

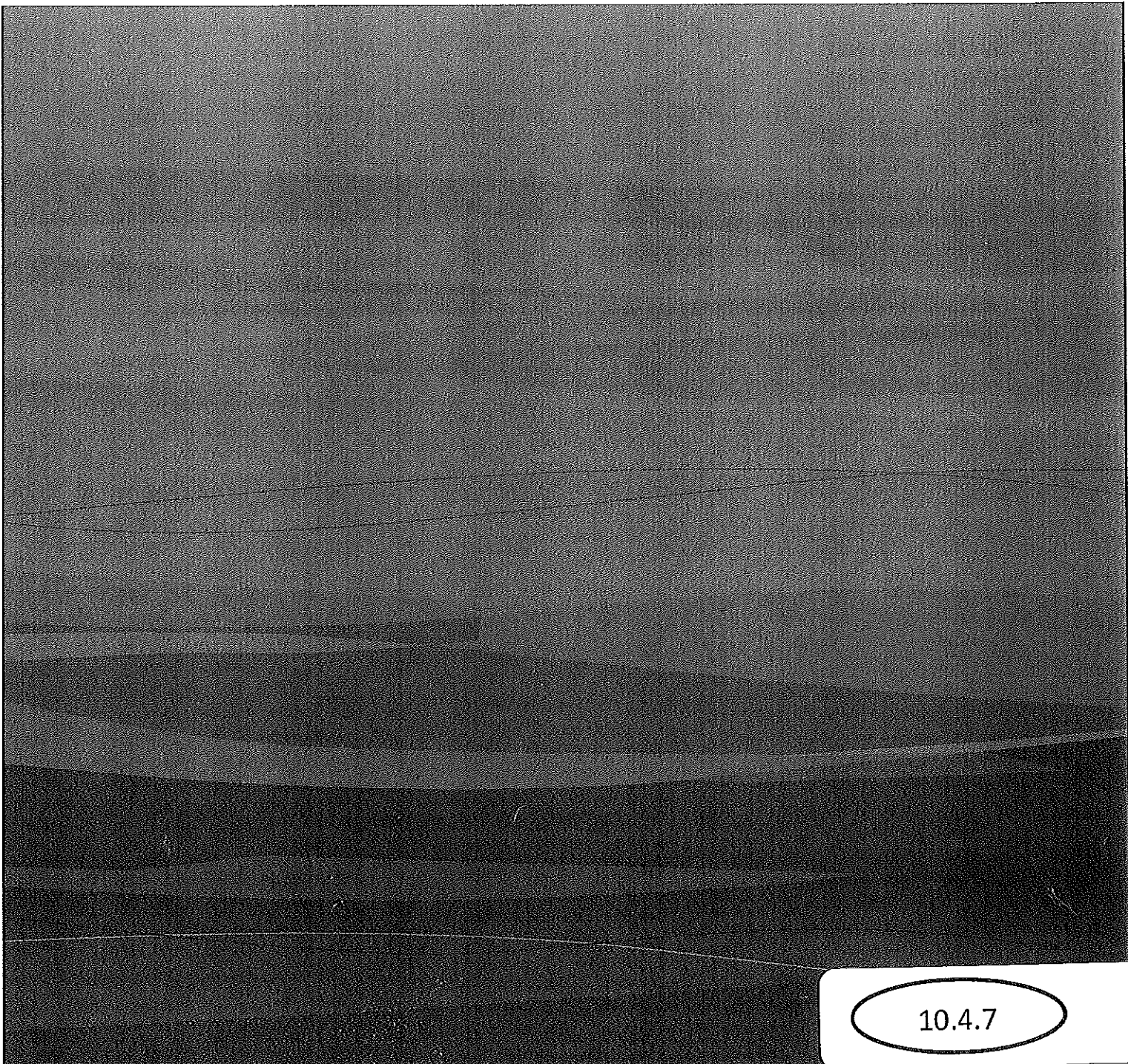


Government of Western Australia
Local Government Advisory Board

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ADVISORY BOARD

The Proposal to Amend the District Boundary between the Shires of Ravensthorpe and Esperance

November 2011



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Proposal to Amend the District Boundary between the Shires of Ravensthorpe and Esperance

This document has been prepared by the Local Government Advisory Board (the Board) and is intended as a guide to the range of issues to be considered as part of its inquiry into the above proposal.

The Board has received a proposal from electors of the Shire of Ravensthorpe to amend the district boundary between the Shire of Ravensthorpe and the Shire of Esperance, based on the locality of Munglinup. A map illustrating the proposed boundary is included as an attachment to this paper.

The electors' reasons for submitting this proposal to the Board are based around their connection and affinity with the Shire of Esperance including conducting business, participating in sport and recreation and attending school within the Shire of Esperance.

As part of the inquiry process, members of the public (individuals and groups) are invited to participate by attending a public hearing. The date and venue of the hearing is as follows:

Public Hearing

Shire of Ravensthorpe	
Venue	Munglinup Community Centre
Date	Thursday, 1 December 2011
Time	6.00pm – 7.00pm

Public hearings provide an opportunity for the public and other interested parties to express their views on the proposal. This will be treated by the Board as a formal submission/s. It is not a forum for debate on the proposal. The Board may also grant private hearings on request.

