

HANSARD

QUEENSLAND PARLIAMENT

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

25.05.2016

Queensland Redistribution Commission, Appointments

Hon. YM D'ATH (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Training and Skills) (2.29 pm): I can advise the House that the Queensland Redistribution Commission has been established. Section 6 of the Electoral Act 1992 requires that the redistribution commission be chaired by a current or retired judge, a non-judicial appointee being a chief executive of a department or a holder of office equivalent to chief executive of a department as approved by Governor-in-Council and the Electoral Commissioner.

The Queensland Redistribution Commission will be chaired by retired District Court Judge Hugh Botting. Mr Botting was appointed to the District Court bench by former attorney-general and member for Redlands Paul Clauson in 1989. Ms Liza Carroll, the Director-General of the Department of Housing and Public Works, has been appointed as a commissioner. Ms Carroll and Mr Botting will join the Electoral Commissioner, who is the third member of the commission.

His Honour Judge Botting has had extensive experience travelling to and presiding over regional circuit courts across the state during his 26 years on the bench of the District Court. He enjoyed a well-deserved reputation for fairness and integrity.

Ms Carroll was formerly the head of Indigenous affairs under former prime minister Tony Abbott, with Indigenous affairs being moved within Prime Minister Tony Abbott's department. Her position included extensive work with regional and remote Queensland communities. Ms Carroll also spent time working as a Queensland teacher and received her Masters from and lectured at James Cook University. I congratulate both of them on their appointments.

A fundamental aspect of the redistribution is to ensure effective representation of the people of Queensland. Section 38 of the Electoral Act 1992 mandates that an electoral redistribution is to occur either one year after the third general election which was held after the last electoral redistribution or 7½ years after the last electoral redistribution was finalised, whichever is the latter. Three general elections—21 March 2009, 24 March 2012 and 31 January 2015—have been held since the last electoral redistribution was finalised on 20 August 2008. In accordance with the requirements of section 38 of the act, the next electoral redistribution should have commenced on 12 March this year. Due to the holding of quadrennial local government elections and a referendum on 19 March 2016, it was necessary to delay the constitution of the Redistribution Commission.

It is expected that the redistribution process will take approximately 12 months to complete. The redistribution will consider not just the current boundaries of the 89 seats but also the additional four seats that have recently been included in the Electoral Act as a consequence of amendments before this parliament.

I encourage all of those in the community to get involved in this redistribution process. They will have the opportunity to put submissions, as will members of the parliament. As I say, I encourage members to do that and their communities as this is an important process for our democracy and our electoral system going forward for Queensland.