

Dr. Steve Thomas MLA

Shadow Minister for the Environment and Planning



Member for
Capel



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

4th July 2007

Re: Objection to Electoral Boundary Changes

Dear Sir/Madam,

I write to lodge a formal objection to the naming of the proposed seat of "Collie-Preston" as identified in the proposed electoral boundaries document. I ask you to note this does NOT include an objection to the boundaries of the seat.

I also note that wherever possible, the Commission has attempted to retain the previous names of seats during the redistribution process.

The proposed seat of Collie-Preston is a merging of three existing seats, and draws on voters from your own figures from them (to the nearest whole percentage) as follows-

Capel	44%
Collie-Wellington	34%
Leschenault	22%

Thus despite Capel providing the greatest share of voters, you have excluded it in the name. You have included Collie, which provides one third of the voters from the previous seat.

If you were using local government districts as a guide, then both Capel and Dardanup on your figures provide around six and half thousand voters. Collie provides fewer than six thousand.

I put it to the commission that the naming of seat provides a free kick to the Labor Party by including the name of the previous Labor held seat, but excluding the equivalent Liberal held one. This appears on paper a partisan, albeit unintentional, action.

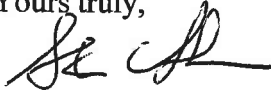
I therefore submit that that the name of the seat be changed. Should the Commission wish to continue using existing names, I suggest either Capel-Collie or Collie-Capel would be the most appropriate alternatives. This would provide a politically neutral answer.

Alternatively should the Commission seek a new name, the use of "Preston" on its' own provides a party political neutral option. Of course there are other options that could be used here.

I am attempting in this submission to find a party neutral answer to what appears a significant issue. I look forward to your response.

With thanks.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'St Thomas', written in a cursive style.

Dr Steve Thomas
Member for Capel



Member for
Capel



Shadow Minister for the Environment and Planning

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

Dear Sir

The Naming of Electoral Districts – 2007 Electoral Distribution

As part of the 2007 Electoral Distribution it has been necessary to combine a number of districts particularly in regional areas. Naming conventions play a significant part in the perception of the electors within a district.

Recent WAEC supported research has indicated that the names of electoral districts may be confusing electors, with some not realizing that an electoral event in a particular district included them.

The Australian Electoral Commission "Supplementary submission to the joint standing committee on electoral matters – The Naming of Electoral Divisions" http://www.aec.gov.au/pdf/committee/jscem/1996_election/sub126.pdf page 11 outlined a range of recommendations related to Amended Naming Conventions. Specifically related to the combination of two or more areas.

(i) That, when two or more Divisions are partially combined at a redistribution, as far as possible the name of the new Division should be that of the old Division which has the greatest number of electors within the new boundaries. Where the socio-demographic nature of the division in question has significantly changed, this should override the numerical formula.

While the above naming conventions are related to the Australian Electoral Commission, has the Office of the Electoral Distribution Commissioners utilized similar guidelines for naming conventions in areas of WA such as the proposed redistribution of the electorates of Capel, Leschenault and Collie-Wellington?

Yours sincerely

**Dr Steve Thomas MLA
MEMBER FOR CAPEL**