

Media Relations

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UNH: LESI Improves on Anticipated Strong Summer Travel Season

DURHAM, N.H. – The Lodging Executives Sentiment Index (LESI) for the current period ending April 2014 rebounded, from the decline of the past few months, to 75.0 from 70.8 in March 2014. Overall the lodging executives' sentiment for Present Business Conditions improved during the current period.

“Executive sentiment for near term general business conditions has improved, despite the continuing decline of 12 month future expectations, on anticipation of a strong summer travel season,” said Nelson Barber, associate professor of hospitality management, who manages the index.

Seventy-eight percent of lodging executives indicated current business conditions were good, an increase from 50 percent last period, while 22 percent indicated conditions were normal, up from 50 percent during the same period. During the two periods, no executives indicated present conditions were bad.

Managed by the Department of Hospitality Management at the UNH Peter T. Paul College of Business and Economics, the LESI is based on a monthly survey of lodging executives representing companies with more than 2.5 million hotel rooms across lodging segments and geographic regions of the United States -- more than 55 percent of all U.S. rooms.

Executives are asked about the present and future business conditions, and to report their outlook during the next 12 months about room reservations and employment practices, such as an increase or decrease of their non-managerial work force.

The LESI indices follow the Institute of Supply Management's Index (ISM) method of tracking leading indicators. A LESI survey reading of greater than 50 indicates expansion whereas a reading below 50 indicates decline and the distance from 50 in either direction is indicating the strength of the expansion or decline. During the April period of time, the ISM Index increased to 54.9 from 53.7 in March 2014.

Looking forward 12 months, lodging executives expect hiring of non-managerial employees, as compared to March 2014, to increase in line with April's unemployment rate, published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), which declined to 6.3 compared to March. The ISM Employment Index also improved compared to last period to 54.7, suggesting manufacturing is anticipating new hiring activity.

Looking forward, 22 percent of the executives thought business conditions will be better in the next 12 months, a decrease from 33 percent last period, while 78 percent indicated they will be the same; up from 67 percent last month. During the two periods, no executives indicated future conditions were bad.

For more information about LESI, visit <http://paulcollege.unh.edu/LESI>.

The [UNH Peter T. Paul College of Business and Economics](#) offers a full complement of high-quality programs in business, economics, accounting, finance, information systems management, marketing, and hospitality management. Programs are offered at the undergraduate, graduate, and executive development levels. The college is accredited by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business, the premier accrediting agency for business schools worldwide.

The [University of New Hampshire](#), founded in 1866, is a world-class public research university with the feel of a New England liberal arts college. A land, sea, and space-grant university, UNH is the state's flagship public institution, enrolling 12,200 undergraduate and 2,300 graduate students.

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Nelson Barber, associate professor of hospitality management, is available to discuss the April 2014 LESI report. He can be reached at nelson.barber@unh.edu. The most recent LESI report is available at <http://paulcollege.unh.edu/LESI>.

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