

Polling - Royal Commissions

September 2018

Key Results

The Australia Institute surveyed a nationally representative sample of 1,449 Australians about attitudes about four recent Royal Commissions.

- Misconduct in the Banking, Superannuation and Financial Services Industry (the “Banking Royal Commission”)
- Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (the “Royal Commission into Child Abuse”)
- Trade Union Governance and Corruption (the “Trade Union Royal Commission”)
- The Murray-Darling Basin

The Murray-Darling Royal Commission was announced by the South Australian government. The other three Royal Commissions were announced by the federal government.

The survey first asked Australians how much they had heard about each of the Royal Commissions.

Most Australians have heard about the Banking Royal Commission (85%) and the Royal Commission into Child Abuse (75%).

- Half of Australians (48%) have heard “a lot” about the Banking Royal Commission
- 29% have heard “a lot” about the Royal Commission into Child Abuse

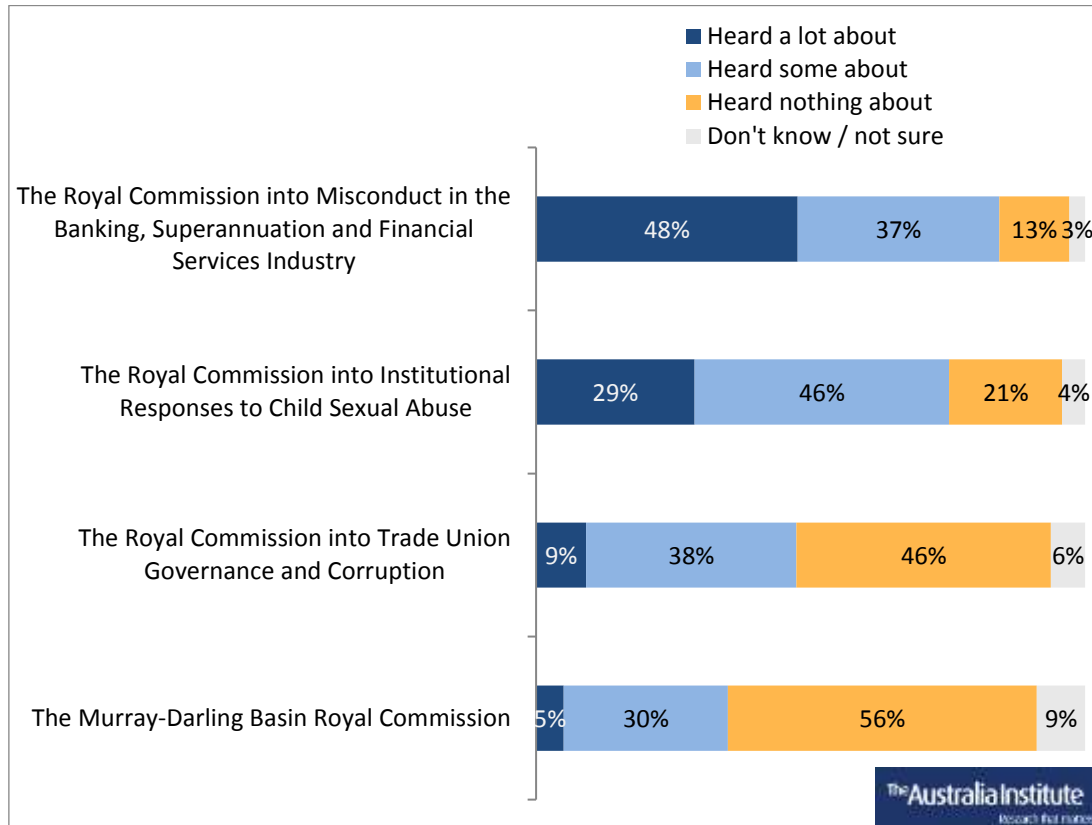
Almost half of Australians (47%) had heard about the Trade Union Royal Commission, although only 9% have heard “a lot” about it.

- Almost as many Australians (46%) have heard “nothing” about the Trade Union Royal Commission as have heard about it

One-third of Australians (35%) have heard about the Murray-Darling Basin Royal Commission, including 5% who have heard “a lot” about it.

