



12 May 2023

COMMENTS ON SUBMISSIONS TO 2023 WESTERN AUSTRALIAN REDISTRIBUTION

The Liberal Party of Australia (WA Division) welcomes the opportunity to comment on the submissions received for the 2023 review of electoral boundaries. Of 35 submissions, 8 propose a total or partial statewide distribution.

The submission of the Liberal Party differs from that of the Nationals in numerous details but there is a fundamental consistency in that both submissions retain 16 non-metropolitan districts without crossing the boundary of the Metropolitan area to create unnatural hybrid districts.

- The Liberal Party specifically endorses the proposed boundary between the districts of Kimberley and Pilbara as set out by the Nationals, running north-south along 123.33E meridian. This corrects the imprecision in our original submission.
- It is notable that across the current 16 country seats, the variation from average district enrolment (VFADE) is only 2.3%.
- We agree strongly that there is no need to expand the current boundaries of Albany and Geraldton.
- While the Liberal and National submissions differ in detail as to the boundaries of Moore and North West Central, we acknowledge that the National's proposal for these two districts has considerable merit.

The submission from Mr Michael Proud also retains 16 non-metropolitan seats, and without a significant crossing of the Metropolitan boundary.

The Liberal Party strongly disagrees with those submissions that propose the abolition or merger of Moore, Pilbara and particularly of North West Central. The low enrolment and large size of this district in no way renders it “unviable”. The Large District Allowance (LDA) and the 20.0% minimum tolerance were legislated to preserve representation in remote but significant parts of Western Australia, and can and should be utilised without apology to maintain the current number of districts.

While the Liberal Party does not support unnecessary boundary changes to districts that are within 10.0% of Average District Enrolment (ADE), the submission of WA Labor fails to adjust such districts as Fremantle, Wanneroo and Warnbro that are edging towards a 10.0% upper VFADE. It could well be described as a minimalist submission. The failure of WA Labor to provide enrolment figures makes it difficult to evaluate their proposals.

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However, it is very clear that in proposing the unnecessary abolition of the district of North West Central, this submission creates a grotesque hybrid district of Moore that extends from the Shires of Exmouth and Meekatharra to the outer metropolitan suburb of Two Rocks.

- It is highly misleading to describe Two Rocks as a “coastal town” akin to Cervantes or Lancelin.
- It is in fact a metropolitan outer suburban locality of 2663 electors closely and historically linked to Yanchep and to the remainder of the City of Wanneroo.
- A district combining pastoral, agricultural and wholly metropolitan communities in this arbitrary manner lacks both geographic focus and community of interest.

Local Government Authorities have made 17 submissions, and 13 of these LGAs are in support of the retention of the 16 country districts: the Shires of Boyup Brook, Dardanup, Esperance, Dundas, Ngaanyatjarraku, Ravensthorpe, Dandaragan, Toodyay and Narrogin; together with the Shires of Shark Bay, Meekatharra, Carnarvon and Yalgoo which specifically urge the retention of the district of North West Central.

- In addition, five other submissions, from Mr C Wjins, Hon Neil Thompson, Coorow Councillor Gary Dring, the Denmark Chamber of Commerce, and Dr Lex Fullarton with Dr Brett Davies, also argue strongly for the continuation of current country representation.
- The Fullarton/Davies submission mounts a particularly well-researched case for the retention of the district of North West Central with minor modifications.

The Liberal Party supports the proposal of the Shire of Augusta-Margaret River to be united within the district of Warren-Blackwood. We do not support suggestions for further minor tinkering with this boundary that has been contracting northward since 2015; the Shire boundary is now entirely logical.

The proposal from Councillor Chris Pavlovich to incorporate the Shire of Plantagenet within the district of Albany is without merit; there is simply no need to increase the elector numbers contained within the City of Albany.

- This erroneous view is also advocated by Dr Mark Mulcair who also proposes the addition of the Shire of Jerramungup to the district of Albany. This would give Albany an inflated enrolment of 8.3% VFADE.
- We also recommend the rejection of suggestions by B Close, Michael Proud and Louis Comer that all or part of the Shire of Denmark be incorporated within the district of Albany. Both Denmark and Mount Barker are distinct and significant communities that should not become mere adjuncts of the City of Albany.
- The Nationals and WA Labor are correct to advocate that the boundaries of the district of Albany remain unchanged. Inflating the enrolment of Albany makes it all but impossible to maintain 16 country districts.



In noting the submissions of the Shire of Collie and of Mr Ian Miffing objecting to the possible inclusion of Collie with a Great Southern district, it is pertinent that since 2015 the Shire of Collie has formed part of the federal division of O'Connor in place of the division of Forrest, without apparent detriment to its representation.

The Liberal Party disagrees with the recommendations in the submissions of B Close, Michael Proud and Dr Mark Mulcair, which advocate the transfer of the entire Shire of East Pilbara to the district of Kimberley. This would include the South Ward with 2423 electors, placing the town of Newman at a vast distance from Broome, thus substantially altering the character of this historic district.

- It would have an effect entirely different from the transfer of other sparsely populated wards and localities, that essentially boost the LDA of the district of Kimberley and minimise the displacement of electors.
- The inclusion of Newman with Kimberley in 1983-89 was deservedly unpopular.
- It is noted that neither the Nationals nor WA Labor propose the inclusion of Newman in the district of Kimberley.

The submission from Mr Bruce Robinson on behalf of West Perth Local supports the view of both the Liberal Party and of WA Labor that the boundary between the districts of Perth and Nedlands should run along the Mitchell Freeway, reuniting the southern City of Perth section of West Perth within the same district.

One aspect of Dr Mark Mulcair's submission that has merit is his proposal to transfer the remainder of the localities of Alfred Cove and Myaree from the district of Bickton to that of Bateman. The district of Bateman would have a VFADE of 7.3%, more than 2.5% below the upper limit.

The request of the City of Kwinana for the localities of Wellard and Leda to be united within the district of Kwinana conforms with the submission of the Liberal Party, proposing that the boundaries of the district of Kwinana should conform to those of the City of Kwinana.

The City of Subiaco seems to advocate the renaming of the district of Nedlands as Subiaco. While acknowledging the distinguished history of the former district of Subiaco from 1901 until 1989, there can be no justification for renaming Nedlands that now has an even longer history dating from 1930.

- The Liberal Party maintains that districts should only be renamed when their eponymous locality or LGA is removed, and strongly disagrees with those submissions advocating new names for continuing districts.