

2019 VCE Australian Politics examination report

General comments

Section A consisted of 15 questions, two with multiple parts. Students were required to answer all questions, worth a total of 60 marks. These questions covered all parts of the course, drawing on each Area of Study.

Section B consisted of four essay questions, and students were required to answer one, worth 20 marks.

The highest-scoring responses demonstrated a very good level of understanding and awareness of important political events in recent years, and many students were able to draw upon these events to offer relevant examples and case studies. Some students, however, used incorrect examples in relation to the questions, which detracted from the quality of their responses. Lower-scoring responses often did not make use of evidence or were too general. A number of students did not respond to some questions. Students are reminded that they should respond to all questions.

In their exam preparation, students should take note of the range of task terms that might be used in the examination. Terms such as 'outline', 'explain' and 'define' require a different type of answer to questions using higher-order terms such as 'critically compare', 'discuss' or 'analyse'. Attention should be paid to these task terms during the year and practice tasks should be completed with them clearly in mind. For example, in Section A two questions asked students to discuss various factors or points. Discussion questions require something more than a description or explanation. A discussion might involve looking at both sides of an argument or offering a number of interconnected examples. Question 8, for example, required students to discuss the roles of political parties in the electoral system of the USA. This required more than one role in the electoral system to be specifically discussed.

Students are reminded of the importance of reading examination questions very carefully. Effective use of reading time is crucial to determining exactly what is being asked. If a question offers students a choice, students should make their choice clear in their response.

Students mostly wrote answers of an appropriate length in response to the mark allocations given in Section A of the examination, although it should be noted that questions worth 6–7 marks do require a significantly detailed response. Students who need to use extra writing space at the end of the question and answer book are reminded to indicate this clearly.

When using examples, which is strongly recommended, students must ensure they are factually correct and relevant to the question. Muddling the names of government ministers or confusion over the relationship of the example to the response detracted from some responses. Students are reminded that examples, case studies and evidence should come from within the last 10 years.

The essays in Section B were generally of good quality. The most popular essay topic was the foreign policy topic, followed by the one on Australian democracy. The length and inclusion of examples in many essays was appropriate. Students are reminded of the essential requirement in

an essay to address the topic and avoid irrelevance or previously-prepared responses. The highest-scoring essays clearly addressed the topic and made detailed use of evidence and contemporary examples. Low-scoring responses were characterised by repetition, irrelevance and generalisations. Practice in dealing with unexpected and complex questions will assist students to develop skills in responding to unfamiliar material under examination conditions.

Specific information

Note: Student responses reproduced in this report have not been corrected for grammar, spelling or factual information.

This report provides sample answers or an indication of what answers may have included. Unless otherwise stated, these are not intended to be exemplary or complete responses.

The statistics in this report may be subject to rounding resulting in a total more or less than 100 per cent.

Section A

Question 1

Marks	0	1	Average
%	1	99	1

Australian citizens can participate in the political process by:

- exercising their right to vote
- joining political parties
- running for election
- taking part in political protests and actions.

Question 2

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	11	23	66	1.6

The main functions of the Senate are:

- to represent the states
- to act as the house of review.

The main functions of the House of Representatives are:

- to form a government
- to represent the people/population
- to initiate the bulk of bills which become legislation (particularly money bills).

Question 3

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	8	18	27	46	2.1

Students were required to explain one of the ways the Australian prime minister can be chosen. The best answers included a recent example. Some responses tried to combine more than one way of becoming PM, which was not necessary. Possible answers included:

- as the leader of the party (or coalition of parties) that receives the majority of seats in the House of Representatives in an election and therefore forms government; for example, Scott Morrison at the federal election in May 2019
- by becoming the leader of the party (or coalition) already in government through a leadership spill (vote of parliamentary party members only) which results in a change of leadership; for example, Scott Morrison becoming PM in late 2018 through the Liberal Party's change of leader
- in a hung parliament the Governor-General has the power to decide who should be the prime minister.

Question 4

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	31	22	30	17	1.4

This question required a clear understanding of the meaning of party pre-selection, which some students confused with a leadership spill. Students had to briefly explain the method, link it clearly to its democratic impact, whether positive or negative, and include a contemporary example.

