



ACT Election 2012

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Introduction

This Background Note provides a contextual account of the issues and dynamics of the 2012 election for the ACT Legislative Assembly, along with an account of its outcomes. The 2012 election proved to be the closest in the history of ACT self-government and produced yet another minority government.

Background

The ACT electoral framework

Elections for the ACT Assembly are held every four years on the third Saturday in October. Elections are regulated by the [Electoral Act 1992](#) and managed by the independent commission [Elections ACT](#).

Members of the ACT's Legislative Assembly are elected using a proportional representation electoral system known as the Hare-Clark system (see Appendix 3). This electoral system was chosen by a majority of ACT voters at a referendum in 1992. The Hare-Clark system is also used to elect Members of the Tasmanian House of Assembly.

Hare-Clark is a type of proportional representation system known as the [single transferable vote](#) method.¹ Electors vote by showing preferences for individual candidates. To be elected, a candidate needs to receive a quota of votes. Each elector has a single vote, which can be transferred from candidate to candidate according to the preferences shown by the elector until all the vacancies are filled.²

There are three multi-member electorates for the ACT Legislative Assembly—Brindabella, Ginninderra and Molonglo.

- Brindabella is a five member electorate comprising the district of Tuggeranong (excluding the suburb of Hume), the Woden Valley suburbs of Chifley, Pearce, Torrens and Farrer and the southern remainder of the ACT.
- Ginninderra is a five member electorate comprising the districts of Belconnen and Hall (including the entire Village of Hall) and the Gungahlin suburb of Nicholls.
- Molonglo is a seven member electorate comprising the districts of Gungahlin (excluding the suburb of Nicholls), Canberra Central, Weston Creek, Woden Valley (excluding the suburbs of Chifley, Pearce, Torrens and Farrer), Jerrabomberra (including the entire suburb of Hume), Kowen, Majura, and Stromlo.

The ACT has far fewer political representatives per capita than any other Australian jurisdiction.³

1. Elections ACT, *Factsheet — Hare-Clark electoral system*, website, viewed 21 December 2011, <http://www.elections.act.gov.au/page/view/432/title/elections-act-factsheet-hare-clark>

2. Ibid.

3. Editorial, 'Ideas, not war, is what we want', *The Canberra Times* 14 July 2012, p. 8, viewed 16 July 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressclp%2F1775806%22>

Indeed, the ACT model has been held up internationally as an ideally compact form of government. Another boon is our Hare-Clark voting system: psephologists say it's the fairest way to elect a legislature that represents, as much as possible, the preferences of most voters. Indeed, except for the four years after the 2004 election, when Labor's Jon Stanhope had the luxury of commanding a majority, minority governments have been the norm in the ACT.⁴

Voting procedures

Candidates' names are listed on the ballot papers in columns. Candidates nominated by registered political parties are listed in party columns, with the name of the party shown at the top of the column. Independent candidates are included in one or more 'ungrouped' columns on the ballot papers. Where a registered party nominates only one party candidate in an election, that candidate is also included in an ungrouped column.

The order in which columns are printed on ballot papers is determined by a random draw conducted by the Electoral Commissioner. The 'ungrouped' column (or columns) always appears on the right-hand side of the ballot paper. The names in each column are listed using the 'Robson rotation' method. This minimises the impact of 'donkey votes' whereby some voters merely number all the boxes in consecutive order down the ballot paper, advantaging candidates at the top of the ballot paper and disadvantaging those at the bottom. The ACT also has a ban on canvassing and the distribution of how-to-vote cards within 100 metres of a polling place. A sample ballot paper as used at the 2008 Legislative Assembly election is shown below.

Sample ballot papers

These samples show the order in which each column of candidates will appear on the ballot papers.

Remember, under Robson rotation candidates' names can appear in different positions within each column, so your ballot paper may not look exactly like the one reproduced here.

Please read the instructions on the ballot paper carefully. Write numbers in the squares – no ticks or crosses – and don't repeat any number.

Need more information?

If you have any questions about the election on 18 October, call our Elections ACT Information Line on 6205 0033.

You can also visit the Elections ACT website at: www.elections.act.gov.au

This tells you the minimum number of candidates you should vote for.

These are 'party' columns, listing candidates nominated by registered political parties, with two or more candidates.

This is the 'ungrouped' column, listing independent candidates and candidates nominated by registered political parties that have nominated only one candidate.

Ballot Paper Election of 7 Members 2008 Electorate of Molonglo Legislative Assembly for the Australian Capital Territory

Number seven boxes from 1 to 7 in the order of your choice

You may then show as many further preferences as you wish by writing numbers from 8 onwards in other boxes.

ACT DEMOCRATS	LIBERAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY	LABOUR PARTY	ACT ELECTORAL PARTY AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY	LIBERAL PARTY	THE ACT GREENS	PROGRESSIVE CANTABRIA	INDEPENDENTS	ACT ELECTORAL PARTY	UNGROUPED
<input type="checkbox"/> Fred LEFTWICH	<input type="checkbox"/> John HARRINGTON	<input type="checkbox"/> John FARRELL	<input type="checkbox"/> Anne O'BRYEN	<input type="checkbox"/> Gordon SCOTT	<input type="checkbox"/> Charles PAULMAN	<input type="checkbox"/> Jo HAINLEY	<input type="checkbox"/> James CROSS	<input type="checkbox"/> Jonathan REYNOLDS	<input type="checkbox"/> Matt KENNEDY
<input type="checkbox"/> Robert ROSE	<input type="checkbox"/> Melissa BUTCLIFFE	<input type="checkbox"/> Robert PEARN	<input type="checkbox"/> Kim BATTLER	<input type="checkbox"/> David BURGE	<input type="checkbox"/> Amanda BRESNAN	<input type="checkbox"/> Brooke GRAY	<input type="checkbox"/> Peter STAMANDAKOU	<input type="checkbox"/> Nancy Louise MCULLOUGH	<input type="checkbox"/> Paul HELLER
			<input type="checkbox"/> Ted OURLAN	<input type="checkbox"/> Richard MULLAHEY	<input type="checkbox"/> Sam ROSEBY				<input type="checkbox"/> Luke SWANER
			<input type="checkbox"/> Katy O'CALLAGHER	<input type="checkbox"/> Lucille BAILE					<input type="checkbox"/> Tony FARRELL
			<input type="checkbox"/> Andrew BARR	<input type="checkbox"/> Ron FORRESTER					<input type="checkbox"/> MARGARET
			<input type="checkbox"/> Simon CORNELL	<input type="checkbox"/> Ed DEBELLA					
			<input type="checkbox"/> Mike HETTINGER	<input type="checkbox"/> David ROBBY					

SAMPLE

Remember, number at least 7 boxes from 1 to 7 in the order of your choice

4. Ibid.

The 2008 ACT Legislative Assembly election

In 2008, the ACT voters elected seven ALP, six Liberals and four Greens to the ACT Legislative Assembly. With no party winning an absolute majority of seats, the ALP and the Greens entered into a [Parliamentary Agreement](#) that promised support for the ALP's Jon Stanhope as Chief Minister, a commitment to stable government and fiscal responsibility, and certain parliamentary reforms.⁵ Jon Stanhope retired from the Assembly in May 2011, and Katy Gallagher was elected Chief Minister. In a recount of ballot papers received by Mr Stanhope at the 2008 election, Labor's Chris Bourke received a majority of preferences. Dr Bourke was officially declared elected to the ACT Legislative Assembly on Wednesday 1 June 2011.⁶

Electoral reform in the ACT

The above-mentioned Parliamentary Agreement with the ALP contained a parliamentary reform agenda as well as a policy program. Item 5.5 of that Agreement required 'passage of legislation which will require all political donations to be disclosed within one month of receipt and in an election period, on a weekly basis'.⁷

In March 2011, and largely in response to recommendations made by the ACT Electoral Commission in its report on the conduct of the 2008 ACT Legislative Assembly general election, the ACT Attorney-General (Simon Corbell MLA) introduced into the Assembly the [Electoral Legislation Amendment Bill 2011](#). The changes focussed largely on provisions to improve the mechanics of electoral enrolment and voting. Among other things, the bill:

- lowered the age of entitlement to provisionally enrol to vote from 17 years old to 16 years old, and
- limited the number of candidates that may be nominated for an election in an electorate to no more than the number of members of the Legislative Assembly to be elected for the electorate.⁸

No provisions in the bill related to political donations or disclosure issues. The bill passed the Assembly on 16 February 2012.

In April 2011, the ACT Legislative Assembly [directed its Standing Committee on Justice and Community Safety](#) to review and report on the ACT Electoral Commission's [Report on the ACT Legislative Assembly Election 2008](#), the Electoral Legislation Amendment Bill 2011 and the [Electoral \(Casual Vacancies\) Amendment Bill 2011](#).

