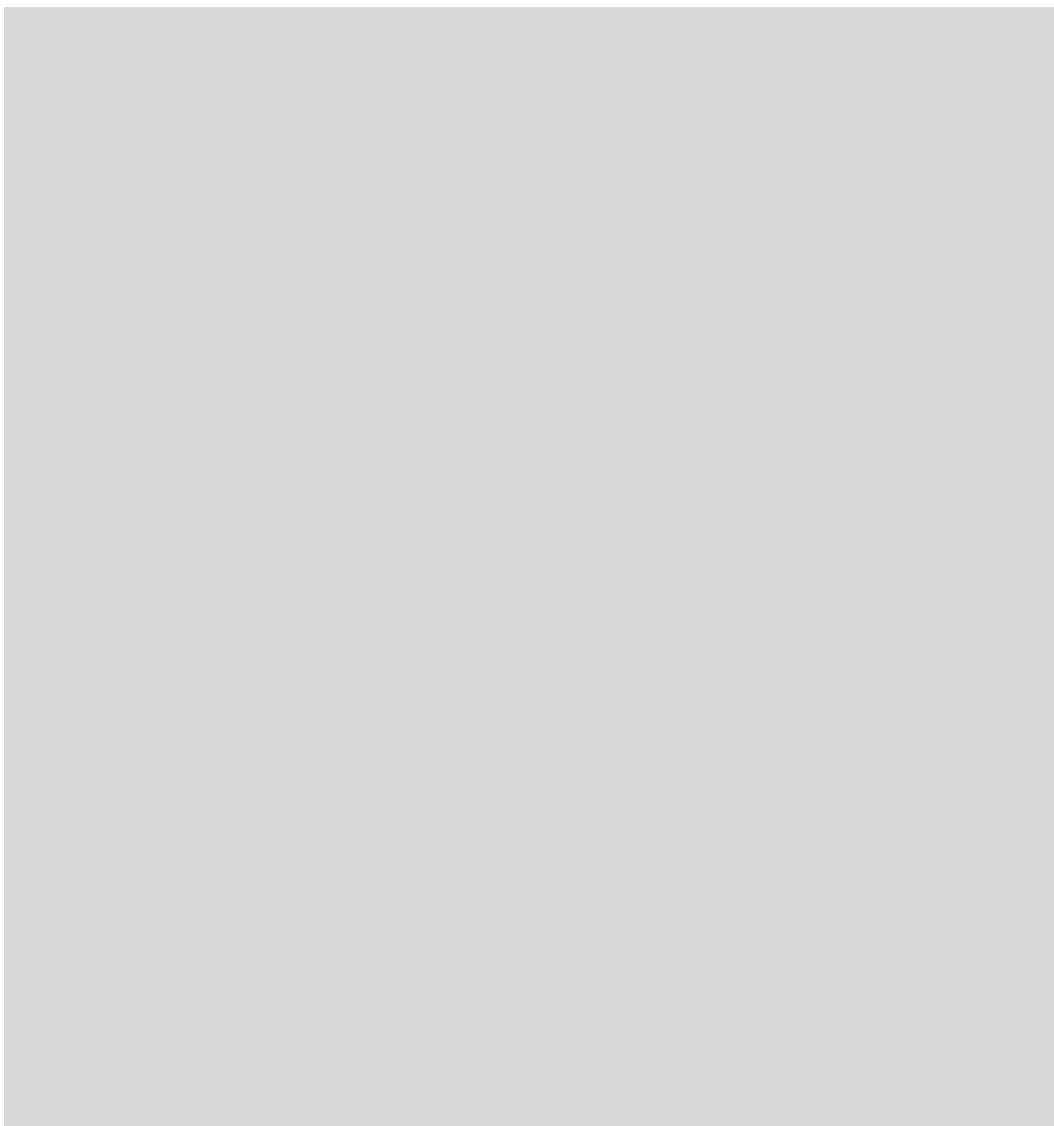




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Chapter 1: Labor's Enduring Values

We pay respect to the traditional owners of our ancient continent, their continuing connection to this land, and their right to a place of honour in our constitution and a full and equal share in our nation's future.

We are *a movement in service to the nation we love*, a country built on fairness, equality, justice and inclusion.ⁱ

We are *the engine room of national renewal, the generators of change, the pioneers of reform*, the party that builds for the future, and now, once again, we answer that call.ⁱⁱ

We have *a great objective – the light on the hill*: a Labor mission, both enduring and evolving.ⁱⁱⁱ

Enduring, because for more than 120 years we have championed fairness and opportunity as the essential qualities of a good society.

Evolving, because as agents of change and drivers of progress, our work is never done. *Others are simply marking time, we are breaking new ground.*^{iv}

We constantly seek to build a better future, for the *benefit of the whole of the people of Australia.*^v

The world that our party's founders knew is long gone, and the nation they built has changed beyond their grandest imagining. Yet we revere our Labor history, and their legacy.

We recognise the timeless truth of solidarity, organising and standing together with our brothers and sisters in the union movement to serve the best interests of working people.

We are a practical and pragmatic party, tinged with and touched by a romantic spirit. We have a tradition of ideals and ideas forged through cooperation, faith, consensus and trade unionism. Our heroes are social democrats, the world over: Robert Owen, William Morris, Beatrice and Sidney Webb, Keir Hardie, Jessie Street, Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt and Nelson Mandela.

We believe, as our forebears did, in the strength of parliamentary democracy and the power of politics to do good.

We stand for integrity and transparency in government and honesty in Labor, with no tolerance for corruption.

Labor is a party of principle, not protest. We strive for government and we seek to be measured by our deeds, marshalling the energy of the nation to *uplift the horizons and liberate the talents of the Australian people.*^{vi}



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For us, the true reward of politics is progress. We are a party of evolutionary change and we are proud of our reform tradition, the vision that has remade our economy and society.

We respect the liberalism of a vital democracy and we fight to ensure that freedom is best given expression in equal opportunity, a decent social safety net and the alleviation of poverty wherever we find it.

We support the march of women through the institutions of power, and true gender equality: in opportunity, in pay, in leadership and in the complete elimination of family violence.

We look at the world differently to our opponents: we see it through the eyes of those without privilege, power or title.

Even in the hardest of times, we have always dreamed of building a better society. We have never wanted to tear it down.

Our struggle has always been on behalf of the weak against the strong; for the poor, creating opportunity for those who never had a chance.^{vii}

When a strong minimum wage and a fair day's work were radical notions, Labor made them universal rights.

When half a million Australians came home from war, Labor built the economy that found them work.

Where once Australia looked only inward, Labor offered a home to migrants whose cultures and traditions enrich us all.

University education was once a privilege decided by wealth. Labor made it an opportunity earned on merit.

For hundreds of thousands of families, illness or injury meant poverty, until Labor built Medicare.

When our national estate was under threat, Labor saved the Franklin and the Daintree.

Millions of Australians worked hard all their lives only to retire poor, until Labor created universal superannuation.

Our nation's failure to face the dark shadow of our history diminished us all, until Labor said Sorry.

Australians with disability were exiled to a second-class life in their own country, until Labor delivered the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

Our vision is for an Australia that offers all its citizens quality education, universal healthcare, opportunity in employment and security in retirement.



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The historic success of our movement inspires us to greater effort, not complacency. We recognise that change in our society never stops, and our work is never done.

Our party has always found the courage to embrace change and adapt to the challenges of a new generation, to *carry on the task of building our nation to greatness*,^{viii} to write the country large.

We do not seek monuments of marble or stone, statues in parks or plaques on buildings. Our measure of success is a young person finding a fulfilling job, an apprentice gaining new skills and new self-respect and a student born into disadvantage bettering themselves through education.

We believe in the fair distribution of wealth and we embrace responsibility for its creation. For Labor, the choice between a strong economy and a fair society is always a false one. We know each is the precondition for the other and each supports the other.

We no longer hide behind the walls of ‘fortress Australia’: we face the world with confidence and the future with optimism. We choose to compete because we know we can succeed.

We stand for a smart, modern and fair Australia, building an economy and a society that rewards people for their ideas, their effort and their industry.

We believe in an economy that rewards risk-takers and job-creators, encourages entrepreneurs and small business owners and respects public enterprise, tradespeople, service providers and the self-employed.

Our belief in prosperity is pragmatic, not dogmatic. A government that is strong and flexible, not brittle or rigid. We believe in the contribution of markets and the role of government.

Where once we sought to row, now we seek to steer: using competition to shape markets and let them work. We recognise that government can underpin markets, building institutions and underwriting stability, as well as releasing assets to allow for better competition and more opportunity. Our focus is on the circumstances, purpose and merit of each decision, not shackled by ideology.

Our Commonwealth thrives on our people’s common endeavour and we are at our best when the benefits of economic growth help everyone, include everyone and leave no-one behind.

We prepare for the future with world class education, giving every Australian child the chance to gain the knowledge and skills to adapt and succeed in the modern economy.

We create the skilled and smart jobs of tomorrow as a learning society dedicated to lifelong education, an innovation nation investing in science and discovery, and supporting our researchers and the CSIRO.

We believe in giving every Australian the opportunity of a good job – a job with a sense of security and fair pay.



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We nourish the arts as the essence of our people's creativity and our nation's spirit.

We believe in equality for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex Australians, in their daily lives and under the law.

Labor began the Snowy Mountain scheme. We brought sewerage and amenity to our outer suburbs. We invest in the regions, our farmers and agriculture, boosting our productive capacity through infrastructure that binds our nation.

We will save the Great Barrier Reef, conserve old-growth forests and take real action on climate change. We will pass on to the next generation of Australians a national environment in better shape than the one we inherited.

We must close the gap, so *all Australians, whatever their origins, are truly equal partners, with equal opportunities.*^{ix}

Labor believes in an Australian Republic, where our head of state is one of us.

We celebrate immigration, we cherish the miracle of multiculturalism and we believe in an Australia where people of all faiths and traditions are respected, valued, welcome and equal.

We believe in an Australia strong in the world and secure at home. We support the dedicated, brave professionals of our defence force and our security agencies who keep us all safe.

We are good international citizens, committed to the United Nations. We look outwards, and we see and seek a positive role for Australia in the world, defending human rights, promoting peace and offering a helping hand to the vulnerable.

We embrace our place in Asia, ready to seize the opportunities of the most profound economic transformation in human history.

This is how we build an Australia where everyone has an equal opportunity to fulfil their potential.

This is our Labor mission and *every individual can bear a hand in this great task.*^x

Our movement's success has always depended upon our members, *the true believers. The people who, in difficult times, kept the faith.*^{xi} Their faith inspires us and guides us still.

Our platform speaks with the voice of all our members. With it, we pledge ourselves to the best of our traditions and the betterment of our nation's future.

- ⁱ Julia Gillard, National Conference, 3 December 2011
- ⁱⁱ Bob Hawke, National Conference, 26 June 1991
- ⁱⁱⁱ Ben Chifley, 'The Light on the Hill', 12 June 1949
- ^{iv} Andrew Fisher, *Labor Call*, 26 October 1911
- ^v Chris Watson, House of Representatives, 18 May 1904
- ^{vi} Gough Whitlam, campaign launch, 13 November 1972
- ^{vii} John Curtin, Perth, 28 August 1940
- ^{viii} Frank Forde, House of Representatives, 5 July 1945
- ^{ix} Kevin Rudd, National Apology, 13 February 2008
- ^x James Scullin, Richmond, 17 November 1928
- ^{xi} Paul Keating, Bankstown, 13 March 1993



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Chapter 2: A Strong Economy for All Australians

Introduction

1. Labor believes in economic growth, opportunity and fairness. Good economic management facilitates economic growth, which lifts living standards, lifts people out of poverty and turns aspiration into reality. Labor believes that Governments must ensure that the opportunities created by economic growth are available to all Australians. Fairness is at the core of our economic agenda. We are committed to ongoing reform and economic management that will increase productivity, create good jobs and secure the future health of the Australian economy. Modernising our infrastructure, managing the transition to clean energy, investing in skills and innovation and advancing tax reform are all vital in transforming our economy in all Australians' interests. Labor's commitment to a strong economy is driven by our determination to build a good society and give all Australians a better quality of life that allows the broader community to share in our nation's prosperity. A strong economy allows Labor to deliver programs and services that Australians need, and to support the most vulnerable.
2. Labor has always been a party of economic growth. We reject the arguments of those who do not believe in economic growth. Whether when engaging in early Labor Governments' nation building reforms, promoting economic reform through the Hawke and Keating years, or seeing Australia through the global financial crisis without recession, economic growth has been at the core of Labor's agenda. Australians have benefited enormously from more than two decades of uninterrupted economic growth. Labor in office will have continuing this growth, in an inclusive and sustainable way, as its economic priority. Labor recognises that climate change poses a significant risk to economic growth.
3. Labor rejects the false choice between economic growth and equality. Excessive inequality detracts from economic growth and damages the social fabric. Labor believes in economic growth that is inclusive of all. We believe there is a role for Government in ensuring that people from all backgrounds and circumstances can both contribute to economic growth and benefit from it. The benefits of economic growth must be redistributed through the economy to those on low wages, not in work or reliant on welfare.
4. Labor believes in economic policy that promotes social mobility and opportunity. Your family's wealth should not determine your ability to grow to your full potential. Promoting equality of opportunity is at the core of Labor's economic approach.
5. Labor believes facilitating innovation science and commercialisation of scientific advances is an important part of economic policy, and central to sustainable economic growth. Companies, organisations and individuals are the driving force behind innovation. But Governments can and must enable and facilitate innovation. Policies which support



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innovation, venture capital, start-ups and the spirit of entrepreneurialism are key to Australia's ability to prosper. Open markets, supported by a framework of pro-competitive rules, provide the best incentives for innovation, enterprise, investment and hard work. Australia's openness to the global economy has made it a more competitive, productive and prosperous nation. The benefits of an open market have flowed to everyday Australians through lower consumer prices, greater choice and increased employment opportunities.

6. Australia's long-term prosperity depends on competing successfully in global markets. This means Australia needs to produce high quality goods and services that the world wants to buy, and remove barriers to overseas markets. Labor will work to ensure major policy settings like skills development and training, infrastructure planning, tax and regulation frameworks do not hold businesses and workers back from achieving their full potential in global markets, while at the same time ensuring that all Australians enjoy a fair share of the benefits of growth. Strong and sustainable public finances underpin the progressive future we want for the next generation. Meeting the health care, pensions and education needs of future generations will require prudent budget management and prioritising support for those most in need.
7. The market will often create the most equitable and efficient distributions of power, wealth and services, but markets sometimes fail. Government has a responsibility to intervene, to address market failures and the extremes of capitalism. Labor supports an active role for governments in addressing market failure, and improving equity and social justice through the full range of government policy instruments including expenditure, taxation, regulation, and the provision of goods and services.
8. Labor is the party of jobs and fairness at work. We believe every Australian should be able to contribute to, and benefit from, economic growth and wealth creation through a fair tax system, quality public services, equal access to educational opportunities and a decent social safety net. Every Australian capable of working should be encouraged to do so. We believe in the benefits of work for individuals and society. Automation and technological advances are good for society and the economy, but these changes need to be managed so negative impacts on individuals, regions and industries are minimised. There is also a danger that automation will see the disappearance of traditional entry-level and manual jobs. Australia needs an education system producing skilled workers who are well trained and capable of performing in high-technology, high-skilled jobs of the future. We need an innovation and education framework that fosters and encourages the very best of Australian ingenuity, so that Australia is setting the pace of technological change. Australians with good ideas should not be forced to leave Australia to see their ideas developed. Entrepreneurs and innovators from around the world should be encouraged and invited to come to Australia to see their ideas developed, deployed and commercialised.

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9. The mining boom generated an increase in our national wealth and created thousands of jobs. The mining construction boom has now ended and although production is picking up, the sector is under pressure due to dramatic falls in commodity prices. While Australia has received a permanent increase in our national income through the mining boom, the sector is now losing construction as well as production jobs, even as production and export pick up. Thus means that strong growth in employment will need to be generated in other sectors to keep our unemployment rate steady. Fostering investment across the entire economy is a crucial role for macro-economic policy. It is important to tackle competitiveness sectorally, examining sector-by-sector measures to improve competitiveness, innovation and productivity.

Responsible Fiscal Policy

10. Labor supports the fundamental social and economic role of government, as this role reflects Labor's fundamental values. Labor is committed to sound public finances by adhering to a fiscal strategy that achieves budget surpluses on average, over the economic cycle. This provides the flexibility for the budget to vary with changing economic conditions to support economic stability, while also ensuring our public finances remain strong over time. Achieving a surplus is not an end in itself, but, as part of sound fiscal policy and economic management, is an appropriate medium-term objective, taking into account the economic cycle. The economic and social role of fiscal policy in both the short and long term should be recognised. Labor believes in keeping government finances strong, while also taking action to support jobs and growth, and lay the foundations for future prosperity. Labor acknowledges how important it was to put in place fiscal support for the economy during the global recession to save Australian jobs.
11. Labor's fiscal strategy will be guided by key principles, which articulate a future Labor Government's approach to short, medium and long-term fiscal issues:
 - An acknowledgement that Australia's public finances are in good shape, as compared to comparable countries across the developed world;
 - Recognition of the role of fiscal policy in supporting growth and employment when growth is below trend and unemployment is above trend, as well as the role of policy to pay down debt through the accumulation of surpluses during above trend growth;
 - Recognition of long-term revenue challenges, including the ageing of the population;
 - The need to constantly review and refine the Commonwealth Budget, on both the expenditure and revenue sides, in the context of Labor's values and the need to address longer term challenges; and
 - A commitment to a tax system and tax reform that is based on efficiency, equity and fairness.



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12. A future Labor government will be a responsible and careful steward of the nation's finances, ensuring the Government performs its role in supporting equity, opportunity and growth as the Australian people expect and deserve while paying for its activities as fairly and efficiently as possible.

Stable Monetary Policy

13. Labor wants to maximise sustainable economic growth, consistent with maintaining low and stable inflation. Labor is committed to the independence of the Reserve Bank and expects it will fulfil each of its charter objectives of currency stability, employment and general economic welfare. Labor fully supports the continued independent conduct of monetary policy by the Reserve Bank and its medium-term inflation target of an average of two to three per cent over the course of the economic cycle.
14. Labor is committed to investing in the long-term drivers of growth and productivity so we can maintain growth with low inflation. By addressing supply-side pressures and increasing the productive capacity of the economy, inflation and interest rates can remain lower over the longer term.

Retirement Incomes and Superannuation

15. Labor is proud of the fact that we put in place a world-class retirement income system that includes universal, compulsory superannuation. As a result of Labor Governments' reforms, there is now over \$1.9 trillion in our national savings pool, making Australia number one in the world on a per capita basis. Apart from aiming to set-up working Australians for a comfortable retirement and therefore take pressure of pension payments, our national savings pool was an important factor in ensuring Australia's banking system was well capitalised during the global financial crisis. When last in office, Labor put in place reforms to ensure the long term sustainability and fairness of Australia's retirement income system, by increasing the pension age to 67, increasing the Superannuation Guarantee from 9 to 12 per cent, forcing superannuation funds to offer low-cost MySuper accounts, and introducing the only superannuation tax concession for low income earners through the Low Income Superannuation Contribution (LISC). The Coalition has sought to either abolish or frustrate these important reforms.
16. Labor, as the party of universal, compulsory superannuation, will continue to put in place reforms to protect and to grow superannuation, to ensure the superannuation system meets an objective of providing a comfortable retirement for all Australians. This will include, when prudent, ending the Coalition's freeze of the Superannuation Guarantee at 9.5 per cent, and fast-tracking the Superannuation Guarantee increase to 12 per cent, which will provide millions of Australians with higher retirement incomes. The current system of superannuation tax concessions has seen more than 35 per cent of the value of tax concessions accrue to the top 10 per cent of income earners. Labor will put in place



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reforms to address this imbalance, ensuring Australia has a sustainable and fair retirement income system.

17. Strong regulatory frameworks in both the global and the Australian economies are important to ensure that markets operate with transparency and openness, and to prevent and expose misconduct.

A Strong and Vibrant Small Business Sector

18. Labor believes in a strong small business sector that focuses on jobs, growth and the Labor principles of fairness and equity. Labor recognises the importance of small business to the Australian economy, employing close to 5 million Australians and contributing some 47% of private sector employment. Small business contributes more than \$330 billion annually to the national economy. Labor will encourage genuine small business activity and will ensure ABNs are not simply a means to transfer workers into insecure work with lower wages and conditions.
19. Small business is vitally important to regional economies with around 35 per cent of the total number of small businesses in each state located in regional areas, compared to 20 per cent for large firms. Over 95% of the businesses in Australia are small businesses; almost two-thirds have no employees and a further one quarter have only four or fewer employees. This means only 10 per cent of small businesses have between 4 and 19 employees.
20. It is the strength and diversity of our micro, small and medium enterprises that will determine Australia's prosperity over the next half decade. Small and medium businesses make a significant contribution to the economy through innovation, with over 85 per cent of the businesses in Australia engaged in innovation being small businesses.
21. Labor believes in creating stability and confidence in the market, and the importance of business and consumer indices remaining stable, at trend or above.
22. Labor's three core areas for small business policy are taxation assistance and simplification, reducing red-tape and regulatory burdens (including competition policy and national harmonisation), and access to finance.
23. Labor's record on small business through the global financial crisis included policies that ensured small business remained central to economic growth during a period when most countries in the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development struggled to counter the impacts of the global financial crisis. Under a Labor government the small business sector continued to employ more than 5 million Australians during that period.



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24. The digital economy means the nature of small business is changing. Labor will adopt policies that allow Australians to make the most of these opportunities.
25. Labor believes in assisting small business through preferential taxation assistance measures consistent with recommendations from the Henry Tax Review. Labor's record in helping small business during the global financial crisis saw the introduction of numerous tax assistance measures designed to assist small business with cash-flow to counter the effects of the crisis. These measures included the instant asset write-off, tax loss carry-back, special depreciation for motor vehicles and the research and development tax incentive, which, when combined, were worth in excess of \$7 billion of direct assistance to small business.
26. Reducing red tape and lowering the costs of doing business means more jobs and greater productivity for small businesses. These objectives can be realised through the work of Council of Australian Governments delivering national reforms across jurisdictions that will benefit small business. Labor's record on sensible regulatory reform for small business in Government includes:
- Establishing the Small Business Superannuation Clearing House enabling small businesses to pay their employees' superannuation contributions to a single location;
 - Establishing the National Business Names registration service for a single online service, removing the requirement for a small business to register in multiple jurisdictions;
 - Introducing Standard Business Reporting through the use of the online standard business reporting; and
 - Worked through the Council of Australian Governments to deliver regulation and competition reforms under the Seamless National Economy framework.
27. Small businesses will be significant drivers of future economic growth. Small businesses are often the first to recognise new technologies; apply the energy, passion and entrepreneurial skill required to grow their business; and find new ways to work in an ever more connected world. Labor also recognises the role that strong local small business plays in community cohesion: the smaller mum and dad businesses, fruit shops, butchers, dry cleaners, farm and rural businesses that contribute to the fabric of our community, satisfy local need, create relationships, support other local business and contribute to our sense of place and identity.
28. It is Labor that understands that micro and small businesses are variable and adaptable, and contribute to both the proximity and flexibility that allow workers and families to arrange their working life around their priorities.



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29. It is Government's role to support micro; small and medium enterprises to do the things that the nation needs to remain a competitive and cohesive nation: develop new ideas, explore new opportunities, transform themselves into viable thriving businesses, and provide the relationships and local servicing that supports community.
30. Small business contributes significantly to the economic and social well-being and prosperity of our nation. All small business people should share in this prosperity through sound Government policy settings.

A Professional Financial Services Industry

31. Labor recognises the fundamental importance of a comprehensive, professional, efficient and competitive finance sector in allocating capital in the economy as well as delivering essential services such as banking, insurance and superannuation to the Australian community at fair prices. The industry underpins many business and personal activities through credit and other financial services that form the foundations for economic prosperity and growth. A vibrant finance sector provides significant employment and career opportunities for many Australians. With appropriate regulation, competition in the market is often the most effective way to ensure that consumers receive value for money in these services. For Australia to have a vibrant and functioning economy, firms must have effective governance in place to ensure corporate responsibility.
32. Labor supports Australia's strong system of financial regulation overseen by the Australian Securities and Investments Commission, the Australian Prudential Regulatory Authority and the Reserve Bank of Australia, and will ensure that Australia's regulators are adequately resourced to continue their work.
33. Labor continues to believe in the consumer protection principles (including consumer best interest duty and removal of conflicted remuneration) underpinning the Future of Financial Advice laws. We will consult further with the financial sector, consumer and retiree groups about the detailed implementation of financial regulation applying to all financial services (including insurance and banking).
34. Under Labor, Australia will be a strong voice in international efforts to address weaknesses in the regulatory and supervisory framework to help ensure greater future stability in the global economy.

Trading with the World

35. Labor supports trade between Australia and the rest of the world because trade generates economic growth, creates jobs, improves living standards and reduces poverty. Labor has a long record as an advocate for an open global trading system. Reducing barriers to trade



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creates more competitive industries and benefits consumers through lower prices and greater choice. Trade is a pathway to a high-skill, high-wage future for working Australians.

36. Australia's trade success depends on its international competitiveness. There will be important trading opportunities for Australia in coming years through engaging with the Asia-Pacific region and ensuring our businesses take part in global value chains. Labor will ensure Australia can realise these opportunities through policies to improve Australia's international competitiveness and to give businesses and individuals the skills and capabilities they need to succeed in a globalised economy.
37. The benefits of trade can and must be shared fairly, both at home and abroad. This will require investment in education, training, skills and innovation, building Australia's national infrastructure, and promoting the health and welfare of the community, to ensure that our people benefit from the opportunities created by trade. While the benefits of trade liberalisation are significant, they can come at a cost to sectors, workers and regions that are disadvantaged by structural change in our economy. Particularly in the short-term, adjustment support is needed for some sectors, workers and regional communities to ensure that they too are raised up, not left behind, by economic change.
38. Labor acknowledges the benefit of economic growth in developing countries, while noting that these benefits have not been shared fairly in many economies. More equitable economic growth will create decent jobs, lifting people out of poverty, giving them economic independence and supporting human rights. Labor is committed to trade policies that are consistent with Australian values of justice and equity, community views and the interests of developing countries.
39. Labor supports the open, rules-based, multilateral trading system under the auspices of the World Trade Organisation. Multilateral trade agreements have been shown to deliver larger economic and social benefits than regional or bilateral preferential agreements. A rules-based, multilateral system, underpinned by core and enforceable labour and environmental standards, provides a framework for fairness and equity and is the most effective means to ensure governments around the world do not resort to universally damaging protectionism.
40. Labor will oppose low-quality piecemeal trade agreements in favour of fair and transparent multilateral agreements. When multilateral trade negotiations are not making satisfactory progress, Labor will consider high-quality regional or bilateral trade agreements that are in Australia's national interest and that support the multilateral trading system. Trade agreements must be consistent with Australia's social and economic values, be based on widespread consultation, provide for appropriate minimum and enforceable labour and environmental standards, take account of social and economic impacts and allow sovereign governments to make decisions and implement policies in the interests of their citizens.



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41. Labor supports trade and investment liberalisation through the Asia–Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum. Labor will ensure APEC is a driver of regional economic integration and will take an active approach to its role in the region’s economic architecture. Labor believes APEC has a key role in promoting economic reform behind the border throughout the Asia–Pacific region and will promote these efforts. Labor will endeavour to strengthen APEC’s role in mobilising support for the WTO’s Doha Round. Labor will also support Australia’s engagement in the emerging regional trade and investment architecture under the auspices of the Trans-Pacific Partnership, the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership and the proposed Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific.
42. Labor will work to:
- Secure a successful conclusion to the World Trade Organisation’s Doha Round that brings certainty to the international trading system and progress for free trade, especially for developing economies;
 - Provide leadership to the Cairns Group and seek reductions in agricultural subsidies and protection;
 - Secure reciprocal new market access for all of Australia’s economic sectors;
 - Tackle non-tariff “behind the border” trade barriers such as excise tax arrangements, standards, customs procedures, subsidies and other restrictive measures which impede Australian exports;
 - Reduce the costs to business of engaging in trade and taking part in global value chains through trade facilitation reforms; and
 - Reduce the cost to business of accessing preferential treatment under bilateral trade agreements by ensuring such agreements have standardised and minimal administrative burden country of origin and other rules.
43. Labor will ensure that Australians are informed about trade negotiations and will undertake full community consultation before entering new agreements. Labor will:
- Ensure that on commencing negotiations for bilateral or regional free trade agreements, a document is tabled in Parliament setting out priorities and objectives, including independent assessments of the economic, employment, regional, social, cultural, regulatory and environmental impacts;
 - Ensure that during trade negotiations, industry, unions and community groups are consulted on draft texts, proposals and requests for review and comment;
 - Ensure that once the negotiation is complete, a package will be tabled in Parliament, including the proposed treaty and any legislation required to implement the treaty domestically;

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- Ensure developments at the World Trade Organisation, and the positions a Labor Government takes there, are regularly reported to Parliament through the Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade;
- Ensure Australian submissions and materials relevant to free trade agreement negotiations and the World Trade Organisation are made public, unless there are commercial-in-confidence reasons, or disclosure would damage our national interest;
- Review government consultative mechanisms to ensure they are open to, and representative of, business, unions, and environmental and community interests;
- Review the composition of delegations to World Trade Organisation Ministerial meetings, so they include appropriate representation from business, unions and non-government organisations; and
- Advance World Trade Organisation rule changes to ensure immediate publication of dispute settlement decisions, together with short, plain language explanations.

44. Labor supports strong anti-dumping measures to ensure overseas exporters do not damage our industry by engaging in anti-competitive and unfair trade practices. Australia's anti-dumping system should be further reformed to ensure it does not lag behind the systems of comparable countries, and is adequately resourced to ensure prompt investigation and resolution of disputes and to provide advice and support for small and medium sized enterprises.
45. Increased international trade brings with it the responsibility to promote higher labour standards for Australia and internationally. Labor will support greater cooperation between the World Trade Organisation and International Labour Organisation secretariats on trade and enforceable labour standards. Labor supports and promotes incorporation of core labour standards, as a minimum, in all international trade agreements. Labor will outlaw importation into Australia of goods or services produced with forced labour and child labour or prison labour. Labor will work actively to combat and overcome the scourges of forced, prison and child labour.
46. Labor will not allow trade agreements to limit the capacity of the Australian Government to determine immigration policies that promote education and training, permanent rather than temporary migration, local employment and fair employment standards. Labor will ensure future trade agreements do not prevent Australia from effectively regulating temporary migration, including by requiring genuine labour market testing for temporary work visas as well as Australian market wages and employment rights for immigrant workers where genuine skills shortages are deemed to exist. Labor will ensure trade agreements promote recruitment of local labour and protect the wages and conditions of local workers.



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47. Labor supports the principle of national treatment so that foreign and domestic companies are treated equally under the law. Labor does not support the inclusion of provisions in trade agreements that confer greater legal rights on foreign businesses than those available to domestic businesses. Nor does Labor support the inclusion of provisions that would constrain the ability of the government to make laws on social, environmental and economic matters in circumstances where those laws do not discriminate between domestic and foreign businesses, such as investor state dispute settlement clauses. Labor will not ask this of its trading partners in future trade agreements.
48. Labor supports current World Trade Organisation rules that allow all nations to determine for themselves the appropriate public-private mix in their health, education, water and welfare sectors and the distribution of government funding within these sectors, and to protect their cultural industries, and procurement and employment policies. Labor will vigorously oppose any trade proposals that would require Australia to privatise its public services including its health, education or welfare sectors, undermine the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme, reduce government rights to determine the distribution of funding within these sectors, or remove protection for our cultural industries. Labor will oppose attempts to privatise water services under World Trade Organisation rules. Federal, state, territory and local governments should retain the flexibility to implement policies to encourage industry development, research and development, regional development and appropriate environmental, employment and procurement standards.
49. Labor will not support the expansion of intellectual property rights, which would extend monopoly patent rights to charge higher prices and would give copyright holders greater rights, at the expense of consumers.
50. The development assistance Australia provides under the World Trade Organisation's aid-for-trade initiative should support developing countries in establishing skills, infrastructure, regulatory and investment policies to support sustainable growth. We will deliver practical trade-related capacity building programs that improve the ability of developing nations to export, improve their international competitiveness, and engage with the global economy.
51. Labor recognises that trade is a necessary, but not sufficient, condition to promote economic growth in developing countries. We will work to ensure that nations throughout the world benefit from open markets and share in global growth. We will promote policies to achieve this in the World Trade Organisation, through trade agreements, at the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the International Labour Organisation and other international forums.
52. Increased international trade brings the responsibility to promote higher environmental standards for Australia and internationally. Labor is committed to the goal of sustainable development. Labor will work towards the removal of environmentally damaging subsidies,



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and promote mechanisms that balance the interests of environmental protection and open markets.

53. Labor notes Australia's important role and responsibility at the Asian Development Bank and supports the inclusion of core labour standards in its decision-making, including the roles monitoring mechanism at the Asian Development Bank.
54. A well-balanced Trans-Pacific Partnership offers the prospect of more and better jobs through improved access to member countries' markets for Australian exporting businesses and their employees. Labor's position is that the Trans-Pacific Partnership must be consistent with the following principles:
- Does not undermine the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme and public health initiatives;
 - Provides for national treatment — that foreign and domestic companies are treated equally under the law, while not conferring greater legal rights on foreign businesses than those available to domestic businesses;
 - Does not require Australia to remove protection of cultural industries;
 - Retains the Foreign Investment Review Board and its powers to review foreign investment in the public interest;
 - Retains quarantine provisions to reduce the risk of imported pests and diseases;
 - Retains the flexibility to encourage industry development including through research and development, regional development and appropriate environmental, employment and procurement policies;
 - Contains enforceable labour clauses that require signatories to enforce core labour standards in International Labour Organisation conventions; and
 - Contains enforceable environmental clauses that require signatories to meet all relevant international environmental standards, including those in applicable United Nations international environmental agreements.

Skilled Migration

55. Labor will continue to adopt a long-term approach when setting annual immigration levels. Australia operates in a global economy with an increasing number of skilled and other workers wishing to migrate to Australia. This means we must continue to work hard to prevent the 'brain drain' of talented Australian employees offshore and develop systems that ensure the best skilled workers who can contribute to national economic development are selected for immigration in Australia.

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56. Labor is committed to a range of policies to lift workforce participation and the qualification level of the workforce in response to an ageing population and the demand for higher levels of skill and mobility. We recognise that falling workforce participation could pose a serious capacity constraint on our economic growth, and we are committed to using Australia's skilled migration program as an important part of the policy response to this challenge.
57. Labor's immigration planning framework will take into account net overseas migration, its positive and negative impacts on employment and training opportunities for Australian residents, demographic trends, and other factors while remaining responsive to current and longer-term economic needs.
58. Labor's skilled migration policies:
- Will ensure that, as far as possible, skilled vacancies are filled locally;
 - Will be informed by ongoing consultation with industry, unions, the education sector and state and territory governments; and
 - Will be underpinned by the identification of emerging skill shortages across different sectors and complement domestic training policies to fill those shortages.
59. Labor will administer a skilled migration program that:
- Supplements domestic training policies in targeting skills shortages that cannot be filled locally;
 - Balances the temporary and permanent skilled visa programs, recognising the increasing numbers of permanent visas granted onshore;
 - Is demand driven, with greater emphasis on migrants sponsored by employers into jobs where there are demonstrated skills shortages;
 - Recognises the different skill needs that exist across and within states and territories and metropolitan, regional and rural communities;
 - Allows Australia to compete internationally for skilled labour;
 - Has the necessary tests and checks, and resources to ensure the integrity of the system and recognise the primary right of Australian workers to Australian jobs;
 - Is underpinned by rigorous safeguards to ensure that employers have made all possible efforts to fill positions locally in order to protect the primary rights of Australian workers to Australian jobs and ensure that migrants are not filling the jobs that Australians could be undertaking; and
 - Protects temporary overseas skilled workers from exploitation.

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60. Labor understands that both permanent and temporary skilled migration will play an important role in delivering sustainable economic growth. Labor prefers permanent skilled migration to temporary skilled migration, because permanent migrants:

- Provide a stable, effective and targeted source of skilled workers;
- Have a greater stake in Australia's future and in integrating into all aspects of Australian community life; and
- Are less susceptible to exploitation and more secure in their jobs, so are less likely to generate negative impacts on Australian workers, in terms of wages, employment conditions and job and training opportunities.

61. The permanent skilled migration program should:

- Encourage an appreciated balance between independent government-sponsored and employment sponsored migration;
- Ensure that non-sponsored skilled migration is targeted on skills in critical need in the economy;
- Provide state and territory governments with the capacity to address the skill shortages in their jurisdiction have the necessary checks to ensure that migrants have the competencies and qualifications claimed recognise the importance of English language skills in finding skilled employment; and
- Provide information, including on workplace rights and responsibilities, for skilled permanent migrants and their families to welcome them into the Australian community.

62. The temporary skilled migration program should:

- Only be used to fill short-term skill shortages that cannot be met locally;
- Require employers accessing overseas workers to make, as a condition of use of such workers, a commensurate investment in training of local workers, including through apprenticeships;
- Be based on a rigorous and transparent process to ensure that employers have made all possible efforts to fill positions locally;
- Ensure overseas workers are provided with genuine market rates and conditions equal to those received by equivalent Australian workers in their industry or occupation to prevent the undermining of those entitlements, and be based on a rigorous and transparent process to ensure that employers have made all possible efforts to fill positions locally;

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- Include a targeted monitoring program that recognises the risks of exploitation across different employers, occupations and sectors and imposes effective sanctions on those who breach the law;
- Ensure that workers, if dismissed from their employment, are able to remain in Australia while any challenge to the dismissal is before Fair Work Commission or the courts, to make workers less vulnerable to exploitation;
- Provide quick processing of visas to employers who have a record of compliance;
- Provide the relevant external agencies with the information to effectively regulate overseas workers, including work safety and industrial relations agencies;
- Ensure that overseas workers have the relevant qualifications for the trade or profession; and
- Ensure that the children of temporary migrants have access to education.

63. Labor will ensure that all categories of temporary workers will not be exploited through sham contracting.

64. Labor believes that a tripartite Ministerial Advisory Council on Skilled Migration, comprising representatives of government, unions and employers, be legislatively established to report to government on skilled migration issues. The Ministerial Advisory Council should:

- Ensure skilled migration programs provide a benefit to Australia and reflect local labour market needs;
- Ensure skilled migration programs are transparent;
- Provide advice in high risk cases, Regional Migration Agreements and high risk Labour Agreements on whether applications for such agreements are consistent with the objectives of Australia's skilled migration programs;
- Provide advice on refining and managing the Consolidated Sponsored Occupations List considering both occupation and regions; and
- Be supported by a dedicated labour market analysis resource.

65. Labor recognises that significant numbers of permanent visas are granted to temporary visa holders already working in Australia. Recognising that a transition to permanent residency status helps move an individual overseas worker onto a more secure footing, where possible, Labor will align the permanent and temporary migration programs to facilitate the conversion of temporary visa holders on to permanent visas and citizenship. Employers will be strongly encouraged to sponsor temporary visa holders for permanent residency where the visa holders are working under successful arrangements and have skills that correspond with those needed in the economy and Australia's migration

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priorities. However any transition to permanent residency status should not be automatic. It should be underpinned by a rigorous process of labour market testing to ensure that labour market conditions used to justify the granting of the original temporary visa are still valid.

66. Labor will ensure that all Australian employment and industries are regulated under Australian law, including those located on the landward side of the outer limits of the territorial sea of Australia, in the Exclusive Economic Zone, or in the waters above the continental shelf. To this effect, Labor will review the Migration Act with a view to ensuring that the definition of the 'Migration Zone' encapsulates all offshore Australian employment and industries.

A Fair and Efficient Tax System

67. Labor is committed to a fair and sustainable tax system that provides incentives for all Australians to work and undertake productive enterprise while guaranteeing adequate revenue to fund the proper role of government, including providing quality public services and ensuring an equitable distribution of income and wealth. Public confidence in Australia's tax system depends on a simple and transparent tax system where everyone pays their fair share of tax. Labor has implemented important tax reforms to improve competitiveness, boost savings through superannuation, make superannuation fairer, simplify personal tax, reduce barriers to participation and provide better assistance to families. We will also continue this record of tax reform, making the system more efficient, less costly and more equitable.
68. Future tax reforms will:
- Ensure there is a sound revenue base for all levels of government for investing in social and economic infrastructure and quality public services;
 - Remove barriers to investment and workforce participation;
 - Support families;
 - Ensure our corporate tax rate is as competitive as is prudent;
 - Work to reduce inefficient taxes and taxes which punish good behaviour;
 - Ensure our corporate tax rate does not discourage investment while enduring corporations – at home and abroad – pay their fair share of tax
 - Ensure multinationals cannot unfairly shift profits to minimise tax paid in Australia.
 - Boost savings and make superannuation fairer;
 - Enhance the capacity of Australian business and industry to successfully integrate into the global economy, so Australian companies win places in global supply chains, while ensuring that business continues to pay its fair share of tax revenue;



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- Simplify the tax system for individuals and businesses while tackling avoidance activity;
- Preserve and enhance a progressive and fair tax system, where all Australians pay their fair share;
- Minimise the impact of high effective marginal tax rates, particularly on those moving from welfare to work or the second income earners in low- to middle-income families;
- Further reduce inconsistencies in the taxation of income from different forms of assets;
- Ensure that the tax system does not make housing less affordable for Australian families;
- Ensure that Australia's financial stability is preserved and that the potentially harmful effects of excessive short-term financial speculation are minimised; and
- Preserve allocative efficiency by minimising distortions to investment and consumption decisions, except where interventions would address market failures and serve environmental or social purposes.

69. Labor will continue to support efforts to establish an international agreement that would require the tax authorities to share information in relation to individuals and corporations suspected of tax evasion or money laundering. Labor is committed to supporting the growing global trend of requiring oil, gas and extractive industry companies to report publicly on their revenue, profits as well as taxes and royalties paid on a country-by-country basis.

Labor values

70. The government has a strong role to play in ensuring the Australian economy becomes a diversified advanced economy. Government must implement policies that support the continued transformation our economy, business by business and region by region, through the provision of world's best infrastructure, support for strategic industries, promotion of skills, overcoming barriers to growth and crucially the strong support of science and innovation.

