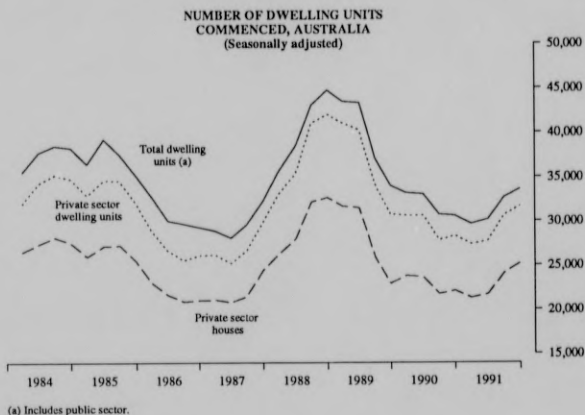


BUILDING ACTIVITY, AUSTRALIA: DWELLING UNIT COMMENCEMENTS, DECEMBER QUARTER 1991, PRELIMINARY

NOTE: Seasonally adjusted estimates in this bulletin have been revised following the annual re-analysis of seasonal factors.

MAIN FEATURES



Total dwelling unit commencements rose by 3.0% (seasonally adjusted) in the December quarter 1991, the third consecutive quarter of growth following the continual downturn in dwelling commencements since December quarter 1988.

In *seasonally adjusted* terms, there were 33,658 dwelling units commenced in the December quarter 1991. This was 9.9% higher than the December quarter 1990 estimate of 30,628, and the highest quarterly commencement figure since September quarter 1989. Private sector house commencements rose by 4.5% to 25,218 in the December quarter 1991.

In *original* terms, the total number of dwelling units commenced in the December quarter 1991, was 35,090, an increase of 3.9% over the September quarter 1991.

Dwelling unit commencements rose for the third consecutive quarter in New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland. Commencements fell significantly in the December quarter 1991 in Western Australia and the Australian Capital Territory, however this was from a high figure recorded in the September quarter 1991.

Public sector total dwelling unit commencements for the December quarter 1991 rose marginally (by 0.5%) from the September quarter 1991, but were 11.3% lower than the December quarter 1990. An increase of 44.8% in public sector house commencements in the December quarter 1991 (mainly in New South Wales and Western Australia) offset a 20.9% fall in the number of public sector other residential dwellings commenced in the same period.

INQUIRIES

- for further information about these statistics in this publication and the availability of related unpublished statistics contact Paul Seville on Canberra (06) 252 6067 or any ABS State office.
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TABLE 1. NUMBER OF DWELLING UNITS COMMENCED IN NEW RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS, ORIGINAL AND SEASONALLY ADJUSTED (a), AUSTRALIA

Period	Houses		Other residential buildings	Total	
	Original	Seasonally adjusted		Original	Seasonally adjusted
PRIVATE SECTOR					
		t			t
1988-89	128,231	..	36,342	164,573	..
1989-90	96,390	..	29,935	126,325	..
1990-91	87,038	..	24,448	111,486	..
1990—					
Sept. qtr	22,392	21,776	6,266	28,658	27,861
Dec. qtr	22,849	22,116	6,478	29,327	28,337
1991—					
Mar. qtr	19,974	21,328	5,497	25,471	27,401
June qtr	21,823	21,760	6,207	28,030	27,800
Sept. qtr	24,794	24,125	6,701	31,495	30,663
Dec. qtr p	26,022	25,218	6,769	32,791	31,711
PUBLIC SECTOR					
1988-89	4,148	..	6,242	10,390	..
1989-90	4,263	..	7,114	11,377	..
1990-91	3,415	..	6,445	9,860	..
1990—					
Sept. qtr	952	n.a.	2,230	3,182	n.a.
Dec. qtr	731	n.a.	1,860	2,591	n.a.
1991—					
Mar. qtr	735	n.a.	1,187	1,922	n.a.
June qtr	997	n.a.	1,168	2,165	n.a.
Sept. qtr	744	n.a.	1,544	2,288	n.a.
Dec. qtr p	1,077	n.a.	1,222	2,299	n.a.
TOTAL					
		t			t
1988-89	132,379	..	42,584	174,963	..
1989-90	100,653	..	37,049	137,702	..
1990-91	90,453	..	30,893	121,346	..
1990—					
Sept. qtr	23,344	22,671	8,496	31,840	30,747
Dec. qtr	23,580	22,807	8,338	31,918	30,628
1991—					
Mar. qtr	20,709	22,161	6,684	27,393	29,671
June qtr	22,820	22,758	7,375	30,195	30,183
Sept. qtr	25,538	24,817	8,245	33,783	32,683
Dec. qtr p	27,099	26,232	7,991	35,090	33,658

(a) Series have been revised due to annual re-analysis of seasonal adjustment factors.

