



Essential Report

Embargo: 16.30, 9 June 2009



15 – 31 Pelham Street
Carlton South
Victoria 3053
Phone 03 9929 9903
Mobile 0432 828 003

With data supplied by



Executive Summary

This report summarises the results of a weekly omnibus conducted by Essential Research with data provided by Your Source. The omnibus was conducted online from the 2nd to the 8th of June and attracted 1000 responses.

Aside from the standard question we ask each week on Federal voting intention, this week we ask respondents a number of questions related to the global financial crisis – specifically the financial position of the company/business they work for, consumer spending behaviour and the global financial crisis, expectation of the Australian economy to withstand the crisis. This week we ask respondents to rate whether they are concerned that they or a member of their immediate family will lose their job in the next 12 months. This week we also ask a question related to government control and regulation. Given the current debate over the Government’s proposed emissions trading legislation, this week we ask people whether they think the Prime Minister would be justified in calling an early election of the Opposition refuses to pass the legislation.

The methodology used to carry out this research is available in appendix one (page 10).

Please note not all tables total 100% due to rounding.



Federal politics – voting intention

Q. If there was a Federal election held today, to which party would you probably give your first preference?

Q. If you 'don't know' on the above question, which party are you currently leaning to?

* 1911 sample size

2 week average	%	2PP	2PP shift from last week
Liberal	37%		
National	2%		
Total Lib/Nat	39%	44%	-1%
Labor	47%	56%	+1%
Greens	7%		
Family First	2%		
Other/Independent	5%		

NB. The data in the above table is derived from our weekly first preference voting question. Respondents who select 'don't know' as their first preference are not included in the results.

* Sample is the culmination of two week's data.



Business/company performance

Q. Is the business or company you work in doing better or worse than it was 12 months ago? (People not working and those employed in the public service are excluded from the sample)

	%
Total better	21%
Total worse	37%
Doing much better	8%
Doing a little better	13%
About the same as it was 12 months ago	36%
Doing a bit worse	25%
Doing much worse	12%
Don't know	7%

n=643

37% of people surveyed indicated that the business or company they work for is doing a bit worse/much worse than it was 12 months ago and 36% think that it is doing 'about the same as it was 12 months ago'. 21% think that the company or business they work for is doing much better/a little better than it was 12 months ago.

There were no significant differences in terms of whether people were in full-time/part-time employment and the perception they had of how the business or company they work for is performing.

However, there was a relationship between income and perceptions of how their business was performing. 40% of those earning over \$1,600 per week believe their business is doing worse compared to only 26% of those earning \$600-\$1,000 per week.



The global financial crisis and consumer behaviour

Q. Over the next 12 months, do you intend to reduce your spending in any of the following areas because of the global financial crisis? (multiple response)

	%
Luxury items	46%
Entertainment	31%
Buying a new car	27%
Travel and holidays	26%
General household expenditure	25%
Major household appliances	25%
Reduce other spending	23%
Home repairs or renovations	19%
Total intend to reduce spending	56%
Don't intend to reduce spending	33%
Don't know	11%

56% of people intend to reduce their spending over the next 12 months because of the global financial crisis and 33% do not intend to reduce spending.

Over the next 12 months, people are most likely to reduce their spending on luxury items (46%) and entertainment (31%) because of the global financial crisis. 27% of people intend to reduce their spending on new car purchases and 26% on travel and holidays. Reducing spending on household goods (major and general) also rated amongst those surveyed.

Females were more likely than males to reduce spending in most areas, notably entertainment (34% v 27%), luxury items (49% v 43%) and general household expenditure (28% v 23%).

Intention to reduce spending is similar across age and income groups as are the areas in which people will reduce spending.



Global financial crisis Australia's economic situation

Q. Which of the following is closest to your expectations of the global financial crisis and Australia's economic situation?

	%
Australia's economy will start to improve this year	28%
Our economy will start to improve next year	35%
Our economy will not improve for a couple of years	18%
The financial crisis will probably last several years	9%
Don't know	9%

Thinking about the global financial crisis, there is general optimism amongst people surveyed that Australia's economy will improve within the next year or so. Nearly two thirds (63%) of respondents said they expect the economy to start to improve within the next 18 months - 28% think that the Australian economy will start to improve this year and 35% think that Australia's economy will start to improve next year.

Labor voters were more likely than Coalition voters to expect that despite the global financial crisis, Australia's economy will start to improve this year (33% v 28%).

Respondents earning \$1000 - \$1600 per week were more likely than those in other income groups to think that Australia's economy will start to improve within the next year or so (45%).



Concern over job situation

Q. How concerned are you that you or some member of your immediate family will lose their job in the next year or so: very concerned, somewhat concerned, or not at all concerned?

