

KATTER'S AUSTRALIAN PARTY
Submission
Electoral (Redistribution Commission) and Another Act Amendment Bill 2015

11 August 2015

Research Director
Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee
Parliament House
George Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Chair and Committee Members,

I make this official submission on behalf of the Katter's Australian Party (KAP) in relation to the Electoral (Redistribution Commission) and Another Act Amendment Bill 2015.

It is noted that the policy objectives of the Bill are to:

1. Provide for broader representation in the Redistribution Commission by increasing the membership of the Commission from 3 to 5 members. In the interests of transparency, the appointments of all Commissioners, with the exception of the Electoral Commissioner who has already undergone a separate appointment process, be subject to the approval of the leaders of all recognised parties represented in the Legislative Assembly.
2. Implement a recommendation by the Electoral and Administrative Review Commission by providing that the independent Redistribution Commission has the ability to determine the number of electoral districts in the Legislative Assembly, subject to a maximum increase of up to 5 additional electoral districts, i.e. the total seats in the assembly would at the commissions discretion be between 89 and 94.
3. Provide that Queenslanders have more equitable access to representation in the Parliament by legislating for the Redistribution Commission to have the capacity, at its discretion, to amend the additional large district number, currently set at 2%, up to 4%.

The KAP acknowledges the principles and merits of policy objectives numbers one and two. To be clear it is acknowledged that by providing for broader representation in the Redistribution Commission and establishing an appointment process involving the approval of the leaders of all recognised parties represented in the Legislative Assembly it will prevent bias, instil confidence and thereby enhance democracy. Furthermore, implementing a recommendation by the Electoral and Administrative Review Commission by providing that the independent Redistribution Commission has the ability to determine the number of electoral districts in the Legislative Assembly will also serve to improve democracy. Accordingly the KAP submission is focused upon the third policy objective of the Bill, concerning the enhancement of electors' equitable access to "local members" and improved representation in the Queensland Parliament.

The *Electoral Act 1992 (Qld)* s 46 'Matters to be considered in preparing proposed electoral redistribution' states, *inter alia*:

(1) In preparing the proposed redistribution, the commission must consider the following matters—

- (a) the extent to which there is a community of economic, social, regional or other interests within each proposed electoral district;
- (b) the ways of communication and travel within each proposed electoral district;
- (c) the physical features of each proposed electoral district;
- (d) the boundaries of existing electoral districts;
- (e) demographic trends in the State etc.

Simplifying the issues contained within the provisions of the *Electoral Act 1992 (Qld)*, the KAP essentially seeks to highlight two key issues that require immediate consideration in relation to any proposed redistribution:

1. Density in terms of population per electorate; and
2. Distance in terms of square kilometres per electorate.

There is evidence that population density is continuing to increase in South East Queensland and that certain areas in rural and remote Queensland are experiencing declining populations, (refer Appendix 1). The latter situation has the potential to result in increased numbers and/or even more expansive additional large districts – i.e. electoral districts in excess of 100,000 square kilometres – created under any future redistributions.

The two competing issues of density and distance, *inter alia*, must be balanced against the ideological goal of voter parity (i.e. equal numbers of electors in every electorate). In fact, this notion has been dispelled not only by affected citizens but also by courts. For example, in *Reference re Electoral Boundaries Commission Act* the Canadian Supreme Court denied that the purpose of s 3 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* was an absolute guarantee of equality of voting power. That section provides: "Every citizen of Canada has the right to vote in an election of members of the House of Commons or of a legislative assembly and to be qualified for membership therein."

McLachlin J held that effective representation, not equality of voting power per se, was the purpose of s 3 and that representation comprehends the idea of having a voice in the deliberations of government as well as the idea of the right to bring one's grievances and concerns to the attention of one's government representative.

