

The ACT Elections in 2008: The way we were

The ACT election of October 18 2008 was dramatic in a number of ways. The greens broke through to become a major force. The ALP received an adverse swing of close to 10 per cent with the Liberals also losing ground. As a consequence the ALP lost its majority government status but formed a minority government with the support of the Greens.

Election context

- ◆ The ACT experienced its first majority government. The ALP government under Chief Minister Jon Stanhope delivered a number of tough budgets that raised taxes and reduced certain services. The most notable and controversial was the closing of a number of schools announced in the 2006 budget. Other issues to generate controversy were roadworks, public artworks, Bus timetables, location of power station/data centres, issues surrounding the Coroner's inquiry into the 2003 bush fires and the inability of the government to find a site for a drag strip
- ◆ Instability in the Liberal party. Divisiveness spilled over into the media on a number of occasions. The Liberals had three leaders¹ over the four years and expelled a former high profile candidate, Richard Mulcahy. Their leader at the election was Zed Seselja who was only elected at the previous election in 2004
- ◆ The formation of three new parties, The Community Alliance (formed around those opposing school closures and issues arising from the 2003 bush fire), The Australian Motorists Party (concerned with the drag strip and other motoring issues) and the Richard Mulcahy Canberra Party (based around expelled Liberal, Richard Mulcahy)
- ◆ The demise of the Australian Democrats whose membership declined below the threshold needed to register as a political party
- ◆ The election of a Federal Labor Government in November 2007.

The electoral system used since 1995 is a variant of proportional representation known as Hare-Clark, candidates names on the ballot paper appear in party or independent groups but the names within those groups are randomly rotated for each ballot paper by a method known as Robson Rotation; a system devised and used in Tasmania.

The ACT is divided into three electorates Ginninderra (covering Belconnen and part of Gungahlin) Brindabella (covering Tuggeranong and parts of Woden) and Molonglo (covering Gungahlin, North Canberra, South Canberra, Woden and Weston Creek). The first two have five members and the latter seven.

The election outcome

Swings, big swings, were the most notable outcome.

- ◆ The biggest swing was negative with the ALP enduring a swing of 9.45 per cent against it. Although just below the average swing (to and from - see Table 3) it was still big and wiped out about half of the gains made by the ALP since 2001. The ALP vote at 37.39 per cent was its fifth worst since 1967. The ALP lost two seats which reduced their Assembly numbers to seven
- ◆ The second biggest swing was positive, 6.32 per cent to the Greens providing them with four seats, a gain of three. Two of these were at the expense of Labor and one, the Liberals. It was a breakthrough for the Greens whose vote had remained at around 9 per cent in the previous four elections. The ACT has become the Greens strongest jurisdiction²
- ◆ The Australian Motorist Party achieved the third biggest swing (almost 5 per cent). It was their first election. Their vote was considerably higher in the two five member seats of Brindabella and Ginninderra than in the seven member seat of Molonglo. However, they failed to win any seats
- ◆ The Community Alliance achieved the fourth largest swing (3.65 per cent) but their vote was distorted by the strong showing of their candidate in Brindabella-Val Jeffery.

He is well known in the area through his volunteer fire service and other community roles. As well there were no independent candidates in the seat. The Community Alliance vote was 7.62 per cent in Brindabella compared to 3.65 per cent for the whole ACT. They failed to win any seats

- ◆ The Liberals like their major party colleagues the ALP suffered an adverse swing (3.22 per cent) , the swing was more marked in Brindabella and Ginninderra than in Molonglo. The Liberals lost a seat in Molonglo to the Greens.

Table 1: ACT Elections 2004 and 2008

Electorate/Party	Brindabella	Ginninderra	Molonglo	ACT
2008				
ALP	36.51	40.17	36.12	37.39
Greens	13.58	13.91	18.25	15.62
Liberals	35.31	27.78	31.50	31.59
Australian Motorist	6.98	6.13	2.78	4.99
Community Alliance	7.62	3.16	1.14	3.65
Pangello Independents	na	na	4.82	2.01
Richard Mulcahy CP	na	na	2.65	1.11
Other ⁽¹⁾	na	8.85	1.86	3.66
2004				
ALP	45.74	50.14	45.30	46.84
Greens	7.25	8.22	11.50	9.30
Liberals	40.37	32.44	32.56	34.81
Democrats	1.55	4.11	1.44	2.25
Other ⁽¹⁾	5.09	5.09	9.20	6.8

