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## 2002–03 Redistribution of Commonwealth Electoral Boundaries

Redistributions of Commonwealth electoral division boundaries occurred in Victoria, Queensland and South Australia during 2002–03. The redistribution in Victoria was triggered by the ‘seven year’ requirement while the redistributions in Queensland and South Australia were triggered by a change in the states’ entitlements to representation in the House of Representatives. This paper describes the redistribution process and provides an analysis of the electoral consequences of the redistributions.

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## Introduction

The *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918* provides three triggers for a redistribution of Commonwealth electoral boundaries. Under section 59 of the Act a redistribution shall occur:

- when there is a change in the representational entitlements of a state or territory
- when more than one third of the divisions in a state or territory vary from the average divisional enrolment for the state or territory by more than ten per cent for three consecutive months, or
- if seven years ('seven year rule') have elapsed since the last redistribution in the state or territory.

A redistribution of Commonwealth electoral boundaries occurred during 2002 and 2003 in Victoria, Queensland and South Australia. The redistribution in Victoria was occasioned by the 'seven year rule', while the redistributions in Queensland and South Australia were triggered by a change in the representational entitlements of the two jurisdictions.

The second trigger, malapportionment of electoral divisions, has not occasioned a redistribution since the three triggers were incorporated in the Act in 1984.

## Redistribution Process

The procedures for conducting electoral redistributions are contained in Parts III and IV of the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918*. The redistribution process provides opportunities for interested parties to make submissions to the Redistribution Committee, to make comments on other submissions and to make objections to the Committee's proposals. The various stages of the process are best summarised by the redistribution timetable.

## Redistribution Timetable

Electoral Commission directs the commencement of a redistribution	— <i>As soon as practicable</i>
Redistribution Committee appointed	— <i>As soon as practicable</i>
Redistribution Committee invites written suggestions from public	— <i>30 days</i>
Closing date for suggestions	— <i>14 days</i>
Closing date for written comment on suggestions	— <i>No time specified</i>
Redistribution Committee considers suggestions and comments—develops boundary proposals	— <i>No time specified</i>
Redistribution Committee publishes proposals	— <i>28 days</i>
Closing date for written objections to proposals	— <i>14 days</i>
Closing date for written comment on objections	— <i>60 days</i>
Augmented Electoral Commission considers objections—makes final proposals	— <i>As soon as practicable</i>
Final determination	

In making its proposals the Redistribution Committee is required to take into account the following considerations, outlined in section 66 of the Act:

- Ensure that, as far as practicable, the projected number of electors in each proposed division in the state or territory, normally three years and six months after the redistribution, be not more than 103.5 per cent or less than 96.5 per cent of the average divisional enrolment of that state or territory.
- Subject to the above, the Committee shall give consideration to the following:
  - community of interests within the proposed divisions, including economic, social and regional interests
  - means of communication and travel within the proposed divisions
  - the physical features and area of the proposed divisions, and
  - the boundaries of existing divisions in the state or territory (this criterion is subordinate to the above).
- The Redistribution Committee may adopt a margin of allowance (from the enrolment quota for the state or territory) of not more than ten per cent above or below the quota.

## Representation Entitlements

The procedures for determining the House of Representatives representation entitlement for each state and territory are contained in section 48 of the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918*. The Act requires the Electoral Commissioner to ascertain the population of the states and territories of the Commonwealth during the thirteenth month after the first meeting of a newly elected House of Representatives. After the population has been ascertained (from the Australian Statistician) the Electoral Commissioner makes a determination of each state and territory's entitlement to representation. The determination following the 2001 election was made on 20 February 2003.<sup>1</sup>

The entitlement is calculated by first dividing the population of the states by twice the number of state Senators ( $72 \times 2 = 144$ ) to obtain a quota. The population of each state and territory is then divided by the quota to determine the entitlement for each. If on this division there is a remainder greater than one-half of a quota then the state or territory is entitled to an additional member. This process can best be explained by the following example. At the 2003 Determination, Queensland had a population of 3 729 123, the quota was 133 369.375. The Queensland population divided by the quota gives a result of 27.9609; this gives Queensland an entitlement of 28 seats, an increase of one over the previous entitlement.

For the purposes of determining entitlements the population of Jervis Bay is added to the Australian Capital Territory (ACT), and Cocos (Keeling) Islands and Christmas Island are added to the population of the Northern Territory, while electors on Norfolk Island are included in state and ACT population figures.<sup>2</sup>

### 2003 Determination

State/Territory	Population	Result (a)	Entitlement	Change
New South Wales	6 657 478	49.9176	50	..
Victoria	4 888 243	36.6519	37	..
Queensland	3 729 123	27.9609	28	+1
South Australia	1 522 467	11.4154	11	-1
Western Australia	1 934 508	14.5049	15	..
Tasmania (b)	473 371	3.5493	5	..
Northern Territory	199 760	1.4978	1	-1
Australia Capital Territory	322 871	2.4209	2	..
Six States	19 205 190			

(a) Population of state or territory divided by Quota (Quota:  $19\,205\,190/144 = 133\,369.375$ ).

(b) Tasmania as an original state is guaranteed a minimum representation of five.

Source: Australian Electoral Commission, *Commissioner Issues Federal Electoral Determination*, media release, Canberra, 20 February 2003.

The 2003 determination resulted in an increase in the entitlements of Queensland from 27 to 28 and a decrease in the entitlements of South Australia from 12 to 11, and the Northern Territory from two to one. As a consequence of the determination, redistributions commenced in Queensland and South Australia on 12 March 2003.

A redistribution in the Northern Territory was not required as the Electoral Commissioner determined that the Northern Territory was to revert to one division for the next election. The determination in respect of the Northern Territory triggered a series of events that resulted in legislation being introduced to set aside the determination in respect of the Northern Territory. The Northern Territory situation is discussed later in this paper.

## **Victoria**

As stated above the redistribution of federal electoral boundaries in Victoria was triggered by the ‘seven year rule’. Under this provision a redistribution must commence within 30 days after the expiration of seven years after a state or territory was last redistributed. In the case of Victoria the state was last redistributed on 20 December 1994. On 18 January 2002 the Electoral Commission directed that a redistribution commence in Victoria<sup>3</sup>.

