



BUILDING ACTIVITY, AUSTRALIA: DWELLING UNIT COMMENCEMENTS, SEPTEMBER QUARTER 1986 PRELIMINARY

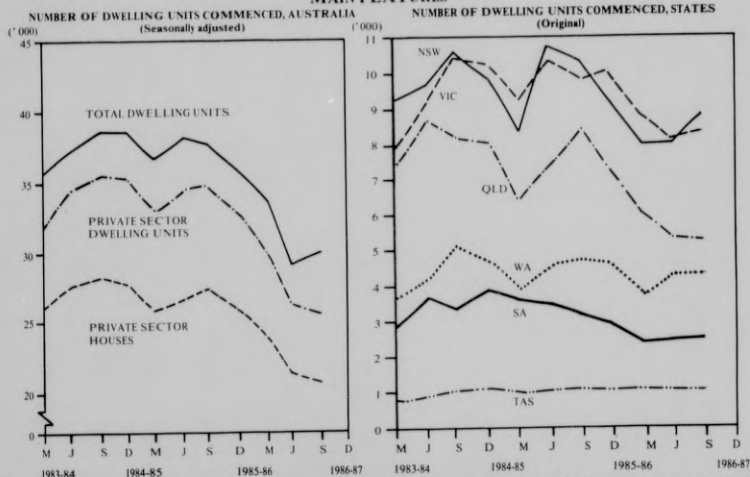
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ELECTRONIC SERVICES • on VIATEL — key *656#. • on AUSSTATS — phone (062) 52 6017.
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MAIN FEATURES



The number of private sector houses commenced in the September quarter 1986 is 21,600, in original terms. This is about the same as the figure for the June quarter (21,500). However, in seasonally adjusted terms, this result represented a decrease of about 3 per cent.

The total number of dwelling units commenced in the September quarter, seasonally adjusted, was about 3 per cent higher than the June quarter.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

Introduction

This publication contains preliminary estimates of the number of dwelling units commenced during the September quarter 1986. More comprehensive results from the quarterly survey will be published in ABS publications 8751.0 and 8752.0.

2. The statistics were compiled on the basis of returns collected from builders and other individuals and organisations engaged in building activity.

The quarterly survey comprises a sample survey of private sector house building activity and a complete enumeration of other building activity. Estimates in respect of commencements of private sector houses are therefore subject to sampling variability. Relative standard errors for Australia for the September quarter 1986 are shown as a footnote to table 1. More details regarding sampling variability for the survey are shown in publications 8751.0 and 8752.0.

3. The use of sample survey techniques in the Building Activity Survey means that reliable estimates of private sector house commencements based on survey results are available only at the State/Territory and Australia levels. Further geographic disaggregations are not available. However, dwelling unit commencement data for regions below State/Territory level are shown in the monthly series of dwelling unit commencements compiled by State offices of the ABS. Data from this series, unlike those compiled from the Building Activity Survey, are based on information reported by local and other government authorities.

Definitions

4. A *building* is defined as a rigid, fixed and permanent structure which has a roof. Its intended purpose is primarily to house people, plant, machinery, vehicles, goods or livestock. An integral feature of a building's design, to satisfy its intended use, is the provision for regular access by persons.

5. A *dwelling unit* is defined as a self-contained suite of rooms, including cooking and bathing facilities and intended for long-term residential use. Units (whether self-contained or not) within buildings offering institutional care, such as hospitals, or temporary accommodation, such as motels, hostels and holiday apartments, are not defined as dwelling units.

6. A *residential building* is defined as a building predominantly consisting of one or more dwelling units. Residential buildings can be either *houses* or *other residential buildings*.

(a) A *house* is defined as a detached building predominantly used for long term residential purposes and consisting of only one dwelling unit. Thus, detached 'granny flats' and detached dwelling units such as caretakers' residences associated with non-residential buildings are defined as houses for the purpose of these statistics.

(b) An *other residential building* is defined as a building which is predominantly used for long term residential purposes and which contains (or has attached to it) more than one dwelling unit (e.g. includes townhouses, duplexes, apartment buildings, etc.). These statistics present the number of dwelling units in other residential buildings (and not the number of buildings).

