



**THE FEDERAL
REDISTRIBUTION
WESTERN AUSTRALIA**

Suggestion 18

WA Labor

9 pages



WA Labor Submission to the
Redistribution Committee

Executive Summary

WA Labor thanks the Redistribution Commission for the opportunity to make a submission as part of the 2023 Redistribution process.

Our submission is **guided by the principle of minimal change**, providing stability to as many Western Australian electors as possible. This is especially important given WA only recently underwent a federal redistribution which resulted in considerable elector shift.

Many of the boundaries of current electoral divisions are longstanding and drawn on strong features. It is our view that wherever practicable, existing boundaries should be retained, with the redrawing of boundaries limited to instances where it is required to bring divisions back within the permissible tolerance from quota.

The number of electoral divisions in WA must grow by one division to 16. In undertaking this task, we believe the Redistribution Commission faces three fundamental issues:

- a) Addressing the rapidly growing population in Perth's north-east corridor;
- b) Resolving significant deviations from quota in the divisions of Cowan, Perth and Hasluck; and
- c) Addressing a lack of community of interest in the division of Hasluck between high-growth areas in the north-east corridor (eg. Ellenbrook town centre), and the localities along Perth's Darling Range.

In seeking to present a submission that addresses these issues, we first took the approach of contracting areas of lower growth, or where populations have been more static, including the regional divisions of Durack and O'Connor and the coastal metropolitan areas closest to central Perth. This approach identified a seemingly inevitable 'gap' that necessitated the creation of two separate divisions in the north-east, being:

- a) a redrawn Hasluck Division anchored around the Ellenbrook and Midland town centres; and
- b) a new division comprised of similar outer-eastern metropolitan communities, drawn largely from the divisions of Hasluck and Canning, with smaller parts of Swan and Burt (we refer to this new division throughout as 'Farmer' – rationale provided later in submission).

This approach is consistent with the Commission's approach from past redistributions. In 2016 the division of Burt was created to respond to significant population growth in the south-east metropolitan area. The redrawing of Hasluck to anchor it in Ellenbrook and Midland in the north-east, and the creation of a new outer eastern division, provides a similar approach to responding to projected population growth in the north-east.

Suggested General Principles

Herein, we endeavour to provide the Redistribution Committee with suggestions that may assist them as they undertake the task of increasing the number of electoral divisions to 16. WA Labor suggests the following general principles to guide the work of the Redistribution Committee:

- **Minimal Change**

As mentioned previously, we believe it important to provide stability to electors, especially given the considerable elector shift resulting from the 2021 federal redistribution.

Given the underlying calculation used to determine the number of members of the House of Representatives for WA, it is possible that the next determination will result in a reversion back to 15 electoral divisions – as is the case for Victoria in their current determination.

Accordingly, we recommend the Redistribution Committee aim to preserve existing boundaries where practicable, to minimise the possibility of rolling significant disturbance.

- **Preservation of North and South of the Swan River**

When determining electoral boundaries in metropolitan Perth, it is useful to segment the metropolitan region into 'North of the Swan River' and 'South of the Swan River' to capture communities of interest, ensure feasible means of communication (eg. postage distribution) and achieve adequate road/rail connections for travel within each electoral division.

The Swan River is a clear physical divider of two distinct parts of metropolitan Perth (noting that it ceases to be a barrier of significance west of Guildford, where the orientation of the Swan River changes to north-south), and crossing this boundary in metropolitan Perth would result in significant community of interest issues.

- **Motorways to Comprise Boundaries**

Population growth and distribution over the past 3 decades has resulted in significant infrastructure development including major motorways and arterials. These roads often serve to connect areas together, as is the case for the Tonkin Highway connecting the inner and outer metropolitan areas of Perth. Equally, these roads can act as a physical barrier with distinct communities on each side, as is the case with the Mitchell Freeway.

Where appropriate, electoral boundaries should prioritise the use of major roads.

- **Unification of Population Centres**

Where practicable, major population centres should be contained within a single electoral division.

- **Preservation of Regional Communities of Interest**

When addressing elector surplus in the existing 'regional' divisions, the Redistribution Committee may wish to retain within one electoral division, areas often grouped together (eg. the Kimberly and the Pilbara).

