

**Media Release
For Immediate Release**
12 April 2018

Housing finance numbers continue to fall

The February 2018 housing finance figures released today by the Australian Bureau of Statistics show the number of loans for housing continues to decline, according to the Real Estate Institute of Australia (REIA).

“Overall the figures for February 2018 show, in trend terms that the number of owner-occupied finance commitments decreased by 0.6 per cent – the fifth consecutive month of decreases,” REIA President Malcolm Gunning said.

“If refinancing is excluded, in trend terms, the number of owner-occupied finance commitments decreased by 1.0 per cent –the sixth consecutive month of decreases.”

Mr Gunning said in trend terms decreases were recorded in all states and territories except Tasmania, where lending increased by 0.2 per cent and the Northern Territory where it remained flat. The largest decrease of 1.4 per cent was in Western Australia.

“The value of investment housing commitments decreased by 0.2 per cent in February in trend terms following falls in the previous thirteen months.

“In trend terms, the number of established dwellings purchase commitments decreased by 0.6 percent while the purchase of new dwellings decreased by 1.0 per cent and new dwelling construction fell by 0.1 per cent.

Mr Gunning said the proportion of first home buyers, as part of the total owner-occupied housing finance commitments, decreased marginally to 17.9 per cent in February compared to 18.0 per cent in the previous month.

“The number of loans to first home buyers increased by 4.2 per cent compared to January.

“The continued decline in housing finance reflects current market conditions with first home buyers being more active in the market in the last six months than in the previous five years,” concluded Mr Gunning.

The Real Estate Institute of Australia (REIA) is the national professional association for real estate agents in Australia.

For further information or to speak with REIA President Malcolm Gunning please contact Helen Hull via media@reia.com.au or 0419 642 961.