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RE: 2023 Electoral Redistribution

Dear Committee Members,

I write to you in my capacity as the Member for Gwoja to outline my recommendations for the 2023 NT Electoral Boundary Redistribution.

The electoral division of Gwoja is a remote electorate created as part of the 2019 Northern Territory redistribution process. Prior to this, the electorate was known as the division of Stuart and a section of Namatjira division.

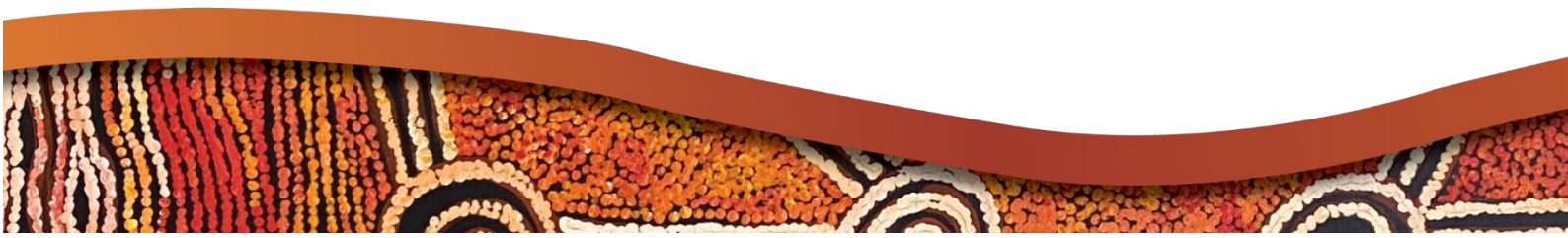
As part of the 2019 Northern Territory redistribution the division of Gwoja was created merging the previous electorate of Stuart with the south-western division of Namatjira resulting in the newly created division of Gwoja.

The division of Gwoja as it is currently stands occupies the western half of the Northern Territory. It extends south from the Victoria River and Gregory National Park, all the way to the border with South Australian and includes the Tanami Desert, Watarrka National Park and Uluru-Kata Juta National Park. The division includes the communities of Amanbidji, Daguragu, Kalkarindji, Kaltukatjara, Kintore, Lajamanu, Laramba, Ntaria (Hermannsburg), Papunya, Wallace Rockhole, Willowra, Yarralin, Yuelamu, Yuendumu, and Yulara and numerous homelands and outstations.

This currently places the electoral division of Gwoja at 427,605 km² making it the second largest electorate in the Northern Territory after the electoral division of Barkly at 442,868 km².

Representing bush constituencies and ensuring regular visitations to communities in remote electoral divisions is imperative to ensure those local voices are heard and represented, I am concerned that future Northern Territory electoral boundary redistributions may consider extending the boundaries of divisions of Gwoja and Barkly which would I believe be cause for concern.

Servicing remote electoral divisions is at best rewarding, empowering and productive for a member. However, the larger remote electorates become, the less manageable to are to service effectively in terms of time, travel and resources,



I do not advocate for any remote seats in the Northern Territory to be abolished or urbanised as I believe that this would further diminish democracy in the bush and would only reinforce urban centric models of governing.

It is crucial that we maintain a balance of urban and remote divisions in the Northern Territory to ensure that equal representation and diversity is achieved in our Assembly

In the case of the 2023 Northern Territory Electoral Boundary Redistribution I believe that minimal changes to the remote electorates of Gwoja and Barkly should occur to most adequately ensure effective representation for the region.

My Recommendations – Gwoja

I recommend that the division of Gwoja receive no to minimal changes to its boundaries. If consideration must be given to appropriately reflect and adjust the number of constituents as per the Northern Territory electoral division quotas, I recommend that consideration be given for the following communities of TiTree (eligible voters) (89), Wilora (97) and Pmara Jutunta (112) be incorporated back into the electorate of Gwoja.

Allowing these communities to be incorporated back into the Gwoja electorate would have several synergies, including:

- The electorate of Gwoja is already home to a majority of the Central Desert Regional council footprint
- Reuniting communities of cultural and spiritual interest;
- Ensuring that these communities have their economic, social and regional interests well represented.
- Reunifying communities who share the similar languages and beliefs
- These communities already being so close to the electoral boundary of Gwoja means that for a considerable amount of time community members are already accessing services or visiting relatives from within the electoral division of Gwoja
- The communities are adjacent to the Stuart Highway and already existing Gwoja communities, which would enable ease of access to service the populations

The communities of Ti-Tree, Wilora and Pmara Jutunta (Six Mile) have existing strong kinship links with many communities already in Gwoja leading to high mobility between the communities. By reunifying these communities within the Gwoja electorate, the division could be serviced alongside similar communities within the same council region.

By advocating for these communities to be incorporated into the Gwoja electorate, I acknowledge and understand that other areas of the division of Gwoja's northern boundary (Amanbidji and Bulla) may be subject to change, I do not advocate for the removal of any communities from the electoral division but acknowledge that a change to electoral boundaries has consequential follow on effects.

Additional Recommendations

In addition to the Gwoja division recommendations I believe in line with the Northern Territory Redistributions Committees remit consideration should be given to consider the appropriateness of electoral division names noting that the legislation specifies that the use of locality names should be avoided, I encourage considerations for the renaming of the electorates of Braiting and Araluen.



BRAITLING to be renamed to the electorate of **PERKINS** in tribute to the late Charles Nelson Perkins born in Mparntwe (Alice Springs) a prominent civil rights activist who dedicated his life to achieving justice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

ARALUEN to be renamed the electorate of **PINK** in tribute to Olive Pink, Pink was an Australian botanical illustrator, anthropologist, gardener, and activist for Aboriginal rights.

Ms Pink spent much of her life agitating for and being a passionate advocate for improved rights and conditions for Australia's Indigenous people. In her later years, Pink concentrated on botanical pursuits and established the currently named Olive Pink Botanic Garden in Alice Springs.

I submit these proposals for the Redistribution Committee's consideration.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'C. Paech'.

Chansey Paech MLA
Member for Gwoja

