

IPA MEDIA RELEASE

Institute of Public Affairs | Australia's leading free market think tank

Wednesday 28 September, 2011

82% OF AUSTRALIANS THINK FREEDOM OF SPEECH IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN THE RIGHT NOT TO BE OFFENDED

A new poll has found that 82% of Australians think protecting freedom of speech is more important than protecting people from being offended.

The poll conducted last weekend for the Institute of Public Affairs by Galaxy Research surveyed 1052 people across the country.

The finding comes in the lead up to this morning's judgement in the Federal Court of the Andrew Bolt freedom of speech trial. Judgement in the trial of *Pat Eatock v Andrew Bolt & Anor* is scheduled to be announced at 10.15 am in Melbourne today.

John Roskam, the Executive Director of the Institute of Public Affairs said 'freedom of speech is a bedrock of Australian democracy.'

'The law which sent Andrew Bolt to trial does not reflect community attitudes to freedom of speech.'

'The trial is another illustration of how freedom of speech is under threat in Australia,' said Mr Roskam.

The poll question was:

In your opinion, which of these two options is the most important? That the government protect the right to free speech, or that people are protected from being offended?

<i>Right to free speech</i>	<i>82%</i>
<i>Protection from being offended</i>	<i>15%</i>
<i>Don't know</i>	<i>3%</i>

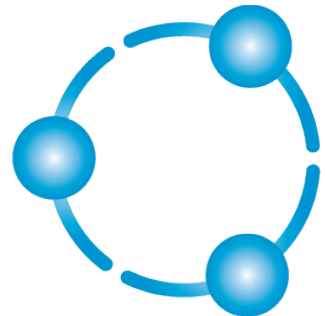
Details of the freedom of speech poll are available at www.ipa.org.au.

For media comment: John Roskam Executive Director 0415 475 673
jroskam@ipa.org.au

Institute of Public Affairs, Level 2, 410 Collins St. Melbourne
ph: 03 9600 4744 fax: 03 9602 4989 www.ipa.org.au

Freedom of Speech Survey

Prepared for:
Institute of Public Affairs
September, 2011



SECTION A – ASK RESPONDENTS AGED 18+. OTHERS GO TO NEXT SECTION

A1. In your opinion, which of these two options is the most important? That the government protect the right to free speech, or that people are protected from being offended?

SR
Right to free speech 1
Protection from being offended 2
Don't know..... 3

GALAXY RESEARCH

TABLE 1 Standard Banner 1 *BY* A1. Free speech more important than protection from being offended

BASE: WGHT SAMPLE (000s)

WEIGHTS: Age/Sex/Area

	Total	Sex		Age				Marital Status		Grocery Buyer		Children		Work Status			S.E.S.	
		Male	Female	18-24	25-34	35-49	50+	Marr-ied	Not Marr-ied	Yes	No	Yes	No	Full Time	Part Time	Not Working	White	Blue
RESPONDENTS	1052	524	528	108	112	395	437	704	348	691	361	417	635	461	235	356	623	429
WGHT SAMPLE (000s)	16970	8265	8705	2108	2774	5149	6939	10950	6020	10987	5983	6494	10476	7342	3839	5789	9981	6989
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
A1. Free speech more important than protection from being offended																		
Right to free speech	13986	6914	7072	1578	2366	4192	5851	9063	4922	9054	4932	5211	8775	6195	3042	4748	8326	5660
	82%	84%	81%	75%	85%	81%	84%	83%	82%	82%	82%	80%	84%	84%	79%	82%	83%	81%
Protection from being offended	2538	1087	1451	471	408	827	832	1646	892	1641	897	1162	1376	1000	740	798	1471	1067
	15%	13%	17%	22%	15%	16%	12%	15%	15%	15%	15%	18%	13%	14%	19%	14%	15%	15%
Don't know	446	264	182	60		130	257	241	206	292	154	121	325	147	56	243	184	263
	3%	3%	2%	3%		3%	4%	2%	3%	3%	3%	2%	3%	2%	1%	4%	2%	4%
TOTALS	16970	8265	8705	2108	2774	5149	6939	10950	6020	10987	5983	6494	10476	7342	3839	5789	9981	6989
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

GALAXY RESEARCH

TABLE 2 Standard Banner 2 *BY* A1. Free speech more important than protection from being offended

BASE: WGHT SAMPLE (000s)

WEIGHTS: Age/Sex/Area

	Total	State					Capital City		Household Income			Schooling	
		NSW Vic/Tas	Qld	SA	WA	Yes	No	< \$40K	\$40K-\$69K	\$70K+	Below Year 12	Year 12	
RESPONDENTS	1052	316	296	192	124	124	672	380	261	201	457	322	730
WGHT SAMPLE (000s)	16970	5934	4701	3326	1332	1677	10459	6511	4201	3336	7203	5089	11881
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
A1. Free speech more important than protection from being offended													
Right to free speech	13986	4926	3802	2774	1067	1418	8462	5523	3294	2770	6182	4082	9903
	82%	83%	81%	83%	80%	85%	81%	85%	78%	83%	86%	80%	83%
Protection from being offended	2538	880	758	433	243	225	1672	866	720	478	935	827	1711
	15%	15%	16%	13%	18%	13%	16%	13%	17%	14%	13%	16%	14%
Don't know	446	129	141	120	23	34	325	122	187	88	87	180	266
	3%	2%	3%	4%	2%	2%	3%	2%	4%	3%	1%	4%	2%
TOTALS	16970	5934	4701	3326	1332	1677	10459	6511	4201	3336	7203	5089	11881
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%