5. J Stanhope and M Hunter, *Parliamentary Agreement for the 7th Legislative Assembly of the ACT*, 31 October 2008, viewed 5 January 2012, <http://acthra.anu.edu.au/resources/alp-greens-agreement.pdf>

6. Elections ACT, 'Casual vacancies in the seventh Legislative Assembly (2008–2012)', website, viewed 6 March 2012, <http://www.elections.act.gov.au/page/view/494/title/casual-vacancies-in-the-seventh>

7. J Stanhope and M Hunter, *Parliamentary Agreement for the 7th Legislative Assembly for the ACT*, viewed 1 December 2011, <http://acthra.anu.edu.au/resources/alp-greens-agreement.pdf>

8. S Corbell MLA, Explanatory Statement, Electoral Legislation Amendment Bill 2011, viewed 21 December 2011, http://www.legislation.act.gov.au/es/db_41216/current/pdf/db_41216.pdf

In September 2011, the Standing Committee of Justice and Community Safety tabled [A Review of Campaign Financing Laws in the ACT](#). An [Electoral \(Election Finance Reform\) Amendment Bill](#) to give effect to the recommendations was introduced on 16 November 2011. According to its Explanatory Statement, the bill will ‘set in place a new regime for openness and accountability in election funding and donations’:⁹

The principal effects of the Bill are to:

- (a) set limits on donations (“gifts”) to political entities
- (b) set limits on expenditure – by candidates, parties and third-party campaigners
- (c) strengthen disclosure provisions and
- (d) refine public-funding provisions, by linking public funding amounts to corresponding Senate provisions, and providing funding for administrative expenditure incurred by political entities (subject to acquittal and audit).¹⁰

The bill passed the Assembly on 11 May 2012. Its key features included:

- a limit of \$60 000 on
 - campaign expenditure by a candidate
 - campaign expenditure by a third party in support of a candidate or party
- a limit on donations of \$10 000 per donor, per financial year, for the purposes of ACT election campaigning, and
- strengthening the definition of “gift” to ensure that payments of over \$250 at fundraising events are considered to be gifts to be disclosed, thereby closing a loophole that allowed large amounts of money collected at fundraising dinners to be classed as payments for services.¹¹

As well, political parties in the ACT are banned from accepting donations from corporations or private companies. The Opposition was angered by provisions regulating associated entities of political parties, which will not come into force until 1 January 2014. The provisions mean that ACT Labor ‘has more than 18 months to sever its 30-year-old financial ties with its affiliated group of licensed clubs’.¹²

Meanwhile, the Liberals’ Brendan Smyth also prepared, in November 2011, an [Election Commitments Costing Bill 2011](#) along with [Draft Guidelines for Costing Election Commitments](#). The

9. V Dunne MLA, Explanatory Statement, Electoral (Election Finance Reform) Amendment Bill 2011, viewed 21 December 2011, http://www.legislation.act.gov.au/es/db_43459/current/pdf/db_43459.pdf

10. Ibid.

11. Ibid.

12. N Towell, ‘Donation ban sparks anger at property trust’, *The Canberra Times*, 12 May 2012, p. 2, viewed 14 May 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressclp%2F1627719%22>

package was referred to a [Select Committee](#) which reported in June 2012.¹³ In August, the Government introduced its own bill and [costing guidelines](#), and the resulting [Election Commitments Costing Act 2012](#) came into force on 29 August 2012. The Act specified the circumstances and arrangements under which the Director General of the ACT Treasury may be requested to cost party election commitments before and after polling day. The 2012 election pre-polling costing period was scheduled to begin on 3 September 2012 and end on 18 October 10:00pm 2012. The post-polling costing period was scheduled to run from 20 October 2012 until the election of the Chief Minister.¹⁴

Redistribution of electoral boundaries

During 2011, a proposed redistribution of the ACT's electoral boundaries caused controversy. Two different proposals for revised boundaries were issued by the Electoral Commission—one involving minimal change, the other involving radical change. The proposals prompted over 100 objections, and public hearings were held to help resolve the matter:

The Augmented Electoral Commission held a public hearing into the objections on 30 August 2011. After considering the objections the Augmented ACT Electoral Commission decided to alter the existing electoral boundaries by adopting the Redistribution Committee's proposal to transfer the Gungahlin suburbs of Crace and Palmerston from the electorate of Molonglo to the electorate of Ginninderra. This change was made to ensure that each of the ACT's three electorates will be within 5% of the enrolment quota at the time of the 2012 election. The electorate of Brindabella was not changed.¹⁵

In late 2011 two Canberra Liberals announced they would swap seats:

Liberal Leader and Molonglo MLA Zed Seselja has announced he will move to contest Brindabella (where he lives) at the 2012 election, while Brindabella MLA Steve Dospot will contest Liberal pre-selection for Molonglo.¹⁶

The party distribution of seats leading into the 2012 ACT election was as follows:

- Brindabella (a five member electorate): Amanda Bresnan (Greens); Joy Burch and John Hargreaves (ALP); Steve Dospot and Brendan Smyth (Liberals)
- Ginninderra (a five member electorate): Meredith Hunter (Greens); Chris Bourke and Mary Porter (ALP); Alistair Coe and Vicki Dunne (Liberals)

13. Select Committee on the Election Commitments Costings Bill, *Inquiry into Election Commitments Costing Bill 2011 Exposure Draft*, June 2012, ACT Assembly, Canberra, viewed 21 June 2012,

<http://www.parliament.act.gov.au/downloads/reports/Election%20commitment%20costing%20bill.pdf>

14. ACT Treasury, 'ACT election commitment costings 2012', Treasury website, viewed 30 October 2012 ,

<http://www.treasury.act.gov.au/electioncostings/>

15. Elections ACT, '2011 Redistribution', website, viewed 6 March 2012,

<http://www.elections.act.gov.au/page/view/487/title/2011-redistribution>

16. A Green, 'ACT Redistribution - Release of final boundaries', *Antony Green's Election Blog*, 29 September 2011, viewed 6 March 2012, <http://blogs.abc.net.au/antonygreen/2011/09/act-redistribution-release-of-final-boundaries.html>

- Molonglo (a seven member electorate): Caroline Le Couteur and Shane Rattenbury (Greens); Andrew Barr, Katy Gallagher and Simon Corbell (ALP); Jeremy Hanson and Zed Seselja (Liberals)

The lead-up to the 2012 election

The resumption of sittings of the ACT Legislative Assembly early in 2012 bore all the hallmarks of an election year. A minor brouhaha flared around some Twitter postings and led to a proposal that political parties be asked to ‘sign up to election-year social media protocols’.¹⁷ The Government was keen to pursue an official inquiry into Opposition Leader Zed Seselja over a succession of administrative failures in his office.¹⁸ The economy was emerging as significant concern, with the mid-year budget update showing significantly reduced GST revenues, the Commonwealth flagging public service spending cuts, and a slow-down in the construction industry—a key player in the ACT’s economic fortunes.¹⁹

In February, simmering tensions in the federal Labor leadership—which ultimately led to a ballot in which Prime Minister Gillard prevailed convincingly over her challenger and predecessor, Kevin Rudd—were causing some anxiety among state and territory Labor governments, although Gallagher said she ‘had not considered whether the damage the crisis was doing to Labor could affect her prospects at the October territory election’.²⁰

On 27 March 2012 Chief Minister Katy Gallagher launched a new video blog www.KatyGallagher.net and released a 30-second commercial that ‘talks briefly about her love of Canberra, our economy and protecting local jobs, and her team’.²¹

Gallagher had moved quickly when she became Chief Minister in June 2011 to implement a series of new media initiatives aimed at more open and accessible government. In her first ministerial statement to the ACT Legislative Assembly, Gallagher committed herself to ‘Open Government’, which she defined as ‘a way of working [that]... rests on three principles; transparency in process and information; participation by citizens in the governing process and public collaboration in finding solutions to problems’.²² She pledged that public access to information would be ‘the default

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17. N Towell, ‘ACT politicians a-twitter as ‘troll’ tweet sparks squabble’, *The Canberra Times*, 26 January 2012, p. 6, viewed 24 April 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressclp%2F1370587%22>
 18. Editorial, ‘Poll not the only challenge ahead’, *The Canberra Times*, 14 February 2010, p. 12, viewed 22 April 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressclp%2F1417808%22>
 19. Ibid.
 20. R Peake and P Jean, ‘PM’s camp calls Rudd party-wrecker’, *The Canberra Times*, 21 February 2012, p. 1, viewed 23 April 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressclp%2F1435678%22>
 21. J Williams, ‘Gallagher closer to election mode with ad and video blog’, *The Canberra Times*, 27 March 2012, p. 3, viewed 27 March 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressclp%2F1526024%22>
 22. K Gallagher (Chief Minister, ACT), ‘Chief Minister outlines vision for open government’, media release, 23 June 2011, viewed 24 June 2011, <http://www.chiefminister.act.gov.au/media.php?v=10789>

position of her government'.²³ She also promised Virtual Community Cabinets, where 'all Ministers will answer questions and respond to issues on Twitter'.²⁴

