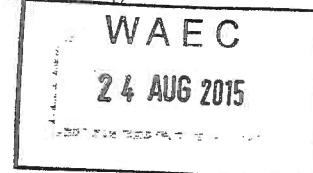


YOUR REF D15/19713  
 OUR REF F15/52  
 ENQUIRIES 08 90 710 621 Matthew Scott  
 DATE 24/08/2015



Electoral Distribution Commissioners  
 Office of the Electoral Distribution Commissioners  
 GPO Box F316  
 Perth WA 6841

**Re: Objection to the Proposed 2015 Electoral Boundary Changes**

Dear Commissioners,

Please regard this submission as the Shire of Esperance's formal opposition to the proposed State Electoral Boundary Changes, as detailed in the Office of the Electoral Distribution Commission (the Commission) report titled "2015 Proposed Boundaries", published on 24 July 2015. In particular, the Shire of Esperance opposes the proposed abolishment of the Electoral District of Eyre.

At a Special Meeting of Council on the 20 August 2015, the Esperance Shire Council resolved the following;

**Resolution S0815-001**

***That Council provide the following submission regarding the proposed Electoral District Changes to the Office of the Electoral Distribution Commissioners:***

***The Shire of Esperance:***

- 1. Believes the predominant land use in northern and eastern parts of the Shire is agriculture, not mining and/or pastoral;***
- 2. Is opposed the abolishment of the Electoral District of Eyre;***
- 3. Is opposed to any reduction of the number of Electoral Districts in the Regions outside the Metropolitan Area.***
- 4. Requests a review of the proposed split of the Shire of Esperance between the Electoral Districts of Kalgoorlie and Wagin (Roe), considering the factors for consideration, as outlined in Section 16I, Electoral Act 1907; and***
- 5. Supports maintaining the current Electoral Boundaries within the Goldfields Esperance Region.***

As a result of the above resolution and after reviewing the following points, the Shire of Esperance requests the Commission reconsider the basis for the proposed boundary changes that will severely impact the Esperance Community.

According to the 2015 Proposed Boundaries Report (the report) the reasons listed for the split of the Shire of Esperance are:

1. The predominant land use in northern and eastern parts of the Shire is mining and (or) pastoral and this allows them to be included in the Kalgoorlie district of the Mining and Pastoral Region; and

2. If the whole of the Shire were to have been included in Roe the geographic area would exceed 100,000 square kilometers and the Commissioners feel it is preferable not to have one only of the four districts in the Agricultural Region with an LDA.

Other than the above statement, there is no evidence included in the published report supporting the notion that the predominant land use of the northern and eastern land use is mining and (or) pastoral. The Shire of Esperance is unaware of any active mining operations within the Shire boundaries. According to the Shire's recently adopted Annual Budget, there are only 83 ratable Mining properties, compared to 1,208 ratable rural properties within the Shire. As previously stated there are no active mining operations, with the registered mining properties being predominantly exploration tenements, and are spread across the entire Shire (not just in the northern and eastern portions of the Shire). The Port of Esperance (located in the town of Esperance) is the major port of export for mining product for the Goldfields Esperance Region, however according to the report; this portion of the Shire will be included in the Agricultural District of Roe. Furthermore, the Shire would like to point out the significant nickel mining operations in the Shire of Ravensthorpe. The Shire notes this district will still be contained within the "Agricultural" district of Roe, despite mining contributing significantly more economic value than the Ravensthorpe agriculture sector. The Shire believes there is no justification to conclude that the northern and eastern portions of the Shire are mining related.

Likewise with mining activity, the Shire also disagrees with the assumption that there is a significant pastoral industry within the Shire. Most of the northern and eastern portion of the Shire is actually unallocated crown land and national park reserves. The remaining land use is rural pursuits, with a mix of animal and grain farming being the major rural activities. These properties are operated in the same manner as their western agricultural counterparts, and there is no evidence to suggest traditional pastoral practices are being undertaken, particularly like pastoral stations within the Central or Northern Goldfields, where the majority of pastoral properties are allowed to revert back to natural vegetation. Once again the Shire completely disagrees with the notion that there is a predominant pastoral activity that links this area to the Kalgoorlie Electoral District.

With regards to Point 2 of the Commission's reasoning, the Shire believes it is completely inappropriate to split the Shire into two Electoral Districts for the convenience of not creating a "Large District Allowance" (LDA) in the Agricultural Region. There is only one community of interest within the Shire of Esperance. The Electoral Act provides the ability of the Shire to be in one Electoral District. If this therefore initiates a LDA in the District of Roe, then this is only a statutory consequence of the creation of District of Roe. Surely there needs to be better reason to split a community than purely convenience. The Shire notes that "convenience" or not creating a LDA is not a factor to be considered under Section 16I of the Electoral Act 1907, which the commission is legally and statutory required to consider in amending Electoral Boundaries.

After reading the Commission's report, the factors required under Section 16I of the Electoral Act 1907 do not seem to be considered. The Shire of Esperance would like the Commission to consider the following;

1. The Shire of Esperance has only one community of Interest (Section 16I(a))
2. There is the same predominant land use (Agriculture) within the Shire of Esperance (Section 16I(b))
3. There are the same means of communication and means of travel and distance from Perth, for the majority of population within the Shire of Esperance (Section 16I(c))

4. They are generally the same physical features within the Shire of Esperance, especially West to East (Section 161(d))
5. The entire Shire of Esperance is currently within an existing Electoral boundary (Eyre) and Regional boundary (GEDC) (Section 161(e))
6. The Esperance Community is contained within the Shire of Esperance Local Government boundary (Section 161(f)); and
7. There are no significant demographic differences throughout the Shire of Esperance, especially West to East (Section 161(g)).

These points can be easily confirmed with reference to the Australian Bureau of Statistics and the Goldfields Esperance Development Commission.

Based on the above points, the Commission has not justified the split of our community with regards to the factors set out in Section 161 of the Electoral Act 1907. The Shire therefore requests the Commission to demonstrate what statutory factors have been considered in its determination to split the Shire into two different Electoral Districts.

Based on little or no justification for this proposed split, the Shire also believes it does not share a community of interest with the majority of District of Roe (Wagin). The Shire of Esperance has a long history and relationship with the Goldfields. From a Local Government perspective the Shire is a member of the Goldfields Volunteer Regional Organisation of Councils (GVROC) and is part of the Goldfields Esperance Development Commission (GEDC) from a State Regional perspective. We strongly believe the current District of Eyre better represents our community of Interest, which includes communities such as Ravensthorpe, Esperance, Norseman, Coolgardie, and Boulder. If the District of Eyre is abolished, there are grave concerns that our community's representation in State Government will be significantly diminished and diluted, despite our region providing a significant proportion of the States natural and economic wealth. The Shire strongly encourages the Commission to reconsider the proposed boundary changes and maintain the current District of Eyre.

I trust the Commission will consider the points raised within our submission, and I respectfully request the Commission visit the communities within the District of Eyre before finalising the proposal for its abolishment. The Shire firmly believes that decisions of this magnitude should not be undertaken without first meeting and discussing the proposed boundary changes with the communities most affected.

Should the Commission have any further queries regarding the Shire's submission, please feel free to contact myself directly on (08) 9071 0621.

Yours faithfully,



Matthew Scott  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