The Redistribution Committee faced the usual problems of unequal rates of enrolment growth in different parts of the state; outer metropolitan divisions with large growth projections while a number of rural and regional divisions had low or negative projected growth. The Committee was mindful of municipal boundaries as indicators of community of interests and attempted to align divisional boundaries with municipal boundaries wherever possible.<sup>4</sup>

The Committee’s most contentious proposals related to the La Trobe Valley and the semi-rural areas to the north and west of Melbourne. In the La Trobe Valley the Committee proposed to bring Gippsland up to quota by transferring the town of Traralgon from McMillan, thus splitting the La Trobe Shire between Gippsland and McMillan. In the north of Melbourne the Committee proposed that McEwen become more rural by the removal of suburban Craigieburn and the inclusion of parts of Macedon Ranges Shire. In the west of Melbourne the Committee proposed the abolition of the division of Burke and the creation of the new division of Gorton.

The Committee’s proposed boundaries were widely condemned by the Labor Party which accused the electoral commission of favouring the Liberal Party by ‘shifting ALP voters from marginal seats into safe Labor seats, making it easier for the Liberals to win key marginal seats’.<sup>5</sup> While making no comment on whether or not the Committee’s proposal favoured the Liberal Party, it could be argued that the Labor Party certainly had a point in regard to the electoral consequences of the Committee’s proposal. The Committee’s proposal reduced the Labor margin in McMillan from 2.5 per cent to a notional 0.6 per cent while in McEwen the Coalition’s margin was increased from 1.2 per cent to a notional 2.2 per cent. On the other hand the new division of Gorton would be a very safe Labor seat (notional margin 70.2 per cent).

Labor's concerns with the redistribution were further compounded by the results of the objection stage of the redistribution process.<sup>6</sup> In its objection to the Committee's proposal the Labor Party argued that the La Trobe municipality should not be split (i.e. Traralgon should be located with the rest of the municipality) and that it should be wholly contained within the division of McMillan.<sup>7</sup> The Liberal Party also argued that Traralgon should not be split from the rest of the La Trobe municipality but suggested as an alternative that both Morwell and Traralgon be included in Gippsland.<sup>8</sup> The augmented Electoral Commission largely accepted the Liberal Party's suggestion and placed the majority of the La Trobe municipality (including Morwell and Traralgon) in Gippsland. In a decision that further upset the Labor Party the augmented Electoral Commission determined that the changes it had made to the Redistribution Committee's proposal were not significant and that as a result its proposals were not open to any further objection.<sup>9</sup>

Under section 72(12) of the Act the augmented Electoral Commission is required to form an opinion whether its proposal is significantly different from the Redistribution Committee's proposal. In forming an opinion that the proposal was not significantly different, the augmented Electoral Commission presumably relied on the fact that its proposal involved only the movement of 1.2 per cent in electors for the whole state to different divisions from the Redistribution Committee's proposal. It could be argued that the augmented Commission's proposal in regard to McMillan and Gippsland was sufficiently different from the Redistribution Committee's proposal and that a further round of objections and consideration was warranted.<sup>10</sup>

With the augmented Electoral Commission's decision not to allow any further objections, the redistribution in Victoria concluded on 29 January 2003. The table below provides a summary of the redistributed divisions.

The redistribution resulted in changes to 34 of the 37 divisions in Victoria. The divisions of Higgins, Kooyong and Melbourne Ports were unchanged by the redistribution, while only minor changes were made to the divisions of Casey, Goldstein and Hotham. As stated above the most dramatic changes occurred in the La Trobe Valley and in the north-west of Melbourne. Only one division notionally changed hands as a result of the redistribution: McMillan changed from a marginal Labor seat to a marginal Coalition seat. The main features of the redistribution are discussed below. In the following discussion all references to voting figures are two party preferred votes at the 2001 House of Representatives election.

**2002–03 Redistribution, Division Summary, Victoria**

Division	Actual enrolment 18 Jan 2002	Variation from average (%)	Projected enrolment 31 Mar 2006	Variation from average (%)	Area sq km
Aston	86 347	-1.98	91 807	-2.21	95.87
Ballarat	88 009	-0.10	91 985	-2.02	4 651.88
Batman	87 577	-0.59	91 402	-2.64	53.47
Bendigo	91 839	4.25	95 428	1.65	7 286.14
Bruce	90 498	2.73	92 528	-1.44	67.81
Calwell	83 636	-5.06	96 959	3.28	503.83
Casey	86 119	-2.24	91 121	-2.94	409.41
Chisholm	87 220	-0.99	91 576	-2.46	60.97
Corangamite	87 219	-0.99	92 107	-1.89	7 723.64
Corio	86 912	-1.34	90 768	-3.32	814.64
Deakin	89 354	1.43	92 753	-1.20	61.37
Dunkley	91 055	3.36	95 470	1.69	137.58
Flinders	88 063	-0.03	95 318	1.53	1 955.35
Gellibrand	92 659	5.18	96 880	3.19	91.33
Gippsland	91 713	4.11	93 071	-0.86	33 263.72
Goldstein	90 353	2.57	95 014	1.21	48.63
Gorton	82 451	-6.40	94 736	0.91	165.63
Higgins	87 951	-0.16	92 065	-1.94	38.80
Holt	81 227	-7.79	96 848	3.16	144.83
Hotham	89 815	1.95	92 983	-0.96	71.59
Indi	87 350	-0.84	90 722	-3.37	28 007.66
Isaacs	89 978	2.14	97 087	3.41	171.44
Jagajaga	93 948	6.65	96 703	3.00	87.38
Kooyong	88 343	0.28	92 572	-1.40	49.49
Lalor	82 378	-6.49	94 146	0.28	990.77
La Trobe	81 412	-7.58	93 122	-0.81	588.08
Mallee	91 145	3.46	93 155	-0.77	70 693.64
Maribyrnong	90 937	3.23	93 543	-0.36	71.22
McEwen	89 526	1.63	97 089	3.42	10 675.29
McMillan	79 517	-9.74	94 344	0.49	8 327.90
Melbourne	88 786	0.79	96 551	2.84	53.45
Melbourne Ports	90 331	2.54	96 081	2.34	43.71
Menzies	88 762	0.76	93 040	-0.90	119.46
Murray	86 834	-1.43	90 680	-3.41	16 228.86
Scullin	85 018	-3.49	96 405	2.69	100.95
Wannon	90 743	3.01	90 710	-3.38	33 854.16
Wills	94 429	7.19	96 868	3.18	57.04
Total	3 259 454		3473637		227 766.99
Average	88 093		93882		

Source: Australian Electoral Commission, *2002–03 Redistribution of Victoria into Electoral Divisions*, Australian Electoral Commission, Canberra, 2003.

