

**FINAL REPORT**  
**Electoral Representation Review**  
**Alpine Shire Council**



4 October 2004



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## Table of Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Background</b>	<b>2</b>
2.1	Legislative basis.....	2
2.2	The VEC and electoral representation reviews.....	2
2.3	Municipality profile.....	3
2.4	Current electoral structure .....	3
<b>3</b>	<b>Electoral representation review process</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Public involvement</b>	<b>4</b>
4.1	Public information.....	4
4.2	Advertising.....	5
4.3	Media releases .....	5
4.4	Information leaflet.....	5
4.5	VEC website .....	5
4.6	Helpline.....	6
4.7	Guide for Submissions .....	6
<b>5</b>	<b>Preliminary Report</b>	<b>6</b>
5.1	Preliminary submissions .....	6
5.2	VEC research .....	6
5.3	Recommended options .....	6
<b>6</b>	<b>Response submissions</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>Public hearing</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>Findings and recommendations</b>	<b>7</b>
8.1	Number of councillors .....	7
8.2	Electoral structure .....	9
<b>9</b>	<b>Appendices</b>	<b>13</b>
9.1	Public notices of the electoral representation review .....	13
9.2	Media releases .....	17
9.3	Information leaflet.....	21
9.4	Guide for submissions .....	22
9.5	List of persons and groups making submissions.....	34

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## 1 Recommendation

The Victorian Electoral Commission (VEC) is required under the legislation for the electoral representation review to make a recommendation to the Minister for Local Government as to the number of councillors and the electoral structure that provides fair and equitable representation for the voters of Alpine Shire (s.219D *Local Government Act 1989*).

**The VEC recommends that Alpine Shire consist of seven councillors to be elected from an unsubdivided municipality.**

This recommended structure is indicated in the map on the back page of this Report.

## 2 Background

### 2.1 Legislative basis

The *Local Government (Democratic Reform) Act 2003* which amended the *Local Government Act 1989* (the Act), was passed by the Parliament in Spring 2003. The amendments included provisions for independent electoral representation reviews of all Victorian councils. In accordance with this new legislation, Alpine Shire Council received notice pursuant to s.219C of the Act from the Minister for Local Government that an electoral representation review was to be conducted for Alpine Shire. The notice appeared in the *Victoria Government Gazette* on 13 May 2004.

Under the legislation, a council is required to appoint an electoral commission to conduct an electoral representation review. On 9 June 2004 Alpine Shire Council appointed the VEC to conduct the review.

The purpose of an electoral representation review is to recommend an electoral structure that provides fair and equitable representation for the persons who are entitled to vote at a general election of the Council. Matters to be considered by the review are:

- a) the number of councillors;
- b) the electoral structure of the Shire (whether the Shire should be unsubdivided or divided into wards; and, if the Shire is to be subdivided, the number of wards and the number of councillors to be elected for each ward); and
- c) if the recommendation is for the Shire to be divided into wards, boundaries for the wards that will:
  - i. provide for a fair and equitable division of the Shire; and
  - ii. ensure equality of representation, through the number of voters represented by each councillor being within 10% of the average number of voters represented by all councillors.

### 2.2 The VEC and electoral representation reviews

The VEC has ten years' experience in working on municipal ward boundaries, being contracted by councils to prepare options for their consideration. VEC staff have also worked for the Electoral Boundaries Commission in State redivisions. In doing this work, the VEC has used sophisticated mapping software, has conducted field research and has developed expertise in preparing electoral boundaries that both comply with legislative approximate equality requirements and respect communities of interest.

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The VEC has engaged Mr Terry Maher to provide expertise in the field of local government in undertaking this review.

Mr Maher commenced his career in local government in 1963. Mr Maher has extensive municipal experience, having been employed by the Melbourne City Council and the former Ringwood and Essendon Councils. He also held the position of Chief Executive at Knox City Council from 1995-2001 and Croydon City Council from 1986-1994. Mr Maher was also interim Chief Executive of the Monash City Council at the time of municipal restructure. More recently, Mr Maher was appointed by the Minister for Local Government to conduct a Commission of Inquiry into Surf Coast Shire Council which was completed in April 2003.

He now provides consulting services to the public sector.

### **2.3 Municipality profile**

Alpine Shire was formed in 1994 by the amalgamation of the shires of Bright and Myrtleford and parts of the shires of Beechworth, Omeo, Oxley and Yackandandah. It includes the towns of Myrtleford, Bright and Mount Beauty, and also contains the alpine resort areas of Mount Hotham and Falls Creek. Almost 64% of the resident population lives in or near Myrtleford or Bright.

Due to the tourist trade, a higher proportion of people in the Alpine Shire are employed in accommodation, restaurants, recreation services etc. than in regional shires as a whole. A higher than average percentage of people are employed in property and business services. Unemployment levels are slightly below the average for regional Victoria, and there is a higher proportion of 18-34 year olds than in many regional shires.

Most residents come from an English-speaking background, although there is also a small Italian community. Between 2004 and 2012, population growth is expected to be above the levels of regional Victoria as a whole (excluding municipalities with cities), and the age structure of the population is expected to change, as in regional Victoria as a whole, with people over 50 years of age becoming a substantially higher proportion of the population.

(Sources: Buchan: Alpine Shire Information Paper: *The Regional Economy*; Department of Infrastructure: *Victoria in Future*; Department of Sustainability and Environment: *Regional Victoria in Fact 2001*; Department of Sustainability and Environment: *Towns in Time*).

### **2.4 Current electoral structure**

Currently, Alpine Shire has five councillors elected from an unsubdivided municipality.

## **3 Electoral representation review process**

Section 219D of the *Local Government Act 1989* specifies that the purpose of an electoral representation review is to achieve "fair and equitable representation for the persons who are entitled to vote at a general election of the Council." To achieve this, the VEC proceeds on the basis of three main principles:

*1: to ensure that the number of voters represented by each councillor is within 10% of the average number of voters per councillor for that municipality*

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Populations are continually changing – they grow in some areas and decline in others. Over time, these changes can lead to some wards having larger or smaller numbers of voters. As part of a representation review, the VEC needs to correct any imbalances that have come about. The VEC also tries to make sure that the boundaries it sets will continue to provide equitable representation until the next review is due in eight years, by taking account of likely future changes.

*2: to take a consistent, State-wide approach to the total number of councillors*

Regarding the number of councillors, the VEC has adopted as a guide the numbers of councillors in similar-sized municipalities of similar categories within Victoria. In addition, the VEC considers any special circumstances that warrant the municipality having more or fewer councillors than similar municipalities.

*3: to ensure that communities of interest are as fairly represented as possible*

Every municipality contains a number of communities of interest. The electoral structure should be designed to take these into account where practicable. This is important for assisting the elected councillors to be effective representatives of the people in their particular municipality.

The VEC bases its recommendations on a number of factors, including the following:

- internal research specifically relating to the municipality under review;
- the VEC's experience from its work with other municipalities and in similar reviews for State elections;
- the VEC's expertise in mapping, demography and local government; and
- careful consideration of all input from the public in both written and verbal submissions made during the course of the review.

Input from the public is an important part of the process, but it is not the only factor considered. The VEC seeks to ensure fair and equitable representation for all voters of the municipality. This means carefully considering all views expressed in submissions from the public, and also considering other factors, such as the best possible representation for the various communities of interest in the municipality under review.

In considering public submissions, the VEC values the local knowledge and local perspectives that are presented. The VEC believes it important to consider the issues and information presented in submissions, as well as the arguments for particular structural models. In reaching its recommendations, the VEC seeks to combine the information gathered through public submissions with its own research in order to achieve what it considers to be a fair and equitable result until the next review period. The VEC does not make its recommendations based on a "straw poll" of the number of submissions supporting a particular option.

Further details about issues considered by the VEC can be found in Sections 8.1 and 8.2 of this Report and in the Guide for Submissions (Appendix 9.3).

## **4 Public involvement**

### **4.1 Public information**

The VEC informed the community about the electoral representation review through:

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- advertising in newspapers;
  - conducting three information sessions on 14 July 2004, to outline the review process and to respond to questions from members of the community;
  - distributing a Guide for Submissions.
  - communicating with the Alpine Shire community through the use of media releases and the VEC website;
  - developing an information leaflet and posting it to all voters in Alpine Shire;
  - publishing all preliminary submissions on the VEC website;
  - releasing a Preliminary Report on 18 August 2004 and making the Report available at the Council offices, at the VEC and on the VEC website;
  - conducting a public hearing at the Bright Entertainment Centre on 15 September 2004; and
  - establishing a help line for responding to community questions.

#### **4.2 Advertising**

In accordance with s.219F(4) of the Act, the VEC published the following advertisements for the electoral representation review:

- a public notice which detailed the process of the Alpine Shire review and called for public submissions appeared in the *Bright Alpine Observer* and the *Myrtleford Alpine Times* on 30 June 2004;
- general advertisements covering several electoral representation reviews, including the Alpine Shire review, appeared in the *Albury Border Mail* on 26 June 2004 and in the *Melbourne Herald Sun* on 30 June 2004; and
- a notice of the Preliminary Report appeared in the *Bright Alpine Observer*, the *Myrtleford Alpine Times* and the *Albury Border Mail* on 18 August 2004.

