



Government of **Western Australia**  
Local Government Advisory Board

# LOCAL GOVERNMENT ADVISORY BOARD

The Proposal to Amalgamate  
the Shires of Cunderdin, Quairading, Tammin and York

*July 2013*

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## The Proposal to Amalgamate the Shires of Cunderdin, Quairading, Tammin and York

July 2013

Prepared by:

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# The Proposal to Amalgamate the Shires of Cunderdin, Quairading, Tammin and York

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 joint proposal from the Shires of Cunderdin, Quairading, Tammin and York to amalgamate and form a new local government. A map illustrating the proposed boundary is included as an attachment to this paper.

The proposal was developed by the South East Avon Regional Transition Group (SEARTG) which was formed to investigate the potential benefits arising from amalgamation. The SEARTG comprises two elected members from each of the four member local governments. A comprehensive Regional Business Plan (RBP) was developed to inform members of the SEARTG whether a formal amalgamation proposal should proceed. Based on the information contained in the RBP the Councils of the respective local governments resolved to amalgamate and submit a proposal to the Board for consideration.

The RBP supports the view that the amalgamation will bring greater benefits to the residents of the proposed new local government, particularly new and improved service delivery.

The SEARTG has a dedicated website which contains substantial information about the proposed amalgamation, including a copy of the RBP and a facility for public comment and frequently asked questions about the proposed amalgamation. The web address is: [www.securingourfuture.com.au](http://www.securingourfuture.com.au)

As part of the inquiry process the Board encourages members of the public (individuals and groups) to participate by attending public hearings. The dates and venues of the hearings are as follows:

## Public Hearings:

Shire of Cunderdin	
Venue:	Cunderdin Golf Course, Watts St, Cunderdin
Date:	Tuesday, 23 July 2013
Time:	6.00 pm – 8.00pm

Shire of Quairading	
Venue:	Town Hall, Jennaberring Rd, Quairading
Date:	Wednesday, 24 July 2013
Time:	6.00 pm – 8.00pm

<b>Shire of Tammin</b>	
Venue:	Lesser Hall, Great Eastern Highway, Tammin
Date:	Monday, 22 July 2013
Time:	6.00 pm – 8.00pm

<b>Shire of York</b>	
Venue:	York Town Hall, 81 Avon Terrace, York
Date:	Thursday, 25 July 2013
Time:	6.00 pm – 8.00pm

Public hearings provide an opportunity for the public and other interested parties to express their views on the proposal and these will be treated by the Board as a formal submission. The hearings are 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. A public submission form is included as an attachment to this paper. When completed it should be forwarded to the -

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Submissions will be received by the Board until 4pm on Thursday, 15 August 2013.

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

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## Background Information

The Shires of Cunderdin, Quairading, Tammin and York submitted a joint proposal dated 22 January 2013 to the Board to amalgamate and establish a new local government from 1 July 2014.

The Board resolved on 4 April 2013 to conduct a formal inquiry into the proposal in accordance with the provisions of Schedule 2.1 of the *Local Government Act 1995* (the Act).

The Board is a statutory body established under section 2.44 of the Act and is responsible for making recommendations to the Minister for Local Government for changes to local government district boundaries and ward and representation structures.

## Assessing the Proposal

Under the Act, the Board is required to take into account the following factors when assessing proposals for amalgamation 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 including the name of the new local government, ward boundaries, names of wards, the number of elected members and the method of electing the Mayor or Shire President.

## 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 identity or 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 natural or 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 the local government boundaries lie.

A community within a local government may have a strong historical identity; alternatively there may be a strong historical links between two or more communities in adjacent 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 communications 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**

