



**OFFICE OF THE
CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

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Dear Sir/Madam

**2015 REDISTRIBUTION OF ELECTORAL DISTRICTS AND REGIONS OF
WESTERN AUSTRALIA**

This submission is made on behalf of the City of Armadale on the 2015 Redistribution of Electoral Districts and Regions of Western Australia (WA).

The City is proposing that a fundamental change for this distribution is desirable on the basis that a reduction in the number of districts in several regions and a corresponding increase in others, coupled with changes to regional boundaries, will reduce some of the more extreme differences in enrolment numbers in electoral units across the State as a whole. In doing so, the change will provide a sound framework for the 2017 and future elections.

The public submission has been prepared in accordance with the Office of the Electoral Distribution Commissioners criteria for the redistribution and provides additional supporting information related to communities of interest, changes in demographic trends and other related matters.

Background

The *Electoral Act 1907* (WA) ('the Act') requires that Western Australia's electoral boundaries be reviewed at regular intervals so that the numbers of electors within electoral districts remains within the permissible enrolment variations.

The last review occurred in 2011, where the number of districts within regions remained as for 2007 (i.e. 42 across the three metropolitan regions; 17 across the three country regions). Boundaries were adjusted within regions to better align elector numbers with the average district enrolment (ADE).

At the time of the 2011 review the Commissioners made the comment that if the trends of demographic change that had been identified since the 2007 division were to continue through to the next division (assuming there are no relevant changes to the legislation) the case for fundamental change may be enhanced materially. They remained of that view and further commented that if that occurs the electoral map developed at the next division, both

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through to the next division (assuming there are no relevant changes to the legislation) the case for fundamental change may be enhanced materially. They remained of that view and further commented that if that occurs the electoral map developed at the next division, both within and as between the six regions and as between 'country' and 'metropolitan', may look quite different from the one that emerges as a result of the 2011 division.

Introduction

Following amendments to the *Electoral Act 1907* in 2005, a review of the electoral boundaries must commence as soon as practicable two years after the previous State general election. Boundaries for both Legislative Assembly Districts and Legislative Council Regions are reviewed.

A regular review of the electoral boundaries ensures that at election time, the number of electors in each district is within a permissible range of the average district enrolment. It is intended to, as far as practicable, make the number of electors in each district as comparable as possible, but also allows some tolerance. It is the job of the Electoral Distribution Commissioners to ensure that enrolments in an electorate are within the upper and lower permissible limits and, while doing this, they must also take into consideration other factors affecting electorates, including those affecting rural and remote areas of Western Australia.

The review of electoral boundaries is a consultative process. There are three opportunities for the community to get involved by sending in a written suggestion of a boundary change, comment on the merits of other suggestions or later, lodge an objection to the boundaries proposed by the Commissioners during the review.

In order to determine electoral boundaries, a snapshot is taken of the total number of electors enrolled to vote in Western Australia on a day two years after the last State election. This day is 9 March 2015. This total is then divided by the total number of electoral districts (59) to produce an average district enrolment (ADE).

If a district's total enrolment figure varies from the average district enrolment by plus or minus 10% (+/- 10%), that district will need its boundary adjusted.

The calculation determining the revised quota for each electorate is detailed in Table 1.

Table 1: Quota for Western Australia

Number of Districts	59
Number of Regions	6
Estimated number of electors enrolled in Western Australia at the time of Redistribution (March 2015)	1,470,451
Average District Enrolment – 'ADE'	24,932
Permissible maximum number of electors in a District (Quota + 10%)	27,425
Permissible minimum number of electors in a District (Quota – 10%)	22,439

As of 9 March 2015, there are 12 districts that are outside the permitted tolerance levels, and a further five that are sufficiently close to the tolerance levels to warrant attention. Clearly, change must be made to satisfy the requirements of the Act.

This submission seeks to have the number of districts in each of the three metropolitan regions increased by one to 15, (making the total number of districts in the metropolitan region 45) with a corresponding decrease in the number of districts in the three remaining country regions (making the total number of districts in these regions 14).

Principles that Guide the Redistribution Committee

Sections 16C and 16D of the Act provide that the State of WA shall be divided into 59 electoral districts in six electoral regions. Section 16H contains a general description of the six regions. Briefly, these are:

- Three metropolitan regions (together, generally co-extensive with the metropolitan area of Perth) called the North, South and East Metropolitan Regions;
- The Mining and Pastoral Region
- The South West Region, and
- The Agricultural Region.

The Act does not prescribe where the boundaries of the six electoral regions are to be set nor does it prescribe how many districts are to be located in each region. However, it does specify that each of the three metropolitan regions ought to have the same number of districts and an electoral district must be wholly located within a region.

