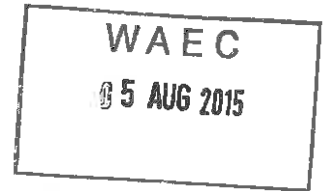


OBJECTIONS TO WESTERN AUSTRALIAN STATE REDIVISION

(Mark Mulcair)



GENERAL COMMENTS

I commend the Commission for their decision to propose Fundamental Change at this Redivision. There is an acceptance that the relative decline of rural WA requires a non-metropolitan Division to be abolished.

However, some of the specific changes proposed by the Committee are questionable. In rural areas, the decision not to alter the metropolitan/rural boundary has caused significant problems and flow-on effects (although many of these can be addressed, discussed below). In Perth, the decision to create a new seat in Southern Metropolitan results in undesirable flow-on effects elsewhere in the metropolitan area.

Finally, the decision to rename many Districts after people rather than places is unusual. Most of the current Districts have geographical names, and the names of prominent individuals such as Coombs should be reserved for future federal Divisions. I recommend geographic names be adopted where possible, and have suggested appropriate alternatives.

OBJECTION 1: RURAL WESTERN AUSTRALIA

I support the Fundamental Change proposal in principle, and the broad thrust of the boundaries are similar to my own suggestions. Although I suggested altering the metropolitan/rural boundary, I accept the logic of retaining it in place.

However, there are problems with many of the specifics, including:

- Splitting Esperance Shire
- Splitting Laverton Shire, and including Laverton and Leonora with a north-western District instead of Kalgoorlie
- Transferring further sparsely populated areas to North West Central, which does not solve its long-term numbers problem.
- Dragging Warren-Blackwood eastwards, resulting in Margaret River remaining split
- Splitting Busselton, and dragging Collie nearly as far south as Busselton itself.

My original proposals, with some slight modifications, would address all of these problems. I would encourage the Committee to consider my original proposals and the suggestions given here, to provide a better outcome for rural Districts.

Mining and Pastoral Region:

I encourage the Committee to adopt my original proposals for this Region. In addition to the changes proposed by the Committee, my proposals:

- Unite ALL of Esperance Shire in Roe
- Unite Laverton Shire and Leonora with Kalgoorlie, where their community of interest lies.
- Transfer the balance of Northampton Shire to North West Central. This provides a bigger boost in “real” electors for this chronically under-populated District.

I believe all of these changes are an improvement. While it could be argued that Northampton is more agricultural in nature, there are good links between Kalbarri and the coastal communities in the existing North West Central. Growth in tourism and associated industries along the coast also provide a stronger growth base for this District, in contrast to adding more LDA electors from remote inland shires.

Agricultural Region:

I recommend the Committee adopt my original proposals for this Region, with the exception of leaving Jerramungup in Albany.

- Northampton is transferred to North West Central.
- All of Geraldton City is united in the District of that name, plus Chapman Valley and Irwin.
- A greater transfer of shires is made between Central Wheatbelt and Moore, and between Wagin/Roe and Central Wheatbelt.
- All of Esperance is united in Roe.
- The Shire of Denmark is transferred from Warren-Blackwood to Roe
- Albany is transferred from South West to this Region, to better balance the numbers.

Many of the problems in rural WA arise from the Committee’s apparent desire to keep Roe under 100,000 sq km. This seems to be the rationale for splitting Esperance, and for dragging Warren-Blackwood eastwards into Plantagenet Shire. The latter causes several unfortunate flow-on effects throughout South-Western Region.

If my proposals were adopted, Roe would shed further shires in the north to Central Wheatbelt, allowing it to gain Esperance and Denmark without going outside 100,000 sq km. There would be no need for Warren-Blackwood to move eastwards, and no need for Kalgoorlie to push southwards into Esperance. This addresses all of the problems in Agricultural and Mining/Pastoral Region.

I still believe that Albany is a better fit in this Region, especially if Jerramungup is added.