Possible impacts and examples included:

- Most pre-selection of candidates is done by paid-up party members only, thereby reducing the participation of most Australian citizens in selecting the candidates of their preferred political party. For example, Katie Allen was pre-selected as the new Liberal candidate for the electorate of Higgins (to replace Kelly O'Dwyer who had been the sitting member) only by local Liberal Party branch members, a small group of people.
- A candidate pre-selected to a safe seat can reasonably expect to win their electorate and go straight to Parliament. This may be undemocratic as it reduces the participation and impact of the voters in that electorate to alone determine their MP; for example, Katie Allen's relatively easy election win in Higgins.
- In the 2019 election several pre-selected candidates were forced to resign during the campaign because of embarrassing social media posts or incidents in their past that were discovered and publicised. This lack of thorough checking/vetting of candidates by parties during their pre-selection process can diminish the voters' choices if they withdraw. For example, in the seat of Melbourne, due to the resignation of the ALP candidate Luke Creasey in the late stage of the campaign, ALP voters had no ALP candidate to vote for.
- Sometimes political parties are accused of 'parachuting celebrity candidates' into safe electorates or the Senate – that is, people they want to get into Parliament and who may have no link with the electorate they are pre-selected for – often as a result of interference by the party at a higher level. This reduces the impact of the vote of the local branch members and wider party supporters. For example, Kristina Keneally was 'parachuted' into a Senate vacancy for NSW by the Labor Party, and Linda Burney was parachuted into the seat of Barton for the House of Representatives.

- Democracy can be enhanced by pre-selection methods such as those used by the Greens, who allow party members across the party to participate in the determination of candidates.
- Some pre-selection methods may negatively impact representation and diversity in choice of candidates; the Liberal Party has been criticised in recent years for not setting a quota for women candidates, thereby failing to address the low numbers of female MPs.

Question 5

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	21	24	33	22	1.6

Students responses showed some confusion about the concept of Individual Ministerial Responsibility (IMR), a key principle of the Westminster system.

IMR refers to the principle that a Minister is responsible to Parliament for the actions of her/his government department; if a Minister fails in this regard the expectation is that they will be dismissed, or should step down, from their position. The fact that in contemporary Australian politics this principle is rarely followed influenced students to use an example of where IMR **has not** been enforced. The moral failings of a Minister (for example in misusing travel allowances or personal impropriety) can only be regarded as IMR if they relate to the Minister's role; a clear link needed to be made in such situations.

Examples include:

- Government Services Minister Stuart Robert acknowledged to Parliament the mistakes in the Robodebt calls carried out by Centrelink in 2019 but did not stand down.
- Health Minister Sussan Ley resigned after the misuse of her ministerial travel entitlements for personal travel in 2017.
- Barnaby Joyce's resignation from his leadership and ministerial roles in the National Party in February 2018 demonstrate IMR only in so far as his extra marital affair while in those roles can be linked to the potential misuse of government funds/jobs/travel.

Question 6

Marks	0	1	Average
%	12	88	0.9

Some students misinterpreted the word 'source', which broadly refers to a key role of the President which gave them power.

Examples include the Constitution itself, the veto power, the ability to appoint Supreme Court judges, the mandate awarded via popular election to the position.

Question 7

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	26	25	32	17	1.4

This question required students to explain one impact, either positive or negative, of the US federal system on the protection of democratic rights and freedoms of US citizens. Students had to show an understanding of the relationship between federal and national levels of government in the area of democratic rights and freedoms and use an example to demonstrate this.

Examples of high-scoring responses included:

- the 2015 Supreme Court decision to guarantee the rights of same-sex couples to marry in the USA which was refused by some states
- the 2019 attempts by some southern states to outlaw abortion, threatening the historic Roe v. Wade decision
- the conflict between the attempts of some states to regulate gun laws against the backdrop of the Bill of Rights protection of the right to bear arms.

The following is an extract from a high-scoring response.

Federalism is the USA system in which powers of the Government are decentralised and divided between States and a Federal Government. The US constitution purposely gives more powers to the states, such as running electoral system, marriage laws etc, to ensure that constituents of any given state are adequately and accurately represented in a way that they need ... this enhances their specific protection of rights and freedoms.

