

East China Sea: What Australians Think

In January 2015 ACRI commissioned a poll on Australian opinions towards disputed territories in the East China Sea. A representative sample of 1000 people over the age of eighteen were surveyed online by UMR Strategic.



1. China and Japan are in dispute about the ownership of five islands in the East China Sea. The Chinese call them the Diaoyu islands, the Japanese call them the Senkaku islands. Are you aware of this dispute between China and Japan?

53 percent not aware
40 percent aware
7 percent unsure

2. Are you aware that the United States has made a commitment to militarily support Japan if Japan and China come into armed conflict over the islands?

67 percent not aware
24 percent aware
9 percent unsure

3. If armed conflict broke out between Japan, the USA and China over the Senkaku/Diaoyu islands should Australia:

71 percent remain neutral
15 percent support Japan and the US
9 percent unsure
4 percent support China

4. Australia has a security treaty with the USA called ANZUS. Do you think the ANZUS treaty means we have to take sides and support Japan in a conflict with China over these islands?

51 percent no
25 percent unsure
24 percent yes

5. In the event of a war over the islands, if the American President rang the Australian Prime Minister to ask Australia to join the Japanese and Americans, what should he say?

68 percent he should say that Australia remains neutral and will not make a military commitment
17 percent unsure
14 percent he should commit Australia to join Japan and America in war with China

6. If there were conflict between China and Japan and Australia supported Japan in conjunction with the USA, do you think the value of Australia's trade with China would fall?

76 percent yes the value would fall
15 percent unsure
9 percent no, trade would not be affected