

Marginal Seat Disaster for Labor

A special JWS Research Poll of 4,070 voters in 54 key federal +/-6% marginal seats commissioned by ECG Advisory Solutions and the Australian Financial Review shows a two party preferred (TPP) vote swing against the ALP of 9.3 percentage points since the last election.

On this swing Labor would lose all of its 24 seats with a 'swing-to-lose' margin of 6.0% or less.

If a swing of this magnitude occurred evenly across the entire nation, it would reduce Labor's numbers in the Parliament to just 32 seats.

Since the previous key marginals poll conducted by JWS Research in January 2013, Labor's primary vote has dropped by just over a point, from 33.5% to 32.2%, whilst the Coalition's primary vote has improved by more than three points, from 48.9% to 52.1%.

After distribution of preferences, according to respondents' nominations, the ALP's TPP vote is 40.6%, down from 45.1% in January, whilst the Coalition's TPP vote is 59.4%, up from 54.9%.

Analysis by state shows the overall 9.3% swing against the ALP is concentrated mostly in New South Wales (-11.8%) and Queensland (-11.0%).

Looking at the swings in these key marginal on a state-by-state basis, Labor stands to lose 10 seats in New South Wales, 7 seats in Queensland and 3 each in Victoria and Western Australia.

Labor's drop in voting support since the January JWS Research Poll has come mostly from Queensland, Western Australia and in non-metropolitan seats.

The Coalition has a majority or near majority on primary vote across all key demographic groups: metropolitan voters (51.4%), country voters (53.6%), men (55.3%), women (49.1%), 18-34 year olds (48.9%), 35-54 year olds (53.0%) and 55+ year olds (54.0%).

On other questions:

- Just 21% of voters think the Government is doing a good job, down from 25% in January, and 56% (up 9 points) think it is doing a poor job, including 40% (up 13 points) who say it is doing a very poor job.
- Julia Gillard is the preferred Prime Minister among 28% (down 5 points) and Tony Abbott is the preferred PM among 37% (up 5 points).
- Julia Gillard has a net favourability rating of -24 points, with only 25% (down 4 points) viewing her favourably and 48% (up 5 points) unfavourably.
- Tony Abbott has a net favourability rating of -2 points, based on 38% (up 8 points) favourable views and 41% (down 5 points) unfavourable views.
- Despite voters' stated voting *intentions*, 53% in total *would like to see* some form of Labor victory at the next election: 20% would like to see Julia Gillard lead Labor to victory; 21% would like to see a Kevin Rudd led win (this includes 15% of Coalition primary voters); and 12% don't mind who leads Labor as long as the Liberal-National Coalition don't win.
- By contrast, 29% would like to see Tony Abbott lead the Liberal-National Coalition to victory and 14% don't mind who leads the Coalition as long as Labor don't win – indicating that there are many people intending to vote for the Coalition even though it is not their preferred outcome.
- Voters are split on what the cross bench members of parliament should do given the current instability within the Labor government – 34% think they should continue to support Julia Gillard and Labor through to the scheduled September election, 20% think they should force Julia Gillard to stand down as Prime Minister but still support a Labor government with a new leader through to the election, and 36% think they should withdraw support from the government and force an early election.
- There are three key issues driving vote: the economy and jobs (mentioned by 29%, up 4 points since January), cost of living (22%, up 7 points) and healthcare and hospitals (18%, down 2 points).

SURVEY METHODOLOGY AND SAMPLING

A total of n=4,070 completed interviews were conducted with eligible voters in federal marginal seats nation-wide using IVR (automated) polling technology on Monday 25th March 2013. Voters were polled across the 54 key marginal seats in the TPP 'swing-to-lose' bandwidth of +/-6%, i.e. from Perth (ALP, WA, notional TPP margin 5.9%) to Wannon (Liberal, Victoria, notional TPP margin 5.7%).

The maximum margin of error on a sample of n=4,070 interviews is +/-1.5% at the 95% confidence level for results around 50%. Margins of error will be greater for results based on sub-samples.

The final sample has been weighted post survey to the known overall gender and age profile of the polled seats.

*Comparisons of these survey results and 2010 election results are of the same seats surveyed. **No comparisons can be made against the overall result in all seats at the last election.***

Variations of +/-1% between individual results and NETS is due to rounding. In reporting, '--' denotes not mentioned and '0%' denotes mentioned by less than 0.5%.

The survey was commissioned by ECG and the AFR and designed and conducted by JWS Research. This report is available for download at www.jwsresearch.com and at www.ecgadvisory.com.au.

