

Voices of Warringah Candidate Responses

Dean Harris (Australian Labor Party) response to Voices of Warringah email, Harris' responses are in Green:

Accountability

- If elected, will you sign the Parliamentary Transparency Charter introduced by Senator Tim Storer on 3 April 2019? For a long time I've been disheartened by the nature of the political debate in our country. Where once the two sides of politics would come together in the parliament to govern – to represent the members who elected them, and to do their very best for the nation they serve – nowadays we see little but childish insults, blind self-interest, and the reckless pursuit of agendas that benefit vested interests instead of the public good. A large part of my motivation for running for the seat of Warringah is to try and bring back a sense of decency and fair-mindedness to our political landscape. I am not a party hack. I am a businessman and a member of the Warringah community. I have no barrow to push or donors to serve. My ambition is simply to serve you, the people of Warringah. I pledge to act responsibly, in a fair-minded and decent way, and to co-operate with other elected representatives to govern in the public interest. I believe we can do better. I share Senator Storer's concern about declining public confidence in federal politics, understand the intent behind his motion and applaud his desire to address these issues. Labor is addressing many of these concerns by committing to establish a National Integrity Commission, lowering the disclosure threshold for political donations to \$1,000 and moving toward real-time donation disclosure. While I am open to signing this charter in the future, for now more detailed policy consideration is needed around some aspects of Senator Storer's charter. If elected I would be very keen to work through some of that detail because I share a common hope that we can have a Federal parliament that has the respect and confidence of the people it seeks to serve.
- Will you support a federal ICAC with full inquisitorial powers and appropriate funding? Yes. Legislation to establish the National Integrity Commission will be introduced into parliament within the first 12 months of a Shorten Labor Government. In the lead up to that will be a process of consultation to determine the detailed design of the commission, followed by a final costing. The key principles underpinning the design of the commission will be these.
 - The Commission will operate as independent statutory body, with sufficient resources to ensure it is able to carry out its functions regardless of the government of the day.
 - The Commission would be constituted by one Commissioner and two Deputy Commissioners, each of whom would serve for a single, fixed, five-year term.
 - The Commission will have sufficiently broad jurisdiction and freedom of action to operate as a standing Royal Commission into serious and systemic corruption by Commonwealth parliamentarians or their staff, public servants, statutory office holders, the Commonwealth judiciary and the Governor-General.

- The Commission will be granted the investigative powers of a Royal Commission, including search and surveillance powers, the power to compel witnesses and subpoena documents and carry out its own investigations, with warrant oversight by the Federal Court.
- While the presumption will be that hearings will be held in private, the Commission will have discretion to hold hearings in public where it determines it is in the public interest to do so. Labor will continue to consult on the appropriate threshold for such hearings.
- The Commission will only be empowered to make findings of fact. Any findings that could constitute criminal conduct would be referred to the AFP or Commonwealth Department of Public Prosecutions.
- A Bipartisan Joint Standing Committee of the Parliament will be established to oversee the Commission and will be empowered to require the Commission to provide information about its work. That Committee will be responsible for appointing the Commissioners. The Commission will also report to Parliament on its performance annually.
- Will you commit to organising at least two public forums open to all residents of Warringah each year to report on Federal matters, and seek local views? Yes. One of the key reasons I am running in this election is that I don't feel the electorate has been well represented by its Federal member for some time. Talking with the community and staying connected to concerns and local issues is very important to me.

Climate

- Will you commit to implementing a national integrated energy and climate policy framework for 2030 based on a low-emission development strategy for 2050, in line with the Paris Agreement? Climate and environment are two areas I am particularly passionate about. The current government's lack of action on these was central to my decision to put myself forward as a candidate at the upcoming election. I am really proud to represent the comprehensive climate action plan being put forward by Labor. It is built on real action, ambitious but achievable targets and supporting both business and ordinary Australians through the transition to a cleaner, more renewables driven future. Consistent with our obligations under Paris of keeping global warming to well-below two degrees above pre-industrial levels, and informed by independent Climate Change Authority advice, Labor is committed to reducing Australia's pollution by 45 percent on 2005 levels by 2030, and to reach net zero pollution by 2050. The headline initiatives of our policy are below and I encourage everyone to take a look at the details on the mechanisms behind these in the attached link: https://www.alp.org.au/media/1692/labors_climate_change_action_plan.pdf
 1. **Making Australia a Renewable Energy Superpower** by ensuring that 50 per cent of the nation's electricity is sourced from renewable energy by 2030, and empowering households and businesses to take advantage of cheap, clean renewable energy and storage.
 2. **Supporting the Transition to Cleaner and Cheaper Power** by implementing Labor's National Energy Plan and ensuring an orderly transition for industries, communities and workers.

