

## Boundary Adjustment Facilitation Panel



Hon Geoff Brock MP  
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**Government of South Australia**  
ABN: 88 326 594 169

Dear Minister Brock

On 8 July 2014 I received a letter from the Premier, the Hon Jay Weatherill, indicating his intention to abolish all government boards and committees "unless it can be demonstrated that (they) have an essential purpose that cannot be met by other means".

I have discussed this matter with my fellow members of the Boundary Adjustment Facilitation Panel (BAFP) and the following advice reflects the views of the Panel as a whole.

This advice addresses the issues of efficiency, independence and the opportunity for stakeholders to have more "direct access to government advisory and decision-making processes" which are the factors for consideration specifically mentioned in the Premier's letter.

The administrative functions of BAFP could be undertaken by the Office of Local Government. However, the *Local Government Act 1999*, requires extensive consultation and analysis of every proposal for boundary change and I doubt that Departmental Officers could undertake this role more efficiently or cost effectively than Panel members with the support of an Executive Officer.

BAFP provides an independent avenue to analyse and assess proposals for changes to Local Government boundaries. This provides a separation between the review and consideration of boundary change proposals and the Minister's decision-making responsibility. Previous Ministers have indicated to me that they particularly value this separation of functions.

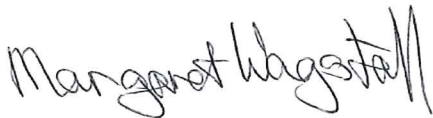
As half the members of BAFP are nominated by the Local Government Association, the Panel provides direct access for its key stakeholder in all its activities, considerations and decision-making. This direct partnership with Local Government has been essential to adequately informing the work of the Panel and in securing support for contentious decisions. Abolition of the Panel would remove Local Government's direct access to the boundary change process.

BAFP is established through the *Local Government Act 1999*, and so subsequent change to this Act would be required if blanket legislation was introduced to abolish government boards and committees. If the Government intends that Local Government Authorities and community members continue to have an opportunity to develop and pursue proposals for boundary change new mechanisms would need to be developed and included in the Act.

If the Government decides to review, rather than abolish, the functions and activities of BAFP, I would be very pleased to have the opportunity to provide some input to this process.

I am available to meet at your convenience if you wish to discuss any of these matters.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Margaret Wagstaff". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Margaret Wagstaff  
**Chair**

25 August 2014