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D&B NATIONAL BUSINESS EXPECTATIONS

Employment expectations improve as business confidence grows

Capacity restraints and skilled labour shortages set to return to national agenda

The latest D&B National Business Expectations Survey shows...

Outlook for the June quarter 2010

- Employment expectations are back in positive territory to an index of five, rising five points since the March 2010 quarter
- Capital investment expectations have risen to the highest level in the last seven years – an index of 10
- Expectations for growth in inventories in the December, March and June quarters are at the highest levels in more than four years
- Selling price expectations have risen eight points from the March quarter index of nine – the lowest level ever recorded in the survey
- Profits expectations have risen again – up five points to 15 but sales expectations have made a small drop of three points to an index of 25

Credit market conditions, debt levels and lagging trade payments

- Thirty five percent of firms reported a negative impact from credit market conditions (up four percent), while 17 percent experienced a positive impact (up ten percent)
- Thirty six percent of firms expect to reduce debt in the next three months, while five percent expect to increase debt and 56 percent plan to maintain current levels of debt
- Thirty five percent of executives are being negatively impacted by lagging business to business payment terms, a 14 percent fall since July

Issues expected to influence operations in the June quarter 2010

- Thirty seven percent of executives rank interest rates as the primary influence on their business in June quarter 2010. Meanwhile, 34 percent expect wages growth to be the primary influence and 23 percent believe fuel prices will be their main concern in the quarter ahead

Actual for December quarter 2009

- Capital investment is positive for a third consecutive quarter, increasing to an index of 11 – the highest in more than six years.
- Thirty four percent of firms increased sales as compared to the December quarter 2008, while 28 percent of firms experienced lower sales
- Eleven percent of businesses increased staff and 13 percent reduced employee numbers in December quarter 2009 compared with a year earlier
- The profits index remained in negative territory at an index of - 5. Twenty four percent of firms increased profits while twenty nine percent of firms recorded lower profit numbers
- The selling price index rose by six points to seventeen with twenty six percent of firms raised selling prices, while nine percent decreased prices

Capacity issues and fierce competition for skilled labour looks set to return as a feature of the Australian economy as firms report their strongest expectations in many years for inventory and employment growth. These findings from the latest Dun & Bradstreet *Business Expectations Survey* for the June quarter follow what have already been record low unemployment levels amongst the developed world during the Global Financial Crisis.

In further positive news Australian executives also have increased profit level expectations with the profit index reaching its highest point in five years.

Employment expectations for June quarter 2010 are five percentage points higher than the March quarter of 2010 reaching an index of 5. Eleven percent of firms are planning to increase staff levels and six percent to reduce employee numbers. These figures are now a 31 percent improvement on the June quarter 2009 expected employment index figure of minus twenty six percentage points. This was the lowest record employment in the history of the survey.

Despite reports of recent falls in job advertisement numbers, all sectors now have positive expectations for growth in employment numbers. Durables manufacturers have the highest index of a net seven with 14 percent expecting to increase employment and seven percent expecting to decrease staff numbers.

In further good news Australian firms' outlook for profits expectations has also continued to improve – the index of 15 for June quarter 2010 is the highest level in five years. Twenty seven percent of Australian executives surveyed now anticipate profits will increase in the June quarter and only 12 percent expect a fall. Executives from the retail sector have the highest profits expectations with 30 percent expecting an increase and just 10 percent a decrease.

The expected sales index however fell three points to 25 but retained the strong positive level of the two previous quarters. The sales index is also still up 73 points on the trough of the June quarter 2009. Thirty nine percent of firms expect an increase in sales and 14 percent a decrease in sales in June quarter 2010. The decline of three points in the overall index was due to a reduction of 18 points from the retail sector's expectations index of 35 for the March quarter. March was however the highest retail sales expectations index in more than six years.

Like sales expectations, capital investment expectations moved only slightly from the previous quarter increasing three percentage points. However expectations for growth in capital investment are equal to their highest level in seven years reaching an index of ten, twenty percentage points higher than the June quarter of 2009. Twelve percent of firms surveyed expect to increase capital investment, while just two percent are planning to decrease spending in this area. Wholesalers have experienced the most significant increase in expectations (up 23 percentage points since the June quarter 2009) as the capital investment index returned to positive territory.

Actual capital investment in December quarter 2009 is the highest in more than six years and has now had three positive quarters after five negative quarters from March 2008 to March 2009. Fifteen percent of firms had more capital investment and four percent less capital investment than in the December quarter of 2008.

Inventory expectations for the latest three quarters are at their highest level in more than four years. Fifteen percent of executives expect to increase inventories in the June 2010 quarter, while 12 percent plan to reduce stock levels. The expectations of wholesale executives have reached the highest level in more than four years, with a net eight percent of firms expecting to increase stock levels in the June quarter.

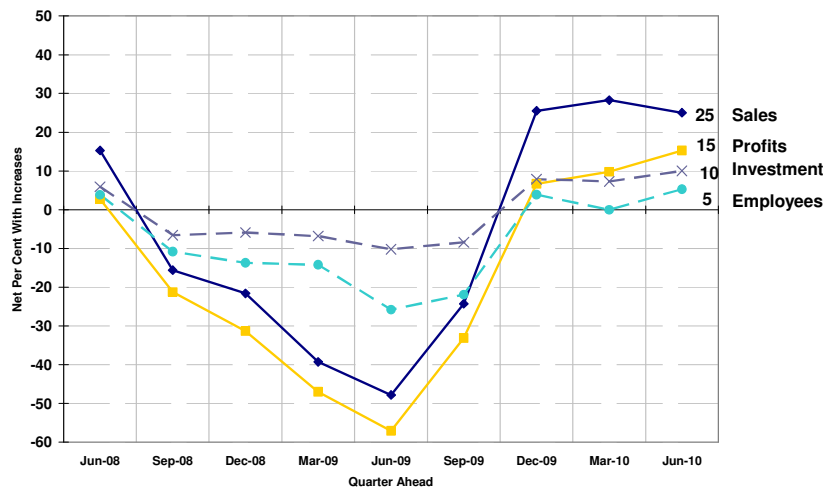


MEDIA RELEASE

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The preliminary index of the net proportion of firms with actual increases in inventory levels is three for the December 2009 quarter, up four points on the previous quarter. The increased contribution of stocks is seen as an important indicator of business confidence and represents a significant improvement since the low actual index of -11 for March quarter 2009. The retail sector has seen the greatest improvement returning to positive territory with an index of 13, up 25 points from a low of -12 in March quarter 2009.

Expectations for selling prices have risen by eight percentage points to an index of 17, the first rise in five quarters. One in five (22 percent) firms expects to raise prices in the June quarter, while five percent expect to lower prices. However, durables manufacturers have further reduced their selling prices expectations by a further 11 points to an index of 1 for June quarter 2010, two points lower than their previous low index of 3 for June quarter 1992.



D&B Expected Sales, Profits, Capital Investment and Employees Indices

According to Dun & Bradstreet's CEO Christine Christian, the expectation of increased intention to employ staff is a sign that Australian firms believe that 2010 will be better than a difficult 2009.

"With unemployment being seen as a major concern throughout 2009 the improved employment expectations across all sectors is welcome news for both those who are in the labour market and for business confidence on the whole," said Ms Christian.

"The rise in confidence of 31 percentage points since the lows of the June quarter of 2009 is one of the biggest improvements in the history of the survey. If the profit and employment expectations of Australian firms are met this could go a long way to restoring Australia to pre Global Financial Crisis levels of business activity. The next challenge will be how Australian firms go about meeting these expectations between now and the June quarter."

