

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

From: US Desk

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Subject: s 22(1)(a)(ii) US Election: SitRep as at 1730 AEDT 6 November [SEC=OFFICIAL]
Attachments: s 22(1)(a)(ii) US Election Talking Points - v6.03.pdf

OFFICIAL

Dear Colleagues,

Please see below the United States 2024 Election SitRep as at 1730 AEDT / 0130 EST 6 November. Next SitRep update will be issued at 0500 AEDT 7 November / 1300 EST 6 November.

To ensure clear communication channels, we kindly ask CBR based US Network colleagues to cc the s 22(1)(a)(ii) dfat.gov.au, s 22(1)(a)(ii) dfat.gov.au, s 22(1)(a)(ii) dfat.gov.au on US Election-related comms.

Best,
US Desk



KEY DEVELOPMENTS

- **Polls have closed in all states.**
- Associated Press News (AP news) has declared the battleground state of **North Carolina and Georgia for Donald Trump**. This is **good news for his achievable paths to victory**
 - By winning North Carolina and Georgia, Trump could reach the 270 electoral vote threshold by carrying Pennsylvania or by carrying Michigan and Wisconsin. He also can win by carrying Wisconsin and Arizona, as well as other combinations involving Nevada
 - Trump is also slightly ahead in Pennsylvania with 84 per cent reporting. However, much of the uncounted vote is in deep blue Philadelphia and surrounding suburbs, meaning there is space for Harris to make up her current ~170,000 vote deficit in the state
 - He is also slightly ahead in Wisconsin (Trump 104,000 votes ahead, 81% counted) and Michigan (Trump 185,000 ahead, 53% counted)
- **Harris' paths to victory have narrowed**, making a win increasingly difficult – particularly via holding the 'Blue Wall'
 - With Pennsylvania, commentators believe her best plausible path still lies with the Blue Wall – combining Pennsylvania with Michigan and Wisconsin. She would also get over the line with Arizona in place of Wisconsin, or Arizona and Nevada combined in place of Michigan, but this is judged less plausible.
- As projected, AP news have declared **Republicans have won the US Senate majority**
 - Ohio flipping for Bernie Morena, giving the Republicans 50 seats
 - Nebraska retaining for Sen. Deb Fischer, giving the Republican at least a 51-seat majority.
- **House race** results are coming in, but still too early to call who will have majority.

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Australian Government
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

MEDIA TALKING POINTS
DISTRIBUTION: STANDARD

Topic: POLITICAL-ECONOMIC**Originating Division: GPD****Subject: United States Elections 2024****Version Date:** 6/11/2024**Reason for Update:** Updated talking points**Version:** 6.03**Expiry:** 31/12/2024

Talking Points

US election outcome

- The 2024 Presidential election is a matter for the people of the United States
 - we will not speculate about the outcome.
- There is strong longstanding bipartisan support for the Alliance in both Australia and the United States.
- We are committed to working with the US Government and Congress of the day in pursuing Australia's interests and strengthening the Alliance.
- The Alliance between Australia and the United States has never been more important given our challenging strategic environment
 - as the Prime Minister has said, Australia will continue to advocate for the United States to remain engaged in the world and our region, where it continues to play an indispensable role.

Australia-US relationship

- The United States is our vital ally and our closest global partner
 - we have strong cooperation across a broad range of areas including defence cooperation, foreign policy, development, climate, and trade and investment
 - the US is Australia's largest economic partner, with total two way goods and services trade between our countries valued at AUD\$98.7 billion and is our largest source of foreign investment
 - the Alliance, including through AUKUS, increases Australia's ability to protect itself and its interests by providing access to world-leading defence capability and technology, training and combined exercises
 - we exercise our own agency and make decisions in our own interests.
- The United States' security guarantee has been essential to the long period of stability and prosperity we've enjoyed in the Indo-Pacific
 - we share a vision for a peaceful, stable and prosperous region where sovereignty is respected.

- We are committed to deepening our cooperation, bilaterally and with regional partners and institutions, to support and deliver tangible benefits to the Indo-Pacific, including by promoting:
 - economic development, climate change cooperation, security, connectivity, good governance, disaster management, health, and resilience, consistent with regional and national priorities.

If raised: How will a [Harris/Trump] election victory impact the Alliance?

- *Australia has an enduring commitment to our Alliance.*
- *We will continue to work with the US Government and Congress of the day in pursuing Australia's interests and strengthening the Alliance – as we have always done.*

If raised: What does the election outcome mean for [X] policy?

- *There is longstanding bipartisan support for the Alliance in both Australia and the United States.*
 - *it is inappropriate to engage in speculation about policy measures the incoming US administration might adopt.*

If raised: How has the Government prepared for the US election outcome?

- It is usual practice ahead of significant international elections to *build relations with both sides and* ensure we understand the key issues and policies.
- As a matter of course, our embassy in Washington is engaging with US officials and Congressional representatives across the political spectrum.

If pressed: Is the Government 'rushing' to build relationships with Republicans?

- *No - as the Prime Minister said [4 November], the Government engages with people across the US political spectrum.*
- *This is usual practice ahead of significant international elections.*
- *As a matter of course, Ambassador Rudd and the Embassy in Washington engage with US officials and Congressional representatives.*

If raised: Are you concerned by the state of US democracy and potential for unrest?

- Violence should never be part of political expression or protest
 - political violence has no place in our democracies.
- As the Prime Minister said [14 July 2024], in Australia and the United States, the essence and purpose of our democracies is that we can express our views, debate our disagreements, and resolve our differences peacefully.

If pressed: Are you concerned about the electoral integrity of the US election?

- *The US election process and system is a matter for the people of the United States, as Australia's election processes and system are a matter for Australia.*
- *The US is a robust democracy with a range of checks and balances, which will determine the outcome.*

If pressed: Are you concerned about a possible contested outcome?

- The 2024 Presidential election is a matter for the people of the United States
 - it is inappropriate to speculate about the outcome, or comment on US electoral processes.

If pressed: Is Australia's sovereignty at risk under a new administration?

- *No - our Alliance strengthens our sovereignty and our security.*
- *Australia's sovereignty is stronger when we work with others towards shared goals, in ways that respect each other's national interests.*

If raised: Are you concerned about the US being distracted from the Indo-Pacific region?

- *Regardless of the outcome, Australia and the US are committed to working together to ensuring a peaceful, stable, and prosperous region*
 - *where the United States continues to play an indispensable role.*

If raised: Will Ambassador Rudd remain in the role if Trump is elected?

- *Ambassador Rudd is a highly effective Ambassador to the United States*
 - *his skill and experience mean he will work closely with whomever the people of the United States elect as their President.*

- *As the Prime Minister said “Australia decides who our ambassador is, and Mr Rudd is doing a terrific job”.*

If raised: Attempted assassinations of former US President Trump [13 July and 15 September]

- The Australian Government condemns the attempted assassination of former US President, Donald Trump in the strongest terms
 - violence should never be part of political expression or protest. Political violence has no place in our democracies.

If raised: Trump criminal cases

- These are matters for the US legal system; we will not run commentary.
- The 2024 Presidential election is a matter for the US people
 - we will not be drawn into hypothesising about the outcomes.

Any use or disclosure of personal information about individuals and the incidents contained in this background should not be made public. To do so may constitute a breach of the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth).

Background

The United States 2024 presidential election will occur on 5 November EDT.

The Republican Party formally nominated Trump as its presidential nominee (15-18 July), who announced Senator J.D. Vance as his Vice President nominee. The Democratic Party formally nominated Vice President Harris, who Harris announced Minnesota Governor Tim Walz as her Vice President nominee (19-22 August). President Biden remains in position until inauguration of the next President on 20 January.

Attempted assassinations of former US President Trump

On 15 September, the FBI reported an assassination attempt against Trump at a golf course in West Palm Beach, Florida. This followed a previous attempt on 13 July, when Trump was shot in the ear during an election campaign event in Pennsylvania.

Trump’s trials

On 31 May AEST, a New York jury found Donald Trump guilty of 34 felonies for falsifying business records to cover up hush money paid to a porn star. Following the US Supreme Court ruling on presidential immunity, Trump’s sentencing was postponed *until 26 November*.

On 15 July, the federal criminal case against Trump relating to the mishandling of classified documents from the White House was dismissed on procedural grounds related to the process of appointing Special Counsel Jack Smith. Special Counsel Jack Smith has appealed the dismissal.

Trump also faces a federal criminal indictment of four felony charges in the District of Columbia relating to alleged attempts to interfere with the outcome of the 2020 election. Following the US Supreme Court ruling, Special Council filed a motion (2 October) that argued Trump's conduct on and before January 6 was as a private citizen, rather than in his official capacity *as President*.

He also faces a state criminal indictment in Georgia relating to efforts to reverse the election outcome in Georgia in 2020.

In the United States, being a convicted felon does not render you ineligible to run for the presidency.