3. **Boosting Clean Transport and Infrastructure** through Australia's first National Electric Vehicle Policy and implementing vehicle emission standards.
4. **Building Jobs and Industry** by partnering with industry to help businesses find innovative solutions to bring down pollution, support trade exposed industries, and build the new jobs and industries of the future.
5. **Kick starting Australia's Hydrogen Economy** with a \$1 billion plan to create new jobs, support new businesses and supercharge Australia's renewable energy industry.
6. **Cutting Pollution by Extending the Safeguard Mechanism** to bring down pollution from Australia's biggest polluters, in line with our international obligations, while supporting jobs and competitiveness.
7. **Reducing Pollution on the Land** by reinvigorating the Carbon Farming Initiative to supply carbon offsets and reduce pollution on the land, and taking action to deal with broad-scale land clearing.
8. **Increasing Energy Efficiency** by implementing a comprehensive Energy Productivity and Efficiency Review and through measures like our Manufacturing Energy Efficiency Accelerator program, harmonising state energy efficiency schemes and allowing ARENA to invest in energy efficiency projects.
9. **Reviving International Engagement on Climate Change** by reinstating an Australian Climate Ambassador, reengaging constructively in the UNFCCC process and supporting our Pacific neighbours.
10. **Restoring Australia's Climate Change Institutions** by restoring and reforming the Climate

This series of questions on climate speak to 1. Having and committing to implementing a comprehensive climate and energy policy with real action and targets, which I have outlined above, and 2. Very specific mechanisms which may or may not be part of any strategy, acknowledging that at this detailed level there can be different ways of working to achieve the same overall outcome of real action on energy and climate. Taxes are one mechanism for influencing market behaviour but there are others as evidenced across the breadth of Labor policies. We won't be introducing a carbon tax or raising government revenue from climate policies.

- Will you push to bring energy taxes in line with the environmental impacts of fuel use; will you tax fuels that are currently exempt and increase tax rates that are too low? At the heart of this question is the desire to discourage or de-incentivize the use of fossil fuels then that is addressed through our electric vehicle policy, national hydrogen plan and various approaches to increasing investment in renewables generation and storage. We are not proposing any new fuel taxes.
- Will you push for the development of incentives and regulation to move freight transport from trucks to rail? While there is currently no commercially viable alternative to the internal combustion engine when it comes to powering heavy vehicles, emission reductions can be achieved by modernising the Australian trucking fleet. Labor's Australian Investment Guarantee will help incentivise trucking operators to upgrade their vehicles to modern, safer and far less polluting vehicles. Labor will also develop a Low Emission Transport Strategy to inform future policy development across transport more broadly, including maritime, aviation, rail and heavy vehicles.

- Will you push for ending public funding for polluting coal, gas and oil industries – including tax concessions? As in the earlier question, the question is founded in a desire for a commitment to reduce pollution by moving away from fossil fuels. This is addressed comprehensively through our electric vehicle policy, national hydrogen plan and various approaches to increasing investment in renewable generation and storage. As stated earlier, there will be no new taxes in this space.
- Will you push for government and businesses to measure their environmental, social and cultural impact through transparent, detailed reporting frameworks? Legislated reporting requirements across all levels of government can be a significant burden, particularly on small to medium sized business. Our preferred approach is to work collaboratively and constructively with any organisation to incentivize and promote positive behaviours in all areas. That said, we understand that some level of reporting is often required to measure progress and encourage action. I couldn't answer this question any more directly without significantly more understanding of what is being proposed here in terms of "detailed reporting frameworks".

