

## HOUSING, BUILDING, AND CONSTRUCTION

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### GENERAL BACKGROUND

#### **Historical introduction**

##### *Beginnings of the building industry*

Early settlement in Victoria, between 1834 and 1851, established a building industry which despite occasional economic setbacks and scarcities of labour and capital, was to grow at a rapid rate. At first, entire buildings were imported in prefabricated or completely knocked down packages and quickly erected at the sites of settlement. Superintendent C. J. La Trobe imported his own house and had it set up on Jolimont Hill, Melbourne. A condition upon which the first land was sold in Melbourne stipulated that a permanent building worth at least £50 had to be built on an allotment within twelve months of the date of sale; this requirement alone was responsible for the initial expansion of the building industry. In fact, between 1837 and 1838, the number of houses in Melbourne increased from 36 to 300. Brickworks were established, quarries for bluestone and freestone started, lime for mortar was prepared in the kilns on the Mornington Peninsula and taken up to Melbourne by small vessels, and sawmills were set up. However, settlers in districts remote from Melbourne had to make do with rude, primitive shelters, although these often displayed considerable ingenuity in the use of the materials at hand.

##### *1851 to 1860*

The discovery of gold in Victoria in 1851 brought most of the building industries to an abrupt closure for some time, as men left their trades and joined the rush to the goldfields. By 1853, however, the industry had begun to recover; indeed, the period of the gold rushes witnessed the start of many manufacturing plants which, through successive modifications as technology has advanced, have survived to the present day.

##### *1860 to 1890*

The expansion of the building industry from 1860 to 1890 was at times spectacular. With substantial increases in the number of brickyards, sawmills, and limeworks, for example, the industry was becoming solidly established, although a lack of capital, rather than a shortage of labour and materials, was the restraining factor in the early part of this period. Despite this situation, however, there was a marked decline in temporary buildings—frames once covered by canvas were now made permanent by claddings in weatherboards, a common practice in the gold districts. Galvanised iron, first used in Melbourne

as early as 1850, came to be, in many respects, the universal roofing material and by far the most inexpensive roofing material. The important influence of this adaptable form of corrosion resistant sheet iron cannot be overemphasised.

This period saw the construction of the major civic, church, and institutional buildings of Melbourne and the provincial cities. It was not unusual for a small remote township to have an elaborate post office, court house, several fine churches, and an ornate hotel or two, with elaborate cast iron verandahs and cresting to the roofs—a skyline bristling with finials of cast and wrought iron and an impressive array of fully ornamented chimneys with their elaborate cornices. The mansions of the Melbourne merchants were a prominent feature of the suburban landscape, set high on the hills of Kew and Toorak, surrounded by fragrant gardens with exotic trees, flowers, summer houses, gas lamps, and statues, marked by elaborate entrance gateways in iron, both cast and wrought.

#### *1890 to 1919*

The economic depression of the early 1890s was a major setback to the building industry. Many banks and building societies failed. In some instances, owners did not live in the apartments of their great houses, but awaited impending doom in their servants' quarters. The rate of building activity slowed markedly, and many home buyers lost their savings; the industry was completely depressed. The subsequent recovery up to 1918 saw the advent of a new style of building which used some of the forms of the popular "art nouveau" movement, flavoured with local deviations. Roofs of houses, high and sweeping, were interrupted by attics, squint slopes, tall chimneys, small, playful spires rising over circular window bays to the main rooms all covered in a profusion of terra cotta finials, crestings, gable scrolls, and "marseilles" pattern terra cotta tiles. Cast iron ornament gradually yielded to timber fretwork infills for verandah balustrades.

#### *1919 to 1939*

The period from 1919 to 1939 witnessed a series of successive styles in home and public building. The Californian bungalow was succeeded by the Spanish Mission which was preferred in the later 1920s and 1930s. Celebrated architects such as Harold Desbrowe Anear introduced the grammar of modern functionalism to the architecture of Melbourne and the younger men Roy Grounds and Geoffrey Mewton designed houses and flats in the suburbs of Melbourne which remain fresh and elegant to the present day. City building was substantially represented by the works of Kingsley Henderson and his partners who designed well-mannered, and often classical-styled offices for many of the major banks and insurance companies. Their apartment house, Alcaston House at the top of Collins Street, opposite the Treasury building, stands as an example of sensitivity and appropriate scale in the urban landscape, though a comparatively tall building in its day.

#### *1939 to 1945*

The war years of 1939 to 1945 saw little significant building work, although the Royal Melbourne Hospital, at Parkville, remains as an outstanding building of world leadership in hospital design. The necessity of constructing large war production factories very quickly undoubtedly gave impetus to post-war developments in prefabricated component buildings.

#### *1945 to 1952*

The immediate post-war period, between 1945 and 1952, was a time of acute shortages in all building materials. There was a lag in home building because of the interruption of the war years and significant prefabrication schemes were introduced, such as the Beaufort house project and the Housing Commission's early ventures into the construction of concrete prefabricated houses. The period

saw comparatively little in city building; however, one sector of business, the banks, was becoming more active in renovating premises, although the resulting removal of many splendid Victorian fittings may now be a matter for regret. Whole interiors were often changed with little understanding of the original structure. The indifference to buildings of historic merit was a characteristic of this period and many fine buildings were destroyed with little regard to their conservation or continuing use; this destruction was minor, however, compared with later events.

#### *1952 to 1971*

During the period from 1952 to 1971 the building industry gathered momentum, although a credit squeeze in 1961 was a temporary setback. The first "glass wall" buildings appeared, using the curtain wall system of enclosing the building frame—a method which was to gather momentum quickly in Melbourne. The 1960s saw the development of the reinforced concrete frame in several buildings. Pre-cast concrete cladding and load bearing units became more widely used. The architectural profession was faced with a challenge from the "package deal" building method, which first appeared in industrial work, and then advanced into the area of city building itself. The suburban scene changed with the availability of "stratum title" own-your-own type flat units offering a comprehensive range of appointments at an improving standard of building construction, after the general tightening of the administration of building regulations by councils and shires. The continuing destruction of important Victorian buildings reached a critical situation with the demolition of Jenkin Collier's mansion home "Werndew" in Toorak, which helped to lead to the formation of the National Trust of Australia (Victoria), marking the beginnings of the movement in Melbourne for the conservation and preservation of buildings of historic and architectural merit.

#### *1971 to 1976*

The recent period, between 1971 and 1976, may be called the period of the developer and the conservationist. The term developer when applied to all real estate usually implies large scale operations involving considerable finance and requiring the acquisition of large consolidated sectors of the city. This involves the complete demolition of old buildings and their replacement by new buildings, frequently with inadequate consideration of the historic value of the buildings demolished and with little attention to the possibility of incorporating them in the new development.

The National Trust of Australia (Victoria) has worked to increase the public's awareness of the importance of Melbourne's heritage, and has saved some important buildings from demolition, especially the splendid domed chamber of the Commercial Bank of Australia's building in Collins Street. Largely because of this latter event, the Victorian Government set up the Historic Buildings Preservation Council to administer an initial register of historic buildings. Citizens can apply to add or remove buildings from the register according to a statutory format, with the Council finally making a recommendation to the Minister of Planning. This Act will significantly influence the architectural forms of the City of Melbourne, and indeed all places where registered buildings are situated. New buildings will contrast with historic buildings, providing the city with a sense of continuity; the contrast between the old and the new provides much of the richness of interest in the city.

The Urban Renewal Advisory Committee, established under the Urban Renewal Act by the Victorian Government, is preparing renewal proposals for many areas of Victoria, while a Government Buildings Advisory Committee has been set up to advise the Victorian Government on the architectural and historic importance of buildings in a position of State ownership.

New suburban areas are rapidly extending in widening belts around Melbourne, and planners are becoming increasingly involved in the impact of new freeways upon the environment and the landscaping of these with acoustic buffer banks and plants. The provision of parks and reserves, such as the Maribyrnong River plans of the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works are significant proposals. New legislation concerned with the notion of cluster housing eventually may produce sound design solutions in the sphere of residential planning. The Residential Planning Standards document, a technical advisory committee report to the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works, published in September 1970, is concerned with a new planning approach to residential projects.

The present period has seen a marked slowing down in city building, largely because of the economic conditions of the time. The Melbourne strategy plan, once implemented, aims to safeguard and enhance the pleasing aspects of the City of Melbourne, while the new Melbourne underground railway loop, at present under construction, is designed to add significantly to the efficiency of the transportation system.

### **The National Estate**

The National Estate programme is concerned with the protection of all significant sites and structures in Australia, whether those sites are of archaeological, historical, or natural history interest. The programme, which commenced in 1973, developed significantly during 1974 and 1975. In 1975, the Commonwealth Government passed the *Australian Heritage Act 1975* and moved to establish a Heritage Commission.

