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22 JANUARY 2014

Federal Election 2013: issues, dynamics, outcomes

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Politics and Public Administration

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Executive summary

- The hung parliament of 2010–2013 was one of the most fractious and difficult parliaments in the 70–odd years since the election of 21 September 1940, when an incumbent Menzies government survived with the support of two independents.
- From 2010, Prime Minister Julia Gillard confronted a largely disillusioned electorate and endured relentless leadership speculation that created an aura of instability around her government. On Wednesday 26 June 2013, with ALP leadership speculation at fever pitch, Gillard called a leadership ballot, which she lost. (For more details on Gillard’s final months in office see the Parliamentary Library research paper [Hard days and nights: the final 147 days of the Gillard government](#). For an account of Rudd’s return to office and electoral defeat see the Parliamentary Library research paper [Rudd redux: victory and defeat](#).)
- Rudd immediately set about refashioning the party and its policies into something that he felt would give Labor a fighting chance at the 2013 Federal election, announcing major changes in the rules for the election of Labor’s leader; confirming a move—a year earlier than originally planned—to an emissions trading scheme (ETS); and unveiling the Australia and Papua New Guinea Regional Settlement Arrangement (RSA) for the processing of asylum seekers, who would no longer be settled in Australia.
- The expectation that the Government’s Economic Statement would clear the decks for an election was realised when, on the afternoon of 4 August, the Prime Minister announced an election date of 7 September 2013. The five–week federal election campaign had begun.
- The opening day of the campaign was notable for the strident headlines from some News Corporation mastheads calling for the defeat of Labor. Economic concerns—and in particular the cost of any new election promises—quickly became the dominant campaign theme. The Coalition elected to use the Parliamentary Budget Office to verify its policy costings, claiming that Treasury figures could not be trusted.
- The Prime Minister and Opposition Leader held their first debate at the National Press Club on 11 August. A second leaders’ debate in the style of a community forum was held in Brisbane on 21 August, and a third on 28 August at Rooty Hill in Sydney’s western suburbs. The Opposition had by then released details of \$31 billion in savings, but had to weather constant criticism for not declaring its ‘budget bottom line’.
- The publication of Treasury’s Pre-election Economic and Fiscal Outlook prompted exchanges over the major parties’ economic credentials, and the nature and timing of any return to a Budget surplus. Sexism also re-emerged as an issue on the campaign trail and the Coalition’s paid parental leave scheme became one of its most controversial policies. Asylum seeker policy continued to animate public discussion.
- A fortnight before polling day, a Fairfax Neilsen poll showed Labor lagging behind the Coalition 47–53 and indicated that 70 per cent of voters were expecting a Coalition win. The Coalition released more policy costings on Thursday 5 September, claiming it would improve the budget bottom line by over \$6 billion. The Coalition had indicated the possibility of a double dissolution if a victorious Coalition’s key policies were to be frustrated in the Senate.
- In the event, the Coalition had a decisive win in the House of Representatives, with a two-party preferred vote of 53.45 per cent to Labor’s 46.55 per cent—a two-party swing of 3.65 per cent. Labor’s primary vote fell to 33.38 per cent, its lowest in over 100 years. The Coalition won 90 seats, Labor 55 seats, with the remainder going to small parties (three seats) and independents (two seats).
- The Senate proved to be an interesting contest, with small parties winning six of the seats. The Coalition won 17 seats, Labor won 13 seats and the Greens three seats, with one independent returned. The Senate count in WA proved controversial, with appeals, re-counts and the loss of 1,300 ballot papers combining to prompt a petition to the Court of Disputed Returns.

Introduction

At 5.29pm on Monday 5 August 2013 the House of Representatives in the 43rd Parliament was prorogued, marking the end of the first hung parliament in over 70 years. Labor had survived in office notwithstanding predictions that the Gillard Government and its agreements with the Australian Greens and key independents would not survive a full term.

Long-time observer of Australian politics, Michelle Grattan, delivered a detailed, contextualised account of the hung parliament in her [Earle Page lecture](#) in July 2013. In her view:

The 43rd parliament has been one of the most dramatic roller coaster rides of modern federal politics. It has got a bad name from its many critics, seen as raucous, often on the brink of falling apart, and full of the worst sort of wheeling and dealing. It has, on this view, contributed to public cynicism about politics. ... Its defenders ... point to its legislative achievements, its survival, and the opportunity it has provided for the House of Representatives to act more like a true “parliament” where outcomes are more fluid, rather than the usual blunt-edge majority rule.

... It is often argued that the net negative of the hung parliament has been that it has frayed the national political psyche. This shouldn't be exaggerated. And it is not just the parliament's fault that people are feeling particularly out of sorts with their politicians. The quality and quantity of media has a lot to answer for as well... My own view is that if we look at this parliament ... the key problem has been less the hung parliament as such than the issue of leadership.¹

The defeat of Julia Gillard as Prime Minister in a Parliamentary Labor Party vote on 26 June 2013 saw the return of Kevin Rudd to the Labor leadership. Rudd immediately set about refashioning the party and its policies into something that he felt would give Labor a fighting chance at the 2013 Federal election—and perhaps secure an unlikely victory:

- On 8 July, the Rudd announced a proposal for a major change in the rules for the election of the leader of the Parliamentary Labor Party.
- The Government declared its intention to move—a year earlier than originally planned—to an emissions trading scheme (ETS).
- Rudd unveiled the [Australia and Papua New Guinea Regional Settlement Arrangement \(RSA\)](#) for the processing of asylum seekers, who would no longer be settled in Australia.

With headquarters of all the parties in advanced stages of readiness for the forthcoming poll, the ALP announced it had secured the expertise of three key players in President Obama's re-election team, including the British social media expert Matthew McGregor—described in the US as ‘Barack Obama's digital attack dog’.² McGregor is regarded as a pioneer in the use of emerging social media platforms to organise grassroots campaigns. Labor was soon engaged in applying his techniques to engage voters and to solicit donations from supporters. McGregor had been particularly effective in ‘getting out the vote’ and Labor strategists regarded the youth vote to be a key factor in the election, given that among younger citizens there had been ‘a spike in pre-election enrolments since Mr Rudd's return to the leadership’.³ Social media was set to play a significant role in most parties' campaigns. (Appendix D provides a selective account of how parties applied strategically effective social media techniques.)

The expectation that the Government's Economic Statement would clear the decks for an election was realised when, on the afternoon of 4 August, the Prime Minister announced an election date of 7 September 2013. The five-week Federal election campaign had begun.

Week One of the campaign

Following the proclamation of the dissolution of the House at 5:29pm, the Government entered [caretaker mode](#). Earlier that day Labor had announced [\\$450m for out-of-school care](#).⁴ The Government also announced a further \$200m to help boost the car industry.⁵

1. M Grattan, [Looking back on the hung parliament](#), *The Conversation*, 17 July 2013, accessed 25 September 2013.

2. M Kenny, [‘Rudd recruits Team Obama trio to take on Abbott’](#), *The Age*, 31 July 2013, p. 3, accessed 31 July 2013.

3. Ibid.

4. Australian Labor Party (ALP), [‘Better Schools: before and after program’](#), *Our stories: Labor Party blog*, 6 August 2013, accessed 6 August 2013.

Opposition Leader Tony Abbott reaffirmed that the carbon tax would be the first thing to be repealed under a Coalition government:

The first act of an incoming Coalition government will be to instruct the public servants to prepare the carbon tax repeal legislation. And the first bill that a new Parliament will handle, should we win the election, is the carbon tax repeal legislation. The mining tax will go as well.⁶

Meanwhile, the first major opinion poll to be published since the beginning of the campaign revealed that the Coalition maintained its lead over Labor:

Labor's primary vote was steady at 37 per cent, while the Coalition was down one at 44 per cent. On a two-party preferred basis, the Coalition was ahead 52–48. Forty-seven per cent of voters preferred Kevin Rudd as PM compared to Tony Abbott on 33 per cent... Support for the Greens stood at 9 per cent, compared to 11.8 per cent at the last election.⁷

Essential Research published findings about when people would make their final decision, and for whom they would vote:

53 per cent say they have already decided who they will be voting for in the Federal election, 30 per cent will finally make up their mind at some stage before election day and 8 per cent will decide on election day. Those least likely to have made up their mind were aged 18-24 (33 per cent), Greens voters (36 per cent), other party/independent voters (29 per cent) and respondents with a university education (48 per cent).⁸

A summary of the opinion polls during the campaign appears at Appendix E.

The campaign ignites

Strident headlines advocating a vote against Labor had appeared in several News Corp newspapers on the opening day of the campaign. The *Daily Telegraph* appeared with the headline 'Kick this Mob out'.⁹

The matter quickly escalated into a war of words between Rudd and News Corp chief Rupert Murdoch. Rudd accused Murdoch of wanting to 'destroy the Labor government and its national broadband network' in order to protect Murdoch's Foxtel 'cash cow'.¹⁰ Meanwhile ex-Labor minister Graham Richardson said Labor was likely to lose the election by 10 to 15 seats and 'Labor people had become carried away with Mr Rudd's poll bounce'.¹¹

The Reserve Bank's decision to cut interest rates by 25 basis points—bringing interest rates to their lowest point in 50 years—prompted further debate about the state of the economy and which of the major parties was best placed to manage it.¹²

The economic debate was also fuelled by Shadow Treasurer Hockey's repeated statements that the Coalition would refuse to commit to a final budget bottom line when it released its policy costings because it did not believe the Treasury figures released in the Government's Economic Statement. Hockey said that individual Coalition election policies would be 'fully and rigorously costed' but forecasting a final budget deficit or surplus would be 'meaningless' because the starting point would have to be the Treasury's projections, and they were 'not credible'.¹³

5. T Collett, '[ALP promises \\$200m boost for Australian car industry: Federal Election](#)', *The Motor Report*, 5 August 2013, accessed 12 August 2013.

6. D Koch and M Doyle, '[Interview with Tony Abbott \(Opposition Leader\)](#)', *Sunrise*, transcript, Channel 7, transcript, 5 August 2013, accessed 6 August 2013.

7. '[Coalition maintains lead over Labor in first election poll](#)', *ABC News*, 5 August 2013, accessed 6 August 2013.

8. '[Voting decision](#)', *Essential Vision*, 5 August 2013, accessed 6 August 2013. Note: A useful public access website documenting the travels of party leaders on the campaign trail can be viewed at http://public.tableausoftware.com/shared/5XZ9T25WJ?:display_count=yes&height=900

9. '[Consign Rudd to the bin of history](#)', *The Daily Telegraph*, 5 August 2013, accessed 17 September 2013.

10. P Coorey and J Massola, '[It's Rudd v Murdoch in NBN slugfest](#)', *Australian Financial Review*, 7 August 2013, p. 1, accessed 7 August 2013.

11. Ibid.

12. S Lane, '[Interest rate cut a warning for economy: Hockey](#)', interview with J Hockey, *ABC Radio (AM)*, 6 August 2013, accessed 7 August 2013. ; '[Coalition, Labor at odds over rate cut](#)', interview with J Hockey, *Channel 9 News*, 6 August 2013, accessed 7 August 2013.

13. L Taylor, '[Joe Hockey refuses to commit to final budget total](#)', *The Guardian*, 6 August 2013, accessed 7 August 2013; S McDonald, '[Chris Bowen questions how Joe Hockey can run the economy if he can't trust Treasury figures](#)', *ABC News*, 26 July 2013, accessed 7 August 2013.

The first notable gaffe of the campaign occurred when, in a cringe-worthy television interview, the Liberal candidate for the swing seat of Greenway, Jaymes Diaz, could not articulate any of the six points by which the Coalition had declared it would 'stop the boats'.¹⁴ The video of the interview went viral.¹⁵

Meanwhile, arguments about the frequency, timing and logistics of debates between the party leaders also continued to rumble.¹⁶

In what seemed likely to be the biggest single spending promise of his 2013 election campaign, Tony Abbott said he would cut company tax by 1.5 percentage points within two years, taking the current 30 cents in the dollar rate down to 28.5 cents.¹⁷ Labor said it would not match the tax cut, and that the Opposition Leader 'would need to increase the GST or accept larger deficits to deliver the annual \$2.5 billion measure'.¹⁸

Meanwhile news also emerged that mining magnate Andrew Forrest had lost his High Court challenge to the Minerals Resource Rent Tax. He had been supported in his bid by the Queensland and Western Australian governments.¹⁹

Discussions about leaders' debates waxed and waned. Labor wanted the debate in Sydney, hosted by Channel Seven, in conjunction with *Facebook*, but Liberal Party national secretary Brian Loughnane was insisting the debate take place at the National Press Club in Canberra and be open to all media, as well as taking questions from 'ordinary Australians' via social media.²⁰ On 7 August the Lowy Institute hosted a debate in Sydney between Senator Bob Carr, the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Julie Bishop MP, Shadow Minister for Foreign Affairs. The debate included questions asked by a panel of senior journalists.²¹

In an appearance on the ABC's *7:30 Report*, the Prime Minister again questioned whether commercial interests were behind Murdoch's alleged opposition to the National Broadband Network.²² The matter took a new turn when Rudd observed that he had become aware that the Coalition's broadband policy had been launched in Foxtel's Sydney studios. He went on to say: 'I would like to hear some answers as to what discussions Mr Abbott may have had with Mr Murdoch on the future of Australia's National Broadband Network'.²³

In response to Rudd's remarks on the *7:30 Report*—and a report that Deputy PM Albanese had been seen having a beer with disgraced MP Craig Thomson—*The Daily Telegraph* published a front page article titled 'Thommo's Heroes', depicting the Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister as characters from the old television comedy *Hogan's Heroes*.²⁴ Reports also emerged that former Queensland Premier Peter Beattie would make 'a sensational return to politics to contest the Queensland seat of Forde for Labor'.²⁵ In a long anticipated move, Senator Barnaby Joyce announced his resignation from the Senate to contest the seat of New England.²⁶

Tony Abbott—while visiting the seats of Bass and Braddon, both of which had been lost to Labor in 2007²⁷—promised to preserve Tasmania's share of Commonwealth revenues, and suggested that Tasmania should be designated a special economic zone.²⁸ A media release by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) issued at the time noted that 'Australia's unemployment rate remained steady at 5.7 per cent in July 2013'.²⁹

14. H Davidson, '[Five points short of a policy: Liberal candidate Jaymes Diaz misses on boats](#)', *The Guardian*, online Australian edition, 6 August 2013, accessed 16 January 2014.

15. Ibid.

16. '[Tony Abbott rejects Kevin Rudd's debate challenge](#)', *The Australian*, 5 August 2013, accessed 7 August 2013.

17. M Kenny, '[1.5 per cent: Abbott's big promise to cut company tax](#)', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 7 August 2013, accessed 7 August 2013.

18. M Kenny, '[Labor rules out matching cut to company tax](#)', *The Canberra Times*, 8 August 2013, p. 5, accessed 9 August 2013.

19. '[High Court rules against Fortescue and states on Minerals Resource Rent Tax](#)', *ABC News*, 7 August 2013, accessed 7 August 2013.

20. '[Deal done, still weighing up venue](#)', *The Canberra Times*, 8 August 2013, p. 5, accessed 9 August 2013.

21. '[Australian foreign policy debate](#)', Lowy Institute for International Policy, 7 August 2013, accessed 9 August 2013.

22. M Ross, '[Kevin Rudd accuses Tony Abbott of holding talks with Rupert Murdoch over NBN](#)', *ABC News*, 8 August 2013, accessed 8 August 2013.

23. Ibid.

24. '[Thommo's heroes](#)', *The Daily Telegraph*, 8 August 2013, accessed 10 December 2013 via [ABC News website](#).

25. '[Labor brings back Peter Beattie to contest seat of Forde, dumps pre-selected candidate Des Hardman](#)', *ABC News*, 8 August 2013, accessed 8 August 2013.

26. C Clifford, '[8 years in Senate over as Barnaby bows out](#)', *ABC News*, 8 August 2013, accessed 8 August 2013.

27. '[Tasmania's Bass 'vital' to Coalition win, says Abbott](#)', *ABC News*, 8 August 2013, accessed 8 August 2013.

28. Ibid.

29. '[Australia's unemployment rate remained steady at 5.7 per cent in July 2013](#)', media release, *Australian Bureau of Statistics*, 8 August 2013, accessed 8 August 2013.

The economy remained strongly in focus throughout the first week of the Federal election campaign, and Treasurer Chris Bowen and Shadow Treasurer Joe Hockey engaged in a live debate on 774 ABC Melbourne.³⁰ Meanwhile, the timing and venue of the first Abbott-Rudd debate appeared to have been settled—6:30pm, Sunday 11 August at the National Press Club in Canberra.

