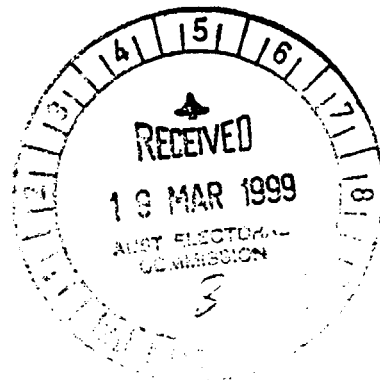


**SUGGESTION No 8**

**Australian Democrats**



**Mike Elliott MLC**  
Federal Campaign Director  
Australian Democrats

March 19 1999

Redistribution Committee for South Australia  
Electoral Commission  
9<sup>th</sup> Floor AMP Building  
1 King William Street  
ADELAIDE 5000

Dear Sirs

Please find enclosed the Australian Democrats submission on the redistribution of Federal Electoral Boundaries.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mike Elliott".

**Mike Elliott MLC**  
Federal Campaign Director  
Australian Democrats

# 1999 SOUTH AUSTRALIAN HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES REDISTRIBUTION

## SUBMISSION ON BEHALF OF AUSTRALIAN DEMOCRATS (S. A. DIVISION) INC.

### BACKGROUND

The present Redistribution is occurring because of the Seven Year Rule (s59(2)(c) – Note – all references to sections are to the Commonwealth Electoral Act). From the increase in the size of the Senate in 1984 to 1992, South Australia had 13 seats in the House of Representatives. In 1992, this number was reduced to 12, and the Electorate of Hawker was lost. The 1999 South Australian Redistribution Committee is now conducting a Redistribution of South Australia's House of Representative Electorates.

It is understood (from information supplied by the Australian Electoral Commission and from "The Advertiser" 13/3/99) that this Redistribution is to create 12 Electorates, and that The Electoral Commission has projected that South Australia's entitlement will reduce to 11 Electorates following the s46/s48(1) process following the next Federal Election (presumably assuming that the current Parliament runs most of its full term). Certainly "The Advertiser" report fits with a Projection Time of 30 June 2001, which is obviously not the Projection Time which would apply under s63A(2).

We submit that this "forward projection" should inform the current Redistribution in two ways:-

1. As the Electorates created by the 1999 Redistribution will only be relevant for one General Election, the aim should be to have the enrollment projections for the Projection Time to be much closer to equal than is prescribed by s66(3)(a). The leeway inherent in that section is present to allow for there to be two or three General Elections held on boundaries which are expected to last for seven years, and with the last of those elections being potentially three years after the Projection Time. On this occasion that constraint does not apply, and therefore the full range of the leeway is not needed: and
2. The Committee should consider the likely outcome of the next Redistribution, where possible, so that, as much as is possible, the changes made on this occasion are directed towards the next Redistribution and do not need to be undone.

We have been provided with enrollment statistics for the Commencement Date and Projection Time for the State of South Australia on a Census Collector District, Local Government Area and Federal Electorate basis. We have also considered the demographic evidence presented by Messrs Coffey and McQueen to the 1998 Electoral Districts Boundaries Commission (SA).

It is obvious that there is an almost infinite number of possible outcomes of the Redistribution process. Therefore, any detailed maps, which we might be inclined to prepare, are unlikely to be of much practical assistance. Rather, our approach to the Redistribution process is to suggest methods by which the Redistribution might be performed, consistent with the criteria in s66(3).

## THE NUMERICAL CORRECTIONS – S66(3)(a)

The quota at the Projection Time is 87,240 electors. The permissible range is 84,187 – 90,293; however, as outlined above, we submit that the aim should be to be more uniform at the Projection Time. After all, the next General Election is likely to be held within six months after the Projection Time. (If the House of Representatives Election were held any earlier than the Projected Date, then there could not be a concurrent Half Senate Election.)

