



**6 June 2011**



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With data supplied by



## **Executive Summary**

This report summarises the results of a weekly omnibus conducted by Essential Research with data provided by Your Source. The survey was conducted online from 1<sup>st</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> June 2011 and is based on 1,047 respondents.

Aside from the standard question on voting intention, this week's report includes on issues of importance, Tony Abbott's performance, the balance of power and the cost of living.

The methodology used to carry out this research is available in appendix on page 10.

Please note that due to rounding, not all tables necessarily total 100% and subtotals may also vary.



**Federal politics – voting intention**

*Q. If a Federal Election was held today to which party will you probably give your first preference vote? If not sure, which party are you currently leaning toward?*

*Q. If don't know -Well which party are you currently leaning to?*

sample size = 1,929

First preference/leaning to	Election 21 Aug 10	4 weeks ago	2 weeks ago	Last week	This week
Liberal		44%	44%	44%	44%
National		3%	3%	3%	2%
<b>Total Lib/Nat</b>	<b>43.6</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>46%</b>
<b>Labor</b>	<b>38.0</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>34%</b>
Greens	11.8	10%	12%	12%	12%
Other/Independent	6.6	8%	8%	8%	8%

2PP	Election 21 Aug 10	4 weeks ago	2 weeks ago	Last week	This week
Total Lib/Nat	<b>49.9%</b>	<b>54%</b>	<b>53%</b>	<b>54%</b>	<b>53%</b>
Labor	<b>50.1%</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>47%</b>

NB. The data in the above tables comprise 2-week averages derived the first preference/leaning to voting questions. Respondents who select 'don't know' are not included in the results. The two-party preferred estimate is calculated by distributing the votes of the other parties according to their preferences at the 2010 election.



## Important election issues

Q. Which are the three most important issues in deciding how you would vote at a Federal election?

	One	Two	Three	Total	24 Jan 11	11 Oct 10	25 Jan 10
Management of the economy	34%	18%	9%	61%	65%	62%	63%
Ensuring a quality education for all children	6%	10%	10%	26%	26%	32%	23%
Ensuring the quality of Australia's health system	15%	15%	19%	49%	49%	48%	48%
Protecting the environment	4%	6%	5%	15%	13%	12%	16%
A fair industrial relations system	2%	3%	3%	8%	10%	11%	*
Political leadership	6%	6%	5%	17%	16%	16%	23%
Addressing climate change	6%	4%	5%	15%	10%	11%	16%
Controlling interest rates	3%	5%	5%	13%	21%	17%	15%
Australian jobs and protection of local industries	9%	11%	12%	32%	30%	30%	33%
Ensuring a quality water supply	1%	1%	3%	5%	6%	6%	12%
Housing affordability	4%	6%	6%	16%	16%	17%	14%
Ensuring a fair taxation system	3%	6%	8%	17%	18%	16%	14%
Security and the war on terrorism	2%	2%	4%	8%	5%	6%	9%
Treatment of asylum seekers	1%	2%	2%	5%	5%	5%	*
Managing population growth	2%	4%	6%	12%	11%	10%	*

\*Not asked

61% of people surveyed rated management of the economy as one of their three most important issues, followed by 49% ensuring the quality of Australia's health system and 32% Australian jobs and protection of local industries.

Since January, there has been an increase in the importance of addressing climate change (from 10% to 15%) and a decrease in the importance of controlling interest rates (from 21% to 13%).

## Important election issues

Q. Which are the three most important issues in deciding how you would vote at a Federal election?

	Total	Labor	Liberal/ National	Green
Management of the economy	61%	60%	76%	28%
Ensuring a quality education for all children	26%	29%	24%	27%
Ensuring the quality of Australia's health system	49%	50%	50%	51%
Protecting the environment	15%	17%	10%	52%
A fair industrial relations system	8%	12%	4%	4%
Political leadership	17%	16%	20%	16%
Addressing climate change	15%	23%	6%	45%
Controlling interest rates	13%	15%	13%	6%
Australian jobs and protection of local industries	32%	28%	36%	12%
Ensuring a quality water supply	5%	5%	3%	7%
Housing affordability	16%	16%	13%	16%
Ensuring a fair taxation system	17%	14%	19%	16%
Security and the war on terrorism	8%	4%	13%	1%
Treatment of asylum seekers	5%	3%	5%	12%
Managing population growth	12%	12%	12%	9%

There were few substantial differences between voters on issues they considered important. Compared to the average, Labor voters are more likely to rate addressing climate change (23%) as important.

