

382 OB

From: Electoral Boundaries Review Mailbox
Sent: Friday, 25 August 2023 1:20 PM
To:
Subject: 382 OB
Attachments: Objection to Electoral Boundary review.pdf; 20230804 Special Meeting Minutes.pdf

From: Tralee Cable <ceo@mtmagnet.wa.gov.au>
Sent: Friday, 18 August 2023 11:38 AM
To: Electoral Boundaries Review Mailbox <boundaries@waec.wa.gov.au>
Subject: Objection to Electoral Boundary Review

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Good morning,

I attach an objection to the Western Australian Electoral Boundary Review outcomes.

Kind Regards

Tralee Cable
Chief Executive Officer
T: (08) 9963 3001
M:
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Acknowledgement of Country: The Western Australian Electoral Commission acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the lands on which our electoral activities take place. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

W.A.E.C. RECORDS	
FILE No. _____	
DATE: 18 AUG 2023	
ACTION BY: _____	



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Please direct all mail to Chief Executive Officer

Friday, 18 August 2023

The Electoral Distribution Commissioners

WA Electoral Commission
GPO Box F316
PERTH WA 6841

Re: 2023 Proposed Electoral Boundaries

I write on behalf of, and with the full support of the Councillors of the Shire of Mount Magnet who wish to lodge their objection to the proposed electoral boundaries. The Commissioners Statement has been reviewed by Councillors, and as per the attached Agenda item from the Special Meeting of Council on 4th August, I have been authorised to submit the objection as attached.

It is timely and ironic the State Government this week identified the need to create a Western Australian Hub in Canberra to lobby for Western Australia, when there are elected members from Western Australia already sitting in Parliament to represent this state. There are direct parallels with the change in representation of Murchison communities as a result of the recent electoral boundary reforms. These communities to the center of Western Australia are further marginalized by this review and their inclusion with the electorate of Moore.

The new electorate boundaries place Mount Magnet and surrounding localities within an electorate that does not in any other way reflect the factors that define our locality, including

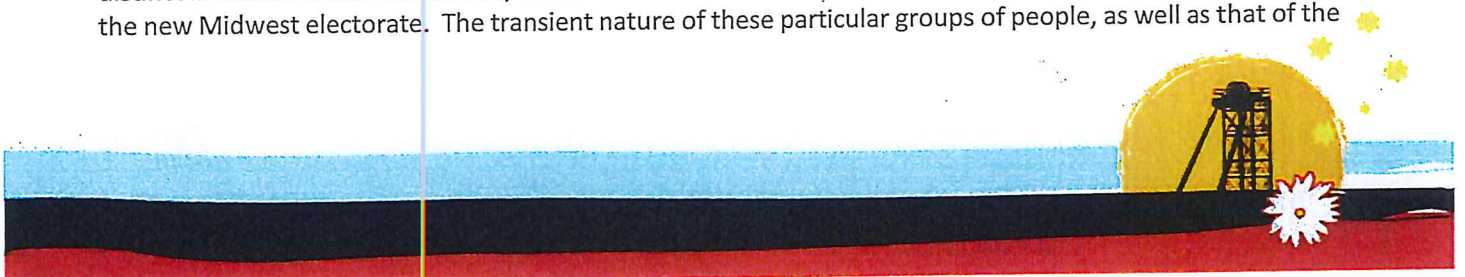
- Community Interest,
- Land Use pattern
- Means of communication, travel or distance from the capital
- Physical features
- Existing boundaries of district or local government or
- Trend of demographic changes

Which are all the factors that were to be considered when determining the boundaries.

The Murchison instead, shares all of these factors with other communities within Central Western Australia, particularly those of the Northern and Eastern Goldfields and the South East Pilbara, and these features are unique to these regions.

It seems ludicrous to not place these very unique locations which demonstrate such strength and solidarity of defining factors into a single electorate to provide strength of representation.

Regions of the Murchison, with Aboriginal populations currently represented in ABS statistics in the vicinity of 8-30% (while also acknowledging the count is not complete when it comes to Aboriginal people), are quite distinct in characteristic and entirely different to communities and towns that make up the southern parts of the new Midwest electorate. The transient nature of these particular groups of people, as well as that of the





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gold mining communities, sees residents traverse between the communities of Murchison, East Gascoyne, Northern Goldfields and Southern Pilbara.

The remoteness of location, climate, challenges of communication and distance and even the physical features bear no resemblance with the locations of Joondalup, Swan or Wanneroo which also appear to also be located in the new electorate. These high density metrocentric locations are in fact about as opposite to the communities that make up the Murchison as if they were an entirely different country.

The specific demographic of the Coastal communities that make up Jurien Bay, Cervantes, and the adjoining communities of Perenjori, Carnamah, Coorow do not experience the harsh reality of remote living and extremes of distance that dramatically impact on staff recruitment and retention, school attendance, violent and antisocial behaviours that are normalized in the communities further to the North East.

