

Ian Bunker

Geraldton WA
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Office of
ELECTORAL DISTRIBUTION COMMISSIONERS
Level2, 111 St. Georges Terrace
Perth W.A
email: boundaries@waec.wa.gov.au

Re: Objection to proposed boundaries-The Electoral Boundary Review (WAEC, 15 May, 2023) – Electoral District of Geraldton

I am writing regarding concerns with the new boundary adjustments for the Electoral District of Geraldton released in the WAEC Electoral Boundary Review on 21 July, 2023.

I understand that with the rapid growth of new suburban areas in Perth and the limiting of the number of Electoral Districts and voter numbers that the new district of Oakford was introduced and that therefore many boundary changes have had to be made in other electorates along with the amalgamation of the current Moore and North West Central to maintain as fair a balance as possible for all electorates.

With the Boundaries for the newly proposed Midwest Electorate adjustments the current Moore Electorate that surrounds Geraldton has seen the actual physical size of the Geraldton Electorate jump a massive 473% from 4229 km² to 15,508 km² all for a growth of only 8.1% in population. This will change the physical features of the mainly urban Geraldton City with semi-rural surrounds into a vast area encompassing large scale farming and grazing and sandplain hinterland over a very lightly populated area. This makes communication and physical contact with remote electors far more challenging. No explanation for this significant geographic increase is provided in the review.

I do acknowledge that instead of the dissected current LGA boundaries the inclusion now of the complete City of Greater Geraldton and the Shire of Chapman Valley are plausible with the satellite communities within the Shire of Chapman Valley very much a part of the City of Greater Geraldton for all facilities and a growing area for semi-rural lifestyle properties, a much better outcome for the communities.

Another proposed change not explained in the boundary changes is to the LGA area of the Shire of Northampton. This LGA is currently fully covered by the Electorate of Moore but is looking to be bifurcated to be part Geraldton and part new Mid-West Electorate. The number of voters involved with half the Northampton Shire would be negligible and it is hard to see any justification for this boundary change which does not seem to be of Community Interest in any way.

As far as land use patterns go the Geraldton Electorate (already slowly building in population) is looking forward to current ongoing infrastucure development/upgrades to the Regional Health Campus and the Mid-West Ports precinct. There is also future planning for the Oakajee Industrial/Port facility and the Arrowsmith Hydrogen project. These major developments and the accompanying support industries that they will attract should insure long term future growth for the Geraldton Electorate.

So I have seen no explanatoy justification for the major boundary realignments in the 2023 Review. I do, however, understand the need for the amalgamation to Moore and North West Central Electorates but can not see what benefits at all there are for the bifurcation of the Shire of Northampton and would hope that consider the same and adjust the boundary plans accordingly.

Many thanks for the opportunity to lodge this submission and I look forward to a positive outcome.

Regards

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