

OBJECTION

The Federal Redistribution 2009
NSW



Objection Number 147

by

A J Young, General Manager, Gloucester Shire Council

2 Pages



GLOUCESTER SHIRE COUNCIL

Reference: LW L12/1

Contact: Allan Young

02 September, 2009

Mr Ed Killesteyn
Electoral Commissioner
Australian Electoral Commission
PO Box K406
HAYMARKET NSW 1240



Dear Mr Killesteyn

Proposal for New South Wales Federal Electoral Redistribution

Gloucester Shire Council wishes to oppose the proposed electoral redistribution that effectively moves the Gloucester Shire Local Government Area out of the Paterson Electorate centred on the Hunter region into the electorate of Lyne centred on the Mid North Coast region.

Council is aware that the Committee is obligated to take into account community of interests, communications and transport levels when determining the redistribution proposal. Within the Committee's report for the changes to the electorate of Lyne at point 100 (p26), it is stated:- *"The Committee believes that there are strong links between Gloucester LGA and the Division of Lyne support this move"*. Council challenges this statement made by the Committee as a "convenient assumption" without in depth enquiry, solely to support the desire to move Gloucester LGA into Lyne.

In reality, Council is of the opinion that the Gloucester LGA has a community of interest that is strategically linked to the Hunter region for services, communication and transport. This link is provided by the Bucketts Way South Road which leads directly to and from the Pacific Highway and links this local government area to Newcastle. In essence, the region that is the major "sphere of influence" on the Gloucester LGA is the Hunter. People within our area are more likely to travel to Newcastle for the provision of services, eg medical and the acquisition of goods, than they are to go east to the proposed Lyne electorate area.

It is interesting to note the Committee's comments under Table 3: Themes (p23) where it is stated:-

"The Committee has ... endeavoured to keep communities with common interests together where possible and within the constraints of the Electoral Act." With respect, it is reiterated that for the Gloucester LGA our community of interest is better served by Federal representation via the electorate of Paterson than through the electorate of Lyne.

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Through the Committee's own findings for the electorate of Paterson at point 102 (P27) the removal of *"Gloucester LGA comprising 3,770 electors to the Division of Lyne means that Paterson has to gain electors to stay within numerical tolerance"*. By massaging the boundaries of the Maitland LGA the Committee has suggested transferring 534 electors to the Division of Newcastle and therefore, endeavours to establish valid reasons for removing Gloucester LGA from Paterson. By leaving Gloucester LGA in Paterson and still adjusting the boundaries of Maitland LGA the variation from the average projected enrolment would only be changed marginally.

It is noted that for both Lyne (point 98, p26) and Paterson (point 103, p27) the enrolment growth is projected to be above average. While noting that Lyne is below the numerical tolerance, based on the expected growth, it is respectfully suggested that Lyne could continue to exist without the inclusion of the Gloucester LGA. Likewise, it is noted that Paterson in its current configuration, which includes the Gloucester LGA, is within the already established numerical tolerance which poses the question of *"why relocate Gloucester LGA to Lyne?"*

In summary, Gloucester Shire Council is requesting the Committee to reassess its proposal to move the Gloucester LGA out of the Paterson electorate into the Lyne electorate. Based on the community of interest factor alone it would appear to be more beneficial to the Gloucester Shire community to be represented by the member for the Paterson electorate. The Committee is asked to give genuine consideration to this response to the report on the proposed New South Wales federal electoral redistribution.

Yours faithfully



AJ Young
General Manager