



PETER REITH FAILS TO ANSWER QUESTIONS ABOUT VICTORIA LIBERALS

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Peter Reith is challenging Michael Kroger for the presidency of the Victoria Liberals Party. Former Howard government minister Peter Reith has suffered through a train wreck interview on Sky News.

Admitting he doesn't know who the deputy leader of the Liberal party is in Victoria's Upper House or how many seats the state party needs to win the next election. Mr Reith, who is challenging Victorian Liberal Party president Michael Kroger for the presidency, appeared on a panel with former Rudd strategist Bruce Hawker on last night's *The Bolt Report*, when he clashed with the host after he refused to air "dirty linen" about his colleagues.



[The Bolt Report](#) The battle begins: Peter Reith hints about his future at the Victorian Liberal party on [#TheBoltReport](#) [9:58 PM - 2 Mar 2017](#)

"Why are you challenging Michael Kroger for the leadership of the Liberal party, what's he done wrong?" asked host Andrew Bolt.

"Let me give you something, a bit of information about how the Liberal party works," Reith said. "Basically they don't like to take the dirty linen and take it out for discussion ... so I'm not talking about it. Sorry. I know you'd like me to, and I'd be quite happy to personally."

Bolt said he didn't require Mr Reith to air private matters on air, but asked him whether he was happy with how the state Liberal party was operating prior to the next state election.

Bolt: "How many seats do they need to win?"

Reith: "Well the point is ..."

Bolt: "How many seats do they need to win?"

Reith: "What, state or federal?"

Bolt: "State."

Reith: "Well, it's a very close situation in Victoria."

Bolt: "You don't know then?"

Reith: "It's one or two votes, that's all."

The Victorian Electoral Commission says Labor has a six seat majority.

Under sustained questioning from Bolt, Mr Reith also admitted he did not know who the deputy leader of the Liberal party in the upper house, a position filled by long-time Liberal Gordon Rich-Phillips.

"I got no idea mate, why should I?" said a visibly frustrated Mr Reith. "For heaven's sakes, what do you think I'm going to be?"

"I think you're going to be president of the party. I think you at least need to know the leadership team," replied Bolt.

"You don't understand how the system works," Mr Reith shot back. "This system works because this system works on the basis there is a parliamentary leader, and there is a leader for the organisation. This is all about the organisation. It's not about going around and talking about all the MPs."

Mr Reith nominated for the Victorian Liberal party presidency on Thursday, after The Australian revealed last month he was in the mix to run. The contest is set to have an impact on state leader Matthew Guy, who faces a divided party regardless of the outcome. Turnbull ministers Josh Frydenberg, Greg Hunt and Alan Tudge are backing Mr Kroger, while ministers Kelly O'Dwyer, Scott Ryan and Mitch Fifield will back Mr Reith.

<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/national-affairs/state-politics/peter-reith-fails-to-answer-questions-about-victoria-liberals/news-story/79fc0c675de3e550a704d824d5d87330>