

FEDERAL ELECTION 2007 PROMISES AND PORKBARREL

Sources are crikey.com.au, abc news website, Canberra Times, SMH, the Fin and the 2 major parties websites.

STOP PRESS!!! AT 08 NOVEMBER 2007, TOTAL SPENDING PROMISES FROM BOTH MAJOR PARTIES EXCEEDED \$105 BILLION, IN MOVES WHICH WILL INCREASE CONSUMER SPENDING AND, IN AN ECONOMY AT FULL CAPACITY, HAVE RESULTED IN AN INCREASE IN INTEREST RATES WHEN THE RESERVE BANK MET ON MELBOURNE CUP DAY.

12 November 2007 – the RBA has indicated that interest rates could continue to rise because of higher short-term inflation.

After increasing the official cash rate an 11-year high to 6.75 per cent last week, the central bank has this morning signalled rates may have even further to go.

In its quarterly statement on monetary policy the bank has revised up its forecast for underlying inflation for 3.25 per cent for the rest of the year and into 2008. That exceeds the bank's target range of between 2 and 3 per cent and builds the case for further rate rises, possibly as early as next month.

For retirees, seniors and age pensioners this has both positive and negative aspects. For home owners without mortgages, the increased cash rate will flow through to an increased return from investment accounts, cash and bond rates, although credit card interest rates will also be expected to rise. In general, increased income for this group.

However, for the same demographic with a home mortgage, or investment property borrowing, the impact will mean increased costs that are unlikely to be balanced out by increased investment income unless the investment is very significant.

For seniors (however defined) who are renting and without investments, the impact is wholly negative in that rents and other costs can be expected to rise further except for public housing tenants where rents will rise proportionate with pension increases only. Other costs however will rise as for the general population.

29 October 2007 A CANBERRA TIMES POLL CONDUCTED BY PATTERSON MARKET RESEARCH LAST WEEK IN THE MARGINAL SEAT OF EDEN-MONARO REVEALED THAT AN OVERWHELMING NUMBER OF VOTERS (88%) PREFERRED MONEY SPENT ON HEALTH AND EDUCATION SERVICES RATHER THAN TAX CUTS (10%). THE TREND WAS MOST PRONOUNCED IN VOTERS AGED OVER 40 YEARS

(90% TO 7%) AND WOMEN VOTERS (91% TO 8%). LABOR VOTERS POLLED 97% TO 2% AND COALITION VOTERS POLLED 78% TO 21%.

COALITION

12 November 2007 – The Coalition announced an extra \$220 million for carers to cover the costs of paid respite care for carers for 1 week every year 24/7 and one full day every month.

08 November 2007 – The Coalition announced today that if re-elected, working grandparents at firms of more than 100 employees would have the right to take up to a year's unpaid leave to care for grandchildren. All grandparents would be entitled to a weeks' unpaid leave to help care for a new grandchild. This would not require approval from the employer. The employer would be required to keep the employee's job open.

02 November 2007 - A Coalition Government will establish 50 Family Emergency Medical Centres across Australia in areas where they are needed most. This will include 25 Centres operating on a 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and a further 25 Centres open until at least 11pm. The Coalition will also increase Medicare rebates for procedures and for after hours services. This will help increase the number of after hours services and medical procedures undertaken by GPs in Family Emergency Medical Centres and other GP practices around Australia. Together, these initiatives, worth **\$433 million** over 5 years, will make general practices even more flexible and responsive to family needs, especially outside regular working hours.

02 November 2007 – Coalition will provide \$2 million for a project in Queanbeyan to support the homeless and mentally ill with safe supported accommodation.

01 November 2007 – Coalition announces that they would commit \$444 million over 4 years to boost spending on practice nurses (to subsidise GP clinics to employ a practice nurse, and create a new Medicare item to allow billing for practice nurse visits to the over patients over 65 years and for children who are too ill to visit the surgery) and extra GP and specialist training places.

31 November 2007 - A re-elected Coalition Government will provide **\$15 million** over three years for a new South Coast Sustainable Regions programme to boost jobs, economic growth and community infrastructure. Deputy Prime Minister and Leader of the Nationals, Mark Vaile announced the funding today which will cover Shoalhaven City Council and the shires of Eurobodalla and Bega Valley on the NSW South Coast. **[NOTHING FOR THE ACT AGAIN]**

29 October 2007 – Coalition Government would address skill shortages by doubling to \$800 million the Work Skills Voucher Program which pays for over 25s to undertake vocational training. **[IS THERE AN AGE LIMIT FOR ELIGIBILITY?]**

25 October 2007 - Coalition Government would build the Murrumbateman Bypass and duplicate the Barton Highway but not till 2014 at a cost of \$264 million.

