

2013 ELECTION CAMPAIGN REVIEW

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Review of the 2013 Federal Election Campaign

FOREWORD

The 2013 Federal Election loss for Labor stands as one of the most disappointing in our electoral history. This was a Government that came to power with so much promise and hope, and which achieved many remarkable transformational and enduring Labor reforms. These reforms in particular, addressed the many inequalities and injustices that had been bequeathed by the Howard years.

The key reasons Labor lost the election have been canvassed extensively in the media and public commentary and it is not the intention of the review to revisit that in detail.

The decline in Labor's vote that began in late 2009 and culminated on 7 September 2013 occurred against a backdrop of persistent and ultimately debilitating leadership instability.

The Coalition's deceptive campaign on government debt, carbon pricing and public concerns over asylum seekers arriving by boat, all eroded support for Labor.

Many of the 550 submissions received by this Review had a remarkably similar structure. They began by despairing at the Rudd/Gillard Government's leadership woes. They proceeded to explain, often in detail, why it had been a very good government in a policy area that was important to them. And finally, they expressed anxiety about the trajectory of that policy area under Tony Abbott, imploring Labor to draw a line through the past, rebuild, take up the fight to the conservatives and win back government.

From Party members at the Northern Territory ALP Conference to a defeated Tasmanian MP who spoke to the Review in Hobart, there was near universal agreement: it's time to move on from this period of acrimony and infighting. The responsibility of senior leaders in the labour movement, especially the Parliamentary Labor Party, is to ensure this happens and that the mistakes of the past are not repeated.

Labor's mission is to rebuild our Party and unite behind the Federal Leader Bill Shorten to win back government.

The direct election of the Federal Labor Leader for the first time has created a real sense of excitement in the Party. This has been added to by the announcement of Bill Shorten's plan to rebuild Labor along with Labor's strong response to the Abbott Government's first Budget.

In its first electoral test following the 2013 Election, Labor successfully retained the seat of Griffith following the by-election caused by the retirement of Kevin Rudd MP.

Unfortunately, Labor suffered a setback in the poor results of the recent Senate special election in Western Australia. Like the 2013 result, Labor must learn the lessons from this loss.

Our capacity to respond to these lessons is critical because Australians rely on a strong and effective Labor Party to ensure fairness and opportunity remains the cornerstone of the Australian way of life. This is more important than ever, particularly given that, with the exception of South Australia and the ACT, Australia is dominated by conservative governments. It is Labor's job to hold them to account while they govern and to work hard to defeat them at the earliest opportunity.

This report examines Labor's 2013 Campaign and focuses on practical recommendations that are designed to improve Labor's engagement with the community, the effectiveness of its campaigning and its support for activists in the field.

There is an incredible enthusiasm amongst Labor's members, campaigners and supporters for greater engagement with the community and a more meaningful say in how our Party operates.

They also expressed a strong desire to participate in campaigns that reflect and promote Labor values in both the policies they advocate and in the ways they engage with the community.

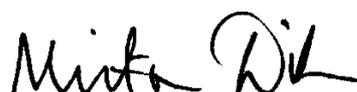
The reviewers support these views and believe they will only make Labor a larger, stronger and more effective campaigning force.

There has been a real renaissance in Labor's voter contact in recent years, and activists want to build their campaigns upon that, using feedback from the community to inform our decision making, rather than having those decisions dictated from on high.

We support these objectives and the recommendations of this review are designed to assist in their realisation.



Ms Jane Garrett MP
National Vice President



Councillor Milton Dick
Brisbane City Council

INTRODUCTION

Polling and the leadership change

Owing to persistent leadership speculation and the eventual leadership change so close to the Election date, the 2013 Campaign faced some unique and extremely difficult challenges. The likelihood of these circumstances occurring again have been reduced thanks to new Party rules put in place regulating the process for electing the Leader of the Federal Parliamentary Labor Party.

The reality for the 2013 Campaign though was that the leadership change occurred just over eleven weeks prior to Election Day, profoundly impacting on both the campaign strategy and infrastructure.

The factors leading up to the leadership change in June, and indeed the tensions and challenges that occurred during the Rudd /Gillard years have been canvassed extensively in the public arena. It is important for the purposes of this Review, however, to note the polling that preceded the Election and which helped fuel much of the leadership speculation prior.

During 2012 our Two Party-Preferred (TPP) vote rose from around 43 per cent and 44 per cent in the first half of the year to around 47 per cent and 48 per cent in the second half of the year.

However, in the period surrounding the faux leadership challenge of March 2013 the polls again had our TPP vote around the low to mid 40s with a primary vote in the low 30s.

The Labor Party's internal research in May, just four months from the Election, indicated possible swings against us of 18 per cent in many seats which would have seen us hold just 40 seats, not the 55 we retained.

By the time of the leadership change in June 2013, Labor had been behind in the polls for most of the past two years and our primary vote had dropped as low as 27% on several occasions.

