18. Queensland

Ian Ward

In mid-August and at the height of an election focused upon on the contest between the major parties and their leaders, the mayors of Richmond, Hinchinbrook, Mount Isa and several other north Queensland local councils announced they would lobby the Local Government Association of Queensland (LGAQ) to press for the creation of a separate State. In Kennedy, Bob Katter—en route to achieving a primary vote of 46.7 per cent and a comfortable victory—hoped this would be a spark to ‘light the fuse’ (Vogler 2010). This serves to remind readers that Queensland is a large, diverse, decentralised State with distinctive political geography and culture. There is a further lesson here. In the colourful language of Bob Katter, the north Queensland mayors had had ‘a gutful of the blood-sucking establishment of the south’ (Calligeros 2010).

In Queensland, the ALP suffered a (two-party preferred) swing of 5.58 per cent—larger than in New South Wales (4.84 per cent), and more than double the Australia-wide swing from Labor of 2.58 per cent. Prior to the 21 August poll, Queensland was widely tipped as a State in which the election would be decided because of the number of seats held by narrow margins. Each side ‘launched’ its campaign in Brisbane. In the last week of the campaign, Brisbane also played host to a televised forum in which the two leaders fielded questions from an audience of swinging voters.

As a further pointer to the State’s perceived importance, beginning well before the campaign proper and when Kevin Rudd remained Prime Minister, the leaders of both major parties made repeated visits to Queensland regions. As it happened, the pundits and parties were right to identify Queensland as a key battleground. At its first federal outing, the new Liberal National Party (LNP) gathered 1.13 million votes and claimed 21 seats. Labor emerged with just eight seats. In all, seven ALP-held seats fell. Moreover, Labor failed to claim Dickson and Herbert—each transformed by the 2009 redistribution into ‘notionally’ Labor seats. Table 18.1 does show some variation in the swing against Labor in the seats it lost. It also shows that the newly created LNP took seats from Labor in areas where, prior to their 2008 merger, both the Liberal Party and The Nationals had held sway.
### Table 18.1 Labor* Seats Falling to the LNP in Queensland

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Electorate</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Pre-poll margin</th>
<th>2PP* swing</th>
<th>Party room</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bonner</td>
<td>Inner eastern Brisbane, urban</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
<td>7.35%</td>
<td>Liberal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brisbane</td>
<td>Inner Brisbane, urban</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
<td>5.73%</td>
<td>Liberal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dawson</td>
<td>Central Queensland, regional</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
<td>5.02%</td>
<td>Nationals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dickson*</td>
<td>Northern outer Brisbane, urban</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
<td>5.89%</td>
<td>Liberal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forde</td>
<td>Southern outer Brisbane, urban</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
<td>4.99%</td>
<td>Liberal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flynn</td>
<td>Central Queensland, rural</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
<td>5.82%</td>
<td>Nationals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Herbert* b</td>
<td>Central Queensland, regional</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>2.20%</td>
<td>Liberal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leichhardt</td>
<td>Cairns and Cape York, regional</td>
<td>4.1%</td>
<td>8.61%</td>
<td>Nationals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Longman</td>
<td>Sunshine Coast, mostly urban</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
<td>3.79%</td>
<td>Liberal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Includes two seats with sitting LNP members but which had been transformed into ‘notionally Labor’ by a redistribution completed in 2009

b 2PP = two-party preferred

Sources: AEC (2010); a ABC (2010).