23 October 2007 - A re-elected Coalition Government will allocate **\$4 billion** to:

Increase the Utilities Allowance paid to older Australians in receipt of income support to meet basic household bills like power and gas. From March 2008 the Utilities Allowance will increase from **\$107.20** to **\$500** a year for a single and **\$500** a year for a couple. This will benefit more than 2 million Australians;

Extend the Utilities Allowance for the first time to more than 120,000 Carer Payment recipients regardless of age, in recognition of the vital role that carers play in our society and the financial and emotional burden they carry;

Extend the Utilities Allowance to more than 700,000 Disability Support pensioners;

More than double the Seniors Concession Allowance to **\$500**, which will particularly benefit self-funded retirees, people who have worked hard, made sacrifices and saved diligently for their retirement.

22 October 2007 - A re-elected Coalition Government will provide **\$23.8 million** to the National Breast Cancer Centre over four years to fund the first and replacement breast prostheses for all Australian women who have had a mastectomy as a result of breast cancer, up to the value of **\$400** per prosthesis.

15 October 2007 - Treasurer Peter Costello's **\$34 billion** (over 3 years) tax plan - I am announcing today a tax reform plan which will cut income tax for every Australian taxpayer from 1 July 2008.

From 1 July 2008:

- the Low Income Tax Offset (LITO) will increase from \$750 to \$1,200, providing an effective tax free threshold of \$14,000 (up from \$11,000) to those taxpayers eligible for the full LITO;
- the 30 per cent threshold will increase from \$30,001 to \$34,001; and
- the 40 per cent threshold will increase to \$80,001 and the 45 per cent threshold will increase to \$180,001, as announced in the 2007-08 Budget.

From 1 July 2009:

- the LITO will increase to \$1,350, providing an effective tax free threshold for low income earners of \$15,000;
- the 30 per cent threshold will increase to \$35,001;
- the second top marginal rate will be cut from 40 to 38 per cent; and
- the top marginal rate will be cut from 45 to 43 per cent;

From 1 July 2010:

- the LITO will increase to \$1,500, providing an effective tax free threshold for low income earners of \$16,000;
- the 30 per cent threshold will increase to \$37,001;
- the second top marginal rate will be cut from 38 to 37 per cent; and
- the top marginal rate will be cut from 43 to 42 per cent.

Table 1: New personal tax rates and thresholds

Taxable income Rate Taxable income Rate Taxable income Rate Taxable income Rate

Current (\$)	(%)	From 1 July 2008 (\$)	(%)	From 1 July 2009 (\$)	(%)	From 1 July 2010 (\$)	(%)
0 - 6,000	0	0 - 6,000	0	0 - 6,000	0	0 - 6,000	0
6,001 - 30,000	15	6,001 - 34,000	15	6,001 - 35,000	15	6,001 - 37,000	15
30,001 - 75,000	30	34,001 - 80,000	30	35,001 - 80,000	30	37,001 - 80,000	30
75,001 - 150,000	40	80,001 - 180,000	40	80,001 - 180,000	38	80,001 - 180,000	37
150,001 +	45	180,001 +	45	180,001 +	43	180,001 +	42

Table 2: Low income tax offset (LITO) and effective tax free thresholds

	Current	From 1 July 2008	From 1 July 2009	From 1 July 2010
LITO	\$750	\$1,200	\$1,350	\$1,500
Effective tax free threshold	\$11,000	\$14,000	\$15,000	\$16,000

Senior Australians eligible for the senior Australians tax offset (SATO) and the LITO currently do not pay tax after assessment until they reach an annual income of \$25,867 for singles and \$21,680 for each member of a couple.

From 1 July 2008, these income levels will be lifted to \$28,867 for singles and \$24,680 for each member of a couple.

From 1 July 2009, these incomes levels will be lifted to \$29,867 for singles and \$25,680 for each member of a couple.

By 2010-11, the income levels will be \$30,685 for singles and \$26,680 for each member of a couple.

The fringe benefits tax rate will also be reduced in line with reductions in the top marginal tax rate (including the Medicare levy), decreasing to 44.5 per cent from 1 April 2009 and to 43.5 per cent from 1 April 2010.

