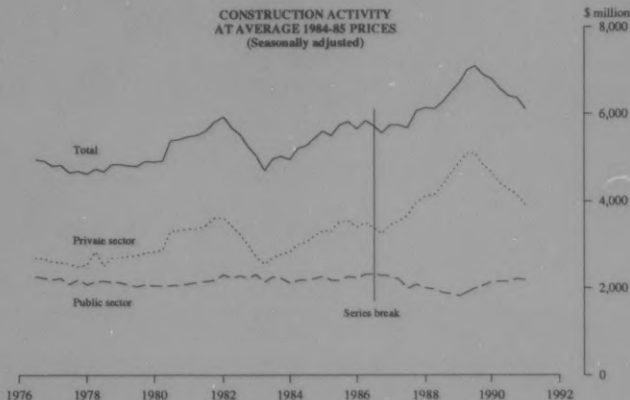


**CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITY AT CONSTANT PRICES, AUSTRALIA  
MARCH QUARTER 1991**

**SUMMARY OF FINDINGS**



**Total construction activity**

Construction activity continued to fall in the March quarter 1991. In seasonally adjusted terms, total construction activity fell by 4.3 per cent during the March quarter 1991 to \$6,095 million. Construction activity has now fallen in each of the last six quarters and is more than ten per cent down on the levels recorded twelve months ago. The fall in total construction activity in the March quarter 1991 was the result of falls in both residential building (down 2.3 per cent) and non-residential construction (down 5.1 per cent). Residential building activity has now declined in each of the last seven quarters, although the rate of decline has slowed in the last six months. On the other hand, while non-residential building has also been declining for some time, the March quarter 1991 fall was the largest of the six consecutive quarterly falls.

Seasonally adjusted estimates are not separately available for engineering construction activity. However, in original terms, engineering construction activity in the March quarter 1991 decreased by 8.9 per cent from the December quarter 1990. This follows an observed pattern of decline in engineering construction work done between the December and March quarters. While all the other components of total construction activity have declined by well over ten per cent in the last year, engineering construction has held up and remains 0.8 per cent above the level observed in the March quarter 1990.

**INQUIRIES**

*\* for further information about statistics in this publication and the availability of related unpublished statistics contact Janet Flynn on Canberra (06) 252 6067 or any ABS State Office*

*\* for information about other ABS statistics and services please refer to the back page of this publication.*

The fall in total construction activity over the last eighteen months has been dominated by declining private sector activity, which has more than offset increased public sector construction activity over the same period.

#### Private sector

Seasonally adjusted, all categories of private sector construction declined in the March quarter 1991. Total private sector construction activity fell by 5.8 per cent to \$3,907 million. Engineering construction dropped by 0.9 per cent to \$529 million. Private residential building fell by 1.1 per cent to \$1,919 million, and non-residential building by 12.9 per cent to \$1,459 million.

While all components of private sector construction activity remain well down on the levels recorded twelve months previously, the rate of decline in residential building activity appears to be easing in contrast to that of non-residential construction.

#### Public sector

Total public sector construction activity, in seasonally adjusted terms, decreased in the March quarter 1991 to \$2,188 million, a fall of 1.3 per cent from the December quarter 1990 estimate. However, public sector construction activity in the March quarter 1991 remains 2.3 per cent above the level recorded in the March quarter 1990, although the rate of annual increase in activity has eased significantly over the last two to three quarters.

### CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITY AT AVERAGE 1984-85 PRICES (Seasonally adjusted)

Construction activity	% Changes between Dec. 90 and Mar. 91		
	Private sector construction	Public sector construction	Total construction
Building —			
Residential	-1.1	-18.5	-2.3
Non-residential	-12.9	-4.0	-10.4
Total building	-6.6	-6.3	-6.5
Engineering construction	-0.9	n.a.	n.a.
Total non-residential construction	-10.0	0.2	-5.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>-5.8</b>	<b>-1.3</b>	<b>-4.3</b>

TABLE 1. SEASONALLY ADJUSTED ESTIMATES OF CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITY AT AVERAGE 1984-85 PRICES  
AUSTRALIA  $\tau$