### ‘All Politics is Local’

James McGrath oversaw the LNP campaign in Queensland. McGrath had been recruited by Malcolm Turnbull and the federal Liberals to run their national marginal-seats campaign. A casualty of the Liberals’ leadership change, McGrath was subsequently exiled to his home State as Queensland LNP campaign director after a falling out with Liberal Federal Director, Brian Loughnane. McGrath added a new level of professionalism to the LNP. Prior to McGrath’s April arrival, the LNP had ‘botched’ several candidate preselections, failing to manage Peter Dutton’s transition to the safe Gold Coast seat of McPherson in October 2009, and endorsing a teenage outsider in Longman in March. The party had also publicly pursued—and ultimately dis-endorsed—the Member for Ryan, Michael Johnson, for refusing to surrender a campaign war chest he had accumulated. McGrath’s *vita* included a stint with the British Conservatives where the Party Chairman with whom he worked, Francis Maude, had observed his ‘brilliant way of combining the ground war and the air war’—of shaping the campaigns fought by local candidates on the ground to feed off the overarching media campaign (Kerr 2010).

The variation in the swing away from Labor in the seats it lost to the LNP recorded in Table 18.1 suggests the ‘air war’ alone is an insufficient explanation and that local factors also contributed to the waning of Labor support in Queensland. Given Queensland’s political geography, the ‘ground war’ in its 30 seats inevitably took different forms. In early August, Liberal polling reportedly...
showed an ‘erratic pattern’ across key marginal seats and volatility across Queensland, which pointed to the election being a series of ‘individual battles’ (Coorey 2010). It is often difficult to know just how much the ebb and flow of local issues, or the standing of local candidates, contributes to a final result.

At first glance, a solid ‘ground war’ would seem to require a strong candidate. In the north Queensland seat of Leichhardt, the LNP’s endorsement of Warren Entsch appears to have been a key factor. Roy Morgan Research estimates it gave the LNP a 2 per cent advantage (see Insiders, 15 August 2010, ABC TV). The Labor incumbent, Jim Turner, had been a ‘diligent and committed MP’. But in the 11 years Entsch had spent representing Leichhardt before retiring in 2007, he had made his mark as—in the words of the Cairns Post (21 August 2010), which endorsed him as the ‘experienced voice we need’—‘a love-him or hate-him personality, a foot-stomper and table-thumper’. Entsch reclaimed Leichhardt for the LNP with a 9.1 per cent buffer. In the inner-urban seat of Brisbane, the LNP preselected another former Liberal MHR. Therese Gambaro had represented the outer-northern Brisbane seat of Petrie from 1996 until 2007. She defeated the ALP’s long-serving Arch Bevis, although with a smaller 5.73 per cent swing. In Bonner, Ross Vasta recontested the same seat he lost after a single term in 2007 and gained a 7.35 per cent swing.

Yet despite injudiciously endorsing a teenaged and inexperienced Wyatt Roy, the LNP still claimed Longman. And for its part Labor appears not to have profited from endorsing several well-known candidates. In Dawson (where it suffered a 5.02 per cent swing), Labor’s preselection of the well-known Mackay Mayor, Mike Brunker, to replace ‘the rather odd James Bidgood’ (Wilson 2010) did not secure it the advantage pundits had predicted. Nor did Labor benefit from running the former Townsville Mayor Tony Mooney in Herbert. But perhaps the ultimate folly of presuming local campaigns turn upon well-known and liked candidates is found in Griffith. The abrupt dumping of Kevin Rudd as Labor leader on 24 June triggered a flood of indignant calls to talkback radio stations in Brisbane. Anger at the manner in which a Queenslander prime minister had been summarily demoted was sufficiently palpable that the LNP considered how they might capitalise on this in their election advertising (Balogh 2010). Rudd’s stoicism, his admission to hospital for surgery, and willingness to thereafter campaign for the re-election of the Gillard Government in marginal seats are all likely to have boosted his cause. Yet in Griffith (where he campaigned on his record in delivering to ‘southside’ voters), he suffered a sizeable 9.01 per cent contraction in his primary vote.