McLachlin J continued: "such relative [voter] parity as may be possible of achievement may prove undesirable because it has the effect of detracting from the primary goal of effective representation. Factors like geography, community history, community interests and minority representation - e.g. *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples* (emphasis added) - may need to be taken into account to ensure that our legislative assemblies effectively represent the diversity of our social mosaic. These are but examples of considerations which may justify departure from absolute voter parity in the pursuit of more effective representation". (Read more in *McGinty v Western Australia* 186 CLR 140).

Arguably the issues highlighted by McLachlin J apply equally to considerations in relation to future redistributions in Queensland. For example, the electorate of Mount Isa covers 570,502 square kilometres in total, that is, 32.9% of the state. Whereas the electorate of Cook is widely recognised as being vital to representation and advocacy on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' issues among matters relevant to other persons residing in the electorate.

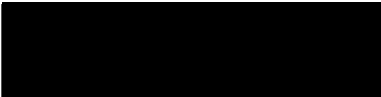
For this reason the KAP submits that enhancing equitable access to representation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and similarly enhancing equitable access for all other persons residing in rural and remote communities throughout the state must be given more meaningful consideration and priority in future electoral redistributions.

Recommendation 1: On this basis it is recommended that there should be no further additional large districts – i.e. electoral districts in excess of 100,000 square kilometres – created under any future redistributions. To be clear Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples among other persons in electorates like Cook should not be deprived of equitable access to “local members” and improved representation in the Queensland Parliament. This is essential to ensure that the Legislative Assembly in Queensland “effectively represents the diversity of our social mosaic”.

Recommendation 2: It is recommended that the existing additional large districts of Cook (196,805km²), Dalrymple, (105,337km²) Gregory (327,212km²), Mount Isa (570,502km²) and Warrego (279,546km²) should be either capped or reduced in terms of square kilometres, with appropriate weightings applied to achieve this end.

The proposition of either capping or reducing the existing additional large districts is based upon the rationale of the above mentioned statement made by McLachlin J. That is, effective representation is not equality of voting power per se, representation comprehends the idea of having a voice in the deliberations of government as well as the idea of the right to bring one's grievances and concerns to the attention of one's government representative. This insightful statement importantly encapsulates the essence of ensuring that future redistributions should primarily enhance electors' equitable access to “local members” and improved representation in the Queensland Parliament.

The KAP thanks the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee for consideration of the Electoral (Redistribution Commission) and Another Act Amendment Bill 2015 and of the KAP's submission and recommendations in relation to it.



Rob Katter MP, Member for Mount Isa; and
Shane Knuth MP, Member for Dalrymple.



Research Brief

Research and Information Service

For	Mr Rob Katter, MP and Mr Shane Knuth, MP
Request	Population and electors
Date	30 July 2015.

Thank you for your request seeking the following:

- *the current population of Queensland;*
- *the trends in population throughout Queensland since the last redistribution and applicable to the pending redistribution in 2016, (e.g. population increases in South East Queensland in comparison with population increases, or decreases, in regional and rural Queensland);*
- *the most recently counted number of enrolled electors in Queensland;*
- *the most recently counted number of electors in each electorate in Queensland;*
- *the average number of electors for electoral districts in Queensland;*
- *the current population of South East Queensland;*
- *the number of electorates in South East Queensland;*
- *the names of the electorates in South East Queensland;*
- *the current population outside of South East Queensland;*
- *the number of electorates outside of South East Queensland;*
- *the names of the electorates outside of South East Queensland;*
- *the average number of electors represented by Members of the Legislative Assembly (i.e. lower house) in all other States and Territories throughout Australia, (e.g. NSW, VIC, SA etc.).*

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Current population

The Queensland Government Statistician's Office population counter shows an estimate of Queensland's current population. As at 30 July 2015 the figure was 4,788,026.

Trends

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) publication *Regional Population Growth 2010 - 11* notes:

At June 2011, south-east Queensland, comprising the SDs of Brisbane, Gold Coast, Sunshine Coast, and West Moreton, accounted for around two-thirds of the total population in Queensland. Between June 2010 and June 2011, the population in south-east Queensland increased by 51,300 to reach 3.05 million people. This accounted for 69% of the total growth in the state.