In April 2012, six months out from the election, *The Canberra Times* declared that 'preparations for the territory's four-yearly festival of democracy are already in full swing' and offered the following assessment of the political landscape:

With federal Labor looking terminal in the polls, state Labor governments obliterated in Queensland and NSW, and the ALP expected to lose its tenuous grip on power in the Northern Territory in August, Liberal supporters believe they can ride a national wave of change to government here in the ACT. But this one is unlikely to run like NSW or Queensland. It is going to be close and it may not be settled on election night.²⁵

The Canberra Times' analysis of the situation suggested that:

- the Liberals were focussed on winning eight seats (three in Brindabella, three in Molonglo and two in Ginninderra) which they believed would pressure the Greens into supporting a minority Liberal government
- Labor expected to hold seven seats, and rely on Greens support to form government
- the Greens were confident of retaining four seats, and that even if they lost seats, were likely to retain the balance of power, and
- a seven Labor, seven Liberal and three Green seats outcome was likely.²⁶

In May 2012, less than six months out from the election, in a major editorial marking the first anniversary of Katy Gallagher's incumbency as Chief Minister, *The Canberra Times* delivered a generally favourable assessment of her performance, along with some advice:

In her 11-year stint in ACT politics so far (which has included at least a decade of service as a government minister) Ms Gallagher has not demonstrated any great desire to grandstand or to seek the limelight, to espouse support for pet causes or indeed to enunciate grand designs or political narratives....

If Ms Gallagher has established a managerial style as chief minister, and not been much given to flourishes, some voters would probably wish she showed a bit more steel on occasion.... Such timidity is perhaps understandable given Ms Gallagher does not yet have a full public mandate, and must face the electorate in five months. She cannot afford to alienate voters unduly or to stumble and give the ACT opposition further ammunition with which to try and unseat her government. Ms Gallagher has, however, shown she has sound political instincts and a sense of pragmatism....

23. Ibid.

24. Ibid.

25. N Towell and L Cox, 'Battle to win the capital', *The Canberra Times*, 21 April 2012, p. 1, viewed 24 April 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressclp%2F1578753%22>

26. Ibid.

In her first year as chief minister Ms Gallagher has proven a steady performer, and one whom many in the community will have warmed to. She is a hard worker, who juggles a huge job with a family life. By and large, she seems up front with people and not overly defensive in the face of criticism. If Ms Gallagher wants to maximise her chances of re-election, she might be advised to open up to the electorate more about what she would do with a new mandate. If her first year as chief minister is to be the first of several, Canberrans may need to see more of a visionary Ms Gallagher to go with the competent and able administrator she has thus far proved.²⁷

Such an assessment was offered notwithstanding reports in April about the alleged improper altering, since 2009, of emergency department statistics at the Canberra Hospital—presumably to meet criteria set by the Commonwealth for the provision of additional hospital funds.²⁸ Gallagher was Health Minister at the time—a portfolio that she had retained on becoming Chief Minister.

A bigger problem for the Chief Minister and Health Minister is ensuring public confidence in the health system and morale of hospital staff isn't further damaged. The Opposition argues that there have been too many problems in the health system for the government to be given any more chances. Ms Gallagher knows she can't afford any more major scandals in health between now and October.²⁹

The political pressure intensified when Gallagher revealed that a member of her family worked with, and was a friend of, the person who had tampered with the data.³⁰ It subsequently came to light in early July 2012 that the family member was Gallagher's sister.³¹ The Opposition renewed calls for a Royal Commission.³²

On 19 May 2012, *The Canberra Times* published two articles based on leaked ALP polling that pointed to the return of a Labor government at the October election. According to these articles:

- there would be no 'Queensland-style electoral slaughter', and the Greens would continue to hold the balance of power
- Labor would take at least seven seats, with Katy Gallagher enjoying 'phenomenal approval ratings' of around 65 per cent

27. Editorial, 'Gallagher needs to show vision', *The Canberra Times*, 17 May 2012, p. 14, viewed 17 May 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressclp%2F1639437%22>

28. P Jean, 'Tampering lights the fuse of health powder keg', *The Canberra Times*, 25 April 2012, p. 1, viewed 10 July 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressclp%2F1588075%22>

29. Ibid.

30. J Hanson MLA, 'Gallagher his relationship with health official for a week', media release, 27 April 2012, viewed 10 July 2012, <http://www.canberraliberals.org.au/NEWSROOM/MEDIA-RELEASES-HANSON/GALLAGHER-HID-RELATIONSHIP-WITH-HEALTH-OFFICIAL-FOR-A-WEEK.asp>

31. 'Gallagher needs to explain', editorial. *The Canberra Times*, 7 July 2012, p. 6, viewed 10 July 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressclp%2F1760954%22>

32. P Jean, "'Pressure' led to altering of hospital data', *The Canberra Times*, 4 July 2012, p. 1, viewed 10 July 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressclp%2F1754622%22>

- the Liberals had gained some ground in the five-seat electorate of Brindabella , though ‘still not enough to give them three seats’.³³

With the Canberra Hospital data scandal continuing to dog the Government, its June Budget included an extra 150 doctors, nurses and allied health workers, and an extra \$12.6 million over four years for the Canberra Hospital’s emergency department.³⁴

Liberals leader, Zed Seselja, used his budget-in-reply speech to attack Gallagher’s record during her six years on the front bench before outlining :

... his “alternative ideas and innovations”. They included the implementation of a new authority, Infrastructure Canberra, “to deliver projects on time and on budget”, the establishment of an independent Public Administration Commission to protect the valuable work of our public servants”, and policies to support local business and reduce red tape.³⁵

In his speech, the Liberal leader made the following key commitments:

Two things I guarantee a Liberal government will do better than a Labor-Greens government every day of the week and every week of the year. Services like health, which the government has so spectacularly failed in. Services like road building and infrastructure delivery, where this government has so abjectly faltered. And costs—housing affordability, rates and the costs of basic utilities.³⁶

Early June also saw the launch of the Liberals first ‘[attack ad](#)’ of the unofficial election campaign—a documentary style video on alleged health services failure:

The party aired an unprecedented two-minute attack ad during WIN TV’s news bulletin after buying the program’s entire first advertising break at a cost thought to be about \$2000. ..The new ad is a radical departure from the short attack ads heavily deployed by the opposition in its failed 2008 campaign, but its length and the expense of buying the two minute slot means it is unlikely to be widely used. A Liberal campaign spokesman said the ad, which was launched in a longer version on YouTube last night, would be the “start of a conversation” with the electorate. “This is a first of its kind for the ACT,” he said.³⁷

Before 30 June 2012 the ACT Electoral Commissioner [received three applications](#) to register new political parties—‘Bullet Train for Canberra’, Marion Lê Social Justice Party and Pirate Party Australia

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33. N Towell, ‘Katy’s team to hold its own’, *The Canberra Times*, ‘Saturday Forum’, 19 May 2012, p. 2, viewed 21 May 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressclp%2F1643369%22>
 34. L Cox, ‘Budget boost to doctors, nurses’, *The Canberra Times*, 4 June 2012, p. 1, viewed 10 July n2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressclp%2F1687663%22>
 35. ‘Seselja follows Abbott’s lead’, editorial, *The Canberra Times*, 9 June 2012, p. 6, viewed 21 June 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressclp%2F1698533%22>
 36. Z Seselja, Budget-in-Reply speech, *Appropriation Bill 2012-2013*, ACT Legislative Assembly, *Debates*, 7 June 2012, viewed 21 June 2012, <http://www.hansard.act.gov.au/hansard/2012/pdfs/P120607.pdf>
 37. N Towell, ‘ACT Liberals fire first TV salvo’, *The Canberra Times*, 5 June 2012, p. 2, viewed 21 June 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressclp%2F1689702%22>

(ACT Branch). The ACT Electoral Commissioner denied registration to the last-named party because it did not submit a list of 100 members who were on the ACT electoral roll.³⁸

The small Community Alliance Party, that had contested but won no seats in the 2008 election, announced that it was seeking expressions of interest from people willing to stand as Alliance candidates in 2012.³⁹ In the unlikely event of the Alliance winning a seat and holding the balance of power, the party said that it would 'insist on a cabinet seat in exchange for supporting a major party in government'.⁴⁰

July 1 saw the commencement of the new election campaign finance laws which had been enacted by the ACT Legislative Assembly in May 2012, and described earlier in this Background Note. Substantial penalties apply for failure to comply with the new limits on donations and expenditure. (Further information on the new laws can be viewed on the Commission's website www.elections.act.gov.au)

Early July also witnessed even more intense scrutiny of the Canberra Hospital doctored records affair, with Gallagher being called before a re-convened estimates committee to answer questions about the matter. The Select Committee on Estimates met on 5 July 2012 'to have relevant Health Directorate officials and you [Chief Minister] appear before the committee to provide an explanation on details of the [Auditor-General's] report and the government's response'.⁴¹ The Standing Committee on Public Accounts also commenced an inquiry under terms of reference that had been recommended by the [Auditor-General's performance audit report](#).

