



Comments on Suggestions Submission

to the Electoral Districts Redistribution Panel
for New South Wales

on behalf of the NSW Nationals

THE NATIONALS
for Regional NSW

The Secretariat of the Electoral Districts Redistribution Panel
C/- The NSW Electoral Commission
GPO Box 832
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Dear Commissioners

It is our pleasure to submit our Comments on Suggestions Submission on behalf of the NSW Nationals.

If you require any further information relating to our Suggestions or Comments, please don't hesitate to contact me on (02) 9299 5811.

Yours sincerely

Olivia Kerr
Deputy State Director

Comments on Suggestions Submission

to the Electoral Districts Redistribution Panel for New South Wales

on behalf of the NSW Nationals

CONTENTS:

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

OVERVIEW	7
LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREAS	8
PHYSICAL FEATURES AND AREA	8
COVID-19 PANDEMIC ¹	9
ELECTORAL ENROLMENT	11
MAINTAINING EXISTING ELECTORAL BOUNDARIES WHERE POSSIBLE	12

COMMENTS IN DETAILS

NSWR200605/1 - B BUSHHELL	13
NSWR200608/2 - M GORDON	14
NSWR200616/3 - P VENERIS - LOCKHART SHIRE COUNCIL	14
NSWR200618/4 - J WADDELL	15
NSWR200622/5 - D BOWMAN	17
NSWR200626/8 - A BUTLER - FEDERATION COUNCIL	17
NSWR200628/18 - P MAYTOM - LEETON SHIRE COUNCIL	17
NSWR200630/21 - D NEEVES	17
NSWR200630/22 - A DONOGHUE - COOLAMON SHIRE COUNCIL	18
NSWR200630/24 - B MONAGHAN - BLAND SHIRE COUNCIL	18
NSWR200630/28 - K AND G MURPHY	18
NSWR200701/30 - THE GREENS NSW	18
NSWR200701/31 - R MEDD	19
NSWR200701/32 - J MARNEY	19
NSWR200701/33 - THE LIBERAL PARTY OF AUSTRALIA, NEW SOUTH WALES DIVISION	19
NSWR200701/36 - M MULCAIR	22
NSWR200701/37 - G LAVELLE - TEMORA SHIRE COUNCIL	23
NSWR200701/38 - SHOOTERS, FISHERS AND FARMERS PARTY (NSW)	23
NSWR200701/39 - AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY (NSW BRANCH)	24

The background of the page is a large aerial photograph of a coastal town and surrounding areas, including a river, a beach, and various buildings. This image is presented as a jigsaw puzzle, with several pieces missing, creating a dark green, irregularly shaped void in the center. The missing pieces are scattered around the perimeter of this void. The text 'EXECUTIVE SUMMARY' is printed in bold yellow capital letters within the green void.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

OVERVIEW

There were 41 Suggestions Submissions lodged with the Electoral Districts Redistribution Panel in response to the Chairperson's invitation to members of the public to submit written suggestions about the redistribution of state electoral boundaries in New South Wales. Subsequently, one submission - NSW200623/6 – has been withdrawn at the request of the suggester.

Of those remaining, only seven (7) submissions are detailed suggestions regarding all State electoral districts in NSW, with the remainder proposing specific change for a cluster of electoral districts in a particular region, specific electoral districts or personal interest suggestions.

Further, the Nationals have five (5) key points detailed in our Comments on Suggestions Submission that we wish to draw to the attention of the of the Electoral Districts Redistribution Panel.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREAS

As the Nationals are the only political party dedicated solely to representing the people living in regional New South Wales, our Comments on Suggestions Submission for the 2020 NSW State Redistribution will focus in most-part on ensuring that the boundaries suggested in regional areas represent and are built upon the strongest possible communities of interests - local government areas (LGAs) - subject to the necessary numerical considerations and requirements as set out in Section 21 (1) of the Act under which the current redistribution must be carried out.

In rural electoral districts, economic, social and regional interests tend to have a greater salience with LGA boundaries and are generally a far stronger indicator of community of interest than elsewhere in the state. By and large, LGA boundaries also reflect the significant natural physical features of the State.

This principal adopted by the Nationals in its Suggestion Submission, is also supported by the 2013 NSW Redistribution Committee when in its report it stated:

“The boundaries were also defined, where possible and particularly in rural and regional areas, to include whole Local Government Areas (LGAs) so as to reflect community of interest.”

Therefore the Nationals would like to commend many of the submitters for adopting this approach and attempting to build electoral districts in regional NSW using LGAs as a foundation to ensure the strongest possible community of interest outcomes.

However, the same cannot be said for the Liberal Party and its Suggestion Submission.

The Liberal Party has claimed in its submission that:

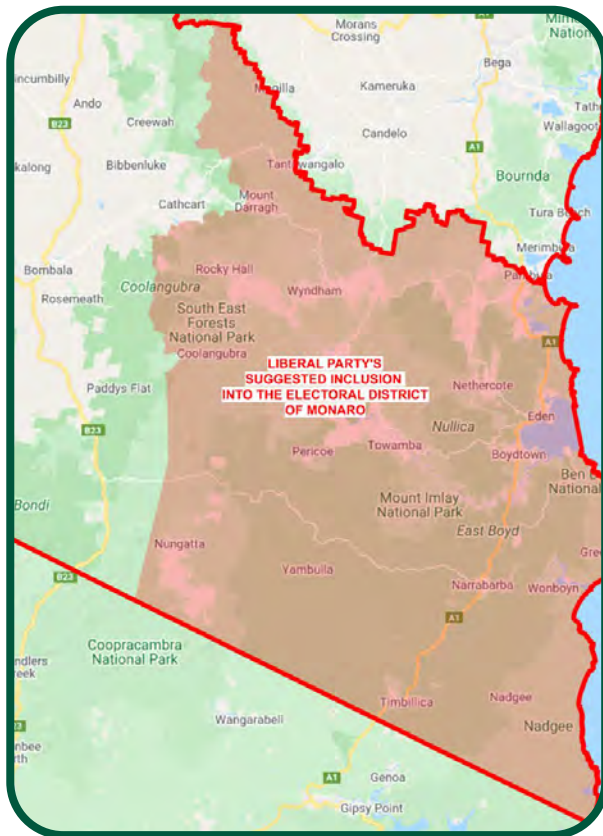
“Taking note of council boundaries remains a key priority to ensure community of interest is observed when drawing State electoral boundaries. We align electoral districts and those LGAs with strong local identity as far as possible, particularly in rural and regional New South Wales.”

Nothing could be further from the truth as the Liberal Party has in fact completely disregarded LGAs on the North Coast, the South Coast, the Northern Tablelands and in Western NSW.

In particular, the Nationals would like to draw the Panel's attention to the Liberal Party's suggestion to split the following nine (9) regional LGAs that are currently located in one electoral district under existing boundaries:

- 1. Lockhart Shire Council** which they suggest should be split between the proposed electorates of Albury and Wagga Wagga - with the locality of The Rock isolated from the remainder of the LGA;
- 2. Queanbean-Palerang Regional Council** which they suggest should be split between the proposed electorates of Monaro, Cootamundra and Goulburn – with the locality of Wamboin isolated from the remainder of the LGA, current split localities of Sutton and Bywong located in Cootamundra and multiple localities from Bungendore to Budawang to Nerriga now in Goulburn;
- 3. Lachlan Shire Council** which they suggest should be split in half between the proposed electorates of Cootamundra and Orange (splitting the Condobolin district and isolating those local residents who live two minutes out of town);
- 4. Ballina Shire Council** which they suggest should be split between the proposed electorates of Lismore, Byron and Clarence;

5. **Bega Valley Shire Council** which they suggest should be split in half between the proposed electorates of Monaro and Bega with a clear lack of communication and transport corridor connection as is clearly shown in the below image;



6. **Tamworth Regional Council** which they suggest should be split between the proposed electorates of Tamworth and Northern Tablelands (north of Manilla);
7. **Lismore City Council** which they suggest should be split between the proposed electorates of Clarence, Byron and Lismore;
8. **Clarence Valley Council** which they suggest should be split between the proposed electorates of Clarence, Lismore, Coffs Harbour; and
9. **Richmond Valley Council** which they suggest should be split between the proposed electorates of Clarence and Lismore.