Peter Beattie's formal nomination as the candidate for the seat of Forde (Qld) was greeted in Brisbane's *Courier-Mail* by the headline 'Send in the clown'.³¹ Prime Minister Rudd formally launched Beattie's campaign, and Beattie vowed to serve a full term if he were elected.³²

On the Friday of the first week of the campaign, Abbott—who had visited a home insulation business in Kevin Rudd's electorate earlier in the day—promised that a Coalition government would, within a month of taking office, set up a judicial inquiry that 'would have the same powers as a royal commission and would examine possible compensation to the victims' families'.³³

The release of the Queensland coroner's report into the deaths of four workers engaged on the Government's home insulation scheme had re-ignited the 'pink batts' controversy, and prompted calls for apologies and possibly compensation. Minister Albanese noted that the three businesses that were involved in these fatalities had all been prosecuted by the relevant Queensland authority.³⁴ The Minister said that 'we absolutely accept [the recommendations and that] if there are any further actions that the Queensland coroner suggests, the Government will implement those as well'.³⁵

Around midday Friday the ABC released the first batch of preliminary data from its Vote Compass policy comparison tool, which within the first week of its operation had captured more than 500,000 responses.³⁶ The responses revealed clearly that:

- the economy was by far the most important election issue for Australian voters
- the asylum seeker issue was a clear but distant second, and ahead of health, climate change and education.³⁷

On 10 August 2013, Opposition Leader Tony Abbott visited Arnhem Land, where he unveiled plans to establish a Prime Minister's Indigenous Advisory Council.³⁸ The Council would meet three times a year, would be comprised of Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians, and would inform the policy implementation of a new Coalition government. Former ALP national president Warren Mundine was named as Abbott's key advisor.³⁹

The week closed with the leaders preparing for the first of the campaign debates, and with unwelcome news in the polls for Labor. A Fairfax Nielsen poll showed the Coalition had pulled ahead of Labor—52 per cent against Labor's 48 per cent in two-party preferred terms, a change of two points.⁴⁰ Rudd remained preferred Prime Minister on 50 per cent, but on the question of trustworthiness, Abbott had overtaken Rudd 47 to 40 per cent.⁴¹

Week Two of the campaign

The Prime Minister and Opposition Leader held their first debate of the 2013 election campaign on Sunday 11 August at the National Press Club in Canberra. The economy dominated the exchange—although the issues of

30. 'Chris Bowen, Joe Hockey debate economy on ABC Local Radio', *ABC News*, 8 August 2013, accessed 8 August 2013.

31. S Scott and M King, 'Prime Minister Kevin Rudd begs spinner Peter Beattie to help rescue Labor', *Courier-Mail*, 8 August 2013, accessed 9 August 2013.

32. K Barlow, tweet #AusVotes, 2:39pm. 8 August 2013.

33. M Ross, 'Tony Abbott promises judicial inquiry into botched home insulation scheme', *ABC News*, 9 August 2013, accessed 9 August 2013.

34. A Albanese (Minister for Infrastructure and Transport), comments made during interview, 'Transcript of Interview with David Speers, Sky News (PM Agenda)', 4 July 2013, accessed 13 July 2013.

35. 'Qld coroner blames poor safety and training for insulation deaths', *PM*, ABC Radio National transcript, 4 July 2013, accessed 13 August 2013.

36. The data is based on the initial 250,000 respondents and weighted to reflect the Australian population using demographic variables from the most recent Australian Census.

37. 'Vote Compass: The most important issues to voters', *ABC News*, 9 August 2013, accessed 9 August 2013.

38. M Ross, 'Tony Abbott unveils Indigenous advisory council, promises to close the gap', *ABC News*, 11 August 2013, accessed 12 August 2013.

39. *Ibid.*

40. 'Coalition pulls ahead of Labor in latest Fairfax-Nielsen poll as Indigenous policy unveiled', *ABC News*, 10 August 2013, accessed 12 August 2013.

41. *Ibid.*

aged care, climate change, asylum seekers, Sydney's second airport and same-sex marriage were also addressed.⁴²

The Prime Minister promised to introduce a bill on same-sex marriage within 100 days of being re-elected, while the Opposition Leader said he would make a decision on a second airport for Sydney in his first term of government.⁴³

The peak Twitter moment during the leadership debate occurred at 7:25pm, when same-sex marriage was being discussed—1,952 Tweets were posted in that minute alone. The next biggest debate moment was at 7:02pm, when discussion about NBN and the budget prompted a flurry of 1,517 Tweets.⁴⁴

Some controversy later ensued over claims that the Prime Minister had breached the rules of the leaders' debate by using notes.⁴⁵ According to results from the ABC's policy comparison tool [Vote Compass](#) Tony Abbott won the debate:

Forty-one per cent of respondents who watched the debate gave it to Mr Abbott, compared to 35 per cent for Prime Minister Kevin Rudd. While some social media measures including Twitter and the election 'worm' on one commercial television channel scored the debate for Mr Rudd on Sunday night, Vote Compass respondents gave the edge to Mr Abbott. However, 24 per cent of respondents who had watched the debate did not see a clear winner, opting for 'don't know'.⁴⁶

Election analyst Antony Green distilled the outcomes further:

Mr Abbott's victory was built on the greater certainty of his victory amongst Coalition-intended voters. ... [Among] Coalition voters 82 per cent rated their party leader, Mr Abbott, the winner. That compares to only 73 per cent of Labor-intended voters backing their party leader, Mr Rudd, while 55 per cent of Green-intended voters backed Mr Rudd.⁴⁷

Campaigning resumes after the first leaders' debate

As campaigning resumed, the Australian National University released the findings of its latest poll into voter attitudes. It showed:

- voters were taking a keener interest in the economy, with concern about the economy and job security doubling since 2010
- those citing the environment and global warming as an issue had halved (from 12 per cent to 6 per cent)
- the second most important issue was immigration and asylum seekers—nominated as either the top or the second top issue by 28 per cent of the 1,200 randomly surveyed people
- only 0.1 per cent of people mentioned the carbon tax.⁴⁸

The appearance of two Somali asylum seekers who had made it—undetected—to Boigu Island in the Torres Strait sparked more heated words over the Government's border protection policy.⁴⁹ It was later reported that the Special Minister of State and the Minister for Immigration had 'specifically directed their respective secretaries . . . that the *By Boat No Visa* campaign should continue'.⁵⁰

The matter of political donations—legislation for which had languished throughout the 43rd Parliament—also received some attention via an opinion piece by academic Brian Costar:

42. ['As it happened: Kevin Rudd and Tony Abbott face off in first leaders' debate of 2013 campaign'](#), ABC News, 12 August 2013, accessed 12 August 2013.

43. ['Kevin Rudd and Tony Abbott back on campaign trail after PM accused of 'cheating' with debate notes'](#), ABC News, 12 August 2013, accessed 14 August 2013.

44. Ibid.

45. E Griffiths, ['Prime Minister Kevin Rudd dismisses criticism for using notes during leaders' debate'](#) ABC News, 12 August 2013, accessed 12 August 2013.

46. ['Vote Compass: Tony Abbott won leaders' debate'](#), ABC News, 13 August 2013, accessed 13 August 2013.

47. A Green, ['Vote Compass reveals how voters view our leaders'](#), ABC News, 13 August 2013, accessed 13 August 2013.

48. ['Survey says economy is key poll concern'](#), bigpondnews.com, 12 August 2013, accessed 13 August 2013.

49. P Maley and S Elks, ['Libs warn of Torres Strait asylum-seeker 'torrent''](#), *The Australian*, 13 August 2013, accessed 13 August 2013.

50. R Morton, ['Ministers step in to reverse ruling on ad campaign'](#), *The Australian*, 13 August 2013, p. 6, accessed 13 August 2013.

The political parties aren't required to reveal donations for the previous financial year until the following October. The Australian Electoral Commission then has about four months to process the returns for publication. Because the 2013 election is being held in September and the relevant financial year will end on June 30, 2014, donations gathered between July 1, 2013, and June 30, 2014, will not be made public until February 2015. (Donations made before July 1 this year will be revealed in February 2014.).⁵¹

When the electoral roll closed at 8pm on August 8, a total of 14,712,799 people had enrolled to vote—624,000 more than at the last election, and significantly more than the previous comparable period from 2007 to 2010 when the increase was just over 440,000.⁵²

Pre-election Economic and Fiscal Outlook (PEFO)

In April 2013 the Grattan Institute had released its report [Budget pressure on Australian governments](#) and in doing so happened to provide a useful context for subsequent economic debate. The Institute reported, among other things, that:

- there was serious risk of posting deficits in the next decade of around 4 per cent of GDP, or \$60 billion a year
- the greatest of the pressures that put Australia's prosperity at risk came from sustained growth in spending, especially health expenditure
- it was not the ageing population that was driving health spending but the fact that people of all ages were seeing doctors more often, having more tests and operations and taking more prescription drugs
- running balanced budgets was not necessarily about reducing the size of government.⁵³

Day nine of the campaign saw the publication of Treasury's [Pre-election Economic and Fiscal Outlook](#).⁵⁴ The PEFO summary included the following:

The Australian economy is expected to grow by 2.5 per cent in 2013-14 and 3 per cent in 2014-15. There is, however, uncertainty surrounding the global outlook, and the economy's transition to new sources of growth may not occur as smoothly as forecast. The underlying cash balance is estimated to be in deficit in 2013-14 and 2014-15 and projected to remain in deficit in 2015-16 and to return to surplus in 2016-17.⁵⁵

In a press conference following the release of the PEFO, Shadow Treasurer Joe Hockey highlighted the 'significant commentary in the document about the downside risks to the Budget'.⁵⁶ He said the Coalition would not be able to rely on the estimates in the PEFO as it believed the government would try to 'bully the public service into a set of numbers' that did 'not properly represent the state of the budget'.⁵⁷ The Coalition indicated that it would rather use the Parliamentary Budget Office (PBO) as well as a range of other sources, instead of the PEFO to construct its budgetary basis. This approach was ridiculed by the Government, who suggested that the Coalition was avoiding the use of PEFO as the basis for its costings for dubious reasons.⁵⁸

It was reported that the Coalition planned to give a clear explanation of how individual Coalition policies would be costed, and that it had already submitted 200 policies to the PBO for scrutiny—with detail to come later in the week about its paid parental leave scheme.⁵⁹

On Monday 12 August, the Deputy Prime Minister Anthony Albanese and Communications Shadow Minister Malcolm Turnbull [engaged in a somewhat heated debate on the ABC's Lateline program](#).⁶⁰ Earlier that evening

51. B Costar, '[Lack of political will stands in the way of Australia adopting a US-style political donations disclosure scheme that operates in near-real time](#)', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 12 August 2013, accessed 13 August 2013.

52. Australian Electoral Commission, '[Online enrolment drives record 14.7 million Australians ready to vote](#)', media release, 16 August 2013, accessed 16 August 2013.

53. '[Time to face rising pressures on Australian government budgets](#)', media release, *The Grattan Institute*, 22 April 2013, accessed 31 October 2013; J Daley, '[Why governments must dig harder to get us out of deficit](#)', *The Australian*, Wednesday 14 August.

54. '[Pre-election Economic and Fiscal Outlook](#)', Department of Finance and Deregulation, website, accessed 1 November 2013; For a useful overview of Australia's economic situation, see F Carmignani, '[FactCheck: how strong is Australia's economy?](#)' accessed 1 November 2013.

55. Department of Finance and Deregulation 'Pre-election Economic and Fiscal Outlook', op. cit., p. 1.

56. Joint transcript, J Hockey (Shadow Treasurer) and A Robb (Shadow Minister for Finance, Deregulation and Debt Reduction), Press conference, Melbourne, 13 August 2013,

57. Z Ghazarian, '[Explainer: Pre-election Economic and Fiscal Outlook](#)', *The Conversation*, 13 August 2013, accessed 14 August 2013.

58. Ibid.

59. '[Both parties wait on latest Treasury figures](#)', *AM: ABC Radio*, 13 August 2013, accessed 13 August 2013.

on the ABC's Q&A panel discussion the Coalition's [Christopher Pyne reiterated in categorical terms](#) that there would be no GST changes under an Abbott government—although a broad review of the tax system would proceed.⁶¹ Earlier that day, [parties' and independents' election costings by the Parliamentary Budget Office](#) (where authorised for publication) were made available on the Australian Parliament House website.

With controversy continuing over the Government's figures in its Economic Statement, the alleged unreliability of Treasury figures, and the Opposition's preference for calculations from the PBO, independent MP Rob Oakeshott posted several Tweets:

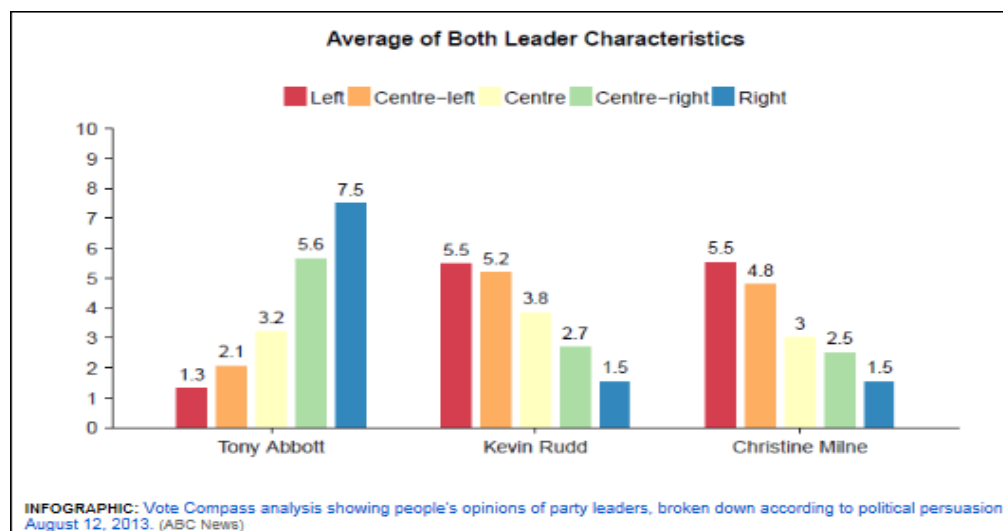
- Here is the joke of it all - the Parliamentary Budget Office will rely on today's PEFO from Treasury/Finance, even if politicians won't. (13 August)
- Just for the record, JHockey fought hard and voted against the Parliamentary Budget Office. Irony that it's now his saviour. (15 August)
- The PBO doesn't do its own budget costings. It will use Treasury/Finance. So yes, PEFO = PBO = PEFO. No difference, just tricky. (15 August)⁶²

How the voters perceived the main leaders early in the campaign

Vote Compass data published by the ABC on 13 August sought people's opinions on the competence and trustworthiness of party leaders Rudd, Abbott and Christine Milne on a scale of one-to-ten. The data showed that for Rudd's home state of Queensland, the Prime Minister had 'failed to establish any clear advantage with voters':

Queensland voters rank Mr Rudd and Mr Abbott close to level-pegging on the key criteria of trustworthiness and competence. Mr Abbott is rated 4.2 out of 10 on a combined ranking of trust and competence in Queensland, while Mr Rudd scores 3.8 out of 10.⁶³

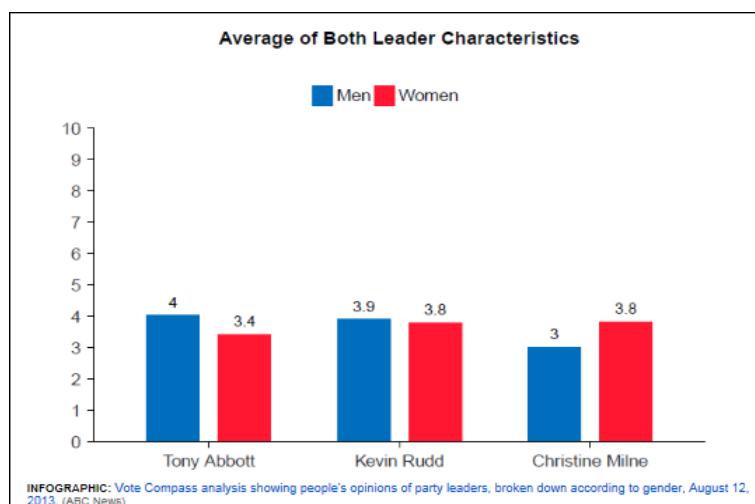
A more nuanced analysis of the Vote Compass data by Antony Green—which took into account respondents' political leanings—revealed a strong correspondence between respondent's political leanings and how they rated leaders' competence and trustworthiness:



Source: A Green, ['Antony Green: Vote Compass reveals how voters view our leaders'](#), ABC News, 13 August 2013, accessed 13 August 2013.

