



29 November 2023

Redistribution Committee
Northern Territory Electoral Commission
GPO Box 2419
DARWIN NT 0801

Via email: secretariat.ntec@nt.gov.au

Dear Redistribution Committee

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the October 2023 proposed redistribution of divisions for the 2023 Northern Territory Redistribution (the October Redistribution).

Territory Labor accepts the reasoning for most of the proposed boundary changes of the October Redistribution and thanks the Committee for the work it has undertaken.

However, as Territory Labor expressed in its submission following the August 2023 proposed redistribution (the August Redistribution), dated 1 September 2023, issues remain regarding the unnecessarily large transfer of electors among Divisions in Palmerston, and further feedback is outlined below with the overall intent of best meeting the principles of redistribution in the *Electoral Act 2004* (NT) (the Act).

Spillett

Acknowledging the significant over-enrolment in the Division of Spillett, Territory Labor supports the changes to the Division of Spillett outlined in the May 2023 proposed redistribution (the May Redistribution).

Brennan, Blain and Drysdale

However, the changes proposed in the August Redistribution, and again in the October Redistribution, fail to achieve the principles stated in section 139A(e) of the Act that changes to existing divisions should minimise the number of electors being transferred from one Division to another. In fact, the proposals appear to maximise the number of electors being transferred; in Blain, more than 30% of electors in the October Redistribution will be new to the electorate, in Brennan 47.5%, and in Drysdale 28%.

The Committee has stated that it believes communities of interest are met by keeping whole suburbs together. However, this does not address the requirement to consider existing boundaries of Divisions under section 140(2)(g)(i), nor the community of interests in each proposed Division, including economic, social and regional interests

under section 140(2)(a).

The proposal for Palmerston does not align with section 139A(b) that the demographic characteristics of a Division should be as uniform as practicable; as the demographic characteristics are stronger along the division of old suburbs, developed suburbs and the new suburbs of Palmerston.

Equally, the proposal for Palmerston in the October Redistribution does not align with section 139A(c) that the geographic features of a division should be as uniform as practicable; Palmerston's localised geographic features such as hills and creeks provide natural boundaries formalised by Elrundie Avenue, Chung Wah Terrace and Roystonea Avenue.

As stated in Territory Labor's submission following the August Redistribution, suburbs do not define the main communities of interest in Palmerston and the current boundaries of the divisions of Blain, Brennan and Drysdale include stronger communities of interest being:

- the old suburbs of Palmerston (Moulden, Driver, Woodroffe and Gray, as suburbs that have existed for around 30 years),
- the developed suburbs of Palmerston (Farrar, Gunn and Bakewell) which have been completed in the last 20 years, and
- the new suburbs of Palmerston (the remaining suburbs to the East and South).

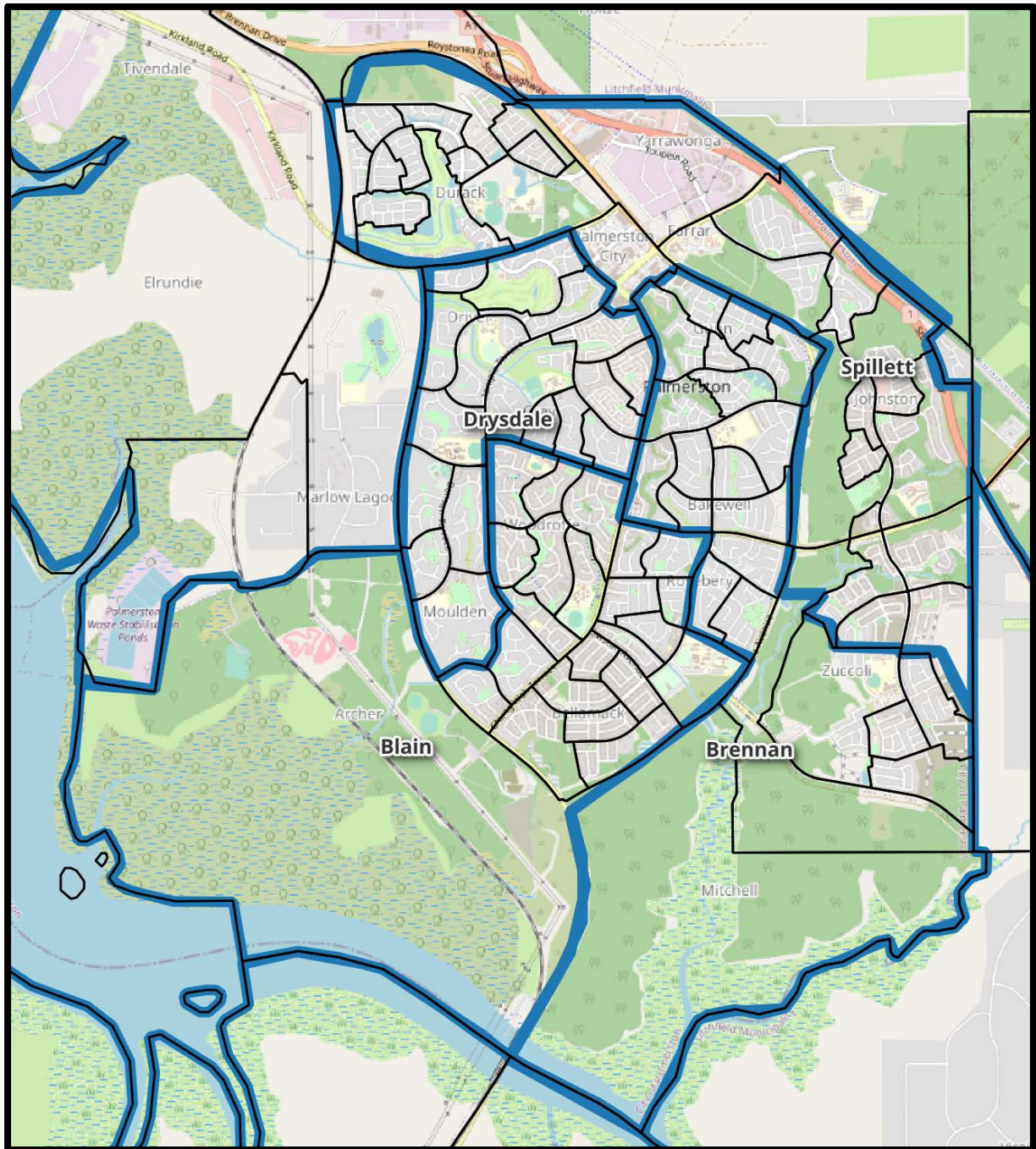
Taking section 139A regarding the principles of redistribution as a whole, Territory Labor maintains that the proposed changes to Blain, Brennan and Drysdale do not align with sections 139A(b), (c) and (e) and give undue weight to the use of suburbs as identifiable communities in attempting to satisfy paragraph 139A(d). The focus on section 139A(d) comes entirely at the expense of sections 139A(b), (c) and (e).

