



24 August 2015

Office of the Electoral Distribution Commissioners  
Level 2, 111 St Georges Terrace  
Perth WA 6000

**RE: 2015 WESTERN AUSTRALIAN STATE REDISTRIBUTION PROPOSAL  
– LIBERAL PARTY OBJECTIONS**

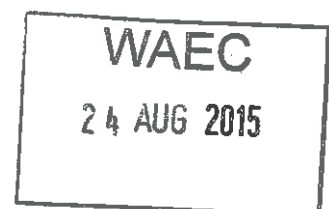
Commissioners,

Please find attached comments on behalf of the Liberal Party of Australia (WA Division) Inc.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Ben Morton', is written over a blue horizontal line.

**Ben Morton  
State Director**



## LIBERAL PARTY OBJECTIONS TO 2015 PROPOSED BOUNDARIES

The Liberal Party expresses strong disappointment at the decision of the Electoral Distribution Commissioners to abolish the district of Eyre in the proposed redistribution of boundaries. Despite inaccurate media reports, there has in fact been no decline in non-metropolitan enrolments and the Liberal Party was able to demonstrate that these Regions contain sufficient elector numbers to maintain 17 districts. We believe strongly in the principle that representation of the remote areas of the State should be maintained whenever possible.

The abolition of Eyre has created adverse consequences for the effective representation of many electors in rural and remote localities. It is unfortunate that of the five districts in the Mining and Pastoral Region, one with 17,224 actual voters and the least reliant on the Large District Allowance, should be abolished.

The electors in the Shires of Leonora, Laverton and Ngaanyatjarraku are included in a Carnarvon-based district, breaking their natural communication links with the City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder. In 2007 the Commissioners took considerable pains to include the main population centre of the Shire of Ngaanyatjarraku within a Kalgoorlie-based district for this very reason. These electors will continue to regard Kalgoorlie as their service centre and to approach the MLA for Kalgoorlie rather than the MLA for North West Central.

An editorial in the *Kalgoorlie Miner* on 1<sup>st</sup> August 2015 stated that "Warburton for instance will now be represented from Carnarvon – a 24 hour drive over nearly 2000 km of road along the most direct route, instead of Kalgoorlie, nearly half that distance". Mr Tomlin also noted that "residents of these communities travel to Kalgoorlie-Boulder for nearly all of their key services – there are historic, economic and communal links with the Goldfields that are not there with the Mid-West". Councillor Malcolm Cullen, the President of the Coolgardie Shire has also strongly protested at this decision, as has Mr Ron Yuryevich, the Mayor of Kalgoorlie (reported on 15<sup>th</sup> August).

Electors in the eastern section of the Shire of Esperance are artificially separated from the Town of Esperance, a major population centre that will be situated at the eastern extremity of a district that reaches to Cranbrook and Kojonup. The decision of the Commissioners in 2007 that recognised the community of interest between the entire Shire of Esperance and the Eastern Goldfields has now regrettably been reversed.

On 5<sup>th</sup> August 2013 Ms Tori Castledine of the Esperance Chamber of Commerce stated in a newspaper article that "all our future planning has been done focusing on the Goldfields-Esperance Region, and we believe it makes no sense to move us into an agricultural, Great Southern-focused electorate". Subsequently on 8<sup>th</sup> August a report from the City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder stated that "the Goldfields-Esperance region's main industry is mining and should therefore remain under the Mining and Pastoral region".

Electors in the Great Southern Shires of West Arthur and Williams will be included in the district of Central Wheatbelt whose member maintains an electoral office in Merredin, necessitating a long trip by road.

We would submit that the abolition of Eyre and the consequent changes to other districts will cause far greater disruption of communities of interest and communication links than would have occurred under the suggestions of the Liberal Party to retain 17 non-metropolitan seats by transferring suburban localities into the South West Region and by including the Shire of Collie in the Agricultural Region.

In regard to the Metropolitan area, the Liberal Party has four major specific objections to proposed Legislative Assembly boundaries, that each involve adjustments to adjacent districts and that avoid consequent changes to other districts. We also object to the proposed boundary between the North and East Metropolitan Regions.

#### JOONDALUP and OCEAN REEF/HALE

It would seem more logical that the 3055 Joondalup electors destined for Hale remain in the Joondalup electorate. To compensate for this loss of electors from Hale the clearly defined area of Ocean Reef bounded by Hodges Drive, Marmion Avenue and Shenton Avenue, with 2510 electors, should be returned to Hale.

Such a change will leave two existing and clearly defined cohorts of voters who share a strong community of interest within their current electoral boundary and would represent a more logical and minimal change between the two electorates.

Importantly, this suggested change would have no impact on any other elements of the proposed state wide redistribution as this change is basically contained within the existing and proposed electorates of Hale/Ocean Reef and Joondalup.

There is a clear community of interest for the suburb of Joondalup north of Moore Drive (which represents 60% of the Joondalup elector population) to remain in the electorate of Joondalup as Joondalup's suburban residents share a community of interest with the Joondalup CBD as their community hub and shopping centre. Under the proposed boundary there will be ongoing confusion for the majority of Joondalup residents as to who is their elected representative.

