

Election 2022: **An opportunity to** **establish a long-term** **Labor government**

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Labor



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Acknowledgement of Country

The Australian Labor Party acknowledges the traditional custodians of the lands on which it stands, and pays its respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

Labor also acknowledges the contributions of First Nations peoples within its membership, and those who assisted in the delivery of this report.

Our membership has helped deliver a Federal Labor government committed to enacting the Uluru Statement from the Heart and enshrining an Indigenous Voice to Parliament in the Constitution.

1. Overview

At the federal election on 21 May 2022 the Australian people voted decisively to change the nation's government. After almost a decade of Coalition government, the electorate rejected Scott Morrison and elected a majority Labor Government led by Anthony Albanese.

Labor offered Australians the chance to vote for a better future, and Anthony Albanese promised that as Prime Minister he would bring the country together, take responsibility, lead with integrity, and treat people with respect.

Faced with a choice between Labor's plans for a better future and three more years of Scott Morrison, the electorate decided it was time for a change. Although several factors contributed to the outcome, the unpopularity of Scott Morrison and his government was the most significant. Morrison's unpopularity was the result of:

- His failure to accept responsibility and demonstrate leadership when confronted with natural disasters.
- Failures during the pandemic, particularly the vaccine rollout and inability to supply sufficient rapid antigen tests when needed.
- The politicisation of the pandemic through attacks on State and Territory Labor governments and leaders.
- Morrison's failure to understand and empathise with the experience of women.
- His failure to develop a credible climate and emissions reduction policy.
- Political dissembling and an inclination to mislead and lie, commonly blaming others to avoid responsibility.
- Bellicose politicisation of the relationship with China.

These failures and misjudgments alienated millions of Australians, and the Coalition was defeated in 18 electorates that had elected Coalition members at the previous election. Ten of these electorates were won by Labor, six by independents and two by Greens.

The significance of Labor's victory cannot be overstated. Labor has won government from opposition only four times since the second world war and five times in the past 100 years.

Labor's campaign secured more than 52.1% of the two-party-preferred vote and a majority in the House of Representatives, and the Albanese Government has demonstrated that it can obtain the support of a majority in the new Senate for important legislation.

Now, Labor has a once-in-a-generation opportunity to establish a long-term government and change Australia for the better. Taking advantage of that opportunity starts with a candid assessment of the 2022 election result and the lessons it holds for the future.

Despite the Morrison Government's unpopularity, Labor's primary vote did not increase and in fact fell to its lowest level since 1934. Contributing to Labor's low primary vote were:

- A long-term trend downwards in the primary vote of both major parties, driven by declining trust in government, politics and politicians.
- Tactical voting by Labor supporters, particularly in seats contested by high-profile and well-resourced independents.

1. Overview

- The decision by the Labor campaign to focus voter attention on Scott Morrison's shortcomings as a leader.
- The Labor strategy to offer a smaller and more tightly targeted set of policies, as distinct from offering a broader agenda that may have energised more soft Labor voters.
- The proliferation of minor party, Green and independent candidates.
- Dissatisfaction with Labor in some heartland seats in Melbourne and Sydney.
- A swing against Labor in Tasmania.

The election victory conclusively affirmed the Labor campaign's strategic judgement to maintain focus on the Morrison Government's negatives, and to present a more targeted set of policies, even if it may have moderated the primary vote.

In fact, it is reasonable to conclude that Labor's victory was one against the odds. The difficult economic circumstances, the pandemic, the Russian invasion of Ukraine, and partisan media advocacy favouring the Coalition all unquestionably advantaged the incumbent Morrison Government.

Against these headwinds, Labor's gains as well as the swings to Labor incumbents in many marginal seats that were targeted by the Coalition are all the more notable. Labor gained three seats in New South Wales, two in Victoria, and one in South Australia. The outstanding result for Labor in Western Australia, where the Party gained four seats, contributed strongly to the election victory.

Demonstrating the folly of assuming that some seats are safe were the results achieved by the Greens and the Teal independents in Liberal heartland seats, Coalition losses in Western Australia and the loss of the Labor-held seat of Fowler to an independent.

The unusually disparate results in individual seats, regions and states reflect the political turbulence of recent years and the frustrations of many voters. While the results do not represent a permanent realignment of Australian politics, the loss of support for Labor in heartland areas, as evidenced once again in the recent Victorian state election, is cause for significant concern.

Labor Campaign Headquarters, the National Secretariat, the state and territory branches and the Leader's office all performed with commendable credit in the campaign.

While Labor's consistent engagement of its members and volunteers was somewhat inhibited by COVID restrictions, their support was vital to the success. Reinvigorating the grassroots campaign and membership activation should be an ongoing focus.

The relationship between Labor and the trade unions has been a pillar underpinning social and economic progress in Australia for well over a century. In that tradition the trade union movement also played an influential and constructive role in the campaign and can continue to do so by elevating the issues of importance to their members and working people throughout Australia.

1. Overview

Climate policy again played an extremely important role in the election result. Labor in government has an opportunity to bridge the political divide over this issue between inner-suburban and outer-suburban and regional voters by demonstrating that decarbonisation can protect and grow jobs, and create new economic opportunities, especially in regional Australia.

Labor in government can transform our economy from its dependence on fossil fuels into a global renewable energy superpower. Such a transformation would challenge in significance the scale and enduring benefit to Australians of the reforms enacted by the Hawke and Keating Governments.

The 2022 election represented a realignment election for the Liberal Party. Voters in traditional Liberal seats have left the party to the benefit of a combination of Labor, the Greens and independents. The Liberal Party is in its worst position since the 1946 election.

While the path back to government for the Coalition appears difficult at present, there is no room for Labor complacency. It is reasonable to expect that the Coalition will target Labor-held outer-suburban and regional electorates – a strategy that Labor must anticipate and counter.

The Review cannot overemphasise the importance of both federal and state Labor focussing on the delivery of demonstrable improvements for communities in areas of long-standing support for Labor. These communities must not be taken for granted.

The improvement of the lives of families and working people has been the cause of the labour movement for well over a century. Labor's values of fairness, equity, and equality of opportunity demand careful consideration of the reasons for the loss of support amongst Labor voters in some heartland areas, and responses which directly address the issues.

The most consistent advice received by the Review for the next election was straightforward: the importance of Labor governing well.

By governing well, placing a high value on internal unity and stability, and drawing together voting constituencies around well-designed policies that attend to peoples' needs, concerns and Australia's national interest, the opportunity to establish a long-term Labor Government can be realised. Competent, trustworthy government, and Parliamentarians actively and consistently engaging their constituents, will be rewarded by voters.

There are opportunities for Labor, and lessons to be learnt which need to be applied during both the new parliamentary term and the formal campaign period.

This review makes 27 recommendations across 5 areas, ranging from the Labor party's values, purpose and method in government; who we seek to represent; policy, strategy and communications; campaign preparedness and operations; and how we should engage with our membership.

Our report sets out the detail in each of these areas but at its core our most important recommendation is this: the realisation of a long-term Labor Government, generating the ability to reshape Australia for a better future, should become the unifying objective of the labour movement following the 2022 election.

2. Recommendations

Labor's values:

Recommendation 1:

That the values of the Albanese Government be clearly and consistently articulated, ensuring that those values underpin signature policies that shape and characterise the Government.

Recommendation 2:

Respect for the trust voters have placed in Prime Minister Albanese and Labor, delivering election commitments, providing stable government, and restoring decency in politics, should be regarded as guiding principles of the Government and as central to re-election.

Recommendation 3:

Focusing on the needs and concerns of Australians including wages and the cost of living, housing availability and affordability, child-care and education, Medicare and health, jobs and economic growth as well as infrastructure, will be an important contributor to lifting Labor's primary vote and reinforcing Labor's standing as the party that best manages the economy in the interests of families and working people. Lifting the primary vote will also assist Labor's vote in the Senate.

Laying the groundwork for a long-term Labor Government:

Recommendation 4

To build commitment and determination throughout the labour movement to achieve Labor's plan for a better future, the Parliamentary leadership, National Secretariat and the trade union movement should adopt a unifying message that the 2022 election victory represents an opportunity to establish a long-term Labor Government.

Recommendation 5:

Labor should develop a policy, political and communications strategy that unites growing support in inner and middle-suburban electorates alongside measures that address the needs of families and working people in outer-suburban and regional areas. The achievement of demonstrable benefit for people in areas of heartland Labor support should be an objective and a measure of success for the Albanese Government.

Recommendation 6:

Specific plans should be developed to address:

- 6.1** Voter dissatisfaction in parts of outer-suburban Melbourne and parts of Western Sydney;
- 6.2** Improved outcomes for Federal Labor in Queensland. This should include developing the approach for the Queensland campaign earlier, and plans and policies for the various regions, while connecting these to the national strategy;
- 6.3** Labor's underperformance in Tasmania. This should complement the current processes underway following the intervention; and
- 6.4** The retention of seats gained in Western Australia.

2. Recommendations

Recommendation 7:

A strategy, underpinned by research, should be developed for successfully contesting three-cornered contests. Labor should actively contest the policy and political positions advocated by the Greens and dedicate resources for this purpose.

Recommendation 8:

Labor's research program over the next term should involve a broader cross-section of the Australian electorate, and in particular soft Labor voters. Voters from a range of different demographics and localities should continue to be included in Labor's qualitative and quantitative research.

Recommendation 9:

Labor should aim to align the interests of inner-suburban, outer-suburban and regional voters on climate policy by demonstrating that emissions reductions and job security/economic growth are not mutually exclusive, and that a coordinated decarbonisation effort by governments, business, unions and workers can drive massive investment that will protect and grow jobs.

Recommendation 10:

The Parliamentary leadership and the National Secretary should formulate the structure and planning that guarantees regular engagement for the purpose of analysing research, developing strategic communications, testing and developing policy proposals, and an improved election policy formulation process.

Recommendation 11:

Labor should continue to build its digital capacity. Capacity building should include sharing research insights to inform a strategic approach to digital communications, and training MPs and local campaign teams to deliver quality digital content and engagement in their communities between elections. Federal Labor should continue working closely with state and territory branches to share knowledge, improve digital skills and trial new approaches in elections.

Recommendation 12:

For the benefit of embedding a culture of continuous campaigning and fundraising, Labor should consider re-establishing the Caucus Communications Committee and providing Parliamentarians with ongoing professional development.

Recommendation 13:

The National Secretariat should engage with state and territory branches to identify opportunities to strengthen and grow the Party's membership. Respective branches should be encouraged to share their insights with one another to guide best practice.

2. Recommendations

Improving Australia's democracy:

Recommendation 14:

The Australian Government should consider allocating greater resourcing to the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) for its enrolment responsibilities.

Recommendation 15:

The Australian Government should explore auto-enrolment improvements.

Recommendation 16:

The proposed referendum on an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice is an opportunity for the AEC to focus resources on improving enrolment and turnout in remote communities and seats with a higher proportion of Indigenous Australians.

Campaign preparedness:

Recommendation 17:

The Campaign Director should maintain a disciplined approach to settling and documenting the strategy for the next election early. This should include maintaining a constructive culture of sharing and testing the strategy with the Federal Campaign Committee.

Recommendation 18:

Campaign preparedness should be assessed well in advance of the next federal election. The assessment should include the preparedness of the campaign for potential crises that could arise during the next campaign, exploring possible scenarios to ensure the relevant team in Campaign Headquarters is ready to respond rapidly.

Recommendation 19:

Labor should begin the process of rebuilding voter trust in the seat of Fowler, and preselect a strong candidate for the next election.

Recommendation 20:

Labor must take no seat for granted, regardless of its margin. All seats must campaign continuously throughout the electoral cycle, and it is critical that Parliamentarians emphasise Labor's record on delivery in government.

Recommendation 21:

Labor should provide its candidates with support before, during and after the campaign. This includes by providing training and advice to candidates to assist their transition into the public sphere, and in engaging with the community and the media.

2. Recommendations

Recommendation 22:

At the next election the composition of the travelling party should be settled early, with the Leader's chief of staff or their delegate responsible for leading and coordinating the traveling party. The team should also include a program leader, advancer/s, strategic communications support, head of media and senior ministers identified in advance of campaigns.

Recommendation 23:

State and Territory branches should be encouraged to identify strong candidates for House of Representatives seats. Branches should work with the National Secretary to identify suitable timing for preselections that maximises the opportunity to field the strongest candidates, keeping in mind the need to ensure proper candidate vetting.

Recommendation 24:

The National Secretary should establish a Senate Campaign Working Group in early 2023, with representation from the Senate caucus and State Branches. The working group should develop a Senate campaign plan, drawing on the 2021 report of the previous Senate working group.

Embracing diversity and fostering cohesion:

Recommendation 25:

While always uncompromisingly promoting and defending Australia's national interests and Australia's security, both major parties should avoid unnecessarily divisive and aggressive rhetoric towards China.

Recommendation 26:

Labor should continue its resourcing of CALD engagement and, if feasible, consider increasing the central investment in CALD engagement during the formal election campaign period.

Recommendation 27:

Labor should continue to embrace greater diversity in its selection of Labor candidates and campaign teams.

