

LIBERAL PARTY COMMENT ON DISTRIBUTION SUBMISSIONS MAY 2019

The Liberal Party notes that suggestions have been received from three political parties, five local governments and seven individuals. There are many points of agreement but of course some significant differences.

Unlike the scenario of the 2015 distribution, patterns of growth ensure that the non-metropolitan Regions have sufficient enrolment to maintain 16 districts. Aside from one individual submission, there are no overt proposals for the abolition of a country district and the creation of an additional metropolitan district.

WA LABOR

It is disappointing however that WA Labor is proposing to dilute country representation by transforming the district of Moore into a semi-urban hybrid electorate. The Liberal Party is most strongly opposed to three major aspects of this submission:

- Crossing the Metropolitan Area boundary to place the localities of Yanchep and Two Rocks in the Agricultural Region;
- Crossing the Metropolitan Area boundary in order to dismember the Shire of Serpentine-Jarrahdale;
- Including nine agricultural Shires in the Mining and Pastoral Region.

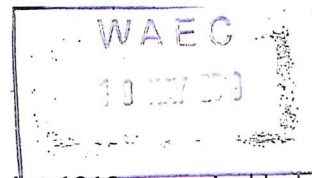
Two of these changes violate Section 16H(1), sub-clauses (b) and (c) of the *Electoral Act 1907*. Section 16H(1)(b) states that the Mining and Pastoral Region encompasses areas "remote from Perth and in which the land use is primarily for mining and pastoral purposes".

- The land use of these Shires is overwhelmingly based on broad acre farming, and for this same reason the pastoral section of the Shire of Northampton north of the Murchison River has always been excluded from the current district of Moore and the former district of Greenough.
- LGAs such as Dalwallinu, Coorow and Irwin are not particularly "remote from Perth". They are part of the heartland of the Agricultural Region and have no place in the Mining and Pastoral Region.

Section 16H(1)(c) states that land use in the Agricultural Region is "primarily for agricultural purposes". It is accepted also that fishing as another primary industry is also a component of coastal rural districts.

However all accepted standards of community of interest would be overturned by the transfer of 7834 suburban electors from the district of Butler to the Agricultural Region district of Moore. The localities of Two Rocks and Yanchep have long ceased to be self-contained coastal communities and are fast-growing metropolitan suburbs. The boundary of the City of Wanneroo with the Shire of Gingin forms not only the Regional and Metropolitan boundary but also separates totally unrelated communities and land usage.

It is absurd to draw any sort of parallel with the federal Division of Pearce. Such divisions, which are up to four times larger than State Parliamentary districts, will inevitably include



some unrelated areas. Under the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918* numerical balance overrides community of interest to a far greater extent than under the *Electoral Act 1907*.

The one section of the Metropolitan Area boundary that is permeable is the boundary between the Cities of Rockingham and Mandurah, with parallel urban growth: there is some community of interest between Singleton and adjacent Madora Bay.

However WA Labor proposes instead to remove the southern part of the Shire of Serpentine-Jarrahdale from its main centre of Byford, splitting this LGA for the first time and for no valid reason.

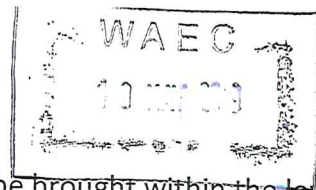
- It is disingenuous to refer to any community of interest between Serpentine, Jarrahdale and Pinjarra while proposing to sever a far stronger community of interest between Serpentine, Jarrahdale and Byford in the same LGA.
- The eight districts of the South West Region collectively exceed the Average District Enrolment (ADE) by a comfortable margin. In this Distribution therefore no justification exists for Murray-Wellington or any other South West Region district to encroach on the Metropolitan area.

