

COMMENT ON OBJECTIONS

The Federal Redistribution 2009
NSW



Comment on Objections Number 28

by

**Rob Allen, Assistant General Secretary, Australian Labor Party,
NSW Branch**

5 Pages



18 September 2009

Mr Tjoen San Lauw
Acting Australian Electoral Officer for New South Wales
AEC New South Wales
Level 3, Roden Cutler House,
24 Campbell Street,
HAYMARKET. NSW 2000

Dear Mr Lauw,

On behalf of the New South Wales Branch of the Australian Labor Party, I
attach our comments on objections to the proposed boundaries for Divisions
of the Redistribution Committee for NSW

Yours sincerely,

Rob Allen
ASSISTANT GENERAL SECRETARY



AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY (NEW SOUTH WALES BRANCH)

**COMMENTS ON OBJECTIONS TO NSW REDISTRIBUTION
COMMITTEE'S PROPOSALS**

GILMORE/THROSBY

We note the appeal 112 by Duncan Gair, Mayor of Wingecarribee Shire Council conveying that the Council wishes all of Wingecarribee to be included in the same Division. The Councillors expressed no preference as to which Division the Shire is located only that it be kept together. Unfortunately, this objection can't be upheld without the proposed Division of Hume being split in half.

Both the Liberal and National parties have suggested that Bowral, Mittagong and Moss Vale be transferred to Gilmore instead of being in Throsby, as proposed by the Redistribution Committee.

However, in their objection the Coalition propose that the Shire of Kiama (which is kept entirely in Gilmore by the Commissioners: see par 2.25 in Lib Party objection) be split with some 3785 projected electors represented by Gerringong and Gerroa being placed in Gilmore with the remainder of Kiama being placed in Throsby.

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, and 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 Highlands.

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 (Highlands to coast). The most apparent linkages for these characteristics run from the Highlands north-south along the Hume Highway corridor to south-west Sydney. The only significant linkage is an employment linkage from the near-Highlands 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:** All these 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. The 2006 Annual Average Daily Traffic Volume (AADT) at Bombo is 27,757.
- **AADT east-west:** The traffic flows measurably reflect the linkages between the Southern Highlands 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 (i.e. Illawarra – Highlands). Traffic movements at the escarpment between the Shoalhaven and the Highlands have an AADT of 2,583.

[source:

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 Southern Highlands than the southern Illawarra. The east-west interactions indicated in the traffic movements are 10% of those running north-south. Public transport between the Highlands and the Shoalhaven barely exists - because there is simply no demand for it.

Similarly, all government agency administrative regions link the Highlands 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 Highlands 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.

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 from Canberra, predominantly) 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 Highlands, 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 Highlands, than between the Shoalhaven and the Highlands.

From its original creation in 1984 the Division of Throsby contained both Shellharbour and Bowral. Prior to 1984 both had been in Macarthur. Clearly Gilmore works best as a coastal Division which under the Committee's proposal has Kiama LGA united.

COOK/HUGHES

Objection 55 of the Bundeena Progress Association which proposes that Bundeena be kept in Cook should be rejected on the grounds that under the Committee's proposal all the Royal National Park will be in the same Division (Cunningham). Moreover, the State District of Heathcote contains Bundeena as well as northern suburbs of Wollongong.

The Liberal Party has also objected to the proposed boundary between Cook and Hughes. They propose that Bonnet Bay and Como be retained in Hughes which would then shed parts of Liverpool to Werriwa and Fowler.

However, under the Committee's proposal the suburb of Como is united (instead of the current split) and the Woronora River is used as a boundary.

Rather strangely, the Liberals make a virtue of retaining Como and Bonnet Bay in Hughes but that can only be done provided Liverpool, already in Hughes is removed.

In the suggestions phase of the Redistribution both the Liberal Party and the ALP suggested that more of Liverpool be added to Hughes. The difference was in degree.

Under the Committee's Hughes more than half its electors come from outside Sutherland LGA with the bulk coming from Liverpool (28 390).

PATERSON/ NEWCASTLE/ LYNE

The Liberal Party's objection to the boundaries between these Divisions should be rejected on the grounds that

- To give effect to its objection the Liberal Party splits Greater Taree LGA by removing electors from Nahiab and other areas.
- Presently Lyne's southern boundary is the boundary of Greater Taree Council. Under the Committee's proposal the southern boundary for Lyne would be the council boundaries of both Gloucester and Greater Taree.
- There is no good reason to transfer Williamtown from Newcastle (where it is now and is proposed to remain) to Paterson due to its strong connection with Newcastle. Indeed Newcastle Airport which is jointly owned by Newcastle and Port Stephens Councils is located at Williamtown.
- It simply makes no sense to argue more of Maitland be added to Newcastle when the lower part of Port Stephens has a much stronger connection.

CALARE/PARKES

The National Party has objected to the above Divisions and has proposed that Parkes and Forbes go into Calare which would transfer Mudgee to Parkes.

This appeal is rather spurious as a glance at the relevant State Districts would indicate. For example the State District of Dubbo also contains Parkes and Forbes. Similarly, the State District of Orange contains Mudgee and Gulgong.

Moreover, Mudgee itself has recently (1984-93) been in Calare. It also makes sense to have Parkes in the Division bearing its name.

Agriculture in Mudgee is much more similar to Bathurst-Orange than with Parkes and Forbes.

HUME/MACARTHUR

We note Objection 111 by the Mayor of Wollondilly which seeks to have this entire Shire in the same Division instead of being split between Hume and Macarthur. But the Council also supports rural precincts of Wollondilly such as around Mount Hunter being transferred to Hume.

The National Party has also supported Mt Hunter being transferred from the proposed Macarthur to Hume. On p29 of its submission the NP has a press clipping from the Macarthur Chronicle dated 25th August, 2009 in which both the MP's for Hume and Macarthur expressed concerns that Mt Hunter would be split in two.

The Commissioners will recall that under the proposed boundaries Wollondilly is split in three separate parts between Hume and Macarthur. Under the ALP objection all of Wollondilly except for Warragamba is placed in Hume.