In May 1973, a Committee of Inquiry into the National Estate was announced in the Commonwealth Parliament. Nine months later, the Report of the National Estate was completed after intensive examination and research by the Committee of Inquiry. Arising from the Report, an Interim Committee was established in August 1974 to continue the work of the Committee of Inquiry and to carry out the preparatory work leading to a fully developed national heritage policy under a permanent Commission. The Interim Committee's tasks also included advising the then Minister of Urban and Regional Development of the Ministry for Environment's funding programmes to the States and other matters related to National Estate issues. The Interim Committee comprised members of the States and Territories and representatives of relevant departments and ministries of the Commonwealth Government.

The Interim Committee prepared a statement of general objectives which developed from the Committee of Inquiry's Report. The objectives included identification and classification of sites, legal protection, physical protection (maintenance, restoration, management, and presentation), professional and technical training, community education and information, and support for community groups concerned with the protection of the National Estate. Of these, identification and classification and legal and physical protection were the two most urgent issues.

The Interim Committee was asked to advise on the distribution of grants to the States under three major programmes within the Commonwealth Government's National Estate allocations. These programmes were:

- (1) The Department of Urban and Regional Development's programme, which was concerned primarily with historic buildings and sites and urban open space, and assistance to urban conservation bodies such as the National Trust of Australia (Victoria);
- (2) the Department of Environment's programme of grants to conservation bodies; and

(3) the Department of Environment's programme for the acquisition of land for nature conservation areas such as Victoria's national parks.

The 1974-75 and 1975-76 grants were decided upon following applications from within the States. In 1974-75, 249 applications from Victoria were made to the Department of Urban and Regional Development's programme requesting a total of \$31.8m. A total of 41 grants were subsequently made with an allocation of more than \$1m.

In assessing applications for grants the Interim Committee took into account that projects should relate to the general objectives as set out previously. In addition, decisions were made on the following criteria :

- (1) Urgent issues were dealt with first wherever possible ;
- (2) advice was sought on the suitability of programmes. The Committee relied as far as possible on a consensus of the best informed opinion, especially on that of State and local governments, and from conservation bodies, the National Trusts, and other such groups ; and
- (3) no grants should be recommended for property owned by any private institution or individual (other than the National Trust and other similarly constituted groups) unless there was a legal power available to enter into covenants running with the land (to be binding in perpetuity). The Victorian Government has this power in respect only of buildings on the Historic Buildings Register.

Commonwealth Government grants were made available to the States for National Estate projects. In Victoria, grants were made as shown in the following table :

**VICTORIA—COMMONWEALTH GOVERNMENT GRANTS  
FOR NATIONAL ESTATE PROJECTS**

Recipient	1973-74	1974-75	1975-76
Historic buildings, National Trusts, etc.	659,900	1,622,150	..
Conservation bodies	32,250	29,850	..
Victorian Government	..	..	126,234
National Trust of Australia (Victoria)	..	..	91,000
Other organisations	..	..	183,900

In 1975-76, 45 projects were funded. Of these, twelve projects were directly funded through the Victorian Government and included projects such as studies of Wyperfeld National Park and the Bend of Islands area ; grants for land acquisition in the Dandenongs and at the Whipstick, Bendigo ; and assistance for protection of Aboriginal sites in the State. The National Trust of Australia (Victoria) received twelve grants for historic buildings and one industrial historical project (e.g., protection of the Lal Lal blast furnace). Another thirteen projects funded were studies aimed at identification and protection. These ranged from studies of natural areas (an allocation to the Bright Shire Council for a landscape study) ; studies of urban areas (central Bendigo, Beechworth, and Yackandandah) ; a study to be carried out by the Australian Conservation Foundation ; and detailed studies in recording techniques such as the photogrammatic research project by the Department of Surveying at the University of Melbourne. Four projects were supported through local government for the protection of historic buildings, for example, the Steam Packet Inn at Portland.

In both 1974-75 and 1975-76, grants were made through the University of Melbourne in two important fields—to establish methodology for conservation techniques, particularly in urban areas, and to establish techniques for setting up an inventory of the National Estate. This last project will assist one of the important roles of the Australian Heritage Commission.

### **Historic Buildings Preservation Council**

The Historic Buildings Preservation Council was established to administer the *Historic Buildings Act 1974*. This Act established an Historic Buildings Register of buildings, works, and objects of historic or architectural interest.

The Council may recommend to the Minister for Planning buildings which it considers should be added or removed from the Register, any approved alterations to a designated building, as well as financial assistance to building owners. The owner of a designated historic building is required to apply to the Council for a permit to remove, demolish, or alter the building. In its first year of operation the Council received many more applications than were initially anticipated.

The Council is divided into a number of sub-committees based on the expertise of its various members. It is to the Classifications Sub-Committee that the Council delegates its functions in matters affecting a building's designation. If a building becomes endangered during the period that its potential designation is being investigated, then the Council may serve an Interim Preservation Order on the owner.

Financial aid may be recommended to the Minister where it appears that the continued use of a designated building is not economically feasible and its preservation is as a result endangered. Such financial assistance to an owner may take the form of grants or loans and the remission of rates and land tax. A covenant may be entered into between the owner of the land on which the historic building stands and the Minister.

The Council also has funds available to engage consultants for research and special projects. It has initiated surveys into groups of buildings on the basis of age or function.

At 31 December 1975, the Historic Buildings Register consisted of 374 entries, located throughout Victoria. One hundred and six of the 374 designated buildings were located in the City of Melbourne. A copy of the Historic Buildings Register is available for inspection at the offices of the Ministry for Planning.

**Further reference, 1976**

### **Victorian Urban Land Council**

The Victorian Urban Land Council is a non-statutory body responsible to the Ministry for Planning for providing residential blocks at the cheapest possible price, and open space for recreation and conservation.

The Council is financed by the Commonwealth Government with long-term loan funds for residential development. The loan funds are made available at long-term bond rate with principal and interest repayable over thirty years, and an exemption from repayment for the first ten years. The Council is responsible for generating sufficient revenue from the sale of urban land to meet the cost of loan repayments.

Funds for the purchase of open spaced land are provided, in accordance with available funds, on the basis of a \$2 grant from the Commonwealth Government for every \$1 provided by the Victorian Government, and are restricted to the funding of regional open space.

The five members of the Council are the Secretary of the Ministry for Planning (chairman), the Secretary of the Premier's Department, the Director of the Ministry for Conservation, a member of the Housing Commission, Victoria, and a representative nominated by the Commonwealth Government. The Council is serviced by the staff of the Ministry for Planning and the Housing Commission, Victoria.

The operations of the Council are supervised by a Ministerial Conference consisting of the Victorian Ministers for Planning, Housing, and Conservation, as well as the Commonwealth Minister for Environment, Housing, and Community Development.

Since the Council's establishment in May 1975, 360 hectares of urban land have been purchased in the Cities of Keilor and Sunshine, and in the Shire of Whittlesea. Regional open space land on the Mornington Peninsula, Yarra River valley, and the Dandenong Creek valley has also been purchased.

By June 1976, approximately 650 hectares of urban land had been assembled for sale. The first lots were placed on sale in November 1975, at an average price of \$12,100, and the annual programme for urban land provision was envisaged at approximately 1,000 residential lots.

The Victorian Urban Land Council is the second such government organisation in Australia to produce residential land blocks. The first was the South Australian Land Commission. The activities of the Victorian Urban Land Council were planned to involve a total expenditure of approximately \$22.8m by the end of June 1976.

Each year the Council will prepare a programme for land acquisition and urban land development; this programme will be submitted for approval to the Ministerial Conference. Loan funds provided by the Commonwealth Government, coupled with revenue from the sale of residential blocks and rental of commercial sites, will enable the Council to act as a buffer between the ability of the private sector to provide residential lots and market demand.

The Council's operation is not necessarily restricted to the Melbourne metropolitan area. The possibility of extending its operation to country areas where additional residential blocks are required will be investigated on request. Forward planning for the development of the Council's future estates include provision for adequate open space and recreation areas, educational facilities, community facilities, and commercial areas.

Recent investigations by the Residential Land Development Committee set up by the Victorian Government indicate that there is a critical shortage of residential blocks for future home builders. The Victorian Urban Land Council's programme will assist in providing a desired residential land stock for the Melbourne metropolitan area.

#### **Residential Land Development Committee**

A Committee of Inquiry into Residential Land Development was established by the Victorian Government on 16 December 1974. It was charged with the task of assessing the present stock of, and future needs for, residential home allotments. The terms of reference of the Inquiry were to:

- (1) Estimate the future needs of residential home allotments, the means of increasing, where necessary, the availability of residential land, and determining ways in which delays in the process of subdivision might be reduced;
- (2) determine what the annual residential land production rate should be over the next five years and what technical and financial problems might prejudice the achievement of those targets; and
- (3) examine closely existing residential land stock and identify allotments which are not fully serviced, and recommend courses of action to enable these allotments to be available for home building at the least possible cost.

