

# **COMMENT ON OBJECTIONS**

The Federal Redistribution 2009  
NSW



---

## **Comment on Objections Number 21**

by

**Ed Gilmore**

**3 Pages**

The Australian Electoral Commission  
PO Box K406  
Haymarket NSW 1240



18 September 2009

Dear Sir or Madam:

**COMMENT ON OBJECTIONS  
Electorate of Gilmore**

I wish to

- **Support the Australian Electoral Commission** in its redistribution in respect to the electorate of Gilmore.
- **Refute objections made that there is not** a very significant community of interest between the northern Shoalhaven and the Illawarra areas (including the Kiama and Shellharbour LGAs). There is a very strong community of interest at the levels of business, employment, services and administration, with extensive family inter-connections and common demographics.
- **Refute objections made that there is** a significant community of interest between the Shoalhaven and the Wingecarribee Southern Highlands - the linkages and interactions are just not there!

The Shoalhaven has always been considered as a part of the wider Illawarra region.

The coastal strip has a strong sense of regional identity, which ends at the escarpment divide - the region refers to itself as 'the South Coast'.

There is a very strong business community of interest between the Illawarra and the Shoalhaven, being within the natural territory of businesses for sales, recruitment and business expansion - there is not a business divide.

There are very strong employment linkages, particularly in the direction of Shoalhaven and Kiama LGA residents working further north in the Illawarra. Shoalhaven children and young people travel to study at university and high schools to the north. Wollongong University has a sub-campus in Nowra; the Nowra TAFE is one of the Illawarra campuses, operating in an integrated fashion for the Shoalhaven-Illawarra area.

There are strong services linkages for health, financial services, personal, household, transport and retail services from the Shoalhaven to the southern and central Illawarra. Public administration operates its offices in an integrated way for servicing the Shoalhaven-Illawarra area. Only administrations with large regional areas include the Southern Highlands in their Illawarra management structures.

Many administrations, like Police, Tafe and DADHC, extend from the Macarthur region to the Wingecarribee LGA.

There are strong leisure linkages in both directions, with sporting teams regularly playing other teams from the coastal strip, and the Shoalhaven is a favourite destination of northern Illawarra people for activities like fishing, boating, surfing, bushwalking and picnics.

None of the above clear linkages running north-south along the coast are readily apparent running east-west (Wingecarribee to coast). The most apparent linkages for these characteristics run from the Wingecarribee LGA north-south along the Hume Highway corridor to south-west Sydney. The only significant linkage is an employment linkage from the Wingecarribee to Wollongong and Port Kembla - but not to the Shoalhaven.

The Shoalhaven is a major retirement destination for Illawarra seniors - a large proportion of the coastal villages have drawn their populations from the Shellharbour and Wollongong areas - hence there are very strong family interactions between the Shoalhaven and the Illawarra. This also helps to explain their very close demographic and socio-economic features and strong community of interest at a personal level.

- **AADT north-south:** The *2006 Annual Average Daily Traffic Volume* (AADT) at Bombo is 27,757. The personal interactions and service streams are clearly visible in the heavy traffic flows in the Princes Highway corridor between the upper Shoalhaven and the lower Illawarra on a daily and particularly weekend basis.
- **AADT east-west:** The traffic flows measurably reflect the linkages between the Wingecarribee and the Shoalhaven or Illawarra. Movements east-west between the Southern Highlands and the Shoalhaven / Illawarra are a fraction of those running north-south. Traffic movements above Macquarie and Jamberoo Passes have AADT of 2,981 (ie Illawarra - Wingecarribee). Traffic movements at the escarpment between the Shoalhaven and the Wingecarribee have an AADT of 2,583.

[source: [http://www.rta.nsw.gov.au/trafficinformation/downloads/aadt\\_data\\_files/k6staadt.xls](http://www.rta.nsw.gov.au/trafficinformation/downloads/aadt_data_files/k6staadt.xls)]

The interactions and people movements are very emphatically north-south along the coastal strip. It is simply ridiculous to claim that the Shoalhaven has a closer affinity with the Wingecarribee than the southern Illawarra. The east-west interactions indicated in the traffic movements are 10% of those running north-south. Public transport between the Wingecarribee and the Shoalhaven barely exists - because there is simply no demand for it.

Similarly, all government agency administrative regions link the Wingecarribee LGA with either Wollongong or the Campbelltown / Macarthur region. The Shoalhaven is linked firmly with the Illawarra for public administration matters. The only

administrative link between the Wingecarribee and the Shoalhaven is the admin base in Nowra for NPWS - and this hardly indicates a people-based community of interest.

The working-age demographic factors are fairly homogenous along the southern Illawarra and Shoalhaven coastal strip. Income, educational attainment, occupational factors, socio-economic status and other factors indicate a substantial community of interest. Towns like Shell Cove, Kiama, Gerringong, Berry, Shoalhaven Heads and Nowra share common characteristics in the working-age cohort - they are working for similar businesses in similar jobs in a common community of interest. Employment patterns in the upper-Shoalhaven and lower Illawarra are not generally rural based. To claim that these areas rural-based like the Wingecarribee is simply incorrect.

The retiree population grows proportionally to the south, but is largely the same socio-economic demographic along the coastal strip, being largely retirees from the Illawarra. It is noteworthy that the retiree population at Batemans Bay (retirees are predominantly from Canberra) is significantly different to the Shoalhaven/Illawarra; the retiree population in the Southern Highlands also reflects a different socio-economic demographic, being a country and Sydney-gentry demographic. The strongest community of interest is again clearly between the Shoalhaven and the Illawarra.

In conclusion:

- There are strong linkages and interactions establishing a strong community of interest all along the coastal strip.
- Minor linkages and interactions exist between the coast and Wingecarribee, but it would be tenuous to assert any encompassing community of interest, outside specific but minor business interests like dairy farming.
- The linkages and interactions are stronger between Wollongong and the Wingecarribee, than between the Shoalhaven and the Wingecarribee.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Yours sincerely



Ed Gilmore  
4 Hartwell Cres  
Kiama NSW 2533