An editorial in *The Canberra Times* on 7 July was headlined 'Gallagher needs to explain'—a reference to the Chief Minister's failure to disclose the full extent of a family relationship with Ms Kathy Jackson, a key staff member involved in the hospital scandal:

Had the "family member" in fact been a cousin or an in-law, and her relationship to Ms Jackson been no more than that of a friend, then Ms Gallagher's decision would have been appropriate. That her family member was a sister who was friendly with Ms Jackson and a senior nurse at the same hospital warranted a more candid and forthright acknowledgement from Ms Gallagher about her links.⁴²

38. Elections ACT, 'Pirate Party Australia (ACT Branch) misses out on registration as a political party for 2012 ACT election', media release, Elections ACT website, viewed 23 July 2012, http://www.elections.act.gov.au/news/pirate_party_australia_act_branch_misses_out_on_registration_as_a_political_party_for_2012_act_election

39. P Jean, 'Ambitious Alliance plots poll campaign', *The Canberra Times*, 17 July 2012, p. 4, viewed 17 July 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressclp%2F1783102%22>

40. Ibid.

41. Legislative Assembly for the ACT, Select Committee on Estimates 2012–13, *Transcript of Evidence*, 5 July 2012, p. 1369, viewed 12 July 2012, <http://www.hansard.act.gov.au/hansard/2009/comms/estimates50.pdf>

42. Editorial, 'Gallagher needs to explain', *The Canberra Times*, 7 July 2012, p. 6, viewed 12 July 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressclp%2F1760954%22>

The newspaper opined that Gallagher ‘has earned a reputation as a self-possessed politician blessed with common sense... But that estimation may be reviewed’.⁴³ It subsequently editorialised that Gallagher has been politically naïve in her handling of the Jackson matter, and that the Opposition was ‘over-egging the pudding’ in claiming that something ‘sinister’ was afoot.⁴⁴

The pre-election campaign intensifies

One hundred days out from the election the ACT Greens [published a list](#) of ‘100 things the Parliamentary team have done with their balance of power position since the 2008 election’.⁴⁵ The list included increased funding for mental health services, campaign finance reform and increased investment in ACT housing.⁴⁶ Gallagher was reportedly ‘amused’ by the list:

I’m not sure that the Greens could actually claim that they have delivered all of those things themselves. “I think there was certainly some assistance from the government provided in many of them, but this is a political campaign, so it’s not unexpected.”⁴⁷

Rumours would later emerge that the ACT Greens leader, Meredith Hunter, would be appointed education minister in a new Labor government—rumours that were swiftly denied by both parties.⁴⁸

With the official pre-election period and the opening of nominations still over two months away, Gallagher called for a ‘positive campaign’, without personal attacks, and focussing on ‘what each organisation or political party has to offer’.⁴⁹ As Labor pledged \$26 million for sporting centres, the Liberals criticised delays in promised sporting infrastructure and said that they would probably close the walk-in clinic at the Canberra Hospital.⁵⁰ *The Canberra Times* took the opportunity to editorialise on how it would like the campaign to unfold, and to advocate for ‘a more collegial style of politics’—albeit adding the rhetorical question ‘Is this too much to ask? Is it naïve?’⁵¹

43. Ibid.

44. Editorial, ‘Gallagher perhaps guilty of naivety’, *The Canberra Times*, 2 August 2012, p. 14, viewed 8 August 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressclp%2F1818842%22>

45. ACT Greens, ‘100 day countdown to election begins’, media release, 12 July 2012, viewed 13 July 2012, <http://act.greens.org.au/content/100-day-countdown-election-begins>

46. ACT Greens, ‘100 things the ACT Greens have done for you since the 2008 election’, ACT Greens website, viewed 13 July 2012, <http://act.greens.org.au/sites/greens.org.au/files/100%20things.pdf>

47. N Towell and L Cox, ‘Gallagher left in outfield as Greens put ‘100’ on board’, *The Canberra Times*, 13 July 2012, p. 4, viewed 13 July 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressclp%2F1773909%22>

48. L Cox and P Jean, ‘Libs fear Greens will get ministry’, *The Canberra Times*, 26 July 2012, p. 6, viewed 26 July 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressclp%2F1802701%22>

49. Ibid.

50. L Cox, ‘Labor pledges \$26m for sporting centres’, *The Canberra Times*, 13 July 2012, p. 4, viewed 13 July 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressclp%2F1773910%22>

N Towell, ‘Liberal govt is set to scrap walk-in clinic’, *The Canberra Times*, 13 July 2012, p. 4, viewed 13 July 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressclp%2F1773912%22>

51. Editorial, ‘Ideas, not war, is what we want’, *The Canberra Times*, 14 July 2012, p. 8, viewed 14 July 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressclp%2F1775806%22>

If debate in the ACT can't transcend negative politics, then democracy is unlikely to reach the heights of its ideals. Yet attack campaigns, and not policy argument, is what we will face over the next three months. There was a time when political parties would strenuously deny that their messages were negative, even when they clearly were. The Canberra Liberals, however, no longer shy away from it. This week, Opposition Leader Zed Seselja warned Labor and the Greens of the Liberals' impending attack, saying the coming election was about the performance of the government and the crossbench. Liberal MLA Jeremy Hanson also confirmed his party would not share its policies with the electorate until at least August. And though Chief Minister Katy Gallagher and her Labor MLAs are yet to describe the Greens as "lunatic extremists", as their federal colleagues now do, they may struggle to keep the noise of federal Labor's campaign from their own.⁵²

The newspaper went on to claim that many Canberrans believe that the ACT Greens constituted the tail that wagged the Labor dog. The Greens, however, 'arguably have the best record, over the past four years, of promoting policy ideas and explaining them, even if at times those ideas are extreme and undeserving of becoming law'.⁵³

There are, of course, important criticisms to be made of this Labor government; there are certainly weaknesses in the Greens' policies, too. Yet we hope that whoever triumphs in October's ballot does so because they win a battle of ideas, and show Canberra a vision of this city's future that is both practical and inspiring. That should be what wins the admiration of ACT voters.⁵⁴

Meanwhile, the ACT Legislative Assembly's Public Accounts Committee inquiry into doctored records at the Canberra Hospital produced fiery public hearings that meant that the Chief Minister remained in the media spotlight.⁵⁵

The ACT Labor Conference (28–29 July 2012) provided an opportunity for the announcement of several election commitments under the 'Connected Capital' policy. Promises included:

- \$2.9 million over four years for free wi-fi in all town centres, bus interchanges and on all ACTION buses
- complementing the major fibre-optic upgrade in government schools with \$2.5 million in 'Smart School, Smart Students' grants to support broadband installation in non-government schools.⁵⁶

The Chief Minister also announced \$1.6 million for a mobile dental service.⁵⁷

52. Ibid.

53. Ibid.

54. Ibid.

55. P Jean, 'Hospital scandal claims executive: Gallagher admits self-doubt', *The Canberra Times*, 21 July 2012, p. 2, viewed 23 July 2012,

<http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressclp%2F1790979%22>

56. M Inman, 'A digital plan for a "hot" ACT', *Sunday Canberra Times*, 29 July 2012, p. 1, viewed 30 July 2012,

<http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressclp%2F1809873%22>

On 10 August 2012, *The Canberra Times* published the results of Liberal polling undertaken in June, which showed ‘an increase in support for both the major parties but a significant undecided vote’.⁵⁸ According to the poll, the Greens vote was diminishing, notably in the 7-member seat of Molonglo, where their support had dropped to 12 per cent from the 18.2 per cent they enjoyed at the 2008 election.⁵⁹ A Liberal campaign source said that the Liberals were close to winning three seats in Brindabella.⁶⁰ Meanwhile, Labor’s campaign director, Elias Hallaj, declared the election outcome ‘too close to call’.⁶¹

In the final sitting fortnight before the October election, Liberals leader Zed Seselja gave notice that he would move a motion of no confidence in the Chief Minister—a move that required that the Assembly adjourn for seven days before debate on the motion could be moved.⁶² This prompted discussion about whether the Assembly should revise its procedures to enable business to continue during the seven-day hiatus.⁶³ A *Canberra Times* editorial argued that the tactic, and its timing so close to an election was ‘not without risk’ as Seselja may be perceived by the voters to be ‘putting politics before good governance’—especially given that the Greens had declared that they would not support the motion, thereby dooming it to failure.⁶⁴

When the no confidence motion against Gallagher was finally debated on 22 August, it was defeated 11 votes to six ‘after three hours of acrimonious debate in the chamber, during which four of the six Liberal members were warned from the Speaker’s chair’.⁶⁵

The adjournment of Assembly proceedings pending the no confidence motion saw Gallagher take the opportunity to highlight the expansion of health services and to launch a mental health workforce strategy.⁶⁶ Meanwhile, an announcement that the ACT Government would trial a needle exchange program in the Alexander Maconochie Centre was commended as a public health

