

## South Australian Political and Election Briefing - 2010

18 February 2010

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# Hawker Britton

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## **Introduction**

Premier Mike Rann will visit Government house this Saturday (20 February) to ask the Governor to issue writs for South Australia to go to the polls on 20 March. This will officially begin the four week election campaign where the Rann Government will seek a third term.

The election will be for all seats in the House of Assembly (Lower House) and half the seats of the Legislative Council (Upper House) last filled in 2002. Like federal elections, South Australia has compulsory voting, uses full-preference instant-runoff voting in the Lower House and single transferable vote group voting tickets in the Upper House.

Currently, the Labor Party holds 28 of the 47 seats in the House of Assembly and the Liberal Party 14. A party requires 24 seats to govern a majority which means the Liberal Party will need to win five seats on a uniform swing of 6.2 per cent to deprive the Rann Government of its majority. To win outright, the Liberals will need to win 10 seats, two of which are held by independents in nominally safe Liberal seats. This will be opposition leader Isobel Redmond's first election as leader of her party.

In the event this is a close election, the role of independents may prove decisive as cross bench support may be necessary to form government.

The most recent poll conducted before the election was an Adelaide Advertiser poll (a 4 point margin of error) which found Labor leading 52-48, this was down from 57-43 in a similar December poll.

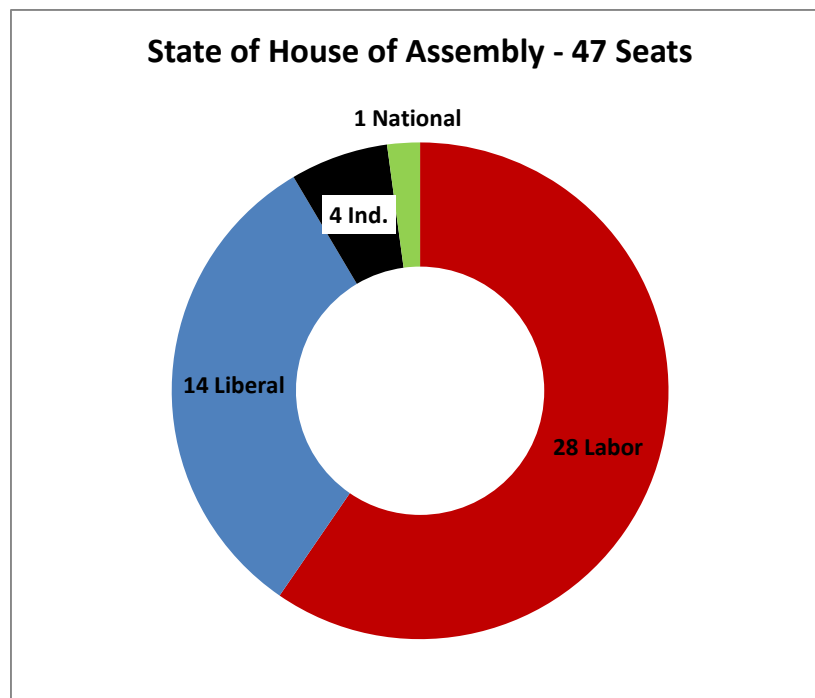
The issues shaping up to be most important at this stage are; water, economic management, the Adelaide oval, plans for the Royal Adelaide Hospital, land tax reform and transport. A brief overview of these issues is provided on page six.

