

AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY

National Platform and Constitution 2004

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Foreword

The National Platform and Constitution was formally adopted by the 43rd ALP National Conference, held in Sydney from 29 to 31 January 2004.

The Platform is the result of a rigorous and constructive process of consultation, spanning the nation and including the cooperation and input of state and territory policy committees, local branches, unions, state and territory governments, and individual Party members.

Thank you to the National Policy Committee for their hard work and to all who took the time to participate in the drafting of this document by submitting ideas or attending meetings held throughout the country.

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The Platform provides the policy foundation from which we can continue to work towards the election of a federal Labor Government.

Tim Gartrell
National Secretary

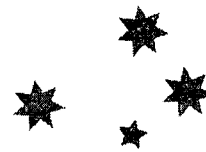
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Conference Resolution relating to the Platform

"That the Conference reconfirm the longstanding resolution relating to the Platform as follows:

- Conference recognises that the Platform and Resolutions of the Party represents short and long term aspirations of the ALP;
- The program for each of the three years of a Labor Government will continue to be drawn from the Platform; and
- Therefore the Conference requests that the FPLP will in preparing the program for the next three years:
 - (a) Continue to give priority to economic growth, a fair distribution of the benefits of economic growth and improvements in the welfare and standard of living of the Australian people; and
 - (b) Implement other platforms and policies according to a time scale to be determined having regard to the above overall priorities of the Party."



AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY



Chapter One

Enduring Labor Values

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Chapter One

Enduring Labor Values

1. Our world is being remade, and Australia is being remade along with it, through explosive advances in ideas, technology and science at a pace we have never before experienced, and in ways we cannot avoid. Labor's approach to our changing world will continue to be an active and creative one. While a Labor Government will seek to embrace the beneficial changes of the knowledge revolution, it is central to Labor values that we ensure all of us have equal access to its opportunities and benefits.
2. In this era of globalisation, Labor's traditional values will remain a constant on which all Australians can rely. Labor believes the truest measure of a good society is the care it provides for those most in need and the opportunity it provides for every person to realise his or her full potential. Labor's commitment to a strong economy is therefore matched by its commitment to justice, fairness and equity for all.
3. To ensure justice, and an equal share of opportunity for all, Labor believes in a strong role for national government—the one institution all Australians truly own and control through our right to vote. Narrowing the scope of government only diminishes our stake in the nation's future. Labor will use our great national institutions in the task of nation building. We will not allow the benefits of change to be concentrated in fewer and fewer hands, or located only in privileged communities. The benefits must be shared by all Australians and all our regions.
4. Central to ensuring fairness in an era of change will be to assist families to better balance the pressures of work, family and social obligations. Labor believes that the family is the fundamental group unit of society, and that its economic security is of paramount importance. Labor will work with all involved to help achieve suitable work arrangements, and access to social programs to help achieve this balance.
5. Labor was born out of the trade union movement and its struggle for a secure, decent and dignified life for working people. This relationship must be more than merely historic; it must be a constructive partnership that takes the whole nation forward. The partnership between the two great wings of the labour movement has been essential to deal with the consequences of the industrial revolution, and must continue into the knowledge revolution of the twenty-first century. We pledge to ensure opportunity, security and progress for working people and their families.
6. Fairness. Labor believes that all people are created equal in their entitlement to dignity and respect, and should have an equal chance to achieve their potential. For Labor, government has a critical role in ensuring fairness by:
 - ensuring equal opportunity;
 - removing unjustifiable discrimination; and
 - achieving a more equitable distribution of wealth, income and status.
7. Compassion and Equality. Labor is committed to protecting and supporting those who are disadvantaged, oppressed or simply struggling to cope.
 - The Labor tradition has always been to reach out, embrace, protect and support those in need.

- The consequences of a society characterised by high levels of inequality include poverty, crime, drug abuse, greed, envy and insecurity. Accordingly, Labor believes that all Australians have an interest in the creation of a more compassionate and egalitarian nation.
8. **Human Rights.** Labor is committed to a just and tolerant society which fully protects the rights and freedoms of all Australians. Labor supports the rights set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international treaties to which Australia is a party. This includes the fundamental political and civil rights of everyone to freedom of conscience, expression and association, and to due process of law. It also includes 'economic rights' such as, for example, access to tertiary education on the basis of merit, access to adequate health care and the right to rest and leisure including reasonable limitations on working hours and periodic holidays with pay. Labor supports the introduction into Australian domestic law of the rights recognised and protected in the international treaties, conventions and protocols to which Australia is a party. In introducing these rights, Labor will ensure that existing rights are also protected.
 9. **Labour Rights.** Labor is committed to protecting and advancing the fundamental rights of working people to join trade unions, and to organise, collectively bargain and strike.
 10. **Responsibility.** Labor believes that rights must be accompanied by responsibilities to behave honestly, humanely and fairly. Those responsibilities must be exercised:
 - by individuals, toward each other and the community which supports them;
 - by social and economic groups and organisations, toward each other and the wider community; and
 - by governments, toward their own people, other governments and the wider international community.
 11. **Democracy.** Labor is committed to the essential democratic principle that every person should have the right to a say, directly or indirectly, in every decision that affects his or her life. That right includes:
 - democratic participation in the choice of governments;
 - the opportunity for a meaningful voice in decision making in the workplace; and
 - the opportunity for a voice in planning, the environment, the delivery of public services and similar matters.
 12. **Community.** Labor believes that the best chance for the future, for Australia and all Australians, lies in our working together for the common good.
 - Within Australia, Labor is committed to a society in which every person is able to actively and productively participate in the life of the community, and the whole community responds sensitively to individual needs.
 - Labor is committed to a community that embraces cultural diversity and reconciliation, based on mutual respect and acceptance. Genuine reconciliation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people is crucial to our capacity to face the world as a united, peaceful and just nation.
 - Within the international community, Labor strongly believes that every country's national interests, including our own, are best protected and advanced by cooperation rather than confrontation and conflict.
 - Labor is committed to the strong role played by community organisations in

both serving the community generally and in building a sense of community.

- The work of these organisations is an essential part of combating alienation for vulnerable Australians.

LABOR'S PRIORITY OBJECTIVES

13. **Providing Security.** Safety and security are central concerns for our national government and for the international community. Labor led older generations of Australians in successfully defending Australia as a secure, courageous and democratic nation. Terrorism's growing presence in our region poses new and complex security challenges. Labor refuses to manipulate fear or racism for political gain in response to terrorism. Instead Labor will increase engagement in our region and cooperation with our neighbours—measures that are fundamental to the new security challenges. Labor will ensure that our defence forces, police and emergency services are equipped to meet the new challenges. As always, preserving national security, and the security of individuals, is a major Labor priority.

Providing security for Australia and all Australians includes:

- security of the nation against internal and external threats, including the threat posed by terrorism;
 - security at the international level through a strong commitment to international forums, including the United Nations and its agencies, and the International Court, that foster peace, cooperation and justice;
 - job security during our working years;
 - income security during both working and retirement years;
14. **Creating Opportunity.** Another Labor priority is to provide opportunity for all Australians:
- personal security in the event of serious illness, injury or other crisis, or in the case of disability; and
 - security and safety in the community living environment.
 - to fully realise their individual potential throughout their lifetime;
 - to advance their living standards and quality of life;
 - to gain access to employment, education, housing, health and welfare services, information technology, culture and recreation, and the legal system; and
 - to participate cooperatively in the life of the nation and the communities within it.
15. **Environmental Sustainability.** Labor believes that protection of the environment is a key value. Labor understands that the dynamic complexity of living organic systems is vital to our social and economic existence and sense of well being. Protecting the environment will involve developing models for sustainable urban living, along with protecting wilderness areas. Labor is committed to bringing regulatory, economic and educational tools to bear on this important question. Labor will prioritise sustainable water and land management, recognising the importance of land and water conservation in enhancing biodiversity, human health, and economic prosperity.
16. **Managing Change to Ensure Security and Opportunity.** Labor has always sought to anticipate and understand the forces of change at work in the national and international communities—not to resist that change, but to gain the maximum

benefit from it while moderating and smoothing its impact.

—Successful governments are those which understand and communicate the reality of that change, and manage it in a way that both creates opportunity and provides security.

17. Labor recognises that the twenty-first century will inevitably be a period of increased globalisation—with dramatically expanding international competition and technological development, and ever-growing interdependence.

—Labor believes that this offers Australia unprecedented opportunities to become a world leader in balancing a dynamic economy with a fair society.

18. Labor has led the way in recognising the necessary inter-relationship between economy, society and environment. It is our fundamental belief that:

—economic progress is not an end in itself but a means to achieve social goals; and

—economic and social changes can only endure if they are environmentally sustainable.

LABOR'S DISTINCTIVE APPROACH

19. What makes Labor governments distinctive is our belief in the critical role of government:

—We believe that strong and active government leadership, with an effective and efficient public sector operating in partnership with a thriving private sector, best manages change to provide security and opportunity for all Australians.

—We believe that government is not an impediment, but rather a crucial force in building and realising the full potential of individuals, the economy and our whole society.

20. Labor believes that government is critical to the achievement of social justice, in ensuring:

—sufficient basic income and assets to provide a decent quality of life for all Australians;

—universal social rights (including fulfilling employment, quality education and affordable health care and housing);

—equal rights for those in groups subject to discrimination; and

—special support for those with particular needs (including Indigenous Australians, women, people from non-English speaking backgrounds, the long-term unemployed, homeless, disabled, frail, aged and mentally ill).

21. Labor sees government as a guardian of the common good, not only in achieving social justice but in securing many public goods which are simply unlikely to be delivered as effectively, if at all, by the private sector and a free market.

—We see our society as not just a market but a community with mutual responsibilities. Not all values have dollar equivalents.

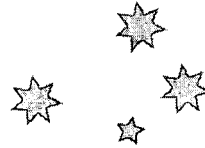
22. Labor has a distinctive vision of how Australia should present itself in the wider international community. We should be, and be seen to be:

—a modern, innovative, socially and economically advanced, united, multicultural society;

—willing to take a confident and independent position in advancing our national interests, and doing so energetically and creatively;

—willing to pursue wider good international citizenship objectives; and

—willing to pursue those interests and objectives by working in cooperation with others.



AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY



Chapter Two

A Strong Economy for a Fair Society

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Chapter Two

A Strong Economy
for a Fair Society

Basic Principles

1. The fundamental objective of economic policy under a Labor Government is to improve the living standards of Australians by maximising employment, lifting incomes, and enabling the community to prosper within a secure and cohesive society. To these ends, Labor will develop a nation building agenda to promote economic growth which lifts the living standards of Australians and builds a compassionate and caring society. Labor believes in an open and competitive Australian economy driven by high levels of public investment in education, training and research, and supported by policies which promote, encourage, and support our nation's industries. Private sector competition is an important contributor to productivity and consumer gains. Likewise, skills and innovation are crucial to national economic growth and living standards. We believe in a strong economy for a fair society with all Australians having access to a decent standard of living, including those unable to provide for themselves.

Labor is committed to the development of Australia as a high-wage, high-skill society. This is essential for stronger economic performance and job creation. It is the pathway to growth with equity and opportunity. Labor rejects policies that would condemn Australia to being a divided, low-wage, low-skill society.

Education is as important in the information age as coal was in the industrial revolution. Fostering a culture of innovation and lifelong learning is critical to economic success in the information age. Wise expenditure on education and

encouraging business innovation should, therefore, be considered not just as a cost to government but as an investment in the nation's future.

2. Australia will not achieve these fundamental objectives in a sustainable way without economic policies that control inflation, balance the budget over the course of the economic cycle and keep interest rates low. Nevertheless, these are not ends in themselves, but means to the achievement of the fundamental objectives of higher living standards, increased equity, and social justice. Good economic policy puts people first, matching competence and efficiency with compassion and care.
3. Labor is committed to achieving full employment, meaning that anyone who wants a job can find one within a reasonable time. Employment security is the key to personal and social well being, to stable relationships and family life. Increasingly, this is more than security within a particular job. In the information age, employment security means possessing the skills and having the opportunities to maintain employment throughout one's working life. It requires the national infrastructure and social support to nurture and develop a personal commitment to lifelong learning across society.
4. Everyone capable of employment should be able to secure a job and education or training. Unemployment is not an acceptable option. Labor will always pursue full employment as our highest priority. This is why we support a dynamic, mixed economy, which drives economic growth by encouraging competition to deliver benefits to Australian families and which invests in our people and their ideas to drive improved productive performance across the economy.

5. The benefits that flow from economic growth and wealth creation should be available to everyone in the community. Sharing the benefits of growth fairly will increase the community's acceptance of the need for economic reform. Labor is committed to providing:
- the opportunity for all Australians to have a reasonable standard of living sufficient to enable them and their families to live with dignity;
 - a society where no one need live in poverty;
 - an equitable distribution of the benefits of national economic success, including a fairer distribution of assets, income and work opportunities;
 - opportunities for everyone to be educated, trained and job ready throughout their working lives through the availability of lifelong learning opportunities that are broad based and nationally accredited;
 - equity in the housing sector, overcoming Australia's housing affordability crisis in both the ownership and rental markets;
 - protection of the living standards of those unable to work; and
 - specific programs to promote economic growth in regional and rural Australia;
6. Economic growth should be sustainable not only economically but socially and environmentally. Growth and development in all major industry sectors (including the knowledge-driven manufacturing sector) and enhancement of the natural and built environment must be seen as compatible, not conflicting, objectives.

Strategies for Growth

7. Labor is committed to managing the economy in the interests of all Australians. This is why Labor supports a dynamic economy that balances private sector competition, strategic government interventions to address market failure, and the demands of corporate social responsibility. Labor believes in competition and improved productive performance which promotes greater market entry, increased real wages and delivers gains to Australian consumers. The Liberal and National Parties, by contrast, believe in business deals and preferment and have ignored the adverse socio-economic impacts on some Australians of their policies. The rigour of private sector competition, the supportive role of government, and the demands of corporate social responsibility are the keys to economic growth, improved productive performances and competitiveness. Companies will not upgrade their technology and expand their markets without the pressure of competition and investment in infrastructure, research and development, and education and training. Governments and the private sector have important roles to play in making these critical investments.
- In order to ensure competition, Labor will:
- upgrade the powers and effectiveness of the Trade Practices Act, with benefits for small business and consumers;
 - guarantee the independence of the ACCC from big business appointments and undue influence;
 - clearly delineate the power and authority of the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) from that of the Australian Industrial Relations Commission;
 - continually monitor the effectiveness of the ACCC in assisting to promote competition; and
 - retain the provisions of the Trade Practices Act which grant immunity from prosecution for anti-competitive behaviour that is in the public interest.

8. Previous Labor governments opened up the Australian economy, with large increases in productive performance and competitiveness. Australia now needs a second generation of productivity and growth which is targeted at improved living standards and social justice. We believe this can be achieved by:
- increasing research and development, both in the public and private sectors, building a culture of continuous improvement and innovation;
 - developing a serious agenda for lifelong learning, with an increased national commitment to education and training;
 - an ongoing program of microeconomic-reform and infrastructure investment, with the benefits of growth in quality employment, economic efficiency and lower market costs;
 - pursuing internal and external demand policies that are strongly growth oriented; and
 - reforming the Productivity Commission to ensure government has access to independent, rigorous economic advice from a range of sources.

Macroeconomic Policy

9. Australia now has the highest-taxing government in its history. The task for Labor is to eliminate waste and mismanagement in the federal budget and reallocate these funds for two important purposes: improving public services and easing the taxation burden on working Australians. To develop a sustainable nation building agenda, Labor will be fiscally responsible and run a tight budget. To be the Party of better services for the Australian people we must also be the Party of fiscal rigour. Better services, fully paid for: this is the Labor way.
10. Responsible budgetary policy must have regard for economic and social objectives, including its impact on growth and employment. It must also consider:
- the need to maintain low inflation and a manageable current account position;
 - the level of public debt, including ensuring that future generations do not have to pay for present recurrent expenditure;
 - balancing the federal budget over the course of the economic cycle;
 - broadening economic ownership, incomes and wealth across the community;
 - the need to smooth the economic cycle, avoiding the rollercoaster of housing boom and bust;
 - the delivery of public goods which the private sector is unable or unwilling to provide;
 - the capacity for public investment in the nation's infrastructure to support Labor's nation building agenda and the best and most transparent methods of financing such investment; and
 - the provision of a decent level of support for those with special needs.
11. Interest rate (monetary) policy is also crucial in ensuring strong and sustainable growth—indirectly influencing consumption and investment while, in the longer term, ensuring that economic growth is prolonged by a stable, low-inflation environment. Labor is strongly committed to macroeconomic policies that place downward pressure on interest rates.
12. While respecting and facilitating the independence of the Reserve Bank of Australia (RBA), Labor also expects that the RBA will fulfil all its charter objectives. That is, maintaining low inflation plus maximising employment growth and general economic welfare.

International Competitiveness

13. Growth and job security in Australia depend increasingly on being able to sell to the world, and in particular to the dynamic growth areas in Asia—not only in our traditional commodity areas of comparative advantage, but also in value-added manufactures and services. Labor will continue to give a high priority to trade and foreign policy strategies designed to achieve better access to these markets, principally through a rules-based multilateral trading regime.

Labor will continue to pursue sensible trade liberalisation through effective multilateral strategies and negotiations. The direction Labor pursued in the 1980s and 1990s of internationalising the economy and reducing protection cannot and should not be reversed. These reforms have provided significant national benefits, however, Labor recognises that some Australians and some regions suffered dislocation as a result of economic reform. Labor is committed to addressing these social costs.

14. Labor will vigorously pursue our trade and financial agenda in international fora. With increased capital flows, the global economy requires greater transparency in financial transactions, effective prudential controls and sound corporate governance. In government we will actively promote and participate in further reform of the international financial system.
15. Labor will also pursue structural policies to ensure that Australia can meet the competitive challenge of an increasingly globalised economy. That means, among other things, support for:
- equal access to a world-class education and training system, incorporating lifelong learning;
 - world's best practice in business, entrepreneurship and industry development;

- rigorous private sector competition, supported by a strong and effective Trade Practices Act;
- policies designed to overcome regional disadvantage in attracting new jobs and investment;
- appropriate levels of investment in infrastructure by both the public and private sectors;
- reducing business costs and promoting employment opportunities and high-skill high-wage career paths;
- a business tax regime that is equitable and fosters increased investment, job growth and innovation, including greater investment in venture capital, access to patient capital, and research and development;
- promoting productive links between public learning institutions, the community and the private sector, while ensuring the independence of public learning institutions by way of adequate public funding;
- business regulation only to the extent necessary to protect the public interest and the interests of employees, shareholders and investors;
- policies that promote environmental enhancement as well as job creation; and
- competition policy that is overseen by a revitalised Council of Australian Governments (CoAG); serves the public interest through a strengthened and transparent public interest test; and has specific regard for the implications for employment, regional development and the provision of community services.

Corporate Governance

16. Efficient and accessible capital markets are critical to investment and growth in the economy. Labor believes that good corporate governance is fundamental to

capital market efficiency and critical to ensuring that the rights of shareholders and workers' entitlements are protected. Labor is committed to a real and effective stakeholder economy, with a broad base of economic ownership. It is now a responsibility of government to ensure that the rights of shareholders are adequately protected.

Labor will continue to review the Corporations Act and related legislation to ensure that companies follow good corporate governance practices that empower shareholders and hold company officers accountable. Labor recognises that disclosure, transparency and accountability are at the core of good corporate governance and will ensure:

- that consideration is given to the process of the election of directors of listed public companies and the possible role to be played by the Australian Electoral Commission in that process;
- a limit is placed on the tax deductability of excessive golden handshakes for senior executives;
- that there is consideration of the role of the remuneration consultancy industry in the setting of executive remuneration;
- companies fully disclose all information relevant to investors, shareholders and the market in a timely and equitable manner;
- companies appoint independent directors to the board of directors;
- directors are accountable to shareholders for the level of remuneration received by directors and senior management;
- companies fully disclose the remuneration of directors and senior management;

- the Corporations Act is amended to enhance the disclosure and regulation of options, termination payments and equity value protection schemes;
- shareholders are empowered to act through a non-binding vote on the executive remuneration report for directors and senior management;
- shareholders are informed about the directors relationships (if any) with the company and its directors when standing for election;
- non-recourse loans to directors and senior management are prohibited;
- current penalties for serious breaches of the Corporations Act are doubled;
- companies use their general meetings to appropriately communicate with shareholders;
- shareholders and institutional investors exercise their voting rights appropriately and regularly;
- a charter of corporate rights and responsibilities will be developed;
- Australian Securities Investment Commission (ASIC) has sufficient funding to improve securities surveillance procedures and pursue small to medium companies who fail to protect employee entitlements;
- the regulation of audit and auditors is strengthened;
- the conflict of interest provisions for auditors are strengthened;
- the introduction of a national consistent regulatory regime to crack down on fraudulent property investment schemes; and
- the implementation of the HIH Royal Commission recommendations in relation to Australian Prudential Regulation Authority (APRA) is monitored to avoid further HIH and OneTel fiascos.

Corporate Social Responsibility

17. Labor also believes in the need for corporate social responsibility. In recent times companies have received many more rights, most notably the rights of trade liberalisation and international investment. With these rights must come the responsibilities of good corporate citizenship. Labor will introduce policies that encourage:
- executive salary restraint and responsibility;
 - decent corporate standards for workplace relations, environmental protection and social philanthropy;
 - active participation by companies in disadvantaged communities, helping to overcome the problems of poverty; and
 - economically sound and socially responsible partnerships between the public and private sector.

MANAGING THE CONSTRAINTS ON GROWTH**The Current Account and National Savings**

18. Australia has long had a current account deficit, reflecting our reliance on foreign capital to fund our investment needs. A nation building agenda and greater national saving, both private and public, are necessary to ensure that strong growth can be sustained for long periods without spilling over into an unmanageable current account position. Increased national saving and increased manufacturing capacity can also increase levels of Australian ownership and economic sovereignty.
19. Labor recognises the importance of increasing national savings through non-inflationary economic growth. Labor rejects the Howard Government's short-sighted policies which have reduced

household savings and massively increased household debt, thereby increasing Australia's vulnerability to economic shocks. Since 1996 Australia's foreign debt level has doubled, with a loss of national sovereignty and economic security. Labor will implement policies to boost national saving through:

- the growth of the superannuation system, sensibly balancing both compulsion and incentive;
- new programs and incentives to encourage families to save for their children's future;
- encouraging broader share ownership across the community, especially by employees while ensuring that employees are not unnecessarily exposed to narrow and unsustainable investment portfolios; and
- responsible budgetary policy.

20. Labor will also address the current account deficit with trade and industry policies designed to increase exports, including through government agencies like Austrade, government export support programs and effective diplomacy winning recognition for Australia's distinctive place in the region and the world.

Inflation and National Competitiveness

21. Low inflation and a competitive exchange rate help support economic growth by:
- providing a more stable environment for business planning, thus promoting investment;
 - maintaining and improving the price competitiveness of Australia's exports;
 - encouraging private saving, by ensuring that the value of savings is not eaten away by higher prices; and
 - maintaining the real purchasing power of incomes.

22. Previous Labor governments secured a low-inflation Australian economy. Labor will ensure that this record continues through the following strategies:

- maintaining the independence and transparency of the RBA and its full employment and inflation-targeting policy;
- promoting private sector competition as a way of driving down prices and delivering gains for Australian consumers;

—ensuring that education and labour market programs overcome skill shortages in the economy, thereby reducing inflationary pressures as well as maximising growth and employment; and

—ensuring that inflation targeting policy is integrated with other policy objectives and is not pursued in isolation from full employment and general welfare goals.

A STRATEGY FOR JOBS IN A JUST SOCIETY

Unemployment, under-employment and widening inequality are the most serious economic and social problems facing Australia. Labor's assault on these problems will involve an integrated strategy drawing on policies from many different sections of this Platform. Our strategy can be summarised as follows:

A1 Growing the Australian economy as fast as we can

Labor will use responsible budgetary, monetary and competition policies to achieve the maximum possible sustainable growth rate while maintaining low inflation. This can only be achieved by pursuing further improvements in our competitive and productive performance, the easing of skill shortages through education, training and appropriate immigration programs, and effective management of the current account constraint on growth through export facilitation and sophisticated industry development programs.

A2 Supporting regional Australia

Australia will not maximise its growth potential without strong regional growth. When regional Australia prospers, more jobs are created and social cohesion is strengthened. Labor is committed to the empowerment of Australia's regions, enabling them to better identify their opportunities and realise them more fully. Labor will seek to remove impediments to investment in regional Australia.

Large regional disparities exist in employment opportunities in Australia. Through education, training and infrastructure investment policies, Labor

will work for a fairer distribution of employment opportunities across Australia.

A3 Education and skills formation

A good education and lifelong learning are essential to a person's employability and job security in the information age. As the global economy becomes ever more sophisticated, the jobs of the future will increasingly be high-skill, high-paying jobs. If Australia is to secure a good share of these jobs, governments must invest heavily in education and skills formation. Labor will ensure through properly funded education, training and labour market policies that we have the skills base to meet new demands where and when they arise.

A4 Trade and industry

An efficient, innovative Australian industry sector can benefit from appropriately targeted industry policies where market failure occurs. In order to ensure optimum economic and employment performance, weaknesses in the Australian economy should be addressed by government—especially in the vital areas of industry development, research, venture capital, infrastructure provision and education and training. Labor will pursue proactive industry policies which seek to prevent market failure and maximise employment opportunities.

Domestic demand is not enough to create the jobs we need. We also need to implement new export, import replacement and procurement policies designed to increase Australia's competitiveness and improve access to world markets, technology

A STRATEGY FOR JOBS IN A JUST SOCIETY

and expertise, particularly in Asia. Labor will ensure greater integration of Australia's industry and trade policies.

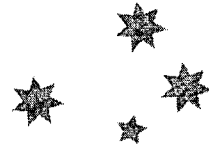
A5 Directly creating jobs to meet community needs

Even with increased economic activity many people, particularly older Australians and the low-skilled, face the prospect of long-term unemployment.

Accordingly, Labor will work at federal, State and local government levels on regional strategies to provide additional publicly funded jobs, involving meaningful and rewarding community-based work.

A6 Encouraging the transition from welfare to work

Currently the interaction between the welfare and tax systems is providing disincentives for people on income support to take on paid work. Extra jobs that are created through Labor's policies may not be taken up if there is little or no financial incentive to do so. Labor will encourage the transition from welfare to work by allowing job seekers to keep more of their earnings from work. We will reward work and effort in our society by addressing high marginal tax rates at the intersection between the social security and tax systems.



AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY



Chapter Three

23

Income, Job and Social Security

Chapter Three

Income, Job and Social Security

Job Security for Australians

Since the foundation of the Labor Party the attainment of full employment and the improvement of working conditions have been at the core of Labor's philosophy. It is only through sound economic policies, a highly skilled and an educated workforce that has access to lifelong learning, coupled with a commitment from government to embrace innovation across the entire economy, that employment for all, with decent working conditions, will be achieved.

1. The most important source of economic security and opportunity for working-age Australians and their families is employment. Labor remains committed to the achievement of full employment.

—An unemployment rate sustainably below five per cent is an important goal for Labor.

—Furthermore, a low unemployment rate should not be achieved by pushing people out of the labour market. Removing barriers to and providing support for participation is essential, especially for the groups with low participation: women, older workers, and people in regional areas. Labor will pursue a strong participation rate by ensuring that there are opportunities and the right mix of support and incentives for all Australians who are able to work.

—Labor notes with grave concern the growth in jobless households, the increasing number of children growing up in families where no one is employed and the growth of unemployment across more than one generation of family members.

—Labor also recognises that Australia has a chronic under-employment problem, which includes a growing number of part time and casual workers who are forced to survive on low wages and minimal hours of work.

—The rapidly growing number of workers employed on casual, temporary, irregular and unpredictable hours is placing immense financial and emotional pressure on Australian families. This compels many workers to seek multiple jobs. It also leads to high employee turnover and a high financial cost to business and the community, reduced investment in training and associated loss of skills in the economy. Labor believes that a strong and growing economy should produce quality and secure work and a decent living standard for all Australians.

—Labor also notes the growing incidence of some workers being required to work excessively long hours on a regular basis, without being necessarily paid for those hours that are worked beyond the standard working week.

—Labor will ensure that workers facing retrenchment receive all possible assistance and retraining in finding new employment as well as ensuring that they receive their full legal entitlements.

2. Labor acknowledges the strong link between an individual's level of education and his or her employment prospects. Employability is critical to the economic security of individuals and families. Labor is committed to improving the skills of those Australians who are unemployed or at risk of becoming unemployed, because skills are the key to employability. Skills are critical to both equity and efficiency.
 - Skills regularly updated throughout life are important in giving all working-age Australians access to economic and social opportunity.

- Investment in skills also helps to develop the nation's capacity for growth, and the direction of that growth, and prolong the economic cycle by acting as an anti-inflation device by better matching supply and demand for skills.
- 3. There is a clear case for a strong government role in addressing the education, training and skills needs of all Australians.
- 4. The modern labour market is leaving too many people and communities behind. Rather than reacting to economic change, Labor's approach to planning for, and investing in, Australia's workforce needs is based on early intervention to better prepare our people and places for change.
- 5. Labor will seek to improve information flows in the labour market, so that individuals, families, communities and governments can plan and prepare for the future.
- 6. Labor believes the task of reducing unemployment needs an integrated approach across government, and a new partnership between the three tiers of government and the private sector as well as key stakeholders including unions and the community.
 - This partnership will ensure that assistance is provided where it is needed most. It will allow governments to better identify communities and individuals most at risk.
 - An important part of this partnership is ensuring that businesses have full access to, and knowledge of government services and infrastructure. These services include group training programs and the pooled use of public infrastructure.
 - Labor believes the closer integration of education and training, employment services and income support is the basis for employment and skills development, which is the best insurance policy the nation has against unemployment in the long-term.
- Labor acknowledges the particularly crucial and effective role played by group training companies in providing rotated structured training and other opportunities for apprentices who work in smaller companies that have a limited capacity to train in their own right.
- 7. Labor's strategy to increase employment and improve employability includes:
 - growing the Australian economy at the maximum possible sustainable rate through appropriate macroeconomic policy;
 - ensuring that the benefits of economic growth are shared and translate into high-wage and high-skill jobs and a lower unemployment rate;
 - improving demand for Australian goods and services both at home and abroad through effective economic, trade and foreign policies;
 - ensuring that increased demand translates into business and job opportunities right across Australia through carefully crafted industry and regional development policies;
 - ensuring that all Australians, but particularly those at risk, have the necessary skills to both create opportunities and take up jobs as they arise, through a range of education and training mechanisms;
 - making sure that the unemployed and those at risk of becoming unemployed have access to specific labour market assistance that can overcome any barriers to effective workforce participation;

- instituting a national skills audit which will allow those in direct need as well as at-risk workers to be identified in advance and appropriate training and reskilling to be provided before they become unemployed;
 - making sure that the interaction of the tax and welfare systems does not penalise people moving from welfare to work;
 - utilising opportunities for important environmental repair to create employment, particularly in regional Australia; and
 - providing incentives to encourage sustainable industry development, based on environmental modernisation, thereby creating real jobs.
8. Labor recognises the challenges presented by a lack of employment opportunities in depressed regions, be they urban, regional, rural or remote. Labor will ensure that national economic policies, including National Competition Policy and public sector employment policies, take account of regional effects. Regional policies will encourage new opportunities for local industry, employment and skills development.
- Labor will actively target high unemployment regional areas with a wide range of available government services. These will include intensive assistance for job seekers, wage assistance, training and retraining and, where appropriate, local community employment programs.
9. Labor developed the concept of reciprocal obligation where people in receipt of benefits were actively assisted by government to develop their capabilities, in return for which they were obliged to search for work and seek to overcome barriers to their employment.
- Labor believes that mutual obligation must be a two-way street. Labor rejects one-sided 'mutual' obligation policies and believes that mutual obligation activities should not become another obstacle to job-seeking activity.
 - Labor will ensure that all labour market programs deliver accredited effective training, skills development and/or experience in a mainstream workplace to participants in matching unemployed workers to the jobs in the economy.
 - Labor will ensure that government meets its obligations. These obligations involve sustained economic growth that delivers high-wage and high-skill jobs and ensuring that all Australians share in the benefits of economic growth. Governments also have an obligation to provide quality training and skill development to the unemployed and the under-employed. Leaving the provision of training and employment creation to the free market alone is not the answer.
10. The Job Network, under contract until July 2006, will be subject to a full review and adjustments will be made accordingly. Labor will introduce transparency and accountability into the employment services system and ensure that funding is spent on delivering quality employment outcomes for the unemployed.
- Through universal, publicly funded active labour market assistance, Labor will aim to develop the capabilities of the unemployed and those at risk of becoming unemployed.
- Labor is committed to the provision of an employment service framework that provides and maintains a nationally accessible job matching data base, and delivers customised assistance to the long-term unemployed and those at risk

of long-term unemployment, through job matching services, case management, opportunities for group participation and targeted access to wage subsidies and community employment schemes.

The employment services framework will include a public provider. This public provider will be required to:

- rapidly respond to local, regional and national structural and economic change;
 - deliver employment services assistance to industry, regions and the general workforce in a timely and efficient manner;
 - provide a range of free, not-for-profit employment services tailored to local and regional needs;
 - meet performance benchmarks that deliver high quality employment services; and
 - work with the local education, industry, government and community sectors in order to deliver relevant training and skills to the unemployed and to better match the unemployed with jobs in the local economy.
11. Labor is committed to adequately addressing the needs of the most disadvantaged in the labour market.
 12. Labor supports an employment services sector where funding is based solidly on quality performance, and where providers work in partnership with government.
 - Labor recognises the need for greater sharing of information and expertise on what works in employment services, and the responsibility of government to ensure the provision of adequate employment services in depressed areas.
 - Labor will encourage a diverse range of providers to take part in the Job Network, including indigenous providers, unions and local community organisations.
 13. Labor will invest in new programs, more closely integrated with employment services, to assist those sections of society and the labour force facing special disadvantages and multiple barriers to workforce participation. In addition to focusing on skills development, Labor will target specific barriers including:
 - poorly located housing; low literacy and numeracy; physical and mental health problems; English language difficulties; disability; alcohol and substance abuse; homelessness; and lack of access to social services like child care and public transport;
 - poverty traps that do not provide the unemployed with adequate financial reward for working which, together with the tapering of benefits, result in high effective marginal tax rates;
 - cultural barriers and discrimination facing mature age people, those who have been institutionalised and carers returning to the workforce;
 - entrenched structural discrimination against people with disabilities, migrants, and Indigenous Australians; and
 - direct and indirect discrimination against women which results in vertical and horizontal job segregation, sexual harassment, pregnancy and maternity discrimination and limits women's choices in workforce participation.
 14. The type of labour market assistance that Labor provides will be tailored to the particular needs of unemployed individuals and the characteristics of the local economies in which they participate. Labour market assistance will be regularly refined in the light of success rates and experience.

—Labor's initiatives will involve different emphases for workers in different stages of their lives, striking an appropriately targeted balance between skills development, work experience, community employment, and income support.

—Where appropriate, Labor will provide additional publicly funded jobs, involving meaningful and rewarding work, particularly in areas of unmet community demand and which avoid substitution.

Promoting a Fairer Distribution of Work

15. A striking characteristic of the return of structural unemployment since the 1970s has been its concentration in particular areas. There are huge and growing divergences between different areas of Australia in their rates of joblessness.
16. At the same time that we have high unemployment we now also have growing demands and pressures on many of those who do have jobs. One of the main inequalities in Australia today is between the overworked and the out of work.
17. In generating additional jobs, Labor will pursue innovative measures to promote greater security and a fair distribution of work between regions and individuals in the workforce, focusing on job creation for the most disadvantaged groups, as part of Labor's overall strategy to reduce unemployment.
18. The net effect of economic growth must be the creation of new jobs and not simply more work in existing jobs.

Labor recognises the significant growth in overwork in many industries and the growing pressure being placed on existing workers, their families and communities.

Labor will foster industrial relations and employment practices that enable workers to balance their employment with family and community responsibilities.

Coping with Under-Employment

19. Under-employment, affecting part time workers who wish to work more hours, and workers who wish to more fully utilise their skills and qualifications, is also a growing problem.

It particularly strikes women with dependent children working in low-paid jobs and migrants from non-English speaking backgrounds, and is most widespread outside the major metropolitan areas. Increasingly more and more men are among the growing number of people who are under-employed.

Clearly, under-employed persons need more hours of work and Labor will take steps with employers, unions and the under-employed to bring about work practices that allow the under-employed to maximise their hours of employment.

20. To help cope with under-employment, part time workers need to be treated equally in industrial terms, by obtaining portable entitlements on a pro rata basis to those of full time workers as well as having equal access to promotion and new job opportunities.
21. The under-employed particularly require access to training and career opportunities to assist them to move into better-paid jobs or industries, as well as to the traditional employment conditions of full time workers, such as holiday pay, sick pay and long service leave.

WORK AND FAMILY

Getting More Out of Life: Work and Family

22. The way families live and work has changed radically. Women's employment participation is increasing. Overwork and casual employment dominate the labour market.
23. Labor believes that policies to better balance work and family mean better economic prosperity and community harmony. It means that employers can get the best out of their employees and families can get more out of life.
24. Labor believes that families need more options for developing their own work and family solution to best suit their needs. This includes more options for caring for loved ones—children, aged parents, disabled grandparents or a sick partner.
25. Labor understands that Australian parents need to be able to choose different solutions at different stages of their working and family lives, depending on their families' changing needs.
26. Labor is committed to introducing policies which include financial support when the need is the greatest—around the time that a baby is born—and options that allow parents to better combine work and family responsibilities.
27. Labor will take steps to encourage employers to provide family friendly workplaces.

Paid Maternity Leave

28. Australia and the United States are the only developed countries that do not have a national paid maternity leave scheme.
29. Labor believes that it is economically and socially responsible for governments to assist mothers with the financial costs associated with the birth of their children.

In particular, mothers need to be able to spend time with their newborn babies and have time to recover from childbirth.

30. Labor is committed to introducing a national fourteen week paid maternity leave scheme, with no cost burden to small business.

Achieving Better Balance Between Work and Family

31. Labor believes that better work and family balance will allow employees to be better family and community members as well as better workers. Labor is committed to a work and family package that will help to ease the pressure on working families. To give parents more options for balancing work and family a range of solutions will be introduced, including the following:
 - Labor recognises the importance of women's participation in the labour market to Australia's productivity and global competitiveness and the importance of work to the independence of women and the security of their families.
 - Labor is committed to a work and family package, which supports women's participation in the workforce and provides improved assistance to all Australian families, especially in areas such as industrial relations, children's services, taxation and income support.
 - Labor recognises that many working parents balancing work with family/carer responsibilities want quality part time work, more options for increased leave without pay and flexibility around hours of work, rosters and leave arrangements.
 - Labor will give parents the option of returning to comparable part time work, by legislating to provide workers returning from parental leave with the right to request part time work.

Employers will not be able to unreasonably refuse such requests and any disagreements about a refusal to provide part time work will be resolved by the Industrial Relations Commission. Reasonableness will take into account the size and nature of the employer.

- Labor believes that working families should have more say and a real choice about how to better balance work and family, including improved arrangements for both paid and unpaid leave.
- Labor also recognises that although some parents would prefer to stay at home and care for their children on a full time basis when their children are pre school age, many cannot afford this option. Labor will work to ensure that such parents can afford to raise their own children.
- Access to affordable quality child care is also critical for parents to balance their work and family lives. Labor is committed to improving access to and affordability of quality child care.
- Labor is committed to raising awareness amongst the community and business sector about the importance of family friendly workplaces and initiatives.
- Labor understands that the need to care for family members can change at different stages of a person's working life and our workplaces should reflect the changing needs of employers, workers, families and communities.
- Work and family patterns are constantly changing and our working arrangements must keep adapting. Labor is committed to ongoing research into work and household trends and into the best work and family solutions for Australian families and their employers.

Supporting Young People (15-24 Year Olds)

32. Labor recognises that young people who leave the education system too early are at risk of being trapped in a cycle of unemployment and lifelong disadvantage. Governments have a responsibility through investment in education to equip our young people with the training and skills they need to get decent and secure work.
33. Labor is committed to strengthening and improving the pathways and increasing the opportunities for young Australians to move successfully from school into further education, training and/or employment.
34. Labor is committed to all young Australians achieving an accredited post-secondary qualification.
35. People in this age group require a smooth transition from school to work, through a combination of work experience opportunities including:
 - expanded opportunities for students to access quality vocational education and training (VET) while at school, that provides genuine pathways to employment and further education;
 - possible TAFE provision of upper-secondary education to early school-leavers;
 - a diverse range of traineeship and apprenticeship opportunities; and
 - targeted case management to more actively assist those at most risk.
36. Labor will ensure that shorter-term unemployed young people have a variety of pathways to develop skills and/or assist them back into the workforce. For those who are long-term unemployed, or at risk of becoming long-term unemployed, case management is necessary to overcome particular barriers.

37. Labor recognises that one of the barriers to the transition from school into work or further training is the lack of information that young people may have about the options available. To assist young people's transition from school into work, further training and/or education, Labor will improve communication and coordination between all levels of government, education sectors, industry, employment service providers and community organisations.

38. Labor will support the establishment, through a case by case approach in the independent Industrial Commission, of competency and skill based pay structures for young workers. The priority in this process shall be to ensure that young people are treated fairly.

Supporting 25-44 Year Olds

39. The concept of lifelong learning is now an imperative for working age Australians. People in work need the opportunity to repeatedly update their skills throughout their working lives. Labor will ensure that working Australians, particularly those at risk of future unemployment, have affordable access to training that can improve their long-term labour market prospects.

40. Labor recognises that improving the skills base of Australian workers is in the best interests of not only workers, but also employers and the nation.

—Reflecting this, Labor will ensure that the costs of training are appropriately shared, including by employers.

41. Just as those in work need to update their skills to maintain employment in the face of change, those without work need assistance to overcome the immediate and longer-term barriers to workforce participation.

42. Labor recognises that many people face difficulties in entering the workforce after long periods of schooling, caring, illness or child rearing. Labor will assist people in making these transitions back into the workforce. This will be done through school to work programs, pre-work training, increased assistance for carers and access to affordable child care.

Supporting Australians Who Are 45 Plus

43. Many Australian workers over 45 have borne the brunt of economic restructuring and workforce change. They face particular difficulty in accessing retraining and reskilling during their working lives. This makes it difficult to subsequently adapt to economic change.

44. Labor recognises that people who become unemployed later in life face difficulty finding new, secure employment. While encouraging ongoing workforce participation, Labor will ensure that obligations placed on unemployed workers who are 45 plus by mutual obligation programs and intensive job searching are fair, and respect the dignity and self esteem of the people concerned. Labor will develop positive pathways for unemployed Australians who are 45 plus to get back to work. Labor believes there must be a national strategy for assisting and retraining older workers, at risk of unemployment, before they lose their jobs. This includes improved consultation before redundancies occur and fast tracking the employment services and training provided to older workers in order to minimise the risk of becoming long-term unemployed.

45. Labor believes the fight against unemployment amongst older workers must involve the whole community, especially industry, unions, employment service providers, group training bodies,

and all levels of government. In particular Labor in government will adopt best practice in its recruitment policies and processes to ensure that older workers are given fair and reasonable opportunities for employment and will open up prospects in government for mature age job seekers. Labor is committed to a national public campaign to promote equal employment practices in the private and non-government sector in relation to older workers. The Commonwealth will seek the cooperation of the States and Territory governments to review the barriers to timely entry to government supported training for mature age workers who are unemployed.

46. Labor recognises the wealth of knowledge, experience and skills that older workers bring both to their communities and the national economy but also appreciates the particular difficulties older workers are currently experiencing in securing and retaining employment in the labour market. Labor is committed to ensuring that mature age Australians receive assistance to take up the employment opportunities available. Labor will develop effective options for employment in areas such as human services and environmental renewal, and will develop Australian communities through mentoring and volunteer work.
47. Furthermore Labor recognises that low labour force participation rates amongst men and women over 45 will become less and less economically sustainable, with an ageing population. Labor is committed to working with industry and unions on developing strategies designed to retain and support older employees, including retraining and reskilling.
48. Labor recognises the right of older Australians to retire from the workforce, if that is their preference, and recognises

their ongoing contribution to society throughout their retirement.

Supporting Other Groups with Particular Needs

49. Labor supports additional assistance to address the particular needs of carers, people with disabilities, migrants and Indigenous Australians in accessing the labour market. Labor will have a structured means of integrating these programs with the mainstream labour market, and will seek to provide people with sufficient opportunity for advancement.
50. Labor supports the Community Development Employment Program (CDEP) and wage subsidies to allow Indigenous Australians to better access work opportunities. However, Labor recognises that CDEP effectively distorts figures reflecting the unemployment rate of Indigenous Australians. Further, Labor recognises the merits of CDEP provided it does not detract from the responsibility of government to support the development of real and meaningful employment opportunities for Indigenous Australians. Labor will encourage a training and industrial award framework that applies to indigenous employment and which encourages skills development.
51. Labor recognises that people with disabilities represent a valued part of our society and have the potential to make a significant contribution to Australia's future. Labor supports programs which address the particular needs of people with disabilities and, in particular, those which encourage skill development.
—Labor recognises that people with disabilities face serious obstacles in obtaining and holding employment, and in securing opportunities to access education and training.

—Labor is committed to ensuring that people with disabilities have access to both generic and specialist employment assistance to meet their employment support needs and to a social security safety net. This commitment will aim towards the twin goals of both ensuring that people with disabilities can earn award wages and have the opportunity for participation in the economic fabric of our society.

—Labor recognises that people with disabilities employed in supported employment business services (previously known as 'sheltered workshops') and in open employment gain a great deal from their employment experience including the opportunity to interact socially and to participate in society through employment. These opportunities lead to increased self confidence and feelings of self worth.

—Labor supports the Supported Wages Scheme, and the development of new programs for people with disabilities. Advances in technology supporting workers with disabilities make it increasingly possible to integrate workers with disabilities into the mainstream labour market.

—Labor will work with employers, unions and community organisations to increase the employment opportunities of people with disabilities in a fair manner.

—Labor's commitment to increasing and enhancing the employment opportunities for people with a disability includes the review of the current legislated cap for the Disability Services Program and the manner in which it is applied to disability employment agencies.

Labor will work with State and Territory governments and the service sector to

explore innovative funding and service models, which increase the opportunities for the employment, training, education and community participation needs for people with a disability.

52. Labor recognises that barriers exist for full time parents entering or re-entering the workforce. Labor is committed to introducing programs for training and support for parents re-entering the workforce. Labor will ensure that women or men who spend time out of the workforce raising children are not disadvantaged for doing so. This will be achieved by ensuring that they have knowledge of and access to the full range of government services, including affordable child care. Labor understands that quality part time work is essential in helping parents who want to re-enter the workforce. Labor will introduce policies to improve the balance between work and family and reduce the barriers for parents entering or re-entering the labour market.

Expanding Choice for Australian Workers

53. Making work financially rewarding is an important element of a comprehensive employment policy.

Labor:

- will examine measures to improve the financial rewards from work, including earned income tax credits;
- will address ways of overcoming other financial barriers to employment and access to training such as the ongoing costs associated with child care and transport, or transitional costs such as funds for work-related clothing; and
- recognises that workplaces that are cooperative, fair, non-discriminatory and non-exploitative are also important in making work attractive.

Labor's Industrial Relations System— Contributing to Income and Employment Security

54. Security of employment is fundamental to income stability and to all aspects of personal and family life. Therefore the industrial relations system should provide significant protection for the security of workers' employment and of their wages, entitlements and working conditions.
55. Industrial relations arrangements should serve social as well as economic goals. There must be emphasis on both achieving fair outcomes for workers and contributing to efficient enterprises.
56. The industrial relations framework should encourage cooperation not confrontation. A well informed and skilled industrial relations community is essential in producing these best practice outcomes. Government has a key role in promoting and fostering these developments.
57. Labor recognises that our industrial relations system must take account of the inherently unequal power balance existing between individual workers and their employer. This principle has long been accepted in Australian society and by virtually all federal governments prior to the Howard Government.
58. The rights and entitlements of workers, particularly the most vulnerable such as young workers, workers with disabilities and workers from non-English speaking backgrounds, need to be supported and protected as a consequence.
59. This inherent imbalance requires a collective approach within the industrial relations system in order to deliver fairness.
60. The legitimate role of trade unions and their rights to organise, to take action on behalf of their members and on behalf of workers generally, and to bargain

collectively, should be recognised, defended and enhanced.

61. A strong and independent Commission is vital to the fair and proper functioning of our system. The independent Industrial Commission needs a greater role to be able to prevent and resolve industrial disputes and to act in the interests of fairness and in the national interest.
62. A system of comprehensive, contemporary and relevant awards is central to the security of workers, their wages and working conditions.
63. Workers must be able to participate in and share the benefits of the success of the enterprise or industry for which they work and of the economy as a whole.
64. While a system of workplace-based collective bargaining will be continued, alternative ways for workers to achieve decent increases in wages and conditions should be promoted, including through the award system and industry-based arrangements.
65. Labor recognises that there is a crisis of low pay in Australia that has come about in conjunction with growing income inequality. Labor acknowledges public disquiet about the increasing difficulty for low-paid workers and their families to participate fully and with dignity in Australian society while the explosion in executive salaries has seen CEOs push their earnings from three times the average wage in 1976 to over thirty times the average wage in 2003.

The independent Industrial Commission has an important role in examining the means by which the low pay crisis and specific areas of labour market exploitation in Australian can be addressed.
66. Labor will require an open process of reviewing workplace agreements:

- to ensure they meet a reasonable 'no disadvantage' test;
 - to consider the consequences of an agreement for those outside the particular agreement (for example, other workers, future workers, the unemployed); and
 - to protect the interests of these groups.
67. Nationally recognised high quality vocational training and skill development opportunities should be available throughout the workforce.
68. Non-discrimination will continue to be a central tenet of Labor's industrial relations policy. This includes a continuing commitment to equal remuneration for women, not just equal pay.
69. Labor will ensure that Australia's domestic industrial relations arrangements are consistent with its international obligations. Labor will restore Australia to a position of international leadership and pride.
70. Labor will:
- actively participate in and promote the development of international labour standards;
 - assist countries in our region and beyond to meet those standards;
 - promote free and democratic organisations to represent employees and employers; and
 - actively support community campaigns to educate and mobilise the public on issues of child labour and forced labour.
71. In addition to reinvigorating our ties with the International Labour Organisation (ILO), Labor will provide funding to the ILO Asian Regional Organisation to assist its program of training and technical assistance and help with the development of unions in the region. This aid should be used constructively to influence governments in the Asian region to

ensure that internationally guaranteed trade union rights under the ILO Convention are respected. It is essential that the rights of all workers to join trade unions and seek improved working conditions are respected and that working people can do this free from coercion and violence.

72. Labor recognises the valuable role played by Australian People for Health, Education and Development Abroad (APHEDA) in providing development assistance and aid to help build vital services and provide practical training and support to trade unions in developing countries. A Labor Government will provide funding to APHEDA to enable it to meet this important need.

Protecting Employee Entitlements

73. Protection of employee entitlements in circumstances of company insolvency is an increasingly important aspect of income security. Labor's legislation to protect employee entitlements will be national and ensure that:
- 100 per cent of entitlements of employees are protected;
 - payments to employees are timely;
 - additional cost burdens placed on employers are minimised;
 - employers are not required to make additional payments for benefits already protected by trusts or other appropriate means;
 - small business is protected from any additional costs;
 - corporations law is amended to enable recovery of assets in circumstances where the use of corporate structures has the effect of denying workers their entitlements; and
 - entitlements are deemed to be a debt for the purpose of insolvency, and courts are enabled to recover entitlements from related companies.

Further, a Labor Government will:

- review the operation of the Corporations Act to ensure that directors who are convicted of trading while insolvent are personally liable for outstanding employee entitlements;
- review, and strengthen where necessary, ASIC powers to disqualify a director from holding office where the director has been convicted of trading while insolvent;
- ensure that administrators and liquidators of insolvent companies are independent of creditors;
- ensure that employee entitlements can be recovered from entities related to the insolvent company;
- upon reasonable request by employees or unions, require companies to disclose information as to the company's ability to meet their obligations under the law regarding employee entitlements (by means which are practicable);
- conduct a review to consider policies which:
 - enhance the early detection and prevention of insolvencies with the objective of restructuring businesses in difficulty;
 - relate to the treatment of creditors who are competitors of the insolvent company and whether such creditors should be able to vote on a proposal to wind up the company;
 - relate to the situation where there is an objection to the decision of the chairperson (of a meeting of creditors) to include or exclude any proof of debt or claim and that decision alters the outcome of the vote;
 - relate to the effectiveness of the provisions in the Corporations Act relating to directors for trading while

insolvent and the penalties imposed on directors for breaches of the Corporations Act in relation to employee entitlements; and

- provide the most effective mechanism to protect employee entitlements including the ranking of employee entitlements relative to other creditors.

74. To enhance security of employee entitlements, Labor will ensure the timely payment of superannuation contributions.

75. Labor will ensure that the superannuation system provides:

- essential protection for employees and for the superannuation contributions made by them or on their behalf;
- effective choice, without undermining successful industry funds;
- representative and balanced trustee structures; and
- an independent appeal process.

Protecting Employee Entitlements

76. Labor will facilitate schemes that provide portability of leave entitlements between employers where those entitlements would otherwise be lost to the employee. Labor acknowledges that less people are becoming eligible for long service leave and will examine ways in which long service leave can be returned to being a mainstream entitlement which better reflects the contemporary labour market.

Contributing to Personal and Family Security

77. The changing lifetime employment pattern of men and women requires the industrial relations system to increasingly adapt itself to actively balance work and family responsibilities. In particular greater attention needs to be given to the growing casualisation of the workforce, home-based work, and independent contractors,

and the increasing demands on Australians in balancing work with personal and family life.

78. The method of engagement of workers should not be a vehicle for denying them access to the independent Industrial Commission or the usual range of entitlements and rights. Nor should it be designed to undermine their income or conditions.
79. A change in ownership of a business or similar corporate restructure should not be used as a means of evading pre-existing wages and conditions. Labor recognises that many workers want part time and casual work and that these forms of employment are integral to many industries. Whilst acknowledging that all workers have a right to full time secure employment, Labor also supports the rights of workers to have part time work that is regular and secure and to have casual work that attracts appropriate entitlements.
80. Labor also recognises the unique and important position dependent and independent contractors play in the Australian labour market. Comprising hundreds of thousands of working families, dependent and independent contractors operating across the country will not be forgotten by a national Labor Government.
81. Labor believes that, like casual and part time workers, dependent and independent contractors also deserve the right to have basic industrial rights, entitlements and protections.
82. All NSW contractors currently have access to remedies for harsh, unreasonable and unconscionable contracts under the Unfair Contracts Act. Owner truck drivers operating as contractors in the NSW transport industry are already able to work under a contract determination system that provides for such things as minimum rates of pay, annual leave, sick leave and access to an independent umpire in the NSW Industrial Relations Commission in the event of a dispute.
83. Along with the proposals to establish equality of rights to job security entitlements for casual and part time workers, these proposals will make a substantial difference for working Australians.
84. It is in the long-term interests of workers, industry and the nation that the increasing reliance in some areas on casualisation of the workforce be reduced and priority given to the provision of secure, good quality employment with appropriate training and career prospects.
85. The inability to balance the increasing pressures of work and personal life can result in loss of productivity for firms, increases in stress and related problems for workers and their families, and a worsening of social problems. Good industrial relations have an important role to play in retaining well qualified and highly motivated workers.
86. Labor will hold an inquiry to examine the growth in contingent and insecure employment and its effects on workers and their families and to recommend measures which would promote greater employment stability for workers and a better balance of work and family responsibilities. Labor will work with industry and unions to pursue effective and viable solutions to these important issues.

A FAIR INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS SYSTEM

The Legal Framework

87. Labor will introduce new industrial relations legislation to:

- put fairness back into the legislation;
- give a greater role to the independent Industrial Commission to act in the national interest and in the interest of fairness and equity;
- ensure that the powers and objects of the independent Industrial Commission are adequate to deal with any industrial matter;
- provide enhanced resources for the enforcement of awards and agreements;
- ensure that the independent Industrial Commission has the authority and resources to establish comprehensive and effective award coverage;
- change the emphasis from an approach based on sanctions to one based on conciliation and, where necessary, arbitration;
- ensure that casual, part time and full time employment are defined to reflect the true nature of these forms of employment;
- reduce excessive legalism and prohibitive cost barriers to accessing rights; and
- abolish the Office of the Employment Advocate.

88. Labor will abolish Australian Workplace Agreements (AWAs), which are secretive, unreviewable and unfair. There will be no legislative provision for federal statutory individual agreements.

89. Collective bargaining should be promoted through a fair and simple stream of workplace, enterprise and industry wide agreements, negotiated with trade unions

or employees and consistent with ILO obligations. Labor will:

- ensure a reasonable 'no disadvantage' test is met for agreements provided for under industrial legislation, which includes relevant award or agreement rates of pay and conditions and protects workers' rights to representation of their choice;
- require employers to bargain in good faith with a union which has indicated its desire to negotiate a collective agreement;
- ensure that lockouts and the replacement of employees by employers who are not bargaining in good faith with their employees are not a feature of the Australian industrial relations system;
- empower the Commission to make binding orders in relation to the commencement and continuation of the collective bargaining process to ensure that the parties to a bargaining period negotiate in good faith. The powers of the Commission should also include the capacity, where unions agree, to mandate a single bargaining unit comprising the appropriate unions which have initiated a bargaining period. Where such a single bargaining unit has been formed, the employer must negotiate in good faith with the single bargaining unit;
- ensure the transparency of the agreement review and registration processes;
- allow any matters agreed between the parties to be in a collective agreement;
- provide that the independent Industrial Commission and affected parties are aware of and able to participate in the bargaining process, the review of agreements provided for under the Act and the arbitration of disputes where

- legitimate collective bargaining is not occurring;
- prohibit discrimination against those who wish to bargain collectively and be represented by a union; and
 - provide that workers and their representatives have access to appropriate information from which to make informed decisions.
90. The right of all workers to democratic collective representation by unions will be recognised and protection provided from discrimination against workers based on trade union membership or activity.
91. The development of representative organisations, which can meet common registration and accountability requirements, should be fostered, including by necessary training and education. In line with international standards, union and delegate rights should be either legislated or determined by the independent Industrial Commission.
- Such rights would include:
- the formal recognition of the representative role of union delegates in the workplace;
 - the absence of discrimination or harassment in employment based on trade union membership or activity;
 - the right to reasonable time off to consult with other workers and participate in the affairs of the union; and
 - the right to reasonable levels of trade union education and access to appropriate facilities for carrying out their role, inclusive of disseminating relevant trade union information, including email.
92. A right of entry should be allowed for union officials to workplaces for the purposes of communication, organisation, recruitment, access to time and wages records and assistance to workers.
93. The protection of the industrial relations system should be extended beyond a narrow definition of employees to include those in employment type relationships.
94. Protection against unfair dismissal should be provided to all workers, irrespective of the size of their employer's business. Employees should have access to a timely and fair remedy for unfair termination of employment, specifically:
- as a priority, provisions relating to unfair dismissal should be streamlined;
 - the Commission should be required by legislation to hear and determine unfair dismissal cases within set timeframes and give the remedy of reinstatement greater emphasis;
 - in circumstances of mass terminations, unions should be given the ability to make a single application to be heard and determined within set timeframes; and
 - Labor will ensure that filing fees are not a barrier to access to relief from unfair dismissal.
95. Public sector workers should have access to the full range of independent Industrial Commission powers to resolve industrial disputes and promote collective bargaining, and, where appropriate, have access to paid rates awards. Labor will discontinue the use of individual contracts for members of the Australian Public Service below the Senior Executive Service level.
96. All industrial matters will be removed from the Trade Practices Act and be regulated by industrial law.
97. Comprehensive programs, including inspections, aimed at achieving compliance with the regulatory regime and proactive approaches aimed at securing protection of workers' rights and entitlements should be developed and implemented. In this regard a Labor

Government shall utilise government procurement in such a way that it only does business with companies that comply with all their legal employment obligations, and will ensure that its procurement policies support collective bargaining and the award system.

98. Compatibility of Commonwealth and State industrial relations systems should be sought.

Incomes Policy

99. Incomes policy should be directed to the following social and economic goals:

- fair distribution of the benefits of economic success;
- job creation and sustained low-inflationary growth;
- ensuring equal remuneration for women, not just equal pay;
- special attention to the interests of the most vulnerable such as the low paid, young workers, workers with disabilities and workers from non-English speaking backgrounds;
- reasonable opportunities for workers to protect and enhance their living standards without working excessive hours or enduring excessive stress;
- competitive Australian enterprises based on a well-paid, highly skilled, flexible and motivated workforce;
- the need to address the growing disparity between incomes in Australia; and
- the establishment, through a case by case approach in the independent Industrial Commission, of competency and skill-based pay structures for young workers. The priority in this process shall be to ensure that young people are treated fairly.

100. Labor will establish cooperative mechanisms with participation from the wider industrial relations community to

consider current issues and future developments in industrial relations. These issues will also be examined in the context of broader industry, employment, education, and social issues. As part of these mechanisms Labor will support industry level forums to promote discussion and resolution of relevant industrial relations matters.

101. A new basis for a cooperative incomes policy should be established on the following:

- recognition that where workers express a clear preference for a particular type of industrial instrument to cover their wages and conditions, the parties in that matter should have an obligation to negotiate in good faith to successfully conclude such an instrument;
- recognition that collective bargaining should remain an important option for workers and employers;
- no worker should be required to enter into an enterprise bargain because the industrial relations system provides no other way to achieve decent wage increases or maintain reasonable working conditions;
- maintenance and enhancement of relevant award standards and wage rates in a manner consistent with overall social and economic objectives, through direct dialogue with unions and employers and through regular national wage cases conducted by the independent Industrial Commission; and
- recognition that a 'one-size-fits-all' approach to wage determination is neither desirable nor appropriate.

Promoting Safe Workplaces

102. Whilst occupational health and safety remains primarily a State responsibility,

the federal government can and should do more to ensure appropriate standards are applied for Australian workers irrespective of where they work. The following principles should be applied:

- increased resources for research, standards setting, information and inspection at the national level, and by grants to State, local and industry/enterprise level where appropriate;
- uniform minimum standards of compensation and other rights for injured workers; and
- the encouragement of tripartite industry forums on occupational health and safety.

103. Labor will work cooperatively with States to ensure that workers' compensation schemes, social security and Medicare deliver the best possible benefits to injured workers. Labor will work with the States to achieve appropriate minimum national standards of benefits for injured workers including:

- periods of income support during incapacity for work;
- requirements for rehabilitation/return to work; and
- periods during which medical and like benefits must be met in respect of work-related injuries.

104. Labor will work with the States to achieve a nationally consistent occupational health and safety framework which reflects best safety practice within Australia, and which is consistent with the best international standards. This framework should be clear and capable of enforcement at the workplace level. This framework must extend the focus of occupational health and safety practice from symptoms to the major causes of occupational health and safety hazards including:

- workplace fatigue;
- stress; and
- occupational bullying and violence.

105. Labor will, in consultation with State governments, develop and maintain a uniform national system of occupational health and safety statistics which detail the incidence of deaths and injury from exposure to hazards in the workplace and is not overly reliant on National Compensation Data.
106. Labor will encourage the States to provide comprehensive rehabilitation programs, and will itself provide such programs within its own areas of responsibilities.
107. Workers must be protected in relation to occupational health and safety with an emphasis on the prevention of disease, injury and accidents. Labor will work with the States to ensure improved integration between State-based workers' compensation systems, public liability laws, private and superannuation-based disability insurance on the one hand and the social security and Medicare systems on the other hand.

Fairer work arrangements

108. Labor recognises that there is a strong connection between deregulation of the labour market and increased inequality in the distribution of work and income.
109. Labor will encourage and promote incentives for implementation by federal, State and local governments and private employers, in consultation with trade unions and employers, of voluntary schemes such as:
- career break schemes;
 - balancing the emphasis on wages/hours/jobs to reflect agreed enterprise or industry priorities;

- recruitment to new positions based on shorter hours;
- job sharing; and
- productivity gains being taken in the form of shorter hours.

110. Labor acknowledges that working time arrangements can vary according to the needs of employees and employers in an industry. Nevertheless, the erosion of full time employment and growth in casual, part time, contracting and insecure forms of employment is adversely affecting the ability of families to meet their financial, family and social needs and responsibilities.

Labor also believes that long and excessive working hours are placing unfair levels of stress and strain on workers and families.

Labor will encourage the independent Industrial Commission, employers and unions to develop working time arrangements which:

- are consistent with employees' preferences and needs;
- reduce excessive working hours;
- maximise employment creation;
- reflect agreed enterprise or industry priorities;
- emphasise levels of working time that are sufficient and reasonably predictable to provide relevant and meaningful outcomes for work; and
- encourage preference for secure full time and part time employment over casual employment.

111. Labor will consult and work with employers, unions and community organisations to remove obstacles to the employment of people with disabilities in fair and non-exploitative ways.

Promoting Industrial Democracy and Cooperative Workplaces

112. The following principles should be pursued:

- the right of workers to meaningful participation in decision making in the workplace about industrial matters;
- the right of workers and their representatives to be consulted before decisions that will have a significant effect on employment or work generally are implemented;
- the extension of industrial democracy and other modern forms of work organisation in major enterprises and workplaces;
- encouragement of employee share ownership programs; and
- assistance for the development of cooperatives.

SOCIAL SECURITY

Past, Present and Future

113. In the post-war era, Labor governments have been responsible for building a decent social security system which has aimed to:
- support Australian families;
 - protect Australians' living standards, provide income support for those in need, and income supplements for families and those with additional costs;
 - give Australians opportunities to improve their lives, providing support and incentives to take up work and learn new skills;
 - demonstrate our compassion for those Australians who, because of age, disability or their responsibility for the care of another, cannot support themselves; and
 - deliver flexible assistance in a cost effective way to the taxpayer.

114. Australia's social security system must change to meet the nation's emerging needs and circumstances.

—Our working lives have changed dramatically. We are now likely to experience periods without a job; we are unlikely to have a job for life with one employer; the hours we work are increasingly unpredictable; some of us are working more hours than we want while others work fewer hours than are needed for a decent life; many of us will return to training or education at some stage during our working lives; and our children are staying at school and at home longer, and many more are going on to post-secondary study.

—Increasingly the benefits of economic growth are not being shared equally and there is a widening gap in opportunities available to people living in particular communities.

—We are living longer and our population is ageing.

115. Labor is committed to preventing and eliminating poverty in Australia, to improving the living standards of all Australians, and to reducing inequality between Australians, by providing people with a secure income and access to the services and opportunities they need so that all Australians can live with decency and dignity.

116. Labor is committed to the development of robust whole of government indicators to measure national progress in addressing poverty and improving living standards, including measures of income, health, educational attainment and participation through employment and housing affordability.

117. Labor will ensure that, through an ongoing dialogue with State and Territory governments, initiatives to tackle poverty and inequality are

coordinated and effective in improving the living standards of all Australians.

First Principles—Security and Opportunity

118. Labor recognises that at times in their working lives some Australians may be unable to support themselves through work. Labor remains committed to a compassionate and fair social security system which offers a basic level of income support to these Australians, in proportion to their need and according to their circumstances, and which above all encourages and supports them to enter or re-enter the workforce and which enables them to enjoy a decent standard of living.

119. Labor believes that the federal government, on behalf of all Australians, has a duty to ensure that none of us are left without the means to a decent life because he or she:

—is retired and does not have an adequate retirement income;

—is sick or disabled and unable to work, either temporarily or permanently;

—is unlikely to find work because of age or disability;

—has primary responsibility for the care of children or other family members;

—has lost the support of a partner through separation, divorce or death;

—is unemployed and seeking work; or

—is in education or training, or a combination of education and training and looking for work.

120. Labor believes that the social security system also plays a vital role in supplementing income where it is low, and in providing additional help where Australians and their families face additional costs—because of the need to provide for children, or to meet the

costs of disability or health care, decent housing, or education. Labor will:

- continue to supplement Australians' incomes to help meet these costs;
- ensure that the system of assistance for families with dependent children, provided through the tax, social security and education systems, is easy to understand and access, and is designed so that people do not face financial barriers to work and are able to get the help they need when they need it;
- work to eliminate tax and social security rules that cause families with variations in income to incur large debts and which result in the removal of substantial amounts of additional income earned through overtime; and
- pursue innovative ways to deliver assistance to families to reflect changing roles, responsibilities and work practices so that all families have the opportunity to make free decisions about bringing up their children.

121. Labor believes that the fundamental objectives of government assistance are to support individuals and families through stages of the life cycle or in particular circumstances where support is needed, and to facilitate and increase people's access to the opportunities and skills they need to achieve a decent standard of living. Our welfare system is successful when it not only alleviates poverty, but when it provides a platform from which people may gain access to education, training and economic opportunities. It is in this way that the welfare system can change people's lives.

Helping People Move Forward

122. Labor recognises that, for working age Australians, the best route out of poverty

lies in a job with a decent income. Labor believes the social security system should encourage and assist people to take up the work opportunities which will improve their standard of living, and that it should ensure that those who can combine assistance with work, education or training are always better off than if they did not.

- As a matter of urgency, Labor will address the poverty traps that see extra earnings immediately clawed back in tax and the withdrawal of social security payments and benefits.
- Labor acknowledges the widening gap between the skills an unemployed person can offer and the skills employers want and will better integrate the provision of income support and job assistance with education and quality training opportunities, particularly in areas of skill shortages.
- Labor recognises the widening disparity of opportunity in many communities, particularly in regional and rural Australia and will act to coordinate and better target resources in these areas.
- Labor will ensure the welfare system takes advantage of the unique resources and expertise found in local communities.
- Labor will pursue new ways to break the cycle of poverty and long-term benefit receipt by developing strategies that can help families early and provide linkages to health, education, child care, and labour market assistance.

The Importance of Creating and Facilitating Opportunities

123. Labor believes in lifelong education and training and recognises that many Australians combine work with

education, training and caring responsibilities, and that families change the way they balance these tasks over the course of their lives.

—Labor will ensure that people receiving payments can move flexibly between caring responsibilities, study or training and the workforce.

—Labor will build positive incentives into the system to encourage those receiving payments to take up work experience, education and training.

124. Labor acknowledges the important role of affordable and quality child care for parents who wish to access educational opportunities, re-enter the workforce, or increase their hours of work.

Providing Incentives

125. Labor will better integrate the income support and tax systems to:

—minimise the poverty traps where income tests and taxation combine to severely reduce the benefit of earnings; and

—develop new and innovative ways to reward people who find work.

126. Labor recognises that for many disadvantaged job seekers, removal of barriers such as access to affordable quality child care and quality training and skills development, are equally important measures needed to assist the unemployed find work. Labor is committed to removing the barriers facing many of the long-term unemployed, especially sole parents, mature aged, the disabled and indigenous job seekers and providing incentives in the transition from welfare into work.

Ensuring Adequacy

127. Labor remains committed to providing adequate income support for those who need it. Labor will:

—maintain the benchmark of maximum single adult rates of pension to at least twenty-five per cent of male total average weekly earnings;

—maintain the current links between pension rates and family payments to ensure increases to pensions flow on to family payments;

—maintain the current relativities between single rates and payments for couples.

—ensure basic rates are indexed twice a year, in line with movements in the Consumer Price Index; and

—ensure that those whose only income is provided through the social security system will not have to pay income tax.

Better Delivery of Welfare Services

128. Labor believes that the social security system should be based upon recognition of the need to provide adequate and sufficient levels of support to all Australians so that they and their families can live decently with dignity. Accordingly, the social security system should be a flexible and simple system, easy to understand and easy to administer, and will continue to reform it by:

—moving towards a common means test with uniform rules for all forms of income support;

—reducing the complexity of the eligibility rules for income support and related payments for those of workforce age so that assistance is available to meet the needs of all those who, for one reason or another, are unable to support themselves or their family;

—ensuring the system is flexible enough to cope with variations in income, so that help is available when needed; and

—removing the gaps and anomalies in the current rules which discriminate against many Australians, including older women, migrants, young people and those who wish to study.

129. A fairer, simpler and more flexible system will mean that people will be able to more readily understand their entitlements and staff will be able to have time to actively assist social security recipients rather than grapple with administrative complexity. Further, the lengthy processes of review and appeal will be reduced. Labor will retain the independent and free review and appeals process.

130. Under Labor, people will be treated with courtesy, respect and understanding by the social security system.

131. Labor will ensure that personal information is protected and will maintain individuals' rights under freedom of information to have access to their personal files.

132. Labor is committed to maintaining Centrelink in full public ownership and ensuring it has the resources necessary to carry out its services effectively. Labor will:

—develop and expand the role of Centrelink in our communities, particularly as a central resource linking people to services and opportunities in local areas; and

—enhance Centrelink's ability to offer personalised service to individuals who are looking for work.

Involving the Community

133. Labor believes that effective, high quality welfare services are best guaranteed by an equal partnership between government and the community sector. A Labor Government will:

—develop a compact with the community sector to guide the development and delivery of welfare services;

—maintain a strong role for government within such a compact, noting that many alternative models have insufficient safeguards against government simply abdicating its responsibilities and shifting the burden to the community or other sectors; and

—develop flexible and responsive models of service delivery that are appropriate to the needs of small and rural communities.

Outworkers

134. Labor recognises the disadvantaged position of outworkers in the textile, clothing and footwear (TCF) sector when compared with the rest of the labour force. Outworkers require specific regulatory protection in order to control the exploitative conditions under which they are employed.

