



Comment on suggestion 8

Cr Chris Potter

3 pages – part 1

2 pages – part 2

27 November 2017

Redistribution Committee for Victoria
Australian Electoral Commission,
Level 1, Urban Workshop
50 Lonsdale Street
Melbourne
FedRedistribution-VIC@aec.gov.au

To whom it may concern,

Subject: Boundaries of electoral divisions

Electorate: Corangamite

Comments relate to: Suggestion 39 – the Nationals; Suggestion 65 – the Australian Labor Party Victorian branch; Suggestion 61 – the Australian Greens Victoria

Thank you for considering my submission into the Victorian federal redistribution. I make this submission as an individual Councillor of the Colac Otway Shire.

My submission strongly opposes any scenario that results in the movement of parts or all of the Colac Otway Shire from the Corangamite electorate into the Wannon electorate. This scenario has been proposed in submissions by, but not limited to, the Nationals (Suggestion 39), the Australian Labor Party Victorian Branch (Suggestion 65) and the Australian Greens Victoria (Suggestion 61).

Any shift of the Colac Otway Shire into the Wannon electorate would have a detrimental effect on the people of the Colac Otway Shire based on the community of interest principle. The Colac Otway Shire's social and economic interests are inextricably linked with Geelong and the Surf Coast. Colac Otway Shire Council is an active participant and contributor to a range of strategic and collaborative partnerships connected to the Geelong and Surf Coast region including G21, the Barwon Regional Partnership and the GROW Project. In fact, Colac Otway ceased its membership of the Great South Coast lobby group in 2016 in acknowledgement of the fact that our community's future and priorities were becoming increasingly linked with those of Geelong and the Surf Coast.

Residents of the Colac Otway Shire gravitate to Geelong for work, further education, specialist healthcare, sport and entertainment. This connection has been further underpinned by the duplication of the Princes Highway, and the introduction of extra rail services between Colac and Geelong (which were delivered after a sustained advocacy campaign by Council and our community). I elaborate further on community of interest matters in the pages to follow.



Workforce:

Colac's employers are heavily reliant on Geelong for professional workers, particularly in public sector roles. Council's REMPLAN data shows that there are currently 239 people living in Geelong that work in Colac, filling vital specialist and technical roles in health, community development, environment, education, planning and engineering to give examples.

Conversely, many residents of the Colac Otway Shire travel to Geelong for work particularly those trying to broaden their career experience, with a view to eventually obtaining a more senior role closer to home. REMPLAN shows that there are currently 229 people live in Colac and travel to Geelong for work. Tourism businesses along our coast and in the Otways are particularly reliant on workers from the Geelong and Surf Coast, being unable to draw all their seasonal staff from the Colac Otway Shire.

These exchanges of human capital create tangible links between our communities that are enhanced through being in the same federal electorate.

Education:

The low rate of educational attainment among Colac Otway Shire residents is an important consideration within the context of the proposed redistribution.

Year 12 attainment for Colac Otway is 33.2 per cent, compared to a state average of 51.7 per cent. Colac Otway's rate of university qualification is 9.8 per cent - less than half that of the state average (G21's Colac Otway Regional Profile 2014). Deakin University Geelong is the closest university to Colac, and the most accessible by both road and rail. Geelong's The Gordon is also an important post-secondary education provider for our shire, evidenced by its satellite campus at the Colac Trade Training Centre.

Under Department of Education and Training zonings, Colac Otway Shire is part of the Barwon region, which also encompasses Geelong and the Surf Coast. Colac Otway Shire's link to Geelong is vital to ensuring further education is both accessible and attainable to our citizens and is made stronger by our shared presence in the Corangamite electorate.

Healthcare:

Colac Otway Shire residents experience many inequities in health including a higher rate of all potentially avoidable deaths (179.3 versus 158.2 per 100,000) (G21 Colac Otway Regional Profile).