Period	Residential building	Non-residential building	Total building	Engineering construction	Non-residential construction	Total construction
QUARTERLY ESTIMATES (\$m)						
1989 June qtr	2,539	2,622	5,161	n.a.	4,461	7,000
Sept. qtr	2,483	2,647	5,135	n.a.	4,607	7,089
Dec. qtr	2,375	2,622	4,992	n.a.	4,515	6,893
1990 Mar. qtr	2,318	2,527	4,841	n.a.	4,484	6,798
June qtr	2,156	2,429	4,586	n.a.	4,419	6,575
Sept. qtr	2,084	(a)2,355	(a)4,445	n.a.	(a)4,330	(a)6,413
Dec. qtr	2,078	2,336	4,409	n.a.	4,284	6,366
1991 Mar. qtr	2,031	2,094	4,121	n.a.	4,067	6,095
PERCENTAGE CHANGE OVER PREVIOUS QUARTER						
1989 June qtr	2.3	7.2	4.8	n.a.	5.7	4.5
Sept. qtr	-2.2	1.0	-0.5	n.a.	3.3	1.3
Dec. qtr	-4.4	-0.9	-2.8	n.a.	-2.0	-2.8
1990 Mar. qtr	-2.4	-3.6	-3.0	n.a.	-0.7	-1.4
June qtr	-7.0	-3.9	-5.3	n.a.	-1.4	-3.3
Sept. qtr	-3.3	(a)-3.1	(a)-3.1	n.a.	(a)-2.0	(a)-2.5
Dec. qtr	-0.3	-0.8	-0.8	n.a.	-1.1	-0.7
1991 Mar. qtr	-2.3	-10.4	-6.5	n.a.	-5.1	-4.3
PERCENTAGE CHANGE OVER SAME QUARTER OF PREVIOUS YEAR (a)						
1989 June qtr	24.0	18.5	21.2	n.a.	9.8	14.6
Sept. qtr	9.0	16.7	12.8	n.a.	15.3	13.0
Dec. qtr	-1.8	14.0	5.9	n.a.	10.5	6.0
1990 Mar. qtr	-6.6	3.3	-1.7	n.a.	6.2	1.5
June qtr	-15.1	-7.3	-11.2	n.a.	-0.9	-6.1
Sept. qtr	-16.0	(a)-11.0	(a)-13.4	n.a.	(a)-6.0	(a)-9.5
Dec. qtr	-12.5	-10.9	-11.7	n.a.	-5.1	-7.6
1991 Mar. qtr	-12.4	-17.1	-14.9	n.a.	-9.3	-10.3

(a) New cut-offs for non-residential building from September quarter 1990 - see paragraph 6 of the Explanatory Notes.

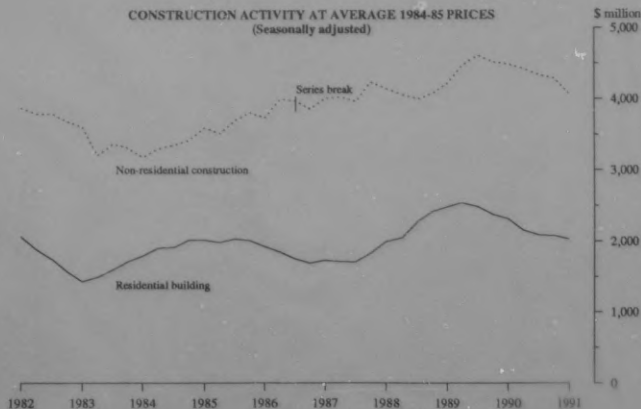


TABLE 2. SEASONALLY ADJUSTED PRIVATE SECTOR ESTIMATES OF CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITY  
AT AVERAGE 1984-85 PRICES  
AUSTRALIA *r*

Period	Residential building	Non-residential building	Total building	Engineering construction	Non-residential construction	Total construction
QUARTERLY ESTIMATES (\$m)						
1989 June qtr	2,435	2,064	4,499	588	2,653	5,088
Sept. qtr	2,368	2,088	4,456	634	2,722	5,090
Dec. qtr	2,241	2,013	4,254	584	2,577	4,839
1990 Mar. qtr	2,170	1,948	4,117	543	2,490	4,660
June qtr	2,036	1,830	3,866	550	2,379	4,415
Sept. qtr	1,974	(a)1,742	(a)3,715	554	(a)2,296	(a)4,269
Dec. qtr	1,940	1,675	3,615	534	2,209	4,149
1991 Mar. qtr	1,919	1,459	3,378	529	1,989	3,307
PERCENTAGE CHANGE OVER PREVIOUS QUARTER						
1989 June qtr	2.1	8.3	4.9	0.8	6.6	4.4
Sept. qtr	-2.7	1.1	-1.0	7.8	2.6	0.0
Dec. qtr	-5.4	-3.6	-4.5	-7.8	-4.6	-4.9
1990 Mar. qtr	-3.2	-3.2	-3.2	-7.2	-4.1	-3.7
June qtr	-6.2	-6.0	-6.1	1.3	-4.4	-5.2
Sept. qtr	-3.1	(a)-4.8	(a)-3.9	0.8	(a)-3.5	(a)-3.3
Dec. qtr	-1.7	-3.8	-2.7	-3.7	-3.8	-2.8
1991 Mar. qtr	-1.1	-12.9	-6.6	-0.9	-10.0	-5.8
PERCENTAGE CHANGE OVER SAME QUARTER OF PREVIOUS YEAR (a)						
1989 June qtr	26.1	25.4	25.8	4.7	20.1	22.9
Sept. qtr	9.5	23.8	15.8	20.6	23.0	16.3
Dec. qtr	-3.3	13.5	4.0	6.8	11.9	4.3
1990 Mar. qtr	-9.0	2.2	-4.0	-7.0	0.0	-4.4
June qtr	-16.4	-11.4	-14.1	-6.6	-10.3	-13.2
Sept. qtr	-16.7	(a)-16.6	(a)-16.6	12.6	(a)-15.7	(a)-16.1
Dec. qtr	-13.4	-16.8	-15.0	-8.6	-15.0	-14.3
1991 Mar. qtr	-11.6	-25.1	-18.0	-2.4	-20.1	-16.2