One test of on-the-ground organisation and staffing levels is the manner in which parties manage requests for postal votes. The LNP held an advantage in safe seats such as Groom. But in key marginal Queensland seats Labor was reported to be ‘streets ahead’ and eager to remedy an error made in its 2009
State campaign. For example, Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) data show that, up to 12 August, Labor had ‘requested 4004 votes in the Gladstone-based seat of Flynn to the LNP’s 1471‘ and 3864 to 1669 in Bonner (Chalmers 2010). As it transpired, the LNP received more postal first preferences in both Flynn (4805 to 2147) and Bonner (3643 to 2573), just as it did in other marginal seats such as Herbert (2069 to 1791) and Leichhardt (2289 to 1402). Indeed (as Table 18.2 records) Labor secured more postal votes in just six of the 31 Queensland seats decided on preferences. This lends credence to the argument that Labor suffered electorally because many of the postal vote applications it enthusiastically dispatched arrived in the second week of the campaign and at the very nadir of national Labor’s fortunes.

In some seats the importance of individual events rather than individual candidates has been highlighted. Longman is a case in point. Labor had ‘privately been counting on Longman as a win’, believing that Roy’s age ‘was starting to count against him’ (Chalmers and Dickinson 2010). During the last week of the campaign, however, the Labor incumbent, Jon Sullivan, tactlessly dismissed a constituent who complained at a public forum of the waiting list his son faced to see a paediatrician. Sullivan was jeered and this became the story of the moment. It is an episode Wyatt Roy believes contributed to his victory: ‘The reality is it had some effect on people’s votes’ (Thomas 2010). He might be right; the polling of both parties suggests that Labor did suffer a decisive swing against it in Longman in the last two days of the campaign (Atkins 2010a). The Queensland election did yield a number of similar episodes. For example, suggesting that ‘ground warfare’ is a more than apt metaphor, Mike Brunker engaged in a widely reported ‘punch-up’ with the local turf club president over election signage (World Today, 16 August 2010, ABC Radio). In Dickson, where Dutton’s much publicised efforts to find a safer seat appear to have had no lasting impact, Liberal campaign workers and a supposed Labor ‘rent-a-crowd’ exchanged push-and-shove politics outside his campaign office on a day Tony Abbot had scheduled a visit (crikey.com, 4 August 2010). Cameras captured a similar incident in Longman in mid-August. Such episodes might have added colour, but are unlikely to have turned the campaign.
Table 18.2 Queensland Seats Decided by Preferences, 2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Division</th>
<th>Won by</th>
<th>Seat type</th>
<th>Changed hands</th>
<th>Most postal votes</th>
<th>First-preference swing against ALP</th>
<th>Two-party preferred swing against ALP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ryan</td>
<td>LNP</td>
<td>Outer metro</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>LNP</td>
<td>13.54</td>
<td>5.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brisbane</td>
<td>LNP</td>
<td>Inner metro</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>LNP</td>
<td>13.22</td>
<td>5.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bonner</td>
<td>LNP</td>
<td>Outer metro</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>LNP</td>
<td>12.73</td>
<td>7.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moreton</td>
<td>ALP</td>
<td>Inner metro</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>LNP</td>
<td>12.12</td>
<td>4.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rankin</td>
<td>ALP</td>
<td>Outer metro</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>ALP</td>
<td>10.98</td>
<td>6.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dickson</td>
<td>LNP</td>
<td>Outer metro</td>
<td>Yes*</td>
<td>LNP</td>
<td>10.95</td>
<td>5.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oxley</td>
<td>ALP</td>
<td>Outer metro</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>ALP</td>
<td>10.91</td>
<td>5.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lilley</td>
<td>ALP</td>
<td>Inner metro</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>ALP</td>
<td>10.19</td>
<td>4.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capricornia</td>
<td>ALP</td>
<td>Provincial</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>LNP</td>
<td>9.57</td>
<td>8.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blair</td>
<td>ALP</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>ALP</td>
<td>9.23</td>
<td>2.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fairfax</td>
<td>LNP</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>LNP</td>
<td>9.07</td>
<td>3.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Griffith</td>
<td>ALP</td>
<td>Outer metro</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>ALP</td>
<td>9.01</td>
<td>3.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forde</td>
<td>LNP</td>
<td>Outer metro</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>ALP</td>
<td>8.92</td>
<td>4.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kennedy</td>
<td>Ind.</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Ind.</td>
<td>8.78</td>
<td>4.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leichhardt</td>
<td>LNP</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>LNP</td>
<td>8.37</td>
<td>8.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Longman</td>
<td>LNP</td>
<td>Provincial</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>LNP</td>
<td>8.04</td>
<td>3.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dawson</td>
<td>LNP</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>LNP</td>
<td>7.35</td>
<td>5.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flynn</td>
<td>LNP</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>LNP</td>
<td>6.78</td>
<td>5.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Petrie</td>
<td>ALP</td>
<td>Outer metro</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>LNP</td>
<td>6.27</td>
<td>1.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Herbert</td>
<td>LNP</td>
<td>Provincial</td>
<td>Yes*</td>
<td>LNP</td>
<td>3.12</td>
<td>2.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fisher</td>
<td>LNP</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>LNP</td>
<td>2.71</td>
<td>0.60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Dickson and Herbert were made ‘notionally’ ALP seats by the 2009 redistribution

