

**ACT Legislative Assembly
Electoral Boundaries
Redistribution 2003**

**Proposed Redistribution of the
Australian Capital Territory
into Electorates for the
Legislative Assembly**

Australian

Capital

Territory

Redistribution

Committee



Australian Capital Territory

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ACT Legislative Assembly Electoral Boundaries Redistribution 2003

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Summary of proposed redistribution

The 2003 ACT Redistribution Committee proposes in accordance with section 43 of the *Electoral Act 1992* that there be no change to the current electoral boundaries in the Australian Capital Territory. The current electorates are as follows:

BRINDABELLA, a five member electorate comprising the district of Tuggeranong (excluding the suburb of Hume), the Woden Valley suburbs of Chifley, Pearce and Torrens and the southern remainder of the ACT;

GINNINDERRA, a five member electorate comprising the districts of Belconnen and Hall (including the entire Village of Hall) and the Gungahlin suburb of Nicholls; and

MOLONGLO, a seven member electorate comprising the districts of Gungahlin (excluding the suburb of Nicholls), Canberra Central, Weston Creek, Woden Valley (excluding the suburbs of Chifley, Pearce and Torrens), Jerrabomberra (including the entire suburb of Hume), Kowen, Majura, and Stromlo.

Overall statistical summary

Quotas and maximum and minimum numbers of electors

	ACT	5 member electorates	7 member electorate
April 2003			
Actual enrolment	219793		
Quotas		64645	90503
Not more than 110% of the quota		71109	99553
Not less than 90% of the quota		58181	81453
October 2004			
Estimated enrolment	224395		
Quotas		65999	92398
Not more than 105% of the quota		69298	97017
Not less than 95% of the quota		62700	87779

Statistical summary of proposed electorates

Proposed electorate	Number of members	Enrolment April 2003	% above or below quota 2003	Projected enrolment October 2004	% above or below quota 2004
Brindabella	5	63934	-1.10%	64325	-2.54%
Ginninderra	5	63868	-1.20%	64312	-2.56%
Molonglo	7	91991	+1.64%	95758	+3.64%

For a detailed break down of these statistics see Appendix A.

Legal Requirements

Commencement of the redistribution process

2. Section 37A of the *Electoral Act 1992* (the Electoral Act) provides that a redistribution of the electoral boundaries of the ACT after the general election held on 20 October 2001 must begin as soon as practicable after 30 April 2003.

The Redistribution Committee

3. Under section 39 of the Electoral Act, the ACT Electoral Commission is required to appoint a Redistribution Committee for the purposes of each redistribution. Before appointing this Redistribution Committee, the Commission gave careful consideration to the appointment of the fourth member of the Committee. The Commission appointed this Redistribution Committee on 1 May 2003.

4. The Redistribution Committee consists of the Electoral Commissioner (Mr Phillip Green, who is chairperson of the Redistribution Committee), the acting Planning and Land Authority (Dr Colin Adrian), the Commissioner for Surveys (Mr David Dobson) and a person appointed by the ACT Electoral Commission, the Regional Director, ACT Office, Australian Bureau of Statistics (Ms Tracy Stewart).

Invitation to submit suggestions and comments

5. In accordance with section 41 of the Electoral Act, the Redistribution Committee invited written suggestions relating to the redistribution, and written comments on those suggestions, on 8 May 2003 by written notice, which is a notifiable instrument under the *Legislation Act 2001*. A copy of this notice was published in the *Canberra Times* on 8 May 2003, and in the *Chronicle* and the *Valley Voice* in the week commencing 12 May 2003. The closing date for suggestions was 5 June 2003. The closing date for comments was 19 June 2003.

Redistribution criteria

6. Section 36 of the Electoral Act sets out the criteria under which a redistribution is to be conducted. This section (as applied to a Redistribution Committee by section 43 of the Electoral Act) prescribes that a Redistribution Committee, 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 subsection 67D(2) of the *Australian Capital Territory (Self-Government) Act 1988* (the Self-Government Act) of the Commonwealth;
- (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 subsection 67D(1) of the *Australian Capital Territory (Self-Government) Act 1988* of the Commonwealth; 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*.

7. Section 67D of the *Australian Capital Territory (Self-Government) Act 1988* of the Commonwealth prescribes that:

(1) In this section:

“**quota**”, in relation to an electorate for the Territory, means the number calculated in accordance with the formula:

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

where:

“**Number of Territory electors**” means the number of electors of the Territory;

“**Number of electorate members**” means the number of members to be elected by the electorate;

“**Number of Territory members**” means the number of members of the Assembly.

- (2) A distribution or redistribution of the Territory into electorates is not to result in any electorate having, immediately after the distribution or redistribution:
- (a) a number of electors of the Territory greater than 110% of its quota; or
 - (b) a number of electors of the Territory less than 90% of its quota.

Objections

8. Written objections to the Redistribution Committee’s proposed redistribution can be lodged with the ACT Electoral Commission by no later than 8 August 2003.

9. Objections should be lodged at:

ACT Electoral Commission
Plaza Level, Allara House, 48-56 Allara St
CANBERRA ACT 2601
Phone: (02) 6205 0033, Fax: (02) 6205 0382
Email: elections@act.gov.au
Postal Address: PO Box 272, CIVIC SQUARE ACT 2608

Who considers objections?