Further, **Shoalhaven City Council** – which is currently split between South Coast and Kiama on current boundaries – would be split between the proposed electorates of Bega, South Coast and

Kiama (from two to three) under the Liberal Party Submission.

With their complete disregard for the communities of interest contained within the aforementioned ten (10) regional LGAs, the Liberal Party suggestions for regional NSW have quite clearly been drawn in a partisan, political way for personal electoral benefit – particularly when it comes to the Electoral Districts of Raymond Terrace (currently Port Stephens).

PHYSICAL FEATURES AND AREA

In the Nationals Suggestion Submission, we were mindful of the importance of ensuring - to the maximum possible extent - that residents in the most remote parts of the state have reasonable access to their local Member of Parliament.

Therefore it was extremely disappointing to see that a number of Suggestions Submissions made by those residing in metropolitan areas, suggest that the new Electoral District of Barwon should again increase further in area land mass from its existing whopping 356,292 km².

What may look good on a map does not necessarily reflect a good outcome on the ground, particularly as it relates to communities of interest and effective communications and transport corridors in regional and rural areas.

This is the case for those suggestions by submitters who argue that the simplest solution is to just further increase land mass by adding additional areas in the east.

To this end, a number of submitters suggest that the solution to managing the enrolment shortfalls in the Electoral District of Barwon is the inclusion of Gunnedah Shire Council. This suggestion dismally fails the community of interest test due to the long-standing and unbreakable links that Gunnedah Shire Council has with the Tamworth Regional Council.

Putting aside the fact that they have been in the same electoral district since 1998, Gunnedah and Tamworth are both located within the same NSW Police Force District, the servicing regional airport for Gunnedah is the Tamworth Regional Airport (next closest airport is in Moree (2hr 20mins away)

Figure 1: The Lower North West Region



LOWER NORTH WEST Regional Economic Development Strategy 2018–2022

or Armidale (2hr 13mins)) and both are located in the same NSW Health District (Hunter New England). They are also both in the same print & electronic media markets.

Further, over the last three years, the NSW Government has assisted local councils and their communities to develop 37 Regional Economic Development Strategies (REDS) across regional NSW.

One of these REDS is the Lower North West Region (see above) which encompasses the Tamworth Regional, Gunnedah Shire and Liverpool Plains Shire Local Government Areas LGAs - which has only just recently been completed and directly reflects the suggested Electoral District of Tamworth by the Nationals in our Suggestion Submission.

This Strategy was formed in collaboration with the councils, key stakeholders and the broader regional community - and benefited from economic-analytical assistance provided by the NSW Government's Centre for Economic and Regional Development (CERD).

However, as detailed in our Suggestions Submission, the Nationals believe there is a much more simple and logical solution to address this important issue.

The Nationals suggest that the Electoral Districts of Barwon and Murray are redrawn in such a way as to equally proportion land mass rather than have one electorate (Barwon) covering over a third of New South Wales. Further, that the new Electoral District of Barwon be made up of the entire LGAs of *Coonamble Shire Council, Lachlan Shire Council, Carrathool Shire Council, Warren Shire Council, Cobar Shire Council, Bland Shire Council, Bogan Shire Council, Bourke Shire Council, Walgett Shire Council, Narrabri Shire Council, Brewarrina Shire Council, Warrumbungle Shire Council, Griffith City Council and Gilgandra Shire Council*.

This change will then necessitate the abolition of Murray but replaces it with the recreated Electoral District of Murray-Darling - which is suggested to be made up of the entire LGAs of *Murrumbidgee Council, Murray River Council, Hay Shire Council, Edward*

River Council, Unincorporated Far West, Broken Hill City Council, Berrigan Shire Council, Leeton Shire Council, Wentworth Shire Council, Balranald Shire Council, Narrandera Shire Council, Central Darling Shire Council and the former Urana Shire.

The new sizes of these suggested Electoral Districts of Barwon and Murray-Darling would be 238,435 and 244,632 km² respectively.

In addition, there are a significant difference of opinions and views on important local issues across the existing Electoral Districts of Barwon and Murray – particularly when it comes to the use of water and the Murray-Darling Basin Plan.

However, these ‘community of interest’ issues are effectively grouped together in each of the suggested redrawn Electoral Districts of Barwon and Murray-Darling by the Nationals.

For example, in the Nationals suggested Electoral District of Barwon, it would have the same river system running through it (the Barwon Darling) where the majority of water users are predominantly irrigators with similar agricultural and crop production. This would assist the local Member in dealing with the same water issues that are important to their local residents – issues surrounding irrigation.

Likewise, the Nationals suggested Electoral District of Murray-Darling – which is connected via the Murray and Darling River systems - access to drinking water and environmental water matters are the predominant issues.

Further, the localities of Menindee and Broken Hill are currently at odds with northern irrigators as they feel they keep all the water for themselves. In addition, the irrigators in the locality of Deniliquin are currently at loggerheads with counterparts in the north of state who they feel get preferential treatment.

COVID-19 PANDEMIC

As detailed in the Nationals Suggestion Submission and unlike previous redistributions, there is also a significant unique factor that should be considered during the 2020 NSW Redistribution process by the Electoral Districts Redistribution Panel – the ongoing wide-spread community disruption being

caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Over recent months, we have seen significant impacts on NSW residents and local communities, whether it be through loss of employment, closure of businesses and schools or the implementation of isolation measures and other restrictions.

Since the closing date for suggestions, we have also seen a further serious outbreak of community transmission of COVID-19 in Victoria, that has subsequently closed the New South Wales/Victoria border and caused community outbreaks in other states and territories including New South Wales.

It is quite clear that the effects and impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic will reverberate in communities across NSW for many months and years to come.

The Nationals commend the suggestion by Mr Gordon in his submission that:

“COVID-19 has added a massive uncertainty to housing demand and household formation. I simply would urge caution before making major boundary changes.”

The Nationals were surprised not to see more submitters urging caution before making major boundary changes due to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, it should be noted that the Liberal Party made a fleeting reference to COVID-19 in its suggestions in relation to west of the Great Dividing Range when it stated:

“This absence of disruption may even be welcomed in rural and regional New South Wales after the triple whammy of drought, bushfires and COVID-19.”

We therefore reiterate our suggestion that the Electoral Districts Redistribution Panel should attempt to minimise further unnecessary voter disruption by undertaking and adopting minimal change to electoral boundaries wherever possible. To assist the Panel in this regard, the Nationals Suggestions Submission proposes no changes to 28 – or 30% - of the state’s 93 Electoral Districts.

ELECTORAL ENROLMENT

As detailed in the Nationals Suggestions Submission, at the time of the redistribution the number of enrolled voters in each Electoral District must not vary by more than 10 per cent (up or down) from the quota or average number.

The Electoral Districts Redistribution Panel will also endeavour to ensure that - as far as practicable - the number of enrolled voters in each Electoral District does not vary by more than 10 per cent (up or down) from the quota at the relevant future time.

This variation has been provided by the Act so that it is possible to also have regard for the aspects of the statutory criteria as set out in Section 21 (1) (b) of the Act.

There is no requirement that each Electoral District must be drawn so that their actual enrolment has negligible variation from the quota, or that the projected enrolment should have negligible variation from the average Electoral District enrolment at the 'relevant future time'.

Therefore, one can assume that the full permissible variation can be employed to allow either a large number of existing Electoral District to maintain their current boundaries to minimise voter disruption during the ongoing and unprecedented wide-spread community disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic - or for sensible Electoral Districts to be redrawn with minimal change to maintain strong communities of interest.

It was therefore surprising to see in the Liberal Party's submission that all of their suggested electoral districts do not vary by more than 2.5 per cent (up or down) from the quota or average number – except for their suggested Electoral District of Leppington located in the high-growth Liverpool-Camden corridor with +3.67 per cent.

This is all satisfactory from an electoral stability argument point of view but the cost to local communities of interest, respecting and maintain the integrity of LGAs in regional NSW and minimising voter disruption is too high.

The Nationals contend that sensible, practical existing electoral district boundaries can be maintained or enhanced with minimal change

– particularly in regional NSW – all the while delivering community of interest, respecting and maintain the integrity of LGAs, minimising voter disruption, providing electoral stability AND utilising the full permissible variations that are provided under the Act.

