



PROPOSED REDISTRIBUTION OF FEDERAL ELECTORAL DIVISIONS IN THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

The Redistribution Committee for the Northern Territory (the Redistribution Committee) has made a proposed redistribution of federal electoral divisions in the Northern Territory.

Members of the public and organisations are invited to inspect the report of the Redistribution Committee which contains:

- reasons for the proposed redistribution,
- maps showing the names and boundaries of each proposed electoral division, and
- suggestions and comments on suggestions previously lodged with the Redistribution Committee.

Members of the public and organisations are now invited to lodge written objections against the proposed redistribution.

WHY IS A REDISTRIBUTION BEING CONDUCTED?

A redistribution of federal electoral divisions in the Northern Territory is required because more than seven years have elapsed since the last redistribution. On 15 October 2015, in accordance with section 59 of the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918* (Electoral Act), the Electoral Commission directed that a redistribution commence.

As part of a determination on 13 November 2014 of the number of members of the House of Representatives to which each state and territory will be entitled at the next federal general election, it was determined that the Northern Territory remains entitled to two members of the House of Representatives.

LEGAL REQUIREMENTS FOR A REDISTRIBUTION

In making its proposed redistribution, the Redistribution Committee was bound by section 66 of the Electoral Act.

The number of electors in each proposed electoral division must not deviate by more than 10 per cent above or below the current enrolment quota. The current enrolment quota for the Northern Territory was determined by the Electoral Commissioner to be 64 786 as at 15 October 2015.

As far as practicable, the Redistribution Committee must ensure that the number of electors enrolled in each division at 7 August 2020 (the projection time) will not deviate by more than 3.5 per cent above or below the projected enrolment quota of 70 688.

Enrolment as at 15 October 2015, the projected enrolment figures, current and projected enrolment quotas, and the redistribution timetable, are available on the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) website:

www.aec.gov.au/nt-redistribution

Section 66 of the Electoral Act also provides that the Redistribution Committee:

'give due consideration, in relation to each proposed Electoral Division, to:

- community of interests within the proposed Electoral Division, including economic, social and regional interests;*
- means of communication and travel within the proposed Electoral Division;*
- the physical features and area of the proposed Electoral Division; and*
- the boundaries of existing Divisions in the State or Territory'.*

Consideration of existing boundaries is subordinate to the other factors set out above.

Under section 56A of the Electoral Act, until such time as the Territory of the Christmas Islands or the Territory of Cocos (Keeling) Island is entitled to a member of the House of Representatives, each Territory is

to be included in an electoral division in the Northern Territory. The Territory of Christmas Island and the Territory of Cocos (Keeling) Island are currently part of the Division of Lingiari.

WHAT HAS HAPPENED SO FAR?

Notices inviting suggestions relating to the redistribution and comments on suggestions were placed in the Gazette on Wednesday 3 February 2016 and in *The Atoll* on Thursday 4 February 2016, *The Islander* on Friday 5 February 2016, the *Northern Territory News* and the *Weekend Australian* on Saturday 6 February 2016 and the *Koori Mail* on Wednesday 10 February 2016.

Six suggestions and one comment on suggestions were received and all were considered by the Redistribution Committee in the development of its proposal.

The proposed federal electoral divisions

The Redistribution Committee proposes retaining the names of both the Division of Lingiari and the Division of Solomon.

The Redistribution Committee proposes altering the current boundary between the Divisions of Lingiari and Solomon in the following manner.

- It is proposed that the entirety of the Litchfield Municipality is located in the proposed Division of Lingiari
 - This includes the transfer of the suburbs of Holtze, Knuckey Lagoon, Mickett Creek and part of Shoal Bay from the Division of Solomon to the proposed Division of Lingiari.
- It is proposed that parts of the Palmerston Municipality are located in the proposed Division of Lingiari.
 - This includes the transfer of the suburbs of Farrar, Johnston, Mitchell, Zuccoli and part of Yarrowonga from the Division of Solomon to the proposed Division of Lingiari.

Under the proposed redistribution, 2 680 electors or 2.07 per cent of electors would change from their current federal electoral division.

VIEWING THE REDISTRIBUTION COMMITTEE'S PROPOSAL

The Redistribution Committee's report, including maps, is available electronically on the AEC website (www.aec.gov.au/nt-redistribution).

A printed copy of the report can also be inspected at the office of the Australian Electoral Officer for the Northern Territory (Level 7, TCG Centre, 80 Mitchell Street, Darwin, NT).

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

Objections

Any interested person or organisation who wishes to make an objection to the proposed boundaries or names of electoral divisions contained in the proposed redistribution has until **6pm Central Standard Time (ACST) Friday 7 October 2016** to lodge a written objection via the means listed in the 'How to lodge an objection or comment on an objection' section below. Objections received after the prescribed lodgement time cannot be considered.

