

Secretariat Northern Territory Electoral Commission

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Dear Committee Members,

I wish to make some observations/suggestions in relation to the Northern Territory redistribution. I had similarly made several contributions to the previous redistribution.

With the regular redistributions at 4 years intervals the variability of enrolments across Divisions is quite small. Similarly the allowable tolerance is quite large when compared to other jurisdictions in Australia.

I would make the following observations:

- All the current 25 Divisions are within tolerance.
- It is highly probable that Spillett will exceed tolerance without a reduction in its enrolment.
- Wanguri may also exceed tolerance without a reduction in its enrolment.
- The Alice Springs based Divisions of Araluen, Braitling and Namatjira are all very close to quota and require no changes.
- The Divisions that are significantly over quota are Spillett and Wanguri. Adjacent to Spillett is under quota Fannie Bay, Fong Lim, Johnston and Nightcliff. Adjacent to Wanguri is under quota Casuarina, Karama, Sanderson and Johnston. Some areas around the Darwin Airport could be transferred to adjacent Divisions to remedy surpluses and deficiencies in elector numbers.
- The Divisions of Mulka, Arafura and Arnhem are respectively over quota in the case of Mulka and very under quota in Arafura and slightly under quota in the case of Arnhem. A transfer from Mulka would remedy the respective deficiencies.
- The Divisions of Gwoja and Barkly are 11.3% under quota in total. Whilst Katherine, Daly are well over quota. In 2019 I had highlighted the elongation of Gwoja as an issue. An earlier commission had proposed a east-west Division of Buchanan in the past. I would suggest that Gwoja take in the south west of the Northern Territory as now but remain south of Tanami Desert and take in central Australian areas south of Tennant Creek from Barkly. The community of interest would be better. With Barkly it could take in areas north of Tanami Desert, and areas close to Katherine and possibly southern or eastern portions of the existing Daly. This would combine areas of similar interest and reduce the over-enrolment of Daly.
- There is no need to change Goyder or Nelson. Katherine is growing and could be drawn to be slightly below quota to accommodate changes to Gwoja and Barkly.
- The Palmerston Divisions of Blain, Brennan and Drysdale are collectively slightly over quota but any adjustments will enable transfers from Spillett into Darwin Divisions to the north west of Palmerston (detailed above).

- Whilst the average enrolment of Divisions is 5928, the 13 in Darwin are on average 5950, and the 12 outside Darwin are 5903. The difference overall is small, but the gap is growing. In time it is likely that a Division might need to be added into the Darwin/Palmerston area, or a significant reshaping of boundaries around Palmerston to effect a transfer to the extra-Darwin/Palmerston area.

Yours sincerely,

Martin Gordon

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