

LIBERAL PARTY *of* AUSTRALIA

Review of the 2022 Federal Election

Brian Loughnane

Jane Hume

December 2022

21 December 2022

The Hon John Olsen AO
Federal President
Liberal Party of Australia
PO Box 6004
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Dear Mr Olsen,

At its meeting following the Federal Election on 21st May this year, the Federal Executive of the Liberal Party asked us to review the Party's election campaign.

We are pleased to enclose our Report. We trust it assists the Party in rebuilding in the years ahead.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you would like to discuss any part of this Report in more detail.

Yours sincerely,



Brian Loughnane



Senator the Hon Jane Hume

Thanks:

The Review received a very large amount of feedback from Party members, volunteers and supporters - far in excess of that received by any previous Review.

The Review has received over 600 submissions, conducted over 50 interviews and considered information provided from all divisions.

The Review is deeply grateful to all those who made the effort to make a submission or to contact the Review. Every submission has been read. Taken together, they form the basis of this Review and the Recommendations we have made.

This is an indication of the level of commitment of Party members and supporters, their concern at the loss of the election, and their desire for the Party to reform in some areas to be in the strongest position for future campaigns.

A Note on Reviews:

Over the years many reviews have been conducted by the Liberal Party following Federal and State elections. The current Review is no exception in this regard.

The effectiveness of a review is not in the report delivered. It is in the commitment and resources provided to implement its recommendations.

Terms of Reference:

To conduct a review of the Liberal Party's 2022 federal election result, including the campaign and the period leading up to it, and to make recommendations arising from the review.

The review will include examination of the performance of – and lessons arising for – the Federal Secretariat/CCHQ, the Divisions of the Liberal Party (including the Country Liberal Party's campaign in Solomon), and the parliamentary team.

The review will also examine, among other things:

- The long-term challenge for the Party presented by independents running in, and winning, seats from the Liberal Party.
- The Liberal Party's electoral performance among different voter segments.
- The selection of candidates by the Liberal Party.

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Introduction

On 25th May 2022, the Federal Executive of the Liberal Party asked us to examine the reasons for the Party's defeat at the 2022 federal election and to make such recommendations as we believe appropriate to assist the Party in rebuilding.

In preparing this Review we have been greatly assisted by the very large number of submissions received from members and supporters of the Party from all parts of Australia and all levels of involvement in the campaign. We have also conducted an extensive series of interviews with those with major responsibilities in the campaign. The Report has greatly benefitted from the willingness of these people to frankly discuss the campaign and their role in it.

We have sought to use the lessons of the campaign to make recommendations to assist the Party in preparing for the next election. As becomes clear from our Report, there are major issues which must be addressed well before the next election if the Party is to be successful.

The result is not comparable to any previous one in Australian political history. Consequently, it poses a significant and unique challenge to the Party. It follows there is not a simple or easy response which can quickly improve the Party's position. It will require a co-ordinated response at every level of the Party.

The Party has many strengths and there were many parts of the Party, in all Divisions, which performed exceptionally during the 2022 campaign. The Party also has a highly skilled and experienced corps of campaign professionals, incumbent Members of Parliament and a dedicated and committed team of supporters. This is a strong base on which to rebuild.

It is clear already that the Albanese government has no answers to the significant problems facing Australia. The Liberal Party must therefore be in the strongest possible position, as quickly as possible, to present a clear alternative at the next election. We trust our report assists in this important task.

Results

Federal election primary vote			
	2019	2022	Swing
Coalition	41.4%	35.7%	-5.7%
Labor	33.3%	32.6%	-0.7%
Greens	10.4%	12.3%	+1.9%
Other	14.9%	19.4%	+4.5%
Total	100%	100%	-

Federal election primary vote			
	2019	2022	Swing
Liberal	28.0%	23.9%	-4.1%
LNP (QLD)	8.7%	8.0%	-0.7%
Nationals	4.5%	3.6%	-0.9%
CLP (NT)	0.3%	0.2%	-0.1%

Preference flows			
	2019	2022	Swing
To the Coalition	40%	38%	-2%
To Labor	60%	62%	+2%
Total	100%	100%	-

Federal election primary votes			
	2019	2022	Swing
Greens	10.4%	12.3%	+1.9%
Independents	3.4%	5.3%	+1.9%
One Nation	3.1%	5.0%	+1.9%
UAP	3.4%	4.1%	+0.7%
Other minor parties	4.9%	5.1%	+0.2%

Observations of the Results

“The Liberals and Nationals increased their vote in only 16 of the 151 seats, their best results a 13.2% swing in Lyons in Tasmania and a 14.5% swing in Herbert”.

The Australian, 4 June 2022

“Labor’s primary vote was just 32.6% down 0.8% from the 2019 election, but it still managed to secure a majority with 77 seats.

“Labor’s primary vote fell in more than half of the nation’s seats and by more than 5% in 30 electorates. Of Labor’s worst 30 swings, 18 were in seats it held before the election. Sixteen of the 30 were in Victoria. Labor’s vote rose in 67 seats, including 14 of the 15 in Western Australia. Its 10 biggest swings were in WA.”

The Australian, 4 June 2022

The Party started the formal 2022 election campaign period behind and at no point did the Party’s polling show the Coalition ahead of Labor. However, party polling showed the Coalition 2PP improved at least 3-4% over the campaign period in the key seats polled. In addition, the issue agenda moved to the economy and finances in the lead-up to the election, particularly among soft voters. Hip-pocket issues were the dominant concern of key seat voters, followed by the environment and then the national economy.

The overview of the result is concerning.

The Liberal Party now holds only four of the 44 inner metropolitan seats. One of these seats, which defied the odds in 2022 is Banks, due to the significant efforts of the local member.

The Party has lost nearly all of its inner metropolitan seats: 13 seats lost, 6 to Labor, 5 to Teal, 1 to Green, and 1 to redistribution. The Coalition now holds 4.

The Party has not held or provided any gains in outer metropolitan seats: 5 seats lost; 3 to Labor, 1 to Teal, 1 to Green. The Coalition now holds 16.

Of particular concern in the results is that in seats with high numbers of female professional voters, the Liberal Party only holds three of the top 30 seats where previously it held 15. In the top 50 seats by female professionals, the Liberal Party only holds 10 seats where previously it held 25.

The Party performed better in provincial seats but still went backwards: One seat lost to Labor. The Coalition now holds 10 of the 24 provincial seats.

The Coalition holds 28 out of 38 rural seats. This should be caveated by the previous losses of Indi and Mayo, which have not returned to the Liberal Party.

The only demographic class where the Liberal Party and National Party have a strong hold is in rural electorates.

No party that is seeking to form Government has a pathway to a majority solely through rural and regional electorates.

In addition, the results showed differences state by state.

As an example, the statewide swing against the Coalition in WA was 10.55% and saw the loss of five seats: Swan (-11.99%), Pearce (-14.23%), Hasluck (-11.89%), Tangney (-11.88%) and Curtin (-15.6% to a Teal Independent) as well as a Senate seat.

Of the 15 seats in WA, the Liberal Party have gone from holding ten seats to five, and Labor from four to nine with one Teal Independent. This is the worst result for the Liberal Party in WA since 1983.

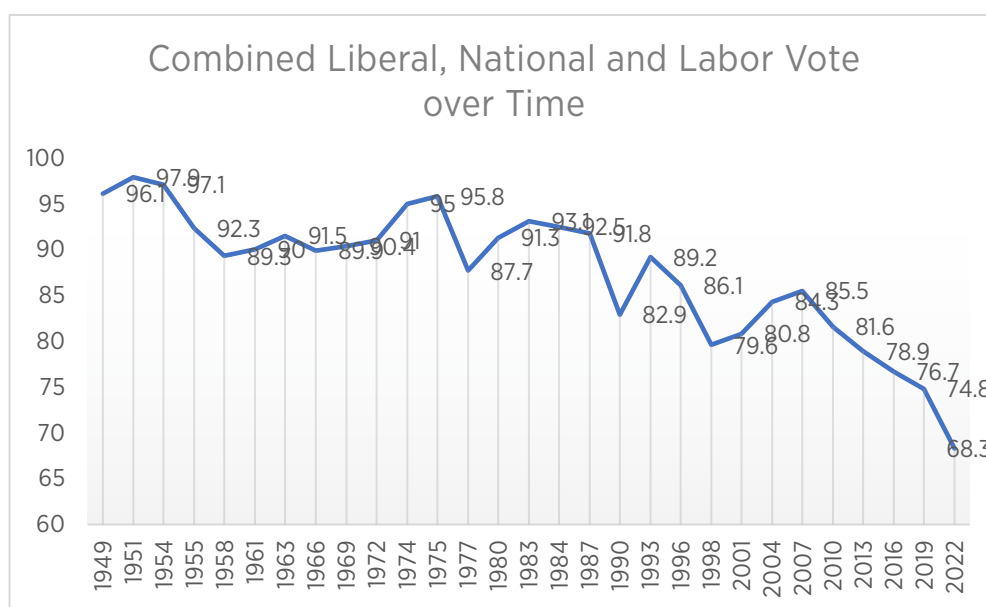
The decline of the combined Liberal and National primary vote is a trend that has been consistent since the election of 2007.

These results should also be considered alongside the historic low performance of the Australian Labor Party's primary vote in 2022 of 32.6%.

However, Labor's success was due significantly to its improved preference flow from minor parties:

- “Greens 85.66% to Labor (+3.45% and a record high)
- One Nation 35.70% to Labor (+0.92%)
- United Australia 38.14% to Labor (+3.28%)
- Independent 63.77% to Labor (+4.37%)
- all others 45.33% to Labor (+0.63%)”

Source: Dr Kevin Bonham, <https://kevinbonham.blogspot.com/2022/07/2022-house-of-reps-figures-finalised.html>



Strategic Context and Findings

Strategic Context

At the federal election on 21st May 2022, the Coalition was defeated after nine years in government. The Coalition lost 18 seats, all of which were held by the Liberal Party.

The Party lost 10 seats to Labor, six to independents (“Teals”), and two to the Greens.

The Coalition had a 5.74% swing against it on primary vote and a 3.60% swing against it on a two-party preferred basis. Every state and territory (except Tasmania) swung to Labor on a 2PP basis. The Coalition now holds its lowest proportion of seats as a share of the House of Representatives since the Liberal Party first ran in a federal election in 1946 (SMH, 24 May 22).

However, Labor received its lowest vote since 1934 and formed Government with the lowest primary vote of any government in Australian history. In 2022, Labor won 51% of the seats based on less than 33% of first preference votes.

The combined vote for “others” was at an historic high point.

In the Senate, the Coalition dropped four seats to 32, while Labor retained its 26 seats. The Greens won a seat in every state, increasing their seats by 3 to 12. The Senate crossbench expanded by two, an independent from the ACT and an additional seat in Tasmania for the Jacqui Lambie Network. These crossbench seats were at the cost of a Liberal Senator in both cases. In the ACT in particular, the Liberal Party now has no representation at a federal level.

The result was driven by a combination of major strategic factors, reinforced by a series of individual and state and local issues which together resulted in the most serious loss for the Party in its history.

In the 12 months prior to the Federal Election, there was a loss of political capital and an accumulation of negative issues impacting on the government. This included:

- The demands of managing the pandemic and the consequent loss of political focus.
- Allegations of the poor treatment of, and attitude toward, women within the Government and the Party, and by associated figures.
- Examples of scandal, disunity and instability within the Government.
- The longevity of the Government and lack of a clear forward agenda.
- The inability of a number of State Divisions to meet their responsibilities in a challenging political environment.

Attempts to reset were unsuccessful and made very difficult through the COVID-19 Omicron wave.

For success, a parliamentary team needs to demonstrate competence (in political management, as well as governing), unity and a real hunger to win – to the point where unity and discipline are such clear expectations and unwritten rules that outbreaks of ill-discipline are rare and more easily contained.

The Australian Labor Party had that hunger prior to the 2022 election. For the last two elections, our team only exhibited real discipline just prior to the campaign.

Importantly also was the sophistication, resourcing and co-ordination of our opponents which allowed them to exploit these problems.

Put simply, by the time of the election the Coalition had lost control of its brand, with the parties and their leaders being defined in the public's mind by our opponents. We were not in control of the politics, and we were unable to frame the electoral contest. Rather it was set by our opponents.

Very significantly, our opponents were not simply the Labor Party, but the combined resources of an extensive left activist apparatus, which were co-ordinated in messaging and resourcing in an unprecedented manner to exploit issues and drive the defeat of the Government.

