



Comment on objections 39

Jeff Waddell

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Victorian Redistribution comments on objections uploaded from the AEC website.

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Additional information: Final comments on objections attached

Comments on Objections

to the Victorian Redistribution

Committee's proposal

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To the Augmented Electoral Commission for Victoria

For those of us with a passion for this process, and who consider themselves regular (constructive) contributors to all Commonwealth, State and Territory Electoral Redistributions; trying to trawl through all 413 objections and provide meaningful comment on all of them in just a 2-week period – as well as continue to do everything else in life – was an onerous task.

It was disappointing to have again read a number of objections that could not be classed as anything more than frivolous – objecting for the sake of objecting.

Others thought these changes would change their way of life or whom they associated with – whether in a private or commercial capacity.

Many made objections containing suggestions (especially for alternative Divisional Names) that simply did not comply with the guidelines.

I trust the Augmented Electoral Commission will – to coin a very old phrase – “sort the wheat from the chaff” before making their final determination.

That aside, there seemed to be a number of consistent issues which were well argued by many objections and at this final stage of the public contribution process I would like to add my thoughts on many of these.

- **The Divisional Name Change from Corangamite to Cox**

Without in any way intending to discount the legacy of May Cox, I believe that 2 arguments put forward in many of the objections are valid arguments.

The first is the unfortunate sexual innuendo associated with the name Cox. Whilst the Redistribution Committee may believe that most of us are above that level of association; there are obviously many who are not. In what is undoubtedly a case of “the law of unintended consequences”; to have a Member of the House of Representatives referred to as “The Member for Cox” by The Speaker of The House is a situation which should be avoided at all costs. This situation would be even worse if that Member happens to be female – which is the case for the current Member for Corangamite.

The second argument put forward is that the Divisional Name of Werriwa has remained even though its association with Lake George has long since been removed. There seems to be a lack of consistency in retaining the Divisional Name Werriwa but proposing to abolish Corangamite because it no longer has any association with Lake Corangamite or the Corangamite Shire.

I recommend that the Augmented Electoral Commission reinstate the Divisional Name of Corangamite in its final determination.

- **Boundary changes to proposed Cox from current Corangamite**

I found support for both my original submission and the Redistribution Committee’s proposal to unite the Bellarine Peninsula in the proposed Corangamite/Cox.

There seemed to be a significant objection to placing parts of both Colac Otway and Golden Plains Shires in Wannon.

However, the numerical situation is that the current Division of Corangamite is over quota and needs to lose electors. The current Division of Wannon is under quota and needs to gain electors. None of the objections seem to offer any alternative solution to this situation.

The few submissions that understood the numerical requirement actually supported the Redistribution Committee's proposal.

Those who objected without understanding the numerical requirements for both Corangamite / Cox and Wannon also failed to understand that to keep all of Colac Otway Shire in Corangamite / Cox would involve transferring all of Golden Plains Shire out of Corangamite (to where? Ballarat?) to maintain its quota; Wannon would then need to gain its numbers from Mallee which I believe would further dilute Wannon's community of interest from the Divisional boundaries proposed by the Redistribution Committee.

To quote a line often used in the Redistribution Committee's proposal; this "*would result in undesirable outcomes elsewhere in the state.*"

In short; part or all of Colac Otway Shire must move to Wannon to make the numbers work for both Divisions. Whilst the Augmented Electoral Commission may decide to tinker with the final boundaries, the general change should not (cannot) be reversed.

- **Central Goldfields Shire from Wannon to Mallee**

There were a number of objections relating to this part of the Redistribution Committee's proposal – including one from the Central Goldfields Shire itself; most of which preferred that Central Goldfields Shire be in the Division of Bendigo or Ballarat rather than Mallee. Interestingly, placing Central Goldfields Shire in Bendigo was the exact solution provided in my original submission at the beginning of this process along with many other submissions.

And ultimately with some boundary changes to Wannon and Mallee, the Central Goldfields Shire could be moved from Mallee to Bendigo and still leave all 3 Divisions within projected enrolment tolerances *providing* the electors from the eastern side of the Redistribution Committee's proposed Bendigo (in the Mitchell and Macedon Ranges Shires) are transferred to other Divisions.

