



MARKET & PUBLIC OPINION RESEARCH

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

June 11, 2009

## **Moving the Coyotes to Hamilton is in Best Interests of Hockey According to Most Canadians; Balsillie Trusted More Than Bettman**

A recent NRG Research Group *Lightning Poll*, an overnight telephone survey with 1013 Canadians, was conducted on June 10, 2009 by utilizing a random digit dial sample, ensuring all adult Canadians had an equal chance of being selected. This representative cross section of 1013 adult Canadians is accurate within  $\pm 3.1$  percentage points at a 95% confidence level. In other words, if the entire adult population of Canada had been surveyed, the results of such a census would not differ from this poll of 1013 adult Canadians by more than plus or minus 3.1 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.

On the eve of game seven 7 of the 2009 Stanley Cup finals, an overnight *Lightning Poll* of 1013 adults indicates a majority of Canadians (56%) think moving the Phoenix Coyotes to Hamilton would be in the best interests of hockey, rather than keeping the team in Phoenix (9%). That proportion favouring moving the team to Hamilton rises to 82% among loyal hockey fans.

Twice as many Canadians trust Jim Balsillie (who has offered to buy the team) to do what is best for the sport (38%), as opposed to Gary Bettman, the NHL Commissioner who has resisted moving the team (18%).

The issue of potentially relocating the Phoenix Coyotes to Hamilton has been followed closely by many Canadians:

- Two out of three Canadians (66%) have been following the story, with about half of the country following it closely (46%). [See Figure 1]
- Only one in four Canadians (24%) say they do not care one way or the other if the team stays in Phoenix (supported by 9%) or is moved to Hamilton (supported by 56%). [See Figure 2]
- Among loyal fans of the sport (who constitute about one third, or 34% of Canadians), over four in five think moving the Coyotes to Hamilton would be best for the sport (82%). [See Figure 3]

- In South-Western Ontario, where Jim Balsillie indicates he would like to move the team, 72% support moving the Coyotes there. [See Figure 3]

On the issue of who Canadians trust to do what is best for hockey, twice as many Canadians choose Jim Balsillie (38%) rather than Gary Bettman (18%), although 30% are unsure, 13% say neither, and 1% say that they trust both men to do what is best for the sport. Among loyal fans of hockey, over half trust Jim Balsillie (55%) and only 19% trust Gary Bettman. [See Figure 4]

Bruce Cameron, Senior Vice President of NRG Research Group, noted that:

“In the battle for public opinion, Jim Balsillie is clearly winning over Gary Bettman. The NHL Commissioner is trusted by only a small fraction of hockey fans in Canada to do what is best for the sport.”

**For further information or commentary, contact:**

Bruce Cameron  
Senior Vice President and Managing Director  
NRG Research Group – Alberta  
Tel: 403.209.4110  
Cell: 403.850.4068  
bcameron@nrgresearchgroup.com

**About NRG Research Group**

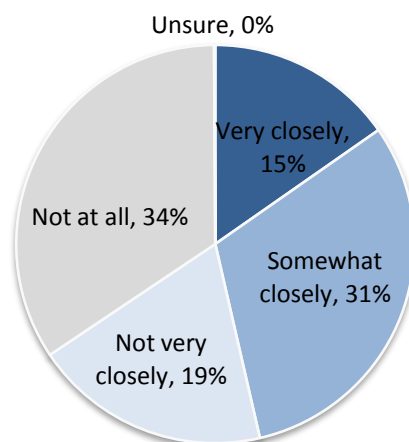
NRG Research Group is a private national market research company with more than 25 years of experience in public affairs and market research for major companies and organizations. NRG Research Group consultants have designed and managed thousands of quantitative and qualitative research projects, including projects with local, provincial, national, and international scope, as well as operating a fan loyalty index for professional sports teams.

NRG Research Group *Lightning Polls* provide accurate overnight results on issues of concern to Canadians.

See [www.nrgresearchgroup.com](http://www.nrgresearchgroup.com) for more information.