Source: AEC (2010).
Pork-Barrel Politics

That ‘all politics is local’ is most visible when political leaders come to town to ‘pork-barrel’. In their analysis of the advantage of incumbency made prior to Labor’s leadership change and the formal campaign, Tom Dusevic and George Megalogenis (2010) observed how the Rudd Government had targeted, amongst other key marginal seats, Herbert, Longman, Flynn and Dawson with community Cabinet meetings and carefully focused economic stimulus and ‘nation-building’ spending on roads, education and health care. They described Herbert in north Queensland as ‘the first stop on the pork express’, noted that Rudd, as Prime Minister, ‘has been a frequent visitor to Townsville’, and that Labor had pledged to provide, amongst other initiatives, a $318 million Townsville hospital upgrade, a GP super clinic and $17.3 million of community infrastructure spending. The wider point here is that governments are alert to political advantage and that, in an era of continuous campaigning, the battle for key marginal seats commences well before the start of the declared campaign.

After the issue of writs, and when it became clear the party was tracking poorly in many Queensland seats, Labor candidates attempted to arrest the decline by ‘localising’ their campaigns (van Onselen 2010). Localising required digging into the pork-barrel. In early August, Gillard was dispatched—as The Australian disapprovingly reported—to ‘improve Labor’s stocks in far north Queensland with two days of cash handouts to the marginal seats of Leichhardt and Herbert’ (Maher 2010). An analysis undertaken by an equally unimpressed Courier-Mail of Labor’s efforts to ‘sandbag’ Leichhardt, Dawson, Flynn and Longman against a rising LNP tide showed that it had ‘rolled out the most promises in Queensland in those seats as part of a defensive political strategy’ (Wardill and Balogh 2010). For its part, the Cairns Post complained that Kennedy, ‘Queensland’s largest electorate has not been promised a single region-specific project by either of the major parties during the 2010 election campaign’. The reason for this, locals ventured, was that, unlike Leichhardt, ‘we are not a marginal seat so we don’t have the major parties bidding against each other for votes’ (Eliot 2010).

Regional Issues

The adage that ‘all politics is local’ reminds us that issues that might drive voters need not be those which preoccupy party leaders. Of course all candidates pursue votes beneath the umbrella of their party’s national campaign. Its influence cannot be discounted. For example, the Liberal leader pledged to ‘stop the boats’, and Michele Levin of Roy Morgan Research observed that this was a ‘sleeper issue’ in Leichhardt, where some 6 per cent of voters were ‘mostly
concerned about boat people and immigration’ and intending to vote for Entsch (*Insiders*, 15 August 2010, ABC TV). But the campaign in Leichhardt was also coloured by the decidedly local Wild Rivers issue. It appears to have provided Entsch with Indigenous booth workers and cost Labor Aboriginal votes on which it might otherwise have counted. Entsch says that the unpopularity of the Queensland Government’s 2005 legislation and the Wilderness Society campaign ‘to lock away north Queensland rivers’ contributed to his victory (*SBS News*, 21 August 2010).