3. Conducting The Review

In June 2022, Labor's National Executive initiated this Review, the primary purpose of which is to better understand the reasons for the 2022 federal election results and to inform and make recommendations on Federal Labor's political strategy and campaign development over the next three years.

The Review's secondary objective is to assist the Labor Party membership and the labour movement to understand and respond constructively to the result.

Our approach to this Review has comprised three workstreams:

- Analysis and research – an examination of the results and performance of key campaign functions;
- Engagement – receiving and reviewing submissions from candidates, Labor members, affiliates and other interested parties, as well as conducting interviews and consultations with the campaign leadership including parliamentarians, candidates, campaign personnel and key service providers; and
- Reporting – providing this report and recommendations for the National Executive's consideration.

The Review received and considered 123 submissions, conducted 90 interviews and received and considered reports from the various unit directors in CHQ and external service providers supporting the campaign.

As part of the Review, a research program was commissioned to better understand the post-election sentiment of voters, vote drivers and expectations of the new Australian government. In addition to an analysis of the result, focus groups were held across the country. The insights from this research program have been invaluable in informing the Review's recommendations.

4. The Election Outcome

4.1 The overall result

On 21 May 2022, the Australian people elected the Albanese-led Australian Labor Party to government with a two-party preferred vote of 52.13 per cent, representing a swing of 3.66 per cent. This gave Labor 77 of the 151 House of Representative seats and the Coalition 58 seats. The Coalition were defeated in 18 seats they won in 2019, and one Liberal-held electorate was abolished by a redistribution prior to the election.

Labor gained 10 seats from the Coalition, and Teal independents defeated Liberal incumbents in six metropolitan electorates in Sydney, Melbourne and Perth.

Labor lost two seats, one to the Greens and one to an independent.

Independents, the Greens and other minor parties won 16 seats, creating the largest cross-bench in the House of Representatives since the fusion of the anti-Labour parties in 1909.

Labor's primary vote fell by 0.76 per cent from its 2019 election result to 32.58 per cent.

The Coalition's primary vote fell by 5.74 per cent to 35.70 per cent. The Liberal Party contributed the most to this result, with its primary vote falling by 4.28%. The Liberal National Party of Queensland and The Nationals had swings of -0.67% and -0.72% respectively.

The Greens' primary vote increased by 1.95 per cent to 12.25 per cent.

Finally, for the first time in a federal election more than half the vote was cast before election day through early voting and postal voting. While this was partly due to COVID-19, it continues a pre-COVID trend and posed significant challenges for both campaign strategy and operations.

4. The Election Outcome

4.2 State and territory results

On a two-party-preferred basis, Labor achieved swings to it in every state and territory except Tasmania. The biggest swing to Labor in Western Australia – 10.55 per cent – delivered Labor a majority amongst WA MPs for the first time since 1990.

The Coalition experienced a primary vote swing against it in every state and territory.¹ On a two-party-preferred basis, the Coalition suffered a swing against it in all states and territories other than Tasmania.

House of Representative swings (%), 2019-2022

State/ territory	Labor primary swing (%)	Coalition primary swing (%)	Coalition two party preferred swing (%)
New South Wales	-1.2	-6.0	-3.2
Victoria	-4.0	-5.2	-1.7
Queensland	+0.7	-4.1	-4.4
Western Australia	+7.0	-10.4	-10.6
South Australia	-0.9	-5.3	-3.3
Tasmania	-6.4	-1.7	+1.6
ACT	+3.8	-4.8	-5.3
NT	-4.1	-8.1	-1.3

Where Labor received primary swings against it, the votes sprayed to the Greens, One Nation and independent candidates, rather than to the Coalition.

Large primary swings against Labor were recorded in several outer-suburban Melbourne seats. Some seats in Melbourne's outer suburbs returned the lowest primary vote for Labor in the last 20 years. Again, these primary swings went mostly to minor parties.

In Tasmania, the Jacquie Lambie Network (JLN) ran candidates for the House of Representatives for the first time. This resulted in both major parties losing a portion of their primary vote to JLN.

¹In 2019 Liberals and Nationals both contested Bass, Braddon and Lyons. The Coalition primary vote across Tasmania was 34.60 per cent, made up of 30.63 per cent for the Liberal Party and 3.97 per cent for the National Party. In 2022 the National Party did not contest any Tasmanian seats. The Liberal Party primary vote improved by 2.36 per cent to 32.94 per cent but was still less than the combined Coalition vote recorded in 2019.

4. The Election Outcome

4.3 Seat results

Labor gained 10 seats, plus the new seat of Hawke following a redistribution.

Seat	State	Primary swing to Labor (%)	Primary swing against the Coalition (%)	Two party preferred swing to Labor (%)
Hawke (new seat)	VIC	-7.4 (notional)	-3.0 (notional)	-2.6 (notional)
Boothby	SA	-2.3	-7.2	+4.7
Higgins	VIC	+2.4	-5.8	+4.7
Robertson	NSW	+3.6	-6.9	+6.5
Chisholm	VIC	+3.8	-7.7	+6.9
Bennelong	NSW	+3.7	-9.5	+7.9
Reid	NSW	+4.4	-10.4	+8.4
Tangney	WA	+10.1	-11.3	+11.9
Hasluck	WA	+9.4	-10.6	+11.9
Swan	WA	+6.2	-12.7	+12.0
Pearce	WA	+11.0	-13.5	+14.2

All seats gained by Labor in Western Australia recorded double-digit two-party-preferred swings, indicating Western Australia substantially contributed to Labor's overall vote.

Labor lost two seats: Griffith (Queensland) and Fowler (NSW).

The Coalition's total of 58 seats was its lowest seat share in the House of Representatives since 1946 (the first federal election contested by the Liberal Party) and the fourth lowest seat share since the Coalition was formed in 1922.

The Greens gained three seats, two from the Coalition and one from Labor, while retaining the seat of Melbourne.

Seat	Labor primary (%)	Coalition primary (%)	Greens primary (%)	Greens two party preferred (%) (vs LNP)
Ryan	22.3 (-2.1)	38.5 (-10.1)	30.2 (+9.9)	52.7
Brisbane	27.3 (+2.8)	37.7 (-10.1)	27.2 (+4.9)	53.7
Griffith	28.9 (-2.0)	30.7 (-10.2)	34.6 (+10.9)	60.5

4. The Election Outcome

4.4 Senate results

In the Senate, the Coalition lost four seats, Labor's representation was unchanged, the Greens gained three seats and minor parties and independents gained a net one seat. Of the 76 seats in the Senate, the Coalition now holds 32, Labor 26, the Greens 12, Jacqui Lambie Network 2, One Nation 2, United Australia Party 1, and David Pocock 1.

Labor's Senate primary vote of 30.09 per cent improved by 1.30 per cent compared to 2019. Labor's strongest Senate result was in Western Australia, where a primary vote swing of +6.92 per cent helped elect three Labor Senators from one state at a half-Senate election for the first time since 2010.

In the ACT, Labor's Senate primary vote fell by 5.98 per cent despite increasing by 3.80 per cent in the House, which can be attributed to Labor supporters tactically voting for independents to defeat ACT Liberal Senator Zed Seselja. For the first time in the history of Territory Senate representation, no Coalition Senator was elected from the ACT.

Senate primary swings (%), 2019-2022

State/ territory	Labor primary swing (%)	Coalition primary swing (%)	Greens primary swing (%)	Other primary swing (%)
New South Wales	+0.6	-1.8	+2.7	-1.5
Victoria	+0.3	-3.6	+3.2	+0.05
Queensland	+2.1	-3.7	+2.5	-0.9
Western Australia	+6.9	-9.2	+2.5	-0.1
South Australia	+1.9	-3.5	+1.0	+0.6
Tasmania	-3.6	+0.6	+2.9	+0.1
ACT	-6.0	-7.6	-7.4	+21.0
NT	-4.5	-5.0	+2.0	+7.5

4.5 The Coalition's metropolitan crisis

The 2022 election represented a realignment election for the Liberal Party, which as noted above is in its worst position since 1946. Voters in traditional metropolitan Liberal seats left the party and voted for Labor, the Greens or independents. The Coalition primary vote of 35.70 per cent was their lowest primary vote since the formation of the Liberal Party, and only the second primary vote below 40 per cent since Menzies' election in 1949.

A combination of poor performance among younger voters, voter alienation over refusal to act on climate change, failures on gender issues, and better resourced opponents triggered what could become a permanent shift rather than just a protest vote or a one-off result.

4. The Election Outcome

The Liberals have now lost most of their inner- and middle-urban seats. In 2007, the Coalition held 33 seats classified by the AEC as metropolitan. In 2022 that number is 19. In Victoria they only hold three metropolitan seats and their biggest margin is 2.9 per cent per cent. The seats of Deakin, Menzies and Aston, as well as Casey, are vulnerable. In Adelaide, the Liberals hold Sturt by less than 1 per cent, in Perth, Moore by less than 1 per cent and in Sydney they hold just seven seats.

The Coalition's path to government is further complicated by Teal independents holding six formerly safe Liberal metropolitan seats.

Seats held by AEC Classification

	2007			2013			2022		
	ALP	Coalition	Other	ALP	Coalition	Other	ALP	Coalition	Other
Inner metro	29	13		22	20	2	31	4	10
Outer metro	25	20		19	24		25	15	3
Provincial	16	5		9	12		14	11	
Rural	13	27	2	5	34	3	7	28	3
Total	83	65	2	55	90	5	77	58	16

4.6 Issues of concern for Labor

The difficulties confronting the Liberals should not be cause for complacency for Labor. The election results point to challenges for Labor that have required thorough examination by the Review:

- Labor's primary vote of 32.6 per cent was its lowest since 1934.
- In Queensland, Labor did not gain any seats, lost one seat, and now holds only five of 30 electorates.
- In Tasmania, Labor suffered a negative primary vote and negative two-party-preferred swings for the second federal election in a row.
- A swing away from Labor to the Greens resulted in the incumbent Member for Griffith being defeated; and Greens gains in the seats of Ryan and Brisbane, where Labor had hoped to defeat the Liberal-National Party incumbents.
- Labor was defeated in the NSW seat of Fowler for the first time since the seat was created in 1984.
- Large primary vote swings away from Labor were recorded in several previously safe, outer-suburban electorates in Melbourne.

5. Defining Events During the Parliamentary Term

5.1 Overview

The parliamentary term following the 2019 federal election was dominated by the worst pandemic in more than a century. Prime Minister Scott Morrison formed a National Cabinet with state and territory leaders. The bipartisanship that this engendered was welcomed by the public, who wanted the pandemic response to succeed.

Morrison also established a National Covid-19 Coordination Commission to harness experienced business and trade union representatives to help respond to the economic and social challenges of the pandemic.

During the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic the Prime Minister's approval ratings in published polls rose to the mid-60s. Throughout this period Anthony Albanese and Labor took a constructive approach, voting for legislation that enabled the immediate health and economic response to the pandemic, and proposing solutions where there were gaps that were leaving vulnerable people exposed.

When Morrison and his senior ministers abandoned the consensus approach to pandemic management and began attacking Labor premiers in mid-2020, the political circumstances changed. The Coalition's politicisation of pandemic management was a major strategic error. When the Morrison Government failed on both establishing quarantine facilities and the rollout of vaccines, Morrison's approval with the public began to wane and the Labor Opposition justifiably criticised the Coalition's mistakes.

At the same time the Morrison government's lack of awareness or interest in the pandemic's impact on women was on show. The early end to free child care and the exclusion of early childhood educators and carers from JobKeeper were only one aspect.

The sense that both Scott Morrison and the Coalition simply failed to understand and empathise with the experience of women was heightened during 2021 by the reckoning around workplace culture and bullying, and sexual harassment in Parliamentary and political workplaces.

Despite the disruption of the pandemic, the Labor opposition stuck to the four stage approach articulated by Anthony Albanese at the National Press Club in November 2019 – the 2019 Campaign Review; a series of speeches by Albanese setting out broad policy directions; a National Conference tasked with consolidating the Labor Platform into a document setting out a positive and compelling story about Australia's future; and finally the rollout of Labor policy outlining the agenda for the first term of a Labor government.

Set out below are the key events that defined the parliamentary term and shaped Labor's approach to the 2022 federal election campaign.

5. Defining Events During the Parliamentary Term

5.2 Key events 2019-2022

The Black Summer bushfires of 2019-20

The initial months of the 46th Parliament were dominated by the Black Summer bushfires. Scott Morrison's response to the crisis did great harm to his public standing. His holiday in Hawaii while much of Australia burned was shrouded in secrecy and his attempts at personal rehabilitation failed when he was filmed pressuring locals who had battled the fires to shake his hand against their will on a visit to the NSW south coast.

Morrison infamously told a Sydney radio host: "I don't hold a hose, mate." This became a metaphor for the Prime Minister's refusal to take responsibility during subsequent crises, particularly the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Sports rorts" and "pork-and-ride" grants

In early-2020, the Australian National Audit Office released a report into the Community Sport Infrastructure Program, exposing the rorts that became a hallmark of the Coalition's time in office. Colour-coded charts were deployed in ministerial offices to bias grant funding heavily towards marginal Coalition seats.