60. E Alberici, ['NBN debate'](#), *Lateline*, Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC), 12 August 2013, accessed 29 November 2013.
 61. ['Christopher Pyne: 'No change to the GST in an Abbott government'](#), ABC News, 13 August 2013, accessed 29 November 2013.
 62. R Oakeshott (@RobOakeshott1), 'Here is the joke of it all ...', tweet, 1:28pm, 13 August 2013, <https://twitter.com/RobOakeshott1/status/367125580493230080> accessed 15 August 2013, ; R Oakeshott (@RobOakeshott1), 15 August 2013 'Just for the record...' <https://twitter.com/RobOakeshott1/status/367801255457853440> ; and R Oakeshott (@RobOakeshott1), 15 August 2013 re-tweet '@AusMaverick The PBO doesn't do its own budget costings...', <https://twitter.com/RobOakeshott1/status/367801255457853440>
 63. ['Vote Compass: Kevin Rudd fails to establish home-state advantage'](#), ABC News, 13 August 2013, accessed 13 August 2013.

It is notable that left-leaning respondents had Rudd and Milne on a level pegging, as did right-leaning respondents—although right-leaning respondents rated Rudd and Milne much less favourably. Among male respondents, Milne was noticeably the less-preferred leader.



Source: A Green, '[Antony Green: Vote Compass reveals how voters view our leaders](#)', *ABC News*, 13 August 2013, accessed 13 August 2013.

Sexism on the campaign trail

While introducing the Liberal candidate for Lindsay, Fiona Scott, Opposition Leader Abbott caused a stir when he said that one of Ms Scott's attributes was that she had a 'bit of sex appeal'.⁶⁴ He later said he had been 'a bit exuberant' in his description of Ms Scott and that he had 'copped a bit of backlash from his daughters'.⁶⁵

The Prime Minister was later reported as saying that if an employer used that language about a worker 'they would be in trouble'.⁶⁶ A few days later, a poll in Western Sydney revealed that Fiona Scott was poised 'for a landslide victory' in Lindsay with a stunning 60 per cent of the primary vote'.⁶⁷ The poll showed Scott with 60 per cent of the primary vote, compared with 43 per cent at the last election, and her Labor opponent—Assistant Treasurer David Bradbury—on just 32 per cent, compared with 45 per cent in 2010.⁶⁸

Major party preferences arrangements disadvantage the Australian Greens

Midway through the week Tony Abbott announced that the Liberal Party would preference Labor ahead of the Greens in all 150 House of Representatives seats. (It was not clear whether the Coalition decision would apply to the Senate as well.) Abbott justified his decision as follows:

It is critical for Australia's future that we have a return to strong, stable and accountable government. But that will not occur if there is a continuation of Labor-Greens minority government. Minority government is an experiment that has comprehensively failed.... Under no circumstances will I allow the Coalition to enter into a minority government arrangement.... Today I challenge Mr Rudd to commit to preferencing the Greens below the Coalition.⁶⁹

Rudd subsequently said that he ruled out doing deals with the Greens or independents in the event of another hung parliament, but he did not commit to going back to the polls if voters were indecisive on 7 September.⁷⁰ Analyst Antony Green assessed the impact of the Coalition's preferences decision as follows:

64. L Scarr and L Novak, '[Tony Abbott's 'sex appeal' comment a 'daggy dad moment' says Frances Abbott](#)', *news.com.au*, 14 August 2013, accessed 14 August 2013.

65. Ibid.

66. '[Federal Election 2013: Tony Abbott and Kevin Rudd in Queensland for day 10 of the campaign](#)', *news.com.au*, 14 August 2013, accessed 14 August 2013

67. L Taylor, '[Western Sydney poll shows huge swing towards Coalition](#)', *The Guardian*, 16 August 2013, accessed 16 August 2013.

68. Ibid.

69. T Abbott, '[Statement on preferences](#)', 14 August 2013, accessed 14 August 2013.

70. J Ferguson and S Maher, '[Captain Abbott calls it, but Rudd won't follow on Greens preferences](#)', *The Australian*, 15 August 2013, accessed 16 August 2013.

Life for the Greens at the 2013 election just got tougher with the Liberal Party's decision to change its policy on preferences. In the past the Liberal party has ignored philosophical differences and taken the entirely strategic decision of recommending preferences for the Greens ahead of Labor. ... The consequence of this decision is that Greens MP Adam Bandt will find it much harder to retain his seat of Melbourne, gained from Labor on Liberal preferences in 2010... The decision also rules out any remote chances the Greens had of winning other inner-city seats such as Batman in Victoria and Grayndler and Sydney in New South Wales.⁷¹

Distribution of Liberals Preferences - 2010 Federal and Victorian Elections Compared			
Federal Election		Victorian Election	
Electorate	% Prefs to Greens	Electorate	% Prefs to Greens
Batman (VIC)	80.86	Brunswick	33.70
Grayndler (NSW)	73.55	Melbourne	33.63
Melbourne (VIC)	80.86	Northcote	29.09
		Richmond	35.73

Source: A Green, '[Liberal Preferences and their Impact on Green Prospects in Melbourne](#)', Antony Green's election blog, ABC Elections, 14 August 2013, accessed 14 August 2013.

Antony Green was of the view that The Greens Deputy Leader Adam Bandt would have to poll above 40 per cent on first preferences to retain the seat of Melbourne.⁷² Bandt responded to the Coalition's announcement of the Liberal-Labor preference deal by saying that the Greens would win the seat of Melbourne on primary votes, without the need for major party preferences.⁷³ The Greens had just launched their election policy platform at Docklands in Melbourne. In a press conference responding to the Liberal's decision, Greens Leader Christine Milne was reported to have called the major parties 'bullies', retorting that Abbott 'can't bang on about the evils of coalition governments when he's the leader of ... the Coalition'.⁷⁴

The following day also saw the launch of the marriage equality website [vote4love](#).⁷⁵

Voters' interest wanes further

Halfway through the second week of the campaign, it appeared that popular and journalistic interest in the election was flagging. Some of the media comment suggested that the ensuing days' campaigning would disenchant voters even further. *The Drum's* Jonathan Green, for example, was scathing:

[Have] you ever endured anything so demeaning, patronising, condescending, cynically manipulative, mendacious, superficial, fatuous, rat cunning, trivialised or just plain false as the process of politics, now thrown at you live, minute by minute, through the course of this campaign?⁷⁶

In a similar vein the following day, Michelle Grattan asked: 'Is anybody concerned that policy process is being trashed in this election? Really trashed'.⁷⁷

In an opinion piece, the *Sydney Morning Herald's* Mark Kenny offered the following assessment of the state of the major parties:

Tony Abbott's 52-48 per cent lead in last weekend's Fairfax-Nielsen poll is not unbridgeable for Labor but it is, in all likelihood, structural. Consider the equation before voters. On one side is a two-term government racked by spectacular hatreds, dragged low by broken promises on carbon and the surplus, various program failures and a

71. A Green, '[Liberal preferences and their impact on Green prospects in Melbourne](#)', Antony Green's election blog, ABC Elections, 14 August 2013, accessed 14 August 2013.

72. Ibid.

73. F Bell, '[Greens looking to hold the seat of Melbourne in September poll](#)', ABC News, 14 August 2013, accessed 31 October 2013.

74. '[Election 2013: Coalition aims to wipe out Greens with preference choice](#)' – politics live blog, *The Guardian*, 14 August 2013, accessed 14 August 2013.

75. [Australian Marriage Equality](#), website, accessed 15 August 2013.

76. J Green, '[Our future just a footnote in this trivialised election](#)', *The Drum*, 15 August 2013, accessed 16 August 2013.

77. M Grattan, '[Grattan on Friday: Policy rigour goes out the window in the desperate chase for votes](#)', *The Conversation*, 16 August 2013, accessed 16 August 2013.

worsening economy. It campaigns for “a new way” but offers a recycled leader once dumped and then viciously traduced by his own side. This gaffer-taped operation is asking voters for another three years.

On the other side is an opposition famed for its negativity and woefully small-horizon thinking, yet uncannily united and consistent. Its leader, while prone to the odd verbal gaffe—his female candidates have “sex appeal”—enjoys unqualified support internally.⁷⁸

Meanwhile, the Climate Institute issued an analysis of the Coalition’s Direct Action Plan to combat climate change, reporting that ‘Abbott will have to find at least another \$4bn for his climate policy or else break his pledge to cut emissions by 5 per cent by 2020’.⁷⁹ The Opposition Leader responded: ‘I simply don’t accept the report’.⁸⁰ Abbott also confirmed that he would not release the Coalition’s full costings until the last week of the election campaign.⁸¹

Coalition announces tougher asylum seeker policy

On 16 August the Coalition reiterated that:

- no permanent visa would be issued to any of the almost 30,000 illegal boat arrivals still waiting in Australia for a decision on their claim, even if they were found to be genuine refugees
- no Temporary Protection Visa (TPV) would exceed three years in duration
- access to benefits for TPV holders, in particular income support, would be subject to satisfying mandatory mutual obligation requirements to undertake work in return for accessing these benefits—for example, the participation in a ‘work for benefits’ regime such as ‘Work for the Dole’.⁸²

We will also remove the benefit of the doubt to those who have thrown their documents away and end Labor’s ‘tick and flick’ approach to refugee assessments and Labor’s endless appeals in the courts. To ensure a fairer system for genuine refugees waiting offshore, we will reserve the Refugee and Special Humanitarian Visa quota for genuine applicants who apply through the proper process. We will also establish a new ‘Fast Track Assessment and Removal’ process that will be modelled on the Detained Fast Track system in the United Kingdom and which will allow protection claim assessments and immigration status determinations to be resolved as quickly as possible.⁸³

The decision to reintroduce TPVs for those given refugee status would revoke a refugee’s right to apply for family reunion, and to leave Australia and return.⁸⁴

During a visit to the Northern Territory, Prime Minister Rudd offered some thoughts about the economic development of northern Australia, including spending millions of dollars on expanding the Ord River irrigation scheme.⁸⁵ The Liberals had previously released their own plan for Northern Australia.⁸⁶

Rudd also announced an extra \$2 billion subsidy to the car industry until at least 2025, saying Labor would legislate to ‘lock in the pledge to give investment certainty to Holden and Toyota to encourage them to keep making cars in Australia’.⁸⁷ The Opposition Leader, when releasing the Coalition’s manufacturing policy at Volvo Group Australia’s factory in Brisbane, ‘revealed in no uncertain terms his desire for Australia’s automotive industry to operate without government assistance’.⁸⁸

78. M Kenny, ‘[Rudd’s honeymoon just a sugar hit, after all](#)’, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 15 August 2013, accessed 16 August 2013.

79. L Taylor, ‘[Tony Abbott’s climate plan has \\$4bn funding gap, new modelling shows](#)’, *The Guardian*, 15 August 2013, accessed 31 October 2013.

80. Ibid.

81. L Sales, ‘[Tony Abbott accepts ‘we have a savings challenge](#)’, ABC, 7.30, transcript of interview with Tony Abbott, 15 August 2013, accessed 17 August 2013.

82. Liberal Party of Australia, ‘[The Coalition’s policy to clear Labor’s 30,000 border failure backlog](#)’, policy document, accessed 17 August 2013.

83. Ibid.

84. O Laughland, ‘[Coalition unveils hardline plan to deal with asylum seekers and refugees](#)’, *The Guardian*, 16 August 2013, accessed 16 August 2013.

85. S Maher and J Kelly, ‘[Labor’s NT economic zone a Top End epiphany](#)’, *The Australian*, 16 August 2013, accessed 29 November 2013.

86. Liberal Party of Australia, ‘[The Coalition’s 2030 vision for developing northern Australia](#)’, 2013 election policy document, accessed 19 August 2013.

87. P Hudson, ‘[\\$2b cars plan to save 50,000 jobs](#)’, *Hobart Mercury*, 17 August 2013, p. 11, accessed 19 August 2013.

88. T Martin, ‘[Coalition leader uses local truck factory as example of subsidy-free auto industry](#)’, *GoAuto.com.au*, 23 August 2013, accessed 13 November 2013.

The end of Week Two

At the end of Week Two, a poll by JWS Research showed that in Forde—the seat being contested by Peter Beattie—the incumbent Liberal-National Party Member Bert van Manen was leading the former Queensland premier on a two-party preferred basis by 60 per cent to 40 per cent.⁸⁹ The draw for the 7 September federal election was carried out at the AEC Head Office in Canberra. ([Details of the process](#) are available on the AEC website.) When nominations closed, a record 1,717 candidates had nominated to contest the 2013 federal election.⁹⁰

Week Three

Coalition formally announces its Paid Parental Leave (PPL) Scheme

On Sunday 18 August the Coalition's Paid Parental Leave scheme was formally announced. Noting that 'Australia is one of only two nations that fail to pay parental leave based on a replacement wage', the Coalition said its policy would provide mothers with 26 weeks of paid parental leave, at their actual wage or the national minimum wage (whichever is greater), plus superannuation. Fathers would be eligible for two weeks out of the 26 weeks at their actual wage or the national minimum wage (whichever is greater), plus superannuation.⁹¹ The scheme would be fully funded through a 1.5 per cent levy on companies earning more than \$5 million in taxable income:

This will affect only around 3,000 companies – less than one out of every 200 companies in Australia. Those companies required to pay the levy will have this offset by the Coalition's previously announced 1.5 per cent company tax cut.⁹²

The policy was already a cause of some controversy, including internal Coalition dissent.⁹³ Moreover, it soon emerged that the scheme would affect the financial interests of retirees relying on dividends to deliver an income stream, because franking credits, which are tied to company tax rates, would drop from 30 cents in the dollar to 28.5 cents—a five per cent decrease.⁹⁴

The debate on the PPL scheme was to resurface throughout the campaign. Some state premiers were unhappy with an assumption they would contribute to the scheme:

West Australian Liberal Premier Colin Barnett said the scheme was too generous and, although his state would cooperate, it wouldn't contribute any money. South Australian Premier Jay Weatherill rebuked the Opposition leader for announcing a plan that needed state funds to work, and declared he would not make any commitment to help pay for the federal scheme. And Tasmanian Premier Lara Giddings slammed the "ill thought out" Coalition scheme and said her state could not countenance returning any "savings" on parental leave to Canberra.⁹⁵

Noted feminist Eva Cox, however, was vocal in her support for the PPL, saying that her view 'and those of most feminists, is that the wage replacement model is preferable because it reinforces the normalisation of parental leave as a workplace entitlement'.⁹⁶

Monday began with bad news for Prime Minister Rudd as a *Newspoll* showed voter dissatisfaction with him had jumped six points to 54 per cent, and his satisfaction rating had dropped to 35 per cent—his lowest rating since

89. M Howells, '[Poll suggests Beattie is stalling in Forde](#)', ABC News, 16 August 2013, accessed 16 August 2013.

90. AEC, '[Record number of candidates to contest the 2013 federal election](#)', media release, 16 August 2013, accessed 16 August 2013. Lists of candidates for each state and territory are progressively published on the AEC's website at www.aec.gov.au/election/who-are-the-candidates.htm. The list of Senate Group Voting Tickets lodged by each Senate group is available at: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/federal-election-2013/guide/gtv/>.

91. T Abbott, '[The Coalition's paid parental leave scheme](#)', Coalition policy document Election 2013, 18 August 2013, accessed 19 August 2013.

92. Ibid.

93. M Gordon and D Hurst, '[Abbott faces call to defend paid parental leave plan](#)', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 7 May 2013, accessed 1 November 2013.

94. R Gottlieb, '[Retirees will pay for the Paid Parental Leave scheme](#)', *Business Spectator*, 19 August 2013, accessed 5 November 2013.

95. D Crowe and S Martin, '[Premiers balk at Libs' baby bill](#)', *The Australian*, 20 August 2013, accessed 5 November 2013.

