The Essential Report

04 May 2020

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Date:	04/05/2020
Prepared By:	Essential Research

Data Supplied by:

AMSRS

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

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About this poll

This report summarises the results of a fortnightly omnibus conducted by Essential Research with data provided by Qualtrics. The survey was conducted online from 30th April 2020 to 3rd May 2020 and is based on 1,093 respondents.

The methodology used to carry out this research is described in the appendix at the end of the report.

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

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Performance of Scott Morrison

Q Do you approve or disapprove of the job Scott Morrison is doing as Prime Minister?

	May'20	Apr'20	Mar'20	Feb'20	Jan'20	Dec'19	Nov'19	Oct'19	Sep'19	Aug'19	Jul'19
TOTAL: Approve	**64%**	59%	41%	39%	40%	45%	45%	47%	49%	48%	48%
TOTAL: Disapprove	**27%**	31%	49%	52%	52%	43%	41%	38%	36%	37%	34%
Don't know	**9%**	10%	10%	9%	8%	13%	13%	15%	15%	16%	18%
Base (n)	**1,093**	1,069	1,096	1,056	1,081	1,035	1,075	1,088	1,093	1,096	1,091

	Total	Federal Voting Intention			
		Labor	Coalition	Greens	TOTAL: Other
Strongly approve	**22%**	8%	45%	6%	12%
Approve	**42%**	38%	46%	31%	49%
Disapprove	**17%**	29%	5%	30%	20%
Strongly disapprove	**10%**	16%	2%	23%	9%
Don't know	**9%**	10%	2%	10%	9%
TOTAL: Approve	**64%**	46%	92%	38%	62%
TOTAL: Disapprove	**27%**	44%	7%	52%	29%
Base (n)	**1,093**	325	435	108	114

- The Prime Minister's approval rating has increased for the fourth straight month, reaching 64% from 39% at the start of February.

- Approval of the Prime Minister among is at 92% of Coalition supporters, with 46% approval among Labor voters, 38% among Greens voters and 62% of all others.

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Performance of Anthony Albanese

Q   Do you approve or disapprove of the job Anthony Albanese is doing as Opposition Leader?

	May'20	Apr'20	Mar'20	Feb'20	Jan'20	Dec'19	Nov'19	Oct'19	Sep'19	Aug'19	Jul'19
TOTAL: Approve	**42%**	44%	41%	41%	43%	39%	37%	40%	36%	38%	39%
TOTAL: Disapprove	**27%**	29%	33%	31%	30%	28%	34%	29%	31%	29%	24%
Don't know	**31%**	27%	26%	28%	27%	33%	29%	31%	33%	33%	37%
Base (n)	**1,093**	1,069	1,096	1,056	1,081	1,035	1,075	1,088	1,093	1,096	1,091

	Total		Federal Voting Intention		
		Labor	Coalition	Greens	TOTAL: Other
Strongly approve	**7%**	12%	4%	6%	4%
Approve	**35%**	51%	30%	39%	27%
Disapprove	**19%**	13%	28%	12%	21%
Strongly disapprove	**8%**	2%	15%	5%	14%
Don't know	**31%**	22%	22%	38%	34%
TOTAL: Approve	**42%**	63%	35%	45%	31%
TOTAL: Disapprove	**27%**	15%	43%	17%	35%
Base (n)	**1,093**	325	435	108	114

- The Opposition Leader's approval rating has remained consistent this month, at 42% compared to 44% in April.

- Albanese's approval among Labor voters remains relatively low at 63%, compared to Morrison's approval among Coalition voters (92%).

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Preferred Prime Minister

Q Who do you think would make the better Prime Minister out of Scott Morrison and Anthony Albanese?

	May'20	Apr'20	Mar'20	Feb'20	Jan'20	Nov'19	Oct'19	Sep'19	Aug'19	Jul'19	Jun'19
Scott Morrison	**50%**	46%	40%	36%	36%	44%	43%	46%	44%	44%	43%
Anthony Albanese	**25%**	27%	35%	36%	39%	28%	28%	25%	28%	26%	25%
Don't know	**25%**	27%	25%	28%	25%	29%	29%	29%	28%	31%	32%
Base (n)	**1,093**	1,069	1,096	1,056	1,081	1,075	1,088	1,093	1,096	1,091	1,099

			Federal Voting Intention		
	Total	Labor	Coalition	Greens	TOTAL: Other
Scott Morrison	**50%**	25%	84%	23%	53%
Anthony Albanese	**25%**	48%	7%	42%	20%
Don't know	**25%**	27%	8%	35%	27%
Base (n)	**1,093**	325	435	108	114

- 50% of participants believe that Scott Morrison would make a better PM than Anthony Albanese (25%). Around a quarter (25%) of participants don't know who would make the better PM.

