

Our Plan

Real Solutions for all Australians

Hope.
Reward.
Opportunity.

The direction, values and policy priorities of the next Coalition Government.



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JANUARY 2013

THIS DOCUMENT SETS OUT THE DIRECTION, VALUES AND POLICY PRIORITIES OF THE NEXT COALITION GOVERNMENT. FURTHER DETAILED POLICIES WILL BE RELEASED IN THE LEAD UP TO THE ELECTION.

Delivering a strong, prosperous economy and a safe, secure Australia

In the two years since the last election, my colleagues and I have travelled to all parts of Australia listening and talking with people about their lives, their families and their hopes for our country. We have also consulted with experts about opportunities to harness Australia’s great potential.

From these conversations at homes, workplaces, factories, farms, school halls, businesses and universities, we have developed our plan to offer Hope, Reward and Opportunity for all Australians.

Our plan is to build a stronger Australia by building a stronger economy, stronger communities, a cleaner environment, stronger borders and more modern infrastructure.

The Coalition’s priority will be to build a stronger, more productive and diverse economy through lower taxes, more efficient government and more productive businesses that will deliver more jobs, higher wages and better services for all Australians.

With a modernised economy and the right policies, Australians can once again have competitive manufacturing industries, a dynamic services sector and a growing knowledge economy as well as strong agriculture and mining. We can also once again have a strong vibrant small business sector creating stronger jobs growth.

Within five years I am confident that our economy can deliver at least one million new jobs; and two million new jobs within the next decade.

Our vision for Australia is grounded in the belief that I expressed in my very first speech to the Parliament 19 years ago, that “there is no limit to what Australia can achieve.”

In the seven parliaments I have served since that first speech, as a backbencher, parliamentary secretary, minister, cabinet minister, Leader of the House and now as a party leader, I have not wavered in my belief that our best days as a nation are still ahead of us.

Here, in these pages, is the stronger Australia – a truly 21st Century Australia – that the next Coalition Government will build.

This is the Australia that we believe in.

Tony Abbott



Tony Abbott in his office, Parliament House, Canberra.

“There is no limit to what Australia can achieve.”

Tony Abbott
May 1994



1. The Coalition's top policy priorities



We will deliver a strong, prosperous economy and a safe, secure Australia.

Our plan will build a stronger, more productive and prosperous Australia – a truly 21st Century Australia – so that all Australians can get ahead in the global economy, live in a better country and get a better future.



1. We will build a stronger, more productive and diverse economy with lower taxes, more efficient government and more productive businesses that will deliver more jobs, higher real incomes and better services for you and your family.



2. We will get the Budget back under control, cut waste and start reducing debt – to keep interest rates as low as possible; and to protect the Australian economy from future economic shocks.



3. We will help families get ahead by freeing them from the burdens of the carbon tax – to protect Australian jobs and reduce cost-of-living pressures, especially rising electricity and gas prices.



4. We will help small businesses grow and create more jobs – by reducing business costs and cutting taxes as well as cutting red and green tape costs by \$1 billion every year.



5. We will create stronger jobs growth by building a diverse, world-class 5-Pillar economy – by building on our strengths in Manufacturing Innovation, Advanced Services, Agriculture Exports, world-class Education and Research, as well as boosting Mining Exports.



6. We will generate one million new jobs over the next five years and two million new jobs within a decade by growing a bigger, more productive and prosperous economy.



7. We will build more modern infrastructure to get things moving – with an emphasis on reducing the bottlenecks on our gridlocked roads and highways.



8. We will deliver better services including health services – by putting local communities in charge of hospitals and improving co-operation with the States and Territories.



9. We will deliver better education – by putting local communities in charge of improving the performance of local schools.



10. We will take direct action to reduce carbon emissions inside Australia, not overseas – and also establish a 15,000-strong Green Army to clean-up the environment.



11. We will deliver stronger borders – where the boats are stopped – with tough and proven measures.



12. We will deliver strong and stable government that restores accountability – to deliver a better future for all Australians.





2. The Coalition's Plan: building a stronger 21st Century Australia

“We stand for active government not big government.”

Tony Abbott
May 1994

Our positive, inclusive vision for Australia

We believe in Australia and we believe “there is no limit to what Australia can achieve.”

That’s why our plan is to build a stronger, more productive and prosperous Australia – a truly 21st Century Australia – so that all Australians can get ahead in the global economy, live in a better country and have a better future.

With your support we will deliver a strong, prosperous economy and a safe, secure Australia. We will offer every Australian Hope, Reward and Opportunity.

We’ve been listening

Your opinion counts. That’s why the Coalition Team has travelled all over Australia listening and talking with people about their lives, their jobs and their hopes for their children and our country. Australians have told us of their growing concerns.

- Concerns about increasing pressures on family budgets and the huge rise in the cost-of-living – especially rapidly rising electricity and gas prices.
- Concerns about poor superannuation returns and being able to afford a secure retirement.
- Concerns about leaving the next generation worse off and unfairly burdening their children’s and grandchildren’s future with higher taxes and debt.
- Concerns about the lack of modern infrastructure and the bottlenecks on our gridlocked roads.
- Concerns about job security, youth unemployment and the slowing economy.



Rapidly rising electricity prices are hurting Australian families.

- Concerns about tax increases, government waste and government debt.
- Concerns about increasing numbers of illegal boat arrivals and the huge blow-out in taxpayer costs.

We’ve been listening to small business

Small business people have told us of their growing concerns.

- Concerns about the government not understanding the needs of small business and how the government is increasing the burdens on business.

- Concerns about rapidly rising business costs and taxes – especially rising electricity and gas prices caused by the carbon tax.
- Concerns about increasing levels of red tape and paperwork and increasing levels of bureaucratic over-regulation.
- Concerns about workplace productivity problems.
- Concerns about the economy and the impact of the high Australian dollar on their businesses.
- Concerns about whether they can afford to hire people because of increasing union militancy and the growing uncertainty this creates for businesses.

We’ve been consulting with the experts

We have also been consulting widely with business and various experts about confronting the challenges facing Australia. For example: the need to foster productivity, competitiveness and growth if we are to lift Australians’ living standards and what needs to be done to unleash Australia’s real economic potential, particularly in the context of the great transformation currently occurring in the Asian region.

We have taken all these ideas into account in developing our plan for Australia’s future.

It’s time to honestly face Australia’s challenges

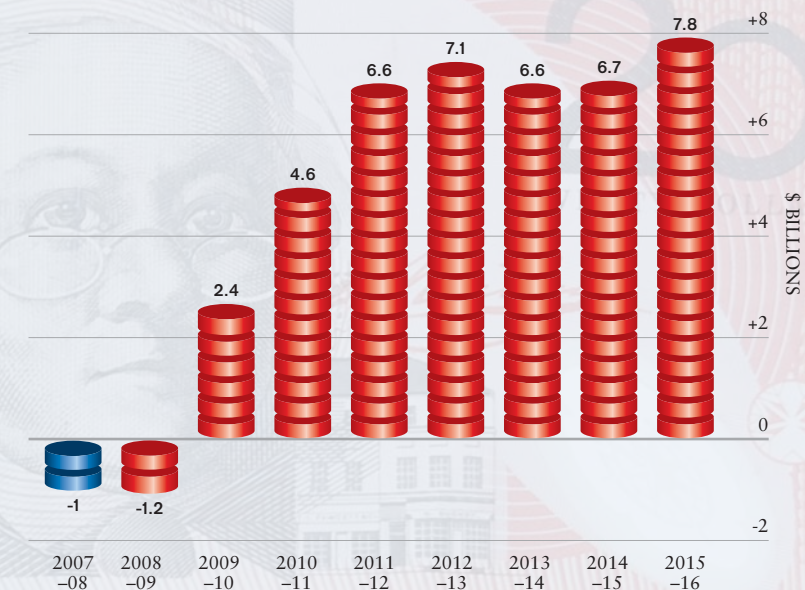
Australia has come a long way but we must now honestly and seriously address the real challenges and issues confronting the nation particularly in this new debt challenged world. We must be

realistic and practical and we must adopt real solutions to these challenges. For example:

- we must start living within our means and start paying down government debt to protect ourselves against any future economic shocks and to avoid leaving a debt legacy to our children;
- we must start addressing the unsustainable structural imbalances in our Budget and get the Budget back on track to strong and sustainable surpluses;
- we must free Australia from the shackles and burdens holding us back and unleash Australia’s

NET DEBT INTEREST PAYMENTS

SOURCE: MYEFO 2012–13



real economic potential so we can compete more effectively in Asia;

- we must boost productivity growth to make Australia more competitive, productive and prosperous;
- we must start building a more diverse, world-class economy – a 5-Pillar economy – that builds on our strengths as a nation and builds real prosperity for the future so that living standards improve, not fall, in the years ahead;
- we must build more modern infrastructure suited to the 21st Century;
- we must work more cooperatively with the States to improve education and health services at the local level;
- we must reduce cost-of-living pressures on families;
- we must secure our borders – where the boats are stopped; and
- we must rebuild our weakened defence force and we must make the nation stronger, not weaker.

This forthcoming election is the most important in decades

At this election the Australian people will face one of the most important elections in decades as they decide the future direction of the country.

Australians will decide which leader and party will put the national interest first; provide strong, stable and accountable government; deliver a strong, prosperous economy and a safe, secure Australia for the uncertain times ahead.

Our plan addresses the main challenges facing Australia

This document, ‘Our Plan: Real Solutions for all Australians’ outlines the clear direction, values and policy priorities that will guide the next Coalition Government. Our plan honestly confronts Australia’s real challenges with real solutions and outlines action to deliver a strong, prosperous economy and a safe, secure future for all of us.

Building a stronger economy

Our main goal is to secure Australia’s economic future and to protect Australians from any future external economic shocks to avoid leaving our children worse off.

We have a detailed plan to build a world-class 5-Pillar economy that will deliver more jobs and generate the real wealth necessary to finance better government services for Australian families.

Charting a longer term course for Australia

The Coalition’s ambitious plan charts a longer term course for modernising and transforming Australia’s economy to ensure it is more suited to the challenges of the 21st Century – by making Australia more competitive in the global economy, by lowering taxes, by boosting productivity growth, by getting small businesses growing again and creating more jobs, by modernising our industries and workforce and developing a more diverse world-class economy – which under a Coalition Government will deliver one million new jobs over the next five years and two million new jobs within the next decade.



The shadow cabinet considering the policy priorities of the next Coalition Government.

Our aim is to deliver a better future for all Australians

Our aim is to build a stronger Australia – a truly 21st Century Australia – so that all Australians can get ahead in the global economy, live in a better country and have a better future. Our aim is to deliver a strong and prosperous economy; a safe and secure nation with secure borders and a strong defence force; a decent and respectful society that gives a ‘fair go’ to all and encourages people to thrive and get ahead; a country with a network of strong communities with more modern infrastructure; a land with a cleaner environment and a more sustainable future; a country with a culture of Hope, Reward and Opportunity; and a country that is a more prosperous, safe and secure place to live.

Australians deserve to live in the best country in the world

Last but not least, the Coalition believes there are no limits to what this great country can achieve for its people.

We need to remove the shackles and burdens holding Australia back and to unleash Australia’s real potential. It’s time to build a truly strong, productive and prosperous 21st Century Australia. After all, Australians deserve to live in the best country in the world with the best prospects for the future.

Australians deserve Hope, Reward and Opportunity. Australians deserve a better future. Australians deserve better government.



3. A time for a decision about the future

The key challenge facing Australia

To safeguard Australia's economic future the key challenge facing Australia is to compete successfully in a more fiercely competitive world.

Undoubtedly, Australia's underlying challenge is to strengthen its economy and make real improvements in productivity, competitiveness and growth to ensure Australia's future prosperity.

Many businesses don't need to be told by government that Asia offers opportunities because of a rapidly rising middle class. But they do want government to help equip the economy for the competitive challenges ahead so that we can actually realise these opportunities.

