



Proposed Redistribution of the ACT into Electorates for the Legislative Assembly



ACT Legislative Assembly



Electoral Boundaries



Redistribution 2011





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ISBN: 978 0 642 60557 3

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<http://www.elections.act.gov.au>

Publication Number: 11/0858

ACT Government homepage:

<http://www.act.gov.au>

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Statement by the Augmented ACT Electoral Commission

This statement by the Augmented ACT Electoral Commission under section 51 of the *Electoral Act 1992* sets out the substance of the Augmented Commission's findings and conclusions concerning the Redistribution Committee's proposed redistribution and sets out particulars of the Augmented Commission's proposed redistribution under section 50 of the Electoral Act.

Summary of the proposal of the Augmented ACT Electoral Commission

After considering the 23 written objections to the electoral boundaries proposed by the Redistribution Committee (including one late submission) and the further spoken submissions presented at the public hearing on 24 June 2011, the Augmented Commission decided to propose a different redistribution to that proposed by the Committee.

The Augmented Commission proposes to alter the Redistribution Committee's proposed redistribution to propose that Ginninderra be made the 7-Member electorate, consisting of Belconnen, Gungahlin and Hall and the Canberra Central suburbs of Lyneham, O'Connor and Turner. The Augmented Commission does not propose to alter the existing Brindabella electorate. Molonglo would become a 5-Member electorate and would include all of the district of Molonglo Valley.

Therefore the Augmented Commission proposes in accordance with section 50 of the *Electoral Act 1992* that the ACT be divided into three electorates as follows:

BRINDABELLA, a 5-Member electorate comprising the district of Tuggeranong (excluding the suburb of Hume), the Woden Valley suburbs of Chifley, Farrer, Pearce and Torrens and the districts of Booth, Coree, Cotter River, Paddys River, Rendezvous Creek, Tennent and Mount Clear;

GINNINDERRA, a 7-Member electorate comprising the districts of Belconnen, Gungahlin and Hall, and the Canberra Central suburbs of Lyneham, O'Connor and Turner; and

MOLONGLO, a 5-Member electorate comprising the districts of Canberra Central (excluding the suburbs of Lyneham, O'Connor and Turner), Molonglo Valley, Weston Creek, Woden Valley (excluding the suburbs of Chifley, Farrer, Pearce and Torrens), Jerrabomberra (including the entire suburb of Hume), Kowen, Majura, and Stromlo.

In the opinion of the Augmented Commission, this proposal is significantly different from the Redistribution Committee's proposal. As a result, in accordance with section 51(2)(c) of the Electoral Act, written objections against this proposal will be invited in a formal notice to be notified under the *Legislation Act 2001*.

The Augmented Commission comprises the members of the ACT Electoral Commission (Chairperson, Mr Roger Beale AO; Electoral Commissioner, Mr Phillip Green; and Commission Member, Ms Dawn Casey) and members of the Redistribution Committee (the Chief Planning Executive, ACT Planning and Land Authority (Mr Neil Savery), the Surveyor-General (Mr Bill Hirst) and a person appointed by the ACT Electoral Commission, the Regional Director, ACT Office, Australian Bureau of Statistics (Mr Stephen Collett)).

Overall statistical summary

Quotas and maximum and minimum numbers of electors

	ACT	5-Member electorates	7-Member electorate
31 March 2011			
Actual enrolment	248 147		
Quotas		72 984	102 178
Not more than 110% of the quota		80 282	112 395
Not less than 90% of the quota		65 686	91 961
October 2012			
Projected enrolment	256 168		
Quotas		75 343	105 480
Not more than 105% of the quota		82 877	116 028
Not less than 95% of the quota		67 809	94 932

Existing electorates: Statistical summary

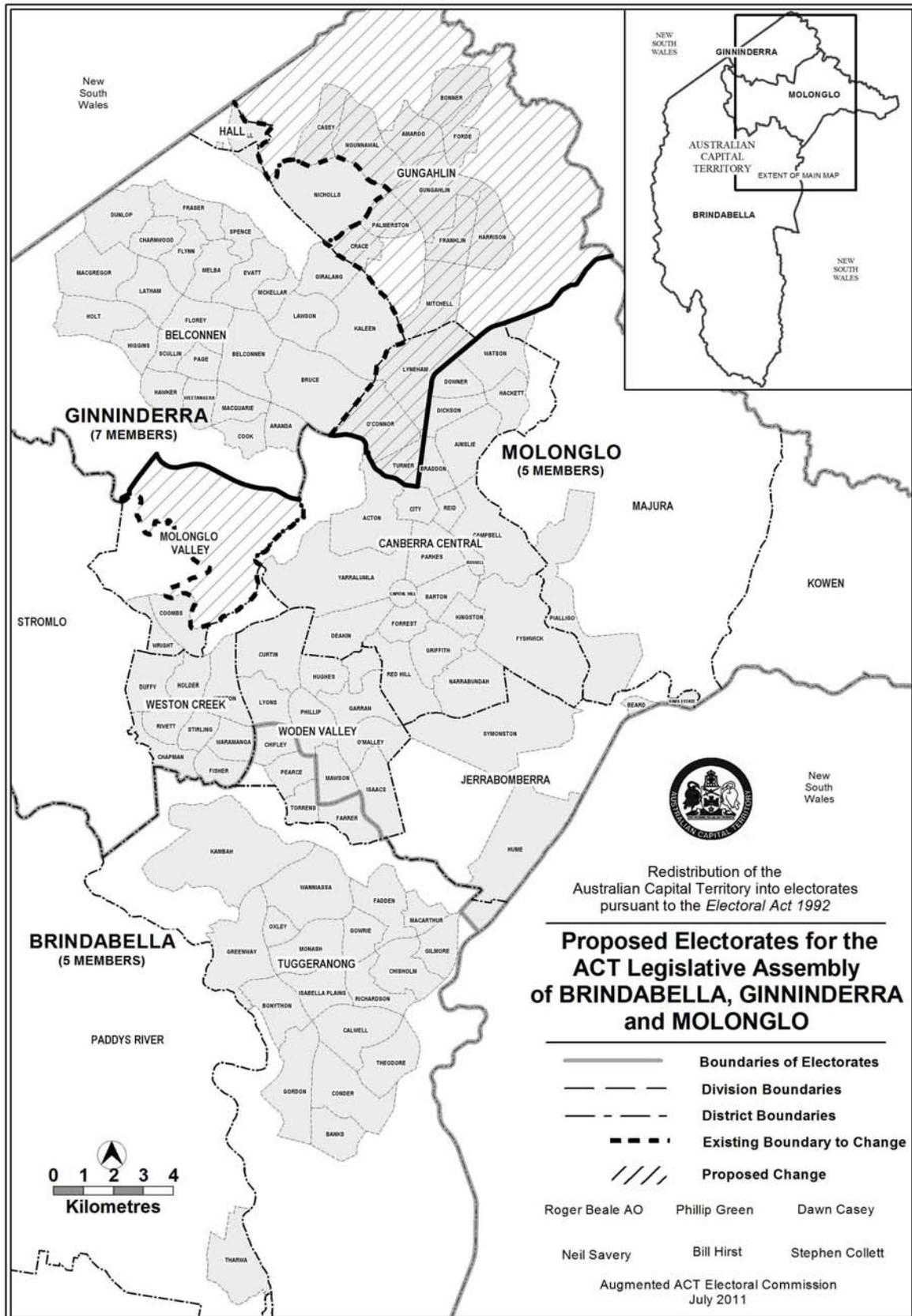
Existing electorate	Number of Members	Enrolment March 2011	% above or below quota 2011	Projected enrolment October 2012	% above or below quota 2012
Brindabella	5	71 429	-2.13%	72 717	-3.49%
Ginninderra	5	69 978	-4.12%	71 098	-5.63%
Molonglo	7	106 740	4.46%	112 353	6.52%

