

JACK WEBSTER AWARDS POLL (2 OF 2)

British Columbians Select Softwood Lumber Dispute as Top BC News Story of Past Year

Glen Clark's Trial a Runaway Winner as Most Over-Rated BC News Story of Past Year



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Ipsos-Reid has joined with the Jack Webster Foundation to conduct this public opinion poll in BC on the BC media. The poll is launched in conjunction with the 2002 Webster Awards Dinner taking place on Tuesday, October 29th in Vancouver. The Jack Webster Foundation was formed in 1986 to recognize excellence in journalism in British Columbia.

Vancouver, BC – A new Ipsos-Reid public opinion poll, conducted in partnership with the Jack Webster Foundation, reveals that British Columbians consider the softwood lumber dispute with the United States (28% selected) to be the most personally important BC news story from the past year. The Pickton pig farm and the missing women of the Downtown East Side (20%) finishes as the second most important story, followed by the downsizing of BC's public service (16%). Meanwhile, Glen Clark's trial (40% selected) is a clear number one choice as the most over-rated BC news story of the year. Poll respondents were presented with a list of 10 prominent BC news stories from the past year and asked to select the one story that had the biggest personal impact and the one story that was the most over-rated.

These are the findings of a BC Ipsos-Reid poll conducted between October 7th and 14th, 2002 among a representative cross-section of 800 British Columbian adults. These data are statistically weighted to ensure the sample's regional, age and sex composition reflects that of the actual BC population according to 1996 Census data. With a provincial sample of 800, one can say with 95 percent certainty that the overall results are within ± 3.5 percentage points of what they would have been had the entire adult BC population been polled. The margin of error will be larger for other sub-groupings of the survey population.

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British Columbians Select Softwood Lumber Dispute as Top BC News Story of Past Year

Three-in-ten (28%) British Columbians say the softwood lumber dispute with the United States is the BC news story that has had the biggest personal impact over the last year. This makes the softwood lumber dispute the number one BC news story over the past year. Poll respondents were presented with a list of 10 prominent BC news stories from the past year and asked to select the one story that had the biggest personal impact.

In second place is the Pickton pig farm and the missing women of the Downtown East Side, as selected by two-in-ten (20%) British Columbians. The third place news story is the downsizing of BC's public service (16% selected)

The complete list of BC news stories and the percentage who selected each story is as follows:

1. Softwood lumber dispute (28%)
2. Pickton pig farm (20%)
3. BC public service downsizing (16%)
4. Doctors' strike (9%)
5. Korean student beating (6%)
6. Land claims referendum (5%)
7. Street racing (5%)
8. Canuck's playoff drive (3%)
9. 2010 Olympic bid (3%)
10. Glen Clark's trial (2%)

The choice of top story varies widely by region of the province:

- Residents outside the Lower Mainland have a much greater tendency to select the softwood lumber dispute as the top story of the past year.
- Interior/North residents select softwood lumber (40%) well ahead of the Pickton pig farm (14%) and the public service downsizing (12%). Similarly, Vancouver Island residents make the softwood lumber dispute (36%) a clear winner over



trailing issues such as the public service downsizing (19%) and the Pickton pig farm (18%).

- Lower Mainland residents are much more divided in their selection of the top story. Twenty-two percent select the Pickton pig farm as the top story, making it a narrow winner over the softwood lumber dispute (20%) and the public service downsizing (17%).

The choice of top story also varies by sex:

- Men choose the softwood lumber dispute (36%) as the top story, with the public service downsizing (16%) a distant second and the Pickton pig farm (13%) in third place.
- Women select the Pickton pig farm (26%) as the top story, with the softwood lumber dispute (21%) in second and the public service downsizing in third (16%).

Finally, public sector union households choose the public service downsizing (27%) as the top BC news story of the year, with softwood lumber (21%) and the Pickton pig farm (20%) as close runners-up.

Glen Clark's Trial a Runaway Winner as Most Over-Rated BC News Story of Past Year

Four-in-ten (40%) British Columbians think the trial of former Premier Glen Clark is the most over-rated BC news story of the past year. Glen Clark's trial receives as many selections as the next four stories combined, including the Canuck's drive to the playoffs (16%), the Pickton pig farm (12%), the 2010 Olympic bid (5%) and the beating of Korean student Ji-Won Park (5%). Poll respondents were presented with a list of 10 prominent BC news stories from the past year and asked to select the one story that was most over-rated or was given too much importance by the media.



The complete list of BC news stories and the percentage who selected each story is as follows:

1. Glen Clark's trial (40%)
2. Canuck's playoff drive (16%)
3. Pickton pig farm (12%)
4. 2010 Olympic bid (5%)
5. Korean student beating (5%)
6. Land claims referendum (4%)
7. Street racing (3%)
8. Softwood lumber dispute (2%)
9. Doctors' strike (2%)
10. BC public service downsizing (1%)

The Glen Clark trial is consistently chosen as the most over-rated story by four-in-ten British Columbians across all regional, demographic and socio-economic groups. Vancouver Island residents are more likely than residents of other regions to choose the Canuck's playoff drive as the most overrated story (26% vs. 13% Interior/North and 14% Lower Mainland).

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