



Submission to the Redistribution Committee for Tasmania

Proposed Redistribution of Tasmania's Federal Electoral Divisions



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Introduction

Break O'Day Council provides this submission in response to the proposed redistribution of the Division of Lyons, noting the limited opportunity for meaningful consultation with affected regional communities.

The Council requests that the Australian Electoral Commission:

1. Re-examine options that more closely align Break O'Day with north-east or east coast communities of interest; or
2. Provide clearer justification for retaining Break O'Day within a re-oriented Division of Lyons that is increasingly south-central in focus.

Council does not support the proposed redistribution as it relates to the Break O'Day municipal area, on the basis that the proposal may not adequately reflect:

- Established communities of interest;
- Regional travel and service patterns; and
- The representational needs of remote and regional communities.

Additionally, Council does not support the proposed inclusion of the Glenorchy local government area within Lyons and considers that this change weakens the coherence of the electorate when assessed against the statutory criteria set out in the Commonwealth Electoral Act.

Council also notes that, under the proposed redistribution, Break O'Day would become the only remaining East Coast municipality within the Division of Lyons. This further highlights the growing disconnect between the electorate's composition and the established communities of interest that exist along Tasmania's East Coast and across Northern Tasmania.

The proposal appears to give insufficient weight to communities of interest and regional connectivity, which are central considerations in any redistribution.

In contrast, Break O'Day Council submits that the municipality's social, economic and governance connections align far more strongly with Northern Tasmania and the communities represented within the Division of Bass.

Council therefore submits that serious consideration should be given to the inclusion of Break O'Day within Bass, where its communities of interest are more clearly aligned.

In undertaking this submission, Council has considered the redistribution criteria contained within the Commonwealth Electoral Act, including communities of interest, means of communication and travel, physical features and area, and existing electoral boundaries.

Community of Interest

The Commonwealth Electoral Act recognises the importance of maintaining communities of interest when determining electoral boundaries.

In its discussion paper accompanying the proposed redistribution, the Committee itself notes the strong functional connections between Break O'Day and Northern Tasmania. Council agrees with this assessment and submits that these connections warrant stronger recognition within the final electoral boundary determination.

For Break O’Day residents, these communities of interest operate strongly within Northern Tasmania.

Despite being geographically located on Tasmania’s east coast, Break O’Day functions socially, economically and administratively within a northern regional system centred on Launceston.

Residents regularly travel north for essential services, education, employment and regional governance engagement.

These patterns demonstrate that Break O’Day’s community of interest aligns closely with the municipalities and communities currently represented within the Division of Bass.

Health and Emergency Services

Break O’Day operates within a regional health service model where serious illness or trauma cases require transfer to major facilities in Launceston.

Patients requiring advanced care are routinely transported north via ambulance, helicopter retrieval services, or fixed-wing aircraft. These established clinical pathways are embedded within the Tasmanian health system and reflect a consistent service relationship with Northern Tasmania.

In addition, access to specialist and allied health services not available locally further reinforces this reliance, with residents routinely travelling to Launceston to access services including specialist care, diagnostics, and a broad range of allied health services not available locally.

This is complemented by established regional service networks, including local allied health coordination groups that operate across Northern Tasmania, strengthening provider collaboration and reinforcing service integration with Launceston-based systems.

Education and Youth Connections

Education pathways further demonstrate Break O’Day’s strong northern alignment.

Many students from the municipality relocate to Launceston to complete Years 11 and 12, often living in shared accommodation while attending Launceston-based colleges.

These arrangements create ongoing social, educational and economic ties between Break O’Day families and the Northern Tasmanian community.

Regional Collaboration

Break O’Day Council actively participates in a range of Northern regional governance networks, including:

- Northern Tasmania Development Corporation
- Circular North (Regional Waste Management Group)
- Northern Tasmanian Alliance for Resilient Councils (Climate Change)
- Northern Regional Land Use Planning Strategy Group

Through these organisations Break O’Day collaborates closely with northern councils including:

- City of Launceston
- Dorset Council
- George Town Council
- West Tamar Council
- Flinders Island

These partnerships reflect shared regional priorities in areas such as economic development, climate resilience, waste management and land use planning.

Transport and Travel Patterns

The Commonwealth Electoral Act requires the Redistribution Committee to consider means of communication and travel within proposed electoral divisions. Transport connections reinforce Break O’Day’s northern orientation. Regular public transport services operate between Break O’Day and Launceston, rather than Hobart.

The municipality is connected to both the north and south via the Tasman Highway; however, travel patterns demonstrate stronger functional links with Northern Tasmania.