135. Labor is committed to introducing complementary federal and state legislation that aims to ensure outworkers are employed under secure, safe and fair systems of work.

136. Labor will implement a package of reforms including parallel federal legislation modelled upon the Victorian Outworkers (Improved Protection) Act 2003 and the NSW Industrial Relations (Ethical Clothing Trades) Act 2001.

137. Labor will work cooperatively with the State governments to achieve these goals, including enactment of legislation designed to ensure the following:
- that no outworker in any Australian jurisdiction will have fewer rights to legal redress and protection than are

- offered by any other Australian jurisdiction;
- the entire chain of clothing production and sale will be rendered transparent to scrutiny, so that each party in that chain will become identifiable and accountable for ensuring payment of monies sufficient to meet local labour standards for the production of clothing;
- provision of sufficient resources to ensure effective compliance with

these legislative protections at each step in the chain of production and sale;

- implementation of policies which require governments to ethically source their TCF supplies; and
- an end to the artificial distinction between so-called 'employee' outworkers and 'contract' outworkers by deeming all outworkers to be employees.

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Government Procurement and Industrial Relations Standards

A Labor Government will review all procurement policies and practices to ensure the following:

Industrial Relations Principles

- That preference in awarding contracts is given to those companies that are prepared to work within the Labor Government's industrial relations framework; that is, which have a positive approach towards the rights of trade unions and their members, respect the right of employees to become members of the appropriate union and which do not promote, or implement individual employment contracts as a mechanism to undermine collective bargaining and the Award system.
- That a Labor Government will only do business with companies that abide by all employment and employment related laws, including awards, enterprise agreements, superannuation, workers' compensation, health and safety and taxation obligations.
- To introduce mechanisms, systems and practices within government departments and authorities which are capable of implementing and policing the above. This includes ensuring that all government

contracts contain clauses which provide the necessary power to cancel or suspend the contract or to impose financial penalties on any companies which breach these laws and policies. Further, a Labor Government will ensure that there is a willingness by government departments to exercise this power.

- Where a Labor Government intends to change or issue tenders for any major service contract it shall ensure that no new contract is entered into that disadvantages employees of the out-going contractor, with respect to employment including continuity of employment and entitlements, wages and conditions, and maintenance of labour levels. In this regard there must be consultation before any contract is awarded with the employees and unions affected.

Codes of Practices

A Labor Government will review, with the appropriate unions, any current Codes of Practice or regulations with a view to ensuring that the practices and policies contained in this resolution are embodied into those codes and regulations.

Transparency

A Labor Government will ensure that any company that supplies goods and/or services will make available to unions all information

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about the location of work including all subcontractors and their locations of work so that government departments and trade unions can play an appropriate role in ensuring compliance.

The Supply Chain

A Labor Government shall not enter into any contract with a supplier (or service provider) unless the contract ensures that all work to be performed under the contract complies with the standards set out in this resolution regardless of whether that work is performed by the suppliers themselves or is further outsourced (by way of subcontracting or otherwise). In this regard no subcontracting of work shall be allowed without the permission of the government department that has issued the contract.

Monitoring

A Labor Government will establish an ongoing monitoring mechanism involving the ACTU and relevant unions to ensure that the principles contained in this resolution are complied with.

Casual Employment

Conference expresses its grave concern about the excessive growth of casual employment under the Howard Government: casual employment has grown 30 per cent, compared with just 10 per cent growth in full time jobs.

Australia has one of the fastest rates of growth in insecure employment in the western world.

Of Australia's 2.2 million casuals, 60 per cent or more than 1.3 million casuals are employed on a regular basis.

It is projected that by 2010 around one in three Australian jobs will be casual.

Conference recognises that casual employment can have a valid role in providing job opportunities and a ready workforce in peak seasonal times, and when work is truly irregular.

However, Conference is concerned that the employment of casuals on a regular basis is being used to avoid basic working conditions such as sick pay, holiday pay, overtime loadings and job security.

Casuals find it very difficult to obtain mortgages and other bank loans.

Women are heavily represented in the casual workforce. Of Australia's 2.2 million casuals, 1.2 million are women and of the 1.32 million regular casuals, over 700,000 are women.

Employers have little incentive to invest in training casual workers, since turnover is high as casuals look for more secure jobs.

When, in the 21st Century, the income-earning prospects and job security of working Australians depend so crucially upon their skills, the de-skilling of the Australian workforce through the misuse of casual employment is not in the nation's interest.

Conference calls for casual, part time and full time employment to be more clearly defined, and for such definitions to provide the basis for regular casuals to convert to permanent employment if that is their choice.

This approach would have no effect on casual employees who genuinely want to remain casuals and retain their casual loading.

Conference is also concerned about other forms of insecure employment, such as labour hire and the misuse of contractor arrangements and calls for a broad inquiry into the growth of insecure employment.

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Building and Construction Industry
National Conference expresses its opposition to the Building and Construction Industry Improvement Bill 2003.

The Bill arose from a Royal Commission set up by the Government for purely political purposes—to gain electoral advantage, to unfairly target trade unions and to advance the Government's ideological anti-union agenda.

The \$60 million Royal Commission spent 90 per cent of its time on anti-union topics and refused to investigate employer malpractice.

The Government's Bill, recently introduced into Parliament, continues that one-sided attack on unions. If passed, the Bill would destroy hard-won award conditions, effectively outlaw protected industrial action, force workers to work in unsafe conditions and deny any effective union right of entry. The Bill would also create an industry-specific police implementing a political agenda and possessing wide coercive powers to monitor and prosecute building workers.

The Bill also undermines the function of the Australian Industrial Relations Commission and fundamentally attacks the legitimate role of unions.

National Conference rejects these proposed laws, which are designed to provide an inferior set of industrial rights for workers in the building and construction industry.

Conference condemns such legislation for being contrary to international law and for eroding the system of conciliation and arbitration enshrined in Australian law.

Conference calls for the withdrawal of the Bill and expresses its commitment to adopt a policy framework that is fair for workers and employers, and addresses the real

issues and problems in the building and construction industry.

Industrial Relations

Conference re-affirms the strong bonds between the trade union movement and the parliamentary Labor Parties of Australia. The Federal and State Labor Parties were formed by the organised labour movement to give effective parliamentary representation to the working men and women of Australia and their families.

The parliamentary Labor Parties are committed to the fundamental Labor philosophy of a fair go for all.

Conference notes that there are 1.8 million proud trade union members in Australia in a legislative and political environment that is hostile to trade unions.

When the Howard Government talks about choice and flexibility it means choice and flexibility only for employers.

In John Howard's Australia:

- low and middle income earners have missed out on most of the rewards of Australia's recent economic growth. The incomes of the top five per cent of earners grew by 31.7 per cent over the six years to 2001 compared with just 6.8 per cent for middle income earners;
- CEOs have enjoyed massive increases in earnings: from three times the average wage in the mid-1970s to more than 30 times the average wage in 2003;
- the weekly incomes of the bottom 20 per cent of income earners have risen by just \$3 per week under the Howard Government;
- employees have been locked out for 17 weeks or more, and instructed to sign non-negotiable individual contracts if they want to keep their jobs;

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- employment on a casual basis is being used as a way of avoiding basic working conditions like sick pay, holiday pay and overtime loadings. More than 1.3 million of Australia's 2.2 million casuals work on a long-term and regular basis, but most have no right to seek a conversion to full time or part time employment if that is their preference; and
- the balance between work and family life is badly out of kilter.

Conference condemns the Howard Government for creating an unfair Australia and, in particular, for:

- seriously weakening the right of Australians to bargain collectively;
- introducing AWAs;
- restricting the capacity of the Australian Industrial Relations Commission (AIRC) to settle disputes;
- overturning the accepted practice of making appointments to the AIRC on the basis of balancing background and gender;
- removing any obligation on the parties to bargain in good faith with a consequent escalation in employer lock-outs;
- attempting to take over State unfair dismissal systems and replacing them with a weak federal system;
- its empty rhetoric but total inaction on improving the balance between work and family life;
- promoting the abuse of casual employment to erode the pay and working conditions of working Australians; and
- failing to invest in skills formation in the Australian workforce.

Conference rejects the Howard Government's low road to low skills and low wages. Vulnerable Australians should never have been entered into this race to the bottom, competing on wage costs against the countries of East Asia.

Labor will take working Australians along the high road to high skills and high wages.

Taking the high road requires a commitment to investing in schooling, vocational education, higher education, on-the-job training and lifelong learning.

Labor seeks productive, fair and harmonious workplaces.

Conference:

- supports the right of all working Australians to bargain collectively;
- rejects the use of Australian Workplace Agreements (AWAs) or any other federal statutory individual agreement to erode the pay and working conditions of employees;
- rejects the role of the Office of the Employment Advocate and supports its abolition;
- recognises the vital role of trade unions in ensuring fair and effective collective bargaining;
- supports the right of trade unions to recruit and represent their members;
- supports an independent Industrial Relations Commission that is required to ensure that bargaining is underpinned by a system of awards providing for fair, relevant and secure wages and conditions of employment and is empowered to resolve disputes when the parties cannot reach agreement;
- considers there is an obligation on the parties to bargain in good faith and condemns the use of lock-outs in industrial disputes;
- is committed to improving job security, by protecting 100 per cent of employee entitlements and preventing the misuse of casual employment and other forms of insecure employment as a means of eroding pay and working conditions;

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- is committed to ensuring that Australians are protected from disease, injury and accidents in their workplaces;
- supports initiatives that assist mature-age Australians to participate in the workforce;
- supports the right of all working Australians to protection against being dismissed unfairly; and
- supports family-friendly workplaces that allow working Australians to balance work and family life.

Taking the high road to high skills and high wages will contribute to Labor's vision of prosperous, fair, tolerant and compassionate Australia.

Industrial Manslaughter Legislation
Conference congratulates the ACT unions and Government for the timely introduction of industrial manslaughter legislation. Recent tragic workplace fatalities have highlighted the need for this legislation. Conference recognises the duty of company owners and managers in enforcing OH&S in their enterprises. Where this duty is neglected there are currently inadequate sanctions. Conference urges all State and Territory governments to rectify this lack of accountability.

Discrimination by Australia Post towards injured workers

Australia Post workers who have a non-work related injury/illness are being managed in accordance with the Australia Post non-work related injury/illness policy.

Under the Australia Post non-work related injury/illness policy, employees who have a non-work related injury or illness are directed home on to sick leave (often unpaid) and ultimately have their employment terminated. Employees who are able to perform the inherent requirements of the job with

reasonable adjustments, for example, provision of a chair at retail counters, have been directed on to sick leave and have had their employment terminated.

Australia Post is a very large national business capable of accommodating injured or sick workers through flexible and modified workplace arrangements and/or reasonable adjustments to the workplace.

It is therefore the view of the Conference that the policy unfairly discriminates against workers who have non-work related injuries and/or illness. The policy is particularly harsh and unfair given that many of the workers who are managed under the policy have medical restrictions, which stem from earlier work related injury for which Australia Post has ceased to accept liability. Further, it is the view of the Conference that the Australia Post non-work related injury/illness policy conflicts with Australia Post obligations under the Disability Discrimination Act.

Australia Post must provide reasonable adjustments to workplaces, or retraining and redeployment, for employees who suffer short or long term medical restrictions.

Australia Post must cease the practice of sending employees to facility nominated doctors for the purpose of directing employees home on to sick leave under its non work related injury/illness policy.

Australia Post must withdraw its non-work related injury/illness policy.

The National ALP Secretary is directed to communicate this Conference's opposition to the Australia Post non-work related injury/illness policy, to Australia Post.

The National ALP Conference calls upon the Shadow Minister for Comcare to seek advice from Comcare as to the possible adverse effects the Australia Post policy has on its employees with disability. Following the

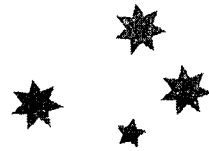
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advice from Comcare, the Shadow Minister is to communicate with relevant ALP National Committees and the Communication Electrical Plumbing Union (CEPU) as to the outcome of the Comcare facility.

This Conference calls upon the Shadow Minister for Communications/Industrial Relations to express concern to the Federal Government and Australia Post in relation to its policy.

Free and Democratic Trade Unionism

Labor is committed to the support and advancement of free and democratic trade unions in our region. Labor supports the principle of all workers in our region to be able to form, join and be active in trade unions. Labor is concerned that in some countries in our region and elsewhere in the world these rights do not exist. Labor condemns the recent assassination of Cambodian trade union leader Chea Vichea and supports the protest lodged by the ICFTU with the Cambodian Government.



AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY



Chapter Four

Security and Opportunity for Older Australians

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Chapter Four

Security and Opportunity for Older Australians

Basic Principles

1. Labor recognises the vital contribution of older Australians to our community and will encourage and support them to live full, active and independent lives.
2. Labor will continue to encourage and support older Australians to play an active role in the community and to contribute to the development and implementation of the policies that affect their quality of life.
3. Labor believes that a secure, adequate income and access to good quality, appropriate health and aged care services when they are needed are essential to older Australians' peace of mind.
4. Labor is committed to providing a guaranteed, universal and integrated retirement incomes system that is secure, stable, simple and fair.

Labor recognises that the maintenance and expansion of the industry superannuation system is fundamental to the achievement of income security for older Australians.

Labor will initiate measures necessary to ensure that workers, including those who have had interrupted working lives, have income security in retirement.

5. Labor believes that Australians' access to aged care services should be on the basis of their need for that care and not on their ability to pay or where they live.
6. Labor recognises the invaluable work undertaken by older Australians as volunteers in the community and will encourage and facilitate such activity.
7. Labor will continue to honour Australia's debt to veterans through programs of

compensation, commemoration, income support, health care, aged care and housing assistance.

8. Labor believes that research into ageing (and in particular dementia) and aged care service delivery is essential to ensure that current and future needs of older Australians are met.
9. Labor will work towards the development of culturally sensitive aged care programs to ensure that older Australians can maintain optimum health security, self respect and dignity.
10. Labor will develop high quality care standards for aged care providers so that they deliver high quality outcomes.

Opportunity for Older Australians

11. Labor recognises that most older Australians remain healthy and continue to lead full, active and independent lives well into their 70s and 80s. Older Australians make a crucial contribution to the Australian community.
12. Labor rejects any suggestion that older Australians are a burden on our society.
13. Labor's policies will recognise and value older Australians in their many roles as:
 - experienced and committed workers;
 - active volunteers in many organisations;
 - carers of children and other family members;
 - investors;
 - teachers and students;
 - advisers, guides and mentors to the next generations; and
 - builders of our sense of community.
14. Labor's policies will encourage and support older Australians to live full, active and independent lives.

- Labor will enact comprehensive age discrimination legislation and will ensure that its policies do not discriminate against older Australians.
 - Labor supports programs which provide lifelong learning opportunities for older Australians. Labor will encourage older Australians who wish to expand their learning horizons to take up educational opportunities, particularly through adult and community education, universities of the Third Age and emerging technologies. Labor will ensure that programs are in place which will enable the formal recognition of acquired skills of older working Australians.
 - Labor supports health promotion initiatives which improve the quality of life for older Australians, such as those that encourage older Australians to remain physically active and provide information to prevent injury.
 - Labor will explore ways of encouraging and supporting more older Australians to engage in community service activities, including through financial support for organisations administering volunteer programs.
 - Labor will support educational and other programs which encourage older Australians to pursue a healthy lifestyle.
 - Labor will encourage and support older Australians to contribute to the development and implementation of the policies which affect their lives.
15. Labor supports programs which ensure that older Australians who wish to remain in the workforce are not discriminated against. Labor will encourage industry to provide continued educational opportunities and adapt work organisation to enable older Australians to continue in the workforce.
16. Labor is committed to increasing employment opportunities for older Australians and addressing negative stereotypes and debunking myths about older workers' suitability and ability to work.
- Labor will actively promote employment of older workers in the public service.
- Labor will actively campaign to remove all forms of discrimination against older workers in the workplace and barriers to their employment.
17. Labor will ensure that the needs of older Australians in the workforce are taken into consideration when developing occupational health and safety policy. This will ensure that older Australians in the workforce are safe and their specific needs are addressed.
- A Secure Income for Older Australians**
18. The growing number and proportion of older Australians requires a comprehensive retirement incomes policy which ensures a guaranteed decent minimum retirement income for all Australians.
19. In government, Labor, together with the trade union movement, employers and superannuation providers, established a comprehensive three pillars retirement incomes system, based on:
- government guaranteed age pensions with appropriate means testing;
 - compulsory superannuation coverage for all employees; and
 - incentives to encourage voluntary superannuation contributions.
20. Labor will continue to strengthen these three pillars to provide a retirement incomes system which:
- is universal;
 - guarantees all Australians a decent minimum retirement income;

Australian Labor Party	National Platform and Constitution 2004
<ul style="list-style-type: none">—better protects retirement investments;—is simple and cost effective to administer; and—is fair and equitable in its operation. <p>21. Australia currently has a retirement income system based on three pillars; the basic government pension, compulsory superannuation and voluntary superannuation. Labor will continue to promote and develop this system to provide all Australians with a higher retirement income. To achieve this Labor will set clear goals for levels of retirement income, in particular levels of compulsory superannuation.</p> <p>22. Labor supports a universal retirement incomes system which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">—ensures that no Australian is left without an adequate retirement income; and—involves greater integration and coordination of the pensions and superannuation systems, to reduce complexity and enhance stability. <p>23. Labor supports a guaranteed minimum retirement income:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">—based on an income support payment which is at least twenty-five per cent of male total average weekly earnings, and indexed twice a year in line with increases in the Consumer Price Index; and—supplemented by superannuation contributions. <p>24. Labor supports a retirement incomes system with better security and protection which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">—provides protection and compensation in the event of theft or fraud for both pre-retirement and post-retirement income products;—ensures fees and charges are monitored and capped where appropriate; and	<ul style="list-style-type: none">—maximises returns through a competitive environment balanced by the safe, stable, and long term approach to be delivered by superannuation investment providers. <p>25. Labor supports a simpler retirement incomes system which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">—is streamlined to improve efficiency and minimise administrative costs;—allows superannuation funds to include death and disability insurance in their investment products;—provides some access to lump sum benefits; and—allows people to make informed choices about their retirement investment strategies through ongoing education campaigns for the community and superannuation providers. <p>26. Labor supports a fair and equitable retirement incomes system which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">—provides taxation treatment of retirement income investments that is fair, equitable and administratively efficient;—prevents gender discrimination;—provides equitable treatment to same-sex couples including for superannuation;—ensures equity and fairness in the division of benefits in the event of the ending of a relationship; and—is regularly reviewed to ensure that older Australians' share in the growth and prosperity of the country. <p>27. Labor recognises that women's work patterns mean that many retire with small superannuation investments. Labor supports a retirement incomes system for women which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">—ensures that the work choices women make over the course of their lives do not jeopardise the adequacy of their retirement income;

- promotes the benefits of superannuation for women through a targeted education campaign which assists women to make informed decisions about their retirement income choices; and
- encourages and fosters the involvement of women in all aspects of the superannuation industry.

28. Labor will ensure that workers, especially women, employed for a small number of hours per week in part time or casual jobs, shall continue to receive compulsory superannuation coverage with full vesting from day one, in order to maximise their retirement income.
29. Labor supports maintaining the existing links between superannuation and the industrial relations system to provide essential protection for employees through a representative and balanced trustee structure and an independent appeals process.

Caring For Older Australians

30. Labor believes that the Commonwealth should continue to play a central role in aged care services.
31. Labor will ensure that access to residential aged care is determined by medical need, not financial means.
32. To make sure that older Australians have access to the services they need, Labor will ensure that the planning ratio for the allocation of aged care services reflects the needs of the population.
33. Labor will maintain an appropriate balance between community-based and residential aged care services, to ensure that older Australians can access the kind of care they choose, and the kind of care they need.
34. Labor has a commitment to provide the highest quality aged care services

possible. Labor believes that older Australians who need residential care should be provided with the highest quality nursing and personal care, in safe and comfortable surroundings. To ensure high quality service standards are adopted and maintained, Labor supports a rigorous accreditation process. Labor will tighten the monitoring of aged care facilities, especially for those that do not provide an appropriate level of care, to ensure that all aged care facilities provide high quality care and services to older Australians.

35. Labor supports an effective complaints resolution process to ensure that residents of aged care facilities and their families are able to resolve their concerns satisfactorily.
36. Labor recognises the difficult work conditions and pressures faced by the aged care workforce. Labor in government will introduce minimum staffing levels into residential aged care facilities.
37. There is a critical shortage of aged care nurses and a major wage disparity between nurses and personal care staff in the aged care sector and the acute care sector. Labor will develop strategies to improve the recruitment and retention of aged care nurses with a focus on:
 - addressing the wage disparity;
 - improving working conditions;
 - reducing the paperwork burden; and
 - improving opportunities for further education and training.

Labor will develop strategies to improve recruitment, retention, training, working conditions and remuneration of other aged care workers.
38. Labor supports initiatives which ensure that the aged care workforce has an appropriate mix of professionals including

Australian Labor Party	National Platform and Constitution 2004
nurses, geriatricians, psychogeriatricians, personal carers, and allied health professionals.	—Labor will promote new ways of delivering community based services to meet the emerging needs of older Australians.
39. Labor will ensure that the rights of frail older people are respected and protected. Labor believes that aged care recipients and their representatives should be empowered to play a central role in determining the nature of their care and ensuring that quality standards are being met.	—Labor will support innovative ways to facilitate, encourage and enhance the ability of people to care for older Australians in their community.
40. Labor recognises the need for all services and programs for older Australians to be person focused and designed to meet their specific and individual needs. Labor will promote equity and access to all programs and service for older Australians.	42. Labor will ensure that older Australians in rural and regional areas have comprehensive access to aged care services appropriate to their needs.
	43. Labor understands the need to provide culturally appropriate aged care services for older Indigenous Australians and older people from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds, and will promote the delivery of such services.
41. Labor recognises that older Australians prefer to stay within their own neighbourhoods or communities. This could be within their own home or the home of relatives.	44. Labor will support the people who care for older Australians at home, and promote new ways to support carers in their vital work.
—Labor supports the vital services which allow older Australians to remain at home, such as personal care, housekeeping, home maintenance, community transport, meals services, and allied health care.	45. Labor will simplify and streamline rules concerning residents' contributions to their care costs to ensure equity and fairness and protect older Australians from the forced sale of their homes.
—Labor supports quality assurance processes within the community care sector to ensure that high quality service standards are adopted and maintained.	46. Labor will improve the links between acute and primary health care, aged care and other services so that older Australians have continuity of care, and can access the care they need without having to deal with multiple programs and multiple levels of government.

RESOLUTIONS

Dementia

Labor recognises that it is estimated that there will be half a million Australians with a diagnosis of dementia by 2040, and that by 2016 dementia will be the leading cause of disability burden in Australia. Labor will work closely with the State/Territory governments to ensure that there is a nationally coordinated approach to this vital issue. Within a public health framework, Labor will seek to promote dementia research, early diagnosis of dementia, carer support and best practice management in dementia care.

Labor believes that dementia should be a priority for all governments, and supports policies which will address the needs of people with dementia and their carers.

The Third Age

Conference notes that the distinction made in the literature on changes in age distribution between people described as being in the Third Age, that is people outside the paid labour force who maintain independence and continue contribution to the community and their own families, and the Fourth Age, people who are in increasing levels of dependence.

About 2.3 million Australians are in the Third Age and 400,000 in the Fourth, a difference of 6:1.

The health of the Third Age largely depends on modest levels of public health expenditure while the Fourth Age depends on high levels of expenditure on therapeutic medicine.

A Labor Government will need to review this proportionality if it wishes to keep people in the Third Age active, independent and outside institutions as long as possible. Labor should try to avoid an automatic linking of terms such as "Aged" with "Care" or "Disability", as revolutionary changes in life expectancy make them increasingly inappropriate.

Indigenous people

Labor recognises the shameful situation that the life expectancy of indigenous people is 20 years less than that of other Australians. In some parts of Australia, including southern Australia, life expectancy is as low as 33 years. Labor commits itself to bringing about an end to this unacceptable situation by looking at mainstream and specific programs that are aimed at increasing the life expectancy of indigenous people.

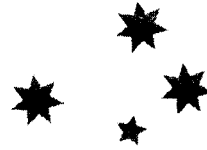
Aged Care inquiry

Conference:

- notes the current crisis in aged care standards and services due to the Howard Government's failure to maintain appropriate regulatory standards on minimum staffing levels, training and prudential management in residential aged care facilities;
- notes the continuing failure of the Aged Care Standards and Accreditation Agency to properly assess and enforce accreditation standards, thus jeopardising the care, health and safety of residents and staff in aged care facilities; and
- notes that the failure by the Howard Government to properly monitor and expand the availability of aged care facilities has resulted in increased numbers of elderly Australians remaining in acute care.

Conference therefore calls on the Senate to conduct an inquiry into aged care, particularly:

- the effectiveness of the current regulatory framework in ensuring the adequacy of staffing levels, training and proper standards care; and
- the performance of the Aged Care Standards and Accreditation Agency.



AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY 

Chapter Five

Personal and Family Well Being

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Chapter Five

Personal and Family
Well BeingA HEALTH SYSTEM THAT
DELIVERS

Strengthening Medicare

1. Medicare is the cornerstone of Australia's high quality health system. Medicare is a universal system of health insurance funded through a combination of general taxation and a Medicare levy based on ability to pay. Since 1984, it has ensured that all Australians have been entitled to free hospital care, bulk billed or rebated medical services, and subsidised essential medicines. Before Medicare, Australians had to rely on private health insurance or pay their own medical bills.
2. Labor believes that Medicare should be defended, retained and strengthened. Labor is opposed to allowing individuals to opt out of Medicare and is opposed to the direct or indirect means testing of Medicare and bulk billing. Medicare should remain a universal system for all Australians. Labor is opposed to the creation of a two-tiered health system in which Medicare is confined to being a second class 'safety net'.
3. Labor will strengthen Medicare to meet future challenges, including those associated with our ageing population and increased use of health technology. To ensure all Australians have access to the health care they need, Labor will:
 - restore bulk billing for all Australians and their families, not just those who meet a means test;
 - in conjunction with the States, work to ensure that Australians who need essential elective surgery are able to access it in a timely fashion;

- ensure that the health workforce is sufficient to meet the growing need for health services;
 - reform the health system to end blame and cost shifting, to remove the sharp edges between primary, acute and aged care and to ensure different levels of government work together to fund and deliver integrated health services;
 - tackle the historic injustice that Indigenous Australians face accessing health services and improve life expectancies for Indigenous Australians;
 - encourage the integration of services to get the best outcomes for people;
 - put new emphasis on the quality and timeliness of treatment;
 - promote the adoption of new health technologies that meet real needs;
 - target priority areas which have been under-resourced, including dental services and services for people with mental health and drug problems;
 - work to ensure that resources are allocated on the basis of health need so that people are not excluded from necessary services because of their financial circumstances or where they live; and
 - support a private health sector that complements the services available to all Australians under Medicare.
4. Labor believes that all Australians are entitled to lead full, healthy, productive and satisfying lives with dignity and independence. To achieve better health outcomes, Labor will:
 - place a greater focus on healthy living and illness prevention;
 - ensure that appropriate, affordable primary health care is accessible to everyone;
 - make use of new information technologies that improve health and empower health consumers;

- provide more resources to deliver quality health care for the acutely ill;
- improve the quality of life for those with chronic illness; and
- improve palliative care services and ensure people can die with dignity.

Improving the Quality of Health Services

5. Labor is committed to improving the quality of health services. Labor will measure the quality of health services provided against six quality principles: access, efficiency, effectiveness, appropriateness, safety and consumer satisfaction.
6. Labor will invest in and promote knowledge management to:
 - improve the flow of information through the health care system;
 - reduce the variation in the use and outcomes of health services; and
 - ensure the efficient implementation of evidence based health care.
7. Labor will develop benchmarks for health service performance and standard of treatment and encourage the use of this information by consumers to help choose their preferred health service, and inform managers and health care providers so that the quality of health services is improved.
8. Labor believes the funders, managers, providers, and consumers of our health services have a role to play in improving the quality of health services. Labor will identify and promote mechanisms that assist stakeholders to take an active role in improving the quality of health services and to ensure that they are held accountable for their performance within the health system.
9. Quality health service delivery depends on cooperative working relationships between governments, professional

bodies, community organisations, the public and private health sectors and consumers in the planning and delivery of health services. Labor will work in partnership with all parties to improve the quality of our health services.

Harnessing New Technology

10. Labor sees major opportunities for new technology to make health services more effective, more accessible and more consumer friendly. Technological change needs to be carefully managed with close attention to the social and ethical implications and the need for privacy for personal health records. Labor will ensure that commercial interests do not subvert intended health outcomes and that decisions are made on the basis of clinical and cost effectiveness determined by the best available research evidence.
11. Labor will, in collaboration with State and Territory governments, build information technology and communication infrastructure and systems that improve the decisions made by consumers, clinicians and health service managers about care, service delivery and policy. The purpose of this investment will be to:
 - build accessible knowledge bases from quality data systems, libraries of research evidence and the experience of consumers and professionals;
 - enhance online communication between consumers and professionals, and primary and acute care settings, regardless of location, to improve health outcomes and service quality; and
 - create data management systems that monitor population health and the safety, quality and efficiency of health services.
12. Labor will ensure that appropriate training is undertaken by health professionals to develop and maintain the skills necessary

to use these knowledge bases, health records and communication systems.

Managing Health Information

13. Labor believes the development and implementation of health knowledge management systems that include electronic health records and decision support systems for evidence-based practice are central to improving the safety and quality of health services provided. However, these new tools cannot be widely used until satisfactory arrangements are in place to ensure security and privacy are protected.
14. Labor will ensure every Australian has a personal electronic health record that incorporates high levels of security to protect consumer privacy. Labor will develop a strong privacy regime built around a unique patient identifier based on the Medicare card. Legislation will prevent this number being used for any other purpose and access will depend on authorisation from both the patient and the doctor. A range of other safeguards will be incorporated in legislation, which will be developed after a public inquiry into all the issues.
15. It is critical that health providers can communicate effectively with each other while maintaining patient confidentiality. Labor will provide leadership in development of national, secure health data standards and will establish a common framework for health record systems. The delay in establishing this infrastructure is inhibiting the delivery of quality health services in Australia and consequently contributing to unnecessary adverse events. Specifically Labor will ensure:
 - the use of tele-health to give rural clinicians direct access to city based specialists and the resources of major teaching hospitals;

- the use of secure electronic networks to give clinicians and pharmacists access to high quality drug information sources; and

- the use of electronic prescriptions to speed up and reduce errors in communications between clinicians and pharmacists.

16. Labor will give the Health Insurance Commission greater powers to analyse data to examine variations in practices to enable the promotion of professional practice based on the best available evidence from research. Clinicians will be supported in their evidence-based practice through the development of appropriate, accessible clinical guidelines and pathways of care.

Delivering Health Information to Consumers

17. Labor recognises that the Australian public wants and needs understandable and relevant information about their health care. Many Australians feel under-informed about their health care and this lack of information can cause unnecessary anxiety about appropriate treatments.
18. Labor believes that all health service users have the right to:
 - receive information about their condition, treatment options and risks and give informed consent before receiving health services;
 - give informed financial consent, before receiving health services, which involves the ability to obtain estimated costs of proposed procedures;
 - expect privacy for their health records and other information relating to their health and use of health services;
 - obtain access to their health records; and
 - indicate, ahead of time, their unwillingness to have their life

prolonged by artificial means should they at some stage suffer from a terminal illness.

19. Labor believes that better informed health care consumers will participate more actively in the health decision making process which will lead to a reduction in the incidence of adverse events, foster a greater partnership approach between consumers and providers and increase consumer satisfaction with the care provided.
20. Labor will promote consumers' access to timely, accurate and relevant health information through support for public internet sites which provide independent, evidence-based sources of information for people to research their health problems.
21. Labor will encourage the development of educational materials about treatment options, medicines and procedures associated with a variety of clinical conditions, for consumers.
22. A strong and independent complaints system is essential to ensuring patients' rights are respected and should also play a constructive role in reform.

Health Financing

23. International experience demonstrates that public purchasing of health services, as occurs under Medicare, is the most effective system for controlling costs and achieving fair access to services.
24. Labor will ensure that health resources are used efficiently and that priorities are set on the basis of the needs of patients and achieving the best outcomes. In recent years Commonwealth funding for Medicare and the Australian Health Care Agreements has been inadequate and service standards have fallen because of under funding.
25. Labor's policies are based on the expectation that Australia's health

expenditure will continue to increase as the population grows and ages and technological advances allow new options for treatment. This increase in expenditure can be met within a growing economy and it will be to the advantage of the Australian community as our health improves.

26. The financing arrangements for Australia's health system need to be simplified. Labor will:
 - resolve confusion over multiple funding sources and disputes between the Commonwealth, States and Territories over who is responsible for delivering particular services;
 - ensure the public and private sectors work to complement each other;
 - carefully manage factors which influence demand and supply for health services; and
 - maintain pressure to ensure Medicare buys health services wisely, particularly in high technology areas such as pathology and radiology.

Cooperation Between Governments

27. An effective health system depends upon cooperation between federal, State, Territory and local governments in planning, funding, monitoring and delivering health services.
 - The federal government must play a national leadership role, particularly in public health, indigenous health and health promotion.
 - The federal government has primary responsibility for national health policy and health insurance, both Medicare and private health insurance.
 - State and Territory governments have primary responsibility for service delivery and administration and an important priority setting role.

—Local governments have responsibilities for developing and maintaining the physical and social environments of local communities, and in service delivery.

28. Australia's health system needs reform aimed at developing a long-term primary health care strategy, specifying mechanisms to close the gaps between primary care, acute care, rehabilitative care and aged care, improving quality and quality assurance, defining the best way for the private sector and the public system to complement each other, embracing preventative health care and the promotion of healthier lifestyles, and of course, implementing strategies for addressing critical health workforce shortages. Reform is also needed to clarify the funding and delivery roles played by federal, State, Territory and local governments to ensure efficiency, quality and integration of services.
29. Labor will establish a national health reform commission to drive reform of the health system. The commission will bring together all the major players, including the Commonwealth, all State and Territory governments, local government, the heads of major statutory authorities, a representative group of managers from major public hospitals and health services, consumers, doctors, nurses, and other health professionals, health unions, and the private health sector to develop an action agenda for the reform of the health system.

PROMOTING A HEALTHY COMMUNITY

Promoting Health and Well Being

30. Labor believes a fundamental pillar of our health system must be health maintenance, health promotion and preventing people becoming ill. National responsibility for setting priorities and

providing funding rests with the federal government. However, substantial change in personal behaviour and reducing the risk profile of the community can only be achieved and sustained with the active participation of the non-government sector of community groups working with health professionals to promote good health and illness prevention.

31. To promote good health and well being, Labor will:
 - pursue national strategies for ten national priority areas: mental health, cancer, sexually transmitted and blood-borne diseases, cardiovascular disease, asthma, injuries, suicide, diabetes, arthritis and obesity;
 - support research into the causes of other preventable health problems in order to develop new effective health promotion programs;
 - reduce the risk of communicable diseases through the vigorous promotion of universal childhood immunisation and improving the Communicable Diseases Network in a cooperative program with the State health departments and infectious diseases specialists;
 - reduce the harm caused by misuse of pharmaceuticals;
 - develop programs that tackle the environmental causes of ill health and issues of occupational health and safety; and
 - seek to further integrate health promotion and preventive health activities with Medicare and general practice.

32. Labor will actively pursue national strategies to combat transmissible blood diseases including HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis C. These strategies will include targeted prevention campaigns, continued access to treatments through the

Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme and health programs for people living with HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis C.

33. Labor will undertake new health education programs to increase awareness of health risks, promote a healthier lifestyle and reduce the toll of preventable ill health. Public health messages will be appropriately targeted to different groups within the community including Indigenous Australians and those from non-English speaking backgrounds.

Care in the Community

34. **Primary health care.** Labor recognises the importance of high-quality primary health care services and the need for general practitioners, nurses, community pharmacists and a wide range of allied health professionals to work together in providing these services.
35. Labor is committed to the improvement of primary health care through:
- reducing financial barriers which prevent people from accessing primary health care services provided by general practitioners by increasing the value of the rebate for bulk billed services and providing financial incentives for GPs to bulk bill more of their patients;
 - addressing workforce shortages by making more GPs and other primary care professionals available, particularly in rural, regional and outer metropolitan areas of need;
 - strengthening the link between patients and their GPs and pharmacists to improve the management of chronic illness and to encourage GPs to act as advocates for their patients when they require hospital treatment;
 - promoting Divisions of General Practice, as the basis for the development of innovative approaches to primary care and the building of

better links between GPs and other health and medical professionals;

- ensuring that a primary health care team approach is a prime consideration in any new GP services;
 - providing new funding for high quality general practices to deliver services for which fee-for-service payment is inappropriate, especially health promotion and illness prevention, and supporting general practice with better resources and a reduction in 'red tape'; and
 - maintaining opposition to compulsory co-payments.
36. **Continuity and coordination of care.** Labor recognises that improving the continuity and coordination of care, especially for Australians with complex and ongoing care needs, is a high priority in health care reform, and will require a concerted effort at all levels, including cooperation among Commonwealth, State and Territory governments and local government. Labor does not support US style managed care programs driven by financial rather than clinical outcomes
37. **Community health.** Labor will put an emphasis on community health programs to ensure all groups in the community have information and access to services appropriate to their health needs. These programs will be delivered by health professionals, and through the general media and community health centres.
38. **Pharmaceuticals.** Labor will ensure all Australians have affordable access to their essential medicines through the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS). In particular Labor will:
- ensure thorough and timely evaluation of new medicines and therapeutic devices before their approval for use in Australia;

—work to reduce the harm caused by the misuse of pharmaceuticals, through inadvertent misuse of prescription drugs or fraudulent abuse of the PBS;

—support the continuing growth of the Australian pharmaceutical industry and recognise its potential to generate jobs and exports for Australia;

—maintain the ban on direct advertising of prescription medicines;

—prevent the illegal sale of registered and non-registered pharmaceuticals through the internet; and

—ensure that international trade agreements and other treaties do not compromise the effectiveness of the PBS.

—Labor believes that a sustainable PBS is essential to the success of Medicare, and that the PBS must be managed responsibly having regard to the ageing of the Australian population and improvements in medical technology.

39. **Community pharmacies.** Labor is committed to maintenance of a competitive community pharmacy sector in Australia to deliver high quality health products and information at a community level. Labor supports an expansion of the range of services to be provided through community pharmacies including the delivery of basic health services such as methadone, wound management, and asthma and diabetes management programs.

40. **Complementary medicine.** Labor recognises and understands that many Australians value alternative health treatments and products. Labor will review the current regulatory regime to ensure that it is both robust and effective. Labor will work to establish appropriate registration and accreditation for practitioners and their products to ensure that the beneficial work of practitioners in

these areas is recognised and also to ensure that consumers are well informed and protected from physical or mental harm or financial exploitation.

National Drugs Strategy

41. Labor recognises the serious health and social impact that problematic alcohol, legal and illegal drug use has on the Australian community. Tobacco use continues to cause harm to the individual and the community. Other legal drugs such as alcohol can cause damage if not used in moderation and are a major factor in domestic violence and road accidents. Greater efforts are needed to prevent and address the significant health and social problems caused by illegal drugs.

Labor is committed to developing innovative integrated strategies to improve the outcomes of alcohol and drug interventions provided by specialist alcohol and drug services, general and mental health services, youth and family services, disability services, housing services, law enforcement and criminal justice system, policy and research services and indigenous services.

Labor will ensure that the Commonwealth, State and Territory governments work together to develop models that coordinate the alcohol and drug interventions provided by all relevant services to maximise positive outcomes for the community.

Labor recognises the need to improve the coordination of care across a range of services. Labor will work towards enhancing cross-sector complex case management between services and health professionals.

42. Central to Labor's drug strategy is the principle of harm minimisation for all drugs. In particular Labor will, in consultation with expert bodies, drug and alcohol agencies, community groups and peak organisations:

- curb the supply of illegal drugs through effective law enforcement;
 - tackle the underlying causes of both legal and illegal drug problems in order to reduce demand;
 - reduce the demand for illegal drugs through targeted advertising and public health education campaigns;
 - increase the opportunities for treatment and harm reduction for people with drug problems; and
 - ensure supply and consumption rates are monitored and reduced where needed to minimize alcohol harm.
43. **Tobacco.** Labor will focus on the prevention and reduction of the harm caused by tobacco by further tightening restrictions on tobacco advertising, conducting aggressive anti-smoking campaigns, and developing national clean air standards to address passive smoking. A new focus will be placed on harm minimisation strategies and promotion of nicotine replacement therapies to reach those people not influenced by current Quit programs. Labor believes that more investigation is needed into manufacturing and marketing practices that target younger Australians. Manufacturers of tobacco should be held to account for any unlawful activity in relation to the suppression or destruction of evidence about the health risks associated with smoking and passive smoking.
44. **Alcohol.** Labor will promote awareness of safer patterns of alcohol use, encouraging reduced consumption at hazardous and harmful levels. With targeted advertising and public education campaigns, strengthened treatment services and appropriate regulation, including taxation, public intoxication, under-aged drinking, and alcohol-related illness and social problems can be reduced.
45. **Petrol sniffing and chroming.** Labor recognises that the practices of petrol sniffing and chroming are seriously damaging to health. Young people are particularly at risk of harm from the misuse of legally available volatile substances. Labor's priority is to focus on prevention and also to protect the health and welfare of those who misuse volatile substances or are at risk of misusing them. Adequately funded community based approaches supported by adequate government services including children's services, correctional services and policing are needed to minimize the harm caused by these practices.
46. **Illicit drugs.** Labor will develop and implement a comprehensive framework of strategies to address the diverse problems cause by illicit drugs. These strategies will include:
- developing and implementing comprehensive community and education strategies targeted to those most in need of information. These groups include the young, families, migrants, refugees and indigenous Australians and the strategies should be designed to encourage drug free lifestyles;
 - additional funding for treatment, primary health care, rehabilitation and diversion services run by government and non-government agencies;
 - support for harm prevention and harm minimisation strategies to prevent the onset of drug use and also deal with drug abuse in cooperation with State, Territory and local governments, including targeted advertising and public education campaigns, strengthened treatment for services and clean needle and needle exchange programs;
 - research based trials of alternative pathways to treat and manage drug dependence;
 - specialised early intervention support services, including counselling and

social support, for families and friends of problematic drug users;

- culturally appropriate services for young people, Indigenous Australians and migrants. These services to work with mainstream drug and alcohol services;
- support for consultation with service users and peak professional bodies in alcohol and drug service planning and delivery;
- support for community self-help organisations and recognition of the role they play in community support and the reintegration of service users back into the community; and
- provision of advocacy services for treatment recipients of drug and alcohol services.

47. **Road, sea and air trauma.** Labor will support a comprehensive approach to reduce the incidence of road, sea and air accidents attributable to fatigue, speeding, or alcohol or other drugs.

Food and Therapeutic Products

48. **Food labelling.** To enjoy healthy lifestyles, Australians and their families need to know what is in the food they are eating and what processes are being used to make food. Labor supports giving consumers essential information to enable them to make an informed choice when purchasing food products.

To make certain consumers have access to effective product labelling Labor will ensure that:

- genetically modified food is labelled; and
- consumers are better informed of the nutritional quality of packaged food through improved nutritional panels.

49. **Food standards.** Labor is committed to working with State governments and the New Zealand Government to improve the current system of food safety standards.

There is a need for greater transparency in the development of standards and more dialogue between consumers, trade unions and industry on technical issues. Australia should bring its standards in line with world's best practice while allowing sufficient flexibility for State-based implementation.

50. These standards need to be backed by quality implementation, ongoing monitoring and enforcement where necessary. Labor will work with all stakeholders to spread the burden of cost to protect small business and local councils.

51. **Genetically modified food.** Labor recognises community concern about genetically modified food. To ensure our food is of a high quality and safe, Labor will:

- maintain consumer and environmental safety through strict enforcement of national standards as the principal policy consideration;
- build public confidence by providing appropriate and balanced public education;
- ensure all issues pertaining to import, export, production, distribution and use of Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) are overseen by a strong national body that is independent, scientifically based and whose processes are transparent;
- establish a meaningful labelling regime that enables consumers to make informed choices about what they are buying;
- undertake continued research on the use of foods containing GMOs to better understand health, safety and environmental risks and benefits; and
- put in place a rigorous and transparent process based on environmental and safety considerations, for assessing

and approving or rejecting research proposals which require the release of GMOs outside the laboratory.

52. Food and therapeutic products

regulation. Labor recognises that the ongoing introduction of new technologies has revealed overlaps in the current responsibilities of food, therapeutic products and import/export regulatory bodies.

53. Australia needs a more effective and open regulatory system for setting standards for foods and therapeutic products produced in Australia and imported from other markets. Labor will introduce a comprehensive food and therapeutic products regulatory model to address overlap and gap issues and place responsibility for consumer health and safety protection within an integrated structure.

HEALTH SERVICES IN RURAL, REGIONAL AND REMOTE AUSTRALIA

Better Delivery of Health Services

54. Labor is committed to addressing the poorer health status of Australians living in rural and remote areas and improving their access to vital health care services.
55. Labor will develop a comprehensive Rural Health Plan that recognises that the health status of rural communities is directly related to the economic prosperity of each community. Depressed economic conditions lead to poorer health and in turn place greater strain on the rural health services provided. Labor's Rural Health Plan is, therefore, one element of a wider regional and rural policy that aims to restore the economic health of rural, regional and remote Australia.
56. A concerted and sustained commitment by all levels of government towards working cooperatively and committing

increased resources to rural health is a necessary first step. Labor's Rural Health Plan will foster a collaborative environment between service providers and will increase resources to rural health services. Labor will:

- negotiate agreements with State governments and regional and local authorities that enable pooling of health and aged care funds at the regional and community level so that the delivery of services is not impeded by artificial funding barriers;
- create flexible funding arrangements that respond to a community's needs and accommodate the different models of health services available; and
- promote greater collaboration and cooperation between public and private health services to enable the sharing of resources and maximise access to health expertise in rural and regional centres.

Ensuring the Availability of Health Professionals

57. Rural health care providers are facing increasing financial, social and professional pressures in their efforts to provide health care for rural Australians. Labor's Rural Health Plan will recognise the special demands of rural health care and will:
- address workforce shortages in rural, regional and remote areas by increasing the number of medical places bonded to areas of workforce shortage and making GP training places more available;
 - provide greater education and professional support to rural doctors, nurses, pharmacists and other health professionals to reduce the pressure they are currently experiencing;
 - adopt a new approach to rural workforce education and training which

acknowledges that the models of health care delivery in rural and remote areas are often quite different from metropolitan health services;

- support programs that improve access to locum services for rural doctors, nurses, pharmacists and other health professionals;

- support incentive packages that are effective in encouraging doctors, nurses, pharmacists and other crucial health professionals to relocate and remain in rural and remote communities;

- promote cross-cultural training programs for rural health care workers to ensure Indigenous Australians are appropriately cared for in mainstream health services; and

- in rural and regional communities, where public hospital facilities are either inadequate or non-existent, ensure equitable access to health services through the provision of public facilities in community health, aged care and multi-purpose services.

58. Rural Australians suffer from asthma, diabetes, suicide, road accidents, injuries and coronary heart disease at significantly higher rates than their metropolitan counterparts. To address this inequity and to encourage greater emphasis on prevention, Labor's Rural Health Plan will include specific rural health promotion campaigns that target these preventable health problems.

59. Access to mental health services is difficult for rural and remote Australians. Labor is committed to developing innovative strategies to improve mental health treatment in rural communities, in particular Labor will work with State governments to develop and implement strategies that will improve the availability of mental health professionals in the public mental health system. Specific

efforts will also be directed at reducing the number of youth suicides in rural communities, especially of young males.

60. **Tele-health.** Labor will significantly expand access and improve decision making processes for patients and health professionals through the encouragement of new technologies. The potential applications for tele-health in rural areas are significant, particularly as a means of reducing the level of professional isolation experienced by rural and remote health workers.

61. Labor's Rural Health Plan will provide resources to significantly expand tele-health services. These new technologies will be used to complement the delivery of face-to-face services in rural areas rather than replace them.

Health of Indigenous Australians

62. Labor is greatly concerned that Indigenous Australians have unacceptably poor health. They suffer a high burden of illness and die at a younger age than non-Indigenous Australians, and too often do not have access to adequate health services.

63. Labor recognises that addressing the health status of Indigenous Australians requires a comprehensive approach looking beyond a focus on health services to include cultural well being and connection to the land, education, environmental health and employment and training opportunities. Labor recognises as essential the need for the Commonwealth government to work with State and Territory and local governments to address environmental health issues including housing, water, sewerage and roads.

64. Labor recognises the critical importance of community control and direct involvement in planning and delivery of services to the success of health services

for Indigenous Australians. It is critical that we train indigenous health workers and vastly increase the number of indigenous health professionals.

65. Labor is committed to reducing the burden of premature death and disease on Australia's indigenous communities, aiming for equity in health status and life expectancy. This will require:
- a financial commitment;
 - a commitment to changing the way health services are delivered; and
 - most importantly, an overall approach to raise the employment, education and social circumstances that lie at the root of indigenous health problems.
66. Labor supports the Council of Australian Governments driving new approaches to regional service delivery for indigenous communities, free from the usual constraints imposed by the involvement of different levels of government and different portfolios. Such new approaches need to be developed in partnership with indigenous communities. In particular, federal Labor will adhere to the principle of providing Medicare Capitation Grants to State and Territory health departments and indigenous controlled health services as agreed by the State and Territory Indigenous Health Planning Forums to pay for comprehensive primary health care services for indigenous people. The capitation grants should be based on national per capita average Medicare usage and adjusted to reflect actual indigenous health needs, with loadings for factors including morbidity rates, remoteness and cultural needs.
- To improve health outcomes, it will be necessary to increase health spending, with an emphasis on provision of primary health care and early intervention in remote, rural and urban communities. Special programs that are integrated into the primary health care planning

and service delivery are needed to tackle particular problems such as renal failure, low birth weights and eye and skin diseases. Labor believes that primary health care programs must be properly funded and developed in consultation with indigenous communities. Labor recognises the pivotal role played by indigenous health workers and supports achieving a national system of skills recognition and the creation of career paths.

Targeting Those in Need

67. There is strong evidence that the overall level of community health will be improved, and the total cost of the health system minimised, if we focus more on preventive health measures and early intervention with those most at risk of developing an illness. Labor has therefore developed specific policy objectives to ensure that the special needs of various groups in the community are taken into account.
68. Mental Health is a major health issue and mental disorders are one of the leading causes of disability in the Australian community. According to the National Survey of Health and Well Being, 17 per cent of Australians will experience a mental health problem at some stage of their life. Three to four per cent will experience a severe mental disorder. Failure to address these problems will lead to a growing social and economic cost to the Australian community.

Labor is committed to ensuring that Australians have access to comprehensive mental health care when and where this is needed. Labor affirms the key role of the Commonwealth in leading and promoting reform of Australia's mental health service system. Under Labor, the Commonwealth government will work in partnership with States and Territories to:

- re-invigorate the National Mental Health reform agenda, including ensuring the availability in all states of community-oriented mental health care, provided through comprehensive local mental health services and improving access to public mental health services by targeting programs that provide early intervention, housing, improved mental health responses in emergency departments and assistance for young people with drug and alcohol and mental health problems;
 - ensure that Australians with mental health problems and their families can access disability support, housing, income security and employment programs and are treated fairly in the justice system and that these and all relevant government services recognise the episodic nature of mental illness and associated disabilities;
 - recognise the particular importance of employment programs for people with mental illness and ensure new programs that work collaboratively with the public mental health system are developed to meet their particular needs;
 - improve public access to private psychiatry by providing incentives to private psychiatrists willing to work in collaboration with public mental health services;
 - review how Medicare could enable better access by general practitioners to specialist psychiatric consultation and treatment for their patients;
 - pilot in areas of high need, improved access to psychology and allied health services under Medicare;
 - support the expanded provision of primary mental health care, including counselling and social support, in recognition of the increasing number of Australians with depression and anxiety;
 - ensure that culturally appropriate mental health services are available to indigenous Australians and to migrants and refugees, especially within the first two years of settlement; and
 - ensure the promotion of mental health is given priority within health promotion campaigns aimed at the general community.
69. **Dental health.** The high cost of private dental services makes access to adequate dental care extremely difficult for many Australians. There is a need for federal government involvement to ensure fair and affordable access to essential dental services. Labor is committed to restoring access to dental services for Australians on low incomes by:
- re-establishing a Commonwealth dental scheme;
 - working with the States to reduce waiting lists and implement preventive dental health programs; and
 - working with dentists and health funds to curb the rapid growth in dental fees and keep treatment affordable.
70. **People with disabilities.** Labor recognises that preventive health measures and early intervention programs can improve the level of ability of, and quality of life for, many people with disabilities. Services for people with disabilities are provided by various levels of government often leading to confusion, difficulty in accessing services and gaps in services for families and individuals. Labor supports the trialling of innovative approaches to the financing and delivery of services and aids for people with disabilities and their carers.
71. Labor recognises that people with disabilities have limited housing options and that many young people live in aged care facilities due to the lack of more appropriate accommodation options. Labor recognises that many young people

with disabilities who are living in nursing homes are at risk of social isolation, depression and in some cases compromised care and could be more appropriately cared for elsewhere. Labor will develop strategies to ensure that people with disabilities can enjoy opportunities for appropriate, accessible and affordable housing.

72. **Women's health.** Labor will develop a national policy on women's health that will encourage specific health services for women and will actively promote participation of women in health decision making and management.

73. Labor will extend the national screening programs for breast cancer and cervical cancer to achieve improved access for those groups not using these screening programs, especially those in rural areas, and non-English speaking and indigenous women.

74. **Men's health.** Labor will put resources into a national education program to raise men's awareness of a range of preventable health problems that disproportionately affect men and which result in generally poorer health outcomes for Australian men. These include heart disease, suicide, lung cancer, prostate cancer and road accidents.

75. **Reproductive health.** Labor will:

- provide universal access to fertility advice and control programs and advice on the safe use of contraceptives;
- fund research into the prevention of infertility and fertility control and ensure that access to assisted reproductive technology programs is not determined by economic circumstances;
- ensure that a broadly representative body exists to advise governments and the community on monitoring, regulation and legislation related to reproductive technology, including cloning; and
- enforce a ban on the cloning of human beings.

76. **Maternal and child health services.**

Labor will work with State and Territory governments to improve the delivery of maternal and child health services. In particular it will:

- improve the promotion and provision of pre-natal services;
- improve the information available to mothers about the options available for childbirth;
- ensure that benchmarks for the appropriate use of caesarean section and ultrasound are professionally developed and used to improve service delivery;
- increase the accessibility of birthing centres;
- redirect resources into post birth health care services, which are currently under-resourced;
- ensure continuity of care is available after a baby is born;
- implement special programs for indigenous mothers and babies, to reduce mortality rates and improve health;
- research the health and well being of children to monitor and improve outcomes for children;
- develop a new policy framework to better integrate research and programs to meet the social and health needs of younger children; and
- support and encourage breastfeeding by supporting initiatives like the Australian Breastfeeding Association's 24 hour phone line and lactation specialists visiting new mothers in hospital and breastfeeding workshops for new mothers who have left hospital.

77. **Young Australians.** Labor recognises the necessity of specifically addressing the health needs of young Australians, including:

- childhood obesity, body image and eating disorders;
- suicide prevention;
- drug and alcohol education;
- sexuality and safe sex practices;
- promotion of healthy lifestyles;
- long-term nursing home type care required as a result of accident or illness; and
- family support and/or appropriate alternative social networks to help children in difficulty.

78. Labor recognises the importance of providing appropriate and accessible health services to young people while ensuring confidentiality. Labor supports the issue of Medicare cards to all young Australians to facilitate their access to health services.
79. **Migrant health.** Labor recognises that language and cultural differences need to be addressed to ensure fair and equal access to health services for all Australians. In particular, Labor recognises the need for interpreter services, culturally appropriate health services and health education messages in languages other than English.
80. **Palliative care.** Labor believes that every person should have access to quality palliative care when dying. People should be able to decide where they wish to die and to choose the extent of active treatment they want to prolong life as a terminal illness progresses. People have a right to relief of pain and suffering, but there is a need for legal guidelines and safeguards to prevent abuse or wrongful actions.
81. Labor supports legislative measures to give each person a right to determine in advance the sort of medical treatment he or she wishes to receive, or not receive, in the event that he or she is ever in a condition that prevents them from expressing that wish.

ACUTE CARE—A HOSPITAL SYSTEM THAT WORKS

Public Hospitals

82. Labor is committed to giving the highest priority to maintaining and improving a high quality, integrated, free public hospital system accessible to all Australians on the basis of clinical need.
83. Labor believes that governments at Commonwealth, State and Territory level must substantially increase their efforts to overcome difficulties with access to public hospitals, and to provide for increasing demand due to the ageing of the population and new medical technologies.
84. **Emergency departments.** There is a strong community demand to end the long queues in emergency departments and the practice of leaving people on trolleys. Labor will work with the States and Territories to integrate low-level emergency treatment services with primary care services available through Medicare and to develop standards for substantial reductions in delays for treatment and admission. Labor will take the pressure off emergency departments by improving access to bulk billed GP services and providing co-located primary health care facilities.

Privatisation

85. Labor opposes the privatisation of public hospitals on the grounds that Australian and overseas experience has shown that privatisation:
- does not lead to increased efficiency or effectiveness in the delivery of health services;
 - opens the way for private operators to allow financial incentives to influence admission, treatment and hospital discharge patterns;
 - results in a loss of flexibility in the delivery of services and thereby

increases the potential for additional costs;

- results in governments relinquishing traditional democratic measures of accountability and replacing those measures with contractual accountability;
- can lead to a reduction of services offered and selective treatment of patients;
- reduces government control over the quality of services, leading to poorer quality of patient care; and
- involves a number of inherent risks associated with the contract, including non-performance of contractual requirements, a change in operator ownership, insolvency, and litigation between the government and the operator.

The Private Sector

86. The private sector plays an important role in Australia to deliver services paid for through Medicare and to supplement this with other services that are paid for privately or covered by private health insurance. Labor recognises the role the private health sector can play to complement Medicare and remains committed to a balanced health system making best use of both public and private services.
87. However, Labor opposes growth in the private sector at the expense of the public system. The focus should be on ensuring a better regional integration of services delivered by private sector and public health providers.
88. Labor will assist private hospitals run by both not-for-profit and commercial organisations to provide services that complement Medicare. Where there are waiting lists at public hospitals for elective surgery within the capability of private hospitals, Labor will examine tendering out this treatment.

Private Health Insurance

89. **Medibank Private.** Labor believes Medibank Private plays an important role as a market leader to hold down premiums and keep the private health insurance market competitive and consumer oriented. Medibank Private will therefore be retained in public ownership.
90. The private health insurance industry offers commercial products to those who want additional services to those offered by Medicare. Labor believes the industry needs to be well regulated in the interests of contributors. To achieve this, Labor believes that the private health insurance industry needs to be reviewed, including the operation of the private health insurance rebate. Issues to be addressed include:
- tackling the huge disincentive of gap payments;
 - curbing the rapid rise in premiums by controlling costs;
 - offering simpler products with more value for consumers; and
 - reforming the industry structure to make it more efficient.
91. Labor will:
- urge funds to increase the proportion of policies that eliminate gap charges without increasing premiums. Doctors and other health professionals who charge gap fees will be required to disclose their additional charges prior to treatment;
 - reform the reinsurance pool to remove the disincentives for funds to operate more efficiently and for the industry to restructure; and
 - provide consumers with access to independent information and require funds to disclose rises in premiums. Funds will be required to simplify their products and produce a common features statement so that people can compare what policies offer.

92. The Private Health Insurance Ombudsman will be given additional powers and resources to investigate policy issues and to develop a Consumer Charter for the industry, setting minimum standards.

A STRONGER HEALTH SECTOR

Health Workforce

93. Labor will work to ensure an appropriate supply and distribution of doctors, nurses, pharmacists and other health workers with particular emphasis on:
- improving the supply of all health professionals in rural Australia;
 - developing strategies to improve recruitment and retention of nurses and other health professionals;
 - supporting evolving new professional roles in health care professions that better meet the health needs of Australians;
 - ensuring the numbers of medical specialists meet Australia's health needs; and
 - increasing the numbers of Indigenous Australians at all levels of the health workforce.
94. Labor will recognise the particular problems experienced by the mental health workforce and:
- support the reform of nursing education to provide for undergraduate psychiatric nursing courses;
 - improve the mental health content of allied health undergraduate courses; and
 - work towards an increase and a better geographical distribution of private psychiatrists.
95. Labor will also address workforce issues related to safety and quality including:
- ending the practice of excessive working hours for young doctors;

- ensuring that a full range of supervised training opportunities are available to graduate doctors and that graduate doctors are not used to fill roles they are not trained for; and
- establishing programs to ensure all health workers remain up to date with the latest health advances and technologies.

Health and Medical Research

96. Labor will encourage innovative health and bio-medical research to improve the health of all Australians, and will maintain Australia's reputation as a world leader in high quality, innovative, cost effective research. In particular Labor will:
- increase the Commonwealth government's contribution to the research effort and ensure that other funding sources maintain or increase their effort during this period;
 - establish a new career structure and pay scale for Australian medical researchers to encourage retention of our best researchers and to be internationally competitive;
 - give priority to emerging international industries of the future such as biotechnology and genetic research;
 - encourage private industry to increase its investment in Australian-based research and development; and
 - work with stakeholders to establish comprehensive ethical guidelines developed specifically for public and private general medical research and biotechnology/genetic research.
97. Labor recognises the particular problems experienced by the mental health workforce in relation to undergraduate education and will:
- support the reform of undergraduate nursing education to provide for competent beginning level psychiatric nurses; and
 - improve mental health content of allied health undergraduate courses.

Health Industry

98. Labor recognises that demand for health services both in Australia and throughout the world will continue to grow. This growth, particularly in the Asia Pacific region offers Australia, a technologically advanced country with a reputation for high quality medicine, an opportunity to develop health care as a major export industry.
99. Labor will develop a whole of government, coordinated health industry plan to promote Australian researched, developed and produced pharmaceuticals, bio-pharmaceuticals, diagnostics, medical technology and health services to both domestic and export markets. This industry offers scope for substantial skilled employment growth.

SPORT AND RECREATION

- A1. Labor recognises that sport is an intrinsic part of our culture and way of life. It builds social cohesion that binds families, communities, whole regions and indeed the nation. Most important of all are the principles of fairness, accessibility and opportunity. Labor is committed to ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to participate in sport, recreation and/or physical activity.
- A2. Labor believes that the roles of government in sport and recreation are to:
- increase participation in physical and recreational activities to promote physical and mental health;
 - improve outcomes for public health through encouragement, facilitation and support for healthy lifestyle choices, including regular physical activity and other recreational pursuits;
 - develop and support participation in grass roots community sport and recreation activities; and
 - develop and support high performance athletes through the provision of infrastructure, resources and leadership.
- A3. Labor will, through the Australian Sports Commission, and in consultation with Australia's sport and recreation community, establish appropriate criteria for the delivery of funding to:
- provide appropriate policies and programs to better deliver sporting and recreational opportunities for all Australians;
 - develop and enhance community based sporting organisations across all regions of Australia in recognition of the important role such organisations play in creating social cohesion;
 - develop and enhance programs and facilities for the Australian Institute of Sport that appropriately reflect our sporting abilities and aspirations;
 - create pathways for the development of high performance athletes that are fair and accessible across all regions of Australia; and
 - assist highly talented athletes to pursue sporting excellence and gain international experience.
- A4. Labor will examine alternative public and private sector funding options to supplement budgetary initiatives.
- A5. In consultation with State and local governments and relevant sporting bodies, Labor will develop a model for Commonwealth government involvement in the provision and access of community sporting and recreation facilities, especially in rural and regional Australia where it is particularly challenging to establish and maintain facilities.
- A6. Labor recognises that the enhanced teamwork, communication skills, health benefits and interdependence that arise from sport are vital to young people's development. Labor will provide coordinated funding for community development resources in sport and recreation that address the needs of young people of all ages.
- A7. Participation in sport and recreation provides public health benefits. Poor diet and lack of fitness are closely associated with major health problems. Labor recognises that physical activity through sport and recreation enhances

SPORT AND RECREATION

- physical well being, including improvements in mental health and self esteem.
- A8. Labor is committed to integrating the development of sport and recreation with its health policy and programs. Labor will develop mechanisms that direct resources into preventive strategies that improve the overall physical health standard of the community by encouraging greater exercise and relaxation.
- A9. Labor is committed to promoting sport and recreation for older Australians. As well as enjoying obvious personal benefits, older and veteran participants contribute greatly by volunteering and passing on their experience and skills as players, administrators and officials to the younger members of their sporting clubs and organisations.
- A10. Labor recognises and values the essential contribution by volunteers of all ages to sport and recreation in Australia. Labor notes the declining levels of volunteers and will work with communities to develop strategies to increase opportunities for participation in administration, officiating, coaching and other forms of volunteer support.
- A11. Labor is committed to ongoing recognition and support of disability sport and supports the integration of athletes with disabilities into mainstream sport. Labor will pursue funding options to ensure that appropriate programs, resources and facilities exist for Paralympic and disability sport.
- A12. Labor is committed to ongoing recognition and support of indigenous sport and recreation programs and will ensure there is appropriate support, resources and facilities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- A13. Labor is strongly committed to raising the profile of women's sport. Labor will restore the Prime Ministerial Women in Sport Award, increase the profile of women's sport, and undertake efforts to improve the coverage and portrayal of women's sport and the accessibility of the media by women's sporting organisations.
- A14. Labor will provide support for the promotion of codes of sporting behaviour, ethics and development of workplace health and safety standards through consultation with other levels of government, Australia's sporting community and relevant organisations.
- A15. Through adequate support for the Australian Sports Drug Agency and education programs, Labor will continue to work towards the abolition of all performance enhancing drugs in sport.
- A16. Labor will ensure that all Australians have access to free-to-air television coverage of sport consistent with standards laid down in broadcasting legislation.
- A17. Labor will work with stakeholders to ensure sporting venues and events are as accessible as possible for all Australians.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Labor's National Housing Strategy

100. Labor believes that all Australians have the right to secure, affordable and appropriate housing throughout their lifetime. Labor is committed to policies which make housing affordable:
- by economic policies designed to maintain low interest rates and a competitive housing finance sector;
 - and

—by assisting those on lower incomes to meet the cost of home ownership or public, community or private rental accommodation.

101. Labor's national housing strategy will:
- expand the range and supply of secure, affordable and appropriate housing choices;
 - deliver more efficient and effective housing provision and land development;

- better integrate housing and other services, to provide neighbourhoods that are safe to live in, and close to employment opportunities;
 - maintain the first homebuyers grant, but with tighter eligibility criterion;
 - develop environmental standards for housing and promote housing options that minimise adverse environmental impacts; and
 - expand the role of institutional investment in the provision of affordable housing.
102. Labor supports the continued existence of the Commonwealth State Housing Agreement (CSHA). Through the CSHA, Labor's national housing strategy will be advanced by:
- setting targets, in cooperation with State, Territory and local governments, for growth in public and community housing, based on a national assessment of need;
 - the establishment of a National Housing Assistance Advisory Committee, which will involve peak representative bodies in program development;
 - ensuring that peak bodies are properly resourced to perform such functions;
 - setting housing affordability benchmarks for public and private tenants;
 - ensuring no public housing tenant pays more than twenty-five per cent of his or her income in rent, unless there is an agreement between the tenant and the Housing Authority to charge a higher rate for the provision of a further range of services for the tenant;
 - setting rent subsidies for private tenants to the level of subsidy for public tenants, to reduce housing-related poverty in the private rental market;
 - monitoring the effectiveness of rent assistance in addressing housing affordability;
 - evaluating the contribution of relevant housing assistance and taxation policies in improving housing outcomes for low income consumers;
 - developing Commonwealth State Housing Agreements (CSHAs) which ensure funds are available to increase social housing stock and upgrade social housing which has fallen below acceptable standards, through direct funds for construction and for rental subsidies to ensure housing is affordable for low income private and social housing;
 - introducing national tenancy standards that will provide for security of tenure and consumer safeguards for tenants including caravan park residents and boarders and lodgers. As a condition of funding under the CSHA, State and Territory governments will be required to comply with national tenancy standards designed to protect tenants' rights. These standards will ensure that tenants' rights are protected in relation to matters such as eviction, unfair rents, repairs and maintenance, quality of rental accommodation, appeals and bond security;
 - developing a National Rental Housing Standards Code in consultation with non-government tenancy organisations;
 - ensuring that all States and Territories have independent review mechanisms for resolving tenancy disputes with the power to overturn evictions and unfair rents, determine bond or rental disputes and refer matters for prosecution where necessary;
 - supporting the regulation of tenant databases though stronger privacy protection including independent

- monitoring of compliance and access to affordable dispute resolution processes;
 - supporting programs which ensure that people are made aware of and can access the various forms of housing assistance which are available;
 - ensuring consumer rights are protected and satisfactory standards are maintained for all low income housing consumers through adequate funding to housing consumer services;
 - in cooperation with all levels of government, industry and unions, developing a plan for the housing industry to increase its capacity to deliver a quality and cost effective product;
 - seeking ways of providing assistance to low and middle income households to buy their own homes;
 - establishing frameworks that enable long-term headleasing;
 - developing and implementing strategies that ensure a housing mix, such as community housing models and the encouragement of joint ventures with the private sector;
 - facilitating employment opportunities for tenants in public housing estates through TAFE training, maintenance work and management;
 - integrating community family services programs into public housing policies;
 - developing and implementing a national indigenous housing strategy, recognising the special needs of indigenous housing policy, taking into account employment needs and the need for cultural compatibility; and
 - developing and implementing strategies to increase the number of apprentices in the housing industry.
103. Labor supports:
- a program of urban renewal of old public housing estates, to provide a greater range of housing choices, better integration with services such as public transport and an increase in private investment and employment opportunities;
 - developing mechanisms to encourage increased institutional investment in the provision of lower income housing, in partnership with social housing agencies;
 - the development of appropriate community housing which links housing with other support and encourages residents' participation in housing management;
 - improving the quality of the accommodation services provided in boarding houses;
 - continuing and expanding crisis and emergency accommodation programs; and
 - continuing and expanding high-security refuges for women and children escaping from family violence.
104. Labor supports the development of flexible housing strategies which recognise regional differences and the changing nature of rural areas.
- Homelessness
105. Labor recognises the growing problem of homelessness, and particularly youth homelessness, and that other problems, such as poverty, drug and alcohol abuse, psychiatric or other health problems, deinstitutionalisation, unemployment, family breakdown, or domestic violence, can contribute to or precipitate homelessness.
106. Labor acknowledges the responsibility of governments to ensure that all Australians have access to adequate housing and that homeless people, and those at risk of homelessness, should receive particular attention in housing and broader social programs.

107. Labor is committed to developing a national homelessness strategy in conjunction with State and Territory governments. Labor supports a three point approach to homelessness, the success of which depends on the participation and cooperation of all stakeholders:
- prevention;
 - assistance to people once they become homeless; and
 - support for homeless people in their transition from crisis accommodation to more stable housing.
108. Labor is committed to the continuation of the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP) and its capital arm, the Crisis Accommodation Program (CAP). Labor will support diverse SAAP program service models and the trialling of other innovative approaches to early intervention and assistance for homeless people, both while they are in crisis and in their transition to stable housing.
- Labor supports a cooperative approach to the development of programs to assist people at risk of homelessness, involving service providers, all levels of government, and the organisations and institutions best placed to identify individuals at risk and to assist them.
109. In order to provide pathways for homeless people to move out of SAAP accommodation and into more permanent housing, Labor will ensure that:
- housing programs have clear and planned links with the SAAP;
 - housing programs provide for long-term housing support requirements in both public and private rental housing; and
 - housing programs have the flexibility to offer a range of housing options suited to those at imminent and/or chronic risk of homelessness.

110. Labor supports programs which ensure that people know about and can access the various forms of housing assistance available, and will ensure that consumer rights are protected and satisfactory standards maintained in services targeted to homeless people.

Labor will establish targets to reduce homelessness over time as part of its strategy to address poverty in the community.

Youth Housing

111. Labor recognises that youth homelessness is a growing problem within the Australian community. To this end Labor supports the implementation of a National Youth Housing Strategy, similar to that commissioned under the previous federal Labor Government. The National Youth Housing Strategy will:
- detail strategies to address the pathways into homelessness for young people (for example, abuse, family breakdown, poverty, unemployment, discriminatory social policy);
 - detail strategies to provide pathways out of homelessness for young people;
 - investigate how community housing can better assist young people to leave the SAAP and move into a more stable environment that will allow them to continue or resume education and/or participate in the labour market;
 - develop best practice models of community housing for young people needing to exit SAAP accommodation; and
 - consider ways to encourage young people into home ownership.
112. Labor recognises that the current Rent Assistance Program discriminates against young people because they receive lower rates of payment, despite

facing similar rental costs to other adult singles.

Labor will:

- review the allocation of Rent Assistance payments to young people in receipt of the Youth Allowance, as part of its commitment to improving rental subsidies for young people.

