THE FEDERAL REDISTRIBUTION 2008

Northern Territory



2008 Proposed Redistribution of the Northern Territory into Electoral Divisions

Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918

Section 68

Report of the Redistribution Committee for the Northern Territory

2008

Proposed Redistribution of the Northern Territory

into two Electoral Divisions

Report of the Redistribution Committee

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Enclosures

One map showing the 2 proposed electoral divisions.

Compact Disc containing public suggestions to the Redistribution Committee and comment received on those suggestions.

This report is published in accordance with Section 68 of the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918*.

The 2008 Proposed Redistribution of the Northern Territory

Report of the Redistribution Committee

Representation of the Northern Territory in the House of Representatives

1. On 17 November 2005 the Electoral Commissioner made a determination of state and territory representation entitlements under section 48(1) of the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918* (the Electoral Act). Under the determination, the Northern Territory is entitled to 2 Members of the House of Representatives.

Direction for a redistribution of Northern Territory electoral divisions

2. Section 59(1) of the Electoral Act provides that a redistribution shall commence whenever the Australian Electoral Commission (the Electoral Commission) so directs by notice published in the Commonwealth Government Gazette (the Gazette).

3. In accordance with section 59(2) of the Electoral Act, a direction to commence shall be made if a period of seven years after the day on which the state or territory was last redistributed into electoral divisions has expired. The direction must be made within 30 days after the expiration of the seven year period.

4. The last federal redistribution of the Northern Territory was determined on 21 December 2000. The Electoral Commission directed the commencement of the current redistribution on 16 January 2008.

5. At the end of 16 January 2008 the number of electors enrolled in the Northern Territory was 119 359. Redistribution statistics which show the detailed electoral enrolment figures as at 16 January 2008 were made available on the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) website. In addition, copies were available at the Northern Territory Darwin AEC office. The statistics were given at the following levels:

   - Census Collection District (CCD)
   - Statistical Local Area (SLA)
   - Electoral Division
   - Territory.

Quota

6. Under section 65(2) of the Electoral Act, the Electoral Commissioner determined that the quota of electors for the Northern Territory was 59 680 (119 359 divided by 2 Members). Thus, the permitted range of the margin of allowance of 10% below and above the quota is 53 712 to 65 648 respectively as at 16 January 2008. (Table 1) In making its proposal for the Northern Territory, the Redistribution Committee (the Committee) is not permitted to propose electoral divisions that exceed that range.

Table 1: Determination of the quota

Number of divisions into which the Northern Territory is to be distributed	2
Number of electors in the Northern Territory at 16 January 2008	119 359
Quota for the Northern Territory	59 680
Permissible maximum number of electors (+10%) in a division	65 648
Permissible minimum number of electors (-10%) in a division	53 712

Enrolment projections

7. Section 66(3)(a) of the Electoral Act requires the Committee to "…as far as practicable, endeavour to ensure that, if the State or Territory were redistributed in accordance with the proposed redistribution, the number of electors enrolled in each Electoral Division in the State or Territory would not, at the projection time determined under section 63A, be less than 96.5% or more than 103.5% of the average divisional enrolment of that State or Territory at that time…". The projection time is three years and six months after the expected date of the final determination of the boundaries, that is, 16 June 2012.

8. The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) supplied enrolment projections to the AEC using AEC enrolment data and a cohort-component method to project the enrolment of each CCD to 16 June 2012. Divisional Returning Officers (DROs) of the AEC examined the ABS projections in the light of their local knowledge and experience[1]. DROs made use of information supplied by relevant local authority planning and statistical groups, as well as their own resources in undertaking this task. The Australian Electoral Officer for the Northern Territory also reviewed the projections.

1 As noted in the Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters report "Report on the Effectiveness and Appropriateness of the Redistribution Provisions of Parts III and IV of the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918* (December 1995)

9. The projections were made available on the AEC website as an aid to persons and organisations interested in using them to assist with the preparation of public suggestions, or comments on suggestions. In addition, copies were made available at the Northern Territory Darwin AEC office.

10. The projected total enrolment for the Northern Territory at 16 June 2012 is 130 149. The average enrolment of the two divisions at that time would be 65 075. The 3.5% tolerance below and above that average requires that proposed divisions be constructed in the range between 62 797 and 67 353 electors. (Table 2)

Table 2: Enrolment projections at 16 June 2012

Projected number of electors in the Northern Territory at 16 June 2012	130 149
Average enrolment for the Northern Territory projected at 16 June 2012	65 075
103.5% of average enrolment projected at 16 June 2012	67 353
96.5% of average enrolment projected at 16 June 2012	62 797

Appointment of the Redistribution Committee for the Northern Territory

11. In accordance with section 60 of the Electoral Act, the Electoral Commission appointed the Redistribution Committee for the Northern Territory on 9 April 2008.