The Report of the Committee of Inquiry was presented to the Victorian Government in August 1975. The Report deals with the terms of reference mainly as they relate to the planning areas of the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works. However, the principles established are appropriate to provincial centres throughout Victoria. Committee studies have taken into account foreshadowed growth in Albury/Wodonga, Sunbury/Melton, and Geelong. Nevertheless, because the Committee saw significant problems arising mainly in the Melbourne metropolitan area in the next five years, the Report has concentrated on that area.

The Committee of Inquiry made nine main recommendations dealing with the following matters: management of planning, definition of development

programmes, funding requirements, subdivisional procedures, development standards, public sector participation in land development, production resources, statistics, and finance for home purchasers.

All of these recommendations are regarded as important in their own right ; most are interrelated, in that while each can contribute, no one recommendation alone can provide any lasting solution to problems which impede the availability of residential land. Taking a short-term view, the provision of funds to enable servicing systems to be extended as required appears to be a most important element in achieving increased availability. However, over a longer period, it may be of greater importance to improve the management of the planning processes and co-ordinate more effectively the activities of all the participants in urban development. This would help to achieve the common aim—the provision of an adequate supply and variety of residential land at prices that the community can afford to pay.

### **Building and Development Approvals Committee**

The Victorian Government appointed a Building and Development Approvals Committee to advise on the development of new procedures designed to minimise delay and expense in obtaining development permits of every description. The Committee's terms of reference are to study and advise the Victorian Government as soon as practicable upon:

- (1) Means of reducing time and costs and of increasing efficiency and general satisfaction, in dealing with building and development applications of every description ;
- (2) any legislative, regulatory, or administrative changes, or rationalisation of responsibilities of authorities necessary or desirable to assist in that process ; and
- (3) any other matter which appears to the Committee relevant to the processing of building and development approvals.

One of the main causes of frustration and delay is the number of successive applications which currently have to be made in many cases. The Victorian Government considers that much time and expense could be saved by dealing with many of these at the one time, rather than in succession, and a major responsibility of the Committee will be to advise upon means of achieving this result. The Committee will also be asked to examine whether a single Buildings Act could bring about economies of time and money for the community generally.

In appointing members to this new committee, the Victorian Government endeavoured to bring together a small group of experts conversant with different aspects of this problem. The Committee is responsible directly to the Premier and is serviced by the Ministry for Planning, with assistance from the Local Government Department. It is required to maintain contact with the Residential Land Development Committee to ensure that material available to both committees is shared and duplication avoided.

**Further reference, 1976 ; Development of architecture in Victoria, 1962 ; Building trends since 1945, 1963 ; Developments in building methods since 1945, 1964 ; Building materials, 1966 ; Redevelopment of the inner residential areas, 1967 ; Early building in Victoria, 1968 ; Housing for aged persons, 1969 ; Building trends in Melbourne since 1961, 1970 ; Bridges in Victoria, 1971 ; Division of Building Research, C.S.I.R.O., 1972, 1974, 1975 ; Metrication in the building and construction industry, 1976.**

## **BUILDING LEGISLATION**

### **Supervision and control of building**

The *Local Government Act* 1958 and the *Town and Country Planning Act* 1961 provide regulations for the uniform control of building and the preparation of planning schemes throughout Victoria.



### Uniform Building Regulations

Under the *Local Government Act 1958* the power to administer Uniform Building Regulations is vested in the councils of municipalities, except where provided under certain clauses of the Regulations concerning Health Acts, Sewerage Regulations, and Water Supply Regulations, which are subject to the sanction of appropriate government authorities. These powers apply to all municipalities and the more populated shires, but, in shires which are predominantly rural, the provisions of the Regulations may only apply to the more settled portions such as urban areas, towns, and villages.

The Uniform Building Regulations define detailed provisions for building operations, and prescribe certain minimum standards which councils are bound to observe; however, councils have the power to insist on standards above those prescribed by these Regulations, provided these requirements are not unreasonable and do not cause undue hardship. If any doubt, difference, or dissatisfaction arises between any parties concerned, in respect of any Regulation, by-law, or decision by a council, they may appeal to a panel of referees, appointed pursuant to the provisions of the Act, for a decision, which is final. These referees are empowered to modify or vary any Regulation or by-law, providing that a modification or variation might reasonably be made without detriment to the public interest.

In the local government areas where the provisions of the Uniform Building Regulations apply, no building may be constructed, erected, placed in position, rebuilt, reconstructed, re-erected, replaced in position, altered, structurally altered, pulled down, or removed, unless it complies with the Local Government Act and Uniform Building Regulations, and is approved by a council. A written permit must be obtained from the council and a fee paid as prescribed in the Regulations. The council is required to ensure that the building, during its course of construction, demolition, or removal, complies with the Act, Regulations, and the plans and specifications it originally approved.

### Urban renewal, 1976

#### BUILDING DEVELOPMENT IN THE CITY OF MELBOURNE, 1975

The number of applications for permits to construct new buildings or to carry out major alterations to existing buildings increased to 1,400 (1974: 984), but the stated cost decreased from \$86.9m to \$72.1m.

The following list, supplied by the City of Melbourne, shows major buildings under construction at 30 September 1975:

Owner	Location	Estimated cost (\$m)
The Abbey Capital Property Group	500 Bourke Street	17.1
Australian Mutual Provident Society	17-65 Collins Street	40.0
Cancer Institute of Victoria	471 Little Lonsdale Street	5.6
College of Nursing, Australia	431 St Kilda Road	7.0
Collins Wales Pty Ltd	360-74 Collins Street	26.8
Commonwealth Banking Corporation	359-73 Collins Street	17.5
Connought Properties (Aust.) Pty Ltd	399-413 Lonsdale Street	3.0
Dominion Properties Pty Ltd	30-4 Collins Street	1.8
Estate House (Melb.) Pty Ltd	114-28 William Street	6.7
Hanover Developments Pty Ltd	516-20 Collins Street	2.3
Methodist Church Trust	15-21 Jones Lane	2.0
Metropolitan Fire Brigades Board	Gisborne Street	4.0
Mypec Pty Ltd	226-60 Elizabeth Street	9.8
National Mutual Life Association	185-9 Queen Street	4.0
Nauruan Government	85-109 Exhibition Street	14.0
Prellington Pty Ltd	19-35 Queen Street	5.8
State Savings Bank of Victoria	270-2 Flinders Street	3.2
Victorian Government (Stages a and c)	Victorian Arts Centre	7.0

## BUILDING STATISTICS

**General concepts**

The statistics in the following pages deal only with the construction of buildings, as distinct from other construction such as railways, bridges, earthworks, water storage, etc. In the following tables, i.e., from 1 July 1968, all alterations and additions valued at \$10,000 and over are included in the values stated. Before this date, published data included such major alterations and additions only in respect of buildings *other* than houses. With the exception of the table relating to building approvals, particulars of minor alterations and additions are excluded, and in all tables particulars of renovations and repairs to buildings are excluded, because of the difficulty in obtaining complete lists of persons who undertake such operations. Figures for houses exclude converted military huts, temporary dwellings, flats, and dwellings attached to other new buildings.

Since the September quarter 1945, a quarterly collection of statistics of building operations has been undertaken, comprising the activities of all private contractors and government authorities engaged in the erection of new buildings, and owner-builders who erect buildings without the services of a contractor responsible for the whole job.

The bases of the collection are building permits issued by local government authorities, and contracts let or day labour work authorised by Commonwealth, State, semi-government, and local government authorities. As a complete list of government authorities and building contractors is maintained, details shown in the following tables embrace all local government areas. However, details for building approvals and owner-builders cover only those areas subject to building control by local government authorities, and up to 1 December 1972 exclude some rural areas not subject to permit issues.

The following definitions of terms used in the succeeding tables are necessary for an understanding of the data presented :

*Building approvals.* These comprise private permits issued by local government authorities together with contracts let or day labour work authorised by Commonwealth, State, semi-government, and local government authorities.

*Private or government.* Building is classified as private or government according to ownership at the time of commencement. Thus, building carried out directly by day labour or for government instrumentalities by private contractors, even though for subsequent purchase, is classed as government. Building carried out by private contractors for private ownership or which is financed or supervised by government instrumentalities but erected for a specified person is classed as private.

*Owner-built.* A building actually erected or being erected by the owner or under the owner's direction, without the services of a contractor who is responsible for the whole job.

*Commenced.* A building is regarded as having been commenced when work on foundations has begun. Because of the difficulty of defining the exact point that this represents in building operations, interpretations made by informants may not be entirely uniform.

*Completed.* A building is regarded as having been completed when the building contractor has fulfilled the terms of the contract or, in the case of owner-built houses, when the house is either completed or substantially completed and occupied (the value shown in this case is that of the owner-built house as a finished project). As with commencements, the interpretation placed on this definition by informants may not be entirely uniform.

*Under construction (i.e., unfinished).* Irrespective of when commenced, and regardless of whether or not work has actually proceeded at all times, once a building has been commenced it continues to be shown in the tables as under construction (i.e., unfinished) until completed. Buildings on which work has been permanently abandoned are excluded.