- **Local Government Areas as Communities of Interest**

Local government areas, while not explicitly stated in section 66, often represent areas of shared economic, social and regional interests, especially in regional WA.

Where appropriate, and particularly in regional areas, Local Government boundaries should be considered as part of division boundaries.

Considerations from the 2021 Western Australian Federal Redistribution

A redistribution in WA was required in 2021, as the number of members of the House of Representatives for WA had decreased from 16 to 15. Given the Redistribution Committee now faces the task of reversing this decrease (and going back up to 16 divisions), it may consider adopting boundaries that resemble those in place prior to 2021. WA Labor is of the view that this approach would be unwise.

The 2021 Redistribution Committee noted in their report on proposed boundaries that "*the population grew at the lowest rate in the Division of Stirling (0.14 per cent).*" They ultimately determined to abolish the electoral division of Stirling, with the primary rationale being slow

population growth. Areas that were part of the former division of Stirling continue to experience low growth today; on this basis, we believe returning to a Stirling-like division is counter intuitive.

By contrast, the 2021 Redistribution Committee noted in its final Report, that “*recently created electoral divisions have often been situated in specific locations to accommodate areas of population and enrolment growth*”. The northeast region of metropolitan Perth has, for a variety of reasons, experienced relatively high growth over the past 10 years when compared to stable low growth areas along the metropolitan coast. Notably, several new suburbs and estates have been established to the north of Midland, including Ellenbrook and The Vines.

WA Labor is of the view that the key principles underpinning the 2021 Western Australian Federal Redistribution Report are sound, and that electoral divisions should reflect population growth patterns and accommodate the west-to-east expansion of metropolitan Perth, north of the Swan River. It follows therefore, that boundaries in the north-east be redrawn to create two electoral divisions.

Proposed Boundaries

In proposing the following boundaries, WA Labor acknowledges and has considered boundary adjustments that first achieve the population targets that the Redistribution Committee must address, followed by requirements of communities of interest, means of communication and travel, physical features and, where possible, adherence to the boundaries of existing divisions.

North Metropolitan Area

The divisions of Curtin, Cowan and Perth are all over quota and need to lose electors. We believe this is best achieved by Curtin ceding electors from the north to the Moore Division, and Perth and Cowan ceding electors from their east to Farmer.

The divisions of Moore and Pearce sitting north of the Swan River and along the coast, are less substantially over quota and have lower projected growth than other areas of Perth. We argue that Moore and Pearce should undergo minimal disturbance, adjusted only to resolve quota issues. This can be achieved by Moore ceding electors in its north to Pearce, and by Pearce ceding electors in its south to Cowan.

As outlined, we propose redrawing boundaries in the north-east be to create two electoral divisions. The redrawn electoral division of Hasluck would be dually anchored around the rapidly growing Ellenbrook town centre, and the established Midland town centre.

Curtin

With Curtin’s southern boundary being the Swan River and western boundary the ocean, there are limited options to redraw the division to bring it back within quota. It is our view that the eastern border should be preserved to ensure minimal disturbance for electors, leaving the northern border as the logical place to resolve quota issues.

We propose therefore, that Curtin’s surplus is best dealt with by transferring a portion of the division’s north to Moore, ideally the part of the Karrinyup locality north of Karrinyup Road, and the part of the Gwelup locality west of the Mitchell Freeway. Karrinyup Road would then serve as the Curtin Division’s northern boundary, forming a strong and clear demarcation between the two divisions.

Moore

Moore can remain largely unchanged, moving slightly southwards with small voter transfers from its north and south.

As outlined above, Moore's southern boundary could become Karrinyup Road, taking in electors from parts of the Gwelup and Karrinyup localities currently in the Curtin Division.

Burns Beach Road could serve as Moore's northern boundary (extending out west to the ocean where it meets the Illuka foreshore). This would result in electors north of Burns Beach Road in the localities of Burns Beach and Kinross, being transferred to Pearce.

Pearce

Pearce requires minor adjustments but can remain largely unchanged. In addition to the movements outlined above (parts of Moore transferred to Pearce), we suggest transferring the localities of Cullacabardee and Landsdale to the Cowan Division.

