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Illawarra business sector reveals stronger start to 2015

The latest edition of the IRIS Illawarra Business Survey revealed local firms recorded stronger business conditions throughout the region when compared to the previous March quarter. The Trading Conditions, Profitability and Overtime Indices all experienced a positive shift.

Trading activity in the Illawarra region increased in comparison to the March 2014 quarter, with net a 9.8% of local firms experiencing positive trading conditions (up 11.4% pts).

Profitability recorded improved results compared to March 2014, while staying well above the March quarter average. The opening 2015 quarter saw a net 4.3% of firms record decreased profitability, up 6.2% pts on the average March quarter result. This is a 7.2% pt increase on the previous March quarter result.

The March quarter saw employment prospects remain steady for firms in the Illawarra region. The Employment Index remained on par with the previous March quarter result to sit 0.7% pts above the long term March quarter average. Expectation levels dropped with a net 2.6% of local businesses anticipating an increase in their staffing levels over the next three months.

Illawarra firms investing in capital expenditure increased slightly during the three months to March. Overall, 30.3% of local businesses reported purchasing 'at least some' capital, up marginally from 29.7% recorded during the previous quarter.

The share of local businesses offering 'at least some' overtime to employees increased relative to the previous March quarter. A net 28.5% of local businesses reported offering overtime to employees, up 3.4% pts. This result falls 5.3% pts below the long term March quarter average.

Media Release

Further comment:

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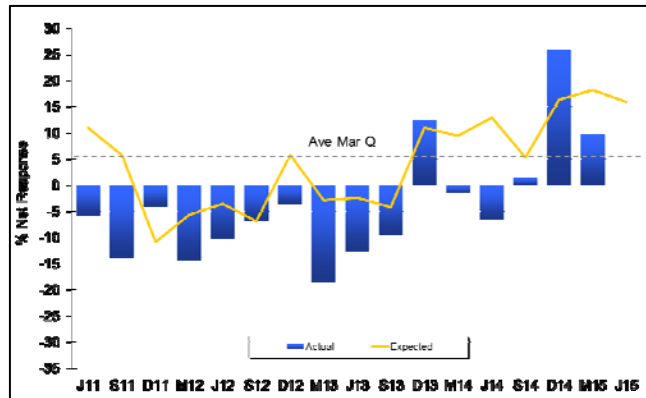
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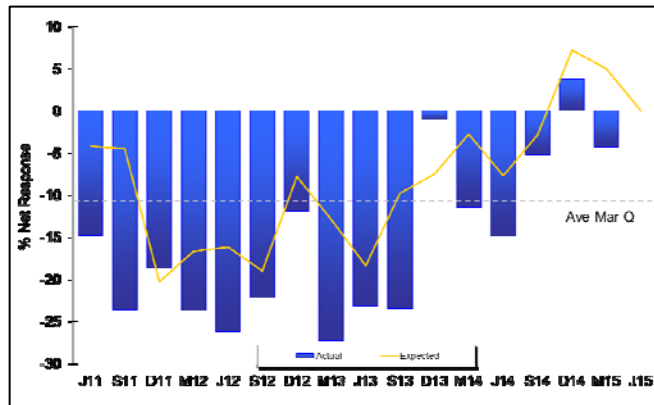
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Note: the graphs below can be provided electronically or in full page hard copy for scanning.

TRADING CONDITIONS



PROFITABILITY



EMPLOYMENT