- **Ballarat**—Division moved closer to Melbourne and becomes slightly safer for Labor by the inclusion of the remainder of Moorabool Shire (Bacchus Marsh) and the removal of the Northern Grampians and Pyrenees shires to Wannon. Labor's notional margin increased from 2.7 per cent to 3.2 per cent.
- **Burke**—Division abolished and parts absorbed by new division of Gorton and existing divisions of Ballarat, Calwell, Lalor and McEwen.
- **Calwell**—Division now wholly contains the City of Hume. Received parts of the City of Hume from Burke and McEwen. Remains a notionally safe Labor seat (margin 15.1 per cent).
- **Gippsland**—Gains parts of La Trobe municipality (Morwell and Traralgon) from McMillan but loses rural areas of South Gippsland Shire to McMillan. Changes from a fairly safe Coalition seat (margin 8.1 per cent) to a notionally marginal Coalition seat (margin 2.6 per cent) by the acquisition of Labor-voting polling places in Morwell and Traralgon ( Morwell 60.5 per cent, Morwell Central 68.2 per cent, Morwell Estate 68.1 per cent, Traralgon East 57.9 per cent, Traralgon North 54.2 per cent, and Traralgon South 53.7 per cent) and the loss of Coalition-voting polling places in South Gippsland (Foster 55.9 per cent, Korumburra 58.4 per cent, Leongatha 65.8 per cent, Meeniyah 62.1 per cent and Welshpool 63.2 per cent).
- **Gorton**—New division in the outer north–western suburbs of Melbourne. Created out of parts of the divisions of Burke, Calwell, Gellibrand, Lalor and Maribyrnong. Only 14 per cent (11 675) of electors from the old division of Burke are contained in the new division. Named after the former Prime Minister the Rt Hon. Sir John Grey Gorton. The new division is a notionally very safe Labor seat (margin 20.2 per cent).
- **Holt**—Division moves in a south-easterly direction with the loss of the City of Greater Dandenong part in the west to Isaacs and the acquisition of parts of the City of Casey in the south from Isaacs. Made less safe for Labor (margin reduced from 13.3 per cent to 7.9 per cent) with the loss of Labor-voting polling places in Greater Dandenong (Chandler 68.7 per cent, Coomoora 70.1 per cent, Dandenong South 78.5 per cent, Douglas 73.4 per cent, Noble Park 71.2 per cent and Southvale 70.8 per cent).
- **Isaacs**—Division gains part of the City of Greater Dandenong in the north from Holt and loses City of Casey part in the west to Holt. Made safer for the Labor Party (margin increased from 2.8 per cent to 6.6 per cent). See Holt (above) for details.
- **McEwen**—Division becomes more rural in nature with the loss of suburban Craigieburn to Calwell and the acquisition of part of Macedon Ranges Shire from the abolished Burke. Division is now slightly safer for the Coalition (margin increased from 1.2 per cent to 2.2 per cent) with the loss of Labor-voting polling places in Craigieburn (Craigieburn 66.4 per cent, Craigieburn South 68.8 per cent and Roxburgh Park 69.9 per cent) and the acquisition of Coalition-voting polling places in Macedon

Ranges Shire (Gisborne 56.8 per cent, Lancefield 55.2 per cent, Mount Macedon 54.7 per cent, New Gisborne 54.4 per cent and Newham 57.6 per cent).

- **McMillan**—Division changed dramatically from being based on the La Trobe valley to now encompass rural areas in South Gippsland. Division changed status from a marginal Labor seat (margin 2.5 per cent) to a notionally marginal Coalition seat (margin 2.9 per cent) with the loss of Labor-voting polling places in Morwell and Traralgon (Morwell 60.5 per cent, Morwell Central 68.2 per cent, Morwell Estate 68.1 per cent, Traralgon East 57.9 per cent, Traralgon North 54.2 per cent, and Traralgon South 53.7 per cent) and the acquisition of Coalition-voting polling places in South Gippsland (Foster 55.9 per cent, Korumburra 58.4 per cent, Leongatha 65.8 per cent, Meeniyan 62.1 per cent and Welshpool 63.2 per cent).
- **Melbourne Ports**—Division remained unchanged for the second redistribution in a row. Melbourne Ports, having been contested on the same boundaries since 1990, is now the longest-standing unchanged seat in the Australia.

