



**THE FEDERAL
REDISTRIBUTION
TASMANIA**

Submission CS4

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I strongly support the "radical revision" option outlined in **Suggestion 22 by the Tasmanian Greens**, which proposes a comprehensive restructure of Clark and Franklin divisions. This approach addresses Franklin's fundamental geographic incoherence while creating sustainable, contiguous divisions that unite genuine communities of interest in southern Tasmania.

Current Boundaries: A Failed Geographic Design

The Division of Franklin is unique in Australia as the only non-island, non-contiguous federal division. As a resident of Cygnet on the western shore, I have no direct road or ferry connection to residents on the eastern shore (Clarence municipality) except by travelling through Clark. This is not merely an inconvenience—it represents a fundamental failure to meet the Electoral Act's requirement to consider "means of communication and travel" (s.66(3)(b)(ii)).

The two halves of Franklin have completely different demographic profiles, economic bases, and community concerns. Western Franklin encompasses rural Huon Valley and Kingborough municipalities with economies centred on agriculture, aquaculture, tourism, and forestry. Eastern Franklin consists of suburban Hobart residential areas on the eastern shore. The only connection between these areas is historical accident, not genuine community of interest.

Why Minimal Change Options Are Insufficient

The minimal change proposals from Labor (Suggestion 19), Liberal (Suggestion 20), and the Greens' main option all perpetuate Franklin's geographic split while making modest boundary adjustments. While these meet the numerical quota requirements, they fail to address the underlying problem:

1. **Labor and Greens' main proposals** have Clark gain Kingston while Franklin remains split, merely adjusting which half is numerically larger
2. **Liberal proposal** has Clark cross the Derwent northward while Franklin remains unchanged, creating different problems without solving the fundamental issue
3. All maintain the situation where approximately 46% of Franklin's electors (western shore) have no practical connection to the majority (eastern shore)

As Suggestion 17 (Justin Lamond) correctly notes: "The Commissioners will face at the next redistribution a similar problem of incremental changes that could further split communities."

The Radical Option: Geographic Logic and Community Coherence

The Greens' radical restructure proposes:

New Clark Division:

- Gains all of western Franklin: Huon Valley Council and remainder of Kingborough Council
- Creates a coherent southern division spanning Hobart, Kingborough, and Huon Valley
- Projected 2030 enrolment: 82,613 (-2.30% from quota) - well within tolerance

Reconstituted Franklin Division:

- Gains all of Glenorchy municipality from Clark
- Becomes a contiguous suburban division spanning Clarence and Glenorchy, connected by Bowen Bridge
- Projected 2030 enrolment: 84,052 (-0.60% from quota) - well within tolerance

Meeting the Redistribution Criteria (s.66(3)(b))

i. **Community of Interests:** The new Clark would unite the City of Hobart with the adjacent Kingborough and Huon Valley areas. As residents of

Cygnet, Huonville, Kingston, and Margate share school catchments, the Huon Valley Council, Channel Highway transport corridor, and common concerns about coastal development, aquaculture impacts, and sustainable tourism. These are genuine, lived communities of interest.

The reconstituted Franklin would unite suburban Hobart communities on both sides of the Derwent that share similar demographic profiles, housing types, and commuting patterns to Hobart CBD.

ii. Means of Communication and Travel: Every part of the proposed new Clark can reach every other part via ordinary roads without passing through another division. The Channel Highway directly connects Cygnet to Hobart via Kingston. This contrasts starkly with current Franklin, where western and eastern residents cannot reach each other except by travelling 45+ minutes through Clark.

iii. Physical Features: The proposed boundaries use clear geographic markers: the Derwent River, municipal boundaries, and the Brooker Highway, making divisions readily identifiable to residents.

iv. Existing Boundaries: While this proposal represents significant change, s.66(3)(b)(v) makes existing boundaries subordinate to other criteria. The Electoral Act explicitly allows disruption where it produces better outcomes on community of interest and communication grounds.