People or organisations making objections are requested, where practical, to provide any paper maps in A4/A3 size to facilitate copying.

Comments on objections

Objections will be available for public inspection from **Monday 10 October 2016** at the office of the Australian Electoral Officer for the Northern Territory (Level 7, TCG Centre, 80 Mitchell Street, Darwin, NT) and on the AEC's website (www.aec.gov.au/nt-redistribution). Any written comments on the objections must be lodged in writing with the AEC by **6pm (ACST) Friday 21 October 2016**. Comments received after the prescribed lodgement time cannot be considered.

The comments on objections will be available for public inspection from **Monday 24 October 2016** at the office of the Australian Electoral Officer for the Northern Territory (Level 7, TCG Centre, 80 Mitchell Street, Darwin, NT) and on the AEC's website (www.aec.gov.au/nt-redistribution).

Objections considered by the augmented Electoral Commission

Written objections and comments on objections are considered by the augmented Electoral Commission. The augmented Electoral Commission for the Northern Territory comprises of:

- the three members of the Australian Electoral Commission – the Chairperson, the Electoral Commissioner and a non-judicial member, currently the Australian Statistician, and
- the three remaining members of the Redistribution Committee – the Australian Electoral Officer for the Northern Territory, Surveyor-General of the Northern Territory and the Northern Territory Auditor-General.

As part of its considerations, the augmented Electoral Commission may hold an inquiry into any objection or comment on an objection.

The second redistribution proposal

After it has considered all objections and comments, the augmented Electoral Commission will make its own proposed redistribution.

Further objections

If the augmented Electoral Commission's proposed redistribution is significantly different from the Redistribution Committee's proposal, the augmented Electoral Commission will invite further objections. Information will be provided should this stage be required.

Final determination

After considering all submissions, the augmented Electoral Commission will make a final determination of boundaries and names of the electoral divisions for the Northern Territory by notice published in the *Gazette* on Tuesday 7 February 2017.

Copies of the augmented Electoral Commission's determination and reasons for that determination, together with the work of the Redistribution Committee, will be tabled in both Houses of Parliament. Once this has occurred, this material will be made available to the public via the AEC website.

WHEN WILL THE NEW FEDERAL ELECTORAL DIVISIONS COME INTO EFFECT?

The new federal electoral divisions will apply at the first general election held for all members of the House of Representatives after the determination date of 7 February 2017.

HOW TO LODGE AN OBJECTION OR A COMMENT ON AN OBJECTION

Objections and comments on objections should be lodged via the AEC website at www.aec.gov.au/nt-redistribution. Objections and comments on objections can also be submitted:

- by email to: FedRedistribution-NT@aec.gov.au
- in person, during business hours, to: The Australian Electoral Commission (Att: Redistribution Secretariat), Level 7, TCG Centre, 80 Mitchell Street, Darwin, NT
- by mail to: The Australian Electoral Commission (Att: Redistribution Secretariat), GPO Box 21, Darwin NT 0801
- by fax to: (08) 6363 8016.

PUBLIC AVAILABILITY OF OBJECTIONS AND COMMENTS ON OBJECTIONS

The Electoral Act requires that submissions to the Redistribution Committee be made publicly available. Copies of all submissions will be made available in full for public inspection at the office of the Australian Electoral Officer for the Northern Territory (Level 7, TCG Centre, 80 Mitchell Street, Darwin, NT), in accordance with the Electoral Act.

All submissions will also be published in full on the AEC's website and included in reports produced by the augmented Electoral Commission.

Signatures and address details of people and organisations who lodge written submissions will be removed prior to publication.

It is strongly recommended those wishing to make an objection or comments on objections read the 'Guidelines for making a public suggestion'.

MORE INFORMATION

Persons or organisations intending to make submissions are urged to take account of the requirements of the Electoral Act. In particular, those making submissions are advised to ensure their submissions are in the physical possession of the Australian Electoral Commission by the relevant closing time.

A wide range of information is available on the AEC's website, including:

- further information about the federal redistribution process in the Northern Territory, including an indicative timetable and background information – www.aec.gov.au/nt-redistribution
- information about current electoral divisions in the Northern Territory – www.aec.gov.au/profiles/index.htm
- Guidelines for making a public submission – www.aec.gov.au/Electorates/Redistributions/guidelines-for-submissions.htm
- Guidelines for naming federal electoral divisions – www.aec.gov.au/Electorates/Redistributions/guidelines.htm
- the legal requirements for a federal redistribution as outlined in Part IV of the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918* – www.aec.gov.au/Elections/australian_electoral_system/Electoral_Legislation.htm)
- general information about the redistribution process – www.aec.gov.au/Electorates/Redistributions/.

Further information can be obtained from the Redistribution Secretariat:

Telephone: 02 6271 4672

Email: FedRedistribution-NT@aec.gov.au

Mr Tom Rogers

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