

Redistributions

What is a redistribution?

A redistribution is a redrawing of electoral boundaries which aims to ensure that, as nearly as practicable, each ACT electorate gains representation in the ACT Legislative Assembly in proportion to the electorate's voting population.

When does a redistribution take place?

The *Electoral Act 1992* provides that a redistribution of electorates for the ACT Legislative Assembly must begin as soon as practicable after the third Saturday in October two years before the next general election is due.

What are the legal requirements for a redistribution?

In making its proposed redistribution, the Redistribution Committee is bound by section 36 of the Electoral Act and section 67D of the Commonwealth *Australian Capital Territory (Self-Government) Act 1988*.

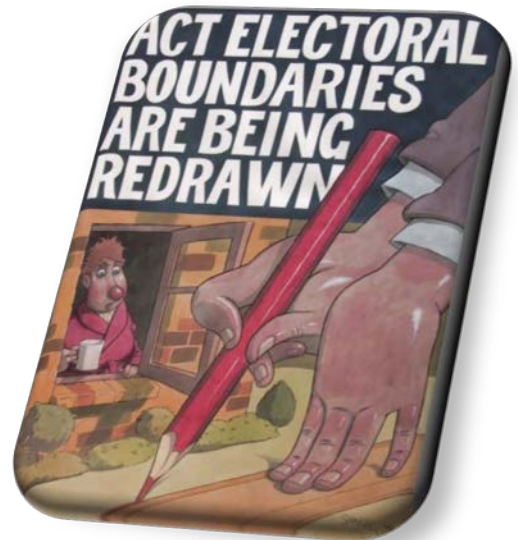
The Electoral Act provides that the Territory must be divided into five separate electorates with five members of the Legislative Assembly to be elected from each electorate.

The Self-Government Act sets out the following formula for calculating a quota:

$$\frac{\text{Number of Territory electors} \times \text{Number of electorate members}}{\text{Number of Territory members}}$$

In summary, the Electoral Act and the Self-Government Act provide that the Redistribution Committee and the augmented Electoral Commission shall -

- Ensure that the number of electors in an electorate immediately after the redistribution is within the range of not greater than 110%, or less than 90% of the quota;
- 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; and



■ 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*.

What is the redistribution process?

The redistribution is carried out in accordance with the Electoral Act with several opportunities for public participation throughout the process.

Step 1 – Appointment of the Redistribution Committee

A Redistribution Committee must be appointed by the Electoral Commission. The Committee consists of the ACT Electoral Commissioner, the ACT Planning and Land Authority, the ACT Surveyor-General and an appointed fourth member.

Step 2 – Public suggestions

Before the Redistribution Committee makes its proposal, any interested persons or organisations who wish to make suggestions regarding the redistribution are given 28 days to forward suggestions in writing to the Redistribution Committee.

Step 3 – Comments on the public suggestions

The public suggestions will be made available for public inspection at the office of the ACT Electoral Commission and from the Commission's website. Any comments on the suggestions must be lodged in writing within 14 days.

Step 4 – The first proposed redistribution

The Redistribution Committee considers the public suggestions and comments before making the proposed redistribution. Maps showing the proposed boundaries and names of the electorates will be published in a newspaper and exhibited at the office of the ACT Electoral Commission and on the Commission's website.

Step 5 – Objections to the proposed redistribution

Following the publication of the first proposed redistribution there will be 28 days within which initial objections to the proposed redistribution may be lodged by members of the public or organisations.

Step 6 – Objections considered by the Augmented Electoral Commission

The objections are considered by the augmented Electoral Commission. The augmented Electoral Commission comprises the Chairperson of the ACT Electoral Commission and the other member of the Commission, sitting together with the members of the Redistribution Committee. The augmented Electoral Commission may hold public hearings into objections.

Step 7 – The second proposed redistribution

After it has considered all the initial objections lodged, the augmented Electoral Commission makes a second proposed redistribution. If this second proposal is not significantly different from the first proposal, the second set of proposed boundaries will become the final boundaries for the ACT.

Step 8 – Further objections

If the second proposal is significantly different from the proposal made by the Redistribution Committee, the augmented Electoral Commission will invite further objections from members of the public or organisations. Further objections must be lodged within 28 days.

Step 9 – Final determination

The augmented Electoral Commission will then consider any further objections. The augmented Electoral Commission may again hold public hearings into objections. Following its consideration of all objections, it will make a final determination of boundaries and names of electorates for the ACT.