08 October 2007 - The Australian Government will fund a number of measures to improve key elements of Tasmania's health services infrastructure, totalling **\$35 million** over four years. Funding of **\$8 million** will be provided over three years for the construction of new purpose-built rehabilitation and transitional care facilities and a new psychiatric unit, at the Burnie Hospital. At Launceston General Hospital **\$16 million** will be provided over three years for the upgrading of oncology, radiotherapy and transitional care facilities and the establishment of new cardiac care facilities. A further **\$8.5 million** will be provided over four years for specific patient transport measures. ... I am also announcing that the Australian Government will provide up to **\$1 million** in 2007-08 for each of Ouse and Rosebery Hospitals.

[NOTE THAT NOTHING HAS BEEN PROMISED FOR CANBERRA HOSPITAL OR CALVARY HOSPITAL IN THE ACT ALTHOUGH THEY TOGETHER SERVE A GREATER POPULATION FOR THE REGION THAN THE WHOLE OF TASMANIA.]

14 September 2007 - I am pleased to announce that the Australian Government will invest about **\$170 million** additional funds over five years to create 25 Australian Hospital Nursing Schools to deliver hospital based training within major public and private hospitals across the country for enrolled nurses. **[DOES THIS INCLUDE THE ACT? NOT CLEAR]**

13 September 2007 - I am pleased to announce that New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia and Western Australia are receiving **\$43 million** in competition payments from the Australian Government following progress in implementing water reforms. These payments to the states were suspended in 2005-06 due to a lack of progress in implementing key water reforms. My decision to lift the suspension follows an independent assessment by the National Water Commission of progress by the states in implementing their COAG water reform commitments. **[NOT ACT!]**

11 September 2007 - with effect from March of 2008 all Veterans' Affairs disability pensions will be indexed with reference to both consumer price index and male total average weekly earnings and this enhancement will benefit some 140,000 disability pensioners including those on the special rate, intermediate rate and extreme disablement adjustment. We also intend with effect from the same date a **\$15** fortnightly increase to the more than 13,500 veterans who receive the above general rate of the extreme disablement adjustment and that will maintain the equity of the EDA payment with other above general rate payments that were increased in the Budget. And also the Government will increase by 5 per cent the entire general rate table for non economic loss compensation for the pain, suffering and loss of function resulting from an accepted service-related condition with effect from March 2008 and that will deliver above and 100 per cent general rate recipients, including EDA veterans, a fortnightly boost of **\$20** from March 2008, adjusted by the more beneficial indexation method. The initiatives announced tonight involve an additional expenditure of some **\$330 million** from March 2008 through to June 2012.

29 August 2007 - In response to strong representations from David Tollner MP, Federal Member for Solomon, the Australian Government will provide additional funding to allow pensioners and veterans to access concessional fares on the Alice Springs to Darwin section of world famous Ghan railway. This initiative will make travel on the Ghan more affordable for about 10,000 pensioners and veterans. It will provide around **\$1.5 million** of additional concessions for travel each year.

08 August 2007 - **\$4 million** to the receiver of a Canberra timber business employing Queanbeyan residents of Eden Monaro.

18 July 2007 - Today I announced that in addition, the Commonwealth will provide up to **\$50,000** to ensure every Australian school can install a solar hot water system and a water tank. These Green Vouchers for schools ... Today I announce some further steps to bring solar hot water within the reach of Australian families. We intend to provide an additional **\$1,000 per household** so that up to another 225,000 homes can upgrade to an energy saving solar hot water system.

04 July 2007 - I am pleased to announce that the Australian Government will contribute up to **\$10 million** towards a pipeline to improve water supply security in Bega Shire. The 20 kilometre pipeline will be used to transfer water from borefields near the lower Bega River to the Yellow Pinch Dam for use in dry times.

28 June 2007 - I am pleased to announce today a **\$1.8 billion** package of assistance for people with disabilities, their families and carers. This assistance will be available from 1 July 2007. It is on top of the **\$3.275 billion** which the Commonwealth has already offered to the states and territories for delivery of disability services.

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LABOR PARTY

12 November 2007 – A Rudd Labor Government would provide \$510 million over 3 years to improve the dental health of children aged 12–17 years, by means of vouchers for \$150 provided to each teenager. The voucher would help pay for an annual check up for each child. The scheme would start on 1 July 2008.

09 November 2007 – Labor would boost disability spending by \$1.9 billion to help improve the lifestyles of disabled people and their carers.