## 1. Political and Parliamentary outline

### a. General Election Facts

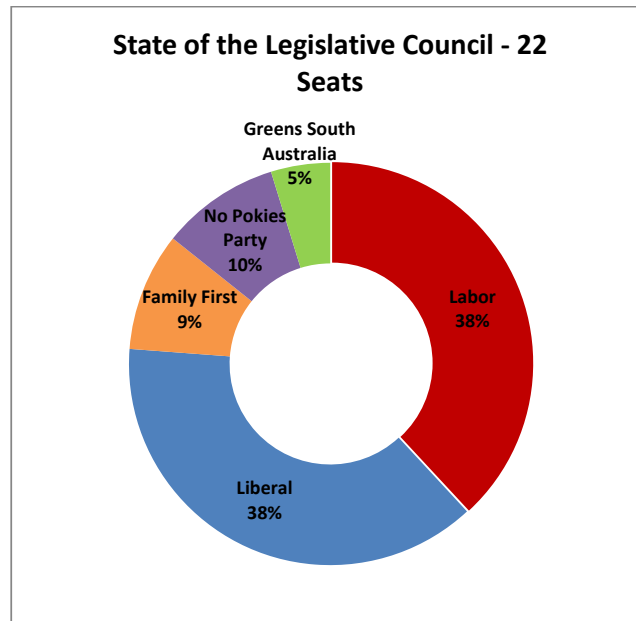
- Premier Mike Rann was elected in 2002 and re-elected in 2006.
- South Australia has fixed 4 year terms. Elections are held on the third Saturday in March every 4 years (unless this date falls on Good Friday or the same month as a Commonwealth election). The coming election will be held on **Saturday, 20 March 2010**.
- The Premier will go to Government House on the 20 February to ask the Governor to issue writs and for the Government to go into Caretaker mode.
- All seats in the House of Assembly or Lower House, whose current members were elected at the 2006 election, and half the seats in the Legislative Council or Upper House, last filled at the 2002 election, will become vacant.
- Like federal elections, South Australia has compulsory voting, uses full-preference instant-runoff voting in the Lower House and single transferable vote group voting tickets in the Upper House.

### b. The current state of the Parliament



**In the 47 seat House of Assembly:**

- Labor Party holds 28 seats
- Liberal Party 14
- National Party 1
- Independents 4



**In the 22 seat Legislative Council**

- Labor Party holds 8 seats
- Liberal Party holds 8 seats
- Family first holds 2 seats
- No Pokies Party holds 2 seats
- Greens South Australia 1 seat

**c. To win:**

- A party needs 24 seats to govern in majority, so the Liberal Party would need to gain five seats on a uniform swing of 6.2 per cent to take away the Rann government majority.
- This would be six seats on a uniform swing of 6.6 per cent if it is assumed that Independent and former Labor MP for Mitchell, Kris Hanna, would support the Rann government if it lost its majority.
- Assuming the Liberal Party can win Mount Gambier on the retirement of Independent Rory McEwen, the Liberal Party will therefore need nine seats on a uniform swing of 12.0 per cent for majority Liberal government. Depending on how many cross-bench MPs are elected, a swing of between 6.6 per cent and 12.0 per cent would produce a hung parliament.

**d. The Opposition Leadership:**

- Isobel Redmond is the leader of the Opposition elected to Parliament in 2002, member for Heyson. She was made Opposition leader in July 2009.
- Before entering Parliament she was a solicitor.
- For access to the Liberal Party policy platform [click here](#).

## **e. Independent seats**

- Karlene Maywald – Member for Chaffey
  - The state's sole National MP, also sits in the Rann Cabinet.
  - In 2006, despite Maywald being a member of the Rann Labor government, she directed preferences in her seat of Chaffey to the Liberal candidate ahead of the Labor candidate.
- Rory McEwen – retiring Member for Mount Gambier
  - Retiring, Mount Gambier is a notionally safe Liberal seat.
- Kris Hanna – Mitchell
  - Kris Hanna is an ex-Labor MP. Joined the Greens in 2003, then became an independent.
  - Labor holds the seat on 14.6 per cent so Labor is expected to win if Hanna falls to third place.
- Bob Such – Fisher
  - Represented the seat since 1989, as a Liberal from 2000. Independent since then.
  - Was speaker of the house from mid 2005 to mid 2006.
- Geoff Brock – Frome
  - Won by Brock in a 2009 by-election.
  - Holds the seat marginally on preferences.
  - Brock is the former Mayor of Port Pirie, Frome's largest centre. He won the seat on the retirement of former Premier and Liberal Party Leader Rob Kerin.

## **f. Redistribution**

There has also been a redistribution since the 2006 election, undertaken using the unique South Australian system where the Boundaries Commission draws boundaries to try to ensure that the party that wins the majority of the state-wide two-party preferred vote should also win the majority of seats.