Boarding Houses, Mobile Homes and Manufactured Home Parks

113. Labor notes that over 160,000 Australians live in boarding houses, mobile homes and manufactured home parks. These people are often retirees or those who cannot afford other accommodation. Refuge services also use caravan parks to provide emergency accommodation. Labor in government will:
- examine ways to restore equity between the private rental market and permanent residents of caravan parks, boarding houses and manufactured home parks including discriminatory applications of taxation; and
 - develop a National Boarding House, Mobile Homes and Manufactured Home Parks Accommodation Standards Code in consultation with appropriate bodies, including peak advocacy and consumer groups.

Security for Australian Families

114. For most Australians, our families are our first and best source of care and support—the most important providers of housing, education, health, personal development and well being. They help us reach our potential, and nurture our individual and collective aspirations.
115. Labor believes that government has a duty to support and assist families in these tasks, as an essential part of maintaining a caring Australian community. Labor is committed to

ensuring that all Australian families are able to live decently with dignity, and to providing the requisite levels of economic and infrastructure support necessary to achieve this outcome.

- A strong, growing economy, secure jobs which provide a decent income, a safe environment, and quality housing, health, education and community services are the foundations of families' security.

- An investment in early assistance services for families with young children improves their life chances and reduces the incidence of educational, health and labour market disadvantage and poverty.

116. Labor recognises that Australia's families do not all fit one pattern, and that the ways families are structured, and organise their lives, changes over time. Labor's policies will be flexible enough to meet the needs of different families at different times in their lives.

- Labor recognises rapidly changing economic and social circumstances place families under great stress, and will focus on policies aimed at balancing work with the vital task of raising children.

117. Labor will provide Australian families with the range of services and income support they need to live a decent life and balance their various responsibilities. In particular, Labor will:

- support work practices and arrangements which recognise the needs of families and promote families' capacities to combine work and family life;
- ensure that families are well informed about the services and payments available for them and that the help available is easy to access;

- supplement family income where it is low and provide additional help where Australians and their families need it to meet additional costs in providing for children, and in meeting education, housing, health care and related needs;
- ensure that the cash assistance that families with dependent children receive through the tax, social security and education systems provides families with the help they need, when they need it;
- better integrate the income support and tax systems for families, to ensure that income tests and taxation do not combine to severely reduce the benefit of earnings;
- deliver quality early assistance services to families with young children that address their educational, health and welfare needs and that aim to prevent or ease the difficulties families can face. Labor will support families' access to family and parenting education, early childhood services and family mediation services. Labor will provide couples entering relationships with access to counselling and marriage education programs;
- encourage and assist families and local communities to develop their own strategies and responses to local and individual needs; and
- support research on families issues to improve our understanding of how families are changing, the issues they face and the support they need.

Children's Services for all Australians

118. Labor believes that the intrinsic value of our children should be the focus of children's services.
119. Labor will develop a long-term, strategic national plan for investing in our children. This will include a plan for child care as a framework for taking forward the early years debate in the education and care areas.
120. Labor will work with the States and Territories in setting a national research agenda for early childhood education and care.
121. Labor is committed to supporting families in the different choices they make about how they balance gaining an income sufficient for their needs and aspirations, with caring for children.
 - Labor's first concern is to ensure that children grow up in caring, stable and safe environments.
 - Labor is committed to providing high quality, affordable and accessible formal child care, and to supporting families who choose to care for their children at home.
 - Labor is committed to ensuring that funding of quality child care supports choice for families in the type of service they can access.
122. Labor believes that the federal government should continue to play a central role in child care through planning and funding to ensure that:
 - the supply of places matches demand, including demand for places for babies and children at risk, for children with disabilities, and in outside-school-hours and vacation care services;
 - emerging needs for child care places are met, in line with changes in the way families balance their working and family lives;
 - location and family incomes are not a barrier to accessing appropriate child care; and
 - the child care sector provides a continuing stable environment for children in communities.

123. Labor will adequately fund the costs of child care, to ensure that quality child care is affordable for the families who choose to use it, and sufficient for child care providers to operate a viable quality service. Labor will better target assistance to overcome income and location disadvantage in the accessing of child care.

Provision of Children's Services

124. The provision of children's services is increasingly mixed between private and community and other not-for-profit providers. In relation to the mix between private and community and other not-for-profit providers, Labor will:

- target support so as to maintain an appropriate balance between private and community and other not-for-profit children's services and so as to ensure that the needs and choices of Australian families are satisfied;
- ensure that federal government funding provided to private and community and other not-for-profit children's services is directed towards improving the quality of those services; and
- support an effective complaints resolution process to ensure that concerns of parents and workers of children's services facilities are able to be resolved satisfactorily.

125. Labor recognises that parents need flexible child care which matches their many needs, and that families' needs for child care can vary.

Labor will encourage the development of an appropriate mix of centre-based care, family day care, work-based care, outside school hours and vacation care and occasional care.

Labor will support and maintain a viable community-based sector through

adequate and appropriate funding, including local government services.

Labor will encourage and support the development of innovative models of child care which link to the provision of other services.

126. Labor's child care policies will encourage all formal child care providers to involve parents in the management of child care services, and will support parents' involvement in the development and implementation of early childhood care and education policies.
127. Labor will work with the States and Territories to develop an integrated system of child care and early childhood education, to ensure that all Australian children under school age have access to early childhood education and other appropriate developmental and social activities, provided in a safe environment. Recognising the contribution early childhood education and care services make to children's development, parent support and early identification of children at risk, Labor will develop an integrated national system of local networks linking services such as pre-school, child care, playgroups, maternal and children's health, early intervention and parental education.
128. Labor will establish a national education, care and development curriculum for children aged 0–5 years as a guide to parents and able to be used in any type of early education and care facility. Recognising the importance of early childhood education to successful transition to school, Labor will work with all State and Territory governments to reduce the cost of and increase participation in pre-school education programs.
129. Labor will continue to support child care for children with special needs and children at risk.

130. Labor supports quality assurance processes within the children's services sector to ensure that high quality service standards are adopted and maintained. Labor supports policies which will ensure that funding provided by the government to children's services operators will be directed towards providing high quality services, maintaining the standards of care and providing greater access to the services, in particular:

- improving standards monitoring, including a more effective system of inspections by the accreditation agency to ensure that accreditation standards are being met;
- greater monitoring of compliance with licensing regulations;
- auditing Commonwealth funding to ensure that all funding is appropriately allocated in all children's services facilities; and
- addressing the development and retention of workforce skills.

131. Labor will extend the national child care accreditation system to encourage the provision of high quality care and appropriate professional standards in all formal child care services.

- Labor will ensure that only users of accredited services are eligible for child care assistance.
- Labor will work with State and Territory governments to ensure a consistent national framework for the regulation of child care providers.

Children's Services Workforce

132. Labor will ensure that care and education are provided by appropriately trained and caring staff whose wages and conditions reflect their training and their responsibilities. Labor recognises that there is a growing body of evidence to show that the first five years in a

child's life are critical to their educational and social development and that dedicated children's services workers are fundamental to this development.

133. Labor recognises that there is a critical shortage of qualified and experienced children's services workers. Labor will develop strategies to improve the retention and recruitment of qualified children's services workers.

Labor recognises that children's services workers are often underpaid and undervalued for the important work they do with Australian children in their vital early years.

Labor also recognises that the wages and conditions of children's services workers often do not reflect their training and qualifications.

Labor will seek improvements in the wages and conditions of children's services workers.

Labor will develop strategies to improve the retention and recruitment of qualified children's services workers.

To this end, Labor will:

- support wage and pay equity cases in State and federal industrial tribunals; and
- help establish a new career structure and pay scale for children's services workers.

Labor will also ensure that there are adequate funding arrangements to:

- meet the necessary improvements in wages and conditions for existing workers and to assist in the recruitment of new qualified workers;
- encourage qualified workers to rural and remote areas;
- meet the cost of further education and training for children's services workers; and

—address occupational health and safety concerns including immunisation and first aid courses for children's services workers.

Child Support When Parents Separate

134. Labor believes that child support policy must put the interests of children first, aiming to reduce child poverty, ensure that both parents contribute to their children's well being and encourage both parents to maintain an ongoing role in their children's lives.
135. Labor supports a flexible national Child Support Scheme which recognises variations in earnings and new family responsibilities, and which is administered by an appropriately resourced Child Support Agency.
136. Labor believes the best arrangements for providing for the children of separated parents are those agreed between parents, and will encourage those who establish a good payment record to opt out of the Scheme by agreement, where this is consistent with reasonable maintenance action.
137. Labor will strengthen enforcement and compliance measures to ensure that parents paying and receiving child support cannot structure their financial affairs to avoid their obligations.
138. Labor will regularly evaluate the Child Support Scheme's operation, and continue to improve the Scheme so it is easily understood, and provides parents with the support required to establish child support arrangements, including mediation services.

RESOLUTIONS

National Housing Strategy

Labor's national housing strategy will be advanced by:

- (a) establishing a committee of inquiry to recommend measures to overcome the problems in financing the supply of affordable housing in the home ownership, private rental, public and community housing sectors. Through consultation with a range of financial institutions, including superannuation funds, the committee of inquiry will explore innovative funding mechanisms directly aimed at expanding the supply of affordable housing;
- (b) holding a housing affordability summit involving all levels of government, industry, unions, housing consumers, voluntary and community based organisations;
- (c) developing a whole-of-government national homelessness strategy to ensure that those most at risk can access housing and broader social programs; and
- (d) expanding the number, quality and duration of apprenticeships and traineeships in all housing sectors.

Community Wellbeing

Labor believes in investing in the long-term health of the people of this nation and in investing in the development of local communities.

In the first concerted federal effort to improve the general health and well being of all Australians, Labor will invest \$25 million over four years to promote community well being and reduce the incidence of obesity, particularly in children.

Labor's policy, *Tackling Obesity and Promoting Community Wellbeing: Labor's plan for a healthier and more active*

RESOLUTIONS

Australia, has two main elements: establishing a new fund to promote community wellbeing, and implementing a national strategy to reduce childhood obesity.

1. A \$15 million Community Well Being Fund will provide the opportunity for community groups to engage with specialists, such as doctors, health professionals and community workers and to coordinate and organise physical activities and events in their local area.
This fund will help Australians get involved in sport and recreation activities at the community level, and will improve dietary habits through broad scale education and health promotion. It will build on the work already being undertaken by State and Territory governments.
2. \$10 million will also be invested to develop and implement a National Strategy to Reduce Childhood Obesity, which will include:
 - \$2.5 million for a National Nutrition Education Framework;
 - \$2 million for a Schools Physical Activity National Taskforce;
 - \$2 million to develop and implement national school canteen food guidelines;
 - \$2.5 million for a national active life media campaign;
 - \$500,000 to implement pilot student well being programs for school students in disadvantaged communities;
 - \$500,000 to establish an Obesity Action Alliance; and
 - working with the Australian Association of National Advertisers and Children's Television Standards to ensure that media advertising of food

and drink products specifically targeted at children reflects community standards and expectations.

Child care

Conference recognises that child care provides a crucial foundation during the early years of children's learning development, and that quality child care requires continuity of care from professional child care workers.

Conference is concerned about the current shortage of qualified child care workers in centres in Australia and recognises that fair and decent wages are an essential part of the solution to this crisis in child care.

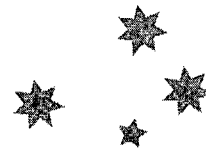
Conference endorses the action of the trade union movement in seeking improvements to the wages and conditions of children's services workers in State and Federal industrial tribunals throughout Australia.

Conference calls on all State Labor Governments to actively support the current wage cases for child care workers. Conference also calls on a Federal Labor Government to adequately fund child care to ensure wage increases which result from these cases, do not increase the burden of fees on parents.

To this end, Labor will support measures to assist providers in meeting any increased operating costs that flow from decisions by industrial tribunals to improve the wages of low paid child care workers.

Labor is committed to the maintenance of a strong and viable community based sector.

In relation to corporate and for-profit services, while Labor is committed to the policy of equity across the sector for families who use these services and for workers employed by them, Labor will ensure that current federal funding is appropriately applied to meet service delivery needs and costs before committing to any increased funding.



AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY



Chapter Six

Community Security and Access to Justice

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Chapter Six

Community Security and Access to Justice

Community Safety and Criminal Justice

1. Labor believes that a fundamental objective of government is to work with the community to provide greater security for all Australians and their families. To achieve this, the objectives of the criminal law should be to:
 - prevent crime;
 - protect the personal safety and property of all Australians;
 - support, counsel and compensate the victims of crime, their families and dependents; and
 - rehabilitate offenders.
2. Labor believes that the well being and safety of the community is a fundamental responsibility of government. An integral element of community safety is criminal justice. Labor is dedicated to providing the community with an effective criminal justice system, at all levels of government. Labor will ensure that the Commonwealth's investigation, prosecution, defence and judicial processes are separate, independent, adequately resourced and appropriately accountable. Labor will also pursue cooperation between the Commonwealth, States and Territories in developing uniform and coordinated approaches to criminal justice and community safety.
3. Labor will provide adequate resources to the Australian Federal Police (AFP), the Australian Crime Commission (ACC) and the Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC) to enable them to investigate Commonwealth offences, in particular corporate crime and fraud against the Commonwealth.

4. Labor's response to the tragedy of drug abuse and related crime will be comprehensive. Labor is committed to a strategy for dealing with illicit drugs that aims to improve safety in the community by reducing the level of drug-related crime; to reduce the spread of illness; to keep people alive; and to find new ways to reduce the use of illicit drugs in our community.

Labor realises that an effective illicit drugs strategy must address all areas of drug use and have harm minimisation as its central element. Labor's illicit drugs strategy will support and promote:

- harm reduction through programs designed to tackle the health and social problems caused by drug use;
- national coordination and cooperation between governments;
- State government initiatives, such as supervised injecting places, aimed at reducing the costs to the community of illicit drug use and which will provide access to counselling and rehabilitation and facilitate scientific and medical research;
- the development of programs and strategies based on expert advice, the adoption of performance objectives and a coordinated approach to research;
- purposeful law enforcement strategies, including the development of specialist drug courts and diversionary programs, designed to get drug users out of the traditional criminal justice system and into a comprehensive range of treatment, rehabilitation and support programs;
- adequate funding of law enforcement agencies such as the Australian Federal Police, which aim to break drug smuggling and other crime organisations;

- effective criminal and civil law reform aimed at deterring and punishing the professional criminal elements of the illicit drug trade;
- demand reduction directed at reducing the number of people taking up illicit drug use through targeted education programs for young people and users, and a strengthening of community and family involvement in programs across Australia;
- tackling the social dimension with programs to give young Australians hope and opportunity through employment, education and training and real life options, and which encourage greater support among family, friends and community networks; and
- improving law enforcement at our borders and on the streets, increasing liaison and coordination with overseas law enforcement agencies, and reducing the profitability of the drug trade.

For these strategies to work, all need to be effectively funded and supported by government. They must also be properly evaluated and researched.

5. Labor will continue to value the Australian Federal Police as the foremost Commonwealth law enforcement agency. Labor will support initiatives and strategies which ensure that the crime fighting and investigation practices of the Australian Federal Police are modern, strategic and effective in combating criminal threats in the twenty-first century, including high technology crime, identity fraud and money laundering.
6. Labor acknowledges that the Australian Federal Police and the Australian Crime Commission must be effectively resourced in order to carry out the range of responsibilities required of Commonwealth law enforcement agencies.

7. Labor supports measures that remove the profit which organised crime can make from illegal activities. Labor believes that where the appropriate authority can demonstrate, on the balance of probabilities, that assets are the result of criminal activity the onus should be on the owner of the assets to prove, on the balance of probabilities, that the assets were lawfully obtained.
8. Labor supports law reform aimed at giving Commonwealth law enforcement agencies greater ability to investigate and apprehend persons involved in terrorism, drug trafficking, gun running and organised crime. Labor will maintain the Australian Crime Commission Act under review, and amend it as necessary so as to further this aim.
9. Labor supports the establishment of independent anti-corruption authorities to oversee the investigative, prosecutorial and judicial processes. Labor will ensure that the Australian Crime Commission and the Australian Federal Police have appropriate independent complaints handling procedures.
10. Labor supports the creation of national uniform criminal laws. These should include:
 - a criminal code;
 - a code of custody, sentencing and parole, with a specific section on juveniles;
 - evidence laws;
 - laws controlling the power of arrest and bail, in particular to strictly define the power to arrest without warrant and simplify the laws governing bail;
 - laws providing strict controls on the use of firearms and offensive weapons;
 - drug laws;
 - national standards for dealing with spent convictions;

—national standards for dealing with victims of crime; and

—national standards for indigenous prisoners which respect, as far as possible, customary law.

11. Labor will maintain and develop mechanisms designed to coordinate and enhance the efforts of federal, State and Territory authorities engaged in the fight against crime. To this end, Labor will establish a joint parliamentary committee for the oversight of all national law enforcement agencies.
12. Labor, while maintaining the principle of merit selection, will encourage the Australian Federal Police to recruit from a broad cross section of the Australian community, particularly Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, women and people from non-English speaking backgrounds, as a means of achieving non-discriminatory and more effective policing practices.
13. Labor will ensure that the training of members of the investigative, prosecution and judicial authorities, and those otherwise involved in the administration of the law, encourages the development of non-discriminatory and non-violent attitudes in the administration of the law. Labor supports the establishment of consultative mechanisms between investigating authorities and groups suffering from discrimination.
14. Recognising that crimes such as drug importation, corporate crime, cybercrime, identity fraud and money laundering are increasingly interwoven with globalised commerce and terrorism, Labor will support enhanced mechanisms for international cooperation including mutual assistance with overseas agencies and regulators. Labor recognises the contract security industry as an integral part of ensuring Australians have confidence in

the safety of the community. Labor recognises that the regulation of this sector is controlled through various Acts at the State and Territory level. Labor supports common minimum standards of regulation of the industry and calls upon State and Territory governments to establish a working group to facilitate those standards.

15. Labor is committed to reducing the over-representation of Indigenous Australians in the criminal justice system. A national whole-of-government social justice approach, in cooperation with State and Territory governments, is required to tackle to complex underlying causes of such over-representation. These causes include poverty, lack of educational and employment opportunities, homelessness, substance abuse and family violence.

Victims of Crime

16. Labor will develop national model legislation and program delivery standards for victims of crime, including:
 - a charter of rights for the victims of crime which builds upon the United Nations Charter of Victims Rights (Basic Principles of Justice for Victims of Crime and Abuse of Power 1985);
 - laws governing the compensation of victims of crime;
 - coordination across States and Territories of research and evaluation programs, the collection of data on victimisation rates, demographics, and victim needs, and the dissemination of information;
 - standards for the provision of support, counselling and rehabilitation services for the victims of crime;
 - laws providing for victim impact statements, the provision of witness support and information, and standards for the treatment of victims by the criminal justice system;

- initiatives for reducing repeated victimisation including video conferencing;
- particular emphasis on the needs of children and victims of sexual assault; and
- promotion of alternative dispute resolution and restorative justice processes aimed at improving outcomes for both victims and offenders and reducing prospects of recidivism.

17. Labor will aim to minimise the trauma to victims of crime, and in particular the victims of sexual or family violence and abuse, during both the investigation of the crime and its prosecution. Labor will support programs and initiatives that are directed towards people from non-English speaking backgrounds, children, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, women, and the disadvantaged.

Rights of the Accused

18. As part of its commitment to the development of national uniform laws, Labor will work with the States and Territories to ensure that Australia is a civil and just society so that:
- persons accused of a criminal offence are not compelled to incriminate themselves;
 - persons charged are given a fair and speedy trial;
 - persons charged with serious criminal offences are provided with legal representation if they are unable to afford legal representation of their own;
 - persons charged have a right to legal representation during questioning by investigating authorities and that such questioning is video taped; and
 - evidence obtained illegally or by improper investigative practice is generally inadmissible.

Custody and Sentencing

19. Labor supports the development of a national uniform code of custody, sentencing and parole to optimise the rehabilitation of offenders and to ensure the just treatment of all prisoners in public and private prisons. The code will:
- ensure consistent, just and humane treatment of offenders and accused, and will support the appropriate use of non-custodial sentencing options;
 - prohibit the imposition of the death penalty;
 - conform with Australia's international human rights obligations;
 - prohibit mandatory detention regimes for juveniles and the adults who commit minor offences without limiting the capacity of courts to direct offenders to appropriate non-custodial programs;
 - adopt special measures to protect young people held in custody;
 - adopt special measures to prevent deaths in custody, particularly amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples;
 - ensure training of police and prison officers in understanding indigenous culture and the indigenous social context;
 - provide innovative and stronger sentencing options to penalise corporate offenders with penalties designed to redress the harm caused to individuals and the community as a result of offences and to deter future offences;
 - remove imprisonment for the non-payment of fines except in cases of wilful default;
 - adopt international treaties allowing the repatriation of Australians in overseas prisons; and
 - develop consistency in sentences so that the judiciary retain a sufficient

degree of appropriate discretion so as to enable sentences to be tailored to the circumstances of each individual case.

20. Labor supports the introduction of sentencing regimes that are purposeful and aim to divert juveniles away from the criminal justice system.
21. Labor will continue to oppose mandatory detention when applied to juvenile offenders and to adults who commit minor offences, as it is discriminatory in practice and ineffective in reducing crime or criminality.

The Causes of Crime and Crime Prevention

22. Restorative justice seeks to build a sense of community spirit and responsibility in the offender and aims to restore the victim and the community to their pre-offence state of security. Labor will promote the principles of restorative justice as a just and effective way to be tough on crime. Labor will support the introduction of programs that are consistent with victims' rights, based upon restorative justice.
23. Labor will support ongoing research into, and consult with the Australian community in relation to, the causes of crime, the most effective ways of preventing crime, and methods of rehabilitating criminals and reducing recidivism.
24. Labor will inform Australians about the level and effect of crime so that Australians can acquire a better understanding of the causes of crime, its impact and the measures needed to address it, and to reduce any fears that Australians may hold about crime in our society.

Access to Justice

25. Access to justice requires reducing the cost of legal services and the removal of

artificial barriers to justice. Labor will also seek to provide all Australians suffering from disadvantage, disability or discrimination with reasonable assistance and specialist services to enable them to have access to justice.

26. Labor will explore alternative and innovative models of justice administration and delivery to provide ease of access to regional, rural and remote Australians.
27. Labor will reassume a national leadership role with regard to legal aid in order to recreate an independent, adequately resourced national uniform system of legal aid, which makes no distinction between Commonwealth and non-Commonwealth matters.
28. Labor will continue to support general and specialist community-based legal services, recognise their advocacy role and further develop collaborative clinical legal education schemes with universities to the mutual advantage of both students and the community.
29. Labor acknowledges the many social and cultural dimensions of the Australian community, and the impact which this has upon understanding of and access to justice. Labor will ensure that Australians from all cultural and ethnic backgrounds are given access to information about their rights and responsibilities under the law, including court interpreter services, and the ways in which these rights and responsibilities can be fulfilled.
30. Labor will ensure the effective and efficient operation of the courts and tribunals by:
 - requiring mediation to be undertaken in all federal matters unless that mediation would be traumatic or impractical as a result of issues of abuse or power imbalance;

- providing adequate resources to the courts to allow the efficient, effective and timely resolution of disputes;
 - supporting the removal of unnecessary procedural impediments to prompt dispute resolution and to minimise litigation costs;
 - working with the States and Territories to overcome jurisdictional barriers to the delivery of effective and efficient justice;
 - ensuring access to small claims tribunals/courts for the resolution of appropriate disputes;
 - maintaining and enhancing the right to bring representative and group proceedings in federal courts and tribunals;
 - rejecting the application of the user pays principle to court fees;
 - reviewing and monitoring court fees with a view to imposing court fees that do not act as a barrier to justice; and
 - ensuring provision of interpreter services.
31. In order to enhance the accessibility of justice, Labor will, without reducing the quality of access to the justice system:
- encourage the continued development of other affordable and simple primary dispute resolution mechanisms;
 - encourage the development of a community approach to dispute resolution;
 - encourage parties to conciliate or arbitrate disputes, where that is appropriate;
 - encourage the continued development of other cheap and simple primary dispute resolution mechanisms;
 - provide just and equitable taxation treatment of legal expenses;
 - promote the use of appropriate and transparent contingency fee arrangements; and
 - promote access to legal expense insurance schemes.
32. Recognising the importance of public duties owed by government to all Australians, Labor will provide relevant public interest advocacy groups with increased standing to enforce public duties.
33. Labor will establish and adequately resource an independent body to advise government on access to justice issues. The body will include representatives from the legal profession, the judiciary, other legal and related service providers, State and Territory governments and consumers.
- Children and the Law**
34. Labor supports the protection of the rights of children whilst respecting the proper role of parents and other persons responsible for their welfare. Labor supports the use of programs to help Australians to become better parents and to enhance the life opportunities of their children.
- Where appropriate, Labor will ensure that children have adequate and independent separate representation before the courts.
35. Labor supports the development of a national approach to children and the law, which will include:
- recognising the best interests of the child as a primary consideration;
 - a sentencing regime based primarily upon the principles of restorative justice;
 - standards for court procedures where children are involved as witnesses, victims or offenders;

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- standards for support, counselling and rehabilitation services for child victims and offenders within the criminal justice system; and
- support for research into causes of juvenile crime.

36. Labor will work with foreign governments, international agencies, the States and Territories, and relevant community groups, to establish and maintain an integrated and effective response to paedophilia, child abuse and family violence.
37. Labor recognises that the way in which the criminal justice system treats juvenile offenders greatly influences whether they will commit further crime. Labor believes that the incarceration of juveniles should be a last resort, and that all efforts should be made to divert children from long-term involvement in the criminal justice system. To this end, Labor supports a review of the current Commonwealth, State and Territory sentencing practices with respect to juveniles.
38. Labor will work with the States and Territories to develop a uniform national system for adoption.

The Government and Legislation

39. Government must play an active role in increasing awareness of, simplifying, and reducing the cost of compliance with the law. Labor will take appropriate steps to ensure that legislation and legislative instruments are accessible to all Australians. In particular, Labor will ensure that all legislation and legislative instruments are:
 - drafted in clear, simple and non-discriminatory language;
 - readily available to the public at the time of proclamation, including in printed form and via the internet;

- consolidated in a form which is accessible to both the profession and the public at a reasonable price and in an appropriate format; and
- regularly reviewed, simplified and if necessary, repealed.

40. Labor believes that substantive rights should be enshrined in legislation. Delegated legislation and other legislative instruments will be confined exclusively to administrative matters and should not be used to limit an individual's rights to access the courts. All legislative instruments should be subject to parliamentary scrutiny.
41. Labor will establish a mechanism for the development of uniform national laws in the Attorney-General's and Justice portfolios. Labor will further work with the States and Territories on a long-term solution to ensure that the federal and State governments can put in place joint legislation to address issues of national importance for which neither the federal nor State governments have complete responsibility.

The Courts and the Judiciary

42. Labor believes in the maximum possible uniformity in the structure and operation of the courts system throughout Australia. Labor will work to ensure adequate court services around the nation, including in rural, regional and remote Australia.
43. The independence of the judiciary is fundamental to the maintenance of both the rule of law and our democratic society. Labor will:
 - consult widely in appointing judicial or quasi-judicial office holders on the basis of merit, from among those with the highest personal and professional qualities. Labor's appointment process will be transparent and as far as practicable will seek to reflect the

diversity of Australian society by including meritorious appointments from traditionally unrepresented groups such as women, people from non-English speaking backgrounds and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples;

—encourage the judiciary to participate in appropriate professional development programs including programs on gender, race and other relevant issues; and

—support the dismissal of judges only for proven misconduct or incapacity, by developing a protocol for dealing with serious complaints of misconduct or incapacity against federal judicial officers.

44. Labor believes that the courts should be accountable and managed efficiently, and will work with the judiciary to develop means to ensure that the judicial system is efficient, accessible and accountable, including the use of benchmarking to evaluate and improve the delivery of services by courts to the public.
45. Labor will resume the traditional responsibility of attorneys-general of defending the courts from inappropriate attacks and threats to their independence.

The Legal Profession

46. The legal profession plays a fundamental role in the provision of access to justice. To this end, Labor supports the creation of a modern, efficient and accountable national legal services market. In particular, Labor will work with the legal profession, the judiciary and the States and Territories to:

—create an independent, national, unified legal profession, regulated by an independent body so as to be fully accountable;

- abolish the distinction between barristers and solicitors;
- develop and maintain independent complaint mechanisms through which the interests of consumers and the community are represented;
- abolish any anti-competitive practices engaged in by the legal profession except where those practices are in the public interest;
- remove restrictions which prevent legal practitioners from incorporating, providing complementary non-legal services and advertising their services, or non-legal corporate entities from offering legal resources by employing qualified practitioners, subject to the protection of the interests of consumers and the community;
- establish uniform and mutually recognisable qualifications for entry to the profession;
- abolish the practice of some judges and members of the legal profession of wearing wig and gown; and
- abolish the title of King's or Queen's Counsel.

47. Labor will work with the legal profession to promote equality of opportunity and to seek to eliminate discrimination within the profession.

48. Labor will work with the legal profession, the judiciary and the States and Territories to:

- review and simplify all fee scales to ensure that they reflect the true value of work performed by the legal profession;
- establish fee scales as benchmarks above which lawyers may not charge without the express written agreement of their client; and
- gather and disseminate information to consumers about the reasonable cost of legal services.

49. Labor will work with the judiciary and the legal profession to ensure that effective mechanisms are in place to minimise the level of abuse of the legal process.

KEY ISSUES IN LAW AND JUSTICE

Law Reform

50. Law reform is essential to ensure that the law reflects the traditions, values and aspirations of all Australians. Law reform also ensures that our laws meet the needs of our modern democratic society.
51. Labor will seek to engage as many Australians as possible in issues of law reform so that our laws and legal system reflect the traditions, values and aspirations of all Australians.
52. Labor will provide adequate support and resources to law reform bodies, including the Australian Law Reform Commission, to enable them to provide independent and comprehensive advice on all aspects of law reform and to consult as widely as possible with the Australian people.

Privacy and Free Speech

53. Labor believes in the protection of the individual's right to privacy. In particular, Labor will:
- legislate to extend the operation of privacy protection to cover both the public and private sectors in accordance with international privacy principles and the best international standards;
 - work with the States and Territories to develop appropriate frameworks for the protection of privacy in the workplace;
 - maintain regulation of the use, collection and dissemination of information about individuals by private and public organisations;
 - prohibit the use of telecommunications interception and listening devices

unless approved by judicial warrant or subject to appropriate administrative review;

- provide that evidence obtained by illegal invasion of privacy is generally inadmissible; and
- examine the privacy implications of emerging technologies.

54. Labor will ensure that all Australians have reasonable access to their personal records and the right to correct false or misleading information contained therein.
55. All Australians enjoy the right to freedom of speech. However, this freedom must be exercised in a manner that respects the individual and collective rights enjoyed by other Australians.
56. In this regard, Labor believes it is appropriate to protect the reputation of others through uniform national defamation laws that ensure a proper balance between freedom of expression, public debate and the protection of the reputation of others.
57. Labor believes that adults should be entitled to read, hear and see what they wish in private and in public, subject to adequate protection against persons being exposed to unsolicited material offensive to them and preventing conduct exploiting, or detrimental to the rights of others, particularly women and children.
58. Labor is particularly concerned about the portrayal of violence on television and in films, videos, the internet and video games. Labor will ensure that appropriate controls are in place to protect all Australians and will conduct research into the impact of the portrayal of violence on our society.
59. Labor will work to ensure that Australia's security organisations are properly equipped and resourced to protect Australians from the threat of terrorist

activities, and that the law strikes an appropriate balance between the protection of Australians and the democratic freedoms and values that are part of the Australian way of life. The activities of all security organisations should be subject to an appropriate complaints mechanism and independent external review.

Family Law

60. Labor believes that the family is the fundamental unit of society. Labor will provide support to Australians to help them to have happy, secure and productive family lives.
61. Labor believes that community-based services aimed at preventing marital and family breakdown, such as relationship education, family skills training, marriage preparation and marriage counselling and adolescent and family mediation, should be a priority and readily available.
62. Labor believes that the resolution of family disputes should focus on counselling and mediation with litigation as a last resort. The resolution of disputes should focus on keeping families together, where it is appropriate. Labor will provide affordable Family Court-based counselling and mediation services.
63. Labor will continue to develop and implement measures to ease the anxiety and stress of marital and family breakdown. In particular, Labor will ensure that:
 - the rights of children are paramount, in particular their right to support from and contact with both parents and contact with members of their extended family;
 - there is a just and equitable division of matrimonial property;
 - appropriate protections are in place in cases of actual or apprehended family violence or abuse;

- the particular needs, customs and practices of the diverse cultures which constitute Australian society are appropriately respected;
- family law disputes are resolved in a timely, effective and affordable way; and
- the Family Court and Federal Magistrates Service are accountable to the people who use them and are affected by them.

64. Labor believes that family law should apply in a consistent and uniform way to de facto relationships.
65. Labor supports the continuation of independent sources of advice to, and research for, government on family matters.

Family Violence and Abuse

66. Labor recognises that family violence is the cause of numerous social ills including: homelessness; suicide; homicide; drug misuse; mental illness; and community dislocation. It causes often irreparable damage to its survivors, particularly children. Labor recognises the need to firstly acknowledge the incidence and prevalence of family violence in all sectors of the Australian community, and to accurately name and define family violence in all aspects of Labor Party policy making. Labor recognises that there is a gross over representation of the incidents of family violence and abuse in indigenous communities which is crippling the development, leadership and capacity of communities to become sustainable. This intolerable situation must be addressed through a re-invigoration of a national partnership approach with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and the three tiers of government.

67. All Australians are entitled to live safe from family violence and physical and emotional abuse. Labor will:
- provide a uniform national mechanism to help protect Australians against family violence and abuse;
 - support the establishment of a national database to record and advise authorities of family violence and abuse orders;
 - ensure access to legal assistance and community services for people escaping family violence and abuse;
 - conduct research and education to counteract the effects of family violence and abuse;
 - ensure women and children are protected from family violence in the family home or through access to high-security refuges with skilled staff to support them;
 - support the establishment of specialised State domestic violence court services to ensure the speedy and appropriate handling of complaints; and
 - offer continued support to successful programs already established to combat domestic and family violence, such as the National Domestic and Family Violence Clearinghouse. Ensure that funding gives organisations some ability to plan long-term.

War Crimes

68. Labor recalls the key role played by Ben Chifley's Government in developing the Geneva Convention on Genocide and reaffirms Labor's commitment to international treaties that aim to punish those who commit crimes against humanity, war crimes and other major human rights violations. There are major gaps in Australia's domestic laws that allow such accused criminals to live here without fear of prosecution.

Labor is committed to meeting Australia's international human rights obligations by closing these loopholes and Labor will review investigatory resources to ensure that any such perpetrators found in Australia can be brought to justice.

Administrative Law

69. Labor will ensure that government is accountable through appropriate freedom of information legislation and by providing mechanisms for all government decisions to be subject to independent administrative review or judicial challenge. Labor will ensure that the law of standing does not inhibit access to justice through effective and accessible administrative review.
70. Labor will ensure that the provision of public services by the private sector does not diminish the rights of Australians to freedom of information and administrative review or judicial challenge.
71. Labor will seek to establish a uniform national administrative law system that complies with the highest standards of accountability.
72. Labor will continue to maintain an adequately resourced independent body to provide advice to government on the effectiveness of Australia's administrative law system.

Business Law

73. Labor supports the maintenance of national companies and securities legislation regulating companies, company takeovers, the futures industry and the securities industry to ensure a rational framework for business, its public accountability, the protection of consumers, workers, investors and shareholders and the prevention of anti-competitive practices.

74. Labor will continue to simplify corporate laws in order to reduce unnecessary costs to business and the community while maintaining protection for consumers, workers, investors and shareholders.
75. Labor will continue to review the Corporations Act and related legislation to ensure that companies follow good corporate governance practices that empower shareholders and hold company officers accountable.
76. Labor will work with the States and Territories, the business community and consumer representatives to develop a national business and commercial law to underpin the development of our national economy and to increase the international competitiveness of Australian business. The national law will seek to establish uniform national laws for commercial transactions and the incorporation of non-corporate business structures, while ensuring international best practice consumer protection laws and such other matters as are agreed. Consistent with Australia's close economic relationship with New Zealand, Labor will work with that country if it wishes to participate in Australia's uniform national scheme. If necessary, Labor supports constitutional reform to bring about this objective.
77. Labor will strengthen remedies and penalties to help prevent the practice of establishing phoenix companies to avoid the payment of debts to employees, trade creditors, and tax authorities.
78. Labor believes that bankruptcy laws should provide an inexpensive and quick determination of the rights and obligations of bankrupts. Labor will ensure:
- maximum possible returns to creditors;
 - that bankruptcy trustees can effectively recover property disposed of by bankrupts in an attempt to defeat creditors; and
 - that small debtors have access to negotiated voluntary alternatives to bankruptcy.
79. Labor will work with the States and Territories to maintain and improve Australia's national uniform Corporations Act on a secure long-term footing by bringing all matters falling within the scope of the Commonwealth's constitutional power to legislate in respect of corporations within a federal government enactment and where appropriate securing a reference of State powers.
80. Labor will explore appropriate constitutional reforms to facilitate federal and State cooperative schemes including the ability of officers of the Commonwealth to exercise powers conferred by State legislation, the ability of officers of States to exercise powers bestowed by federal legislation and the ability of federal courts to adjudicate in respect to matters arising under co-operative schemes.

Fraud Control Policy

81. Labor will be vigilant in efforts to eradicate fraud against the Commonwealth, particularly in light of the increased opportunities for fraudulent activity which have arisen from outsourcing and technological changes.
82. Labor supports the development of a fraud control policy which:
- is applicable to modern public service conditions and technological changes;
 - has a comprehensive, all of government application;
 - focuses on developing public sector expertise in preventing and combating fraud;
 - involves the private sector; and

—acknowledges the primary role of the Australian Federal Police in conducting fraud investigations.

83. Labor supports a review of the criminal and civil laws relating to fraud, the range of civil penalties available, and possible reforms to the complexity and length of the trial process.

Legal Services in the Global Market

84. Labor will work with the States and Territories, the courts and the profession to export Australian legal services to the world. In particular Labor will, through multilateral and bilateral negotiations, seek to reduce and eliminate inappropriate trade barriers to the export of the legal services of Australian firms.
85. Labor will work with our universities to promote our high standards of legal education to overseas students.

Empowering Consumers

86. Labor is committed to consumer sovereignty. Consumer sovereignty is enhanced by competitive and fully informed markets, balanced by effective regulation to protect consumers from unsound or unsafe goods, services or practices.
87. Labor will work with States and Territories to develop uniform personal property security laws and a national register of personal property securities, to reduce the cost and uncertainty of transactions for consumers and small businesses.
88. Labor is committed to effective lifetime consumer education starting at school. It is through education that all Australians can be empowered as consumers.
89. Labor is committed to effective consumer protection measures at the national and international level. Labor supports unified, consistent, simplified consumer laws and

redress mechanisms throughout Australia.

90. Labor is committed to effective product labelling to ensure consumers can make informed choices. Food should be labelled to ensure consumers know both the ingredients and processes used. Labor will maintain food standards that guarantee minimum compositional requirements for popular foodstuffs such as ice cream and meat pies. Labor also supports the comprehensive labelling of genetically modified food.

Labor will strengthen country of origin labelling laws to ensure that products labelled 'Made in Australia' are predominantly manufactured in Australia, and that the 'Product of Australia' label is only used on products which are wholly made in Australia.

91. Financial markets offer many new opportunities for consumers but are also becoming increasingly complex. So that consumers can make informed financial decisions Labor supports:
- the full and transparent disclosure of all fees, charges, interest rates, risks and returns;
 - the introduction of truth in lending laws to provide consumers with effective interest rates;
 - advice about all available professional evaluations;
 - an end to unconscionable fees and charges; and
 - up front display of transaction fees at ATMs.
92. Labor will work with State and Territory governments to ensure that financial literacy is a prominent part of the education curriculum.
93. Labor will work with State and Territory governments to ensure comprehensive regulation by ASIC of mortgage brokers

and property investment schemes.

94. Consumers are entering a new economic era where goods and services are increasingly available in highly deregulated and complex markets. Labor will conduct an urgent audit of our existing regulatory structures to ensure that consumers are adequately protected in this new environment. The audit will include consultation and input from relevant industry and community organisations, including the relevant trade unions, and whether:

- the existing regulatory structures need to be redesigned to better protect consumers in the new economy;
- voluntary industry codes of conduct offer adequate protection to consumer interests in the new economy; and
- the Commonwealth's Trade Practices Act needs further amendment to outlaw unfair consumer contracts.

95. Labor will ensure that the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission is adequately resourced to protect the interests of consumers, in areas such as price exploitation, price monitoring, industry codes and pursuit of legal action against organisations in breach of consumer legislation.

96. Labor supports a strong consumer voice in government and will ensure that consumers are properly represented in policy processes and that all consumer advocates on government bodies are genuine representatives of Australian consumers.

97. Services such as mobile phones and the internet are increasingly essential to full participation in the economy. To protect consumers in these new growth areas, Labor supports the implementation of:
- cooling off periods in consumer internet and mobile phone contracts;

- an end to unconscionable fees and charges in consumer internet and mobile phone contracts; and
- strict standards to protect consumers engaging in electronic commerce consistent with international best practice standards.

98. Labor believes that every individual has a right to a clean and sustainable environment and that government has a responsibility to protect the environment.

99. The environment is a national asset. Labor recognises that environmental issues cross State boundaries and require national leadership and will:

- work with the States and Territories to achieve best outcomes in the national interest;
- assess the environmental and social impacts of all legislation and agreements entered into by the government; and
- establish an independent commissioner for the environment.

National Security

100. One of the primary obligations of government is to secure and defend its territory, people and economic and political interests. Military defence is a fundamental basis of any country's national security. However, effective national security relies on much more than military defence alone. Foreign policy, customs services, international crime detection, immigration policies, trade and economic policies all combine to contribute to a nation's security. In addition, maintaining critical infrastructure systems such as telecommunications and transport and ensuring the integrity of key information systems are vital to the nation's security.

101. Labor will establish an Office of National Security under the Prime Minister's portfolio to be headed by a National Security Advisor at permanent head level. This Office will develop Australia's first fully integrated national security policy.

Department of Homeland Security

102. Labor is committed to an effective and comprehensive plan for domestic security.
103. Labor will provide a secure environment in Australia to enable all to live, work and raise families in safety.
104. Labor believes greater efforts must be made to ensure that Australia is as effective as possible in the coordination of its homeland security, particularly in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks in the United States on 11 September 2001 and closer to home, in Bali on 12 October 2002.
105. Labor will establish a new Department, the Department of Homeland Security, to be responsible for security functions as well as certain non-security and administrative functions. The new Department will achieve better coordination between law enforcement, intelligence and security agencies as well as civil authorities and the Defence Organisation.
106. The Homeland Security portfolio will cover agencies such as the Australian Federal Police, the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation, the Australian Protective Service and the Protective Security Coordination Centre. Labor believes the creation of a cabinet level Homeland Security ministry will provide a more efficient and effective way to coordinate and integrate domestic security operations in Australia.

Protecting Our Coastline— Australian Coast Guard

107. The front line of Australia's national security in peacetime is our maritime jurisdiction and coastal borders. The increased prevalence of transnational organised crime, drug running, gun running and illegal fishing operations and Australia's environmental responsibility have created substantial new challenges to Australia's national security.
108. Labor believes that the most effective way to combat these threats to Australia's security is through a professional, disciplined, well resourced maritime law enforcement organisation.
109. Labor will establish an Australian Coast Guard. The Coast Guard will bring together in an effective and better coordinated way the marine surveillance and enforcement roles of all Commonwealth agencies.
110. The Australian Coast Guard will be responsible for the detection of and response to all incursions into Australian waters; for the enforcement of all Commonwealth laws as they relate to the maritime jurisdiction; for carrying out coastal surveillance and intelligence gathering operations; for coordinating maritime safety and search and rescue operations; and for coastal surveillance and protection against incursions in times of declared emergency and conflict.
111. In times of peace, the Coast Guard will be a civil law enforcement agency within the Homeland Security portfolio. It will be appropriately armed. It will coordinate its intelligence and surveillance work closely with the Australian Defence Force (ADF) and in times of war or declared emergency the Coast Guard

will come under the direct command of the Defence Force.

112. The Coast Guard will also have a volunteer and entirely civil reserve component to provide a localized search and rescue service. This component will not transfer to the ADF in times of war or emergency.

RESOLUTIONS

Family Law

The rate of divorce in Australia is such that it affects many members of the community and has far reaching economic, emotional and social effects on those immediately involved and the community generally.

Labor shall review the application of the family law process to develop a system that is less litigious. This shall focus on settlement as a first resort by introducing mediation, save in cases where domestic violence or sexual abuse is a factor in the relationship; capping of legal fees to the court scale and a case management process.



AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY 

Chapter Seven

Human Rights and Equal Opportunity for All

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Chapter Seven

Human Rights and Equal Opportunity for All

KEY ISSUES IN HUMAN RIGHTS

Basic Principles

1. Respect and support for internationally recognised human rights is fundamental to an equal, just, democratic, inclusive and tolerant society, and inherent to the dignity of each and every Australian.
2. Human rights are enjoyed not only by individuals, but collectively by all Australians. Respect for the individual and collective rights of others is essential to the protection and promotion of human rights.
3. Human rights are essential for the maintenance and enhancement of democracy and peace. Labor wants Australia to reassert its role as world leader in the promotion and protection of fundamental human rights both domestically and internationally.
4. Labor believes that all Australians have a right to equality before the law, to the due process of the law, to protection against discrimination, to freedom of thought, conscience, speech, association, including the right to join a union, and religion and peaceful assembly.
5. Labor is committed to supporting the international human rights instruments to which Australia is a signatory including:
 - the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;
 - the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights;
 - the International Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights;
 - the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women;

- the International Convention on the Rights of the Child;
- the International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination.

6. Labor will continue to support a properly funded Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC) as an independent body advising on, and inquiring into, the protection and advancement of human rights in Australia.
7. Labor will cooperate with the States and Territories to ensure that comprehensive and consistent human rights protection and enforcement mechanisms are available to all Australians.
8. Labor supports both the promotion of human rights internationally and the development of international standards and mechanisms for the protection and enforcement of these rights.

Labor will adhere to Australia's international human rights obligations and will seek to have them incorporated into the domestic law of Australia and taken into account in administrative decision making.
9. Labor recognises the fundamental rights and entitlements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians as the original owners of this land.
10. An awareness and understanding of the human rights enjoyed by all Australians is essential to their maintenance and protection. Labor will promote an awareness and understanding of human rights that should be enjoyed by all Australians and provide education to all Australians about the significance of, and the need to respect, human rights.

Constitutional Recognition

11. As a means of building community confidence in the constitutional recognition of the rights enjoyed by all

Australians, Labor will introduce a legislative Charter of Citizenship and Aspirations.

12. Labor supports constitutional reform to achieve a comprehensive recognition of the rights enjoyed by all Australians. These inalienable rights also carry with them a responsibility to respect the individual and collective rights enjoyed by others and the need to protect and promote institutions and practices fundamental to an equal, just, democratic and tolerant society.

Discrimination

13. Labor supports legislative and administrative action by all Australian governments to eliminate discrimination, including systemic discrimination, on the grounds of race, colour, sex, religion, sexuality, gender identity, disability, genetic makeup, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.
14. Where necessary, Labor will take special measures designed to achieve equality and eliminate the effects of both historic and contemporary discrimination.
15. Labor recognises the right of all people to live and work in an environment free from vilification or harassment, and will provide an accessible and effective means for all people to protect themselves from such behaviour.
16. Labor supports the enactment of comprehensive age discrimination legislation.
17. Labor supports the protection of the rights of children whilst respecting the proper role of parents and other persons responsible for their welfare.
18. Labor supports the appropriate protection of the religious freedom of all people.

19. Labor believes that people are entitled to respect, dignity and the ability to participate in society and receive the protection of the law regardless of their sexuality or gender identity. Labor supports the enactment of legislation prohibiting discrimination on the grounds of a person's sexuality or gender identity and will audit Commonwealth legislation to amend provisions that unfairly discriminate against any person on the grounds of sexuality or gender identity.
20. Labor recognises the right of those people living in rural, regional and remote communities to receive adequate levels of essential services in areas such as access to justice, health, education, housing, employment and technological and physical infrastructure.

WOMEN: MAKING EQUALITY REAL

21. Labor is concerned that women remain concentrated in lower-paid and lower-skilled jobs. Women are more likely to work part time, more likely to experience periods out of the labour force, and more likely to require support to balance work and family responsibilities throughout their lifetimes. To address these issues, Labor will implement measures to:
 - further reduce and ultimately eliminate the earnings gap between male and female workers;
 - further reduce occupational segregation;
 - ensure that women receive equal access to educational and training opportunities and ensure that women are encouraged and assisted to take up these opportunities;
 - ensure women equal access to opportunities within the workplace, specifically to promotions and career development;

- ensure that women have access to adequate retirement income, with a particular focus on increasing women's superannuation contributions;
 - recognise and value women's unpaid work, particularly caring and volunteer work;
 - develop specific programs to assist women to better balance work and family responsibilities, in particular high quality, flexible and affordable child care and before and after school care;
 - promote changes to both the industrial relations system and labour market programs that improve women's access to employment and to their conditions of employment;
 - provide strong mechanisms to remove sexual harassment and discrimination from the workplace;
 - recognise the particular issues faced by women in rural, regional and remote areas and seek to address inequalities of access to communication services, transport, training and employment;
 - recognise the particular issues faced by women of non-English speaking backgrounds and ensure government policies and programs are accessible and appropriate to their needs;
 - recognise the particular issues faced by indigenous women and ensure that government policies and programs are accessible and appropriate to their needs;
 - ensure appropriate measurement of the value of unpaid work to the economy; and
 - eliminate the exploitation, including sexual exploitation, of women and children, either in Australia or overseas.
22. Labor will:
- strengthen and improve the Sex Discrimination Act and the powers of the Commissioner to protect women against discrimination on the basis of gender and family and carer responsibility;
 - ensure the unfair taxation system introduced by the Coalition is made fairer for women;
 - invest in lifelong learning so that women are provided with equal opportunities to improve their skills and their life opportunities by getting a better education; and
 - provide Australian women with a new avenue to seek redress of their fundamental human rights where domestic avenues have been exhausted, by signing and pursuing ratification, through domestic treaty-making processes, of the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women.
23. Labor will provide the necessary support services which enable women to balance work and family responsibilities so that they can participate fully in the life of the community.
24. As women are the major users of health and community services, Labor will:
- ensure that health, housing, child care, aged care, and family and other community services are of high quality and affordable;
 - support the rights of women to determine their own reproductive lives, particularly the right to choose appropriate fertility control and abortion;
 - ensure that women have a choice regarding their reproductive lives on the basis of sound social and medical advice;
 - strengthen programs that assist women escaping family violence;

- provide assistance to carers, including carers in the workforce; and
- support the development of local and accessible justice, health, education and training and family and community service programs tailored to meet the needs of women living in rural, regional and remote Australia.

25. Labor will pay particular attention to keeping women and families out of poverty, acknowledging that women of all ages and their dependent children comprise the majority of Australians who live below the poverty line, as well as the majority of social security beneficiaries. Labor will continue to help families lift their living standards by:

- providing income support and health and community services to reduce the number of women and their children living in poverty;
- linking the provision of these services more directly to employment, education and training opportunities so that women can improve their living standards over their lifetime;
- reducing the tax and social security penalties that apply when many women return to work or increase their hours at work;
- ensuring that labour market programs of proven benefit to women are maintained and extended; and
- providing and promoting reskilling and re-education programs for women re-entering the workforce.

A Better Balance Between Work and Family

26. Labor will implement measures to:

- encourage employers to provide more family friendly workplaces, including the provision of paid family leave, extended unpaid parental leave, family friendly rostering provisions, paid maternity

leave, quality part time work including the opportunity to move between full and part time work, and family facilities;

- improve the affordability and accessibility of quality child care, and before and after school care, particularly at or near workplaces;
- provide greater support for pregnant and breastfeeding women in the workplace;
- encourage greater flexibility in the delivery of social security payments so that families, if they so choose, can afford to have one parent stay at home in the early years in a child's life;
- promote greater acceptance that women and men will temporarily interrupt their careers for parenting duties and reduce the indirect costs such as loss of benefits and uncertain or reduced employment status associated with these breaks; and
- target social and economic policies to the different needs of families as they pass through each life stage.

A Better Deal for Women from Federal Government

27. To improve the quality of government decision making as it relates to women, Labor will:

- introduce annual audits by an independent agency of the impact of specific Labor Government policies on women. These audits will be conducted in partnership with the Office of the Status of Women and will be made publicly available.

28. Labor will support and encourage women to contribute to the development and implementation of policies that affect their lives, and will fund organisations to advocate on behalf of and for women.

29. Labor will strengthen the Office of the Status of Women.

30. Labor will increase the representation of women in parliament, and will continue efforts to increase the number of women at senior levels in both the public and private sectors.

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

31. Labor believes that all portfolios must reflect the intrinsic value of children and young people in their policies and programs.
32. Labor will establish a specialised government Office for Children and Young People. The Office will have the responsibility for developing a coordinated strategy between, and analysing policies arising from, different portfolios for impacts on children and young people.
33. Labor will also establish a National Commissioner for Children and Young People in order to promote their interests as participants in our community and to promote investing in children and young people.
34. The National Commissioner for Children and Young People will establish a national code to protect children and young people from abuse. The national code will be developed in consultation with the States and Territories and will ensure that all organisations have adequate procedures to prevent abuse and handle any complaints. The code will include a national working with children check.

Young Australians: Consultation and Inclusion

35. Labor is committed to real consultation with children and young people about issues affecting them as well as including parents, communities, community organisations and advocacy groups. Labor will pursue a positive and integrated agenda which recognises and

values the strengths, contributions and resources of all young people.

36. Young people are a diverse group with different needs, concerns and aspirations. Labor is committed to the development of policies that support and service the different needs, concerns and aspirations of all young people including those who suffer from socio-economic disadvantage, neglect and abuse, shifts in education, employment and training patterns and technological change.
37. Labor is committed to ensuring successful transitions for young people leaving school to pursue employment, education and training. Labor will ensure that appropriate support services are available to young people so that their transition from school to further education and employment is as effective as possible.
38. Labor's education and training strategies will ensure that young Australians have high levels of literacy and numeracy, and the confidence, flexibility and maturity to contribute to, and participate in, our nation's economic, social, cultural and technological development.
39. Given structural changes in the economy and the greater flexibility which is demanded of the workforce, a commitment of both government and individuals to lifelong education and training is required to ensure that young workers can shift effectively into growth sectors of the economy.
- Unless young people are given greater certainty about their post-secondary pathways, they will inevitably lower their ambitions, and Australia will become a much weaker nation for this loss of ambition among its young citizens.
40. The role of education and training in preparing young people for the employment market, including the

exploration of career paths, development of job interview skills, workplace responsibilities and the rights of the employee, cannot be overstated.

Such job-focused education should be available through a wide range of outlets including schools, community groups and other convenient and youth accessible mediums such as the internet.

41. Labor is committed to enhancing pathways that will effect young people achieving employment and job security. In particular, the 15–19 age group requires relevant school to work transition programs, expanded work experience opportunities and work-orientated careers education in secondary schools. It is also the primary target group for apprenticeships and traineeships.
42. Labor will provide the support and assistance needed by young people at risk of not successfully making the transition to economic independence. Labor will invest in programs to assist young people who face barriers to participation and will integrate employment development for young people into its regional job creation programs.
43. Labor recognises the need to specifically address the health needs of young Australians, including physical and/or mental health issues, drug and alcohol education and the promotion of a healthy lifestyle. Labor will adopt an integrated health-based approach to youth suicide that works with existing community structures. Part of this approach will include strategies to address contributing factors such as depression, neglect, abuse, drug and alcohol problems, access to firearms and discrimination.
44. Labor will address the whole problem of youth homelessness, recognising the interconnection of employment and education opportunities and the need for

a voice in the community for young people. Labor recognises the higher incidence of physical and sexual assault among young people and the need for this to form a central element of service provision.

45. Labor recognises the need for the reinstatement of a peak youth representative body in order to facilitate a direct voice to government for youth service organisations, and to coordinate a national network of autonomous youth services. In addition to this, Labor will examine ways of improving the access of young people to make recommendations to government across all portfolio areas.
46. Labor will review the current citizenship rights extended to youth, including suffrage, discrimination and representation in the policy making process, and seek to extend these rights where they respond inadequately to young people's needs and legitimate aspirations.

INDIGENOUS AUSTRALIANS: THE WAY FORWARD

Basic Objectives

47. Labor believes that Indigenous Australians must be able to:
 - exercise and enjoy the fundamental human rights to which all Australians are entitled;
 - exercise and enjoy the distinct rights which attach to Indigenous Australians as a group, as the original owners of this continent;
 - share in and contribute to the economic and social advantages available to all Australians as citizens of a first world nation;
 - exercise their right to self determination within the Australian nation;
 - exercise and enjoy their unique cultures; and

—share with other Australians the real, practical benefit of reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians.

48. Reconciliation is fundamentally important to Australia's capacity to face the future as a united, peaceful, proud and just nation. Labor will continue to pursue reconciliation with the aim of achieving a lasting settlement between indigenous peoples and other Australians. Labor recognises that reconciliation is a mutual process which requires national leadership and involves all Australians.

Guiding Principles

49. A federal Labor Government will work with the States and Territories to reduce the gap in living standards between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians and provide the strongest framework for advancing the rights and responsibilities of Indigenous Australians.
50. Labor is committed to the spirit of the 1967 constitutional amendment that gave the federal parliament the power to make laws for the benefit of Indigenous Australians. The position of indigenous peoples must be seen as a national commitment.
51. Labor will support the indigenous community's commitment to good governance of its institutions and the developing role of Native Title Representative Bodies, Native Title Bodies Corporate and emerging regional authorities. Improved governance is aimed at ensuring indigenous peoples are in the best position to negotiate the enjoyment of their rights and self determination arrangements. These arrangements must be based upon support for capacity building and leadership development and must be adequately resourced so that indigenous peoples are on an equal footing in land ownership/native title negotiations and legal process.
52. Economic development is a key to achieving improved social and economic outcomes and self determination for Indigenous Australians as a lasting reality.
53. Labor will pursue a partnership arrangement with indigenous peoples in a whole of government approach to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander affairs. Labor will pursue new agreements involving indigenous peoples, federal, State and local governments in relation to the delivery of both mainstream and indigenous specific programs. Labor will empower indigenous leaders to work in partnership for such programs and solutions.
54. The design of policy and the delivery of services must be developed in consultation with indigenous peoples at the local, regional and national levels and based on objective assessment of needs and focused on targets and time frames. Labor will set targets and time frames for the achievement of outcomes as the basis for measuring the progress of government policy.
55. Labor will work towards negotiated, comprehensive regional agreements that address a range of areas including land issues, heritage protection, economic development, cultural support and service delivery. Programs and services must be delivered in a culturally appropriate manner. To the greatest extent possible, indigenous peoples must have control over the initiation, development and delivery of policy, programs and services. This control must be exercised from the local community level in conformity with the principle of self determination.
56. Labor will work to overcome the misunderstanding in the broader

community as to the root causes of Indigenous Australians' disadvantage. That misunderstanding presents one of the most critical obstacles to the achievement of the primary objectives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander policy.

57. Accountability must apply with equal rigour to all agencies expending public funds in this area. Accountability requirements will be designed to assist indigenous-controlled organisations to achieve target outcomes. State, Territory and local governments will be held accountable for outcomes in areas for which they are responsible, and for programs using Commonwealth-sourced funding.

Land Rights

58. Dispossession is critically related to the contemporary circumstances of Indigenous Australians. Land holds a unique spiritual and cultural significance for Indigenous Australians.
59. Access to land and security of title are essential to enable Indigenous Australians to fully exercise their economic, social and cultural rights.
60. Wherever possible, land use and ownership issues will be resolved through negotiations directed towards achieving workable, lasting coexistence.
61. Native title is a property right recognised by the common law of Australia. Native titleholders are entitled to the full protection of the law in exercising their rights.
62. Labor believes that many of the 1998 amendments to the Native Title Act are unjust, unworkable and open to legal challenge. Labor will defend, preserve and build upon the mechanism embodied in the Native Title Act of 1993 for the constructive and lasting resolution of land issues arising from the Mabo Decision. It recognises that both practical considerations and further court decisions in this emerging area of legal understanding will necessitate refinement of this legislation in the future. Labor remains committed to the ongoing development and delivery of the Social Justice Package promised to indigenous representatives as part of the negotiated package in 1993. Labor will negotiate the details and timeframes for implementing this package in the first term of the next Labor Government.
63. Labor will encourage the negotiation of regional agreements between non-indigenous land users, governments and indigenous land claimants. Under the regional agreements framework, native title will be the catalyst for lasting, integrated solutions to the economic and social challenges faced by regional Australia.
64. Education for all Australians about the significance and value of native title is essential to realising the benefits of native title for all Australians. Labor Governments will therefore implement substantial public education campaigns to enhance understanding in the wider community about indigenous history, land claims and native title generally.
65. Statutory land rights regimes have provided the foundations for economic, social and cultural development in many indigenous communities throughout Australia. Labor will build upon that success.
66. Labor reaffirms, as the basis for the Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act, the principles of the Aboriginal Land Rights Commission (Woodward Report), which include:

- the rights of traditional owners in relation to access and development on their land;
- protection of sacred sites; and
- the existence of adequately resourced land councils with statutory responsibilities for the representation and protection of Aboriginal interests in relation to land.

Health

67. Labor acknowledges the wide disparity between the health status of Indigenous Australians and the general Australian community. Labor recognises that within the indigenous population health needs vary depending on a number of factors including geographical location, gender, age and experience of health service provision.
68. Labor recognises the problems indigenous people face in accessing health services. Programs will best serve the health needs of Indigenous Australians if they are included in the formulation, establishment and ongoing delivery of such programs. Culturally sensitive and appropriate health programs will be more accessible and effective for Indigenous Australians.
69. Health services formulation directed and delivered with a regional focus, that takes into account intra-community differences and variance of age, gender, and health provision experience, will best tackle the diverse health problems within indigenous communities.
70. There is a fundamental link between the health status of Indigenous Australians and all other aspects of their disadvantage. Labor is committed to a continually monitored reduction of mortality and morbidity indicators to levels comparable with the general Australian community.

71. Labor recognises the concern many indigenous communities have regarding particular health problems, notably domestic violence, substance abuse, sexual assault and suicide. Labor is committed to working with indigenous communities on a regional level to address the fundamental causes of particular health problems these communities have. Labor believes problems such as these must be seen in a health context as well as being law and order problems. By addressing the causes with remedies supported by and involving the local communities, Labor believes the incidence of these problems can be reduced.

Housing

72. Indigenous Australians are entitled to adequate and appropriate housing. Labor will set objective national benchmarks for adequate and appropriate housing, and time frames for meeting those targets.
73. Labor is aware of the current poor housing experienced by many Indigenous Australians. Labor will work with local land councils, housing service deliverers and government agencies on a State and regional basis to ensure that funds designated for housing are appropriately used. Labor is committed to housing that meets the unique needs of local indigenous communities and is culturally appropriate.

Education

74. Labor recognises the key role of education in the economic empowerment, health and employment prospects of Indigenous Australians. Labor further recognises the potential for appropriate education to preserve and enrich indigenous peoples' cultures.
75. Education policy must respond to the appalling reality of current outcomes and

the disparity between outcomes for indigenous and non-indigenous people. Labor is committed to indigenous specific programs, such as ABSTUDY, which have made a significant contribution to improving indigenous education outcomes.

76. While recognising that education and training are primarily State and Territory responsibilities, Labor recognises that the federal government has a particular obligation to ensure that indigenous people have fair access to appropriate education to meet their needs and aspirations, including improved education and training outcomes. Labor is committed to improving indigenous participation in tertiary education across all disciplines and levels of study, and will encourage the recognition and valuing of indigenous knowledge within higher education institutions.
77. Labor is committed to working with indigenous communities to maintain and extend access to bilingual education where it is supported by those communities to facilitate better education for Indigenous Australians, while preserving and enriching indigenous culture.
78. Subject to the need for significantly enhanced outcomes, Labor recognises the variety of educational needs and aspirations across indigenous communities. Labor is committed to education programs that are regionally focused and that recognise these differences in their content and delivery. The involvement of indigenous people in the preparation and ongoing delivery of educational services is vital to the success of such programs.

Economic Development and Employment

79. Employment programs must reflect the reality that unemployment amongst Indigenous Australians is chronic and is projected to increase dramatically in the next decade.
80. Program design and delivery must respond to specific regional, gender and age variations. Programs to address indigenous unemployment must identify, harness and develop labour markets with genuine potential for sustainable employment. A sustainable land base and access to resources for community development initiatives will be integrated into programs to combat indigenous unemployment through economic development.
81. Labor will improve the operation of the Aboriginal Councils and Associations Act as a means to greater economic development in indigenous communities.

Regional Development

82. Indigenous communities are an integral part of regional Australia. Indigenous programs often provide much needed funding and development to small isolated communities. Labor recognises the important role such programs play in both indigenous and non-indigenous life in these regional communities and is committed to their continuation and enhancement.
83. Labor acknowledges the disadvantage indigenous and non-indigenous people face in regional areas. Labor is committed to the inclusion of indigenous representatives in the formulation, introduction and ongoing supervision of programs that seek to revitalise regional areas with significant indigenous populations. Through meaningful inclusion, Labor will ensure all regional

residents have a share in the economic and cultural benefits these programs may deliver.

84. Regional agreements, based on the mutual recognition of converging interests between all people living in regional areas, will be an important part of achieving respect for, and inclusion of, indigenous peoples in regional development. This will involve legally binding undertakings by governments in relation to the delivery and management of both indigenous specific and mainstream programs and services.

Protecting the Cultural Heritage

85. Labor supports strengthened heritage protection legislation to deliver improved economic, social and cultural outcomes, with a continuing role for the Commonwealth in upholding its constitutional responsibilities to Indigenous Australians.
86. Labor recognises the need for balance between ensuring that indigenous peoples possess the power to protect their own culture, both past and present, and the right to economic development for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. Non-adversarial processes that include indigenous peoples in the protection of their heritage, cultural and intellectual property will ensure greater certainty for development.
87. Labor is committed to promoting respect for the heritage and living cultures of indigenous peoples by promoting policies that:
 - support the preservation and recording of indigenous cultural heritage;
 - facilitate and promote appropriate means for sustaining and transmitting the living cultures of Australia's indigenous peoples;
 - support the repatriation of indigenous artefacts and human remains removed

without indigenous consent and repositied in overseas collections;

- guarantee indigenous involvement in decisions on the location, care and rules of access to cultural artefacts in Australian public collections;
- protect the culture and heritage of Indigenous Australians from expropriation, exploitation and desecration; and
- protect, preserve and revitalise indigenous languages . The urgency of this is underscored by the possibility of most languages disappearing over the next generation.

Conserving the Natural Environment

88. Labor recognises the special connection many Indigenous Australians maintain with the land and the primary role of the natural environment in indigenous culture and tradition. In accordance with this special relationship, Labor is committed to the involvement of indigenous peoples in the management structures overseeing the maintenance of parks, waterways and other public spaces with which local indigenous people have affinity.
89. Labor is committed to fostering an understanding and respect for the traditional native title rights of local indigenous people on such lands. This will be achieved in part through the involvement of local indigenous people in the management of parks and other public areas with which there is indigenous affinity.
90. Labor recognises that Indigenous Australians' knowledge and experience of the land is a beneficial asset in the management and use of our environment. Labor will ensure that Indigenous Australians are involved in the formulation, implementation and ongoing delivery of environmental programs.

Deaths in Custody

91. The problem of deaths in custody is inseparable from the broader disadvantage experienced by Indigenous Australians.

92. Labor will seek to overcome the underlying causes of high imprisonment rates among Indigenous Australians, through effective action in all other areas of indigenous affairs.

Labor will consult with indigenous communities about creating establishments where youth and young adults, caught up in the court system, can be dealt with by their respective Elders using traditional methods (provided the traditional method would not constitute a crime under Australian law).

Labor will continue to oppose mandatory detention when applied to juvenile offenders and to adults, as it is discriminatory in practice and ineffective in reducing crime or criminality.

93. Labor recognises that the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody recommendations and the Commonwealth, State and Territory responses to the Royal Commission, provide a specific and targeted agenda for governments to tackle Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander disadvantage and aspirations, and will continue to support the implementation of its detailed recommendations by all levels of government.

The Stolen Generations

94. Labor recognises that past government policies which separated indigenous children from their families continue to have economic, social and cultural effects among indigenous communities in Australia. The legacies of these past policies are a fundamental source of indigenous disadvantage today.

95. Labor recognises the importance of the National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from their Families (the Bringing Them Home Report) in initiating the debate on, and widening understanding of, past government policies separating indigenous children from their families. These policies continue to have lasting economic, social and cultural effects among indigenous communities in Australia. The legacies of these past policies are a fundamental source of indigenous disadvantage today.

96. The Howard Government's continuing inadequate response to the Bringing Them Home Report has only compounded the problems experienced by members of the Stolen Generations. The unwillingness to extend a formal apology on behalf of the Commonwealth to members of the Stolen Generations, and the refusal to contemplate the issue of compensation on a compassionate level has forced claimants into the adversarial court system, creating further hardship on those who have already suffered.

97. Labor will implement a comprehensive response to the recommendations of the Bringing Them Home Report. A Labor Government will formally apologise on behalf of the Commonwealth for the deficient past policies and practices identified in the Inquiry's report.

Migrant Australians: Responding To Particular Needs

98. Australia is a multicultural society. Labor recognises that it is part of the Commonwealth government's responsibility to assist all Australians to live together productively and have an equal sense of opportunity and belonging to the nation.

99. Labor will positively promote the strength that Australia gains from recognising and valuing our diversity and will combat prejudice and discrimination aimed at any migrant community through community education programs and anti-discrimination legislation.

Labor will maintain effective and independent processes for resolving complaints about prejudice and discrimination.

100. Labor also recognises that some migrants will have particular needs and may require settlement assistance.
101. Labor will ensure that Australia's international obligations towards asylum seekers and refugees are met, and Labor will positively promote the rights of refugees and asylum seekers. Refugees, including those who arrive as asylum seekers, and persons admitted under humanitarian programs, some of whom have suffered torture and trauma before arriving in Australia, will receive appropriate support, including counselling for trauma.
102. Labor will support a network of Migrant Resource Centres, provide adequate English language programs to new arrivals and maintain adequate interpreter and translation services, and fund needs-based settlement services.

Australians With Disabilities: Closing The Access Gap

103. People with disability in Australia have the same rights as other Australians and form a valuable part of our inclusive society where individual difference is valued.

Labor is committed to policies and programs for people with disabilities which:

- recognise and promote the worth and dignity, and improve the quality of life, of people with disabilities, and which encourage and support their participation in the community;
- improve access for people with disabilities to open employment at decent wages, to other appropriate day activities, to the full range of accommodation options, to transport and the built environment, to health, rehabilitation and community services, to recreational activities, and to the education and training opportunities available to other Australians;
- provide specific redress against discrimination on the basis of disability;
- improve community awareness and understanding of physical, intellectual, and psychiatric disability; and
- recognise the critical importance of carers and support them in assisting people with disabilities to maintain their independence in the community.

Labor recognises that the life cycle requirements for people with disabilities from early childhood to the aged years will require appropriate long-term national planning together with the States and Territories.

104. Labor recognises the need for the Commonwealth State/Territory Disability Agreement (CSTDA) to provide national leadership and coordination of services for people with disability throughout Australia. Labor recognises the vital importance of a standard approach to the assessment of need and delivery of services to people with disabilities. Labor will pursue through the CSTDA the adoption of a national approach to disability policy that seeks to deliver a consistent approach to the delivery of services. People with disabilities and

their families want to achieve a level of security in their living arrangements and a sense of certainty that basic life needs will be taken care of. Many families are desperately concerned that their children or relatives will not have support into the future.

Labor supports:

- a national approach to disability policy, continuing to provide services for people with disabilities through mainstream programs where appropriate and through disability-specific programs where they are necessary;
- equitable access to services for people with physical, intellectual and psychiatric disability;
- cooperation between the Commonwealth and State/Territories to reassess the CSTDA to ensure cooperation and strategic planning between governments;
- ongoing collaboration between the government and people with disabilities, their families, carers, service providers and key stakeholders to ensure that the CSTDA is indeed a national plan to address their support needs efficiently and effectively;
- initiatives that make information about disability services more streamlined and accessible;
- a collaborative and cooperative approach between the Commonwealth and State/Territory governments and service providers to reduce the administrative complexity of the disability service sector;
- a collaborative and cooperative approach between the Commonwealth and State/Territories to address the crisis of unmet need and demand in housing, accommodation and respite

services and develop and encourage innovative funding and service models across jurisdictions to better suit the diverse needs of people with disability.

- increased resources to continue the twenty year program of implementing the access standards under the Disability Discrimination Act, with priority given to public transport, education and access to premises;
- the trialling of innovative approaches to the financing and delivery of services and aids for people with disabilities and their carers;
- strengthening advocacy services, user rights, complaints, and advisory mechanisms for people with disabilities; and
- the development and funding of services which are flexible enough to respond to the specific needs and aspirations of different individuals with disabilities and their families.

105. Labor will retain the Disability Discrimination Act and Commissioner within the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission.