These developments will require a number of major and urgent responses from the Party if it is to quickly rebuild. The Party must re-establish a strong, grassroots presence throughout Australia, its Executives must carry out their responsibilities conscious of the Party's electoral interests, the Parliamentary team must be united and disciplined, and a major investment will be necessary in building a significantly more sophisticated and cutting-edge campaign operation.

Findings

The Review has made a number of findings, many of which will be considered in greater detail alongside their respective recommendations. However, the strategically significant findings of the Review can be summarised as follows:

1. For most of the 46th Parliament the Government faced a challenge which in its demands on the senior levels of Government was equivalent to war-time.

The COVID-19 pandemic, which first came to attention in January 2020 (a little over six months into the term), required the almost complete focus and time of the Prime Minister, senior Ministers and their staff for most of the remainder of the term.

As a result, other issues including, importantly, political management did not receive the attention they normally would have. The Prime Minister and his team, rightly, placed the national interest first but at considerable political cost.

2. Concentrating on managing the pandemic meant the Government did not fully appreciate serious political developments which were taking place and did not respond as comprehensively or as quickly as normally would be the case.

The inability to travel to all parts of Australia, as would normally happen, exacerbated this. The political narrative and issues driven by our opponents were therefore able to be established and were not responded to and neutralised before the election.

A number of developments had a particular impact:

- a. A consequence of the National Cabinet was the emergence of some State Premiers as the clearly dominant political figure in their jurisdiction. These Premiers used their extensive media and social media platforms to reinforce their political positions and to corrode the political standing of the Prime Minister and the federal Government.
- b. The emergence of a very sophisticated and well-resourced grassroots activist network, which evolved into campaigns supporting allegedly “independent” candidates in previously safe metropolitan seats, could not be easily addressed. These campaigns evolved rapidly, many within the last six months of the campaign, and against a backdrop of seats with incumbents either diverted by senior parliamentary positions, where lockdowns may have limited traditional opportunities for direct voter contact, or where some (not all) local members did not maximise the advantages of incumbency in a marginal seat.
- c. A series of national political issues prosecuted aggressively against the Government were not sufficiently and effectively addressed in a timely manner.

Two, in particular, had a significant impact:

- i. Perceptions that the Government and the Prime Minister (in particular) had not adequately managed the response to the pandemic (despite Australia’s internationally leading position in responding) and, very importantly, that the Prime Minister was not attuned to the concerns of women and was unresponsive

to issues of importance to them.

- ii. A number of issues, including some related to the management of COVID, resulted in individuals who would otherwise support the Coalition switching their support to minor parties or independents on the right. This impacted not just the Party vote, but also its grassroots volunteer base.
 - d. As a consequence, the Prime Minister's standing with voters deteriorated significantly through 2021 to become a significant negative. The Prime Minister and the Party were seen as "out of touch". The leadership choice between Scott Morrison and Anthony Albanese became the most influential driver of voting intention during the campaign period.
 - e. The Coalition did not define Labor and its leader before the campaign. Consequently, Anthony Albanese came to be seen as an acceptable, low-risk alternate Prime Minister.
 - f. A different political context developed in some States as a result of the way in which individual State governments handled the pandemic. This was particularly the case in Western Australia, limiting the effectiveness of a national campaign and national message.
 - g. The lockdowns had implications for local campaigning, fundraising and, in some cases, the timing of candidate selections. The standing of a number of incumbent Members of Parliament in key seats was not what should be expected leading into a campaign.
 - h. The poor discipline of some members of the parliamentary team in the lead up to, and during the campaign, had a damaging impact on other colleagues' local campaigns.
 - i. The advantages of incumbency, including use of social media, were not fully utilised in too many cases.
3. The situation in some State Divisions amplified the challenges facing the Party, meaning it was not in an acceptable position to contest the election in some key seats.
- a. Pre-selections were delayed because of factional and other disputes meaning candidates were unable to be introduced locally in sufficient time before the formal commencement of the campaign.
 - b. Lockdowns, and the Party's current constitutional requirements in some States for important Party meetings to occur face-to-face, also

caused delays.

- c. Potentially attractive candidates also became discouraged from contesting pre-selection, narrowing the options available to the Party. While many excellent candidates were selected, in some cases the Party did not present the candidate with the strongest possibility of winning a seat. This matter was a particular problem in NSW.
- d. Feedback to this Review suggests deep frustration among Party members and supporters about the behaviour of some State Executives in being unable to make timely and necessary decisions to put the Party in a winning position in key electorates.

This resulted in members not being involved in the pre-selection process and consequently a reluctance to volunteer to the extent they had previously done so. Public discussion of internal Party issues and the media interest in them became a diversion for the campaign.

- e. The internal structures of the Party were unable to resolve these delays in a manner and timeframe demanded by contemporary political reality, raising the question of whether the Party's current structures, including the operation of its State Executives and the powers of the Federal Constitution, are "fit for purpose" to meet the demands and sophistication of modern elections. Factional problems were allowed to become governance problems for the Party.
- f. In addition, multiple submissions received from Party members at all levels expressed concern at the behaviour of a small number of Party members, including some State Executive members, which falls below acceptable collegial and professional standards.

Currently, the Party structure does not properly allow it to quickly and effectively address instances of unprofessional behaviour. This is unacceptable from a community, Party and political perspective. The Party must insist on the highest standards of personal behaviour at every level of its operations.

The Party, ultimately at the Federal Executive level, must have the means to deal with recurrent behaviour below acceptable standards.

- 4. The Liberal Party performed particularly poorly with female voters, continuing a trend that has been present since the election of 1996. The results from the 2022 campaign include:

- a. A majority of women preferred Labor in all age segments (18-34, 35-54 and 55+).
 - i. On a 2CP basis in four teal seats, independents won majority support from women across all age groups.
 - b. The Party's 2PP vote was the weakest among young women (aged 18-34).
 - c. Women aged 35-54 were the most likely segment to shift away from the Liberal Party.
 - i. Women aged 35-54 were the most likely segment to vote Independent.
5. The emergence of the Teals meant the Party needed to campaign on two different fronts. Polling in Teal seats showed voters in those electorates had a different set of election priorities when compared to traditional Liberal-Labor contests. This naturally also compromised the Party's ability to campaign with a single national message.

Information which has become public since the election confirms the high-level co-ordination between the Teal campaigns, and the extensive resourcing and the use of cutting-edge campaigning tools, particularly data and analytics.

The Teals are not a collection of independent entities. They are, by any meaningful interpretation of the term, a political party and should be considered by the electoral authorities as such.

6. Multiple parties and independents which broadly could be considered right-wing contested the election drawing primary votes from the Liberal Party.

The four largest of these minor right-wing parties polled more than 10% of the vote in 71 seats and over 15% of the vote in 26 seats.

Submissions received by the Review suggest factors influencing this included:

- a. Disenchantment among previous Coalition voters with the performance of the Government over a number of years.
- b. Issues specific to COVID, religious liberty and insufficient progress on addressing concerns on various cultural changes.

The preference flow from these parties to Labor improved in 2022. For example, 35.7% of One Nation preferences flowed to Labor and 38.14% of United Australia preferences flowed to Labor.

Concerningly, the flow of preferences from all minor parties to the Liberal Party, relative to 2019, decreased.

7. The combined primary vote for the two major parties was at an historic low point. An increasing number of seats are no longer decided as Liberal – Labor contests, and this has significant implications for strategy and local campaign execution going forward.
8. A particular characteristic of the 2022 election was the level of co-ordination among the Coalition’s opponents in the activist left on attack messaging, effective use of resources and issue prosecution. The resources of this extensive activist network were co-ordinated to support Labor, Teals and the Greens in an unprecedented manner to drive the defeat of the Government. The Party’s strategy for future campaigns will need to take this in to account.
9. In the top 15 seats by Chinese ancestry the swing against the Party (on a 2PP basis) was 6.6%, compared to 3.7% in other seats. There are more than 1.2 million people of Chinese heritage living in Australia today. Rebuilding the Party’s relationship with the Chinese community must be a priority during this term of Parliament.
10. A legacy of the pandemic was that many voters were focussed on their own circumstances, and many did not engage with the campaign until it was underway. The Government’s weakened political position, and lack of a cut-through political message, and policy programme made influencing the electorate in these circumstances very difficult.
11. The political implications of COVID manifested themselves differently in each State. Western Australia was a particular case. A significant number of submissions referred to the popularity of WA State Labor Premier Mark McGowan and the COVID border closures. While much of the country was locked down, WA continued to operate normally, and high iron ore prices bolstered the State Budget which reduced the economic ramifications of border closures. The standing of the Labor Premier improved significantly as a result, allowing him to become a major asset for Labor in the Federal election campaign.
 - a. The decision to support Clive Palmer’s High Court case against the WA State government in 2020 had significant electoral ramifications.

It has been pointed out in a number of submissions that “while it

would have been unorthodox for the Commonwealth Government to not join constitutional High Court challenge of this nature, the politics of it were underestimated, and the issue was ultimately weaponised by Labor against the Coalition”.

- b. Labor ran a separate campaign in WA to its national campaign. This included distinct local WA-themed advertising.
 - i. The Labor Party’s campaign messaging and material centred around the two themes that Prime Minister Scott Morrison had done the wrong thing by West Australians and that Labor would be a better friend to WA and “stand up for WA” in Canberra.

12. The pandemic is a very specific case driven by circumstances that are unlikely to be repeated, but that doesn’t mean there are not important lessons from the federal election loss in WA, particularly around state specific and local campaign messaging in the face of popular state premiers and the effective use of digital marketing to run shadow campaigns with negative messaging, leaving positive messages for members and candidates on the ground.

13. The Coalition’s agenda for a fourth term appeared to be limited and unclear to the electorate. The most significant policy announcement, on home ownership, was announced in the last week of the campaign. The sense the Government had “run its race” was allowed to develop as a result. Voters, including those acknowledging the Government’s effective performance in managing the pandemic, did not have a clear view of the Coalition’s priorities for another term.

14. The campaign operations in 2022, including CCHQ, worked well. While every campaign has some difficulties (which are addressed in this Review) in 2022 these were at a minimum.

The Coalition did not lose the election because of a poorly executed campaign. The position of the Coalition improved during the campaign. The relationship at CCHQ with the National Party was strong. The team at CCHQ worked well and were highly regarded across the campaign.

This team is a major asset for the Party and an important base on which to build for future campaigns. Retaining, training, appropriately modifying and resourcing this team to meet the evolving needs of contemporary campaigning should be a priority for the Party.

15. In 2022, the Party and the Leader did much of the heavy lifting on social media throughout the campaign. In contrast, Labor MPs, their Shadow

Ministers and Leader performed strongly on all major social media platforms and routinely outperformed their Liberal counterparts.

16. The track polling conducted across 20 marginal seats provided the campaign team with accurate data. The final track's measure of primary and two-party preferred vote was close to the final result. The benchmark polling program was professionally conducted and provided valuable insights.
 - a. Interactive Voice Response (IVR) surveys provided less accurate data and are not a substitute for high quality benchmark surveys.
17. Many of the matters raised in this Review were also discussed in the reviews of the 2016 and 2019 federal elections. Many of the problems identified have been constants for a decade or more.

The Review and Recommendations

Parliamentary Team

The Coalition Government had many achievements it can be proud of, including a world leading response and recovery from a once in a generation health and economic crisis.

However as noted above, there were too many examples of scandal, disunity and instability that eroded political capital, contributed to perceptions we were out of touch and hurt our re-election chances.

The Liberal Party's parliamentary team will rely heavily on the Party organisation and campaign teams to support their efforts to return to government.

A number of recommendations below relate to how this support can be more effective.

In turn, Liberal Party members should expect the highest levels of professionalism, discipline and unity from those privileged to represent our Party in parliament.

Recommendation 1: Unity and discipline of parliamentary team

The Liberal parliamentary team must recognise that greater levels of discipline, unity and focus on issues that matter to everyday Australians are needed and develop a culture where this is expected. Liberal Party members should also hold their parliamentary representatives responsible for this.

Party Structure

The long-term success of the Liberal Party is built in significant part on the work and decisions of its key organisational bodies, most importantly its State Executives. The Party is fortunate to have a number of State Executives operating in an effective and professional manner.

However, many submissions received by the Review from Party members expressed deep frustration at the lack of effectiveness of some (but not all) State Executives. Concerningly, submissions frequently also raised concerns regarding the standard of behaviour of some members of those Executives.

