

# 2014 VICTORIAN STATE ELECTION REVIEW

ROLAND LINDELL

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Victorian  
**Labor**

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## **TERMS OF REFERENCE.**

That former ALP State Secretary Roland Lindell & Alan Griffin be considered for the purposes of leading the 2014 Labor State Campaign Review and that the Administrative Committee consider the following terms of reference:

- (1) Notwithstanding the historic achievement of winning back Government after only one term in Opposition, to commission a 2014 State Election campaign review aimed at the further enhancement of those campaign processes and strategies deemed successful, in addition to a critical examination of those that could be considered less so;
- (2) That the Lead reviewer be authorised to request assistance from any other member of the Party who may assist them in the process of the review and that the Administrative Committee consider potential additions to a reference panel at the February 2015 Administrative Committee Meeting if required;
- (3) That the scope of the review shall be comprehensive in nature and more specifically including, but not limited to:
  - A) Member and supporter campaigning;
  - B) A review of policy and platform development;
  - C) The innovative field campaign approach;
  - D) Communications planning and implementation;
  - E) The quantitative and qualitative research methodologies employed, and;
  - F) The creative and advertising placement strategy and activity.
- (4) That any and all material deemed relevant by the aforementioned reviewer(s), Members of the Administrative Committee and Campaign Committee shall be made available to those undertaking the review;
- (5) That this review shall be concluded at a date no later than 2015 June Administrative Committee Meeting;
- (6) That this review should, as a matter of course, be advertised to all members by email and branches by physical mail, in addition to candidates (successful or not) and affiliated Union leaders to ensure their views are included by way of submission.
- (7) That where appropriate and agreeable, the Victorian Trades Hall Campaign Leadership group also be requested to make a submission.

## **SECTION 1 INTRODUCTION**

The 2014 State Election represents a great victory for the Victorian Branch.

All election victories are to be applauded but to return to government after just one term in opposition is an outstanding effort.

Why was Labor successful? And why did our opponents do so badly? These are questions that the review will attempt to provide some answers to. However it is not the only task of this review and not the most important task.

The major task is to identify the areas where we can improve, where more effort, better organisation, or more resources will help us conduct the best possible campaign in 2018.

The review therefore has looked at many aspects of the campaign and commented as appropriate.

The review has also spent considerable time examining processes, systems, record keeping, and other operational details of the campaign. The review has conducted what is in effect an “Internal Audit” into our campaign preparedness. In other words what risks are we taking and how we can minimise those risks?

All organisations have to be aware of risks and have strategies in place to manage those risks. This review has identified a number of areas for improvement and provided what are intended as helpful recommendations.

Election campaigns are a mixture of strategy and organisation. Too often the focus is on strategy and not enough on organisation. Yet organisational mistakes can be crucial and can change the course of a campaign. The failure to lodge a nomination, produce a How to Vote (HTV) card, adequately scrutinise candidates, or accurately cost policies to name just a few matters, can be disastrous. All of these failures are avoidable.

This review therefore makes no apology for having a strong focus on organisational issues.

Many of the recommendations in this review will require further funding. The review is fully aware of the financial constraints of the Party and that some recommendations may be difficult to implement in either the manner or timeline recommended by the review. However it is relevant that the ideas are put forward, discussed, debated, amended or rejected.

This report includes both recommendations and comments. The comments should be seen as matters that are worthy of further consideration, research and/or consultation. The recommendations represent the review’s specific opinion on the way forward.

Labor’s victory was a victory for the Party, the Labour movement and for our committed loyal voters. This review aims to help the Party prepare for the 2018 election.

## **SECTION 2 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Winning election campaigns are seldom followed by a review. It is as if victory means that there are no lessons to be learnt or that every aspect of the campaign ran smoothly and cannot be improved upon.

This review therefore begins by congratulating the Party for conducting a review as clearly there are always lessons to be learnt.

The review started with joint reviewers namely Roland Lindell and Alan Griffin.

Due to work commitments Alan had to excuse himself and so the review primarily represents Roland's thoughts on the 2014 State Election.

The review, however, thanks Alan for his contribution.

The review would not have been possible without the hard work, commitment and informed input from Conrad French. Conrad not only continued with his responsibilities at Victorian Branch and his studies but played a vital role in the preparation of this report.

The review thanks Conrad and also State Secretary Noah Carroll for "loaning" Conrad to the review.

The review also acknowledges the work done by Michael Mamouny entitled "Media Analysis of Victorian State Election held on November 29 2014".

The Review received 35 submissions and conducted 38 interviews from campaigns, branches and individual members. As well the Review met with a range of MPs, candidates, former Opposition Room staff members, Victorian Branch officials, staff and key players in the election campaign.

I thank them all for their time and contribution.

The views and recommendations contained in this report are the product of the thoughts and views of many persons.

So again thank you to all who participated in the review.

Finally a special thank you to State Secretary Noah Carroll, the Premier's Chief of Staff Johnny Mc Lindon and their staff for their cooperation and for the unhindered access to records and information requested by the review.

### **SECTION 3 BACKGROUND – LABOR**

The foundations for Labor's victory in the 2014 State Election were laid immediately after Labor's defeat in 2010 by the new Leader Dan Andrews accepting the verdict of the people. This was an important statement by the Leader, and its adoption by the Party helped set the framework for the following four years.

It is all too easy to think the electorate made a mistake and that simply staying "out of trouble" will ensure victory the next time around.

This thinking is a recipe for repeated defeats. Labor did not make that mistake.

Further, Labor made the bold decision to seek to return to government at the 2014 election. Too often oppositions take the easy route and in practical terms cede the next election to the government of the day.

Labor set a course to "win in one" and succeeded.

To do so would require party unity, new strategies, policies, campaign techniques and most importantly to reengage with the Victorian people.

Under the leadership of Dan Andrews, and State Secretary Noah Carroll the work began immediately to rebuild our credibility, keep the government to account and to build the structures necessary for victory in 2014.

Given the tightness of the election result these early decisions and follow-up actions were crucial elements to our victory.

The first task of any opposition is to keep the government to account. Labor was able to do this by highlighting the internal divisions and tensions within the Liberal/National coalition whilst still campaigning strongly on issues important to Victorians, such as cuts to TAFE, education, health services and the East West Link project.

Labor successfully used the Parliament to highlight the divisions within the Liberal Government. The Parliamentary turmoil, a strongly evident feature of the Liberal Government's term, was seen as a failure of the government.

Labor, however, did more than just keep the Liberal Government to account.

Under the leadership of Dan Andrews, the caucus remained a united team working together with a clear goal of winning in one term.

The importance of a united team cannot be overstated nor can it be taken for granted.

Election defeats are often followed by a period of internal bickering and outright disunity. There was no such outbreak following November 2010. Credit has to be given to the Leader, the Parliamentary leadership team, caucus members, candidates and key party figures for their unity of purpose following the 2010 election loss.

Labor in opposition had a strong mix of new blood and old hands. This mix ensured that the Party was not always reinventing the wheel nor remained tied to old ideas.

In terms of preparing for government, many steps were taken to ensure future ministers understood their role. Training sessions, including completion of the AICD Directors course, were held for shadow ministers and a thorough Transition to Government document was prepared. The smooth transition from opposition to government is proof of the benefits of these measures.

A well-constructed, reputable Election Costing document was in stark contrast to the Liberal document of 2010.

The review will comment further on policy development later in the report but suffice to say that Labor presented sufficient policy in key areas.

Most importantly Labor began the process of announcing policy well before the election. This decision was crucial especially in regard to the level crossing removal initiative. And not only did Labor announce the policy but also the funding model, namely the sale of the Port of Melbourne.

This allowed Labor not only to oppose the East West Link project but to present an alternative, which impacted across the Melbourne metropolitan area and especially along the Frankston line with its key marginal seats.

Labor announced Project 10,000 in 2013. This document included a number of different projects including the removal of level crossings which would create 10,000 new jobs.

These announcements denied the government the opportunity of suggesting that Labor had no policies or vision for the future and contributed to Daniel Andrews being seen as a credible alternative to the electorate and the media.

Labor also developed strong messages in areas of strength, which contrasted sharply to Government decisions.

This ensured a consistent and tight message well before the election. Importantly it assisted Labor in not being distracted by minor issues. In turn, this meant that by Election Day the electorate clearly understood and knew Labor's messages.

These messages were complemented by the union movement's opposition to government cutbacks. The campaigns by emergency services, health and education unions further helped highlight the mismanagement of key government services by the Liberal Government.

The role of the Victorian Branch is deserving of special mention. It is all too easy to stick with tried and true campaign techniques and strategies. State Secretary Noah Carroll led a campaign that was both innovative and unconventional.

The Field program, a fresh approach to research and data collection, the different apportionment of resources to targeted seats, the changed postal vote campaign, an upgraded presence on digital tools and the more limited use of direct mail were all decisions aimed at keeping Labor ahead of the game and importantly ahead of the Liberal/National Coalition.

Just as important was the concentration of resources on the carefully selected target seats.

In summary, Labor in opposition had done its job.

The Liberal Government had been held to account, policies had been developed, the Party was united and Labor had developed strong messages and a campaign plan that ensured those messages could be delivered effectively to targeted voters in targeted seats.

Labor was campaign ready.

## **THE PREMIER DAN ANDREWS**

The review congratulates the efforts of Premier Dan Andrews from his election as Opposition Leader to his election as Premier.

From the outset Premier Dan Andrews was able to set Labor on the path to victory. But this solid ground work would mean little without a strong campaign up until Election Day. That we won is testimony to the outstanding efforts of the Leader Dan Andrews during the campaign period. By all measures his campaigning was exceptional.

Whether visiting electorates, announcing policy, debating the Liberals or giving countless media interviews, Dan Andrews was faultless while being personable. By campaign end Dan Andrews had clearly established himself as an alternative Premier and therefore Labor as an alternative government.

## **SECTION 4 BACKGROUND – LIBERAL / NATIONAL COALITION**

To discuss the Liberal/National Coalition, we must start with the defeat of the Labor Government in 2010.

The reasons for the defeat have been well debated and require no comment from this review. However there is some value in examining the readiness of the Liberal/National Coalition to assume the mantle of office.

The Liberal/National Party 2010 campaign was successful at highlighting a range of issues that hurt the government and presented a small number of well received policy initiatives.

However this review would argue that at no stage did the then opposition articulate a clear vision and direction for the state or demonstrate that they were in fact ready to govern. The evidence suggests that the opposition, especially the parliamentary party was not confident of winning and did not do the hard work in policy development or preparation for government.

The inability to produce or articulate a plan or vision either in opposition or during their term in government was a major factor in the dearth of reforms, projects, initiatives from the Liberal Government especially during the Baillieu years.

Soon after 2010, the electorate was asking the question “what have they done?”- To this day the answer is very little.

To add to the Liberal Government’s woes some election promises in key service area as health, education and emergency services were broken.

Further unpopular and ill-advised cuts to TAFE and an inability to settle some EBAs created widespread dissatisfaction with the Liberal Government.

The major policy initiative of the Napthine Government was of course the East West Link project. This was a project formulated in government that had never been voted on by the electorate. While the project may have been well received in the Eastern suburbs, its relevance to Frankston Line electorates and the rest of Melbourne was never clearly spelt out.