**Effects of 2002–03 Redistribution, Victoria**  
**Estimated Two-Party Preferred Votes, 2001 Election**  
 Per cent

	Old Boundaries		New Boundaries	
	ALP	LP/NP	ALP	LP/NP
Aston	43.8	56.2	44.0	56.0
Ballarat	52.7	47.3	53.2	46.8
Batman	75.1	24.9	75.1	24.9
Bendigo	53.6	46.4	53.6	46.4
Bruce	55.5	44.5	56.5	43.5
Burke	55.5	44.5	n.a.	n.a.
Calwell	67.7	32.3	65.1	34.9
Casey	42.8	57.2	42.8	57.2
Chisholm	52.8	47.2	52.7	47.3
Corangamite	44.3	55.7	44.6	55.4
Corio	58.7	41.3	58.5	41.5
Deakin	48.3	51.7	48.4	51.6
Dunkley	44.6	55.4	44.8	55.2
Flinders	42.4	57.6	42.6	57.4
Gellibrand	71.8	28.2	70.4	29.6
Gippsland	41.9	58.1	47.4	52.6
Goldstein	40.5	59.5	40.5	59.5
Gorton	n.a.	n.a.	70.2	29.8
Higgins	41.6	58.4	41.6	58.4
Holt	63.3	36.7	57.9	42.1
Hotham	61.0	39.0	61.0	39.0
Indi	38.9	61.1	39.3	60.7
Isaacs	52.8	47.2	56.6	43.4
Jagajaga	55.6	44.4	55.3	44.7
Kooyong	39.1	60.9	39.1	60.9
Lalor	65.6	34.4	62.1	37.9
La Trobe	46.3	53.7	46.3	53.7
Mallee	30.1	69.9	29.1	70.9
Maribyrnong	67.4	32.6	65.4	34.6
McEwen	48.8	51.2	47.8	52.2
McMillan	52.5	47.5	47.1	52.9
Melbourne	70.1	29.9	69.9	30.1
Melbourne Ports	55.7	44.3	55.7	44.3
Menzies	41.1	58.9	41.1	58.9
Murray	26.1	73.9	28.1	71.9
Scullin	69.2	30.8	70.3	29.7
Wannon	40.4	59.6	40.8	59.2
Wills	69.4	30.6	70.6	29.4

## Queensland

Continued high population growth in Queensland resulted in the state gaining an additional seat in the House of Representatives at the 2003 determination. Queensland has now gained an additional seat in four out of the seven determinations made since the expansion of the parliament in 1984 (1991, 1994, 1997 and 2003).

In common with other redistributions, the Committee faced the problem of unequal enrolment growth rates in different parts of the state. The Committee noted large enrolment growth rates in inner city Brisbane and in the outer suburbs and in divisions covering the Gold and Sunshine Coasts. The Committee also noted the low level of enrolment growth in rural and provincial divisions.<sup>11</sup>

In previous redistributions the Redistribution Committees have located the new divisions to the north and west of Brisbane (Blair in 1997, Longman in 1994 and Dickson in 1991). Suggestions to the Redistribution Committee for the 2003 redistribution generally proposed the creation of a new division to the south of Brisbane. The Liberal Party proposed a new division in Brisbane's south-eastern suburbs, the National Party proposed a new division following the course of the Brisbane River, while the Australian Democrats proposed a new division in the northern Gold Coast. The Labor Party did not propose the location of a new division in its written suggestion.<sup>12</sup>

In dealing with areas south of Brisbane the Committee proposed that three divisions be located within the City of Gold Coast. This meant the contraction of Fadden in a southerly direction and the movement of Bowman into the areas vacated by Fadden. With considerable enrolment growth in central Brisbane, the division of Brisbane was substantially over quota. The Committee remedied this by proposing that Brisbane be wholly located north of the river. The division of Griffith could then move up to the areas vacated south of the Brisbane River by Brisbane. With the contraction of divisions in both a northerly and southerly direction, the Committee was able to propose the location of the new division of Bonner in Brisbane's bay side and eastern suburbs.

The Committee's proposals were not without controversy as they were perceived in some quarters as favouring the Coalition parties over the Labor Party.<sup>13</sup> Criticism of the Committee's proposals centred on the fact that before the redistribution Labor held seven out of Queensland's 27 seats and that after the redistribution it notionally still only holds seven seats out of a new total of 28. Concern was also expressed that Labor's supporters were bottled up in the division of Griffith (margin increase from 5.7 per cent to 6.2 per cent) while the division of Brisbane was made notionally more marginal for Labor (margin reduced from 3.1 per cent to 1.0 per cent). In other significant changes the division of Rankin becomes notionally more marginal for Labor (margin reduced from 6.7 per cent to 2.4 per cent) and the division of Moreton becomes notionally more marginal for the Liberal Party (margin reduced from 4.2 per cent to 2.6 per cent). The new division of Bonner is a notionally marginal Labor seat (margin 1.9 per cent) but is compensated for by

the fact that the division of Bowman changes from a marginal Labor seat (margin 1.4 per cent) to a notionally marginal Coalition seat (margin 3.1 per cent).

The following table provides a summary of the redistributed divisions in Queensland.

### 2003 Redistribution, Division Summary, Queensland

Division	Actual enrolment 12 Mar 2003	Variation from average (%)	Projected enrolment 31 Jul 2007	Variation from average (%)	Area sq km
Blair	87 171	3.68	92 524	-1.18	14 860
Bonner	84 311	0.28	95 968	2.50	358
Bowman	81 718	-2.81	93 842	0.23	573
Brisbane	83 834	-0.29	94 643	1.09	77
Capricornia	88 717	5.52	91 062	-2.74	125 136
Dawson	87 398	3.95	93 437	-0.20	22 515
Dickson	80 206	-4.61	92 029	-1.70	708
Fadden	75 838	-9.80	96 668	3.25	524
Fairfax	79 667	-5.25	93 699	0.08	1 880
Fisher	79 326	-5.65	94 100	0.51	787
Forde	80 422	-4.35	92 787	-0.90	5 202
Griffith	86 970	3.44	93 983	0.38	59
Groom	85 038	1.14	92 665	-1.03	6 452
Herbert	83 435	-0.76	92 957	-0.71	1 997
Hinkler	88 788	5.60	94 524	0.96	35 330
Kennedy	90 860	8.07	95 378	1.87	564 701
Leichhardt	85 467	1.65	93 124	-0.54	150 676
Lilley	89 238	6.14	93 928	0.32	142
Longman	81 010	-3.65	94 932	1.40	1 673
McPherson	78 087	-7.13	94 545	0.98	355
Maranoa	86 946	3.41	90 922	-2.89	779 329
Moncrieff	81 002	-3.66	93 173	-0.48	129
Moreton	84 444	0.44	95 475	1.98	101
Oxley	85 221	1.36	94 916	1.38	302
Petrie	83 679	-0.47	93 395	-0.25	144
Rankin	87 349	3.89	94 557	1.00	160
Ryan	84 081	0.00	91 646	-2.11	415
Wide Bay	83 953	-0.15	90 610	-3.22	19 604
Total	2 354 176		2 621 489		1 734 189
Average	84 078		93 625		

Source: Australian Electoral Commission, *2003 Redistribution of Queensland into Electoral Divisions*, Australian Electoral Commission, Canberra, 2003.

