



2006 Survey Of
Politicians' Lobbying Preferences

Highlights

Canberra
August 2006



Client Solutions Pty Ltd
Research-Based Public Affairs

1 FOREWARD

Consider for a moment the life of a federal politician. When not in Canberra they must service the needs of their electorate by meeting constituents and attending a relentless round of local engagements. During Parliamentary Sittings they are stuck in Canberra, usually away from their families, with long hours of sittings, frequent late nights, incessant committee work, preparing speeches, engaging in debates, again representing their constituents and being available to vote on issues at a moment's notice. And while all this is happening, they also need to focus on the next election and how to persuade firstly their party members to give them pre-selection and then their constituents to re-elect them!

When you add to this the never-ending stream of Special Interest Groups (SIGs) doing the rounds of Parliament, each seeking the ear and attention of individual politicians and committees to get their special interest views across - you might well say "...a politicians' lot is not a happy one..."

The 2006 Survey Of Politicians' Lobbying Preferences undertaken by Committee Bulletin, a fortnightly review of Parliamentary Committee activity published by Client Solutions, has attempted to capture the opinions of our federal politicians in an effort to help alleviate these demands and present collective recommendations about how politicians prefer to interact with lobbies and essentially Special Interest Groups (SIGs).

This research follows on from a Survey administered by Committee Bulletin twelve years ago that was the first of its kind in Australia to investigate how politicians preferred to be lobbied.

The 2006 Survey builds on this foundation but also aims to;

- Seek the views of a new generation of politicians on their personal lobbying preferences;
- Update the information being collected to take account of changes processes, new circumstances and advanced communication technology;
- Provide relevant and timely advice to SIGs to assist them in refining their lobbying efforts in a professionally responsible way; and
- Make the lives of Members and Senators (and their staff) a little easier by having their views taken on board by SIGs

This summary booklet explores some of the key findings of this Survey and most importantly, examines the implications of this data for both lobbyists or SIGs and our federal representatives.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Telesny', with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Monica Telesny
Editor
Committee Bulletin
August 2006

2 Methodology

The Survey was primarily conducted online during May and June 2006. Questionnaires were sent to 215 politicians who had publicly listed email addresses.

The Survey required Members and Senators to log into a survey site and complete the questionnaire over the Internet. The responses received in this way were tabulated automatically into aggregated answers complete with charts, data analysis and statistical measurement tools. Almost 55% used the internet based electronic survey and 45% an alternate printed form.

The survey response period ran over five weeks. During this time two reminder emails and a hard copy of the Survey were distributed.

3 Response

At the time of the Survey there were 150 Members of the House of Representatives and 76 Senators. There were 86 respondents to the survey, over 40% of those contacted.

The 2006 Committee Bulletin Survey of Politicians' Lobbying Preferences had the following break down by House, Political Party and Gender.

HoR	LIB	LAB	NAT	DEM	OTHER	HoR
MALE	22	15	2	0	0	39
FEMALE	3	10	1	0	0	14
TOTAL	25	25	3	0	0	53

SENATE	LIB	LAB	NAT	DEM	OTHER	Senate
MALE	10	4	2	1	0	17
FEMALE	5	10	0	1	0	16
TOTAL	15	14	2	2	0	33

BOTH	LIB	LAB	NAT	DEM	OTHER	Both
MALE	32	19	4	1	0	56
FEMALE	8	20	1	1	0	30
TOTAL	40	39	5	2	0	36

Women (35% of the sample compared to 28% of parliamentarians) were slightly better represented than men but the spread across the parties and between the House of Representatives and the Senate was highly representative.

4 Results in Summary

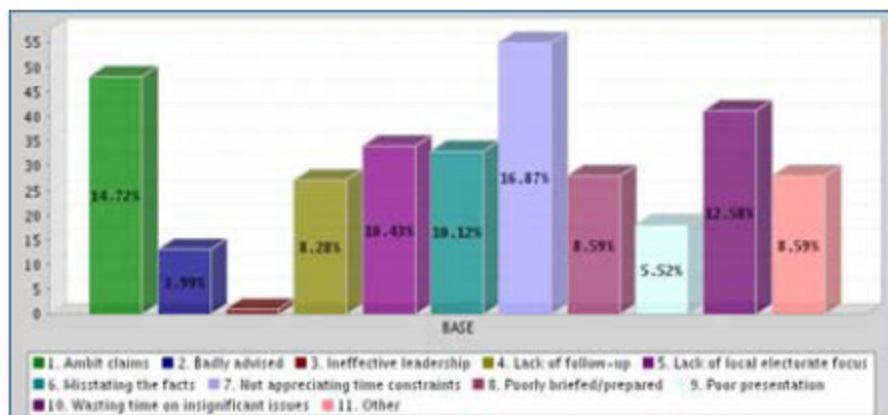
Q1 Where do you prefer to meet with Special Interest Groups (SIGs)?

<i>Answer</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Percent</i>
<i>My office - Parliament</i>	66	75.00%
<i>My office - Electorate</i>	10	11.36%
<i>SIGs Office</i>	0	0.00%
<i>Neutral Venue (e.g. hotel, airline lounge)</i>	1	1.14%
<i>Other</i>	11	12.50%
Total	88	100%

Q2 How do you prefer to meet SIGs?

