

SHORT RESEARCH ARTICLE OPEN ACCESS

CanberraInbox: Political Communication, the Personal Vote and Representation Styles—Studying Legislators' e-Newsletters in Australia

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ABSTRACT

This research note introduces *CanberraInbox*, a new, regularly updated dataset comprising the full text of all e-newsletters from Australian members of Parliament. The dataset addresses a gap in studying how legislators communicate, which has traditionally focused on national leaders. Communication by individual legislators is essential for understanding how electoral incentives drive elite political behavior, including the cultivation of the personal vote and different representational styles. This initial study, based on 868 e-newsletters collected between March and December 2024, finds that institutional incentives shape elite behavior, with legislators in their first term, those in marginal electorates, and those elected under a candidate-centric system being more likely to send e-newsletters than longer-serving legislators, those in safe seats, and those elected in a party-centric system. However, the finding about marginal seats compared to safe seats was not statistically significant. The *CanberraInbox* dataset allows for ongoing study of political communication and provides a valuable comparison to the US-based *DCInbox* and UK-based *UKInbox*. Future research can explore the content of these communications, examining factors like party discipline, gender differences, and policy emphasis, contributing to broader political science literature on representational role, focus and style, and electoral behavior.

1 | Introduction

Democracy requires a connection between the public and their elected representatives. Legislators need to listen to what their constituents are saying, but constituents should also listen to their representative(s), to inform their vote. While there is significant literature on what political leaders (Presidents and Prime Ministers) say to the national electorate, what ordinary legislators say to their constituents is often harder for academics to study. If, when and what legislators say to their constituents is primarily motivated by re-election (Fenno 1978). For individual legislators, a key factor will be their personal vote, so understanding legislators' behavioral choices about constituency communication can help explicate the institutional structures that impact the personal vote. Empirically this matters, as more

than 10% of Australian voters say that “their local candidates” are the most important factor in deciding how to vote and these voters are disproportionately centrist, uncommitted voters (McAllister et al. 2022).

In the Australian context, these questions, and many more, can now be studied through *CanberraInbox*, a new, regularly updated dataset of the full text of every e-newsletter sent by members of both houses of Parliament. For the purposes of this research note, the analysis is limited to the first 9 months of data (15 March—14 December 2024), at which point the dataset included 868 newsletters. While there have been a range of studies of how legislators communicate with their constituents (Koop and Marland 2012; Marland and Snagovsky 2023; Umit 2017), these generally rely on one-off data collection, restricting

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researchers' ability to study change over time. *CanberraInbox* will address this by continuing to collect e-newsletters, allowing ongoing study and comparison.

Australia provides a useful case study; its Parliament combines a candidate-centric electoral system (House of Representatives) and a party-centric electoral system (Senate). This allows for an analysis of the impact of institutional differences. It also provides for an international comparison for the existing *DCInbox* (Cormack 2017) and *UKInbox* (Ozer 2024). Like the US, the Australian House of Representatives is one of the most candidate-centric systems in the world (McAllister 2015); however, unlike the US, Australia is a parliamentary system and has some of the strictest party discipline of liberal democracies (Studlar and McAllister 1994). This comparison will improve our understanding of how electoral and party systems impact elite behavior (Zittel 2017), role conceptions (Searing 1995), connection-building (Petter 2021), and styles of representation.

This research note focuses on which legislators choose to send e-newsletters. I find that new legislators (those in their first term) and those on a smaller margin are more likely to send e-newsletters, consistent with the expectation that these legislators have a strong incentive to cultivate a personal vote. Legislators elected under a candidate-centric system (House of Representatives) were also more likely to send e-newsletters than those elected in a party-centric system (Senate).

The closure of CrowdTangle and the restrictions imposed on its replacement, Content Library (Johns et al. 2024) and similar restrictions on Twitter/X (Tomaszewski 2023), mean there is a need to expand the tools to examine legislators' political communications. I hope that *CanberraInbox*, as part of a network of similar projects, can partially fill this gap.