96. E Cox, '[Paid parental leave should be a workplace entitlement, not welfare](#)', *The Guardian*, 20 August 2013, accessed 21 August 2013.

returning to the Labor leadership.⁹⁷ Labor's primary support had fallen to its lowest level since his return, and the Coalition was enjoying a 47 to 34 per cent lead.⁹⁸

With the betting markets largely unmoved from their recent positions, three national polls showed things moving against Labor:

- Newspoll—Labor on 46 per cent to the Coalition's 54 per cent
- Roy Morgan—Labor on 48 per cent to the Coalition's 52 per cent
- Galaxy—Labor on 48 per cent to the Coalition's 52 per cent.⁹⁹

An Essential poll, however, showed Labor gaining one percentage point to be at 50 per cent—level with the Coalition.¹⁰⁰

The second leaders' debate

The campaign cooled somewhat as the two major party leaders began to prepare for the second formal debate—a '[people's forum](#)' at the Brisbane Broncos Leagues Club hosted by Sky News political editor David Speers. One commentator said that the revised format 'breathed life into both leaders. ...With broader questions ... the leaders engaged directly with each other. It's the closest we've seen to a dialogue'.¹⁰¹ The following day the Murdoch press gave its front page to a quip by Tony Abbott, who asked at one point 'Does this guy ever shut up?'.¹⁰² The morning after the debate stories emerged that, during preparations for the leaders' forum in Brisbane, the television studio make-up artist had been unimpressed by the manner in which Prime Minister Rudd had engaged with her.¹⁰³ It also emerged that a *Guardian* Loneragan poll showed the Prime Minister trailing his opponent, Bill Glasson, in his home seat of Griffith:

Glasson, who is running an intensive local grassroots campaign, leads Rudd on a two-party preferred basis by 52 per cent to 48 per cent. The poll's margin of error is 4 per cent ... Rudd could become the third prime minister in Australian history to lose his seat¹⁰⁴

The end of Week Three

On Friday 23 August a *Galaxy* poll suggested Labor could lose up to seven seats in western Sydney—[Reid](#), [Lindsay](#), [Greenway](#), [Banks](#) and [Werriwa](#), with [Parramatta](#) and [Barton](#) also at risk.¹⁰⁵ At the same time, chief economist at the Bank of America Merrill Lynch, Saul Eslake, argued that the Coalition needed to find another \$30 billion in savings to make good on its promise to improve the budget bottom line, saying that there was 'still a significant gap between new spending promises and the savings that have already been announced'.¹⁰⁶

The Coalition provided more detail about its strategies for dealing with asylum seekers, including joint operations with Indonesia, Sri Lanka and Malaysia; engaging and enlisting Indonesian villages to support people smuggling disruption; establishing transit zones within the region to facilitate the transfer of asylum seekers; increased aerial surveillance and up to \$71 million to boost the search and rescue response capability of Indonesian authorities; and supplementing the border protection fleet with commercially leased vessels to support patrol operations.¹⁰⁷

In an analysis of a Fairfax Neilsen poll published in Saturday 24 August, journalist Michael Gordon argued that:

97. K Cassidy, '[Labor steps up attacks on Tony Abbott as Newspoll put Kevin Rudd's popularity at lowest level](#)', *ABC News*, 19 August 2013, accessed 19 August 2013.

98. Ibid.

99. E Tadros, '[Polls diverge on Labor's chances](#)', *Australian Financial Review*, 19 August 2013, accessed 19 August 2013.

100. Ibid.

101. M Clarke, '[Debate Round 2 breathes life into leaders' dialogue](#)', *The Drum*, 22 August 2013, accessed 22 August 2013.

102. S Blake and K Campbell, '[Kevin Rudd and Tony Abbott fail to inspire undecided voters at People's Forum](#)', *Courier-Mail*, 21 August 2013, accessed 12 December 2013.

103. '[Make-up artist Lily Fontana slams 'rude' Kevin Rudd after People's Forum](#)', *news.com.au*, 22 August 2013, accessed 22 August 2013.

104. L Taylor, '[Kevin Rudd trails in his own seat in shock poll finding for Labor](#)', *The Guardian*, 22 August 2013, accessed 22 August 2013.

105. W Bove, '[Galaxy marginals polling](#)', *The Poll Bludger*, 23 August 2013, accessed 5 November 2013.

106. S Cullen, '[Economist Saul Eslake predicts Coalition faces \\$30 billion budget shortfall](#)', *ABC News*, 23 August 2013, accessed 23 August 2013.

107. '[Tony Abbott – A regional deterrence framework to combat people smuggling](#)', Coalition policy document Election 2013, 23 August 2013, accessed 5 November 2013.

- Labor would need a much stronger campaign in the final fortnight to have any prospect of even a narrow victory, and
- Labor's hopes would rely on 'raising doubts about a Coalition government led by Tony Abbott, and not assuming the returned PM is adored by the voters who were denied the opportunity to pass judgment on him in 2010'.¹⁰⁸



Source: <http://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/news/special-features/federal-election>, accessed 26 August 2013.

Week Four

The Coalition stays ahead in the polls

On Sunday 25 August—with a possible US response to the Syrian crisis requiring Australia's diplomatic attention—the Coalition formally launched its election campaign. At the launch in Brisbane, Abbott made some sweeping pledges about what he could achieve over 10 years, and declared that 'within a decade, a Coalition government would have a budget surplus at 1% of GDP, defence spending at 2% of GDP, the private health insurance rebate fully restored' and 'each year, government will be a smaller percentage of our economy'.¹⁰⁹ Betting agency *Sportsbet* had the Coalition at \$1.08 to win and Labor at \$7.50.¹¹⁰

Meanwhile, the newly-formed Palmer United Party unveiled its policies, which included:

- massive increases to health and education spending and plans to raise pensions
- abolishing the fringe benefits tax, repealing and refunding the carbon tax and merging the country's three biggest car-makers
- plans to 'turbocharge' the national economy.¹¹¹

Kevin Rudd announced \$52 million to take the next step towards building a fast train link between Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne.¹¹²

Despite a slight bounce for Labor, the Coalition maintained an election-winning lead—53 per cent to 47 per cent—while The Greens' primary vote was stable at 9 per cent.¹¹³ The Greens received a blow when Independent Senator Nick Xenophon decided to run a split preference ticket, meaning his excess votes would flow to Labor and Liberal candidates before The Greens.¹¹⁴

108. M Gordon, '[Latest polling proves a reality check for Labor's hopes of victory](#)', *The Canberra Times*, 24 August 2013, p. 4, accessed 6 November 2013.

109. M Grattan, '[Abbott launch: small hand-outs, but big promises](#)', *The Conversation*, 25 August 2013, accessed 6 November 2013.

110. '[The odds](#)', *Sunday Times (WA)*, 25 August 2013, p.14, accessed 26 August 2013.

111. '[Palmer's big plans](#)', *Northern Territory News*, 26 August 2013, accessed 26 August 2013.

112. E Griffiths, '[Kevin Rudd pledges funding towards high-speed rail network on east coast](#)', *ABC News*, 27 August 2013, accessed 8 November 2013.

113. '[Newspoll reveals Labor is gaining ground, but Coalition leads](#)', *ABC News*, 26 August 2013, accessed 26 August 2013.

114. '[Sixth senate spot shapes as main electoral battleground in SA](#)', *ABC News*, 29 August 2013, accessed 11 November 2013.

Amongst the press and pundits there was a widespread view that Labor was doomed.¹¹⁵ ‘Labor loses puff’ said the *Herald Sun* editorial.¹¹⁶ At Centrebet, 70 per cent of bets wagered thus far on the election backed the Coalition.¹¹⁷ The *Australian Financial Review* spoke of a ‘post-Rudd’ world:

The 71 per cent tipping an Abbott victory is the most certain the electorate has been about the outcome of an election in the poll’s history ... The danger for Labor is these numbers suggest a lot of people will stop listening, right when the campaign enters its final critical phase.¹¹⁸

Meanwhile, Rudd stoked the campaign fires with an announcement that he was considering the relocation of Sydney’s Garden Island naval base to Brisbane—an option canvassed in the Defence White Paper. It drew a furious response from NSW Premier Barry O’Farrell.¹¹⁹

Coalition releases policy costings

Just hours ahead of the second leaders’ debate, the Coalition released details of its controversial Paid Parental Leave scheme. Declaring that the PPL scheme would have a \$1.1bn positive impact on the budget bottom line, the Coalition explained that:

- gross cost of the Coalition’s PPL scheme was \$9.8bn, less
 - existing Government scheme—\$3.7bn
 - Commonwealth and state Government schemes—\$1.2bn
 - automatic adjustments to Government spending and revenue—\$1.6 bn.¹²⁰

As well, there was a new levy of 1.5 per cent on company taxable income above \$5 million (raising \$4.4bn) resulting in a positive impact on budget bottom line of \$1.1bn.

The Coalition also outlined \$31bn in savings measures, (based largely on abolishing the MRRT), which included:

- discontinuing the School Kids Bonus - \$4 billion
- reducing public service head count by natural attrition by 12,000 - around \$5 billion
- two year delay in phasing of superannuation increase from 9 to 12 per cent - \$2.1 billion
- discontinue low income super contribution - \$2.9 billion
- rescind increase in humanitarian intake - \$1.3 billion
- discontinue supplementary allowance to unemployed, students and parents - \$1 billion
- scrapping Clean Energy Finance Corporation - \$1.6 billion
- paid parental leave (PPL) scheme, which would replace existing programs - \$1.1 billion
- abolition of Minerals Resource Rent Tax (MRRT) and associated costs - nearly \$5 billion
- dumping carbon tax, which would include ending associated programs - \$7.5 billion.¹²¹

The third and final leaders’ debate

The final leaders’ debate took place in the Rooty Hill RSL Club in Western Sydney on Wednesday 28 August 2013.¹²² In the town hall-style debate, attended by 100 undecided voters, Rudd and Abbott took questions

115. P Coorey, ‘[Labor starts working on the post-Rudd world](#)’, *Australian Financial Review*, 26 August 2013, p.47, accessed 26 August 2013.

116. ‘[Labor loses puff](#)’, editorial, *Herald Sun*, 26 August 2013, p.20, accessed 26 August 2013.

117. N Klein, ‘[Punter bets \\$750,000 on Abbott to win while Rudd’s odds balloon to 10:1](#)’, *Daily Telegraph*, 26 August 2013, accessed 26 August 2013.

118. P Coorey, ‘Labor starts working on the post-Rudd world’, op. cit.

119. E Griffiths, ‘[Kevin Rudd and Barry O’Farrell in war of words over proposed Navy relocation](#)’, *ABC News*, 27 August 2013, accessed 11 November 2013. (The White Paper flagged a new naval base in Brisbane, seen as being a better location for Australian forces deployed to the Asia-Pacific and the Indian Ocean. At the time, Defence Minister Stephen Smith said the review was a long way from being adopted as government policy.)

120. ‘[Election 2013: third Rudd v Abbott debate build-up – politics live blog - as it happened](#)’, *The Guardian*, online edition, 28 August 2013, accessed 11 November 2013.

121. E Griffiths and K Cassidy, ‘[Chris Bowen and Joe Hockey butt heads at press club over Coalition savings, return to surplus](#)’, *ABC News*, 28 August 2013, accessed 11 November 2013.

covering economic management, Labor's leadership, education funding, paid parental leave, dental care, aged care, election promises, disability care, underemployment, environmental safeguards, foreign ownership of agricultural land, trade and superannuation.

Kevin Rudd talked up the government's economic credentials ... [and] dismissed claims of policymaking on the fly... Tony Abbott ... said he would rather under-promise during the election campaign and over-deliver when in government. When asked what question the leaders would like to put to each other, Abbott said he would like Rudd to give voters a positive reason to vote for him ... [and] Rudd responded by asking Abbott to release the Coalition's 200 policies and its budget bottom line.¹²³

The Prime Minister referred repeatedly to the Coalition's PPL scheme—an issue that was also raised by an audience member.¹²⁴ Rudd, in turn, was pressed on the destabilisation of Julia Gillard—and on the question of overseas purchases of Australian rural land Rudd declared himself to be 'a bit nervous, a bit anxious frankly about simply an open slather'.¹²⁵

Tony Abbott declared that he would not close any Medicare Locals¹²⁶; stressed the Coalition's pledge to scrap the carbon tax and to run a government that would 'live within its means'¹²⁷; and said a Coalition government would lower the scrutiny threshold for the Foreign Investment Review Board to examine acquisition proposals above 'about \$15 million'—down from the current threshold of more than \$220 million.¹²⁸

Stirrings in Labor's campaign camp

On 29 August, media reports were suggesting that some Labor powerbrokers were 'openly questioning whether Julia Gillard would have done a better job than Kevin Rudd':

Despite Mr Rudd yesterday insisting he could still pull off a surprise win, his own ministers are quietly airing complaints about the Prime Minister and his closest adviser Bruce Hawker's strategic decision-making. Just two months since the Labor Party dramatically switched its leader, some senior members of the Government are now complaining that Ms Gillard would have performed better than Mr Rudd. The minister said Ms Gillard would have slowly improved Labor's vote, while under Mr Rudd it soared and then plummeted.¹²⁹

Rudd remained focussed on the campaign, claiming that Abbott had committed a '\$10b fraud on the Australian people' over his recently released costings.¹³⁰ The Treasury and Finance departments later said that they had not costed Opposition policies and that different assumptions would lead to different results.¹³¹ Abbott retorted that Rudd's attack had blown up in his face.¹³²

A Newspoll published on 30 August 'found Labor on track for a wipeout in western Sydney that could be big enough to settle the election purely on NSW losses':

Under Kevin Rudd's leadership, Labor is facing a similar level of "catastrophe" forecast under Julia Gillard before she was removed as prime minister eight weeks ago in a bid to avoid the loss of up to 10 seats in Sydney's west. There are now at least eight Labor-held seats in real danger, including those of Chris Bowen and Assistant Treasurer David Bradbury, with another two at risk.¹³³

The *Economist* published its own assessment of the looming election in the following terms:

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122. See M Kenny, 'Election 2013: Kevin Rudd's and Tony Abbott's policy on the run at Rooty Hill debate', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 29 August 2013; E Griffiths, 'Abbott promises not to shut down Labor's Medicare Locals during Rooty Hill debate with Rudd', *ABC News*, 29 August 2013, accessed 11 November 2013.
 123. Ibid. For more comment on the forum, see *The Conversation's* 28 August overview: '[Rooty Hill people's forum: experts respond](#)'.
 124. Ibid.
 125. E Griffiths, 'Abbott promises not to shut down Labor's Medicare Locals during Rooty Hill debate with Rudd', op. cit.
 126. M Kenny, 'Election 2013: Kevin Rudd's and Tony Abbott's policy on the run at Rooty Hill debate', op. cit.
 127. E Griffiths, 'Abbott promises not to shut down Labor's Medicare Locals during Rooty Hill debate with Rudd', op. cit.
 128. M Kenny, 'Election 2013: Kevin Rudd's and Tony Abbott's policy on the run at Rooty Hill debate', op. cit.
 129. S Scott, '[Julia Gillard may have performed better in election campaign than Kevin Rudd, say key Labor Party figures](#)', *Courier-Mail*, 29 August 2013, accessed 11 November 2013.
 130. E Griffiths, '[Labor claims \\$10 billion hole in Coalition's budget cuts](#)', *ABC News*, 30 August 2013, accessed 11 November 2013.
 131. Ibid.
 132. B Packham '[Rudd sticks to Coalition costings fraud claim](#)', *The Australian*, 30 August 2013, accessed 11 November 2013.
 133. D Shanahan, '[Newspoll signals election lost in Labor's heartland](#)', *The Australian*, 30 August 2013, accessed 12 November 2013.

The choice between a man with a defective manifesto and one with a defective personality is not appealing—but Mr Rudd gets our vote, largely because of Labor’s decent record. With deficits approaching, his numbers look more likely to add up than Mr Abbott’s. Despite his high-handed style, Mr Rudd is a Blairite centrist. A strategic thinker about Asia, he has skills that will be useful, especially as Australia has to balance its economic dependence on China with its security dependence on America. It would be nice if he revived his liberal approach to asylum-seekers. And, who knows, he may even live up to his promise to be less vile to his colleagues.¹³⁴

Week Five—the final week

The final week of the campaign saw Rudd defiant in the face of the polls that continued to point to a landslide victory for the Coalition. Newspoll showed Abbott overtaking Rudd as preferred prime minister for the first time, and that Labor’s primary vote had slumped to 33 per cent.¹³⁵ Rudd appeared on the breakfast media, insisting that Labor could still win:

If you’re uncertain about what Mr Abbott’s putting out there, then I think listen to your instincts and don’t vote for him.¹³⁶

With only days to go, and the solid prospect of an Abbott government, the politics of climate change re-emerged in the light of an address to the National Press Club by the Opposition Leader in which he said he thought that a Coalition victory would mean that Labor (in Opposition) would capitulate and agree to the repeal of the carbon tax.¹³⁷ *The Guardian* [assessed the parties’ positions](#) in the following terms:

1. Labor: We’ve been into pricing carbon since before 2007. We don’t support direct action. We won’t get into hypotheticals post-election about carbon price repeals.
2. Coalition: We won’t spend one dollar more than we’ve budgeted under direct action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Labor will fold and back us on carbon tax repeal - just you watch.
3. Greens: We won’t be helping anyone repeal the carbon tax. You can’t trust Labor. And Tony Abbott is obsessed with absolute senate power.¹³⁸

The differences articulated opened up the prospect of a second election, as the Opposition Leader had promised an immediate double dissolution if the Senate were to block the repeal of Labor’s emissions trading scheme.¹³⁹

As Labor’s Tony Burke and the Liberals’ Scott Morrison prepared for a Press Club debate on asylum seeker policy, social media comments were circulating about a remark by NSW Liberal candidate Fiona Scott on the ABC’s *Four Corners* program the previous evening that linked asylum seekers to traffic jams in Sydney’s west.¹⁴⁰ Ms Scott said she was talking about deficient infrastructure and her comments had been reported out of context.¹⁴¹

Meanwhile, a [media release from the AEC](#) reported that pre-poll voting rates were already far higher in this election than in 2010: 1,462,721 electors voted at early voting centres (until close of polling on Wednesday, 4 September 2013); 1,324,178 postal vote applications were processed as of 4 September, over 380,000 of which were submitted via the internet.¹⁴²

134. Editorial, ‘[Lucky no more](#)’, *The Economist*, 31 August 2013, accessed 12 November 2013.

135. D Shanahan, ‘[Tony Abbott overtakes Kevin Rudd as voters’ favoured leader as Labor sinks to 33pc](#)’, *The Australian*, 2 September 2013, accessed 12 November 2013.

