



18 August 2015

WA Electoral Commission  
GPO Box F316  
PERTH WA 6841

To whom it may concern

## SUBMISSION – OBJECTION TO THE PROPOSED ELECTORAL DISTRIBUTION

I write on behalf of the Esperance Chamber of Commerce and Industry to express our disappointment with the Western Australian Electoral Commission's recommendation to abolish the seat of Eyre and to share our concerns regarding the suggestion that half of the Shire of Esperance be absorbed in to the seat of Wagin (to be renamed Roe).

Overall, we are concerned with the decision to abolish any regional electorate, a move we believe will disadvantage people living in regional WA. The loss of a regional seat will mean less focus on essential services like health, education and transport within these communities. The proposed new regional electorate boundaries make these electorates impossibly large. It is unrealistic to expect one person to truly represent everyone across such large geographical regions.

We have specific concerns with the proposed division of Eyre, with the majority of the Shire of Esperance becoming part of the new electorate of Roe, and the balance becoming part of Kalgoorlie.

The electorate of Eyre has been characterised by its diverse economic base that includes mining and exploration, agriculture and pastoral grazing, fishing, tourism and supporting industries. These industries share much stronger links and interests to the rest of the Goldfields, than to the other communities in the proposed Roe electorate.

All Government departments servicing Esperance are based either in the town itself, or in Kalgoorlie, while servicing the Esperance region. These include the Departments of Health, Main Roads, Tourism, Community Development, Transport, Sport and Recreation and Centrelink. In addition, Esperance is part of the Goldfields-Esperance Development Commission, which has driven a number of key development plans for Esperance, including the recent Regional Investment Blueprint, which guides planning and developments in our region for the next 35 years.

With all these obvious and established ties to the Goldfields region, the electorate of Eyre has been well positioned to grow and develop in conjunction with the communities in the Goldfields. To shift us into the newly proposed electorate of Roe shows little regard for our communities of interest, existing relationships and the in depth work done to plan for the region – which will require the strong support and understanding of the local Member of Parliament.

It is not unrealistic to expect that the newly elected Member for Roe will be based in the Wheatbelt part of the region, given the majority of the existing electorate of Wagin remaining within the newly proposed boundaries, the clear ties between those communities and the majority of the electorate's

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population being based there. This will make it exceptionally difficult for the people of Esperance to have regular access to their elected representative.

We find it difficult to see how Esperance and the South-East region could be adequately represented in the proposed electorate of Roe. We believe that the Esperance region is unique, and does not fit well politically or economically with the Wheatbelt.

While we are obviously disappointed that Eyre has been abolished and that Esperance has been aligned with Wagin, if the recommended changes progress, we would like to see the whole Shire of Esperance remain as one. People living and farming in the areas Howick, Beaumont and wider-Condongup consider themselves part of the Esperance community. They vote in the Shire of Esperance's local government elections, use Esperance as their central hub and share the same interests as the rest of the Shire. We encourage you to reconsider the decision to divide the Shire of Esperance and place us all in one electorate.

In closing, while we understand that this is not within your powers, we strongly encourage you to recommend that the number of electorates in the State be increased. While it is true that significant growth has occurred in the Metropolitan area we do not believe that decreasing regional representation is the appropriate response. Discussion regarding increasing the number of electorates in WA needs to be had to ensure that regional WA continues to be fairly and adequately represented in Parliament.

Should you wish to discuss our submission further, please do not hesitate to contact me on 0438 546 526 or via [tori.castledine@esperancecci.com.au](mailto:tori.castledine@esperancecci.com.au)

Kind regards

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