2 | The Australian Context

Australia is a bicameral parliamentary system. The House of Representatives has 151 single-member electorates, each elected through the alternative vote (known in Australia as preferential voting). The Senate has 12 senators from each state (and two from each territory), elected on a rolling 6-year term (with six elected every 3 years). They are elected using the single-transferrable vote (STV), which effectively operates as closed-list proportional representation (Farrell and McAllister 2006).

Australian Members of Parliament receive a range of support, staff, and entitlements to undertake their functions. Most MPs can employ five staff to undertake electorate and parliamentary duties (Church 2024), which would include the work associated with preparing and sending e-newsletters. In addition to these employees, in 2024–2025, Australian senators had a budget of approximately AU\$133,000 (US\$90,000), while Members of the House of Representatives (MHRs) received just over \$300,000 (US\$200,000) specifically for office and communication expenses, including establishing, maintaining, and monitoring websites, email distribution services, and online survey tools (Finance 2024). This funding can also be used to produce and distribute hard-copy newsletters. The major parties all have substantial head office operations, supported by generous public

financing and donations (Muller 2022). These head offices provide a range of campaigning templates and resources to their MPs (Gibson et al. 2008). Thus, there are no substantial resource constraints that would prevent these MPs from sending out e-newsletters.

3 | Theory

In this section I set out my theoretical expectations for which legislators are more likely to send newsletters (and likely to send more newsletters). The overarching theoretical approach is the “personal vote,” which is the component of their vote that is driven by, inter alia, their personal activities and actions as a legislator, rather than partisanship, national conditions, or evaluations of their party or leader (Cain et al. 1987). Legislators will endeavor to secure a higher personal vote because it provides a level of insurance against national swings.

The desire of legislators to achieve a personal vote aligns with the trend towards the personalization of politics, both at the level of leader (Dowding 2013) and local candidates (McAllister 2015). The proportion of Australians who indicate that “the candidates in your electorate” was the most important factor in deciding their vote has increased from less than 6% in 1998 (Bean et al. 2019) to more than 10% in 2022 (McAllister et al. 2022). At the same time, the average swings recorded across the House of Representatives has also increased, from around 2.6% in the late 1980s/early 1990s to more than 4.5% in the 2022 election. Together, this will further incentivize legislators to attract a personal vote.

One way of attracting a personal vote is to communicate with their constituents, to signal their trustworthiness (Auel and Umit 2018; Koop and Marland 2012). Legislators communicate with their electorate in many ways, including physical newsletters, social media, phone calls, door-knocking, and street stalls. The rise of the Internet and email opened a new door for political campaigning—significantly reducing the cost and increasing the immediacy of communications. However, each of these different forms of communication (both online and offline) has different purposes, different audiences, and different drivers and co-variables (Blum et al. 2023), making it important to establish clear baselines about the use and adoption of each of these communication technologies. There is evidence from Australia that having a website increased a candidate's vote by approximately 2% in the 2004 election (Gibson and McAllister 2006). Therefore, there is a clear incentive for candidates to maintain and increase internet visibility through actions such as an official e-newsletter.

In addition to the binary of whether to send e-newsletters or not, there is the related issue of how often to send out e-newsletters. Again here, the same broad theoretical framework applies—what action is most likely to increase the MP's personal vote? Political psychology and marketing literature suggests that “mere-repeated-exposure” can increase positive evaluations, increase name-recognition and increase an MP's personal vote (Cain et al. 1987; Grimmer et al. 2012). In this way, even if people don't read the e-newsletter, simply having the MP's name appear in their inbox provides a “reminder facility” that the

MP is there, and increases name recognition (Ollier, quoted in Jackson (2004, 337)).

Having established that sending e-newsletters, and the frequency of sending out e-newsletters, is likely to help cultivate a personal vote, I now develop specific hypotheses about which legislators are more (less) likely to send out e-newsletters. The existing research points to institutional characteristics, legislators' characteristics, and constituency characteristics (Blum et al. 2023). As set out above, the Senate electoral system is effectively closed-list PR, while the House of Representatives is single-member plurality. Candidate-centric systems (like the House of Representatives) create much stronger incentives to seek out a personal vote compared to closed-list PR (Cain et al. 1987). These different electoral systems were a significant factor in determining which legislators sent e-newsletters in both the national and sub-national parliaments in the United Kingdom (Umit 2017). Therefore, I hypothesize that:

Hypothesis 1a. *Senators will be less likely to send e-newsletters than MHRs.*

Hypothesis 1b. *Amongst those parliamentarians that do send e-newsletters, senators will send fewer e-newsletters than MHRs.*

In the House of Representatives, two groups of members are likely to feel particularly vulnerable. Firstly, those on a lower margin, and secondly, those for whom it is their first term, and thus need to improve their name recognition. Both these factors were significant in determining the use of congressional franking (Cover 1980), use of communication allowances in the UK (Auel and Umit 2018), and providing e-newsletters in both the national and sub-national parliaments of the UK (Umit 2017).

Hypothesis 2a. *MHRs on a narrower margin are more likely to send e-newsletters than those MHRs with larger margins.*

Hypothesis 2b. *Amongst those MHRs that do send e-newsletters, MHRs on a narrower margin will send more e-newsletters than those MHRs with larger margins.*

Hypothesis 3a. *MHRs in their first term are more likely to send e-newsletters than those MHRs who are not in their first term.*

Hypothesis 3b. *Amongst those MHRs that do send e-newsletters, MHRs in their first term will send more e-newsletters than those MHRs who are not in their first term.*

4 | Data and Method

Over the course of three successive days in March 2024, I visited the home page of every member of the Australian Parliament and attempted to subscribe to every e-newsletter that I could locate. I subscribed using a dedicated email address. Wherever a name or phone number was required, the author's name and number were used. The emails have all been in HTML, and they are regularly collected using *gmailR* (Hester and Bryan 2023), with parliamentary metadata added using *ausPH* (Leslie 2024), and their full text is stored in a *Quanteda* corpus (Benoit et al. 2018).

Sample e-newsletters are below (Figure 1). I conduct regular checks on MPs that did not have an e-newsletter when I first signed up or to pick up newly elected MPs following resignations or deaths of previous members. In a few instances, Federal MPs shared my email address with state MPs or their party offices. Any emails received from party head offices or state MPs were discarded.

The data, which is updated approximately weekly, is available at www.canberrainbox.com.au, where it can be explored and graphed, downloaded, and the e-newsletters viewed in their original format (including any images or videos). Details of each of the variables stored in the dataset are in the Appendix A.

The analysis for this article is based on data collected between 15 March 2024 and 16 December 2024. There were no extraordinary political events during this period that might impact the generalizability of the findings.

5 | Results

5.1 | The Patterns of the e-Newsletters

One hundred and sixty-five Australian legislators had e-newsletter subscription facilities on their websites. There has been a steady increase in the proportion of legislators who advertise an e-newsletter on their websites (Table 1). These figures appear broadly consistent with the United Kingdom, where Umit (2017) found that approximately 60% of MPs in the House of Commons had e-newsletter subscription facilities in September 2014.

During the period under examination, however, only 79 legislators sent newsletters (48% of those with email subscription facilities). This represents 35% of all legislators. Unfortunately, no historical data is available on the proportion of legislators that sent e-newsletters. These figures differ significantly from the USA, where during the 114th Congress (2015–2017), close to 100% of both members of the House of Representatives and the Senate sent e-newsletters (Cormack 2017). These differences are likely to be a function of the different institutional incentives of the systems and demonstrate the need for further comparative research.

Some MPs send significantly more than others. Of those MPs that had sent newsletters, the mean was 11 newsletters and the median was 8 (approximately one per month) but there was a significant tail, with 4 MPs sending at least one e-newsletter per week (36 newsletters over 9 months). At the other end, 22 MPs (28% of those that do send newsletters) sent out four or fewer newsletters over the nine-month period. Four of the top five senders were from the coalition of the Liberal Party and The National Party (currently in opposition). Fridays were the most common days for the e-newsletters to be sent (43%), consistent with the USA (Cormack 2017). Finally, female legislators are slightly more likely to send out e-newsletters (39%–31%)—which is also consistent with the USA (Blum et al. 2023).