A regional grants program was used to upgrade North Sydney Pool. And as the parliamentary term unfolded, more rorted programs were exposed, including four park-and-ride facilities where no railway station existed.

The early COVID-19 pandemic era

"From March [2020] onwards the pandemic overwhelmed discussion of every other issue.

Incumbents dominated the conversation and the share of public attention available to the Opposition was much smaller than usual.

Public appetite for political conflict was at an all-time low, particularly in the first few months...

Unlike other oppositions, Federal Labor's strategy throughout 2020 was to offer broad support for the public health response and stand up for people left behind by the Coalition's economic response.

5. Defining Events During the Parliamentary Term

This was appreciated by the voters and helped Federal Labor maintain a sound position – especially in states where the Liberal opposition took an alternative approach and behaved and looked like wreckers.”

- Paul Erickson, ALP Campaign Director’s address to the National Press Club, 15 June 2022

In an early and ultimately politically disastrous decision, federal and state Liberals backed Clive Palmer’s failed High Court challenge to the Western Australian government’s border closures. Wanting to be shielded from COVID-19 arriving from the eastern states, the Western Australian public sided with the McGowan Labor government and against the Morrison Government.

The Eden-Monaro by-election of July 2020

In April 2020 Mike Kelly resigned from Parliament, triggering the Eden-Monaro by-election on 4 July. The by-election was the first test for both major parties since the 2019 election, and occurred at a time when the public was rallying around incumbent governments across the globe. Despite this advantage for the Coalition, Labor’s candidate Kristy McBain, who had earned a strong reputation for her handling of the Black Summer bushfires as Mayor of Bega Valley Shire Council, retained the seat for Labor.

Anthony Albanese’s Budget Reply of 8 October 2020

In his reply to the 2020 Budget, Anthony Albanese unveiled Labor’s first significant policy commitment of the term, cheaper child care. The child care policy reduced child care costs for most families, including those on middle and higher incomes. Not only was the policy presented as advancing gender equality, it was also promoted as a fundamental economic reform that would increase workforce participation and productivity.

The second policy announced in the Budget Reply was an initial instalment of Labor’s climate-change policy. Rewiring Australia set out a plan to modernise the electricity transmission grid by connecting renewable energy sources to the existing grid carrying electricity to the major cities and industrial centres.

Women’s March for Justice of 15 March 2021

The Women’s March for Justice demonstrated and catalysed discontent with the Morrison Government amongst women across the country.

Thousands of women participated in a protest gathering at the front of Parliament House. In response to the gathering, Scott Morrison told Parliament: “Not far from here, such

5. Defining Events During the Parliamentary Term

marches, even now, are being met with bullets, but not here in this country” adding “This is a triumph of democracy when we see these things take place.”

Morrison’s statement was interpreted as meaning that the women at the rally were lucky they were not being shot. Together with the Morrison Government’s failure to respond in a timely way to a report on sexual harassment in workplaces by Sex Discrimination Commissioner, Kate Jenkins, these statements infuriated and alienated many women and also men.

ALP National Conference of March 2021

Labor’s Special Platform Conference, held online in March 2021, adopted a modernised ALP National Platform. At the Conference, Labor released policies on electric vehicles and community batteries to complement its Rewiring the Nation policy and as forerunners to its comprehensive climate change policy unveiled later in the year.

The middle COVID-19 pandemic era

In February 2021 Australia’s vaccine rollout commenced. The rollout stalled in April 2021 when the Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI) updated their advice in response to safety concerns about AstraZeneca. The government’s failure to secure a variety of vaccine deals left Australia dangerously exposed. This failure to secure multiple vaccines led Morrison to say three times in one day in March 2021 that the vaccine rollout was “not a race” and was “not a competition.”

At the same time, the Morrison Government refused to establish a safe and effective national quarantine system as an alternative to hotel quarantine. Morrison argued that quarantine was not its responsibility despite the Constitution clearly stating that quarantine was a federal responsibility.

Labor shadow ministers began stating repeatedly that the Morrison Government had two jobs – quarantine and vaccine rollout – and had botched both.

Anthony Albanese’s Budget Reply of 13 May 2021

In his May 2021 Budget Reply, Anthony Albanese announced \$10 billion in government bonds to finance a new Housing Australia Future Fund to be managed by the existing Future Fund, with the earnings spent on affordable housing. The Budget Reply highlighted weak wages growth, announced a policy to criminalise wage theft and returned to gender equality issues by imposing a duty on employers to take reasonable steps to eliminate sex discrimination, harassment and victimisation.

5. Defining Events During the Parliamentary Term

Barnaby Joyce's return to the National Party leadership

In June 2021, Barnaby Joyce defeated Michael McCormack in a party-room ballot to return to the National Party leadership. This had two negative effects on the Coalition's support: further damaging its support with women and highlighting its lack of sincerity in reducing carbon emissions. Much was made publicly of the hard bargaining position adopted by the Nationals under Joyce's leadership in reluctantly agreeing to support net zero emissions by 2050, with Joyce in the Nationals' party-room discussion speaking against the deal he did with Scott Morrison.

Ahead of the COP26 meeting at Glasgow in November 2021, a vacuous document brandished by Morrison failed to persuade the voting public that the Coalition was any more committed to action on climate change than it had been when it voted against Labor's Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme in 2009 and repealed the Gillard government's carbon price in 2014.

Labor's climate change and free TAFE policies of early-December 2021

On 3 December 2021, Labor unveiled its 2030 emissions reduction target of 43 per cent, substantially greater than the Coalition's target of 26-28 per cent. The policy included a tightening of the Safeguard Mechanism for the biggest emitters and received the backing of all the major business organisations.

At a community rally on 5 December 2021 Labor released a policy to provide fee-free TAFE courses in industries hit hard by the COVID-19 pandemic such as hospitality and tourism and in areas of skill shortages. This would give young people extra opportunities along with those later in life who felt that they were in jobs that were likely to disappear through technological change.

The later COVID-19 pandemic era

During the winter of 2021, vaccines were in extremely short supply and leaky hotel quarantine facilities led to repeated COVID outbreaks. By July, the Delta variant had been introduced into Australia and new lockdowns occurred. Yet Morrison and his Ministers stepped up their attacks on state Labor premiers, especially Daniel Andrews and Anastacia Palaszczuk.

To compound the botched rollout of vaccines, the Morrison Government was tardy in ensuring plentiful supplies of Rapid Antigen Tests (RATs). Australians had been queuing for months for PCR tests but now that RATs had been developed to reduce the need for queuing, they were expensive and hard to obtain.

5. Defining Events During the Parliamentary Term

Scott Morrison stated that procuring RATs was not a Commonwealth responsibility, consistent with his refusal to accept responsibility for assistance with bushfires, quarantine and vaccine procurement and rollout.

“Over that summer the failures of the vaccine rollout were repeated when the omicron wave arrived and the shortage of rapid antigen tests ruined the Christmas holidays.

This period did denied Morrison his summer reset and reinforced his weaknesses – ignoring warnings, refusing to take responsibility, going missing and then blaming others.

With most of the population now vaccinated and aware that omicron was less likely to cause severe symptoms, a degree of fatalism about catching COVID had settled in.

For the first time since the beginning of the pandemic, COVID no longer dominated voters’ thinking about the election.

Instead cost of living became the number one issue across the board – and remained so until election day.”

- Paul Erickson, ALP Campaign Director’s address to the National Press Club, 15 June 2022

Supply-chain problems and labour shortages drove up the prices of groceries and the war in Ukraine was adding upward pressure to petrol prices. At the same time a sustained boom in house prices put further pressure on housing affordability, particularly for young people.

The Morrison Government’s Budget of 29 March 2022

As had occurred in 2019, the Morrison Government’s 2022 Budget was widely viewed as the scene setter for a looming federal election. It sought to ease cost-of-living pressures, halving fuel excise for six months, providing cash payments to pensioners and announcing new housing initiatives.

Anthony Albanese’s Budget Reply of 31 March 2022

The centrepiece of Anthony Albanese’s Budget Reply was aged care – a nurse in every aged-care facility, support for a wage increase for aged-care workers and the provision of nutritious meals to residents.

6. The Campaign

After redistributions and defections, the Coalition notionally held 75 out of 151 seats, while Labor notionally held 69 seats.

6.1 Big moments in the campaign

10 April – The election is called for 21 May 2022

Prime Minister Morrison called the election for 21 May 2022, making it a six-week campaign, urging voters to stick with the Coalition government and not to take a risk on the economy by voting Labor. Anthony Albanese appealed to voters' desire for a better future.

11 April – Albanese's slip-up

In response to media questioning, Anthony Albanese was unable to nominate the unemployment rate and the Reserve Bank's cash rate. Albanese quickly apologised. Media criticism continued for more than a week, arguing the incident lent support to the Coalition's claim that Albanese was inexperienced on the economy.

The incident set up a testing environment between some of the media and the Labor travelling party, and a near-hysterical "gotcha" approach to some reporting.

14 April – Katherine Deves and the culture wars

Scott Morrison's hand-picked candidate for Warringah, Katherine Deves, apologised for historic comments linking her anti-trans activism to resistance against the Nazis and claiming that half of all males with trans identities were sex offenders. This set up a running issue, with Morrison later defending Deves' right to speak out.

Morrison's defence of Katherine Deves sharpened the contest between Liberals in heartland seats and Teal challengers, many of whom were highly critical of Deves' comments.

Katherine Deves' comments triggered public infighting within the NSW Division of the Liberal Party over the delayed NSW preselections that had enabled Morrison to choose his own candidates in several seats. Morrison's public support for Deves placed moderate incumbent MPs under intense pressure to hold their seats against Teal challengers.

16 April – Anti-corruption Commission

Anthony Albanese announced that, if elected, Labor would legislate a national anti-corruption commission by the end of 2022. Prime Minister Morrison had pledged before the 2019 election to legislate a federal integrity commission but failed to introduce legislation into the parliament.

6. The Campaign

18 April – Medicare

Newly appointed Health spokesperson, Anne Ruston, was equivocal when asked about her previous comments that Medicare was financially unsustainable in its present form. During the campaign Labor announced policies to boost Medicare, highlighting the difference between Labor and the Coalition on health.

19 April – China, the Pacific Islands and national security

The ABC revealed that China and the Solomon Islands had signed a security pact. The deal was reported widely as China increasing its influence and presence in the Pacific, with some reports stating the pact left the door open for China to move military personnel into the region. Labor argued that the Morrison Government had dropped the ball in Australia's relations with Pacific Island neighbours.

The Coalition ramped up its attack on Labor, arguing it was too soft on China, having already described a member of the Labor frontbench as a "Manchurian candidate" during a parliamentary debate, arguing that the Chinese Communist Party was backing Labor and that Labor opposed the AUKUS arrangement.

Later in April Labor released a detailed plan to restore Australia's place as the partner of choice for countries in the Pacific.

20 April – First Leaders' debate

Anthony Albanese won the first Leaders' debate of the campaign, hosted by Sky News and The Courier-Mail and conducted in front of a live audience of 100 undecided voters and a total television audience 415,000 viewers.

21 April – Albanese tests positive to COVID-19

Anthony Albanese tested positive to COVID-19 and isolated for seven days. Deputy Leader Richard Marles and senior shadow ministers including Penny Wong, Jim Chalmers, Katy Gallagher and Jason Clare stepped up their campaigning in Anthony Albanese's absence.

22 April – Criticism of the Morrison Government on national security

Former Foreign Minister, Julie Bishop, and former Chief of the Defence Force, Chris Barrie, criticised the Morrison Government for doing too little to prevent the Solomon Islands security pact with China.

6. The Campaign

27 April – Inflation rising confirming cost-of-living pressures

The inflation rate for the March quarter was released, coming in at an annualised 5.1 per cent, a 20-year high, and elevating the cost of living to the top election issue for many Australians. Labor continued to emphasise that for almost a decade of Coalition real wages had lagged inflation and that the Coalition Government had suppressed wages as a deliberate design feature of its economic strategy.

30 April – Royal Commission into Robodebt

Shadow Minister for the NDIS, Bill Shorten, announced Labor would initiate a Royal Commission into Robodebt if elected.

1 May – Labor campaign launch in Perth, News Corp fights for Frydenberg, Teals rising

Labor's campaign was officially launched in Perth for the first time since the 1940s. The centrepiece of Labor's launch was its Help to Buy housing policy, a shared equity scheme designed to assist low and middle-income earners to enter the housing market.

The Coalition attempted to revive its fear campaigns from the 2019 campaign to attack the initiative, running digital advertisements claiming Labor had “argued for higher taxes on retirees, housing and inheritances.” Scott Morrison falsely claimed that Labor would force people to sell their homes if their income rose above the original threshold for the scheme. These attacks did not influence voters.

The Herald Sun published a story stating Treasurer Josh Frydenberg was in for the “fight of his political life” in Kooyong against independent candidate Monique Ryan. Some Liberal incumbents under pressure from the Teals described them as “fake independents.” A YouGov poll released on May 10 revealed that independent candidates were leading the Coalition in the key seats of Kooyong and Goldstein and were competitive elsewhere against the Liberal incumbents.