09 November 2007 – Labour announced that it would provide \$23 million of Defence spending to upgrade the King's Highway between Bungendore and Queanbeyan as the sole route to the new Defence Joint Operations HQ at Bungendore. Mr Rudd did not dispute that most crashes occurred on other parts of the Highway, on Clyde Mountain or between Braidwood and Bateman's Bay for which funds will not be provided.

05 November 2007 - A Rudd Labor Government will invest **\$150 million** over five years with the aim of halving the number of homeless people turned away from homeless shelters. *A Place to Call Home* is Federal Labor's five year plan to establish up to 600 new houses and units across the country for families and individuals who are homeless.

05 November 2007 – Labor announced a \$600 million plan to encourage young people to save for their first home. Tax concessions would cost the Commonwealth \$600 million in lost tax receipts.

02 November 2007 – The ALP has matched the Coalition's promise to provide \$2 million to a project in Queanbeyan which will provide safe and supported accommodation to the homeless and mentally ill.

02 November 2007 – Kevin Rudd unveils a \$4.1 billion package of benefits for older Australians, largely copying the Coalition promise made last month. A key difference is that Labor will put \$50 million towards national recognition of Seniors Cards discounts on public transport. This would allow 3 million older Australians to travel across Australia at concessional rates, not just in their home states. Labor would increase the Seniors' telephone allowance from \$88 to \$132 pa and establish a Seniors internet fund to provide grants of up to \$10,000 to community groups to set up free internet connections for their members.

Labor's promise fall short of increasing the age pension beyond inflation increased rises, whereas seniors groups have been lobbying for a \$30 per week increase to the single age pension.

02 November 2007 – Labor has announced that it will provide \$260,000 to the Braidwood Community Arts Centre, for the purchase and refurbishment of a property in Wallace St. The centre will provide space for a range of arts activities, a meeting room and gallery shop.

01 November 2007 – A Labor Government would spend \$600 million over 4 years to reduce elective surgery waiting times in public hospitals.

31 October 2007 – A Federal Labor Government would provide \$5 million for a GP superclinic in Queanbeyan announced Labor candidate Mike Kelly. The clinic would bring together GPs, nurses and allied health professionals, and could be co-located with the Queanbeyan Hospital.

31 October 2007 – A Rudd Labor Government would commit Australia to a 20% renewable energy target to be achieved by 2020.

28 October 2007 – A Rudd Labor Government would commit \$1 billion tax credits to storm water harvesting and desalination projects to help secure Australia's urban water supplies. It will implement a **\$1 Billion National Urban Water and Desalination Plan** to help secure the water supplies of Australia's major cities. The initiative will drive major desalination projects across Australia. It will also support water recycling and major stormwater capturing projects nationwide. Federal Labor's The Plan will fund a 10% Water Tax Credit and grants for approved desalination, water recycling, and major storm water capture projects developed by the private sector, local governments, and State and Territory Governments.

26 October 2007 - A Rudd Labor Government will provide a rebate of up to \$500 to help landlords install energy-efficient insulation in 300,000 Australian rental homes in a practical measure to help fight climate change. Federal Labor's **\$150 million Low Emission Plan for Renters** will reduce the power bills and greenhouse gas emissions of 300,000 rental properties.

26 October 2007 – A Rudd Labor Government would expand his \$69million plan to help volunteer organisations with their petrol costs, which have increased 42% over 5 years. Volunteer community organisations will be able to apply for grants of up to \$3000 to buy petrol vouchers. The funding would also provide for computers, microwaves, kettles and sporting equipment.

22 October 2007 - A Rudd Labor Government will reform Australia's tax system. Estimated cost **\$31 billion**. This is very similar the Coalition's tax plan, except that Labor would defer the cut to the top marginal tax rate (for tax payers earning in excess of \$180,000 pa) by 3 years and apply the \$2.7 billion saved to rebates for spending on education by families with school age children, and to provide additional funds for elective surgery in public hospitals (\$400 million).

18 October 2007 - A Rudd Labor Government's *Tax Plan for Australia's Future* will invest **\$2.3 billion** in financial support to help working families meet the growing costs of educating their children. A Rudd Labor Government will provide a new 50% Education Tax Refund to help families of around 2.3 million school-age children meet the costs of education.