TABLE 2. NUMBER OF DWELLING UNITS COMMENCED
IN NEW RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS

Period	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Australia
HOUSES									
1988-89	34,399	35,179	30,370	7,581	19,676	2,657	605	1,914	132,379
1989-90	26,233	27,572	23,761	7,174	11,300	2,565	575	1,473	100,653
1990-91	23,185	21,094	23,566	8,177	10,319	2,401	596	1,115	90,453
1990—									
Sept. qtr	5,632	6,035	5,857	2,156	2,766	552	109	237	23,344
Dec. qtr	6,224	5,471	5,985	2,169	2,600	643	221	267	23,580
1991—									
Mar. qtr	5,814	4,699	4,993	1,942	2,280	575	136	269	20,709
June qtr	5,515	4,889	6,731	1,909	2,672	631	131	342	22,820
Sept. qtr	6,786	5,360	6,927	2,090	3,125	626	137	486	25,538
Dec. qtr p	7,152	5,860	7,974	2,031	2,806	728	181	368	27,099
OTHER RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS									
1988-89	13,827	3,456	13,624	2,655	6,942	1,010	333	737	42,584
1989-90	13,482	2,444	9,673	3,762	5,644	828	288	928	37,049
1990-91	12,307	2,486	8,203	2,644	3,059	875	258	1,061	30,893
1990—									
Sept. qtr	3,069	637	2,495	714	853	219	49	460	8,496
Dec. qtr	3,468	854	1,838	741	916	214	56	251	8,338
1991—									
Mar. qtr	2,613	482	2,032	577	598	171	51	160	6,684
June qtr	3,157	513	1,838	612	692	271	102	190	7,375
Sept. qtr	3,198	725	2,063	646	941	218	61	393	8,245
Dec. qtr p	3,138	670	2,158	687	792	200	115	231	7,991
TOTAL									
1988-89	48,226	38,635	43,994	10,236	26,618	3,667	938	2,651	174,963
1989-90	39,715	30,016	33,434	10,936	16,944	3,393	863	2,401	137,702
1990-91	35,492	23,580	31,769	10,821	13,378	3,276	854	2,176	121,346
1990—									
Sept. qtr	8,701	6,672	8,352	2,870	3,619	771	158	697	31,840
Dec. qtr	9,692	6,325	7,823	2,910	3,516	857	277	518	31,918
1991—									
Mar. qtr	8,427	5,181	7,025	2,519	2,878	746	187	429	27,393
June qtr	8,672	5,402	8,569	2,521	3,364	902	233	532	30,195
Sept. qtr	9,984	6,085	8,990	2,736	4,066	844	198	879	33,783
Dec. qtr p	10,290	6,530	10,132	2,718	3,598	928	296	599	35,090

TABLE 3. NUMBER OF PRIVATE SECTOR DWELLING UNITS COMMENCED
IN NEW RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS

<i>Period</i>	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic.</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>Tas.</i>	<i>NT</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>Australia</i>
HOUSES									
1988-89	33,797	34,268	29,315	7,133	18,978	2,459	471	1,812	128,231
1989-90	25,667	26,508	22,426	6,734	10,776	2,442	462	1,375	96,390
1990-91	22,632	20,032	22,654	7,863	9,971	2,310	465	1,111	87,038
1990—									
Sept. qtr	5,431	5,704	5,731	2,055	2,629	532	73	237	22,392
Dec. qtr	6,078	5,223	5,841	2,093	2,573	619	155	267	22,849
1991—									
Mar. qtr	5,741	4,496	4,678	1,877	2,225	559	128	269	19,974
June qtr	5,382	4,609	6,404	1,837	2,543	600	110	338	21,823
Sept. qtr	6,583	5,234	6,701	2,016	3,073	589	111	486	24,794
Dec. qtr p	6,724	5,709	7,716	1,955	2,689	697	165	368	26,022
OTHER RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS									
1988-89	11,839	2,770	12,037	1,690	6,216	840	244	706	36,342
1989-90	11,167	1,809	7,892	2,678	4,595	728	183	883	29,935
1990-91	9,939	1,883	6,496	1,810	2,453	771	189	907	24,448
1990—									
Sept. qtr	2,246	405	2,016	419	586	181	20	393	6,266
Dec. qtr	2,822	659	1,319	524	696	180	56	222	6,478
1991—									
Mar. qtr	2,178	377	1,618	417	576	160	47	124	5,497
June qtr	2,693	442	1,543	450	595	250	66	168	6,207
Sept. qtr	2,716	444	1,822	434	679	184	52	370	6,701
Dec. qtr p	2,699	439	2,023	421	687	190	104	206	6,769
TOTAL									
1988-89	45,636	37,038	41,352	8,823	25,194	3,299	715	2,518	164,573
1989-90	36,834	28,317	30,318	9,412	15,371	3,170	645	2,258	126,325
1990-91	32,571	21,915	29,150	9,673	12,424	3,081	654	2,018	111,486
1990—									
Sept. qtr	7,677	6,109	7,747	2,474	3,215	713	93	630	28,658
Dec. qtr	8,900	5,882	7,160	2,617	3,269	799	211	489	29,327
1991—									
Mar. qtr	7,919	4,873	6,296	2,294	2,801	719	175	393	25,471
June qtr	8,075	5,051	7,947	2,287	3,138	850	176	506	28,030
Sept. qtr	9,299	5,678	8,523	2,450	3,752	773	163	856	31,495
Dec. qtr p	9,423	6,148	9,739	2,376	3,376	887	269	574	32,791