Refugees

- Will you legislate to support a permanent end to offshore processing? No. Labor is committed to strong borders, turn backs when safe to do so, offshore processing and regional resettlement because we know it saves lives at sea.
- Will you support the reform of the immigration detention system? Our first aim is to deter and disrupt people smugglers from taking to the water in the first instance. That's a lot more effective and involves a lot less risk, particularly for the people who want to use the people smugglers, so that's always our preference.
Labor will triple the number of Australian Federal Police officers overseas dedicated to working cooperatively with partner nations to deter and disrupt people smugglers.
Beyond that, our policy is to focus on offshore processing and resettlement as opposed to detention. This is addressed in more detail in the combined response to the next two questions
- Will you push for a larger and more responsive Refugee and Humanitarian Program? Yes. Labor is committing \$500 million to the work of the UNHCR, to deliver stronger asylum seeker assessment and resettlement processes across the region and closer to source countries – an important measure to ensure vulnerable people are not exploited by people smugglers to travel by boat.
This funding delivered over five years will help make sure regional processing and resettlement is implemented in an orderly and structured way through the UNHCR – by building capacity such as boosting staff, facilities and training throughout the region.
A Labor Government will also work more cooperatively with community, faith based and business groups to responsibly support and expand community sponsorship of refugees. We will reform the Community Sponsored Refugee Program to, over time, allow up to 5000 refugees to resettle in Australia annually.
This model – akin to the successful program in Canada – will mean groups such as state and local governments, community organisations, businesses, unions, and faith-based organisations – will be able to sponsor humanitarian entrants into Australia.
Labor will also appoint a Special Envoy for Refugee and Asylum Seeker Issues to advance Australia's interests and leadership on refugee issues within the region, secure third country

resettlement agreements, develop an Australian Refugee Commission, and provide policy advice for Australia's Humanitarian Program.

This comprehensive suite of measures are underpinned by a commitment to maintain Australia's strong borders – to ensure people smugglers are never again able to exploit vulnerable people.

Labor's policies ensure Australia does its fair share to meet humanitarian need, plays a leadership role in our region, and treats genuine refugees with dignity and humanity.

- **Will you push for an increase in Australian humanitarian support within the Asia Pacific region?**

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Environment

- **Will you work with State and Local government to identify and protect all natural bush areas on public lands in Warringah?** Yes. As I've mentioned earlier, the environment is something I am passionate about. If elected I'll do everything I can to protect our beautiful native bushland, beaches and marine environments to ensure these precious parts of our environment are preserved for future generations
- **Will you push for 70% of Australia's plastic packaging be recycled or composted by 2025?** Yes. Last year COAG agreed to a set of 2025 targets to reduce plastics – including that 100 per cent of all Australia's packaging will be reusable, recyclable or compostable by 2025 or earlier. I endorse these targets and Labor's plan will provide the national leadership needed to get the country on track to meet our 2025 targets.

- Will you push for the removal of problematic and unnecessary single-use plastic packaging to be phased out through design, innovation or introduction of alternatives? Yes. Labor will invest \$290 million to cut waste through reduction and recycling. In this are a range of initiatives:
 - Introduction of a **national ban on lightweight, single use plastic bags and microbeads** from 2021. This is through the creation of a consistent approach across the country – following moves of many state and territories to phase out single-use plastic bags, as well as manufacturers phasing out microbeads.
 - The creation of a **National Container Deposit Scheme** – Labor will work with COAG to ensure states with existing schemes are consistent. These schemes incentivise recycling, and increase the quality of recyclables by separating out materials – making it far cheaper to be able to recycle in Australia.
 - Establishing a **National Waste Commissioner** – To work with states and local government and help educate the community on solutions to waste. The Commissioner will also be charged with working with industry on the expansion of schemes for the recycling of products when they are at the end of their use – the Product Stewardship Schemes. There are existing schemes for TVs, computers and mobile phones – the Commissioner will look at the expansion of these schemes to other products which are currently ending up in landfills at alarming rates – including e-waste, batteries, and whitegoods such as microwaves.
 - Establish a **\$60 million National Recycling Fund**. This will fund projects to encourage recycling, including funding for innovative waste solutions, local government recycling facilities and material processing facilities, and new approaches to tackling food waste. A Labor Government will engage with industry, the research sector and the wider community to integrate waste processing and recycling into a 21st century industrial system, based on Industry 4.0 principles. Already used materials and products will be reprocessed and integrated back into the economy for greater productivity. This shift must take place across the full range of manufacturing industries – steel and aluminium, chemicals, plastics, automotive and electronics. It will require a focus on innovation and development of capabilities, at the industry and the enterprise levels, and the acquisition of new capabilities will in turn create new job opportunities.
 - **Tackling marine plastics** through \$15 million to assist our neighbours clean up the Pacific Ocean.
 - **Setting targets for government to purchase recycled** products – As one of Australia’s largest procurers, there is an opportunity to make the Australian Government a national leader in waste and recycling by prioritising the purchase of recycled products. Labor will also ask the Infrastructure Department to investigate whether recycled products can feasibly be used as road base for infrastructure projects.