3 May – Reserve Bank increased interest rates

The Reserve Bank lifted the cash rate by 0.25 percentage points from its historically low 0.1 percentage point, while also signalling further rate increases. This rate rise added fuel to the cost-of-living debate.

8 May – Second Leaders' debate

The second Leaders' debate, hosted by the Nine Network, was marred by technical problems with online voting and an angry tone. Despite voting difficulties confronting viewers seeking to vote for Anthony Albanese, he nevertheless won the vote. The debate drew a large audience of 641,000 viewers.

6. The Campaign

10 May – Albanese supported minimum wage rise

Anthony Albanese was asked whether he would support an increase in the minimum wage equal to the 5.1 per cent inflation rate. He answered: “Absolutely.” This one-word reply set off a fierce political fight, the media describing it as a gaffe, and the Coalition stating it was economically irresponsible and that a dollar an hour rise to the minimum wage would cause the sky to fall in. Morrison’s attack signalled its ongoing support for real wage reductions. This debate suited Labor, confirming it as the party for working Australians, especially the lowest paid.

11 May – Third Leaders’ debate

The third Leaders’ debate, hosted by the Seven Network and The West Australian, was won by Anthony Albanese following a poll of 150 undecided voters in selected marginal electorates, which recorded 50 per cent for Albanese, 34 per cent for Morrison with 16 per cent remaining undecided. The viewing audience of 811,000 was the largest of the three debates.

During the third debate, Anthony Albanese held up a \$1 coin, signifying the increase in the hourly rate of the minimum wage that he was supporting, and the Coalition was opposing. He repeated this several times during the election campaign, crystallising the difference between Labor and the Coalition on wages and the cost of living.

13 May – Chinese surveillance ship tracked off WA coastline

The Defence Minister, Peter Dutton, revealed that the Defence Force had been tracking a Chinese surveillance ship off the coast of Western Australia for the “past week or so”. He claimed the ship was collecting intelligence along the Australian coast, describing it as “an aggressive act.” The vessel was outside Australia’s territorial sea. Chinese authorities responded by stating that “China always abides by international law and international practice”. Dutton urged voters concerned about national security or “the situation in the Indo-Pacific” to take the “much safer bet” of the Coalition.

15 May – Coalition campaign launch and housing policy

The Coalition officially launched its campaign on the last Sunday before the election. It unveiled its housing policy to enable first home buyers to access their superannuation retirement savings to enter the property market. The policy was criticised by Labor, industry and economists for putting upward pressure on housing prices and reducing retirement incomes. Labor polling revealed that voters saw it as bad policy that would undermine the superannuation system and push up house prices.

6. The Campaign

18 May – Albanese appeared at the National Press Club

Anthony Albanese addressed the National Press Club and fielded questions from the media. Scott Morrison was the first Prime Minister since 1969 not to appear at the National Press Club during a federal election campaign.

20 May – Telephone voting permitted

The AEC changed telephone voting rules to allow voters who had tested positive after 6pm on 13 May to vote by telephone.

21 May – A boat arrival on polling day

In a final act of desperation, the Coalition breached established protocols at the behest of the Prime Minister by briefing the media that an asylum seeker boat had been intercepted near Christmas Island. The Coalition sent text messages to voters in marginal seats urging them to vote for the Coalition for border security.

6.2 Labor's campaign strategy

Early in the parliamentary term, Labor leader Anthony Albanese described his strategy as “kicking with the wind in the final quarter.” He indicated that he would not be releasing policies every few weeks, nor would he be attacking the Morrison Government for the sake of it. The plan was to develop momentum over time and head into the election period with the wind at Labor's back.

As referenced earlier in this report Albanese outlined this approach at the National Press Club in November 2019 by positioning the 2019 campaign review as the beginning of a four-stage response to the 2019 defeat. Adoption of the Emerson-Weatherill review would be followed by a series of speeches setting out broad policy directions; a National Conference; and the rollout of Labor policy. The pandemic changed the context for Labor but the Opposition stuck to this sequence, notwithstanding adjustments to the timing.

During the early stages of the pandemic circumstances favoured governments over oppositions more so than usual. Governments not only had the normal capacity to dominate the agenda, but government had also become more important in peoples' lives and oppositions at federal and state levels were sidelined for much of the term.

As the pandemic progressed, state politics took on a greater significance in shaping perceptions of the major parties than at any time in the recent past. Voters were much more likely to credit their local health system, public health experts and the State Premiers with the successes of the COVID response than the federal government. Frustration at ‘in-fighting’ at the National Cabinet throughout 2021 also came to the fore.

6. The Campaign

As the country entered an election year, Australia's future seemed very muddy and unclear to voters. The political instability of the last decade had seen them switch off from politics, and COVID had seen their lives disrupted in unwelcome and unexpected ways. More than anything else they were looking for the promise of a return to stability and certainty, and for some hope that the country might get back on track.

In this context a switch to Labor offered a change of government that would deliver new ideas and greater energy, would allow the country to put COVID behind it, and would have a stronger focus on jobs, health, the environment, and climate. As to reasons to stick with the Coalition, voters nominated stability and continuity, perceptions that Labor would be a risk to the economy, and perceptions that the Opposition was an unknown quantity who were unsure of their policies.

In these circumstances, Labor implemented an evolving strategy comprising four components:

1. Frame the election as a choice about Australia's future

Throughout the first half of 2021 Morrison sought to bask in the reflected glory of Australia's COVID response, which he positioned as a success relative to similar developed countries.

Essential to Labor's strategy was ensuring that when voters thought about the next federal election, they considered a choice about the future rather than Morrison's desired scenario of a 2021 election that asked voters to endorse the first 12 months of the COVID response.

Morrison's failures on vaccines, quarantine and rapid antigen tests caused massive disruption when the delta and omicron waves hit, and took the option of an early election off the table. Over time Labor dialled up its focus on Morrison's mistakes and excuses, creating the political space to convert dissatisfaction with Morrison's performance into a mood for change.

2. Define Labor and Anthony Albanese by his plan for a better future

Labor sought to define Anthony Albanese by his plan for a better future, and associate Albanese with simple, clear, and credible policy commitments. Throughout 2021 Labor's policy development was organised into three themes to develop this plan:

- A better life for working families – Medicare, child care, aged care, wages.
- Secure jobs – job security, skills and training, national reconstruction fund.
- A future made in Australia – manufacturing, renewables, energy grid modernisation.

6. The Campaign

In the campaign period Labor’s plan for a better future was distilled to four points:

- Strengthen Medicare by making it easier to see a doctor.
- Create secure local jobs by investing in fee-free TAFE and more university places, and making your job more secure with better pay and conditions.
- Make child care cheaper for Australia families so that it’s easier for working families to get ahead.
- Make more things here in Australia – Labor will work with business to invest in manufacturing and renewables to create more Australian jobs.

This plan built on Albanese’s strengths with voters – an authentic, down-to-earth and experienced leader who would work with people to solve problems rather than pick fights. Other notable policy commitments included the introduction of a national anti-corruption commission, the Powering Australia plan which committed to a 43% reduction in emissions by 2030, and a plan to fix the crisis in aged care.

3. Make another term for the Liberals the biggest risk

Labor developed a character case against Morrison by pointing out that he consistently refused to take responsibility, went missing in action, blamed others and couldn’t admit his mistakes. From the bushfires to the bungled vaccine rollout to not securing enough rapid antigen tests, Labor argued that Morrison’s mistakes had held Australians back.

In the closing stages of the campaign Labor sought to take the case for change beyond Morrison’s character flaws and project forward to turn another three years of the Coalition into the greatest risk facing voters.

4. Offer voters a clear choice between a better future or more Morrison

As the election neared, Labor identified that what worried voters most about a re-elected Morrison government was that nothing would change – that Morrison would continue making mistakes and excuses, that the country’s problems would continue to mount up, and Australians would miss out on some big opportunities that could come from a change. This closing contrast between “more of the same under Morrison” and a better future under Labor was the central voter choice message of the campaign.

6. The Campaign

6.3 Campaign organisation

The Campaign Director has observed to the Review that this strategy was designed to meet objectives that mirrored the 2019 Campaign Review's top findings:

- Develop a persuasive strategy for winning the election.
- Have the strategy documented.
- Report against that strategy at a Federal Campaign Committee.
- Craft a simple narrative that reinforced that strategy and unified our policies.
- Encourage dialogue and challenge internally.
- Campaign consistently on the reasons to vote out the Coalition.
- Be disciplined in selection and resourcing of target seats.
- Adapt to changing circumstances and reframe Labor's voter choice message as required.
- Protect the standing of the Leader.

It is clear to the Review that the documentation of the campaign strategy by the National Secretary was an important contributor to a focused campaign effort, and that this should continue to be the discipline applied.

From January 2021 onwards the strategy, along with a workplan outlining how it would be implemented, was discussed at a Federal Campaign Committee chaired by ALP National President Wayne Swan. The Campaign Committee's work was augmented by the State and Territory Secretaries group, which met regularly throughout the three years. As the formal campaign period approached a Campaign Strategy Group made up of the Parliamentary Leadership, party officials and key staff from CHQ and the travelling party met daily.

6.4 Campaign themes

'A Better Future' was used by Labor to frame a national campaign broad enough for voters to project into, whether they were attracted to specific policy planks in the Albanese plan; moving on from two years of the pandemic; a greater emphasis on climate change or women's issues; or getting rid of Scott Morrison and ending nine years of conservative government. The theme was developed over the second half of 2021 and launched at a community rally in NSW on Sunday 5 December, five and a half months out from polling day.

In the months leading up the election public and private polling indicated that Liberal economic management remained the Coalition's best card. Apart from anything else voter concerns about Morrison's incompetence meant that a leadership contrast was not an available campaign strategy. At the same time Labor held a strong lead on the question of which party was best to manage cost-of-living pressure and lift wages. Labor framed the debate on the economy around the kitchen table and made it about cost of living and wages, whilst also highlighting the enormous levels of rorts and waste that left the federal budget heaving in debt. The development of these themes over the term, led by Jim Chalmers and Katy Gallagher, meant Labor was well-placed in the campaign when the cost-of-living debate was enlivened by the March quarter inflation figures, the Reserve Bank's decision to increase interest rates, and the argument over the minimum wage.

6. The Campaign

Western Australia

In mid-2021 Labor identified that, due largely to the significant differences in the experience of COVID in Western Australia, the political environment in WA was sufficiently distinct from the rest of the country to justify a standalone WA campaign theme. This was developed by the National Secretariat and the WA ALP branch.

Labor's polling day message:



Labor's polling day message in WA:



The Review notes that whilst the WA campaign had a standalone message, Labor's strategy in WA was the same as the rest of the country. The fact that the national campaign launch occurred in Perth and was built around the 'Better Future' theme demonstrates how campaign messages that vary by region can remain strategically consistent.

7. Analysing the Election Result

7.1 Effectiveness of the strategy

Labor's constructive approach to the pandemic during 2020 kept Labor's voting intentions at respectable levels and Anthony Albanese's leadership ratings positive at a time when Scott Morrison's approval ratings were in the mid-60s and the public rallied around the incumbent in response to the initial stages of the crisis.

After the initial consensus approach to the pandemic, Morrison began to play politics by attacking state Labor Premiers, attacking public health measures and failing to take responsibility for the bungled vaccine rollout and federal quarantine. By the time of the rapid antigen tests debacle, concern about Morrison's character had converted into a general concern about his competence.

The focus on Morrison's character was highly effective. Morrison's unpopularity is the single most significant factor in Labor's victory. Morrison continued to reinforce Labor's messages with his behaviour. Over an 18-month period his net satisfaction rating in Newspoll fell from +41 per cent in July 2020 to -19 in January 2022.

Labor's sustained message discipline throughout the campaign on cost of living and wages succeeded against the Coalition's attempt to frame an economic debate around the headline figures in the March 2022 federal budget. Defeating the Coalition on economic management was a triumph of strategy and message discipline.

Labor's closing message was successful in holding the line, maintaining Labor's lead in the closing fortnight (including amongst voters who decided their vote in the final 72 hours), and ensuring that dissatisfaction with Scott Morrison was the most salient issue for undecided voters in the final stages of the campaign.

Defining Labor's offer through the plan for a better future was partially successful. It was effective in giving the Coalition little to attack. No 'winners and losers' narrative could be established that had worked so well for the Coalition in previous campaigns. Voters who switched to Labor cited Albanese's style of leadership as a reason they opted for change. However, a further group of voters who had been available to Labor during the campaign cited a lack of awareness of Labor's policies or agenda as their reason for voting for independents or minor parties.

7.2 Vote drivers

The Review's post-election research has confirmed that the animosity towards Scott Morrison and a loss of confidence in the Morrison Government was the predominant vote driver. Compared with Morrison, voters perceived Anthony Albanese as being more genuine and someone who would bring people together. He was seen as a humble person, with a sense of decency and not entitlement. However, he was relatively unknown – not unusual for an opposition leader throughout the pandemic. Voters saw Labor as having presented a team

7. Analysing the Election Result

ready for government, with more women and greater diversity in its ranks.