Source: Elections ACT

1. Independents and minor parties

Table 2: Swings from 2004 to 2008 (per cent)

	Brindabella	Ginninderra	Molonglo	ACT
ALP	-9.23	-9.97	-9.18	-9.45
Greens	6.33	5.69	6.75	6.32
Liberals	-5.06	-4.66	-1.06	-3.22
Australian Motorist	6.68	6.13	2.78	4.99
Community Alliance	7.62	3.16	1.14	3.65
Pangello Independents	na	na	4.82	2.01
Richard Mulcahy CP	na	na	2.65	1.11
Other	-5.09	3.76	-7.34	-3.14

The 2008 election in historical context

Local elections have been held in the ACT since at least 1930 for a variety of local bodies. The earliest data from the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) for ACT local elections is for the Advisory Council election of 1967. Data for elections before then are hard to find, even in the AEC. Since responsible government in 1989 there have been seven elections. Details of these are reported in Table 3.

For a number of elections since 1992 the major party (ALP and Liberals) share of the vote had been increasing. In 2004 it was just over 81 per cent. The ACT had its first majority government and there was only one other party represented, the Greens with one member. In the first responsible government election of 1989 five parties were elected. By 2004 it looked as though the ACT was conforming to the norm for Australian Parliaments—a dominance of the

two major parties.

But 2008 was to change all that. The major party share fell back to 69 per cent the lowest since 1992. The ALP retained government with the support of the Greens, pretty much the way we were. The main difference being that there was a formal agreement between the Greens and the ALP. In 2001-2004 the ALP governed with the support of either the Greens or the Australian Democrats on an informal basis.

Table 3: Votes of Major parties in ACT Local Elections since 1967

Election	Body to be elected	ALP	Liberal	ALP-Lib	ALP+Lib	ALP swing	Lib Swing
1967	Advisory Council 8 seats	37.50	25.00	12.50	62.50		
1970	As above	30.40	13.50	16.90	43.90	-7.10	-11.50
1974	ACT Legislative Assembly 18 seats	24.20	33.60	-9.40	57.80	-6.20	20.10
1979	ACT House of Assembly 18 seats	41.50	21.20	20.30	62.70	17.30	-12.40
1982	As above	41.00	25.80	15.20	66.80	-0.50	4.60
1989	Legislative Assembly for the ACT 17 seats	22.80	14.90	7.90	37.70	-18.20	-10.90
1992	As above	39.90	29.00	10.90	68.90	17.10	14.10
1995	As Above	31.63	40.48	-8.85	72.11	-8.27	11.48
1998	As above	27.61	37.83	-10.22	65.44	-4.02	-2.65
2001	As above	41.70	31.60	10.10	73.30	14.09	-6.23
2004	As above	46.84	34.81	12.03	81.65	5.12	3.17
2008	As above	37.39	31.59	6.00	68.98	-9.45	-3.32
Average		35.21	28.28	6.95	63.48	*9.76	*9.13

Source: Elections ACT, Australian Electoral Commission and the Canberra Times

*sign ignored

In my summary of the last election in 2004 I asked the question:

*What will the future bring? At the next election, will the ACT revert to some form of minority government making 2004 an aberration? Anything can happen in politics. If the ALP loses support, will that result in a Majority Liberal Government or will the ALP need to fall back on some sort of an alliance with a minority party such as the Greens. **Now we know!***

Voting in Canberra's Communities

The ACT can be divided into seven communities based on the townships developed by the former National Capital Development Commission (NCDC). North and South Canberra is the original "Burley Griffin" Canberra or what would be called the inner city in other cities. Of the new towns Woden was first in the 1960s, followed by Belconnen and Weston Creek in the 1970s, then Tuggeranong in the late 1970s to 1980s. Gungahlin is the most recent dating from the 1990s.

Variations in voting are more apparent in the communities than among the three electorates. The large seven seat of Molonglo cover a diverse array of areas which masks voting patterns.