- A majority of Australians (56%) have heard “nothing” about the Murray-Darling Basin Royal Commission

How much would you say you have heard about:



The survey asked participants what they thought the main reason for each Royal Commission being established was.

Australians overwhelmingly thought that the Royal Commission into Child Abuse was established “to pursue justice and fairness” (71%), and almost half thought the same thing about the Banking Royal Commission (49%).

- 38% of Australians thought the Trade Union Royal Commission was established mainly “to pursue justice and fairness”
- 27% thought the Murray-Darling Basin Royal Commission was established mainly “to pursue justice and fairness”

Australians were more likely to think that “public pressure from voters” was the main reason for the Banking Royal Commission to be established (34%) than for the Royal Commission into Child Abuse (17%) or the Murray-Darling Basin Commission (20%) to be established.

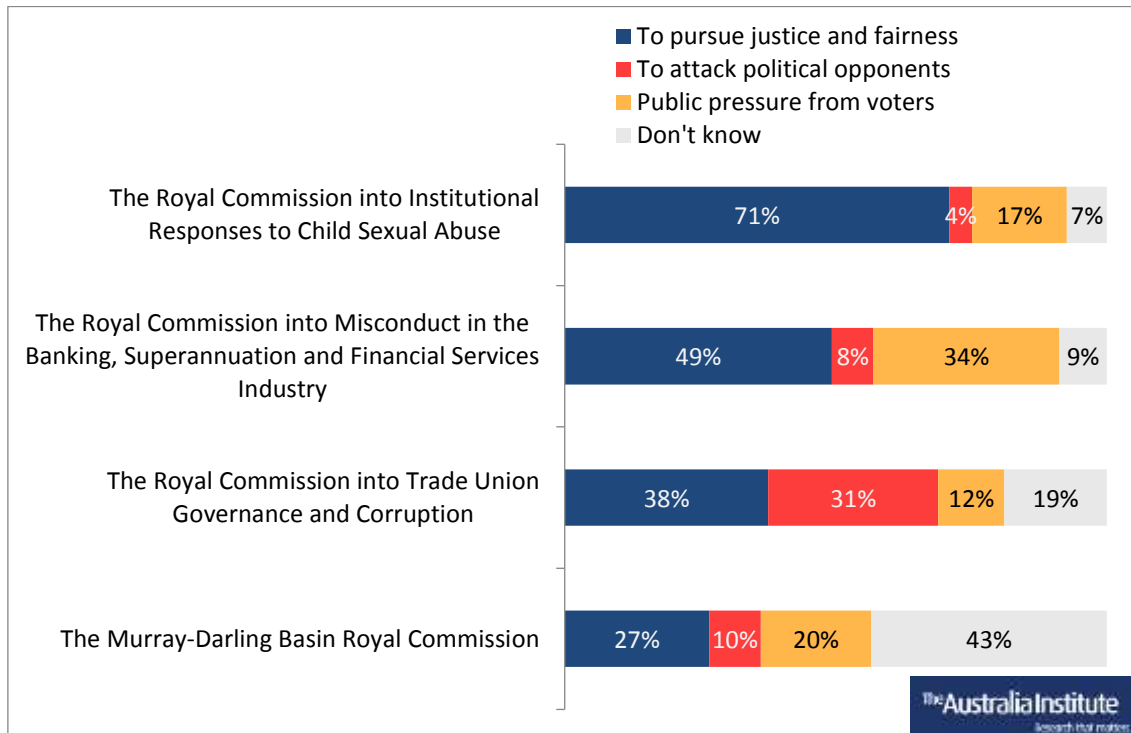
- Only 12% of Australians thought “public pressure from voters” was the main reason the Trade Union Royal Commission was established, the lowest response for any Royal Commission

Australians were more likely to think that the Trade Union Royal Commission was established “to attack political opponents” (31%) than thought that about the Royal Commission into Child Abuse (4%), the Banking Royal Commission (8%) or the Murray-Darling Basin Royal Commission (10%).

For most responses, Australians of different demographics and from across the political spectrum responded similarly. The exception is the Trade Union Royal Commission, which attracted more polarised responses.

