



**THE FEDERAL  
REDISTRIBUTION  
TASMANIA**

# Submission OB94

Sorell Council



# Sorell Council – Submission on the Proposed Redistribution of Tasmania’s Federal Electorates (February 2026)

Australian Electoral Commission – Redistribution  
Committee for Tasmania

**Date: 27 March 2026**

## Executive Summary

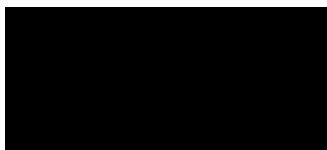
Sorell Council supports the AEC's proposal to include the Sorell LGA in a reconfigured Franklin electorate, noting that the revised boundaries create a coherent and unified southeast region aligned with established economic, social, demographic and transport linkages.

Council considers that objections from Glenorchy City and Brighton Councils—if accepted—would undermine quota stability and risk reopening boundary considerations affecting Sorell. Council notes, however, that if Glenorchy were to remain in Clark, the AEC could alternatively consider transferring Derwent Valley Council into Clark to avoid reintroducing east-coast areas into Lyons and to maintain the principle of avoiding geographic separation within electorates.

Historical analysis from the South East Region Development Association (SERDA) demonstrates that the southeast has long functioned as an integrated community of interest, and its 2016 evidence anticipated a future electorate closely matching the AEC's proposed Franklin.

Council also acknowledges the Committee's invitation for alternative naming suggestions, including opportunities for Aboriginal naming and broader community engagement.

Overall, the proposal provides an opportunity for a stable, regionally logical structure that supports long-term population growth while ensuring strong equitable representation for smaller southeast communities within the reconfigured Franklin electorate.



Robert Higgins

**Chief Executive Officer**

# 1. Introduction

Sorell Council welcomes the opportunity to provide a submission in response to the *Proposed Redistribution of Tasmania's Federal Electorates*, released by the Redistribution Committee for Tasmania on 27 February 2026.

This submission focuses on the implications for the Sorell Local Government Area (LGA) under the proposal to incorporate Sorell within the reconfigured Franklin electorate. It also discusses regional impacts stemming from positions taken by neighbouring LGAs, particularly the City of Glenorchy and Brighton.

## 2. Summary of Proposed Changes Affecting Sorell

The proposed boundaries include a significant change for Sorell:

- Franklin would expand to include Brighton, Clarence City, Glamorgan Spring Bay, Sorell, and Tasman LGAs, forming a more consistent south-eastern electorate.
- This realignment is intended to strengthen Franklin's south-eastern coherence and resolve its previous non-contiguity issues.
- Approximately 27% of Tasmanians would change electorate, with the largest movements occurring between Clark, Franklin, and Lyons.

These changes are the basis for Sorell's new electoral placement.

## 3. Legislative and Procedural Context

Council recognises and respects the statutory framework guiding the redistribution:

- A redistribution is triggered when more than seven years have passed since the previous determination.
- Enrolment numbers must meet:
  - $\pm 10\%$  of the quota at the time of redistribution, and
  - $\pm 3.5\%$  of the projected enrolment quota for April 2030, determined as 84,557 electors.
- When forming boundaries, the AEC must consider:
  - community of interests,

- communication and travel patterns,
- physical features and geography,
- existing boundaries (only as a secondary factor).

These principles underpin the Committee's restructuring of Franklin, Lyons, and Clark.

## 4. Community of Interest Impacts on Sorell

### 4.1 Economic and Functional Linkages

Sorell LGA is a regional hub for the Southern Beaches, Tasman Peninsula, and South-East Coast, with strong economic, retail, employment, and service linkages to Hobart and broader south-east Tasmania. These regional ties reflect the Committee's intent to strengthen "*connected communities of interest*".

### 4.2 Travel and Transport Patterns

Major transport corridors—including the Tasman and Arthur Highways—reinforce Sorell's role as a gateway to the South-East. These travel patterns align with the AEC's requirement to consider "means of communication and travel."

### 4.3 Social, Health and Emergency Services

Sorell residents access health, education, and emergency services primarily across the south-east and Greater Hobart region. Consolidation into Franklin better reflects this service footprint.