After the leadership change our TPP vote crept from the mid-40s to the high 40s, breaking even at the start of July, although sustaining this vote proved hard. During the campaign only two polls conducted in mid-August recorded Labor with a vote at 50% and by the final weeks of the campaign this had fallen to 48% and below, with our primary vote no higher than 35%.

We know the single biggest reason voters turned away from Labor was internal Party disunity.

Campaign infrastructure

In May 2013, the Labor Party held a two-day trial in Campaign Headquarters with the campaign team. The technology held up, processes predictably needed refining, but there was a large and committed team who were ready to fight despite the well understood odds Labor was up against.

A month later the campaign lost about half of that team as a result of the leadership change. The Campaign Director had to pull together a new team immediately. At the same time the new Prime Minister's Office had to fill its staffing positions and Ministers were finding their feet in new portfolios.

Some sitting members decided they wouldn't run again and candidates had to be selected in many seats including Rankin, Kingsford Smith, Charlton, Lalor and Hotham.

The infrastructure of the campaign had to be rebuilt in a matter of weeks.

Policy framework

In those weeks leading up to the election, Prime Minister Rudd made three key policy announcements.

The first was to announce changes to the rules which decided the leader of the Federal Parliamentary Labor Party, to give Labor party members a vote in any leadership ballot.

The second was to immediately move to reject the fixed carbon price model and switch to emissions trading based on a floating international price.

The third was to announce a regional resettlement arrangement with PNG in July 2013.

On 4 August, Prime Minister Rudd called the Election for 7 September.

Highlights amidst the challenges

Despite the challenging electoral circumstances, 2013 saw many examples of exceptional and innovative campaigning:

- In Western Sydney we held seats we were expected to lose;
- In Queensland we went against the trend in five seats;
- Our call centre in Parramatta alone made almost 400,000 calls in the lead up to Election Day; and
- In Victoria there was a highly successful local field campaign which now provides us with the foundation for deeper engagement with supporters, members and the community.

Campaigners and candidates called a record 1.2 million voters and knocked on almost 250,000 doors. And for the first time, small donations online collectively became not just Labor's fastest growing funding source, but the single biggest funding source.

The online campaigning increases in activity between 2010 and 2013 election campaigns were:

- Individual donors – 17 fold increase
- Donors – 15 fold increase
- Funds raised – 10 fold increase
- Email addresses – 8 fold increase
- Emails sent, volunteer signups – 12 fold increase
- Twitter followers – 3 fold increase
- Facebook likes – 12 fold increase

The outcome

By Saturday 7 September 2013, no one was expecting the miracle that might have been possible seven weeks earlier. The only question was how severe the loss would be.

Labor has to accept responsibility for this loss, the factors leading up to it, and the dire consequences it has had for both our Party and our nation.

As the results rolled in on Election night we did find ourselves holding seats we fully expected to lose, and even received swings toward us in some seats. In the end Labor held 55 seats – 15 more than our research in May had predicted.

Despite the challenges Labor faced between 2010 and 2013, the Coalition increased their Primary vote by only 1.8 per cent at the September 2013 Election.

The Australian Election Study conducted by the ANU, showed in 2013: 36.6 per cent of people decided how they would vote during the campaign and 63.2 per cent decided prior to the campaign. Of those who decided before the campaign only 33.9 per cent were giving their vote to Labor, but of those who decided during the campaign 50.8 per cent said they were voting Labor. This wasn't enough to win, and it does clearly show that much of the damage in Labor's vote was already done before the campaign started.

This Review will consider all these matters in detail and make recommendations about what we can do better, what we can build on and what we must never repeat, as we support our Federal Leader Bill Shorten and his team in the march to the next election.

A. CAMPAIGN STRUCTURE

It is clear on any assessment that campaign decision-making processes in the 2013 Campaign were poor and suffered from the changes in personnel and operating procedures that came with the change in leader so close to the Election date.

This impacted the campaign in many ways including:

- More than half of Campaign Headquarters staff turned over weeks before the Election.
- There were serious difficulties managing the liaison between the Travelling Party and Campaign Headquarters.
- The Travelling Party's focus on low level campaign decisions at the expense of more significant decisions, which were subsequently left too long to be resolved. This fundamentally resulted in the reduced effectiveness of the campaign materials, announcements and over-all media strategy.
- Unit Directors within Campaign Headquarters did not feel confident that decisions they made within their area of responsibility would not be overturned by the Travelling Party. People with responsibility for different areas lacked the authority to make decisions with the confidence that the Travelling Party would not over-rule them.
- The change in leadership so close to the Election also severely frustrated and derailed the important policy and messaging work that is normally done well in advance of a campaign. This work is critical in minimising the risk of poorly considered announcements.
- Insufficient notice of announcements, specifically the nature and location for where they would be made, hampered the campaign's ability to undertake advance work, affecting the ability to identify and prepare suitable locations.
- There were a number of very late changes made to the campaign's Target Seats list which had implications for the allocation of resources across the country.

Outline of campaign infrastructure

Office

Campaign Headquarters housed Labor's largest ever campaign team during the campaign. Each part of the team – for example, policy, communications and field – had different needs. Submissions from members of the campaign team indicate that the space held-up well.