(a) New cut-offs for non-residential building from September quarter 1990 - see paragraph 6 of the Explanatory Notes.

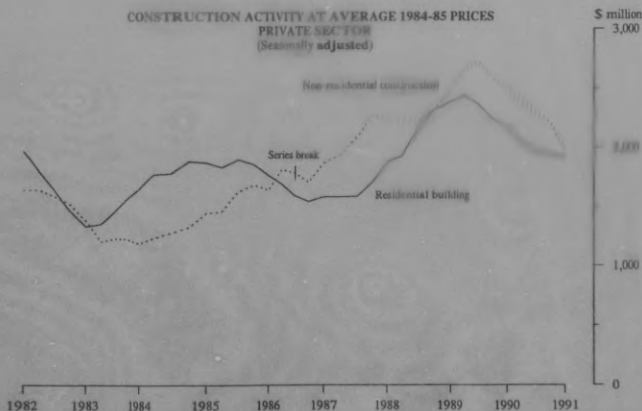


TABLE 3. SEASONALLY ADJUSTED PUBLIC SECTOR ESTIMATES OF CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITY  
AT AVERAGE 1984-85 PRICES  
AUSTRALIA  $\text{\$}$

Period	Residential building	Non-residential building	Total building	Engineering construction	Non-residential construction	Total construction
QUARTERLY ESTIMATES ( $\text{\$m}$ )						
1989 June qtr	104	557	662	n.a.	1,809	1,912
Sept. qtr	114	559	679	n.a.	1,885	1,999
Dec. qtr	133	609	738	n.a.	1,918	2,055
1990 Mar. qtr	148	579	724	n.a.	1,994	2,138
June qtr	120	599	720	n.a.	2,040	2,159
Sept. qtr	111	(a)613	(a)729	n.a.	(a)2,035	(a)2,144
Dec. qtr	138	661	793	n.a.	2,075	2,217
1991 Mar. qtr	112	634	744	n.a.	2,079	2,188
PERCENTAGE CHANGE OVER PREVIOUS QUARTER						
1989 June qtr	8.6	3.0	4.4	n.a.	4.4	4.7
Sept. qtr	10.6	0.3	2.5	n.a.	4.2	4.5
Dec. qtr	16.2	8.9	8.7	n.a.	1.7	2.8
1990 Mar. qtr	11.5	-4.9	-1.8	n.a.	4.0	4.1
June qtr	-19.3	3.5	-0.6	n.a.	2.3	1.0
Sept. qtr	-7.4	(a)2.3	(a)1.4	n.a.	(a)-0.3	(a)-0.7
Dec. qtr	24.0	7.7	8.8	n.a.	2.0	3.4
1991 Mar. qtr	-18.5	-4.0	-6.3	n.a.	0.2	-1.3
PERCENTAGE CHANGE OVER SAME QUARTER OF PREVIOUS YEAR (a)						
1989 June qtr	-10.4	-1.5	-2.9	n.a.	-2.5	-2.9
Sept. qtr	-1.4	-3.7	-3.2	n.a.	5.8	5.3
Dec. qtr	32.8	15.6	18.3	n.a.	8.7	10.0
1990 Mar. qtr	55.6	7.1	14.2	n.a.	15.1	17.1
June qtr	15.7	7.5	8.7	n.a.	12.8	12.9
Sept. qtr	-3.2	(a)9.7	(a)7.4	n.a.	(a)7.9	(a)7.2
Dec. qtr	3.4	8.5	7.5	n.a.	8.2	7.9
1991 Mar. qtr	-24.5	9.5	2.7	n.a.	4.3	2.3

(a) New cut-offs for non-residential building from September quarter 1990 - see paragraph 6 of the Explanatory Notes.

