



Comment on suggestions 71

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4 pages

8 December 2023

The Redistribution Committee for Victoria
6A/706 Lorimer St
Port Melbourne VIC 3207

Dear Committee Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit a comment on suggestions for the Victorian redistribution.

I will outline some observations on suggestions made by a number of different submissions, before discussing the submissions more broadly in terms of basic data.

I note my initial suggestion that Hotham be abolished, and its electors be distributed between Higgins, Goldstein, Isaacs, Bruce and Chisholm

Observations made in numerous submissions

1. Bruce must move west to include Noble Park, which is currently in Hotham (s14, s15, s16, s18, s19, s23, s33)

- Noble Park was frequently cited as the only portion of the Dandenong LGA in Hotham, and ill-fitting the rest of the electorate.
- It is therefore clear that Bruce must move west to unite a community of interest, which strengthens the argument for abolishing Hotham, or even Higgins or Macnamara.

2. Hotham lacks geographic coherence and grounding (s21, s23, s49, s53)

- Hotham was frequently cited as not only splitting suburbs that should be together, such as Bentleigh and Oakleigh, but possessing suburbs with very little in common.
- For example, it was said that suburbs such as Noble Park and Springvale have very little in common with Bentleigh and Oakleigh.
- Each area within Hotham is more suited to the division bordering it - west, Higgins and Goldstein, south, Isaacs, east, Bruce and north, Chisholm.
- Hotham also straddling both the Monash and Princes Freeways was also mentioned.

3. Chisholm should be retained as a seat centred around Glen Waverley (s11, s12, s18, s19, s33, s43)

- Often while suggesting Hotham be abolished, numerous submissions advocated for the retention of Chisholm as an important representation of large Chinese and Arabic communities.

- This would leave Chisholm as a multicultural Whitehorse/Monash LGA electorate.
- The retention of Chisholm rather than Hotham is also in line with legislation regarding division names.

4. Menzies and Deakin should be reoriented as north-south divisions rather than east-west divisions, so as to reflect shifts in economic and community links (s16, s22, s24, s25)

- The reliance of Menzies suburbs (Wonga Park, Warrandyte, Donvale and Park Orchards) on Ringwood and Croydon in terms of economic and sporting activity centres, rather than Doncaster and Box Hill, was frequently mentioned.
- While being part of the Manningham LGA, these suburbs have become more alike Deakin's central suburbs.
- By the same logic, any Menzies encroachment into Deakin's current borders would be extremely illogical and antithetical to the community of interest notion.
- Moving suburbs east of Springvale Rd or Mullum Mullum Creek from Menzies to Deakin would create a better boundary, while allowing Menzies to become a multicultural Manningham/Whitehorse electorate.
- This would allow Deakin to become a mostly Maroondah-based division, with portions of Manningham that are integrated with the LGA.

5. Menzies should move south and unite Box Hill and Blackburn in one division (s16, s22, s25, s27, s37, s41, s42, s48, s63)

- The lack of current submissions contesting Menzies crossing the Eastern Freeway in 2021 reflects the uniting of Doncaster, Doncaster East and Box Hill as eastern centres.
- Whitehorse Rd needlessly divides the Box Hill precinct.
- Moving the southern border of Menzies to Gardiners Creek or Canterbury Rd both unites a community of interest, as well as creating a better electorate boundary.
- This is compatible with Chisholm shifting south to be centred around Glen Waverley and the Monash LGA.
- **Observations 1, 3, 4 and 5 seemed to be the consensus community view, and should be endeavoured to be followed regardless of which division is ultimately abolished.**

6. The current boundaries of Macnamara, Higgins and Kooyong are manifestly unsatisfactory, as a result of slow population growth over a long period of time (s21, s27, s35, s41, s53, s60, s63)

- Macnamara and Higgins' respective shapes and borders, division of Jewish communities, and individual uniting of inner metropolitan and suburban communities with very little in common, necessitate action.

- Kooyong also does not currently possess Ashburton and Glen Iris (Higgins), despite these suburbs being in the Boroondara LGA, and does possess parts of Whitehorse LGA in the form of Mont Albert and Mont Albert North.
- 7. Melbourne, as the only LGA to cross the Yarra River, is the division best placed to cross the Yarra. (s21, s32, s53, s60)**
- This resolves the question surrounding the crossing of the Yarra, while ensuring that one of Hotham, Macnamara and Higgins be abolished.
 - This also makes the resolving of Macnamara and Higgins' borders more straightforward.
 - If Melbourne does not cross the Yarra, it becomes almost impossible to fix Macnamara/Higgins borders without abolishing Hotham.
- 8. McEwen combines too many disparate communities and lacks geographical focus (s32, s36, s41, s57)**
- A method of remedying this while allowing under quota divisions to the north and west (Hawke, Scullin, Cooper, Wills, Maribyrnong) to gain electors, would be to shift McEwen east while losing Diamond Creek and Plenty in the south, allowing the division to become focussed around Whittlesea and Nillumbik councils.
- 9. The ABS projected enrolments are incorrect**
- The faults of the ABS' projected enrolment growth by SA2 data are frequently mentioned.
 - I make no comment regarding the veracity of these claims, however:
 - I believe this is a moot point, as even if these projections overestimate growth east of the Yarra relatively to west of the Yarra, it is still a more logical solution to abolish a southeastern metropolitan seat.
 - The numbers below illustrate my point that despite supposed underestimations of growth in western seats, most submissions that offered a suggested abolition suggested an eastern seat.

Data - Suggestions to abolish:

Casey - 4
 Deakin - 1
 Higgins - 3
 Hotham - 7
 Goldstein - 1
 Mcnamara - 3
 Menzies - 1

Division east/south of Yarra - 20

Maribyrnong - 2
 McEwen - 2

Wills - 1

Jagajaga - 1

Unspecified western division - 2

Division west/north of Yarra - 8

In closing, I believe that aside from some minor changes, the submissions of the community reflect the sentiment of my initial suggestion (s50), which strongly suggested abolishing Hotham; albeit with the caveat that the abolition of Higgins or Macnamara would be a satisfactory outcome. There are simply one too many divisions in the southeast relative to the area's populations and communities of interest.

As a local to the area despite living in Jagajaga, I also believe it to be very important that Menzies be realigned to reflect the Doncaster-Box Hill community centre and link. This also allows Deakin to be realigned into a more coherent electorate, while ensuring Chisholm remains viable as a division that represents the eastern suburbs' cultural and linguistic diversity.

Thank you for your consideration of my comment on submission, and I wish you luck for the difficult but import job ahead,

Regards,

Henry Rees