## 5. Geographic and Physical Cohesion

The Committee's stated goal of forming a geographically coherent south-east electorate is supported by incorporating Sorell into Franklin. This resolves past discontinuities and creates a contiguous region consistent with physical geography and coastal settlement patterns.

## 6. Alignment with Local Government Boundaries

While not required, aligning federal divisions more closely with LGA boundaries:

- simplifies representational clarity,
- supports streamlined communication between councils and federal representatives,
- reduces constituent confusion about electorate identity.

Incorporating the whole of Sorell LGA into Franklin improves this clarity.

## 7. Enrolment Growth and Forward Planning

The redistribution uses projected enrolments for 2030, requiring electorates to remain within  $\pm 3.5\%$  of the projection.

Sorell's rapid population expansion—driven by growth in Midway Point, Sorell township, and coastal areas—supports its inclusion in Franklin, which is being reshaped to balance growth across the south-east.

## 8. Impact of Glenorchy City and Brighton Positions on the Redistribution

### 8.1 Glenorchy City's Objection to Inclusion in Lyons

The AEC proposes that Lyons gain the Glenorchy City LGA as part of a structural rebalancing.

Sorell understands that Glenorchy City may object to this proposal.

If Glenorchy City successfully opposes the move and remains in Clark:

- Lyons may fall below required enrolment numbers, forcing compensatory boundary changes.
- The AEC may need to reintroduce some east-coast areas into Lyons, counter to its goal of removing “geographic separation within electorates,”.
  - As an alternative to reintroducing east-coast areas into Lyons, the AEC could consider moving Derwent Valley Council into Clark

instead, achieving its intent of avoiding that very same “geographic separation within electorates”.

## 8.2 Brighton Council's Preference to Remain in Lyons

The proposal places Brighton into Franklin as part of strengthening a unified south-east division.

Sorell understands that Brighton may object to this proposal.

If Brighton were retained in Lyons:

- Franklin could become under-enrolled, requiring additional LGAs to be transferred.
- Lyons could become over-enrolled, forcing further destabilising adjustments.
- This would undermine the Committee's objective of forming a geographically coherent southeast region around Franklin.

## 8.3 Combined Effects of Both Positions

If both Glenorchy City and Brighton remained in Lyons:

- Lyons would become significantly over-enrolled,
- Franklin significantly under-enrolled, and
- the AEC would need to redraw multiple electorates—likely reversing major elements of the proposed structure.

The AEC's proposal emphasises a strong logic for the new configurations; Notwithstanding, this risk must nonetheless be considered in Sorell's deliberations.

## 9. Integration of Historical SERDA (2016) Evidence

The South East Region Development Association (SERDA)—a regional alliance formed in 1993 by the councils of Clarence City, Glamorgan Spring Bay, Sorell, and Tasman—provides important historical context for understanding the emergence of the south-east as a distinct community of interest.

SERDA's 2016 submission to the Commonwealth Redistribution Committee highlighted several central themes that directly support the AEC's 2026 proposed boundaries.

### 9.1 SERDA as the earliest formal articulation of a unified south-east region

SERDA identified, more than a decade ago, that the south-east exhibited strong and growing:

- social cohesion,
- shared economic and service networks,
- common demographic and infrastructure drivers, and
- aligned coastal and peri-urban settlement patterns.

Its 2016 submission argued that the region already functioned as a coherent, interconnected community of interest and that future redistributions—particularly around 2023 onwards—should consider recognising the south-east as a unified federal electorate.

### 9.2 SERDA provided strategic population and enrolment analysis that forecast the changes now proposed

In 2016 SERDA presented demographic evidence showing:

- rapid population growth in Sorell, Clarence City, and Brighton, well above the Tasmanian average,
- increasing integration of settlement patterns and service catchments,
- clear south-east enrolment growth trajectories strong enough to sustain an electorate.

SERDA forecast that the south-east, combined with adjacent growth municipalities, would reach the scale to form a federal electorate “in its own right”. This forecast is consistent with the AEC's 2026 approach, which

consolidates Clarence City, Sorell, Brighton, Glamorgan Spring Bay and Tasman into the new south-east-centred Franklin.

