

## Katter is no One Nation, say pundits

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Katter's Australian Party is predicted to win four seats at the upcoming Queensland election but is unlikely to replicate the success of One Nation, according to key election analysts.

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Malcolm Mackerras expected the new minor party, spearheaded by maverick federal MP Bob Katter, would win Nanango and Mount Isa.

This would propel former cricketer Carl Rackemann and Mr Katter's son Robbie into state parliament.

He expected MPs Shane Knuth and Aidan McLindon - Liberal National Party defectors who are standing for re-election under the Australian Party banner - would retain their seats of Dalrymple and Beaudesert respectively.

Griffith University senior lecturer in politics Paul Williams agreed but believed Mr McLindon was in for a tough fight, rating him as a "likely, strong possibility but not even a probable" winner.

"It's closer to Brisbane so its electoral values are closer to Brisbane," Dr Williams said.

He believed the party's policies and lack of female candidates would hamper its chances in major metropolitan areas.

And Dr Williams threw in a "wild card", suggesting senior LNP figure Jeff Seeney could struggle to beat off a challenge from the Australia Party candidate Steve Ensby in Callide.

Scott Prasser, a specialist in public policy from the Australian Catholic University, said the minor party had the potential to win three to five seats.

"[But] fears that the Katter Australian Party might repeat the One Nation Party's 1998 electoral success when it gained 25 per cent of the vote, are an exaggeration," Professor Prasser wrote in a Democratic Audit discussion paper on the upcoming state election

The next fortnight might be significant, University of Queensland's Ian Ward said when asked about the minor party's chances.

"I think at this stage there isn't enough polling or similar evidence to be confident that they will make a significant impact at the next election," Dr Ward said.

"But we should not dismiss the lessons of 1998 where suddenly and unexpectedly One Nation emerged to win 11 seats.

"So how the campaign plays out in the next week or two may be significant."

Dr Ward, who is editor of the Australian Journal of Politics, said he suspected the Australian Party would not prove as successful as One Nation.

"But at the end of day, if [LNP leader] Campbell Newman can't convince voters who are determined to vote against the Labor Party that he is their man and the LNP is their party, then one of the places where that disgruntled vote may go is to the Katter party," he said.

*This story was found at: <http://www.brisbanetimes.com.au/queensland/state-election-2012/katter-is-no-one-nation-say-pundits-20120208-1rffb.html>*