

Over the Christmas/New Year period, *The Australian* has released Newspolls for NSW, Queensland, SA and WA. Elections are due early this year in both NSW and Queensland, so these surveys are of the most interest. In both states, Labor was obliterated at the previous state elections, and we would normally expect some recovery for Labor, but not a competitive election. This expectation looks correct in NSW, where the Coalition has a large lead, but Queensland is showing a 50-50 tie. Both states use *optional* preferential voting, and around half of all minor party votes will exhaust.

The NSW election is in late March, and the [November-December Newspoll](#) has the Coalition leading by 56-44, a 1% gain for the Coalition from September-October. Primary votes were 44% for the Coalition (up 2), 33% for Labor (steady) and 11% for the Greens (down 2). NSW Premier Mike Baird had a satisfied rating of 60%, and a dissatisfied rating of 20%, for a net approval of +40, up from +36. In John Robertson's last poll as opposition leader, he had a net approval of -7, down from +5. The sample size for this poll was 1,275.

This poll is in agreement with NSW polls from Galaxy, Ipsos and Morgan conducted in late November. Since Baird is so popular, any opposition leader would struggle to make inroads. Labor will regain much ground after 2011's 64-36 wipeout result, but it is very likely that the Coalition will win the 2015 election easily.

In Queensland, the [October-December Newspoll](#) shows a 50-50 tie, a 4% gain for Labor since the July-September Newspoll. Primary votes are 37% for the Liberal National Party (LNP) (down 2), 36% for Labor (up 4), 10% for the Greens (steady) and 17% for all Others (down 2). Despite his party's drop in voting intentions, Premier Campbell Newman's ratings improved to a net approval of -13, up from -19. Opposition leader Annastacia Palaszczuk also improved to +4, from a zero net approval. The sample size was 1,150.

The latest possible date for the [Queensland election is in June](#), but it will probably be held well before then. At the March 2012 election, Labor was reduced to just seven of 89 seats, though they actually performed a little better than in NSW in overall vote share terms. A 50-50 result would be a 13% swing to Labor from the 2012 election. This Newspoll is in agreement with polling conducted in late November by Galaxy, ReachTEL and Morgan. This polling implies that a Labor victory is now a real possibility, though the most probable outcome is still a narrow win for the LNP. Even if Labor falls short, they will certainly have a far better representation in the Queensland Parliament than following the 2012 massacre.

NSW and Queensland Newspolls

Written by The Conversation

In SA, Labor led by 53-47 in the October-December Newspoll, up from 51-49 in July-September. This would be a 6% swing to Labor from the March election, which they won despite losing the overall vote convincingly. [Peter Brent](#) says that Labor had not led in a SA Newspoll since 2009 until this year. In WA, the October-December Newspoll had a 50-50 tie, unchanged from July-September. This would be a swing of 7% to Labor from the 2013 election.

[Peter Brent](#) and [Kevin Bonham](#) say that state parties do worse when the opposite party is in power federally. Although an unpopular Federal government certainly does not help, even popular Federal governments will have some drag on their state parties. As a result, state conservative parties should hope that Labor wins the next Federal election. If that happens, the WA conservatives would avoid a state election under a Federal Coalition government; they were re-elected in early 2013, and the next WA election will not be held until early 2017.

Adrian Beaumont does not work for, consult to, own shares in or receive funding from any company or organisation that would benefit from this article, and has no relevant affiliations.

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