Equally, there is a clear community of interest for the portion of Ocean Reef north of Hodges Drive to remain in the proposed seat of Hale. This portion of Ocean Reef was developed much later than the southern half of the suburb and in concurrence with the suburb of Iluka, with both northern Ocean Reef and Iluka being known and branded as Beaumaris. Most of the Beaumaris Estate community infrastructure which services Iluka is actually within northern Ocean Reef, including the Beaumaris community centre, the Beaumaris shopping centre and the Beaumaris medical practice. Beaumaris Primary School (located in northern Ocean Reef) is also the only state school for residents of Iluka, whilst southern Ocean Reef contains its own primary and high schools.

These suggested changes would increase elector numbers in Joondalup but would leave it within the tolerance range. It should be remembered that the electorate of Joondalup like

Hillarys is fully developed, contains no new greenfield developments and its future elector numbers will only grow marginally through gradual infill.

The Liberal Party also proposes a minor adjustment of the proposed boundary between Joondalup and Hillarys, that would include a small part of Beldon bounded by Craigie Drive, Ocean Reef Road and Coyle Road within the district of Hillarys. The boundary would run along major roads rather than a minor suburban street in Coyle Road, and the enrolments of these two established districts would be equalised.

Under this proposal, Ocean Reef/Hale would have 25,455 electors (+2.1%) but would contain four ongoing residential greenfield subdivisions, in Iluka, Burns Beach, Mindarie and Catalina (Clarkson), within its boundary. So, like Butler, which is the only district in North Metropolitan to have a negative ADE, such a change will leave room for inevitable growth of Ocean Reef/Hale and Butler over the next four years in elector numbers.

These suggested changes are far more reflective of the respective communities of interest of the two electorates and are far more incremental than what has been proposed, with over 5500 electors that had been proposed to move electorates now being able to remain within their existing boundaries.

#### WEST SWAN/MANN and SWAN HILLS/SALVADO

By necessity these two outer suburban districts must range extensively across dispersed communities; so too does the district of Darling Range. We appreciate the difficulties faced by the Commissioners in this respect. However we would submit that the West Swan seat need not extend east of the Swan River or as far north as the locality of Bullsbrook.

The separation of the localities of Baskerville, Millendon, Herne Hill, Red Hill and Middle Swan from the closely related localities of Brigadoon and Upper Swan disrupts the natural community of interest for the Swan Valley. Nor is it desirable that 321 electors in the locality of Bullsbrook be artificially separated from the 2589 Bullsbrook electors who would remain within Swan Hills.

We understand the wish of the Commissioners to include the more densely populated localities of Ellenbrook, Aveley and the Vines within one district. However the urbanised section of Henley Brook known as Morgan Fields, immediately south of Gnangara Road, is part of this population centre but remains within the district of West Swan. It is not therefore possible to achieve this objective.

We therefore consider it reasonable and desirable for the boundary between these districts, south from West Swan Road, to revert to the clear and natural boundary of the Swan River so that Herne Hill and its four related localities would remain within the district of Swan Hills. We also propose that the locality of Bullsbrook remain united within Swan Hills.

In order to maintain both districts within VFADE it is proposed that the southern section of the locality of Ellenbrook lying south and west of Vaucluse Park/Vendata Avenue, Oval

Vista/Pinaster Parade, Brook Park and Bronzewing Avenue, revert to the district of West Swan.

These changes would reduce the geographic spread of the West Swan seat and generally create a more consistent and straighter boundary between the two districts.

#### MOUNT LAWLEY and MAYLANDS

The Liberal Party is opposed to an unnecessary transfer of electors between these two districts and considers that the localities of Maylands and Inglewood should remain entirely within the district of Maylands. The community of interest between the adjacent suburbs of Maylands and Inglewood has been recognised in successive redistributions. Indeed the section of Inglewood lying south of Beaufort Street, and the related section of Maylands, has never been left outside the district of Maylands since 1962.

Also, the proposed boundary running along Stuart Street in Inglewood actually follows a narrow suburban street, that is not a clear and desirable line of demarcation.

It is proposed that the boundary between these two districts be adjusted so that the 4641 electors in the locality of Dianella remain within the district of Mount Lawley. Only the small section of the locality of Morley south and east of the locality boundary of Smith Street and Light Street would be transferred to Maylands. This would prevent the locality of Dianella from being dispersed as proposed across the four districts of Mirrabooka, Morley, Mount Lawley and Maylands.

We suggest that the boundary continue to run along Walter Road, and then follow Central Avenue as far as the railway line. This would enable the entire populated section of the locality of Inglewood to remain united within its historic district of Maylands. The section of Inglewood between Central Avenue and Eighth Avenue, currently within the Mount Lawley district, would be transferred to Maylands with Central Avenue serving as a consistent major road boundary.

The effect of our objection would enable some 8000 electors currently in the districts of Mount Lawley and Maylands to remain within these districts.