- Just under half of Labor voters believe Albanese would make the better PM (48%) compared to Morrison (25%). 27% said they didn't know who would make the better leader.

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Coronavirus concerns

Q   To what extent are you concerned about the threat of Covid-19 (coronavirus) in Australia?

	04/05	27/04	20/04	13/04	06/04	29/03	22/03	09/03	10/02
Very concerned	**32%**	39%	44%	45%	51%	53%	39%	27%	25%
Quite concerned	**46%**	44%	43%	43%	37%	35%	43%	36%	43%
Not that concerned	**18%**	13%	11%	9%	10%	10%	14%	28%	26%
Not at all concerned	**4%**	3%	2%	3%	2%	3%	4%	9%	6%
Base (n)	**1,093**	1,054	1,051	1,068	1,069	1,086	1,034	1,096	1,057

		Age group			Location	
	Total	**18-34**	**35-54**	**55+**	**Capital**	**Non-Capital**
Very concerned	**32%**	27%	34%	34%	34%	27%
Quite concerned	**46%**	49%	43%	47%	47%	46%
Not that concerned	**18%**	18%	20%	15%	16%	22%
Not at all concerned	**4%**	6%	4%	3%	4%	4%
Base (n)	**1,093**	341	372	380	734	359

- Concern about the threat of Covid-19 has lessened this again week, with 32% saying they are very concerned (down from 39% last week) and 46% saying they are quite concerned.

- Those aged 18-34 have a lower concern (24% not that/not at all concerned) to those aged over 55 (18%).

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Likelihood of developing Coronavirus

Q   How likely do you think it is, that you will develop Covid-19?

	04/05	27/04	20/04	13/04	06/04	29/03	22/03	09/03
Very likely	**5%**	5%	7%	5%	8%	8%	8%	7%
Somewhat likely	**26%**	21%	25%	28%	33%	36%	34%	24%
Somewhat unlikely	**46%**	50%	52%	49%	45%	45%	45%	43%
Very unlikely	**23%**	23%	17%	18%	14%	12%	13%	26%
Base (n)	**1.093**	1,054	1,051	1,068	1,069	1,086	1,034	1,096

		Age group			Location	
	Total	**18-34**	**35-54**	**55+**	**Capital**	**Non-Capital**
Very likely	**5%**	8%	5%	1%	5%	3%
Somewhat likely	**26%**	31%	28%	20%	29%	19%
Somewhat unlikely	**46%**	38%	43%	57%	43%	54%
Very unlikely	**23%**	23%	25%	22%	23%	24%
Base (n)	**1.093**	341	372	380	734	359

-   The likelihood of catching Covid-19 has remained steady this week, with 31% saying they are very/somewhat likely to contract the virus (27% last week).

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Reaction to Covid-19

Q Which of the following is closer to your personal views of the Covid-19 outbreak?

	04/05	27/04	20/04	13/04	06/04	29/03	22/03
There has been an over-reaction to the threat of Covid-19	**14%**	15%	14%	13%	17%	18%	33%
The response to the threat of Covid-19 is about right	**67%**	68%	63%	59%	46%	39%	39%
The threat of Covid-19 has been under-estimated	**20%**	18%	24%	29%	37%	43%	28%
Base (n)	**1,093**	1,054	1,051	1,068	1,069	1,086	1,034

		Gender		Age Group		
	Total	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+
There has been an over-reaction to the threat of Covid-19	**14%**	16%	11%	19%	14%	9%
The response to the threat of Covid-19 is about right	**67%**	66%	68%	64%	67%	69%
The threat of Covid-19 has been under-estimated	**20%**	19%	21%	17%	19%	23%
Base (n)	**1,093**	539	554	341	372	380

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Government response to Covid-19

Q   Overall, how would you rate the Government's response to the Covid-19 outbreak?

