

BC PUBLIC ON THE SOFTWOOD LUMBER DISPUTE

*Majority Think Federal (81%) and Provincial (58%) Governments
Doing a Poor Job Resolving Dispute*

*Two-Thirds (63%) Pessimistic that Dispute Will Be Resolved to
Satisfaction of BC Forest Industry*



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Vancouver, BC – A new Ipsos-Reid survey finds that British Columbians give both the federal and provincial governments a failing grade when it comes to their performance in trying to resolve the softwood lumber dispute with the Americans. Eight-in-ten (81%) BC residents say the federal government is doing a “poor job” in trying to resolve the dispute. The provincial government fares somewhat better, with six-in-ten (58%) residents rating its performance as “poor”. Looking forward, British Columbians are more “pessimistic” (63%) than “optimistic” (35%) that the softwood lumber dispute will be resolved to the satisfaction of the BC forest industry. “These poll results are a clear indication of the frustration British Columbians are feeling with the snail-like progress in trying to resolve the softwood lumber dispute,” observes Daniel Savas, Senior Vice-President in Ipsos-Reid’s Vancouver office. “The BC public is close to giving up hope of seeing a positive result for the BC forest industry from the negotiation, and, as a result, they’re quite critical of the provincial and federal governments.”

These are the some of the findings from an Ipsos-Reid Special Report on BC’s Forest Industry conducted between February 3rd and 9th, 2003 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 2001 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 population sub-groups.



Majority Think Federal (81%) and Provincial (58%) Governments Doing a Poor Job Resolving Dispute

Eight-in-ten (81%) British Columbians think the federal government is doing a “poor job” in trying to resolve the softwood lumber trade dispute with the Americans. Nearly one-half (46%) think the federal government is doing a “very poor job”, while 35 percent think the federal government is doing a “somewhat poor job”. Only two-in-ten (18%) residents think the federal government is doing a “good job” (2% “very good job”, 16% “somewhat good job”) in resolving the dispute.

A majority (58%) of BC residents also think their provincial government is doing a “poor job” in trying to resolve the dispute with the Americans. One-quarter (25%) think the BC government is doing a “very poor job”, while 33 percent think the provincial government is doing a “somewhat poor job”. Meanwhile, four -in-ten (40%) British Columbians think the provincial government is doing a “good job” (7% “very good job”, 33% “somewhat good job”) in resolving the dispute.

- ◆ Middle aged and older residents are more likely than younger residents to think the federal government is doing a “poor job” (84%, 35+ years vs. 73%, 18-34 years).
- ◆ The percentage of British Columbians thinking the provincial government is doing a “poor job” is consistent across regions and demographic groups.

Two-Thirds (63%) Pessimistic that Dispute Will Be Resolved to Satisfaction of BC Forest Industry

British Columbians are not hopeful that the softwood lumber dispute will be resolved in a way that will satisfy BC’s forest industry. Two-thirds (63%) say they are “pessimistic” about the dispute being resolved to the satisfaction of the BC forest industry. One-quarter (27%) are “very pessimistic” and another 36 percent are “somewhat pessimistic”.



Ipsos Reid

Roughly one-in-three (35%) BC residents are generally “optimistic” about the likelihood of the softwood lumber dispute being resolved to the satisfaction of the BC forest industry. One-in-ten (8%) residents are “very optimistic”, while 27 percent are “somewhat optimistic”.

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For full tabular results, please visit our website at www.ipsos-reid.com. News Releases are available at http://www.ipsos-reid.com/media/content/PRE_REL.cfm

For information on how to obtain an expanded report on BC's Forest Industry: “Turning over a New Leaf or Continued Decline”, please consult our website at www.ipsos-reid.com/BCREID.cfm or contact Ms. Claire McRobbie at claire.mcrobbe@ipsos-reid or call 604-893-1685.

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