

Priorities for the NAIF

POLLING BRIEF – NOV 2016

Between 16 and 28 September The Australia Institute conducted a national opinion poll of 1442 people through Research Now, with nationally representative samples by gender, age and state or territory. The polling asked about priorities for the Northern Australia Infrastructure Facility (NAIF), a \$5 billion public finance facility to develop Northern Australia.

What should the NAIF's priorities be? Respondents were given options.

- The most often selected were infrastructure for health, education and renewable energy, each selected by more than half of the respondents.
- The least often selected priorities for the NAIF were fossil fuel infrastructure (rail, ports, pipelines), each selected by only 1 in 8 or fewer.
- 75% would prefer the funding to go towards renewable energy instead of infrastructure for coal companies.

What would create more jobs: \$5 billion on schools and hospitals in existing cities and towns, instead of spending it on fossil fuel infrastructure in remote areas? 62% say schools and hospitals.

41% oppose spending NAIF funding on infrastructure assisting the Adani Carmichael coal mine. Only 26% support it, while 33% are unsure.

Most projects currently under consideration are based in Queensland.¹ What do Queenslanders think about priorities for the NAIF?

Queenslanders gave similar responses to Australians overall. Queenslanders showed slightly higher support for funding renewables (79%) instead of coal. Compared with all Australians they also showed moderately higher support for the Adani mine (33%) but similar levels of opposition (42%).

Three in four respondents agreed that all infrastructure spending should be assessed by the same standards, with funding going to projects with the greatest benefits. More than half agreed that infrastructure for indigenous communities should be prioritized.

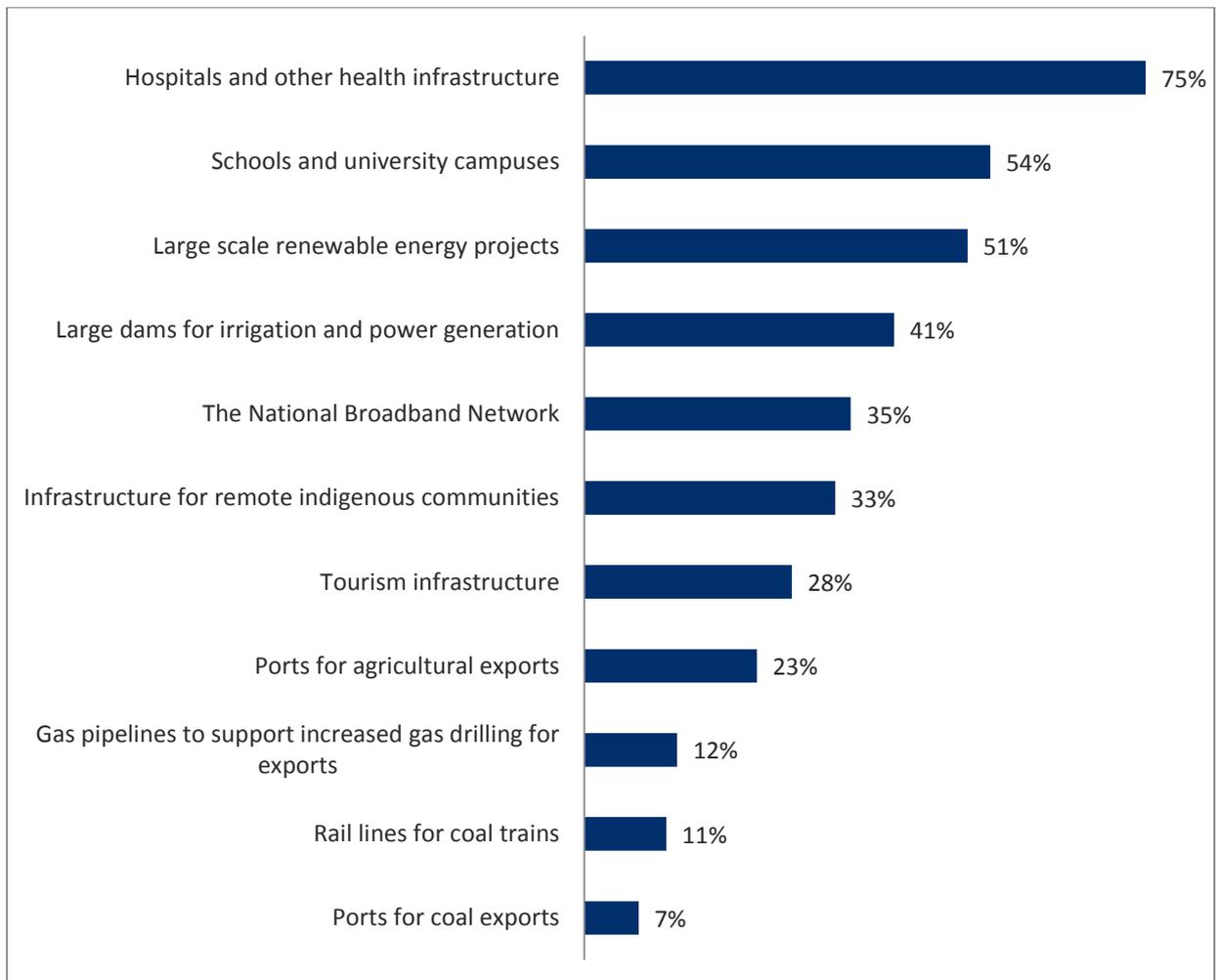
¹ Correspondence with the NAIF Secretariat