MAINTAINING EXISTING ELECTORAL BOUNDARIES WHERE POSSIBLE

It was heartening to see that a number of submitters have suggested no changes to many electoral districts located in regional NSW, including the Australian Labor Party (NSW Branch), the Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party (NSW), Mr Gordon, Mr Waddell and Mr Mulcair.

As detailed in the Nationals submission, in previous redistributions the Electoral Districts Redistribution Panel has used existing electoral boundaries as a starting point for designing new ones and electoral boundaries themselves are one of the factors that comprise a strong community of interest. We also suggest no changes to 28 – or 30% - of the state's 93 Electoral Districts.

The Nationals contend that with the use of the flexibility offered by the margin of enrolment allowance on current and projected enrolments provided under the Act, many of the electoral districts located in regional NSW can – and should – have their boundaries maintained in their current form.

CONCLUSION

As mentioned earlier, the Nationals are the only political Party dedicated solely to representing the people living in regional New South Wales and our Comments on Suggestions Submission for the 2020 NSW Redistribution will focus - in most-part - on ensuring that the boundaries suggested in regional areas represent and are built upon the strongest possible communities of interests - local government areas (LGAs).

To this end, the Nationals will be making further comments in detail on nineteen (19) of the Suggestion Submissions received - which wholly or in part focus on regional NSW.



COMMENTS IN DETAIL

SWR200605/1 - B BUSHELL

Although the Nationals agree in principal with this submitter's suggestion, unfortunately some change will be necessitated for the Electoral District of Cootamundra due to declining population in north western and western NSW.

To this end, we urge the Electoral Districts Redistribution Panel to adopt the Nationals suggestion for the Electoral District of Cootamundra.

NSWR200608/2 - M GORDON

SUMMARY

There are a number of suggestions made by Mr Gordon that the Nationals support as they are entirely, or in large-part, consistent with our own Suggestions Submission.

However, we will raise concerns with other suggestions where the Nationals believe that they are clearly at odds with the criteria set out in the statutory requirements of Section 21 (Criteria for distributions) of the *Electoral Act 2017 No 66*.

COVID-19

It is quite clear that impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic will reverberate in communities across NSW for many months and years to come. The Nationals commend the suggestion by Mr Gordon in his submission that:

“COVID-19 has added a massive uncertainty to housing demand and household formation. I simply would urge caution before making major boundary changes.”

The Nationals urge the Electoral Districts Redistribution Panel to adopt Mr Gordon's suggestion to be cautious before making major boundary changes.

RETENTION OF EXISTING BOUNDARIES

The Nationals support the submitter's suggestions to make no changes to a number of electoral districts located in regional NSW - including Bathurst, Orange, Port Stephens, Myall Lakes, Tweed and Clarence - which fall well within the allowable current and

projected enrolment tolerance provide under the Act.

As detailed in the Nationals Suggestion Submission, in previous redistributions the Electoral Districts Redistribution Panel has used existing electoral boundaries as a starting point for designing new ones and electoral boundaries themselves are one of the factors that comprise a strong community of interest.

To this end, we urge the Electoral Districts Redistribution Panel to adopt Mr Gordon's suggestions to retain the existing electoral district boundaries of Bathurst, Orange, Port Stephens, Myall Lakes, Tweed and Clarence.

ELECTORAL DISTRICT OF ALBURY

The Nationals support the submitter's suggestions to relocate the former LGAs of Urana and Jerilderie to manage the enrolment numbers for the Electoral District of Albury and to provide additional population to be used for the far western NSW electoral districts.

To this end, we urge the Electoral Districts Redistribution Panel to adopt Mr Gordon's suggestions for the Electoral District of Albury.

ELECTORAL DISTRICT OF UPPER HUNTER

Although the Nationals do not support the submitter's suggestions for Upper Hunter in its entirety, we do support their suggestion to relocate the rural components currently residing in the Electoral District of Cessnock, into the Electoral District of Upper Hunter based on community of interest arguments.

To this end, we urge the Electoral Districts Redistribution Panel to adopt this suggestion from Mr Gordon's.

ELECTORAL DISTRICT OF COFFS HARBOUR

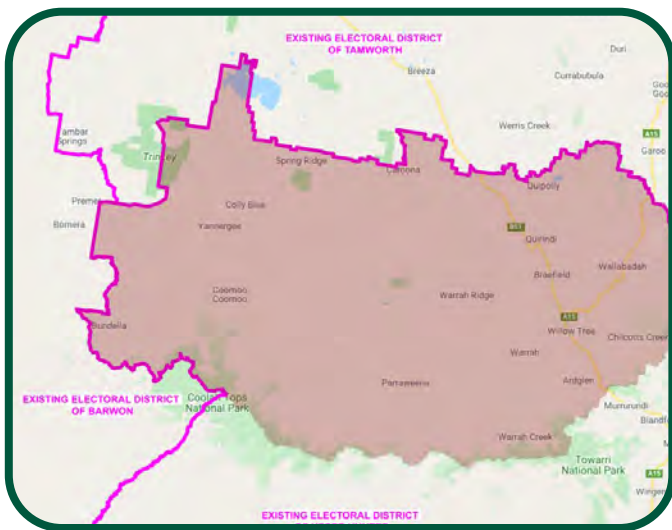
The Nationals do not support the submitter's suggestions for unnecessary changes to the Electoral District of Coffs Harbour - as this electoral district currently sits well within the required population tolerance and as the current boundary is made up of 99.99% of the Coffs Harbour City Council.

To this end, we urge the Electoral Districts Redistribution Panel to reject this suggestion from Mr Gordon.

ELECTORAL DISTRICT OF BARWON

This submitter's suggestion to include the section of Liverpool Plains currently residing in the Electoral District of Upper Hunter into Barwon – along with the locality of Broken Hill - shows a clear lack of understanding by the submitter of this part of regional NSW.

There is absolutely no community of interest argument that can be made – and there is no communication or significant transport corridor linkages with the other localities in the submitter's suggested electoral district of Barwon.



To this end, we urge the Electoral Districts Redistribution Panel to reject this suggestion from Mr Gordon.

ELECTORAL DISTRICT OF WAGGA WAGGA

The submitter's suggestion to include the former LGA of Gundagai - which results in the splitting of the Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council - is unnecessary, as the current Electoral District of Wagga Wagga falls well within the required population tolerances provided under the Act. It also cannot be supported on any local community of interest argument.

To this end, we urge the Electoral Districts Redistribution Panel to reject this suggestion from Mr Gordon.

UNNECESSARY SPLITTING OF RURAL LGAs

The submitter suggests transferring the locality of Bemboka from the Electoral District of Bega to Monaro - unnecessary splitting the Bega Valley Shire Council between two electoral districts.

The resultant effect from this suggestion is the further unnecessary splitting of the Yass Valley Council between the Electoral Districts of Monaro, Cootamundra and Goulburn.

In rural electoral districts, economic, social and regional interests tend to have a greater salience with LGA boundaries and are generally a far stronger indicator of community of interest than elsewhere in the state. By and large, LGA boundaries also reflect the significant natural physical features of the State.

As the Electoral Districts of Bega and Monaro currently fall well within the permissible tolerance provided under the Act, these suggestions by the submitter are unnecessary and will break local community of interest.

To this end, we urge the Electoral Districts Redistribution Panel to reject the suggestion from Mr Gordon for the Electoral Districts of Bega and Monaro - and instead retain their existing boundaries.

NSWR200616/3 - P VENERIS - LOCKHART SHIRE COUNCIL

The Nationals completely agree with this suggestion by this submitter, as it reflects our suggestion for the Electoral District of Wagga Wagga.

To this end, we urge the Electoral Districts Redistribution Panel to adopt this submitter's suggestion.

NSWR200618/4 - J WADDELL

SUMMARY

The Nationals support quite a number of Mr Wadell's suggestions for regional NSW, as they are entirely, or in large-part, consistent with our own Suggestions Submission.

In particular, the submitter's adopted principal of using entire LGAs in regional areas, consistent with the NSW Redistribution Committee's 2013 report which stated that:

“The boundaries were also defined, where possible and particularly in rural and regional areas, to include whole Local Government Areas (LGAs) so as to reflect community of interest.”

