



25 October 2010



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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 19th October to 24th October 2010 and is based on 1,002 respondents.

Aside from the standard question on voting intention, this week's report includes questions on the war in Afghanistan, the Murray Darling Basin Plan, and asylum seekers.

The methodology used to carry out this research is available in appendix on page 11.

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 = 1,873

First preference/leaning to	6 months ago	4 weeks ago	2 weeks ago	Last week	This week
Liberal	36%	40%	42%	42%	41%
National	3%	3%	2%	2%	3%
Total Lib/Nat	39%	43%	44%	44%	44%
Labor	42%	42%	41%	40%	41%
Greens	9%	9%	8%	9%	8%
Other/Independent	10%	6%	7%	7%	7%

2PP	6 months ago	4 weeks ago	2 weeks ago	Last week	This week
Total Lib/Nat	46%	49%	49%	50%	50%
Labor	54%	51%	51%	50%	50%

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.



War in Afghanistan

Q. Thinking about the Australian troops in Afghanistan, do you think Australia should –

	Total 25 Oct 10	Labor	Liberal	Greens		30 March 09	21 June 10	11 Oct 10
Increase the number of troops in Afghanistan	10%	10%	12%	10%		14%	7%	13%
Keep the same number of troops in Afghanistan	30%	31%	34%	23%		24%	24%	24%
Withdraw our troops from Afghanistan	47%	49%	45%	55%		50%	61%	49%
Don't know	14%	10%	8%	12%		12%	8%	14%

47% say Australia should withdraw our troops from Afghanistan, 30% say we should keep the same number and 10% say we should increase troop numbers. The support for keeping the same number of troops in Afghanistan has increased by 6% since previous surveys.

Support for withdrawal is highest among Greens voters (55%) and those on higher incomes (54% of those earning over \$1,600 per week).

Support for maintaining or increasing troop numbers is highest among Liberal/National voters (46%), men (46%) and those aged 55+ (48%).

Leader and Party most trusted to handle the war in Afghanistan

Q. Which leader and party would you trust most to handle our involvement in the war in Afghanistan?

Julia Gillard and the Labor Party	33%
Tony Abbott and the Liberal Party	32%
Bob Brown and the Greens	7%
Don't know	28%

Respondents were split over which leader and party they would trust most to handle our involvement in the war in Afghanistan. 33% prefer Julia Gillard and the Labor Party and 32% prefer Tony Abbott and the Liberal Party.

Those aged 55+ prefer the Liberal Party over the Labor Party 40% to 34%.

Taking water for irrigation from Murray Darling

Q. Do you agree or disagree that the amount of water currently taken from the Murray-Darling river system for irrigation should be reduced?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens
Total agree	49%	51%	47%	62%
Total disagree	20%	17%	30%	14%
Strongly agree	19%	21%	16%	33%
Agree	30%	30%	31%	29%
Disagree	13%	11%	18%	6%
Strongly disagree	7%	6%	12%	8%
Don't know	31%	32%	23%	23%

49% agree that the amount of water currently taken from the Murray-Darling river system for irrigation should be reduced and 20% disagree – 31% could not give an opinion. All demographic groups show higher agreement than disagreement.

Statements about Economic Impact

Q. Which of the following statements is closest to your view?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens
Time is running out and strong action must be taken to restore the health of the Murray Darling river system even if it means some job losses or other economic impact	47%	52%	42%	74%
Protecting the economic well being of local communities and jobs must be the first priority in any decisions made about the Murray Darling river system	31%	28%	42%	13%
Don't know	22%	20%	16%	13%

47% agreed that “strong action must be taken to restore the health of the Murray Darling river system even if it means some job losses or other economic impact “ while 31% agreed more with the statement “protecting the economic well being of local communities and jobs must be the first priority”.

A majority of Labor (52%) and Greens voters (74%) agreed that “strong action must be taken to restore the health of the Murray Darling river system even if it means some job losses or other economic impact” while Liberal/National voters were split (42%/42)%.

Moving children out of detention centres

Q. Do you approve or disapprove of the Federal Government's decision to move children and their families out of immigration detention centres and allow them to live in the community while their cases are being processed?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens
Total approve	33%	42%	24%	63%
Total disapprove	53%	45%	67%	28%
Strongly approve	11%	15%	4%	39%
Approve	22%	27%	20%	24%
Disapprove	24%	22%	29%	12%
Strongly disapprove	29%	23%	38%	16%
Don't know	13%	13%	9%	8%

53% disapproved the Federal Government's decision to move children and their families out of immigration detention centres and allow them to live in the community while their cases are being processed and 33% approved.

63% of Greens voters approved, 67% of Liberal/National voters disapproved and Labor voters were split 42% approve/45% disapprove.

By gender – men 38% approve/50% disapprove, women 28% approve/57% disapprove.

Asylum Seekers

Q. Do you think the Federal Labor Government is too tough or too soft on asylum seekers or is it taking the right approach?

	This week	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens		12 July 10	4 April 10
Too tough	7%	9%	3%	28%		10%	6%
Too soft	63%	49%	83%	33%		56%	65%
Taking the right approach	18%	31%	7%	30%		21%	18%
Don't know	12%	10%	7%	9%		13%	11%

63% of respondents believe that the Federal Labor Government is too soft on asylum seekers (up 7% since the last survey in July), 7% think they are too tough and 18% think they are taking the right approach.

Only 31% of Labor voters and 30% of Greens voters think the Government is taking the right approach.

Party trust to handle Asylum Seeker issue

Q. Which party would you trust most to handle the issue of asylum seekers

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens
The Labor Party	25%	57%	2%	38%
The Liberal Party	37%	8%	80%	8%
No difference	25%	27%	11%	46%
Don't know	13%	8%	7%	8%

37% of respondents trust the Liberal Party most to handle the asylum seeker issue and 25% trust the Labor Party most.

57% of Labor voters trust the Labor Party most and 80% of Liberal/National voters trust the Liberal Party most. 46% of Greens voters and 55% of other voters think there is no difference between the Labor and Liberal Parties on the issue.



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.