Strong local community opposition in the inner suburbs and a timeline that included contract approval on election eve opened the door for the Labor opposition to oppose the project to the extent of promising not to honour the contract.

The Liberal Government was not able to convince the electorate that this was a necessary project and that an election eve contract was a reasonable action.

The lack of preparation for the task of government is best exemplified by the pathetic and amateuristic Election Policy Costing document produced by the opposition late in the 2010 election campaign. Such a poorly prepared document is not the work of an opposition ready to govern.

As a contrast while we all disliked and disapproved of the Kennett years and agenda, no-one can deny that there was an agenda, there was a reform plan. Kennett and his Liberal Government were about implementing that reform agenda.

And surely the only reason to seek government is to shape our society according to our values and beliefs, something the Victorian Coalition parties have forgotten.

A core ingredient of any successful government is unity. The conservatives were never able to project a unified front.

The exploits of the member for Frankston, Geoff Shaw, the change of leadership, the change of Speaker and a change of Treasurer all contributed to a sense of turmoil which coupled with a lack of

direction helped create the climate for a one-term government.

The change of leadership failed to change those basic fundamentals.

Voter disenchantment with the performance of former Prime Minister Tony Abbott also played a role especially as the election came just months after the disastrous budget of May 2014.

A lack lustre campaign did nothing to reverse the electorate's view of the Liberal Government, and thus Labor was able to hold its lead to gain a very narrow victory.

The election result is also a warning.

The electorate seems to be more willing than ever to change government.

Too often we expect the electorate to reward governments for managing the economy, building schools and infrastructure and for all the countless successful actions of government.

But why should governments expect to be "rewarded" for just doing their job? The review contends that by doing the job well governments will in the main simply slow the rate of voter dissatisfaction. This is especially true for governments seeking third or fourth terms.

The 2014 victory for Labor saw the electorate reject a one-term government.

In contrast, the 2002 State Election saw a very large swing to a first term Labor Government. That result can be seen as the electorate acknowledging that Labor was governing satisfactorily and as an indictment of the then opposition and its campaign.

Make errors or do nothing and voters will quickly turn away to the other side. Do the job well, and the electorate may well give you another term.

In summary the first and most important factor in Labor's win was the commitment of the opposition to win back government in one term and the work done by the Leader, the Parliamentary team and Victorian Branch to put together a winning strategy and then implement that strategy.

Labor's victory was aided by the Coalition performance in government, which had its roots in its failure whilst in opposition to properly prepare for government and to articulate a clear vision for Victoria

The lessons are clear – it is always important to articulate a vision or plan and always be ready to govern.

Under Dan Andrews Labor was able to do just that.

## COMMENTS

1. Labor must always be able to articulate a vision and have strong policy positions to support that vision.
2. Labor must always be prepared to govern as no election result can be taken for granted.
3. Disunity is political death.

## SECTION 5 BACKGROUND – RESULT

Election figures tell us the story of the election.

	<b>PRIMARY</b>	<b>2PP</b>	<b>SEATS WON</b>
<b>ALP</b>	38.10%	51.99%	47
<b>GREENS PARTY</b>	11.48%		2
<b>COALITION PARTY</b>	42.00%	48.01%	38
<b>OTHER</b>	3.35%		1

	<b>ALP</b>	<b>LIB</b>	<b>Margin</b>
<b>FRANKSTON</b>	17,665	17,329	336
<b>CARRUM</b>	19,998	19,427	571
<b>BENTLEIGH</b>	18,449	17,881	568
			1,475

Labor was able to hold its seats, except for Melbourne and Ripon (which was a notional Liberal seat following the redistribution) and win the seats of Frankston, Carrum, Mordialloc and Bentleigh from the Liberal Party. The redistribution had notionally given Labor an extra seat.

It should be noted that Labor was successful in holding seats that were notionally Liberal seats following the redistribution.

Labor achieved this result with a 1.85% increase in our primary vote and a 3.57% increase in the 2PP vote from the 2010 State Election.

In voting terms the changes from 2010 to 2014 were minor but their impact enormous.

Labor was able to shift just enough votes in key electorates to gain a majority. 1500 less votes in three electorates and Victorian Labor falls short of an outright majority.

Preferences, once again were a crucial factor in our victory. While the Green Party and independents continue to poll at the current level it is unlikely that Labor's primary vote will reach previous highs and we must therefore continue to work hard to secure preferences.

Labor needs to continue to maintain good relations with political parties and independents other than the extreme parties of the right. Labor also needs to continue the current practice of negotiating preference deals at the central level. And we must acknowledge that some of those deals will not be to everyone's liking and may well hurt our chances in some seats and in particular the Legislative Council.

However, our priority must always be to gain a majority in our own right in the Legislative Assembly.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Preference negotiations must continue to be centrally controlled.
2. Preference outcomes must continue to seek the most favourable outcome possible for the Legislative Assembly.

## **SECTION 6 PREPARING FOR THE CAMPAIGN**

### **6.1 CANDIDATE SCRUTINY**

For the 2014 State Election the Party introduced a process by which candidates had to undergo a police check and complete a signed declaration concerning various aspects of their lives.

The process was successful in identifying a variety of issues concerning candidates but did not insulate the party from having to ask a candidate to resign.

No system can be completely foolproof as ultimately the Party is reliant on the candidate's knowledge and/or total candour. However, the system does at least provide valuable information that can avoid unwanted surprises and provides evidence if it is required to dis-endorse a candidate because of undisclosed information.

The review notes that candidates' past actions are more frequently being investigated by the media and political opponents. In a digital age where much of what we do and say is easily accessible, more and more candidates are likely to feature in an adverse media story.

At what point does a past adverse action warrant dis-endorsement? How serious does the adverse action need to be?

In the heat of a campaign, party leaders are more likely to want to be seen to act quickly and decisively. However, that may not always lead to a "fair decision".

It is important that the Party determine what constitutes actions that warrant dis-endorsement and what is an error of judgement that should be defended.

The process used for the 2014 State Election was a good beginning but further reforms are in order to ensure a greater level of scrutiny and fairness.

The current candidate scrutiny process is undertaken post pre-selection. The review believes that consideration should be given for the process to be undertaken after the candidate selection process but before endorsement.

Therefore the candidates that would undergo the vetting process would be the winners of the pre-selection process.

This process would mean that the Party would have no need to dis-endorse a candidate other than for non-disclosure or for incorrect or misleading disclosure.

This proposal would require maybe a four week period from the close of the pre-selection process for the vetting process to be conducted.

To facilitate a quicker vetting process and to ensure that all natural justice issues have been addressed the review recommends that a number of Candidate Scrutiny Panels be appointed by the Administrative Committee.

Each panel should include an "independent" chairperson and include a legally trained member to ensure proper process.

Each panel would be assigned candidates at random and provide a written report to the Administrative Committee or other body, including a recommendation on the suitability of each candidate. The review believes that the Leader should be provided a copy of the Scrutiny Panel reports and asked for comment.

The implementation of this proposal would require some changes to Party rules and some agreement as to what constitutes actions that warrant non-endorsement and how serious any adverse actions will need to be. This review is not the forum to conduct this examination but the review does believe it is worth investigating.

The review is also of the opinion that a speedier dis-endorsement process should be considered. A process that may take a day or so is potentially too long. Therefore the Party needs to consider delegating to a small group the power of dis-endorsement. Clearly there are considerable risks for the Party in delegating such power and therefore this matter also needs further consideration.

To date the Party has only seen fit to vet candidates. Sitting MPs have not been scrutinised. The review supports the vetting process being extended to all candidates for every election. The Party must be satisfied as to the suitability of all of its candidates.

A sitting MP may at some time have behaved in an inappropriate manner, but because that behaviour has not been revealed to date and we have not asked the question then the Party remains at risk.

Further, candidates (including MPs) need to be scrutinised each time they seek pre-selection. We cannot and should not assume that a clean bill of health in 2014 is still the case four years later. The Robert Dean episode of 2002 is a case in point.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. That clear guidelines are established concerning the grounds for dis-endorsement of candidates.
2. That the Party alters the timing of the candidate scrutiny process so it is conducted between the close of the pre-selection ballot but prior to formal endorsement.
3. That independently-chaired Candidate Scrutiny Panels consisting of at least one legally trained member be created.
4. That the candidate scrutiny process be applied to all ALP candidates at every election.
5. That the Administrative Committee consider delegating the power of dis-endorsement to Party Officers.

## **6.2 POLICY DEVELOPMENT**

Labor was successful in presenting a coherent set of policies for the 2014 election.

These policies were well costed and most importantly the source of funding clearly spelt out.

Developing policy and platform for the 2018 State Election will be a crucial element of our campaign for re-election.

We must learn some lessons from both the 2010 and 2014 campaigns.

In 2010 the then Brumby Government failed to provide the electorate with a strong policy message. On reflection too much reliance was placed on advisors while at the same time the government after 11 years had probably become too reliant on the bureaucracy and key stakeholders.

Following the 2010 defeat a revitalised parliamentary team (much like their predecessors in the lead up to 1999) sought out the views of key stakeholders, the caucus, the Party and most importantly the community at large in developing new ideas to present to the electorate.

For the 2014 election the development of policy was followed by the early rollout of some policies, in particular, Project 10,000. These policies were costed and the funding clearly identified.

By the time of the campaign launch Labor was already seen as having a plan and vision in contrast to a government that was lacking any clear direction.

## **6.2.1 HOW THEN TO REPLICATE THIS PROCESS WHILE IN GOVERNMENT?**

The challenge of generating good policy in government will be much greater. There will be more scrutiny of the policies, there may well be a need for many more policies so as to satisfy stakeholders and all of it will need to be very accurately costed.

The Andrews Government will need to be deliberately, systematically and continuously talking to the electorate at large on their vision for the future. There is no reason why programs such as “Labor Listens” cannot be conducted while in government.

The Party will need to engage with party members, policy committees, supporters, caucus, stakeholders, think tanks and the community at large.

The review believes that the work on policy development needs to commence immediately.

The 2018 Election policy offering needs to consider that as the number of voters casting an “early vote” increases so does the need to review the timing of the release of policy initiatives, in 2014 of those enrolled less than 60% voted in their electorate on Election Day and a full third of those that cast a ballot had done so before Election Day. It is no longer viable to introduce major new initiatives in the last week of the campaign.

The review believes that the roll out of policy needs to be better integrated with the Field program. The Field program can be strengthened and value-based conversations enhanced by strong policy positions.

The review also believes that better use can be made of digital tools to market Labor policies.

MPs and candidates need to also be provided with strong local initiatives that work towards enhancing their reputations as strong local advocates.

Policy for non-targeted seats is also important. Labor needs to have an appropriate policy offering for the entire state.

All Labor candidates need to be able to demonstrate that Labor governs for all. Such policy positions can help the task of improving our Legislative Council vote and thus gaining extra seats.

Such policy can be produced either on a seat by seat basis or by region. That can and needs to apply both in Melbourne and in the regions.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. That the timing of policy announcements needs to take into account the increasing number of early voters.
2. That the release of policy be fully integrated with the Field program.
3. That the consultation process and the marketing of policy include all the available digital tools.
4. That policy needs to be prepared so all candidates have specific measures for their electorate/region.

## **6.3 CANDIDATE PREPAREDNESS**

Interviews with a number of candidates highlighted the need to review our support mechanisms for candidates.