Too often, commentary about the Party and its internal affairs has become a defining public issue, overshadowing national messages from the leaders of the Party. Matters which should have been resolved internally all too often were deliberately made public.

While seemingly an internal issue that has no bearing on the general voting public, disunity and dysfunction (including branch stacking, mishandling pre-selection processes and factional in-fighting) have electoral consequences. They cause Party members to disengage, to not donate, to not volunteer their time to assist in campaigns, and often not to renew their memberships. Negative media attention on internal party matters also deprives local members and candidates of clear air in which to communicate compelling campaign messages.

Executives and Memberships

The Liberal Party is not a lobby group or a think tank. It is a political party whose objective is to form government to advance Australia. To do this it must be an effective political operation and appeal to the broader Australian community. Self-absorption by narrow sectional and factional interests are increasingly restricting the Party's ability to meet this test, as are inflexible Party structures. It is a pre-condition for revival that this changes. Maintaining an engaged and energetic membership and volunteer base is the responsibility of us all.

Given the persistence of these problems over a number of electoral cycles there is a need for specific action to address ineffective and unprofessional behaviour in senior Party committees. The Party must insist on the highest possible standards from its office-holders. In addition, doing so is necessary to reinvigorate Party membership and maintain engagement.

Recommendation 2: Responsibilities of executive positions

The Federal Executive to discuss the role and responsibilities of Party Executive members and develop a Code of Conduct to be signed by all candidates wishing to contest senior Party positions, including State Executive positions and Federal Electorate Committee membership.

The Code should set out clear requirements of behaviour and penalties for breaches. Party members should also, on applying for a position, waive their rights to take legal action against party members.

After endorsement by the Federal Executive the recommended Code should be discussed and adopted by each State Executive.

In addition, in some States, the Party was not able to prepare effectively for the Federal election because of the restrictions of COVID and the inflexible nature of their State Constitutions. Outdated constitutions meant the Divisions, unlike most businesses and organisations, were not able to accommodate the restrictions of COVID. For example, a requirement that key meetings must be held in person and an inability to use technology, such as Zoom, caused unnecessary delays and restrictions.

Recommendation 3: A fit for purpose constitution

Each State Division to review its Constitution in light of their experience during the COVID pandemic to ensure the Party has the flexibility to adapt in exceptional circumstances.

Specifically, Divisions should ensure there is the ability within their structures for Party meetings requiring a ballot to be held if there is legitimate reason for face-to-face meetings not proceeding.

The Liberal Party cannot survive without an active, engaged and growing membership base. In recent years the Party has not been attracting new members in the numbers necessary to campaign effectively in local communities, particularly members who are ethnically diverse, women and under 40 years old. There are a number of explanations for this including a decline in volunteering in the community more broadly, the fear of ramifications for businesses or professionals who are explicit about their Party allegiance, and a lack of priority by the Party itself to recruit.

Membership recruitment is vital not just to provide money and manpower, but to ensure that the Liberal Party remains relevant and representative. There is opportunity to attract new members in communities who may not feel their interests have a voice in state and federal politics, and who can add value to party policy development and community engagement.

Recommendation 4: Membership opportunities

Where they do not already exist, State Divisions to consider establishing branches or networks specifically for Liberal leaning interest groups such as small business owners and veterans. These branches should have cooperative arrangements with similar branches in other state divisions.

As a multicultural country, it is vital that all Australians see the values that drew them to Australia in the first place reflected in the Liberal Party membership and policy platform. For example, Members of Parliament who have developed close ties with multicultural groups have seen those relationships bear fruit in electoral success. But there is more than an electoral imperative at stake. As a matter of principle, our Party structures should be welcoming and engaging and be more representative of the community at large and develop opportunities not just for engagement but for inclusion in our activities and policy discussion and development.

Recommendation 5: Multicultural community engagement

State Divisions develop a clear and communicable strategy to better engage with multicultural communities that can be shared between and across divisions.

Local Branches and Local Campaigning

“Every county, every vote” - Campaign slogan, Fetterman for Senate, Pennsylvania 2022

In the 2022 mid-terms, the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee’s investment in field exceeded tv for the first time.

“Setting aside his earlier fears that an enlarged party machinery could be ripe for manipulation by party elders, in January 1840, he became a co-author of a circular that would ‘appoint one person in each county as county captain,’ with the precinct captain and section captain ‘to perform promptly all the duties assigned him.’ The Whigs, put on the defensive by the organizational structures of their Democratic opponents, were determined to tighten their own organization. ‘Our intention is to organize the whole State, so that every Whig can be brought to the polls in the coming presidential election.’”

Ronald C. White, p.92, *A Lincoln: A Biography*

The 2022 federal election was the most complex of recent times. It played out at many different levels including, specifically locally in many key seats.

A key finding of this Review is the effectiveness of our opponents in developing strong local grassroots volunteer operations. Local campaigning was a priority for our opponents and was fully integrated with their national campaign utilising, in particular, data and analytics to develop their volunteer base and to drive local issues, including attacks on our sitting Members of Parliament. In addition, of particular note is the rise in large-scale local volunteer campaigns organised by activist groups opposed to the Coalition.

Successful election campaigns internationally are now also being built on strong grassroots organisation.

There are now fewer direct Liberal-Labor contests. The campaign landscape is more varied and challenging. This will necessitate greater flexibility in future campaigns in local messaging, consistent with the national strategy. Going forward, the Party must be able to adapt its campaign strategy to suit local or State requirements, including much greater community focussed campaigns.

To be able to do this, the Party must rebuild its campaign skill base in all electorates across Australia. Local campaigning has always been important for the Liberal Party but in recent elections the Party has fallen below its previously high standards. Simply put, the Party no longer “owns” the ground in too many seats.

Consequently, redeveloping the Party’s local campaign structure must now be a priority for all levels of the Party. The decline in the Party’s volunteer base, in particular, is a major concern and must be addressed as quickly as possible. To match and better our opponents, the Party will need more members and volunteers, including those targeted to specific (e.g. ethnic, rural) parts of the community. And our volunteers must have the training to be politically effective.

A feature of the campaign in Teal seats was the level of training their volunteers had received to most effectively engage with voters while door-knocking and on persuasive ways to convey the key messages of the Teal campaign.

It is important to say that there are some State Divisions, and some parts of some States, where our local campaigns in 2022 were strong. But these are the exception to previous campaigns.

There is no reason to limit the number of people participating in training over time and all Party members should be encouraged to volunteer for these roles. It is important the Party has a large pool of well-trained local volunteers.

This work will not be accomplished without an engaged, motivated, and larger membership. As is outlined below, the best way for the Party to engage with Australians in the broadest terms is to ensure that the Party has a membership that reflects the community that it is seeking to represent in Government.

To engage the membership, the Review heard from submissions that the Party should provide more opportunity for policy and political discussion outside of the formality of Division Councils. The Party should conduct a pilot of a national conference in a space where members can interact freely with speakers, parliamentarians and leading centre-right policy experts and academics. The Review notes that the Liberal Party previously held similar national conferences in 2000 and 2003.

The Party should consider using a meeting of Federal Council (and State equivalents) over the next two years to also hold policy forums, candidate and volunteer training and other engagement activities.

Recommendation 6: A Party Membership Recruitment Plan

Each State Executive to develop a structured plan to renew Party membership and recruit volunteers in all key seats. Each Division to report to the Federal Executive by 30th June 2023 on progress in doing so, and twice a year thereafter.

Recommendation 7: Education of Party History, Values and Achievements

The Federal Secretariat, in conjunction with State Secretariats, to commission a programme of information on the history, values and achievements of the Party from the Menzies Research Centre to assist in recruiting new members and volunteers.

Recommendation 8: Local Campaign Readiness Survey

Staff Planning Committee should develop a template, and State Directors should ask FECs to complete a “needs analysis questionnaire” of their current campaign capability, drawing on the experience of the 2022 campaign, and to identify major gaps and needs.

As part of this, a team, comprising a representative group from across the Party of defeated candidates, experienced FEC Chairs and local campaign directors and key campaign volunteers be asked by the Federal Executive to make practical, “nuts-and-bolts” recommendations to the Federal Director on the needs of local campaigns.

Recommendation 9: Local Campaign Blueprint

State Directors, informed by Recommendation 8, should clarify the role and responsibilities of local campaign committees in future campaigns, identify the key positions and tasks expected of local committees, and the training available to improve the skill base of volunteers.

As part of this and to highlight the priority of this work, all FEC Chairs and local campaign directors to be invited to attend a Federal Council during the current term of Parliament. A series of presentations to be made to this group at the Council highlighting current “best practice” within the Party. FECs who have been successful in recent elections in particular aspects of local campaigning should be asked to share their insights.

In addition, training material should be developed to assist Party members and volunteers in carrying out their responsibilities locally to ensure that by election time, all members and volunteers should have a clear understanding of their designated roles and be equipped to carry it out effectively.

Recommendation 10: Local Campaign Leaders

Each State Director, after consulting their State Executive, FECs and branch members in their State, to identify experienced Party supporters who could accept leadership roles in local campaigns. These individuals should be invited to take part in specialist training to equip them with the necessary skills to be effective in key local campaign roles.

As part of this, the Party should consider the establishment of a regular training college open to all staff, candidates and local campaign leaders or directors.

Recommendation 11: Liberal Party Conference

The Liberal Party hold a Conference during this term to engage members, particularly young and new members, and involve them in centre right policy thinking through discussions and debate with academics and policy experts, and connect members with the party organisation through training and networking.

The Review received many additional comments and suggestions on the local aspects of the recent campaign. The following recommendations are based on these submissions and inquiries made by the Review:

Recommendation 12: Third Party Endorsement Forms

To avoid possible embarrassment or distraction it is recommended the Federal

Director develop a formal Endorsement Release form for use in developing Party materials which clearly indicates to the individual providing the endorsement their support may be used publicly. This is in addition to Talent Release forms.

Recommendation 13: Campaign and Membership Databases

There is, in some States a need to update and improve systems providing basic information to local campaigns. State Directors should undertake work to ensure that Party membership lists and databases are current and have accurate information relating to previous campaigns' volunteer and booth lists.

Recommendation 14: Local Campaign Preparation

There is a need to begin preparing for campaigns earlier including identifying as early as possible sites for corflutes, posters and other material. This should include early engagement with local campaigns on local government rules to identify if there is a need to adapt the supply of materials.

Recommendation 15: Local Volunteer Training

State Divisions to review the training available for booth captains and for local volunteers including on how to better capture data, and update the training provided as a result.

Recommendation 16: Campaign Communication

In some seats, candidates were unaware of campaign material being circulated by the Party. The Federal Director in consultation with State Directors to undertake work to ensure candidates know about material being circulated in their seats.

Recommendation 17: Election Commitments

An ability to effectively campaign on promises impacting on local communities is important for candidates. The Review received feedback that the development of projects for local campaigns was delayed and inflexible. It is recommended the process of developing local commitments be reviewed.

Recommendation 18: Visit Co-ordination

Local campaigns should be consulted as early as possible on a proposed visit by a senior Party Shadow Minister to identify the need and purpose of the visit and the arrangements which will be required. In the event of a visit by the Leader it is important there is appropriate integration of advancing between Leader's team and State campaign organisers.

Recommendation 19: Minimum Campaign Requirements

The Federal Director to develop a recommended minimum campaign to be run in all non-key seats not held by the Party.

Pre-selections and Candidates

The most significant responsibility of the Party at all levels is the identification, encouragement, training, selection and support of the most qualified Australians who can contribute to the government of our country in line with Liberal principles.

It was clear from the submissions we received, and our own inquiries, that this has not been occurring in too many instances. Significant feedback from Party members expressed frustration at the process of pre-selection in some States. It was clear from these submissions there is presently also significant alienation among the grassroots of the Party in some electorates. This has primarily (but not exclusively) resulted from delays in holding pre-selections and the subsequent exclusion of local members from involvement in the pre-selection in their seat. This was also compounded in some States by the restrictions of COVID lockdowns.

It was also clear that in an unacceptable number of cases the delays in holding pre-selections narrowed the field of possible quality candidates and resulted in the Party not selecting a candidate with a reasonable prospect of winning the seat. The Party's research over many years has shown that a strong local candidate who has the time to campaign performed better in close electoral contests than one selected late or with a problematic public profile.

In too many instances, the structures of the Party in the lead-up to the 2022 election were unable to resolve these logjams. This was a contributing factor to the Party underperforming in some electorates. Ensuring this does not occur in the future must be a priority as the Party rebuilds. The Party standard, except in the most exceptional circumstances, must be to ensure local involvement in pre-selecting our candidates.

