John Edwards is the Chief Economist for Australia and New Zealand for the global financial group, HSBC. In this position he advises the group and its clients on the economic outlook, the direction of exchange rates and interest rates, and on a range of economic policy issues.

Dr Edwards was formerly Chief Economist for SG Australia, and an adviser at Macquarie Bank. While at Macquarie he was also the economic adviser to the Australian member of the APEC Eminent Persons Group and to the Australian members of the APEC Business Council.

From 1991 to 1994 Dr Edwards was principal economic adviser to Treasurer and then Prime Minister, Paul Keating. Earlier in his career Dr Edwards was a political and economic journalist in Sydney, Canberra and Washington. Immediately before joining Mr. Keating, he was the Sydney Morning Herald's correspondent in Washington, DC.

As Chief Economist of HSBC Australia and New Zealand his articles on economic issues have appeared in the Financial Times, The Australian Financial Review, The Australian and other publications, and he is frequently quoted on these issues in the local and international news media and interviewed on television and radio. He has given evidence on economic issues before parliamentary committees, and presented briefings for state and federal officials and ministers. He is also a frequent guest speaker at business forums.

During 200/2001 Dr Edwards was a visiting scholar at the John Curtin Prime Ministerial Library at the University of Technology, Perth. In 1991 and again from 1994 to 1997 he was a visiting scholar in the economic history department at the ANU’s Research School of Social Sciences.

Dr Edwards has published five books, including a best selling biography of the former Prime Minister Keating – the inside story (Viking 1996). His most recent book is Curtin’s Gift (Allen and Unwin 2005).

Dr Edwards also teaches economics at the Macquarie Graduate School of Management, and is a senior research associate with the Lowy Institute for International Policy.

He holds Ph.D. and M Phil degrees in economics from George Washington University and a BA from Sydney University.

Topic:
Savings, Investment and Capital Flows: Australia’s Changing Place in the Asia Pacific Capital Market
Mr Bill Evans
Westpac

J William (Bill) Evans is a graduate of Sydney University (BEC. Hons I and University Medal) and the London School of Economics (M.Sc.). He has worked as a Research Manager for the Reserve Bank of Australia, Treasurer at the Commonwealth Bank of Australia, and prior to joining Westpac in 1991, was Director and Head of Financial Markets at Schroders Australia Limited for 8 years.

Mr Evans joined Westpac in 1991 in the position of Chief Economist and Head of Research. During his time at Westpac he has also spent 2 years in New Zealand as Head of the Institutional Bank with responsibility for Westpac’s corporate and financial markets businesses.

He is currently, General Manager Economics. He is the Bank’s economic spokesman and is responsible for all the Bank’s economic research, in addition to advising the Board on economic issues. He travels frequently, advising Westpac’s customers on the Australian economy and financial markets. He has developed many important contacts in the U.S, Europe and Asia.

Topic:
Global Economic Imbalance: Will Asia be a Willing Participant?
Mr Stephen Halmarick
Citigroup

Stephen Halmarick is a Director and Co-Head of Citigroup Global Markets “Economic and Market Analysis” (EMA) Department for Australia and NZ, based in Sydney. In addition to his Australia/NZ responsibilities, Stephen is also a member of the global Citigroup Currency Research & Strategy team, focusing on the G10 currencies.

Mr Halmarick is responsible for forecasting interest rates, bond yields and currencies in Australia and NZ (working on the fixed income and FX dealing desk in Sydney) and analysis of monetary and fiscal policy. He also works extensively on Federal and State government analysis and the impact of the changing structure of Australia’s bond market.

According to the 2005 INSTO Magazine survey of Australian Fixed Income investors, he was rated No. 1 for research coverage on Australian Commonwealth and semi-government bonds. He has now achieved this result for four consecutive years.

Focussing on the region’s fixed income and FX markets, he authors the “Australian Morning Minute” and the “Australia & NZ Focus & Strategy”, co-authors the “Australia & NZ Weekly”, contributes to EMA’s “Global Economic and Market Outlook” and also issues ad hoc reports on economic, political and market developments in Australia and NZ. Mr. Halmarick also authors “State of the States”, the No. 1 ranked publication on the Australian States and semi-government bond market. He also authors the “Citi FX London Morning Notes” and contributes to the “CitiFX Weekly Strategy”.

Mr. Halmarick is responsible for marketing the Citigroup view on Australian and international markets to fixed income and FX clients in Australia, and Australia/NZ views to clients internationally, particularly in the UK/Europe, the US and Asia. As part of his FX research role, Mr. Halmarick is responsible for marketing the CitiFX G10 currency views to clients within the Asian time-zone.

Mr Halmarick has 20 years experience as a financial markets economist and joined Salomon Smith Barney in 1998 when they purchased NatWest Markets (County NatWest) Australia - where he had worked for 4 years. Shortly after the merger of Salomon Smith Barney and Citibank in late 1998 he was appointed Co-Head of the EMA team. In April 2003 the SSB/Citibank businesses completed their merger and changed their name to Citigroup Global Markets Australia/NZ. He has been at the firm for over 11 years, having previously worked at Nomura Australia (1993-1994), DBSM/SBC Australia (1989-1993) and Westpac (1986-1989).

Mr. Halmarick holds a Bachelors degree in Economics from Macquarie University and a graduate diploma from the Securities Institute of Australia. He holds dealer/research accreditation in both Australia (ie. AFMA) and the US (ie. Series 7) and is a member of the Finance and Treasury Association of Australia (FTA). He is also currently the Treasurer of the Australian Business Economists (ABE).

Topic:
Demand and Supply for Australian Government Debt and the Influence of Asian Central Banks
Dr Ken Henry
Secretary to the Federal Treasury

Dr Ken Henry was appointed Secretary to the Treasury in April 2001. He is ex officio member of the Board of the Reserve Bank of Australia and the Board of Taxation. He is Australia’s Alternate Governor at the IMF. Previous positions include executive director (deputy secretary) of Treasury’s economic group, head of Treasury’s taxation policy division, and minister (economic and financial affairs) in the Australian delegation to the OECD. He was a senior adviser in the office of the Treasurer from 1986 to 1991. He has a PhD in economics from the University of Canterbury (NZ), where he lectured for some years before rejoining the APS in 1984.

Topic:
Economic Imbalances and Integration

Mr Stephen Koukoulas
TD Securities

Stephen Koukoulas is TD Securities’ Chief Strategist, where his research focus is economic and financial market developments in the Asia-Pacific region. The emphasis of his work is developments in Australia and New Zealand.

He has a high profile in the media appearing frequently on news and current affairs programs where he comments on economic data and policy developments.

He was the co-creator of the TD Securities – Melbourne Institute Monthly Inflation Gauge which is now a key data release on the monthly economic calendar given its timeliness and track record in anticipating the official quarterly inflation data.

Prior to joining TD Securities, he was at the Australian Financial Review for three years where he would write comment and opinion pieces for Australia’s premier business newspaper. He was employed by Citibank economics department for five years between 1994 and 1998, and was Chief Economist for the last two years.

Mr Koukoulas began his career as an Economist in the Department of Treasury in Canberra. He holds a Bachelor of Economics degree, with Honours, from the Australian National University.

Topic:
After 15 years of Success, will the RBA Make a Mistake?