The Liberal Party while noting that WA Labor agrees that the locality of Australind should be transferred to the district of Collie-Preston, has several significant points of disagreement regarding the South West Region:

- The proposal to transfer the locality of Coodanup to Murray-Wellington ignores the natural boundary of the Serpentine River, whereas there is no such natural boundary separating Parklands/Lakelands from the Murray LGA.
- The district of Bunbury has no need to expand into Gelorup or any other locality.
- WA Labor is proposing that the districts of Murray-Wellington, Bunbury and Collie-Preston should approach the upper limit of ADE, seemingly in order to retain the Shire of Collie within the South West Region, despite numerical logic to the contrary.
- The Liberal Party considers that the Donnybrook-Balingup LGA has as much if not more affinity with Greater Bunbury than does the Shire of Collie. It makes greater numerical sense to retain the Donnybrook-Balingup Shire rather than the Collie LGA within this district.
- Leaving this LGA in place would make redundant the proposal of WA Labor to remove the Shire of Plantagenet from the district of Warren-Blackwood, and with it the associated proposal that the district of Albany be transferred to the Agricultural Region.

We note that at the 2011 distribution, when the district of Warren-Blackwood ceded the Plantagenet LGA leaving the Shire of Denmark as the district's sole border with the district of Albany, the Commissioners rejected the option of transferring the Albany district to the Agricultural Region. The Liberal Party continues to oppose the transfer of this district from the South West Region.

The Liberal Party fundamentally disagrees with proposals of WA Labor to radically alter the boundaries of the district of North West Central by creating another hybrid electorate where mining, pastoral and agricultural LGAs are thrown together in contravention of the clear intention of the *Electoral Act 1907*.



- Both the North West Central and Kimberley districts can be brought within the lower limit of ADE by transfers of the Large District Allowance (LDA) that minimises the disruptive transfer of actual electors.

Within the Metropolitan Area, there are several points of agreement between WA Labor and the Liberal Party.

- The transfer of the locality of West Perth to the district of Nedlands brings the district of Perth comfortably within ADE and is in accord with community of interest. We note that the submission of D. McLeod also reinforces this argument.
- There is substantial consensus regarding the proposed boundaries of the district of Baldivis, particularly the use of LGA boundaries to demarcate the western border of the district of Darling Range.
- Both Parties agree that the locality of Banksia Grove be transferred to the district of Wanneroo, and that the locality of Ballajura be consolidated within the district of West Swan.
- There is broad agreement that the district of Morley move northward into the current district of Mirrabooka.
- It is agreed that the boundary between the districts of Maylands and Bassendean should follow the LGA boundary and consolidate the locality of Bayswater within Maylands.
- The Liberal Party and WA Labor are in full agreement that Legislative Assembly districts should be named after geographic localities and should not commemorate individuals. Geographic names do indeed enable electors to relate to boundary changes.

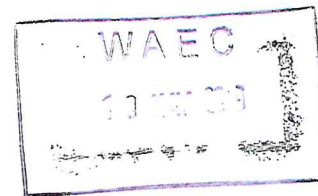
However the suggestions of WA Labor regarding the north-western metropolitan area are based on the unsustainable premise that Butler should cede electors to the district of Moore, rather than following logic and precedent by drawing other urban districts northward.

- In particular the Liberal Party is opposed to the transformation of the districts of Hillarys and Joondalup into two elongated north-south districts, a suggestion that wrongly presupposes a lack of community of interest between suburbs on either side of Marmion Avenue that are currently contained in the same districts.

We have made clear our strong opposition to the suggestion of WA Labor that the district of Darling Range lose any part of the Serpentine-Jarrahdale LGA while supposedly being centred on Byford in the heart of this same LGA.

- There is agreement that the Rockingham, Kwinana, Kalamunda and Mundaring LGAs be withdrawn from this district.
- However the Liberal Party disagrees strongly that the district of Kalamunda cede Darlington and other localities on its western border in order to encompass more distant localities to its north. This proposal, like the suggestion to bisect the Serpentine-Jarrahdale LGA, cuts across established communities of interest.

THE NATIONALS



The submission of the National Party of Australia covering the non-metropolitan Regions displays far greater balance and understanding by recognising that extensive change, and alteration of the Metropolitan Area boundary, is both undesirable and unnecessary.

We would however submit that this minimalist approach is sometimes taken to an unrealistic extreme, especially as regards the Nationals' proposal for the South West Region. It is impractical to maintain the districts of Dawesville and Mandurah with such high enrolments nudging the upper limit of ADE.