Handling Notes

Media Interest

Approval	
Consultation	GPD
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Subject: US Election: SitRep as at 22:30 AEDT 6 November

Attachments: PM media release.docx; OFFICIAL_TalkingPoints_6_11_2024 at 2200pm.docx



Dear Colleagues,

Please see below the United States 2024 Election SitRep as at 22:30 AEDT / 0600 EST 6 November – this is an ad hoc SitRep. Next SitRep update will be issued at 0500 AEDT 7 November / 1300 EST 6 November.

Please note we will hold an ad hoc IDC tomorrow – Wednesday 7 November, 11:30 to 13:00 (AEDT). Delegates are welcome, including as it is during DFAT’s Senate Estimates appearance. For external agencies, please RSVP to the calendar invite sent this evening so we can ensure you are in our Visitor Management System.

To ensure clear communication channels, we kindly ask CBR based US Network colleagues to cc the s 22(1)(a)(ii) dfat.gov.au, s 22(1)(a)(ii) dfat.gov.au, s 22(1)(a)(ii) dfat.gov.au on US Election-related comms.

Best,

US Desk

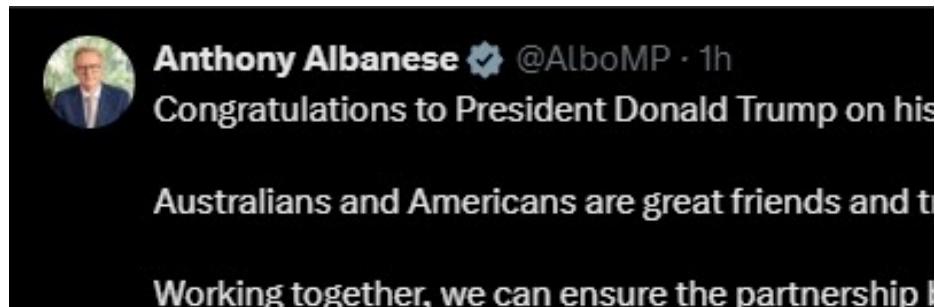
KEY DEVELOPMENTS

- As at 21:40 AEDT, Associated Press News (AP News) declared Trump as winning the US presidency. Donald Trump declared victory earlier, addressing supporters at a watch party in Florida.
 - AP called Harris winning Minnesota, New Hampshire.
 - AP called Trump winning Pennsylvania and Wisconsin.
 - Trump is leading in key races left to be called, including Michigan.
- Prime Minister Albanese has tweeted a congratulatory message to Donald Trump
- Foreign Minister Wong has also tweeted, including a retweet of Prime Minister Albanese's message.

STATEMENTS AND MEDIA

Ministerial:

- **Prime Minister Albanese (Tweet):** <https://x.com/AlboMP/status/1854076093663527414>



- **Prime Minister Albanese (Media Release):** (Attached)
- **Foreign Minister Wong:** <https://x.com/SenatorWong/status/1854081356881682735>



ELECTORAL INTEGRITY – CHALLENGES AND ISSUES

- No updates since 1730 AEDT / 0130 EST 6 November SitRep.

PROTESTS/SECURITY

- No updates since 1730 AEDT / 0130 EST 6 November SitRep.

INTERNATIONAL REACTIONS

Country / economy	Leader	Tweeted	Text
G7			
Canada	Trudeau	No	
France	Macron	Yes (French)	Congratulations, President @realDonaldTrump. Ready to work together as we did for four years—with your convictions and mine. With respect and ambition. For more peace and prosperity.
Germany	Scholz	Yes (German)	I congratulate @realDonaldTrump on his election as US President. For a long time, Germany and the US have been working together successfully promoting prosperity and freedom on both sides of the Atlantic. We will continue to do so for the wellbeing of our citizens.
Italy	Meloni	Yes	A nome mio e del Governo italiano, le più sincere congratulazioni al Presidente eletto degli Stati Uniti, Donald #Trump. Italia e Stati Uniti sono Nazioni “sorelle”, legate da un’alleanza incrollabile, valori comuni e una storica amicizia. È un legame strategico, che sono certa ora rafforzeremo ancora di più. Buon lavoro Presidente. Google Translate : On behalf of myself and the Italian Government, my most sincere congratulations to the President-elect of the United States, Donald #Trump. Italy and the United States are “sister” nations, linked by an unshakable

			alliance, common values, and a historic friendship. It is a strategic bond, which I am sure we will now strengthen even further. Good work Mr. President.
Japan	Ishiba	Yes	Heartfelt congratulations to @realDonaldTrump. I truly look forward to working closely with you to further bolster the Japan-US Alliance & cooperate to promote a free and open Indo-Pacific 🇯🇵
UK	Starmer	Yes	Congratulations President-elect @realDonaldTrump on your historic election victory. I look forward to working with you in the years ahead. + Statement
Other			
EU	von der Leyen Michel	Yes Yes	<u>von der Leyen</u> : I warmly congratulate Donald J. Trump. The EU and the US are more than just allies. We are bound by a true partnership between our people, uniting 800 million citizens. So let's work together on a strong transatlantic agenda that keeps delivering for them. <u>Michel</u> : Congratulations to President-elect @realDonaldTrump. EU & US have an enduring alliance and a historic bond. As allies and friends, the EU looks forward to continuing our constructive cooperation. The EU will pursue its course in line with the strategic agenda as a strong, united, competitive and sovereign partner while defending the rules-based multilateral system.
Greece	Mitsotakis	Yes	Congratulations @realDonaldTrump on your election victory. Greece looks forward to further deepening the strategic partnership between our two countries and working together on important regional and global issues.
Hungary	Orban	Yes	The biggest comeback in US political history! Congratulations to President @realDonaldTrump on his enormous win. A much needed victory for the World!
India	Modi	Yes	Heartiest congratulations my friend @realDonaldTrump on your historic election victory. As you build on the successes of your previous term, I look forward to renewing our collaboration to further strengthen the India-US Comprehensive Global and Strategic Partnership. Together, let's work for the betterment of our people and to promote global peace, stability and prosperity.
Indonesia	Prabowo	No	
Ireland	Harris	Yes	Congratulations to US President-elect @realDonaldTrump on your victory. The people of the United States have spoken and Ireland will work to deepen and strengthen the historic and unbreakable bonds between our people and our nations in the years ahead.
Israel	Netanyahu	Yes	Dear Donald and Melania Trump, Congratulations on history's greatest comeback! Your historic return to the White House offers a new beginning for America and a powerful recommitment to the great alliance between Israel and America. This is a huge victory! In true friendship, yours, Benjamin and Sara Netanyahu

Malaysia	Ibrahim	Yes	<p>Congratulations to @realDonaldTrump on his remarkable political comeback and victory in the US presidential election. This new chapter brings renewed opportunities, and we're ready to move forward with optimism, collaboration and shared purpose.</p> <p>The United States remains Malaysia's largest source of foreign investment and a vital player in the Asia-Pacific region. As ASEAN Chair in 2025, Malaysia hopes that America will reinvigorate its engagement with Southeast Asia. We also urge the US to use its considerable influence to help end the devastating violence and loss of life in Palestine and Ukraine.</p> <p>We look forward to working closely with the incoming president to foster mutual benefits for the people of both our nations.</p>
NATO	Rutte	Yes	<p>I just congratulated @realDonaldTrump on his election as President of the United States. His leadership will again be key to keeping our Alliance strong. I look forward to working with him again to advance peace through strength through #NATO.</p>
NZ	Luxon	Yes	<p>The United States is one of New Zealand's most important partners. Tonight, I congratulate President-elect @realDonaldTrump and look forward to building New Zealand's relationship with his incoming Administration.</p>
Portugal	Montenegro	Yes	<p>Congratulations, President @realDonaldTrump. I look forward to working closely with you, within the spirit of the long standing and solid relationship between Portugal and the United States, bilaterally and at @NATO and multilateral level.</p>
ROK	Suk Yeol	Yes	<p>Congratulations to @realDonaldTrump! Under your strong leadership, the future of the ROK-U.S. alliance and America will shine brighter. Look forward to working closely with you.</p>
Singapore	Wong	Yes	<p>Congratulations @realDonaldTrump on being elected as the 47th President of the United States! I am confident that the US will continue to grow and lead globally. I look forward to taking our partnership to even greater heights. We hope to welcome you back to Singapore soon sg 🇺🇸</p>
Spain	Sanchez	Yes	<p>Congratulations @realDonaldTrump on your victory and your election as 47th President of the US. We will work on our strategic bilateral relations and on a strong transatlantic partnership.</p>
Ukraine	Zelenskyy	Yes	<p>Congratulations to @realDonaldTrump on his impressive election victory! I recall our great meeting with President Trump back in September, when we discussed in detail the Ukraine-U.S. strategic partnership, the Victory Plan, and ways to put an end to Russian aggression against Ukraine. I appreciate President Trump's commitment to the "peace through strength" approach in global affairs. This is exactly the principle that can practically bring just peace in Ukraine closer. I am hopeful that we will put it into action together. We look forward to an era of a strong United States of America under President Trump's decisive leadership. We rely on continued strong bipartisan support for Ukraine in the United States. We are interested in developing mutually beneficial political and economic cooperation that will benefit both of our nations. Ukraine, as one of Europe's strongest military powers, is committed to ensuring long-term peace and security in Europe and the Transatlantic community with the support of our allies. I am looking forward to personally congratulating President Trump and discussing ways to strengthen Ukraine's strategic partnership with the United States.</p>

