



Comment on objections 29

Ringwood RSL Sub Branch

3 pages



“Your Local Club”
“Your RSL”
“Ringwood RSL”

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Augmented Electoral Commission for Victoria
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Background

The Ringwood RSL Sub Branch welcomes the opportunity to provide comments concerning objections received by the Redistribution Committee.

The Ringwood RSL Sub Branch is part of a network of community clubs that is integral to the fabric of the Victorian community. Our primary objective as an RSL Sub Branch is to support serving and former ADF members and their families as well as our other members who are part of the surrounding general community.

Over a year we help many veterans in our local area. We provide assistance with their claims for support from the Department of Veterans' Affairs, and our team of volunteers provide much needed welfare and practical support to veterans especially to the older and less mobile members of the Sub Branch. These services include in-home and hospital support, welfare help, transport assistance, mobility aids as well as minor house and garden maintenance etc. for our frailer members.

We support local community-based organisations such as ADF cadet units, bands, local football teams and sponsor school children with bursaries as well as hosting informal groups and activities designed to combat social isolation.

Support for united Ringwood and Croydon communities of interest

The core Ringwood RSL Sub Branch membership and support base is almost entirely made up of residents located in the proposed Deakin electorate. Our ability to effectively represent the interests of veterans, war widows, our members and the local community more broadly to the Federal Government has been largely the result of being able to work with a singular federal MP whose electorate covers the area in which the vast bulk of our members reside. Being a volunteer-based organisation with limited resources, this aspect is particularly important with respect to our interactions with Federal Government agencies such as the Department of Veterans Affairs.

The Ringwood RSL also has many links with other local community groups including sporting clubs and service clubs. We know from these relationships that the distribution of members within those organisations similarly centre around the Ringwood and Croydon areas in much the way ours do. We are not in any way unique in this respect.

In the previous two redistributions in 2018 and 2021, the Redistribution Committee to its credit largely ensured that Ringwood and Croydon, and the communities which cluster around these centres, were included in the federal electorate of Deakin. This is a logical grouping of areas with an affinity to each other and should not be reversed now.

We therefore commend the Redistribution Committee for the current proposed boundaries it has put forward. In particular, by ensuring that Ringwood and Croydon, and the surrounding communities which cluster around these suburbs being – Ringwood North, Warranwood, Ringwood East, Park Orchards, Croydon North, Croydon Hills – fall within a single federal electorate. Again, we applaud the proposal in this redistribution to acknowledge the affinity Park Orchards has with the Ringwood area by placing it within its natural home in the Deakin electorate.

Opposition to objections

The Ringwood RSL is seriously concerned at objections to the Redistribution Committee proposals which would seem to have little understanding of the affinity between the communities of Ringwood, Croydon, Park Orchards and Warranwood. Organisations like ours draw on that affinity to bolster support and attract volunteers for our community activities. The proposal to splinter the strong communities of interest that cluster around Ringwood and Croydon would lead to a disbursement of common interests and ties that would have a catastrophic impact on volunteer-based sporting and community organisations such as ours. The worst showing an insensitivity towards local communities are contained in OB487 and OB157.

As we have noted before, these objections seem to argue that it's appropriate to align areas as a community, simply because they fall on the same train line or freeway.

Transport corridors do not define communities of interest. Freeways are crossed with arterial roads, bridges and tunnels, with communities, services and amenities developing at various points on either side of the transport corridor.

Communities of interest are formed through social interactions. Schools, places of worship, shopping centres, health and recreational facilities, areas of employment and community organisations including RSL's like ours, create commonality of interest. This concentration of shared amenity and facility form the basis of communal interest. That is certainly the case here in Maroondah and surrounding areas.

Indeed, the proposition contained in OB487 that the Eastern Freeway (which links Ringwood to Collingwood) forms a community of interest, is in our eyes, ridiculous. More specifically, OB487 and OB157 suggest that Deakin be centred on the Eastern Freeway, all the way from Surrey Hills to Mt Dandenong Road in Croydon. This vast

east-west ribbon of Eastern Melbourne simply cannot be considered the basis for a community of interest.

In Conclusion

For the reasons outlined above, we again strongly support the AEC proposal on boundaries for our community and suggest that the Redistribution Committee proceed with these in the best interests of our community.

We thank the Redistribution Committee for considering our comments.

Yours sincerely,



Colonel David Jamison AM (Rtd)
President