Interventions in Divisions on pre-selection matters should therefore occur only in the most extraordinary circumstances.

Candidates

An important element of the Party identifying potential candidates is to ensure pre-selectors have a representative mix of the community to choose from. To successfully win seats, the Party must reflect modern Australia. It is therefore important the Party, as a priority, has a greater gender and ethnic diversity in pre-selection candidates.

There are many Australians with Liberal values who currently believe they have no prospect of being pre-selected or contributing to the Party. This is clearly not in the Party's interests and State Divisions must make widening the pool of candidates a priority. This work requires a dedicated focus but is not impossible.

It is noted that in recent years the Conservative Party of the United Kingdom and the Conservative Party of Canada have been remarkably successful in selecting and electing candidates representing the broad cross-section of the community.

Recommendation 20: Candidate Identification

It is recommended the Federal Executive, after consultation with State Divisions, establish a national search committee to identify high quality possible candidates who could be approached to consider standing for pre-selection.

This committee should include some members of Parliament nominated by the Federal leader with the balance appointed by the Federal Executive.

The Committee should conduct wide consultation across the Party and the community to identify outstanding possible candidates. This process may include appointing a contact group in each State to assist.

The Committee should report to the Leader, the Federal President and the Federal Director on their activities and findings at least every six months. (It is noted the NZ Nationals have a similar committee).

The responsibility of State Divisions for pre-selections is in no way changed as a result of the establishment of this committee. It is intended solely to widen the number and quality of candidates to be considered in a pre-selection.

It remains the responsibility of State Divisions to nurture, encourage and select candidates. But for the Party to be successful identifying outstanding candidates must be a core responsibility at every level of the Party to ensure the best qualified potential candidates are applying for pre-selection.

There were a number of problems during the 2022 campaign which resulted from poor or insufficient vetting of the candidates pre-selected. This, in part, resulted from the out-sourcing of vetting to specialist organisations. As a generalisation, this work was done to a high standard but there were a number of cases where issues of political sensitivity were not identified.

The processes used by the party to assess candidates against section 44 (citizenship) criteria were strong and helped the party avoid the loss of candidates after the close of nominations. The system which the Federal Secretariat put in place identified issues with at least ten candidates which were subsequently resolved. In short, this part of the vetting process was robust and worked.

Vetting a political candidate is more complex than vetting an individual for a role in the private sector, remembering that a political candidate is subjected to the highest level of scrutiny. A number of States used external third-party vetting companies to vet potential candidates. A number of times matters were overlooked because those undertaking the work lacked the necessary political experience to

properly identify potentially sensitive issues. No Division can delegate their responsibility regarding the vetting of candidates, and while outsourcing can be a useful tool in conducting checks, it should be a complementary rather than a replacement service.

Recommendation 21: Candidate Vetting

If the vetting of candidates for pre-selection is outsourced to a professional firm, the relevant Party Division should ensure an oversight process involving an in-house review to ensure quality assurance.

Timing of Pre-selections

Pre-selections should be held at a time which gives the Party maximum opportunity to win a seat. This was not the case in too many instances in the lead-up to the 2022 election. As a generalisation, pre-selections should be held earlier than they were in the last two electoral cycles. But there must be flexibility to ensure a quality candidate is accommodated if necessary, or if there is another serious reason to delay (for example, redistributions).

Recommendation 22: Pre-selection Timeline

After consultation with the Federal Leader and State Directors, the Federal Director should recommend the timeline for key pre-selections. This should be endorsed by the Federal Executive and State Divisions except in the most extraordinary circumstances (which should be reported to the Federal Executive).

The experience of the Party in recent elections where a number of Divisions did not conduct some key pre-selections in a politically timely way cannot continue in the future if the Party is to present strong candidates with a prospect of winning seats.

Recommendation 23: Ensuring Adherence to Timelines

The Federal Executive to consider adopting a series of thresholds to respond to State Divisions which have not complied with the recommended pre-selection timeline. These thresholds should be at least at six months, two months and one month from the potential issuing of the writs for an election. The Federal Council should consider amending the Party Constitution to enable the Federal Executive to intervene at these trigger points in a way to enable pre-selections to be held.

In those States which hold plebiscites, an FEC must perform to a certain level and meet basic performance criteria before being able to conduct a successful plebiscite. To be genuinely representative of the community, and in the Party's interests, there should also be a minimum number of local Party members in the electorate.

Recommendation 24: Conduct of Pre-selections

State Directors to recommend a minimum threshold for an electorate to have a plebiscite pre-selection.

Responsibility of Pre-selectors

The Party owes a great debt to all those who nominate for pre-selection. The reality of politics is that most are not selected to be a candidate, but they honour the Party by coming forward, allowing a strong group of people to be considered. All who contest pre-selection deserve to be treated professionally and with respect. Regrettably, in submissions received by the Review, a number of cases were discussed where this did not occur. There are enough disincentives to discourage people to contest pre-selection without unprofessional behaviour by pre-selectors. The Party has a responsibility to address this going forward.

Recommendation 25: Informed and responsible pre-selections

The Staff Planning Committee recommend to the Federal Executive a common standard to be adopted by State Executives regarding the responsibility of pre-selectors. This should involve background briefing on the seat, including demographic trends, and the obligation to act professionally in dealing with candidates.

Pre-selected Candidates

A number of candidates at the 2022 election discussed with the Review the support they received after being pre-selected. Most were highly complementary, but it was clear that, in some cases, support was not at an adequate level. Candidates need to be fully and professionally supported from the time of their pre-selection. Prior to pre-selection it must be made clear to candidates what will be expected of them and the resources which will (and will not) be provided.

Recommendation 26: Candidate Preparation

It is recommended the Federal Executive, on advice from the Federal Director, set a Party-wide set of standards and requirements for future candidates and for the support needed to ensure they are able to campaign successfully. It will be the responsibility of State Divisions to implement these decisions.

As part of this, the Staff Planning Committee to review the training available to candidates, including the feasibility of holding a series of “candidate schools” in the lead-up to the next campaign.

This review to specifically consult on training support which can be given to female candidates who are pre-selected.

Unsuccessful Candidates and Former Parliamentarians

The Party has not been good in the aftercare of candidates who are unsuccessful at an election. The Party owes these fellow members a great deal. Liaison with unsuccessful candidates, particularly in the first twelve months after an election, should be a particular responsibility of State Presidents.

Recommendation 27: Post-Election Aftercare

The Federal Executive to develop a Party-wide protocol for the aftercare of all unsuccessful Party candidates and unsuccessful incumbents.

Demographics

Female Representation

A significant number of submissions to the Review cited the Liberal Party's declining vote among women as a decisive factor in the 2022 election loss.

It is clear from the Party's research and post-election analysis that the Party's standing with women was an important factor in the Party's defeat.

The Party, since inception, has prided itself on pioneering gender equality in its office bearer positions. However, the Party has clearly fallen below this proud record in the number of women representing the Party in Parliament and in the number of women who are currently members, particularly young women.

At the 2022 election, in traditional marginal seats (where the final 2PP contest was between Labor and Liberal):

- the Liberal Party had significantly lower levels of support among women than men.
- a majority of women preferred Labor in all age segments (18-34, 35-54 and 55+).
- our 2PP vote was the weakest among young women (aged 18-34).
- women aged 35-54 were the most likely segment to shift away from the Liberal Party.

In electorates where Liberal MPs lost to Teal Independents:

- on a 2CP basis in four teal seats, independents won majority support from women across all age groups.
- women aged 35-54 were the most likely segment to vote Independent.

Liberal defectors in "Teal seats" were highly likely to agree with the statement that "the treatment or attitude toward women within the Liberal Party had a strong influence on my vote".

Immediately following the election, a clear majority of Australians (across different electorates) agreed with the statement that “the Liberal Party has fallen behind the views of middle Australia”.

In the current Parliament, 39% of members of the House of Representatives and more than 55% of senators across all parties are women. This is a record. However, the Liberal Party has the lowest number of Liberal women in our parliamentary ranks since 1993: nine (out of 42 – 21%) female Members in the House of Representatives and 10 (out of 26 – 38%) female Senators.

Many of the submissions received by the Review discussed the reasons the Party is failing to attract female members and pre-selection candidates. The submissions identified many reasons, including but not limited to:

- a sense that the Liberal Party is failing to adequately represent the values and priorities of women in modern Australia;
- a lack of confidence that women within the Party would be encouraged to hold leadership positions or be encouraged to run;
- the increasing demands and expectations placed on our candidates, including media scrutiny and personal and financial cost;
- the potential for professional backlash on candidates from the corporate sphere;
- the potential for commercial backlash for those candidates who run their own businesses; and
- the lack of co-ordinated support for unsuccessful candidates means that it is difficult to get good candidates to run twice.

In addition, it is important for the Party to understand the implications of the “Set the Standard” report (also known as the Jenkins Report) going forward.

The report was commissioned by the Morrison Government to recommend standards to ensure parliamentary workplaces are safe and respectful. The recommendations of the report were accepted by all parties, including the Liberal Party.

Recommendation 8 of the Jenkins Report addresses diversity and inclusion in the parliamentary departments, and specifies:

- “Leaders of the parliamentary departments should advance gender equality, diversity and inclusion within parliamentary departments by:
- (a) adopting specific actions to increase gender balance and diversity in leadership roles
 - (b) collecting and publicly reporting on workforce composition and leadership by diversity characteristics.”

This means the Liberal Party will need to report to the Parliament annually on its actions to improve gender diversity in leadership roles. The first of these reports is due to be finalised in mid-January 2023 for tabling in Parliament in February 2023.

The Liberal Party is now at a point where it must address diversity in its selection of candidates and office holders. In particular, it is important the Federal and State Executives of the Party address this matter in an expedient manner well before the next federal election. It is the responsibility of all parts of the Party to assist in improving its performance in this regard.

Specifically, if the Party is to fully reflect the Australian community the objective must be to improve the level of female members, particularly younger women, and to increase the level of representation of women as successful members of parliament, not just as candidates. The Party must therefore ensure that all Divisions are working to increase female membership, particularly of women under 50. The Party must also ensure there is a much larger number of high-quality female candidates contesting key, winnable seats at the next election. It is expected that by broadening the membership base with young women, and retaining them, that this will assist in identifying strong pre-selection candidates.

It is noted some Divisions currently have targets for the number of female candidates. This should now be adopted by all States.

Recommendation 28: Female Representation in Parliament

The Federal Executive to adopt a target of 50% female representation within our Parliamentary ranks within ten years or three terms, and to adopt practical measures to increase the female representation in the Parliament as quickly as possible.

Each Division to report to Federal Executive by 30th June 2023 and every six months thereafter on progress toward meeting the target.

The manner in which this is achieved should be up to individual state divisions. As such, each state division should set and articulate their own internal targets for recruiting, developing and pre-selecting female candidates and the manner in which they intend to achieve that target.

Recommendation 29: Female Representation in Organisation

To improve the pipeline of experience and talent within our Divisions, State Executives to establish a target of 50% for female membership, and female members in leadership roles within the organisation and branch structures.

Each Division to report to Federal Executive by 30th June 2023 and every twelve months thereafter on progress toward meeting the target.

To achieve these objectives, widening the pool of available candidates for Party positions and pre-selection will be necessary. Current and former female Coalition staff, elected representatives and office-bearers are a wonderful and under-utilised asset for the Party. To encourage greater female participation in the Party the experience of this important group should be drawn on.

Mechanisms used by other parties to promote this aim can be matched, including supporting the professional development and nurturing of talented female candidates, staff and members.

It is important that the resourcing of this network be done in line with current efforts and will require additional effort from all parts of the Party who will need to be responsible for ensuring its success.

The network should have an active and ongoing presence. Activities should include connecting network members to each other and to professional opportunities (including pre-selection, and employment within parliamentary and party operations), training, mentoring, events and exchange of ideas in an environment separate from the activities of state divisions.

The network should be overseen by an honorary advisory committee of current and former parliamentarians, staff and members to ensure that it is informed by lived experience. The day-to-day operation of the network should be run within the Federal Secretariat.

Recommendation 30: Establish the Dame Margaret Guilfoyle Network

The Liberal Party should establish a network to engage current and former female parliamentarians, staff, and members, with the aim of promoting greater female representation in Parliament, and provide opportunities and avenues for continued involvement for professional women associated with the Party. This network should:

- be funded through a combination of the Enid Lyons Fighting Fund, and that the Party seek an annual contribution of fundraising from all state and federal parliamentarians, and through an annual subscription for membership;
- include a scholarship for talented women to invest in their further education and professional development, with a particular view to public service in Parliament or the party;
- connect Liberal women with opportunities for employment within parliamentary offices and party divisions; and
- be governed by an honorary advisory committee that reports to the Federal Director.