A secondary vote driver was the perceptions of local MPs and candidates, their record of delivering for the local communities, and efforts to engage with the community throughout the term and in the lead-up to election day.

A deeper analysis of the result found that while there were some nationwide demographic trends, results were heavily influenced by electorate-specific and state-specific factors. The strongest predictor of a positive swing towards Labor was living in Western Australia.

More generalised predictors of swings towards Labor were people who had a tertiary education, were living in a metropolitan electorate, voters of Chinese ancestry, and voters with an income less than the median. The most pronounced contrast with the result in 2019 was that Chinese Australians swung towards Labor in 2022. The analysis also revealed that Vietnamese Australians swung away from Labor in 2022. This might partially be explained by the result in Fowler. However, the correlation is still evident when Fowler is excluded from the overall results.

While Labor experienced swings against it in some outer-suburban areas, some of the biggest swings to Labor were also recorded in outer-suburban and regional electorates such as Greenway, Macquarie, Eden-Monaro, Dobell and Robertson in NSW, Dunkley, Deakin and Corangamite in Victoria, Hasluck, Moore and Pearce in Western Australia and Flynn in Queensland.

The Morrison Government's record on women's issues was a driving factor for both female and male voters. Voters expressed approval for the prominence of women in leadership positions within Labor's ranks, and for the diversity within its Caucus.

7.3 An explanation of the result

While there might not be consistent nationwide trends in voting behaviour, the assessment of the Review is that there was a recurring hierarchy of themes that many voters tended to navigate:

- Voters had either made up their minds about voting out Scott Morrison and his government, or they were nervous about the potential for change in a period heavily characterised by uncertainty and instability.
- If they were open to an alternative, voters either found Anthony Albanese and Labor to be an acceptable, credible, and sensible option for government, or they were nervous about the potential for change or they did not have enough information to confidently make the decision to switch.
- If voters were not certain about Anthony Albanese and the Labor alternative government, they looked to the local MPs and candidates, their track record in the community, and their commitments. They were likely to be persuaded by active and engaging campaigns.
- If they were undecided at this point, the vote would spray to the Greens, or to a range of minor parties including One Nation, United Australia Party, Liberal Democrats, or less well-known independent candidates.

7. Analysing the Election Result

These patterns appear to have been quite uniform across postal voting, pre-polling and voting on the day. COVID-19 clearly had a significant impact during this election and drove many voters to cast their ballots early.

Almost 36 per cent of voters who cast a formal vote at this election still voted for the Coalition. The Review's post-election research found that Coalition voters still gave the Morrison Government credit for its handling of the unprecedented pandemic, recalled the support payments distributed to people during the crisis, or felt their experience of the pandemic compared favourably with that of friends and families in other countries. Other reasons for a Coalition vote included a desire to avoid a hung Parliament, loyalty to the Liberal Party and the Nationals, and positive perceptions of their local Coalition MP.

From the research, participants who said they did not give Labor their first preference cited a lack of awareness of Labor's policies, perceived inactivity of local Labor MPs and candidates, entrenched views of Labor's experience in managing the economy, and concern that Labor would try to introduce its various tax changes from the 2019 election. The Review's post-election research confirmed that one factor in Labor's low primary vote was limited awareness of Labor's agenda. It should be recognised that this is a corollary of the (successful) strategic judgement to focus on Scott Morrison's negatives and to present a more limited set of election policies following the experience of 2019.

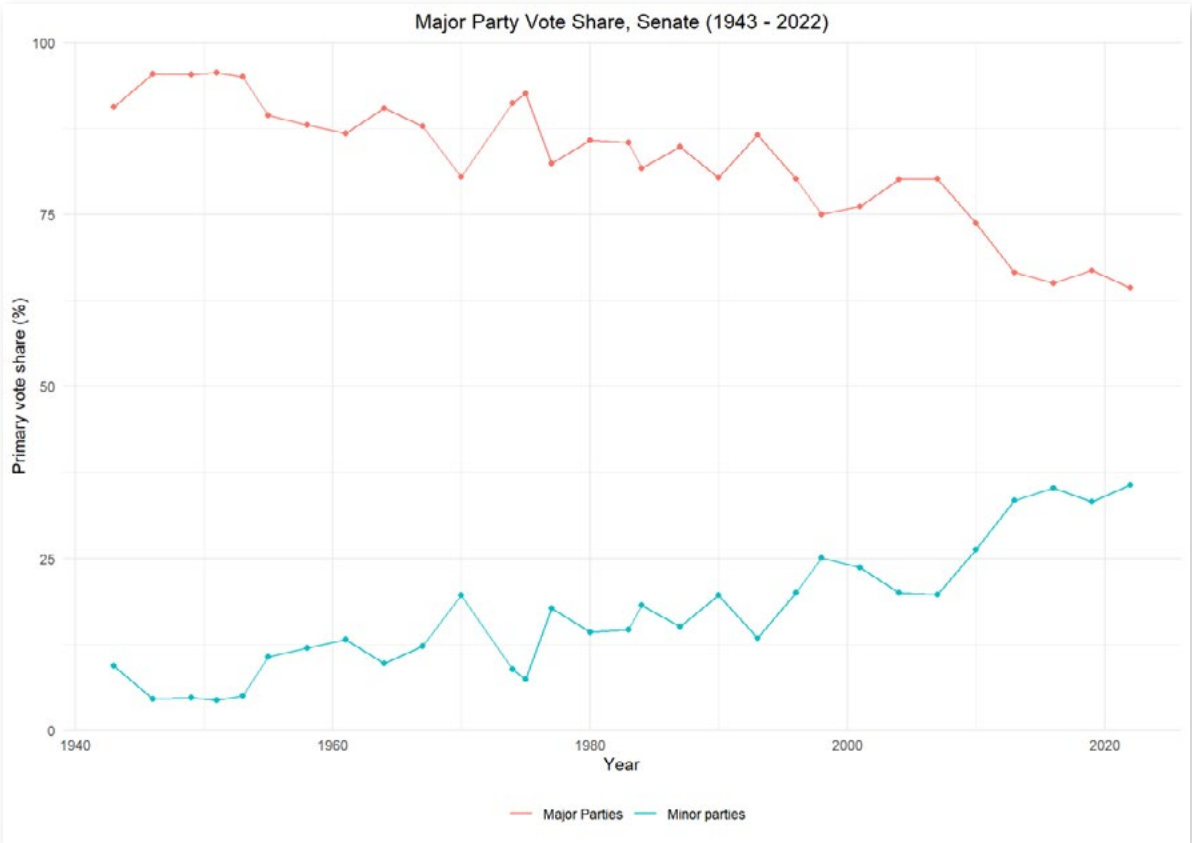
7.4 Declining support for the major parties

The decline in both major parties' primary vote is part of a long-term trend driven by declining trust in government, politics and politicians. Notably:

- The Coalition now have their lowest proportion of House of Representative seats since 1946;
- The Liberal Party received their lowest primary vote in the party's history;
- The Nationals received their second-lowest percentage of the primary vote in the House of Representatives in their party's history; and
- Labor received its lowest primary vote since 1934.

The Review's research confirmed that there is no single issue or reason driving the growth in support for independents and minor parties. Some voters chose to support independents to 'mix it up', to elect more women or to ensure greater diversity in the parliament, and to 'keep the bastards honest'. Voters who supported minor parties of the right such as One Nation said they were sick of the big parties or objected to politicians who focus on culturally progressive causes. In parts of the country where COVID lockdowns were most severe or long-running there remains an undercurrent of resentment at perceptions that the COVID response was unfair or disproportionate. Supporters of the Greens wanted to send a message about the importance of the climate and environment, and often acknowledged that the Greens would be ineffective amateurs if they held any real power but voted for Green candidates regardless.

7. Analysing the Election Result



7. Analysing the Election Result

Finally, ‘tactical voting’ by Labor voters in seats contested by high-profile independents cannot be overlooked. Most Labor voters in Indi, Mayo, Warringah, Wentworth, North Sydney, Goldstein, Kooyong, Curtin and Mackellar (and many Labor voters in Hughes, Hume, Flinders, Bradfield, Cowper, Nicholls, Grey and Wannon) formed the view that their best option to defeat the Coalition was to vote for an independent.

Both parties face a challenge to rebuild trust in political institutions and restore confidence in the Parliament. Significantly, the Review’s research found a shared sentiment across all voter groups that the new Parliament is functioning well and that the shift in tone in federal politics following the election was a welcome by-product of a change of government.

7.5 Other contributing factors

Outer-suburban Sydney and Melbourne

Key electorates in outer-suburban Sydney and Melbourne are home to communities that acutely experienced COVID restrictions and were subject to extensive lockdowns. The Review’s research showed the voters in these areas were generally angrier and more frustrated with the major parties as a result. In addition to issues such as cost of living, health, infrastructure, education and climate change, voters raised local government matters in discussions.

In outer-suburban Melbourne it is vital that research is undertaken to thoroughly understand the causes of the large anti-Labor swings where they occurred, and that remediation strategies are developed and implemented. Labor cannot assume that these seats will not be vulnerable to well resourced, locally focused campaigns by independents should Labor fail to heed the message of the significant swings experienced.

Recommendation:

Labor should develop a policy, political and communications strategy that unites growing support in inner and middle-suburban electorates alongside measures that address the needs of families and working people in outer-suburban and regional areas. The achievement of demonstrable benefit for people in areas of heartland Labor support should be an objective and a measure of success for the Albanese Government.

7. Analysing the Election Result

Fowler

Vulnerability to a well resourced local campaign was clearly evidenced by the result in Fowler in Western Sydney, where one of Labor's most capable and valued parliamentarians, Kristina Keneally, chose to move from the Senate to the House of Representatives. Fowler had been held by Labor since its creation and was one of Labor's safest seats. It was lost to an independent buoyed by an 18.5 per cent primary swing against Labor.

A significant factor in Fowler was the prominence of the Fairfield City Mayor, a former Labor power broker in the area, who backed the independent campaign. The Mayor rose to prominence during the lockdowns and was rewarded with a 70 per cent primary vote in the then recent Council Elections. The Fairfield City Council boundaries significantly overlap with Fowler. The lockdowns contributed significantly to anti-major party sentiment. Even the Liberal Party's candidate experienced a negative 12.89 per cent swing on primary votes.

There are lessons to be learned from the result. As a number of submissions to the Review and interviews identified, the prominence of a local independent candidate backed by a groundswell of campaign supporters, Labor's candidate selection, and the local campaign strategy were all contributing factors to the result. The circumstances generated a "perfect storm" that were exploited by the independent candidate. The Labor campaign needed to be more attuned to the risks and to respond accordingly.

The Review believes that the outcome in Fowler can begin to be addressed by recognition that no seat is safe, the adoption of a considered approach to candidate selection for the next election, and a commitment to consistent campaigning to rebuild trust and support.

Recommendation:

Labor should begin the process of rebuilding voter trust in the seat of Fowler, and preselect a strong candidate for the next election.

Queensland

Despite a small swing towards the Party, Labor did not effectively establish a Queensland-specific message, and lost one seat to the Greens. It was put to the Review that COVID-19 affected Labor's ability to campaign effectively in the state. However it is clear that many voters in Queensland were not aware of the alternative Labor was presenting, and that the mood for change was present only at low levels and principally in south-east Queensland.

Queensland has several distinct population centres, including inner-city constituencies, southeast Queensland and several important regional areas. Each requires a slightly different approach and message. Labor did not effectively take account of these regional differences. The Greens were particularly adept at utilising local and state issues in the inner-metropolitan

7. Analysing the Election Result

seats of Brisbane, Ryan and Griffith, including aircraft noise from Brisbane Airport and urban infill. This contributed to the perception of the Greens running active grassroots community campaigns and being more visible and engaging in inner-city communities.

However, in the Review's research, voters in these seats overwhelmingly identified action on climate change as their major vote driver. The Brisbane floods in early 2022 made climate change a more tangible issue for many voters, creating more space to consider a vote for the Greens. Some voters had indicated that they were not expecting the Greens to win so many seats in Brisbane; that the intention of their vote was to send Labor a message about action on climate change. That is, voters were expecting Labor to win and felt comfortable to lodge a protest vote. Interviewees also identified that this result could have been different for the Greens if the Teals decided to run in these seats.

The reality is that Queensland Labor underestimated the threat from the Greens in these seats. Although the Greens had elected representatives at local and state levels, including the state seats of Maiwar and South Brisbane, the Greens were largely off the radar for Labor and the threat was identified too late in the campaign. Voters felt confident of a Labor win, so there was no price to pay for voting Greens.

In Griffith, the Greens had put in the work over a longer period. Former Member for Griffith, Terri Butler, was a strong contributor in the Shadow Cabinet and a rising star in Labor's ranks. Again, with the benefit of hindsight, Griffith should have been considered more marginal than it was. Terri Butler had a program of constant campaigning and community engagement, but the Greens were more visible in the electorate and campaigned more intensively. They linked Terri Butler to state and local issues, effectively wedging Federal Labor into defending state decisions for which it was not responsible.