- 39% of men thought that the Royal Commission was established mainly “to attack political opponents”, compared to only 24% of women
- More Labor voters (38%) and Greens voters (34%) thought that the Trade Union Royal Commission was established mainly “to attack political opponents” than thought it was established mainly “to pursue justice and fairness” (Labor 32%, Greens 31%)

Thinking about these Royal Commissions, what do you think was the main reason why they were established?



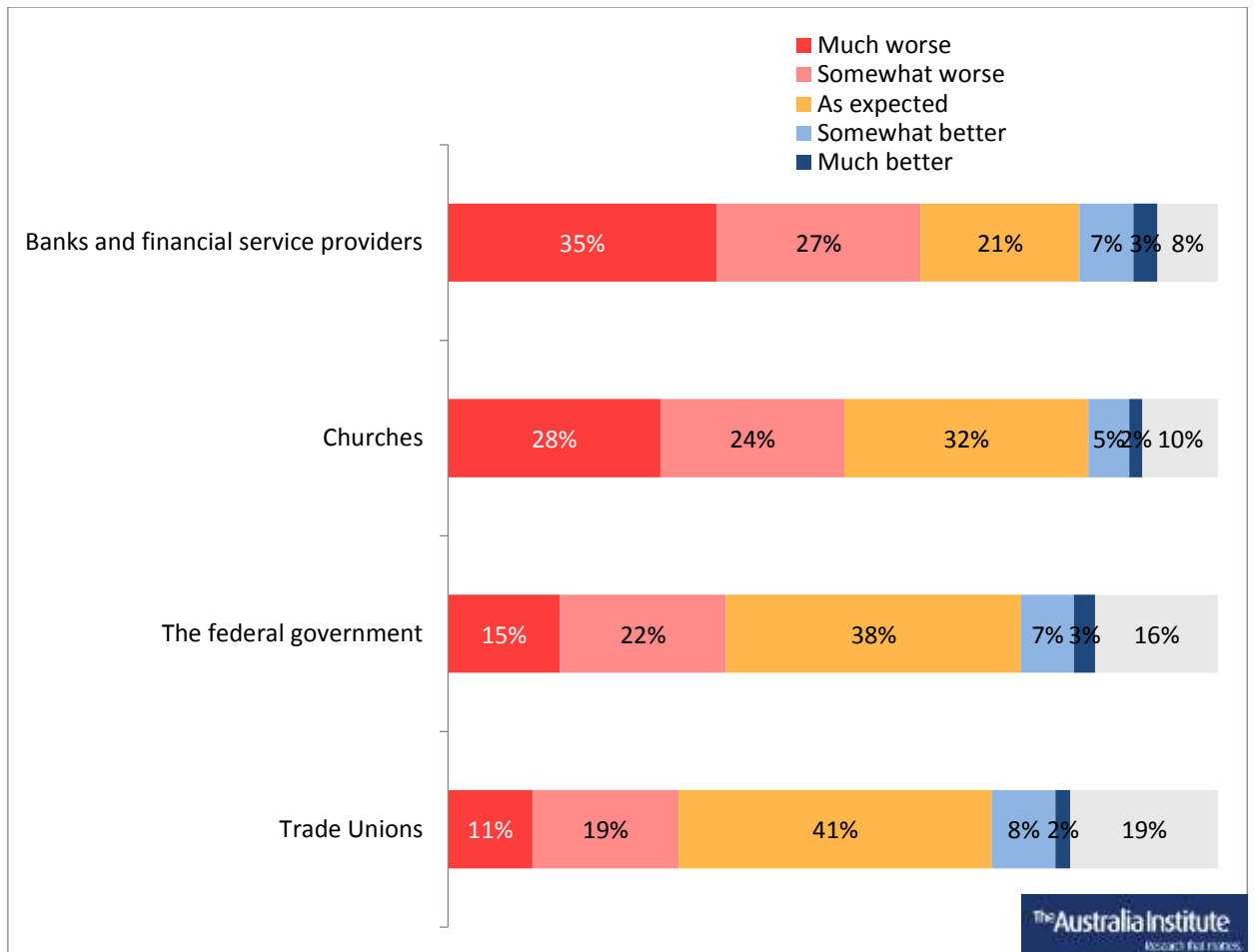
Respondents were asked whether the reputations of churches, banks, trade unions and the Federal government had fared better or worse than expected due to the Royal Commissions.