Politics is a demanding profession requiring specialist skills and knowledge. While there is some information and training available for women interested in applying for pre-selection, there is a clear need for this to be improved and made available more widely and regularly.

Recommendation 31: Female Candidate Support

The Staff Planning Committee, in consultation with current female MPs and unsuccessful female candidates, develop a training curriculum or template open to female members of the Party who may be interested in applying for pre-selection and for all pre-selected female candidates.

Importantly, the responsibility for attracting female membership and recruiting and pre-selecting female candidates must be recognised by and reinforced to all levels of the Liberal Party – membership and organisation, parliamentary team and the professional wing.

Multicultural Communities

The swing against the Liberal Party was significantly greater in electorates which have a higher concentration of voters of Chinese ancestry. In the top 15 seats by Chinese ancestry the swing against the Party (on a 2PP basis) was 6.6%, compared to 3.7% in other seats.

There were a number of reasons for this, including a perception the previous Government's criticisms of the CCP government of China included the wider Chinese community more generally. This was obviously incorrect but the Party's political opponents pushed this perception among voters of Chinese heritage in key seats in 2022.

According to the most recent census, 5.5% (1.4 million) of Australia's population identify as having Chinese ancestry. This has increased from 3% in 2001, and 5.2% in 2016. Rebuilding the Party's relationship with the Chinese community must therefore be a priority during this term of Parliament.

There is a particular need for the Party's representatives to be sensitive to the genuine concerns of the Chinese community and to ensure language used cannot be misinterpreted as insensitive.

The Liberal Party also continues to under-perform among other culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities. The Party must build and strengthen its relationships over this term of parliament with CALD communities. This is an important task which the whole parliamentary team – including patron senators – and the Party organisation should play a role in.

Recommendation 32: CALD Community Engagement

The Parliamentary Team to develop an outreach programme for Party MPs and Senators to CALD communities, in particular the Chinese Australian community and to review the need for the appointment of additional staff with bilingual language skills.

Teal Candidates and Campaigns

“an advertising campaign that borrowed from both corporate marketing and cutting-edge US political campaigns....”

“opinions are formed over the long term, by osmosis. By reserving the advertising until the final weeks, campaigns miss what we call the persuasion window. Teal campaigns took full advantage of that window, which was the foundation of their success.”

“The voters in Kooyong, for example, saw an on-line ad promoting Monique Ryan an average of 251 times each over the course of the campaign”.

“our digital war room built an on-line message testing system that would not consider the results until a message had been seen at least 5000 times.”

Ed Coper (responsible for Teal digital advertising), Sydney Morning Herald, 6 June 2022

“Mr Coper said the majority of the work was done on Facebook....YouTube was the other main digital platform....”

Australian Financial Review, 28 May 2022

On 21st May, the Liberal Party lost six seats to independent Teal candidates. The Party also lost two seats in Brisbane to the Greens.

These results were the culmination of lengthy, well-resourced, grassroots focussed campaigns in previously “safe” Liberal seats.

The Teal campaigns were professionally run and driven by advanced technical support, including cutting-edge campaigning assistance from the United States. The campaigns sought to exploit the position of the Federal Government on a range of issues, particularly perceptions of its responsiveness to concerns of women, integrity and climate change. This was assisted by third party activist groups who aggressively pushed attacks on Liberal sitting members allowing Teal candidates to remain positive in their messaging.

In each seat the Teals developed a large volunteer base which was trained to a high level, particularly on voter persuasion and messaging, phone canvassing, door knocking, voter interaction and scrutineering.

In addition both Labor and the Greens ran minimal campaigns in Teal seats and the “Teals” were not active in Brisbane leaving the ground there free for the Greens. It should be noted that in Queensland, the lack of a Teal campaign led to seats with similar demographics as those in New South Wales and Queensland becoming

vulnerable to Greens campaigns. These campaigns were supported by similar ground campaigns that saw volunteers and voters targeted

In some, but not all, of these seats the Liberal Party local infrastructure, including its volunteer support base, was clearly not at a level needed to contest an intense marginal seat campaign.

It was clear to the Party during the campaign that Teal candidates were gaining support and threatening sitting Liberal MPs. The Party's polling in these seats was clear on the improved standing of the Teal candidates and the Party's campaigns in these seats were briefed accordingly.

Nevertheless, the Party was out-campaigned in seats which have formed the foundation of the Party's parliamentary representation for generations. Long-term Liberal voters become alienated from the Party for a range of reasons.

As mentioned elsewhere in this Review, in electorates where Liberal MPs lost to Teal Independents:

- On a 2CP basis, independents won majority support from women across all age groups.
- Women aged 35-54 were the most likely segment to vote Independent.

Liberal defectors in Teal seats were highly likely to agree with the statement that "the treatment or attitude toward women within the Liberal Party had a strong influence on my vote".

It is only after the election that detailed information has started to become available regarding the level of resourcing, co-ordination and sophistication of the Teal campaign. A large amount of this material has come to the attention of the Review and will be made available to the Federal Secretariat. It is important that as part of the preparations for the next federal election all available information on the Teal campaigns is gathered and analysed. It is, however, very clear that, from a campaigning perspective, the "Teals" are not a series of "independent" entities. They are, for all intents and purposes, and by any meaningful interpretation of the term, a political party and should be treated as such going forward.

As public office-holders it is legitimate the Teal MPs are publicly held to account for their activities and their votes in Parliament. The Liberal Party must monitor Teal statements and commitments as they will be the basis for future candidates campaigning against Teal incumbents. In addition, public comments by Teal campaign leaders are foreshadowing the possibility of Teal campaigns in additional seats currently held by the Coalition at the next election. The Party should be conscious of candidates as they are announced and work with Liberal incumbents to develop plans to counter these future candidates' campaigns.

Liberal Primary Vote and Swing in Teal Seats

	Liberal Primary	Liberal Swing	Ind Primary	Labor Primary	Labor Swing	Green Primary	Green Swing
Kooyong	42.7%	-6.5%	40.3%	6.9%	-10.6%	6.3%	-14.8%
Mackellar	41.4%	-11.6%	38.1%	8.2%	-8.7%	6.1%	-5.4%
Goldstein	40.4%	-12.3%	34.5%	11.0%	-17.3%	7.8%	-6.2%
Curtin	41.3%	-12.7%	29.5%	14.0%	-4.6%	10.4%	-4.9%
North Sydney	38.0%	-13.9%	25.2%	21.4%	-3.6%	8.6%	-5.1%
Wentworth	40.5%	-6.9%	35.8%	10.9%	-10.0%	8.3%	0.8%

Kooyong

	2019	2022	Difference
Liberal Party	49.4%	42.7%	-6.7%
Combined Green and main Independent	30.2%	46.6%	16.4%

The Liberal Party is a national party which exists to form Government based on the widest possible support of the community. The Party must concede no seat and must vigorously contest the Teal seats at the next election. This will require the strongest possible candidate in each seat and a rebuilding of the Party infrastructure in each seat. It will also require specific strategies for each seat.

Recommendation 33: Teal Operations and Structure

The Federal Director to co-ordinate a specific project to identify all available information on the background, history and functioning of the Teal campaigns.

This should also include the collection of all available public information on the Teal campaign, the voting record of Teal MPs, their social media and other comments.

As part of this, the Party should work with relevant Divisions and Patron Senators to share information to assist in efforts to scrutinise Teal incumbent activities and public commentary.

Recommendation 34: Future Campaign Plans and Resourcing

The Federal Director, in consultation with State Directors, develops initial campaign plans for each seat won from the Liberal Party by Teal or Green candidates in 2022.

As part of this process, an audit be undertaken of the current state of the Party's infrastructure, including its volunteer base and fundraising capacity, in these seats.

As part of the Party's over-all review of its data requirements, the Federal Director to review the specific commitment of resources, including on data and

analytics, required to campaign in Teal seats, and consideration be given to the need for further detailed research and data analysis to provide maximum clarity on voters who switched from the Party in 2022

The Federal Director to identify possible future Teal target seats, work with incumbents and their Divisions to prepare their campaigns and integrate findings into the development of the Party’s strategy for the next election.

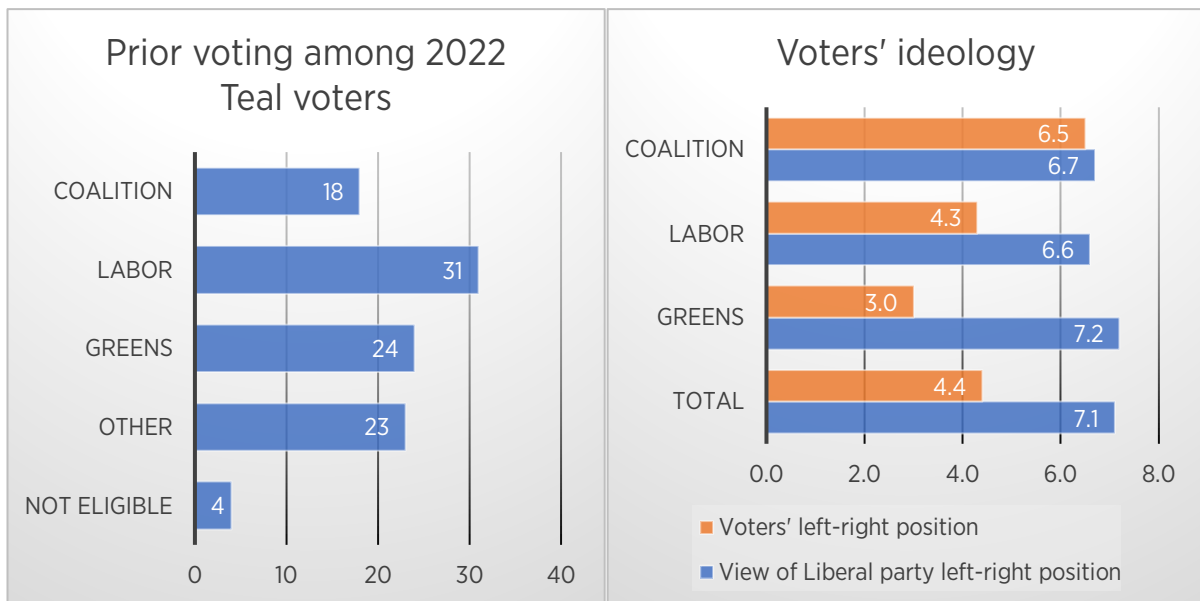
Recommendation 35: Branch Support in Teal Electorates

State Divisions to review the level of support for local branches in Teal seats to identify the necessary training and development required to adequately equip local Party members and volunteers to campaign effectively.

Recommendation 36: Early Pre-selection of Candidates in Teal Seats

The Party to begin the search for possible candidates with strong community credentials early, including wide consultation with the relevant local community.

“Based on their recalled vote in the 2019 election, a majority of Teal supporters in 2022 were tactical voters intent on unseating the incumbent Liberal. The figure below from the Australian Election Survey shows that 31 percent of Teal voters had supported Labor in 2019 and a further 24 percent had supported the Greens. Just 18 percent said that they had voted for the Coalition. The view that Teal voters are ‘disaffected Liberals’ protesting the policies of their party therefore applies to less than one in five Teal voters.”



2022 Australian Election Survey, Australian National University

Centre Right Voters

Multiple parties and independents who could broadly be considered conservative, libertarian or right-wing contested the 2022 election. This clearly impacted on the Party’s primary vote.

There were many reasons driving this, with differences between States and regions. But among the reasons given in many submissions received by the Review were disenchantment among previous Coalition voters with the performance of the Government over a number of years, issues specific to COVID, religious liberty and insufficient progress on addressing concerns on various cultural changes.

Four parties polled more than 10% of the vote in 71 seats and over 15% of the vote in 26 seats.

Compounding this, preferences from these parties or candidates did not flow back to the Party in the same numbers as the preferences of left-wing parties and independents came back to the Labor Party. For example, 35.7% of One Nation preferences flowed through to Labor candidates and 38.14% of United Australia preferences flowed through to Labor candidates.

As with other demographics and communities that the Party needs to consider in forming the broad appeal to voters, consideration needs to be made to how the policies of the Party better reflect the underlying values driving this segment of the electorate.