*Numbers.* The numbers of houses, flats, and shops with dwellings attached, represent the number of separate dwelling units. Each flat in a block of flats is counted as a separate dwelling unit.

*Values.* All values shown exclude the value of the land and represent the estimated value of the buildings on completion.

### Statistical tables

#### *Building approvals*

The following table shows the value of private and government building approved in Victoria for the years 1971-72 to 1975-76 :

VICTORIA—VALUE OF PRIVATE AND GOVERNMENT  
BUILDING APPROVED  
(\$'000)

Year	Houses and other dwellings	Other new buildings	Alterations and additions to buildings	Total all buildings
1971-72	410,880	352,956	(a)61,273	825,109
1972-73	591,119	496,083	(a)73,409	1,160,611
1973-74	671,901	483,805	(b)59,252	1,214,958
1974-75	618,268	470,566	(b)76,113	1,164,947
1975-76	960,489	512,816	103,082	1,576,387

(a) Valued at less than \$10,000.

(b) Valued at \$2,000 to \$9,999.

In normal circumstances, information concerning building approvals is a primary indicator of building trends and gives some indication of the effect of varying economic conditions on the building industry. However, a complete comparison of buildings approved cannot be made against buildings commenced, since the relationship is affected by the fact that (1) some intended buildings are never begun, and new building plans may be re-submitted later, (2) estimated values recorded for building approvals may be affected by rising costs resulting from delays in the commencement of buildings, and (3) as previously mentioned, building permits issued up to 1 December 1972 did not embrace the whole of Victoria.

#### *Value of building jobs*

As with building approvals, increases in the value of buildings commenced, completed, and under construction, and increases in the value of work done during a period are not wholly attributable to increased building activity, but are partly the result of an almost continuous rise in the cost of building. It should also be realised that, in any period, where there are appreciable increases in the value of buildings commenced for industrial, commercial, business, health, etc., purposes, this movement could be misinterpreted to some extent, as these buildings may include the commencement of large scale projects, the completion of which may be spread over several years.

The following tables show the value of all buildings commenced, completed, and the value of work done during the period in Victoria, according to the type of building, for the years 1971-72 to 1975-76. The figures include all alterations and additions valued at \$10,000 and over. Renovations and repairs are excluded.

VICTORIA—VALUE (WHEN COMPLETED) OF BUILDING JOBS  
COMMENCED : CLASSIFIED BY TYPE  
(\$'000)

Type of building	1971-72	1972-73	1973-74	1974-75	1975-76
Houses	337,324	453,444	537,449	536,245	774,137
Other dwellings	76,128	109,344	131,764	102,518	139,378
Shops	19,294	46,737	49,415	34,672	61,266
Hotels, guest houses, etc.	19,550	26,708	14,524	11,194	11,949
Factories	55,952	90,551	119,372	78,275	75,367
Offices	106,824	166,239	102,277	92,256	56,887
Other business premises	19,924	21,603	35,309	34,362	36,322
Educational	46,389	76,837	113,592	105,169	77,224
Religious	4,152	2,707	2,839	5,518	5,491
Health	16,104	22,515	29,226	51,435	42,503
Entertainment and recreation	10,515	11,123	14,227	15,007	34,228
Miscellaneous	21,265	20,333	23,015	14,131	43,424
<b>Total</b>	<b>733,418</b>	<b>1,048,141</b>	<b>1,173,008</b>	<b>1,080,783</b>	<b>1,358,176</b>

VICTORIA—VALUE OF BUILDINGS COMPLETED :  
CLASSIFIED BY TYPE  
(\$'000)

Type of building	1971-72	1972-73	1973-74	1974-75	1975-76
Houses	306,315	372,099	428,557	530,106	647,138
Other dwellings	75,421	82,668	101,590	130,263	130,658
Shops	16,710	24,974	37,237	54,506	49,335
Hotels, guest houses, etc.	20,197	13,194	10,327	24,344	11,292
Factories	73,415	63,132	94,048	100,479	92,067
Offices	57,770	92,278	131,418	87,014	171,339
Other business premises	26,577	40,280	21,094	35,792	35,584
Educational	52,262	65,226	50,092	89,578	141,455
Religious	3,265	3,578	2,222	3,120	4,905
Health	25,428	18,521	12,324	19,484	41,946
Entertainment and recreation	7,877	11,982	9,749	11,888	25,341
Miscellaneous	12,145	21,968	11,824	21,702	23,412
<b>Total</b>	<b>677,381</b>	<b>809,900</b>	<b>910,481</b>	<b>1,108,278</b>	<b>1,374,470</b>

VICTORIA—VALUE OF WORK DONE ON BUILDINGS (a) :  
CLASSIFIED BY TYPE  
(\$'000)

Type of building	1971-72	1972-73	1973-74	1974-75	1975-76
Houses	319,217	402,326	491,946	538,519	727,016
Other dwellings	74,066	94,505	123,331	121,602	147,377
Shops	20,278	31,507	49,032	50,163	50,520
Hotels, guest houses, etc.	17,252	15,380	20,567	16,257	16,404
Factories	68,713	78,992	110,324	96,370	83,643
Offices	91,073	117,117	128,554	134,761	119,532
Other business premises	24,941	22,536	29,686	39,356	38,089
Educational	50,047	64,309	73,700	130,705	129,005
Religious	3,145	4,182	2,440	5,011	5,450
Health	18,372	22,310	23,801	38,100	64,655
Entertainment and recreation	8,561	11,745	12,635	15,329	28,024
Miscellaneous	17,706	17,879	18,709	20,204	29,565
<b>Total</b>	<b>713,369</b>	<b>882,786</b>	<b>1,084,724</b>	<b>1,206,375</b>	<b>1,439,280</b>

(a) Includes alterations and additions of \$10,000 and over.

NOTE: This table includes partly estimated values for owner-built constructions where actual value of work done during the period was not available.

*Value of building jobs under construction (i.e., unfinished)*

The value of all building work remaining unfinished increased from \$1,228,308,000 at 30 June 1975 to \$1,276,361,000 at 30 June 1976.

*Number of dwellings*

The following tables show the number of houses and individual flat units (excluding conversions to flats) commenced, completed, and under construction

classified by geographical distribution and ownership for the years 1971-72 to 1975-76, and the number of houses classified by material of outer walls, commenced, completed, and under construction. Because of the new concepts used at the Census of 30 June 1966 for the delimitation of the boundaries of the Melbourne Statistical Division (see pages 232-3), figures other than "State total", subsequent to 30 June 1966, are not comparable with those of earlier years.

**VICTORIA—NUMBER OF HOUSES AND OTHER DWELLINGS (a) : GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION**

Year	Commenced		Completed		Under construction (i.e., unfinished) at end of period	
	Houses	Other dwellings	Houses	Other dwellings	Houses	Other dwellings
MELBOURNE STATISTICAL DIVISION						
1971-72	21,703	8,927	20,070	8,840	8,493	5,596
1972-73	25,213	10,611	21,931	8,475	11,535	7,613
1973-74	21,925	9,790	20,122	8,297	12,903	8,849
1974-75	16,664	5,804	19,337	8,547	9,851	5,582
1975-76	21,065	6,199	18,749	6,202	11,668	5,422
REMAINDER OF VICTORIA						
1971-72	5,897	1,408	5,557	1,251	3,467	804
1972-73	7,785	1,937	6,329	1,448	4,861	1,272
1973-74	9,366	2,364	7,502	1,768	6,540	1,837
1974-75	9,156	1,657	8,752	1,915	6,755	1,541
1975-76	10,169	1,909	9,654	2,000	7,111	1,414
STATE TOTAL						
1971-72	27,600	10,335	25,627	10,091	11,960	6,400
1972-73	32,998	12,548	28,260	9,923	16,396	8,885
1973-74	31,291	12,154	27,624	10,065	19,443	10,686
1974-75	25,820	7,461	28,089	10,462	16,606	7,123
1975-76	31,334	8,108	28,403	8,202	18,779	6,836

(a) Includes alterations and additions of \$10,000 and over.

**VICTORIA—NUMBER OF HOUSES AND OTHER DWELLINGS (a) : CLASSIFIED BY OWNERSHIP**

Year	Number of houses and other dwellings erected for—				Total houses and other dwellings
	Government ownership (b)	Private ownership (b)			
		By contractors	By owner-builders	Total private	
COMMENCED					
1971-72	2,839	31,626	3,470	35,096	37,935
1972-73	2,263	38,726	4,557	43,283	45,546
1973-74	2,300	35,872	5,273	41,145	43,445
1974-75	3,602	23,658	6,021	29,679	33,281
1975-76	2,283	25,788	11,271	37,059	39,342
COMPLETED					
1971-72	2,845	29,734	3,139	32,873	35,718
1972-73	2,197	32,455	3,531	35,986	38,183
1973-74	1,524	32,112	4,053	36,165	37,689
1974-75	3,493	30,640	4,418	35,058	38,551
1975-76	3,251	24,727	8,627	33,354	36,605
UNDER CONSTRUCTION (I.E., UNFINISHED) AT END OF PERIOD					
1971-72	1,982	13,105	3,273	16,378	18,360
1972-73	2,114	18,930	4,237	23,167	25,281
1973-74	2,890	21,921	5,318	27,239	30,129
1974-75	2,954	13,991	6,784	20,775	23,729
1975-76	1,908	13,081	10,626	23,707	25,615

(a) Includes alterations and additions of \$10,000 and over.