Cont...



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MEDIA RELEASE

The detrimental impact of credit market conditions on Australian businesses is continuing. Thirty five percent of firms indicated that credit market conditions are detrimentally impacting operations (an increase of four percent in a month) while seventeen percent report a positive impact (up 10 percent since last month).

Despite a small decrease of five percent in the last month, rising business-to-business payment days are still having a negative impact on one in three (35 percent) firms. Dun & Bradstreet's Trade Payment Analysis of the more than nine million current accounts receivable records contained on the D&B database - reveal that a deterioration in payment terms (2.1 days) in the December 2009 quarter has taken terms up to 53.9 days. This has largely reversed the gains made in the September quarter 2009.

Twenty three percent of executives believe fuel prices will be the primary influence on operations in the quarter ahead. This is a rise of 10 percent since last month. However, 37 percent of firms surveyed rank interest rates as the major influence on their business and 34 percent consider wages growth to be their primary concern.

With the rising improvement in profits expectations, 36 percent of executives plan to reduce their current business debt levels in the next three months, seven percent reduce significantly and 29 per cent moderately. Only five percent expect to increase their business debt and 56 percent plan to maintain current debt levels.

According to Dr Duncan Ironmonger, Dun & Bradstreet's economic consultant, the latest D&B survey indicates a continued strong business performance in 2010.

"Expectations for growth in profits and staff numbers have picked up and are now equal to the highest levels in five years. Businesses are backing up these expectations with intentions to make relatively strong increases in capital investment and inventories," said Dr Ironmonger.

"Last week's Reserve Bank's decision to leave official rates unchanged indicates some concern for the difficult credit conditions that remain for many small businesses. However the decision indicates the Bank is comfortable with the current outlook for inflation.

"Although the latest national accounts do not yet go beyond the September quarter 2009, later data suggest a continuation of growth in the December quarter. In the three months to December employment grew at an annual rate of 3.6 percent. Consequently 2009 is highly likely to show four quarters of positive economic growth in Australia – a strong base for more growth in 2010," Dr Ironmonger said.

The D&B index for expected sales is down three points to 25, with 39 percent of executives expecting an increase in sales and 14 percent expecting a decrease. The profits index is up five points to 15, with 27 percent of executives expecting profits to rise and 12 percent expecting a fall.

Employment expectations are up five points an index of 5, with 11 percent of executives expecting an increase in staff and 6 percent expecting a reduction. Capital investment expectations are up three points to an index of 10, with 12 percent of executives expecting an increase and 2 percent expecting to cut spending. Inventories expectations are down two points to an index of 3. The selling prices index is up 8 points to an index of 17, with 22 percent of firms expecting to raise prices and 5 percent expecting to decrease them.

Media Notes

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About the survey

D&B Australasia conducted the latest Business Expectations Survey in January 2010. Each quarter 1,200 business owners and senior executives representing major industry sectors across Australia are asked if they expect increases, decreases or no changes in their upcoming quarterly Sales, Profits, Employment, Capital Investment, Inventories and Selling Prices. Since its introduction in Australia in 1988, the Survey has proven to be a highly reliable measure of economic performance.

NOTE: The index figures used in the Survey represent the net percentage of Survey respondents expecting higher sales, profits, etc., compared with the same quarter of the previous year. The indices are calculated by subtracting the percentage of respondents expecting decreases from the percentage expecting increases. Copies of these results can be viewed and downloaded from the D&B website at: www.dnb.com.au

Methodology

Each quarter D&B asks a sample of executives in manufacturing, wholesale and retail businesses across Australia if they expect an increase, decrease or no change in their quarter-ahead sales, profits, employees, capital investment, inventories and selling prices compared with the same quarter a year ago.

The executives are also asked for actual changes over the twelve months to the latest completed quarter.

The Australian survey began in March 1988 obtaining some 900 responses in the third month of each quarter. Since the middle of 1999, the survey has been conducted monthly, initially with about 300 responses each month. From September 2000, responses have been obtained from 400 executives each month.

From July 2005, to simplify the interpretation of the survey data, the results have been presented as a sequence of preliminary, interim and final indexes. The 400 responses from the first month of each quarter give preliminary estimates of the quarter-ahead expectations and the quarter behind actual indexes. The 400 responses from the second month of the quarter are combined with those from the first month as interim estimates of the indexes based on 800 responses. The 400 responses from the third month are combined with those from the first two months to give the final expectations and actual indexes based on all 1,200 responses obtained during each quarter.

In this issue, the preliminary indexes for the latest quarters are based on the 400 responses obtained in January 2010.

Charts & Tables

Positive and Negative Component Responses. It is the common practice to present the results of business expectations surveys as indexes showing the net balance of the positive and negative responses. However, this method of aggregating responses loses relevant information about the relative proportions and rates of change of the two (positive and negative) groups.

Accordingly, the detailed charts at the top of pages 5 to 10 in the Dun & Bradstreet National Business Expectations Survey show separately the positive and negative components of each of the various indexes. These charts help provide a better insight into the expectations and performance of Australian business than that shown by movements in the simple aggregation of the positive and negative responses.

The aggregate net balance indexes are shown in the charts at the bottom of pages 6 to 11 and in the tables on pages 12 to 14.

About D&B

D&B is the world's leading provider of business-to-business credit, marketing and purchasing information and receivables management services. D&B manages the world's most valuable commercial database with information on more than 130 million companies.

Information is gathered in 209 countries, in 95 languages or dialects, covering 186 monetary currencies. The database is refreshed more than one million times daily as part of D&B's commitment to provide accurate, comprehensive information for its more than 150,000 customers.

The Australasian operations were bought out by the senior management group in August 2001. It was the first MBO of a wholly owned subsidiary in D&B's history worldwide. Today Lazard Carnegie Wylie owns an approximate 90% stake in DBA and the local management team a 10% stake.

Strategies for future growth include developing DBA's commercial and consumer credit referencing business; expanding its receivables management outsourcing business; maintaining its lead in the development of unique credit and risk scoring products; and developing new products specifically tailored to the Australasian market. DBA currently employs over 500 people in Australia and New Zealand.



Sales Outlook

(Quarterly Net Index) (Down 3 to 25)

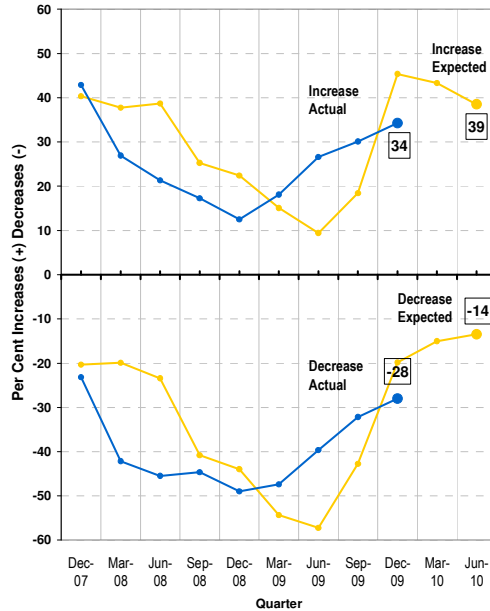
The positive and negative components of the D&B net indexes are shown in the adjacent chart.

