



Submission No 32

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From time to time, there are suggestions that the Australian constitution (the fundamental laws that structure our system of government) should be changed. The only way this can happen is through a referendum, which means everyone has to vote for or against the proposed change.

When this happens, the government sends every Australian voter a document which sets out the case for and against the proposed change.

By law, each case is up to 2000 words long and is written by the politicians who are for or against the change.

**Qu 1: How useful would you find the following sources in determining how you would vote in a referendum?**

	Very useful	Useful	Not very useful	Not at all useful	Don't know
TV ads	16	47	22	11	3
The document described above	26	42	18	8	6
Newspaper ads	13	47	25	12	4
The internet	28	47	14	8	4
Social networking sites, such as Facebook	7	22	31	33	7

	Total useful	Total not useful	Don't know
TV ads	63	34	3
The document described above	69	26	6
Newspaper ads	60	37	4
The internet	75	21	4
Social networking sites, such as Facebook	29	64	7

Data weighted to reflect the Australian population; n = 1500, margin of error +/-2.5%

**Qu 2: In the document described above, who do you think should write each of the 2000 word cases?**

The politicians who support each case	25
The Australian Electoral Commission which is the neutral body that runs elections	57
Don't know	18

**Qu 3: The following are a series of proposals that could allow the Australian public to suggest changes to the constitution. Do you support or oppose the following proposals?**

	Strongly support	Support	Oppose	Strongly oppose	Don't know
A group or "convention" comprising a mix of distinguished Australians (selected by the Government) as well as other Australians (elected by the people for this purpose) who would meet to discuss possible changes to the constitution .	15	47	15	7	16
A government body comprised of public servants (government workers) that is set up to consider possible changes to the constitution	5	30	32	15	18
A committee of politicians from all parties who would meet to discuss possible changes to the constitution	7	41	25	11	15
Votes of the entire population that would inform the government about community sentiment but would not bind the government to make any particular changes to the constitution	23	45	13	4	15



	Total support	Total oppose	Don't know
A group or "convention" comprising a mix of distinguished Australians (selected by the Government) as well as other Australians (elected by the people for this purpose) who would meet to discuss possible changes to the constitution .	62	22	16
A government body comprised of public servants (government workers) that is set up to consider possible changes to the constitution	35	47	18
A committee of politicians from all parties who would meet to discuss possible changes to the constitution	48	37	15
Votes of the entire population that would inform the government about community sentiment but would not bind the government to make any particular changes to the constitution	67	18	15

Data weighted to reflect the Australian population; n = 1500, margin of error +/-2.5%