This means that the South Australian Electorates need to gain or lose the following number of electors as at the Projected Date, compared with the current forward estimates:-

Adelaide	Gain	3,106
Barker	Lose	672
Bonython	Gain	2,085
Boothby	Gain	5,435
Grey	Gain	3,623
Hindmarsh	Gain	2,186
Kingston	Lose	6,027
Makin	Lose	6,593
Mayo	Lose	7,386
Port Adelaide	Gain	4,293
Sturt	Gain	4,705
Wakefield	Lose	4,750

Absolute precision is neither necessary nor desirable. However, on the other side of the coin, it must be noted that the forward projections suggest that the current boundaries would result in the Electorates of Adelaide, Boothby, Grey and Port Adelaide being impermissibly under-quota and Kingston, Makin, Mayo and Wakefield being impermissibly over-quota.

From the foregoing, and with a working knowledge of the South Australian Electoral map assumed, it might be thought that this Redistribution needs only to achieve the following:-

1. A transfer of about 4,000 electors from Wakefield to Grey;
2. A transfer of between 5,500 and 6,000 electors from Kingston to Boothby;
3. A transfer of around 7,000 electors from Mayo to Sturt, with a consequential transfer of around 3,000 electors from Sturt to Adelaide; and
4. A transfer of around 7,000 electors out of Makin, with around 2,000 going to Bonython and the balance going into Bonython, Sturt or Adelaide with further consequential transfers aimed ultimately to add around 3,500 to Port Adelaide and 1,500 to Hindmarsh.

For reasons which follow below, we do not support this simple approach. Suffice to say, at this stage, that the simple approach can be relatively easily achieved:-

Firstly, the transfer of Saddleworth, Auburn, Robertstown and Eudunda from Wakefield to Grey achieves objective number 1 above.

Secondly, a discrete change to the Kingston/Boothby boundary achieves objective number 2.

Thirdly a similar change to the Mayo/Sturt boundary achieves the first part of objective number 3.

Fourthly, the moving of the western boundary of Adelaide east from (generally) South Road to (generally) the railway lines could achieve those parts of objective number 4 relating to Hindmarsh and Port Adelaide.

This would the only leave a fairly small scale balancing act to be performed between Adelaide, Bonython, Makin and Sturt, ie:-

1.	Makin to Bonython	2,000
2.	Makin to Adelaide	5,000
3.	Sturt to Adelaide	3,000

Note that some of the second transfer above could be via either Bonython or Sturt or both.

### THE S66(3)(b) CONSIDERATIONS

We submit that a number of the current electoral boundaries breach s66(3)(b) of the Act, and further that the simple approach outlined above will not correct the problems. We appreciate that the 1992 Redistribution Committee may have found its task to be very difficult because of the loss of an Electorate and the need to create three essentially rural Electorates.

However, the effect, either then or now, is that the following criticisms are, we submit, validly made:-

1. The inclusion of an essentially suburban area (Athelstone, Newton, etc) in the otherwise peri-metropolitan seat of Mayo is anomalous. The area is better placed in Sturt, whence it was taken in 1992;
2. This problem cannot be rectified by a transfer of only 7,000 electors from Mayo to Sturt;
3. The Fleurieu Peninsula is now becoming increasingly peri-metropolitan and is therefore somewhat out of place in Barker (perhaps not so - Kangaroo Island!);
4. Leaving Barker as it is will not overcome this problem; and
5. The transfer from Wakefield to Grey outlined above will leave the Riverland as a relatively isolated part of Wakefield, and there will be little compliance with s66(3)(b)(ii) as far as the Riverland and the Yorke Peninsula are concerned.

On the other hand, the suggested eastward movement of Adelaide's western boundary has significant merit in terms of s66(3)(b). Further, some of the "balancing act" between Adelaide, Bonython, Makin and Sturt referred to above could be achieved by reversion to significant sections of the 1984-1992 boundaries, which had special merit; for example the use of the River Torrens as the southern boundary of Makin.

### THE "NEXT REDISTRIBUTION" CONSIDERATIONS

We submit that if the Committee is constrained to perform its functions following the Electoral Commission's exercise in crystal ball gazing under s63A(3), then the Committee should also look into the future in considering s66(3)(b)(v). That is, the Committee should say "If we have a fair idea of how some boundaries are going to end up next time, then we should prefer an option this time which will mean that we don't have to breach s66(3)(c)(v) too much next time."