The SD of Brisbane experienced the largest growth of all SDs in Queensland, with an increase of 34,800 people (1.7%) in the year to June 2011. Brisbane SD accounted for 45% of Queensland's population at June 2011.

The fastest-growing SD in south-east Queensland (and the third fastest-growing in the state) was West Moreton which grew by 1.9% (or 1,900 people) in the year to June 2011.

At June 2011, the three most populous LGAs in Australia were located in south-east Queensland. They were Brisbane (C) (with 1.08 million people), Gold Coast (C) (536,500) and Moreton Bay (R) (389,700). Brisbane (C) had the largest increase in population in Australia between June 2010 and June 2011, up by 14,100 people. Gold Coast (C) had the third-largest increase (9,600) and Moreton Bay (R) the fifth-largest (8,100).

An additional three LGAs within south-east Queensland were among the six largest-growing in Queensland in 2010-11. They were Logan (C) (5,300), Sunshine Coast (R) (5,000) and Ipswich (C) (4,900).

The three fastest-growing LGAs within south-east Queensland in 2010-11 were Somerset (R) and Ipswich (C) which both increased by 2.9%, and Lockyer Valley (R) (2.3%). In 2010-11, the SLA of Somerset (R) - Esk accounted for 80% of the growth in the LGA of Somerset (R), while the SLA of Ipswich (C) - East accounted for 59% of the growth in the LGA of Ipswich (C).¹

The most recent ABS *Regional Population Growth 2013 - 14* notes

The population of Greater Brisbane (which excludes the Gold Coast and Sunshine Coast) was 2.27 million people at June 2014, accounting for nearly half of Queensland's population. Between 2013 and 2014, the population of Greater Brisbane increased by 1.7% (38,500 people).

Ipswich had the largest growth of all SA4s in Greater Brisbane, with an increase of 8,000 people. This was followed by Logan - Beaudesert (up by 5,200 people) and Moreton Bay - South (5,100). However, Moreton Bay - South had the fastest growth (up by 2.8%), followed by Ipswich (2.6%) and Brisbane Inner City (2.0%).

The SA2 with the largest growth in both Greater Brisbane and Queensland was North Lakes - Mango Hill, up by 2,200 people. Other SA2s in Greater Brisbane with large growth were Redbank Plains (1,000) and Springfield Lakes (930). The fastest-growing SA2s were North Lakes - Mango Hill (up by 9.5%), Bellbird Park - Brookwater (8.8%) and Springfield Lakes (7.9%).

¹ Australian Bureau of Statistics, [Regional Population Growth, Australia, 2010-11](#), cat no 3218.0, 2012.

In the 12 months to 2014, the population in the rest of Queensland (outside of Greater Brisbane) grew by 1.3%, or 32,000 people, to reach 2.45 million. This was the fastest growth rate of all rest of state regions, ahead of rest of Western Australia (1.1%) and New South Wales (0.9%).

The SA4s of Gold Coast and Sunshine Coast grew by 14,900 people, accounting for 46% of the growth in the rest of Queensland. The SA4s lying further north along the Queensland coast of Fitzroy (which includes Rockhampton and Gladstone), Mackay, Townsville and Cairns accounted for a further 38% (12,100 people).

Gold Coast had the largest growth of all SA4s in Queensland, increasing by 9,100 people to 560,300. Other SA4s in the rest of Queensland with large population increases were Sunshine Coast (up by 5,700 people), Fitzroy (4,500), Townsville (3,000) and Cairns (2,600).

The SA4 of Fitzroy had the fastest growth in the rest of Queensland (up by 2.0%), followed by the Gold Coast and Sunshine Coast (both 1.7%), Townsville (1.3%) and Toowoomba (1.2%).²

Population Projections

The Population Projections Advisory Group was responsible for the preparation of the Queensland Government Population Projections for Queensland and statistical divisions in 2006. The publication provided figures for Queensland statistical divisions up to 2026 as seen in the following table.