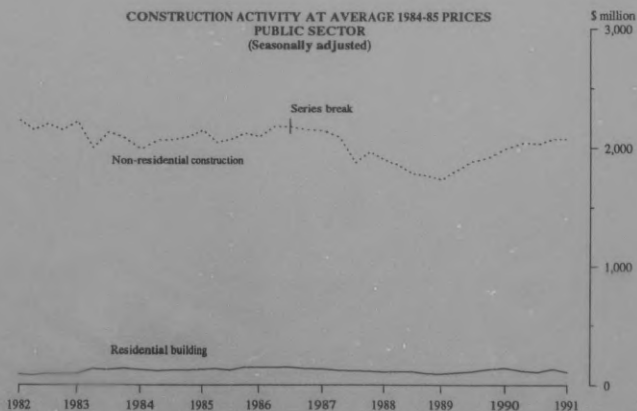


TABLE 4. ORIGINAL ESTIMATES OF CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITY AT AVERAGE 1984-85 PRICES, AUSTRALIA <sup>r</sup>

Period	Residential building	Non-residential building	Total building	Engineering construction	Non-residential construction	Total construction
ANNUAL ESTIMATES (\$m)						
1977-78	6,650	5,110	11,760	6,940	12,049	18,699
1978-79	6,565	5,324	11,889	7,266	12,590	19,155
1979-80	7,296	5,299	12,595	6,913	12,212	19,509
1980-81	8,351	5,715	14,066	7,679	13,393	21,744
1981-82	8,179	5,613	13,792	9,207	14,820	22,999
1982-83	6,256	4,775	11,031	9,525	14,299	20,556
1983-84	6,970	5,236	12,206	7,933	13,169	20,139
1984-85	7,909	6,108	14,016	7,763	13,871	21,779
1985-86	7,814	7,423	15,239	7,823	15,249	23,063
1986-87	6,880	8,045	14,925	(a)7,828	(a)15,873	(a)22,753
1987-88	7,556	9,234	16,780	7,183	16,407	23,963
1988-89	9,709	9,620	19,329	7,132	16,752	26,462
1989-90	9,336	10,239	19,576	7,808	18,047	27,383
PERCENTAGE CHANGE OVER PREVIOUS YEAR						
1978-79	-1.3	4.2	1.1	4.7	4.5	2.4
1979-80	11.1	-0.5	5.9	-4.9	-3.0	1.8
1980-81	14.5	7.8	11.7	11.1	9.7	11.5
1981-82	-2.1	-1.8	-1.9	19.9	10.7	5.8
1982-83	-23.5	-14.9	-20.0	3.4	-3.5	-10.6
1983-84	11.4	9.7	10.6	-16.7	-7.9	-2.0
1984-85	13.5	16.6	14.8	8.8	5.3	8.1
1985-86	-1.2	21.6	8.7	0.8	9.9	5.9
1986-87	-12.0	8.3	-2.1	0.1	4.1	-1.3
1987-88	9.8	14.6	12.4	-8.2	3.4	5.3
1988-89	28.5	4.3	15.2	-0.7	2.1	10.4
1989-90	-3.8	6.4	1.3	9.5	7.7	3.5
QUARTERLY ESTIMATES (\$m)						
1989 June qtr	2,534	2,609	5,143	1,905	4,514	7,048
Sept. qtr	2,562	2,762	5,324	1,961	4,723	7,285
Dec. qtr	2,487	2,738	5,225	1,955	4,693	7,180
1990 Mar. qtr	2,137	2,317	4,454	1,815	4,132	6,269
June qtr	2,150	2,423	4,572	2,077	4,500	6,650
Sept. qtr	2,151	(b)2,451	(b)4,602	1,971	(b)4,422	(b)6,573
Dec. qtr	2,179	2,439	4,618	2,008	4,447	6,626
1991 Mar. qtr	1,874	1,915	3,789	1,829	3,744	5,618
PERCENTAGE CHANGE OVER PREVIOUS QUARTER						
1989 June qtr	10.7	16.4	13.5	15.2	15.9	14.0
Sept. qtr	1.1	5.9	3.5	2.9	4.6	3.4
Dec. qtr	-2.9	-0.9	-1.9	-0.3	-0.6	-1.4
1990 Mar. qtr	-14.1	-15.4	-14.8	-7.2	-12.0	-12.7
June qtr	0.6	4.6	2.7	14.4	8.9	6.1
Sept. qtr	0.1	(b)1.2	(b)0.6	-5.1	(b)-1.7	(b)-1.2
Dec. qtr	1.3	-0.5	0.4	1.9	0.6	0.8
1991 Mar. qtr	-14.0	-21.5	-18.0	-8.9	-15.8	-15.2
PERCENTAGE CHANGE OVER SAME QUARTER OF PREVIOUS YEAR (b)						
1989 June qtr	24.1	18.3	21.1	-0.3	9.7	14.5
Sept. qtr	8.8	16.5	12.7	13.4	15.2	12.9
Dec. qtr	-1.7	14.1	6.0	6.0	10.6	6.0
1990 Mar. qtr	-6.6	3.4	-1.7	9.8	6.1	1.4
June qtr	-15.2	-7.1	-11.1	9.0	-0.3	-5.7
Sept. qtr	-16.0	(b)-11.3	(b)-13.6	0.5	(b)-6.4	(b)-9.8
Dec. qtr	-12.4	-10.9	-11.6	2.7	-5.2	-7.7
1991 Mar. qtr	-12.3	-17.3	-14.9	0.8	-9.4	-10.4