The only concern with the office was that there was limited meeting space, but with a smaller campaign team likely for the next election this would not be an on-going issue.

The facility used in 2013 proved highly fit for purpose and superior to other recent Campaign Headquarters. It would serve well as a headquarters for future campaigns.

Staff

Campaign staff were largely in place prior to the leadership change in June. The subsequent upheaval saw around half of those staff leaving and needing to be replaced, including a large number of unit directors. In some cases entire roles were dropped because there were simply not the staff to fill the positions. Nonetheless, once reconstructed it was the largest central campaign team ever.

It is important to note that the new Prime Minister's Office sought to make a number of specific changes to the campaign staffing and structure, including late involvement by overseas consultants. This created some significant disruptions, confusion and inefficiencies within the campaign.

Coordination

Coordination of activities between Campaign Headquarters, State Branches and local campaigns did not always function smoothly. Clearer structures for communication and greater clarity regarding roles and responsibilities for each of these three campaign levels may assist with this in the future.

The late decision making from the Travelling Party to Campaign Headquarters also led to some communication challenges with local campaigns. State Branches sometimes duplicated work being done centrally and local campaigns didn't always feel they were across what Campaign Headquarters and their State Branches were doing. While guidance and support was appreciated, local campaigns also expressed a need to have the flexibility to do what would work locally when it came to messaging and voter contact.

All of these experiences confirm the opinion of the reviewers that final decisions in a campaign must rest with the Campaign Director.

Recommendations

1. The use of overseas consultants did not add significant value and in some cases was disruptive. The Labor Party has highly skilled and experienced campaigners that resources should actively be invested in to accelerate the development of their skills and experience. Our most effective campaigners should be formally identified, kept in the movement and provided with ongoing support and training and experience to further develop their skills.
2. Responsibility for final decision-making must lie with the Campaign Director.
3. Formal and regular structures for co-ordination between the central campaign director and state secretaries be established well out from the campaign.

Localisation

It was also clear that in a country as vast as Australia, uniform campaigning is not always effective. Specifically, Western Australia and the Northern Territory require jurisdiction specific strategies and staffing to run the most effective local campaigns.

There was very strong input in this Review from Western Australia and the Northern Territory in particular about the need for campaign staff with local knowledge of the media and campaign issues. The importance of presenting local campaign spokespeople was also highlighted. To a lesser extent these needs were also identified in Queensland and Tasmania.

Recommendation

4. The Campaign Director undertake active and early discussion with Western Australia and the Northern Territory to identify local campaign needs and that the Leader and Shadow Ministers spend more time in Western Australia, the Northern Territory, Queensland and Tasmania.

Process for Managing Candidate Issues

The submissions on this issue capture the tension between wanting as much grass roots involvement as possible in the pre-selection process and wanting swift and effective intervention where a candidate's conduct or circumstances jeopardises the broader campaign and the likely success of all other candidates.

In particular there was a sizable submission from the former candidate for Hotham, Geoff Lake regarding his loss of support to stand when information not previously advised to the campaign came to light through the media. Issues specific to this case are appropriately being addressed by the State Branch. The incident also highlighted the need for candidate disclosures to more clearly articulate the responsibility of all candidates to fully disclose any information which may be relevant to not just their own candidacy but also to the broader campaign.

Recommendations

5. The declaration from candidates to the National Secretariat should specifically request disclosure of anything that could have the potential to become an issue for the campaign or the Party.
6. The particular matter relating to Mr Lake should be referred to the Victorian State Branch for investigation and action.

B. FIELD, DATA AND TECHNOLOGY

The 30:30 program which deployed more than 30 organisers to key seats across the country, was described favourably and was seen as a positive step which should be built upon for 2016, and deployed earlier in the term.

The 2013 Campaign also saw improvements in the Party's use of data to improve its community engagement.

If Labor candidates are to build genuine relationships with their Electorates, relationships that grow rather than just occurring sporadically at election time, candidates need to keep good records of voters' issues, and their interactions with the community in order to build relationships based on those interactions. This is fundamental to local organising.

Doing so across an Electorate of 100,000 people, or a State of millions of people, requires an investment in technology.

The Party made a significant investment in Campaign Central development in 2012-13. Credit must go to those Federal MPs who contributed financially and through feedback. Further investment is required to support organisers' phone surveys, online petitions, volunteer lists, community events, and other campaign efforts.

This investment needs to be made not only in the technology but in training.

Further training of staff and volunteers was identified as an area for improvement and investment. Many people felt there needed to be a professionalisation of campaigning with clearer career paths for experienced campaigners so people can continuously build on their skills and expertise rather than losing quality campaigners between election campaigns as we often do now.

Recommendation

7. The Labor Party should invest further in technology and training that improves voter engagement, the use of evidenced based campaign techniques and measurable campaign activity targets with a focus on quality as well as quantity.

Campaign Technology

There was broad satisfaction with the campaign technology with a number of submissions highlighting the advances that had been made over the past term and the development of Campaign Central.