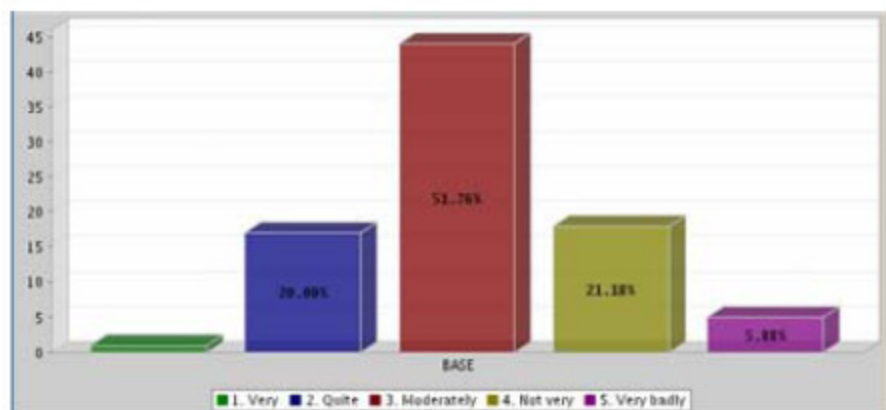
Answer	Count	Percent
<i>On your own; or</i>	31	34.83%
<i>Accompanied by an advisor; or</i>	41	46.07%
<i>As a member of a group or committee</i>	8	8.99%
<i>Other</i>	9	10.11%
Total	89	100%

Q3 Please select the 5 most common mistakes made by those who lobby politicians.



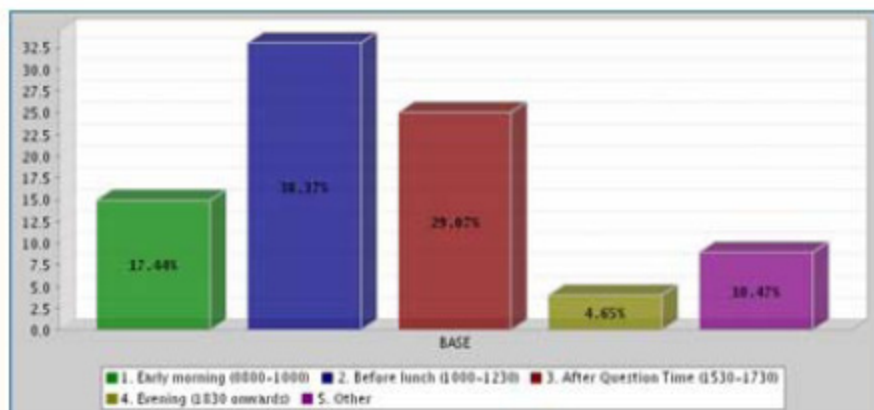
- Ambit claims
- Badly advised
- Ineffective leadership
- Lack of follow up
- Lack of local electorate focus
- Misstating the facts
- Not appreciating time constraints
- Poorly briefed/prepared
- Poor presentation
- Wasting time on insignificant issues
- Other

Q4 How effectively do SIGs/lobbyists use the parliamentary and party committee systems?



- Very
- Quite
- Moderately
- Not very
- Very badly

Q5 On sitting days what is the best time to meet?



- Early morning (0800-1000)
- Before lunch (1000-1230)
- After question time (1530-1730)
- Evening (1830 onwards)
- Other

Q6 Please indicate your views on the effectiveness of –

	<i>Count</i>	<i>Percent</i>	20%	40%	60%	80%	100%
Letter writing campaigns							
Very	12	14.12%					
Limited	59	69.41%					
Never	14	16.47%					
Total	85	100%					




	<i>Count</i>	<i>Percent</i>	20%	40%	60%	80%	100%
Email campaigns							
Very	6	7.06%					
Limited	49	57.65%					
Never	30	35.29%					
Total	85	100%					

	<i>Count</i>	<i>Percent</i>	20%	40%	60%	80%	100%
Advertising campaigns							
Very	18	21.18%					
Limited	58	68.24%					
Never	9	10.59%					
Total	85	100%					

Q7 What role do you think the Internet will play in the next Federal Election?

<i>Answer</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Percent</i>	20%	40%	60%	80%	100%
Major	25	29.41%					
Minor	59	69.41%					
None	1	1.18%					
Total	85	100%					



Q8 What do you see the role of blogging having in future advocacy programs?

Answer	Count	Percent	20%	40%	60%	80%	100%
Major	9	10.71%					
Minor	61	72.62%					
None	14	16.67%					
Total	84	100%					



Q9 Which are the top five SIGs with HQs in Canberra?

- ▶ *Australian Medical Association;*
- ▶ *Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry;*
- ▶ *Pharmacy guild of Australia;*
- ▶ *Australian Industry Group; and*
- ▶ *National Farmers' Federation.*



Q10 Should there be a Register of lobbyists?

Answer	Count	Percent	20%	40%	60%	80%	100%
Yes	63	74.12%					
No	22	25.88%					
Total	85	100%					



Q11 Should there be a Code of Ethics for lobbyists?

Answer	Count	Percent	20%	40%	60%	80%	100%
Yes	68	80.00%					
No	17	20.00%					
Total	85	100%					

Q12 Do you host your own website?

<i>Answer</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Percent</i>	20%	40%	60%	80%	100%
Yes	<u>55</u>	64.71%					
No	<u>30</u>	35.29%					
Total	85	100%					

Q13 Do you resent people making opportunistic contact to lobby you?

<i>Answer</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Percent</i>	20%	40%	60%	80%	100%
Yes	<u>31</u>	36.90%					
No	<u>53</u>	63.10%					
Total	84	100%					



Committee Bulletin is a fortnightly newsletter produced by Client Solutions which provides independent coverage of Federal Parliament's committee system covering developments in both the Senate and House of Representatives.

The full report is available for purchase for \$45.00.

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