The review has noted that upon gaining pre-selection candidates were not immediately provided by either Victorian Branch or the Opposition Rooms with sufficient tools to enable them to kickstart their

campaigns or to better comprehend the enormity of the task that lay ahead especially in regard to target seat candidates.

The advice provided in regard to campaign structures, fundraising, media training, messages and policy were either not provided at the close of pre-selections or were not sufficiently detailed. As an example the provision of Campaign Handbook would have been a simple tool to provide candidates with useful campaign advice.

And it took some time before candidates were able to meet as a team.

The timing of the pre-selections in late December did not help this task and consideration needs to be given to the timing of pre-selections especially for targeted seats.

Campaigning is a daunting and sometimes insular task especially in a target seat. The task is almost full time and local resources often meagre.

A candidate's campaign experience is varied as is the marginality of the electorates they represent. Irrespective they must all be provided with the basic tools.

Without strong direction and leadership from Victorian Branch candidates will seek advice from other sources. Those sources may or may not be well informed or necessarily consistent with the overall campaign strategy.

It is therefore important that Victorian Branch becomes the chief source of all campaign advice and information from the start.

Further, Victorian Branch has an important role in team building. Creating a team atmosphere gives candidates a sense of belonging and common purpose. In times of internal difficulty these attributes can be very beneficial in maintaining unity.

Live-in workshops or retreats are an expensive, but very useful means of team building and imparting advice. Otherwise a series of one-day workshops can do the job.

Either way the review is of the view that such workshops need to be held within days of finalising pre-selection not weeks.

Victorian Branch has a responsibility to support all candidates and to ensure all candidates are thoroughly prepared and informed in a timely and appropriate manner. The review suggests that Victorian Branch needs to drive and lead all elements of candidate preparedness.

Clearly the focus of Victorian Branch and the Leader's Office must be on the target seat candidates. Information, workshops and training courses must be tailored to the needs of the candidates, acknowledging that those needs vary for target and non-target seats.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. That both the Leader's Office and Victorian Branch have complete packages of information for all candidates ready by the time of pre-selections.
2. That a program of candidate, either live-in or day-long workshops, be held to both inform candidates of the task ahead and as a means of team building.
3. That pre-selections for targeted seats be held at such time that allows candidates to be thoroughly briefed immediately after endorsement.
4. That Victorian Branch be the lead agency in driving all the measures required to ensure candidates are prepared.

## 6.4 CAMPAIGN INTERNAL AUDIT & CAMPAIGN PREPAREDNESS

### 6.4.1 INTERNAL AUDIT

The review examined the risk management strategies at both the Victorian Branch and in the Leader's Office.

The review sought information on processes, approval mechanisms, task procedures, position descriptions, task descriptions, written reports, structures, accuracy checking, campaign manuals, contract management, staff replacements and other such issues.

The 2014 campaign was a well-run smooth campaign that went according to plan and was conducted without too many problems and certainly none that were not able to be overcome.

For the record the strong working relationship between the Leader's Office and Victorian Branch was vital in ensuring a successful campaign. This strong relationship needs to be maintained.

Good structures existed within the campaign team and the use of an "independent" third person was critical in providing sound advice and in resolving a multitude of day to day matters without the need for the Leader to become involved.

However the review discovered areas of weakness that could have impacted on the result.

### 6.4.2 ISSUES OF CONCERN

- **POLICY FORMULATION** – the review was informed that just days prior to their launch at least two policies were discovered to contain errors.
- **PEOPLE** – the unexpected absence of a number of key personnel could have created major disruption as inadequate measures had been taken to assure replacement staff existed for each position.
- **PEOPLE** – the review noted that a number of persons expressed a view that they would have benefitted from greater interaction with other campaign staff. A constant concern is the potential of a divide between ALP Staff and Opposition/Government Staff. Such divisions can be very disruptive and steps must be taken to ensure such divisions are minimal.
- **PROCEDURE MANUALS** – few procedure manuals or templates are in existence so campaign staff had to create their own systems.
- **WRITTEN REPORTS** – the review only saw a handful of written reports on the campaign from campaign staff and similarly campaign staff had no 2010 reports to read.
- **TRAINING** – the review was not sufficiently satisfied that all campaign staff were adequately trained for their roles. Without procedure documents, campaign reports and other background information there is a real likelihood of staff having to learn on the run, which the review considers an unnecessary risk.
- **LOCATION** – the location of the campaign office was almost universally acknowledged as excellent but some doubts were expressed about the suitability of the Docklands for the next election. The review has no view other than this matter needs to be resolved very early in the piece.
- **CAMPAIGN READINESS** – the review is not convinced that some of the necessary campaign tasks were commenced in a timely manner. It is essential that all components of an election campaign are ready to go well in advance.

- **ADMINISTRATIVE FUNCTIONS** – in the election period the pressures on the administrative functions increase many times over. Whether it be accounts or membership issues, there are simply many more transactions that need to be dealt with. The review is uncertain that sufficient resources were provided for these functions but is in no doubt that the effectiveness of the campaign requires that these functions are adequately resourced.
- **ROLE OF VICTORIAN BRANCH** – the review noted that Victorian Branch had the task of managing a voting centre and assisting in the organisation of events/fundraising functions for local campaigns. The review does not believe that this is an appropriate role for Victorian Branch.
- **CAMPAIGN TEAM** – the review heard from a number of 2014 campaign staff that more staff will be needed for the 2018 election. The review considers that the size and make-up of the campaign team needs to be determined very early in the planning stage of the 2018 campaign.
- **PLANNING** – the review is aware that on more than one occasion there was some concern that the Bus and therefore the Leader may not have arrived at the right place at the right time.

### 6.4.3 CAMPAIGN READINESS

The review believes that the Victorian Branch and the Leader's Office were campaign ready by the end of October 2014, however the review has formed the view that we need to be ready to go much earlier in the election cycle.

The level of preparation required for a state election is considerable and growing. Not only do strategic decisions need to be made but there are a multitude of logistical, administrative, and structural issues that need to be managed.

The review believes many matters can and should be organised very early in the process.

There is no reason why the Campaign Committee, location, staff (certainly all heads of units), key contracts, manuals, procedures, policy, individual campaign unit plans and many other matters cannot be resolved soon after the next Federal Election.

Further detailed campaign plans need to have been agreed to in regard to various campaign areas such as digital, mail, the Field program to name just a few areas.

The review believes that by June 2017 many, if not all of these issues/plans should have been resolved or at least in an advanced draft stage.

Further the review believes that by October 31 2017 Victorian Branch and the Leader's Office need to be election ready in regards to logistics, planning and strategy.

2018 should be all about actual campaigning and implementation of strategic decisions.

The review acknowledges that campaigns must be flexible and all matters can be subject to revision. That, however, does not impact on being ready on all fronts by October 31 2017.

The review contends that while campaign preparation is the task of the Victorian Branch, the Administrative Committee and its committees (Party Officers & Campaign) have a responsibility to oversight our campaign readiness.

Campaign audits are a means by which the Administrative Committee on behalf of the Party can undertake its governance role.

The risks are too great for the Party if our governing body does not play its role in ensuring we are ready.

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. **WRITTEN REPORTS** – every campaign worker needs to complete a written report within 10 days of election – day. Victorian Branch in conjunction with the Leader’s Office need to compile templates for the reports.
2. **PROCEDURE MANUALS** – every campaign function needs to have a procedure document that includes whatever forms/templates are required for each function.
3. **POSITION DESCRIPTION** – every campaign position needs to have a written job description that clearly spells out reporting requirements for that position.
4. **TRAINING** – every campaign worker needs to have completed an appropriate training session for their task, including some kind of simulation exercise.
5. **ORIENTATION** – every campaign worker needs to have had a familiarisation session in the campaign office, met their fellow workers and have some understanding of all the various components of an election campaign.
6. **PEOPLE** – every campaign position must have a replacement. No person is so important as to not be replaceable and campaign information needs to be shared by at least one other person.
7. **CHECKING PROTOCOLS** – every campaign function/task needs a proofing protocol that is appropriate for the function, whether it be policy, advertisements, contracts, face book posts and countless other functions.
8. **CONTRACTOR REPORTS** – all contractors/service providers such as advertising agencies, polling/research companies and other suppliers should be required to prepare detailed post-election reports.
9. That Victorian Branch prepare a Campaign Preparedness Checklist by June 30 2016.
10. That a Campaign Preparedness Audit be conducted by March 30 2017.
11. That a further Campaign Preparedness Audit be conducted by November 30 2017.
12. That the Campaign Committee oversight the Campaign Preparedness Audits.

## COMMENTS

1. The review notes the strong working relationship between the Leader’s Office, Caucus, and Victorian Branch and encourages all those parties to maintain that relationship.
2. That the travelling party and the use of a third person be replicated at the 2018 election.

## **SECTION 7 UNIONS**

The union campaign was a factor in the success of the overall campaign.

Over the term of the Ballieu/Napthine Government's relations with a number of Victorian Trades Hall Council (VTHC) affiliates, in particular teachers, nurses, firefighters and ambulance officers had become toxic.

Election promises had been broken, EBAs remained unresolved and key services had deteriorated.

The ground was therefore ripe for the union movement to galvanise and campaign against the Liberal Government, even if not directly for the Labor Party.

The ability of the VTHC to organise a coordinated campaign in key seats was beneficial to the ALP campaign.

Even more important was that the union campaign dovetailed perfectly with the Field program being run by the party.

The union's ability to conduct a strong field program was enhanced by having access to members' mobile numbers, email addresses as well as landline numbers.

The unions were able to identify union members who were unsure of their voting intentions and then conduct a personalised "persuasion" campaign amongst those members.

The ability of the union campaign to have teachers discussing education issues, nurses discussing health issues to name some areas resulted in a targeted campaign, which is the aim of all political campaigns.

Use of pledges, mail, street stalls, doorknocks, billboards and digital campaign tools ensured that the campaign was a fully integrated effort.

The presence of union members at Early Voting Centres and on Election Day reinforced the VTHC message.

The challenge is for the Party is to build on this support. Galvanising the union movement has always been easier from opposition than from government.

For Labor to again have the strong public support of key service delivery union members, a strong case will have to be mounted both denouncing opposition positions and promoting Labor policy.

Labor will need to maintain strong relations and mount a strong case both for the Andrews Government and against the opposition if it is to receive the same level of support from the union movement in 2018.

## **COMMENTS**

1. That the Andrews Government needs to strongly highlight the anti-union positions of the opposition.
2. That the Andrews Government needs to produce strong policy positions that demonstrate that Labor can best deliver the key services for all Victorians.
3. That the Party needs to maintain a strong relationship with the VTHC and its affiliates so a co-ordinated and co-operative campaign can be mounted amongst union members in 2018.

## SECTION 8 CHANGES IN VOTING PATTERNS & DEMOGRAPHICS

### 8.1 EARLY VOTERS

At the 2014 State Election just 55% of all enrolled voters actually cast their ballot in their electorate on Election Day.

#### POSTAL

2010		2014		Increase 2010 - 2014
Formal	Total	Formal	Total	
237,077	3,164,729	280,386	3,355,707	43,309
7.49%		8.36%	0.86%	0.86%

#### EARLY

2010		2014		Increase 2010 - 2014
Formal	Total	Formal	Total	
526,456	3,164,729	868,985	3,355,707	342,529
16.64%		25.90%	0.86%	9.26%

The remainder either did not vote, or voted Absent, Early or Postal.