While the overriding factor the Committee must consider is elector numbers, under section 16I, the Redistribution Committee shall also give due consideration to:

- community of interest
- land use patterns
- means of communication, means of travel and distance from the capital
- physical features
- existing boundaries of regions and districts
- existing local government boundaries
- the trend in demographic changes.

Principles for Electoral Redistribution Supported by the City of Armadale

The City of Armadale supports a *fundamental change* in the number of districts in each region and has outlined the following reasons aligning to the principles the Committee may consider for the redistribution:

1. Elector numbers must not vary by +/- 10% above the State average of 24,932. Further, high growth districts should err on the minimum size to provide for enrolment lag and population growth.

Twelve of the 59 districts are outside permitted tolerance levels. Of these 12, only two are in country regions leaving 10 in the three metropolitan regions. The City submits that making the changes itemised below would ensure this principal is met

- *Increase the number of districts in each metropolitan region from 14 to 15*
- *Specifically, in North Metropolitan Region, create a new district 'Alkimos' by adjusting the existing Butler and Ocean Reef boundaries. Extend the regional boundary into the Agricultural region and make further boundary adjustments*

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to districts within the region's existing boundaries to ensure more appropriate alignment with the ADE and allow for the 'domino effect'

- *In the South Metropolitan Region, create a new district 'Baldivis' by adjusting the boundaries of Kwinana and Warnbro Extend the regional boundary into both the South West and Agricultural regions, and make further boundary adjustments to districts within the region's existing boundaries to ensure more appropriate alignment with the ADE and allow for the 'domino effect'*
- *In the East Metropolitan Region, create a new district 'Piara Waters' excised from the existing district of Darling Range and adjusting that districts boundary in the northwest Extend the regional boundary into both the Agricultural and South West regions and make further boundary adjustments to districts within the region's existing boundaries to ensure more appropriate alignment with the ADE and allow for the 'domino effect'*
- *Reduce each Country region by one district through a mixture of regional and district boundary adjustments that ensure ADE numbers are optimised at maximum levels and allow for the impacts of the 'domino effect' created by the changes required in the Metropolitan regions, as outlined above.*

Table 2 below shows proposed elector numbers, ADE's and VFADE's under the proposed fundamental change. These show that compliance with the requirements of the Act can be achieved if this approach is adopted by the Committee.

Region	Existing elector numbers	Existing ADE	Proposed ADE – district boundary changes only	Proposed VFADE after district boundary changes	Fundamental change proposed	Proposed elector numbers after fundamental change	Proposed ADE – district and regional boundary changes	Proposed VFADE after district and regional boundary changes
North	369 850	26 418	24 657	-1 10%	Add 7000 electors through regional boundary adjustment	376 850	25 123	0 77%
South	367 641	26 260	24 509	-1 70%	Add 7000 electors through regional boundary adjustment	374 641	24 976	0 18%
East	365 681	26 120	24 379	-2 22%	Add 6000 electors through regional boundary adjustment	371 681	24 779	-0 61%
Agricultural	91 339	22 835	30 446	22 12%	Remove 10000 electors through regional boundary adjustment	81 339	27 113	8 75%
Mining & Pastoral	108 983	21 797	27 246	9 28%	No change proposed However changes may be made to accommodate 'domino effect'	108 983	27 246	9 28%
South West	201 206	25 151	28 744	15 29%	Remove 10000 electors through regional boundary adjustment	191 206	27 315	9 56%

2. Community of interest

Fundamental change inevitably means change to existing communities. However, since the last review in 2011, it must also be acknowledged that whole communities have been created that simply did not exist four years ago. The majority increase in elector numbers in the metropolitan regions compared to the country regions is further evidence of this. Fundamental change will give recognition to these new communities.

3. Land use patterns

The strong residential and commercial growth in outer metropolitan districts of all three metropolitan regions is the driver for change in this redistribution. Land use patterns are changing as land is developed for residential, commercial and industrial use.

Increasingly, land on the urban fringe is being targeted for development as the Perth metropolitan area spreads north, east and south. The two fastest growing suburbs in Australia are in the Perth metropolitan area. It is essential that fundamental change is introduced to adjust the regional boundaries and ensure equitable and accessible electoral representation for these new communities.

4. Means of communication, means of travel and distance from the capital

As stated in Principle 3 above strong growth in the outer suburbs of all three metropolitan regions impacts on the ability of electors to have easy access and interaction with their elected representative. Adjusting district and regional boundaries will facilitate this.