See Appendix 9.1.

#### **4.3 Media releases**

Media releases designed to supplement the paid advertising were distributed to the *Albury Border Mail*, the *Bright Alpine Observer* and the *Myrtleford Alpine Times* on 18 June 2004 and on 11 August 2004.

See Appendix 9.2.

#### **4.4 Information leaflet**

The VEC posted an information leaflet about the review to all Alpine Shire voters from 21 June 2004.

See Appendix 9.3.

#### **4.5 VEC website**

The VEC used its website to deliver information and to provide transparency in the review process. All preliminary submissions and submissions in response to the Preliminary Report were posted to the website to facilitate public access to this information. The VEC website can be viewed at [www.vec.vic.gov.au](http://www.vec.vic.gov.au)

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## **4.6 Helpline**

The VEC established a help line to assist with public enquiries concerning the electoral representation review process.

## **4.7 Guide for Submissions**

The VEC developed and distributed its Guide for Submissions to help those persons interested in making submissions. A copy of the Guide is attached.  
See Appendix 9.4.

# **5 Preliminary Report**

In accordance with s.219F(6) of the Act, the VEC produced a Preliminary Report containing its proposed option for Alpine Shire. In developing this proposed option, the VEC considered preliminary submissions made by various persons and groups, as well as various other relevant factors.

## **5.1 Preliminary submissions**

By the closing time for submissions (26 July 2004 - 5.00 pm), the VEC had received 18 preliminary submissions.

Among the submissions, opinion regarding the number of councillors varied. Support ranged from a total of 5 to 9 councillors. Opinion regarding the electoral structure and voting system options also varied. Some submissions favoured the municipality being subdivided into wards, with either single or multiple councillor representation for each ward. Other submissions preferred the retention of an unsubdivided municipality and the introduction of a system of voting by proportional representation.

See Appendix 9.4 for details of those persons and groups making preliminary submissions. Copies of the submissions can be downloaded from the VEC website, [www.vec.vic.gov.au](http://www.vec.vic.gov.au)

## **5.2 VEC research**

In addition to information provided in submissions, the VEC conducted its own research. The VEC conducted research into the demographics of the municipality, using a number of data sources including the 2001 Census. The VEC also took into account changes predicted by the Department of Sustainability and Environment and by the Department of Infrastructure. Summaries of some of this research were published in the Guide for Submissions, the Preliminary Report and in Section 2.3 of this Report.

Development projections based on information presented by the Council were also taken into consideration. Extensive field work was conducted throughout the municipality by the VEC. The VEC also examined the considerations of Alpine Shire's Commissioners in reviewing the municipality's structure in 1996.

## **5.3 Recommended options**

Having considered the preliminary submissions made by various persons and groups and all other relevant factors, the VEC proposed an option for public comment.

The VEC's preferred option was:

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- **That Alpine Shire consist of seven councillors to be elected from an unsubdivided council.**

A detailed map representing this option was included in the Preliminary Report.

## **6 Response submissions**

In accordance with s.219F(7) of the Act, the VEC invited written submissions in response to its Preliminary Report.

By the close of submissions, 8 September 2004 – 5.00 pm, the VEC had received five response submissions.

Three of the response submissions supported the VEC's preferred option of seven councillors elected from an unsubdivided structure. They did so on the grounds that the structure is currently working well and that subdivision would split communities of interest and would disregard the needs of certain communities. Two submissions suggested that a subdivided electoral structure was necessary to provide the voters of Alpine Shire with local representation.

See Appendix 9.4 for details of those persons and groups making response submissions. Copies of the submissions can be downloaded from the VEC website, [www.vec.vic.gov.au](http://www.vec.vic.gov.au)

## **7 Public hearing**

A public hearing was held at the Bright Entertainment Centre on 15 September 2004 at 6.30 pm. All persons who had made submissions in response to the VEC's Preliminary Report were invited to speak to their submissions and two individuals chose to do so. Members of the public were invited to attend and 13 people, including those speaking at the hearing, were present.

## **8 Findings and recommendations**

The Act states that the purpose of the review is to consider two matters. The first matter is the number of councillors for the municipality and the second matter is the electoral structure of the municipality.

### **8.1 Number of councillors**

#### **Issues considered by the VEC**

The legislation provides that a council must consist of between 5 and 12 councillors (s.5B(1)). It does not, however, prescribe the matters to be considered by the reviewer in recommending the number of councillors for a municipality.

The VEC has therefore been required to identify the appropriate matters to take into account when considering the number of councillors.

In terms of voter numbers, Victorian municipalities vary from 4,077 to 160,368. The VEC applies the legislative provisions relating to numbers of councillors in a logical way: with those councils that have the largest number of voters having the most councillors, and those councils that have the least number of voters having fewer councillors.

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In most cases, the electoral structure and the number of councillors were established during the period of the Commissioners when local government was restructured between 1993 and 1995. The Commissioners did not have the benefit of a State-wide reference when considering the appropriate number of councillors for their respective municipalities. The result was a degree of disparity in councillor numbers for similar types of municipalities. The VEC has produced a table that lists each municipality and the councillor to voter ratio. The table differentiates between rural, regional and metropolitan councils in recognition of the different circumstances and needs between these categories of councils. The table has been a valuable reference point in considering the appropriate number of councillors and was made available to the public in the Guide for Submissions. The information has enabled the VEC to compare a council being reviewed with councils with similar voter numbers and areas.

The VEC also considers whether the number of voters in the municipality is anticipated to increase or decline in the period between reviews (eight years). Population forecasts produced by the Australian Bureau of Statistics and the Victorian Department of Sustainability and Environment have been used to assist the VEC in making its assessment.

In addition, the VEC considers any special issues or circumstances that may require a council to have more or fewer councillors than would otherwise be the case. Public submissions provide valuable information regarding any such issues or circumstances.

### **The VEC's findings**

In its Preliminary Report, the VEC put forward its preferred option for Alpine Shire, of seven councillors to be elected from an unsubdivided municipality. None of the five submissions received in response to the Preliminary Report raised any concerns with increasing the number of councillors from five to seven. The VEC confirms that seven is the appropriate number of councillors for Alpine Shire.

The number of voters in Alpine Shire suggests that seven councillors would be adequate to provide voters with fair and equitable representation. Alpine Shire contains 11,074 voters. Each of Alpine Shire's five councillors represent an average of 2,215. If the number of councillors in the Shire was increased to seven, the voter/councillor ratio would drop to one councillor for every 1,582 voters. Either way, the ratio would be within an acceptable range for similar-sized Victorian regional shires.

While either five or seven councillors could work in Alpine Shire, certain demographic and geographic factors suggest that the larger number would provide voters in the Shire with the fairest and most equitable representation.

The Shire's population growth is one of a number of factors which indicate that seven councillors would be most appropriate for the municipality. Between 1991 and 2003, Alpine Shire's population increased by 6.11% and it is projected that between 2004 and 2012 the area will grow by a further 6.77%. In a five-councillor electoral structure this rate of growth would result in the voter/councillor ratio rising well above the current average for municipalities in regional Victoria. In contrast, a seven-councillor electoral structure at the lower end of the voter/councillor ratio would be better able to absorb any potential growth.

Alpine Shire's geographic makeup also suggests that the region might be suited to a larger rather than a smaller number of councillors. The Shire is a regional

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municipality of above average size displaying mountainous terrain which imposes considerable access and travel burdens on councillors. The Shire contains several population centres, all of which demand attention and specialised knowledge. The nature of the Shire's topography and its relatively broad population spread represent special circumstances which justify an increase in representation.

For the reasons detailed above, the VEC recommends that the number of councillors in Alpine Shire be increased to seven.

## **8.2 Electoral structure**

### **Issues considered by the VEC**

Provisions within the Act allow for a municipality to be unsubdivided, with all councillors elected "at large" by all voters, or for a municipality to be subdivided into a number of wards. If wards have only one councillor, preferential voting applies. Under an unsubdivided or a multi-councillor ward structure, councillors are elected through proportional representation. With each system, voters mark their ballot papers the same way.

If the municipality is subdivided into wards, there are three options available:

- single-councillor wards;
- multi-councillor wards; and
- a combination of both single-councillor and multi-councillor wards.

Boundaries for wards must:

- provide for a fair and equitable division of the municipality; and
- ensure equality of representation, through the number of voters represented by each councillor being within 10% of the average number of voters per councillor for the municipality.

In addition to the legislative requirements, a number of other factors were considered when evaluating subdivided structures. These factors included:

- communities of interest (Communities of interest are groups of people who share a range of common concerns. They may occur where people are linked with each other geographically, economically or through having particular needs.);
- spreading developing areas over a number of wards;
- using logical boundaries such as main roads, physical features and existing boundaries for easy identification of wards; and
- taking account of likely population changes.

In developing ward boundaries, the VEC aims to achieve the best possible balance between these criteria.

### **The VEC's findings**

In its Preliminary Report, the VEC put forward its preferred option for Alpine Shire, of seven councillors elected from an unsubdivided municipality. The VEC did not offer an alternative option because the other configurations it considered, based on suggestions received in preliminary submissions, were not practicable.