The June quarter 2010 sales expectations preliminary index is 25; three points lower than for March quarter 2010. **Despite this small drop, the high positive sales expectations for the two previous quarters are maintained.**

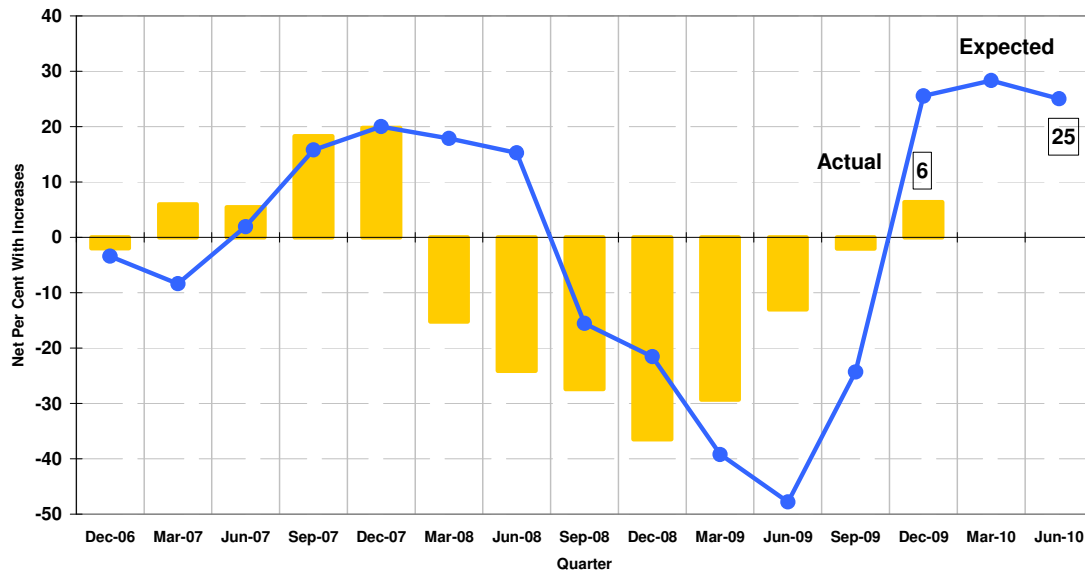
The index is now up 73 points from the trough of June quarter 2009. Thirty nine per cent expect an increase and 14 per cent a decrease in sales compared with June quarter 2009.

The actual sales index for December quarter 2009 is 6; up 8 points on the September quarter. Thirty four per cent of firms had increased sales and 28 per cent had decreased sales compared with December quarter 2008.

Sales: D&B Indexes
Component Responses



Sales: D&B Indexes Dec Qtr 2006 to Jun Qtr 2010





Profits Outlook

(Quarterly Net Index) (Up 5 to 15)

The positive and negative components of the D&B net indexes are shown in the adjacent chart.

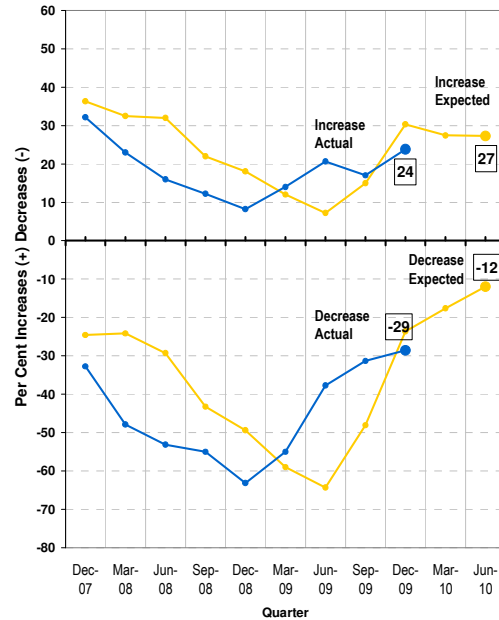
The preliminary index for the net proportion of executives expecting an increase in profits in June quarter 2010 is 15; **five points higher than for March quarter 2010**.

The index is now the highest in five years and 72 points higher than the trough in profits expectations for June quarter 2009.

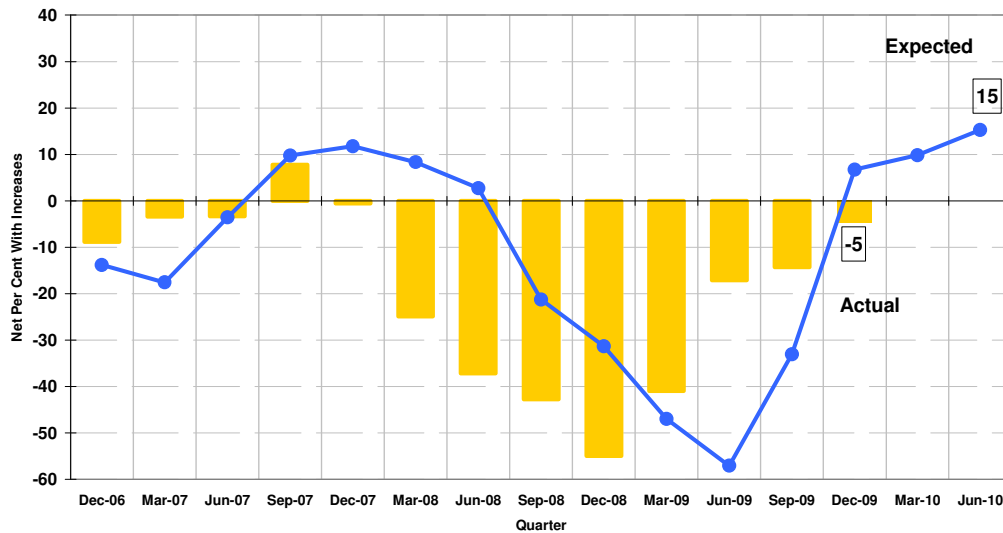
Twenty seven per cent expect an increase and 12 per cent a decrease compared with June quarter 2009.

The actual net profits index for December quarter 2009 is -5; **up nine points from the previous quarter and now 50 points above the low actual index of -55 for December quarter 2008.** Twenty four per cent had an increase and 29 per cent a decrease in profits compared with December quarter 2008.

Profits: D&B Indexes
Component Responses



Profits: D&B Indexes Dec Qtr 2006 to Jun Qtr 2010





Employment Outlook

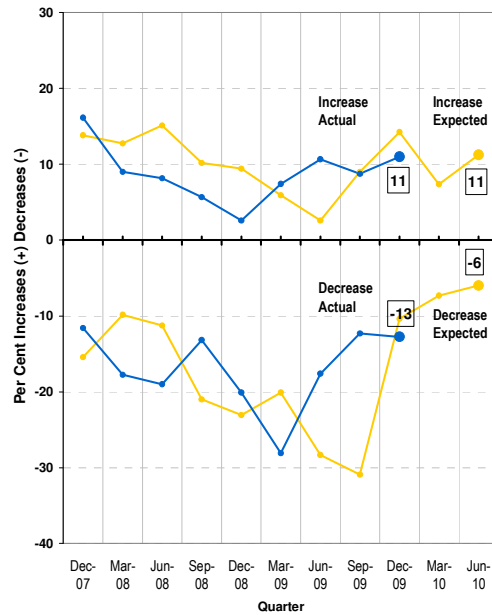
(Quarterly Net Index) (Up 5 to 5)

The positive and negative components of the D&B net indexes are shown in the adjacent chart.

