



MEDIA RELEASE

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TRADE AVAILABILITY IMPROVES BUT SHORTAGES REMAIN

The availability of home building trades improved modestly at the end of last year, while at the same time trade prices pushed higher.

Figures released today from the HIA-Austral Bricks Trades Report for the December 2006 quarter show that home building trades remain in short supply despite the modest improvement in availability.

Australia's peak building industry body, HIA, said that across Australia, the price of thirteen key home building trades rose by 1.2 per cent over the December quarter to be up by 3.5 per cent over the year.

HIA's Chief Economist, Mr Harley Dale said that the East-West divide in housing conditions remained clear with Perth experiencing the sharpest jump in trade prices over the year and New South Wales being the only region where building trades are no longer in short supply.

"The price pressure in the west is not evident nationally. In aggregate trade prices are running close to the rate of general inflation and in most regions of Australia trade prices are actually sitting below that general rate," Mr Dale said.

On a state by state basis, quarterly trade prices increased by 3.4 per cent in Brisbane, 2.8 per cent in Perth, 2.5 per cent in Regional Queensland, 1.8 per cent in Regional Victoria, 1.1 per cent in Sydney, 0.8 per cent in Adelaide, 0.2 per cent in Regional NSW, and 0.1 per cent in Melbourne. Prices fell by 3.9 per cent in Regional South Australia and 3.3 per cent in Regional Western Australia.

On an individual trade basis, the largest increases in prices over the quarter were in painting, up 5.7 per cent, plastering and landscaping, both up 2.5 per cent, and bricklaying, up 2.4 per cent.

HIA Trade Contractor Price Index - by Region

(Sep 02 All Trades, All Regions = 100)

	Sep-02	Jun-03	Sep-03	Jun-04	Sep-04	Dec-04	Mar-05	Jun-05	Sep-05	Dec-05	Mar-06	Jun-06	Sep-06	Dec-06	Qtly Change	Annual Change
Sydney	110.8	115.7	122.1	126.8	120.0	128.3	128.1	127.8	125.5	124.0	123.0	125.5	125.7	127.1	1.1%	2.5%
Regional NSW	90.4	95.2	102.7	109.6	121.8	112.8	112.8	110.8	116.1	111.6	114.5	109.1	112.1	112.3	0.2%	0.6%
Melbourne	103.5	99.7	115.3	113.6	115.8	113.9	119.6	117.5	116.3	117.5	112.9	112.9	117.9	118.1	0.1%	0.5%
Regional Vic	95.1	112.7	92.7	119.3	102.4	99.3	94.7	99.3	104.5	101.2	95.5	99.9	102.7	104.6	1.8%	3.4%
Brisbane	96.0	100.3	109.4	115.3	129.4	127.1	125.9	120.0	121.6	121.7	120.3	123.3	119.6	123.7	3.4%	1.7%
Regional QLD	97.5	97.9	106.6	111.5	111.1	110.4	114.6	118.9	114.9	118.5	118.8	112.9	118.5	121.5	2.5%	2.5%
Adelaide	94.7	112.2	106.9	123.5	102.9	115.5	108.1	135.6	129.0	125.3	115.1	114.4	111.2	112.2	0.8%	-10.5%
Regional SA	88.5	96.5	97.6	106.2	110.1	106.1	105.4	108.5	113.1	111.6	103.9	112.3	114.1	109.7	-3.9%	-1.8%
Perth	94.5	99.9	103.5	111.9	111.6	118.8	117.8	118.5	120.8	119.3	120.3	124.5	129.4	133.0	2.8%	11.5%
Regional WA	94.0	99.9	99.9	107.5	119.4	136.4	139.4	133.3	136.4	134.0	135.2	138.9	142.1	137.4	-3.3%	2.6%
All of Australia	100.0	102.5	108.3	115.3	117.2	118.8	118.1	119.0	120.2	119.9	120.5	120.4	122.6	124.1	1.2%	3.5%

HIA Trade Contractor Price Index - by Trade

(Sep 02 All Trades, All Regions = 100)

	Sep-02	Jun-03	Sep-03	Jun-04	Sep-04	Dec-04	Mar-05	Jun-05	Sep-05	Dec-05	Mar-06	Jun-06	Sep-06	Dec-06	Qtly Change	Annual Change
Bricklaying	89.6	78.2	101.8	87.2	96.8	102.3	105.4	106.9	109.6	110.4	109.7	105.5	110.7	113.3	2.4%	2.7%
Carpentry	80.0	86.5	90.1	97.3	94.7	104.8	105.2	102.2	105.8	104.5	112.3	112.8	112.0	110.7	-1.1%	5.9%
Ceramic Tiling	105.8	98.2	124.0	118.3	112.9	111.5	109.4	108.4	113.2	116.1	112.9	120.5	128.2	130.9	2.1%	12.7%
Electrical	118.8	118.0	127.1	130.3	139.5	145.9	142.3	141.6	146.6	148.8	150.9	148.8	150.1	147.9	-1.5%	-0.6%
General Building	89.5	93.0	102.1	110.0	114.1	107.9	110.2	114.2	114.4	116.1	116.3	120.7	120.0	117.8	-1.8%	1.5%
Joinery	114.7	117.0	128.0	129.2	120.1	121.2	118.6	125.4	129.0	127.5	129.0	119.0	120.2	117.5	-2.2%	-7.8%
Landscaping	101.5	103.4	106.2	114.7	119.1	116.3	111.9	115.5	110.4	111.4	114.6	121.3	110.0	112.7	2.5%	1.2%
Other Trades	116.2	136.7	128.0	139.5	141.1	129.3	129.1	123.8	122.0	124.0	122.1	125.7	126.9	124.6	-1.8%	0.5%
Painting	87.0	86.7	94.7	94.9	97.5	101.8	95.3	101.7	94.7	97.3	105.7	100.5	109.2	115.4	5.7%	18.6%
Plastering	77.5	102.3	97.7	107.3	104.6	109.6	107.7	99.2	102.3	104.2	108.3	103.4	111.6	114.4	2.5%	9.8%
Plumbing	115.3	118.9	127.2	132.3	143.0	144.0	151.3	155.3	147.3	142.6	139.9	146.4	138.1	141.1	2.2%	-1.1%
Roofing	104.4	121.8	113.9	123.7	113.2	124.2	121.6	135.5	123.8	119.1	118.4	122.1	133.3	134.5	0.9%	12.9%
Site Preparation	110.7	97.3	126.5	107.7	115.8	123.4	121.6	124.0	117.7	114.1	119.7	124.8	123.4	125.7	1.8%	10.1%
All trades	100.0	102.5	108.3	115.3	117.2	118.8	118.1	118.8	120.2	119.9	120.5	120.4	122.6	124.1	1.2%	3.5%

Note to Editors

The HIA-Austral Bricks Trades Report is a quarterly measure of trade prices and availability on a capital city and rest of state basis for 13 different trade categories in the 5 largest states. The data is sourced each quarter from a sample of HIA builder and contractor members. The price series is the current charge out rate minus GST and materials. The data is weighted and expressed in terms of an index (with base of 100 being the weighted average price for all trades in all regions in September 2002). The trade availability measure is derived from a question asking members about the availability of their particular trade in their particular region. There are five possible responses ranging from critical short supply to massive oversupply. A net balance method is used to derive the single measure. For a full copy of the HIA-Austral Bricks Trades Report (media only), please contact Kirsten Lewis on (02) 6245 1393

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