



The Federal Redistribution 2009
QUEENSLAND



Public Suggestion Number 18

Western Queensland Local Government Association

3 pages

From: Peter O'May [ceo@boulia.qld.gov.au]
Sent: Friday, 24 April 2009 4:16 PM
To: QLD Redistribution
Subject: WQLGA Submission
Attachments: WQLGA Submission electoral boundaries.pdf

Please find attached a submission on the proposed Redistribution.

Thanks

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THE WESTERN QUEENSLAND LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION

Incorporating the Councils of:- Barcaldine Regional Council, Barcoo Shire Council, Blackall-Tambo Regional Council, Boulia Shire Council, Central Highlands Regional Council, Diamantina Shire Council, Flinders Shire Council, Isaac Regional Council, Longreach Regional Council, McKinlay Shire Council and Winton Shire Council.

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Herbert Street
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President: Cr Rick Britton
Secretary: Mr. Peter O'May

24 April 2009

Redistribution Committee for Queensland
GPO Box 2590
Brisbane Qld 4001

Dear Members

Re: Redistribution of Federal Electoral Boundaries in Queensland

The Western Queensland Local Government Association (WQLGA) consists of eleven regional and shire councils in western Queensland - Barcaldine Regional Council, Barcoo Shire Council, Blackall-Tambo Regional Council, Boulia Shire Council, Central Highlands Regional Council, Diamantina Shire Council, Flinders Shire Council, Isaac Regional Council, Longreach Regional Council, McKinlay Shire Council and Winton Shire Council.

The member councils are located across three federal electorates including Flynn, Kennedy and Maranoa.

It is noted that the quota for the proposed redistribution is 97,232 (93,829 min – 100,635 max)

With the projected population figures the electorates of Flynn and Kennedy are anticipated to remain in quota while the electorate of Maranoa is projected to be out of quota (90,878). With many other electorates also out of quota it is assumed several changes will be forthcoming with the proposed redistribution.

Recognising the WQLGA's large membership and varying locations the impacts of the redistribution are likely to differ across our membership therefore this submission does not propose specific suggestions for individual areas rather broad comments for the committees' consideration.

The WQLGA considers the retention of "Community of Interests" among communities within an electorate the key consideration in any redistribution irrespective of the area or communities affected. Communities and regions with similar interests will share common needs and desires.

With business interests, social interests, transport links, communication networks, tourism, education, health, natural resource management and many other key aspects of a community often common with other like communities the grouping of a remote western

community with an urban coastal community provides little common interests or benefits to either community.

By aligning like communities the effectiveness of an elected member can be enhanced as they are able to represent constituents successfully by pursuing common goals in conjunction within the electorate. Common issues such as the impact of drought, the influence of mining activity, funding of regional programmes, employment issues, attraction and retention of workers/families/youth etc will vary across such a large state as Queensland thereby increasing the complexity of issues facing the elected member. Given the sparse population of Western Queensland representing a population spread over 200,000km² presents particular logistical challenges alone.

With the increasing population expansion in South East Queensland and other major urban centres in Queensland we see a continual increase in the size of the large western electorates to conform to the current quota system. This threatens the community of interests of these communities as detailed above given the increasing diversity of the communities required to satisfy the quota. Additionally this exacerbates the problem of elected members representing or even being in touch with certain parts of the electorate.

To alleviate this pressure it is suggested a system of notional electors for large area electorates as provided for in the Queensland *Electoral Act 1992* may assist in limiting the ever expanding size of rural and remote electorates. It is noted that the electorates of Kennedy, Maranoa and Flynn are the three largest electorates in Queensland and the 4th, 5th and 6th largest in Australia.

Notional electors in Queensland are utilised as follows:-

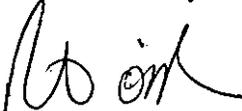
For an electoral district with an area of 100,000 km² or more, two per cent of the total area of the electorate is taken to represent the number of 'notional electors'. This figure is added to the number of actual enrolled electors in the district to make the total number of electors fall within 10 per cent of the average number of enrolled electors for an electoral district. For example, an electoral district with an area of 250,000 km² would have 5,000 'notional electors'. This is added to the actual number of electors when calculating whether the number of enrolled electors is within 10 per cent of the average number of enrolled electors.

Whilst acknowledging legislative change would be required to implement a notional elector system or any other alterations to the quota system, the committees' consideration and support on this issue would be welcomed.

This may be one way of combating the expanding size of large electorates which may help retain certain Community of Interests within the electorate.

The committees' consideration of the issues raised above is appreciated.

Yours sincerely



Peter O'May
Secretary