



Suggestion 184

Rebekha Sharkie MP

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Sent: Wednesday, 29 November 2017 9:24 AM
To: FedRedistribution - SA
Subject: AEC SA Redistribution Submission - Ms Rebekha Sharkie
Attachments: R Sharkie AEC SA Redistribution Submission 28.11.17.pdf

To the Redistribution Committee for South Australia,

Please find attached my written submission to the Australian Electoral Commission's Redistribution Committee for South Australia regarding the current South Australian federal redistribution.

Thank you for considering my submission.

Yours sincerely

Rebekha



Rebekha Sharkie MP
Federal Member for Mayo

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Rebekha Sharkie MP

Federal Member for Mayo



28 November 2017

Redistribution Committee for South Australia
Australian Electoral Commission
Level 9, 1 King William Street
ADELAIDE SA 5001

To the Redistribution Committee for South Australia,

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN FEDERAL REDISTRIBUTION

Please find attached my written submission to the Australian Electoral Commission's (AEC) Redistribution Committee for South Australia regarding the current South Australian federal redistribution.

I acknowledge that the redistribution process will result in the abolition of one federal electoral division in South Australia and this saddens me, as I believe it reflects South Australia's diminishing presence on the national stage. With that in mind and for the reasons outlined in my attached submission, I strongly believe the current division of Mayo should be retained.

Mayo is a large electorate with a growing population and a distinct regional culture that distinguishes its residents from those in the urban electoral divisions of metropolitan Adelaide. To abolish Mayo and absorb its large geographical area into neighbouring seats would create a significant divide between communities in those new divisions.

Mayo's growing population indicates that it will be able to comfortably meet the requirements for number of enrolled electors set down by the AEC.

I hope that the Redistribution Committee will take these arguments into account and ultimately decide that the division of Mayo should remain.

I thank you for considering my submission.

Yours sincerely,



REBEKHA SHARKIE MP
Federal Member for Mayo

SUBMISSION ON THE SOUTH AUSTRALIAN ELECTORAL REDISTRIBUTION

The *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918* (the Electoral Act) requires the Redistribution Committee for South Australia to comply with the following factors when making their proposed redistribution

;

1. South Australia be reduced to 10 electoral divisions;
2. As far as practicable, the number of electors enrolled in each federal electoral division in South Australia at the projection time of Thursday 20 January 2022 must be between 118,436 and 127,026;
3. The number of electors enrolled in each federal electoral division in South Australia must be between 107,553 and 131,453.
4. In relation to each proposed federal electoral division, give due consideration to:
 - a. Community of interests within the proposed federal electoral division, including economic, social and regional interests.
 - b. Means of communication and travel within the proposed federal electoral divisions.
 - c. The physical features and area of the proposed federal electoral division, and
 - d. The boundaries of existing federal electoral divisions in South Australia, with this factor being subordinate to consideration (a)-(c).

1. Enrolment Numbers

In accordance with section 65 of the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918*, the Electoral Commissioner has determined the current enrolment quota for the purposes of the redistribution of South Australia to be 119,503.

The permissible maximum number of electors in an electoral division is 131,453.

The permissible minimum number of electors in an electoral division is 107,553.

Mayo has a current enrolment of 106,191.

1.1 Projected Enrolment Growth

According to AEC published projections, Mayo will have an enrolment of 110,072 by 20 January 2022. This is a 3.65 per cent increase in enrolments than the current number of 106,191.

This projected growth means that Mayo will be the seventh largest electorate in South Australia by 20 January 2022.

SEAT	CURRENT ENROLMENT	PROJECTED ENROLMENT	PROJECTED GROWTH
Adelaide	110,351	114,268	3.55%
Barker	106,009	108,383	2.24%
Boothby	107,939	109,835	1.76%
Grey	102,264	102,612	0.34%
Hindmarsh	112,511	114,716	1.96%
Kingston	107,643	110,793	2.93%
Makin	107,636	109,253	1.50%
Mayo	106,191	110,072	3.65%
Port Adelaide	115,227	119,176	3.43%
Sturt	104,727	106,669	1.85%
Wakefield	114,533	121,533	6.11%

Mayo's projected growth is the second highest in South Australia, behind the division of Wakefield.

