



Essential Report

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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 17th to the 23rd of August and attracted 1028 respondents.

Aside from the standard question we ask each week on Federal voting intention, this week we ask people whether they think that Prime Minister would be justified in calling an early election if the Opposition continues to reject an Emissions Trading Scheme. This week we ask a number of questions related to the economy – specifically whether people think the economic situation in Australia will get better or worse over the next 12 months and whether people think the economy is starting to improve. This week we ask people who they would like to see as the next Australian Ambassador to the USA and for people’s opinion on the state of the Liberal party.

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?

* 1942 sample size

2 week average	%	2PP	2PP shift from last week
Liberal	33%		
National	3%		
Total Lib/Nat	36%	42%	-
Labor	48%	58%	-
Greens	8%		
Family First	4%		
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.



Emissions Trading Scheme and an early election

Q. If the Opposition continues to refuse to pass the Government's legislation for the Emissions Trading Scheme to address climate change, do you think Prime Minister Kevin Rudd would be justified in calling an early election?

	28 Apr 09*	9 June 09**	This week
Yes	41%	33%	29%
No	29%	37%	38%
Don't know	30%	30%	33%

29% of people surveyed think the Prime Minister Kevin Rudd would be justified in calling an early election if the Opposition continues to refuse to pass the Government's legislation for an Emission Trading Scheme. 38% do not support the calling of an early election and 33% don't know. Support for an early election has fallen from April and June.

Labor and Green voters were more likely to support the calling of an early election if the Opposition continues to block the Emission Trading Scheme legislation (42% Labor and 42% Green), while Coalition voters were more likely to oppose an early election (54%).

** Question asked: If the Opposition continues to oppose the Government's financial measures and other legislation, do you think Prime Minister Kevin Rudd would be justified in calling an early election?*

*** Question asked: If the Opposition refuses to pass the Government's legislation for the Emissions Trading Scheme to address climate change, do you think Prime Minister Kevin Rudd would be justified in calling an early election?*

Economic conditions in Australia over the next 12 months

Q. Over the next 12 months do you think economic conditions in Australia will get better, get worse or stay much the same?

	1 Dec 08	23 Feb 09	18 May 09	15 Jun 09	6 Jul 09	21 Aug 09
Total better	21%	19%	25%	43%	50%	55%
Total worse	61%	65%	56%	37%	31%	23%
Get a lot better	2%	2%	2%	5%	7%	9%
Get a little better	19%	17%	23%	38%	43%	46%
Get a little worse	45%	42%	37%	28%	23%	17%
Get a lot worse	16%	23%	19%	9%	8%	6%
Stay much the same	13%	12%	13%	17%	15%	18%
No opinion	5%	4%	5%	3%	4%	3%

55% of people surveyed think that over the next 12 months, economic conditions in Australia will get a lot better/a little better – this is an increase of five percentage points since we last asked this in July. Optimism about the economy has increased substantially since we first began tracking this question and most significantly since we asked this question in February 2009 (+36%).

Labor voters were more likely to think that economic conditions in Australia will get better over the next 12 months (64%), while Green and voters were more likely to think they will get worse (31% Green, 28% Coalition).

People aged 55 years and over were more likely to think economic conditions will get better (61%), while those aged 35 – 44 years were more likely to think conditions will get worse over the next 12 months (31%).



Australian economy starting to improve

Q. Do you think the Australian economy is over the worst of the slowdown resulting from the global financial crisis and is starting to improve or do you think it will still get worse before it starts to improve?

	20 Jul 09	This week
Starting to improve	52%	62%
Will get worse	31%	23%
Don't know	17%	16%

62% of people surveyed think the Australian economy is over the worst of the slowdown resulting from the global financial crisis and is starting to improve, and 23% think that it will get worse before it starts to improve. There has been a ten percent increase in the number of people that think that the Australian economy is starting to improve since we last asked this question in July.

Labor voters were more likely to think that the Australian economy is starting to improve (71%), while Coalition voters were more likely to think that things will get worse before it starts to improve (28%).



Australian Ambassador to the USA

Q. Which of the following do you think should be Australia's next Ambassador to the USA?

	%
A career diplomat	20%
Alexander Downer	14%
Kim Beazley	12%
Peter Costello	12%
Bob Carr	2%
Someone else	13%
Don't know	26%

When it comes to who the Australian public think should be Australia's next Ambassador to the USA, 20% of people surveyed think that a career diplomat should be appointed to the position. The former politician that received the most support in being appointed to the position was Alexander Downer (14%), followed by Kim Beazley (12%) and Peter Costello (12%).

Coalition voters were most likely to support Downer being appointed as Australia's Ambassador to the USA (28%) and Costello (20%), while Labor voters were more likely to support a career diplomat (22%) or Kim Beazley (18%). Green voters were also more likely to support Beazley (20%).

Respondents aged 55 years and over were more likely to support Alexander Downer (28%), while those aged 45 – 54 were more likely to support Kim Beazley (18%).

South Australian voters were more likely to support Downer (20%), Victorian voters were more likely to support Costello (17%) and Western Australian voters were more likely to support Beazley (23%). Only 2% of NSW voters support Carr as Australia's next Ambassador to the USA.



State of the Liberal Party

Q. Some people say that the Liberal Party is so divided and without direction at the moment that regardless of what you think of the Rudd Labor Government, the Liberals are just not prepared at the moment to take on the difficult task of governing Australia. Do you agree a lot, a little or disagree a lot or a little with this statement?

	%
Total agree	66%
Total disagree	21%
Agree a lot	39%
Agree a little	27%
Disagree a little	12%
Disagree a lot	9%
Don't know	14%

66% of people surveyed think that the Liberal Party is so divided and without direction at the moment that regardless of what is thought of the Rudd Labor Government, the Liberals are just not prepared at the moment to take on the difficult task of governing Australia. 21% think that the Liberal Party is prepared at the moment to take on the difficult task of governing Australia.

Labor voters were more likely to agree with the position that the Liberal Party is not prepared at the moment for the task of governing Australia, while Coalition voters were more likely to disagree with this statement (53%). However, 36% of Coalition voters agreed with the statement that suggests the Liberal Party is too divided and without direction that it is not prepared for the task of governing Australia.

Respondents aged 45 – 54 were more likely to agree with the position that the Liberal Party is not prepared for the task of governing Australia (78%), while respondents aged 55 years and over were more likely to disagree with this position (31%).



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.