South-West Region:

While I support some of the proposals in this Region, there are a number of problems, especially for Warren-Blackwood, Vasse, and the Collie seat. In particular, splitting Busselton in the manner proposed by the Committee seems completely contrary to community of interest, and will likely arouse significant objections. It also seems odd to continue splitting Augusta-Margaret River between Districts.

The Committee has decided to leave the urban/rural boundary unchanged, so my original proposals for this Region cannot be adopted in full. However, I am recommending some changes that can address the problems around Busselton and Margaret River, as well as accommodate my proposals for Agricultural and Mining/Pastoral Region.

- Mandurah sheds the remaining ~1500 electors in Murray Shire to the District of Murray-Wellington.
- Dawesville remains unchanged, as per the Committee's proposals.
- Murray-Wellington gains the balance of Murray, but sheds Roelands and surrounds to the Collie seat. This provides better connectivity between Collie itself and the outskirts of Bunbury.
- Bunbury and Collie-Capel make the exchange of Australind for Dalyellup, as per the Committee's proposals.
- Vasse retains ALL of Busselton and sheds the balance of Augusta-Margaret River to the District of Warren-Blackwood.
- Warren-Blackwood sheds Denmark to Roe.

These changes significantly improve community of interest throughout the Region. Busselton would remain intact in Vasse with the surrounding coastal communities, while Collie would remain focussed on the Bunbury suburbs and immediate surrounds. No major changes would be necessary for Mandurah, with only semi-rural areas transferred to Murray-Wellington.

OBJECTION 2: KWINANA AND SURROUNDS

(Warnbro, Baldivis, Kwinana, Rockingham)

The decision to retain the metro/rural boundary in place, and to create a new seat in Southern Metropolitan, causes a number of undesirable flow-on effects in this area. This was one of the reasons why I advocated transferring southern Rockingham to Mandurah. However, I acknowledge that the Committee is unlikely to make major changes at this late stage. I have proposed a few minor adjustments to improve the boundaries in this area.

1) Bertram returns to Kwinana. Accepting that the Kwinana Town Centre must be split, it still seems sensible to return Bertram to the District of Kwinana, so Baldivis does not need to make the awkward intrusion to the north. This allows the boundary to be straightened along Bertram Road, with Bollard Bulrush Swamp also providing a clear divide between Bertram and suburbs to the south. Kwinana is proposed to be placed at the low end of tolerance, so can easily accept this gain.

2) Baldivis is united in the District of that name. This involves only a few hundred electors, but it seems logical to unite the entire suburb in the District of Baldivis.

3) The balance of Cooloongup is transferred from Rockingham to Baldivis. This compensates Baldivis for the loss of Bertram, provides a much clearer boundary along Rae Road, and unites the suburb of Cooloongup in a single District. Rockingham would be placed at the very bottom of tolerance with this loss, but given the improvement in boundaries in this area, I believe this is an acceptable outcome.

OBJECTION 3: SOUTH-EASTERN PERTH

(Riverton, Cannington, Gosnells, Southern River)

While different from my own suggestions, I support the general thrust of the Committee's proposals through south and south-eastern Perth. In particular, the use of the Kwinana Freeway generally improves the community of interest of seats such as Willagee, Riverton, and Jandakot.

1) Riverton: It is not clear why part of Riverton has been removed from the District of that name. It seems logical to retain all of the suburb of Riverton within this District, and the change would only involve a few hundred electors, leaving Riverton and Cannington within tolerance.

2) Gosnells: I suggest a minor change to straighten the boundary between "Coombs" and Southern River, to provide a neater split of Gosnells. I suggest simply extending the boundary along Corfield Street all the way to Tonkin Highway instead of making the deviation onto Verna Street. Corfield Street is a more significant road and much clearer boundary, and the change only involves ~1050 electors.

3) Mount Richon: I still think it makes logical sense to unite all of Mount Richon and Wungong in the District of Armadale, since it only involves a few hundred electors.