- The Liberal Party disagrees with any proposal to alter the southern boundary of the district of Dawesville, as this impinges on the unity of the main section of the district bounded by the Indian Ocean, Peel Inlet and the Harvey Estuary, and would remove part of the eponymous locality of Dawesville.
- It makes no sense to reduce the enrolment of Dawesville in this way rather than by the obvious means of transferring electors in Dudley Park to Mandurah, and with Mandurah ceding electors to Murray-Wellington.
- The Liberal Party, WA Labor and the City of Mandurah are all agreed that this is the appropriate means of transferring electors between these three districts.

The Nationals' submission follows logic in leaving the district of Geraldton unchanged while transferring LGAs from Central Wheatbelt to Moore, and from Roe to Central Wheatbelt. The submission of Mr Shane Love MLA reinforces that of the Nationals.

We would however suggest that the transfer of such small numbers of electors will provide a very short-term solution to the low enrolment of Moore, and also ignores the need for a substantial transfer of electors from the South West Region to the Agricultural Region.

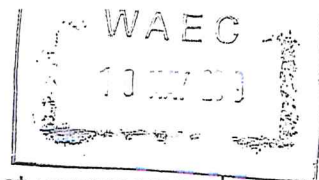
Mr Love's submission is to be commended for its thorough repudiation of ill-informed suggestions to extend the district of North West Central into broad acre farming LGAs within the Agricultural Region.

- Any such suggestion defies community of interest and runs contrary to the clear intention of the provisions of the *Electoral Act 1907*.
- Mr Love is correct in affirming that districts with falling towards the lower tolerance of ADE within the Mining and Pastoral Region can be adjusted within the existing boundaries of that Region.

The Liberal Party endorses the Nationals' suggestion that the boundary of the district of Kimberley extend due southward along the 126.0E meridian, as displayed on the attached map. This brings this district within ADE with the minimum disturbance to electors, and does not require the district of Pilbara to expand elsewhere.

LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

The Liberal Party acknowledges the strong preference of the City of Belmont and the Shire of Esperance for no change to the boundaries of the districts in which they are situated.



11

While this may not be possible, these submissions are a reminder that unnecessary change is never desirable.

The submission from the City of Karratha also reinforces the desirability of leaving existing boundaries in place in the Mining and Pastoral Region. Increasing the 20.0% minimum tolerance for these four districts however would require an amendment of the *Electoral Act 1907* and is beyond the scope of this distribution.

The Liberal Party notes that the City of Swan agrees with the proposition that the locality of Ballajura should be excised from the district of Mirrabooka and consolidated in the district of West Swan.

The City of Mandurah correctly identifies the need to transfer a section of the locality of Dudley Park to the district of Mandurah. The section that is specified however forms an awkward “bite” in the east of this locality, meandering along minor residential streets. Moreover the transfer of only 1030 electors leaves the district of Dawesville 8.9% above ADE when it makes sense to give this expanding area a lower initial enrolment.

- Similarly the district of Mandurah needs to cede far more electors than those contained in the Murray LGA. There are now too many electors within the City of Mandurah to be contained in two districts.
- It is impractical for the City of Mandurah to advocate such minimal change, and yet suggest that a third Mandurah district be created in 2023.

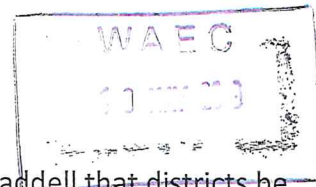
INDIVIDUALS

Aside from Mr Shane Love MLA, six individuals have submitted suggestions to the Distribution Commissioners.

As noted earlier, the Liberal Party commends the comprehensively argued suggestion from D McLeod that the transfer of the locality of West Perth from the district of Perth to the district of Nedlands not only brings Perth comfortably within ADE, but also enhances community of interest.

The Liberal Party is also in agreement with the submission of Mr Martin Gordon that displays a firm understanding of the realities of the non-metropolitan districts in particular.

- Mr Gordon points out that the two City of Mandurah-based districts are together 4000 electors over quota and that the consequential transfer of electors may necessitate the excision of the Collie LGA from the South West Region.
- He also reinforces the contention of the Liberal Party and the Nationals that the four districts of the Mining and Pastoral Region can be successfully adjusted by the transfer of sparsely populated LGAs.
- Mr Gordon concurs with WA Labor and the Liberal Party in supporting the northward movement of the Girrawheen district and the eastward contraction of the West Swan district, and also the excision of the Rockingham and Kwinana LGAs from the district of Darling Range.