Transport

- Do you support the immediate release of all Northern Beaches Tunnel investigation reports? Yes.
- Will you ensure the publication of analysis of viable public transport alternatives to the tunnel and a full cost benefit analysis of all viable options? Transport, and so the tunnel, is a State Government responsibility. As a Federal Labor member I would have no ability to force a State

Liberal Government to publish their analysis. That said I would certainly be strongly encouraging them to share any analysis or modelling they have done in respect of the tunnel and alternative transport solutions so we can properly evaluate the alternatives available to us.

- The most critical infrastructure for the Northern Beaches is facilitating mass public transport on the East-West link between Dee Why, Mona Vale and Chatswood via Northern Beaches Hospital. Significant public transport improvements in this corridor have been consistently supported at a local level, but which have been rejected by the current NSW government. Will you support this proposal through the federal system in the near future? The Beaches link tunnel is undoubtedly controversial in our area. On the surface it seems a simple solution to the congestion issues we are experiencing. Unfortunately it is too simple. It would cause increased congestion and disruption for 8 to 10 years while being constructed and there is no evidence that it will solve our traffic problems once it's built. Dr Michelle Zeibots Research Director of the Transport Research Centre at the University of Technology Sydney gave evidence to a parliamentary inquiry in late 2018 expressing this view on the basis of her independent study. This is particularly concerning as the rush to build this tunnel by the Liberal Government is in the absence of any independent, robust, costed plans or any consideration given to alternatives. To commit some \$14 billion in taxpayer funds without that level of rigor is simply not acceptable. Ultimately I think we all recognize that the only way to reduce traffic congestion is to encourage people to use their cars less, not more. Better public transport will be central to a sustainable long-term solution. What we need is a meaningful non-partisan discussion about the best options for the north shore and beaches. If a tunnel is the best solution then I am open to that. At the moment sufficient work has not been done on the tunnel plan itself or at looking at all the options available to us.
- Again, transport is a State issue but I am very supportive of public transport solutions and an East-West link and would seek Federal contribution to making this happen should I be in a position to do so.

Development

- Will you support mandatory inclusionary zoning for addressing housing affordability needs? With young adult children of my own I share the concerns of many about our children's ability to rent never mind own their own homes in Warringah. A Shorten Labor Government will improve housing supply and provide long-term affordable housing for low and middle-income Australians through the construction of 250,000 new affordable homes. Building on the National Rental Affordability Scheme (NRAS), Labor will drive residential construction activity, through a secure, long-term pipeline of investment, scale up the capacity of the community housing sector, boost employment, and meaningfully address the profound shortage of affordable housing in Australia. Zoning is a State issue currently in the hands of the State Liberal Government.
- Should appropriate development controls be imposed on development proposals by the Northern Beaches Council? This is difficult to answer without more clarity around what precisely is meant by 'appropriate' controls. It is also perhaps a question better directed to the Northern Beaches Council and Planning NSW. That said, it is incumbent on all councils to have sensible and sustainable development strategies built on an understanding of the future needs of their communities, supporting infrastructure and thorough community consultation. A rigorous review of any development proposals is obviously important.

Housing and Development

- Will you advocate for at least a 25% increase in social and affordable housing? As mentioned earlier, a Shorten Labor Government will increase the amount of affordable rental properties by building 250,000 new affordable homes, with at least 20,000 in Labor's first term.
- Will you advocate for a national funding scheme for affordable rental housing? Such a scheme already exists – the National Rental Affordability Scheme. It has attracted private investment of approximately \$12.9 billion to deliver 37,000 affordable rental dwellings in the ten years since 2008. Despite this success, the Liberals have abandoned affordable housing and axed the subsidies that encourage affordable housing. Increasing the supply of affordable housing is critical to addressing pressures on disposable income, and in turn, addressing inequality.