Western Australia

The popularity of the Premier of Western Australia, Mark McGowan and the State Government had a strong positive impact on the Labor vote. The Review's research confirms that favourable perceptions of the Premier generated not only through the State Government's handling of the COVID-19 crisis but also through its more recent efforts to address cost-of-living pressures for Western Australians paved the way for McGowan's endorsement of Anthony Albanese to be well received.

Scott Morrison and the Coalition's support for Clive Palmer's attacks on Western Australia meant the message that the McGowan Labor Government needed a partner in Canberra was a compelling pitch.

In addition, relatively poor perceptions of Federal Liberal MPs in Western Australia, including former Federal Member for Pearce, Christian Porter, and the dilapidation of the Liberal Party in the state contributed to the third landslide result for WA Labor – the 2017 state election, the 2021 state election and 2022 federal election.

7. Analysing the Election Result

South Australia

South Australian voters held negative perceptions of the Coalition, and Labor was ultimately viewed as a better choice on various issues. A recently successful state election campaign in South Australia contributed to an improvement in Labor's standing in the eyes of many voters. Labor was successful in winning the seat of Boothby, for the first time since 1949, and achieved significant swings in the division of Sturt.

Tasmania

Like Western Australia, Tasmanians strongly supported the then Premier, the Liberals' Peter Gutwein, in recognition of his management of the pandemic. However, Tasmania's experience with former Prime Minister Scott Morrison was different to the situation in Western Australia in that Scott Morrison supported Premier Gutwein throughout the pandemic.

Less favourable perceptions of Labor at a state level, which were associated with the perceived frequency of leadership changes, disunity, and a lack of awareness of Labor's federal candidates, concerned voters enough for them to stick with the Liberal Party.

The Review notes that the National Executive, at the request of the Tasmanian ALP Branch, undertook a separate review of the Branch's recent state election campaign and the governance of the Branch. The review canvassed a range of internal issues for the Branch to address. As a result of the findings and recommendations of that review, in July 2022 the National Executive intervened in the Branch and installed former Senators Doug Cameron and Nick Sherry as administrators. Doug Cameron and Nick Sherry are working with the State Labor Leader, Rebecca White, the State Secretary and a specially constituted Special Administrative Committee. This Review strongly endorses the need to implement, in full, the findings of the recent review into the Tasmanian Branch.

Recommendation:

Specific plans should be developed to address:

- 6.1** *Voter dissatisfaction in parts of outer-suburban Melbourne and parts of Western Sydney;*
- 6.2** *Improved outcomes for Federal Labor in Queensland. This should include developing the approach for the Queensland campaign earlier, and plans and policies for the various regions, while connecting these to the national strategy;*
- 6.3** *Labor's underperformance in Tasmania. This should complement the current processes underway following the intervention; and*
- 6.4** *The retention of seats gained in Western Australia.*

7. Analysing the Election Result

Recommendation:

Labor should provide its candidates with support before, during and after the campaign. This includes by providing training and advice to candidates to assist their transition into the public sphere, and in engaging with the community and the media.

Recommendation:

State and Territory branches should be encouraged to identify strong candidates for House of Representatives seats. Branches should work with the National Secretary to identify suitable timing for preselections that maximises the opportunity to field the strongest candidates, keeping in mind the need to ensure proper candidate vetting.

Recommendation:

Labor should continue to embrace greater diversity in its selection of Labor candidates and campaign teams.

8. Campaign Operations

National Secretary Paul Erickson and Assistant National Secretary Jennifer Light were widely credited by participants in this Review for providing strong campaign leadership and generating a positive campaign culture. This included collaborating with and empowering State and Territory ALP Secretaries to lead campaigns in their own jurisdictions.

The various team leads provided submissions and were interviewed as part of this Review. They outlined their team structures, how learnings were incorporated from the 2019 campaign and the challenges they overcame to run, by and large, cohesively and with a strong sense of personal accountability and responsibility.

Each team was empowered to own its area, informed by research and given the opportunity to have a seat at the table and provide input and feedback about what was working and what needed to be improved tactically throughout the campaign period.

This constructive approach generated a unified culture for the election campaign, alignment with the national strategy and improved transparency around the tactical execution of the campaign. It also allowed for variations of each state and territory campaign to be adopted and incorporated.

The benefits of good communication and, where possible, co-location of teams, remain considerable for national campaigns in terms of fostering improved culture and collaboration.

8.1 Research

Unlike the previous election, in the wash up, this election has not been dominated with widespread concern about the inaccuracy of polling and research. An assessment commissioned by the Review has confirmed that Labor's research program provided an accurate assessment of the pathway to government, the key issues, and insights into seat-by-seat nuances. Both the tracking poll and electorate-level research accurately reflected the outcome of the election.

In the 2022 election, the team was well resourced and were able to commission a comprehensive research program. The use of online focus groups saved costs, and these savings were able to be turned into extra groups, which are just as informative. In future there should be some consideration about the ability to do more seat specific research earlier, to better understand sentiment and to identify any issues earlier.

Labor also invested in ensuring insights were gathered from CALD communities. Incorporating the views of non-English speaking people or people with low levels of English proficiency is critical for the robustness of research program going forward. It will ensure that as the multicultural communities across Australia grow and thrive, Labor continues to invest in how they are included as part of this important element of the campaign.

8. Campaign Operations

The Review also notes that as the prevalence of three-cornered contests will likely be an ongoing feature of elections, further consideration and investment in seat specific research will help inform strategic direction. This research should be planned with two objectives in mind - to form a view early in a campaign of the messaging and approach and to ensure resources for seats likely at risk are directed with enough time to be effective and make an impact.

8.2 Advertising

Overall, the advertising campaign was sound. It placed a strong emphasis on setting strategic principles with a research foundation, working with agencies to deliver against those benchmarks and bringing together a coherent, winning proposition that dominated the share of voice throughout the campaign. The compelling principles were:

- Attacks on Scott Morrison were most effective in his own voice.
- An effective positive offer was necessary and needed to be established early in the campaign.
- Labor's positive material was most effective with the Leader speaking directly to the camera, with a set of practical, relevant policies that were grounded in the language of plans for the future.

These principles were applied throughout the campaign. They were also supplemented with state or regional-specific messaging in all markets.

The successful operation of the advertising function requires effective interaction with a number of units. While the feedback points again to improvements on the ways of working compared to 2019, there is a need for more capacity in the advertising unit to manage inputs and information flows, including management of dominant platforms and coordination with local campaign teams.

8.3 Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Community Engagement

The Review's post-election research found the issues of importance to CALD communities were largely consistent with those influencing non-CALD communities. Unsurprisingly, the key variation was that CALD communities are more likely to see the value in Australia maintaining international relations, and view this important for Australia's economy.

Many in the Chinese-Australian community voted Labor for the first time because of the behaviour of Scott Morrison and Peter Dutton. They felt that the actions and rhetoric of Scott Morrison and Peter Dutton meant that they were not welcome in Australia and that their businesses would be affected. Morrison and Dutton's unnecessarily bellicose politicisation of the relationship with China also adversely impacted Australia's national interest.

The Federal Labor campaign had a dedicated CALD team established in CHQ, responsible for collaborating with campaign units to ensure the accessibility and dissemination of policy

8. Campaign Operations

through appropriate channels and in language. This is likely to continue to grow in importance and be a significant feature of future campaigns as census data shows the proportion of overseas born and second-generation migrants in Australia has steadily increased over the decades.

Labor must continue to build upon its relationships with community leaders and work with communities to ensure that they are aware of the Labor government's agenda and are being listened to. This also includes embracing cultural diversity of candidates, campaign teams and in Labor's volunteer community.

Recommendation:

While always uncompromisingly promoting and defending Australia's national interests and Australia's security, both major parties should avoid unnecessarily divisive and aggressive rhetoric towards China.

Recommendation:

Labor should continue its resourcing of CALD engagement and, if feasible, consider increasing the central investment in CALD engagement during the formal election campaign period.

8.4 Digital Unit

The Digital Unit was run as a newsroom. An editorial manual was developed ahead of the formal campaign period. Internal communication channels with stakeholders were set up in advance, which enabled content to be pushed out rapidly. This approach was war-gamed early. Labor was intent on outperforming its opponents.

There was a high degree of importance applied to digital communications. A point of difference is that the work of the Digital Unit was informed by Labor's research insights, which included narrative development and execution. The Digital Director also communicated and shared the strategy with internal stakeholders to enable greater alignment.

The Coalition's efforts were closely monitored and it appears they went backwards. They appeared to lack planning, posted strange content, and were not spending as much as Labor. At one point, the Liberal Party did not post any content about Scott Morrison for two weeks. Scott Morrison was notably removed from their banners, and they even stopped promoting a video with Scott Morrison after a week. The Coalition appeared to be more fixated with getting Labor's voting information website taken down, which included complaining to auDA in an attempt to get the website deregistered.

8. Campaign Operations

The Digital Unit also reports engagement with other internal teams had improved compared with the 2019 campaign. There was more clarity on roles and responsibilities, which meant content was released quickly. The content was always aligned with the campaign strategy and the agreed campaign narrative.

In addition to using Facebook, Labor trialled utilising Tik Tok. The team believes this trial was well executed, with time and resources invested to make it effective, and tailored digital content produced for the platform. Areas identified for further development are utilisation of different channels and means of amplifying digital presence.

Recommendation:

Labor should continue to build its digital capacity. Capacity building should include sharing research insights to inform a strategic approach to digital communications, and training MPs and local campaign teams to deliver quality digital content and engagement in their communities between elections. Federal Labor should continue working closely with state and territory branches to share knowledge, improve digital skills and trial new approaches in elections.

8.5 Target Seats Unit

The Target Seats Unit was led by Assistant National Secretary Jennifer Light. Team members indicated to the Review that the culture of the team was excellent and led to productive output in a collegial environment. One of the challenges experienced was having several organisers based in their home states, as well as navigating COVID-19/work-from-home issues. Accordingly, internal communications were more important than ever.

Labor's strategy and the collegial environment within the Target Seat Unit ensured that resources were used effectively and efficiently.

The Campaign Committee made a strategic decision to have a refined list of target seats. Labor demonstrated great discipline in maintaining this list; this enabled the Party, the National Organisers and campaigns to concentrate their efforts on a credible path to government. Labor's discipline and the work of the Target Seats Unit was rewarded on election day, with its targeted seats achieving significant swings in the primary vote.

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8.7 CHQ and the travelling party

During the campaign, the travelling party accompanying the Leader included mostly the Leader's office staff. Periodic additions of the economic team – Jim Chalmers and Katy Gallagher – as well as former Minister Stephen Smith – had a positive impact on the effectiveness of the campaign.

The travelling party functioned best when a senior colleague and peer of the Leader was on board for days on end. The approach that was adopted initially, with senior colleagues coming on and off for a few days at a time, was less successful.

The conduct of media conferences was also commented upon frequently during the course of the review. As is well known there was particularly aggressive behaviour from some members of the media towards the Leader, sometimes compounded by the physical setup of media conferences. Reflection on how media conferences and the relationship with travelling media may be improved should be considered.

Recommendation:

At the next election the composition of the travelling party should be settled early, with the Leader's chief of staff or their delegate responsible for leading and coordinating the traveling party. The team should also include a program leader, advancer/s, strategic communications support, head of media and senior ministers identified in advance of campaigns.

9. Looking Ahead

9.1 Positioning for the next election

Labor will conduct the next election campaign from government, not opposition. Not only does this offer the opportunities afforded to an incumbent government seeking re-election, it necessitates some different approaches to campaign planning and places greater time pressure on the Parliamentary leadership.

Whereas Labor began developing and releasing alternative policies from early in the previous parliamentary term, ultimately releasing the signature policies over the course of 2019-2022, Labor will now constantly be articulating policy positions as a government – both to implement election commitments and respond to the prevailing circumstances.

The challenge will be to manage the prevailing circumstances whilst maintaining a focus on the values and policy formulations that will characterise the Albanese Government throughout the term and provide the basis for re-election.

It is apparent that the policy formulation process in advance of the 2022 federal election was disrupted by the practical impacts of the pandemic, and by the rapid changes in political and economic circumstances. The contours of Labor's offer to the electorate did not crystallise until early 2022 when the Leader and the senior economic team coalesced around the task. To improve this process consideration of the structure and planning for regular engagement between the National Secretariat, the Leader and the senior parliamentary leadership for the purpose of analysing research, developing strategic communications, and testing and developing policy is an imperative.

Research to underpin a strategic communications approach for Labor in government is crucial. This approach was successfully applied in opposition and contributed to electoral success, and needs to be revisited to inform success in government. Clearly and consistently articulating the values of the Albanese Government, and ensuring that those values underpin signature policies that shape and characterise the government can be key.

In terms of the next campaign, Labor's best chance to set its narrative is to have its policy agenda communicated through a strategic program of activity and engagement that is organised thematically, with a campaign spending three, five or seven days on each theme to maximise the chance of cutting through. This is even more important now with the rise in early voting and because voters are more likely to decide their vote over the term rather than during the election campaign period.

