Redistribution of Legislative Council Electoral Boundaries

Legislative Council Electoral Boundaries Act 1995 – Section 19

Notice of Inquiry

Public Hearing

The Redistribution Tribunal is to hold an inquiry, the subject of which is to be:

"Suggestions, comments and objections received in relation to the Initial Redistribution Proposal for the redistribution of the State's 15 Legislative Council electoral divisions."

The public hearing will commence at 10am on Wednesday 26 March 2008 on the 2nd floor, Telstra Centre, 70 Collins St, Hobart and will continue at Henty House Auditorium, Launceston the following day.

Any person who, or organisation which, has lodged a written submission no later than close of business on Tuesday 11 March 2008 has a right to be heard.

Those intending to lodge submissions and who wish to be heard at the inquiry are asked to contact the Redistribution Secretariat as soon as possible.

Written submissions can be sent to the Tribunal by post, facsimile or email.

Access to Information

The Redistribution Committee's Initial Redistribution Proposal was published in this newspaper on 9 February 2008.

Members of the public may obtain other information on the Initial Redistribution Proposal, statistics and electoral maps from our designated public offices (*Service* Tasmania).

If you prefer other arrangements, the Assistant, Mr Julian Type, may be contacted as shown below. We will distribute material throughout Tasmania.

Redistribution Process

On 9 February 2008 the Redistribution Committee published an Initial Redistribution Proposal, including maps showing names and boundaries of proposed divisions, boundary descriptions and reasons. The proposal was exhibited at each public office.

Within 28 days, that is by close of business on Tuesday 11 March, any person or organisation may lodge a written suggestion, comment or objection.

The Tribunal considers submissions lodged and may decide to hold an inquiry.

Once its inquiries are completed the Tribunal publishes a further redistribution proposal. If the Tribunal states its opinion that the further proposal differs significantly from the initial proposal, a person or organisation may lodge a further written submission within 7 days.

If, in the Tribunal's opinion, a subsequent further proposal differs significantly from an earlier proposal, a person or organisation may lodge a further written submission within 7 days. An inquiry will also be held into any further submissions.

The Tribunal then makes a final determination of the names and boundaries of the 15 new Legislative Council electoral divisions. The Tribunal's determination is final. It may not be challenged or appealed against.

Transition arrangements to implement the redistribution are also to be determined by the Tribunal as soon as practicable after it makes its final determination. These involve the allocation of members to the new divisions and any associated matters.

The Tribunal must conduct a hearing into matters relating to transition arrangements. As soon as possible after that hearing, the Tribunal makes and publishes its initial transition proposal. Within 14 days after publication, a person or organisation may lodge a written submission in relation to the initial transition proposal. The Tribunal considers submissions received and may hold an inquiry into matters raised.

The Redistribution Tribunal is to make and publish a final transition determination as soon as practicable after the completion of its deliberations.

Redistribution Criteria

In accordance with the *Legislative Council Electoral Boundaries Act 1995*, in making the Initial Redistribution Proposal the Redistribution Committee was required to take into account the following priorities:

- the first priority is to ensure, as far as practicable, that the number of electors in each Council division would not (in four and a half years' time) vary more than ±10% of the average Council division enrolment;
- the second priority is to take into account community of interest within each Council division.

After taking into account the priorities specified above, the Redistribution Committee was required to consider the following matters in the case of each electoral division:

- the means of communication and travel within the division;
- the physical features and area of the division;
- existing electoral boundaries;
- distinct natural boundaries.

The Council division quota was the basis for the Initial Redistribution Proposal.

For this redistribution the average divisional enrolment, or quota, was 23,183 and was determined as at 30 September 2007.

In no case is any variation from the Council division quota to exceed 10%.

Initial Redistribution Proposal – Reasons

The last nine years

The 1998-99 redistribution has stood the test of time remarkably well: the current deviations from average division enrolment (ADE) stand within the range –6.5% (Rowallan) to +5.5% (Derwent).

Enrolment growth over the last nine years has been most pronounced in the outer suburbs of Hobart (Derwent, Rumney, Nelson and Huon) and Launceston (Paterson). Only the division of Elwick in Hobart's north has actually lost electors during the period 1998-2007, perhaps due to declining household size and limited infill development.

Over time, there has been a discernible, but very slight, southward movement of the balance of state enrolment.