Building on the National Rental Affordability Scheme, our program will provide annual incentives of \$8,500 per year for 15 years for newly constructed properties that are owned or managed by a registered community housing provider, and will be mandated to provide 20% below market rent for eligible Australian tenants on low and middle incomes. The incentive will be indexed annually to the rent component of the CPI. Labor will work with the re-established National Housing Supply Council to identify the number, type and general location of dwellings which would be eligible to receive incentives. The policy will complement the financing available from the National Housing Finance and Investment Corporation and is designed to be further supplemented by additional grants, subsidies, land or shared equity arrangements from the States and Territories to meet housing need in their jurisdictions. There will also be opportunities for joint ventures between developers and institutional investors, alongside registered community housing providers, to participate in the scheme. Labor will ensure that new housing is well serviced by linking the program closely with infrastructure investments, and key services such as schools and hospitals. Planning consideration will be vital, ensuring that new dwellings fit within existing communities. Dwelling design will need to meet energy efficiency standards to ensure that renters aren't hit with higher energy bills through poor development. Consistent with Labor's commitment on major infrastructure projects, one in ten jobs during construction and maintenance of NRAS properties will go to an Australian apprentice.

The program will complement our already announced reforms to negative gearing and capital gains tax, which are designed to target those tax concessions to the construction of new housing and put first home buyers on a more level playing field in the housing market.

- Will you champion a change in policy, legislation and programs to resolve housing inequality? Yes. I will champion the policies and programs as outlined above which are designed to address housing inequality.
- Will you work towards mandating adequate public transport access for all new development projects? Both public transport and local development are in the remit of State and Local Governments. That said I certainly believe that new development projects should have adequate public transport access and would advocate for that as required.

Health

- Will you lobby the federal government to support additional funding to hospitals to provide 1:3 nurses to patient ratio for emergency departments in NSW? Yes. There were 7.8 million emergency department presentations in 2016-17 – one million more than five years ago.

This growth is putting our hospitals under immense pressure – and they need more funding to keep up with the increasing demand of a growing and ageing population.

- The national average wait time for elective surgery is the longest on record.
- The number of hospital beds available for elderly Australians is the lowest on record.
- The number of people presenting at emergency departments is the highest on record – and yet one in every three patients considered ‘urgent’ isn’t seen on time.

Labor has committed to investing \$500 million to upgrade and expand emergency departments across Australia and cut waiting times with:

- \$250 million for emergency department upgrades; and
 - \$250 million for more doctors, nurses and health workers to bring down national waiting times.
- To that end, further lobbying for funding for EDs would not be required. However, management and administration of hospitals is a state responsibility. 1:3 nurse to patient ratios in ED’s was a NSW Labor policy, unfortunately they did not get the opportunity to implement it.
 - Will you support mandatory staffing ratios in aged care facilities? I, like many others, am deeply concerned about the quality of care being provided by aged care services around the country. The Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety is currently underway. I would support mandatory ratios if that is recommended by the Royal Commission.
 - Will you support reforms to our Medicare benefits scheme to include dental health? Yes. All Australians who receive the Age Pension or hold a Commonwealth Seniors Health Card will receive \$1,000 worth of free essential dental care, covered by Medicare, every two years under Labor’s Pensioner Dental Plan. This is a health boost and a cost of living boost for up to three million older Australians. And it’s the next step towards Labor’s vision of universal access to dental care in Australia.
Labor created Medicare and we will always protect and strengthen it.

ABC

- Will you restore funding to the ABC to previous levels that existed prior to the \$83.7m reduction in the 2018 budget? Yes. We will reverse Turnbull’s \$83.7 million cut to the ABC.
- Will you ensure that the ABC remains independent of political and Government influence, commercial sponsorship and advertising? Yes. I and the Labor Party are committed to the ABC’s independence and to maintain the ABC as our comprehensive national broadcaster.
- Will you ensure that the ABC is adequately funded by the government to fulfil its role as an independent and comprehensive national public broadcaster? Yes. In addition to reversing the cuts mentioned earlier, we will guarantee funding certainty over the next ABC budget cycle. This will ensure our public broadcaster can meet its Charter requirements, safeguard jobs at the ABC, adapt to the digital media environment and maintain content and services that Australians trust and rely on.