IMMIGRATION

A Link to Australia's Future Growth

106. Labor will ensure immigration levels are set within the framework of a population policy fashioned in Australia's interest and consistent with international and humanitarian commitments. The system of setting immigration targets year by year without any underlying rationale or long-term policy framework has contributed to declining public confidence in the program. Moving to long-term planning will achieve greater stability and confidence.
107. Labor is committed to maintaining a non-discriminatory immigration policy. Labor

recognises the economic and social contribution that has been made by immigrants and refugees throughout our nation's history. Labor regards Australia's diversity as a source of national strength and nation building and will consistently oppose those who seek to poison Australia's social cohesion by fostering extremism, hatred or ethnic division.

108. Labor will ensure that the current system and criteria for granting visitor visas is addressed and that a more equitable, flexible, fair and non-discriminatory system is implemented while at all times maintaining the integrity of our immigration program.
109. Labor will administer a fair and flexible refugee and humanitarian program. While acknowledging that Australia has one of the world's most generous humanitarian programs, Labor will ensure that unforeseen world events that necessitate special responses can be accommodated. Labor will examine immigration intake consistent with a population policy for nation building and will work with regions seeking population growth to find options to assist additional immigration. Labor will ensure that Australia's non-refoulement obligations under international law are met.
110. Labor's refugee and asylum seeker policy will be in accordance with the following principles:
 - that Australia should comply with the letter and the spirit of the obligations Australia has voluntarily assumed by signing the Refugee Convention and other relevant international instruments;
 - that a Labor Government should seek to lead world debate on the new agreements and understandings required to ensure that the Convention and the international protection

system function effectively over the long-term, including encouraging countries in our region to become signatories to the existing Refugee Convention;

- that a Labor Government should develop further multilateral solutions, recognising the importance of regional neighbours, with the aim of eradicating people smuggling, deterring secondary movement and enabling genuine refugees to access processing and appropriate settlement outcomes;
- that Australia should seek to eradicate people smuggling, which is an organised criminal activity that costs lives, by effective law enforcement as well as relevant international agreements;
- that, as a matter of fairness, Australia should seek to assist the world's most vulnerable whether those persons are within or beyond our immediate line of sight;
- that Australia should take its fair share of refugees for resettlement and contribute a fair share to international aid efforts and to UNHCR to alleviate the pressing humanitarian needs of displaced persons;
- that asylum claims made in Australia should be assessed in a manner which is both fast and affords procedural fairness, with those found to have genuine claims and not able to be resettled in other Refugee Convention signatory countries provided with appropriate settlement outcomes and services, while those without genuine refugee or humanitarian claims are quickly returned;
- that mandatory detention be used for the proper administrative purposes of ensuring the health, identity and

security checking of all unauthorised arrivals, enabling the expediting of processing and ensuring that those whose claims have failed are locatable and available for removal from Australia;

—that the conditions of detention be humane and appropriate to the needs of asylum seekers, with appropriate arrangements made to meet the needs of unaccompanied children and family groups; and

—that the length and conditions of detention be subject to review and that detention centres be managed by the public sector.

111. Labor will administer a fairer and more balanced immigration program. While the current ratio of skilled to family migration will remain largely unchanged, sub-categories such as the parents stream will be expanded to better reflect the value of family reunion and the family unit within Australian society.

112. Labor will review the current asylum seekers' appeal mechanism to ensure that its decision making and operation is both cost efficient, fair and consistent. While the rights of asylum seekers to seek judicial review must be maintained, it is important that a streamlined and more formal system of appeal is instituted to provide a better filter and alleviate the higher courts' immigration caseload burden.

113. Labor recognises that the Refugee Convention has always envisaged that the protection of the Convention might not be required on an ongoing basis.

Accordingly, Labor will maintain a Temporary Protection Visa (TPV) system for unauthorised arrivals. Labor will introduce a one-off TPV period of two years, after which, consistent with the

Convention, if ongoing protection is still required, permanent protection will be provided.

Labor will ensure that in addition to existing services, TPV holders have access to English language training and employment assistance. Labor will also ensure appropriate settlement support and alleviate the financial and organisational burden borne by the States, Territories, welfare and volunteer organisations.

114. Labor will review the system of temporary entry visas and act to prevent the establishment in Australia of a semi-permanent group of 'guest workers' on short-term but renewable visas. Labor will maintain a cap on the size of the working holiday scheme and prevent it becoming a de facto labour market program. Labor will institute research into the labour market impact of the working holiday visa scheme.

115. Labor will ensure that adequate resources are allocated to Australia's overseas immigration posts to liaise and maintain relationships with local authorities in order to prevent or minimise illegal immigration and in particular to highlight the dangers facing people undertaking this dangerous activity and ensure information is available on Australia's refugee programs.

Labor will also ensure that close political and diplomatic relations are maintained with all those countries where known people smuggling operations exist and where there is a high incidence of illegal immigration.

116. Labor will ensure that the highest level of service and coordination is restored and adequate resources are provided to organisations that assist in the

settlement and counselling of newly arrived migrants and refugees, recognising the value of volunteer contribution in these areas whilst not exploiting their goodwill.

117. A Labor Government will examine the provision of incentives to newly arrived migrants to settle in regional areas. Such incentives, along with a program of ethno-specific infrastructure development, will ensure that regional migration will provide long-term benefits for both the newly settled migrants and the original community.
118. Labor's initiatives will include fostering a secure environment conducive to companies planning ahead to meet future skill needs. The identification of emerging skill shortages is crucial to ensure that as far as possible skilled vacancies are filled by unemployed Australians who have gained qualifications from training programs in this country. The intake of skilled migrants should always be determined in the context of local employment policy.
119. To this end Labor supports the further development of closer consultation between the employment and immigration departments in determining intakes of skilled migrants.
120. Labor also supports the further development and effective implementation of employer sponsorship schemes and labour agreements. These seek to ensure that employers wishing to bring in skilled migrants to fill particular vacancies must consult with the employment department and relevant trade unions, provide justification for that admission, and agree to provide appropriate training to local people in the area of skills sought.

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Multiculturalism

Labor recognises the reality that Australia is and will remain a truly multicultural society, consisting of people from a rich variety of cultural, ethnic, linguistic and religious backgrounds. The values of multiculturalism are directly relevant to our continuing desire to be a tolerant, fair and united nation.

Labor's multicultural agenda seeks to capitalise on the opportunities presented by our diversity and to manage the challenges that can arise from it.

Labor recognises that migrants and their children are entitled to retain their customs, beliefs and traditions, as are long established groups and our indigenous peoples.

Nevertheless, issues of identity are complex and rarely static and multiculturalism must relate to the lived daily experience of these Australians.

Labor regards our cultural diversity as an asset that enhances Australia's ability to compete in the international marketplace and to make a real and worthwhile contribution to international affairs. We will seek to identify and overcome attitudinal barriers that work against these aims and will expand information programs that detail the cultural, linguistic and religious backgrounds of our peoples.

Labor believes that multiculturalism entails obligations as well as rights. These include respect for our parliamentary democracy, the rule of law, freedom of speech and religion, respect for the rights and liberties of others, equality of the sexes and English as the national language.

Labor will work to isolate and overcome those who seek to poison our social cohesion by fostering extremism, hatred or ethnic division and will ensure that appropriate social support services are

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provided to prevent groups in our society feeling marginalised or neglected.

Labor recognises that there is a pressing need to develop a proper research capacity on questions of citizenship and multicultural affairs independent of government.

Community Relations

Labor reconfirms its commitment to appropriate anti-discrimination legislation and to providing effective and independent processes for resolving complaints about discrimination and vilification.

Labor will restructure the Living in Harmony program to deliver more effective education programs and community-based projects to combat racism and intolerance. These programs will include measures to encourage greater dialogue and cooperation between different religious faiths and national ethnic organisations.

Labor will institute an appropriate community relations strategy to deal with threats to community harmony, including tensions arising from international events. Under this strategy, government and community leaders will be encouraged to again speak up for tolerance, moderation and respect.

Labor recognises that community relations efforts sometimes need to focus on specific geographical areas and will seek to work with appropriate State and local government agencies, and community organisations, to achieve positive outcomes.

Access and Equity

Labor will develop a clear access and equity strategy as part of its broader commitment to social justice. This strategy will seek to ensure that policy and program development by government agencies is responsive to the cultural, ethnic, linguistic and religious diversity of the community.

Labor recognises that access to employment, proper labour market programs and income

support has deteriorated under the Coalition. Labor's access and equity strategy will include measures to improve the availability of these vital supports to migrants and humanitarian arrivals.

Labor will also require agency heads to put in place workplace measures to make best use of the diversity available in the workforce and the wider community, and to overcome discrimination.

Labor believes that access and equity issues are best dealt with by the prime minister's department on a whole of government basis, with community input through an appropriate advisory committee.

Citizenship

Labor believes that citizenship is the common bond that unites us all in a mutual commitment to Australia. It is the key that can open the door to the full participation of migrants in our society.

Labor will retain the current citizenship residence, language, and character requirements, which are welcoming by international standards.

Labor believes that we must redouble our efforts to encourage the increased take up of citizenship by eligible permanent residents and to ensure that applicants properly understand the responsibilities and privileges of citizenship.

Labor will streamline the citizenship resumption arrangements for those who lost citizenship as a result of previous provisions regarding dual citizenship in Australian and Maltese law.

Labor will reactivate the Australian Citizenship Council to monitor current legislation and practice and improve the availability of data on citizenship trends and decisions.

Labor recognises that growing numbers of Australians now live overseas on an extended

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basis and will ensure that Commonwealth agencies improve their understanding of the needs of overseas Australians and better communicate with them.

Migrant Settlement Services

Labor recognises that the migration process raises frequent adjustment challenges for individuals and families. It is in our national interest to ensure that migrants and humanitarian arrivals receive targeted high quality assistance with the settlement process.

Labor will improve the availability and integration of Commonwealth-funded migrant settlement services, focusing on the newly arrived and those in greatest need.

Labor will increase coordination and cooperation with the States and Territories on settlement issues and will seek to work in partnership with local councils and community organisations.

Labor will ensure that those currently holding Temporary Protection Visas do not remain in limbo in the community for extended periods, without access to appropriate settlement services such as English language classes.

Labor recognises that the availability of English classes under the Adult Migrant Education Program is crucial to the settlement process and will ensure that contracted service providers deliver high quality and cost effective tuition.

Labor will restructure current settlement services for new humanitarian arrivals to improve service integration, case management and the provision of accommodation-related assistance.

Labor will continue the provision of interpreting and translating services to eligible clients and will work with the States and Territories to address issues facing the interpreting workforce.

Labor will ensure that ongoing core funding is provided for the maintenance of a network

of community-controlled Migrant Resource Centres in high settlement regions. These centres will provide information advice and referral services, foster the development of specific services, promote greater awareness of the needs of migrants and refugees, and provide a base for other sessional services and community functions.

Labor will continue project funding to community organisations and councils to deliver appropriate settlement services, promote client needs to mainstream service providers and promote community capacity building amongst specific groups or in specific locations. Labor will give priority consideration to the more recently arrived and economically disadvantaged groups but rejects the notion that the need for settlement services ceases at some arbitrarily defined point.

The Implementation of Labor's Refugee and Asylum Seeker Policy in Government

Labor believes in an orderly immigration system, a system based on the rule of law, a system of integrity in which the Australian people will have confidence and trust.

For the Australian people to have confidence in the administration of our immigration system, it must be built upon rigorous procedures and processes, which protect our national interest and our national borders.

We must also treat individuals fairly and with dignity. To treat individuals fairly requires that they are dealt with in a speedy and efficient manner, where decisions are based on fair procedures and subject to appropriate review.

Protecting our national interest and our national borders requires zero tolerance for people smugglers, who will be subject to harsher penalties to deter their activities and stop unauthorised boat arrivals.

It is also in our national interest to conduct ourselves as a good international citizen, to

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do our fair share for those who are subject to persecution and who need protection.

Labor in Government will ensure that our borders are secure and that the processing and detention of asylum seekers is fair.

In Government, Labor will:

Protecting our borders

- Create an Australian Coastguard;
- Implement harsh penalties for people smugglers, including life sentences for the worst of the people smugglers;
- Effect strong international and regional arrangements to deter secondary movements of asylum seekers;
- Continue the excision of Christmas Island, Cocos (Keeling) Islands and Ashmore Reef from Australia's migration zone; and
- Introduce a Foreign Worker ID Card to crack down on illegal workers and protect Australian jobs and conditions, with tough new penalties for employers who knowingly hire illegal foreign workers.

Mandatory Detention

- Maintain mandatory detention as an essential part of Labor's approach;
- Provide open hostel style supervised accommodation for those with prima facie claims who are not a health, security or absconding risk;
- Remove children from detention centres and care for unaccompanied children through foster or community care arrangements, with children and their family members (subject to health and security risks) in open hostel style supervised accommodation;
- Return detention centres to the public sector, with centres managed by Commonwealth Officers;
- Provide access to detention centres for the media and independent medical professionals; and

- Create an independent Inspector General of Detention to monitor detention conditions and to deal with complaints.

Better Processing

- End the so called "Pacific Solution", with its huge cost to Australian taxpayers;
- Determine 90% of claims within 90 days;
- Provide an independent review of those claims not determined in 90 days, with a goal of processing all claims within twelve months;
- Process claims quickly through a new Refugee Determination Tribunal, with appeals to Federal Magistrates; and
- Provide a processing and detention facility on Christmas Island.

Temporary Protection Visas

- Maintain a Temporary Protection Visa (TPV) system for unauthorised arrivals with a one-off TPV period of two years, after which, if ongoing protection is still required, provide permanent protection;
- Immediately upon coming to office, conduct a review of the circumstances of each existing TPV holder of two years or more duration, giving priority to those who have been on a TPV for the longest period. Where a TPV holder has been in the community longer than two years, if ongoing protection is required, provide permanent protection.

If ongoing protection is no longer required, offer permanent residence to a TPV holder who passes a rigorous public interest test where it is found the person is the sort of person who Australia would otherwise select for a migration program—someone who has made, and can continue to make, economic, social, community and family contributions beneficial to the Australian community, particularly within rural or regional Australia.

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—Enable TPV holders to access English language training and employment assistance in addition to existing services; and

—Ensure asylum seekers and refugees in the Australian community have, either through Commonwealth, State or community based services, appropriate health, income and settlement support, as well as alleviate the financial and organisational burden currently borne by the States, Territories, welfare and volunteer organisations.

Labor's Minister for Immigration will report to the first National Conference after the election of a Labor Government on the progress of the implementation of Labor's refugee and asylum seeker policy.

Stolen Generations

This conference notes that a Labor Government will formally apologise to the Stolen Generations. Conference also notes the special responsibility that the Commonwealth had in relation to the Northern Territory Aboriginal Community with regard to this past policy. For this reason the apology will reflect the different historical roles played by the Commonwealth in respect of the Northern Territory on the one hand and the rest of Australia on the other.

Indigenous Community Consultation

Labor firmly believes that comprehensive consultation and negotiation with a wide range of indigenous community stakeholders is essential for sound indigenous policy development and commits itself to this course.

Labor will continue to foster the development of ATSIC as a self determining indigenous organisation.

Reconciliation

This Conference reaffirms Labor's commitment to reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians.

Labor:

—Commits to extending a national apology to Indigenous Australians for the lasting economic, social and cultural legacy of dispossession, including the forced separation of Indigenous Australian children from their families.

—Recognises the right of Indigenous Australians to exercise self-determination within the Australian nation and resolves to work with indigenous communities to strengthen their sense of responsibility.

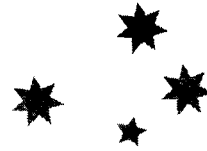
—Apologises for our Party's role in the development, administration and promotion of past practices and policies that caused profound grief, loss and damage to Indigenous Australians.

—Condemns the Howard Government for denying the consequences of dispossession, failing to deliver its self-defined and limiting "practical reconciliation" agenda and abandoning genuine reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians.

—Commits to work towards the elimination of the discrimination and disadvantage experienced by Indigenous Australians.

—Celebrates and values the enduring contribution of Indigenous Australian culture, society and spirituality to our nation; and

—Commits to providing national leadership on reconciliation and adopt the six recommendations contained in the Final Report of the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation.



AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY



Chapter Eight

A Sustainable Environment

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Chapter Eight

A Sustainable Environment

Basic Principles

1. Labor recognises that a high standard of living and a healthy and sustainable economy rely on a healthy and sustainable environment. Long-term economic growth depends on the ability to conserve, repair and maintain our natural resource base.
2. The natural environment is our greatest asset, sustaining our economy and society and providing the context in which they develop.
3. Biodiversity is at the core of the natural environment, with a web of plants and animals that sustain and rejuvenate our natural systems.
4. All Australians deserve to live in a healthy environment with clean air, clean water, safe food, healthy wildlife and plenty of green space for our children to play in.
5. With vision and leadership, Australians do not have to choose between a healthy environment and a strong economy—we can have both.
6. Australia can and should be an environmental showcase. The quality of our air, our water, our beaches, and our wildlife is second to none.
7. We have both the opportunity and the responsibility to safeguard and protect our environment, on behalf of the whole world, for our children and their children.
8. More than 200 years of non-indigenous settlement in Australia has had a profound impact on our continent's uniquely fragile and complex range of ecosystems.
9. Without concerted international effort, serious and irreversible environmental damage will continue to occur. A safe,

clean and sustainable global environment is in Australia's national interest and Australia has a responsibility to future generations and the international community to repair, maintain and protect it.

10. Labor believes the Commonwealth government must play a leadership role in environmental matters, with an integrated, whole of government approach to environmental protection.
11. Labor is committed to accountability, shared responsibility and transparency in addressing environmental issues at all levels of government and society.

Vision

12. Labor believes that Australia is in a strong position to prepare for an environmentally sustainable future.
13. Australian scientists, researchers and developers are among those leading the world in understanding the environmental challenges we face and developing solutions to them.
14. Where there are threats of serious or irreversible damage to the environment, and available scientific information is inconclusive, Labor supports a cautious approach with appropriate environmental safeguards.

A healthy and sustainable environment will improve living standards, create jobs and encourage growth of sustainable industries.

Ecologically sustainable development represents a future for regional Australia, with regional delivery of natural resource management, sustainable agricultural practices and opportunities for new industries.

15. The international community increasingly recognises the need for sustainable development. Labor believes that early

environmental action will position Australia to take advantage of growing global markets for sustainable products and services and deliver improved quality of life.

Water

16. Sustainable use of water resources is Australia's biggest environmental challenge. Australia is the world's driest inhabited continent, yet we are amongst its highest per capita users of water. We have been too profligate in our use of water, both in rural and in urban areas.
17. Water sustains all human and biological communities on our planet, yet our current lifestyle places significant pressure on our oceans, inland river systems and groundwater. Stormwater, sewage and industrial and agricultural waste water contaminate our waterways resulting in the immediate prospect of ecological crisis. Unsustainable levels of extraction, and major alterations to the seasonal flow patterns of our rivers by dams and weirs have disturbed the natural balance in many river systems. Increasingly, algal blooms, pest species and salinity impact on our waterways. Without continued and concerted national effort, there is a real prospect of the economic as well as ecological collapse of major systems such as the Murray-Darling Basin. Labor will introduce mechanisms to encourage projects which address these issues.
18. Labor is committed to providing science-based environmental flows to save the Murray River and repair the Murray-Darling Basin and other rivers which are facing similar degradation.
19. Labor recognises the responsibility of all governments to provide safe and adequate drinking water to communities and to maintain the ecological health of river systems.
20. Labor is committed to a national rivers program, in cooperation with State and local governments, industry and communities, that provides adequate environmental flows to rivers, addresses encroaching salinity and enables the restoration of river systems currently in crisis. Australia's approach to rivers in the past has been to take as much water as we possibly could and leave the rest. Our approach in the future must be to determine and provide the level of environmental flows necessary to maintain a healthy river system and make better use of the water we can safely extract.
21. Labor is committed to supporting initiatives, including the Murray-Darling River Bank and community education, to reduce residential, industrial and agricultural water consumption and to minimise the release of waste water and pollutants into our aquatic environment.
22. Labor encourages the adoption of water efficiency technologies and urban planning measures that improve the quality and integration of urban water, sewerage and drainage, and the adoption of whole of catchment approaches.
23. Labor is committed to ensuring the highest possible economic returns from the water we use.
24. Labor supports the reuse of waste water and is committed to the development and promotion of waste water utilisation.
25. Labor is committed to the sustainable use of groundwater. Labor acknowledges that personal and domestic water is an essential service and must be available to all citizens and ensure that all citizens have non-profit driven access to water for the essentials of life. To further this Labor will work with State governments, Territories and local governments to achieve access for all.

Land Clearing

26. Land clearing is the single biggest cause of dryland salinity; it is the single greatest threat to endangered species of birds, plants and animals; and it is a significant contributor to greenhouse gas emissions.
27. Labor is opposed to broadscale and unregulated land clearing.
28. Labor would put an end to the year in, year out decline in our native vegetation cover.
29. A Labor Government will insist that funding of State, Territory and landholder projects is conditional upon the States, Territories and local governments introducing appropriate clearing controls.
30. Labor supports the introduction of national standards to strictly regulate approvals for land clearing.
31. Labor will prevent the clearing of endangered and vulnerable threatened ecological communities and critical habitats for threatened species, and work with private landholders to deliver threatened species and ecological community recovery measures.

Biodiversity and Endangered Species

32. Australia is blessed as one of the few megadiverse nations. We have one of the most diverse collection of species, habitats and ecosystems of any developed nation on earth. This national asset remains under threat from human activities such as land clearing for urban development and agriculture, the loss of native forests, the introduction of exotic species and the inadequacy of our system and funding of national parks and reserves.
33. The extinction of plant and animal species over the past 200 years has been dramatic and human impact is responsible.

34. No generation has the right to appropriate biodiversity for its exclusive use and no government should accept species decline as inevitable.
35. Labor is committed to a national approach to the protection of rare, vulnerable and endangered species and ecological communities, through the development, resourcing and implementation, in cooperation with State and Territory governments, of threat abatement and recovery plans.
36. A Labor Government will ensure that the schedules of nationally threatened species and ecological communities are kept up to date, ensuring State and Territory listings are considered promptly for national EPBCA listing.
37. The health of breeding bird populations is a visible and reliable measure of ecosystem health. Labor would introduce regular monitoring of the health of breeding bird populations as one indicator of ecosystem health.
38. Labor acknowledges the contributions made by zoological parks through their research and development into captive breeding.

Invasive Species and Weeds

39. Introduced weeds and feral animals, whether it is cane toads in Kakadu or foxes in Tasmania, have the capacity to wreak havoc with our environment.
40. Labor will promote research into invasive species and weeds with a view to finding environmentally responsible means of dealing with these problems.
41. Labor will fund measures to ensure that both public land and private land are managed so as to effectively control invasive species and weeds.

Sustainable Agriculture and Nature Conservation on Private Land

42. Labor recognises the critical role of the rural community in the ongoing stewardship of our land. Labor is committed to working with rural communities and landholders in the adoption of sustainable agricultural practices and whole farm planning consistent with bio-regional strategies.
43. Labor recognises that the good work of private landholders and volunteers in programs such as Landcare has been damaged by uncertainty, and short-termism associated with funding through vehicles such as the National Heritage Trust.
44. Labor is committed to building on the achievements of Landcare, encouraging the uptake of sustainable farming practices and maintaining support for the repair of our rural landscapes.
45. Genetically Modified (GM) crops are not to be released unless they are safe to health and safe to the environment and beneficial to the economy. Safe and beneficial standards must be established beyond reasonable doubt. Standards must be met to the satisfaction of the government and also of the scientific community, the consumer community and in the case of GM crops they must also be established to the satisfaction of the farming community. Accurate information on GE products must be provided to consumers and the community. The onus of proof that a product is 'safe and beneficial' lies with its developers.
46. Labor will explore models which provide suitable financial recognition for landholders who have engaged in good environmental practice.
47. Labor is committed to conservation and regeneration of our native plant

communities outside our nature reserve system through partnerships with landholders. Significant proportions of Australia's arid and rangeland ecosystems are suffering from serious degradation and are in need of urgent government attention to ensure their conservation values are restored and maintained.

48. Labor is committed to halting the loss of vegetation, reducing soil erosion and rehabilitating degraded land, particularly those lands affected by soil salinity.
49. Labor supports the adoption of integrated catchment management plans, property management plans, voluntary conservation agreements, community based revegetation programs and appropriate regulatory and fiscal policies to promote the conservation ethic.

Wetlands

50. Australia's wetlands are critical to the ongoing health of Australia's rivers, estuaries and coastal waters. These vital environments are under increasing threat from human settlement, jeopardising the habitat and survival of many species of fish and crustaceans that use wetlands as a nursery ground, and migratory birds that depend on wetlands as feeding and resting areas.
51. Labor is committed to ensuring proper management and protection of our wetlands and will promote and honour Australia's obligations under the Ramsar Convention.

Forests

52. Labor is committed to the establishment and maintenance of a comprehensive, adequate and representative reserve system that is consistent with the agreed Janis criteria and aims to protect at least 60 per cent of existing old growth forest (increasing to 100 per cent for rare and

depleted old growth), and 90 per cent or more of high quality wilderness, as part of a broad objective of preserving 15 per cent of pre-1750 distribution of each forest ecosystem.

This goal will be achieved through the Regional Forest Agreement (RFA) process. RFA outcomes will vary from region to region in response to variations in community expectations and environmental concerns.

53. Labor is committed to the ongoing monitoring of compliance with RFA outcomes and full implementation of the National Forests Policy Statement, the Wood and Paper Industry Strategy and Plantation 2020 Vision.
54. Labor recognises the potential for development of plantations and integrated farm forestry, particularly on existing cleared agricultural land and the additional benefit in addressing dryland salinity and greenhouse emission abatement.
55. Labor recognises that large-scale plantations need to be managed to minimise possible adverse effects and supports research and development, particularly in relation to improved technology and processes, tree breeding, species selection and land capability assessment.
56. Much of our remaining native vegetation is fragmented, leaving it vulnerable to further decline and limiting its habitat values. Labor will build and promote corridors to link native vegetation where appropriate, including enhancing roadside remnant vegetation, to better enable wildlife species to survive.

World Heritage Areas and National Parks

57. While in government, Labor earned an international reputation for providing a high standard of properly funded protection, management, monitoring and presentation of World Heritage Areas. A Labor Government will continue this standard of protection, and will support the investigation of areas identified as suitable for future listing.
58. Labor strongly opposes any moves to reduce protection of World Heritage Areas, the listing of which protects areas of outstanding universal value.
59. Labor recognises the fragile and diverse nature of Australia's natural environment and its unique array of species and habitats, wilderness areas, old growth forests, rivers, native grasslands, coastlines and oceans. Labor is committed to the protection of Australia's biological diversity through the establishment of a national system of comprehensive, adequate and representative national parks and reserves (including a representative range of terrestrial and marine ecosystems), while continuing to promote ecologically sustainable use of all our natural resources.
60. Labor will ensure that the Commonwealth will retain responsibility for the protection of forests located in listed world heritage areas. Labor will progress further World Heritage nominations in accordance with Regional Forest Agreement objectives and other cooperative agreements with the States.
61. Labor does not support mining or other resource extraction in national parks and world heritage areas.
62. Labor will ban oil and gas exploration and mining both on and near to the Great Barrier Reef, in order to ensure that the reef is not threatened by oil spills.

Northern Australia

63. Northern Australia contains some of the most outstanding environmental assets in the world. The Great Barrier Reef, Daintree, Cape York Peninsula, Kakadu and the Kimberley are regions which are known the world over. The tropical rainforests and tropical savannah are comparable in quality with just about any other region on earth, and being located in a politically stable country are not under immediate threat.
64. Labor's approach to northern Australia will focus on sustainability, protecting heritage rivers, focusing on ecotourism as a source of wealth for the north, and a vigorous attack on invasive species of weeds and feral animals.

Marine Environment Protection

65. Labor is committed to promoting the conservation and sustainable use of our marine and coastal environment. Labor will work with State, Territory and local authorities and agencies to ensure Australia's biologically diverse and fragile marine environment is monitored and sustainably managed.
66. The Commonwealth government should provide leadership, policies and resources to ensure integrated regional ecosystem-based management across jurisdictions and maintain marine biodiversity.
67. Labor supports a comprehensive assessment of offshore ecosystems to inform policy development and management of marine resources.
68. A Labor Government will work towards the reduction of the serious threat to water quality from coastal shipping practices, sewage and stormwater disposal and thermal pollution, nutrient sedimentation, and introduction of exotic pests and diseases via ship ballast water.

69. A Labor Government will work to mitigate noise pollution in the marine environment, and sonar and seismic activities harmful to cetaceans and other vulnerable marine species.
70. Planning imperatives include the need to address unsuitable coastal development including all future canal developments, agricultural practices, pollution of estuary and coastal water, ship transport regulation, rig and pipeline developments and industry accountability for pollution.
71. A Labor Government will promote the efficient and sustainable use of Australia's marine resources and will address unsustainable fishing practices.
72. Labor supports the creation of marine national parks and 'no take' or 'green zones' in the Great Barrier Reef to sustain ecosystem health and sustain fish stocks.
73. Labor will promote the conservation of key ecosystem health indicator species such as whales, dugong and turtles both in Australian waters and across the world's oceans.
74. A Labor Government will support technological advances in fisheries to minimise bycatch of non-target species in fisheries and ensure this serious threat to a number of marine threatened species is eliminated.
75. A Labor Government will develop strategies to mitigate the impact of marine debris in our coasts and oceans that poses a threat to many marine species.
76. A Labor Government will work through international forums to address unsustainable fishing practices worldwide.
77. A Labor Government will work with indigenous communities and recreational fishermen to ensure hunting of marine animals is sustainable and humane and threatened species are protected.

Australian Labor Party	National Platform and Constitution 2004
<p>78. A Labor Government will pursue a permanent end to all commercial and scientific whaling and the establishment of a global whale sanctuary.</p> <p>79. A Labor Government will pursue high seas marine protected areas to protect biodiversity and work to address the increasing problem of unregulated, unreported and illegal fishing through all appropriate legal instruments.</p>	<p>85. Biodiversity loss in turn weakens our ecosystems' capacity to absorb and adjust to climate change. This is why addressing the biodiversity loss is so important in the face of likely climate change over the coming century.</p> <p>86. It is in Australia's national interest to mitigate the effects of climate change.</p> <p>87. Labor believes that significant emission reductions can and should be achieved with a net positive effect on Australia's economy and our international competitiveness. By delaying effective action, Australia will miss out on growing global markets for sustainable goods and services.</p>
Climate Change	
<p>80. Labor considers human-induced climate change a serious and unpredictable global climate experiment with potentially serious consequences. Climate change is the most serious global environmental challenge facing the world today.</p> <p>81. Australia, with its long coastline and unique wildlife, is particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change.</p> <p>82. Labor recognises that the CSIRO has estimated that international greenhouse gas emissions would need to be cut by 60-80 per cent of 1990 levels to stabilise greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere.</p> <p>83. Climate change is already happening, and the scientific evidence suggests that it will deliver more serious and more extreme weather events, such as droughts, floods, bushfires and cyclones, if action is not taken to address it, with all that implies for insurance, agriculture, the future of the Great Barrier Reef, the loss of snow-cover from the alps, and increased risk of tropical diseases.</p> <p>84. Climate change threatens Australian biodiversity. While some species will be able to adapt to changing climate, for others change will be too rapid and will combine with other stresses such as loss of habitat to threaten their ongoing existence.</p>	<p>88. Labor believes a proactive response to climate change creates opportunities for Australian business to provide environmentally sustainable products to developing countries who will account for an increasing proportion of emissions.</p> <p>89. Labor believes Australia must act as a responsible member of the world community and commit to greenhouse gas targets.</p> <p>90. Labor will ratify the Kyoto Protocol on Climate Change, which will enable Australian business to take advantage of new international trading arrangements, and avoid discrimination against our exports.</p> <p>91. Labor strongly endorses the notion of internationally applicable compulsory targets and the implementation of a national emissions trading system in advance of a global system.</p> <p>92. Labor supports activities undertaken in Australia that offset emissions elsewhere (for example Liquid Natural Gas production and export that displaces coal fired generation). Labor supports the introduction of international flexibility mechanisms that ensure that such projects are not disadvantaged.</p>

93. Labor believes that adequate funding of research into the science of climate change, emission reduction technologies and adaptation management is vital if Australia is to meet the challenge of climate change.
94. Labor will fund research into renewable energy and support research, development and demonstration aimed at technologies to reduce emissions from fossil fuels, including cleaner coal and technologies to capture and store carbon dioxide to prevent its release to the atmosphere.
95. Labor will implement regulatory, fiscal and voluntary measures that lead to greenhouse gas emission reductions and efficiency improvements in all sectors of the economy. Labor supports a critical assessment of appropriate subsidies and taxes to ensure the most efficient use of our resources.
96. Labor supports the promotion of demand management and end use efficiency throughout the national electricity and gas systems, with programs targeting both domestic and industrial energy use. A Labor Government will ensure the national electricity market delivers environmental outcomes by promoting renewable energy and cleaner fuels and removing barriers to sound demand management and cogeneration investments.
97. Labor supports the promotion of renewable power solutions that provide reliable supply to rural communities and minimise greenhouse gas emissions.
98. Labor is committed to the development of the sustainable energy industry.
99. Labor recognises that it is both possible and desirable to introduce measures to increase the contribution of renewable energy to the national energy market beyond current targets (a minimum of 5 per cent) and in line with international best practice.
100. Labor is committed to taking a leadership role in the efficient use of energy and will ensure that all government departments and agencies adopt best practice energy efficiency.
101. Labor supports the introduction of measures to promote consumer uptake of energy efficient technologies and renewables.
102. Labor is committed over time to expansion of national, mandatory energy efficiency design and performance standards, including those for domestic appliances, industrial equipment, residential and non-residential buildings and motor vehicles.
103. Labor supports the promotion of less greenhouse intensive forms of transport, including cycling, walking and public transport.
104. Labor recognises that the utilisation of waste methane from landfill and coal seam methane present opportunities for emission reduction and power generation.
105. Labor will promote more sustainable management of Australia's vegetation cover and an end to broad-scale clearing. Labor is committed to cooperation between States, Territories and landholders to achieve net expansion of vegetation cover and reduction in emissions related to land use change.
- Sustainable Industries and Cleaner Production
106. Modern clean industries that minimise resource consumption, waste and pollution generation, together with new agricultural techniques that reduce land

and water degradation, are the key to a sustainable economy. Labor will work with State and Territory governments to consider extended producer responsibility schemes for priority waste. Labor recognises that schemes to manage white goods, televisions, computers, tyres and mobile phones (including advanced deposit and refund schemes) at the end of the lifecycle have been highly successful overseas and will consider their suitability to Australia's unique economic and environmental conditions.

107. Labor is committed to the modernisation of existing industry to ensure sustainable patterns of production and consumption. Labor is committed to helping industry adjust and identify associated value-adding opportunities.

108. A Labor Government will promote more efficient and cleaner production practices and the 'reduce, reuse, recycle and recover' approach to waste management through the adoption of voluntary economic, fiscal and regulatory measures.

109. Labor will encourage the adoption of life cycle analysis, green purchasing arrangements and voluntary corporate environmental reporting.

110. New global markets are developing as the demand for sustainable goods and services grows. New industries are emerging with new jobs and both domestic and export opportunities. These opportunities range across industry sectors and geographic areas. Labor is committed to supporting the development of these new industries.

111. Labor supports a Mandatory Renewable Energy Target which will promote the growth of renewable energy industries such as wind power and solar power and

enable Australia to keep pace with the rest of the world and be better positioned for a carbon constrained future.

112. Labor will promote research and development into sustainable energy and cleaner products processes including technologies to increase efficiencies and reduce emissions from fossil fuel power generation.

Chemicals, Toxins and Pollutants

113. Labor recognises the important role of chemicals in both industrial processes and every day life. However, many pollutants are produced as a result of the use of chemicals and it is the responsibility of the government to ensure that the production, release and disposal of these substances is adequately managed to ensure that individuals and the environment are not exposed to harmful concentrations.

114. Labor is committed to the strict control of pollutants and toxins in the environment, including the minimisation of the production, import and use of harmful substances, the development of alternative technologies and, where possible, the elimination of harmful substances.

115. Labor believes that nations have a responsibility for appropriate disposal of hazardous wastes generated within their boundaries. Labor is committed to the aims of the Basle Convention and to fulfilling Australia's obligations in the control of transboundary movements of hazardous waste.

116. Labor remains strongly opposed to the importation and storage of nuclear waste in Australia that is sourced from overseas. Labor does, however, acknowledge that Australia has a responsibility to manage nuclear waste material that has been produced in Australia.

Clean Air

117. Urban Australians rate the quality of the air they breathe as their most serious environmental concern. Labor is committed to improving air quality and averting the serious health risks that air pollution represents.
118. A comprehensive system of monitoring and reporting of air pollution will be an integral part of Labor's air quality initiatives, including dissemination of information regarding health risks.
119. Labor will introduce national air quality standards commensurate with international standards.
120. Labor will recognise the environmental and health impacts of vehicle emissions and will seek to strengthen emission regulations. Labor recognises the need to promote greater transport choice and a Labor Government will pursue strategies to encourage alternative modes of transport, alternative fuels, greater fuel efficiency and lower average vehicle age.
121. Labor believes careful and integrated urban planning offers a powerful tool for reducing transport demand.

Built and Cultural Heritage

122. Thousands of years of indigenous settlement and more recent waves of migration have left Australia with a rich and diverse heritage. This heritage is a link between the past and present and is both a national asset and a source of national pride.
123. Labor is committed to the identification, preservation, restoration and promotion of significant and representative built and cultural heritage, whether material or not. Labor recognises the imminent threat of the loss of indigenous knowledge systems and will promise

funding for the recording of indigenous oral histories, stories and languages. Labor recognises that indigenous Knowledge is a critical part of the knowledge capital of Australia and is a key to the environmentally and socially sustainable Australia.

124. It is important that we preserve what is best of our history, tradition and heritage. Where culturally appropriate, Labor is committed to the promotion of and access to our built and cultural heritage, both indigenous and non-indigenous.
125. The identification and listing of properties of heritage significance should be carried out by an independent expert body.
126. Labor believes that the Commonwealth government has a responsibility to provide adequate heritage protection for Commonwealth properties of heritage significance.
127. Labor would pay special attention to ensuring that the heritage significance of existing defence properties is properly ascertained, protected and conserved.

Human Settlement and Population

128. Patterns of human settlement and the size and rate of growth of the population are crucial determinants of our ongoing impact on our ancient and fragile environment. Labor believes that Australian cities must be ecologically sustainable and incorporate a sound understanding of environmental principles in their planning. Labor recognises that the Commonwealth government has a role in long-term strategic planning for demographic change and local government priority setting.
129. The daily lives of most Australians are spent in and around urban areas.

Our quality of life and our physical and mental health is increasingly at risk from degradation of urban environments. Labor is committed to appropriate demographic policies and to ensure that any population increase is sustainable and does not come at the cost of the environment. As our population increases, it is essential that our collective 'ecological footprint' is contained.

130. Labor is committed to protecting and enhancing our urban environment through long-term integrated urban planning for all major cities, major industries and rural communities. Planning must be supported by the provision of information, the development and implementation of practical solutions, and the right policy framework to ensure our cities are healthy and sustainable. We should seek to contain the area of our cities and guard against urban sprawl.
131. For any planned increase in the population of a particular urban area, Labor supports infrastructure investment (especially transport investment) that is evaluated on the basis of its contribution to improvements in that urban environment, including air and water quality. It is important that remnant vegetation and catchment health is protected from urban encroachment.

Greening our Institutions

132. A Labor Government will lead by example. In order to achieve national leadership on environmental matters with an integrated, whole of government approach, Labor supports the incorporation of environmental values into all areas of government decision making, both in terms of the government's direct environmental impacts and the environmental

consequences of all legislation and regulation.

133. Labor recognises the essential role played by local government in environmental protection and repair and natural resource management. Labor is committed to involving local government fully in environmental protection and repair efforts and making use of its substantial capacity to deliver outcomes and promote change for the better.
134. Labor is committed to a social and environmental impact assessment of all legislation and agreements entered into by the government.
135. Labor supports the development of a genuine progress or sustainability indicator which recognises social and environmental capital and complements monitoring of economic indicators such as Gross Domestic Product.
136. Labor supports the incorporation of environmental reporting into the budget process through the development of a federal Green Budget. A Green Budget will enable progress on environmental performance to be tracked and achievement against milestones to be monitored.
137. Labor supports the establishment of a Commissioner for the Environment to provide objective, independent analysis and recommendations on environment and sustainable development issues; monitor and report on progress towards sustainable development; consider public complaints; and assist the auditor general on matters related to environment and sustainable development issues.
138. Labor is committed to ensuring that community, industry, unions and government decision makers are fully informed of the environmental impacts of their actions.

139. Labor is committed to open and transparent environmental decision making and effective monitoring, assessment and reporting of environmental performance. This will be achieved through a combination of state of the environment reporting, environmental audits and impact assessments, and initiatives such as the National Pollutant Inventory and corporate environmental reporting.
140. Labor is committed to post-approval monitoring of major projects to ensure that measures and targets agreed during environmental impact assessment processes do in fact achieve the desired environmental outcomes.
141. Labor supports a life cycle approach to the evaluation of environmental impacts of goods and services. Where there is a significant variation in environmental impact between comparable products, Labor supports eco-labelling to provide the consumer with the necessary information to make informed purchasing and lifestyle decisions.
142. A Labor Government will encourage the adoption of internationally recognised forest certification systems that are transparent and appropriate to Australia's conditions, developed in consultation with all stakeholders.
143. A Labor Government will wherever possible implement environmental best practice to government operations.
144. Labor recognises that existing international environmental protection regimes need to be strengthened and new arrangements developed to address emerging issues. A Labor Government will take a leadership role in multilateral forums that consider issues of environmental protection and sustainable development, including the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development process, the Convention for the Conservation of Biological Diversity, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species, the Convention for the Conservation of Migratory Species, and the International Whaling Commission.
145. A Labor Government will assess all trade agreements to ensure that they are consistent with the principles of sustainable development, and will work to prevent any conflict arising between trade agreements and multilateral environmental agreements and domestic legislation to protect the environment.
146. Labor will ensure that specific environmental programs will be targeted at nations in the region that are also recognised global biodiversity hotspot regions.

RESOLUTIONS

National Nuclear Waste dump
Conference condemns the federal Government's stated intention to compulsorily acquire land for a national radioactive waste repository against the express wishes of the people of South Australia and their government.

Accordingly, Conference resolves that a future federal Labor Government:

- will abandon plans for a new national nuclear waste dump in South Australia;
- exclude South Australia from any future sites for a national radioactive waste store or repository; and
- transfer back any land, if it should be compulsorily acquired by the federal Government, to South Australia.

RESOLUTIONS

Urban development

Labor will coordinate research involving local, State and Federal Governments to identify best practice transport models in urban transport and city planning with a view to a secure sustainable utilisation of resources to minimise adverse social, environmental and greenhouse impacts of urban development.

Jabiluka

Conference recognises that the environmental and cultural values of Kakadu National Park have led to this area being listed on the World Heritage List.

Conference notes:

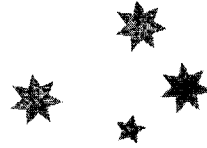
- that the Jabiluka site is an area physically surrounded by the World Heritage listed area of the Park and holds particular cultural importance to the Mirrar traditional owners; and
- the domestic and international concern and opposition that continues to exist over the issue and has seen development of Jabiluka halted since September 1999.

Conference deplores the Howard Government's decision to support mining at Jabiluka and its lack of commitment to adequate supervision and monitoring of mining activities in the region. Conference further notes and welcomes that there have been significant recent developments on this issue including:

- the support by the Martin Northern Territory Labor Government of a company application to rehabilitate much of the Jabiluka mine site;
- the completion of major rehabilitation works by mining company Energy Resources of Australia (ERA); and
- the stated commitment by ERA's majority owner Rio Tinto to ERA entering into a formal agreement with the Mirrar traditional owners that there will be no future work at the site without the explicit written consent of the Mirrar.

Labor remains committed to working for the ultimate resolution of this long standing issue and a future Labor Government will implement an action plan in order to reflect community and indigenous concerns and respect the area's World Heritage values by:

- continued opposition to the proposed mine at Jabiluka and any application for the export of ore from the mine;
- seeking a permanent outcome for the Jabiluka mineral lease which protects the outstanding natural and cultural values of both the lease area and the surrounding national park; and
- reviewing the 'joint management' structures and processes for the park.



AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY



Chapter Nine

Lifelong Education and Training

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Chapter Nine

Lifelong Education and Training

Investing in Australia

1. Education and training is an investment in developing the capability of all Australians to contribute to a prosperous, democratic, just and open society. That investment takes in the full range of economic, social and personal benefits.

—A good education system is essential to an active democracy, where all citizens are confident that they can make a contribution to society. An informed, critical and creative citizenry is able to build on the strengths of cultural diversity, to sustain and develop Australia's democratic principles and traditions.

—Education offers Australians opportunities to gain the depth and range of knowledge and skills they need for the jobs of the future. It provides the foundations for sustained economic investment, productivity, growth and employment. Education is one of the key means for building the capacity of governments, industry and the community to improve the prospects of Australians.

—Individuals derive intrinsic benefits from an education system that broadens their horizons through extending their intellectual, creative and practical skills. They also enjoy extrinsic benefits, including the economic rewards resulting from the application of those skills in the workforce and in the economy more generally.

2. Labor understands that education is now, more than ever, a lifelong commitment, the responsibility for which is shared by governments, industry and individuals. This commitment is needed in response

to, and in anticipation of, technological and structural changes in the economy and in the workplace, and to provide opportunities for people to develop and renew the knowledge and skills they will need at various stages of their lives.

Labor recognises the need to provide lifelong learning opportunities for new and existing workers, as the demands of the workplace change and opportunities for new careers emerge.

3. Labor recognises the right of all Australians to a quality education, not least because of the impact that it has on earning capacity and the ability to provide for families. Given the importance of lifelong learning in our society, it is more important than ever to ensure education is delivered as a core function of the public sector. The great bulk of education services must be funded by the public sector, rather than through user charges. Labor opposes the introduction of vouchers in education and training.

4. Labor will put in place a comprehensive platform for the renewal of education and training in Australia, based on the following priorities:

—all Australians are entitled to gain access to quality education and training, throughout their lives;

—this commitment starts with access to early childhood education, including pre-school and the first stages of primary school;

—Labor will guarantee access by all young Australians to schooling to Year 12 or its vocational equivalent at an accredited training institution;

—Labor will provide public funding so that all Australians who are eligible to participate in further education and training have access to an affordable place in a public university or TAFE;

- Labor will also ensure that publicly funded programs are in place that enable the formal recognition of skills acquired by means other than formal education or training;
 - governments also need to provide incentives and opportunities for ongoing education and training throughout life;
 - Australians must have confidence in the quality of the teaching and learning they receive in our education and training systems. This will require investment in the development of knowledge and skills through research, and the integration of that research into teaching and learning programs that meet quality standards set by government. Labor will ensure that processes are in place which are designed to maximise quality outcomes from all accredited vocational education and training programs; and
 - education and training must also provide clear learning outcomes, including real and valued pathways to employment and to further education and training.
5. Federal Labor will work in partnership with State and Territory governments and, where appropriate, with non-government authorities, to achieve these priorities. All governments have a responsibility to ensure the quality of education through funding, planning and regulation, and to give priority in the allocation of public funds to eliminating barriers to education for students and families from disadvantaged backgrounds. A federal Labor Government will substantially increase investment by the national government in education, training and research.
 6. Labor will work constructively with professional, trade union, community, non-government and industry groups,

including trade unions, and will establish representative advisory structures to provide independent and strategic advice to government on all aspects of education, training and research policy.

7. Labor will ensure that Australia takes advantage of opportunities for the export of education and training, including increased support for teaching and research, promotion of education services, and the development of open and rigorous quality assurance regimes to improve Australia's reputation for providing quality education and training programs.

Indigenous Education

8. Labor believes that education and training is fundamental to reducing indigenous disadvantage and enabling greater indigenous self governance, determination and responsibility in the future. Labor accepts that national government should play a particular role in supporting and promoting education and training rights and opportunities for indigenous people. Labor will work to reduce the appalling gap between indigenous and non-indigenous education and training attendance, access and standards. This will mean addressing the needs and requirements of indigenous people and families as they relate to both mainstream and indigenous-specific education and training opportunities. Labor will develop goals specific to the different needs of urban, regional and remote areas. In particular, Labor is committed to working in partnership with indigenous communities, families and people of all ages in order to develop and implement these education and training goals and opportunities.
9. Central to indigenous education policy is the valuing of the diversity of cultures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their contribution to

Australia's social, economic, cultural and environmental development. Indigenous people and their communities must shape and influence decisions about educational priorities and strategies. Labor will develop alternative education structures that acknowledge the community, cultural and educational needs of indigenous students.

10. The content of what is learnt in Australia's education systems, whether school or university curricula or vocational training packages, should be inclusive of indigenous cultures and perspectives. This is as important for non-indigenous Australians as it is for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
11. Labor supports a mandatory Aboriginal Studies component as part of all teachers' pre-service training. This will prepare teachers to be able to:
 - work effectively in Aboriginal communities and teach Aboriginal children; and
 - competently and confidently teach Aboriginal studies and incorporate Aboriginal perspectives to all children.
12. Labor understands the important role that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education workers and teachers play in achieving successful education outcomes for students. This includes, in particular, the need to increase indigenous enrolments in education and training and employment opportunities. Labor will work with State and Territory governments to develop effective incentives, support and strategies for indigenous education worker enrolments, recruitment, remuneration, career pathways and professional development strategies. As well, Labor will work with teacher educators and with the teaching profession to ensure that all teachers enter the profession with a good understanding of indigenous education issues and perspectives.

13. These general principles about indigenous education policy will need to be complemented by policies that are specific to the different sectors of education, as set out below.

Educating Our Children

14. All children have the right to high quality education so that they can live fulfilling and rewarding lives. It is the responsibility of governments to protect that right.
15. This responsibility entails investment in raising standards at all levels of education. It includes guaranteeing that all Australians have access to the full range of learning outcomes so that students and trainees can fully develop their capabilities, as well as the intellectual and social skills to gain the fullest benefit from citizenship.
16. Governments also have a responsibility to ensure that there is fairness in the allocation of education resources to monitor educational outcomes to identify where action may be needed to improve opportunities for particular student populations and to guard against unjustifiable forms of inequality and discrimination. Equity principles will guide Labor's priorities for the funding, planning and delivery of education for all our children and young people.
17. Much more needs to be done to improve participation and retention of indigenous children in education at all levels. This must involve:
 - focusing on literacy and numeracy in indigenous education;
 - working with communities to lift school attendance rates;
 - involving indigenous families in schools and decision making processes;
 - employing more indigenous teachers and other education workers;

- encouraging greater participation by indigenous children in pre-schooling; and
 - providing culturally appropriate and relevant learning experiences, including indigenous languages.
18. Good teaching is at the heart of successful learning. Governments have a clear responsibility to ensure that all students, including apprentices and trainees, have access to quality teaching. Labor will give priority to this imperative across all education and training sectors in collaboration with State and Territory governments, education authorities and the teaching profession.
19. Education systems need support so that they can meet the challenges and opportunities of the twenty-first century. Labor will support the strategic development of information and communication technologies for the benefit of all, to avoid our education systems contributing to widening of the gap between the information rich and the information poor. Labor will develop a national strategy in cooperation with the States and Territories and with non-government authorities to ensure that all children and young people have access to information and communications technologies. We will also work with education professionals to develop effective and innovative strategies for the use of those technologies in education and training.

Early Childhood, Pre-School and Primary Learning

20. Nowhere is the right of children to a high quality education more significant than in the pre-school and primary school years, which have a crucial influence on the life opportunities and directions of young Australians and on their opportunities for
- realising the full benefits of citizenship. No child should be left behind because of inadequacies in the provision of services in their early years. This means that pre-school and early primary school years must be at the core of the education, health and child care policies of government.
21. Labor will work with the States and Territories to develop an integrated and nationally consistent system of child care and early childhood education to ensure that all Australian children under school age have access to early childhood education and other appropriate developmental and social activities, provided in a safe environment. Priority will be given to extending access in those communities where children are currently under-participating in early learning, including in particular indigenous families and communities in remote areas of Australia; and to supplying the resources for the provision of quality teaching in early childhood education.
22. Labor will establish a national education, care and development curriculum for children aged 0–5 years that is suitable for use in all aspects of early education and care and that provides a useful guide to parents.

Schools

23. Labor believes that governments should ensure that every Australian school student has access to the learning programs required to achieve the full range of learning outcomes set out in the National Goals of Schooling for the Twenty-First Century. Access to the teaching and learning resources that support the achievement of those goals should not depend on the financial capacities of individual school communities.
24. Labor accepts the principle that all children and young people have an equal

entitlement to the resources needed for a high quality education, without regard to differences in family background, educational or financial status. Such a principle is consistent with the need for governments to uphold the dignity of each child as a learner, and with the aspiration for an education system that contributes to our becoming a more, rather than a less, just and open society.

25. In developing its policy directions for schools, Labor endorses the framework of principles for the funding of schools that have been endorsed by State and Territory Labor governments through the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA). These principles are:

- the total level of resources available for schooling is adequate so that achievement of the National Goals of Schooling is a realistic objective for all students;
- public funding across different schools and sectors is distributed fairly and equitably through a consistent approach to assessing student needs and through having regard to the total level of resources available for students;
- the total level of funding for government schooling is adequate to ensure access to high quality government schooling for all, and all governments' funding policies recognise this as a national priority;
- resourcing for all students is adequate for meeting the National Goals, notwithstanding the school or sector they attend; and
- public funding for schooling supports the right of families to choose non-government schooling and supports non-government schools on the basis of need, within the context of promoting a socially and culturally

cohesive society and the effective use of public funds.

26. Labor will negotiate a national compact with State and Territory governments and with non-government school authorities to achieve these principles on behalf of all students in all Australian schools. This compact will have respect for the distinctive and the shared purposes of schools in both the public and non-government sectors. It will also promote cooperation between the sectors and a complementary rather than competitive relationship between them.
27. Labor recognises that all governments have a primary obligation for the provision of high quality public schooling that is accessible to all children and young people. Public schooling must continue to be free and secular, to shape and be shaped by Australian society and culture, to keep pace with the times, to strive for educational and intellectual excellence, to contribute to the development of the shared values that sustain democratic life and to foster innovation, critical awareness, creativity and optimism towards a shared future. Consistent with the MCEETYA principles set out above, Labor will give priority for public schools through enhanced Commonwealth programs for schools.
28. Labor continues to respect the right of parents to choose a non-government school for their children and, on the basis of educational and financial need, for these schools to receive public funding consistent with the MCEETYA principles outlined above. Labor rejects the Howard Government's unfair and divisive funding arrangements for schools, which have delivered the largest increases in Commonwealth funding to some of the best-resourced schools in Australia. Labor will adopt new funding arrangements for

non-government schools that reflect the following principles:

- Commonwealth and State and Territory funding policies and arrangements will be aligned to provide a coherent national approach to funding conditions, mechanisms and accountabilities;
 - the resources available to non-government schools, including income from private sources, will be considered when assessing financial need; and
 - public funding should be subject to non-government schools meeting quality standards for curriculum and teaching, planning arrangements that promote the economic use of public resources and accountability and reporting conditions that are consistent with those required by governments for schools in the public sector.
29. Labor supports the right of parents and the community to be involved in schools and will ensure that schools reflect genuine community needs. Labor believes that all schools should have guidelines that give parents and staff the opportunity to make a contribution and which ensure the best interests of schools, parents, staff and the community.
 30. Labor also recognises the role of schools as sites for community building and for the development of partnerships and sharing of experience and expertise across different social and interest groups, strengthening the social fabric and enhancing the context in which schools work.
 31. Labor supports national consistency in school curriculum in such core areas of learning as English, mathematics, science and information technologies, while recognising the value of local and regional perspectives in the delivery of curriculum in schools and classrooms. National consistency and collaboration have the potential to provide efficiency and effectiveness in the development of curriculum and related learning materials, in areas of national responsibility such as Australian history, indigenous cultures and histories, and the study of languages and cultures across all communities in Australia and in the Asia Pacific region. It should also be a vehicle for teaching young Australians their civic rights and responsibilities, including learning about our Australian Constitution and the role of national, State and local governments.
 32. Labor also supports the further development of a national approach to the assessment and reporting of student achievements in an educationally responsible way. This should include both minimum benchmarks for literacy, numeracy and technological capabilities and the assessment of learning outcomes across the full range of student abilities and achievements. National reporting should inform parents and students of students' progress against national benchmarks and contribute to student learning and school improvement.
 33. Labor recognises the importance of the middle school years and the need for specific encouragement, support and inspiration for young adolescents at school.
 34. The Commonwealth government has a particular responsibility to promote the quality of teaching and educational leadership in Australian schools. A Labor Government will work with the profession and the States and Territories to develop a national approach to improving the quality of teaching and the status of teachers, including issues of national concern such as remuneration levels, national consistency and portability of teachers' qualifications and teacher registration.

- Meeting this responsibility will require national strategies for the supply of quality teachers in all schools. This begins with the Commonwealth's responsibilities for an adequate supply of undergraduate and postgraduate places for teachers in the higher education sector. The large numbers of teachers who are approaching retirement age makes it critical to prepare for renewal of the teaching profession and to avoid decline and the need for crisis management.
- The Commonwealth's strategic role in developing nationally consistent standards for professional teaching practice and school leadership professional renewal is critical. Such standards should inform the directions and priorities for the Commonwealth's ongoing support for professional learning.
- Labor recognises the important role played by non-teaching staff such as Education Assistants and Aboriginal Islander Education Officers and other support staff in building a positive learning environment at all levels of the education system. Labor will ensure that these areas are adequately funded.
35. Labor will continue to give priority to equity in schooling, for students and groups of students who are currently not participating fully in schooling or who require additional support to reach their potential. This can only be achieved through a comprehensive approach to the planning and funding of schools, where targeted initiatives complement the base of adequate and appropriate resources needed in all schools.
36. Poverty remains the greatest indicator of disadvantage and the single most important barrier to educational success. Schools that serve communities with many low income families need specialised support for teachers, student counselling and community liaison, and additional resources to provide that support. Labor will establish an innovative system of targeted resource provision to schools with concentrations of students from disadvantaged backgrounds to improve their participation in schooling and their educational outcomes.
37. Labor recognises the entitlement of students with disabilities to maximise opportunities to participate in schooling. Where students with disabilities require special support, and consistent with needs-based funding principles that apply to all schools, governments should share the responsibility to provide these additional resources to build the capacity for schools and teachers to accommodate students with disabilities.
- Labor is committed to working with State and Territory governments to enable schools to conform with agreed disability standards under the Disability Discrimination Act, which clarify the rights of students with disabilities and the obligations of education providers.
38. Labor also recognises the difficulties of providing access to quality teaching and learning programs and resources in rural and remote areas of Australia, and will support the further development of targeted programs for schools in these areas.
- School to Work Transition**
39. Strong educational foundations are more important than ever to Australia's economic future and social well being. Labor recognises that Australia's economic success depends on the education, skills and labour market participation of all our young people. Those young people who leave the formal

education and training system without recognised skills are vulnerable to long-term unemployment.

40. Labor's commitment to all young people and their families is to guarantee access to valued learning to Year 12 of schooling or its equivalent in other areas of education and training.
41. While for most young people this will mean completing their secondary education at school, Labor recognises that this is not the best way or the only way for all. Guidance and support needs to be there when it counts. This will require effective policies to encourage young people to stay at school, to develop alternative learning options within and alongside schools and to support students in the world outside school in a highly competitive labour market if they choose to leave.
42. Labor will work with States and Territories to deliver a national strategy to provide our young people with the foundation for lifelong learning, consisting of the following elements:
 - to achieve Year 12 or equivalent qualification in school or through TAFE, Adult and Community Education or an apprenticeship or traineeship.
 - to re-engage early school leavers to achieve a Year 12 or equivalent qualification, in school or TAFE.
 - to provide tailored and informed advice and support to help students make a successful transition from school to employment and further education and training.
 - to support coordinated community partnerships, to maximise the use of existing resources.
 - to provide targeted labour market assistance, through employer subsidies, job creation and related

training, for those young people remaining outside the formal education and training system.

43. Labor will support the further development of opportunities for students to participate in quality vocational education and training programs while they are at school, which provide real pathways to employment and to further education and training.

Vocational Education and Training

44. The primary objective of training is to help Australians develop skills to obtain secure and satisfying employment. Labor's policies in vocational education and training should be directed to the following aims:
 - to develop portable and nationally consistent vocational qualifications;
 - to equip Australians with relevant and valued skills;
 - to meet the needs of people from educationally and vocationally disadvantaged backgrounds in gaining employable skills, including those who would benefit from second chance opportunities for education and training; and
 - to maximise training and reskilling opportunities to raise skill levels generally and to prevent workers being forced into low-skilled and precarious employment.
45. Labor supports the development of a genuinely national system of vocational education and training, with increased resources from government and employers for growth and for improved quality. This will include strategies to improve and modernise vocational education and training to provide contemporary programs that meet the changing needs of students and industry.

46. The development of a national system of vocational education and training, including related national industry standards must be based on the expert advice from industry. Labor will support an industry training advisory network, where employer associations and unions are equally represented.
47. Labor understands the importance of structured and accredited on-the-job training, which gives many working Australians the opportunity to access further education and training and provide greater job security through ongoing skill development.
48. Labor recognises that a more effective industry training advisory network led by employer organisations and unions is critical to increasing the uptake of structured industry training and the ongoing success of the national training system.
49. Labor supports the continuation and adequate resourcing of a national training authority to maintain and further develop a high quality national vocational education and training system with nationally agreed objectives, strategies and planning processes. The quality standards will seek to equip the workforce with the skills and knowledge for the future of technological change and the knowledge based economy and society. The authority will have a key role in strengthening a quality national training system and national qualifications framework and more effective national processes for recognition and audit of education and training providers. This will be supported by a more effective industry training advisory network led by employer organisations and unions.
50. Labor is committed to increasing access of existing workers to national vocational education and training qualifications. A key barrier to this is the cost of identifying skills and knowledge workers have already acquired through previous work experience and training and identifying future skill needs. Labor will support partnerships between industry, unions and training providers to achieve this outcome particularly when it results in investment and further training by industry. Labor will also support initiatives that educate and empower workers about the benefits of lifelong learning and structured training in existing workplaces. Labor will enable employees, through their properly elected union representatives, to be actively involved in increasing access to structured learning and training in their workplaces.
51. In developing policies and programs for vocational education and training, Labor will give particular attention to its critical role in providing training and employment opportunities for indigenous students and their communities. Labor will develop vocational education and training models that acknowledge the community, cultural and educational needs of indigenous people, including in and for isolated communities.
52. Labor recognises the centrally important role played by TAFE as the public provider of quality training to assist the government in achieving its policy goals for economic development and social justice, and in meeting the technical and further education needs of the Australian community.
53. Access to vocational education and training is critical for many Australians. Labor will support increased public provision through high quality TAFE systems where costs are not a barrier to participation by students from low income backgrounds, and to which employers should make a funding contribution. Labor

- will support TAFE in its dual roles of training provider and key access point for community education.
54. Labor acknowledges the contribution made by the TAFE workforce in developing the knowledge and skills of Australians. In cooperation with unions, industry and State and Territory governments, federal Labor will take a national approach to improving the professional skills and status of TAFE teachers, including through development of their contemporary and industry-relevant skills. Labor will also support the professional development of other TAFE staff.
 55. As well as training programs delivered through TAFE institutions, Labor believes that private sector employers have a responsibility to provide opportunities for comprehensive post-school vocational training for Australia's young people.
 56. While recognising the unique character of vocational education and training, Labor will facilitate maximum cooperation between the senior secondary years, TAFE and university sectors, especially in the establishment of course credits, articulation and, where appropriate, dual and co-located institutions. This recognises the substantial overlap emerging between some university and TAFE courses and the growing number of students moving each way between these institutions to obtain their qualifications.
 57. One of the most important pathways for young people is from school to vocational education and training. Labor is committed to improving the links between school systems and TAFE, and to providing better pathways through educational education and training for young people generally and early school leavers in particular.
 58. Labor recognises the role played by the private sector in the vocational education and training system. It also acknowledges the value of on-the-job training where such training is part of a structured and accredited training program. The diversification of the training market, however, must not be allowed to damage quality. Australia's current and future workforce must be provided with sound, transferable skills, and our international reputation for quality education and training provision must be protected. Labor will work with the States and Territories to ensure that all providers of vocational education and training are subject to an efficient, comprehensive system of quality assurance including a system of independent auditing. Private sector involvement in workforce skills development should be fully integrated within national education and training goals and national quality and recognition processes. With the primary focus on public education, the Labor Party will investigate the wasteful duplication from the application of the competitive training market in the Vocational Education and Training (VET) sector with a view to giving priority in government funding to the public sector.
- Apprenticeships and Traineeships**
59. Labor will provide adequate resources for the expansion of apprenticeships and traineeships to ensure that structured entry level training and work experience opportunities are available to those seeking these skills. Labor will foster cooperative efforts between employers and unions to maximise and continually increase the take-up of apprenticeships and traineeships, especially in areas of skill shortage and in emerging industries and with a focus on the development of both generic and industry-specific skills. Both government and industry have a

responsibility to contribute to investment in workplace education and training.

60. Labor supports continuing review of the form, structure and duration of apprenticeships and traineeships to reflect the changing structure of work and the needs of industry, including the need for on- and off-the-job training. Labor will protect the rights of young workers and other participants in structured training programs to fair wages and conditions and to real on- and off-the-job quality training experiences that produce lasting and portable skills. All training contracts or agreements will have to meet minimum standards for the protection of apprentices and trainees, which will be properly monitored. Labor will provide support for TAFE teachers involved in on-the-job training due to the increased workload and responsibilities arising from that form of training.
61. Labor will focus on quality apprenticeship and traineeship programs and on higher skill levels. Public funding should be more directly linked to the level of training effort, to the completion of quality outcomes and to the development of future skill needs. All apprenticeship and traineeship programs should be consistent with the national qualifications framework.
62. Labor will ensure that there is sufficient funding made available for on- and off-the-job training for apprentices, especially in rural and regional Australia.
63. Labor recognises that training programs must take into account the different needs of those entering the workforce for the first time and those of existing workers, which may require separate programs. Training for existing workers should extend career pathways and be focused on developing the skills and qualifications of those who are affected by, or likely to

be affected by, industry restructuring.

Labor endorses the principle of recognising prior learning and will ensure that an affordable and accessible system is put in place to enable all workers to have their acquired skills recognised and credited.

64. Labor acknowledges the particularly crucial and effective role of group training companies in providing rotated structured training and other opportunities for apprentices who work in smaller companies that have a limited capacity to train in their own right. Labor will support group training companies' involvement with a wider range of small companies, and the formation of vocationally based employment pools based on similar principles. In addition to support for group training, Labor will examine ways to encourage public and private employers including contract maintenance, employers, labour hire and industry schemes, to directly employ more apprentices and trainees.
65. There is a close link between building a modern competitive economy, particularly through the application of advances in science, engineering and information and communications technology, and Labor's policies on education, training and employment. Labor is committed to increasing investment by governments and employers in research and development and in vocational education and training.

Adapting to New Jobs

66. As well as direct job creation for older workers and unemployed people, governments also have a responsibility to invest in the retraining of workers to provide them with new skills in tune, where possible, with national qualifications so that they can adapt to changing demands in the labour force.

Labor will invest in a range of new job preparation programs, including specially targeted labour adjustment programs for mature age workers displaced by industry restructuring, aimed at getting these workers back into paid jobs. These programs may include specifically targeted mature age apprenticeships.

Adult and Community Education

67. Adult and community education is an integral component of lifelong learning in Australia. Labor is committed to extending learning opportunities through adult and community education that is affordable, flexible and community-based, and that can adapt to the learning needs of both younger and older adults.
68. Labor acknowledges the significant contribution to the education of new arrivals to Australia by the Adult Migration Education Service (AMES) and will direct appropriate public funding for their ongoing work.

Management Skills

69. Labor is committed to raising the skills and standards of managers in Australia at all levels, as well as workers, through innovative new programs on leadership and management skills, and continuing review of the performance of Australia's corporate managers.

Universities

70. Labor's policies will support the advancement of the highest standards of research and teaching in Australian universities, where intellectual rigour and excellence are the cornerstones of successful higher education and are the outcomes of the link between teaching and research.
71. Labor will do so against the following principles:

- access to a university education should be open to all, available on the basis of merit and equity rather than wealth and privilege. Universities have a range of public purposes, both intellectual and vocational, and public access to these opportunities should be as broad as possible;
- Labor will ensure that the Higher Education Contribution Scheme (HECS) does not act as a financial barrier to Australians seeking to study in a public university in Australia;
- Labor opposes the deregulation of HECS and full fees for Australian undergraduate students in our public universities. Deregulation of fees would reduce opportunities for students from low and middle income families to attend university and would undermine the viability of regional and rural campuses. Labor will increase public investment in our universities and phase out fee-paying places for Australian undergraduate students;
- Australia's system of higher education should be strengthened. This means building on the individual strengths of Australia's universities and encouraging collaboration to lead to greater public and international confidence in the quality and integrity of all our universities;
- universities in Australia should be supported to reap the benefits of global developments in knowledge, research and teaching; and to shape and respond to the challenges of the future. Labor will encourage universities to play a leadership role in the internationalisation of higher education, including through new forms of digital technologies and through the development of global networks and by promoting capacity building in host countries within our region; and

—priority in public funding will be given to public universities in Australia. But the quality of all public and private providers of higher education in Australia is critical, for the protection of the interests of students in those institutions as well as for the nation's economic and social well being. Labor will work with the States and Territories, with higher education institutions and with staff and students to ensure that all higher education providers meet quality standards that are consistent with national protocols endorsed by governments through ministerial councils. Those standards should be assured through independent assessment processes, and lead to consistency in establishment and accreditation criteria and procedures across Australia and to offshore delivery of higher education.

72. Commitment to free inquiry is a core element of university accreditation. It is essential that institutions of higher education provide independent advice to students and to the broader community. Labor also supports accreditation requirements for universities to undertake teaching and research and to offer a broad range of courses.
73. Labor's commitment to a strong system of public universities will govern its policy responses to new learning opportunities generated by advances in technology and an increasing number of private providers. Labor notes the developing role of universities as commercial suppliers of education and training services tailored to the needs of corporate clients. Labor will ensure that there are proper accounting and auditing processes to prevent the inappropriate transfer of public funds for commercial purposes.
74. Labor is committed to the autonomy of public universities and will ensure that

funding and staffing arrangements are consistent with this important principle. Labor will reverse the policy of the current Government by ensuring that funding arrangements remain free of punitive threats such as the linking of funding levels to the imposition of individual contracts.

75. Labor recognises that despite the efforts of many dedicated staff the quality of university teaching and research has been undermined by Howard Government policy. The quality of university staff and their remuneration are matters of national interest, and therefore the national government must take some responsibility for ensuring that Australian universities are able to attract, retain and develop high quality staff. Labor will reverse the policies of the current Government by investing in a national staff development scheme for university staff, thereby assisting staff to achieve the goal of improving the quality and global competitiveness of Australian higher education.
76. Labor supports the right of staff and students to participate in the governance of higher education institutions, in recognition of the knowledge, experience and commitment they bring to this.
77. Labor recognises the need to protect the value of the resources provided by public funding of universities, through appropriate indexation arrangements.
78. Labor will take action to reverse the brain drain of talented Australian researchers and academics overseas. At the same time, Labor will provide incentives for postgraduate research and coursework studies, especially in such priority areas as science, health, teaching and nursing.
79. Labor understands that financial pressures on students are forcing many to seek part time employment to meet

their living expenses, which is drawing on the time they have for study and that some students are either excluded from study or forced to discontinue their studies due to lack of financial support. Labor will identify ways of better meeting students' needs, including in particular the special needs of indigenous students. Labor will also reduce the age at which students can receive income support at the independent rate and we will ensure adequate support for students below the age of independence.

Labor is also concerned about the increasing prevalence of professional associations requiring post graduate qualifications for accreditation and the impact that it is having on students who need to work to support their studies. Labor will seek to ensure that the lack of financial assistance does not create social inequities within professions.

80. The Howard Government has compounded the effects of its policies of increasing student debt by lowering the income at which students start repaying their HECS debt. Labor will raise this threshold to a level that is consistent with the average graduate starting salary.
81. As in other areas of education and training, students from disadvantaged backgrounds are under-represented in higher education. Labor will develop policies and strategies to improve their participation and success, including indigenous students, students with disabilities, students from low income communities and students from rural and regional areas.
82. Labor supports universal membership of student representative organisations. These organisations play a strong representative role and provide a wide range of sporting, catering, legal, health, employment and other services, sometimes after normal commercial hours of operation and often in circumstances that would not be viable if membership was voluntary. Labor will oppose government interference in the decisions of students and independent university institutions about the membership of student guilds, associations and unions.

Research

83. Labor will implement a comprehensive, long-term national research policy. Such a long-term national research strategy is essential if Australia is to deliver quality research outcomes and to capitalise on public and private investment in research. Such an approach is necessary because our economy and population are small compared to other developed nations, and consequently the effective use of limited resources assumes a greater significance.
84. Within such a strategy Labor will ensure that the current 'competition at all costs' ethos will be replaced by an environment in which the research strengths of both public research agencies and private research programs are recognised and set in a cooperative framework with a strong focus on promoting collaboration through networking and clustering. Wasteful trends towards duplication will be reduced while the debilitating effects of the short-term research horizon promoted by current models can be reversed.
85. Labor supports the prioritisation of research funding. Prioritisation will be based on indices that encourage innovation in industry, job creation and the maintenance of a culturally aware society in which community needs are recognised and addressed. As a consequence, Labor advocates a research policy addressing the big issues facing Australian society. Labor is committed to developing priorities based

on thematic areas of research rather than simply discipline-based models.

