



**10 December 2012**



15 – 31 Pelham Street  
Carlton  
Victoria 3053  
Phone 03 9929 9903  
Mobile 0416 121 969

With data supplied by



## **About the 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 5<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> December and is based on 1,053 respondents.

Aside from the standard question on voting intention, this week's report includes questions party leaders, power costs and usage and media regulation.

The methodology used to carry out this research is described in the appendix on page 14.

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 = 1,888 respondents*

First preference/leaning to	Election 21 Aug 10	4 weeks ago 12/11/12	2 weeks ago 26/11/12	Last week 3/12/12	This week 10/12/12
Liberal		42%	44%	44%	45%
National		3%	3%	3%	3%
<b>Total Lib/Nat</b>	<b>43.6%</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>48%</b>
<b>Labor</b>	<b>38.0%</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>36%</b>
Greens	11.8%	9%	10%	9%	8%
Other/Independent	6.6%	8%	8%	7%	8%

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

NB. 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 2010 election. These estimates have a confidence interval of approx. plus or minus 2-3%.

## **Approval of Julia Gillard**

*Q. Do you approve or disapprove of the job Julia Gillard is doing as Prime Minister?*

	<b>19 Jul 2010</b>	<b>20 Dec</b>	<b>14 Mar 2011</b>	<b>14 June</b>	<b>12 Sept</b>	<b>12 Dec</b>	<b>12 Mar 2012</b>	<b>12 Jun</b>	<b>10 Sept</b>	<b>15 Oct</b>	<b>12 Nov</b>	<b>10 Dec</b>
<b>Total approve</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>43%</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>37%</b>
<b>Total disapprove</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>54%</b>	<b>64%</b>	<b>54%</b>	<b>61%</b>	<b>56%</b>	<b>54%</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>49%</b>	<b>53%</b>
Strongly approve	11%	10%	7%	6%	5%	6%	8%	6%	7%	9%	7%	<b>10%</b>
Approve	41%	33%	34%	28%	23%	28%	24%	26%	28%	32%	34%	<b>27%</b>
Disapprove	17%	24%	22%	29%	28%	25%	29%	22%	27%	24%	25%	<b>25%</b>
Strongly disapprove	13%	16%	24%	25%	36%	29%	32%	34%	27%	27%	24%	<b>28%</b>
Don't know	18%	17%	13%	13%	8%	11%	7%	12%	11%	8%	10%	<b>11%</b>

37% (down 4%) approve of the job Julia Gillard is doing as Prime Minister and 53% (up 4%) disapprove – an 8-point change in net rating from -8 to -16.

82% of Labor voters approve (down 3%) and 13% disapprove (up 5%).

By gender – men 36% approve/57% disapprove, women 38% approve/48% disapprove. In net terms this represents a shift with men from -16 to -21 and with women from 0 to -10.

## **Approval of Tony Abbott**

*Q. Do you approve or disapprove of the job Tony Abbott is doing as Opposition Leader?*

	<b>18 Jan 2010</b>	<b>5 Jul</b>	<b>20 Dec</b>	<b>14 Mar 2011</b>	<b>14 June</b>	<b>12 Sept</b>	<b>12 Dec</b>	<b>12 Mar 2012</b>	<b>12 Jun</b>	<b>10 Sept</b>	<b>15 Oct</b>	<b>12 Nov</b>	<b>10 Dec</b>
<b>Total approve</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>33%</b>
<b>Total disapprove</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>48%</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>53%</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>54%</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>54%</b>	<b>58%</b>	<b>56%</b>
Strongly approve	5%	8%	9%	7%	6%	8%	6%	7%	6%	6%	9%	6%	<b>8%</b>
Approve	32%	29%	30%	31%	32%	31%	26%	29%	26%	26%	28%	27%	<b>25%</b>
Disapprove	20%	23%	21%	24%	25%	23%	25%	23%	24%	26%	23%	28%	<b>25%</b>
Strongly disapprove	17%	24%	18%	23%	23%	27%	28%	29%	30%	29%	31%	30%	<b>31%</b>
Don't know	26%	16%	22%	16%	15%	11%	14%	12%	13%	13%	9%	10%	<b>12%</b>

33% (no change) approve of the job Tony Abbott is doing as Opposition Leader and 56% (down 2%) disapprove – a change in net rating from -25 to -23 over the last 4 weeks.

63% (down 2%) of Coalition voters approve and 30% (up 1%) disapprove.

By gender – men 37% approve/55% disapprove, women 28% approve/56% disapprove. In net terms this represents a small improvement with men from -20 to -18 and with women from -30 to -28.

## Better Prime Minister

Q. Who do you think would make the better Prime Minister out of Julia Gillard and Tony Abbott?

	5 Jul 2010	14 Mar 2011	14 June	12 Sept	12 Dec	12 Mar 2012	12 Jun	10 Sept	15 Oct	12 Nov	10 Dec	Vote Labor	Vote Lib/Nat	Vote Greens
Julia Gillard	53%	44%	41%	36%	39%	40%	37%	40%	43%	45%	<b>43%</b>	92%	6%	80%
Tony Abbott	26%	33%	36%	40%	35%	37%	37%	37%	36%	32%	<b>34%</b>	4%	71%	1%
Don't know	21%	23%	24%	24%	26%	23%	26%	24%	20%	23%	<b>23%</b>	5%	23%	19%

43% (down 2%) believe Julia Gillard would make the better Prime Minister and 34% (up 2%) prefer Tony Abbott.

Men prefer Julia Gillard 40%/39% and women prefer Julia Gillard 46%/29%. Compared to last month's figures, Julia Gillard's margin over Tony Abbott has dropped 3 points among men (from 40%/36%) and 4 points among women (from 49%/28%).

