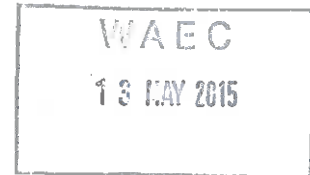


Electoral Distribution Commissioners  
GPO Box F316  
PERTH WA 6841



Dear Commissioners,

### **The Nationals WA - Comments on WA Electoral Boundary Distribution Submissions 2015**

The Nationals WA has reviewed the written submissions pertaining to the 2015 Review of Electoral Boundaries and wish to submit the following comments.

The Nationals WA reaffirms its suggestion that the current regional boundaries and the number of districts within each region be retained as they are at present, with the exception of a modest adjustment to the Agricultural and South West Region boundaries to bring the District of Wagin within the permissible limit.

The Commissioners' Preliminary Observations regarding the 2015 Review indicated a concern about disruption to current communities of interest. The Nationals WA's suggestions avoid such disruptions and will result in very minimal impact, if any, to the current communities of interest and minimise substantial and unnecessary domino effects which will otherwise occur in the regions if many of the other proposals submitted are adopted. In addition, The Nationals WA contend that the spread between the average Metropolitan and average Country Average District Enrolment (ADE) from 5.39% to -5.23%, respectively, is provided for in the legislation and as such, substantial changes to the number of and the boundaries for regional districts are not required at this time.

### **Retaining Five Districts in the Mining and Pastoral Region**

The Nationals WA refer especially to the suggestion to reduce the number of Districts in the Mining and Pastoral Region, in particular the abolition of the District of Eyre. The Nationals WA maintain that having five Districts in the Mining and Pastoral Region is still required and is consistent with the intent of the Act to make effective provision for the interests of voters living in rural and remote areas.

The Mining and Pastoral Region representation has been provided for and generally described under the WA Electoral Act as part of changes made in 2005. It has been reviewed as part of recent Distributions and confirmed as meeting the requirements with only a very modest adjustment being made between 2007 and 2011. The current average variation, including the Large District Allowance (LDA) to the permissible limit across the five districts is -12.48% which is well within permissible limit of -20%. If the number of Districts in the Mining and Pastoral Region are reduced to four, the average variation to ADE across the Districts will be +9.4% which is only 0.6% short of the maximum 10% ADE. Avoiding one or two of the Districts going over the 10% higher permissible limit in the four District scenario will be very difficult to achieve without negatively affecting all the other attributes required of an electoral District and its boundaries under the Act.

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The Greens, in their proposal, illustrate how difficult it is to find this balance. The Greens have proposed three Districts in the regions with an ADE variance over 9% and one District, the Pilbara, with a variance of 14% which well above the above the permissible limit.

### **Maintain the District of Collie-Preston with its current boundaries**

The Nationals WA believe that moving the Shire of Collie from the District of Collie-Preston to the District of Wagin will present too many flow on boundary adjustments without benefit and does not reflect the community of interest within the District.

The Shire of Collie is firmly considered part of the South West by the constituents of Collie and the remaining population of the South West. It is an industrial and mining centre with greater ties to the Port of Bunbury and the worker catchment to the areas to the west of the town of Collie. Collie is often referred to as the engine room of the South West and there are very few common links to the Agricultural Region. Almost all of Collie's industries, recreational and sporting activities, educational boundaries and health boundaries are related to the South West.

### **Maintain the eastern boundaries of the District of Wagin**

A number of proposals suggest the extension of the District of Wagin to include Ravensthorpe and Esperance.

The Nationals WA suggestion to include the Shire of Boyup Brook into the western boundary of the Wagin District will bring the District within the permissible limit and will effect fewer electors. It is a straight forward proposal and, given its history, would maintain the community of interest for many of the electors in the Shire.

Wagin already has 150 separate towns and communities that a member of Parliament will seek to represent. Adding Ravensthorpe and Esperance will negatively affect current Wagin electors, not improve representation for new electors given the distances involved, and does not reflect the differences in lifestyle, communities of interest and industry orientation as part of the Mining and Pastoral Region.

In addition, the impact of this suggestion would be to unnecessarily extend the use of LDA's for the calculation of the ADE variances for the Wagin District. While the LDA formula can be applied to any District providing it meets the criteria, at present LDA only applies to Districts in the Mining and Pastoral Region.

### **Retain the District of Albany with its current boundaries in the South West Region**

It is the view of The Nationals WA that the Legislative Council Regions have served the electors of these regions well and that no substantial change in communities of interest or land use patterns has occurred over the past four (4) years which would warrant any adjustment.

With specific reference to Albany, the District of Albany is a clear extension of the South Coast that begins at Cape Leeuwin and incorporates parts of the Shires of Margaret River, Manjimup, Denmark and Albany. Its existing links indicate a South West orientation economically and socially. Albany's communities of interest lie to the west with clear associations with Denmark, Walpole and Mount Barker. Albany together with the Shires of Plantagenet, Denmark and

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Manjimup share a common wine and timber industry and are also linked as tourism destinations.

The Nationals WA thanks the Commissioners for the opportunity to provide a written submission and for the opportunity to provide comment on those written submissions.

Sincerely,



Jamie Forsyth  
State Director

Wednesday, 12 May 2015