71. We live in a rapidly changing and increasingly competitive world. Progress and modernity have always been at the core of Labor's efforts to ensure Australia has a strong and diverse economy. Government and industry must be partners in the jobs and opportunities of the future, and this partnership must be structured to achieve clear capability, employment, training, research, innovation, and local content and export objectives. Recognising the critical role of science and research in underpinning Australia's national innovation system,



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Labor delivers policies and programs that bridge the cultural divide between the laboratory and the factory floor.

72. Labor believes in the power of ideas to transform our nation and build a richer, fairer and more sustainable future. Science includes knowledge of the world in all its forms. It is not confined to any one discipline. We turn to science and research to understand the world, and to help change it. We believe that our unique situation – as a large country with a small population, as custodians of fragile ecosystems, and as a developed, responsible democracy – demands that we invest in the science and research that will underpin Australia's wellbeing in the 21st century. We recognise the imperative of harnessing new ideas, processes and technologies for the benefit of all Australians.

Labor achievements

73. In government, Labor developed *Powering Ideas*, the *Clean Energy Future Package* and *A Plan for Australian Jobs*, implementing a suite of measures that made great strides in ensuring Australia not only increased investment in science, research and innovation to record levels but that these investments would translate to real world economic outcomes. Labor strives to foster an innovation ecosystem that enables Australian industry to compete and win on the world stage, not based on a race to the bottom on wages, but on quality, ingenuity, technology and service.
74. Labor initiatives, including the Research and Development Tax Incentive and the Cooperative Research Centres program have been replicated across the world. Programs such as Enterprise Connect and Commercialisation Australia helped Australian businesses innovate and bring new products to market. Our Buy Australian at Home and Abroad strategy increased opportunities for local businesses and strengthened the capacity of Australian firms to win more work on major projects. These represent exactly the type of innovation and industry policy needed to secure our future prosperity in an increasingly competitive and technologically advanced global economy.
75. Thanks to Labor's past reforms, our economy is resilient. We saved jobs and kept the economy growing through the worst global recession since the 1930s. We laid the foundation for future growth and economic prosperity. A future Labor government will foster collaboration between industry and research, and develop new programs to attain the goal of creating a diverse and thriving industrial base that can deliver and sustain the jobs of the future.
76. The previous Labor Government established a range of programs to develop clean energy industries. These programs allocated nearly \$15 billion to support innovation and new jobs in energy efficiency, low carbon and renewable energy industries. This constituted one of the most significant industry policies, by resources allocated, in Australia's history.



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77. The previous Labor Government increased investment in innovation, science and research by 43 per cent. We put university research on a secure financial footing by re-establishing realistic indexation arrangements for block grants, and providing increased funding for the indirect costs of research. We revolutionised the research funding system through new grants and fellowships to help talented researchers at every point in the career cycle realise their full potential, from the ambitious early career researcher to the internationally celebrated mentor.

Labor priorities – Innovation and the Economy of the Future

78. Creating jobs is the central objective of Labor’s innovation and industry policy. Labor is committed to policies aimed at fostering the use of clean energy, especially wind and solar power, to drive industrial expansion. The clean energy sector has demonstrated that it is a key creator of jobs in its own right, and the jobs of the future should increasingly come from industries able to take advantage of clean energy sources. We are committed to maximising opportunities for Australians to be employed in secure, high-wage, high-skill jobs and providing the digital infrastructure needed to underpin this.
79. Australia today is competing in a global innovation race. To secure our future prosperity and create jobs in an increasingly competitive and technologically advanced global economy we must invest in the drivers of economic growth by putting innovation, science and research at the heart of industry policy. We must foster a culture of entrepreneurialism across the economy, from start-ups to established businesses and within the public sector.
80. To be globally competitive we must reinvest in a suite of measures, including sectoral approaches, aimed at lifting the capabilities of Australian firms and attracting new investment. Governments, industry and research institutions must work together to make the transition to a clean energy future, overcome barriers to innovation and commercialisation, and meet the challenges of global competition.
81. Labor is committed to transforming the Australian economy through science and innovation. Our innovation agenda is a chance to re-tool Australia’s industries, to re-skill our people and build a new economy based on the latest technologies and advanced manufacturing.
82. Besides strengthening access to diverse sources of capital, our capacity to achieve these objectives is underpinned by the availability of high quality, relevant and accessible education and training. Through increased knowledge and skills, Australian citizens not only improve their individual work opportunities and living standards, but contribute to a stronger Australian economy and a more prosperous future.



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83. Labor recognizes that an impediment to early stage innovation and commercialization is access to capital. Labor will work to remove impediments that inhibit the emergence of diversified sources of capital to support the work of start-ups and established firms.

Manufacturing

84. Labor's agenda for high-quality jobs through innovation includes support for a strong and competitive manufacturing sector. Manufacturers employ nearly a million Australians in high quality jobs, contribute around 8 per cent of Gross Domestic Product and undertake almost a quarter of all business research and development.
85. Manufacturing is the cornerstone of any advanced economy. Without a strong manufacturing sector, Australia will not have the diverse economic base it needs to overcome our dependence on unpredictable and increasingly volatile commodity prices and to capitalise on future economic growth opportunities.
86. Manufacturing produces high-value exports, nurtures essential skills and drives innovation across the economy. A dynamic manufacturing sector is an essential feature of a resilient and broad-based economy. Manufacturing productivity sustains activity in other sectors, including advanced service sectors such as logistics.
87. Australia's manufacturers have long been under severe pressure from the high dollar, which has increased import and export competition for Australian products. This pressure, which increased costs for Australian manufacturers by almost a third, is now beginning to ease. This represents an opportunity for Australian manufacturers, with appropriate assistance from the government and in partnership with unions, to foster new growth through innovation.
88. There is a legitimate role for government in supporting industrial growth and the development of Australia's economy. De-industrialisation results in relative technological decline, a diminished capacity for innovation, and squandering of new growth opportunities. Once manufacturing capabilities are lost, they may be lost forever and the nation will be poorer as a result. A Labor government will never allow this to happen.
89. Labor believes there is a bright future for an internationally competitive Australian manufacturing sector – a sector that is still well placed to continue its efforts to raise productivity, to make more specialised and high value-added products, to enter new supply chains and capture niche markets. An industry policy focused on these goals is the only way to ensure that Australia's manufacturing sector will thrive into the future.
90. Manufacturing now matters more than ever in the knowledge-dependent and interconnected global economy. The measures Labor put in place in government

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encouraged Australian manufacturers to innovate and boost competitiveness, by shifting to high-technology, lower-volume forms of production for niche markets. Australia's strong reputation in areas such as quality standards, product safety and ethical labour and environmental standards are key competitive advantages that governments have a responsibility to monitor and maintain.

91. In government Labor will revive our innovation agenda and seek to support Australia's advanced industrial capacity in automotive manufacturing, shipbuilding, rail manufacturing and other advanced manufacturing industries, like textile, clothing and footwear, pharmaceuticals and biotechnology, food, and pulp and paper. We will re-establish Innovation Councils in key industry sectors to ensure a tripartite approach to building the innovative capacity of Australian industry.
92. Labor recognises the specific pressures facing Australia's crucial textile, clothing and footwear industries. These industries employ over 40,000 Australians in the formal sector and many thousands more in the informal sector as home-based workers. They maintain valuable skills and capabilities, and underpin regional economies around the country.
93. Labor will accelerate the transformation of the textile, clothing and footwear sector by supporting the development of new products and processes, targeting opportunities in ethical production and the high-tech, high-value end of the market. The conditions of support to textile, clothing and footwear companies will be designed to ensure sustainable employment outcomes, ethical labour and environmental standards, and maintain capacity and build skills.
94. We will work to maximise opportunities for Australian textile, clothing and footwear manufacturers in government tenders and will require all companies that tender for textile, clothing and footwear contracts to hold Ethical Clothing Australia accreditation. We will support the important work of Ethical Clothing Australia and work with agencies to extend requirements for ethical labour standards to companies tendering for government contracts that source their textile, clothing and footwear contracts from offshore.
95. Labor is committed to supporting and assisting TCF workers who lose jobs in the industry with an appropriate level of support for programs and services such as a non-means tested training allowance, training in English language and literacy, customised support for training and job-seeking, and funding for community-based organisations to advocate on behalf of redundant workers.
96. In order to maximise Australian industries' competitiveness in global markets, the federal government must work in partnership with state and territory governments, industry, businesses, unions, and research centres to lift productivity, improve workforce skills, foster innovation and collaboration, enhance competitiveness, and overcome barriers to growth, by, for example, improving access to investment finance and overseas markets.



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97. We will develop policies to address the historic underinvestment in too many manufacturing sectors and will look to models like the Clean Energy Finance Corporation, to improve access to finance. By partnering with industry and private finance providers, a Labor government will help ensure manufacturers are able to make the investments needed to over time to transform their operations and take advantage of new advanced manufacturing opportunities.
98. Labor believes in the importance of providing small and medium businesses with independent advice to help boost their productivity, lift management skills, and bring new products to market. We will develop networks to enhance collaboration between industry and researchers, so that Australian firms benefit from cutting-edge research and new technologies.
99. Labor will continue Australian Industry Participation Plans for public and private procurement. If we want a diversified economy that isn't entirely dependent on commodity exports and that sustains high-skill, high-wage jobs, we need to be clever in our purchasing. That goes for private purchases but even more for government procurement, because governments' buying power extends throughout the economy.
100. Labor will maintain its strong advocacy of Buy Australian programs and initiatives. We will adhere to a national interest test for government procurement policy by considering whole-of-life costs, rather than purchase prices alone, and ensure that procurement policies take into account the direct and indirect economic benefits of buying locally, including estimated taxation revenues, employment opportunities and industrial capability.
101. Australian industry has a responsibility to act ethically both domestically and globally. Labor will ensure Australian enterprises' global supply chains are transparent and do not breach State and International Labour Organisation labour standards, international human rights, or slavery and human trafficking laws.

Industry, Science and Research Collaboration

102. Governments and industry have a mutual obligation to invest in the jobs and opportunities of the future. We will preserve the Research and Development Tax Incentive as a crucial driver of investment in innovation through the taxation system. We will develop a suite of measures to complement the incentive and increase co-investment in innovative manufacturing. We will build partnerships that turn research into results for industry, the public sector and the community.
103. Labor is committed to putting Australia's researchers in the front-line of our industries. The Commonwealth Science and Industry Research Organisation – known as the CSIRO – is critical to achieving this goal by working with governments and industry to ensure that its



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world class research and innovation capabilities help to create the jobs of the future. Labor supports strengthening links between industry and universities and other research institutions to ensure that Australia is at the forefront of developments in information technology, robotics, 3D printing, materials science, nanotechnology, aerospace technologies and other frontiers of science and engineering.

104. Labor will use proven structures, such as the Cooperative Research Centres program, to build new collaboration between researchers and end-users. Recognising that Australia's prosperity derives not only from direct commercial outcomes, we will restore the public good aspect of the Cooperative Research Centres program, re-opening the scheme to social and cultural innovation from the humanities and social sciences that delivers for a diversity of end-users.

Science and Research

105. Australia's publicly-funded science and research agencies must be properly resourced to support their critical contribution to society, productivity and economic growth. Labor understands the critical importance of maintaining Australia's regional and rural science capabilities, including within publicly-funded research agencies such as CSIRO.
106. Labor values universities as repositories of knowledge, havens for advanced learning, sources of ground-breaking research, and hubs of community engagement. We will continue to pursue the twin objectives of ensuring university funding adequately reflects the full cost of research and maintaining globally competitive success rates in grant funding. Incentives in university funding must ensure that researchers are encouraged to engage with end-users, including industry, to maximise the impact of their research for industrial applications and the public good.
107. Researchers in universities and publicly-funded research organisations such as CSIRO create the bedrock knowledge that powers Australia's innovation system. They perform the basic research that underpins future discoveries. They give us the means to manage our unique natural heritage, not only protecting our environment, but creating new jobs in biodiversity conservation and ecotourism.
108. Publicly-funded researchers also undertake vital work in the humanities, arts and social sciences. Their work helps us to understand the world around us, and to build a stronger and more resilient society. Labor is committed to maintaining government investment in these fields of research, where the market rarely provides incentives for the private sector to invest.
109. Australia's public research sector must be underpinned by the pursuit of excellence. Universities and publicly-funded research agencies must also be responsive to national priorities and to the communities that sustain them. Labor introduced mission-based



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compacts to support universities in pursuing diverse missions, based on their strengths. We have a strong record of actively supporting smaller and regional universities to develop their research capacity in areas of strategic capability.

110. Governments have a responsibility to ensure Australia's scientists and researchers have access to the world-class infrastructure they need to make breakthrough discoveries. We remain committed to delivering the research infrastructure toolkit Australia needs in the 21st century.
111. Labor will ensure that Australian scientists and researchers have the chance to collaborate and compete on the global stage. The great leaps of the past century were made possible by scientific experiments on a massive scale, far beyond the resources of any one nation. Australia will continue to contribute its research strengths to international collaborative missions such as the European Molecular Biology Laboratory, the International Census of Marine Life and major astronomy projects, such as the Square Kilometre Array. We will support researchers from all disciplines to collaborate with their colleagues abroad, accessing new ideas and forming and maintaining valuable research networks with the best minds on the planet.
112. The success of the Australian research enterprise — including its ability to reach out effectively to industry and the public sector — requires the active enthusiasm and support of the community. Labor initiated a ground-breaking science engagement program, Inspiring Australia, to bring the transformative power of science and research to every corner of the nation. Labor will continue to support Inspiring Australia and promote Questacon's vital education role.
113. Labor understands the paramount importance of rigorous evidence-based policy advice. Labor supports science advisory mechanisms and the engagement of the Learned Academies in providing expert advice to the Australian Government. We will ensure that publicly funded research agencies such as CSIRO are represented on all relevant advisory bodies and councils, including those in the industry and innovation portfolio.
114. Global competitive pressures are driving a relentless race for research talent and investment. Labor will build on Australia's recognised strengths and priority research needs by expanding research in targeted fields. In particular, Labor will ensure our research efforts are trained to the imperatives and opportunities presented by the global challenge of climate change, including the development of clean technologies and strategies to protect our natural assets. Recognising the environmental importance, economic value and unique vulnerability of our tropical regions and marine environment, Labor will promote research in these critical fields.
115. Labor recognises Australia's increasing reliance on space infrastructure. Our ongoing social and economic wellbeing and our nation's security depend on access to space-based

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research. Labor is committed to having a National Space Policy that provides a clear statement of intent for Australia's future space-related activity and harnesses the strengths of our space research and industry sectors.

116. Labor will always defend our researchers' integrity and independence. Science and research must be free of commercial influence and political interference. The previous Labor Government restored the independence of the Australian Research Council through the appointment of a high level Advisory Committee with the confidence of the university sector. We ensured the independence and autonomy of researchers working in our publicly funded research agencies and our universities by entering into binding charters and passing legislation to ensure scientific independence and academic freedom. Labor will build on this record to develop a Science Integrity Charter across the Federal public sector.
117. Labor believes in fostering a diverse research workforce and improving research training opportunities for early career researchers from all backgrounds. We will support programs aimed at achieving these goals, including those that encourage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to pursue research careers, help to retain talented women researchers in the lab and as research leaders, and promote closer involvement by industry in hands-on research training.

Strengthening the services sector

118. A strong and efficient service economy is crucial to Australia's long-term economic prosperity and ability to take part in the global services economy.
119. Labor recognises the importance of maintaining and creating high skill, quality jobs in the domestic services sector. The prosperity of the years ahead will increasingly come from businesses that provide the many services that are essential to consumers in a modern industrial society — such as financial, retail and personal services, transport, communications, information technology, data management, legal, medical, scientific, engineering, construction, education, tourism, hospitality and leisure services — 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.
120. Though there is great opportunity to grow Australia's services exports, Australian consumers are increasingly receiving services from off-shore locations unknowingly. Where services are provided from off-shore locations, this should be disclosed to allow consumers to make informed purchasing decisions. Labor has implemented a service economy

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strategy that has, where feasible, introduced country of origin disclosure legislation for services and we will continue to work with the industry and unions to ensure disclosure is appropriate in the area.

121. Off-shoring of service sector jobs has been emerging as an important issue impacting employees and communities for a number of years. Service sector employees e.g. banks, communications and information technology in particular, have been interested in off-shoring as a way of reducing costs. Labor believes that all service sector businesses have a responsibility to support and promote new and better Australian jobs, creating opportunities for local employment as they grow their operations.
122. Labor is committed to ensuring that services industry organisations who derive their business and profits from the Australian community contribute economically and socially into the future. Australia needs a service industries strategy. This must be led and developed by a task force that includes all the relevant players. The strategy needs to focus on innovation and identifying capabilities that exist in the Australian economy that can provide the basis for a globally competitive services sector. The objective must be for Australia to establish itself in the global traded services economy. Implementation of the strategy will need to focus on:
 - Developing stronger linkages between universities, industry bodies, training institutions business, unions, state and federal governments;
 - Improving skills through training and other targeted skills development initiatives;
 - Scaling up parts of the Australian services sector through clusters, networks and mergers;
 - Encouraging leaders in the services sector capable of building a globally competitive and productive sector;
 - Developing infrastructure with internationally competitive costs;
 - Leveraging the roll out of the NBN to build competitiveness and productivity and strengthen the regional job market;
 - Building capabilities in data management;
 - Building market linkages into the global services sector;
 - attracting investment from companies who can build an international presence for Australia; and
 - Marketing and branding Australia's key capabilities in the services sector.
123. Labor is concerned with the widespread use of sham contracting in the services sector. Sham contracting is the deliberate or reckless misclassification of the working relationship as a contract for services instead of a traditional employment relationship. This

misclassification results in knowing or reckless behaviour designed to result in workers being denied employment benefits and protections, including superannuation entitlements.



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Chapter 3: Building Australia's Future

1. As a vast island nation, Australia's geography is both a gift and a challenge. In a world where economic power has shifted dramatically to the Asia-Pacific, Australia finds itself well positioned to supply minerals, energy, food and an expanding array of services to the developing nations to our north. But Australia is also a dry continent, with a relatively small but rapidly growing population that clusters in cities around our coast. The combination of vast commodity riches in our regions and relatively small population has meant that Australia's transport and infrastructure challenges are greater than most. Australians need nation building governments to realise our full potential.
2. Labor has a strong tradition of nation building. Previous Labor governments had the vision to build the transcontinental railway, the Snowy Hydro Electricity Scheme and to invest in massive urban infrastructure that provided running water to many Australian homes for the first time. More recently, Labor's economic stimulus and commitment to invest in the future heralded a comprehensive period of nation building, building new opportunities in modern communications and transport for people and goods that boosted long-term productivity, competitiveness and economic prosperity.
3. The Australian economy is diverse and priorities differ across industries and in regional, urban, coastal and remote contexts. Labor understands this diversity and it is reflected in our policy approach. Labor also recognises the critical role of state, territory and local governments in delivering infrastructure and essential services, and in improving productivity right across Australia.
4. Australia has long been recognised as a highly urbanised nation, with around 80 per cent of our people living in our capitals and regional cities – a trend now occurring across our region. As Australian cities transform, and new urban patterns of living and working evolve, how we plan and use these valuable spaces to create productive, sustainable and liveable cities presents as a vital competitive challenge. Australia needs a government that will lead on cities policy.
5. Labor has its origins in the bush. The workers who sheared the sheep, ploughed the fields and dug the minerals were as important as the tradespeople in the cities in forming the Labor Party. Labor has always understood the regions and invested in them. Successive Labor governments have recognised the role of the Commonwealth in regional development and introduced innovative policies to address regional needs, and built the infrastructure for the regions to advance economic prosperity.



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Labor values

6. Properly operating markets can be effective in driving our economy. This includes world markets, as well as domestic markets. It is into world markets that we sell most of our minerals and agricultural produce.
7. Governments have a responsibility to intervene in the economy to help achieve economic, environmental and social outcomes to address market failure. Labor will intervene where appropriate to advance broader economic, social and regional objectives.
8. The federal government needs to provide leadership in planning and delivering national infrastructure, including transport, water and communications networks. Building world-class infrastructure creates jobs now, supports future jobs and is the means by which our economy grows.
9. Labor supports working in partnership with the private sector in providing infrastructure and services where doing so represents good value to the Australian community.
10. Labor supports the continued development of Australia's natural resources through a competitive minerals, resources and energy industry, backed by quality infrastructure links, which will grow export-oriented jobs for our modern economy.
11. Agriculture and fisheries industries will continue to contribute a large share of export revenue and economic activity in regional and rural Australian communities. These industries must be supported as they adapt to climate change and shifts in global markets.
12. Labor believes in national leadership in planning our cities. With 80 per cent of our population living in capitals and regional cities, the case for engagement across all three levels of Government on cities is compelling. Labor's involvement as a Party of Government at federal, state and local level in our cities means that Labor is able to deliver a mix of strategic, regulatory and project-based support for urban development.
13. Labor is committed to building strong and dynamic regional communities. Regions play a vital role in Australia's economy. Labor invests in regional Australia and in nation-building infrastructure to enable our regions to prosper. Investment in quality government services, local skills development, social services and the digital economy is vital to regional Australia's economic health. Labor affirms its commitment to utilising the local institutional expertise available in our regions through the structures of Regional Development Australia Committees and local government to deliver leadership on economic development and diversification for their communities.



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14. Safety and security is a paramount consideration in transport regulation and transport operations.
15. Labor recognises the challenges posed by climate change and is committed to its reduction. New infrastructure will need to be built to withstand extreme weather events and additional infrastructure will be needed to deal with sea level rises, particularly in built up areas. Climate change may affect settlement patterns and agriculture and tourism. Labor will give special attention to infrastructure projects that will help affected communities and industries deal with change
16. Supporting a well-resourced public and private sector workforce, whose rights are respected, is fundamental to achieving these objectives. Australians rely on this workforce to deliver quality services, procure and often operate the infrastructure that secures our future and as such our investment in their skills, their job security and their rights at work remains a cornerstone of our community and our economy.

Labor achievements

17. Labor's record as a nation builder in government stretches back to its earliest days. Federally, and in the States and Territories, it has been Labor Governments that have taken big decisions that have increased productive and export capacity, connected our cities and regions and kept many Australians in meaningful work in times of crisis. Many of these decisions were subject to strong criticism at the time, and required resolve to implement.
18. Federal Labor's proud record of achievement includes:
 - Careful management of our national economic development and export markets including during periods of our greatest economic adversity, stretching from prior to and during the Great War, the Depression, the Second World War and subsequent reconstruction, and through to the 2008-2009 global financial crisis.
 - Commencing construction of the Transcontinental Railway from Port Augusta to Kalgoorlie, connecting Australia east-west over land;
 - Establishing the Snowy Mountains Scheme, and funding post-War water and irrigation projects across the country;
 - Establishing and commencing the construction of a National Broadband Network;
 - Pioneering plans for development of northern Australia;
 - Championing Federal involvement in cities, regional development and decentralisation programs, including via transport, housing, sewerage and community infrastructure programs;



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- Federal funding for congestion-busting public transport projects, as well as the national road network;
- Developing a streamlined national system of transport regulation;
- Creating Infrastructure Australia to lead strategic national infrastructure planning;
- Fostering and encouragement of an Australian maritime industry via major overhauls of shipping policy, and action to develop and maintain an Australian trading fleet;
- Active support for the ongoing evolution of an Australian aviation sector;
- Identifying Canberra as the future national capital;
- National strategies for ports and freight;
- Advance planning for major future projects including high-speed rail and inland rail.

Labor priorities

A national infrastructure agenda

Leadership

19. Labor will provide leadership and coordination to maximise nation building investment in Australia's nationally significant infrastructure across the transport, energy, water and communications sectors.
20. Working with State, Territory and local Governments, a Federal Labor Government will implement its infrastructure policy guided by the following principles.

Productivity

21. Consistent with the national challenge to increase productivity, the assessed contribution of projects and regulatory settings to national productivity will be a key factor in infrastructure decision-making.

Proper planning

22. Investment in new infrastructure involves choices, and long-term vision. It also requires timely consultation with affected communities by the appropriate level of Government, generally the states and territories. Recent experience underscores how vital it is that planning is efficient and open, without being rushed or out of sequence, so that we get planning and delivery right, first time around.



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23. Central to this is the need to separate short-term electoral cycles from the longer-term infrastructure planning and delivery cycles, via strong institutional frameworks, providing a clear pipeline of projects and initiatives.
24. Labor supports a longer pipeline timeframe than 15 years when considering infrastructure projects.

Infrastructure Planning Framework

25. Labor will maintain and enhance a clear national framework to support long-term planning for Australia's nationally significant infrastructure needs.
26. A Federal Labor Government will work closely with State, Territory and local Governments, via the Council of Australian Governments, to provide leadership and federal support for agreed projects and initiatives.
27. This framework includes identifying, prioritising and redressing inadequacies in Australia's nationally significant infrastructure, and identifying the projects to best address those inadequacies. The framework will also identify appropriate regulatory reform to ensure efficient use of existing infrastructure, and to remove obstacles to infrastructure planning, financing and delivery.
28. Labor's national infrastructure policy will be shaped by:
 - The work of Infrastructure Australia, complemented by its State and Territory counterpart agencies, which will drive the development of a long term, coordinated, expert-led, national approach to infrastructure planning and investment;
 - An evidence-based approach to assist in identifying and prioritising nationally significant transport, water, energy and communications infrastructure initiatives;
 - An open approach to options to address infrastructure gaps;
 - Funding and financing through government grants and other support, including an ongoing investment fund for the development of nationally significant infrastructure;
 - The development of a pipeline of projects through the National Infrastructure Priority List and national audit of significant infrastructure;
 - Early work to identify strategic corridors, and action to protect these corridors;
 - Transparency and accountability;
 - The targeting of key areas requiring regulatory and governance reform to improve the utilisation of existing infrastructure; and



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- Balancing national priorities with city and regional expectations of a fair share of funding for value-for-money projects.

Infrastructure Australia

29. Labor is committed to strengthening and resourcing Infrastructure Australia, to allow it to develop long-term strategies to tackle infrastructure bottlenecks, improve vital freight networks, assess projects, and promote private financing of domestic infrastructure by investors including superannuation funds.
30. Infrastructure Australia will be tasked to work with counterpart agencies in the states and territories to address problems, identify solutions, evaluate options and recommend nationally significant projects that represent value-for-money.

Cost-benefit analyses and business cases

31. Nationally significant infrastructure projects should be prior-assessed by Infrastructure Australia, based on a business case, a cost-benefit analysis and other objective criteria.

Transparency

32. The community is entitled to understand and question the reasons for government decisions. Few new infrastructure projects are free of concern from affected communities, and often the benefits are spread beyond the immediate community in which they are situated. Labor supports timely consultation with the community when projects are being planned and delivered.
33. Assessed project business cases should be released, and details withheld only where taxpayer value-for-money would genuinely be at risk.

Programs to address different needs

34. There are different transport infrastructure needs across the community. This is reflected in different programs focused on these needs. In Government, Labor will fund targeted national programs, including:
 - Nation building investment in projects including public transport and roads;
 - Urban and regional development and renewal programs;
 - Roads to Recovery – assistance to councils for local roads;
 - Black Spots – support for fixing sites with a poor safety record;



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- Heavy Vehicle Safety and Productivity – rest stops for truck drivers, safe loading and uncoupling; and
- Transport Development and Innovation projects.

35. Labor also supports initiatives to support active travel, including cycling and walking.

36. Labor backs initiatives to promote social inclusion and access, including greater connectivity between residential communities and jobs centres. Public transport is a key factor that assists social inclusion.

37. Labor supports investment in projects in remote communities, including indigenous communities.

38. Labor supports initiatives to improve access for disabled people to all forms of transport and public infrastructure.

Fairness

39. Projects and initiatives supported by a Federal Labor Government will incorporate fairness – that is, all states, territories, cities and regions are entitled to a share of national funding, based on project merit.

Project financing

40. Project financing instruments will be determined on a case-by-case basis ensuring value for money is preserved. Federal Labor will work, as appropriate, with the States, Territories and local government, and the private sector, on financing of priority projects.

41. Labor supports innovative approaches to financing projects, including public private partnerships, tax incentives, concessional finance, government guarantees, transport oriented development, value capture and seed funding via grants or availability payments. Labor will investigate any unnecessary impediments and remove them, to allow this to occur. In choice of method, Labor will ensure that maintaining infrastructure quality, the public interest and labour standards are relevant criteria.

42. When appropriate for financing infrastructure projects, Labor supports superannuation funds investing in infrastructure projects when that aligns with the best interest of superannuation fund members. Labor will investigate, and remove, any unnecessary impediments to such investment, whilst ensuring high standards of accountability and governance.



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43. Labor acknowledges the important role that the private sector must play in increasing the scope of infrastructure project delivery, including with involvement of superannuation funds.

Mode neutrality and public transport

44. There are often competing options to address transport bottlenecks, spanning different projects across road, rail, intermodal and ports, but also including separate regulatory and economic reform options. To the extent modal choice is required; Labor will take a mode-neutral approach based on merit.
45. Specifically, a Federal Labor Government will be open to funding public transport projects, including urban passenger rail and rapid transit infrastructure – unlike the Federal Coalition.

Smart Infrastructure

46. Infrastructure solutions will include using new technology for better management of existing infrastructure. Like the federal Managed Motorways program, and the ARTC's Advanced Train Management System, smart infrastructure can deliver improved productivity at much lower cost than a new project.

Skills and jobs

47. Consistent with Labor's overall approach to jobs and skills development, infrastructure planning and delivery is a key area that requires planning for the future.
48. In this context Labor supports processes to forecast and plan for skills development across the infrastructure chain, including project planning and assessment, project management, technical, trades and operational expertise. A clear pipeline of projects will aid skills planning.
49. The public sector needs to attract and retain the technical and business capability to represent taxpayer interests when infrastructure deals are being negotiated.

Transformative projects

National Broadband Network

50. Labor is the party of nation building. From the Snowy Mountains Scheme to the National Broadband Network, it is Labor that builds the infrastructure of the future.



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51. The National Broadband Network is the biggest and most important infrastructure project in Australia's history. It is vitally important to the way we will provide health services in the future, to the way we deliver a world class education to our kids and to how we build a strong and growing economy.
52. All Australians should have access to broadband, no matter where people live or do business. Wholesale prices should be the same, whether people live in the city or the bush, and broadband should not be made more expensive for those Australians who can least afford it.
53. Labor understands that fibre is optimal. A National Broadband Network for the 21st century will be rolled out across Australia, but because of the Coalition's limited vision, it will now need to be built in two stages rather than one.

High Speed Rail

54. High speed rail has the potential to significantly transform our longer distance travel options. Many nations already have high speed rail, connecting major cities with fast surface transport.
55. High speed rail on Australia's east coast, from Brisbane to Melbourne, can transform the future of cities and towns along the corridor, in effect bringing regional centres much closer to our major cities in terms of time. This creates new possibilities for living and working, and substantially increases the stock of land close to major jobs centres. It provides new opportunities for businesses to expand beyond our major cities, and introduces greater choice into long distance travel.
56. The former Federal Labor Government commissioned the two-phase high speed rail feasibility study that identified details of the 1748 km route from Melbourne to Brisbane, via Sydney and Canberra and including via the following cities and regional centres: Gold Coast, Casino, Grafton, Coffs Harbour, Port Macquarie, Taree, Newcastle, the Central Coast, Southern Highlands, Wagga Wagga, Albury-Wodonga and Shepparton.
57. High speed rail is a transformative project. It is likely to be built in stages, and timetable will be subject to factors impacting the economic viability of the project, and funding availability. Analysis shows that long-term benefits considerably outweigh the costs.
58. Labor will re-establish the High Speed Rail Planning Authority as a statutory body, and re-engage with the Queensland, NSW, Victorian and ACT Governments, local government and the rail industry, to continue planning, and commence the vital initial work of corridor preservation.

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Inland Rail

59. Labor will construct an inland freight route from Melbourne to Brisbane, via Toowoomba and Parkes, following up on the planning work funded by the previous Labor Government.
60. The 1730 km route would provide an alternative to the coastal road and rail north-south freight route, and would bypass Sydney. The route would use substantial parts of the existing freight network, which has already undergone substantial upgrades in recent years.

Agriculture, Fisheries & Forestry

61. Australia's agriculture, fishing and forestry sector has played a key role in national economic development throughout our history. They have generated a large share of Australia's wealth, helped shape our culture and identity, and underpinned the establishment of rural and regional communities throughout the nation.
62. In the century ahead of us, our agriculture, fisheries and forestry sectors will continue to play a major role in creating wealth and jobs in rural and regional Australia, and generating export income as we capitalise on growing global food demand.
63. Labor will take a five-pillars approach to the future development of our agriculture, fisheries and forestry sectors – Financial Capital, Human Capital, Natural Capital, Physical Capital and Research Capital.
64. Labor will support the profitability, productivity and sustainability of Australia's agriculture, fisheries & forestry sector by fully developing the five crucial pillars.
 - Financial Capital – ensuring the sector has the necessary and affordable funding to capitalise on its opportunities;
 - Human Capital – ensuring the sector has people with the necessary education and skills necessary to fully develop its opportunities;
 - Natural Capital – ensuring the sector is using our limited natural resources in the most productive and sustainable way;
 - Physical Capital – ensuring the sector has the infrastructure it needs to be competitive and profitable and to fully capitalise on export opportunities; and
 - Research Capital – ensuring the sector retains its world-class research and development funding model and is a world-leader in research, development and extension.

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65. Labor will seek to maximise access to domestic and international markets for Australian agriculture, fisheries and forest products.
66. Labor sees a key role for Australia - in collaboration with other nation-states – in addressing future global food security needs.
67. Labor recognizes the importance of the innovations of agricultural biotechnologies, such as GM crops, in making Australian farming more productive, competitive, environmentally sustainable and improving financial returns at the farm gate. To ensure the safety and the access by farmers of such innovations it's essential that Australia maintains an independent, scientific and evidence-based regulatory system for GM crops.
68. A rigorous, well-resourced and effective public sector-led biosecurity system is vital to the Australian economy, human health, and the retention of our clean, green and safe image – one of our key competitive advantages.

Minerals, resources and energy

69. Labor values Australia's minerals, resources and energy industries and those who work in them. They generate a large share of export revenue, support regional economic development, provide employment directly and indirectly and improve the living standards of the entire community; they also create wealth and opportunity in indigenous communities.
70. To maximise the minerals, resources and energy industries' social, environmental and economic contribution to Australia, Labor will:
 - Ensure Australian resource industries continue to pay their fair share of tax and royalties;
 - Promote the sound sustainable development of Australia's energy resources, taking into account domestic industrial, home and community needs and the need to ensure security of domestic energy supplies including gas, coal and electricity while ensuring that these measures are market based and encourage investment and properly functioning gas and electricity markets;
 - Develop initiatives to promote opportunities for Australian companies and workers to enter the global supply chains of multinational resource companies
 - Encourage the development of low emission fossil fuel and carbon capture, re-use and storage technologies;
 - Encourage downstream processing of minerals, resources and energy products, and, through public and private investment, the infrastructure necessary to achieve this;



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- Facilitate the commercialisation and export of minerals-related services and technology;
- Create an efficient national energy market that can enhance Australia's natural advantages in downstream minerals processing for domestic and export markets; and
- Support modern maritime engineering excellence in export gas production including the involvement of Australian engineering and industry within the supply chain.

71. Labor will continue to ensure that mineral development on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' land proceeds consistently with Labor's land rights and native title policy, maximises Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people employment, business, education and training opportunities, and maximises Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' community development and self-determination opportunities.

Australia's cities – productive, sustainable, liveable

72. Labor believes there is a distinct role for the national government in leading and coordinating urban development. We will build on the proud record of the Whitlam, Hawke/Keating and Rudd/Gillard Governments of leading a national effort to make our cities more, liveable, sustainable and productive.
73. Australia relies heavily on the productivity of its cities for national prosperity. The majority of Australia's population and businesses are located in urban areas and our cities are hubs of economic activity that link Australia to the global economy.
74. Rapid growth and development has imposed challenges such as patterns of growth, water supply, urban congestion, climate change and adaptation.
75. In Government, Labor delivered new urban development policies through a Major Cities Unit, which has now been abolished by the Coalition. Only through coordinated and integrated approach to urban policy development can we improve the productivity, sustainability and liveability of major cities in Australia.
76. Labor will refocus the Commonwealth on cities policy by:
- Appointing a Minister for Cities;
 - Updating the National Urban Policy;
 - Re-establishing the Major Cities Unit;
 - Reconvening the Urban Policy Forum; and

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- Publishing annually the State of the Cities Report and connecting it to the National Urban Policy goals.

77. Labor will work with and across all spheres of government at Council of Australian Governments, the private sector and the community to improve governance structures and develop integrated long term strategies to better manage land use planning, housing affordability, settlement patterns, social cohesion, climate change and urban congestion.
78. Labor's Minister for Cities will help coordinate across Cabinet, policy to direct Federal Government energy to working with states, territories and local government on urban challenges including:
- Investing in properly integrated transport systems involving public transport and roads;
 - Investing in active transport solutions which connect up with public transport, education and employment hubs;
 - Addressing housing affordability through the use of urban planning, land supply and use of incentives;
 - Aligning greater housing density with public transport corridors;
 - Promoting jobs growth in outer suburbs. This could be through direct investment such as Badgerys Creek Airport and Moorebank Intermodal project, or by giving consideration to incentives for the location of business;
 - Promoting jobs growth in middle ring suburbs around cities by investing in research precincts around universities and hospitals; and
 - Supporting connectivity and productivity through fibre-to-the-premise National Broadband Network.
79. Labor is committed to making our cities more productive, sustainable and liveable into the future.
80. Labor understands that a high level of mobility is necessary to unlock the economic potential of cities – ensuring diverse and specialised skillsets can be brought together. This requires strong land use planning and investment in transport infrastructure. Labor will provide national leadership by working with state, territory and local governments and the private sector to deliver the infrastructure and services our urban communities need to thrive and prosper. The rapid growth of our cities, as well as the outward expansion of cities over the last 50 years, has created significant congestion on urban roads, which has had an impact on quality of life and reduced family and social time.



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81. Safe, clean and efficient public transport in our major cities is critical to addressing the economic, environmental and social problem of urban congestion. The Federal Coalition has cut all future funding for public transport.
82. Having a genuine chance to live near job opportunities is an essential foundation for Australians to participate in the workforce, and to contribute to a productive national economy. Accordingly, successful cities require affordable, diverse and well distributed housing stock. The affordability of housing is crucial to the equity and inclusiveness of our cities.

Strengthening regional and remote Australia

83. All Australians, regardless of where they live, or where they come from, should have reasonable and affordable access to services including:
- Secure and appropriate housing;
 - Transport;
 - Basic utilities;
 - Universal and affordable broadband facilities and telephone access;
 - Quality education and training opportunities;
 - Health and aged care;
 - Financial services;
 - Personal, family and social services;
 - Employment services;
 - Emergency services; and
 - Information on government programs and policies.
84. To this end, Labor is committed to engaging with regional communities to develop policies, undertake regional planning and ensure that regional Australia and local government has access to these services.
85. While Labor maintains that regional development should be part of mainstream policy, it will retain regional-specific programs. Labor will ensure transparency and accountability in the delivery of these programs.
86. Labor will continue to provide a unique funding program for regional Australia. This fund will enable regions to broaden their traditional economic base — through new partnerships, new skills and new technologies. In this way, communities will become more



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resilient, more viable and more sustainable in the longer term. We will do so with a collaborative approach to regional development that involves all levels of government, the private sector and local communities, to produce the best solutions and outcomes.

87. Labor will continue to strengthen the Regional Development Australia network of local advisory committees to engage with regional communities and local and state government. Labor is committed to ensuring that Regional Development Australia committees operate in a transparent and accountable manner and are representative of their communities, working closely with state and local governments. The committees must include, for each community falling within their geographic area, persons who are genuinely local, and who have a commitment to realising the opportunities for their region through effective engagement.
88. All three levels of government are essential in developing Australia's regions. Labor will provide the national leadership necessary to work with state, territory and local governments to implement targeted strategies and policies in regional Australia. These will include the development of local industry and employment opportunities, access to education, health, housing and community support services, and improved transport links.
89. Some areas of regional and remote Australia face unique challenges after the investment phase of the mining boom. We will work with these communities to find durable and sustainable policy solutions to any economic and social issues they face.
90. Labor is committed to ensuring that regional Australia is a central part of the solution to climate change, promoting the benefits and opportunities of environmental sustainability.
91. Labor understands the important opportunities that tourism can provide to regional Australia. Labor will support and encourage these opportunities, helping regional communities work together to best leverage their efforts in finding funding opportunities.
92. Labor will continue to support cities in regional Australia and promote policies that address the unique needs of these centres. We will support sustainable growth and recognise the vital role that these cities play in servicing regional and remote Australia.
93. Labor will also introduce region-specific policy programs where parts of regional Australia are experiencing accelerated growth and where parts of regional Australia are facing significant challenges. These programs will help communities build sustainable, resilient economies, where growth is inclusive.

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Local government

94. Labor recognises that local government is the level of government closest to the community. The role of local government has evolved beyond the traditional municipal and road services to delivering a broader range of services including:
- Social services such as childcare, aged and home care, affordable housing, social and community and health services; along with Arts and Culture
 - Environmental services such as coastal management, improved waste management, energy, and climate change responses;
 - Efficiency, and improved catchment and water resources provision;
 - Community infrastructure such as sports grounds, swimming pools, parks, community centres and tourism facilities; and
 - Regional planning, economic development strategies and emergency services.
95. Labor is committed to partnerships with local government to improve the provision of services and infrastructure for local communities. Labor will investigate opportunities to assist local government to innovate in management and construction of social and community infrastructure that delivers benefits and opportunities for local communities.
96. Recognising that local government needs a secure economic base in which to deliver important services that benefit local communities and allow economic growth, Labor will assist local government by:
- Providing funding through the ongoing Financial Assistance Grants with appropriate indexation of these payments so local governments can continue to grow;
 - Providing long term funding certainty to local governments recognising the important role it plays in communities across Australia;
 - Increasing funding for local government-maintained roads;
 - Establishing a mechanism to consult directly with local government to ensure it has strong and direct relationship with federal government;
 - Working with local government to improve efficiency and financial sustainability of local governments;
 - Ensuring local government has a voice within Infrastructure Australia and is represented consistently across the Regional Development Australia network; and
 - Participating in a range of programs to provide direct funding to local government.