(a) For explanation of series break, see paragraph 3 of the Explanatory Notes. (b) New cut-offs for non-residential building from September quarter 1990 - see paragraph 6 of the Explanatory Notes.

TABLE 5. ORIGINAL PRIVATE SECTOR ESTIMATES OF CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITY AT AVERAGE 1984-85 PRICES  
AUSTRALIA  $\text{r}$

Period	Residential building	Non-residential building	Total building	Engineering construction	Non-residential construction	Total construction
ANNUAL ESTIMATES (\$m)						
1977-78	6,076	2,839	8,915	1,262	4,101	10,177
1978-79	6,098	3,137	9,235	1,406	4,543	10,641
1979-80	6,897	3,207	10,104	1,183	4,390	11,287
1980-81	7,930	3,863	11,793	1,572	5,435	13,365
1981-82	7,815	4,001	11,816	2,286	6,287	14,102
1982-83	5,835	3,295	9,131	2,434	5,730	11,565
1983-84	6,442	3,328	9,771	1,556	4,885	11,327
1984-85	7,377	4,083	11,460	1,422	5,505	12,882
1985-86	7,238	5,171	12,409	1,601	6,772	14,010
1986-87	6,322	5,404	11,726	(a) 1,893	(a) 7,297	(a) 13,618
1987-88	7,093	6,681	13,774	2,124	8,805	15,898
1988-89	9,293	7,413	16,705	2,241	9,653	18,946
1989-90	8,824	7,891	16,715	2,316	10,207	19,031
PERCENTAGE CHANGE OVER PREVIOUS YEAR						
1978-79	0.4	10.5	3.6	11.4	10.8	4.6
1979-80	15.1	2.3	9.4	-15.9	-3.4	6.1
1980-81	15.0	20.4	16.7	32.9	23.8	18.4
1981-82	-1.4	3.6	0.2	45.4	15.7	5.5
1982-83	-25.3	-17.6	-22.7	6.5	-8.9	-18.0
1983-84	10.4	1.0	7.0	-36.1	-14.7	-2.1
1984-85	14.5	22.7	17.3	-8.6	12.7	13.7
1985-86	-1.9	26.6	8.3	12.6	23.0	8.8
1986-87	-12.7	4.5	-5.5	18.2	7.8	-2.8
1987-88	12.2	23.6	17.5	12.2	20.7	16.7
1988-89	31.0	11.0	21.3	5.5	9.6	19.2
1989-90	-5.0	6.5	0.1	3.4	5.7	0.3
QUARTERLY ESTIMATES (\$m)						
1989 June qtr	2,433	2,021	4,454	550	2,572	5,004
Sept. qtr	2,436	2,191	4,627	654	2,845	5,281
Dec. qtr	2,348	2,106	4,454	629	2,735	5,083
1990 Mar. qtr	2,008	1,803	3,810	519	2,322	4,329
June qtr	2,033	1,791	3,824	514	2,306	4,339
Sept. qtr	2,029	(b) 1,825	(b) 3,854	571	(b) 2,397	(b) 4,426
Dec. qtr	2,035	1,754	3,789	575	2,329	4,364
1991 Mar. qtr	1,776	1,351	3,127	506	1,857	3,633
PERCENTAGE CHANGE OVER PREVIOUS QUARTER						
1989 June qtr	10.3	14.7	12.3	-1.5	10.8	10.6
Sept. qtr	0.1	8.4	3.9	18.8	10.6	5.5
Dec. qtr	-3.6	-3.9	-3.7	-3.8	-3.8	-3.7
1990 Mar. qtr	-14.5	-14.4	-14.5	-17.5	-15.1	-14.8
June qtr	1.3	-0.6	0.4	-0.9	-0.7	0.2
Sept. qtr	-0.2	(b) 1.9	(b) 0.8	11.0	(b) 3.9	(b) 2.0
Dec. qtr	0.3	-3.9	-1.7	0.6	-2.8	-1.4
1991 Mar. qtr	-12.7	-23.0	-17.5	-11.9	-20.2	-16.7
PERCENTAGE CHANGE OVER SAME QUARTER OF PREVIOUS YEAR (b)						
1989 June qtr	26.2	25.7	25.9	4.9	20.6	23.2
Sept. qtr	9.4	23.3	15.5	20.4	22.6	16.1
Dec. qtr	-3.2	13.7	4.1	6.8	12.0	4.4
1990 Mar. qtr	-9.0	2.3	-4.0	-7.1	0.1	-4.4
June qtr	-16.4	-11.4	-14.1	-6.5	-10.3	-13.3
Sept. qtr	-16.7	(b) -16.7	(b) -16.7	-12.6	(b) -15.7	(b) -16.2
Dec. qtr	-13.3	-16.7	-14.9	-8.6	-14.9	-14.2
1991 Mar. qtr	-11.5	-25.0	-17.9	-2.5	-20.0	-16.1

