

# The Essential Report

7 March 2017



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**Prepared By:** Essential Research

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**Data Supplied by:**



Essential Media Communications is a member of the Association of Market and Social Research Organisations



Our researchers are members of the Australian Market and Social Research Society.



## About this poll

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 the 3<sup>rd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> March 2017 and is based on 1,004 respondents.

Aside from the standard question on voting intention, this week's report includes questions on penalty rates, party leaders, trust in industries and Tony Abbott's policy proposals.

The methodology used to carry out this research is described in the appendix on page 15.

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



## Federal 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? If don't know - Well which party are you currently leaning to?

	Total	Last week 28/2/17	2 weeks ago 21/2/17	4 weeks ago 7/2/17	Election 2 Jul 16
Liberal	34%	34%	33%	33%	
National	3%	3%	3%	2%	
<b>Total Liberal/National</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>42.0%</b>
<b>Labor</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>34.7%</b>
Greens	9%	9%	10%	8%	10.2%
Nick Xenophon Team	3%	3%	4%	3%	
Pauline Hanson's One Nation	9%	9%	10%	10%	
Other/Independent	5%	6%	6%	6%	13.1%
<b>2 party preferred</b>					
Liberal National	<b>47%</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>48%</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>50.4%</b>
Labor	<b>53%</b>	<b>53%</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>53%</b>	<b>49.6%</b>

NB. Sample = 1,786. The data in the above tables comprise 2-week averages derived from 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 2016 election.

## Reduction in Sunday penalty rates

Q Do you approve or disapprove of the Fair Work Commission’s recent decision to reduce current Sunday penalty rates paid in retail, fast food, hospitality and pharmacy industries?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other	Work full time	Work part time
<b>Total approve</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>27%</b>
<b>Total disapprove</b>	<b>56%</b>	<b>74%</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>73%</b>	<b>61%</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>58%</b>
Strongly approve	9%	5%	17%	2%	10%	10%	6%
Approve	23%	14%	38%	12%	19%	29%	21%
Disapprove	22%	21%	23%	25%	21%	20%	23%
Strongly disapprove	34%	53%	13%	48%	40%	32%	35%
Don't know	12%	7%	10%	14%	10%	9%	15%

32% approve of the Fair Work Commission’s recent decision to reduce current Sunday penalty rates and 56% disapprove.

Those most likely to approve were Liberal National voters (55%), men (40%) and aged 65+ (49%).

Those most likely to disapprove were Labor voters (74%), Greens voters (73%), women (63%) and aged 18-24 (64%).



## Result of cutting penalty rates

Q What do you think will be the more likely result of cutting penalty rates for hospitality and retail workers?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other	Work full time	Work part time
Businesses will make bigger profits	<b>57%</b>	73%	41%	66%	61%	60%	55%
Businesses will employ more workers	<b>24%</b>	12%	42%	12%	23%	24%	22%
Don't know	<b>20%</b>	15%	17%	22%	16%	17%	23%

57% think that the most likely result of cutting penalty rates will be that businesses will make bigger profits. 24% think businesses will employ more workers.

Those most likely to think businesses will make more profits were Labor voters (73%) and Greens voters (66%).

Those most likely to think businesses will employ more workers were Liberal National voters (42%) and aged 65+ (41%).



## Whether Government should legislate

Q Which of the following statements represents your view of how the Government should respond to these penalty rate reductions?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other	Work full time	Work part time
The Government should accept the decision to cut penalty rates	31%	15%	55%	14%	32%	37%	27%
The Government should pass legislation to protect current penalty rates	51%	73%	29%	64%	52%	47%	51%
Don't know	18%	12%	16%	22%	16%	16%	22%

51% think that the Government should pass legislation to protect current penalty rates and 31% think the Government should accept the decision to cut penalty rates.

Those most likely to think the Government should pass legislation to protect current penalty rates were labor voters (73%), Greens voters (64%) and women (55%).

Those most likely to think the Government should accept the decision to cut penalty rates were Liberal National voters (55%), men (37%), aged 65+ (51%) and full-time workers (37%).



