

Optimism among executive CAs soaring, nearing levels seen prior to downturn: CICA/RBC Business Monitor

TORONTO, April 27, 2010 — Optimism about the Canadian economy is up sharply among executive chartered accountants (CAs) and approaching levels last seen in 2007, according to the most recent *CICA/RBC Business Monitor* (Q1 2010).

Sixty-one per cent of respondents are optimistic about the economy over the next 12 months, up dramatically from the four per cent recorded in the first quarter of 2009. It also marks a significant jump above the 48 per cent of respondents who expressed optimism in the final quarter of 2009. In fact, optimism has climbed close to the levels recorded in the final three quarters of 2007 (67 per cent, 66 per cent and 63 per cent).

“The latest findings clearly underscore a growing comfort with the Canadian economy,” said Kevin Dancey, FCA, president and CEO, Canadian Institute of Chartered Accountants (CICA). “For the first time, since 2007, executive CAs are almost equally optimistic about the prospects for both their own company and the Canadian economy. Optimism among respondents regarding their own company had previously been running well ahead of that being expressed for the overall economy.”

The *CICA/RBC Business Monitor* also shows positive projections for the next 12 months relating to revenues (+ 3.5 per cent), profits (+3.7 per cent) and employment numbers (+1.2 per cent), marking three consecutive quarters of projected increases.

“The results suggest that executive CAs are increasingly confident that we are now in recovery mode,” added Shauneen Bruder, executive vice-president, Business and Commercial Banking, RBC. “Canadian business leaders have a real opportunity in this strengthening economy to capitalize on conditions to seize new business opportunities and make new and bold productivity gains.”

The *CICA/RBC Business Monitor* is issued quarterly, based on a survey conducted by the Canadian Institute of Chartered Accountants (CICA). The report draws upon business insights of CAs in leadership positions in privately and publicly held companies across Canada.

For the Q1 2010 report, emailed surveys were completed by 397 CAs of 4,219 identified by the CICA as holding senior positions (CFOs, CEOs and COOs). The response rate was 9 per cent, with a margin of error associated with this type of study at ± 5 per cent, with a confidence level of 95 per cent. The survey was conducted March 9 – March 18, 2010.



The *CICA/RBC Business Monitor (Q1 2010)* is part of an international initiative. The American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA) in the United States and the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (ICAEW) in the United Kingdom also undertake quarterly studies that tap the insights of members in senior positions to provide a barometer of economic activity in their nations and as a basis for future comparative analysis across countries. A background document is available online at www.cicarbcbusinessmonitor.com.

About CICA

The Canadian Institute of Chartered Accountants (CICA), together with the provincial, territorial and Bermuda Institutes/Ordre of Chartered Accountants, represents a membership of approximately 75,000 CAs and 12,000 students in Canada and Bermuda. The CICA conducts research into current business issues and supports the setting of accounting, auditing and assurance standards for business, not-for-profit organizations and government. It issues guidance on control and governance, publishes professional literature, develops continuing education programs and represents the CA profession nationally and internationally. CICA is a founding member of the International Federation of Accountants (IFAC) and the Global Accounting Alliance (GAA).

About RBC

RBC delivers a wide range of financial services through a variety of channels to individuals, small and medium-sized businesses and commercial clients, including deposit accounts, investments and mutual funds, credit and debit cards, business and personal loans, and residential and commercial mortgages. It is the personal and commercial banking division of Royal Bank of Canada (RY on TSX and NYSE).

- 30 -

Interviews with an official from the CICA can be arranged by contacting:

Tobin Lambie, CICA, (416) 204-3228 or c/o tobin.lambie@cica.ca

Interviews can be arranged with Shauneen Bruder, executive vice-president, RBC Business and Commercial Banking, by contacting:

Matt Gierasimczuk, (416) 974-2124 or c/o matthew.gierasimczuk@rbc.com; or Janet Gibson Eichner, (416) 974-7622 or c/o janet.gibson-eichner@rbc.com