The redistribution resulted in changes to all but three of the divisions in Queensland. The divisions of Dawson, Groom and Leichhardt were unchanged by the redistribution. As a result of the creation of the new division of Bonner significant changes were made to

divisions to the south of Brisbane while divisions to the north of Brisbane (notably Dickson, Lilley, Longman and Petrie) were less significantly affected. The main features of the redistribution are discussed below. In the following discussion all references to voting figures are two party preferred votes at the 2001 House of Representatives election.

- **Bonner**—New division in Brisbane’s bay side and eastern suburbs. Created out of parts of Bowman, Griffith and Moreton. Named after former Senator Neville Bonner AO. Division is a notionally marginal Labor seat (margin 1.9 per cent).
- **Bowman**—Division moves to the south into parts of Redland Shire vacated by Fadden and now fully contains the Redland Shire. Status of division changes from a marginal Labor seat (margin 1.4 per cent) to a notionally marginal Coalition seat (margin 3.1 per cent) with the loss of strong Labor-voting polling places to Bonner (Hemmant 62.5 per cent, Lindum 62.1 per cent, Wynnum Central 60.9 per cent and Wynnum West 60.0 per cent) and the acquisition of Coalition-voting polling places from Fadden (Mount Cotton 62.7 per cent, Redland Bay 58.3 per cent, Victoria Point 59.4 per cent, and Victoria Point South 59.1 per cent).
- **Brisbane**—Division now wholly located north of the Brisbane River with the loss of areas south of the river to Griffith. Division is now notionally highly marginal for Labor (margin reduced from 3.1 per cent to 1.0 per cent) with the loss of Labor-voting polling places south of the Brisbane River (Dutton Park 65.7 per cent, Hill End 65.3 per cent, South Brisbane 64.3 per cent and West End 74.7 per cent) and the acquisition of Liberal-voting polling places from Dickson (Everton North 56.3 per cent, Ferny Grove 58.4 per cent and Keperra 58.4 per cent) and Petrie (Everton Park 58.6 per cent and Everton Park North 61.5 per cent).
- **Capricornia**—Division contracts towards the coast with the loss of the western shires of Aramac, Barcaldine, Ilfracombe, Jericho, Longreach, Peak Downs and Winton to Maranoa. Remains a notionally fairly safe Labor seat (margin reduced from 6.9 per cent to 5.5 per cent).
- **Fadden**—Division moves southward with the loss of Redland Shire part to Bowman and is now wholly contained within the City of Gold Coast, becoming one of three Gold Coast-based divisions. Remains a notionally safe Liberal seat (margin increases from 12.3 per cent to 13.1 per cent).
- **Griffith**—Division contracts towards the inner-city with the loss of the eastern suburbs part of the division to Bonner and the acquisition of areas south of the Brisbane River from Brisbane. Becomes notionally safer for Labor (margin increased from 5.7 per cent to 6.2 per cent) with the acquisition of Labor-voting polling places from Brisbane (Dutton Park 65.7 per cent, Hill End 65.3 per cent, South Brisbane 64.3 per cent and West End 74.7 per cent).

- **Hinkler**—Division loses Mt Morgan in the north to Capricornia and gains rural shires of Eidsvold, Gayndah, Kolan, Monto, Mundubbera and Parry in the south–west from Wide Bay. Division becomes notionally safer for the National Party (margin increased from 0.04 per cent to 2.2 per cent) with the loss of the strong Labor-voting town of Mt Morgan (72.3 per cent) and the acquisition of solid Coalition-voting towns of Gayndah (67.3 per cent), Gin Gin (59.7 per cent), Monto (72.3 per cent) and Mundubbera (70.3 per cent).
- **Kennedy**—Division is slightly increased in size with the acquisition of parts of the City of Thuringowa. Notionally less safe for the sitting independent member, the Hon. Robert Katter (two candidate preferred margin reduced from 19.7 per cent to 14.1 per cent) through the acquisition of polling places where Mr Katter was not a candidate at the 2001 election.
- **Moreton**—Division moves in a southerly direction with the loss of suburbs in the north to Griffith and in the east to Bonner and Rankin and the acquisition of the Sunnybank Hills area in the south from Rankin. Division is made notionally slightly less safe for the Liberal Party (margin reduced from 4.2 per cent to 2.6 per cent) with the loss of Liberal-voting polling places to Bonner (Mansfield 60.1 per cent, Mt Petrie 66.8 per cent, Rochedale 69.0 per cent and Wishart 60.2 per cent).
- **Oxley**—Division moves further to the east with the acquisition of Corinda, Darra, Oxley and Seventeen Mile Rocks from Ryan and the loss of parts of Ipswich to Blair. Division no longer has a majority of electors located in the City of Ipswich. Political status of division remains virtually unchanged.
- **Rankin**—Division now firmly centred on the City of Logan with the acquisition of parts of the City of Logan east of the South–East Freeway from Fadden and the suburbs of Kuraby and Underwood from Moreton and the loss of the Sunnybank Hills area to Moreton. Division is notionally more marginal for Labor (margin reduced from 6.7 per cent to 2.4 per cent) with the acquisition of Liberal-voting polling places in Fadden (Chatswood Hills 60.7 per cent, Kimberley Park 64.8 per cent, Shailer Park 66.5 per cent, Slacks Creek 60.1 per cent and Springwood Road 61.6 per cent).

