

To the Electoral Distribution Commissioners

Hon Wayne Martin - Chief Justice of Western Australia

Mr Warwick Gately - Electoral Commissioner

Mr Michael Tindall - Government Statistician

Please accept this objection to your division of the State in to districts and regions.

Metropolitan Region Scheme Boundary

For many years State law has maintained a boundary between electorates in Perth and the country. In recent years Parliament has chosen the Metropolitan Region Scheme Boundary but in the past when Parliament itself drew this boundary it was the subject of controversy.

Parliament has altered the law so that it is no longer responsible for drawing the electoral boundary, rightly preferring instead to leave the decision to the Electoral Distribution Commissioners. This is a significant historical change.

I am disappointed that you do not seem to have realised the significance of this reform and have not seized the opportunity to begin a process of ending artificial divisions between electors in Perth and elsewhere.

For example, electors living East of John Forrest National Park could easily be included in a country district and have been not so long ago.

My original suggestion to you was for an arrangement with 3 fewer districts in the Metropolitan regions than the arrangement you have proposed.

Malapportionment – allocation of districts to regions

Parliament has given us 6 regions and 59 districts which, in an equitable scheme of representation, suggests five regions each containing 10 districts and one with 9.

However, other constraints in the law would make it questionable to include less than 13 districts in each of the Metropolitan regions.

In the 3 country regions the law does not provide instructions about the allocation of districts.

The current proposal is inequitable among electors particularly in the 3 country regions. Engineering greater representation of electors in the Legislative Council than in the Legislative Assembly in Agricultural region is a decision which decreases the representation of electors elsewhere.

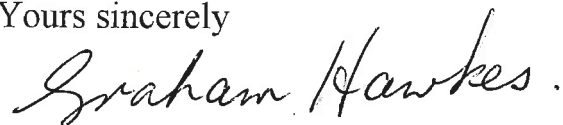
A more equitable allocation of districts to regions should be made.

Malapportionment – statistical overview

The table below summarises a comparison between the present and the proposed electoral systems to show the effects on representation which flow from the coming together of legislative reform and the proposed boundaries. The table can also be found at <http://members.iinet.net.au/~maggra/electoral.html>

My disappointment with the proposed boundaries is that malapportionment in representation to the Legislative Council is continued. I had hoped that the initial redistribution under the reformed law would endeavour to use the limited discretion available to promote greater equity in representation.

Yours sincerely



Graham Hawkes

29 Amherst Road
Woodbridge 6056
Ph/Fax 9274 2009
Email maggra@iinet.net.au
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Table 2**Comparison between the current and the new electoral system**

NB: The enrolments in the proposed boundaries and were first published in June 2007 whereas the existing boundaries were created in 2003. They therefore contain changes in enrolments accumulated over 4 years.

Key **Significant improvement** **Minimal or no change**

	Comparison	Current	Proposed
Legislative Assembly [LA]	Metro enrolment	74.3%	No change
	Country enrolment	25.7%	No change
	Metro districts	59.6% [34]	71.2% [42]
	Country districts	40.4% [23]	28.8% [17]
LA Average enrolments	Metro districts	27,978	22,275
	Country districts	14,092	19,066
	Ratio between Metro and Country	1.95:1	1.17:1
LA enrolments Highest district	Percentage above State average Wanneroo	+66.4%	+7.6% Cottesloe
Lowest district	Percentage below State average Kalgoorlie	-45.8%	-42.9% Pilbara
LA enrolments	Ratio between highest and lowest district enrolment	3:1	1.88:1
Legislative Council [LC]	Metro enrolment	74.3%	No change
	Country enrolment	25.7%	No change
	Metro seats	50% [17]	50% [18]
	Country seats	50% [17]	50% [18]
LC Average enrolments per MLC	Metro regions	55,031	51,974
	Country regions	19066	18,007
	Ratio between Metro and Country	2.88:1	No change
LC enrolments Highest region	Percentage above State average North Metro	+50.6%	+48.7% North Metro
Lowest region	Percentage below State average Mining & Pastoral	-65.2%	-64.8% Mining & Pastoral

LC enrolments	Ratio between highest and lowest region enrolment	4.3:1	4.2:1
Control of Parliament	Majority of MsLA in lowest enrolment districts	37.7% [29/57]	48.1% [30/59]
	Majority of MsLC in lowest enrolment regions	30.0% [18/34]	29.9% [19/36]