Importantly, the growth of the electorate is projected to come from three distinct areas – Mount Barker, Strathalbyn, and the South Coast of the Fleurieu Peninsula, incorporating the communities of Goolwa and Victor Harbor.

- The AEC enrolment projections predict an increase in enrolments of **9.144 per cent** in the Mount Barker/Nairne District to 22,271 electors;
- The AEC enrolment projections predict an increase in enrolments of **5.88 per cent** in the Strathalbyn district to 11,094 electors and;
- The AEC enrolment projections predict an increase in enrolments of **3.83 percent** in the Victor Harbor/Port Elliot/Goolwa district to 21,754 electors.

Each of these enrolment projections are higher than the projected growth across Mayo and higher than the projected growth of every South Australian federal electoral division with the exception of Wakefield.

Given the geographic positioning of each of these districts, their current population, and their projected growth, it would be incredibly difficult to adequately redistribute boundaries to align these areas with other electoral divisions without either:

- a) Causing the number of electors in that federal division to exceed the maximum permissible number of electors at the projection time;
- b) Disregarding the communities of interest principle that must be considered during redistribution.

1.2 Long term population increase

The projected increase in enrolments over the next three years is supported by a significant projected increase in population in certain areas over the next 20 years.

At the 2016 Census, the federal division of Mayo had a population of 140,367. Its current enrolment is 106,191. This means that 75.65 per cent of people who live within the electorate boundaries are enrolled to vote.

1. Mount Barker District Council

At the 2016 Census the Mount Barker District Council had a population of 33,397.¹ This is projected to increase to 55,416 by 2036.²

If the above ratio is applied to the Mount Barker District Council population growth, it can be safely assumed that there will be an increase in enrolments within the District Council area of approximately 16,600 by 2036

2. Alexandrina Council

At the 2016 Census the Alexandrina Council had a population of 25,873³. This is projected to increase to 34,816 by 2036.⁴

Using the above ratio of 75.65 per cent of the population of Mayo being enrolled to vote, it can be assumed that there will be an increase in enrolments within the council area of approximately 6,760 by 2036.

¹http://www.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census_services/getproduct/census/2016/quickstat/LGA44550?opendocument

² <http://forecast.id.com.au/mount-barker>

³http://www.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census_services/getproduct/census/2016/quickstat/LGA40220?opendocument

⁴ <http://forecast.id.com.au/alexandrina>

1.3 Zoning Changes and Land Allotments

The projected increases in population in the Mount Barker and Alexandrina Councils to 2036 are based on projections which also include the significant land releases and re-zoning of residential property to allow for construction of housing. In 2010, the South Australian Government released the Mount Barker Urban Growth Development Plan Amendment.⁵ This plan sought to develop at least 7000 new dwellings in the Mount Barker/Nairne region within 15 years.

I understand that the projections provided by the AEC do not take projected growth into account.

The Mount Barker District Council has advised that approximately 400 houses per year are being built in the council area. This equates to a population increase of approximately 1000 people per year. It can therefore be safely assumed that an extra 3000 people can be added to the AEC's assumed population growth over the next three years.

I suggest that the AEC should consider land releases and urban planning and development when determining the redistribution of electoral boundaries.

In summary, Mayo's projected growth indicates that it should not be abolished, as its growth areas would not fit within nearby electorates and its projected growth will ensure that its enrolment stays within the number of electors permitted within a federal division.

2. Communication and Travel

The number and condition of Federal, State and Local Roads throughout the division provides an excellent communication and travel network.

The division of Mayo has a National highway (South Eastern Freeway) that connects large areas of the central area of the electorate with Adelaide, and the southern and eastern regions of South Australia and the eastern States with Adelaide. For commuters between Adelaide Hills population centres and metropolitan Adelaide, this road is the primary route of travel.