Cowan

Cowan is substantially over quota and requires significant transfer of electors to bring it back within the permissible tolerance from quota. We believe this is best achieved by:

- a) transferring electors in the Stirling and Balcatta localities south of Morley Drive, to the division of Perth (with Morley Drive then acting as a clear boundary between the two divisions); and
- b) transferring electors east of Tonkin Highway (from the localities of Beechboro, Kiara, Lockridge and Morley), into the Hasluck Division.

As outlined above and to assist in resolving nearby quota issues, we propose Cowan's boundaries also be adjusted to include the Cullacabardee and Landsdale localities (currently in Pearce).

Perth

Like Cowan, Perth is substantially over quota and requires significant transfer of electors to bring in back within the permissible tolerance. We believe this is best achieved by transferring electors east of Tonkin Highway (including in the localities of Ashfield, Bassendean, Bayswater, Eden Hill, Embleton and Morely), into Hasluck.

As outlined above and to assist in resolving nearby quota issues, we propose Perth's boundaries also be adjusted to include electors in the Stirling and Balcatta localities south of Morley Drive (currently in Cowan).

Hasluck

We propose to significantly redraw the Hasluck Division, to dually anchor it in the high-growth northeast metropolitan area (specifically the Ellenbrook locality and surrounds) and the established Midland town centre.

On the boundaries we propose, 74% of electors would be retained in the Hasluck Division. Electors retained would include those in the localities of Aveley, Boya, Baskerville, Bellevue, Bellhus, Bennet Springs, Brabham, Brigadoon, Caversham, Dayton, Ellenbrook, Greenmount, Guildford, Helena Valley, Henley Brook, Herne Hill, Jane Brook, Koongamia, Middle Swan, Midland, Midvale, Millendon, Red Hill, Stratton, Swan View, The Vines, Upper Swan, Vineash, West Swan, Whiteman and Woodbridge.

From the Perth Division, Hasluck would take electors east of Tonkin Highway including those in the localities of Ashfield, Bassendean, Bayswater, Eden Hill, Embleton and Morley.

From the Cowan Division, Hasluck would take electors east of Tonkin Highway including those in the Beechboro, Kiara, Lockridge and Morley localities.

The boundaries of the Hasluck would roughly comprise:

- a) Western boundary - Tonkin Highway from the Swan River, north to Maralla Road in the Ellenbrook locality.
- b) Northern boundary - Maralla Road from Tonkin Highway eastwards, with the boundary following that footing to the eastern Brigadoon locality boundary.
- c) Eastern Boundary - the eastern locality boundaries of Brigadoon, Red Hill, Jane Brook, Greenmount, Boya and then Helena Valley.
- d) Southern Boundary – the southern locality boundaries of Helena Valley, Midland, Woodbridge and Guildford.

Redrawing Hasluck on the boundaries above, provides a future-proofed division anchored around two outer metropolitan town centres - the established Midland town centre, and the rapidly growing Ellenbrook town centre.

South Metropolitan Area

In the south metropolitan area, the ocean and/or the Swan River provide strong natural boundaries for much of the seats of Fremantle, Tangney and Swan. While some movement of electors will be required to bring districts within permissible limits, we argue that these divisions should retain their current structure and distinct communities, and not be altered other than is required to bring these and neighbouring districts within the permissible tolerances from quota.

To accommodate the new division of Farmer, Burt would move south-west, taking voters from Canning and a smaller number from Tangney, Fremantle and Brand (and helping these seats to resolve quota issues).

Canning in turn would move south, pushing Brand west to the Kwinana Freeway (helping resolve its quota issues) and taking in the Shires of Boddington, Collie and Harvey to balance its elector numbers.

Fremantle

Fremantle's southern, western and northern boundaries are strong and longstanding and should not undergo change. In order to resolve quota issues in Fremantle and neighbouring electorates, we propose to transfer a portion of the Fremantle Division's south-east corner (south of Armadale Road and east of Kwinana Freeway) to the Burt Division.

Tangney

Tangney requires little change, other than modest adjustments to bring in back within quota. We propose transferring the portion of Canning Vale east of Nicholson Road (i.e. that part of Canning Vale in the City of Gosnells Local Government Authority) to the Burt Division.

Swan

The division of Swan is over quota and needs to reduce its elector numbers.

The Swan River should remain the boundary for the western third of the electorate, as it's a clear demarcation between South Perth, Victoria Park and Belmont which share communities of interest, and north of the Swan River communities.