## Best leader of the Liberal Party

Q Which of the following do you think would make the best leader of the Liberal Party?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other	Jun 2014	Feb 2015	Aug 2015	Sep 2015	Dec 2015	Mar 2016	Jul 2016	Nov 2016
Malcolm Turnbull	<b>20%</b>	18%	36%	15%	8%	31%	24%	24%	37%	42%	39%	30%	21%
Tony Abbott	<b>10%</b>	8%	15%	2%	12%	18%	11%	18%	9%	9%	9%	9%	11%
Julie Bishop	<b>17%</b>	18%	19%	15%	18%	4%	21%	17%	14%	13%	12%	16%	20%
Christopher Pyne	<b>2%</b>	2%	2%	2%	2%	<1%	<1%	1%	1%	2%	1%	3%	2%
Scott Morrison	<b>2%</b>	1%	3%	-	3%	1%	2%	3%	4%	2%	2%	3%	3%
Peter Dutton	<b>2%</b>	1%	2%	1%	4%								
Someone else	<b>18%</b>	25%	6%	32%	25%	19%	13%	13%	10%	9%	15%	19%	18%
Don't know	<b>28%</b>	27%	17%	34%	29%	21%	24%	22%	21%	22%	21%	21%	25%

20% (down 1% since November) think Malcolm Turnbull would make the best leader of the Liberal Party, 17% prefer Julie Bishop (down 3%) and 10% prefer Tony Abbott (down 1%). 18% (no change) prefer someone else.

Among Liberal/National voters, 36% (no change) prefer Malcolm Turnbull, 19% (down 1%) Julie Bishop and 15% (down 4%) prefer Tony Abbott.

Preferences of men were Malcolm Turnbull 22% (-3%), Julie Bishop 16% (-3%) and Tony Abbott 13% (no change).

Preferences of women were Julie Bishop 19% (-3%), Malcolm Turnbull 19% (+2%) and Tony Abbott 7% (-2%).





## Best leader of the Labor Party

Q Which of the following do you think would make the best leader of the Labor Party?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens	Vote other	Aug 2015	Dec 2015	Mar 2016	Jul 2016	Nov 2016
Bill Shorten	<b>21%</b>	46%	12%	18%	6%	16%	13%	15%	27%	17%
Anthony Albanese	<b>11%</b>	10%	12%	7%	16%	12%	14%	14%	11%	12%
Tanya Plibersek	<b>13%</b>	16%	14%	15%	9%	13%	14%	14%	12%	14%
Chris Bowen	<b>3%</b>	3%	3%	1%	6%	5%	3%	7%	3%	4%
Tony Burke	<b>2%</b>	2%	2%	3%	2%	-	-	-	-	2%
Someone else	<b>16%</b>	7%	19%	22%	24%	18%	17%	18%	17%	18%
Don't know	<b>35%</b>	17%	38%	34%	36%	36%	38%	32%	30%	32%

21% (up 4% since November) think Bill Shorten would make the best leader of the Labor Party, 13% (down 1%) prefer Tanya Plibersek and 11% (down 1%) Anthony Albanese. 16% prefer someone else and 35% don't know.

Among Labor voters, 46% (up 9%) prefer Bill Shorten, 13% (down 3%) Tanya Plibersek and 10% (down 4%) Anthony Albanese.

Preferences of men were Bill Shorten 24% (+5%), Anthony Albanese 13% (-3%) and Tanya Plibersek 12% (-1%).

Preferences of women were Bill Shorten 18% (+2%), Tanya Plibersek 13% (-1%) and Anthony Albanese 8% (-1%).

## Trust in industries

Q How much trust do you have in the following industries to act in the public interest?

	Total a lot/some trust	A lot of trust	Some trust	Not much trust	No trust at all	Don't know	Jan 2013 A lot/some trust
Tourism	<b>70%</b>	18%	52%	16%	5%	9%	68%
Agriculture	<b>68%</b>	18%	50%	15%	6%	11%	72%
Manufacturing	<b>55%</b>	8%	47%	27%	9%	10%	56%
Retail	<b>53%</b>	8%	45%	29%	10%	9%	47%
Construction and development	<b>46%</b>	8%	38%	31%	14%	9%	48%
Telecommunications	<b>36%</b>	7%	29%	35%	20%	9%	37%
Mining	<b>36%</b>	6%	30%	30%	24%	11%	32%
Banking	<b>33%</b>	8%	25%	30%	30%	7%	33%
Media	<b>29%</b>	3%	26%	31%	31%	8%	30%
Power companies	<b>24%</b>	3%	21%	35%	32%	8%	18%



The industries most trusted to act in the public interest were tourism (70% some/a lot of trust), agriculture (68%) and manufacturing (55%).

The industries least trusted to act in the public interest were power companies (24%), the media (29%), banking (33%) and mining (36%).

Since this question was asked in 2013, trust in power companies has increased 6 points – although remains the least trusted industry.

The only industry on which there were major differences was mining where 50% of Liberal/National voters had a lot/some trust compared to only 30% of Labor voters and 18% of Greens voters.