However, there is one concern that the Nationals have with Mr Waddell's suggested Electoral District of Barwon where we believe it is clearly at odds with the criteria set out in the statutory requirements of Section 21 (Criteria for distributions) of the *Electoral Act 2017 No 66*.

RETENTION OF EXISTING BOUNDARIES

The Nationals support the submitter's suggestions to make no changes to a number of electoral districts - including Ballina, Balmain, Bega, Clarence, Coffs Harbour, Gosford, Hawkesbury, Lismore, Monaro, Orange, Oxley, Pittwater, Terrigal, The Entrance, Tweed and Wyong - which fall well within the allowable current and projected enrolment tolerance provide under the Act.

As detailed in the Nationals Suggestion Submission, in previous redistributions the Electoral Districts Redistribution Panel has used existing electoral boundaries as a starting point for designing new ones and electoral boundaries themselves are one of the factors that comprise a strong community of interest.

To this end, we urge the Electoral Districts Redistribution Panel to adopt Mr Waddell's suggestions to retain the existing electoral district boundaries of Ballina, Balmain, Bega, Clarence, Coffs Harbour, Gosford, Hawkesbury, Lismore, Monaro, Orange, Oxley, Pittwater, Terrigal, The Entrance, Tweed and Wyong.

ELECTORAL DISTRICT OF COOTAMUNDRA

The Nationals support the submitter's suggestion to transfer the former Booroowa Shire LGA from the Electoral District of Goulburn as it will unite the Hilltops Council LGA within the one electoral district (Cootamundra).

However, the Nationals do not support the unnecessary splitting of Yass Valley Shire for the reasons we have previously detailed.

The Nationals urge the Electoral Districts Redistribution Panel to relocate the former Booroowa Shire and Yass Valley Shire LGAs into the Electoral District of Cootamundra.

MINOR TRANSFERS OF SPECIFIC LOCALITIES

The Nationals support the submitter's suggestions to

make a number of minor transfers of specific localities between electoral districts to enhance communities of interest, namely:

- *The transferring of the South Western part of Singleton Shire and Pokolbin and its surrounds - which is currently in the Electoral District of Cessnock - into the Electoral District of Upper Hunter*
- *The transferring of the split component of Mid-Western Regional Council to electoral districts located in Western NSW*
- *The transfer of the localities of Bowral and Burradoo in the Southern Highlands from the Electoral District of Wollondilly into the Electoral District of Goulburn*

We urge the Electoral Districts Redistribution Panel to adopt these suggestions from Mr Waddell's suggestions.

ELECTORAL DISTRICT OF BARWON

The submitter's suggestion to include the Gunnedah Shire Council and the Liverpool Plains Shire Council currently residing in the Electoral Districts of Upper Hunter and Tamworth – along with the locality of Broken Hill - shows a clear lack of understanding by the submitter of this part of regional NSW.

This suggestion dismally fails the community of interest test due to the long-standing and unbreakable links that Gunnedah Shire Council has with the Tamworth Regional Council.

Putting aside the fact that they have been in the same electoral district since 1998, Gunnedah and Tamworth are both located within the same NSW Police Force District, the servicing regional airport for Gunnedah is the Tamworth Regional Airport (next closest airport is in Moree (2hr 20mins away) or Armidale (2hr 13mins)) and both are located in the same NSW Health District (Hunter New England). They are also both in the same print & electronic media markets.

Further, over the last three years, the NSW Government has assisted local councils and their local communities to develop 37 Regional Economic Development Strategies (REDS) across regional NSW.

One of these REDS is the Lower North West Region which encompasses the Tamworth Regional, Gunnedah Shire and Liverpool Plains Shire Local

Figure 1: The Lower North West Region



LOWER NORTH WEST Regional Economic Development Strategy 2018–2022

Government Areas LGAs, which has only just recently been completed (see above).

This Strategy was formed in collaboration with the councils, key stakeholders and the broader regional community - and benefited from economic-analytical assistance provided by the NSW Government's Centre for Economic and Regional Development (CERD).

To this end, we urge the Electoral Districts Redistribution Panel to reject these suggestions from Mr Waddell.

NSWR200622/5 - D BOWMAN

This submitter suggests that all properties on Nullo Mountain be relocated into the Electoral District of Bathurst based on community of interest grounds.

Although the Nationals have suggested that Bathurst retain its existing boundaries in our Suggestions Submission, we see no reason why this small rural community could not be relocated into the Electoral District of Bathurst

- particularly given that Mid-Western Regional Council is currently split between Bathurst and Dubbo

NSWR200626/8 - A BUTLER - FEDERATION COUNCIL

Although the Nationals support in principle the sentiments contained with the suggester's submission, there is a practicality that some electoral boundaries will need to be redrawn in Western NSW during this redistribution process - using existing or previous LGAs - to ensure a greater equal representation and is necessitated due to declining population in north western and western NSW.

NSWR200628/18 - P MAYTOM - LEETON SHIRE COUNCIL

Although the Nationals support in principle the sentiments contained with the suggester's submission, there is a practicality that some electoral boundaries will need to be redrawn in

Western NSW during this redistribution process - using existing LGAs - to ensure a greater equal representation and is necessitated due to declining population in north western and western NSW.

NSWR200630/21 - D NEEVES

Although the Nationals support in principle the sentiments contained with the suggester's submission, there is a practicality that some electoral boundaries will need to be redrawn in Western NSW during this redistribution process, to ensure a greater equal representation.

Having said that, the point regarding the locality of Broken Hill being located in an electoral district with the local government areas north of Dubbo – including Narrabri – is well made.

The Nationals urge the Electoral Districts Redistribution Panel to adopt the Nationals suggestion for the Electoral District of Barwon.

NSWR200630/21 - A DONOGHUE - COOLAMON SHIRE COUNCIL

The Nationals strongly support the sentiments contained in this suggester's submission, particularly as it relates to the size of rural electoral districts.

Regarding the ever-increasing land sizes of rural-based electoral districts, we are mindful of the importance of ensuring - to the maximum possible extent - that residents in the most remote parts of the state have reasonable access to their local Member of Parliament.

That is why by using current boundaries as a starting point in our own Suggestions Submission, the Nationals have sought to ensure that the Electoral Districts of Barwon and Murray in particular, are redrawn in such a way as to equally proportion land mass rather than have one electorate (Barwon) covering over a third of New South Wales. This change necessitates the abolition of Murray but replaces it with the recreated Electoral District of Murray-Darling.

To this end, we urge the Electoral Districts Redistribution Panel to adopt this submitter's suggestion regarding the size of rural electoral districts.

NSWR200630/24 - B MONAGHAN - BLAND SHIRE COUNCIL

Although the Nationals support in principle the sentiments contained with the suggester's submission, there is a practicality to ensure a greater equal representation that some electoral boundaries will need to be redrawn in Western NSW during this redistribution process.

However, every effort should be made by the Electoral Districts Redistribution Panel to ensure that entire rural-based local government areas are contained within one electoral boundary – consistent with the principle set out in the NSW Redistribution Committee's 2013 report where it stated:

“The boundaries were also defined, where possible and particularly in rural and regional areas, to include whole Local Government Areas (LGAs) so as to reflect community of interest.”

NSWR200630/28 - K AND G MURPHY

Although the Nationals agree in principal with this Suggestion, unfortunately some change will be necessitated for the Electoral District of Cootamundra due to declining population in north western and western NSW.

To this end, we urge the Electoral Districts Redistribution Panel to adopt the Nationals suggestion for the Electoral District of Cootamundra.

NSWR200701/30 - THE GREENS NSW

SUMMARY

There was only one suggestion made by The Greens NSW in their Suggestions Submission that the Nationals can support - as the rest of those suggested for regional NSW are not supported with any population movements or community of interest arguments.

ELECTORAL DISTRICTS OF ALBURY, WAGGA WAGGA AND MONARO

The submitters suggestions regarding the Electoral District of Albury taking in the locality of Jindabyne and the areas around Cooma - as well as Electoral

District of Wagga Wagga taking in the suburb of Tumbarumba - are not feasible.

Not only do these suggestions split two rural local government areas, there would be no way a Member for Albury could service both ends of their electoral district without first leaving their own electorate entirely - and then attempting to traverse the Jagungal Wilderness of the Kosciuszko National Park!