As previously stated, the VEC received five submissions in response to its Preliminary Report, three of which favoured the VEC's unsubdivided option. Two submissions preferred a subdivided structure on the basis that the introduction of wards would

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provide voters with stronger local representation. This argument was strongly advocated in the first round of submissions.

In developing its final recommendation, the VEC considered suggestions for an electoral structure that were put forward in response submissions and at the public hearing. The VEC appreciates and values community input into the electoral representation review but notes that despite their various benefits, none of the suggested options are ultimately feasible. Further comment on these options follows. The VEC maintains that an unsubdivided structure remains the most appropriate electoral structure for Alpine Shire.

#### Unsubdivided Municipality

The VEC originally proposed the retention of an unsubdivided electoral structure as its preferred option for Alpine Shire. The VEC confirms that such a structure will benefit voters by addressing the issue of unfair councillor distribution and by avoiding future difficulties associated with keeping voter numbers in accordance with legislative requirements.

The VEC acknowledges voters' concerns regarding what is perceived to be an uneven councillor distribution in the Shire. The VEC notes that the introduction of a system of voting by proportional representation could go some way towards addressing this perceived difficulty. Councillors in the Shire were previously elected from an unsubdivided municipality under a system of exhaustive preferential voting but recent legislative change has introduced voting by a system of proportional representation in unsubdivided councils. Under proportional representation, any candidate who obtains a 'quota', either through first-preference votes or through the flow of preference votes, is elected. This means candidates representing large minorities and candidates representing majorities will have a reasonable expectation of being elected. Such a system offers the possibility of a relatively even spread of representation in Alpine Shire.

An unsubdivided electoral structure will remove potential difficulties involving voter numbers. According to the legislation, the number of voters represented by each councillor must be within 10% of the average number of voters represented by all councillors. Under a subdivided structure, growth within a municipality can see voter numbers in various wards reach unacceptably high levels – requiring boundary alterations. With no ward divisions, the difficulties with deviations which can arise under a ward structure, are avoided.

Finally, the VEC acknowledges the desirability of preserving distinct communities of interest within municipalities. The proposed unsubdivided structure means that all communities in Alpine Shire will be kept intact.

#### Alternative options

In coming to its final recommendation, the VEC considered a range of options for the Shire's electoral structure. Based on community information which highlighted three main communities of interest in Alpine Shire, the VEC originally modelled a three-ward configuration (see Diagram 1 below). This model involved a Kiewa Ward which followed the natural Kiewa Valley boundary, a Bright Ward incorporating Bright, Porepunkah and Dinner Plain and a Myrtleford Ward incorporating Myrtleford, Ovens, Gapsted and extending down through the Mount Buffalo National Park to include Dandongadale.

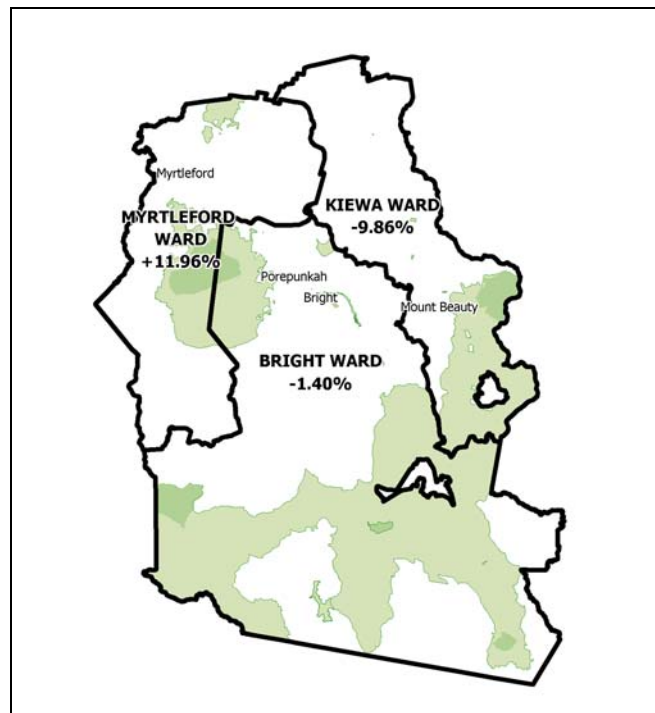


DIAGRAM 1

The VEC's model was based on defined geographical divisions and on strong communities of interest. It was not, however, feasible in that voter numbers in each ward either did not comply with legislative requirements or did not reflect predicted growth patterns in the region. In the proposed Myrtleford Ward, the deviation from the average was +11.96% and in the proposed Kiewa Ward, where minimal population growth is forecast, it was -9.86%. The VEC could have made this structure work by adjusting ward boundaries to incorporate an appropriate number of voters in each ward but this would have split existing communities of interest.

The VEC also considered a two-ward option involving seven councillors which was proposed in one response submission and elaborated on at the public hearing. The structure followed the three-ward option detailed above but merged the Kiewa and Myrtleford Wards, leaving one amalgamated northern ward with four councillors and one southern ward, focused on Bright, with three councillors. Based on information received in other submissions regarding established communities of interest in Alpine Shire, the VEC acknowledges that in one respect, this two-ward option offered significant benefit. The configuration neatly captured the township of Bright – encapsulating the entire township and its surrounds within one ward.

At the public hearing, the person who suggested this model acknowledged the difficulties involved in merging the two communities of Myrtleford and the Kiewa Valley. He compared the model to an unsubdivided structure in which all communities of interest within a Shire are merged and suggested that the two-ward option is superior because it only merges two communities of interest rather than all of them. The VEC considers that where the introduction of wards will merge two distinct communities of interest into one ward, leaving a third community as the focus of a single ward, it is unlikely that such subdivision will maximise benefit to

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voters and to the community as a whole. The suggested two-ward structure has the potential to encourage discord within the community by fostering an 'us and them' mentality.

The VEC is aware that Alpine Shire's current unsubdivided structure has generated some concern among various constituents regarding a fair and equal spread of representation throughout the Shire. The VEC notes, however, that an increase in councillor numbers combined with the recent introduction of a system of proportional representation in unsubdivided councils should address these concerns. The VEC considers that the Shire will be best served by remaining as an unsubdivided municipality with seven councillors. The VEC is confident that such a structure will provide Alpine Shire voters with fair and equitable representation for at least the next eight years.

DOUG BEECROFT

Acting Electoral Commissioner

## 9 Appendices

### 9.1 Public notices of the electoral representation review

#### **Electoral Representation Review Alpine Shire Council**

The Minister for Local Government has given notice under section 219C of the *Local Government Act 1989* that there is to be an electoral representation review of the Alpine Shire Council. The Council has appointed the Victorian Electoral Commission (VEC) to conduct the independent review.

##### **What is the review about?**

The aim of the review is to ensure fair and equitable electoral representation for the voters of Alpine Shire. The VEC will recommend to the Minister for Local Government:

- the appropriate number of councillors;
- whether the Shire should be unsubdivided or divided into wards; and
- if the Shire is to be divided into wards, how many wards there should be, the number of councillors per ward and the ward boundaries.

Information about the review is being posted to all Alpine Shire voters.

##### **What will the VEC consider?**

The VEC will consider the numbers of councillors and the electoral structures of comparable municipalities, communities of interest, demographics and growth potential. Arguments and evidence in public submissions will assist the review.

Any person or group may make a written submission to the VEC regarding electoral representation for Alpine Shire. The VEC recommends consulting the VEC's Guide for Submissions first.

##### **Key Steps in the Review**

###### **Step 1 – Information sessions, Wednesday, 14 July 2004**

- Council Chamber, Council offices, O'Donnell Avenue, Myrtleford – 5.30 pm
- Council Chamber, Council offices, Great Alpine Road, Bright – 7.30 pm
- Alpine Discovery Centre, Kiewa Valley Highway, Tawonga South – 7.30 pm

###### **Step 2 – Preliminary submissions. Deadline: 5.00 pm, Monday, 26 July 2004**

###### **Step 3 – Preliminary Report, released Wednesday, 18 August 2004**

###### **Step 4 – Response submissions. Deadline: 5.00 pm, Wednesday, 8 September 2004**

###### **Step 5 – Public hearing, 6.30 pm, Wednesday, 15 September 2004**

- Bright Entertainment Centre, Railway Avenue, Bright (people can speak in support of their response submissions)

###### **Step 6 – Final Report, released Monday, 4 October 2004**

The VEC will lodge a Final Report, containing its recommendations, with the Minister for Local Government.

**For a Guide for Submissions or further information, call 13 18 32 or visit [www.vec.vic.gov.au](http://www.vec.vic.gov.au)**

**Victorian Electoral Commission**

## Electoral Representation Reviews Rural City of Wangaratta and Alpine Shire

The Minister for Local Government has given notice under section 219C of the *Local Government Act 1989* that there are to be electoral representation reviews of the following councils:

- Rural City of Wangaratta Council
- Alpine Shire Council

The councils have appointed the Victorian Electoral Commission (VEC) to conduct the reviews.