Demographic Sustainability (2030 Projections)

The radical option positions both divisions well within tolerance with excellent growth buffers:

- **Clark at -2.30%** with Kingston-Huntingfield SA2 projected to grow 29.9% (from 1,847 to 8,483 electors), providing substantial buffer for future growth
- **Franklin at -0.60%** with stable suburban population base

As Suggestion 17 notes: "Future redistributions are likely to be small scale and incremental...once done, it would never need to be done again."

In contrast, the Liberal minimal change option places Clark at -4.09% (dangerously close to the -3.5% lower tolerance), while Labor's option, though numerically balanced, perpetuates geographic incoherence that will require addressing at the next redistribution.

Political Representation and Electoral Equity

The current Franklin split creates significant barriers to effective representation:

1. **Campaign logistics:** Candidates must maintain separate campaign offices, volunteer networks, and media strategies for disconnected areas

2. **Community engagement:** Representatives cannot hold unified town halls or community meetings accessible to all constituents
3. **Media market inefficiency:** Western shore events receive limited coverage on eastern shore and vice versa
4. **Independent candidate disadvantage:** Independents lacking major party resources face doubled costs campaigning in split electorates

The radical option removes these barriers, creating divisions where:

- All electors can reasonably attend their representative's community events
- Single volunteer bases can cover entire divisions
- Media coverage reaches all constituents
- Independent candidates compete on equal footing with major parties

Addressing the Disruption Concern

I acknowledge this proposal would move approximately 91,700 electors (22.2% of Tasmania's total). However, this must be weighed against:

1. **Permanent solution:** The geographic incoherence of Franklin has persisted since 1984. Incremental changes merely postpone inevitable restructuring
2. **Quality of representation:** Geographic coherence directly affects how effectively representatives can serve constituents

3. **Electoral equity:** All Tasmanian electors deserve divisions that unite genuine communities of interest
4. **Future stability:** As Suggestion 17 emphasizes, "once done, it would never need to be done again"

The disruption is temporary; the benefit is permanent.

State Electoral Boundaries Alignment

Importantly, these federal boundaries are used for Tasmania's multi-member House of Assembly electorates. The radical option creates more coherent state electorates by:

- Uniting the entire Huon Valley Council in one state/federal electorate
- Keeping all Kingborough areas together
- Creating a logical suburban Franklin spanning both sides of the Derwent

This improves representation at both federal and state levels simultaneously.

Conclusion and Recommendation

I urge the Redistribution Committee to adopt the Greens' radical restructure option for southern Tasmania. While it involves greater initial disruption than minimal change alternatives, it:

1. **Resolves fundamental geographic problems** that have persisted for 40+ years
2. **Creates genuine communities of interest** united by practical communication and travel links
3. **Ensures numerical sustainability** through 2030 and beyond with excellent growth buffers
4. **Improves representative democracy** by enabling effective constituent service
5. **Provides long-term stability** reducing the need for major future re-distributions

The minimal change options may appear less disruptive, but they merely postpone necessary reform while perpetuating a demonstrably failed geographic design. Franklin's non-contiguity is an "historical aberration" (Suggestion 17) that should not continue another seven years.

As a Cygnet resident, I want to be part of an electorate that reflects my genuine community: the southern coastal region from Hobart through Kingborough to the Huon Valley. This is where I shop, work, attend community events, and share common interests with my neighbours. The radical option delivers this outcome while meeting all Electoral Act requirements.

I strongly support Suggestion 22's radical option and urge the Committee to prioritise geographic coherence and community of interest over minimal boundary change.

Supporting References:

- Suggestion 22: Tasmanian Greens (particularly pages 6-7 on radical restructure)
- Suggestion 17: Justin Lamond (Option 3: Abolishing Franklin)
- Suggestion 8: Darren McSweeney (emphasis on means of communication and travel criteria)
- Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918, section 66(3)(b) (redistribution criteria)

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