Asia's growth offers Australia tremendous potential to significantly increase our exports by utilising our competitive advantages as a nation – as long as we position ourselves so that we are ready to seize these opportunities and unleash Australia's real economic potential.

For example, estimates suggest that Asian demand could almost double our net energy exports over the next 20 years. And that comes on top of projections that the volume of our minerals exports could increase by 40 per cent to 60 per cent in the period to 2025.

In the education sector, we will expand our exports, particularly in the Asian region using a number of channels including online.

As ANZ chief executive Mike Smith¹ has warned, Australia risks losing out on a \$3 trillion economic

opportunity in the Asian region if it does not urgently address productivity concerns. Mr Smith said tax and labour reforms were critical and warned that incorrect policy settings risked Australia not being able to finance the \$3 trillion that ANZ estimated Australia needs over the next 20 years to seize the resource and agricultural opportunities presented by the rising Asian middle class.

Tackling the real challenges here in Australia

The real challenges facing Australia range from the need for lower, simpler and fairer taxes, to improving productivity, to promote industries to take advantage of the opportunities ahead. In summary:

- we need to improve productivity, competitiveness and growth;
- we need to reduce Australia's sovereign risk profile and restore Australia's competitive reputation overseas;
- we need to address Australia's growing workplace militancy, flexibility and productivity challenges;
- we need to scrap unnecessary taxes like the carbon tax that reduce our comparative advantages;
- we need to scrap a mining tax that discourages investment by imposing very high effective tax rates on risky projects, while collecting little revenue – particularly after reimbursing the States for their mining royalties;



Tony and Margie Abbott. Margie works full-time running a childcare centre.

- we need to streamline environmental approvals – and stop the delays, complexities and uncertainties imposed by the Commonwealth and States;
- we need to reduce the cost base of our mining projects so that Australian projects are favoured over other countries' and our projects move further up the ladder on resource companies' development plans;
- we need to increase the flexibility of our economy to respond when economic shocks hit;
- we need to address the infrastructure blockages holding us back; and
- we need to support our small business sector. The economic vitality of our country is being sapped because the small businesses of our country are being suffocated. There are 11,000 fewer small businesses actually employing people now than there were in 2007. Small business start-ups have dropped by a staggering 95 per cent. The number going bankrupt has increased by 48 per cent. Small business insolvencies instigated by the Australian Taxation Office are up 46 per cent on previous years.

¹ Source: *The Australian* 23 November 2012.

“We stand for government which backs Australia's families with real policies not just platitudes.”

Tony Abbott
May 1994

Australia needs to restore responsible economic management

It is imperative that Australia restores responsible economic management, adopts a strong economic plan and changes the direction of its structural Budget as quickly as possible to get back on the path to building real prosperity, not false prosperity.

Unfortunately Labor has no economic plan – instead it thinks the answer to every problem is more spending and more taxes. Australia has been living beyond its means, recklessly spending more than it earns. As a result we are now borrowing more and mortgaging our future, forcing our children to pay for the government’s debt of today.

Australia’s current structural Budget position is poor

Australia is now more vulnerable to economic shocks due to excessive deficits and debt spending. There is no credible plan to repay debt – making Australia more vulnerable to another financial crisis.

Yet Labor is now creating expectations by promising new spending programmes that are not funded, making the structural Budget position even worse.

- The Australian Financial Review has identified that under Labor, Australia now has a \$120 billion Budget black hole of unfunded policy promises.
- On the matter of the ongoing structural integrity of the Budget – Chris Richardson, one of Australia’s leading economic forecasters said: “The Budget remains in trouble.”²
- There have now been four years of back-to-back Budget deficits at record levels with another deficit in prospect. Kevin Rudd and Julia Gillard have burned through almost \$200 billion worth of excessive Commonwealth government spending.
- Last year’s deficit was initially expected to be \$12.3 billion but it turned out to be \$43.4 billion – a \$30+ billion blow-out!
- Labor has not delivered on its financial promises and has never returned a Budget surplus, only excuses.
- Labor is now raising taxes and using accounting tricks to manipulate Budget outcomes. And it has still not tackled the problem of the structural position of the Budget.

Australia needs to develop a more productive economy

Spending policies are now overriding productivity-enhancing policies.

Unfortunately, like Europe, under Labor Australia remains fixated on the spending side of the economy rather than on the productive side of the economy – the side that creates greater wealth and prosperity for the nation.

Since the global financial crisis, Labor has encouraged policies that are arguably the opposite of improving long-run sustainable growth in national output – the key determinants of which are saving and productivity improvements.

Productivity growth has fallen significantly

The Economist Intelligence Unit now ranks Australia as the second worst of 51 countries for productivity growth ahead only of Botswana.

The next wave of investment is now at risk

About \$75 billion worth of resource projects have been cancelled in the past 12 months and a further \$100 billion are at serious risk.

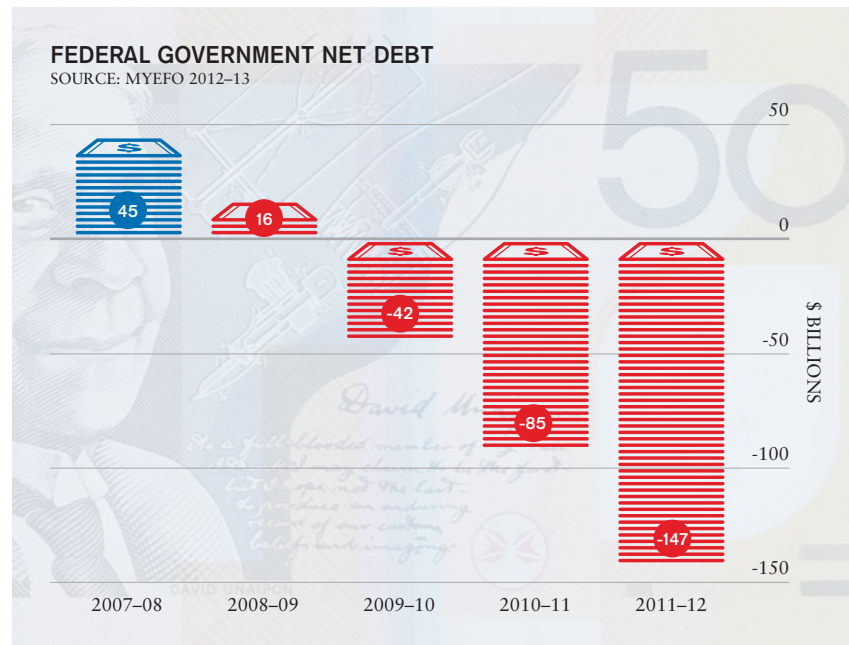
For example: BHP has deferred its massive Olympic Dam expansion in South Australia and in Western Australia, Fortescue and BHP have scaled back expansion plans and Japan’s Mitsubishi has shelved the \$6 billion Oakajee development. With commodity prices still high despite recent falls, this raises serious questions:

- about the imposition of new taxes like the mining tax and carbon tax – particularly when we are the only country with a resource based economy to impose an economy-wide carbon tax;
- about Australia’s sovereign risk profile which has dramatically increased with the introduction of these new taxes;
- about Australia’s poor recent levels of productivity performance and the need to make Australia more competitive and productive; about growing union militancy in workplaces; and
- about Australia’s high project development costs now affecting investment decisions.

GDP is growing too slowly

Australia’s GDP per head has grown by only just over 0.5 per cent per year under Labor compared to well over 2 per cent a year under the Coalition.

- The economy is now slowing with the Reserve Bank cutting its economic growth forecasts and warning the resources boom is losing steam faster than expected.
- As UBS economist Scott Haslem said: “While the RBA sounds less certain on domestic growth...they now appear even more worried about domestic inflation and productivity.”³
- Monetary policy is now being used to try and catch a falling economy.



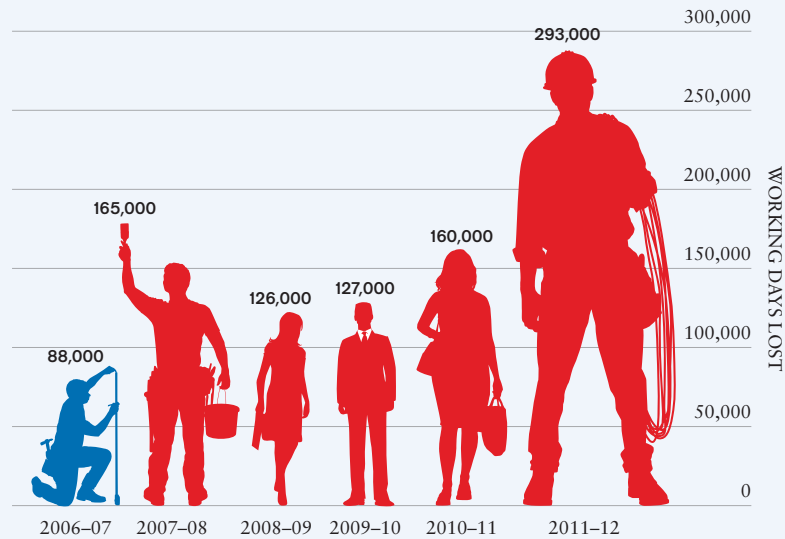
“We
Australians
are a great
people with
a great
destiny.”

Tony Abbott
May 1994

² Source: *Herald Sun* 5 November 2012. ³ Source: *Herald Sun* 9 November 2012.

WORKING DAYS LOST

SOURCE: ABS INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES DATA 2007–12



Over-regulation is strangling our businesses and driving up costs

An Australian Chamber of Commerce and industry survey showed that 73 per cent of businesses report greater increases in regulation over the past two years and 60 per cent of businesses spend over \$5,000 a year just meeting regulatory requirements.

Inflexible work practices are holding our industries back

The Australian Industry Group warns there are too many unnecessary barriers on productivity and flexibility that will lead to more business closures and jobs going overseas. They say it's not about

slashing wages, working conditions or living standards, but they fear the nation is going “the wrong way down a one-way street.”

Australia's pace of jobs growth has been 30 per cent lower under Labor

Under Labor, the pace of jobs growth has averaged 1.5 per cent a year compared with 2.2 per cent under the Coalition – a 30 per cent slower pace of jobs growth. And less than half of the new jobs under Labor have been private sector jobs compared with over 70 per cent under the Howard Government.

Jobs growth over the past two years has slowed to its weakest pace in 15 years. And Australia's workforce participation rate has dropped.

Without a strong, growing economy, other challenges can't be properly addressed

Without a strong, prosperous economy the nation won't have the financial means to address all the other challenges facing Australia, like the need for more modern infrastructure, better services like health and education and the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) as well as the need to restore defence funding. That's why a strong, prosperous economy is central to everything.

Australians are being let down by a bad government

Australians know that this is a great country let down by a bad government interested only in its own survival – with no economic plan for Australia other than to run deficits and spend more money.



4. Delivering a strong, prosperous economy

The importance of a responsible economic strategy

We have an economic plan for Australia – a plan to deliver a strong, prosperous economy based on the fundamental truth that the best long-term economic strategy for Australia is to get our finances in order, build a strong growth-powered economy with less debt and make Australia more productive and competitive in the global economy. Our plan will deliver more jobs, higher real wages and better living standards for all Australians.

The elements of our economic plan

- We will live within our means, get the Budget back under control and pay back debt.
- We will lower taxes to stimulate stronger economic growth and unleash our real economic potential.
- We will boost productivity to secure greater prosperity and build more 21st Century infrastructure.

- We will deepen our engagement with Asia and deliver more growth from Asia.
- We will help small business create stronger jobs growth.
- We will build a more diverse, world-class 5-Pillar economy that unleashes Australia's potential.

Building a strong, productive and prosperous economy with less debt benefits everyone

We believe a strong, productive and prosperous economy, ideally free from the burdens of debt, is the basis for realising all our other goals for Australia. In fact, it provides the financial means to enable us to help those in need, particularly the disadvantaged.