The most significant contributor to this change in voter behaviour was the increase in the number of votes cast in person at Early Voting Centres.

The percentage of voters who cast a Postal Vote or an Absent Vote was fundamentally unchanged. It was the 35% increase in Early Voting that has changed election campaigns.

The increase in the number of pre-poll or early voters raises a number of important questions for future campaigns.

This review has formed the view that campaigns are no longer an event gearing up for Election Day but are now an event gearing up to "the Voting Period". That period commences at the close of nominations and closes on election-day.

#### RECOMMENDATION

1. The Campaign Committee needs to develop the appropriate strategies to deal with the change in voting behaviour.

### 8.2 ABSENT VOTING

The 2014 State Election saw a massive increase in the number of early votes from 15% of all ballots cast to 25% of all ballots cast (this does not include postal votes). Despite this increase there was little to no effect on the number of Absent Votes cast.

Absent Votes are, of course, also cast at the Early Voting Centres.

Absent voters either at the Early Voting Centres or on Election Day, in the main cast their vote without the aid of a HTV. While we produce a state wide HTV card we certainly do not distribute them to the 6.2% of voters who voted absentee.

The review contends that we need to make a greater effort to provide the appropriate HTV to each voter.

Apart from utilising all the digital means at our disposal (maybe even an election information app) the review proposes that a large (1800mm x 1200mm) corflute poster and stand be provided for each voting centre displaying the state wide HTV.

If the recommendation on Voting Centre Material (Section 11.1) is adopted then the display of HTV information would need to be exempted.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That further research be conducted into the best means of ensuring that all Absent Voters have access to an ALP HTV prior to casting their vote.
2. That large corflute signs for each Early Voting Centre and Election Day Voting Centre displaying the state wide HTV be provided.

## 8.3 POSTAL VOTING

For the 2014 State Election the Party changed its policy in regard to providing all voters in targeted electorates a Postal Vote Application (PVA) Form. Householder mail was used to forward a PVA to targeted voters.

It should also be noted that the VEC did not send out a PVA to all voters and that the Liberal Party used direct mail to forward a PVA to all voters in their target seats.

The result of these actions is best demonstrated by the numbers.

	<b>2014 ALP Primary %</b>	<b>SWING</b>	<b>Overall Figures</b>
<b>Total Postal</b>	35.61%	-3.62%	2706
<b>Total minus postal</b>	39.37%	1.81%	3116
<b>Total Early</b>	38.29%	0.75%	12733
<b>Total minus Early</b>	39.14%	1.06%	<b>-6901</b>

The review examined our primary vote in regard to postal votes in a sample group of target seats.

Those figures show a decline in the primary vote of 3.62%. That figure alone is cause for concern, however, that decline is counterbalanced by the increase in our early vote primary vote. The early vote being a much larger group of voters and therefore more important.

Does Labor have a problem? Do we need to revert back to direct mailing the PVA to all voters in target seats?

The review is uncertain and suggests that more work is required before an informed decision can be made. It may well be that the decline in our postal vote primary is more than made up for by an improved early vote outcome.

Other factors, such as the increased cost of mailing a personalised letter and the time taken to deliver letters need to be considered. In brief, what are the cost/benefits of a specific campaign on postal votes?

The role of the VEC in regard to informing voters of all the voting options needs to be considered. The review strongly believes that it is the VEC's responsibility to ensure that every voter is fully informed about the various means by which they can cast their ballot.

That requires the VEC to provide a PVA to every voter as well as informing every voter of the location of early voting centres, absent voting rights, interstate and airport voting facilities and Election Day polling booth locations.

If the VEC was in fact to do just that then the need for political parties to mail a PVA application to voters would be diminished.

The review noted that campaigns were not informed by the VEC of the names of the applicants for a PVA. The review considers that all candidates and registered political parties are entitled to this information on a daily basis.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That more research is undertaken to determine the consequences of the decision to not direct mail a PVA in target seats.
2. That the VEC in fulfilling its responsibilities forward a PVA and all other relevant voting information to all voters.
3. That the VEC provide to candidates and registered political parties the names of all applicants for a PVA.

## 8.4 INNER SUBURBS & THE GREENS PARTY

For many years the Greens have been slowly making inroads into what has always been perceived as traditional Labor heartland.

The Greens Party started by winning Senate positions, then Legislative Council seats, the Federal seat of Melbourne and in 2014 were successful in winning two Legislative Assembly seats, namely Melbourne from the Labor Party and Prahran from the Liberal Party. Prahran was a Labor target in the 2014 election, so it also represents a loss for the party.

From the very first time the Greens Party stood for election we have always assumed that their votes came from disgruntled former ALP voters. We have also constantly debated and agonised over why those Labor voters have switched.

During that same time period we have tried various techniques and arguments with limited success to stop the flow of votes to the Green Party in the inner suburbs.

Our efforts have met with mixed results in the inner suburbs.

However, we must also recognise that Labor has stemmed the flow of votes to the Green Party outside of the inner suburbs.

YEAR	VICTORIA WIDE GREEN VOTE	GREEN VOTE IN ALP TARGETS OUTSIDE OF THE TOP 5 GREEN SEATS	GREEN VOTE IN THE TOP 5 GREEN SEATS	GREEN VOTE VICTORIA WIDE EXCLUDING TOP 5 GREEN SEATS
2006	10.0%	9.3%	20.6%	9.4%
2010	11.2%	9.4%	28.4%	10.2%
2014	11.5%	8.0%	34.8%	10.1%

So while the Green Party Vote has increased substantially in the inner suburbs, it needs to be noted that that increase has not been replicated across the state. For example in the outer suburban growth suburbs the Green vote is static or declining. These suburbs are Labor's new heartland, and the growth of seats in these suburbs more than make up for the loss of seats to the Green Party in inner suburbs.

There are of course a number of electorates on both sides of the political fence where the Green Party vote is increasing at a more moderate rate than the inner suburbs. These electorates may be under threat in future elections.

Why then have we had some success but also some failure?

The answer lies in demographic change.

The inner suburbs of Melbourne that encompass the seats of Melbourne, Northcote, Brunswick and Richmond are not the suburbs that they once were.

Once populated by low to middle income individuals and families working in semi or skilled jobs these suburbs are now home to many thousands of high income individuals and families working as managers and professionals.

That change is best demonstrated by the increase in the median price of housing in these suburbs.

The \$200,000 home is long gone and replaced by million dollar plus properties.

The simple reality is that Labor voters are migrating to the outer suburbs and are being replaced by socially progressive high income earners who vote for the Green Party.

The extent of this migration is best demonstrated by the simple fact that the Labor primary vote in Kew was only 382 votes less than in Melbourne.

The Liberal Party has actually failed to recognise this shift and allowed a group of voters that they would have expected to vote Liberal to support the Green Party.

The inner suburbs of Melbourne could well have become new Liberal seats.

Due to the same demographic changes it has become apparent the Green Party is beginning to threaten the Liberal seats of Hawthorn and Kew. This review contends that those seats will become major targets for the Green Party as soon as the next State Election.

As a result Labor will need to carefully consider its preference allocation.

What can Labor do?

Firstly we must recognise that the demographic change is the fundamental reason for our declining vote. It is not about our policies or our people. We have not lost touch. We are battling a demographic change that has been occurring for many years and will undoubtedly continue.

We cannot fight demographics.

What we can do is work to develop a new policy offering that is attractive to the professionals and managers of the inner suburbs. However, this policy offering needs to be consistent with our values and supported by the so called traditional Labor voters in the fast growing outer suburbs of Melbourne.

This a most challenging endeavour.

Secondly we must always remember that there is no magic wand to representation or campaigning. All of our candidates and MPs must try all means available to them to impart the Labor message.

The Party needs to continue to support our candidates and MPs in the inner suburbs to the full.

But we must also “double down” wherever our target voters and seats go. The reality is that the fast growing municipalities on the outer reaches of Melbourne is the new heartland for Labor.

The demographic changes that are hurting us in the inner suburbs are creating new opportunities in the outer suburbs.

Even if Labor is unable to stem the flow of votes to the Green Party in the inner suburbs the review is convinced that Labor can continue to win an absolute majority of seats in the Legislative Assembly and thus govern in its own right.

In the eventuality that the Green Party gains the balance of power, Labor needs to have a clearly thought through and agreed position. To this end the review notes that in Tasmania the Party requires State Conference approval before agreeing to join forces with the Green Party.

The review is indebted to the work of Victorian Branch and in particular Assistant State Secretary Kosmos Samaras for the analysis of the changing demographics and its impact on the Green Party vote and the Labor vote.

The review supports those views and supports the proposed further research work that should help Labor better identify what has been occurring, why it has been occurring and hopefully to provide some further suggestions for the future.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That all currently held seats continue to be defended with all available resources.
2. That Labor’s new heartland is the outer suburbs of Melbourne.
3. That in prioritising target seats the current practice of targeting the most winnable seat remain the key criteria.
4. That a clear, agreed position be developed in the eventuality of the Green Party gaining the balance of power.

## 8.6 NON-TARGETED SEATS

### 8.6.1 LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL SEATS

As in previous elections the Labor vote for the Legislative Council was less than our vote for the Legislative Assembly.

	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>ALP LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY</b>	1,278,436	38.10%
<b>ALP LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL</b>	1,143,883	33.46%
<b>DIFFERENCE</b>	134,553	4.64%

Labor, correctly, continues to concentrate all its effort on winning Legislative Assembly seats.

Our opponents devote more space and words in their printed material to promoting their Legislative Council candidates, but to what extent this actually delivers more votes is very questionable.

Independents and the Green Party are able to use the proportional voting system for the Legislative Council to their advantage. We should expect more of the same, with neither of the major parties being able to have control of the Legislative Council in the future.

The review considers that the best hope of improving our Legislative Council vote is by improving our campaign techniques across the state.

We simply do not campaign as hard or as well in non–target seats. While this is also true of our opponents, it is also possible that by improving our campaigning in these seats we would improve our overall performance.

The implementation of a field program across the state may well be one way of improving the Labor vote.

### **8.6.2 NON-TARGET LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY SEATS**

How much energy and resources does the Party put into non–target seats is always a matter of debate. A debate this review is not able to resolve.

What can be said is that by improving our vote in these electorates we hopefully improve our vote in the Legislative Council, which is clearly a desirable outcome.

Apart from the introduction of the Field program across the state the review believes that a few measures can better support Labor candidates.

These measures are discussed elsewhere in the report, but include measures to improve campaign preparedness, policy and training.

The review also believes that further opportunities exist by the better use of both current and existing MPs. Their assistance in supporting candidates in both an advisory and organisational roles in non–target seats is good use of existing skills and provides necessary support for Victorian Branch as it manages the campaign.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

1. That current and former MPs be enlisted to support candidates in non–target seats.

### **8.7 REGIONAL VICTORIA**

Regional Victoria was not the frontline in the 2014 State Election but it was nonetheless very important.

Labor despite losing Ripon, which was badly affected by the redistribution, performed strongly in Regional Victoria. We held all our seats and, in particular, consolidated our strong position in the Geelong, Ballarat and Bendigo regions.

Labor must continue to not only hold its position but seek to (where possible) win extra seats in the regions.