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97. Labor will work with local government to consider policies that help make our urban and regional communities more liveable and environmentally sustainable, including urban and regional planning, development assessment and approval processes. .
98. Labor supports workplace development programs that directly assist local government, recognising the central role that local government plays as a major employer.
99. Women’s representation in local government — as Mayors, Councillors, and General Managers — is still unacceptably low. Labor is committed to working with local government to develop and implement strategies that increase participation by women and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in all aspects of local government. We will recommit to reaching the goals of the 50 50 vision of Councils for Gender Equity to achieve enduring equality in local government.
100. Labor continues to support the recognition of local government in the Australian Constitution. Labor believes in recognising local government in the nation’s foundation document.
101. Labor believes any local government reforms must be about improved community outcomes that reflect community needs. Labor encourages cross council shared services between local government authorities, noting the value to communities of local government operated services. Labor will review the National Competition Policy with a view to improving local government and its ability to respond to local community needs including emergencies.

Transport regulation

Transport safety and security

102. Passengers’, workers’ and the general public’s safety and security is a paramount consideration in transport operations.
103. Labor will prioritise security operations at our international gateways – ports and airports, including offshore installations - and resource relevant agencies, and regulate operators, to manage security risks.
104. Labor supports strong domestic and international transport safety regulation and oversight, and will prioritise agency resourcing, and implementation of world’s best practice in safety regulation.
105. Labor will pursue nationally agreed road safety reforms guided by the National Road Safety Strategy 2011-2020.



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- 106. Labor will also support the continuing work of the Road Safety Remuneration Tribunal in delivering safe, sustainable rates and conditions.
- 107. Labor supports the ongoing work around safety being undertaken by the National Rail Safety Regulator.
- 108. When investing in transport infrastructure projects, Labor ensures that safety impacts are a key factors considered.

Land transport regulation

Strategic leadership

- 109. In Government Labor will continue national leadership and coordination around development of ports and land freight options.
- 110. Infrastructure Australia's National Ports Strategy and Land Freight Strategy will be the starting point for renewed work with states and territories in this area.

Competition

- 111. Labor supports modal competition as a key driver of quality domestic freight and passenger services at the lowest price. Modal choice, with minimal intervention, can keep downward pressure on transport costs. As freight costs are bundled into the cost of almost all goods consumed by consumers and businesses, competition is an important discipline that keeps costs down.

Fair regulation

- 112. Consistent with a mode-neutral approach, Labor aims for a regulatory approach that applies the same cost base across competing transport modes. Labor supports a level playing field that internalises currently external costs and benefits from transport modes in a fair manner. Labor also supports the principle that each mode should be subject to Australian wages and conditions when operating in the Australian jurisdiction.

Streamlined regulation

- 113. Labor will develop a truly national transport policy so that freight and services logistics systems are integrated across modes and can operate efficiently and competitively, with only necessary and nationally consistent regulation. Labor will continue to streamline and improve the regulation, operation and development of land transport policy. Labor will continue to work towards a single national system for each separate system of rail safety

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regulation, maritime safety regulation and heavy vehicle regulation. A single national system of regulation is estimated to save industry \$30 billion over a 20 year period.

Active transport

- 114. Labor supports strategies that encourage walking and cycling as forms of transport. There are considerable benefits that accrue to individuals and the community as a whole from a healthier, more active, more included population.
- 115. Labor will require consideration of active transport options when land transport projects are being considered, and maintain support for road safety, including for cyclists and pedestrians, and increasing cycling rates.
- 116. Labor in Government will seek to implement and build upon active transport initiatives including the National Road Safety Strategy and National Cycling Strategy, including standardisation of data for fatalities and serious injuries, by transport mode, across jurisdictions.

Aviation

- 117. Labor is committed to the maintenance of a strong aviation industry with a secure Australian workforce.
- 118. Aviation plays a large part in connecting Australia to the world and linking our towns and cities, as well as servicing the needs of regional and remote communities. It is also a key factor impacting international and domestic tourism. Where new gateways are approved, Labor will seek to provide timely support in terms of Federal agencies such as customs and security.
- 119. Labor developed Australia's first ever comprehensive National Aviation White Paper (2009) that recognised that safety and security are critical for the travelling public, and that investment in well planned airports and a strong domestic market and general aviation sector are crucial for the long-term future of aviation in Australia.
- 120. Labor supports ownership provisions that keep majority ownership and governance of Australian international airlines in Australia.
- 121. Labor supports the inclusion of labour standards in Air Transport Agreements. Labor supports fair and equitable remuneration of aviation workers within the Australian and New Zealand Closer Economic Relations Trade Agreement region. Labor will take steps to ensure that the intent of this platform is given effect on Australia's airlines however they are structured.



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- 122. Labor supports the Civil Aviation Safety Authority's ongoing work in relation to safety and compliance.
- 123. Labor will ensure that aviation activity is prioritised on airport precincts and that other economic activity does not inhibit aviation at these sites. Labor will develop an integrated Sydney Aviation Plan that provides for Sydney's future airport needs. Labor supports a second airport for Sydney to serve the needs of the region and drives economic activity.
- 124. Labor will ensure that the operation of a second airport maximises economic activity and job creation in western Sydney and minimises environmental impacts. Labor will maintain the cap and curfew at Kingsford Smith Airport and implement the long-term operating plan maximising take-offs over water.

Shipping

- 125. Labor is committed to the revitalisation of a strong Australian-flagged shipping industry with a secure Australian workforce.
- 126. Revitalising Australian shipping is important for economic security, environmental protection, and national security reasons.
- 127. Over 99 per cent of trade to and from Australia is carried by ship. Australia has the fourth largest shipping freight task in the world. With the expansion of Australia's commodity trade, international shipping is becoming busier. Cruise shipping is also growing rapidly, delivering more international tourists to Australia, and around the coast.
- 128. Coastal shipping remains an important domestic freight mode, in competition with road and rail. Coastal shipping requires port access, and quality linkages to land transport infrastructure.
- 129. Labor will continue to support a broad package of measures aimed at revitalising the Australian shipping industry including taxation, regulatory and workforce development measures to provide a level playing field for Australian shipowners to employ more Australian seafarers, and to attract related functions to develop an industry cluster.
- 130. Labor will continue to support measures aimed at fostering Australian shipping and jobs, without closing the coast to international ships as many comparable nations have.
- 131. Labor will maintain its support and oversight of International Labour Organisation and International Maritime Organisation conventions, codes and recommendations.

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132. Labor supports the Australian Maritime Safety Authority's ongoing work in relation to safety, rescue coordination and compliance.

Transport and the environment

133. Our transport system needs to operate in harmony with the environment.
134. Labor supports evidence-based measures to manage noise, air and groundwater impacts from transport infrastructure, motor vehicles, trains, aircraft and ships.
135. Labor supports careful management of shipping impacts on the Great Barrier Reef and other sensitive marine environments.
136. Labor understands the importance of reducing transport related emissions in any transition to a low carbon economy. Given the relatively low emission intensity of sea freight, rail freight, public transport and active travel, Labor supports policies that recognise the value of this reduced intensity.

External territories

137. Labor recognises the need for special arrangements between the Commonwealth and the External territories that are tailored to the particular needs and circumstances of each territory.
138. Labor is committed to the good governance of all territories through the maintenance and improvement of the legislative framework for self-governing territories and laws and services for the non-self-governing territories.
139. The potential of our external territories and their people will be best realised when they have access to:
- Fair and equitable opportunities similar to that in Australian states and mainland territories;
 - A diversified economy that recognises the diverse strengths of their populations and environments;
 - Appropriate economic, social and cultural development strategies addressing the needs and circumstances of each territory; and
 - Governance arrangements that are equitable, fair, and sustainable and reflect islanders' desire for real decision-making power and responsibility and a level of autonomy.



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Northern Australia

140. Northern Australia, identified as the part of Australian north of the Tropic of Capricorn, makes a vital contribution to the national economy, particularly through its resources, agriculture and tourism industries. That is why Labor established the Northern Australia Ministerial Forum to collaboratively advance the sustainable development of the north.
141. Labor recognises the rich diversity of Northern Australian communities as well as its unique and fragile natural environments and the impacts of ongoing climate change.
142. Northern Australia has significant social service needs and economic infrastructure requirements. Labor will address ongoing infrastructure and policy bottlenecks to remove obstacles for future investment.
143. Labor believes in encouraging development in Northern Australia in a sustainable manner that protects the region's natural environment, its water resources and its many social and cultural assets, while harnessing its potential, including greater use of renewable energy sources.
144. Appropriate investment in water, energy, and transport and communications infrastructure is critical to the future development of Northern Australia.
145. Labor acknowledges that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are the traditional custodians of the land and today are major landowners in Northern Australia making them key partners for Northern development.
146. Labor will work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island communities in Northern Australia to tackle systemic disadvantage and ensure access to quality education, housing and basic services, and enable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to take advantage of employment opportunities.
147. Labor will work with relevant state and territory governments, industry, local government and the community to identify further opportunities for investment in Northern Australia.

Tourism

148. Tourism is a super-growth sector and will be a key driver of jobs and economic growth in Australia over coming decades. We can best fulfil the potential of Australia's tourism industry by:
 - Appointing a Minister for Tourism;



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- Ongoing support for Tourism 2020, Australia's first national strategy to enhance growth and competitiveness in the tourism industry, created by the former Labor Government;
- Maintaining tourism as a national investment priority;
- Investing in tourism infrastructure including airports, ports, roads and public transport;
- Supporting taxation arrangements that are conducive to the industry's growth;
- Working with the states and territories and Tourism Australia to ensure adequate resourcing and coordination of marketing and promotion of Australia domestically and internationally;
- Pursuing visitor visa reform to maintain and grow Australia's tourism competitiveness;
- Supporting the adoption of new technologies to enhance the visitor experience from start to finish;
- Providing adequate tourist forecasting and research services, recognising the significance of accurate and robust data to inform long-term government and industry investment;
- Taking steps to address the threat of climate change to Australia's prized natural assets, supporting sustainable tourism and protecting and promoting Australia's environmental and cultural heritage;
- Recognising that most tourism businesses in Australia are small businesses and appropriately targeting assistance and advice schemes to include tourism operators;
- Acknowledging cities as a key international gateway and drawcards in their own right, and the value of Labor's cities agenda to the industry;
- Helping drive tourism growth in regional Australia, and recognising the potential of tourism to create jobs and support local communities;
- Supporting education and training via a nationally recognised formal training package based on agreed industry standards engaging with governments, industry and unions to create and develop quality jobs in the tourism sector including appropriate training and safe work strategies with career options, appropriate recognition in wages of training and productivity outcomes; and
- Developing tourism projects to enhance employment and business opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in conjunction with appropriate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representative bodies, to foster tourism that builds a wider understanding of the culture of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.



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Uranium

149. The production of uranium and its use in the nuclear fuel cycle present unique hazards, risks and challenges including:
- Threats to human health and the local environment in the mining and milling of uranium and management of radioactive materials, which demand the enforcement of strict safety procedures;
 - The generation of products that are usable as the raw materials for nuclear weapons manufacture, which demands the enforcement of effective controls against diversion; and
 - The generation of radioactive waste by-products that demand permanently safe storage and management.
150. Labor accordingly will allow the mining, moving and export of uranium only under the most stringent conditions.
151. In relation to exports other than to India, Labor will allow the export of uranium only to those countries that observe the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, are committed to non-proliferation policies, and have ratified international and bilateral nuclear safeguards agreements. Labor will export uranium only to countries that maintain strict safeguards and security controls over their nuclear power industries.
152. In addition, Labor will:
- Strengthen export control regimes and the rights and authority of the International Atomic Energy Agency to manage global protocols to control standards of and movements of uranium and radioactive materials;
 - Participate in, strengthen and support international responses to violations of existing safeguard commitments;
 - Limit the processing of weapon usable material;
 - Maintain controls over the export of nuclear material and technology;
 - Universalise the International Atomic Energy Agency additional protocol making it mandatory for all states and members of the Nuclear Suppliers Group to adhere to the additional protocol as a condition of supply to all their transfers;
 - Criminalise actions of individuals and companies that assist in nuclear proliferation;
 - Develop an international guarantee of nuclear fuel supply to states foregoing sensitive nuclear technologies;

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- Encourage all nuclear states to join the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty or equivalent International Atomic Energy Agency instruments;
- Reserve the right to withhold supplies of uranium permanently, indefinitely or for a specified period from any country that ceases to observe the non-proliferation safeguards and security conditions applied to Australian uranium exports to that country, or which adopts nuclear practices or policies that do not further advance the cause of nuclear non-proliferation;
- Support the maintenance and enhancement of international and Australian safeguards to ensure that uranium mined in Australia, and nuclear products derived from it, are used only for civil purposes by approved instrumentalities in approved countries that are signatories to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty or with whom Australia has safeguard arrangements;
- Resource the International Atomic Energy Agency to ensure its effectiveness in undertaking its charter;
- Accept responsibility for ensuring safe management of nuclear materials through proper secure storage and management of nuclear materials generated by Australian uranium and nuclear processes; and
- Support measures that inform public debate of the science of nuclear processes.

153. Labor will progress this agenda through diplomatic and multilateral diplomacy. In doing so, Labor believes that as a non-nuclear armed nation and a good international citizen, Australia can make a significant contribution to promoting disarmament, the reduction of nuclear weapons and associated stockpiles, and the safe responsible use of civil nuclear technology.

154. In addition, Labor will:

- Vigorously and totally oppose the ocean dumping of radioactive waste;
- Prohibit the establishment of nuclear power plants;
- Prohibit all other stages of the nuclear fuel cycle in Australia without local and inclusive community consultation;
- Fully meet all our obligations as a party to the NPT, the IAEA and other international protocols;
- Remain strongly opposed to the importation and storage of nuclear waste that is sourced from overseas unless agreed to by those communities directly affected by such measures; and
- Seek to fully understand the future role Australia can play in global nuclear safety and sustainability including taking back for storage and management materials generated from Australian exported uranium.

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Chapter 4: A Clean Energy Future

Introduction

1. A clean energy future is at the heart of Labor's long-term plan to reshape our economy and cut carbon pollution. Labor's vision will transform Australia's economy to safeguard its growth over the coming decades. Australia's economy needs to remain competitive globally, and Labor's policy framework will ensure Australia works cooperatively with our international trading partners.
2. Labor understands the urgency of taking meaningful action on climate change. With 97 per cent of the world's scientists in agreement that climate change impacts will grip the world if something isn't done about greenhouse gas emissions, Labor's policies will ensure Australia does what's required to reduce its carbon pollution. Australia is particularly vulnerable to climate change. Australia suffered through its hottest year in 2013, and globally, 2014 was the hottest year on record. Fourteen of the hottest fifteen years on record globally have occurred in the last fourteen years. This affects our water security, coastal development, infrastructure, agriculture and health. The environmental consequences translate directly into economic costs and, as a hot and dry continent, Australia has more to lose from climate change than other developed countries. The longer we delay taking action, the harder and more expensive the change will be.
3. Global momentum has shifted in the past few years, with the world's biggest economies all taking major steps towards reducing carbon pollution and investing in new, cleaner technologies. The World Bank's 2014 State and Trends of Carbon Pricing report showed there were around 60 forms of carbon pricing mechanisms across the globe. By 2016, 3 billion people will live in cities or provinces where emissions trading schemes operate. Labor knows the cheapest and most effective way to tackle climate change is to put a legal cap on pollution, underpinned by a market mechanism that lets business work out the best way to operate within that cap. There also needs to be strong support for renewable energy development and generation.
4. The transition to a low pollution economy will affect workers and communities. This transformative period carries both opportunities and uncertainty for workers. Labor will work to ensure that jobs in the clean economy will provide security, decent wages and conditions.
5. Alongside climate change, broader environmental issues and environmental protection remain of critical concern to Labor and to Australia's future. This includes protecting our biodiversity and our treasured lived environments. By identifying, protecting and managing our built and cultural heritage, we are conserving a valuable asset and ensuring that these places will continue to be experienced and enjoyed by future generations.



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Labor values

6. There is an essential role for government in securing Australia's economic and environmental wellbeing.
7. Labor believes in constructive, inclusive debate and evidence-based policy. Our approach has been informed by scientists, environmental and climate stakeholders, farmers, business, industry and governments. Our consultation has been thorough and comprehensive and our policy has been based on the views of the community and the experts.
8. Climate change requires a global response. Australia has a responsibility to play a leading role in global efforts to mitigate climate change. As one of the biggest polluters per capita in the developed world, Australia should do its share to limit global warming to no more than two degrees Celsius, in line with the advice from the world's leading scientists and in cooperation with our global partners.
9. Labor recognises the passion of local environment conservation groups and the invaluable contribution they make to protecting and preserving Australia's environment. These groups play an important role in mobilising government action on local environmental issues and are critical, active participants in broader national conversations on issues such as climate change.
10. Protecting our rich biodiversity lies at the core of Australia's environmental protection intentions, requiring a brave, concentrated and proactive approach to genuine ecological sustainability.
11. Labor believes in developing a robust and integrated system of environmental management. Labor will develop improved environmental law that builds on Australia's best-practice environmental governance. It will reflect Australians' expectations that environmental protection is essential and will ensure an effective and efficient national approach to the management of matters of national environmental significance.
12. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people can provide valuable guidance, knowledge and advice on preserving Australia's environment through their connections to land and sea country. Labor will work with Traditional Owners to develop strategies that ensure sustainable use of Australia's natural resources.

Labor achievements

Climate change

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13. Labor:

- Ratified the Kyoto Protocol as one of the first acts of the Labor Government on coming to power in 2007;
- Expanded the Renewable Energy Target and legislated that 41,000GWh of Australia's large scale energy generation come from renewable sources by 2020, along with an uncapped rooftop solar program that has already reached its 2020 target;
- Developed a comprehensive suite of policy measures to ensure Australia transitioned to a clean energy future;
- Established the Climate Change Authority to provide independent advice on climate change policies;
- Established an Emissions Trading Scheme in Australia to cap carbon pollution and let business work out the cheapest and most effective way to operate – this led to a fall in Australia's carbon emissions by 40 million tonnes and a 10% reduction in the emissions intensity of the National Electricity Market; and
- Established the \$10 billion Clean Energy Finance Corporation, the \$1.2bn Clean Technology Program and the \$3.2 billion Australian Renewable Energy Agency, which together have attracted billions in supplementary private investments in Australia's renewable and low-carbon energy technology developments.

Environment and heritage

14. Labor:

- Established the most comprehensive plan to manage the Murray Darling Basin since Federation including \$1.8 billion in funding to restore environmental and water security to Australia's most important river system;
- Invested more than \$2 billion in the Caring for our Country program and aims to protect Australia's unique environment by supporting the contributions of volunteers and community groups;
- Funded national, regional and local Landcare programs;
- Took action in the International Court of Justice to put an end to commercial whaling in the Southern Ocean;
- Invested \$200 million in Reef Rescue to protect the Great Barrier Reef, one of the world's seven natural wonders and a World Heritage Area;



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- Introduced what was the world's largest network of marine reserves;
- Introduced the Water Trigger to require an assessment of the impact of coal seam gas and large coal mining projects on Australia's water resources;
- Extended the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area; and
- Negotiated the Tasmanian Forest Agreement to ensure sustainable use of Tasmania's forests.

Energy capacity and energy efficiency

15. Labor:

- Introduced uncapped rooftop solar program, which underpinned an explosion in the number of Australian households with rooftop solar, panels from 7,400 when were elected in 2007 to more than 1.2 million in 2013; and
- Oversaw a tripling in the number of jobs in the renewable energy sector and tripled wind power generation.

Labor priorities

Creating a clean energy future to address climate change

16. At the core of Labor's values is the understanding that effective climate change action is critical to Australia's growth and prosperity for future decades. Labor knows this action needs to begin now.
17. The most urgent response to climate change is reducing Australia's carbon pollution. As one of the world's biggest polluters per capita in the developed world, Australia has a responsibility to reduce its carbon pollution. Labor will ensure Australia plays a leading role in global efforts to mitigate the impact of climate change.
18. Labor is committed to the goal of limiting global warming to no more than 2 degrees and will ensure Australia's contribution to the task is equitable, fair and based on the best available independent scientific advice. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change suggests that this will require advanced economies to be close to net zero emissions by mid-century.
19. Labor will:

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- Introduce an Emissions Trading Scheme which imposes a legal limit on carbon pollution that lets business work out the cheapest and most effective way to operate within that cap. Labor’s cap on carbon pollution will be based on robust independent advice and reduce over time in accordance with Australia’s international commitments;
- Develop a comprehensive plan to progressively decarbonise Australia’s energy sector, particularly in electricity generation. At the heart of that plan will be a commitment to reinvigorate and grow Australia’s renewable energy industry, encourage energy efficiency and invest in low carbon energy solutions;
- Work to undo the damage that the Coalition Government has done to the renewable energy sector, and be ambitious in growing the renewable energy sector beyond 2020;
- Restore integrity, independence and capacity to the environment and climate change portfolios and relevant science agencies; and
- Work with the land sector and other stakeholders to store millions of tonnes of carbon in the land through better land and waste management.

20. In 2015 there is no restraint on releasing greenhouse gases into the atmosphere in Australia. A legal cap on carbon pollution underpinned by a market price creates a powerful incentive for all businesses to cut their pollution, by investing in clean technology or finding more efficient ways of operating.

21. Labor’s programs designed to transition Australia to a clean energy future will be underpinned by the principle of pursuing lowest cost abatement. There is still a need to pursue reform at a sectoral level to ultimately transition to a clean energy future. These sector-specific policies will include:

- Electricity, including renewable energy;
- Transport, including vehicle emissions standards; and
- The land sector.

22. Labor is committed to building a vibrant, clean technology industry in this country and to pursuing the enormous future job opportunities in new technologies and clean energy.

23. Labor will promote innovation and investment in renewable energy and encourage energy efficiency and low-carbon technologies. Our economy has successfully handled comparable structural changes over its history. In fact, transformative changes — new products and technologies, and the integration of our economy into the global economy set in train by



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the reforms of the 1980s and 1990s — and a willingness of Australians to embrace those changes, have underpinned rising prosperity and sustainable growth.

24. Policies to support industry and jobs must include a focus on regional workers and communities at the front line of the transition to a low pollution economy.
25. Labor recognises the importance of growing diverse regional economies in areas such as the Latrobe Valley, Colley District, the Illawarra and the Hunter Valley, as we make the transition to a low pollution economy while ensuring a just transition for affected workers and communities. These communities and their traditional industries have underpinned our prosperity and have been the source of jobs for generations of Australians. Labor will work with communities, unions and industry to develop a comprehensive regional development approach which supports the growth of sustainable new industries, technologies and practices.
26. Labor will promote collaborative planning between workers, employers and government to develop a full suite of policy measures to maximise competitiveness and job growth in all its forms—from production and maintenance, through to research, design and development.
27. Labor will work with communities, unions and industry to develop a comprehensive approach that supports the growth of sustainable new industries, technologies and practices. Labor will draw on international experience and world leading policies to further enhance clean technology, investment and employment opportunities for Australians.
28. Labor will continue to support the Clean Energy Finance Corporation and the Australian Renewable Energy Agency. Labor established these agencies in 2012 and together they have helped drive the explosion in renewable energy and energy efficiency technology development in Australia.
29. Labor is fully committed to a robust and independent Climate Change Authority to provide scientifically based advice and recommendations to help shape future policy direction
30. Labor will embrace these opportunities to reduce Australia's carbon pollution and expand jobs opportunities for the future.
31. Labor recognises the importance of supporting high carbon emitting industries to find ways to become more energy efficient and reduce emissions.
32. Labor recognises the importance of making training and skills programs available for workers wishing to build skills in energy efficient technologies and transition to new, clean energy or low pollution industries.



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33. Labor knows parts of Australia are feeling the impact of climate change now. Assisting communities adapt to a changing climate is central to Labor's long term plan to tackle the issues arising from reduced water and other resources, rising sea levels, warmer average temperatures and more frequent and intense extreme weather events.
34. Labor will work with state and territories and local councils and community organisations to assess their vulnerability to climate change and develop and implement strategies to address those challenges.
35. The emerging technologies in reducing carbon pollution from the transport industry will make significant reductions in Australia's total carbon emissions. Labor is committed to introducing national vehicle emission standards.
36. Labor acknowledges the importance of this reform as transport emissions make up 16 per cent of Australia's total emissions. Making significant reductions will go a long way to Australia achieving its global emissions reduction obligations.
37. Labor will model its measures on international jurisdictions that have been operating successful frameworks in this area.
38. The Climate Change Authority report on light vehicle emissions standards (June 2014) recommends reducing the emissions intensity for all light vehicles (including passenger and commercial) from the current 192 grams of CO₂ per km (g CO₂/km) to 105g CO₂/km in 2025 through the implementation of mandatory standards.

National Environmental Law

39. Labor believes the national government has an enduring responsibility to protect matters of national environmental significance.
40. Labor has a proud history of national environmental protection. These laws have been instrumental in protecting Australia's greatest natural treasures for decades.
41. Labor will develop improved frameworks to ensure a truly national approach to protection and management of Australia's natural resources. This will focus on:
 - Consideration of management, governance and decision making structures and responsibility;
 - Consistency in standards;
 - Efficiency and certainty in regulation including streamlining environmental assessment processes; and



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- Building resilience in the natural environment.

42. In the context of a comprehensive response to climate change, Labor will consider the appropriateness of a climate change trigger in the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Act 1999 and or successive framework.
43. Labor will consider the appropriateness of a trigger to cover Australia's system of national parks.

National and World Heritage

44. Labor recognises its international obligations to protected World Heritage Areas, and areas that are subject to international treaties such as Ramsar sites. Labor recognises human activity such as mining and oil drilling, as well as urban and commercial developments near World Heritage Areas, Ramsar and similar sites, have the potential to affect these areas. Labor will ensure that any proposal within the vicinity of a World Heritage Area, Ramsar or area subject to an international treaty, will be subject to a full independent Environmental Impact Statement, and be considered under environment protections and biodiversity conservation legislation.
45. The federal government has a responsibility to provide adequate heritage protection for Commonwealth properties of heritage significance. Our World Heritage Areas require coordinated management. Accordingly Labor will work with the States and Territories to better governance structures and management programs.
46. Labor will continue to support the investigation and nomination of areas suitable for future listing in cooperation with traditional owners, state and territory governments and other stakeholders.
47. Labor will work with the Queensland Government and traditional owners to pursue resolution of outstanding Cape York tenure issues and subsequently pursue World Heritage listing for appropriate areas of Cape York, recognising the importance of Commonwealth leadership and the consent of traditional owners.
48. Labor does not support mining or other resource extraction in national parks and World Heritage areas.

Securing the health of the Great Barrier Reef

49. The Great Barrier Reef forms part of Australia's national identity. Australia is renowned for its incredible natural beauty, and the Great Barrier Reef is central to that world-class



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reputation. Labor understands the cultural, environmental, social and economic significance of a healthy Great Barrier Reef ecosystem.

50. The Reef supports many industries employing tens of thousands of Australians and is enjoyed by millions of domestic and international visitors each year. But it's under threat. The survival of the Great Barrier Reef is dependent on the decisions of the Australian Government, industry and communities today.
51. Labor will fight to save the Reef by tackling climate change, improving water quality, strengthening our environmental laws and protecting the biodiversity of species and ecological habitats in the Great Barrier Reef.

Protecting biodiversity and natural resources

52. Labor is committed to protecting Australia's biological diversity through a national system of comprehensive adequate and representative parks and reserves, while using education, regulation and incentives to achieve ecologically sustainable use elsewhere in the landscape.
53. Labor will work with state and territory governments and landholders to develop, resource and implement threat abatement and recovery plans for threatened species and ecological communities, while preventing clearing that will have a significant impact on threatened ecological communities and critical habitats for threatened species.
54. Labor will work to ensure that Caring for our Country programs and other volunteer and community programs like Landcare support local agriculture, conservation and environmental priorities as well as contributing to national priorities to improve biodiversity and sustainable farm practices. Labor recognises the role of community groups and volunteer networks in raising awareness of local environmental issues and building community momentum. Labor will continue to support local and state based conservation councils and EDOs.
55. Labor will cooperate with the states, territories and landholders to achieve a net increase in Australia's vegetation cover, to improve its management and to end broad-scale clearing. Funding of state, territory and landholder projects will be conditional upon appropriate clearing controls being in place.
56. Labor supports Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and recognises that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' knowledge is a key to an environmentally and socially sustainable Australia.
57. Labor will:

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- Support employment programs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to work on and manage country;
- Support new opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, particularly those in remote and regional communities, to participate in a low carbon economy through initiatives such as carbon farming;
- Support Australians, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, living in remote communities reliant on diesel fuel for electricity to transition their use to low-carbon alternatives such as solar; and
- Encourage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' involvement in land management through various means, including national parks, tourism and state forests, particularly where this provides cultural, social, economic and environmental benefits.

58. Labor is committed to ensuring proper management and protection of our wetlands and will promote and honour Australia's obligations under the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands.

59. Labor is committed to maximising the social, economic and environmental benefits that flow from the sustainable management of Australia's forests.

A cleaner environment for living

60. Labor recognises and will support the Australian community's desire to live in a clean and healthy environment, and empower it to achieve that goal.

61. Labor recognises and will support the role of non-government and community organisations in advocacy and taking action for the protection of our environment and heritage.

62. Labor will support the development of industries that minimise resource consumption, waste and pollution generation.

63. Labor will work with state and territory governments to promote a coordinated national approach to waste. This approach will maximise the economic opportunities of a harmonised and strategic national waste reduction and recycling policies, and will be informed by the principles of ecologically sustainable development.

64. 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



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development of alternative technologies and, where possible, the elimination of harmful substances.

65. Labor believes nations have a responsibility for the appropriate disposal of hazardous wastes generated within their boundaries. Labor is committed to fulfilling Australia's obligations in the control of trans-boundary movements of hazardous waste.
66. Labor will support action to improve air quality and avert the serious health risks that air pollution represents, particularly by promoting national air quality standards and monitoring and reporting air pollution.

Building energy capacity

67. 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 developer of renewable and sustainable energy technologies.
68. Labor recognises the importance of and the community concern about coal seam natural gas from shales and tight formations. Labor will take action to ensure that it is conducted in a way that is sustainable, science based and safe in a way that manages environmental impacts and ensures sustainable local economic activity. Labor will ensure the industry operates at the highest environmental standards and will ensure the coal seam gas industry assesses and manages environmental and other impacts including on water reserves and co-existence with other agricultural activities. Labor also calls on the industry to constructively engage with affected landholders.
69. Increasingly, more efficient, diverse and clean energy supplies will enhance Australia's capacity for the downstream processing of minerals and other natural resources and more competitive manufacturing generally, thus providing employment benefits and the ability to ensure secure domestic gas supplies.
70. 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.
71. To improve our national energy capacity, Labor will continue to facilitate a process of cooperation and development involving state and territory governments, industry representatives, and unions to ensure Australia builds the necessary electricity industry transmission, distribution and generation facilities to meet Australia's electricity demands and ensure supply for the future for all Australians.

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- 72.** Labor will continue to encourage greater efficiency in the production, transmission and use of existing energy sources by:
- Maintaining a concerted and ongoing effort to encourage the greater use of clean and renewable energy sources and enabling technologies in Australia’s domestic, transportation and industrial energy consumption through demand management strategies;
 - Encouraging greater energy efficiency and consumer purchase of energy efficient products through consumer education programs, product standards and energy efficiency labelling schemes; and
 - Encouraging energy audits for the industrial, commercial, transportation and residential sectors to inform users of their relative energy efficiency and how this can be improved.
- 73.** Major opportunities are emerging in new and renewable energy technologies within the global energy market. Accordingly Labor will continue to:
- Support public and private sector research and development in innovative energy technologies and low-carbon technologies that are cleaner and more efficient;
 - Encourage Australian development, manufacture and commercialisation of renewable energy technologies and low-carbon technologies for both domestic and export markets; and
 - Encourage local and foreign investment to increase Australia’s renewable energy technology and low-carbon technology manufacturing capability.
- 74.** Labor’s national energy industry policy will continue 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.
- 75.** Labor will continue to ensure that household consumers are protected in the new national energy environment, through access to competitively priced energy, proper regulation of the national energy market and viable dispute resolution mechanisms. We will ensure that consumers are the focus of the energy sector and that network investments and costs are appropriately funded and fairly paid for by network users.

Preparing primary industries for climate change and future droughts

- 76.** Labor is committed to ensuring our agriculture sector is sustainable. To guarantee our food security and to fully capitalise on the Dining Boom, Australia’s agriculture sector must have



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a long-term future. That means ensuring that our farming practices are focused on the best and most efficient use of our limited natural resources. Changing climatic conditions including more regular and prolonged droughts make this all the more important.

77. Increasingly, investors and consumers alike will demand that farming practices are environmentally sustainable and animal welfare standards are respected.
78. Carbon farming can increase resilience to the impacts of climate change, protect our natural environment, and increase farm profitability and food production. Increasing carbon storage in agricultural soils improves soil health and productivity.
79. Revegetation will help restore degraded landscapes, provide biodiversity habitats and corridors, and help to address salinity, protect livestock and reduce erosion.
80. Labor supports Landcare and the uptake of sustainable farming practices and improved natural resource management.

Managing our water assets

81. Labor understands that addressing Australia's long-term water issues requires national leadership.
82. Responsible management of water assets requires a combination of; taking action on climate change, using water wisely, securing water supplies, supporting healthy rivers.
83. Labor is committed to addressing the long-term problems of the over-allocation of water resources of the Murray-Darling Basin, and the neglect of the health of its iconic rivers and wetlands. The problems facing the Murray-Darling Basin and other river systems will be exacerbated by the emerging impacts of climate change.
84. The Murray-Darling Basin is one of the most significant river systems in Australia with considerable cultural, social, environmental and economic value. Decades of over-extraction from the Basin left many areas of the Basin close to collapse during the drought of the early 2000s. Labor legislated the Murray-Darling Basin Plan in late 2012 to help realise the ambition of a healthy working Basin which underpins healthy rivers, strong communities and sustainable food production.
85. Labor notes that over 1,900 gigalitres of water have been recovered for the environment. This water is already delivering substantial environmental benefits in providing environmental flows to wetlands and floodplains across the Basin. Labor remains committed to the Murray-Darling Basin Plan which will keep the mouth of the River Murray open nine years out of ten, to enable the export of salt and sediment from the system.

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86. Labor supports the Murray-Darling Basin Plan which, within legal and physical constraints, will return enough water to the Basin to protect key environmental sites, including, but not limited to the Ramsar wetland sites. Labor calls for the continued bridging the gap to new Sustainable Diversion Limits as the Murray-Darling Basin Plan is implemented.
87. By continuing to purchase water from willing sellers and investing in water savings, Labor will improve the health of our rivers and facilitate an early transition in anticipation of lower Sustainable Diversion Limits under the Basin Plan.
88. Water is vital to the livelihood of regional and rural communities across the Murray-Darling Basin. That is why Labor is committed to continuing support for water efficiency projects in the Murray-Darling Basin to help rural and regional communities improve the efficiency and productivity of water usage.
89. By improving irrigation water management practices and on-farm water use efficiency, and by modernising our irrigation infrastructure, this investment will enable more crops to be grown with less water. This approach will boost regional economic and employment opportunities in the Basin, and help underpin the future prosperity of irrigation communities.
90. Labor recognises the excessive burden of current duplicative reporting requirements on water use in the Murray-Darling Basin. Labor will ensure that this burden is lifted from basin communities by moving to a common reporting format.
91. Climate change means we need to use water more wisely in our cities, at the same time as diversifying our urban water supplies and infrastructure so that we reduce our reliance on rainfall.
92. Labor will continue to support initiatives to improve water security for Australia's cities and towns, support for investment in wastewater recycling, desalination, stormwater harvesting and efficient water infrastructure.
93. Labor will support research and commercialisation of new technologies in improved water efficiency, desalination and water recycling.

Marine and coastal protection

94. Labor will achieve our marine ecological, economic and social objectives in an open, integrated, participatory and planned manner. Labor will use modern, best-practice public processes like marine spatial planning involving stakeholders in a transparent way, to create and establish a more rational, adaptive and strategic use of marine space and the



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interactions between its uses, including Australia's comprehensive network of marine reserves.

95. Labor will partner with traditional owners and local fishing communities across Australia that wish to manage their take of natural resources, their role in compliance activities and in monitoring the condition of plants and animals and the impact of human activities on local and regional biodiversity. We will work together to improve ways of educating the public about traditional and community connections to sea.
96. In Australian waters and throughout the world's oceans, Labor will encourage protection for iconic marine species like whales, dugongs, turtles and sharks, and will promote the conservation and research of key bioregional health indicator species.
97. Labor is committed to ensure Australia's waters are adequately protected from the risks associated with the use of super trawlers. Labor will ensure all super trawlers are thoroughly assessed using the most up-to-date science, thereby protecting our oceans and our recreational fishing spots.

Environmental diplomacy

98. Labor will re-establish Australia as a cooperative and engaged participant in international efforts to address climate change. Under Labor, Australia played a leadership role in developing effective climate policy and a re-elected Labor will see Australia return to its position as one of the most attractive countries to invest in clean energy and climate change mitigation actions.
99. While the rest of the world has moved towards taking meaningful action on climate change, Australia has regrettably fallen behind after the winding back of Labor's historic climate policies. Labor will ensure Australia works cooperatively with our major trading partners and the rest of the international community on climate change action.
100. Labor is committed to working within our region with vulnerable developing countries to adapt to climate change. Labor will help our neighbours, primarily in the Pacific and Timor Leste to prepare for and adapt to the effects of climate change.
101. Labor considers the protection of the global environment a vital foreign policy objective, as environmental degradation contributes to social and political conflict and undermines regional and international security.
102. Labor will consider ways to ensure greater transparency and accountability in extractive industries to ensure mining, oil and gas revenues are used for economic development and poverty reduction in resource rich countries.



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103. Existing international environmental protection regimes need to be strengthened and new arrangements developed to address emerging issues. Labor will take a leadership role in multilateral forums that consider issues of environmental protection and sustainable development.
104. Labor will work to further strengthen the Antarctic Treaty System with particular emphasis on enhancing environmental protection.
105. Labor will work through international forums to address unsustainable fishing practices worldwide with the establishment of protected areas a particular priority.
106. We will energetically seek to combat unsustainable, illegal and unregulated fishing in the Southern Ocean.
107. Labor remains firmly opposed to all commercial and scientific whaling, and will vigorously pursue all options to implement Australia's objective of a worldwide ban on whaling.
108. Labor is committed to ensuring that the landmark ruling in the International Court of Justice against Japan's Antarctic 'scientific' whaling program is adhered to by Japan.



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Chapter 5: Decent jobs with fair pay and conditions

Introduction

1. The Australian Labor Party was formed to improve the lives of working people. Early Labor governments transformed working conditions in Australia. Now, the rapid pace of technological change and the transformation of the workforce pose significant challenges to improve our standard of living in the future.
2. We must ensure that every Australian has the opportunity to develop the skills they need to adapt to changes in the economy. Every individual who can work should be given that chance. Our economy needs more working people, and many people want more work. We need to find the best way to overcome this mismatch.
3. Fairness in the workplace is fundamental to Labor values. We must also make sure that change isn't an excuse to erode hard-won working conditions. Insecure work threatens those conditions. Protecting the rights of working people will always be central to Labor's purpose. Working people have to be able to join together to bargain collectively for improvements to their lives.
4. Part of Labor's modern vision is improving work-life balance, enabling time for parenting and family life. It is also about leading Australia's transition to a high-skill, high-wage, diverse and sustainable economy. It is responding to the challenges of an ageing society in a way that supports Australians having greater choice and control over their working lives.
5. Inequality is not only bad for society; it is bad for economic growth. This is something Labor has always known. At the heart of addressing inequality are decent jobs with fair pay and conditions.

Labor values

6. Labor believes in the dignity of work. A secure, meaningful job is a fundamental source of self-respect and identity, providing a sense of purpose and belonging and fostering social inclusion.
7. It is the role of Government to provide unemployed Australians with the support they need to transition into meaningful work.
8. Labor believes in increasing workforce participation.
9. Labor believes it is in the community interest to support both parents to take time off to be involved in the care of their new baby.



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10. Labor believes pregnancy discrimination should be eliminated.
11. Labor believes paid parental leave helps new parents stay connected with the workplace when they take time off to care for a baby, and that it assists employers retain skilled staff.
12. Labor believes that childcare and parental leave remove barriers to work for parents and improve productivity for the economy.
13. Education and training is the bedrock of social mobility in Australia and that the lifelong acquisition of skills and knowledge creates the opportunity for individuals to improve their living standards and for the nation to grow and prosper.
14. Labor believes in creating jobs through investing in skills and training, infrastructure, innovation and entrepreneurship.
15. Labor believes in the right to equal pay for work of equal or comparable value.
16. Labor believes all employees are entitled to a strong safety net of fair, relevant and enforceable minimum standards, including through legislation, the award system, and minimum wages.
17. People should have the right not to work excessive or unsociable hours, and should be adequately compensated when they do. People should be able to access common leisure time on weekends and holidays.
18. Employees undertaking the same work in the same workplace should be afforded the same entitlements.
19. Government should support people to balance their work and family life including flexibility for employees to combine work and family responsibilities. People should be able to take personal leave for caring responsibilities.
20. It is the role of government to protect people from labour market risk not of their own making.
21. Labor believes in protecting people from discrimination in obtaining and keeping employment.
22. Labor believes in protecting people from unfair dismissal.
23. Labor believes in international labour standards and their effective implementation in Australia.



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24. Every workplace injury is preventable. Industry, employers, trade unions and workers should be supported to reduce workplace risk, hazards and injury to achieve the highest standard of workplace safety.
25. If a worker is injured at work, on the way to work, or as a result of the negligence of their employer or a third party, their rights to both statutory no fault benefits and common law compensation must be respected and protected.
26. The dignity of injured workers, and their rights to be compensated for their injuries, should be protected. Injured workers should be rehabilitated and assisted to return to work in a suitable role.
27. Employees have fundamental democratic rights to representation in the workplace, that employees have a right to freedom of association, and that employees' rights to organise and be represented by a union must be respected.
28. Employees are best represented in their workplace through membership of their relevant trade union and that unions and union delegates have an important role to play in giving employees a voice at work, building harmonious and productive workplaces, facilitating workplace change, resolving disputes as they arise, improving occupational health and safety, and improving access to ongoing training opportunities.
29. Australia's trade unions, as the legitimate representative of the workforce, should be fully consulted and involved across a range of industrial, economic and social issues.
30. Labor believes in the right to collective bargaining in good faith.
31. Australia's workplace relations system should balance the needs of business with the important social and economic need of creating and sustaining good, secure jobs.
32. Labor believes workplace relations laws should promote harmonious and productive relationships between employers and employees.
33. Labor believes workplace relations laws should promote job security, good wages and working conditions and employment growth.
34. Labor believes all employees and employers, in every workplace, are entitled to the same basic rights and responsibilities.
35. Labor believes that we should adhere to these values in Government as an employer.