A prosperous economy with less debt is the essential ingredient that allows us all to secure the aspirations we have for ourselves, our families and our country.



Andrew Robb, Joe Hockey, Tony Abbott, Julie Bishop and Warren Truss.

“The best way to restore politicians' standing is to have governments which meddle less and lead more.”

Tony Abbott
May 1994



5. Living within our means and getting the Budget back under control

POLICY PRIORITY

We will get the Budget back under control, cut waste and start reducing debt – to take unnecessary pressure off interest rates; and to protect the Australian economy from another financial crisis.

Protecting Australia from a debt crisis – paying down debt

We have an economic plan for Australia – a plan to live within our means and get the Budget back under control.

With Australia's net debt over \$160 billion, Australia is more vulnerable to an economic shock and has less protection in the event of a financial crisis. This is why we are so determined to get the Budget back under control and get back on the path to real prosperity. Sound budget management means a sustainable surplus over the medium-term because governments have to live within their means if we wish to leave the next generation better off, not worse off.

We will manage the economy and Budget responsibly to ensure our children are not burdened by unfairly high taxes and left with an unfair debt legacy.

The Coalition will protect the Australian economy from economic shocks and create the conditions which keep interest rates as low as possible and reduce debt interest payments, which are now costing the Australian public over \$7 billion a year. By repaying debt, this annual \$7 billion of debt interest payments could instead be better spent on better services such as health and education and for tax relief.

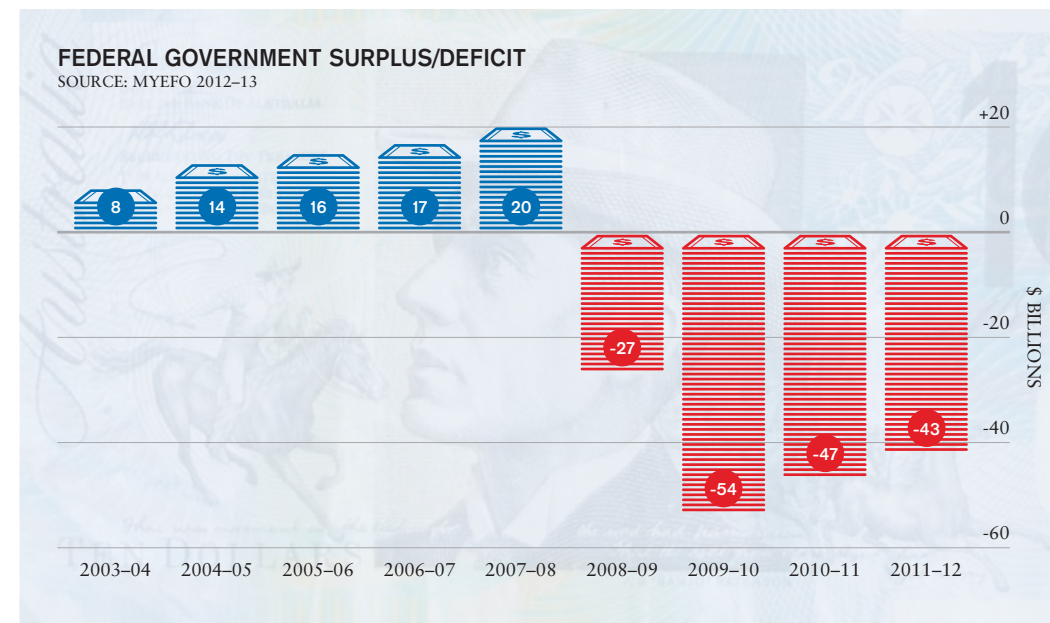
Getting the Budget back under control

We will:

- get the Budget back under control, start delivering real Budget surpluses, pay down debt and take pressure off the high Australian dollar;
- immediately establish a Commission of Audit to identify savings and efficiencies in all areas of government, so we can reduce government debt



Bruce Billson, George Brandis, Eric Abetz, Joe Hockey and Peter Dutton.



and start delivering better value for money and sustainable Budget surpluses into the future;

- end government waste and ensure better value-for-money in government programmes so that Australia no longer needs to keep borrowing money to prop up its Budget; and
- start reducing government debt so the government won't need to spend \$7 billion a year on wasted interest payments.

Living within our means on a sustainable basis

We will restore prudent financial management and live within our means on a sustainable, longer-

term basis to restore structural integrity to the Budget. We will:

- act in a responsible way to protect Australian families and deliver better frontline services whilst repairing Australia's Budget and putting it on a sustainable, longer-term footing;
- get spending down by fixing the overlap between different levels of government and by reducing the size of the bloated Commonwealth payroll, with a focus on natural attrition, to bring it closer to its size at the close of the Howard Government; and
- deliver a more effective and responsive public service focused on your needs.



6. Lowering taxes to unleash our real economic potential

Delivering lower taxes and growing a stronger economy

We have an economic plan for Australia – a plan to lower taxes to stimulate stronger economic growth and make Australia more competitive in the global economy.

We will abolish unnecessary taxes to unleash Australia's real economic potential and to encourage businesses to invest and grow and create more jobs.

Personal income tax cut – without the carbon tax

We will fund personal income tax cuts for individuals and families – without a carbon tax. We pledge to the families of Australia that we will never make your lives harder by imposing needless new taxes and we will free Australians from the burdens of the carbon tax.

Cutting company tax – without the mining tax

We will deliver a modest cut in company tax – funded from savings in the Budget.

Scrapping the carbon tax – reducing cost-of-living pressures

We will immediately introduce legislation to scrap the world's biggest carbon tax and start reducing cost of living pressures for all Australians caused by rapidly rising electricity and gas prices.

- By repealing the world's biggest carbon tax we will secure a bigger economy – an extra \$1 trillion of lost output cumulatively by 2050 on Labor's own figures, or the equivalent of shutting down

the whole Australian economy for almost a year. This will secure more Australian jobs, boost Australia's exports and make Australia's businesses more competitive and productive. No other energy-rich country has introduced an economy wide carbon tax. The world's biggest carbon tax damages the Australian economy, drives up prices unnecessarily, hits the cost-of-living of families, hurts small businesses and makes all Australian businesses less competitive in both domestic and international markets.

- We will take direct action to reduce carbon emissions. Through the Coalition's Direct Action Plan we will deliver on our commitment to a five per cent reduction in carbon emissions by 2020. We will reduce emissions inside Australia, not by paying billions of dollars to foreign carbon traders.
- We will act immediately to abolish the carbon tax. On day one of a new government– we will instruct the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet to draft legislation to repeal the carbon tax. The



We have an economic plan to lower taxes to stimulate economic growth.

Finance Minister will notify the Clean Energy Finance Corporation that it should suspend its operations and instruct the Department of Finance to draft legislation to permanently shut down the \$10 billion fund. The Environment Minister will instruct the department to start implementing the Coalition's Direct Action Plan on climate change and carbon emissions.

- Legislation to repeal the carbon tax will be the first piece of legislation the Coalition will introduce.

Abolishing the mining tax – growing a stronger economy

We will abolish the mining tax and restore Australia's international reputation as a safe and reliable place to invest, making Australia more competitive in the global economy.

- We are determined to attract more investment in Australia's mining sector, encourage the development of the world's best mining industry and harness the comparative advantages we have as one of the world's great mining and energy rich resource countries.
 - The mining tax damages Australia's international reputation overseas, increases our sovereign risk profile, damages investor confidence and deters investment in Australia in favour of other countries.
 - The compliance costs of the mining tax push up costs for our mining companies making them less productive and less competitive.
 - As a result, Australia is becoming less competitive in the global economy and is heading in the wrong direction.



We will abolish the mining tax and restore Australia's international reputation as a safe and reliable place to invest.

- The Coalition is determined to deliver a more positive environment for mining. By abolishing the mining tax, we will re-energise the entire industry and this will lead to increased mining investment with more mining projects coming on stream. This will lead to an eventual boost in Australia's exports, strengthening the economy and creating more Australian jobs over the medium-longer term.

The Australian people will benefit significantly from a bigger and stronger mining industry that pays more taxes and invests in more mining projects in Australia, rather than overseas.

Welcoming investment

By lowering taxes and reducing Australia's sovereign risk profile we will declare to the world that Australia is 'open-for-business' again and that will lift confidence and investment in our industries.



7. Boosting productivity and securing greater prosperity

Securing the future prosperity of our country

We have an economic plan for Australia – a plan to boost productivity to make Australia more competitive in the global economy and to lift Australians’ standard of living.

In a competitive world economy, standing still is not an option. That’s why we must immediately take the decisions necessary to boost productivity growth and encourage world’s best practice to modernise and transform Australia’s businesses and industries for the 21st Century.

Our Better Productivity Plan

Everything in our Better Productivity Plan is designed to make Australia more productive and to make our economy more competitive, because that is the key to building a better future with better prospects for all Australians.

We will implement our Better Productivity Plan and deliver higher productivity growth by:

- encouraging more people into the workforce to be productive contributors in the nation’s life and to help make Australia a more successful country;
- making public institutions more cost effective and responsive so they too can contribute to making Australia more productive and successful;
- cutting government red and green tape so businesses can become more productive and devote their energies towards business and jobs growth;
- improving competition rules so competitive forces drive productivity growth;

- getting greater value from infrastructure spending so every dollar of spending becomes more productive and the infrastructure contributes to real economic growth; and
- rebalancing workplace relations to reduce union militancy in workplaces and to encourage higher pay for better work.

Productivity Priorities Working Group

We have established a Productivity Priorities Working Group to consult with business and community stakeholders on the implementation of our Better Productivity Plan – so that it can be implemented from day one and a new government can ‘hit the ground running’.

Improving productivity – by boosting workforce participation

We will deliver higher productivity growth by boosting workforce participation. We will encourage every Australian to be a productive contributor in the nation’s life and give every Australian the opportunity to get ahead and build a better life for themselves and their families.

- We will provide incentives for employers to employ young people and seniors and take them off welfare.
- We will ensure that people of working age are actually working, preferably for a wage – but if not, for the dole – by reinvigorating the work-for-the-dole programme that was one of the great successes of the previous Coalition Government.
- We will introduce a genuine Paid Parental Leave Scheme and help ensure that childcare is more

accessible, affordable and flexible – ensuring all families have more choice. The Coalition’s Paid Parental Leave scheme is based on a mother’s real wage, rather than a minimum wage. According to the Productivity Commission’s report into parental leave, Australia is one of only two countries where parental leave isn’t based on the mother’s actual wage.

- We will introduce a new Job Commitment Bonus for long-term employees who get a job and remain off welfare for 12 months and a further bonus if they remain off welfare for 24 months.
- We will introduce a new Jobseeker Relocation Bonus for young job seekers who move to take a job.
- We will provide better structured incentives for employers to employ people over 50 years of age.
- We will make work-for-the-dole mandatory for all long-term unemployed welfare beneficiaries under 50 years of age and tighten work-for-the-dole requirements.
- We will start suspending dole payments for people under 30 years of age in areas where unskilled work is readily available.
- We will adopt a smarter approach to the disability pension that distinguishes between disabilities that are likely to be permanent and those that are not, which will help to prevent older unemployed people being parked on welfare.
- We will support the Australian Employment Covenant and its many supporting employers to create more opportunities for indigenous Australians to get ahead by actively engaging more indigenous Australians in real jobs.