The towns and communities of Wiluna, Leonora, Laverton, Newman, Menzies, Sandstone Meekatharra, Yalgoo, Upper Gascoyne, Ngaanyatjarra do all experience the unique challenges that occur with distance from Ocean or Metropolitan living and include poor to no health service access, a continuation of retraction of government services, vast distances between very small communities, freight challenges, heavy haulage impacts including those on the towns themselves, and the expansive road networks between.

Many of these factors are highlighted by the shared IRSAD quintile score on the SEIFA Index issued by the Australian Bureau of Statistics 2021 of 1, being most disadvantaged, by all of the areas previously recommended in this objection as being distinct and unique, requiring specific representation – The Local Government Areas of Carnarvon, Cue, Laverton, Meekatharra, Menzies, Mount Magnet, Murchison, Ngaanyatjarraku, Upper Gascoyne, Wiluna and Yalgoo represent 11 of the 23 LGAs in the 1st and 2nd Decile of LGA Index of Relative SocioEconomic Disadvantage for Western Australia issued by Australian Bureau of Statistics 2021, which demonstrates their commonality of disadvantage and experience.

These remote communities battle the lack of sewerage infrastructure combined with the compliance requirements of State zoning and planning legislations that are designed for towns with reticulated sewerage, meaning that rebuilding within these communities is impossible, leaving residents to reside in asbestos homes or transportable buildings. Worse, many continue to live in century old corrugated iron shacks – a state of affairs that would be unconscionable in places such as Jurien Bay, Cervantes, Shire of Wanneroo.

Community outrage at regional bank closures within these farming communities has recently resulted in an enquiry – Goldfields and Murchison communities have existed without these facilities for decades, and when we were calling for change there was no representation to support us.

Land uses in the towns of Carnamah, Coorow, Three Springs, Dalwallinu, Badgingarra and surrounding towns rely heavily on cropping and farming – this is not alike at all to the sporadic pastoral use of land in the regions of the Murchison and Northern Goldfields areas. The ebbs and flows of economic boom and bust in the cropping and farming regions is very different to that of the remote Mining communities in the Murchison.

School attendance in communities to the coast, farming towns and Metropolitan areas is very different to the sub 25% that is experienced in the Central WA communities. The children of these forgotten communities fall further and further behind their cohorts in more affluent, well located communities. Teaching staff are unobtainable.





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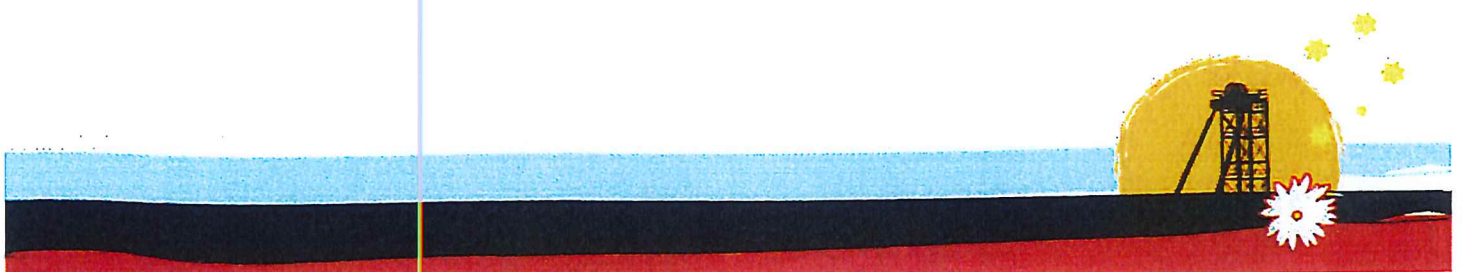
The challenges associated with developing an harmonious community are the extreme polar opposite to each other when comparing Jurien Bay and Wanneroo to Mount Magnet and Wiluna, and are exacerbated in the more remote communities by heavy haulage from mining companies that pass through the main business and shopping precincts of these towns – often in the vicinity of 15 – 20 quad road trains, for a prolonged 24 hour, 7 day per week time frame. The consequence of this pervasive and intrusive noise on the residents of these communities is often played out in extreme antisocial behaviors. There is no support for our communities in regard to this invasive plague – every bit as devastating for our communities as locust or mice plagues are to farming communities.

A single representative for these communities may end up being one of 37 voices that make up Parliament, but to disperse them between the other electorates will ensure they are lost in the clamour of the higher density, closer to Metro locations where a representative can easily meet with many members of their electorate in a single meeting. The proposed new seat of Midwest is made up of an extreme ratio that sees 70 of the states 137 Local Governments in a single electorate.

The community of the Shire of Mount Magnet implore the Commissioners to reconsider their decision and dig a bit deeper to develop an electorate that is sorely needed by the residents of the harsh Murchison, Eastern Gascoyne, Northern Goldfields and Southern Pilbara regions – We are desperate to be represented at the decision making table by passionate and knowledgeable representatives who understand, and can speak to our very unique situation.

