



Illawarra Regional Information Service

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Consumer confidence increases slightly

The latest edition of the *IRIS Research Consumer Sentiment Monitor* has shown that consumer confidence in the Illawarra experienced a minor increase in the three months to December. The *Illawarra Consumer Sentiment Index* rose by 1 pt to 81 pts, 7 pts below the long term December quarter average.

There was a 4 pt improvement in the relative financial position of local households during the three months to December, as the *Current Financial Position Index* strengthened to 100 pts. This result is 1 pt above the average level of this index for a December quarter. At the same time, a net 1.7% of local residents reported having more debt this quarter, a 6.1% pt improvement on the June quarter result.

Looking ahead to the next twelve months, Illawarra households are optimistic about their financial situation. Although the *Future Financial Position Index* lost 1 pt, it remained in positive territory, at 105 pts. This result falls 5 pts below the average level of 110 pts for a December quarter.

A shift in spending from household essentials towards leisure and entertainment goods was apparent during the December quarter. In terms of purchasing, 39.9% of locals enjoyed recreation & travel activities, up 6.4% pts compared to the same period in 2012 and 8.2% pts above the average for a December quarter.

At the same time, 81.1% of respondents bought clothing & footwear, down 1.5% pts on the previous survey result. This is consistent with the December quarter average of 81.7%. Household furniture & equipment was purchased by 38.5% of locals, down 0.5% pts.

Motor vehicles were purchased by 9.1% of respondents, down 2.3% pts in comparison to six months earlier. Despite this negative purchasing result, confidence towards the motor vehicle market increased. The *Vehicle Purchase Index* experienced a 7 pt rise to 94 pts, in line with the long term December quarter average.

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Media Release

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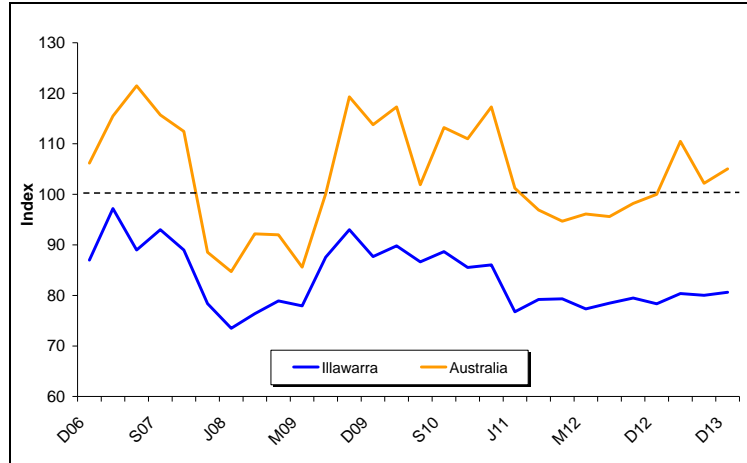
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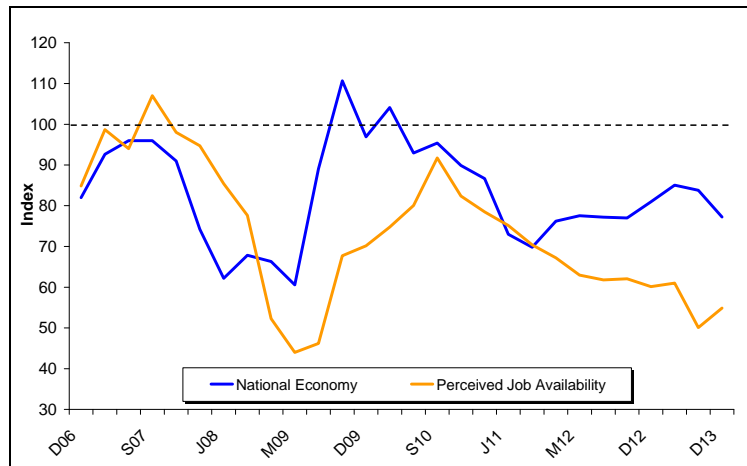
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CONSUMER SENTIMENT INDEX



ECONOMIC CONDITIONS



CONDITIONS FOR BUYING A PROPERTY

