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Health and the economy come first, but terror on the rise



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by Phillip Coorey

Two opinion polls taken on the eve of the new Parliament show healthcare remains the issue voters want the government to focus on the most.

But one of the polls shows concern about terrorism, specifically fear of a domestic attack, is on the rise. The latest True Issues Survey by JWS Research shows that as a single issue of concern, defence, security and terrorism rates third behind health and the economy, and ahead of education and training, which has long held third spot in the quarterly poll of issues that gauges what voters worry about and how they rate the government's handling of each.

Over the past six months, 57 per cent of voters say their fear of a



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government this term and he will not be distracted by such issues as Section 18C of the Racial Discrimination Act or same-sex marriage.

A poll of 1000 voters commissioned by Chartered Accountants Australia & New Zealand finds this will be welcomed by voters.

They see the "leadership merry-go-round" in Canberra posting the greatest threat to the nation and want stable government focused first and foremost on healthcare (61 per cent), followed by jobs (46 per cent), economic growth (38 per cent), education (37 per cent) and housing affordability (33 per cent). Innovation rated just 5 per cent.

Chartered Accountants CEO Lee White said he hoped the findings would be heeded by the new Parliament.

"The government needs to be careful that it does not become publicly bogged down in policy debates that are of marginal importance to voters," he said.

"And the government needs to clearly state how its innovation policy will boost jobs and drive economic growth which are important issues to 46 per cent and 38 per cent of respondents respectively. It's the bread-and-butter issues that matter to the electorate at large."

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