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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 2nd to the 7th of March 2010 and attracted 1129 responses.

Aside from the standard question on voting intention, this week we ask Australians which level of government they think is responsible for managing various public services. We ask people a few questions related to women in the workplace and gender differences in average national earnings. We ask the public to rate their approval of the Federal Government's recently announced national curriculum for schools. We also gauge what factors determine voting behaviour in State and Federal elections.

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?

*1889 sample size

2 week average	%	2PP	2PP shift from last week
Liberal	37%		
National	3%		
Total Lib/Nat	40%	46%	-1%
Labor	43%	54%	+1%
Greens	9%		
Family First	2%		
Other/Independent	7%		

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.



Government responsibility for public services

Q. Do you think the following services should be mainly the responsibility of the Federal Government or State Governments?

	Federal	State	Both	Don't know
Defence	76%	2%	16%	6%
Border security	69%	4%	22%	5%
Economy	56%	3%	35%	6%
Trade	49%	13%	31%	8%
Social welfare	45%	14%	35%	6%
Health	44%	12%	38%	6%
Universities and tertiary education	41%	18%	35%	7%
Primary and secondary education	32%	24%	38%	6%
Law and order	27%	23%	45%	6%
Water supply	25%	35%	35%	6%

Most people think that defence (76%), border security (69%) and the economy (56%) are the responsibility of the Federal Government.

44% think that health should be the responsibility of the Federal Government, 12% think it should be the responsibility of State Governments and 38% think it should be the responsibility of both. People in Western Australia (50%) and Victoria (43%) were more likely to think that health should be the responsibility of both State and Federal Governments.

35% of those surveyed think that water supply should be the responsibility of the State Governments and 25% think it should be the responsibility of the Federal Government. People in South Australia (42%) were more likely to think that water supply should be the responsibility of the Federal Government.



Gender and the workplace

Q. In your workplace, are there more men or more women in the lower paid positions?

Q. In your workplace, are there more men or more women in the higher paid positions?

	Lower paid positions	Higher paid positions
More men	17%	45%
More women	36%	12%
About the same number	31%	27%
Don't know	16%	16%

NB. Only asked to those in paid employment

In most workplaces, there are more women in lower paid positions (36%) and more men in higher paid positions (45%).

49% of women indicated that there are more women in lower paid positions in their workplace.

44% of those in part-time work indicated that there are more women than men in lower paid positions in their workplace.



Gender disparity in national average earnings

Q. Did you know that the average national weekly ordinary-hours earnings across all industries for men is more than 20% higher than for women?

	%
Yes	52%
No	48%

Just over half (52%) know that the average national weekly ordinary-hours earnings across all industries for men is more than 20% higher than for women, 48% did not know.

Women were more likely to know that average earnings for men is more than 20% higher than for women (55%), while men were more likely to not know (52%).

People aged 55 years and over were more likely to know (74%), while those aged 18 – 24 were more likely to not know earnings are higher for men than women (63%).

National curriculum

Q. The Rudd Government proposes to introduce a national curriculum from next year where every student from prep to year 10 will learn from the same curriculum in English, maths, history and science. Do you approve or disapprove of the Government's proposal for a national curriculum?

	%
Total approve	85%
Total disapprove	7%
Strongly approve	43%
Approve	42%
Disapprove	4%
Strongly disapprove	3%
Don't know	8%

85% of those surveyed approve of the Government's proposal for a national curriculum, 7% disapprove and 8% don't know.

Labor voters were slightly more likely than Coalition and Green voters to approve (90% Labor v 86% Coalition, 85% Green).

Approval was high amongst all demographic groups.



Factors determining voting behaviour in Federal or State elections

Q. When you vote in Federal or State elections, which of the following best describes how you decide who to vote for?

	First reason	Second reason
I just have a general preference for that party	26%	13%
The overall policies of the parties	43%	25%
The parties' policies on a particular issue	10%	22%
The leaders of the parties	5%	15%
The actual candidates standing	6%	12%
I don't make a choice – I just vote for anyone	2%	2%
Don't know	9%	10%

The overall policies of the parties was the first most important factor that determines voting behaviour for 43% of those surveyed, for 26% having a general preference for a party was the primary factor determining their voting behaviour.

25% indicated that the second most important reason determining their voting behaviour are the overall policies of the parties, and 22% indicated that the parties' policies on particular issues is the second most important reason.

48% of Coalition voters and 42% of Labor voters indicated that it is the overall policies of the parties that determine how they vote in a Federal or State election. 35% of Labor voters and 31% of Coalition voters indicated that having a general preference for a party is the primary reason that best describes how they vote in a Federal or State election.

People aged 65 years and over were more likely to indicate it is party policy that primarily determine how they vote in a Federal or State election (57%), while those aged 35 – 44 were more likely were more likely to indicate it is a general preference for a party that determines how they will vote (32%).



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.