Actual and projected population, Queensland statistical divisions, at 30 June 1986, 2006 and 2026³

Statistical Division	1986	2006	2026
Brisbane	1,217,348	1,844,600	2,533,400
Moreton	375,549	839,300	1,310,500
<i>South East Queensland</i>	<i>1,592,897</i>	<i>2,683,900</i>	<i>3,843,900</i>
Wide Bay-Burnett	170,835	263,200	352,600
Darling Downs	183,112	226,000	274,600
South West	28,791	27,000	27,700
Fitzroy	160,120	192,000	248,400
Central West	13,619	12,100	12,200
Mackay	117,511	151,000	207,400
Northern	157,732	209,800	264,800
Far North	161,042	242,100	317,200
North West	38,332	34,400	35,000
Queensland	2,623,991	4,041,400	5,584,000

Note: Figures have been rounded so totals may not add. Historical figures have been adjusted to reflect boundary changes. For the purposes of these population projections, South East Queensland is the total of Brisbane and Moreton Statistical Divisions.

² Australian Bureau of Statistics, [Regional Population Growth Australia, 2013-14](#), cat no 3218.0, 2015.

³ Queensland Government, [Queensland Government Population Projections to 2051: Queensland and Statistical Divisions](#), 2nd edition, 2006.

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Source: Planning Information and Forecasting Unit (PIFU), Department of Local Government, Planning, Sport and Recreation (DLGPSR); ABS 3218.0; and Queensland Government Population Projections, 2006 (medium series).

The Queensland Government Statistician's Office prepared statistics on estimated resident population at 30 June for the years 2004, 2009 and 2014 as the table below shows:

	2004	2009	2014
Greater Brisbane ⁴	1,823,496	2,068,479	2,274,560
Gold Coast ⁵	435,960	509,133	560,266
Sunshine Coast ⁶	270,326	308,362	335,874
Queensland total ⁷	3,829,970	4,328,771	4,722,447

All the regional profiles for the table above will be provided as attachments.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics has published a table of [Estimated Resident Population by State electorates](#) covering the years 2004 to 2014.⁸

Enrolled electors in Queensland

There are 89 electoral districts in Queensland, with a state total enrolment of 3,015,124 and an average enrolment of 33,877 as at 30 June 2015.

The Electoral Commission of Queensland released the most recent [enrolment figures](#) for each electorate as at 30 June 2015.⁹

South East Queensland

South East Queensland is not a defined geographical area of the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) or the Government Statistician. For the purposes of this request the following areas will be aggregated:

- Greater Brisbane (which includes Ipswich)(Greater Brisbane Capital City Statistical Area),
- Gold Coast (SA4), and
- Sunshine Coast (SA4).

The current population of South East Queensland as at 30 June 2014 was 3,170,700. There are 57 electorates in this area. The electorates are:

⁴ Queensland Regional Profiles, *Greater Brisbane Capital City Statistical Area*, compiled 30 July 2015.

⁵ Queensland Regional Profiles, *Gold Coast Statistical Area Level 4 (SA4)*, compiled 30 July 2015.

⁶ Queensland Regional Profiles, *Sunshine Coast Statistical Area Level 4 (SA4)*, compiled 30 July 2015.

⁷ Queensland Regional Profiles, *Queensland*, compiled 30 July 2015.

⁸ Australian Bureau Statistics, *Regional Population Growth, Australia, Table 4 Estimated resident population, State Electoral Divisions (SEDs), Queensland*, cat no 3218.0. 2015.

⁹ Electoral Commission Queensland, *Current enrolment figures, 30 June 2015*.

