

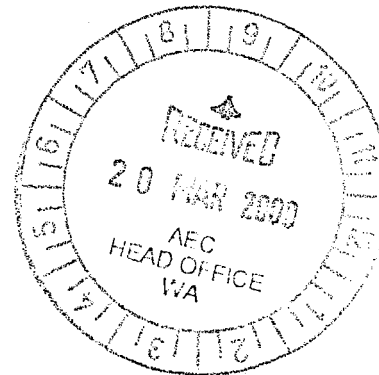
SHIRE OF COLLIE



Our Ref : 5.2.1

16th March 2000

The Secretary,
Redistribution Committee for WA,
PO Box 781
VICTORIA PARK WA 6100



Dear Sir,

RE: SUBMISSION ON FEDERAL ELECTORAL BOUNDARIES

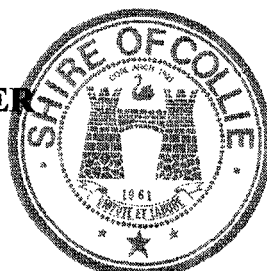
Please find attached an original and four copies of the Shire of Collie's submission in relation to the Committee's deliberations on a redistribution of Federal electoral boundaries in Western Australia.

You will notice from the submission that the Shire of Collie contends that the whole of the Collie Shire should be transferred from the existing Electorate of O'Connor to the Electorate of Forrest.

Council thanks you for the opportunity to make comment and we look forward to the outcomes of the Committee's deliberations.

Yours faithfully,

Ian Miffling
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



SHIRE OF COLLIE

SUBMISSION RELATING TO REDISTRIBUTION

OF

FEDERAL ELECTORAL BOUNDARIES

IN

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

MARCH 2000

SHIRE OF COLLIE
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INTRODUCTION - SHIRE OF COLLIE:

Collie is situated within the Darling Ranges and is surrounded by forests and scenic weirs and waterways of the Collie River Valley. The town of Collie is located 200kms from the State Capital of Perth and 60kms from the port City of Bunbury. The whole of the Shire covers an area of 1,685 square kilometres and forms the north eastern corner of what is generally recognised as the South West Region. The Shire has common boundaries with seven other local authorities. It is much more closely integrated, demographically, geographically and economically, with the three Shires to its south and west (Shires of Donnybrook/Balingup, Dardanup and Harvey) and with the City of Bunbury than with the four Shires to the east and north (Shires of Boyup Brook, West Arthur, Williams and Boddington).

Population trends in the Shire have fluctuated over the years although more recent times have shown a gradual decline in population numbers. Australian Bureau of Statistics Census and 'estimated population numbers' reveal the following trends since 1991 :

| | | | | | | |
|-------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Year | 1991 | 1994 | 1996 | 1997 | 1998 | 1999 |
| <i>Population</i> | 9842 | 9374 | 9015 | 8997 | 8962 | 8788 |

The gradual decline in population numbers over the above mentioned years can be directly attributed to large scale industry restructurings in coal mining and power generation. Prior to this, State agencies such as Westrail and Department of CALM also 'downsized' in Collie. Results of restructurings have seen young families leave the Shire to seek employment elsewhere or families who previously resided in the Shire are now living out of the Shire and travelling daily to work within Collie based industries. A trend has also been noticed whereby older persons/couples have relocated to Collie from other areas for reasons of cheaper housing, good community and medical facilities and relatively safe lifestyles.

Collie is a rather unique Shire. It combines large industry with pictureque natural beauty and within the Shire, activities are either governed by State Government department operations or State Agreement Act requirements. Some of those activities include :

- * Coal mining
- * Power generation
- * Alumina refining
- * State Forest (78% coverage of total Shire land area)

- * Water storage - Harris Dam currently provides water to Collie, the Great Southern Water Supply, and soon to the Perth metropolitan area. The Wellington Dam is in a state of rehabilitation to return it to a potable water supply and once this has been achieved, it will no doubt become another important water source for coastal and Perth metropolitan development.

Rateable property within the Collie Shire constitutes only 18% of the total Shire area and of this, the predominant rateable area is within the Collie townsite which, axiomatically, houses the majority of Shire inhabitants.

Collie townsite is the only major settlement in the Shire however smaller housing settlements do exist at Allanson 6 kms west of Collie and Collieburn/Cardiff 8 kms south east of Collie.

