

BC PROVINCIAL POLITICAL SCENE

BC Liberals (44%) Widen Lead over NDP (30%)

*MacPhail (51%) Continues to Lead Campbell (42%) in Job Approval,
But Campbell (47%) Beats MacPhail (32%) as Choice for Best Premier*



**Public Release Date:
March 19, 2003**

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Vancouver, BC – A new Ipsos-Reid poll shows support for the BC Liberals is right back where it was before the Premier's drinking and driving arrest in early January. The BC Liberals currently lead the NDP by 14 points (44% to 30%) among decided voters in the province. This is virtually unchanged from the Liberal's 13 point lead (44% to 31%) in December 2002 and shows the Liberals have now regained all the ground they lost in an Ipsos-Reid poll taken in January, shortly after the Premier's public apology (BC Libs 41%, NDP 34%). Meanwhile, the Green Party remains in third place at 19% (up 2 points from December, up 1 point from January) followed by BC Unity at 3% (down 2 points from December, unchanged from January).

Joy MacPhail continues to lead Gordon Campbell in job performance approval, although the gap has narrowed. Five-in-ten (51%, down 2 points from January) BC residents approve of MacPhail's performance as NDP leader, compared to four-in-ten (42%, up 4 points from January) who approve of Campbell's performance as Premier.

MacPhail's strong showing as NDP leader doesn't translate into a desire to see her as Premier. Among British Columbians with a preference, Gordon Campbell is selected over Joy MacPhail as the party leader who would make the best Premier by a margin of 15 points (47% to 32%). Adriane Carr of the Green Party is next best at 14%, followed by Chris Delaney of BC Unity at 6%.

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These are the findings of a BC Ipsos-Reid poll conducted between March 3rd and 10th, 2003 among a representative cross-section of 800 British Columbian adults. These data are statistically weighted to ensure the sample's regional, age and sex composition reflects that of the actual BC population according to 2001 Census data. With a provincial sample of 800, one can say with 95 percent certainty that the overall results are within ± 3.5 percentage points of what they would have been had the entire adult BC population been polled. The margin of error will be larger for population sub-groups.

BC Liberals (44%) Widen Lead over NDP (30%)

The BC Liberals have doubled their lead over the NDP from 7 percentage points in January to 14 points today. The BC Liberals currently have the support of 44% of decided and leaning voters in British Columbia, compared to 30% for the NDP. In a January Ipsos-Reid poll taken shortly after the Premier's public apology for drinking and driving, the Liberal's lead over the NDP had fallen to 41% to 34%. The ballot result is now essentially unchanged from a December 2002 survey taken a month before the Premier's arrest (44% BC Liberals vs. 31% NDP).

The Green Party currently sits at 19% support (up 2 points from December, up 1 point from January), followed by BC Unity at 3% (down 2 points from December, unchanged from January). These results exclude the 19% of British Columbians who are either undecided or show no preference for any party.

The regional results continue to show a huge divide between the Lower Mainland and the rest of the province. The BC Liberals have a 24 point lead over the NDP in the Lower Mainland (51% to 27%), but are in a statistical dead heat with the NDP in the rest of the province (Interior/North: 37% LIB vs. 34% NDP, Island: 32% LIB vs. 33% NDP). The Green Party (27%) is also very competitive on Vancouver Island.



- The BC Liberals do best with upper income households (55% \$60K+ vs. 35% <\$60K), men (51% vs. 37% women) and non-union households (50% vs. 33% union).
- The NDP do best with union households (42% vs. 24% non-union), older residents (38% 55+ years vs. 24% 18-34 years) and women (35% vs. 25% men).
- The Greens do best with younger residents (28% 18-34 years vs. 15% 35+ years), Vancouver Island residents (27% vs. 18% rest of province) and lower/middle income households (24% <\$60K vs. 14% \$60K+).

MacPhail (51%) Continues to Lead Campbell (42%) in Job Approval

Joy MacPhail continues to have a stronger job approval rating as NDP leader than Gordon Campbell has as Premier. Five-in-ten (51%, down 2 points from January) BC residents approve of the job MacPhail is doing as NDP leader, compared to four-in-ten (42%, up 4 points from January) who approve of Campbell as Premier. MacPhail's approval includes 11% "strong" approval and 40% "moderate" approval. Campbell has 11% "strong" approval and 31% "moderate" approval.

A majority (56%, down 3 points from January) of BC residents currently disapprove of Campbell's performance as Premier, including 41% who "strongly" disapprove. One-in-three (32%, down 1 point from January) disapprove of MacPhail's performance, including 16% who "strongly" disapprove.

- MacPhail's approval is highest with union households (63% vs. 46% non-union), university graduates (59% vs. 48% non-university grads) and older British Columbians (58% 55+ years vs. 49% 18-54 years).
- Campbell's approval is highest with upper income households (51% \$60K+ vs. 35% <\$60K), men (49% vs. 34% women) and non-union households (47% vs. 32% union).



But Campbell (47%) Beats MacPhail (32%) as Choice for Best Premier

Although Joy MacPhail has a better job approval rating than Gordon Campbell, she is not the people's number one choice to be Premier of BC. When asked to forget about party preferences, 47% of British Columbians with an opinion select Gordon Campbell as the party leader who would make the best Premier of BC. Joy MacPhail is second best at 32%. Green Party leader Adriane Carr finishes third at 14%, followed by BC Unity leader Chris Delaney at 6%. These results exclude the 26% of BC residents with no opinion.

- Campbell is selected most often by upper income households (59% \$60K+ vs. 36% <\$60K), men (57% vs. 37% women) and non-union households (53% vs. 36% union).
- MacPhail is selected most often by union households (46% vs. 25% non-union), older residents (40% 55+ years vs. 29% 18-54 years), lower/middle income households (39% <\$60K+ vs. 25% \$60K+) and women (39% vs. 26% men).
- Adriane Carr is selected most often by women (19% vs. 10% men).
- Chris Delaney is selected most often by lower/middle income households (9% <\$60K vs. 3% \$60K+) and non-union households (8% vs. 3% union).

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For more information on this news release, please contact:

**Kyle Braid
Vice President
Ipsos-Reid
(604) 257-3200**

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