In the central Queensland seats of Capricornia, which includes Rockhampton, and Flynn, based on Gladstone, Labor seemingly suffered a ‘QR effect’, with traditional supporters turning against it in protest at the Bligh Government’s decision to privatise Queensland Rail (QR) (Atkins 2010b). Up and down the Queensland coast, recreational fishers and industry activists held ‘rallies attracting hundreds of people’ (Cleary 2010) in protest at, as Warren Truss put it, Labor’s ‘secret preference deal’ with the Greens to ‘close down more fishing areas off our coast’ (Warren Truss, Media release, 27 July 2010). Labor’s interest in pursuing a Coral Sea Conservation Zone stretching from south of Rockhampton to Cape York triggered fears that commercial and recreational fishing would be restricted that resonated in the central and north Queensland coastal seats of Flynn, Dawson, Herbert and Leichhardt, each of which Labor lost.

Mining appears to have also loomed large as an issue in central Queensland in ways it did not in the metropolitan south-eastern corner. Concerns generated by the hostile industry reaction to Labor’s super-profits mining tax reverberated in seats such as Flynn, which encompasses Emerald, Blackwater and Biloela in addition to Gladstone—all centres largely reliant upon servicing the mining industry and fearful that companies might scale back or withdraw. Labor’s deal to secure Greens preferences in 15 Queensland seats in return for Senate preferences ramped up this anxiety. As Senator Ron Boswell (whose web site curiously carried both The Nationals’ and LNP logos) said in support of the LNP’s Capricornia candidate, a Labor government with Greens in control of the Senate would stamp on coalmining, ‘turn Rockhampton into a ghost town and decimate the Central Queensland economy’ (Ron Boswell, Media release, 4 August 2010). The same issue will have resonated in Dawson—also covering the central and north Queensland coal belt.

‘Queensland is Different’

Ahead of the election, pundits suggested it was likely that the high tide of ALP support Rudd achieved in Queensland would ebb in 2010. Figure 18.1 puts this prediction in context. It compares the two-party preferred vote achieved by the
ALP in Queensland with its wider electoral performance in postwar elections. Queensland and the town of Barcaldine might lay claim to being the birthplace of the ALP, but Queenslanders have long been more reluctant than the rest of the nation to embrace federal Labor. This reluctance was clearly evident in 2010.

![Figure 18.1 The Australia-wide and Queensland Labor vote, 1949–2010](image)

**Figure 18.1 The Australia-wide and Queensland Labor vote, 1949–2010**

Source: AEC (n.d.[b]).

It is true that, at the State level, Labor has governed Queensland (with a short interruption in 1996–98) since 1989. This has often been explained by the disinclination of ‘Beattie Liberals’ to install a State Government dominated by The Nationals. Figure 18.2 plots the percentage of Queenslanders intending to cast a primary vote for the ALP as measured by Newspoll. It suggests that for much of the past two decades Queenslanders have differentiated between State and federal Labor. The merger of the Liberal and National parties in 2008 to establish the LNP did not prove the hoped-for ‘game changer’ at the 2009 Queensland State elections. But it might after all have given Labor’s opponents a fillip. Starting in 2008, but with a brief correction for the State election, the Queensland State Labor Government’s popularity spiralled rapidly downward—collapsing by September 2010 to just 29 per cent. This evidently damaged federal Labor’s prospects.
Across Queensland, the two-party preferred swing away from Labor was much more uniform than in any other State, including New South Wales, which also had an unpopular State Labor Government. Table 18.3 is based on the demographic classification of seats by the Australian Electoral Commission. It suggests that voters in Queensland responded in a quite distinctive way and that particular State-wide factors were in play. Chief amongst these will have been the unpopularity of the Bligh Government. This was cleverly exploited by the LNP whose internal research identified Bligh as Gillard’s Achilles heel (Wardill and Balogh 2010).
Air Wars