There is, however, room for improvement when it comes to training. A number of submissions expressed a need for a more in-depth knowledge of both Campaign Central and NationBuilder.

In addition there is some frustration that the two systems do not yet interact as well as many campaigners would like. Better interaction between data sets would assist with identifying and stepping up highly engaged supporters, voter ID and geographic targeting using both systems.

Recommendation

8. Conduct regular training in Campaign Central and NationBuilder and improve management of data in these systems.

Continuous campaigning

There is a consistent view that in order to run the best campaigns at election time Labor needs to be campaigning continuously. Doing so builds our networks in the community, the skills and experience of our volunteers. What is more, campaigning for better local community outcomes is a vital part of being involved in the Labor Party, whether you are a supporter or elected representative.

The Review found the most effective campaigns were those that focused on local issues, targeted persuadable voters and used values based messages. These campaigns had large volunteer teams who were treated as a central and vital part of the team. They had also been campaigning throughout the term or as soon as they were pre-selected.

“Amanda Rishworth is a hard working member who begins her re-election campaign from day one of the new Government period. She maintains a high profile in the community through door-knocking, conducting regular street corner meetings and shopping centre stalls as well as attending all manner of public meetings and events.”

- Phil Giles, Kingston

Just like traditional campaigning, this approach depends on relationship building and utilising our networks, the difference now is that both scale and accessibility are significantly enhanced by new technologies. With a laptop and a mobile phone someone can set up their own call centre, they can access online webinars for training sessions and they can link in with other volunteers in their local community.

While Labor is yet to extract the full value of these tools, 2013 made some excellent advances. To be ahead of our opponents in 2016 we will need to make these tools more accessible to more of our volunteers and our communities.

Recommendations

9. Candidates should be preselected as early as is possible, recognising the need to find the best candidates for every seat.
10. In all key seats the process of rolling out field operations should be commenced as soon as possible.

11. Resources should be allocated to a structured National Train-the-Trainer Program to accelerate the exchange of key skills in field organising, online campaigning and fundraising.

C. VALUING VOLUNTEERS AND LABOR'S GRASSROOTS

Efforts to engage volunteers was stronger this campaign than they have been for decades. However what was lacking was the structure to ensure that people who volunteer are found suitable tasks and given the support and interaction they need from campaigns. Sadly there are a large number of cases when people signed up to volunteer but were never contacted by a volunteer organiser or coordinator to take the next step. This is unacceptable.

Labor also reached out more directly to our grassroots supporters, many who are not Party members, using email and Facebook. Actions as simple as sharing a Facebook post helped us reach millions of people and provided information which was not always getting through in mainstream media.

Importantly, volunteering for Labor doesn't necessarily mean being a formal member of the Labor Party. Interestingly, more than half of those who donated online or signed up online to volunteer were not Party members.

"I can't afford to join at the moment but I've volunteered as much as I can"
Julie, NSW

There is also a growing need to recognise the variety of ways in which our supporters want to contribute outside of the traditional branch membership structure.

Federal Labor Leader, Bill Shorten, has flagged the need to acknowledge our supporters and the experience and expertise they collectively bring to the table, and work to engage more closely with them.

Mr Shorten has also set a target of recruiting 100,000 new members to the Labor Party and has identified the need for a new low cost, uniform fee structure and a "one click" online membership category from July 2014.

"Almost 300,000 have signed up for our emailing list. These are Labor's people. These are Australians who own our beliefs, who share our ideals, who rely upon Labor governments. People who place their faith and trust and hope in Labor. These are our supporters, our people...I want them to be our members."

– Bill Shorten

We see these changes as being complementary, with activists becoming involved with local campaigns and taking the next step towards joining the Party.

Consistent with this is the Leader's commitment to greater policy engagement with our grassroots.

A successful campaign in 2016 will put our supporters first. That means giving our people the support and resources they need to be able to make Tony Abbott's government a one-term government. It means resources in volunteer training, working with volunteers on issues based campaigns throughout the term, and recognising the expertise of our supporters through their work on the ground.

Recommendations

12. Provide volunteers with clear information on policies linked to local examples and to our values.
13. Shadow Ministers should prioritise contact with volunteers and participation in volunteer activity when they visit seats.
14. The Labor Party should aim to achieve a fourfold increase in the number of active volunteers by 2016.

D. ENGAGING EVERY PART OF OUR COMMUNITY

Labor needs to actively re-build our relationship with multicultural communities, to strengthen our engagement – especially where there are language barriers.

Labor's membership, volunteers, candidates, communications and campaigns need to better reflect the broader community. Direct engagement with a range of communities is one part of this, as is calling for bilingual and multilingual volunteers to campaign in their communities.

In particular the scaling up of telephone calls to non-English speaking voters has had a positive effect on non-English background volunteers who previously felt their English language skills weren't strong enough for many volunteering tasks. These volunteers are not only able to make these calls, it's a task they were able to do more effectively than other volunteers.

There are a range of multicultural groups such as Sub-Continental Friends of Labor, Chinese Friends of Labor and Vietnamese Friends of Labor which have been helping in many electorates to connect with the local multicultural communities. However more work needs to be done to build upon these connections, and the Party must learn from our experiences in 2013 in the lead up to the 2016 election.

