



Goldfields Voluntary Regional Organisation Of Councils
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Our ref: GVROC 050815

Electoral Boundaries WA
GPO Box F316
PERTH WA 6841

Dear Sir/Madam

2015 REDISTRIBUTION OF WESTERN AUSTRALIAN ELECTORAL DISTRICTS AND REGIONS

This submission is made on behalf of the 10 local governments within the Goldfields Voluntary Regional Organisation of Councils (GVROC). GVROC's membership comprises the:

- Shire of Coolgardie;
- Shire of Dundas;
- Shire of Esperance;
- City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder;
- Shire of Laverton;
- Shire of Leonora;
- Shire of Menzies;
- Shire of Ngaanyatjaraku;
- Shire of Ravensthorpe; and
- Shire of Wiluna.

GVROC is appreciative of the opportunity to provide comment to the Commissioners as they review the State's electoral region and district boundaries.

In preparing its submission GVROC has taken into account the views expressed in other submissions prepared for this current review of electoral boundaries. As such it is cognisant of the views expressed by local governments from the Perth metropolitan area. For those experiencing rapid population growth the call for change is strong.

GVROC recognises that significant population growth across the Perth metropolitan area is the driver for electoral boundary reform, with the redistribution suggested being to increase the number of districts in the metropolitan region by one and remove a district from regional Western Australia. This proposal changes the regional boundaries quite considerably. For those living in regional, rural and remote parts of the State this is an undesirable outcome. Councils within GVROC do not wish to see their electoral representation further eroded.



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GVROC supports the principles and views contained within the submissions¹ prepared by the Nationals WA. GVROC agrees with the view that there is no justification to reduce the number of country districts at this distribution.

The loss of the seat of Eyre and the subsequent transfer of the Shire of Ravensthorpe and part of the Shire of Esperance into the current seat of Wagin does not seem logical, from a community of interest viewpoint, when the majority of services for both these communities are sourced from the Goldfields.

Given the strong link these communities have to the Goldfields, there seems to have been no account taken of the community of interest these communities have with the Goldfields. To GVROC's Member Councils it would appear the decision has been taken solely on the number of electors.

Also based on community of interest GVROC would request that the Shires of Laverton, Leonora and Ngaanyatjarraku -in their entirety remain within the seat of Kalgoorlie.

Given the population growth within the Perth metropolitan area is set to continue the further erosion of electoral representation in non-metropolitan parts of the State will also continue. This will be detrimental to the representation and engagement each regional elector receives in the Parliamentary process if these electorates are to expand or change significantly.

Currently the Act places the highest priority upon elector numbers in any review process, enrolments in a district cannot be outside the upper or lower permissible limits specified in s 16G(2) and (3) of the Act.

Section 16I of the Act specifies a number of other matters to which the Commissioners must give due consideration in dividing the State into regions and districts, namely community of interest;

- land use patterns;
- means of communication, means of travel and distance from the capital;
- physical features;
- existing boundaries of regions and districts;
- existing local government boundaries; and
- the trend of demographic changes.

¹ www.boundaries.wa.gov.au/have-your-say/2015-submissions Accessed 24 August 2015



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GVROC is of the view that that the above should be treated as being equally important if adequate regional representation is to be achieved. Inadequate recognition of any, or all, of these factors will on current evidence see further reduction in the number of country districts. In addition to loss of representation these changes could disconnect existing communities of interest and could make the means of travel more difficult for elected members of larger electorates and residents seeking assistance from their elected representatives.

For GVROC there would appear to be only one solution to this problem and that is to amend the Act (and any subsidiary legislation) so that when further reviews are carried out, new seats are added to the metropolitan area without detriment to electoral representation within regional areas of the State. As such GVROC requests that a review of all electoral legislation form part of the recommendations around the final findings for this current review of the State's electoral region and district boundaries. And whilst any review will have no impact on the 2017 elections changes to electoral legislation could be in place in time for future State elections.

Should you have any questions or require additional information regarding GVROC's submission please contact the undersigned.

Yours faithfully

Helen Westcott
Executive Officer

24 August 2015