



Comment on suggestions 31

Dr Paul Rival

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COMMENT ON SUBMISSIONS – BY EMAIL - FedRedistribution-VIC@aec.gov.au <FedRedistribution-VIC@aec.gov.au>

Dear Sir/Madam

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on submissions regarding the Victorian Federal Redistribution.

I have reviewed the 63 submissions published on the AEC website, which includes my own, as well as the Liberal Party submission for completeness.

From all submissions, I note that most include some discussion about boundaries of the Eastern Melbourne electorates. As disclosed in my original submission, my particular concern is in the electorate of Deakin, which I suggested should be realigned North-South.

Of the submissions concerning the Eastern suburbs, the overwhelming majority argue that a North-South alignment better reflects the communities of interest. Pleasingly, this view is shared by a diverse range of submitters. Meanwhile, some submissions prefer Deakin to move to the East, a few suggest Deakin moves West, while a couple advocate to maintain the status quo and one seeks Deakin to be abolished. I will address each broadly.

Firstly, I was greatly encouraged about the number of submissions that agree with my own submission for a North-South alignment for Deakin. There seems to be broad agreement that these localities are much better suited to a North-South alignment. The submissions in broad agreement with the North-South approach of my own submission S39 are S16, S22, S24, S25, S37, S41, S50, S60, S61, S62 and S63.

I particularly applaud submission S22, which explains the current and historical ties between Wonga Park and Croydon, an obvious example of how communities in the east cluster around centres like Ringwood, Croydon and Mitcham. As the author wrote about Wonga Park and its neighbouring suburbs in Deakin, there is "...considerable interdependence and synergies ...and this has obvious implications in terms of Parliamentary representation and support."

As submission No 50 notes of Park Orchards, Donvale, Warrandyte, North Warrandyte and Wonga Park moving into Deakin, "These areas are simply more suited to Croydon and Ringwood than they are to Doncaster and Box Hill." I agree with that assessment which also seems to be the rationale for submission S41 which is a very good proposal.

Submission S37 notes the inevitability of dividing Manningham LGA and agrees that the cleanest manner to do so would be to use Springvale Road as this "...aligns the two, relatively, distinct areas of the LGA within different divisions, while maintaining as far as possible the communities of interest within those two areas."

Submission S16 has a focus on addressing issues with Box Hill, to the west of Deakin, this submission too concluding that this issue can be addressed most simply by a north-south alignment of both Deakin and Menzies. "With a north-south alignment of Menzies, a clear boundary which satisfies the number can be drawn along Springvale Road with Deakin. Springvale Road one of the most significant north south transport routes east of the Yarra, so it provides a clear separation of community."

I have also considered the alternate, minority views for either a Western or Eastern shift.

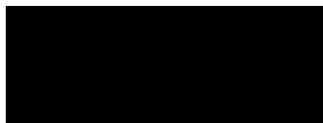
I conclude that an Eastward shift variously suggested in S32, S42, S49 and S57 is broadly speaking, consistent in continuing the communities of interest of Ringwood and Croydon. This is particularly so when coupled with the suburban areas of Lilydale, Chirnside Park and Mooroolbark. I am less convinced that the semi-rural areas of Olinda, Monbulk, Belgrave, Emerald, Cockatoo and Silvan (particularly as suggested in S49 and S57) work on a communities of interest basis.

However, it seems to me that the submissions to move Deakin in a westerly direction would result in the communities of interest in the eastern suburbs being diminished or even completely lost. Moving Deakin west means the composition of the electorate would become effectively bipolar, with no discernible shared communities of interest. I accordingly disagree with proposals S8, S27, S35 and S53, as I do with submission no 9 which proposes the abolition of Deakin. These submissions seem to pay no regard for the communities in these areas.

The Liberal Party's submission, which does not appear on the AEC website but was obtained from their own website, advocates maintaining the status quo for Deakin's boundaries, which seems unrealistic given that almost every electorate in the Melbourne Metropolitan area will have to change to achieve an equal spread of voters with one less seat.

In conclusion, having reviewed submissions from other contributors, I stand by my original submission and that of the majority of submissions about the Eastern suburbs and recommend that Deakin moves North into Park Orchards, Donvale, Warrandyte, Warrandyte South, and Wonga Park, with Canterbury Road the Southern boundary.

Yours sincerely

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