### **8.8 THE FRANKSTON LINE**

Labor through its opposition to the East West Link and its Level Crossing policy had a strong message that resonated in those electorates.

A powerful local campaign model, supported by hard working local candidates resulted in just enough votes changing hands to allow Labor to form a government.

The closeness of the result cannot be overstated. Only Mordialloc achieved a significant swing, and that was only 3.6%. The other three electorates just scraped across the line, despite strong policy, strong campaigns and good candidates.

	<b>ALP</b>	<b>LIB</b>	<b>Margin</b>
<b>FRANKSTON</b>	17,665	17,329	336
<b>CARRUM</b>	19,998	19,427	571
<b>BENTLEIGH</b>	18,449	17,881	568
			1,475

Incumbency, will certainly help our cause, and our MPs need to better use that advantage than their Liberal predecessors. However, nothing short of good government, a strong policy offering coupled with a strong campaign is required for Labor to hold these seats.

For our local MPs it means four years of representing their electorates in an outstanding manner and campaigning continuously.

**COMMENT**

1. The review considers these the battleground seats for 2018 and again reiterates the need for continuous campaigning.

## **SECTION 9 CAMPAIGN TECHNIQUES**

### **9.1 FIELD**

Without doubt the most discussed element of the 2014 State Election Campaign was the Field program. It was the subject of more commentary in the submissions than any other single issue.

The review endorses the Field program and endorses its continuing use in between elections and as the major element of local campaigning for the 2018 State Election campaign.

That is not to say that all elements of the Field program were executed perfectly or improvements cannot be made. The review recommendations are about growing and building on the model.

The review contends that the Field program is not fundamentally new or indeed innovative. Rather it builds on the oldest known campaigning tool, namely talking to voters.

Labor has always sought to engage voters and in particular “undecided voters” The aim of all electioneering is to identify and then reach out to those voters.

All campaign techniques are aimed at those relatively few voters. Labor has always encouraged its candidates and MPs to doorknock or phone voters. However we have not always used our members and supporters to do the same.

We have in recent years used centralised phone banks to reach out to undecided voters. That process required a relatively small number of volunteers.

As well in the past we have doorknocked or called trying to discuss policy.

The 2014 Field Campaign added some important dimensions to the “old” model.

Firstly was the localisation of the phone calls and doorknocks.

Secondly was that the discussion with voters would be about values not necessarily policy.

Thirdly was the simple fact that the Field program was a structured multi-faceted program, which had goals, objectives, timelines and performance measures. This is in sharp contrast to the almost ad hoc nature of so many of our campaign tools.

These three important changes were fundamental and have changed the way we engage with voters.

A further positive outcome of the Field program is the impact the program has had on members and supporters.

Since the early 1980s local campaigns have been about direct mail and all the usual activities such as street stalls, leaflet drops, mobile booths and the like.

When extensive phone work was introduced in the late 1990s it was either candidates calling or centralised phone banks.

For the overwhelming majority of members and supporters, campaign work consisted of distributing leaflets and handing out HTVs. In retrospect that campaign model failed to utilise the talents, skills and commitment of our members and supporters.

The 2013 Federal Election campaign and the 2014 State Election campaign have turned that scenario on its head.

Members and supporters now have a vital and meaningful role in local campaigns. And the impact on the Party is a re-energised existing membership and most importantly many hundreds of new members.

The extension of the Field program across the State can only impact positively on the Party.

A further impact has been the increased number of women involved in campaign tasks. Over 40% of field organisers were women including a similar proportion in leadership positions, which is the first time that Victorian Labor has involved that many women in key campaign tasks.

The review would also like to put on the record its congratulations to Victorian Branch and in particular Assistant Secretary Stephen Donnelly for the meticulous preparation and attention to detail that was one of the hallmarks of the Field program.

### **9.1.1 EARLY VOTING CENTRE & VOTING CENTRE VOTER CONTACT**

At the 2013 Federal Election a trial was conducted where volunteers were given the task of trying to engage with voters at the booth. These volunteers were not responsible for distributing HTV cards.

The review believes that such engagement is at least worth trialling again at both early voting centres and Election Day voting centres.

We know that there are still many undecided voters on Election Day, therefore we need to be still trying to reach out to those voters until the close of the ballot.

### **9.1.2 DATA**

It needs to be recognised at the outset that the changed nature of our primary voter contact tool would not have been as successful without the Party's ability to analyse data and therefore provide campaigns with voter profiles that were more accurate than ever before.

Accurate data is essential to the success of any campaign. The review understands and appreciates that not all the data was accurate and that data collection is an area that requires more work.

However the review is satisfied that that the data provided to campaigns was sufficiently accurate so that campaigns were in the main contacting undecided voters or voters who were in our target group.

### **9.1.3 TRAINING**

Without a doubt this is the most crucial element of the program. An extensive training program for all involved was undertaken and needs to be continued.

All persons involved with the Field program need to be thoroughly trained. It is much easier to lose a vote than to win a vote and that simple view should drive the training regime.

While there was a strong "train the trainer program" established and running in target seats, the party would benefit if this was expanded into non-target seats, leading to many more party members being informed of the Field program and participating.

### **9.1.4 IMPROVEMENTS**

The Field program was conducted in a very structured manner. Field staff had very defined roles and very clear reporting lines and requirements. The level of rigidity was difficult for some campaigns to deal with but was also instrumental in having a consistent approach across the state and importantly consistent KPIs and data.

Notwithstanding the above the review believes there is room for improvement.

The review contends that Field Officers should be better integrated into the local campaign, with greater knowledge of their electorates (the review notes that this occurred in most of the successful campaigns).

Better use can be made of policy announcements and digital tools should be better integrated into the Field program.

Further work may be worthwhile to attempt to have volunteers make repeat calls to the one voter in the hope of building a stronger relationship with that voter. As well further work is worthwhile in attempting to make more calls on the basis of teachers responding to education issues.

In regard to policy announcements the review believes that better use can be made of these announcements without moving away from the value based nature of the program.

The Field program emphasis on either phone calling or doorknocking resulted in a number of volunteers not being fully utilised as they were not willing to undertake these activities. Measures need to be taken to ensure all volunteers are given the opportunity to participate. The review believes there are sufficient tasks to cater for all volunteers.

The review is concerned that at times the Field program can become a numbers game. The quality of a conversation must always take precedence over the number of calls.

At the 2013 Federal Election the Field program was utilised on Election Day both at the booths and by phone. Only phone banks were continued at the State Election. The review supports more trials of Field program activities on Election Day.

The VTHC was able to have teachers talk to voters on education and so on. The Party needs to explore whether it can do likewise. The review acknowledges the enormous logistical effort required to achieve this level of targeting.

Most importantly of all in the opinion of the review is that the Field program is embedded in our campaign culture so that MPs and candidates are constantly having conversations with targeted voters.

The Field program must be ongoing and continuous with the election year component being just one element.

The Field program needs to become the major campaigning method across all seats not just among the targeted seats. In this way we are using our resources in the best manner possible and maximise our pool of volunteers, which can be used in our target seats.

Clearly the same model that is used for target seats cannot be delivered across the state but the review believes that a model can be developed that is appropriate. By extending the Field program across the state the pool of volunteers could well grow substantially, with the real prospect that many of those volunteers can be utilised in the target seats.

### **9.1.5 FIELD PROGRAM CHALLENGES**

The biggest challenge facing the Field program comes from the ever diminishing number of landlines.

Privacy needs restrict the ability of organisations such as political parties from accessing mobile phone numbers and the rapid decline of landlines means that phone work is becoming increasingly harder. As well, available landline numbers are no longer representative of the community at large.

Therefore to build our networks and have ever more conversations, the Field program will require more and more doorknocking which requires more and more volunteers.

We should not be deterred by this challenge.

The changes introduced by Australia to mail delivery charges and delivery times places even more importance of the Field program. While the effectiveness of direct mail as a campaign tool is debated

by some, the costs involved in direct mail are now so prohibitive that its cost effectiveness must be questioned.

### **9.1.6 DOORKNOCKING AT NIGHT**

As previously discussed the ability to make phone calls is becoming increasingly difficult due to the reduction in land lines, and outside of acquiring more mobile phone numbers the most efficient way to use our volunteer army will be doorknocking.

To that end the time of day to doorknock was a regular issue that emerged throughout the review. There is generally an acceptance to make phone calls as late as 8pm but a general attitude not to doorknock after 5 or 6pm.

The main reasons given for this are that there was a feeling that interrupting someone on their door at this time of night would be greeted with some hostility. However this seems to conflict with the willingness to interrupt voters on the phone.

The more compelling reason however is the safety of doorknockers. There was a feeling that doorknocking after dark is unsafe. While this has some validity, the last two months of a State election campaign are held during daylight savings and as such the review suggests doorknocking up to 8:30pm possible.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. The Field program continue to be the key campaigning tool for targeted local campaigns.
2. That an education program be developed to promote the Field program across the party with the ultimate aim of increasing our pool of volunteers.
3. That the Field program be adopted as the key component of all local campaigning and a fit for purpose model be developed.
4. That the Field program is better integrated into the local campaign.
5. That more use should be made of digital tools and policy announcements.

## **COMMENTS**

1. Victorian Branch needs to guard against the Field program becoming a numbers race – how many calls made as against the quality of the conversation.
2. The review acknowledges the difficulties in establishing the means by which teachers discuss education issues and so on but steps should be taken to build a database of “informed policy” personnel who can discuss with voters specific issues.
3. The review supports further trials of Election Day and early voting centre field program activities.
4. The review supports tasks being found for all volunteers.

## **9.2 CAMPAIGN TOOLS**

The review received many comments concerning the Field program. A number questioned its effectiveness and sought from the review “evidence” that it changed votes.

Similarly the same question can be asked of all campaign techniques, whether it be TV advertising,

mail, leaflets, digital, billboards, phone calls, doorknocking and everything else that we do to try and win votes.

The simple reality is that there is no one magic bullet.

Therefore this review contends that Victorian Branch must continue to be innovative. It must continue to look to our friends abroad for the latest in campaign techniques.

We do know that campaigning is much more than a gut feeling, it is in fact a professional endeavour.

We know that negative TV advertising works, we know that the more direct the voter contact the more likely there will be a positive outcome. We know that targeted messages work better than generalised messages.

Therefore the aim of every campaign at both the local and central level is to connect/engage with voters and in particular “target voters.”

To achieve that goal we must try and engage the electorate in every viable way.

This review therefore supports and endorses the Field program. Further it supports the continued use of all known effective campaign tools.

The review strongly supports the continued efforts at identifying “target voters”.

The review contends that only a strong centralised campaign lead by experienced professional staff can maximise our efforts and the outcomes.

Further, campaigning does not start on any particular day nor does it end on Election Day. The task is ongoing – every day from one election – day to the next one.

The comments below relate to the use of these campaign techniques at a local level.

### **9.2.1 DIRECT CONTACT**

The review as indicated earlier strongly supports the Field program and by doing so is supporting campaign methods that engage directly with voters.

Targeted doorknocking and targeted phone calls are the two most effective campaign methods available to local campaigns and should be the prioritised activity for all local campaigns.