Proposed electorates: Statistical summary

Proposed electorate	Number of Members	Enrolment March 2011	% above or below quota 2011	Projected enrolment October 2012	% above or below quota 2012
Brindabella	5	71 429	-2.13%	72 717	-3.49%
Ginninderra	7	101 569	-0.60%	106 617	1.08%
Molonglo	5	75 149	2.97%	75 343	1.98%

For a detailed breakdown of these statistics see Appendix A.

Map of proposed boundaries



Objections to the Redistribution Committee's proposal

The Augmented Commission met on 10 June 2011 to investigate 22 objections made in accordance with section 46 of the Electoral Act to the Redistribution Committee's proposed redistribution of the ACT Legislative Assembly's electoral boundaries published on 5 May 2011. The Augmented Commission also agreed to consider an additional objection received 7 days after the close of the objection period on 2 June 2011. The objections were made by:

Objections from organisations:

Australian Labor Party (ACT Branch)

Gungahlin Community Council

Proportional Representation Society of Australia

Turner Residents Association (received on 9 June 2011)

Woden Valley Community Council

Objections from individuals:

Bromwich, H

Costelloe, M

Cox, K

Crowley, P

De Silva, T

Dixon, E

Fearn, D

Hodgson, J

Mair, R

Pauza, G

Reid, B

Reynolds, J

Ruecroft, T I

Schaffarczyk, K

Sherd, S

Shoring, G

Sullivan, C

Wright, R & V

Copies of the objections can be obtained from the Elections ACT website at: www.elections.act.gov.au/page/view/487/title/2011-redistribution or from the office of the ACT Electoral Commission.

As some matters raised in the objections were not raised in suggestions given to the Redistribution Committee, the Augmented Commission was required to hold a public hearing into the objections under section 49(2) of the Electoral Act. This public hearing was held at 10.00 am on 24 June 2011 at the Reception Room, ACT Legislative Assembly, Civic Square, London Circuit, Canberra City.

The following persons made oral submissions at the public hearing:

Mr Alan Kerlin, on behalf of the Gungahlin Community Council, who had made a written suggestion and objection.

Mr Harvey Bromwich, who had made a written objection.

Mr Theodore Ian Ruecroft, who had made a written objection.

Mr Tom Anderson, on behalf of the Weston Creek Community Council, who had made a written suggestion.

Mr Malcolm Mackerras, who spoke in relation to the objections.

Mr Elias Hallaj, on behalf of the Australian Labor Party (ACT Branch), who had made a written suggestion and objection.

The Augmented Commission met immediately after the public hearing to consider the matters raised at the hearing and in the objections received.

Summaries of objections

A brief summary of the 23 objections follows.

Objections against the proposal to transfer Crace and Palmerston from Molonglo to Ginninderra and objections in favour of including all Gungahlin suburbs in one electorate

Nineteen of the 23 objections argued in favour of including all Gungahlin suburbs in one electorate and/or against the proposal to transfer Crace and Palmerston from Molonglo to Ginninderra. The main points put forward are summarised here:

- Crace, Nicholls and Palmerston are integral parts of the Gungahlin community and they should be included in the same electorate as all other Gungahlin suburbs. All the Gungahlin suburbs form a community of common interests.
- Crace, Nicholls and Palmerston are physically separated from the rest of the electorate of Ginninderra by a green belt and the Barton Highway.
- Crace, Nicholls and Palmerston have no affinity with the Belconnen suburbs making up the rest of the Ginninderra electorate.
- Twelve of the objections supported combining Belconnen, Gungahlin and parts of north Canberra in a 7-Member electorate, for the purpose of ensuring that all of Gungahlin is contained in one electorate.
- Molonglo as it is currently proposed is very large and spread across many areas that do not have significant connection with each other.
- Splitting Gungahlin across two electorates splits the voting power of Gungahlin, with the alleged result that MLAs do not focus on Gungahlin issues.
- Gungahlin is a disadvantaged community. Placing all of Gungahlin in one electorate would result in Gungahlin being seen to be a major community within one electorate rather than two minor communities within two electorates.