To this end, we urge the Electoral Districts Redistribution Panel to reject these suggestions from The Greens NSW.

NORTH COAST, UPPER HUNTER, NORTHERN TABLELANDS AND WESTERN NSW

None of the submitter's suggestions in these regions are based on any community of interest arguments, are supported by any population movements and nor do they make any sense. They should therefore be discounted in their entirety.

To this end, we urge the Electoral Districts Redistribution Panel to reject these suggestions from The Greens NSW.

ELECTORAL DISTRICTS OF COOTAMUNDRA AND GOULBURN

The Nationals do agree with the suggested changes to the Electoral Districts of Cootamundra and Goulburn.

The transfer of the Yass Valley Shire from the Electoral District of Goulburn into the Electoral District of Cootamundra - and the transfer of the localities of Mittagong and Bowral from the Electoral District of Wollondilly to the Electoral District of Goulburn - make complete sense and is supported by strong community of interest arguments.

To this end, we urge the Electoral Districts Redistribution Panel to adopt these suggestions from The Greens NSW.

NSWR200701/31 - R MEDD

Although the Nationals support in principle the sentiments contained with the suggester's submission - with regards to the connectivity between Gilgandra and Dubbo - there is a practicality that this inclusion would have a

detrimental effect on both the current and projected enrolment numbers for the electoral Districts of Barwon and Dubbo.

However, the Nationals strongly support this suggester's suggestion as it relates to the size of rural electoral districts.

Regarding the ever-increasing land sizes of rural-based electoral districts, the Nationals are mindful of the importance of ensuring - to the maximum possible extent - that residents in the most remote parts of the state have reasonable access to their local Member of Parliament.

That is why by using current boundaries as a starting point in our own Suggestions Sub-mission, the Nationals have sought to ensure that the Electoral Districts of Barwon and Murray in particular, are redrawn in such a way as to equally proportion land mass rather than have one electorate (Barwon) covering over a third of New South Wales.

This change necessitates the abolition of Murray but replaces it with the recreated Electoral District of Murray-Darling.

To this end, we urge the Electoral Districts Redistribution Panel to adopt the Nationals suggestions for the Electoral Districts of Barwon and Murray-Darling.

NSWR200701/32 - J MARNEY

The Nationals do not support this submitter's suggestion as it would place both the current and projected enrolments for the suggested Electoral District of Lismore well outside of the allowable tolerance provide under the Act - 16.50 per cent and 16.25 per cent respectively.

To this end, we urge the Electoral Districts Redistribution Panel to reject this suggestion.

NSWR200701/33 - THE LIBERAL PARTY OF AUSTRALIA, NEW SOUTH WALES DIVISION

SUMMARY

There is little in the Liberal Party's suggestions for regional NSW that the Nationals can support as they have suggested undertaking wide-scale changes across the regions, even though it is not required.

It was also surprising to see in the Liberal Party's submission that all of their suggested electoral districts do not vary by more than 2.5 per cent (up or down) from the quota or average number – except for their suggested Electoral District of Leppington located in the high-growth Liverpool-Camden corridor with +3.67 per cent.

This would come at a great cost to local communities of interest, the integrity of preserving LGAs in regional NSW and also cause unnecessary voter disruption during this period.

What also surprised the Nationals was the fleeting reference to COVID-19 by the Liberal Party in its suggestions in relation to west of the Great Dividing Range when they stated:

“This absence of disruption may even be welcomed in rural and regional New South Wales after the triple whammy of drought, bushfires and COVID-19.”

COMPLETE DISREGARD FOR RURAL AND REGIONAL LGAs

The Liberal Party has also claimed in its Suggestion Submission that:

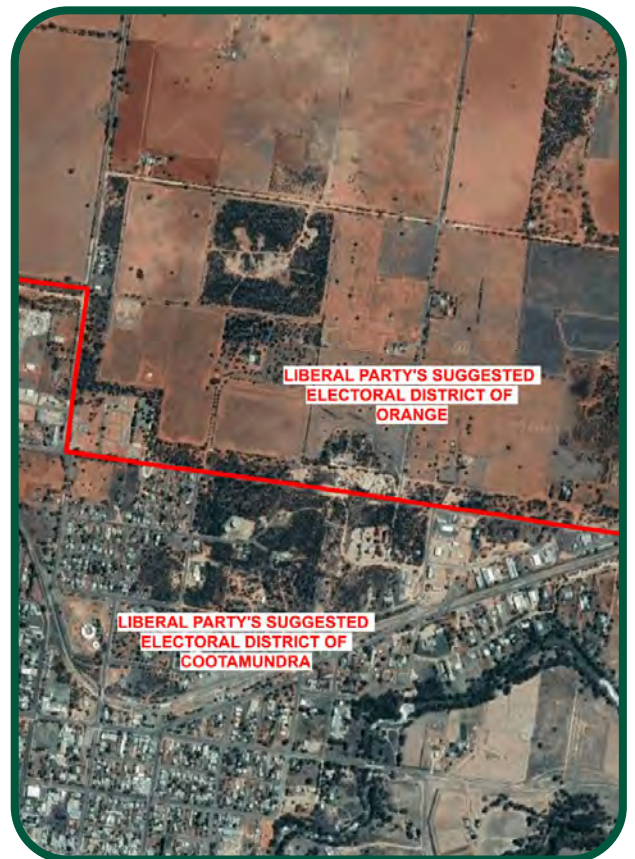
“Taking note of council boundaries remains a key priority to ensure community of interest is observed when drawing State electoral boundaries. We align electoral districts and those LGAs with strong local identity as far as possible, particularly in rural and regional New South Wales.”

Nothing could be further from the truth as the Liberal Party has in fact completely disregarded LGAs on the North Coast, the South Coast, the Northern Tablelands and in Western NSW.

In particular, the Nationals would like to draw the Panel's attention to the Liberal Party's suggestion to split the following LGAs that are currently located in one electoral district under existing boundaries:

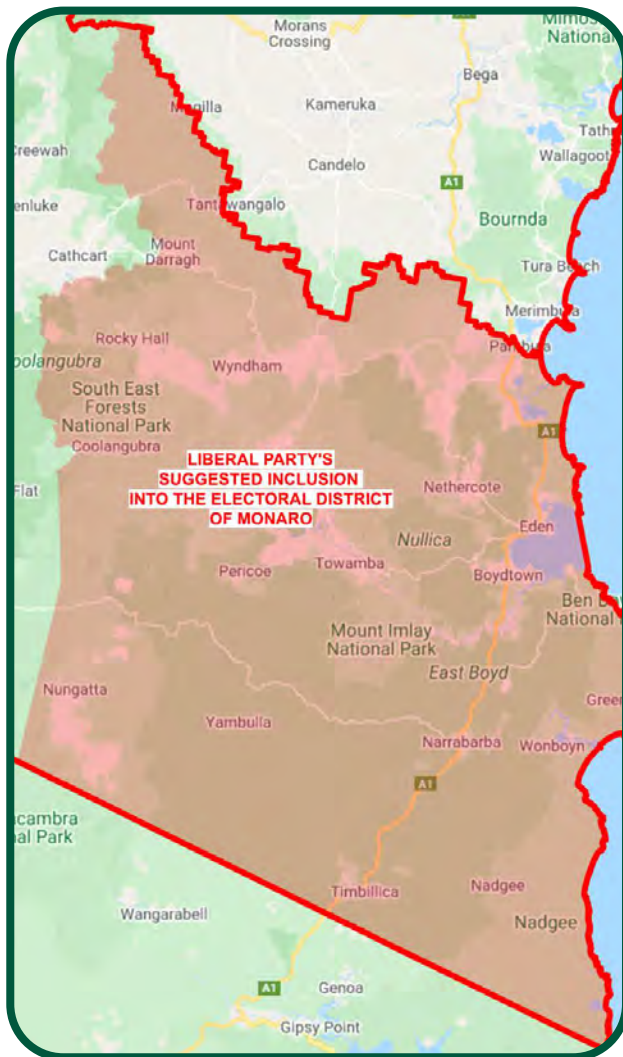
1. **Lockhart Shire Council** which they suggest should be split between the proposed electorates of Albury and Wagga Wagga - with the locality of The Rock isolated from the remainder of the LGA;