Belconnen is the best area for the ALP, followed by North Canberra. The swing against the ALP

Table 4: Voting in ACT Communities

	ALP	Liberal	Greens	Motorists	Community Alliance
2008					
Belconnen	41.65	25.58	14.06	6.45	3.36
Gungahlin	35.78	40.74	9.46	4.09	1.05
North Canberra	39.92	23.11	26.72	2.03	0.93
South Canberra	33.15	33.41	18.68	2.41	1.05
Tuggeranong	37.20	34.41	13.10	7.58	7.75
Weston Creek	36.14	30.85	15.18	3.27	1.59
Woden	36.93	31.96	17.16	2.73	2.80
2004					
Belconnen	51.72	31.16	7.75	dns	dns
Gungahlin	42.73	40.30	4.92	dns	dns
North Canberra	47.41	24.18	18.67	dns	dns
South Canberra	42.54	36.24	11.24	dns	dns
Tuggeranong	45.93	39.63	9.16	dns	dns
Weston Creek	49.22	31.94	8.73	dns	dns
Woden	45.86	33.72	6.53	dns	dns
Swings					
Belconnen	-9.90	-5.84	6.31	6.45	3.36
Gungahlin	-6.75	0.48	4.54	4.09	1.05
North Canberra	-7.35	-1.45	8.05	2.03	0.93
South Canberra	-10.73	-1.23	7.44	2.41	1.05
Tuggeranong	-9.13	-6.00	6.30	7.58	7.75
Weston Creek	-12.15	0.73	6.93	3.27	1.59
Woden	-8.13	-3.34	8.40	2.73	2.80

Note: Some of these results may appear inconsistent with other figures but these are based on polling booth data only and exclude pre-polls, declaration and postal votes.

was highest in Weston Creek (12.15 per cent) and lowest in Gungahlin (6.75 per cent). The Liberals did best in Gungahlin, daylight was second then Tuggeranong. The Liberals actually received small swings to them in Gungahlin and Weston Creek.

The Greens polled highest in North Canberra where they out polled the Liberals for the first time. Their worst result was in Gungahlin both in terms of swing and total vote.

The Motorists party polled best in Tuggeranong and Belconnen. But their vote dropped off markedly in North Canberra, South Canberra, Woden and Weston Creek. Gungahlin was somewhere in the middle.

The Community Alliance formed out of the school closures and bush fire issues polled poorly in all areas except Tuggeranong. Their poor performance in Weston Creek is surprising given the bush fire issue. If there was dissatisfaction with the ALP on this issue voters must have opted for the Greens or the Liberals instead of Community Alliance. In Tuggeranong their stronger performance was quite likely due to high profile candidate - Val Jeffery.

Independents did not receive a great deal of support except for former radio announcer³ Mark Parton in Belconnen, who received 6.53 per cent. Virtual⁴ independent Richard Mulcahy did poorly in Molonglo.

Why is their such variation? Australian politics is largely class based. Middle to lower income persons are inclined to the ALP and middle to higher income persons, the Liberals. But what about the Greens and the other minor parties? An analysis⁵ I did of the 2001 ACT elections showed that factors such as median income, median age, proportion in "working class" occupations, numbers in public sector employment, religious affiliation and proportion born overseas had some impact.

At the census conducted in 2006 the characteristics of the ACT communities were:

Table 5: ACT Communities socio economic characteristics

	Median age years	Median Income \$ weekly	Proportion in Managerial professional occupations	Proportion in public sector Occupations⁽¹⁾
Belconnen	34	680	40.5	39.1
Gungahlin	31	813	42.9	45.3
North Canberra	32	647	56.7	53.6
South Canberra	39	915	59.6	50.1
Tuggeranong	33	703	36.6	45.8
Weston Creek	39	737	47.0	51.2
Woden	40	769	52.2	52.6

Source: ABS Census 2006

1. Public administration and safety, Education and training and Health care and social assistance

Although the Census and the election were two years apart it should still be possible to make some useful comparisons.

Statistical tests (Correlation analysis) showed that at the 2008 election statistically significant *negative* relationships existed between:

- ◆ the ALP vote and median income
- ◆ the Community alliance vote and the proportion of managers and professional
- ◆ the Australian Motorist Party vote and the proportion of managers and professional
- ◆ the Australian Motorist Party vote and the proportion of public sector employees

Positive relationships existed between:

- ◆ The Greens vote and the proportion of managers and professional

These results indicate that the Greens have a stronger following among those employed as managers and professional while the Community Alliance and the Australian Motorist Party obtained their support from those in less skilled occupations. It largely explains the variation in support for those parties among the communities.