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Noosa	Southport
Nicklin	Broadwater
Maroochydore	Coomera
Buderim	Redlands
Kawana	Cleveland
Glass House	Waterford
Pumicestone	Woodridge
Morayfield	Stretton
Pine Rivers	Springwood
Kallangur	Sunnybank
Murrumba	Mansfield
Redcliffe	Capalaba
Ferny Grove	Chatsworth
Ashgrove	Yeerongpilly
Moggill	Mt Ommaney
Ipswich West	Greenslopes
Ipswich	Indooroopilly
Bundamba	South Brisbane
Inala	Mt Coot-tha
Algester	Bulimba
Logan	Brisbane Central
Albert	Lytton
Gaven	Clayfield
Mudgeeraba	Stafford
Currumbin	Everton
Burleigh	Nudgee
Mermaid Beach	Aspley
Surfers Paradise	Sandgate
Caloundra	

Outside South East Queensland

The population of Queensland outside South East Queensland is 1,551,747 as at 30 June 2014 with 32 electorates. The electorates are:

Barron River	Lockyer
Beaudesert	Mackay
Bundaberg	Maryborough
Burdekin	Mirani
Burnett	Mount Isa
Cairns	Mulgrave
Callide	Mundingburra
Condamine	Nanango
Cook	Rockhampton
Dalrymple	Southern Downs
Gladstone	Thuringowa
Gregory	Toowoomba North
Gympie	Toowoomba South
Hervey Bay	Townsville
Hinchinbrook	Warrego
Keppel	Whitsunday

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Average number of electors in all States and Territories

New South Wales

There are 93 state electorates in New South Wales. The average number of electors per electorate in New South Wales is 52,537, as at 31 March 2015.¹⁰

Victoria

There are 88 electoral districts in Victoria. There are approximately 43,672 electors in each district.¹¹

Western Australia

In Western Australia, there are 59 Legislative Assembly districts. The average district enrolment is calculated by dividing the total enrolment (metropolitan and country) by the 59 Legislative Assembly districts. As at 30 June 2015, there is an average district enrolment of 25,806 in Western Australian state electoral districts.¹²

South Australia

The number of electors in South Australia was 1,155,741 as at May 2015, with 47 state electorates. The average number of electors per electorate was therefore 24,590.¹³

Tasmania

In Tasmania there are five House of Assembly divisions: Bass, Braddon, Denison, Franklin and Lyons. There are 25 representatives in the Lower House. As at the 22 July 2015 there were 367, 583 electors enrolled¹⁴ thus the average number of electors per representative is 14,703.

Australian Capital Territory

Up until the 2016 election, the Territory has been divided into three electorates, one electing seven members and two electing five members each. On 5 August 2014, the ACT Legislative Assembly voted to increase the size of the Assembly to 25 Members from the 2016 election, consisting of five electorates each returning five Members. This is the first increase in the size of the Assembly, which has consisted of 17 Members since its establishment in 1989.¹⁵

There were 256,702 people enrolled in the ACT at the close of rolls for the 2012 election. Enrolled voters for each electorate were:

- Brindabella 72,368,
- Ginninderra 76,140, and
- Molonglo 108,194.

The average electors per member in the ACT was 15,100, based on 17 members and 256,702 electors. This number will change with the introduction of 25 members representing five electorates in the 2016 election.

¹⁰ Electoral Commission of New South Wales, [Enrolment Statistics for the March 2015 State General Election](#), accessed 22 July 2015.

¹¹ Victorian Electoral Commission, [State district profiles](#), accessed 22 July 2015.

¹² Western Australian Electoral Commission, State Enrolment Reports, [Enrolment Statistics as at 30 June 2015](#), accessed 22 July 2015.

¹³ Found by dividing the number of electors by the number of electorates.

¹⁴ The Tasmanian Electoral Commission provided the enrolled electors statistic.

¹⁵ ACT Electoral Commission of the ACT Legislative Assembly, [Enrolment – Fact Sheet](#), accessed 22 July 2015.

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Northern Territory

On 17 April 2015 the Northern Territory had 128,450 electors and is divided into 25 divisions for Legislative Assembly elections, for an average of 5,138 electors per electorate.¹⁶

I trust this information will be of assistance to you.

Research and Information Service

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¹⁶ Northern Territory Redistribution, [2015 Proposed Redistribution of Legislative Assembly divisions](#), 2015, p 40.

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