There are also a number of State highways within the area. The Princes Highway connects large parts of the central area of the electorate with Adelaide, and the southern and eastern regions of South Australia and the eastern States, with Adelaide and major centres within the electorate. Main South Road connects the southern areas of the electorate with Adelaide and other major centres within the division of Mayo.

There is also a good network of major arterial roads that connect the major, and many minor, centres within the division, and centres within the division with Adelaide (Victor Harbor Road, Mount Barker Road, Strathalbyn Road, Onkaparinga Valley Road, Echunga Road, Battunga Road, Brookmans Road, Meadows Road and Wellington Road).

The quantity and quality of the road network within the division of Mayo enables constituents to maintain strong communities of interest.

⁵https://www.sa.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0005/16493/Mount_Barker_Community_Information_Sheet.pdf

2.1 Neighbouring Electorate Offices

Any redistribution that removes the division of Mayo may deliver perverse outcomes and create a barrier for people attempting to visit their electorate office.

A member representing an electoral division larger than 250,000km² is provided with a second electorate office.⁶ A redistribution that abolished Mayo would be unlikely to increase the size of any neighbouring electorate to a size where it is entitled to a secondary electorate office or, in the case of the division of Barker, a third electorate office.

Assuming that the existing electorate offices in neighbouring electorates remain in their current location, removing the seat of Mayo could create transportation barriers for residents seeking to visit their local electorate office. It must be noted that Mayo has the highest median age of all of the South Australian federal electoral divisions⁷ and the means of transportation of its elderly residents must be taken into account.

Residents of the Adelaide Hills face significant restrictions in accessing public transport to travel to the electorate offices of Sturt, Boothby or Wakefield. Similarly, residents of the South Coast of the Fleurieu Peninsula have limited public transport options to access the Kingston electorate office.

While residents of the South Coast of the Fleurieu Peninsula also have limited transport options between those townships and the current electorate office location in Canberra, I have sought to rectify this by setting up a small electorate office in Victor Harbor using existing office funding allocations to ensure that those residents have access to their Federal Member of Parliament. I am not aware of any other Federal Member of Parliament does this, and abolishing the seat of Mayo would likely mean that residents of the South Coast are restricted from visiting their local electorate office.

Ease of access to electorate offices should be encouraged, and I suggest that the committee should consider potential restrictions of access to electorate offices during the process of redistribution.

⁶ [http://www.maps.finance.gov.au/entitlements_handbooks/senators-and-members/Part Three Accommodation and Office Facilities - 3.1](http://www.maps.finance.gov.au/entitlements_handbooks/senators-and-members/Part%20Three%20Accommodation%20and%20Office%20Facilities%20-%203.1)

http://www.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census_services/getproduct/census/2016/quickstat/CED408?open=document

3. Communities of Interest

The *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918* requires the Redistribution Committee to give due consideration to communities of interest within a proposed electoral division, including economic, social and regional interests.

There is no clear definition on what constitutes a 'community of interest', but the issue has been explored during previous electoral redistributions throughout different states, and those definitions have been referenced below.

3.1 Local Government

The *New South Wales Redistribution of Electoral Districts 2013* considered various principles to be taken into account when redistributing electoral boundaries. Of note is the principle 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."⁸

The *Tasmanian 2016-17 Legislative Council Electoral Boundaries Redistribution* also considered the issue of community of interest. Speaking on the issue, the committee "endeavoured, where possible, to utilise locality and Local Government Area (LGA) boundaries when altering the boundaries of existing divisions."⁹

There is a clear precedent for considering Local Government boundaries when attempting to redistribute electoral boundaries. With this in mind, the following Local Government Areas exist entirely within the electorate of Mayo.

1. Adelaide Hills Council
2. Mount Barker District Council
3. Alexandrina Council
4. Victor Harbor Council
5. District Council of Yankalilla
6. Kangaroo Island Council

With the exception of Kangaroo Island Council, any proposed abolition of Mayo would likely see all of these Local Government Areas have their boundaries divided between two or more federal electorates.