## Change in Gas/Electricity Costs

*Q. Over the last few years, have your gas and/or electricity costs increased, decreased or stayed much the same?*

<b>Total increased</b>	<b>86%</b>
<b>Total decreased</b>	<b>2%</b>
Increased a lot	45%
Increased a moderate amount	26%
Increased a little	15%
Stayed about the same	8%
Decreased a little	1%
Decreased a moderate amount	*
Decreased a lot	1%
Don't know	5%

86% say their power costs have increased over the last few years including 45% who say their costs have increased a lot.

Those most likely to say their power costs have increased a lot were aged 45-54 (59%) and Liberal/National voters (50%).

There were no substantial differences across income groups.

88% of those with air conditioning or evaporative cooling said their power costs had increased including 47% who said they have increased a lot. In comparison, 79% of those without air conditioning or evaporative cooling said their power costs had increased including 40% who said they have increased a lot.

## Change in Gas/Electricity Usage

Q. And as far as you know, over the last few years, has your gas and/or electricity usage increased, decreased or stayed much the same?

<b>Total increased</b>	<b>54%</b>
<b>Total decreased</b>	<b>16%</b>
Increased a lot	24%
Increased a moderate amount	15%
Increased a little	15%
Stayed about the same	26%
Decreased a little	11%
Decreased a moderate amount	3%
Decreased a lot	2%
Don't know	4%

54% say their power usage has increased over the last few years, 16% say it has decreased and 26% think it has stayed much the same.

Change in usage was similar across all ages except the 65+ group where 39% thought their usage had increased, 22% decreased and 38% stayed much the same.

Among Greens voters, 42% said their usage had increased, 24% decreased and 30% stayed much the same. There were no substantial differences across income groups.

56% of those with air conditioning or evaporative cooling said their power usage had increased compared with 45% of those without air conditioning or evaporative cooling.



## **Responsibility for Gas/Electricity Prices**

*Q. Who do you think is mainly responsible for electricity and gas prices?*

	<b>Total</b>	<b>Vote Labor</b>	<b>Vote Lib/Nat</b>	<b>Vote Greens</b>
The Federal Government	27%	17%	40%	15%
The State Government	16%	18%	14%	18%
The power companies	45%	54%	37%	56%
Don't know	13%	11%	9%	11%

45% believe that power companies are mainly responsible for electricity and gas prices, 27% think the Federal Government is mainly responsible and 16% State Governments.

40% of Liberal/National voters think the Federal Government is mainly responsible. Answers were similar across the major states - NSW, Victoria, Queensland.

## **Reducing Power Bills**

*Q. What would be the best way to reduce power bills?*

	<b>Total</b>	<b>Vote Labor</b>	<b>Vote Lib/Nat</b>	<b>Vote Greens</b>
Measures to encourage consumers to use less electricity	20%	29%	14%	28%
Regulation to limit profits of electricity distributors	49%	50%	50%	44%
Privatise electricity generators and distributors that are currently government-owned	5%	4%	7%	2%
None of the above	11%	7%	14%	14%
Don't know	14%	10%	14%	11%

49% think the best way to reduce power bills would be to regulate to limit profits of electricity distributors and 20% think there should be measures to encourage consumers to use less electricity. Only 5% think privatisation of electricity generators and distributors would be the best way to reduce power bills.

Responses were similar across NSW, Queensland and Victoria.

## Operation of Power Generation and Distribution

Q. Which is closer to your view?

	<b>Total</b>	<b>Vote Labor</b>	<b>Vote Lib/Nat</b>	<b>Vote Greens</b>
Power generation and distribution should be operated by private companies, because they are more efficient and competition will keep prices down	24%	20%	31%	9%
Power generation and distribution should be operated by government, because it is not motivated by profit and will keep our energy supply secure	56%	66%	52%	68%
Don't know	19%	13%	17%	23%

56% agree that power generation and distribution should be operated by government and 24% think they should be operated by private companies.

Liberal/National voters (31%) were most likely to support operation by private companies while highest support for Government operation came from Labor voters (66%), Greens voters (68%) and respondents aged 45+ (63%).

## Use of Air Conditioning

*Q. Do you have an air conditioner or evaporative cooling?*

Yes	74%
No	26%

74% of respondents said they had air conditioning or evaporative cooling.

Those most likely to have air conditioning or evaporative cooling were respondents from Victoria (82%) and with incomes of \$1,600+ pw (80%).

Those least likely to have air conditioning or evaporative cooling were respondents from NSW (68%), Greens voters (65%) and incomes of less than \$1,000 pw (65%).

## Media Regulation

*Q. Newspapers and magazines are regulated by the Australian Press Council which was established by the media industry and comprises representatives of media organisations and as well as independent members. It deals with complaints and decides what penalties should be given to journalists and media that break agreed codes of conduct.*

*Do you think newspapers and magazines should continue to be regulated by the media industry's Press Council or should the Federal Government appoint a new independent organisation to deal with complaints?*

	<b>Total</b>	<b>Vote Labor</b>	<b>Vote Lib/Nat</b>	<b>Vote Greens</b>
Press Council should continue to deal with complaints	44%	40%	54%	38%
Should be a new Government-appointed organisation to deal with complaints	28%	36%	25%	40%
Don't know	28%	25%	21%	22%

44% think that newspapers and magazines should continue to be regulated by the media industry's Press Council and 28% think the Federal Government should appoint a new independent organisation to deal with complaints.

Highest support for a new Government-appointed organisation came from men (36%), Labor voters (36%) and Greens voters (40%).

## Appendix – 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 Wednesday 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.