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57. M Inman, ‘Oral promise for needy’, *Sunday Canberra Times*, 29 July 2012, p. 3, viewed 30 July 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressclp%2F1809883%22>
58. P Jean, ‘Greens seats at risk: Lib polling’, *The Canberra Times*, 10 August 2012, p. 1, viewed 10 August 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressclp%2F1836954%22>
59. Ibid.
60. Ibid.
61. Ibid.
62. P Jean and L Cox, ‘Assembly stalls as Gallagher faces no-confidence motion’, *The Canberra Times*, 14 August 2012, p. 1, viewed 16 August 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressclp%2F1846251%22>
63. P Jeans, ‘Labor, Greens call for reforms’, *The Canberra Times*, 15 August 2012, p. 1, viewed 16 August 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressclp%2F1848270%22>
64. Editorial, ‘Gallagher’s record’, *The Canberra Times*, 14 August 2012, p. 8, viewed 16 August 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressclp%2F1846322%22>
65. N Towell, ‘Gallagher survives Assembly motion’, *The Canberra Times*, 23 August 2012, p. 2, viewed 12 October 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressclp%2F1865517%22>
66. L Cox and P Jean, ‘Gallagher uses break to talk up health cred’, *The Canberra Times*, 17 August 2012, p. 5, viewed 20 August 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressclp%2F1852599%22>

initiative, but had its electoral merits queried.⁶⁷ The trial was described as ‘something that the opposition will work to exploit in the run-up to the election, and which may yet become an albatross around Labor’s neck’.⁶⁸

As August drew to a close, the demise of Labor in the Northern Territory election (in a six per cent swing against it) occasioned something of a slanging match between Gallagher and Seselja regarding the implications of the NT results for the ACT.⁶⁹ The election campaign was poised to enter its main phase.

The campaign begins in earnest

Although the ACT Government was not due to enter caretaker mode until 14 September 2012, the election campaign was effectively underway from the beginning of September. The Liberals took the somewhat unusual move of making a raft of key election promises early in the campaign, announcing on 3 September a score of commitments in health, education, roads and transport, services and cost of living.⁷⁰

A [Leaders Debate](#) was held on 12 September under the auspices of the National Press Club. The debate was dominated by local tax reform issues, with Seselja insisting that ‘rates will triple’ under Labor, and Gallagher adamant that rate rises would be less than three dollars a week per household.⁷¹ While Gallagher indicated that she would consider bringing a Green into her cabinet should she win government, Seselja ruled out such a move.⁷²

With the campaign officially under way from 14 September, it was clear that the Liberals sought to target Labor’s tax reforms, along with Gallagher’s record as Health Minister.⁷³ One of Gallagher’s first moves was to announce that Labor would spend \$30 million on expanding services at the Centenary Hospital for Women and Children, including funding an extra 19 beds.⁷⁴ The Liberals’ claims that a Labor government would triple the rates charged on Canberra households were to

67. Editorial, ‘Needle trial may haunt Gallagher’, *The Canberra Times*, 17 August 2012, p. 16, viewed 20 August 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressclp%2F1852662%22>

68. Ibid.

69. R Peake, ‘ACT poll battle gets personal : NT Labor loss sparks local debate’, *The Canberra Times*, 27 August 2012, p. 4, viewed 12 October 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressclp%2F1874859%22>

70. L Cox, ‘Libs bank on bulk policies pitch’, *The Canberra Times*, 4 September 2012, p. 1, viewed 12 October 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressclp%2F1892272%22>

71. N Towell and L Cox, ‘Labor braces for Liberals’ tax assault’, *The Canberra Times*, 1 September 2012, p. 2, viewed 12 October 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressclp%2F1910840%22>

72. C Kerr, ‘Labor leader out on limb, happy to embrace Greens’, *The Australian*, 13 September 2012, p. 2, viewed 12 October 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressclp%2F1911840%22>

73. L Cox and P Jean, ‘Libs put rates at centre of poll bid’, *The Canberra Times*, 15 September 2012, p. 1, viewed 12 October 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressclp%2F1914676%22>

74. Ibid.

become a major feature of the Liberals' political advertising, drawing the ire of Labor and prompting wider public comment about the use and abuse of independent costings.

The ACT election was to also prove an interesting occasion for testing the relationship between Federal and Territory party politics. *The Canberra Times* devoted an editorial to the matter, arguing that:

- the state or territory election which does not feature an appearance by the Prime Minister or the Opposition Leader of the day is a rarity.
- with the Coalition in the ascendancy across Australia, Liberal leader Tony Abbott is being rushed to appear alongside his state and territory counterparts, while Prime Minister Julia Gillard is being studiously overlooked, and
- Mr Abbott will not be showing up alongside ACT Liberals leader Zed Seselja probably because the Coalition has promised to implement significant public sector cuts—not an appealing policy in a public service-dominated town.⁷⁵

In mid-September, *The Canberra Times* suggested that there were 'jitters' in the Labor election camp, claiming that Labor had no 'cut-through message' and lacked the 'slick and simple – kind of positive' messages being delivered by the Liberals.⁷⁶

At Labor's official launch on 17 September, Gallagher intensified her 'blitz of education policies', highlighting a \$250 million education package that she said would be the 'game changer' that would end Canberra's dependence on the public service. Promising to make Canberra a hub of learning from early childhood to tertiary level, Gallagher offered 'a vision for education in our city that benefits the high achiever, that benefits the student that struggles and benefits every child in between'.⁷⁷ The package included two million dollars to establish Canberra as 'Australia's study destination of choice for local, national and international students'.⁷⁸

The Liberals' education promises included \$30.4 million in non-government schools, \$36 million for government school upgrades, an extra \$1.25 million for teacher professional development, and \$5 million to double the number of school counsellors in public schools.⁷⁹

75. Editorial, 'Abbott? Seselja says no thanks', *The Canberra Times*, 15 September 2012, p. 8, viewed 12 October 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressclp%2F1914734%22>

76. N Towell, 'Nagging doubts in Labor camp', *The Canberra Times*, 15 September 2012, p. 2, viewed 12 October 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressclp%2F1914687%22>

77. N Towell, 'Education the game changer: Gallagher', *The Canberra Times*, 18 September 2012, p. 4, viewed 12 October 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressclp%2F1921774%22>

78. J Mather, 'ANU backs Labor hub bid', *Australian Financial Review*, 17 September 2012, p. 24, viewed 12 October 2012,

<http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressclp%2F1919544%22>

79. E Macdonald, 'Education may tip balance, leaders say', *The Canberra Times*, 21 September 2012, p. 2, viewed 12 October 2012,

<http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressclp%2F1927841%22>

With respect to transport, Labor committed to establishing Canberra Transport Authority and announced a 'Capital Metro' policy based around a privately built and operated light rail link from Civic to Gungahlin.⁸⁰ The Greens proposed a Canberra-wide light rail system using a mix of public and private funding.⁸¹ Seselja said that Labor, on its record, lacked the commitment and capability to deliver on such a major infrastructure project.⁸² The Liberals committed to increasing the capital road works budget by \$125 million, along with a 12-month trial of a free shuttle service in Belconnen, Gungahlin and Tuggeranong suburbs to feed into rapid bus lines, and a study on intelligent transport systems for the ACT road and public transport network.⁸³

In late September a minor controversy arose in the wake of a market research exercise conducted on behalf of the Liberals which led to accusations of 'push polling' by the party and a complaint being lodged with the ACT Electoral Commission.⁸⁴ A few days later further controversy arose concerning how the Liberals had costed their \$7 billion health package, which factored in five financial years, not four, and included \$1.2 billion already included in the 2012-13 ACT budget.⁸⁵

Canberra Liberals' figures supplied to *The Canberra Times*, showed the party plans to spend \$6.2 billion on recurrent health measures and \$666 million on capital over the five years.⁸⁶

The Liberals said that they would submit their election costings to the ACT Treasury for costing.⁸⁷

Under the ACT's *Election Commitments Costing Act 2012*, the leader of a party may ask Treasury to undertake costings of the party's publicly announced election commitments. Requests for costings of commitments by opposing parties or other MLAs are not permitted.⁸⁸ There is no obligation on parties to submit their costings for verification.

