



The Federal Redistribution 2003  
**QUEENSLAND**



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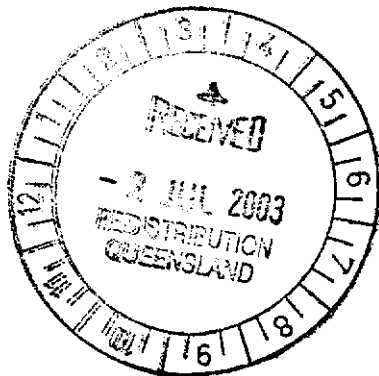
## **Comment Number Four on Public Suggestions**

**Queensland Nationals**

**5 pages**

QUEENSLAND NATIONALS

Comment on Submissions to the Redistribution Committee  
for Queensland



**Comments on Federal  
Redistribution  
Submissions**

**COMMENT**

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QUEENSLAND NATIONALS

**Comment on Submissions to the  
Redistribution Committee for Queensland**

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## Overview

The Queensland Nationals submit the following comments on those Submissions put before the Redistribution Committee in redrafting Queensland's existing Federal Divisional boundaries and the creation of a new Federal Division.

These comments seek to bring to the Redistribution Committee's attention the community of interest concerns raised within those Submissions. Such comments will be based on the recognition that the Committee's determination of draft boundaries needs to comply with the strict statistical requirements of the Electoral Act.

The Queensland Nationals reaffirm their stated belief that in drafting the proposed boundaries, the Redistribution Committee should seek to constrain the disruptive impact of boundary amendments to **the region requiring change** and thereby minimise changes which multiply boundary changes across the State.

In reviewing the Submissions put before the Redistribution Committee the Queensland Nationals welcome the consensus of opinion about the fact the State's high growth areas located in the State's South East corner are defining 'community of interest' in more minute and urbanised terms. Conversely, in those districts experiencing low or negative growth, 'community of interest' is encompassing a wider catchment area.

The Queensland Nationals are confident the Redistribution Committee, in framing it's proposed boundaries, will *give due consideration* to Section 66(3)(b) of the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918* which prescribes that:

- community of interests within the proposed Electoral District, including economic, social and regional interests;
- means of communication and travel within the proposed Electoral District;
- the physical features and the area of the proposed Electoral Division; and
- the boundaries of the existing Divisions in the State or Territory."

## Specific comments

Overall, there appears to be a commonality of agreement in addressing boundaries in Leichhardt, Kennedy and Herbert.

The Queensland Nationals believe the communities of western Queensland would be best served by the inclusion of the Longreach and Ilfracombe shires into the Federal Division of Maranoa.

A clear and irrefutable community of interest already exists between residents located south of Longreach with the township itself. Longreach acts as a major service centre to the residents of towns such as Stonehenge, Windorah, Birdsville and Jundah. In addition to shopping, residents utilise a range of services located in Longreach such as the School of Distance Education, Pastoral College, hospital and health services, health professionals, and daily commercial flights to Brisbane. In addition, Longreach is a central hub to inland tourism operations operating throughout the Division of Maranoa.

Under the existing Divisional boundaries the residents of Longreach and Ilfracombe have to travel some seven to eight hours by road in order to visit the Electorate Office of the Member for Capricornia, which is located in Rockhampton. The inclusion of these Shires in the Division of Maranoa would provide residents with greater access to their local member, as the Member for Maranoa currently operates an Electorate Office in Emerald.

By including these Shires, with a pastoral and rural character similar to the remainder of the Division, it would reduce the need to relocate an even larger quantity of people in the Darling Downs region from Groom to Maranoa. In the Darling Downs region the Nationals Submission has sought, as far as practical, to follow boundaries similar to those employed by the Commission in 1994 whilst still meeting the statistical requirements of the Act.

Similarly, the Queensland Nationals oppose the proposal to transfer the Emerald Shire to Capricornia. This would result in the transfer of some 7,500 people out of a Division which already requires an influx of voters in order to meet the projected population requirements. The Federal member for Maranoa currently operates an Electorate Office out of Emerald in order to service the local community, and any such proposal would see the loss of such a service to the people of central Queensland. It should also be noted the Emerald Shire has also voted unanimously to oppose this suggested transfer.

At the time of the last Redistribution residents of the Winton Shire and their Council expressed concerns that their being located in Division of Capricornia had destroyed their community of interest with North-West Queensland. The Redistribution Committee is urged to consider the fact that the Winton Shire is the only Shire in the State Electorate of Mount Isa not contained in the Federal Division of Kennedy.