- Theodore Ian Ruecroft stated that “If it is not possible to develop a suitable option that contains all communities of common interests within the same electorate, then there is a need to develop a process that rotates the disadvantage.”
- Mr Ruecroft also stated that “Gungahlin has been split into two electorates for too long. In the 2012 ACT election, all Gungahlin suburbs must be contained within one electorate. This should be a non-negotiable consideration, as it is required to resolve the current issues and to provide the ACT community with a transparent and socially equitable model for electing members of the ACT Legislative Assembly.”
- Robert Dale Wright & Valda June Wright argued that previous redistributions have placed too much emphasis on the criterion related to the boundaries of existing electorates and not enough emphasis on the criteria related to community of interests, means of communications and travel, and physical features and area.
- Jonathon Reynolds argued that the Redistribution Committee had placed undue emphasis on the criterion related to boundaries of existing electorates. Mr Reynolds argued that the Redistribution Committee had a duty to meet all of the specified redistribution criteria without giving weight to some criteria over others. He stated: “Given that no criterion should have an emphasis or weighting greater than any other, the only way to correctly evaluate a preferred redistribution outcome in these circumstances is to analyze which options will accurately meet the MAJORITY of these sub-criteria and choose the redistribution outcome on that basis, irrespective of circumstances where a single criterion cannot be fully compliant or met.”
- Alan Kerlin, Spokesman – Planning, Transport and Environment for the Gungahlin Community Council, stated “The effect of what the committee is proposing is that both the Woden and Gungahlin electorates would have multiple suburbs carved off into neighbouring electorates without any apparent regard to the requirements of the legislation that calls for common communities of interest. Gungahlin would have Nicholls, Crace and Palmerston in Ginninderra, and Woden already has Chifley, Pearce, Torrens and Farrer separated into Brindabella. The problem with Molonglo is that it is strung most of the length of Canberra. But instead of withdrawing from one end OR the other towards an eventually more compact electorate, the committee has over several redistributions actually made things worse rather than better”.
- Mr Kerlin also stated “The legislation either intended the options [in section 36(c) of the Electoral Act] to be in priority order as listed, or of equal importance. Our key point is that the second last criterion on the list [the boundaries of existing electorates] seems to get most of the committee's consideration, disproportionately compared to the first criterion on the list [the community of interests within each proposed electorate, including economic, social and regional interests]. And by the way they are pursuing stability of the boundaries, the committee is instead ensuring precisely the opposite – ongoing need for continuous change.”

Objections raising issues outside the scope of the redistribution

Some objections raised issues that are beyond the power of the Augmented Electoral Commission to consider, including:

- Changing the number of Members to be elected to the Assembly, or changing the number of Members to be elected in the various electorates, or changing the number of electorates.
- Making changes that would place one or more electorates outside the +/- 5% range at the time of next election, for example, creating an electorate based on all of Tuggeranong and Weston Creek.

Objections against the proposal to split Woden Valley suburbs between the electorates of Molonglo and Brindabella

Three objections were against the proposal to leave unchanged the boundary between the electorates of Molonglo and Brindabella, which would leave the suburbs of the district of Woden Valley split between the two electorates.

- Shirley Lithgow, Secretary, Woden Valley Community Council (WVCC), stated that the WVCC “would like to register its strong objection to the Redistribution Committee’s proposed redistribution of the ACT electoral boundaries. The bifurcation of Woden, with the town split across the electorate of Molonglo and Brindabella has been a long-standing concern of the WVCC. We are very disappointed that this issue has not been resolved in the proposed redistribution. ... The current situation of representation with one part of Woden being on the periphery of the electorate of Brindabella, primarily comprising the Tuggeranong Valley, and the other part of Woden being on the periphery of the electorate of Molonglo that stretches all the way to the northern part of Gungahlin is most unsatisfactory. The WVCC has found that the bifurcation of Woden in this way has resulted in, with few exceptions, inadequate representation by our elected members of the Legislative Assembly, and the issues facing our town being ‘off the radar’.” The WVCC did not propose an alternative set of boundaries.
- Mr Reynolds stated that “the Redistribution Committee has incorrectly: ... Omitted to properly assess and consider the ongoing inequities for “communities of interest” for the electors in the Woden Valley suburbs who remain split across two electorates ...”. In his suggestion to the Redistribution Committee, his preferred option was to transfer all Woden Valley suburbs to the electorate of Molonglo and to transfer all Weston Creek suburbs south of Hindmarsh Drive to the electorate of Brindabella.
- Mr Kerlin, for the Gungahlin Community Council, also objected to the splitting of Woden Valley suburbs between the electorates of Molonglo and Brindabella. Mr Kerlin suggested altering Brindabella so that it included all of Tuggeranong and Weston Creek.

Objection against the proposal to transfer the whole of the new Molonglo Valley district to the electorate of Molonglo

One objection was against the proposal to transfer the whole of the new Molonglo Valley district to the electorate of Molonglo.

- Bogey Musidlak of the ACT Branch of the Proportional Representation Society of Australia argued that the proposed transfer of the whole of the new Molonglo Valley district to the electorate of Molonglo was premature. He stated: "Even though, as the Redistribution Committee has indicated, only four current electors would be affected, a sudden change along these lines ... does not solve any additional problems, as there are none further that must be tackled. By proposing the immediate placement of all these anticipated future growth areas exclusively within Molonglo, the Committee appears to be slanting the discussion necessary in around four years' time, as this change would result in the bulk of predictable population growth occurring in Molonglo, and continue to skew future elector-to-MLA ratios that are published at the start of each redistribution process. In the Society's view, the best time to deal thoroughly with these specific matters is when the salient conditions in the lead-up to the 2016 general election are clearer. At the time of the next redistribution process, there will be far better information on current and projected enrolments in all the suburbs where significant development activity is occurring or anticipated, and the outcome of any concerted attempt to change the size of the Legislative Assembly will also be known. The Society notes that there has not been any public agitation for an immediate change of the nature being proposed."