Twice the number of respondents said banks and financial service providers fared worse than expected, as said Trade Unions had fared worse (30%).

- A majority (61%) said banks and financial service providers had fared worse than expected, followed by Churches (51%), the Federal Government (36%) and Trade Unions (30%)
- Respondents were most likely to say the reputation of Trade Unions had fared as expected (41%), and least likely to say banks and financial services had fared as expected (21%)
- Few thought any of the organisations had fared better than expected, but respondents were least likely to say Churches had fared better (7%, compared to 10% for Banks and financial service providers, Trade Unions and the Federal Government).

Thinking about the Royal Commission's impacts on the following, have their reputations fared better or worse than you expected?

Compared to what I expected, their reputation has fared

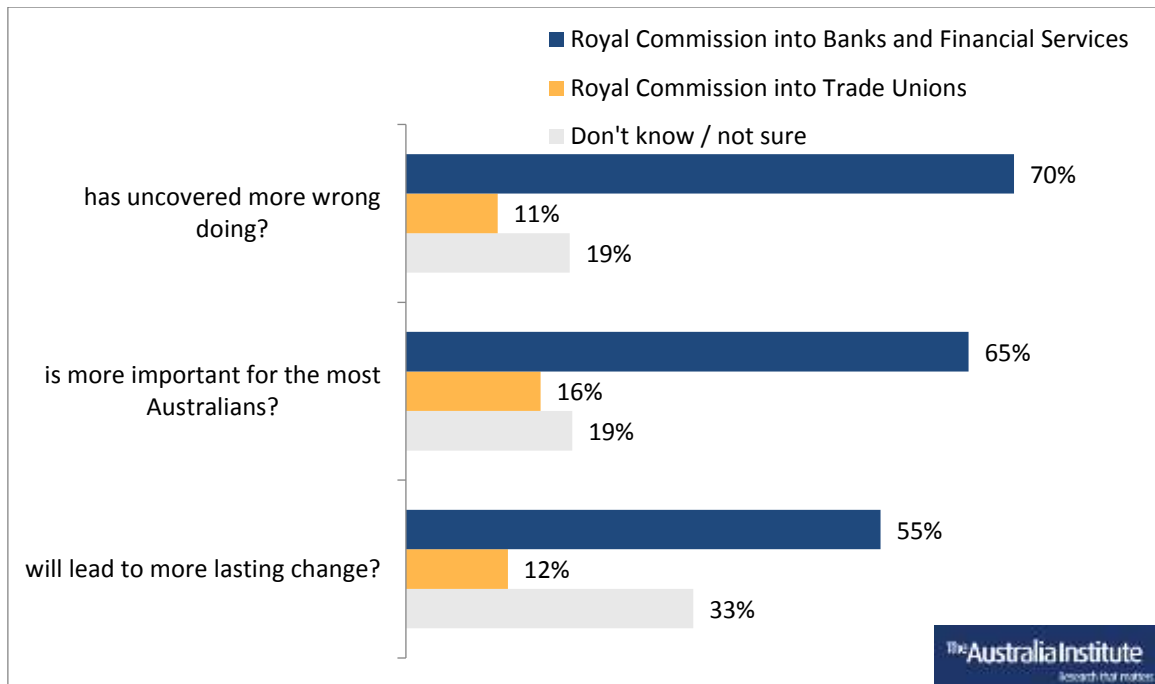


Respondents were then asked to compare the outcomes of the Banking Royal Commission compared to the Trade Union Royal Commission.

Overwhelmingly, respondents thought the Banking Royal Commission had uncovered more wrong doing, was more important for the most Australians and would lead to more lasting change than the Trade Union Royal Commission.

- 70% thought the Banking Royal Commission had uncovered more wrong doing compared to 11% for Trade Union Royal Commission
- Two thirds (65%) thought the Banking Royal Commission was more important for the most Australians, compared to 16% for the Trade Union Royal Commission
- Half (55%) thought the Banking Royal Commission would lead to more last change compared to the 12% who thought the Trade Union Royal Commission would.

