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## Skilled Trade Shortages Re-Emerge

The latest Housing Industry Association-Austral Bricks Trades Report shows that a surplus availability of tradespeople in the residential sector was a one quarter wonder, reversing in the September 2009 quarter.

The HIA, Australia's largest building industry organisation, said that at the very start of a modest home building recovery the availability of tradespeople had already slipped back into shortage.

HIA's Chief Economist, Dr Harley Dale said that trade availability deteriorated in the September 2009 quarter to -0.07, from +0.10 in June, meaning tradespeople were defined as being in moderate under supply.

"At the same time trade rates were effectively flat, a good situation for renovators and home buyers alike, especially with interest rates back on the rise," Harley Dale said.

The HIA-Austral Bricks Trades Price Index inched up by 0.5 per cent in the September 2009 quarter to be 3.1 per cent lower than the comparable period last year.

"With little price pressure, and trade availability still considerably better than it was up until late last year, it is a good time to engage in renovating an existing property or building a new home.

"The pressing concern is that this situation won't last and labour shortages will re-emerge by mid 2010 as a major constraint on the ability of the housing industry to grow both in terms of new home building and renovation activity.

"It is vital for all levels of government to keep the training of apprentices and trainees as a priority, encouraging young people to not only start a trade but to complete the training.

"Failure to constantly address the structural shortage of skilled labour will inhibit the recovery in the housing industry, denting economic growth and affordability along the way," said Harley Dale.

### Further Information:

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For a full copy of the HIA-Austral Bricks Trades Report (media only), please contact Kirsten Lewis on (02) 6245 1393 or [k.lewis@hia.com.au](mailto:k.lewis@hia.com.au)



media release

	Mar-07	Jun-07	Sep-07	Dec-07	Mar-08	Jun-08	Sep-08	Dec-08	Mar-09	Jun-09	Sep-09	Quarterly Movement in Availability
<b>Bricklaying</b>	0.00	-0.48	-0.49	-0.63	-0.27	-0.17	-0.13	0.00	-0.12	-0.06	-0.10	↓
<b>Carpentry</b>	-0.30	-0.35	-0.50	-0.55	-0.46	-0.37	-0.29	0.11	0.16	0.08	0.04	↓
<b>Ceramic Tiling</b>	-0.36	-0.32	-0.37	-0.61	-0.43	-0.40	-0.33	0.00	-0.08	-0.21	-0.25	↓
<b>Electrical</b>	-0.70	-0.56	-0.57	-1.07	-0.25	-0.17	-0.30	-0.83	-0.51	-0.14	-0.15	↓
<b>General Building</b>	-0.54	-0.44	-0.49	-0.60	-0.44	-0.45	-0.17	0.06	0.13	0.03	-0.06	↓
<b>Joinery</b>	-0.32	-0.34	-0.40	-0.68	-0.44	-0.27	-0.27	-0.11	0.12	0.38	0.19	↓
<b>Landscaping</b>	0.00	-0.47	-0.49	-0.33	-0.50	-0.25	-0.10	0.09	0.18	0.11	-0.14	↓
<b>Other Trades</b>	-0.20	-0.32	-0.41	-0.34	-0.44	-0.24	-0.25	-0.36	-0.05	0.04	-0.04	↓
<b>Painting</b>	-0.47	-0.66	-0.40	-0.67	-0.62	-0.50	-0.36	-0.60	-0.08	0.18	0.00	↓
<b>Plastering</b>	-0.29	-0.28	-0.50	-0.77	-0.56	-0.44	-0.39	-0.18	0.13	0.22	0.14	↓
<b>Plumbing</b>	-0.80	-0.85	-0.80	-0.76	-0.50	-0.26	-0.14	-0.50	-0.36	0.01	-0.25	↓
<b>Roofing</b>	-0.33	-0.76	-0.79	-0.96	-1.00	-0.40	-0.76	-0.31	-0.35	0.01	-0.14	↓
<b>Site Preparation</b>	-0.75	-0.84	-0.80	-0.50	-0.57	-0.57	-0.25	0.00	-0.09	0.13	0.08	↓
<b>All trades</b>	-0.41	-0.43	-0.46	-0.51	-0.46	-0.40	-0.29	-0.06	-0.05	0.10	-0.07	↓

**Note to Editors**

1. 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.
2. 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 a base of 100 being the weighted average price for all trades in all regions in September 2002).
3. The trade availability measure is derived from a question asking members about the availability of their 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.
4. For a full copy of the HIA-Austral Bricks Trades Report (media only), please contact Kirsten Lewis on (02) 6245 1393