12. The Redistribution Committee comprised the following members:

Electoral Commissioner	Mr Ian Campbell
Acting Australian Electoral Officer for the Northern Territory	Mr Wayne Harlock
Auditor-General for the Northern Territory	Mr Frank McGuiness
Surveyor-General for the Northern Territory	Mr Garry West

13. A formal meeting of the Committee was held on 16 April 2008.

Public suggestions and comments

14. In accordance with section 64 of the Electoral Act, the Electoral Commissioner invited written suggestions and written comments on those suggestions by notice published in the Government Gazette on 27 February 2008 and in the Northern Territory News on 1 March 2008.

15. At the stipulated closing time on 28 March 2008, three suggestions had been received from:

- Mr Martin Gordon
- Australian Labor Party, Northern Territory Branch
- Northern Territory Country Liberal Party.

16. In accordance with the Electoral Act, the suggestions were made available to members of the public for perusal at the office of the Australian Electoral Officer for the Northern Territory, and also published on the AEC website, from Monday 31 March 2008.

17. The period during which comments could be made on these public suggestions closed on 11 April 2008. At that date, one comment had been received from:

- Australian Labor Party, Northern Territory Branch.

18. The comment was made available at the office of the Australian Electoral Officer for the Northern Territory and published on the AEC website.

19. As required by section 64(4) of the Electoral Act, the Committee considered all the public submissions lodged within the statutory timeframe.

Statutory requirements for the making of a proposed redistribution

20. Section 66(1) of the Electoral Act requires the Redistribution Committee for the Northern Territory to make a proposed redistribution of the Territory.

21. Sections 66(3) and 66(3A) of the Electoral Act prescribe that:

> *(3) In making the proposed redistribution, the Redistribution Committee:*
>
> *(a) shall, as far as practicable, endeavour to ensure that, if the State or Territory were redistributed in accordance with the proposed redistribution, the number of electors enrolled in each Electoral Division in the State or Territory would not, at the projection time determined under section 63A, be less than 96.5% or more than 103.5% of the average divisional enrolment of that State or Territory at that time; and*
>
> *(b) subject to paragraph (a), shall give due consideration, in relation to each proposed Electoral Division, to:*
>
> *(i) community of interests within the proposed Electoral Division, including economic, social and regional interests;*

(ii) means of communication and travel within the proposed Electoral Division;

(iv) the physical features and area of the proposed Electoral Division; and

(v) the boundaries of existing Divisions in the State or Territory;

and subject thereto the quota of electors for the State or Territory shall be the basis for the proposed redistribution, and the Redistribution Committee may adopt a margin of allowance, to be used whenever necessary, but in no case shall the quota be departed from to a greater extent than one-tenth more or one-tenth less.

(3A) When applying subsection (3), the Redistribution Committee must treat the matter in subparagraph (3)(b)(v) as subordinate to the matters in subparagraphs (3)(b)(i), (ii) and (iv).

Community of interests, means of communication and travel, physical features and existing boundaries

22. As set out in section 66(3) of the Electoral Act, the criteria of community of interests, means of communication and travel, physical features and area, and boundaries of existing divisions, are secondary to the two requirements of:

- endeavouring to ensure that the number of electors in proposed divisions are within a range of 3.5% below or above the average divisional enrolment at the projection time; and
- ensuring that current enrolments are within a 10% range below or above the quota.

23. However, within limits imposed by the numerical criteria and other considerations, the Committee acknowledges that it is also highly desirable that electoral boundaries be readily recognisable. Therefore, local government boundaries, locality boundaries, main roads, railways, waterways and other linear features, guide the Committee.

Names of proposed divisions

24. Guidelines on naming electoral divisions were brought to the attention of interested persons when the redistribution was advertised and are publicly available on the AEC website.

Technical procedures

25. The AEC maintains the electoral roll on the basis of alignment to CCDs, and is able to provide statistical data on enrolments and projected enrolments at this level. Accordingly, in formulating its proposal, the Committee used CCDs as basic building blocks. The Northern Territory is divided into 515 CCDs based on the 2006 Census of Population and Housing. Each CCD is of differing size and shape and has a defined boundary. In cases where the Committee considers that a particular CCD boundary is inappropriate for use as a divisional boundary, the CCD may be split to provide a more useful boundary.