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Table 1: Primary voting intention *

Federal Primary Vote	JWS Research Polls		Area		Gender		Age		
	17 January 2013	25 March 2013	Metro	Country	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+
	n=3350	n=4070	n=2785	n=1285	n=1655	n=2415	n=404	n=1226	n=2440
Labor	33.5%	32.2%	32.7%	31.2%	30.8%	33.5%	32.3%	28.9%	35.7%
Liberal National Coalition	48.9%	52.1%	51.4%	53.6%	55.3%	49.1%	48.9%	53.0%	54.0%
Greens	9.3%	7.6%	8.3%	6.3%	5.7%	9.4%	11.6%	7.6%	4.1%
Independent/Other	8.3%	8.1%	7.7%	8.9%	8.2%	8.0%	7.2%	10.5%	6.2%

Question: If a Federal election for the House for Representatives was held today, which party would you vote for? If undecided: Even though you are undecided, do you have a leaning towards any candidates or parties?

Note: 4% undecided overall on primary vote has been redistributed.

** A primary vote comparison to the August 2010 federal election result is not available as the AEC has since conducted redistributions in Victoria and South Australia.*

Table 2: Two-party preferred voting intention

Federal TPP Vote	Election Results		JWS Research Polls		Change (JWS 25 Mar 2013 – JWS 17 Jan 2013)	TPP Swing * (JWS 25 Mar – 2010 Election)
	21 August 2010 in all 150 Seats *	21 August 2010 in 54 +/- 6% Seats *	17 January 2013	25 March 2013		
ALP	49.9%	49.9%	45.1%	40.6%	-4.5%	-9.3%
Liberal National Coalition	50.1%	50.1%	54.9%	59.4%	+4.5%	+9.3%

Question: Even though it is not your first choice, if a Federal election was held today and you must choose between Labor and the Liberal National Coalition, who would you likely choose?

Note: 8% undecided overall on primary and preferential vote has been redistributed.

Note: The TPP calculation is based on applying preference distributions according to the respondent nominated preferences in this survey conducted March 25, 2013.

** The TPP election results quoted take into account the notional results of redistributions the AEC has conducted in Victoria and South Australia since the August 2010 Federal election, as calculated by Antony Green. The election result in all seats at the last election is shown for reference only, direct comparisons should only be made for this poll against the same 54 marginal seats included in this poll.*

Table 3: Two-party preferred voting intention – JWS Research poll trend *

TPP Vote in +/-6% Marginal Seats	Seats	Sample	JWS 17 Jan 2013		JWS TPP Margin 17 Jan	JWS 25 Mar 2013		JWS TPP Margin 25 Mar	TPP Change For/Against ALP Since 17 Jan
			ALP	LNP		ALP	LNP		
Total	54	n=4070	45.1%	54.9%	-4.9%	40.6%	59.4%	-9.4%	-4.5%
ALP seats	25	n=1767	46.8%	53.2%	-3.2%	40.6%	59.4%	-9.4%	-6.2%
LNP seats	29	n=2303	43.7%	56.3%	-6.3%	40.6%	59.4%	-9.4%	-3.1%
3-6% ALP seats	15	n=1035	50.4%	49.6%	+0.4%	39.9%	60.1%	-10.1%	-9.8%
0-3% ALP seats	10	n=732	41.3%	58.7%	-8.7%	41.6%	58.4%	-8.4%	+0.3%
0-3% LNP seats	16	n=1178	46.4%	53.6%	-3.6%	40.1%	59.9%	-9.9%	-6.3%
3-6% LNP seats	13	n=1125	40.9%	59.1%	-9.1%	41.1%	58.9%	-8.9%	+0.2%
Metropolitan	37	n=2785	44.0%	56.0%	-6.0%	41.6%	58.4%	-8.4%	-2.4%
Country	17	n=1285	47.3%	52.7%	-2.7%	38.4%	61.6%	-11.6%	-8.9%
QLD	17	n=1282	52.6%	47.4%	+2.6%	38.8%	61.2%	-11.2%	-13.8%
NSW	16	n=1123	38.2%	61.8%	-11.8%	38.6%	61.4%	-11.4%	+0.4%
VIC	10	n=739	44.8%	55.2%	-5.2%	45.2%	54.8%	-4.8%	+0.4%
WA	7	n=432	47.4%	52.6%	-2.6%	42.8%	57.2%	-7.2%	-4.6%
SA **	2	n=364	n/a	n/a	n/a	43.2%	55.8%	-5.8%	n/a

* The TPP election results quoted take into account the notional results of redistributions the AEC has conducted in Victoria and South Australia since the August 2010 Federal election, as calculated by Antony Green. Direct comparisons should only be made against the same 54 marginal seats included in this poll, not with seats outside the +/-6% bandwidth. See Attachment 1 for a list of all seats surveyed.