While the Liberal/National Coalition (currently in opposition) is more likely to send e-newsletters than the Australian



Meals on Wheels restricted from providing essential services

Recently I met with Meals on Wheels Moreton Bay General Manager, Wendy Smith, who informed me that the funding for this vital organisation had been frozen by the Federal Government. While Meals on Wheels only received funding for 115,000 meals, this wonderful organisation actually provided over 124,000 meals to residents in Moreton Bay distributing from their centres at Burpengary, Caboolture, Bribie Island, Woodford, Samford and Petrie.



Message from Pat Conroy

One of the biggest commitments Labor made prior to the 2022 election was restoring dignity to older Australians and fixing our broken, neglected aged care system. Yesterday, the Albanese Labor Government announced our once in a generation reforms which will ensure the viability and quality of aged care, and support Australians who choose to retain their independence and remain in their homes as they age. Around \$5.6 billion will be invested which represents the greatest improvement to aged care in 30 years.

FIGURE 1 | Sample e-newsletters.

Labor Party (government) (31% vs. 26%), the independents and minor parties are the most likely to send out newsletters (58%) (Table 2).

There was a noticeable increase in the number of government e-newsletters straight after the Budget (14 May), with government MPs sending out 19 e-newsletters in the week following



Dear Daniel,

They're not even bothering to pretend anymore.

When Valentina Petrillo, a 51-year-old biological male and father of two, lined up in the women's 200m and 400m at the Paralympics this month, it showed the world the truth about men in women's sport.



Hello

We're well into September now and driving around Indi I've loved seeing our beautiful countryside burst into Spring.

With this delightful weather as our backdrop, I hit the pavement and went door-knocking in Wodonga last Saturday. Thanks to everyone who had a chat and let me and the team know what you're concerned about.

It's been my focus, since being elected as Indi's Independent representative, to meet my

the Budget, compared to an average of 5 e-newsletters per week at other times (Figure 2). There was a spike in e-newsletters from the opposition at the end of June, following the Leader of the Opposition's announcement on nuclear power. While beyond the scope of this short article, this already raises further research questions about the level of intra-party organization and discipline in the e-newsletters.

These e-newsletters also contain a wide variety of topics and issues. While beyond the scope of this article, Table 3 includes a random sample of subject lines to provide some indication of the breadth of issues and approaches to the communications. There is a mix of national policy issues (nuclear energy, immigration,

housing) and local constituency issues (local advisory committees and grants). These differences directly speak to the different conceptions of representative roles that Searing (1995) suggested (e.g., policy advocates compared to constituency members), as well as the different modes of representation and images that legislators wish to portray (Marland and Snagovsky 2023).

TABLE 1 | Percentage of Australian MPs with e-newsletter subscription facilities on their website.

Date	Percentage
December 2003 ^a	9%
January 2005 ^a	11%
November 2007	19%
July/August 2010 ^b	38%
March 2024	73%

^aHouse of Representatives only.
^bOnly includes MPs/senators standing for re-election in the 2010 election.
Source: 2003 and 2005 from Ward et al. (2007). 2007 from Macnamara (2008). 2010 from Macnamara and Kenning (2011).

5.2 | Hypotheses Testing

Hypotheses 1a and 1b suggested that Senators will be less likely to send e-newsletters (and will send less e-newsletters) than MHRs, because MHRs are elected through a candidate-centric system, while senators are elected through a party-centric system. Consistent with Hypothesis 1a, MHRs were more likely to send e-newsletters than Senators (38% vs. 27%) (Table 4). However, this difference does not meet the standard thresholds of statistical significance.¹

Given the differences between parties (Table 2), I turn to multivariate analysis to control for these factors. A multivariate logistic regression (Table 5) confirms that, consistent with the

TABLE 2 | Sending an e-newsletter by party.

	Australian Labor Party	Liberal/National Coalition	Australian Greens	Minor/Independent	
Sent e-newsletters	29%	33%	31%	67%	79
					35%
Did not send e-newsletters	71%	67%	69%	33%	149
					65%
Total	103	85	16	24	228
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Note: $\chi^2 = 10.663$, $df = 31$, Cramer's $V = 0.216$, $p = 0.014$.

