



Illawarra Regional Information Service

Wednesday, 19th May 2010

Ph: 02 4285 4446
Fax: 02 4285 4448

Media Release

Local businesses advertising more jobs

The volume of job advertisements published in the Saturday edition of the Illawarra Mercury recorded a gain of 8.8% for the December 2009 quarter. The December edition of the *IRIS Profile Illawarra* reported that in the three months to December there was a surge of 17.0% in the number of full time positions advertised, totaling 1,425. This offset the 12.5% fall in the number of part time positions to 315 advertisements.

The *IRIS Profile Illawarra* also revealed that during the December quarter employment in the Illawarra fell 1.8%, which led to an overall decline of 5.4% for the year to December 2009 to 179,000 persons. This represents a reduction of 10,100 jobs when compared with the year to December 2008. There was an average of 8,533 people receiving unemployment benefits, an increase of 19.3% on the year to December 2008.

Property prices have continued to grow, while the number of property sales eased from the strong September quarter results. In Wollongong Statistical District, the volume of medium density property sales fell 11.8% to 425 over the December quarter, with a median price of \$336,000. The volume of house sales dropped 6.6% to 868 properties, with a median price of \$418,000.

The rental market continued to tighten with lower availability and higher median rental prices. Over the year to December, the average number of rental advertisements in the Illawarra Mercury declined by 31.1% for houses and by 31.3% for units. The median weekly rental price increased 6.1% for houses to \$350 per week, and it increased 12.0% for units to \$280 per week.

Revenue from Illawarra accommodation establishments reported a slight weakening of 0.5% to \$75.0 Million in the year to December 2009. While Shoalhaven and Wingecarribee recorded increases, takings in the Wollongong Statistical District (WSD) decreased by 5.6% to \$41.2 Million. At the same time total tourist expenditure in the WSD declined by 2.7% to \$643.5 Million, equating to a loss of \$18.1 Million.

In the December quarter Port Kembla Harbour reported a 60.1% increase in import tonnage to 3.6 Million tonnes. Meanwhile export levels deteriorated to 4.4 Million tonnes, a fall of 19.1% compared with the September quarter.

Further comment:
Simon Pomfret
Executive Director
simon_pomfret@iris.org.au

Tel: 02 4285 4446

Data enquiries:
Melissa Dabinett
Assistant Research Analyst
melissa_dabinett@iris.org.au

Tel: 02 4285 4446

IRIS Research, Level 1 iC Central, Innovation Campus, Squires Way, North Wollongong NSW 2522
Postal Address: UOW, Northfields Avenue Wollongong NSW 2522
Tel: (02) 4285 4446 Fax: (02) 4285 4448
Email: research@iris.org.au Web Address: www.iris.org.au ABN 16 002 278 793