### What are the reviews about?

The aim of the reviews is to ensure fair and equitable electoral representation for the voters of these municipalities. For each municipality, the VEC will recommend to the Minister for Local Government:

- the appropriate number of councillors;
  - whether the municipality should be unsubdivided or divided into wards; and
  - if the municipality is to be divided into wards, how many wards there should be, the number of councillors per ward and the ward boundaries.
- Under an unsubdivided or a multi-councillor ward structure, councillors are elected through proportional representation. Under a single-councillor ward structure, councillors are elected using preferential voting. With each system, voters mark their ballot papers in the same way.

### What will the VEC consider?

The VEC will consider the numbers of councillors and the electoral structures of comparable municipalities, communities of interest, demographics and growth potential. Arguments and evidence in public submissions will assist the review.

Any person or group may make a written submission to the VEC regarding electoral representation for these municipalities. The VEC recommends consulting the VEC's Guide for Submissions first.

### Key steps in the reviews

#### Step 1 – Information sessions

Anyone interested in making a submission should attend.

**Wangaratta:** Monday, 12 July 2004

Council Chambers, 1st Floor, Council Offices, 64 Ovens Street, Wangaratta – 7.30 pm

**Alpine:** Wednesday, 14 July 2004

Council Chamber, Council Offices, O'Donnell Avenue, Myrtleford – 5.30 pm

Council Chamber, Council Offices, Great Alpine Road, Bright – 7.30 pm

Alpine Discovery Centre, Kiewa Valley Highway, Tawonga South – 7.30 pm

#### Step 2 – Preliminary submissions

Any person or group may make a preliminary submission to the VEC.

Submissions for both municipalities must be received by 5.00 pm, Monday, 26 July 2004.

#### Step 3 – Preliminary Reports

The VEC will release Preliminary Reports containing its preferred options.

Release dates:

**Wangaratta:** Friday, 13 August 2004

**Alpine:** Wednesday, 18 August 2004

#### Step 4 – Response submissions

Any person or group may make a response submission to the VEC about the Preliminary Reports.

Deadlines:

**Wangaratta:** 5.00 pm, Monday, 6 September 2004

**Alpine:** 5.00 pm, Wednesday, 8 September 2004

#### Step 5 – Public hearings

People may speak in support of their response submissions.

**Wangaratta:** Thursday, 16 September 2004

Reception Room, 1st Floor, Council Offices, 64 Ovens Street, Wangaratta – 6.30 pm

**Alpine:** Wednesday, 15 September 2004

Bright Entertainment Centre, Railway Avenue, Bright – 6.30 pm

#### Step 6 – Final Reports

The VEC will lodge Final Reports, containing its recommendations, for the consideration of the Minister for Local Government. The Reports will be publicly available on the VEC's website on Monday, 4 October 2004.

**For a Guide for Submissions or further information, call 13 18 32 or visit [www.vec.vic.gov.au](http://www.vec.vic.gov.au)**

## Electoral Representation Reviews

The Minister for Local Government has given notice under section 219C of the *Local Government Act 1989* that there are to be electoral representation reviews of the following councils:

- Indigo Shire Council
- Towong Shire Council
- City of Wodonga Council
- Alpine Shire Council
- Greater Shepparton City Council
- Rural City of Wangaratta Council
- Strathbogie Shire Council
- Mitchell Shire Council
- Macedon Ranges Shire Council
- South Gippsland Shire Council
- Wellington Shire Council
- Frankston City Council

The councils have appointed the Victorian Electoral Commission (VEC) to conduct the reviews.

### What are the reviews about?

The aim of the reviews is to ensure fair and equitable electoral representation for the voters of these municipalities. For each municipality, the VEC will recommend to the Minister for Local Government:

- the appropriate number of councillors;
- whether the municipality should be unsubdivided or divided into wards; and
- if the municipality is to be divided into wards, how many wards there should be, the number of councillors per ward and the ward boundaries.

Under an unsubdivided or a multi-councillor ward structure, councillors are elected through proportional representation. Under a single-councillor ward structure, councillors are elected using preferential voting. With each system, voters mark their ballot papers in the same way.

### What will the VEC consider?

The VEC will consider the numbers of councillors and the electoral structures of comparable municipalities, communities of interest, demographics and growth potential. Arguments and evidence in public submissions will assist the review.

Any person or group may make a written submission to the VEC regarding electoral representation for these municipalities. The VEC recommends consulting its Guide for Submissions first.

### Making a submission

Further information about making a submission can be found in the Guide for Submissions. Submissions can be made by mail, fax or email. Submissions must reach the VEC by 5.00 pm on the following dates:

- |                             |              |                          |               |
|-----------------------------|--------------|--------------------------|---------------|
| • Indigo Shire:             | 19 July 2004 | • Strathbogie Shire:     | 2 August 2004 |
| • Towong Shire:             | 19 July 2004 | • Mitchell Shire:        | 2 August 2004 |
| • City of Wodonga:          | 19 July 2004 | • Macedon Ranges Shire:  | 2 August 2004 |
| • Alpine Shire:             | 26 July 2004 | • South Gippsland Shire: | 9 August 2004 |
| • Greater Shepparton City:  | 26 July 2004 | • Wellington Shire:      | 9 August 2004 |
| • Rural City of Wangaratta: | 26 July 2004 | • Frankston City:        | 9 August 2004 |

**For a Guide for Submissions or further information, call 13 18 32 or visit [www.vec.vic.gov.au](http://www.vec.vic.gov.au)**

**Victorian Electoral Commission**

# Electoral Representation Review

## Alpine Shire Council

### Preliminary Report

The Victorian Electoral Commission (VEC) is conducting an electoral representation review for the Alpine Shire Council. The review aims to achieve fair and equitable electoral representation for persons who are entitled to vote at the Council's general election. Having considered a range of information, including information contained in public submissions, the VEC has now released a Preliminary Report including its recommendations.

### What are the recommendations in the Report?

Alpine Shire currently has five councillors, elected from an unsubdivided council.

#### *Preferred option*

The Report recommends that the Alpine Shire Council consist of seven councillors, to be elected from an unsubdivided council.

The map on the right shows the unsubdivided Shire.

### Where is the Report available?

Copies of the Preliminary Report are available from:

- the Alpine Shire Council offices, Great Alpine Road, Bright;
- the VEC website, [www.vec.vic.gov.au](http://www.vec.vic.gov.au); and
- the VEC on 13 18 32.

### Response submissions on the Report

Any person or group may make a response submission to the VEC about its Preliminary Report. A response submission should comment only on the preferred option. Submissions can be:

- posted to the VEC at Level 8, 505 Little Collins Street, Melbourne Vic. 3000;
- emailed to [alpine.review@vec.vic.gov.au](mailto:alpine.review@vec.vic.gov.au); or
- faxed to (03) 9629 9330.

Submissions must include the following information about the person or group making the submission:

- name;
- address;
- telephone contact number; and
- whether the person or group making the submission wishes to speak at a public hearing in support of their submission.

Submissions must reach the VEC by **Wednesday, 8 September 2004 - 5.00 pm**. Late submissions will not be accepted.

Submissions will be available to the public at the VEC office and on the VEC website.

### Public hearing, Wednesday, 15 September 2004-6.30pm

The hearing will be held at:

- Bright Entertainment Centre, Railway Avenue, Bright.

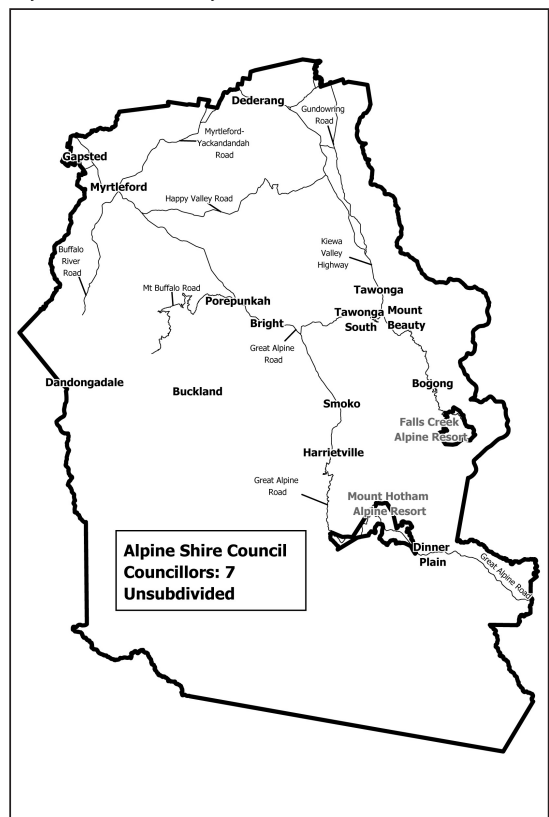
The hearing is open to the public, but only those people who have indicated in their submission that they would like to speak in support of their submission will be heard at the hearing.

### Final Report, 4 October 2004

After considering a variety of sources of information including information contained in submissions and provided at the public hearing, the VEC will prepare its Final Report making recommendations to the Minister for Local Government.