Question 8

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	8	6	15	17	22	21	11	3.5

This question required a discussion of the roles of political parties in the US electoral system, not just in general, which was missed by some students. At least two if not three roles should have been addressed. Higher-scoring responses referred to examples such as the names of parties, key figures and recent events.

Some roles include:

- the selection of candidates for election via the system of primary elections, including in particular those for presidential candidates currently being undertaken by the Democrats in the lead-up to the 2020 election
- holding national party conventions to nominate the party's presidential and vice-presidential candidates
- development of policies and campaign platforms for candidates, also seen in political party advertising and debates, thus providing a choice for voters
- mobilising voters to vote, in the USA non-compulsory system
- taking an active role in the conduct of elections at a state level and the drawing of electoral boundaries, sometimes resulting in gerrymandering.

Both this question and Question 7 required detailed knowledge of specific aspects of the US system, as outlined in the study design.

Question 9

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	1	2	8	18	29	26	17	4.2

To critically compare political systems of Australia and the USA students were required to analyse and evaluate similarities and differences between the political system in Australia and the political system in the USA and the extent to which each system reflects liberal democratic values.

Students were able to identify the key differences and impacts on both political systems of using compulsory and voluntary voting, most evidently in relation to voter turnout and the subsequent mandate given to elected governments. Many students also recognised other differences, such as the necessity of political parties in the US to focus on getting out the vote as opposed to Australia where seemingly more time is spent on campaign issues and policy debate. Many students

addressed similarities in allowing the right to vote to be exercised in both democracies. Most students referred to a contemporary example as requested, such as turnout figures from recent elections in both countries. Some students wrote short responses that did not adequately demonstrate their knowledge.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

In Aust, voting is legally mandatory, whereas in the US, voting is optional. These have in both countries, had significant implications, overall though proving that compulsory voting produces more democratic results. B/c voting in US is optional, an insufficient amount of ppl actually vote, which means that election results are not representing accurately the will of the entire nation, undermining representation of popular gov! 2016 saw only 60.1% vote in Pres elections, and hence Trump was elected with only 37% of the nation's popular vote! This power is based on a miniscule amount of the nation, particularly the demographics who are more likely to vote, more likely to CHOOSE to vote, such as stakeholders, wealthier, more educated ppl. This is not representative of America's diverse population. In Aust, b/c everyone must vote, participation is VERY high, in 2019 it was 90.(! This upholds participation & ensures very accurate results when truly reflect the ppl's will ...

Question 10

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	12	22	66	1.6

Differences between the formulation of domestic and foreign policy include:

- Domestic policy is subject to a range of factors inside parliament and in the community generally in its formulation; foreign policy is often formulated at an elite level where influences might be unknown or hidden due to security concerns.
- Domestic policy is generally discussed and debated in the parliament; foreign policy can be made by the Cabinet alone.
- Domestic policy is often made proactively whereas foreign policy can be reactive to particular global events.
- Domestic policy is often partisan and contested between the major parties whereas foreign policy is often bi-partisan in the agreed national interest.

Question 11a.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	22	38	39	1.2

This question required students to describe one way in which a backbencher might influence the forming of domestic policy, not necessarily successful. The question was not about the role of a backbencher in general.

Some ways in which backbenchers could do this include:

- asking questions in parliament that relate to policy development
- participating in parliamentary committees
- meeting with groups of voters
- lobbying party leaders/ministers regarding policies to benefit their electorates
- threatening to or actually crossing the floor
- developing and introducing private member's bills.

Students should note that Senate crossbenchers such as Jacqui Lambie, Pauline Hanson and (formerly) Derryn Hinch are not backbenchers.

Question 11b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	Average
%	12	8	22	26	24	8	2.7

This question required an understanding and explanation of what the public service is and its role in domestic policy-making. Many students seemed unclear on how to explain the concept of the public service. This is a key aspect of the Westminster system and should be clearly understood by students of Australian politics.

An analysis of the role of the public service needed to include a discussion of more than one role and some understanding of the overall impact of the public service on domestic policy formulation as a conclusion to or commentary on the analysis. Examples or evidence from recent policy issues needed to be incorporated into the answer. Higher-scoring responses revealed an understanding of the public service, analysed two or three roles and referred to contemporary evidence.