Objections supporting the Redistribution Committee's proposal to transfer Crace and Palmerston from Molonglo to Ginninderra

Two objections were received that supported the Redistribution Committee's proposal to transfer Crace and Palmerston from Molonglo to Ginninderra. The main points put forward are summarised here:

- Mr Musidlak of the ACT Branch of the Proportional Representation Society of Australia stated that the Society "warmly applauds the Redistribution Committee's recommendation that Palmerston and Crace be transferred from Molonglo to Ginninderra, as such a decision would cause the minimum possible disruption to voters while ensuring compliance with the mandatory legislative framework that is in operation."
- Elias Hallaj, Secretary, Australian Labor Party, ACT Branch, argued in favour of the proposal put forward by the Redistribution Committee and argued against the proposal put forward by the Gungahlin Community Council to combine Belconnen, Gungahlin and parts of north Canberra in a 7-Member electorate. His objection states "ACT Labor sympathises with the submissions which have argued for clearer "community of interest" identification within electorates. In particular the frustrations which have been articulately explained in the Gungahlin Community Council submission include valid concerns about the challenges and benefits of fulfilling community of interest objectives. However, simply transplanting the existing community of interest frustrations from one part of the city to another will not resolve this problem in the long-term. We suspect that had it been in the Redistribution Committee's proposal, any plans to move Lyneham and Watson into Ginninderra (an electorate that is largely identified with the Belconnen region) would cause some concern within those suburban communities, as much as it has been of concern to residents in the suburb of Nicholls in past elections."

- Anne McMahon, President of the Turner Residents Association, indicated that the Turner Residents Association supported the Redistribution Committee's proposed boundaries and stated "that the suburbs of Turner, O'Connor and Lyneham should NOT be part of a larger Ginninderra electorate as Turner, O'Connor and Lyneham have much stronger links with central Canberra than with the newer suburbs to the north and should remain within the electorate of Molonglo."

Objection to the Redistribution Committee's proposal to retain the name of the Molonglo electorate

One objection was to the Redistribution Committee's proposal to retain the name of the Molonglo electorate.

- Mr Kerlin, for the Gungahlin Community Council, stated "With regard to the electorate names, we point to the difficulty experienced herein of discerning between the district and the electorate of the same name. It will only get worse. We suggest the committee consider the name of Griffin for the central electorate, in recognition that the central band of Canberra ... contains most of the core areas designed by Walter Burley Griffin."

Discussion at the public hearing

The discussion at the public hearing focussed on the following issues:

- The alleged under-representation of Gungahlin's interests in the Legislative Assembly as a result of it being split between two electorates and its inclusion as a relatively minor component in both Molonglo and Ginninderra;
- Whether a preferable change would be the more substantial change discussed in the Redistribution Committee's report of making Ginninderra the 7-Member electorate consisting of Belconnen, Gungahlin and Hall and some Canberra Central suburbs; and
- Whether confusion would result from the use of the name 'Molonglo' for both the new district of the Molonglo Valley and the electorate.

Mr Kerlin, on behalf of the Gungahlin Community Council, argued in favour of making Ginninderra the 7-Member electorate incorporating all of Belconnen and Gungahlin, thus avoiding splitting the community of interests of the growing area of Gungahlin. He argued that the "incremental changes" to include Nicholls in Ginninderra, and the current proposal to transfer Crace and Palmerston to Ginninderra, are not "minor changes". He expressed support for the second option discussed by the Redistribution Committee in its report.

Mr Kerlin also asked whether, for future redistributions, the Electoral Commissioner could put a tool on the Elections ACT website that could be used by people making submissions to calculate the statistical composition of various alternative boundaries. The Electoral Commissioner undertook to endeavour to provide such a tool at the next redistribution.

Mr Bromwich argued in favour of placing all of Gungahlin in one electorate to strengthen the voice of its electors in the Legislative Assembly, noting that it is a rapidly growing area in need of good representation to ensure infrastructure needs of the population are met adequately.

Mr Anderson, on behalf of the Weston Creek Community Council, argued in favour of minimal change, supporting the first option proposed by the Redistribution Committee and suggesting that more substantial change be deferred until the 2016 election when the outcome of the current population growth in Gungahlin, Molonglo Valley and Woden will be known.

Mr Ruecroft argued that splitting suburbs off from a community of interest into a different electorate can have significant impact on the representation of that community in the Legislative Assembly. He noted that "minimum change" in the 2003 redistribution resulted in one suburb of Gungahlin being in a different electorate and that the further "minimum change" of the 2011 Redistribution Committee's final proposal would see this increase to 3 suburbs of Gungahlin being in a different electorate.

Mr Mackerras argued that making a Ginninderra the 7-Member electorate including all of Gungahlin and all of Belconnen is more logical in that it creates a 'northern' electorate rather than the continuation of Molonglo as the 7-Member electorate stretching from north Canberra through central Canberra and into the southern suburbs of Canberra.

Mr Hallaj, on behalf of the Australian Labor Party (ACT Branch), acknowledged the work of the Redistribution Committee and Elections ACT and noted the professionalism and accessibility of the current redistribution process. He supported the proposal put forward by the Redistribution Committee.

Investigation of the objections and the discussion at the public hearing

In investigating the objections to the Redistribution Committee's proposed boundaries, the Augmented Commission was mindful that its deliberations were subject to and constrained by section 36 of the Electoral Act.

Section 36 of the Electoral Act sets out the criteria under which a redistribution is to be conducted. This section prescribes that the Augmented Commission, in making a redistribution of electorates, shall:

- (a) ensure that the number of electors in an electorate immediately after the redistribution is within the range permitted by the *Australian Capital Territory (Self-Government) Act 1988* (Cwlth), section 67D(2) [not greater than 110%, or less than 90%, of the quota];
- (b) endeavour to ensure, as far as practicable, that the number of electors in an electorate at the time of the next general election of members of the Legislative Assembly will not be greater than 105%, or less than 95%, of the expected quota for the electorate at that time ascertained in accordance with the formula set out in the *Australian Capital Territory (Self-Government) Act 1988* (Cwlth), section subsection 67D(1); and
- (c) duly consider —
 - (i) the community of interests within each proposed electorate, including economic, social and regional interests;
 - (ii) the means of communication and travel within each proposed electorate;
 - (iii) the physical features and area of each proposed electorate;
 - (iv) the boundaries of existing electorates; and
 - (v) the boundaries of divisions and sections fixed under the *Districts Act 2002*.