**Effects of 2003 Redistribution, Queensland**  
**Estimated Two Party Preferred Votes, 2001 Election**  
 Per cent

	Old Boundaries		New Boundaries	
	ALP	LP/NP	ALP	LP/NP
Blair	41.5	58.5	43.4	56.6
Bonner	n.a.	n.a.	51.9	48.1
Bowman	51.4	48.6	46.9	53.1
Brisbane	53.1	46.9	51.0	49.0
Capricornia	56.9	43.1	55.5	44.5
Dawson	42.0	58.0	42.0	58.0
Dickson	44.0	56.0	44.0	56.0
Fadden	37.7	62.3	36.9	63.1
Fairfax	40.8	59.2	40.8	59.2
Fisher	37.9	62.1	38.2	61.8
Forde	42.6	57.4	43.0	57.0
Griffith	55.7	44.3	56.2	43.8
Groom	34.9	65.1	34.9	65.1
Herbert	48.4	51.6	48.5	51.5
Hinkler	50.0	50.0	47.8	52.2
Kennedy (a)	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Leichhardt	43.6	56.4	43.6	56.4
Lilley	54.8	45.2	54.6	45.4
Longman	47.3	52.7	47.5	52.5
McPherson	37.5	62.5	37.8	62.2
Maranoa	34.0	66.0	34.6	65.4
Moncrieff	34.6	65.4	33.7	66.3
Moreton	45.8	54.2	47.4	52.6
Oxley	58.1	41.9	58.0	42.0
Petrie	46.6	53.4	46.5	53.5
Rankin	56.7	43.3	52.4	47.6
Ryan	41.4	58.6	40.5	59.5
Wide Bay	39.3	60.7	40.1	59.9

(a) Two Candidate Preferred votes: Old boundaries-Ind 69.7% ALP 30.3%, New boundaries- Ind 64.1% ALP 35.9%.

## South Australia

Low population growth in South Australia resulted in the state losing a seat in the House of Representatives for the second occasion since 1984.

The main interest in the South Australian redistribution was whether the seat to be abolished was from Adelaide or from the country and which member was to lose his or her seat. As the Liberal Party held nine of the twelve South Australian seats there was a

widespread expectation that a government seat would be abolished, with the Speaker's seat of Wakefield being a prime candidate.<sup>14</sup>

The Australian Labor Party in its submission to the Redistribution Committee called for the abolition of Wakefield, with parts of the division to be transferred to Barker, Bonython and Grey.<sup>15</sup> Given the obvious political sensitivities, the Liberal Party submission was less definite. It provided suggestions and arguments for the retention of each division but did not suggest a division for abolition.<sup>16</sup> Not surprisingly a number of Liberal MPs made submissions arguing for the retention of their divisions.<sup>17</sup>

In the end the Redistribution Committee's proposal closely resembled the Labor Party's submission but with one notable difference. The Committee decided to abolish the division of Bonython and retain Wakefield as the name for the area previously covered by Bonython. Wakefield thus changes from a rural division to a largely outer metropolitan division located in the northern suburbs of Adelaide. The Committee argued that although the majority of electors in the proposed Wakefield are from the existing Bonython the majority of land area is from the existing Wakefield. The Committee also noted that Wakefield has been in existence from 1903 and is thus as close to a Federation seat as possible in South Australia.<sup>18</sup>

The Redistribution Committee's proposal provided a neat solution to what could have been a potentially difficult situation. With the boundaries of Wakefield being extensively redrawn to take in traditionally Labor voting areas in Adelaide's northern suburbs the seat is now a notionally marginal Labor seat (margin 1.3 per cent). Given the abolition of Bonython and the changed status of Wakefield, the Coalition now notionally holds eight seats to Labor's three. Shortly after the proposed boundaries were announced the member for Wakefield and Speaker of the House of Representatives, the Hon. Neil Andrew announced that he would be retiring from the Parliament at the next election.<sup>19</sup>

The redistribution became finalised on 17 December 2003 with a decision by the augmented Electoral Commission for South Australia to accept the Committee's proposal and not to uphold any objections. The following table provides a summary of the new divisions.

The redistribution resulted in changes to all South Australian divisions. Apart from the already mentioned changes to Wakefield, substantial changes were also made to Barker, Kingston, Grey and Mayo. The main features of the redistribution are discussed below. In the following discussion all references to voting figures are two party preferred votes at the 2001 House of Representatives election.

**2003 Redistribution, Division Summary, South Australia**

Division	Actual enrolment 12 Mar 2003	Variation from average (%)	Projected enrolment 31 Jul 2007	Variation from average (%)	Area sq km
Adelaide	94 342	-0.52	98 204	-0.71	75
Barker	100 231	5.69	102 000	3.13	64 015
Boothby	94 981	0.16	97 016	-1.91	123
Grey	97 415	2.72	99 491	0.59	904 881
Hindmarsh	98 621	3.99	101 469	2.59	73
Kingston	92 537	-2.42	98 446	-0.47	377
Makin	92 774	-2.17	97 315	-1.61	115
Mayo	88 426	-6.76	96 761	-2.17	9 190
Port Adelaide	97 207	2.50	100 546	1.66	253
Sturt	96 928	2.21	100 126	1.23	84
Wakefield	89 715	-5.40	96 628	-2.31	6 155
Total	1 043 177		1 088 002		985 341
Average	94 834		98 909		

Source: Australian Electoral Commission, *2003 Redistribution of South Australia into Electoral Divisions*, Australian Electoral Commission, Canberra, 2003.

- **Barker**—Division expands in a northerly direction acquiring the Riverland (Berri, Loxton, Renmark and Waikerie) and parts of the Barossa valley (Angaston, Barossa and Tanunda) from Wakefield and losing Kangaroo Island and the southern Fleurieu Peninsula (Alexandrina, Victor Harbour and Yankalilla) to Mayo. Division remains a notionally safe Liberal seat (margin 16.6 per cent).
- **Bonython**—Division abolished, mainly absorbed by the relocated Wakefield but parts of Salisbury in the south east transferred to Port Adelaide.
- **Grey**—Acquires Yorke Peninsula (Barunga West, Copper Coast and Yorke Peninsula) from Wakefield, loses Clare and Gilbert Valleys to Wakefield. Division remains a notionally safe Liberal seat (margin 10.6 per cent).
- **Hindmarsh**—Division acquires suburbs on the coast in the north (Grange, Seaton West, Semaphore Park and West Lake Shore) from Port Adelaide and loses Edwardstown in the south east to Boothby. Division is now notionally more marginal for the Liberal Party (margin reduced from 1.9 per cent to 1.0 per cent) with the acquisition of solid Labor-voting polling places from Port Adelaide (Semaphore Park 61.7 per cent and Semaphore Park South 71.3 per cent).
- **Kingston**—Division now fully contains the City of Onkaparinga with the acquisition of remaining parts of municipality from Mayo. Division is now notionally more marginal for Labor (margin reduced from 2.4 per cent to 1.3 per cent) with the acquisition of

solid Liberal-voting polling places (McLaren Vale 65.6 per cent and Willunga 61.6 per cent).