10. Objections to the Redistribution Committee's proposal will be considered by the augmented ACT Electoral Commission. The augmented Commission consists of the Chairperson of the ACT Electoral Commission (Mr Graham Glenn), the Electoral Commissioner (Mr Phillip Green, who is chairperson of the Redistribution Committee), the third member of the ACT Electoral Commission (Dr Christabel Young) and the other members of the Redistribution Committee: the acting Planning and Land Authority (Dr Colin Adrian), the Commissioner for Surveys (Mr David Dobson) and the Regional Director, ACT Office, Australian Bureau of Statistics (Ms Tracy Stewart). The augmented Commission may hold public hearings into objections to the proposed redistribution.

Numbers of electors

Numbers of electors immediately after the redistribution

11. Paragraph 36(a) of the Electoral Act requires the Committee to ensure that the number of electors in an electorate immediately after the redistribution is within the range permitted by subsection 67D(2) of the Self-Government Act. Before appointing the Redistribution Committee, the Electoral Commission obtained from the Australian Electoral Commission the latest available enrolment statistics for the ACT, broken down by suburb. These enrolment statistics were compiled on 2 April 2003. These statistics were used to determine the enrolment projections for the next election and to provide information for people lodging submissions. The Committee considered that these figures were sufficient for ensuring this criterion will be met under its proposed redistribution. However, the augmented Electoral Commission may further consult the Australian Electoral Commission before it makes its final determination, to ensure that the final determination is made against the latest enrolment statistics.

Numbers of electors at the time of the next general election

12. Paragraph 36(b) of the Electoral Act requires the Committee to endeavour to ensure, as far as practicable, that the number of electors in an electorate at the time of the next general election is within the range of not greater than 105% nor less than 95% of the quota at that time. The next general election is due to be held on 16 October 2004 under section 100 of the Electoral Act.

13. In order to comply with this criterion, the Electoral Commission engaged the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) to estimate enrolment at the suburb level as at 16 October 2004. The estimated enrolment statistics were calculated by the ABS according to assumptions accepted by the Electoral Commission on the basis of advice provided by the ACT Government. A detailed description of the methodology used to calculate the estimated enrolment statistics is included in the introduction to those statistics, which are available from the ACT Electoral Commission.

14. The Committee noted the enrolment projections included relatively high growth rates in some areas, particularly Braddon, Canberra City, Dunlop, Greenway, Gungahlin, Kingston and O'Malley. The Committee considered that it was possible that the projected enrolment growth in these areas may be overstated. However, as all these suburbs other than Dunlop and Greenway are in Molonglo, less growth than projected in these areas would tend to bring the projected enrolment in Molonglo for 2004 closer to the quota. Molonglo is projected to be 3.64% over the quota in October 2004. Consequently the Committee considered that this factor was not likely to have a negative impact on its proposed boundaries.

Quotas

15. At 2 April 2003 there were 219793 electors on the roll for the ACT. The quota for the five member electorates determined in accordance with section 67D of the Self-Government Act is 64645, the permitted minimum enrolment (not less than 90% of the quota) is 58181, and the permitted maximum enrolment (not greater than 110% of the quota) is 71109. The quota for the seven member electorate is 90503, the permitted minimum enrolment is 81453, and the permitted maximum enrolment is 99553.

16. The ABS estimates that there will be 224395 electors on the roll for the ACT in October 2004. Therefore the quota for the five member electorates at that time determined in accordance with subsection 67D(1) of the Self-Government Act is 65999, the permitted minimum enrolment (not less than 95% of the quota) is 62700, and the permitted maximum enrolment (not greater than 105% of the quota) is 69298. The quota for the seven member electorate is 92398, the permitted minimum enrolment is 87779, and the permitted maximum is 97017.

The other redistribution criteria

17. The criteria set out in paragraph 36(c) of the Electoral Act — community of interests, means of communication and travel, physical features and area, boundaries of existing electorates and boundaries of divisions and sections fixed under the *Districts Act 2002* — are subservient to the two objectives of enrolments in proposed electorates being within a range of 5% above or below the quota at the time of the next election and current enrolments being within 10% above or below the quota. However, given these two constraints the Committee sought to ensure that the other criteria were given maximum possible effect. In particular, the Committee considered that these criteria were best met by avoiding, where possible, splitting suburbs and districts and by selecting boundaries which clearly separate communities.

Suggestions and comments

18. Seven suggestions were lodged with the Redistribution Committee by the close of the suggestions period on 5 June 2003. Six comments on the suggestions were received by the closing date on 19 June 2003, with an additional comment received on 20 June 2003, dated 19 June 2003. The Redistribution Committee decided to accept this late comment as the sender indicated before the closing date that the submission had been prepared but could not be sent until the following day. Copies of the suggestions and comments may be viewed at the Commission's office or obtained from its website, www.elections.act.gov.au.

Brief summary of suggestions

Glenys Darnell, Gungahlin

19. This submission from a Gungahlin resident stated that Nichols should be brought into the same electorate as the other Gungahlin suburbs, so that Gungahlin could be better represented in the Assembly, particularly in relation to education and transport matters. No other changes to electorates were proposed.