	04/05	27/04	20/04	13/04	06/04	29/03	22/03
Very poor	**4%**	4%	5%	6%	6%	11%	9%
Quite poor	**9%**	9%	10%	12%	15%	21%	20%
Neither good, nor poor	**20%**	17%	21%	20%	21%	24%	26%
Quite good	**38%**	44%	42%	40%	37%	34%	33%
Very good	**28%**	26%	23%	23%	21%	11%	12%
TOTAL: Poor	**14%**	13%	15%	17%	21%	31%	29%
TOTAL: Good	**66%**	70%	65%	63%	58%	45%	45%
Base (n)	**1,093**	1,054	1,051	1,068	1,069	1,086	1,034

		Gender		Age Group			Location	
	Total	**Male**	**Female**	**18-34**	**35-54**	**55+**	**Capital**	**Non-Capital**
Very poor	**4%**	6%	3%	5%	6%	3%	5%	4%
Quite poor	**9%**	10%	8%	14%	9%	6%	10%	7%
Neither good, nor poor	**20%**	21%	20%	32%	22%	9%	20%	21%
Quite good	**38%**	36%	40%	37%	39%	39%	38%	39%
Very good	**28%**	28%	28%	12%	25%	44%	27%	30%
TOTAL: Poor	**14%**	16%	11%	19%	14%	8%	15%	11%
TOTAL: Good	**66%**	63%	68%	49%	64%	82%	65%	69%
Base (n)	**1,093**	539	554	341	372	380	734	359

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State Government response to Covid-19

Q   How would you rate your state government's response to the Covid-19 outbreak?

	04/05	27/04	20/04	13/04
Very poor	4%	4%	5%	5%
Quite poor	8%	9%	9%	11%
Neither good, nor poor	18%	17%	20%	20%
Quite good	38%	41%	39%	38%
Very good	31%	30%	26%	26%
TOTAL: Poor	12%	13%	14%	16%
TOTAL: Good	70%	70%	66%	64%
Base (n)	1,093	1,054	1,051	1,068

				State		
	Total	NSW	VIC	QLD	SA	WA
Very poor	4%	5%	3%	6%	3%	2%
Quite poor	8%	8%	8%	9%	7%	5%
Neither good, nor poor	18%	19%	17%	21%	13%	14%
Quite good	38%	45%	32%	43%	31%	30%
Very good	31%	23%	40%	22%	45%	48%
TOTAL: Poor	12%	13%	11%	15%	10%	7%
TOTAL: Good	70%	68%	72%	65%	76%	79%
Base (n)	1,093	352	275	220	85	106

- Across the country, the overall perception of states' handling of the crisis is in line with government rating their own state's handling as Very/Quite good (70% states, 66% federal). Rating of the state government in NSW increased from 63% to 68%, while in Victoria, the rating decreased from 77% to 72%.

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Easing restrictions

Q When do you think governments should start to ease the restrictions on travel and gatherings to allow offices, shops, restaurants, other workplaces, and public spaces to start operating again?

	04/05	27/04	20/04
As soon as possible	10%	10%	9%
Within the next 1 to 2 weeks	9%	7%	6%
Within the next month	21%	18%	14%
By the end of next month	15%	15%	13%
It is too soon to consider easing restrictions	37%	42%	49%
Unsure	8%	8%	10%
Base (n)	1,093	1,054	1,051

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		Gender		Age Group			Location	
	Total	**Male**	**Female**	**18-34**	**35-54**	**55+**	**Capital**	**Non-Capital**
As soon as possible	**10%**	12%	9%	11%	13%	8%	10%	12%
Within the next 1 to 2 weeks	**9%**	11%	7%	12%	9%	7%	9%	10%
Within the next month	**21%**	21%	20%	26%	18%	18%	22%	17%
By the end of next month	**15%**	15%	15%	12%	17%	17%	16%	14%
It is too soon to consider easing restrictions	**37%**	32%	42%	28%	37%	44%	36%	38%
Unsure	**8%**	8%	7%	10%	7%	6%	7%	9%
Base (n)	**1,093**	539	554	341	372	380	734	359

- People are becoming increasingly open to easing the lockdown restrictions. Those who think it's too soon to lift restrictions has fallen from 49% two weeks ago to 37%.

- One in five people think restrictions should be eased within the next month (21%).