### 9.3 SERDA established the regional governance foundation that the 2026 redistribution builds upon

SERDA has demonstrated long-standing collaboration and shared governance across the south-east through:

- regional economic development strategies,
- tourism and industry initiatives,
- joint infrastructure planning such as airport expansion, irrigation schemes, and industrial precinct development,
- integrated transport corridors (Tasman and Arthur Highways),
- shared environmental and coastal management issues.

This collective governance framework has provided an early structural blueprint for what a regionally coherent federal electorate would look like.

### 9.4 SERDA as historical validation of the 2026 AEC proposal

The Committee's proposed boundaries in 2026 reflect—almost precisely—the regional form SERDA anticipated:

- a unified south-east block,
- consolidation of coastal and peri-urban communities with shared growth trajectories,
- resolving the long-recognised fragmentation of Franklin and the oversized structure of Lyons,
- aligning federal divisions with real regional identity.

SERDA's analysis therefore provides independent, long-term validation for the AEC's proposed south-east configuration and reinforces the logic of Sorell's inclusion in Franklin.

## 10. Additional Observations

### 10.1 Population Balance Concern

While Sorell Council supports the proposed south-east configuration, it notes a risk that the new Franklin electorate may become dominated by Clarence City due to its significantly larger population.

Smaller LGAs such as Sorell, Tasman and Glamorgan Spring Bay could find their representation diluted as enrolment growth increasingly concentrates in Clarence, a trend also reflected in SERDA's earlier demographic analysis of strong growth across larger south-east municipalities.

As the AEC must maintain projected enrolment balances through to 2030, there is a need to ensure that the voices of smaller communities remain proportionately considered within a division shaped by the demographic weight of its largest council.

### 10.2 Naming

The Committee has invited potential alternative naming suggestions for Franklin, specifically honouring individuals with links to Tasmania's south-east.

It is worth noting, again as in SERDA's 2016 submission, that a newly formed electoral division comprising Brighton, Clarence City, Glamorgan Spring Bay, Sorell, Tasman and possibly Southern Midlands would geographically embrace an area almost identical with that identified with, by the Paredarerme (Oyster Bay) Tasmanian Aboriginal nation. The Paredarerme nation was estimated to be the largest Tasmanian Aboriginal nation with 10 clans.

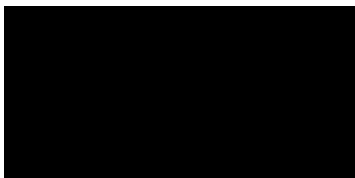
Given that the guidelines for naming electoral divisions advise that "Aboriginal names should be used where appropriate" a new south east Tasmanian electorate could be called the Division of Paredarerme.

Council does not propose a name at this stage, but the AEC may wish to undertake appropriate community consultation should the reconfiguration occur.

## 11. Conclusion

Sorell Council thanks the Redistribution Committee for the opportunity to contribute to this process. The proposed boundaries provide improved regional coherence, better recognition of community linkages, and a sustainable basis for electoral representation – provided the highlighted need for continued attention to equitable representation within the proposed Franklin electorate occurs to ensure that the interests of smaller communities—particularly Sorell, Brighton, Tasman, and Glamorgan Spring Bay—are not diluted in a division increasingly shaped by the demographic dominance of Clarence City.

Council remains available for future consultation or public hearings.



Robert Higgins

**Chief Executive Officer**

# ANNEX A: Structured, multi-perspective analysis of Sorell Council's position on the AEC's Proposed Redistribution of Tasmania's Federal Electorates (February 2026)

## A1. Facts & Evidence

- The AEC proposes that Clarence City, Sorell, Brighton, Glamorgan Spring Bay and Tasman LGAs be included in a re-shaped Franklin electorate, strengthening its south-eastern coherence.
- Redistributions must comply with  $\pm 10\%$  enrolment quota at redistribution and  $\pm 3.5\%$  projected quota (84,557 by April 2030).
- SERDA (2016) identified the south-east as a long-term community of interest with shared population growth, infrastructure drivers and coastal settlement patterns.
- Glenorchy is understood to oppose joining Lyons; it is understood that Brighton seeks to stay in Lyons—both positions undermine the numerical and structural balance of the Committee's proposal.