FIGURE 1

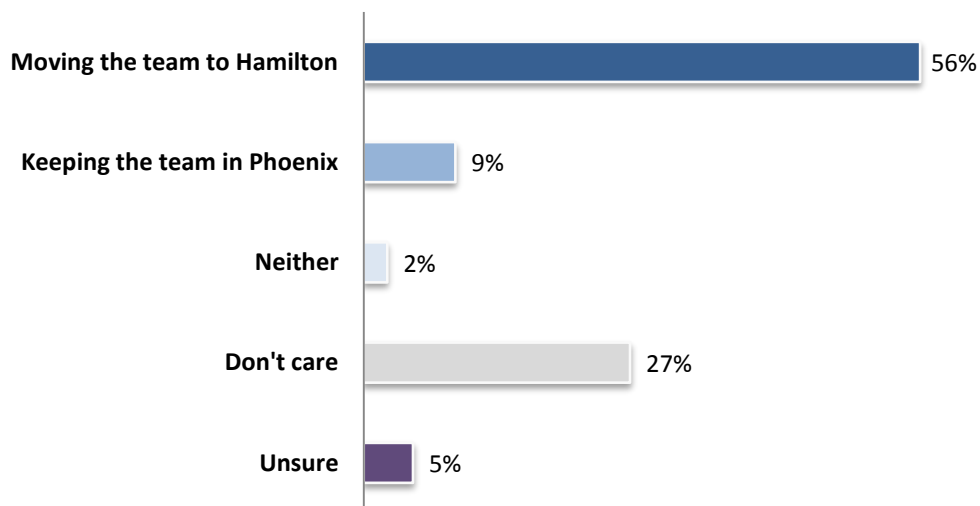
Would you say you have been following the story of  
Balsillie's bid to buy the Phoenix Coyotes...



(n = 1013 Canadians)

FIGURE 2

Which option do you think is best for the sport of hockey  
or do you care?



(n = 1013 Canadians)

FIGURE 3

**Which option do you think is best for the sport of hockey  
or do you care?**

■ Total Canadians (1013) ■ Loyal fans (321) ■ SW Ontario (180)

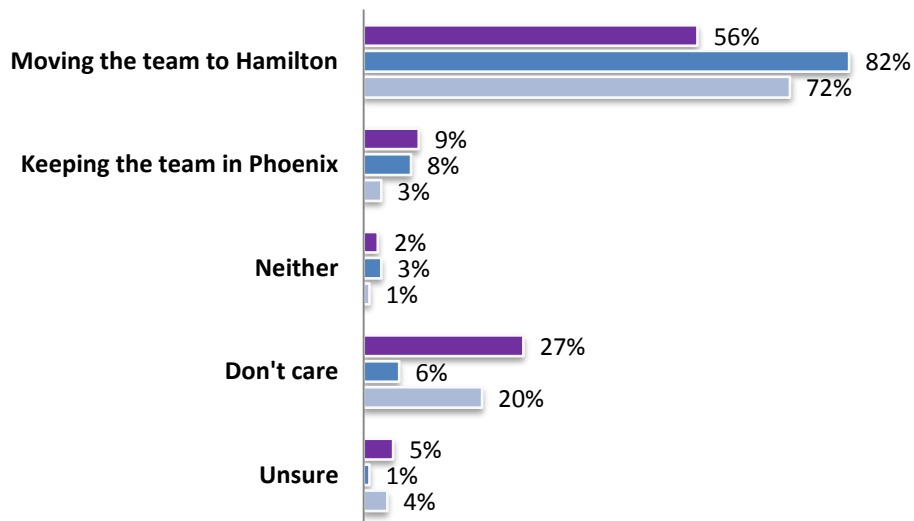
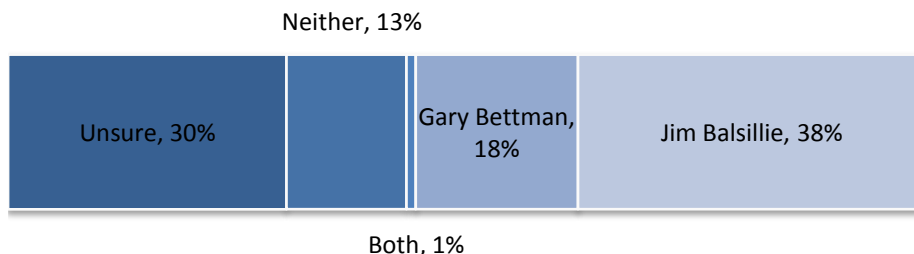


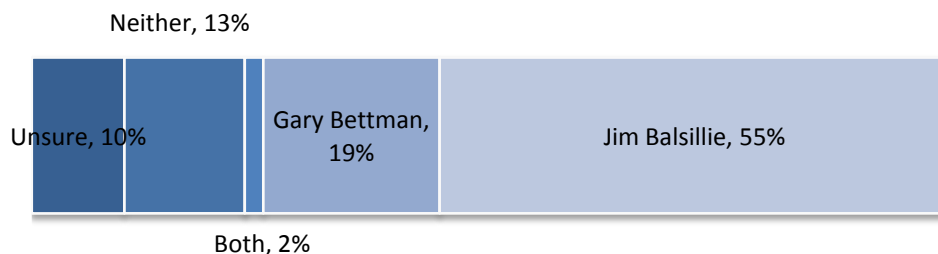
FIGURE 4

Which one of the two men do you trust do to do what is best for professional hockey?

Total Canadians (n=1013)



Loyal Fans (n=321)



SW Ontario (n=180)