Given this, we believe the resolution of Swan's quota issues is best achieved by transferring to the Farmer Division, the localities of Maida Vale, Forrestfield and Wattle Grove.

To assist in resolving quota issues in neighbouring divisions, electors in the localities of South Guildford and Hazelmere could be transferred from Hasluck to the Swan Division.

Burt

While Burt itself does not have quota issues, changes would be required as a flow on from the creation of Farmer, and to assist in resolving quota issues elsewhere.

We propose shifting Burt south-west, retaining more than 60% of its electors while taking in small portions of Tangney, Fremantle, Brand and Canning. This anchors the redrawn Burt Division around established areas in its north, and the rapidly growing Byford town centre in its south.

Burt could cede to Farmer the localities of Beckenham, northern Gosnells, Kenwick, Langford, Maddington, Orange Grove and Thornlie. The balance of the Burt Division could then be made up as follows;

- a) from Tangney - part of Canning Vale locality east of Nicholson Road;
- b) from Canning - north of Cardup Siding Road/ Orton Road & west of South West Highway (noting that a deviation would be required to contain Byford Town Centre entirely within Burt);
- c) from Fremantle - south of Armadale Road and east of Kwinana Freeway; and
- d) from Brand - east of Kwinana Freeway and north of Thomas Road.

Brand

As outlined above, to facilitate other movements and assist in bringing Brand back within the permissible tolerance from quota, we suggest contracting the division west, so that the eastern division boundary is made up of the Kwinana Freeway, a clear and strong boundary. In doing so, we propose:

- a) transferring a portion of Brand's north-east corner to Burt, ideally east of Kwinana Freeway and north of Millar Road; and
- b) transferring the balance of the Brand electorate east of the Kwinana Freeway to Canning.

Canning

As a flow on from the creation of Farmer and Burt shifting further south, Canning would also be pushed south, with a number electors transferred out of northern Canning to facilitate this movement including;

- a) to the Farmer Division - the localities of Ashendon, Bedforddale, Canning Mills, Karragullen, Lesley, Martin, Pickering Brook and Roleystone; and
- b) to the Burt Division - electors west of South Western Highway (including the whole Byford Town Centre) and electors north of Cardup Siding Road/ Orton Road.

Canning would then expand west, pushing up to the Kwinana Freeway and taking in portions of the Brand Division including any parts of the Wandi, Anketell, Casuarina, Baldivis and Keralup localities that lie east of the freeway.

Further south, Canning would take in the whole of the Boddington, Collie and Harvey Local Government Authorities, uniting more semi-rural areas which share strong communities of interest, similar local economies, land uses etc.

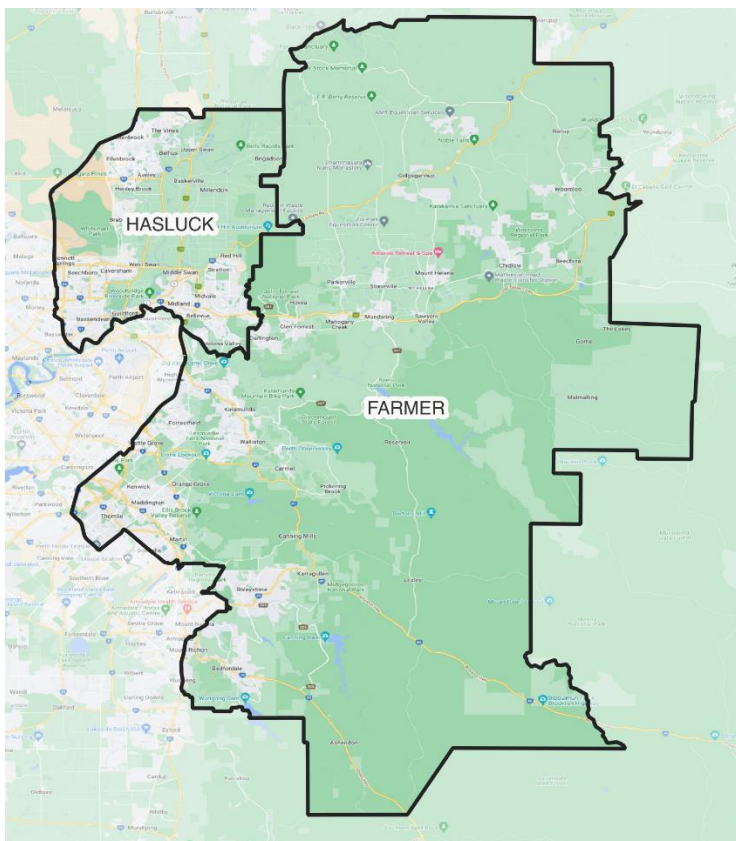
Eastern Metropolitan Area – New Division of Farmer