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36. Balance in the workplace is achieved through an independent umpire, acting in the national interest, who can ensure the fair and effective resolution of disputes and the fair application of workplace laws.
37. Government should be responsible for providing practical, quick and low-cost assistance to help employers and employees understand their responsibilities.

Labor achievements

38. Labor has:
- Successfully navigated Australia through the Global Financial Crisis with unemployment always below 6 per cent;
 - Introduced Job Services Australia to provide individual pathways to employment and to assist the most disadvantaged job seekers;
 - Introduced the Remote Jobs and Communities Program to create opportunities in remote indigenous communities;
 - Developed a place-based approach to tackling disadvantage;
 - Uncapped disability employment services and changed income support arrangements for people with disability to remove disincentives to work;
 - Legislated to protect out-workers;
 - Championed equal pay for work of equal or comparable value;
 - Delivered anti-discrimination laws;
 - Delivered Australia's first national Paid Parental Leave scheme and Dad and Partner Pay and extended the minimum standard for unpaid parental leave. More than 500,000 families with new babies have already benefited;
 - Increased the child care rebate to help parents with the costs of child care;
 - Invested in training, including through trade training centres to meet the skills shortage and train the next generation of tradespeople;
 - Created the collective bargaining and the award system;
 - Abolished Work Choices and stood firm against attempts to reintroduce it;
 - Built a decent safety net for pay and conditions including the National Employment Standards and the "better off overall" test;
 - Created compulsory superannuation for all workers;
 - Enshrined in legislation workers compensation and occupational health and safety; and



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- Established a range of agencies focused on workplace safety, including Safe Work Australia, the Road Safety Remuneration Tribunal and the Asbestos Safety and Eradication Agency.

Labor priorities

Transition to work

39. Labor is committed to helping more people participate in the workforce through a combination of active labour market programs, support, incentives and responsibilities. Labor is committed to an effective employment services system that is based on evidence of what works to help people achieve sustainable and meaningful employment and which helps employers meet their labour and skill needs.
40. Labor is committed to an effective employment services system that is based on evidence of what works to help people back into work and which helps employers meet their labour and skill needs.
41. Labor is committed to ensuring the integrity of employment services, in the interest of job seekers, business and taxpayers.
42. Labor is committed to improving employment opportunities and support for disadvantaged job seekers including young people, women, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, people with disability and the long term unemployed, older Australians and retrenched workers. Labor is committed to an approach that recognises the transition from school, university and vocational education into employment.
43. Labor is committed to initiatives that will support people who live in locations where there is intense disadvantage to participate in employment.

Improving participation for carers

44. Labor is committed to helping people manage their work and caring responsibilities through paid parental leave, rights to unpaid parental leave of up to two years, the right to request part-time work, or other flexible work arrangements, and the right to work reasonable but not excessive hours.
45. Labor is committed to building on the national paid parental leave scheme for a child's primary carer and their partner.



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46. Labor will continue to encourage employers to top up the earnings of workers receiving paid parental leave so they can enjoy their regular income and entitlements while on parental leave.
47. Labor is committed to affordable, quality childcare and before and after school care, and will consider what taxation, superannuation, work and industry arrangements are optimal for that purpose.
48. Labor is committed to flexible working arrangements to accommodate unpaid caring work, without discrimination, financial or otherwise.
49. Labor is committed to ensuring that the right to request changes to working arrangements to meet caring responsibilities is equitable for all employees.
50. Labor is committed to effective support for transition to work when caring responsibilities change, including access to education and training opportunities.
51. Labor is committed to regulation and education for employers to promote equal opportunity, gender pay equity and work and family balance.
52. Labor is committed to improving gender pay equity including through effective data collection from business by government.
53. Labor is committed to the development of an equal pay for equal work strategy underpinned by legal obligations.
54. Labor is committed to taking action to bridge the gap in women's retirement incomes.

Improving participation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

55. Labor is committed to halving the gap in employment outcomes between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and other Australians by 2018, supporting 100,000 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to find and sustain a job by 2018.
56. Labor is committed to working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to improve employment opportunities and the job readiness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, whether they live in urban areas or remote communities.
57. Labor is committed to supporting procurement opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' businesses and otherwise supporting the growth of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander business sector.



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- 58. Labor is committed to working with communities and businesses to develop economic, employment and training opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, including in remote communities.
- 59. Labor is committed to ensuring that participation programs in remote communities focus on skill-formation and are not a substitute for real employment.

Investing in Skills and Social Mobility

- 60. Labor is committed to helping Australians acquire the skills they and the labour market need now and in the future.
- 61. Labor is committed to working in partnership with industry, union and professional representative bodies to deliver high quality training that will equip people with nationally recognised and transferrable skills for current and emerging employment opportunities; and that will improve productivity, and make our workplaces internationally competitive, as well as improve job satisfaction and employment prospects.
- 62. Labor is committed to effective industry and government co-investment models to upskill existing workforces, including in language, literacy, numeracy and digital skills.
- 63. Labor is committed to apprenticeships and traineeships that deliver for the individual and industry, for young people and for mature-age workers.
- 64. Labor is committed to working with state and territory governments to ensure we have a strong and responsive TAFE system.
- 65. Labor is committed to ensuring that high quality training is delivered irrespective of whether the provider is private or public sector.
- 66. Labor is committed to industry-led skills councils with representation from employers and unions.
- 67. Labor is committed to protecting vulnerable individuals from unscrupulous practices in the training sector and that there are appropriate consequences for such improper conduct.
- 68. Labor is committed to providing training opportunities to Australians who are vulnerable to unemployment.



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Jobs with decent pay and conditions

69. Labor is committed to a modern award system that is relevant to the workplaces of the 21st century, while also addressing the needs of workers in different industries and occupations.
70. Labor is committed to working with State and Territory Governments to achieve a national minimum standard for long service leave to form part of the National Employment Standards.
71. In delivering a modern workplace relations system, Labor will work with state and territory governments to ensure consistent treatment of public holidays, including the issue of Easter Sunday and the treatment of Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day where they fall on weekends.
72. Labor is committed to wage levels for apprentices and trainees that fairly balance the need for a living wage with the need to encourage employers to train the next generation of skilled employees.
73. Labor is committed to promoting better skilled and secure jobs through industry driven workforce development research and planning and the establishment of a tripartite government agency as an authority on workforce development policy advice and to conduct skills and workforce research, including into the quality and security of jobs and the future working life in Australia.
74. Labor is committed to the retention of penalty rates for excessive or unsociable hours, and for weekends and public holidays.
75. Labor is committed to a minimum wage that will support decent living standards.
76. Labor is committed to addressing the gender pay gap, including by requiring Fair Work Australia to take into account the principle of pay equity when conducting period reviews of modern awards.
77. Labor will not seek to reduce industrial obligations or terms and conditions through outsourcing in Government.
78. Labor is committed to a workplace relations system that will reduce the incidence of underemployment and insecure work.
79. Labor will work with State and Territory Governments, employers and unions to facilitate the portability of entitlements including through industry-wide schemes.



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80. Labor is committed to supporting employers and unions to develop working time arrangements that are consistent with employees' preferences and needs and that will reduce excessive working hours and maximise employment creation.
81. Labor is committed to strengthening the laws that prohibit sham contracting.
82. Labor is committed to an objective test for determining when a worker is a casual.
83. Labor is committed to protecting labour hire workers.
84. Labor is committed to protecting vulnerable seafarers in the coastal trade and to promoting fair labour standards in the Australian shipping industry.
85. Labor recognises the disadvantaged position of outworkers in the Textile, Clothing and Footwear sector. Outworkers require specific regulatory protection in order to control the exploitative conditions under which they are employed and ensure they are deemed to be employees and receive all employee entitlements including superannuation.
86. Labor is committed to considering the issues around fly-in, fly-out working conditions, including the protections, health and wellbeing of workers and their families.
87. Labor will work with employers, unions and community organisations to remove obstacles to the employment of people with disability.
88. Labor is committed to preventing transfer of business, corporate restructuring, phoenixing, insourcing or outsourcing arrangements to be used to avoid obligations in the Fair Work Act, an award or a collective agreement.
89. Labor is committed to redundancy pay as a basic employment right.
90. Labor is committed to protecting employee entitlements from the risk of company and market failure with a Fair Entitlements Guarantee that includes redundancy pay (up to four weeks per year of service), annual leave, long service leave, notice, superannuation and unpaid wages.
91. Labor is committed to introducing an improved ranking of employee entitlements relative to other creditors, ensuring that employers and directors meet their responsibilities, and ensure that any burden placed on taxpayers is reasonable.
92. Labor is committed to amending corporations law to strengthen the recovery of employee entitlements including prohibiting corporate and director conduct which has the



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consequence of preventing recovery. Employee creditors and their representatives should also have the capacity to directly recover employee entitlements.

93. Employers should be obliged to make proper provision for employee entitlements. Labor is committed to developing further mechanisms to protect workers' superannuation in the event of corporate collapse.
94. Labor is committed to supporting the work of the International Labour Organisation, particularly within our region, to improve international labour standards and champion respect for internationally recognised workplace rights.

Safety at work

95. Labor will advance its workplace safety agenda through Safe Work Australia, the national body overseeing the development of model Occupational Health and Safety laws.
96. Labor is committed to working cooperatively with states and territories to develop national Occupational Health and Safety Laws that reflect best health and safety practice within Australia and internationally.
97. Labor is committed to tripartite oversight of workers' compensation and workplace safety.
98. Labor is committed to working with employers, unions and the States and Territories to restore dignity and support for injured workers who have suffered as a result of the erosion of their rights and benefits.
99. Labor is committed to improving Comcare to ensure that injured workers have access to fair compensation for their injuries or illness, and are rehabilitated and assisted to return to work in a suitable role.
100. Labor does not support any changes to Comcare that would allow employers to exit other Australian Workers' Compensation schemes, thereby undermining the viability of those schemes. Labor does not support any move to outsource or privatise Comcare.
101. Labor is committed to working cooperatively with employers, unions and States and Territories to develop a national regulatory framework for Occupational Health and Safety and Workers' Compensation in the shipping, offshore oil and gas, and stevedoring industries.
102. Labor is committed to improving workplace safety in high risk sectors including on farms, fishing vessels and in forests with farm organisations, unions and governments; through



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research, raising the profile of safety issues, codes of practice, and where these means fail, appropriate regulation.

103. Labor is committed to protecting owner-drivers and employees in the road transport industry by maintaining safe rates, conditions and payments systems for employees and owner-drivers; covering all parties in the transport supply chain; and by a strong and effective education and enforcement regime.
104. Labor is committed to protecting the community from exposure to asbestos-related disease, in cooperation with states and territories, by improving asbestos awareness, and management and removal of asbestos from the built environment.
105. Labor is committed to working towards a full world-wide ban on the mining, manufacture and use of asbestos, to be implemented and oversighted by tripartite international processes and to ensure that ongoing protection and support is provided to victims of asbestos-related disease and their families and to ensure that people are protected from asbestos and asbestos related diseases.
106. Labor is committed to providing the highest level of protection to the community, workers and the environment from chemicals by ensuring the efficient and timely assessment of all chemicals; by requiring safety data to be complete, up to date and comprehensive (including nano forms of bulk chemicals) and by reducing the risks posed by chemicals.

The right to organise and be represented

107. Labor is committed to employees' right to access union representation at work in reasonable locations at appropriate times.
108. Labor is committed to ensuring delegates are able to organise and effectively represent employees, including paid training leave.
109. Labor is committed to a low-paid bargaining stream in which workers who are substantially reliant on the safety net are able to participate in bargaining, with the involvement of third parties where relevant, through a special authorisation from the independent umpire.
110. Labor is committed to including unions alongside business, community and other appropriate interests in constituted boards, committees and consultative bodies that provide advice to the government.
111. Labor is committed to working with trade unions and employers to ensure that employees have access to adequate information on their workplace rights, relevant industrial agreements, occupational health and safety and other employment information.



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- 112. Labor is committed to working with trade unions and employers to ensure due respect for workers' rights to join a union without hindrance or discrimination, and using modern payment methods.
- 113. Labor is committed to promoting and ensuring good faith bargaining in workplaces including through the development of guidelines on good faith conduct in negotiations that allow access to and assistance from the independent umpire to resolve disputes.

The workplace relations system

- 114. Labor is committed to ensuring that all employees and employers have equal access to assistance from the independent umpire to resolve disputes including by requiring that dispute resolution procedures in agreements provide for arbitration where disputes cannot be resolved through discussion, conciliation or mediation.
- 115. Labor is committed to the Fair Work Commission and the Fair Work Ombudsman ensuring understanding of and compliance with workplace laws.
- 116. Labor is committed to effective, low-cost, informal and prompt resolution of disputes through the Fair Work Commission, the Fair Work Ombudsman and small claims procedures in the courts.
- 117. Labor is committed to providing a balanced and effective compliance regime, which will provide procedural and substantive fairness to all parties in the construction industry.
- 118. Labor is committed to working with State Governments to develop a truly national workplace relations system for the private sector.

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Chapter 6: New opportunities for an ageing Australia

Introduction

1. Australia's population is undergoing a profound change. There are more people reaching Age Pension eligibility age each year than those reaching working age. More of us are living longer. This longevity is a result of advances in health, technologies and lifestyles. While this demographic shift creates some challenges, it is a historic achievement which provides social and economic opportunities for the nation. This is to be celebrated, not perceived as either a problem or a burden. Governments have a responsibility to ensure that senior Australians get the support, security, care and services they need into the future.
2. Senior Australians want to contribute to the Australian economy and society through engagement in business, education, employment and volunteerism. Australians wish to live active, happy, healthy and productive lives in their retirement and they should be supported to do so.

Labor values

3. Labor sees ageing as a social and economic asset to be celebrated and harnessed.
4. Labor believes in building communities which enable senior Australians to lead healthy and productive lives.
5. All Australians deserve respect, dignity, security and choice as they age.
6. Labor believes in the provision of support and services to senior Australians including housing assistance, public transport and community infrastructure, which will enable Australians to live longer and better lives.
7. Labor created the pension and we have protected it for more than 100 years.
8. Labor built universal superannuation and we will always ensure that Australia's post-retirement income system is strong and sustainable, giving senior Australians the financial support and security they deserve.
9. Senior Australians should be free from the atrocities of elder abuse and neglect, whether intentional or unintentional. Senior Australians should be free to live without fear of physical, psychological, emotional, sexual or financial abuse.
10. Labor believes in a fair and equitable society where older Australians are recognised for their contribution to our national prosperity and economic development. Senior

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Australians deserve to be honoured and supported in their continued contributions, whether in employment, volunteering, caring or other roles in their community.

11. Labor is committed to removing barriers to mature age workforce participation, including tackling age discrimination and providing better and more flexible work environments for older Australians.
12. Labor appreciates the contribution of older Australians as mentors in business and community life.
13. Older Australians are entitled to affordable, accessible and high quality aged care services.
14. Australia has the skills, talents and abilities to protect and grow aged care services and expertise as trade and export opportunities continue to emerge.
15. Older Australians should be able to access fast, reliable and affordable broadband to stay connected with family and friends, provide opportunities for employment and business, and where appropriate, access health and other services.

Labor Priorities

16. In Government, Labor made the aged care system stronger, more sustainable, more transparent and easier to access through its Living Longer, Living Better reforms.
17. Labor remains committed to implementing the Living Longer Living Better reforms and will develop policies to:
 - Ensure senior Australians can participate to their full capacity and potential in the economy and in community life;
 - Meet the challenge of workforce needs including wages and conditions, skills development, professional development and career advancement, of senior Australians;
 - Put an emphasis on wellness, independence and ageing in place, including addressing chronic health conditions, the importance of independence and mobility, fall prevention and wound management;
 - Improve and enhance access to health care services in the community, at home and in residential aged care facilities;
 - Support educational programs such as Broadband for Seniors to improve senior Australians' access to the benefits of modern information and communications technologies;



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- Support older Australians in reskilling as they transition through different phases of work and transition into semi-retirement and retirement;
- Deal with the unique challenges faced by senior Australians in regional, rural and remote areas, senior Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and those from LGBTI communities and from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities;
- Improve and enhance legal protections, consumer protections and financial security for senior Australians;
- Address discriminatory perceptions of senior Australians which may hinder their full participation in society;
- Promote the value of older Australians, while tackling age-discrimination and elder abuse;
- Address the challenge posed by the growing numbers of Australians experiencing dementia;
- Enhance access to quality palliative care and provide Australians with better control and choice over end of life planning by increasing awareness and uptake of advanced care plans; and
- Determine the true cost of care through independent research and in consultation with stakeholders.

Retirement Incomes

18. Labor acknowledges that Australia has an ageing population and that by 2050 there will be approximately four times as many 80 year olds as there are today, twice as many 65 year olds and 2.7 people in the workforce for every person aged 65 years or older.
19. All senior Australians deserve to share in Australia's improving community living standards, in their retirement.
20. Labor believes in pursuing policy settings in superannuation and financial services that equitably maximise retirement incomes and take pressure off the aged pension system.
21. Labor believes in providing a strong and sustainable pension system that helps ensure that older Australians can live with dignity and financial security.
22. Labor will maintain and strengthen pension indexation that reflects pensioners' rising costs of living and broader community living standards.
23. A highly skilled, ethical, professional financial services industry is essential for the financial well-being of senior Australians.

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24. As many Australians as possible should be able to access high quality and affordable financial advice, particularly in the context of making decisions regarding their retirement incomes.
25. Lifting the standards for financial advice is the best way to encourage more Australian's to undertaken retirement planning.
26. Labor will continue to support strong consumer protections that ensure that senior Australians' best interests are protected in the provision of financial advice.

Ageing and Aged Care

27. Australia's aged care system must give every Australian:
 - The right to access quality care services appropriate to their needs;
 - Greater control over their own care arrangements;
 - Access to a fair and sustainable aged care system; and
 - Access to quality care provided by a highly qualified and well paid workforce capable of meeting their needs.
28. Aged care policies should promote independence, wellness and the continuing contribution and active involvement of older Australians, with their friends, families and communities.
29. All senior Australians have a right to safe and secure aged care services, whether they are provided in a residential facility or in the home.
30. Many Australians, as they age, come to rely on the support provided by the aged care sector with services ranging from low level home support with domestic chores to full residential care. Labor will seek to align services with the needs and preferences of older Australians, delivered with an emphasis on the principle of 'consumer directed care' and in keeping with Labor's *Living Longer, Living Better* aged care reforms.
31. Labor will take into account demographic changes and rural and regional supply challenges with a view to ensuring the supply of aged care services appropriately meets current and future demand. Labor is committed to the provision of an adequate number of residential aged care places offering a high standard of care and subject to relevant regulation.
32. A growing system of providing support and care services in the home is vital to meeting the needs of Australia's ageing population. Senior Australians want to stay in their own homes for as long as is possible. Labor is committed to the provision of services that help older



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Australians remain independent and in their own homes, close to their family and community, wherever possible.

33. Labor remains committed to:
- Creating opportunities for residents of aged care facilities, their families and other interested parties, to have their voices heard in relation to the quality and nature of care provided;
 - Providing quality residential aged care for those who need it; and
 - Maintaining a strong and robust complaints process.
34. The quality of residential aged care includes the recognition of the social needs of residents as essential to their care and well-being.
35. Labor recognises the need to provide culturally appropriate aged care, including strategies that address:
- The propensity of older Australians from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse backgrounds experiencing dementia to revert to their first language;
 - Discrimination against Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex senior Australians in aged care facilities; and
 - The need for older Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to maintain contact with their culture and country.
36. Labor recognises the profound grief, suffering and loss experienced by members of the Stolen Generations as a result of forced removals and other past government policies. Accordingly, Labor recognises the need for appropriate aged care services that take into consideration their differing needs.
37. For Forgotten Australians and Former Child Migrants, the impact of childhood experiences in institutions and children homes is ongoing. These ‘care-leavers’ have special needs in accessing aged care services and deserve an aged care system that is responsive and appropriate for their needs.
38. Labor acknowledges the importance of preventive health measures and ongoing vigilance with regard to senior Australians’ health, with a view to tackling chronic illnesses and keeping seniors as healthy as possible.



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Quality Aged Care Workforce

39. Labor recognises the valuable work performed by staff in the aged care system, including nursing, allied health professional and personal care and support staff. Labor will work to ensure that the aged care workforce is properly paid and supported and that incentives are put in place to attract and retain staff in the aged care sector.
40. There are acute workforce shortages in the aged care sector. Labor will work with the sector on the development and implementation of an aged care workforce strategy that addresses career and training pathways, improved management, supervision and wages.
41. Labor is committed to working with industry stakeholders to achieve sector reforms including properly benchmarked rates of pay delivered through appropriate industrial instruments.
42. Labor is committed to fair and competitive wages and conditions for aged care workers delivered through an open and sustainable pricing system.
43. Labor believes in transparency and accountability in funding to aged care providers and ensuring that every dollar provided in public funding is directed to ensuring quality of care.
44. Quality care can be delivered only through safe and sustainable staffing levels, and appropriate skill-mix, across the aged care sector. Labor is committed to working with stakeholders to achieve this policy outcome.

Dementia

45. Labor recognises the growing incidence of dementia as one of the biggest health challenges of the 21st century, both in Australia and across the world. Living with dementia can be confusing and frightening, for the sufferer and their family and friends.
46. All people experiencing dementia should be treated with dignity, respect and compassion and should have access to quality home or community care and support or residential care facilities.
47. People living with dementia should be supported so they can stay connected to their communities and remain independent as far as is possible.
48. Communities need support to enable people living with dementia to contribute. Labor believes in supporting local communities to deliver improved dementia awareness, dementia-friendly community infrastructure, education and training programs on

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dementia and employment opportunities and the provision of appropriate support programs for people experiencing dementia.

49. Labor applauds the great advances Australian researchers, scientists and practitioners have made to find a cure, improve treatment and develop appropriate models of care. Labor is committed to ensuring Australia continues to invest in this vital work.

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Chapter 7: A world-class education for all Australians

Introduction

1. Every Australian has the right to a great education. Education is central to personal fulfilment and the future prosperity of our nation. It underpins our culture and our productive capacity. Labor's goal is to make Australia one of the most highly educated and skilled nations on earth.
2. Labor has always been the party for opportunity in education. We see education as the great enabler that helps individuals achieve their full potential, gives our industries the knowledge and skills they need to innovate and become more productive, and promotes social mobility and social harmony. Successive Labor governments have established and invested in education at all levels: early childhood, the primary and secondary years, Vocational Education and Training and higher education.
3. The social and economic transition that Australia is undergoing elevates the importance of education. Too many students, particularly from disadvantaged communities, are not reaching their educational potential. Too many children still have their future determined by their postcode. Our education system must prepare a new generation of Australians for the jobs of tomorrow.

Labor values

4. All Australians, regardless of their social background, have the right to a high quality education to enable them to fulfil their potential.
5. Quality education in the early years is crucial for child's development. Early childhood education should therefore be universally available, affordable and of the highest quality.
6. Every student in every school should have access to a quality education that meets their individual needs.
7. Every Australian in every community should be able to access free, secular, high quality government schooling and government policies should recognise this. Adequate public funding significantly contributes to the quality of public education and training.
8. Greater equity in educational outcomes is important for strengthening social inclusion and promoting opportunity. Neither background nor disadvantage should be a barrier to educational achievement for any child.



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9. Labor is committed to greater transparency and accountability in our schools and education institutions.
10. The right to education includes an environment free from bullying and harassment, including racist, sexist or homophobic bullying and harassment.
11. Quality vocational education and training is a crucial driver of participation and productivity and a significant contributor to social inclusion and civic participation. For millions of Australian school-leavers, it is the entry point to work and further education. To deliver the high-skilled workers and citizens of the future, engaged in lifelong learning, vocational education and training must be a national priority – with a strong public sector technical and further education –TAFE – at its heart, supplemented by a quality private sector.
12. Labor is committed to ensuring that access to higher education is based on talent and hard work, not on a student's bank balance or family income. We will never support policies that would reduce access to higher education for students from low-income or disadvantaged backgrounds.
13. Labor is committed to excellence in all aspects of higher education from teaching and learning, to research and engagement with industry and the community. We value universities as critical drivers of social and economic wellbeing within their regions, and as the bedrock of Australia's innovation system. As public institutions, universities must work with governments to address national priorities and ensure our nation continues to prosper in a rapidly changing world.
14. Labor believes opportunities should be available through our educational institutions including Vocational Education and Training, and universities, for career enhancing learning and life-long learning in older age.
15. Labor believes education and training is fundamental to reducing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' disadvantage and providing opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Labor is committed to working in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island communities and families to develop and implement education and training access, attendance and outcomes in order to close this gap.

Labor priorities

Early Childhood: The best start for every child

16. Labor values early childhood education and care as both a priority for Australia's economic interests and a priority for families.

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17. Labor believes that Australia must continue to expand access to affordable, high quality, integrated early learning and care programs. Labor also believes early education and care programs should meet the learning and development needs of individual children, including children with disability. Labor understands the importance of early intervention programs for children at risk, and children with extra educational or developmental needs.
18. Labor understands the critical importance of high quality learning and development experiences in the first five years of life to children's cognitive and non-cognitive development. Labor also understands the importance of play based learning, and that early childhood education and care has a proven link to life outcomes. As a result, learning and development must be at the centre of our system of early childhood education and care. Creating this 21st Century early childhood education and care system is the responsibility of all levels of government.
19. Labor recognises the long term economic and social benefits of investing in the early years. Quality early childhood programs offer a strong return on investment through reduced expenditure on later interventions, and are the foundation of a skilled and productive workforce. Labor believes that early childhood education and care is the first step in lifelong learning and enrichment.
20. Labor acknowledges that expenditure on early education and care in Australia is currently below the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development average. Labor is committed to improving standards and access to care so that Australian children do not fall behind those in other comparable countries.
21. Labor acknowledges the evidence that quality early education in the year before school leads to higher levels of student achievement. Labor has long recognised that kindergarten and preschool is a shared responsibility of the Commonwealth and state and territory governments, and is committed to working with the states and territories so all children have access to this important opportunity.
22. Labor recognises the importance of all children – particularly vulnerable and disadvantaged children – having access to at least 15 hours a week of kindergarten and preschool in the year before school. It is our goal to see this achieved.
23. Labor also believes accessible and affordable early childhood education and care is essential to enable parents, especially women, to return to the workforce. To achieve this, Labor is committed to:
 - Providing high-quality early education and care options that are flexible, accessible, affordable and convenient for parents;



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- Ensuring government funding is tied to both workforce participation and quality care outcomes; and
- Supporting employment and education participation through the provision of early education and care and out of school hour care options that are flexible, accessible and affordable.

24. Cost must not be a barrier to early childhood education and care and is committed to ensuring affordable access for Australian families. Labor is committed to targeting assistance to alleviate income and location disadvantage in accessing early childhood education and care.
25. Labor regards early childhood education and care as one of the most valuable careers for our nation's future.
26. Quality early education and care can be provided only by a highly skilled, professional and well paid workforce. To deliver this, Labor supports improved wages and conditions for educators, and acknowledges that parents alone cannot afford to meet this increased cost. Quality education for children must be supported by quality training for educators which meets strict quality controls.
27. Labor recognises the historical barriers to genuine enterprise bargaining in the early childhood education and care sector that have resulted in low wages for skilled childcare professionals. These barriers include the highly feminised workforce, multiple small sites of employment, limited community recognition of the work and the high responsibility placed on the workforce, making industrial action difficult.
28. Labor believes in the importance of the National Quality Framework and is committed to its continued implementation.
29. To ensure a quality early education and care into the future, Labor will:
 - Support the professional development of early childhood educators;
 - Maintain and continue to improve minimum qualifications requirements for educators;
 - Support staff-to-child ratios that enable educators to develop secure attachments with children;
 - Take a proactive approach to meeting the future workforce needs of the early childhood education and care sector, including the need for more degree-qualified Early Childhood Teachers; and

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- Ensure proper regulation of any new federal programs that deliver flexible forms of care, or care in the home, to ensure the protection of educator's wages and conditions and the implementation of quality standards.

30. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children should have improved access to quality, culturally rich early education and care services, and that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people should be encouraged and supported to train as early childhood educators.

An excellent education for every student, in every school

31. Universal access to high quality school education is the cornerstone of social justice, prosperity and opportunity. No student should miss out on achieving their potential because of the means of their family, where they live, or the school they attend.

32. Labor in government will work to implement a properly funded national needs-based and sector-blind school funding model consistent with the Gonski reforms. We will work with the states and territories to ensure that all schools are operating at a resource standard that meets the needs of students.

33. School education is too important to Australia's future prosperity to be solely the responsibility of individual states and territories. All students have the right to access high quality, well-resourced schools, and the federal government has a central role in ensuring the equity and quality. Labor believes schooling is the shared responsibility of the states and territories, and the Commonwealth.

34. Equity in education is essential for social inclusion, and that every student should have access to the teaching and learning resources needed to achieve their best. This requires targeted needs-based investment to overcome disadvantage; including for students from low socio-economic backgrounds, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people students, students with disability, students with limited English, and students in rural and remote areas.

35. Labor will work cooperatively with the states and territories to increase school funding and ensure this investment drives evidence-based reforms that will lead to higher academic achievement, and better teaching and learning. Labor believes federal investment in schools must always be transparent and accountable and subject to all schools in all sectors meeting national standards in curriculum, teaching and learning.

36. Labor strives for each generation of students to achieve more than their parents and for Australian students to be among the very highest performing in the world, not only in academic scores, but in their social, personal and emotional development, and in their creative abilities.



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37. Labor supports an independently determined national curriculum, free from political or commercial influence. Labor also believes that national student assessment and reporting should be carried out independently. The curriculum should prepare students to be active and engaged citizens, equipped with the skills they need to succeed in the workforce and further education. The curriculum should also support Vocational Education and Training in schools.
38. Labor acknowledges the strategic national importance of skills development in science, technology, engineering and mathematics. Labor will support our schools to encourage more people to study and teach science, technology, engineering and mathematics subjects, and lift competency standards.
39. All students benefit from completing Year 12, and will work to continue improving Year 12 retention rates. To achieve this, Labor will support schools to offer programs that meet the aspirations and interests of all students, including Vocational Education programs. Labor also believes there must be alternative pathways for the completion of Year 12, because all young Australians – including those not in the school system – deserve the opportunity to complete school education or its equivalent regardless of their circumstances.
40. Labor acknowledges the invaluable work of all principals, teachers, and support staff in educating the next generation of Australians. Labor will work to lift the status of the teaching profession, and support improved practice and continued professional development for teachers and principals.
41. Labor believes it is of urgent national importance to ensure the highest standards are maintained in initial and continuing teacher education. Universities have a responsibility to ensure that prospective teachers are of high academic ability, receive a quality education, and are properly supported throughout their studies. This includes ensuring that all students have access to substantial and meaningful practical classroom experience.
42. Labor recognises the important work and contribution of education support workers and non-teaching support staff to the school community. It is vital that these workers continue to be directly employed by the states and territories to ensure a cohesive and integrated education community.
43. Labor supports a mandatory Indigenous Studies component as part of all teachers' pre-service training and will work with teacher educators and the teaching profession to ensure all teachers have a good understanding of Indigenous education issues and the knowledge to work effectively with Indigenous communities and families.
44. Every Australian in every community should have access to high-quality free, secular government schooling. Our public schools are among our nation's most important institutions, and it is a fundamental responsibility of governments to ensure they are



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adequately resourced to deliver an excellent quality education. Labor is fully committed to the principle of excellent, universal public education and will not pursue the privatisation of any aspect of public schooling.

45. Labor is also committed to parents' right to choose non-government schooling. Non-government schools should receive support that reflects need and is consistent with the creation of a diverse and inclusive society.

Students with Disability

46. All children should have the skills and opportunities to participate in society. Children and students with disability should have access to the same education opportunities as all Australian children and students.
47. All children and students with disability must be recognised as learners, and given every opportunity to discover and fulfil their learning potential. Labor will invest to improve educational outcomes and promote inclusion for all children, particularly those with disability.
48. Labor is committed to ensuring the National Disability Insurance Scheme provides early intervention services for children with disability so that they can maximise learning and development.
49. Labor is committed to needs-based school funding to ensure that our schools and teachers are equipped to meet the needs of students with disability. Labor is committed to working with states and territories to see needs based funding for students with disability become a reality for all children with disability, right across Australia.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians

50. A high quality education is critical to Closing the Gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Labor is committed to ensuring that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people have access to the same opportunities as others.
51. Labor celebrates the fact that more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are attending school than ever before, recognising, however, that current levels of school participation and attainment remain unacceptable.
52. Labor remains committed to Closing the Gap in early childhood education; school attendance; reading, writing and numeracy achievements; and Year 12 completion.



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53. Labor will work to ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children have access to early childhood education, as evidence shows the benefits of early education extend to imported school results and life outcomes.
54. Labor is also committed to needs based school funding to ensure that our schools are equipped to meet the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and improve educational attainment and employment outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

Strong transitions from school to work or training

55. The transition from school to work, training or higher education is a crucial time in every person's life. Students who do not make a successful transition face the prospect of diminished opportunities and the heightened risk of unemployment and social exclusion throughout their adult life.
56. Labor is committed to education policy reforms to improve the post-school transition for young Australians. This includes:
- Strengthening vocational education in schools;
 - Working with employers to create more opportunities for young people to develop technical and work skills while completing Year 12; and
 - Improving career education and ensuring all students have access to appropriate and useful information about a wide range of career options.
57. Governments must do all they can to encourage young people to stay at school, and that developing a range of learning pathways within and alongside schools is crucial. Students who leave school before Year 12 must be supported in their transition to the world beyond school.

The vocational education and training system of the future

58. Labor is committed to a high quality and responsive training system that meets national skills needs and contributes to economic growth today and into the future. Labor is proud of the strong role played by the labour movement in building the TAFE and vocational education and training sector.
59. Labor believes quality should be at the centre of the national training system. To retain confidence in the national training system, its individual programs and the quality of its graduates must be the highest priority for government. As both governments and individuals invest in their training they have a right to expect that training to be of a quality

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and standard to maximise the chance that it will lead to employment or relevant further study.

60. Labor believes public TAFEs should be at the centre of the vocational education and training system. An effective skills and training system relies on the availability of a strong and responsive public sector provider. The ability of vulnerable individuals to access vocational and further training must not be lost because of the poor availability or affordability of courses. Labor remains committed to working with state and territory Governments to ensure the TAFE system is sustained and capable of delivering its responsibilities as the public provider. As TAFE is the provider responsible for the broader economic and social imperatives of governments it must be sustained as the major provider in the system, affordable and accessible to all Australians.
61. Labor will work with the private sector to clarify their roles and responsibilities to ensure that students are able to undertake qualifications that meet their needs for further education or employment, based on informed decision-making. Private providers of vocational education will continue to provide their specific expertise to both industry and individuals to meet some of the national training demand, and should be able to operate in a system where quality assurance supports them to provide quality training and not be forced into a low-cost race to the bottom.
62. Labor is committed to policies to support effective life-long learning. In a modern economy, the post-secondary education system is critical to the ability of all Australians to participate in retraining and renewal of qualifications. Labor will support the vocational education and university sectors to cooperate in the development of pathways that flow in both directions, recognising that many students now seek vocational skills and knowledge as a value-add to their university degree.
63. Labor will continue its strong tradition of support for access and equity principles in the vocational education system. The Vocational Education and Training system is most often the option that provides education and training for students from disadvantaged backgrounds, in particular through public TAFEs. All Australians, regardless of their life circumstance, deserve the opportunity to access a post-school education and complete a pathway to work or further study.
64. Labor will build a Vocational Education and Training system based on the following principles:
 - A national system with high quality nationally-accredited qualifications that provide life-long pathways to work and further study with the student at the centre;
 - A priority on quality assurance in all aspects of recruitment, delivery and assessment and a requirement for strong consumer protections and student

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concerns and complaints mechanisms, both internal and external to the training provider;

- Transparent governance, funding and performance supported by an efficient, comprehensive and independent regulation and auditing system;
- Competency-based qualifications that are developed in cooperation with industry, unions, professional bodies and educators, through expert advisory bodies such as Industry Skills Councils;
- Affordability and accessibility that allows new workers, existing workers, young people and industry participants to have their needs met;
- Delivering an accessible and diverse system that enables people with disability, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, people from culturally and linguistically diverse and other students from non-traditional backgrounds to flourish;
- A sector with public provision through TAFE at the centre supplemented by quality private providers, both protected from being undermined by competition based on low cost and substandard quality;
- Ensuring the availability of affordable, flexible adult and community education entry points to education and training, including language, literacy and numeracy programs;
- A system supported by well-developed research on skills for the future and their contribution to participation, productivity and innovation; and
- Recognition and support for quality teaching through professional teaching qualifications and standards for TAFE and VET teachers.

65. To ensure the national economy has the qualified skills base it needs to grow, innovate and prosper, Labor will provide solid foundations to the vocational education and training sector and its place in our national agenda by:

- Maintaining the integrity and international reputation of Australia's trade qualifications and ensuring Australians have relevant, valued and portable qualifications, including a rigorous process of recognising skills obtained overseas;
- Working in partnership with industry and unions to ensure existing workers are able to update their knowledge and skills post-school in order to sustain their participation in work and the viability of the industry;

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- Ensuring that people from educationally and vocationally disadvantaged backgrounds, including those who would benefit from “second chance” education are able to access training programs;
- Supporting TAFE to deliver its dual roles of training provider and community education resource, including offering training and careers advice to people seeking to enrol;
- Creating a responsive but rigorous system of well-resourced and appropriate flexible delivery methods, integration of work and learning experiences, and recognition of prior learning;
- Encouraging the inclusion in qualifications of transferable skills and knowledge that will ensure the qualification is robust, equips workers for innovation and enables them to adapt to new technologies and processes;
- Ensuring that clean and environmentally sustainable practices and skills are included in relevant training packages and qualifications;
- Providing access for workers who are in businesses and industries that are facing restructuring, at the earliest possible time, to broad-based and relevant vocational education to secure new employment and a career path; and
- Linking vocational education and training strategies with industry and innovation development policy.

Boosting apprenticeships and traineeships

66. Australia has been well served by our internationally recognised traditional trades apprenticeship system. Apprenticeships have been the backbone of our skilled trades and technical workforce and have provided a valuable and rewarding career for millions of Australians.
67. The success of the system derives from an enduring partnership between government, business, trade unions, TAFE and other training providers. Because of these links and the focus on opportunity and quality, the apprenticeship system is strongly supported by parents and communities, particularly those with high youth unemployment. Its viability as a training and employment pathway has also seen the successful growth of mature-age apprenticeship schemes.
68. In more recent times the development of the parallel pathways of traineeships has been an important addition to this form of training. Traineeships should be an important and viable pathway for the employment sectors not covered by traditional trades.



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69. A modern and sustainable apprentice and traineeship system needs to adapt to the changing structure of the workforce and to seek opportunities to improve the form, structure and duration without undermining the strength and value of the qualification. The diversity of Australia's workforce is an important strength, and must be reflected in and supported by the apprentice and traineeship system. Labor believes apprentice and traineeship pathways must be accessible to people from diverse backgrounds, and must promote opportunities for broader representation of both genders in non-traditional trades and occupations.
70. It is also important that employers, of all sizes, are encouraged and supported to take on apprentices and trainees. Labor has previously expanded access programs and mentoring support to ensure more Australians would be able to upskill in preparation for undertaking an apprenticeship. In order for apprentices to have a successful experience, it is important that governments both pursue opportunities for the creation of apprentice and trainee places and encouraging successful completions.
71. Labor will ensure a quality apprenticeship and traineeship system by:
- Establishing and implementing minimum national standards and individual training plans for the protection of apprentices and trainees;
 - Prioritising quality programs and higher skill levels to ensure public funding is directly linked to the level of training effort, the completion of quality outcomes and the development of future skills needs;
 - Making sure all apprenticeships and traineeships deliver full qualifications consistent with the national qualifications framework;
 - Ensuring that trade qualifications continue to promote a combination of work and on-the-job training;
 - Ensuring there is sufficient funding available for on and off-the-job training, especially in regional and rural Australia;
 - Supporting the role of group training companies, recognising their special capacity to enhance opportunities in sectors such as resources, major projects and for small and medium businesses; and
 - Continuing to review and provide appropriate incentives – payments and support programs - to both employers and apprentices to maintain commitment to the provision and completion of apprenticeships and traineeships.

Higher education

72. Australia needs a strong, affordable and accessible higher education system to ensure that we are equipping Australians for the jobs of the future. Investing in higher education is

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critical to maintaining and growing a high quality public university sector, to educate the graduates needed by an economy based on knowledge, skills and innovation.

73. All Australians, regardless of their background or where they live, must have the opportunity to access higher education.
74. Labor recognises the important role of higher education in shaping a fairer, more socially inclusive society. We will continue to work towards the key national objectives of:
- A target of 40 per cent of 25–34 year olds holding bachelor level degree or higher by 2025;
 - A target of 20 per cent of university undergraduate enrolments made up of low socio-economic background students by 2020;
 - Closing the gap in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' participation and retention in higher education for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander academic staff; and
 - Increasing access to university for students with disability through innovative programs that support universities ensure equal access.
75. Labor will ensure that future funding for Australia's public universities is responsive to these priorities, while reflecting broader student demand, and recognising the importance of meeting public good and labour market needs.
76. Universities also have a responsibility to support all students to succeed in their studies and to graduate with the skills and knowledge they need to prosper in the workforce. To this end Labor will consider mechanisms that encourage universities to provide practical, industry based work placements for students that in turn will improve university to industry links.
77. Labor is committed to excellence in higher education. Universities must be accountable for maintaining quality standards in both teaching and research. The community expects that, as self-accrediting institutions, our public universities produce the highest quality graduates, particularly in qualifications vital to the health, safety and welfare of other Australians, such as nursing, teaching and engineering. Transparent entry standards, regulation of quality and external verification are all critical to protecting the reputation of public universities, the value of an Australian qualification, and our ability to attract international students to study in Australia.
78. Labor supports the role that higher education plays in improving the quality of our lives by fostering higher learning. The pursuit of knowledge is an important end in itself, and will continue to support the autonomy of public universities and the principle of academic independence that underpins higher learning.



