



## Essential Report

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With data supplied by



## **Executive Summary**

This short report summarises the results of a weekly omnibus conducted by Essential Research with data provided by Your Source. The omnibus was conducted online from the 19<sup>th</sup> to the 24<sup>th</sup> of May and attracted 1074 respondents.

Aside from the standard question we ask each week on Federal voting intention, this week we ask the Australian public a question related to the fairness of delaying retirement for workers in certain professions. This week we ask a few questions related to class – specifically people’s personal perception of their social status and their personal financial situation. Given the recent announcement of the Federal Budget, we ask people whether they think that it was a fairly good budget for people like them personally and whether they agree with the Government or Opposition’s position on the budget deficit. Finally, this week we ask a question related to Peter Costello’s future in Australian parliament.

The methodology used to carry out this research is available in appendix one (page 10).

Please note not all tables total 100% due to rounding.



## Federal politics – voting intention

Q. If there was a Federal election held today, to which party would you probably give your first preference?

Q. If you 'don't know' on the above question, which party are you currently leaning to?

\*1882 sample size

<b>2 week average</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>2PP</b>	<b>2PP shift from last week</b>
Liberal	33%		
National	2%		
<b>Total Lib/Nat</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>+ 3%</b>
<b>Labor</b>	<b>49%</b>	<b>59%</b>	<b>- 3%</b>
Greens	8%		
Family First	3%		
Other/Independent	5%		

NB. The data in the above table is derived from our weekly first preference voting question. Respondents who select 'don't know' as their first preference are not included in the results.

\* Sample is the culmination of two week's data.



## Raising the retirement age

*Q. Thinking about the Government's decision to raise the pension age from 65 to 67 – do you think that it is fair or unfair for the following types of workers to wait until 67 before being eligible for a pension?*

	Unfair	Fair	Don't know
Manual labourers	72%	18%	10%
Tradesmen	61%	28%	11%
Office workers	36%	53%	12%

Thinking about the Government's decision to raise the pension age from 65 to 67, 72% of people think that it is unfair to raise the pension age for workers in manual labor jobs and 61% think it is unfair to raise the pension age for tradesmen. 53% of people think that it is fair to raise the pension age for office workers.

Coalition voters were more likely than Labor voters to think that it is unfair to raise the pension age for manual laborers (79% v 70%) and tradesmen (70% v 56%).



## Social status

*Q. How would you describe your personal social status?*

	%
Poor	7%
Working class	17%
Lower middle class	16%
Middle class	47%
Upper middle class	9%
Upper class	*
Can't say	4%

Just under half (47%) of those surveyed describe their personal social status as middle class, 17% think they are working class and 16% consider themselves lower middle class.

Coalition voters were more likely than Labor voters to consider themselves middle class (56% v 43%), while Labor voters were more likely than Coalition voters to consider themselves as working class (21% v 15%).

Respondents in full time work were more likely than those in other employment situations to describe their personal social status as middle class (53%).



## Personal financial situation

Q. How would you describe your personal financial situation?

	%
Going backwards	11%
Just keeping my head above water	26%
Managing	52%
Well-off	8%
Wealthy	*
Can't say	2%

52% of people surveyed describe their personal financial situation as managing, while just over one quarter (26%) think that they are just keeping their head above water.

More than half (51%) of those surveyed on low incomes describe their personal financial situation is going backwards.

Respondents in the 25 – 34 year age group were more likely to describe their personal financial situation as as 'just keeping my head above water', while people in the 35 – 44 year age group were more likely to describe their personal financial situation as managing (62%).

Labor voters were more likely to consider their personal financial situation as managing (56%), while Coalition voters were more likely to describe their personal financial situation as well off (12%).



## Federal Budget

Q. Thinking about the Federal Budget, do you think this is a very good budget for you and persons like you, a fairly good budget, a bad budget, or a very bad budget?

	%	Poor	Working class	Lower middle class	Middle class	Upper or upper middle class	Can't say
<b>Total good</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>56%</b>	<b>58%</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>49%</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>46%</b>
<b>Total bad</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>31%</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>13%</b>
Very good	5%	9%	6%	4%	4%	12%	5%
Fairly good	45%	47%	52%	48%	45%	27%	41%
Bad	23%	19%	25%	21%	22%	34%	6%
Very bad	13%	9%	6%	11%	16%	18%	7%
Don't know	14%	17%	12%	16%	12%	10%	41%

Half (50%) of those surveyed think that the Federal Budget is a very good/good budget for them and persons like them and 36% think that it is a very bad/bad budget for them personally and people like them.

