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**Date Received:** 9/4/26, 2:45 pm  
**Name:** Cr Barry Hughes  
**Organisation Name:** North West Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils (NWQROC)  
**Submission Topic:** Electorate Boundaries and Names  
**Electoral District:** Cook; Hill; Flinders (formerly Traeger)

**Submission:**

See below

**Submission Attachments**

Email - Barry Hughes - 20260408\_NWQROC to Qld Redistribution Commission\_Submission to the Redistribution Proposal.pdf

9 April 2026

Queensland Redistribution Commission

By email: [QRCsubmissions@ecq.qld.gov.au](mailto:QRCsubmissions@ecq.qld.gov.au)

Dear Queensland Redistribution Commission,

**RE: NWQROC – Queensland Electoral Redistribution Review**

The North West Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils (NWQROC) was established in 2013 as the representative organisation for the councils of the North West Queensland region. Our vision is to achieve regional prosperity through interactive and collaborative planning and advocacy.

Despite our remoteness, North West Queensland is an economic powerhouse - anchored by a globally significant minerals province, a growing agricultural industry and an emerging renewable energy sector. Collectively, our region contributes \$142,000 per capita to the national economy - as compared to \$91,000 elsewhere in Queensland, and delivering \$4.72 billion of gross regional product annually.

On behalf of the NWQROC, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to provide a submission to the Queensland electoral redistribution review (the Review).

**Background**

The NWQROC understands that the Review is being undertaken in accordance with the *Electoral Act 1992 (Qld)* (the Act), which requires periodic reviews into the State’s electoral boundaries to ensure that Queensland’s electoral districts maintain relatively equitable numbers of enrolled electors to uphold the democratic principle of “one vote, one value”.

The NWQROC also understands that when completing reviews, the Act requires that district enrolment numbers must fall within a specified range of the average State enrolment, known as the “quota”.

The quota is calculated by dividing the total number of enrolled electors in the State by the number of electoral districts (93) to determine the average State enrolment. It is understood that enrolments within each district must be within a maximum range of 10% above or below the average to be within the quota.

The quota for the Review was calculated based on enrolment data collected on 22 September 2025, and is presented in **Table 1**.

Enrolment (22 September 2025)	Districts	Average enrolment	Upper threshold (average +10%)	Lower threshold (average -10%)
3,737,470	93	40,188	44,206	36,170

**Table 1:** Current enrolment data used in the redistribution review

The NWQROC also understands that projected estimates for the 93 districts were also obtained from the Queensland Government Statistician’s Office to support the Review and to ensure that districts remain within the prescribed quota until the next periodic review, being 30 June 2032. These projected estimates are provided in **Table 2**.



Enrolment (30 June 2032)	Districts	Average enrolment	Upper threshold (average +10%)	Lower threshold (average -10%)
4,155,112	93	44,679	49,146	40,212

**Table 2:** Projected enrolment data used in the redistribution review

The NWQROC acknowledges that within the Act, districts with a geographical area of 100,000km<sup>2</sup> or more have an “additional large district number” added to enrolment figures to act as a “weighted” enrolment figure. The primary purpose of the weighted enrolment figure is to ensure enrolment equity in larger regions, however, district enrolments must continue to be within the range of 10% above or below the quota.

In addition to quota considerations, the NWQROC also understands that section 46 of the Act places additional matters that must be considered during a redistribution review. These additional matters include:

- economic, social, regional or other community of interest factors;
- ways of communication and travel within electoral districts;
- physical features of electoral districts;
- boundaries of existing electoral districts; and
- demographic trends in the State, with a view to ensuring electoral districts remain within quota.

It is understood by the NWQROC that for the Review, the Queensland Parliament decided not to increase the number of electoral districts, and instead decided to maintain 93 districts across the State.

### **NWQROC Response**

The NWQROC, in consultation with its members, have reviewed the [Proposal for the Redistribution of the State's Electoral Districts \(March 2026\)](#) prepared by the Queensland Distribution Commission (the Redistribution Proposal) – with a particular emphasis on proposed changes to the Traeger district.

Based on the Redistribution Proposal, the NWQROC understands that the following amendments to the Traeger district have been put forward for consideration:

- a) amendment to the Traeger district’s geographical boundary, due to the district currently not meeting the prescribed quota (-10.16% as at September 2025); and
- b) amendment to the Traeger district’s name to the Flinders district.

The NWQROC provides the following feedback to these proposed amendments.

