



The Federal Redistribution 2006
QUEENSLAND



Comment Number 15 on Objections

The Hon Bruce Scott MP

Member for Maranoa

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THE HON BRUCE SCOTT MP
 FEDERAL MEMBER FOR MARANOA
 CHAIRMAN DEFENCE SUB COMMITTEE
 JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS, DEFENCE AND TRADE
 ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER

BS:db

The Redistribution Committee for Queensland
 GPO Box 2590
BRISBANE Q 4001

Dear Members,

I am writing to provide comment on the Objections lodged in relation to the 2006 Proposed Redistribution of Queensland into Electoral Divisions.

I refer to my original comment on 10th March, 2006, following the call for comment on Public Suggestions, that the Maranoa Electorate as it currently stands meets quota as required under the Act.

Western Queensland Shires

In perusing the overwhelming and surprising number of objections received from Western Queensland, it becomes evident that there is no compliance with the community of interest requirement under the Commonwealth Electoral Act, something which must be addressed by the Committee.

Mr John Cherry's objection (objection 4) qualifies this through his statement, "*The Committee appears to place great emphasis on reducing the area of Maranoa. However, in doing so, it ignores the very strong community of interest in Western Queensland, and creates 'artificial links' between coastal communities and western Queensland and the south Burnett in Maranoa.*"

Furthermore the organisations :-

Roma-Bungil Showgrounds and Saleyards Board (objection 21),
 Australian Stockman's Hall of Fame (objection 44),
 Remote Area Planning and Development Board (objection 47),
 Qantas Foundation Memorial Ltd (objection 106),
 Outback Queensland Tourism (objection 152),
 Western Queensland Local Government Association (objection 35)

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as well the Central Western Shires, (objections 141, 34, 37, 70, 17, 72, 45, 2) as elected representatives of their respective communities, have all indicated their

opposition to Winton, Aramac, Longreach, Barcaldine, Ilfracombe, Isisford, Blackall and Tambo Shires moving out of Maranoa into the proposed new seat of Wright, based on a lack of community of interest, social dislocation and economic implications, with the Gladstone and Burnett areas.

The Australian Stockman's Hall of Fame and Outback Heritage Centre (objection 44) supported by their Chairman, Mr Ken Cowley AO, a well respected businessman, states, *'To 'relocate' Longreach under the Gladstone region, where we have little or no affinity or linkages appears to be a step back in economic and industry development as well as further isolating us from our neighbouring communities'*.

The QANTAS Founders Outback Museum (objection 106) states, *"we, as a major tourist attraction, are so concerned about this proposal that to people of Western Queensland this proposal will be seen as an abdication of Commonwealth responsibility to provide fair and equitable representation to an area that is disadvantaged to that of most coastal areas of Australia."*

The Remote Area Planning and Development Board (RAPAD) (objection 47) as a regional organisation representing 11 shires, states:-

'Splitting the Shires that form central west into two Federal divisions diminishes the advantages of being a concentrated grouping.

The transfer of the eight shires, (Longreach, Winton, Barcaldine, Ilfracombe, Aramac, Blackall, Tambo and Isisford) from the proposed inland division of Maranoa to the proposed Wright does not maintain the unity of purpose which is important for us to achieve our goals as a remote outback board . The Committee's proposal shatters our community of interest and removes us from our historical and natural associations. We have no affinity or transport, communications or service links with the port City of Gladstone and its hinterland.

The RAPAD Board's vision is "A united regional organisation proactively shaping and creating a prosperous future for Outback Queensland." We strongly recommend to The Committee that the eight impacted shires be returned to the proposed inland division of Maranoa so that we can retain, "a united regional organisation proactively shaping and creating a prosperous future for Outback Queensland"

As a representative example of individual concerns, Mary Killeen of Isisford (objection 27) states in respect to the proposal to move from Maranoa into proposed Wright:-

"This proposal will disenfranchise us from our community of interest.... The needs of people located in the central and southwest are very different from those of our coastal cousins. The electorate of Maranoa in its current form provides a wonderful base for a unified approach to finding practical solutions to problems and the continued economic sustainability of the region as a whole."

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This is further supported through the general comments made in submissions from the Biggenden and Burnett areas (objections 153, 95, 62, 57, 19, 15, 5), where any correlation between their areas and towns such as Winton, in Outback Queensland, as part of the proposed seat of Wright has been dismissed.

I support all of these comments which are representative of the overwhelming concern from a broad cross-section of communities affected by the Committee's proposals.

Taroom

I further highlight my previous comments that Taroom Shire, as part of the Western Downs, has been in the Division of Maranoa since Federation – some 106 years. The Taroom Shire (objection 25) has stated, *'Residents have little interaction and commonality with the proposed Wright Electorate'*.

I support the comments of the Taroom Shire.

South Burnett

In respect to the proposal to move the South Burnett Shires of **Wondai**, **Kingaroy** and **Nanango** into Maranoa, it is overwhelmingly clear, given that there was not one supportive comment from the objections received from within the South Burnett Shires, that these Shires would be better placed in a Division encompassing the Wide Bay/Burnett area.

Mr Cameron Thompson MP, Federal Member for Blair's (objection 48) comments

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"To many of these people, your proposed redistribution of boundaries exploits negative aspects of submissions received prior to March 3 and delivers none of the benefits. The Kingaroy, Nanango and Crows Nest shires are to be separated from Blair, but moved into Maranoa, an outback electorate in which extreme remoteness and the Warrego Highway are core concerns and linkages. This will be a huge disappointment and a serious disadvantage to these South Burnett communities", reinforces the strength of this opposition.

The Liberal Party (objection 187) has also stated the proposal to place the Shires of Wondai, Kingaroy, Nanango in Maranoa that, *"this will create serious disadvantage for the South Burnett community, geographically virtually removing electors' access to their elected representative."*

I strongly endorse these comments regarding the South Burnett Shires.

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Crows Nest

The Federal Member for Groom (objection 182) and Member for Blair (objection 48), are in concurrence that consideration should be given to the part Crows Nest, currently located in the Division of Blair, being combined as a whole with that in the Division of Groom.

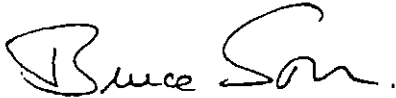
I note this has been supported in other objections – the Queensland Nationals (objection 180), the Remote Area Planning and Development Board (objection 47), as well as the Kingaroy Shire Council (objection 113).

I support these comments.

Call for Public Hearings

I respectfully ask the Redistribution Committee to conduct public hearings in the communities affected by the proposed redistribution, as also requested by others who lodged objections.

Yours sincerely



BRUCE SCOTT MP

31 July, 2006

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