Additionally, a national research strategy will ensure that our national capacity to maintain, and increase, "blue sky" research is recognised as a continuing priority.

86. A ground breaking new policy for research and innovation is central to Australia's ability to surmount the big issues confronting Australia, including:

- economic and environmental sustainability;
- salinity and land degradation; and
- Australia's place in a global economy and an unstable world.

To deal with these challenges successfully, Australia needs new ideas and new know-how. Reliance on our natural resources is no longer enough. We have to lift our performance in all areas of endeavour. Labor believes that research and development is a key driver of productivity improvement and economic growth. We need to ensure that there is a balance between the creation of new knowledge and its application to create high skilled, high wage jobs.

87. Labor supports increased public investment in research. Universities represent the foundation on which any successful long-term research strategy must be based, and the current financial crisis in universities acts as an impediment to fully effective research programs. Labor will address this deficiency and maintain the role of universities as institutions undertaking basic and applied research across a range of disciplines. Labor will also reverse the current trend to under funding and marginalisation of national research agencies, will develop a Charter to protect the scientific integrity of the CSIRO and will encourage enhanced collaboration

between such agencies, universities, TAFE and the private sector.

88. Labor believes it incumbent on government to ensure a policy framework that is conducive to industry and the private sector undertaking research. Labor supports active industry policies that encourage private sector development in research and development (R&D) and, further, that promote more effective linkages between Australian industry and our public research infrastructure. Labor will review the effectiveness of the current R&D tax concession regime, will target grants to industry in priority areas and consider options such as standardised reporting on intellectual capital and intangible assets and customised courses to develop skills in research-derived commercial negotiation, intellectual property (IP) protection and strategic marketing.
89. As a key component of a national research policy Labor will develop a national strategy for IP protection, commercialisation and research management. Such a strategy is designed to achieve a sustainable balance between academic and innovative activity. Key features include a national framework for commercialisation of publicly funded research, together with uniform definitions of ownership and moral rights of all parties to IP and a research and commercialisation code for both researchers and agencies. This strategy would be underpinned by a commitment to the promotion of open and free dissemination of knowledge by publicly funded research agencies.
90. Labor recognises that there exists an urgent need for better coordination of Commonwealth research activities. To facilitate this core objective, Labor will establish a bureau of science and

research policy within DEST, with responsibility for monitoring, reporting and ensuring Commonwealth research targets are met; complete the partial transfer of science research agencies into DEST and rework the Prime Minister's Innovation Council to include advocates of the humanities and social sciences. Within the context of increased support for the tertiary education sector, reflecting a holistic approach to research and innovation, the policy will also include an expanded range of opportunities and funding for humanities and social science

research, including humanities Cooperative Research Centres and access to funding for cultural institutions.

91. Labor believes that it is essential for a national research strategy to encourage partnerships across national borders and build links with our national aid program. Labor will develop measures that encourage research in areas of assistance to other societies or economies, together with funding to assist in research training and with continuing research overseas.

RESOLUTIONS

Nuclear Facilities

Given continuing Labor opposition to a new reactor at Lucas Heights, Conference notes that the Coalition Government is proceeding with a replacement reactor at Lucas Heights in southern Sydney despite unresolved environmental and health concerns within both the local and wider community.

Labor notes that the construction of the new reactor is advanced and that much of the specialist equipment has been purchased. Accordingly, in government, Labor will refer the following issues to an independent public inquiry before the new reactor at Lucas Heights is operational:

- the legal and financial obligations, beyond those relating to the work already undertaken, effective under the current secret contract signed by the Howard Government;
- a review of the licensing processes and conditions applied to the reactor;
- security issues relating to the reactor site;
- whether or not medical isotopes can be produced from alternative sources and whether this can be achieved before the current facility has expired;

- the economic and industry impact of importing medical isotopes;
- whether or not it is necessary for research funding to be allocated to the development of alternative sources for radiopharmaceutical production;
- the impact on jobs and Australian nuclear research of not proceeding with the replacement reactor;
- whether an effective solution to the problem of the final management of nuclear waste has been identified;
- emergency management and response implications of the new facility; and
- whether there has been adequate consultation with the community, local government and the NSW Government.

Labor will promote and assist the development of the remaining facilities at Lucas Heights into a centre for medical, scientific and technological research. Labor will implement a national management plan for radioactive waste and ensure that Lucas Heights does not become a de facto or permanent facility for storage of nuclear waste.

RESOLUTIONS

Vocational Education and Training

Labor recognises the important role that vocational education and training has in providing opportunities for all Australians to get the training and skills they need for secure and satisfying employment.

Australian industry is suffering from severe skill shortages, which can only be addressed by increasing access to quality vocational education and training.

Labor believes there is an important role for the State and Territory governments to work with the Federal Government to assure the quality and integrity of vocational education and training.

Under the Howard Government around 15,000 young Australians are turned away from a TAFE course every year.

Labor is committed to increase participation in vocational education and training by Australians of all ages.

A Latham Labor Government will create places for an additional 20,000 Australians to start a TAFE course every year.

Schools Funding

That the National Conference condemns the Howard Government for its unfair and divisive funding policies for schools. These policies have provided the largest increases in Federal funding to some of the best-resourced non-government schools in Australia, while ignoring the needs of the great majority of government and non-government schools.

National Conference calls on a Labor Government to endorse the framework of principles that have been approved by State and Territory Labor governments on the funding of schools, noting that these principles include:

- the total level of resources for all schools are adequate to achieve the National Goals of Schooling; and
- all governments recognise that funding of high quality government schooling is a national priority

University Fees

That the National Conference of the Australian Labor Party condemns the Howard Government for its unfair university charges which will increase university fees by 25 per cent and allow universities to fill 35 per cent of places with students paying full fees.

Labor further condemns the Government for:

- increasing HECS fees since 1996 for a standard degree from \$7,300 in 1996 to \$15,700 today and further pushing the cost up over \$20,000;
- allowing one in three students to jump the queue and buy their way into university ahead of people with better marks;
- allowing universities to offer Australian undergraduates full fee degrees that can cost up to \$100,000;
- failing to create 20,000 extra university places so that qualified students are not turned away from our universities;
- attacking the independence of our universities and failing to safeguard universities from ministerial interference in what they teach students;
- failing to ensure universities receive proper indexation;
- making Australian students pay some of the highest university fees in the world, only Japan, Korea and the United States have higher fees;
- ignoring important research from the National Centre for Social and Economic Modelling (NATSEM) which shows

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Australian university graduates are already delaying starting a family and buying a home because of their university debts;

- failing to improve student financial assistance;
- introducing a 7 year learning limit; and
- placing ideological industrial relations conditions on millions of dollars of desperately needed funding.

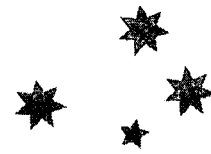
Labor will reverse the 25 per cent HECS increases, prevent Australian students from buying their way into a university place by paying full fees and abolish the Howard Government's unfair 7 year learning limit.

Labor will create 20,000 new places for Australians to start a university course every year, in addition to properly funding the 25,000 over-enrolled places created under the Howard Government's failed policy.

Labor will properly index university operating grants by providing an additional \$312.7 million over and above existing increases to reduce class sizes and support high quality university education.

Labor recognises the positive impact that participation in higher education has for the advancement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and will work with indigenous communities to increase indigenous participation both as staff and students in our universities. Labor recognises that the accurate academic representation of indigenous peoples and cultures is important for both non-indigenous and indigenous students in our universities.

As part of the commitment to opportunity for all, Labor supports wide access to high quality and affordable higher education. Labor recognises that higher education is critical to Australia's prosperity, drives our economic growth and gives our citizens the knowledge and skill they need for a good job and a bright future. Labor also recognises that participation in education contributes to the ability of citizens to actively participate in our democratic, social and cultural institutions.



AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY 

Chapter Ten

Nation Building

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Chapter Ten

Nation Building

Australia's Investment Needs

1. A high and sustainable level of capital investment is central to Labor's goals of a better economy and society, contributing directly to:
 - stronger economic growth;
 - more new jobs and a reduction in unemployment;
 - increased job security and higher incomes for those already in employment;
 - increased technological innovation and technological modernisation in the economy; and
 - environmental sustainability.
2. Labor recognises that a high and sustainable level of capital investment delivers both short-term and long-term benefits to the Australian economy. Creating buildings, plant and machinery, and transport, communications and energy systems means:
 - increased short-term economic activity in its own right; and
 - an increase in the long-term productive capacity of the economy to sustain higher levels of economic activity than would otherwise be possible.
3. Beyond the general requirement to lift capital investment, which is faced by all growing economies, Australia faces a particular requirement for higher levels of capital investment than would be normally required in an economy of comparable GDP size and population, as a consequence of:
 - the size of our land mass;
 - Australia's unique environmental assets and problems;
 - our modest population size, its uneven distribution and its relatively high level of growth; and
 - the highly capital intensive nature of many of our principal economic activities such as agriculture, minerals and, increasingly, sophisticated manufactures and some key tradeable services.
4. Labor believes that government has a vital role to play in fostering capital investment to meet these requirements, both in:
 - achieving higher rates of overall investment in the Australian economy; and
 - achieving a broader spread of investment, in terms of its regional, sectoral and labour market impact across the nation.
5. Without government involvement, unfettered market forces cannot be guaranteed to supply adequate levels of capital to all regions and sectors of the economy.
6. Accordingly, Labor will pursue balanced economic policy measures which promote the highest sustainable level of productive investment, improve the productivity of existing investments, and increase the availability of national savings to fund such investments. Specific measures will range across the areas of:
 - monetary policy (especially through the maintenance of low inflation, which provides a more stable environment for business planning and investment);
 - taxation policy;
 - competition and regulation policy;
 - industry policy;
 - regional policy;
 - infrastructure policy; and
 - enterprise productivity.

7. Labor recognises that the maintenance of well functioning infrastructure is fundamental to maximising sustainable growth in the economy. This involves both the maintenance and upgrading of existing infrastructure as well as developing the future infrastructure to meet the needs of the nation. Consistent with the objective of maximising growth and living standards, governments have a responsibility to develop, in partnership with the community and business, strategies to identify, prioritise, and satisfy the long term infrastructure needs of the nation.

Public, Private and Foreign Investment

8. Throughout Australia's economic history, Labor governments—at both Commonwealth and State levels—have worked to accelerate and broaden national economic development through a balance of public and private investment strategies, involving direct public investment in infrastructure and

commercial enterprises, and creating a positive climate for private investment.

9. Public investment has been an important means of meeting community needs, and Labor believes that it should continue to be provided to meet community service obligations and ensure the provision of services.
10. Labor will explore all financing options, including opportunities for superannuation funds, infrastructure and/or savings bonds and public private partnerships. Before effecting any private sector financing options, Labor will ensure they all genuinely serve the public interest. National policy making should focus particularly on identifying regional and sectoral priorities for infrastructure investment.
11. Labor recognises the contribution made by foreign investors to the development of the Australian economy, supplying capital, technology and other skills. It is also the case that our comparatively low rate of

LIFTING NATIONAL SAVINGS

- A1 Australia has long relied on foreign capital to fund a significant part of our investment needs. Strong economic growth has historically seen a spillover into higher levels of current account deficit. Greater national saving, both private and public, is necessary to ensure that strong economic and investment growth can be sustained for long periods without unmanageable current account problems arising.
- A2 Greater national saving is also necessary to increase the Australian community's capacity to own and control national economic assets. 'Buying back the farm' will remain an unrealisable dream unless there is a significant increase in our national saving rate.
- A3 Labor is strongly committed to strategies to increase private saving, in particular through the

continued growth and spread of superannuation to encourage broader share ownership across the community; and through pursuing higher growth and lower unemployment—which means higher private incomes and hence greater resources available for boosting private saving.

- A4 Labor accepts that public saving is a significant component of national saving, and that ongoing effort in budget management is an important economic priority. But Labor also recognises that policies which simply boost public saving in the short-term at the expense of long-term sustainable growth, employment, national competitiveness and private saving are likely to diminish rather than enhance our overall national saving performance.

national saving has meant that Australian economic growth has depended significantly on the continued flow of foreign investment.

12. Labor also recognises that:

- there is broad concern within the Australian community about the degree of foreign ownership, and control of the economy and of Australian enterprises;
- Australia has historically been a net importer of capital;
- foreign investment in the Australian economy should be undertaken in such a way that its benefits outweigh its costs; and

—the benefits of foreign investment are likely to be maximised where ownership and control is shared between foreign and Australian investors.

13. Labor will, accordingly:

- seek to maximise Australian ownership and control of resources and enterprises;
- encourage foreign investment to the extent that it introduces beneficial and new technology and expertise, increases employment, expands government revenue and provides other clear benefits to the Australian community; and

IMPROVING ACCESS TO CAPITAL

B1 Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) generate a significant proportion of Australia's national income and employment, and the access of these firms to capital sufficient to finance their enterprises is vital to Australia's economic development and well being.

B2 Despite generally efficient and well functioning debt and equity markets in Australia, Labor recognises that there are some areas where those markets are not completely efficient and where government assistance can be used to enhance their operations. This problem relates mainly to equity markets for SMEs. Some SMEs find it difficult to attract sufficient equity to fund their needs—particularly for seed, start up and early stage capital. At the same time, providers of equity capital in Australia (both institutional investors and 'business angel' investors) face a shortfall of good quality investment opportunities. The reasons for this mismatch include the following:

- many SMEs require assistance to become 'investment ready';
- many SMEs and their advisers are not well aware of how the private equity markets work and where the providers are;

- some SMEs can grow to become successful businesses but are not yet at the stage to deliver the high rates of return required by the investor market; and
- some SMEs are located in geographical regions which are outside the networks of the providers.

B3 Labor in government will pursue a balanced combination of policies designed to ensure that market failures affecting SMEs' access to capital are addressed, principally by:

- support for innovation, through targeted assistance;
- the establishment of industry development mechanisms—in partnership with business where appropriate—focused on the venture and patient capital needs of SMEs;
- modifying, where appropriate, finance industry regulatory restrictions;
- providing appropriate taxation incentives;
- providing other appropriate SME industry support measures such as information exchanges; and
- measures to ensure that access to capital by SMEs in regional Australia is appropriate.

- maintain the capacity to limit or control foreign ownership where this is demanded by the national interest.

Building Australia's Infrastructure

14. Labor recognises that a strongly performing economy is dependent on adequate and efficient national infrastructure, particularly in the critical sectors of transport, communications and utilities. Renewal and enhancement of this infrastructure is necessary to reduce business costs, improve accessibility and social justice, improve the environment, contribute to the community's well being by reducing traffic congestion and increasing mobility, and expand opportunities for economic development in regional Australia.

- Labor will establish a National Infrastructure Advisory Council to coordinate a national strategy for infrastructure provision and maintenance, according to strict, transparent and objective criteria.

Building Transport Capacity

15. For transport infrastructure development generally, Labor will:

- develop a national transport planning strategy aimed at implementing a world class national transport network, with consistent performance benchmarks across rail and road, to ensure Australia has a coherent land transport system;
- ensure that the national transport strategy funding model takes account of the particular financial capacities of different State and Territory governments to meet infrastructure demands, so as to guarantee the development of a coherent national transport plan;
- develop integrated transport planning processes which provide for fair competition between modes,

transparent and objective criteria for investment, equality of modal treatment in regulatory and financial issues, and policy integration with environmental, energy and land use objectives;

- broaden representation on national transport regulatory reform organisations to include union representation;
- work with industry participants on strategies to redress skill shortages and develop a highly skilled transport workforce;
- support strategies to develop urban and regional infrastructure and intelligent transport systems;
- ensure that Australians have access to adequate transport services by providing appropriate financial assistance to State governments to improve and extend public transport systems in urban and regional Australia for employment, environmental, education and training, social justice and economic reasons and to help alleviate congestion;
- focus infrastructure development strategies on the creation of efficient intermodal connections, particularly at ports and airports;
- foster the use of public transport by exploring the tax treatment of public transport to remove the disincentives compared to the concessional tax treatment of company cars;
- encourage the promotion and funding of environmentally friendly transport including cycle ways; and
- consider strategies to promote the development of energy efficient, alternative fuel vehicles including the purchase of such vehicles by government. Action on this front is important given the state of our environment and the fact that oil is a non renewable fuel source.

16. For aviation, Labor will:

- maintain Qantas as Australia's international carrier, delivering high levels of service and providing a substantial proportion of Australia's international aviation needs;
- foster the development of the general aviation sector and develop the potential of the aviation industry as an important export industry;
- encourage the growth of air freight through upgraded airport facilities, increased competition in cargo terminal operations and improvements in the logistics chain;
- ensure that privatised airports maintain competitive pricing regimes, high quality services and strict environmental and safety requirements, and facilitate local ownership and operation of regional airports;
- ensure regional communities have proper access to safety services; and
- develop an integrated Sydney Transport Plan that provides for Sydney's future airport needs, including a preferred second Sydney airport site outside the Sydney basin. Labor will maintain the cap and curfew at Kingsford Smith Airport and implement the long-term operating plan maximising takeoffs over water.

17. For maritime transport, Labor will:

- ensure that Australian domestic shipping is crewed by workers operating under Australian award conditions under established cabotage arrangements;
- develop a national register/database of all maritime employees—including seafarers, port and stevedore workers—to record that the appropriate levels of security induction and qualifications are held;

- encourage growth in the Australian coastal shipping industry—and in doing so ensure that Australian shipowners continue to employ Australian crews and receive support comparable with international standards;
- encourage the expansion of Australian participation in Australia's international shipping task;
- pursue individual port productivity improvement strategies with the direct involvement of port authorities, stevedoring companies, unions and port users through initiatives such as increased competition, productivity targets in terminal leases, increased investment and enterprise bargaining; and
- ensure that where Australia shares economic zones with East Timor and Indonesia that preference of employment is given to the participating nations and that the actual conditions of employment, safety and maritime legislation are no less than those payable in the Australian Offshore Oil and Gas Industry.

18. For rail transport, Labor will:

- work with State and Territory governments to develop an integrated national rail network and tracks of national significance to the operation of the economy, including efficient inter-modal connections, particularly at ports and airports;
- retain the designated interstate mainline from Perth to Brisbane and explore in cooperation with State governments designating extensions of the interstate rail mainline. Labor will also maintain the Australian Rail Track Corporation in full public ownership;
- having regard to the recommendations of the Tracking Australia report, revitalise investment to attain high

speed freight standards giving priority to removing speed restrictions and modifying extension of the network to include critical freight lines;

- provide assistance to major privately funded extensions to the rail network where there is demonstrable public benefit; and
- work with State and Territory governments to reinvigorate Australia's long-haul passenger railways, including assessment of the likely costs and benefits of private high-speed train projects, linked to airports where practicable, and establishment of uniform national Very Fast Train (VFT) standards.

19. For road transport, Labor will:

- seek to restore road funding to previous Labor government levels and ensure that road projects are funded according to strict, transparent and objective criteria;
- seek to expand the national highway network to include critical freight routes—such as port access roads and urban ring roads; and
- improve road safety by providing greater access to well equipped rest stops for both passenger vehicles and heavy vehicles on the national highway.

20. For urban public transport, Labor will:

- recognise the importance of cities and regional urban communities to the national economy and a role for Commonwealth government in urban development;
- recognise a role for Commonwealth involvement in delivering urban public transport infrastructure, with particular focus on the needs of poor regions in outer urban and regional areas; and
- assist State and local governments to integrate land use and transport planning.

Protecting Travellers

21. In relation to aviation safety, Labor will:

- ensure that security at Australian airports and in planes flying in Australia is maintained at the highest possible standards;
- ensure that the Australian Transport Safety Bureau has access to adequate resources to continue its efficient and effective, independent role in accident and incident investigation across transport modes;
- ensure the Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) is appropriately resourced and continue the review of regulations and internal CASA reforms designed to streamline procedures, ensure public accountability, concentrate resources on the safety enforcement task and ensure the strict enforcement of safety regulations; and
- retain Airservices Australia as an efficient public aviation service provider of air traffic services, aviation fire service and national airways maintenance and installation services.

22. In relation to maritime safety, Labor will:

- ensure that the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) and equivalent State organisations maintain strict maritime safety regimes; and
- protect the marine environment by adequately resourcing AMSA to combat 'ships of shame', and to maintain strict regulatory regimes governing pilotage, discharges at sea and other matters critical to marine environmental protection.

23. In relation to rail safety, Labor will:

- consult with rail operators, users and unions with the aim of upgrading Australia's rail safety efforts in order to accommodate the proliferation of

operators arising from privatisation and/or vertical separation;

- enhance the role and functions of the Rail Safety Unit in the Australian Transport Safety Bureau to recommend strategies to improve the safety of the national rail network; and
- work with State governments to develop a modern national regulatory and enforcement regime.

24. In relation to road safety, Labor will:

- continue the process of developing uniform national road transport regulations, and ensure that the regulations regarding driving hours and loads protect the health and safety of drivers, including concerns about driver fatigue and the interests of the general public;
- continue to develop e-transport strategies and actions to improve road safety, reduce emissions and traffic delays and to make our transport systems more sustainable and user friendly;
- develop strategies to reward road transport operators and drivers who fully comply with regulatory and health and safety requirements, and penalise operators and drivers for regulatory and health and safety breaches; and
- improve the collection of data on road fatalities and injuries to ensure a more strategic approach to road safety initiatives, make more use of Australian Design Rules to improve safety standards in new vehicles, require manufacturers to release crash test data and improve public road safety education.

BUILDING COMMUNICATIONS CAPACITY

Equitable Access to Modern Communication Services

25. Labor regards telecommunications services as essential services that should be accessible and affordable for all Australians. Labor believes that access to fundamental telecommunications services should be provided through a universal service obligation, funded by the industry in accordance with market share.
26. Labor is committed to ensuring that all Australians will be able to enjoy access to an affordable broadband telecommunications service.
27. Labor recognises that access to broadband in regional Australia is crucial to the future economic development of regional communities. Broadband facilitates the location of small and medium sized businesses outside the major urban centres.
28. Labor will ensure that adequate safeguards are in place to protect consumers in communications markets. Labor will ensure that these safeguards are properly enforced, and that communications companies deliver high standards of service to consumers.

A More Competitive and Consumer-Focused Regulatory Regime

29. Labor is committed to establishing a communications regulatory regime that ensures more genuine competition and better protection for consumers.
30. Labor supports fair third party access arrangements for communications infrastructure. Labor will ensure that Telstra's wholesale and retail functions are clearly distinct within the company, to ensure the openness and transparency needed for fair access regulation. Labor

will strengthen the telecommunications competition regime to ensure genuine openness and transparency in Australian telecommunications.

31. Genuine competition and consumer protection in communications requires appropriate resourcing and regulatory powers for bodies such as the Australian Communications Authority (ACA) and the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC).
32. Labor will retain the telecommunications price control regime and ensure that there are no further unfair increases in telephone line rental fees.

Telstra

33. A publicly owned Telstra provides a guarantee of universal telecommunications access for all Australians. Labor opposes the further sale of Telstra, either in part or in whole, and will not sell any more shares in the company. Labor recognises that Telstra, as the only carrier with a nation-wide fixed network, will remain central to the achievement of telecommunications equity for all Australians. Telstra delivers essential public services in a market which retains pervasive monopoly characteristics. These services are changing and broadening because of technological change.
34. Labor will ensure that Telstra intensifies its focus on fulfilling its telecommunications responsibilities to the Australian community, and that these responsibilities take precedence over Telstra's foreign ventures and media investments.
35. Labor will ensure that Telstra is committed to the provision of affordable broadband access for all Australians.
36. Labor will maintain the power of the minister to direct Telstra in the national interest.

37. Telstra's neglect of its telecommunications responsibilities has led to massive job losses, particularly in regional Australia. Labor supports adequate permanent staffing arrangements to enable Telstra to fulfil its responsibilities to communities throughout Australia.
38. Labor supports Telstra maintaining its significant contribution to communications research and development. Labor will encourage communications technology research and development generally, to help ensure that Australia remains at the forefront of the international communications sector.

Australia Post

39. Labor will maintain Australia Post in full public ownership.
40. Labor will maintain Australia Post as the sole carrier of the standard size letter service and the sole issuer of postage stamps. Cross-subsidy arrangements between metropolitan and regional Australia will remain to ensure an equitable flat rate postal charging arrangement for the standard letter.
41. Labor will encourage the growth of Australia Post's services and extend the scope of Australia Post's community service obligations, where appropriate, to ensure equitable access to a full range of postal services for all Australians, including financial and bill paying services.
42. Labor will ensure that Australia Post continues to maintain appropriate coverage of post office and post box outlets throughout Australia.
43. Labor will encourage Australia Post to continue to use its network to provide public access to new communications options and essential community information.

44. Labor envisages Australia Post playing a key role as a platform for the delivery of digital services, particularly to regional Australia.

Building Energy Capacity

45. Among Australia's greatest economic strengths is the extent and diversity of its natural energy resources, energy infrastructure and energy technology. Australia is both an important producer of established sources of energy, including coal, gas, oil and condensate, and a world class player in the development of renewable and sustainable energy technologies.
46. Australia's energy supply and use must be economically efficient, internationally competitive and sustainable in the long term. Such national energy capability is essential for Australia's sustained economic growth. Labor recognises that the long-term challenge of global environmental issues must be built in from the start in planning the future of the Australian energy industry.
47. Increasingly, more efficient and clean energy supplies and use will enhance Australia's capacity for the downstream processing of minerals and other natural resources, and more competitive manufacturing generally, thus providing employment benefits.
48. The continued development and application of new technology to improve the economic and environmental efficiency of energy production and consumption is vital to Australia's long term international competitiveness.
49. To improve our national energy capacity, Labor will:
- facilitate a process of co-operation and development involving State Governments, Industry representatives, including peak Industry Associations and the Trade Union Movement to

ensure that Australia builds the necessary Electricity Industry Transmission, Distribution and Generation electricity facilities to meet Australia's electricity demands and ensure supply for the future for all Australians;

- encourage investment in an intensive national oil and gas exploration effort;
- encourage continued development and investment in energy infrastructure and technologies, particularly gas and renewable energy sources;
- facilitate free and fair competition between energy sources;
- facilitate free and fair interstate trade in gas;
- facilitate a national electricity market;
- encourage co-generation;
- encourage the use of gas in conjunction with coal for power generation;
- encourage research and commercial development of new and renewable energy sources and technology; and
- take into account the relative environmental impact of these energy sources.

50. Labor will encourage greater efficiency in the production, transmission and use of existing energy sources, in particular by acting to:

- ensure a concerted and ongoing effort to encourage the pattern of Australia's domestic, transportation and industrial energy consumption to greater use of clean and renewable energy sources through demand management strategies and government procurement policies;
- encourage greater energy efficiency and consumer purchase of energy efficient products through consumer education programs, innovative financing mechanisms, product

- standards and energy efficiency labelling schemes; and
- encourage energy audits for the industrial, commercial, transportation and residential sectors to inform users of their relative energy efficiency and how this can be improved.
51. Labor recognises that major opportunities are emerging in new and renewable energy technologies within the global energy market. Accordingly Labor will:
- support research and development in innovative energy technologies that are cleaner and more efficient;
 - encourage domestic markets in renewable energy technologies;
 - encourage Australian development, manufacture and commercialisation of renewable energy technologies for both domestic and export markets;
 - encourage local and foreign investment to increase Australia's renewable energy technology manufacturing capability; and
 - maximise employment creation within the renewable energy sector to offset possible long-term job losses in fossil fuel dependent sectors of the energy industry.
52. Labor will institute a national energy industry policy to integrate the need for improving energy efficiency, abating greenhouse emissions and encouraging the development and commercialisation of new Australian energy industries, including renewable and sustainable energy technology.
53. Labor will ensure that consumers are protected in the new national energy environment, and will ensure access by consumers to competitively priced energy, proper regulation of the national energy market and viable dispute resolution mechanisms.

Safeguarding Australia's Infrastructure

54. Labor recognises the importance of Australia's critical infrastructure and the need to adequately plan, maintain and safeguard it. Critical infrastructure includes systems of telecommunication; banking and financial operations; power generation; air, land, sea and water transportation systems and operations; water purification; and sewerage and waste water treatment.

Infrastructure protection is integral to Australia's national security. It underpins our economy. Our quality of life depends on it. Labor is committed to ensuring that Australia can manage and contain demonstrated and emerging threats to our infrastructure, especially those that relate to the information or cyber elements that increasingly control the operation of physical infrastructure.

THE POPULATION BASE

A New Approach to Population Policy

55. The achievement of Australia's economic and social goals, and our international objectives, requires government to consult widely to develop an integrated population policy commanding widespread community support.
- Labor recognises the need to plan for a sustainable population and in government will develop a formal national population policy.
56. A population policy will allow Australia to decide as a community the long-term sustainable population we want rather than allowing population issues to be an incidental by-product of ad hoc, political decisions about annual immigration levels.
- Labor will focus on population policy as a whole, rather than just immigration,

enabling the community to think in a long-term and constructive way about issues which otherwise stand to divide us.

57. The development of a population policy will involve consideration not just of immigration, but also of elements as diverse as desirable rates of economic growth; resource constraints; environmental management; internal migration; urban form; industry and regional development policy; and the fertility and mortality of Australia's current population. This will involve drawing in all stakeholders, including the States, local government, farmers, ethnic communities, industry, environmentalists, Indigenous Australians and the tourism industry.

58. A national population policy need not specify a precise fixed numerical outcome for a projected date in the future. At a minimum, however, it will identify a range within which year to year policy making will operate, and a process for updating and modifying planning objectives as new demographic, environmental and social factors are identified.

—Labor will establish, as a matter of priority, a new Office of Population to advise on a range of desirable population options, and ways of achieving them.

59. The National Population Policy will be adopted by CoAG and will be

implemented through a series of strategies agreed between State and federal government to:

- address the age imbalance that is emerging as the post war generation approaches retirement;
- relieve the pressure on families and restore incentives to raise children in our community;
- ensure population growth is drawn to the regions and the attraction of new skills results in regional development opportunities;
- adopt planning strategies which will curb urban sprawl and provide for liveable cities in the future;
- implement a national approach to infrastructure planning to provide for the needs of a growing population;
- plan for growth that is environmentally sustainable by reducing per capita use of water, energy and other natural resources and ecosystems; and
- strengthen our economy in a sustainable fashion by encouraging young migrants to choose this country as a place to settle.

60. To address these issues, Australia needs to review the size and make up of its migration program whilst recognising that some areas are more capable of absorbing an increase in population than others.

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Public Private Partnerships

National Conference notes the need in Australia for increased investment in public infrastructure following years of neglect by the Howard Government. Conference further notes the political, academic and media debate about the best method of accelerating the availability of, or providing additional, community goods and services in a cost effective, efficient and timely manner.

Conference therefore welcomes the decision of the Federal Parliamentary Labor Party to establish an inquiry into Australia's physical and social infrastructure needs and how best to finance them. The committee will comprise both parliamentary and non-parliamentary members and report no later than 30 June 2005. The inquiry will investigate:

- the scope for governments to invest directly in public infrastructure;
- the scope and conditions for private sector involvement in the provision of public infrastructure including through appropriate Public Private Partnerships;
- the most equitable, cost effective and fair methods of finance;
- ways to maximise effective public ownership, management and maintenance of public infrastructure;
- improving accountability and transparency in infrastructure finance;
- the most effective method of reducing financial risk to government and minimising the level of fees and charges;
- ways to ensure that financing is compatible with Labor's agenda on skills development and quality employment;
- whether current risk transfer arrangements are appropriate;
- the potential role of the superannuation industry in financing public infrastructure; and

—any other relevant matters.

National Conference calls on interested parties including members, governments, unions and the business community, and members of the public to participate in the inquiry.

Shipping

Given Australia's coastal freight task, the number of ports around our enormous coastline, the distance to our foreign markets by sea and our historic maritime traditions, Australia is truly a shipping nation.

The Howard Government's attitude toward this vital industry however has resulted in the lowest participation of Australian owned, operated and crewed ships in our nation's history.

The wholesale abuse of the single and continuous voyage permit system under the Howard Government has laid our coastline open to the ravages of flag of convenience shipping.

These abuses have led to job losses in the shipping industry devastating the maritime skills base in our country.

Contrived unavailability of Australian tonnage has unfairly favoured cheap foreign crews and flag of convenience shipping in the Australian domestic transport trade at the expense of Australian investment.

Foreign shipping engaged in the domestic trade poses threats to our nation's security, environment and employment opportunities.

The Howard Government has allowed bilateral trade deals such as China gas and East Timor oil and gas to be signed off without any attempt to negotiate a shipping component to the detriment of Australian shipping and employment.

Without any Australian participation in the international trade, Australian shippers are at

RESOLUTIONS

the mercy of international conference lines. During the second half of 2003 conference lines more than doubled their freight rates. The conference lines are operating to suit their profits rather than Australia's needs as a trading nation.

- The ALP recognises the importance of a strong and viable shipping industry using Australian seafarers working under the Australian flag and conditions.
- The ALP renews its commitment to the retention of cabotage and commits to a full review of the Permit system and the conditions under which single and continuous voyage permits are issued. This review will include application of the Maritime Transport Security Act to foreign vessels to ensure a level playing field.
- The ALP commits to encouraging long-term investment to rebuild the Australian maritime industries, protect our vast coastline and marine environment and to re-establish our defence self sufficiency.
- The ALP also recognises the competitive nature of the international shipping industry and will ensure that Australian seafarers working in international trades are not disadvantaged compared to other seafarers in international trades. Further, the ALP will give consideration to the introduction of a tonnage tax regime similar to the schemes introduced by the UK and other OECD nations.
- The ALP recognises that the efficient provision of salvage services under the Navigation Act 1912 is important not only for saving lives, but also protecting the environment. Given the unpredictability of salvage work and that no vessels are engaged exclusively in salvaging services, Labor recognises that salvage capability will continue to be provided by harbour towage services and a range of other

vessels depending on the nature of the salvage task. Governments at all levels have a responsibility to provide salvage infrastructure and to work with the private sector towage companies to guarantee the reliability of towage services around the Australian coastline.

The ALP recognises the work of the International Transport Workers Federation, in the protection of international seafarers visiting our ports. We support seafarer's human and industrial rights progressed by welfare organisations and maritime unions. Further the ALP endorses the call for a genuine link between all ships and their flag state to exist as a means to combating abuses under the flag of convenience system.

Urban Transport

Conference notes:

- Australia's urban transport systems are under increasing demand pressures relative to their capacity. The costs of traffic congestion and road accidents are increasing. The costs have important consequences for Australia's well-being, the environment, Australia's efficiency and workers' standard of living. These issues include transport efficiency and effects on economic growth, pollution, greenhouse gas emissions, health and social amenity;
- Australia's transport greenhouse emissions are per capita the third highest in the world and it is estimated that by 2010, total greenhouse emissions will be 47 per cent higher than 1990 levels;
- urban transport congestion cost \$12.8 billion in 1995 and is estimated to increase to \$29.7 billion in 2015;
- Australia's major cities have clear 'transport rich' and 'transport poor' regions because of the creation of new suburbs without strong public transport

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infrastructure. 16 per cent of the average household budget is spent on cars—the same is spent on housing and food;

- Australia is the only developed country without a national policy covering urban issues, despite the need for innovative sustainable urban development programs. OECD research concluded that urban travel and land use problems are not just urban issues—their economic, social and environmental impacts are national;
- there has been a significant shift globally in the way transport problems are framed and solutions implemented. There is a convergence of views, analysis and approaches around the world on how to deal with transport problems and transport investment;
- the Howard Government's national land transport policy is focused on freight to the total exclusion of urban public transport;
- in Australia there is a very strong case for a complete reorientation of national transport policy based on fairness, equity and transparency. It must deal with all modes in the same way and introduce public benefit/costs tests incorporating social, economic planning environmental objectives.

Conference resolves that the next federal Labor Government will:

- provide appropriate financial assistance to State governments to improve and extend public transport systems in urban and regional Australia for employment, education and training, health, social justice and economic reasons;
- achieve greater use of all forms of public transport, thereby contributing to reductions in emissions and congestion, such as that being pursued through the Growing Victoria Together strategy, which seeks to increase the number of trips on

public transport from 9 per cent to 20 per cent by 2010;

- integrate transport, land use and environmental objectives;
- ensure public transport is available to new suburbs and developments;
- improve integration of various public transport modes through development of inter modal interchanges; and
- propose ways to reduce dependency on cars, including reform of the inequitable tax treatment of public transport as against employer provided car transport, and thus encourage public transport use for commuting to and from work.

Nation Building

Conference recognises that the equitable provision of both existing and newly emerging communication services remains one of the key policy challenges facing Labor.

The Besley and Estens inquiries, designed by the Howard Government to pave the way for full privatisation of Telstra, have highlighted the difficulties rural and regional Australians face in gaining access to such services.

At the same time, the Senate's inquiry into the condition of the Australian telecommunications network has revealed nation-wide impediments to the development of broadband capabilities in the Telstra fixed network.

The government's strategy of targetted infrastructure spending, tied to the partial privatisation of Telstra, cannot provide a comprehensive or lasting solution to these problems.

Labor is committed to developing a sustainable strategy for the funding and delivery of affordable communications services on a national basis. Such a strategy would:

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- encourage efficient and timely upgrades of the national communications infrastructure, including provision of broadband capabilities;
- provide certainty to consumers; and
- ensure that arrangements for the delivery and funding of uneconomic services are competitively neutral.

Second Sydney Airport

Conference supports the building of a second airport for Sydney. This is important for the economic future of Sydney, New South Wales and the nation. It is also necessary to alleviate the impact aircraft noise is having on the quality of life of residents living in the most densely populated area of Australia.

The ALP rejects the Sydney Airport Masterplan with its projections of a tripling of passenger numbers and a doubling of movements through Kingsford Smith Airport by 2020. We call upon the Government to bring forward its 2005 review of Sydney's Airport needs.

Labor is:

- committed to the legislated cap and curfew at Sydney Airport;
- committed to implementing the long-term Operating Plan;
- committed to ensuring all those eligible for noise amelioration measures receive it, and will consider the particular needs of schools and the unique circumstances of Sydenham; and
- committed to support slot allocation priorities that preserve access for regional airlines while giving preference to larger aircraft.

Labor will develop an Airport Masterplan for Sydney's General Aviation Airports to include:

- the determination of the future of Hoxton Park;

- no large jet traffic to be permitted at Bankstown Airport and explore options to reduce the impact of training operations;
- determine the ongoing method of operation of Camden Airport; and
- determine the future use of Richmond Airport—in consultation with the local community and the RAAF.

Conference notes that changes in circumstances mean that Badgery's Creek is no longer a viable option for Sydney's 2nd Airport. Labor will not build an airport at Badgery's Creek.

Upon coming to Government Labor will immediately conduct a new comprehensive EIS into preferred sites south of the Nepean River through the Southern Highlands. Labor will work with the NSW Government and draw upon their best advice to identify specific sites within the identified corridor.

The EIS will be directed at ensuring there is minimal impact from the construction and operations of a new airport, if the EIS approves its development.

Labor will develop this integrated Transport Plan in consultation with the New South Wales Government and local government.

Modern, Efficient and Safe Land and Transport Network

This Conference condemns the Howard Government for their seven years of neglect of Australia's transport infrastructure.

The Auslink plan is the first Howard Government attempt to deliver an integrated land transport plan, but it fails on many counts because it:

- was motivated to shift costs to States, Territory and Local Governments, not to deliver an efficient, integrated and modern transport network;

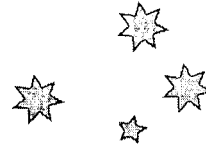
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- has not moved beyond the Green Paper stage after almost two years, leaving it big on restating the problems and short on solutions and action plans;
- fails to identify an ongoing, sustainable source of additional ongoing funding for transport infrastructure;
- only considers the movement of freight, not people;
- ignores the capacity of sea and aviation to carry a bigger load in our domestic freight task that is set to double by 2020;
- jeopardises the Commonwealth's responsibility to construct and maintain our national highway system; and
- fails to halt and reverse the decline in land transport infrastructure funding, particularly in railways.

The Conference calls on the next federal Labor Government to lead Australian governments in the joint development of a national, modern, efficient transport network to meet our nation's burgeoning freight and passenger transport task by:

- developing a national land and transport plan that includes all modes of transport in a co-ordinated way, which integrates transport, environmental, energy and land use policy across State and Territory boundaries;
- establishing a national infrastructure advisory council and processes that will provide for fair competition between modes and transparent and objective criteria for public and private infrastructure investment decisions;
- ensuring the National Transport Commission is equipped and supported to develop and implement nationally consistent transport regulatory reforms to improve the efficiency of our national road and rail networks;

- working with States to develop an integrated national transport network and corridors of significance to the operation of the national economy, including efficient inter-modal connections at ports and airports;
- strengthening the Commonwealth commitment to the construction and maintenance of the national highway system;
- retaining full Commonwealth ownership of the Australian Rail Track Corporation and ensuring it has sufficient funds to develop and maintain our interstate rail infrastructure to world class standards, such as transit times, axle loads and double stacking containers;
- committing to invest in Australia's transport network to ensure our infrastructure can accommodate the increasing freight and urban passenger task in a sustainable and efficient way and financing options may include superannuation funds, infrastructure and/or savings bonds;
- improving rail and road safety standards for the national transport network by enhancing the role of the Australian Transport Safety Bureau and ensuring more proactive leadership from the Commonwealth Department of Transport to reduce accidents and fatalities;
- improving the security of our transport networks through more clearly defined responsibilities and accountabilities between Commonwealth Government agencies; and
- developing a modern, integrated regulatory and enforcement regime



AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY



Chapter Eleven

Engaging with the Global Economy

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Engaging with the
Global Economy

Creating Better Jobs Through Trade

1. Labor is committed to ensuring that the benefits of global economic growth are shared—both within Australia and between countries. We support free trade as a means of generating the growth necessary for enhancing the living standards of everyday Australians. Australia has directly benefited from trade liberalisation, but the distributional effects cannot be ignored. Reducing trade barriers boosts our economic growth, creates more competitive industries, provides benefits to consumers and builds stronger relationships with our trading partners. Trade is an important way of creating more fulfilling, well paying jobs for Australians.
2. Labor will ensure that the benefits of global economic growth are available to all Australians through better education and training programs, industry development policies, fostering new knowledge intensive enterprises and a particular focus on those industries and regions which are adversely affected by trade liberalisation. Whilst the rapid development of new technologies will be encouraged, Labor will introduce policies to make access to technology more equitable. Labor is committed not only to providing an adequate safety net, but also giving everyone, wherever in Australia they live, the opportunity to prosper in the modern economy.
3. Labor will continue to pursue sensible trade liberalisation through effective multilateral strategies reinforced by bilateral negotiations. The direction Labor pursued in the 1980s and 1990s of internationalising the economy and

reducing protection cannot and should not be reversed.

4. Australia's economic future lies principally with the Asia Pacific region. Over half of our trade is with nations in the Asia Pacific. Labor is committed to enhancing our economic relationship with those countries in Australia's immediate neighbourhood.
5. Australia also needs to recognise the continuing integration of Europe and the size and importance of the Economic Union (EU) to Australia's trading interests. Australia needs to make a strong commitment to winning new markets in the emerging economies within Europe and the Americas.

Opening Markets

6. Labor recognises the importance of maximising trade and investment opportunities for Australia in a rapidly changing world. The role of the Minister and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade must remain sufficiently flexible to meet our future needs. Labor does not assume that the current policy machinery will necessarily be appropriate to the modern economy. Labor will integrate innovation, industry and trade policies to take Australia along the road of high skills and high wages. Labor will adopt administrative arrangements within the Commonwealth Public Service that facilitate this integration.
7. Labor remains firmly committed to realising our free trade objectives, through negotiations at the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum, regional free trade agreements and bilateral market opening.
8. The WTO's objective, to reduce trade barriers worldwide, will help Australia maximise economic growth and job

creation. Labor endorses the full implementation of the WTO's Uruguay Round agreements and the work of the Cairns Group (established by Labor in 1986) to reduce world agricultural protection. Labor supports the timely and successful completion of the WTO's Doha Round. The Doha Round must achieve a substantial lowering of industrial tariffs and improved market access for services. It must also achieve a comprehensive outcome on agriculture including substantial improvements in market access, reductions in, with a view to phasing out all forms of export subsidies, and substantial reductions in trade distorting domestic support. The Doha Round must offer major benefits to Australia and to developing countries that face world trading rules denying them access to major markets.

9. Labor will play an active role to ensure that the activities of the WTO respect core International Labour Organisation (ILO) labour standards and multilateral environment agreements. Labor recognises that economic growth and prosperity arising from increased international trade brings with it the responsibility to promote higher labour and environment standards for Australia and internationally.
10. WTO rules presently allow all nations to determine for themselves the appropriate public/private mix in their health, education, water and welfare sectors, and to determine the distribution of government funding within these sectors. WTO rules also permit countries to protect their cultural industries. Labor supports these positions. We will vigorously oppose any WTO rules, interpretations or proposals that would require Australia to privatise its health, education and welfare sectors, reduce government rights to determine the distribution of government funding within these sectors, or which would require us to remove protection of our cultural industries.
11. Labor is committed to the peaceful resolution of trade disputes in the WTO, through a system of transparent, fair and enforceable rules. We support efforts to make the WTO dispute resolution process as fair, prompt and open as possible. Labor will make sufficient resources available to ensure that Australia can properly prosecute and defend those cases in which it is involved.
12. APEC (established on Labor's initiative in 1989) is pivotal to increasing trade in our region. Labor will promote APEC's Bogor Declaration goals of regional free trade by 2010 for developed nations and 2020 for developing nations. APEC can also serve a valuable function by mobilising support for a further round of WTO negotiations, facilitating trade between APEC members and widening dialogue in the region on the issue of core labour standards.
13. Labor acknowledges the positive role our Closer Economic Relations agreement with New Zealand has played in improving the economies on both sides of the Tasman. In government, Labor will seek an agreement with New Zealand to jointly examine whatever other possibilities exist to further strengthen the relationship.
14. Labor supports efforts, first begun in 1994, to join the ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA) and the Australia New Zealand Closer Economic Relations agreement into a single free trade agreement.
15. Where appropriate, Labor will pursue a vigorous agenda of bilateral market access initiatives. Bilateral initiatives must contribute to, and not detract from, multilateral trade liberalisation.
16. Bilateral trade initiatives agreed by Australia must not impact on the

government's capacity to provide public services such as health, education, water or post. In particular, trade initiatives must not undermine Australia's Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme.

Inclusive Trade Policies

17. Labor believes that there is an obligation in all trade arrangements to respect core labour standards. Consequently, and consistent with the Singapore Declaration, we support the establishment of a formal permanent WTO working group or similar body with the following terms of reference:

- it would be part of the WTO's follow-up to the Singapore Declaration commitment on labour standards and would therefore report back to the WTO General Council with proposed recommendations concerning WTO procedures, mechanisms and regulations;
- it should be a standing or permanent body working on an ongoing basis;
- it should provide for the participation of the ILO, which must be given formal consultative status at the WTO;
- it must have a defined work programme including, inter alia:
 - a mandate to undertake analysis and to propose procedures and instruments for the treatment of core labour standards in the international trading system;
 - the examination of how to associate trade with respect for core labour standards, including positive incentives and assistance;
 - the consideration of measures to be taken where trade liberalisation was associated with violations of core labour standards; and
 - review of the mechanisms of the WTO (trade policy reviews, dispute

settlement etc) in order to promote openness and transparency and ensure consistency of trade negotiations and agreements with respect for core labour standards within the work of the WTO.

18. Labor believes a rules based system underpinned by core labour standards provides a framework for fairness and equity and is the most effective means to ensure governments do not resort to unsustainable protectionism. Labor is of the view that there is a need to analyse the strengths and weaknesses of the WTO, ILO, International Monetary Fund (IMF), international framework with a view to introducing a reform agenda. Reflecting this, Labor will work towards the development of a global trading system for the 21st Century which is underpinned by equity and transparency.
19. In this context, Labor will support calls for a meeting between the WTO, ILO, World Bank, IMF and other relevant bodies, as may be decided, for the purpose of launching an on-going dialogue and action on the subjects of development and labour standards.
20. Labor notes that the WTO (through its preamble) and APEC (through successive Leaders' Statements) are committed to furthering the goal of sustainable development. A Labor Government will play an active role in WTO and APEC negotiations to promote sustainable development. In particular, Labor will work towards the removal of environmentally damaging subsidies, and promote mechanisms which can reconcile the interests of environmental protection and trade liberalisation. A Labor Government will also ensure that all major trade agreements into which Australia enters, bilateral and multilateral, are assessed to ensure that they are consistent with the

principles of sustainable development and environmental protection for all distinct regions of Australia.

21. Labor recognises that free trade is a necessary, but not sufficient, condition to promote economic growth in developing countries. We will work to ensure that nations and their communities in our region and throughout the world benefit from open markets and share in global growth. We will promote policies to achieve this in the WTO, World Bank, IMF, ILO and other international forums. Labor acknowledges the virtuous circle created by equitable economic growth in developing countries. Through the creation of jobs, it can free people from hunger and poverty, and by providing access to economic independence for the individual, make meaningful basic human rights. At the same time economic growth in developing countries creates new markets for Australian exporters thus contributing to creating jobs in our country and strengthening our economy.

22. Developing countries must be properly resourced if they are to fully benefit from WTO negotiations. Labor will work to ensure that international funds are made available for capacity building and technical assistance, so that poorer countries can effectively participate in WTO negotiations.

23. Governments have a responsibility to make trade policy making as transparent and publicly accessible as possible. A free flow of information is important for its own sake, as well as to build accountability and public confidence in the multilateral trading system. Labor will encourage this by:

—ensuring that the positions that a Labor Government takes at the WTO and developments within the WTO are regularly reported to the parliament, including to a Joint Parliamentary

Committee established to scrutinise WTO affairs;

- ensuring that all Australian submissions and relevant materials to the WTO are made public unless there are genuine commercial-in-confidence reasons, or disclosure will damage our national interest;
- reviewing all existing government consultative mechanisms and reconstituting them to ensure they are representative of business, unions, environmental and community interests;
- reviewing the composition of governmental delegations to WTO ministerial meetings, so that they include appropriate representation from business (including small business), unions and non-governmental organisations; and
- advancing rule changes within the WTO to ensure immediate publication of dispute settlement decisions, together with a short, plain language explanation of the decision.

More Democracy and Transparency

24. Labor recognises that bilateral free trade agreements offer an avenue for opening new markets for Australia's export community to complement market access gains derived from regional and multilateral trade negotiations. Labor considers that bilateral trade initiatives should only proceed on the basis of full community consultation. In the interests of openness and accountability a new mechanism should be established to enhance parliamentary scrutiny of free trade agreements.

Labor proposes that:

- Prior to commencing negotiations for bilateral or regional free trade agreements, a Labor Government shall table in both Houses of Parliament a

document setting out its priorities and objectives, including independent assessments of the costs and benefits of any proposals that may be negotiated. This assessment should consider the economic, regional, social, cultural, regulatory and environmental impacts which are expected to arise.

- Once the negotiation proposal is complete, the government shall table in parliament a package including the proposed treaty together with any legislation required to implement the treaty domestically.

Export Promotion

25. Labor maintains its commitment to the promotion of Australian exports. Austrade should be structured so that it can respond promptly to the needs of individual firms, as well as developing particular export markets. This may also involve forming consortia, holding conferences and educating Australians about the contribution that trade and investment make to our living standards. Austrade should focus particularly on knowledge intensive industries and the service economy. The Export Market Development Grants scheme provides grants to small and medium enterprises (SMEs) to assist their export promotion activities. In accordance with the legislated timetable, Labor will assess the operation of the scheme to ensure that it is efficient and effective.
26. Labor recognises that the multicultural nature of our society and the many languages spoken by Australians is one of our great strengths as a trading nation. Labor will facilitate trade networking and trade promotional activities in cooperation with major ethnic organisations both domestically and overseas.
27. Labor recognises the significant opportunities the world wide growth of electronic commerce brings, particularly

to small and medium sized businesses in Australia. To help optimise e-commerce opportunities for Australian companies, Labor will:

- encourage Austrade to promote competency in e-commerce as a key function of their work;
- support in APEC, and all other trade agreements, the promotion of electronic clearance and other cross border regulation; and
- promote programs to help exporters to lift their take-up rate of new technology and be e-commerce ready.

28. The Export Finance Insurance Corporation (EFIC) should operate on commercial lines. In so doing, however, it must carefully assess the environmental and social implications of projects to ensure that they are sustainable in the long term. EFIC should retain the ability to refer non-commercial projects issues to the Minister for support, where those projects are in the national interest.
29. Labor will investigate the feasibility of instituting a mixed credit scheme, as part of the role of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) should play in linking our initiatives to the needs of Australian companies. Such a program should support Australia's development assistance objectives, but would not be counted as part of Australia's overseas aid budget.

Anti-dumping

30. Labor supports the maintenance of anti-dumping measures. Anti-dumping legislation ensures that overseas exporters do not hurt our industry by selling their products in Australia at a lower price than they charge in their home markets. Where there is an allegation of dumping, it should be independently and urgently investigated by the Australian Customs Service.

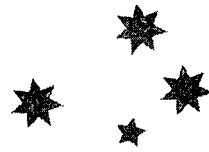
RESOLUTION**Independent Government Meat Inspection**

Labor recognises that an efficient meat inspection service is vital in guaranteeing the quality of Australian meat products on the export and domestic markets.

Labor recognises the importance of independent government employed meat inspectors in ensuring the quality of product in Australian export meat establishments.

Labor rejects the attempts both in Australia and internationally to abolish the role of government meat inspectors and in the interests of promoting food safety and protecting our export meat industry, Labor commits to maintaining the role of government meat inspectors in licensed export establishments.

Labor will investigate current meat inspection practices and procedures in domestic establishments, especially those domestic establishments which export, to determine if they adequately safeguard community health in Australia and abroad.



AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY 

Chapter Twelve

Developing Australian Industry

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Chapter Twelve

Developing Australian Industry

Industry Development: An Integrated Approach

1. Industry policy is central to Labor's economic development strategy that is based on growing the Australian economy and translating Australian ideas and innovations and the overall level of economic demand into business and job opportunities for Australians. The essence of Labor's approach is to create the potential for Australia to enjoy a high-wage, high-skill future.
2. Australia must have a coherent and visionary industry development policy which lasts beyond the term of any one government, setting out where Australia should be in 2015 and beyond and what we need to do to get there.
3. Such an industry development policy should encourage wealth generation in Australia, in particular in value-added activities, and seek to ensure that this is equitably distributed, particularly across the regions of Australia.
4. Labor believes the government must be involved in developing and pursuing such an industry development policy. It is an abrogation of national responsibility for a government to leave industry development to market forces alone.
5. Labor will put in place economic policies to achieve:
 - sustainable economic growth sufficient to achieve a continuous reduction in unemployment levels, with job growth in the manufacturing, mining, agriculture, services and emerging industries;
 - significant expansion of export income, with the particular long-term goal of

lifting to fifty per cent the proportion of manufacturers who export;

- an environment conducive to the achievement of significant levels of investment from both Australia and overseas; and
 - growth in the economic value and contribution of science and technology based industries, education and other professional services.
6. Labor will employ the full range of industry development policy instruments necessary to achieve its goals, whether they be industry specific, region specific or generic measures such as support for innovation. The five key elements of a modern industry development policy will be:
 - support for innovation and skill formation including diffusion of technology;
 - strategic intervention;
 - government procurement;
 - support for innovation and facilitation of opportunities for commercialisation of these;
 - skill formation and diffusion of technology;
 - cost competitiveness; and
 - market access and export promotion.

Innovation and Skill Formation

7. In the twenty-first century, the key drivers of economic success in any modern western economy will be the extent and success of investment in innovation, skill development and skill formation.
8. Labor recognises the fundamental changes that have occurred in the global economy and in Australian society. As the translation of science, technology and innovation into the productive economy proceeds at a rapid pace, we must

enhance this process through strategic public and private investment.

9. Labor is committed to ensuring organisations and individuals have the knowledge, skills and incentives to stimulate investment in innovation. Labor will foster an economic climate which supports private investment in research and development, including through tax incentives, and the effective and innovative use of technology by firms and organisations.
10. Australia must achieve at least the OECD average for general expenditure on research and development by 2015 if we hope to succeed in the twenty-first century.
11. Labor will maximise the benefits of innovation by encouraging the local commercialisation of Australian inventions and the development of export markets for new technologies and knowledge-based service industries. As well as commercialising Australian inventions, Australia must lead the world in adopting and using technology including advanced production technology and information and communications technology (ICT) developments.
12. National science agencies, such as the CSIRO, will be given clear strategic direction and funded at levels which allow them to pursue basic research as well as working with industry to transfer technology and nurture innovation. Labor will further expand and encourage links between the Defence Science and Technology Organisation and the domestic defence industry. Technology transfer to Australian industry will be encouraged.
13. Labor will ensure that the financial and cultural benefits of technological change are available to all members of society, including those in regional and rural

Australia. Labor will address the potential social and financial costs of technological change and questions of equitable access to information and services increasingly delivered in electronic form.

14. An emphasis on innovation and skills is fundamental not only to the creation of new industries but to the modernisation and transformation of traditional industries. A Labor Government will:
 - establish effective incentives to encourage research, development and commercialisation;
 - seek to encourage greater collaboration between Australia's private and public research effort;
 - promote linkages between industry and research bodies so that they share knowledge and expertise;
 - nurture clustering and networking of industries so that they share knowledge and expertise; and
 - seek to strengthen industry supply chains.

Strategic Intervention

15. Labor will put in place an active industry policy involving strategic intervention where such intervention adds value to Australia's workforce, its national resources or its ideas and increases our global competitiveness, leading to more exports and investment, or where the cost of not intervening would severely impact on particular industries or regions. The focus will be on building jobs in the new and existing industries.

Emphasis will also be given to sustainable industry development, based on environmental modernisation, with the aim of 'cleaning and greening' existing industries and developing new and emerging environmental technologies and industries.

16. A Labor Government will be prepared to intervene as appropriate to advance broader economic, social or regional objectives.
17. Labor will work with particular industries to achieve national goals. The sectoral approach adopted in the 1980s and 1990s was highly effective in boosting exports and cushioning the impact of reduced protection. The industry policy requirements of the next decade will not be the same as those of the past.
- Labor will put in place industry-based assistance measures that meet the needs of the new century.
18. In particular, Labor believes that industry policy measures must be developed and implemented on the basis of mutual obligation. Assistance provided to industries will therefore be on the basis of agreements between government and industry whereby industry agrees, for example, to specific job, export and investment targets, in exchange for governments providing the best possible environment to achieve those targets.
- Measures designed to attract significant new investment, from both Australia and overseas, will be an important element of this approach. Such measures will encourage a national approach to investment promotion and seek to minimise the detrimental effects of bidding wars between the States to attract new investment.
19. Individual projects or companies which receive federal government assistance under investment attraction schemes will need to enter into activity agreements with a Labor Government that ensure commitments to priority issues such as employment and local content strategies.
20. Accordingly, Labor's policy approach is not about propping up poor performers,

nor is it a 'dead hand of government' approach. While Labor urges a greater emphasis on intervention, it is intervention with a focus on building the competitiveness and export orientation of Australian industries.

Labor's approach involves working with business, workers and their unions and with the regions to support and encourage industries and firms that are committed to best practice and improving their international competitiveness.

21. Labor will seek to coordinate these strategic interventions as part of a broad nation building agenda. An office will be established to:
- assist in articulating government's strategic priorities;
 - coordinate economic, social and environmental agendas;
 - coordinate policy across governments; undertake research and policy development; and
 - ensure that the machinery of government is working towards the achievement of the government's strategic objectives.

Cost Competitiveness

22. Labor is committed to pursuing, through cooperative and consultative processes, a range of measures to improve the efficiency and productive performance of industry. Labor will:
- continue to promote microeconomic reform and competition policy in ways which not only contribute to a competitive business environment, but embrace social welfare and equity concerns, benefit consumers and are consistent with industrial relations best practice;
 - ensure that business regulation measures are reviewed for their impact on competitive efficiency, are in the

public interest and are not used by either the public sector or the private sector to unfairly restrict business competition;

—ensure that Australia's taxation system is sensitive to business needs; and

—continue to emphasise best practice in industrial relations, and the improvement of management systems to improve the efficiency and productive performance of industry.

23. Industrial relations arrangements must contribute both to competitiveness and to achieving fair outcomes. The emphasis should be on the development of productive and cooperative enterprise relations based on a well paid, highly skilled, effective and motivated workforce which contributes to building a competitive business environment.
24. Productive workplaces require attention to opportunities for employees to participate in and contribute to the efficient development of the enterprise and to have the opportunity to share in the benefits of its success. Labor will also develop cooperative tripartite mechanisms to consider industrial relations in the context of wider industry development issues.

Government Procurement

25. Labor recognises that in the manufacturing, service and information industries, government has a crucial role as a purchaser of goods and services. This is especially so for emerging industries or companies. A Labor Government will work with industry and State and Territory governments to use ethically sourced public procurement as an industry policy tool in ways that are compatible with efficiency and cost effectiveness and local industry development.

26. Labor will put in place an aggressive local industry participation policy, consistent with our World Trade Organisation (WTO) obligations and our commitment to purchasing the product with lowest 'whole of product life' cost. This policy will ensure: that all government departments see their purchasing activities as a key element in industry development; that significant outlays of Commonwealth funds conform with the policy; and that government agencies will be required to purchase from Australian and New Zealand suppliers who are price and quality competitive. The policy will provide a price reference advantage for Australian suppliers of 20 per cent with an additional 5 per cent for those companies in regional Australia and will ensure that all goods are ethically sourced and the process ensures that the aims of the policy can be adequately implemented subject to international commitments and/or obligations.

The Future for Agriculture

27. Australia's agricultural and fisheries industries will continue to play an essential role in the Australian economy as a major source of exports and as the economic base for most of rural and regional Australia.
28. Strong primary industries are crucial for creating wealth, income and jobs in rural and regional Australia.
29. Labor is committed to positive strategic intervention to ensure that all export development and import replacement opportunities are fully explored.
30. The key components of Labor strategy for agriculture and fisheries are:
 - increasing agricultural productivity;
 - maximising agricultural employment;
 - investment in innovative agriculture;

- access to markets;
- workplace safety on farms;
- women in agriculture;
- farm assistance programs;
- intergenerational transfer of farms;
- science and best practice;
- food safety and quality assurance;
- agriculture and the natural environment; and
- fisheries and aquaculture.

Increasing Agricultural Productivity

31. Labor acknowledges that the long-term survival of agriculture in a global environment will depend on continuing innovation and productivity improvement in the sector. Continuous productivity improvement will be achieved by:
- rebuilding agriculture's research and development capacity to improve on farm productivity and enhance producer competitiveness;
 - specific skilling of farmers and rural workers to enable the sector to keep pace with new production, technology and marketing advances;
 - improving the nation's transport infrastructure and produce handling facilities to enable Australia's agricultural produce to reach overseas markets quickly and at a competitive price to maximise returns, recognising the important role of air freight and intermodal linkages in that task; and
 - ensuring access by farm businesses to quality information technology and communication infrastructure to provide farmers with instant access to production, marketing and financial data.

Maximising Agricultural Employment

32. Labor acknowledges the capacity of agriculture to generate new jobs in regional areas and is committed to

encouraging the further processing of agricultural products close to the source of production as a means of creating wealth and jobs in country towns.

Labor will:

- assist Australian agriculture to identify new products, new market opportunities and areas where agricultural product imports may feasibly be replaced;
- recognise the important role played by off-farm income sources to the survival of the family farm, and see the restoration of regional services as an important vehicle for the creation of employment opportunities for farm family members; and
- facilitate the further development and growth of integrated farming and small-scale manufacturing and processing businesses.

Investment in Innovative Agriculture

33. Labor will examine and develop policies which will encourage new forms of ownership and investment by Australian capital in Australian primary industries.
34. Labor recognises there is a potential partnership between the long-term investment needs of agriculture and the growing pool of patient capital represented by Australian superannuation funds. Labor will seek to develop specific incentives and structures that will encourage these funds to play a significant role in contributing to the capital base required in the agricultural industry.
35. Labor will assist in the development of alternative farm ownership models (eg leasing and cooperative ownership) that may make it more attractive for institutional investors to contribute to the capital costs required to improve returns.
36. Labor will support the ongoing development of organic farming and sustainable agricultural practices.

Access to Markets

37. Labor will maximise access to international markets for Australian agriculture and fisheries. This will be coupled with effective communication links between new markets and local producers to take advantage of new market opportunities.
38. In pursuit of new domestic and international marketing opportunities, Labor will:
- ensure that Australian representatives at international agriculture and trade forums are adequately prepared to vigorously pursue the interests of Australian agriculture;
 - work with producer organisations to develop programs to keep farmers better informed about changing trends in market and consumer requirements;
 - support the development of structures which facilitate appropriate producer involvement at each step of the marketing chain;
 - examine existing marketing structures to ensure that they maximise returns to producers and the nation; and
 - develop programs which will assist regions and individual farm businesses to attract a premium price for their products through the use of 'clean and green' production methods.

Workplace Safety on Farms

39. Labor recognises the importance of workplace safety for farmers and farm workers and will work with State governments to ensure that best practice farm safety education programs are available throughout Australia.
40. Labor will work with farm organisations and unions representing rural workers to develop codes of practice for workplace

safety on farms. Where codes fail to make the farm workplace safe, Labor will work with State governments to introduce legally enforceable codes.

Women in Agriculture

41. Labor acknowledges the role played by women in the operation and management of farm businesses. Labor will:
- work with rural women to enhance the awareness and appreciation of their important role and will develop programs to upgrade the skills and expand the opportunities of women in the sector; and
 - maintain and expand services, including childcare, which support women in the agricultural workforce.

Farm Assistance Programs

42. With primary industries particularly exposed to changing natural, environmental, economic and social conditions, there is a need to:
- further develop flexibility, innovation and adjustment to change as core skills in Australian primary industry; and
 - develop specific national responses to better provide for the ever present short-term crises such as disease outbreaks and climate problems.

Labor will:

- maintain flexible crossovers between family or household support programs in other portfolios to ensure that primary producers are not excluded from mainstream safety net assistance simply through ownership of the primary asset;
- maintain funding for exit programs which make it possible to exit with dignity as deemed appropriate;
- explore with farmers, farm organisations and other groups,

- conservation stewardship arrangements as alternatives to exit programs; and
- assist farmers to assess ongoing viability of their enterprises in the light of changing production, marketing and environmental conditions and provide programs to assist farmers to adjust to these changing circumstances.

Intergenerational Transfer of Farms

43. Labor recognises the importance to the farm sector and the national economy of enabling younger generations of farmers to take over family farm businesses without leaving the older generation in financially difficult circumstances.
44. In partnership with farm organisations, Labor will seek to develop new ways of facilitating the intergenerational transfer of farm assets.

Science and Best Practice

45. Labor is committed to confirming science as an accepted arbiter in questions related to sustainability, environmental assessment, hazards and quarantine.
46. Standards of international best practice and science will be developed and continuously reviewed and updated, in particular to support a fully resourced national quarantine system which will accept a proactive responsibility for representing Australian quarantine interests at all levels and ensuring appropriate levels of protection for all distinct regions of Australia.

Food Safety and Quality Assurance

47. Australia's producers must be able to satisfy the consumer need for complete assurance on matters of food safety and quality. Labor draws no distinction between domestic and international consumers in this regard.

48. Labor will establish and enforce a comprehensive model of national food safety and quality assurance, which will include:
- the adoption of international best practice at all levels of the chain;
 - requiring an understanding of food safety and quality assurance concepts for persons performing tasks along the pathway from producer to end user;
 - labelling of food products containing genetically modified material; and
 - development of a national label of accreditation as a universally recognised symbol of Australian quality and environmental sustainability.

Agriculture and the Natural Environment

49. Labor sees an expanded role for the agriculture sector in meeting major environmental challenges such as soil degradation, salinity, chemical use, water conservation, greenhouse and climate change, river rehabilitation, feral and noxious weed control, and the loss of biodiversity. Labor will:
- encourage the development of innovative production systems and farming practices, new research and infrastructure developments that address these major challenges; and
 - acknowledge the particular implications for Australian agriculture of long-term climate change, direct scientific effort to identifying areas at risk from such change, and develop long-term strategies for regions required to change the nature of their farming activity.
50. Labor recognises the critical role of the rural community in the ongoing stewardship of our land. Labor is committed to working with rural communities and land holders in the

adoption of sustainable agricultural practices and whole farm planning consistent with regional strategies.

Labor is committed to building on the achievements of Landcare, encouraging the uptake of sustainable farming practices and the continuing support for the repair of our rural landscapes.

Fisheries and Aquaculture

51. Labor recognises the importance of the commercial and recreational fishing industries, and the aquaculture industry, in generating employment and export income for many regions.
52. Labor understands the crucial role research and development plays in ensuring that fish stocks remain at a level that can support both commercial and recreational fishing.
53. Labor supports the further development of aquaculture industries.

The Future for Minerals, Resources and Energy

54. Australia's minerals, resources and energy industries are vital to our economy. They are a major source of exports and a direct and indirect employer; provide an economic base for regional Australia; and make a substantial contribution to the well being of the whole community.
55. Enormous potential for long-term economic and employment growth exists in the further development of these industries. The greatest potential for this growth exists in downstream processing of Australia's natural resources and the export of minerals-related services and technology.
56. The potential for economic and employment growth in these industries, combined with the globalisation of the

economy, the emergence of new international competitors in the global resources market, and the internationalisation of a number of Australia's larger companies, means that the international competitiveness of Australia's minerals, resources and energy industries is a crucial issue for government.

57. Australia's natural advantages in downstream minerals processing for domestic and export markets can be further enhanced by a more efficient, nationally oriented energy industry.
58. The extraction and use of mineral resources has both natural resource and economic implications. Government and industry should seek to ensure that development of mineral resources occurs in a way which maximises the economic worth of existing resources.

Labor will improve the efficiency of the use of minerals, resources and energy so that the depletion of finite resources is minimised by the use of renewable resources.

59. To maximise the minerals, resources and energy industries' social and economic contribution to Australia, Labor will:
 - encourage, in conjunction with the States, an intensified national minerals, oil and gas exploration effort, and the development of new exploration science and technology;
 - facilitate the continued development of a national gas distribution network;
 - promote the sound development of Australia's coal resources, with particular regard to domestic requirements, the development of Australia's coal exports, and the need for a stable and profitable coal industry;

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> —encourage downstream processing of minerals, resources and energy products, and, through public and private avenues, the infrastructure necessary to achieve this; —bolster research, development and technology efforts to ensure the international competitiveness of the minerals, resources and energy industries, including technology and services derived from those industries; —harness the scientific, technological, research and development and engineering ingenuity of our minerals and resources industries in a nationally coordinated way; and —make a national effort to maximise our energy capacity and efficiency and to bring down the cost of energy for Australian industry and consumers. <p>60. Labor will maximise local content in the manufacture, construction and maintenance of facilities and equipment for production and processing in Australia's minerals, resources and energy industries, including by promoting specific facilities and infrastructure which can build and service major offshore and onshore hydrocarbon projects.</p> <p>61. Labor recognises that the development of Australia's natural resources requires that the benefits are shared equitably between producers and the Australian community, and will foster a full return to the community from the development of common resources and maximise the benefits of Australian ownership and control of our natural resources. Labor supports the use of the tax regime to help achieve this objective.</p> <p>62. Labor will ensure that the ultimate responsibility for the administration of offshore mining and petroleum production resides with the Commonwealth, and</p>	<p>facilitate the efficient production of crude oil from new and existing fields including through regular release of exploration areas and an efficiently administered resource rent tax.</p> <p>63. Labor will ensure that mineral development on indigenous land proceeds consistently with Labor's land rights and native title policy, and maximises indigenous employment opportunities.</p> <p>64. Labor acknowledges that mining operations may have an impact on indigenous communities and traditional land owners. Labor is committed to working with these communities and mining operators to identify and minimise any adverse impact.</p> <p>65. Labor will adopt integrated long-term plans to ensure the economic and environmental health of the nation's water resources.</p> <p>Uranium</p> <p>66. Labor recognises that the production of uranium and its use in the nuclear fuel cycle present unique and unprecedented hazards and risks, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> —threats to human health and the local environment in the mining and milling of uranium, which demand the enforcement of very strict safety procedures; —the generation of products which are useable as the raw materials for nuclear weapons manufacture, which demands the enforcement of effective controls against diversion; and —the generation of highly toxic radioactive waste by-products, which demands permanently safe disposal methods not currently available. <p>67. Labor, accordingly, will not allow the mining and export of uranium except in</p>

limited circumstances, and under the most stringent conditions, as described below.

68. In relation to mining and milling, Labor will:

- prevent, on return to government, the development of any new uranium mines;
- ensure that the first consideration for workers in the uranium industry is the protection of their health, and constantly check health protection standards to ensure that they are adequate and properly enforced;
- establish a mechanism for ensuring as a matter of course the application of world best practice standards in Australian uranium mining and milling, based on extensive continuing research on environmental matters and on the health and safety of employees and affected communities;
- ensure through public accountability mechanisms that the Australian public is informed about the quality of the environmental performance of uranium mines; and
- foster a constructive relationship between mining companies and indigenous communities affected by uranium mining.