Thinking about the Royal Commission into Banks and Financial Services, and the Royal Commission into Trade Unions, which do you think ...



Method

The Australia Institute conducted a national survey of 1,449 people 3 August and 15 August 2018, online through Research Now, with nationally representative samples by gender, age and state and territory.

Results are shown only for larger states.

Voting crosstabs show voting intentions for the lower house. Those who were undecided were asked which way they were leaning; these leanings are included in voting intention crosstabs, but results are also shown separately for undecideds. "LNP" includes separate responses for Liberal and National. "Other" includes Centre Alliance, United Australia Party and Independent/Other.

Detailed results

How much would you say you have heard about:

The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse

	Total	Male	Female	NSW	Qld	Vic	WA
Heard a lot about	29%	30%	28%	32%	28%	28%	25%
Heard some about	46%	46%	47%	43%	48%	47%	45%
Heard nothing about	21%	20%	21%	21%	20%	20%	26%
Don't know / not sure	4%	4%	4%	4%	5%	5%	4%

	LNP	ALP	GRN	PHON	Other	Undec
Heard a lot about	27%	31%	35%	24%	23%	17%
Heard some about	50%	46%	38%	39%	50%	46%
Heard nothing about	19%	20%	22%	28%	21%	28%
Don't know / not sure	4%	3%	5%	8%	6%	9%

The Royal Commission into Trade Union Governance and Corruption

	Total	Male	Female	NSW	Qld	Vic	WA
Heard a lot about	9%	12%	6%	9%	9%	11%	6%
Heard some about	38%	45%	32%	39%	43%	34%	34%
Heard nothing about	46%	37%	55%	46%	42%	47%	56%
Don't know / not sure	6%	6%	7%	5%	6%	8%	4%

	LNP	ALP	GRN	PHON	Other	Undec
Heard a lot about	11%	9%	8%	6%	7%	5%
Heard some about	41%	39%	33%	39%	34%	28%
Heard nothing about	42%	47%	50%	50%	52%	55%
Don't know / not sure	6%	6%	9%	6%	7%	13%

The Royal Commission into Misconduct in the Banking, Superannuation and Financial Services Industry

	Total	Male	Female	NSW	Qld	Vic	WA
Heard a lot about	48%	55%	40%	52%	54%	43%	35%
Heard some about	37%	34%	40%	35%	30%	39%	45%
Heard nothing about	13%	9%	16%	11%	12%	15%	17%
Don't know / not sure	3%	2%	4%	2%	4%	3%	3%

	LNP	ALP	GRN	PHON	Other	Undec
Heard a lot about	52%	47%	36%	54%	43%	33%
Heard some about	35%	37%	40%	34%	40%	42%
Heard nothing about	10%	14%	20%	10%	13%	19%
Don't know / not sure	3%	2%	4%	2%	4%	6%

The Murray-Darling Basin Royal Commission

	Total	Male	Female	NSW	Qld	Vic	WA
Heard a lot about	5%	5%	5%	4%	4%	4%	4%
Heard some about	30%	34%	26%	31%	28%	29%	21%
Heard nothing about	56%	53%	59%	57%	60%	54%	65%
Don't know / not sure	9%	8%	10%	8%	8%	12%	10%

	LNP	ALP	GRN	PHON	Other	Undec
Heard a lot about	5%	5%	8%	2%	6%	4%
Heard some about	33%	27%	27%	29%	32%	23%
Heard nothing about	54%	58%	59%	60%	52%	57%
Don't know / not sure	9%	10%	6%	9%	10%	16%

Thinking about these Royal Commissions, what do you think was the main reason why they were established?

