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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 omnibus was conducted online from the 10th to the 14th of March and obtained 1,000 responses.

Aside from the standard question on voting intention, this week we ask Australians which parental leave scheme they support - the Liberal's or the Labor Party's scheme. This week we ask questions about media usage and which media sources people trust to go to. We also ask people to rate the Labor and Liberal parties against a series of attributes.

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?

*1,908 sample size

2 week average	%	2PP	2PP shift from last week
Liberal	35%		
National	3%		
Total Lib/Nat	38%	44%	-2%
Labor	45%	56%	+2%
Greens	9%		
Family First	2%		
Other/Independent	6%		

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 polling data.



Parental leave policy

Q. The Opposition leader Tony Abbott has proposed a scheme to give new parents 26 weeks leave at their normal rate of pay to be paid for by a 1.7 per cent levy on large companies. The Rudd Government plans to introduce a scheme to give new parents 18 weeks leave at the minimum wage rate paid for by the Government. Which scheme do you support more?

	%
The Government's scheme	40%
The Opposition's scheme	24%
Neither	27%
Don't know	10%

40% of respondents supported the Government's parent leave scheme, 24% supported the Opposition's scheme and 27% supported neither.

Among Labor voters, 61% supported the Government's scheme and 15% supported the Opposition's. However, only 37% of Coalition voters supported the Opposition's scheme - 20% supported the Government scheme and 35% supported neither.

Young people were more likely to support the Opposition's scheme – of those aged under 35, 35% supported the Opposition's scheme and 39% the Government's. Older respondents were more likely to support neither scheme – of those aged 45-64, 36% supported neither scheme, 42% the Government scheme and 14% the Opposition's.

Men and women showed similar levels of support.



Attributes of the Labor Party

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?

	6 Jul 09	14 Mar 10	% change
Moderate	65%	63%	-2%
Will promise to do anything to win votes	57%	63%	+6%
Looks after the interests of working families	61%	57%	-4%
Professional in its approach	59%	55%	-4%
Understands the problems facing Australia	62%	54%	-8%
Has a good team of leaders	60%	52%	-8%
Out of touch with ordinary people	44%	48%	+4%
Too dominated by its leader	39%	45%	+6%
Divided	30%	36%	+6%
Keeps its promises	44%	33%	-11%
Extreme	25%	26%	+1%

The Labor Party's main attributes were being moderate (63%), will promise anything to win votes (63%), looks after the interests of working families (57%) and professional in its approach (55%).

Since these questions were last asked in July 2009, most of Labor's positive attributes have declined a little and the negative attributes increased. Main changes since last July were keeps its promises (down 11% to 33%), has a good team of leaders (down 8% to 52%) and understands the problems facing Australia (down 8% to 54%).

Note that the 2PP voting intention for 6 July 2009 was 59%-41% compared to the current 56%-44%.



Attributes of the Liberal Party

Q. And which statements do you feel fit the Liberal Party?

	6 July 09	14 Mar 10	% change
Will promise to do anything to win votes	67%	72%	+5%
Divided	74%	66%	-8%
Out of touch with ordinary people	62%	58%	-4%
Moderate	50%	50%	-
Professional in its approach	41%	47%	+6%
Too dominated by its leader	34%	44%	+10%
Understands the problems facing Australia	44%	43%	-1%
Extreme	36%	38%	+2%
Looks after the interests of working families	31%	35%	+4%
Has a good team of leaders	29%	31%	+2%
Keeps its promises	28%	23%	-5%

The Liberal Party's main attributes were - will promise anything to win votes (72%), divided (66%) and out of touch with ordinary people (58%).

Main changes since last July were – too dominated by its leader (up 10% to 44%), divided (down 8% to 66%) and professional in its approach (up 6% to 47%).



Party attributes comparison

	Labor	Liberal	% difference
Looks after the interests of working families	57%	35%	+22%
Has a good team of leaders	52%	31%	+21%
Moderate	63%	50%	+13%
Understands the problems facing Australia	54%	43%	+11%
Keeps its promises	33%	23%	+10%
Professional in its approach	55%	47%	+8%
Too dominated by its leader	45%	44%	+1%
Will promise to do anything to win votes	63%	72%	-9%
Out of touch with ordinary people	48%	58%	-10%
Extreme	26%	38%	-12%
Divided	36%	66%	-30%

The Labor Party maintains significant leads over the Liberal Party on all positive attributes – in particular, looks after the interests of working families (+22%), has a good team of leaders (+21%), moderate (+11%), understands the problems facing Australia (+11%) and keeps its promises (+10%).

The Liberal Party is more likely to be considered divided (-30%), extreme (-12%) and out of touch with ordinary people (-10%).



Media usage

Q. How frequently do you read, listen to or watch the following?

	Daily	Several times a week	About once a week	Less often	Never	Don't know
Commercial TV news and current affairs	48%	27%	12%	8%	5%	1%
News and opinion in daily newspapers	26%	22%	24%	16%	11%	1%
Commercial radio news and current affairs	24%	22%	13%	20%	19%	1%
News and opinion websites	23%	22%	17%	19%	17%	2%
ABC TV news and current affairs	19%	21%	18%	23%	18%	1%
ABC radio news and current affairs	15%	13%	10%	28%	33%	2%
Commercial radio talkback programs	13%	12%	12%	26%	36%	1%
ABC radio talkback programs	8%	10%	10%	26%	45%	2%
Internet blogs	6%	9%	13%	29%	41%	3%

Commercial TV news and current affairs was the most used news and opinion media (48% watch daily). 26% read newspapers daily, 24% commercial radio news and current affairs and 23% news and opinion websites.

Newspapers tend to be read more by older people (38% of 65+ years read daily). 65% of those aged 55+ watch commercial TV news and current affairs daily. Internet news and opinion websites have similar patterns of usage across age groups but internet bogs are mostly used by those aged under 35 (10% daily).



Trust in media

Q. How much trust do you have in what you read or hear in the following media?

	A lot	Some	Not much	None	Don't know/use
ABC TV news and current affairs	25%	45%	14%	3%	13%
ABC radio news and current affairs	20%	42%	15%	4%	19%
Commercial TV news and current affairs	9%	55%	26%	5%	5%
News and opinion in daily newspapers	9%	53%	26%	4%	7%
Commercial radio news and current affairs	7%	47%	29%	6%	10%
ABC radio talkback programs	6%	39%	24%	5%	25%
News and opinion websites	5%	44%	31%	6%	15%
Commercial radio talkback programs	3%	35%	32%	11%	19%
Internet blogs	2%	18%	40%	15%	25%

ABC TV and radio news and current affairs were the most trusted media (25% and 20% respectively have a lot of trust).

Commercial TV news and current affairs programs have the highest consumption, but only 9% say they have a lot of trust in them. And although consumption of newspapers and internet news sites is very similar, newspapers are considered more trustworthy (62% compared to 49% have a lot/some trust in them).



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 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.