69. In relation to exports, Labor will:

- allow the export of uranium only from those mines existing on Labor's return to government, and only to those countries which observe the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), maintain strict safeguards and security controls over their nuclear power industries, are committed to non-proliferation policies and have ratified the international and bilateral nuclear safeguards agreements necessary to support these controls and policies;

- reserve the right to withhold supplies of uranium permanently, indefinitely or for a specified period from any country which ceases to observe the non-proliferation safeguards and security conditions which are applied to Australian uranium exports to that country, or which adopts nuclear practices or policies inimical to further advance in the cause of nuclear non-proliferation; and

- support the maintenance and enhancement of international and Australian safeguards to ensure that uranium mined in Australia, and nuclear products derived from it, is used only for civil purposes by approved instrumentalities in approved countries which are signatories to the NPT and with whom Australia has safeguard arrangements.

70. In addition, Labor will:

- vigorously oppose the ocean dumping of radioactive waste;
- prohibit the establishment in Australia of nuclear power plants and all other stages of the nuclear fuel cycle;
- fully meet all our obligations as a party to the NPT; and
- remain strongly opposed to the importation and storage of nuclear waste that is sourced from overseas in Australia.

Forests

71. Australia's forest and forest products industry has high economic and employment value. Labor recognises the importance of the forest and the forest products industry to the Australian economy and the need for forests to continue to be based on ecologically sustainable development principles. Future development of the forest and forest products industry must take place

on an ecologically and economically sustainable basis, by ensuring the full implementation of the National Forest Policy Statement, the Wood and Paper Industry Strategy, the Regional Forest Agreements process and the Plantation 2020 Vision.

72. The forest and forest products industry provides a source of employment for regional communities and contributes to economic growth and employment through increasing downstream processing of resources taken from public and private forests.

Labor will:

- pursue a forest and forest products industry strategy that balances employment, economic and social considerations consistent with Labor's environmental policy and in consultation with industry, unions, the community and the conservation movement;
- closely monitor the implementation of Regional Forest Agreements (RFAs) to ensure that agreed milestones and outcomes are achieved and that appropriate security is provided to both the timber industry and the reserve system; and
- establish an effective and properly resourced Independent Wood and Paper Industry Council to focus on creating employment and development in the forest and forest products industry, and encourage a move away from reliance on the export of woodchips and unprocessed wood, by promoting greater value adding and downstream processing.

The Future for Manufacturing Industries

73. Labor is committed to supporting a strong manufacturing sector, on the basis that:
 - a strong manufacturing sector can be the engine for significant job growth,

particularly in high quality service sector jobs;

- exports of manufactures, particularly elaborately transformed manufactures, have experienced rapid growth over the past two decades. Service enhanced manufacturing will be the engine of growth in world trade and it is essential that Australia realises its full potential; and
- investment in heavy manufacturing industries, including the resource sector must be planned within a cooperative framework, with medium to long-term value adding propensity for local and export markets.

74. Manufacturing provides Australia with some of its most significant economic opportunities. Within the manufacturing sector, the industries with the fastest export growth over the past decade were those that had some level of government assistance, including pharmaceuticals, computer and telecommunications equipment, assembled new motor vehicles, ships, food processing, and textiles, clothing and footwear.

75. Labor will secure and expand our manufacturing sector, and through it develop our high growth and knowledge intensive industries. Labor sees the key elements to develop in relation to these industries as being:

- research and development and innovation;
- quality products and services;
- a more skilled workforce, including management; and
- infrastructure.

76. Labor will develop or review existing strategic action plans for a range of industries including:

- food processing;
- pharmaceuticals;

- biotechnology;
- medical and scientific instruments;
- information technology, including software;
- telecommunications;
- metal production and fabrication;
- automotive;
- advanced manufacturing technology;
- shipbuilding;
- resource processing;
- sustainably managed forest and forest products;
- environmental technology;
- plastics and chemicals;
- printing;
- energy, including renewable energy; and
- textiles, clothing and footwear.

77. Development of these strategic action plans will involve industry employers, unions and government identifying the opportunities, the barriers to realising these opportunities and the solutions to overcoming the barriers. In addition to the broad array of our industry policy initiatives, Labor will look to establish a partnership with each relevant industry, involving a commitment from each industry to targets in investment, jobs, net exports and research and development, in return for strategic assistance.
78. Labor will continue to support the established manufacturing industries as well as new and emerging industries. The industries which have been undergoing major structural change such as the automotive and textiles, clothing and footwear industries, have the capacity to be transformed into successful world class industries providing quality jobs with decent wages and working conditions.
79. Continuing emphasis will be placed on the effort to ensure that our trading

partners honour their trade liberalisation obligations and that the established time frame is adhered to by all.

80. Where these industries continue to receive special support, Labor will seek firm commitments to securing existing employment levels, adherence to core labour standards including relevant award and legislative protections, new jobs, new investment and increased exports and a commitment to skills development, research and high quality design performed in Australia. For its part, Labor will seek to ensure that future tariff reductions are matched by our competitors and that programs are in place which encourage continued growth in net value-added exports.
81. Textile, clothing and footwear tariffs will be held at current levels pending a review to be undertaken by a new Labor Government. In addition, the government's Textile, Clothing, Footwear (TCF) legislation to be introduced by the government prior to the next election which further reduces tariffs will be opposed by the Labor Party. Labor's TCF review will not be undertaken by the Productivity Commission, but instead by a review panel established by the Industry Minister and including both employer and union representatives. This review must take into account the tariff and non-tariff barriers practised by our trading partners and likely social impact of further tariff reductions on TCF workers, regional Australia and the broader community. If our trading partners have not made sufficient adjustments at all levels to bring them into line with their international obligations or the negative social impact is too severe, the tariff freeze is to be maintained until such time as those key issues are addressed. Importantly, a Labour Adjustment Program that was

abolished by the Howard Government for the TCF sector will be reinstituted with an appropriate level of funding. This non-means tested program will assist TCF workers in improving their English and language skills, in vocational training and in finding new employment.

In Government, Labor will:

- pursue improved market access arrangements for Australian TCF exporters;
- continue funding of the Strategic Investment Program for the TCF sector at current levels and will review the scheduled reductions from 2009 with a view to reversing the government's planned reductions, and link funding to employment of Australian workers;
- establish an effective and resourced Australian TCF Industry Council to focus on creating employment and development in the TCF sector focussing on high value exports; and
- implement federal legislation to complement State legislation that aims to end the exploitation of outworkers and ensure they are employed under secure, safe and fair systems of work with enforceable rights and conditions of employment.

82. Labor will put in place anti-dumping measures to ensure that Australian industry is not disadvantaged by unfairly priced imports.

Biotechnology

83. Labor recognises that Australia has a strong record in biotechnology research and its application to medical, pharmaceutical, agricultural and industrial uses. A Labor Government will promote a national approach to promoting the biotechnology sector, in conjunction with States and Territories and will give strong support for local

industry to take advantage of biotechnology research through:

- access to government research and development assistance;
- a range of venture capital initiatives and other forms of encouragement to enable Australian companies to fully exploit the products of Australian research;
- creating conditions for partnerships and co-operative projects with international partners that enable Australia to participate in commercialisation activities; and
- assurance that intellectual property rights will be protected.

The Future for Service Industries

84. Labor recognises that our service industries already provide a significant proportion of Australia's employment and national income. Labor also recognises that, beyond our traditional strengths in primary industries and manufacturing, the service industries sector has grown in importance in recent years as a vital contributor to our export performance, job growth and ability to sustain economic growth. This trend, as well as the significant growth in service enhanced manufacturing, will strengthen in the future as the long-term shift in the structure of the economy continues.
85. The businesses which provide the many services which are critical to the way we lead our lives as consumers in a modern industrial society—such as financial, transport, communications, information technology (IT), data management, legal, medical, scientific, engineering, construction, education, tourism and leisure services—are also becoming more crucial to our national prosperity, due to their increasing capacity to:
- improve our ability to compete on the international stage by making export

- initiatives in other sectors more competitive;
- penetrate services export markets in their own right; and
 - compete with imported services on cost and quality.
86. Accordingly, Labor recognises that service and information industries must be embraced by the broader approach to national industry policy outlined in this Platform. In particular, Labor will develop and implement industry policy measures which assist the different industries which comprise the sector to:
- build export markets;
 - generate new jobs;
 - attract new investment;
 - improve the productive performance of the nation's businesses to internationally competitive levels;
 - collaborate, where appropriate, with international partners in export initiatives;
 - gain access to capital, where this is warranted because of financial market failures; and
 - pursue innovation.
87. Labor recognises the particular importance of a number of key industries in this sector and will develop focused industry strategies in these areas.

The Future for Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Industries

88. The shift to an information age culture has transformed our world, creating opportunities and challenges and presenting advances that affect almost every aspect of daily life. Labor sees the ICT industry as an important source of economic activity, providing sustainable high-skill and high-wage jobs into the future. Labor recognises the significant

positive contribution that the adoption of ICT has made to Australia's economic growth.

89. Labor is committed to putting in place industry development measures which help position Australia as a quality supplier of ICT products and services, building on the synergies to be achieved between developing the nation's ICT infrastructure and manufacturing capacity. In particular, Labor will seek to:
- attract investment into this sector;
 - reduce foreign barriers to exports through active market access efforts and export promotion programs;
 - lift the nation's educational emphasis on, and jobs skills in, ICT;
 - encourage collaborative relationships between local business, educational institutions and government, building on the concept of Cooperative Research Centres (CRCs) and geographical Centres of Excellence;
 - support a range of Information Technology (IT) investment initiatives, research and development programs and IT traineeships across a range of significant portfolios;
 - facilitate exports, consistent with our international obligations and commitments;
 - continue to grow Australia's strength as a quality exporter of information industry and technology education services;
 - continue to grow Australia's strength as a quality exporter of information industry and technology education services; and
 - use the purchasing power of government to create opportunities for the local ICT industry.
90. Labor is committed to improving the access of all Australians, including those

living in regional and rural areas, to the benefits of broadband connectivity. Compelling content, affordable pricing and effective competition will drive consumer take-up of broadband services, and the ongoing development of national and international network infrastructures will improve community access to a wide range of emerging content and broadband-enabled applications.

91. The public sector must be at the leading edge of online information provision and transaction processing. Labor will utilise the digital environment to improve access to government services without compromising service delivery.

92. Labor recognises that, in the information age, the key to fostering sustained growth is the protection and careful management of intellectual property. Online commerce and communication will only flourish if data is secure, ownership identified with certainty and privacy guaranteed. Investment in technology and information based industries requires the development and enforcement of domestic law, supported by international treaties and agreements, for the protection of intellectual property and the regulation of electronic commerce. Understanding the importance of information security and data protection, Labor will seek to:

- encourage the widespread uptake of unique digital identities through mechanisms such as digital signatures;
- support the use of encryption technologies to secure ICT services;
- develop a framework to deal with information security issues such as information warfare, computer crime and cyber-terrorism; and
- develop a strategy for the protection of Australia's national information infrastructure and its quick recovery in the event it is compromised.

93. Digital content in all of its forms—entertainment, education, marketing, presentation of information, applications and databases—is the interface between what Australia has to offer and the global economy. Strategies to achieve excellence serve a dual purpose, providing both a source of export revenues and an opportunity to showcase Australian talent and culture. An industry development focus on the production of digital content should assist in the rapid expansion of our capability in this area.

94. Labor will implement principles governing personal privacy. Action will include:

- using international privacy principles as a minimum standard in a digital environment;
- the regulation of information sharing in a corporate environment where mergers occur and particularly where databases are a core asset;
- the independent regulation of data matching and its possible inclusion as a role for the privacy commissioner;
- the standardisation of metadata with respect to publicly held information about private individuals; and
- measures to reduce junk email or 'spam', and the invasion of privacy that it represents.

Labor believes Australians should have the knowledge and the tools necessary to protect themselves from exposure to internet material that they consider inappropriate.

95. Labor will establish a national framework to provide academic, industry and community input into IT policy development.
96. Labor will encourage the application of new information and communications technologies to established industries to enable their successful transformation into world class industries.

97. Enhanced measures to facilitate and encourage employee share ownership will be an important part of a successful information industry development strategy.

98. Labor recognises the importance of protecting the security and privacy of publicly held information.

Tourism

99. Labor acknowledges that tourism is the fastest growing employment sector in Australia, particularly for young people. It is one of Australia's highest export earners and generates immense goodwill for Australia with overseas visitors.

100. Labor acknowledges the importance of strategic coordination between all tiers of government in the development of promotional and marketing activities, infrastructure and new job opportunities.

101. Labor recognises the opportunities which tourism can provide to regional Australia and supports strategic intervention by all levels of government to maximise these opportunities.

102. Labor recognises that there are many varied sectors within the tourism industry ranging from small businesses to international corporations, all of which cater for people with diverse needs and expectations.

103. Accordingly, Labor will seek to:

- improve industry workplace relations by introducing measures to enhance efficiency and productive performance in a cooperative manner;
- ensure that taxation arrangements are conducive to the industry's growth;
- ensure that environmental sustainability is central to tourism planning;

—ensure that regulation and compliance costs faced by the industry are minimised;

—improve the price competitiveness of Australian tourist destinations;

—develop further the job skills of tourism workers and improve the standards and options available for training and education in tourism and related areas;

—address the significant infrastructure needs of the sector, particularly in transport, encompassing aviation, rail, road and cruise shipping, and communications;

—ensure that the benefits of tourism are spread throughout regional Australia, through targeted assistance to encourage job creation and economic development;

—develop tourism strategies and policies which recognise that the sector is predominantly operated by small businesses;

—develop tourism projects to enhance the employment prospects of Indigenous Australians in areas in which they live and work in conjunction with the appropriate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representative bodies;

—appropriately resource the marketing and promotion of the domestic tourism sector;

—develop adequate tourist forecasting and research services; and

—maintain adequate resources for marketing and promotional activities, particularly generic efforts related to Australia as a tourist destination, through the Australian Tourist Commission.

104. Labor recognises ecotourism and heritage tourism as areas of significant

growth in Australia and an effective catalyst for encouraging the tourism industry to be ecologically sustainable and responsive to our cultural heritage. Labor is committed to protecting Australia's unique natural environment and heritage as well as to the development of strategies designed to maximise the benefits and sustainability of both eco tourism and heritage tourism.

105. Increasingly, international visitors are seeking an opportunity to experience Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures. Labor will work with Indigenous Australians, their organisations and communities to facilitate growth in indigenous tourism, that respects their culture, and assists them to become more involved in this aspect of tourism.

Transport

106. Labor recognises that transport is a service industry in its own right, and not just an infrastructure network. For transport services, Labor will seek to reduce foreign barriers to transport exports through active market access efforts and export promotion programs, and assist the growth of aviation and maritime transport as important export industries.

Education Services

107. Labor will assist the education services industry to build upon the successes in the 1980s and the first half of the 1990s and position itself as a supplier and a destination of choice in the booming international education market.

Financial and Professional Services

108. Labor acknowledges that the financial services industry has become increasingly outward looking since the early 1980s. Labor believes that, subject

to the maintenance of quality and cost effective banking and financial services for Australian consumers, this trend should be facilitated by government. In particular, Labor will seek to reduce foreign barriers to financial services exports through active market access efforts and export promotion programs.

109. Labor supports the increasingly outward orientation of Australian professional services, such as health, legal, accounting, engineering and surveying services. Labor will seek to:
- reduce foreign regulatory barriers to entry through active bilateral, regional and multilateral trade diplomacy; and
 - develop export strategies designed to win a greater share of the burgeoning international market for these services, particularly in East Asia, in partnership with the industries involved.

The Future for the Arts Industry

110. Labor recognises the economic significance of the arts industry in Australia and its contribution to the nation's cultural capital. Since the 1960s the number of artists and arts workers in Australia has tripled and there are four times as many arts companies. Seven per cent of Australia's workforce now earns some of its income from arts work.

The arts give us a sense of pride and improve the quality of our daily lives. Labor recognises the contribution of the arts to our intellectual and cultural life, to our leisure time, and to our economy through employment, tourism, taxes and export dollars. By nurturing arts industries, Labor acknowledges a significant investment in the future, ensuring a vibrant culture for the generations to come.

Small Business: Creating Jobs and Wealth

111. Labor recognises that small business plays a central role in the Australian economy. Through individual effort, small business owners provide employment for themselves and many thousands of employees. The dynamism of small business cannot be underestimated and should be encouraged. Its potential to further invigorate the Australian economy must be explored through active assistance from government.

Government Regulation

112. To maximise the economic dynamism that flows from the personal enterprise of small business operators, the sector must be free from unnecessary government regulation and interference, provided that firms meet their social and industrial relations obligations by implementing fair and cooperative relationships with workers and their representatives.

Fair Trading

113. Market economies sometimes produce market failures. Small firms struggle to compete with larger firms and government has a role to play in ensuring larger players do not misuse their market power to the detriment of smaller firms. Small business must be appropriately protected from unfair business conduct, particularly in areas such as franchising and retail tenancy leasing. Labor will utilise mechanisms, including legislation, to ensure that a fair trading environment exists within Australia and that smaller firms are protected from any unconscionable conduct on the part of larger firms, lessors and franchisers.

Government and Small Business

114. Labor acknowledges that there are significant government compliance costs associated with running a commercial operation. Small businesses are not as well equipped as larger businesses to cope with this burden. Labor will constantly audit compliance measures and work towards minimising those costs.

Employment

115. Labor acknowledges that the capacity of small business to generate increased employment is sensitive to overall economic conditions. Labor will implement policy in such a way as to provide small firms with opportunities to generate secure jobs that complement the objective of small businesses to operate in their markets profitably and efficiently.

Small Business and Enterprise Development

116. Labor acknowledges that small business has not had adequate access to successful government programs aimed at enhancing the productive performance of firms. Despite the success of a range of reform programs carried out in large firms, those programs cannot be relied upon to be the principal source of job creation in the future. Therefore, government must do more to facilitate the participation of small firms in programs that:
- enable small businesses to operate with well integrated management, production and service delivery functions;
 - enable small businesses to implement sophisticated strategies that enhance the quality of their products, customer service, response time, product development and marketing; and

—encourage the development of small business networks that provide access to otherwise largely inaccessible specialist activities such as research, product development and finance. Labor will develop programs that assist enterprises within cluster arrangements to maximise their ability to share highly skilled employees who, in isolation, they would not be in a position to employ.

Finance

117. Small firms need affordable access to both equity and debt finance to prosper and reach their full potential. Small firms are often required to pay a higher premium for finance than the rest of the community. To assist small business, Labor will ensure that a more competitive environment, particularly in lending arrangements and bank fees and charges, exists within the finance sector, and appropriate dispute resolution mechanisms are available.

Education

118. Small firms, particularly new entrants, would benefit greatly from education and training options specifically designed to assist them to operate their businesses more efficiently. Labor will provide small business with such options.

Access to Justice

119. Small business faces considerable difficulty in seeking redress through existing mechanisms because of the prohibitive cost involved. Labor will seek to provide small business with an effective low cost dispute resolution system.

Women in Small Business

120. Labor recognises the growing and important role women play in the small business sector. Labor also recognises

women often face barriers not encountered by their male counterparts. Labor will initiate mentor programs for women entering or contemplating entering the small business sector and fund the development of short training courses on small business management, delivered face to face and electronically, targeted specifically at women.

Information Technology

121. Labor recognises the critical importance of IT, and particularly e-commerce, in ensuring the competitiveness and survival of small firms. As new technologies evolve, Labor in government will provide ongoing support for small business to assist them in maintaining best practice business techniques.

Labor will work to maximise the benefits for small firms that flow from the outsourcing of government contracts by:

- ensuring that government procurement policies allow small to medium enterprises to effectively compete with multinationals for government contracts; and
- providing support and assistance to small to medium enterprises to help them gain access to potential markets.

Labor recognises that e-commerce is the practical facilitator in a global economy, and will work towards ensuring that small firms are not left behind by initiating strategies to:

- communicate to small firms the potential benefits of broadband internet as a tool of commerce and the use of e-commerce as a source of choice, competitiveness and ease;
- assist the development of access for small enterprises to national and international business opportunities; and

—ensure the safeguarding of transactions for those small businesses involved in electronic transactions through the further development of frameworks relating to e-commerce, privacy and digital authentication.

122. Labor acknowledges the important contributions of community organisations and the 'not for profit' sector to the Australian economy and to Australians' quality of life.

There are 700,000 non-profit organisations in Australia employing in excess of 600,000 people and contributing billions of dollars to the Australian economy.

Labor, in consultation with the sector, and State governments will encourage the development of a national regulatory framework for 'not for profit' organisations that is fair, consistent and clear that:

- stimulates the establishment or further development of a broad range of community or 'not for profit' organisations;
- does not attempt to inhibit the public advocate role of the sector;
- encourages donor confidence;
- sets a reasonable standard for public disclosure; and
- establishes appropriate oversight of the sector.

RESOLUTIONS

IT and Call Centres

National Conference expresses its concern at the recent trend in outsourcing information technology and call centre functions to off-shore providers.

Labor will ensure that government and government business enterprises shall not outsource their existing functions to off-shore providers (either directly or indirectly) where those services can be efficiently and effectively provided within Australia.

Government Procurement and Australian Jobs

The key elements in any successful government industry policy must be based on a fully integrated, whole of government approach, which includes government procurement policy. In this regard, a Labor Government will:

- use its purchasing power to promote and use Australian manufactured goods and services wherever possible;
- avoid doing business with those companies that do not support the principles of a civil society and core labour standards;
- not purchase imported goods until the social impact of such a decision has first been assessed, in particular, the impact of such a decision upon Australian jobs, industry development, technology transfer and skills development. In this regard no contract will be entered into for the supply of overseas goods if the assessment shows an overall negative impact. In the absence of such an assessment, a Labor Government should only purchase 'Australian made' goods and services wherever goods and services of the required quality are locally available;

RESOLUTIONS

- establish a minimum set of ILO core labour standards (as agreed between government and unions) which overseas manufacturers or service providers must comply with in order to do business with departments;
- provide that all Australian manufacturers who provide goods to government demonstrate a willingness to engage apprentices and trainees and have a training regime in place, which promotes skill development;
- ensure that federally owned corporations participate in the government procurement policy; and
- establish a monitoring/compliance program involving industry, unions and government to ensure continued compliance with the standards referred to above.

An Agenda for Trade and Industry and Policy

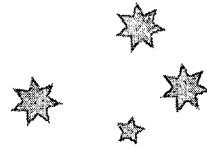
In translating Labor's industry development platform into policies and action plans, a Labor Government will establish the mechanisms and consultative process necessary to implement its trade and industry policy agenda, with the following initiatives:

- establishing an Australian Manufacturing Council, with an appropriately staffed and funded secretariat;
- establishing closer links between the trade and industry portfolios;
- recruiting and promoting the best qualified and committed people within Australia and overseas with a demonstrated track record in developing and implementing a sophisticated, interventionist industry and trade policy agenda; and
- providing funding at a level that ensures effective promotion of Australia's industry development, export promotion, investment attraction and innovation support.

In developing strategies for Australian industry to realise more opportunities in the domestic and export markets, Labor will:

- develop action plans in key industry sectors, in consultation with industry and union representatives, which involve firm commitments from industry to export, investment, job and research & development growth targets in exchange for assistance provided by the government;
- provide a long term commitment to the Export Market Development Grants Program;
- release an action plan and progress report on initiatives required to meet the long term goal of 50 per cent of manufacturing firms exporting;
- maintain a strong anti-dumping scheme to ensure Australian industry is not disadvantaged by unfairly priced imports; and
- implement a local industry participation policy that, consistent with our WTO obligations, will require government agencies to purchase from Australian suppliers who are price competitive.

The key elements of this policy will be a National Procurement Strategy coordinated by a dedicated unit within government with the objective of maximising the participation of Australian companies in the provision of goods and services to government.



AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY 

Chapter Thirteen

Stronger Urban and Regional Communities

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Chapter Thirteen

Stronger Urban and Regional Communities

People and Places: Developing Our Regions

1. The sustainable development of our urban and country regions, and a fair sharing of opportunity between regions, is critical to Australia's long-term environmental, social and economic well being. Labor recognises that:

- an inclusive approach to regional development will encompass rural, remote, regional and urban Australia;

- a collaborative approach to regional development involving all spheres of Government, the private sector and communities, in partnership, will provide local ownership of issues and solutions; and

- a strategic approach will facilitate the delivery of customised and targeted attention to specific issues, locations and people.

2. Labor recognises that there is an increasing economic disparity between different regions in Australia. This inequity undermines social cohesion and limits opportunities for many Australians. Markets alone will not deliver fairness and equality of opportunity to regional Australia. Government has a responsibility to act as both catalyst and partner to meet the challenges confronting our regions and to ensure equitable economic and social outcomes.
3. Labor recognises that there is a role for the Commonwealth government in both urban and regional development.
 - Abrogation of Commonwealth responsibility and massive cuts to urban and regional development and service delivery is regressive.

- Successful nations today have active strategies to take advantage of their untapped potential and to regenerate their regions and integrate them into the national and international economy.

4. Labor recognises that globalisation and technological change bring both opportunities and threats. Through strategic and targeted intervention, government has a responsibility to ensure that the benefits of change are achieved and equitably shared.

- Labor recognises that there is role for all three levels of government in developing Australia's regions.

5. Labor accepts that government involvement is critical to improving nation building outcomes in the areas of:

- infrastructure and service provision;

- building stronger communities;

- economic development;

- education, training and skills development;

- employment and social services; and

- restoration and management of the built and natural environment.

6. Labor recognises that an integrated cross-portfolio approach to urban and regional development is necessary to realise our environmental, social and economic goals. Labor will consider the impacts of policies on not only our economy, but also on our communities and natural environment.

- Labor is committed to ensuring all government decisions are assessed in terms of their impact on Australia's regions.

7. Federal government has both the capacity and the responsibility, in consultation with States and local government, to plan for the long-term with respect to industry and workforce

development, the provision and maintenance of infrastructure and services, and environmental sustainability.

8. Labor acknowledges the diversity of our regions and the challenges they face. Labor respects the capacity of regions and communities to determine their own futures, and will support each region in assessing its own potential, identifying its own priorities, devising its own solutions and driving its own agenda.
9. Labor recognises that successful urban and regional development must capitalise on the knowledge and commitment of the local community and extend opportunities for the involvement of all stakeholders. Furthermore, regional economic development must proceed by embedding new and existing economic activities, rather than relying solely on large subsidies or other inducements to attract often footloose activities. This is best done by developing appropriate infrastructure for skills development, innovation and technology transfer and diffusion in the region concerned, together with ensuring affordable access to finance for investment.

Reforming Urban and Regional Structures And Processes

10. National leadership is required to ensure that regional structures and processes are effectively developed and utilised. Regional planning and decision making allows for coordination between local communities, based on geographic proximity and commonality of interest, while maintaining the ability to take into account regional differences.
 - As the level of government closest to the community, Labor recognises the potential role local government can play in regional planning and decision making and will ensure its participation.

11. Labor's urban and regional development structures will build on existing regional and sub-regional networks.

12. Communities themselves need to be the main drivers in the development and implementation of local and regional development strategies. This will require greater collaboration between all levels of government, the private sector and communities.

- Labor will identify and develop community leadership, including youth leadership, and will provide opportunities for community input to ensure that people have an effective voice in policy development and delivery.

- Labor sees local leadership, entrepreneurship, innovation and fostering of social capital as critical to urban and regional development. To this end, Labor will encourage the expansion of economic and social networks within and between regions.

13. Labor recognises that Australians respond to challenges when given opportunity, resources and support. Community empowerment will be at the core of Labor's approach, with the devolution of opportunity and responsibility that this implies.

- Regions will be assisted to develop proposals that are clearly articulated, have the support of all relevant stakeholders, leverage private sector funding, and have transparent monitoring arrangements.

- Where these conditions are met, government must be prepared to support community initiative.

Strategies for Urban and Regional Development

14. Labor's urban and regional development agenda involves the development of

sustainable communities, and requires action across the broad spectrum of policy.

15. Labor acknowledges the potential of approaches that bring together resources in key policy areas to allow identification of priorities and improved policy coordination.

16. Labor will examine mechanisms for the consolidation and integration of infrastructure and service delivery between the public, private and community sectors.

—Labor will pursue an expanded role for the Council of Australian Governments (CoAG), incorporating Commonwealth, State and local governments, to coordinate and integrate infrastructure utilisation and service provision between different levels of government, and the private and community sectors.

Urban and Regional Infrastructure

17. Labor recognises that a successful economy depends on the provision and maintenance of adequate infrastructure, including transport, water, energy, education, health and information and communications technology.

18. Labor will establish a National Infrastructure Advisory Council to coordinate a national strategy for infrastructure provision and maintenance.

—Labor will develop a regional infrastructure fund, to leverage private sector financing for infrastructure programs in areas of identified priority.

—Labor acknowledges the important role of local government in terms of the provision and maintenance of infrastructure.

19. Labor will establish a national transport planning strategy to enable integrated planning and to help achieve our environmental, social and economic goals.

20. Labor recognises that up to date communications infrastructure and facilities are essential and will establish a national broadband strategy to ensure up to date communications infrastructure and facilities that enable residents and business to participate in, and take advantage of, the opportunities offered by developments in communications technology and services.

Regional Services

21. Labor recognises that many urban and country communities have difficulty in accessing a range of basic services.

—Empowering these communities to identify priorities and work with government on developing solutions is central to Labor's approach to regional services.

22. Labor believes that all regions should have reasonable and affordable access to services including:

—transport and infrastructure;
—basic utilities such as water supply, sewerage and energy;
—personal, family and social services, including housing;
—financial services;
—health and aged care;
—quality education and training opportunities;
—employment services;
—information on government programs and policies;
—universal and affordable broadband communications facilities, particularly in remote areas; and
—environmental health services, including land and water usage.

23. Labor will build and expand on existing public networks, where appropriate, to provide urban and regional Australia with this range of basic services.

24. Labor recognises the importance of innovation in service delivery, and the potential of coordination to improve the effectiveness of over-the-counter, telephone and online services.

—Under Labor, all levels of government will play a role in the development and devolution of services to Australia's regions.

25. Labor recognises the particular difficulties faced by small regional communities in accessing a range of basic services. Labor is committed to developing a flexible, long-term solution to the service difficulties facing small regional communities.

26. Labor will develop a comprehensive national disaster strategy, in partnership with State and Territory emergency services and local governments.

27. Labor will work with State and Territory governments to implement a national bushfire strategy aimed at ameliorating the adverse environmental, social and economic impacts of bushfires.

—Measures will include appropriate resourcing and coordination of a national aerial firefighting effort, research capacity, community education, protection of volunteers and adoption of new firefighting and communications technologies.

Building Stronger Communities

28. Community building strategies are a response to growing geographic, economic and social inequities across Australia. Many rural and remote communities and some urban areas have been adversely affected by the process of globalisation and the resultant transformation of local employment and industry.

29. Labor recognises that communities that are confident and participatory create

opportunities for environmental, social, cultural and economic development and lead to improved health, education and employment outcomes.

30. Labor is committed to community building, which is about developing partnerships between local people, government, businesses, higher education and research institutions and other agencies to improve the places in which people live. Community building aims to find local solutions to local problems, increase social participation and develop networks within and across communities.

31. Labor recognises that 80 per cent of the Australian population lives on 1 per cent of the land mass, the coastal fringe. This trend continues in the context of an ageing population. Many towns in regional Australia have very high indigenous populations where 40 per cent is under the age of 15. This situation has major economic and infrastructure implications, a point that must be understood and factored in to planning and policy development.

32. Labor recognises that community building requires that government is willing to move from program-focused policy to people—and place-based policies, provide coordination across departments and between levels of government, and is committed to long-term strategies rather than one-off projects.

Urban and Regional Economic and Business Development

33. Labor recognises that adequate infrastructure, the ability to attract capital, an innovative business culture and a skilled workforce are critical to developing and diversifying local economies.

34. Labor recognises the increasing importance of broadband communications

Australian Labor Party	National Platform and Constitution 2004
<p>infrastructure in achieving business development and growth in regional economies.</p> <p>35. Labor recognises that economic and business development will be enhanced in regions that have a high quality of life. Labor is committed to supporting and promoting opportunities for cultural expression and cultural experiences for all Australians whatever their backgrounds and wherever they live.</p> <p>36. Labor recognises that retaining, creating and expanding business and industry is critical to providing opportunity and security for the future, and will encourage innovation and business growth. Labor is committed to overcoming the practical difficulties facing regional and outer urban business, particularly small business, in accessing information and expertise.</p> <p>—Labor will improve the effectiveness of business networks, including online networks, in disseminating best practice information and new technologies to regional and outer urban businesses.</p> <p>37. Labor will encourage strategic alliances between industry, universities, research centres, business service providers and customers.</p> <p>—Labor will assist regions to develop business networks that can allow them to identify and develop closer links with other regions, industries and sectors.</p> <p>38. Labor recognises the difficulties faced by regional businesses in accessing capital, information and advice, and will develop initiatives to improve information flows between financial institutions and regional entrepreneurs.</p> <p>Urban and Regional Education, Training and Skills Development</p> <p>39. Labor recognises that knowledge and learning are critical to the long term future of urban and regional economies. A</p>	<p>skilled and educated population creates not only economic opportunities, but vibrant and diverse communities.</p> <p>—The education sector has great potential as a source of ideas and leadership to assist in addressing local economic and social challenges.</p> <p>40. Labor will examine initiatives to retain and attract a diversity of highly skilled workers and businesses to the regions, through both internal migration and the immigration program.</p> <p>41. Labor is committed to working in partnership with the community to develop local employment and training initiatives to improve skills of people at all levels.</p> <p>—Labor recognises that skills relevant to local industry are critical to employment prospects in regional areas.</p> <p>—Labor is committed to maximising the opportunities for young people to pursue education and employment in their own regions.</p> <p>42. Labor recognises the importance of all sectors of education and training, and will seek to improve coordination between these sectors at a regional level.</p> <p>—Labor recognises the potential of both improved transport and distance learning in expanding access to education and training.</p> <p>43. Labor also recognises that affordable, reliable broadband is an essential pre-requisite to quality distance education.</p> <p>Urban and Regional Employment Assistance and Social Services</p> <p>44. Labor recognises the debilitating effect of social exclusion on the lives of individuals, families, communities and the nation. An active approach to opportunity and responsibility at the community level, with an emphasis on employability and social participation, is critical to improving outcomes.</p>

45. Labor believes that people in depressed regions should be able to access a diverse range of family and community support services.
46. Labor recognises that people in depressed areas often suffer from multiple disadvantages. They need customised assistance that delivers opportunities for employment and participation and that can improve employability, self esteem and community well being.
47. Labor will develop coordinated options for work, work experience, reskilling, volunteering, mentoring and other forms of community service for older Australians.
48. Labor acknowledges the potential for employment opportunities in areas such as human services, tourism, alternative energy development and environmental renewal, and the application of information technologies, and will develop frameworks that can identify and take advantage of these opportunities.
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52. Labor is committed to maintaining and protecting the environmental quality of urban areas so that they remain attractive for people to live and work in, for investment and tourism.
53. Labor will develop, in partnership with all three tiers of government and the community, a national urban development strategy.
54. Labor recognises that the federal government must play a leadership role in environmental management, to ensure sustainability at a regional, national and global level.
55. Labor views environmental concerns as integral to policy debates, and will therefore consider the environmental impact of all policy decisions made by government.
56. Labor will encourage the development of regional environmental strategies, encouraging effective land and water usage strategies and the expansion of industries such as alternative energy development and environmental renewal.
57. Labor will facilitate a grass-roots approach to local and regional environmental management, recognising that this is often more effective in obtaining public commitment.

Better Management of Our Built and Natural Environment

49. Labor recognises the way we manage our cities and towns will determine our success in achieving many of our environmental, social and economic goals and is critical to improving the liveability of our communities.
50. Labor is committed to planning and developing Australia's cities and towns as high quality living environments with access to housing, jobs and services and to facilitate growth in accord with national environmental, social and economic goals.
51. Labor recognises that, in an internationally competitive economic environment, the management of our cities and towns to achieve high quality environments, efficiency of operation and

sustainability, is a key factor in helping the nation to continue to achieve economic growth.

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 57. Labor will facilitate a grass-roots approach to local and regional environmental management, recognising that this is often more effective in obtaining public commitment.
- Labor acknowledges the important role local government can play in environmental management, planning and service delivery.

Strategies for Specific Regions

58. Each Australian region has a unique configuration of geographic, economic and social characteristics and requires the development of a specific strategy for that region. Recognising there are

regional disparities, Labor will establish benchmarks that recognise differences and help identify what is necessary to overcome them.

59. Labor will focus assistance on regions of greatest disadvantage and on reducing the gap between these regions and more advantaged areas. These regions will be given priority access to Commonwealth funding in key policy areas.
60. Labor recognises that in the uneven pattern of economic development, five types of regions face particular difficulties:
 - rural towns and communities with declining populations;
 - old industrial centres affected by industry restructuring;
 - new coastal conurbations with growing populations, increasing unemployment and limited service provision;
 - outer metropolitan regions poorly served by infrastructure and services; and
 - remote and isolated areas that are deficient in or devoid of infrastructure, services and economic and employment opportunities.
61. Labor will develop a suite of support items and brokered services for urban and regional development, from which communities can select items that are suited to their circumstances. This will require regions to prioritise their opportunities and constraints.
62. Labor's regeneration strategies will seek to reinvigorate regions bearing the costs of economic restructuring. Labor will develop strategies involving all levels of government aimed at improving the physical, social and economic environment in these areas.
 - These strategies will involve the development of local industry and employment opportunities, access to

education, health, housing and community support services, improved transport links and the involvement of local stakeholders.

63. Labor will continue to develop integrated strategies for particular regions, in partnership with regional communities. Labor recognises that the problems of urban and regional development and their solutions will differ throughout Australia. In the cases of South Australia, Tasmania and northern Australia, due to their lower populations, isolated locations and unique economic circumstances, Labor will develop specific regional packages. Nevertheless, Labor recognises that isolation and low density population is not constrained by State boundaries and that regions of all States are affected by the challenge of the provision of greater development opportunities and services.
64. A federal Labor Government will review the role of the National Capital Authority (NCA) to ensure that it operates in harmony with the planning goals of the ACT Government.

Local Government

65. Labor will support the necessary legislation for a referendum to amend the Australian Constitution to recognise the autonomous role of local government. In addition Labor recognises:
 - the increased role played by local government in the Australian federal system and potential benefits to the nation of enhancing that role;
 - local government will play a participative role in the decision making process of CoAG;
 - the important role played by local government representatives in their communities;
 - the value of democratic, accountable and efficient local government as a

- vehicle for local democratic decision making, responsible to local communities;
- the importance of effective partnerships between local government and the Commonwealth in the efficient delivery of services that impact directly on the living standards of Australians; and
 - that efficient, effective and responsive local government is vital to creating and maintaining equity between the regions.
66. Labor is committed to working with local government to develop and implement strategies to increase participation by women in all aspects of local government.
67. Labor will work with local government on the issue of urban reform and development through further measures to improve the efficiency and quality of local planning and approvals processes.
68. Labor recognises the role of local government in environmental management, including the areas of coastal management, reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, improved waste management, energy efficiency, and improved catchment and water resources management and will promote its active involvement in the achievement of national environmental objectives.
- Labor will promote consideration of a broad range of national environmental strategies in the core business of local government.
69. Labor acknowledges the need for greater local government involvement in pursuing employment and training opportunities, in partnership with other spheres of government, business, unions and regional organisations.
70. Labor is committed to working with local government on the formulation and implementation of regional development strategies.
71. Labor recognises that State and federal governments have shifted costs to local government without adequately resourcing councils. Accordingly an incoming Labor government will examine ways to redress the funding shortfall suffered by local government.
- In addition Labor will work with local government to improve and protect the provision of infrastructure and services to local communities and to achieve best practice in the development, management and maintenance of infrastructure.
- This will include:
- Increasing efforts to stimulate and support infrastructure investment in partnership with State and federal governments; and
 - Preparing infrastructure development plans as part of local and regional development objectives.
72. Through a whole of government approach, Labor will work towards clearer definitions of the roles and responsibilities of local government and other levels of government and the elimination of unnecessary duplication between spheres of government, and to improve linkages between Commonwealth, State and local government in the delivery of services and programs, particularly across rural and regional areas.
- This process will involve the development of national benchmarking and performance indicators for specific services and functions, and will include consultation with all stakeholders, the community and appropriate unions.
73. Labor will implement a process to provide for a serious discussion on the future funding arrangements for local government, involving federal government, state government, local government, and that industry

unions be asked to contribute to this important discussion.

External Territories

74. Labor is committed to ensuring that our external territories maintain their unique social and historical structure. Labor believes the potential of our external territories is best realised when the people of the territories:
- have self determination; and
 - take responsibility for actively promoting their cultural and social uniqueness.
75. To this end, Labor will ensure that the people of the external territories of Australia are provided with:
- the support to allow them to participate fully in decisions relating to both the day to day administration, as well as the long-term future of their communities;
 - support in their efforts to develop regional autonomy; and
 - the financial support needed to encourage the future economic and ecological sustainability of their communities.

RESOLUTION

Banking and Financial Services

Labor recognises that access to basic banking, insurance and financial services is essential for full participation as a member of the community and for the community to realise its full economic and social capacity.

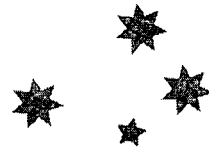
Government has an obligation to intervene where the market fails to look after the needs of our community in providing this access.

Labor condemns the inaction of the Howard Government, while more than 1600 of Australia's bank branches were closed in the five years from 1998 to 2002.

Labor is concerned at the concentration of economic power, the likely further reduction of access to services for some of our communities and the significant job losses that would result from bank mergers.

Given the above, in government, Labor will:

- act to maintain prohibitions of mergers and takeovers among the big four banks (ANZ, CBA, NAB and Westpac);
- restrict mergers and acquisitions across the banking sector where they significantly diminish competition or where social and employment impacts warrant, and will consult the community and the relevant trade unions prior to any approval; and
- regulate Approved Deposit Institutions to the extent necessary should they fail to meet appropriate voluntary community service obligations.



AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY



Chapter Fourteen

Our Arts, Culture and Heritage

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Chapter Fourteen

Our Arts, Culture
and Heritage

Towards a National Cultural Policy

1. Labor recognises that culture embodies the energy and the spirit of our nation through the creative expression of ideas and imagination. Labor is committed to supporting and promoting opportunities for cultural expression and cultural experiences. Labor has a proud history of nurturing cultural expression and cultural opportunities for all Australians whatever their backgrounds and wherever they live. Labor will ensure that support for all cultural activities remains one of its highest priorities.

2. In a democracy, a necessary part of effective participation is equitable access to diverse sources of information and opinion. This continues to be a core priority of Labor.

3. Labor will encourage the development of creative talent and imagination through continued support to the cultural industries and groups and individuals within them.

4. In a fair society, there needs to be a balance between government support for the development of excellence and giving everyone a chance to participate.

Labor will ensure all forms of art and culture are accessible to all Australians.

Labor is aware of the contribution that can be made by the arts and artists to improving Australia's quality of life, and the progress of tolerance, justice and peace in the world. Labor acknowledges that artists and the arts contribute to improving the quality of life for all Australians. The talents of our artists give us unique opportunities to strengthen our intellectual, social and economic well

being, and help to promote tolerance and understanding.

5. Labor will strive to ensure that the Australian cultural sector will not be diminished as a result of any free trade agreements. Labor is committed to ensuring Australian culture remains unique and diversified. It is fundamental that our news and entertainment reflect the values and priorities of our culture, both for our vision of ourselves and for the vision of Australia overseas. Labor will commit to promotion of local content development and availability, and any free trade agreement must not undermine the capacity of future Australian governments to regulate any future mediums for the delivery of content.
6. Labor will consult and involve the community in developing strategies which embrace, include and respect individual and ethnic-related differences.

Government Support for the Arts

7. Labor recognises that, while there are many changes occurring in contemporary society, artistic creativity and innovation are important factors in preserving our social identity and building national pride.
8. Labor acknowledges that artists and the arts contribute to improving the quality of life for all Australians. The talents of our artists give us unique opportunities to strengthen our intellectual, social and economic well being, and help to promote tolerance and understanding.
9. Labor will continue to support the Australia Council to provide an independent voice in policy development.

Priority will continue to be given to the principles of merit-based funding and peer assessment for the arts. Labor will ensure that funding granted by the Australia Council will be allocated in a

- way that provides the maximum benefit for the artist and be distributed equitably amongst the States and Territories.
10. A fundamental role for the Commonwealth must be the maintenance and development of the great national collecting institutions. Australians in all regions must be able to access quality works, traditional and contemporary, of both local and international artists. National institutions should be encouraged to tour their collections to ensure access by all Australians.
 11. The role of the Commonwealth is to develop and support professional arts. Labor recognises the importance of fostering all forms of amateur art, and will encourage an increased role for professionals in providing advice to emerging artists involved in local and regional arts activity.
 12. In recognition of the important role that the Australian film industry plays in our cultural sector, Labor commits to supporting and financing the film industry, training future talent, and assisting market development through Australian local content requirements on free-to-air and pay television.
 13. Labor recognises the role of strong local markets in supporting the development of the Australian music industry, particularly at the research and development stage phase. Labor asserts that Commonwealth Governments should ensure that access to local markets is maintained and strengthened.
 14. Commonwealth, State and local governments should cooperate to ensure that regional and local libraries can provide effective and equitable access to literature and information, including through modern technology.
 15. Labor recognises that Australians are showing an increased interest in the arts sector, with higher enrolment in arts courses. Labor will continue to support high quality art, drama and music education programs, and will nurture our vibrant, expanding arts sector.
 16. Technological change such as the internet brings new media and art forms and new industries associated with it. The Australian government should continue initiatives which encourage Australian talent, create Australian jobs and ensure that Australian consumers have access to such material.
 17. Labor recognises that the internet and the world wide web complement traditional ways of presenting our culture and art and will pursue opportunities to enrich their presentation in digital media including the internet and multimedia.
 18. Labor supports policies aimed at educating and empowering parents and citizens with the knowledge and the tools to enable them to protect their children and families from being exposed to inappropriate violent and pornographic material on the internet. Labor therefore supports the development of appropriate internet filtering technology for this purpose. Labor does not support government policies which seek to prohibit Australians from viewing internet content which is legal in other mediums, or which mandates the use of internet filtering technology.
 19. Labor will seek to restore priority to the provision of arts works in major public buildings as part of a public works program.
 20. In addition to financial support, government needs to play a role in encouraging and coordinating the development of private and corporate patronage and sponsorship of arts and culture to maximise the social resources provided to this sector.

21. As society and the economy change and develop, the economic and employment significance of the arts and culture industries must be recognised. Labor commits to developing industry and export assistance programs in ways which are appropriate for these industries.

Support for Artists

22. Government funding in arts and culture must include priority for the development of excellence. It must also maximise the opportunities for Australians to fully develop their talent and to display it to other Australians and the world.
23. Labor recognises the need to support experienced artists and develop strategies which make it more attractive for artists to live and work in Australia, rather than overseas. Retaining talented and experienced artists is crucial for the ongoing development of Australia's cultural and artistic life.
24. A fundamental part of industry development and equitable access is policy to maximise employment in culture, arts and heritage, training for employment in these areas and support which enables talent to be developed into a career. Labor will support the transition from education and training to work. Labor will also support programs for mentoring emerging artists.
25. Training and retraining options for artists and arts workers in mid-career should also be a high priority. Emphasis needs to be given to programs to facilitate the development of, and access to, such training programs and to special project support for artists who have an established career.
26. Labor recognises that artists and artworkers earn their living through a range of mechanisms in any year, from casual work to entrepreneurial activity.

Labor will support workers in the arts industry and protect and advance their industrial rights, employment conditions and entitlements.

27. The legal framework of copyright is a necessary part of a program to ensure that the income generated by arts, culture and heritage is fairly distributed between the creators and the institutions and entrepreneurs who make it available. Labor will support the introduction of legislation to protect artists' rights and recognise copyright in performance. Labor is committed to implementing a resale royalty scheme for visual art works in order to provide fairer income distribution for artists.
28. The tax and welfare systems need to be responsive to the needs of students and workers in, and the products of, arts and culture. In particular, they should reflect the varied nature of artists' income generation within years and over different years.

Equity and Access

29. To balance the emphasis on excellence, it is fundamental for Labor that priority be given to maximisation of, and equity of access to, participation in arts, culture and heritage activities.
30. Any policy of equity and access must place great emphasis on the development of arts in regional Australia and in the outlying suburbs of our cities. Labor supports regional arts organisations and the touring of arts to cities in regional Australia. This requires a role for government in assisting regional touring and the development of regional facilities.
31. Emphasis on access must include the development of effective opportunities for Australians with disabilities and Australians from disadvantaged groups to participate in the arts.

32. Labor encourages women to seek careers in the arts and to hold positions at the highest level.
33. There is a need for special emphasis on the participation of young people in the arts and the development of arts of interest to young Australians. Labor believes governments have a key role in facilitating this.
34. The arts must reflect the reality of our cultural diversity and give voice to all Australians including the long settled Anglo-Celtic communities, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, the post-war migrant groups and more recent arrivals. Multicultural arts will receive Labor's support and recognition.
35. Labor is committed to developing and promoting the indigenous arts sector to its full social, cultural and economic potential.
36. Labor will ensure that provision is made for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to participate in all aspects of the planning, decision making and implementation of policies and programs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts.
37. Labor recognises that it is important to improve access and participation in cultural activities and experiences. Through arts education programs young Australians gain access to the ideas, values and beliefs of others, and nurture their own imaginations.

Heritage

38. In placing emphasis on developing the best and newest, it is very important not to lose sight of the priority of preserving what's best of our history, tradition and heritage.
39. It is not only important that this material is preserved but that it is made effectively

available to Australians wherever they live. This requires institutional and individual activities at a local and national level, assistance to private owners of heritage properties and skills development and training.

40. Labor will give special attention to the preservation of the heritage properties owned by the Commonwealth.
41. Labor will ensure the identification and preservation of our industrial, built, environmental and cultural heritage, and look for opportunities to promote world heritage recognition of such sites.
42. Labor will ensure that the National Trust and other government and community organisations are supported to identify priority projects for heritage protection.

Communications and Electronic Media

43. The media, particularly broadcasting, are undergoing a process of major change, driven by digitisation, convergence of technology and the globalisation of broadcasting, communications and information technologies.
44. Labor remains strongly committed to longstanding national and public interest objectives, including:
 - high quality and informative media which contributes to the advancement of Australian society;
 - genuine diversity of sources of information, opinion, education and entertainment;
 - diversity of ownership, operation and control of Australia's media
 - greater choice and accessibility for consumers;
 - the development and reflection of a distinctly Australian national identity;
 - a vibrant competitive industry of international standard; and

—the development of, and equitable access to, new technologies.

Labor will also strengthen legislation to meet the challenges of adult and other materials being made available to children and young people on mobile phones.

Diversity and Content

45. Labor will retain cross-media ownership laws as necessary to ensure that Australians have access to a diverse range of information and opinion in Australia's media.
46. Labor is committed to maintaining appropriate Australian content quotas in the broadcasting sector.
47. Labor will ensure that television and radio advertising are properly regulated and that community standards are reflected in the regulatory approach.
48. Labor will ensure that Australians will continue to enjoy coverage of premium sporting events on free-to-air television.
49. Labor is committed to adequately resourced, strong regulatory institutions such as the Australian Broadcasting Authority to ensure the maintenance of appropriate community standards in broadcasting material. Labor believes that classification guidelines should be strengthened to stop the sexualisation of advertisements and sexually explicit and adult material being put to air during times when children and young people watch television, including music videos and current affairs, advertising and promotional materials. Such strengthened guidelines should aim to stop the sexualisation of advertisements, particularly that which is aired at times children may be exposed to it.

Public Broadcasting

50. The ABC and SBS are two of Australia's most important community institutions. Labor is committed to ensuring adequate funding and support for Australia's public broadcasters, to enable them to continue to provide Australians with high quality broadcasting services free from political interference.
51. Labor will provide adequate funding on a triennial basis to the ABC and SBS to ensure they can deliver quality public broadcasting services.
52. The ABC is a cultural institution which reflects our national identity. Without committing the range of programs and services the ABC provides, Labor will ensure the ABC delivers high levels of local content and has the capacity to:
 - cater to the needs of regional and rural Australia, providing coverage of local news, current affairs and community activities;
 - provide programs and services relevant to young Australians;
 - work with indigenous people to provide services and programs relevant to them and their communities; and
 - provide comprehensive coverage of a broad range of sporting and artistic activities.
53. Labor will end political interference in the ABC by reforming the ABC Board appointment process. Candidates will be considered by a panel established at arm's length from the minister who will appoint Board members from a shortlist prepared by the panel. SBS Board appointments will be dealt with in the same way. Labor will examine other options for further increasing the transparency and democratic accountability of the ABC and SBS Boards.

54. Labor will ensure that the ban on ABC advertising and sponsorship remains in place.
55. Labor is committed to increasing access to public broadcasting services to those Australians in regional and rural areas who currently do not access particular services.
56. Labor recognises that the SBS provides a unique national broadcasting service that promotes a multicultural Australia, providing services to Australians from non-English speaking backgrounds which are not delivered by the ABC or the commercial broadcasting sector.
57. Labor recognises the need for Australia to maintain external broadcasting through Radio Australia and ABC Asia Pacific International Television Service, to explain Australian values to the world and encourage closer ties with our Asian and South Pacific neighbours, as well as serving the needs of Australians abroad.

Community Broadcasting

58. Labor regards community radio and community television as an essential component of Australian broadcasting, and will continue to encourage its growth. Community broadcasting provides important services to local communities, particularly in rural, regional and remote areas. Labor supports diversity in community broadcasting recognising that stations meet the needs of many communities, including Aboriginal, ethnic, and print handicapped broadcasters.
59. Labor will seek to improve the capacity of community broadcasters to serve their communities by providing appropriate staff training support. Labor believes that adequate public funding must be provided to the community broadcasting sector for it to be able to perform its functions properly. Labor seeks to improve the

capacity of community stations to serve their communities by providing support to the sector for improving skills, technical equipment and program development. Labor accepts that appropriate public funding must be provided to the community broadcasting sector.

RESOLUTIONS

WAR ON CULTURE

ScreenSound Australia

The Howard Government in December 2002 announced a review of the National Cultural Institutions which Labor believes is the blueprint for the Howard Government's war on culture. This report is secret, and the Government refuses to release it to the public. Labor believes that this report must be made public and will continue to call for the release of this report.

The war on culture has been evidenced in the following ways:

- The blatant politicisation of the National Museum and the controversial sacking by the Howard Government of its Director, Dawn Casey, and controversial political appointments to the Museum Council;
- The decrease in funding of our national institutions totalling nearly \$8 million (\$900,000 in 2003–04, with further cuts of \$6.9 million over the coming four years) and the abolition of dozens of positions from within the National Museum, the National Gallery, the National Archives and the National Library;
- A systematic stacking of the boards of the national cultural institutions with conservative appointments, who seek to impress upon the institutions' collecting and exhibition policies a conservative agenda and view of Australia's history

RESOLUTION

and culture—this is in the context of an increasing politicisation of arts advice going to government from the Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts; and

—As a result of the merger between ScreenSound Australia and the Australian Film Commission an attempt was made by the Howard Government and the Australian Film Commission (AFC) in December 2003, to abolish and or relocate several key functions of ScreenSound Australia out of the Nation's Capital to Sydney and Melbourne. This was announced after commitments were made at the announcement of the merger (2003–04 Budget) that the integrity of ScreenSound Australia would be protected as would its functions and that no job losses would result. The Howard Government and the AFC has once again given this commitment, but Labor must ensure that the Howard Government does not back down from this undertaking.

Labor is committed to protecting the integrity of ScreenSound Australia as a world class facility charged with responsibility of collection, preserving, exhibiting and restoring our nation's history in film and sound which rightfully belongs in the Nation's Capital.

SPAM

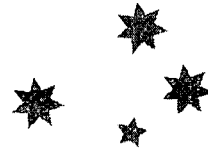
Owing to its remoteness, technological communications are vitally important to Australia's communication needs with the rest of the world.

The Howard government has failed Australians by not tidying up SPAM—its approach is weak and ineffectual.

Labor shall, using international precedents, and with international cooperation, better reduce the proliferation and dissemination of SPAM.

News Services

A Labor Government will amend the Broadcasting Services Act to place a licence condition on commercial radio stations to ensure that they maintain a radio news service independent from services maintained by other commercial radio licence holders in the same market.



AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY



Chapter Fifteen

Australia's Place in the World

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Chapter Fifteen

Australia's Place
in the WorldNational Security and Foreign
Policy Objectives

1. The fundamental objective of Labor's approach to international affairs is the promotion of our tradition of a strong and independent foreign policy. This means acting to:

- preserve and enhance Australia's security in the region and in the world;
- foster our economic growth, jobs and standard of living;
- protect and improve our quality of life;
- safeguard the world environment; and
- foster mutual respect, cooperation and greater economic interdependence between nations.

Labor has a proud tradition of a strong, independent foreign policy. Over a succession of Labor governments, this approach has underwritten our nation's ability to provide a leading, progressive role in international relations.

2. Labor also believes foreign policy must advance more than self interest. Australia's international relations must reflect our nation's core values; in particular, our commitment to peace and cooperation among nations founded on international justice, our concern for universal human rights and democratic processes and our concern to see the eradication of global poverty.
3. Foreign policy must therefore advance the national interest. It must also project our national values. A foreign policy that does not incorporate and give active expression to these universal values will fail to win respect at home or abroad and undermine our long-term national interests.

Labor's Foreign Policy Framework

4. For most of the post-war period, Australian national security policy under successive Labor governments has been constructed on the basis of three fundamental pillars:
 - our membership of the United Nations;
 - our alliance with the United States; and
 - our policy of comprehensive engagement with Asia.
5. This framework has served both the Party and successive Labor governments well. It was Labor under Curtin that initiated our alliance with the United States fully a decade before the ANZUS Treaty—although for Labor the alliance has never meant compliance. It was Labor under Chifley (and Foreign Minister Evatt) that helped form the United Nations as the core of the post-war international order. It was also Labor under Whitlam, Hawke and Keating that initiated and advanced Australia's policy of comprehensive engagement with Asia.
6. Labor has a proud tradition of activism in international affairs. We are determined to bring to Australia's foreign policy the conviction and commitment which saw previous Labor governments play critical roles in world events, including the formation of the United Nations, the proclamation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, establishment of the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone, the banning of chemical weapons, and in the development of Australia's vital engagement with the Asia Pacific region.
7. Labor's clarity of vision, effective advocacy and appropriately resourced and targeted diplomacy will ensure Australia plays a significant role in regional and global developments in favour of our own interests and the common good. Labor will pursue

Australia's national security, economic and human rights interests with vigour and determination at all levels in the international system: globally, regionally and in our bilateral relations with other countries.

Australia's Changing Strategic Environment

8. While Labor's national security policy and foreign policy objectives and values remain constant, the global and regional environment in which we must now operate has been subjected to rapid and recent change. This in turn has created new and significant challenges for Labor policy.
9. Principal among these challenges is the impact of terrorism on Australia's national security. The emergence of al Qaeda, Jemaah Islamiah and related terrorist organisations has profoundly reshaped Australia's strategic environment. The attacks of 11 September 2001 in the United States caused the deaths of some 3000 people of 92 nationalities. It resulted in the invocation for the first time since its inception of the ANZUS Treaty because 11 September constituted an attack on the metropolitan territory of an ally. As a result, Australia became engaged in military conflict in Afghanistan, under the authorisation of a UN Security Council Resolution, against al Qaeda and the Taliban regime that had provided their operating base.
10. The Bali bombings on 12 October 2002 by Jemaah Islamiah (itself directly associated with al Qaeda) brought terrorism to Australia's doorstep and shattered the lives of many Australians. Terrorism continues to represent a significant threat to Australians abroad, particularly, but not exclusively, in South East Asia where al Qaeda and Jemaah Islamiah remain active.
11. Terrorism therefore represents a major new factor in Australia's strategic environment which requires a comprehensive policy response at home, in the region through cooperative efforts with regional partners, as well as globally.
12. Labor led older generations of Australians in successfully defending Australia as a secure, courageous and democratic nation. Terrorism is nothing new. But its growing presence in our region poses new and complex security challenges. Labor refuses to manipulate fear or racism for political gain in response to terrorism. Labor will increase engagement in our region and cooperation with our neighbours—measures that are fundamental to meeting the new security challenges. Labor will ensure that our defence forces, police and emergency services are equipped to meet the new challenges. As always preserving national security, and the security of individuals, is a major Labor priority.
13. Labor has supported the Solomon Islands request for assistance in restoring law and order to the islands. The Solomons intervention was authorised by the Solomons government and the UN Secretary General and supported by the Pacific Islands Forum and a majority of the people of the Solomons. Labor will work closely with governments in the South Pacific and will continue to consider any further requests for assistance on their merit.
14. Elsewhere in our broader region unresolved tensions between India and Pakistan and on the Korean Peninsula (arising from North Korea's decision in 2002 to withdraw from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and the expulsion of International Atomic Energy Agency inspectors) present additional instabilities and policy challenges. Labor is committed

to using its good offices to try and assist in building improved relations on the Korean Peninsula.

15. Against these developments in Australia's immediate strategic environment, the war in Iraq has created fundamental challenges to the future international order. Labor did not support this war because military action was not authorised by the United Nations Security Council and because a credible case could not be made that the Iraq war represented a legitimate response to the terrorist attacks by al Qaeda on 11 September under the terms of Article 51 of the UN Charter. There are of course other continuing international policy challenges facing Labor and Australia. These include the ongoing impact of economic globalisation, underdevelopment, human rights, global warming and transnational communicable disease.
16. All these factors impact on our current national security and foreign policy environments. Labor's challenge today, as in previous decades, is to apply Labor's continuing policy objectives, values and framework to the new demands of the emerging environment.

Challenge of Terrorism

17. Labor believes that the challenge of terrorism, together with the changing nature of the threat spectrum requires a reorganisation of Australia's national security policy. In the past, Australia has not had a properly integrated national security policy that addresses the breadth and depth of the new threat spectrum—including terrorism, international organised crime and the narcotics trade. To this end, Labor will establish an Office of National Security under the Prime Minister's portfolio to be headed for the first time by a National Security Advisor at permanent head level. This Office will develop Australia's first fully integrated national security policy.
18. Labor believes that the particular challenge of terrorism in South East Asia needs to be addressed by a Regional Summit on Terrorism that would bring together heads of government from South East Asia on a regular basis. This would build on Labor's previous proposal for a Regional Summit on People Smuggling—and recognises the fundamental reality that terrorism can only be dealt with on a cooperative basis between regional governments. This involves intelligence sharing, joint policing and better resourcing whenever possible, to combat what is a major challenge for the whole region.
19. Labor believes that an effective strategy for combating terrorism must also confront those factors that make it easier for terrorist organisations to recruit within the region. This raises the question of economic, employment and educational opportunities available to young people across the region—particularly Indonesia and the Philippines. Labor believes this requires an integrated, comprehensive strategy for dealing with a range of the causative factors involved in the terrorism challenge.
20. Finally, Labor believes that the global nature and reach of various terrorist organisations will mean that Australia will rely on global intelligence exchange—as well as support for an expanding range of UN multilateral measures designed to combat terrorist financing and explicitly to outlaw defined terrorist organisations.

United Nations (UN) Multilateral System

21. Labor's approach to international relations is based on a clear recognition of the fundamental interdependence of the world community. Global economic and social

development, human rights, environmental protection and international security can best be achieved through multilateral diplomacy. Through international organisations we can promote the agreements necessary to build a secure twenty-first century based on economic justice and development, respect for human rights, environmental sustainability and peaceful means of resolving conflict.

22. The United Nations is the key forum for cooperation on many issues that affect Australia's interests, including our national security, trade and sustainable development, and our humanitarian concerns for welfare and human rights. Agreements reached under the auspices of the UN and its agencies touch on almost all aspects of our national life. Australia must contribute actively and constructively to shape global changes and events through the work of the UN.

23. A Labor Government will be committed to working closely with like-minded countries to reform and improve the administrative efficiency, democratic operation and effectiveness of the UN. This should be directed to enhancing the role and standing of the UN as the primary forum for global cooperation and understanding. Labor will devote particular attention to strengthening and improving the UN's human rights machinery and processes and its peacekeeping activities, starting with support for the expansion of the UN's Department of Peacekeeping Operations. A Labor Government would also look critically at options to expand the membership of the United Nations Security Council to reflect the new global order. Recognising the significant threats to international security that arise both from longstanding and new conflicts between and within states, Labor supports strengthening the UN's capacity

in the fields of preventive diplomacy and peace building, peace making, peace keeping and peace enforcement.

24. Consistent with our strong commitment to the peaceful resolution of disputes in accordance with international law and justice, Labor considers Australia duty bound to assist with the resolution of disputes and conflicts wherever we can play a positive role consistent with our national interests.
25. As a middle power with significant experience in peace keeping operations, most recently in East Timor, Australia must play an active role in pursuing reform of UN peace keeping policy and operations. Australia must be prepared to accept peace keeping responsibilities consistent with our national, regional and global security interests.
26. The UN multilateral system is currently under great strain because of the events associated with the Iraq war—as well as post-war stabilisation, economic reconstruction and humanitarian assistance. This has led to great debate about the very future of the UN multilateral system. Labor believes the future is best achieved by strengthening, democratising and reforming the UN, not replacing the UN.
27. Labor further believes that this reform agenda is best achieved by a review of the membership and voting arrangements of the Security Council; a review of the particular problems that terrorists as non-state actors present to the operation of the UN Charter; and a formal review by the Security Council and all member states, including Australia, of the emerging doctrine of international humanitarian intervention.
28. Labor argues that this latter review is best based on the report 'The Responsibility to Protect' of 2001 prepared by the

International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS) at the request of the government of Canada. The ICISS Report contains the most authoritative draft definitions of the threshold questions to be resolved by the international community if the UN is to be better able to deal with the type of grim realities that Rwanda, Bosnia, Somalia and Kosovo presented in the recent past. This question has also been posed directly by the UN Secretary General Kofi Annan for the world to resolve as a matter of great humanitarian urgency.

The United States

29. The United States remains our closest security ally and a vital global partner. Labor is firmly committed to maintain and strengthen Australia's close relationship with the United States, a relationship founded on our people's common democratic values and their commitment to fostering international peace and security.
30. Labor believes in the centrality of the alliance to Australia's national security requirements in critical areas such as intelligence on terrorism, defence equipment and broader strategic stabilization in East Asia, where great power tensions between other regional states remain problematic.
31. Labor does not, however, believe that the alliance equals the totality of Australia's national security requirements as these must also be met in the other two pillars of Labor's approach—the UN multilateral system and our policy of comprehensive engagement in Asia. Labor continues to support the United Nations process and opposes policies by governments that undermine the integrity and effectiveness of the United Nations.

Comprehensive Engagement in the Asia Pacific Region

32. The third pillar of Australia's framework for national security policy and foreign policy is comprehensive regional engagement. This policy pillar is based on the logic that if you have good relations with your neighbours, it is good for your security and if you have bad relations with your neighbours, it is bad for your security. This is particularly critical given the current challenges to our security from terrorism.
33. Labor also believes that comprehensive engagement with Asia rests on the logic that if you have good relations with your neighbours it is good for the economy, exports and jobs.
34. Labor considers that active engagement with Asia is fundamental to our national security and to furthering our national interest. Australia is intimately linked with Asia. We contribute to both the prosperity and security of the region, just as the region profoundly contributes to Australia's prosperity and security. Labor is committed to our nation's future with Asia. Australia's greatest international challenges and opportunities arise from rapid economic change in East Asia and the evolving security environment of the Asia Pacific region. Economic growth in East Asia is again presenting Australia with critical opportunities to advance our prosperity and security. Resumed economic growth will be accompanied by increasing regional confidence and assertiveness. As a consequence Australia will have to make greater efforts and work with imagination to maintain and enhance our relative influence in our region and beyond.
35. We are determined to broaden and deepen our links at all levels in the Asia Pacific region and will seek to secure full

participation in significant regional forums and processes.

- Labor will continue to consolidate Australia's economic engagement in the Asia Pacific region, especially with the economies of East Asia, including working through the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum and other cooperative arrangements to produce concrete benefits in terms of economic growth, jobs and our standard of living.
- Labor is similarly committed to actively contribute through the ASEAN Regional Forum to region-wide cooperation on security, specifically the development of capacity and confidence building measures, mechanisms and practices of preventive diplomacy and peaceful dispute resolution.
- Labor will actively encourage the further broadening of regional dialogue and cooperation to include problems of sustainable economic and social development and environmental protection with the aim of enhancing human security throughout our region.

At the bilateral level, Labor will work with vigour in building productive relationships which advance shared political and economic interests. Labor strongly supports enhancing people-to-people contacts between Australia and our East Asian neighbours and will actively pursue the further development of social, cultural and educational ties. Labor will support the National Asian Languages and Studies in Australian Schools strategy.

36. Labor strongly supports engaging and integrating China with the emerging Asia Pacific security community. The rise of China is the single biggest geopolitical force in the ongoing transformation of our region. Australia's interests are best served by China's positive involvement in

the international political and economic community. It is imperative that Australia seek to work cooperatively with China, bilaterally and regionally, and in global forums in the context of an international rules-based order.

37. Australia and Japan have a long standing and mature relationship. Japan is a vital economic partner and our political and strategic relationship is of fundamental importance to Australia's regional and international aspirations. Labor looks forward to the further development of Australian-Japanese ties, especially people-to-people contacts and greater understanding of each other's society and culture.
38. Indonesia, the world's fourth most populous country and Australia's nearest Asian neighbour, is of vital importance. Labor is committed to building a new relationship with a new democratic Indonesia. Australia and Indonesia have strong, shared interests in regional security cooperation and in relation to many international issues. Labor looks forward to the development of a close, mature and multi dimensional relationship in which no one dimension dominates. Labor will seek to maximise our cooperation in regional and global forums.
39. Labor considers that support for universal human rights and democratic processes should be an integral part of Australia's engagement with Indonesia. In the context of a broadly based and multifaceted relationship, Australia should maintain contact with all elements of the political process in Indonesia and our dialogue should give expression to the Australian people's fundamental concern with human rights and democratic freedoms.
40. Labor will give priority to further developing our bilateral economic relationship with Indonesia, providing

appropriate humanitarian assistance, supporting sustainable development, and increasing people-to-people and institutional exchanges, especially in fields such as the media, education, the arts, health and language training.

41. Labor warmly welcomes the progress achieved by East Timor in working to build the foundations for a viable, self-sustaining, independent and sovereign state. Labor considers that Australia should continue to assist East Timor in building an independent future. Australia should be comprehensively engaged in supporting sustainable development in East Timor and the creation of democratic institutions, effective law enforcement and modern defence forces. Labor strongly supports the further development of a wide range of institutional and people-to-people ties between Australia and East Timor. Labor recognises that the people of East Timor have the right to secure, internationally recognised borders with all neighbouring countries. A future Labor Government will negotiate in good faith with the Government of East Timor, in full accordance with international law and all its applications, including the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. In Government, Labor will do all things reasonably practicable to achieve a negotiated settlement within 3–5 years. The conclusion of the maritime boundary should be based on the joint aspirations of both countries.
42. Australia's greatest international challenges and opportunities arise from rapid economic change in East Asia and the evolving security environment of the Asia Pacific region. Economic growth in East Asia is again presenting Australia with critical opportunities to advance joint prosperity and security.
43. While pursuing closer engagement with East Asia as Australia's highest foreign

policy priority, Labor is firmly committed to strengthening and broadening our links with other countries and regions.

44. Australia must embrace India, a country of immense potential, an important participant in global and regional forums, and a trading partner of growing significance. Australia has long neglected India in our foreign relations. Labor will work energetically to remedy this deficiency and enhance our ties with the world's second most populous nation.

Labor recognises the increasing importance of the Indian Ocean Rim as a region for achieving the long-term objectives of our foreign and economic policies. Labor will build our relationships with the Indian Ocean Rim and the emerging economies of Southern Africa.

45. Labor will give high priority to the further development of Australia's strong and mutually beneficial relationship with New Zealand, both in respect of bilateral economic and political ties and through cooperation in multilateral forums. We should jointly review existing mechanisms for cooperation and coordination and explore further opportunities for closer integration.
46. Papua New Guinea (PNG) remains a country of great importance to Australia. Labor will work closely with PNG in dealing with the very substantial challenges of economic and social development in the context of great cultural and political diversity. Labor will maintain Australia's strong support for the Bougainville peace process. Labor will continue to provide substantial support to PNG, focusing particularly on basic education and health services, including programs to address the spread of HIV/AIDS, and district and community level employment creation and income generation; and support efforts to improve resource management and conservation in the areas of fisheries and forestry.

47. Security, stability and peace in the nations of the Pacific is important to regional security and Australia's national defence. Labor is committed to increasing Australia's efforts to engage in supporting sustainable development in partnership with the nations of the Pacific through the creation of democratic institutions, effective law enforcement and modern defence forces. Labor will encourage the further development of a wide range of institutional and cultural links between Australians and the people of the Pacific nations. Labor will also promote economically and environmentally sustainable and equitable development; strengthen regional cooperation in areas including natural disaster planning, response and relief, fisheries research and protection; and work to ensure that impacts on the peoples and nations of the Pacific are fully considered in the negotiation of solutions to global problems.