Daniel Clode, ACT Director, The Liberal Party of Australia, ACT Division

20. This suggestion submitted that there should be no change to the present boundaries. Arguments put forward in favour of making no change included:

- That the existing electorates are projected to remain comfortably within the statutory tolerance at the time of the next election;
- That it was highly improbable that the population projections were likely to be very inaccurate when forecasting over such a short time period;
- That no change would satisfy the public desire for continuity of electoral boundaries;
- That it would be rash to move suburbs from one electorate to another based on speculative assumptions about longer term population trends that might occur after 2004; and
- That the present configuration avoids sub-division of existing town centres so far as it is possible, and that any further changes to boundaries would inevitably further divide communities of interests, physical features and zones of travel and communications.

Proportional Representation Society of Australia (ACT Branch)

21. This suggestion submitted that there should be no change to the present boundaries. Arguments put forward in favour of making no change included:

- That there was a community expectation that electoral boundaries would seldom change;
- That stability of electoral boundaries was one of the features of the Hare-Clark electoral system listed in the official case in favour of Hare-Clark distributed during the 1992 referendum on the choice of electoral systems in the ACT; and
- That the current boundaries satisfy all the relevant criteria and should be retained.

22. The suggestion also called for a simplified redistribution process to be suggested to the Legislative Assembly, whereby public submissions would continue to be invited, but where the actual and projected enrolments stood well within the tolerances, the Redistribution Committee should be empowered to make a final determination to the effect that the boundaries would remain unchanged, without the need for a further public objection period.

Jeff Carl, Chairperson, Weston Creek Community Council

23. This suggestion submitted that there should be no change to the present boundaries. The suggestion noted that the current boundaries have detached small portions of Woden Valley and Gungahlin for their neighbouring suburbs in the same districts and that such arrangements are not ideal as local communities are split. However, it was also noted that these splits may be necessary and unavoidable arrangements given other numerical constraints.

Jonathon Reynolds, President, ACT Equality Party

24. This suggestion acknowledges that the electoral boundaries as currently drawn already meet the legislative requirements. However the suggestion notes that the current boundaries are not “perfect” as the Gungahlin and Woden districts are currently split between electorates, and puts forward four alternative models for consideration:

Model 1:

Brindabella, a five member electorate comprising the district of Tuggeranong (excluding the suburb of Hume), the Woden Valley suburbs of Farrer, Isaacs and Torrens and the southern remainder of the ACT;

Ginninderra, a seven member electorate comprising the districts of Belconnen, Gungahlin and Hall and the Canberra Central suburbs of Dickson, Downer, Hackett, Lyneham, O’Connor and Watson; and

Molonglo, a five member electorate comprising the districts of Canberra Central (excluding the suburbs of Dickson, Downer, Hackett, Lyneham, O’Connor and Watson), Weston Creek, Woden Valley (excluding the suburbs of Farrer, Isaacs and Torrens), Jerrabomberra (including the entire suburb of Hume), Kowen, Majura, and Stromlo.

Model 2:

Brindabella, a five member electorate comprising the district of Tuggeranong and Jerrabomberra, the Woden Valley suburbs of Farrer and Isaacs, the suburb of Oaks Estate and the southern remainder of the ACT;

Ginninderra, a seven member electorate comprising the districts of Belconnen, Gungahlin and Hall and the Canberra Central suburbs of Ainslie, Dickson, Downer, Hackett, Lyneham and Watson; and

Molonglo, a five member electorate comprising the districts of Canberra Central (excluding the suburbs of Ainslie, Dickson, Downer, Hackett, Lyneham and Watson), Weston Creek, Woden Valley (excluding the suburbs of Farrer and Isaacs), Kowen, Majura (excluding Oaks Estate) and Stromlo.

Model 3:

Brindabella, a seven member electorate comprising the districts of Stromlo, Tuggeranong and Weston Creek, the Woden Valley suburbs of Chifley, Curtin, Farrer, Lyons, Mawson, Pearce, Phillip and Torrens and the southern remainder of the ACT;

Ginninderra, a five member electorate comprising the district of Belconnen and the Canberra Central suburbs of Lyneham and O'Connor; and

Molonglo, a five member electorate comprising the districts of Canberra Central (excluding the suburbs of Lyneham and O'Connor), Gungahlin, Jerrabomberra, Kowen and Majura and Stromlo, and the Woden Valley suburbs of Hughes, Garran, Isaacs and O'Malley.

Model 4:

Brindabella, a five member electorate comprising the districts of Tuggeranong (excluding the suburb of Hume) and Stromlo, the Weston Creek suburbs of Chapman, Fisher and Rivett and the southern remainder of the ACT;

Ginninderra, a five member electorate comprising the district of Belconnen and the Canberra Central suburbs of Lyneham and O'Connor; and

Molonglo, a seven member electorate comprising the districts of Gungahlin, Canberra Central (excluding the suburbs of Lyneham and O'Connor), Weston Creek (excluding the suburbs of Chapman, Fisher and Rivett), Woden Valley, Jerrabomberra (including the entire suburb of Hume), Kowen and Majura.

Australian Democrats (ACT Division)

25. This suggestion puts forward proposed electoral boundaries that the Australian Democrats believe provide "a more sensible layout of electorates for the ACT Legislative Assembly elections than exists at present."

26. The submission proposes altering the boundaries of Ginninderra so that it would be a five member electorate comprising the districts of Belconnen (excluding the suburbs of Aranda, Bruce, Cook, Hawker, Macquarie and Weetangera), Gungahlin and Hall. The Belconnen suburbs excluded from Ginninderra would be transferred to Molonglo. The submission presented detailed arguments in support of this proposed change. In particular, the submission argued that the south east suburbs of Belconnen had more in common with Central Canberra than did Gungahlin.