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80. N Towell, 'Labor sees the light rail', *The Canberra Times*, 22 September 2012, p. 1, viewed 12 October 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressclp%2F1933913%22>
 81. Ibid.
 82. Ibid.
 83. *Canberra Liberals*, 'A plan for better public transport in Canberra' Canberra Liberals Policy 2012, website, viewed 12 October 2012, <http://www.canberraliberals.org.au/files/nrteUploadFiles/192F092F2012123A083A04PM.pdf>
 84. L Cox and N Towell, 'Libs reject allegations of election push polling', *The Canberra Times*, 29 September 2012, p. 3, viewed 12 October 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressclp%2F1944439%22>
 85. L Cox, 'Liberals under fire over \$1b 'hole' in health spending promises', *The Canberra Times*, 1 October 2012, p. 3, viewed 15 October 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressclp%2F1949058%22>
 86. L Cox, 'Libs accused of health funding 'chaos'', *The Canberra Times*, 3 October 2012, p. 2, viewed 15 October 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressclp%2F1952778%22>
 87. Ibid.
 88. *Election Commitments Costing Act 2012*, viewed 15 October 2012, <http://www.legislation.act.gov.au/a/2012-47/current/pdf/2012-47.pdf>

The Liberals submitted 19 of their election policies to ACT Treasury analysts on 11 October.⁸⁹ The policies included health, education, sporting and anti-crime initiatives.⁹⁰ At that time, Labor had put more than 100 policies in to be assessed, while the Greens had submitted 168 for costing.⁹¹

With barely two weeks to go before polling day, the major parties were generally regarded as being neck-and-neck. Political commentator Professor John Warhurst considered the election too close to call:

The electorate will probably swing towards the Liberals. The key will be both the extent of the swing and where it occurs among the three electorates. Labor and the Greens should win a majority of seats in Molonglo (probably Labor three and Greens one) where demography and the spread of high-profile candidates favour Labor and the Greens over the Liberals. The Liberals' best chance of winning three seats appears to be in Zed Seselja's new electorate of Brindabella. If that happens then the election will be decided in Greens' leader Meredith Hunter's electorate of Ginninderra. This means that the two most probable results are either a new Liberal majority government (Liberal nine, Labor six and Greens two) or a continuing Labor minority government supported by the Greens (Labor seven, Greens two and Liberal eight). It is too close to call at the moment.⁹²

Ten days out from the election eve, Labor launched a website, www.realzed.com, which accused Seselja 'of making a bid for power that was based on lies' and 'an inability to get their costings right on health and education'.⁹³ The Liberals' claimed Labor was 'resorting to personal negative attacks'.⁹⁴ Meanwhile, Gallagher was joined by Prime Minister Gillard at a breakfast forum celebrating the role of women in politics.⁹⁵ Although Federal Opposition Leader Tony Abbott was reportedly not joining Seselja 'on the campaign trail', Mr Abbott was involved in several invitation-only party fundraisers in Canberra.⁹⁶

89. L Willis, 'Liberals submit policies for costing', viewed 13 October 2012, <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2012-10-12/liberals-submit-policies-for-costing/4310038?§ion=news>

90. Ibid.

91. Ibid.

92. J Warhurst, 'ACT election too close to call', *The Canberra Times*, 4 October 2012, p. 15, viewed 15 October 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressclp%2F1954847%22>

93. N Towell, 'Liberals hit back as Labor steps up 'personal' attacks', *The Canberra Times*, 9 October 2012, p. 2, viewed 15 October 2012,

<http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressclp%2F1965357%22>

94. Ibid.

95. L Cox, 'Gallagher brings out big gun for single shot', *The Canberra Times*, 10 October 2012, p. 2, viewed 15 October 2012,

<http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressclp%2F1967385%22>

96. N Towell, 'Abbott lends hand in local Liberal fund-raising events', *The Canberra Times*, 10 October 2012, p. 1, viewed 15 October 2012,

<http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressclp%2F1967378%22>

A week out from election eve, veteran election psephologist Malcom Mackerras revealed his predictions for the election outcome—Labor and Liberals would win seven seats each, with three seats going to the ACT Greens.⁹⁷

The final week

On Monday 15 October, the economist whose work the Liberals had used to back their core ‘rates will triple’ campaign published an opinion piece in *The Canberra Times* to the effect that his work had been ‘misrepresented’ and that the key table used by the Liberals ‘does not confirm the party’s central campaign message’.⁹⁸ Seselja was reportedly ‘defiant’ and ‘denying the model had been misused or that his election material ... was discredited’.⁹⁹

Meanwhile, in what was described as a ‘dirty turn’ in the countdown to the poll, a number of campaign signs were defaced, some with homophobic or racist graffiti.¹⁰⁰ Both Liberal and Labor candidates were affected.

A poll of voters commissioned by *The Canberra Times* and published mid-week revealed that:

- less than 25 per cent of voters would be strongly swayed by what is happening at the federal level
- health was the most dominant issue for voters followed closely by education
- leadership ranked third in importance.¹⁰¹

The poll also suggested that the electorate was ‘not seeing a compelling case for change’, and there was ‘satisfaction ... with the leadership of Ms Gallagher’.¹⁰² Notably, in terms of preferred Chief Minister, Gallagher outshone Seselja 54 per cent to 26 per cent.¹⁰³ The Opposition Leader was

97. M Mackerras, ‘Predictions for the Legislative Assembly election’, *The Canberra Times*, 12 October 2012, p. 19, viewed 15 October 2012,

<http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressclp%2F1971486%22>

98. L Cox and N Towell, ‘Rates work “misrepresented”’, *The Canberra Times*, 15 October 2012, p. 1, viewed 18 October 2012,

<http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressclp%2F1978493%22>

99. N Towell and L Cox, ‘Liberals persist with discredited numbers’, *The Canberra Times*, 16 October 2012, p.2, viewed 18 October 2012,

<http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressclp%2F1980313%22>

100. L Cox and C Knaus, ‘Dirty tactics as poll nears’, *The Canberra Times*, 16 October 2012, p. 1, viewed 18 October 2012,

<http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressclp%2F1980310%22>

101. ‘Trust the issue bubbling under’, editorial, *The Canberra Times*, 17 October 2012, p. 16, viewed 18 October 2012,

<http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressclp%2F1982471%22>

102. Editorial, ‘Prepared to go with the status quo’, *The Canberra Times*, 18 October 2012, p. 16, viewed 18 October 2012,

<http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressclp%2F1984542%22>

103. N Towell and L Cox, ‘Poor showing down to honeymoon: Seselja’, *The Canberra Times*, 18 October 2012, p. 2, viewed 18 October 2012,

<http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressclp%2F1984462%22>

‘preferred least in Molonglo, his former electorate ... [and] fared best in his new electorate of Brindabella’.¹⁰⁴

The poll indicated that Labor would retain its existing seven seats, with the Liberals holding six and the ACT Greens four (with the help of Labor preferences).¹⁰⁵ Such a result would constitute a status quo outcome, notwithstanding that both Labor and Liberals appeared to have increased their support in each of the three electorates, with the ACT Greens losing support in Brindabella and Ginninderra and increasing their support in Molonglo.¹⁰⁶

On election eve the betting agency *Sportsbet* described Chief Minister Katy Gallagher as ‘unbackable favourite to hold on to power’.¹⁰⁷ *Sportsbet* said that the company was ‘amazed by the vote of confidence from punters on Gallagher’s party’:

“[It] has literally been all one-way traffic for Labor,” Mr Anderson said. “There has virtually been no interest at all in the Liberals and, if that continues, Labor will start even shorter than their current \$1.18 on election day.” Either six or seven seats will be won by Labor according to the market, with both figures priced at \$2.20 each.¹⁰⁸

The Canberra Times concluded its election eve editorial in the following terms:

The ACT’s 11-year-old Labor administration does not ... necessarily deserve another term. Canberra may be a government town but, as [previous Liberal Chief Ministers] Ms Carnell and Mr Humphries showed, it need not be a Labor town. This election should be there for the taking. And this newspaper would willingly back an opposition that had a bold vision for making Canberra Australia’s best-governed city. Yet, over the past four years, Mr Seselja and his colleagues have carped at any sign of ambition. Their most novel policy is to provide Canberra homes with an extra bin for green waste. A worthwhile initiative, perhaps, but it’s far from enough. We deserve loftier goals.

Criticism is part of opposition, but so, too, is showing that one has the ideas and inspiration to govern. On this point, Mr Seselja has not presented a compelling alternative. The ACT is not a mere municipality; we are spared the buck-passing that dogs councils and state governments. We run our own hospitals, schools and judicial system, and have a unique opportunity to control our city’s destiny. Yes, tomorrow’s election is about rates, roads and rubbish, but so much more besides. It’s about who will shape our future. Ms Gallagher has shown she has a more inspired vision for Canberra than her opponent. We support the re-election of her government.¹⁰⁹

104. Ibid.

105. N Towell, ‘Labor will hold power’, *The Canberra Times*, 18 October 2012, p. 1, viewed 18 October 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressclp%2F1984456%22>

106. Ibid.

107. ‘Punters reckon they’re on to a sure thing’, *The Canberra Times*, 19 October 2012, p. 1, viewed 19 October 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressclp%2F1986465%22>

108. Ibid.

109. Editorial, ‘Tarnished Labor still more reliable’, *The Canberra Times*, 19 October 2012, p. 18, viewed 19 October 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressclp%2F1986558%22>

The outcome

For several days there was considerable uncertainty about the final outcome of the election, and the fortunes of parties and candidates shifted frequently as the vote was counted.