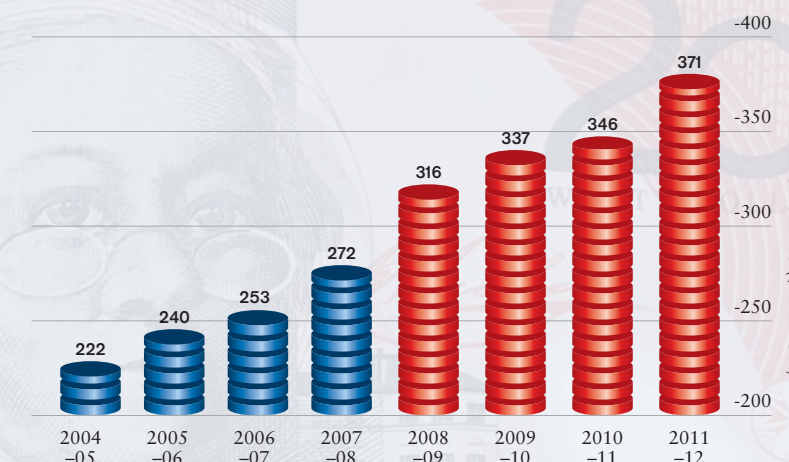
Improving productivity – by improving government services

We will deliver higher productivity growth by making public institutions more cost effective and responsive, so they too can contribute to making Australia more productive and successful.

- We will make our hospitals and schools more responsive to community needs and more efficient. Community controlled public hospitals and independent public schools where individuals have a stake in the institution and a say at the board table, with a focus on improvement and delivering better results, lead to greater productivity. If the public schools and public hospitals that comprise more than 5 per cent of our total economy are more responsive and efficient, productivity will improve.

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT SPENDING

SOURCE: MYEFO 2012–13

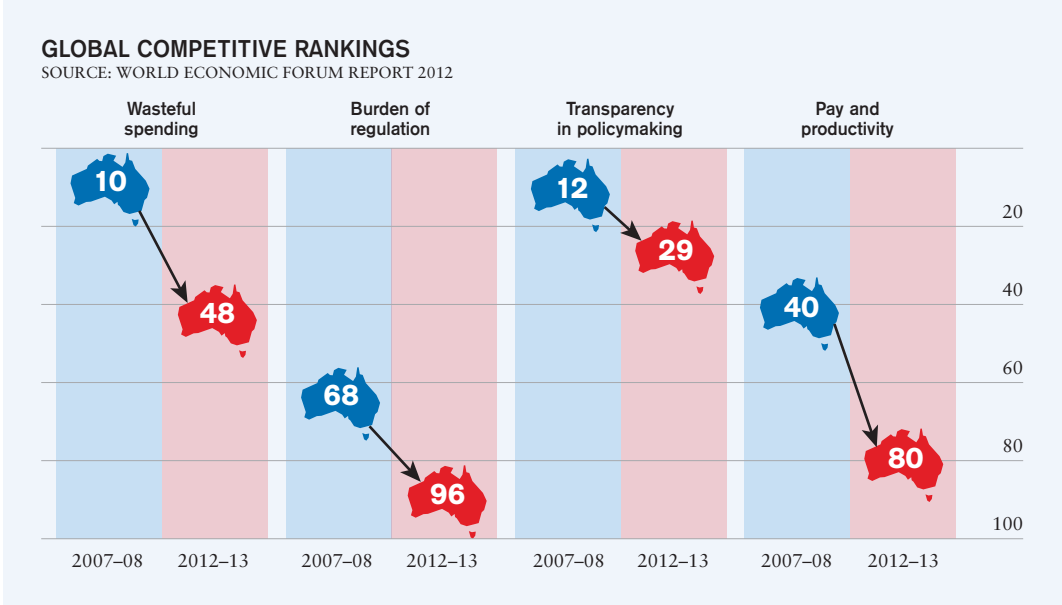


“The challenge is to support smart ways to protect the environment, not dumb ones.”

Tony Abbott
April 2012

“We need governments which believe in Australia and Australians.”

Tony Abbott
May 1994



Improving productivity – by cutting government red and green tape

We will deliver higher productivity growth by cutting government red and green tape – so businesses can become more productive and devote their energies towards business and jobs growth.

Productivity will go up when people running businesses have more time for innovation, customer sales and actually running their businesses because they will spend less time and money on unnecessary paper work with no real benefit.

- We will cut government red tape costs on businesses and community groups by \$1 billion a year.

- We will deliver a State-based one-stop shop for environmental approvals to streamline the environmental approval process, reduce costs for business and boost productivity while retaining current high environmental standards.
- We will give every significant Commonwealth government agency/department an annual target for red tape cost reductions and public service bonuses will depend upon those targets being met.
- Where possible we will replace burdensome regulatory reporting requirements with independent audits backed by penalties for organisations that fail to comply with set standards.
- Every Cabinet submission will once more contain a regulation impact statement that will quantify

the compliance costs imposed and matching compliance cost cuts.

- Every year, there will be a Deregulation Report tabled in the parliament and two sitting days will be dedicated to the repeal of redundant legislation and review of regulations.
- Responsibility for deregulation will be assumed by the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet so that deregulation and productivity will have a whole-of-government focus.

Improving productivity – by improving competition policy

We will improve competition rules so competitive forces drive productivity growth.

- We will review competition policy and deliver more competitive markets because there will be, for the first time in two decades, a root and branch review of competition laws.
- We will ensure that big and small businesses get a ‘fair-go’ and do the right thing by each other in their respective marketplaces. If they are competing on a genuinely level playing field where the most cost-effective products dominate markets regardless of who supplies them, our productivity will go up and consumers will see real and lasting benefits.

Improving productivity – by building more modern infrastructure

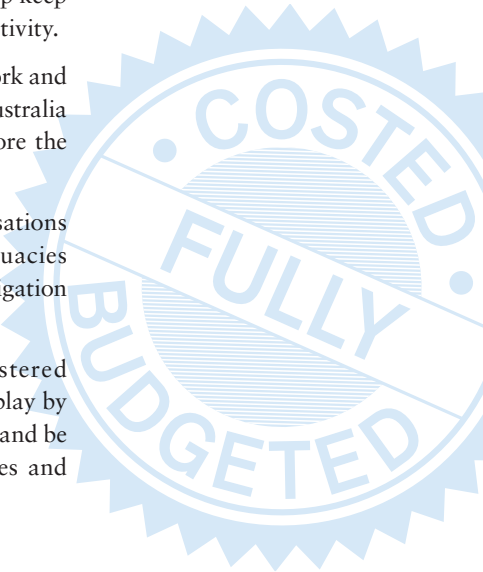
We will get on with the job of building the modern infrastructure required to unclog our congested roads and highways to improve the productive use

of the nation’s time – millions of hours of wasted time can be converted into more productive economic activities, helping to grow a stronger economy. If workers spend less time in traffic jams they will have more time at work and more time with their families.

Improving productivity – by reducing union militancy in workplaces

We will deliver higher productivity growth by rebalancing workplace relations to reduce union militancy and to encourage higher pay for better work. If there are fewer strikes and if unions are better governed, our economy will become more productive and competitive.

- We will fully restore the Australian Building and Construction Commission (ABCC) so that there will be less union militancy. This will help keep business costs down and improve productivity.
- We will work within the existing framework and with the independent umpire Fair Work Australia and the Fair Work Ombudsman to restore the balance in workplaces.
- We will establish a Registered Organisations Commission to overcome the inadequacies revealed by Fair Work Australia’s investigation into the Health Services Union.
- We will amend laws so that registered organisations and their officials have to play by similar rules, to make similar disclosures and be subject to similar penalties as companies and their directors.





8. Delivering more growth from Asia

Focusing on opportunities in the Asian region

We have an economic plan for Australia – a plan to deliver more growth from Asia.

We will position Australia to seize the opportunities in the Asian region by strengthening our trading relationships, welcoming investment, boosting our exports and deepening Australia's knowledge of and engagement with countries in Asia.

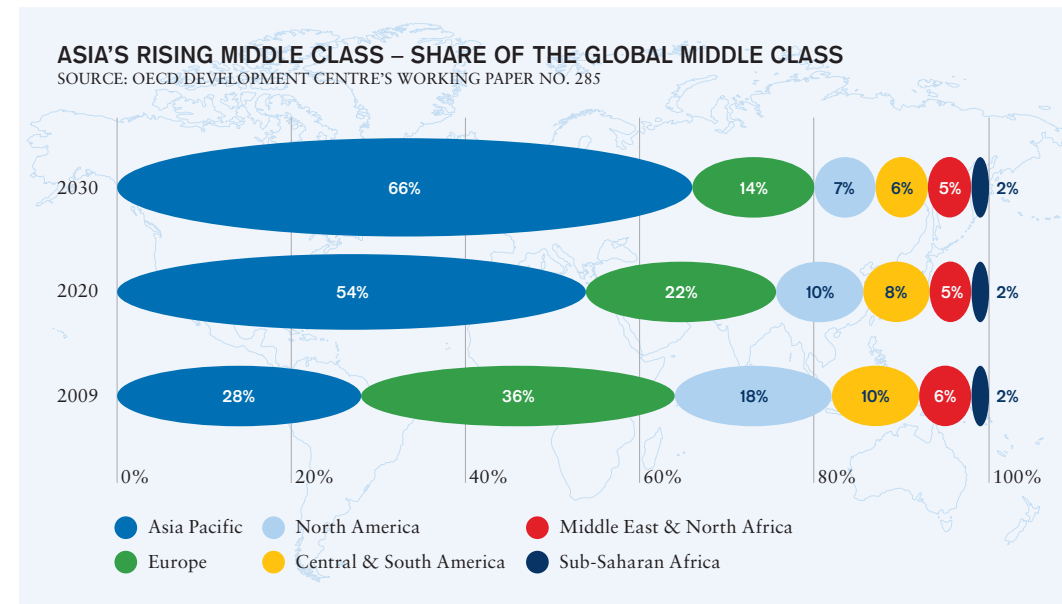
- We will modernise and transform our economy and make Australia more productive and competitive.
- We will develop stronger people-to-people relationships and foster the mind-set and skills-

set needed to make the most of Asia's ongoing economic transformation.

- We recognise the rapid emergence not only of China, but also India and Indonesia – and the opportunities this will afford Australia in the years ahead.

Delivering new regional Free Trade Agreements

We will take real action to increase economic activity, strengthen our trading relationships and grow a stronger economy by fast tracking Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) with China, Indonesia, Japan and India amongst others.



We have a plan to deliver more growth from Asia.

Building more opportunities for Australia's exporters

By focusing on opportunities in the Asian region and building a strong diverse 5-Pillar economy we will boost our export of goods and services – particularly by building on our strengths in Manufacturing Innovation, Agriculture Exports, Advanced Services, world-class Education and Research, as well as Mining Exports.

We will strengthen our diplomatic relationship and trade ties with India and boost mining exports by exporting uranium to India.

Developing our Asia-capability

We will develop more Asia-capable talent and help Australians gain study and work experience, form relationships, learn to adapt behaviour to Asian

contexts and learn to work more effectively with Asian governments. We will develop Australia's 'Asia literacy' beyond language skills. We will develop strong people-to-people relationships. Our intention is to develop a 'deep knowledge' of Asia and to broaden and deepen our engagement and relationships in the region.

Establishing a new two-way 'Colombo Plan'

Within two years we will build a better and stronger network of cultural and trade relationships in our region by establishing a new two-way 'Colombo Plan' that doesn't just bring the best and brightest talent from the region to learn in Australia but more importantly takes Australia's best and brightest talent to learn more about the countries in our region.

We will achieve better engagement with Asia through this new two-way 'Colombo Plan' which sends our future leaders to Asian universities as well as bringing their future leaders here through a scholarship programme. By fostering these relationships we will develop the important people-to-people links and the leadership relationships of the future as was previously done under Sir Robert Menzies' 'Colombo Plan'.

Ensuring high school students learn an Asian language

We will aim to have 40 per cent of high school students studying a foreign language, preferably an Asian language, in year 12, to ensure the youth of Australia become more 'Asia-capable' and are better equipped in the future to engage with our trading partners in our region and in the global economy.

“The next Coalition Government will fight the tyranny of low expectations.”

Tony Abbott
June 2012



9. Helping small business create stronger jobs growth

Helping small business

We have an economic plan for Australia – a plan to help small businesses grow and create stronger jobs growth.