5. Physical features

Notwithstanding boundary changes necessary under Principal 6 where possible, all adjustments should follow natural physical boundaries, i.e. river courses, escarpments, regional parks.

6. Existing boundaries of regions and districts

The City submits that the unprecedented and continued population growth in the metropolitan region makes it essential that fundamental change is required and regional and district boundaries must change.

7. Existing local government boundaries

Notwithstanding boundary changes necessary under Principal 6 where possible, all adjustments should incorporate local government boundaries, or whole suburb boundaries. The City's submission supports this Principle.

8. The trend in demographic changes

The justification for fundamental change and the establishment a new division in each of the North ('Alkimos'), South ('Baldivis') and East ('Piara Waters') Metropolitan regions is based on the demographic changes being experienced throughout Western Australia

The increasing population ratio for the Perth Metropolitan area and the continued decreasing Country elector ratio over the past eight years highlight this trend. There is no evidence to suggest this trend will change into the future (Refer Table 3 below), and in fact all indicators show population growth will continue to intensify at a higher rate across the greater Perth metropolitan area through greenfield and brownfield (infill) developments

Table 3: Ratio of Country Electors 2007 - 2011

<i>Date</i>	<i>Total No. of Electors</i>	<i>Metropolitan</i>	<i>Metropolitan Ratio</i>	<i>Country</i>	<i>Country Ratio</i>
2007	1,259,665	935,539	74.27%	324,126	25.73%
2011	1,367,532	1,021,503	74.70%	346,029	25.30%
2015	1,470,451	1,103,172	75.02%	367,279	24.98%

The City of Armadale supports the concept that a reduction in the number of country districts, and corresponding increase in the number of metropolitan districts, is timely and justified.

Further demographic analysis shows that since 2009, the South East and South West corridors have been responsible for over 50% of the population growth in the Perth Metropolitan region and at an increasing rate each year. This regional growth in population is expected to continue over time. This further justifies the need for two of the three new metropolitan regions to be located south of the Swan River (i.e. 'Baldivis' and 'Piara Waters').

The population growth centred in the City of Armadale was recently highlighted in an article published in The West Australian newspaper, entitled "Population shift heads west", written by Shane Wright Economics Editor

"Parts of suburban Perth have had a near tenfold increase in population in the past decade - and have helped turn around the city's Dullsville tag

The fastest-growing suburban area in Australia over the past decade was Forrestdale-Harrisdale-Piara Waters. In 2004 it had just 1311 residents. A decade later it was home to almost 13,500 - a 928 per cent jump" The area is anticipated to grow at over 4000 residents per year until at least 2020

New Dwellings

The South East Corridor has the highest number of new dwellings for 2013/14 period (6,519) followed by the North West Corridor (6,302, mainly attributable to the City of Wanneroo), South West Corridor (5,576) and North East Corridor (3,409)

The South East and South West corridors when combined represented 49.4% of all dwellings in the metropolitan region in 2013/14, with the North East and North West corridors comprising 39% and the remainder in the central area around Perth CBD. This provides further evidence that development growth in the metropolitan area is centred south, rather than north, of the Swan River.

Armadale District Boundaries to Remain Unchanged

The City of Armadale strongly submits that the district boundary of Armadale remains unchanged.

Although acknowledging that the current Armadale VFADE ratio is 3.55%, and there could be perceived capacity to move boundaries, the City respectfully notes that the Office of Electoral Distributions Commissioners Fact Sheets failed to acknowledge the high population growth rate forecast for the suburbs of Haynes and Hilbert which are located in the Armadale district. These figures are demonstrated below in Table 4.

Table 4: Population Growth Projections – Haynes and Hilbert

Area	2011	2016	2021	2026	2031	Total change	Avg. annual % change
Haynes	134	531	2,944	5,651	8,347	+8,213	+22.94
Hilbert	589	2,563	8,005	15,786	23,681	+23,092	+20.29

Source – Forecast .id 2015.

The City further notes that experience shows that the WA Tomorrow’s figures are overly conservative and understate population considerably for Armadale. For example, while WA Tomorrow is predicting a population of 79,600 by July 2019 for the City of Armadale, demographic forecasts calculated by the City using Census data result in a forecast population of 82,615 by 2016 and 102,235 by 2019. This figure is considered a more accurate forecast and is backed up by actual population growth analysis conducted by Informed Decisions (.id).

The City of Armadale urges the Electoral Distribution Commissioners to look favourably on this submission and to make the fundamental changes required at this review.

Should you have any queries or require further information regarding this submission, please contact me.

Yours sincerely

~~R STAME~~ **A F MAXWELL**
 CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

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 MAYOR