The Review again emphasises the importance of Labor attending to the needs of people in outer-suburban and regional areas - both in national policy areas like health and education, but also local infrastructure and community amenity. Both federal and state Labor have roles to play in this regard.

9. Looking Ahead

The difficulties confronting the Liberal Party have been canvassed earlier in this report. For Labor, the problems for the Liberals represent an opportunity to become a broader based progressive party and to build a larger primary vote. If Labor analyses not only its successes but also missed opportunities, Labor can build a bigger winning coalition of voters. Developing a policy, political and communications strategy that unites growing support for Labor in inner/middle-suburban electorates alongside measures that address the needs of families and working people in outer-suburban and regional areas will be important to achieving this goal.

To build confidence for future success and the better future that Labor can achieve, the Review proposes that the National Secretariat and the Parliamentary leadership encourage throughout the labour movement a unifying message that the 2022 victory represents an opportunity to establish a long-term progressive Labor government – that our ambition to improve the lives of Australians is not limited by one election.

Recommendation:

That the values of the Albanese Government be clearly and consistently articulated, ensuring that those values underpin signature policies that shape and characterise the Government.

Recommendation:

Respect for the trust voters have placed in Prime Minister Albanese and Labor, delivering election commitments, providing stable government, and restoring decency in politics, should be regarded as guiding principles of the Government and as central to re-election.

Recommendation:

To build commitment and determination throughout the labour movement to achieve Labor's plan for a better future, the Parliamentary leadership, National Secretariat and the trade union movement should adopt a unifying message that the 2022 election victory represents an opportunity to establish a long-term Labor Government.

Recommendation:

The Campaign Director should maintain a disciplined approach to settling and documenting the strategy for the next election early. This should include maintaining a constructive culture of sharing and testing the strategy with the Federal Campaign Committee.

9. Looking Ahead

Recommendation:

The Parliamentary leadership and the National Secretary should formulate the structure and planning that guarantees regular engagement for the purpose of analysing research, developing strategic communications, testing and developing policy proposals, and an improved election policy formulation process.

Recommendation:

Campaign preparedness should be assessed well in advance of the next federal election. The assessment should include the preparedness of the campaign for potential crises that could arise during the next campaign, exploring possible scenarios to ensure the relevant team in Campaign Headquarters is ready to respond rapidly.

9.2 The potential for climate policy to unite, not divide

The election heralded a shift in climate politics that offers the opportunity to tackle the long-standing divide between inner-city and outer-suburban and regional voters on climate change policy.

In government Labor can align the interests of inner-city, outer-suburban and regional voters through its approach to the energy transition and emissions reduction. The Albanese Government can demonstrate that decarbonisation and job security are not mutually exclusive but, rather, that decarbonisation will drive a massive investment that will protect and grow jobs. It will be feasible to demonstrate concrete action on climate change whilst at the same time generating jobs and economic growth in outer-suburban and regional areas affected by climate policy.

Achieving this will require a coordinated effort by governments, business and workers – led by the Australian Government.

When claiming victory on election night under the banner of A Better Future, Anthony Albanese spoke of the opportunity for Australia to become a renewable energy superpower.

Labor's Powering Australia policy brings together its climate-change initiatives such as Rewiring Australia, tightening the Safeguard Mechanism, installing community batteries and incentivising the purchase of electric vehicles. Labor will tap into Australia's plentiful natural endowments that the decarbonising world needs. These endowments include ample sunshine and wind and their conversion into hydrogen to power the early-stage processing of Australian's iron ore and bauxite deposits, critical minerals used in renewable energy production, and vast expanses of land suitable for revegetation and carbon storage.

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Australia as a renewable energy superpower producing carbon-free energy and products for the world is all the more compelling for where these decarbonising activities can occur. As we struggle with urban congestion and high capital city housing costs, the locations for these industries are in provincial and rural Australia, breathing new life into old industrial areas such as Newcastle, the Latrobe Valley, north and central Queensland, Collie, northern Tasmania and Whyalla.

The enormous renewable energy investment task required to achieve Australia's economic transformation can generate the productivity growth and budgetary space to fund Labor's social reforms such as aged care, better and more hospitals and social and affordable housing.

Politically, this will demonstrate to inner-suburban voters the practical achievement of emissions reductions, and to outer-suburban and regional voters that Labor's climate policy is delivering future social, economic and employment opportunities and security.

Achieving this economic transformation would challenge in significance the reforms of the Hawke-Keating era, and immensely benefit future generations of Australians.

Recommendation:

Labor should aim to align the interests of inner-suburban, outer-suburban and regional voters on climate policy by demonstrating that emissions reductions and job security/ economic growth are not mutually exclusive, and that a coordinated decarbonisation effort by governments, business, unions and workers can drive massive investment that will protect and grow jobs.

9.3 Does Labor need a primary vote strategy?

Historically, neither of the major parties have specifically set out to maximise their primary vote as a campaign objective, although lifting the primary vote obviously assists towards winning a majority in the House of Representatives. State and Federal Labor campaigns have generally been designed to maximise Labor's return in the lower House by persuading a majority of voters in target seats to vote Labor or preference Labor candidates ahead of the Coalition. Labor has not prioritised strategies designed to win voters outside of target seats purely to lift the primary vote.

Considering the increasing volatility of the Australian electorate, it is worth assessing whether this approach is still the best strategy for maximising Labor's capacity to form majority government.

In the Review's assessment, the most significant contributor to an improvement in the primary vote would be strengthening Labor's claim as the party that best manages the economy in the interests of families and working people. Delivering on wages growth and the cost of

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living, housing affordability, Medicare and health, jobs and economic growth, amenity and infrastructure in local communities – and other mainstream issues for ordinary Australians – will achieve a lift in the primary vote.

The Review considers that the main objective of the Campaign Director during the campaign period (the three or four months leading into a federal election) should continue to be winning or retaining government by securing a majority in the House of Representatives. However, a longer-term project to understand more about Labor's base and include a wider cross-section of the Australian electorate in research and voter engagement activities should be developed.

Recommendation:

Focusing on the needs and concerns of Australians including wages and the cost of living, housing availability and affordability, child-care and education, Medicare and health, jobs and economic growth as well as infrastructure, will be an important contributor to lifting Labor's primary vote and reinforcing Labor's standing as the party that best manages the economy in the interests of families and working people. Lifting the primary vote will also assist Labor's vote in the Senate.

Recommendation:

Labor's research program over the next term should involve a broader cross-section of the Australian electorate, and in particular soft Labor voters. Voters from a range of different demographics and localities should continue to be included in Labor's qualitative and quantitative research.

9.4 Jurisdictional and demographic considerations

As highlighted earlier Labor still has room to grow its support in several jurisdictions, regions and demographics. The next federal election is likely to occur within months of general elections in the Northern Territory, the Australian Capital Territory, Queensland, Western Australia and possibly Tasmania. It will be important to plan well in advance in each of these jurisdictions, and respond to challenges in various regions and demographics highlighted earlier in the report.

Outer-suburban Sydney and Melbourne

There is a very clear message for Labor, at a federal and state level, that is especially pertinent in the outer-suburban areas of Sydney and Melbourne: delivery of improved services and infrastructure is vital. These communities must never be taken for granted.

MPs should be supported to ensure they are engaging their communities about projects and services in their electorates as well as communicating about their local achievements regularly.

9. Looking Ahead

Recommendation:

Labor must take no seat for granted, regardless of its margin. All seats must campaign continuously throughout the electoral cycle, and it is critical that Parliamentarians emphasise Labor's record on delivery in government.

Queensland

The challenges associated with the Queensland campaign have been canvassed elsewhere in this report.

Labor needs a clearer understanding and internal alignment regarding target seats in Queensland ahead of the next federal election. The Queensland Branch should work with the National Secretary to refine this list. It is likely to involve a mix of inner-city, outer-suburban and regional seats. Each would require a different local strategy. A streamlined list of target seats would also enable better utilisation of the Branch's resources, including the reinvigoration of its field campaign structure.

The Branch, with the support of the National Secretary, should undertake detailed work to better understand and mitigate the Greens threat in Brisbane. The work is long overdue, given the Greens vote has been trending upwards since the Greens won the Gabba ward on Brisbane City Council in 2016.

In interviews with stakeholders, the Review found that the Queensland Branch acutely feels its responsibility to deliver additional Labor seats to the federal parliament at the next election. It is clear the Branch is well-led, well-resourced and technically competent to deliver.

To make gains, Labor needs a strong overall Queensland narrative that is broadly consistent with the national strategy. However, as noted earlier, there would be benefit in developing policies and plans for the regions (as distinct from different messaging) backed by localised and regional announcements.

The challenge for Queensland is the availability of Federal Labor representatives to carry out the campaign task across such a large and dispersed state. Unlike the Northern Territory, which has one Labor Member of Parliament for every 90,000 people, or New South Wales which has one for every 270,000 people, Queensland has one for every 660,000 people. A better result in Queensland will be vital next time around, and following the 2022 federal election a range of seats are now within striking distance for Labor.

Western Australia

The unique circumstances that contributed to the positive result in Western Australia have been canvassed earlier in this document. With these circumstances likely to change by the time of the next election, it will be critical for the State Branch and National Secretariat to work together to develop a strategy for retaining seats gained.

9. Looking Ahead

Tasmania

The Review has earlier observed that the intervention being conducted into the Tasmanian Branch is critical, and cannot over-emphasise the importance of building campaign capacity over the coming years. A culture of discipline and collaboration should be forged to bolster Labor's chances at the next federal election.

Labor has an opportunity to highlight the State Liberal Government's inability to respond to the health and housing crisis, which should become a focus of policy development for Labor in Tasmania and federally.

Three-cornered contests

The Review's research identified that those who voted for third parties did not want the Coalition returned for a fourth term. They voted for a third party to elevate the issues that they cared about.

Third party voters felt directly engaged by candidates and their campaign teams, or a party, who had a strong stance on specific issues or who had highly active and visible local campaigns. The overall number of candidates contesting an election was also a factor contributing to results in particular seats.

It is also important to note that the negative sentiment on Scott Morrison and the Coalition had already set in these voters' minds. Hence, half the work was done for third parties; all they had to do was capitalise on the mood for change.

Labor needs to call out the reckless policies and hollow rhetoric of third parties and communicate the risk of voting for a third party to voters in three-cornered contests. As outlined earlier in this report, the threat of third parties needs to be identified early in a campaign if possible. Additional seat research and monitoring would assist in informing a compelling message and redirecting resources to deliver an appropriately tailored strategy in these seats.

Recommendation:

A strategy, underpinned by research, should be developed for successfully contesting three-cornered contests. Labor should actively contest the policy and political positions advocated by the Greens and dedicate resources for this purpose.

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9.5 No such thing as a safe seat

The Review's research suggests that as the underlying primary vote of both major parties declines, the presence and activity of the local MP or candidate is becoming more influential in determining who voters support, not less. A poorly performing local MP can drive more voters away, and a well-regarded local member can retain support against the trend. Voters remember when they have met their MP or candidate, whether it was at the doors of their homes or at a local event.

Labor MPs must engage with their communities over the full term. Seats where this happens have become safer as a result. Seats with inactive MPs will be susceptible to a strong campaign by an alternative, including a representative from the relevant local council.

It is important MPs do not mistake activity for momentum. The strongest local campaigns prioritise a combination of field campaigning, layering communications and high-visibility engagement.

An analysis of direct voter contact and campaign activity in held and target seats conducted for the Review found there is a correlation between held seats where there is evidence of voter contact throughout the term and positive primary swings.

Labor must not lose sight of the needs and concerns of families and working people, and the fairness, equity and equality of opportunity values that have been the cause of the labour movement for well over a century.

9.6 Reinvigorating Labor's grassroots

Community engagement and field organising has always been a strength for Labor. In the past decade, when Labor has invested in the campaign and organising skills development of its rank and file members, supporters and volunteers, it has strongly underpinned success in elections.

While Labor's field campaign efforts were impacted by extended periods of COVID lockdowns and restrictions this time, those that engaged consistently with members of the community were rewarded electorally. This Review heard of innovative ways through which candidates serviced their communities throughout the pandemic, including online school forums, check-in calls to elderly people, and calling to provide the latest updates on issues as they unfolded.

However, Labor needs to modernise the way it engages its members and supporters and reinvigorate field campaigning and grassroots engagement.

To do this, the Review believes Labor needs a bigger, stronger and re-energised membership, which should be a national project that the National Executive, National Secretariat and the State Branches work together on.

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Labor also needs to refresh its approach to continuous campaigning. Following the NSW State Election, the lessons from successful recent State and Federal campaigns should be captured and applied. This should form the basis of a refreshed national training program, which will be essential in reinvigorating the grassroots. Investment in training is an investment in people. Providing the opportunity for professional development allows Labor to demonstrate how much it values its campaigners.

Recommendation:

For the benefit of embedding a culture of continuous campaigning and fundraising, Labor should consider re-establishing the Caucus Communications Committee and providing Parliamentarians with ongoing professional development.