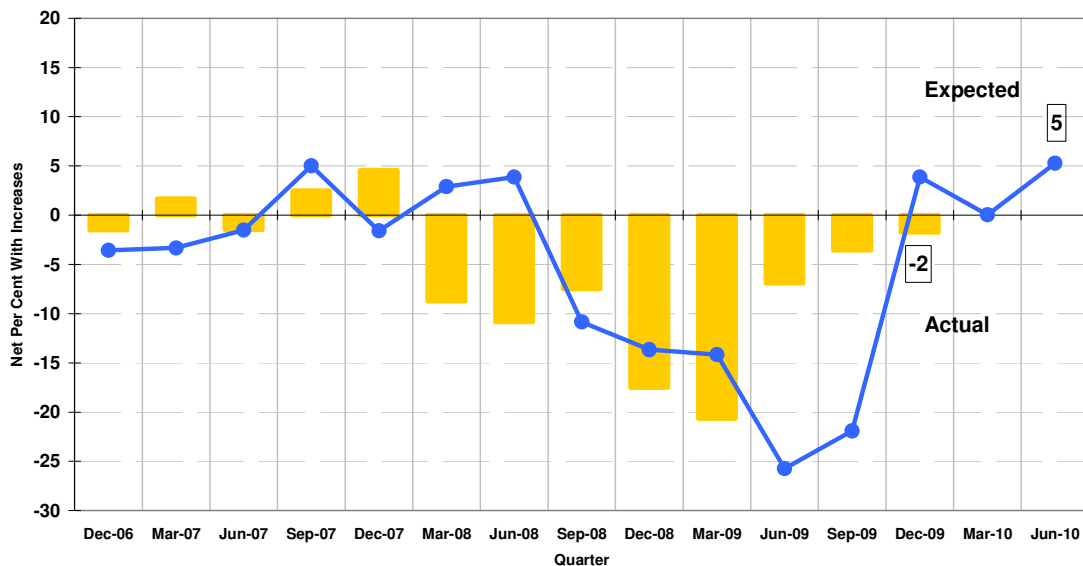
The preliminary index of the employment outlook for June quarter 2010 is 5, up five points and now **up 31 points on the June quarter index of -26, the lowest employment expectations recorded since the survey started in 1988.** Eleven per cent of executives now expect to employ more staff than a year ago and six per cent expect a decrease in staff numbers.

The D&B employees actual preliminary index for December quarter 2009 is -2, six points below the expected index of four for that quarter. Eleven per cent of firms had more staff in December quarter 2009 than a year earlier and 13 per cent of firms had fewer.

Employees: D&B Indexes
Component Responses



Employees: D&B Indexes Dec Qtr 2006 to Jun Qtr 2010





Capital Investment Outlook

(Quarterly Net Index) (Up 3 to 10)

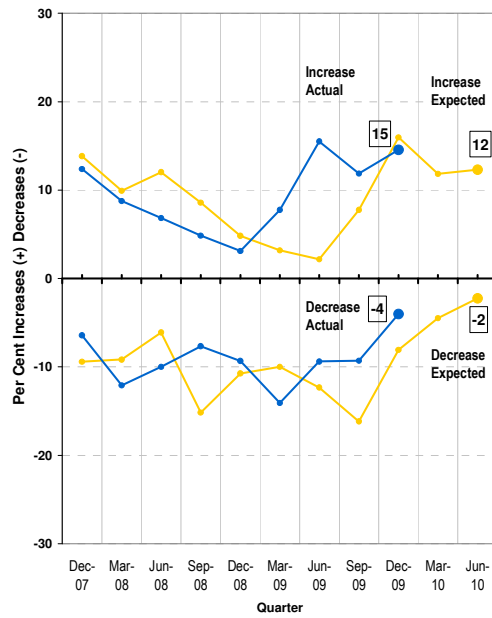
The positive and negative components of the D&B indexes are shown in the adjacent chart.

Capital investment outlook is up three points to a preliminary index of 10 for June quarter 2010, equalling the highest capital investment outlook in the last seven years. Twelve per cent expect an increase and two per cent a decrease in capital investment compared with a year earlier.

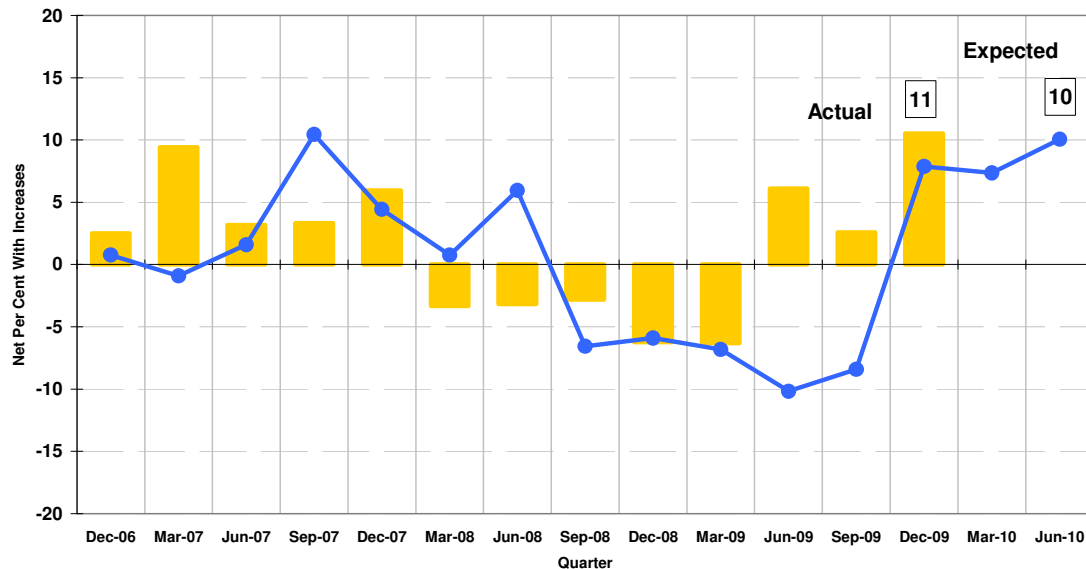
For December quarter 2009 the preliminary index for actual investment is 11, **up eight points on the September quarter actual index of three and the highest in more than six years.**

Fifteen per cent of firms had more capital investment and four per cent had less than in December quarter 2008.

Capital Investment: D&B Indexes Component Responses



Capital Investment: D&B Indexes Dec Qtr 2006 to Jun Qtr 2010





Inventory Outlook

(Quarterly Net Index) (Down 2 to 3)

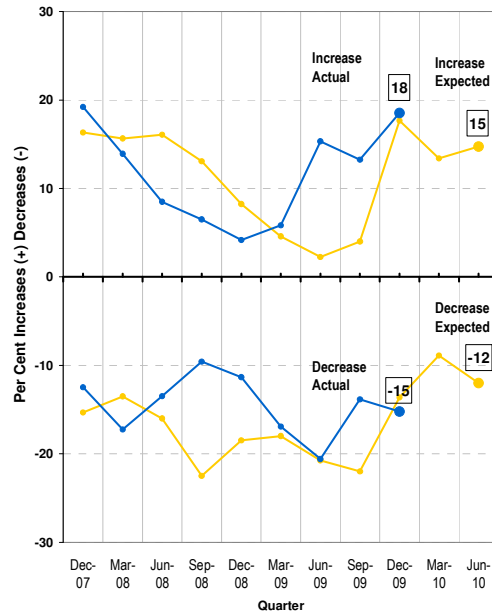
The positive and negative components of the D&B net indexes are shown in the adjacent chart.

The preliminary outlook for growth in inventories in June quarter 2010 is for a positive index of 3, down two points on the March quarter.