High income earners were more likely than low income earners to think that the Federal Budget is very bad/bad for them and persons like them (47% \$1.6K per week or more v 23% \$600 per week or less).

Labor voters were more likely to think that the Federal Budget announced recently is very good/good for them and persons like them (79%), while Coalition voters were more likely to think that it is very bad/bad for them and people like them (67%).

The table above demonstrates that people who consider themselves as poor or working class were more likely to think that the Federal Budget is good/very good for them and persons like them. While people that consider themselves upper or upper middle class were more likely to think that the Federal Budget is bad/very bad for them and persons like them.



## **Budget deficit**

*Q. The Government says it was necessary to have a deficit budget to protect jobs and get Australia out of recession. The Opposition says that the Government has lost control of the economy and has run up too much debt. Which do you agree with most?*

	%	Poor	Working class	Lower middle class	Middle class	Upper or upper middle class	Can't say
The Government	46%	58%	54%	49%	42%	37%	40%
The Opposition	34%	15%	24%	27%	43%	48%	12%
Don't know	20%	27%	22%	24%	15%	16%	48%

In terms of the budget deficit, 46% of people agree with the Government in that it is necessary for the budget to have a deficit to protect jobs and get Australia out of recession. 34% of people agree with the Opposition's opinion that the Government has lost control of the economy and has run up too much debt.

Respondents in the 25 – 34 year old age range were more likely to agree with the position of the Government in that it is necessary for the budget to have a deficit to protect jobs and get Australia out of recession (53%). Respondents aged between 56 – 64 years were more likely to agree with the Opposition's opinion that the Government has lost control of the economy and has run up too much debt (45%).

The position people agreed with followed party lines, with 83% of Labor voters supporting the position of the Government and 80% of Coalition voters supporting the Opposition. Green voters were more likely to support the position of the Government and agree that it was necessary to have a deficit budget to protect jobs and get Australia out of recession (56%).

The table above shows that people that consider themselves poor or working class were more likely to agree with the position of the Government, while people that consider themselves upper middle class or upper class tend to agree with the position of the Opposition.



## Peter Costello

Q. Do you think Peter Costello should –

	2 March 09	This week
Stay in Parliament on the backbench as long as he wants	15%	12%
Challenge for the leadership of the Liberal Party	17%	19%
Take on a senior position in the Liberal Party – such as shadow Treasurer	14%	17%
Resign from Parliament	34%	31%
Don't know	20%	20%

36% of people think that Peter Costello should stay in the Liberal party and take on a more senior role, either challenging for the leadership position (19%) or taking on a more senior position in the Liberal Party – such as shadow Treasurer (17%). 31% of people think that Peter Costello should resign from Parliament.

Liberal voters are most likely to want Peter Costello to either challenge for the leadership (34%) or take on a senior position in the party (26%).

The results are similar to the last time we asked this question in March, however slightly fewer people this week (-3%), think that he should resign from Parliament.



## **Appendix One – Methodology**

The data gathered for this report is gathered from a weekly online omnibus conducted by Your Source. Your Source is an Australian social and market research company specializing in recruitment, field research, data gathering and data analysis. Your Source holds Interviewer Quality Control Australia (IQCA) accreditation, Association Market and Social Research Organisations (AMSRO) membership and World Association of Opinion and Marketing Research Professionals (ESOMAR) membership. Senior Your Source staff hold Australian Market and Social Research Society (AMSRS) membership and are bound by professional codes of behavior.

Essential Research has been utilizing the Your Source online panel to conduct research on a week by week basis since the 19<sup>th</sup> of November 2007. Each Monday, the team at Essential Media Communications discusses issues that are topical. From there a series of questions are devised to put to the Australian public. Some questions are repeated each week (such as political preference and social perspective), while others are unique to each week and reflect prominent media and social issues that are present at the time.

Your Source has a self managed consumer online panel of 109 500. The majority of panel members have been recruited using off line methodologies, effectively ruling out concerns associated with online self selection. Your Source has validation methods in place that prevent panelist over use and ensure member authenticity. Your Source randomly selects 18+ males and females (with the aim of targeting 50/50 males/females) from its Australia wide panel. An invitation is sent out to approximately 7000 – 8000 of their panel members. The response rate varies each week, but usually delivers 1000 + responses. The Your Source online omnibus is live from the Tuesday night of each week and closed on the following Sunday. Incentives are offered to participants in the form of points (referred to as 'Zoints').

EMC uses the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software to analyse the data. The data is weighted against Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) data.

