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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 23rd to 27th March 2011 and is based on 1,016 respondents.

Aside from the standard question on voting intention, this week's report includes questions on the proposed carbon tax, Kevin Rudd's performance as Foreign Minister, military intervention in Libya and Australia's relationships with other countries.

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 =1,917

First preference/leaning to	Election 21 Aug 10	4 weeks ago	2 weeks ago	Last week	This week
Liberal		42%	45%	44%	43%
National		3%	2%	3%	3%
Total Lib/Nat	43.6	45%	47%	46%	46%
Labor	38.0	37%	35%	36%	37%
Greens	11.8	11%	10%	10%	10%
Other/Independent	6.6	7%	8%	8%	7%

2PP	Election 21 Aug 10	4 weeks ago	2 weeks ago	Last week	This week
Total Lib/Nat	49.9%	52%	54%	53%	52%
Labor	50.1%	48%	46%	47%	48%

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.



Carbon Pricing

Q. Do you support or oppose the Government's recent announcement to introduce a carbon pricing scheme from 1 July 2012, which will require industries to pay a tax based on the amount of carbon pollution they emit?

	7 March	14 March	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens
Total support	35%	38%	34%	63%	14%	56%
Total oppose	48%	49%	51%	23%	80%	24%
Strongly support	9%	12%	12%	22%	4%	29%
Support	26%	26%	22%	41%	10%	27%
Oppose	19%	17%	19%	12%	24%	13%
Strongly oppose	29%	32%	32%	11%	56%	11%
Don't know	18%	13%	15%	14%	7%	19%

Support for the Government's carbon pricing scheme has fallen over the last 2 weeks. 34% now support the scheme and 51% are opposed.

Opinion has polarized among voters for the major parties. Support among Labor voters has increased from 55% to 63% while opposition from Coalition voters has increased from 73% to 80%. Support has fallen among Greens voters – 2 weeks ago they split 78% support/11% oppose compared to this week's 56% support/24% oppose.

Form of Compensation Preferred

Q. The Federal Government says that the funds raised from the carbon tax will be used to compensate those affected by price increases. Which of the following forms of compensation do you favour?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens
A direct payment to households	39%	44%	37%	50%
An income tax cut	33%	36%	34%	26%
A cut to the GST rate	13%	11%	17%	8%
Cuts to corporate taxes	2%	1%	2%	1%
Don't know	13%	8%	10%	14%

39% favour compensation as a direct payment to households and 33% favour income tax cuts. Greens voters (50%) and Labor voters (44%) are most likely to favour a direct payment while Coalition voters split 37% direct payment/34% tax cut.

Older people strongly favour a direct payment - among those aged 55+, 51% favour direct payment and 21% a tax cut, while for those aged 18-44, 39% favour a tax cut and 33% favour a direct payment.

Early Election over Carbon Tax

Q. Do you think the Government should call an early election over the carbon tax?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens
Yes	40%	16%	67%	17%
No	44%	72%	20%	69%
Don't know	17%	11%	13%	13%

40% think that the Government should call an early election over the carbon tax and 44% think they should not. 67% of Coalition voters favour an early election while 72% of Labor voters and 69% of Greens voters do not.

Men favour an early election 47%/41% while women oppose 46%/33%.

Approval of Kevin Rudd as Foreign Minister

Q. Do you approve or disapprove of the job Kevin Rudd is doing as Foreign Minister?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens
Total approve	61%	83%	47%	74%
Total disapprove	19%	5%	33%	9%
Strongly approve	17%	27%	9%	25%
Approve	44%	56%	38%	49%
Disapprove	11%	4%	18%	7%
Strongly disapprove	8%	1%	15%	2%
Don't know	21%	12%	21%	18%

61% approve of the job Kevin Rudd is doing as Foreign Minister and 19% disapprove. 83% of Labor voters and 74% of Greens voters approve.

Coalition voters are also more likely to approve than disapprove (47% approve/33% disapprove).

Military Intervention in Libya

Q. Do you approve or disapprove of the military intervention in Libya being undertaken by the US, France, Italy, Canada and others?

	Total	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens
Total approve	57%	64%	63%	53%
Total disapprove	22%	20%	22%	23%
Strongly approve	18%	20%	22%	14%
Approve	39%	44%	41%	39%
Disapprove	14%	15%	12%	12%
Strongly disapprove	8%	5%	10%	11%
Don't know	21%	17%	15%	24%

57% approve the military intervention in Libya while 22% disapprove. A majority of all voter groups approve – although Greens voters are more likely to be undecided (24% don't know).

65% of men approve compared to 49% of women. By age - those aged 55+ approve 69%/18% and aged 18-44 approve 51%/23%

Importance of Relationships with Other Countries

Q. How important is it for Australia to have a close relationship with the following nations?

	Very important	Quite important	Not very important	Don't know	Very Important 15 Nov	Change
New Zealand	69%	24%	4%	3%	54%	+15
United States	60%	33%	5%	2%	56%	+4
United Kingdom	56%	35%	6%	3%	44%	+12
China	48%	42%	6%	4%	45%	+3
Japan	39%	47%	9%	4%	30%	+9
Indonesia	31%	43%	20%	6%	30%	+1
India	26%	42%	26%	5%	24%	+2
Germany	23%	42%	29%	6%	15%	+8
South Africa	16%	36%	39%	8%	12%	+4

More than half the respondents think it is very important to have close relationships with the New Zealand (69%), United States (60%) and the United Kingdom (56%) and just under half think it is very important to have a close relationship with China (48%).

A close relationship with the United States is considered very important by 70% of Liberal/National voters and 57% of Labor voters and 48% of Greens voters.

Since this question was asked in November, there have been substantial increases in the rating of the importance of relations with New Zealand (+15%), United Kingdom (+12%) and Japan (+9%).

Change in Relationships with Other Countries

Q. Would you like to see Australia's relationship with these countries get closer, stay the same or become less close?

	Get closer	Stay the same	Become less close	Don't know		Get closer 15 Nov	Change
New Zealand	37%	55%	3%	5%		29%	+8
China	32%	52%	9%	7%		30%	+2
Japan	26%	59%	8%	7%		21%	+5
United Kingdom	25%	62%	7%	5%		20%	+5
United States	24%	61%	11%	5%		20%	+4
Indonesia	21%	51%	20%	8%		23%	-2
India	19%	53%	18%	9%		22%	-3
Germany	18%	62%	10%	10%		14%	+4
South Africa	13%	59%	17%	11%		11%	+2

37% think that Australia's relationship with New Zealand should get closer and 32% think our relationship with China should get closer.

Labor voters are most likely to favour closer relationships with China (31%) and New Zealand (31%).

Liberal/National voters are most likely to favour closer relationships with New Zealand (42%) and United States (34%).

Greens voters are most likely to favour closer relationships with New Zealand (43%), China (38%) and Japan (34%).

Since this question was asked in November, the percentage wanting a closer relationship with New Zealand has increased 8%, and increased 5% for Japan and the United Kingdom.

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.