When polling day drew to its close on 20 October, the initial vote count indicated a swing away from the ACT Greens, a modest swing to Labor and a larger swing to the Liberals. With around two-thirds of the vote counted, the primary vote showed:

- Labor on 39 per cent
- Liberals on 37.9 per cent
- Greens on 11.1 per cent
- Others on 12.1 per cent.¹¹⁰

Three days later, election analyst Antony Green posted provisional results indicating that:

- in the five-seat electorate of Brindabella, the Liberals seemed to have secured three seats (Zed Seselja, Brendan Smyth, Andrew Wall) and Labor two (Joy Burch, Mick Gentleman), with Greens incumbent Amanda Bresnan defeated
- in the five-seat electorate of Ginninderra, the Liberals seemed to have secured two seats (Alistair Coe, Vicki Dunne), Labor two seats (Mary Porter, Chris Bourke), and Greens leader Meredith Hunter seeming to hold the fifth seat
- in the seven-seat electorate of Molonglo, Labor seemed to have secured three seats (Katy Gallagher, Andrew Barr, Simon Corbell), the Liberals three seats (Jeremy Hanson, Giulia Jones, Steve Doszpot) and the Greens one seat (Shane Rattenbury), with incumbent Green Caroline Le Couteur defeated.¹¹¹

Thus it seemed that, overall the Liberals had won eight seats (an all-time high for the party), Labor seven seats, and the Greens two seats.

Debate quickly surfaced about which party had earned the right to govern should the anticipated breakdown of seats prove correct—Liberals eight, Labor seven, Greens two. Writing in *The Canberra Times* on the day after the election, veteran Canberra journalist Jack Waterford opined that:

Zed Seselja has the moral victory in the election, with a personal triumph and looking to have wrested two seats from the Greens. But he has failed to take votes from Labor, and, bar an

110. 'As it happened: ACT votes 2012', *ABC News*, 20 October 2012, website, viewed 24 October 2012, <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2012-10-20/live-blog3a-act-votes-2012/4322714>

111. 'Provisionally Elected Members for the ACT 2012 Election', *Antony Green's election blog*, updated 23 October 2012, *ABC Elections* website, viewed 24 October 2012, <http://blogs.abc.net.au/antonygreen/2012/10/provisionally-elected-members-for-act-2012-election.html#more>

unlikely courtship between the Liberals and the Greens, has neither the numbers nor the right to claim government.

Labor won more votes, even if, as seems likely, the Liberals, thanks to Seselja's own efforts in the electorate to which he switched, have a seat more. The Liberals would probably need a further swing of 10 per cent to be in striking distance of government in its own right, or to make an alliance with a party capable of taking probably two further seats from Labor and the Greens. At the end of the day, it must take votes from Labor. It failed to do so; indeed the Labor Party increased, marginally.

Put another way, Labor and the Greens collectively won about 50 per cent of the vote. The Liberals were only three-quarters of the way to that, with an eighth of voters preferring other groupings or Independents. That's a very good showing for the Liberals, but does not entitle them to the keys of the ACT Treasury unless they do a deal with the Greens.¹¹²

Noel Towell—the lead journalist covering the election for *The Canberra Times*—said that Seselja had a 'powerful case' to argue that the Greens 'should have a responsibility to support the largest party in the Assembly'.¹¹³ He continued:

But the Greens could always justify reinstalling Labor leader Katy Gallagher as chief minister by arguing that there are more progressive MLAs than conservative ones and that Labor look to have outpolled the Liberals, slightly.

...

But crucially there's a massive gulf between the [Liberals and Greens] on the issue that will be remembered as defining this poll: tax reform.

The Greens support Andrew Barr's tax package, the one that the Liberals still insist will triple your rates. The Greens voted for it in this year's budget. They might not like the way it was sold, or not sold, to the electorate but they still own it.

It would be a hard sell for the Greens to give the go-ahead to a party committed to tearing the tax reforms up. Supporting the Liberals would be a hard sell to the Greens' grassroots, full stop.¹¹⁴

In the view of politics professor and commentator John Warhurst: 'Ultimately, the ACT election result can be boiled down to Labor and the Greens winning two of the three electorates in terms of both votes and seats'.¹¹⁵

112. J Waterford, 'Who has right to power?', *The Canberra Times*, 21 October 2012, p. 3, viewed 24 October 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressclp%2F1991040%22>

113. N Towell, 'Seselja will need to use all his powers of persuasion to reign', *The Canberra Times*, 21 October 2012, p. 5, viewed 24 October 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressclp%2F1991044%22>

114. Ibid.

As the first week of counting drew to a close, it appeared that the Greens were close to losing the third of their four seats, leaving only one Green MLA (Shane Rattenbury), with Labor closer to securing an eighth Assembly seat.¹¹⁶ The two major parties remained neck-and-neck in the popular vote.¹¹⁷

The national implications of the ACT voting patterns

The relationship between ACT and Federal politics was an inevitable post-election topic, with Warhurst suggesting that: 'On the party political front the 2013 federal election will undoubtedly change the dynamics of ACT politics if Tony Abbott's Coalition wins as predicted. That result would make the job of the ACT Liberals harder'.¹¹⁸

In *The Age*, Peter Martin said that the narrow result in the ACT 'puts the Coalition in a strong position nationally'.¹¹⁹ He cited Federal Opposition Leader Tony Abbott as saying that 'the issue was that the ACT rate increase hadn't been put to an election, just as carbon tax had not been put to an Australian election'.¹²⁰ Analyst Malcolm Mackerras believed that 'concerns at both the Greens' influence on local Labor and their federal policies had depressed their vote'.¹²¹ *The Australian* also editorialised on the Greens 'dismal performance', noting its 'drubbing' in Queensland, its 'failure' in the Melbourne state by-election and its 'setback' in NSW local government polls.¹²²

The Australian's Troy Bramston saw clear national implications for all three parties in the ACT result. Bramston said that the Canberra Liberals 'should have won in a cakewalk', but their campaign style 'bore all the hallmarks of Tony Abbott's national leadership' and 'exposes the risk in Abbott's aggressive, negative and largely policy-free bid for the prime ministership'.¹²³

Bramston considered the Greens result as 'part of a seemingly inexorable and unstoppable decline':

It has been a dreadful year for Greens. Their vote fell in the Queensland and Northern Territory elections. They failed to win or perform strongly in key by-elections ... [and] were devastated at

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115. J Warhurst, 'Count could spring surprises', *The Canberra Times*, 22 October 2012, p. 9, viewed 24 October 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressclp%2F1993190%22>
 116. N Towell, 'History against Hunter as Greens limp away', *The Canberra Times*, 26 October 2012, p. 1, viewed 26 October 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressclp%2F2001657%22>
 117. Ibid.
 118. Ibid.
 119. P Martin, 'Liberals make big inroads in ACT', *The Age*, 22 October 2012, p. 4, viewed 24 October 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressclp%2F1992910%22>
 120. Ibid.
 121. C Kerr, 'ALP to cling on despite Lib swing', *The Australian*, 22 October 2012, p. 1, viewed 24 October 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressclp%2F1993937%22>
 122. Editorial, 'Even Canberra wants to give the Greens the boot', *The Australian*, 22 October 2012, p. 13, viewed 24 October 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressclp%2F1994020%22>
 123. T Bramston, 'Errors cost Libs capital triumph', *The Australian*, 22 October 2012, p. 12, viewed 24 October 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressclp%2F1994006%22>

local government elections across NSW... The Greens look like a spent force. A party that small is simply dying if it is not growing. The stench of death around the Greens is palpable.¹²⁴

The final result

On 27 October, the ACT Electoral Commissioner announced the [final results](#), which delivered eight seats each to the Canberra Liberals and to ACT Labor and one seat to the ACT Greens.

In order of election, the successful candidates were:

Brindabella

Zed Seselja	(Canberra Liberals)
Joy Burch	(ACT Labor)
Brendan Smyth	(Canberra Liberals)
Mick Gentleman	(ACT Labor)
Andrew Wall	(Canberra Liberals)

Ginninderra

Alistair Coe	(Canberra Liberals)
Vicki Dunne	(Canberra Liberals)
Mary Porter	(ACT Labor)
Chris Bourke	(ACT Labor)
Yvette Berry	(ACT Labor)

Molonglo

Katy Gallagher	(ACT Labor)
Jeremy Hanson	(Canberra Liberals)
Andrew Barr	(ACT Labor)
Simon Corbell	(ACT Labor)
Shane Rattenbury	(ACT Greens)
Giulia Jones	(Canberra Liberals)
Steve Doszpot	(Canberra Liberals)

The election had been the closest in the history of self-government for the ACT, with 41 Liberal votes putting the party just ahead of Labor in the popular vote.¹²⁵

As the only Green left standing after a swing of 4.9 per cent against the party, Shane Rattenbury found himself the MLA who would determine whether the Liberals or Labor would form

124. Ibid.

125. M Inman, 'Green deliberates over poll verdict', *Sunday Canberra Times*, 28 October 2012, p. 1, viewed 29 October 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressclp%2F2006526%22>

government. Rattenbury had been Speaker in the previous Assembly, but stated that he would not take on the role in the new Assembly.¹²⁶

