

**Electoral structure review - Surf Coast Shire Council - Response Submission
Aireys Inlet and District Association - Aireys Inlet - 09 April 2023, 01:59 pm**

AIREYS INLET AND DISTRICT ASSOCIATION INC

██████████ AIREYS INLET VICTORIA 3231

(Reg. No. A000710V)

9 April 2023

The Victorian Electoral Commission
Level 11, 530 Collins Street
Melbourne Victoria 3000

Dear Commissioner

RE: Surf Coast Shire Structure Review

The Aireys Inlet and District Association (AIDA) is making this submission on behalf of its 500 plus members following the Commission's consideration of initial submissions and the release of its three proposed models for the Structural Review of the Surf Coast Shire Council.

AIDA has been a very active community association for nearly 60 years and works to preserve the low-key coastal character of the area between Urquhart Bluff and Eastern View on the Great Ocean Road. We work closely with our Council and Ward Councillors and have a very strong interest in the outcome of the current review.

In our initial submission we proposed a four Ward model, and our preference now is for Option 3 – the three Ward model.

Torquay is the dominant population centre in the Surf Coast Shire Council area with 15,236 registered voters. (The whole shire has 35,330 voters.) The remainder of the shire is divided between the coastal communities along the Great Ocean Road and the rural hinterland.

It would seem to be logical and sensible for the council area to be divided into these three areas. This would reduce the potential for the Shire to become dominated by the interests of Torquay, while, as far as possible, preserving the three distinct communities of interest of the three areas.

The coastal communities and rural hinterland have their own strong communities of interest which must be recognised. We agree that the best option available would be to have one Ward for the communities of interest in the hinterland (Winchelsea) and one Ward for the coastal communities (Otway Range) - Anglesea, Aireys Inlet, Fairhaven, Moggs Creek, Eastern View and Lorne. These communities have strong common interests and issues.

The dominant population centre of Torquay, which has its own issues and urban communities of interest, would be better represented by its own councillors.

The coastal communities already have links between community organizations and share many of the same concerns, such as caring for the coastal environment, pressures of tourism and traffic on the Great Ocean Road, public infrastructure and the impacts of climate change, particularly dealing with bushfires and erosion along the coast and the vulnerability of the Great Ocean Road. The inclusion of the immediate hinterland in this ward would also make sense given the close ties of population and employment with the coast.

To achieve the requirements of the Local Government Act 2020 there needs to be an equal number of councillors for each Ward and a fair distribution of voters in all Wards (+or - 10%).

We note that in the Commission's Option Three the suggested Ward boundaries do not provide compliance with the +or- 10% deviation requirements. We have attempted to create a map to address this. Achieving compliance with the deviation requirements does mean some of the outer areas of Torquay need to be included in the two neighbouring Wards. (see attached map)

This submission is made on behalf of the Aireys Inlet and District Association. The Association would like to speak to its submission.

We are happy to discuss our submission and to provide further information if required.

Yours sincerely
Charlotte Allen
President