### **9.2.2 LEAFLETS**

Leaflets either directly delivered to the letterbox or delivered at stations and shopping centres continue to be a popular method of campaigning. The real question is how effective are leaflets. There is so much junk mail in letterboxes that the effectiveness of leaflets must be seriously questioned.

The review advocates delivery at the door as a means of improving the effectiveness of leaflets.

### **9.2.3 SHOPPING CENTRES / RAILWAY STATIONS / MOBILE OFFICES**

These campaign tools are effective in improving the visibility of the candidate/MP. But it is doubtful that they are effective at meeting and having conversations with targeted voters.

The review contends that such conversations would rarely occur via these campaign activities.

### **9.2.4 3RD PARTY CAMPAIGNS**

The review strongly supports the use of third parties in both the central and local campaigns. The union campaign run by the VTHC is proof enough that third party campaigns can be very effective but only if they are well organised and have a strong message.

### **9.2.5 COMMUNITY GROUPS**

Candidates/MPs spend a great deal of time attending community group events in their electorates. While these events are an integral part of the role of an MP, the review needs to question the campaign effectiveness of attending multiple meetings of non-targeted voters during the campaign period.

While undoubtedly targeted voters do attend community events and are involved in community groups the review believes that the candidate/MP should have by mid-way through election year built up a sufficient rapport with community groups that there would be little to no need to revisit these groups during the final months of the campaign other than for a very limited number of major events. An important caveat to this of course if it is an event where there is capacity to find new volunteers for the campaign.

### **9.2.6 DIRECT MAIL**

For the 2014 State Election Victorian Branch only supported the use of targeted direct mail. In fact, support for electorate-wide mail outs was only provided for the unaddressed postal vote campaign in target seats.

In its advocacy of the merits of the Field program and to ensure its successful implementation Victorian Branch was often in the position of having to question the use of direct mail by local campaigns. Victorian Branch task was and is to ensure that local campaigns use the most cost effective means of communicating with voters.

Direct mail is but one tool, of many, by which to engage voters.

The review is satisfied that only targeted direct mail is worthwhile given the costs if delivered by Australia Post. Postal charge increases and changes to delivery times (not daily) have made direct mail prohibitive and not cost effective.

Continued use of hand-delivered direct mail should be continued by utilising volunteers whom do not wish to participate in phone calling or doorknocking.

All of the above forms of contact are important and each has a role to play especially in developing the candidate/MP as a strong local advocate/representative in his/her electorate.

However as we approach the “voting period” the question has to be repeatedly asked what is the most cost effective means of campaigning and even more fundamental what campaign tool is the most effective at reaching targeted voters.

### **9.2.7 DIGITAL**

The review strongly supports the continued use of all current digital tools, while it is unclear if these tools change votes the review believes that when used effectively digital tools can help create a positive perception of the candidate and the Party.

### **9.2.8 POSTERS / BANNERS / LOCAL BILLBOARDS / BUNTING**

All of the above message delivery means have a role to play and if resources are available should be utilised. They are particularly useful at imparting a negative message (not from candidate) or at improving the name recognition of a candidate.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. That direct voter contact campaigning is far and away the most effective campaign technique.
2. That local campaigning is most effective when direct voter contact is made with targeted voters.
3. That direct mail delivered by Australia Post should only be utilised if being sent to targeted voters and deemed the most cost effective means of communicating with those voters.
4. That digital campaigning is important in shaping voter perception.
5. That other campaign techniques are all important and are part of the mix but notes that they are not targeted and are therefore less cost effective.

### **9.3 ADVERTISING**

That Labor won is testimony that our advertising campaign was well targeted and successful.

Irrespective of the importance of the 6 o'clock news, on line communications, field programs and all the other means of communicating with voters, television advertising is still the single most important element of an election campaign.

Digital campaigning and therefore advertising is becoming more important and will certainly become even more important for the 2018 election.

However, it is essential that the State Branch continue to recognise that traditional forms of advertising are still the most important and that radio, in fact, was shown to have the highest recognition rate of all mediums.

It is also equally important to recognise that negative advertising works.

Determining the media buy, that is basically how much to spend on TV, radio, billboards and the like and determining when to spend your dollars is not a simple task and getting harder.

As an example of the changing nature of the advertising options the impact of Netflix on television demonstrates this fact.

What for example is the mix between traditional mediums such television against digital?

The mix of advertising will change and change rapidly. Only the continued application of best practice will enable the Party to get the right mix of advertising.

For the 2014 State Election the Party went to the market place to seek the appropriate agency. The review supports that decision and believes that should happen for each election.

The review is concerned that through local campaign expenditure in regard to billboards (both static and mobile), digital through advertising and posts and other forms of communications that the electorate hears mixed messages.

Victorian Branch must aim to manage all messages as much as practicable.

The review concedes that Victorian Branch cannot control every message that is relayed to voters but protocols must be clearly established and all candidates must understand the need to abide by the protocols.

Mishaps during campaigns are costly and need to be minimised.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That Victorian Branch goes through an open tender process for all the advertising contracts as was undertaken in 2014.
2. That protocols be established regarding local campaigns advertising messages irrespective of the medium being used.

### 9.4 DIGITAL CAMPAIGNING

In 2014 digital or online campaigning began to be more than just a side show to the campaign in general.

In the course of the 2014 campaign a number of opposition candidates were dis-endorsed due to inappropriate online activities. Parties and their candidates spent considerable resources on their websites and Facebook pages and dollars were allocated to advertising on the internet and Facebook.

As well media advisors spent hours scrutinising every tweet, website and Facebook page.

Labor was very much part of that story. Victorian Branch is to be congratulated for being in that space and for the quality of the digital campaign.

Whether the digital campaign changed a significant number of votes is somewhat unclear but we can be certain that for more and more voters the digital world is their primary communication and information tool.

The review considers it safe to assume that Facebook posts, like other digital communications and their traditional counterparts can be important in shaping perceptions.

Positive perceptions of candidates can do no harm and can also help create a positive perception of the Leader and of Labor.

By 2018 the world of digital campaigning will be completely transformed. For example if the election had been in 2015 Instagram would have been a factor. What we can be sure of is that new technologies will have emerged, and in all likelihood more resources, more advertising dollars, more time and more importance will be placed on the digital campaign.

What we can also be sure of is that for an increasing number of voters the digital world will be their main source of information and communication.

Facebook was launched in the USA in February 2004. That means that a first-time voter in 2018 will not be aware of a world without Facebook and maybe never have read a hard copy of a newspaper.

A 10 year old in 2004 will be 24 years old in 2018 and will probably have notched up 14 years or more of active online communications.

To not keep up or adjust to change will simply spell electoral disaster.

In planning for the 2018 election campaign there are some issues that the review believes are worthy of consideration.

In 2014 candidates were free to post on Facebook without prior approval. There was Victorian Branch review of posts – but they were after the event. That regime does not apply to printed material or press releases. The review supports message control of all billboards on major arterials so why

should Facebook, tweets or websites be treated any different.

Central approval means message consistency which is vital to not having to spend valuable time defending mistakes.

The challenge is in creating an approval process that is rapid enough and does not stifle innovation and creativity.

The review acknowledges the enormity of the task being recommended and suggests that if a system cannot be devised than as a very minimum detailed protocols need to be established.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. That a central approval process be established for all digital campaign tools.
2. That a set of protocols be established to govern the use of digital tools

## **COMMENT**

1. The review believes that more financial and human resources will be required for the digital component of the next state election.

## 9.5 MEDIA

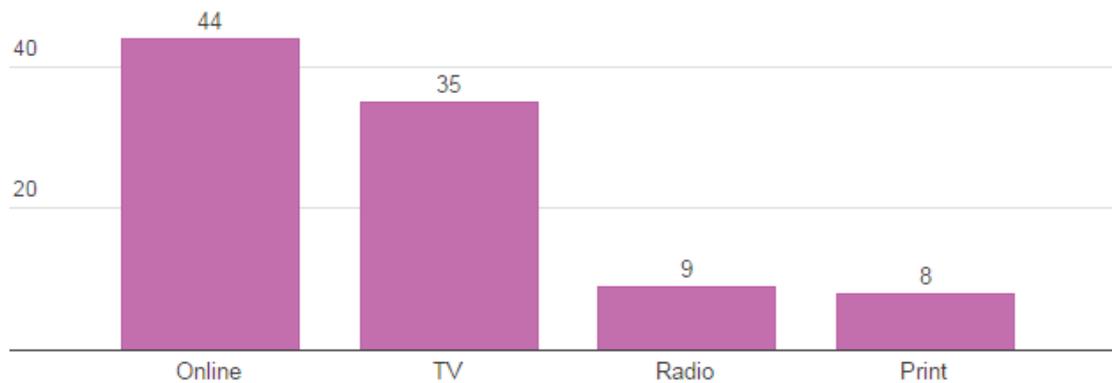
Perhaps in no other area has the impact of new technologies been more pronounced than in the media and especially, the print media.

Long gone are the days of reading a hard copy of the paper on the train, tram or bus. The influence of television news is also diminishing as more and more people seek their news and information via online tools.

1. When asked to name their single main source for news, 44 per cent said the internet.

### Australians' main source of news

overall %



From the ABC <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2015-06-16/australians-digital-news-trust/6548232>

This trend is certain to continue.

Media strategies have to deal with the 24 hour news cycle and the proliferation of news sources, including social media.

The print media was if nothing else entirely predictable both in the lead up to and during the final few weeks of the campaign.

The Fairfax media was more neutral in its coverage, although increasingly becoming an apologist for the Greens Party, while News Ltd continued its long anti-Labor tradition.

Labor again demonstrated, as it has throughout its history, that it can and does win elections, both from opposition and in government despite anti-Labor media coverage.

Television, was as always about the visuals and a relaxed Daniel Andrews supported by Cath Andrews, and excellent back drops meant Labor was able to present itself as a strong viable alternative to the Coalition.

In 2014, the nightly TV news bulletins provided the best opportunity to reach the largest audience with the campaign's message and policy announcement each day.

The resourcing required to deliver these events was significant, involving extensive work from the policy, media and advance teams.

The effort that went towards planning and executing these policy announcements to hold each day in the media paid off with the Labor team winning almost every night's coverage.

The reviews only observations in regard to the media is the need to be mindful of the changes in technology and therefore the way in which an ever increasing number of people receive their news and information.

It should be noted that for the 2018 State Election, digital may well replace broadcast media as the most important communication channel and campaign planning should be adjusted accordingly.

The other observation is for the Andrews Government not to become the “slaves of the media”. We must continue to maintain good relations and be open with our dealings with the media but we cannot and should not try to meet their every demand.

#### **COMMENTS**

1. That Victorian Labor keeps abreast of changes in technology and the means by which voters receive their news and information.
- 2 That Victorian Labor continues to adopt a balanced approach to media relations.

## **SECTION 10 FINANCE FUNDRAISING & ADMINISTRATION**

### **10.1 FUNDRAISING**

The State Branch was able to raise sufficient funds to run a strong campaign as a result of the positive response from the corporate sector and the support of members and supporters.

However, raising sufficient funds to stay competitive with our well-funded opponents remains a major challenge for Labor. Our opponents' ability to access almost limitless amounts of money means Labor is always on the back foot and is always going to be outspent. Labor cannot hope to receive the same level of funds from the corporate sector as our opponents.

It is worth noting that for the 2014 State Election the corporate sector donated more than the union movement in cash donations. Further the union movement financial contribution tends to be through affiliation fees which go towards the administrative expenses of the Party.