The Reviewers were impressed by the work undertaken in this field by the New South Wales ALP Branch and its General Secretary, Jamie Clements.

In Western Australia the Reviewers met with Racial and Ethnic Equality Labor, a group committed to ensuring Labor connects with multicultural communities, benefits from the relationship with these communities and continues to advance policy in support of diversity and equality in government.

There is also scope to better engage with multicultural communities online. Many people who speak English as a second language depend heavily on the internet to

connect them to overseas family and to communicate with their local community in their own language.

Perhaps the greatest challenge is the high informal vote amongst people who do not speak English or who do not speak English as their first language. While it is the responsibility of the Australian Electoral Commission to ensure everything possible is done so that all Australians can make their vote count, it is evident from the figures that Labor must continue to endeavour to reduce the informal vote in these communities.

Recommendations

15. Better match volunteers to constituents to maximise voter contact in the appropriate language.
16. Establish a dedicated research project to identify best practice methods to increase the formal vote amongst people from Non-English Speaking Backgrounds including exploring language and community specific online platforms used by some communities, for example Weibo.

E. CANDIDATES

Identifying the best candidates

To support the Federal Leader Bill Shorten's call for increased participation, a new Leader's Candidate Selection Panel should be established to assist with the identification of potential new candidates.

This panel should consist of eminent campaigners and electorally successful candidates. This group should identify people who might not normally participate in the current pre-selection processes.

This process should apply in the first instance to marginal seats necessary to form government.

Bill Shorten has correctly identified the need for greater community participation in our preselection process. For far too long our preselections have had this component missing.

The Panel will work alongside with and report to the Federal Leader, the National Secretary and relevant State Branches.

The Panel should also work alongside community representatives to help identify strong local champions within the community.

Having the right candidate in the right seat and more candidates who represent the diversity of the Australian community is a priority for Labor. The best candidates are connected to the needs of the electorate and the issues the community faces.

There are many talented community members who simply have not considered public service as an elected member. From school principals and school teachers to local Rotary Club volunteers and community services workers. Smart people dedicated to public service who will make Labor stronger should be identified as a matter of priority.

As part of its program of rebuilding, it is up to Labor to look at ways to actively recruit these people and to ensure the prospect of possibly becoming a candidate is attractive to them.

Recommendation

17. To facilitate pre-selection of the best candidates a group of experienced Labor people should be charged with searching communities for the best potential talent. This group will establish a process for identifying potential candidates and recommending candidates who should nominate for pre-selection.

F. MAXIMISING OUR VOTE

Since the foundation of the Australian Parliament in 1901, the Australian Labor Party has been the most important force for progressive change in our nation. This remains the case today.

Labor continues to be the only party on the progressive side of politics that seeks to engage with electorates across the country, listen and respond to their issues and concerns, and argue for the policies that we believe in as part of our endeavour to form government.

Accordingly, Labor should never forget that the most critical factor in achieving lasting progressive change in Australia is to ensure the maximum number of Labor MPs and Senators as possible are elected to the Australian Parliament. To do this means a commitment to maximise our primary vote at every turn, and to not rely on preference and other deals as heavily as we have recently.

Since the emergence of the Greens Party (culminating in recent times with Greens' representatives being elected to local councils and some lower house Federal, State and Territory parliaments) there has been an extremely unfortunate and very counterproductive trend of minor progressive parties and organisations focusing their criticism, energies and political activity almost entirely on the Labor Party and its policies and approach in order to maximise their own electoral successes.

The *raison d'être* for the Greens Party over the last decade has been to attack, undermine and/or colonise the Labor Party's policies with an increasing ferocity, in an attempt to win one or two inner city seats in Melbourne and Sydney. The effect has been that these policy objectives have themselves been undermined, attacked and turned into political footballs driven by insular and often circular debate that has proved alienating to the mainstream community. The outcome of all of this has been devastating for the very issues that the Greens Party purport to care about the most.

There is no clearer example of this than the current fate of protection and enhancement of the environment, the issue that actually led to the formation of the Greens Party. While it is hard to fathom today, it is important to remember that prior to the 2007 election, there was bipartisan and vocal support for action on climate change and for a scheme that priced carbon.

It is a matter of record that had the Greens Party acted in the interests of the environment, rather than their own political advancement, they would have supported the groundbreaking CPRS in the Senate and it would have passed. Australia would have transitioned to a carbon pricing scheme years ago, and with a supportive Australian public.

Rather than seize this historical opportunity, harness the mood of the nation and build on the momentum, the Greens Party set in train a bitter and divisive political storm.

This issue, like many others, will need to be built back up in the national consciousness through mainstream engagement and campaigning in seats across Australia, by not just the Labor Party but the environment movement itself. This movement is under deliberate and unprecedented attack by conservative governments.

On this issue, and so many others, it has become brutally clear that the two major parties are very, very different.