OBJECTION 4: NORTH-EASTERN PERTH

(Wanneroo, Girrawheen, West Swan, Swan Hills)

The Committee's proposed West Swan ("Mann") is a very unsatisfactory District, joining together a disparate group of suburbs that have little connection with each other. Since its creation, West Swan has been a bits-and-pieces seat, and I specifically proposed to address this problem in my original suggestions by creating a District in Northern Metropolitan instead of Southern. West Swan would have become clearly focussed on the Swan Valley, with neighbouring Swan Hills being an equally clear "Hills" District.

One very strange addition to West Swan is the suburb of Banksia Grove. This is completely cut off from the remainder of the District, and has far stronger links to its neighbouring suburbs in Wanneroo. The inclusion of large semi-rural areas is also less than desirable, as it has little effect on enrolment but gives West Swan, Swan Hills, and Wanneroo very "interesting" shapes.

However, once again I accept that there will be no radical changes at this late stage, and I simply propose some minor changes to tidy up the boundaries of these Districts. In particular, I have tried to address the large and disparate nature of the proposed West Swan:

- 1) **Transfer Banksia Grove, plus Mariginiup and Jandabup, to Wanneroo.** This re-unites Banksia Grove with its immediate neighbours, uniting this suburban area in a single District. This change also rounds out the boundary of Wanneroo by returning semi-rural areas to the east.
- 2) **Transfer Pearsall and Hocking from Wanneroo to Girrawheen.** With the gain of Banksia Grove, Wanneroo needs to lose electors, and the only realistic place is in the south. The southern parts of Wanneroo Council are already in Girrawheen, and Pearsall/Hocking would fit well with suburbs such as Madeley and Darch. This is something similar to what I proposed in my original Suggestions.
- 3) **Transfer Wangara, Gnangara, and the small part of Wanneroo in "Mann" to Girrawheen.** This provides the connection between Pearsall and the remainder of Girrawheen, rounds out the north-eastern boundary, and further reduces the size of West Swan.
- 4) **Transfer the populated part of Lansdale (east of Mirrabooka Avenue) to West Swan.** This compensates West Swan for the losses to Wanneroo and Girrawheen. Lansdale is a compact suburb that has previously been in West Swan, and unlike Banksia Grove, it is close to Ballajura and other areas already in West Swan.
- 5) **Transfer Lexia, Melaleuca, and the balance of Bullsbrook to "Salvado".** This involves very few electors, but significantly reduces the physical size of West Swan. This change also rounds out the northern and western boundary of "Salvado", significantly improving its coherence and shape.

OBJECTION 5: NAMING

While I understand the logic of naming Districts after individuals, I still think it makes more sense to retain the practise of geographic names. It seems logical to reserve names such as Coombs for possible future federal Divisions, especially since population growth means the number of federal seats in WA will increase over time. In fact, the current federal redistribution for Western Australia has seen a number of these names proposed for a new federal Division.

I therefore suggest that the following proposed Districts be renamed.

“Molloy” can simply retain its current name of Warren-Blackwood, especially if my Objections are upheld.

“Hale” can be renamed Kinross, a suburb at the centre of the District. Re-introducing the name Mindarie could also be an option.

“Erickson” can retain its current name of Girrawheen. If my Objection 4 was upheld, it could be given the name Wanneroo South, and the existing Wanneroo be named Wanneroo North.

“Coombs” can be renamed Thornlie.

“Salvado” can be renamed Ellenbrook, which now clearly forms the heart of the District.

“Mann” can retain its existing name of West Swan, especially if my Objection 4 was upheld.

“Burt” can be renamed Bicton.

“Toohey” can be renamed Mount Pleasant.

“Brearley” can retain its current name of Jandakot, as the suburb and airport are still prominent parts of the District.

The proposed District of Murdoch can retain this name, as this is also a geographic name, and both the suburb and university are placed in this District.

As stated in my original suggestions, I think **“Noranda”** is a better name for the District of Morley, since the suburb of Morley is split over several different Districts.