Other Important Bilateral and Regional Relationships

48. Labor supports the development of a strong political, economic and cultural partnership with Europe. Europe has a combined GDP as significant as that of the United States. Furthermore, the European Union (EU) has become a significant political voice globally and within our own region.
49. Similarly, Labor supports expanded relations with the Americas, including Canada, Central America and South America. Latin America is also important in Australia's capacity to increase its multilateral leverage both on trade and other broader UN candidacies.
50. Labor will rectify the emerging pattern of Australian disengagement from the African continent. Africa lies front and centre in the international community's

global development challenge. Australia must re-engage with Africa and to this end Labor will establish an Africa-Australia Council as a vehicle for deepening this country's commitment to some of the poorest countries on the planet. Africa also presents significant opportunities for Australian business—as well as enhancing Australia's multilateral leverage through the UN system.

Australia's Role in Arms Control and Disarmament

51. The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), nuclear, chemical and biological, is widely recognised as one of the most serious international security issues facing the world community. The international environment in the immediate aftermath of the Cold War allowed important gains in nuclear arms control and disarmament. In more recent years, however, progress in nuclear disarmament has faltered with adverse implications for efforts to halt weapons proliferation.
52. Labor considers that Australia also has a strong interest in preventing the spread of WMD. This interest has both a humanitarian and a strategic aspect. Labor has an interest in helping to ensure that no one should experience the horrors of nuclear, chemical or biological warfare. Labor also believes that Australia has a strategic interest in minimising the risk that WMD might one day be used or threatened against Australians and Australian interests. Effective global non-proliferation regimes are vital to limit the spread of WMD in our region.

Disarmament and non-proliferation measures are vital to ensure long-term international security and to channel resources into sustainable and just development. Australia has a direct national security interest in ensuring our

immediate region remains free of such weapons and that their presence does not lead to instability and conflict elsewhere.

53. Australia has made significant contributions to important multilateral disarmament and arms control negotiations, notably the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone, the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. Labor will ensure Australia is at the forefront of international efforts to advance disarmament and non-proliferation.
54. With regard to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, Labor will energetically support and pursue appropriate initiatives, such as those recommended by the Canberra Commission on the Elimination of Nuclear Weapons, the Tokyo Forum for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament, and the New Agenda Coalition, to achieve further significant reductions in nuclear armament and strengthen non-proliferation regimes as steps toward the ultimate objective of a nuclear weapon free world.
55. Labor will continue to give strong support to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, to strengthening safeguards against further horizontal proliferation, to negotiating a convention banning the production of fissile material for use in nuclear weapons, and to the earliest possible entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty. Labor will continue support for nuclear weapon free zones in the South Pacific, Africa, Latin America, the Middle East and South East Asia and explore the possibilities of links between those zones to consolidate a southern hemisphere free of nuclear weapons.
56. Labor will actively encourage the pursuit of further substantial reductions of nuclear arsenals and the development of processes for bringing all nuclear weapon

states into the disarmament process. In this regard, Labor considers it very important to protect fully the integrity of the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty.

57. In the longer-term, achievement and maintenance of a nuclear weapon free world will require an enduring legal framework, linked to the Charter of the United Nations. Labor supports exploration of potential legal frameworks for the abolition of nuclear weapons, including negotiation of a Nuclear Weapons Convention that would ban nuclear weapons and provide a global framework for the elimination of existing arsenals.
58. Efforts to reduce and eliminate nuclear arms must be accompanied by further progress in eliminating other WMD. Labor will continue Australia's strong support for the Chemical Weapons Convention and pursue the earliest possible completion of negotiations for a robust and effective verification protocol for the Biological Weapons Convention. We are committed to continue support for the Missile Technology Control Regime and explore the possibilities of negotiating more effective multilateral constraints on ballistic missiles.
59. In response to the global humanitarian crisis produced by anti-personnel landmines, Labor will campaign to encourage universal adherence to the Ottawa Convention and continue support for negotiation of a global ban on the transfer of landmines. Labor will also continue to give high priority in Australia's overseas aid programs to de-mining activities and assistance to landmine victims in afflicted countries.
60. Labor strongly supports international efforts to address the proliferation and misuse of small arms and light weapons

across the globe, and particularly in the South Pacific. We are committed to work in both global and regional forums to stop illegal trafficking and limit destabilising accumulations and transfers of small arms. Labor will sign and ratify the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime.

Human Rights in International Relations

61. Labor considers the promotion of universal human rights to be a core foreign policy objective that cannot be traded off against other diplomatic and economic goals. Support for an active and consistent pro-human rights stand is firmly grounded in Australian values.

The Australian people expect our nation's diplomacy to be both principled and effective. A foreign policy that incorporates and reflects the core human rights values of our society will enjoy more respect overseas and greater support within Australia.

Respect for human rights brings benefits in higher standards of international behaviour. Domestic peace and stability, which stems from respect for human rights, contributes to international security. Effective human rights diplomacy supports international and regional security, and therefore Australia's national interests.

62. Labor considers all human rights to be universal, equal and indivisible. There is no hierarchy of human rights. The basic human rights to food, shelter, health care, economic security and education are preconditions for human survival, dignity and the enjoyment of civil and political

rights. Equally, respect for civil and political rights is critical to advancing economic and other rights. Each group of rights underpins the other.

63. Labor considers all states have a duty to protect and promote universal human rights. This obligation is grounded in the principles contained within the United Nations Charter, the Universal Declaration on Human Rights and other international covenants. It is an obligation also based on the consistency of experience across diverse cultures and societies in which ideals of popular sovereignty, equality of treatment, fairness and freedom are enduring themes.
64. Labor considers human rights to be a subject of legitimate international concern and rejects attempts to portray this concern as interference in the internal affairs of other states.

International dialogue on universal human rights issues must be based on the concept of mutual respect. Australia must respect the political, economic, social, religious and cultural differences between other countries and ourselves. At the same time, Australian diplomacy must never lose sight of our core national values as a country with proud democratic traditions of openness and rigorous debate.

Labor will be forthright in raising concerns over human rights violations with relevant governments in our region and beyond. Similarly we expect and welcome the prospect of international scrutiny of Australia's domestic human rights record.

65. Labor is determined to further strengthen international mechanisms and processes for monitoring human rights violations, especially those monitored under the auspices of the United Nations, and encourage the development of regional

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<p>dialogue on human rights issues in the Asia Pacific region.</p> <p>66. Cooperation between national human rights institutions is an important foundation for regional understandings and arrangements to advance human rights in our region. Labor will work to further develop the Asia Pacific Forum of National Human Rights Institutions. Labor will give high priority to supporting institutions, such as Indonesia's National Commission on Human Rights (Komnas HAM) and the Australia-China Human Rights Dialogue, that face major new challenges and opportunities to advance respect for human rights.</p> <p>67. Labor strongly supports the development of bilateral human rights dialogues as an integral element of Australia's relations with our neighbours in the Asia Pacific region and beyond. These should supplement but not replace multilateral monitoring mechanisms and processes and not constrain Australia's ability to speak out strongly against violations of human rights. Where appropriate, Labor supports the imposition of targeted 'smart' sanctions against governments that violate fundamental human rights. Such sanctions will not be to the detriment of the general population.</p> <p>68. Labor will actively campaign to focus world attention on governments that persist with forms of repression against the development of free trade unionism. Labor reaffirms that issues of core labour standards relate to fundamental human rights and will pursue, as appropriate, through international treaties, guaranteed respect for those rights. Labor deplores cuts to Australia's participation in the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and reaffirms its support for programs designed to address abuse of labour rights in the Asia Pacific region. Labor will</p>	<p>restore and strengthen Australia's participation and support for these vital activities. Labor will also give high priority to supporting international efforts to eradicate the exploitation of child labour.</p> <p>69. Labor will play an active role in encouraging Australian companies operating overseas to adopt public codes which commit them to observe international human rights standards, including core labour standards, and ensure that their operations do not directly or indirectly violate human rights, or inflict unacceptable impacts on local communities and the environment.</p> <p>70. Labor abhors the increasing levels of repression against women in some countries. Labor will vigorously support international campaigns to end:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">—sexual exploitation of women and children, including child sex tourism;—prohibitions on education and paid employment for women;—the denial to women of equal property rights;—the unequal standing of women in judicial systems;—the persecution of rape victims; and—the systematic use of rape and sexual torture in war. <p>71. Labor believes the current Australian Government policy of constructive engagement with Burma must be abandoned in favour of targeted sanctions against the military regime. The gross abuse of human rights against the Burmese democratic opposition led by Aung San Soo Kyi is intolerable.</p> <p>72. The establishment of an International Criminal Court is an important step in efforts to deter the perpetrators of crimes against humanity, and to ensure justice is done when atrocities have been committed. Labor will actively encourage</p>

ratification by other countries to broaden the Court's jurisdiction to punish crimes against humanity. Labor believes the negotiation of bilateral agreements to grant immunity to citizens of particular countries from the jurisdiction of the Court undermines the operation of the International Criminal Court and should not be supported.

Environmental Diplomacy

73. Labor considers the protection of the global environment a vital diplomatic objective.
74. International environmental concerns have become ever more acute. Many of the most serious environmental problems extend far beyond the boundaries of nation states. Climate change, ozone depletion, over-population, over-consumption, deforestation and loss of biodiversity threaten the future of the planet and its inhabitants. Environmental degradation contributes to social and political conflict. It undermines regional and international security. Protecting the environment will support Australia's national interests and security.
75. Major advances have been made in international environmental cooperation on, and regulation of, global commons. Although multilateral agreements have proven powerful tools for addressing environmental problems, international environmental stewardship lags behind rapid economic and social change. Gains from new technology and environmentally sensitive policies are being overtaken by the pace and scale of population growth and economic development. Concerted global action is required.
76. Leadership on these issues can and must be taken by middle powers such as Australia. Labor is determined to rebuild Australia's reputation as a world leader on international environmental issues.
77. Labor is committed to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development process as the framework for our international environmental policies, and to Agenda 21 as an action plan to promote sustainable development on a worldwide basis.

Labor welcomes the strong reaffirmation of the Agenda 21 goals, the Programme for Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the Commitments to the Rio principles, recorded at the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in Johannesburg, South Africa in September 2002.
78. Labor strongly supports the work of the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) and will pursue reform aimed at enhancing the UNEP's advocacy of global environmental concerns.
79. Labor will give priority to environmental cooperation in the Asia Pacific region where rapid economic growth is accompanied by increasing environmental pressures and damage. Labor supports regional cooperation on environmental issues through APEC and in cooperation with ASEAN. We will seek to upgrade consultation with Japan, the United States, Canada and New Zealand. We will further seek to establish new and substantive dialogues with major developing countries, especially China, Indonesia and India.
80. Labor will work to enhance the role of the Valdivia Group of Temperate Southern Hemisphere Countries in giving voice to southern hemisphere interests in international environment meetings.
81. Australia's Pacific Island neighbours face increasing environmental challenges arising from global warming, population growth and rapid increases in exploitation of land, forests and fisheries. Increased

Australian support for the South Pacific Regional Environment Program, sustainable management of fisheries and other bilateral environmental assistance to Pacific Island countries will be key elements of Australia's engagement with the Pacific under Labor.

82. As a major Antarctic claimant state, Australia has a special responsibility to protect the Antarctic's near pristine environment. Labor will work to further strengthen the Antarctic Treaty System with particular emphasis on enhancing environmental protection. Labor supports negotiation of a stringent agreement on liability for damage to the Antarctic environment. Priority will also be given to developing effective arrangements for management of tourism and other non-government activities that may impact on the Antarctic environment. Labor will energetically seek to combat unsustainable, illegal and unregulated fishing in the Southern Ocean.

Development Assistance Responsibilities

83. Eliminating the disparities between the world's rich and poor is one of the critical international challenges of our time. A world is not just if one in five of its people live in abject poverty and are denied basic rights to health, shelter, education, clean water and sanitation. Global poverty is also a leading source of international insecurity with high levels of poverty linked to political and economic instability, human rights abuse, unrest and war, uncontrolled migration and population growth, and environmental degradation.

Both altruism and self interest require that we actively assist the economic and social advancement of people in developing countries, especially the poorest countries and communities.

84. To that end, Labor believes the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) should constitute the new framework for global overseas development assistance (ODA) and Australia's national contribution. Labor argues for a deepening in the world's commitment to this MDG framework. Specifically, this involves commitments to:

- eradicate extreme poverty and hunger;
- achieve universal primary education;
- promote gender equality and empower women;
- reduce child mortality;
- improve maternal health;
- combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases;
- ensure environmental sustainability; and
- develop a global partnership for development.

85. Labor believes that Australia's commitment to the MDGs should also be reflected in appropriate levels of senior ministerial representation at relevant UN review conferences. The fact that Australia has failed consistently to do so in recent years unnecessarily undermines Australia's international standing in a critical area of corporate global responsibility.
86. Consistent with our commitment to the ideals of equality and social justice, Labor accepts the challenge of working towards these goals as an urgent priority. This objective fully supports Australia's long-term security and economic interests. While the provision of development assistance may also support our foreign policy objectives, the pursuit of short-term diplomatic and trade advantage can easily compromise the effectiveness of our aid program and should not determine development assistance priorities.

87. A focus on the MDGs is also consistent with our determination to employ Australia's overseas development assistance to advance respect for human rights. Labor considers efforts to advance the full range of human rights, economic, social, cultural, civil and political, must be integral to Australia's overseas aid, while acknowledging the sovereign right of developing nations to control the form and nature of their development.

88. In promoting the MDGs, Australia's overseas aid program should involve a cooperative partnership with developing countries and peoples to:

- support broadly based, equitably distributed and sustainable economic growth by encouraging sound national economic policies, including helping to develop efficient, accountable and equitable government administration;
- work to increase access to basic human requirements such as health, education, housing and sanitation, where possible building upon existing infrastructure, knowledge and resources of local communities;
- increase the productivity of the poor by facilitating access to productive assets, including support for microcredit programs, and access to vocational training and appropriate agricultural technology;
- break down barriers to the participation of the poor in economic and social development, and especially support activities which enable women to contribute to and benefit from development;
- establish a human rights framework for Australia's overseas aid programs and include human rights issues and respect for indigenous rights and culture, in our development assistance policy dialogue with recipient countries.

This should be done bearing in mind the pitfalls of imposing donor values and structures on developing countries through development assistance:

- support environmentally sustainable development work directed towards environmental protection and rehabilitation;
- address HIV/AIDS and other communicable diseases; and
- support population activities, including voluntary family planning, as part of wider efforts to improve the health and education of women.

89. Labor strongly supports further international action to provide effective debt relief for Heavily Indebted Poor Countries. Debt relief should be closely linked to social and economic development and poverty alleviation. Australia must be prepared to contribute its fair share of the cost of debt cancellation.

90. Labor will pursue reforms to ensure the International Monetary Fund, World Bank and Asian Development Bank are held more accountable for their programs in terms of poverty reduction and sustainable development, as well as their impacts on vulnerable groups and communities.

91. Labor accepts the internationally agreed aid volume target of 0.7 per cent of GNP for overseas development assistance. A Labor Government will ensure that Australia's overseas aid as a percentage of GNP is not further reduced and as a first step will seek to restore development assistance to Labor's 1995/96 ratio of 0.32 per cent of GNP as quickly as circumstances permit.

92. Labor acknowledges the faltering effectiveness of much development assistance in recent years, evidenced by the poor state of the Solomon Islands and

other Pacific nations and therefore commits to new and innovative approaches in aid delivery which aim to maximize aid effectiveness through:

- developing the distinction between short-term foreign policy and long-term development policy and ensuring one doesn't undercut the other;
- discouraging corruption and other destructive distortions in recipient countries nurtured by ineffective development assistance;
- maximizing recipient-driven policies and minimizing donor-driven policies in recipient countries;
- empowering and serving individuals in developing countries more effectively and directly through decentralized aid delivery; and
- supporting grass roots, local ownership of institutions of governance.

Such measures will enable Labor to improve the effectiveness of development assistance and encourage greater commitment to development assistance in wealthy countries, and in so doing better fulfil its commitment to the Millennium Development Goals.

93. The geographical scope of Australia's aid programs should reflect our primary regional focus on East Asia and the South Pacific. This should not preclude significant development assistance activities in other areas, especially South Asia and Africa where many of the world's poorest communities are located. Labor also supports the continuation of special development assistance programs of global significance such as Australia's aid contributions in support of the Middle East peace process.
94. Labor is committed to ensuring that Australia's overseas development assistance is delivered professionally in a

cost effective manner and that over time it contributes to development. Labor strongly supports the role of non-government organisations in the development and delivery of Australia's overseas aid program. Labor will further enhance the role of Australian and international non-government organisations as channels for Australia's development assistance, subject to rigorous standards of effectiveness and accountability.

Australia's International Image

95. Labor believes in the importance of public electronic media in enhancing Australia's interests and standing in our immediate region. Labor will rebuild Radio Australia as the pre-eminent broadcaster in the region.
96. Labor notes that other countries have increased their short-wave and television penetration of Asia—while in Australia's case it has declined.

Institutional Foundations of Foreign Policy

97. Australia's diplomatic service is a national asset that is critical to maximising our international influence and securing outcomes that advance the interests of Australia and Australians. Australia needs effective diplomacy to make us heard and help shape the course of international and regional events.
98. Australian governments must be provided with timely and high quality analysis of international developments. Similarly our overseas representation must enable us to pursue our objectives in a cost effective way and to exploit emerging opportunities to enhance our security, economic and other interests.
99. Australia's diplomatic service has suffered significant cutbacks that impair its ability

to pursue our national interests. Targeted reinvestment in our international relations effort is required to meet the challenges of the next two decades and beyond.

Labor will:

- strengthen the capacity of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) and other relevant agencies to assess and assist in shaping global and regional patterns of strategic and economic change, and their implications for Australia, especially in the longer term;
- ensure that the Foreign Affairs and Trade portfolio retains and develops relevant policy expertise;
- review the capacity and focus of Australia's overseas representation to ensure that our network of diplomatic posts is resourced to meet the challenges of the increasingly complex international agenda and the growing needs of government, business and the Australian people;
- review and strengthen Australia's public diplomacy programs to project abroad an image of a modern, culturally diverse, tolerant and sophisticated Australia, in support of our key foreign and trade policy objectives; and
- ensure that DFAT maintains 'critical mass' in its cadre of linguistic and area specialisations consistent with Australia's regional interests. Australia must maintain in its diplomatic service (inter alia) continuing high levels of expertise in Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Bahasa Indonesia and Bahasa Malay, Thai, Tagalog, and Vietnamese. In the case of the languages of South East Asia in particular, the impact of regional terrorism makes the retention of these language and area specialisations within DFAT even more critical than in the past.

100. Labor will ensure that high priority is given to assisting all Australian travellers and Australians overseas through effective and accessible consular services. In the aftermath of the Bali bombings, Labor will overhaul every aspect of the DFAT travel advisory system to ensure there is no avoidable mismatch between intelligence and what the travelling public are told.

101. Labor recognises the important contribution made to advancing Australia's national interests by Australia's intelligence collection and assessment agencies and the necessity for effective management, scrutiny and accountability of those organisations. Labor is committed to:

- ensuring that our intelligence agencies are able to assess effectively and respond to national security challenges, including threats arising from the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and international terrorism; and
- maintaining appropriate and effective oversight of Australia's intelligence agencies, including placing all such organisations on an appropriate legislative basis and under effective parliamentary scrutiny.

102. Labor is committed to ensuring continued effective parliamentary and public scrutiny of international treaties prior to final treaty action by government. Labor will continue arrangements for review of treaties including the Treaties Council, the Parliamentary Joint Standing Committee on Treaties, and the requirement that treaties together with National Interest Analyses be tabled in the Commonwealth Parliament for at least fifteen sitting days before final treaty action is taken. Labor is committed to

further enhance consultation with State and Territory governments and increase opportunities for public and parliamentary scrutiny prior to the conclusion of treaty negotiations.

STRENGTH, SUSTAINABILITY AND SELF RELIANCE IN DEFENCE POLICY

Australia's Defence Capabilities

103. **Foundations of defence policy.** Labor believes that the main responsibility of the Australian Defence Force (ADF) is to defend Australian territory and other key Australian strategic interests from any credible threat.
104. The foundation of Labor's defence policy is the principle of Australian self reliance. Labor considers that Australia's armed forces need to be able to defend Australia without relying on the combat forces of other countries. Labor believes that the principle of self reliance reflects, fundamentally, Australia's sense of itself as an independent nation.
105. Notwithstanding its commitment to a self-reliant defence policy, Labor recognises the importance of strong bilateral and multilateral defence relationships in providing for Australia's defence. Where appropriate, Labor will both strengthen existing defence ties through the United Nations, with our key allies, and by building new relationships within the Asia Pacific region.
106. Australia's strategic interests. Labor considers that the best way for Australia to discharge its global responsibilities, and to protect its national security interests at the same time, lies first in defending our nation, and then in fostering peace, stability and security within our South Pacific neighbourhood and the broader Asia Pacific region.
107. Labor believes that the ADF needs to possess the capability to make contributions to international operations led by the United Nations and Australia's key allies in the pursuit of broader national strategic objectives. Those contingents will be drawn from the forces and capabilities that are developed for the defence of Australia and for operations in our region.
108. Labor will ensure that ADF capability development is directly related to Australia's strategic interests, and that appropriately regular strategic reviews are undertaken with public reports published. Where necessary, Labor will respond to changes in Australia's strategic circumstances by providing a clear explanation of any implications for defence.
109. **Maintaining a viable defence capability.** Labor is committed to maintaining a strong and efficiently managed defence organisation that possesses the equipment, personnel and skills that are needed to meet the demands placed upon it by the Australian government.
110. Labor believes that armed conflict should be a last resort, and that every effort should be made to prevent it. Nevertheless, a strong and technologically advanced defence capability must be maintained and be so effective as to demonstrate, if necessary, Australia's intention and ability to defend itself and its vital interests.
111. Labor considers that all Australians within Australian territory are entitled to the full protection of the ADF. No concentration of defence effort in particular areas shall in any way compromise the security of other parts of Australia's national territory.

112. **Terrorism.** Labor believes that Australia's national interest dictates a committed and determined effort to prevent the spread of terrorism. Labor is strongly committed to working with its neighbours, allies, and through the United Nations, to eliminate this serious threat.
113. While primary responsibility for counter-terrorism rests with Australia's intelligence, law enforcement and emergency management agencies, the ADF also has a critical role. Labor's new Department of Home Affairs will work closely with Defence to ensure that Australia develops a coordinated, whole of government response to the ongoing threat of terrorism.
114. Labor is committed to ensuring that the ADF, in particular the Special Forces, is equipped with the highest level of counter-terrorist capabilities available.
115. **The Australian Coast Guard.** Labor recognises the importance of ensuring that the ADF maintains a focus on its core function of providing for the military defence of Australia. Labor will transfer the maritime policing role currently performed by the Navy to a single, dedicated agency, the Australian Coast Guard.
116. In times of war or national emergency the Australian Coast Guard will come under the command, and act as a fourth arm of, the ADF. In times of peace the ADF and Coast Guard will maintain high levels of cooperation and assistance in the pursuit of national security.
117. Labor remains committed to the ADF's important maritime surveillance and interdiction roles, such as that performed by the Navy's fleet of patrol boats. The creation of a Coast Guard reflects Labor's belief that border protection

should be performed on a full time basis by a single, dedicated, specialist agency.

International and Regional Defence Relationships

118. **International defence relationships.** Labor recognises the importance of both bilateral and multilateral defence relationships in achieving security for Australia and creating and maintaining stability in Australia's strategic environment. Defence cooperation with Australia's neighbours is important for building regional security.
119. Labor will ensure that Defence cooperation does not contribute to any suppression or violation of human rights or democratic freedoms. Labor will closely monitor the human rights performance of foreign military forces with which Australia engages in defence cooperation. If necessary, Australia will work with regional military forces to increase respect for human rights and democratic processes.
120. **The US alliance.** Labor considers the alliance relationship with the United States to be fundamentally important to Australia's national security. Labor believes that the ANZUS Treaty, which is central to the alliance relationship, is one of Australia's great national assets. Labor endorsed the invoking of the ANZUS Treaty following the terrorist attacks in the United States on 11 September 2001.
121. Labor will continue to build on this excellent relationship developed over many years. We will revitalise the consultative mechanisms to facilitate a strong relationship into the future.
122. Labor will continue to promote joint defence exercises and improved interoperability with United States military forces, within the context of Australia's national defence objectives.

123. **Pine Gap.** The Pine Gap Joint Facility makes an important contribution to this alliance as well as to the deterrence and avoidance of conflict. Labor will require that this facility continue to be managed and operated on a joint basis and only with the Australian Government's full knowledge of and concurrence with the facility's activities. Labor will ensure the operations of the Joint Facility are consistent with Australia's national security, disarmament and non-proliferation objectives. Furthermore the Joint Facility will only operate to support the use of armed forces with the specific prior agreement of the Australian Government.
124. **Ballistic missile defence.** Labor considers that the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missile delivery systems is one of the most serious international security issues confronting the world today. Labor considers effective efforts to combat these developments require sustained multilateral, diplomatic and defence cooperation and action.
125. Labor is concerned that as a unilateral response to the problem of ballistic missile proliferation, national missile defence is disproportionate, technically questionable, costly and likely to be counterproductive. It also has the potential to undermine non-proliferation and derail world progress towards nuclear disarmament. Labor also notes that national missile defence would impact on the security situation in the Asia Pacific region, and that this could have serious consequences for Australia's strategic circumstances and national security.
126. Labor is committed to ensuring that all efforts are made to protect ADF personnel deployed on operations.
- Labor supports the development of capability for in-theatre defence of ADF personnel and key strategic interests from ballistic missile attack.
127. Defence relationships in the Asia Pacific region. Labor is committed to Australia comprehensively engaging with other nations in the Asia Pacific region, as part of its efforts to foster and preserve peace, stability and security in this region. Labor recognises that these efforts are increasingly fundamental to Australia's own national security.
128. Australia's participation in the Five Power Defence Arrangements (FPDA) will remain an important aspect of regional policy under Labor. The FPDA provides a unique multinational forum in which the ADF can exercise with other countries of the region. Labor will work to maintain the FPDA as a cooperative treaty with benefit for all participants.
129. The continued development of Indonesia's democracy, and joint cooperation against terrorism, is allowing Australia to build on the strength of its relationship with that country. Labor will ensure that any defence relationship between Australia and Indonesia will be as equal partners, to the benefit of both countries and that of our broader region, while ensuring that Labor's commitment to liberal democratic and human rights values is not compromised.
130. Australia's historical and close ties with New Zealand are the basis of an ongoing partnership. Labor will promote regular joint military exercises with New Zealand and seek to improve the operational capability of potential joint deployments and foster the synergies that can be created with our different defence capabilities.

131. Australia has a special role and responsibility in its relations with Papua New Guinea. Labor in government will assist Papua New Guinea to develop an effective and disciplined defence force, while encouraging non-military solutions to problems of internal security and order.

132. Security of the Pacific nations is essential for regional security and Australia's own defence. Labor will increase Australia's efforts to engage in supporting sustainable development of the Pacific nations through the creation of democratic institutions, effective law enforcement and modern defence forces.

133. **Allied use of Australian facilities.** Labor will support the use of facilities in Australia by the armed forces of friendly countries for combined exercises, training and goodwill visits, provided that in times of peace:

- use of Australian ports by foreign warships does not extend to the home porting of any of those vessels in Australia;
- the staging of military aircraft through Australian airfields or airspace shall only be for such purposes as may be agreed beforehand by the Australian Government;
- no nuclear, biological or chemical weapons may be stored or stationed in Australia;
- nuclear powered vessels visit only those ports which, after assessment by the Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation (ANSTO), have been determined by the Visiting Ships Panel (Nuclear) as being suitable for those vessels, and provided also that all other safety precautions and conditions that are

deemed necessary by the relevant Australian authorities are complied with by the vessels concerned; and

—appropriate environmental safeguards are in place.

Defence Personnel

134. **Looking after ADF personnel.** Labor recognises that the ADF's most valuable asset is its people. Labor is committed to an ADF which is made up of highly motivated, skilled, well trained and well equipped personnel who volunteer for service. The ADF must be able to compete with the private sector to recruit and retain the best and brightest personnel. In order for the ADF to be an attractive and competitive employer Labor will develop an integrated long-term personnel policy that addresses the special nature of military service and the needs of service families.

135. Labor will ensure that ADF pay and conditions continue to be fixed in a fair and transparent manner by an independent tribunal. Labor believes that ADF personnel have the right to form, and be members of, associations in respect of their pay and conditions. Labor will allow associations that can demonstrate a substantial membership to have the right to appear before the independent tribunal to present the views of serving members.

136. **Occupational health and safety, and workers' compensation.** Labor is strongly committed to improved occupational health and safety and workers' compensation arrangements for ADF personnel. Labor believes that these arrangements should reflect the unique risks involved in military service and give appropriate emphasis to treatment, rehabilitation, return to work and income maintenance measures.

137. Labor will ensure that all ADF personnel receive quality information about occupational health and safety, and compensation provisions, and increased assistance to claim compensation when they sustain a work-related injury or illness.
138. Labor believes that before ADF personnel are deployed on operations they should, at any early stage, receive full details about any inoculation requirements, and the nature of any health risks associated with the vaccines. Labor will also ensure personnel receive comprehensive medical checks and support upon their return from operations.
139. **Female personnel in combat roles.** Labor will review the extent to which the remaining prohibitions on women serving in combat positions serve any useful military purpose. The experience of overseas defence forces will be considered as part of this process.
140. **Sexual harassment in the ADF.** Labor is strongly committed to eliminating sexual harassment in the ADF. Labor will establish a single point of complaint and a specialist investigative unit, separate from the chain of command and accountable directly to the Chief of the Defence Force, to investigate all allegations of sexual harassment. Labor will ensure that all allegations of sexual assault involving members of the ADF are referred to the civilian police for investigation.
141. **Composition of the ADF.** Labor believes it is important that the nation's defence force be representative of the community it serves. Labor will reconsider Defence's recruitment policies to ensure that the ethnic composition of the ADF better reflects that of the broader Australian community.
142. **Independent investigation of incidents involving ADF personnel.** Labor strongly believes that affected ADF personnel and their families are entitled to the highest standards of justice and procedural fairness in military investigations. Labor will ensure that the military justice system provides impartial, rigorous and fair outcomes for all affected parties. Labor is committed to the introduction of a strict accountability system to improve the transparency and public accountability of all military justice investigations.
143. **Defence Reserves.** Labor believes that the Reserves are a critical component of Australia's defence capability that needs to be able to contribute to any sort of operation in which Australia might participate. Labor is committed to integrating full time ADF and Reserve elements in a total force structure where the different role of all components is properly understood, valued and utilised effectively. Labor will also:
- abolish the Common Induction Training for the Army, and review it for the Navy and Air Force;
 - assess the adequacy of equipment available for the purpose of Reserves training, in light of evidence that some units are suffering shortages of weapons and ammunition; and
 - be vigilant in ensuring that the rights and protections accorded to Reservists are observed, including through the reintroduction of defence leave as an allowable award matter.
144. Labor is concerned that the current shortfall of Reserve recruits is preventing the Reserves from fully performing the functions envisaged in the 2000 Defence White Paper. Labor will work with

Reserve commanders to determine why Australians are not joining the Reserves, and develop strategies to improve the recruitment rate.

145. Community recognition of ADF service.

Labor will work with nations that enforce conscription against Australians who have dual citizenship with the purpose of ensuring that Australians are able to visit their country of origin without being forced into conscription. We will seek to develop civilian and military alternatives in Australia for those who choose to undertake such alternatives and wish to embark on extended visits.

146. Labor is committed to commemorating the sacrifice of those Australian men and women who have served in war and overseas conflicts on behalf of Australia and who have participated in United Nations peace keeping operations. Labor will ensure that Australia particularly remembers the individual sacrifice of those who have given their lives in the service of our country.

147. Labor will assist the Australian community to learn about and remember the nation's experiences of war, and to appreciate both the personal contribution of those who served and the social, economic and political impact on the wider community.

148. Labor will review the range of policies on the issuing of medals and benefits for operational service, with a view to addressing any outstanding anomalies.

Defence Industry and Procurement

149. Defence acquisitions. Labor believes that the failure to deliver major defence equipment projects on time, within budget and with the required level of capability is undermining Australia's overall defence efforts.

150. Labor is committed to reforming defence acquisition policy to ensure that the defence procurement process delivers better outcomes for the ADF, the Australian government, and the Australian community.

151. Labor will ensure that the Department of Defence is more accountable for the timely and cost effective delivery of all major defence acquisition projects. Labor will undertake annual evaluations, strengthen parliamentary oversight, and publish regular reviews of all major defence projects to ensure that important new equipment is delivered on time, within agreed budgets, and with the required level of capability.

152. Defence industry. Australia's defence industry sector is an integral part of the defence of Australia. Labor is committed to fostering a strong and viable long-term domestic defence industry and will ensure that government policy reflects that commitment.

153. Labor is concerned by the Australian National Audit Office criticism of defence's ability to deliver Australian industry involvement in major acquisition projects. Labor will undertake annual reports on Australian industry involvement in defence acquisition and procurement projects, to ensure that the economic and employment benefits of such involvement are achieved.

154. Labor recognises that defence acquisition plays a significant role in the modernisation of Australian industry and the development of a skills base. Labor will give preference to Australian based companies, with special consideration for local suppliers being desirable where:

- the supplier is commercially competitive;
- the supplier is operating in an area of high strategic value;

- competitors are likely to be subject to political and intelligence pressures from foreign powers and are consequently unreliable; and
 - local production is required to establish a new capacity capable of future development.
155. **Defence industry sectoral plans.** Labor supports the development of defence industry sectoral plans for shipbuilding, aerospace, electronics, and land and weapons.
156. Labor believes that the sectoral plans represent a more strategic approach to defence industry policy that will enable Australia to sustain key industry capabilities necessary to meet our long-term national security needs. This also helps to provide better guidance for industry, introduce better business practices within defence and establish better relationships between industry and defence.
157. Labor supports a defence shipbuilding sector plan that maintains a viable defence shipbuilding capability in Australia.
158. **Australian Submarine Corporation.** Labor believes that the Australian Submarine Corporation (ASC) is a strategic national asset. Labor is committed to maintaining a viable ASC to ensure that the economic benefit from Australia's investment in submarines is maintained, employment in the sector is continued and is consistent with the long-term strategic requirement to maintain a strong submarine industry in Australia.
159. **Private Finance Initiatives and Support-Public Partnerships.** Labor supports the use of the Private Finance Initiatives (PFI) and Private-Public Partnerships (PPP), which can enable defence to maximise the outcome of its capital expenditure by utilising the project management skills of the private sector. Labor will develop guidelines to ensure that a PFI cost-benefit analysis option for every major defence acquisition project is undertaken to ensure that the maximum value for money outcome is achieved on every major defence project.
160. **Defence Capability Plan.** Labor is committed to the regular publication of a Defence Capability Plan (DCP) to ensure that the defence industry sector remains informed about future acquisition projects, particularly the proposed timing, cost and level of capability associated with such projects.
161. Consistent with its approach to regular strategic reviews, Labor will review and, as necessary, update the DCP on a regular basis to ensure that public information about defence equipment projects remains current and relevant to the needs of the ADF, the defence industry sector and the Australian community.
162. **Defence science and technology.** Labor believes that the Defence Science and Technology Organisation (DSTO) has an impressive record of research and development of defence-related technologies. Labor will further expand and encourage the links between DSTO and the Australian defence industry, including technology transfer to Australian industry. This will ensure maximum benefit from Australian defence research and development and enhance domestic development opportunities for new technologies and products.
163. As far as possible, Labor will foster the retention of intellectual property ownership in Australia, including where

appropriate ownership of intellectual property by defence.

164. **The role of defence in urban and regional development.** Consistent with Labor's urban and regional development and transport policies, we will develop ports, airfields, railways and roads which will contribute to the mobility of, and infrastructure support for, the ADF as well as to the material development of the nation and growth in the defence industrial base. Labor will also ensure that the Defence Forces activities that provide important transport links and economic infrastructure for rural and regional centres are maintained.
165. **Defence exports.** Labor will ensure government control over the manufacture and export of arms, munitions and military goods and services.
166. Labor supports the export of Australian defence equipment within strict guidelines. Labor will not permit defence exports to countries where those exports would:
- have an adverse impact on Australia's security interests;
 - contravene United Nations embargos; or
 - pose a clear, identifiable risk of being used for the major suppression or violation of human rights or fundamental freedoms.
167. Defence exports are important in maintaining local industry support for the ADF and in contributing to Australia's own Defence capability. Accordingly, Labor will review the Defence export facilitation program in consultation with industry to ensure maximum opportunities for Australian defence industry, within the strict guidelines required for defence exports.

Defence Corporate Performance

168. **Defence financial and corporate management.** Defence continues to face significant corporate management challenges. Labor will ensure that Defence establishes the highest level of financial discipline, because improved financial management is critical in ensuring that value for money outcomes are delivered to the government, the ADF and the Australian community.
169. Labor will undertake a comprehensive audit of Defence financial management to ensure that the corporate performance of the organisation meets best practice standards. Labor will ensure and demand greater accountability and transparency in defence financial and asset management.
170. **Defence property disposal.** Labor recognises the cultural, heritage and environmental significance of many surplus defence properties around Australia. Labor will review the future of all sites identified as being surplus to defence needs, before deciding whether to sell or transfer these properties to the community. Labor will ensure that defence consults with all affected parties, including local communities, local and State government agencies, and private interests before determining the future of individual sites.
171. **Defence outsourcing.** Labor will review all outsourcing initiatives proposed by defence to determine the financial viability of proceeding with these programs. Labor will ensure that future outsourcing only occurs in areas where real long-term savings can be generated without compromising the operational capability of the ADF.

CARE AND HONOUR FOR AUSTRALIA'S VETERANS

The Tradition of Care

172. Australia's military activity since Federation has seen many deployments abroad in the defence of our national interests. This service has traditionally been treated with special status by Australian society, recognising the disruption to life, hardships of separation from family, and the wide range of risk to life and limb. Repatriation therefore has had a special significance, with unique and separate acknowledgement of that service through special programs of support, care and commemoration at public cost.
173. Labor respects the tradition of special care for Australia's service men and women who serve overseas, within the modern context. Labor will continue to care for and honour veterans for their service to the maintenance of world peace and domestic security through dedicated programs of support, care, and commemoration.
174. Moreover, Labor will not tolerate any further erosion of the traditional distinction accorded those with warlike (qualifying) service as appropriate in a modern service context.
175. However, Labor also notes that these traditional policies and programs have evolved slowly over almost a century, and that in some instances may no longer be consistent with the needs of veterans and their families in a modern society.
176. Labor in its approach to veterans and war widows' entitlements recognises there are many inconsistencies, but in addressing these, need will always have first priority.

177. Labor also recognises however, that many inconsistencies resulting from different judgements and perceptions in the past cannot be remedied without considerable cost, and the risk of creating further inconsistencies.
178. Consistent with the philosophy of benefits being relevant to contemporary needs, and with the principles of fairness, equity and transparency, Labor will continue to review policies. Labor will fully consider the recommendations of all recent reviews of policy, including those of the Clarke Review of Veterans' Entitlements completed in February 2003.
179. Labor will give early priority to those recommendations of Clarke relating to those affected by radiation from service in Japan and during the atomic tests in Australia.

Veterans' Needs

180. With the passing of most World War I veterans, the veteran community can be categorised three ways for the purposes of reviewing and developing flexible and responsive programs:
 - Veterans who served in World War II, Korea and subsequent deployments in South East Asia who are largely retired. For this group the issues are now predominantly ones of health and aged care.
 - Veterans who served in the Vietnam War with its unique characteristics including the presence of many conscripted men, and divided community support. For this group the more immediate needs are those of income security for their future retirement, support for the raising of families, and programs of support for families suffering from the effects of substance abuse, gambling and acts of violence.

—Those who have served since in peace keeping missions, and deployments such as the Gulf, East Timor, Afghanistan, Iraq and the Solomon Islands—most of whom are yet to become veterans, but whose needs at present seem likely to emulate those of the Vietnam generation.

181. Labor's policy for veterans will therefore be structured to respond to the differing needs of veterans according to their stage of life, with flexible programs based on meeting contemporary needs.

Veterans' Families

182. Traditionally programs of support and care for veterans extend to immediate family, recognising that injury and the stresses of service can often affect those for whom the veteran is responsible. Those programs also recognise the care extended to the veteran within the family, especially by partners, as a lifelong commitment. They also recognise the right to public support in times of need and for children not to be disadvantaged by their parents' service and any subsequent outcomes affecting their health and well being, and their future development as individuals.
183. Labor is committed to the care and welfare of veterans' partners and families who may have suffered as a result of the veterans' service, particularly from the ill health of a veteran, as part of a policy of lifelong care for those injured or affected by their service.
184. Labor will work to address the health and welfare needs of younger veterans' families, particularly those of Vietnam veterans, but also those of former peace keepers, and subsequent deployments. Labor will ensure there are adequate

programs to assist these families to meet the pressures and demands of modern society.

185. As first priority Labor will ensure the adequacy of programs focused on alleviating the effects of substance abuse, gambling, and domestic violence as experienced by partners and children.
186. Labor will also undertake health studies, into the health and welfare of children of younger veterans, to better establish the possibility of inter-generational health effects flowing from their service.
187. To assist families of veterans in need, Labor will review the adequacy of the program of bursaries for talented children accepted at the tertiary level—including living away from home allowances, complementary with the Veterans' Children Education Scheme.

Programs of Income Support

188. Consistent with general policies which have seen the provision of safety nets for those disadvantaged in society and unable to take their place in the workforce due to disability or age, special provision has always been made for veterans and their dependants. This uniquely includes the effects of service which impact on veterans' employability within the labour market.
189. These policies which have their origins in the immediate post World War I society, while consistent with general social welfare policies, are separate and form part of service conditions rather than general social welfare policy. Labor will honour that distinction.
190. Recognising the principles of entitlements based on need, and consistent with the current principles governing the provision of income support, Labor will continue to provide

programs of income support for veterans, their partners and widows, whereby as the result of service in the Australian Defence Forces, they have been unable to provide for themselves and their families due to loss of work capacity, death, or age.

Disability Compensation

191. Injuries and illness resulting from veterans' service overseas have traditionally been compensated in a separate scheme in recognition of the different circumstances and status of that service. This is reflected in some circumstances by a more generous standard of proof, the lack of any onus of proof, and a longstanding commitment to the benefit of the doubt operating in the veterans' favour.
192. Labor will honour these commitments and the values on which they are based.
193. Labor will seek to ensure the operation of income and assets tests applied to veterans other than under the Veterans' Entitlements Act apply fairly and take account of veterans' service to our nation.
194. Labor also recognises the claims of the Totally and Permanently Incapacitated community with respect to the erosion of that part of their pension compensating for their inability to earn a living, particularly those younger veterans with continuing family responsibilities. Labor will consider further measures to restructure benefits for T&PI's consultatively with the T&PI community.
195. Labor recognises too, that much of the unfairness and inconsistency within veterans' disability compensation law derives from two separate acts of parliament and the incompatibility of different entitlements from this dual eligibility. Labor supports the

development of a new single scheme for all ADF serving people in the future, provided that hard-fought benefits, and the traditional values on which they are based, are not diminished.

196. Labor will continue to support the BEST and TIP programs which are of immense value in assisting ex-service organisations prepare compensation claims for their members.

War Widows

197. Australians have always cared and provided for those whose partners were lost in action or who died as the result of their war-caused injuries or illness. Labor recognises that the traditional programs of support for war widows as provided for in the Veterans' Entitlement Act may no longer be relevant, and that there are strong perceptions in the community of unfairness with respect to eligibility.
198. Labor also clearly recognises there are some widows in need of greater support, especially those renting privately, and younger widows without children whose entitlements have been reduced in the past.

Health Care

199. Health care policy for veterans has from the time of Federation, provided for free treatment of all service related injury and illness. This is now denoted by possession of a White Card.
200. In more recent times free private health care for all conditions has been provided by the Gold Card to a range of veterans and widows. Eligibility is automatic for some classes of veterans and widows, but generally requires warlike (qualifying) service and an age of 70.
201. Assistance in the home, aimed at keeping ageing veterans and widows

out of costly institutionalised care is also provided under the Homecare Program, consistent with the Home and Community Care (HACC) program available to the community at large. This forms part of the traditional approach of lifelong care to those who served Australia abroad.

202. Labor will retain the current programs of health care for veterans and honour the historic commitment to free treatment for all service-related injuries and disease. The Gold, White and Orange cards will be retained with existing entitlements.
203. Labor will expedite the current program of mortality and health studies and research into past deployments, as well as ensuring that the current processes for future deployments properly deal with health risks in advance, and after return to Australia—particularly with respect to record keeping.

Commemoration

204. Commemoration of veterans, their commitment and sacrifice has historically been restricted to the observance of Anzac Day and Remembrance Day by the public, and with little government involvement. Labor introduced the current program of commemoration in 1992 and has continued to support that effort, despite its capture by the Howard Government for political promotion.
205. Labor will restore a bipartisan approach to commemorative activity, with a

concentration on educative programs under the aegis of the Australian War Memorial. Anzac Day will continue to be the central focus of commemorative commitments, but additionally will introduce a new day of commemoration to be known as the 'Battle for Australia Day' in September each year, recognising the special significance of the World War II campaigns in Papua New Guinea, the Pacific and South East Asia in the defence of Australia.

206. Labor will implement education and information campaigns to ensure all Australians, especially the young, develop a full appreciation of the sacrifice and service of our veterans and current service men and women.

Administration

207. Currently administration of veterans' and ex-service personnel matters are concentrated within the Department of Veterans' Affairs, recognising the need for better continuity of specialised client service around Australia. Recognising that the administration of veterans' policy and ex-service personnel matters will continue to merge in the future as the nature of defence service evolves, and the older veteran cohort diminishes in number, Labor will continue with a dedicated agency for veterans within the defence portfolio.
208. As part of this continuing commitment, Labor will consult widely and regularly with the veteran community at State and federal level.

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Anti-Vehicle Mines

In recognition of the fact that anti-vehicle mines kill and maim innocent civilians, Labor supports a ban on all anti-vehicle mines that are fitted with anti-handling devices. Labor will support international efforts to regulate and further restrict the use of anti-vehicle mines in general and continue to promote Australia's work in mine clearance programs.

Republic of Cyprus

Labor deplores the fact that for nearly 30 years Cyprus remains artificially divided, and recognises the humanitarian and economic costs this continued division imposes on the communities of the island.

Labor reaffirms its longstanding and unequivocal support for the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of the Republic of Cyprus.

Labor expresses its strong belief that the status quo on Cyprus is unacceptable and our deep concern that negotiations are still yet to secure a just and lasting resolution of the Cyprus issue.

Labor calls once more upon all parties to respect the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of the Republic of Cyprus. Labor reaffirms the policy of non-recognition of the secessionist Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus.

Labor reiterates its strong concern at the absence of progress towards any significant reduction in the number of foreign troops on the island. The presence of foreign troops on Cyprus fuels tensions both on the island and in the eastern Mediterranean and complicates efforts to negotiate an overall political settlement. Labor welcomes the accession of Cyprus into the European Union which presents a new context and opportunities for the resolution of the Cyprus conflict.

Labor welcomes the improvement in relations between Greece and Turkey and especially the overtures by the new Erdogan Government and hopes that this will facilitate progress toward resolution of the Cyprus issue.

Labor commends the UN Secretary-General for his current initiative and regrets the failure of The Hague Summit in March 2003.

Accordingly, Labor:

- reaffirms its strong support for the role of the UN Secretary-General, commends his continuing efforts to facilitate negotiations to secure a solution to the Cyprus problem, and expresses its deep concern at the continuing deadlock in intercommunal talks;
- reaffirms its support for the approach adopted in the relevant UN Security Council resolutions that require Cyprus to be one State, with a single sovereignty, single international personality and single citizenship based on a bizonal, bicomunal federation;
- welcomes the efforts of the UN and others concerned—including those in Australia—to promote the holding of bicomunal events so as to build cooperation, trust and mutual respect between the two communities;
- welcomes the mobilisation of Turkish Cypriot public opinion in favour of the UN proposal, the peace process and accession to the EU, as well as the change in the Turkish Cypriot leadership, expressing the hope that this would herald a new conciliatory policy towards the reunification process;
- welcomes the partial lifting of restriction of movement by the Turkish side between the north and the south but reiterates that this does not constitute a substitution for a comprehensive settlement;

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- applauds the efforts of the UN Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus, especially officers of the Australian Federal Policy who continue to make a vital contribution to its operations;
- calls upon the parties to work towards resolution of the Cyprus problem in a way which guarantees to all Cypriot people the three freedoms of movement, settlement and ownership, and ensures the right of all refugees to return in safety;
- calls upon all involved parties to undertake urgent and comprehensive investigations into the fate and whereabouts of all missing persons;
- calls on the Federal Government to use all its influence to help facilitate a just and lasting settlement of the Cyprus problem, consistent with United Nations resolutions and based upon the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Cyprus; and
- further calls on the Federal Government to encourage, assist and support all efforts and contacts which maintain and enhance relations between the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities, especially those in Australia.

Labor in government will maintain the position of an Australian Special Envoy for Cyprus and will commit Australia's good offices in active support of international efforts to resolve the Cyprus problem. Labor will strengthen Australia's diplomatic presence in Nicosia which has been reduced to an unacceptably low level.

Labor views positively Cyprus' accession to the European Union with major potential benefits for the economic development and security of the whole island and the opportunity to bring the communities in Cyprus closer together.

Labor calls on the international community to reinvigorate efforts to advance negotiations to restore justice for Cyprus and to bring about a long term resolution of the Cyprus issue.

Western Sahara

Labor notes that the United Nations has been trying to organise a referendum for self-determination in Western Sahara since 1991. Labor further notes that the referendum has been delayed because of obstructions by Morocco, which has illegally occupied Western Sahara since 1975.

Labor expresses its deep concern for the deterioration of the human rights situation in the occupied areas of Western Sahara.

Labor supports the right of the Saharawi people to self-determination and deplores the long delays, which have so far prevented them from exercising their inalienable right to self-determination through a UN conducted referendum.

Labor urges the UN and the international community to press Morocco to accept and implement the latest UN peace plan for self-determination of the people of Western Sahara without further delay.

Labor urges the Australian Government to extend all due assistance to the UN in its efforts to organise a free and fair referendum for the people of Western Sahara, and to establish and maintain an appropriate dialogue with the Polisario Front.

Missile Defence

Labor expresses its opposition to the decision by the Howard Government to commit Australia to joining the United States National Missile Defence (US NMD) program.

Labor notes that the Howard Government has not released any detail about Australian

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participation in the US NMD program, nor has it committed any financial resources to funding this participation. Any financial contribution to the \$US120 billion NMD program can only come at the expense of other important domestic priorities, such as screening facilities in Australia's regional airports and the provision of better health, education and social welfare outcomes for Australian families.

NMD will increase tension in our region, encourage proliferation of ballistic missiles and make the world less rather than more secure.

Instead of committing Australia to joining the US NMD program, Labor in government will:

- redouble Australia's efforts as part of international moves to combat the proliferation of ballistic missiles through strengthening international disarmament treaties; and
- supporting multilateral mechanisms aimed at preventing weaponisation of, and ensuring the peaceful use of, space.

Middle East Peace Process

Labor strongly supports the negotiation of a just, enduring and comprehensive peace settlement in the Middle East, based on United Nations Security Council Resolutions 242, 338, the Middle East Road Map to Peace and the Oslo Declaration of Principles agreed between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation, representing the Palestinian people, in 1993. Labor considers it to be a matter of great regret that Israel and the Palestinian Authority were unable to reach agreement on permanent status issues at the Summit held under the auspices of US President Clinton at Camp David between 11 and 24 July 2000.

Labor urges the commitment from both sides to continue their efforts to conclude an

agreement on all permanent status issues as soon as possible, thereby seeking to put an end to decades of conflict and achieve a just and lasting peace. Labor further urges both sides of avoiding unilateral action that prejudice the outcome of negotiations.

Labor urges both Israel and the Palestinian Authority to resume substantive negotiations to achieve a permanent status agreement as quickly as possible.

Labor continues to support the right of Israel to exist in peace and security within secure and recognized borders. At the same time Labor supports the right of self determination for the Palestinian people, including their right to their own independent state.

Labor welcomes Israel's recognition of the Palestinian people's right to self determination. Labor acknowledges that the implementation of Palestinian self determination and the ultimate shape of the Palestinian entity is subject to the permanent status negotiations.

Labor recognizes the Palestinian Authority as the basis for a potential Palestinian state and believes that consideration should be given to the upgrading of bilateral contacts with a view to the extension of diplomatic recognition, as and when appropriate, to a representative of the Palestinian Authority in Australia.

Labor condemns all acts of terrorism, including Palestinian suicide bombing and urges all parties to the peace process to exercise maximum restraint and deprive the enemies of peace the opportunity they seek through violence to disrupt negotiations.

Labor does not believe the current dividing barrier being constructed by the Israeli government will assist in bringing about a lasting peace settlement with the Palestinian people.

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Labor urges Israel and the Palestinian Authority to cooperate wholeheartedly in taking all appropriate measures to combat terrorist activity and calls on all groups to refrain from and actively discourage all hostile propaganda and vilification that may incite violence and impede progress toward peace and reconciliation.

Labor urges the Federal Government to lend every support to the peace process, in particular through the United Nations and through the active participation of the parties in the Road Map to Peace negotiations process.

Labor further urges the Federal Government to provide maximum possible targeted development assistance to the Palestinian Authority to assist the Palestinian Authority address ongoing problems associated with poverty levels exceeding 60 per cent and unemployment in excess of 30 per cent.

Labor expresses its hope that further progress in negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians will be accompanied by advances in negotiations between Israel and Syria towards Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights and the normalization of relations.

Labor welcomes the withdrawal of Israeli military forces from Lebanon in accordance UN Security Council Resolution 425.

Labor calls on the Federal Government to assist in the full restoration of Lebanese sovereignty and the protection of the rights of all citizens of Lebanon; in particular by calling for the immediate withdrawal of remaining foreign forces, dismantling of foreign sponsored militias, cessation of foreign interference in internal Lebanese affairs, and encouraging free democratic elections and full respect for human rights in Lebanon.

Labor also notes that under the terms of the 1989 Taif Agreement, Syria should have withdrawn all military forces from Lebanon by 1992. Labor notes Syria's withdrawal of some military forces from Lebanon through 2003.

Recognising the threat to peace and security in the Middle East posed by the proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, Labor opposed the war on Iraq because the reasons advanced by the Howard Government for going to war were insufficient and incompatible with the UN Charter.

Labor calls for the immediate return of UN weapons inspectors to produce a final and comprehensive report verifying whether or not Iraq possessed stockpiles of chemical and biological weapons, at the time of the Iraq war was initiated as claimed by the Howard Government.

Labor calls for the immediate return of International Atomic Energy Agency inspectors to produce a final and comprehensive report verifying whether or not Iraq was reconstructing its nuclear weapons program at the time of the Iraq war was initiated as claimed by the Howard Government.

Labor recognizes now that Australia's foremost responsibility is to assist in the rebuilding of Iraq for the benefit of the Iraqi people. Labor believes that this must be done through a consistent and concerted humanitarian assistance and economic reconstruction effort in which Australia must be an active participant.

Labor also believes this process can be advanced through appropriate Australian technical assistance (through the Australian Electoral Commission) with the development of an Iraqi electoral system and conduct of Iraqi elections in order to

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bring about the earliest return of full sovereignty to the Iraqi people.

Labor welcomes the increasing openness in Iranian society and notes the Khatami Government's trend toward greater openness toward the international community. IT therefore regrets the 2003 decision of the Iranian Council of Guardians to prevent a large number of candidates for and existing Members of Parliament from contesting the next Iranian elections. Labor further welcomes the resumption of negotiations between the Iranian Government and the International Atomic Energy Agency to inspect Iran's nuclear facilities. Labor remains deeply concerned however, by abuses of human rights and religious freedoms in Iran.

Australia should make it clear to the Iranian Government that persecution of people as a consequence of their religious or political beliefs can only damage Iran's international standing and further delay normalisation of Iran's relations with much of the world.

Labor extends its condolences to the Iranian people for the tragic loss of life that occurred during the Bam earthquake on 28 December 2003. Labor calls on the Government to provide additional humanitarian relief assistance to ensure that the basic needs of survivors are adequately met.

Timor Leste

Labor warmly welcomes Timor Leste into the community of nations and welcomes the progress achieved by the East Timorese people and government in working to build a viable, self sustaining, independent and sovereign state. Timor Leste's status as an independent nation amongst all others is a tribute to the resolve of the East Timorese people.

Timor Leste continues to face significant economic and social challenges in its nation-

building, including the re-establishing of essential social services, revitalising the economy, generating employment and achieving food self sufficiency.

Labor considers that Australia should generously assist the East Timorese people as they work towards an independent future. Australia should be comprehensively engaged in supporting sustainable development in Timor Leste, including through the provision of comprehensive technical advice. Labor strongly advocates the further development of a wide range of institutional and people to people ties between Australia and Timor Leste, including local government friendship relationships.

Labor expresses its concern that incursions by militia forces from Indonesian West Timor have continued and notes that despite commitments to action by the Indonesian military, little appears to have been done to disarm or disband the militia groups. These groups must be terminated without delay and those responsible for violating Timor Leste's territorial integrity must be identified and held to account for their actions. Labor believes that United Nations peace keepers should remain in Timor Leste until such time as that country's security can be assured.

Labor supports in principle the ratification of the unitisation agreement between Australia and Timor Leste, and notes that Australian government support for the commencement of the Sunrise project as soon as possible would provide impetus to the projects success.

Zimbabwe

Labor condemns the Mugabe regime for the manipulating the 2002 general election to ensure its re-election. Labor further condemns the stance taken by the Mugabe regime with its land redistribution campaign

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and notes that as a result of this campaign, thousands of farmers and workers in Zimbabwe have been displaced, the Zimbabwe economy has been crippled, and there are now widespread shortages of basic commodities.

Labor notes that opposition and union groups in Zimbabwe have actively pursued pro-democracy reforms, including seeking the early retirement of President Mugabe.

Labor condemns the periodic harassment of Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) Opposition leader Morgan Tsvangirai, including his arrest and detention, and the suppression of independent media by the Mugabe regime.

Labor stands side by side with the Zimbabwean people in their pursuit for democratic reform and free and fair elections. Labor supports efforts by the MDC opposition to enter into a dialogue with the regime, and calls on the Mugabe regime to enter into genuine political dialogue with the Opposition with a view to restoring democracy and rebuilding international confidence in the country.

Labor calls on the Federal Government to explore options through the United Nations of bringing international pressure to the Mugabe regime to ensure that democracy is restored in Zimbabwe.

Global Fund for HIV/AIDS

Labor notes that there are approximately 40 million people worldwide estimated as currently infected by HIV/AIDS, and that this is causing a significant fall in life expectancy, a rapid growth in the number of orphans and a decline in national productivity in much of sub-Saharan Africa.

Labor further notes that the significant rise in parts of South and South East Asia, and in

Papua New Guinea, means that the Asia Pacific region also threatens to be significantly affected by HIV/AIDS.

Labor affirms its commitment to supporting international efforts to limit the spread and impact of the HIV/AIDS epidemic. Labor welcomes the creation of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, formally established at the United Nations General Assembly Special Session on HIV/AIDS in June 2001. Labor notes that the Fund enables recipient countries to maintain their own autonomy in deciding the best strategies for tackling diseases, as well as facilitating and scaling-up and strengthening existing responses to epidemics.

Labor notes that in its first two rounds of funding the Global Fund approved AUD\$2.4 billion over two years for more than 154 programs in 93 of the worst affected countries. Labor further notes that this funding is only a fraction of the AUD\$11-16 billion UN Secretary General Kofi Annan called from the international community annually to respond to HIV/AIDS. Labor notes that the Global Fund today faces a significant shortfall of funding and that this jeopardises its ability to distribute funds to those countries already with program

Labor calls on the Government to review the way resources are allocated for combating HIV/AIDS through Australia's aid budget, with a view to committing financial support to the Fund. Labor believes that support for the Fund would be an important contribution to the global fight to eradicate HIV/AIDS.

Burma

Labor reaffirms its longstanding condemnation of gross violations of human rights in Burma, including the draconian suppression of political freedoms, torture, rape, disappearances, extrajudicial killings,

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oppression of ethnic and religious minorities and the use of forced labour.

Labor further condemns the continued refusal of the State Peace and Development Council to accept the political verdict of the people of Burma freely expressed at the democratic elections of 1990.

Labor expresses its deep concern at the continuing repression of public political activity, the arbitrary detention, imprisonment and systematic surveillance of those in Burma seeking to exercise their rights to freedom of expression, assembly and association.

Labor calls on the Government to cease its 'constructive engagement' policy with the Burmese regime, including its human rights training course for Burmese officials. This has been a demonstrable failure in bringing about any improvement regarding the State Peace and Development Council's approach to addressing human rights concerns in Burma.

Labor notes that the Australian Government's approach stands in stark contrast to the majority of international opinion. Both the European Union and the United States have put in place a range of targeted sanctions against individuals in the SPDC regime.

Labor believes that for its part the Australian Government should also consider a range of targeted sanctions against the SPDC regime. Targeted sanctions applied against individual members of the regime would not cause

undue hardship on the citizens of Burma.

Sanctions that should be considered include those that deal with the international financial transactions of members of the regime, including a freeze on assets overseas, their personal international travel, and that of their families.

Labor also calls on the Australian Government to do all it can to maximise international pressure on the Burmese military regime to respect human rights and democratic freedoms.

Labor calls on the State Peace and Development Council to cease its repressive attempts to suppress political freedom in Burma, and to release all prisoners detained for their political views and beliefs.

Labor considers the only long-term solution to the situation in Burma is a negotiated settlement based firmly on a fundamental respect for human rights. Labor calls on the State Peace and Development Council to open a genuine political dialogue with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, representatives of the National League for Democracy, and ethnic minorities.

Labor further calls on the State Peace and Development Council to fully and unconditionally cooperate with the United Nations Secretary General's Special Representative and to cooperate unreservedly with the international community in efforts to suppress trafficking in narcotics.



AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY



Chapter Sixteen

Delivering Quality Government

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Chapter Sixteen

Delivering Quality Government

Making Government Responsive, Accountable and Efficient

1. The process of globalisation has set in train developments that are affecting the image and authority of states everywhere: there is widespread disillusionment with government and a lack of confidence in the capacity of governments to solve problems. Labor rejects these views, remaining committed to the belief that governments, which are truly representative and accountable, have an essential role to play in protecting and enhancing the lives of citizens.
2. If people are to be persuaded of the legitimacy and worth of government, then the standards, practices and services of governments must be of the highest quality. In particular, government must be responsive and representative, accountable and accessible, efficient and effective.
3. **Responsive and representative government.** Government must respond to the higher level of social wants characteristic of modern, technologically rich societies and to the economic insecurities citizens are experiencing. Labor reaffirms its commitment to:
 - the idea and practice of government intervention to promote social democratic goals and to ameliorate the consequences of market failure; and
 - remaining responsive to community opinion, with a continuing emphasis on consultative processes of government.
4. Government must be truly representative if it is to realise the aspirations of all Australians. Labor believes governments

should reflect the diversity of our society through their representatives, appointments and decisions.

5. **Accountable and accessible government.** With the growing perception that decisions affecting the lives of citizens are increasingly being taken beyond national borders, it is imperative that people should have access to and confidence in their national governments. Labor believes this can only be achieved if:
 - governments are truly accountable to parliament and the electorate;
 - citizens' rights to independent review of administrative decisions are guaranteed;
 - transparency of government decision making is facilitated by effective measures such as freedom of information.
6. **Efficient and effective government.** Labor has always believed that its goals are best achieved if government services are delivered in the most efficient manner possible.
 - Because of the universal difficulty in matching government revenue raising capacity to required outlays the premium on efficiency is greater than ever.
7. Labor recognises that community support for an active role for government in the achievement of social and economic goals requires that government programs deliver the expected results.

Respect for the Constitution

8. The Constitution is the fundamental compact between the Australian people and their government. The Constitution and the powers it vests in the three arms of government—the parliament, the executive and the judiciary—all draw authority from the Australian people.

9. A healthy and open democracy in which government is held to account by the people is dependent upon a participative and active population. Our democracy's ability to respond properly to the priorities of people is diminished if people feel they are not part of that society or that it has nothing to offer them.

Labor is committed to addressing issues such as economic deprivation, geographic or cultural isolation and language barriers that contribute to people's perceptions of social exclusion.

—Through citizenship education and lifelong learning, Labor is committed to empowering Australians to understand the operation of our system of government, and to the need for ongoing constitutional reform to ensure that our legislatures are properly equipped to meet the challenges of the twenty-first century.

10. To continue to meet the increasingly complex economic, environmental, political and social needs and aspirations of the Australian people, Labor believes that the Constitution must be flexible and readily capable of alteration.
11. Australians have only rarely amended the Constitution. History shows that referenda are only likely to succeed when they receive broad support across the political spectrum.

—Accordingly, Labor will seek to build a broad consensus for constitutional reform both with other political parties and among the Australian people as a whole.

12. The Constitution was not set in stone at the time of Federation. It must be adaptable and acquire meaning from the needs of the day.

—Labor acknowledges that it is the role of the High Court to interpret the

Constitution in context, rather than relying on any expression of original intent made at the time of Federation.

13. The Constitution should:

- reflect Australia's status as an independent nation and as a federal parliamentary democracy;
- use simple language and reflect actual practices and conventions of our system of government, including that the head of state should act on the advice of the government enjoying the confidence of the House of Representatives;
- provide the most suitable framework for the economic, environmental, social and political development of Australia as a federation;
- recognise an appropriate division of responsibilities between all levels of government to facilitate national planning and the effective delivery of public services;
- protect the independence of the judiciary; and
- ensure that our individual, collective and civic rights are guaranteed, with constitutional reform to entrench these rights. Labor recognises that these inalienable rights carry with them a responsibility to respect the individual and collective rights enjoyed by others, and the need to protect and promote institutions and practices fundamental to an equal, just, democratic and tolerant society.

14. Labor supports the inclusion of a new preamble to the Constitution which recognises Indigenous Australians and the core elements of Australia's history and democracy and appropriately expresses the values, aspirations and ideals of the Australian people.

15. Australians must be entitled to participate equally in the democratic process and in

- public life and administration. Labor supports constitutional reform to entrench the principle of one vote, one value for all elections, to ensure equal participation for all regardless of place of residence.
16. Labor supports simultaneous, fixed four year terms for the House of Representatives and the Senate.
 17. Labor supports repealing subsection 394(1) of the Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918, which would then not prevent the States and Territories from moving their electoral systems into line with the Commonwealth should the Commonwealth establish fixed four year terms.
 18. Labor supports constitutional reform to prevent the Senate rejecting, deferring or blocking appropriation bills.
 19. Labor supports constitutional reform at the Commonwealth, State and Territory level to remove the barrier on election to parliament of a person holding an office of profit under the Crown, provided that office is relinquished on election.
 20. Labor supports constitutional reform to allow all Australian citizens to contest Commonwealth elections.
 21. Labor supports the removal from the Constitution of provisions no longer having any effect.
 22. Labor will seek to remove racially discriminatory provisions from the Constitution, in particular to delete section 25 of the Constitution and to amend placitum 51(xxvi) to ensure it cannot be used to discriminate against Indigenous Australians.
- Respect for the Parliament
23. Parliament is the central institution in our system of government and respect for parliament is an essential element of a healthy democracy. In Labor's view this respect is dependent on the extent to which parliament reflects the will of the people; the credibility, appropriateness and effectiveness of the institutions of parliament; and the standard, dignity and transparency of parliamentary proceedings.

THE REPUBLIC AND NATIONAL IDENTITY

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>A1 Labor believes that the monarchy no longer reflects either the fundamental democratic principles that underlie the Australian nation or its diversity. Labor believes that our head of state should be an Australian who embodies and represents the traditions, values and aspirations of all Australians.</p> <p>A2 Labor recognises the difficulty of advancing constitutional reform if the Australian people are not fully involved in the process and unless bipartisan support is obtained.</p> <p>A3 Labor is committed to consulting with the Australian people, other political parties, the States and the Territories as to the form that the</p> | <p>Republic should take. Labor will promote community debate about the advantages and disadvantages of the various republican models.</p> <p>A4 Labor will conduct plebiscites to establish support for an Australian head of state and the preference for different forms of a Republic. When a preference has emerged Labor will initiate an appropriate referendum under section 128 of the Constitution.</p> <p>A5 Labor believes that every Australian citizen should be eligible to be our head of state.</p> <p>A6 Labor supports Australia's continued membership of the Commonwealth of Nations.</p> |
|---|---|

24. Labor reaffirms its belief in the primacy of the people's House (the House of Representatives) and believes that a government enjoying the confidence of that House should be able to govern without obstruction by the House of review (the Senate).
25. Labor acknowledges the need for ongoing reform to ensure parliament is able to meet the changing needs of government and society.
26. Parliamentary question time should be an opportunity for calling the government to account. Labor believes that all ministers should be in attendance and that there should be procedures to ensure that questions are adequately answered.
27. Labor will support measures designed to enhance the independence of the Speaker of the House of Representatives.
28. Labor regards the parliamentary committee system as an important means for enabling parliament to exercise its responsibility to review draft legislation and oversee the implementation of laws, policies and programs.
29. Labor believes that those holding public office should fully disclose their financial interests and any other interest that may conflict, or be perceived to conflict, with their public duty.
30. Labor ministers will be required to adhere to a formal code of conduct which sets out the action to be taken when conflicts of interest, or perceived conflicts of interest, arise and which prohibits behaviour likely to bring discredit to the government. Former ministers will be required to adhere to a twelve month waiting period before they can take up employment in their most recent area of responsibility.
31. In order to enhance the accountability of parliamentarians for their expenditure of allowances, Labor will table details of expenditure of travel and other allowances annually and will establish an independent auditor of parliamentary allowances and entitlements with appropriate powers of investigation.
32. Labor will ensure that ministerial advisers are accountable to government, the parliament and the public.
33. Recognising that every citizen should have a stake in the political process and that political parties need to be broadly representative, Labor endorses the maintenance of compulsory voting and registration.
34. In order to guarantee effective representation of the community in the national parliament, limitations on the opportunities for Australian citizens to offer themselves for election to the parliament should be minimal. Labor will work towards removing unnecessary barriers, and in particular will support reforms to terminate the constitutional ban on election to parliament of a person holding an office of profit under the Crown, provided that office is relinquished on election.
35. Labor believes that the cost of participation in the political process should be shared between the wider electorate and political organisations and their supporters. To achieve this Labor believes public funding is central to ensuring an open and participatory democracy.
36. Labor supports public transparency of political donations. Labor believes all original sources of political donations should be disclosed. Labor will introduce measures to ensure:
 - all fundraising bodies and trusts assisting political parties, politicians or candidates fully and promptly disclose their accounts and the source of their income;

- the definition of 'associated entity' in the Commonwealth Electoral Act more accurately reflects the activities of political parties;
 - political party annual returns are accompanied by a report from an accredited auditor; and
 - the Australian Electoral Commission has the power and resources to ensure compliance with disclosure laws, including the power to fully audit organisations or people it suspects have not disclosed gifts or other resources given to political parties, politicians or candidates.
37. Labor will abolish the tax-deductibility of political donations.
- Integrity and Openness in Government Administration**
38. In government Labor will aim for the highest standards of integrity, transparency in decision making, openness and accountability.
39. Labor will seek to encourage and lead public debate on important public policy issues by publishing appropriate, taxpayer-funded research.
40. Labor will not support the use of government advertising for political purposes. Labor will introduce legislation to ensure:
- government advertising campaigns only occur after government policy has been legislated for by parliament;
 - all government advertising and information campaigns provide objective, factual and explanatory information, free from partisan promotion of government policy and political argument, and in an unbiased and objective language; and
 - the cost of government advertising is minimised by the targeted use of media other than television advertising.
41. Labor will promote transparency and open government through effective freedom of information legislation, including mandatory release of internal working documents where this is not contrary to the public interest, and the regular tabling in parliament of reports on the operation of government and government-funded agencies.
42. Freedom of information provisions should be available to all. Labor will ensure that the costs involved in using freedom of information procedures do not put them out of reach of the community.
43. Labor will ensure that considerations relating to outsourcing, privatisation, notions of commercial confidentiality and corporatisation are not used as excuses to allow government and government-funded agencies to escape the requirements of open government and accountability. The rights of clients and other recipients of such services, including rights to access to information, privacy, correction of inaccurate information and, where necessary, redress, will be maintained.
44. Labor recognises the responsibility of government to provide the necessary regulatory frameworks to ensure people, particularly clients and other recipients of services, are protected.
45. Labor recognises that where the government acknowledges responsibility to provide a service, it must guarantee delivery standards. This will require that the performance of service providers, whether they be public or private sector, be subject to examination by the Auditor General. Labor remains committed to a strong, independent and well resourced national audit office capable of providing objective and balanced audit advice and assurance to the parliament, government and public sector entities.

46. Labor believes that all government and administrative decisions should be subject to administrative review or judicial challenge, including through the continued effective operation of the Administrative Decisions (Judicial Review) Act.
47. Labor will defend the integrity of the office of the Commonwealth Ombudsman and ensure that it is adequately funded.
48. It is essential for the integrity of the review process that tribunals and other bodies should maintain their independence from the agencies under review.
49. Labor supports public participation in government decision making through consultative processes such as advisory bodies, that are representative of community views.
50. Labor recognises that whistleblowing is a legitimate form of action in a democracy and will support legislation to provide effective protection for whistleblowers in the public sector.
51. Labor is opposed to relinquishing control of the nation's public services, including health and education services, in the General Agreement on Trade in Services negotiations and negotiations on bilateral free trade agreements. Labor will not support changes that undermine affordable access to public services or ongoing government rights to regulate services in the public interest. Nor will Labor support changes that require the privatisation of public assets.