(b) See definitions on page 332.

**VICTORIA—NUMBER OF HOUSES (a) : CLASSIFIED BY  
MATERIAL OF OUTER WALLS**

Year	Brick, concrete, and stone	Brick veneer	Wood	Asbestos- cement	Other	Total
COMMENCED						
1971-72	873	24,350	710	1,647	20	27,600
1972-73	1,177	29,075	759	1,947	40	32,998
1973-74	1,464	26,629	939	2,174	85	31,291
1974-75	1,575	20,814	1,048	2,151	232	25,820
1975-76	2,136	24,940	1,549	2,396	313	31,334
COMPLETED						
1971-72	706	22,515	738	1,649	19	25,627
1972-73	887	24,930	688	1,724	31	28,260
1973-74	1,016	23,787	768	1,978	75	27,624
1974-75	1,271	23,783	848	1,992	195	28,089
1975-76	1,571	23,084	1,236	2,229	283	28,403
UNDER CONSTRUCTION (I.E., UNFINISHED) AT END OF PERIOD						
1971-72	626	9,486	441	1,382	25	11,960
1972-73	849	13,435	482	1,599	31	16,396
1973-74	1,243	15,830	603	1,728	39	19,443
1974-75	1,441	12,473	751	1,838	103	16,606
1975-76	1,996	13,693	1,037	1,936	117	18,779

(a) Includes alterations and additions of \$10,000 and over.

**GOVERNMENT BUILDING AUTHORITIES**

**Commonwealth Government**

*General*

Commonwealth Government activities in the housing field have, in the main, included the provision of moneys to State Governments under various agreements; financial assistance to defence (and eligible ex-service) personnel in the erection and purchase of homes; assistance to young married couples under the Homes Savings Grant Act; the operations of the Housing Loans Insurance Corporation; assistance in the provision of accommodation for the aged; and the provision of homes in the Territories.

*Commonwealth Government-State Housing Agreements*

Under the Housing Agreements the Commonwealth Government makes substantial long-term loans to the States for the provision of housing.

*1945 Agreement.* In November 1945 the Commonwealth Government entered into an Agreement with the States to provide finance for them to undertake the building of housing projects. Between 1945-46 and 1955-56 the Commonwealth Government advanced a total of \$481,118,000. Initially, dwellings constructed under the 1945 Agreement were only sold to tenants if the tenant was able to arrange payment of the full purchase price to the State immediately on sale. Subsequent amendments to the Agreement progressively eased the conditions of sale.

*1956 Agreement.* In 1956 the Commonwealth and State Governments entered into a new Agreement under which added emphasis was placed on the construction of dwellings for private ownership. The Agreement provided that part of the loans advanced to each State was to be allocated to a Home Builders' Account for the making of loans to building societies and other approved institutions for lending to private home builders and purchasers. The balance of the amounts advanced to each State was used by the States for the erection of dwellings for either rental or sale. The Commonwealth Government was entitled to specify that

up to 5 per cent of the moneys allocated for the erection of dwellings by the State be set aside for the erection of dwellings for serving members of the defence forces.

*1961 Agreement.* The period during which Commonwealth Government advances to the States could be made under the 1956 Agreement terminated on 30 June 1961. A new Agreement was entered into, extending that period for a further five years and also amending the 1956 Agreement in certain respects concerning funds for the erection of dwellings for rental to servicemen and the rate of interest payable on Commonwealth Government advances.

*1966 Agreement.* An Agreement was entered into in 1966 which extended for a further five years the period during which advances could be made, and also amended the 1956-1961 Agreement in certain respects concerning the definition of "member of the forces", the erection by the States of blocks of flats in metropolitan areas, the standard of dwellings to be built for rental to servicemen, and the provision of finance to home builders in rural areas.

#### *States Grants (Housing) Act 1971-1973*

The 1956-1966 Housing Agreement expired on 30 June 1971 and was not further renewed. Instead, arrangements were made for the provisions contained in the 1956-1966 Housing Agreement to be continued substantially for a period of five years up to 30 June 1976 under the authority of the *States Grants (Housing) Act 1971*. However, that Act was amended in 1973 to limit its application to two years (1971-72 and 1972-73) in lieu of five years. The Commonwealth Government's assistance under the Act is being provided in the form of non-repayable grants to subsidise the use of State loan funds for welfare housing purposes. A basic housing grant is payable for thirty years in respect of State housing activities and home builders' account loans in 1971-72 and 1972-73 and is applied towards reducing payments that otherwise would have been made by tenants as rent, and by purchasers or home builders as repayments of loans. A rental assistance grant is payable in each of the five years 1971-72 to 1975-76 for use by each State housing authority in reducing rents payable by families they consider are not able to meet rents ordinarily payable.

#### *Housing Assistance Act 1973*

In 1973 the Commonwealth Government passed the Housing Assistance Act, which authorised special advances to the States totalling \$6.55m to enable State housing authorities to commence dwellings for rental in 1972-73 additional to those financed from State loan funds.

#### *1973-74 Housing Agreement*

For the five year period which commenced on 1 July 1973 advances are being made by the Commonwealth Government to the States for welfare housing under this Agreement, which replaces the arrangements contained in the *States Grants (Housing) Act 1971-1973*.

The rate of interest payable on all advances made during the five year term of the Agreement will be 4 per cent for advances allocated to the State housing authorities and 4.5 per cent for advances allocated to the States' Home Builders' Accounts for lending to eligible prospective home owners.

Sales of family dwellings financed with funds made available to State housing authorities and completed in the five years commencing 1 January 1974 are limited to 30 per cent of the total, except in Tasmania where higher percentages (50 per cent and 40 per cent, respectively) were permitted in the first two years. The remainder are added to the stock of houses retained for rental to eligible families. Eligibility for State housing authority rental accommodation is limited, in the case of a family, by a needs test whereby the income of the main breadwinner should not be greater than 85 per cent of the quarterly seasonally-adjusted

average weekly earnings, plus \$2 for each child beyond the second. A needs test of 95 per cent of the quarterly seasonally-adjusted average weekly earnings, plus \$2 for each child beyond the second, is applied to establish eligibility for assistance when persons seek Home Builders' Account loans for the acquisition of homes.

*Commonwealth Government-State Housing Agreement (Servicemen) 1972*

Upon the expiration of the 1956-1966 Housing Agreement at 30 June 1971, a separate Agreement was entered into between the Commonwealth and State Governments for the erection by the State housing authorities of dwellings for allotment to servicemen and for capital improvements to dwellings built for servicemen under this and preceding Housing Agreements. The Commonwealth Government-State Housing Agreement (Servicemen) had a five year term expiring on 30 June 1976. It provided for the full capital cost of construction and improvements programmes negotiated annually which were advanced by the Commonwealth Government as required by the States. A further term has not yet been negotiated.

Operations under the Commonwealth Government-State Housing Agreements in Victoria to 30 June 1975 are summarised as follows:

<i>1945 Agreement (1 July 1945 to 30 June 1956)</i>	
Loan funds advanced	\$171,562,000
Number of dwellings completed by Housing Commission, Victoria	30,925

<i>1956-1966 Agreement (1 July 1956 to 30 June 1971)</i>	
	\$
Loan funds advanced	410,700,000
Loan funds allocated to Housing Commission, Victoria	291,230,000
Loan funds allocated to Home Builders' Account Number 1	119,470,000
Drawings from Home Builders' Account by co-operative terminating housing societies to 30 June 1974	188,552,949
Supplementary advances made by Commonwealth Government for housing for defence forces	24,558,182
	number
Dwellings completed by Housing Commission, Victoria	37,349
Dwellings completed or purchased under Home Builders' Account Number 1	24,013

<i>States Grants (Housing) Act 1971-1973</i>	
<i>(1 July 1971 to 30 June 1973)</i>	
	\$
Allocations from State loan funds	74,000,000
Loan funds allocated to Housing Commission, Victoria	51,800,000
Loan funds allocated to Home Builders' Account Number 2	22,200,000
Drawings from Home Builders' Account Number 2 by co-operative terminating housing societies to 30 June 1974	24,643,730
	number
Dwellings completed by Housing Commission, Victoria	3,984
Dwellings completed or purchased under Home Builders' Accounts	3,650

