



Building newsflash number 485

Provision of building approval data to local government

Purpose

To remind private building certifiers of the importance of providing building development application details to local government for archiving.

Background

If a private certifier approves a building development application, section 86 of the *Building Act 1975* requires the certifier to give the relevant local government a copy of certain documents within five business days of the approval. These documents include the application, the approval documents for the application and the approved form.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) collects and publishes data monthly on the number, type and value of building approvals at a range of geographical levels for the whole of Australia. The value of building approvals, as measured by dwelling investment, is a key indicator of economic activity at the state, regional and local government levels. This indicator is used frequently and extensively by policy makers and analysts as one measure in assessing the economic health of an area.

Building approvals are also used extensively by many organisations in planning for the provision of infrastructure and services as it is a leading indicator of future population growth in an area.

Issues

ABS advises that it frequently needs to revise building approvals data for Queensland. Building certifiers must lodge the required documents to the relevant local government in a timely manner and accurate records must be maintained by local governments so that the ABS data for Queensland is up to date and accurate.

The ABS uses building approvals, lagged six months, as a key input to the demographic model that calculates the annual estimated resident population figures for local government areas. It is important that population estimates are as accurate as possible to assist in the equitable allocation of grants to local government. It is therefore vital that private building certifiers supply timely, accurate and complete building approval data to local governments and that local governments correctly record this data for the ABS reports.

Contact for further information

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