

Labor the loser as voters move towards independent

David Killick

Support for the Liberal government in Tasmania has increased slightly while voters are drifting away from Labor in favour of independents, the latest opinion polling shows.

The November EMRS state voting intentions report shows the support for the government firming one percentage point to 39 per cent since the August poll.

At the same time, support for Labor has dropped from 32 per cent to 29 per cent, and stated support for independents rising by the same three percentage point margin.

The result reverses 12 months



Labor leader Rebecca White.

of steady gains for Labor, which recorded increased support in each of the past three polls.

Independent candidates now represent the third largest bloc in Tasmanian politics, with the support of nearly one in five voters.

The number of those surveyed favouring the Greens dropped from 14 per cent to 12 per cent over the last poll.

Premier Jeremy Rockliff maintained his lead as preferred premier, with 42 per cent support, while Labor leader Rebecca White's support dropped from 39 per cent to 35 per cent of those surveyed.

Nearly one in four were unable to make a choice – the 23 per cent undecided result was the highest since March 2017.

EMRS's managing director Paul Jamrozik said Labor was losing support to non-party candidates.

"While support for the Liberal Party has remained stable,

what's notable is the switch in support from Labor," he said.

"We've been watching the level of support for an independent candidate increase over time and this poll reflects their strongest position yet.

"The surge in voter support for an independent or other minor party, at the expense of Labor, is reflected in the decline in personal support for Labor Party leader, Rebecca White.

"While this may seem like good news for the Liberal Party, let's not forget that their gains have been marginal over time since a large decrease in support in May."

Mr Jamrozik said support for independents was starting to

impact on the major parties.

"The biggest issues highlighted by voters in the November poll are healthcare and the cost of living, rather than the AFL stadium. These are the hot topics candidates should focus on to show they are in touch with what keeps Tasmanians up at night," he said.

Independent Legislative Council member for Nelson Meg Webb said the EMRS poll's positive swing to independents reflected people "sick of being taken for granted by political parties".

"It is not surprising when taking the temperature of the Tasmanian electorate to find people are turning cold on poli-

tical parties, especially the two major ones," she said.

"Clearly people feel their trust has been betrayed once too often and voters are now looking for credible candidates who stand for something, and who can be trusted to stand up to be counted when it matters.

"Tasmanians may not have to wait until the next state election to send this message even more loudly, with the May upper house elections providing an opportunity to vote for independents."

The survey of 1000 registered voters was taken between November 20 and 27 and has a maximum margin of error of 3.1 percentage points.