**Further information 13 18 32 or visit [www.vec.vic.gov.au](http://www.vec.vic.gov.au)**

Alpine Shire Preferred Option



Victorian Electoral Commission

# Media Fact Sheet

For release Wednesday, 30 June 2004

## REPRESENTATION REVIEW GETS UNDERWAY

The electoral representation review for Alpine Shire has begun. The review, conducted by the Victorian Electoral Commission (VEC), will consider the number of councillors for the Shire and the Shire's electoral structure.

"Anyone interested in the review should attend the public information session on 14 July," said the Acting Victorian Electoral Commissioner, Mr Doug Beecroft.

The details for the information session are:  
Wednesday, 14 July 2004

- Council Chamber, Council Offices, O'Donnell Avenue, Myrtleford - 5:30pm
- Council Chamber, Council Offices, Great Alpine Road, Bright - 7:30pm
- Alpine Discovery Centre, Kiewa Valley Highway, Tawonga South - 7:30pm

In conducting its review, the VEC will consider a range of information including arguments and information in public submissions.

Any person or group may make a written submission to the VEC about the review. Submissions do not have to be elaborate documents. A letter is perfectly acceptable, as long as it deals with the matters covered by the review. The VEC recommends consulting its Guide for Submissions which outlines the issues involved.

A leaflet about the review is being posted to Alpine Shire voters.

Key dates for the Indigo representation review are:

Monday, 26 July 2004 – 5.00 pm – Deadline for preliminary submissions. Submissions can be mailed, faxed or emailed to the VEC.

Wednesday, 18 August 2004 – The VEC's Preliminary Report will be released containing its preferred options.

Wednesday, 8 September 2004 – 5.00 pm – Deadline for response submissions about the Preliminary Report.

Wednesday, 15 September 2004 – Public hearing. People will be able to speak in support of their response submissions.

Monday, 4 October 2004 – The VEC will lodge its Final Report with the Minister for Local Government.

Any new electoral arrangements, if approved by the Minister for Local Government, would apply at the next Shire Council elections.

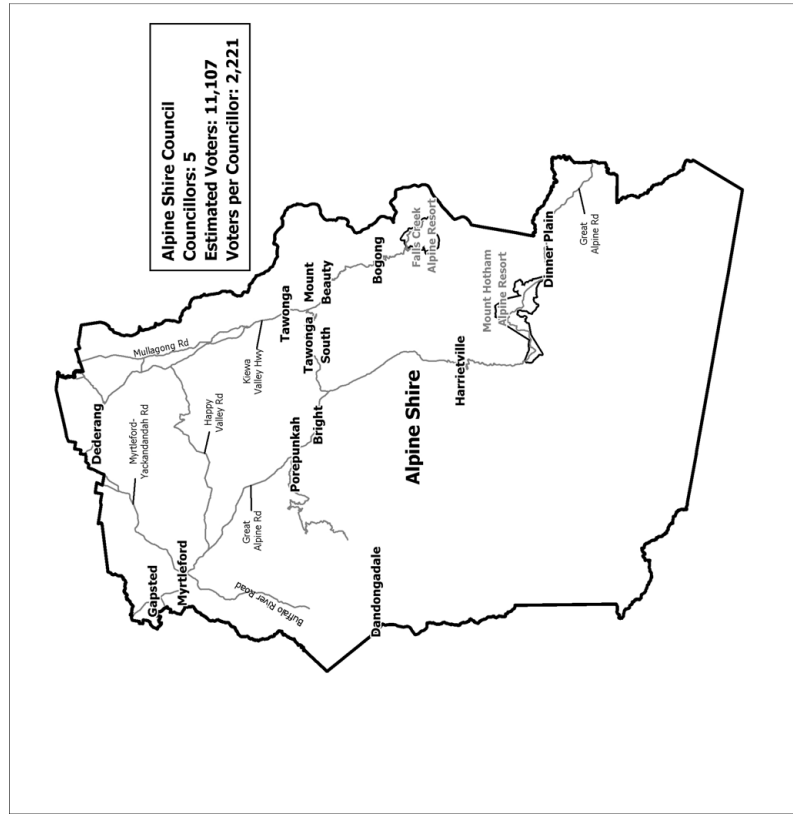
For more information, telephone the VEC on 13 18 32 or visit the VEC website [www.vec.vic.gov.au](http://www.vec.vic.gov.au)  
– ENDS –

## 9.2 Media releases

# Media Fact Sheet

## Alpine Shire

The map below shows the current riding boundaries and voter numbers for Alpine Shire.



For release Saturday 26 June

## REPRESENTATION REVIEWS GET UNDERWAY

Electoral representation reviews for Alpine Shire and the Rural City of Wangaratta have begun. The reviews, conducted independently by the Victorian Electoral Commission (VEC), will consider the number of councillors and the Councils' electoral structures.

"Anyone interested in the reviews should attend one of the public information sessions being held for each council," said the Acting Victorian Electoral Commissioner, Mr Doug Beecroft.

The details for the information sessions are:

### Wangaratta

- Monday, 12 July 2004
- Council Chambers, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, Council Offices, 64 Ovens Street, Wangaratta – 7.30 pm

### Alpine

- Wednesday, 14 July 2004
- Council Chamber, Council Offices, O'Donnell Avenue, Myrtleford - 5.30 pm
  - Council Chamber, Council Offices, Great Alpine Road, Bright - 7.30 pm
  - Alpine Discovery Centre, Kiawa Valley Highway, Tawonga South - 7.30 pm

In conducting its reviews, the VEC will consider a range of information including arguments and information in public submissions.

Any person or group may make a written submission to the VEC about the review. Submissions do not have to be elaborate documents. A letter is perfectly acceptable, as long as it deals with matters covered by the review. The VEC recommends consulting its Guide for Submissions which outlines the issues involved.

Next steps in the reviews:

### **Step 1 – Preliminary submissions**

Any person or group may make a preliminary submission to the VEC.  
Deadline for both councils: Monday, 26 July 2004 – 5.00 pm

### **Step 2 – Preliminary Reports**

The VEC will release a Preliminary Report for each council, containing its preferred options.  
Release dates:

Wangaratta: Friday, 13 August 2004

Alpine: Wednesday, 18 August 2004

# Media Release

### **Step 3 – Response submissions**

Any person or group may make a response submission to the VEC about its Preliminary Reports.  
Deadlines:

Wangaratta: Monday, 6 September 2004 – 5.00 pm

Alpine: Wednesday, 8 September 2004 – 5.00 pm

### **Step 4 – Public hearings**

Any person or group may speak in support of their response submission.  
Hearing dates:

Wangaratta: Thursday, 16 September 2004

Reception Room, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, Council Offices, 64 Ovens Street, Wangaratta – 6.30 pm

Alpine: Wednesday, 15 September 2004

Bright Entertainment Centre, Railway Avenue, Bright – 6.30 pm

### **Step 5 – Final Reports**

A Final Report for each council will be released on Monday, 4 October 2004.  
The VEC will lodge the Reports with the Minister for Local Government.

Any new electoral arrangements, if approved by the Minister for Local Government, would apply at the next Council elections.

For more information, telephone the VEC on 13 18 32 or visit the VEC website [www.vec.vic.gov.au](http://www.vec.vic.gov.au)

– ENDS –

### **For further media information:**

Paul Thornton-Smith  
Victorian Electoral Commission  
Tel: (03) 9299 0732



For release from Wednesday 18 August 2004

## ALPINE SHIRE COUNCIL ELECTORAL REPRESENTATION REVIEW: PRELIMINARY REPORT RELEASED

The Victorian Electoral Commission (VEC) today released its Preliminary Report on electoral representation for the Alpine Shire Council. The VEC's preferred option is to have seven councillors elected from an unsubdivided municipality.

The Report has been released and is available on the VEC's web site at [www.vec.vic.gov.au](http://www.vec.vic.gov.au). The Report is also available at the Alpine Shire Council offices, Great Alpine Road, Bright and at the VEC office, Level 8, 505 Little Collins Street, Melbourne, Vic., 3000.

People have until 5.00 pm, Wednesday, 8 September 2004 to lodge submissions with the VEC regarding its Preliminary Report.

People who wish to speak publicly in support of their submissions will have an opportunity to do so at a public hearing at the Bright Entertainment Centre, Railway Avenue, Bright on Wednesday, 15 September 2004 – 6.30 pm.

The VEC's Final Report and recommendations will be lodged with the Minister on Monday, 4 October 2004.

Any person who requires additional information can visit [www.vec.vic.gov.au](http://www.vec.vic.gov.au), contact the VEC on 13 18 32, or write to the VEC at Level 8, 505 Little Collins Street, Melbourne, Vic., 3000.

