



The Redistribution Committee

The Commissioners,

I wish to lodge a submission for the redistribution of the Western Australian state electoral boundaries.

My submission will largely in a narrative form as whilst some districts clearly require adjustments a great number do not, or only very minor ones.

My submission is brief as on comparing enrolments I was surprised how close to quota many districts were and those which were not, could be comparatively easily accommodated. I do imagine that any district needs to be abolished or a new one created in any part of the state.

I have addressed the state in terms of country and Perth as regions. The states requirement to construct Legislative Council Provinces in regions and provide notional electors for large districts is helpful in shaping more regionally focused districts, which would be more difficult to achieve without notional electors.

Country Western Australia

Geraldton currently has 25,874 electors and whilst somewhat below quota, is within tolerance. Whilst it does not include 348 electors currently in Moore, it could be left as is, and given that movements out of Moore will flow onto other districts, it might be left as is. With Moore, I do not feel that there is sufficient case to place rural Shires such as Chapman valley or Northampton in North West Central in the Mining and Pastoral Region.

Albany contains all the City of Albany and is sufficiently close to quota to not require any changes. Similarly, Bunbury could be left unchanged as it sufficiently close to quota.

Kimberley, Pilbara, North West Central – only Pilbara is over quota and any change to Kimberly will reduce the enrolment of Pilbara and/or its land area. The total shortfall of electors in the Mining and Pastoral Region is 10,594. Notional electors and use of tolerance might enable reasonably self-contained changes between Pilbara to Kimberly (the eastern part of Pilbara which is sparsely populated) and the transfer at least of Shires such as Laverton and Leonora to North West Central from Kalgoorlie which adds electors and notional electors.

The alternative of not utilising the lower tolerances is the inclusion of entire adjacent local government areas such as Esperance with over 9,000 electors and this exacerbate the shortfalls in Roe. The retention of Roe in turn would require significant changes to adjoining districts.

All the districts of South West Region are over quota (except Albany) and could accommodate supplementing Roe, Geraldton and Moore. The excess of electors in most pronounced in the City of Mandurah which comprises Mandurah and Dawesville and is some 4,000 electors over quota. Given their rapid growth they probably should be placed below quota to allow for future growth.

Roe if it lost Esperance to the Mining and Pastoral Region could easily absorb the Shire of Collie, which is a discrete local government entity which is well connected to other areas within Roe (and which might justify a district name change) and in turn the remainder of Collie-Preston could absorb electors from Murray-Wellington to the north and Vasse and Warren-Blackwood to the south.

Given these factors I consider the maintenance of the existing 16 districts outside of Perth is viable and would avoid even more significant changes to boundaries than involved restoring imbalances noted above.

Perth

As is often the case with urban development the greatest growth of electors is occurring on the periphery of greater urban area of Perth. The colour coded map of the committee shows clearly that Butler, Burns Beach, West Swan, Swan Hills, Midland, Darling Range, Jandakot, Baldivis and Perth are in excess of 10% over quota.

Notably Fremantle is well over quota, but immediately adjacent to Willagee which is over 9% below quota. Whilst Warnbro is well over quota, apart from Willagee, Kwinana and Rockingham are under quota. A regionally relatively self-contained series of adjustments would equalise enrolments without significant adjustments further afield. I noted that some odd portions of local government areas of Rockingham and Kwinana are in Darling Range. Acknowledging the use of the Freeway as a boundary creates these odd enclaves attached to Darling Range. If numbers permit it should be that the local government links might be more important than the geographical barrier of the Freeway.

Bicton, Bateman and Riverton are all adjoining and under quota whilst over quota Jandakot in close by. The districts closer to the CBD should be placed above quota given the modest population growth they are experiencing and the large and growing disparities with some outer suburban districts.

Whilst Darling Range is over quota, nearby districts are under quota such as Forrestfield, Kalamunda, Cannington. Similarly, over quota Midland is immediately adjacent to under quota Bassendean. As well over quota Swan Hills, and West Swan are adjacent to Morley which is under quota. West Swan acquired this peculiar western projection into the City of Wanneroo and losing this would enable Girrawheen to move further north and enable West Swan to move to the east towards the Swan Valley.

In the northern suburbs Butler and Burns Beach will need to be significantly modified, but Kingsley to their south is significantly under quota. Further south Cottesloe and Churchlands are under quota, but Perth needs to shed electors and Nedlands is only just above quota. Some minor changes amongst these districts again will serve to equalise numbers.

Summary

Making changes along the lines described above will have the effect of equalising district enrolments and those of Legislative Council Regions in at least the Metropolitan ones.

I wish the Commissioners well in their deliberations.

Martin Gordon

25 April 2019