//

The Liberal Party does not support the suggestion from Mr Jeff Waddell that districts be named after notable individuals, for the reasons stated earlier. We would consider that the Queensland Legislative Assembly is now adopting a confusing mixture of geographic and individual names.

- Moreover we reject the contention that any confusion exists when district names coincide with those of LGAs, or through the duplication of the district names of Perth, Fremantle and Moore with the three federal divisions of the same name. These three districts each have a long history dating from the commencement of responsible Government in 1890.
- Local community objections in 2007 reversed the renaming of the district of Kalgoorlie as “Goldfields” at a time when there was still a Federal division of Kalgoorlie.

The submission of Mr David Anson regarding the district of Joondalup is noted, and the Liberal Party agrees that the localities of Joondalup and Currambine be united in this district. However we do not support his suggestions regarding the localities of Beldon and Iluka as numerical requirements do not justify them.

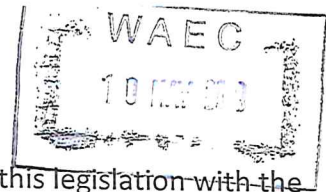
The submission of former MLC Hon Ken Travers recognises that excess electors from the district of Butler need to be transferred to the district of Burns Beach, with consequential effects on other districts.

- We consider however that he is proposing the transfer of an excessive numbers of electors from the districts of Butler and Perth, as this is not a federal distribution where an extreme emphasis is placed on future growth.
- There is no need to split the locality of Mount Hawthorn in order to remove additional electors from the district of Perth, when the transfer of West Perth alone will bring Perth comfortably within ADE.

Mr Travers is mistaken in singling out the district of Kingsley as having particularly low future growth prospects. In the near future there will be considerable infill development that will boost enrolment, particularly in relation to the three train stations bordering this district.

- Forecasts by the City of Joondalup indicate that from 2021 to 2026, the total population of the four localities comprising the district of Kingsley will rise from 37,087 to 38,148 – a rise of 2.9%.
- It is absurd to suggest that the localities of Craigie and Padbury be transferred to this district, disregarding longstanding communities of interest.
- Rather there is a clear precedent for the expansion (and contraction) of the district of Kingsley on a north-south basis and never on an east-west basis: the Mitchell Freeway and Wanneroo Road form clear natural boundaries.
- Indeed at the 2003 distribution the southern section of the locality of Edgewater was transferred to Kingsley; the current Liberal Party submission follows this precedent without splitting the locality.

The submission from Mr David Walsh is fundamentally flawed because of his declared objective of removing allegedly “perverse outcomes” of districts with low enrolments and large LDAs. These “perverse outcomes” are fully in accord with the 2005 amendments to



the *Electoral Act 1907*. The Large District Allowance was created by this legislation with the clear intention that it be utilised to preserve remote area representation to the greatest extent possible.

- The current district of North West Central enhances the representation of some of the most isolated small communities in our State that would otherwise be small appendages of major population centres.

Mr Walsh advocates the unjustified removal of a district from the Mining and Pastoral Region and the creation of an unnecessary additional metropolitan district. The proposed boundaries of the district of Moore, reaching from the Shire of Gingin to the Shire of Wiluna, are frankly absurd. Equally the inclusion of the Shires of Shark Bay and Murchison in the district of Geraldton violates Section 16H(1) of the *Electoral Act 1907* and ignores community of interest.

The suggested redrawing of the district of Bunbury would split the Bunbury LGA for no good reason. There is no need to alter the boundaries of this district that sits comfortably within ADE. At the same time Mr Walsh suggests minimal change to the high-growth districts of Dawesville and Mandurah, leaving them respectively 8.7% and 8.1% above ADE. This is a deeply inconsistent approach.

Mr Walsh's suggestions for the metropolitan area are based on the false premise that an additional metropolitan district can be justified. Moreover there is a pattern of extensive change and the disruptive creation of new electoral districts. No further comment on these suggestions is therefore necessary.

.....

The Liberal Party has supplied enrolment numbers for all 59 Legislative Assembly districts in the context of the mapping data that is an integral part of our submission. The enrolments of all districts are within ADE. We regret that the unavoidable time constraints involved in the creation of the supporting maps has prevented the listing of these figures in our written submission.