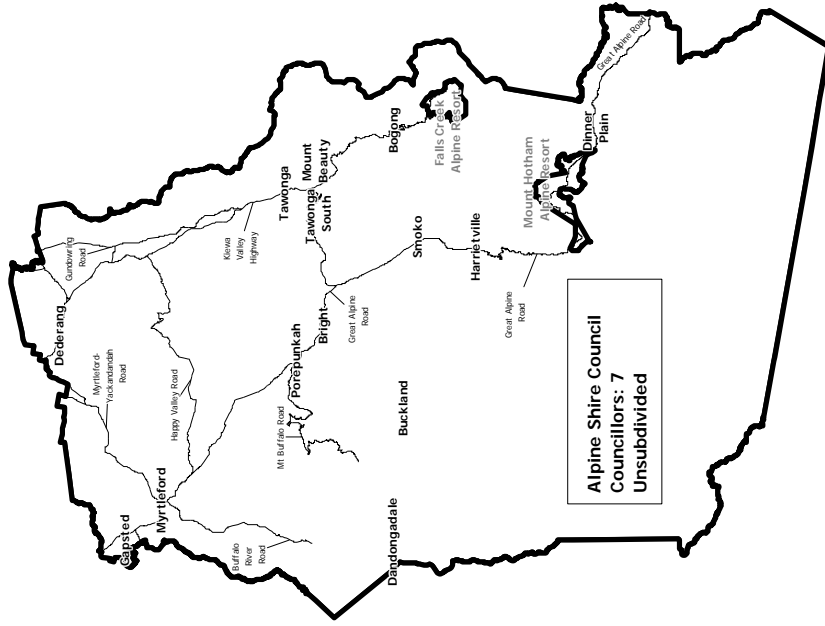
– ENDS –

### For further media information:

Alex Kingsmill  
Victorian Electoral Commission  
Tel: 9299 0731

## MAP OF RECOMMENDED OPTION FOR THE ALPINE SHIRE COUNCIL

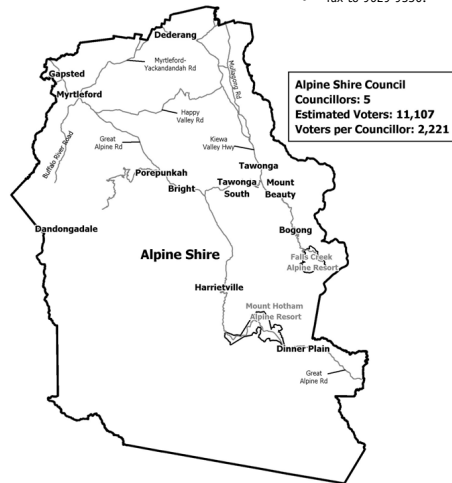
PREFERRED OPTION: UNSUBDIVIDED MUNICIPALITY



## 9.3 Information leaflet

### Current structure of Alpine Shire

Alpine Shire currently has five councillors, elected from an unsubdivided council. Below is a map showing the Shire boundaries and the estimated number of voters as at 10 May 2004.



### How to make a submission

Get the Guide for Submissions by telephoning the VEC on 13 18 32 or by checking our website at [www.vec.vic.gov.au](http://www.vec.vic.gov.au). Send your submissions to the VEC in one of the following ways:

- post to Level 8, 505 Little Collins Street, Melbourne, Vic. 3000; or
- email to [alpine.review@vec.vic.gov.au](mailto:alpine.review@vec.vic.gov.au); or
- fax to 9629 9330.

## Electoral Representation Review of the Alpine Shire Council



Conducted by the  
Victorian Electoral Commission

### Why is this review being undertaken?

The Minister for Local Government has given notice that there is to be an electoral representation review of Alpine Shire. The Council has appointed the Victorian Electoral Commission (VEC) to conduct the independent review. The VEC aims to ensure fair and equitable representation for Alpine Shire voters.

### What will the review recommend?

The VEC will make a recommendation to the Minister for Local Government as to:

- the appropriate number of councillors;
- the electoral structure of the Shire (whether it should be unsubdivided or divided into wards, how many wards there should be, and the number of councillors per ward); and
- the boundaries of the wards (if the Shire is to be divided into wards).

Under an unsubdivided or a multi-councillor ward structure, councillors are elected through proportional representation. Under a single-councillor ward structure, councillors are elected using preferential voting. With each system, voters mark their ballot papers the same way.

### What will the VEC consider?

In conducting its review, the VEC will consider such factors as the number of councillors and the electoral structure of comparable municipalities, communities of interest, demographics and growth potential. The VEC will consider a range of information including arguments and evidence in public submissions.

## Key steps in the review

### Step 1 Information Sessions

*Wednesday, 14 July 2004*

Council Chamber, O'Donnell Avenue, Myrtleford 5.30pm  
Council Chamber, Great Alpine Road, Bright 7.30pm

Alpine Discovery Centre, Kiewa Valley Highway, Tawonga South 7.30pm

### Step 4 Response Submissions

*Deadline:  
Wednesday, 8 September 2004*

Any person or group may make a submission to the VEC about the Preliminary Report.

### Step 2 Preliminary Submissions

*Deadline:  
Monday, 26 July 2004*

Any person or organisation may make a submission to the VEC. The VEC recommends consulting the Guide for Submissions.

### Step 5 Public Hearing

*Wednesday, 15 September 2004  
Bright Entertainment Centre,  
Railway Avenue, Bright 6.30pm*

People will be able to speak in support of their response submissions.

### Step 3 Preliminary Report

*Wednesday, 18 August 2004*

The VEC will release a preliminary report containing its preferred option(s).

### Step 6 Final Report

*Monday, 4 October 2004*

The VEC will lodge a final report, containing its recommendations, with the Minister for Local Government. The Report will be publicly available.

## 9.4 Guide for submissions

### Electoral representation review for the Alpine Shire Council

#### Guide for Submissions



#### CHECKLIST:

##### Before you send in your submission:

- Have you included your name, address and telephone contact number?
- Do you understand that your submission will be made public (see page 5)?
- Have you given reasons for the model(s) you are suggesting?

##### If you are making a *response submission* to the *Preliminary Report*:

- Have you restricted your discussion to the models proposed in the Preliminary Report?
- Have you indicated whether or not you would like to speak to the submission at the public hearing (see page 5)?

##### In writing your submission, you might like to consider the following questions (you do not need to answer every question in order to make a useful submission):

###### The *number of councillors* (see page 9):

- Have you suggested a number between 5 and 12 (as required by legislation)?
- If the voter to councillor ratio you have suggested varies substantially from the State-wide average for that type of municipality, have you explained why?

###### The *electoral structures* (see pages 11-15):

- Have you indicated whether you want the municipality to be subdivided or unsubdivided?
- Have you explained why your preferred structure would best suit your municipality?

###### If you think that the *municipality should be subdivided into wards* (see pages 11-15):

- Have you indicated whether you want single-member wards, multi-member wards or a combination of both?
- Have you suggested ward names and given reasons for those names (see page 16)?

#### Conducted by the

Victorian Electoral Commission

Level 8, 505 Little Collins Street, Melbourne Vic. 3000

Telephone: 13 18 32

Fax: (03) 9629 9330

Email: [alpine.review@vec.vic.gov.au](mailto:alpine.review@vec.vic.gov.au)

Website: [www.vec.vic.gov.au](http://www.vec.vic.gov.au)



Victorian Electoral Commission

## Contents

Background	2
The review process	4
Making a submission	5
Getting copies of the Preliminary and Final Reports	6
Current structure of Alpine Shire	7
Alpine at a glance	7
Matters to consider when preparing submissions	9
How many councillors should there be?	9
Communities of interest	10
Should the municipality be unsubdivided or divided into wards?	11
Voting Systems	14
How should ward boundaries be drawn?	15
What should wards be called?	16
Table: Profiles of municipalities	17
About the VEC	back cover

## Background

### **What is an electoral representation review?**

An electoral representation review examines the electoral structure of a local council. It considers:

- the number of councillors in a municipality;
- whether a municipality should be unsubdivided or subdivided; and
- if it should be subdivided, what the ward boundaries should be.

In addition, the review must make sure that, within each municipality, the number of voters represented by each councillor in each ward is within 10% of the average number of voters per councillor. That way, each person's vote has the same value.

Another important element to these considerations is that, according to the *Local Government Act 1989* (the Act), wards with only one councillor must elect that councillor using preferential voting, and wards with two or more councillors must elect them via proportional representation. If a municipality is unsubdivided, then all of its councillors must be elected using proportional representation.

### **When do representation reviews take place, and who conducts them?**

The Local Government Act specifies that:

- electoral representation reviews must be conducted before every second council election; and
  - a council must appoint an Electoral Commission to undertake the review.
- On completion of the review, the Electoral Commission makes a recommendation to the Minister for Local Government, who then has the power to act on it.

This system of electoral representation reviews came into effect at the end of 2003 as a result of amendments to the Act. The first representation review for each municipality under this system takes place at a time specified by the Minister for Local Government by a notice in the *Victoria Government Gazette*.

On 13 May 2004, the Minister for Local Government gave notice under section 219C of the Local Government Act that an electoral representation review is to be conducted for Alpine Shire. The Alpine Shire Council has appointed the Victorian Electoral Commission (VEC) to conduct the review.

The VEC is an independent statutory authority and, in accordance with the Act, conducts reviews independently of both councils and the State government.

