Submission S32

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SUBMISSION TO THE REDISTRIBUTION COMMITTEE FOR QUEENSLAND

Federal Redistribution: First Nations Toponyms, Catchment Integrities, and Cross-Border Community of Interest

Submitted by: Ty Hardin

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Accessibility & Lived Experience: Deaf and Partially Blind Regional Advocate

Scope of Submission: Division Names and Regional/Remote Boundaries across Queensland Electorates

Filing Reference: Queensland Federal Redistribution (Suggestions Phase)

Executive Summary

This submission provides strategic, evidence-grounded recommendations for the federal redistribution of Queensland's electoral divisions under Sections 66 and 73 of the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918*.

As a Wiradjuri man, founder of *The Third Place Community Inc.*, a deaf and partially blind regional advocate, and an administrative law analyst who has lived and operated across the New South Wales and Queensland border regions, I bring direct, lived-experience standing regarding regional infrastructure, cross-border social ecosystems, and statutory compliance.

This submission formally proposes:

1. **Structural Adoption of First Nations Toponyms & Dual Naming:** Establishing Indigenous language designations for expansive regional divisions (*Kennedy*, *Leichhardt*, *Maranoa*, and *Capricornia*) to reflect traditional Country, ancient trade pathways, and major river catchments.
2. **Community of Interest & Cross-Border Corridor Integrity:** Aligning electoral boundaries with contiguous river basins, agricultural transport routes, and disaster-recovery corridors—recognising that border communities share interconnected economic, health, and emergency infrastructure.

Section 1: Naming Conventions & First Nations Cultural Stewardship

Statutory Criteria Addressed: Names of Electoral Divisions & Cultural Community Interests

Under AEC guidelines, federal divisions may be named after prominent Australians, geographic features, or Indigenous words. Of Queensland's 30 federal divisions, only *Blair*, *Bonner*, and *Maranoa* formally incorporate First Nations names or named individuals.

Specific Naming Proposals:

To align with AEC Naming Guidelines and elevate continuous First Nations legal and cultural stewardship, this submission recommends concrete transitions for key regional divisions:

- **Division of Capricornia:** Transition to or dual-name as **Tunuba** (the Darumbal name for the Fitzroy River system) to reflect the primary ecological, agricultural, and flood-catchment corridor anchoring Central Queensland.
- **Division of Leichhardt:** Transition to **Mabo** (honouring Eddie Mabo's landmark legal legacy) or dual-name with **Kuku Yalanji** to replace colonial exploration names with recognised First Nations land and sea stewardship across Cape York and the Torres Strait.
- **Division of Kennedy:** Transition to or dual-name as **Gudjuda** or **Yirrganydji** to honour the First Nations coastal and river catchments of Tropical North Queensland.
- **Division of Maranoa:** Formally recognise **Mandandanji** and **Gunggari** Country roots across the Balonne and Maranoa river systems, establishing cultural continuity alongside existing geographic naming.

Recommendation 1: That the Redistribution Committee for Queensland formally adopt these proposed First Nations names and dual-naming frameworks across regional divisions to embed continuous Indigenous heritage into Australia's democratic structure.

Section 2: Communities of Interest & Regional/Cross-Border Infrastructure

Statutory Criteria Addressed: Community of Interest within Proposed Electorates (Economic, Social, Regional)

Having lived in the NSW/QLD border region and founded *The Third Place Community Inc.*, I have direct operational insight into how regional communities function. A genuine

"community of interest" in regional Queensland is defined by shared health district corridors, disaster recovery hubs, and transport infrastructure (such as the Newell, Bruce, Landsborough, and Capricorn Highways).

Strategic Boundary Considerations:

1. **Disaster Resilience & Catchment Areas:** Regional centers across Central, Western, and Border Queensland face recurring, catastrophic flood and weather events. Placing interconnected river-basin townships (e.g., within the Fitzroy, Burdekin, or Border-Rivers catchments) into separate federal divisions fractures community advocacy when applying for federal disaster-relief and mitigation infrastructure.
2. **Cross-Border Service Integration:** Communities spanning the NSW/QLD border share crucial healthcare pathways, regional employment hubs, Aboriginal Medical Services (AMS), and Native Title representative bodies. Boundaries must not sever contiguous service networks or isolate regional hubs from the hinterlands that rely on them.

Recommendation 2: That the Redistribution Committee maintain boundary integrity around major river catchments, cross-border health and economic corridors, and shared disaster-management zones.

Section 3: Means of Travel, Communication, and Physical Features

Statutory Criteria Addressed: Means of Communication, Travel & Physical Features

Vast regional divisions cover immense geographic distances. To maintain lawful, accessible representation:

- **Transport Trunk Realignment:** Boundaries must align with primary highway arteries and freight corridors rather than arbitrarily splitting rural service centers.
- **Geographic Topography:** Major natural features—such as the Great Dividing Range and primary river systems—should serve as boundary markers to ensure divisions remain physically navigable for both elected representatives and constituents.

Conclusion

Electoral redistributions are a fundamental instrument of democratic integrity. By incorporating First Nations naming frameworks, respecting cross-border communities of interest, and unifying river catchments, the Commission will ensure Queensland’s federal divisions remain equitable, culturally grounded, and operationally effective.

Respectfully submitted for formal consideration,

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