### **District boundary amendment - Unequitable representation**

The Redistribution Proposal proposes to amend the geographical boundary of the Traeger district by:

- removing the bulk of the Charters Towers local government area and redistributing to the Burdekin district; and
- adding the western bulk of the current Hill district, including Malanda, Milla Milla, Ravenshoe and the territory to their west, as well as the southern portion of Mareeba local government area from the districts of Cook and Hill.

Through the geographical amendments, the size of the Traeger district is proposed to be reduced by 7.7%, thereby reducing the number of notional electors added to the district’s enrolment via the additional large district number, and bringing the region back within the prescribed quota.

Whilst the Redistribution Proposal acknowledges that the geographical amendments support the east-west alignment for the northern portion of the district, it does not acknowledge that the amendments would impact the east-west alignment for the southern portion of the district, specifically through the removal of the bulk of Charters Towers Regional Council’s local government area which connects the southern portion of the district to Townsville via the Flinders Highway.



As acknowledged in the Redistribution Proposal, population growth across the state of Queensland is not uniform with growth generally concentrated in South East Queensland – particularly northern Gold Coast, through to Logan to Ipswich; the Moreton Bay area; and parts of Sunshine Coast, and along Queensland’s coastal fringes.

Based on the Queensland Statisticians’ Office modelled enrolment data to 30 June 2032, provided in the Redistribution Proposal, this concentration of growth is expected to continue into the foreseeable future.

In contradiction to this growth, enrolment numbers are expected to either remain stable or decline across the majority of Western Queensland districts – including the Traeger district, which, based on the Queensland Statisticians’ Office modelled 2032 enrolments, will again be close to being below the quota at the next review period in 2032 (-9.68%).

It is of the NWQROC’s opinion that this on-going demographic shift fundamentally disadvantages Western Queensland, despite these communities powering Queensland through their sizeable contribution to the nation’s Gross Regional Product – which, for the Traeger district, equates to \$8.84 billion, or \$275,000 per capita – 3.27 times more per capita than the rest of Queensland.

This outcome cannot be considered equitable.

Without electoral reform to either the number of districts represented in Queensland Parliament, or amendment to the “additional large district number” to support a greater voice across North West Queensland, the NWQROC fears that the region’s voice will continue to be diluted at Queensland Parliament, with future redistributions favouring the more populous Eastern coast communities – as is the current case with the Redistribution Proposal recommending the inclusion of the Northern Tablelands into the Traeger district, whilst removing the Charters Towers Regional Council local government area which has a greater connection to North West Queensland.

Whilst the NWQROC acknowledges that electoral reform considerations were outside the scope of the Review, the NWQROC strongly recommends that the Review reflects these inequalities and recommend electoral reform prior to the next review period in 2032 for the purposes of protecting the Act’s principles.

***Recommendation 1: The NWQROC recommends that the Queensland Redistribution Commission includes how changing demographics are not only impacting North West Queensland communities’ representation in Queensland Parliament, but also the achievement of the Act’s principles of “one vote, one value”, and recommend electoral reform prior to the next electoral redistribution review in 2032 to ensure that rural and remote communities continue to be equitably represented.***

#### **Traeger district name amendment**

The Redistribution Proposal proposes to amend the name of the Traeger district to the Flinders district, noting that the change is required to:

- build consistency into how districts are named – with a focus on localities; and
- reflect the importance of the Flinders Highway as a primary connector to several centres across the district.

The NWQROC and its members are **opposed** to the proposal.

Not only does the NWQROC and its members believe that this proposal has the potential to create confusion in regard to the roles and responsibilities of Flinders Shire Council, we also believe that the change would dilute the district’s identity – noting that the Flinders Highway is only one road corridor in the



southern portion of the district linking the region to Townsville, and disregards other important road corridors such as the Gulf Developmental Road that links the region to the business centre of Cairns.

The NWQROC and its members consider that the name of Traeger, who honours the work of Alfred Traeger alongside John Flynn in establishing the communication systems that became the backbone of safety and connection for remote residents through the Royal Flying Doctor Service, continues to appropriately reflect the identity of North West Queensland, and as such, should remain as the name of the district.

***Recommendation 2: The NWQROC recommends that the Queensland Redistribution Commission retains the Traeger district name due to the regional significance of Alfred Traeger and his work in connecting rural and remote communities.***

To discuss this submission further, please contact Josh Dyke, NWQROC via [REDACTED] or phone: [REDACTED]

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

Barry Hughes  
Chair  
Mayor of Ethridge Shire Council

