

Gladys Berejiklian is steering a rudderless ship

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When the Police Minister Troy Grant was responsible for the arts, he picked up the phone on more than one occasion and called the Sydney Opera House chief executive Louise Herron.

He had clear instructions. Once it was to promote the Wallabies (without any mention of major sponsors Qantas) on the white sails of Australia's most famous building. Another time it was to show support for Paris after deadly terrorist attacks.



Gladys Berejiklian believes the projection of a Racing NSW promotion for the Everest event will be in "good taste".

The requests were in line with the Opera House's policies and Herron accepted the directions from the arts minister without fuss. The sails were lit up and there was no public outrage.

But in the latest disastrous blunder for the state government, the issue of whether a multimillion-dollar horse race should be promoted on the Opera House has dominated headlines for days.

Gladys Berejiklian has managed to get herself embroiled in the bitter debate that only emerged because 2GB shock jock [Alan Jones publicly berated Herron on live radio](#).

Berejiklian didn't criticise Jones for his outrageous behaviour, but instead intervened and then doubled down on the government's decision to use the cultural icon to push the Everest event.

There is public outrage, but this issue alone is not going to cost the Coalition the election in March.

What could, though, is the cumulative impact of Berejiklian constantly having to fight fires that are lit by her own people.

After the Liberals' humiliating loss in the Wagga Wagga byelection, the government realised it had to take stock and rethink its message to voters if the Coalition was to win a third term.

Berejiklian needed clear air to convince the people of NSW that not only would they reap the rewards of the government's strong financial position, but the pain from years of construction mayhem would be worth it.

Instead, Berejiklian has spent the weeks since the Wagga wipeout caught up in issues management that has sucked up all that supposed clear air.

The most spectacular was having to stop [a bitter internal war between two ministers](#) who were fighting over the same seat in parliament. No time for talking about policies or vision amid battle.

And even worse for Berejiklian is the rumblings from her own people, those who were once her biggest supporters, that she is at the helm of a rudderless ship.

She is now seen as a weak leader who caves in to pressure in a desperate, but ill-fated, attempt to keep everyone happy.

The Coalition is beginning to resemble a government in its dying days.

<https://www.smh.com.au/politics/nsw/gladys-berejiklian-is-steering-a-rudderless-ship-20181008-p508fg.html>