136. D Harrison, ‘[Listen to your instincts’: Kevin Rudd’s plea to the undecided](#)’, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 2 September 2013, accessed 12 November 2013.

137. M Grattan, ‘[Tony Abbott interview: “The prime minister is probably a little more than first amongst equals”](#)’, *The Conversation*, 2 September 2013, accessed 12 November 2013.

138. K Murphy, ‘[Climate debate: in three points](#)’, *Australian election 2013*, weblog, *The Guardian*, 3 September 2013, accessed 12 November 2013.

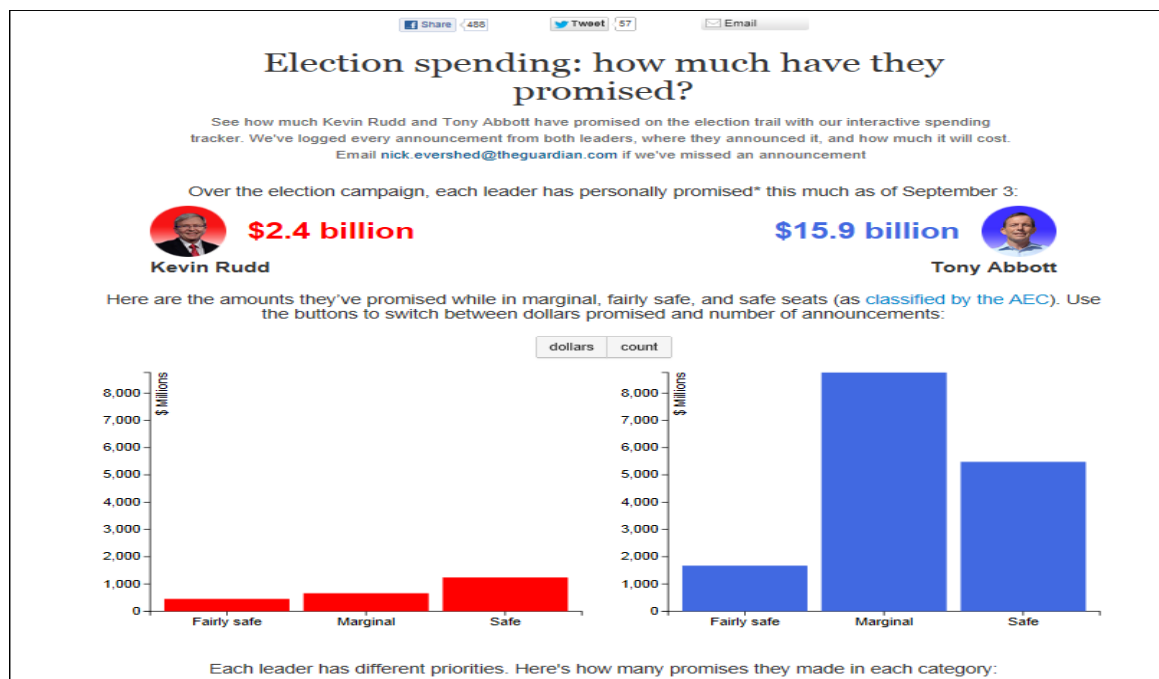
139. Ibid.

140. Ibid.

141. K Cheng, ‘[Fiona Scott says Four Corners took her words out of context after linking asylum seekers to traffic](#)’, *Penrith Press / The Daily Telegraph*, online edition, 3 September 2013, accessed 12 November 2013.

142. AEC, ‘[Early voting tracking to record levels as polling day preparations ramp up](#)’, media release, 5 September 2013, accessed 12 November 2013.

Of interest, too, were the amounts that the parties had committed to spend in meeting election promises:



Source: N Evershed, 'Election spending: how much have they promised?', *The Guardian*, online edition, 4 September 2013.

In their letter to the Liberal Party, Peter Shergold, Len Scanlan and Geoff Carmody—the three prominent Australians engaged by the Liberal Party to validate its costings of their election promises—confirmed that they were 'of the opinion that the final policy costings ... are based on reasonable assumptions and calculations and as such represent a fair estimate of the net financial impact of those policies on the federal budget'.¹⁴³

As the election advertising blackout descended on the campaign at midnight, all parties were gearing up for the final two days of the campaign—a frenzied round of interviews and appearances, with candidates spruiking their and their parties' credentials in an attempt to secure every last vote from the electors.

The vote in the 2013 election

A total of 14,712,799 people enrolled to vote in the 2013 federal election, an increase of over 624,000 since the last election.¹⁴⁴ Despite a growth in youth enrolment of 25,000 since the 2010 election, an estimated 400,000 young voters failed to enrol. An estimated 1.22 million—the equivalent of 12 electorates—remained unenrolled across all age groups.¹⁴⁵ A record 1,717 candidates contested the election, compared to 1,198 in 2010—an increase of 43 per cent. This national figure included 529 Senate candidates for the 40 Senate vacancies and 1,188 candidates for the 150 Representatives seats. There were 470 female candidates and 1,247 male candidates. Altogether, 265 group voting tickets were accepted. The Australian Electoral Commission [registered](#) 54 unrelated parties plus 23 branches of the major parties.¹⁴⁶

Voter turnout in the House of Representatives was 93.34 per cent (93.22 per cent in 2010) and 94.00 per cent in the Senate (93.83 per cent in 2010). It is perhaps surprising, given the size of many Senate ballot papers that the rate of informal voting in the Senate was lower than at the previous election, and was also lower than the informal vote in the House of Representatives. The informal vote in the House of Representatives was 5.91 per cent and 2.96 per cent in the Senate, compared to the 2010 informal vote of 5.55 per cent and 3.75 per cent respectively.¹⁴⁷ Over 3.2 million Australians voted early (pre-poll or postal) for the 2013 federal election. This

143. P Osborne, 'Three experts endorse coalition costings', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 5 September 2013, accessed 12 December 2013.

144. All figures referred to here are official AEC figures taken from AEC website, 'Media key facts and figures, 2013 federal election', 20 September 2013, accessed 13 November 2013.

145. Ibid.

146. Ibid.

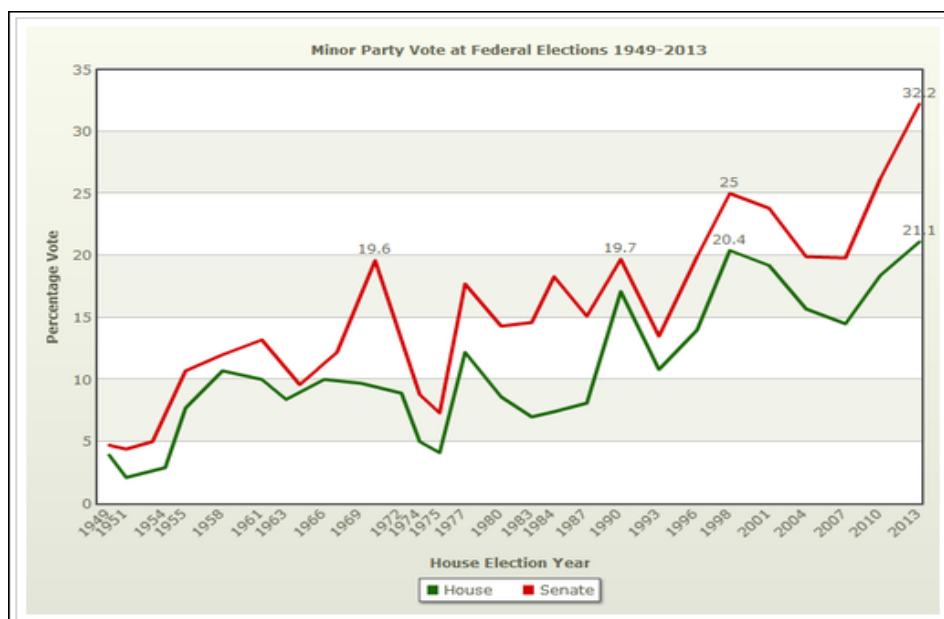
147. Ibid.

compares to around 2.5 million in 2010. Over 1.3 million postal vote applications were received for the 2013 federal election. This compares to just over 950,000 in 2010.¹⁴⁸

The rise of the minor parties and independents

ABC election analyst Antony Green has provided a comprehensive overview of the rise of minor parties and independents:

Support for minor parties and independents reached record levels for both the House and Representatives and the Senate at the 2013 election. Support for non-major party candidates reached 21.1 per cent in the House of Representatives, representing more than one in five of all votes. In the Senate, support for non-major party candidates reached 32.2 per cent, just under one on three of all votes.



In the House the 21.1 per cent non-major party support broke the 20.4 per cent record at One Nation's first election in 1998. The level of support for independents and minor parties has now been above 14 per cent at every election since 1996. Non-major support in the Senate has always been several percentage points higher than in the House. The new record of 32.2 per cent surpasses 26.2 per cent in 2010 and 25.0 per cent at One Nation's first election in 1998. Minor party and independent support in the Senate has now been above 19 per cent at every election since 1996... The 2013 election also set a new record for a gap between non-major party support in the two houses, non-major support being 11.1 percentage points higher in the Senate. The previous record was in 1984 when the Nuclear Disarmament Party ran a Senate-only campaign and created a gap of 10.9 percentage points. 1984 and 2013 are the only two elections where the gap between major party support in the two houses has been above 8 per cent.

The rise in support for minor parties and independents stems from a decline in support for the traditional parties. It is a trend seen in most western democracies but has happened more slowly in Australia. The comparatively slow decline in traditional party support in Australia may owe something the inertia built into voting patterns by Australia's use of compulsory voting. The rise in independent and minor party support has occurred in conjunction with a rise in the number of candidates contesting Federal elections.¹⁴⁹

It should be noted, however, that the seats of Lyne (formerly held by independent Rob Oakeshott) and New England (formerly held by independent Tony Windsor) both returned to the Coalition. Lyne was won by the Nationals (David Gillespie), and New England by the Nationals' Barnaby Joyce.¹⁵⁰

148. Ibid.

149. A Green '[Record vote for minor parties at 2013 Federal Election](#)', *Antony Green's Election Blog*, 19 November 2013, accessed 20 November 2013.

150. AEC, [Virtual tally room: The official election results](#), accessed 16 January 2014.

The outcome: a Coalition victory

The Coalition had a decisive win in the House of Representatives, with a two-party preferred vote of 53.45 per cent to Labor's 46.55 per cent—a two-party swing of 3.65 per cent.¹⁵¹ Labor's primary vote fell to 33.38 per cent—its [lowest in over 100 years](#).¹⁵²

The Coalition won 90 seats, Labor 55 seats, with the remainder going to small parties (three seats) and independents (two seats).¹⁵³

Despite a national swing of 3.11 per cent against the Australian Greens, deputy leader Adam Bandt retained his seat of Melbourne.¹⁵⁴ Tasmanian independent Andrew Wilkie was [re-elected with an increased majority](#).¹⁵⁵

	Primary Votes	Swing	Seats Won
Labor (ALP)	33.4%	-4.5%	55
Coalition (L/NP)	45.6%	+1.8%	90
Greens (GRN)	8.6%	-3.1%	1
Others (OTH)	12.4%	+5.8%	4

Source: ABC website, [Federal Election 2013](#), accessed 12 November 2013

Some notable outcomes in the 2013 election

With a record number of candidates registered for the 2013 election it is perhaps not surprising that there were some unexpected outcomes in both House electorates and Senate seats. Several of these outcomes were the result of elaborate preferences deals among the small parties in particular.

The role of preferences in winning seats—especially in the Senate

In Australia's [system of preferential voting](#), the allocation of preferences is an important factor in determining electoral outcomes. Political parties have become adept at influencing the flow of preferences—especially through [ticket voting](#) in the Senate, and the distribution of how-to-vote cards more generally.

The 2013 election was distinguished by the extent to which sophisticated preferencing strategies were employed by parties and candidates to optimise their chances of success—with results that dismayed many observers:

Microparties have been elected at the expense of better-known parties, so reform is in the interest of all major parties, as well as being an improvement to Australian democracy. And consider this: if the Senate rejects the new government's [carbon tax repeal] legislation and Tony Abbott calls a double dissolution election, we can, without reform of the Senate electoral process, expect even more horse trading from microparties. With the lower quota of 7.7 per cent [in a double dissolution election] we might even get two microparty senators per state.¹⁵⁶

It has been argued that Australia's preferential system for the Senate has been distorted by above-the-line voting which allows a party to predetermine preference allocation by means of [Group Voting Tickets](#). There appears to be an appetite for reform; at least six suggestions for reform have been offered:

151. All figures referred to here are official AEC figures taken from the AEC [Virtual Tally Room: The official 2013 federal election results](#), accessed 12 November 2013.

152. Drawn from [Australian politics and elections database](#), University of Western Australia, accessed 12 November 2013.

153. For full details of seats and members see Appendix C.

154. ['Melbourne results'](#), *Federal election 2013*, ABC website, 11 October 2013, accessed 12 November 2013.

155. AEC, *Election 2013*, Virtual Tally Room, ['Tas division-Denison'](#), accessed 12 November 2013.

156. S Morey, ['How do we solve a problem like the Senate?'](#), *The Conversation*, 11 September 2013, accessed 21 November 2013.

- the abolition of above-the-line voting and Group Voting Tickets so voters decide their preferences explicitly
- introducing optional preferential voting to reduce the difficulty of marking all the squares correctly
- allowing optional above-the-line preferential voting so voters decide their preferences, group by group
- introducing a threshold, a minimum percentage of first preference votes needed to be eligible to stay in the count
- increasing the deposit fee from the existing \$2,000
- increasing the minimum number of members a party must have before it can be registered.¹⁵⁷

A prominent figure in the realm of minor parties' and independents' preferencing strategies is Glenn Druery—who had been dubbed 'the preference whisperer' by virtue of his seemingly uncanny abilities:

He ... has been instrumental in the campaigns and preference arrangements for Independent and minor party candidates in local, state and federal elections... Prior to founding Independent Liaison, Glenn Druery worked at the NSW Parliament as the liaison and negotiator for the many Independent and minor party MPs. ... He has been an Independent and minor party candidate himself in several state and federal elections.¹⁵⁸

The controversial success in the Senate election of the Australian Motoring Enthusiast Party (AMEP) and the Australian Sports Party (ASP)—parties guided and advised by Druery—brought both praise and blame to Druery's door. ABC election analyst Antony Green said that the series of deals Druery advocated made a joke of Australia's democratic system, while Druery insisted that his actions did not distort the political process.¹⁵⁹

A more detailed account of the WA Senate vote, and the complications that arose—not least because of some lost ballot boxes—appears later in this paper.

The Liberal Democratic Party and Family First Party both squeak into the Senate

The NSW Senate ballot paper was a large one, and the Liberal Democratic Party appeared on its top left hand corner—a very advantageous location. The seldom-mentioned party gained 8.89 per cent of the initial vote allocation, ahead of the Greens' 7.77 per cent.¹⁶⁰ The party, which believes in social libertarianism, a free market economy and small government now joins a key group of minor party and independent senators set to hold the balance of power after July next year.¹⁶¹

NSW Senator-elect David Leyonhjelm freely admitted that his election was largely the result of votes gained as a result of the long ballot paper pushing votes to the Liberal Democrats (who were the first-listed party) and because voters confused the Liberal Democrats with the Liberals.¹⁶² The party's name had been a matter of concern in 2007 when the Liberal Party had raised objections, and as a consequence the party ran at that time as the Liberty and Democracy Party.¹⁶³

157. Ibid.

158. 'Glenn Druery ('the preference whisperer') to speak at Government Relations Summit', *The PR Report*, accessed 21 November 2013.

159. A Green 'Hand the power of preferences back to the people', *The Drum*, ABC website, 12 September 2013; L Yacksley, "Preference whisperer' Glenn Druery in demand as fresh election likely for WA Senate", *ABC The World Today*, 4 November 2013, accessed 21 November 2013.

160. 'Senate results NSW', *Federal election 2013*, ABC website, accessed 21 November 2013.

161. L Foschia and M McClymont, 'NSW sends pro-gun Liberal Democrat David Leyonhjelm to Senate', *ABC News*, 9 September 2013, accessed 21 November 2013.

162. Ibid.

163. This is a section from the AEC's [evidence](#) at estimates on 19 November 2013 (Finance and Public Administration Committee) where the Committee discusses the confusion with the Liberal Democratic Party's name.