Yours faithfully,

Tralee Cable
Chief Executive Officer





SHIRE OF
MOUNT MAGNET

MINUTES

Special Meeting

Council Chambers

*90 Hepburn St, Mount Magnet
Friday 4th August 2023 at 11am*



11.2 RESPONSE TO BOUNDARY CHANGE AND WIDER RURAL REPRESENTATION

File:	
Officer:	T Cable, Chief Executive Officer
Date of Report:	03 August 2023
Amended By:	No Amendments
Disclosure of Interest:	No Disclosures
Nature of Interest:	
Meeting Date:	04 August 2023
Attachments:	Electoral Distribution Commissioners Statement (under separate cover) Proposed response by Shire of Yalgoo

Matter for Consideration

Council Support for a submission into the proposed electoral boundary changes by the Office of Electoral Distribution Commissioners

Background

Reform of the Constitutional and Electoral Legislation Amendment (Electoral Equality) Act 2021 has seen the entire of Western Australia considered a single electorate for the purpose of electing 37 members to serve in the Legislative Council at the 2025 State general election. This has altered the structure within which boundaries are determined for the election of members of the Legislative Council.

These reforms also abolish the requirement to maintain a distinction between metropolitan regions and non-metropolitan regions when determining boundaries.

The Act requires an Average District Enrolment (ADE) to be calculated by dividing the number of electors on the roll by the number of districts. The number of electors must be within 10% of the ADE. There is an exception for districts which exceed 100,000 square kilometres in geographical area. These districts receive a Large District Allowance (LDA) which is calculated at 1.5% of the number of square kilometres in the district.

The LDA is added to the number of actual electors enrolled in the district to arrive at a nominal enrolment figure. In districts that have a LDA, the Commissioners must set boundaries so that the notional enrolment figure is within minus 20 per cent and plus 10 per cent of the ADE. For the 2023 Distribution, the notional enrolment figure for districts that received a LDA must therefore be no less than 24,346 and no more than 33,475.

As of 13 March 2023 there was a total LDA of 36,129 spread across the following six existing electoral districts

District	Electors	LDA	Total (electors plus LDA)
Central Wheatbelt	26,652	1,532	28,184
Kalgoorlie	20,268	8,332	28,600
Kimberley	16,514	8,032	24,546
North West Central	11,021	12,275	23,296
Pilbara	23,716	4,383	28,099
Roe	25,387	1,575	26,962

It should be noted that the Act is explicit in its requirements and does not provide the Commissioners with any discretion to depart from the methodology outlined above. Only Parliament could make such changes.

As a result the Commissioners decided to merge parts of the North West Central electorate with that of Moore in the northern outskirts of Perth.

There is significant concern that this will result in decreased representation for communities in the North West Central electorate. Objections to the boundary changes may be made prior to 21 August, 2023.

Comment

Factors the Commissioners were required to take into account when determining boundaries include

- Community Interest
- Land Use Patterns
- Means of communication, means of travel and distance from capital
- Physical features
- Existing boundaries of districts
- Existing local government boundaries and
- The trend of demographic changes

Any objection to the proposed boundaries must be framed within these points of reference.

Later in the Statement attached, the Commissioners during their considerations over which electorate boundaries were to be ceded and merged, decided

“The districts of Kalgoorlie, Kimberley and Pilbara, the unique character of each district and the compounding effect the LDA would have if significant parts were ceded to neighbouring districts meant that they were not suitable options for combination or elimination”.

From within the Murchison it could be easily argued that the unique character of the Kimberley, Pilbara and Kalgoorlie electorates have much more in common with the Murchison than does parts of Moore. The reliance on Mining and Pastoralism, the remoteness, distance from the coast and climate, the demographic with such high proportions of Aboriginal people should be considered to be aligned. Populations between these electorates and the North West Central are often shared and transient with both Mining Operations and Aboriginal populations moving between the four. Land Use patterns share significantly closer alignment between the four electorates than with Moore, or even Geraldton.

Other considerations that appear to be obvious include the ability to effectively represent such a vast and diverse region could be best managed from within that region rather than closer to the city.

Any response to the proposed changes should mention the cost of servicing a region of this size with lack of access to air transport and long distances to drive meaning inefficient use of sitting member time.

Council support and input into a response is sought at this meeting

Consultation

Jorgen Jensen, President
Mem Beard, National Party

Statutory Implications

Constitutional and Electoral Legislation Amendment (Electoral Equality) Act 2021

Policy Implications

There are no policies that relate

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications to this matter

Strategic Implications

5.2 Election Process

5.1 Local Leadership

Voting Requirements

Simple Majority

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

Moved: Cr I Black

Seconded: Cr. C Kelly

That Council support an objection to the proposed boundaries and instruct the CEO to draft a response for endorsement by Councillors by email prior to submitting before 21st August, 2023

RESOLUTION 2023-149

CARRIED 5/0

For
Cr J Jensen
Cr I Black
Cr C Kelly
Cr J McGorman
Cr M Ford