27. The submission also proposes that the boundaries of Brindabella be either left unchanged, or that the suburb of Farrer be transferred to Brindabella from Molonglo.

Barry Dee, President, Gungahlin Community Council Inc.

28. This suggestion puts forward the opinion of the Gungahlin Community Council that the entire Gungahlin region, including Hall, should be located within a single electorate, either Ginninderra or Molonglo. The submission states that the Gungahlin Community Council does not have the available expertise or resources to determine which would be the most appropriate electorate to locate Gungahlin in, or to recommend how the boundaries should be redrawn to accommodate Gungahlin in one electorate.

Brief summary of comments

Cathy Hales, Aranda

29. This comment supported the suggestions put forward by the Liberal Party and the Proportional Representation Society that the current boundaries should remain unchanged. This comment also addressed the suggestion put forward by the Australian Democrats that the boundaries of Ginninderra be changed so that it would be a five member electorate comprising the districts of Belconnen (excluding the suburbs of Aranda, Bruce, Cook, Hawker, Macquarie and Weetangera), Gungahlin and Hall; with the Belconnen suburbs excluded from Ginninderra transferred to Molonglo.

30. This comment supported the idea of uniting Gungahlin in one electorate, but strongly objected to achieving this by dividing established Belconnen communities of interest by splitting Belconnen as proposed by the Australian Democrats.

Rosemary Lissimore, President, Tuggeranong Community Council Incorporated

31. This comment proposed altering the boundaries so that Chifley, Pearce and Torrens would be transferred from Brindabella to Molonglo; and all suburbs of Gungahlin currently in Molonglo would be transferred from Molonglo to Ginninderra, making Ginninderra a 7 member electorate and Molonglo a 5 member electorate. The comment argued that this would be a much fairer distribution in line with population numbers.

Jeff Carl, Chairperson, Weston Creek Community Council

32. This submission commented on the proposals put forward by the ACT Equality Party. The submission particularly objected to the proposed model that would see Weston Creek split between Brindabella and Molonglo. The submission noted that the four models proposed by the ACT Equality Party would split at least two, and sometimes three, local communities, "so they are no real improvement to the existing boundaries that split only two communities." The submission reiterated the view put forward in the Weston Creek Community Council's suggestion, that the current boundaries should be left unchanged.

Barry V Raison, Curtin

33. This comment expressed concern that Woden Valley was split between two electorates and that Nicholls was in a different electorate from the rest of Gungahlin. The submission stated "Rather than dislocate Canberra's satellite towns, it would seem preferable to change the number of members in each electorate."

Roma Hosking, Editor, Gunsmoke Newsletter, Gungahlin Community Council Inc.

34. This comment rejected those suggestions that argued that the boundaries should remain unchanged on the basis of stability because this position would continue the division of Gungahlin across two electorates. The submission argued that, as Gungahlin is the only significant area of green fields development in the Territory, it should be considered in an electoral context as "a first among equals".

35. The submission stated that “communities that are fragmented do not function as efficiently as those which are able to have a sense of belonging in their local community” and goes on to “request the Electoral Commission repair the damage that has been done to the Gungahlin community by the dividing [of] Gungahlin between two [electoral] districts and ensure that Gungahlin is contained within one electoral boundary.”

Barry Dee, President, Gungahlin Community Council Inc.

36. This comment rejected those suggestions that argued that the boundaries should remain unchanged on the basis of stability because this position would continue the division of Gungahlin across two electorates. The submission argued that, as Gungahlin is the only significant area of green fields development in the Territory, it should be considered in an electoral context as “a first among equals”.

37. The submission stated that “in the interests of equity and fairness all areas of the Territory should (at some time) be given equal exposure to such a multiple electoral distribution effects [sic]. In this context the current split across two electorates could be removed from both Gungahlin and Woden regions and applied to two other regions for the upcoming 2004 Election.”

Miko Kirschbaum for the ACT Greens

38. This comment noted the undesirability of the placement of Nicholls, Chifley, Pearce and Torrens in electorates separate from the rest of their districts, as set out in several suggestions. The comment noted that the alternative boundaries proposed by the ACT Equality Party and the Australian Democrats would preserve Gungahlin in one electorate while breaking other communities of interests in other districts. The comment concluded that “While the problems with the current arrangement are obvious, and, indeed, highly undesirable, we cannot see a way of solving these problems without creating equally significant problems somewhere else. None of the solutions that have been suggested appear to be an improvement on the current situation despite its obvious undesirability. Hence, we concur with the view put forward by the proportional representation society, that the current boundary arrangements be maintained in the interest of continuity and stability.”

The Committee's proposed boundaries

39. The Committee noted that the current boundaries are within the permissible statistical tolerances set out under subsections 36(a) and (b) of the Act according to the actual enrolments for April 2003 and the estimated enrolments for October 2004 (see the following table). The Committee saw its task as deciding whether to leave the current boundaries unchanged or to propose changes that would achieve a redistribution that better fits the criteria in section 36 of the Act.

40. The following paragraphs examine some of the options the Committee considered before arriving at its proposed boundaries.

