

525 OB

From: Electoral Boundaries Review Mailbox
Sent: Friday, 25 August 2023 3:05 PM
To:
Subject: 525 OB
Attachments: Objection to Proposed Electoral Boundary Changes.pdf

From: Dale Chapman
Sent: Monday, 21 August 2023 4:01 PM
To: Electoral Boundaries Review Mailbox <boundaries@waec.wa.gov.au>
Cc: oay.wa.gov.au>
Subject: RE: Proposed Changes to Western Australian Electoral Boundaries

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Good Afternoon,

Please see attached the Shire of Shark Bays objection to the proposed changes to the Western Australian Electoral Boundaries, namely the Commissioners' proposal to combine the districts of North West Central and Moore thereby reducing the number of non-metropolitan districts by one (1).

Should you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact me.

Regards


Dale Chapman
Chief Executive Officer | Shire of Shark Bay

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Shire Website: <http://www.sharkbay.wa.gov.au/>

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DATE:	21 AUG 2023
ACTION BY:	_____

*I would like to acknowledge the Malgana Peoples as the traditional custodians of the land and sea in and around the Shire of Shark Bay.
I pay my respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.*



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From: Electoral Boundaries Review Mailbox <boundaries@waec.wa.gov.au>
Sent: Friday, July 21, 2023 10:43 AM
To: Electoral Boundaries Review Mailbox <boundaries@waec.wa.gov.au>
Subject: Proposed Changes to Western Australian Electoral Boundaries

Good morning

The proposed boundaries for the next State general election have been released for public comment. Please see the attached notice. Objections to the proposed boundaries may be submitted until 5.00 pm 21 August 2023.

All relevant information is available at www.boundaries.wa.gov.au.

Kind regards

Boundaries WA Team
Western Australian Electoral Distribution Commission

Level 2, 111 St Georges Terrace, Perth WA 6000
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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.

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Objection
Proposed Boundaries
for the 2025 State General
Election

August 2023



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Overview

The Shire of Shark Bay and its community object to the proposal to abolish the North West Central district and combine it with the district of Moore into a single district to be known as Mid West.

Basis of Objection

Diminished political representation for the Gascoyne

The Shire of Shark Bay as part of the Gascoyne, recognises the importance of political representation. With demographic and other forces pulling people and resources away from some regions towards the metropolitan area, political representation becomes increasingly important.

The Commissioners' proposal to combine the districts of North West Central and Moore and reduce the number of non-metropolitan districts by one (1), will significantly reduce the political representation of communities in the North West Central district and regional communities generally. This reduction in representation is compounded by the 2021 change to the Legislative Council regions to create a whole of state electorate.

The perspective of ours and many regional communities is that, without sufficient political representation, their concerns will be "out of sight, out of mind", swamped by the sheer weight of voters in metropolitan Perth and large regional centres. Regional and remote communities need effective representation to ensure that the unique needs and challenges of people living in those communities, outside the metropolitan area are adequately listened to and addressed at a State level.

Increased pressure on regional and remote Local Governments

As political representation of regional and remote communities at the State level is diminished, the political representation provided by Local Governments will become even more important. This additional responsibility will be challenging for many small regional and remote Local Governments such as Shark Bay, already stretched beyond their current capacity and resourcing.

The service provision expectations and requirements of Local Governments have increased considerably, rarely with commensurate increases in funding and resourcing. This has led to Local Governments, particularly in regional and remote parts of Western Australia, providing services previously the responsibility of other spheres of government. Contemporary examples include the provision of primary health care; aged care; housing; and economic



development. Diminished political representation, requiring Local Government to fill another gap, will further stretch capacity and resources.

The contributions and future growth of non-metropolitan regions

In considering political representation it is important to acknowledge the economic contribution of non-metropolitan districts to the wealth and standard of living in Western Australia.

Regional Western Australia makes a significant contribution to the WA economy. As of July 2023, the regions accounted for 35 percent of Gross State Product. Regional WA is also a significant employer, with more than 300,000 jobs located in regional WA – around 25% of the state's total workforce.

Current enrolment figures do not factor in the potential future growth expected in the North West Central region, new projects in areas such as Green Hydrogen, Rare Earth and numerous other resource projects, in addition to expected growth in the Tourism and Hospitality sectors.

Resourcing of electorate offices in the regions

Even before the proposed reduction of non-metropolitan Legislative Assembly districts, there was a need for additional resourcing in the regions to improve the capacity of State representatives to service their electorate. This is particularly true for those electorates that cover a large geographical area such as the Gascoyne. Any reduction in overall regional representation will only exacerbate this problem.

Resourcing for electorate offices in the regions needs to be significantly increased to improve the capacity of representatives to engage with communities within their electorate. The ability for a State Member to effectively represent the interests of their electorate is reliant upon their ability to effectively communicate with and hear from their constituents. An increase in resources, including staff, is needed for electorate offices in non-metropolitan districts, particularly those covering vast distances.

Conclusion

The Shire of Shark Bay acknowledges the challenges and limited scope inherent to the Commissioners' task to propose electoral boundary changes. Nevertheless, as a regional and remote Local Government in the Gascoyne representing community, we need and support strong and effective political representation to ensure that our community and our region is supported to continue to pursue opportunities that benefit us all.

Any further reduction in political representation at the State level will necessarily lead to an expectation that regional Local Governments will expand to fill this gap, a role that will stretch Local Governments beyond their already stretched capacity and resources.

Representation for non-metropolitan districts (especially those covering large geographical areas) also needs bolstering by increased resources for electorate offices.



The Shire of Shark Bays objection to the proposed boundaries is on the basis that the loss of the North West Central district will:

1. Further diminish political representation for ours and other Gascoyne communities;
2. Increase pressure on regional Local Governments; and
3. Fail to recognise the contribution of the North West Central district to the WA economy.

The Shire of Shark Bay and its community support increased resourcing for electorate offices in non-metropolitan districts, particularly those that cover a large geographical area, to ensure effective political representation at the State level.