Overall an analysis of political party returns in 2013-14 from the AEC show that the Victorian Liberal Party received four times as much in donations as Victorian Labor.

The one area of fundraising that Labor should hold a clear advantage as this seems to be the case with other progressive parties, is with the so called "small or individual donors."

That group of donors in the USA helped propel Barack Obama to the White House in 2008 and his re-election in 2012. Reports from the non-aligned Campaign Finance Institute in the USA show that the Obama 2012 campaign raised over 30% of its funds from donations of less than \$1,000.

In the UK, British Labor began to raise significant funds from small donors in the 2015 election. Further evidence is the success of Bernie Sanders in raising funds from small donations.

Despite making progress the Victorian Branch is a long way behind. In fact the dollars raised by "small" donors for the 2014 election are less than the total raised by these donors in the 2002 State Election Campaign. The USA experience tells us there is much more we can do in this regard.

The Branch needs to set specific goals and objectives, such as for example 25% of election income being raised from "small" donations.

The opportunities are huge. Labor members and supporters can and should be galvanised to become a major contributor to our income stream and that includes creating and maintaining a strong bequest program.

To achieve these objectives requires a long-term commitment at all levels of the Party.

Fundraising is more than sending out an email. The digital age has created new opportunities to finding new donors and communicating with existing donors. The party needs to develop the full suite of products and services that constitute a fundraising program.

The review believes that progress will continue to be slow until a dedicated full time fundraising professional is employed at Victorian Branch.

This is not a cost to the Victorian Branch as the income generated by such a position will over a period of time far outweigh the outlay.

Further the fundraising role must be fully integrated with all party activities. Fundraising opportunities can come from anywhere and at any time and the Party must be able to respond accordingly.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That a fully integrated “small donor” fundraising program be established.
2. That a dedicated Fundraising Unit be established at Victorian Branch led by an experienced and suitably qualified person.
3. That the Party adopt a target that 25% of all revenue be from “small donors”

### 10.2 CAPITAL INVESTMENT FUND

The Capital Investment Fund was created in the 1990s with the aim of providing the party with a new and constant income stream. While the CIF has partly achieved this goal the income stream is not large enough for this to be a significant factor in ALP accounts.

Over the life of this government the party will generate considerably more income.

Voluntary contributions from ministerial advisors, increased revenue from the Parliamentary Levy and the likelihood of increased corporate donations all point to a healthier revenue position.

This review believes that an opportunity currently exists to dramatically increase the capital base of the fund.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That a review of the CIF be conducted to examine the options to increase donations into the fund given the increased revenue coming to Victorian Branch as a result of the 2014 State Election result.

### 10.3 PARTY FINANCES

That we are not in debt is a factor of our electoral success (in government at the State level for 23 of the last 34 years) and the strong financial management by Victorian Branch, which has avoided the often-made mistake of massively overspending at election time.

State Secretary Noah Carroll maintained strict control of all campaign expenditures, thus ensuring that win or lose, the financial position of Victorian Labor would not be adversely affected.

In fact further controls were introduced for the 2014 campaign in sharp contrast to our opponents.

Despite this apparent strong position the financial position of Victorian Labor both in regard to the ongoing administration of the Victorian Branch and to adequately finance election campaigns (state and federal) needs to be kept under constant review.

Our campaign funds are derived from public funding (the largest component), Parliamentary Levies, corporate fundraising through direct donations and Progressive Business and individual donors. It should be noted that State MP levies are earmarked for state campaigns and Federal MP levies for federal campaigns.

The reliance on the success of our fundraising program to adequately fund election campaigns leaves us extremely vulnerable, as election defeats inevitably lead to reduced income. And unless that is matched by reduced expenditure we could likely end up with a debilitating debt.

The review considers one measure to be a professional dedicated fundraising unit. We must vastly increase the income received from the thousands of loyal members and supporters across the state (refer to section 10.1 on Fundraising) to improve our financial sustainability.

We must also never forget that Labor's opponents, despite their protestations, do not face any financial difficulties, either now or into the future. They constantly outspend us and we should expect the same into the future.

### **10.3.1 FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION**

The financial administration of the Victorian Branch is a major undertaking and recent events in the Liberal Party Victorian Division highlight the need for best practice in financial controls.

The review has no reason to doubt that the appropriate checks and balances are in place but believes there is value in an external review of all our financial systems, protocols, policies and practices.

### **10.3.2 ELECTION EXPENDITURE**

Overspending at an election is a constant concern. In the heat of the moment literally millions of dollars can be spent with no guarantee of electoral success and with a resultant debt that can cripple the Party for years into the future.

To date Victorian Branch has avoided this situation and we need to ensure that we maintain that proud record.

To that end the review considers that an audit of the checks and balances that are currently in place be reviewed to ensure we are adopting best practice. The review needs to look at our Rules and the role of the State Secretary, the Administrative Committee and its committees.

The review suggests that as a means of further ensuring the sound financial management of campaign expenditures that the option of introducing penalties into the rules for such mismanagement be examined.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. That an external review/audit be conducted to review Victorian Branch financial controls to ensure that the branch is utilising best practice.
2. That an external review/audit be conducted to review the checks and balances that are in place for election expenditure to protect the Party from expenditure over and above the approved budget.
3. That the use of penalties to ensure the sound financial management of campaign expenditure be examined.

### **10.4 PARTY COMMITTEES**

The review notes that Party Committees such the Administrative Committee, Party Officers and the Campaign Committee are being attended by proxies.

The proxies are generally inexperienced and often do not have the authority to make decisions or most importantly offer reasoned advise and feedback, let alone adequate scrutiny.

The review notes that there are no proxies in the Cabinet room, the Parliament, Government Boards, Company Boards, or Not for Profit Boards. Why then Party committees?

Certainly proxies are appropriately used for conferences, and on occasions to replace a board member who maybe be absent for an extended period of time, but they are the exception not the rule.

The review believes that Party Committees need to consist of persons capable of making decisions and of contributing to the issues before the committee. It is the responsibility of those being elected to committees to attend those committees.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

1. That the use of proxies for meetings of the Administrative Committee, Campaign Committee and Party Officers except in the case of extended absences be banned.

## **10.5 OFFICIALS & STAFF**

The 2010 State Election Campaign Review noted the high turnover of officials in the years leading up to the 2010 State Election and the impact of those changes on the administration of Victorian Branch and election campaigns.

This review is pleased to report that Victorian Branch in the period 2010 to 2015 has been a stable environment. This applies to both officials and staff.

The success of the 2014 State Election is evidence of the benefits to the Party of that stability and of the skill base of the current officials and staff.

But as always there are challenges ahead.

The role of the Victorian Branch is twofold.

Firstly the office is responsible for the administration of the Victorian Branch. The servicing of the membership, upholding the structures and Party rules are an integral part of the role as is the maintenance of the “wellbeing” of the branch, ensuring a vibrant and involved branch.

Secondly, Victorian Branch is responsible for the conduct of the State Election and the Victorian component of federal elections.

Both roles require skilled officials and staff. Whatever role you examine the requirement is for expert knowledge in a variety of fields.

The future success of the party demands total professionalism in the appointment of both officials and staff.

Since the 2010 State Election a concerted effort has been made to appoint fit for purpose personnel at Victorian Branch. The appointment of personnel from the USA, the rigor used to appoint Field Officers and the establishment of trained data analysts are excellent examples.

The review congratulates all concerned for fit-for-purpose appointments and urges that all future appointments of officials and staff be on that basis.

What are the requirements for the position? And does the applicant have the skills to meet those requirements?

For example the collection and analysis of data is not a task that anyone can undertake. Yet this is a necessary task to our future success.

The review also considers it important that the State Secretary has the ability and authority to employ staff as required for the many specialised tasks involved in a modern campaign.

Specialist skills requires specialists.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

1. That all appointments of Party Officials and Victorian Branch staff need to be based on merit and skills and made on the basis of fit-for-purpose.

## **SECTION 11 TOWARD 2018**

### **11.1 VOTING CENTRE ELECTION MATERIAL**

The extent of promotional material at Voting Centres appears to be on the increase. HTV cards, corflutes, banners, bunting surround the voting centre whether it be on Election Day or at early voting centres.

Add to the mix multiple candidates and third party supporters and the voting centre becomes a blaze of advertising material.

To what extent any of these messages make a difference is unknown. What we do know is that it is expensive and labour intensive.

The task on Election Day should be to distribute HTVs and seek to continue a dialogue with undecided voters.

This can be done without all the election advertising material.

This review recommends that the Electoral Act be amended to prohibit all material other than HTVs for a specified distance from the voting centre.

Clearly the VEC would be exempt from this restriction. The review also suggests that state wide HTV information in the form of a poster size corflute also be exempted. (Refer to Section 8.2 on Absent Votes)

### **RECOMMENDATION**

1. That all printed material and signs other than HTV material be prohibited for a specified distance from a voting centre.

### **11.2 BILLBOARDS**

Billboards both stationary and movable are used by both the central campaign and at a local level to display specific messages both positive and negative.

At the local level campaigns appear to be seeking only prime locations with larger boards, which are being used to display a message rather than the old fashioned traditional head and shoulder shot of the candidate with the name of the electorate.

Who is in control of the message?

It is imperative that all such posters, corflutes, billboards be explicitly approved by Victorian Branch.

Arterial roads are used by hundreds of thousands of persons and therefore the message must be appropriate to all, not just the local campaign. This is especially true in the inner suburbs where the campaigns often run non-mainstream messages which can be different to outer suburban campaigns.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

1. That the Victorian Branch control all billboard messaging on major roads across the state.

### **11.3 CAMPAIGNING BY THIRD PARTIES**

It is clear that many organisations now use a version of the Field program and it would seem a safe bet that many more will do likewise in the foreseeable future.

It is also clear that the use of digital tools has made it easier for membership based organisations to connect quickly with their membership and therefore mount potentially strong campaigns amongst their members.

While this is certainly the case with federal or state wide organisations it is also possible that some local groups could do likewise.

These organisations are therefore in a position to advocate strongly either for or against a particular policy position or could advocate a voting position.

In the past such organisations may have sent members letters, newsletters but have now been given the framework for a much more powerful means to impart a message to their members.

Labor therefore needs to build on its relations with membership based organisations, as all of them would be capable of mounting “field” style and digital campaigns.

Labor, more than ever needs to be cognisant of such organisations views and at least have an open dialogue with such organisations.

Such organisations are in the same position as the union movement in that they would be capable of conducting member to member conversations and in all probability have mobile phone data as well as landline and email addresses.

Labor needs to continue to build strong ties to membership based organisations at all levels.

### **COMMENT**

1. That the Andrews Government and the Party recognise that “field” type programs could be mounted by any membership based organisation.

### **11.4 HOW TO VOTE CARDS**

The review received a number of comments concerning the HTV.

The very late hour at which the Administrative Committee approved all the preference flows could well have caused a delay in some electorates receiving a printed HTV for the opening of early voting.

The review strongly believes that the Administrative Committee should delegate this task to the Campaign Committee.

The review also believes that more attention is required in regard to dual/joint booths. The production of HTVs for a particular voting centre needs to better reflect the constituents voting at either an early voting centre or an Election Day booth.