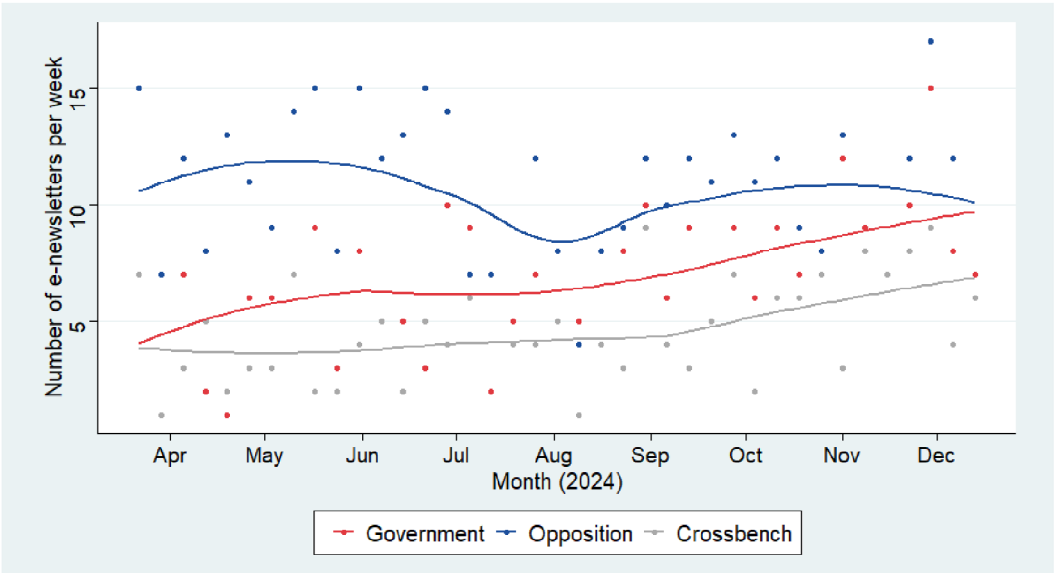


FIGURE 2 | Number of e-newsletters per week.

TABLE 3 | Sample e-newsletter subject lines.

Subject line
“Nominations Open—Herbert Youth Advisory Committee”
“Immigration rises above housing supply levels, Unions get Budget win and our productivity crisis continues”
“Enough is enough”
“Important information and support following the Bondi Junction attacks”
“Ryan news, Volunteer grants winners, internet and phone survey, flight noise updates and more”
“Coalition Nuclear Energy Announcement”
“Pat Conroy enewsletter 15 March 2024”
“Seniors' Morning Tea, Cost of Living relief and more”
“Australians deserve better”
“Gee News!”
“Nominations Open—Herbert Youth Advisory Committee”.

TABLE 4 | Sending e-newsletters by chamber.

	Member	Senator	Total
Sent e-newsletters	38%	27%	79
			35%
Did not send e-newsletters	62%	73%	149
			65%
Total	151	77	228
	100%	100%	100%

Note: $\chi^2 = 2.324$, $df = 1$, $\phi = 0.111$, $p = 0.127$. The total number of Senators is higher than the size of the Senate, as it includes people who left during the study period.

TABLE 5 | Probability of sending an e-newsletter.

Predictors	Odds ratios	<i>p</i>
(Intercept)	2.12	0.065
Chamber (senate)	0.42	0.011
Gender (male)	0.64	0.148
Parliamentary status (government)	0.28	0.002
Parliamentary status (opposition)	0.41	0.035
Observations	228	
R^2 Tjur	0.065	

Note: The parliamentary status reference group is “crossbench.” Bold *p* values indicate the results are statistically significant.

bivariate analysis, Senators are approximately half as likely to send an e-newsletter compared to MHRs.

To test Hypothesis 1b, an independent *t*-test was conducted amongst those 79 legislators that did send newsletters. Contrary to Hypothesis 1b, Senators send significantly more newsletters (mean of 13) compared to MHRs (mean of 10). As such, Hypothesis 1b is not supported.²

TABLE 6 | Sending an e-newsletter by electorate margin (House of Representatives only).

	1. Marginal	2. Safe	Total
Sent e-newsletters	47%	30%	58
			38%
Did not send e-newsletters	53%	70%	93
			62%
Total	75	76	151
	100%	100%	100%

Note: $\chi^2 = 3.628$, $df = 1$, $\phi = 0.169$, $p = 0.057$.