According to the media monitors Xtreme Info, the televised advertising campaigns of the two major parties ‘intensively targeted’ Queensland. During the five-week campaign, in Brisbane Labor aired 812 screenings of its advertisements, and the LNP, 706 (Crabb 2010). Labor’s Queensland election advertising was heavily negative and involved a blitz in the 10 days before the media blackout. In keeping with Labor’s national campaign, much of it sought to demonise Tony Abbott. The LNP, however, adopted a distinctive approach to its Queensland ‘air war’. Taking a cue from Bligh’s elevation to the federal ALP presidency at the beginning of August, the LNP warned that she had become ‘Gillard’s boss’ and rolled out a message in leaflets, direct mail, via its candidates, in press and television advertising, and on YouTube. It was simple and direct: ‘don’t let Gillard do to Australia what Bligh has done to Queensland.’

The Bligh Government’s standing had been dashed by its mishandling of health and water policies. It seems likely, however, that voter discontent with Labor owed much to the particular impact of the global financial crisis from which Queensland’s economy had not rebounded. In the year to March 2010, the Queensland State final demand (SFD: in effect the GDP for the State) had risen by just 0.3 per cent and at a lower rate than any other State and significantly below the sister mining state of Western Australia (6.1 per cent) and even New South Wales (4.7 per cent). Queensland experienced a 17.8 per cent dip in business investment—unparalleled among mainland States—and had the lowest level of consumption growth (1.8 per cent). Queensland’s tourism industry had stalled (Battellino 2010). In the run-up to the 2010 poll, Queenslanders also faced an above-average, 12 cents-a-litre hike in petrol prices and escalating water and power utility bills. The State Labor Government, which had removed a longstanding petrol subsidy and privatised power companies, bore much of the blame. It was a ready and obvious target for LNP advertising.

As the election campaign closed, the LNP ran a full-page Courier-Mail ad that dwarfed its generic ‘end the waste, pay back the debt, stop the boats’ message with a blunt invitation to ‘take the smile off [Bligh’s] face’ (see Figure 18.3). On polling day itself, the LNP State campaign director, demonstrating his ‘brilliant way’ of combining the ground and ‘air war’, reinforced this media campaign with a flood of SMS messages in key seats such as Herbert, and with, at polling places around Queensland, the same grainy pictures of Bligh and Gillard accompanied by advice to ‘put Labor last’.
Figure 18.3 Last-Day LNP Print-Media Election Advertising

Source: Vexnews (2010).
With its pitch to punish the Bligh Government by voting against federal Labor, the LNP was a direct beneficiary of an extensive Queensland Council of Unions campaign launched in mid-2009 aiming to reverse a State Government decision to privatisate rail and other public assets. This campaign fuelled popular disillusionment with the Bligh Government amongst a constituency on which Labor might otherwise have counted. It is also likely to have blunted—until the very last minute when an Abbott government and a resurrected WorkChoices loomed as very real prospects—the enthusiasm of unions such as the Australian Manufacturing Workers’ Union and Australian Services Union to contribute organisers and other support to Labor’s 2010 federal campaign.

**A Final Note**

The LNP’s success in cultivating sullen resentment of Labor was not matched by an appealing positive message. Hence, the LNP was not the sole beneficiary of dissatisfaction with the Labor brand. Especially in metropolitan Brisbane, some erstwhile Labor voters split to the left and to the Greens. As Table 18.2 shows, in most metropolitan seats Labor’s primary vote fell significantly but this translated into an appreciably smaller two-party preferred swing. While Labor bled primary votes to, it also secured preferences from, the Australian Greens (whose overall Queensland lower-house first-preference vote improved to 10.92 per cent). In the upper-house race, the Greens accumulated 12.76 per cent of first-preference votes and secured their very first Queensland Senate seat (at Labor’s expense).

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