Public service roles that could have been mentioned include:

- providing non-political and expert advice to the relevant minister
- conducting and reporting on research relating to the domestic policy
- preparing briefs and speeches for the relevant minister
- presenting alternatives and options to the minister in the policy area.

Some responses included reference to the notion that in recent times ministerial advisers had in some cases overtaken the traditional role of the public service in domestic policy formulation and this was a relevant part of the analysis.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

The public service has a significant role in the formulation of domestic policy. The public service is intended to provide frank and fearless advice to government, specifically to the relevant ministers. This advice often forms the groundwork of a new policy. Additionally, the government can commission the public service to conduct a report or hold a survey, for example, the 2017 same-sex marriage postal survey conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics on behalf of the government.... However, the public service's role in the formulation of domestic policy has been somewhat diminished in recent years. The government is becoming increasingly reliant on expert reports instead of the public service in their domestic policy formulation, as seen in the 2011 Gonski education report, which although conducted through the Department of Education, was chaired by David Gonski who was not a part of the public service. Additionally there are concerns that the public service is become more politicised, undermining their ability to provide frank fearless advice. For example there have been reports of the CSIRO being reluctant to provide a climate change sceptical government with climate advice.

Question 12

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Average
%	8	5	13	13	17	18	14	12	4

Students needed to discuss one contemporary domestic policy issue, ideally but not necessarily one they had studied during the year, and evaluate its successes and/or failures.

Success was accepted to mean whether the policy met its aims; whether it was passed through both houses of parliament and into an implementation phase; whether it had broad public support and acceptance. Failures meant the opposite of these points. Some judgement on the overall success or failure was required as part of the answer.

Students took a range of approaches: some attempted to discuss all these aspects, others focused only on the formulation of the policy through parliament. Many students wrote narrative and descriptive overviews of their chosen policy, but some responses were much too short. Students are reminded of the essential requirement in this Area of Study to develop a detailed knowledge and understanding of one policy area and be able to write about it in specific terms, alongside other related domestic policy examples.

A range of policy areas were referred to in this question including Medevac, same-sex marriage, drought relief, 2019 budget income tax cuts, cashless welfare cards and energy policy.

Question 13

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	24	13	23	23	17	2

This question required students to discuss one example where public opinion, successfully or not, had played a role in the formulation of foreign policy. Some responses mistakenly referred to domestic policy.

High-scoring responses described a foreign policy instance from recent years and explained how the view of the public either impacted positively on the policy or had no impact. Examples could have included the live cattle export ban by the Gillard government due to public outcry or the minimal effect of public pressure on the current government to honour its international climate change obligations.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

Public opinion refers to the views of the Australian citizen, and it has been highly influential in the 2011 live export case. After the release of the four corners expose on the condition of live export to Indonesia there were waves of public outcry. Petitions, as well as an influx of letters to MPs flooded parliament. This urged the Gillard gvt to take action, and suspend their trade relationship relations to live export- banning it due to the sheer size and strength of public opinion.

Question 14a.

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	2	16	35	47	2.3

The reasons it is important for the Australian Government to act as a good global citizen include that this:

- is one of the main aims of Australian foreign policy
- is a moral obligation and its responsibility as a member of the UN and the international community
- helps Australia develop positive trade relationships with developing and emerging market nations
- helps in strengthening good governance in other nations, which can assist in mitigating the threat of global terrorism and other risks to Australia's national security
- strengthens Australia's reputation and role in our region.

Too many students listed but did not explain, as required by the question, why the above reasons were important for the Australian government.

Question 14b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	6	9	28	32	24	2.6

Students needed to explain why the maintenance of national security is important to the aims of Australian foreign policy, but many students missed the need to clarify their understanding of the term. National security is defined as the following in the VCAA glossary, as published on the website:

‘... the national interest of a state to ensure it maintains sovereignty. Traditionally this term refers to the protection of a state’s borders from intruders but has evolved to include other forms of security, such as resource and environmental security, which are necessary for a state to maintain sovereignty ...’