The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse

	Total	Male	Female	NSW	Qld	Vic	WA
To pursue justice and fairness	71%	69%	73%	71%	70%	71%	74%
To attack political opponents	4%	6%	2%	4%	6%	4%	1%
Public pressure from voters	17%	19%	16%	18%	16%	16%	20%
Don't know / not sure	7%	7%	8%	8%	8%	8%	5%

	LNP	ALP	GRN	PHON	Other	Undec
To pursue justice and fairness	71%	72%	71%	67%	69%	69%
To attack political opponents	4%	4%	5%	4%	5%	6%
Public pressure from voters	17%	16%	16%	23%	20%	16%
Don't know / not sure	7%	8%	8%	6%	6%	10%

The Royal Commission into Trade Union Governance and Corruption

	Total	Male	Female	NSW	Qld	Vic	WA
To pursue justice and fairness	38%	36%	39%	37%	39%	41%	37%
To attack political opponents	31%	39%	24%	31%	34%	27%	27%
Public pressure from voters	12%	11%	13%	14%	8%	13%	13%
Don't know / not sure	19%	14%	24%	18%	19%	19%	23%

	LNP	ALP	GRN	PHON	Other	Undec
To pursue justice and fairness	45%	32%	31%	45%	34%	39%
To attack political opponents	25%	38%	34%	23%	31%	21%
Public pressure from voters	11%	12%	11%	13%	18%	13%

Don't know / not sure	19%	18%	24%	19%	17%	27%
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The Royal Commission into Misconduct in the Banking, Superannuation and Financial Services Industry

	Total	Male	Female	NSW	Qld	Vic	WA
To pursue justice and fairness	49%	48%	50%	50%	49%	51%	55%
To attack political opponents	8%	9%	7%	7%	7%	10%	4%
Public pressure from voters	34%	38%	31%	35%	33%	32%	34%
Don't know / not sure	9%	6%	12%	8%	11%	8%	7%

	LNP	ALP	GRN	PHON	Other	Undec
To pursue justice and fairness	54%	48%	43%	52%	43%	52%
To attack political opponents	7%	8%	8%	7%	8%	4%
Public pressure from voters	32%	35%	36%	32%	40%	32%
Don't know / not sure	7%	9%	13%	8%	8%	12%

The Murray-Darling Basin Royal Commission

	Total	Male	Female	NSW	Qld	Vic	WA
To pursue justice and fairness	27%	27%	26%	27%	29%	26%	23%
To attack political opponents	10%	12%	7%	8%	8%	11%	9%
Public pressure from voters	20%	21%	20%	20%	19%	19%	20%
Don't know / not sure	43%	39%	47%	45%	44%	44%	48%

	LNP	ALP	GRN	PHON	Other	Undec
To pursue justice and fairness	28%	26%	29%	28%	22%	22%
To attack political opponents	9%	9%	11%	8%	13%	8%
Public pressure from voters	21%	19%	15%	25%	24%	16%
Don't know / not sure	42%	46%	45%	39%	41%	53%

Thinking about the Royal Commission's impacts on the following, have their reputations fared better or worse than you expected?

Compared to what I expected, their reputation has fared

Churches

	Total	Male	Female	NSW	Qld	Vic	WA
Much worse	28%	29%	26%	32%	31%	24%	18%
Somewhat worse	24%	25%	22%	24%	20%	24%	27%
As expected	32%	31%	33%	29%	33%	31%	33%
Somewhat better	5%	6%	5%	4%	5%	8%	3%
Much better	2%	2%	1%	2%	1%	2%	3%
Don't know / not sure	10%	7%	13%	9%	9%	11%	15%

	LNP	ALP	GRN	PHON	Other	Undec
Much worse	28%	28%	25%	35%	25%	21%
Somewhat worse	29%	21%	20%	20%	24%	22%
As expected	28%	35%	34%	28%	30%	34%
Somewhat better	5%	5%	4%	3%	8%	3%
Much better	2%	1%	2%	1%	3%	2%
Don't know / not sure	8%	9%	15%	13%	10%	17%

Trade Unions

	Total	Male	Female	NSW	Qld	Vic	WA
Much worse	11%	13%	9%	11%	17%	10%	3%
Somewhat worse	19%	21%	17%	20%	18%	21%	14%
As expected	41%	42%	40%	41%	39%	40%	39%
Somewhat better	8%	9%	8%	7%	8%	8%	13%
Much better	2%	3%	1%	2%	1%	2%	2%
Don't know / not sure	19%	12%	26%	19%	16%	20%	30%