Employing almost half of the workforce in Australia, small businesses are the real “job creators” in the economy. By unshackling the small business sector we will unleash the potential of small businesses to grow and create more jobs.

Lowering taxes and reducing business costs

We will reduce costs for every business by cutting taxes: by abolishing the carbon tax and cutting company tax.

- We will stop small businesses paying 10 per cent more for their electricity and 9 per cent more for their gas bills and paying more for everything else they need by abolishing the carbon tax.

- We will deliver a modest company tax cut, funded from savings in the Budget.

Cutting red and green tape – removing the burdens on small business

We will cut government red and green tape and reduce the regulatory burdens that small businesses face – so businesses can become more productive and devote their energies towards business and jobs growth.

- We will get businesses growing by cutting red tape costs to business by \$1 billion each year.
- We will streamline environmental approvals through a State-based one-stop shop environmental approval process. This will save time and money, cut down on paperwork and boost productivity.
- We will require Parliament to spend two days a year removing legislation and regulations to help ease the burden on small businesses.



Tony Abbott listening to the concerns of small business.

POLICY PRIORITY

We will get small businesses growing and creating more jobs – by reducing business costs, cutting taxes, cutting red tape costs by \$1 billion a year and delivering on our Better Productivity Plan.

- We will allow small business to send one payment directly to the Australian Taxation Office for superannuation and then the Australian Taxation Office will do the rest, if that’s what small business would prefer.
- We will give employers the option of ‘opting in’ to managing the administration of Paid Parental Leave to their employees. If they choose not to be the government’s paymaster, payments will be made directly to the employee. This will relieve small businesses of their role as paymaster of the government’s inadequate Paid Parental Leave scheme.
- We will have a genuine Paid Parental Leave scheme and we won’t force small business to do the paperwork for it. Our scheme will benefit small business because it will make it easier for them to retain capable female staff.

Doubling the annual rate of small business growth

We will double the current annual rate of growth of small businesses because we understand that small businesses are the real ‘job creators’ in our economy.

- We will achieve an annual growth rate in the numbers of small businesses of 1.5 per cent – the same rate the Howard Government was achieving. We will then be adding more than 30,000 new small businesses each year. That’s double the rate achieved under the current government.
- We want small businesses providing more than half the jobs in the private sector because that is where people get a start in life, that is where



Joe Hockey and Andrew Robb will lower business taxes and cut red tape.

entrepreneurship is fostered and innovation happens. This is an important part of building a more productive nation and is at the heart of building our economy.

Reviewing competition laws and policy

We will conduct, for the first time in two decades, a root and branch review of competition laws and policy and deliver more competitive markets.

Extending unfair contract protection to small business

We will extend unfair contract protection currently available to consumers, to small businesses. We will ensure that big and small businesses get a ‘fair-go’ and do the right thing by each other in their respective marketplaces, delivering real and lasting benefits to consumers.





10. Building a 5-Pillar economy and unleashing Australia's potential

POLICY PRIORITY

We will create stronger jobs growth by building a diverse, world-class 5-Pillar economy – by building on our strengths in Manufacturing Innovation, Advanced Services, Agriculture Exports, world-class Education and Research, as well as boosting Mining Exports.

Building a diverse 5-Pillar economy

To guard against having all our eggs in the one basket of mining, we will build a more diverse, world-class economy – a 5-Pillar economy – to unleash Australia's real economic potential. We will build on our strengths in Manufacturing Innovation, Agriculture Exports, Advanced Services, world-class Education and Research, as well as boosting our Mining Exports, to make the most of our comparative advantages in international markets.

Delivering stronger jobs growth

By developing a world-class 5-Pillar economy we will deliver one million new jobs over the next five years and two million new jobs over the next decade as we modernise and transform all sectors of our economy.



We will deliver one million new jobs over the next five years.

Prime Minister's Business Advisory Council

We will establish a new Prime Minister's Business Advisory Council to advise the Executive Government on developing the economy. The Business Advisory Council will be chaired by leading Australian business leader Mr Maurice Newman AC and meet three times a year. It will include, amongst others, representatives from the Manufacturing, Agricultural, Services, Education and Resources sectors of the economy.

Building on our strengths in Manufacturing Innovation

We will unleash the real economic potential in our manufacturing industry by removing the shackles and burdens holding the industry back and by making the industry more productive and competitive. We will:

- repeal the world's biggest carbon tax which makes Australian businesses, particularly manufacturing, less competitive in domestic and international markets;
- cut red tape costs by \$1 billion a year;
- get business costs down and get productivity up by ensuring Australian businesses have the right incentives to invest in Research and Development;
- create the environment to revitalise Australian industry's international competitiveness;
- we will provide better links between government, business and research institutions;
- act immediately to deliver a level playing field for Australia's manufacturing businesses with more effective anti-dumping measures. We will crack



We will unleash the real economic potential in our manufacturing industry

down on overseas producers who don't cooperate with anti-dumping investigations. We will strengthen enforcement of the provisions of the World Trade Organisation Agreement on subsidies and countervailing measures. We will transfer anti-dumping responsibilities from Customs to the Department of Industry; and

- build on our comparative strength in Manufacturing Innovation.

Building on our strengths in Agriculture Exports

We will unleash the real economic potential in our agricultural industry by removing the shackles and burdens holding the industry back and by making the industry more productive and globally competitive. We will:

- build on our comparative strength in food production and better manage our precious water resources to help our agriculture sector become the 'Food Bowl of Asia' and achieve 'food security' in a world demanding more of our food resources;
- support our fishing industry and review the declaration of new Marine Protected Areas. We will establish genuine consultation with the fishing industry on research and strengthen the connection between science and fishing policy; and
- provide policy stability and certainty to our live exports trade – avoiding damaging backflips like Labor's overnight decision to suspend live cattle trade with Indonesia.

Building on our strengths in Advanced Services

We will unleash the real economic potential in our service industries by making the industry more productive and globally competitive.

We will deliver broadband faster, sooner and at less expense to taxpayers and consumers than Labor's National Broadband Network.

We will:

- cut red tape costs by \$1 billion per year;
- build on our comparative strength in Advanced Services to boost our exports to Asia. We will seize the enormous opportunities for this highly diversified sector, particularly in relation to financial services, health services, engineering and architectural services;

“The sum of human happiness is most likely to be maximised when government knows its limits.”

*Tony Abbott
November 2012*

“Government should be at least as interested in the creation of wealth as in its redistribution.”

*Tony Abbott
May 2012*



We will re-energise our mining industry by abolishing Labor's carbon and mining taxes.

- encourage modernisation and the development of Advanced Services and support the use of new technologies, particularly digital and IT;
- expand our skills into the Asian region; and
- give priority to the recommendations of the Johnson Report into Australia as a Financial Centre to further grow our financial services industry's ability to export its world-class expertise to Asia and beyond.

Building a world-class Education and Research sector

We will unleash the real economic potential in our Education and Research sector by removing the shackles and burdens holding the industry back and by making the industry more productive and globally competitive. We will:

- encourage modernisation and the development of world-class Education and Research capabilities and support the use of new technologies, particularly digital and IT; and

- expand our education export sector, particularly in the Asian region using a number of channels including online.

Building a world-class Mining, Energy and Resources sector

We will unleash the real economic potential in our mining industry by removing the shackles and burdens holding the industry back and by making the industry more productive and globally competitive. We will:

- build on our strength as one of the world's rich resource-based economies;
- re-energise our mining companies by abolishing Labor's carbon and mining taxes;
- establish a one-stop shop for environmental approvals and speed up the time for bringing projects on-stream; and
- declare Australia 'open-for-business' and restore Australia's international reputation as a safe place to invest.



11. Delivering modern infrastructure and building a 21st Century Australia

Building the modern infrastructure Australia needs

We have an economic plan for Australia – a plan to build more modern infrastructure to boost productivity.

We will deliver the modern infrastructure that a first world 21st Century country deserves. You will see cranes over our cities as we get on with the job of building more modern infrastructure, with a special emphasis on reducing the bottlenecks on our gridlocked roads and highways. Big new projects will be underway within 12 months of a change of government. Our big cities are as vital to our economy as our vast resource developments and can be properly considered a critical part of our national economic infrastructure. They are key to the development of a more productive and prosperous Australia.

Delivering a 15-year rolling plan for national infrastructure projects

We will develop a rolling 15-year infrastructure plan of national projects and work closely with Infrastructure Australia in establishing project priorities and delivery timetables. This will be a Commonwealth and State government plan and will be revised every five years.

Empowering Infrastructure Australia to deliver better value from infrastructure spending

We will deliver better value from infrastructure spending by working in close collaboration with Infrastructure Australia. Infrastructure projects

are very expensive and taxpayers must be guaranteed that their money is spent in the most cost effective manner possible so that we end up with more productive infrastructure, rather than just wasted money.

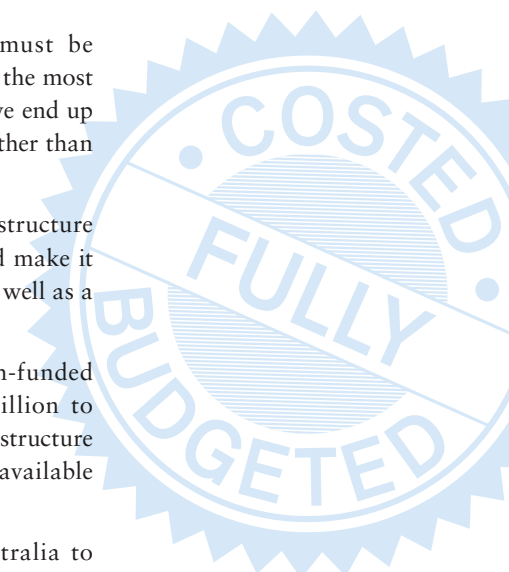
- We will strengthen the role of Infrastructure Australia, improve its governance and make it more transparent and accountable, as well as a more effective adviser.
- We will require all Commonwealth-funded projects worth more than \$100 million to undergo a cost-benefit analysis by Infrastructure Australia to ensure the best use of available taxpayer monies.
- We will require Infrastructure Australia to publish justifications for all its project recommendations.
- We will prioritise projects based on a proper cost-benefit analysis.
- Within 12 months of election we will announce infrastructure priorities and construction timetables in consultation with the States.

Encouraging more private investment in infrastructure projects

We will investigate ways to get more private funding into high priority infrastructure projects to enable us to do more to modernise Australia. We will ask the Office of Financial Management to examine an Infrastructure Partnership Bonds Scheme to encourage billions of dollars of additional private investment in infrastructure projects, so that we can get more things done.

POLICY PRIORITY

We will build more modern infrastructure to get things moving – with a special emphasis on reducing the bottlenecks on our gridlocked roads and highways.





We will work with the States and the private sector to accelerate the delivery of major roads and highways.

Delivering major roads and highways to get things moving

We will work with the States and the private sector to accelerate the delivery of a major roads and highways programme that reduces bottlenecks – to improve productivity and safety for all road users.

- We will contribute \$1.5 billion to get the M4 East (WestConnex Project) underway in Sydney to complete the east-west corridor.
- We will contribute \$1.5 billion to get the East-West Link road tunnel underway in Melbourne to link the Eastern Freeway and Western Ring Road and we will further improve the Geelong Princes Highway.
- We will contribute \$1 billion towards the upgrade of the Gateway Motorway in Brisbane and we will develop the Toowoomba Range crossing.
- We will contribute \$400 million and get the duplication of the Midland Highway between Hobart and Launceston done in Tasmania.
- We will contribute \$5.6 billion to complete the duplication of the Pacific Highway from Newcastle to the Queensland border.
- We are committed to the Perth Gateway project and will make further road infrastructure commitments in South Australia before the next election.

Delivering more affordable broadband – rolling it out faster

The Coalition will deliver high speed broadband that is both affordable for families and businesses and cost effective for taxpayers.