26. The indicative area of electoral divisions in the Northern Territory has been calculated by aggregating the area of:

    - all land-based CCDs;
    - any parts of land based CCDs; and
    - any lakes, ponds, rivers, creeks, wetlands or marshes not already included in land-based CCDs, that are wholly contained within the divisional boundary of each electoral division.

27. Areas are spheroidal and are calculated on the geocentric datum of Australia (GDA94) spheroid using the AEC's Electoral Boundary Mapping System (EBMS), developed within the proprietary "MapInfo Professional" software package. EBMS was made available for public use at the office of the Australian Electoral Officer for the Northern Territory.

Enrolment in existing divisions

28. The actual and projected enrolment figures for each of the divisions in the Northern Territory are detailed below and illustrated in Tables 3 and 4.

29. The variations from the quota, 59 680, are +2.54% for the Division of Lingiari and –2.54% for the Division of Solomon. These variations are within the 10% range.

30. The variation from the 16 June 2012 average enrolment projection, 65 075, is +0.58% for the Division of Lingiari and -0.58% for the Division of Solomon. That is, enrolment projections for both divisions are within 3.5% statistical range.

Table 3: Existing Divisions - Variation from the 2008 Enrolment Quota

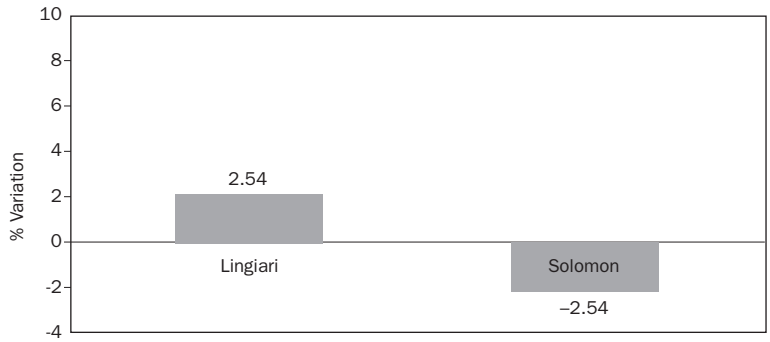
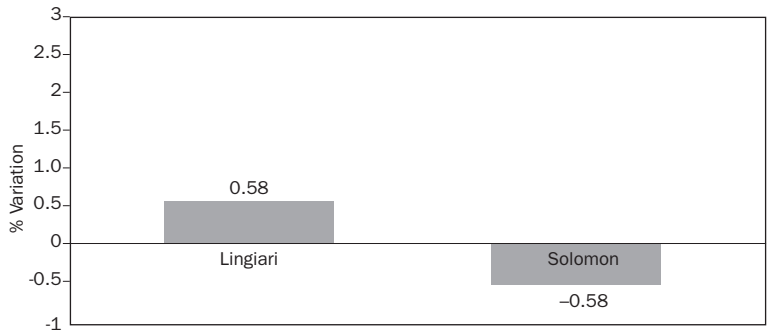


Table 4: Existing Divisions – Variation from the 2012 Projected Enrolment



Strategy for proposed redistribution of the Northern Territory

31. The Committee's strategy for formulating its proposed redistribution was based on the requirements of the Electoral Act.

32. The Committee considers that the principle of equality of electors between electoral divisions is of high importance. In seeking to achieve numerical equality, the Committee was particularly mindful of the need to consider community of interests, such as recognising the respective urban and rural characteristics of the two divisions.

33. The population of the Northern Territory as at 30 September 2007 was 216 500, an increase of 2.2% from the previous year. The Committee noted that the population of Darwin accounted for 55% of the Territory's population at 30 June 2007 and 70% of its population growth during 2006-07.

34. The Committee notes that the pockets of growth are occurring in and around the Darwin City, Palmerston suburbs, and adjacent regional areas, while outer rural and remote areas are not experiencing the same rates of growth.

35. The Committee considered the views presented in the public suggestions and comment on the suggestions. The Committee noted that:

- Mr Martin Gordon proposed that no change to existing boundaries be made, as the projection figures demonstrate that both divisions are forecast to have similar elector numbers in 2012. He also indicated that an adjustment to the Taylor Road portion of the boundary was possible, but on balance suggested the boundary remain unchanged.
- The Australian Labor Party (ALP), Northern Territory Branch, supported retaining the current boundaries. The ALP submitted that the long-term interests of the divisions and the distinct communities of interest that reside within them are best protected by this position, and argued that the enrolment projections do not justify any change.
- The Northern Territory Country Liberal Party (CLP) proposed to transfer approximately 1 500 electors from the Division of Lingiari into the Division of Solomon to narrow the margin of difference in projected enrolment numbers between the two divisions in 2012. The suggestion proposed moving electors into the Division of Solomon from the Howard Springs region.