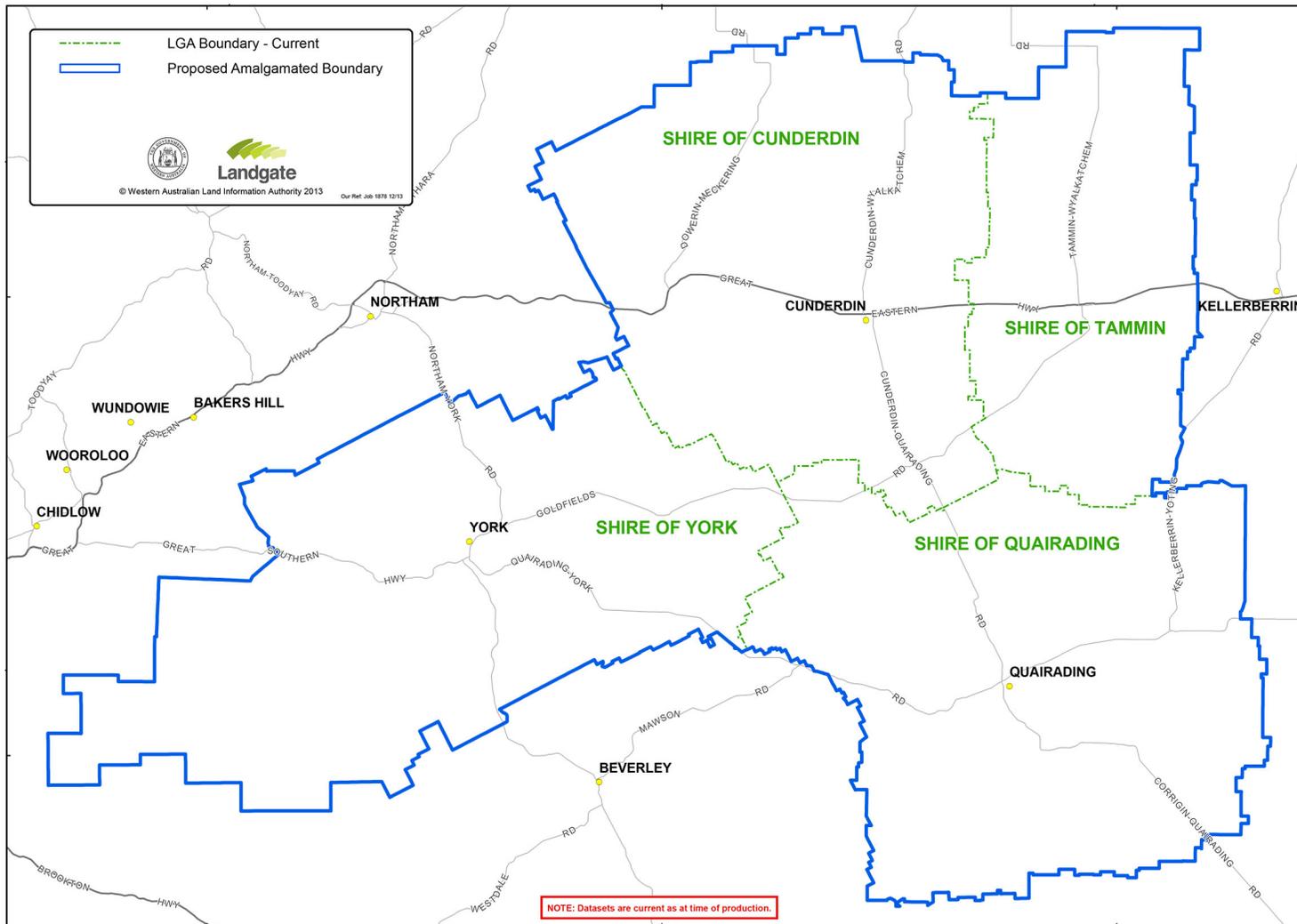
On completion of its inquiry the Board will submit its inquiry report with recommendations to the Minister for Local Government for consideration.

Should the Board recommend in favour of the proposal, the Minister can either reject or accept the recommendation subject to the Board notifying electors of the affected local governments of their right to petition the Minister for a poll on the recommendation.

If a poll returns a majority “no vote” the result is binding on the Minister and the amalgamation will not proceed.

If a poll is not requested, invalid or returns a majority “yes vote”, the Minister can either accept or reject the Board’s recommendation in favour of the amalgamation.

# Attachment One: Map of the Proposal



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## Public Submission Form

I/We

\_\_\_\_\_ (Name)

Of

\_\_\_\_\_ (Address)

### **Proposal to Amalgamate the Shires of Cunderdin, Quairading, Tammin and York**

Do you agree with the proposal? (Please select response)      Yes      No

Please provide reasons for your answer:

\* Please attach further documentation if required.

Any other comments:

Do you wish this information to remain private and confidential:      Yes      No

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please return submissions by 4pm on Thursday, 15 August 2013 to:**

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