The Commission publishes its estimated new margins ([available here](#)). According to ABC election analyst Antony Green, the methodology employed makes it very difficult to use the new margins because they are not based solely on the results of the last election. He notes the Commission lists some electorates as having new margins despite there being no change to boundaries.

## **g. Retiring Members**

### **Liberal**

- Graham Gunn, MHA in Stuart. Preselection is former national basketball player Dan Van Holst Pellekaan.
- Liz Penfold, MHA in Flinders. Preselection is Australian Farmers' Federation Grains Council chairman Peter Treloar.
- Caroline Schaefer, MLC.

### **Labor**

- Lea Stevens, MHA in Little Para. Preselection is staffer for Wakefield MP Nick Champion, Lee Odenwalder.
- Trish White, MHA in Taylor. Preselection is former Labor assistant secretary Leesa Vlahos.

### **Other**

- Rory McEwen, Independent MHA in Mount Gambier.

## 2. Key Election Issues

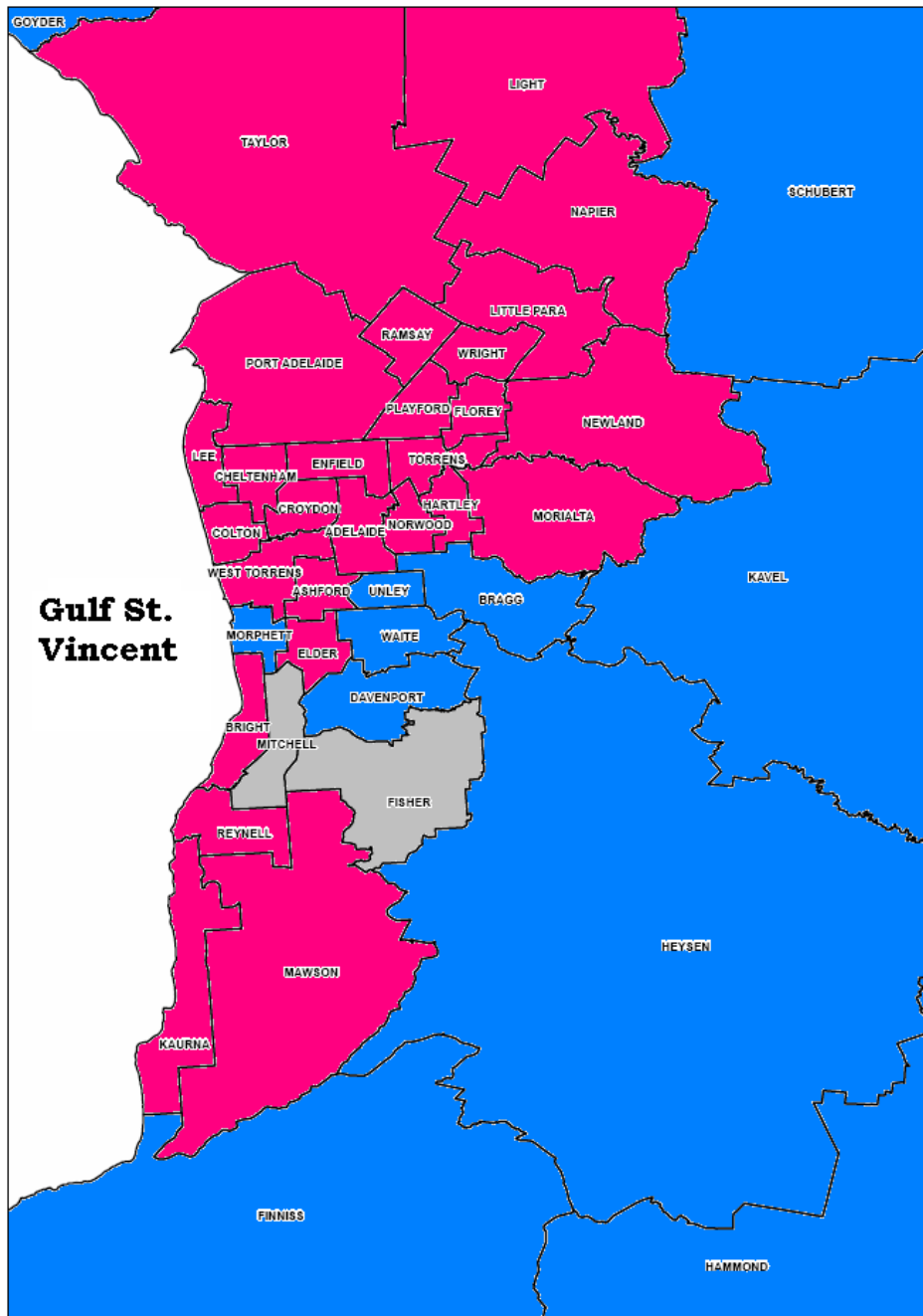
- **Water**
  - South Australia is known as the driest state in Australia and is heavily dependent on the Murray Darling river for its water supply. There has been six years of water restrictions and a water levy imposed as a result of drought.
  - The important drought stricken Riverland seat of Chaffey (the seat where Nationals member, Karlene Maywald and Minister for Water Security sits) will be in close focus. The Government made a pre-election announcement for a \$20 million plan to help the local community with water saving and community projects.
  - The Government is arguing the desalination plant it has built has guaranteed 50 per cent of SA's water needs, and reduces dependence on the River Murray.
  - The Liberal Party is promoting a stormwater recycling plan.
- **The Economy**
  - The Government will attempt to point to its strong economic performance and handling of the global financial crisis. South Australia has the lowest unemployment rate in Australia – at 4.4 per cent.