** Note: Some results in South Australia and Northern Territory are not shown due to low sample sizes.

Table 4: Two-party preferred voting intention – Swings and net gains/losses

TPP Vote in +/-6% Marginal Seats	Seats	Sample	2010 Election TPP Margin (ALP-LNP) *	JWS Margin 25 Mar 2013 (ALP-LNP)	TPP Swing For/Against ALP Since 2010	ALP Net Gains/Losses In 54 +/-6% Seats
Total	54	n=4070	-0.1%	-9.4%	-9.3%	-25
ALP seats	25	n=1767	+3.3%	-9.4%	-12.7%	-25
Liberal National Coalition seats	29	n=2303	-3.0%	-9.4%	-6.4%	0
Net result by ALP/LNP seats						-25
3-6% ALP seats	15	n=1035	+4.7%	-9.4%	-14.1%	-15
0-3% ALP seats	10	n=732	+1.3%	-8.4%	-9.7%	-10
0-3% LNP seats	16	n=1178	-1.7%	-9.9%	-8.2%	0
3-6% LNP seats	13	n=1125	-4.7%	-8.9%	-4.2%	0
Net result by marginality groups						-25
Metropolitan	37	n=2785	+0.3%	-8.4%	-8.7%	-18
Country	17	n=1285	-1.0%	-11.6%	-10.6%	-7
Net result by metro/country						-25
QLD	17	n=1282	-0.2%	-11.2%	-11.0%	-7
NSW	16	n=1123	+0.4%	-11.4%	-11.8%	-10
VIC	10	n=739	-1.1%	-4.8%	-3.7%	-3
WA	7	n=432	+0.6%	-7.2%	-7.8%	-3
SA	2	n=364	-2.1%	-5.8%	-3.7%	0
Net result by state **						-23

* The TPP election results quoted take into account the notional results of redistributions the AEC has conducted in Victoria and South Australia since the August 2010 Federal election, as calculated by Antony Green. Direct comparisons should only be made against the same 54 marginal seats included in this poll, not with seats outside the +/-6% bandwidth. See Appendix A for a list of all seats surveyed.

** Note: Some results in the Northern Territory are not shown due to low sample sizes.

Table 5: Performance of the Gillard Labor Government

Performance of Gillard Labor Government	Total +/-6% Marginals 17 Jan	Total +/-6% Marginals 25 Mar	Primary Voting Intention					Gender	
			ALP	LNP	Greens	Other	Undecided	Men	Women
Sample	n=3350	n=4070	n=1308	n=2070	n=236	n=299	n=158	n=1655	n=2415
Very good	9%	9%	26%	1%	7%	4%	1%	10%	8%
Good	16%	12%	28%	2%	30%	4%	2%	10%	14%
Average	25%	19%	29%	11%	28%	25%	24%	15%	23%
Poor	20%	16%	10%	19%	17%	23%	15%	15%	18%
Very poor	27%	40%	5%	65%	14%	41%	36%	47%	33%
TOTAL GOOD	25%	21%	54%	3%	37%	8%	3%	21%	22%
TOTAL POOR	47%	56%	15%	85%	30%	65%	51%	62%	51%
Undecided	4%	3%	2%	2%	5%	2%	22%	2%	3%

Question: How do you rate the performance of the Gillard Labor Government?

Table 6: Preferred Prime Minister

Preferred PM	Total +/-6% Marginals 17 Jan	Total +/-6% Marginals 25 Mar	Primary Voting Intention					Gender	
			ALP	LNP	Greens	Other	Undecided	Men	Women
Sample	n=3350	n=4070	n=1308	n=2070	n=236	n=299	n=158	n=1655	n=2415
Julia Gillard	33%	28%	68%	6%	44%	11%	16%	26%	31%
Tony Abbott	32%	37%	3%	69%	4%	9%	7%	43%	30%
Neither	26%	31%	25%	23%	47%	78%	57%	28%	34%
Undecided	9%	4%	4%	3%	5%	3%	20%	3%	5%
Net PM (Gillard – Abbott)	+2	-8	+65	-63	+40	+2	+8	-17	+1

Question: Who do you think would make the better Prime Minister?