2. **Queanbean-Palerang Regional Council** which they suggest should be split between the proposed electorates of Monaro, Cootamundra and Goulburn – with the locality of Wamboin isolated from the remainder of the LGA, current split localities of Sutton and Bywong located in Cootamundra and multiple localities from Bungendore to Budawang to Nerriga now in Goulburn;
7. **Lachlan Shire Council** which they suggest should be split in half between the proposed electorates of Cootamundra and Orange (splitting the Condobolin district and isolating those local residents who live two minutes out of town);



5. **Tamworth Regional Council** which they suggest should be split between the proposed electorates of Tamworth and Northern Tablelands (north of Manilla);
6. **Ballina Shire Council** which they suggest should be split between the proposed electorates of Lismore, Byron and Clarence;

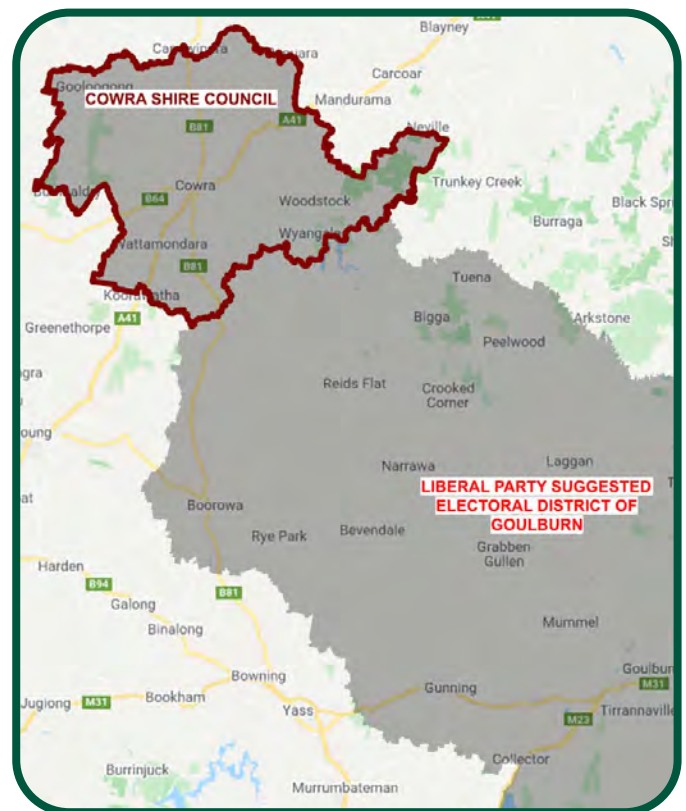
4. **Bega Valley Shire Council** which they suggest should be split in half between the proposed electorates of Monaro and Bega with a clear lack of communication and transport corridor connection as is clearly shown in the below image;



current boundaries – would be split between the proposed electorates of Bega, South Coast and Kiama (from two to three) under the Liberal Party Submission.

With the complete disregard for the communities of interest contained within the aforementioned ten (10) regional LGAs, the Liberal Party suggestions for regional NSW have quite clearly been drawn in a partisan, political way for personal electoral benefit – particularly when it comes to the Electoral Districts of Raymond Terrace (currently Port Stephens).

Further, the suggestion by the Liberal Party for the inclusion of the Cowra Shire Council into the same electoral district as the regional centre of Goulburn is ridiculous. Particularly given the lack of community of interest between Cowra and Goulburn - which is highlighted by the fact that there is no significant communication or transport corridors between these two regional centres (see image below).



8. **Lismore City Council** which they suggest should be split between the proposed electorates of Clarence, Byron and Lismore;
9. **Clarence Valley Council** which they suggest should be split between the proposed electorates of Clarence, Lismore, Coffs Harbour; and
10. **Richmond Valley Council** which they suggest should be split between the proposed electorates of Clarence and Lismore.

Further, **Shoalhaven City Council** – which is currently split between South Coast – and Kiama on

The Nationals urge the Electoral Districts Redistribution Panel to completely discount and disregard the Liberal Party's suggestions for regional NSW based on their partisan, political nature and the fact that they dismally fail any community of interest test as set out under the Act.

NSWR200701/36 - M MULCAIR

SUMMARY

The Nationals support quite a number of Mr Mulcair's suggestions for regional NSW, as they are entirely, or in large-part, consistent with our own submission.

However, we will raise concerns with other suggestions where the Nationals believe that they are clearly at odds with the criteria set out in the statutory requirements of Section 21 (Criteria for distributions) of the *Electoral Act 2017 No 66*.

RETENTION OF EXISTING BOUNDARIES

The Nationals support the submitter's suggestions to make no changes to a number of electoral districts - including Ballina, Bega, Clarence, Coffs Harbour, Gosford, Monaro, Orange, Oxley, Terrigal, Wagga Wagga - which fall well within the allowable current and projected enrolment tolerance provide under the Act.

As detailed in the Nationals Suggestion Submission, in previous redistributions the Electoral Districts Redistribution Panel has used existing electoral boundaries as a starting point for designing new ones and electoral boundaries themselves are one of the factors that comprise a strong community of interest.

To this end, we urge the Electoral Districts Redistribution Panel to adopt Mr Mulcair's suggestions to retain the existing electoral district boundaries of Ballina, Bega, Clarence, Coffs Harbour, Gosford, Monaro, Orange, Oxley, Terrigal, Wagga Wagga.

TRANSFERS OF SPECIFIC LOCALITIES

The Nationals support the submitter's suggestions to make a number of transfers of specific localities between electoral districts to enhance communities of interest, namely:

- *The remaining parts of Singleton LGA which is currently in the Electoral District of Cessnock - into the Electoral District of Upper Hunter*
- *The transferring of the split component of Mid-Western Regional Council from the Electoral District of Upper Hunter to electoral districts located in Western NSW*
- *The Liverpool Plains Shire Council being solely located with the Electoral District of Tamworth*

- *The transfer of the former Booroowa Shire LGA, from the Electoral District of Goulburn as it will unite the Hilltops Council LGA within the one electoral district (Cootamundra).*

To this end, we urge the Electoral Districts Redistribution Panel to adopt Mr Mulcair's suggestions above.

ELECTORAL DISTRICT OF TWEED

Although the submitter is only suggesting a minor modification to the Electoral District of Tweed, the Nationals do not support it and contend that the existing boundary be maintained - as the current electoral district falls within the permissible tolerances and to avoid any voter confusion.

We urge the Electoral Districts Redistribution Panel to reject this suggestion from Mr Mulcair.

ELECTORAL DISTRICT OF BARWON

The submitter's suggestion to remove Gunnedah Shire Council from the Electoral District of Tamworth dismally fails any community of interest test. As detailed earlier, Gunnedah Shire Council is so closely connected with the Tamworth Regional Council that they should both be located in the one electoral district.

Putting aside the fact that they have been in the same electoral district since 1998, Gunnedah and Tamworth are both located within the same NSW Police Force District, the servicing regional airport for Gunnedah is the Tamworth Regional Airport (next closest airport is in Moree (2hr 20mins away) or Armidale (2hr 13mins)) and both are located in the same NSW Health District (Hunter New England). They are also both in the same print & electronic media markets.

Further, over the last three years, the NSW Government has assisted local councils and their local communities to develop 37 Regional Economic Development Strategies (REDS) across regional NSW.

One of these REDS is the Lower North West Region which encompasses the Tamworth Regional, Gunnedah Shire and Liverpool Plains Shire Local Government Areas LGAs, which has only just recently been completed.

This Strategy was formed in collaboration with the councils, key stakeholders and the broader regional

community - and benefited from economic-analytical assistance provided by the NSW Government's Centre for Economic and Regional Development (CERD).

To this end, we urge the Electoral Districts Redistribution Panel to reject this suggestion from Mr Mulcair.

ELECTORAL DISTRICTS OF DUBBO AND BATHURST

The Nationals do not support the submitter's suggestion for unnecessary changes to the Electoral Districts of Dubbo and Bathurst, which results in Bathurst only very marginally falling within the allowable projected enrolment tolerance (+9.13).