This would involve the electors from the Redistribution Committee's proposed Bendigo transferred to the Divisions of Nicholls (Mitchell Shire) and McEwen (Macedon Ranges Shire) – both of which were in line with my original submission.

From a numerical perspective, further boundary changes with Nicholls, McEwen and Scullin can accommodate all the surplus electors from Bendigo and still leave all Divisions within projected enrolment tolerances. Such a change will be proven at the end of this document.

Notwithstanding such a massive change is unlikely now, I would encourage the Augmented Electoral Commission to at least model my proposed adjustments to the Divisions of Wannon; Mallee; Bendigo; Nicholls; McEwen and Scullin and see if there is an overall improvement on what has been proposed by the Redistribution Committee.

- **The separation of Flemington and Kensington**

A significant number of objections opposed to the transfer of Flemington from the Division of Melbourne to the Division of Maribyrnong with claims that both communities were close.

Whilst those claims undoubtedly have some foundation, I decided to investigate that connection at all levels of government. The current situation is that Flemington and Kensington are already divided at both the municipal level - with Flemington in the City of Moonee Valley LGA and Kensington in the City of Melbourne LGA; as well as being divided at the State Electoral District level - with Flemington being in Essendon District and Kensington being in Melbourne District.

Despite currently electing the same representative only at Commonwealth level, the citizens of both locations seem to be associating with each other more than adequately despite their separation at State and Local Government levels.

I would therefore encourage the Augmented Electoral Commission to leave the proposed new Maribyrnong – Melbourne CED boundary along Racecourse Rd as proposed.

- **Objections to the retention of the name Batman**

Unsurprisingly, there were a significant number of objections received to the Redistribution Committee’s proposed retention of the Divisional Name, Batman.

I don’t claim for a minute to be familiar with the accusations and the validity or otherwise of those accusations. However, I believe that Batman should not be removed as a Divisional Name unless the crimes of which he is accused can be proven beyond reasonable doubt in a court of law. And that the crimes he is accused of perpetrating were also crimes at the time they were performed.

We cannot judge the actions of historical figures by today’s values or where would that end?

- **Support for renaming Melbourne Ports to Macnamara**

There was significant support for this Divisional Name Change to take place and I believe this change should be adopted by the Augmented Electoral Commission

- **Support for issues tabled in my objection**

I was encouraged to read a number of other objections who also argued that Mornington should not be transferred to Flinders and that the Western Port Coast of the City of Casey LGA had closer connections with the Western Port coast of the Mornington Peninsula Shire than it did to the greater part of the City of Casey.

- **Practical application of the Central Goldfields adjustment**

Though I had little time to complete the number crunching for this fix, the below changes can all be performed across the Divisions of Wannon, Mallee, Bendigo, Nicholls, McEwen & Scullin to resolve the objections of those in the Central Goldfields Shire who did not want to be transferred to the Division of Mallee.

1. Wannon

From the Redistribution Committee’s proposed version of Wannon, the part of the Northern Grampians Shire the Redistribution Committee proposes to transfer from Mallee to Wannon is returned to Mallee. Whilst this leaves Wannon near the lower end of projected tolerance it nevertheless remains within tolerance.

Division	Component	Proposed	Projected
Proposed Wannon		112,296	112,757
To Proposed Mallee	Stawell SA2 - balance	-5,696	-5,710
New Total		106,600	107,047
Variation		-0.33%	-3.01%
To Wannon	Total transfers in	0	0
From Wannon	Total transfers out	-5,696	-5,710

2. Mallee

Mallee regains the balance of Northern Grampians Shire from Wannon (the transfer of which was also raised in some objections) and transfers Central Goldfields LGA to Bendigo.

Division	Component	Proposed	Projected
Proposed Mallee		112,088	112,053
From Proposed Wannon	Stawell SA2 - balance	5,696	5,710
To Proposed Bendigo	Castlemaine Region SA2 - part - Central Goldfields LGA only	-12	-12
To Proposed Bendigo	Maryborough SA2 - all	-6,135	-6,118
To Proposed Bendigo	Maryborough Region SA2 - part - Central Goldfields LGA only	-4,204	-4,211
New Total		107,433	107,422
Variation		0.45%	-2.67%
To Mallee	Total transfers in	5,696	5,710
From Mallee	Total transfers out	-10,351	-10,341

3. Bendigo

Bendigo gains Central Goldfields LGA from Mallee and transfers its parts of the Mitchell LGA to Nicholls and the Macedon Ranges LGA to McEwen.