OFFICIAL:Sensitive



Australian Government
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

MEDIA TALKING POINTS DISTRIBUTION: STANDARD

Topic: POLITICAL-ECONOMIC
Subject: United States Elections 2024

Originating Division: GPD

Version Date: 6/11/2024

Version: 7

Reason for Update:
Updated talking points
Expiry: 31/12/2024

Talking Points

US election outcome

- *Congratulations to President-elect Trump on his election victory.*
- *We look forward to working with the incoming Trump Administration to advance our mutual interests and expand our cooperation.*
- *Australians and Americans are great friends and true allies*
 - *our nations are bound by a history of shared sacrifice, a commitment to common values and – above all – enduring respect and affection between our people.*
- There is strong longstanding bipartisan support for the Alliance in both Australia and the United States.
- The Alliance between Australia and the United States has never been more important given our challenging strategic environment
 - *working together, we can ensure the partnership between our nations and peoples remains strong into the future*
 - *the United States has long played a leadership role in the stability and security of the Indo-Pacific. Australia will strive to strengthen the co-operation between our two nations in the region.*

Australia-US relationship

- The United States is our vital ally and our closest global partner.
- *Our Government will work closely with the new Trump Administration to realise the benefits of our strong economic and security partnership.*
- *The US-Australia Alliance is critical to the security and prosperity of both our nations and the region*
 - we have strong cooperation across a broad range of areas including defence, foreign policy, development, trade and investment and cultural ties

- the US is Australia's largest economic partner, with total two way goods and services trade between our countries valued at AUD\$98.7 billion and is our largest source of foreign investment
- the Alliance, including through AUKUS, increases Australia's defence capability and it provides access to world-leading defence capability and technology, training and combined exercises
- we exercise our own agency and make decisions in our own interests.

If raised: What does this presidency mean for the Alliance?

- *Australia and the US have an enduring bipartisan commitment to our Alliance, which is critical to the security and prosperity of both our nations and the region.*
- *Australia had a strong working relationship with the previous Trump Administration*
 - *we look forward to working with the incoming administration to achieve positive outcomes for both Australia and the United States.*

If raised: What does a Trump presidency mean for [X] policy?

- There is longstanding bipartisan support for the Alliance in both Australia and the United States
 - *as is usual practice, the Australian Government has been working to ensure we are ready for whatever the American people decide*
 - *we will continue to work closely with the Biden Administration until the presidential inauguration on 20 January.*

If raised: Are you concerned about the US being distracted/withdrawing from the Indo-Pacific region?

- *The United States has long played a leadership role in the stability and security of the Indo-Pacific.*
- *Australia will strive to strengthen the co-operation between our two nations in our region.*
- *The US-Australia Alliance is critical to the security and prosperity of both our nations and the region.*

If raised: Will Ambassador Rudd remain in the role with Trump as president?

- Ambassador Rudd is a highly effective Ambassador to the United States
 - his skill and experience mean he will work closely with the new administration and congress.
- As the Prime Minister said, "Australia decides who our ambassador is, and Mr Rudd is doing a terrific job".

If raised: Trump criminal cases

- These are matters for the US legal system; we will not run commentary.

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s 22(1)(a)(ii)

From: US Desk

Sent: Thursday, 7 November 2024 4:10 PM

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Subject: US Election: SitRep as at 1530 AEDT 7 November [SEC=OFFICIAL:Sensitive]

Attachments: US Election - WoAG Talking Points - v.10..docx

OFFICIAL: Sensitive

Dear Colleagues,

Please see below the United States 2024 Election SitRep as at **1530 AEDT 7 November / 2330 EST 6 November**. Next SitRep update will be issued at **0500 AEDT 8 November / 1300 EST 7 November**.

To ensure clear communication channels, we kindly ask CBR based US Network colleagues to cc the [s 22\(1\)\(a\)\(ii\) dfat.gov.au](mailto:s 22(1)(a)(ii) dfat.gov.au), [s 22\(1\)\(a\)\(ii\) dfat.gov.au](mailto:s 22(1)(a)(ii) dfat.gov.au), [s 22\(1\)\(a\)\(ii\) @dfat.gov.au](mailto:s 22(1)(a)(ii) @dfat.gov.au) on US Election-related comms.

Best,
US Desk

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

- Prime Minister Albanese spoke with President Trump at 1000 AEDT 7 November/1800 EST 6 November, and as posted about the call on X.
- President Trump is leading key races still to be called, including Nevada and Arizona.
- **The House is still in play** for either party, with 38 races yet to be called.

STATEMENTS AND MEDIA

Ministerial:

- **Prime Minister** statement at the opening of Question Time on 7 November AEDT: 'Just after 10am I spoke with President Trump and I congratulated him on his election victory. It was a very constructive discussion. We affirmed the strong relationship between our two nations and committed to working together for the benefit of our people, including through AUKUS.'
- **Prime Minister** at a [press conference](#) this morning (7 November AEDT): 'Our government will work closely with the new Trump Administration to realise the benefits of what is a very strong economic and security partnership'.
- **Foreign Minister** during a [doorstop](#) on 7 November AEDT (similar lines used in [several other media interviews today](#)): 'I first congratulate on behalf of the Government, as the Prime Minister has, President Trump on his election. It was an emphatic victory. We look forward to working with him. We have an Alliance that's historic, that's grounded in shared history, shared democratic values and shared objectives, and we look forward to working with him on behalf of the Australian people.'

ELECTORAL INTEGRITY – CHALLENGES AND ISSUES

- No updates since 0500 AEDT 7 November / 1300 EST 6 November SitRep.

PROTESTS/SECURITY

- No updates since 0500 AEDT 7 November / 1300 EST 6 November SitRep.

INTERNATIONAL REACTIONS

Further to 1200 AEDT / 2000 EST 6 November, additional international reactions of note have been issued by:

- [China MFA](#): We respect the choice of the American people and congratulate Mr. Trump on being elected as president of the United States.
- [Taiwan](#): Sincere congratulations to President-elect Donald Trump on your victory...
- [Philippines President](#): Statement of the President
- [Cambodia Prime Minister](#): Cambodian PM extended congratulations to US President-elect Donald Trump
- [UN Secretary-General](#): Secretary-General's statement on the US elections
- [NATO Secretary-General](#): NATO Secretary-General congratulates US President-elect Donald Trump and Vice President-elect JD Vance
- [Human Rights Watch](#): US: Second Trump term a threat to rights in US, world
- [Saudi Arabia Prime Minister](#): HRH Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman congratulates Donald Trump in a phone call on winning US presidential election...
- [Russia MFA](#): Russia will interact with the new White House administration, firmly upholding our national interests and working to achieve the goals of the special military operation...
- [Türkiye President](#): President RT Erdoğan spoke by phone with President-elect Donald Trump of the United States. Congratulating US President-elect Trump on his election victory, President Erdoğan expressed his wish to enhance the cooperation between Türkiye and the US in the upcoming term.

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OFFICIAL:Sensitive

**Australian Government****Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade****MEDIA TALKING
POINTS
DISTRIBUTION:
STANDARD****Topic: POLITICAL-ECONOMIC****Subject: United States Elections 2024****Originating Division: GPD****Version Date: 7/11/2024****Version: 10****Reason for Update:** Updated
talking points**Expiry:** 31/12/2024**Talking Points****US election outcome**

- Congratulations to President Trump on his election victory.
- We look forward to working with the incoming Trump Administration to advance our mutual interests and expand our cooperation.
- Australians and Americans are great friends and true allies
 - our nations are bound by a history of shared sacrifice, a commitment to common values and – above all – enduring respect and affection between our people.
- There is strong longstanding bipartisan support for the Alliance in both Australia and the United States.
- The Alliance between Australia and the United States has never been more important given our challenging strategic environment
 - working together, we can ensure the partnership between our nations and peoples remains strong into the future
 - the United States has long played a leadership role in the stability and security of the Indo-Pacific. Australia will strive to strengthen the co-operation between our two nations in the region.

Australia-US relationship

- The United States is our vital ally and our closest global partner.
- Our Government will work closely with the new Trump Administration to realise the benefits of our strong economic and security partnership.
- The US-Australia Alliance is critical to the security and prosperity of both our nations and the region
 - we have strong cooperation across a broad range of areas including defence, foreign policy, development, trade and investment and cultural ties

- the US is Australia's largest economic partner, with total two-way goods and services trade between our countries valued at AUD\$98.7 billion and is our largest source of foreign investment
- the Alliance, including through AUKUS, increases Australia's defence capability and it provides access to world-leading defence capability and technology, training and combined exercises
 - we exercise our own agency and make decisions in our own interests.

