

ELECTORAL ENROLMENT

1009. Hon NEIL THOMSON to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Electoral Affairs:

I refer to the answer to question without notice 970 asked on 31 August and note the systemic under-enrolment in regional areas when assessing enrolment rates as a proportion of census data.

- (1) Is Electoral Boundaries WA or the Western Australian Electoral Commission aware of the significantly wider than average gap between enrolment and adult population of regional districts when compared with metropolitan districts, which I referred to as structural under-enrolment but might better be described as systemic under-enrolment in regional areas?
- (2) Has Electoral Boundaries WA or the WA Electoral Commission undertaken an analysis of the reasons for this?
- (3) Given the claims of increased enrolment in the lead-up to the Voice referendum, is there any statutory reason for Electoral Boundaries WA not updating its enrolment dataset before finalising the proposed regional boundaries?

Hon MATTHEW SWINBOURN replied:

I thank the member for some notice of the question. The following answer has been provided to me by the Minister for Electoral Affairs, whom, for the member's future reference, I represent.

- (1)–(2) The Western Australian Electoral Commission—along with its joint electoral roll partner, the Australian Electoral Commission—is always studying enrolment rates across the state. It is conscious of varying enrolment trends in regional districts across Western Australia, including areas of sustained population growth and decline. There is no uniform systemic under-enrolment in regional areas. The issues and reasons for varying enrolment across all electoral districts varies based on some common factors, as well as the particular characteristics of each district.
- (3) The determination of the relevant day is set out in section 16E of the Electoral Act 1907, which states that the state must be divided into districts as soon as practicable after the day that is two years after polling day for each general election for the Assembly. The roll close for the distribution took place on the relevant day, which was 13 March 2023, in accordance with the act. Section 16G of the Electoral Act 1907 requires the commissioners to divide the state into districts in accordance with the enrolment levels determined at the relevant day.