



Essential Report

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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 3rd of March to the 9th of March and attracted 1072 responses.

Aside from the standard question we ask each week on Federal voting preference, this week we pose a series of attributes to describe the Labor and Liberal party and ask respondents to indicate whether they think these descriptions are accurate or not. This week we ask respondents a question related to limiting pay and bonuses for executive salaries. This week we also ask respondents whether they support a taxpayer-funded maternity leave scheme. Given the recent bushfires in Victoria and the floods in Queensland, we ask respondents whether these events have increased their concern regarding the impact of climate change. This week we also ask Australians how confident they are the Australian economy can withstand the current global financial crisis.

The methodology used to carry out this research is available in appendix one (page 9).

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?

*1980 sample size

2 week average	%	2PP	2PP shift from last week
Liberal	33%		
National	2%		
Total Lib/Nat	35%	40%	+ 2%
Labor	50%	60%	- 2%
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.



Political party characteristics

Q. Here is a list of things both favourable and unfavourable that have been said about various political parties. Which statements do you feel fit the Labor Party? And which statements do you feel fit the Liberal Party?

	Labor	Liberal
Keeps its promises	55%	31%
Has a good team of leaders	61%	31%
Moderate	70%	57%
Professional in its approach	67%	50%
Understands the problems facing Australia	64%	45%
Looks after the interests of working families	65%	31%
Extreme	20%	29%
Out of touch with ordinary people	39%	56%
Divided	30%	68%
Will promise to do anything to win votes	54%	65%
Too dominated by its leader	31%	31%

The key characteristic for the Labor party is moderate (70%) while the key characteristic for the Liberal party is divided (68%).

Labor has a strong lead over Liberal when it comes to 'having a good team of leaders' (Labor leads Liberal by 30%) and 'looks after the interest of working families' (Labor leads Liberal by 34%).



Limit pay and bonuses on executive salaries

Q. Do you agree or disagree that businesses that receive Government support during the economic downturn should be required to meet obligations in return, including limits on the pay and bonuses for executives?

	%
Total agree	85%
Total disagree	2%
Strongly agree	59%
Agree	26%
Neither agree or disagree	10%
Disagree	1%
Strongly disagree	1%
Don't know	3%

An overwhelming majority (85%) of Australians surveyed agree/strongly agree that businesses that receive Government support during the economic downturn should be required to meet obligations in return, including limits on the pay and bonuses for executives.

74% of respondents aged over 50 years and 64% of respondents aged 35 – 49 strongly agree that businesses that receive Government support during the economic downturn should be required to meet obligations in return, including limits on the pay and bonuses for executives.

There were no real differences in terms of voting intention.



Concern regarding climate change

Q. Have the recent Victorian bushfires and Queensland floods caused you to be much more concerned about the impact of climate change, somewhat more concerned or have they made little difference in your overall view of the impact of climate change?

	%
Much more concerned	16%
Somewhat more concerned	34%
Made little difference	46%
Don't know	4%

Half (50%) of those surveyed indicated that the recent Victorian bushfires and Queensland floods have caused them to be much more concerned/somewhat more concerned in their overall view about the impact of climate change. 46% of people think that the recent events have made no difference to their overall view of the impact of climate change.

Females were more likely than males to indicate that the recent Victorian bushfires and Queensland floods have caused them to be much more concerned/somewhat more concerned in their overall view about the impact of climate change (58% v 43%). Males were most likely to indicate that the recent Victorian bushfires and Queensland floods have made no difference to their overall view of the impact of climate change (50%).

72% of Green voters and 56% of Labor voters indicated that the recent Victorian bushfires and Queensland floods have caused them to be much more concerned/somewhat more concerned in their overall view about the impact of climate change. Coalition voters were most likely to indicate that the recent Victorian bushfires and Queensland floods have made no difference to their overall view of the impact of climate change (55%).

Respondents in Victoria were most likely to think that the recent Victorian bushfires and Queensland floods have caused them to be much more concerned in their overall view about the impact of climate change (25%) while respondents based in Queensland were more likely to think that the recent events have made no difference to their overall view about climate change (52%).



Taxpayer-funded maternity leave scheme

Q. The Productivity Commission has recommended a taxpayer-funded maternity leave scheme where women would be paid \$540 a week for 18 weeks' leave. Do you think the Government should introduce such a scheme as soon as possible, in stages over several years or should it not introduce such a scheme?

	%
Introduce as soon as possible	26%
Introduce in stages	32%
Not introduce	35%
Don't know	8%

More than half (58%) of those surveyed support a taxpayer-funded maternity leave scheme where women would be paid \$540 a week for 18 weeks' leave – 32% support the introduction of such a scheme in stages and 26% support the introduction of the scheme as soon as possible. 35% of people surveyed do not support the introduction of a taxpayer-funded maternity leave scheme where women would be paid \$540 a week for 18 weeks' leave.

Females were most likely to support the introduction of the taxpayer-funded maternity leave scheme where women would be paid \$540 a week for 18 weeks' leave as soon as possible (32%) as were people between the ages of 25 – 34 (46%).

Green voters were most likely to support the introduction of the taxpayer-funded maternity leave scheme where women would be paid \$540 a week for 18 weeks' leave as soon as possible (45%), Labor voters were most likely so support the introduction of the scheme in stages (38%), while Coalition voters were most likely to not support the introduction of a taxpayer-funded maternity leave scheme (51%).



Confidence in Australian economy to withstand the global financial crisis

Q. How confident are you that the Australian economy can withstand the current global financial crisis?

	13 Oct 08	20 Oct 08	12 Jan 09	16 Feb 09	10 Mar 09
Total confident	52%	63%	61%	60%	53%
Total not confident	42%	31%	34%	35%	41%
Very confident	7%	10%	6%	8%	6%
Quite confident	45%	53%	55%	52%	47%
Not very confident	33%	25%	29%	30%	33%
Not confident at all	9%	6%	5%	5%	8%
No opinion	7%	6%	5%	5%	5%

Confidence that the Australian economy can withstand the current global financial crisis has dropped since we last asked this question in February by seven percentage points, with 53% of Australians very confident/quite confident the Australian economy can withstand the current global financial crisis.



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 19th 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.