This broad definition allowed students to draw upon a wide range of examples, such as:

- meeting and countering the rise of China in the Asia Pacific, particularly land claims in the South China Sea affecting Australian trade routes
- contributing to the US-led naval force in the Strait of Hormuz
- responding to the alleged hacking of Australian sites by China and the threat to cyber security
- working alongside US troops at the US military base in Darwin.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

Maintaining national security is a key objective of Australian foreign policy because the government views it as a priority to protect Australia’s sovereignty and to protect the safety of Australian citizens.

Australia often conducts military deployments targeting potential security threats to prevent these threats expanding to Australia. For example Australia deployed troops in Iraq in 2014 and Syria in 2015 as well as conducting air strikes in Syria in 2017 to combat terrorist group Islamic State, who the government viewed as a potential security threat.

Question 15

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	Average
%	5	6	16	28	29	15	3.2

This question required students to show an understanding of how foreign aid is used as an instrument of Australian foreign policy.

Essentially foreign aid (not to be confused with humanitarian/emergency assistance) is a tool the Australian government can use to help it achieve its overall foreign policy objective of protecting the national interest. For example, by helping poorer nations develop their economies, Australia’s potential trading partners are expanded and the need for reliance on financial assistance from Australia decreases. By supporting countries in our region with their governance and economic development, Australia’s reputation and influence as a good global citizen increases alongside our desire to match the rise of other nations such as China.

On the other hand it could be argued that Australia’s commitment to foreign aid for purely altruistic or cosmopolitan reasons has lessened in recent years. This is exemplified by our decreasing overall budget allocation for foreign aid, in contrast to UN targets, and by the small amount of aid we direct to the poorest parts of the world such as Africa, in favour of countries in our region. So overall it could be concluded that foreign aid is a less important instrument for the government in achieving our foreign policy objectives.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response:

Foreign aid is a key instrument of Australian foreign policy because it can achieve multiple objectives of Australian foreign policy. Foreign aid primarily promotes Australia as a good global citizen, but also can maintain national security and promote Australia's economic and trade interests. By providing foreign aid to countries Australia is building good relationships with these countries and minimising potential security threats in the process. Additionally foreign aid has been spent in an attempt to counter regional Chinese influence, which is seen as a threat to Australia's security. For example, in 2018 Australia pledged \$3 billion in foreign aid to help counter Chinese influence in the Pacific. Foreign aid also promotes Australia's economic and trade interests. Australia is a subscriber to the 'Aid for trade' program through which Australia has provided foreign aid through multilateral organisations such as the WTO and bilaterally, such as to Timor Leste in 2013 and 2014 specifically to develop other states economies, often in the hope that Australia will be able to trade with them.

Section B – Essay

Question chosen	none	1	2	3	4
%	2	27	18	19	34

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	Average
%	2	0	1	1	1	1	2	3	6	6	10	10	8	8	13	10	9	5	3	2	1	12.3

Question 1

This topic was the second-most popular with students. The question required students to address the aims of both proportional and preferential voting systems and why they are used in Australia. An explanation of the operation of each system was also required before a detailed discussion of strengths and weaknesses in relation to democratic values such as representation, accountability, majority rule etc. An overall judgement on the relative merits of both systems, individually and as compared to the other, also needed to be included, either as the main contention or as the conclusion.

Many students struggled with their explanation of both systems. This is a core aspect of Area of Study 1 and students should practice writing on this topic. The two systems have distinct aims and operate independently of each other, despite the AEC overseeing elections in which the two systems are used. Both have democratic strengths and weaknesses. The impact of recent changes to proportional voting on the composition of the current Senate should have been a major discussion point.

Students should ensure that they use relevant and recent examples in their essays. This topic in particular lent itself to a rich source of examples being drawn from the 2019 federal election; however, many essays did not include such evidence.

Question 2

The key word in the prompt was 'representative' and students needed to convey an understanding of this key democratic value as the main focus of their essay. Many of responses were very good.