If raised: What does this presidency mean for the Alliance?

- Australia and the US have an enduring bipartisan commitment to our Alliance, which is critical to the security and prosperity of both our nations and the region.
- Australia had a strong working relationship with the previous Trump Administration
 - we look forward to working with the incoming administration to achieve positive outcomes for both Australia and the United States.

If raised: What does a Trump presidency mean for [X] policy?

- There is longstanding bipartisan support for the Alliance in both Australia and the United States
 - as is usual practice, the Australian Government has been working to ensure we are ready for whatever the American people decide
 - we will continue to work closely with the Biden Administration until the presidential inauguration on 20 January.

If raised: What is the Government going to do about President Trump's tariff proposals?

- *President Trump presented numerous tariff proposals during the campaign*
 - *currently, it is unclear which proposal will be implemented and how*
 - *as such, it would be inappropriate to engage in detailed speculation about hypothetical tariff scenarios.*

If raised: Are you concerned about the US being distracted/withdrawing from the Indo-Pacific region?

- The United States has long played a leadership role in the stability and security of the Indo-Pacific.
- Australia will strive to strengthen the cooperation between our two nations in our region.
- The US-Australia Alliance is critical to the security and prosperity of both our nations and the region.

If raised: Will Ambassador Rudd remain in the role with Trump as president?

- Ambassador Rudd is a highly effective Ambassador to the United States
 - his skill and experience mean he will work closely with the new administration and congress.
- As the Prime Minister said, "Australia decides who our ambassador is, and Mr Rudd is doing a terrific job".

If raised: Trump criminal cases

- These are matters for the US legal system; we will not run commentary.

Any use or disclosure of personal information about individuals and the incidents contained in this background should not be made public. To do so may constitute a breach of the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth).

Background

The United States 2024 presidential election occurred on 5 November EST. At 21:44 6 November AEDT, Associated Press News (AP News) declared Trump as winning the US presidency. Donald Trump declared victory earlier than the AP announcement, addressing supporters at a watch party in Florida. Vice President Harris called to congratulate President Trump on his election win at approximately 2pm 6 November (6am 7 November AEDT) and delivered her concession speech to supporters in Washington DC at 4pm EST (8am 7 November AEDT).

Prime Minister Albanese tweeted a congratulatory message to Donald Trump on 6 November AEDT and issued a media release. He held a call with the President on the morning of 7 November AEDT, where he congratulated President Trump on his election victory. They discussed the importance of the Alliance and the strength of the Australia-US relationship, particularly in relation to security, AUKUS, trade and investment.

Foreign Minister Wong also tweeted on 6 November AEDT. When addressing media, she congratulated President Trump, and reaffirmed the strength of the Alliance and that Australia was looking forward to working with him and his administration.

Ambassador Rudd also tweeted a congratulatory message.

AP News has confirmed that Republicans have won control of the Senate (52-44), with some seats still to be called). The House is still in play for either party (205-190), with races still to be called.

President Biden will remain in position until President Trump is inaugurated on 20 January 2025.

Handling Notes**Media Interest**

Approval	
Consultation	GPD
Author	s 22(1)(a)(ii)
Cleared by	Elizabeth Le Bas, AS USB

04 November 2024

UNITED STATES

ISSUES

The Alliance, including engagement with the United States in the Indo-Pacific, and bilateral cooperation under the three pillars of the Alliance – defence, economic, and climate change.

KEY MESSAGES

- The United States is our vital security ally, closest global partner, and largest source of foreign investment.
 - we are the closest of partners across a broad range of areas including defence cooperation, foreign policy, development, climate, and trade and investment.
- The Alliance between Australia and the United States has never been more important given our challenging strategic environment
- The Alliance, including through AUKUS, increases Australia's ability to protect itself and its interests by providing access to world-leading defence capability and technology, training and combined exercises
 - we exercise our own agency and make decisions in our own interests.
- We are committed to deepening our cooperation, bilaterally and with regional partners and institutions, to support and deliver tangible benefits to the Indo-Pacific, including promoting:
 - economic development, climate change cooperation, security, connectivity, good governance, disaster management, health, and resilience, consistent with regional and national priorities.

2024 US election

- The 2024 Presidential election is a matter for the people of the United States
 - we will not speculate about the outcome.
- Australia has an enduring commitment to our Alliance and will work with the US Government and Congress of the day in pursuing Australia's interests and strengthening the Alliance
 - as we have always done.
- As the Prime Minister has said, Australia will continue to advocate for the United States to remain engaged in the world and our region, where it continues to play an indispensable role.

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04 November 2024

If raised: How has the Government prepared for the US election outcome?

- It is usual practice ahead of significant international elections to build relations with both sides and ensure we understand the key issues.
- As a matter of course, our embassy in Washington is engaging with US officials and Congressional representatives across the political spectrum.

If raised: Is the Government 'rushing' to build relationships with Republicans?

- No. As the Prime Minister said [4 November], the Government engages with people across the US political spectrum.
- This is usual practice ahead of significant international elections.
- As a matter of course, Ambassador Rudd and the Embassy in Washington engage with US officials and Congressional representatives.

If raised: Commentary by officials on the outcome of the US election

- The 2024 Presidential election is a matter for the people of the United States
 - we will not speculate about the outcome.
- Australia has an enduring commitment to our Alliance and will work with the US Government and Congress of the day in pursuing Australia's interests and strengthening the Alliance
 - as we have always done.

If pressed: Were recent comments by an official appropriate?

- All APS employees are bound by the APS Values, Employment Principles and Code of Conduct set out in the *Public Service Act 1999*
 - comments made by DFAT officials are a matter for the Department.

If raised: Attempted assassinations of former US President Donald Trump

- Violence should never be part of political expression or protest
 - political violence has no place in our democracies
 - we condemn it in the strongest terms.

If raised: Criminal cases against Donald Trump

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- These are matters for the US legal system; we will not run commentary.
- The 2024 Presidential election is a matter for the US people
 - we will not be drawn into hypothesising about the outcomes.

If raised: How will Donald Trump's negative public commentary of Ambassador Rudd affect Australia's relationship with the United States, especially if Trump is re-elected in 2024?

- Ambassador Rudd is doing a good job as Australia's Ambassador to the United States.
- His skill and experience mean he will work closely with whomever the people of the United States elect as their President.

If raised: Lara Trump's comments on Ambassador Rudd

- Australia has an enduring commitment to our Alliance and will work with the US Government and Congress of the day in pursuing Australia's interests and strengthening the Alliance – as we have always done.
- Ambassador Rudd is a highly effective Ambassador to the United States
 - his skill and experience mean he will work closely with whomever the people of the United States elect as their President.

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04 November 2024

Background

US Elections

The United States 2024 presidential election will occur on 5 November EDT. The Republican Party formally nominated Trump as its presidential nominee (15-18 July), who announced Senator J.D. Vance as his Vice President nominee. The Democratic Party formally nominated Vice President Harris, who Harris announced Minnesota Governor Tim Walz as her Vice President nominee (19-22 August).

On 21 July EST, President Biden released a statement on X (Twitter) announcing he would withdraw from the 2024 Presidential race. President Biden will remain President until the inauguration of the next US President on 20 January 2025.

On 4 November, the Australian Financial Review reported Australian officials are 'rushing' to engage Republicans and Trump allies ahead of the US Election. Stating the Foreign Minister Wong and Deputy Prime Minister Marles met with former Secretary of State Mike Pompeo as part of an effort to cultivate relationships with Donald Trump's allies. It was also reported Minister Wong met with Kevin McCarthy, former Speaker of the House of Representative and potential frontrunner to become Chief of Staff to Donald Trump. Ambassador Rudd has met with 66 of 100 Senators and 102 of 435 House of Representatives members.

On 4 November, the PM said "We engage with people across the US political system...When I was in the United States, I met with Republicans, I met with the Democrats, I met with people in Congress, people in the Senate." The Prime Minister met with Republican Congresspeople during his October 2023 visit and hosted a bipartisan reception for the Australia America Leadership Dialogue delegation in August 2023.

Comments by former Deputy Ambassador on US election outcome

On 4 November, the AFR published an article citing views of former Deputy Ambassador to Washington on the outcome of the US election. The Former Deputy Ambassador was quoted as saying "The Trump campaign seems to have eschewed appealing to Nikki Haley voters, who are potentially a quarter of Republicans in key states, to focus on speaking to Joe Rogan's gamer-bro audience – disgruntled, non-college- educated young men, predominantly white but making inroads with young black and Latino men attracted to Trump's machismo...They might take a punt on Trump on their favourite betting market – but will these traditionally low-propensity voters turn out to vote? My bet is those gamer chairs are too comfortable on the day".

