

Hawker Britton

Government Relations Strategy

Queensland State Election 2020: Political Briefing Week 1

Each Friday during the Queensland Election, Hawker Britton takes a look back at the week that was and provides insights and analysis on the shape of the race in the lead up to election day on October 31st.

The 2020 State Election is like no other. Whichever party forms government will have the opportunity of a four-year fixed term – the first in Queensland history. This campaign comes on the backdrop of the once-in-a-generation COVID-19 health and economic crisis which brings great accelerations and disruptions across all facets of the state.

State of the race – Labor and LNP

The Labor Government has opened the campaign strongly. With a heavy focus on its key issues of economic recovery, regional resources investments and skills training. The Premier and the Treasurer have travelled together for the first week of the campaign starting in Brisbane then heading to Mount Isa and Townsville where they made announcements that support the campaign's narrative of providing a positive economic recovery to the COVID-19 crisis. Meanwhile Minister Miles has campaigned in the South East, delivering the daily COVID health briefing and running the campaign's negative attacks on the Liberal-National Party.

The LNP campaign has spent the majority of the week on the Gold Coast and Brisbane, before moving to Cairns for events on Thursday. Deb Frecklington spent the week prior to the campaign travelling on the Bruce Highway as part of her four-lane proposal. For the first week of the campaign the Opposition Leader was forced to spend time on issues outside of her advantage, including on cuts to the public service, lack of federal funding for the Bruce and on preference arrangements. The LNP has been making a series of targeted industry specific announcements around space and marine infrastructure.

Polling

<i>YouGov / Courier-Mail</i>	Labor	LNP	Green	One Nation	Katter Party
Statewide primary vote	37%	37%	12%	9%	2%

<i>YouGov / Courier-Mail</i>	Annastacia Palaszczuk	Deb Frecklington
Net satisfaction rating	+30%	-3%
Satisfied	57%	29%
Dissatisfied	27%	32%

Uncommitted	16%	39%
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YouGov / Courier-Mail	Anastacia Palaszczuk	Deb Frecklington	Don't know	Both equally
Preferred economic manager	40%	27%	19%	14%

Labor's Policy Week

The Labor Government made a series of significant announcements over the course of the week.

- Two leading national builders were announced on Saturday develop the first two affordable housing projects under the Build-To-Rent program.
- The Government announced on Sunday that a Queensland medical technology company will manufacture its globally renowned needle-free vaccine technology at a new facility in Northshore Hamilton
- On Monday the Government announced a partnership with Boeing Australia for Queensland to be the home for the final production for unmanned defence aircraft, the first military aircraft to be designed, engineered and manufactured in Australia in more than 50 years
- The Government further confirmed a final deal had been signed with Virgin Australia to keep the airline's headquarters in Queensland
- The Premier officially started the State Election on Tuesday – asking Queenslanders to let her “finish the State's post-COVID recovery”
- In Mount Isa on Wednesday the Premier revealed a deal had been signed to provide Copper String 2.0 with assurances to further develop the project
- In Townsville on Thursday the Government announced \$100 Million for TAFE Infrastructure across the State focusing on new infrastructure to provide skills training for new growth industries of cyber security training, robotics, hydrogen and resources, manufacturing, agriculture; and nursing and allied health.

LNP's Policy Week

The LNP has made a series of industry specific announcements this week.

- On Tuesday the LNP announced a plan to partner with Gilmore Space to build a new rocket manufacturing plant on the Gold Coast.
- On Wednesday in Brisbane the Opposition announced a plan to cut manufacturing business' electricity costs by 20%.
- In Cairns on Thursday the Opposition announced \$20 Million to co-invest in a ship-lift.

The Federal Budget

The Labor Government was the big winner on Tuesday's Budget, with major requested roads projects funded by the Federal Government – including funding for the 'Second M1' Coomera Connector. The Budget also mirrored the State Government's plan to borrow

significantly during a period of low repayment rates in order to spend and invest through the COVID economic crisis.

Unfortunately for the LNP their hope for 80% funding of their \$33 Billion plan to four lane the Bruce Highway only netted funding for further studies. Treasurer Cameron Dick labelled the outcome a 'highway hoax'.

Preferences

This election is notable for the large number of minor parties campaigning actively across the State. This is the second Queensland election with full preferential voting since reforms were introduced in 2016. The issue of whom the LNP would provide its preferences was an undercurrent of the 2017 State Election that became dominant in the final stages of the campaign to the detriment of then leader Tim Nicholls.

This election, LNP Leader Deb Frecklington has attempted to anticipate questions on her party's decision by announcing Monday that the LNP would put the Labor Party last on all how to vote cards across the State. The ramifications of this decision have been a constant of the first week of the campaign. While the full electoral implications of this decision will not be known until the 31st of October the political effects are significant for the LNP. In practice it means the LNP has decided that every political party from The Greens to One Nation and Clive Palmer should receive their preference before the Labor Party. This breaks against the long-standing ideological views of LNP members in regional and northern Queensland against The Greens and simultaneously against the position of the Liberal party since the days of John Howard and Peter Costello to put the racist views of One Nation last on how to vote cards.

This decision stands to benefit minor parties in tight races where the LNP has historically come in third place – including favouring The Greens in South Brisbane and favouring Clive Palmer and One Nation in as many as nine outer suburban and regional Labor held seats including Logan, Cook and Keppel.

All in all, this preferencing decision will mean calling and predicting this election will be tougher than ever.

In case you missed it

InQld: Modern-day 'fireside chats' allow Premier to hear directly from voters - <https://inql.com.au/opinion/2020/10/02/modern-day-fireside-chats-allow-premier-to-hear-directly-from-voters/>

Hawker Britton: Seats to watch - <http://www.hawkerbritton.com/2020/10/queensland-state-election-seats-watch/>

COVID-19 Update and Roadmap

Queensland has passed the milestone of 28 days without community transmission of the COVID-19 virus. There are only currently four active cases in Queensland.

Last week the Queensland Government announced its COVID-Safe Roadmap, charting the next three months of responding to the virus and the pathway to easing restrictions. You can see it in detail here - <http://www.hawkerbritton.com/2020/10/queenslands-covid-safe-roadmap/>

Feedback or insights?

If you or your company has a particular campaign policy issue, insight or analysis you feel is missing from this briefing or that you'd like further information about please contact me on estein@hawkerbritton.com or call 0431 744 115 at any time.

Regards,

Elliot.

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