



# Illawarra Regional Information Service

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## Consumer confidence remains low despite improved debt position

The latest edition of the *IRIS Research Consumer Sentiment Monitor* has revealed that consumer confidence in the Illawarra continued to weaken throughout the three months to December. The *Illawarra Consumer Sentiment Index* contracted by 4 pts to 75 pts, 13 pts below the long term December quarter average.

There was a 4 pt drop in the relative financial position of local households during the three months to December, as the *Current Financial Position Index* weakened to 94 pts. This result is 4 pts below the average level of this index for a December quarter. At the same time there was a 3.3% pt improvement in the relative debt position of Illawarra residents.

Looking ahead to the next twelve months, Illawarra households continue to be less optimistic about their financial situation as the *Future Financial Position Index* lost 3 pts to sit at 99 pts. This result falls 11 pts below the average level of 110 pts for a December quarter.

In terms of purchasing, money outlaid by locals on household furniture and equipment declined during the December quarter to 37.4% (down 2.5% pts). Results also revealed that 39.0% of locals enjoyed recreation & travel activities, 6.9% pts higher than the average for a December quarter, while 83.8% of local households purchased clothing and footwear (up 3.1% pts on the June quarter).

Sentiment towards job availability remained flat as the *Perceived Job Availability Index* lost 4 pts to sit at 49 pts, 25 pts weaker than the long term December quarter average.

Motor vehicles were purchased by 12.7% of residents, up 0.6% pts in comparison to the previous survey. With this positive purchasing result, confidence towards the motor vehicle market increased marginally. The *Vehicle Purchase Index* experienced a 1 pt rise to 99 pts, 5 pts above the long term December quarter average.

### Further comment:

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# Media Release

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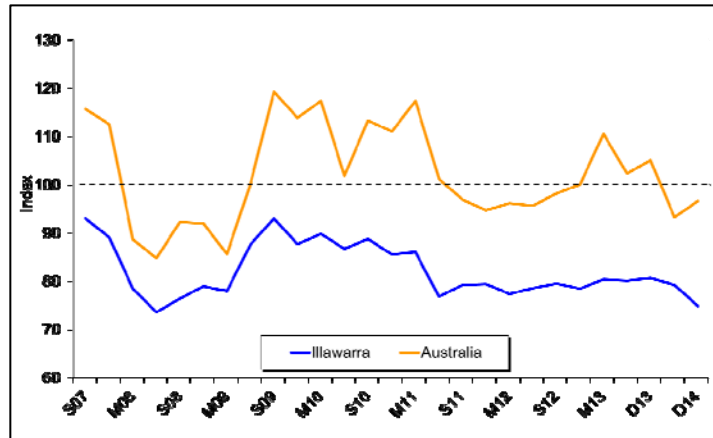
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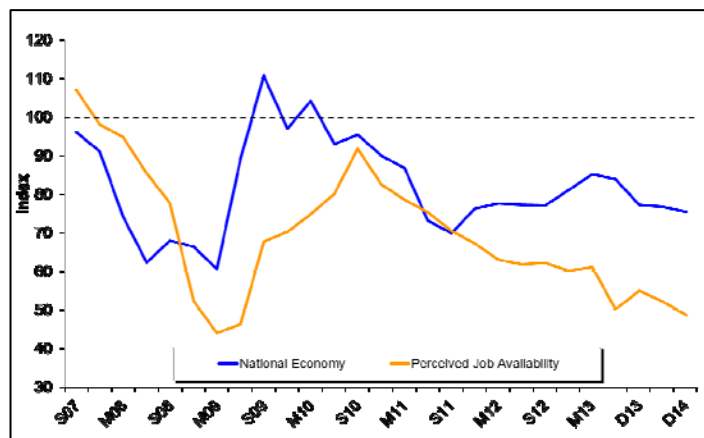
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### CONSUMER SENTIMENT INDEX



### ECONOMIC CONDITIONS



### CONDITIONS FOR BUYING A PROPERTY