<i>1973-1975 Housing Agreement</i>	
<i>(1 July 1973 to 30 June 1975)</i>	
	\$
Loan funds advanced	151,859,000
Loan funds allocated to Housing Commission, Victoria	99,300,000
Loan funds allocated to Home Builders' Account Number 3	52,359,000
Drawings from Home Builders' Account Number 3 by co-operative terminating housing societies	45,201,229



	number
Dwellings completed by Housing Commission, Victoria to 30 June 1975	4,187
Dwellings completed or purchased under Home Builders' Account Number 3 at 30 June 1975	5,396

*Commonwealth Government-State Housing Agreement (Servicemen)*

(1 July 1971 to 30 June 1975)

Commonwealth Government advances—	\$
Construction	7,295,630
Improvements	2,772,631
	number
Dwellings completed by Housing Commission, Victoria—	
Construction	462
Improvements	1,080

*Housing Assistance Act 1973*

Commonwealth Government advances allocated to Housing Commission, Victoria	\$1,500,000
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*Defence Service Homes (formerly War Service Homes)*

Under the *Defence Service Homes Act 1918-1975* the Commonwealth Government provides assistance in acquiring a home to persons who were members of the Australian defence forces and nursing services enlisted or appointed for or employed on active service outside Australia or on a ship of war, during the First and Second World Wars, and subject to the prescribed conditions, persons who served in the war-like operations in Korea or Malaya, or who have served on "special service" as defined in the *Repatriation (Special Overseas Service) Act 1962-1973*; regular servicemen who on or after 7 December 1972 complete three years full-time effective service in the Australian defence forces; national servicemen serving at 7 December 1972 who completed the period of service they were engaged to serve; and members of approved welfare organisations who served outside Australia with the Australian defence forces on or after 3 September 1939. Assistance may be granted also to dependent widowed mothers of unmarried eligible persons and to the widows of eligible persons.

The maximum loan which may be made available is \$15,000. The term of the loan is based on the estimated life of the property but ordinarily would be repayable over a period not exceeding 32 years. The rate of interest is 3.75 per cent per annum on loans not exceeding \$12,000 and 7.25 per cent per annum in respect of the amount (if any) of a loan in excess of \$12,000.

## VICTORIA—DEFENCE SERVICE HOMES SCHEME : OPERATIONS

Year	Homes provided during year				Total homes provided from inception to end of year (a)	Annual expenditure	Instalments paid (b)	Loans repaid
	By erection	By purchase (a)	By discharge of mortgage	Total				
1970-71	233	1,423	333	1,989	87,057	\$'000 15,156	\$'000 22,255	1,677
1971-72	189	1,477	412	2,078	89,135	17,613	23,581	1,890
1972-73	339	1,414	420	2,173	91,308	18,750	27,771	2,592
1973-74	174	1,683	388	2,245	93,553	25,469	29,489	2,794
1974-75	237	1,429	506	2,172	95,725	28,801	27,247	2,155

(a) Excludes Commonwealth Government-State Housing Agreement homes.  
 (b) Includes excess instalment payments.

*Home Savings Grant Scheme*

The purpose of the Home Savings Grant Scheme is to assist young married persons, and young widowed or divorced persons with dependent children, to purchase or build their own homes. The scheme is also aimed at increasing the proportion of total savings available for housing by encouraging young people to save with those institutions that provide the bulk of housing finance.

The scheme is governed by the *Homes Savings Grant Act 1964-1975* which authorises the payment of the grants from the National Welfare Fund.

The scheme provides for the payment of grants of \$1 for every \$3 saved by eligible persons under 36 years of age for the first home they own after marriage. The savings must be made in an approved form and held over a period of at least three years immediately before the date the contract to buy or build the home was made, or the building of the home as an owner-builder began. The maximum grant to a married couple, to a husband or wife if only one is eligible, or to a widowed or divorced person, is \$750 on savings of \$2,250 or more. Smaller grants, down to a minimum of \$10, are payable on lesser amounts saved.

The grant is payable for existing homes and homes being built. A home unit or own-your-own flat may also qualify. The value of the home, including the land, the house itself, and any other improvements, must not exceed \$22,500. Most homes are eligible, the main exception being homes purchased from the State housing authorities and built with moneys advanced by the Commonwealth Government under the Commonwealth Government-State Housing Agreements at concessional rates of interest.

The main forms of savings acceptable under the scheme are savings accounts with savings banks, fixed deposits with trading banks, deposits with or shares in registered building or co-operative housing societies, and savings with credit unions that have sought to be, and have become, approved credit unions for the purposes of the scheme.

The following tables show particulars of activities for the years 1970-71 to 1974-75 :

## VICTORIA—HOME SAVINGS GRANT SCHEME : OPERATIONS

Year	Applications received	Applications approved	Grants approved	Average grant (a)	Expenditure from National Welfare Fund
	number	number	\$'000	\$	\$'000
1970-71	13,911	12,751	5,746	451	5,496
1971-72	14,698	13,934	6,267	450	6,440
1972-73	17,375	15,309	8,338	545	8,331
1973-74	14,644	13,659	8,707	637	8,618
1974-75	6,165	5,814	3,770	648	3,954

(a) The maximum grant was raised from \$500 to \$750 in respect of homes acquired on or after 16 August 1972.

As grants are payable only to eligible persons under the Act, details in the following tables should not be regarded as being applicable to home owners in general.

VICTORIA—HOME SAVINGS GRANT SCHEME: APPLICATIONS  
APPROVED, MANNER OF ACQUISITION, AND TOTAL VALUE OF HOMES

Manner of acquisition	1970-71	1971-72	1972-73	1973-74	1974-75
Purchase of home (a)—					
Number of applications approved	7,924	9,259	10,524	9,319	3,807
Total value of homes (\$'000)	97,362	120,382	152,269	155,241	69,499
Purchase of flat/home unit—					
Number of applications approved	91	131	239	204	73
Total value of homes (\$'000)	1,129	1,657	3,342	3,333	1,370
Built under contract—					
Number of applications approved	4,343	4,232	4,189	3,711	1,643
Total value of homes (\$'000)	59,869	61,428	66,024	66,477	31,915
Owner-built—					
Number of applications approved	393	312	357	425	291
Total value of homes (\$'000) (b)	5,110	4,238	5,347	7,211	5,420
Total all homes—					
Number of applications approved	12,751	13,934	15,309	13,659	5,814
Total value of homes (\$'000)	163,470	187,705	226,982	232,262	108,204

(a) Includes purchase of new and previously occupied houses.

(b) Usually based on the cost of the land and the assessed value of the dwelling.

The average value of homes for which applications for grants were approved during 1971-72, 1972-73, 1973-74, and 1974-75 were \$13,471, \$14,827, \$17,004, and \$18,611, respectively.

VICTORIA—HOME SAVINGS GRANT SCHEME: APPLICATIONS  
APPROVED, METHOD OF FINANCING, AND AVERAGE AMOUNT  
OF MORTGAGE FINANCE

Year	First mortgage loan only	First and second mortgage loans	Other (a)	Total applications approved	Average first mortgage loan (b)	Average second mortgage loan
	number	number	number	number	\$	\$
1970-71	10,134	1,813	804	12,751	8,551	2,063
1971-72	11,208	1,689	1,037	13,934	9,058	2,334
1972-73	12,889	1,527	893	15,309	10,302	2,531
1973-74	12,090	931	638	13,659	11,930	3,027
1974-75	5,041	405	368	5,814	12,941	3,513

(a) Homes financed either from the applicant's own resources or with personal or unsecured loans or purchased under a terms contract of sale.

(b) Includes homes financed with first mortgage only and with first and second mortgage loans.

*Transitory flats for migrants*

A scheme to provide fully furnished flats for occupation by newly arrived migrant families for maximum periods of six months was introduced in 1967. The purpose of the scheme is to improve the standard of transitory accommodation available to migrant families and to allow them to experience a normal family life during their settling-in period. At 30 June 1975 there were 396 flats in use, of which 104 were located in Melbourne. The Commonwealth Department of Environment, Housing, and Community Development is responsible for the provision, management, and maintenance of the flats.

*Dwellings for Pensioners Scheme*

Up to 30 June 1974 this scheme was governed by the *States Grants (Dwellings for Aged Pensioners) Act 1969* which was assented to on 27 September 1969. The legislation arose from the Commonwealth Government's offer to make grants to the States for the provision of self-contained accommodation for eligible single age pensioners, upon the States undertaking not to reduce the level of their expenditure during recent years on aged persons housing from funds other than

the grants. An amount of \$25m was allocated among the States to be made available to them over the five year period 1969-70 to 1973-74.

The purpose of the scheme was to provide reasonable accommodation, at rents they could afford to pay, for single elderly pensioners living alone in private accommodation and paying too high a proportion of their pensions in rent. Accordingly, an eligible pensioner as defined by the Act was a person in receipt of an age pension, or one who qualified for a service pension because of age, and was entitled to receive supplementary assistance under the *Social Services Act 1947-1975* or the *Repatriation Act 1920-1975*.