Often such an exercise is not possible. There are too many possible outcomes for, say, Port Adelaide next time for the Committee to have any confidence that a change in 1999 may not need to be undone in 2002/3. Indeed this exercise is truly impossible for most Electorates. However, we submit that the suggested exercise is possible in the cases of Barker and Grey. What is more, once the exercise is performed in those two cases, then there are flow-on effects throughout the balance of this Redistribution.

Further, we intend to demonstrate that, by performing a Crystal Ball gazing exercise in relation to Grey and Barker, some changes can follow which correct the s66(3)(b) problems outlined above.

We start with the process of looking forward to 2002/3.

One would imagine that the quotas at both the Commencement Date and Projection Time would be very close to 100,000 electors; possibly 2,000 below at the former and 2,000 above at the latter.

Therefore Grey will need to be expanded by between 15,000 and 18,000 electors over its current enrollment, and it has very low growth rates. It is inconceivable that any significant part of the current Grey would not also be part of the 2002/3 version of Grey. To add the Riverland would be to add too many electors. To add areas south of Clare and into the Barossa Valley would be to cut off the Yorke Peninsula from the rest of whichever is the Electorate of which it forms a part. The addition of the Yorke Peninsula to the current Grey (possibly with some minor alterations for exactness' sake) is the only realistic option. The current Grey, plus the Yorke Peninsula, plus Saddleworth, Auburn, Robertstown, Riverton and Eudunda would be too big.

We therefore submit that another alternative swap from Wakefield to Grey ought to be considered on this occasion. That alternative is to add the Yorke Peninsula to the 1984-1992 version of Grey; ie add Yorke Peninsula and remove Clare, Burra Burra, Spalding, Blyth, Jamestown, Peterborough, Rocky River and a significant portion of the north east of the State, with a view to restoration of that area to Grey in 2002/3. We suggest that "yo-yoing" of the mid-North and the north east from Wakefield (1984) to Grey (1992) to Wakefield (1999) and finally back to Grey (2002/3) is preferable to adding an area which has always been part of Wakefield to Grey for one General Election only.

We also suggest that by 2002/3, the Fleurieu Peninsula region will have become even more peri-metropolitan than it is now, and therefore even more obviously out of place in Barker. Further, taking into account the 2002/3 configuration of Grey, it is likely that Barker ought to become the "other" rural based Electorate. Wakefield will disappear, and the metropolitan Electorates will all expand outwards to take in the Fleurieu Peninsula, Gawler and the Wakefield Plains region.

The effect of this analysis is that we submit that the 1999 Committee should seriously consider restoring the Riverland to Barker, as it was from 1984-1992, as an indirect exchange for the Fleurieu Peninsula region. That region could then revert to Mayo, whence it came in 1992 and Mayo could then lose the metropolitan areas, which should not be part of it, and parts of the Northern Adelaide Hills.

## CONCLUSION

In our submission, the suggestions outlined immediately above should be adopted by the Committee. Further, the suggestion made earlier in relation to the western boundary of Adelaide ought also to be accepted.

This then leaves the need for Wakefield to move south into the Northern Adelaide Hills and into parts of Bonython and possibly Makin. With increasing urban sprawl towards Gawler, the lines dividing the communities of interest in that area are becoming increasingly blurred. Therefore boundaries drawn to even up the numbers for one General Election only cannot be seen to be breaching s66(3), especially when they are the boundaries of the electorate which is the prime candidate for disappearance in 2002/3.

The current boundary between Bonython and Port Adelaide is appropriate in terms of geography generally and therefore Bonython will need to swing around towards Makin. Makin and Sturt will need to move into the metropolitan parts of the current Mayo. Between those changes and some other changes to the northern and north-eastern boundaries of Adelaide, there could be a reversion to the boundaries between those three Electorates which obtained from 1984-1992, albeit that at its southern end, the Adelaide/Sturt boundary might well move to the east.

Finally, this would also allow the Redistribution to be completed with a fairly minor alteration of the Boothby/Kingston boundary.

While we have not prepared detailed maps, we believe that our general approach should be apparent from the above. Of necessity, we leave the fine drawing of boundaries to those with high-powered mapping programs.

We believe that our approach complies with s66 and will assist in future compliance.

We submit that there are inconsistencies in the current South Australian Federal Electoral landscape, and that our approach offers a sound remedy.

We would be happy to supplement this submission with oral submissions should the Committee consider that appropriate.