## Tony Abbott's policy proposals

Q Do you agree or disagree with the following proposals for actions the Federal Government could take?

	Total agree	Total disagree	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
Abolish subsidies for renewables and cut renewable energy targets to reduce household power bills	40%	38%	12%	28%	19%	19%	22%
Abolish the Human Rights Commission to allow more free speech	33%	44%	12%	21%	25%	19%	23%
Stop all new government spending to reduce future debt	43%	41%	15%	28%	29%	12%	17%
Cut immigration to make housing more affordable	57%	28%	27%	30%	18%	10%	15%
Reform the Senate to reduce the power of small parties.	41%	34%	14%	27%	22%	12%	25%

Q Do you agree or disagree with the following proposals for actions which Tony Abbott has said the Federal Government should take

	Total agree	Total disagree	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
Abolish subsidies for renewables and cut renewable energy targets to reduce household power bills	47%	33%	16%	31%	13%	20%	20%
Abolish the Human Rights Commission to allow more free speech	39%	43%	14%	25%	25%	18%	18%
Stop all new government spending to reduce future debt	51%	35%	22%	29%	25%	10%	14%
Cut immigration to make housing more affordable	57%	31%	29%	28%	18%	13%	12%
Reform the Senate to reduce the power of small parties.	41%	37%	18%	23%	23%	14%	23%



Note : this question was split so that half the sample were told that Tony Abbott had made these proposals and half were asked about the proposals without any reference to Tony Abbott.

The question which referenced Tony Abbott showed higher support for cutting the RET, abolishing the Human Rights Commission and stopping all new Government spending but similar support for cutting immigration and reforming the Senate.

Overall, support for each proposal was higher than opposition except for abolishing the Human Rights Commission.

Among Liberal National voters, reference to Tony Abbott increased agreement with stopping new spending (from 51% to 62%) but made only small differences to other proposals.

Among Labor voters, reference to Tony Abbott increased agreement with abolishing the RET (from 36% to 44%) and abolishing the Human Rights Commission (from 24% to 32%).

A majority of Liberal National voters agreed with each proposal except for abolishing the Human Rights Commission.



No reference to Tony Abbott	Total agree	Total disagree	Labor voters agree	Labor voters disagree	LNP Voters agree	LNP voters disagree
Abolish subsidies for renewables and cut renewable energy targets to reduce household power bills	40%	38%	36%	46%	56%	24%
Abolish the Human Rights Commission to allow more free speech	33%	44%	24%	56%	42%	39%
Stop all new government spending to reduce future debt	43%	41%	38%	47%	51%	38%
Cut immigration to make housing more affordable	57%	28%	53%	34%	69%	19%
Reform the Senate to reduce the power of small parties.	41%	34%	39%	38%	57%	24%

Reference to Tony Abbott	Total agree	Total disagree	Labor voters agree	Labor voters disagree	LNP Voters agree	LNP voters disagree
Abolish subsidies for renewables and cut renewable energy targets to reduce household power bills	47%	33%	44%	36%	57%	28%
Abolish the Human Rights Commission to allow more free speech	39%	43%	32%	53%	46%	45%
Stop all new government spending to reduce future debt	51%	35%	42%	47%	62%	27%
Cut immigration to make housing more affordable	57%	31%	49%	41%	63%	30%
Reform the Senate to reduce the power of small parties.	41%	37%	34%	40%	59%	26%



## Appendix: Methodology, margin of error and professional standards

The data gathered for this report is gathered from a weekly online omnibus conducted by Your Source. Essential Research has been utilizing the Your Source online panel to conduct research on a week-by-week basis since November 2007.

Each week, the team at Essential Media Communications discusses issues that are topical and a series of questions are devised to put to the Australian public. Some questions are repeated regularly (such as political preference and leadership approval), while others are unique to each week and reflect 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+ interviews. In theory, with a sample of this size, there is 95 per cent certainty that the results are within 3 percentage points of what they would be if the entire population had been polled. However, this assumes random sampling, which, because of non-response and less than 100% population coverage cannot be achieved in practice. Furthermore, there are other possible sources of error in all polls including question wording and question order, interviewer bias (for telephone and face-to-face polls), response errors and weighting. The best guide to a poll's accuracy is to look at the record of the polling company - how have they performed at previous elections or other occasions where their estimates can be compared with known population figures. In the last poll before the 2016 election, the Essential Report estimates of first preference votes averaged less than 1% difference from the election results and the two-party preferred difference was only 0.1%.

The Your Source online omnibus is live from the Wednesday night of each week and closed on the following Sunday. Incentives are offered to participants in the form of points. Essential Research 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.

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