



Illawarra Regional Information Service

Monday, 2nd August 2010

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Media Release

Consumer sentiment down despite confidence in job availability

Illawarra households displayed growing confidence in the local job market in spite of economic uncertainties, according to the June quarter edition of the *IRIS Consumer Sentiment Survey*.

The *Illawarra Consumer Sentiment Index* dipped by 3 pts in the three months since March, to 87 pts overall. This result is just 1 pt shy of the long term June quarter average of 88 pts. This weakening in consumer confidence appears to have been influenced by the mixed economic signals locally and abroad.

Despite this, the perceived availability of employment in the Illawarra continued its upward trajectory, rising by another 5 pts to sit at 80 pts. This is also 5 pts above the long term June quarter average of 75 pts. However, sentiment towards the national economy diluted further. The *Future Economic Expectations Index* sat at 93 pts, 11 pts lower than the March result.

Meanwhile, confidence regarding the perceived financial position of local households experienced a downturn. The *Current Financial Position Index* stood at 94 pts, which is a 6 pts fall from the March quarter result. Furthermore, a net 10.9% of survey respondents reported that their debt position had worsened over the past three months.

The report also revealed that a net 50.5% of survey respondents indicated that now was a 'bad time' to borrow money. This result is up 19.9% pts from the June 2009 quarter result of net 30.6%.

Additionally, 57.6% of local households believe that the three months to June was a 'bad time' to be building or buying a house, 7.1% pts higher than the March quarter result. The *Dwelling Purchase Index* declined 6 pts to 70 pts, which is 16 pts under the June quarter average.

Further comment:

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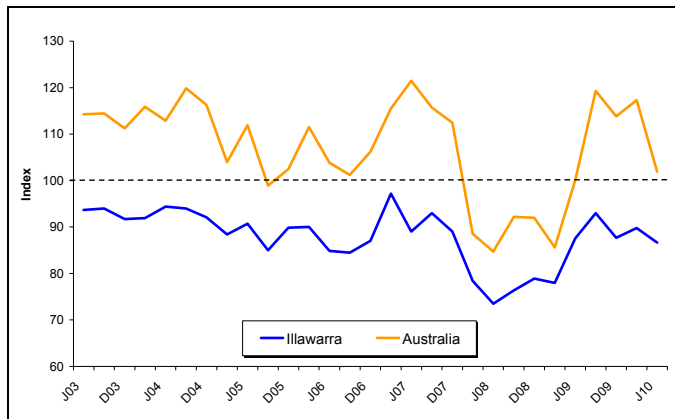
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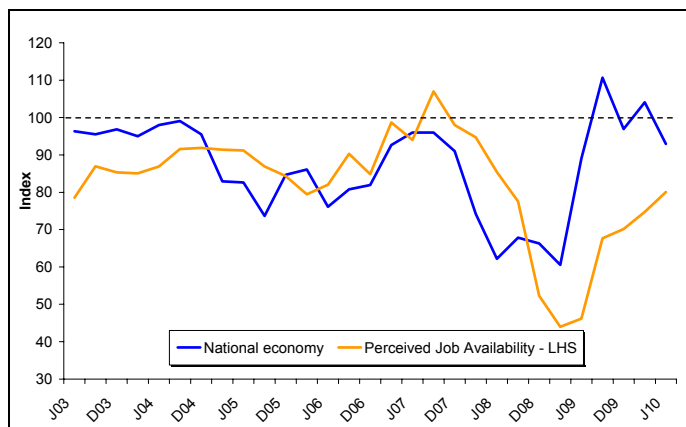
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CONSUMER SENTIMENT INDEX



ECONOMIC CONDITIONS



CONDITIONS FOR BUYING A PROPERTY