Assassination attempts of former president Donald Trump

On 15 September EST, the FBI reported an assassination attempt against former US president Donald Trump at a golf course in West Palm Beach, Florida. The gunman was identified as 58 year old Ryan Routh, who was charged with two gun-related crimes on 16 September EST.

This followed a previous assassination attempt on 13 July EST, when former President Trump was shot in his ear during an election campaign event in Pennsylvania. The US Secret Service confirmed the death of a rally participant (Corey Comperatore, 50). Two others were critically injured (David Dutch, 57 and James Copenhaver, 74).

Trump's trials

On 31 May AEST, a New York jury found Donald Trump guilty of 34 felonies for falsifying business records to cover up hush money paid to a porn star. Following the US Supreme Court ruling on presidential immunity, Trump's sentencing was postponed while the trial court determined what acts alleged in the Special Counsel's indictment constituted 'official acts'.

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04 November 2024

On 15 July, the federal criminal case against Trump relating to the mishandling of classified documents from the White House was dismissed on procedural grounds related to the process of appointing Special Counsel Jack Smith. Special Counsel Jack Smith has appealed the dismissal.

Trump faces two other prosecutions. A federal criminal indictment of four felony charges in the District of Columbia relating to Trump's alleged attempts to interfere with the outcome of the 2020 election. Following the US Supreme Court ruling on presidential immunity, Special Council has filed a motion (2 October) that argues Trump's conduct on and before January 6 was as a private citizen, rather than in his official capacity. He also faces a state criminal indictment in Georgia relating to efforts to reverse the election outcome in Georgia in 2020. These are unlikely to go to trial ahead of the 5 November election.

In the United States, being a convicted felon does not render you ineligible to run for the presidency.

Trump's comments on Ambassador Rudd (19 March 2024)

In an interview with Nigel Farage, Donald Trump's response to a question about whether he would take a call from Ambassador Rudd after he had called Trump a 'destructive President', 'a traitor to the west', was 'He won't be there long if that's the case. I don't know much about him. I heard he was a little bit nasty. I hear he's not the brightest bulb, but I don't know much about him. If he's at all hostile, he will not be there long.'

Lara Trump's comments on Ambassador Rudd (1 November)

In an interview with Sky News Australia, Lara Trump suggested Ambassador Rudd may not be the right person for the job if Donald Trump was re-elected. 'It's not my decision but I do think it would be nice to have a person who appreciates all Donald Trump has gone through' and 'obviously, that is a little bit tough to take, and maybe we would want to choose some else (to represent Australia in the US)'.
 s 22(1)(a)

On 4 November, PM Albanese said "Australia decides who our ambassador is, and Mr Rudd is doing a terrific job".
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05 November 2024

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UNITED STATES

ISSUES

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- We are committed to deepening our cooperation, bilaterally and with regional partners and institutions, to support and deliver tangible benefits to the Indo-Pacific, including promoting:
 - economic development, climate change cooperation, security, connectivity, good governance, disaster management, health, and resilience, consistent with regional and national priorities.

2024 US election

- The 2024 Presidential election is a matter for the people of the United States
 - we will not speculate about the outcome.
- Australia has an enduring commitment to our Alliance and will work with the US Government and Congress of the day in pursuing Australia's interests and strengthening the Alliance
 - as we have always done.
- As the Prime Minister has said, Australia will continue to advocate for the United States to remain engaged in the world and our region, where it continues to play an indispensable role.

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If raised: 2017 comments by Prime Minister Albanese regarding Donald Trump

- There is strong, longstanding bipartisan support for the Alliance in both Australia and the United States.
- Australia is committed to working with the US Government and Congress of the day in pursuing Australia's interests and strengthening the Alliance
 - as we have always done.

If raised: How has the Government prepared for the US election outcome?

- It is usual practice ahead of significant international elections to build relations with both sides and ensure we understand the key issues.
- As a matter of course, our embassy in Washington is engaging with US officials and Congressional representatives across the political spectrum.

If raised: What does the election outcome mean for [X] policy?

- There is longstanding bipartisan support for the Alliance in both Australia and the United States.
 - it is inappropriate to engage in speculation about policy measures the incoming US administration might adopt.

If raised: Is the Government 'rushing' to build relationships with Republicans?

- No. As the Prime Minister said [4 November], the Government engages with people across the US political spectrum.
- This is usual practice ahead of significant international elections.
- As a matter of course, Ambassador Rudd and the Embassy in Washington engage with US officials and Congressional representatives.

If raised: Commentary by officials on the US election outcome

- The 2024 Presidential election is a matter for the people of the United States
 - we will not speculate about the outcome.
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If pressed: Were recent comments by an official appropriate?

- All APS employees are bound by the APS Values, Employment Principles and Code of Conduct set out in the *Public Service Act 1999*
 - comments made by DFAT officials are a matter for the Department.

If raised: Attempted assassinations of former US President Donald Trump

- Violence should never be part of political expression or protest
 - political violence has no place in our democracies
 - we condemn it in the strongest terms.

If raised: Criminal cases against Donald Trump

- These are matters for the US legal system; we will not run commentary.
- The 2024 Presidential election is a matter for the US people
 - we will not be drawn into hypothesising about the outcomes.

If raised: How will Donald Trump's negative public commentary of Ambassador Rudd affect Australia's relationship with the United States, especially if Trump is re-elected in 2024?

- Ambassador Rudd is doing a good job as Australia's Ambassador to the United States.
- His skill and experience mean he will work closely with whomever the people of the United States elect as their President.

If raised: Lara Trump's comments on Ambassador Rudd

- Australia has an enduring commitment to our Alliance and will work with the US Government and Congress of the day in pursuing Australia's interests and strengthening the Alliance – as we have always done.
- Ambassador Rudd is a highly effective Ambassador to the United States
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05 November 2024

Background

US Elections

The United States 2024 presidential election will occur on 5 November EDT. The Republican Party formally nominated Trump as its presidential nominee (15-18 July), who announced Senator J.D. Vance as his Vice President nominee. The Democratic Party formally nominated Vice President Harris, who Harris announced Minnesota Governor Tim Walz as her Vice President nominee (19-22 August).

On 21 July EST, President Biden released a statement on X (Twitter) announcing he would withdraw from the 2024 Presidential race. President Biden will remain President until the inauguration of the next US President on 20 January 2025.

2017 comments by Prime Minister Albanese regarding Donald Trump

On 4 November, footage from 2017 resurfaced of then Transport Minister Anthony Albanese saying Donald Trump "scares the s**t out of me" during an interview. Opposition home affairs spokesman James Paterson was quoted in The Australian as saying Prime Minister Albanese's comments were 'grossly irresponsible' on 5 November.

On 5 November, Deputy Prime Minister Marles was asked about the previous statement by Prime Minister Albanese. He noted Prime Minister Albanese would 'be working very closely with that person [Harris or Trump], and the Alliance will be in good shape.'

Deputy Prime Minister Marles was further asked what he 'thought' of Donald Trump. He was also asked if Kevin Rudd's position as Australia's Ambassador to the United States was tenable, what the impact on Australia's efforts to stabilise our relationship with China would be, and if he had received assurances that AUKUS would continue, in the event of a second Trump administration.

Election questions to Trade and Tourism Minister Farrell in Shanghai

While in Shanghai on 4 November for China International Import Expo (CIIE), media asked Minister Farrell to assess the consequences for Australia should the US impose higher tariffs on Chinese goods following the US election. In response, Minister Farrell noted it was our, particularly his, job to discourage the imposition of additional trade barriers. He noted that free trade provided peace and prosperity in our region, and that his argument to any incoming American government administration would be that Australia supported the concept of free trade, and wanted to continue to work with countries to ensure that free trade principles continue to apply to world commerce.

Australian officials 'rushing' to engage Republicans and Trump allies

On 4 November, the Australian Financial Review reported Australian officials are 'rushing' to engage Republicans and Trump allies ahead of the US Election. Stating the Foreign Minister Wong and Deputy Prime Minister Marles met with former Secretary of State Mike Pompeo as part of an effort to cultivate relationships with Donald Trump's allies. It was also reported Minister Wong met with Kevin McCarthy, former Speaker of the House of Representative and potential frontrunner to become Chief of Staff to Donald Trump. Ambassador Rudd has met with 66 of 100 Senators and 102 of 435 House of Representatives members.

On 4 November, the PM said "We engage with people across the US political system...When I was in the United States, I met with Republicans, I met with the Democrats, I met with people in Congress, people in the Senate." The Prime Minister met with Republican Congresspeople during his October 2023 visit and hosted a bipartisan reception for the Australia America Leadership Dialogue delegation in August 2023.

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Comments by former Deputy Ambassador on US election outcome

On 4 November, the AFR published an article citing views of former Deputy Ambassador to Washington on the outcome of the US election. The Former Deputy Ambassador was quoted as saying “The Trump campaign seems to have eschewed appealing to Nikki Haley voters, who are potentially a quarter of Republicans in key states, to focus on speaking to Joe Rogan’s gamer-bro audience – disgruntled, non-college- educated young men, predominantly white but making inroads with young black and Latino men attracted to Trump’s machismo... They might take a punt on Trump on their favourite betting market – but will these traditionally low-propensity voters turn out to vote? My bet is those gamer chairs are too comfortable on the day”.