If the redistribution committee is going to make suggestions consistent with previous state redistribution committee, it will retain the seat of Mayo.

3.2 South Australian Government Regions

South Australian Government departments and agencies use a consistent set of boundaries to define 12 administrative regions in the state. The boundaries help government partners develop and improve reporting, planning and service delivery. They also relate to targets in South Australia's strategic plan.¹⁰

There are twelve distinct regions as defined by the South Australian Government.

⁸ http://map.elections.nsw.gov.au/Redistribution/Redistribution_2013_MAPS_A3_ALL.pdf

⁹ <https://credistribution.tas.gov.au/PDFs/Initial-Proposal-Booklet-2017Redistribution.pdf>

¹⁰ <http://www.sa.gov.au/topics/planning-and-property/planning-and-land-management/land-supply-and-planning-system>

Adelaide Metropolitan Area

1. Eastern Adelaide SA Government Region
2. Northern Adelaide SA Government Region
3. Southern Adelaide SA Government Region
4. Western Adelaide SA Government Region

Greater Adelaide

5. Adelaide Hills SA Government Region
6. Barossa Light and Lower North SA Government Region
7. Fleurieu Kangaroo Island SA Government Region

Country Regions

8. Eyre Western SA Government Region
9. Far North SA Government Region
10. Limestone Coast SA Government Region
11. Murray Mallee SA Government Region
12. Yorke Mid North SA Government Region

Of these twelve regions, the Adelaide Hills SA Government Region and the Fleurieu Kangaroo Island SA Government Region are contained entirely within the electoral boundaries of Mayo.¹¹

In addition, both the Adelaide Hills SA Government Region and the Fleurieu Kangaroo Island SA Government region are often considered as a singular region for the purpose of South Australian Government publications.¹²

3.3 Regional Development Australia - Adelaide Hills, Fleurieu and Kangaroo Island

Regional Development Australia (RDA) Boards in South Australia are a unique tripartite partnership between the Australian and South Australian Governments, and the Local Government Association of South Australia on behalf of its members.

There are eight RDA Boards in South Australia responsible for detailed regional plans that focus on the economic development of their region and providing independent advice to all three levels of Government on critical issues affecting their region.¹³

The eight RDA Boards in South Australia are;

1. Adelaide Hills, Fleurieu and Kangaroo Island
2. Adelaide Metropolitan
3. Barossa
4. Far North
5. Limestone Coast
6. Murraylands and Riverland
7. Whyalla and Eyre Peninsula
8. Yorke and Mid North¹⁴

¹¹https://www.sa.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0012/21612/Fleurieu_Kangaroo_Island_SA_Government_region.pdf

https://www.sa.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0018/16470/Adelaide_Hills_SA_Government_region.pdf

¹²http://pir.sa.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0003/277545/RIF_Adel_Hills_Fleurieu_and_KI.pdf

¹³ <https://rda.gov.au/my-rda/sa.aspx>

The RDA Board boundary for Adelaide Hills, Fleurieu and Kangaroo Island exists entirely within the electorate of Mayo.

There is a clear perception within both the South Australian and the Australian Government that the Adelaide Hills, Fleurieu Peninsula and Kangaroo Island are to be considered a continuous and consistent region. Any attempt to abolish the electoral division of Mayo would result in this region being represented by a number of federal electorates and not address the communities of interests test that the redistribution committee is required to consider.

3.4 Economic Activity

The division of Mayo is home to several distinct economic industries.

Horticulture

The Adelaide Hills horticultural industry employs the full time equivalent of 1350 workers, with more than 5000 seasonal workers during peak picking seasons. There are between 80-100 commercial sized apple, pear, cherry and strawberry growing businesses within the electorate.

The Horticultural Coalition of South Australia's industry assessment for the 2016/17 financial year indicates that the farm-gate value for horticulture within the electorate is approximately \$113 million per annum. This equates to 17 per cent of South Australia's total horticultural produce.