#### SOUTHERN RIVER and GOSNELLS/COOMBS

It is accepted that the district of Southern River will need to move eastward and gain additional electors from the current district of Gosnells. We would however suggest that this could be achieved by partly returning to the 2007 boundary, avoiding the bisection of the locality of Gosnells and the extension of the district of Southern River so far to the east.

We suggest that the section of the locality of Thornlie known as Forest Lakes, lying south of Yale Road and west of Murdoch Road and Forest Lakes Drive, be transferred to the district of Southern River. This would return these electors to the district of Southern River, from which they were removed at the 2013 election.

To maintain the numerical balance of these two districts, only a small section of the locality of Gosnells would need to be included within the district of Southern River. We propose that the section of the locality of Gosnells between the Southern River, Verna Street and Chamberlain Street be transferred from the district of Gosnells to the district of Southern River. This area also formed part of the district of Southern River before 2013.

The boundary between the two districts would run along Murdoch Road, Forest Lakes Drive, Warton Road, the natural boundary line of the Southern River, Chamberlain Street and Verna Street. Apart from a small section, the locality of Gosnells would remain within the district of Gosnells.

#### NORTH METROPOLITAN REGION and EAST METROPOLITAN REGION

The Liberal Party disagrees with the transfer of the district of Girrawheen from the North Metropolitan Region to the East Metropolitan Region, balanced by the transfer of the district of Mount Lawley. Again, we would argue that this constitutes an unnecessary displacement of electors that is not required for numerical balance between the Regions.

Essentially the electors of such localities as Darch, Marangaroo and Girrawheen would consider that they lived in the northern rather than the eastern suburbs of Perth. Broader communities of interest orient this district westward rather than eastward.

Equally the district of Mouth Lawley lies to the east of the City of Perth, with major road communications reaching eastward, and is closely related to the adjacent district of Maylands.

Otherwise the Liberal Party supports the decision of the Commissioners to leave all other districts within the same Regions. In particular we support the retention of the district of Albany within the South West Region.

The Liberal Party requests the Commissioners to give consideration to two comparatively minor adjustments to the proposed boundaries:

- Rather than transfer the Osborne Park commercial and industrial area (which has almost no electors) from the district of Scarborough to the district of Balcatta, we would suggest that the Mitchell Freeway be maintained as a well-established and continuous boundary between these two districts. The Freeway has served as a constant boundary from Loftus Street in West Perth to Ocean Reef Road in Edgewater.
- There are fewer than 100 electors in the easternmost section of the Shire of Esperance that is proposed to be transferred to the district of Kalgoorlie, separating them from their natural population centre. It is appreciated that the Commissioners prefer that the Large District Allowance not be applied to the proposed district of Roe. However we would ask that if possible the populated sections of these localities be transferred to Roe, that is some 20,000 square kilometres below the statutory benchmark figure of 100,000 square kilometres.

## PROPOSED NAMING OF DISTRICTS

The Liberal Party has very strong reservations as to the departure from the established tradition of naming electoral districts after localities. We consider in principle that it is unfortunate to end the established tradition whereby State electorates are named on a geographic basis whereas Federal electorates are predominantly named after individuals. This has provided a useful 'benchmark' in public consciousness. We note that electorates in the Legislative Assemblies of New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland continue to have geographic names despite the need for some of these to be changed in the course of redistributions.

We object in principle to the renaming of seven electoral districts currently named after localities and geographic features that would in fact remain within their proposed new boundaries. This creates the misleading impression that they are "new seats".

Moreover we disagree strongly with the contention "that it would be better to avoid the name of a person who had a strong connection with a political party or a group that is still active". This exclusion casts an unintended slight on those former members who have made deep and selfless contributions to the Western Australian community.

Again, if it is considered that there has been insufficient time to enquire and consult in relation to the names of Aboriginal persons, then it is a sound reason to delay the adoption of this radically new policy for the naming of electoral districts. This policy change was not foreshadowed in the Preliminary Observations published by the Commissioners.

Such a delay within the redistribution cycle would allow for extensive public and parliamentary debate on this question. Indeed it would be highly desirable for this debate to occur over this longer period so that a wide input of views could be sought from members of Parliament, political parties, local governments and all community stakeholders.

Accordingly we would argue that the electoral districts designated as Molloy, Brearley, Murdoch, Erickson, Mann and Salvado should revert to their current names of Warren-Blackwood, Jandakot, Willagee, Girrawheen, West Swan and Swan Hills on the basis that in each case the eponymous geographic features or localities remain within their proposed boundaries. In the case of Molloy, confusion may arise as Molloy Island is a small locality within the proposed electoral district, yet has far less significance than the Warren and Blackwood rivers.

If the Commissioners were to adopt our suggestion for the readjustment of the proposed eastern boundary of the district of Southern River, then the great majority of electors in the locality of Gosnells would remain within the district designated as Coombs, allowing it to retain the name of Gosnells.

The Liberal Party proposes that in those limited instances where current electoral district names are no longer appropriate, the Commissioners should choose a significant locality from within the proposed boundaries as a new name.

The revival of the name of Roe for the proposed Great Southern electoral district is supported. We agree also that Baldivis is an entirely appropriate name for an electoral district based on this major locality.