Further, both of the two electoral districts are currently well within the required tolerance on their existing boundaries – and will also receive more enrolment from the transfer of part of the Mid-Western Regional Council from the Electoral District of Upper Hunter.

To this end, we urge the Electoral Districts Redistribution Panel to reject these suggestions from Mr Mulcair.

NSWR200701/37 - G LAVELLE - TEMORA SHIRE COUNCIL

Although the Nationals agree in principal with this submitter's suggestion, unfortunately some change will be necessitated for the Electoral District of Cootamundra due to declining population in north western and western NSW.

To this end, we urge the Electoral Districts Redistribution Panel to adopt the Nationals suggestions for Electoral District of Cootamundra - which retains the Temora Shire Council within the existing boundary.

NSWR200701/38 - SHOOTERS, FISHERS AND FARMERS PARTY (NSW)

ELECTORAL DISTRICT OF ORANGE

The Nationals support the submitter's suggestion to retain the existing boundaries for the Electoral District of Orange.

To this end, we urge the Electoral Districts Redistribution Panel to adopt this suggestion from the Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party (NSW).

ELECTORAL DISTRICT OF BARWON AND MURRAY

The Nationals were extremely disappointed to see that this submitter has suggested that the new Electoral District of Barwon should again increase further in area land mass from its existing 356,292 km².

What may look good on a map does not necessarily reflect a good outcome on the ground, particularly as it relates to communities of interest – and effective communications and transport corridors.

This is the case for this suggestion that the solution to managing the enrolment shortfalls in the Electoral District of Barwon is the inclusion of Gunnedah Shire Council. This suggestion dismally fails the community of interest test due to the long-standing and unbreakable links that Gunnedah Shire Council has with the Tamworth Regional Council and the fact that they should both be located in the one electoral district.

Putting aside the fact that they have been in the same electoral district since 1998, Gunnedah and Tamworth are both located within the same NSW Police Force District, the servicing regional airport for Gunnedah is the Tamworth Regional Airport (next closest airport is in Moree (2hr 20mins away) or Armidale (2hr 13mins)) and both are located in the same NSW Health District (Hunter New England). They are also both in the same print & electronic media markets.

Further, over the last three years, the NSW Government has assisted local councils and their local communities to develop 37 Regional Economic Development Strategies (REDS) across regional NSW. One of these REDS is the Lower North West Region which encompasses the Tamworth Regional, Gunnedah Shire and Liverpool Plains Shire Local Government Areas LGAs, which has only just recently been completed.

Figure 1: The Lower North West Region



LOWER NORTH WEST Regional Economic Development Strategy 2018–2022

This Strategy was formed in collaboration with the councils, key stakeholders and the broader regional community - and benefited from economic-analytical assistance provided by the NSW Government's Centre for Economic and Regional Development (CERD).

To simply claim "Gunnedah shares communities of interest, travel corridors and physical features as the rest of the district" is lazy and doesn't make it so - which is extremely disappointing coming from a political party claiming to represent all of NSW - and particularly regional communities.

However, as detailed in our Suggestions Submission, the Nationals believe there is a much more simple and logical solution to address this important issue.

The Nationals suggest that the Electoral Districts of Barwon and Murray are redrawn in such a way as to equally proportion land mass rather than have one electorate (Barwon) covering over a third of New South Wales.

Further, that the new Electoral District of Barwon be

made up of the entire LGAs of *Coonamble Shire Council, Lachlan Shire Council, Carrathool Shire Council, Warren Shire Council, Cobar Shire Council, Bland Shire Council, Bogan Shire Council, Bourke Shire Council, Walgett Shire Council, Narrabri Shire Council, Brewarrina Shire Council, Warrumbungle Shire Council, Griffith City Council and Gilgandra Shire Council.*

This change will then necessitate the abolition of Murray which is replaced with the recreated Electoral District of Murray-Darling - that is suggested to be made up of the entire LGAs of *Murrumbidgee Council, Murray River Council, Hay Shire Council, Edward River Council, Unincorporated Far West, Broken Hill City Council, Berrigan Shire Council, Leeton Shire Council, Wentworth Shire Council, Balranald Shire Council, Narrandera Shire Council, Central Darling Shire Council* and the former *Urana Shire.*

The new sizes of these suggested Electoral Districts of Barwon and Murray-Darling would be 238,435 and 244,632 km² respectively.

In addition, there are a significantly different opinions on important local issues across the existing Electoral Districts of Barwon and Murray – particularly when it comes to the use of water and the Murray–Darling Basin Plan. However, these ‘community of interest’ issues are effectively grouped together in each of the suggested redrawn Electoral Districts of Barwon and Murray-Darling by the Nationals.

For example, in the Nationals suggested Electoral District of Barwon, it would have the same river system running through it (the Barwon Darling) where the majority of water users are predominantly irrigators with similar agricultural and crop production. This would assist the local Member in dealing with the same water issues that are important to their local residents – issues surrounding irrigation.

Likewise, the Nationals suggested Electoral District of Murray-Darling – which is connected via the Murray and Darling River systems - access to drinking water and environmental water matters are the predominant issues.

Further, the localities of Menindee and Broken Hill are currently at odds with northern irrigators as they feel they keep all the water for themselves. In addition, the irrigators in the locality of Deniliquin are currently at loggerheads with counterparts in the north of state who they feel get preferential treatment.

The Nationals strongly urge the Electoral Districts Redistribution Panel to reject this suggestion from the Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party (NSW) and instead adopt the Nationals suggested Electoral Districts of Barwon and Murray-Darling.

NSWR200701/39 - AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY (NSW BRANCH)

SUMMARY

There are a number of suggestions made by the Australian Labor Party that the Nationals support as they are entirely, or in large-part, consistent with our own submission.

However, we will raise concerns with other suggestions where the Nationals believe that they are clearly at odds with the criteria set out in the statutory requirements of Section 21 (Criteria for distributions) of the *Electoral Act 2017 No 66*.

RETENTION OF EXISTING BOUNDARIES

The Nationals support the submitter's suggestions to make no changes to a number of electoral districts - including Bathurst, Myall Lakes, Orange, Port Stephens and Tweed - which fall well within the allowable current and projected enrolment tolerance provide under the Act.

As detailed in the Nationals Suggestion Submission, in previous redistributions the Electoral Districts Redistribution Panel has used existing electoral boundaries as a starting point for designing new ones and electoral boundaries themselves are one of the factors that comprise a strong community of interest.

We urge the Electoral Districts Redistribution Panel to adopt the Australian Labor Party's suggestions to retain the existing electoral district boundaries of Bathurst, Myall Lakes, Orange, Port Stephens and Tweed.

ELECTORAL DISTRICT OF BARWON

The submitter's suggestion to remove Gunnedah Shire Council from the Electoral District of Tamworth dismally fails any community of interest test. As detailed earlier, Gunnedah Shire Council is so closely connected with the Tamworth Regional Council that they should both be located in the one electoral district.

This suggestion would also see the new Electoral District of Barwon again increase further in area land mass from its existing 356,292 km².

What may look good on a map does not necessarily reflect a good outcome on the ground, particularly as it relates to communities of interest – and effective communications and transport corridors.

Putting aside the fact that they have been in the same electoral district since 1998, Gunnedah and Tamworth are both located within the same NSW Police Force District, the servicing regional airport for Gunnedah is the Tamworth Regional Airport (next closest airport is in Moree (2hr 20mins away) or Armidale (2hr 13mins)) and both are located in the same NSW Health District (Hunter New England). They are also both in the same print & electronic media markets.

Further, over the last three years, the NSW Government has assisted local councils and their

local communities to develop 37 Regional Economic Development Strategies (REDS) across regional NSW.

One of these REDS is the Lower North West Region which encompasses the Tamworth Regional, Gunnedah Shire and Liverpool Plains Shire Local Government Areas LGAs, which has only just recently been completed.

This Strategy was formed in collaboration with the councils, key stakeholders and the broader regional community - and benefited from economic-analytical assistance provided by the NSW Government's Centre for Economic and Regional Development (CERD).

We urge the Electoral Districts Redistribution Panel to reject this suggestion from the Australian Labor Party and instead adopt the Nationals suggested Electoral Districts of Barwon and Murray-Darling.

