

Results from our recent survey of *Bulletin* readers

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This note summarises the results of our August 2008 survey of *Bulletin* readers. Overall, we received very positive feedback. Survey respondents found *Bulletin* articles to be readable, topical, good quality and in-depth. We also received a number of useful suggestions on the *Bulletin's* content and style, which we will take on board. In particular, we are pleased to announce that from the September 2009 issue, we will provide printed copies of the *Bulletin* free of charge.

We launched the survey of *Bulletin* readers with the June 2008 issue of the *Bulletin*, in both printed and online form. As with our previous survey in 2002,¹ we were looking for feedback and suggestions for improvements from readers on the *Bulletin's* content, style and format.

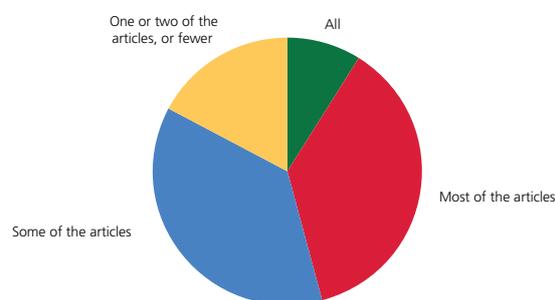
We received a satisfactory number of responses, especially though the online survey, with 165 responses in total. A large majority said that they access the *Bulletin* through the Reserve Bank's website, either exclusively or as well as using the print version. We received a number of suggestions for improvements to the presentation of our content on the website, which we will take on board.

The *Bulletin* seems to appeal to a fairly wide range of audiences. Most respondents identified themselves as economists, analysts from central banks, or analysts from commercial banks. Other types of respondent included researchers, students, teachers, journalists, and investors.

Most respondents said they read the *Bulletin* for purposes related to their work and research. A number of respondents commented that they look to the *Bulletin* for insights on the Reserve Bank's various functions, for its view on the global and domestic economic and financial environments, and to inform their investment or business decisions. Some respondents who were teachers or lecturers said they use the *Bulletin* as a source of supplementary reading for their teaching.

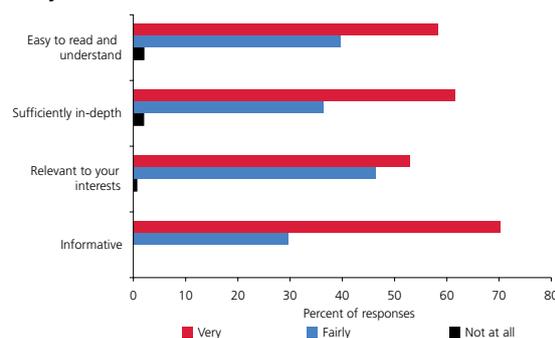
A majority of respondents read the *Bulletin* every quarter, and almost half find most or all of the articles of interest (figure 1).

Figure 1
How many articles do you find of interest to you in each issue (on average)?



Respondents generally found *Bulletin* articles to be well written, and considered them reliable, authoritative and relevant (figure 2).

Figure 2
Do you think *Bulletin* articles are:



Our recent move to using themes for each edition where we can, and encouraging authors to include visuals, images and diagrams where they can, was well received. We will continue to look for opportunities to present our material in interesting ways.

As in the 2002 survey, we received a number of suggestions to pitch content at a more accessible level. Since then, we have tried to move in this direction with at least some articles, and will continue to do so.

¹ Reserve Bank of New Zealand (2002) 'Results of *Bulletin* readers survey', *Reserve Bank Bulletin* 65(3), pp. 56-58.

When respondents were asked about the topics they most want to read about, they said monetary policy, interest rates and exchange rates, and domestic economic developments. This response pattern broadly matches that in the 2002 survey. However, it seems that international economic developments have become more interesting to readers, probably reflecting the recent dramatic developments in the international economy and financial system. Also, compared with the 2002 survey results, more readers are now interested in currency-related topics.

Responses were mixed to the question about whether the print version of the *Bulletin* was value for money at the current \$12 per issue charge. A number of respondents said yes, but some argued that there was enough of a public service element to the *Bulletin* that it should be free (noting that the online version is free) to encourage wider readership. Having considered the various arguments, we have decided to cease charging for printed copies of the *Bulletin*, from the September 2009 issue onwards.