HISTORY - ELECTORAL BOUNDARIES:

Collie has, over many years it seems, been used as a balancing tool for electoral districts generally. For quite a long time Collie sat within the Division of Forrest. It later moved into the Division of Brand and of more recent times it moved into (and currently remains within) the Division of O'Connor. It is hard to believe that Collie has fared very well at all considering the criteria which ought to be followed during Division boundary reviews. It is equally hard to conclude from past experiences that population numbers of Collie have been nothing more than the 'balancing tool' mentioned above, and more particularly if the three Divisions (in which Collie has been included from time to time) are considered more closely -

| | |
|---|--|
| Forrest (where Collie once was) | Comprises the South West including the Lower South West with all of its forests, waterways and coastline - features which Collie and other towns in the Division have in common; |
|---|--|

| | |
|---|---|
| Brand (as it was when it included Collie) | Outer metropolitan area south through City of Mandurah, Harvey and Collie (as an appendage almost) - nothing of real commonality here for Collie; |
|---|---|

| | |
|--|---|
| O'Connor (where Collie currently sits) | From far flung City of Geraldton south through the midlands, eastern and Great Southern agricultural communities (all well east of Collie) and again, nothing of real commonality for Collie. |
|--|---|

The Shire of Collie has to be considered firstly for its 'community of interest' and secondly for its 'proximity', followed by other considerations which the Electoral Redistribution Committee must have regards for.

PROPOSITION:

The Collie Shire Council proposes that the whole of the Shire of Collie be transferred from the current Division of O'Connor to that of the Division of Forrest. The reasons for the Council's proposition are stated below.

COMMUNITY OF INTEREST:

The first point which must be stated clearly is that the Collie Shire has no 'community of interest' whatsoever with the Division of O'Connor. O'Connor is distant, different in its makeup and quite frankly of no interest electorally to the inhabitants of the Collie Shire. Collie is really that appendage mentioned earlier which has moved round from time to time to balance numbers.

Economic:

Collie residents have an affinity with the regional City of Bunbury for the reasons of choice, price and proximity.

Choice : As a City, Bunbury naturally has a wide range of goods and services to offer. Most of the large department stores are present as are numerous variety shops, specialist boutiques, professional offices and service industry businesses. A number of shopping centres provide for the opportunity of choice.

Price : The choice factor mentioned above allows for competitive pricing and it is unusual for Collie people not to be able to purchase either from within their own town or from competitive Bunbury outlets.

Proximity : Bunbury, being only 60kms away from Collie, makes a day trip to Bunbury an attractive outing for most people. The travelling distance is not onerous with a one-way trip being no longer than 45 minutes in duration.

Collie people are loyal to their own town for so much as they can be but due recognition must be given to the fact that Bunbury is the regional City and can comfortably provide in the above mentioned areas. It is natural for Collie people to travel west to Bunbury however, there is no reason for them to travel east from Collie for the reason that no other towns in the Great Southern can generally provide over and above what Collie offers. Certainly, no Great Southern Region towns can provide to Collie in the same way that Bunbury provides in factors of choice, price and proximity.

The major Collie industry of coal extraction provides a resource which is used either directly in the (coal fired) power stations at Collie or in the mineral sand plants on the coastal plain or in the alumina industry immediately west of Collie. Collie, or the greater Bunbury area, is the current market for the Collie coal resource.

Electricity is generated into the State power grid and distributed throughout Western Power Corporation's service area.

The workforce for both the coal mining and power generation industries are sourced either locally (from Collie) or from the coastal residential areas of Bunbury, Eaton and Australind. Very few workers come from the hinterland east of Collie.

The workforce for the alumina refinery in the western sector of the Collie Shire is heavily weighted at about 88% from the Bunbury/Eaton/Australind areas and about 12% from the Collie area.

The Collie Shire Council has joined membership of the 'Bunbury Wellington Economic Alliance' whose membership comprises private enterprise and local government. Council membership includes the City of Bunbury and the Shires of Collie, Dardanup, Donnybrook/Balingup and Capel. The main objective of the Alliance is to strengthen the economic base of the region generally and work co-operatively to attract new businesses and industries - the Alliance will work together to place business and industry into the most appropriate locations within the Region.