### **How did the current electoral structures come about, and on what were they based?**

The electoral structures currently in place in municipalities across Victoria are diverse. This is because the present structures were determined individually for each municipality by the commissioners appointed during the restructures of the 1990s. The commissioners did not have any state-wide reference available to them when considering the appropriate number of councillors or the appropriate electoral structures for their municipalities. As a consequence, there are substantial differences between similar municipalities across Victoria. Subsequent to these reforms, councils have conducted their own electoral reviews.

## The review process

1 June 2004	the review begins	The VEC begins conducting research and preparing material for the public.
26 and 30 June 2004	notification of the public	A notice detailing the process for the review and calling for submissions is placed in <i>The Albury Border Mail</i> , the <i>Bright Alpine Observer</i> and in the <i>Myrtleford Alpine Times</i> .
Wednesday, 14 July 2004	information sessions	A leaflet outlining the purpose and process of the review is posted to all Alpine Shire voters. Information sessions on the review process are held at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Council Chamber, Council Offices, O'Donnell Avenue, Myrtleford – 5.30 pm.</li> <li>Council Chamber, Council Offices, Great Alpine Road, Bright – 7.30 pm.</li> <li>Alpine Discovery Centre, Kiawa Valley Highway, Tawonga South – 7.30 pm.</li> </ul> Anyone interested in making a submission is advised to attend.
5.00 pm, Monday, 26 July 2004	closing date for preliminary submissions	Preliminary submissions are your chance to contribute your views and local knowledge about any issues relevant to the review. See details in the next section.
Wednesday, 18 August 2004	Preliminary Report released	Based on the VEC's research, including information presented by the public, the VEC formulates a series of different models for how the electoral structure of Alpine Shire could be arranged. The models which best fit the VEC's aim of fairness and equity of representation are presented and explained in the Preliminary Report. For details of how to get a copy of the report, see below.
5.00 pm, Wednesday, 8 September 2004	closing date for response submissions on the Preliminary Report	Any person or group, including the Council, may make a response submission to the VEC about the Preliminary Report. This is your chance to present any additional arguments regarding which of the VEC's models you believe best represents the people of Alpine Shire.
6.30 pm, Wednesday, 15 September 2004	public hearing	A public hearing is held. People who state in their response submissions to the Preliminary Report that they want to speak in support of their submissions may do so at this public hearing.
Monday, 4 October 2004	Final Report	After considering submissions relating to the Preliminary Report, and information provided at the public hearing, the VEC prepares a Final Report making recommendations to the Minister for Local Government. For details of how to get a copy of the Report, see below.
		The Minister for Local Government considers the VEC's recommendations and may make a determination. Any determination will take effect at the next Council election.

### What is the purpose of a representation review?

The *Local Government Act 1989* specifies that the purpose of a representation review is to achieve "fair and equitable representation for the persons who are entitled to vote at a general election of the Council."

To achieve this, the VEC has three main duties:

*Duty 1: to make sure the number of voters represented by each Councillor is within 10% of the average number of voters per Councillor for that municipality*

Populations are continually changing – they grow in some areas and decline in others. Over time, that can lead to some wards having larger or smaller populations. As part of a representation review, the VEC needs to correct any imbalances that have come about. The VEC also tries to make sure that the boundaries it sets will continue to provide equitable representation until the next review in eight years, by taking account of likely future changes.

*Duty 2: to take a consistent, State-wide approach to the total number of councillors*

Regarding the number of councillors, the VEC tries to bring the ratio of voters to councillors to comparable levels as for other similar municipalities across Victoria. At the same time, the VEC considers it important to take account of any special circumstances that warrant increasing or reducing the number of councillors from what would otherwise be the case.

*Duty 3: to ensure that communities of interest are as fairly represented as possible*

Every municipality contains a number of communities of interest (see page 10). The electoral structure should be designed to take account of the main communities of interest. This is important for assisting councils to be effective representatives of the people in their municipalities.

### What can't a representation review do?

The review cannot deal with the external boundaries of the municipality, or such matters as whether the municipality should be divided into two separate municipalities or amalgamated with another municipality.

### On what does the VEC base its recommendations?

The VEC bases its recommendations on a number of factors. The VEC:

- conducts its own research;
- draws on its experience with other municipalities and in similar reviews for State elections;
- draws on its expertise at mapping, demography and local government; and
- carefully considers all input from the public.

Input from the public is an important part of the process, but it is not the only factor considered. The VEC's recommendations are not made by a "straw poll" of the number of submissions supporting particular models. The VEC seeks to ensure fair and equitable representation for *all* voters of the municipality. This means carefully considering all views expressed in submissions from the public, but also considering other factors, such as giving representation to communities of interest (including those communities of interest which may not be particularly vocal).

### **Making a submission**

Any person or group, including the Council, may make a submission to the VEC.

Submissions do not have to be elaborate documents; a short letter is perfectly acceptable, as long as it addresses matters within the scope of the review (see the checklist inside the front cover of this document).

### **When can people make submissions?**

The VEC accepts submissions at two stages of the review process:

**Preliminary submissions** should address matters relating to the number of councillors and the electoral structure of the municipality. At this stage, people can suggest any possible models within the constraints as explained in the "Matters to consider" section of this document. The most helpful submissions are generally those which provide clear explanations or evidence for particular viewpoints. Preliminary submissions must be received at the VEC by **Monday, 26 July 2004 – 5:00 pm. Late submissions will not be accepted.**

**Response submissions** on the Preliminary Report should address matters relating to the models proposed by the VEC in the Preliminary Report. Alternative models will not generally be considered at this stage. Response submissions should indicate whether the person making the submission wishes to speak at a public hearing in support of his or her submission. Response submissions must be received at the VEC by **Wednesday, 8 September 2004 – 5:00 pm. Late submissions will not be accepted.**

There will be a **public hearing** for people who want to speak in support of their response submissions on **Wednesday, 15 September 2004.**

### **Where should submissions be sent?**

Submissions can be sent to the VEC in the following ways:

- posted to Level 8, 505 Little Collins Street, Melbourne, Vic. 3000;
- emailed to [alpine.review@vec.vic.gov.au](mailto:alpine.review@vec.vic.gov.au); or
- faxed to 9629 9330.

**Submissions must include the name, address and telephone contact number of the person making the submission. Without this information, the submission will not be accepted.**

### **Public access to submissions**

Once lodged, submissions will be available to the public at:

- the VEC office at Level 8, 505 Little Collins Street, Melbourne; and
- the VEC website [www.vec.vic.gov.au](http://www.vec.vic.gov.au)

The VEC will publish all submissions received by the due date on its website. The name and locality of the person making the submission will also be published. The person's telephone number, street address and signature will not be published. The reason for making submissions available to the public is to ensure transparency in the electoral representation review process.

### **Getting copies of the Preliminary and Final Reports**

Copies of the Preliminary and Final Reports will be available from the VEC website, [www.vec.vic.gov.au](http://www.vec.vic.gov.au), by contacting the VEC on 13 18 32, and at the Alpine Shire Council offices, Great Alpine Road, Bright.

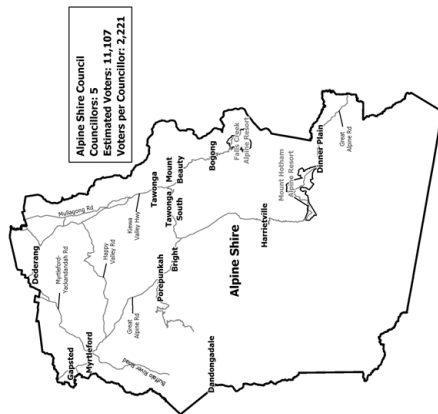
When the Preliminary Report is released, a notice in the *Albany Border Mail*, the *Bright Alpine Observer* and in the *Myrtleford Alpine Times* will specify how people can make a written submission in response to the Report.

The Preliminary Report will be available from Wednesday, 18 August 2004.

The Final Report will be released on Monday, 4 October 2004.

### Current structure of Alpine Shire

Alpine Shire currently has five councillors elected from an unsubdivided council. The map shows the Shire boundaries and the estimated number of voters as at 31 May 2004. Updated voter numbers will shortly be available from the VEC's website, by telephoning the VEC or at the Information Session.



### Alpine at a glance

Alpine Shire was formed in 1994 by the amalgamation of the shires of Bright and Myrtleford and parts of the shires of Beechworth, Omeo, Oxley and Yackandandah. It includes the towns of Myrtleford, Bright and Mt Beauty, as well as the ski resorts of Mt Hotham and Falls Creek. Almost 64% of the resident population lives in or near Myrtleford or Bright.

Due to the tourist trade, a higher proportion of people in the Alpine Shire are employed in accommodation, restaurants, recreation services etc. than in regional shires as a whole. A higher than average percentage of people also work in property and business services. Unemployment levels are slightly below the average for regional Victoria, and there is a higher proportion of 18-34 year olds than in many regional shires.

Most residents come from an English-speaking background, although there is also a small Italian community. Between 2004 and 2012, population growth is expected to be above the levels of regional Victoria as a whole (excluding municipalities with cities), and the age structure of the population is expected to change, as in regional Victoria as a whole, with people over 50 years of age becoming a substantially higher proportion of the population.

