



Western Australian Distribution Commission
Electoral Boundaries WA
GPO BOX F316
PERTH WA 6841

via email: boundaries@waec.wa.gov.au

Dear Commissioners

2019 WA DISTRIBUTION – COMMENT ON ELECTORAL BOUNDARY SUBMISSIONS

The Nationals WA have reviewed the written submissions pertaining to the 2019 review of the electoral boundaries and wish to submit the following comments.

The Nationals WA reaffirms its submission of minimal change, proposing that where possible current boundaries be retained and the number of districts within each region remain as they are.

WA LABOR SUBMISSION

The Nationals WA in particular will focus on the submission by WA Labor, which does not respect the guidelines in section 16H of the Electoral Act 1901.

Section 16H of the Electoral Act 1901 specifies the electoral regions as follows:

- *Three regions which together must be generally coextensive with the metropolitan area of Perth: the North Metropolitan Region to the north of the Swan River; the South Metropolitan Region south of the river; and the East Metropolitan Region which includes the Perth hills;*
- *One region, to be known as the Mining and Pastoral region, an area remote from Perth and whose land is mainly used for mining and pastoralism;*
- *One region, the Agricultural region, an area south, or southwest of, and adjacent to, the Mining and Pastoral region and whose land is used mainly for agriculture;*
- *The South West region, which includes coastal and forest areas in the south west of the state*

In this section of the Act, the metropolitan region has the following definition under section 16H(2) of the Electoral Act:

metropolitan area of Perth means the part of the State that comprises —

- (a) the region that was, as at the relevant day, described in the Third Schedule to the Metropolitan Region Town Planning Scheme Act 1959; and
- (b) Rottnest Island.

Changing the borders of the District of Moore and the District of Murray-Wellington to draw these two regional Districts, and therefore the Legislative Council Regions they occupy, into the metropolitan area, rejects the doctrine that boundaries should be 'generally coextensive' and hold communities of interest with the metropolitan area of Perth.

The Nationals WA argue that the land of localities within the City of Wanneroo are not mainly used for agriculture and do not share communities of interest with other shires in Moore – including the proximate regional shires of Gingin, Toodyay and Chittering. Since 2005, the Electoral Distribution Commissioners have not changed the boundaries of the metropolitan area and therefore a change here would be a significant departure from precedent.

WA Labor's attempt to narrow the boundaries of the metropolitan area is an attempt to diminish regional representation by stealth and therefore should not be entertained by the Electoral Distribution Commissioners.

WA Labor's suggestion to shift shires in the northern reaches of the Moore District into the Mining and Pastoral region creates a perverse situation in which the District of Geraldton, situated in the Agricultural Region, is entirely geographically disconnected from the remainder of the Agricultural Region. This is a change that is unprecedented in redistributions in Western Australia. The Nationals WA strongly oppose this change and reiterate that the present Mining and Pastoral Region boundary should remain unchanged.

The Nationals WA note that WA Labor submit to change boundaries in Bunbury, Collie-Preston, Roe, and others to bring them close to the allowable VFADE limit. The Nationals WA submit that if it is acceptable that Districts are close to the allowable limit, the Commissioners should opt for minimal change and prefer The Nationals WA's submission over unnecessary changes suggested by WA Labor.

The Nationals WA suggest the Commissioners disregard WA Labor's submission as it pertains to regional Districts as the submission is based on unprecedented and perverse assumptions.

LIBERAL PARTY OF WA SUBMISSION

The Nationals WA strongly agree with the Liberal Party of WA that "there is no need to abolish a non-metropolitan District and create an entirely new metropolitan District as occurred in 2015."

The Nationals WA also agree with the Liberal Party of WA's proposal for the Kimberley District.

Outside of these changes, The Nationals WA contend that the Liberal Party of WA submission is too extensive and will cause unnecessary change. The Nationals WA

submit again that Districts can be brought within allowable limits with minor adjustments only.

In particular, The Nationals WA disagree with changes made to boundaries in North West Central (which was within allowable limits at the March snapshot), Central Wheatbelt, Roe, Moore and Warren-Blackwood. The Nationals WA point the Electoral Distribution Commissioners to our initial submission for rationale.

DAVID WALSH SUBMISSION

The Nationals WA strongly oppose the suggestion made by Mr Walsh that the District of North West Central be abolished and moved to the metropolitan area. There is no numerical requirement for this to happen and Mr Walsh's suggestion that the Mining and Pastoral Region consist of three districts only does not consider the vast distances travelled by Members of Parliament and constituents to meet one another. The abolition of a District in the Mining and Pastoral Region would further diminish the ability of constituents in these areas to access their local Members of Parliament.

This submission considers only numbers and is contrary to the Commissioners' requirement to consider other factors in determining boundaries.

The Nationals WA thank the Electoral Commissioners for the opportunity to provide comment on the submissions received.

Yours sincerely



Joe Lundy
STATE DIRECTOR

13 May 2019