Building schemes were submitted by the State housing authorities to the Department of Environment, Housing, and Community Development for approval by the Minister. The accommodation to be provided, apart from meeting other requirements, had to be single, self-contained, of an adequate size and standard, and be available at reasonable rentals.

The Minister approved, for the purposes of the Act, 29 building schemes submitted by the Housing Commission, Victoria. These schemes, estimated to cost \$6,500,000, provided 885 units of accommodation. At 30 June 1974 the whole allocation of \$6,500,000 to Victoria under the Act had been paid.

Upon expiry of the five year period on 30 June 1974, the 1969 Act was replaced by the *States Grants (Dwellings for Pensioners) Act 1974*, which was assented to on 17 December 1974. Under the new Act an amount of \$30m has been allocated among the States to be made available during the three-year period from 1974-75 to 1976-77. As well as doubling the total annual allocation to the States the eligibility conditions have been widened to include, in addition to the single aged pensioners eligible under the previous scheme, single invalid and Class B widow pensioners and single service pensioners who are permanently unemployable or suffering from tuberculosis, all of whom must still be eligible for supplementary assistance.

Building schemes are similar in design to those approved under the previous Act and arrangements for the approval of building schemes and payment of grants is the same. Rents under the new scheme are required to be not less than the maximum amount of supplementary assistance payable under the *Social Services Act 1947-1975* or the *Repatriation Act 1920-1975* which is at present \$5.00 per week.

The allocation of grants to Victoria under the new Act is \$7,590,000. In the year ending 30 June 1975, 35 building schemes designed to provide 394 units at an estimated cost of \$5.98m were approved. Grants paid to Victoria in this year amounted to \$1,343,070.

#### *Housing Loans Insurance Corporation*

The Housing Loans Insurance Corporation was established by the *Housing Loans Insurance Act 1965-1966* to administer the Commonwealth Government's Housing Loans Insurance Scheme under which approved lenders may be insured against losses arising from the making of housing loans. The Corporation consists of a chairman (who is also managing director) and a deputy chairman, who are full-time members, and three part-time members, all of whom are appointed by the Governor-General.

The main purpose of the Housing Loans Insurance Scheme is to assist people to borrow as a single loan, at a reasonable rate of interest, the money they need and can afford to re-pay to obtain a home suited to their requirements.

To encourage lenders to make high ratio loans, the Corporation may insure a loan of up to \$40,000. The maximum loan to valuation ratio is 95 per cent where the security is a house or a unit. For loans in respect of two units of accommodation the maximum is 90 per cent.

A once and for all premium is charged by the Corporation at the time the loan is made. The premium is payable by the borrower but lenders may agree

to add it to the amount of the loan for repayment by the borrower over the period of the loan. On loans comprising 94 per cent and 95 per cent of the valuation of a home the premium is 1.4 per cent of the amount of the loan. On loans less than 94 per cent of valuation, the premium falls progressively down to 0.25 per cent on loans of less than 76 per cent of valuation. Cover is available for either the full term of a loan, or for the first five years.

The Corporation will insure a loan made to enable a borrower who is to occupy the dwelling to buy or build a house, to buy a home unit, or to discharge an existing mortgage. A loan for a dwelling consisting of two units of accommodation is insurable if one of the units is to be occupied by the borrower. Loans for alterations and extensions and loans to meet expenses of providing or improving lighting, sewerage, drainage, fences, roads, etc., are also insurable. In addition to loans secured by a registered first mortgage, there is provision for the insurance of second mortgage loans.

An insured loan may be made only by an approved lender. Approved lenders are appointed by the Corporation from within approved classes of lenders specified by the Minister for Environment, Housing, and Community Development. Approved classes include banks, building societies, life insurance and general insurance companies, trustee companies, friendly societies, mortgage management companies, solicitors, credit unions, and trustees of superannuation funds.

During 1974-75, 2,380 loans for \$41.41m were insured in Victoria. Comparable figures for 1973-74 were 3,273 loans for \$46.73m.

### **Victorian Government**

#### *Ministry of Housing*

On 5 December 1972, the Victorian Parliament set up a Ministry of Housing in Victoria to co-ordinate all Victorian Government housing activities. The authorities within the Ministry of Housing are the Housing Commission, the Registry of Co-operative Housing Societies and Co-operative Societies, the Home Finance Trust, the Decentralized Industry Housing Authority, and the Teacher Housing Authority. Details of each of these authorities are provided in the following notes.

#### *Housing Commission*

Victoria's population stands at approximately 3,500,000 persons—more than 250,000 persons live in Housing Commission houses and flats.

The Commission, since its formation in 1938, has provided comparatively modern, low-rental accommodation, in pleasant landscaped surroundings, for families on limited incomes and pensioners who formerly had to live in the sub-standard dwellings of depressed areas.

As the Commission's various projects developed, special attention was given to the housing needs of the aged. Thus, in the 1960s and the 1970s, the Commission created the Granny Flat, a concept in government housing which has evoked considerable interest.

The Granny Flat (grandparent unit) consisting of a separate bedroom, living room, kitchen, entry porch, and bathroom-toilet is completely self-contained and equipped with all contemporary conveniences. It is designed to be erected in the householder's backyard for occupancy by pensioner parents. The rentals charged are the same as for pensioner couples residing in Darby and Joan flats. When no longer needed, the Granny Flat, because of its special construction, can be transported easily to another site. When this occurs, the Commission clears the site and restores it to its original state, after disconnecting the services.

The Commission is aware that Victorians are used to the concept of an individual home on its own block of land. By encouraging home ownership, the

Commission had sold 22,818 in the Melbourne metropolitan area and 15,613 in the rest of Victoria of the 78,870 dwellings built to 30 June 1975.

On 15 December 1974, the *Aboriginal Affairs (Transfer of Functions) Act 1974* transferred to the Housing Commission all functions relating to Aboriginal housing which had previously been performed by the former Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs.

The Commonwealth Government provides funds annually for the provision of houses and the maintenance thereof for Aboriginal families at reasonable rental. For the period 1 January 1975 to 30 June 1975, 74 housing grants were paid to Aboriginal applicants and three houses were purchased by the Commission for Aboriginals.

The *Urban Renewal Act 1970* provides for renewal procedures designed to ensure that urban areas can be rehabilitated through a system of co-ordinated research and consultation, which joins the interest and skills of the people of the area, the councils, and the relevant State authorities. The procedures start with an invitation from the council to the Urban Renewal Authority to discuss the uses of renewal with regard to the borough, city, or shire. Initial discussions of this type are held with the municipalities. If these are satisfactory to the municipal council, then a liaison committee is formed, comprising members of the council and members of the Urban Renewal Authority, to pursue the question of the possible use of renewal pertaining to specific areas within the municipality.

Urban renewal is one of the most significant spheres the Commission has entered during the last five years. A comprehensive article on this topic appears on pages 303-4 of the *Victorian Year Book 1976*.

#### VICTORIA—HOUSING COMMISSION: DWELLING CONSTRUCTION

Geographical distribution (a)	Houses and flat units				
	1970-71	1971-72	1972-73	1973-74	1974-75
	COMPLETED				
Melbourne Statistical Division	1,934	1,975	1,326	889	1,820
Remainder of Victoria	953	758	660	558	1,196
State total	2,887	2,733	1,986	1,447	3,016
	UNDER CONTRACT AT END OF PERIOD (INCLUDES CONTRACTS LET, WORK NOT STARTED)				
Melbourne Statistical Division	2,028	1,705	1,707	1,896	1,363
Remainder of Victoria	638	688	1,307	1,571	1,860
State total	2,666	2,393	3,014	3,467	3,223

(a) Figures are according to boundaries as determined at 30 June 1966.