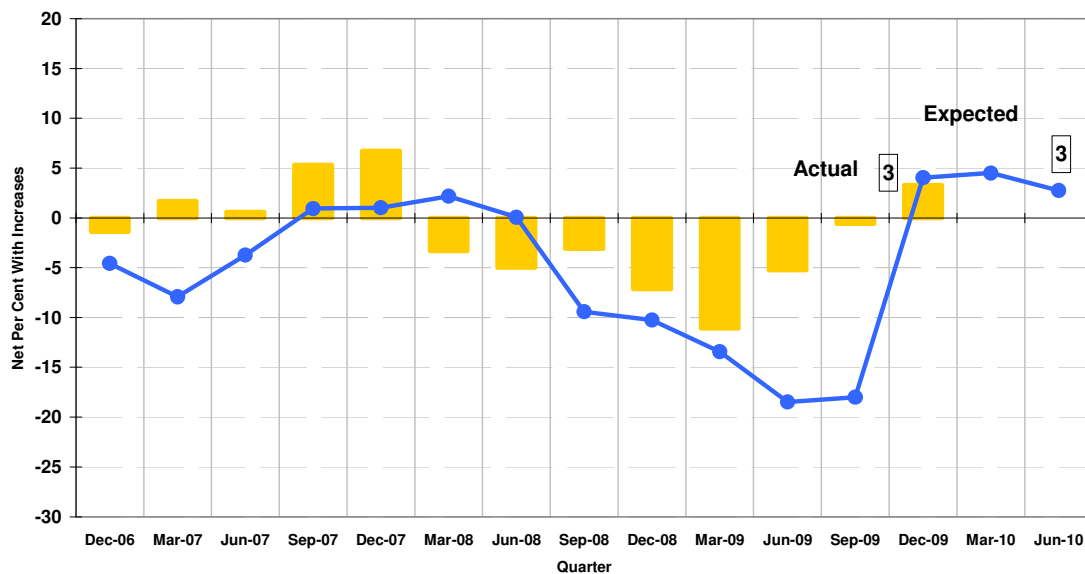
The positive indexes for the latest three quarters are the highest expectations for growth in inventories in more than four years. Fifteen per cent expect to increase and 12 per cent to decrease inventories in June quarter compared with a year earlier.

The preliminary index of the net proportion of firms with actual increases in inventories for December quarter 2009 is three, up four points on the previous quarter. Eighteen per cent had an increase in inventories and 15 per cent a decrease compared with December quarter 2008.

Inventories: D&B Indexes
Component Responses



Inventories: D&B Indexes Dec Qtr 2006 to Jun Qtr 2010





Selling Prices Outlook

(Quarterly Net Index) (Up 8 to 17)

The positive and negative components of the D&B net indexes are shown in the adjacent chart.

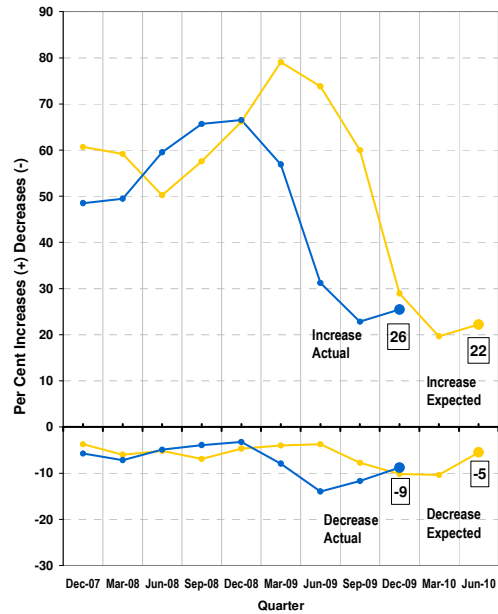
The preliminary selling prices outlook for June quarter 2010 is for a rise to a net index of 17.

This is a rise of eight points from the index of 9 points for the March quarter, the lowest expected selling prices index recorded in the survey. The previous low of 10 points was expected for June quarter 1992.

The proportion of firms expecting to have higher selling prices in June quarter 2010 than a year earlier is 22 per cent with five per cent expecting to have lower prices.

At 17, the preliminary actual prices index for December quarter 2009 is just two points below the 19 net expectations index for the quarter. Twenty six per cent had increased and 9 per cent had decreased prices compared with December quarter 2008.

Selling Prices: D&B Indexes
Component Responses





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D&B Survey New Quarterly Indexes

Expected: Quarter Ahead: Net per cent with increases

QUARTER	Mar	Jun	Sep	Dec	Mar	Jun	Change In	
	<u>2009</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2010 Prelim</u>	One Quarter	Four Quarters
Sales	- 39	- 48	- 24	26	28	25	- 3	+ 73
Profits	- 47	- 57	- 33	7	10	15	+ 5	+ 72
Employees	- 14	- 26	- 22	4	0	5	+ 5	+ 31
Capital Investment	- 7	- 10	- 8	8	7	10	+ 3	+ 20
Inventories	- 13	- 18	- 18	4	5	3	- 2	+ 21
Selling Prices	75	70	52	19	9	17	+ 8	- 53

Actual: Quarter Behind: Net per cent with increases

QUARTER	Sep	Dec	Mar	Jun	Sep	Dec	Change In	
	<u>2008</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2009 Prelim</u>	One Quarter	Four Quarters
Sales	- 27	- 37	- 29	- 13	- 2	6	+ 8	+ 43
Profits	- 43	- 55	- 41	- 17	- 14	- 5	+ 9	+ 50
Employees	- 8	- 18	- 21	- 7	- 4	- 2	+ 2	+ 16
Capital Investment	- 3	- 6	- 6	6	3	11	+ 8	+ 17
Inventories	- 3	- 7	- 11	- 5	- 1	3	+ 4	+ 10
Selling Prices	62	63	49	17	11	17	+ 6	- 46

Survey Months	Oct-Dec 2008	Jan-Mar 2009	April-Jun 2009	July-Sep 2009	Oct-Dec 2009	Jan 2010
Number of Responses	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,211	1,201	400

Quarterly Indexes: Each batch of monthly responses is given an equal weight in the calculation of the new quarterly indexes.

Preliminary indexes for June quarter 2010 (Expected) and December quarter 2009 (Actual) are now issued based on the 400 responses obtained in January 2010.



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D&B New Quarterly Expectation Indexes for Industry Sectors