Senator TILLEM: Liberal Democrats. Let me read out 1(d). If I am reading incorrectly, pull me up any time. It 'so nearly resembles a name or an abbreviation or acronym of a name of another political party'. In that instance, it was not the recognised political party and so on and so forth; they just like to be confused with or mistaken for that name. Who was the decision maker applying 1(d) in that instance?

Mr Pirani: The starting off point is the full bench of the AAT decision in Woollard and the Australian Electoral Commission. That case involved the name Liberals for Forests. The commission at that time had taken an approach that the wording of a political party by the name of liberals for forests was likely to be misleading and should be knocked out under 129(1)(d). The full bench of the AAT, which comprised three Federal Court judges, said we were wrong. So you need to go and examine the decision in Woollard and the Australian Electoral Commission. That started off with a limitation as to what the courts would regard section 129(1)(d) as applying to. The parliament then enacted 129(1)(da) in the act, and that wording of that provision was also considered in a full bench AAT decision involving the Fishing Party when there was a dispute between the Fishing Party and the Australian Fishing and Lifestyle Party for their registration. In that case the full bench of the AAT held that the combination of the names was such that, when they appeared on the ballot paper, electors were unlikely to be misled. So we had those two matters.

Controversy over Leyonhjelm's election was exacerbated by his views that the public should be allowed to carry guns, and that the Sandy Hook school massacre in the United States could have been avoided if teachers had been armed.¹⁶⁴

In South Australia, Family First chairman Bob Day was elected to fifth Senate spot, despite receiving only 3.76 per cent of the first preference votes, 0.2631 of a quota, and with a swing against his party.¹⁶⁵

Sophie Mirabella loses the seat of Indi

Early in August, reports had emerged that Liberal frontbencher Sophie Mirabella—the Member for Indi—was under considerable pressure from a local conservative independent candidate, Cathy McGowan.¹⁶⁶ Ms McGowan had strong support from the retiring independent member for New England, Tony Windsor. The matter turned into something of a *cause célèbre*, with Mirabella apparently 'thoroughly outgunned ... by the McGowan camp'.¹⁶⁷

There were also claims that the local National Party was working hard to unseat Mirabella.¹⁶⁸ After a knife-edge count, Mirabella conceded victory to McGowan, with the *Sydney Morning Herald* editorialising that 'Voters in Indi are sick of the rantings of Sophie Mirabella'.¹⁶⁹

The strident personal criticism of Mirabella from several quarters reignited comment about the role of gender and misogyny in politics, with feminist activist Jenna Price arguing:

There is no question... [that] Mirabella... is an unpopular figure... This has zero to do with her public persona—it's a judgment made by the people who voted her into their seat... But the wholesale and loathsome enthusiasm for her demise is not about how she represented Indi. It's the response of a national electorate which has an appetite for talking about women as if they were dogs. Or bitches. Mirabella herself conspired in the formation of this discourse when she appeared beneath the now infamous "[Ditch the Witch](#)" signs. But that's not reason enough to treat her that way.¹⁷⁰

There was a [7.17 per cent swing](#) against Mirabella in Indi—a seat which had long been considered fairly safe. Its status in 2013 is 'marginal'.

Katter's Australian Party (KAP) fails to make gains in Queensland

When Bob Katter (Kennedy, QLD) announced that Katter's Australian Party would contest the 2013 federal election, he said: 'We stand to make a much stronger showing than at the Queensland election where we polled over 15 per cent in 33 seats. This time we will have the party's full name on the ballot paper and have a preferential voting system'.¹⁷¹ Former state leader, Aidan McLindon, was appointed as the party's State Director for Queensland.¹⁷²

KAP and the Palmer United Party negotiated a preference agreement for the election, agreeing to exchange preferences above the major parties for all jointly contested lower house seats across Australia, while continuing to negotiate independently regarding Senate preferences.¹⁷³ But all proved to no avail, with Katter suffering a 16

Then we had the Liberty and Democracy Party that was registered and subsequently changed their registration. We went through appeal processes et cetera. At the moment, there is still an appeal avenue pending in relation to that decision. So I really do not want to go any further other than to say there is still the prospect of an appeal in relation to how the LDP appeared on the Senate ballot paper.

Mr Killesteyn: The other thing I should note is the AGS advice we received in 2008. That advice is published on our website. We have made it available. Essentially, the advice is that the provisions of section 129(1)(d) and (da) do not reserve the use of words such as Australia, liberal, labour, democrat and national to political parties that are already registered. We have been acting on the basis of clear legal precedent established right back from 2001 and reaffirmed by the AAT and affirmed by AGS.

164. Ibid.

165. AEC, '[First preferences by group South Australia](#)', AEC website, accessed 21 November 2013.

166. R Baxendale and C Kerr, '[Mirabella rattled by the indie from Indi](#)', *The Australian*, 9 August 2013, p. 5, accessed 19 November 2013.

167. Ibid.

168. J Campbell and M Johnston, '[Coalition seat row: Nationals working to oust Mirabella](#)', *Herald Sun*, 15 August 2013, p. 10, accessed 19 November 2013.

169. '[Abbott will have time to prove himself and Labor to reform](#)', editorial, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 9 September 2013, accessed 19 November 2013.

170. J Price, '[Mirabella and gender: vicious attacks show nothing's changed](#)', *The Conversation*, 17 September 2013, accessed 19 November 2013.

171. '[Katter's Australian Party sets its sights on Federal Election; McLindon appointed as State Director](#)', media release, 4 June 2012, accessed 19 November 2013.

172. Ibid.

173. '[Katter and Palmer parties reach preference deal](#)', media release, Palmer United Party, 19 August 2013, accessed 21 November 2013.

per cent swing against him in Kennedy, and his party failing to win any other seat in either the House or the Senate.¹⁷⁴ KAP received just 3.75 per cent of the total primary vote in Queensland.¹⁷⁵

KAP had held high hopes for celebrity Senate candidate and country music singer James Blundell.¹⁷⁶ The expected win by KAP of the sixth Queensland Senate position failed to materialise, notwithstanding a preference deal with Labor. Katter reportedly blamed KAP's poor showing on a Coalition campaign 'that claimed a vote for him was a vote for Labor', along with 'million dollar spending in [Kennedy]' by Palmer United Party.¹⁷⁷ The KAP managed to secure only one per cent of the House vote nationally, 'with most of the protest vote ... captured by the Palmer United Party instead'.¹⁷⁸

Palmer United Party (PUP) meets with success

When Clive Palmer—one-time key supporter of Queensland's Liberal National Party—sought to enter the national political arena by starting his own party, Brisbane academic Donna Weeks explained the situation in the following terms:

Best known nationally as the man who wants to build Titanic II and the franchise owner for a short time of a Gold Coast A-League soccer team, it would be easy for Mr Palmer's latest venture into politics to be swamped by Titanic jokes and references to dinosaurs. But Mr Palmer has been a player in Queensland politics for decades. There is sufficient political savvy behind his pronouncements for us to take notice of his intentions...

Politics watchers here in Queensland were more than familiar with the financial resources Mr Palmer had poured into his beloved LNP; his history with the party and its antecedents was part of Queensland political lore; his role in the 'Joh for PM' campaign is well-known. So whatever you think of the United Australia Party [*later Palmer United Party*] push, Mr Palmer is no political novice seeking to clumsily exert influence for his business interests.¹⁷⁹

PUP had planned to field candidates in all 150 House of Representative seats at the September election as well as Senate teams in all states and territories.¹⁸⁰ Nationally, PUP secured 5.5 per cent of the vote for the House of Representatives.¹⁸¹ In Queensland, PUP received 11.02 per cent of the overall primary vote and outpolled KAP across most seats.¹⁸² In the Senate, the PUP candidate, former rugby league player Glenn Lazarus won Queensland's fifth spot.¹⁸³

Palmer himself stood for, and won, the House of Representatives seat of Fairfax by 53 votes, following a long and controversial re-count.¹⁸⁴ Palmer had repeatedly accused the AEC of trying to manipulate the outcome in Fairfax.¹⁸⁵ Upon his election as a federal MP, Palmer said he would be:

- 'putting the spotlight on the Queensland government'
- condemning 'attacks by Premier Campbell Newman on the state's judiciary' and
- revealing 'evidence of corruption by the state's LNP government'.¹⁸⁶

On 10 October 2013, Australian Motoring Enthusiast Party (AMEP) senator-elect—the Victorian Ricky Muir—announced an alliance with Clive Palmer, prompting outrage among many Victorian AMEP members.¹⁸⁷ Muir defended the move saying it would give him a 'stronger voice' to serve his constituents more effectively.¹⁸⁸

174. P Berry, '[Katter bitter about party's poor polling](#)', *The Australian*, 8 September 2013, accessed 19 November 2013.

175. AEC, *Election 2013*, '[Virtual Tally Room](#)', website, accessed 12 December 2013.

176. Ibid.

177. Ibid.

178. '[Future of Katter's party in doubt](#)', ABC Radio National *Breakfast*, 12 September 2013, accessed 19 November 2013.

179. D Weeks, '[Titanic ambitions: Palmer's federal push shouldn't be lightly dismissed](#)', *The Conversation*, 1 May 2013, accessed 20 November 2013.

180. Palmer United Party, '[Palmer United Party announces La Trobe candidate](#)', media release, 30 May 2013, accessed 20 November 2013.

181. '[Party totals](#)' *ABC News: Federal election 2013*, ABC website, accessed 20 November 2013.

182. Full details of the vote are available from the AEC website '[House of Representatives downloads](#)'.

183. AEC, *Election 2013*, '[Virtual Tally Room](#)', accessed 12 December 2013.

184. '[Clive Palmer wins Sunshine Coast seat of Fairfax, says 'goodbye' Campbell Newman](#)' *ABC News*, 1 November 2013.

185. Ibid.

186. Ibid.

187. R Cavanagh, '[Motoring Enthusiast Party goes after senator-elect Ricky Muir](#)', *Herald Sun*, 10 October 2013, accessed 21 November 2013.

188. Ibid.

A month later, the press reported that another senator-elect (West Australian Wayne Dropulich of the Australian Sports Party) had joined Clive Palmer's alliance and would vote with the PUP senators-elect Glen Lazarus and Jacqui Lambie.¹⁸⁹ Palmer and Dropulich both later denied that they were in such talks.¹⁹⁰

Prime Minister Abbott announces ministry

There had been some controversy about the proposed composition of the first Abbott ministry because, as Opposition Leader, Abbott had publicly committed to retaining his existing Shadow Ministry when in government. Academic commentator Peter van Onselen, for example, had said that 'Abbott's pledge not to adjust his front bench... will hamper the quality of a first-term Coalition government. It may even lead to early internal destabilisation as ambitious MPs quickly grow restless'.¹⁹¹

On Monday 16 September the newly installed Prime Minister [announced his new team](#)—'the team that will scrap the carbon tax, end the waste, stop the boats, build the roads of the twenty first century and deliver the strong and dynamic economy that we need'.¹⁹² (Details of Abbott's first ministry appear at Appendix B.)

Issues highlighted in the course of the announcement included:

- a 'back to basics' government
- Treasury forecasting that the number of unemployed will rise to around 800,000 by mid-2014
- restoration of the Australian Building and Construction Commission
- establishing a bipartisan process leading to a referendum and recognition of indigenous Australians, with the administration of indigenous affairs moving into the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet
- working to fulfil Australia's potential as the food-bowl of Asia
- a new business plan for the NBN to deliver fast broadband sooner and at less cost
- the Centenary of ANZAC
- Hon Bronwyn Bishop MP nominating for the role of Speaker.¹⁹³

The announcement of Abbott's first ministry sparked immediate controversy because there was only one female MP in Cabinet—Foreign Affairs Minister Julie Bishop. In Kevin Rudd's Labor government, women had made up six of the 20 members of Cabinet.¹⁹⁴

Rudd resigns as Labor leader

Having acknowledged the Coalition's victory on election night, Kevin Rudd announced that he would not be seeking re-election for the Labor leadership. He had earlier stated his intention to stay in Parliament if he won the seat of Griffith, even if he lost the election.¹⁹⁵ But retiring defence minister Stephen Smith urged Rudd to retire altogether from politics:

The smart thing for the party and the smart thing for Kevin in my view is to not just walk away from the leadership but to walk away from the Parliament ...[and thereby] remove for all time the remnants of those political and leadership disputes and difficulties that we had from the moment effectively of the 1996 defeat.¹⁹⁶

With Rudd's resignation from the leadership, the party embarked on its [newly minted process for electing the party leader](#).¹⁹⁷ Senior frontbencher Chris Bowen assumed the role of Labor's interim leader while the two

189. H Aston, '[Dropulich joins Palmer's alliance](#)', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 11 November 2013, accessed 21 November 2013.

190. J Heath, '[Palmer denies deal with Dropulich](#)', *Financial Review*, 12 November 2013, accessed 21 November 2013.

191. P van Onselen, '[Abbott's silly game could cost the Coalition](#)', *Weekend Australian*, 6 July 2013, p. 20, accessed 8 July 2013.

192. T Abbott, '[A team to build a stronger Australia](#)', media release, 16 September 2013, accessed 16 September 2013.

193. Ibid.

194. C Alexander, '[Govt ministry announced: men the 95 per cent in Abbott cabinet](#)', *Crikey*, 16 September 2013, accessed 20 November 2013.

195. S Scott, '[If not PM then I'll be an MP, says Kev](#)', *Courier-Mail*, 6 September 2013, p. 9, accessed 19 November 2013.

196. M Gordon, '[Felled PM urged to leave Parliament](#)', *Sunday Age*, 8 September 2013, p. 6, accessed 19 November 2013.

197. See Appendix A for details.

contenders for leadership—Bill Shorten and Anthony Albanese—pursued an internal election campaign for the hearts and minds of both the Labor Caucus and the rank-and-file Labor membership.¹⁹⁸ Bill Shorten prevailed.¹⁹⁹

Former minister Nicola Roxon criticises Rudd

When delivering the John Button Memorial Lecture in mid-October 2013, former Labor Attorney-General Nicola Roxon included a highly critical assessment of Kevin Rudd—an attack described by *The Guardian* as ‘an extraordinary public evisceration... covering both his period as prime minister and the period he spent out of the leadership campaigning with caucus supporters to get it back’.²⁰⁰

The Kevin Rudd described by Roxon ran chaotic policy development processes, stifled cabinet collaboration and abused staff and senior officials – calling the then New South Wales premier Kristina Keneally “Bambi” behind her back. She said Rudd ... was “great at the cut through and then struggled at the follow through”.

“Removing Kevin was an act of political bastardry, for sure, but ... Kevin had been such a bastard himself to too many people,” Roxon said in the lecture. She said Rudd had always treated her “appropriately and respectfully. Although I was frustrated beyond belief by his disorganisation and lack of strategy, I was never personally a victim of his vicious tongue or temper. I did, however, see how terribly he treated some brilliant staff and public servants. Good people were burnt through like wildfire.”²⁰¹

Rudd formally resigns from Parliament

On Wednesday 13 November Kevin Rudd announced his intention to retire from politics—‘it really is time for me to zip’.²⁰² He planned to establish a ‘national apology foundation’—highlighting his apology to Indigenous Australians, which he said ‘was a signature achievement’ of his time as prime minister.²⁰³ He planned to ‘remain active in the international community’.²⁰⁴ Rudd said that his decision to leave had been ‘the product of much soul-searching for us as a family over the last few months’.²⁰⁵ Kevin Rudd formally resigned from the Australian Parliament on Friday 22 November 2013.

The West Australian contest in the Senate

The Senate had proved to be an interesting contest, with small parties winning six of the seats—pending recounts in the WA Senate. The Coalition won 17 Senate seats, Labor won 13 seats and the Greens three seats, with one independent returned.

As discussed above, the Senate outcome prompted debate about the fairness of the Senate voting system, given that the distribution of preferences delivered Senate seats to parties with a very low primary vote.²⁰⁶ The [Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters](#) will examine the matter as part of its inquiry into the 2013 federal election. South Australian independent Senator Nick Xenophon announced his intention to introduce legislation to change the Senate voting system to optional preferential below the line.²⁰⁷

Problems in Western Australia—including missing ballot papers

The initial count of the Senate vote in Western Australia gave the last two Senate seats to Palmer United Party (PUP) candidate Zhenya Dio Wang and ALP candidate, sitting senator Louise Pratt. However, the closeness of the

198. L D’Angelo Fisher, ‘[The Labor leadership contest is breaking all the rules, but it just might work](#)’, *Business Review Weekly*, 26 September 2013, accessed 20 November 2013.

199. E Griffiths, ‘Bill Shorten elected Labor leader over Anthony Albanese after month-long campaign’, ABC News, 13 October 2013, accessed 14 October 2013.

200. K Murphy, ‘[Nicola Roxon says Kevin Rudd was a ‘bastard’ who deserved his removal](#)’, *The Guardian*, 16 October 2013, accessed 2 December 2013.

201. Ibid.

202. ‘[Former prime minister Kevin Rudd quits federal politics with emotional speech to Parliament](#)’, ABC News, 14 November 2013, accessed 20 November 2013.