Speculation ensued as to whether Labor would offer Rattenbury a ministry—a post that Zed Seselja had ruled out should a Liberal government be formed. A decision by Labor to offer Rattenbury a ministry would prove problematic for Katy Gallagher as it would require an existing Labor minister to step aside—at least temporarily.¹²⁷

For his part, Rattenbury said that he would not be providing a running commentary on his discussions with both Labor and the Liberals—although a meeting of the ACT Greens members on 28 October seemed inclined to support Gallagher for Chief Minister.¹²⁸

On Friday 2 November, Rattenbury announced that he would support a Labor Government.¹²⁹ His [agreement with Labor](#) included:

- a position in cabinet, and while subject to the requirements of cabinet confidentiality Rattenbury remained free to publicly criticise and to vote against the government
- more resources at his disposal than his cabinet colleagues, and
- support for light rail in Canberra, for full marriage equality and a clean-up of Lake Burley Griffin.¹³⁰

In summarising its view of the outcome, *The Canberra Times* noted that the Canberra Liberals had scored a narrow win in the popular vote, but in being dismissive of the Greens and stridently opposed to the Labor tax reforms that the Greens supported, Seselja was not well placed to win the Greens' support:¹³¹

In many respects, Mr Rattenbury's decision is a victory for the ACT and for good government. Labor's record over the past 11 years is far from perfect – it has struggled to fix longstanding problems in the health system for example. But in the key areas of education and service delivery, it has performed competently. ...

126. Ibid.

127. N Towell, 'Wooing the last Green standing', *The Canberra Times*, 27 October 2012, p. 2, viewed 29 October 2012,

<http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressclp%2F2003629%22>

128. N Towell and L Cox, 'Rattenbury calls deadline and prepares for talks on pivotal role', *The Canberra Times*, 30 October 2012, p. 1, viewed 30 October 2012,

<http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressclp%2F2010981%22>

129. R Lentini, 'Coalition of Greens and Labor in control', *Daily Telegraph*, 3 November 2012, p. 9, viewed 4 November 2012,

<http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressclp%2F2020073%22>

130. N Towell, 'Minister for real power may cause problems', *The Canberra Times*, 3 November 2012, p. 1, viewed 4 November 2012,

<http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressclp%2F2019567%22>

131. Editorial, 'Hard bargaining good for ACT', *The Canberra Times*, 3 November 2012, p. 6, viewed 4 November 2012,

<http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressclp%2F2019615%22>

Importantly, Mr Rattenbury's decision to side with Labor will enable a start to be made on probably the most ambitious and far-reaching project in Canberra since self-government: the move to put the ACT's taxation and revenue system on a more sustainable footing. ...

Although the October 20 poll proved the Liberals are a resurgent force in the ACT, Labor's case for reelection was the more compelling, and Mr Rattenbury has made the correct call in giving them his support for the next four years.¹³²

Conclusion

The 2012 ACT election proved memorable in several respects. It was the closest election in the history of ACT self-government, with only 41 votes separating the two major parties. The Liberals had won the popular vote by a narrow margin and had achieved their best electoral result ever. Labor, too, had increased its vote. The Greens were the biggest losers in terms of both votes and seats, losing three of their four seats, and experiencing a strong swing against them.

When the Legislative Assembly resumed on 6 November 2012, Katy Gallagher was elected Chief Minister, and the Liberals' Vicki Dunne was elected Speaker. Mary Porter was elected Deputy Speaker.

The next ACT election will be held on 15 October 2016.

132. Ibid.

Appendix 1: The timetable for the 2012 ACT Legislative Assembly

Timetable	2012 Election
Last day to lodge applications for party register	30 June 2012
Party registration closes	13 September 2012
Pre-election period commences and nominations open	14 September 2012
Rolls close	21 September 2012
Nominations close	26 September 2012
Nominations declared and ballot paper order determined	27 September 2012
Pre-poll voting commences	2 October 2012
Polling day	20 October 2012
Last day for receipt of postal votes	26 October 2012
Scrutiny completed	from 20 October 2012 to as soon as practicable after the last date for receipt of postal votes
Poll declared	as soon as practicable after the completion of the scrutiny
Legislative Assembly formed	within 7 days after the declaration of the poll

Source: Elections ACT, website, <http://www.elections.act.gov.au/page/view/375/title/election-timetable>

Appendix 2: ACT Legislative Assembly 2008–2012

The following candidates, in order of election, were elected to the ACT Legislative Assembly on Saturday, 18 October 2008.

Brindabella

Brendan Smyth	Canberra Liberals
Steve Doszpot	Canberra Liberals
Amanda Bresnan	ACT Greens
John Hargreaves	Australian Labor Party
Joy Burch	Australian Labor Party

Ginninderra

Jon Stanhope	Australian Labor Party
Meredith Hunter	ACT Greens
Alistair Coe	Canberra Liberals
Mary Porter	Australian Labor Party
Vicki Dunne	Canberra Liberals

Molonglo

Zed Seselja	Canberra Liberals
Katy Gallagher	Australian Labor Party
Shane Rattenbury	ACT Greens
Andrew Barr	Australian Labor Party
Jeremy Hanson	Canberra Liberals
Simon Corbell	Australian Labor Party
Caroline Le Couteur	ACT Greens

Source: ACT Electoral Commission, website, <http://www.elections.act.gov.au/page/view/364/title/list-of-elected-candidates->

Appendix 3: The Hare-Clark electoral system in brief

The Hare-Clark electoral system in brief	
Step 1	Count the first preference votes for each candidate.
Step 2	<p>Calculate the quota:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • $(\text{total number of valid votes} / (\text{number of vacancies} + 1)) + 1$ • or divide the total number of valid votes by one more than the number of vacancies, and add one to the result.
Step 3	<p>Any candidate with votes equal to or greater than the quota is declared elected.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If all vacancies have been filled, the election is completed. • If all vacancies have not been filled, does any candidate have more votes than the quota? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If yes then go to step 4. • If no then go to step 5.
Step 4	Distribute the successful candidate's surplus votes to continuing candidates according to the further preferences shown on the ballot papers by those voters. (A 'continuing candidate' is one neither elected nor excluded.) Calculate each continuing candidate's new total votes, then go back to step 3.
Step 5	<p>If there are more continuing candidates than there are vacancies remaining unfilled, exclude the candidate with the fewest votes and distribute this candidate's votes to continuing candidates according to the further preferences shown by those voters. Calculate each continuing candidate's new total votes then go back to step 3.</p> <p>Or, if the number of continuing candidates is equal to the number of vacancies remaining, all of those candidates are declared elected and the election is completed.</p>

Source: Elections ACT <http://www.elections.act.gov.au/page/view/432/title/elections-act-factsheet-hare-clark>

Appendix 4: Candidates by electorate and party

	BRINDABELLA 5 members	GINNINDERRA 5 members	MOLONGLO 7 members
Canberra Liberals	Val JEFFERY Nicole LAWDER Zed SESELJA Brendan SMYTH Andrew WALL	Alistair COE Vicki DUNNE Merinda NASH Jacob VADAKKEDATHU Matt WATTS	Steve DOSZPOT Murray GORDON Jeremy HANSON Giulia JONES Elizabeth LEE James MILLIGAN Tom SEFTON
ACT Labor	Joy BURCH Rebecca CODY Mick GENTLEMAN Mike KINNIBURGH Karl MAFTOUM	Yvette BERRY Chris BOURKE Jayson HINDER Glen McCREA Mary PORTER	Andrew BARR Simon CORBELL Angie DRAKE Meegan FITZHARRIS Katy GALLAGHER Mark KULASINGHAM David MATHEWS
The ACT Greens	Amanda BRESNAN Johnathan DAVIS Ben MURPHY	James HIGGINS Meredith HUNTER Hannah PARRIS	Alan KERLIN Caroline LE COUTEUR Shane RATTENBURY Adriana SIDDLÉ
Bullet train for Canberra	Mark ERWOOD Adam HENSCHKE	Chris BUCKNELL Tony HALTON	Tim BOHM Shelley DICKERSON
Australian Motorist Party	Burl DOBLE Kieran JONES-ELLIS	Chic HENRY Darryl WALFORD	David CUMBERS Mark CURRAN
Liberal Democratic Party		Mustafa JAWADI Matt THOMPSON	Ian GARDNER Trisha JHA
Marion Lê Social Justice party		Majlinda BITANI Nehmat Nana JBEILI Karamia LÊ Marion LÊ Kate REYNOLDS	
Independent	Mark GIBBONS Michael LINDFIELD Calvin PEARCE	Darren CHURCHILL Emmanuel EZEKIEL-HART Norm GINGELL Glen TAKKENBERG	Stuart BIGGS Philip POCOCK

Source: ACT Electoral Commission, '2012 ACT Legislative Assembly election candidates', website, http://www.elections.act.gov.au/elections_and_voting/2012_act_legislative_assembly_election/2012_candidates

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