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79. Labor in government will ensure that universities, while independent, are accountable for public funding and work in partnership with the Commonwealth. In government, Labor introduced mission-based compacts to help universities align their resources to their areas of strength and strategic interest, and to help the sector as a whole more effectively address our national priorities and needs. We will strengthen partnerships with universities to ensure they are responsive to areas of national need and drive outcomes in priority areas.
80. There are clear differences between public universities and other higher education providers. Labor opposes the privatisation of higher education and the undermining of public universities in the name of contestability, efficiency or deregulation.
81. Labor recognises and supports the important role that regional universities and campuses play in making higher educational opportunities available to regional students, and in the social and economic life of regional communities. The continued development of excellent research capability and research training in Australia's regions is vital to their future prosperity.
82. Labor supports strong, effective oversight of the international education sector, with the protection and welfare of international students at its core, through a risk-based regulatory framework, independent scrutiny and quality assurance. Recognising that international education should be a two-way street, Labor will improve opportunities for Australian students to study abroad.
83. Labor strongly opposes the deregulation of fees, or the introduction and use of full fee degrees for undergraduate award courses in Australian universities.
84. Labor strongly supports Australia's world leading HECS-HELP, VET FEE-HELP, FEE-HELP and related income-contingent loan programs that ensure greater participation in tertiary education by allowing students to defer the cost of their studies until they are earning a decent income. Australian students make a significant contribution to the cost of their education and will ensure that HECS contributions do not create financial disincentives to study.
85. Costs and pressures act as a barrier to participation in tertiary education. Labor also supports a strong, sustainable and targeted system of student income support that provides greater assistance to Australian students who need it most. Students who do not have the means to support themselves during their university study will be provided with adequate support.
86. Labor strongly supports student involvement in the management of their university communities and in university decision-making processes. It is important that funding is made available for student-run services and independent advocacy. Labor will support

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students in the creation of democratic, student-run representative bodies and safeguard the right for students to voluntarily organise themselves on campus. Good student amenities and services like early childhood education and care, health services, counselling, advocacy, and sporting facilities are vital to university participation and the quality of students' experience on campus and should be securely and adequately funded.

- 87.** Labor recognises the potential of flexible and online delivery to improve university teaching and learning, including through the use of technologies and community spaces that support access to learning for disadvantaged students. At its heart must be the enhancement of student experience, while maintaining academic rigour and ensuring that qualifications offered through these technologies meet appropriate quality standards.



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Chapter 8: A health system for all

Introduction

1. Health is critical to the quality of life of all Australians. Health affects everything we do – our standard of living, our employment, our relationships and how we participate in the social and economic life of our country.
2. Health is crucial to Australia's standard of living. Good health boosts productivity and improves workplace participation. A healthier country delivers a stronger economy. The health of any one Australian affects all Australians.
3. Labor created Medicare, our unique universal health insurance scheme that has seen Australians achieve some of the best health outcomes in the world.
4. We created Medicare because we believe Australians should get the healthcare they need, not the health care they can afford.
5. For over 30 years Medicare has proved well worth the investment.
6. Australia's future depends on our ability to continue to adapt our health care system to meet the needs of all Australians.
7. Investing in and strengthening Medicare will always be at the heart of Labor's health policy.

Labor values

8. Labor built Medicare and only-Labor will invest in and strengthen Medicare. It is central to our vision of a fairer Australia. The core principle underpinning Medicare is universal access to health care.
9. A fairer and more equitable society is one in which all Australians are able to access high-quality and affordable health care, including any necessary medicines, on the basis of health care need, not their capacity to pay.
10. Labor recognises the need to address the social determinants of health as crucial in tackling health inequality. A fairer and more equitable society requires us to address health inequality, particularly among Australians who live in regional, rural and remote areas and belong to populations experiencing disadvantage. This is especially true for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians. Labor is committed to Closing the Gap in life expectancy between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians.

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11. Only a strong and properly resourced public health system, including a well-supported primary care and preventive health system, provides the opportunity for all Australians to reach their full potential. Labor also believes in our public health system being complemented by a strong and sustainable private health care system. Both provide individuals with choices in health care and contribute to Australians' good health outcomes.
12. Labor values the role of doctors, nurses, allied health professionals and health support workers who work tirelessly to care for Australians. Labor believes they, alongside consumers, should have more opportunities to engage in constructive debate about reform of our health care system.
13. Labor supports the rights of all health workers to organise collectively and for their union representatives to contribute positively to the delivery of a high quality public health system.
14. Australia's health care system is the responsibility of all levels of government with the involvement and support of the community and not-for-profit sector and relies upon co-operative, transparent and accountable reform arrangements driven by evidence.
15. Labor believes a strong primary care system complemented by prevention will be critical to tackling chronic disease and put Australia in the best position possible to meet our future health care challenges.
16. Labor has an unshakeable commitment to an excellent universal public hospital system and will not support any moves to privatise public hospitals or their functions.

Labor achievements

17. Labor has a long and proud history in health. Successive Labor Governments have driven the advancement of Australian health policy. Labor reforms have championed the important role of the Commonwealth in health, established Medicare and the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme, reformed Commonwealth-State financial relations in health care and provided greater levels of funding for public hospitals, health workforce development, health infrastructure, medical research and prevention. Great Labor reforms in health include:
 - The Curtin Government introducing a national pharmaceutical, hospital and medical benefits scheme. These historic reforms made possible the establishment of Medicare and Commonwealth funding to the States for public hospitals;

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- The Chifley Government continued this legacy by creating the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme in July 1948, a scheme on which all Australians today rely for affordable access to essential medicines;
- The Whitlam Government established Medibank - our first national health insurance scheme without which Medicare would not exist;
- The Hawke-Keating Governments re- established access to universal health care with Medicare – a scheme which continues to provide Australians with universal access to general practice along with high quality care in our public hospital system; and
- The Gillard/Rudd Governments delivered record investments in health, including in public hospital funding, cancer services, health infrastructure, general practice training, better access to general practice after hours, the largest ever mental health funding package, a national organ and tissue donation scheme, our very first children’s dental scheme and the world’s first plain packaging legislation to reduce the rates of smoking. Labor’s whole of system reform to Commonwealth/State financial relations in health established Local Hospital Networks and Medicare Locals, all critical to improving transparency and efficiency in our health system.

Labor Priorities

Rebuilding Australia’s health care reform program

18. Labor will:

- Work to build the architecture needed for health care reform in preventive health, primary care and hospitals;
- Strengthen cooperation between different levels of government on health care reform by reintroducing incentives and targets into Commonwealth/State funding agreements that minimise cost shifting when it comes to health care;
- Seek opportunities to ensure the health system integrates care across all levels of the health system and all life stages to enhance physical, mental and social wellbeing;
- Strengthen the primary health care system to ensure that coordination is improved and gaps in service delivery can be identified, with a view to addressing unmet need, preventing avoidable hospitalisation and providing opportunities for health prevention; and
- Provide greater opportunities for consumers and health care professionals to participate in improving our health care system.

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Promoting wellness, preventing disease

19. Preventive health must be central to the Australian health care system.
20. Labor believes in national leadership to improve the health of all Australians. This is a vital social and economic priority. We cannot allow the challenges of an ageing society to be compounded by increasing numbers of working-age adults being denied participation in the labour force because of preventable chronic and complex conditions.
21. Labor accepts the science and expert advice that climate change will have an impact on health outcomes and these impacts are already becoming evident in Australia.
22. Health maintenance, promotion and illness prevention are essential to combating the rise of preventable chronic diseases and governments must accept their responsibilities in this context. Progress also requires substantial changes in personal behaviour, which can only be sustained with the active participation of all levels of government, the non-government sector, health professionals, local communities, and individuals.
23. To enhance preventative health efforts, Labor will:
 - Facilitate early health care interventions in the lives of children, to encourage healthy habits for life, reduce obesity and promote physical activity;
 - Work to find solutions to tackle the problem of alcohol abuse, especially binge-drinking amongst young people and at-risk populations;
 - Take strong action to educate young people about the dangers of illicit drug use;
 - Continue world leading policies to reduce smoking levels;
 - Provide greater opportunities for health professionals to provide advice and support to people about improving their lifestyles, in order to improve health outcomes and reduce hospital admissions;
 - Encourage healthy lifestyles;
 - Support and encourage health education as an important part of optimising public health outcomes.
 - Work with all levels of government, Primary Health Networks, local communities, health professionals and individuals to encourage all Australians to live longer, healthier lives;
 - Undertake specialised health education programs targeted at Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians and those from non-English speaking backgrounds to ensure all Australians have the best chance at a healthy life; and



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- Support and develop programs in health promotion, illness prevention and relapse prevention, as well as treatment, recovery and disability services to improve the mental health and wellbeing of all Australians.

Strengthening Primary Care

24. The stronger our primary care system, the better Australia's health outcomes are. Labor recognises primary care as the frontline of our health care system.
25. General practitioners work in collaboration with nurses, allied health professionals and pharmacists providing the best possible care for millions of Australians in the community every day.
26. Labor will strengthen primary care, in particular the care provided through general practice. To do this Labor will:
 - Work with general practitioners to strengthen primary care, including access to multidisciplinary care by primary health care teams and better pathways between our hospital, residential aged care and primary care systems;
 - Protect and maintain bulk-billing to ensure all Australians have affordable access to GPs;
 - Support the upgrade of existing GP infrastructure to allow for more services and training to be delivered within general practice settings;
 - Expand and better coordinate after-hours GP care and better access for those in residential aged care;
 - Promote the use of TeleHealth services where appropriate;
 - Continue the development, uptake and use of e-health records;
 - Invest in training health professionals, particularly in rural, regional and outer metropolitan areas of need;
 - Work to improve incentives for primary health professionals to work in regional areas;
 - Maintain Labor's reforms that have granted Medicare access for nurse practitioners and midwives; and
 - Cut red tape that hinders doctors and takes valuable time away from treating patients.
27. Medicare is central to strong primary care. Labor is opposed to any weakening of Medicare through opting out, or the direct or indirect means testing of Medicare and bulk billing. Medicare must remain a universal, fully funded system for all Australians.



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28. Labor is opposed to increased or different services being provided to private health insured patients in general practice settings that undermine the universal access principle of Medicare.

Access to Specialist care

29. Australia has highly skilled specialists working across both the public and private health sectors. Our specialists provide world-leading care in public and private hospitals and clinics; they participate in and lead clinical research, and teach both at home and internationally.
30. Labor is concerned many Australians, especially in rural and regional areas, are unable to access, or afford, the specialist care they need. To address this Labor will:
- Work with healthcare organisations to improve access to specialists;
 - Provide opportunities for specialists to consult within general practice settings in the community;
 - Support the use of telemedicine for appropriate specialties;
 - Create further opportunities for specialists to utilise nurse practitioners within their practices;
 - Continue the development, uptake and use of e-health records;
 - Seek to provide greater opportunities for specialist training; and
 - Provide incentives to encourage specialists to work in rural, remote and regional and outer metropolitan areas of need.

A hospital and secondary care system that works

31. Labor believes firmly in the need for a high-quality public hospital system accessible to all Australians, while recognising the role played by private hospitals.
32. Labor is committed to ongoing reform of the public hospital system, anticipating increasing demand in coming years due to higher rates of chronic disease and an ageing population.
33. Labor will re-establish cooperation between the Commonwealth, states and territories to avoid cost-shifting, improve transparency and create an efficient public hospital system.
34. Labor will work with states and territories through the Council of Australian Governments to strengthen our public hospitals, and to improve services in areas including elective surgery and emergency services.



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35. Labor will:

- Expand access to primary health care and prevention services that help people avoid hospital by keeping well;
- Tackle health problems that cause large numbers of hospital admissions, such as tobacco, binge drinking and avoidable GP-type presentations;
- Continue to build capacity of supporting clinical services to ensure that they maintain their expanding role in the delivery of high quality public health care
- Expand the use of technology including the delivery of eHealth systems where appropriate, that allow patients to ensure their health information is available for both their hospital and primary care health practitioners; and
- Work to maintain and improve systems of training of high-quality staff to work in public hospitals.

36. Labor is committed to improving transparency and accountability in our hospitals, both public and private.

37. Labor will ensure:

- Hospital performance data is reported in a transparent and nationally-consistent manner;
- Hospital safety and quality reporting is conducted to the highest international standards; and
- Australians have access to the information they need to make informed choices about their health care.

38. Government is best placed to deliver a strong and quality public health system that is focused on patient care and positive health outcomes. Everyone has a right to quality health care, irrespective of their capacity to pay.

Access to medicines

39. Labor is committed to ensuring that all Australians have access to affordable, essential medicines through the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS).

40. The PBS was first introduced by the Chifley Labor Government and has provided Australians with free or subsidised medicines for over 65 years. It has contributed significantly to the good health outcomes Australians enjoy.



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41. Over the next decade many of the new drugs that are expected to become available will be more specialised and targeted treatments, increasing pressure on the PBS to ensure that Australia does not miss out on new medicines at the same time as maintaining a robust system for entry. This is especially the case when it comes to cancer drugs and other drugs that treat life-threatening illnesses.
42. Labor's reforms have ensured the sustainability of the PBS to this point, and we will ensure the PBS gains from the best models overseas to respond to future challenges.
43. Labor will continue to ensure the safety of medicines available in Australia.

Palliative Care

44. Labor is committed to ensuring individuals nearing the end of their lives and their families are provided with the highest standards of palliative and end-of-life care whether they are at home, in community facilities or in acute facilities.
45. People with incurable terminal illness can endure great hardship and deserve high quality coordinated palliative care and support services.
46. Labor believes each individual should be given the opportunity to plan for the final stages of life and be given appropriate personal control of the types of medical treatments and interventions they receive during this period.
47. Labor will expand the availability of advance care planning.
48. Labor recognises the specific end-of-life care needs of particular populations such as young people, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, culturally and linguistically diverse communities and people living in rural and remote areas.
49. Labor understands the importance of properly integrating palliative care services with medical intervention services.

The health workforce

50. All efforts must be made to ensure there is an adequate supply of highly-trained doctors, nurses, allied health professionals, health support workers and medical educators to all parts of the nation, including a vibrant health and medical research workforce, so all Australians can access the health care they need.
51. Labor wants to improve Australia's health workforce — through the training of more doctors, nurses, allied health professionals and health support workers and better utilising



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the skills, expertise and experience of existing health professionals. Labor will continue to build a strong health workforce and prepare Australia's health system for the challenges of the future, recognising the expanding workloads of the health workforce and the need to address the consequences of these growing pressures.

Doctors

52. Labor will:

- Restore a focus on general practice as the central coordination point of primary care and grow the efficiency and effectiveness primary care sector to reduce pressure on hospitals;
- Ensure that Australia educates and trains enough doctors to meet the needs of patients throughout the nation;
- Provide incentives to increase the numbers of doctors and other health professionals in rural and regional Australia;
- Work to improve the retention of doctors in the workforce and in the study of medicine;
- Work to deliver high-quality training facilities for GP training;
- Restore a national approach to health workforce planning to ensure an appropriate supply and targeted distribution of Australia's health workforce;
- Encourage people from linguistically and ethnically diverse backgrounds to enter all levels of the health workforce; and
- Increase the numbers of and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people at all levels of the health workforce.

Nurses

53. Labor supports nurses and their critical role in the health care system.

54. Labor supports expanded training and employment opportunities for nurses through primary and acute care settings and the extended role of midwives and nurse practitioners.

55. To support and strengthen the nursing workforce, Labor will:

- Recognise the valuable role nurses play and invest in providing nurses with the clinical training they need to expand that role;
- Ensure sufficient university and Vocational Education and Training places are available to nursing students;



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- Continue to support the expanded role for nurse practitioners and midwives, with access to Medicare and the PBS; and
- Invest in expanding and supporting the aged care nursing workforce.

Allied health professionals

56. Multidisciplinary team-based care is an important element of our healthcare system. Allied health professionals have an important role to play in such teams. By providing access to allied health professionals in convenient locations, multi-disciplinary general practices make it simpler and easier to access the care families need
57. Labor recognises the critical role of allied health professionals in delivering good health outcomes for the community. Labor will:
- Invest to provide allied and ancillary health professionals with the clinical training they need, including access to adequate supervised practice placements;
 - Ensure allied health professionals are better integrated into local primary health care services; and
 - Ensure sufficient university and Vocational Education and Training places are available for allied health professionals across the nation.

Health support workers

58. Labor recognises the important work of health support workers in our hospitals and values their role in the health community. Without the contribution of these workers, the health system could not function properly.
59. Labor supports fair pay and conditions and dignity at work for health support workers. Labor will support these workers and their unions to ensure our high quality public health system is maintained.

Investing in health and medical research

60. Australia has long boasted some of the best scientists, researchers and medical pioneers in the world. The successes of our researchers — both as individuals and as part of organisations — has meant less disease, better treatment and improved quality of life for Australians.
61. All Australians benefit from health and medical research, particularly when that research is translated into improved primary and hospital care, aged care, or better preventive health strategies. Our national economy also benefits as research findings lead to the



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development of innovative new industries and better health outcomes. Research needs to be embedded throughout the health system and actively involve all health professionals.

62. Labor will enhance Australia's reputation as a world leader in high quality, innovative research and development activities by working towards the recommendations of the Strategic Review of Health and Medical Research.

Investing in e-health

63. Labor recognises the crucial role information and communications technology plays in health care by improving coordination and reducing duplication to deliver better health outcomes.
64. To drive better use of information and communications technology in health, Labor will:
- Continue to build the eHealth record system while ensuring that appropriate privacy and security protocols protect consumers' rights;
 - Encourage all Australians to apply for an electronic health record that will improve the coordination of care, eliminate duplication, and reduce the likelihood of errors;
 - Work with health care professionals to increase utilisation of eHealth and the uploading of required data;
 - Integrate eHealth records with hospital, pathology, diagnostic imaging, medicine compliance and other clinical systems and where appropriate, seek to deliver more health care solutions into people's own homes; and
 - Expand the rollout of TeleHealth services for specialist medical care where the efficacy is already proven.

Supporting public and private health

65. Labor believes both public and private sectors play critical roles in Australia's world-class health system. While governments have sole responsibility for managing the public health sector, they must also support a strong and sustainable private health care industry.
66. Labor will:
- Ensure that public and private health services complement each other;
 - Ensure that all necessary services are provided in the public health system;
 - Encourage public and private hospitals to work together, including for the provision of elective surgery;



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- Work to improve both systems by encouraging competition, innovation and new uses of both public and private health providers;
- Apply high standards to the provision of both public and private health services including the reporting of both public and private hospital performance;
- Regulate the private health industry to ensure that value-for-money products are available to all policy holders;
- Work to eliminate surprise gap payments for private health insurance holders;
- Work to increase the sustainability of private health insurance for Australians, with specific regard to premium increases;
- Ensure the benefits of private health insurance rebates are available to Australians who need them most; and
- Ensure that patient choice and good clinical decision-making remain at the heart of health care.

Tackling health inequality

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health

67. In 2008 Labor initiated a national partnership between Federal state and territory governments to address the shameful gap in health and life expectancy between indigenous and non-indigenous Australians. The annual Closing the Gap address to Parliament is our national annual report card on progress in achieving Closing the Gap targets in health.
68. Labor's approach to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' health is built on:
- A commitment to the Closing the Gap targets;
 - A commitment to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Plan which sets out the strategy for meeting those targets;
 - An understanding that healthy lives are heavily influenced and determined by the social and economic environment; and
 - A commitment to the community controlled health sector in the delivery of culturally appropriate primary health care services.
69. Only modest progress has been made since the targets were adopted. Much more needs to be done.
70. In Government Labor will focus on:

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- Tackling chronic disease, particularly diabetes and renal diseases;
- Reducing smoking rates among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians;
- Preventative health, particularly amongst children;
- Mental health disorders, with specific regard to tackling the unacceptable tragedy of youth suicide; and
- Building health workforce capacity, including in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health organisations.

71. Labor believes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health organisations must be strengthened to ensure best practice management and quality care standards.

72. Labor will fully implement the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Plan.

Regional, rural and remote health

73. Australians living in remote, rural and regional locations typically have poorer access to health services, higher out-of-pocket medical expenses, poorer health outcomes and a lower life expectancy than those living in metropolitan and urban centres.

74. Labor will:

- Promote opportunities for medical and allied health students to train in remote, rural and regional communities and encourage them to return to those areas once their training is completed;
- Ensure the nursing and allied health workforce pipeline for remote, rural and regional communities is focused on geographically specific health workforce shortages;
- Work with local governments, Primary Health Networks and GP groups to develop community specific models for GPs and other specialists to practice in areas of shortage;
- Work to ensure adequate governance of health services for remote, rural and regional communities, particularly in primary care settings;
- Ensure our strategies for dealing with alcohol and other drugs take account of the needs in remote, rural and regional Australia;
- Improve coordination between public, private and non-government health care providers, including Primary Health Networks and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders' medical services;
- Work to address barriers people in remote, regional and rural communities face in accessing mental health and dementia care services, including through the



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provision of services where people live or nearby, rather than hundreds of kilometres away in regional cities; and

- Act to reduce the rate of youth suicide in rural communities, especially among young men and young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Women's Health

75. Labor is committed to improving the health outcomes of Australian women, and implementing targeted policies to help ensure that the health system is more responsive to the needs of women. Labor will:

- Renew our commitment to the full implementation of the National Women's Health Policy;
- Take account of the needs of lesbian, bisexual, transgender and intersex women, including the provision of culturally appropriate health services;
- Continue to improve services and choices in health care available to women, building upon access to Medicare and the PBS and targeted health prevention programs; and
- Continue to support the important role of Breast Screen Australia as well as other cancer treatment and support services and research.

Child and maternal health

76. Interventions to improve the health of mothers and their babies can have a profound lifelong impact. Labor will:

- Promote maternal and child nutrition, including support and encouragement of breastfeeding;
- Continue to implement policies to address peri natal depression, to improve prevention, early detection and support services for expectant and new mothers;
- Improve the information available to mothers about the options available for childbirth regardless of income or geographical location;
- Continue to support the ability for midwives to access Medicare and PBS services;
- Ensure continuity of care is available after a baby is born;
- Continue to implement special programs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mothers and babies, to reduce mortality rates and improve health;
- Support programs to increase the proportion of children born at a healthy birth weight; and

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- Promote immunisation and work with the primary care sector to develop local solutions in those areas and populations where vaccination remains low.

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex health

77. Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) people have specific health needs, for which promoting equitable access requires targeted programs.
78. Labor will:
- Continue to develop health strategies to address the needs of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex people, working in partnership with these communities and LGBTI health peak bodies;
 - Continue to provide training for health care workers about issues of sexual orientation and gender identity;
 - Continue to support programs aimed at prevention of suicide for high risk groups, including lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex Australians;
 - Seek to better provide for the needs of young lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex Australians, particularly in rural, regional and outer urban areas; and
 - Continue to ensure that Medicare and the PBS supports anti-discriminatory policies for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex Australians and that same sex couples and their families are not discriminated against in their access to Medicare and the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme.

Men's health

79. Labor is committed to improving the health outcomes of Australian men. Recognising that men are generally worse at visiting their GPs and seeking care when it is needed Labor will:
- Commit to the full implementation of the National Male Health Policy;
 - Develop and implement policies aimed at improving male mental health and tackling male suicide;
 - Support policies to address the gap in life expectancy between males and females;
 - Implement policies and programs designed to address the incidence of prostate and bowel cancer, including the continuation of bowel cancer screening; and
 - Consult with the relevant communities about the specific health needs of gay and bisexual men, and men who are transgender or intersex, and about the provision of culturally appropriate health services, and will ensure their appropriate resourcing and promotion.



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Senior Australians' Health

80. Ageing presents both opportunities and challenges for our health care system. Labor also recognises that senior Australians face distinct health challenges and conditions that require targeted care and support;
81. Labor will:
- Promote healthy ageing and provide greater opportunities for senior Australians to control their own health care and treatment choices;
 - Ensure greater coordination across the system to ensure senior Australians receive the highest quality of continuous care; and
 - Ensure senior Australians are supported to make informed choices about what care they receive.

The Health of People with Disabilities

82. The National Disability Insurance Scheme provides opportunities for people with disability to participate more fully in work and the community.
83. People with disability experience many health challenges and their experiences of the health care system can be fragmented, discriminatory and often include the denial of access to the care they need when and where they need it.
84. Labor will:
- Better integrate the care provided to people through the National Disability Insurance Scheme and Medicare; and
 - Improve access to health care services for people with disability not eligible for the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

Young people

85. Labor recognises that young people have specific health needs.
86. Labor will:
- Place a particular focus on young people's health needs, including addressing physical and mental health needs, providing age appropriate services, providing access to impartial medical advice, ensuring the privacy of medical records, drug and alcohol education and the promotion of a healthy lifestyle; and



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- Adopt an integrated health-based approach to youth suicide that works with existing community structures, including strategies to address depression, neglect, abuse, drug and alcohol problems, access to firearms, school and workplace bullying, homophobia and other forms of discrimination.

Health priority areas

Mental health

87. A strong primary health care system with equitable access to GPs, community health care and other primary health services is an integral component of the support provided to people experiencing mental disorders or at risk of mental ill health.
88. Labor will build on its legacy of investments in mental health and commitment to mental health reform. We will continue to focus on the delivery of a more integrated, cross-sector and whole-of-government mental health care system which is centred on early intervention and prevention as well as the provision of more intensive and better coordinated support services for people with mental illness.
89. Historic reforms like Labor's National Disability Insurance Scheme will help to achieve better outcomes for people with severe and persistent mental illness by helping them to access timely support and maximise their independence.
90. The majority of people suffering from mental illness have non-enduring symptoms, which may resurface sporadically. Labor will ensure that these people will have access to resources and information on the mainstream support and treatment that they need, when they need it.
91. Mental health services should be less crisis-driven and more preventative and recovery-driven. Supporting people to participate in the community, particularly through employment and education must be a key feature of Australian's mental health system.
92. Investing in community mental health services and support for families and carers of Australians living with mental illness is critical to providing appropriate care and support and ensuring that all people who are suffering from mental illness, from early intervention to recovery, have access to the resources and the information they require, including the most effective care and support options.
93. Labor will:
 - Continue the key role of national government in leading and promoting reform of Australian's mental health service system;



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- Develop and deliver policies and programs aimed at supporting and promoting good mental health and wellbeing and policies which encourage Australians to access mental health care early;
- Work to ensure that people experiencing mental illness can access more and better co-ordinated services, both clinical and non-clinical, and work towards improving the lives of those that are the most disadvantaged and socially excluded;
- Target support to people who need it most including young people, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex people, and those living in socio-economically disadvantaged communities that may be currently underserved;
- Provide more support for mental health services in rural, regional and remote areas to better ensure equity of access for communities across the country;
- Continue to build the capacity of Australia's mental health workforce to ensure that people can more readily access mental health services when and where they need it;
- Help to prevent and address homelessness among people with mental illness;
- Improve support for people with mental illness to better support them to participate in the workforce;
- Provide respite and support for family members and carers of people with mental illness;
- Work towards breaking down the barriers to seeking care by reducing the stigma around mental health through ongoing public education activities; and
- Monitor the implementation of the National Disability Insurance Scheme to ensure that people's access to support for mental illness is maintained at an appropriate level.

94. Labor will continue to focus on efforts to prevent suicide by identifying and addressing the causes of suicide and working to ensure the provision of services and support which target those most at risk.

95. Labor believes in the need for a strong independent organisation to ensure there is effective monitoring, assessment and reporting on how the mental health system is performing in a way that provides greater transparency and public accountability.

Alcohol and other drugs

96. Labor will continue to respond to the harm caused by alcohol and other drug abuse with early intervention, effective treatment and harm minimisation policies.



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97. Labor is committed to evidence-based strategies for dealing with alcohol and other drug related harm.
98. Labor will:
- Support the ongoing development and implementation of the National Drug Strategy ensuring it includes the provision of support services, harm minimisation, demand and supply reduction strategies, law enforcement and national and community campaigns and interventions; and
 - Develop a new National Alcohol Strategy that includes a focus on improved safety throughout our communities by reducing the level of alcohol related violence.

Oral health

99. Dental health is important to overall general health and strongly linked to socio economic status. Labor recognises the importance of addressing the dental health needs of all Australians.
100. The lack of access to appropriate dental care for many disadvantaged Australians represents a significant gap in the provision of universal health care.
101. Labor will:
- Improve the delivery of dental services in Australia and work with the states and territories to reduce public dental waiting lists; and
 - Work towards the aspiration of universal access to dental care. Labor's Child Dental Benefits Scheme, which has seen four million services delivered in its first full year of implementation, is a significant step forward.

Sexual and reproductive health

102. To improve reproductive health for men and women, Labor will:
- Provide universal access to fertility advice and control programs and promote advice on the safe use of contraceptives;
 - Support the rights of women to make decisions regarding reproductive health, particularly the right to choose appropriate fertility control and termination and ensure that these choices are made on the basis of sound psychological and medical advice;
 - Support research into the causes of infertility and work to ensure that access to assistive reproductive technology programs are not determined by economic

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circumstances or any form of discrimination, whether that be on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity or relationship status; and

- Enforce the ban on the cloning of human beings.

103. Labor recognises the importance of renewing efforts to reduce the spread of HIV/AIDS, sexually-transmitted infections, and blood borne viruses, in partnership with the non-government organisation sector and driven by expert evidence.

Tackling chronic disease

104. Levels of chronic disease correlate strongly with socio-economic status in Australia, disproportionately disadvantaging poorer communities both economically and with regard to health outcomes.

105. Chronic disease has become the leading cause of preventable death in Australia and one of the greatest challenges facing our health system.

106. Labor will address this by:

- Targeting the causes of chronic disease, particularly in economically disadvantaged communities through working with local government, Primary Health Networks and the primary health care sector more broadly;
- Improving access to primary health care multi-disciplinary teams and exploring and trialling innovative models for management of chronic disease, including coordinated case management, and where appropriate, involve the community and not for profit sectors;
- Leading the world in action to reduce rates of smoking; and
- Developing preventative health policies and solutions, including those that focus on tackling obesity, noting that it is often a condition that manifests as a result of multiple morbidities.

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Chapter 9: A fair go for all

Introduction

1. For Labor, the fair go is at the heart of who we are as a party and at the centre of our vision for the nation.
2. Labor will strive to ensure that fairness is central to all our policies. We will continue to work tirelessly to ensure that every Australian has the opportunity to share in our national prosperity. This means developing policies which improve the lives of our most disadvantaged citizens and ensuring no Australian is left behind. It also means tackling extreme inequality and all the social and economic costs that come with that inequality.
3. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have a special place in our nation as Australia's first peoples and as custodians of the oldest continuing cultures in the world.
4. Labor understands that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples experience particular disadvantage when compared to other Australians. Labor is committed to working in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to achieve the change that they aspire to, for themselves and for their children, including Closing the Gap on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' disadvantage in Australia. This commitment is underpinned by Labor's support for the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which includes the right to self-determination.
5. Labor prevented the global economic downturn from creating widespread disadvantage in Australia. Labor firmly believes that government has a responsibility to ensure that jobs and living standards are protected.
6. Labor will continue to develop policies that protect jobs, prepare Australians for the jobs of the future and ensure living standards are improved.
7. Understanding the causes of social exclusion and disadvantage is a priority for Labor. We know that people can get trapped in a spiral of disadvantage caused by family circumstances, low expectations, poor housing, unemployment, age, illness or discrimination. We know certain groups are more likely to be excluded, including jobless families, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, people with mental illness or disability, new migrants and refugees, and people experiencing homelessness.
8. Labor understands the challenges of our modern economy, and acknowledges the last thirty years have been a period of great social and economic change. Labor is committed to ensuring that our policies respond to the rapidly changing nature of our labour market, our families and our economy.



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9. Affordable and secure housing is the foundation of wellbeing, participation and inclusion. Labor believes all Australians should have access to safe, affordable and appropriate housing throughout their lives. Labor will make tackling homelessness a high priority.
10. Families are the foundation of our communities and our society, and must be supported to give their children the best opportunities in life.
11. Labor also understands that to have a fulfilling life, Australians need to engage in a range of activities, including cultural and sporting activities. Such activities play a role in broader social and economic goals. Arts and culture are fundamental to Australia's identity, stretching back to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander traditions of creative expression. Our arts and creative industries are important to the wellbeing and fulfilment of Australians; they contribute to social cohesion and are increasingly important to our economic success, driving innovation and contributing to productivity. Sport contributes to health and fitness and has the power to bring communities together, to cross cultural, religious and political divides. It teaches self-discipline and teamwork to our children and often is a source of immense national pride.

Labor values

12. Labor has always stood for equality. Throughout our party's history successive Labor governments have sought to achieve this by helping people overcome disadvantages based on class, gender, sexual orientation, disability, religion, cultural background and racial prejudice. We have always pursued the fair go, tolerance and respect. We oppose all attempts to divide Australians by pandering to prejudice. Australia's diversity is one of the greatest sources of strength in our nation. Our national unity is based on mutual respect, shared values and a commitment to work together to build a stronger Australia.
13. Labor is the party of opportunity for all. We believe all Australians should have the opportunity to work, to learn and to participate fully in family and community life. Spreading opportunity and participation is about access to work and the economy, and about supporting families to give their children the best opportunities in life. It is also about access to the broad range of activities and services that make life liveable and fulfilling.
14. Our commitment to social justice means we measure ourselves by our treatment of those among us who are most marginalised. Our commitment to opportunity for all extends to every Australian. Tackling the root causes of poverty, disadvantage and social exclusion is central to Labor's cause.
15. We believe in a more sustainable economy. This is a complex task. One aspect of this is the recognition that our population, and our workforce, is ageing. Increasingly, we will need to

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ensure that as many Australians who are able to work can and are supported to make that contribution and that we seek to give those people the skills and opportunities to do so.

16. Labor is the party of compassion. Not everyone has the capacity to perform paid work. These Australians deserve respect and ongoing support, including financial support. Carers deserve the same opportunities as other Australians to participate in work and the community, and live a fulfilling life.
17. Labor believes in the recognition and protection of human rights and that this actively contributes to building a more inclusive society. Labor has a Human Rights Framework to increase community awareness of human rights and to provide greater scrutiny of compliance with our international human rights obligations.
18. Labor recognises the importance of community services in delivering services and in building links between Australians. Community and public services provide essential support to the most disadvantaged in our society. Community and public services meet the direct needs of individuals and create social cohesion in communities. Developing a highly skilled workforce in community and public services, and a strong and sustainable community and public sector, is vital to meeting the nation's challenges. Labor will continue to work in partnership with the community sector to develop solutions to the complex challenges of today, and the future.
19. Australia is an inclusive and multicultural country. Labor upholds these values. 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 a critical factor in nation building. Labor believes in the power of a multicultural society, underpinned by our citizenship process and respect of Australian values. Labor supports a multicultural society and will maintain non-discriminatory migration policies and respect the heritage and customs of migrants.
20. For the Australian people to have confidence and trust in the integrity of our migration system, Labor believes it must be built upon rigorous procedures and processes that protect our national interest and our national borders while also treating individuals with fairness, dignity and humanity. Labor believes in dealing with the complex issue of those seeking Australia's protection by giving expression to the values of compassion, fairness and generosity. These values are at the heart of the Australian identity. Labor will treat people seeking our protection with dignity and compassion and in accordance with our international obligations and core Australian principles of fairness and humanity.
21. Citizenship is a critical factor in our culturally diverse society. Labor supports a citizenship process that encourages all permanent residents to become citizens. Labor's citizenship process will focus on the principles underlying Australia's citizenship pledge: Australia's democratic beliefs and laws, and the rights, responsibilities and privileges of Australian

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citizenship. Appreciating that Australian citizenship is a critical part of encouraging participation in the Australian community, Labor will remove unnecessary and unintended barriers to citizenship, particularly for vulnerable groups of migrants.

22. Labor is committed to eliminating all forms of discrimination, vilification or harassment and harmonising anti-discrimination laws and procedures.
23. Labor supports the appropriate protection of the religious freedom of all people.
24. Labor will act to eliminate the exploitation, including sexual exploitation, of women and children, either in Australia or overseas.
25. Labor believes a creative nation is a productive nation. The arts and creative industries are fundamental to Australia's identity as a society and nation, and increasingly to our success as a national economy. In 2013 Labor announced the nation's first national cultural policy in nearly two decades, titled *Creative Australia*. Built on the successes of the Keating-era *Creative Nation* policy, *Creative Australia* was crafted to ensure that Australia's cultural sector—incorporating all aspects of arts, cultural heritage and the creative industries—has the skills, resources, and resilience to play an active role in Australia's identity and future. Consistent with its proud history of support for the arts, Labor will continue to develop and champion innovative and forward-looking national culture.

Labor achievements

26. Labor:
 - Delivered national, government-funded Paid Parental Leave and Dad and Partner Pay to better support families when a new baby arrives and to support families to give their children the best possible start in life;
 - Established a National Child Protection Framework, the first time a national government has committed to working with the states and territories to keep children safe from harm;
 - Reformed family support programs to have a stronger focus on vulnerable families and best interests of children, particularly children at risk;
 - Delivered a National Apology to Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, in particular to the Stolen Generations, in recognition of the importance of saying sorry for past wrongs to healing and a bridge to building respect;
 - Built a national Closing the Gap strategy with a range of programs and policy responses in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health, housing, early childhood development, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' economic participation and remote service delivery;



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- Supported the recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in our Constitution, through the establishment of an Expert Panel which consulted with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other Australians on constitutional recognition; and the enactment of an Act of Recognition, which recognises the unique and special place of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples;
- Continued work to deliver housing to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in remote communities through the National Partnership Agreement on Remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people Housing; more than 2300 new homes have been completed and 6300 houses have been rebuilt and refurbished nationally;
- Delivered significant increases to the age, disability and carers pensions and improved indexation arrangements to pensions;
- Increased support for people with disability to work through better access to employment services and new wage subsidies for employers;
- Developed a long-term plan for supporting people with disability across government, including in accessing services in health and education, and improved recognition of people with disability through the National Disability Strategy, agreed with the states and territories;
- Under the National Disability Strategy, established Liveable Housing Australia to promote Universal Housing Design practices in the residential building and property industry so that Australian homes are more accessible;
- Expanded access to supported accommodation for people with disability, and provided additional help to participate in community life, including improved access to public facilities such as libraries and cinemas;
- Built and funded the National Disability Insurance Scheme, to deliver the care and support people with disability need to live the lives they aspire to;
- Provided new funds for early intervention services for children with disability through the Better Start for Children with Disability and Helping Children with Autism programs, which include additional funds for children living in rural and remote areas;
- Developed a National Carer Strategy and delivered substantial investments to support carers, including through increases to the Carer Payment and the introduction of a new, permanent Carer Supplement; the passage of legislation to recognise carers and their role; and delivering more respite and support for carers of people with severe mental illness;
- Invested \$550 million in a National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness, which rolled out more than 180 new or expanded homelessness services across Australia and increased funding to homelessness services by 55 per cent;

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- Developed a National Affordable Housing Agreement and have committed to the greatest single capital investment in social housing in our nation's history, building more than 21,000 new social housing homes;
- Established the National Rental Affordability Scheme which will see the construction of over 37,500 homes which are to be rented to low income earners and key workers;
- Delivered a National Apology to the Forgotten Australians and former Child Migrants, and delivered additional assistance for care leavers including a national Find and Connect service;
- Established the Royal Commission into Institutional Child Sexual Abuse;
- Delivered the National Apology for Forced Adoptions;
- Introduced a Human Rights Framework to embed human rights throughout our economic and social policies;
- Developed a new multicultural strategy and established a new independent advisory body on multiculturalism — the Australian Multicultural Council;
- Established a National Anti-Racism Partnership and Strategy, in recognition of the role that an anti-racism strategy can play in protecting a harmonious, multicultural society;
- Established the first National Sport and Active Recreation Policy Framework;
- Adopted a new national cultural policy — the first comprehensive cultural policy since the Keating Government's *Creative Nation*;
- Established an inquiry into responsiveness of Australian Government services to the needs of Australians from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds;
- Developed a Multicultural Youth Sports Partnership Program to create sustainable opportunities for youth from new and emerging communities to participate in community sport;
- Strengthened the provision of settlement services for new migrants and refugees through the development of a new settlement framework and improved settlement programs; and
- Signed the National Compact between the Australian government and the Third Sector.



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Labor priorities

Creating an inclusive Australia

27. Labor is committed to giving every Australian the help they need to access the opportunities society has to offer. Our emphasis is on supporting people to enable them to take up available opportunities for work in order to help them improve their circumstances. It recognises that policies and programs need to work in a cohesive and complementary way to deal with the variety of challenges which vulnerable Australians and disadvantaged people face. It requires sustained action across all levels of government and with the private and community sectors.
- Labor's social inclusion goal is to enable all Australians to participate in community life at all levels, through employment, volunteering, community service and education. People need the capabilities, opportunities, responsibilities and resources to participate;
 - Labor will continue to work with employers to help Australian's living with disability and mental illness to participate in work and community life.
28. Labor aims to make Australia stronger and fairer over time, by:
- Supporting families and building strong and cohesive communities;
 - Maintaining a strong and internationally competitive economy;
 - Creating the opportunities and resources that every Australian needs to participate in the economy and community life; and
 - Ensuring that services which are provided to all Australians meet high standards.
29. Labor's priorities are based on evidence about the causes and consequences of social and economic disadvantage. These priorities, where disadvantage is often a result of multiple, complex and interconnected barriers to participation, are:
- Supporting families to give their children the best opportunities in life, including a safe home, a good education, positive role models, and assistance with parenting skills;
 - Support for people who do not have a source of income from employment to increase the work opportunities available to them;
 - Improving the life chances of children at greatest risk of long-term disadvantage, including through the National Child Protection Framework;
 - Reducing the incidence of homelessness;

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- Improving outcomes for people living with disability or mental illness and their carers;
- Closing the gap in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' disadvantage;
- Breaking the cycle of entrenched and multiple disadvantage in particular neighbourhoods and communities; and
- Ensuring equitable access to services through maintaining front line access to government services in regional and rural Australia.