QUARTER	(Survey Months)	Durables Manufacturers	Non-Durables Manufacturers	Wholesalers	Retailers	All Firms
Sales Expectations						
Mar 2009	(10-12/08)	- 42	- 29	- 47	- 40	- 39
Jun 2009	(01-03/09)	- 47	- 43	- 48	- 54	- 48
Sep 2009	(04-06/09)	- 25	- 28	- 24	- 21	- 24
Dec 2009	(07-09/09)	16	30	33	24	26
Mar 2010	(10-12/09)	25	26	28	35	28
Jun 2010	(01/10)	28	26	29	17	25
Profits Expectations						
Mar 2009	(10-12/08)	- 49	- 39	- 55	- 45	- 47
Jun 2009	(01-03/09)	- 54	- 53	- 61	- 61	- 57
Sep 2009	(04-06/09)	- 32	- 38	- 32	- 30	- 33
Dec 2009	(07-09/09)	4	7	13	3	7
Mar 2010	(10-12/09)	9	7	9	14	10
Jun 2010	(01/10)	13	12	16	20	15
Employees Expectations						
Mar 2009	(10-12/08)	- 15	- 12	- 16	- 14	- 14
Jun 2009	(01-03/09)	- 27	- 25	- 25	- 25	- 26
Sep 2009	(04-06/09)	- 24	- 24	- 21	- 19	- 22
Dec 2009	(07-09/09)	4	2	5	5	4
Mar 2010	(10-12/09)	3	- 3	- 2	1	0
Jun 2010	(01/10)	7	3	6	5	5
Capital Investment Expectations						
Mar 2009	(10-12/08)	- 9	- 4	- 9	- 6	- 7
Jun 2009	(01-03/09)	- 12	- 8	- 8	- 12	- 10
Sep 2009	(04-06/09)	- 10	- 9	- 6	- 9	- 8
Dec 2009	(07-09/09)	6	13	6	6	8
Mar 2010	(10-12/09)	15	2	7	5	7
Jun 2010	(01/10)	7	11	15	7	10
Inventories Expectations						
Mar 2009	(10-12/08)	- 12	- 11	- 20	- 11	- 13
Jun 2009	(01-03/09)	- 17	- 17	- 15	- 24	- 18
Sep 2009	(04-06/09)	- 20	- 17	- 18	- 17	- 18
Dec 2009	(07-09/09)	2	- 1	6	9	4
Mar 2010	(10-12/09)	8	5	3	2	5
Jun 2010	(01/10)	- 2	3	8	2	3
Selling Prices Expectations						
Mar 2009	(10-12/08)	79	69	77	76	75
Jun 2009	(01-03/09)	67	67	75	71	70
Sep 2009	(04-06/09)	47	49	50	62	52
Dec 2009	(07-09/09)	19	24	14	19	19
Mar 2010	(10-12/09)	12	15	2	8	9
Jun 2010	(01/10)	1	30	16	20	17

This table now shows the [Preliminary](#) expectation indexes for June quarter 2010.



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D&B New Quarterly Actual Indexes for Industry Sectors

QUARTER	(Survey Months)	Durables Manufacturers	Non-Durables Manufacturers	Wholesalers	Retailers	All Firms
Sales Actual						
Sep 2008	(10-12/08)	- 25	- 22	- 32	- 30	- 27
Dec 2008	(01-03/09)	- 39	- 34	- 33	- 40	- 37
Mar 2009	(04-06/09)	- 27	- 33	- 35	- 22	- 29
Jun 2009	(07-09/09)	- 18	- 14	- 9	- 11	- 13
Sep 2009	(10-12/09)	- 2	1	- 6	- 2	- 2
Dec 2009	(01/10)	- 3	5	20	3	6
Profits Actual						
Sep 2008	(10-12/08)	- 42	- 39	- 49	- 42	- 43
Dec 2008	(01-03/09)	- 55	- 57	- 53	- 55	- 55
Mar 2009	(04-06/09)	- 40	- 47	- 46	- 31	- 41
Jun 2009	(07-09/09)	- 20	- 13	- 12	- 23	- 17
Sep 2009	(10-12/09)	- 9	- 13	- 19	- 16	- 14
Dec 2009	(01/10)	- 8	- 7	7	- 11	- 5
Employees Actual						
Sep 2008	(10-12/08)	- 8	- 6	- 7	- 9	- 8
Dec 2008	(01-03/09)	- 22	- 15	- 17	- 16	- 18
Mar 2009	(04-06/09)	- 20	- 22	- 21	- 19	- 21
Jun 2009	(07-09/09)	- 9	- 11	- 2	- 5	- 7
Sep 2009	(10-12/09)	- 3	- 7	- 4	0	- 4
Dec 2009	(01/10)	- 5	4	- 2	- 4	- 2
Capital Investment Actual						
Sep 2008	(10-12/08)	- 4	- 1	- 4	- 2	- 3
Dec 2008	(01-03/09)	- 7	- 4	- 6	- 8	- 6
Mar 2009	(04-06/09)	- 10	- 4	- 3	- 8	- 6
Jun 2009	(07-09/09)	8	10	7	- 1	6
Sep 2009	(10-12/09)	11	0	0	- 1	3
Dec 2009	(01/10)	11	12	16	3	11
Inventories Actual						
Sep 2008	(10-12/08)	- 2	- 3	- 5	- 2	- 3
Dec 2008	(01-03/09)	- 8	- 10	- 3	- 8	- 7
Mar 2009	(04-06/09)	- 15	- 10	- 7	- 12	- 11
Jun 2009	(07-09/09)	- 11	- 4	2	- 8	- 5
Sep 2009	(10-12/09)	- 2	2	- 5	3	- 1
Dec 2009	(01/10)	- 3	- 6	9	13	3
Selling Prices Actual						
Sep 2008	(10-12/08)	66	59	60	63	62
Dec 2008	(01-03/09)	62	58	70	63	63
Mar 2009	(04-06/09)	43	47	45	60	49
Jun 2009	(07-09/09)	14	18	17	20	17
Sep 2009	(10-12/09)	11	12	6	15	11
Dec 2009	(01/10)	6	28	12	21	17

This table now shows the preliminary actual indexes for December quarter 2009.



D&B Supplementary Questions – January 2010

Includes comparisons with responses to these questions in recent previous surveys.

1. Thinking about the different types of credit your business relies on, what is the split between bank credit and trade credit?

<i>Question 1 (January 2010)</i>	January 2010 All Firms		Durables Manufacture	Non-Durables Manufacture	Wholesale	Retail
More bank credit than trade	90	23	20	18	24	28
Approximately half and half	152	38	38	45	28	40
More trade than bank credit	128	32	37	30	37	25
Not sure/don't know	30	7	5	7	11	7
Total	400	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

<i>Question 1 (December 2009)</i>	December 2009 All Firms		Durables Manufacture	Non-Durables Manufacture	Wholesale	Retail
More bank credit than trade	106	27	20	40	16	30
Approximately half and half	153	38	25	32	55	41
More trade than bank credit	103	26	37	26	20	21
Not sure/don't know	37	9	18	2	9	8
Total	399	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

<i>Question 1 (November 2009)</i>	November 2009 All Firms		Durables Manufacture	Non-Durables Manufacture	Wholesale	Retail
More bank credit than trade	94	24	19	24	25	26
Approximately half and half	144	36	41	38	32	34
More trade than bank credit	126	31	31	30	32	32
Not sure/don't know	36	9	9	8	11	8
Total	400	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

<i>Question 1 (October 2009)</i>	October 2009 All Firms		Durables Manufacture	Non-Durables Manufacture	Wholesale	Retail
More bank credit than trade	109	27	37	20	20	31
Approximately half and half	102	26	21	24	26	31
More trade than bank credit	142	36	32	34	44	32
Not sure/don't know	47	12	10	22	10	6
Total	400	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

2. Thinking about the quarter ahead, which issue do you think will influence the operations of your business the most?

<i>Question 2 (January 2010)</i>	January 2010 All Firms		Durables Manufacture	Non-Durables Manufacture	Wholesale	Retail
Interest rates	148	37	30	41	37	40
Fuel prices	92	23	28	19	29	16
Wages & salary growth	134	34	39	34	26	35
Not sure/don't know	26	6	3	6	8	9
Total	400	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%



