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Name: Cr Cathy White
Organisation Name: Winton Shire Council
Submission Topic: Electorate Boundaries
Electoral District: Gregory

Submission:

See below

Submission Attachments

26.03 WSC Letter - Objection to the Gregory Electorate Queensland
Redistribution Commission Marhc 2026.pdf

13 March 2026

The Queensland Redistribution Commission
c/- Electoral Commission of Queensland
GPO Box 1393
BRISBANE QLD 4001

Dear Commissioners

Re: Objection to proposed redistribution of the Gregory electorate affecting the Blackall-Tambo Regional Council area

Winton Shire Council writes to formally object to the proposed redistribution of the Gregory electorate insofar as it would remove the southern portion of the Blackall-Tambo local government area, including the town of Tambo, from Gregory and place it within Warrego. The Commission's proposal expressly provides for that outcome, which would result in the Blackall-Tambo local government area being divided across two State electorates.

Council acknowledges the statutory task of the Queensland Redistribution Commission and the requirement to ensure electorates are brought within quota. However, the Commission is also required to consider broader matters including community of interest, ways of communication and travel, existing boundaries and local government boundaries. The report makes clear that these matters were to be considered under section 46 of the *Electoral Act 1992*, and that, where practicable, State district boundaries should align with local government boundaries because they are commonly understood by local residents.

It is Council's strong view that the proposed excision of part of the Blackall-Tambo Regional Council area is contrary to those principles. Blackall and Tambo are not discrete communities for representation purposes; they are part of one local government area with shared governance, shared service delivery, shared economic interests and an established regional identity. To split that local government area between Gregory and Warrego is to fracture a clear community of interest and diminish the quality, clarity and effectiveness of representation for those communities.

This proposal is particularly troubling in the context of local government amalgamation. Communities across Blackall-Tambo have endured significant structural change and have spent many years working through the impacts of amalgamation, rebuilding local confidence and progressively delivering stronger outcomes under a unified local government structure. At a time when those communities have worked hard to establish cohesion, common purpose and practical local governance arrangements, the proposed redistribution would reopen division and uncertainty by artificially separating that local government area for State representation purposes.

Council is also deeply concerned about the wider regional consequences of this proposal. The RAPAD region comprises seven local government areas currently aligned within the Gregory electorate, and this alignment has proven highly effective for regional advocacy, intergovernmental coordination and the delivery of local, State and Commonwealth services across western Queensland. It has supported a coherent regional voice on matters such as infrastructure, transport, housing, health, economic development and community resilience. Dividing the Blackall-Tambo area in this way will weaken that established regional alignment, create avoidable fragmentation and ultimately lead to poorer outcomes for the communities of the wider west.

The Commission's own report notes that Gregory is currently below quota and that the proposed changes are intended to return the district to compliance, with Gregory moving from a weighted enrolment of -11.67% to +0.34%, while Warrego is also projected to improve. The report also acknowledges the distinct challenges of regional representation in large western electorates and the need to consider communities of interest and travel corridors when determining boundaries. In Council's submission, those considerations should weigh heavily against the arbitrary excision of part of the Blackall-Tambo local government area.

The proposed boundary change is not a minor technical adjustment. It has far-reaching implications for community identity, representation, regional collaboration and service coordination across western Queensland. It is disappointing that the Commission has chosen to divide an established local government area in circumstances where doing so undermines the very considerations the Commission says it has sought to respect.

For these reasons, Winton Shire Council strongly urges the Commission to reconsider this aspect of the proposed redistribution and to retain the Blackall-Tambo Regional Council area wholly within the Gregory electorate.

Yours faithfully



Cathy White
Mayor
Winton Shire Council