Given the concentration of growers in both the Adelaide Hills and the Fleurieu/Kangaroo Island regions, it is appropriate for the industry to be contained as much as practicable within a regional electorate. Such a measure creates a level of cohesion for the industry to advocate to their federal representative.

Viticulture

Wine Australia lists 18 distinct wine regions in South Australia. Six of these regions lie wholly within the boundaries of Mayo.¹⁵

1. Adelaide Hills
2. Currency Creek
3. Southern Fleurieu
4. Kangaroo Island
5. Langhorne Creek
6. McLaren Vale

A further two regions are split between Mayo and a neighbouring electorate.

7. Eden Valley
8. Barossa Valley¹⁶

Only the electorate of Barker contains the same number of distinct wine regions.

¹⁴ https://rda.gov.au/files/rda_map_sa.pdf

¹⁵ <https://www.wineaustralia.com/discover-australia-wine/south-australia-wines>

¹⁶ <http://www.wgcsa.com.au/wp-content/uploads/Wine-Regions-of-SA1.png>

As submitted above, it is appropriate for this industry to be contained within a single electorate as far as practicable. Certainly, any redistribution of electorate boundaries should consider the uniqueness of each of the aforementioned wine regions and the need for each one to exist entirely within an electorate, rather than be divided by an electorate boundary.

Tourism

South Australia is divided into twelve tourism regions, three of which are within the division of Mayo; Adelaide Hills, Fleurieu Peninsula, and Kangaroo Island. All of the regions follow Local Government boundaries that are within the division of Mayo, except part of the Fleurieu Peninsula region that falls in the northern and populated part of the City of Onkaparinga. The part of the City of Onkaparinga within the Fleurieu Peninsula region that lies within the division of Mayo includes the major tourism destination of McLaren Vale.

The three tourism regions that are within the division of Mayo contributed \$605 million to the December 2016 South Australian expenditure of \$5.8 billion, or 10.4 per cent.¹⁷

In 2013-2014 the tourism industry in the three regions that are within the division of Mayo contributed \$646 million to their respective regional economies, compared to the tourism industry contribution to the South Australian economy of \$2.4 billion, or 26 per cent.

In addition to contiguous nature of the three tourism regions within the division of Mayo, these statistics demonstrate the economic and financial importance and integration of three homogenous tourism regions.

3.5 Sporting Groups

Associations of sporting groups are an indicator of communities of interest. The following major sports, and the related associations of sporting groups, suggest strong communities of interest in the Local Government Areas within the division of Mayo.

Australian Rules Football¹⁸

The following association are within the division of Mayo:

- *Hills Football League*
All but two teams in the 18 team league are based within the electorate.
- *Great Southern Football League*
All ten clubs are based within the electorate
- *Kangaroo Island Football League*
All five clubs are based within the electorate

Netball¹⁹

The following associations are within the division of Mayo:

- *Hills*: All ten teams are within the division of Mayo.
- *Mid Hills*: All fifteen teams are within the division of Mayo.
- *Great Southern*: All eleven teams are within the division of Mayo.
- *Kangaroo Island*: All five teams are within the division of Mayo.
- *Southern Hills*: Two of the nine teams are within the division of Mayo.

¹⁷ <http://tourism.sa.gov.au/research-and-statistics/regions/regional-tourism-profiles>

¹⁸ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Australian_rules_football_clubs_in_South_Australia

¹⁹ <http://sa.netball.com.au/associations/>

In summary, 43 of the 50 teams in the five aforementioned associations are within the division of Mayo.

Cricket

The following associations are within the division of Mayo:

- *Alexandra and Eastern Hills Cricket Association*²⁰
Thirteen of the fourteen teams are within the division of Mayo.
- *Great Southern Cricket Association*²¹
Ten of the thirteen teams are within the division of Mayo.
- *Hills Cricket Association*²²
Fourteen of the eighteen teams are within the division of Mayo.
- *Kangaroo Island Cricket Association*²³
All five teams are within the division of Mayo.