On 4 November he published on LinkedIn, noting ‘a lot of people have been asking me what my thoughts are on the US election’. He said ‘My gut tells me that we will either see Kamala Harris surprise on the upside, or we will see Donald Trump grind out a close victory in the electoral college; I don’t see any reason to suggest that Donald Trump will surprise by breaking his ceiling significantly. If Kamala Harris surprises on the upside, the election will be resolved on the night (although expect lots of unsuccessful legal shenanigans from the Trump team); if she doesn’t it will take some days before we know whether Trump has scraped across the electoral college line.’ He also noted some counties to particularly watch on election night.

Assassination attempts of former president Donald Trump

On 15 September EST, the FBI reported an assassination attempt against former US president Donald Trump at a golf course in West Palm Beach, Florida. The gunman was identified as 58 year old Ryan Routh, who was charged with two gun-related crimes on 16 September EST.

This followed a previous assassination attempt on 13 July EST, when former President Trump was shot in his ear during an election campaign event in Pennsylvania. The US Secret Service confirmed the death of a rally participant (Corey Comperatore, 50). Two others were critically injured (David Dutch, 57 and James Copenhaver, 74).

Trump’s trials

On 31 May AEST, a New York jury found Donald Trump guilty of 34 felonies for falsifying business records to cover up hush money paid to a porn star. Following the US Supreme Court ruling on presidential immunity, Trump’s sentencing was postponed while the trial court determined what acts alleged in the Special Counsel’s indictment constituted ‘official acts’.

On 15 July, the federal criminal case against Trump relating to the mishandling of classified documents from the White House was dismissed on procedural grounds related to the process of appointing Special Counsel Jack Smith. Special Counsel Jack Smith has appealed the dismissal.

Trump faces two other prosecutions. A federal criminal indictment of four felony charges in the District of Columbia relating to Trump’s alleged attempts to interfere with the outcome of the 2020 election. Following the US Supreme Court ruling on presidential immunity, Special Council has filed a motion (2 October) that argues Trump’s conduct on and before January 6 was as a private citizen, rather than in his official capacity. He also faces a state criminal indictment in Georgia relating to efforts to reverse the election outcome in Georgia in 2020. These are unlikely to go to trial ahead of the 5 November election.

In the United States, being a convicted felon does not render you ineligible to run for the presidency.

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Trump's comments on Ambassador Rudd (19 March 2024)

In an interview with Nigel Farage, Donald Trump's response to a question about whether he would take a call from Ambassador Rudd after he had called Trump a 'destructive President', 'a traitor to the west', was 'He won't be there long if that's the case. I don't know much about him. I heard he was a little bit nasty. I hear he's not the brightest bulb, but I don't know much about him. If he's at all hostile, he will not be there long.'

Senator Birmingham was reported in the AFR on 4 November saying Australia's relationship with the US was bigger than any individual privileged to be Ambassador. He said 'Regardless of who wins, the Albanese government needs to judge Dr Rudd's position on his capacity to get the job done in Washington, and make Australia's influence as strong as possible, just as Dr Rudd's predecessors have done across various administrations. While Dr Rudd deserves credit for the work he has done to help secure Australia's interests on AUKUS, defence export rules and boosting our co-operation on supply chains, it is important that this success continue under a new administration. Despite saying that he wouldn't appoint Kevin Rudd to Washington, Anthony Albanese did so. If necessary, Mr Albanese must be willing to put Australia's best interests first, regardless of his personal loyalty to Dr Rudd.'

On 4 November, former Australian Ambassador to the United States and Secretary of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Denis Richardson, said on ABC's Q&A 'Rudd will be fine [as Ambassador] under a possible second Trump Administration' and that 'He is extremely hardworking. He's been highly effective in Washington. He has good links across the political spectrum'. This built on earlier comments on ABC Radio on 4 November that 'Australia decides who our ambassador is, and Mr Rudd is doing a terrific job'.

Lara Trump's comments on Ambassador Rudd (1 November)

In an interview with Sky News Australia, Lara Trump suggested Ambassador Rudd may not be the right person for the job if Donald Trump was re-elected. 'It's not my decision but I do think it would be nice to have a person who appreciates all Donald Trump has gone through' and 'obviously, that is a little bit tough to take, and maybe we would want to choose some else (to represent Australia in the US)'.

On 4 November, PM Albanese said "Australia decides who our ambassador is, and Mr Rudd is doing a terrific job".

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06 November 2024

UNITED STATES

ISSUES

The Alliance, including engagement with the United States in the Indo-Pacific, and bilateral cooperation under the three pillars of the Alliance – defence, economic, and climate change.

KEY MESSAGES

- The United States is our vital security ally, closest global partner, and largest source of foreign investment.
 - we are the closest of partners across a broad range of areas including defence cooperation, foreign policy, development, climate, and trade and investment.
- The Alliance between Australia and the United States has never been more important given our challenging strategic environment
- The Alliance, including through AUKUS, increases Australia's ability to protect itself and its interests by providing access to world-leading defence capability and technology, training and combined exercises
 - we exercise our own agency and make decisions in our own interests.
- We are committed to deepening our cooperation, bilaterally and with regional partners and institutions, to support and deliver tangible benefits to the Indo-Pacific, including promoting:
 - economic development, climate change cooperation, security, connectivity, good governance, disaster management, health, and resilience, consistent with regional and national priorities.

2024 US election

- The 2024 Presidential election is a matter for the people of the United States
 - we will not speculate about the outcome.
- Australia has an enduring commitment to our Alliance and will work with the US Government and Congress of the day in pursuing Australia's interests and strengthening the Alliance
 - as we have always done.
- As the Prime Minister has said, Australia will continue to advocate for the United States to remain engaged in the world and our region, where it continues to play an indispensable role.

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If raised: 2017 comments by Prime Minister Albanese regarding Donald Trump

- There is strong, longstanding bipartisan support for the Alliance in both Australia and the United States.
- Australia is committed to working with the US Government and Congress of the day in pursuing Australia's interests and strengthening the Alliance
 - as we have always done.

If raised: How has the Government prepared for the US election outcome?

- It is usual practice ahead of significant international elections to build relations with both sides and ensure we understand the key issues.
- As a matter of course, our embassy in Washington is engaging with US officials and Congressional representatives across the political spectrum.

If raised: What does the election outcome mean for [X] policy?

- There is longstanding bipartisan support for the Alliance in both Australia and the United States.
 - it is inappropriate to engage in speculation about policy measures the incoming US administration might adopt.

If raised: Is the Government 'rushing' to build relationships with Republicans?

- No. As the Prime Minister said [4 November], the Government engages with people across the US political spectrum.
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If raised: Commentary by officials on the US election outcome

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If raised: Criminal cases against Donald Trump

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If raised: How will Donald Trump's negative public commentary of Ambassador Rudd affect Australia's relationship with the United States, especially if Trump is re-elected in 2024?

- Ambassador Rudd is doing a good job as Australia's Ambassador to the United States.
- His skill and experience mean he will work closely with whomever the people of the United States elect as their President.

If raised: Lara Trump's comments on Ambassador Rudd

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06 November 2024

Background

US Elections

The United States 2024 presidential election polls opened at 10:00PM AEDT Tuesday 5 November. They will close 5:00PM AEDT Wednesday 6 November. More than 80 million Americans had already voted and cast early ballots before polls opened.

Vice-President Harris and former president Trump tied with three votes each in Dixville Notch, New Hampshire – traditionally one of the first places in the US to report its presidential preference.

2017 comments by Prime Minister Albanese regarding Donald Trump

On 4 November, footage from 2017 resurfaced of then Transport Minister Anthony Albanese saying Donald Trump “scares the s**t out of me” during an interview. Opposition home affairs spokesman James Paterson was quoted in The Australian as saying Prime Minister Albanese’s comments were ‘grossly irresponsible’ on 5 November.

On 5 November, Deputy Prime Minister Marles was asked about the previous statement by Prime Minister Albanese. He noted Prime Minister Albanese would ‘be working very closely with that person [Harris or Trump], and the Alliance will be in good shape.’

Deputy Prime Minister Marles was further asked what he ‘thought’ of Donald Trump. He was also asked if Kevin Rudd’s position as Australia’s Ambassador to the United States was tenable, what the impact on Australia’s efforts to stabilise our relationship with China would be, and if he had received assurances that AUKUS would continue, in the event of a second Trump administration.