A discussion of representative as meaning actively acting on behalf of their constituents allowed students to discuss the tight party discipline in the Australian Parliament as opposed to its looser

standards in the US Congress. Additionally, a discussion of the larger representation in the Australian Parliament of Independents and minor parties, as distinct from the US Congress's almost total two-party dominance, was dealt with by many students. 'Representative' in the sense of diversity of those elected allowed students to discuss the narrower range of people elected to the Australian Parliament, in contrast to the greater range of people currently sitting in the US Congress, in terms of ethnicity, age, religious background etc. Students could also have discussed the link between representation and the length of terms served by those in both legislatures, relating to frequency of elections and the election processes in both nations.

Students also needed to show a link between why the representative nature of legislative branches was related to the overall maintenance of democratic values in both systems.

Higher-scoring responses demonstrated a high level of knowledge of the composition and operation of both legislatures and included current and relevant examples. They cited the names of members of both Parliament and Congress, party names, figures relating to election results etc., and showed a general awareness of the role of both legislatures in contemporary Australian and US politics.

Any contention was possible to argue as long as evidence was included and a coherent argument were maintained.

The following is an introduction from a high-scoring response.

The Australian Parliament (Parlt) & USA's Congress (Cong) are the respective legislatures of their political system, responsible for firstly creating and amending laws, keeping govt accountable and very importantly, representing the ppl, a key democratic value. Aust's parlt overall proves to be more representative than Congress. 1) When comparing the voting systems of the USA and Aust, its obvious that Aust produces more accurate results and representation of the ppl. 2) The strong presence of crossbenchers, minor parties and independents in parlt, unlike in the USA, which has a much stronger 2 party system, allows for (more) minority views represented. 3) Where Aust's parlt is (more) representative overall, USA's weak party discipline allows for more active and accurate representation of the ppl's interests.

Question 3

For this question students were expected to demonstrate an understanding of the degree to which the influence of the media and interest groups is significant in the forming of domestic policy. Essays should contain detailed reference to recent evidence and examples to demonstrate their understanding of policy formulation and implementation as a real life process.

An explanation of the nature and role of both the media and interest groups was required and a discussion of their role in domestic policy formulation in Australian democracy. Students could have then discussed each factor in detail, using examples of where they had played a significant role and others where their role was diminished in favour of other factors. Evaluating the extent of their influence overall needed to be part of the essay's contention and/or conclusion.

Higher-scoring essays discussed these points in detail and referred to a range of examples in policy areas such as same-sex marriage, Medevac, income tax cuts and energy policy debates. In all these case studies both media and interest groups played important roles, but were not always significant enough to influence a final outcome. Acknowledging the importance of other key policy formulation factors such as the Cabinet and public service allowed students a broad scope for their discussion. Essays which were too general or gave detailed historical narrative accounts of the policy area did not score highly.

Question 4

This was the most popular question and was completed very well by a number of students.

Students were asked to evaluate whether the national interests of Australia should indeed be the top priority for the government when managing the challenges listed, or whether other factors should be taken into account. The national interests of Australia, in terms of foreign policy, are accepted to be our trade and economic growth, the protection of our national security and our reputation as a good global citizen. The selected challenges should have been discussed in relation to these factors. Only two challenges needed to be addressed; discussing additional challenges did not lead to higher scores.

The most commonly discussed challenges were global/regional conflicts, the threat of global terrorism, climate change and environmental issues. Many students drew upon recent examples and evidence.

Examples of the challenge of global and regional conflict included: tensions in the South China Sea and the rise of China in the region, both examples of diplomatic conflict, have led to the possibility and fear of military conflict between key players in the region; the threat of military action in the Strait of Hormuz has led to Australian naval deployment; ongoing action in Syria by the US and its allies aimed at ending this conflict. Climate change as a challenge allowed students to discuss Australia's seeming prioritising of our economic interests and key alliance with the USA over the call to be a good global citizen and to readily deal with this challenge, particularly in light of its impact in our Pacific region.

The following is an introduction from a high-scoring response.

The challenges to Australian Foreign Policy –AFP- pose a threat to Australia's national interest- which is the key objective of AFP. It concerns the maintenance of peace and prosperity for Aus and its citizens and aims to do so through the three objectives of good global citizenship (GGC), maintenance of national security and economic and trade interests. So in the face of challenges in the form of humanitarian crises and natural disasters, as well as global and regional conflict, Australia should, and does respond by prioritising national interest.