Multiculturalism

30. Australia is a multicultural country. Multiculturalism is a key driver of Australia's economic prosperity and enriches our society
31. Labor is committed to combating racism and will respond to expressions of intolerance and discrimination with strength and, where necessary, the full force of the law.
32. Labor promotes, celebrates and values the social, cultural and economic benefits a multicultural society delivers for all Australians.
33. Labor is committed to ensuring government services are more responsive to the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse Australians.
34. Labor's policies will reflect our multicultural nation consistent with the following principles:
 - Respect for our cultural diversity and harnessing the economic potential of our people;
 - Applying a whole-of-government approach to recognising and maximising the benefits of multiculturalism; and
 - Recognition that equality of opportunity is paramount to ensuring the full participation of our diverse citizenry
35. Labor is committed to a program of continuous improvement for newly arrived refugees and humanitarian entrants as they build their new lives in Australia, including:
 - Ensuring the provision of practical settlement services, English language tuition, case management where required and encouragement and facilitation for social inclusion, leading to full participation in Australian society; and
 - Increasing employment outcomes for newly arrived refugees and improving employment participation in the long term.

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36. Labor's framework for building a stronger, fairer Australia is built on five pillars:

- **Economic growth** — maintaining a strong, internationally competitive economy. To improve social outcomes over time and between generations, government economic strategy needs to be consistent with sound fiscal and macroeconomic policy settings.
- **Equitable social policy** — creating the opportunities and resources that every Australian needs to participate in the economy and community life by:
 - Providing an adequate social safety net;
 - Increasing the productive capacity of people with disability, people on low-incomes and people marginally attached to the labour market through local skills, training and employment strategies; and
 - Supporting people to take responsibility for the choices that are within their control in ways that build and reinforce their capabilities, resilience and independence.
- **Quality government services, a strong independent and appropriately resourced public service** – ensuring that services which are provided to all Australians are appropriately funded to meet high standards, especially for those Australians who need them most but may have difficulty accessing them. This means improving the quality and accessibility of mainstream services and targeting the right support directly to the most disadvantaged individuals and communities. Our service reform priorities include:
 - Building a world-class education system which prepares children for work and life, including through lifting the quality of education in the most disadvantaged schools;
 - Building world-class health and community services which improve life outcomes, particularly for the most disadvantaged and people with disability, including through better access to primary and preventative health services, linking people to the range of supports they need before crises occur, and at critical life transitions;
 - Improving the supply of affordable and accessible housing; and
 - Closing the gap for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in areas including life expectancy, education, health, housing and employment
- **Strong families and communities** — supporting families to give their children the best opportunities in life and building strong and cohesive communities especially in areas experiencing entrenched and multiple disadvantage. Our priorities include:
 - Supporting families to give their children the best opportunities in life through paid parental leave, better quality childcare and family support programs;

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- Supporting vulnerable families and children at risk by ensuring family support programs focus on vulnerable people, reduce red tape for service providers and ensure that payments are spent in the interests of children;
- Ensuring Australians on low or fixed incomes have access to fair and equitable financial products, including emergency relief, no- and low-interest loan schemes, matched saving schemes and financial literacy support;
- Ensuring that all communities benefit from the opportunities afforded by Australia's strong recovery from the global economic downturn and from future economic growth;
- Supporting strong, diverse communities, free from discrimination, violence and abuse, by confronting intolerance and promoting respect and a sense of belonging for everyone;
- Supporting individuals and communities affected by disasters and critical incidents to recover and build resilience; and
- Improving social infrastructure in communities and supporting volunteering
- **Partnership for change** — building new and innovative partnerships with all sectors of the economy, so that all levels of government, businesses and not-for-profit organisations are working together to build a stronger, fairer Australia. This includes:
 - Maintaining a strong and sustainable community sector, including smaller, not-for-profit, locally-based organisations that can rally the support of local communities;
 - Working in partnership with the community sector and its representatives, including workforce representatives, to develop solutions to our nation's complex issues, and formalizing the relationship between government and the community sector by building on the National compact between the Australian government and the third sector;
 - Ensuring an approach to funding which is sustainable, driven by best outcomes at a local level that protects a diversity of services which are embedded in their community and which encourages community organisations to work together, and not against one another, to deliver for the most vulnerable members of our society;
 - Exploring new models of social enterprise and social investment;
 - Working with philanthropic foundations and individual donors in areas of national priority like reducing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander disadvantage and improving child health outcomes;
 - Effectively coordinating action across sectors to prevent and reduce homelessness; and



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- Working together with business to help Australians living with disability and mental illness to participate in work and community life.

Human rights

37. Labor believes a Human Rights Framework that reflects our international obligations is necessary in reflecting our commitment to fundamental rights across social and economic policies. We are committed to promoting the awareness and understanding of human rights, supporting the international human rights instruments to which Australia is a signatory, and properly funding and supporting the Australian Human Rights Commission an independent agency that plays a critical role in our society. Labor will adhere to Australia's international human rights obligations and will seek to have them incorporated into the domestic law of Australia, and have them taken into account in administrative decision-making and whenever new laws and policies are developed.

38. Labor introduced a Human Rights Framework that:

- Invested in a comprehensive suite of education initiatives to promote a greater understanding of human rights across the community;
- Through the National Action Plan on Human Rights required that each new Bill introduced into Parliament is accompanied by a statement of compatibility with our international human rights obligations; and
- Established a new Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights to provide greater scrutiny of legislation for compliance with our international human rights obligations

39. Labor will:

- Develop federal anti-discrimination laws into a single Act to remove unnecessary regulatory overlap and make the system more user-friendly;
- Provide for a review of legislation, policies and practices for compliance with the seven core UN Human Rights treaties to which Australia is a party (which are listed in the framework); and
- Consider whether the Human Rights Framework could be enhanced through a statutory charter of human rights or other similar instrument rights or other similar instrument.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples

40. Labor is committed to the recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the Australian Constitution. The recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the Constitution is an important step in building a more reconciled nation based on

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strong relationships of mutual respect. Labor supports meaningful and substantive change that will recognize the unique and special place of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and reflects our nation's fundamental belief in the importance of equality and non-discrimination. Labor will work to build public support for constitutional recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

41. Labor believes that the acknowledgement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as traditional owners and continuing custodians of country is an important mark of respect and reconciliation at appropriate events, including at the opening of the Federal Parliament. Labor supports welcome to country ceremonies at significant public events.
42. Labor acknowledges the First Nations status and aspirations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, as well as their contribution to Australian society.
43. Labor remains firmly committed to reconciliation and recognises the importance of reconciliation as a vehicle for healing and justice in Australian society. Labor will continue to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, the broader community and corporate and non-government sectors in driving reconciliation.
44. Labor is committed to compliance with the Racial Discrimination Act in the development of policies relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
45. Labor supports the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The Declaration affirms the entitlement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people peoples to all human rights and fundamental freedoms as recognised in international law and provides an aspirational framework for future dialogue. Australia's formal support was welcomed by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, key Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, UN experts and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner. This support underlines Labor's desire to work in good faith with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, acknowledging that our relationship will be tested and evolve over time.
46. Labor understands that land and water are the basis of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander spirituality, law, culture, economy and wellbeing. Native Title and land rights are both symbols of social justice and a source of valuable economic Opportunity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians.
47. Labor supports land rights and Native Title as property rights under Australian law and will work to accelerate the resolution of outstanding land and Native Title claims in partnership with other stakeholders. Negotiation produces better outcomes than litigation. Land use and ownership issues should be resolved by negotiation wherever possible.

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48. Labor supports the statutory recognition of inalienable freehold title under the *Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976*.
49. Labor supports the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to live on their traditional lands and the provision of essential services to remote communities.
50. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures enrich the nation and are integral to our national identity. Strong cultural identity is fundamental to the health, social and emotional wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Labor supports initiatives that strengthen the rich and diverse cultural practices, knowledge systems and cultural expressions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
51. Labor recognises the National Congress of Australia's First Peoples as the national peak representative body of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Labor will support the National Congress of Australia's First Peoples, which gives Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples a forum to express their views and aspirations and build on the strengths of existing institutions and bodies at the national, state, and regional level.
52. Labor recognises the importance of community control and direct involvement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the planning and delivery of programs and services. Labor will continue to invest in high performance community controlled Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people organisations to deliver the services that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples want and need.
53. Labor supports a stronger focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander outcomes through mainstream funding and service delivery.

Closing the Gap

54. Closing the gap in life expectancy, employment, health and education outcomes between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other Australians is a national priority. Closing the Gap requires enduring commitment from all levels of government and the corporate and non-government sector, and working in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to deliver the change they aspire to for themselves and for future generations.
55. After decades of underinvestment and neglect, major reforms and unprecedented investment must be made in education, health, employment, housing and services, governance and infrastructure.
56. Labor's commitment to Closing the Gap will be evidence-based and include measurable targets that are open and transparent to the community. The Closing the Gap targets are:

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- To close the life-expectancy gap within a generation;
- To halve the gap in mortality rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children under five within a decade;
- To ensure access to early childhood education for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander four years olds in remote communities within five years;
- To halve the gap in reading, writing and numeracy achievements for children within a decade;
- To halve the gap for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in Year 12 (or equivalent) attainment rates by 2020;
- To halve the gap in employment outcomes between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people within a decade; and
- To Close the Gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people school attendance within five years.

57. Labor supports the development of three additional targets under the Closing the Gap framework to be developed in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and organisations:

- To increase participation in higher and further education, ensuring greater opportunity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to continue their learning in the fields of their choice;
- To improve access to services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability, to ensure that 90 per cent of eligible Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people will receive funded support under the National Disability Insurance Scheme by 2020; and
- To address the high rates of engagement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, particularly young people, with the criminal justice system.

58. Labor understands that all governments must be held accountable for their progress in Closing the Gap to achieve a change for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Labor believes in a nationally coordinated approach to drive progress in achieving the Closing the Gap targets and will work in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to develop effective solutions that achieve long-term and measurable improvements with an independent and regular reporting framework.

59. Labor puts families at the centre of our work to Close the Gap on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander disadvantage, and will work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families to give children the best start in life. Through the National Partnership on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people Early Childhood Development, Labor worked

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with state and territory governments to implement a comprehensive early childhood strategy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, including better access to antenatal care services, sexual and reproductive health services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and maternal and child health services.

60. Labor recognises the importance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander early years services, including the Children and Family Centres established by Labor, which are critical to support families to give children a strong start in life so that they are healthy, strong in their identity and ready for school.
61. Labor acknowledges that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children have a significantly greater risk of experiencing violence than other women. Labor pledges to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to reduce the risk and prevalence of violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children.
62. Labor recognises the over representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in the child protection system. Labor is committed improving child safety and reducing the number of children entering care. Labor will work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to ensure children in care maintain contact with their culture and community.
63. Labor notes the unacceptably high levels of incarceration experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, particularly young people, and that these rates continue to rise. Labor notes the House of Representatives Standing Committee Report *Doing Time — Time For Doing* and the 1992 Report of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody which identify the systemic causes of incarceration experienced by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.
64. Labor will take steps to address Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' interaction with the justice system, to reduce the rates of offending and victimisation, and to improve community safety. Labor supports justice reinvestment and is committed to the development of a justice target under the Closing the Gap framework to ensure coordinated action, accountability and progress to reduce the disproportionate incarceration rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Suspicious deaths in custody must also be treated in a manner that maintains public confidence in the justice system.
65. Labor acknowledges that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples experience a higher burden of illness, die at a younger age than other Australians and too often do not have access to adequate health services. Addressing the health status of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples requires a comprehensive approach that looks beyond health services to include cultural wellbeing and connection to the land, education, environmental health and employment and training opportunities, as discussed in Chapter 8.



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66. Labor believes education and training is fundamental to improving employment opportunities and reducing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' disadvantage. In government, Labor increased Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student numbers in higher education by 26 per cent. Labor understands the vital importance of ensuring that children go to school each day. Labor is committed to working in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and schools to support families and children to engage with schooling and improve educational outcomes, as discussed in Chapter 7.
67. Labor is committed to improving job readiness employment opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to halve the employment gap by 2018, through a range of strategies and policy approaches discussed in Chapter 5.
68. Labor delivered the Apology to Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, in particular the Stolen Generations in recognition of the importance of saying sorry for past wrongs to healing and a bridge to building respect.
69. Labor will work in partnership with the Stolen Generations members and their families to comprehensively respond to their needs as a distinct group. Labor supports the Healing Foundation and its work to aid healing in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, and the programs arising from the Bringing Them Home Report.
70. Labor notes the House Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs, *Sport – More than Just a Game*, which found that sport is a vital tool in facilitating positive outcomes in health and mental health, strengthening cultural identity and social inclusion. Labor is committed to supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' participation in sport to contribute to Closing the Gap in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' disadvantage.

Rights and Opportunities for People with Disability

71. Labor believes that people with disability have the same rights as all Australians.
72. Labor believes government has a key role to play in removing the barriers that prevent people with disability from exercising those rights and ensuring they receive the support they need to participate fully in society.
73. Labor is committed to ensuring that people with disability and their families are not treated like second class citizens, but are entitled to equal opportunities to participate in life, and to be free from discrimination in our workplaces, services and communities.



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74. Labor believes people with disability and their families should be supported as individuals to have choice and control in their lives.
75. Services for people with disability must be tailored to individual circumstances to improve opportunities to participate in work and in the community.
76. Mainstream community services need their capacity to be built to be inclusive and accessible to citizens with disability and their families.
77. People with disability are persons before the law. Labor is committed to promoting their right to make choices for themselves.
78. Labor is committed to implementing the ‘National Decision-Making Principles’ published in the Australian Law Reform Commission’s (ALRC) 2014 report, *Equality, Capacity and Disability in Commonwealth Laws*, namely:
- Everyone has an equal right to make decisions and to have their decisions respected;
 - Persons who need support should be given access to the support they need in decision-making;
 - A person’s will and preferences must direct decisions that affect their lives; and
 - There must be appropriate and effective safeguards in relation to interventions for persons who may require decision-making support.
79. These principles promote the autonomy and independence of persons with disability, and are underpinned by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities. Labor ensured Australia is a signatory to this Convention.
80. Labor is committed to having a strong, independent Disability Discrimination Commissioner to advocate for people with disability affected by discrimination, engage the community in understanding and contributing to the human rights of people with disability and work with the public and private sectors, government and the community to break down the barriers that people with disability face.
81. Labor will work to improve the range, diversity and quality of services for people with disability, including by delivering income support and employment services; focusing on early intervention, individual and personalised choice and control; and working cooperatively with state and territory governments to expand the availability of a broad range of accommodation options, personal support including in-home support and individualised arrangements that support community participation and inclusion.



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82. Labor will work to improve access to buildings, including dwellings, communications, transport, health care, aids, equipment and the justice and education systems, for people with disability and their families.
83. Australians with disability should have the assurance of quality care and support, free of abuse and violence.
84. Labor knows that a collaborative approach between people with disability, their families, advocacy groups, the workforce and their unions, and service providers is essential to the provision of high quality support services, which enable people with disability to reach their goals and aspirations, and maximize opportunities for full participation and inclusion in the community.
85. People with disability should be afforded every opportunity to participate in employment.
86. Labor is committed to ensuring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability are given every opportunity to participate in employment and in the community, and have access to care and supports specific to their needs.
87. Labor is committed to ensuring that people with a disability from a linguistically and culturally diverse background are supported to participate in the community with access to appropriate supports.
88. In line with the United Nations convention, organisations of people with disability and families should have a strong, united voice to be able to provide advice to government and to strengthen the capacity for people with disability to exercise genuine choice and control over their lives.
89. Labor recognizes the critical role advocacy plays in providing support to people with disability and in safeguarding people with disability from abuse, neglect and exploitation. Labor is committed to strengthening the role of advocacy within the sector.
90. Labor is committed to people with disability and families being able to choose to become members or to receive advice and support from organisations specialising in a particular disability, as well as from organisations specialising in population groups.
91. Labor strongly respects the roles of advocates for people with disability and family based organisations and is committed to strengthening them to be effective as possible.



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National Disability Insurance Scheme

92. Labor built the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) – the largest ever reform to Australia’s disability support system.
93. The National Disability Insurance Scheme will transform the lives of around 460,000 people with disability, their families and carers, and give people with disability more choice and control over their lives.
94. Labor built the National Disability Insurance Scheme because the existing disability system is completely broken. For too long Australia’s disability support systems have failed to provide people with disability, their families and carers with the support they need.
95. Labor is committed to rolling out the National Disability Insurance Scheme in full and on time.
96. Labor believes in the creation of new types of user-led services to ensure people with disability have the choice and control over the services they receive.
97. All Australians deserve to have the peace of mind that if they or a loved one acquires disability; they will get the support and care they need to participate in the community.
98. The National Disability Insurance Scheme is an important economic reform that will create jobs and unlock the productive potential of thousands of people with disability and their carers.
99. Through the National Disability Insurance Scheme, Labor is committed to stimulating new innovations and expanding services, creating new, skilled job opportunities for Australian workers to meet the expanding demand from people with disability and families.
100. As the NDIS is rolled out across Australia, Labor will support present and future service providers to better attract, develop, train and employ the sector’s workforce.
101. Labor supports a fully funded National Disability Insurance Scheme that provides the support required for people with disability while also maintaining and enhancing attractive remuneration, job security and career development opportunities for the disability sector workforce. Labor recognizes that retraining and attracting a qualified and experienced disability sector workforce ensures genuine choice and control for people with disability.
102. Labor strongly supports the vital work performed by all staff in the sector and will address the capacity, skill and remuneration issues affecting the disability workforce due to the huge expansion of the sector under the National Disability Insurance Scheme. Labor

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recognises the need to address ongoing workforce attraction and retention issues to ensure quality care and outcomes for people living with a disability. Labor will work with disability services workers and their unions, service providers and stakeholders on the development and implementation of a disability sector workforce strategy that improves sector capacity and ensures quality standards are maintained and enhanced, including:

- Enhancing skill levels and continuing professional development of the workforce, and ensuring there is access to quality and relevant training;
- Ensuring employment standards are protected and maintained through the National Disability Insurance Scheme funding mechanisms with proper regard to relevant industrial instruments;
- Supporting employment and training models that enhance job security and minimise the spread of casualised and insecure work;
- Developing best practice standards and accreditation of supports in consultation with stakeholders so that quality controls can be established, maintained and properly funded; and
- Maximising funding to direct client services rather than administrative and brokerage costs.

103. Labor is committed to working closely with the states and territories on the details of full rollout, based on evidence about high level of need for services across Australia's cities, regions, rural and remote areas.

104. Labor is committed to ensuring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples with disability fully benefit from the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

105. Labor is committed to investment in disability research. Research, evidence and information are essential to support service innovation, planning and quality, as well as informed choice by National Disability Insurance Scheme participants.

106. People with disability and their families know best about what will assist them to live full lives as independently as possible in the Australian community.

107. Labor is committed to peer support and to working with people with disability, their families and carers to develop consumer demand and ensure that people with disability and families are exercising full choice and control in their lives.

National Injury Insurance Scheme

108. Labor is committed to a National Injury Insurance Scheme (NIIS) that complements the National Disability Insurance Scheme.



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109. Labor believes a person-centred National Injury Insurance Scheme for catastrophic injuries will revolutionise support for people with disability by reducing the large inequities in lifetime care and support that currently exists across Australia.
110. Labor is committed to a National Injury Insurance Scheme based on the recommendations of the Productivity Commission that covers the four main causes of catastrophic injury which require a NIIS, namely motor vehicle accidents, medical accidents, workplace accidents, and general accidents occurring in the home or community.
111. The only factor that should determine the level of care someone receives is the level of support they require, not the cause of their injury.
112. Labor is committed to working with the states and territories, as well as key sectors and industries, to develop and implement the National Injury Insurance Scheme as a federated model of separate state-based no-fault schemes that provide lifetime care and support for people who have sustained a catastrophic injury.
113. Labor believes the National Injury Insurance Scheme is critical to the sustainability of the National Disability Insurance Scheme. It will also drive the development of a modern rehabilitation system to provide the early intervention needed for people with acquired disability.

National Disability Strategy

114. Labor is committed to the National Disability Strategy as the key avenue for Australia to implement its obligations under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.
115. The National Disability Strategy gives effect to Labor's belief that governments have a key role to play in helping improve access and inclusion for people with disability in a range of mainstream community settings and services, including health, housing, transport, employment, education, building and planning, communications and justice, as well as in specialist disability services.
116. Labor is committed to the National Disability Strategy's six priority areas for action to improve the lives of people with disability, their families and carers:
- Inclusive and accessible communities — the physical environment including public transport; parks, buildings and housing, digital information and communications technologies; civic life including social, sporting, recreational and cultural life;

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- Rights protection, justice and legislation — statutory protections such as anti-discrimination measures, complaints mechanisms, advocacy and the electoral and justice systems;
- Economic security — jobs, business opportunities, financial independence, adequate income support for those not able to work, and housing;
- Personal and community support — inclusion and participation in the community, person-centred care and support provided by specialist disability services and mainstream services and informal care and support;
- Learning and skills, early childhood education and care, schools, further education, vocational education, transitions from education to employment and life-long learning; and
- Health and wellbeing — health services, health promotion and the interaction between health and disability systems, wellbeing and enjoyment of life.

117. Labor will work with states and territories to reduce the over-representation of people with disability, particularly people with cognitive impairment in the justice system, both as victims and offenders.

118. Labor will use the National Disability Strategy to guide our work with states and territories to bring about change in all mainstream services and programs as well as community infrastructure.

Supporting Our Carers

119. Labor values the contribution of families and carers to our society and believes that carers should have rights, choices, opportunities and capabilities to participate in economic, social and community life.

120. People who care for sick and elderly relatives and people with disability and mental illness deserve acknowledgement and support for the job they do and their selfless and incredible contribution to Australia's economy.

121. Labor acknowledges that our carers take on enormous responsibilities often at both a personal and a financial cost. Many carers experience substantial financial hardship, reduced education and employment prospects, lower levels of health, depression and chronic grief or anxiety.

122. Carers play an invaluable role in providing care and support to loved ones, and believe that carers deserve the same opportunities as other Australians to participate in work and the community, and live a meaningful life.



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123. In Government, Labor worked to reform and improve support through the aged care, disability, mental health, primary health care, hospital, and community care systems. Labor passed the Carer Recognition Act in 2010, and delivered a National Carer Strategy and implementation plan that outlined practical actions, responsibilities and timelines against each of the Strategy's priority areas. Labor values consultation with care organisations with lived experience. Labor recognises the need to work effectively with state and territory governments and service providers.
124. In Government, Labor made significant investments to support carers including:
- Increasing the amount of the Carer Payment, extending eligibility for the Carer Allowance, establishing the annual Carer Supplement and ensuring fairer access to the Bereavement Payment;
 - Boosting mental health respite services and reforming Family Mental Health Support Services to provide improved support and strengthen families affected by mental illness;
 - Improving specialist disability services under the National Disability Agreement; and
 - Funding a national and targeted campaign to raise public awareness of the role and contribution of carers.
125. Labor acknowledges the importance of effective employment conditions for carers, including transition to work when caring responsibilities change.
126. Labor will continue to consult with carers, their representative peak bodies and service providers to identify and overcome impediments, including inflexible working arrangements and financial and practical support for carers in our community.

Financial Security for People with Disability and Carers

127. The Disability Support Pension and Carer Payment are and must remain an essential part of our social safety net for people who need it.
128. Labor is committed to ensuring the Disability Support Pension and Carer Payment are properly indexed, so that they keep pace with the cost and standard of living.
129. The former Labor Government's historic pension reforms delivered the biggest increase to the Disability Support Pension and Carer Payment in 100 years.
130. Labor also implemented a series of reforms to the Disability Support Pension to encourage greater participation in employment.



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131. Labor will fight any attack on the Disability Support Pension and Carer Payment that will leave vulnerable people worse off.

Homelessness

132. Labor will focus on ending homelessness rather than just managing it. Labor will fund homelessness services, giving particular emphasis to improving the connections between homelessness services and mainstream services and getting people who are homeless into employment.
133. Labor is committed to halving homelessness by 2020 and will continue to implement the 12- year strategy laid out in the 2008 White Paper on reducing homelessness, including:
- Providing access to stable, affordable and long-term housing, with an emphasis on ‘housing first’;
 - Models of support that end homelessness long-term, such as Common Grounds and Foyers;
 - Providing support services to help maintain stability in housing;
 - Increasing early intervention and prevention services;
 - Preventing exits from care into homelessness;
 - Ensure appropriate access to mainstream services, such as employment services;
 - Better integrating service provision and providing outreach support; and
 - Encouraging private sector investment in homelessness and housing affordability.
134. Labor recognises the links between access to affordable housing and homelessness. Labor will strongly encourage the states and territories through future funding agreements to prioritise people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness in the allocation of social housing and ensure they are provided with the services to help them maintain their tenancies.
135. Labor will work with the states and territories and stakeholders to continue to improve services for those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. Labor will also continue to support research and data collection on homelessness to collect more reliable and timely data which will help optimise government policies.
136. In addition, Labor understands the significant connection between homelessness and mental health. Mental illness can be a cause of homelessness, just like family breakdown or domestic violence can be. It can also be in itself caused by homelessness. Labor will continue to enhance services to people with a mental health condition or disorder that are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

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Labor's National Housing Strategy

137. Having a home provides the foundation for financial, social and emotional wellbeing. Labor believes all Australians have the right to secure, affordable and appropriate housing throughout their lives. Having a genuine chance to live near job opportunities is also an essential foundation for Australians to participate in the workforce, and to contribute to a productive national economy.
138. A functioning housing market relies on a strong and growing economy. Labor's economic strategy will deliver a smart, modern and fair economy that secures the jobs of today and creates the jobs of tomorrow.
139. Labor acknowledges the role of housing in enhancing social, economic and environmental outcomes.
140. Addressing housing affordability is a major challenge that encompasses federal and state government policy across infrastructure, tax, planning, financing, development, cities, social services, workforce development and industry policy.
141. Reform in this area requires cooperation and coordination across sectors of the economy and especially across Governments to ensure that policy initiatives meet their intended objectives, and Labor believes the Commonwealth has an important leadership role to play.
142. The Commonwealth also must take an active role in working with states and territories and other major stakeholders on strategies to address market failures as well as provide appropriate crisis support for the most vulnerable.
143. Labor is committed to policies which assist Australians to purchase affordable housing including:
- Economic policies designed to keep downward pressure on interest rates and create a competitive housing finance sector;
 - Assistance that allows low to middle income households to meet the cost of home ownership;
 - Programs to expand the supply of affordable public, community and private rental; and
 - Ensuring impediments to building new homes are no greater than necessary.

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144. Labor developed a National Affordable Housing Agreement to bring together a range of policy approaches. The NAHA is the mechanism to commit all governments to joint action on housing policy and reforms including:

- Expanding the supply of housing, particularly affordable rental accommodation;
- Delivering more efficient and effective housing, land and infrastructure development;
- Improving opportunities for first home buyers to enter the market;
- Reforming the social housing sector to improve the public and expand the not-for-profit (community) housing sector;
- Better integrating housing and other services to strengthen communities and build neighbourhoods that are safe, healthy and close to employment opportunities;
- Expanding the role of institutional investment in the provision of affordable housing;
- Promoting housing options that minimise adverse environmental impacts;
- Preventing and reducing homelessness; and
- Improving housing outcomes, for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, particularly in remote communities.

145. Labor will review the National Affordable Housing Agreement ahead of the renegotiation of the next agreement. Principles that will underpin the discussion include:

- Expanding the not-for-profit sector to boost the overall supply of social housing;
- Setting targets for expansion of stock in each state and territory;
- Promoting partnerships between the public, private and community sectors;
- Reforming social housing to ensure that growth is achieved by maximising use of available land;
- Promoting economic and social participation of public housing tenants; and
- Helping to ease the pressure on social housing by improving the wider housing market's delivery of housing.

146. National leadership is required to support Australians who aspire to home ownership. Labor supports, and will continue to review and implement, strategies to make home ownership more affordable including:

- Support for first home owners;

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- Reducing the cost of new homes through measures such as streamlining planning processes or defraying the impact of infrastructure charges;
- National regulation of consumer credit to ensure that all home providers are appropriately regulated and that borrowers are protected as far as possible from taking on unsustainable home loans;
- The development of pathways into home ownership for low and moderate income earners such as key workers and social housing tenants including shared equity products;
- Exploring tax relief mechanisms for first home owners;
- Exploring mechanisms to support low and medium income earners who are at risk of mortgage default maintaining their home;
- Developing mechanisms to encourage older home owners to right-size their homes; and
- Ensuring housing market settings enable first home buyers to compete on a level playing field with other purchasers.

147. Labor acknowledges that much of the urban infrastructure to support new residential areas is a long- term community asset. Labor will work with state, territory and local governments to:

- Ensure that new home buyers do not unfairly bear the costs of such infrastructure, with infrastructure charges levied on developers appropriately reflecting the cost of infrastructure related to specific developments;
- Find innovative ways to finance infrastructure that has a broader community benefit; and
- Reduce development costs by improving national consistency in building codes and urban design regulations and streamlining approval processes.

148. Most rental accommodation will be provided in the private rental market. Labor will monitor the rent costs in the private rental market and examine mechanisms to maintain affordability. Labor will maintain programs to improve the affordability of private rental accommodation. Labor is committed to providing rental assistance in a way that recognises their actual housing costs, and supports people to move from welfare to work.

149. Labor acknowledges that high rent costs exacerbate economic and social pressures in some communities. Labor will work to ameliorate the effects of sharply rising rent costs on local communities.

150. Labor is committed to encouraging greater private investment in the affordable rental sector. Labor established the National Rental Affordability Scheme and will consider this

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approach in future policy development that increases the stock of affordable rental property.

151. Australia needs a strong and vibrant social housing sector to improve housing affordability for low and moderate income earners. The social housing sector incorporates public housing authorities, community housing organisations and a range of other not-for-profit housing organisations.
152. Labor is committed to supporting a viable social housing sector. Labor made the greatest single capital investment in social housing in the history of the Federation. Labor will continue to work with all state, territory and local governments and community housing sector to expand, reform and improve the social housing including:
 - Setting targets for a growth in public and community housing stock in each state and territory, based on a national assessment of need;
 - Ensuring maintenance programs operate to keep social housing stock at acceptable standards;
 - Supporting the renewal of public housing estates, to create mixed communities and tenures and better access to jobs, transport and integration with services;
 - Promoting partnerships between the public, community and private sectors and innovative approaches to increase access to finance;
 - Supporting the substantial growth of the community and not-for-profit housing sector, which is better able to leverage housing assets to build more social and affordable housing for Australians in need;
 - Ensuring public housing rental rebate policies do not require tenants to pay more than 25 per cent of household income in rent, unless there is an agreement with the housing authority to charge a higher rate for the provision of additional services;
 - Ensuring that social housing tenants are supported to maintain their tenancy by linking tenancy management with health, disability and other support services, with specific support for tenants who are vulnerable or marginalised, including tenants with a mental illness;
 - Improving the capacity of public and community housing to help tenants move from welfare to work, including creating employment opportunities for public housing tenants;
 - Ensuring that public and community housing tenants in all states and territories have access to independent mechanisms to review decisions made by housing providers;

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- Supporting programs which ensure that people are made aware of and can access the various forms of housing assistance which are available;
- Encouraging social housing tenants to transition into other forms of affordable housing where appropriate to ensure social housing is targeted to those most in need; and
- Overseeing a strong national regulatory system for the not-for-profit housing sector that both encourages the expansion of the sector by attracting private finance but also avoid unnecessary red tape.

153. The rights of renters must be protected. Labor is committed to funding adequate housing consumer services. Labor will improve the rights of renters through the application of appropriate regulation and standards and will work with states, territories, local government and the community sector to:

- Introduce national tenancy standards for all residential tenancies, including caravan park residents, boarders and lodgers, to 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;
- Ensure 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; and
- Support the regulation of tenant databases though stronger privacy protection including independent monitoring of compliance and access to affordable dispute resolution processes.

Housing for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

154. Access to secure and affordable housing in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, particularly remote communities, is critical to Closing the Gap in life expectancy between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other Australians.

155. Labor will continue to invest in new housing and in refurbishing existing housing stock to address chronic overcrowding in remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

156. Many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people live in cities and regional centres, and the housing challenges faced in these communities differ greatly to those in remote communities. Labor will work with Aboriginal owned and controlled community housing providers to deliver accessible, affordable, appropriate and secure housing that meets the social, cultural and economic aspirations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

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157. Labor supports the aspirations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, including in remote communities, to home ownership. Labor will work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to support this aspiration and increase home ownership rates.

Women

158. Labor believes much remains to be done to achieve equality between Australian women and men to access and enjoy the same rewards, resources and opportunities.
159. Women remain underrepresented within civic and corporate institutions, including the Labor Party; remain disadvantaged by the gender pay gap; and their career progression is still disproportionately affected by pregnancy and carer responsibilities
160. The work of courageous and inspirational women throughout our history has seen great achievements toward the equality of women and men in Australian society, and toward the party's long-held commitment to policies that underpin gender equality.
161. Our whole nation benefits from the full and equal participation of women in education, work and decision-making, not least enhancing productivity and competitiveness.
162. We need to build a stronger partnership between men and women to achieve our goals. Labor will do this through:
- An industrial relations system that protects minimum level of standards to protect the most vulnerable workers, many of whom are women;
 - An industrial relations system that provides employees the right to request family friendly conditions such as extended unpaid parental leave, and flexible and part-time work to support people to manage the competing interests of work and family;
 - Regulation and education for employers to promote equal opportunity, gender pay equity and work and family balance;
 - Policy and law that promotes diversity, including through the participation of women on company boards by aiming to increase the representation of women on Australian Government boards to 40 per cent by 2016;
 - Maintaining a fair government-sponsored paid parental leave scheme;
 - Improving the accessibility of affordable quality childcare and before and after school care;
 - Promoting women's equal access to educational and training opportunities, particularly for women who have spent time out of the workforce to care for their children;



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- Recognising and valuing women's paid and unpaid work;
- Supporting and encouraging men to take an increased role in care giving and domestic labour;
- Providing women with access to financial literacy and superannuation information and tailoring that information to their needs, having regard to the disproportionate representation of women in part time and casual work and the long-term implications for their financial security and superannuation; and
- Ensuring that all employees, including those who worked minimal hours in part-time or casual work, will continue to receive compulsory superannuation contributions.

Prevent Violence against Women and Children

163. There is no clearer symbol of continuing gender inequality in our society than violence against women and Labor believes addressing family violence must be a national priority. Labor recognises family and domestic violence will only be prevented by working in partnership with all Australians and requires changing attitudes through teaching respect in our schools, our sporting clubs, our military, our workplaces and the media and will work with all sectors of the community on prevention programs.
164. Labor will take decisive action to tackle violence against women by making critical investments and ensure addressing family violence is a national priority.
165. Labor believes national leadership is required to coordinated judicial and social services reform across jurisdictions to better deal with family violence in a new comprehensive national strategy that will include:
- Supporting victims of family violence going through court by resourcing community legal assistance including culturally-appropriate support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people;
 - Building the capacity of the judicial system to deal with family violence;
 - Delivering more certainty for homelessness services supporting women and children escaping family violence situations;
 - Enabling women and their children experiencing family violence to remain safely in their current home and community;
 - Establishing greater perpetrator accountability mechanisms and divert perpetrators from the path that leads to violence;
 - Addressing fragmented responses to family violence;

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- Sound research and ongoing measurement to underpin policy approaches, identify emerging challenges and track progress; and
- Primary prevention and early intervention strategies.

166. Labor values the work of the myriad of organisations working to address family violence, and commits to ongoing consultation and support to ensure that women’s voices are heard in the development and delivery of our strategy. Labor implemented the National Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women and their Children (2010-2022), which provided the first ever national framework for action by federal, state and territory governments to reduce violence against women and their children. The national plan aims to reduce gendered violence by improving how governments work together, increasing support and creating innovative and targeted ways to bring about change. Labor remains committed to the implementation of the Plan.

167. The national plan focuses on preventing violence by

- Building respectful relationships and attitudinal change in our culture, institutions and in individuals, with a focus on young people;
- Encouraging men and women to treat each other as equals;
- Driving whole of community action to prevent violence;
- Understanding diverse experiences of violence across sectors in the community;
- Supporting innovative services and integrated systems including supporting victims to rebuild their lives supported by a community-wide responses including specialist services, as well as offering more services to people who hurt others to help them stop using violence;
- Improving perpetrator interventions to prevent and track incidences of violence; and
- Continuing to build the evidence base on violence against women and children, including understanding emerging challenges and incidence of violence, tracking attitudinal change and target and prioritise resources.

Children

168. Every child has a right to a safe, healthy and happy childhood. Labor will support families to give their children the best start in life, and will continue to work to protect children at risk from disadvantage and abuse.

169. The former Labor Government led the way on reforms that protect and ensure the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people across the country. In 2009 Labor established the National Child Protection Framework. The Framework represented the



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highest level of collaboration between Commonwealth, State and Territory governments and non-government organisations to improve the way agencies, payments and programs interact to help prevent abuse and better protect children identified as being at risk.

170. Labor’s National Child Protection Framework demonstrated our ongoing commitment to:

- Improved prevention and early intervention through a national, collaborative approach;
- More effective responses for children in care and leaving care;
- Improved outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children; and
- Attracting and retaining a skilled professional workforce to improve child protection systems.

171. Labor is committed to ensuring that children are adequately protected from exposure to inappropriate material over the internet, at home, school and at other public access points.

172. Labor acknowledges the experiences of past adoption practices. Labor is committed to working with the states and territories to develop a uniform national system for adoption. This includes work to achieve harmonisation and best practice of fees, document access and format, as well as ongoing access to support for all families impacted by adoption and procedures for inter-country adoption, whilst always prioritising the best interests of the child and ensuring adequate safeguards against child trafficking risk.

173. Labor supports the development of a national approach to children and the law, which includes:

- 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;
- Standards for support, counselling and rehabilitation services for child victims and offenders within the criminal justice system;
- Support for research into causes of juvenile crime; and
- The appointment of a National Children’s Commissioner.

Young Australians

174. Government should take active steps to ensure better representation of young Australians in national debate and policy development.



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- 175. Labor will continue to engage with young Australians, including through the use of social media and new technology.
- 176. Labor will ensure young Australians are supported to reach their full potential, by investing in education, training, employment and school to build resilience and ensure young Australians can successfully negotiate the many transitions through life.
- 177. Labor will place a particular focus on young people's health needs, including physical and mental health, drug and alcohol education, the promotion of positive body image and a healthy lifestyle.
- 178. Labor will work towards developing strategies to prevent and reduce the damage being caused by the increased sexualisation of children in the media and popular culture.
- 179. Violent activity, including street violence, is something that can affect Australians of all ages. To ensure that young people are not disproportionately affected by street violence either as victims or perpetrators, Labor will work in partnership with young people to tackle street violence and the perceptions of street violence in our community.
- 180. Labor will ensure a national voice for the Australian youth sector.

Support for the Community Sector

- 181. Labor supports a vibrant, strong and innovative community sector.
- 182. Labor acknowledges the enormous social and economic contribution of the sector. It provides frontline services to our most vulnerable people including early intervention and crisis support for those at risk of homelessness, escaping domestic violence or those who are excluded from their communities. The community sector builds the capacity of communities to respond to entrenched and emerging social challenges and create opportunities for the participation and inclusion of all Australians.
- 183. Labor believes support for the most vulnerable and marginalised people in our communities is always best provided in a partnership between the Government and not-for-profit community sector.
- 184. Labor is committed to developing and maintaining a genuine partnership based on mutual respect and trust, providing the opportunity for the sector to have strong voice in the design and implementation of social policy and programs.
- 185. Labor will create a platform to consider sector-specific challenges, including the uncertainty and loss of capacity caused by recent funding processes, the lack of a

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clear pathway on regulation, the role of volunteering and innovation in service delivery, as well as the critical role of advocacy in developing and implementing effective policies and programs that achieve real outcomes for those most at risk of social exclusion.

Removing discrimination

- 186. Labor supports the enactment of legislation prohibiting discrimination on the basis of a person's sexual orientation or gender status, and the removal of such discrimination from Commonwealth legislation.
- 187. All people are entitled to respect, equality, dignity and the opportunity to participate in society free of hatred or harassment and receive the protection of the law regardless of their sexuality or gender identity.
- 188. Consistent with this belief, in 2007 Labor audited Commonwealth laws to identify discrimination against same sex couples. In 2008, Labor passed laws to remove discrimination from 84 pieces of Commonwealth legislation.
- 189. Labor will ensure that all couples whether married or de facto do not suffer discrimination.
- 190. Labor will amend the Marriage Act to ensure equal access to marriage under statute for all adult couples irrespective of sex who have a mutual commitment to a shared life.
- 191. These amendments should ensure that nothing in the Marriage Act imposes an obligation on a minister of religion to solemnise any marriage.

Justice in the community

- 192. Access to justice is central to the rule of law and integral to the enjoyment of basic human rights. It is an essential precondition to social inclusion and a critical element of a well-functioning democracy.
- 193. Labor is committed to ensuring our justice system is fair, simple, affordable and accessible, and based on principles of early intervention to assist people to resolve problems before they escalate and lead to entrenched disadvantage.
- 194. People on the margins of society often have the highest levels of interaction with the justice system. Australia's system of justice must provide security for all Australians, protect their property, deter and prevent crime, compensate victims where appropriate and rehabilitate offenders.



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195. Labor supports a charter of rights for the victims of crime based on the United Nations Charter of Victims' Rights (Basic Principles of Justice for Victims of Crime and Abuse of Power 1985), and 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.
196. Labor will continue to ensure that the Commonwealth's investigation, prosecution, defence and judicial processes are separate, independent, adequately resourced and appropriately accountable.
197. The independence of the judiciary is fundamental to the maintenance of both the rule of law and our democratic society. The courts should be accountable, and will continue to ensure judicial appointments made through a transparent and merit-based process and that all those eligible for appointment to judicial office have the opportunity to be fairly and properly considered. Labor will work with the judiciary to ensure that the judicial system is efficient and adequately funded. Labor will continue to work with the courts to evaluate and improve service delivery.
198. Labor will also ensure the leading law enforcement agency of the Commonwealth, the Australian Federal Police, is adequately resourced and supported.
199. Labor is committed to the rule of law and basic principles of justice including that people accused of a criminal offence are not compelled to incriminate themselves; that they are not subject to prolonged detention without charge; that they are given a fair trial including, in the ordinary course, the right to see and hear the evidence against them; that people charged with serious criminal offences are provided with legal representation if they are unable to afford legal representation of their own; and that evidence obtained illegally, by torture, coercive techniques or by improper investigative practice is inadmissible.
200. Labor is committed to providing national leadership to resource our system of legal aid in partnership with the states and territories. Labor will continue to support general and specialist community-based legal services and clinical legal education schemes.
201. The legal profession plays a fundamental role in the provision of access to justice. Labor supports the creation of a modern, efficient and accountable national legal services market, regulated by an independent body so as to be fully accountable and maintain the independence of the legal profession.
202. Labor is committed to the ongoing process of law reform so that our laws and legal system reflect the traditions, values and aspirations of all Australians, and meet the needs of our modern democratic society. Labor is committed to the adequate resourcing of the Australian Law Reform Commission, to enable them to provide independent and comprehensive advice on all aspects of law reform.

