

Submission 096

From: webmaster@parliament.qld.gov.au
Sent: Monday, 2 August 2010 2:49 PM
To: Law, Justice and Safety Committee
Subject: ONLINE SUBMISSION - Inquiry into a new Local Government Electoral Act
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Divisions (Question 1 to 5):

1) No. The present arrangement has resulted in having "town" divisions and "country" divisions where town interests dominate the council table simply because that is where the votes are. It also results in the town councillors being able to cover their area easily and spend their time in meeting preparation, whilst country councillors are spending most of their time travelling trying to cover their division. This does not automatically result in lower quality of representation in council meetings but it certainly makes their life infinitely more difficult.

2) No. The design of divisional areas needs to try and achieve a mix of town and country interests in each division; this can be achieved with a "pie or wagon wheel" layout of divisional boundaries to ensure that each representative needs to pay full attention to the entire division rather than just relying on the winning margin of town votes.

3) Compared to the disparity of effort needed to provide effective representation between "town" and "country" divisions, the error margin pales into insignificance.

4) Yes and in regional areas the State Government should make the decision to ensure proper and balanced representation. In regional areas comprising towns surrounded by large country areas, such as the Rockhampton Regional Council, divisional representation in properly designed divisions should be retained.

5) The above identified "town v country" problem is most important in regional areas because amalgamations ostensibly seek to unify the region's disparate communities and represent them as though they are homogeneous; satisfactory representation can only be achieved if all councillors are forced by the layout of divisions to acquaint themselves with the full range of their constituents and their varying needs and aspirations.

Conduct of elections (Question 6 and 7):

6) The present system has worked well

7)

Conduct of elections (Question 8 and 9):

8) Yes

9) elections are too close to the framing of the budget

Candidates - requirements and conduct (Questions 10 to 15):

10) yes. it generally works well

11) Yes

12) Yes

13) Yes

14) No

15) yes as unity of purpose can only come from respect for the person

Candidates - requirements and conduct (Questions 16 to 19):

16) no

17) Progressively during to a point before, say a week, after which time donations should not be allowed

18) yes

19) ?

Candidates - requirements and conduct (Questions 20 to 24):

20) no

21) no

22) no bunting and signage should be restricted to a standard size

23) yes

24) yes, for the same reason as other levels of government

Voting (Question 25):

25) Generally yes. However, please consider the effect of a system that affords the vote as an earned right, based on the individual's contribution to the community that could be in the form of volunteer activity, payment of rates and taxes or some other measure. I think that the incidence of uninformed/donkey vote and subsequent complaints about "the way the place is run" would diminish.

Voting (Questions 26 to 30):

26) no

27) ?

28) no

29) not if they consider the election relevant to their life

30) ?

Voting (Questions 31 to 35):

31) yes/yes

32) no

33) yes to owners

34) no

35) the local government already has the information within its rating system

Voting systems (Questions 36 to 38):

36) present system is adequate

37) ?

38) ?

Other (Question 39):

Other)