7. *Commenced*. A building is regarded as commenced when the first physical building activity has been performed on site in the form of materials fixed in place and/or labour expended (this includes site preparation but excludes delivery of building materials, the drawing of plans and specifications and the construction of non-building infrastructures, such as roads).

However, for practical purposes a building is not treated as having commenced in a particular quarter unless the value of work done to the end of the quarter, reported on

the Building Activity Survey form, is equal to or greater than the following threshold values:

(a) for houses, \$2,000.

(b) for other residential buildings \$5,000.

8. *Ownership*. The ownership of a building is classified as either public sector or private sector according to the sector of the intended owner of the completed building as evident at the time of approval. Residential buildings being constructed by private sector builders under government housing authority schemes whereby the authority has contracted, or intends to contract, to purchase the buildings on or before completion, are classified as public sector.

Seasonal adjustment

9. Original and seasonally adjusted building statistics are shown in Table I. 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 movement in the date of Easter which may, in successive years, affect figures for different quarters. Details of the methods used in seasonally adjusting these statistics are available on request.

10. Since seasonally adjusted statistics reflect both irregular and trend movements, an upward or downward movement in a seasonally adjusted series does not necessarily indicate a change of trend. Particular care should therefore be taken in interpreting individual quarter to quarter movements. Each of the component series shown has been seasonally adjusted independently. As a consequence, while the unadjusted components in the original series shown add to the totals, the adjusted components may not add to the adjusted totals. Further, the difference between independently seasonally adjusted series does not necessarily produce series which are optimal or even adequate adjustments of the similarly derived original series. Thus the figures which can be derived by subtracting seasonally adjusted private sector dwelling units from the seasonally adjusted total dwelling units should not be used to represent seasonally adjusted public sector dwelling units.

Unpublished data and related publications

11. The ABS can also make available certain building activity data which are not published. Where it is not practicable to provide the required information by telephone, data can be provided in the following forms: microfiche, photocopy, computer printout and clerically extracted tabulation. A charge may be made for providing unpublished information in these forms.

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

Building Approvals, Australia (8731.0)—issued monthly

Building Activity, Australia, Summary (8751.0)—issued quarterly

Building Activity, Australia (8752.0)—issued quarterly (\$1.20, \$2.10 incl. postage)

Construction (Other Than Building) Activity, Australia (8761.0)—issued quarterly

13. Current publications produced by the ABS are listed in the *Catalogue of Publications, Australia* (1101.0). The ABS also issues, on Tuesdays and Fridays, a *Publications Advice* (1105.0) which lists publications to be released in the next few days. The Catalogue and Publications Advice are available from any ABS Office.

Symbols and other usages

- p preliminary—figures or series subject to revision
- ... not applicable
- nil or rounded to zero

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

Electronic services

15. VIATEL. Key *656# for selected current economic, social and demographic statistics.

AUSSTATS. Thousands of up-to-date time series are available on this ABS on-line service through CSIRONET.

For further information phone the AUSSTATS Help Desk on (062) 52 6017.

TELESTATS. This service provides foreign trade statistics tailored to users' requirements.

Further information is available on (062) 52 5404.

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Acting Australian Statistician

TABLE 1. NUMBER OF DWELLING UNITS COMMENCED IN NEW RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS, ORIGINAL AND SEASONALLY ADJUSTED : AUSTRALIA
(' 000)

Period	Private sector						Public sector			Total				
	Houses			Total						Houses			Total	
	Original	Seasonally adjusted	Other residential buildings	Original	Seasonally adjusted	Total	Houses	Other residential buildings	Total	Original	Seasonally adjusted	Other residential buildings	Original	Seasonally adjusted
1983-84	99.7	..	22.5	122.2	..	8.3	6.6	14.9	107.9	..	29.1	137.0	..	..
1984-85	109.1	..	28.7	137.9	..	8.5	6.4	14.9	117.6	..	35.1	152.7	..	..
1985-86	97.8	..	24.7	122.5	..	7.1	6.2	13.3	104.9	..	30.9	135.8	..	..
1985—														
June qtr	27.1	26.9	7.5	34.6	34.2	2.8	1.8	4.6	29.9	29.0	9.3	39.2	38.3	..
September qtr	28.4	27.2	7.4	35.8	34.5	2.0	1.5	3.5	30.4	29.3	8.9	39.3	37.8	..
December qtr	26.6	25.8	6.8	33.4	32.4	1.5	1.3	2.8	28.1	27.5	8.1	36.2	35.6	..
1986—														
March qtr	21.3	23.2	5.5	26.8	29.1	2.0	1.7	3.7	23.3	25.6	7.2	30.5	33.2	..
June qtr	21.5	21.3	5.0	26.5	26.2	1.6	1.7	3.3	23.1	22.4	6.7	29.8	29.0	..
September qtr p	21.6	20.7	4.9	26.4	25.5	1.9	2.8	4.7	23.4	22.6	7.7	31.1	30.0	..