Why did it turn out that way?

It was an election of marked changes, why?

The large swing against labor was likely due to:

- ◆ The election of the Federal ALP Government in November 2007-voters may have felt that labor's dominance (they held office in every State and Territory as well as Nationally in late 2007) was politically unhealthy. Four State and Territory elections⁶ have been held since the Federal election. In all of these the ALP suffered adverse swings
- ◆ For most of the period 2004 to 2008 the ACT Liberals were "out to lunch" being riven by personal infighting and leadership disputes. Consequently, the Labor government lost "match fitness" and felt that the next election was a certainty
- ◆ A reaction against majority government-the first majority government in the ACT may have caused unease. The Labor government had taken some firm decisions on budget matters which, while being in the public interest, offended certain interest groups who had been used to exercising power with former ACT minority governments
- ◆ The Labor vote was exceptionally high in 2004 -at 46.84 per cent⁷, it was 11.63 per cent above the average. A king tide in voting. As the 2004 ACT election was only a week after the Federal election, ACT election issues may have been overwhelmed by Federal issues. Also the aftermath of the Federal result would have continued to detract from ACT issues in the week after. This may have led to many voters voting the same way in both⁸
- ◆ Issues-there were a number of issues which impacted on the election such as budget cuts, schools closures, Bus services, road construction, public art and environmental matters. However, the ALP operated in a cohesive manner with no internal divisions and no scandals or ministerial sackings.

But the Liberals failed to benefit, large swings are not unusual but it is very unusual for a major party to suffer such an adverse swing without the major opposition party being a beneficiary. The Liberals went backwards despite substantial dissatisfaction with Labor, why?

- ◆ In the four years to 2008 the Liberals were involved in leadership tensions and personality based factionalism
- ◆ In 2007 Richard Mulcahy (a high profile candidate in the 2004 election) was expelled from the party and went on the form his own party, the Richard Mulcahy Canberra Party
- ◆ Key business groups notably the 250 club withdrew support from the party
- ◆ Right leaning high profile candidates in Ginninderra (Mark Parton) and Val Jeffery (Community Alliance) provided alternatives for conservative voters in those electorates (the swings against the Liberals were much higher in those electorates).
- ◆ Former leader and proven vote getter (Bill Stefaniak) decided not to re contest Ginninderra close to the election forcing the party to run unknown candidates.

Factors in the Greens success included:

Their capacity to attract disaffected labor supporters was obvious. It was apparent in the 2007 ACT Senate Election when the Greens candidate (Kerry Tucker) attracted over 21 per cent of the vote. The Green campaign was directed at replacing the Liberal (Senator Gary Humphries) But most of the Green vote was at the expense of the Labor Candidate (Senator Kate Lundy). In fact the Greens did better in the Senate than in the ACT election⁹.

Whether, increased awareness of environmental issues had any impact is difficult to determine

as they have been around for some time and may not have had any special impact on this election.

The new parties

It would not be an election without the creation of new parties. Most fold up fairly soon, especially if they do not win seats. Three new parties contested the 2008 election. the Australian Motorists Party, Community Alliance and the Richard Mulcahy Canberra Party. None won seats. The Community Alliance came closest in Brindabella with 7.62 per cent or 0.46 of a quota. But that was with a high profile candidate (Val Jeffery). Their results in the other seats were only about half of that (see Table 1).

The Motorist party did better especially in Ginninderra and Brindabella where socio-economic factors were more favourable to them.

The Richard Mulcahy Canberra Party only contested Molonglo and fared poorly.

Whether they stay to contest the 2012 election is open to doubt.

Challenges for the future

The ALP got back into government but suffered a severe swing. It appears that the ALP lost votes to the Greens among those in professional and managerial occupations and to the Australian Motorist Party among those in "blue collar" occupations. They will need to get some of these votes back or at least "hold the line" in 2012. By then they will have been the incumbents for 11 years. They face an uphill task.

The Liberals certainly need to attract voters who become disaffected with the ALP. They need to attract those voters who went to the new parties and independents such as Mark Parton.

The Greens will be under pressure to hold on to their gains. A lot will depend on how the arrangement with the ALP works out over the next four years.