The Augmented Commission considers that the 10% tolerance set out in the Self-Government Act and the 5% tolerance set out in the Electoral Act aim to provide, in a practical way, for "one vote, one value" in ACT elections. That is, each person's vote should be worth the same as any other person's vote.

The Augmented Commission considers that s36(b) places on it a heavy responsibility to ensure as far as practicable that the number of voters will not fall outside these two numerical tolerances, and that as a result this obligation must be met even if it implies some difficulty in fully satisfying one or more of the subjective criteria which the Augmented Commission must duly consider under section 36(c) of the Electoral Act. Nevertheless, the Augmented Commission also considers that it must give as much weight to the section 36(c) criteria as possible, within the constraints of meeting the numerical tolerances.

Whether to leave the current boundaries unchanged

In considering the objections to the Redistribution Committee's proposal, and the reasons put forward by the Redistribution Committee for its proposal, the Augmented Commission took the view that the first matter to consider was whether the existing boundaries would meet the numerical requirements of section 36 without any changes.

In its proposal, the Redistribution Committee published the following table showing the enrolment figures for March 2011 and the revised projected enrolment figures for October 2012 on the current electoral boundaries.

Existing electorate	Number of Members	Enrolment March 2011	% above or below quota 2011	Projected enrolment October 2012	% above or below quota 2012
Brindabella	5	71 429	-2.13%	72 717	-3.49%
Ginninderra	5	69 978	-4.12%	71 098	-5.63%
Molonglo	7	106 740	4.46%	112 353	6.52%

This table clearly shows that the current boundaries would, if they remained unchanged, fail to meet the requirement to be within +/- 5% of the quota at the time of the 2012 election. Consequently, the Augmented Commission agreed with the Redistribution Committee that the size of the Molonglo electorate needed to be reduced and the size of the Ginninderra electorate needed to be increased in order to bring those two electorates within the specified +/- 5% of the quota at the time of the 2012 election.

The Brindabella-Molonglo boundary

The Augmented Commission turned next to the Brindabella-Molonglo boundary.

The Augmented Commission noted that the enrolment for Brindabella was projected to be 3.49% below the quota at the time of the October 2012 election. Given the requirement in section 36(b) of the Electoral Act to ensure, as far as practicable, that the number of electors in an electorate at the time of the next general election will not be greater than 105%, or less than 95%, of the expected quota for the electorate at that time, the Augmented Commission noted that there was no numerically compelling argument to alter the Brindabella boundary.

The Augmented Commission noted that there were several suggestions and objections in favour of retaining the current Brindabella-Molonglo boundary, and

that there were several objections to the split of Woden Valley suburbs between the Brindabella and Molonglo electorates. In particular the Woden Valley Community Council was opposed to the division of Woden Valley between the two electorates.

The Augmented Commission noted that the proposal from the Gungahlin Community Council to include all of the districts of Tuggeranong and Weston Creek in Brindabella would result in Brindabella being projected to be over 8% above the quota in October 2012. Therefore the Augmented Commission could not consider this to be a viable option given the requirement for each electorate to be within 5% of the quota at the time of the next election.

The Augmented Commission noted Mr Reynolds' suggestion of transferring all Woden Valley suburbs to Molonglo and transferring the Weston Creek suburbs of Chapman, Fisher, Rivett, Stirling and Waramanga (that is, those suburbs south of Hindmarsh Drive) from Molonglo to Brindabella. This option would put Brindabella 0.57% below the quota in October 2012. The Augmented Commission also noted the submissions from the Weston Creek Community Council that recorded the Council's objection to Weston Creek being split between two electorates.

Taking the above considerations into account, the Augmented Commission noted that the only suggested viable alternative to splitting Woden Valley between two electorates in order to bring Brindabella within the required 5% of the quota at the time of the next election would be to split Weston Creek between two electorates. The Augmented Commission also noted that this issue has been a feature of the redistributions that have taken place from the initial 1993 redistribution onwards. The Augmented Commission was not satisfied that any new matters had been raised that would justify altering the current boundaries. While the Augmented Commission is aware that the splitting of Woden Valley between two electorates divides the community of interests represented by the district of Woden Valley into two electorates, the Augmented Commission noted that the requirement to ensure each electorate was within 5% of the quota at the time of next election dictated that one district adjacent to the Tuggeranong district must be split in order to meet the numerical requirements.

Given that the inclusion of Woden Valley suburbs in Brindabella has been a feature of the Brindabella electorate since its inception, and given that the boundaries of existing electorates are a factor to be given weight under section 36 of the Electoral Act, the Augmented Commission was not satisfied that a case had been made for altering the existing boundaries. Accordingly, the Augmented Commission decided to retain the Brindabella-Molonglo boundary unchanged.

The Ginninderra-Molonglo boundary

Having decided that there was no need to alter the Brindabella-Molonglo boundary, the Augmented Commission turned to the boundary between Ginninderra and Molonglo.

The Augmented Commission noted that Ginninderra is projected to be 5.63% below the quota in October 2012, and Molonglo is projected to be 6.52% above the quota in October 2012. As a result, the Augmented Commission considers that it is required to alter the boundaries to increase the size of Ginninderra and decrease the size of Molonglo in order to bring the electorates within +/-5% of the projected enrolment in October 2012.