Liberal/National voters attach more importance to management of the economy (76%) and security and the war on terrorism (13%) while Greens voters are more likely to nominate protecting the environment (52%), addressing climate change (45%) and treatment of asylum seekers (12%).

## Party trust to handle important election issues

Q. And which party would you trust most to handle the following issues?

	Labor	Liberal	Greens	Don't know
Management of the economy	29%	47%	3%	22%
Ensuring a quality education for all children	38%	35%	5%	23%
Ensuring the quality of Australia's health system	33%	35%	6%	25%
Protecting the environment	18%	21%	39%	23%
A fair industrial relations system	40%	31%	4%	24%
Political leadership	26%	38%	5%	31%
Addressing climate change	21%	24%	29%	26%
Controlling interest rates	26%	44%	3%	28%
Protecting Australian jobs and protection of local industries	35%	35%	4%	26%
Ensuring a quality water supply	21%	28%	22%	29%
Housing affordability	26%	34%	4%	35%
Ensuring a fair taxation system	29%	37%	4%	30%
Security and the war on terrorism	25%	40%	3%	32%
Treatment of asylum seekers	19%	39%	11%	31%
Managing population growth	21%	36%	7%	36%

Labor is the most trusted party on only one issue – a fair industrial relations system. There is little difference between Labor and the Liberals for ensuring a quality education for all children, ensuring the quality of Australia's health system and protecting Australian jobs and protection of local industries.

This represents a weakening in Labor's position over the last few months. In January Labor was trusted most to handle ensuring a quality education for all children and in October Labor also had a significant lead on protecting Australian jobs and protection of local industries.

## Performance of Tony Abbott

*Q. Which of the following statements is closest to your view about the performance of Tony Abbott as Opposition leader?*

	<b>7 Mar 11</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Vote Labor</b>	<b>Vote Lib/Nat</b>	<b>Vote Greens</b>
Tony Abbott is performing the role of Opposition leader well and is keeping the Government accountable	41%	42%	11%	78%	13%
Tony Abbott is just opposing everything and is obstructing the work of the Government	43%	44%	78%	13%	73%
Don't know	16%	15%	11%	10%	14%

42% believe that Tony Abbott is performing the role of Opposition leader well and is keeping the Government accountable and 44% think he is just opposing everything and is obstructing the work of the Government. These figures have not changed significantly since March and views very much follow party preferences.

45% of men think he is performing the role of Opposition leader well compared to 38% of women and 51% of those aged 55+ think he is just opposing everything compared to 40% of those aged under 35.

## Balance of Power

*Q. Do you think the independents and Greens holding the balance of power in Parliament has been good or bad for Australia?*

	7 Mar 11	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens
<b>Total good</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>77%</b>
<b>Total bad</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>68%</b>	<b>6%</b>
Very good	7%	9%	11%	3%	40%
Good	20%	19%	29%	8%	37%
Neither good nor bad	33%	33%	41%	21%	17%
Bad	22%	21%	13%	33%	5%
Very bad	19%	18%	6%	35%	1%

28% of respondents think the independents and Greens holding the balance of power in Parliament has been good for Australia and 39% bad. This is very similar to the results obtained for this question in March. The only substantial change is that Labor voters are now more positive – in March they responded 33% good/25% bad.



## **Cost of Living**

Q. What do you think is the main reason for the increasing cost of living?

	<b>Total</b>	<b>Vote Labor</b>	<b>Vote Lib/Nat</b>	<b>Vote Greens</b>
The strong Australian dollar	17%	30%	9%	17%
Excessive company profits	18%	24%	10%	27%
Lack of competition	14%	18%	9%	24%
Economic management of the Federal Government	28%	8%	51%	9%
Economic management of State Governments	6%	3%	8%	6%
Wage increases	4%	3%	4%	3%
Don't know	14%	14%	8%	14%

28% believe that economic management of the Federal Government is the main reason for the increasing cost of living. 18% blame excessive company profits and 17% the strong Australian dollar. Only 4% said wage increases.

Most of those blaming the Federal Government were Liberal/National voters. Labor voters nominated the strong Australian dollar and excessive company profits while Greens votes said excessive company profits and lack of competition.

## **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 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 over 100,000 members. 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.

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.

