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23 July 2007

Secretary
Office of the Electoral Distribution Commissioners
Level 11, 111 St Georges Terrace
PERTH WA 6000

Dear Sirs,

PROPOSED STATE ELECTORAL BOUNDARIES JUNE 2007 - OBJECTIONS

Congratulations on the excellent job you have done in preparing the proposed new electoral boundaries for Western Australia.

Generally, your proposals appear to be in line with the new legislative requirements. However, in accordance with your advertised notices, I hereby provide the following objections and comments for consideration by the Commissioners.

1. Firstly, I consider that this thorough review of all of the State's electoral boundaries provides the Commissioners with an unique opportunity to introduce a meaningful naming convention to further enhance the State's voting system for 'ordinary people'.
2. I preface the following objections and comments by noting that they are primarily based on the significant amount of feedback I have received from voters while working as an electoral officer during several State Elections.
3. For instance, many voters experience a significant amount of confusion every time they go to a polling booth when there have been minor boundary changes. This problem is exacerbated when the names given to the State's electoral districts are also locality names. Hence, I believe that the amount of confusion will be multiplied many fold with the current major boundary changes because of the continued use of locality names for electoral districts that actually include several different localities.

Further, this confusion is exacerbated where a locality has been split into different electoral districts **AND** the name of the locality is then used as the name of one of these electoral districts?

4. I object to the absence of an identifiable naming convention in respect to the proposed names for Legislative Assembly electoral districts, particularly newly formed districts.

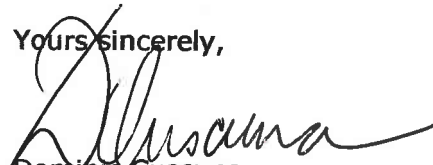
I believe that the creation of several **new** electoral districts provides the ideal opportunity to break the current nexus of using locality names for much larger voting areas. Surely it is feasible to develop a proposal using unique and/or 'more generic' names for electoral districts in order to remove this negative factor from the electoral system? Hopefully, the following examples will highlight some of the apparent anomalies with the current 'district naming process' and/or the current lack of a meaningful naming process.

5. Further, where locality names are used for naming electoral districts surely the whole of that locality should actually be included within that electoral district to avoid adding an unnecessary complication to the electoral process!
6. Therefore, based on a sample of six (6) of the proposed **new** electoral districts in the **new** East Metropolitan Region, I provide the following comments for your consideration:
 - 6.1 The proposed **new** electoral district of 'Mt Lawley' includes several localities namely Mt Lawley, Yokine, Coolbinia, Menora, parts of Inglewood and Dianella, as well as a bit of North Perth(?), East Perth(?), Perth(?) and Maylands(?). Therefore, I recommend that this area could possibly become the electoral district of 'Lawley'. My proposed name change is based on the City of Stirling's Lawley Ward and will avoid confusion with the locality of Mt Lawley – see attached COS map.
 - 6.2 Surely it is logical that the tiny portion of North Perth referred to above should remain with the balance of North Perth in the **new** 'Perth' electoral district? *Similarly it is illogical that a small portion of East Perth and Perth (between Lord Street and the Swan River) and Maylands (between Central Ave, East Street and the Swan River) have been included in your proposed electoral district of 'Mt Lawley'?* There appear to be no obvious reasons for such 'illogical' boundaries? Surely the relevant local government boundaries should be followed when they are in close proximity viz. City of Bayswater?
 - 6.3 I consider that the proposed **new** electoral district of 'Nollamara' could also be more appropriately re-named with a non-locality name. It is important to note that the major localities in this proposed district are to be Mirrabooka, Westminster, Nollamara, Alexander Heights, Koondoola as well as a section of Dianella? The Nollamara locality is only a minor part of the new district? Hence Nollamara is hardly a satisfactory name even though it has been used previously (with different boundaries)? For example, I would suggest that 'Alexander' may be a more suitable name for this district.
 - 6.4 I consider that 'West Swan' is an inappropriate name for the proposed **new** electoral district that covers such a large geographical area from Landsdale, part of Beechboro, Whiteman Park, Ballajura, Malaga, Henley Brook, West Swan and across to the Swan River. I would strongly suggest that 'Whiteman' be used instead of 'West Swan' given the significant proportion and contribution of Whiteman Park to this proposed electoral district (approximately 50%).
 - 6.5 I have found many examples where localities have been split up between two or more proposed electoral districts and at least one that was even split between regions. Surely, one of the primary criteria of the redistribution would have been to try and keep localities within one electoral district and region, wherever possible? Similarly, I would have expected the proposed electoral districts would have been developed around the larger localities and designed in such a way as to avoid splitting localities wherever possible?
 - 6.6 A prime example is the locality of Morley which has been split between three (3) of the proposed **new** electoral districts of 'Morley' (!), Maylands and 'Bassendean'? This gives rise to the significant problem with using 'Morley' as the name of one of the proposed electoral districts even though it does not include the whole of Morley (locality)! Therefore, given the above, I strongly submit that 'Morley' is an inappropriate name for a proposed new electoral district!

- 6.7 Similarly, the locality of Beechboro has been split between three (3) of the proposed **new** electoral districts of 'West Swan', 'Morley' and 'Bassendean'?
- 6.8 It does not appear necessary to split the locality of Landsdale between the proposed **new** East and North Metropolitan Regions, let alone between the proposed **new** 'Wanneroo' and 'West Swan' electoral districts?
- 6.9 It is quite amazing that the sizable locality of Dianella has not been retained as one distinct electoral district? Instead, Dianella has been split up into little portions and farmed out to three (3) of the **new** electoral districts of 'Mt Lawley', 'Morley' and 'Nollamara', all of whom appear to have very little *raison d'être* in their own right!

Given the above objections, comments and examples (based on sample of six of the proposed **new** electoral districts in the new East Metropolitan Region), I am sure that the Commissioners can come up with even better proposals before finalising the State Electoral Boundaries later this year.

Yours sincerely,



Dominic Cuscuna

Att.