It should be noted that, unlike other segments, the issues raised by the pandemic such as lockdowns are unlikely to be replicated and provide a basis for the Party to rebuild equity on values such as the rights of the individual.

Recommendation 37: Loss of Votes

The Party to further examine the reasons for the loss of votes to minor parties and undertake further specific research on preference flows and the most effective means to improve the flow of preferences.

Recommendation 38: Values-based Policy

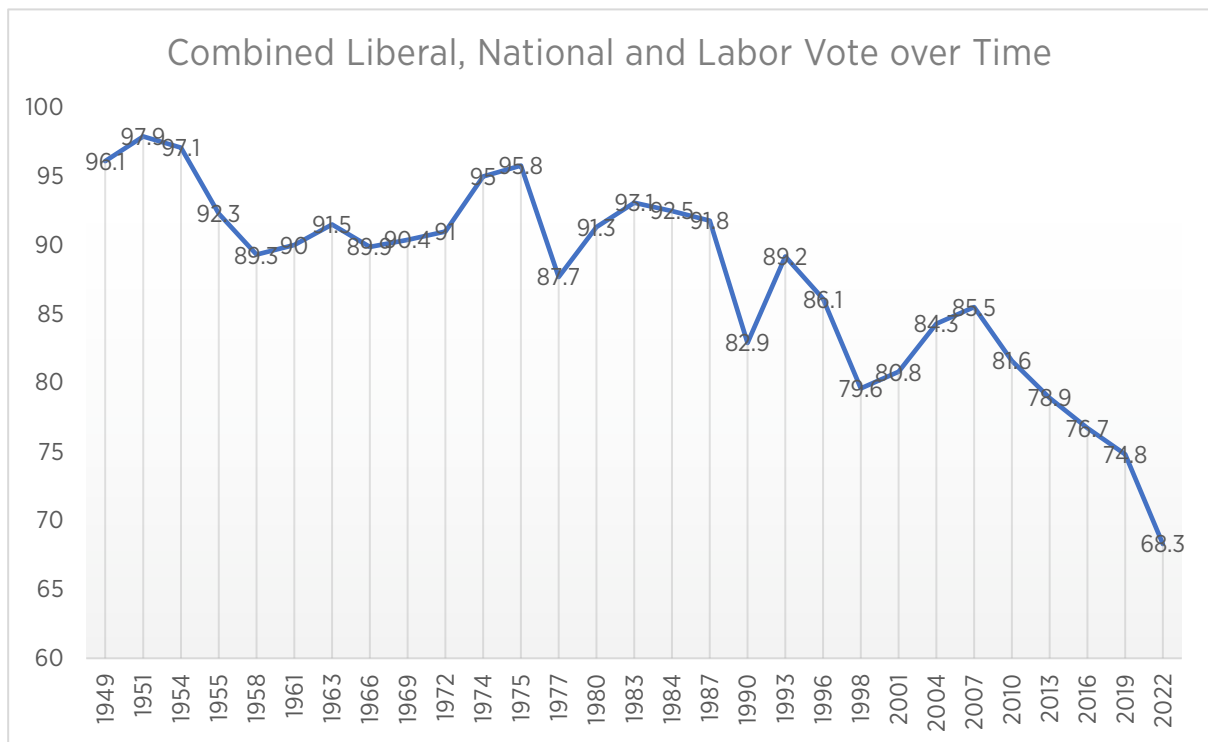
Consistent with Recommendation 7, the Party should conduct work to develop policy proposals, that are developed consistent with the Party's values, are tangible, implementable, and relevant to the current mainstream public debate.

Preferences

“in the 1960s and 1970s, around eight out of every 10 voters considered themselves to be a partisan of one or other major party. That figure has declined consistently since then, and in 2022 just 58 percent considered themselves to be close to one or other of the major parties. Almost one in four said they had no partisanship, the highest figure the AES has ever recorded.....in 2022 just 31 percent said that they had followed a ‘how to vote’ card handed out by the parties at the polling booth, with the large majority saying that they decided their own preferences. This compares with 56 percent who used a ‘how to vote’ card in 1996 when the question was first asked in an AES survey. Voters are now much more likely to make up their minds how to vote during the election campaign, suggesting that they are evaluating the parties, the leaders, and their policies, rather than following a party label. Perhaps most importantly of all, voting volatility has increased. In 1967, 72 percent of respondents reported that they had always voted for the same political party during their lifetime. In 2022 the same figure was almost half that—37 percent.....”

2022 Australian Election Survey, Australian National University

Since 2007, there has been a sharp decline in the combined vote for major political parties. With this sharp decline showing no sign of slowing, it is important that the Party has a renewed focus on preferences.



At the 2022 election, despite the Labor Party receiving 32.6% of the primary vote, they received a two-party preferred vote of 52.1%.

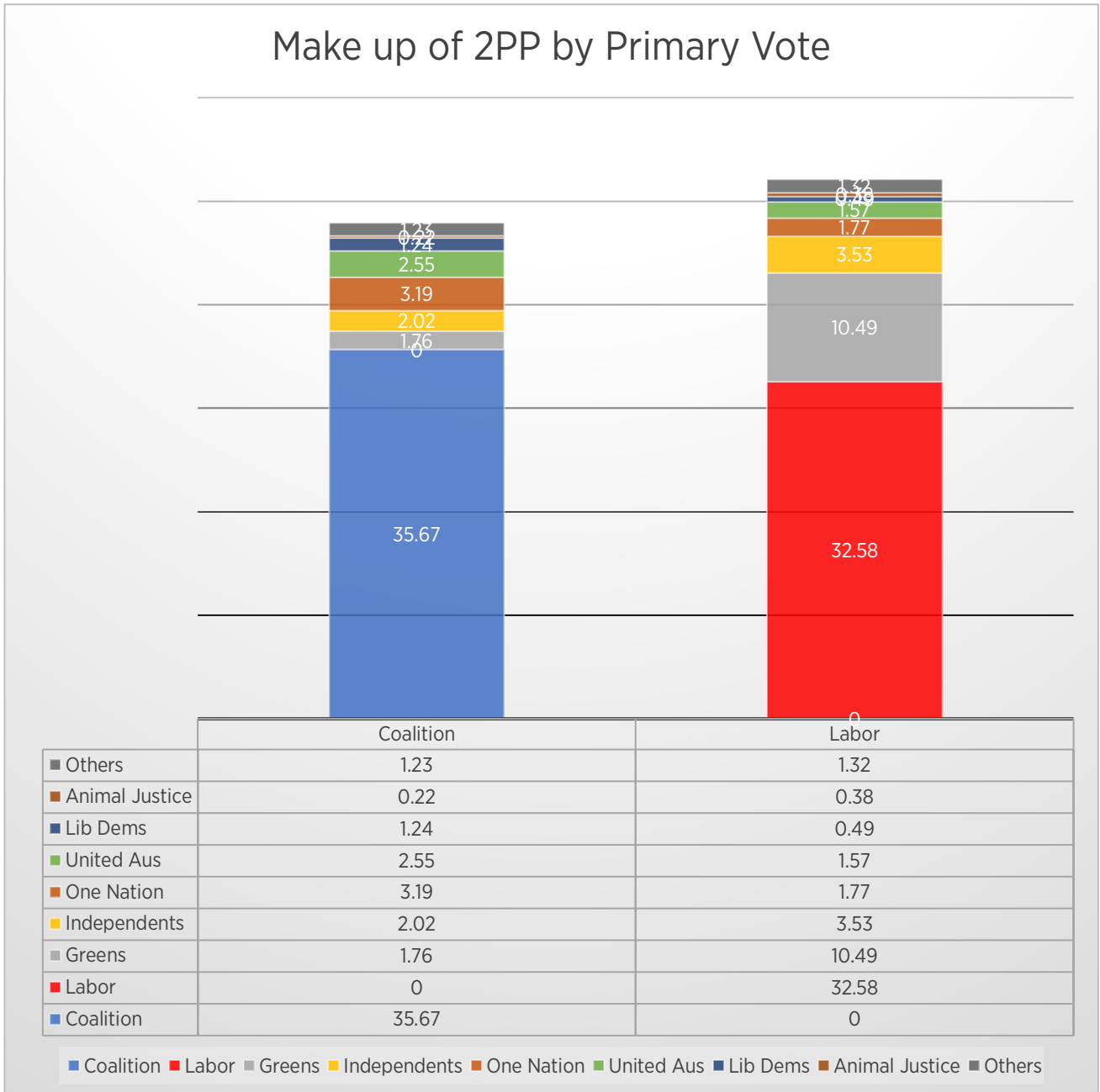
Labor’s success was due significantly to its improved preference flow from minor parties:

- “Greens 85.66% to Labor (+3.45% and a record high)
- One Nation 35.70% to Labor (+0.92%)
- United Australia 38.14% to Labor (+3.28%)

- Independent 63.77% to Labor (+4.37%)
- all others 45.33% to Labor (+0.63%)”

Source: Dr Kevin Bonham, <https://kevinbonham.blogspot.com/2022/07/2022-house-of-reps-figures-finalised.html>

The following graph and table demonstrates the importance of these increased preference flows to the final 2PP result:



Source: Australian Electoral Commission

Campaign Preparation

Contestable Seats and Incumbents

As discussed elsewhere in this Review, there are now significantly less “safe” seats held by either major party. This is a trend in electoral results over the last seven electoral events. In 2004, 86 seats were decided on primary vote. In 2013, 50 seats were decided on primary vote alone. In 2022, it was 15 seats.

There is now a larger number of previously non-traditional Liberal and formerly Liberal seats which are potential gains. The Party must make the development of the branch structure, volunteer network, and candidate selection in these seats a priority. Put simply, there are now more seats which require quality candidates and better organisation.

Recommendation 39: Early Key Seat Identification

The Federal Director, in consultation with State Directors, to identify seats which the Party does not hold, and which are potential key seats for the Party at coming elections.

As part of this work, each Division to establish a sub-committee of the State Executive to oversee the building of Party membership in these seats and the identification of outstanding possible candidates.

For a number of reasons, including the constraints of COVID, not all incumbent parliamentarians used the advantages of incumbency to the full extent possible prior to the last election. In modern politics, there is no longer any such thing as a safe seat.

The objective at the next election must be on winning additional seats, not just defending our current seats. Therefore, incumbency must be utilised throughout the whole of this term to maximum effect.

Recommendation 40: Incumbency Planning and Guides

The Federal Director to develop a recommended minimum work programme for incumbent members of Parliament, including voter contact efforts and an active social media presence by incumbents.

Campaign Headquarters and Party Co-ordination

The Review received many comments from across the Party complimentary of the work of Campaign Headquarters. CCHQ performed at a high level and ensured the “technical” aspects of the campaign, including support for candidates, was good.

In particular, the Campaign Director selected an outstanding group of individuals who carried the responsibility for the highly demanding senior roles in the

operations of the campaign. It is important the Party builds on this team for future campaigns.

Recommendation 41: Campaign Staff

The Federal Director to continue to identify people with the key responsibilities during the 2022 campaign who may not be available for future elections and select possible replacements for these roles as early as possible.

As a campaign approaches, there must be very close integration in messaging and content between the campaign, the leader and senior Parliamentary team. Work should be done to ensure that when the transition is made to Campaign Headquarters, there is a clear understanding of the tools and processes that will be used, in particular to how social media and digital teams will operate. This is particularly critical in opposition when resources are tight.

Recommendation 42: Parliamentary Party Campaign Readiness

The Federal Secretariat works to ensure that through informal arrangements the staff of the Parliamentary Party are ‘campaign ready’, and that both the Party and the Parliamentary Party’s approaches to social media and digital campaigning are aligned, consistent with Recommendation 44.

It is clear our opponents are utilising sophisticated campaigning practices and technology and in future campaigns the Party must be at the forefront of these developments to be successful.

Data, Analytics, Digital and Social Media

“an advertising campaign that borrowed from both corporate marketing and cutting-edge US political campaigns...”

“our digital war room built an on-line message testing system that would not consider the results until a message had been seen at least 5000 times.”

Ed Coper (responsible for Teal digital advertising), Sydney Morning Herald, 6 June 2022

Successful campaigns across the world are increasingly using data and analytics to drive platform-based grassroots campaigning. It is clear from public commentary after the election that the Labor Party, the Teals and activist groups were using information from highly sophisticated data and analytics to target their activities and resources.