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Custody and sentencing

- 203.** Labor recognises the principles of sentencing as deterrence, punishment, retribution and rehabilitation and supports the just and humane treatment of accused people in custody and offenders in prison. Labor’s policies and practices will conform to Australia’s international human rights obligations and strive for world’s best practice in its treatment of prisoners.
- 204.** Labor supports the sentencing principle of prison as a last resort and the appropriate use of noncustodial sentencing options for all offenders. The way in which the criminal justice system treats juvenile offenders greatly influences whether they will re-offend. The principle that incarceration should be a last resort is particularly important for young people, and all effort should be made to divert children from long-term involvement in the criminal justice system. Labor will take all reasonable steps to ensure that minors are not incarcerated in adult prisons.
- 205.** Labor opposes mandatory sentencing and detention regimes because they are often discriminatory in practice, conflict with the role of the judiciary as an independent arm of government, and have not proved effective in reducing crime or criminality.
- 206.** Labor supports:
- Efforts to reduce the unacceptably high rates of incarceration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians and in particular, young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people;
 - Special attention to prevent deaths in custody, particularly among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people;
 - Training of police and prison officers in understanding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples’ culture and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples’ social context;
 - Legal aid services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people that are efficient, culturally appropriate and recognise the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people within the criminal justice system;
 - The adoption of international treaties allowing the repatriation of Australians in overseas prisons;
 - The ongoing development of ensuring consistency in sentencing so that the judiciary retains a sufficient degree of appropriate discretion so as to enable sentences to be tailored to the circumstances of each individual case;



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- 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;
- The principles of restorative justice as a just and effective way to tackle crime; and
- The introduction of programs that are consistent with victims' rights, based upon restorative justice.

Family law

207. Labor believes that the best interests of children must be the paramount consideration in Family Law disputes. Resolving family disputes should focus on counselling and family dispute resolution, with litigation as a last resort. Labor will ensure community-based services such as counselling and family dispute resolution are accessible, affordable and equipped to resolve entrenched disputes.

208. Labor will continue to develop and implement measures to ease the anxiety and stress of family breakdown. In particular, Labor will ensure that:

- The rights of children are paramount;
- There is a just and equitable division of relationship property;
- The important and valuable contribution of a partner to family care and homemaking be recognised;
- The Family Law system protects those at risk of family violence or child abuse;
- The particular needs, customs and practices of diverse cultures are appropriately respected;
- Children are not disadvantaged by the structure of their family or by the circumstances of their conception;
- Disputes are resolved in a timely, effective and affordable way; and
- Where the family law court system is utilised to resolve disputes the litigation process be efficient and streamlined.

Migration and Refugees

209. Labor believes in dealing with the complex issue of those seeking Australia's protection by giving expression to the values of compassion, fairness and generosity. These are values which are at the heart of the Australian identity.



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210. Labor will treat people seeking our protection with dignity and compassion and in accordance with our international obligations and core Australian principles of fairness and humanity.
211. Labor recognises that, under the Refugee Convention, asylum seekers have the right to seek protection and asylum and that, regardless of the mode of arrival, this is not illegal under Australian or international law. Accordingly, Labor rejects the practice of referring to asylum seekers as "illegals".
212. Labor believes that as a country Australia must not harm people.
213. The issue of those seeking protection is both a global and regional one. Accordingly, in order to achieve a long-term resolution to the issue, it must be dealt with through international cooperation and not unilateral action. Within our region, Australia must play a leadership role.
214. A fundamental principle in treating those seeking protection with humanity is to provide as much certainty as possible. An aspiration of certainty in all matters around asylum seekers, including the duration of assessing refugees' claims, must underpin Australian policy.

International Engagement

215. Labor will seek to lead debate on the new agreements and understandings required to ensure that the Refugee Convention and the international protection system function effectively over the long-term, including encouraging countries in our region to provide protection to those in need.
216. Recognising that irregular movement is a regional issue that requires a co-operative regional approach, Labor will engage with Australia's neighbours to seek innovative and effective solutions to the irregular movement of people through the region. This approach will include multilateral engagement, particularly through the Bali Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime (the Bali Process), and bilateral arrangements of a type envisaged by the Regional Cooperation Framework agreed at the Bali Process Ministerial Conference in March 2011.
217. The phenomenon of people smuggling has a long history arising from the need for people to escape from danger and persecution. Labor also recognises that those who decide to leave a country in perilous circumstances have the right under the Refugee Convention to determine their means of departure. However, recognising the risk to life of people travelling on unsafe, unseaworthy and overcrowded boats, Labor supports measures to reduce such journeys by working with regional neighbours and the Office of the United

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Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to eliminate any pull that people smugglers may have over vulnerable protection claimants by:

- Addressing people smuggling at its source;
- Pursuing strong regional and international arrangements which provide access to protection in countries of first asylum to deter secondary movements of asylum seekers;
- Developing the capacity, both in countries of first asylum and transit countries, to improve living standards and protection outcomes for asylum seekers who may be vulnerable targets of people smugglers;
- Expediting the claims for refugee status by asylum seekers in the region; and
- Increasing the humanitarian intake of genuine refugees from source and transit countries to create an orderly pathway to resettlement in Australia and provide asylum seekers with an alternative to irregular boat travel to Australia.

218. Noting that Pacific Island nations have a particular vulnerability to the effects of climate change, and that these nations have expressed a clear desire for Pacific peoples to continue to live in their own countries where possible, and acknowledging Australia's unique responsibilities in the Pacific, Labor will:

- Support Pacific Islanders to remain in their homelands as the first response to this challenge;
- Work to assist with intra-country relocations when citizens have to be moved from low-lying areas to higher ground; and
- In the event that in the longer term permanent migration becomes necessary for some Pacific Islanders, work in close consultation with the region to ensure that appropriate settlement is achieved.

219. Labor will continue Australia's contribution to international aid efforts to alleviate the pressing humanitarian needs of displaced persons.

Humanitarian Migration Programme

220. Labor aspires to progressively increase Australia's humanitarian intake to 27,000 places per year.

221. In continuing Australia's generous humanitarian program, Labor will work to provide appropriate support for the travel and resettlement of refugees and others requiring Australia's protection.

Australia's Border

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222. For the Australian people to have confidence and trust in the integrity of our migration system, Labor will fund and maintain robust border security measures that support the orderly processing of migration to our country and protect our national interest and our national borders.
223. Labor will ensure that asylum seekers who arrive by irregular means will not be punished for their mode of arrival.
224. Labor is united in its commitment to prevent further loss of life at sea of vulnerable children, women and men. Labor will:
- Meet its obligations to the maritime principle of safety of life at sea which requires a response to assist in the rescue at sea of vessels in distress;
 - Consider introducing further penalties for serious people smuggling offences; and
 - Ensure repatriation of crew members who are proven to be juveniles.
225. To support Australia's strong border security regime, Labor will maintain:
- An architecture of excised offshore places; and
 - The non-statutory processing on Christmas Island of persons who arrive unauthorised at an excised place, except where other arrangements are entered into under bilateral and regional arrangements.

Immigration Detention

226. Under Labor's policies, the presumption will be that unauthorised arrivals who enter for the purpose of seeking asylum will, after appropriate checks, be detained only if the need is established.
227. Labor's humane and risk-based immigration detention policies and practices will be guided by key immigration detention values, namely:
- Three groups will be subject to mandatory detention. Labor will strive to ensure that this is for no longer than 90 days.
 - All unauthorised arrivals, for management of health, identity and security risks to the community. Labor will strive to ensure this is for 90 days only;
 - Unlawful non-citizens who present proven unacceptable risks to the community; and
 - Unlawful non-citizens who have been proven to persistently refuse to comply with their visa conditions;

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- Detention that is indefinite or otherwise arbitrary is not acceptable and the length and conditions of detention, including the appropriateness of both the accommodation and the services provided, will be subject to regular review;
- Detention in an IDC is only to be used as a last resort and for the shortest practicable time;
- People in detention will be treated fairly and reasonably within the law; and
- Conditions of detention will ensure the inherent dignity of the human person.

228. Labor’s humane and risk-based immigration detention policies and practices will include a commitment to ensure that after the necessary health, identity and security checks every humanly practical effort will be taken to remove children and their families from immigration detention centres (IDCs) into alternative arrangements

229. Labor will ensure that all Australian Government involvement in detention facilities it operates or funds is subject to transparent, independent oversight. Provisions for this oversight will be reflected in all contracts with service providers. Labor in government will use its best endeavours to provide for this oversight in any relevant international agreements.

230. Recognising the inequities of the policy of charging immigration detainees a daily maintenance rate while in immigration detention, Labor extinguished such detention debts and will oppose any attempts to reinstate this practice.

231. As soon as the reasons for mandatory detention have ceased every effort must be made to remove asylum seekers from IDCs through community detention or the granting of bridging visas with work rights. Means-tested access to migration assistance should be provided while the merits of an asylum seeker’s application are assessed.

232. The management of IDCs will remain with private sector management for the term of the current contracts. In evaluating the future form of detention facility and detention services management the views of all stakeholders, including the relevant trade unions must be taken into account.

Refugee Assessment

233. Labor believes protection claims made in Australia should be assessed and reviewed on the individual merits with procedural fairness ensuring that our international human rights obligations are met. Accordingly:



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- The assessment and review of protection claims should be underpinned by robust, efficient and transparent processes that ensure fair and consistent outcomes, including access to review and independent advice;
- The assessment and review of protection claims must be independent and free from any political or diplomatic interference;
- The processing of protection claims must be streamlined to enhance the quality of decision-making, to provide more efficient pathways for prompt resolution of visa status and to alleviate the courts' immigration case-load burden; and
- The Stone Review process will be maintained as an important mechanism for ensuring the fairness of Australia's security assessment system.

234. Labor will require the National Security Legislation Monitor to advise on establishing other mechanisms for independent review of the adverse security assessments that ensures procedural fairness while recognising that processes may be required to protect intelligence sources and methodology.
235. Labor will explore options other than indefinite detention including third country resettlement to deal with refugees with adverse security assessments in a way that does not jeopardise Australia's national security interests.
236. Reporting on the '90 day rule', which requires that refugee status determinations are concluded within 90 days from the time of application, has been an important accountability measure in ensuring that the Government operates in a timely way in assessing protection applications.
237. Labor in Government will reintroduce the 90 day rule into the Migration Act.
238. The existing fast track assessment process under the auspices of the Immigration Assessment Authority and the limitation of appeal rights does not provide a fair, thorough and robust assessment process for persons seeking asylum.
239. Labor in Government will abolish this fast track assessment process.
240. Labor believes the Refugee Convention plays a critical role in Australian law. Referring to the Refugee Convention in the Migration Act 1958 is good legislative practice.
241. Labor in Government will reintroduce the appropriate references to the Refugee Convention into the Migration Act.
242. Protection visa applications made in Australia should be assessed by Australians on Australian territory.

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243. Under legislation passed by Labor, complementary protection claims should be considered by way of the protection visa framework.

Australia's Protection

244. Those found to be owed Australia's protection under the Refugee Convention and other international instruments should be given permanent protection under the Migration Act.
245. Those not found to be owed Australia's protection under the Refugee Convention and other international instruments should be promptly returned.
246. Temporary Protection Visas place refugees in an ongoing state of uncertainty and prevent meaningful settlement, creating hardship for refugees and denying Australia the benefit of their contribution.
247. Labor in Government will abolish Temporary Protection Visas.

Settlement of Refugees

248. Australia's settlement support services are regarded as the best in the world. Labor is committed to maintaining this and accordingly will ensure that sufficient focus and resources are directed to our settlement services.
249. Labor will work to ensure the provision of appropriate English language tuition as an essential settlement service which is critical to the achievement of full social and economic participation of refugees.
250. Labor will seek to improve the availability and integration of Commonwealth-funded migrant and settlement services. Labor will ensure settlement service policies are:
- Informed by advice from the Refugee Resettlement Advisory Council, the Settlement Council of Australia and other key stakeholders and the community; and
 - Coordinated in partnership with state and territory governments, local councils, community organisations and service delivery providers.
251. Labor is committed to ensuring that services across government for refugees are culturally responsive, universally accessible and consistent with Labor's social inclusion agenda.
252. Labor acknowledges the positive effect regional settlement can have on rural locations. Labor supports the settlement of suitable humanitarian entrants in regional locations with the support of state and local governments and local communities.



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The Economic and Social Contribution of Migrants and Refugees

253. Labor recognises the economic and social contribution that has been made by migrants and refugees throughout our nation's history. Labor regards Australia's diversity as a source of national strength and a critical factor in nation building.
254. Australia is and will remain a society of people drawn from a rich variety of cultural, ethnic, linguistic and religious backgrounds. Australia is and will remain a multicultural society.
255. To support Australia's multicultural society, Labor's migration policies will:
- Remain non-discriminatory;
 - Respect the heritage and traditional customs of migrants and their children;
 - Recognise the importance of all aspects of the migration program, including skilled, family and humanitarian streams;
 - Support Australia's social cohesion by encouraging universal respect for Australia's democratic beliefs and laws, and the rights, responsibilities and privileges of Australian citizenship;
 - Consistently oppose those who foster extremism, hatred, ethnic division or incitement to violence; and
 - Be evidence-based, supported by rigorous research and evaluation.

Sport

256. Labor will continue to entrench sport and physical activity as a central part of the preventative health agenda and encourage a lifelong love of sport.
257. Sport is a vital tool in facilitating outcomes in health and mental health, social inclusion, tourism, education, community capacity building, multicultural affairs, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander affairs, regional development, trade, foreign affairs, and creating cultural identity.
258. Sport and physical activity is essential for the physical and mental development of children.
259. Sport is an important platform for social inclusion. Labor is committed to ensuring all levels of sport in Australia are inclusive of culturally and linguistically diverse Australians.
260. Labor recognises the increasing popularity of non-organised sport and fitness activities and acknowledges the value of these forms of physical activity facilitating outcomes in health and mental health



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- 261. Labor will continue to support young Australians, including young people in regional areas, to participate in physical activity and to compete in recognised sporting competitions.
- 262. Labor is committed to supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' sport and using participation in sport to contribute to the Closing the Gap in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander disadvantage.
- 263. In recognition of the need to further increase the profile of women's sport in Australia, Labor will continue to support the promotion of women's sport and efforts to increase its media coverage.
- 264. Labor is committed to greater leadership and mentoring opportunities for women in sport.
- 265. Labor is committed to supporting sport for people with disability and establishing pathways for athletes with a disability.
- 266. Labor values the role of the coaches and officials and believes they should be supported.
- 267. Labor recognises the role and invaluable contribution of volunteers across all levels of sport.
- 268. Labor will continue to work to maximise the water safety of Australians, especially children.
- 269. Labor is committed to keeping Australia at the forefront of Olympic, Paralympic and other international sport and maximising our success on the international stage by continuing to support our elite athletes and ensuring elite pathways.
- 270. Labor believes success on the international stage creates role models for young Australians and encourages participation in grassroots sport.
- 271. Labor is committed to strengthening Australia's sporting systems and will continue to ensure that the Australian Institute of Sport is a world-class facility for elite athletes.
- 272. Labor will ensure that Australia is at the forefront of anti-doping and fighting match fixing in sport and will provide leadership in anti-doping and the fight against match fixing on the international stage.
- 273. In partnership with sport, Labor will continue to tackle the issue of illicit drug use and binge drinking by athletes and in the wider community.

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Arts and culture

274. Arts and culture contribute to building a more creative and productive nation. People of all ages and from all walks of life can participate in arts events and education and can express their creativity in an array of different cultural forms. For Labor, cultural policy is not just about supporting the arts, it is about strengthening communities and developing our creative culture so that we are ready to take on the challenges and opportunities of life. Labor recognises the important role played by Australia’s cultural institutions and commits to supporting these institutions to collect, preserve and make available Australia’s cultural heritage. Labor also understands that arts and culture drive innovation across the nation and contribute to productivity.
275. Labor will build on and further develop Creative Australia, the national cultural policy adopted by Labor in government in 2013.
276. Labor’s arts and cultural policy reflects the important role that arts and creativity play in the daily lives of all Australians, and it will help to integrate arts and culture policy within our broader social and economic goals. It will strengthen the links between creative culture and priorities to boost productivity, drive innovation and strengthen community cohesion.
277. Labor’s arts and cultural policy has four goals:
- To ensure that what the government supports — and how this support is provided — reflects the diversity of a 21st century Australia and protects and supports Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people culture;
 - To encourage the use of emerging technologies and new ideas that support the development of new artworks and the creative industries, and that enable more people to access and participate in arts and culture;
 - To support excellence and world-class endeavour and strengthen the role that the arts play in telling Australian stories both here and overseas; and
 - To increase and strengthen the capacity of the arts to contribute to our society and economy.
278. In developing its arts and cultural policy, Labor remains committed to:
- An active role for public arts and culture programs in schools, regional communities, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and throughout our cities and suburbs;
 - Measures to maximise the participation of all Australians, especially in disadvantaged and marginalised communities, in Australia’s cultural life;

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- Supporting and funding the Australia Council as an independent and expert grant making body which works closely with arts organisations and individual artists;
- Ensuring that the Commonwealth maintains and develops the great national collecting institutions, and that they are able to tour their collections to ensure access for all Australians;
- Supporting and financing the film and television industry, encouraging increased private investment, training further talent and assisting market development through Australian local content requirements on free to air and pay television as well as diverse new technologies;
- Measures to ensure Australian stories continue to be created and told by Australian performers and crew in Australian film and television production; and
- The role of strong local markets in supporting the development of the Australian music sector.

279. Labor will maintain and strengthen access to local markets and support for independent and emerging artists building overseas careers.

280. Labor supports the legal framework of copyright as 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 affirms that a successful copyright framework will support the education, arts, culture, and heritage of Australia through:

- The development and maintenance of a national identity in the Australian creative industries;
- Appropriate and effective measures to protect the intellectual property rights of content creators;
- The development of new and emerging Australian creative talent;
- The meeting of consumer expectations in speed to market;
- Certainty of supply and diversity of Australian-produced intellectual property;
- The promotion of competitive, sustainable and innovative Australian creative industries; and
- The promotion of exports of Australian creative product to foreign territories.

Animal welfare

281. All animals should be treated humanely and will work to achieve better animal welfare through harmonisation of relevant federal, state and territory laws and codes to ensure consistent application and enforcement of animal protection statutes. Labor will:

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- Establish an independent office of animal welfare.
- Phase out cosmetic testing on animals or on products used in the production of cosmetics.
- Oppose any “Ag-gag” legislation.

Fairness and equity in access to government services

282. Labor launched its Service Delivery Reform agenda in 2009 in recognition of changing community expectations about improved service standards and greater choice of channels for government service delivery. In bringing Centrelink, Medicare and the Child Support agency together into the new Department of Human Services in 2011, Labor embraced new technologies to provide convenient, more efficient and more effective delivery of services through the Express Plus apps and the MyGov portal. MyGov now provides citizens with easier, faster and secure access to Medicare, Centrelink, Child Support, DVA, NDIS, PCEHR and ATO. There are currently 5.8 million active MyGov accounts.

283. Labor's approach to human service delivery is defined by our values of fair and equitable access to government services for all citizens. The design of government services will place the citizen at the centre.

284. Labor will put citizens at the centre of service delivery by:

- Ensuring that the Department of Human Services is appropriately resourced to deliver quality and timely services to Australian citizens;
- Increasing the skills and capacity of DHS staff in all areas of customer engagement;
- Maintaining a robust and responsive digital information system that is responsive and appropriate for the needs of the day;
- Maintaining a network of accessible service centres throughout Australia capable of providing real time performance information to citizens;
- Engaging in a Service Delivery Reform agenda designed to improve service delivery standards and promote increased choice of delivery channels;
- Underpinning service delivery reform with an e-citizen's Charter promoting transparency, accountability and democratic participation;

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- Utilising resources saved through more extensive digital service delivery to provide intensive case management programmes for those in greatest need and to ensure that digitally excluded citizens are not disadvantaged;
- Integrating, where practical and appropriate, Department of Human Service digital services with other government digital platforms; and
- Developing, from within existing departmental resources, a departmental e-Government research centre laboratory in line with international best practice. The laboratory will conduct research aimed at continuously improving DHS digital service delivery.



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Chapter 10: Strong democracy and effective government

Introduction

1. Labor will strengthen our democracy and give Australians a real say in shaping our future. Since before Federation, Labor has supported and respected Australia's democratic institutions and values and the Westminster Parliamentary tradition from which they are derived. Labor recognises the role of a strong public service supporting the Government. Labor understands the need to do more than just have great ideas; we need to be able to competently deliver them. Labor is committed to a strong, capable public sector.
2. Labor has always been the party that has invested in our nation's public services and public institutions, to serve the common good, achieve broader social democratic goals and give individuals access to the support they need to fully participate in their community. This commitment holds strong today.
3. Our public services and institutions have a critical role to play in building the Australia of the 21st century. Labor recognises the importance of long term planning to fund the public service. This will ensure that the public service can attract and retain the high skilled employees needed to provide high quality policy solutions that address the big issues facing Australia, and provide better services now and in the future.
4. Labor understands that changes in our population, society and economy are creating new needs and that modern democratic engagement and service delivery must reflect those needs. As communication technology improves, our national broadcasters are able to provide more content to more diverse audiences. As technology increases access to government, our public services and elected representatives should become more accountable. As our population ages, services will need to adapt to meet the demand for greater choice and control. These changes present new challenges to our democratic processes, our public services and the community and not-for-profit sector.

Labor values

5. Labor believes our Constitution and Federation need to be modernised to resolve the funding and administrative problems that have prevented government effectively dealing with the challenges of today. This includes ensuring our constitutional framework recognises our role as an independent nation and our federal funding and administrative structures reflect our status as a nation, not as a number of colonies.
6. Labor believes government should be transparent and driven by electoral mandate, not hidden and unaccountable power. Whether through donations to political parties, lobbying activities restrictions on freedom of information, government should be free of the vested



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and sectional interests that undermine the ability of government to act in the national interest.

7. Labor is committed to democratic and accountable government. This means upholding the highest standards of transparency and probity in the conduct of government and public services. It means a vital role for our public media and broadcasting in informing and educating our citizens. Labor also believes an effective democracy requires a healthy electoral process and a healthy civil society.
8. Elections and voting are at the heart of democracy, and ensuring that all Australians can exercise their democratic franchise regardless of social class, race or background is an enduring Labor value.
9. Government at its best is an enabler: providing the necessary regulation and opportunities for achieving our broader social democratic goals. Labor is committed to shaping government so that it delivers through collaboration and partnership and encourages deliberative solutions to the complex challenges many Australians face.
10. Labor is committed to upholding and strengthening the role of the Australian Parliament as a critical expression of our democracy and is committed to treating Parliament and the essential role of parliamentarians with dignity and respect.
11. Labor's tradition of nation building extends beyond our essential economic and physical infrastructure. For Australia to be a fair, inclusive and well governed society, Labor believes in investing in public services and institutions, the community sector and our national and community media and broadcasting infrastructure.
12. Labor recognises the important role of Australia's public services in providing essential services for the entire community, while also providing long-term policy advice for government that serves the national interest. Labor believes public services should be efficient, high quality, effective and accountable and they should also be protected from interference from government, the private sector or political parties with decisions to outsource public services not made solely on cost.
13. Labor is committed to fostering a culture of integrity within Commonwealth public institutions – a culture of openness and honesty, transparency and accountability, with the highest ethical standards and zero-tolerance for corruption. Building on its record of integrity in public administration Labor will ensure that public confidence in public administration is enhanced by a framework consisting of the Australian National Audit Office, the Australian Public Service Commission, Parliamentary Estimates, the Commonwealth Ombudsman and other integrity measures to support and ensure the culture of integrity.



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Labor priorities

Open and accountable government

14. Labor has strengthened citizens' rights of access to Government material and documents.
15. Labor will continue to promote transparency and accountability by maintaining and promoting a transparent culture across Australian Government agencies.
16. Labor is committed to observance of the United Nations Convention Against Corruption and will ensure the development and implementation of a national anti-corruption plan.
17. Labor will ensure more effective international engagement on anti-corruption matters including by joining the Open Government Partnership.
18. Labor has established whistleblower protection in the public sector. Labor will introduce whistleblower protection across the private sector.
19. Labor recognises the importance of corruption prevention and education as integrity building measures in addition to corruption investigation, detection and enforcement.

Government procurement

20. Labor will promote a procurement strategy that safeguards and grows skills, investment and jobs, under existing international obligations, to ensure that Australian businesses can compete locally and internationally.
21. Labor will take into account a range of considerations when determining what constitutes good value for money, not just purchase price. Government agencies will not be forced to choose the cheapest supplier whether at home or abroad when that choice would cost taxpayers more in the long run because the products or services on offer are inferior in quality or have high ongoing costs. Agencies will also not be forced to choose the cheapest supplier when this would have detrimental social or environmental effects. Agencies will be required to consider all direct and indirect benefits and costs over the whole life of each product and service, including jobs, skills and investment, along with the performance history of each prospective supplier (including, industrial relations, environmental and, where appropriate, community engagement).
22. Labor is committed to ensuring that services, industry organisations that derive their business and profits from the Australian community contribute economically and socially into the future.

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23. As the biggest purchaser of services, the Federal Government has an important role to play to ensure where possible services are sourced locally
24. Labor in Government will:
 - Be a model purchaser and deal with people who are fair employers (compliant with industrial legislation, Awards and Agreements, Workplace Health and Safety standards and superannuation and workers compensation legislation) throughout the life of the contract
 - Give preference to companies that provide sustainable (i.e. over the life of the contract) employment opportunities for local workers.
 - Labor recognises the importance of both value for money and compliance with government policy and Fair Work Act in procurement processes. This is why the Commonwealth Procurement Guidelines require that suppliers comply with workplace relations laws.
25. Labor will use existing procurement mechanisms such as multi-user lists and coordinated procurement, or if necessary introduce a pre-qualification system, to require prospective tenderers to demonstrate their compliance as a condition of the ability to tender. In government, Labor's amendments to the FMA Regulations to allow the issuing of the Commonwealth Cleaning Services Guidelines is an example of the government acting where there is demonstrated non-compliance with the Fair Work Principles in particular sectors. To ensure compliance, this process will need to be transparent, and be subject to oversight by a tripartite body where appropriate. The Productivity Consultative Committee which includes representatives of unions, business and the government will advise on areas of concern.
26. Recognising that direct government procurement represents only a proportion of the money the Australian government expends each year, Labor will also examine how procurement policies (including those that promote good workplace relations outcomes and Australian industry participation) can be extended to other areas of expenditure including grants and other funding. Labor will investigate ratifying ILO Convention 94, on the payment of market wages in government procurement, as an additional measure.
27. To further enhance transparency, Labor will ensure agencies keep records of, and make available on request, the details of any sub-contractor engaged by a contractor in respect of a Commonwealth contract for procurement.
28. Labor is committed to maximising opportunities for Australian companies to compete for business through the Procurement Coordinator it established in government. The Procurement Coordinator will review and advise on practices across government; handle

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and review complaints; aggregate procurement information and submit an annual report to the government.

29. Building on its record of reforms in government to Commonwealth procurement policy including the Indigenous Opportunities Policy and exemption to the mandatory procurement guidelines for Indigenous small to medium enterprises, Labor will continue to use procurement to support the growth of the Indigenous business sector and will urge states and territories to implement similar reforms to their procurement policies.
30. Labor is committed to:
 - Ensuring that government procurement delivers world-class public services, through fair and open procurement processes free of corruption and discrimination;
 - Ensuring that a robust objective public interest test occurs if services are shifted from the public sector and that it is not done for the purpose of lowering wages and conditions. The test must take into account social and environmental outcomes, including access to and quality of services, impact on regional areas and on local jobs, privacy provisions, risks and consequences, and the cost and benefits to the public; and
 - Providing leadership on sustainability and ethical procurement practices, including requiring all companies that tender for Government contracts in the TCF industry hold Ethical Clothing Australia accreditation.
31. Labor recognises that:
 - In its role as a major purchaser of goods and services, government can play a role in fostering Australia's manufacturing, service and information industries, particularly for emerging industries or companies; and
 - For goods or services to be ethically sourced, suppliers must be good corporate citizens who comply with the law in all matters, most notably laws regarding taxation, trade practices, corporations, industrial relations, consumer affairs, environment and immigration.
32. Labor will continue to require that:
 - Commonwealth procurement rules and codes reflect government policy on ethical procurement;
 - Principal suppliers to the Commonwealth comply with procurement policies by requiring all sub-contractors involved in the principal's supply chain to the Commonwealth to comply with all materially relevant laws;



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- Agencies should not enter into contracts with suppliers who have had a judicial decision against them (not including decisions under appeal) relating to employee entitlements and have not paid the claim; and
- Agencies seek to confirm a tenderer has no such unsettled judgements by seeking a declaration on the matter from all tenderers.

33. To further enhance transparency, Labor will continue to ensure that agencies keep records of, and make available on request, the details of any sub-contractor engaged by a contractor in respect of a Commonwealth contract for procurement.
34. Labor will ensure that small and medium enterprises are able to engage in fair competition for government business. Government officials undertaking procurement will be required to ensure that procurement methods do not unfairly discriminate against small and medium enterprises.
35. Labor has acted to support Australian small and medium enterprises to participate in the government procurement market, including the manufacturing sector. There are special measures in place within the procurement framework to ensure small and medium enterprises have the opportunity to compete for government business. These include a current commitment to source at least 10 per cent of purchases by value from small and medium enterprises. Labor will better coordinate Commonwealth procurement and where it is sensible to do so, consider options to utilise model terms and conditions to assist business and contractors.

A dynamic, effective and modern public sector

36. The Australian Public Service and the wider public sector have a crucial role to play in nation building. Public services should be properly funded to deliver quality public policy, foster innovation, achieve best practice and create quality jobs.
37. We believe the Australian Public Service should be:
- Professional and apolitical;
 - Strong, independent and well-resourced;
 - Committed to equality and social cohesion as well as economic efficiency;
 - Allowed and encouraged to provide frank and fearless advice;
 - Accountable for meeting high standards of service delivery
 - Recruited from the brightest and best in the Australian community
 - Allowed and encouraged to provide frank and fearless advice

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- A model employer in terms of consultation, internal communication, trade union engagement, and the conditions of employment and opportunities for advancement for its staff, including through continuous education and lifelong learning
- Subject to democratic oversight through parliament and relevant bodies including the Auditor- General, the Australian National Audit Office, the Commonwealth Ombudsman and the Australian Public Service Commission;
- Subject to independent administrative review of its actions; and
- A leader in environmental best practice.

38. Labor has always been a strong advocate and protector of the professionalism and integrity of the public service. We will work with the public service and unions to ensure the public service is efficient, effective and responsive to the changing requirements of the Australian people. 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.

39. Labor will ensure that these special elements are reflected in public service industrial relations arrangements by:

- Supporting a single, unified Australian Public Service by addressing pay inequities through an agreed mechanism to achieve equal pay for work of equal value across the APS;
- Ensuring best practice bargaining arrangements including genuine negotiation over pay and conditions;
- Ensuring genuine, good faith consultation on all matters affecting employees in the workplace;
- Facilitating support for the role of trade unions and delegates in the workplace;
- Taking further active steps to ensure people with a disability employed in the Australian Public Service have access to meaningful career development;
- Establishing staffing levels commensurate with workloads;
- Ensuring service-wide productivities are recognised as efficiency gains by Australian Public Service agencies and that these gains are shared between government, employees and the community;



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- Ensuring secure, comprehensive, service-wide standards and classifications;
- Ensuring secure superannuation arrangements in industrial instruments. Labor will maintain at least 15.4 per cent employer contribution to the superannuation of federal government employees, regardless of choice of fund;
- Emphasising training and career development;
- Enabling public servants to balance work and family responsibilities;
- Ensuring appeal and review rights;
- Encouraging direct employment and limiting hiring on a contract basis;
- Enabling employment mobility across the whole of the public service;
- Providing adequate agency funding across the whole of the Australian Public Service;
- Centrally and fully funding measures that address pay inequities in low-paying public sector agencies with a high proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff;
- Taking further active steps to increase the proportion of Indigenous employees in the APS including the provision of meaningful career development and regularly reviewing the effectiveness of those measures in achieving that goal;
- Taking further active steps to increase the proportion of people with a disability employed in the Australian Public Service and ensuring they have access to meaningful career development and regularly reviewing the effectiveness of those measures in achieving that goal;
- 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 workloads.

40. Labor will work with trade unions and employees to investigate a range of alternatives for measuring agency efficiency and identify alternative measures to the efficiency dividend that allow Australian Public Service agencies to most efficiently and effectively deliver government services and develop public policy.

Progressing constitutional reform

41. Labor has a long-standing commitment to constitutional reform to modernise our democratic structures and make our public administration more effective, efficient and prepared to deal with the challenges of the future. First and foremost, our Constitution should reflect Australia's status as a parliamentary democracy and an independent nation.
42. Labor supports the recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the Australian Constitution. The recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the Australian Constitution is an important step in building a more reconciled nation based

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on strong relationships and mutual respect. Labor supports changes that will reflect the unique and special place of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in our nation. Labor will work to build public support for Constitutional recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

43. Modernising our Constitution also entails a transition to an Australian Republic, with an Australian Head of State, who can fully represent our traditions, values and aspirations as a nation. Labor is committed to consulting with the Australian people, other political parties and the states and territories as to the form that the Republic should take. Labor will promote community debate about the advantages and disadvantages of the various republican models. 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.
44. Constitutional reform must be underpinned by popular ownership of the reform agenda, broad political support and effective community education. Labor remains committed to constitutional reform that:
 - Entrenches the principle of one vote, one value for all elections, to ensure equal participation for all regardless of place of residence;
 - Allows simultaneous, fixed four-year terms for the House of Representatives and the Senate;
 - Prevents the Senate rejecting, deferring or blocking appropriation bills;
 - Removes the barrier on election to parliament of a person holding an office of profit under the Crown, provided that office is relinquished on election not nomination;
 - Allows all Australian citizens to contest Commonwealth elections;
 - Removes racially discriminatory provisions from the Constitution, in particular by amending or removing section 25 and section 51(xxvi) to ensure they cannot be used to discriminate against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people Australians;
 - Makes clear the capacity of the Commonwealth and the states and territories to work together using the full range of cooperative schemes to achieve harmonised laws and national enforcement regimes; and
 - Recognises the role of local government.
45. Labor will continue using the Council of Australian Governments process to modernise our Federation and improve the delivery of important services in areas like health, education, transport, water, emergency services and equality for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.



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Reforming electoral law

46. Labor is committed to the fair, open and transparent operation of our electoral system and to the essential democratic principle that every person should have the right to full participation in it.
47. Labor will ensure that all Australians, and particularly first-time voters, people from non-English speaking backgrounds, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, people in remote locations and young people are not excluded from the electoral system.
48. Labor will improve the integrity of the electoral system and, most urgently, restore transparency, openness and accountability to the funding and disclosure regime.
49. Building on the improvements made to date, Labor will:
- Encourage public debate about reform of our electoral laws including enrolment and electoral participation;
 - Ensure that disadvantaged groups are not excluded from the democratic process;
 - Introduce a new scheme for the regulation of political financing, including donations, other revenues, expenditures, and record-keeping;
 - Legislate to require public disclosure of political donations over \$1000;
 - Ensure maximum opportunities for enrolment and involvement in our electoral process;
 - Remain committed to constitutional reform that allows simultaneous, fixed four-year terms for the House of Representatives and the Senate;
 - Continue to build confidence in the system by effectively investigating and reporting all claims of electoral malpractice; and
 - Commit to advance the cause of making electoral enrolment and voting as quick, simple and flexible as possible, seeking to maximise the franchise consistent with maintaining the integrity of the system. Labor will further amend electoral legislation to ensure the capacity of Australians to participate in the electoral system is undiminished and extended where possible and appropriate and remove existing laws that disenfranchise Australians due to incarceration or criminal conviction.
50. Labor recognises the important role of the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) in ensuring the integrity of the electoral system and will provide the Commission with the appropriate funding needed to meet its responsibilities, including the highly desirable area of a single national electoral roll capable of serving the needs of states and territories but funded and maintained by the AEC.

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Ensuring women's equal place in a stronger democracy

51. Labor is committed to promoting the equal participation of women and men in decision-making processes.
52. Labor is committed to promoting and supporting women's leadership in Australia's parliaments, governments, senior levels in the private sectors and communities throughout Australia.
53. Labor will work to ensure women's equal place in the world by:
 - Maintaining an active role in international forums to promote the rights of women including institutions formed under the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women;
 - Ensuring the Sex Discrimination Act and the powers of the Commissioner are adequately protecting women against discrimination on the basis of gender and family responsibility;
 - Supporting women's representative organisations to participate in policy development;
 - Applying sophisticated gender policy advice and analysis to policy development of the government;
 - Supporting and promoting women's leaders in all facets of Australian society through a range of regulatory and educative measures;
 - Supporting the greater representation of women in all of Australia's parliaments;
 - Supporting diversity in corporate Australia, including in appointments to boards and at the executive level;
 - Adopting a target for government boards so that least 40 per cent of members should be women as an immediate priority in government; and
 - Recognising the particular issues faced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, women of culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, women with disability, rural women, young women, lesbians, bisexual women and women of transgender or intersex background, and ensures that government policies and programs are funded, accessible and appropriate to their needs.
54. Labor will require as a condition of all Commonwealth grants and other financial support to organisations that they perform their contracts in accordance with state, territory and Commonwealth anti-discrimination laws.

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LGBTI place in a stronger democracy

55. Labor believes in a society that embraces diversity. Labor will support lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex Australians and ensure that they are safe, valued and respected.
56. Labor recognises that the Yogyakarta Principles on the Application of International Human Rights Law in Relation to Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity provide a substantial guide to understanding Australia’s human rights obligations in relation to LGBTI Australians and their families.
57. Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex Australians and their communities contribute much to Australian society.
58. Labor will work with lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex Australians and representative groups to:
 - Expand integrated advice and support services for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex Australians, and ensure their engagement in the policy development of government;
 - Support lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex Australians with particular needs, such as those who are young, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and those living in rural, regional and remote Australia;
 - Strengthen laws and expand programs against discrimination and harassment on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity; and
 - Support and engage with communities and stakeholders to provide input into government decision-making, including consideration of a lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex ministerial advisory committee.
59. Labor will strengthen support for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex Australians by integrating advice and support services and ensuring they are engaged in the policy development of government.
60. Labor condemns sexual violence, or any derogatory behaviour and harassment towards all people.
61. Labor recognises the harm that such actions cause and will pursue policies that prevent discrimination.
62. Labor will:

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- Establish appropriate mechanisms to coordinate and promote both policy development and the initiatives across government needed to ensure effective implementation of policies, with adequate ongoing funding to ensure that all government services are provided in a way that furthers those policy aspirations in practice;
- Strengthen partnerships between the Commonwealth and LGBTI community groups in the delivery of support services for LGBTI Australians and their families;
- Investigate the establishment of a National Gender Centre to provide support and advocacy for transgender and intersex Australians, which could also have an education and training role to promote awareness about transgender and intersex issues to the wider public; and
- Review documentation requirements, including passports and birth certificates, as they affect transgender and intersex people, to facilitate their equal enjoyment of human rights without discrimination and to promote identification options beyond binary male / female.

63. Labor will build upon previous legal achievements to implement equality in practice, so that every area of policy is inclusive of the needs and interests of all Australians-including lesbians and gay men, and bisexual, transgender and intersex people-without discrimination.

64. Building on the 2008 reform of 85 Commonwealth statutes that discriminated against same-sex couples and their families, Labor will:

- Ensure that the impact on lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex people is considered in developing bills or regulations; and
- Ensure lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex Australians enjoy equality before the law, and have access to every state institution without discrimination.

Australian media

65. 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.

66. Labor is committed to ensuring that Australia has both the regulatory processes and industry structures to support a strong, healthy, responsible and independent media that operates in the public interest.



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67. Labor supports the National Classification Code that classifies content against the standards of morality, decency and propriety accepted by reasonable adults, without discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity.
68. Labor will pursue policies that ensure that Australians have access to a diverse range of information and opinion in Australia's media. Labor is committed to maintaining appropriate Australian content quotas in the broadcasting sector. Labor will ensure that television and radio advertising are properly regulated and that community standards are reflected in the regulatory approach.
69. Labor will ensure that Australians will continue to enjoy coverage of premium sporting events on free- to-air television.
70. Labor is committed to ensuring that the Australian Communications and Media Authority is adequately resourced and has sufficient regulatory powers to ensure the maintenance of appropriate community standards in broadcasting material.
71. Labor is committed to ensuring local captioning in the broadcasting sector to ensure that all Australians are able to enjoy and access content on television.

Public and community broadcasting

72. The Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) and the Special Broadcasting Service (SBS), including National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Television (NITV), are some of Australia's most important public institutions. Labor acknowledges the unique operations of these broadcasting services and is committed to increasing funding and support for Australia's public broadcasters, to enable them to continue to provide Australians with high quality broadcasting services, free from political and commercial interference.
73. Labor recognises the importance of the ABC being maintained as an independent and comprehensive national public broadcaster, catering for a diversity of interests in the Australian community.
74. The SBS provides a unique national broadcasting service that promotes multicultural Australia, and provides services to Australians from non-English speaking backgrounds which are not delivered by the ABC or the commercial broadcasting sector.
75. Labor will:
 - Ensure public broadcasters cater to the needs of urban, regional and rural Australia, providing coverage of local news, current affairs and community activities, including production capacity in regions;

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- Provide programs and services relevant to young Australians;
- Ensure the ABC produces high levels of quality and distinctive local content;
- Work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to provide services and programs relevant to them and their communities;
- Provide comprehensive coverage of a broad range of sporting and artistic activities;
- Ensure ABC and SBS board members and chairpersons are appointed on the basis of merit;
- Ensure a staff-elected commissioner position on the ABC board; and
- Support and promote Australia's external broadcasters in radio, television and digital platforms, which encourage awareness of Australian values around the world and build closer ties in our region.