- **Mayo**—Division expands in the north with the acquisition of parts of the Barossa valley from Wakefield and to the south with the acquisition of Kangaroo Island and the southern Fleurieu Peninsula from Barker. Division remains a notionally safe Liberal seat (margin 14.3 per cent).
- **Wakefield**—Division changes dramatically from being a rural division based on the Riverland to a largely outer metropolitan division based on Elizabeth. Division changes status from a safe Liberal seat (margin 14.6 per cent) to a notionally marginal Labor seat (margin 1.3 per cent). Safe Labor-voting polling places in Elizabeth (Elizabeth Downs 65.1 per cent, Elizabeth Grove 68.8 per cent, Elizabeth North 65.5 per cent, Elizabeth South 69.0 per cent) are partly offset by solid Liberal-voting polling places in the rural part of the division (Clare 70.9 per cent, Gawler East 63.0 per cent, Gawler South 58.6 per cent and Kapunda 58.2 per cent)

### Effects of 2003 Redistribution, South Australia Estimated Two Party Preferred Votes, 2001 Election Per cent

	Old Boundaries		New Boundaries	
	ALP	LP/NP	ALP	LP/NP
Adelaide	49.8	50.2	49.4	50.6
Barker	34.3	65.7	33.4	66.6
Bonython	60.4	39.6	n.a.	n.a.
Boothby	42.6	57.4	42.6	57.4
Grey	39.4	60.6	39.4	60.6
Hindmarsh	48.1	51.9	49.0	51.0
Kingston	52.4	47.6	51.3	48.7
Makin	46.2	53.8	46.3	53.7
Mayo	37.1	62.9	35.7	64.3
Port Adelaide	64.6	35.4	66.0	34.0
Sturt	41.8	58.2	41.5	58.5
Wakefield	35.4	64.6	51.3	48.7

### Northern Territory

The 2003 determination reduced the Northern Territory's representation in the House of Representatives from two to one. Given the fact that the Northern Territory fell short of the second seat by only 295 people<sup>20</sup> and the consequences for the representation of the Northern Territory in the House of Representatives, the determination generated much discussion. In June 2003 the member for Solomon, David Tollner MP, introduced a

private member's bill, the purpose of which was to guarantee a minimum of two seats each for the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory. The Tollner bill was overtaken by events and was subsequently removed from the Notice Paper.

In July 2003, the Special Minister of State, Senator the Hon. Eric Abetz asked the Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters to inquire into and report on increasing the minimum representation for the territories to provide for a minimum of two seats each for the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory.<sup>21</sup>

The majority of submissions to the inquiry supported a guaranteed minimum of two seats for the Northern Territory. The reasons given included: the geographic size and the disparate nature of the territory, claims that the territory would be entitled to two seats at the next determination, uncertainty about the definition of the 'latest statistics of the Commonwealth' used to calculate entitlements, reservations about the accuracy of Northern Territory population estimates, and an acknowledgement by the Australian Bureau of Statistics that its quarterly population estimates contain a margin of error and that the 295 people by which the Northern Territory fell short of a quota for a second seat was within that margin of error.<sup>22</sup>

In its report dated 1 December 2003, the Committee rejected the proposal that the Northern Territory be guaranteed a second seat but did recommend that in future the margin of error in the territory's population estimates be taken into account when determining the two territories entitlements and that the 2003 determination in respect of the Northern Territory be set aside.<sup>23</sup>

The Government accepted the Committee's recommendations and introduced the Commonwealth Electoral Amendment (Representation in the House of Representatives) Bill 2004 on 25 March 2004 to give effect to the Committee's recommendations. The bill attracted bipartisan support and received Royal Assent on 20 April 2004. With the passing of the bill the Northern Territory reverts to two divisions, Lingiari and Solomon, at the next election, with no alteration to their boundaries.

## Future Redistributions

Since the 1984 amendments to the *Commonwealth Electoral Act*, redistributions have become an integral part of the Australian political landscape. There have been twenty-one electoral redistributions in the various states and territories under the current provisions. All states have been redistributed at least twice during that time, with Queensland having been redistributed four times.

The 'seven year' rule has triggered redistributions in 1992 in Tasmania and the ACT, in 1997 in Western Australia, in 1999 in South Australia, Tasmania and New South Wales and 2003 in Victoria. The following schedule shows the date of the most recent redistribution in each State and Territory and the prospective date of the next redistribution scheduled under the 'seven year' rule. According to the schedule the next redistribution to

be held, under this provision, should be in the Australian Capital Territory in January 2005.

### Redistribution Schedule

State/Territory	Last Redistribution	Next Scheduled Redistribution (a)
New South Wales	11 February 2000	Mar 2007
Victoria	29 January 2003	Feb 2010
Queensland	25 November 2003	Dec 2010
South Australia	17 December 2003	Jan 2011
Western Australia	20 November 2000	Dec 2007
Tasmania	11 February 2000	Mar 2007
Northern Territory	21 December 2000	Jan 2008
Australian Capital Territory	10 December 1997	Jan 2005

(a) Under section 59 of the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918* a direction initiating a redistribution must be made within 30 days of the end of the period of seven years after a state or territory was last redistributed.

As noted redistributions may also be triggered by a change in a state or territory's entitlements to representation in the House of Representatives. Assuming that the current House of Representatives serves its full term with the next election held at the end of 2004, then the next determination of entitlements should take place in February 2006. At that date the latest available population figures should be for June 2005. The following table calculates the entitlements of the states and territories at June 2005 using the latest Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) population projections. The ABS publishes three population projection series; Series A high growth rate, Series B medium growth rate and Series C low growth rate.