## A2. Emotions & Intuition

- Sorell residents generally feel aligned with the greater south-east rather than rural areas of Lyons.
- There is pride in seeing the region formally recognised as a coherent unit.
- Some uncertainty exists about renaming Franklin or potential last-minute boundary changes.

## A3. Risks & Concerns

- If Glenorchy or Brighton's objections are accepted, quotas may be destabilised and Sorell's placement may be revisited.
- Rapid population growth could later necessitate further adjustments.
- Changes to Franklin's composition may create transitional identity concerns.

## A4. Benefits & Strengths

- Strong match with AEC criteria for community of interest, travel patterns, and geographical cohesion.
- Improves representational clarity for south-east communities.
- Resolves long-noted structural issues—Franklin's non-contiguity and Lyons' scale.

- Validated by SERDA's earlier research, providing independent, long-term justification.

## A5. Opportunities & Creative Ideas

- Engage community on possible new electorate names (including Aboriginal names), responding to AEC's request for naming suggestions.
- Use this redistribution as a springboard for renewed south-east regional collaboration (revitalised SERDA-style model).
- Develop communications to clearly explain benefits to residents and dispel misconceptions.

## A5. Opportunities & Creative Ideas

- Evidence, logic, and regional history strongly favour Sorell's inclusion in Franklin.
- Key vulnerabilities relate to objections from neighbouring LGAs affecting overall structural balance.

## A6: Conclusion of Annex

- Evidence, logic, and regional history strongly favour Sorell's inclusion in Franklin.
- Key vulnerabilities relate to objections from neighbouring LGAs affecting overall structural balance.

**Summary Position:** Council's support for inclusion in Franklin is strongly justified—based on evidence, regional identity, geography, and long-term population growth. Our support position is well-founded, stable and future-focused.

# ANNEX B: Implications for Sorell LGA Arising from Regional Boundary Positions

## B1. Overview

This annex outlines how the positions of Glenorchy City and Brighton Council—if adopted—could indirectly affect Sorell's electoral placement and the stability of the south-eastern division.

## B2. Implications of Glenorchy Remaining Out of Lyons

If Glenorchy were retained in Clark:

1. Lyons risks under-enrolment, forcing the AEC to reassign population from other areas.
2. The AEC may need to re-expand Lyons eastward, potentially affecting Glamorgan Spring Bay or adjacent areas.
3. This could cause knock-on instability that reopens consideration of Sorell's placement.
4. Sorell's secure fit within Franklin—which relies partly on proportionate balancing across southern divisions—may be revisited if enrolment deficits cascade.

## B3. Implications of Brighton Remaining in Lyons

If Brighton does not transfer to Franklin:

1. Franklin may fall below enrolment requirements, requiring compensatory additions.
2. These compensations could involve parts of the east coast or other LGA areas, inadvertently pulling Sorell further into a boundary restructuring debate.
3. The intended geographic cohesion of the southeast (Franklin) becomes compromised, weakening the rationale for Sorell's inclusion.

## B4. Combined Effects of Both Positions

If both Glenorchy and Brighton remain in Lyons:

- the AEC would need to undertake large-scale redrawing across southern Tasmania,

- the current logic supporting a cohesive southeast Franklin—of which Sorell is a major part—would be destabilised,
- and Sorell's boundary placement may be reconsidered, depending on how quotas are rebalanced.

Sorell Council respects the positions taken by both Glenorchy City and Brighton Council and acknowledges that, in their circumstances, we might well advocate similarly; however, we also recognise that for Sorell, a stable, regionally coherent solution for southern Tasmania requires a broader, regional approach to boundary setting.

## B5. Conclusion of Annex

Sorell's inclusion in Franklin is strengthened when:

- Glenorchy joins Lyons (as proposed), and
- Brighton transfers to Franklin (as proposed).

Departures from either position increase the risk of broader boundary changes affecting Sorell's placement.

For Sorell Council, supporting the AEC's proposed configuration promotes stability, regional coherence, and future-proof representation for the south-east.