The election campaign

The ACT has strictly fixed terms with only extremely limited opportunities for early elections. The election date of 18 October 2009 had been set down years before. Governments go into "caretaker mode" about five weeks before polling day.

The Major polling companies (News Poll, Galaxy and Morgan) do not poll the ACT throughout the term, the only polls taken are by the parties and these are confidential. The Canberra Times Newspaper usually conducts polls in the "caretaker period" early and late in the campaign.

However, from early 2008 both major parties usually geared up and got into campaign mode. Preselections are finalised and prospective candidates started their local campaigns from about February. Under Hare Clark both Parties give their candidates an open hand in campaigning, that is all candidates campaign on an individual basis with their own campaign teams, fund raisers and electioneering (see section below).

In early 2008 The Liberals introduced their team under new leader Zed Seselja and announced policies on Housing affordability. The ALP started preparations with election guides for candidates and also announced initiatives on housing affordability. The 2008 Budget was targeted towards areas of electoral sensibility.

The Liberals election television campaign started mid year and focussed on Housing affordability, access to general practitioners and road works, the ALP ran a mid year radio campaign.

Labor's television campaign started in earnest in the "caretaker period" and was quite intensive. There were a number of debates between Jon Stanhope (Chief Minister) and Zed Seselja (Leader of the Opposition) at the National Press Club and at the Legislative Assembly.

The key issues were not clear but debate centred on Health, Education, Roads, the data

centre/power station and public arts. The Liberals ran negative television ads on Jon Stanhope's perceived arrogance to which Labor responded with ads featuring Deputy Chief Minister Katie Gallagher saying that Jon isn't perfect, but who is. Labor's negative ads stressed Liberal infighting over the last four years.

The Canberra Times poll on October 4 showed a very tight result with Labor 34.7, Liberal 33.6 and Greens 19.0 per cent. On the Friday before the poll the figures were Labor 38.3, Liberals 31.3, Greens 19.0, Motorists 3.0 and Community Alliance 2.6 per cent. The ALP had improved its position mostly at the expense of the Liberals. The final poll turned out to be fairly accurate with the estimates for the major parties almost spot on: Labor (estimate 38.3, actual 37.4). Liberal (estimate 31.3, actual 31.6). But not so accurate for the minor parties: Greens (estimate 19.0, actual 15.9), Motorists (estimate 3.0, actual 5.0), Community Alliance (estimate 2.7, actual 3.7).

On election night it seemed as though the result in terms of seats won would be Labor 7, Liberal 7 and Greens 3. Further counting saw the Greens take one of the Liberals in Molonglo leaving a 7,6,4 outcome.

The Greens then talked to both parties about the next ACT Government. They eventually, and as expected, went with Labor through an agreement on actions and procedures. It was not a coalition and no Greens hold portfolios but they did take the Speakership.

The campaign in the electorates

With a Hare-Clark Robson Rotation electoral system there are virtually campaigns within campaigns. At the top level the parties run campaigns to attract support for their parties. In the electorates candidates run what are almost personal campaigns to get votes for themselves. A party candidate will campaign to get the maximum share of their party vote plus any personal vote they can grab. In essence they are campaigning against candidates of their own party. Number one votes are crucial. With Robson Rotation there is no donkey vote and only limited possibility of obtaining flow on from more popular candidates.

Although candidates are required by the parties to identify as party candidates most local candidate campaigns are based on the personal attributes of the candidate rather than the party. There is virtually no campaigning at electorate level advocating a party vote¹⁰.

Campaigns are centred on candidates who put together campaign teams with their own campaign directors. Strategies are determined and fund raisers are held to finance advertising. Candidates also run media ads for themselves. Some candidates have been known to spend considerable amounts of their own money on their campaign.

While the parties supervise and exercise some control over local candidate campaigns, candidates have a lot of room to do their own thing. However, running blatant negative campaigns against candidates of their own party is rare¹¹. They tend to focus on the positives as they see them: their community service, life achievements, policy ideas, capacity to get things done, service to the party and suitability as a prospective member. Often candidates are from specific factions but these are rarely brought to the electorates attention.

There is some contest between incumbent and non incumbent candidates. Sometimes the question "Is the incumbent good enough" is implied. Also many candidates look beyond the election, perhaps a good but unsuccessful campaign will ensure support in the future and if one polls well there is also the chance of getting elected on count back if a sitting party colleague resigns.