Efficiency in Government Service Delivery

52. The Australian Public Service (APS) and the public sector generally plays a crucial nation building role, promoting our economic and social objectives. Labor will revive the concept of a career in the public service by making the APS a model employer, a place where

Australians want to work, and by limiting and reducing non-ongoing employment in the APS. We are also determined to revive skills in the public sector and reaffirm the historic role of the public sector in national affairs. Conference believes that a Labor Party Government should be committed to working with the community and the trade union movement in order to develop quality public services for all communities throughout Australia, which are balanced across a range of issues, including re-investing in the community, services generated for service rather than profit, commitment to growth in service, and meeting the community's expectations.

53. Labor will boost the powers of the Public Service Commission and its Commissioner. This would provide for greater coordination in whole-of-service issues, such as workforce planning, recruitment, and greater in-service training. The Commission will take responsibility for core industrial relations matters, including a framework agreement.
54. Given the rapid ageing of the APS workforce, and the shrinking number of young people joining the service, Labor will place particular emphasis on the recruitment of young people to the APS workforce, and will ensure that older Australians who wish to remain in the APS are able to do so.
55. Labor supports the maintenance of a strong, unified, apolitical public service as a repository of knowledge and expertise in the development of government policy and the delivery of essential services to the Australian community.
56. Labor believes there are characteristics, which are unique to the public sector, such as multiplicity of objectives, the need for higher standards of accountability and

the need to respond to the changing requirements of governments and that there are limits to the extent to which private sector practices can and should be applied to the public sector.

57. Under Labor, the focus of government will be on achieving benefits for the Australian community as a whole. While cost effectiveness will be an important consideration, equity, social cohesion and the provision of opportunities for all Australians will be of prime importance.

58. Labor recognises that in the drive to make Australia more competitive, there is a need for continuous improvement in the efficiency and effectiveness of government service delivery.

—Labor is committed to achieving best practice in the provision of government services.

59. Labor believes public ownership of national assets will continue to play an important role in helping to foster a strong economy and a more equal society. Any consideration of outsourcing or privatisation of government assets or services, including through the application of National Competition Policy, will only occur where it is demonstrably in the public interest. Such public interest tests will include:

- accountability to and scrutiny by the public, including access to contracts;
- affordability and value of public services are maintained and genuine cost savings, not at the expense of quality of service or access to services, nor through cuts to jobs, employment conditions or rights of workers, are identified;
- no negative effect on the environment or industry development;
- assessment of impacts on regional, rural and remote Australian communities;

—costs and benefits for the public are clearly identified through a direct, fair comparison along with the balance of risk and profit between the government and any private provider; and

—privacy of consumer information.

60. As part of the process for improving the performance of public sector trading enterprises, Labor will ensure that they are provided with an adequate capital structure, including an adequate equity base.
61. Labor believes that the purchasing power of the Commonwealth and other levels of government should be used to provide expanded opportunities for local industry and to achieve savings in the purchase of goods and services for the public sector.
62. Labor recognises that for government programs to meet their stated objectives necessary tools and resources must be in place. Programs should be regularly monitored to ensure that they have the capacity to achieve their stated objectives.
63. Labor is committed to improving transactions between the public sector and the wider community. It will strengthen the consultation between government agencies and consumers and will ensure that service delivery is simplified and better directed through the use of appropriate technology. It will favour changes to program design that enable recipients to exercise greater choice and control in their utilisation of basic government services.
64. Labor recognises that despite the potential for increased efficiencies offered by new technologies, access to personal service and expert advice locally will still be of great value in many circumstances, particularly in the delivery of services to regional areas.

65. Labor will undertake audits of the provision of government services, including to regional, rural and remote Australia, and develop a strategy to ensure adequate service provision.

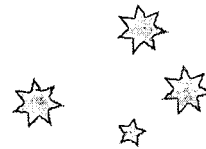
Access and Equity in Government Employment

66. Labor is committed to a single, integrated, merit-based and non-discriminatory career public service that is able to respond to the changing needs of government and society.
67. Selection and promotion in the public sector will be on the basis of merit. At the same time Labor reaffirms its commitment to ensure a rapid increase of representation, including at senior levels, of sections of the workforce who have been discriminated against, or who have special needs, namely: women, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, migrants and people with disabilities. Labor also recognises the important role of the public sector in providing employment, training and career opportunities for young people.
68. Women now make up over fifty per cent of the Australian public service workforce, but are still significantly under-represented at senior and middle management levels. Labor is committed to the rapid elimination of this gender gap.
69. Labor reaffirms its commitment to the principles of participatory decision making and industrial democracy in the public sector.
70. Labor supports collective bargaining within the public service and the role of relevant unions in bargaining processes.
71. Labor is committed to ensuring that public servants are adequately represented in respect of workplace matters and will encourage union membership within the public service.
72. Labor will encourage mobility between and within departments, particularly for the Senior Executive Service, and between the public service and other appropriate areas of employment.
73. Labor recognises that the job insecurity faced by agency heads and department secretaries is a matter of serious concern and that it can lead to politicisation of the APS. Labor will revisit the matter with the aim to enhance job security.
74. Labor recognises that:
- Australians want a career public service without partisanship;
 - public service employment must be fair and equitable;
 - there is necessarily a limit on, and need for public scrutiny of, top public service remuneration;
 - there must be an ethos of public service; and
 - outcomes are funded by public money.
75. These special elements should be reflected in public service industrial relations arrangements by:
- ensuring secure, comprehensive, service-wide standards and classifications;
 - ensuring secure superannuation arrangements;
 - emphasising training and career development;
 - enabling public servants to balance work and family responsibilities;
 - ensuring appeal and review rights;
 - ensuring that contracting-out is not used as a vehicle to cut wages and working conditions for public sector employees; and
 - establishing staffing levels commensurate with work loads, not arbitrary financial targets.

76. Labor recognises that government appointments to board and statutory positions should be conducted in a manner that is designed to foster transparency, accountability and public confidence. In government Labor will adopt principles and procedures that ensure such appointments are underpinned by a system based on merit, equality of opportunity, public scrutiny and independence.

Constitutional Reform

Labor is committed to engaging the public in a process of ongoing constitutional reform to remove outdated and inappropriate provisions from the Australian Constitution, to modernise our democratic structures and to make public administration more efficient and effective by facilitating cooperative schemes between federal and State governments.



AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY



Chapter Seventeen

Financing Government

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Chapter Seventeen

Financing Government

Basic Principles

1. High quality public services provided by government to meet the needs of the community are essential in any civilised society. They must be sustainably financed in a way that is as fair and economically efficient as possible.
2. The management of Australia's public finances must meet broad economic and social objectives, ensuring a sustainable approach to:
 - managing the economic cycle and promoting productivity growth;
 - balancing public and private savings;
 - investing in nation building priorities including public infrastructure and the environment;
 - maintaining Australia's international competitiveness and export performance;
 - providing essential services and promoting social justice for those in need;
 - re-establishing a fair and just Australia;
 - targeting support to the unemployed; and
 - maintaining independent national financial policies while managing the demands of increased globalisation.
3. Labor will:
 - finance government in ways which recognise not only the role of fiscal policy in ensuring sustained economic and jobs growth, but also the importance of low levels of taxation and public debt;
 - investigate alternative funding options, including Government Infrastructure Bonds, for much needed infrastructure;

- reduce the burden of taxation on lower and middle income Australians; and
- investigate ways of financing government that promote environmental goals in keeping with the above principles.

Revenue

4. Labor believes that the operation of the taxation system should be consistent with the criteria of fairness, economic efficiency, environmental sustainability, adequacy, simplicity, transparency, comprehensiveness and administrative efficiency.
5. **Fairness.** Labor is committed to a fair and progressive tax system characterised by:
 - vertical equity, meaning that those with differing capacities to pay tax should face differing burdens, with a greater contribution from those with the greater capacity to pay; and
 - horizontal equity, meaning that those with equivalent capacities to pay tax should face similar burdens.
6. Labor will ensure that the taxation system is fair by, in particular:
 - recognising the costs faced by families in raising children;
 - ensuring that the interaction of tax and welfare does not act as a barrier for people to move from welfare to work;
 - providing appropriate resources to revenue authorities to ensure a high level of compliance with, and minimal avoidance of, existing taxation laws;
 - taking measures to ensure that high wealth individuals are not able, through family trusts and other income splitting arrangements, to avoid paying their fair share of taxation;
 - ensuring that the tax system does not subsidise excessive executive remuneration;

- ensuring the integrity of the ABN registration system; and
 - addressing erosion of the PAYE tax base through incorporation and contrived independent contracting.
7. **Economic efficiency.** The design and structure of taxes can have a significant effect on the economic viability of particular industries, regions or indeed the whole nation. To maximise economic efficiency in the tax system, Labor will seek to ensure that it:
- encourages economic growth and employment;
 - encourages saving;
 - encourages new investment, and research and development;
 - assists the location of headquarters of international businesses in Australia;
 - facilitates the establishment of Australia as a major regional financial centre; and
 - maintains the integrity of taxation bases that are currently threatened.
8. **Environmental sustainability.** Labor will ensure that taxation leads to increased environmental sustainability and avoid taxation that leads to increased environmental degradation.
9. **Adequacy.** Labor will ensure a level of revenue adequate for the rebuilding and improvement of the public services we are committed to providing by:
- achieving sufficient economic growth to generate revenue;
 - ensuring that the integrity of the tax base is maintained; and
 - ensuring that all taxpayers are contributing fairly, by appropriately designed tax measures and effective legislative and administrative action to minimise tax avoidance.
10. **Simplicity.** Labor will ensure that the taxation law is as simple to apply as is practicable and consistent with the achievement of fairness and other objectives. Taxpayers should be able to determine their liability inexpensively and with reasonable certainty, and the authorities should be able to calculate and collect revenue equally readily.
11. **Transparency.** Labor will ensure that the taxation system is as transparent as possible, with decision-making discretions reduced as much as possible and a comprehensive system of rulings maintained to keep taxpayers fully informed of the practice of the revenue authorities.
- In addition, Labor will ensure that bracket creep is returned to Australians either through reductions in tax or improved services.
12. **Comprehensiveness.** Labor will ensure that the tax base is as comprehensive as possible, consistent with the achievement of other objectives, in a way that ensures that all sections of the community pay their fair share and no one is disproportionately burdened. Labor believes that tax avoidance schemes used by wealthy individuals must be stamped out. Labor in Government will require the budget papers to include an independent report from the Taxation Commissioner and the Secretary to the Treasury, identifying material threats to the tax base.
13. **Administrative efficiency.** Labor recognises that administrative efficiency is particularly desirable in the taxation system, in that it minimises the negative effects of taxation on the economy; reduces the costs of collecting revenue, thereby providing more net revenue for government services; and improves voluntary compliance by taxpayers.

- Labor will ensure that the taxation system minimises compliance and collection costs. Maximum use will be made of information technology to minimise the time and cost burden faced by taxpayers, in particular small businesses, in complying with their taxation obligations.

The Management of Assets and Non-tax Revenue

14. Labor believes that the management of public assets should reflect their contribution to the community beyond their financial worth. To this end Labor is committed to the management of public assets to ensure that:
 - consultation occurs when the use of public assets, including land, require upgrading or review and that this involves the consideration of impacts on the environment, community amenity and access, transport, and regional or urban development;
 - interest and dividends are used to meet broad social and economic objectives; and
 - the services provided by the assets are reviewed, and if required, safeguarded by legislation.
15. Labor believes public ownership of assets, services and infrastructure will continue to play a vital role in supporting and promoting a strong economy and a more equal society.

Therefore, Labor is committed to the maintenance of, and investment in, public assets, services and infrastructure to ensure their long-term competitive viability.

Any consideration of privatisation of assets, infrastructure or services, including through the application of national competition policy, will only occur where, after a period of genuine public consultation, it is demonstrably in the public interest.

Such public interest tests will include:

- privacy of consumer information;
- accountability to and scrutiny by, the public, including unions and other stakeholders;
- detriment to quality of service or access to service, cuts to jobs or employment conditions;
- detrimental effect on the environment or industry development (including regional industry clusters and supply chains);
- assessment of impacts on regional, rural and remote Australian communities;
- detrimental impact on skills development; and
- detrimental impact on maintenance, safety and productivity of associated industries services and infrastructure.

Outlays

16. In addition to maintaining a taxation system which provides the primary source of revenue for meeting the needs of the Australian community, Labor recognises that the public expects government to continually review and assess public spending, so that value for money in public expenditure is achieved and additional resources can be directed to high priority objectives.
17. Labor recognises that this can only be achieved by way of a rigorous and disciplined budget process and financial management system. Accordingly, Labor will implement a system which:
 - establishes clear priorities and intended outcomes for spending, in line with announced policies;
 - seeks wherever possible to offset new recurrent expenditure with efficiencies in existing programs;
 - maintains world's best practice and continuous improvement in the efficient

- delivery of high quality public services, and encourages innovative ways to achieve policy objectives at lower cost;
- maintains accrual accounting, but makes it more transparent and rigorous;
 - evaluates rigorously all spending and tax expenditure programs to ensure that programs are efficiently and effectively achieving their objectives;
 - ensures the prudent financial management and accountability of public monies through a framework of strong fraud control measures, efficient cash management, optimal buying practices by government agencies and active asset management; and
 - maintains the role of the Auditor General as the sole auditor of budget funded bodies; ensures adequate resources for the Australian National Audit Office; and provides comprehensive financial information throughout the budgetary cycle.

Labor will do this while maintaining its commitment to a socially just Australia where all people can have a standard of living sufficient to enable them to live decently with dignity.

Commonwealth-State Financial Relations

18. Australia's federal system creates a number of financial challenges in the delivery of public services to Australia's citizens. Labor recognises the key role of sensible and balanced intergovernmental financial relations in ensuring the delivery of public services, and ensuring fair access to those services. The best public policy outcomes arise from whole of government approaches to policy which are coordinated across all levels of government. Only Labor is committed to such an approach in conjunction with a meaningful regional focus.

19. Accordingly, Labor will:

- maintain a system of funding to the States and Territories which provides adequate funding for their needs until the flow of GST revenue makes this budget balancing assistance unnecessary;
- maintain a comprehensive system of horizontal fiscal equalisation based upon the per capita relativity recommendations of the Commonwealth Grants Commission;
- maintain a system of general purpose funding to local governments which provides adequate funding for their needs;
- continue to support specific purpose payments to States and Territories where these are appropriate to meet national objectives or ensure national standards, and ensure that those payments are used for the purpose for which they have been allocated; and
- ensure that State, Territory and local governments and their authorities are able to maintain and steadily improve their economic and social infrastructure.

20. Labor will also:

- seek to eliminate inappropriate duplication between Commonwealth, State and Territory, and local government functions and activities;
- support arrangements to voluntarily harmonise revenue bases and tax administration between the Commonwealth, States and Territories; and
- support arrangements to voluntarily integrate the administration of Commonwealth and State and Territory taxes and charges, where this has the potential to lead to economic benefits such as lower compliance costs for business.

RESOLUTION**Financing Government**

Conference condemns the Howard Government for its attempted profiteering at the expense of the general community in regard to the high value heritage land at Point Nepean, Victoria. The Government completely ignored important environmental and community access considerations in its ham-fisted focus on maximising commercial returns from the Commonwealth land at Point Nepean.

Unlike the Liberal and National parties, who determine the future of public land only on financial short term criteria, this Labor Conference recognises that social and community values are important in public land use considerations.

Conference resolves that the true value of public land is to be recognised through consideration of community, heritage and biodiversity values of public land as well as economic values.



AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY



National Constitution of the ALP

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As amended at the 43rd ALP National Conference 2004

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Part A

OBJECTIVES AND PRINCIPLES

Origins

1. The Australian Labor Party had its origins in:
 - the aspirations of the Australian people for a decent, secure, dignified and constructive way of life;
 - the recognition by the trade union movement of the necessity for a political voice to take forward the struggle of the working class against the excesses, injustices and inequalities of capitalism; and
 - the commitment by the Australian people to the creation of an independent, free and enlightened Australia.

Objectives

2. The Australian Labor Party is a democratic socialist party and has the objective of the democratic socialisation of industry, production, distribution and exchange, to the extent necessary to eliminate exploitation and other anti-social features in these fields.
3. To achieve the political and social values of equality, democracy, liberty and social cooperation inherent in this objective, the Australian Labor Party stands for:
 - (a) redistribution of political and economic power so that all members of society have the opportunity to participate in the shaping and control of the institutions and relationships which determine their lives;
 - (b) establishment and development of public enterprises, based upon federal, State and other forms of social ownership, in appropriate sectors of the economy;
 - (c) democratic control and strategic social ownership of Australian natural resources for the benefit of all Australians;
 - (d) maintenance of and support for a competitive non-monopolistic private sector, including small business and farming, controlled and owned by Australians, operating within clear social guidelines and objectives;
 - (e) the right to own private property;
 - (f) recognition and encouragement of the right of labour to organise for the protection and advancement of its interests;
 - (g) the application of democracy in industry to increase the opportunities for people to work in satisfying, healthy and humane conditions; and to participate in and to increase their control over the decision making processes affecting them;
 - (h) the promotion of socially appropriate technology and the monitoring of its introduction to ensure that the needs and interests of labour, as well as the requirements of competitive industry and consumer demand, are taken into consideration;
 - (i) the restoration and maintenance of full employment;
 - (j) the abolition of poverty, and the achievement of greater equality in the distribution of income, wealth and opportunity;
 - (k) social justice and equality for individuals, the family and all social units, and the elimination of exploitation in the home;
 - (l) equal access and rights to employment, education, information, technology, housing, health and welfare services, cultural and leisure activities and the law;
 - (m) reform of the Australian Constitution and other political institutions to ensure that they reflect the will of the majority of Australian citizens and the existence of Australia as an independent republic;
 - (n) recognition and protection of fundamental political and civil rights, including freedom of expression, the press, assembly, association, conscience and religion; the right to privacy; the protection of the individual from oppression by the state; and democratic reform of the Australian legal system;
 - (o) the development of a democratic communications system, as an integral part of a free society, to which all citizens have opportunities for free access;
 - (p) elimination of discrimination and exploitation on the grounds of class, race, sex, sexuality, religion, political affiliation, national origin, citizenship, age, disability, regional location, economic or household status;

- (q) recognition of the prior ownership of Australian land by Aborigines and Islanders; recognition of their special and essential relationship with the land as the basis of their culture; and a commitment to the return of established traditional lands to the ownership of Aboriginal and Islander communities;
- (r) recognition and encouragement of diversity of cultural expression and lifestyle within the Australian community;
- (s) the use, conservation and enhancement of Australia's natural resources and environment so that the community's total quality of life, both now and into the future, is maintained and improved;
- (t) recognition of the need to work towards achieving ecologically sustainable development;
- (u) maintenance of world peace; an independent Australian position in world affairs; the recognition of the right of all nations to self determination and independence; regional and international agreement for arms control and disarmament; the provision of economic and social aid to developing nations; a commitment to resolve international conflicts through the UN; and a recognition of the inalienable right of all people to liberty, equality, democracy and social justice;
- (v) commitment to and participation in the international democratic socialist movement as represented by the Socialist International; and
- (w) recognition of the right of citizens to work for progressive changes consistent with the broad principles of democratic socialism.

Principles of Action

4. The Australian Labor Party believes that the task of building democratic socialism is a cooperative process that requires:
 - constitutional action through the federal and State Parliaments, municipal and other statutory authorities;
 - union action; and
 - ongoing action by organised community groups.

Membership and Organisation

5. Membership of the Australian Labor Party is open to all residents of Australia who are prepared to accept its objectives and who have associations with no other political party.
6. Australian Labor Party policy is made by National Conferences comprising the federal and State parliamentary leadership of the Party, together with elected delegates from all States, the Australian Capital Territory, the Northern Territory and Australian Young Labor.
7. Party policy within the States and Territories is framed by conferences of delegates elected by constituent branches and affiliated unions. Policy within the Australian Labor Party is not made by directives from the leadership, but by resolutions originating from branches, affiliated unions and individual Party members.

Part B

RULES

Name

1. The name of the Party shall be "The Australian Labor Party".

Objectives

2. The objectives of the Party are set out in the Basic Principles as determined by the National Conference. To achieve these objectives the ALP will act in accordance with the Principles of Action and Progressive Reforms set out in the Party Platform from time to time.

Head Office

3. The Head Office of the Party shall be known as the National Secretariat and shall be established in Centenary House, Barton, ACT or any other place determined by the National Executive from time to time.

Composition

4. The Party shall consist of branches in each State, the Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory (hereinafter referred to as State Branches).

Structure of Party Organisation

5. (a) The Party shall function upon the following basis:
 - (i) National Conference,
 - (ii) National Executive,
 - (iii) Federal Parliamentary Labor Party (FPLP), and
 - (iv) Australian Young Labor.
- (b) The National Conference shall be the supreme governing authority of the Party and its decisions shall be binding upon every member and every section of the Party.
- (c) The National Executive shall be the chief administrative authority of the Party, subject only to the National Conference.
- (d) The Federal Parliamentary Labor Party shall have authority in properly constituted Caucus meetings to make decisions directed towards establishing the collective

attitude of the Parliamentary Party to any question or matter in the Federal Parliament, subject to:

- (i) at all times taking such action which may be possible to implement the Party's Platform and Conference decisions;
 - (ii) on questions or matters which are not subject to National Platform or Conference or Executive decisions, the majority decision of Caucus being binding upon all members in the parliament; and
 - (iii) no attitude being expressed which is contrary to the provisions of the Party Platform or any other decision of National Conference or National Executive.
- (e) Australian Young Labor shall function in accordance with the rules that may be approved from time to time by the National Executive and subject to its control and jurisdiction.
 - (f) The National Labor Women's Network shall function in accordance with the rules that may be approved from time to time by the National Executive and subject to its control and jurisdiction.
 - (g) That a National Indigenous Labor Network be formed from the State Networks with appropriate support from the National Office. The Network's goals will be to:
 - (i) attract and support Indigenous ALP members;
 - (ii) increase the involvement of Indigenous people at all levels of the ALP;
 - (iii) provide a focus for the identification, training and support of Indigenous candidates;
 - (iv) increase awareness of Indigenous issues throughout the ALP;
 - (v) increase commitment of Party members to greater representation of Indigenous people throughout the Party; and
 - (vi) encourage the employment of Indigenous people in staff and Party positions.

National Conference

6. (a) National Conference shall consist of 400 delegates, comprising:

- (i) three delegates being the National President and National Vice-Presidents elected under rule 9(a);
- (ii) four delegates being the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Federal Parliamentary Labor Party and the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Party in the Senate;
- (iii) six delegates elected from and by the Federal Parliamentary Labor Party;
- (iv) delegations from each State consisting of:
 - a. the State Parliamentary Leader,
 - b. a base component of 12 persons, and
 - c. a supplementary component of a number of persons equal to twice the number of House of Representatives electorates in that State as at the previous 31 December;
- (v) delegations from each Territory consisting of:
 - a. the Territory Parliamentary Leader,
 - b. a base component of 2 persons, and
 - c. a supplementary component of a number of persons equal to twice the number of House of Representatives electorates in that Territory as at the previous 31 December; and
- (vi) three delegates from Australian Young Labor.

(b) State Secretaries and members of the Federal Parliamentary Labor Party who are not delegates to National Conference shall be able to attend National Conference with the rights of delegates except that of voting.

(c) All members of the State or Territory Branch shall be eligible to be elected as delegates from that State or Territory.

Proxy Delegates

(d) (i) Each State shall be entitled to a minimum of two proxies up to a

maximum equal to half the State's delegation.

(ii) The credentials for State Branch proxies shall be circulated in advance and accepted at the commencement of the Conference and no other proxies may be admitted.

(iii) It is the responsibility of each State delegation to ensure that the Chair is advised of all changes of delegation during the Conference. No proxy shall participate in the debate of a report in which the delegate he/she is replacing has participated.

(iv) State and federal Leaders may each nominate one proxy subject to paragraph (ii) above. Such proxies must be a member of the relevant parliamentary party.

(e) All delegates must be elected by a system of proportional representation in a single ballot with affirmative action in accordance with rule 10.

(f) Delegates shall be elected within 12 months prior to the date of National Conference.

(g) State Branches cannot bind delegates with regard to their vote on any issue before the National Conference.

(h) National Conference shall be held every three years in a location determined by the National Executive which shall have the responsibility for determining the time of the National Conference.

(i) Special National Conferences may be held for specially stated purposes and shall be called in the manner prescribed by these Rules.

(j) (i) The National President and National Vice-Presidents need not be delegates to National Conference, but have the full rights of a delegate except that of voting.

(ii) The National Secretary shall not be a delegate to National Conference, but shall have the full rights of a delegate except that of voting.

(k) The National Secretary, after receiving instructions from the convening authority, shall observe the following procedure

for the purpose of establishing the Conference agenda:

- (i) give the following bodies three months notice to send items to the National Policy Committee: State Branches, Australian Young Labor, and Federal Electorate Councils, and trade unions whose State branches are affiliated with the Party in a majority of States in which they operate, all of which shall have the right to submit items to the National Policy Committee. Bodies so submitting items to the National Policy Committee shall be notified in writing of the Committee's views on such items; and
- (ii) send to State Branches and other bodies represented at National Conference, agenda and any other documents related thereto at least one month before Conference meets.

National Executive

- 7. (a) The National Executive of the Party, which shall be the chief administrative authority subject only to National Conference, shall be constituted in the following manner:
 - (i) the National President and National Vice-Presidents, who are directly elected by Party members in accordance with rule 9(a), have the full rights of a delegate except that of voting, unless elected as a delegate in their own right;
 - (ii) 20 executive members elected by the National Conference;
 - (iii) the National Secretary, who shall be elected by the National Conference, shall not be a delegate but shall have the full rights of a delegate except that of voting;
 - (iv) the Leader of the Federal Parliamentary Labor Party or proxy nominated by the Leader. Such proxy must be a member of the Federal Parliamentary Party;
 - (v) State Secretaries who are not delegates to the National Executive shall be able to attend National Executive meetings with the rights of delegates except that of voting; and

- (vi) delegates shall be entitled to nominate their proxy for any meeting or part of a meeting for which they are unable to attend.

- (b) (i) The terms of all those elected by the National Conference shall commence at the conclusion of the National Conference at which they are elected. They shall be subject to re-election at each Conference except the National Secretary who shall be subject to re-election at every second Conference.
- (ii) Casual vacancies will be filled by the National Executive in accordance with the principles of proportional representation.
- (iii) Casual vacancies for the positions of National President, National Vice-Presidents and National Secretary shall be filled by a ballot of the National Executive and the National Executive Committee shall institute procedures to hold a ballot.

Powers and Duties of the National Executive

- (c) Decisions of the National Executive shall be binding upon all sections and members of the ALP subject only to appeal to National Conference. Pending the hearing of any appeal, the decision of the National Executive shall operate. The National Executive shall:
 - (i) be the administrative authority carrying out the decisions of National Conference, and in the interpretation of any Conference decision, the National Platform and the Constitution and Rules of the Party, and the direction of federal members;
 - (ii) convene National Conferences in accordance with these Rules;
 - (iii) convene Special National Conferences when requested by a majority of State Branches for special purpose(s), providing that such purpose(s) is/are national in character. The National Executive may also, on its own motion, convene such Conferences;
 - (iv) elect a National Executive Committee and such other committees, including

- the National Policy Committee, as it may determine from time to time;
- (v) meet at least three times a year, and at such other times as the Executive may determine, for the purpose of considering and determining all matters that are properly before it. Subject to these Rules only State Branches, Australian Young Labor, the Federal Parliamentary Labor Party and trade unions whose State branches are affiliated with the Party in a majority of States in which they operate shall be competent to send matters to the National Executive;
 - (vi) initiate discussions of any question of a national nature if a majority of the Executive so decides;
 - (vii) determine the time and place of all meetings. However, special meetings of the National Executive may be convened with the agreement of a majority of delegates or by unanimous decision of the National Officers;
 - (viii) be competent to hear and decide appeals from any affiliated organisation or individual member against the decision of any State Conference or State Executive alleged to be inconsistent with any national decision or matter;
 - (ix) where any member or affiliated organisation desires to appeal to the National Executive on a question which does not involve any national decision or matter, leave to appeal must first be obtained from the State Branch concerned;
 - (x) hear and decide an appeal from any person seeking to be a candidate for federal elections against a decision of any State Conference or State Executive affecting his/her preselection or endorsement, providing that leave to appeal is granted by the National Executive. Such leave to appeal is not to be granted except by a decision in which 11 members vote affirmatively;
 - (xi) have plenary powers to deal with and decide any matters which, in the

opinion of an absolute majority of members of the Executive, affect the general welfare of the Labor Movement, provided that no decision of National Conference shall be abrogated under this rule;

- (xii) in the case of any State Executive, State Branch or section of the ALP acting or having acted in a manner deemed by the National Executive to be contrary to the National Constitution, Platform and Policy of the Party as interpreted by the National Executive, the National Executive may overrule such State Executive, State Branch or section and/or may declare that same no longer exists, and shall set up in place thereof an organisation competent to carry out the National Constitution, Platform and Policy of the ALP. Pending the hearing of any appeal, the decision of the National Executive shall operate. In the event of the National Executive taking any action under this paragraph, the National Executive shall be the body to approve any selection which otherwise would have been made by the body affected by the National Executive decision; and
- (xiii) the National Executive, in part, combined with the parliamentary leadership and Caucus representatives would be combined to form a revamped Political Coordination Committee. Such a committee is to meet regularly to discuss key strategic issues facing the Parliamentary Party.

National Executive Committee

8. (a) The National Executive Committee (NEC) shall consist of the National Secretary and such other members of the National Executive as may be elected by the National Executive.
- (b) The National Executive Committee shall be responsible for the administration of the Party between meetings of the National Executive.

- (c) They shall meet at least once between each two meetings of the National Executive for the purpose of preparing the agenda and making recommendations to expedite the business of the National Executive.
- (d) Other than in urgent situations which preclude either a special meeting of the National Executive or a postal vote of Executive members, the NEC shall not have the power to make decisions on behalf of the National Executive.
- (e) Any actions taken by the NEC between Executive meetings shall be reported to the next meeting of the Executive for endorsement.
- (f) The non-parliamentary members of the NEC shall also be members of the companies John Curtin House Limited and ALP Legacies and Gifts.

National President and National Vice-Presidents

- 9. (a) The National President and 2 National Vice-Presidents must be directly elected from and by Party members in the 12 months before each triennial National Conference in a single ballot by proportional representation with affirmative action in accordance with rule 10.
- (b) (i) The candidate first elected holds office in turn as National President, National Junior Vice-President and National Senior Vice-President.
- (ii) The candidate second elected holds office in turn as National Senior Vice-President, National President and National Junior Vice-President.
- (iii) The candidate third elected holds office in turn as National Junior Vice-President, National Senior Vice-President and National President.
- (iv) The term of office in each position is 12 months, beginning at the commencement of National Conference or on the anniversary of that date, except that the term of office in the third position ends at the commencement of the next triennial National Conference.

- (c) The National President, when available, will chair National Conference and meetings of the National Executive, and conduct such meetings in accordance with the National Conference Standing Orders. The National President will carry out any other duties referred by the National Executive.
- (d) The National Vice-Presidents in order of seniority will take the Chair in the absence of the National President, and carry out any other duties referred by the National Executive.

Affirmative Action

- 10. The ALP is committed to men and women in the Party working in equal partnership. It is our objective to have equal numbers of men and women at all levels in the Party organisation, and in public office positions the Party holds. To achieve this the Party adopts a comprehensive affirmative action model of 40:40:20, as set out below, whereby a minimum of 40% of relevant positions shall be held by either gender.

Party Positions

- (a) All elections, other than public office preselections conducted by national and State level Party units for three or more positions, shall comply with the affirmative action model. Not less than 40% of such positions shall be held by women, and not less than 40% by men, provided that sufficient candidates of the relevant gender nominate ("the basic entitlement"). If the calculation to determine the basic entitlement results in a fraction of one half or more then the basic entitlement shall be the next higher whole number, and where it results in a fraction of less than one half it shall be the next lower number.

Union Delegations

- (b) Union delegations to Party conferences and forums shall comply with the affirmative action model. Not less than 40% of a union's delegation shall be women, and not less than 40% shall be men ("the minimum representation"). Provided that if the level of male or female membership of a union is less than 40%, the minimum representation shall be set at that level.

Public Office Preselection

- (c) Preselections for public office positions at a State and federal level shall comply with the affirmative action model in this rule 10(c).

PRINCIPLES

- (i) The intention of this rule is to produce an outcome where not less than 40% of seats held by Labor will be filled by women, and not less than 40% by men ("the minimum target").
- (ii) This minimum target shall apply to any preselection round taking place after 1 January 2012.
- (iii) The remaining 20% of the seats held by Labor may be filled by candidates of either gender.

IMPLEMENTATION

- (iv) State and Territory Branches shall be required to amend their rules so as to achieve the minimum target by applying these principles to the relevant seats.
- (v) For the purposes of paragraph (iv), the relevant seats shall include:
 - a. in relation to lower houses, those seats needed to form government, or those seats held by Labor, whichever is the greater; and
 - b. in relation to upper houses, at least 50% of seats in the upper house, or those seats held by Labor, whichever is the greater.
- (d) The National Executive shall have the responsibility and the power to enforce rules 10(a)–(c) generally and specifically to determine the outcome in any public office preselection progressively between now and the year 2012 in order to ensure that this rule is complied with.
- (e) Each State and Territory Branch must no later than 1 November each year provide a report to its Administrative Committee or State Executive and to the National Executive on the implementation of rules 10(a)–(c).
- (f) Each State and Territory Branch must ensure that its rules are consistent with this rule, and are submitted to the National Executive for approval by 1 November 2003.

Transitional Provisions —Former Rule 12 to Continue to Apply

- (g) Any preselection round held after this rule is adopted by National Conference, but prior to 1 January 2012, shall comply with the provisions of rule 12 as it was immediately prior to the adoption of this rule ("the former rule"), except that the reference in the former rule 12(d) to the year 2002 shall be read as a reference to the year 2011 so that it is clear that the National Executive continues to have the power to enforce the requirement of a 35 per cent target in relation to all preselection rounds held between the adoption of this rule and 2011.

National Labor Women's Network**Membership**

11. (a) (i) There will be a National Labor Women's Network.
- (ii) Every woman member of the Party is automatically a member of the National Labor Women's Network.
- (iii) There will be no membership fee at the national level.

Role of the NLWN

- (b) The role of the National Labor Women's Network is:
 - (i) to encourage women to join and participate in the Australian Labor Party;
 - (ii) to increase the numbers of women in the Party;
 - (iii) to maintain and expand e-communication between Labor women;
 - (iv) to devise and promote training programs to improve the skills, confidence and participation of Labor women throughout the ALP;
 - (v) to sponsor and expand the NLWN political work experience program;
 - (vi) to develop and promote women within branches and other structures of the ALP as well as to elected office;
 - (vii) to organise, in conjunction with the host State or Territory, the National Labor Women's Conferences;

- (viii) to administer travel subsidy to the National Labor Women's Conferences;
- (ix) to promote contact between the ALP and women's organisations in the community;
- (x) to assist in the development of policy and ensure women participate in policy making; and
- (xi) to nominate representatives to women's forums, including international women's forums.

National Executive

- (c) (i) The NLWN Executive will consist of 15 women members of the ALP, representing all States and Territories.
- (ii) The members of the NLWN Executive will elect a Convenor, Secretary and Communications Officer.
- (iii) The NLWN Executive will be elected by the National Conference.
- (iv) Women members of the ALP National Executive and the Federal Minister or Shadow Minister for the Status of Women shall be ex-officio members of the NLWN Executive.
- (v) Nominees for the NLWN Executive do not have to be delegates to the National Conference at which they are elected.
- (vi) Members of the NLWN Executive shall be able to nominate their proxy for NLWN Executive meetings.
- (vii) The NLWN Executive will provide an annual report of its activities to the National Executive, State and Territory Branches and State and Territory women's organisations.
- (viii) The NLWN Executive will meet monthly by telephone and twice a year, face to face, with travel funded through the National Secretariat.
- (ix) Accounts and financing will be run through the National Secretariat, within an annual budget, allocated by the National Executive.

State Women's Groups and Interaction

- (d) (i) The NLWN will co-ordinate contact with State and Territory branches of the Labor Women's Network, other Labor women's organisations and women's contact officers.

- (ii) The NLWN will regularly meet with State and Territory representatives of the LWN by telephone conference.
- (iii) The structure of State and Territory Labor Women's Networks will be determined by each State and Territory although uniformity is desirable.
- (iv) The NLWN will continue to develop materials, share programs and information to assist and support State LWNs.

Finance

- 12. (a) To meet the general expenses of the Party, each State Branch shall pay each year, to the National Executive through the National Secretary, a sum representing a rate per thousand adult members, and a rate per thousand pensioner and student/junior members. The total due shall be paid in four quarterly instalments on 1 January, 1 April, 1 July and 1 October. The National Executive shall have the power to fix sustentation fees.
- (b) In the event of a State Branch being six months in arrears in its contributions to the Party, the National Executive may decide that such Branch shall not be entitled to be represented at any meeting of the National Executive or National Conference, or be consulted on any question that may be subject to a ballot of State Branches, until such arrears are paid.
- (c) Upon request, State and Territory Branches shall report financial information to the National Secretary in a standard format determined by the National Executive.
- (d) The National Executive shall determine an annual budget for travel costs and administer an equalisation pool for such costs associated with National Conferences and the National Executive.
- (e) The National Executive shall meet the expenses of the National President attending National Conference and the expenses of any officers associated with

- any duty being carried out on behalf of the National Executive.
- (f) Each Branch shall pay to the National Executive not later than 31 December of each year the appropriate fee, to be determined by the National Executive, for international affiliations or activities associated therewith.
 - (g) The National Executive shall authorise the National Secretary to negotiate banking facilities on behalf of the National Executive of the Party and determine the manner in which the Party's accounts shall be operated including the signatories to the Party's bank accounts.
 - (h) Fundraising by the Labor Party at State, Territory and national levels and by the Labor Party candidates for public office shall be governed by the ALP Code of Conduct for Fundraising as approved by the National Executive.
 - (i) All accounts conducted for candidates whether at Commonwealth, State or municipal elections shall include the Australian Labor Party in their title. Furthermore, they shall be controlled by that level of Party organisation with the identical relevant signatories, be audited at the July meeting of such Party organisations and such annual accounts shall be forwarded to the Party State Branch for inclusion in the Party's annual account reporting process to the Australian Electoral Commission.
 - (iii) preparing the draft Platform for consideration by National Conference;
 - (iv) actively participating in the formulation of policy at National Conference;
 - (v) taking into account all policy resolutions passed by State and Territory Conferences;
 - (vi) considering all policy resolutions sent to it by State and Territory Policy Committees and other constituent units; and
 - (vii) in conjunction with State and Territory Policy Committees, conducting regular policy forums in which rank and file participation is encouraged.
 - (c) The Committee has power to co-opt non-voting members with particular expertise to the Committee when examining specific policy areas.
 - (d) The Committee will work closely with the convenors of the State and Territory Policy Committees, and will be resourced by the National Secretariat.

Federal Parliamentary Labor Party

- 14. (a) No State Branch may direct or discipline members of the FPLP in regard to matters affecting the National Platform or policy or upon legislation before the parliament or any matters the subject of consideration by the FPLP.
- (b) The power of direction, advice and/or guidance is reserved for the National Conference and between Conferences, the National Executive.

National Policy Committee

- 13. (a) At its first meeting after each triennial National Conference, the National Executive must appoint a National Policy Committee consisting of a Chair, Deputy Chair and seven other members, all of whom have considerable experience in policy development.
- (b) The Committee will be responsible for:
 - (i) coordinating development of the Party Platform;
 - (ii) conducting ongoing reviews of the Platform;

Membership Recruitment

- 15. (a) It is an abuse of Party rules for an individual or group/s to fund Party membership for other individuals or groups of individuals who would otherwise be unwilling to pay their own subscriptions.
- (b) It is an abuse of Party rules for an individual or group/s to encourage reduced-rate membership to people that may not be eligible for that category of membership.

- (c) It is an abuse of Party rules for an individual or group/s to recruit members who do not live at the claimed addresses in an attempt to gain advantage at local Party meetings or the outcome of Party ballots.
- (d) It is a requirement of Party rules for members, where eligible, to join or transfer to the branch or sub-branch which has geographical coverage, in accordance with State or Territory Branch rules, of the address at which the member is enrolled to vote. Members must, at the time of joining or transferring to the branch or sub-branch, either be correctly enrolled with the Australian Electoral Commission to vote in a federal election at their stated address or not be so entitled because they are under 18 years of age or not an Australian citizen.
- (e) It is a requirement of the Party rules for members to personally apply for membership and renew membership by signing their own membership application or renewal form and either:
 - (i) organising to post the form back to State Branch office with an appropriate fee;
 - (ii) by personally attending the State Branch office or arranging a person to attend on their behalf and paying their membership fees (identification shall be necessary); or
 - (iii) subject to the rules of a State Branch, by personally attending their local branch meeting and paying their fees to the Secretary during the meeting. In this regard, the money shall be receipted to the member and the member's attendance recorded in any attendance book. The Secretary shall forward such moneys to the State Branch office along with the signed membership renewal forms.
- (f) A Party member may also renew their membership by phone or the internet using their personal credit card or by signing a standing authority for the renewal of membership via their personal credit card or bank account.
- (g) Notwithstanding the above, a Party member's membership may also be renewed by a family member resident in the same household.
- (h) All records associated with the payment of membership fees shall be available to any full-time officer of the State Branch upon request.
- (i) In order to prevent the "bulk renewal" of other members, the National Executive must prescribe membership application and renewal forms for use by all State and Territory Branches that:
 - (i) require the signature of the applicant or member authorising the application or renewal; and
 - (ii) contain a declaration by any applicant or member paying a reduced-rate subscription that they are entitled to that reduced rate. The declaration must also indicate the basis on which the member is claiming this entitlement. State or Territory Branches may also set standard requirements of evidence to be met by members claiming this entitlement.
- (j) All State and Territory Branches must implement an appropriate cap or limitation/review procedure relating to the number of members that may validly apply to join the ALP at a local branch or sub-branch meeting. Members who seek to transfer into a branch or sub-branch shall be included/counted for the purposes of determining the number of members to which the cap or limitation applies.
- (k) Involvement in such abuses will be considered as behaviour likely to bring the Party into disrepute and will result in disciplinary action which may include expulsion under the rules of the Party.
- (l) All State and Territory Branch rules must, where necessary, establish a tribunal to effectively resolve disputes concerning membership. All State dispute tribunals will operate according to due process and according to the national membership principles and rules.
- (m) All State and Territory Branch rules must contain a procedure that permits a decision to admit a person as a Party

member to be reviewed, where there is an allegation that the person was ineligible to become a Party member.

- (n) All State and Territory Branch rules must permit 50 members or 25% of the members in a federal electorate, whichever is the lesser, to petition the Administrative Committee or State Executive to investigate any allegations of breaches of this rule in that electorate.
- (o) In order to ensure that these rules are given effect, the State and Territory Branches of ALP be required to amend, where necessary, their rules to reflect these National Rules. Such amended rules will be presented to the National Executive no later than 1 November 2003.
- (p) The National Executive must continue:
 - (i) to monitor and enforce compliance with this rule; and
 - (ii) to review the operation of this rule to ensure the integrity of the Party's membership processes.
- (q) All States and Territory Branches must provide to the National Executive a complete current Branch membership list by no later than 31 July of each year.

National Life Membership

- 16. (a) The National Executive can award national life membership of the Australian Labor Party.
- (b) Nominees for national life membership must be longstanding members of the Party and have provided distinguished service to the Party at a national level.
- (c) Only the National Executive, State Branches, federal electorate bodies and nationally affiliated unions can make nominations for national life membership. Nominations should describe the background and history of service of the nominee particularly their contribution at a national level.
- (d) Nominations for national life membership must be forwarded to the National Secretary at least one month prior to a meeting of the National Executive.
- (e) National life membership shall only be awarded with the unanimous support of the National Executive.

Australian Labor Advisory Council

- 17. (a) There will be an Australian Labor Advisory Council (ALAC), consisting of the Leader and senior members of the Federal Parliamentary Labor Party, the National President and National Secretary or their nominees, and representatives of the Australian Council of Trade Unions.
- (b) The role of ALAC will be to provide a formal consultative mechanism between the Party and the union movement.
- (c) The National Policy Committee must consult with ALAC in relation to Party policy relevant to ALAC's role, and resolutions of ALAC relevant to Party policy must be considered by the National Policy Committee.
- (d) ALAC must meet at least twice each year, the meetings to be resourced by the National Secretariat.

National Appeals Tribunal

- 18. (a) The National Executive must:
 - (i) at its first meeting after each triennial National Conference; and
 - (ii) whenever there is a vacancy in a position;
 by a three-quarters majority of all voting members appoint three persons to form the panel for the National Appeals Tribunal.
- (b) A member of the panel may only be removed by a three-quarters majority of all voting members of the National Executive.
- (c) In respect of each appeal, the Tribunal is constituted by a member of the panel determined by lot under the supervision of the National Secretary.
- (d) The Tribunal is responsible on behalf of the National Executive for hearing all appeals by members, affiliated unions and constituent units of the Party that relate to:
 - (i) compliance with the National Constitution; or
 - (ii) enforcement of the rights and obligations of members, affiliated unions and constituent units under the National Constitution;
 and making recommendations to the National Executive in relation to those appeals.

- (e) No appeal may be heard by the Tribunal until all practicable avenues of appeal have been exhausted under the rules of the relevant State or Territory Branch.
- (f) The Tribunal must:
 - (i) comply with the rules of procedural fairness in conducting hearings;
 - (ii) (subject to paragraph (i)) conduct its hearings as expeditiously as possible; and
 - (iii) give the National Executive and all parties to the appeal written reasons for its recommendations.
- (g) The National Executive:
 - (i) must promptly consider all recommendations of the Tribunal; and
 - (ii) may make any decision in relation to the appeal it thinks fit.
- (h) The Tribunal:
 - (i) must prescribe guidelines for the conduct of appeals, including the granting of leave by the Tribunal to hear appeals; and
 - (ii) may otherwise regulate its own procedure;

subject to these Rules and any direction of the National Executive.
- (i) In this rule "National Constitution" has the same meaning as in rule 19.
- (j) The powers of the National Executive under this rule are in addition to, and not in derogation from, those contained in rule 7(c).

National Constitution Not Enforceable in Law

- 19. (a) In this rule "National Constitution" means all national constituent instruments of the Party, and includes the national Objectives and Principles, the national Rules, the National Principles of Organisation, and all resolutions of National Conference and the National Executive relating to the structure and organisation of the Party.
- (b) It is intended that the National Constitution and everything done in connection with it, all arrangements relating to it (whether express or implied) and any agreement or business entered into or payment made or under the National Constitution, will not bring about any legal relationship, rights, duties or outcome of any kind, or be enforceable by law, or be the subject of legal proceedings. Instead all arrangements, agreements and business are only binding in honour.
- (c) Without limiting rule 19(b), it is further expressly intended that all disputes within the Party, or between one member and another that relate to the Party be resolved in accordance with the National Constitution and the rules of the State and Territory Branches and not through legal proceedings.
- (d) By joining the Party and remaining members, all members of the Party consent to be bound by this rule.

Part C

NATIONAL PRINCIPLES OF ORGANISATION

1. Policy at the national, State and Territory level shall be determined by the national, State and Territory conferences respectively. Such decisions shall be binding on every member and every section of the Party, or of the relevant State or Territory Branch.
2. On matters that are not subject to National Platform or Conference or Executive decisions, or their State and Territory equivalents, the majority decision of the relevant Parliamentary Labor Party shall be binding upon all members of the parliament.
3. In all parliaments, the parliamentary leadership, the Ministry and Shadow Ministry shall be elected by the Parliamentary Labor Party.

Election of Delegates to National Conference

4. State and Territory Branch delegates to National Conference (including proxy delegates) must be elected in accordance with the rules of that State or Territory Branch, subject to rule 6.

Composition of State Conferences

5. (a) In all States the State Conference shall comprise 50 percent union representatives and 50 percent constituency Party representatives. (This shall not bind Territory Branches until the proportion of unions affiliated is equivalent to that in the States. This principle shall apply to all State level Party units comprised of direct representatives of unions and constituency units.)
- (b) State Branches should increase or maintain the size of State Conferences, which should have greater rank and file involvement.

Membership

6. (a) Membership of the ALP is open to all residents of Australia who are prepared to accept its objectives and who have

associations with no other political party or proscribed organisation. This right to join shall not be impaired other than in circumstances in which it can be demonstrated clearly that an individual cannot meet the requirement outlined above.

- (b) Members of the Party are encouraged to be members of a union or to employ union labour. State and Territory Branch rules should require members of the Party to be members of a union or to employ union labour to the maximum extent permitted by law.
- (c) To further encourage union members to join the Party, State and Territory Branches should offer discounts in membership subscriptions for members of affiliated unions.

Affiliation of Unions

7. (a) All bona fide unions shall have the right to affiliate to the ALP. This right to affiliate shall not be impaired unless it can be demonstrated clearly that the relevant organisation is not a bona fide union or that the organisation has engaged in conduct that renders it unsuitable to be affiliated.
- (b) For the purposes of calculating union delegation sizes and affiliation fees, the number of members of each affiliated union must be determined each year by an independent audit by a registered auditor of:
 - (i) the number of members eligible to vote in a ballot for an office in that union at 30 June as conducted by the appropriate Electoral Commission/s, and
 - (ii) the number of members identified in paragraph (i) above for whom the union received an amount of dues in relation to the period between 1 April and 30 June inclusive for that year.
- (c) Each affiliated union must by 4.00 p.m. on the last Friday in February each year provide to the State or Territory Branch in a sealed envelope:
 - (i) the independent audit report for the previous year, and

- (ii) advice on the number of members that union will affiliate on for the current year,

and all such sealed envelopes must be opened at the same time in the presence of scrutineers appointed by affiliated unions.

- (d) Union delegation sizes must be based on the three year rolling average of that union's affiliation for the current and two preceding years (except that affiliation figures before 2002 must not be used to determine a union's rolling average).
- (e) Each State and Territory Branch (other than the Queensland Branch) must amend its rules to implement clauses 7(b)–(d) above in accordance with the model adopted by the National Executive for the Queensland Branch on 12 April 2002.

- 8. Each State and Territory Branch should develop an equitable basis of determining union entitlement for representation at relevant State level Party units. This shall not prevent State Branches making reasonable special arrangements for the representation of small unions.

Union Delegations

- 9. Subject to rule 10(b), it shall be the right of each union to determine the criteria and procedures for selection of its delegates, subject to those delegates being members of that union and financial members of the Party.

State and Territory Labor Advisory Councils

- 10. (a) Labor Advisory Council (LAC), consisting of the Leader and senior members of the State or Territory Parliamentary Labor Party, the State or Territory President and Secretary or their nominees, and representatives of the Trades and Labour Council or equivalent body in that State or Territory.
- (b) The role of the LAC will be to provide a formal consultative mechanism between the Party and the union movement in that State or Territory.

Dialogue with Local Union Activists

- 11. All Labor MPs must establish dialogue with local union activists in their electorates, including frequent meetings with those union activists who work in their area. Senators and MLCs must be invited to attend such meetings.

Members' Rights

- 12. The following are to be established as minimum standards:
 - (a) The process of joining the Party shall be simplified and all unnecessary impediments to that process shall be removed from State and Territory Branch rules.
 - (b) Subject to any attendance requirements in the State or Territory, full membership rights in all States and Territories shall begin to accrue in accordance with the relevant State or Territory requirements and those rights shall accumulate, to a maximum, following two years consecutive membership. These rights include: being eligible for preselection; standing and voting for or standing on, the various Party bodies and executives.
 - (c) Each State and Territory Branch must adopt rules that establish an appeals process in relation to compliance with and enforcement of Branch Rules by members, affiliated unions and constituent units of the Branch, such rules to be submitted to the National Executive for approval by 1 November 2003. The appeals process must include compliance with the rules of procedural fairness, expedited hearings and written reasons for decision.

Organisation and Training

- 13. (a) In addition to geographically based local branches within State and federal electorates, State and Territory Branches should consider different forms of rank and file organisation, such as:
 - (i) occupation, workplace and employment related branches,
 - (ii) university and TAFE campus branches, and
 - (iii) policy forums (including online forums).

However, any attendance requirements in State and Territory Branch rules will continue only to be met through attendance at geographically based local branches.

- (b) The number of local branches in metropolitan areas should be consolidated to provide for larger meetings and better branch organisation.
- (c) Branches should be involved in local community activities, and should provide regular updates and suggestions of events in which members might participate.
- (d) Local branches and MPs should institute, and participate in, regular joint community consultation processes in their electorates to raise the profile of the ALP and provide feedback on policy and Party initiatives.
- (e) MPs and State and Territory Branches should respond to branch correspondence promptly so that branch members know their contribution has been considered.
- (f) State and Territory Branches should ask branches to nominate either a women's officer or contact person to assist the development of equitable participation for women in the Party.
- (g) State and Territory Branch rules should provide for a forum of all members within each federal electorate to be held at least once each year.
- (h) The Federal Electorate Council (FEC), or combinations thereof, shall be encouraged to appoint a Women's Contact Officer, Community Activities Officer and a Policy Development Officer when electing or appointing its executive.
- (i) The Community Activities Officer and Women's Contact Officer shall assist the local branches to identify the major issues within the community, within which they should be active and assist in the development of either endorsed or unendorsed (depending on the State Branches) candidates for local government or other community bodies.
- (j) The State Branches shall assume within their organisational structure the responsibilities of coordinating the

Women's Contact Officers, Community Activities Officers and the Policy Development Officers.

- (k) The Policy Development Officer at a State Office level and at State and federal electorate level shall be responsible for coordinating policy input on local, State or federal matters, as appropriate, and work within a defined relationship between those electorate based Policy Committees and State and Territory Policy Committees and/or the National Policy Committee.
- (l) Each State Branch shall develop training programs for Branch executives, candidates and activists, as well as introductory programs for new Party members and mentoring and development programs targeting women. The National Secretariat shall assist in the development of such programs.
- (m) State and Territory Branches should form supporters clubs, and explore the possibility of the creation of an associate class of membership as a way of broadening involvement in the Party.

State and Territory Policy Committees

- 14. (a) State and Territory Branches should expand and improve the system of State and Territory Policy Committees, which should be linked to any policy forums that have been established.
- (b) All Party members should be eligible to attend State and Territory Policy Committee meetings to contribute specialised knowledge and expertise on policy issues. However, final decisions on policy documents should continue to be taken by elected Committee members. Committees should, where feasible, conduct forums and consultations in regional centres.
- (c) Resolutions passed by Party units should be circulated to the relevant Ministers and Shadow Ministers, State and Territory Policy Committees and the National Policy Committee for consideration and response.

Preselections

15. (a) Any member who meets the membership eligibility requirements shall be entitled to participate in voting for a candidate in any preselection covered by the applicable boundaries within which they reside, subject to clause 15(c).
- (b) The only residential boundaries that can affect that right are those devised by either federal, State or municipal electoral commissions. That is, the entitlement is guaranteed by the publicly known and independently drawn boundaries of respective electoral commissions. Therefore, if you live within the respective electorate and meet other criteria within the rules you are eligible to vote in the preselection.
- (c) To ensure the integrity of preselection ballots, no member shall receive a vote in any preselection unless that member is correctly enrolled with the Australian Electoral Commission to vote in a federal election. The member's address for the purposes of preselection will be their enrolled address.
- (d) In order to ensure that MPs are fulfilling local responsibilities, State and Territory Branches must:
 - (i) introduce a system of compulsory candidate forums during preselection processes; and
 - (ii) develop a system of reporting to federal electorate bodies the activities of their MP.

Australian Young Labor

16. Every State and Territory Administrative Committee or State Executive should consider co-opting a non-voting member or members of Young Labor.

Indigenous Labor Network

17. That each State and Territory Branch form an Indigenous Labor Network. Membership should be open to all Indigenous people who are members of the ALP. Non-Indigenous ALP members can nominate to be associate members.

Implementation of National Principles of Organisation

18. The National Executive will monitor the implementation of these National Principles of Organisation in consultation with the State and Territory Branches. These Principles will apply equally to all State and Territory Branches unless otherwise stated.

State and Territory Branch Rule Changes

19. All State and Territory Branch rules must be revised in accordance with these National Principles of Organisation as amended at the Special Rules National Conference held in October 2002, and be submitted to the National Executive for endorsement no later than 1 November 2003.
20. That, pursuant to rule 7(c)(i), the National Executive be empowered to amend the rules of any State Branch as required to implement the National Principles of Organisation.

Part D

RESOLUTIONS TO IMPLEMENT NATIONAL PRINCIPLES OF ORGANISATION

General Membership System

1. (a) Each State should adopt a system to allow applications to be processed and accepted by the head office thus allowing potential expansion of a general membership system.
- (b) A general member initially has only the right to take up at their initiative the process of becoming a full member through the Branch membership system. The general members are to be encouraged to contribute to the Party in whatever way they can and they are bound to assume the responsibilities of supporting the Party both privately and publicly.
- (c) Any general member of five years or more standing could be considered for preselection provided the majority request of all Party members in their respective electorate was made and/or the majority request of that State Branch Administrative Committee or Executive was made.

(for guidance to the State Branches)

Party Communications

2. The National Secretary shall be requested to prepare an annual budget for internal Party communications, to include methods of financing, as well as expenditure. The National Executive shall liaise with the State and Territory Branches with the objective of improving internal Party communications.

(for direction to the National Secretariat)

Responsibilities of National Executive

3. That the responsibilities of National Executive be clarified to ensure appropriate powers to manage the Party's:
 - (a) finances,
 - (b) education and training for memberships,
 - (c) liaison with the trade union movement,

- (d) liaison with community organisations,
 - (e) campaign technique development for Party members and constituent units, and
 - (f) Party communication;
- and to organise the Manning Clark Labor History Memorial Lecture at each National Conference of the Party.

Review of Campaign Techniques

4. That National Conference instructs the National Executive and State Administrative Committees to undertake a review of campaign techniques to ensure continued electoral success. The following principles are central to such a review:
 - (a) the need for redevelopment of campaign skills within safe Labor seats;
 - (b) the need for continuous workplace campaigns to be developed in consultation with the trade union movement;
 - (c) improved liaison with community organisations; and
 - (d) continued development of ministerial involvement at the local level.

National Organisation— Ongoing Review

5. (a) That the National Executive take responsibility for an ongoing process of organisational review. The National Executive should establish a Standing Committee to initiate proposals, or receive submissions from members and affiliates, on the Party's rules, structures and political effectiveness.
- (b) That an ongoing National Organisational Review Committee (ORC) be established with appropriate delegated powers under the guidance of the National Executive to continue the process of improving the effectiveness, participation and accountability of the Party's organisation.
- (c) That the ORC undergo a consultative process with State Branches, union affiliates, Party units and members on strategies to achieve the following objectives:
 - (i) strategies to increase the level of ALP branch membership;

- (ii) strategies to encourage more trade unions to affiliate to the ALP and to involve unions more effectively in the Party's decision-making processes;
 - (iii) strategies the ALP should consider in order to defeat coalition party proposals to undermine the existing arrangements for trade union affiliation; and
 - (iv) strategies to increase the participation of women at all levels within the ALP.
- (d) That the National Secretariat provide adequate resources for the Committee to meet its objectives.

Preselections

6. That the matter of preselections be referred to the ongoing organisational review process.

Internal Party Relationships

7. (a) The National Secretariat shall coordinate a regular program of ministerial visits to FEC meetings, coordinated through the State Branch offices, to report on the work of the Government and then receive views of Party members. Such FEC meetings to be open to all Party members.
- (b) That a representative delegation from the State Administrative Committee shall combine with the parliamentary leadership and Caucus representatives to form a State political coordination committee. Such a committee shall meet regularly, to discuss key strategic issues facing the Parliamentary Party.

(for guidance to the National Secretariat and State Branches)

Basic Principles

8. (a) The National Executive establish a Committee for the purpose of revising the Basic Principles of the Party including its objectives.
- (b) The Committee, in conducting its revision, should invite submissions from any interested Party member or interested unit and conduct appropriate seminars on the subject, prior to finalising any recommendations on changes.

Preselections

9. State and Territory Campaign Directors should consult the Leader and the National Campaign Director before the selection of candidates in both target and safe Labor seats to discuss quality potential candidates. This process should begin at least 18 months prior to the next election. It is the responsibility and obligation of Party officers and other influential figures within the Party to ensure that quality candidates are preselected in all seats. The Party must also actively identify and encourage candidates from a wide range of occupations and life experiences.

National Public Office Training Program

10. The National Secretariat, in conjunction with State and Territory Secretaries, should conduct a pilot National Public Office Training Program and report to the National Executive by 1 July 2003. The NPOTP would involve former Labor leaders and ministers and would be responsible for: running training schools for candidates, those who aspire to be candidates, and younger Party members; overseeing mentoring programs; and running skills workshops. Better training and professional development should also be examined for elected members.

Part E

REGISTER OF CONFERENCE DECISIONS

(These decisions of previous National Conferences remain in force.)

Members Initiating Legal Proceedings

(decision of the 1955 Conference)

1. This Conference resolves that as a general principle it cannot concede the right of any member of the Party to initiate legal proceedings for the purpose of establishing the constitutional behaviour of the Labor Movement. We emphasise that, with a few isolated exceptions, the history of our Party discloses we have functioned on a basis of complete determination in accordance with our own rules and our own interpretation of them. We insist we must continue to create our own procedures, taking care of our own business without the introduction of lawyers and law courts.

Union Elections

(decision of the 1963 Conference)

2. Conference believes that industrial legislation should provide for trade unions to properly determine their own internal policies in accordance with their rules and constitutions and deplores interference in trade unions activities by any government, outside individuals or organisations. Conference accordingly calls upon all trade unionists to refrain from interference in the internal affairs of another trade union.

Grievance Procedures

(decision of the 1979 Conference)

3. That Conference believes that the procedures of the Party at State and national level provide adequate opportunity for people who are dissatisfied to seek redress of grievance and calls upon all members of the Party in respect of matters in dispute to refrain from making comment outside the Party.

Affirmative Action

(decision of the 1981 Conference)

4. (a) That Conference:
 - (i) asserts its support for affirmative action to ensure greater representation of women in the Party structures and amongst its representatives at all levels of government;
 - (ii) endorses the Guidelines for Implementation of an Affirmative Action Programme in the ALP, June 1981, produced by the Working Party on Affirmative Action, drawn from the State Women's Groups and requests each State and Territory Branch to implement an affirmative action programme in keeping with these guidelines; and
 - (iii) requests the National Executive to monitor regularly progress in each State Branch and to report to each National Conference.
- (b) That all Party publications and Party ballot papers be given an indication of sex by use of given names.
- (c) That it be the policy of the ALP to investigate, instigate, and fund the provision of child care facilities at all conferences and large assembly meetings of the Party.
- (d) That it be the policy of the ALP that all Party literature and publications should be free of sexist terms and sexist overtones; similarly all Party conferences, meetings etc. should be free of sexist comments, terms and overtones of any kind and all officers, MPs and members of the Party should be advised accordingly.

Abortion

(decision of the 1984 Conference)

5. Conference resolves that the matter of abortion can be freely debated at any State or federal forum of the Australian Labor Party, but any decision reached is not binding on any member of the Party.

Conduct of Ballots

(decision of the 1994 Conference)

6. Procedures for conduct of ballots if required:
 - (a) that ballots for multiple vacancies be conducted in accordance with the rules of the Victorian Branch;
 - (b) that ballots for single vacancies be conducted under the optional preferential system; and
 - (c) that ballots for multiple vacancies be conducted in accordance with rule 10(a).

ALP Code of Conduct for Fundraising

(decision of the 1994 and 2004 Conferences)

7. Preamble

Australia's political and economic stability is dependent on the strength of our democracy. The Labor Party believes that democracy in Australia will be strengthened by moderate and equal financial contributions from corporate Australia to both sides of politics.

- This code of conduct establishes the conditions that govern fundraising by the Labor Party at State, Territory and National levels. It is binding on all Labor Party branches, units and candidates for public office.
- Funds are raised by the Organisational wing of the Labor Party to assist candidates for public office to gain and/or maintain office.
- Funds are needed for policy development, Party administration and, most importantly, campaigning. All these political tasks must be carried out Federally and in each State and Territory.
- Each State, Territory and National Secretary of the Labor Party has a responsibility to raise funds.
- Campaign responsibilities can overshadow the need for adequate funds to support a strong and effective party organisation. Lack of funding for party maintenance and administration not only drains the Party's ability to develop policy and membership, but also undermines Labor's ability to campaign effectively and therefore undermines the stability of Australia's political system.

Organisation of Fundraising

- The Party's National Director of Fundraising is the National Secretary. State and Territory Directors of Fundraising are the relevant State or Territory Secretary.
- Each State and Territory Branch and the National Secretariat raise funds cooperatively but separately.
- Each State and Territory Branch and the National Secretariat has a Finance Committee and a Fundraising Director. These individuals and their committees and/or donation collectors have sole responsibility for fund raising for their respective Branches. Each Branch organises its efforts independently and according to its own methods.
- State and Territory Finance Committees, all of whose members act in a voluntary capacity, collect funds from individual unions and corporations. Such funds supplement the Party's income from normal membership dues and affiliation fees.
- The National Secretariat collects funds for national campaigning, maintenance of the National Secretariat and the support of various State Branches. These funds support the National Secretariat's role of national policy development, assistance to the Federal Parliamentary Party and maintenance of the Party's professional and voluntary organisation throughout Australia.
- State, Territory and National offices shall operate systems of "centralised banking".
- All local campaign and other party accounts will be held under the relevant State or Territory central banking system with the relevant Tax File Number.

Conditions

- The Labor Party observes a fundraising code of conduct. This code is fundamental to the integrity of the Party and its organisational and Parliamentary members.
 - Parliamentarians can, and should, voice the Party's needs for funds or services and on occasions sign appeal letters.
 - on reasonable request, Parliamentarians can, and should, speak or appear at Labor Party fundraising events.

- Members of the Parliament or candidates should not accept money or services on the Party's or their own behalf, above the amount of \$3000 from any one source. Donations that are accepted must be held in appropriate Labor Party central banking accounts styled in the form: Australian Labor Party Campaign Account.
- Any funds held in accounts, or otherwise not under a State or Territory central banking system with the relevant Tax File Number, will be regarded by the Australian Labor Party and any other interested party as "personal accounts".
- Cheques should be made payable to the Australian Labor Party named account, not individuals.
- It is the legitimate responsibility of the relevant Fundraising Director, Finance Committee members and/or collectors to accept money on behalf of the Party.
- On the written authority of the relevant State, Territory or National Secretary, Parliamentarians or Candidates may act as fundraising agents for the Labor Party.
- Members of parliamentary executives may not be asked to act as fundraising agents or collectors.
- The detail of donations shall be publicly disclosed as per the requirements of the Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918.
- The Labor Party does not accept funds that are subject to conditions of any kind.
- Under no circumstances will the Labor Party accept funds which, even if only by inference, are intended to obtain the Party's support for specific actions, attitudes or public statements.
- Donors have a right to put views to the Party—but a right to no more than that.
- The Labor Party never raises funds on behalf of any other Party or Organisation.
- Under no circumstances will the Labor Party or any of its endorsed candidates accept donations from the tobacco industry.
- Candidates for public office who act outside these guidelines will be liable to sanctions by the relevant Labor Party Caucus or State or Territory Administrative Committee or other interested parties.

National Conference Decisions

8. That decisions of National Conference are equally binding on all members of the Party whether determined as Platform or as a decision of Conference. However, decisions of Conference which relate to matters of policy lapse if they are not reaffirmed by the subsequent Conference. Decisions of Conference which relate to organisational, administrative or rules matters continue in force until a subsequent Conference otherwise determines.

Part F

NATIONAL CONFERENCE STANDING ORDERS

Chair of Conference

1. The National President shall preside over Conference. In the President's absence the senior officer present shall preside. If no officers are present a delegate shall be appointed by Conference to preside.

Credentials

2. (a) Each body represented at National Conference or National Executive shall lodge with the National Secretary the names and addresses of its delegates as early as practicable before the meeting. These names and addresses shall be sent by the National Secretary to all members of the National Executive and other bodies represented at the National Conference as soon as possible.
- (b) Any body or delegate may challenge the credentials of any delegate by lodging with the National Secretary the grounds of objection in writing within 14 days of being notified of the nomination of that delegate.
- (c) The grounds of the objection shall be conveyed to the delegate challenged and to the body nominating the delegate by the quickest possible means. The National Executive shall hear and determine the challenge. An appeal shall lie to the National Conference. Pending the outcome of any such appeal, the decision of the National Executive shall stand.

Session Times

3. Conference shall meet each day from 9.30 a.m. to 12.45 p.m., and 2.15 p.m. to 5.30 p.m., subject to Conference at any time, determining on motion or amendment without debate, and without rescission of any previous decisions as to meeting times, to meet at any other times.

Order of Business

4. The agenda of the National Conference shall be as distributed by the National Executive pursuant to rule 6(j)(ii). The order of business shall be as determined by Conference from time to time.
5. No discussion shall be allowed except on motion or amendment duly proposed and seconded.
6. Any member desiring to propose a motion or amendment, or to discuss any matter under consideration, must address the Chair. No member shall address the Conference unless called by the Chair of Conference.
7. All questions shall be determined in the following manner:
 - (a) the mover of the motion shall have seven minutes to present argument in support of the motion and five minutes to reply;
 - (b) the seconder of such motion, and all other speakers, shall be limited to five minutes;
 - (c) the movers and seconders of motions and amendments must exercise the right to speak at the time of moving and not subsequently, subject to the right of reply by the mover of the motion;
 - (d) Conference on motion without debate may extend the time of any speaker; such extension of time shall not exceed five minutes. Conference may agree to further extensions on the same basis;
 - (e) the Chair shall call attention to the time of all speakers one minute before such time expires. Motions for extensions may be made when the Chair so calls, but no later;
 - (f) after the motion has been moved and seconded, and no speaker rises to oppose or move an amendment, the Chair shall proceed to put such motion to a vote of Conference;
 - (g) all votes of Conference shall be subject to the following procedure:
 - (i) the Chair shall call upon those who support the question to say "Aye" and those who are opposed to say "No"; and
 - (ii) the Chair shall then declare the question carried or lost;

- (h) any delegate not satisfied with the Chair's decision may, by standing in their place, call for a show of hands. The Chair shall proceed to determine the question by calling upon those who support the motion to raise their hands, and those opposed to act similarly. The Chair shall appoint two tellers to take the count and they shall be representative of the opposing viewpoints. When the tellers are agreed upon their count the Chair shall declare the result by quoting the figures for and against;
- (i) when any question voted upon by Conference results in equal numbers for and against, the Chair shall declare such question lost; and
- (j) any motion or amendment affecting the Pledge, Platform or Constitution of the Party shall be declared lost if less than a majority of delegates credentialled to the Conference vote for it.

Amendments

- 8. (a) At any time during debate on any motion it shall be competent for any delegate to move an amendment. All amendments must be seconded. Motions may be amended by adding words, by deleting words, or by deleting words and inserting others in their place, providing that the effect of any proposed amendment is not to establish a direct negative to the question contained in the motion.
- (b) Any number of amendments may be proposed and discussed simultaneously with the original motion, notwithstanding standing order 14. At the close of debate amendments shall be put in the order they have been moved.
- 9. No member shall speak more than once to any question before the Chair, unless by way of personal explanation or with the consent of the Conference. Such consent shall not be given unless by a majority of those present.
- 10. At any time during debate on any question it shall be competent for the Chair to accept a motion "that the question be adjourned," "that the question be put", or "that the next business be proceeded with", provided at least two speakers have spoken for and against.

A member having spoken to the question shall not be competent so to move. Such motions shall be immediately put without debate, provided that in the event of Conference agreeing "that the question be now put" the mover of the original motion shall have the right of reply.

- 11. On Conference agreeing "that the question be now put" it shall mean not only the question contained in the motion, but in any and all amendments.
- 12. No question shall be debated for a longer period than one and a half hours, subject to Conference agreeing on motion or amendment put without debate to extend such time. A two-thirds majority of those present shall be required to approve any such extension.
- 13. Motions directed towards the re-consideration of any decision reached by Conference shall fail unless carried by a three-fourths majority of the delegates credentialled to Conference.
- 14. Not more than two delegates in succession shall speak for or against any question.
- 15. All questions involving an interpretation of policy on any section of the Platform or the direction of members of the parliament in accordance with the principles and methods of the Party, shall be subject to decision by Conference on the basis of these Standing Orders and not by ruling of the President.
- 16. Questions other than those contained on the Agenda shall not be discussed unless agreed to by two-thirds of the delegates credentialled to Conference, and no delegate shall canvass the subject matter of the proposed new business when seeking Conference approval for discussion of same.
- 17. Rulings given by the Chair on any question shall be subject to a motion calling upon Conference to disagree with any ruling. In the event of such motion, the mover shall be permitted not more than five minutes to support the motion and the Chair shall be permitted not more than five minutes to defend the Chair's ruling. There shall be no other speakers. The Vice-President or any other delegate appointed by Conference shall occupy the Chair during the currency of such motion.

