

Blair D Campbell
16 Parkhill Way
WILSON WA 6107
blaircam1@aapt.net.au

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Secretary to the Electoral Distribution Commissioners
Office of the Electoral Distribution Commissioners
Level 11, 111 St Georges Terrace
PERTH WA 6000
boundaries@waec.wa.gov.au

Dear Sirs

WRITTEN COMMENTS ON THE SUGGESTIONS PURSUANT TO S. 16F OF THE ELECTORAL ACT 1907

I had originally intended to restrict my comments to matters directly affecting my locality however, having read all of the suggestions, I feel compelled to comment on one other item. My comments are as follows:

1. It is common ground that there will need to be shrinkage in the North Metropolitan region to allow expansion of both the South and East Metropolitan regions. Most suggestions propose limiting North Metropolitan to the districts north of the river and most westerly – the balance being shifted into East Metropolitan and East Metropolitan shedding its more south-westerly districts to South Metropolitan.

However, I note the ALP submission that the district of Cottesloe find its way into the South Metropolitan region (the Greens' submission also hints at flexibility in this area). The Act provides that the North and South Metropolitan regions are to be 'generally to the north of the Swan River' and 'generally to the south of the Swan River'. To include a district that is entirely comprised north of the river in a region that is required to be 'generally to the south of the Swan River' is to offend the wording of the section. To read the term 'generally' so as to permit the opposite of the remainder of the section seems to strain the wording unnecessarily.

In addition, while the district of Cottesloe could arguably be considered contiguous with its neighbours south of the river (boundaries meeting in the river), drawing a regional boundary in this way ignores the obvious physical boundary of the river and the long-term (through rather artificial) north/south divide that has existed in the psyche of Perth for many years. In my view the use of the term 'generally' should be read so as to permit the Commissioners to include areas to the north, north-west, and north-east of the Swan River in the North Metropolitan region and likewise areas south, south-west and south-east of the river in the South Metropolitan region.¹

2. The suburb of Wilson has been in the electorate of Victoria Park for some time. Apart from that forced association I am at a complete loss as to what other matter compelled this forced marriage. While Wilson is a small suburb it has its own personality. It is served well by its two local primary schools (one public, one private). It is in a different municipality to Victoria Park. The nearest large shops are not in Victoria Park, our children do not go to High School in Victoria Park. The electorate of Victoria Park roughly follows the train tracks – this is not the case for Wilson as we are far removed from the train tracks. The boundary must have a peculiar little 'tail' to take in my suburb and this seems at odds with the general advantage of simple, clear

¹ This was the topic of discussion in Committee in the Legislative Council (see Hansard 5 May 2005). Relevantly the consensus (if such can be discerned) of those participating – including the Parliamentary Secretary – is that the Commissioners would act as outlined above – namely that North Metropolitan contract to the more westerly parts of the seats north of the river, East Metropolitan move slightly westward, and South Metropolitan take the necessary seats in the south-western portion of the Metropolitan area to make up the numbers, the Swan River forming an obvious natural boundary between the regions.

boundaries along major physical, municipal or traffic routes. The Democrats proposal would split the suburb of Wilson in two as would Dr Richardson's. The ALP wishes to keep Wilson attached to Victoria Park with another 'wiggle in the tail'. Several other submissions propose placing us into a seat of 'Cannington' or Riverton.

Obviously Wilson will need to be joined with one of its neighbours. In my view the appropriate course is to keep Wilson intact in the one electorate and put it into an electorate with either Cannington or Riverton. It is to either of these two suburbs that most of my neighbours and I go for shopping, they are still within the City of Canning, major transport arteries travel in either of these two directions and most of our school children will head in either of these directions for high schooling.

I thank the Commissioners for their consideration of my comments and wish them the best in their deliberations.

Yours faithfully

Blair D Campbell