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**Date Received:** 30/3/26, 11:52 am  
**Name:** Peter Franks  
**Organisation Name:** Mareeba Shire Council  
**Submission Topic:** Electorate Boundaries  
**Electoral District:** Cook; Flinders (formerly Traeger)

**Submission:**

See below

**Submission Attachments**

Email - Peter Franks - Electoral Commission Submission Final.pdf

65 Rankin Street  
PO Box 154 MAREEBA QLD 4880

**P:** 1300 308 461  
**F:** 07 4092 3323

**W:** [www.msc.qld.gov.au](http://www.msc.qld.gov.au)  
**E:** [info@msc.qld.gov.au](mailto:info@msc.qld.gov.au)

26 March 2026

Council Ref: GVT-LIA-STA pf:kb

Your Ref:

**Queensland Redistribution Commission**  
Electoral Commission of Queensland  
GPO Box 1393  
Brisbane QLD 4001

Dear Commissioners

***RE: SUBMISSION OPPOSING PROPOSED ELECTORAL BOUNDARY REALIGNMENT AFFECTING MAREEBA SHIRE***

Mareeba Shire Council welcomes the opportunity to provide feedback on the draft electoral redistribution released in March 2026. While Council recognises the importance of maintaining equitable representation across Queensland, the proposed realignment affecting the Mareeba Shire will have significant unintended consequences for governance effectiveness, community identity, and equitable service delivery.

Council therefore lodges a formal objection to the proposed removal of Dimbulah, Chillagoe, Wylandra Estate, and the Mareeba Airport from the Cook electorate and their reassignment to the geographically vast and remote electorate of Flinders.

These proposed changes undermine established community-of-interest principles, disrupt logical regional boundaries, and diminish the political voice of Far North Queensland.

**1. Disruption of Logical Community Boundaries**

The draft redistribution fragments long-standing social, economic, and service-based connections. Western Mareeba communities—including Dimbulah and Chillagoe—identify strongly with Mareeba as their principal service hub for health, education, commerce, and transport.

Reassigning these areas to Flinders, an electorate based in Mount Isa, is inconsistent with the everyday lived realities of residents, who have no practical or cultural connection with communities in the far west.

This shift disregards:

- established community identity,
- regional service flows, and
- the natural functional boundaries that guide planning, service delivery and economic development.

## 2. Reduced Effectiveness in Advocacy and Representation

The proposed changes would result in Council being required to engage with multiple Members of Parliament for matters affecting the Mareeba Shire. This fragmented representation would:

- create significant administrative inefficiencies,
- delay coordinated advocacy efforts, and
- complicate strategic planning and project delivery.

Effective governance relies on clarity and cohesion. Splitting Mareeba communities across electorates undermines this and imposes avoidable burdens on both Council and residents.

## 3. Loss of Regional Voice in Far North Queensland

Council holds serious concerns about the cumulative effect of the draft redistribution on representation in Far North Queensland (FNQ). The proposal coincides with the abolition of the Hill electorate, resulting in a net loss of political representation for inland FNQ communities.

There is a genuine risk that voices of regional Queenslanders—including those in Mareeba Shire—will be diminished as representation shifts further toward South East Queensland to account for population growth. This imbalance threatens the equitable distribution of resources and political attention.

Council reiterates that representation should be strengthened—not diluted—in large, diverse regions facing unique geographic and socio-economic challenges.

## 4. Lack of Local Context in Drafting

The draft boundaries appear to have been developed without sufficient regional understanding or consultation. The proposed realignment cuts across natural communities of interest and disregards the practicalities of service relationships.

It would be far more logical and consistent for electoral boundaries in regional Queensland to follow Local Government boundaries, which:

- represent cohesive communities,
- reflect natural socio-economic linkages, and
- form the basis for most service planning and delivery.

Maintaining alignment with Local Government areas would ensure stability and preserve community identity.

## 5. Broader Consideration: Retaining Regional Representation Statewide

Council also notes its general position that, rather than reducing the number of electorates in regional Queensland to accommodate population growth elsewhere, the Commission should consider increasing the overall number of electorates and Members of Parliament. This would preserve fair representation for regional and rural Queenslanders while addressing demographic pressures in SEQ.

## Council Resolution

At its March 2026 meeting, Mareeba Shire Council unanimously resolved to submit a formal objection opposing the removal of Mareeba suburbs, Dimbulah, Chillagoe, Wylandra Estate, and the Mareeba Airport from the Cook electorate.

Council affirms that the existing boundaries better reflect:

- community identity,
- regional service flows,
- established governance structures, and
- effective and accessible political representation.

### Request to the Commission

Mareeba Shire Council respectfully requests that the Queensland Redistribution Commission:

1. **Retain all Mareeba Shire localities within the Cook electorate**, including Dimbulah, Chillagoe, Wylandra Estate, and the Mareeba Airport.
2. **Reconsider the proposed redistribution** with criteria that prioritise community cohesion, geographic logic, and Local Government boundaries.
3. **Ensure Far North Queensland retains strong, unified political representation**, avoiding fragmentation of communities across multiple electorates.
4. **Undertake further engagement with FNQ councils and communities** before finalising the redistribution to ensure local context is properly incorporated.

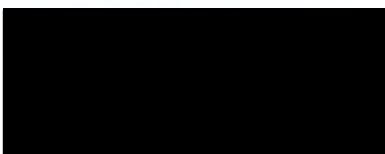
### Conclusion

Mareeba Shire Council remains committed to safeguarding the long-term wellbeing and representation of its residents. The proposed redistribution threatens the cohesion, identity, and governance efficiency of the region.

Council urges the Commission to amend the draft redistribution and maintain the integrity of existing electoral boundaries impacting Mareeba Shire.

Council welcomes further discussion and is available to provide additional information or participate in consultation as required.

Yours faithfully



**PETER FRANKS**  
**CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**  
**MAREEBA SHIRE COUNCIL**