The Augmented Commission noted that many of the objections to the Redistribution Committee's proposal to transfer Crace and Palmerston from Molonglo to Ginninderra objected to further splitting the district of Gungahlin between two electorates, noting that Gungahlin was already split as Nicholls was currently in

Ginninderra. The Augmented Commission also noted that many objections referred to the diverse nature and large size of the existing electorate of Molonglo, which currently stretches from Gungahlin, through Canberra Central to Woden Valley, Weston Creek and the new district of Molonglo Valley.

Several objections argued that, in making its proposal, the Redistribution Committee had given too much weight to the criterion regarding existing electoral boundaries and too little weight to the other criteria related to community of interests, including economic, social and regional interests, means of communication and travel, and physical features and area.

The Augmented Commission was inclined to agree that the electorate of Molonglo had become increasingly diverse and elongated as a result of the extensive developments in Gungahlin. The Augmented Commission noted that, at the time Molonglo was created in 1995, the development in Gungahlin was at an early stage, and that, at that time, the entire district of Belconnen, with the village of Hall, constituted a neat 5-Member electorate. Since that time, the growth of Gungahlin has had the effect of extending the reach of the Molonglo electorate further north, while the comparative lack of growth in the Ginninderra electorate has required that electorate to increase in size beyond the district of Belconnen.

The Augmented Commission had sympathy with the submissions that argued that, as a rapidly growing new area, the fact that Gungahlin was split between two electorates divided the clear community of interests represented by the new community of Gungahlin, at a critical point in its development.

The Augmented Commission also had sympathy with the argument that, while section 36 of the Electoral Act required the Augmented Commission to duly consider the boundaries of the existing electorates, it also required the Augmented Commission to take account of other less tangible criteria, including community of interests, including economic, social and regional interests, means of communication and travel, and physical features and area. The Augmented Commission was persuaded that the growth of the Gungahlin district had substantially altered the nature of the existing Molonglo electorate since its creation prior to the 1995 election. Since that time, the growth of Gungahlin has created a significant population centre to the north of the Molonglo electorate that has little connection to the southern reaches of Molonglo, which include the districts of Weston Creek, Woden Valley and Molonglo Valley. The Augmented Commission is inclined to accept the view that Molonglo now contains more significant variations of economic, social and regional interests, and more extensive networks of communication and travel, than it did at its inception.

By contrast, the growth in Gungahlin has been accompanied by increasing connections between Gungahlin and Belconnen. As the development of schools, commercial areas and other facilities in Gungahlin has taken time to establish, many Gungahlin residents have made use of schools, medical facilities, employment opportunities, shopping and commercial areas in the adjacent district of Belconnen. The development of the Gungahlin Drive Extension and the heavy usage of other roads linking Gungahlin and Belconnen have facilitated these connections.

For these reasons, the Augmented Commission was inclined to give considerable weight to the calls to combine Gungahlin and Belconnen together in the one electorate.

The Augmented Commission noted the arguments calling for stability of boundaries and for minimising the transfer of electors between electorates. However, the Augmented Commission also noted that the proposed transfer of Gungahlin to the same electorate as Belconnen received extensive endorsement by submissions from Gungahlin residents and the Gungahlin Community Council. Consequently, while

most Gungahlin residents would be moved from one electorate to another under this proposal, it would appear that this would be greeted by support from the affected Gungahlin residents.

The Augmented Commission notes that it would not be possible to combine Gungahlin and Belconnen together in the one electorate without moving the location of the 7-Member seat to encompass these two districts. As these two districts by themselves are not large enough to create a 7-Member electorate, it is necessary to include other adjacent areas to make up the numbers to bring the electorate to within +/- 5% of the quota at the time of next election.

The Augmented Commission therefore considered which other suburbs could be combined with Belconnen and Gungahlin to constitute a 7-Member electorate.

The Redistribution Committee examined this issue in some detail in its report. After examining the various options submitted to it in public submissions, the Committee concluded that its preferred option would be to include the suburbs of Lyneham, O'Connor and Turner.

The Committee noted that the option to make Ginninderra the 7-Member electorate, comprising all of Belconnen, Gungahlin and the suburbs of Lyneham, O'Connor and Turner would result in the electorate of Ginninderra being 1.08% above the quota at the time of the next election. This result would be comfortably within the required +/-5% variation from the quota. The Committee also noted that the electorate boundaries around these three (north) Canberra Central suburbs would follow the major thoroughfares of Northbourne Avenue and Barry Drive.

This option was considered by the Committee to be the best mix of suburbs that could constitute a 7-Member electorate including Belconnen and Gungahlin.

The Committee considered that this option had merit in that it combined the whole of the districts of Belconnen and Gungahlin with a discrete set of (north) Canberra Central suburbs – Lyneham, O'Connor and Turner – that had close connections with each other and which were delineated by the major multi-lane thoroughfares of Northbourne Avenue and Barry Drive. The Committee also noted that two of these three suburbs were immediately adjacent to the Belconnen suburbs of Kaleen and Bruce, that they shared access to O'Connor Ridge Nature Park and that they had strong transport links along Belconnen Way, Ginninderra Drive and the Barton Highway. The Committee also noted these areas had a range of other connections due to their proximity, including access to schools, shops, sporting facilities and Calvary Hospital.

However, the Committee noted that this option could be seen as reducing the priority given to the boundaries of existing electorates, with its implicit value of minimising changes to electoral boundaries and providing stability of boundaries. The Committee noted that this option would involve the transfer of around 31,600 electors from Molonglo to Ginninderra on current enrolment. (By contrast, the proposal to transfer Palmerston and Crace would involve the transfer of around 4,000 electors.) This option would also have the significant consequence of moving the location of the 7-Member electorate. While this is a major change, it is one which will make it more likely that the stability of boundaries will be enhanced in the future. The alternative would likely see a progressive incremental shift of Gungahlin suburbs to Ginninderra in future redistributions entrenching the difficulty of satisfying the other criteria under s36(c).