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Australian officials ‘rushing’ to engage Republicans and Trump allies

On 4 November, the Australian Financial Review reported Australian officials are ‘rushing’ to engage Republicans and Trump allies ahead of the US Election. Stating the Foreign Minister Wong and Deputy Prime Minister Marles met with former Secretary of State Mike Pompeo as part of an effort to cultivate relationships with Donald Trump’s allies. It was also reported Minister Wong met with Kevin McCarthy, former Speaker of the House of Representative and potential frontrunner to become Chief of Staff to Donald Trump. Ambassador Rudd has met with 66 of 100 Senators and 102 of 435 House of Representatives members.

On 4 November, the PM said “We engage with people across the US political system...When I was in the United States, I met with Republicans, I met with the Democrats, I met with people in Congress, people in the Senate.” The Prime Minister met with Republican Congresspeople during his October 2023 visit and hosted a bipartisan reception for the Australia America Leadership Dialogue delegation in August 2023.

Comments by former Deputy Ambassador on US election outcome

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Trump’s trials

On 31 May AEST, a New York jury found Donald Trump guilty of 34 felonies for falsifying business records to cover up hush money paid to a porn star. Following the US Supreme Court ruling on presidential immunity, Trump’s sentencing **was postponed until 26 November**.

On 15 July, the federal criminal case against Trump relating to the mishandling of classified documents from the White House was dismissed on procedural grounds related to the process of appointing Special Counsel Jack Smith. Special Counsel Jack Smith has appealed the dismissal.

Trump faces two other prosecutions. A federal criminal indictment of four felony charges in the District of Columbia relating to Trump’s alleged attempts to interfere with the outcome of the 2020 election. Following the US Supreme Court ruling on presidential immunity, Special Council has filed a motion (2 October) that argues Trump’s conduct on and before January 6 was as a private citizen, rather than in his official capacity. He also faces a state criminal

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In the United States, being a convicted felon does not render you ineligible to run for the presidency.

Trump's comments on Ambassador Rudd (19 March 2024)

In an interview with Nigel Farage, Donald Trump's response to a question about whether he would take a call from Ambassador Rudd after he had called Trump a 'destructive President', 'a traitor to the west', was 'He won't be there long if that's the case. I don't know much about him. I heard he was a little bit nasty. I hear he's not the brightest bulb, but I don't know much about him. If he's at all hostile, he will not be there long.'

Senator Birmingham was reported in the AFR on 4 November saying Australia's relationship with the US was bigger than any individual privileged to be Ambassador. He said 'Regardless of who wins, the Albanese government needs to judge Dr Rudd's position on his capacity to get the job done in Washington, and make Australia's influence as strong as possible, just as Dr Rudd's predecessors have done across various administrations. While Dr Rudd deserves credit for the work he has done to help secure Australia's interests on AUKUS, defence export rules and boosting our co-operation on supply chains, it is important that this success continue under a new administration. Despite saying that he wouldn't appoint Kevin Rudd to Washington, Anthony Albanese did so. If necessary, Mr Albanese must be willing to put Australia's best interests first, regardless of his personal loyalty to Dr Rudd.'

On 4 November, former Australian Ambassador to the United States and Secretary of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Denis Richardson, said on ABC's Q&A 'Rudd will be fine [as Ambassador] under a possible second Trump Administration' and that 'He is extremely hardworking. He's been highly effective in Washington. He has good links across the political spectrum'. This built on earlier comments on ABC Radio on 4 November that 'Australia decides who our ambassador is, and Mr Rudd is doing a terrific job'.

Lara Trump's comments on Ambassador Rudd (1 November)

In an interview with Sky News Australia, Lara Trump suggested Ambassador Rudd may not be the right person for the job if Donald Trump was re-elected. 'It's not my decision but I do think it would be nice to have a person who appreciates all Donald Trump has gone through' and 'obviously, that is a little bit tough to take, and maybe we would want to choose some else (to represent Australia in the US)'.

On 4 November, PM Albanese said "Australia decides who our ambassador is, and Mr Rudd is doing a terrific job".

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07 November 2024

UNITED STATES

ISSUES

The Alliance, including engagement with the United States in the Indo-Pacific, and bilateral cooperation under the three pillars of the Alliance – defence, economic, and climate change.

KEY MESSAGES

- Congratulations to President Trump on his election victory.
 - we look forward to working closely with the new Trump Administration to realise the benefits of our strong economic and security partnership.
- Australians and Americans are great friends and true allies
 - our nations are bound by a history of shared sacrifice, a commitment to common values and – above all – enduring respect and affection between our people.
- There is strong longstanding bipartisan support for the Alliance in both Australia and the United States.
- The United States is our vital security ally, closest global partner, and largest source of foreign investment.
- Our alliance has never been more important given our challenging strategic environment
 - working together, we can ensure the partnership between our nations and peoples remains strong into the future
 - the United States has long played a leadership role in the stability and security of the Indo-Pacific. Australia will strive to strengthen the co-operation between our two nations in the region.

Australia-US relationship

- The US-Australia Alliance is critical to the security and prosperity of both our nations and the region
 - we have strong cooperation across a broad range of areas including defence, foreign policy, development, trade and investment and cultural ties
 - the US is Australia's largest economic partner, with total two-way goods and services trade between our countries valued at

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07 November 2024

AUD\$98.7 billion and is our largest source of foreign investment.

- The Alliance, including through AUKUS, increases Australia's ability to protect itself and its interests by providing access to world-leading defence capability and technology, training and combined exercises
 - we exercise our own agency and make decisions in our own interests.
- We are committed to deepening our cooperation, bilaterally and with regional partners and institutions, to support and deliver tangible benefits to the Indo-Pacific, including promoting:
 - economic development, climate change cooperation, security, connectivity, good governance, disaster management, health, and resilience, consistent with regional and national priorities.

~~2024 US election (section merged into key messages)~~

If raised: What does this presidency mean for the Alliance?

- Australia and the US have an enduring bipartisan commitment to our Alliance, which is critical to the security and prosperity of both our nations and the region.
- Australia had a strong working relationship with the previous Trump Administration
 - we look forward to working with the incoming administration to achieve positive outcomes for both Australia and the United States.

If raised: What does a Trump presidency mean for [X] policy?

- There is longstanding bipartisan support for the Alliance in both Australia and the United States
 - as is usual practice, the Australian Government has been working to ensure we are ready for whatever the American people decide
 - we will continue to work closely with the Biden Administration until the presidential inauguration on 20 January.

If raised: How did Government prepared for the US election outcome?

- It is usual practice ahead of significant international elections to build relations with both sides and ensure we understand the key issues.

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- As a matter of course, Ambassador Rudd and the embassy in Washington engage with US officials and Congressional representatives across the political spectrum.

If raised: Are you concerned about the US being distracted/withdrawing from the Indo-Pacific region?

- The United States has long played a leadership role in the stability and security of the Indo-Pacific.
- Australia will strive to strengthen the co-operation between our two nations in our region.
- The US-Australia Alliance is critical to the security and prosperity of both our nations and the region.

If raised: Calls by the Greens following the outcome of the election to “urgently cancel AUKUS”

- We face the most challenging strategic circumstances in the Indo-Pacific in decades
 - Australia is transparently investing in a capable military, defence industry, and partnerships, including through AUKUS, to be a reliable security partner for the region
 - and working to shape a peace, stable and prosperous Indo-Pacific.
- The Alliance, including through AUKUS, increases Australia’s ability to protect itself and its interests by providing access to world-leading defence capability and technology, training and combined exercises
 - we exercise our own agency and make decisions in our own interests.
- The AUKUS partnership has received strong and enduring bipartisan support in the US system
 - as demonstrated by the passage of AUKUS legislation through the US Congress [December 2023].
- AUKUS makes a substantial contribution to allied deterrence in the Indo-Pacific
 - including enhanced defence capabilities and greater presence of allied assets.

[For further information on AUKUS, see QB24-000063]

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07 November 2024
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If raised: Criminal cases against Donald Trump

- These are matters for the US legal system; we will not run commentary.
- ~~The 2024 Presidential election is a matter for the US people we will not be drawn into hypothesising about the outcomes.~~

If raised: 2017 comments by Prime Minister Albanese regarding Donald Trump

- There is strong, longstanding bipartisan support for the Alliance in both Australia and the United States.
- Australia is committed to working with the US Government and Congress of the day in pursuing Australia's interests and strengthening the Alliance
 - as we have always done.

If raised: Will Ambassador Rudd remain in the role with Trump as President? How will Donald Trump's negative public commentary of Ambassador Rudd affect Australia's relationship with the United States, especially if Trump is re-elected in 2024?

- Ambassador Rudd is a highly effective Ambassador to the United States
 - his skill and experience mean he will work closely with the new administration and Congress.
- As the Prime Minister said, "Australia decides who our ambassador is, and Mr Rudd is doing a terrific job".

If raised: Lara Trump's comments on Ambassador Rudd

- ~~Australia has an enduring commitment to our Alliance and will work with the US Government and Congress of the day in pursuing Australia's interests and strengthening the Alliance as we have always done.~~
- ~~Ambassador Rudd is a highly effective Ambassador to the United States~~

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07 November 2024

his skill and experience mean he will work closely with the new administration and Congress.