36. The Australian Labor Party, Northern Territory Branch, also submitted a comment on the suggestions. It argued against moving electors from the Division of Lingiari to the Division of Solomon, as proposed by the CLP, based on the projected enrolment figures and on community of interest grounds.

37. In considering possible options for the redistribution of divisional boundaries in the Northern Territory, the Committee sought to ensure that population and enrolment trends were appropriately taken into account.

38. As explained in paragraphs 29 and 30, both divisions, with their current boundaries, remain well within the statistical tolerances in relation to the enrolment quota and the projected enrolment. The difference between the projected average enrolment for the Northern Territory, 65 075, and the projected enrolment for each division is marginal at –378 electors for Lingiari and +379 for Solomon.

39. The Committee noted that the enrolment projections indicated more substantial growth in the Division of Solomon than Lingiari. Projected enrolment growth for the Division of Lingiari is only 6.96% to 16 June 2012, compared with 11.23% for Solomon. (Table 5)

Table 5: Enrolment projections of existing divisions

Division	Number of CCDs	Enrolment 16.01.2008	Projected Enrolment 16.06.2012	Growth
Lingiari	335	61 196	65 453	6.96%
Solomon	180	58 163	64 696	11.23%
Northern Territory	**515**	**119 359**	**130 149**	**9.04%**

40. Given the elector growth patterns in the Darwin and Palmerston vicinity, the Committee concluded that it was not necessary to move the boundary further east to align with Taylor Road. This would bring more electors into the Division of Solomon when, in all likelihood, the boundary may need to move west to accommodate the growth expected in Darwin and Palmerston by the time of the next redistribution. Electors are familiar with the current boundary line and the Committee could not conclude that changing the boundary to Taylor Road was supported by community of interest arguments.

41. Similarly, the Committee concluded that the suggestion to move parts of Howard Springs from the slower growing Division of Lingiari into the faster growing Division of Solomon was contrary to the trends shown by the projection data and was not sustainable in the longer term. Enrolment projection figures indicate that the Division of Solomon is likely to need to shed electors rather than gain electors in future. In addition, the Committee considered that such a move would not satisfy the community of interest criterion as it would geographically

split the town of Howard Springs and separate it from other rural block communities such as Humpty Doo and Bees Creek.

42. The Committee is satisfied that the existing boundaries generally reflect the community of interests of an urban Darwin-focused division (Solomon) and the geographically separate and predominately rural based Division of Lingiari.

43. The Committee has taken this opportunity to make changes to the coastal boundaries of the Division of Solomon so that they coincide substantially with the existing Darwin, Palmerston and Litchfield Municipal boundaries. These changes do not affect any current electors and will minimise potential ambiguities in the future.

44. The Committee has concluded that the existing land boundaries for the Divisions of Lingiari and Solomon should remain unchanged.

Summary

45. In making its proposal, the Committee noted that current and projected enrolment figures do not demand a change to the existing boundaries and it found no compelling case for instituting change on community of interests or other grounds specified in the Electoral Act.

46. The Committee concluded that making interim changes to move the boundary towards the east to increase the size of the Division of Solomon would be contrary to the long-term requirements of the Territory, and in all likelihood would require reversing at the next redistribution. Therefore no change to the existing land boundaries was deemed necessary at this stage. However, the Committee has proposed extending the water boundaries around the Division of Solomon to substantially align with the Darwin, Palmerston and Litchfield Municipal boundaries.

47. The proposed divisions are detailed in Tables 6 and 7.

48. The Committee unanimously agrees on its proposed divisional boundaries, as detailed in the report, and commends its redistribution proposal for the Northern Territory.

Ian Campbell	Wayne Harlock	Frank McGuiness	Garry West
Presiding Member	Member	Member	Member

Redistribution Committee Northern Territory
Darwin, Northern Territory - 20 June 2008

Statistical summary and general description of the manner in which each proposed division has been constituted

Table 6: Summary of variations for proposed divisions

Division	Base Enrolment 16 Jan 2008	Variance % (Average)	Projected Enrolment 16 June 2012	Variance % (Projected)	Approximate Area (sq km)
Lingiari	61 196	2.54	65 453	0.58	1 352 034
Solomon	58 163	-2.54	64 696	-0.58	337
Northern Territory	**119 359**		**130 149**		**1 352 371**
Average	59 680		65 075		

Table 7: General description of how proposed divisions are constituted

This table sets out how each proposed division is constituted, arranged under SLAs. Each SLA comprises a number of CCDs. The CCDs which applied at the 2006 Census of Population and Housing have been used.

