



# Submission S17

Mark Basham

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**From:** Mark Basham [REDACTED]  
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**Subject:** Submission for SA Federal Electoral Redistribution

**Categories:** [REDACTED]

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Hello

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the federal redistribution for South Australia.

I am the proprietor of a fledgling news service in SA reporting on elections and government policy of all 3 levels of government. My background includes being an elected Councillor for 34 years, as a journalist, a former political party member (last century), election campaign consultant and campaign volunteer. I have maintained an interest in electoral affairs since my teen years, and also possess an avid interest in local history, geography and statistics - three areas relevant to boundary redistributions.

My submission covers two areas, one being the boundaries themselves, and the other the names of the electorates.

#### ELECTORAL BOUNDARIES

I fully support the legislation requiring the electorates to be within the mathematical parameters as they are, as this is a vital piece of our democracy, being as close to 'one vote, one value' as is practically possible.

My only suggestion here is that the boundaries should be, as far as practicable, be on along boundaries contiguous with other recognised boundaries, preferably for a Council, locality or significant geographic boundary such as watercourse. I note that this issue is not as common as for state electoral boundaries, but I raise it so that any issues can be prevented.

I was involved in the campaign in Sturt at the 2025 Federal Election, and noted the following:

\* The locality of Paracombe was split between Sturt and Mayo (BTW, Wikipedia is wrong), along the Council boundary of Tea Tree Gully and Adelaide Hills.

This complied with my requirements above - but was very frustrating trying to explain to volunteers when delivering flyers.

\* The suburb of Teringie is partially in Sturt and Mayo, and the boundary is based on no more than the side boundaries of private properties. Approximately 200 properties of Teringie are in Mayo. Surely the allowance was not going to be pushed out for these approximately 400 electors, out of a total of 120,000 plus?

\* Similarly, the suburb of Woodforde is also split between Sturt and Mayo, but in this case there are apparently no dwellings or electors in the Mayo part of Woodforde.

My point in using a well known and logical boundary is not just to make life easier for the parties, candidates and volunteers; but to make it easier for the electors, who are incredulous when told their next door neighbour live in a different electorate. It devalues the reputation of the AEC for no good reason - people cannot understand why this is, and is an issue that can easily be resolved and still meet boundary requirements.

This is an idea that could also be implemented across all states and territories.

### ELECTORATE NAMES

I have noted the AEC electorate naming protocols.

This has been a bugbear of mine for some years, that electorates, at both State and Federal level, have been named after obscure historical figures etc and the people these electorates are meant to serve, are the last ones considered. I can promise you from my experience with thousands of constituents over the years, that there is no end of confusion amongst the general population as to what electorate they are in, even for those who do not move home, when their electorate has some non-relevant local geographic moniker. People remember where they live, even if not entirely accurate, not to which electorate they belong. Giving them a geographic name and they're OK. It seems only the politically engaged elite can remember. That is not how it should be.

So, let's look at South Australia.

ADELAIDE - this works. A lot of my council ward is in this electorate, and it is clear that most of the residents know they live in Adelaide.

THE REST - all named after, sometimes obscure, South Australian historical figures. Whilst I give points to the historical knowledge of those doing the naming, and I am not at all opposed to naming things after people, it does not help people know which electorate they belong.

I am not suggesting we change all the names to numbers, like in the USA, "District 23 of Colorado", but the UK and Europe manage to keep it geographic. Even New Zealand uses geographic names - ironically brought in by their then Governor, one former SA Governor, George Grey, who of course, has an electorate named after him in SA!

I am not sure what has driven this desire to name electorates after obscure colonial figures, whether cultural cringe, or bragging rights at history trivia nights, but in 2025 I think it is time that this game finishes and we go back to the 1800s in one way, and go back to naming electorates after geography.

I am also not suggesting we change them all - some are just too hard now and have been around for many years and that has, to some degree, helped entrench the name, however, let's not change any names anytime soon, and if we do, change them to something geographic.

Hence, I am proposing renaming using the British system, but am not wedded to:

ADELAIDE - ADELAIDE

BARKER - RIVERLAND AND SOUTH EAST

BOOTHBY - BRIGHTON AND MITCHAM

GREY - NORTHERN SA

HINDMARSH - PORT ADELAIDE

KINGSTON - HAPPY VALLEY AND NOARLUNGA

MAKIN - TEA TREE GULLY

MAYO - ADELAIDE HILLS AND FLEURIEU

SPENCE - ELIZABETH AND GAWLER

STURT - EASTERN ADELAIDE

I am not expecting any of these changes to happen, but at least they're submitted for the consideration of all.

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*kind regards*

**Mark Basham**

Editor