76. Labor will ensure that the ban on ABC advertising and sponsorship remains in place. Labor commits to no extension of the current advertising quotas on SBS to ensure that SBS remains a properly publicly funded broadcaster.
77. Labor will provide adequate funding on a triennial basis to the ABC and SBS to ensure they can deliver quality public broadcasting services. Labor will ensure that the national broadcasters are able to exploit the potential of new technology to deliver attractive and innovative content.
78. Labor regards community broadcasting, which includes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, ethnic and multicultural broadcasting, as an essential component of Australian broadcasting, and will continue to encourage its growth and development.
79. Labor supports diversity in community broadcasting and recognises that it meets the needs of many diverse communities.
80. Labor believes adequate funding must be provided to ensure the effective ongoing operation of community broadcasting.

Vibrant community and not-for-profit sectors

81. Over the past generation, civic life in Australia has been under threat. Membership of religious organisations, unions and many other community groups has waned. On many metrics, Australia has become more disconnected. Labor believes in social capital. We support a strong, vibrant, independent and innovative not-for-profit sector.
82. Not-for-profit organisations contribute to good public policy, enrich our culture, protect our environment and promote health and wellbeing. Australian charities advocate on



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behalf of Australian communities including marginalised groups. The work of not-for-profit organisations complements the role of the public sector in the provision of essential services to the community; it should not duplicate or compete with them. The relationship between not-for-profits and the government should be one of partnership and respect.

83. Labor's view is that the national framework for the regulation of not-for-profits should have the following aims:
- Stimulate the establishment and growth of a broad range of community or not-for-profit organisations;
 - Foster the public advocacy role of the sector;
 - Encourage donor confidence; and
 - Set a reasonable standard for public disclosure and oversight.
84. In 2012, Labor created the Australian Charities and Not-For-Profits Commission (ACNC). The creation of the ACNC followed external inquiries in 1995, 2001, 2010, Parliamentary committee reviews, issues and discussion papers, exposure drafts and consultations with experts. Since its creation, the ACNC has operated efficiently and effectively, helping charities, donors and taxpayers. Labor supports the work of the ACNC to cut the paperwork burden on charities, and engage with states and territories to reduce duplicate reporting.
85. Like Labor's reforms to unify company law across Australia in 1990, Labor recognises the benefits of removing inconsistencies and overlaps in the reporting obligations of charities. Building on the good work of the ACNC, Labor supports the development of a single national Associations Act, Fundraising Act, and other relevant regulatory requirements.

Australia Post

86. Australia Post is an Australian Icon and Labor knows that Australians rely on their local post office and the local postie.
87. Labor strongly believes that Australia Post must be maintained in full public ownership.
88. 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.
89. Labor will encourage the growth of Australia Post's services and ensure that Australia Post's community service obligations provide equitable access to a full range of postal services for all Australians.



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90. Australia Post should maintain appropriate coverage of post office and post box outlets throughout Australia. Labor will ensure that the ownership mix between corporate retail outlets, franchisees and licensed post office's is maintained.
91. Labor understands that Post Offices are often the lifeblood of rural and regional communities. Labor will work to maintain and strengthen the service offering of Australia Post in rural and regional Australia.
92. Australia Post employs thousands of Australians. Labor will work to protect the jobs of these workers, encourage Australia Post towards direct full time employment rather than contract work, and endeavour to ensure that contractors will not be used to undermine the current entitlements of direct employees.

Free speech

93. All Australians enjoy the right to exercise their freedom of speech in a manner that respects the individual and collective rights enjoyed by other Australians and allows others to live free from violence, the fear of violence or the threat of violence.
94. In Government, Labor:
- Implemented whistle-blower protection laws
 - Supported new Commonwealth shield laws to protect journalists, and pushed for harmonisation of shield laws nationally
95. Labor strongly supports Australia's anti-vilification laws, which strike an appropriate balance between the right to free speech, and protection from the harm of hate speech. After the election of the Abbott Coalition Government, Labor stood with the community to successfully oppose the Government's attack on the Racial Discrimination Act.
96. Labor also recognises that homophobic harassment by the written or spoken word causes actual harm, not mere offence, to people with a history of suffering discrimination and prejudice, and particular harm to young same-sex attracted or gender-questioning people who do not yet have support networks in place to assist them in coming out, and considers such harmful harassment is an unacceptable abuse of the responsibilities that come with freedom of speech and must be subject to effective sanctions.
97. Labor supports uniform national defamation laws that provide a proper balance between freedom of expression, public debate and the protection of the reputation of others.
98. 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



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offensive to them and preventing conduct exploiting, or detrimental to the rights of others, particularly women and children. Labor is concerned about the portrayal of violence and inappropriate content in all forms of media. Labor will ensure that appropriate controls that reflect community standards are in place to classify and protect all Australians, particularly children and young people.

99. Ministers, staff and all members of Parliament should follow clear standards relating to their behaviour, contact with lobbyists, receipt of any gifts, and disclosure of any potential conflicts of interest which may affect them carrying out their public duty.

Freedom of Information

100. Freedom of Information (FOI) laws are a cornerstone of transparent and accountable government.

101. In Government, Labor reformed Freedom of Information laws to strengthen citizens' rights of access to government material and bring down the costs of FOI including:

- Strengthened the public's right to access documents under Freedom of Information by minimising exemptions and broadening the application of public interest tests under the Act;
- Streamlined and improved review processes;
- Extended Freedom of Information to information held by other entities delivering government services;
- Established an FOI Commissioner within the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner;
- Abolished the power to issue conclusive certificates under the Freedom of Information Act and the Archives Act;
- Restored the role of the Administrative Appeals Tribunal and the Courts in determining disputes over Freedom of Information requests; and
- Proactive release and reporting of information by agencies on their operations and policies.

102. Labor will continue to promote transparency and accountability by maintaining and promoting a prodisclosure culture across Australian Government agencies.

103. Labor is committed to:

- preserving and strengthening the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner;



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- fulfilling Australia’s commitment to join and participate in the Open Government Partnership; and
- reviewing the operation of the Freedom of Information reforms passed by the last Labor Government and pursuing further reforms if necessary.

Privacy

104. Labor believes an individual’s right to privacy is a fundamental political, civil and human right that must be protected. We believe it is the responsibility of government to provide a strong regulatory framework to protect people’s right to privacy and ensure the security of their personal information, whether held in the public sector or the private sector. To this end, Labor introduced the first Commonwealth Privacy Act in 1988. In 2012, Labor implemented broad reforms to the Privacy Act based on the recommendations of the Australian Law Reform Commission in its 2008 report on privacy.



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Chapter 11: Australia's place in a changing world

1. Australian Labor's foreign policy will promote Australia's interests and influence in the world, keeping Australia safe and prosperous while protecting our values and way of life.
2. Labor will shape Australia's future by meeting the opportunities and challenges of a changing world. We will work with like-minded countries and within regional and global institutions to respond to complex problems that are beyond the capacity of any one country to solve.
3. We are a middle power with strong regional and global interests, the 12th largest economy in the world, a member of the G20 and a founding member of the United Nations. We are a significant player in our region with a responsibility to be a constructive actor globally.
4. Australia's interests are served by a peaceful, stable and prosperous world in which we are an independent and confident ally, a constructive neighbour and a good international citizen.
5. The Coalition Government has broken its promise of 'more Jakarta and less Geneva' and has become increasingly isolated on important international issues including climate change and economic inequality. It has reduced the focus within our region, made unprecedented cuts to the aid program hurting some of the world's poorest and most disadvantaged people and damaging the aspirations of some of our closest neighbours.

Labor values

6. Our highest obligation is to protect the security of our people and Australia's territorial integrity.
7. Labor knows that some problems are too big for any one country and we work cooperatively to find solutions to the challenges that the international community faces.
8. Australia's interests are served by our strong bilateral and multilateral relationships, our alliance with the United States, deep engagement with our own region and active leadership in international forums.
9. The same values that drive our actions at home will guide our actions abroad. The promotion and protection of human rights at home and abroad is vital to achieving a peaceful and secure world where all people have a right to live with dignity, freedom, safety and prosperity.
10. Labor will strongly advocate for and observe internationally accepted human rights and civil liberties.



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11. Labor strives to be a good international citizen, doing our fair share and leading by example to reduce inequality and shape a stable, prosperous and inclusive world.
12. Labor recognises that climate change poses serious threats to the security and prosperity of Australia and our allies

Labor achievements

Foreign affairs

13. Labor has:
 - Built strong relationships with countries in our region and around the world, from John Curtin's foundation of the US alliance in the 1940s, through to Gough Whitlam's establishment of diplomatic relations with China in the 1970s. Under the Gillard Government, Labor launched the Asian Century White Paper and forged a strategic partnership with China including annual meetings between our Prime Ministers and Cabinet-level strategic dialogues;
 - Strengthened key multilateral institutions. H. V. Evatt was a key voice for smaller nations in the establishment of the United Nations, a legacy of internationalism taken up by Bob Hawke in the establishment of APEC and Kevin Rudd in the elevation of the G20 as the world's premier economic forum. In 2012, Julia Gillard secured a seat on the UN Security Council which gave Australia a voice in critical international debates.
 - Advanced Australia's values and interests on the world stage. In 1973, the Whitlam Government successfully advocated in the International Court of Justice against France's claimed right to atmospheric nuclear testing in the Pacific. Under Labor, Australia returned to the International Court of Justice in 2013 to successfully seek an end to commercial whaling in the Southern ocean. In the Hawke-Keating years, Labor played key roles in the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone, the Cambodian peace plan, and bringing to a conclusion the international Chemical Weapons Convention. Most recently Kevin Rudd established, with Japan, the ten-nation Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative to make practical progress towards a nuclear free world, Julia Gillard appointed Australia's first Global Ambassador for Women and Girls, and Australia helped pass a resolution through the UN limiting access to small arms.

Defence

14. Labor has:
 - Initiated a comprehensive modernisation program for the Australian Defence Force, with critical defence capabilities significantly improved. Labor was the first Government to deliver over \$100 billion across the forward estimates. In Government, Labor acquired the first two F35-Lightning Joint Strike Fighters; new

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naval combat helicopters; additional Bushmaster Protected Mobility Vehicles; additional heavy lift aircraft (C-17 Globemaster III); new tactical lift aircraft (C-27J Spartan), new airborne electronic attack aircraft (EA-18G Growler), a new amphibious vessel, and and development of the locally built Hawkei Protected Mobility Vehicle;

- Reformed defence procurement process through the Projects of Concern list and a number of reforms including the Mortimer reforms. These initiatives substantively improved the performance of Defence and Industry in delivering and sustaining ADF materiel. The 2010 Defence Industry Policy Statement reshaped defence industry policy, emphasising a commitment to leverage Australian companies and workers into the global supply chains of the defence industry
- Committed to a maritime strategy that effectively controls the sea and air approaches to our continent as the key to defending Australia, in order to deny them to any adversary and provide maximum freedom of action for our forces;
- Recognised the unique contribution made by the ADF by ensuring the fair and equitable treatment of its members and their families. To this end, Labor initiated the National ADF Family Health Program; provided pay increases averaging 3 per cent per annum over the last three years of being in Government; launched Plan Suakin to create a more flexible workplace; and initiated a process of cultural reform; and
- Supported and properly cared for our veteran community, delivering record funding, targeted reforms, as well as additional funding for the commemoration of our military history. Labor allocated over \$12.5 billion for the veteran community annually, including \$6.8 billion in pensions and income support and \$5.6 billion in health services. Labor assigned \$140 million in funding for the ANZAC Centenary, including \$100,000 to every federal electorate for Anzac Centenary commemorations; \$5 million for the Australian Memorial in Wellington, New Zealand; and \$10 million for the Australian Remembrance Trail in France and Belgium.

Labor priorities

Protecting Australia's economic interests abroad

15. Economic and foreign policies are inextricably linked. The protection and promotion of Australia's interests must recognise that diplomacy, trade, development and economic reform are closely interrelated.
16. Labor will ensure Australian foreign policy is deeply engaged with the Australian business community and addresses a global economy increasingly characterised by global value chains that cross national borders.



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17. Labor will seize the opportunities of the Asian Century to drive growth in the Australian economy by capturing new markets and strengthening existing partnerships.
18. Labor will work within multilateral institutions like APEC and the G20 to promote inclusive and sustainable growth, recognising that complex economic challenges like Base Erosion and Profit Shifting require an internationally coordinated response.
19. Labor supports measures to promote transparency in the extractives industry both in Australia and overseas to ensure that countries rich in natural resources benefit from greater economic and political stability.
20. Australia will support trade and economic initiatives which also support inclusive growth, sustainable and clean energy economies, protect cultural and environmental assets, and that do not erode the potential for individuals and communities to support themselves, including through small holder income generation.
21. Labor will work to ensure that the Indo–Pacific region remains open to trade and investment and is supported by open, inclusive regional institutions. Labor will ensure that bilateral and regional free trade agreements support the rules-based trade system of the World Trade Organisation.
22. Labor will work through international economic forums to create a more stable global financial system and international trading regime.

Democracy and human rights

23. Labor supports democracy globally and the universal aspiration of people to have the government of their choice. People have the right to a freely expressed and legitimate voice in their government.
24. Labor supports the process of democratic transition including through electoral assistance and other programs to assist countries seeking to build their democratic capacity.
25. A free press is an essential part of a democratic society and is committed to promoting and defending media freedoms globally and the protection of the rights of journalists.
26. Labor considers the promotion of universal human rights to be a core foreign policy objective and that our diplomatic, economic and international development assistance goals must be consistent with that objective.
27. Labor will pursue effective human rights diplomacy that supports international and regional security in Australia's national interest.

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28. Labor is strongly committed to promoting universal adherence to and implementation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other key human rights instruments. Labor considers that human rights do not exist in a hierarchy and will strive to ensure that all human rights instruments ratified by Australia are observed in domestic law.
29. Labor is concerned about human rights violations wherever they occur and will continue to raise human rights concerns with the governments concerned. Under Labor, Australia will be forthright in raising concerns over human rights violations overseas including through bilateral representations and formal bilateral human rights dialogues.
30. Labor is determined to further strengthen international mechanisms and processes for monitoring human rights violations and to encourage the development of regional dialogue on human rights issues in the Indo–Pacific region.
31. Under Labor, Australia will support the Yogyakarta Principles on the Application of International Human Rights Law in Relation to Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity, and will continue to sponsor and promote resolutions in support of the implementation of human rights protections for lesbians and gay men and bisexual and transgender and intersex people at the Human Rights Council and the General Assembly of the United Nations. Australia under Labor will actively encourage the repeal of discriminatory laws, especially criminal laws against homosexual sexual conduct, and most urgently against such laws where they impose the death penalty, and generally to encourage steps to implement the actions required by the Yogyakarta Principles. Labor in government will continue to work strategically to support international civil society organisations promoting lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex human rights.
32. It may be necessary and appropriate to impose targeted sanctions against governments that violate human rights. Such sanctions will not be to the detriment of the general population of the country in respect of which sanctions are imposed.
33. Labor supports the development of initiatives to advance the rights of Indigenous peoples internationally and address Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander disadvantage, including through our support for the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.
34. Labor is also committed to sharing Australia’s own experiences of reconciliation, including the National Apology, and strongly supports efforts to increase Indigenous participation in UN forums, including through contributions to the UN Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Populations.
35. Labor will support actions to promote gender equality and the economic, social and political empowerment of women, and to reduce the increasing levels of repression against women in some countries. Labor will vigorously support international campaigns to end:
 - Sexual exploitation of women and children, including sex tourism and trafficking;



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- Prohibitions on education and paid employment and restriction to access to medical services for women;
- The denial of equal property rights for women;
- The unequal standing of women in judicial and political systems;
- The persecution of rape victims; and
- The systematic use of rape and sexual torture in war.

36. Labor will work to extend measures which reduce violence against women to Australia's Pacific neighbours.
37. Labor is strongly opposed to the incidence of forced labour and is committed to actively campaigning against forced labour and for the rights of people in situations of forced labour through international forums, multilateral and bilateral frameworks and its relationships with other countries. Labor also commits to providing every possible support and assistance for people in situations of forced labour both in Australia and internationally.
38. Labor is committed to promoting and protecting the rights of persons living with disability, including by Australia's adherence to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Labor will continue Australia's record of building a world-leading disability-inclusive aid program to strengthen opportunities for people with disability in the Indo-Pacific region and globally.
39. Labor is universally opposed to capital punishment. Under Labor, Australia will strongly and clearly state its opposition to the death penalty, whenever and wherever it arises and advocate its universal abolition, including through strong regional and global representations.
40. 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 reaffirms its support for programs designed to address abuse of labour rights in the Indo-Pacific region through support to neighbouring countries for the development of national labour legislation, helping partner countries to ratify ILO conventions, and regional trade union cooperation. Labor will 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.
41. Under Labor, Australia will play an active role in encouraging Australian companies operating overseas to observe international human rights standards, including core labour



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standards, and to ensure that their operations do not directly or indirectly violate human rights or inflict unacceptable impacts on local communities and the environment.

42. Labor will work with Australian trade unions to build the capacity of trade unions in developing countries through development assistance and training, to complement Australia's foreign policy and official development assistance goals.

International law

43. Labor strongly supports multilateralism and the United Nations, and believes that reform of the United Nations and the United Nations Security Council is essential to ensure that the UN can effectively respond to international challenges.
44. Labor supports strengthening the United Nations' capacity in the fields of preventive diplomacy and peace building, peacemaking, peace keeping and peace enforcement in recognition of the significant threats to international security that arise both from longstanding and new conflicts between and within states. Therefore Labor strongly supports the UN Security Council's adoption of the doctrine of international humanitarian intervention known as 'The Responsibility to Protect'.
45. Labor supports the work and role of the International Criminal Court as a key part of Australia's ongoing commitment to international criminal justice.

Strengthening our engagement with the countries of the world

46. Labor is committed to strengthening Australia's ties with the countries of the world. As a nation with a large immigrant population, global interests, and cultural ties to every corner of the globe, we have much to gain from building our cultural and country to country relationships.
47. The United States remains our closest security ally and a vital global partner, formalized through the ANZUS Treaty. Labor is firmly committed to maintaining and strengthening Australia's close relationship with the US, a relationship founded on our people's common democratic values and our mutual commitment to fostering international peace and security.
48. Labor believes in the centrality of the US alliance to Australia's national security requirements in critical areas such as intelligence on terrorism, defence equipment and broader strategic stabilisation in the region.
49. Built on a foundation of mutual respect and a sense of genuine partnership in our own Indo-Pacific region, Labor seeks to build stronger economic, social, cultural and educational ties with countries including Japan, Korea, India and Indonesia. Labor supports enhanced

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cooperation through rules-based institutions and opportunities for regional engagement including the PIF, ASEAN, the EAS and APEC.

50. Labor welcomes China's economic growth, and will work to encourage China's emergence as a major, constructive influence on regional and global affairs. Labor will ensure that as China grows, Australia is positioned to benefit from this growth while preserving our core national interests. Labor is optimistic about the Australia–China relationship and will ensure Australia takes advantage of the increasing openness and growth in China. A prosperous China, fully engaged in the region's affairs, is good for Australia and good for the region.
51. Labor will place new emphasis on ensuring that the languages of the region are taught more widely in our schools as part of the Indo-Pacific focus of our foreign policy.
52. Labor will promote Australia's interests across the world stage in Europe, Africa, the Middle East and the Americas. Labor will build strong partnerships with individual countries, including ones like the United Kingdom where there is a unique and long-lasting relationship, as well as engaging with important regional institutions like the African Union and the Arab League.
53. Labor will seek to expand Australia's whole of government overseas representation to build on the benefits of our existing networks.
54. The Muslim world is important to Australia. Because of the connection with so many Australians of Islamic faith; because so many of Australia's key neighbours and partners are Muslim nations; and because the challenges that face the world require shared solutions, Labor will strengthen Australia's links with the Muslim world, including through the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation.
55. Labor is committed to supporting an enduring and just two-state solution to the Israeli–Palestinian conflict, based on the right of Israel to live in peace within secure borders internationally recognised and agreed by the parties, and reflecting the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian people to also live in peace and security within their own state.

Australian aid and international development

56. Labor will support an aid program of which all Australians can be proud.
57. Labor believes the fundamental purpose of Australian aid is to reduce inequality and help people lift themselves out of poverty. This also serves Australia's national interests by promoting stability and prosperity in our region and beyond. We will focus our effort on addressing the intractable problems facing developing countries that require global



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leadership and action and in areas where Australian resources can most effectively and efficiently be deployed to make a difference.

58. Labor supports the Sustainable Development Goal process as a global blueprint to end extreme poverty. Like the Millennium Development Goals they replace, the SDGs will guide Labor's plan for Australia's international development assistance.
59. Labor is committed to Australia taking a leadership role on the issue of international development assistance, committing to actively campaigning through international forums, multilateral and bilateral frameworks and its relationships with other countries. Labor will support measurement of our efforts and our accountability against internationally agreed aid and development assistance targets.
60. Labor is committed to growing the Australian aid program and increasing Official Development Assistance to internationally accepted levels. We believe Australia should do its fair share internationally, and work with the international community to achieve the longstanding funding targets which are reiterated by the SDGs. Labor will, over time, achieve a funding target for the aid program of at least 0.5 per cent of Gross National Income.
61. Labor will take action to rebuild the skills, expertise and credibility in the public service necessary to deliver a high-quality aid program.
62. Labor's overseas aid efforts will focus on advancing human rights while addressing important development challenges, including ensuring people have the opportunity to lead healthy and prosperous lives regardless of gender, ethnicity, religion or cultural beliefs and with access to shelter, education, food and clean water, health and sanitation, and emergency services support.
63. Inclusive economic growth is the most powerful tool to reduce poverty and achieve sustainable development. Investment in education and health are key pathways to delivering inclusive growth. Economic growth helps to create jobs, lifts household incomes and generates the government revenues needed to provide key public services such as hospitals and schools.
64. Labor believes the empowerment of women should be a fundamental principle of Australia's aid program. It is one of the most effective tools to increase the chances of education for all young women and girls, raise economic productivity, reduce infant and maternal mortality, and improve health, including preventing HIV/AIDS.
65. Labor believes enabling more children, particularly girls, to attend school for a longer and better education, gives them the skills to build their own futures and, in time, escape poverty.



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66. In addition to supporting the development and delivery of education services, action must be taken to reduce the barriers to children, particularly girls, attending school such as the requirement for them to care for adults living with disability, child labour and child trafficking.
67. Labor has a strong commitment to ensuring food security, water and sanitation, climate change and disability-inclusive development are afforded appropriate attention.
68. Labor remains committed to fostering good governance, accountability and anti-corruption measures through the development assistance program, particularly in fragile states.
69. Labor is committed to delivering Australia's overseas development assistance in partnership with nongovernment organisations and finding new ways of working with non-government organisations and civil society to ensure the assistance is efficient and effective.
70. Labor believes Australia must continue to take a leading role in promoting development, security and stability in the Pacific. Labor's partnerships for Development have eleven Pacific Island Government partners, working together to achieve improved living standards for people in the Pacific.
71. Labor will work in collaboration with our Pacific partners to:
- Promote sustainable and equitable development;
 - Increase the participation of women in society and the economy;
 - Strengthen regional cooperation through the Pacific Islands Forum and in areas including climate change and natural disaster planning, response and relief, defence and security, sustainable agriculture and fisheries management and protection;
 - Promote consideration of the interests of Pacific Islanders in international fora; and
 - Prepare for the impacts of climate change.
72. Labor will work co-operatively with other Pacific development partner nations, in particular those in the Indo-Pacific region to improve the transparency and coordination of aid delivery.

Assisting Australians abroad

73. Labor places a high priority on the safety of Australians overseas and is committed to delivering a high standard of travel advice and consular assistance to all Australians overseas so that our millions of 'unofficial ambassadors' can travel the world in safety.



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- 74. Labor will ensure that consular representatives visit Australians promptly if they have been arrested and maintain effective communication between legal representatives and loved ones.
- 75. Labor is committed to ensuring Australian passports are at the forefront of passport technology, ensuring that people applying for and using passports are doing so legitimately.
- 76. Labor is committed to ensuring Australian passports comply with international standards and are accepted in all countries assisting smooth transit across international borders.

Maintaining our national security

- 77. Labor is committed to tackling the global and domestic security challenges that would threaten the safety and freedom that Australians enjoy. Labor is determined to ensure that our police and national security agencies have the powers they need to keep our nation secure and our people safe.
- 78. Labor also strongly believes in the importance of upholding the rights and freedoms that define us as a democratic nation, living under the rule of law.
- 79. Labor will wherever possible take a constructive and bipartisan approach to security arrangements.
- 80. Changing power realities are challenging traditional security settings. Labor recognises that a changing security environment requires new approaches to prevent crime, protect the safety of all Australians and defend our nation's security. Australians expect transparency and accountability in security and enforcement activities to the greatest extent possible.
- 81. Unresolved territorial disputes give rise to potential flashpoints in our region and growing military capability in Asia is increasing the potential for regional disputes. The rise of extremists in the Middle East and Africa threatens Australia's national interest and security.
- 82. The escalation of cybersecurity threats to national security, businesses, utilities, and individuals is another challenge that must be met. Labor will ensure that our responses to cyber-attacks remain up to date, and that our institutional and legal arrangements are flexible in dealing with fast evolving threats, including those driven by rapid technological change.
- 83. The rising global influence of non-state actors is a challenge for all nations, including Australia. Some non-state groups which have emerged as key protagonists in serious conflicts are hostile to Australia's national interest and foreign policy goals. Other non-



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state actors remain important agents for positive change through advocacy, institutional strengthening and citizen engagement.

84. Labor will support Australian diplomatic, development and strategic capability to ensure that we can respond effectively to the influence of non-state actors on domestic, regional and global outcomes.
85. Strong international institutional arrangements must be available to support coordinated international responses to security threats. Labor will respect and uphold institutional arrangements and be an active participant to the extent that we are able to influence positive outcomes. Labor will work directly with regional institutions to strengthen their capacity to deal with challenges facing the region.
86. Labor will build effective partnerships with other countries to respond to common security challenges, including continuing engagement with the US and Europe, and further strengthening our ties with our Asian and other regional neighbours.
87. Labor's approach to national security recognises that the safety and security of Australians and our economic and social wellbeing is more than just addressing the threat of war, terrorism and the existence of weapons of mass destruction, it also encompasses climate change, natural disaster management, combating serious and organised crime including cyber and transnational crime and strengthening border control.
88. Labor understands that contemporary security challenges involve multi-agency and organisation responses and coordination and will examine the relationship between the Civil-Military Centre, the ADF Peace Operations Training Centre and the Australian Civilian Corps.
89. Prohibiting and eliminating nuclear weapons is a humanitarian imperative. Labor will continue to act with urgency and determination to rid the world of nuclear weapons.
90. Labor recognises the work of civil society and non-government organisations in Australia and internationally who form the global movement to secure a ban on nuclear weapons.
91. Given the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons, Labor firmly supports the negotiation of a global treaty banning such weapons.
92. Labor will continue its support for nuclear weapon free zones, both the strengthening of existing nuclear weapon free zones and the creation of new zones.
93. Labor will actively encourage the pursuit of further substantial reductions of nuclear arsenals and the development of processes, including supporting a nuclear weapons convention, for bringing all nuclear armed states into the disarmament process.



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94. Labor is committed to strengthening the work of the International Atomic Energy Agency and compliance with the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (including universalisation of the Additional Protocol), and other nuclear treaties and agreements. Labor's nuclear disarmament agenda also includes implementation of the disarmament obligations under Article 6, support for "no first use" obligations, deep, verifiable, and irreversible cuts in all categories of nuclear weapons and a continuing reduction of their roles in national security policies.
95. Labor will support the development of a time-bound framework to negotiate legally binding agreements to achieve these objectives.

The challenge of terrorism

96. The paramount responsibility of national government is the defence and security of our people. Labor led previous generations of Australians in successfully defending Australia as a secure and democratic nation. The growing presence of terrorism in the international arena and here within our borders pose serious and complex security challenges.
97. Labor will ensure that our defence forces, security agencies, police and emergency services are always appropriately resourced and given the necessary powers to respond to the security challenges we face as a nation.
98. Recognising the threat that terrorism poses to international peace and security, Labor will continue to work closely with our neighbours, international allies and international institutions to meet the security challenges posed by terrorism.
99. To be effective, a strategy for combating terrorism must promote justice, the rule of law, genuine peace and inclusive development, as well as confront those factors that make it easier for terrorist organisations to recruit within the region. Australia's military and security assistance should promote these objectives. The strategy should include addressing the economic, employment and educational opportunities available to young people across the region. Labor believes this requires an integrated, comprehensive strategy including cooperation with and capacity building for local security forces.
100. In meeting the challenge of terrorism, Labor refuses to manipulate fear, sectarianism or racism for political gain or to compromise the democratic values that we are fighting to defend. Recognising the importance of national unity and cohesion in responding to the threat of terrorism, Labor will always work to ensure that our counter-terrorism laws and other measures do not operate to divide or marginalise any part of the Australian community.
101. Labor will always work responsibly and constructively to improve our national security laws and to ensure that our security agencies and police have the powers they need to meet the



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changing national security threats that we face as a nation. However, in fulfilling that vital responsibility Labor will ensure that the powers we confer on our security agencies and police to fight terrorism and other threats to our national security are consistent with the long-standing values and hard-won liberties that help to define Australia as a democratic nation that upholds the freedoms and the privacy of its citizens. Recognising the importance of transparency and accountability measures to safeguard freedoms and privacy, Labor will continue to support the oversight role of entities including:

- The Independent National Security Legislation Monitor;
- The Inspector-General of Intelligence and Security;
- The Commonwealth Ombudsman; and
- The Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security.

102. Labor believes Australia must have a properly integrated national security policy that is continually reviewed and adapted as required to meet changing security threats. Labor will continue to support initiatives to enhance our national security, including:

- The appointment of a National Security Adviser;
- The creation of a strategic policy framework for national security;
- A National Intelligence and Coordination Committee;
- Improvements to Australia's national crisis management arrangements; and
- The preparation of new Defence White Papers at intervals of no greater than five years.

103. While in office, Labor developed and implemented a national strategy to counter violent extremism. Labor believes a national approach involving engagement with local communities and a strong partnership between Australian governments is essential to the development of a coordinated and effective approach to address domestic terrorism.

104. The global nature and reach of various terrorist organisations means that Australia will increasingly rely on global intelligence exchange—as well as support—for an expanding range of UN multilateral measures designed to combat terrorist financing and to outlaw terrorist organisations.

105. Labor is also committed to ensuring Australia's cyber security arrangements are able to meet the challenges presented by the electronic environment, which is presenting additional opportunity and vulnerabilities for individuals, business and government, with sophisticated attacks coming from criminal groups and foreign governments.

106. Finally, Labor will continue to work with industry to ensure there are sufficient measures in place to reduce the risk of chemicals of security concern.

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Emergency management

- 107. Labor will ensure that the Commonwealth provides strong leadership in promoting an all-hazards approach to emergency management and disaster resilience that focuses on how prevention, mitigation and preparation can improve response and recovery.
- 108. Recognising that climate change is already driving an increase in the number and severity of natural disasters affecting Australia, Labor will continue to review our emergency response capacity and work with the states to ensure that capacity meets increasing demand.
- 109. Labor will continue to implement the National Disaster Resilience Strategy which identifies priority areas to build disaster resilience in communities across Australia.
- 110. Recognising that disaster resilience is a shared responsibility for individuals, households, businesses and communities, as well as for governments, Labor will work with all stakeholders to deliver sustained behavioural change and enduring partnerships.
- 111. Labor will work with regional neighbours/partners to encourage the exchange of information, capabilities and expertise as well operational assistance and cooperation during emergency situations.
- 112. Labor will work with other levels of government to ensure local communities understand potential risks and are capable of addressing of them.
- 113. Appropriate mitigation activities are vital in preventing loss of life and damage to property caused by natural disasters. Labor will achieve this by working with states and territories to ensure that national, state and local disaster plans, strategies and program funding reflects these goals.

Strength, sustainability and self-reliance in defence

- 114. The foundation of Labor's defence policy is the principle of Australian self-reliance. This recognises that Australia is an independent nation and, as such, Australia's armed forces need to be able to defend Australia without relying on the combat forces of other countries.
- 115. 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 strengthen existing defence ties with our key allies and through the UN, as well as building new relationships within the Indo-Pacific region.

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116. Labor believes in an Australia Defence Force that possesses the capability to make contributions to international operations led by Australia's key allies and the UN that meet Australia's broader national strategic objectives. Those contributions will be drawn from the forces and capabilities that are developed for the defence of Australia and for operations in our region.
117. Labor will ensure that ADF capability development is directly related to Australia's strategic interests and that appropriate regular strategic reviews are undertaken with public reports published.
118. Labor is committed to maintaining a strong, modern, and efficiently managed defence organisation that possesses the personnel, equipment and skills that are needed to meet the demands placed upon it by the Australian Government.
119. 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.

120. Labor is committed to Australia comprehensively engaging with other nations in the Indo-Pacific region, as part of its efforts to foster and preserve peace, stability and security in the region. These efforts are fundamental to Australia's own national security.
121. Security of the Pacific nations is essential for regional security and Australia's own defence. Labor supports the 'Pacific Maritime Security Plan', the deployment of Navy personnel, surveillance assets and patrol boats in Pacific Island Countries to protect their sovereignty from threats such as smuggling, illegal, unrecorded and unregulated fishing and terrorism.
122. 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 and security forces with which Australia engages in defence cooperation.

Allied use of Australian facilities

123. Labor supports 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;



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- 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 have been determined 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 and training

124. Labor recognises the bravery, courage and dedication of the men and women of the Australian Defence Force. Labor is committed to an ADF which is made up of highly motivated, skilled, well trained, well equipped, and diverse personnel who volunteer for service.
125. Labor recognises the essential role that civilian employees play in providing and contributing to the ADF's operational capacity.
126. Labor will ensure that Australian Defence Force personnel are paid fairly and in a manner that properly reflects the unique nature of military service. Labor will institute a review of the operations of the current system with a view to improving its fairness, efficiency and transparency.
127. Australian Defence Force 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.
128. Building on Labor's introduction of Project Suakin, Labor will continue to develop a more flexible ADF workforce, with better career planning and more investment in better training programs.

A diverse ADF

129. Labor believes the nation's defence force should reflect the diversity of the community it serves.
130. Labor is therefore committed to ensuring female military personnel have equal opportunities for career progression and development within the ADF.



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131. Defence's recruitment policies should also ensure that the ethnic composition of the ADF better reflects the cross section of Australian people, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
132. The Reserves are a critical component of Australia's defence capability that need to be able to contribute to any sort of operation in which Australia might participate. Labor is therefore committed to maintaining recruitment and retention of Reserve members and 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.

Occupational health and safety and workers' compensation

133. Labor will continue to support a modern, dedicated Occupational Health and Safety regime for all personnel, supported by a fair and supportive military rehabilitation and compensation scheme. These arrangements should reflect the unique employment circumstances of the ADF, the need to respect the historical approach to injury and illness incurred overseas and the need for firm policies of prevention, treatment, rehabilitation, return to work and income maintenance measures.

Mental health and Post Traumatic Stress Disorders

134. Labor fully recognises the serious and growing risks associated with mental health disorders, including Post Traumatic Stress Disorders (PTSD) that can result from active military service, and can often continue after leaving the Australian Defence Force.
135. Labor is therefore committed to ensuring that Australian Defence Force members and veterans who suffer PTSD are not left behind. Labor is committed to providing such ADF members full support and treatment, including through early intervention and treatment.
136. Labor will work also with non-government organisations that are active in assisting members and veterans.

Defence families

137. Labor recognises the vital role played by the families of ADF members, and the challenges they face, both for serving members and in many cases after separation from service. Labor will be responsive to the changing needs of families, including through continued strengthening of the organisations in the Defence Department that support them.

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Defence administration, industry and procurement

138. Labor is committed to fostering a strong and viable, long-term domestic Defence industry and will ensure that government policy reflects that commitment. The Defence industry provides vital national capability. Fostering and drawing on the innovation and entrepreneurship of Australian companies is a crucial element in achieving this aim.
139. Defence acquisition plays a significant role in modernising Australian industry and the development of a skills base. Labor will maximise Australian defence industry involvement in both procurement and sustainment contracts, while maintaining a high level of marketplace competition and value for money for the Australian taxpayer. Consistent with Australia's international obligations, Labor will maximise the participation of Australian companies, particularly SMEs, in defence procurement contracts, and ensure that Australian supply capabilities are maintained and enhanced through the application of Australian Industry Capability Plans. Labor will ensure that contractual obligations arising from such arrangements are enforced.
140. Labor will ensure that defence procurement decisions will be taken on a 'whole-of-life' cost basis, and will take full account of strategic considerations and the need to maintain and develop critical supply capabilities. Given the importance to the security and safety of our armed forces of the best quality and highest technical standard defence uniforms, Labor will, consistent with Australia's international obligations, maximise the participation of Australian textile garment and footwear suppliers in defence procurement, and ensure that ADF textile garment and footwear suppliers fully comply with the government's ethical procurement principles set out in this Platform.
141. Given the crucial role of sustainment, especially in cases of ageing capability, Labor will work to provide greater transparency in reporting, consistent with operational security requirements, on sustainment.
142. Labor, in common with Australia's allies including the United States and the United Kingdom, recognises that greater energy efficiency and increased use of renewable energy sources throughout defence organisations and operations is necessary for sustaining effective and independent defence capability. The reduction of the overall carbon footprint and the development of alternative energy sources contribute to the concurrent aims of addressing the risks of climate change while enhancing energy security and self-sufficiency.

Meeting the needs of Australia's veterans

143. Labor respects the tradition of special care for Australia's servicemen 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.



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144. Labor 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.
145. Labor will not tolerate any further erosion of the traditional distinction accorded to those with warlike service as appropriate in a modern service context.
146. Labor, recognises that inconsistencies have arisen in the approach taken by government to the management of veterans' and war widows' entitlements.
147. Labor also recognises that many of these inconsistencies result from different judgements and perceptions in the past and cannot be remedied without considerable cost, as well as the risk of creating further inconsistencies.
148. 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 to ensure that they adapted to and are appropriate for the current needs of our veteran community.
149. In addition to Labor's historic delivery of disability and compensation pension improvements, Labor will continue to explore equitable and affordable mechanisms for the improvement of other military pensions.
150. Labor's policy for veterans will 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 who served in World War II, Korea and subsequent deployments in South East Asia who are now largely retired and whose issues are now predominantly ones of health and aged care;
 - Veterans who served in the Vietnam War, whose 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; and
 - Those who have served in peace keeping missions, and deployments such as Somalia, Rwanda, the Gulf, Timor-Leste, Afghanistan, Iraq and the Solomon Islands, most of whom are still serving with the Australian Defence Force, but whose needs at present seem likely to emulate those of the Vietnam generation.

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Veterans' families

- 151. Labor is committed to the care and welfare of veterans' partners and families who may have suffered as a result of the veteran's 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.
- 152. Labor will work to address the health and welfare needs of younger veterans' families.
- 153. Labor will ensure there are adequate programs to assist these families to meet the pressures and demands of modern society.
- 154. Labor will also undertake health studies into the health and welfare of children of younger veterans, to better establish whether there are any intergenerational health effects flowing from their service.

Programs of income support

- 155. Consistent with general policies which have seen the provision of safety nets for those who are 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.
- 156. Recognising the principle 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, when as the result of service in the Australian Defence Force, they have been unable to provide for themselves and their families due to loss of work capacity, death, or age.
- 157. 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 veteran's favour. Labor will honour these commitments and the values on which they are based.
- 158. Labor is committed to the support of veterans through a range of programs including the Building Excellence in Support and Training and Training & Information Program programs ensuring that ex-service organisations can assist with compensation claims for their members and provide welfare support.

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War widows, war orphans and disabled veterans

159. 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. 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.
160. Labor also clearly recognises there are some widows in need of greater support, especially those in private rental accommodation, and younger widows without children whose entitlements have been reduced in the past.
161. Recognising the difficulties faced by a new generation of war spouses, Labor will continue to provide support for war spouses and their children, to enter academic or vocational training.

Health Care

162. From the time of Federation, health care policy for veterans has provided for free treatment of all service-related injury and illness. This is now denoted by provision of a White Card.
163. In more recent times, free private health care for all health 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 or above.
164. 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 program available to the community at large. This forms part of the traditional approach of lifelong care to those who served Australia abroad.
165. 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.
166. 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.

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167. Labor recognises that mental health issues arising from service, such as post-traumatic stress disorder, have affected veterans from all conflicts. Labor encourages and supports measures designed to ensure that existing programs take account of the mental health needs and requirements of veterans.

Commemoration

168. Commemoration of veterans, their commitment and sacrifice has historically been restricted to the observance of ANZAC Day and Remembrance Day by the public, with little government involvement. Labor introduced the current program of commemoration in 1992 and has continued to support that effort.
169. Labor supports 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.
170. Labor recognises the significance, importance and sacred nature of battlefields where our troops have lost their lives. Where possible, Labor will actively work with foreign governments and other parties to protect and preserve the integrity of significant battlefields where Australian troops have served. These locations include, but are not limited to, the Gallipoli Peninsula and the Kokoda Track.
171. 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 servicemen and women.

Administration

172. 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 and properly funded agency for veterans within the Defence portfolio.

Defence industry sectoral plans

173. Labor supports the development of defence industry sectoral plans for shipbuilding, aerospace, electronics, land and weapons.



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174. 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.
175. Labor supports a defence shipbuilding and submarine sector plan that maintains a viable defence shipbuilding and repair capability in Australia. Labor will ensure that the shipbuilding and repair industry is based on a competitive private sector model in such a way as to ensure continuity of work through prime and sub-contractors, recognising the need for flexibility in the national heavy engineering sector.
176. A viable and competitive naval shipbuilding industry is strategically vital for Australia's defence, as well as for the continuing health of the heavy engineering and high-tech industries involved in modern weaponry.
177. Labor is committed to the regular publication of a Defence Capability Plan 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.
178. The Defence Science and Technology Organisation has an impressive record of research and development of defence-related technologies. Labor will further expand and encourage the links between Defence Science and Technology Organisation and the Australian defence industry, including technology transfer to Australian industry. As far as possible, Labor will foster the retention of intellectual property ownership in Australia, including where appropriate ownership of intellectual property by defence.