203. Ibid.

204. Ibid.

205. Ibid.

206. A Green, ‘[Senate preference deals put the joke on us](#)’, *The Age*, 10 September 2013, p. 17, accessed 12 September 2013.

207. N Xenophon, ‘[Senate voting needs urgent reform](#)’, media release, 11 September 2013, accessed 12 September 2013. When the 44th Parliament commenced, Senator Xenophon introduced the [Commonwealth Electoral Amendment \(Above the Line Voting\) Bill 2013](#).

result—14 votes separated two minor parties at an important point in the count—was challenged by defeated candidates sitting senator Scott Ludlam (Australian Greens) and Wayne Dropulich (Australian Sports Party).²⁰⁸

As a result on 2 October, the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) deferred the formal announcement of the six successful candidates.²⁰⁹ The AEC was originally due to formally declare the result at 3:00pm (AWST) that afternoon following the distribution of preferences for the Western Australia Senate contest that had occurred earlier at 11:00am. The next day (3 October) the AEC turned down the appeal for a recount by Ludlam and Dropulich because they ‘did not identify any specific issues which would have warranted the conduct of a recount’.²¹⁰ As allowed under section 278(2) of the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918* the two candidates then appealed directly to the Australian Electoral Commissioner Ed Killesteyn.

On 10 October, Killesteyn said that after due consideration he had ordered a recount of Western Australian Senate ballot papers where electors had marked their ballot above-the-line.²¹¹ The recount began on Thursday 17 October and was completed by 1 November. It was the largest recount (nearly 1.3 million ballot papers) since the AEC was established in 1984.

However, during the recount a serious administrative issue came to light. Specifically, 1,375 votes—all of which had been verified during the initial WA Senate count—could not be located, rechecked or verified in the recount process. These votes were classified as 1,255 formal above-the-line ballots and 120 informal votes.²¹² The missing votes came from one polling place in the Division of Forrest (Bunbury East) and three polling places from the Division of Pearce (Henley Brook, Mt Helena and Wundowie). A fifth category—a small number of provisional votes—were cast in the Division of Pearce and were informal.²¹³

Commissioner Killesteyn requested the former Federal Police Commissioner Mick Keelty to undertake an independent inquiry into the matter of the missing votes.²¹⁴ The specific [terms of reference](#) for Mr Keelty’s inquiry were to:

- make findings on what factors may have contributed to the misplacing of the ballot papers
- recommend what changes could be made in the future to reduce the risk of similar incidents occurring in future elections
- recommend any other actions that might be regarded as necessary or prudent.²¹⁵

The AEC received criticism over the missing ballot papers from a number of sources. Special Minister of State Hon Michael Ronaldson said it was ‘totally unsatisfactory’ but noted that he did not think there was any ‘skulduggery’ involved.²¹⁶ Deputy Liberal Party Leader, Julie Bishop expressed concern over the missing ballot papers saying: ‘Our democracy, our system of Government, depends upon there being integrity in our electoral system.’²¹⁷ Clive Palmer accused the AEC of trying to rig the election and stop his party from having the balance of power. He said the initial count should stand.²¹⁸

The AEC announced the results of the [recount](#) on Sunday 3 November and declared the poll on Monday 4 November. The recount overturned the result of the initial count and the Australian Sports Party’s Wayne

208. The following account of events is drawn from R Lundie ‘[The disputed 2013 WA Senate election](#)’, *FlagPost*, 20 November 2013, accessed 22 November 2013.

209. Section 278 of the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918* states that at any time before the declaration of the result of a Senate election the Australian Electoral Officer may, on the written request of any candidate setting forth the reasons for the request, or of the officer’s own motion, direct or conduct a recount of the ballot papers contained in any parcel or in any other category determined by the Australian electoral Officer.

210. AEC, ‘[Australian Electoral Commission statement: WA Senate recount requests declined](#)’, media release, 3 October 2013, accessed 12 November 2013.

211. AEC, ‘[Australian Electoral Commission statement: Senate recount in Western Australia](#)’, media release, 10 October 2013, accessed 12 November 2013.

212. AEC, ‘[Australian Electoral Commission statement: WA Senate recount](#)’, media release, 31 October 2013, accessed 12 November 2013.

213. AEC, ‘[AEC releases voting preference information recorded for WA missing votes](#)’, media release, 8 November 2013, accessed 12 November 2013.

214. Ibid.

215. AEC, ‘[Missing votes inquiry continues in Perth next week](#)’, media release, 8 November 2013, accessed 12 November 2013

216. M Ronaldson (Special Minister of State) reported in ‘[Government doesn’t believe foul play responsible for missing ballot mystery](#)’, *ABC News*, 1 November 2013, accessed 22 November 2013.

217. J Bishop (Foreign Minister) quoted in E Griffiths ‘[Independent Senator Nick Xenophon calls for fresh WA Senate vote after 1,375 votes go missing](#)’, *ABC News*, 1 November 2013, accessed 22 November 2013.

218. Ibid.

Dropulich and The Greens' Scott Ludlam were announced as the successful candidates for the fifth and sixth positions respectively.²¹⁹

On 8 November the AEC released the [preferences distribution](#) for the missing votes. It also revealed that the number of missing votes was 1,370, five fewer than initially announced.²²⁰ Antony Green noted that if these votes had been counted it would have resulted in the PUP and ALP candidates winning the last two seats. Green gave a detailed account of the matter on his blog:

The AEC has today released its tally of votes by party for the WA Senate votes that were counted in the days after the election but were unable to be found during the re-count. If these votes could be included in the count then they would produce the closest Senate election result in Australian history with a gap of just a single vote determining the final two Senate seats.

The critical contest that determined the final two seats occurred early in the count between two parties polling just 1.75 per cent each. The competing parties were the Australian Christians, who had the benefit of ticket preferences from the previously excluded No Carbon Tax Climate Sceptics, and the Shooters and Fishers Party, who had the benefit of preferences from the previously excluded Australian Independents and the Fishing and Lifestyle Party.

On the first count the Shooters and Fishers Party led the Australian Christians by a critical 14 votes, 23,515 to 23,501. This excluded the Australian Christians and resulted in the election of the Palmer United Party's Zhenya 'Dio' Wang and Labor's Louise Pratt to the final two seats. On the re-count which was conducted minus the missing votes, the Australian Christians led at the crucial count by 12 votes, 23,526 to 23,514 for the Shooters and Fishers Party, resulting in the Shooters and Fishers being excluded and the last two seats being won by Wayne Dropulich of the Australian Sports Party and Scott Ludlam of the Greens. The missing votes were all ticket votes so there is no doubt where the preferences of each ticket go.

The tally of missing votes released today by the AEC gives an extra 3 ticket votes to the Australian Christians and two extra ticket votes to the No Carbon Tax Climate Sceptics, and 14 votes to the Shooters and Fishers Party and an extra 4 votes to the Australian Independents. That is an extra 5 votes for the Australian Christians and 18 for the Shooters and Fishers, a net gain of 13 votes for the Shooters and Fishers. The new tallies at the critical count if these votes were included would be Shooters and Fishers Party 23,532 and the Australian Christians 23,531. So the Shooters and Fishers Party would lead by 1 vote, yes, just 1 vote out of 1.3 million. This would result in the Australian Christians being excluded and the result being changed again, this time with Palmer United and Labor winning the last two seats.

Sometimes elections are determined for the winning candidate by a lead of just one vote. In this case the last two seats are determined by the lowest placed candidate trailing by one vote and being excluded. The last two seats being determined by the race for last place. This is so close that even if the votes were not missing, the result would go to the Court of Disputed Returns to adjudicate. With votes being missing and modelling indicating the result is so close, the chances of the Court overturning the result and calling a fresh election are even higher than before. Remember also, these votes could not be re-counted. Are there any errors in the count for the missing votes that would have been uncovered by the re-count? We may never know.

What an astonishing result.²²¹

There is a period of 40 days from the date when the writ is returned (i.e. until 16 December) in which the High Court sitting as the Court of Disputed Returns can be petitioned either by the AEC itself or any WA voter to reconsider the result.²²²

The AEC lodged such a [petition](#) on 15 November in which it sought an order from the Court to declare the WA Senate election of six senators void. The AEC reasoned that:

219. AEC, '[Western Australia Senators decided from recount](#)', media release, 2 November 2013, accessed 22 November 2013.

220. AEC, '[AEC releases voting preference information recorded for WA missing votes](#)', media release, 8 November 2013, accessed 8 November 2013.

221. A Green, '[WA Senate Contest Comes Down to Just 1 Vote - and it's one of the Missing](#)', *Antony Green's Election Blog*, 8 November 2013, accessed 12 November 2013.

222. [Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918](#), 355(e)

Given the closeness of the margins that favoured the final two declared candidates, the petition is based on the premise that the inability to include 1,370 missing ballot papers in the recount of the WA Senate election means that the election was likely to be affected for the purposes of s 362(3) of the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918*.²²³

The Court could decide to accept the result declared by the AEC, call for another poll, or announce some other finding. Constitutional law expert Professor Anne Twomey said:

The High Court will weigh up the evidence and decide whether an election is needed. The High Court would consider practicalities, like the margins involved, when deciding if a fresh election is needed. Because the first count was so tight ... obviously the prospects of a High Court decision ordering a re-run ballot would be very high.²²⁴

If the Court declared the election void and called for another Senate election just for WA this would be the first time this has occurred. The poll would most likely be held in the early part of 2014 but would need to be completed by 24 May 2014 so that the writ could be returned by 30 June and the elected senators could take their places in the Senate by 1 July 2014. The AEC estimated the cost of such an election would be about \$10 million plus a further \$2-3 million in public funding.²²⁵

Former AFP Commissioner Keelty handed down his [report](#) on the missing ballot papers on 6 December 2013.²²⁶

Conclusion

The 2013 election brought to an end a remarkable period in Australian politics—a hung parliament; the return (and thereafter the electoral defeat of) a former prime minister (Rudd) at the expense of an incumbent (Gillard) who had earlier displaced him; financial and personal scandals among some MPs, including a former Speaker; a fiercely partisan legislature; sustained vitriolic criticism of Julia Gillard and of Labor by major newspapers; a comparatively large volume of legislation passed—some of it of considerable national significance; an electorate that, by most accounts, was thoroughly disillusioned by formal politics; and the increasing use of social media in general political discourse.

It is perhaps not surprising that the 2013 election fielded a record number of candidates in both the Senate and the House of Representatives. It was an election which saw a dramatic rise in the number of minor party and independent candidates, where some newcomers were relatively successful, and the tightness of some results elicited appeals to the Electoral Commissioner and a petition to the Court of Disputed Returns.

The Coalition's victory had been widely anticipated; it had led in the opinion polls throughout the 43rd Parliament. But Labor's defeat was not as bad as predicted, fuelling debates about whether Rudd had indeed restored Labor's electability, having himself been allegedly the party's chief destabiliser.

Some debates that coloured the politics of the 43rd Parliament seem likely to persist—notably the role of gender in politics. The legacies of both Rudd and Gillard promise to be passionately contested and there seems little prospect of a consensus emerging any time soon.

The Coalition had promised that theirs would be a Government of 'no surprises'. But politics has a habit of undermining good intentions, confounding expectations, throwing spanners into legislative works, and suffering bolts from the blue. Within weeks of its ascension to power the Abbott Government was discovering that, like all preceding governments, it was not immune from the vagaries of office and the infelicities of power.

223. AEC, '[Petition lodged with Court of Disputed Returns](#)', media release, 15 November 2013, accessed 22 November 2013.

224. A Twomey quoted in E Griffiths '[Independent Senator Nick Xenophon calls for fresh WA Senate vote after 1,375 votes go missing](#)', *ABC News*, 1 November 2013, accessed 22 November 2013.

225. Senate Finance and Public Administration Committee, '[Official committee Hansard](#)', 19 November 2013, accessed 21 November 2013.

226. AEC, '[Keelty report released](#)', media release, 6 December 2013, accessed 12 December 2013.

Appendix A: Process for election of Labor leader



National Executive Guidelines for the Election of Leader of the Federal Parliamentary Labor Party

The following is a consolidated list of guidelines for the ballot for the election of the Leader of the Federal Parliamentary Labor Party.

1. There will be a postal ballot of qualified Party members conducted by the National Returning Officer (NRO) from a central balloting location. The normal conventions in relation to scrutineers shall apply.
2. A qualified Party member shall be a financial member of the Australian Labor Party (including Victorian Central Branch members, and Life Members and others who are not required to pay annual dues but are deemed to be financial) as at the date of the last federal election, 7 September 2013, but does not include members of the Federal Parliamentary Labor Party (FPLP).
3. There will be a postal ballot with random signature checks:
 - All financial members will be posted a ballot paper in a reply paid envelope.
 - Members will be required to sign a declaration when returning the ballot. This will mirror the process used by the AEC in the conduct of many union elections.
 - If a returned ballot envelope is challenged, the NRO will request a copy of a signature from the member's application or renewal form. This will be provided by the State or Territory Secretary. If a signature is not available (due to the unavailability of older records) the NRO will ask the member to provide a sample signature (such as that provided on a driver's licence).
 - There will also be additional random checks of signatures against membership application and renewal forms by the NRO.
4. All State and Territory branches (in accordance with rule 15q) will forward membership details in accordance with the timetable set out below.
5. Each candidate will be provided with a copy of the voters roll, including the name, postal address, all phone numbers and any email address held by the State or Territory branch. Candidates will be required to provide a formal undertaking to the Party that this information will only be used for the purpose of this election.
6. Candidates agree that they will do no more than two national mail outs to voters.

7. The State branches through their normal credentialing and disputes processes will resolve disputes over financial eligibility. State Secretaries will then inform the NRO of any additions to or deletions from the roll.
8. Scrutineers will be required to be authorised by an eligible candidate in a method determined by the National Returning Officer.
9. For the purposes of scrutinising the ballot, authorised scrutineers will be able to inspect (at the central balloting location) the roll of voters at any time during the ballot.
10. On receiving their ballot paper, voters will be sent a publication which contains (in an order determined by lot) statements of up to 1,000 words from each candidate. The statements will include a photo of the candidate (where submitted). These statements will also be available on the ALP website.
11. The National Executive prohibits the use by either by candidates or other parties, of any paid advertising (including print, TV, radio, outdoor or the internet) and paid canvassing in relation to the ballot for the Leader of the FPLP.
12. Guideline 11 applies to all Party members and affiliated unions from the opening of nominations until the close of voting.
13. In relation to candidates, enforcement of Guideline 11 shall be the responsibility of the FPLP and penalties may include disqualification of a candidate.
14. Candidates will be required to conduct all financial transactions in relation to the election through National Secretariat accounts established for this purpose.