The Board welcomes community participation in its inquiry. Written submissions can be mailed, faxed or e-mailed to the addresses below. A public submission form is included as an attachment to this paper that can be completed and returned to the Board.

Local Government Advisory Board
GPO Box R1250, PERTH WA 6844
Fax: (08) 6552 1555
E-mail: advisory.board@dlg.wa.gov.au

Submissions should be received by the Board by 4pm on Thursday, 22 December 2011.

For further information on completing a submission or the inquiry process please contact:

Meghan Dwyer

Tel: (08) 6552 1484

E-mail: meghan.dwyer@dlg.wa.gov.au

Background Information

The Board is a statutory body established under section 2.44 of the *Local Government Act 1995* (the Act) and is responsible for inquiring into proposals for amalgamations and boundary amendments.

Electors of the affected area submitted a proposal to the Board in June 2011.

The Board considered the proposal on 2 August 2011 and resolved to conduct a formal inquiry into the proposal in accordance with the provisions of Schedule 2.1 of the Act.

Assessing the Proposal

In accordance with the Act, the Board is required to take into account the following factors when assessing proposals for amalgamations and boundary changes:

- Community of interests
- Physical and topographic features
- Demographic trends
- Economic factors
- History of the area
- Transport and communication
- Matters affecting the viability of local governments, and
- The effective delivery of local government services.

The Board will consider these factors and any others it considers relevant to the inquiry.

Guiding Principles

The following information is intended as a guide to the range of issues the Board will take into account in its assessment. However, public submissions need not be limited by these factors and can address any area of interest relevant to the inquiry.

Community of Interests

Community of Interests includes parts of a district that share common interests, values, characteristics and issues giving rise to a separate sense of identity or community. Factors contributing to a sense of community include shared interests and shared use of community facilities. For example, sporting, leisure and library facilities create a focus for the community.

The use of shopping areas and the location of schools also act to draw people together with similar interests. This can also give indications about the direction that people travel to access services and facilities. The external boundaries of a local government need to reflect distinct communities of interest wherever possible.

Neighbourhoods, suburbs and towns are important units in the physical, historical and social infrastructure and often generate a feeling of community and belonging. The Board believes that wherever possible, it is inappropriate to divide these units between local governments.

Physical and Topographic Features

Physical and topographic features may be man-made and will vary from area to area. They may include:

- Water features (such as rivers)
- Catchment boundaries
- Coastal plains and foothills
- Parks and reserves, and
- Man-made features (such as railway lines or freeways).

These features can form identifiable boundaries and can also act as barriers to movement between adjoining areas. In many cases physical and topographical features are appropriate district and ward boundaries. The Board supports local government structures and boundaries that facilitate the integration of human activity and land use.

Demographic Trends

Local governments should consider the following characteristics when determining the demographics within its locality:

- Population size
- Population trends
- Distribution by age
- Gender, and
- Occupation.

Current and projected population factors will be relevant as well as similarities and differences between areas within the local government.

Economic Factors

Economic factors can include any factor that reflects the character of economic activities and resources in the area including:

- Industries within the local area
- Distribution of community assets, and
- Infrastructure.

History of the Area

The history of the area can be a relevant consideration, although the Board believes that in a majority of cases this will not be a primary justification for changing or retaining local governments and local government boundaries. The nature of historical ties between the communities is important to understand, irrespective of where local government boundaries lie.

A community within a local government may have a strong historical identity; alternatively there may be strong historical links between two or more local governments. It is important to note that historical identity is not necessarily lessened if an area does not have its own local government.

Transport and Communication

The transport and communication linkages between towns and other areas may be a significant barrier to movement and therefore an appropriate boundary between local governments.

Consideration of the following factors is important in any assessment of local government boundaries:

- Port access
- Neighbouring towns
- Railways, and

- Major roads.

Matters Affecting the Viability of Local Governments

Local governments should have a significant resource base:

- To be able to efficiently and effectively exercise their proper functions and delegated powers and operate facilities and services
- To be flexible and responsive in the exercise of their functions and powers and operation of their facilities and services
- To employ appropriate professional expertise and skills, and
- To be capable of embracing micro-economic reform.

Each local government should have a diverse and sufficient rate base to ensure that general purpose grants do not represent the major revenue source.

Effective Delivery of Local Government Services

A broad range of factors can be relevant to the effective delivery of local government services and these are often directly relevant to those that also affect the viability of local governments. These include:

- The size and geographical spread of the population
- Management effectiveness and efficiency
- The availability of staff expertise, and
- Appropriate infrastructure and equipment.

Final Decision

On completion of its inquiry the Board will submit its inquiry report with recommendations to the Minister for Local Government for consideration.

Should the Board recommend in favour of the proposal the Minister can either accept or reject the Board's recommendation in favour of the boundary amendment.

In the event that the Board recommends against the boundary amendment the Minister must accept the recommendation and the amendment will not proceed.