Retaining the current boundaries

41. The enrolment figures for April 2003 and the projected enrolment figures for October 2004 on the current ACT electoral boundaries are:

Electorate	Number of members	Enrolment April 2003	% above or below quota 2003	Projected enrolment October 2004	% above or below quota 2004
Brindabella	5	63934	-1.10%	64325	-2.54%
Ginninderra	5	63868	-1.20%	64312	-2.56%
Molonglo	7	91991	+1.64%	95758	+3.64%

42. Three of the seven suggestions and three of the seven comments (one of which was from the Weston Creek Community Council, which also made a suggestion) lodged with the Committee recommended that the existing boundaries be retained. Those in favour of this option noted that the current and projected enrolments are within the variations permitted under the Electoral Act. The submissions stressed the importance of providing stability of electoral boundaries.

43. The Committee agreed that the requirement in paragraph 36(c)(iv) that existing boundaries must be duly considered was an indication that the legislature placed considerable weight on stability of electoral boundaries, while also noting that this criterion has equal weight with the other criteria listed in paragraph 36(c).

44. While the enrolment projections for all three current electorates are within the permitted tolerances, the Committee noted the significant number of suggestions and comments calling for Nicholls to be included in the same electorate as the rest of Gungahlin. The Committee agrees that the splitting of Nicholls from the rest of Gungahlin is not ideal. Accordingly, the Committee examined a number of options to determine whether an alternative proposal could be identified that included Nicholls in the same electorate as the rest of Gungahlin that also met the criteria in paragraph 36(c) to the same or to a greater extent than the current boundaries.

Using suburban streets as electoral boundaries

45. Several suggestions for changes made in the public submissions include electoral boundaries that follow suburb boundaries that comprise relatively minor single-lane suburban streets, fronted on both sides by houses with driveways on the boundary street. Examples include Beasley Street between Farrer and Mawson and David Street between O'Connor and Turner. As this is an issue that arises in relation to several of the proposed options, the Committee considered it worth discussing in the abstract before dealing with specific examples.

46. In its reasons for its proposed 2000 redistribution, the 2000 Redistribution Committee stated that "Roads fronted by houses are not ideal as electoral boundaries as they can result in confusion for residents in those streets." In its 2003 suggestion, the Australian Democrats questioned whether this view was relevant to any of the redistribution criteria set out in the Electoral Act.

47. This Committee considers that electoral boundaries that follow relatively minor single-lane suburban streets, fronted on both sides by houses are likely to be dividing clear communities of interests. People who live on such streets are likely to share several aspects that unite them in a community sense. They are likely to know their immediate neighbours across the street and have various kinds of interaction with them. They would share schools, transport routes and shops. They would be more likely to share the interests of their neighbours on the other side of the street compared to those people who live in suburbs either side of a four-lane major traffic route.

48. For these reasons the Committee considers that placing electoral boundaries on single-lane suburban streets, fronted on both sides by houses, is a practice to avoid wherever possible, and that alternative boundaries between suburbs that consist of major transport routes that clearly divide communities are to be preferred. The Committee considers this view to be consistent with the factors to consider set out in sections 36(c)(i), (ii) and (iii) of the Electoral Act, that deal with community of interests, means of communication and travel, and physical features and area.

The Brindabella boundary

49. Before turning to the Ginninderra boundary, the Committee examined the Brindabella boundary to determine whether any alternative boundary might better meet the statistical and other criteria. The Committee noted that the current enrolment for Brindabella was only 1.10% below the quota and the projected enrolment was 2.54% below the quota, a satisfactory result in terms of the statistical criteria.

50. In view of the concerns raised in previous redistributions and in some of the present suggestions and comments about the inclusion of the three Woden suburbs of Chifley, Pearce and Torrens in the Brindabella electorate, the Committee considered whether it would be practicable to transfer some or all of these suburbs to Molonglo. However, transferring even the most northerly suburb of Chifley would reduce the projected enrolment for 2004 for Brindabella to an unacceptably low figure (5.07% below the quota) and would raise Molonglo to an unacceptably high figure (5.44% above the quota, if its boundaries otherwise remained unchanged).

51. While the Committee noted that there are strong links between these suburbs and the rest of Woden, the Committee did not consider that any alternative transfer of suburbs to Brindabella would better fit the criteria, for the reasons advanced by the 1993, 1996 and 2000 Committees, and for the reasons discussed below. In addition, the Committee was not aware of any widespread dissatisfaction with the current boundary of Brindabella. While several submissions made to the Committee suggested changes to the current boundary, the Committee did not consider that any of the suggested alternatives better met the redistribution criteria.

52. The Tuggeranong Community Council suggested that Chifley, Pearce and Torrens should be transferred to Molonglo, leaving Brindabella as a five member electorate consisting solely of the district of Tuggeranong and the southern remainder of ACT. As discussed above, this would place Brindabella below the acceptable enrolment levels and would not satisfy the statistical criteria.

53. The Australian Democrats suggested either leaving the current Brindabella boundary unchanged, or transferring the Woden Valley suburb of Farrer from Molonglo to Brindabella. Such a transfer of Farrer would give a projected enrolment variation for 2004 for Brindabella of 1.37%, well within the permitted range, with a corresponding drop in Molonglo to 0.84% from the quota (if Molonglo remained otherwise unchanged). However, the Committee was not satisfied that there was a need to make this change. In particular, the Committee considered that this change would exacerbate rather than ameliorate the current concerns over the splitting of some Woden Valley suburbs from the majority of Woden Valley suburbs in Molonglo. The Committee also took the view that the proposed electorate boundary between Farrer and Mawson – which runs along Beasley Street – was a single lane suburban street that would have the effect of dividing a community of adjacent neighbours.

