

Setting the final boundaries

Considering the objections

Under the statutory timetable, members of the public had until 24 August 2015 to lodge objections to the proposals. By that date 237 written objections or comments

had been received. Another 11 objections were received after the due date. The objections can be categorised as follows:

Table 1: Categories of Objections to 2015 proposed electoral boundaries

Objectors	Number
Local government authorities (including 7 late objections)	21 (country) 4 (metro)
Community/business groups (including 1 late objection)	7 (country) 3 (metro)
Political parties	4
Individual Members of Parliament or Party Branches	8 (country) 5 (metro)
Individuals – Esperance and (or) Eyre	142
Individuals – other (including 3 late objections)	52
Petition with 523 signatures – loss of a country seat	1
Petition with 113 signatures – Hazelmere	1
Total	248

The Commissioners are grateful to the large number of people who took the time to raise matters of concern to them and there was much useful material in the objections. The Commissioners have given careful consideration to the matters raised in each of the objections and comments. As indicated earlier, the Commissioners have been able to accommodate some, but not all, of the objections.

As they did at the proposals stage, in considering the objections and deciding on final boundaries, the Commissioners were required to weigh up a range of relevant factors set out in section 16I.

The task of weighing up competing factors is not easy. Some factors can apply in different ways depending upon the particular circumstances. It is important to note also that, even though the influence of one or other of the criteria set down

in section 16I may seem obvious, the overriding consideration must always be compliance with the legislative prescription of the permitted tolerance range from the average district enrolment: see section 16G.

In a report of this nature it is not possible to describe how the competing factors were weighed and considered in relation to each and every decision made in relation to all 59 districts and six regions. Sometimes, the consideration of a particular factor is acknowledged but it cannot be accommodated because the numbers simply will not allow it. This difficulty becomes apparent when, for example, two or more localities have similar community of interest arguments but not all of them can be accommodated due to the necessity to keep a district within the permitted tolerance range. Nor is it possible to deal with each and every point raised in objections. The fact that some objections and some matters contained in objections are not expressly referred to in this report does not mean they have been overlooked or ignored.

The reader can assume that, unless there is an express statement to the contrary in this report, a change to district boundaries outlined in the 2015 Proposals Report will be included in the final boundaries.

It is convenient to deal first with the proposals to change the naming protocol for districts and then work through the objections on a region by region basis as this will enable the reader to follow the process through from the proposals to the final boundaries.

Naming of electoral districts

There was very little support for the proposal to alter the naming of electoral districts at this time so that they would be named after prominent people or historical events rather than locality names. Most objectors thought the change was premature and ought not to be implemented without wide ranging consultations.

To say, as some objectors did, that as the naming regime was not raised in the Preliminary Observations paper it should not have been included in the proposals, is to misunderstand the nature and purpose of the paper. More like a guide than a code, the paper raises some of the issues that the Commissioners thought could merit attention in submissions. Nonetheless, the Commissioners were persuaded that the subject would benefit from further consideration and public debate, and have decided to defer the proposed naming protocol to a later division. In response to a request from the Commissioners, the Western Australian Electoral Commission has agreed to undertake a research project on this issue so that the Commissioners can consider it again at the next division, due in 2019.

It follows that the proposal to rename certain districts after prominent persons will not be implemented in the 2015 division. There is one exception to that statement. The district of Wagin will be renamed Roe. John Septimus Roe was an early colonial settler and the Surveyor General of the colony. The decision to adopt that name can also be explained

by the fact that the reconfigured district of Wagin includes much (although not all) of the land area situated in a district that existed under the name 'Roe' from at least 1950 until the 2007 division. While there were objections to the reconfiguration of Wagin, no objectors cavilled with the use of 'Roe' to identify the district.

In the 2015 Proposals Report the Commissioners suggested the district presently known as Collie-Preston be renamed Collie-Capel. However, as will be explained shortly, the Commissioners

have decided to relocate the Shire of Donnybrook-Balingup from the district of Warren-Blackwood to Collie-Preston (where it was prior to the 2011 division). As the Shire of Donnybrook-Balingup includes the area known as Preston Valley, there was no need to change the name of this district.

Finally in relation to names, it was still necessary to name the new district and to rename some other districts as set out in the following table.

Table 2: Current districts renamed in the 2015 division with reasons

Current name	New name	Reason for change
Not applicable	Baldivis	New district
Alfred Cove	Bicton	Most of the locality of Alfred Cove is no longer in the district and Bicton is a central locality
Gosnells	Thornlie	Most of the locality of Gosnells is no longer in the district and Thornlie is a central locality. Thornlie was previously used as the name for a district in this general area
Ocean Reef	Burns Beach	The locality of Ocean Reef is no longer in the district and Burns Beach is a central locality