Education

- Will you make efforts to facilitate greater engagement and participation in STEMbased subjects?
While the Federal Government has a very significant role to play in the funding of education, curricula and its implementation is the responsibility of State Governments. That said I would encourage any program designed to increase participation and active engagement across a broad curriculum. Clearly encouraging engagement in STEM based subjects will be critical to ensuring our children can participate effectively in society and employment in an increasingly globalised economy.
- Will you advocate for greater funding of education in the next federal budget? Absolutely. I am very proud to represent a party which is offering the biggest investment in public education in Australian history. This includes but is not limited to:
 - An **extra \$14 billion for public schools** over the next decade ensuring that every child in every school will be better off under Labor. Across Warringah this means an extra almost \$15million for our schools. You can go to <https://www.fairgoforschools.com.au/> to see exactly what this means for each school in our area.
 - **\$3.2 million for programs to support students in country areas to go to Uni or TAFE**, including mentoring and tutorials, delivered through 22 new community-owned Regional Study hubs. We will appoint a dedicated Regional and Remote Commissioner to develop strategies and policies to support country students and regional Higher-Ed institutions.
 - Setting up a new **National Principals' Academy** to give thousands of Australian principals advanced leadership training and support.
 - Investing an extra \$300 million to ensure **students with disability** get the support they need at school.
 - Giving our nation's top achievers **bursaries of up to \$40,000** to encourage the best and brightest Australians into teaching.
 - Help double the number of **First nations students** at the University of Technology Sydney by investing \$20 million towards a new landmark indigenous Residential College
 - Introduction of a **new two year National Preschool and Kindy Program** guaranteeing around 700,000 Australian children a year will be able to access subsidised preschool.
 - An extra \$174 million to **support more people from disadvantaged backgrounds** to attend University.
 - **200,000 more Australians will get access to a university** education by abolishing the Government's cap on student places and reinstating our demand-driven system
- Will you advocate for greater involvement in foreign language learning in NSW? Yes. I am very supportive of foreign language learning. In late 2018 Labor announced an investment of \$32 million to strengthen Asian language and literacy education in schools:
 1. **To boost the supply of Asian language teachers** - Up to 100 scholarships a year for Australians who are Asian language native speakers and for top performers in priority Asian languages in Year 12, to go on to study a teaching qualification.
 2. **Establish a new nationwide FutureAsia – Asia Capable Schools program** - Intensive training for 5,000 principals and senior teachers to drive sustained whole-of-school change by supporting them to make the necessary updates to their curriculum and teacher capability. We would also seek matching funding

from the states so this program can be rolled out for all 10,000 Australian principals over a five year period.

3. **Improve Asian languages curriculum materials from pre-school to Year 12**
4. **Set ambitious targets and goals for Asian languages**
5. **Collect better data about the take up of Asian languages in Australia**
6. **Establish an Advisory Council on Asia Capabilities**
7. **Undertake a whole-of-government audit of Australian and state government policies and programs on Asian literacy and languages education**
8. **Convene regular meetings of Indo-Pacific Education Ministers** - To further strengthen educational links between Australia and our Asian neighbours.

In addition to this, Labor will invest an extra \$8 million in community language schools so more Australian children get the chance to learn other languages. Currently, community language schools teach mostly school age kids. But the younger someone starts learning another language, the easier it is to pick up. That's why we'll help more community language schools open up their classes to pre-schoolers as well as school age children.

Open Questions

- **What makes for a strong community?** A strong community is one that is founded on equality, fairness and opportunity – no one is marginalised or left behind, we treat each other with respect, we provide opportunity for everyone to be their best selves and we reward and recognise contribution and achievement.
- **What do you value the most about living in Warringah?** Warringah is for me about people and place. I have lived in the electorate for over 12 years and have always found it a particularly friendly, welcoming and harmonious community. It must also be one of the most beautiful electorates in the country. I am very passionate about protecting the native bush, pristine beaches and marine environments for future generations.