



Comment on suggestion 8

Ringwood RSL

3 pages



"Your Local Club"
"Your RSL"
"Ringwood RSL"

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Redistribution Committee for Victoria,
Australian Electoral Commission,
Locked Bag 4007,
Canberra, ACT, 2601.

Background

The Ringwood RSL welcomes the opportunity to provide comments on suggestions received by the Redistribution Committee for Victoria regarding the proposed redistribution of federal electorate boundaries in Victoria.

The Ringwood RSL Sub Branch is part of a network of community clubs that is integral to the fabric of the Victorian community. Our primary objective as an RSL Sub Branch is to support serving and former ADF members and their families as well as our other members who are part of the surrounding general community. We offer members activities and facilities to host "get togethers" to enjoy each other's company, to swap stories and particularly for veterans to share experiences and support and help each other in an empathetic environment.

Over a year we help some hundreds of veterans in our local area. We provide assistance with their claims for support from the Department of Veterans' Affairs and our team of volunteers provide much needed welfare and practical support to veterans especially to the older and less mobile members of the Sub Branch. These services include in-home and hospital support, welfare help, transport assistance, mobility aids as well as minor house and garden maintenance etc. for our frailer members.

We support local community-based organisations such as ADF cadet units, bands, local football teams and sponsor school children with bursaries as well as hosting informal groups and activities designed to combat social isolation.

We contribute about \$2.9m annually to the local community in goods and services purchased and employment of some 50 staff.

Support for united Ringwood and Croydon communities of interest

The Ringwood RSL Sub Branch reviewed the residential state of our membership base and it is to a significant extent, located in the existing Deakin electorate. Our ability to effectively represent the interests of veterans, war widows, our members and the local community more broadly to the Federal Government has been largely the result of being able to work with a singular federal MP whose electorate covers the area in which the majority of our members reside. Being a volunteer-based organisation with limited resources, this aspect has a particular importance with respect to our interactions with Federal Government agencies such as the Department of Veterans Affairs.

The Ringwood RSL has many links with other local community groups including sporting clubs and service clubs. We know from these relationships that the distribution of members within those

organisations similarly centre around the Ringwood and Croydon areas in much the way ours do. We are not in any way unique in this respect.

The previous 2018 Redistribution Committee largely ensured that Ringwood and Croydon, and the communities which cluster around these centres, were largely included in the federal electorate of Deakin in the 2018 redistribution. This has helped foster social inclusion of this community and has been a factor in promoting a cohesive local community spirit in Maroondah.

The communities of interest within the Maroondah Local Government Area cluster around Ringwood and Croydon in the following way:

- **Ringwood:** Heathmont, Ringwood North, Ringwood East, Warranwood and Park Orchards;
- **Croydon:** Croydon North, Croydon Hills and Croydon South.

We therefore request that the Redistribution Committee continue to ensure that Ringwood and Croydon, and the surrounding communities which cluster around these suburbs being – Ringwood North, Warranwood, Ringwood East, Park Orchards, Croydon North, Croydon Hills – fall within a single federal electorate, in this case Deakin.

The Ringwood RSL is seriously alarmed at suggestions to the Redistribution Committee which would seem to have little understanding of the communities of Ringwood and Croydon, including organisations like ours, by catastrophically splintering the strong communities of interest that cluster around Ringwood and Croydon.

We strongly suggest that the Redistribution Committee continue to ensure that these communities remain within a single electoral boundary, being Deakin.

We therefore strongly commend the following Suggestions to the Redistribution Committee **S43, S13, S85, S90** and **S97** which all appropriately recognise that the communities which cluster around Ringwood and Croydon must remain united in a single electorate. Each of these submissions provide a neat and appropriate solution to the numerical requirements the Redistribution Committee must adhere to.

As the membership of the Ringwood RSL demonstrates, it is unquestionable that the communities of interest cluster around Ringwood and Croydon. It is grossly inaccurate to suggest that the communities of interest somehow exist through falling on the Belgrave/Lilydale train line or along Maroondah Hwy/Whitehorse Rd.

Objections to splintering of Ringwood and Croydon

We strongly object to Suggestions, **S24, S31, S34, S70, S99, S100** and **S101** which in our opinion, lead to a preposterous electorate stretching from Warragul Rd, Box Hill all the way to Liverpool Rd, Kilsyth.

This would massively splinter our local communities and would mean most members of the Ringwood RSL, would no longer live within the federal electorate in which we are situated. We suspect a similar situation would occur for most community groups in our area.

This is because as membership of the Ringwood RSL demonstrates, it is unquestionable that the communities of interest cluster around Ringwood and Croydon.

It is plain wrong to suggest that the communities of interest in our area somehow exist by simply falling on major transport routes like the Belgrave/Lilydale train line (refer S31) or Maroondah Hwy

(refer S70). This rationale would seem to suggest that Croydon shares a stronger community of interest with Box Hill North than it does Croydon North. That is simply ridiculous!

In our view, if Suggestions S24, S31, S34, S70, S99, S100 and S101 are adopted, no coherent community of interest would exist in the entire electorate. Ringwood and Croydon would be entirely splintered, and even Vermont the other primary centre of the Deakin electorate would be completely splintered.

Conclusion

In contrast to the suggestions we object to above, we again reiterate to the Redistribution Committee our support for Suggestions S43, S13, S85, S90 and S97, all of which would ensure a coherent electorate that maintains the cohesiveness of the communities of Ringwood and Croydon.

Consistent with each of these Suggestions, we also support the inclusion of Warranwood in the Deakin electorate. Warranwood forms part of the Maroondah LGA and as our membership demonstrates, centres on Ringwood as the nearest local major activity centre.

We again thank the Redistribution Committee for considering this submission.

Yours sincerely,



Colonel David Jamison AM (Retd)
President
Ringwood RSL