The Queensland Nationals contend the transfer of the Shire of Winton into the Division of Kennedy would also provide easier access for residents to their local Federal Member. The Member for Kennedy operates an Electorate Office out of Mount Isa, while at present residents of the Winton Shire would have to travel to Rockhampton to access the same services.

In assessing the Submissions put forward in relation to the Division of Capricornia, the Redistribution Committee is asked to take into account the following community of interest considerations. The Queensland Nationals recognise that at present the northern part of the State Electorate of Fitzroy is currently located in the Division of Capricornia. The State Electorate of Fitzroy covers the Duaringa Shire, the northern half of the Banana Shire, the southern boundary of the Fitzroy Shire and the Mount Morgan Shire.

The location of the entire State Electorate of Fitzroy into the Division of Capricornia would enhance the community of interest in this region. At present, the location of Mount Morgan Shire in the Division of Hinkler can only occur via splitting the Fitzroy Shire. Residents of Mount Morgan currently utilise the services of the Member for Capricornia's Electorate Office, located just 40 kilometres away in Rockhampton. In addition, social, medical, family services, sporting, cultural, local government and regional links all focus clearly on Rockhampton. The Federal Member for Capricornia also supports such a view, having recently raised the matter in Federal Parliament.

By placing the State Electorate of Fitzroy into Capricornia, the mining-based character of the Division would be further enhanced. For this reason the Redistribution Committee is urged to utilise suggested amendments in the Broadsound and Sarina Shires. The Broadsound Shire Council office is currently located in the town of St Lawrence, which at present is located in the Division of Dawson, whilst other residents find they are located in the Division of Capricornia. Reuniting the entire Shire into Capricornia would in effect re-unite this divided community.

In considering the mining-based character of the Division of Capricornia it is also noted the coal producers of Broadsound, Belyando and Nebo, all of which are in the Division of Capricornia, transport their goods via the railway located in the southern area of the Sarina Shire through the town of Koumala. It is a sensible proposition for such a vital infrastructure hub to be located in the same Division as the communities who depend on its operation.

The Queensland Nationals would not support the placement of all of the Banana Shire into Capricornia. Such proposals not only overlook the negative community of interest impacts in this region, but further, create massive dislocation of communities in the southern end of the Division of Wide Bay as well as the northern end of the Division of Fairfax - effectively carving up the Cooloolia Shire and township of Gympie. Such proposals do not limit the impact of change to the regions affected, and in reality spread the impacts of high population growth in Fairfax and the Sunshine Coast, into Wide Bay, Hinkler and Capricornia. As demonstrated in the Queensland Nationals Submission, growth in the Southeast corner of the State is able to be addressed within this distinct region.

The Queensland Nationals recognise the strong community of interest arguments put forward by the Kolan and Perry Shires and urge the Redistribution Committee to consider these strong arguments and incorporate this region into the

Division of Hinkler. It is a practical move for the Redistribution Committee to look at the hinterland region adjoining the existing Division of Hinkler in order to address the statistical requirements of the Division of Hinkler. The major centres of Bundaberg and Gladstone provide economic, social, medical, family services, sporting, cultural, local government and regional services to these surrounding hinterland regions.

The Redistribution Committee is strongly urged to consider the comments offered to the Committee by the Federal Member for Hinkler.

The placement of the South Burnett region into Wide Bay would compliment the existing nature of the seat of Wide Bay - with the Wide Bay/Burnett region sharing a strongly recognised community of interest in economic, production, service, tourism and local government terms. Such links are far stronger than those proposed by cutting up Gympie and the Cooloola Shire and transferring them into Wide Bay.

The Sunshine Coast local government and tourism regions clearly identify the Cooloola Shire as an integral part, and northern boundary of, the Sunshine Coast Region. In addition, the Cooloola Shire, along with the adjoining Noosa and Maroochy Shires are classified as part of the South East Queensland - North region.

Such an approach would require the Division of Blair to continue its expansion into the city of Ipswich, an area that it already covers in part.

The Queensland Nationals do not support amendments to the Division of Forde which fail to address existing fractures to clear communities of interest located in the northern end of the Division and which, at the same time, seek to dislocate the communities of the Gold Coast Hinterland region from the Gold Coast.

## **Summary**

The Queensland Nationals ask the Redistribution Committee to take these community of interest considerations into account when drafting their proposed boundaries - and urge the Redistribution Committee to use this opportunity to redress some of the social dislocation brought about in previously framed Divisional boundaries.

The Queensland Nationals will be participating in the next phase of the Redistribution process.

Yours faithfully,



Andrew Bibb  
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July 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2003