

To the Victorian Electoral Commission

Response Submission on the Port Phillip Electoral Representation Review by unChain Inc

May 2015

Email to portphillipreview@vec.vic.gov.au

Submissions on the Electoral Representation Review for Port Phillip are due by Wednesday 5 May.

The Preliminary Report from the VEC for the Port Phillip Representation Review offered the following options:

- Option A (preferred option) Port Phillip City Council consist of nine councillors elected from three three-councillor wards.
- Option B (alternative option) Port Phillip City Council consist of nine councillors elected from three three-councillor wards, with different boundaries from those in Option A.
- Option C (alternative option) Port Phillip City Council consist of seven councillors elected from seven single-councillor wards.

unChain Inc is a residents group that made a submission to the Preliminary Stage. We submitted that the current ward boundaries for the City of Port Phillip have worked well and should be retained with minimum changes.

We continue to hold this position and therefore support Option C. (We note that the Council also proposes an additional option of nine single-Councillor wards).

The reasons for our support of Option C are:

- The seven wards each represent a different community with different issues.
- Councillors are relatively accessible to their constituents because Port Phillip as a whole, and its individual wards, are compact geographical areas. It is not necessary to have more than seven councillors in order to ensure adequate representation of residents and ratepayers.
- Having a single councillor for each ward allows the voters to assess the performance of each councillor.
- The experience of the last two Councils in Port Phillip has shown that the individual councillors have been very aware of their municipality-wide responsibilities and have not been guilty of focusing only on parochial issues.
- The recommendations of the Georgiou Committee, if adopted by the State government, will have more impact in Port Phillip than any other municipality especially the move to compulsory postal voting and the new

franchise for the absentee landlords. This will require an 'out-of-cycle' representation review of port Phillip. It is appropriate to wait for this review to make fundamental changes to the structure in this municipality.

I would like to speak to our submission at the public hearing.

Regards

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