Social :

Collie looks towards Bunbury in a number of social ways - entertainment, education and recreation. Bunbury and the wider South West Region is also attractive to Collie people for tourism reasons.

Entertainment: As a regional City, Bunbury has a modern performing arts/entertainment centre which attracts first class stage productions. Bunbury also has a large cinema complex which provides variety according to taste and quite often Collie people combine these attractions with shopping trips to the port City.

Education : Bunbury has a choice of private schools to TEE level (Bunbury Catholic College and Bunbury Cathedral Grammar School), a large South West College of TAFE and a campus of the Edith Cowan University. Numerous Government primary and secondary schools also exist.

Collie people frequently make use of the Bunbury higher education facilities as private and secondary school opportunities in Collie are limited by comparison.

Recreation : Collie is part of the South West generally in all of its sporting pursuits and most particularly in football. Two Collie teams compete annually in the South West National Football League. Collie teams also participate in the South West Games. The coast is, of course, a great attraction for all inland people and Collie residents are no exception through their use of the ocean for fishing, surfing and swimming.

Tourism : The coastal towns are a natural choice for Collie people at holiday time with most 'migrating' to caravan and camping parks in Busselton or Bunbury. The wineries of the South West are also an attraction and are within day trip proximity to Collie.

The Collie Shire Council is a member of the 'South West Tapestry' group of Councils which is currently identifying tourism opportunities for the Tapestry region (a region which includes Collie, Bunbury and the greater Bunbury area).

The South West Tapestry is also part of a local government and industry led team which is about to undertake a large research project 'Co-operative Research Centre Modelling Study of the South West Tapestry Region'. The Collie Shire Council and other Tapestry member Councils will be working together on this project.

Regional Interests :

The Collie Shire Council has all of its focus within the South West Region through the earlier mentioned Bunbury Wellington Economic Alliance as well as the South West (WA) Local Government Association and the Bunbury Wellington Group of Councils.

The South West (WA) Local Government Association comprises 11 local governments (City of Bunbury and Shires of Collie, Harvey, Donnybrook/Balingup, Capel, Busselton, Margaret River, Majimup, Bridgetown/Greenbushes, Boyup Brook and Nannup) who meet on a regular basis to consider local government and economic matters of importance to the South West Region. The Association also doubles as the South West Ward of the Country Shire Councils' Association.

The Bunbury Wellington Group of Councils comprises the City of Bunbury and the Shires of Collie, Dardanup, Harvey, Donnybrook/Balingup and Capel who all work co-operatively towards identifying and practicing resource sharing opportunities. The Group is also constantly seeking solutions to matters of common interest to all participating Councils.

COMMUNICATIONS AND TRAVEL:

Collie has daily transport connections to the City of Bunbury for education purposes and shopping excursions. Bunbury provides connections to train services to metropolitan Perth and the Region also has excellent road services on dual lane highways. Collie people will generally travel by road through Bunbury to the South West Region or near to Bunbury for trips to Perth.

Communications are fairly universal but it is worth noting that mobile telephone services are more readily accessible to the Bunbury district than to areas east of Collie (much of the area immediately east of Collie is 'blind' in terms of mobile telephone communications).

PHYSICAL FEATURES:

There are physical features quite distinct for the South West Region as opposed to the hinterland Agricultural Region. The South West Region, of which Collie is part, has the Darling Ranges, coastal plains and abundant forest areas (Jarrah and Karri Forests). These are in stark contrast to the undulating plains of the Agricultural Region for which there appears to be no commonality of interest. South West Region interests are completely different from those of the Agricultural Region and it is difficult to imagine that Collie would ever become involved in agricultural issues to the same degree as local governments to the east of the Collie Shire. We have issues of our own (water, forests and mining) and we tend to resolve them with the co-operation of our South West associations.

BOUNDARIES OF EXISTING DIVISIONS:

Comment has already been made on the Collie Shire Council's perception of existing boundaries for the Forrest and O'Connor Divisions. It is realised of course that to comply with elector quota requirements, adjustments will no doubt be needed to almost all Division boundaries within the State. It is suffice to say however that in terms of the Shire of Collie, the Collie Shire Council believes that its Shire should be removed from the Division of O'Connor and placed within the Division of Forrest which encompasses, amongst others, the City of Bunbury. For all the reasons explained above, Collie has a real affinity with Bunbury and a transfer to the Division of Forrest would reflect this fact.