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From: David Coletto, CEO
To: VOCM News
Date: August 7, 2014
Re: Newfoundland and Labrador Provincial Vote Intention

According to a new VOCM-Abacus Data random telephone survey of 600 eligible voters in Newfoundland and Labrador conducted from July 28 to August 1, the NL Liberals continue to hold a large lead over the PC Party.

The Liberals lead the Tories by 14-points with support for the Liberals at 48% among committed voters compared with 34% for the Tories and 16% for the NDP. Support is the same as the previous VOCM-Abacus poll back in January 2014 following the resignation of Premier Kathy Dunderdale.

Among all respondents, 14% said they were undecided while 1% said they would not vote.

If a provincial election was held today, which political party would you vote for in your local electoral district? Would you vote...

Change since Jan 2014 in Brackets

	All Respondents (n=600)	Committed Voted (n=512)
Liberal	41% (+4)	48% (-1)
PC	29% (+3)	34% (-)
NDP	13% (+1)	16% (+1)
Other parties	1% (-)	1% (-1)
Undecided	14% (8)	
Not voting	1% (-1)	
Margin of Error	± 4.1%	± 4.4%

Liberals ahead in all regions of Newfoundland and Labrador

The Liberal Party leads in all regions of the province. On the Avalon Peninsula and in St. John's, the Liberals have a 13-point lead over the PCs among committed voters. The Liberals have the support of 47% of committed voters compared to 34% for the PCs and 19% for the NDP.

In Eastern and Central Newfoundland, the Liberals lead by 11-points with 48% of committed voter support compared with 37% for the PCs and 10% for the NDP.

And in Western Newfoundland and Labrador, the Liberals lead by 22-points, with 52% of committed voters supporting the Liberals compared with 30% for the PCs and 16% for the NDP.

Half of past PC supporters are currently supporting the PCs; 26% of former NDP voters now back the Liberals

When we compare current vote intention with how voters said they voted in the 2011 provincial election, the Liberal Party's lead is built around three factors: it is holding most of its previous support (82% of former Liberal voters currently support the party), it has attracted 27% of former PC supporters while also gaining the support of 26% of those who voted NDP in the last provincial election.

The Progressive Conservative Party has the support of 53% of its former supporters. Twenty-seven percent (27%) of former PC supporters now say they would vote Liberal while 13% said they are undecided. Six percent of former PC supporters said they would now vote NDP.

The NDP has lost about four in ten of its past voters with 26% saying they would vote Liberal and 7% saying they would vote PC. Nine percent of past NDP voters are undecided about how they would vote.

NL Liberals have the largest pool of accessible voters

The survey also asked respondents if they would consider voting for each of the three main political parties. The Liberals have the largest pool of accessible voters with two in three eligible voters in NL saying they would consider voting Liberal. This compares with 52% for the PCs and 39% for the NDP.

Among those who would consider voting Liberal, 59% say they would vote Liberal if the provincial election was held at the time of the survey. Another 17% would vote PC while 9% would vote NDP.

Among those who would consider voting PC, 52% said they would vote PC compared to 24% who would vote Liberal and 7% who would vote NDP.

Among NDP supporters, only one in three of those who would consider voting NDP would do so if an election was held at the time of the survey. Another 34% said they would vote Liberal while 16% would vote PC.

Regardless of how you actually vote, would you consider or not consider voting for the following PROVINCIAL political parties?

	All Respondents (n=600)
Would consider voting Liberal	66%
Would consider voting PC	52%
Would consider voting NDP	39%

Health care and the economy are the top issues for voters

When asked what they thought was the most important issue facing Newfoundland and Labrador (unprompted), 29% of eligible voters surveyed said health care, followed by the economy and jobs (17%), government accountability and leadership (10%), Muskrat Falls or electricity prices (8%) and the budget deficit or government debt (7%). Other issues raised included taxes (6%), education (6%), infrastructure and roads (7%), and the fishery (4%).

In a follow up question, respondents were asked which party would best manage the issue they considered most important. Overall, the Liberal Party had an advantage over the PC Party with one in three respondents (36%) selecting the Liberals as the party that would best deal with the issue they believed to be most important followed by the PCs (28%) and the NDP (11%). Twenty-one percent of respondents were unsure which party would best manage the issue they identified while 4% said none of them would be best to deal with the issue.

Which party in Newfoundland and Labrador is best able to deal with [issue]?

	Health care (n=190)	Economy and jobs (n=110)	Government accountability / Leadership (n=63)
Liberal	39%	42%	48%
PC	24%	33%	13%
NDP	8%	7%	10%
Unsure	24%	16%	22%

On the three top issues identified by respondents (health care, economy and jobs, and leadership), the Liberal Party has a substantive advantage over the PCs. Among those who said health care was the most important issue facing the province, 39% selected the Liberals as best to deal with the issue, followed by the PCs (24%) and NDP (8%). Twenty-four percent were unsure which party would best deal with health care.

For eligible voters who thought jobs and economy were most important, 42% selected the Liberals as best able to deal with the issue, followed by the PCs (33%) and the NDP (7%),

Finally, on government accountability or leadership, the Liberals have a big lead with 48% of those selecting the issue as most important picking the Liberals as best to deal with government accountability compared with 13% for the PCs and 10% for the NDP.