The practice of Victorian Branch having to manage the Early Voting Centres at the Airport and in Melbourne needs to stop. Victorian Branch has many responsibilities but the management of individual booths is not one of them.

The review noted and supports the fact that Victorian Branch had arranged back up printers for the production of the HTVs if required. The review considers that back suppliers are required for all tasks.

The failure of one supplier should not have an impact on the delivery of any election function.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Administrative Committee delegate its powers to approve the distribution of preferences to the Campaign Committee
2. That all Early Voting Centres and Election Day Voting Centres that service more than one electorate be provided with appropriate HTV material.
3. That back up or alternate suppliers be contracted for all functions and services that are delivered by Victorian Branch.
4. That Victorian Branch no longer manage the Early Voting Centres at the Airport and in Melbourne

### 11.5 MINISTERIAL VISITS

A feature of campaign for decades have been “ministerial visits”.

The review discussed this matter with candidates, MPs, officials and other campaign workers.

Ministers (and the same applies to shadows) have always been used during the campaign period to attend local functions, make local funding or minor policy announcements in the belief that these events assisted local campaigns.

The time has come to review the use of ministerial visits during the campaign period.

Ministerial visits are time and resource intensive. They may generate a local media story but how cost effective is the story given the time and effort needed to organise the visit?

Some ministerial visits are beneficial. If enough time has been provided these visits can provide an opportunity to invite constituents to a function but often time does not allow this to occur.

The use of ministers and shadows for volunteer recruitment and at Early Voting Centres can be valuable, is easily organised and should be encouraged.

In regional areas a ministerial visit could well lead to local radio or TV covering the event and therefore be valuable to the local campaign.

Overall, local campaigns need to concentrate during the campaign period on the key task – that is talking to targeted voters. Ministerial visits can divert candidates and campaigns from that task.

### RECOMMENDATION

1. That the Campaign Committee review the practice of ministerial visits during the campaign period to ensure that the visits maximise the benefit to the candidate and the Party.

### 11.6 TARGETING

A number of campaigns felt let down by not being considered as a target seat. The determination of what is a target seat, is always difficult and is never going to please all candidates and members.

What is a target seat varies from election to election. Sometimes it is just a matter of holding as many seats as possible (the 2013 Federal Election). On other occasions it is about winning seats from the opposition (the 2014 State Election).

If resources were unlimited then, of course, all seats would be targeted and all campaigning tools would be utilised to the full. However, that is simply not reality.

Being on the target list means substantial increase in support from both Victorian Branch and the

Leader's Office. It also means that your electorate is either in danger, if a held seat, or a possible win if it is a non-held seat. In other words being on the list is not always good news.

What then are the factors in determining target seats?

The financial position of the Party, and therefore what resources can be used for target seats is a crucial consideration. Further what constitutes an adequate marginal seat campaign is a further consideration. There is no point spreading resources so thin that we fail to either win or hold our target seats.

Data in the form of polling has to be the key factor. What are the opinion polls saying and far more important what is our own internal polling saying? There is no point trying to win a seat that requires a 10% swing to Labor if our polling is only showing a 1% swing to Labor.

Certainly other factors come into consideration but the factors noted above are the key.

There are going to be winners and losers and mistakes will be made, but the review sees no other alternative.

Who makes the decision?

The review considers that only Victorian Branch and the Campaign Committee have all the facts and all the data necessary to make the call. Other party units should have their say but the decision is totally an operational decision and as such must be left to Victorian Branch.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. That the determination of the target seat list be the responsibility of Victorian Branch and the Campaign Committee.
2. That the key factors in determining the target seat list be the financial position of the party and polling data.

### **11.7 ELECTORAL ACT REFORM**

The review has previously recommended changes to the Act in relation to election material at Voting Centres and Postal Votes.

The review also recommends some changes in regard to the disclosure of donations and the counting of votes.

#### **11.7.1 DONATIONS / RECEIPTS**

Donations and/or receipts either from individuals or organisations either commercial or not for profit to political parties are an important element of our system of government as is public funding.

How are political parties expected to campaign if they are not able to raise funds from non-members.

What right do we have to restrict the right of an individual or organisation to donate to a political party?

The review is opposed to any legal restrictions on who has the right to donate.

The real issue that we must confront is transparency. The lack of transparency is a greater danger than simply who donates or attends a function.

Three very simple measures can greatly improve our current system and ensure that we all know who is donating and how much?

### **11.7.1.1 DISCLOSURE LIMITS**

\$1,000 per annum as a total should be the limit before public disclosure. Attendance at functions and the like must also be included in the \$1,000 limit.

### **11.7.1.2 CONTINUOUS DISCLOSURE**

Continuous disclosure requires a donation or receipt to be disclosed to the VEC within 24 hours of receipt and for the VEC to be required to post that information on its website within 24 hours.

In the digital age continuous disclosure is possible and necessary. All donations/receipts of \$1,000 or more or when the \$1,000 mark is reached for a year would be subject to this provision.

### **11.7.1.3 HARSHER PENALTIES FOR BREACHES**

Harsh penalties for breaches in the form of fines and jail sentences will stop breaches. Further measures for an MP could be threat of losing the right to nominate at the next election. Such measures are harsh, maybe even over the top, but they will ensure compliance with the Act and therefore the integrity of the system.

These three measures ensure transparency - that we know who has donated and when.

### **11.7.2 COUNTING VOTES**

Election results should be known on Election Day.

The electorate is entitled to know how they voted on the day.

Unless changes are made to the vote count the increase in early voting numbers is likely to have the effect of further delaying the announcement of the election result.

More votes need to be counted on Election Day and steps need to be taken to ensure that this occurs for the 2018 election.

If it is a resource issue then the Andrews Government needs to adjust its election year budget allocation to the VEC.

If there are legislative issues to protect the integrity of the ballot, then those changes need to be enacted. This may be required to allow counting of early votes prior to the close of the ballot.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. That the disclosure limit for donations and/or receipts be \$1,000 per annum.
2. That continuous disclosure through online tools be introduced.
3. That harsher penalties be introduced.
4. That measures be taken as appropriate to ensure that early votes can be counted on Election Day.

## **11.8 TRAINING & MENTORING**

The review cannot overstate the importance of training and mentoring.

Whatever the task a level of training is essential. All campaign workers either paid or volunteer need to undergo a level of training appropriate to the task.

All MPs, candidates, ministerial staff, electorate staff should be trained as appropriate.

Members should be trained or at least have access to training on both internal ALP matters and campaign tasks.

We all benefit from a being a better trained organisation.

Apart from expanding the training we provide to volunteers and staff, Victorian Branch needs to begin establishing an extensive network of mentors.

Whatever role a person has, it is beneficial for that person to be able to discuss in confidence work related matters. The large core of former MPs, advisors and other party activists can be utilised to both establish a mentoring network and be mentors themselves.

The Party has within its ranks and supporters many skilled individuals who could prepare the necessary training manuals and mentoring protocols, conduct training courses, train the trainers and act as mentors.

This pool of individuals can ensure that this exercise is not a major cost burden on the Party.

In regard to the next State Election it is essential that all campaign workers both volunteer and paid all undergo an appropriate level of training and be provided with a mentor.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. That all campaign workers both volunteer and paid participate in appropriate training courses.
2. Victorian Labor establish a mentoring program for campaign tasks.
3. That all members have access to training courses in regard to participation in the Party, community and in campaign tasks.

## **11.9 ONGOING CAMPAIGNING**

Campaigning for the 2018 State Election started at 6.00pm on Saturday 29 November 2014.

Campaigning simply does not stop. For the unsuccessful candidates it is over for now, but not for MPs.

In fact, campaign activities outside of the campaign period are probably more important than all the frenzied activity during the final weeks.

The review takes this opportunity to reinforce the importance of the Field program and to again state that it is our most valuable tool at a local level and as such should be the key campaigning tool being employed by MPs. The review stresses again that all campaign tools need to be used.

To maintain a strong campaigning emphasis the review recommends that an agreement be entered into between Victorian Branch and MPs.

In a sense a contract whereby MPs commit to undertaking various campaign tasks. Those tasks would include all the tasks of an MP and all the campaign related activities. Targets should be agreed upon and regular audits conducted to monitor progress.

If these measures seem extreme so be it. But it is imperative that the advantages of incumbency are not thrown away.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. That an agreement be reached between MPs and Victorian Branch on the level and type of campaigning up to the 2018 election.
2. That Victorian Branch conduct annual audits of MP campaign activities.

### **11.10 RESEARCH, DATA & POLLING**

A major component of any election campaign is polling/research. Only through accurate research that reflects the voting intention of the state and identifies the issues which are resonating with the voters can any election campaign hope to be successful.

In 2014 Labor's research program adequately fulfilled its mission but as with most areas there are some important issues to be addressed and considered.

Quantitative polling faces serious challenges. The failure of opinion polls in the UK to correctly forecast the strength of the Conservative vote is a clear demonstration of the difficulties facing all pollsters.

More analysis is required to better understand the UK election polling outcome, however, suffice to say that it highlights the need for great care.

One factor that is already impacting on polling and will become a bigger issue by 2018 is the ever diminishing number of landlines.

It is simply going to be harder and therefore cost more to ensure that we researching a representative sample of the electorate.

Better co-ordination is required between different campaign units to ensure that the message is always delivered in the recommended manner. For example research needs to communicate with Data and message writers.

The qualitative program was successful in identifying the strengths and weaknesses of both the government and the opposition.

Research in itself is important but even more important is the ability to analyse the data and draw the conclusions.

Victorian Labor is well served by having at its disposal a group of highly skilled individuals that were drawn together for this purpose.

## **COMMENTS**

1. That the results of all investigations into the failings of opinion polls in the UK be noted.
2. That further investigation is conducted into polling methods, given the declining number of landlines.
3. That the current group of skilled data analysts be expanded.

## **SECTION 12 OTHER**

The following suggestions have all come from written submissions or interviews and are considered by the review as being worthy of further investigation.

### **12.1 PRE – SELECTION**

A number of the submissions spoke of their disappointment/disapproval of the pre-selection process when the Administrative Committee determined that there would be no local vote.

### **12.2 LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL**

Submissions were received recommending five candidates for Legislative Council seats not four as appeared in some provinces.

### **12.3 BUNTING**

The use of anti-Liberal bunting in electorates where the Liberal Party primary vote was less than 25% was questioned.

### **12.4 EARLY VOTING CENTRES**

A suggestion was made that an agreement be reached with the VEC that would allow the storing of election material at by the VEC at Early Voting Centres.

### **12.5 LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL VOTING**

Abolishing group voting was suggested as a means of reducing the number and impact of minor parties winning a preference lotto and thus winning seats in the Legislative Council. The suggestion would mean that a 1 in the ALP box above the line would only be counted through to the ALP candidates. To distribute preferences would require a voter to place further numbers above the line.

### **12.6 LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL HTV**

A suggestion was made that HTVs in non-target seats could stress the Legislative Council vote rather than the Legislative Assembly vote.

### **12.7 ELECTION REVIEWS**

That future Election Reviews include a Survey Monkey type questionnaire to all members and supporters.

### **12.8 BANK ACCOUNTS**

A number of submissions highlighted the need for a review of our banking arrangements especially the lack of online facilities.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

1. That the issues raised in Section 12 be further considered by Victorian Branch and the Campaign Committee.