(a) For explanation of series break, see paragraph 3 of the Explanatory Notes. (b) New cut-offs for non-residential building from September quarter 1990 - see paragraph 6 of the Explanatory Notes.

TABLE 6. ORIGINAL PUBLIC SECTOR ESTIMATES OF CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITY AT AVERAGE 1984-85 PRICES  
AUSTRALIA  $\text{\$}$

Period	Residential building	Non-residential building	Total building	Engineering construction	Non-residential construction	Total construction
ANNUAL ESTIMATES (\$m)						
1977-78	574	2,270	2,844	5,678	7,948	13,522
1978-79	467	2,187	2,654	5,860	8,047	13,514
1979-80	400	2,092	2,491	5,730	7,822	13,222
1980-81	421	1,852	2,273	6,106	7,958	13,379
1981-82	364	1,612	1,976	6,921	8,535	13,897
1982-83	421	1,480	1,901	7,090	8,570	13,991
1983-84	528	1,908	2,435	6,377	8,284	13,812
1984-85	531	2,025	2,556	6,341	8,366	13,997
1985-86	576	2,254	2,831	6,223	8,477	14,053
1986-87	559	2,641	3,200	(a)5,935	(b)8,576	(b)13,135
1987-88	464	2,543	3,006	5,059	7,601	13,065
1988-89	417	2,207	2,624	4,892	7,099	12,516
1989-90	512	2,348	2,860	5,492	7,840	13,522
PERCENTAGE CHANGE OVER PREVIOUS YEAR						
1978-79	-18.7	-3.7	-6.7	3.2	1.2	-0.1
1979-80	-14.4	-4.4	-6.1	-2.2	-2.8	-3.4
1980-81	5.3	-11.5	-8.8	6.6	1.7	1.9
1981-82	-13.7	-12.9	-13.1	13.3	7.2	6.2
1982-83	15.8	-8.2	-3.8	2.4	0.4	1.1
1983-84	25.3	28.9	28.1	-10.1	-3.3	-2.0
1984-85	0.7	6.1	5.0	-0.6	1.0	1.0
1985-86	8.5	11.3	10.7	-1.9	1.3	1.8
1986-87	-3.1	17.2	13.0	-4.6	1.2	0.9
1987-88	-17.0	-3.7	-6.0	-14.8	-11.4	-11.7
1988-89	-10.1	-13.2	-12.7	-3.3	-6.6	-6.8
1989-90	22.9	6.4	9.0	12.3	10.4	11.1
QUARTERLY ESTIMATES (\$m)						
1989 June qtr	101	587	689	1,355	1,943	2,044
Sept. qtr	126	571	697	1,307	1,878	2,005
Dec. qtr	139	632	771	1,326	1,958	2,097
1990 Mar. qtr	130	514	644	1,296	1,810	1,940
June qtr	117	631	748	1,563	2,194	2,311
Sept. qtr	122	(b)626	(b)748	1,400	(b)2,025	(b)2,147
Dec. qtr	144	685	829	1,433	2,118	2,262
1991 Mar. qtr	98	564	662	1,323	1,886	1,984
PERCENTAGE CHANGE OVER PREVIOUS QUARTER						
1989 June qtr	21.6	22.6	22.5	23.8	23.4	23.3
Sept. qtr	24.5	-2.8	1.2	-3.5	-3.3	-1.9
Dec. qtr	10.4	10.6	10.6	1.4	4.2	4.6
1990 Mar. qtr	-6.8	-18.6	-16.5	-2.3	-7.5	-7.5
June qtr	-9.7	22.8	16.2	20.6	21.2	19.1
Sept. qtr	4.3	(b)-0.9	(b)-0.1	-10.4	(b)-7.7	(b)-7.1
Dec. qtr	17.8	9.6	10.9	2.4	4.6	5.3
1991 Mar. qtr	-31.8	-17.7	-20.2	-7.7	-10.9	-12.3
PERCENTAGE CHANGE OVER SAME QUARTER OF PREVIOUS YEAR (b)						
1989 June qtr	-11.1	-1.4	-3.0	-2.2	-2.0	-2.5
Sept. qtr	-0.9	-3.9	-3.4	10.2	5.5	5.1
Dec. qtr	32.7	15.6	18.3	5.6	8.7	10.0
1990 Mar. qtr	55.7	7.3	14.5	18.4	15.0	17.0
June qtr	15.6	7.5	8.7	15.3	12.9	13.1
Sept. qtr	-3.2	(b)9.5	(b)7.2	7.1	(b)7.8	(b)7.1
Dec. qtr	3.3	8.5	7.5	8.1	8.2	7.9
1991 Mar. qtr	-24.4	9.7	2.8	2.1	4.2	2.3