Digital and social media platforms are now a central part of any successful campaign. In future campaigns they are likely to be the most significant single means of influencing voters. These tools are evolving rapidly, and campaign communications must change to be effective and achieve success. Platforms which were at the forefront of a previous campaign are now often overtaken by newly emerging platforms by the time of the next campaign. As with data and analytics, the Party’s aim must be to be at world’s best practice in this area. There is also a

need to deploy major emerging platforms early where practicable to ensure we maximise their benefit.

To be successful going forward the Liberal Party must be at the cutting-edge of developments in these areas and adapt and evolve our campaigning needs as new tools become available. This will require a significant commitment of resources by the Party. In addition to software and other technology, the Party will need highly trained professional expertise. These are not operational extras but central to successful campaigning.

In addition, it is important our incumbent Members of Parliament are at the cutting edge in their use of social media tools in their communications with their constituents. Our MPs need to be competitive with their counterparts and grow their audiences, reach and engagement with high-quality material and follower engagement.

Recommendation 43: Review of Digital and Social Media Practice

The Federal Director to review current international best practice campaigning and identify technology, social media and other specialist needs the Party will require for the next campaign.

As part of this work, the development of a budget outlining the requirements to meet the required upgrades to technology, data, analytics and digital campaign tools.

Recommendation 44: Digital and Social Media Benchmarking

The Federal Secretariat to develop data, analytics, digital and social media guidance and benchmarks, including minimum standards of engagement and recommended content for incumbents and candidates.

As part of this work, the Federal Secretariat to continue to provide training and assistance to incumbents, candidates and staff, and to provide updates to the Leader of the Liberal Party.

To strengthen the position of our incumbent Members of Parliament the Federal Secretariat to provide recommended social media content for use by MPs, including material to rebut Labor and activists' attacks.

Some freelance social media providers were used by candidates, particularly in New South Wales, in the 2022 campaign. In some cases, inexperience and unsuitability to the modern digital environment in politics caused difficulties and missed opportunities. Campaign resources were diverted as a result to correct mistakes. To maximise impact and to reduce the possibility of problems candidates must use providers approved by the Party for digital resources throughout the campaign.

Recommendation 45: Candidate Digital and Social Media Protocol

State Directors, in consultation with the Federal Secretariat, to develop guidelines for candidates on digital and social media activity and protocols to be followed.

Development of Professional Staff

As is evident from this Review, election campaigns now require highly skilled professionals in a large number of complex areas. The era of multi-tasked amateurs has long passed.

However, the Party is fortunate that over many years it has developed experienced campaigners with great knowledge and specialist skills. This team is a major asset to the Party and essential to successful campaigns in the future.

The Party will also require additional specialist professionals before the next election. In addition, the Party must always be supporting the development of a coterie of potential senior staff, particularly State Directors.

The Party should make additional efforts to remain in touch with former staffers as they provide a pool of potential senior staff at both the Party and Parliamentary level in future years. There currently exists a number of informal groups, such as the Former Coalition Staffers' Network, that are run on a volunteer basis. In future, these efforts will need to become more formalised to ensure the Party is able to draw on the full set of skills that exist in its broader network of supporters.

Recommendation 46: Liberal Party Network

Staff Planning Committee to formalise a network of former Liberal staff, parliamentarians and candidates to provide ongoing contact for the Party and for the members of the network, ensuring that they remain connected to the Liberal Party Movement.

Research and polling

The Review discussed the Party's polling with the campaign leadership and the polling providers. The Party's polling was accurate. The Party was aware throughout 2021 and 2022 and during the campaign period of the changing dynamics in the electorate and the challenge facing the Party.

Changes in technology and personal behaviour (for example the decline of landlines) make conducting accurate polling much more difficult. The Party's pollsters have kept pace with these developments. Going forward the demands and the cost of polling will continue to escalate.

The track polling conducted across 20 marginal seats provided the campaign team with accurate data. The final track's measure of primary and two-party preferred vote was close to the final result. The benchmark polling program was

professionally conducted and provided valuable insights. Benchmark polling during the campaign period also accurately measured the size of the threat from so-called “Teal” independents in the seats where these polls were conducted.

Some obstacles to providing accurate polling data to the campaign have become apparent. Late pre-selections in New South Wales did, however, delay benchmark polling in some key seats, reducing the flexibility in the polling program during the campaign period. Interactive Voice Response (IVR) surveys provided less accurate data and are not a substitute for high quality benchmark surveys.

In addition to this, during the campaign there was a significant demand for polling and in some cases, this demand was unable to be met. In some cases, State Directors were not informed of polling being conducted in their Division, and occasionally private polling was undertaken by individual parliamentarians.

Recommendation 47: Polling Accuracy and Consistency

The Federal Director to review the policy approach to polling prior to the campaign and provide an update to the Federal Executive on any required guidelines to ensure accuracy and consistency across the Party.

Recommendation 48: Commissioning of Polling

No parliamentarian or candidate to undertake or to commission private polling without informing their State Director.

Australian census data and public polling shows the community is changing rapidly in its beliefs and aspirations. In developing its plans in the lead up to the next election it is important for the Party to understand these changes.

Recommendation 49: Attitudes and values

The Party to undertake a “deep-dive values study” on the attitudes and values of the Australian community.

Campaign Mail Programme

The mail programme was a major logistical exercise, delivering tens of millions of mail pieces right across the country. Mail continues to have a high level of campaign message recall (just below TV and still above digital).

There was evidence in research that mail pieces had an impact in helping some key arguments cut through – including local MPs delivering for their community and Australia’s strong economic performance during COVID.

Continuous improvement in data modelling has and will continue to enable more efficient and effective targeting of mail to different audiences. The media landscape continues to change and the appropriate mix of mail in our overall media plan should be assessed again closer to the next election.

The success of the mail programme was contrasted with instances of pieces that had not been designed or cleared through Campaign Headquarters. In many cases, these pieces drew negative media attention for the candidate and the campaign more broadly. It should be noted that any piece of campaign material that publishes a statement of fact should be cleared through Campaign Headquarters.

In addition to this, the mail programme remains one of the largest logistical exercises undertaken by the campaign, while at the same time the ability for providers such as Australia Post to be ready and able to deliver outcomes in tight timeframes is becoming more strained, particularly in a post-COVID context. In future the campaign will need to consider how it can better prepare to account for this.

Advertising

"It was a no holds barred contest and the Liberals ran very effective negative advertising against Labor and that depressed our vote at the end. The Liberals were unsuccessful at persuading the electorate to return to them. So it's not surprising that other parties and candidates benefited from the late swing."

ALP National Secretary Paul Erikson, National Press Club, 15 June 2022

The Party carefully planned and executed its television, radio and other advertising over an extended period of careful testing.

Despite the Party having less weight on television (Labor outspent the Liberal Party by 1.3 times), the Liberal Party's advertisements had higher recall.

The Party's slogan ("It won't be easy under Albanese") had very high recall. The "*Hole in the Budget*" ad reinforced some doubt about Labor and gave Labor an even higher association with "higher taxes" than in 2019 when Labor's explicit policy was to increase several taxes.

In terms of cut-through, the Party's "*Hole in the Budget*" jingle is still being shared and disseminated on social media today.

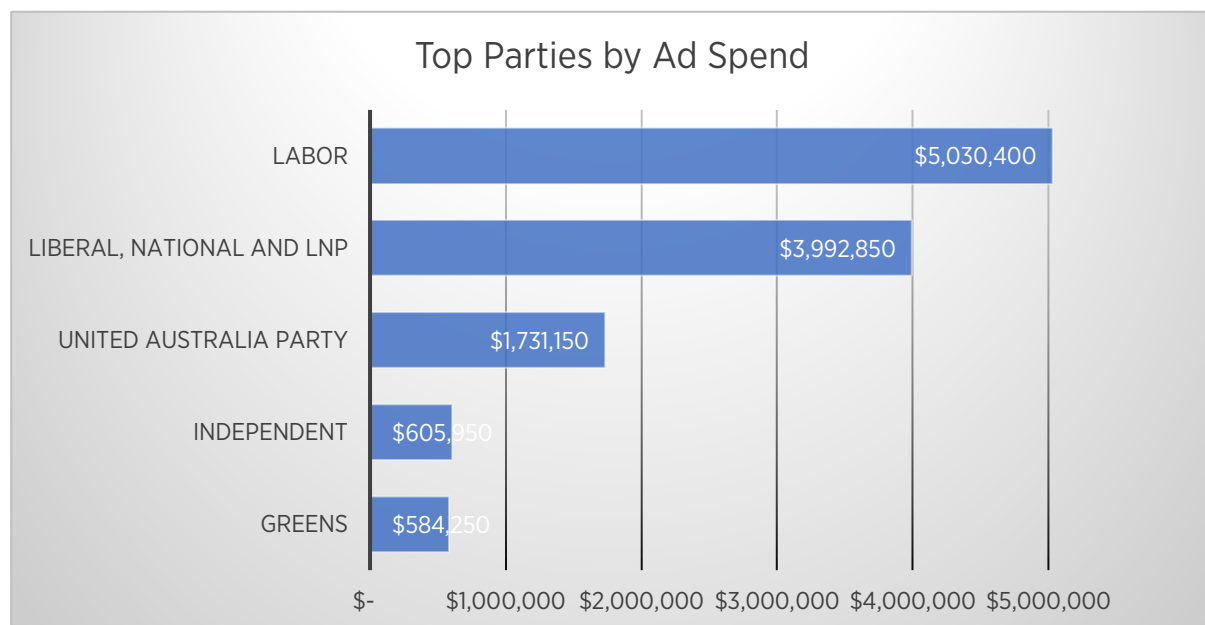
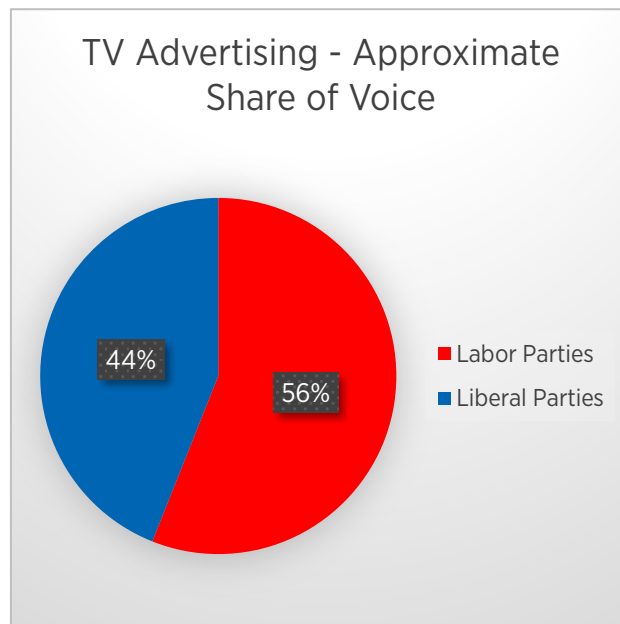
Fundraising

The Party's fundraising was competitive. However, available data suggests that the Labor campaign outspent the Liberal campaign on both television and digital advertising (see below).

Federal fundraising from the corporate sector has grown since the last election.

Federal online fundraising during the 2022 campaign also exceeded that of 2019. However, fundraising from high-net-worth sources remains narrowly based.

Total public funding received by the Party was reduced as a result of the lower primary vote compared to 2019.



Source: The Australia Institute Analysis of the Meta Ad Library

Conclusion

As it approaches its 80th year, the Liberal Party of Australia can be proud of its record in building Australia. The Party has governed, federally, for over 50 of those years. In coalition with the National Party, the Liberals have been responsible for almost all of the major policy decisions which have made Australia a prosperous, safe, inclusive and growing society.

But this Review is about the future.

There is no guarantee the next 80 years will be as successful as the previous 80. Whether it will be depends, in part, on the response the Party develops to the immediate challenges, unprecedented in scope and complexity, which the 2022 election crystallised and which drove our defeat and which are discussed in this Review.

Throughout its history the Party has achieved great success by uniting and building on our core principles. Politics evolves; it is not static. New opportunities and challenges emerge. It is clear already that Labor does not have answers for the problems facing Australia. It is a mediocre government. The Liberal Party therefore has an obligation to its members, supporters and, most importantly, to our country to present the strongest possible alternative at the next election. The Coalition is the only alternate to Labor or the possibility of a minority Labor government dependent on the left in the years ahead.

There is not a single answer to the Party's current challenges. Rather, as set out in this Review, there are multiple issues which need to be addressed at all levels of the Party. Beginning to do so will be the start of the path to victory.