Table 7: Prime Minister Julia Gillard name ID (awareness and favourability)

Awareness and Favourability of the Prime Minister, Julia Gillard	Total +/-6% Marginals 17 Jan	Total +/-6% Marginals 25 Mar	Primary Voting Intention					Gender	
			ALP	LNP	Greens	Other	Undecided	Men	Women
Sample	n=3350	n=4070	n=1308	n=2070	n=236	n=299	n=158	n=1655	n=2415
Favourable	29%	25%	60%	3%	43%	14%	10%	22%	27%
Unfavourable	43%	48%	17%	72%	30%	49%	22%	50%	46%
No particular view	25%	24%	20%	22%	25%	34%	54%	23%	25%
Never heard of Julia Gillard	3%	3%	3%	2%	2%	3%	14%	5%	2%
Net favourability (favourable – unfavourable)	-14	-24	+43	-69	+13	-35	-11	-28	-19

Question: How do you view the Prime Minister, Julia Gillard?

Table 8: Opposition Leader Tony Abbott name ID (awareness and favourability)

Awareness and Favourability of the Opposition Leader, Tony Abbott	Total +/-6% Marginals 17 Jan	Total +/-6% Marginals 25 Mar	Primary Voting Intention					Gender	
			ALP	LNP	Greens	Other	Undecided	Men	Women
Sample	n=3350	n=4070	n=1308	n=2070	n=236	n=299	n=158	n=1655	n=2415
Favourable	30%	38%	6%	69%	8%	11%	12%	42%	35%
Unfavourable	46%	41%	74%	13%	76%	58%	33%	37%	44%
No particular view	23%	18%	15%	17%	16%	29%	37%	17%	20%
Never heard of Tony Abbott	1%	2%	4%	0%	-	1%	18%	4%	1%
Net favourability (favourable – unfavourable)	-16	-2	-68	+56	-67	-47	-21	+5	-10

Question: How do you view the Opposition Leader, Tony Abbott?

Table 9: Preferred outcome at next election

Preferred Election Outcome	Total +/-6% Marginals 25 Mar	Primary Voting Intention				
		ALP	LNP	Greens	Other	Undecided
Sample	n=4070	n=1308	n=2070	n=236	n=299	n=158
Julia Gillard lead Labor to victory	20%	53%	2%	30%	5%	5%
Kevin Rudd lead Labor to victory	21%	23%	15%	31%	40%	25%
Don't mind who leads Labor as long as Liberal-National Coalition don't win	12%	19%	4%	28%	16%	12%
TOTAL WANT LABOR TO WIN	53%	95%	21%	89%	62%	42%
Tony Abbott lead Liberal-National Coalition to victory	29%	1%	54%	1%	10%	14%
Don't mind who leads Liberal-National Coalition as long as Labor don't win	14%	1%	24%	4%	14%	14%
TOTAL WANT LNP TO WIN	43%	2%	78%	5%	24%	27%
Unsure/don't care	4%	3%	1%	6%	14%	30%

Question: Which of the following outcomes would you prefer to see happen at the next election?

Table 10: Preferred actions of cross-benchers

Preferred Cross-bench Member Action	Total +/-6% Marginals 25 Mar	Primary Voting Intention				
		ALP	LNP	Greens	Other	Undecided
Sample	n=4070	n=1308	n=2070	n=236	n=299	n=158
Continue to support the Gillard Labor government to September 14 election	34%	73%	9%	59%	25%	20%
Force Julia Gillard to stand down as Prime Minister but support a Labor government with a new leader to September 14 election	20%	15%	21%	20%	33%	17%
TOTAL SUPPORT LABOR	54%	88%	30%	79%	58%	37%
Withdraw support from government and force an early election	36%	3%	60%	8%	33%	38%
Unsure	10%	8%	10%	13%	10%	25%

Question: Given the current instability within the Labor government, which of the following comes closest to your thinking on what the cross-bench members such as the Greens and Independents should do?

Table 11: Most important issue influencing vote at the next Federal election

Most Important Issue	Total +/-6% Marginals 17 Jan	Total +/-6% Marginals 25 Mar	Primary Voting Intention				
			ALP	LNP	Greens	Other	Undecided
Sample	n=3350	n=4070	n=1308	n=2070	n=236	n=299	n=158
Economy and jobs	25%	29%	28%	33%	16%	22%	22%
Cost of living	15%	22%	20%	25%	9%	23%	28%
Healthcare and hospitals	20%	18%	24%	15%	12%	25%	13%
Education	8%	9%	14%	5%	12%	8%	10%
Immigration and border security	9%	7%	2%	10%	3%	4%	5%
Environment	7%	6%	6%	2%	31%	5%	2%
Leadership	10%	5%	3%	7%	3%	7%	11%
Something else	5%	4%	3%	3%	14%	7%	8%

Question: Which one of the following seven issues is the most important issue to you in deciding how you'll vote at the next Federal election?