(a) For explanation of series break, see paragraph 3 of the Explanatory Notes. (b) New cut-offs for non-residential building from September quarter 1990 - see paragraph 6 of the Explanatory Notes.

TABLE 7. IMPLICIT PRICE DEFLATORS, AUSTRALIA <sup>a</sup>

<i>Period</i>	<i>Residential building</i>	<i>Non-residential building</i>	<i>Total building</i>	<i>Engineering construction</i>	<i>Non-residential construction</i>	<i>Total construction</i>
(1984-85 equals 100.0)						
1989 June qtr	151.1	145.4	148.4	133.1	146.0	148.0
Sept. qtr	154.8	148.3	151.6	135.6	150.1	151.9
Dec. qtr	157.6	151.5	154.6	138.8	153.0	154.7
1990 Mar. qtr	158.9	153.4	156.3	141.9	153.9	155.8
June qtr	160.7	154.3	157.5	144.3	154.0	156.3
Sept. qtr	161.6	154.6	158.2	147.4	156.0	158.0
Dec. qtr	162.4	154.7	158.8	149.3	154.8	157.6
1991 Mar. qtr	162.7	154.5	158.9	149.8	153.7	157.0
PERCENTAGE CHANGE OVER PREVIOUS QUARTER						
1989 June qtr	3.6	2.0	2.8	1.6	0.6	1.6
Sept. qtr	2.4	2.0	2.2	1.9	2.8	2.6
Dec. qtr	1.8	2.2	2.0	2.4	1.9	1.8
1990 Mar. qtr	0.8	1.3	1.1	2.2	0.6	0.7
June qtr	1.1	0.6	0.8	1.7	0.1	0.3
Sept. qtr	0.6	0.2	0.4	2.1	-3	1.1
Dec. qtr	0.5	0.1	0.4	1.3	-0.8	-0.3
1991 Mar. qtr	0.2	-0.1	0.1	0.3	-0.7	-0.4
PERCENTAGE CHANGE OVER SAME QUARTER OF PREVIOUS YEAR						
1989 June qtr	18.0	8.5	13.1	5.7	8.3	11.6
Sept. qtr	16.0	8.5	12.1	6.3	7.9	10.8
Dec. qtr	12.9	8.4	10.6	7.8	7.7	9.5
1990 Mar. qtr	9.0	7.6	8.3	8.3	6.0	7.0
June qtr	6.4	6.1	6.1	8.4	5.5	5.6
Sept. qtr	4.4	4.2	4.4	8.7	3.9	4.0
Dec. qtr	3.0	2.1	2.7	7.6	1.2	1.9
1991 Mar. qtr	2.4	0.7	1.7	5.6	-0.1	0.8
PERCENTAGE CHANGE OVER SAME QUARTER OF PREVIOUS YEAR						
1989 June qtr	18.0	8.5	13.1	5.7	8.3	11.6
Sept. qtr	16.0	8.5	12.1	6.3	7.9	10.8
Dec. qtr	12.9	8.4	10.6	7.8	7.7	9.5
1990 Mar. qtr	9.0	7.6	8.3	8.3	6.0	7.0
June qtr	6.4	6.1	6.1	8.4	5.5	5.6
Sept. qtr	4.4	4.2	4.4	8.7	3.9	4.0
Dec. qtr	3.0	2.1	2.7	7.6	1.2	1.9
1991 Mar. qtr	2.4	0.7	1.7	5.6	-0.1	0.8

## EXPLANATORY NOTES

## Introduction

This publication contains constant price estimates of the level of construction activity in Australia. It also contains implicit price deflators derived from these estimates. The estimates provide a measure (in 'real' terms) of residential building, non-residential building, total building, engineering construction, non-residential construction and total construction activity for the private and public sectors.

2. The estimates are compiled from results of the ABS surveys of Building Activity (BACS), Construction Other than Building (COTB), Engineering Construction (ECS) and from government finance data.

3. The engineering construction estimates for quarters back to and including September 1986 were compiled from the ECS which covers both the private and public sectors. For earlier quarters, activity for the private sector has been extrapolated backwards using the results from the COTB which was limited to jobs valued at \$100,000 or more undertaken by private contractors. However, no equivalent extrapolation could be done for work undertaken by the public sector, and it was necessary to use government finance data. Hence there is a break in the continuity of the series.

