



**THE FEDERAL
REDISTRIBUTION
SOUTH AUSTRALIA**

Submission COB4

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Feedback on Submissions to the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) on the proposed redistribution and renaming of the Electorate of Grey

Expansion of size of the Grey Electorate

Having read the reasons for the consideration of change in the boundaries of the Grey Electorate and the submissions I have the following to contribute.

As the wife of the previous Member for Grey who accompanied the Member throughout the expanse of the electorate for 17 years, I have a very strong understanding of this unique seat. The sheer magnitude of nights away from home and diversity of issues is huge. The work load is unimaginable to those who do not understand the tyranny of distance and the fairness of equitable representation.

Firstly and foremost in any decision making in relation to Grey is; that it should operate on the least amount of voters allowable under the guidelines, taking into consideration a workable margin. The late Joy Baluch AO former Mayor of Pt Augusta recognized this in suggesting Grey should be split in two and be made up of half the number of electors. While this is not feasible under the guidelines it is possible for the Electoral Commission to recognize the enormity of the work load of the Grey Electorate and consider it is, a work place safety issue to expect one member to travel to so many isolated and spread out areas and now even suggest a change to include more area well beyond the expectations of a safe work place.

Grey is larger than the whole of NSW and has more towns and communities than any other electorate. While Grey has four large towns that are called cities they are small in comparison to cities in other states and have a very regional focus. Incorporating part of the spreading metro area is not consistent with the balance of this large regional and remote seat.

While Spence may have more electors than Grey the job is incomparable when the member or other metro members, can be home every night of the week when not in Canberra and electors can have easy access to their member.

Secondly I wish to bring to your attention that the estimates put forward for growth of electors within the present boundaries of Grey seem out of kilter with what is happening on the ground. Six thousand new houses are currently being constructed in the Two Wells and Roseworthy areas and 512 new homes have commenced construction in the Gracewood development at Mallalla, all within the existing boundaries of Grey. This would suggest the growth in elector numbers will greatly exceed the 2,871 number projected.

This aside the numbers for Grey are within the margins allowable and should in all fairness be on the very lowest end.

Each of the 157 towns and communities and the 19 remote indigenous communities of Grey deserve available and equitable representation. As it was not practical to pick up and take staff away for up to two weeks at a time, I accompanied my husband most of the time and as there is no driver attached to the job, I believe he would not be alive today if I did not do half the driving.

Even around the more settled areas of the Grey Electorate the job requires a huge amount of driving. There is a well-funded charter allowance, but most places do not have hire cars so flying from one place to another is impracticable.

In considering fairness and equity, thought needs to be given to Indigenous communities who need their Member in them as much as time permits to have any chance of understanding issues and actually achieving positive outcomes. You can't fly in fly out of these communities and think you have any real understanding. It is only repetitive visits, staying in communities, seeing and participating in life on the ground. When these places are up to 1500kms from home like the APY Lands and Yalata and Oak Valley, the job becomes enormous.

It is therefore my strong suggestion that no added workload be placed on the Member for Grey, doing so, would be **a grossly negligent act of workplace safety and produce even more inequitable outcomes in rural and remote communities**

Name Change proposal

There have been a large number of submissions on the name change of Grey to O'Donoghue and it poses the question; why would the Commission ask if feedback is not strongly listened to. The overwhelming number of submissions are not keen on change. A number of those in favour do not reside in Grey. It is important people identify with their electorate and unlike other electorates a large amount of people know they are in the Federal Electorate of Grey, the name has a high recognition factor. While a name change would be confusing there has been no compelling case put forward to change the name, **therefore it is outside the strong reasons for change that appear in the guidelines.**

A sentiment that has come through strongly in the submissions, suggests, in the current economic climate and stress on households, a change would be an unnecessary waste, and they indicate there is a low tolerance in the community at this time for spending when it is not necessary. Dr Lowitja O'Donoghue AC is a significant South Australian and while naming an electorate after her is a worthy idea it does not have to be a name change to Grey. In time new electorates are likely to be added to South Australia, either State or Federal, and maybe one of these would be more appropriately named O'Donoghue. Considering Lowitja spent most of her life in Adelaide, a metro seat is worth examination.

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