The three projection series provide different prospective outcomes for the future entitlements of the states and territories. Under the high growth projection, both New South Wales and Victoria would lose a seat each while Queensland would gain a seat. Under the medium growth projection, Queensland would gain a seat while under the low growth projection the Northern Territory would lose a seat. Given the differing outcomes depending on the projection used it is difficult to make generalisations as to the future entitlements of the various states and territories. However, there is some chance that Queensland will gain a seat at the next determination and a lesser chance that New South Wales, Victoria and the Northern Territory could lose a seat. The entitlements of the other states and the Australian Capital Territory should remain unchanged.

## Projected Entitlements, June 2005

	Series A (High)			Series B (Medium)			Series C (Low)		
	Population '000	Quotas	Seats	Population '000	Quotas	Seats	Population '000	Quotas	Seats
NSW	6 825.5	49.4611	49	6 812.3	49.5665	50	6 787.5	49.6543	50
Vic	5 036.3	36.4957	36	5 027.3	36.5788	37	5 016.6	36.6992	37
Qld	3 971.7	28.7810	29	3 930.9	28.6014	29	3 886.7	28.4333	28
SA	1 536.8	11.1365	11	1 538.5	11.1942	11	1 538.8	11.2572	11
WA	2 021.1	14.6459	15	2 006.2	14.5972	15	1 983.5	14.5104	15
Tas	480.2	3.4798	5	475.8	3.4619	5	471.0	3.4456	5
NT	211.0	1.5290	2	207.4	1.5090	2	203.8	1.4909	1
ACT	336.7	2.4399	2	332.9	2.4222	2	329.0	2.4068	2

Territory projections adjusted to include Christmas and Cocos Islands (NT) and Jervis Bay (ACT) and two standard errors of estimate of margin of error of net Census undercount.

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Population Projections, Australia, 2002-2101*, Australian Bureau of Statistics, Canberra, 2003.

## Endnotes

1. Australian Electoral Commission, *Commissioner Issues Federal Electoral Determination*, media release, Australian Electoral Commission, Canberra, 20 February 2003.
2. Under section 38A of the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918*, the Territory of Norfolk Island is not taken to be a territory for the purposes of the determination, but certain Norfolk Island residents are included in the state and ACT population figures.
3. Australian Electoral Commission, *2002 Victorian Redistribution Commences*, media release, Australian Electoral Commission, Canberra, 23 January 2002.
4. Redistribution Committee of Victoria, *2002 Proposed Redistribution of Victoria into Electoral Divisions*, Melbourne, 2002, p. 7.
5. Phillip Hudson, 'Labor anger over shift in voters', *The Age*, 31 August 2002.
6. For Commonwealth redistributions, initial boundaries are proposed by a Redistribution Committee, objections and comments on the initial proposals are heard by an augmented Electoral Commission which consists of the Redistribution Committee plus the other two members of the Australian Electoral Commission.
7. Roland Lindell, Australian Labor Party (Victorian Branch) augmented Electoral Commission, Public Objection no. 45, *2002–03 Redistribution of Victoria into Electoral Divisions*. <http://www.aec.gov.au/content/why/redistributions/2002/vic/objec/obj45.pdf>
8. Brian Loughnane, Liberal Party of Australia (Victorian Division) augmented Electoral Commission, Public Objection no. 44, *2002–03 Redistribution of Victoria into Electoral Divisions*, <http://www.aec.gov.au/content/why/redistributions/2002/vic/objec/obj44b.pdf>

9. Australian Electoral Commission, *2002–03 Redistribution of Victoria into Electoral Divisions*, Australian Electoral Commission, Canberra, 2003, p.10.
10. Gerard Newman and Andrew Kopras, 'Victorian Redistribution', *Research Note*, no. 25, Parliamentary Library, Canberra, 2002–03.
11. Redistribution Committee for Queensland, *2003 Proposed Redistribution of Queensland into Electoral Division*, Brisbane, 2003, p. 7.
12. Suggestions and Comments to the Redistribution Committee, *2003 Proposed Redistribution of Queensland into Electoral Division*, Brisbane, 2003, CD Rom.
13. Dennis Atkins, 'Seat reshuffle will give Labor the blues', *Courier-Mail*, 23 August 2003.
14. General News, 'Lib seat likely to go without a vote cast', *Advertiser*, 10 March 2003.
15. Australian Labor Party, South Australian Branch, Redistribution Committee of South Australia, Public Suggestion no 18, *2003 Redistribution of South Australia into Electoral Divisions*, [Hhttp://www.aec.gov.au/content/why/redistributions/2003/sa/sugg/SS18.pdf](http://www.aec.gov.au/content/why/redistributions/2003/sa/sugg/SS18.pdf)
16. Liberal Party of Australia (SA Division), Redistribution Committee of South Australia, Public Suggestion no 16, *2003 Redistribution of South Australia into Electoral Divisions*, [Hhttp://www.aec.gov.au/content/why/redistributions/2003/sa/sugg/SS16.pdf](http://www.aec.gov.au/content/why/redistributions/2003/sa/sugg/SS16.pdf)
17. Suggestions were received from Mr C Pyne (Sturt), the Hon N Andrew (Wakefield), Mr A Southcott (Boothby) and the Hon T Worth (Adelaide).
18. Redistribution Committee for South Australia, *2003 Proposed Redistribution of South Australia into Electoral Divisions*, Adelaide, 2003, p. 12. For the first Commonwealth elections in South Australia, members were elected 'at large'. It was not until the 1903 election that South Australia was divided into divisions.
19. Morgan Mellish, 'Andrew to retire', *Australian Financial Review*, 17 September 2003.
20. Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters, *Territorial representation: report of the inquiry into increasing the minimum representation for the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory in the House of Representatives*, November 2003, p. 24.
21. Under section 48(2B) of the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918* the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory are entitled to a minimum of at least one member each in the House of Representatives. It should be noted that at the 2003 determination the entitlement calculation for the ACT was 2.4209, well over the requirement for two seats but short of the requirement for three seats.
22. Rosemary Bell and Gerard Newman, 'Commonwealth Electoral Amendment (Representation in the House of Representatives) Bill 2004', *Bills Digest*, no. 121, Parliamentary Library, Canberra, 2003–04.
23. Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters, op. cit. p.xvi.