<i>Question 2 (December 2009)</i>	December 2009 All Firms		Durables Manufacture	Non-Durables Manufacture	Wholesale	Retail
Interest rates	131	33	16	40	34	41
Fuel prices	53	13	15	14	15	9
Wages & salary growth	153	38	43	41	31	38
Not sure/don't know	63	16	26	5	20	12
Total	400	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
<i>Question 2 All Firms (November - June 2009)</i>	November 2009	October 2009	September 2009	August 2009	July 2009	June 2009
Interest rates	37	34	36	33	30	32
Fuel prices	15	16	16	15	20	30
Wages & salary growth	34	38	30	37	36	21
Not sure/don't know	14	12	18	15	14	17
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
<i>Question 2 All Firms (May 2009 - December 2008)</i>	May 2009	April 2009	March 2009	February 2009	January 2009	December 2008
Interest rates	41	45	48	58	36	36
Fuel prices	23	16	20	14	33	33
Wages & salary growth	17	18	16	14	16	16
Not sure/don't know	19	21	16	14	15	15
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
<i>Question 2 All Firms (November - June 2008)</i>	November 2008	October 2008	September 2008	August 2008	July 2008	June 2008
Interest rates	39	48	42	38	33	33.5
Fuel prices	35	28	34	37	47	42.8
Wages & salary growth	14	18	22	21	17	22.5
Not sure/don't know	12	6	2	4	3	1.2
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

3. Have recent changes in credit market conditions had an impact on your business?

<i>Question 3 (January 2010)</i>	January 2010 All Firms		Durables Manufacture	Non-Durables Manufacture	Wholesale	Retail
Yes, a very negative impact	22	5	1	9	4	8
Yes, a moderately negative impact	118	30	21	34	30	33
Yes, a moderately positive impact	52	13	21	14	9	8
Yes, a very positive impact	15	4	10	2	3	-
No impact whatsoever	191	48	47	40	54	50
Not sure/don't know	2	<1	-	1	-	1
Total	400	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%



Decide with Confidence

<i>Question 3 (December 2009)</i>	December 2009 All Firms		Durables Manufacture	Non-Durables Manufacture	Wholesale	Retail
Yes, a very negative impact	41	10	12	5	13	11
Yes, a moderately negative impact	84	21	16	21	20	27
Yes, a moderately positive impact	13	3	2	6	3	2
Yes, a very positive impact	16	4	4	7	2	3
No impact whatsoever	246	61	66	61	61	57
Not sure/don't know	1	<1	-	-	1	-
Total	401	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
<i>Question 3 (November 2009)</i>	November 2009 All Firms		Durables Manufacture	Non-Durables Manufacture	Wholesale	Retail
Yes, a very negative impact	47	12	12	5	13	17
Yes, a moderately negative impact	99	25	16	28	30	25
Yes, a moderately positive impact	23	6	3	5	11	4
Yes, a very positive impact	19	5	3	4	11	1
No impact whatsoever	211	53	65	58	35	53
Not sure/don't know	1	<1	1	-	-	-
Total	400	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
<i>Question 3 (October 2009)</i>	October 2009 All Firms		Durables Manufacture	Non-Durables Manufacture	Wholesale	Retail
Yes, a very negative impact	62	16	9	16	21	16
Yes, a moderately negative impact	87	22	32	19	21	15
Yes, a moderately positive impact	28	7	5	7	8	8
Yes, a very positive impact	13	3	2	-	2	9
No impact whatsoever	208	52	52	56	48	52
Not sure/don't know	2	<1	-	2	-	-
Total	400	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
<i>Question 3 (September 2009 – April 2009)</i>	September 2009	August 2009	July 2009	June 2009	May 2009	April 2009
Yes, a very negative impact	12	9	17	3	4	6
Yes, a moderately negative impact	27	36	26	50	47	51
Yes, a moderately positive impact	10	5	12	4	1	2
Yes, a very positive impact	8	2	4	3	3	3
No impact whatsoever	42	47	41	40	45	38
Not sure/don't know	<1	<1	<1	-	-	-
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
<i>Question 3 (March 2009 – October 2008)</i>	March 2009	February 2009	January 2009	December 2008	November 2008	October 2008
Yes, a very negative impact	8	7	4	3	4	1
Yes, a moderately negative impact	43	47	53	40	44	25
Yes, a moderately positive impact	2	2	9	7	3	5
Yes, a very positive impact	2	5	4	7	2	1
No impact whatsoever	45	39	30	43	47	68
Not sure/don't know	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%



4. Do you plan to reduce your current business debt levels in the next three months?

<i>Question 4 (January 2010)</i>	January 2010 All Firms		Durables Manufacture	Non-Durables Manufacture	Wholesale	Retail
Yes, reduce debt significantly	30	7	2	6	16	6
Yes, reduce debt moderately	114	29	20	43	22	29
No, plan to maintain current debt levels	222	56	72	47	48	55
No, plan to increase debt levels	21	5	3	3	8	7
Not sure/don't know	13	3	3	1	6	3
Total	400	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
<i>Question 4 (December 2009)</i>	December 2009 All Firms		Durables Manufacture	Non-Durables Manufacture	Wholesale	Retail
Yes, reduce debt significantly	19	5	4	6	6	3
Yes, reduce debt moderately	56	14	14	15	15	11
No, plan to maintain current debt levels	281	70	59	72	70	80
No, plan to increase debt levels	27	7	15	5	5	2
Not sure/don't know	18	4	8	2	4	4
Total	401	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
<i>Question 4 (November 2009)</i>	November 2009 All Firms		Durables Manufacture	Non-Durables Manufacture	Wholesale	Retail
Yes, reduce debt significantly	26	7	9	9	3	5
Yes, reduce debt moderately	53	13	14	7	21	11
No, plan to maintain current debt levels	273	68	65	75	69	64
No, plan to increase debt levels	37	9	9	6	5	17
Not sure/don't know	11	3	3	3	2	3
Total	400	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
<i>Question 4 (October 2009)</i>	October 2009 All Firms		Durables Manufacture	Non-Durables Manufacture	Wholesale	Retail
Yes, reduce debt significantly	38	10	14	5	12	7
Yes, reduce debt moderately	82	20	15	24	20	23
No, plan to maintain current debt levels	231	58	51	64	58	58
No, plan to increase debt levels	36	9	11	6	10	9
Not sure/don't know	13	3	9	1	-	3
Total	400	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
<i>Question 4 (August 2009)</i>	August 2009 All Firms		Durables Manufacture	Non-Durables Manufacture	Wholesale	Retail
Yes, reduce debt significantly	32	8	8	4	9	11
Yes, reduce debt moderately	110	27	26	27	26	31
No, plan to maintain current debt levels	212	53	56	50	64	41
No, plan to increase debt levels	39	10	8	14	1	16
Not sure/don't know	8	2	2	5	-	1
Total	401	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%



<i>Question 4 (July 2009)</i>	July 2009 All Firms		Durables Manufacture	Non-Durables Manufacture	Wholesale	Retail
Yes, reduce debt significantly	32	8	8	7	5	12
Yes, reduce debt moderately	86	22	22	24	23	17
No, plan to maintain current debt levels	201	50	49	58	46	48
No, plan to increase debt levels	52	13	13	9	15	15
Not sure/don't know	29	7	8	2	11	8
Total	400	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

5. Are rising business-to-business payment days negatively impacting your business?

<i>Question 5 (January 2010)</i>	January 2010 All Firms		Durables Manufacture	Non-Durables Manufacture	Wholesale	Retail
Yes, a significant negative impact	36	9	6	2	17	11
Yes, a small negative impact	103	26	20	20	37	26
No impact	258	64	72	77	46	63
Not sure/don't know	3	1	2	1	-	-
Total	401	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

<i>Question 5 (December 2009)</i>	December 2009 All Firms		Durables Manufacture	Non-Durables Manufacture	Wholesale	Retail
Yes, a significant negative impact	38	10	11	11	6	10
Yes, a small negative impact	121	30	27	36	37	21
No impact	238	59	61	52	56	68
Not sure/don't know	4	1	1	1	1	1
Total	401	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