	LNP	ALP	GRN	PHON	Other	Undec
Much worse	17%	5%	5%	21%	13%	10%
Somewhat worse	20%	20%	15%	19%	15%	16%
As expected	40%	43%	42%	33%	40%	37%
Somewhat better	8%	10%	8%	6%	5%	6%
Much better	1%	3%	1%	0%	3%	1%
Don't know / not sure	14%	20%	29%	21%	24%	30%

Banks and financial service providers

	Total	Male	Female	NSW	Qld	Vic	WA
Much worse	35%	40%	30%	40%	40%	28%	20%
Somewhat worse	27%	26%	27%	24%	29%	28%	28%
As expected	21%	19%	22%	19%	19%	23%	24%
Somewhat better	7%	6%	8%	8%	4%	8%	11%
Much better	3%	4%	2%	4%	2%	3%	4%
Don't know / not sure	8%	5%	11%	6%	6%	10%	13%

	LNP	ALP	GRN	PHON	Other	Undec
Much worse	35%	35%	24%	42%	38%	27%
Somewhat worse	31%	26%	24%	27%	19%	22%
As expected	19%	21%	26%	17%	22%	23%
Somewhat better	7%	7%	7%	5%	11%	9%
Much better	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%	4%
Don't know / not sure	5%	9%	15%	7%	7%	15%

The federal government

	Total	Male	Female	NSW	Qld	Vic	WA
Much worse	15%	16%	13%	17%	17%	11%	10%
Somewhat worse	22%	23%	20%	20%	23%	19%	18%
As expected	38%	41%	36%	37%	39%	40%	39%
Somewhat better	7%	7%	6%	6%	6%	10%	9%
Much better	3%	3%	3%	5%	2%	2%	2%
Don't know / not sure	16%	10%	21%	15%	13%	19%	22%

	LNP	ALP	GRN	PHON	Other	Undec
Much worse	7%	18%	15%	27%	19%	11%
Somewhat worse	20%	23%	22%	23%	19%	19%
As expected	49%	34%	33%	27%	34%	33%
Somewhat better	8%	7%	5%	5%	4%	4%
Much better	3%	2%	3%	4%	3%	4%
Don't know / not sure	13%	15%	23%	16%	20%	29%

Thinking about the Royal Commission into Banks and Financial Services, and the Royal Commission into Trade Unions, which do you think ...

has uncovered more wrong doing?

	Total	Male	Female	NSW	Qld	Vic	WA
Royal Commission into Trade Unions	11%	11%	10%	9%	14%	12%	6%
Royal Commission into Banks and Financial Services	70%	76%	65%	77%	69%	63%	70%
Don't know / not sure	19%	13%	25%	15%	16%	25%	24%

	LNP	ALP	GRN	PHON	Other	Undec
Royal Commission into Trade Unions	15%	7%	10%	8%	11%	8%
Royal Commission into Banks and Financial Services	69%	73%	63%	73%	71%	60%
Don't know / not sure	16%	19%	27%	18%	18%	33%

is more important for the most Australians?

	Total	Male	Female	NSW	Qld	Vic	WA
Royal Commission into Trade Unions	16%	17%	14%	16%	18%	14%	15%
Royal Commission into Banks and Financial Services	65%	69%	61%	67%	62%	63%	63%
Don't know / not sure	19%	14%	24%	17%	19%	22%	22%

	LNP	ALP	GRN	PHON	Other	Undec
Royal Commission into Trade Unions	17%	13%	15%	20%	16%	14%
Royal Commission into Banks and Financial Services	64%	69%	62%	61%	61%	56%
Don't know / not sure	18%	18%	23%	18%	24%	31%

will lead to more lasting change?

	Total	Male	Female	NSW	Qld	Vic	WA
Royal Commission into Trade Unions	12%	11%	12%	11%	11%	13%	11%
Royal Commission into Banks and Financial Services	55%	61%	49%	57%	57%	50%	52%
Don't know / not sure	33%	28%	39%	32%	32%	37%	37%

	LNP	ALP	GRN	PHON	Other	Undec
Royal Commission into Trade Unions	12%	13%	11%	7%	11%	8%
Royal Commission into Banks and Financial Services	55%	56%	52%	59%	51%	45%
Don't know / not sure	33%	31%	37%	34%	38%	47%