There is strong anecdotal evidence to suggest that a majority of Colac Otway Shire's residents have a preference for Geelong when they need specialist health care not otherwise available locally. For residents relying on public transport, Geelong provides the only viable option for specialist healthcare due to a lack of timely rail services to Warrnambool and the complete absence of a direct public transport service to Ballarat.

There are many examples of healthcare providers in Geelong and Colac working together to deliver shared care arrangements. There is a long list of co-located services operating out of Colac Area Health including a community dental clinic, Barwon community legal services, and medical and radiation





Colac Otway
SHIRE

oncology. These important healthcare partnerships may be undermined should parts or all of the Colac Otway Shire be moved into Wannon electorate.

Sport and entertainment

The links between Geelong and Colac via sport and entertainment are significant. In almost every sporting arena, the Colac Otway Shire is part of Barwon or Geelong region zoning including football, netball, baseball, soccer, cricket and basketball. This association also extends to regional advocacy and planning, where Colac Otway Shire Council works in partnership with G21 to develop strategic plans supporting the development of sport and recreation across our region. Indeed, Colac Otway Shire Council's partnership with G21 was pivotal in securing funding support from other levels of government for the Bluewater and Central Reserve redevelopments.

The Colac Football Netball Club plays in the Geelong Football League, precipitating several hundred players, supporters and club administrators travelling up or down the highway every weekend in winter. The Geelong Falcons is a training ground for the Colac Otway Shire's up and coming footballers, so too is the Geelong Cougars for netball and the Barwon Rockets for cricket. For nine years Colac's Bluewater Leisure Centre has partnered with the Barwon Sports Academy to provide shared specialist training to some of our shire's most promising young athletes.

A change of electorates could potentially undermine long-established networks that have supported our shire's athletes to achieve on the state, national and world stage.

If you have any inquiries concerning this matter please contact me on [REDACTED]

Regards,

Cr Chris Potter
Colac Otway Shire Council

[REDACTED]



From: Cr Chris Potter
To: [FedRedistribution - VIC](#)
Subject: Electoral Boundaries
Date: Tuesday, 28 November 2017 1:45:25 PM
Attachments: [170911 Mayoral Column We will fight to stay in the Corangamite \(electorate\).DOCX](#)
[ATT00001.htm](#)

Hi,

Further to my submission in regard to the electoral boundaries redistribution of the Corangamite electorate, please find attached an article I wrote and was printed in the local newspaper, The Colac Herald.

Thank you for taking my material.

I'm getting ready to fight, and I want you to join me...in the fight to stay in Corangamite.

There's a risk that the Colac Otway Shire could be moved out of the Corangamite electorate in the upcoming boundary changes, and that's bad news for our community.

Now before I go further, I want to take party politics right out of this. My opinion has nothing to do with the Liberals or Labor or any other party.

It has everything to do with who we are as a community, and where we want to be.

The Corangamite electorate is marginal and there is no doubt that marginal electorates are where the attention and the money are. But that's not the only reason we want to stay in Corangamite.

Colac Otway's fortunes have long been linked with the Geelong region and we have forged strong and successful partnerships with our eastern neighbours.

Gaining funding for the Princes Highway duplication was not just an example of how effective we are as a region when we lobby together – it's a tangible, physical link between our communities.

The extra train services recently secured is another example of how important our connection is to Geelong for workers, university students, people accessing medical care and sports lovers (have you noticed how many Geelong supporters there are in Colac?).

The G21 councils backed Colac Otway in our bid for funding for Bluewater, the Central Reserve and the CBD upgrades – and believe me, a chorus of united voices gets much more attention than a lone Council.

The G21 councils are also supporting our drive to secure funding for the Apollo Bay Harbour precinct, recognising it as a key asset along the Great Ocean Road.

The fact is while we have strong partnerships to the west and the east, our community gravitates to Geelong for sport, work, further education, entertainment, specialist healthcare, the list goes on.

This is my position, and I'll be discussing it with my colleagues when we make a submission into the proposed boundary changes.