to 2,050 (2.5 per cent of 2,000 is 50) and about nineteen chances in twenty that the number would have been within the range 1,900 to 2,100.

**21** The imprecision due to sampling variability, which is measured by the relative standard error, should not be confused with inaccuracies that may occur because of inadequacies in the source of building approval information, imperfections in reporting by respondents, and errors made in the coding and processing of data. Inaccuracies of this kind are referred to as non-sampling error, and may occur in any enumeration whether it be a full count or only a sample. Every effort is made to reduce the non-sampling error to a minimum by the careful design of questionnaires, efforts to obtain responses for all selected building jobs, and efficient operating procedures.

### SEASONAL ADJUSTMENT

**22** Seasonally adjusted building statistics are shown in Tables 2–4. In the seasonally adjusted series, account has been taken of normal seasonal factors and trading day effects (arising from the varying numbers of Sundays, Mondays, Tuesdays, etc. in the quarter) and the effect of the movement in the date of Easter which may, in successive years, affect figures for different quarters. Further information about seasonal adjustment can be obtained from the Assistant Director of Time Series Analysis on Canberra 02 6252 6345.

**23** 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 should not be used to represent seasonally adjusted public sector dwelling units.

### ESTIMATES AT CONSTANT PRICES

**24** Estimates of the value of commencements and work done at average 1989–90 prices are shown in tables 1 and 2. Constant price estimates measure changes in value after the direct effects of price changes have been eliminated. The deflators used to revalue the current price estimates in this publication are derived from the same price data underlying the deflators compiled for the dwellings and non-dwelling construction components of the national accounts aggregate 'Gross fixed capital expenditure'.

**25** Estimates at constant prices are subject to a number of approximations and assumptions. Further information on the nature and concepts of constant price estimates is contained in Chapter 4 of *Australian National Accounts: Concepts, Sources and Methods* (Cat. no. 5216.0).

**26** The factors used to seasonally adjust the constant price series are identical to those used to adjust the corresponding current price series.

### ACKNOWLEDGMENT

**27** 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*.

### UNPUBLISHED DATA AND RELATED PUBLICATIONS

**28** The ABS can also make available certain building approvals and 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: photocopy, computer printout, floppy disk and clerically extracted tabulation. Inquiries should be made to Information Inquiries on Canberra 02 6207 0326 or any ABS State office.

**29** Users may also wish to refer to the following building and construction publications which are available on request:

*Building Activity, Australia* (Cat. no. 8752.0) — issued quarterly

*Building Activity, Australia: Dwelling Unit Commencements, Preliminary* (Cat. no. 8750.0) — issued quarterly

*Building Approvals, Australia* (Cat. no. 8731.0) — issued monthly

*Building Approvals, New South Wales and Australian Capital Territory* (Cat. no. 8731.1) — issued monthly

**30** Current publications produced by the ABS are listed in the *Catalogue of Publications and Products* (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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