- We will for the first time do a fully transparent cost-benefit analysis of the National Broadband Network, to find out the quickest and most cost-efficient way to upgrade broadband to all areas where services are now unavailable or sub-standard. This is the cost-benefit analysis Labor didn't do before committing to spend tens of billions of dollars on the NBN.
- We will roll out super-fast broadband using whichever is the most effective and cost efficient technology and we will use existing infrastructure where we can.
- We will roll it out faster to high priority areas.
- We will end billions of dollars of wasteful spending on the NBN and deliver more of the modern infrastructure we urgently need while encouraging competition wherever possible to put downward pressure on prices.

Building more dams – providing water security

We will start the detailed planning necessary to build new dams – to secure the nation's water supplies, deliver strong economic benefits for Australia, while also protecting our environment.

The Coalition's Dams Taskforce is looking at potential investments in dam capacity across Australia.



12. Delivering more jobs, higher wages and higher living standards

Delivering stronger jobs growth and a bigger economy

Our economic plan will deliver stronger jobs growth right across Australia by unleashing Australia's real economic potential and growing a bigger, more productive and prosperous economy.

Delivering two million new jobs over the next decade

We will generate one million new jobs over the next five years and two million new jobs over the next decade as we unleash Australia's real economic potential, modernise our businesses and industries as well as transform to a stronger and more prosperous economy.

Delivering higher real wages and higher living standards

We will deliver higher real wages and higher living standards by providing real opportunities for productivity growth as we transform and grow the economy and encourage higher pay for better work.

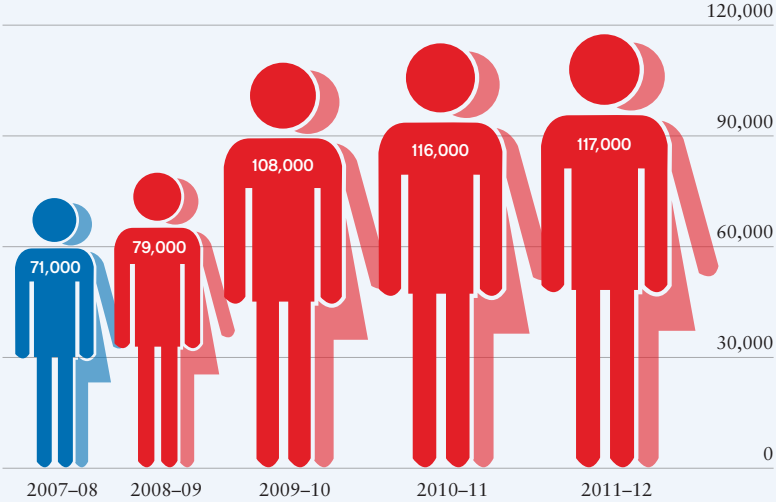
We will tackle Australia's lagging productivity growth problem by pursuing our Better Productivity Plan and building a more productive and prosperous economy that will enable higher real wages and lift Australia's living standards.

Helping unemployed young people to get a job

We will encourage unemployed young people to get back into the workforce – particularly in those areas where unskilled jobs are readily available.

LONG-TERM UNEMPLOYED

SOURCE: ABS, LABOUR FORCE



Helping women get ahead

We will help the women and families of Australia get ahead and have a real choice to have children and a career with a genuine Paid Parental Leave scheme, supported by an affordable, flexible and accessible childcare system.

POLICY PRIORITY

We will generate one million new jobs over the next five years and two million new jobs over the next 10 years by growing a bigger, more productive and prosperous economy.



13. Reducing cost-of-living pressures for families

POLICY PRIORITY

We will help families get ahead by freeing them from the burdens of the carbon tax – to protect Australian jobs and reduce cost-of-living pressures – especially on rising electricity and gas prices.

Delivering Hope, Reward and Opportunity for families

We believe that strong families are the bedrock of a healthy society and should receive support and encouragement from government. A supportive family is the greatest source of emotional stability and social development anyone can have. The Coalition believes that the role of government is to support and expand choices for families, not to make their choices for them.

We will improve rewards from working, reduce cost-of-living pressures and help families with the real costs of raising children as we reset our country's course to one that sees increasing confidence, renewed productivity growth and real

improvement in the wealth of households. We believe that people who work hard and put money aside so they won't be a burden on others should be encouraged, not hit with higher taxes.

Abolishing the carbon tax and reducing cost-of-living pressures

We will start reducing cost of living pressures for families by immediately scrapping the world's biggest carbon tax – taking pressure off rapidly rising electricity and gas bills. We will put downward pressure on prices by getting the ACCC to make sure that prices do not remain artificially raised when we abolish the carbon tax.

Lowering taxes – improving rewards from hard work

We will fund personal income tax cuts for individuals and families – without a carbon tax. We pledge to the families of Australia that we will never make your lives harder by imposing unnecessary new taxes and we will free Australians from the burdens of the carbon tax.

Keeping interest rates low

We will keep interest rates as low as possible by ending government waste, paying back debt and balancing the Budget.

Protecting and strengthening Medicare and private health insurance

We will protect and strengthen Medicare by restoring the Private Health Insurance Rebate as soon as we responsibly can.

Delivering more affordable and flexible childcare

We will help ensure that childcare is more accessible, affordable and flexible, to help families juggle work and family commitments, by getting the Productivity Commission to urgently undertake a major inquiry into the childcare system. We need a better childcare system that's not just geared to 9-to-5 workers – to give women a better chance to combine families with careers. We will look at ways so childcare can become more flexible and responsive to the differing needs and lifestyles of parents, as work patterns and demands on parents are different today than even a decade ago.

Delivering genuine Paid Parental Leave

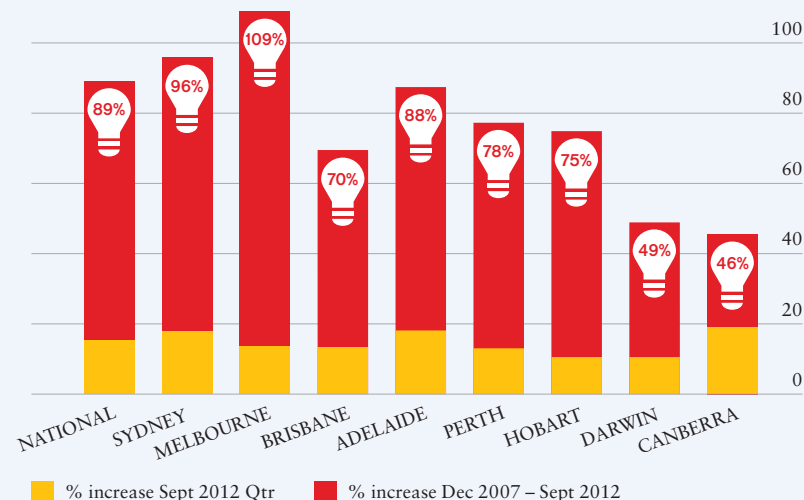
We will deliver a genuine Paid Parental Leave scheme to give mothers six months leave based on their actual wage – to help young families get ahead. This will give women a more realistic choice if they want to combine work with family and continue their careers. According to the Productivity Commission report into parental leave, Australia is one of only two countries where parental leave isn't based on a mother's actual wage. If people receive their actual wage while sick or on holiday, they should also receive their actual wage while on parental leave. Parental leave is supposed to be a workplace entitlement, not a welfare payment.

Delivering better cyber safety for families

We will work together with social media operators, schools, parents and children to tackle cyber bullying and other harmful material and behaviour targeted at individual children online.

% ELECTRICITY PRICE INCREASES UNDER LABOR

SOURCE: ABS, CPI, SEPTEMBER QTR 2012, 6401.0



Margie and Tony Abbott at a local greengrocer.

Delivering better local roads and more modern infrastructure

We will deliver better planned infrastructure including more modern highways that unlock the traffic jams and bottlenecks in our gridlocked cities and provide better and safer highways in country areas. If workers spend less time in traffic jams they will have more time at home with their families.



14. Delivering a more secure retirement for older Australians

Giving older Australians the secure retirement they deserve

After a lifetime of hard work, older Australians are entitled to a safe and secure retirement.

We will ensure older Australians and seniors enjoy the safe and secure retirement they deserve by delivering a strong, prosperous economy which will then ensure that the government has the financial means to provide the real support required by older Australians in their later years.

Delivering stability and certainty on superannuation

We will deliver greater stability and certainty on superannuation – we won't move the goalposts.

It is unfortunate that Labor has wasted so much money and made so many threats and changes to the superannuation system, cutting back on contribution levels and discouraging many people from providing more for their own self-funded retirement.

This has not been in the long-term interests of Australians or Australia.

We will ensure that no more negative unexpected changes occur to the superannuation system so that those planning for their retirement can face the future with a higher degree of predictability.

We believe the people who want to plan and save for their own retirement should be supported by government, not penalised.



We will deliver greater stability and certainty on superannuation.

“I stand for government which gets off people's backs.”

Tony Abbott
May 1994

Assisting mature age workers with employment

We will assist mature age workers by providing better structured incentives for employers who employ workers who are over the age of 50.

Pensioners and self-funded retirees

We will support pensioners and self-funded retirees by tackling the number one issue that adversely affects them – the ever increasing cost of living, especially the cost of electricity and other utilities.

We will abolish the carbon tax which will see an immediate 10 per cent reduction in electricity prices and we will give the ACCC the task of ensuring the benefits of the repeal are passed onto consumers without delay.

Even though we will abolish the carbon tax, we will fund tax cuts and pension increases without a carbon tax, benefiting older Australians.

A better deal for our veterans

We will support our veterans by properly indexing the Defence Force Retirement Benefits and Defence Force Retirement and Death Benefit military superannuation pensions and we will deliver this in our first Budget.

Improving health services and aged care for older Australians

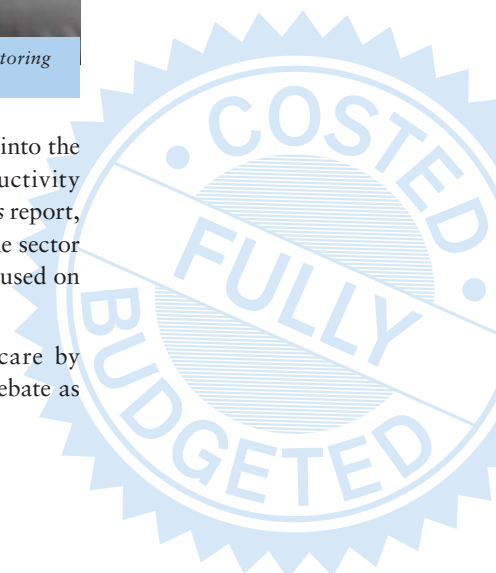
We will negotiate an Aged Care Provider Agreement with the aged care sector. This first ever Aged Care Provider Agreement, will set the framework for ageing and aged care arrangements



We will protect and strengthen Medicare by restoring the private health insurance rebate.

in Australia over the next four years and into the future. Taking into account the Productivity Commission *Caring for Older Australians* report, we will reduce needless bureaucracy in the sector while making sure the sector remains focused on high quality care.

We will protect and strengthen Medicare by restoring the Private Health Insurance Rebate as soon as we responsibly can.





15. Delivering better services and a better society

Our aim is to deliver a better future for all Australians

Our aim is to build a stronger Australia so that all Australians can get ahead in the global economy, live in a better country and have a better future. That's why the Coalition is so determined to deliver a strong, prosperous economy because it allows us to invest more in government services – like the NDIS, health, aged care and education. A strong, productive and prosperous economy is central to everything in our society. It enables us to deliver better services at the local community level so our children can get a good education, so Australians know that when they get sick or old they can get care and if they fall on hard times they can get help.



Our aim is to deliver a better future for all Australians.

Improving co-operation with State governments through the Council of Australian Governments

We will deliver better government services by working in close co-operation with the State and Territory governments who are largely responsible for the delivery of government services.

We will significantly increase co-operation with State and Territory governments by reforming the Council of Australian Governments (COAG), rather than using it as a parking lot for tough decisions which are sidelined by political grandstanding.