#### VICTORIA—HOUSING COMMISSION: REVENUE, EXPENDITURE, ETC. (\$'000)

Particulars	1970-71	1971-72	1972-73	1973-74	1974-75
REVENUE					
Rentals	19,044	21,091	21,629	25,487	30,350
Gross surplus—house sales	3,202	2,873	3,065	6,392	10,139
Interest—					
House sales (net)	1,817	2,136	2,042	2,053	2,300
Sundry	287	599	649	2,429	2,906
Miscellaneous	299	745	585	513	954
Total revenue	24,649	27,445	27,971	36,874	46,649

VICTORIA—HOUSING COMMISSION : REVENUE, EXPENDITURE, ETC.—*continued*  
(\$'000)

Particulars	1970-71	1971-72	1972-73	1973-74	1974-75
EXPENDITURE					
Interest—less amounts capitalised and applied to house sales	7,971	9,280	9,636	11,365	12,742
Loan redemption—					
Commonwealth Government—State Agreement	2,294	2,370	2,434	2,460	2,603
Contribution to National Debt Sinking Fund	21	17	18	23	29
Redemption of debentures and Debenture Loan Sinking Fund contribution	8	7	7	7	7
Administration—					
General	1,382	1,588	1,674	1,872	2,491
House and land sales	1,022	1,138	1,101	1,323	1,648
Rates—less amount capitalised	3,000	3,407	3,735	4,467	5,815
Provision for accrued maintenance	2,871	2,914	3,356	3,678	5,964
Provision for irrecoverable rents	32	107	128	75	56
Communal services—flats and garden maintenance	958	1,234	1,377	1,783	2,439
House purchasers' Death Benefit Fund appropriation	473	464	452	452	461
Transfer to house sales Reserve Suspense Account	1,845	1,273	1,034	3,234	6,802
Maintenance and repairs on houses sold	240	299	228	269	437
Other	592	1,092	939	1,168	1,956
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>22,709</b>	<b>25,189</b>	<b>26,118</b>	<b>32,176</b>	<b>43,450</b>
<b>Operating surplus</b>	<b>1,940</b>	<b>2,256</b>	<b>1,852</b>	<b>4,698</b>	<b>3,199</b>
Fixed assets at 30 June	339,247	357,507	377,295	413,677	484,700
Loan indebtedness at 30 June (a)—					
Government advances	452,013	457,499	500,934	538,574	598,072
Debenture issues	400	400	400	400	400
Death Benefit Fund advances	4,522	5,241	5,128	5,338	4,853

(a) Excludes subsidies from State Loan Fund for slum reclamation.

*Registry of Co-operative Housing Societies and Co-operative Societies*

The *Co-operative Housing Societies Act* 1958 empowers societies to raise money on loan for the purposes of making advances to their members to erect houses; to purchase houses (within certain age limits); to meet street making and sewerage installation charges; to undertake additional permanent improvements to a dwelling acquired through a society; to maintain and keep the house in proper repair; and to purchase a residential flat on the security of a stratum title.

Until 30 June 1956, co-operative housing societies were entirely dependent on institutional finance for their funds, but since 1956 they have received a portion of Victoria's housing loan allocation under the Commonwealth Government—State Housing Agreements.

The following table, compiled from annual reports published by the Registrar of Co-operative Housing Societies, provides particulars relating to the operations of societies at 30 June for each of the years 1971 to 1975:

VICTORIA—OPERATIONS OF CO-OPERATIVE HOUSING SOCIETIES  
AT 30 JUNE

Particulars	Unit	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975
Societies registered	number	1,316	1,429	1,481	1,640	1,687
Members registered	number	54,612	54,646	53,395	54,581	54,125
Shares subscribed	number	3,073,813	3,476,736	3,238,762	3,410,941	3,716,949
Nominal share capital	\$m	307	347	323	341	373
Advances approved	number	47,637	47,220	44,039	45,341	58,185
Advances approved	\$m	292	317	307	330	418

VICTORIA—OPERATIONS OF CO-OPERATIVE HOUSING SOCIETIES AT 30 JUNE—*continued*

Particulars	Unit	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975
Government guarantees executed	number	787	811	863	906	927
Government guarantees executed	\$m	195	199	201	210	214
Indemnities given and subsisting	number	2,998	3,481	3,854	4,403	4,940
Indemnities subsisting	\$'000	1,600	1,925	2,319	2,995	3,992
Housing loan funds paid into Home Builders' Account	\$m	119	130	141	157	195
Dwelling houses completed to date (a)	number	72,275	75,660	76,989	80,559	91,778
Dwelling houses in course of erection (a)	number	1,125	1,248	908	1,509	1,247

(a) Includes residential flats.

### *Home Finance Trust*

The Home Finance Trust is a corporate body constituted under the *Home Finance Act 1962*. It is authorised to receive money on deposit, the repayment of which is guaranteed by the Victorian Government, for the purpose of making loans for housing on the security of first and second mortgages. Under the terms of the Act, the Trust is precluded from making loans in certain circumstances.

The number of loans granted by the Trust to 30 June 1975 and subsisting totalled 3,271 on the security of first mortgages, and 784 on second mortgages, the amounts involved being \$25.5m and \$1.5m, respectively.

### **Further reference, 1967**

### *Approved housing institutions*

The *Home Finance Act 1962* empowers the Victorian Government Treasurer, *inter alia*, to guarantee, in certain circumstances, the repayment of part of a housing loan made by an approved institution on the security of a first mortgage.

The Treasurer's guarantee covers that portion of a loan which exceeds the institution's loan limit, whether statutory or under the terms of a trust, or where there is no such limit, the guarantee applies to the amount of loan in excess of 60 per cent of the valuation of the security. Guarantees are available under the Act for loans up to 95 per cent of the value of the security.

At 30 June 1975, there were six approved institutions. Guarantees given by the Treasurer and subsisting totalled 96, the amount involved being \$158,102.

### **Further reference, 1967**

### *Decentralized Industry Housing Authority*

The Decentralized Industry Housing Authority is a statutory authority, established by an Act of the Victorian Parliament on 19 April 1973. Its charter is to provide housing assistance to approved decentralised secondary industries established outside an 80 kilometre radius of the Melbourne G.P.O., and their key personnel. Housing loans are made on a first mortgage basis to enable eligible persons to purchase or build residential accommodation in the towns where they are employed.

An amendment to the legislation in 1975 gave the Authority powers to grant housing assistance to persons employed in public administration who are transferred to country locations. The total value of loans approved, to 31 December 1975, exceeded \$4m.

### *Teacher Housing Authority*

The Teacher Housing Authority was created as a statutory authority by an Act of the Victorian Parliament on 22 December 1970. Its objectives are to provide suitable housing accommodation for teachers and to improve existing housing conditions in respect of teachers.

The Authority controls approximately 2,000 houses, almost entirely in country locations, with the average rental of these properties being \$6.72 per week. Since its inception, the Authority has provided 200 additional houses throughout



Victoria and has entered the area of prefabricated transportable housing to provide suitable accommodation in more remote locations.

#### *Rural Finance and Settlement Commission*

The Rural Finance and Settlement Commission was constituted in March 1962 by the passing of the *Rural Finance and Settlement Commission Act 1961*, which provided for the merger of the Rural Finance Corporation and the Soldier Settlement Commission.

The Commission administered the settlement of eligible discharged servicemen on the land as part of the general scheme of rehabilitation of ex-servicemen, and is also administering the scheme of land settlement under the *Land Settlement Act 1959*. At 30 June 1975, a total of 3,392 houses had been completed since the inception of the Soldier Settlement Commission in 1945.

#### *State Savings Bank of Victoria*

The State Savings Bank of Victoria grants loans to eligible persons to build, purchase, or improve homes upon such terms and subject to such covenants and conditions as are prescribed or are fixed by the Bank's commissioners.

Loans are made from the Savings Bank and Credit Foncier Departments. Particulars for the years 1970-71 to 1974-75 can be found in Chapter 21.

#### *Other Victorian authorities*

Victorian Government authorities (other than those providing rental housing under Housing Agreements) such as the Public Works Department, the State Electricity Commission, the Victorian Railways, the State Rivers and Water Supply Commission, etc., from time to time provide the necessary land and finance for the erection of dwellings for employees of those departments. The rentals charged are fixed according to the salaries of the officers occupying the dwellings. The dwellings erected by these authorities do not come under the control of the Housing Commission.

#### *Other lenders*

Details of all loans made to home purchasers are not available. However, particulars of the permanent finance made available by the major institutions to persons buying or building new homes in Victoria for their personal use are shown, for each of the years 1970-71 to 1974-75, in the following table. The amounts shown are actual payments during the periods indicated, as distinct from loans approved, and do not include loans made to institutions, public authorities, corporate bodies, or to persons building or buying homes for resale or for investment purposes. A new home is regarded as a house or flat not more than twelve months old and permanent finance means finance granted for a term of three years or more.

VICTORIA—HOUSING FINANCE STATISTICS: PERMANENT FINANCE  
FOR NEW HOMES ONLY: PARTICULARS OF AMOUNTS PAID BY  
MAJOR INSTITUTIONS AS LOANS TO PERSONS BUYING OR  
BUILDING HOMES IN VICTORIA FOR THEIR PERSONAL USE  
(\$'000)

Institution	Payments during year—				
	1970-71	1971-72	1972-73	1973-74	1974-75
Savings banks	} 112,801	} 118,476	123,316	142,830	188,172
Co-operative housing societies			17,662	16,501	30,191
Life insurance offices	9,672	8,104	7,994	8,671	7,479
Friendly societies	2,006	2,169	2,003	1,786	1,901
Building societies	19,527	48,906	89,028	66,733	44,632
Government instrumentalities	21,319	16,115	14,960	16,638	27,720
<b>Total</b>	<b>165,325</b>	<b>193,770</b>	<b>254,963</b>	<b>253,159</b>	<b>300,096</b>

**BIBLIOGRAPHY****Victorian Office**

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**Central Office**

- 3.1 Building and construction
- 3.2 Building approvals
- 3.6 Building statistics