Division	Component	Proposed	Projected
Proposed Bendigo		108,575	111,292
From Proposed Mallee	Castlemaine Region SA2 - part - Central Goldfields LGA only	12	12
From Proposed Mallee	Maryborough Region SA2 - part - Central Goldfields LGA only	4,204	4,211
From Proposed Mallee	Maryborough SA2 - all	6,135	6,118
To Proposed McEwen	Kyneton SA2 - part - Macedon Ranges LGA only (est.)	-7,184	-7,326
To Proposed McEwen	Romsey SA2 - balance	-96	-99
To Proposed McEwen	Woodend SA2 - balance	-5,230	-5,349
To Proposed Nicholls	Seymour Region SA2 - balance	-108	-109
New Total		106,308	108,750
Variation		-0.60%	-1.47%
To Bendigo	Total transfers in	10,351	10,341
From Bendigo	Total transfers out	-12,618	-12,883

4. Nicholls

Nicholls gains the part of Mitchell Shire currently in the proposed Bendigo plus the localities of Willowmavin, Moranding and Kilmore East from McEwen.

Division	Component	Proposed	Projected
Proposed Nicholls		108,608	109,734
From Proposed Bendigo	Seymour Region SA2 - balance	108	109
From Proposed McEwen	Kilmore - Broadford SA1's 105601 (balance) & 105610	611	635
New Total		109,327	110,478
Variation		2.22%	0.10%
To Nicholls	Total transfers in	719	744
From Nicholls	Total transfers out	0	0

5. McEwen

McEwen gains the balance of Macedon Ranges Shire from Bendigo, transfers Willowmavin, Moranding and Kilmore East to Nicholls and transfers the part of the locality of Doreen (Whittlesea LGA component) that is south of Bridge Inn Rd to Scullin.

Division	Component	Proposed	Projected
Proposed McEwen		100,358	107,238
From Proposed Bendigo	Kyneton SA2 - part - Macedon Ranges LGA only (est.)	7,184	7,326
From Proposed Bendigo	Romsey SA2 - balance	96	99
From Proposed Bendigo	Woodend SA2 - balance	5,230	5,349
To Proposed Nicholls	Kilmore - Broadford SA1's 105601 (balance) & 105610	-611	-635
To Proposed Scullin	South Morang SA1 #122248	-4,558	-5,335
New Total		107,699	114,042
Variation		0.70%	3.32%
To McEwen	Total transfers in	12,510	12,774
From McEwen	Total transfers out	-5,169	-5,970

6. Scullin

Scullin's northern boundary continues further east along Bridge Inn Rd all the way to the Whittlesea LGA boundary on Yan Yean Rd transferring that part of Doreen south of Bridge Inn Rd from McEwen to Scullin.

Division	Component	Proposed	Projected
Proposed Scullin		103,164	108,238
From Proposed McEwen	South Morang SA1 #122248	4,558	5,335
New Total		107,722	113,573
Variation		0.72%	2.90%
To Scullin	Total transfers in	4,558	5,335
From Scullin	Total transfers out	0	0

As a consequence of the changes above, the Northern Grampians Shire is again united in the Division of Mallee; the Macedon Ranges Shire is united in McEwen; the Mitchell Shire is now divided only between 2 Divisions (McEwen & Nicholls) rather than the 3 Divisions proposed by the Redistribution Committee.

The changes detailed above, in addition to the changes I proposed in my Objection (OB92), would be a significant improvement on the already improved boundaries proposed by the Redistribution Committee.

One note I forgot to add in my original submission; is that over the past 30 years I have either lived or worked in Chadstone, Clayton, Mulgrave, Dandenong, Dandenong North, Dandenong South, Endeavour Hills, Cranbourne, Cockatoo, Gembrook as well as Longwarry and Drouin, so my knowledge of the Divisions in the south-east to which I am proposing changes is not insignificant.

I trust the Augmented Electoral Commission will take into consideration that "inside knowledge" when it weighs up the alterations I proposed.

In closing, I wish the Augmented Electoral Commission well in their final deliberations and look forward to reading the final report in due course.

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