TABLE 4. NUMBER OF PUBLIC SECTOR DWELLING UNITS COMMENCED
IN NEW RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS

<i>Period</i>	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic.</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>Tas.</i>	<i>NT</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>Australia</i>
HOUSES									
1988-89	602	911	1,055	448	698	198	134	102	4,148
1989-90	566	1,064	1,335	440	524	123	113	98	4,263
1990-91	553	1,062	912	314	348	91	131	4	3,415
1990—									
Sept. qtr	201	331	126	101	137	20	36	—	952
Dec. qtr	146	248	144	76	27	24	66	—	731
1991—									
Mar. qtr	73	203	315	65	55	16	8	—	735
June qtr	133	280	327	72	129	31	21	4	997
Sept. qtr	203	126	226	74	52	37	26	—	744
Dec. qtr p	428	151	258	76	117	31	16	—	1,077
OTHER RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS									
1988-89	1,988	686	1,587	965	726	170	89	31	6,242
1989-90	2,315	635	1,781	1,084	1,049	100	105	45	7,114
1990-91	2,368	603	1,707	834	606	104	69	154	6,445
1990—									
Sept. qtr	823	232	479	295	267	38	29	67	2,230
Dec. qtr	646	195	519	217	220	34	—	29	1,860
1991—									
Mar. qtr	435	105	414	160	22	11	4	36	1,187
June qtr	464	71	295	162	97	21	36	22	1,168
Sept. qtr	482	281	241	212	262	34	9	23	1,544
Dec. qtr p	439	231	135	266	105	10	11	25	1,222
TOTAL									
1988-89	2,590	1,597	2,642	1,413	1,424	368	223	133	10,390
1989-90	2,881	1,699	3,116	1,524	1,573	223	218	143	11,377
1990-91	2,921	1,665	2,619	1,148	954	195	200	158	9,860
1990—									
Sept. qtr	1,024	563	605	396	404	58	65	67	3,182
Dec. qtr	792	443	663	293	247	58	66	29	2,591
1991—									
Mar. qtr	508	308	729	225	77	27	12	36	1,922
June qtr	597	351	622	234	226	52	57	26	2,165
Sept. qtr	675	407	467	286	314	71	35	23	2,288
Dec. qtr p	867	382	393	342	222	41	27	25	2,299

TABLE 5. NUMBER OF DWELLING UNITS COMMENCED, DECEMBER QUARTER 1991
RELATIVE STANDARD ERRORS (PER CENT)

<i>State and Territory</i>	<i>Private sector</i>		<i>Total</i>	
	<i>Houses</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Houses</i>	<i>Total</i>
NSW	3.5	2.5	3.3	2.3
Vic.	3.1	2.9	3.0	2.7
Qld	2.0	1.6	2.0	1.6
SA	3.0	2.4	2.9	2.1
WA	3.8	3.0	3.6	2.8
Tas.	2.5	2.0	2.4	1.9
NT	3.4	2.2	3.1	2.0
ACT	1.8	1.2	1.8	1.1
Australia	1.4	1.1	1.3	1.0

EXPLANATORY NOTES

Introduction

This publication contains preliminary estimates of the number of dwelling units commenced during the December quarter 1991. More comprehensive results from the quarterly survey will be published in ABS publication 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 the December quarter 1991 are shown in Table 5. More details regarding sampling variability for the survey are shown in publication 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).

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 1. In the seasonally adjusted series, account has been taken of normal seasonal factors and the effect of movement in the date of Easter which may, in successive years, affect figures for different quarters. In this publication the seasonally adjusted series have been revised. The revision is the result of the annual reanalysis. Details regarding the methods used in seasonally adjusting the series 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 (8752.0) — issued quarterly

Construction Activity at Constant Prices Australia (8782.0) — issued quarterly

Engineering Construction Activity, Australia (8762.0) — issued quarterly

13. Current publications produced by the ABS are listed in the *Catalogue of Publications and Products, 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
- r figures or series revised since previous issue
- . . not applicable
- n.a. not available

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

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