Labor must always welcome and work with the broader progressive movement but can never allow these relationships to compromise our core values, objectives and identity. Not least of which because it is demonstrably not in the long-term interests of the issues that many of these groups pursue.

On the progressive side of politics, only Labor is capable of, or interested in, forming government. And only Labor is committed to engaging in a national conversation across the many and diverse electorates in our States and Territories.

Recommendations

18. Maximising the Labor primary vote should be a primary consideration of the Party in all its future planning and endeavours and maximising the number of Labor MPs should be the primary consideration in any preference negotiation.
19. The management of preference negotiations and outcomes should be conducted in close consultation with State and Territory Party organisations in accordance with the above principle.

G. MEETING THE CHALLENGES OF MODERN VOTING

One of the most striking aspects of the campaign was the significant uptake of pre-polling. With a large number of voters casting their vote before Election Day there are implications for how we allocate campaign resources both towards specific pre-

poll campaigns and for the central campaign, specifically relating to how advertising is spread over the campaign period.

The submission from Queensland's George Hasanakos was so comprehensive on the issue of pre-polling that a large section of it is included below:

In 2013, by the end of the third-last week when ballot papers have been sent out up to 8% of final voters may have received their ballot paper. Once uncompleted postal ballots and the relatively small numbers of pre-poll voters at this point are accounted for, it is possible that at the 2013 federal election up to 5% of votes have been completed a fortnight before election day. A week later, 7 days before Election Day, this figure could be as high as 11-13%. By the close of pre-poll booths on the Wednesday before the election, 18-20% of vote would have been cast.

Another way to conceptualise the increase in early voting is to compare at what point previous election early voting shares would have been reached at the last federal election. In 1996 prior to the polling opening on Election Day 7.7% of votes had already been cast. In 2013 this same threshold would have most likely been reached by the middle of the second last week of the campaign. The increasing proportion of voters who cast their ballot before Election Day will force all political parties, especially parties of government, to reconsider how they can target their messaging and resources to all voters before they cast their ballot.

Given the above analysis of the early vote the following features of the early vote are salient to party campaign planning:

- There is a medium term trend of increasing proportion of voters choosing to vote before Election Day. This is consistent with the rising levels of early voting in similar English speaking democracies.
- Early voting is more prevalent in the larger population states and the territories.
- Early Voting and specifically pre-poll voting is utilised more in regional Australia.
- There is no partisan trend inherent in the increase of the proportion of early voters.
- Increasing levels of pre-poll voting will “backload” the numbers of early voters, with the largest number of pre-poll voters casting their votes at the end of the last week of the campaign.
- Increasing levels of postal voting will “front load” the numbers of early voters. The vast majority of postal voters should receive their ballots by 14 days before Election Day.
- Levels of pre-poll voting are rising faster than levels of postal voting, hence there is more “back loading” than “frontloading” of increasing numbers of early voting.

-George Hasanakos Review Submission January 2014

Recommendation

20. Appoint a pre-poll director in the central campaign team to develop a dedicated pre-poll strategy including maximising the time candidates spend on pre-poll booths during the last week of the campaign and structuring campaign and communications to recognise the growth in pre-poll.

H. RELATIONSHIP WITH UNIONS & THE PROGRESSIVE MOVEMENT

The Australian Labor Party has an historic and proud partnership with the union movement. This continues today. As in many elections before, unions played a crucial role in supporting the election campaign. As Labor's focus increasingly turns to the effectiveness of our field campaigning, we need a renewed focus on the shared objectives of Labor and the union movement of a fair and just society. The reviewers saw firsthand the terrific work that the unions do in advocacy and organising. The Labor Party needs to better utilise member recruitment and retention and organising strategies.

Many of the campaigning and organising lessons and strategies the Party needs to develop and refine have already been well thought out by many unions and are in the process of being effectively implemented. The reviewers benefit from this experience. The successful 30:30 program was a good start to this but has to be built upon in the lead up to 2016.

In order to be as successful as possible, Labor needs to continue to reach out to unions and the progressive movement, as strong stakeholder relationships are an important part of effective campaigning and communications. The Liberal Party enjoyed strong partnerships with a number of organisations advancing sectional interests. To effectively combat this it is important that the Labor Party continues to build relationships across the progressive movement to ensure we are not drowned out by more conservative, wealthy and self-interested voices.

In the 2013 campaign \$13 million was spent on advertising by Conservative interests with the top spenders being opposed to changes to salary packaging and the mining tax.

It is in Labor's interest to continue to work closely with groups with shared purposes and to leverage off the community networks of other groups to ensure clear and vocal support from the wider community for progressive policy outcomes.

Recommendations

21. That the Labor Party incorporate the proven organising models of many of the unions.
22. Australian Labor Advisory Council continue as an active pathway for the union movement to engage with the party leadership on policy.

I. RESEARCH AND MESSAGING

The malicious leaking of internal research which has occurred in recent years has been unforgivable. This leaking has been motivated not by a desire to advance the Party as a whole, but rather to advance the political interests of particular individuals. Any behaviour which compromises the ability of the Labor Party to deliver for the Australian community is the most heinous activity a member or representative of the Party could ever engage in and it should be dealt with firmly and thoroughly.

