



**THE FEDERAL  
REDISTRIBUTION  
SOUTH AUSTRALIA**

# Submission COB19

Liberal Party of Australia (SA Division)



Redistribution Committee for South Australia,  
Australian Electoral Commission,  
Locked Bag 4007,  
CANBERRA ACT 2601

By email: [FedRedistribution-sa@aec.gov.au](mailto:FedRedistribution-sa@aec.gov.au)

Dear Committee Members

The Liberal Party of Australia, South Australian Division, welcomes the opportunity to provide this Feedback on Ideas to the augmented Electoral Commission for South Australia as part of the proposed redistribution process.

The Liberal Party acknowledges the substantial work undertaken by the Redistribution Committee and the augmented Electoral Commission to date, and thanks the Commission for its careful consideration of the significant volume of public input received during this stage of the process.

Yours sincerely,

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the signature of Alexander Hyde.

**Alexander Hyde**

**State Director**

**Liberal Party of Australia (SA Division)**



## **Feedback on Ideas**

The Liberal Party of Australia (South Australian Division) welcomes the opportunity to provide Feedback on Ideas received in response to the proposed redistribution of South Australia's federal electoral divisions.

The Redistribution Committee received 415 Ideas on the proposal, of which 376, or approximately 90%, related to the Division of Grey, either in respect of the proposed boundary change, the proposed name change, or both. For this reason, this Feedback on Ideas focuses principally on Grey. It does not seek to address every matter raised in every Idea, but instead identifies the key areas of contention and agreement relevant to the Committee's further consideration.

## **Request for public inquiry**

The Liberal Party encourages the augmented Electoral Commission to conduct an inquiry under section 72(3) of the Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918, given the scale of public response and the significance of the issues raised. Should an inquiry be held, the Liberal Party requests the opportunity to appear and be heard.

## **Purpose of Feedback on Ideas**

It is the Liberal Party's understanding that the purpose of the Feedback on Ideas stage is to assist the augmented Electoral Commission in assessing the merits of matters raised in response to the Redistribution Committee's proposal. This stage provides an opportunity to support, clarify or respond to arguments already raised, rather than to advance entirely new redistribution proposals or materially different boundary configurations. Accordingly, weight should be given to the strength of the evidence and reasoning contained in the Ideas, and to their alignment with the statutory criteria contained within the Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918.

## **Liberal Party position**

The Liberal Party reiterates the key conclusions of its original submission. In the context of a redistribution triggered solely by the passage of time, the circumstances support an approach of minimal necessary change, with primary weight given to the statutory criteria in the Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918.

As previously outlined, the proposed changes to the Division of Grey are not required to meet enrolment thresholds and do not produce a clear improvement against the legislated secondary criteria. Rather, the proposal weakens alignment with community of interests, means of communication and travel, physical features and existing boundaries. It also departs from principles applied elsewhere in the redistribution process, including the recognition of natural boundaries, Local Government Area integrity and public feedback.

The Liberal Party therefore maintains that the proposed alteration to Grey is unnecessary, inconsistent with the statutory framework, and should not be adopted.

## **Summary of Ideas relating to Grey**

The vast majority of Ideas on the proposal related to the Division of Grey, accounting for 376 of the 415 submissions received. Those Ideas demonstrated overwhelming opposition to both the proposed boundary alteration and the proposed renaming of the electorate.

Of the submissions expressing a view on the boundary change, 237 submissions, or 98.3%, opposed the proposal, compared with only 4 submissions, or 1.7%, in support. One of the four submissions in support proposed the inclusion of additional areas within Grey beyond the Committee's proposal, while the remaining supportive submissions were very brief statements of support.

Similarly, 216 submissions, or 75.0%, opposed the proposed name change, compared with 72 submissions, or 25.0%, in support.

The scale and consistency of this feedback strongly suggests that the proposed changes are out of step with community sentiment regarding the identity, composition

and representation of Grey. This reinforces the Liberal Party's broader position that the proposed boundary alteration does not represent a clear improvement against the statutory criteria, including community of interests, means of communication and travel, physical features and existing boundaries.

## **Division of Grey**

### **Boundary change**

The concerns raised in the Liberal Party's submission were also reflected in the South Australian Labor Party's Idea, OB406, which opposed the inclusion of Riverlea Park within Grey. The SA Labor Party noted that Riverlea Park is a distinctly urban, high-growth master-planned community with metropolitan characteristics, including Adelaide Metro servicing, and is materially different in character from the rural and semi-rural communities that comprise Grey.

OB406 also acknowledged that alternative redistribution options exist to address enrolment requirements without transferring a major urban growth area into a predominantly regional electorate with different communities of interest. This reinforces the broad opposition to the proposed boundary change and the concern that it would weaken the regional identity and community coherence of Grey.

A recurring theme across the Ideas was that the inclusion of metropolitan Adelaide fringe suburbs within Grey would dilute the representation of regional and remote South Australian communities. Multiple submissions argued that Grey is already one of the largest and most diverse electorates in Australia, and that adding outer metropolitan areas would weaken community of interests, increase the practical challenges of representation, and shift electoral focus away from regional communities.

OB147 stated that the proposal would "significantly skew the population towards Metro interests and away from the already under represented regional interests". OB159 similarly argued that metropolitan populations risk diluting regional voices and overshadowing issues such as drought support, regional health access and distance education. OB139 raised concern that including Adelaide fringe suburbs would "change the needs and opinions of voters in the electorate", while OB219 argued that the

proposal would dilute representation for Aboriginal, mining and pastoral communities across northern South Australia and create an electorate with “no commonality connecting them”.

Concerns about scale and manageability were also prominent. OB73 and OB128 highlighted Grey’s existing geographic size and diversity, and questioned how any Member could effectively service an even larger and more disparate electorate. OB231 further pointed to existing “City vs Country” disparities in funding, infrastructure and service delivery, reinforcing concerns about equity and service access across regional areas.

Taken together, these Ideas demonstrate a strong and consistent concern that the proposed boundary change would dilute regional representation, diminish Grey’s identity as a regional electorate, and create a division with increasingly divergent community interests.

### Name change

The Liberal Party reaffirms its opposition to the proposed renaming of the Division of Grey to O’Donoghue. This position is grounded in the AEC’s naming guidelines, which place strong emphasis on stability and continuity, including the retention of original Federation electorate names wherever possible.

The Liberal Party also notes and directs the Committee to the detailed reasoning in OB414, which argues that the proposed renaming of Grey is inconsistent with the AEC’s naming guidelines and that insufficient justification has been provided to remove one of South Australia’s original Federation electorates. OB414 contends that Grey should properly be regarded as a Federation electorate, consistent with conclusions reached during the 2017 redistribution, and should therefore only be altered for very strong reasons.

OB414 also disputes the Committee’s characterisation of Sir George Grey as having “limited connection and contribution to Australia”, pointing to his contributions to exploration, Indigenous language documentation, colonial administration and the 1891 Constitutional Convention. It further argues that the proposed adoption of O’Donoghue

occurs unusually soon after Dr O'Donoghue's death and that caution should be exercised before conferring permanent electoral honours of this nature.

For these reasons, the Liberal Party maintains that the case for renaming Grey has not been made. The existing name has longstanding historical significance, strong public recognition, and substantial community support for its retention.