If raised: Is the Government 'rushing' to build relationships with Republicans?

- No. As the Prime Minister said [4 November], the Government engages with people across the US political spectrum.
- This is usual practice ahead of significant international elections.
- As a matter of course, Ambassador Rudd and the Embassy in Washington engage with US officials and Congressional representatives.

If raised: Commentary by officials on the US election outcome

- The 2024 Presidential election is a matter for the people of the United States.
 - we will not speculate about the outcome.
- Australia has an enduring commitment to our Alliance and will work with the US Government and Congress of the day in pursuing Australia's interests and strengthening the Alliance
 - as we have always done.

If pressed: Were recent comments by an official appropriate?

- All APS employees are bound by the APS Values, Employment Principles and Code of Conduct set out in the *Public Service Act 1999*
 - comments made by DFAT officials are a matter for the Department.

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07 November 2024

Background

US Elections

At 21:40 AEDT on 6 November, Associated Press News (AP News) declared Trump as winning the US presidency. Donald Trump declared victory earlier than the AP announcement, addressing supporters at a watch party in Florida. Vice President Harris called to congratulate President Trump on his election win at approximately 2pm on 6 November (6am 7 November AEDT) and has delivering her concession to supporters in Washington DC at 4pm EST (8am 7 November AEDT).

Prime Minister Albanese and Foreign Minister Wong tweeted a congratulatory message to Donald Trump early on 6 November AEDT. Ambassador Rudd then sent his own congratulatory message.

AP News has confirmed that Republicans have won control of the Senate (52-42, with some seats not yet confirmed). Key House races are yet to be announced.

President Biden will remain in position until President Trump is inaugurated on 20 January 2025.

2017 comments by Prime Minister Albanese regarding Donald Trump

On 4 November, footage from 2017 resurfaced of then Transport Minister Anthony Albanese saying Donald Trump "scares the s**t out of me" during an interview. Opposition home affairs spokesman James Paterson was quoted in The Australian as saying Prime Minister Albanese's comments were 'grossly irresponsible' on 5 November.

On 5 November, Deputy Prime Minister Marles was asked about the previous statement by Prime Minister Albanese. He noted Prime Minister Albanese would 'be working very closely with that person [Harris or Trump], and the Alliance will be in good shape.'

Deputy Prime Minister Marles was further asked what he 'thought' of Donald Trump. He was also asked if Kevin Rudd's position as Australia's Ambassador to the United States was tenable, what the impact on Australia's efforts to stabilise our relationship with China would be, and if he had received assurances that AUKUS would continue, in the event of a second Trump administration.

Trump Trade Policy

While in Shanghai on 4 November for China International Import Expo (CIIE), media asked Minister Farrell to assess the consequences for Australia should the US impose higher tariffs on Chinese goods following the US election. In response, Minister Farrell noted it was our, particularly his, job to discourage the imposition of additional trade barriers. He noted that free trade provided peace and prosperity in our region, and that his argument to any incoming American government administration would be that Australia supported the concept of free trade, and wanted to continue to work with countries to ensure that free trade principles continue to apply to world commerce.

On 7 November, Shadow Minister for Trade and Tourism Kevin Hogan published a media release calling for the Government to secure a tariff deal with the US. In posting this release on X, he wrote 'In 2018, the Coalition in Government successfully secured an exemption for Australia from tariffs the then #PresidentTrump introduced on imported metals, safeguarding Australian industries. It is incumbent on Prime Minister Albanese and Ambassador Kevin Rudd, along with the Australian Government officials, to act quickly and prioritise respectful and constructive dialogue with US counterparts to secure a tariff deal'.

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07 November 2024

Australian officials 'rushing' to engage Republicans and Trump allies

On 4 November, the Australian Financial Review reported Australian officials are 'rushing' to engage Republicans and Trump allies ahead of the US Election. Stating the Foreign Minister Wong and Deputy Prime Minister Marles met with former Secretary of State Mike Pompeo as part of an effort to cultivate relationships with Donald Trump's allies. It was also reported Minister Wong met with Kevin McCarthy, former Speaker of the House of Representative and potential frontrunner to become Chief of Staff to Donald Trump. Ambassador Rudd has met with 66 of 100 Senators and 102 of 435 House of Representatives members.

On 4 November, the PM said "We engage with people across the US political system...When I was in the United States, I met with Republicans, I met with the Democrats, I met with people in Congress, people in the Senate." The Prime Minister met with Republican Congresspeople during his October 2023 visit and hosted a bipartisan reception for the Australia America Leadership Dialogue delegation in August 2023.

Comments by former Deputy Ambassador on US election outcome

On 4 November, the AFR published an article citing views of former Deputy Ambassador to Washington on the outcome of the US election. The Former Deputy Ambassador was quoted as saying "The Trump campaign seems to have eschewed appealing to Nikki Haley voters, who are potentially a quarter of Republicans in key states, to focus on speaking to Joe Rogan's gamer-bro audience – disgruntled, non-college- educated young men, predominantly white but making inroads with young black and Latino men attracted to Trump's machismo... They might take a punt on Trump on their favourite betting market – but will these traditionally low-propensity voters turn out to vote? My bet is those gamer chairs are too comfortable on the day".

On 4 November he published on LinkedIn, noting "a lot of people have been asking me what my thoughts are on the US election". He said 'My gut tells me that we will either see Kamala Harris surprise on the upside, or we will see Donald Trump grind out a close victory in the electoral college; I don't see any reason to suggest that Donald Trump will surprise by breaking his ceiling significantly. If Kamala Harris surprises on the upside, the election will be resolved on the night (although expect lots of unsuccessful legal shenanigans from the Trump team); if she doesn't it will take some days before we know whether Trump has scraped across the electoral college line.' He also noted some counties to particularly watch on election night.

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 s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Trump's trials

On 31 May AEST, a New York jury found Donald Trump guilty of 34 felonies for falsifying business records to cover up hush money paid to a porn star. Following the US Supreme Court ruling on presidential immunity, Trump's sentencing was postponed until 26 November.

On 15 July, the federal criminal case against Trump relating to the mishandling of classified documents from the White House was dismissed on procedural grounds related to the process of appointing Special Counsel Jack Smith. Special Counsel Jack Smith has appealed the dismissal.

Trump faces two other prosecutions. A federal criminal indictment of four felony charges in the District of Columbia relating to Trump's alleged attempts to interfere with the outcome of the 2020 election. Following the US Supreme Court ruling on presidential immunity, Special Council has filed a motion (2 October) that argues Trump's conduct on and before January 6 was as a private citizen, rather than in his official capacity. He also faces a state criminal indictment in Georgia relating to efforts to reverse the election outcome in Georgia in 2020. These are unlikely to go to trial ahead of the 5 November election.

In the United States, being a convicted felon does not render you ineligible to run for the presidency.

Trump's comments on Ambassador Rudd (19 March 2024)

In an interview with Nigel Farage, Donald Trump's response to a question about whether he would take a call from Ambassador Rudd after he had called Trump a 'destructive President', 'a traitor to the west', was 'He won't be there long if that's the case. I don't know much about him. I heard he was a little bit nasty. I hear he's not the brightest bulb, but I don't know much about him. If he's at all hostile, he will not be there long.'

Senator Birmingham was reported in the AFR on 4 November saying Australia's relationship with the US was bigger than any individual privileged to be Ambassador. He said 'Regardless of who wins, the Albanese government needs to judge Dr Rudd's position on his capacity to get the job done in Washington, and make Australia's influence as strong as possible, just as Dr Rudd's predecessors have done across various administrations. While Dr Rudd deserves credit for the work he has done to help secure Australia's interests on AUKUS, defence export rules and boosting our co-operation on supply chains, it is important that this success continue under a new administration. Despite saying that he wouldn't appoint Kevin Rudd to Washington, Anthony Albanese did so. If necessary, Mr Albanese must be willing to put Australia's best interests first, regardless of his personal loyalty to Dr Rudd.'

On 4 November, former Australian Ambassador to the United States and Secretary of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Denis Richardson, said on ABC's Q&A 'Rudd will be fine [as Ambassador] under a possible second Trump Administration' and that 'He is extremely hardworking. He's been highly effective in Washington. He has good links across the political spectrum'. This built on earlier comments on ABC Radio on 4 November that 'Australia decides who our ambassador is, and Mr Rudd is doing a terrific job'.

Lara Trump's comments on Ambassador Rudd (1 November)

In an interview with Sky News Australia, Lara Trump suggested Ambassador Rudd may not be the right person for the job if Donald Trump was re-elected. 'It's not my decision but I do

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07 November 2024

think it would be nice to have a person who appreciates all Donald Trump has gone through' and 'obviously, that is a little bit tough to take, and maybe we would want to choose some else (to represent Australia in the US)'.

On 4 November, PM Albanese said "Australia decides who our ambassador is, and Mr Rudd is doing a terrific job".

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