Launceston — the primary regional service centre for Northern Tasmania — is approximately 130 km from St Helens, compared to approximately 220 km to Hobart, representing a travel time difference of around one hour.

As a result, residents overwhelmingly travel north to Launceston for:

- Specialist medical services
- Higher education and training
- Employment opportunities
- Government and administrative services
- Major retail and commercial activity

Launceston also functions as the primary air travel gateway for the region, with residents routinely accessing Launceston Airport for intrastate and interstate travel.

These established movement patterns demonstrate a clear and consistent functional alignment with Northern Tasmania.

East Coast Representation

While Break O’Day shares some characteristics with both northern and southern regions, the evidence clearly demonstrates a stronger and more consistent alignment with Northern Tasmania across health services, education, employment, and transport connections.

Any residual similarities with the south are outweighed by these dominant functional relationships.

Historically, the Division of Lyons has incorporated several communities from Tasmania's East Coast, reflecting the shared coastal economy, tourism sector and regional development priorities of these areas.

Removing other East Coast communities from the electorate while retaining Break O'Day in a different southern anchored electorate creates an increasingly fragmented geographic arrangement.

As a result, Break O'Day risks becoming geographically and regionally isolated within the electorate, despite its strong practical connections with Northern Tasmania.

This outcome risks creating an electorate in which the remaining East Coast community has limited geographic, economic or social alignment with the majority of the division.

Recognising Break O'Day's alignment with Northern Tasmania through inclusion in Bass would provide a more coherent reflection of the municipality's community of interest.

Collectively, these patterns confirm that Break O'Day operates as part of a northern regional system in practice, not a southern one.

Concerns Regarding the Inclusion of Glenorchy in Lyons

Break O'Day Council is concerned that the proposed inclusion of Glenorchy within Lyons may create an electorate with increasingly divergent communities of interest.

Glenorchy is a large metropolitan municipality located within the Hobart urban area and shares strong economic and social connections with Greater Hobart.

Council is concerned that this proposal introduces a significant metropolitan municipality into what has historically been a predominantly regional electorate, potentially altering the balance of representation between metropolitan and regional communities.

If the proposal stands as proposed it would result in three (3) of Tasmania's five (5) electorates being firmly anchored in Hobart. Given that it is all about the numbers required to be elected, this may result in Hobart-based communities having a greater likelihood of securing three Members of Parliament at the Federal level.

Under the proposed redistribution, Lyons would contain a large metropolitan municipality in Glenorchy while Break O'Day would remain the electorate's sole East Coast community — a configuration that risks diluting both metropolitan and regional communities of interest within the division.

By contrast, communities within Lyons are largely rural and regional in character, with diverse economic bases including agriculture, tourism and resource industries.

Council believes that redistributions should seek to maintain electorates that reflect coherent regional identities and shared community interests.

A Stronger Alignment with Bass

Break O'Day Council submits that the municipality's community of interest aligns more naturally with the Northern Tasmanian municipalities represented within the Division of Bass.

The municipality's:

- health service pathways
- education patterns
- regional governance participation
- economic and social networks
- travel patterns

All point strongly toward Northern Tasmania. These relationships are not incidental but reflect longstanding regional structures that shape how services are delivered, how communities interact and how local governments collaborate across Northern Tasmania.

Recognising these connections within electoral boundaries would better reflect the lived experience of Break O'Day residents and the way the community interacts with the broader region.

Consistency with Redistribution Principles

When assessed against the redistribution criteria outlined in the Commonwealth Electoral Act, Break O'Day's alignment with Northern Tasmania is clear:

- **Community of interest:** Break O'Day shares strong economic, social and governance connections with Northern Tasmania.
- **Means of communication and travel:** Residents travel predominantly to Launceston for services and employment.
- **Existing boundaries:** Break O'Day has longstanding collaborative relationships with Northern councils and regional organisations.

Conclusion

Break O'Day Council respectfully submits that:

- The proposed inclusion of Glenorchy within Lyons should be reconsidered; and
- The strong Northern Tasmanian connections of Break O'Day warrant consideration of the municipality being included within the Division of Bass.

Aligning electoral boundaries with genuine communities of interest strengthens representation and ensures electorates reflect the real social and economic relationships that shape Tasmanian communities.

Electoral boundaries are most effective when they reflect the real social, economic and service relationships that shape communities. For Break O'Day, those relationships clearly extend north toward Launceston and the municipalities represented within Bass. Aligning electoral boundaries with these realities would strengthen the coherence of the electorate and better reflect the lived experience of Break O'Day residents.