<i>Question 5 (November 2009)</i>	November 2009 All Firms		Durables Manufacture	Non-Durables Manufacture	Wholesale	Retail
Yes, a significant negative impact	67	17	16	13	27	11
Yes, a small negative impact	98	24	15	37	27	19
No impact	231	58	68	50	46	67
Not sure/don't know	4	1	1	-	-	3
Total	400	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

<i>Question 5 All Firms (October 2009 – May 2009)</i>	October 2009	September 2009	August 2009	July 2009	June 2009	May 2009
Yes, a significant negative impact	19	24	13	18	7	5
Yes, a small negative impact	25	19	33	31	24	22
No impact	54	53	52	46	69	73
Not sure/don't know	2	4	2	5	<1	<1
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

6. Thinking just about your use of trade credit, has the amount of time you've been given to pay changed?

<i>Question 6 (January 2010)</i>	January 2010 All Firms		Durables Manufacture	Non-Durables Manufacture	Wholesale	Retail
Time to pay has been increased	23	6	1	3	15	4
Time to pay has been decreased	77	19	27	20	11	19
Time to pay has stayed the same	295	74	72	76	72	75
Not sure/don't know	5	1	-	1	2	2
Total	400	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%



Decide with Confidence

<i>Question 6 (December 2009)</i>	December 2009		Durables Manufacture	Non-Durables Manufacture	Wholesale	Retail
	All Firms					
Time to pay has been increased	23	6	4	7	7	5
Time to pay has been decreased	58	14	14	18	12	13
Time to pay has stayed the same	310	77	74	74	80	82
Not sure/don't know	10	3	8	1	1	-
Total	401	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

<i>Question 6 (November 2009)</i>	November 2009		Durables Manufacture	Non-Durables Manufacture	Wholesale	Retail
	All Firms					
Time to pay has been increased	47	12	10	9	15	13
Time to pay has been decreased	52	13	15	8	12	17
Time to pay has stayed the same	296	74	72	83	72	69
Not sure/don't know	5	1	3	-	1	1
Total	400	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

<i>Question 6 (October 2009)</i>	October 2009		Durables Manufacture	Non-Durables Manufacture	Wholesale	Retail
	All Firms					
Time to pay has been increased	20	5	6	7	15	3
Time to pay has been decreased	70	18	13	15	22	20
Time to pay has stayed the same	297	74	76	76	73	72
Not sure/don't know	12	3	5	2	-	5
Total	400	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

7. In terms of the number of people working in your business, how would you categorize it?

<i>Question 7 (January 2010)</i>	January 2010		Durables Manufacture	Non-Durables Manufacture	Wholesale	Retail
	All Firms					
Very small (1 to 5 workers)	193	48	30	52	55	56
Small (6 to 20 workers)	137	34	35	32	39	31
Medium (21 to 50 workers)	42	11	21	11	4	6
Large (51 to 100 workers)	13	3	10	1	1	1
Very large (more than 100)	15	4	4	4	1	6
Not sure/don't know	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	400	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

<i>Question 7 (December 2009)</i>	December 2009		Durables Manufacture	Non-Durables Manufacture	Wholesale	Retail
	All Firms					
Very small (1 to 5 workers)	147	37	43	23	41	40
Small (6 to 20 workers)	157	39	32	45	39	40
Medium (21 to 50 workers)	68	17	18	22	18	10
Large (51 to 100 workers)	13	3	4	2	2	5
Very large (more than 100)	14	3	3	8	-	3
Not sure/don't know	2	<1	-	-	-	2
Total	401	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

<i>Question 7 (November 2009)</i>	November 2009		Durables Manufacture	Non-Durables Manufacture	Wholesale	Retail
	All Firms					
Very small (1 to 5 workers)	206	51	48	36	62	60
Small (6 to 20 workers)	154	39	42	48	32	32
Medium (21 to 50 workers)	25	6	6	9	5	5
Large (51 to 100 workers)	11	3	3	6	-	2
Very large (more than 100)	4	1	1	1	1	1
Not sure/don't know	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	399	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%



Decide with Confidence

<i>Question 7 (October 2009)</i>	October 2009 All Firms		Durables Manufacture	Non-Durables Manufacture	Wholesale	Retail
Very small (1 to 5 workers)	179	45	30	32	59	59
Small (6 to 20 workers)	178	44	50	57	33	38
Medium (21 to 50 workers)	28	7	13	8	4	3
Large (51 to 100 workers)	8	2	4	3	1	-
Very large (more than 100)	6	<2	3	-	3	-
Not sure/don't know	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	399	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
<i>Question 7 (September 2009)</i>	September 2009 All Firms		Durables Manufacture	Non-Durables Manufacture	Wholesale	Retail
Very small (1 to 5 workers)	179	44	44	37	50	43
Small (6 to 20 workers)	171	42	41	47	32	47
Medium (21 to 50 workers)	40	10	12	11	8	8
Large (51 to 100 workers)	10	2	2	3	5	-
Very large (more than 100)	10	2	1	2	5	2
Not sure/don't know	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	410	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
<i>Question 7 (August 2009)</i>	August 2009 All Firms		Durables Manufacture	Non-Durables Manufacture	Wholesale	Retail
Very small (1 to 5 workers)	145	36	30	24	47	43
Small (6 to 20 workers)	187	47	48	57	40	41
Medium (21 to 50 workers)	43	11	17	12	7	7
Large (51 to 100 workers)	12	3	3	4	1	4
Very large (more than 100)	14	3	2	3	5	4
Not sure/don't know	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	401	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
<i>Question 7 (July 2009)</i>	July 2009 All Firms		Durables Manufacture	Non-Durables Manufacture	Wholesale	Retail
Very small (1 to 5 workers)	190	48	42	47	49	52
Small (6 to 20 workers)	141	35	42	37	34	28
Medium (21 to 50 workers)	48	12	10	11	12	15
Large (51 to 100 workers)	14	3	5	2	3	4
Very large (more than 100)	7	2	1	3	2	1
Not sure/don't know	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	400	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
<i>Question 7 All Firms (June 2009 – January 2009)</i>	June 2009	May 2009	April 2009	March 2009	February 2009	January 2009
Very small (1 to 5 workers)	9	6	5	8	9	2
Small (6 to 20 workers)	71	78	76	73	71	87
Medium (21 to 50 workers)	17	15	18	17	17	10
Large (51 to 100 workers)	2	<1	<1	<1	2	<1
Very large (more than 100)	1	<1	-	<2	1	<1
Not sure/don't know	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%



Decide with Confidence

Question 7 All Firms (December 2008 – July 2008)	Dec 2008	Nov 2008	Oct 2008	Sep 2008	August 2008	July 2008
Very small (1 to 5 workers)	2	4	3	4	8	12
Small (6 to 20 workers)	84	79	83	87	87	83
Medium (21 to 50 workers)	13	16	13	7	4	5
Large (51 to 100 workers)	<1	<1	1	1	<1	<1
Very large (more than 100)	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1
Not sure/don't know	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Question 7 All Firms (June 2008 – January 2008)	June 2008	May 2008	April 2008	March 2008	February 2008	January 2008
Very small (1 to 5 workers)	7	10	17	27	15	17
Small (6 to 20 workers)	86	85	71	46	76	75
Medium (21 to 50 workers)	5	5	9	17	7	6
Large (51 to 100 workers)	1	<1	1	7	2	1
Very large (more than 100)	<1	<1	2	3	<1	1
Not sure/don't know	-	-	-	<1	-	-
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