In summary, 42 of the 50 teams in the three regions are within the division of Mayo.

Whilst these examples do not include all sporting and recreational activities within the division of Mayo, they include the major activities in the region and, therefore provide a reasonable indicator of the homogenous nature of the various communities across the electorate.

3.6 Community Commonalities

Residents across the electorate of Mayo face very similar issues on a day to day basis. One of the most significant areas of commonality is a commute to work. The following two Local Government Areas provide compelling data on the amount of residents who must travel for work.

Adelaide Hills Council

65.8 per cent of employed residents within the Adelaide Hills Council travel outside of the area to work. This means a daily commute to either a neighbouring LGA or to metropolitan Adelaide. Of employed residents of the Adelaide Hills Council, 54.2 per cent work in the Adelaide metropolitan area.²⁴

Mount Barker Council

55.7 per cent of employed residents of the Mount Barker District Council work outside the area. This means a daily commute to either a neighbouring LGA or to metropolitan Adelaide. Of employed residents of the Mount Barker District Council, 42.7 per cent work in the Adelaide metropolitan area.²⁵

²⁰ <http://aehca.sa.cricket.com.au/>

²¹ <http://gsca.sa.cricket.com.au/>

²² <http://hillsca.sa.cricket.com.au/>

²³ <http://mycricket.cricket.com.au/common/pages/public/rv/ladder.aspx?entityid=3148&save=0>

²⁴ <http://profile.id.com.au/adelaide-hills/residents?WebID=10>

²⁵ <http://profile.id.com.au/mount-barker/residents>

This leads to commonality of issues across public transport, condition of roads, regional services and more.

Another issue of significance that affects the community as a whole is the constant threat of bushfires. The Adelaide Hills has been the site for several bushfires over a many decades, most prominently the Black Sunday fires in 1955, and the first Ash Wednesday fire in 1980 followed by Ash Wednesday II in 1983. There have also been fires in Strathalbyn in 1987, Rapid Bay in 1995 and 2001, and Kangaroo Island in 2007.²⁶

While bushfire awareness and preparedness are concerns shared by almost all regional based South Australian's, residents of Mayo must be constantly prepared for the threat of bushfires to a degree not required or considered by their metropolitan neighbours. This adds to the commonality of issues faced by those in the electorate.

4. Physical Features

The physical features of the division of Mayo and those that define its borders are distinctive.

The Hills Face Zone is a large land-use planning zone in Adelaide that extends from Gawler in the north to Sellicks Beach in the south. Together with the Onkaparinga River, the Hills Face Zone clearly defines the western boundary of the division. Given that the Hills Face Zone restricts development on the western edge of the Mount Lofty Ranges, an effective physical barrier is created between the urban sprawl of metropolitan Adelaide and the communities of the Adelaide Hills.

The Barossa region to the north is a distinctive region in South Australia and provides an easily recognised and distinctive northern boundary of the electorate.

The Local Government boundaries with the Mid Murray Council and Rural City of Murray Bridge form clear boundaries of the division of Mayo to the east, and the south coast boundary of the Fleurieu Peninsula is a natural border to the south. Kangaroo Island is also a clear boundary within the electorate.

5. Conclusion

The current and projected growth within the major regions of the divisions of Mayo provides clear justification for retaining the division with its current boundaries.

There is a clear and distinct community of interest that exists throughout the electorate, typified by the similar economic, social, sporting and community interests of the area.

There are well defined physical features that divide the electorate from its neighbours, including the Hills Face Zone and the Onkaparinga River. The boundaries of the division comprise complete Local Government Areas, with the exception of parts of the City of Onkaparinga and the Barossa Council.

For these reasons, I submit that there is a clear case for retaining the division of Mayo with its current boundaries.

²⁶ https://www.cfs.sa.gov.au/site/about_cfs/history_of_the_cfs/bushfire_history.jsp