

# The Bermuda Omnibus Survey

## Top-Line Highlights – Third Quarter 2008

---

The following are Top-Line Highlights from the latest Bermuda Omnibus Survey, a syndicated quarterly survey of Bermuda residents. The survey consisted of telephone interviews with a representative sample of 400 Bermuda residents conducted between September 6<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup>, 2008. A sample of this size drawn from the population provides results accurate to within plus or minus 4.9 percent in 95 out of 100 samples. A detailed report on the results of this survey will be provided to subscribers.

---

### Important Issues in Bermuda Today

- **Most Important Issue.** With media reports of recent stabbings, drive-by shootings and murders, it is not surprising that crime has become the single most important issue among Bermudians. In fact, more than one-third of residents now consider **crime** (37%, up 16 points from last quarter) to be the most important issue facing Island residents. This topic surpasses **housing/the cost of housing** (11%, down 9 points) and **education** (11%, down 4 points) which distantly follow. Other issues facing the Island include the **economy** (9%, down 3 points), **youth** (7%, up 6 point), and **Government** (5%, down 2 points).
- **Crime.** In light of recent violent occurrences on the Island, it is not surprising that the vast majority of residents (94%) express some level of personal concern about crime in their communities. In fact, one-half (50%) of residents are **extremely concerned** and four-in-ten (44%) are **generally concerned** about community crime. Although these results are consistent with one year ago, there has been a shift in concern across the Island. Residents living in Hamilton, Smiths and St. George's parishes are more likely be extremely concerned about crime compared with last year.
- **Cost of Oil.** In the past three months the cost of oil has fluctuated significantly, reaching a high of \$146. Although the price per barrel fell at the beginning of September, oil experienced its greatest single day increase shortly after data was collected this quarter. Prior to this notable change, residents were asked to assess the impact the cost of oil has had on consumer behaviour. Overall, the vast majority of consumers regard the change in the cost of oil to have had at least moderate impact on their lifestyle. In fact, nearly one-quarter (22%) of residents believe the increase in the cost of oil has had a significant impact to their lifestyle, while more than half (53%) report it has had a moderate impact on their lifestyle.

### Economic Mood

- **Consumer Confidence.** Consumer confidence, which last quarter reached the second lowest point recorded in the past ten years, has remained unchanged this quarter. The Consumer Confidence Index (CCI) stands at 75 this quarter (down from 103 in September 2007). Although confidence

overall has remained stable, consumer confidence among white residents has fallen dramatically, yet increased among black residents. The net of the past quarter's shifts across race has resulted in an stable overall Consumer Confidence Index.

- **Bermuda Economy.** As Bermuda's economy continues to be impacted by the U.S. and global shifts, residents continue to express concern over the current state of the Island's economy. It should be noted that the survey was conducted prior to the major downturn in the U.S. economy in mid-September. Currently, the majority of residents believe the economy in Bermuda is worse compared with last year (51%, up 4 points from last quarter). A third of residents (36%, down 4 points) believe the economy is about the same, while a handful (11%, unchanged) think the economy is now better than it was this time last year.
- Perceptions of the Island's future are unfavourable relative to expectations held by residents one year ago. Currently one-half of Island residents anticipate the Island's economy to worsen over the coming year (51%, down 4 points in the past three months but up 35 points from September 2007). Although this represents no significant change from last quarter, results remain staggeringly pessimistic compared with residents' outlook one year ago. Nevertheless, one-third of residents (37%, up 3 points) believe the Island's economy will **remain the same** in the coming year. Although one-in-ten (11%, up 3 points but down 10 points from this time last year) think Bermuda's economy will improve in the coming year, this represents only a small segment of the Island's population holding a positive outlook.
- **Household Finance.** Once again residents perceive their own standard of living to have remained stable in the past year as one-half (58%, down 4 points from June) report their household well-being to have remained the same. The remainder of residents are equally likely to believe that their own well-being has **improved** (19%, up 2 points) as they are to believe that it has **declined** (22%, up 4 points) in the past twelve months.
- Consistent with past results, residents are more likely to expect the Island's economy to sustain the brunt of an economic downturn and regard their own future more positively. More specifically, one-half of Island residents believe the Island's economy will worsen in the coming year, while only one-fifth of residents (21%, unchanged) think their personal well-being will **worsen** in the next twelve months. In light of global economic changes in the past few months, results are consistent with last quarter with one-half of residents (54%, up 5 points) anticipating their personal well-being to **remain the same** in the coming year. There remains a small group of residents who hold some level of optimism about their personal future with one-fifth of residents (22%, down 4 points) expecting their household's well-being will **improve**.
- **Purchase Conditions.** Reflective of residents' outlook of their well-being in the coming year, most residents (58%, down 4 points) think that the conditions required to purchase a major item **are unchanged** from one year ago. Of the remainder, residents are equally likely to think conditions are **better** (19%, down 2 points from June) or believe that buying conditions are now **worse** (22%, up 4 points).

## Consumer and Lifestyle Trends

- **“Best” Grocery Store.** When asked which grocery store, if any, is the best in Bermuda, residents are most likely to state one of the *Lindo’s* brand stores. In fact, one-half of residents (49%) believe that one of the *Lindo’s* stores is the best grocery store in Bermuda. It should be noted that not one single *Lindo’s* location is identified to be the best store. In fact, preference is spread between stores with one-quarter mentioning *Lindo’s Market* (26% of all residents) and one-in-five identifying *Lindo’s Family Foods* (19%). A handful also simply mention *Lindo’s* (4%). Other grocery stores mentioned by residents include *The Market Place* (20%), *Miles Market* (6%), and *The SuperMart* (5%).
- **Television Service.** Most residents have some form of paid television service coming to their home. Although cablevision is the most commonly used format (77%, up 3 points from September 2007), one-in-ten residents have either satellite (4%, unchanged) or WOW service (9%, up 1 point). When it comes to local television service, the most frequently watched channel is ZBM/ZFB Bermuda Broadcasting. In fact, more than one-half (56%) of residents report watching that channel on occasion. However, viewership of local television stations is not universal as one-in-five residents (20%) that have television in the home do not watch any local stations.
- **International Business in Bermuda.** Residents perceive the growth of the Island’s international business to have slowed in the past six years. Specifically, residents are now less likely to believe that, compared with five years ago, international business continues to **grow at a rapid pace** (22%, down from 45% in December 2002). Overall, the majority of residents perceive the rate of international business in Bermuda to **have seen moderate growth in the past five years** (61%, up 14 points from 2002). A handful (14%, up 11 points) believes there has been little growth to the Island’s international business.

## Government and Politics

- **Government Performance.** There has been some stability in residents’ satisfaction with the Government in the past three months. Although results declined notably during the second quarter of 2008, the decline has not continued. Just under one-half of residents (45%, unchanged) currently express some level of **satisfaction** with the Government led by Premier Ewart Brown. Conversely, one-half (50%, up 1 points) of residents are either completely or mostly **dissatisfied** with the Government’s performance.