



**THE FEDERAL  
REDISTRIBUTION  
SOUTH AUSTRALIA**

# Submission OB405

District Council of Kimba



## **SUBMISSION TO THE AUSTRALIAN ELECTORAL COMMISSION (AEC) ON THE PROPOSED REDISTRIBUTION AND RENAMING OF THE ELECTORATE OF GREY**

**PREPARED FOR:** The Australian Electoral Commission

**PREPARED BY:** The District Council of Kimba

**DATE:** 24<sup>th</sup> April 2026

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*We acknowledge the Barngarla People, the Traditional Owners of the land now known as the District Council of Kimba and their continuing connection to land, culture and community. We pay our respect to Elders past, present and emerging, and we extend that respect to other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in our community.*

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### **1. Introduction**

The District Council of Kimba welcomes the opportunity to provide a submission in relation to the proposed redistribution and renaming of the Division of Grey.

Kimba is a small, remote regional community on the Eyre Peninsula, with strong economic foundations in agriculture and emerging industry. Like many communities across Grey, our capacity to thrive is closely linked to effective federal representation that understands and advocates for the unique challenges of regional and remote Australia.

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### **2. Name of the Electorate**

The District Council of Kimba acknowledges the significant contributions of both Sir George Grey and Dr Lowitja O'Donoghue.

Dr O'Donoghue's connection to the region, including her birth in the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (APY) Lands within the current electorate, and her lifelong contribution to Aboriginal health and advocacy, is widely respected. Council also recognises that there is support for a name change to honour her legacy. Council also notes that some members have expressed a preference for the alternative name "Lowitja" as part of this recognition.

However, Council is also aware of some concerns in respect to the change based on the following reasons:

- Lack of clear justification and a compelling rationale or tangible benefit to warrant a change to the electorate name.

- Unnecessary administrative and financial cost: The renaming of an electorate carries with it a range of implementation costs, including updates to signage, materials and systems. It is hard to justify these costs in the current economic climate.
- Change without demonstrated need: Does the existing name create disadvantage or confusion that would necessitate change?

While the recognition of significant individuals is important, Council considers that such recognition should be supported by a clear purpose and community value.

**Council Position:**

On balance, while recognising the merit in acknowledging individuals of national significance, Council considers that the case for change has not been sufficiently demonstrated to outweigh these concerns.

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### **3. Boundary Realignment**

The District Council of Kimba holds significant concerns regarding the proposed changes to the boundaries of the Division of Grey.

Grey is a large, geographically expansive regional and remote electorate comprising communities with shared economic drivers and service challenges, including agriculture, mining, transport, health access, and workforce availability. These characteristics create a strong regional identity that underpins effective and coherent representation.

The proposed inclusions introduce metropolitan and peri-urban populations whose service needs, growth pressures, and policy priorities are fundamentally different from those of remote and regional communities. This shift not only alters the character of the electorate but also has practical implications for the sitting Member, significantly increasing the geographic spread, travel burden, and time required to effectively engage with constituents across an already vast electorate.

Council questions whether the current approach to redistribution gives sufficient weight to factors beyond population alone. In particular, there appears to be limited consideration of economic contribution, industry diversity, geographic scale, and the complexity of service delivery across remote Australia. A population-centric model risks overlooking the distinct role and needs of regional and remote electorates that contribute significantly to the national economy through agriculture, mining, energy, and freight networks.

Key concerns include:

- Increased burden on representation: Expanding the electorate into metropolitan fringe areas substantially increases travel distances and logistical demands on the sitting Member, potentially reducing the capacity for meaningful engagement with remote communities already spread across vast distances.

- Dilution of regional representation: The inclusion of metropolitan populations risks shifting focus and advocacy away from the specific needs and priorities of rural and remote communities.
- Misalignment of interests: Urban growth areas have fundamentally different policy needs and service expectations compared to remote regional communities, weakening the coherence of representation.
- Fragmentation of local government areas: Splitting council areas across multiple electorates reduces representational continuity and creates unnecessary complexity for both communities and elected representatives.

Council also notes that the current population profile of Grey does not appear to warrant significant structural change, and that the existing boundaries are well established, functional, and widely understood.

Where boundary adjustments are considered necessary, Council strongly supports an approach that:

- Preserves the regional integrity and intent of the electorate; and
- Prioritises alignment of whole local government areas within a single electorate wherever practicable.

**Council Position:**

The District Council of Kimba does not support the proposed boundary changes and strongly advocates for the retention of the current boundaries of Grey.

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**4. Importance of Maintaining a Regional Electorate**

For Kimba and similar small and remote communities, effective representation depends on being part of an electorate defined by shared geographic, economic, and service delivery realities.

As a remote council, Kimba relies on advocacy that reflects the lived experience of regional communities, including:

- Agricultural productivity, resilience, and supply chain sustainability
- Regional health access and workforce challenges
- Critical infrastructure and freight connectivity across vast distances
- Housing availability and workforce attraction and retention
- Economic diversification and regional industry development

When remote communities are absorbed into electorates that become increasingly metropolitan in character, there is a real risk that their voice is diminished and their priorities are outweighed by population centres. This results in small regional communities effectively losing visibility and influence within the parliamentary system, despite their significant contribution to the national economy and regional development.

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## 10. Conclusion

The District Council of Kimba respectfully submits that:

1. Any proposed name change should only occur where there is clear community support and demonstrated benefit, which is not evident at this time.
2. The proposed inclusion of metropolitan fringe areas should not proceed, as it materially alters the character of the Division of Grey and undermines the cohesion, integrity, and effective representation of regional and remote communities.

The District Council of Kimba remains committed to working constructively with all levels of government to achieve strong and sustainable regional outcomes. Maintaining the Division of Grey as a genuinely regional electorate is essential to ensuring that rural and remote communities continue to have effective, coherent, and meaningful representation.

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