



## Essential Report

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Level 8, Suite 10  
377 Sussex Street  
Sydney NSW 2000  
Phone 02 8280 9100  
Mobile 0448 801 044

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 24<sup>th</sup> of February to the 1<sup>st</sup> of March and attracted 1116 responses.

Aside from the standard question we ask each week on Federal voting preference, this week we asked respondents to rate which political party (Labor or Liberal) is better at handling a number of economic and employment in Australia. This week we ask respondents what they think Peter Costello should do in terms of his future political career – stay in Parliament on the back bench, challenge the Liberal party leadership, take on a senior position within the leadership – such as shadow Treasurer, or resign from parliament. This week we also ask the Australian public a question related to the emissions trading scheme and the proposed emission reduction targets set by the Government. This week we seek to gauge public support for the calling of early elections at either a State or Federal level.

The methodology used to carry out this research is available in appendix one (page 8).

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?

\* 2085 sample size

<b>2 week average</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>2PP</b>	<b>2PP shift from last week</b>
Liberal	30%		
National	2%		
<b>Total Lib/Nat</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>38%</b>	-
<b>Labor</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>62%</b>	-
Greens	9%		
Family First	2%		
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.



**Economic issues of national importance – party best at**

*Q. Thinking about the Federal Government, which political party does a better job when it comes to:*

	May 08		March 09				
	Labor by a lot/little	Liberal by a lot/little	Labor by a lot/little	Liberal by a lot/little	Labor margin	Neither party	Don't know
Protecting your wages and conditions	51%	19%	51%	15%	+ 36%	19%	15%
Handling the economy in a way that helps ordinary working people	45%	28%	48%	25%	+ 23%	13%	13%
Making taxes fairer	42%	22%	41%	20%	+ 21%	23%	16%
Providing secure well-paid jobs for our children in the future	33%	25%	34%	23%	+ 11%	24%	19%
Ensuring all people benefit when the economy is strong	35%	27%	41%	24%	+ 17%	19%	16%
Planning the economy for the nation's long-term prosperity	35%	34%	34%	23%	+ 11%	15%	18%
Handling the economy	32%	38%	34%	33%	+ 1%	16%	17%
Providing secure well paid jobs	30%	27%	31%	24%	+7%	27%	18%
Keeping unemployment down	28%	39%	29%	31%	- 2%	23%	17%
Handling inflation	28%	30%	29%	31%	- 2%	22%	18%
Keeping interest rates low	21%	27%	36%	24%	+ 12%	24%	17%
Dealing with the current global economic crisis	*	*	43%	21%	+ 22%	19%	17%
Regulating the banks and financial institutions	*	*	36%	17%	+ 19%	30%	17%

\* Not asked in May 2008 poll.

This week, Labor has the highest lead over the Liberal Party when it comes to protecting wages and conditions (+36%), handling the economy in a way that helps ordinary working people (+23%) and dealing with the current economic crisis (+22%).

Labor leads the Liberal Party when it comes to planning for the nation's long-term prosperity (+11%) and keeping interest rates low (+12%). Labor and Liberal are on par in areas that the Liberal Party was once perceived as stronger at managing – such as handling the economy (34% v 33%) and keeping unemployment down (29% v 31%). When it comes to dealing with the current global financial crisis the Labor Party leads the Liberal Party two to one (43% v 21%).

Labor has improved its relative position over the Liberal Party on most issues since May 2008, especially planning the economy for the nation's long-term prosperity (10% shift) and keeping interest rate low (18% shift).



## **Peter Costello's future in Australian parliament**

*Q. Do you think Peter Costello should –*

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

The most preferred option was that Peter Costello should resign from Parliament (34%). 31% believe he should take a senior role in opposition by challenging for the leadership or taking on a shadow ministry.

There was only 15% support for Peter Costello's current position of remaining on the backbench.

Labor voters were more likely to think Peter Costello should resign from Parliament (44%).

Coalition voters were more likely to think Peter Costello should challenge the leadership of the Liberal Party (26%) or take on a senior position such as shadow Treasurer (24%). 20% of Coalition voters think Peter Costello should stay in Parliament on the backbench as long as he wants and 18% think that he should resign from the Parliament.



## **Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme**

*Q. Thinking about the Government's proposed emissions trading scheme (called the carbon pollution reduction scheme) to address climate change by which the Government aims to reduce emissions by 5-15% by 2020 - do you think the Government should –*

	<b>%</b>
Strengthen the scheme by setting a higher target	32%
Keep the target set	33%
Delay introduction of the scheme	9%
Abandon the scheme	10%
Don't know	16%

The majority (65%) of Australians surveyed support the introduction of the emissions trading scheme – 33% think the Government should keep the target set and 32% think the Government should strengthen the scheme by setting a higher target. There is very little support for delaying (9%) or abandoning the scheme (10%).

40% of Labor voters think the Government should keep the target set, while 37% of Labor voters think the Government should strengthen the scheme by increasing the target. Coalition voters are more likely to support the introduction of the emissions trading scheme than think that the scheme should be abandoned or delayed (48% v 40%).

Coalition voters were more likely to think the Government should abandon the emissions trading scheme (22%). 72% of Green voters think the Government should strengthen the scheme by increasing the target.

Respondents aged 18 – 24 were more likely to think the Government should strengthen the emissions trading scheme by setting a higher reduction target (48%) while respondents aged 50 years and over were more likely to think the Government should abandon the scheme (19%).



**Government's (State or Federal) calling early elections**

*Q. In the current economic climate, do you approve or disapprove of Governments, State or Federal, calling early elections?*

	<b>%</b>
<b>Total approve</b>	<b>21%</b>
<b>Total disapprove</b>	<b>40%</b>
Strongly approve	6%
Approve	15%
Disapprove	27%
Strongly disapprove	13%
Neither approve nor disapprove	31%
Don't know	8%

More people (40%) disapprove of Governments, State or Federal, calling early elections, while 21% approve.

Coalition voters were more likely than Labor voters to disapprove of Governments, State or Federal calling early elections (50% v 40%).



## **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 Wednesday of each week and closed on the following Tuesday. 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.