Insights from Abacus Data

Since January, the NL Liberal Party continues to hold a substantial lead over the incumbent PC Party. The Liberals lead the Tories by 14-points and lead in all regions of the province and among all key demographic groups.

As the PC Party prepares to elect its new leader, the party faces a difficult political environment. While 52% of eligible voters would consider voting PC, it faces a popular Liberal Party with a substantially larger pool of accessible voters (66%). Moreover, the Liberals have an advantage on all the key issues voters think are most important to the province. On health care, the economy, and government accountability, voters who care about those issues are more likely to select the Liberals as best to manage them than the Tories.

With a popular leader (see tomorrow's release) in Dwight Ball and positive issue positioning, the Liberals are well placed with just over a year out from the next election. The party has rebuilt its support by attracting a quarter of past voters from the PCs and the NDP. It leads the Tories in support among all age groups, among men and women, and among voters with different levels of educational attainment.

Methodology

The random live-interview telephone survey commissioned by VOCM was conducted with 600 eligible voters living in Newfoundland and Labrador. The survey was completed from July 28 to August 1, 2014.

The margin of error for a probability-based random sample of 500 respondents using a probability sample is +/- 4.1%, 19 times out of 20.

The data was statistically weighted according to census data to ensure that the sample matched population of Newfoundland and Labrador. The tables within this report detail the weighted and unweighted counts for the sample.

Note the small sample sizes when reviewing results in subgroups.

For more information about the poll's methodology or the results, please contact David Coletto, CEO at david@abacusdata.ca or at 613-232-2806.

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Abacus Data is an innovative, fast growing public opinion and marketing research consultancy. We use the latest technology, sound science, and deep experience to generate top-flight research based advice to our clients. We offer global research capacity with a strong focus on customer service, attention to detail and exceptional value.

Our team combines the experience of our Chairman Bruce Anderson, one of Canada's leading research executives for two decades, with the energy, creativity and research expertise of CEO David Coletto, PhD. For more information, visit our website at <http://www.abacusdata.ca/>

If a provincial election was held today, which political party would you vote for in your local electoral district? Would you vote...

All respondents

Sample size: 600

MoE: ± 4.1, 19 times out of 20

Fields dates: July 28 to Aug 1, 2014

		PC	Liberal	NDP	Other	Undecided	WNV	Raw	Weighted
	NL	29%	41%	13%	1%	14%	1%	600	656
Region	Avalon Peninsula/St. John's	29%	40%	16%	0%	14%	0%	270	334
	Eastern/Central	32%	41%	8%	2%	14%	2%	185	187
	Western/Labrador	25%	44%	14%	0%	15%	1%	145	135
Gender	Female	29%	38%	15%	1%	15%	1%	300	327
	Male	29%	45%	12%	1%	13%	1%	300	329
Age	<40	29%	41%	16%	0%	13%	1%	186	206
	40 to 59	32%	37%	13%	1%	15%	1%	256	279
	60+	24%	49%	11%	1%	14%	1%	158	170
Education	HS or less	29%	45%	10%	0%	14%	1%	200	221
	College	33%	39%	14%	1%	11%	1%	195	244
	University	25%	40%	16%	0%	18%	0%	205	190
2011 Provincial vote	PC	53%	27%	6%	1%	13%	0%	283	312
	Liberal	7%	82%	4%	0%	8%	0%	148	161
	NDP	7%	26%	57%	1%	9%	0%	89	97
	Other responses/DNV	10%	35%	11%	0%	38%	6%	80	85
Consider Voting PC	PC	52%	24%	7%	1%	15%	0%	309	341
Consider Voting Liberal	Liberal	17%	59%	9%	1%	14%	0%	397	433
Consider Voting NDP	NDP	16%	34%	33%	1%	16%	0%	239	258

If a provincial election was held today, which political party would you vote for in your local electoral district? Would you vote...

Committed voters only

Sample size: 512

MoE: ± 4.5%, 19 times out of 20

Fields dates: July 28 to Aug 1, 2014

		PC	Liberal	NDP	Other	WNV	Raw	Weighted
	NL	34%	48%	16%	1%	1%	512	563
Region	Avalon Peninsula/St. John's	34%	47%	19%	1%	0%	231	287
	Eastern/Central	37%	48%	10%	2%	3%	158	161
	Western/Labrador	30%	52%	16%	0%	2%	123	115
Gender	Female	35%	45%	18%	1%	1%	252	276
	Male	33%	51%	14%	1%	1%	260	287
Age	<40	33%	47%	18%	1%	1%	161	179
	40 to 59	38%	44%	15%	1%	1%	216	237
	60+	29%	57%	13%	1%	1%	135	146
Education	HS or less	34%	52%	12%	0%	2%	172	189
	College	37%	44%	16%	2%	1%	172	217
	University	31%	49%	19%	1%	1%	168	156
2011 Provincial vote	PC	61%	31%	6%	2%	0%	246	272
	Liberal	8%	88%	4%	0%	0%	136	149
	NDP	8%	28%	63%	1%	0%	81	89
	Other responses/DNV	17%	56%	17%	0%	10%	49	53
Consider Voting PC	PC	62%	29%	9%	1%	0%	261	290
Consider Voting Liberal	Liberal	19%	69%	11%	1%	0%	339	372
Consider Voting NDP	NDP	19%	40%	39%	2%	0%	199	216