



Comment on suggestion 49

Yarra Valley Business

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Yarra Valley Business is the peak body representing businesses within the Yarra Valley.

Our membership is based within the main regional centre of the Lilydale-Chirnside Park area, along the Maroondah Highway to the north east and Melba Highway to the north, ranging from micro businesses to businesses that employ over 600 people.

The industrial Lilydale-Chirnside Park area is an important link for the Yarra Valley and the Upper Yarra as this is the area our members rely on for their service and local manufacturing needs.

The predominant mix of businesses in the area are based in tourism, agribusiness, and the required services that support those industries.

The above business networks have organically grow within the corridors of the Maroondah Highway to the north east and the Melba Highway to the north. The physical barrier of the Christmas Hills border also marks the boundary of our business network as the lack of direct road connections and capacity. This along with the tyranny of distance means that there is a direct loss of physical business connections with the Yarra Valley and areas east of Christmas Hills with those west of the Yarra Valley.

The only expansion of the electorate that makes any sense is to expand along existing tourism, business and regional routes which is along Maroondah and Melba Highways.

These road networks provide a direct connection between the Goulburn Valley and the Yarra Valley as the tourist traffic flows from Yarra Glen to Eildon and Mount Buller must pass along the Melba, creating a shared economic interest in tourism.

The largest private land owners within the Yarra Valley and the Upper Yarra are graziers. Graziers have a direct connection to the cattle sales yard at Yea, north along the Melba Highway as it provides an important component of their product supply chain. Many also own additional land for beef production in the area directly north of the Yarra Valley in the Glenburn area. Agricultural service providers in Lilydale, (which there are many) are also reliant on customers from Yea and Murrindindi shire.

This means there is a direct economic community of interest between Yarra Valley graziers and the Goulburn Valley.

Additionally Tim Colebatch suggested in his submission (#19) that seats be renamed after geographical areas. If the AEC were to consider adopting his suggestion, I would suggest that the division of Casey be renamed to the division of Yarra or Yarra Valley. This would be fitting as not only are the head waters of the Yarra located in division of Casey, but the river and the Yarra Valley are the key defining features of the Commonwealth Electoral Division as it currently exists and as it should continue to exist. This would recognise that the division effectively unifies the greater Yarra Valley and the Upper Yarra into a single coherent community of interest.

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It is imperative that any expansion in the electoral boundaries of Casey only expand to the north and north east along the main highway network as demonstrated in the above. This will continue to unite the 'communities of interest' as the electorate of Casey currently achieves.

Brett Whelan
Chairman
Yarra Valley Business