In addition it must be recognised that Party research is, appropriately, conducted by the National Secretariat and the freelancing done in this area by others outside of the central campaign team did not assist our campaign efforts.

Despite this, the field, digital and advertising teams were successful in sticking with the key message about Tony Abbott: *If he wins, you lose.*

The daily track during the campaign allowed us to constantly monitor our progress in key seats and make adjustments to our tactics and messaging, or stay the course depending on how we were tracking.

Recommendation

23. Review the methodology used in the research conducted by the Party to ensure best practice is applied.

J. DIGITAL

Labor focussed on bringing traditional organising tactics to online email activities based on what had worked well overseas for the Democrats and the British Labour Party and for a number of prominent local online activist groups.

The shift went largely unnoticed because it was primarily happening on email rather than on Facebook or twitter. The upshot was that online donations exceeded our targets by more than double and were ten times higher than what they were in 2010. Combined, small donations became the single largest source of funds to the campaign apart from public funding.

It is important to note that donating online is only one way in which Labor's supporters and members contributed to the campaign. Without being able to engage in the campaign in a range of ways, both online and in more traditional ways, donations would decline.

The shift makes Labor's relationship with members and supporters even more tangible as the Labor community puts up funds for particular campaign actions and materials. It is part of the move towards our campaigns being driven much more by our grassroots and that is particularly important in an era of mega donations made by billionaires to the Coalition and the emergence of entire parties being funded by mining magnates.

Online, more than 95% of all actions come through email contact, consistent with experiences in the U.S, U.K and Canada. Email contact needs to be carefully managed to ensure best practice and avoid spam which leads to people unsubscribing. With email address databases held by local members, State Branches and the National Secretariat, coordination and collaboration is required to prevent email recipients having a negative experience which leads to disengagement or the loss of the email address.

Recommendations

24. National Secretariat continue to grow its email database, aiming to double the number of subscribers by 2016.
25. A process similar to that which applies to media releases during elections should be implemented for email. Where there are State elections National Secretariat excludes those States from email blasts and when there is a Federal Election that emails are only sent from Campaign Headquarters, including those which are geographically targeted.
26. Online fundraising should aim to double donations for 2013-2016 compared with 2010-2013.
27. Every effort should be made to consolidate supporter and subscriber email addresses into a single database to improve coordination, maximise list size and reduce the risk of spamming our supporters.

K. ADVERTISING AND COMMUNICATIONS

While core elements of the campaign advertising were determined well ahead of the election, the late leadership change did require some significant and strategic changes to messaging and advertising.

Policy announcements with inadequate lead times or planning put further pressure on the advertising team and the campaign more generally.

The Liberals massively outspent Labor throughout the campaign and the Palmer United Party spent at major party levels in the final week. Additionally, conservative business groups were very active, spending around \$13 million on advertising during the campaign.

With the exception of Queensland, State Branches' investment in campaign media was low compared to 2007 and 2010.

Despite these challenges the advertising team delivered a series of ads, targeted specific audiences across different States and delivered a standalone ethnic media campaign that helped to secure a drifting culturally and linguistically diverse voter group – all within a month of the leadership change and within budget.

The “Spotlight” commercials played an important role in defining a single message delivered through mass media.

The 2013 campaign also brought new opponents with considerable budgets for local campaigns, a challenge which is only likely to grow by 2016. In Melbourne we needed a specific campaign to counter the Greens Party and in Page our fight was against the National Party.

Recommendation

28. The campaign advertising agency and the online agency should be co-located.

L. CAMPAIGN FINANCES

In the 2013 Campaign a number of new initiatives were introduced to improve the management of campaign finances.

The introduction of a Campaign Expenditure Sub-Committee with clear financial management targets and objectives was established. This proved a very effective way of managing campaign spending. The committee, which met twice weekly throughout the campaign placed a necessary degree of scrutiny and analysis on spending decisions in the high-pressure environment of an election campaign.

For the first time in 2013 online fundraising made a significant contribution to campaign funds while at the same time strengthening the relationship between the Party leadership and our grassroots.

Despite spending restraint and improved fundraising efforts the Federal Labor Party continues to face a significant challenge to remain competitive in terms of campaign spending with the Coalition and more recently well financed newcomers like the Palmer United Party. How much we are outspent by depends on how well we are able to adapt to new fundraising methods.

Recommendations

29. The successful Federal Labor Business Forum (FLBF) should continue to be supported and expanded with Shadow Ministers coordinating fundraising events through the FLBF to ensure maximum professionalism, transparency and fundraising potential of these events.
30. The Campaign Expenditure Sub-Committee be re-established for the 2016 campaign.

N. CONCLUSION AND RESULT

Within the national defeat there were many smaller victories. In 2013, with strong local campaigning and a simple advertising message, Labor held onto seats the Liberals expected to take from us. Parramatta, Greenway, McEwen, Kingsford Smith, Adelaide, Moreton, Blair, Lilley and Fowler were all seats we were expecting to lose

just months earlier.