Proposed Division 1: - Lingiari

How Constituted	Actual Enrolment 16-Jan-08	Projected Enrolment 16-Jun-12
From existing Division of Lingiari		
SLAs of		
Alice Springs (T) - Charles	3010	3004
Alice Springs (T) - Heavitree	1397	1506
Alice Springs (T) - Larapinta	4762	4746
Alice Springs (T) - Ross	4390	4463
Alice Springs (T) - Stuart	998	1022
Alpurrurulam (CGC)	286	290
Angurugu (CGC)	533	588
Anmatjere (CGC)	685	836
Arltarlpilta (CGC)	151	141
Belyuen	137	138
Binjari	133	136
Borroloola	463	530
Coomalie	557	652
Cox Peninsula	221	223
Cox Finniss	264	261
Daguragu	381	402
Daly	557	593
East Arnhem - Balance	4169	4863
Elliott District (CGC)	235	223
Elsey	496	709
Groote Eylandt	857	849

How Constituted	Actual Enrolment 16-Jan-08	Projected Enrolment 16-Jun-12
Gulf	439	430
Hanson	665	644
Jabiru (T)	599	631
Jilkminggan (CGC)	164	164
Katherine (T)	4489	4515
Kunbarllanjnja (CGC)	610	660
Lajamanu (CGC)	462	493
Litchfield (S) – Pt A	59	67
Litchfield (S) – Pt B	9195	10335
Ltyentye Purte (CGC)	321	361
Marngarr (CGC)	156	152
Mataranka (CGC)	127	124
Nauiyu Nambiyu (CGC)	291	290
Nhulunbuy	2041	2264
Numbulwar Numburindi (CGC)	495	534
Nyirranggulung Mardrulk Ngadberre (CGC)	653	624
Palmerston (C) Balance	0	0
Petermann-Simpson	1134	1188
Pine Creek	216	215
Sandover	1331	1557
South Alligator	350	329
Tableland	283	280
Tanami	1572	1500
Tapatjatjaka (CGC)	151	147
Tennant Creek (T)	1696	1832
Tennant Creek Balance	783	774
Territory of Christmas Island	562	553
Territory of Cocos (Keeling) Islands	392	389

How Constituted	Actual Enrolment 16-Jan-08	Projected Enrolment 16-Jun-12
Thamarrurr (CGC)	1164	1433
Timber Creek (CGC)	142	130
Tiwi Islands (CGC)	1537	1589
Victoria	391	395
Walangeri Ngumpinku (CGC)	258	310
Wallace Rockhole (CGC)	72	71
Watiyawanu (CGC)	152	147
West Arnhem	2020	2374
Yuendumu (CGC)	555	627
Yugul Mangi (CGC)	987	1150
Total for proposed Division of Lingiari	**61 196**	**65 453**

Proposed Division 2: - Solomon

How Constituted	Actual Enrolment 16-Jan-08	Projected Enrolment 16-Jun-12
From existing Division of Solomon		
SLAs of		
Alawa	1335	1399
Anula	1563	1583
Bakewell	1798	1953
Bayview-Woolner	1298	2126
Brinkin	669	654
City – Inner	1673	2048
Coconut Grove	1687	1982
Driver	1590	1634
Durack	1647	1951
East Arm	9	9
Fannie Bay	1689	1705
Gray	1787	1826
Gunn-Palmerston City	1427	1835
Jingili	1152	1165
Karama	2834	2937
Larrakeyah	2078	2176
Leanyer	3122	3172
Lee Point-Leanyer Swamp	65	58
Litchfield (S) – Pt A	1222	1152
Litchfield – Pt B	0	0
Ludmilla	1155	1169
Malak	1950	1976
Marrara	954	952
Millner	1617	1611
Moil	1310	1344

How Constituted	Actual Enrolment 16-Jan-08	Projected Enrolment 16-Jun-12
Moulden	1736	1835
Nakara	1236	1251
Narrows	393	536
Nightcliff	2314	2351
Palmerston (C) Balance	1994	4496
Parap	1216	1311
Rapid Creek	1995	2012
Stuart Park	2289	2743
The Gardens	390	525
Tiwi	1499	1603
Wagaman	1264	1285
Wanguri	1257	1296
Winnellie	178	178
Woodroffe	1935	2018
Wulagi	1619	1657
City – Remainder	1217	1182
Total for proposed Division of Solomon	**58 163**	**64 696**