The Committee noted that a negative impact of this option would be the separation of the community of interests that Lyneham, O'Connor and Turner share with neighbouring (north) Canberra Central suburbs. For example, it could be argued that Lyneham, Turner and O'Connor have much closer connections to the university

precinct of Acton, the adjacent City area and the neighbouring suburbs of Braddon, Dickson, Downer and Watson than they do with Belconnen or Gungahlin.

The Augmented Commission also considered carefully the views of Anne McMahon, President of the Turner Residents Association, who indicated that the Turner Residents Association supported the Redistribution Committee's proposed boundaries and stated "that the suburbs of Turner, O'Connor and Lyneham should NOT be part of a larger Ginninderra electorate as Turner, O'Connor and Lyneham have much stronger links with central Canberra than with the newer suburbs to the north and should remain within the electorate of Molonglo."

The Augmented Commission nevertheless concluded, on balance, that the case for the proposed change to make Ginninderra the 7-Member electorate, comprising all of Belconnen, Gungahlin and the suburbs of Lyneham, O'Connor and Turner is a strong one, for the reasons set out above. In reaching this conclusion it agreed with the assessment made by the Redistribution Committee that, if Belconnen and Gungahlin are to be combined into a 7-Member electorate, the most appropriate suburbs to include would be Lyneham, O'Connor and Turner.

The Augmented Commission notes that, as its proposal is significantly different from the proposal made by the Redistribution Committee, there will be another round of public objections invited to its proposal. If significant community objections are made to this later proposal, the option of reverting to the earlier proposal, or indeed another proposal, remains possible under the terms of the Electoral Act. The Augmented Commission looks forward to seeking the community's views on its proposal.

Inclusion of the district of Molonglo Valley in one electorate

In its proposal, the Redistribution Committee had proposed to transfer that part of the new district of Molonglo Valley that is currently in the Ginninderra electorate into the electorate of Molonglo, in order to keep the new district entirely in the one electorate. This would involve the transfer of 4 currently enrolled electors in this area, who are all resident at the National Zoo and Aquarium, from Ginninderra to Molonglo.

The Augmented Commission received an objection to this proposed change from Mr Musidlak of the ACT Branch of the Proportional Representation Society of Australia. He argued that the proposed transfer of the whole of the new Molonglo Valley district to the electorate of Molonglo was premature, for the reasons quoted above in the summary of his objection to this change.

The Augmented Commission noted that a large proportion of the objections received regarding all of the ACT redistributions conducted to date centred around the splitting of districts between electorates. Therefore, the Augmented Commission agrees with the Redistribution Committee that it would be appropriate to take this opportunity, as the new district of Molonglo Valley is becoming established, to ensure that it is encompassed within the one electorate from its inception. Given the proposal to combine Belconnen, Gungahlin, Lyneham, O'Connor and Turner in the one electorate, the Augmented Commission considers it appropriate to include the new Molonglo Valley district entirely within the Molonglo electorate, as the growth in this new area could be expected to off-set further growth in Gungahlin, which could reduce the need to alter the boundaries in future to cater for differing rates of growth between the electorates.

As the only Molonglo Valley suburbs that will be developed at the time of the next election are currently in the electorate of Molonglo, and as those suburbs, Coombs and Wright, are adjacent to the Weston Creek suburbs of Duffy and Holder, the

Augmented Commission agrees with the Committee that it would be appropriate to include all of the district of Molonglo Valley in the electorate of Molonglo.

Therefore, as part of its proposed redistribution, the Augmented Commission is proposing that the portion of the district of Molonglo Valley north of the Molonglo River be transferred from the electorate of Ginninderra to the electorate of Molonglo.

Names of electorates

The Augmented Commission received one objection to the proposed name of the Molonglo electorate. Mr Kerlin, on behalf of the Gungahlin Community Council, stated "With regard to the electorate names, we point to the difficulty experienced herein of discerning between the district and the electorate of the same name. It will only get worse. We suggest the committee consider the name of Griffin for the central electorate, in recognition that the central band of Canberra ... contains most of the core areas designed by Walter Burley Griffin."

This issue was also discussed at the public hearing. The Augmented Commission and the public participants at the hearing discussed the fact that the new district had been deliberately named "Molonglo Valley" so as to distinguish it from the electorate of Molonglo.

The Augmented Commission decided that it did not have sufficient evidence before it to justify altering the name of the Molonglo electorate at this time.

The Augmented Commission accordingly proposes that Brindabella, Ginninderra and Molonglo be retained as the respective names of the southern, north-western and central electorates of the Australian Capital Territory.

Conclusion

For the reasons given above, the Augmented Commission proposes to:

- Alter the Redistribution Committee's proposed redistribution to propose that Ginninderra be made the 7-Member electorate, consisting of Belconnen, Gungahlin and Hall and the Canberra Central suburbs of Lyneham, O'Connor and Turner;
- Alter the Redistribution Committee's proposed redistribution to propose that Molonglo become a 5-Member electorate including all of the district of Molonglo Valley;
- Retain the existing Brindabella electorate unchanged; and
- Retain the existing names for the electorates of Brindabella, Ginninderra and Molonglo.

Next stage of the redistribution process

As the Augmented Commission has decided to alter the proposal of the Redistribution Committee, the Augmented Commission considers that its proposal is significantly different from the Redistribution Committee's proposal, within the meaning of section 51(2)(c) of the Electoral Act. Consequently, there will be a further opportunity for public objections.

Accordingly, the Augmented Commission intends to prepare a written notifiable instrument for publication on the ACT's Legislation Register inviting written objections to this proposal.

Written objections to the Augmented Commission's proposed redistribution can be lodged with the ACT Electoral Commission within 28 days after the publication of the notice under the *Legislation Act 2001*.

Objections should be lodged at:
ACT Electoral Commission
Ground floor, North Building
Civic Square, London Circuit
CANBERRA CITY ACT 2601

Postal Address: PO Box 272, CIVIC SQUARE ACT 2608
Phone: (02) 6205 0033, Fax: (02) 6205 0382
Email: elections@act.gov.au

Who considers objections?

