

SHIRE OF ASHBURTON

Administration Centre, P.O. Box 567, Tom Price, 6751
Telephone (08) 9188 4444
Facsimile (08) 9189 2252
Email: soa@ashburton.wa.gov.au
Enquiries: Neil Hartley - CEO
Our Ref: GR01



12/05/2015

Electoral Boundaries WA
GPO Box F316
PERTH WA 6841

Dear Sir / Madam

Review of State Electoral Boundaries – Increase Representation in the Pilbara

The Shire of Ashburton would like to lodge a submission against the proposal that WA State Government regional electorates should be abolished. It is simply not safe to expect our state politicians to accommodate even a reasonable amount of contact with their very large Pilbara electorates and whilst it would be ideal to receive a similar level of accessibility as the metropolitan based elected representatives, to do so would result in our politicians needing to work "in an unsafe work environment". The regional electorates certainly should not be abolished as some have proposed. Quite the opposite, the representation should be increased.

The community of the Shire of Ashburton (one of four Pilbara local governments) is spread over more than 100,000 square kilometres. Our population is approximately 10,000 residents, but we have an even higher number of Fly In Fly Out workers travelling to/from our district on a daily basis.

Whilst it is accepted that population is a driver for electoral boundaries, like the Shire of Ashburton's Ward system, it is inherently more sensible to allow a reasonable degree of flexibility and to provide for a "safe workplace" for all of our Pilbara elected members representatives (whether that be Federal, State, or Local Government).

The Shire of Ashburton submits that the present representation already provides inadequate local access to our state political representatives and we would ideally seek to have an increased portion of representation across the Pilbara to compensate for the distances politicians need to travel on a regular basis. As highlighted above, it is simply not safe to expect them to accommodate even a comparatively reasonable amount of contact so most certainly the State's regional electorates should not be abolished as some have proposed, the representation should in fact be increased.

Regards

Kerry White
Shire President