Respondents were more likely to disagree than agree with the idea that Northern Australia is the biggest infrastructure priority. They were also more likely to disagree than agree with the idea that southern Australia doesn't need as much infrastructure spending as northern Australia.

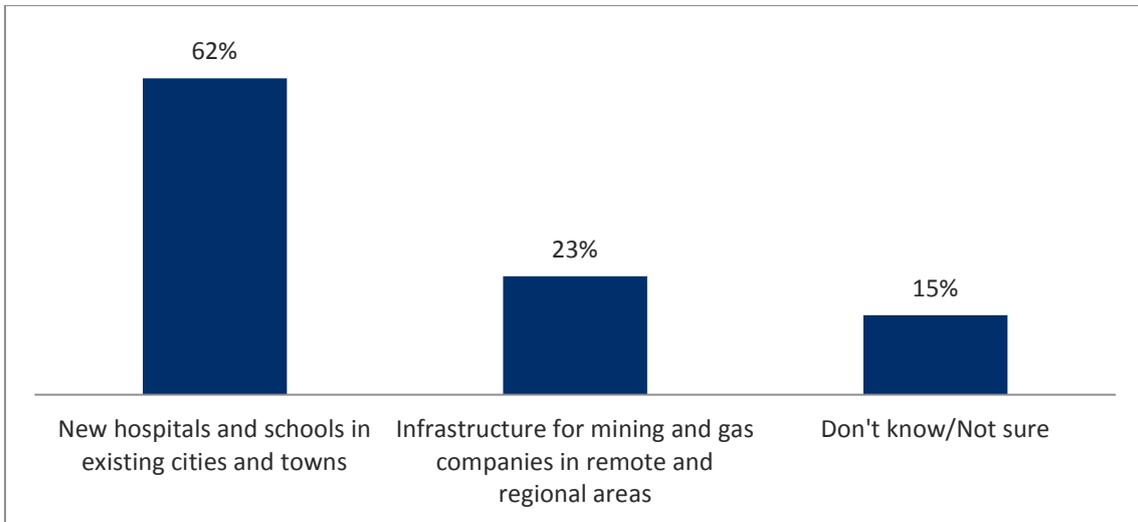
Results

The Commonwealth Government is proposing to provide \$5 billion in taxpayer-funded loans over five years to infrastructure projects in Northern Australia (northern parts of QLD, WA and NT). The loans will be given to commercially unviable projects that would not be built otherwise because private funders will not get good enough returns.