Objections to the Augmented Commission's proposal will be considered by the Augmented Commission. The Augmented Commission may hold public hearings into objections to its proposed redistribution. After consideration of any objections to this proposal, the Augmented Commission will make a final determination of the electoral boundaries for the ACT Legislative Assembly.

Augmented ACT Electoral Commission
Roger Beale AO — Phillip Green — Dawn Casey
Neil Savery — Bill Hirst — Stephen Collett
5 July 2011

Appendix A: Constitution of Proposed Electorates

Proposed 5-Member Electorate of Brindabella

Suburb	Actual persons enrolled 31 March 2011	Projected persons enrolled 20 October 2012	% change
Banks	3390	3951	16.55%
Bonython	2654	2831	6.67%
Calwell	4219	4402	4.34%
Chifley	1714	1764	2.92%
Chisholm	3848	3709	-3.61%
Conder	3498	4084	16.75%
Fadden	2477	2323	-6.22%
Farrer	2554	2489	-8.70%
Gilmore	2014	1964	-2.48%
Gordon	5447	6193	13.70%
Gowrie	2451	2371	-3.26%
Greenway	1098	1199	9.20%
Isabella Plains	2974	3008	1.14%
Kambah	11702	11101	-5.14%
Macarthur	1173	1184	0.94%
Monash	4188	4369	4.32%
Oxley	1309	1309	0.00%
Pearce	1913	1925	0.63%
Richardson	2245	2166	-3.52%
Theodore	2728	2898	6.23%
Torrens	1666	1677	0.66%
Tuggeranong - SSD Bal	26	22	-15.38%
Wanniassa	5921	5591	-5.57%
Remainder of ACT	220	187	-15.00%
Total	71429	72717	1.80%
Quota	72984	75343	
Variation from quota	-2.13%	-3.49%	

Proposed 7-Member Electorate of Ginninderra

Suburb	Actual persons enrolled 31 March 2011	Projected persons enrolled 20 October 2012	% change
Amaroo	3552	3688	3.83%
Aranda	1831	1836	0.27%
Belconnen Town Centre	2451	2843	15.99%
Belconnen - SSD Bal	26	30	15.38%
Bonner	278	523	88.13%
Bruce	3146	3659	16.31%
Casey	341	723	112.02%
Charnwood	2101	2052	-2.33%
Cook	2176	2180	0.18%
Crace	97	112	15.46%
Dunlop	4519	5218	15.47%
Evatt	4049	3865	-4.54%
Florey	3610	3656	1.27%
Flynn	2605	2458	-5.64%
Forde	761	862	13.27%
Franklin	1412	2961	109.70%
Fraser	1632	1541	-5.58%
Giralang	2567	2425	-5.53%
Gungahlin	3112	3513	12.89%
Gungahlin-Hall - SSD Bal	16	16	0.00%
Hall	236	228	-3.39%
Harrison	2506	2790	11.33%
Hawker	2202	2102	-4.54%
Higgins	2250	2137	-5.02%
Holt	3474	3602	3.68%
Kaleen	5676	5330	-6.10%
Latham	2768	2630	-4.99%
Lyneham	3319	3451	3.98%
McKellar	2138	2161	1.08%
Macgregor	3376	4088	21.09%
Macquarie	1807	1819	0.66%
Melba	2432	2448	0.66%
Mitchell	8	8	0.00%
Ngunnawal	6000	6187	3.12%
Nicholls	4986	5151	3.31%
O` Connor	3811	3942	3.44%
Page	2021	2014	-0.35%
Palmerston	3904	4212	7.89%
Scullin	1983	1859	-6.25%
Spence	1933	1836	-5.02%
Turner	2478	2535	2.30%
Weetangera	1979	1926	-2.68%
Total	101569	106617	4.97%
Quota	102178	105480	
Variation from quota	-0.60%	1.08%	

Proposed 5-Member Electorate of Molonglo

Suburb	Actual persons enrolled 31 March 2011	Projected persons enrolled 20 October 2012	% change
Acton	353	368	4.25%
Ainslie	3837	3973	3.54%
Barton	839	928	10.61%
Braddon	2735	3157	15.43%
Campbell / Duntroon / Majura	3952	3943	-0.23%
Chapman	2191	2087	-4.75%
City	918	1060	15.47%
Curtin	3908	3975	1.71%
Deakin	2108	2127	0.90%
Dickson	1431	1482	3.56%
Downer	2467	2498	1.26%
Duffy	2390	2260	-5.44%
Fisher	2342	2314	-1.20%
Forrest	1126	1156	2.66%
Fyshwick	23	21	-8.70%
Garran	2281	2342	2.67%
Griffith	3130	3306	5.62%
Hackett	2259	2299	1.77%
Harman	34	38	11.76%
Holder	2079	1978	-4.86%
Hughes	2140	2196	2.62%
Hume	6	7	16.67%
Isaacs	1871	1948	4.12%
Jerrabomberra	8	9	12.50%
Kingston	2224	2368	6.47%
Kowen	25	26	4.00%
Lyons	1825	1873	2.63%
Mawson	2174	2205	1.43%
Molonglo Valley - SSD Bal	4	4	0.00%
Narrabundah	4153	4298	3.49%
Oaks Estate	198	174	-12.12%
O`Malley	666	685	2.85%
Parkes	3	3	0.00%
Phillip	1372	1558	13.56%
Pialligo	92	95	3.26%
Red Hill	2297	2340	1.87%
Reid	1107	1139	2.89%
Rivett	2358	2383	1.06%
Russell	0	0	0.00%
Stirling	1486	1433	-3.57%
Stromlo	4	5	25.00%
Symonston	329	333	1.22%
Waramanga	1926	1825	-5.24%
Watson	3617	3733	3.21%
Weston	2454	2416	-1.55%
Weston Creek-Stromlo - SSD Bal	28	26	-7.14%
Yarralumla	2379	2440	2.56%
Total	75149	76834	2.24%
Quota	72984	75343	
Variation from quota	2.97%	1.98%	