54. The ACT Equality Party proposed four different models for redistributing the ACT, including four different approaches to redrawing the Brindabella/Molonglo boundary. The first model proposed that Chifley and Pearce be transferred to Molonglo and Farrer and Isaacs be transferred to Brindabella, so that Brindabella would consist of Tuggeranong and the Woden Valley suburbs of Farrer, Isaacs and Torrens. This boundary would include several single lane suburban streets fronted by houses, and would therefore not be preferred to the current boundaries, which all run along major roads around Chifley, Pearce and Torrens.

55. The ACT Equality Party's second model proposed that Chifley, Pearce and Torrens be transferred to Molonglo, and Farrer, HMAS Harman, Hume, Isaacs, Jerrabomberra, Oaks Estate and Symonston be transferred to Brindabella. This boundary would also include several single lane suburban streets fronted by houses, and would therefore not be preferred to the current boundaries. The Committee also considered that HMAS Harman and Oaks Estate were geographically removed from the rest of the proposed electorate and had closer connections with Fyshwick, Pialligo and Narrabundah than with Tuggeranong.

56. The ACT Equality Party's third model proposed that Brindabella should be a seven member seat consisting of Tuggeranong, Weston Creek and the Woden Valley suburbs of Chifley, Curtin, Farrer, Lyons, Mawson, Pearce, Phillip and Torrens. While the boundary around this proposed electorate would consist of significant four lane roads, it would split Woden Valley into two from north to south, with eight suburbs in Brindabella and four suburbs in Molonglo. The Committee considered that this would involve significant disruption of the community of interests present in Woden Valley, and did not consider that a need for such a dramatic change had been demonstrated.

57. The ACT Equality Party's fourth model proposed that Chifley, Pearce and Torrens be transferred to Molonglo, and the Weston Creek suburbs of Chapman, Fisher and Rivett be transferred to Brindabella. This boundary would also include several single lane suburban streets fronted by houses, and would therefore not be preferred to the current boundaries. The Committee also considered that there was no compelling case to justify the inclusion of these suburbs in Brindabella compared to the existing boundaries.

The Ginninderra boundary

58. The Committee noted the significant number of suggestions and comments calling for Nicholls to be included in the same electorate as the rest of Gungahlin. The Committee agrees that the inclusion of Nicholls in Ginninderra is not ideal. Accordingly, the Committee examined a number of options to determine whether an alternative proposal could be identified that included Nicholls in the same electorate as the rest of Gungahlin that also met the criteria in paragraph 36(c) to the same or to a greater extent than the current boundaries.

Option I: Transferring Nicholls from Ginninderra to Molonglo and transferring Lyneham and/or O'Connor from Molonglo to Ginninderra

59. The third and fourth models proposed by the ACT Equality Party included the proposal that Lyneham and O'Connor be transferred from Molonglo to Ginninderra.

60. Transferring Lyneham, O'Connor and Nicholls as proposed would improve the variation in the projected enrolments for Ginninderra in 2004 to 0.91% above the quota and for Molonglo to 1.16% over the quota, if no other changes were made. Both of these results would be closer to the quota than would the current boundaries.

61. Transferring only one or the other of Lyneham or O'Connor would put Molonglo 4.91% or 4.46% respectively over the quota in 2004. As these results would be uncomfortably close to the permissible 5% option, the Committee considered these would not be viable options.

62. The boundary between O'Connor and Turner runs along David Street, a relatively minor road fronted by houses in both O'Connor and Turner. The Committee considers that this would be a poor boundary for the reasons expressed above. The boundary between Lyneham and the suburbs to the east would follow Northbourne Avenue, which would be a more appropriate boundary.

63. The Committee considered that Lyneham and O'Connor share significant communities of interests with the adjacent north Canberra suburbs, such as Watson, Downer, Dickson and Turner. These suburbs were developed at similar times and share similar socio-economic characteristics, as well as transport links, schools and shopping and employment facilities. While Lyneham and O'Connor share some interests with the adjacent Belconnen suburbs, particularly O'Connor ridge and the proposed Gungahlin Drive extension, the Committee considers that Lyneham and O'Connor have much stronger links with the adjacent north Canberra suburbs.

64. The Committee was also concerned that transferring Lyneham and O'Connor to Ginninderra would insert a "wedge" in Molonglo that would disrupt the continuity of Molonglo by isolating Gungahlin from north Canberra in the electorate.

65. Consequently, the Committee considered that transferring Lyneham and O'Connor to Ginninderra was not a very suitable option, compared to retaining the current boundaries.

Option 2 Transferring all of Gungahlin and Mitchell from Molonglo to Ginninderra and transferring Aranda, Cook, Hawker, Macquarie and Weetangera from Ginninderra to Molonglo

66. The Committee also looked at the option of transferring all of Gungahlin and Mitchell from Molonglo to Ginninderra and transferring Aranda, Cook, Hawker, Macquarie and Weetangera from Ginninderra to Molonglo. This change was proposed by the Australian Democrats. This option would bring both Ginninderra and Molonglo closer to their respective quotas in 2004.