NOTE: The relative standard errors for September quarter 1986 are as follows:

private sector houses — 1.5%
private sector dwelling units — 1.2%
total houses — 1.4%
total dwelling units — 1.0%

TABLE 2. NUMBER OF DWELLING UNITS COMMENCED IN NEW RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS : AUSTRALIA
('000)

Period	N.S.W.	Vic.	Qld	S.A.	W.A.	Tas.	N.T.	A.C.T.	Australia
HOUSES									
1983-84	28.7	28.2	24.8	8.6	12.0	2.6	1.5	1.6	107.9
1984-85	29.6	32.7	23.9	9.6	14.3	3.1	1.6	2.8	117.6
1985-86	26.1	29.9	21.6	7.3	13.1	2.9	1.1	2.8	104.9
1985—									
June qtr	8.0	8.6	5.8	2.2	3.4	0.8	0.4	0.7	29.9
September qtr	7.8	8.1	6.8	2.2	3.6	0.7	0.4	0.8	30.4
December qtr	6.9	8.2	5.8	2.0	3.4	0.8	0.2	0.9	28.1
1986—									
March qtr	5.7	6.9	4.7	1.6	2.8	0.7	0.3	0.7	23.3
June qtr	5.7	6.8	4.4	1.5	3.3	0.7	0.2	0.5	23.1
September qtr p	5.8	6.9	4.3	1.7	3.4	0.6	0.2	0.6	23.4
OTHER RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS									
1983-84	8.4	5.5	6.4	3.6	2.9	0.6	1.0	0.7	29.1
1984-85	10.0	7.6	6.2	4.6	4.0	0.9	1.2	0.6	35.1
1985-86	9.3	5.9	5.5	3.5	4.2	1.0	0.7	0.9	30.9
1985—									
June qtr	2.8	1.8	1.6	1.2	1.2	0.2	0.3	0.1	9.3
September qtr	2.8	1.7	1.7	0.9	1.3	0.3	0.2	0.2	8.9
December qtr	2.1	1.7	1.5	0.8	1.2	0.2	0.2	0.4	8.1
1986—									
March qtr	2.2	1.4	1.4	0.8	0.8	0.3	0.1	0.2	7.2
June qtr	2.2	1.1	0.9	0.9	1.0	0.2	0.2	0.1	6.7
September qtr p	3.0	1.4	0.9	0.8	0.9	0.3	0.1	0.2	7.7
TOTAL									
1983-84	37.1	33.7	31.2	12.2	14.9	3.2	2.5	2.3	137.0
1984-85	39.6	40.3	30.1	14.2	18.3	4.0	2.8	3.4	152.7
1985-86	35.3	35.9	27.1	10.7	17.3	3.9	1.8	3.8	135.8
1985—									
June qtr	10.8	10.4	7.4	3.4	4.5	1.0	0.7	0.9	39.2
September qtr	10.6	9.8	8.5	3.1	4.8	1.0	0.5	1.0	39.3
December qtr	8.9	9.8	7.3	2.8	4.5	1.0	0.4	1.3	36.2
1986—									
March qtr	7.9	8.3	6.0	2.3	3.7	0.9	0.4	0.8	30.5
June qtr	7.9	7.9	5.3	2.4	4.3	0.9	0.4	0.6	29.8
September qtr p	8.8	8.3	5.2	2.5	4.3	0.9	0.3	0.8	31.1