  - Significant infrastructure spending, defence contracts, growth in the education and resources sector has seen significant jobs growth of 16 per cent, or 111,300 new jobs created since 2002.
  - A mid-year budget review showed an increase in revenues and a stronger than previously thought budget position. The deficit for 2009-10 was revised down from \$304m to \$174m.
- **Land Tax**
  - The Government has announced land tax reforms, 75,000 investors will no longer be liable for land tax in the 2010-11 financial year. This means two thirds of those paying land tax will no longer have to pay anything by 2010-11.
  - The threshold is lifted from \$110,000 to \$300,000. The Liberals are currently proposing the same plan.
- **New Stadium**
  - The Government has announced a plan to redevelop Adelaide Oval into a 50,000 seat sporting facility for both cricket and football. The mid-year budget allocated \$190 million towards the \$450 million development.
  - In opposition, the Liberals want to build a completely new stadium and precinct at Riverside West, where the Government is planning to build the new Hospital. The Opposition has said they will sell off Government land to developers to help fund the project.
- **Royal Adelaide Hospital**
  - The Government is planning to build a new Royal Adelaide Hospital costing \$1.7 billion on a site nearby.
  - The Liberal Party is proposing to rebuild the existing Royal Adelaide Hospital on the existing site.
- **Transport**
  - The Government has announced a \$445 million plan to duplicate the Southern Expressway. The upgrade will allow traffic to flow in both directions. Construction is expected to begin by the end of next year and be completed by 2014. This is a significant issue for the key electorates in the south of Mawson, Bright and Mitchell. The plan includes construction of a new transport interchange at Darlington. The Government has also drafted a 30-year Plan for Greater Adelaide.
  - At the time of writing, the Liberal Party had not yet fully announced its plan.