There were also some lessons to learn. Local campaigns and great candidates made a huge difference to our success, but we need to do even more to recognise local differences. This challenge has been brought home even more by the Western Australian Senate by-election in April 2014. One size doesn't fit all and there are specific challenges for communities in some parts of the country that don't apply to others.

In particular Western Australia need campaign staff with a clear understanding of local issues and communities to ensure we can run the best local campaigns possible.

To a lesser extent there are similar needs in Queensland which will form a key battleground come the next Federal Election. In a state where Labor holds only six out of thirty seats, it is obviously vital Labor increases its representation here if we are to win back government.

Labor's defeat in 2013 is a tragedy for the Party, largely because it was self-inflicted but a greater tragedy because of the harm being caused to Australians under an Abbott government. The defeat was a tragedy for action on climate change, urgent justice for people living with a disability, universal healthcare, needs-based education funding, world class broadband, properly funded retirement incomes, equitable access to university, fair workplace rights and for striking the balance between demands of jobs and the environment.

Nevertheless, this is a defeat from which the Party can and will rise again. And these reforms; set back and delayed by the current government will not be stopped forever. Labor is in a good position to return to government in 2016.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The use of overseas consultants did not add significant value and in some cases was disruptive. The Labor Party has highly skilled and experienced campaigners that resources should actively be invested in to accelerate the development of their skills and experience. Our most effective campaigners should be formally identified, kept in the movement and provided with ongoing support and training and experience to further develop their skills.
2. Responsibility for final decision-making must lie with the Campaign Director.
3. Formal and regular structures for co-ordination between the central Campaign Director and State Secretaries be established well out from the campaign.
4. The Campaign Director undertake active and early discussion with Western Australia and the Northern Territory to identify local campaign needs and that the Leader and Shadow Ministers spend more time in Western Australia, the Northern Territory, Queensland and Tasmania.
5. The declaration from candidates to the National Secretariat should specifically request disclosure of anything that could have the potential to become an issue for the campaign or the Party.
6. The particular matter relating to Mr Lake should be referred to the Victorian State Branch for investigation and action.
7. The Labor Party should invest further in technology and training that improves voter engagement, the use of evidenced based campaign techniques and measurable campaign activity targets with a focus on quality as well as quantity.
8. Conduct regular training in Campaign Central and NationBuilder and improve management of data in these systems.
9. Candidates should be preselected as early as is possible, recognising the need to find the best candidates for every seat.
10. In all key seats the process of rolling out field operations should be commenced as soon as possible.
11. Resources should be allocated to a structured National Train-the-Trainer Program to accelerate the exchange of key skills in field organising, online campaigning and fundraising.
12. Provide volunteers with clear information on policies linked to local examples and to our values.
13. Shadow Ministers should prioritise contact with volunteers and participation in volunteer activity when they visit seats.

14. The Labor Party should aim to achieve a fourfold increase in the number of active volunteers by 2016.
15. Better match volunteers to constituents to maximise voter contact in the appropriate language.
16. Establish a dedicated research project to identify best practice methods to increase the formal vote amongst people from Non-English Speaking Backgrounds including exploring language and community specific online platforms used by some communities, for example Weibo.
17. To facilitate pre-selection of the best candidates a group of experienced Labor people should be charged with searching communities for the best potential talent. This group will establish a process for identifying potential candidates and recommending candidates who should nominate for pre-selection.
18. Maximising the Labor primary vote should be a primary consideration of the Party in all its future planning and endeavours and maximising the number of Labor MPs should be the primary consideration in any preference negotiation.
19. The management of preference negotiations and outcomes should be conducted in close consultation with State and Territory Party organisations in accordance with the above principle.
20. Appoint a pre-poll director in the central campaign team to develop a dedicated pre-poll strategy including maximising the time candidates spend on pre-poll booths during the last week of the campaign and structuring campaign and communications to recognise the growth in pre-poll.
21. That the Labor Party incorporate the proven organising models of many of the unions.
22. Australian Labor Advisory Council continue as an active pathway for the union movement to engage with the party leadership on policy.
23. Review the methodology used in the research conducted by the Party to ensure best practice is applied.
24. National Secretariat continue to grow its email database, aiming to double the number of subscribers by 2016.
25. A process similar to that which applies to media releases during elections should be implemented for email. Where there are State elections National Secretariat excludes those States from email blasts and when there is a Federal Election that emails are only sent from Campaign Headquarters, including those which are geographically targeted.
26. Online fundraising should aim to double donations for 2013-2016 compared with 2010-2013.

27. Every effort should be made to consolidate supporter and subscriber email addresses into a single database to improve coordination, maximise list size and reduce the risk of spamming our supporters.
28. The campaign advertising agency and the online agency should be co-located.
29. The successful Federal Labor Business Forum (FLBF) should continue to be supported and expanded with Shadow Ministers coordinating fundraising events through the FLBF to ensure maximum professionalism, transparency and fundraising potential of these events.
30. The Campaign Expenditure Sub-Committee be re-established for the 2016 campaign.