Consequently, local campaigns are often hard fought and interesting, sometimes more so than the general party campaign.

The 2008 election was no exception with lively intra party campaigns being fought in each electorate.

As a result three incumbent members were replaced by alternate members of their own parties. In Brindabella Liberal incumbent Steve Pratt was replaced by Liberal Steve Doszpot, who received 4,980 votes to Pratt's 3,978. Also in Brindabella Labor's Mick Gentleman (4,612 votes) was replaced by Labor's Joy Birch (4,965 votes).

In Molonglo Liberal Jacqui Burke's 1,548 votes were far too few to avoid being replaced by Jeremy Hanson who attracted 3,278 votes.

Is the party's overall vote enhanced when they have a number of attractive and diverse candidates conducting vigorous and positive campaigns?

It's hard to know. Both major parties had a whole range of candidates working hard in each

electorate but they both lost votes. Central Belconnen may provide an example. Although candidates will always contest the whole electorate, there is a tendency to mark out a "patch". In Belconnen the contiguous suburbs of Weetangera, Page, Hawker and Scullin were worked over intensively by Labor candidates Mary Porter (incumbent) and David Peebles. Mary Porter lives in Hawker and David Peebles, Scullin.

The outcomes in those suburbs, in terms of Labor swing, were: Scullin -7.47, Page-1.44 (the lowest in the ACT) and Weetangera -6.20 (there is no polling booth in Hawker). All of these were less than the swing in all Belconnen, -9.90. The swing in Charnwood was also lower at -8.70. Charnwood was intensively canvassed by Labor Candidate Adina Cirson.

However, the major determinant for the voter seems to be the party. Once they have made this choice then they may seek out their favoured candidate of that party. Although many just select the best known of the party candidates. Jon Stanhope in Ginninderra obtained 56 per cent of the Labor vote and Zed Seselja garnered 60 per cent of the Liberal vote in Molonglo.

If the party loses favour candidates appear to have a very limited capacity to recover support, they are left to fight over fewer votes.

Terry Giesecke
March 2009

Endnotes

1. Brendan Smyth was replaced by Bill Stefaniak who was in turn replaced by Zed Seselja
2. The Tasmanian House of Assembly has four Green members out of a total of 25; therefore the ACT with four out of 17 is a greater proportion. Although the Tasmanian Greens received 16.63 per cent of the vote compared to the ACT Greens 15.62.
3. Former announcer on Mix 106.3 FM, he was not the only radio announcer to stand, Clinton White of ArtSound FM stood as a Liberal in Molonglo.
4. He actually stood for the Richard Mulcahy Canberra Party, a registered party. Under the electoral law parties get a position on the ballot paper whereas independents are placed in an ungrouped slot. Thus there is an incentive for independents to form parties in order to get greater visibility.
5. The 2001 ACT Election-determinants of voting behaviour in the post modern era - Australian Quarterly 2005
6. Northern Territory, Western Australia, the ACT and Queensland. The swing was least in Queensland and highest in the ACT. The swings against Labor were: NT 8.76, WA, 6.05, ACT 9.45, Qld 4.36. These resulted in loss of office in WA, a narrow win in NT, loss of some seats in Qld and loss of majority government in ACT. (Data source Uni of WA - Australian Government and Politics data base)
7. In statistical terms it was +1.51 standard deviations away from the mean. If it were a sample the chances of such an occurrence would be 2.5 per cent.
8. In the ACT the ALP always polls higher in Federal than ACT Elections. From 1966 to 2004 the average ALP Federal vote was 53.2 compared with 35.2 per cent for the ACT (1967 to 2008). In the Federal election one week previously the ALP vote was 50.3 per cent. (Data source Uni of WA - Australian Government and Politics data base)
9. In the Federal election the House of Representatives ALP vote was 51.0 per cent, for the Senate 40.84 per cent. For the Greens 13.23 and 21.47 respectively and for the Liberals

33.23 and 34.20. The Liberals vote was better in the Senate. Hence it appears that the Greens improved Senate tally was at the expense of Labor. (Data source - Australian Electoral Commission)

10. In fact the ALP abolished Electorate Campaign bodies some time ago, all campaigning at electorate level is now candidate centred.

11. And generally forbidden by the Parties. In 2009 a labour candidate for Molonglo was suspended for campaigning as a Green Labor candidate.