Proposed timeline – 2013 Federal Parliamentary Labor Party Leader

- | | |
|--------------------------|---|
| • Friday 13 September | Nominations open |
| • Wednesday 18 September | States send National Returning Officer (NRO) rolls of qualified Party members |
| • Friday 20 September | 5:00pm Nominations close |
| • Tuesday 24 September | Member voting opens, ballot papers and candidate statements issued |
| • Wednesday 9 October | 5:00pm. Member ballot closes |
| • Thursday 10 October | 4:00pm. Members of FPLP to meet vote for Leader. |
| • Friday 11 October | NRO count of member ballot |
| • Sunday 13 October | 2:00pm. Caucus RO count of FPLP vote and declaration of elected candidate |

Source: ALP website, [National Executive Guidelines for the Election of Leader of the Federal Parliamentary Labor Party](#)

Appendix B: Abbott ministry—2013

See official list at <http://www.aph.gov.au/~media/03%20Senators%20and%20Members/32%20Members/Lists/minlist.ashx>

FIRST ABBOTT MINISTRY	
	16 September 2013
CABINET	
Prime Minister The Hon Tony Abbott MP	
Deputy Prime Minister Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development (Leader of the Nationals) The Hon Warren Truss MP	
Minister for Foreign Affairs (Deputy Leader of the Liberal Party) The Hon Julie Bishop MP	
Minister for Employment Minister Assisting the Prime Minister on the Public Service (Leader of the Government in the Senate) Senator the Hon Eric Abetz	
Attorney-General Minister for the Arts (Deputy Leader of the Government in the Senate) (Vice-President of the Executive Council) Senator the Hon George Brandis QC	
Treasurer The Hon Joe Hockey MP	
Minister for Agriculture (Deputy Leader of the Nationals) Mr Barnaby Joyce MP	
Minister for Education (Leader of the House) The Hon Christopher Pyne MP	
Minister for Indigenous Affairs (Leader of the Nationals in the Senate) Senator the Hon Nigel Scullion	
Minister for Industry The Hon Ian Macfarlane MP	
Minister for Social Services The Hon Kevin Andrews MP	
Minister for Communications The Hon Malcolm Turnbull MP	
Minister for Health Minister for Sport The Hon Peter Dutton MP	
Minister for Small Business The Hon Bruce Billson MP	
Minister for Trade and Investment The Hon Andrew Robb AO MP	
Minister for Defence Senator the Hon David Johnston	
Minister for the Environment The Hon Greg Hunt MP	
Minister for Immigration and Border Protection Mr Scott Morrison MP	
Minister for Finance Senator Mathias Cormann	

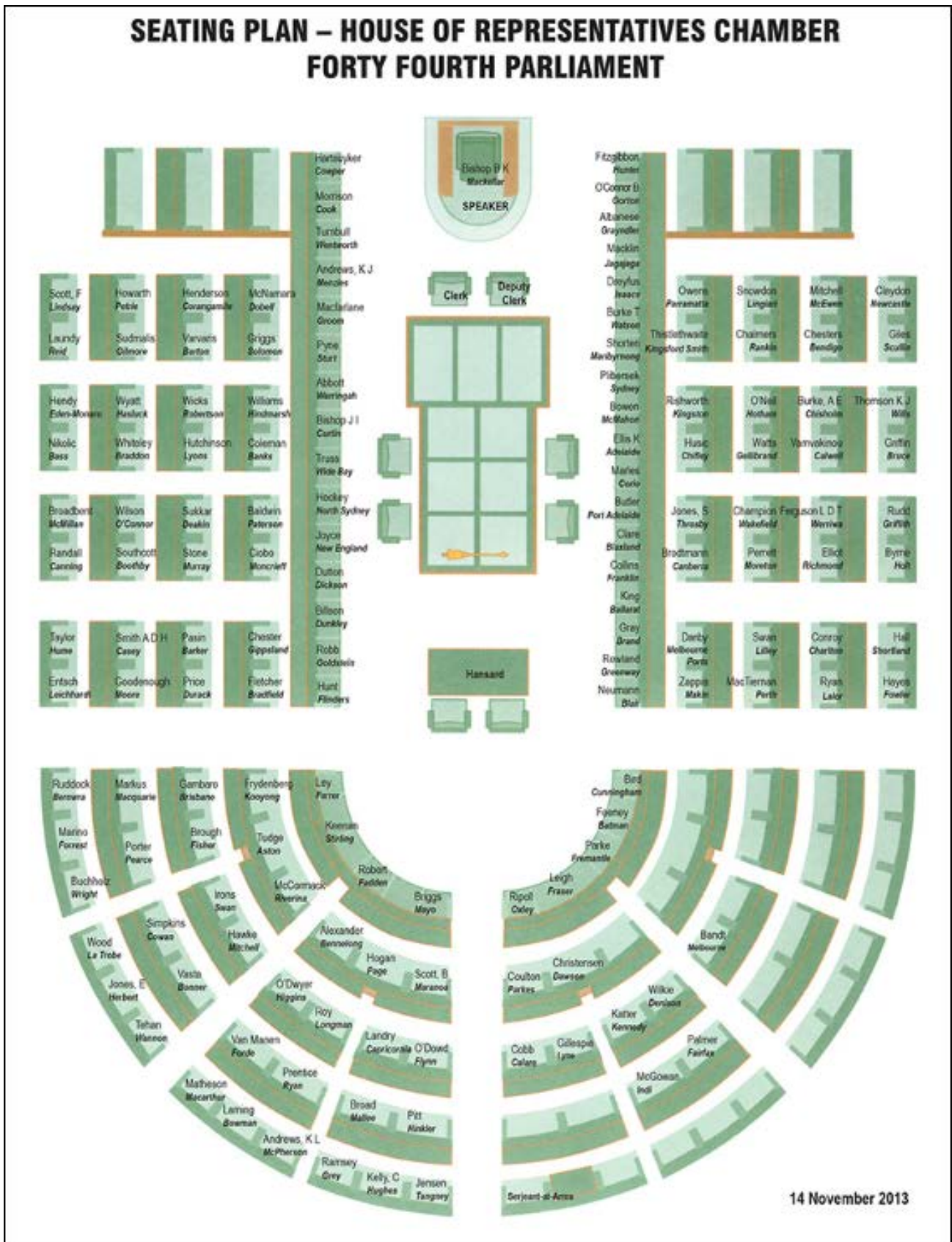
Source: <http://www.scribd.com/doc/168478869/Tony-Abbott-s-first-Ministry>

See official list at <http://www.aph.gov.au/~media/03%20Senators%20and%20Members/32%20Members/Lists/minlist.ashx>

OUTER MINISTRY
Assistant Minister for Social Services (Manager of Government Business in the Senate) Senator Mitch Fifield
Assistant Minister for Employment (Deputy Leader of the House) Mr Luke Hartsuyker MP
Assistant Minister for Health (Deputy Leader of the Nationals in the Senate) Senator Fiona Nash
Minister for Veterans' Affairs Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for the Centenary of ANZAC Special Minister of State Senator the Hon Michael Ronaldson
Assistant Minister for Education The Hon Sussan Ley MP
Minister for Human Services Senator Marise Payne
Minister for Justice Mr Michael Keenan MP
Assistant Minister for Defence Mr Stuart Robert MP
Assistant Minister for Immigration and Border Protection Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for Women Senator Michaelia Cash
Assistant Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development Mr Jamie Briggs MP
Assistant Treasurer Senator Arthur Sinodinos AO
PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARIES
Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Agriculture Senator the Hon Richard Colbeck
Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Industry The Hon Bob Baldwin MP
Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Foreign Affairs Senator the Hon Brett Mason
Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasurer Mr Steven Ciobo MP
Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Social Services Senator Concetta Fierravanti-Wells
Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for the Environment Senator Simon Birmingham
Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Education Senator Scott Ryan
Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Defence Mr Darren Chester MP
Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Communications Mr Paul Fletcher MP
Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister Mr Josh Frydenberg MP
Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister Mr Alan Tudge MP
Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Finance Mr Michael McCormack MP

Source: <http://www.scribd.com/doc/168478869/Tony-Abbott-s-first-Ministry>

Appendix C: House seats and members



Appendix D: The role of social media in the 2013 election

The acclaimed 2012 [Pew Internet & American Life Project](#) had found social media ‘to be a significant part of the process by which voters are talking about their ballot selections, especially younger voters’.²²⁷ The same proved true in Australia.²²⁸ It has become an article of faith that politicians must have an online presence if they are to remain electorally competitive.

One of the most illuminating analyses of Australian MPs’ use of social media comes from Jim Macnamara’s 2010 study that shows the number of social media sites used by federal politicians—*Facebook*, *Twitter*, *Tumblr* and so on—more than doubled in 2010 compared with 2007.²²⁹ It appears that by the time of the 2013 election, social media had been fairly thoroughly integrated into all parties’ campaigns.

The rise in the use of *Twitter* was notable. A 2010 study of Australian MPs’ use of *Twitter* had reported that:

Politicians are noisier than Australians in general on *Twitter*, though this is due more to broadcasting than conversing. Those who use *Twitter* to converse appear to gain more political benefit from the platform than others. Though politicians cluster by party, a relatively ‘small world’ network is evident in the Australian political discussion on *Twitter*.²³⁰

The so-called *Twitterverse* ‘now boasts more than 2 million Australian accounts, ensuring that the microblogging site is a critical campaign arena for the 2013 election. ... Expect *Twitter* to become the new and more interactive “worm” in televised election debates’.²³¹ The website [Australian MP Tweets](#) reveals the extent to which *Twitter* has become a much-used social media platform.²³² The tweet has also become a ubiquitous tool for commenting immediately on politicians’ statements, opinions and in particular, their gaffes:

Australian social media expert ... Julie Posetti said candidates and party organisations were investing time and money in the platforms, alongside traditional media markets and talkback radio. “There is a clear recognition from both sides that they must be in these spaces, that they must participate in these conversations but we’re not seeing anything of the same variety and the same creativity that we’ve seen from the Obama campaign for example,” she said.

“Australian politics at the moment has been marked out for the rest of the world, particularly through the viral nature of gaffes. I think there have been some deadset beauties that have gone viral and become trending topics.” Ms Posetti said Mr Rudd’s social media campaign had been dominated by so-called “selfie” photos on sharing website *Instagram* as well as calls for volunteers and donations.²³³

At the beginning of the 2013 campaign, with headquarters for all the parties in advanced stages of readiness, the ALP announced it had secured the expertise of three key players in President Obama’s re-election team, including the British social media expert Matthew McGregor—described in the US as ‘Barack Obama’s digital attack dog’.²³⁴ McGregor is regarded as a pioneer in the use of emerging social media platforms to organise grassroots campaigns. Labor was soon engaged in applying his techniques to engage voters and to solicit donations from supporters. He had been particularly effective in ‘getting out the vote’ and Labor strategists regarded the youth vote to be a key factor in the election, given that among younger citizens there had been ‘a spike in pre-election enrolments since Mr Rudd’s return to the leadership’.²³⁵

Social media strategies have their own distinct set of complications and attendant risks. For example, shortly after the campaign began, Abbott’s *Facebook* fan count began to rise sharply:

227. L Rainie, [Social media and voting](#), [Pew Internet & American Life Project](#)

228. See J Macnamara and G Kenning, ‘E-electioneering 2010: trends in social media use in Australian political communication’, [Media International Australia](#), no. 139, May 2011.

229. J Macnamara and G Kenning, ‘E-electioneering 2010: trends in social media use in Australian political communication’, [Media International Australia](#), no. 139, May 2011, p. 9.

230. W Grant and others, ‘[Digital dialogue? Australian politicians’ use of the social network tool Twitter](#)’, [Australian Journal of Political Science](#), vol. 45, no. 4, December 2010, p. 579, accessed 20 November 2013.

231. ‘[Federal politics: Social media stakes](#)’, [Sydney Morning Herald](#), SMH website, accessed 20 November 2013.

232. [Australian MP tweets](#), website, accessed 21 November 2013.

233. T McLroy, ‘[Will social media be the real election winner?](#)’, [Sydney Morning Herald](#), 22 August 2013, accessed 22 November 2013.

234. M Kenny, ‘[Rudd recruits Team Obama trio to take on Abbott](#)’, [The Age](#), 31 July 2013, p. 3, accessed 31 July 2013.

235. Ibid.

There were accusations that it was due to the Liberal Party (or someone else) buying fans for Abbott's page, but the accusations were later pronounced untrue by social media analysts. Rather, it's more likely that the party poured a huge amount of funds into Facebook advertising to promote the growth. By the end of the campaign, Abbott's fans had grown to 240,000, while Rudd's had grown only marginally to 119,000.

But Twitter was another matter. Abbott's follower count rocketed suddenly over one weekend, prompting the Liberal Party to announce they were working with Twitter to remove the fake accounts and investigate who was behind them: "The Liberal Party has not purchased or artificially sought to inflate any social media numbers." It was never discovered (or revealed) who was behind it, but it's likely to have been mischief-making, as fake Twitter followers can be cheaply bought.²³⁶

The *Sydney Morning Herald* [compared the social media performance](#) of the key political participants. For example :

Rudd's Twitter tone 'fosters authenticity, creating the impression of an open communication channel directly to the Prime Minister' whereas Abbott's 'has a decidedly detached campaign feel, giving the impression that followers are engaging with staffers rather Mr Abbott himself'.

The potential for *YouTube* to engage a far-reaching audience 'is being under-realised' by parties.

Among The Greens, both Milne and Bandt 'use Twitter to directly engage with their followers ... in addition to the expected political messaging'. Bandt maintains an active Twitter account, 'regularly engaging in multidirectional dialogue with numerous followers simultaneously'.²³⁷

The social media aspect of the Indi campaign

For the grass-roots campaign of independent Cathy McGowan in Indi social media was an important element right from the beginning, and was 'essential when engaging with supporters, facilitating donations and coordinating volunteers across the huge electorate'.²³⁸ Cam Klose helped manage Ms McGowan's social media accounts:

- 'we maintained a very active social media presence and it was just fantastic to see so much engagement in a rural electorate'
- 'what was really important was our ability to convert social media followers to volunteers'
- 'we were able to raise large crowds to turn up to events, like our cash mob, even at the very last moment'
- there was 'crowd-funding through Chip In, [and] YouTube videos of supporters'.²³⁹

Crowd-sourcing funds

On the day that Prime Minister Rudd announced the election date he also launched an appeal for funds—\$10 per supporter— to help finance Labor's election campaign. It had been reported that Labor was many millions of dollars behind the Liberal Party in fundraising.²⁴⁰ Labor also 'lacked the massive automatic support of the union movement'.²⁴¹

One hundred days out from the federal election, Labor campaign director George Wright had also appealed to grassroots supporters to chip in \$25, \$50, \$100, \$250 or \$1000—or nominate their own donation amount— saying the money would go towards a 'rapid response advertising blitz on social media to counter [Liberals'] lies with truth'.²⁴² According to Wright, fifty dollars 'pays for more than 10,000 emails that distribute facts to the

236. G Waters, '[Ten social media moments of the 2013 campaign](#)', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 7 September 2013, accessed 22 November 2013.

237. '[Social media stakes](#)', *Sydney Morning Herald*, n.d., accessed 3 December 2013.

238. '[Building a successful campaign: The road to Indi](#)', *Cathy McGowan for Indi*, accessed 3 December 2013.

239. *Ibid.*

240. A Probyn, '[Rudd in new bid for donations](#)', *The West Australian*, 6 August 2013, accessed 21 November 2013.

241. *Ibid.*

242. B Packham, '[Labor rattles the tin for campaign donations](#)', *The Australian*, 6 June 2013, accessed 6 September 2013.

community', while \$100 'pays for 90 targeted phone conversations with voters in marginal seats'. A \$1000 contribution 'goes towards paying for the expensive but necessary TV ads closer to the election'.²⁴³

In its turn, the Liberal National Party copied Rudd's small donations tactic as part of its effort to wrest from Labor his Brisbane seat of Griffith:

With a by-election imminent in Griffith, Queensland's LNP is asking supporters to hand over as little as \$15 to pay for leaflets. ... LNP state director Brad Henderson has sent an email to supporters, asking for contributions of between \$15 and \$5000.²⁴⁴

Liberal Party also launched its own 'Countdown to a Better Government' website, with a ticker counting down the days, hours, minutes and seconds until the close of polls, along with an upbeat video message and click-on buttons to make instant donations.²⁴⁵

243. Ibid.

244. '[Libs launch Rudd-style donations plea](#)', *news.com.au*, 14 November 2013, accessed 21 November 2013.

245. B Packham, 'Labor rattles the tin for campaign donations', op. cit.

Appendix E: Election opinion polls during campaign

		Voting Intention			Two Party Preferred		PM Satisfaction		LOTO Satisfaction		Preferred PM	
		COALITION	ALP	GREENS	COALITION (2PP)	LABOR (2PP)	SATISFIED (PM)	DISSATISFIED (PM)	SATISFIED (LOTO)	DISSATISFIED (LOTO)	PRIME MINISTER (PPM)	OPPOSITION LEADER (PPM)
07-Sep-13	Election	45.6	33.4	8.6	53.4	47						
06-Sep-13	Morgan Multi	44	31.5	10.5	53.5	47						
05-Sep-13	Morgan Multi	45	31.5	9.5	53.5	47						
05-Sep-13	Newspoll	46	33	9	54	46	33	58	44	50	43	45
05-Sep-13	Nielsen	46	33	11	54	46						
05-Sep-13	Essential Online	43	35	10	52	48						
04-Sep-13	Galaxy	45	35	9	53	47						
02-Sep-13	Essential	44	35	10	53	47						
01-Sep-13	Morgan Multi	43	34	11	52	48						
41518	Newspoll	46	33	10	54	46	32	58	41	51	41	43
01-Sep-13	Galaxy	46	35	10	53	47						
26-Aug-13	Essential	42	38	11	50	50						
25-Aug-13	Newspoll	47	37	9	54	46	36	52	42	49	44	40
25-Aug-13	Morgan Multi	45	34.5	11	51.5	49						
22-Aug-13	Nielsen	47	35	10	53	47	43	51	44	52	48	45
19-Aug-13	Essential	44	40	8	50	50						
18-Aug-13	Newspoll	47	34	9	54	46	35	54	41	51	43	41
18-Aug-13	Morgan Multi	44.5	36.5	9.5	51	49						
15-Aug-13	Galaxy	45	36	10	52	48						
13-Aug-13	Essential	43	39	8	51	49						
11-Aug-13	Newspoll	46	35	11	52	48	39	48	38	52	46	37
11-Aug-13	Morgan Multi	44	36.5	10.5	50	50						
09-Aug-13	Galaxy	45	38	10	51	49						
08-Aug-13	Nielsen	46	37	10	52	48	48	47	45	52	50	42
05-Aug-13	Essential	43	38	9	51	49						
04-Aug-13	Morgan Multi	43	38	9.5	50	50						
04-Aug-13	Newspoll	44	37	9	52	48	37	48	34	56	47	33

Source: Parliamentary Library, Statistics and Mapping Section, 10 December 2013

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