Recommendation:

The National Secretariat should engage with state and territory branches to identify opportunities to strengthen and grow the Party's membership. Respective branches should be encouraged to share their insights with one another to guide best practice.

9.7 Senate Campaigning

Labor's Senate campaign activity ultimately supported the effort to win a majority in the House of Representatives. Incumbent Senators and Senate candidates play an important role in elevating Labor's primary vote in both held and non-held seats across the nation, and it is critical that Senators continue to amplify Labor's presence in key battlegrounds over the coming Parliamentary term.

It is noteworthy that following the 2019 Campaign Review a Senate Working Group was established with the goal of improving Labor's primary vote in the Senate. The recommendations and findings of this working group remain relevant today.

During the campaign, respective State and Territory branches conducted Senate election campaigns on an as-needed basis, utilising the recommendations of the working group. However, there was not a consistent and national approach to lifting Labor's overall Senate primary vote.

While the review acknowledges that a strong central campaign translates to votes in both Houses of Parliament, it remains a fact that many voters strategically and intentionally differ their vote between the two chambers. Labor can and should do more to account for this in the Senate. In many non-held seats the Review heard that Labor voters felt licensed to vote for an independent, Green or minor party candidate in order to defeat a Coalition candidate and ultimately the Morrison Government.

9. Looking Ahead

In the ACT a similar dynamic contributed to Labor's Senate primary vote declining by almost 6 per cent despite Labor's vote in the House increasing by 3.8 per cent, as Labor supporters tactically voted for independents to defeat Liberal Senator Zed Seselja.

The Review notes that Labor did not have coordinated or localised efforts to secure votes for the Senate, in seats where an independent or minor party candidate was the Coalition's competitor. In these areas there is a significant potential for Labor to engage with voters on issues that are relevant to them and lift its Senate primary.

Further, there is potential for Labor to elevate its Senate primary vote in communities that are already represented by an incumbent Labor MP. Effective local campaigns may assist in improving Labor's electoral performance in the Senate, and in closing a gap that exists in terms of Labor's primary vote in the House compared to its primary vote in the Senate across many electorates.

Recommendation:

The National Secretary should establish a Senate Campaign Working Group in early 2023, with representation from the Senate caucus and State Branches. The working group should develop a Senate campaign plan, drawing on the 2021 report of the previous Senate working group.

9.8 The Labor-union relationship

The relationship between Labor and the trade unions has been a pillar underpinning social and economic progress in Australia for well over a century. In the lead up to and during the 2022 election the focus of the Australian Council of Trade Unions and affiliated unions on the engagement of workers in their workplace and communities around employment issues was once again a strong complement to Labor's campaign.

The Labor-union relationship can play an extremely important role in the coming period by focusing on issues of commonality including wages, superannuation, decarbonisation and jobs and economic growth, and aligning on campaigns to support policy initiatives. The relationship is fundamental to Labor's identity and its standing with working people. The Australian Labor Advisory Council should continue to play an important role as a forum for discussion of common objectives for working people.

As noted earlier by the Review, the transformation of the Australian economy to reduce emissions and become a renewable energy superpower is an intergenerational challenge of huge significance, particularly for people working in emissions intensive industries and regions. A strong relationship between Labor in government and the trade union movement is pivotal to success, both economically and politically.

10. The Conduct of Elections

10.1 The role of the Australian Electoral Commission

One of the many strengths of Australia's democratic processes is that elections are run and administered by the AEC and the various state/territory based electoral commissions. These are independent agencies, universally trusted, experienced, and diligent about running orderly elections. The AEC continues to earn the confidence of the Australian community and its political stakeholders for its strong record.

However, the AEC, like any public entity, was also subject to efficiency targets by the previous Australian government. Efficiency targets affect the AEC's resourcing available to fully enfranchise all voters. There is evidence of this in the AEC's ever-declining capacity to prioritise the enrolment of people living in regional and remote communities, and its gradual scaling back of the mobile polling and remotes polling schedule in the lead-up to election day.

The AEC has achieved growth in the Northern Territory electoral roll (81.1 per cent in 2016 and 85.5 per cent in 2022) and there were more Indigenous Australians voting in 2022 (74.1 per cent) compared to 2017 (67.1 per cent) when the AEC first looked at the data. This is a good sign. The AEC attributes some of this to trials undertaken to increase engagement with Indigenous Australians, including employing Indigenous Australians at polling centres and sending SMS messages and emails to prompt unenrolled Australians to enrol.

The AEC is currently proactively writing to unenrolled Indigenous Australians utilising data obtained by Services Australia. It is also writing to community members who receive mail via "community mailbags." Information was also translated into 20 Indigenous languages during this federal election. As of 30 June 2022, an estimated 14,000 Indigenous Australians nationwide were not enrolled. This includes Indigenous Australians living in urban areas. Enrolment rates continue to decline outside of metropolitan hubs. The AEC has admitted that it does not have the staff needed to do enrolments properly.

After the 2010 federal election, the AEC noted that enrolment had been declining for some time. In response to this and other submissions, the Australian Parliament's Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters (JSCEM) recommended that the AEC be allowed to directly enrol eligible voters. In 2012, the Electoral Act was amended to facilitate this.

Direct enrolment allows the AEC to enrol people using information from other agencies such as the Australian Taxation Office and enrollees are required to opt out of enrolment rather than opting in. From the 2013 federal election onwards, the enrolment rate has been improving. In addition, the AEC has placed increased emphasis on advertising and other methods of encouraging people to enrol.

International voting turnout was about half the rate it was in 2016 due to some voting locations not operating and postal votes not arriving in time.

10. The Conduct of Elections

The AEC's capacity to provide pre-polling is being hampered. It is not able to efficiently assist voters from outside of local areas. In remote areas of Australia, some mobile polling stations were also cancelled due to rain and because people would not be able to travel to the location. It did not appear there were any contingency plans in place for this occurrence.

One interviewee shared an anecdote about a group of Indigenous women who were not able to cast their votes because they were from outside the area. This points to the need for greater cultural awareness training for the AEC permanent and casual polling officials.

Further anecdotal insights indicate that turnout was less than half in Australia's remote communities. The AEC does not provide data for remote polling booths. This needs to be addressed, and legislation amended if necessary to provide this data.

Overall, turnout was 89.8 per cent in 2022. This was 2.07 per cent lower than in 2019. Turnout has been declining over the past four elections, but not by a significant amount. It was 93.2 per cent in 2013, 91.0 per cent in 2016 and 91.9 per cent in 2019. The effects of COVID-19 and the associated challenges around voting might explain the lower turnout in 2022.

COVID-19 was again the great disruptor. For the first time, more than half of the votes were cast before polling day. The Review's research showed that the main reasons for voting early were to avoid the crowds, avoid the queues, be COVID-safe, and because people were working on election day. The research also showed that the main reason for voting on election day was to enjoy the social occasion of a "democracy sausage".

Over time, the number of voters casting their ballot early has consistently increased. Significant planning is therefore required in advance in relation to the staffing of early voting booths.

COVID-19 also meant the AEC and political parties were affected by their respective workforces getting ill. Business continuity planning was a feature of this election. On 20 May, telephone voting was also permitted. The telephone voting rules were changed to allow voters who had tested positive after 6pm on 13 May to vote by telephone. The AEC changed the rules around telephone voting quite late and did not widely publicise the availability of telephone voting, so many people with COVID-19 may have not been aware of the option.

The lowest turnout was in Lingiari, where there was a significant drop in turnout of 6.0 per cent. Since 2001, Lingiari, Durack and Solomon have consistently been in the 10 seats with the lowest levels of turnout. Seats with high proportions of Indigenous Australians have lower levels of turnout and enrolment. Turnout within seats is often correlated with socioeconomic status – greater disadvantage is associated with lower turnout.

10. The Conduct of Elections

Seat	State	Enrolment	Turnout	Turnout (%)	Turnout Swing (%)
Lingiari	NT	74008	49459	66.8	-6.0
Solomon	NT	71843	57136	79.5	-3.6
Durack	WA	118406	95742	80.9	-4.5
Leichhardt	QLD	117214	98422	84.0	-3.7
Rankin	QLD	108054	91375	84.6	-4.3
Kennedy	QLD	114399	96775	84.6	-4.5
Sydney	NSW	125419	106624	85.0	-1.3
Calwell	VIC	106706	90719	85.0	-1.0
Moncrieff	QLD	122546	104198	85.0	-3.2
Forde	QLD	119085	101496	85.2	-4.3

Labor should commit its own resourcing to support the enrolment and turnout of Indigenous Australians through the upcoming referendum. Undertaking stakeholder mapping and identifying new networks of people who might support organising and turnout in these areas should be a priority in the coming months, outside the noise of a general election.

The proportion of informal votes cast in 2022 was 5.19 per cent, 0.35 per cent lower than in 2019. The state with the highest rate of informal voting was NSW at 6.22 per cent. Informality has remained relatively stable over the last four elections, at 5.9 per cent in 2013, 5.0 per cent in 2016 and 5.7 per cent in 2019.

Rates of informality vary between seats; affluent areas with high levels of tertiary educated voters generally have an informality rate of 2-3 per cent, while areas with lower levels of education and many voters from CALD communities have an informality rate of 8-10 per cent. Eight of the 10 seats with the highest informal vote were in Western Sydney. Many of the seats with high proportions of informal votes have higher ethnic diversity and lower levels of English proficiency.

Electorate	State	Informal votes (%)	Informal swing (%)
Blaxland	NSW	10.8	-2.5
McMahon	NSW	10.6	-1.45
Fowler	NSW	10.5	-2.6
Werriwa	NSW	9.8	-1.8
Watson	NSW	9.7	-2.9
Parramatta	NSW	8.9	+0.6
Chifley	NSW	8.9	-0.8
Greenway	NSW	8.2	+1.5
Hawke	VIC	8.2	+2.6
Nicholls	VIC	7.9	+0.4

10. The Conduct of Elections

Recommendation:

The Australian Government should consider allocating greater resourcing to the AEC for its enrolment responsibilities.

Recommendation:

The Australian Government should explore auto-enrolment improvements.

Recommendation:

The proposed referendum on an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice is an opportunity for the AEC to focus resources on improving enrolment and turnout in remote communities and seats with a higher proportion of Indigenous Australians.

10.2 The tone of elections

On election night, former Prime Minister, Scott Morrison, conceded defeat and announced that he would quit the Liberal Party leadership, declaring he accepted the verdict of the voters. It should be acknowledged that this was a gracious concession and a stark contrast to the recent experience elsewhere. This is a strength of Australian democracy.

This Review was also obliged to address the matter of the relationship between the media and politicians. A number of people interviewed commented on the behaviour of some of the journalists who travelled with the Albanese campaign team. It was generally suggested that, by comparison to previous election campaigns, fewer senior members of the press gallery travelled on this occasion, and that some journalists seemed determined to make their mark with “gotcha” moments. Media events were described by some as “feeding frenzies” and excessively aggressive towards Anthony Albanese.

“They need to reflect on their behaviour. I’ve never seen anything like it.”
- WA Premier Mark McGowan, press conference, 23 May 2022

The Review agrees with Premier McGowan. Politics should inspire people, not dishearten them. It is the responsibility of all political parties to uphold decency and respect. All people involved in politics – politicians, staffers, volunteers, the media and electoral officials – should talk politics up and not down, they should inspire, educate and inform people about Australia’s democracy and how they can participate in it.

Acknowledgements

The Review congratulates Labor Leader and Prime Minister Anthony Albanese and the entire Parliamentary Labor team, and National Secretary Paul Erickson and Assistant National Secretary Jennifer Light on their achievements and successes in this campaign.

Throughout this Review, Paul has been widely commended for his ability to bring people together, develop, articulate and share a strategy, and ensure consistency with the framing of the election campaign through a disciplined approach to messaging and adoption across the country. We have heard many reflections on the constructive and positive culture of CHQ, and this is recognised as having been led from the top.

Together, Paul and Jennifer, along with Labor's National President Wayne Swan, led the Federal Campaign Committee, which is recognised for its collective effort in coordinating the campaign.

We thank all the staff at CHQ, National Secretariat and the Leader's office for their considerable efforts in the campaign. We also thank the Prime Minister's Chief of Staff, Tim Gartrell, along with the staff of the Federal Parliamentary Labor Party for their discipline and hard work over three years.

To the State and Territory Branches, all the successful and unsuccessful candidates and every member of every campaign team – we thank you for your work.

We sincerely thank all the ALP members, volunteers, donors, and supporters – those who have been with us for many years and experienced the ups and downs of various elections and those who joined and volunteered for the first time. Your time and commitment are valued and appreciated.

We also acknowledge and thank the union movement and its members who contributed to Labor's success.

Thank you to the team assisting with this Review – Brydan Toner, Matilda Stevenson, Bernie Shaw and Sandy Rippingale – for continuing on from the election campaign and for all your work and support throughout this process.

We also want to acknowledge and sincerely thank Reggie Martin for his analysis of the National Secretariat's research program.

Lastly, we want to thank the National Executive for the opportunity to undertake this important work.

