



Submission S12

Anonymous 1

SA Federal Redistribution 2025 - Names proposal

South Australia is currently the largest state with no electoral divisions named after Indigenous Australians, and I believe it's not acceptable for this to continue in 2025. With this in mind, I would like to respectfully propose two names for federal electoral divisions in South Australia. Ideally, I would like both of them to be adopted, however I acknowledge that the decision ultimately rests with the Redistribution Committee.

UNAIPON - Named for David Unaipon (1872-1967)

David Ngunaitponi, known as David Unaipon was a Ngarrindjeri man, inventor and author. He was well-known at the time for being gifted scientifically and took out provisional patents for 19 separate inventions. However, being unable to fund full patents for his inventions, he was unable to claim credit or receive any financial compensation for his designs. One of these inventions became the basis of the modern-day shearing scissors, which revolutionised the wool industry in Australia. Some of his other designs included a pre-World War I era design for a helicopter based on a boomerang, and he also researched light polarisation. He was also the first Aboriginal writer to publish in English, including writing for the Sydney Daily Telegraph.

Since his passing in 1967, various institutions have begun retroactively crediting the man for his work, or honouring him in other ways. He's been depicted on the \$50 bill since 1995, is honoured through the David Unaipon Literary Award and the David Unaipon Award for Aboriginal Writers and the Unaipon Lecture in Adelaide.

I believe his achievements make him more than a worthy candidate to have a federal electoral division named after him. His contributions to the wool industry also mirror those of Elizabeth and John Macarthur, who already have a division named after them in New South Wales. Similarly, Banjo Paterson, Dame Mary Gilmore, Reverend John Flynn, Edith Cowan and Sir John Monash all feature on Australian banknotes and all have federal electoral divisions named after them.

So acknowledging that Unaipon is significant enough to have a division named after him, the question becomes which division name should be retired to be replaced with Unaipon. In my view, that should be that of the Division of Barker.

Retiring the Division of Barker

Given Unaipon was a Ngarrindjeri man born at Point Macleay Mission (now Raukkan), I believe it makes sense that the name of the Division of Barker (where both Ngarrindjeri Country and Raukkan lie) be changed. Furthermore, while Collet Barker is noteworthy for being an explorer who was less hostile to Indigenous Australians, noting that South Australia currently does not have any electoral divisions named after Indigenous people, I don't believe this is justification enough to warrant the name of Barker being maintained as a division name. Additionally, there are already (by my count) 17 divisions already named after explorers, so there is no need to maintain one additional explorer name at the expense of Indigenous representation in electoral division names.

O'DONOGHUE - Named for Lowitja O'Donoghue (1932-2024)

Additionally, I would also like to propose O'Donoghue as the name of a division, after Lowitja O'Donoghue, who was a high-profile public servant and played a crucial role in institutionalising native title in Australia. She also became the first Indigenous Australian to address the United Nations in 1992, and was declared a national living treasure in 1998. Recognising her through the naming of an electoral division would also bring long-overdue representation of Indigenous women to Australia's federal electoral division names.

Retiring the Division of Grey

O'Donoghue was born in the APY Lands located in the Division of Grey, so it would be logical that this division is renamed. This division is even more deserving of a renaming as its namesake (Sir George Grey) is more famous for his role in the colonisation of Aotearoa / New Zealand. Not only would retaining his name further entrench the overrepresentation of colonisers amongst Australian division names, but also it makes fundamentally less sense to continue honouring someone whose best achievements were overseas, compared to someone who dedicated her life to improve the lives of fellow Indigenous Australians.