	16 Feb 09	27 Apr 09	8 Jun 09
Total concerned	62%	67%	52%
Very concerned	22%	24%	13%
Somewhat concerned	40%	43%	39%
Not at all concerned	29%	23%	35%
Don't know	4%	5%	6%
No employees in the immediate family	5%	5%	8%

52% of people surveyed are very concerned/somewhat concerned that they or a member of their immediate family will lose their job in the next year or so. This has dropped 15 percentage points since we last asked this question in April. 35% of people are not at all concerned that they or someone in their immediate family will lose their job in the next year or so.

Labor voters were more likely than Coalition voters to be not at all concerned that they or a member of their immediate family will lose their job in the next year or so (40% v 34%).

Part-time workers were more likely than full-time workers to be somewhat/very concerned that they or a member of their immediate family will lose their job in the next year or so (65% v 53%).

Respondents in the 45 – 54 year age group were more likely than those in other age groups to be very concerned that they or someone in their immediate family will lose their job in the next year or so (23%).

Respondents earning \$1000 - \$1600 per week were more likely than those in other income groups to be somewhat/very concerned that they or someone in their immediate family will lose their job in the next year or so (59%). Respondents earning \$1600 per week or more were more likely than those in other income groups to be not at all concerned that they or some member of their immediate family will lose their job in the next year or so (42%).



Control and regulation by government

Q. Has the current economic crisis made you feel that we need more or less control and regulation by democratically elected governments, like Australia, over -

	Total more control	Total less control	A lot more control	A little more control	No change	A little less control	A lot less control	Don't know
The large financial institutions	68%	8%	40%	28%	14%	5%	3%	10%
The large global multi-national companies	66%	9%	39%	27%	15%	6%	3%	10%
The world economy	52%	7%	20%	32%	29%	4%	3%	12%

Generally, the current economic crisis has made people feel that we need more control and regulation by democratically elected governments over large financial institutions (68%), large global multi-national companies (66%) and the world economy (52%).

People's support for more government control and regulation over financial institutions, multi-national companies and the world economy is consistent amongst demographic and voter groups.



Emissions Trading Scheme and an early election

Q. If the Opposition refuses to pass the Government's legislation for the Emissions Trading Scheme to address climate change, do you think Prime Minister Kevin Rudd would be justified in calling an early election?

	28 Apr 09*	This week
Yes	41%	33%
No	29%	37%
Don't know	30%	30%

In April, people were generally more likely to support an early election if the Opposition opposes Government financial measures and other legislation. This week, 37% of people do not think the Prime Minister would be justified in calling an early election if the Opposition refuses to pass the Government's legislation for the Emissions Trading Scheme and 33% think that the Prime Minister would be justified in calling an early election if the Opposition refuses to pass the legislation.

Labor voters were more likely than Coalition voters to think that the Prime Minister would be justified in calling an early election if the Opposition refuses to pass the Government's Emissions Trading Scheme legislation (38% v 28%). 46% of Green voters think that the Prime Minister would be justified in calling an early election if the Opposition refuses to pass the legislation.

Respondents aged 55 – 64 years were more likely than those in other age groups to think that the Prime Minister would not be justified in calling an early election if the Opposition refuses to pass the Government's legislation for the Emissions Trading Scheme (48%).

**Question asked: If the Opposition continues to oppose the Government's financial measures and other legislation, do you think Prime Minister Kevin Rudd would be justified in calling an early election?*



Appendix One – Methodology

The data gathered for this report is gathered from a weekly online omnibus conducted by Your Source. Your Source is an Australian social and market research company specializing in recruitment, field research, data gathering and data analysis. Your Source holds Interviewer Quality Control Australia (IQCA) accreditation, Association Market and Social Research Organisations (AMSRO) membership and World Association of Opinion and Marketing Research Professionals (ESOMAR) membership. Senior Your Source staff hold Australian Market and Social Research Society (AMSRS) membership and are bound by professional codes of behavior.

Essential Research has been utilizing the Your Source online panel to conduct research on a week by week basis since the 19th of November 2007. Each Monday, the team at Essential Media Communications discusses issues that are topical. From there a series of questions are devised to put to the Australian public. Some questions are repeated each week (such as political preference and social perspective), while others are unique to each week and reflect prominent media and social issues that are present at the time.

Your Source has a self managed consumer online panel of 109 500. The majority of panel members have been recruited using off line methodologies, effectively ruling out concerns associated with online self selection. Your Source has validation methods in place that prevent panelist over use and ensure member authenticity. Your Source randomly selects 18+ males and females (with the aim of targeting 50/50 males/females) from its Australia wide panel. An invitation is sent out to approximately 7000 – 8000 of their panel members. The response rate varies each week, but usually delivers 1000 + responses. The Your Source online omnibus is live from the Tuesday night of each week and closed on the following Sunday. Incentives are offered to participants in the form of points (referred to as 'Zoints').

EMC uses the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software to analyse the data. The data is weighted against Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) data.