Instead, Territory Labor again submits that the electorates of Blain, Brennan and Drysdale should retain their current boundaries. Blain is on quota at 0.0% variance, and Brennan and Drysdale are both within the acceptable variance at -1.1% and 6.0%, respectively.

If the Committee insists this is not acceptable, we submit that any changes should minimise the number of electors experiencing change, rather than arbitrarily trying to keep suburbs together. This could be achieved by the following alternative:

1. Blain keeps Rosebery and only gains part of Moulden, and still gains Archer given its low population.
2. Brennan can still gain from Spillett (to allow for growth, and as these are new suburbs the change is less significant) but doesn't gain Roseberry from Blain, keeps Gunn (Gunn suits the rest of the suburb, new, similar characteristics) and still gains parts of Farrar.
3. Drysdale can lose part of Moulden to Blain and/or part of Driver and Palmerston City to Spillett.

This is demonstrated on the below map:



This option would minimise the disruption to people and local organisations across Palmerston and still achieve the objectives of keeping the number of electors in each division as near to equal as practicable while allowing for growth in seats with greenfield sites.

The tables showing the transfers in and transfers out are provided at **Appendix A** to this submission. As the Committee will note, these proposals significantly reduce the number of electors changing divisions while maintaining communities of interest and keeping all new proposed divisions within 5% variance of the quota of 6,083 electors. Therefore, Territory Labor submits this proposal aligns much more strongly with the principles and objectives as stated in the Act.

Again, Territory Labor thanks the Committee on their work on the redistribution and submits this feedback for final consideration to better meet the principles of the redistribution.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dalton". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial 'D'.

Karlee Dalton
Secretary
Territory Labor

Appendix A – Proposed transfers

Brennan

From	To	SA1	Area	Electors
Starting enrolment				6,018
Transfers in				
Spillett	Brennan	7104202	Mitchell	1
		(Split SA1) 7104209	Zuccoli	82
		7104210	Zuccoli	416
		7104211	Zuccoli	189
		7104212	Zuccoli	285
		(Split SA1) 7104214	Mitchell/Zuccoli	0
		7104219	Zuccoli	359
Total				1,332
Transfers out				
Brennan	Spillett	7104111	Farrar	307
		7104112	Farrar	462
		7104113	Farrar	273
Total				1,042
Final enrolment				6,308
Variance				3.70%

Blain

From	To	SA1	Area	Electors
Starting enrolment				6,084
Transfers in				
Drysdale	Blain	7104004	Moulden	291
Spillett	Blain	7104202	Archer	2
Total				293
Transfers out				
Total				0
Final enrolment				6,377
Variance				4.83%

Drysdale

From	To	SA1	Area	Electors
Starting enrolment				6,447
Transfers in				
Total				0
Transfers out				
Drysdale	Blain	7104004	Moulden	291
Total				291
Final enrolment				6,156
Variance				1.20%

Spillett

From	To	SA1	Area	Elector
Starting enrolment				7,115
Transfers in				
Brennan	Spillett	7104111	Farrar	307
		7104112	Farrar	462
		7104113	Farrar	273
Total				1,042
Transfers out				
Spillett	Fong Lim	7101202	Berrimah	6
		7101206	Berrimah	10
		7101208	Berrimah/Northcrest	202
		(Rejoin SA1)	Hidden Valley	0
		(Split SA1) 7101701	East Arm/Wishart	11
Spillett	Nelson	(Split SA1) 7101701	Elrundie	7
		7103807	Pinelands	34
		7103812	Marlow Lagoon	139
		7103816	Marlow Lagoon	329
Spillett	Blain	7104202	Archer	2
Spillett	Brennan	7104202	Mitchell	1
		(Split SA1) 7104209	Zuccoli	82
		7104210	Zuccoli	416
		7104211	Zuccoli	189
		7104212	Zuccoli	285
		(Split SA1) 7104214	Mitchell/Zuccoli	0
Total				2,072
Final enrolment				6,085
Variance				0.03%