- Those aged over 55 are least likely to consider easing restrictions (44% say it's too soon, compared to 28% of those aged 18-34).

- Women are more likely than men to think it's too soon to consider lifting restrictions (42% to 32%).

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Opening schools following Covid-19

Q   Which of the following is closest to your views on the reopening of schools?

	Total	Parent/Guardian Status	
		I am a parent/guardian of school-aged children	I am not a parent/guardian of school-aged children
Schools should only open for children of essential workers	32%	36%	30%
Schools should re-open for all children	45%	44%	46%
Schools should remain closed with all teaching conducted online	23%	20%	24%
Base (n)	**1,093**	291	802

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Views on opening schools following Covid-19

Q   To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following questions about children returning to school following the Covid-19 lockdown restrictions?

	TOTAL: Agree	TOTAL: Disagree	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree, nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
Schools should teach most students remotely until the Covid-19 outbreak passes	**50%**	**25%**	23%	27%	25%	15%	10%
It's unreasonable to expect teachers to prepare separate lessons for children who are learning remotely and for children who still attend school	**52%**	**21%**	23%	30%	27%	12%	8%
Even if schools in my state are open, I will still choose to keep my children home because of the Covid-19 outbreak (PARENT/GUARDIAN ONLY)	**41%**	**36%**	17%	25%	23%	18%	17%

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International Response

Q Based on what you've seen in the media or heard from friends and family, how would you rate the response to the Covid-19 outbreak from each of these countries?

	TOTAL: Good	TOTAL: Poor	Very good	Quite good	Neither good, nor poor	Quite poor	Very poor
New Zealand	**79%**	5%	49%	30%	17%	2%	2%
China	**21%**	56%	6%	15%	23%	20%	36%
United Kingdom	**20%**	48%	4%	16%	33%	31%	17%
United States of America	**12%**	71%	3%	9%	17%	23%	48%

- Australians think New Zealand has managed the Covid-19 well, with 79% rating the countries performance as very/quite good.

- Around half of Australians rate the response of USA to Covid-19 as very poor (48%). Just 12% think the country has handled the outbreak well.

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Raising Newstart

Q   The government has doubled the Newstart allowance to support people out of work for the next six months. When that time expires, which of the following would you prefer to see happen the Newstart allowance?

	Total	Gender		Age Group			Location	
		Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	Capital	Non-Capital
Maintain the current rate ($560 per week)	**24%**	24%	24%	32%	27%	15%	26%	21%
Increase the former rate to equal the single pension amount ($472 per week)	**33%**	35%	31%	28%	31%	40%	31%	37%
Return to the former rate ($285 per week)	**28%**	27%	29%	23%	27%	33%	28%	28%
Unsure	**15%**	13%	16%	17%	15%	12%	15%	14%
Base (n)	**1,093**	539	554	341	372	380	734	359

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	Total	Labor	Federal Voting Intention		
			Coalition	Greens	TOTAL: Other
Maintain the current rate ($560 per week)	**24%**	28%	20%	34%	18%
Increase the former rate to equal the single pension amount ($472 per week)	**33%**	38%	31%	38%	36%
Return to the former rate ($285 per week)	**28%**	22%	38%	16%	30%
Unsure	**15%**	12%	11%	12%	15%
Base (n)	**1,093**	325	435	108	114

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Appendix: Household income definitions*

TOTAL: Lower Income	Up to $51,999 per year Total of all wages/salaries, government benefits, pensions, allowances and other income that your household usually receives (GROSS – before tax and superannuation deductions)
TOTAL: Mid Income	$52,000 to $103,999 per year Total of all wages/salaries, government benefits, pensions, allowances and other income that your household usually receives (GROSS – before tax and superannuation deductions)
TOTAL: High Income	More than $104,000 per year Total of all wages/salaries, government benefits, pensions, allowances and other income that your household usually receives (GROSS – before tax and superannuation deductions)

Appendix: Methodology, margin of error and professional standards

The data gathered for this report is gathered from a fortnightly online omnibus conducted by Qualtrics.

Every two weeks, the team at Essential considers 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 current media and social issues.

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 online omnibus is live from the Wednesday night and closed on the following Sunday. Incentives are offered to participants. 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.

All Essential Research staff hold Australian Market and Social Research Society (AMSRS) membership and are bound by professional codes of behaviour.

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