## Scope and coverage

4. The estimates relate to construction activity which includes construction of new buildings, alterations and additions to existing buildings and engineering construction activity (roads, bridges, railways, earthworks, etc). The estimates measure total activity on construction rather than the output of the Construction industry (i.e. the value of construction activity undertaken by businesses classified to industries other than Construction is included and non-construction activity of businesses in the Construction industry is excluded).

5. The building estimates relate to:

- construction of new residential buildings and all alterations and additions to residential buildings with an approval value of \$10,000 or more; and
- all non-residential building jobs with an approval value of \$50,000 or more.

6. From the September quarter 1990, only non-residential building jobs with an approval value of \$50,000 (previously \$30,000) or more are included. Appendix Table A shows details of non-residential building activity, total building activity, non-residential construction activity and total construction activity based on the old and new cut-off values, in original and seasonally adjusted constant price terms, for the June quarter 1990. For more details on the effect of the new cut-offs on specific classes of non-residential building (in current price terms) please refer to *Building Activity, Australia* (8752.0) for the September quarter 1990.

7. The engineering construction estimates relate to engineering construction work undertaken in Australia.

8. The cost of land is excluded. Repair and maintenance activity is excluded.

## Definitions

9. 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, with provision for regular access by persons.

10. *Residential building* is defined as building predominantly consisting of one or more dwelling units. A dwelling unit is defined as a self-contained suite of rooms, including cooking and bathing facilities, 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, but are included in non-residential building.

11. *Non-residential building* is defined as building other than residential building and includes hotels, shops, factories, offices etc.

12. *Engineering construction* is defined as construction other than building and includes roads, bridges, railways, harbours, water storage and supply, sewerage and drainage, electricity generation, pipelines, telecommunications etc.

13. *Non-residential construction* is the sum of non-residential building and engineering construction.

## Valuation of jobs

14. Value of work done during the period represents the estimated value of building or engineering construction work actually carried out during the quarter on jobs which have commenced.

## Classification

15. *Ownership*. The ownership of construction work is classified as either public sector or private sector according to the sector of the intended owner of the completed work 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

16. Details of methods used in seasonally adjusting original series are available on request.

17. Large fluctuations in series as a result of irregular influences are not removed by seasonal adjustment, and

particular care should be taken in interpreting individual quarter-to-quarter movements.

18. Seasonally adjusted public sector and total engineering construction activity estimates can not yet be compiled from the results of the ECS, because there are insufficient observations to determine the seasonal pattern.

#### Estimates at constant prices

19. The base year of constant price estimates of construction activity in this issue is 1984-85.

20. Constant price estimates measure changes in value after the direct effects of price changes have been eliminated. The deflators used to revalue the current price estimates in this publication are derived from the same price data underlying the deflators compiled for the dwellings and non-dwelling construction components of the National Accounts aggregate 'Private gross fixed capital expenditure'.

21. Estimates at constant prices are subject to a number of approximations and assumptions. Further information on the nature and concepts of constant price estimates is contained in Section 4 of *Australian National Accounts: Concepts, Sources and Methods* (5216.0).

#### Implicit price deflators

22. Implicit price deflators provide an estimate of the price change between the base period of the relevant constant price estimate (currently 1984-85) and any other period, and use the quantity weights of this latter period. An implicit price deflator is obtained by dividing a current price value by its corresponding constant price value. Thus implicit price deflators are derived measures (hence the term 'implicit') and at the level of published aggregates are not normally the direct measure of price changes by which components of current price estimates are converted to estimates at constant prices.

#### Interpretation and analysis

23. Care should be exercised when interpreting quarter-to-quarter movements in the estimates as short term movements do not necessarily indicate a change in trend.

24. Estimates for financial years are simple aggregates of quarterly estimates. All estimates for the current quarter

and preceding quarter are preliminary and subject to revision. However, it may be necessary from time to time to revise estimates for earlier periods.

#### Related publications

25. Users may also wish to refer to the following publications which contain statistics relating to building and construction:

*Australian National Accounts: National Income and Expenditure* (5206.0) — issued quarterly.

*Australian National Accounts: Gross Product, Employment and Hours Worked* (5222.0) — issued quarterly.

*Building Approvals, Australia* (8731.0) — issued monthly.

*Building Activity, Australia: Dwelling Unit Commencements, Preliminary* (8750.0) — issued quarterly.

*Building Activity, Australia* (8752.0) — issued quarterly.

*Engineering Construction Survey, Australia* (8762.0) — issued quarterly.

26. Current publications produced by the ABS are listed in the *Catalogue of Publications and Products, Australia* (1101.0). The ABS also issues, on Tuesday 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.

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

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