Table 12: Political values

Political Values	Total +/-6% Marginals 25 Mar	Primary Voting Intention				
		ALP	LNP	Greens	Other	Undecided
Sample	n=4070	n=1308	n=2070	n=236	n=299	n=158
Labor values	34%	74%	10%	42%	29%	19%
Liberal values	39%	4%	71%	10%	14%	18%
Other values	22%	18%	15%	47%	53%	40%
Unsure	5%	4%	5%	1%	3%	23%

Question: And finally, in terms of your political values, do you generally tend to think of yourself as having Labor values, Liberal values, or other values?

Appendix A: 54 +/-6% seats polled

Seat	Held by	Margin	State	Metro/country	Seat	Held by	Margin	State	Metro/country
Perth	ALP	5.9%	WA	Metropolitan	Wannon	LNP	-5.7%	VIC	Country
Oxley	ALP	5.8%	QLD	Metropolitan	Stirling	LNP	-5.6%	WA	Metropolitan
Chisholm	ALP	5.8%	VIC	Metropolitan	Higgins	LNP	-5.4%	VIC	Metropolitan
Fremantle	ALP	5.7%	WA	Metropolitan	Paterson	LNP	-5.3%	NSW	Country
Rankin	ALP	5.4%	QLD	Metropolitan	Gilmore	LNP	-5.3%	NSW	Country
Kingsford-Smith	ALP	5.2%	NSW	Metropolitan	Hughes	LNP	-5.2%	NSW	Metropolitan
Dobell	IND	5.1%	NSW	Country	Dickson	LNP	-5.1%	QLD	Metropolitan
Parramatta	ALP	4.4%	NSW	Metropolitan	Leichhardt	LNP	-4.6%	QLD	Country
Blair	ALP	4.2%	QLD	Metropolitan	McMillan	LNP	-4.2%	VIC	Country
Eden-Monaro	ALP	4.2%	NSW	Country	Fisher	IND	-4.1%	QLD	Country
Page	ALP	4.2%	NSW	Country	Sturt	LNP	-3.6%	SA	Metropolitan
Lingiari	ALP	3.7%	NT	Country	Flynn	LNP	-3.6%	QLD	Country
Capricornia	ALP	3.7%	QLD	Country	Bennelong	LNP	-3.1%	NSW	Metropolitan
Brand	ALP	3.3%	WA	Metropolitan	Macarthur	LNP	-3.0%	NSW	Metropolitan
Lilley	ALP	3.2%	QLD	Metropolitan	Bonner	LNP	-2.8%	QLD	Metropolitan
Reid	ALP	2.7%	NSW	Metropolitan	Swan	LNP	-2.5%	WA	Metropolitan
Petrie	ALP	2.5%	QLD	Metropolitan	Dawson	LNP	-2.4%	QLD	Country
La Trobe	ALP	1.7%	VIC	Metropolitan	Canning	LNP	-2.2%	WA	Metropolitan
Banks	ALP	1.5%	NSW	Metropolitan	Herbert	LNP	-2.2%	QLD	Country
Moreton	ALP	1.1%	QLD	Metropolitan	Casey	LNP	-1.9%	VIC	Metropolitan
Lindsay	ALP	1.1%	NSW	Metropolitan	Longman	LNP	-1.9%	QLD	Metropolitan
Robertson	ALP	1.0%	NSW	Country	Solomon	LNP	-1.8%	NT	Country
Greenway	ALP	0.9%	NSW	Metropolitan	Forde	LNP	-1.6%	QLD	Metropolitan
Deakin	ALP	0.6%	VIC	Metropolitan	Macquarie	LNP	-1.3%	NSW	Metropolitan
Corangamite	ALP	0.3%	VIC	Country	Brisbane	LNP	-1.1%	QLD	Metropolitan
<i>Note: The election results for Victorian and South Australian seats are notional results based on redistributions the AEC has conducted in these states since the August 2010 Federal election.</i>					Dunkley	LNP	-1.1%	VIC	Metropolitan
					Aston	LNP	-0.7%	VIC	Metropolitan
					Hasluck	LNP	-0.6%	WA	Metropolitan
					Boothby	LNP	-0.6%	SA	Metropolitan