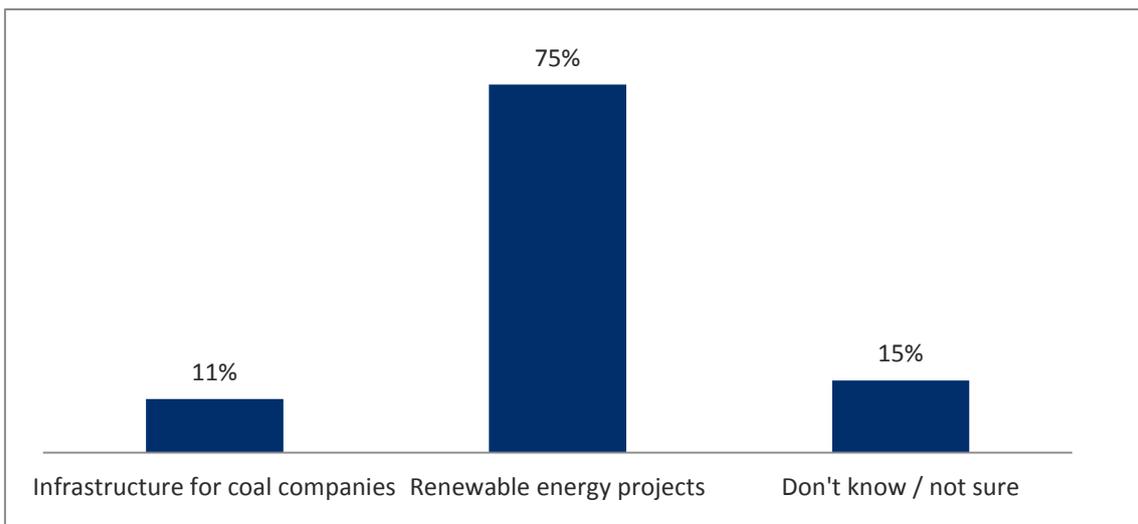
Which, if any, of the following projects should get these loans as a matter of priority? (Select no more than five)



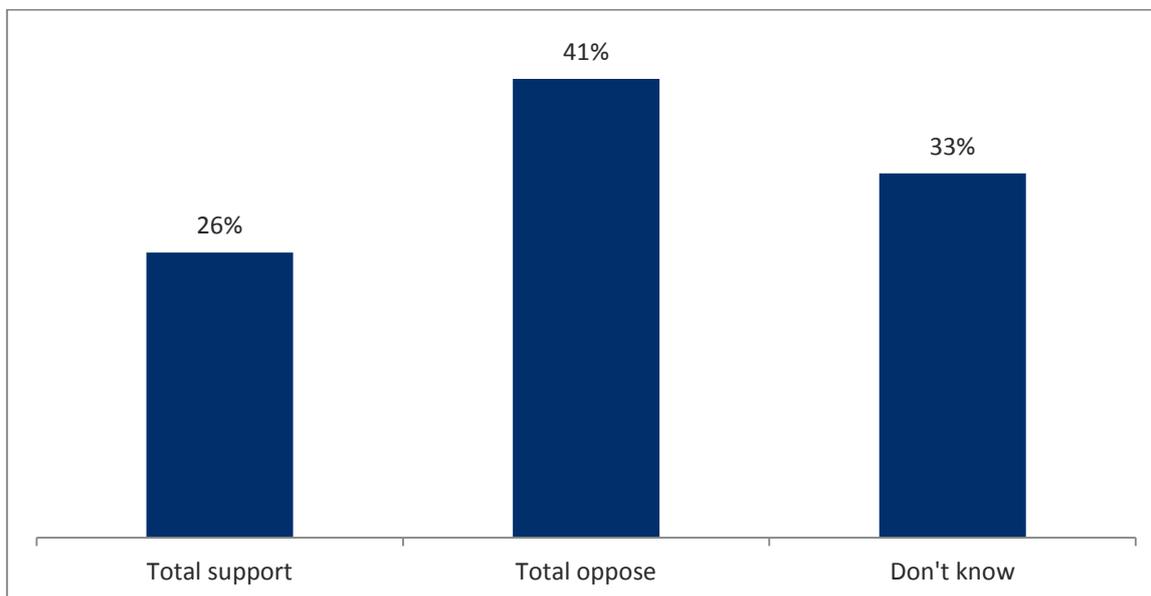
Do you think more jobs would be created by spending \$5 billion on...?



Would you prefer \$5 billion in government infrastructure funding to be spent on...?



Would you support or oppose funding to infrastructure that would enable the construction and operation of the Adani Carmichael coal mine?



Crosstabs: Queenslanders compared with the rest of Australia

		Australians	Queenslanders
More jobs created by?	Hospitals and schools	62%	63%
	Infrastructure for fossil fuels	24%	25%
Prefer \$5bn spent on?	Renewable energy	75%	79%
	Coal infrastructure	11%	10%
Fund Carmichael?	Support	26%	33%
	Oppose	41%	42%

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following?