We will get on with the job of clearing the backlog of jobs on the agenda and immediately tackle the top priorities in order to deliver better services on the ground as soon as possible.

We will focus COAG on a smaller number of core issues and ensure they are resolved quickly. We will

reduce the number of COAG committees and require Ministers to show why it is essential their portfolio reforms must be resolved by COAG.

Helping the disabled and carers – responsibly implementing the NDIS

We are fully committed to helping people with disabilities and their carers and delivering the NDIS as soon as possible in line with the Productivity Commission's timetable. Full implementation of the NDIS will be a new deal for people with disabilities and their carers. We will establish a bi-partisan parliamentary committee jointly chaired by both sides of the Parliament, with Members and Senators with a strong personal interest in making the NDIS happen. The committee will put the NDIS in place as a united project across party lines.



16. Delivering better health services

Improving the performance of public hospitals at the local level

We will work with the States to ensure their hospitals are managed by local hospital boards so that communities get better health services and better value for their money.

We will put local communities and experts, not unaccountable bureaucrats, in charge of improving the performance of public hospitals – by creating community-controlled hospital boards to appoint the CEO and manage hospital budgets, by instilling a 'patient care first' culture amongst staff and ensuring the delivery of better health outcomes at the local hospital level.

Improving mental health services

We will deliver better mental health services and provide better employment services for people with a mental health issue.

We will take real action and support better mental health services with Early Psychosis Prevention and Intervention Centres (EPPICs); boosting of basic and applied research into mental health; new

headspace sites; better employment opportunities to those with serious mental health problems, boosting outside services that job agencies can provide to clients with mental health issues and a Mental Health Workforce Training Institute.

Funding diabetes research

We will provide \$35 million to help find a cure for type 1 diabetes. This will assist the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation's Clinical Research Network to fund a significant number of additional patient trials locally and internationally and take a co-ordinated nationwide approach to diabetes research.

Improving access to medicines

We will restore transparency, certainty and confidence to the process by which medicines are listed on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) – ensuring medicines are listed on the basis of advice from the independent Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee, not on the whim of the government.

Improving private health insurance

We will strengthen Medicare and take pressure off the public hospital system by restoring the Private Health Insurance Rebate as soon as we responsibly can. This will encourage more Australians to take up private health insurance.

Bringing dental into Medicare

We aspire to improve and restore dental services through Medicare as soon as we responsibly can.



We will put local communities and experts in charge of improving public hospitals.

POLICY PRIORITY

We will deliver better services including health services – by putting local communities in charge of hospitals and improving co-operation with States and Territories.

“The Coalition is much more interested in an empowered community than we are in an empowered government.”

*Tony Abbott
March 2012*



17. Delivering better education



We aim to develop stronger people-to-people relationships with countries in our region.

POLICY PRIORITY

We will deliver better education – by putting local communities in charge of improving the performance of local schools.

Improving the performance of schools at the local level

We will provide better schools, encourage better teachers and provide more choice for parents by giving communities and parents greater control over schools.

- We will put parents, principals and school communities, not unaccountable bureaucrats, in charge of determining how their school will be run to improve performance – by instilling a ‘students come first’ culture amongst staff and ensuring the delivery of better education outcomes at the local school level.
- We will work with the States and Territories to encourage State schools to choose to become independent schools, providing simpler budgeting and resources allocation and more autonomy in decision making.

- We will support teachers in the classroom by ensuring our curriculum is rigorous without being too prescriptive or overcrowded.
- We will continue current levels of funding for schools, indexed to deal with real increases in costs and we will ensure that money is targeted based on the social and economic status of the community.
- We will make more investment in science education at primary schools. We will restore the Primary Connections science education programme which is strongly supported by Australian Nobel Laureate, Professor Brian Schmidt, following recent Labor cuts to the successful programme.
- We will work together with social media operators, schools, parents and children to tackle cyber bullying and other harmful material and behaviour targeted at individual children online, by measures such as ensuring large social media operators rapidly remove harmful online material directed at a child.
- We will continue the National School Chaplaincy Programme in Schools to support the emotional wellbeing of students.

Strengthening higher education

We will strengthen higher education and encourage Australians of all ages to further their education so that they can gain a comparative advantage and get ahead in the new global economy. We believe higher education has a vital dual role in our society as an engine of economic growth, through educating our workforce and producing quality research.

- We will ensure the continuation of the current arrangements of university funding.
- We will work with the sector to reduce the burden of red tape, regulation and reporting, freeing up the sector to concentrate on delivering results and services.
- We will review and restructure government research funding to make sure each dollar is spent as effectively as possible.
- We will ensure the sector has a stable, long-term source of infrastructure funding.
- We will work with the sector to grow higher education as an export industry and to support international students studying in Australia.

Investing in job skills training

We will invest in advanced job skills training – including trade skills.

- We will boost and retain skills in the workplace and give incentives to employers to take young people and older Australians off welfare and into work.
- Our immigration programme will focus on skilled migrants targeting skills shortages and people who can make a contribution from day one in a job.
- We will work urgently with the States to aim to have 40 per cent of Year 12 students studying a foreign language, preferably an Asian language, within a decade to equip them with the skills necessary for the jobs of the future.

New opportunities for our youth to learn in the Asian region

We aim to develop stronger people-to-people relationships with the countries in our region and this presents enormous opportunities for the youth of Australia.

- We will establish a new two-way ‘Colombo Plan’ that doesn’t just bring the best and brightest talent from the region to Australia’s universities but that also takes Australia’s best and brightest talent to Asian universities to learn more about the countries in our region and to develop closer ties and stronger people-to-people relationships.
- By awarding scholarships to our students and fostering this ‘Asia-capable’ learning and developing these people-to-people relationships in those countries we are really developing the leaders of the future as was previously done under Sir Robert Menzies’ ‘Colombo Plan’. It is through such people-to-people schemes that deeper engagement and closer ties with the countries in our region can be developed.



We will put parents, principals and school communities in charge of how their school will be run.

“Within two years, under a Liberal and National government, there will be a new Colombo Plan.”

*Tony Abbott
June 2012*



18. Delivering stronger and better communities

Delivering a ‘fair go’ for regional Australia

We will stand up for regional Australia to ensure that they receive their ‘fair share’ of support from government on a wide range of policy programmes.

- We will restore policy stability and certainty to our live exports trade.
- We will better manage our precious water resources to help our agriculture sector grow to become the ‘Food Bowl of Asia’ and achieve ‘food security’ in a world demanding more food resources.
- We will further unlock potential growth in Northern Australia as we develop new land as a result of building new dams and securing our nation’s water supplies.
- We will deliver a strong, powerhouse economy delivering more jobs and generating the real wealth needed to drive growth in Australia’s tourism industry.
- We are investigating options to strengthen the rules governing the sale of Australian agricultural land and agribusinesses to foreign entities.

Improving housing affordability – supporting housing development

We will improve housing affordability and encourage high levels of home ownership.

We will work closely with the States and Territories who have primary responsibility for housing to reduce red tape holding up the supply of housing and construction and to increase land release for new homes.

Carefully managing the issues of population, citizenship and settlement

We will carefully manage the issues of population, citizenship and settlement to foster stronger economic growth and enhance Australia’s social fabric.

- We will ensure that our non-discriminatory immigration programme helps those in need and serves our national interest.
- We will make sure that Australia’s refugee and humanitarian resettlement programme provides places to those most in need. We will ensure a minimum of 1,000 places are available for women at risk and their dependents and appropriate settlement services are available once they arrive in Australia.
- We will ensure the migration programme is skewed towards skilled workers to enable the growth of a more productive and prosperous economy – particularly for those areas where skilled workers are not available and where our industries need to grow.
- We will ensure our immigration programme is focused on people who can make a contribution from day one in a job – thereby lessening the burden on taxpayers.

Improving community safety and fighting crime

We will stand up for communities so that people feel safe in their streets. We will establish a new national Safer Streets programme and expand the use of CCTV cameras in crime prevention and detection.

We will establish a new Commonwealth/State Standing Council on Law, Crime and Community Safety to bring together lawmakers and law-enforcers to develop a national focus to fighting crime – and to report on key issues within 12 months.

We will work with the States and Territories to improve Australia’s capacity to respond to natural disasters and emergencies both domestically and internationally for better and faster deployment of search dogs nationally by creating an Australian Search Dog Framework.

Supporting and strengthening community groups and the voluntary sector

We will support community groups to strengthen local communities and enhance the social fabric.

We will provide \$10 million support to assist surf life saving clubs buy needed equipment and to tackle drowning black-spots.

We will re-establish the successful Coalition Community-Business Partnerships to engage with local communities and advise on encouraging more philanthropy by business and in assisting charities and community groups in their local area.

Encouraging indigenous Australians to get ahead

We will work with indigenous communities to bring in a new suite of purposeful and innovative strategies that will help indigenous people to get ahead.

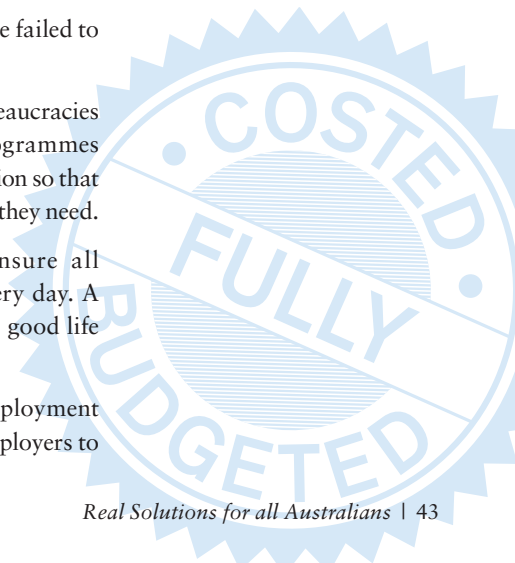
- We will eliminate red tape and streamline programmes to move away from the complex



Tony Abbott has raised over \$2.5 million through his annual ‘Pollie Pedal’ bike ride for many worthy causes including for children’s cancer, a local women’s shelter and carers.

web of overlapping initiatives that have failed to end disadvantage.

- We will direct funding away from bureaucracies and overlapping and competing programmes towards local communities and real action so that indigenous Australians get the services they need.
- We will work with families to ensure all indigenous children attend school every day. A good education is the foundation of a good life and children must go to school.
- We will support the Australian Employment Covenant and its many supporting employers to



“Politicians can’t really hope to understand the issues if they rarely leave capital cities.”

Tony Abbott
March 2010



NEWSPIX

We will work with indigenous communities to bring in a new suite of purposeful and innovative strategies that will help indigenous people to get ahead.

“The measure of a decent society is how it looks after its most vulnerable members.”

*Tony Abbott
January 2012*

create more opportunities for indigenous Australians to get ahead and actively engage more indigenous Australians in real jobs. We will provide \$10 million to fund four trial sites to train 1,000 indigenous people for guaranteed jobs, working with the Australian Employment Covenant and Generation One.

- We will end training for training's sake and implement employment or work for the dole programmes that prepare and support indigenous Australians to work.
- Tony Abbott will continue to spend a week a year in a remote community, to gain a better understanding of people's needs, as he has done for many years.

Protecting freedom of speech – supporting an open media

We will protect the media from over-regulation; support an open and accountable media; and protect the freedom of speech to strengthen our vibrant democracy.

- We will reject Labor's push for increased regulation of the media, including the Finkelstein Report proposals for a powerful 'News Media Council' to 'set journalistic standards' for print and online media.
- We will work with the media to ensure they actively strengthen their standards so they meet community expectations of the levels of journalism Australians expect and deserve.
- We do not support a 'public interest test' for assessing media mergers and acquisitions as it would be subjective, susceptible to political manipulation and would lead to uncertainty for media businesses. Current laws and the Australian Communications and Media Authority, as the regulator, provide adequate protection in this area.
- We will support freedom of speech, particularly in relation to anti-discrimination legislation. Prohibitions on inciting racial hatred or intimidation of particular groups should be focused on offences of incitement and causing fear but not a prohibition on causing offence.