Hypotheses 2a and 2b suggest that MHRs on a narrower margin are more likely to send e-newsletters (and will send more e-newsletters) than those MHRs with larger margins. Electorates were split at the median (a margin of 8.94%) and categorized as “marginal,” (margin under 8.94%) or “safe,” (margin 8.94% or higher). Consistent with the hypothesis, MHRs in safe seats are less likely to send e-newsletters compared to those in marginal seats (30% vs. 47%) (Table 6).

Amongst those 58 MHRs that did send e-newsletters, the Pearson's correlation between the number of newsletters and their electoral margin is -0.19 ($p = 0.16$), consistent with Hypothesis 2b.

Hypotheses 3a and 3b suggest that MHRs in their first term are more likely to send e-newsletters (and will send more e-newsletters) than those MHRs who are not in their first term, because these MHRs are likely to have a lower name recognition and personal vote, and thus will seek to increase their name recognition. Consistent with Hypothesis 3a, first term MHRs were significantly more likely to send e-newsletters compared to their more senior colleagues (62% vs. 30%—Table 7). Among those 58 MHRs that did send newsletters, an independent *t*-test was conducted, and while MHRs in their first term did send more newsletters than their more senior colleagues (average of

TABLE 7 | Sending an e-newsletter by first-term status (House of Representatives only).

	Not first term	First term	Total
Sent e-newsletters	30%	62%	58 38%
Did not send e-newsletters	70%	38%	93 62%
Total	112	39	151
	100%	100%	100%

Note: $\chi^2 = 10.607$, $df = 1$, $\phi = 0.281$, $p = 0.001$.

TABLE 8 | Probability of sending an e-newsletter (House of Representatives only).

Predictors	Odds ratios	<i>p</i>
(Intercept)	2.56	0.239
First term (true)	3.16	0.012
Margin	1.02	0.651
Gender (male)	0.99	0.972
Parliamentary status (government)	0.12	0.002
Parliamentary status (opposition)	0.12	0.003
Observations	151	
R^2 Tjur	0.156	

Note: Margin is expressed as whole numbers, rather than percentages, that is, a margin of 5% is expressed as 5, not 0.05. Parliamentary status reference group is “crossbench.” Bold *p* values indicate the results are statistically significant.

12 vs. 9), consistent with Hypothesis 3b, this was not statistically significant.³

I now turn to multivariate analysis of these hypotheses. Firstly, to explore Hypotheses 2a and 3a, which test the factors that lead to MHRs sending newsletters, a multivariate logistic regression shows (Table 8) that being a first-term MHR is the most important factor, providing clear support for Hypothesis 3a, while margin (Hypothesis 2a) makes very little difference.

Hypotheses 2b and 3b test the factors that impact the volume of e-newsletters. A multivariate OLS regression was undertaken (Table 9), which shows that for both first term status (Hypothesis 3b) and margin (Hypothesis 2b), the relationship is in the expected direction, but in neither case meeting traditional thresholds of statistical significance, and a very low adjusted R^2 .

6 | Discussion and Mapping Research Agenda

This research note introduces a new dataset, based on the long-running *DCInbox* (Cormack 2017), which has demonstrated its capacity for use across a wide variety of purposes, including public policy, political communications, representation, and

TABLE 9 | Number of e-newsletters (House of Representatives only).

Predictors	Estimate	<i>p</i>
(Intercept)	8.41	0.111
First term (true)	3.47	0.364
Margin	−0.21	0.560
Gender (male)	1.12	0.722
Parliamentary status (government)	0.94	0.799
Parliamentary status (opposition)	4.15	0.333
Observations	58	
R^2/R^2 adjusted	0.068/−0.022	

Note: Margin is expressed as whole numbers, rather than percentages, that is, a margin of 5% is expressed as 5, not 0.05. Parliamentary status reference group is “crossbench”.

responsiveness. This research note explored some initial differences between legislators who do and do not send e-newsletters and found that, consistent with theoretical expectations, legislators elected under a candidate-centric system (House of Representatives); MHRs in their first term; and MHRs with a smaller margin are more likely to send e-newsletters—however, the impact of an MHR's margin largely disappeared when controlling for other factors.