The task

Projections provided by the Australian Bureau of Statistics show that only the division of Elwick, at –10.1%, would fail to meet the statutory requirement of being within 10% of ADE in 2012, four and a half years after the current redistribution. As its immediate neighbour, Derwent, is projected to move to +9.1%, an adjustment between these two divisions could have wholly discharged the Committee's responsibilities.

The Committee noted, however, that such an approach would defer significant adjustments to the 2016 redistribution.

The current proposal endeavours to take account of underlying shifts in enrolment, making gradual changes now, and obviating more drastic ones in nine years' time.

Local government and statutory locality boundaries

The 1998 Committee noted "when...new statutory locality boundaries are in place...they will provide a stable ongoing indicator of community of interest which will assist in determining better electoral boundaries."

The current Committee has endeavoured, where possible, to utilise locality and local government area (LGA) boundaries when altering the boundaries of existing divisions.

Names for proposed divisions

The current proposal moves only 3.1% of Tasmanian electors to a new division, four divisions are wholly unchanged, and the remaining 11 are substantially similar to their predecessors. The Committee has accordingly retained the names of all 15 divisions in its proposal.

The proposed divisions

Murchison, Montgomery and Mersey – These three north-western divisions are unchanged by the Committee's proposal.

Rowallan – The Committee proposes that Rowallan should take the balance of Central Highlands LGA from Derwent and part of the Northern Midlands LGA from Paterson, while ceding part of Southern Midlands LGA to Apsley. The proposal has the advantage of unifying Central Highlands LGA in a single division, and retains the character of Rowallan as a rural division.

Rosevears – This division, which follows the West Tamar Highway north out of Launceston, is unchanged by the Committee's proposal.

Paterson – Without adjustment, Paterson would grow to +4.8% of ADE in 2012; the solution has been to transfer Paterson's part of Northern Midlands LGA to Rowallan, consolidating Paterson as a metropolitan division centred on Launceston's CBD and southern suburbs.

Windermere – This division, centred on Launceston's northern suburbs and the East Tamar, was trending to –4.7% of ADE in 2012. The Committee has added the balance of George Town LGA from Apsley, unifying that LGA and augmenting Windermere's enrolment.

Note – the Committee considered transferring electors in metropolitan Launceston between Paterson and Windermere, but could find no particularly satisfactory boundaries to accommodate the adjustment required.

Apsley – This division loses the eastern portion of George Town LGA to Windermere, and gains the balance of Southern Midlands LGA from Rowallan and Derwent, unifying Southern Midlands LGA in a single division.

Derwent – This division was trending to +9.1% of ADE in 2012, and the proposal cedes most of Claremont east of Brooker Avenue to Elwick, Derwent's part of Central Highlands LGA to Rowallan and Derwent's part of Southern Midlands LGA to Apsley, concentrating Derwent's focus on Derwent Valley and Brighton LGAs. The proposal also contains a minor adjustment to improve definition of the Derwent/Pembroke boundary.

Pembroke and Rumney – With Rumney heading to +3.3%, and Pembroke –0.7% of ADE, the Committee has taken the opportunity to propose the unification of the localities of Mornington, Warrane, Lindisfarne and Geilston Bay in Pembroke.

Elwick – Otherwise heading to –10.1% of ADE, the proposal adds most of Claremont east of Brooker Avenue, and the balance of the locality of Moonah, to Elwick, further consolidating the division's City of Glenorchy focus.

Note – the Committee took the opportunity to transfer an isolated enclave of 31 electors at the western end of Lenah Valley Road from Elwick to Wellington.

Wellington – This central Hobart division is caught between declining enrolment to its immediate north and expanding enrolment to its south. The proposal cedes the balance of Moonah to Elwick, and adds Sandy Bay/Dynnyrne east of the Southern Outlet and north of the University of Tasmania to Wellington.

Nelson – This growing division loses Sandy Bay/Dynnyrne east of the Southern Outlet and north of the University of Tasmania to Wellington, and gains the balance of Kingston Beach and Kingston (with very minor exceptions) in the south.

Huon – Heading for +6.2% of ADE without adjustment, Huon cedes the balance of Kingston Beach and Kingston (with very minor exceptions) to Nelson to its north.

Richard Bingham – Chairperson of the Redistribution Tribunal – 1 March 2008

Tasmania

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