

LOCAL GOVERNMENT CHANGE COMMISSION

**REPORT ON A CHANGE
TO THE EXTERNAL BOUNDARIES OF THE
BARCALDINE REGIONAL COUNCIL AND
BLACKALL-TAMBO REGIONAL COUNCIL**

June 2011

**Electoral Commission of Queensland
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Background

The former Minister for Local Government and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships asked me to consider a proposal to change the common boundary between Barcaldine Regional Council and Blackall-Tambo Regional Council.

The section of the boundary considered in this proposal relates to Stratford Station currently the holding of Terry Brennan and Robyn Adams. The proposal has been the subject of negotiation between the local councils and the landholders over a number of years.

The Change Commission in this case is constituted by me as Electoral Commissioner in accordance with section 22 of the *Local Government Act 2009* (the Act). The Change Commission is responsible for assessing whether a proposed local government change is in the public interest. In doing so, the Change Commission must consider whether the proposed local government change is consistent with the Act.

Section 19(4) of the Act requires that the Change commission must—

- ask for submissions from any local government that would be affected by the proposed local government change; and
- hold a public hearing to ask the public for its views about the proposed local government change.

Submissions and Hearing

The Minister received submissions from both councils relating to the boundary change under consideration. The Blackall-Tambo Regional Council submission supported the proposed change and was accompanied by the landholders' agreement. Barcaldine Regional Council's (initial) submission expressed reservations.

A public hearing in connection with this matter was advertised in the *Barcoo Independent* and *Longreach Leader* newspapers on Friday 11 February 2011. These newspapers are published weekly and circulate in the Blackall and Barcaldine areas respectively. Each council concerned in this matter was also advised of the hearing and invited to put any additional material that the council considered appropriate before the Change commission. The landholders were also given an opportunity to put material before the commission.

The public hearing was held in the town of Blackall on Monday 28 February 2011, with 15 persons in attendance. At the commencement of the hearing, I outlined the process to be followed.

Landholder Mr Terry Brennan addressed the meeting summarising material in his prepared written submission. Cr Jan Ross, Mayor of Blackall-Tambo, as well as a number of local residents, spoke in favour of the proposal, stating that the landholders were active members of the Blackall community.

Mr Des Howard, Chief Executive Officer of the Barcaldine Regional Council addressed the meeting and advised that his council no longer held any objection to the proposed boundary change. The Barcaldine Council recognises that any assessment of this matter will have no direct bearing on any other matters that may come before the Change commission, given that each separate proposal must be considered on its individual merits.

At the hearing's conclusion, I advised that I would analyse the issues taking into account comments made at the hearing. The procedure followed in these matters, as required by the Local Government Act, was also outlined.

Findings

I assess that the common boundary between Barcaldine Regional Council and Blackall-Tambo Regional Council should be changed to exclude Lot 6 Crown Plan 848943, County of Evora, Parish of Yalleroi from Barcaldine Regional Council and include it in Blackall-Tambo Regional Council.

Reasons for Findings

After considering the material put before me, I find broad general support for the proposed change to the common boundary between Barcaldine and Blackall-Tambo Councils at Stratford Station. In particular, I acknowledge the support of both councils and members of the Blackall community for the landholders' proposal. I note that there are some anomalies relating to the existing boundaries, in particular that responsibility for the upkeep of a single section of road which forms one of the boundaries of the property in question falls to the two different councils when it would clearly be more efficient for the one council to maintain the entire section. In reaching this conclusion, I wish to reiterate that all change proposals must be considered on their merits and my support for this particular proposal should not be taken as a guarantee of a supportive assessment in relation to any or all other future local government change proposals.

Implementation

The Governor in Council may implement the change commission's recommendation under a regulation.

The regulation may provide for anything that is necessary or convenient to facilitate the implementation of the local government change.

David Kerslake
Electoral Commissioner

APPENDIX A

Overview Map – Barcaldine Regional Council and Blackall-Tambo Regional Council