However, contrary to expectations, Senators sent significantly more e-newsletters than their House colleagues. While beyond the scope of this research note, it is likely that this reflects the different type of contents of the e-newsletters, and different ways of seeking connection between representative and represented (Fenno 1977; Koop and Marland 2012; Marland and Snagovsky 2023), with some MHRs more likely to focus on local representation, while Senators instead focus on policy. These questions of content open up a range of new research questions. Both Pitkin (1967) and Fenno (1978) place an emphasis on ‘explanations’ and the communication from representatives to the public in their conceptions of democratic accountability. Accountability to the public requires that leaders communicate with the public about their actions—“the representative has an obligation to explain” their actions (Mansbridge 2003, 516). Thus, the e-newsletters can provide evidence of this accountability and explanations, which can then increase the democratic legitimacy of the system (Grose et al. 2015). Therefore, this dataset can help address these aspects of representational theory.

Other areas for investigation, both within Australia and comparatively, include: How does strict party discipline impact the contents of the e-newsletters? Are there gendered differences in this form of communication style (Yarchi and Samuel-Azran 2020)? How does the content of the e-newsletters reflect different ‘home-styles’ (Fenno 1978) and ways of building an electoral connection (Petter 2021; Studlar and McAllister 1994)? Within policy studies, the dataset can be used to explore agenda-setting and framing, as well as differences between parties in communication and emphasis across specific policy areas such as veterans' affairs (Cormack 2018), environment (Walker 2017) and trade (Clarke et al. 2019).

A further area for future research is to understand the readership of these e-newsletters and the impact the e-newsletters have on readers. It is not clear how many subscribers these e-newsletters have, although evidence from the United States of America indicates that 19% of constituents had signed up for an e-newsletter from their representative, and 14% had signed up for an e-newsletter from their senator (Cormack 2017). Are subscribers more likely to participate in politics and write back to the legislator (Casey 2024; Casey and Rottinghaus 2025)? Does it change their policy opinions or policy priorities? Most importantly for the legislator, does it impact their vote?

CanberraInbox is now publicly available at www.canberrainbox.com.au with data updated regularly.

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Data Availability Statement

The data that support the findings of this study are available from www.canberrainbox.com.au.

Endnotes

¹ While some of my findings do not meet standard thresholds of statistical significance, my data is a census of the entire current Federal parliamentary population in Australia, making statistical inference unnecessary, because the difference is “is true and does exist” (Hair et al. 2006, as cited in DBF Filho et al. 2013, 46). Nevertheless, I report *p*-values throughout for the sake of transparency.

² *p* = 0.4. An OLS regression, controlling for gender and parliamentary status, was consistent with the finding that, contrary to the hypothesis, senators send more e-newsletters (*p* = 0.5).

³ *p* = 0.27.

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Appendix A

Variable	Description
PHID	Unique identification number for every Australian parliamentarian, generated by the Australian Parliamentary Library. This is a linkage key that can then be used to link this dataset with a wide variety of other Australian political science datasets
SurnameName	The parliamentarian's name, as used by the Australian Parliamentary Library
MemberOrSenator	Whether the parliamentarian was a Member of the House of Representatives or Senator at the time the e-newsletter was sent.
Electorate	Which electorate (House of Representatives) or state/territory (Senate) the parliamentarian represented at the time the e-newsletter was sent
Party	Which party the parliamentarian represented at the time the e-newsletter was sent. Party name is from the Australian Parliamentary Library
Parliament	The sequential number of the parliament at the time the e-newsletter was sent (data for this article collected during the 47th parliament)
message_id	Unique message ID generated by Gmail
message_date	Date and time the email was received, GMT
message_hour	Date and time the email was received, GMT
message_sender	Sender of the email and sender's email address. From the email metadata
message_subject	Subject line of the email
message_body	Full text of the email
message_html_link	Location of the original HTML version of the email. Accessible through www.canberrainbox.com.au or https://storage.googleapis.com/canberra-inbox-html-other/XXXXX

Note: "Party," "Electorate" and "MemberOrSenator" are dependent on the *ausPH()* package (Leslie 2024) and therefore may not immediately reflect changes, should they occur during a parliamentary term.