ELECTORAL DISTRICT OF BEGA

The submitter's suggestion to retract the northern boundary of the Electoral District of Bega unnecessarily splits the Eurobodalla Shire Council between two electoral districts - Bega and South Coast.

As the Electoral District of Bega currently falls well within the full permissible variation provided under the Act that can be employed to allow either a large number of existing Electoral District to maintain their current boundaries to minimise voter disruption, the Nationals contend that no change is required.

The Nationals urge the Electoral Districts Redistribution Panel to reject this suggested Electoral District of Bega from the Australian Labor Party - and retain its current boundary.

ELECTORAL DISTRICTS OF TAMWORTH AND SINGLETON

If the Nationals' earlier comment regarding the necessity to retain both Gunnedah Shire Council and Tamworth Regional Council within the one electoral district is adopted by the Electoral Districts Redistribution Panel - there would be too much population for the suggested Electoral District of Singleton in its current form as suggested by the Australian Labor Party.

We urge the Electoral Districts Redistribution Panel to reject the suggested Electoral Districts of Tamworth and Singleton from the Australian Labor Party.

ELECTORAL DISTRICTS OF CLARENCE AND COFFS HARBOUR

The submitter's suggestions relating to the Electoral District of Clarence - which is currently made up of two entire LGAs (Clarence Valley Council and Richmond Valley Council) - will break these clear community of interest links by locating part of Richmond Valley Council into Lismore and taking in some of Coffs Harbour City Council. These suggestions have been made in despite of the fact that the Electoral District of Clarence is currently well within current/projected enrolment tolerances.

The flow-on effect to the Electoral District of Coffs Harbour by the suggestion is again unnecessary and detrimental to its current community make-up.

The electoral District of Coffs Harbour is currently made up of 99.99% of the Coffs Harbour City Council - and under the Australian Labor Party suggestions - would also include two small sections of Bellingen Shire Council, creating a further unnecessary split of a regional LGA.

The Nationals urge the Electoral Districts Redistribution Panel to reject this suggestions relating to the Electoral Districts of Clarence and Coffs Harbour from the Australian Labor Party.

ELECTORAL DISTRICT OF COOTAMUNDRA

Although the Nationals support the Australian Labor Party's suggestion as to not split Lachlan Shire Council between two electoral districts - such as what has been proposed by the Liberal Party - we cannot support the suggested make-up of an elongated electoral boundary for Cootamundra that includes Condobolin in the North West and Crookwell to the East.

This suggested electorate dismally fails any community of interest test which is supported by the fact that there is no distinct communication and transport corridor through the electorate.

In fact, a Member traveling from Gunning to Temora would need to leave their own electoral district - drive through the locality of Yass in the suggested Electoral District of Goulburn - and then re-enter their electorate to continue their journey.

We urge the Electoral Districts Redistribution Panel to reject this suggested Electoral District of Cootamundra from the Australian Labor Party.

ELECTORAL DISTRICT OF DUBBO

Although the Nationals agree in principle with the Australian Labor Party's suggested Electoral District of Dubbo, we cannot support the inclusion of Merriwa, which has not community of interest connection with those localities already situated in Dubbo.

We urge the Electoral Districts Redistribution Panel to adopt the Nationals suggested Electoral District of Dubbo.

ELECTORAL DISTRICT OF GOULBURN

The Nationals suspect that if you were to look up the word "Gerrymander" in the Oxford Dictionary - it would have a picture resembling the Australian Labor Party's suggested Electoral District of Goulburn.

The Nationals could spend a plethora of time detailing why this suggested boundary for the Electoral District of Goulburn should be completely discounted by the Electoral Districts Redistribution Panel. However, we will just let a picture say a thousand words (see below).

The Nationals strongly urge the Electoral Districts Redistribution Panel to reject this suggested Electoral District of Goulburn from the Australian Labor Party.

ELECTORAL DISTRICT OF WAGGA WAGGA

The Nationals do not support the submitter's suggestion to include a large part of the former LGA of Gundagai - which results in the splitting of the Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council.

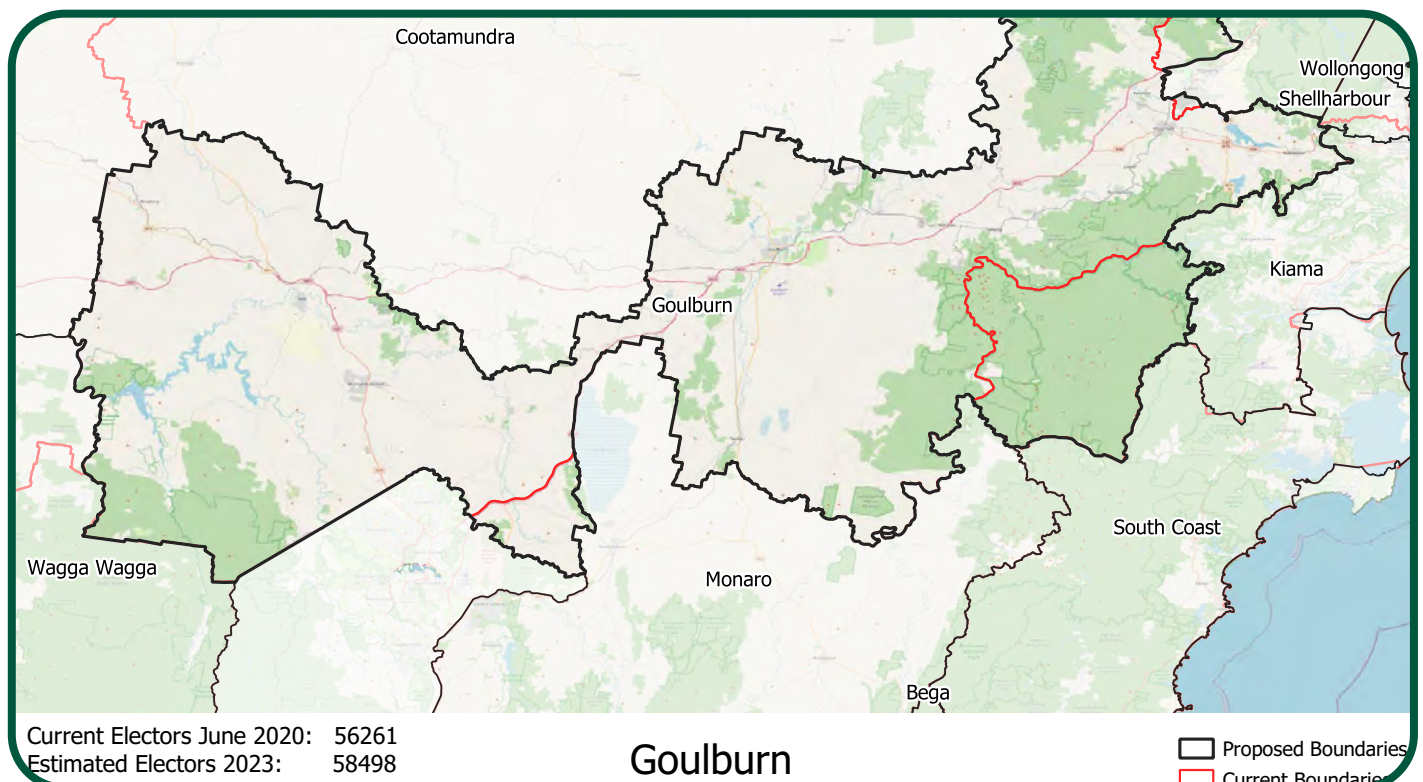
It is unnecessary as the current Electoral District of Wagga Wagga falls well within the required population tolerances provided under the Act and also cannot be supported on any local community of interest argument.

The Nationals urge the Electoral Districts Redistribution Panel to reject this suggestion from the Australian Labor Party - and retain the Electoral District's current boundary.

ELECTORAL DISTRICT OF MONARO

Given the good electoral stability of the current Electoral District of Monaro and there being no logical reason to adjust its current boundaries, the Nationals can only assume that this change is necessitated as a result of the Australian Labor Party's suggested 'gerrymandered' Electoral District of Goulburn.

We urge the Electoral Districts Redistribution Panel to reject this suggested Electoral District of Monaro from the Australian Labor Party - and retain the Electoral District's current boundary.





THE NATIONALS
for Regional NSW