67. The Committee considered this proposal to be the best of those that were designed to place Gungahlin wholly in one electorate. However, under this option, uniting Gungahlin in one electorate would come at the cost of removing a substantial portion of Belconnen from Ginninderra.

68. The Committee considered splitting Belconnen in this way would disrupt several communities of interests. It would separate the excised Belconnen suburbs from the shopping, leisure and employment facilities in the Belconnen town centre. It would also divide several school catchment areas. The suburbs proposed to be transferred to Molonglo include Calvary Hospital, the Australian Institute of Sport, the Canberra Stadium, the Hawker sporting ovals, the University of Canberra, Radford College, Hawker College, Canberra High, Fern Hill Park and the Jamison Centre, all of which have strong connections with the rest of Belconnen. While many of these institutions also have connections with other parts of Canberra, their location in Belconnen arguably makes their Belconnen connections stronger.

69. In support of this option, the Australian Democrats identified a range of factors that indicate that these older Belconnen suburbs have several communities of interests in common with the adjacent north Canberra suburbs. The Committee does not dispute that such connections exist, in the same way that most suburbs in Canberra have various connections with their adjacent suburbs in adjoining districts. However, the Committee considers that it is unrealistic to attempt to draw electoral boundaries in the ACT on the basis of placing localities in the same electorate on the basis of their socio-economic similarities. Given that the ACT is only to be divided into three electorates, and given that the seven member electorate must contain 7/17 of the enrolled population, it is inevitable that each electorate must contain a broad range of localities encompassing many different communities and socio-economic groups. In particular, it is inevitable that the seven member electorate must contain a large range of localities in order to reach its required enrolled population.

70. While the Committee recognises that the inclusion of Nicholls in Gungahlin disrupts the community of interests that exist between Nicholls and Gungahlin, the Committee consider that the division of Belconnen under this option would disrupt significantly greater interests than the current boundaries. In addition, this proposal is significantly at odds with the criteria related to having regard to existing boundaries. In particular, it would involve the transfer of 11666 electors (on the April 2003 enrolment figures) from Ginninderra to Molonglo, and the transfer of 12499 electors from Molonglo to Ginninderra. In total, this proposal would require 24165 electors to change electorate. By comparison, there were 4044 electors enrolled in Nicholls in April 2003.

71. For these reasons, the Committee rejected this option.

Option 3: Making Ginninderra the seven member electorate, consisting of Belconnen, Gungahlin, Hall and Mitchell and the Central Canberra suburbs of Ainslie, Dickson, Downer, Hackett, Lyneham and Watson

72. This proposal was put forward by the ACT Equality Party. The Committee considered that this option was not satisfactory on a number of grounds. It would involve dramatic change to the existing boundaries and the transfer of a large number of electors from Molonglo to Ginninderra. It would divide the communities of interests that exist between the various north Canberra suburbs that would be divided by this proposal. It would involve poor boundaries along single-lane suburban street on the suburb boundary between Lyneham and O'Connor. The proposed boundary along Limestone Avenue between Ainslie and Braddon would also be less than ideal as it presents less of an obstacle to community interaction compared to more major roads like the Tuggeranong Parkway or Hindmarsh Drive.

73. For these reasons, the Committee rejected this option.

Option 4: Making Ginninderra the seven member electorate, consisting of Belconnen, Gungahlin, Hall and Mitchell and the Central Canberra suburbs of Dickson, Downer, Hackett, Lyneham, O'Connor and Watson

74. This proposal was also put forward by the ACT Equality Party. It is the same as option 4, except that in this option O'Connor is transferred to Ginninderra and Ainslie remains in Molonglo.

75. The Committee rejected this option for the same reasons as those applying to option 3.

Conclusion

76. The Committee agreed that the requirement in paragraph 36(c)(iv) of the Electoral Act that existing boundaries must be duly considered was an indication that the legislature placed considerable weight on stability of electoral boundaries. Several suggestions stressed the importance of providing stability of electoral boundaries and recommended that boundaries remain unchanged, given that the statistical requirements are met by the current boundaries.

77. The Committee noted, and had considerable sympathy with, the suggestions that urged the inclusion of Nicholls in the same electorate as the rest of Gungahlin. However, the Committee also noted that this issue was at the forefront of the thinking of the 2000 Redistribution Committee, which took the view that transferring Nicholls from Molonglo to Ginninderra would best satisfy all of the criteria in section 36 of the Electoral Act. While agreeing with this view, this committee joins with its predecessor in expressing its regret at the necessity to split the district of Gungahlin. However, as discussed above, all of the identified available options require splitting one or more districts somewhere. The committee considers that the existing boundary results in disruption to the minimum number of electors possible while also meeting the statistical requirements.

Names of electorates

78. In the first distribution of electoral boundaries in 1993, the then Committee also had the duty to propose names for the electorates. In naming the electorates the Committee was sensitive to the need to avoid confusion with Commonwealth electoral divisions and took cognisance of names that had a common theme and some tangible connection with their respective electorates. The names adopted in 1993 would appear to have gained general community acceptance.