19. Delivering a cleaner and more sustainable environment

Cleaning up our own environment

We will take direct action to reduce carbon emissions – and establish a 15,000-strong Green Army charged with the clean-up and conservation of our environment – so that we can all enjoy a cleaner environment and a more sustainable future without the impost of the carbon tax which is causing real economic damage to our economy and affecting the living standards of Australian families.

Reducing carbon emissions inside Australia, not overseas

We will take direct action to reduce carbon emissions in a practical, affordable way inside

Australia, not overseas. We remain committed to a five per cent reduction in emissions by 2020.

- We will establish an Emissions Reduction Fund of \$3 billion to allocate money in response to emission reduction tenders to projects designed to reduce carbon emissions.
- All money spent will be on Australian green projects, not foreign carbon credits, keeping more jobs in Australia.
- We will support projects such as the exploration of soil carbon technologies and abatement, putting carbon back in soils and providing for a once in a generation replenishment of our farmlands.

POLICY PRIORITY

We will take direct action to reduce carbon emissions inside Australia, not overseas – and also establish a 15,000-strong Green Army to clean-up the environment.



Tony and Margie Abbott on the deck of their Sydney home.



We will establish a one-stop shop environmental approvals process.

Delivering a better environment

We will establish a 15,000-strong Green Army to clean up and protect the environment in local communities throughout Australia supplementing the current land care efforts of councils, farmers and volunteers. The Green Army will undertake projects like restoring and rejuvenating bushland, planting trees and cleaning-up the Tamar River in Tasmania.

Improving water security – better water management

We will enhance Australia's natural water supplies and reduce Australia's reliance on energy-hungry desalination plants.

- We will deliver on the 10-point plan for the Murray-Darling announced by the Howard Government. We will restore the Murray-Darling to health while still ensuring the viability of Australia's food producing communities. The future of the Murray-Darling should not and cannot be a choice just between the environment and agriculture. The Coalition will address both parts of this equation.

- We will start the detailed long-term planning necessary to build new dams to secure the nation's water supplies into the future, deliver strong economic benefits for Australia, while also protecting our environment.

Improving the environmental approval process

We will streamline the environmental approval process for all users – resulting in less duplication across federal and State jurisdictions and delivering a real boost to the nation's productivity.

We will establish a one-stop shop environmental approvals process covering both Commonwealth and State legislation, that maintains high environmental standards, delivers certainty for all users and importantly makes swift decisions.

Supporting communities – creating a sustainable environment

We will adopt a practical, balanced and sustainable approach to environmental issues based on linking sound scientific findings with the needs of all users resulting in more sustainable commercial activities and better environmental outcomes.

For example, we will support the fishing industry. We will adopt a more balanced approach by setting up more rigorous assessments for new Marine Protected Areas that will mean the areas are assessed in accordance with objective scientific, economic and social evidence. Our aim is to continue to protect marine environments and the fishing communities which rely on them.



20. Delivering stronger borders and a more secure nation

Putting the national interest first

The Coalition will put the national interest first, deliver stronger borders, provide a world-class defence force and protect the nation's interests overseas.

We will take immediate action to protect both the integrity of our borders and Australia's immigration programme. We will not allow illegal boat arrivals and people smugglers to either determine Australia's immigration programme, or undermine the Australian people's confidence in the programme.

Delivering stronger borders – where the boats are stopped

We will deliver stronger borders – where the boats are stopped – with tough and proven measures.

- If elected Prime Minister, the first overseas trip that Tony Abbott makes as Prime Minister will be to Indonesia to renew cooperation against people smugglers.
- We will re-introduce the use of Temporary Protection Visas (TPVs) to deny the people smugglers a product to sell.
- We will immediately give new orders to the Navy to tackle illegal boat arrivals and 'turn back' the boats where safe to do so.
- We will give priority in processing to offshore special humanitarian visa applicants, over illegal boat arrivals.
- We will ensure, offshore special humanitarian visa applicants receive priority in obtaining permanent residency in Australia over illegal boat arrivals.

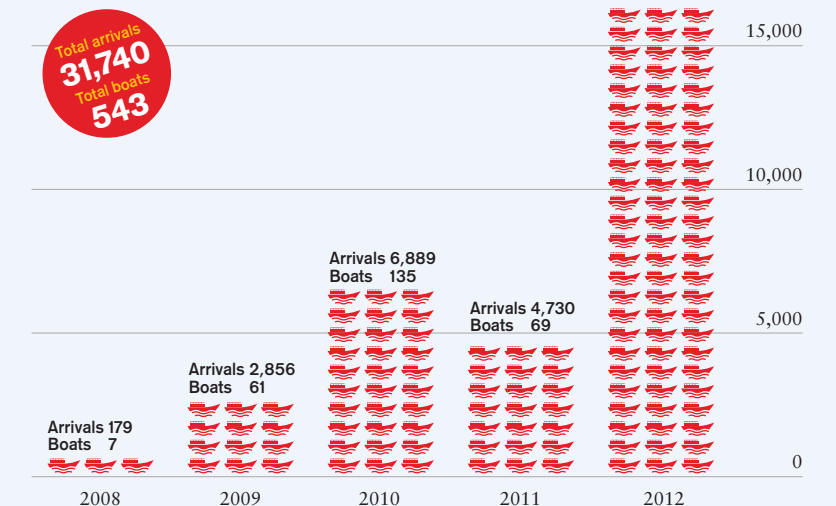
- We will boost rigorous offshore processing for illegal arrivals so that bad behaviour has consequences.
- We will establish presumption against refugee status for people who arrive on boats without identity papers.
- Where asylum seekers deliberately discard their identity documentation, we will deny them the benefit of doubt when determining their refugee status.
- We will establish and increase mandatory minimum jail sentences for people smugglers.
- We will reserve 11,000 of the 13,750 refugee places each year for offshore applicants.

POLICY PRIORITY

We will deliver stronger borders – where the boats are stopped – with tough and proven measures.

ILLEGAL ARRIVALS BY BOAT 2008–12

SOURCE: AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT



“Stopping the boats matters. It would signify that the Australian government is in every respect sovereign over Australia’s borders.”

*Tony Abbott
April 2012*

- We will ensure a minimum of 1,000 refugee places are reserved for the most vulnerable refugees, in particular women at risk of violence and harm.
- We will restore the single case officer appeal process.

Delivering a world-class defence force

We will rebuild our defence force by stopping Labor’s defence run-down and give our defence force the first-class resources and equipment they need.

- We will restore responsible defence spending to 3 per cent real growth per year subject to improvements in the Budget – our aspiration is to restore funding to defence to the same level as it was under the last seven years of the Howard Government
- We will reinvest any responsible savings that can be found in the defence bureaucracy in greater military capacity.
- We will immediately start the process of acquiring a number of new state-of-the-art unmanned aircraft.
- Within 18 months, we will publish a new defence White Paper with costed, affordable ways to meet Australia’s important defence and national security objectives.
- We will ensure that Australia does not have a submarine capability gap. Within 18 months, we will make the short and medium term decisions necessary to achieve this goal.

Fighting terrorism in Australia

We will deliver improved counter-terrorism and domestic security measures in Australia and secure our ports and airports.

Improving foreign affairs – a stronger focus on our region

We will increase the importance of foreign affairs, place a stronger focus on our region and rebuild our diplomatic footprint with more effective representation and better diplomacy. We will enhance Australia’s role and engagement in the world developing greater international cooperation.

- We will review the weighting Australia gives to its diplomatic resources including overseas representation, with a view to refocusing foreign policy on the Asia-Pacific region.
- We will rebuild relationships with our neighbours damaged by Labor’s mismanagement and failed border security policies.
- We will enhance US access to bases in Australia and continue to support our close alliance with the US.
- We will ensure future aid funding increases are dependent on AusAid meeting strict performance benchmarks.
- Within two years, we will establish a new two-way ‘Colombo Plan’ to deepen our knowledge and engagement with countries in our region and develop stronger people-to-people relationships by bringing the best and the brightest talent from our region to Australia and taking Australia’s best and brightest talent to countries in our region.



21. Delivering strong, stable, accountable government

Encouraging Australians to work together

The Coalition will do the right thing for Australia and deliver a strong, stable, accountable government that puts the national interest first and delivers a better future for all Australians.

We will restore accountability and improve transparency measures to be more accountable to you.

We will govern for all Australians, not favour any particular group. We’re all in this together and we’ll encourage all Australians to work together. We will end the class war and the bad blood between Labor and business that is damaging investment and employment.

Tony Abbott is a strong leader – a record of success

Tony Abbott was a senior, experienced Cabinet Minister in the Howard Coalition Government.

- He has a law degree and a degree in economics from the University of Sydney.
- He is a Rhodes Scholar with a Master’s degree from Oxford University.
- He is community oriented – he is a volunteer firefighter and lifesaver, he contributes his time every year to help Aboriginal communities and he has raised over \$2.5 million through his annual ‘Pollie Pedal’ bike ride for many worthy causes including for children’s cancer, a local women’s shelter and carers.
- He has dedicated his life to public service – to serving his country and the Australian people.



Malcom Turnbull, Joe Hockey, Tony Abbott, Julie Bishop, Warren Truss and Christopher Pyne.

- He is married to Margie and they have three adult daughters.

The Coalition Team includes experienced ministers

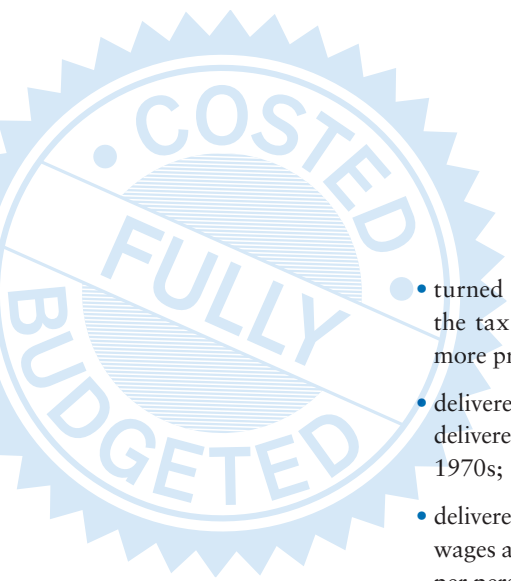
Because sixteen members of the Shadow Cabinet were experienced ministers in an effective Coalition Government they will hit the ground running and they won’t have to learn the hard way that good government is about getting on with the job and delivering results and dealing with substance, not spin.

The Coalition Team has a successful track record

The Coalition Team were effective Ministers in the successful Howard Coalition Government which:

POLICY PRIORITY

We will deliver strong and stable government that restores accountability – to deliver a better future for all Australians.



- turned Australia's economy around, reformed the tax system and made Australia's economy more productive and prosperous;
- delivered more than two million new jobs and delivered the lowest unemployment rate since the 1970s;
- delivered a more than 20 per cent increase in real wages and a doubling of Australians' net wealth per person;
- delivered real tax cuts and more benefits for families;
- delivered Budget surpluses in 10 out of 12 years, paid back Labor's \$96 billion debt and put away \$70 billion in net assets; and
- secured Australia's borders and stopped the boats.

All Coalition policies are affordable and fully funded

All Coalition policies are fully costing and fully funded. The Coalition has a long track record of managing Budgets responsibly.

Sixteen members of the Shadow Cabinet were experienced Ministers in the effective Howard Coalition Government.



"I have not wavered in my belief that our best days as a nation are still ahead of us." Tony Abbott



“Our Plan will deliver a strong, prosperous economy and a safe, secure Australia.”



For further details of the Coalition's Plan go to www.realsolutions.org.au

Authorised by Brian Loughnane, Federal Director, Liberal Party of Australia. Cnr Blackall & Macquarie Streets, Barton, ACT 2600.
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