## 3. Election Pendulum and Maps

### a. Pendulum with marginals

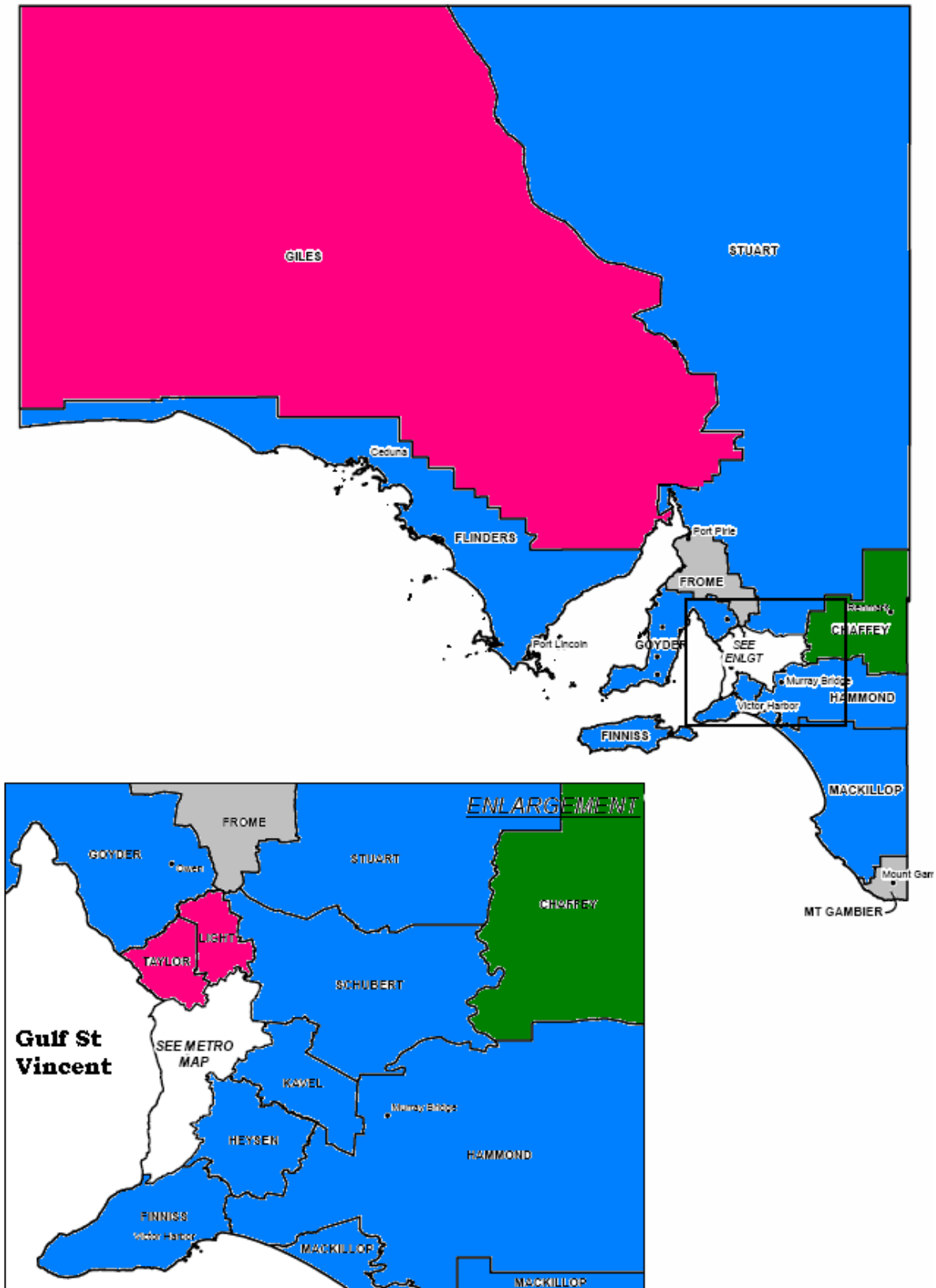
Labor 28 Seats	Margin	Liberal 14 Seats	Margin
Light	ALP 2.1%	Stuart	LIB 0.6%
Mawson	ALP 2.2%	Unley	LIB 1.8%
Norwood	ALP 4.0%	Morphett	LIB 3.4%
Newland	ALP 5.2%	Waite	LIB 4.1%
Hartley	ALP 6.2%	Heysen	LIB 4.9%
Bright	ALP 6.6%	Finniss	LIB 5.4%
Morialta	ALP 6.9%	Davenport	LIB 6.3%
Adelaide	ALP 10.2%	Schubert	LIB 6.8%
Florey	ALP 12.0%	Kavel	LIB 8.1%
Ashford	ALP 15.2%	Goyder	LIB 8.9%
Wright	ALP 15.3%	Hammond	LIB 10.9%
Elder	ALP 15.6%	Bragg	LIB 12.0%
Colton	ALP 16.0%	MacKillop	LIB 22.2%
Giles	ALP 16.4%	Flinders	LIB 28.4%
Little Para	ALP 17.3%		
West Torrens	ALP 18.2%	<b>Independent 4 Seats</b>	<b>Margin</b>
Reynell	ALP 18.4%	Mitchell	IND 0.6% v ALP
Torrens	ALP 19.2%	Frome	IND 1.7% v LIB
Lee	ALP 19.8%	Mount Gambier	IND 6.2% v LIB
Kaurna	ALP 21.9%	Fisher	IND 16.7% v ALP
Napier	ALP 23.9%	<b>National – 1 Seat</b>	<b>Margin</b>
Enfield	ALP 24.5%	Chaffey	NAT 17.2% v LIB
Cheltenham	ALP 25.5%		
Playford	ALP 25.7%		
Croydon	ALP 26.1%		
Port Adelaide	ALP 26.2%		
Taylor	ALP 26.5%		
Ramsay	ALP 28.5%		