79. None of the submissions received canvassed changing the names of any of the electorates.

80. The Committee 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.

Redistribution Committee for the Australian Capital Territory
Phillip Green — Colin Adrian — David Dobson — Tracy Stewart

11 July 2003

Appendix A: Constitution of Proposed Electorates

Proposed Electorate of Brindabella

Suburb	Actual persons enrolled 2 April 2003	Projected persons enrolled 16 October 2004	% change
Banks	2282	2309	1.18%
Bonython	2232	2281	2.20%
Calwell	3905	3923	0.46%
Chifley	1674	1670	-0.24%
Chisholm	3607	3583	-0.67%
Conder	2884	3077	6.69%
Fadden	2390	2379	-0.46%
Gilmore	1829	1848	1.04%
Gordon	4744	4835	1.92%
Gowrie	2246	2267	0.93%
Greenway	720	872	21.11%
Isabella Plains	2731	2721	-0.37%
Kambah	11987	11869	-0.98%
Macarthur	1058	1081	2.17%
Monash	3988	3993	0.13%
Oxley	1235	1239	0.32%
Pearce	1852	1833	-1.03%
Remainder of ACT	233	233	0.00%
Richardson	2174	2198	1.10%
Theodore	2513	2510	-0.12%
Torrens	1617	1606	-0.68%
Tuggeranong - SSD Balance	19	19	0.00%
Wanniassa	6014	5979	-0.58%
Total	63934	64325	0.61%
Quota	64645	65999	
Variation from quota	-1.10%	-2.54%	

Proposed Electorate of Ginninderra

Suburb	Actual persons enrolled 2 April 2003	Projected persons enrolled 16 October 2004	% change
Aranda	1814	1791	-1.27%
Belconnen - SSD Balance	0	0	
Belconnen Town Centre	1740	1903	9.37%
Bruce	1675	1811	8.12%
Charnwood	2097	2089	-0.38%
Cook	2158	2124	-1.58%
Dunlop	2193	2546	16.10%
Evatt	4100	4111	0.27%
Florey	3604	3611	0.19%
Flynn	2673	2651	-0.82%
Fraser	1639	1579	-3.66%
Giralang	2570	2536	-1.32%
Hall	250	250	0.00%
Hawker	2277	2248	-1.27%
Higgins	2267	2228	-1.72%
Holt	3505	3432	-2.08%
Kaleen	5735	5736	0.02%
Latham	2719	2689	-1.10%
Macgregor	2650	2663	0.49%
Macquarie	1700	1690	-0.59%
McKellar	1899	1972	3.84%
Melba	2497	2464	-1.32%
Nicholls	4044	4227	4.53%
Page	1951	1933	-0.92%
Scullin	2118	2089	-1.37%
Spence	1951	1910	-2.10%
Weetangera	2042	2029	-0.64%
Total	63868	64312	0.70%
Quota	64645	65999	
Variation from quota	-1.20%	-2.56%	

Proposed Electorate of Molonglo

Suburb	Actual persons enrolled 2 April 2003	Projected persons enrolled 16 October 2004	% change
Acton	326	326	0.00%
Ainslie	3426	3416	-0.29%
Amaroo	2574	2791	8.43%
Barton	281	281	0.00%
Braddon	1930	2626	36.06%
Campbell/Duntroon	3573	3601	0.78%
Chapman	2223	2199	-1.08%
City	207	709	242.51%
Curtin	3845	3825	-0.52%
Deakin	1972	2082	5.58%
Dickson	1358	1414	4.12%
Downer	2382	2393	0.46%
Duffy	2354	2292	-2.63%
Farrer	2556	2580	0.94%
Fisher	2337	2327	-0.43%
Forrest	860	906	5.35%
Fyshwick	19	19	0.00%
Garran	2130	2163	1.55%
Griffith	2885	2924	1.35%
Gungahlin - Balance	229	1544	574.24%
Hackett	2240	2211	-1.29%
Harman	72	72	0.00%
Holder	2077	2038	-1.88%
Hughes	2142	2119	-1.07%
Hume	15	15	0.00%
Isaacs	1879	1901	1.17%
Jerrabomberra	0	0	
Kingston	1411	1769	25.37%
Kowen	20	20	0.00%
Lyneham	3054	3053	-0.03%
Lyons	1751	1709	-2.40%
Majura	0	0	
Mawson	2102	2077	-1.19%
Mitchell	2	2	0.00%
Narrabundah	3956	3917	-0.99%
Ngunnawal	5906	5928	0.37%
Oaks Estate	188	188	0.00%
O'Connor	3432	3463	0.90%
O'Malley	597	704	17.92%
Palmerston	3788	3798	0.26%
Parkes	5	5	0.00%
Phillip	1345	1376	2.30%
Pialligo	200	200	0.00%
Red Hill	2181	2243	2.84%
Reid	1112	1113	0.09%
Rivett	2374	2360	-0.59%
Russell	0	0	
Stirling	1586	1567	-1.20%
Stromlo	90	90	0.00%
Symonston	277	277	0.00%

Proposed Electorate of Molonglo

Suburb	Actual persons enrolled 2 April 2003	Projected persons enrolled 16 October 2004	% change
Turner	1315	1615	22.81%
Waramanga	1969	1930	-1.98%
Watson	2637	2791	5.84%
Weston	2520	2492	-1.11%
Weston Creek - SSD Balance	0	0	
Yarralumla	2281	2297	0.70%
Total	91991	95758	4.09%
Quota	90503	92398	
Variation from quota	+1.64%	+3.64%	

Map of Proposed Boundaries