As outlined previously, our approach to redrawing boundaries has been based on;

- a) first contracting electorates with low or stagnant population growth;
- b) resolving quota issues in a large number of divisions using the principle of minimal change;
- c) recognising and responding to areas of significant population growth; and
- d) anchoring divisions on population centres that help to future-proof them (and hopefully prevent largescale disturbance in future redistributions).

The boundary movements proposed throughout our submission and the conclusion we've reached to establish a new division in Perth's east, have flowed from this methodology.

To assist the Commission in visualising this key plank of our submission, being the way in which we propose to redraw boundaries in the north-east to create two divisions, we provide the map below. Hasluck contracts to become the division in the north-east of the map, and a new division is created.



We propose that the new eastern division be named Farmer, a name drawn from Graham “Polly” Farmer, an honoured West Australian of Noongar Aboriginal heritage who is considered one of the greatest football players of all time. Farmer captained the AFL team Geelong, even before the 1967 referendum to count Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as citizens. He has a freeway named in his honour, the Graham Farmer Freeway, and is a much loved West Australian. While we understand the Redistribution Commission will consider a range of factors when naming a new division, we ask them to consider naming the new Western Australian division in Graham Farmer’s honour.

We propose the Farmer Division be made up of a collection of similar outer-eastern metropolitan communities, drawn largely from the existing divisions of Hasluck and Canning, with smaller parts of Swan and Burt. We propose Farmer to be comprised as follows:

- a) from the current Hasluck Division - the eastern portion (localities not included in redrawn Hasluck Division outlined above);

- b) from the Swan Division - the localities of Forrestfield, Maida Vale and Wattle Grove;
- c) from the Burt Division - the localities of Beckenham, northern Gosnells, Kenwick, Langford, Maddington, Orange Grove and Thornlie; and
- d) from the Canning Division - the localities of Ashendon, Bedforddale, Canning Mills, Karragullen, Lesley, Martin, Pickering Brook and Roleystone.

Regional

Regional electorate don't require wholesale change, but to resolve quota issues and to absorb the flow on effects from movements elsewhere, require some modification.

Durack should not undergo major change other than as required to bring it back within the permissible quota.

Some adjustments between O'Connor and Forrest are required to resolve the southward movement of Canning, and would also assist in uniting a number of agricultural and tourism based townships that share strong communities of interest, in an expanded south-west division.

Forrest

With northern electors in the Harvey Local Government Authority transferred to Canning, Forrest is able to move southwards, and take in the Nannup Local Government Authority. This movement will anchor Forrest as a truer south-west electorate, uniting agricultural and tourism-based townships in and around Nannup, with similar communities like Donnybrook and Balingup.

O'Connor

In ceding electors in the Nannup Local Government Authority to the Forrest Division, and electors in the Shires of Boddington and Collie to the Canning Division, O'Connor requires additional electors to bring it up to quota.

We believe this is best achieved by transferring the Dalwallinu, Dowerin, Goomalling, Wongan-Ballidu and York Local Government Authorities from Durack to O'Connor. This also has the benefit of uniting more wheatbelt agricultural townships within the same division, townships built on strong wheat producing communities of interest.

Durack

Durack is over quota and needs to reduce its elector numbers. As per the above, this can be achieved by transferring electors in the entire Dalwallinu, Dowerin, Goomalling, Wongan-Ballidu and York Local Government Authorities from Durack to O'Connor.

Conclusion

Our submission is **guided by the principle of minimal change**, and despite accommodating a new division and the knock-on effects, displaces less than 1 in 5 electors across Western Australia.

We believe this submission also provides some 'future-proofing', brought about by the intentional anchoring of divisions around established and growing town centres, that we hope will reduce the likelihood of significant voter displacement in future redistributions.

WA Labor again thanks the Redistribution Commission for the opportunity to make a submission as part of the 2023 Redistribution process.