18 October 2007 - A Rudd Labor Government will invest **\$600 million** to dramatically slash waiting lists for elective surgery in Australia's public hospitals. This four year plan, beginning in 2007-08, is funded through a **\$400 million** investment from Federal Labor's *Tax Plan for Australia's Future* and **\$200 million** from Federal Labor's **\$2 billion** National Health and Hospitals Reform Plan.

17 October 2007 - A Rudd Labor Government will aim to put 9,250 extra nurses into Australia's hospital system in a new **\$81 million** commitment.

13 October 2007 - A Rudd Labor Government will invest up to **\$50 million** in the establishment of a Comprehensive Cancer Centre in Sydney – to treat patients and conduct research into the disease at a world class facility... Today's initiative is another part of Federal Labor's National Cancer Plan

12 October 2007 - Federal Labor today expanded its national effort on cancer to include support for the Olivia Newton-John Cancer Centre and setting up the first two dedicated prostate cancer research centres. Federal Labor will provide **\$30 million** for two new cancer initiatives: the **Olivia Newton-John Cancer Centre at the Austin Hospital in Melbourne**; and the establishment of two dedicated **Prostate Cancer Research Centres** – the first in Australia.

11 October 2007 - Under a national cancer initiative, a Rudd Labor Government will invest **\$25 million** over three years to screen all 50 year olds for bowel cancer – the second biggest cancer killer after lung cancer.

8 October 2007 - A Rudd Labor Government will invest an extra **\$15 million** – over the next three years – in independent clinical trials of drugs and research into cancer treatment.

1 October 2007 - A Rudd Labor Government will invest up to **\$5 million** to establish a GP Super Clinic co-located with the Redcliffe Hospital. This will help take pressure off the Redcliffe Hospital. [THERE ARE A NUMBER OF GP SUPERCLINICS ANNOUNCED TO BE FUNDED, NONE IN THE ACT]

25 September 2007 - A Rudd Labor Government will provide more than **\$50 million** in additional health services in Tasmania, particularly in the North and North West where people suffer from very high rates of chronic diseases like cancer, diabetes and kidney disease. [TASMANIA, PRESUMABLY THE UNHEALTHIEST BUT BEST FUNDED STATE FOR HEALTH SERVICES IN AUSTRALIA!]

18 September 2007 - Federal Labor Leader Kevin Rudd today pledged to invest up to **\$290 million** to a Commonwealth Dental Health Program – one of the first programs scrapped by the Howard Government in 1996. Labor estimates that this would cover the costs of 1 million consultations however each patient could expect to require an average of 4 consultations.

[15 September 2007](#) - A Rudd Labor Government will create Skills Australia, an independent statutory body to advise government on fixing the nation's skills crisis – which is expected to worsen. (No cost specified.) [SHOULD CONSIDER THE UNDERUSED SKILLS OF THE MATURE AGE WORKFORCE]

[10 September 2007](#) -- A Rudd Labor Government will commit **\$7.5 million** to get the upgrade and duplication of Tharwa Road/Lanyon Drive started – one of the busiest arterial roads on the ACT/Queanbeyan transport corridor.

[23 August 2007](#) -- Federal Labor will establish a **\$2 billion** National Health Reform Plan over four years to improve Australia's health system and ensure better health services for patients in hospitals.

[25 June 2007](#) -- Federal Labor will invest **\$250 million** over six years to offer a rebate of up to \$500 for 500,000 homes to help install new piping for grey water use or rainwater tanks.

[28 March 2007](#) -- Federal Labor's Solar Home Power Plan will invest **\$50 million** over four years to install solar power in Australian homes, schools and community buildings.

FEDERAL ELECTION 2007 PROMISES AND PORKBARREL

GREENS

05 November 2007 – NSW Senator Kerry Nettle and Eden-Monaro Greens candidate Keith Hughes called for Federal funding for the \$15 billion very fast train project linking Sydney and Canberra. Senator Nettle said that the rail link, which had been rejected as not commercially viable, was now back on the agenda because of climate change. Rail transport was four times more energy efficient than road transport however the Commonwealth had spent \$58 billion on roads and only \$2.2 billion on rail over the 30 years to 2004.

05 November 2007 - Local Greens Senate candidate Kerry Tucker called for the Commonwealth to fund a local light rail network. Ms Tucker said that the light rail would complement the new very fast train link to Sydney. A good start would be for the Commonwealth to work with the ACT Government and the airport to build a light rail system to link Civic, EPIC, Fyshwick, the airport and the Parliamentary Triangle. (including Russell?)