It will require the integration of a clear central and national strategy with flexibility to adapt locally and regionally depending on the political situation. It will require the Coalition to rebuild in all parts of Australia and to competitively contest a broad cross-section of seats to achieve a stable majority government. And it will require the commitment of resources and personnel to ensure our campaigning is using the most up-to-date technology and other contemporary tools.

We trust this Review assists in the task of returning the Liberal Party to government.

Summary of Recommendations

The following is a summary of the recommendations that have been made as part of this Review. This summary has been provided for ease of use. Discussion of the specific recommendations and the context in which they are made is found throughout the body of this report.

Recommendation 1: Unity and discipline of parliamentary team

The Liberal parliamentary team must recognise that greater levels of discipline, unity and focus on issues that matter to everyday Australians are needed and develop a culture where this is expected. Liberal Party members should also hold their parliamentary representatives responsible for this.

Recommendation 2: Responsibilities of executive positions

The Federal Executive to discuss the role and responsibilities of Party Executive members and develop a Code of Conduct to be signed by all candidates wishing to contest senior Party positions, including State Executive positions and Federal Electorate Committee membership.

The Code should set out clear requirements of behaviour and penalties for breaches. Party members should also, on applying for a position, waive their rights to take legal action against party members.

After endorsement by the Federal Executive the recommended Code should be discussed and adopted by each State Executive.

Recommendation 3: A fit for purpose constitution

Each State Division to review its Constitution in light of their experience during the COVID pandemic to ensure the Party has the flexibility to adapt in exceptional circumstances.

Specifically, Divisions should ensure there is the ability within their structures for Party meetings requiring a ballot to be held if there is legitimate reason for face-to-face meetings not proceeding.

Recommendation 4: Membership opportunities

Where they do not already exist, State Divisions to consider establishing branches or networks specifically for Liberal leaning interest groups such as small business owners and veterans. These branches should have cooperative arrangements with similar branches in other state divisions.

Recommendation 5: Multicultural community engagement

State Divisions develop a clear and communicable strategy to better engage with multicultural communities that can be shared between and across divisions.

Recommendation 6: A Party Membership Recruitment Plan

Each State Executive to develop a structured plan to renew Party membership and recruit volunteers in all key seats. Each Division to report to the Federal Executive by 30th June 2023 on progress in doing so, and twice a year thereafter.

Recommendation 7: Education of Party History, Values and Achievements

The Federal Secretariat, in conjunction with State Secretariats, to commission a programme of information on the history, values and achievements of the Party from the Menzies Research Centre to assist in recruiting new members and volunteers.

Recommendation 8: Local Campaign Readiness Survey

Staff Planning Committee should develop a template, and State Directors should ask FECs to complete a “needs analysis questionnaire” of their current campaign capability, drawing on the experience of the 2022 campaign, and to identify major gaps and needs.

As part of this, a team, comprising a representative group from across the Party of defeated candidates, experienced FEC Chairs and local campaign directors and key campaign volunteers be asked by the Federal Executive to make practical, “nuts-and-bolts” recommendations to the Federal Director on the needs of local campaigns.

Recommendation 9: Local Campaign Blueprint

State Directors, informed by Recommendation 8, should clarify the role and responsibilities of local campaign committees in future campaigns, identify the key positions and tasks expected of local committees, and the training available to improve the skill base of volunteers.

As part of this and to highlight the priority of this work, all FEC Chairs and local campaign directors to be invited to attend a Federal Council during the current term of Parliament. A series of presentations to be made to this group at the Council highlighting current “best practice” within the Party. FECs who have been successful in recent elections in particular aspects of local campaigning should be asked to share their insights.

In addition, training material should be developed to assist Party members and volunteers in carrying out their responsibilities locally to ensure that by election time, all members and volunteers should have a clear understanding of their designated roles and be equipped to carry it out effectively.

Recommendation 10: Local Campaign Leaders

Each State Director, after consulting their State Executive, FECs and branch members in their State, to identify experienced Party supporters who could accept leadership roles in local campaigns. These individuals should be invited to take part

in specialist training to equip them with the necessary skills to be effective in key local campaign roles.

As part of this, the Party should consider the establishment of a regular training college open to all staff, candidates and local campaign leaders or directors.

Recommendation 11: Liberal Party Conference

The Liberal Party hold a Conference during this term to engage members, particularly young and new members, and involve them in centre-right policy thinking through discussions and debate with academics and policy experts, and connect members with the party organisation through training and networking.

Recommendation 12: Third Party Endorsement Forms

To avoid possible embarrassment or distraction it is recommended the Federal Director develop a formal Endorsement Release form for use in developing Party materials which clearly indicates to the individual providing the endorsement their support may be used publicly. This is in addition to Talent Release forms.

Recommendation 13: Campaign and Membership Databases

There is, in some States a need to update and improve systems providing basic information to local campaigns. State Directors should undertake work to ensure that Party membership lists and databases are current and have accurate information relating to previous campaigns' volunteer and booth lists.

Recommendation 14: Local Campaign Preparation

There is a need to begin preparing for campaigns earlier including identifying as early as possible sites for corflutes, posters and other material. This should include early engagement with local campaigns on local government rules to identify if there is a need to adapt with the local supply of materials.

Recommendation 15: Local Volunteer Training

State Divisions to review the training available for booth captains and for local volunteers including on how to better capture data, and update the training provided as a result.

Recommendation 16: Campaign Communication

In some seats, candidates were unaware of campaign material being circulated by the Party. The Federal Director in consultation with State Directors to undertake work to ensure candidates know about material being circulated in their seats.

Recommendation 17: Election Commitments

An ability to effectively campaign on promises impacting on local communities is important for candidates. The Review received feedback that the development of projects for local campaigns was delayed and inflexible. It is recommended the process of developing local commitments be reviewed.

Recommendation 18: Visit Co-ordination

Local campaigns should be consulted as early as possible on a proposed visit by a senior Party Shadow Minister to identify the need and purpose of the visit and the arrangements which will be required. In the event of a visit by the Leader it is important there is appropriate integration of advancing between Leader's team and State campaign organisers.

Recommendation 19: Minimum Campaign Requirements

The Federal Director to develop a recommended minimum campaign to be run in all non-key seats not held by the Party.

Recommendation 20: Candidate Identification

It is recommended the Federal Executive, after consultation with State Divisions, establish a national search committee to identify high quality possible candidates who could be approached to consider standing for pre-selection.

This committee should include some members of Parliament nominated by the Federal leader with the balance appointed by the Federal Executive.

The Committee should conduct wide consultation across the Party and the community to identify outstanding possible candidates. This process may include appointing a contact group in each State to assist.

The Committee should report to the Leader, the Federal President and the Federal Director on their activities and findings at least every six months. (It is noted the NZ Nationals have a similar committee).

Recommendation 21: Candidate Vetting

If the vetting of candidates for pre-selection is outsourced to a professional firm, the relevant Party Division should ensure an oversight process involving an in-house review to ensure quality assurance.

Recommendation 22: Pre-selection Timeline

After consultation with the Federal Leader and State Directors, the Federal Director should recommend the timeline for key pre-selections. This should be endorsed by the Federal Executive and State Divisions except in the most extraordinary circumstances (which should be reported to the Federal Executive).

Recommendation 23: Ensuring Adherence to Timelines

The Federal Executive to consider adopting a series of thresholds to respond to State Divisions which have not complied with the recommended pre-selection timeline. These thresholds should be at least at six months, two months and one month from the potential issuing of the writs for an election. The Federal Council should consider amending the Party Constitution to enable the Federal Executive to intervene at these trigger points in a way to enable pre-selections to be held.

Recommendation 24: Conduct of Pre-selections

State Directors to recommend a minimum threshold for an electorate to have a plebiscite pre-selection.

Recommendation 25: Informed and responsible pre-selections

The Staff Planning Committee recommend to the Federal Executive a common standard to be adopted by State Executives regarding the responsibility of pre-selectors. This should involve background briefing on the seat, including demographic trends, and the obligation to act professionally in dealing with candidates.

Recommendation 26: Candidate Preparation

It is recommended the Federal Executive, on advice from the Federal Director, set a Party-wide set of standards and requirements for future candidates and for the support needed to ensure they are able to campaign successfully. It will be the responsibility of State Divisions to implement these decisions.

As part of this, the Staff Planning Committee to review the training available to candidates, including the feasibility of holding a series of “candidate schools” in the lead-up to the next campaign.

This review to specifically consult on training support which can be given to female candidates who are pre-selected.

Recommendation 27: Post-Election Aftercare

The Federal Executive to develop a Party-wide protocol for the aftercare of all unsuccessful Party candidates and unsuccessful incumbents.

Recommendation 28: Female Representation in Parliament

The Federal Executive to adopt a target of 50% female representation within our Parliamentary ranks within ten years or three terms, and to adopt practical measures to increase the female representation in the Parliament as quickly as possible.

Each Division to report to Federal Executive by 30th June 2023 and every six months thereafter on progress toward meeting the target.

Recommendation 29: Female Representation in Organisation

To improve the pipeline of experience and talent within our Divisions, State Executives to establish a target of 50% for female membership, and female members in leadership roles within the organisation and branch structures.

Each Division to report to Federal Executive by 30th June 2023 and every twelve months thereafter on progress toward meeting the target.

Recommendation 30: Establish the Dame Margaret Guilfoyle Network

The Liberal Party should establish a network to engage current and former female parliamentarians, staff, and members, with the aim of promoting greater female representation in Parliament, and provide opportunities and avenues for continued involvement for professional women associated with the Party. This network should:

- be funded through a combination of the Enid Lyons Fighting Fund, and that the Party seek an annual contribution of fundraising from all state and federal parliamentarians, and through an annual subscription for membership;
- include a scholarship for talented women to invest in their further education and professional development, with a particular view to public service in Parliament or the party;
- connect Liberal women with opportunities for employment within parliamentary offices and party divisions; and
- be governed by an honorary advisory committee that reports to the Federal Director.

Recommendation 31: Female Candidate Support

The Staff Planning Committee, in consultation with current female MPs and unsuccessful female candidates, develop a training curriculum or template open to female members of the Party who may be interested in applying for pre-selection and for all pre-selected female candidates.

Recommendation 32: CALD Community Engagement

The Parliamentary Team to develop an outreach programme for Party MPs and Senators to CALD communities, in particular the Chinese Australian community and to review the need for the appointment of additional staff with bilingual language skills.

Recommendation 33: Teal Operations and Structure

The Federal Director to co-ordinate a specific project to identify all available information on the background, history and functioning of the Teal campaigns.

This should also include the collection of all available public information on the Teal campaign, the voting record of Teal MPs, their social media and other comments.

As part of this, the Party should work with relevant Divisions and Patron Senators to share information to assist in efforts to scrutinise Teal incumbent activities and public commentary.

Recommendation 34: Future Campaign Plans and Resourcing

The Federal Director, in consultation with State Directors, develops initial campaign plans for each seat won from the Liberal Party by Teal or Green candidates in 2022.

As part of this process, an audit be undertaken of the current state of the Party's infrastructure, including its volunteer base and fundraising capacity, in these seats.

As part of the Party's over-all review of its data requirements, the Federal Director to review the specific commitment of resources, including on data and analytics, required to campaign in Teal seats, and consideration be given to the need for further detailed research and data analysis to provide maximum clarity on voters who switched from the Party in 2022.

The Federal Director to identify possible future Teal target seats, work with incumbents and their Divisions to prepare their campaigns and integrate findings into the development of the Party's strategy for the next election.

Recommendation 35: Branch Support in Teal Electorates

State Divisions to review the level of support for local branches in Teal seats to identify the necessary training and development required to adequately equip local Party members and volunteers to campaign effectively.

Recommendation 36: Early Pre-selection of Candidates in Teal Seats

The Party to begin the search for possible candidates with strong community credentials early, including wide consultation with the relevant local community.

Recommendation 37: Loss of Votes

The Party to further examine the reasons for the loss of votes to minor parties and undertake further specific research on preference flows and the most effective means to improve the flow of preferences.

Recommendation 38: Values-based Policy

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the members of the network, ensuring that they remain connected to the Liberal Party Movement.

Recommendation 47: Polling Accuracy and Consistency

The Federal Director to review the policy approach to polling prior to the campaign and provide an update to the Federal Executive on any required guidelines to ensure accuracy and consistency across the Party.

Recommendation 48: Commissioning of Polling

No parliamentarian or candidate to undertake or to commission private polling without informing their State Director.

Recommendation 49: Attitudes and values

The Party to undertake a “deep-dive values study” on the attitudes and values of the Australian community.