b. Metro SA map – (Labor in pink, Liberal in blue)





c. Rural SA map (Labor in pink, Liberal in blue, National in green)



4. Polling History since 2006

Newspoll polling history since 2006 - The declared margin of error is ±3.5 percent.

	House of Assembly opinion polling								Two party preferred	
	Political parties							ALP	Lib	
	ALP	Lib	Nat	Dem	FFP	Grn	Oth			
Jul – Aug 2009	41%	33%	1%	1%	1%	11%	12%	56%	44%	
Jan – Mar 2009	42%	34%	1%	1%	1%	10%	11%	56%	44%	
Oct – Dec 2008	39%	35%	1%	< .5%	1%	13%	11%	54%	46%	
Jul – Sep 2008	38%	40%	1%	1%	1%	8%	11%	50%	50%	
Apr – Jun 2008	41%	35%	1%	< .5%	2%	12%	9%	54%	46%	
Jan – Mar 2008	41%	37%	< .5%	1%	1%	8%	10%	53%	47%	
Oct – Dec 2007	42%	36%	1%	2%	3%	7%	9%	54%	46%	
Jul – Sep 2007	48%	33%	1%	2%	2%	6%	8%	59%	41%	
Apr – Jun 2007	47%	35%	1%	1%	2%	5%	9%	57%	43%	
Jan – Mar 2007	48%	29%	1%	4%	2%	6%	10%	61%	39%	
Oct – Dec 2006	47%	33%	1%	2%	3%	4%	10%	58%	42%	
<u>2006 Election</u>	45.2%	34%	2.1%	2.9%	5.9%	6.5%	3.4%	56.8%	43.2%	
15 – 16 Mar 2006	46%	33%	1.5%	1.5%	3%	4%	11%	57%	43%	
<u>2002 Election</u>	36.3%	40%	1.5%	7.5%	2.6%	2.4%	9.7%	49.1%	50.9%	

Better Premier ratings <sup>^</sup>		
Date	Labor Rann	Liberal Redmond
Jul – Aug 2009	46%	27%
Jan – Mar 2009	53%	24% <sup>3</sup>
Oct – Dec 2008	50%	26% <sup>3</sup>
Jul – Sep 2008	48%	30% <sup>3</sup>
Apr – Jun 2008	54%	27% <sup>3</sup>
Jan – Mar 2008	54%	24% <sup>3</sup>
Oct – Dec 2007	50%	25% <sup>3</sup>
Jul – Sep 2007	52%	26% <sup>3</sup>
Apr – Jun 2007	52%	21% <sup>3</sup>
Jan – Mar 2007	64%	14% <sup>2</sup>
Oct – Dec 2006	61%	14% <sup>2</sup>
Pre 2006 election	63%	21% <sup>1</sup>
Pre 2002 election	30%	50% <sup>1</sup>

Polling conducted by Newspoll and published in The Australian.  
<sup>^</sup> Remainder were "uncommitted" to either leader.  
<sup>1</sup> Rob Kerin, <sup>2</sup> Iain Evans, <sup>3</sup> Martin Hamilton-Smith