(Sources: Buchan: Alpine Shire Information Paper: The Regional Economy; Department of Infrastructure: Victoria in Future; Department of Sustainability and Environment: Regional Victoria *In Fact* 2007).

### Size<sup>1</sup>:

	Alpine:	Regional shires without cities (medians):	Regional cities (medians):
Area (square kilometres):	4,832	3,891	2,388
Population <sup>2</sup> :	13,105	15,805	32,077
Population density (people/square km):	2.71	3.75	27.82
Voters:	11,107	13,850	23,908
Average voters per councillor:	2,221	2,190	3,738

### Economic profile<sup>1</sup>:

	Alpine:	Regional Victoria:
Major industries (percentages of workforce):		
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	8.0	11.2
Manufacturing	10.4	13.4
Retail trade	10.9	15.3
Accommodation, cafés, restaurants, cultural and recreation services	18.2	6.9
Property and business services	9.5	6.6
Government administration and defence	4.5	3.3
Health and community services	10.0	10.8
Unemployment rate:	4.5%	7.4%
Households earning under \$500/week:	37.5%	34.6%

### Population profile<sup>1</sup>:

	Alpine:	Regional shires without cities:	Regional cities:
Age groups (percentages of the population):			
0-17 years old	26.4	27.27	26.64
18-34 years old	22.9	17.76	22.24
35-49 years old	23.6	22.53	21.74
50+ years old	27.2	32.44	29.37
Expected population growth (2004-2012):	6.77%	4.79% <sup>4</sup>	6.95%

- 1 – statistics from 2001 Census
- 2 – based on ABS estimates as at June 2003
- 3 – based on 2003 interim projections from the Department of Sustainability and Environment
- 4 – excluding Cardinia

### Matters to consider when preparing submissions

There are many matters to be considered when determining the electoral structure of a municipality. In your submission, you might try to take all of the issues into account, or you might just concentrate on one issue that you wish to bring to the VEC's attention. The VEC's job is to look at all of the relevant matters and to reach the best overall solution, based both on its own research and submissions received from the public.

Below are some of the main matters you might like to consider.

#### How many councillors should there be?

Under the *Local Government Act 1989*, the number of councillors in every municipality must be between five and twelve inclusive (s-58(1)). The Act does not specify how to decide what is the appropriate number, but the VEC has identified the following matters to consider.

Parliament has provided a range for the number of councillors to allow for municipalities with large numbers of voters and municipalities with smaller numbers. The numbers of voters in each municipality vary across Victoria from 4,077 to 160,368. The VEC applies these provisions of the Act in a logical way, with those municipalities that have the largest numbers of voters having the most councillors, and those municipalities that have the least numbers of voters having fewer councillors.

The VEC has produced a table that lists each municipality and its voter to councillor ratio (see the end of this document). The table differentiates between rural, regional and metropolitan municipalities. This table is a valuable reference point in considering the appropriate number of councillors by recognising the different circumstances and needs of these categories of municipalities. This information enables the VEC to compare the municipality being reviewed to other municipalities with similar voter numbers and areas.

The VEC also considers whether the number of voters in the municipality is expected to increase or decline in the period between reviews (eight years). Population forecasts produced by the Australian Bureau of Statistics and the Victorian Department of Infrastructure are used to assist the VEC in making its assessment.

In addition, the VEC considers any special issues or circumstances that may require a municipality to have more councillors than would otherwise be the case. These might include such issues or circumstances as:

- significant population growth within the municipality;
- an especially mobile or transient population;
- cultural and linguistic diversity within the community;
- a large proportion of older residents who may have special interests and needs;
- a wide geographic distribution of voters within a large municipality; or
- a large number of communities of interest (see below).

The table at the end of this document shows the numbers of councillors and the voter to councillor ratios for the various types of municipalities in Victoria.

### Communities of interest

An important part of achieving "fair and equitable representation" is making sure that communities of interest are appropriately represented. Communities of interest are groups of people who share a range of common concerns or aspirations. They are different from "interest groups" or "pressure groups" which may only have one issue in common (or a very limited number of issues). The communities of interest to which people belong are often also an important part of their self-identity.

Communities of interest may occur where people are linked with each other geographically (e.g. a town or valley) or economically, such as where people work in similar industries (e.g. tourism) or where people work in mutually-dependant industries (e.g. fruit growers, transporters and canners). Communities of interest may also appear where people share a number of special needs because of similar circumstances (such as new immigrants, who may have little English, require assistance with housing and need help finding employment). Communities of interest may also include ethnic groups, retired people, the unemployed or many other groupings of people.

Communities of interest are important in electoral representation reviews when they have similar needs from their local government. In such cases, it is important to endeavour to ensure that communities of interest have the opportunity to be fairly represented on councils. There are a number of ways to take account of communities of interest, depending on how they are distributed geographically. For example:

If:	then fair representation may best be achieved by:
a community of interest is compact geographically,	creating a ward with boundaries reflecting that community of interest.
a community of interest is a widespread minority,	creating multi-member wards with proportional representation.
there are numerous minority communities of interest within a municipality,	combining the communities of interest, so that any elected councillor would be responsible to all of these groups.

There are also many other ways to take communities of interest into account.

**Should the municipality be unsubdivided or divided into wards?**

A municipality can either be unsubdivided, with all councillors elected “at large” by all of the voters, or it can be subdivided into a number of wards. Both electoral structures have advantages and disadvantages, and which structure is best for any individual municipality will depend on the municipality’s particular circumstances.

Alpine Shire currently has five councillors elected from an unsubdivided council.

The following tables list characteristics that are commonly considered to be associated with the different possible electoral structures and may be of use in deciding which structure most suits your municipality.

The table at the end of this document lists all of Victoria’s municipalities and their electoral structures.

**Unsubdivided municipalities**

Of Victoria’s 79 municipalities, 14 are unsubdivided. Unsubdivided municipalities must elect their councillors by proportional representation (see more on this point below).

The possible features of an unsubdivided municipality can be portrayed as follows:

Positive Features	Less Positive Features
Promotes the concept of a municipality-wide focus, with councillors being elected by and concerned for the municipality as a whole, rather than parochial interests.	May lead to significant communities of interest and points of view being unrepresented. May lead to councillors being relatively inaccessible for residents of parts of the municipality.
Gives residents and ratepayers a choice of councillors to approach with their concerns.	May lead to confusion of responsibilities and duplication of effort on the part of councillors. May be difficult for voters to assess the performances of individual councillors.
Each voter has the opportunity to express a preference for every candidate for the Council election.	Large numbers of candidates might be confusing for voters.
Removes the need to define internal ward boundaries.	
Results in a simple, less expensive voters’ roll for elections as compared with separate voters’ rolls for individual wards.	

**Options for division into wards**

If the municipality is to be divided into wards, there are three options:

- single-member wards;
- multi-member wards; and
- combinations of single and multi-member wards.

The Local Government Act specifies that wards with only one representative must elect that representative via preferential voting, whereas multi-member wards and unsubdivided municipalities must elect their representatives via proportional representation. As far as voters are concerned on the day, it makes no difference. In practice, ballot papers look the same and are filled out in the same way, regardless of whether the candidates are being elected by proportional representation or by preferential voting. Whether a ward elects councillors via proportional representation or preferential voting can sometimes make a difference as to whether or not communities of interest are fairly represented.

**Single-member wards**

More than half (43) of Victoria’s municipalities are made up entirely of single-member wards.

The possible features of single-member wards can be portrayed as follows:

Positive Features	Less Positive Features
Councillors are more likely to be truly local representatives, easily accessible to residents and aware of local issues.	Councillors may be elected on minor or parochial issues and lack a perspective of what policies benefit the municipality as a whole. Ward boundaries may divide communities of interest, and may be difficult to define.
Major geographical communities of interest are likely to be represented. It is less likely that one particular point of view or sectional interest will dominate the Council.	Voters may have a restricted choice of candidates in elections for individual wards. Small populations in each ward may make ward boundaries more susceptible to change caused by demographic shifts.

### Multi-member wards

Eleven of Victoria's municipalities have multi-member wards. A multi-member ward structure results in fewer but larger wards than a single-member ward structure.

The possible features of multi-member wards can be portrayed as follows:

Positive Features	Less Positive Features
This structure supports the accommodation of a whole community of interest (such as a sizeable town or group of suburbs) within a ward.	Very local issues may be overridden.
Focus on issues may be broader than for single-member wards (though councillors may be more locally focussed than in an unsubdivided municipality).	Groups may form within the council based on multi-member wards, leading to possible division between councillors.
Councillors may be more accessible than in an unsubdivided municipality.	In very large wards, councillors may not be accessible for residents in parts of the ward.
Electors have a choice of councillor to approach.	Duplication or gaps may occur if councillors do not communicate or share their workloads effectively.
Councillors may share workloads more effectively.	
Ward boundaries are likely to be easy to identify and less susceptible to change as a result of population growth or decline than for single-member wards.	It is easier for candidates to be elected as part of a voting ticket than as individuals.

13

### Voting systems

The voting system is another important factor to take into account when considering whether to have single-member wards, multi-member wards or unsubdivided municipalities. In single-member wards, councillors must be elected by preferential voting. In unsubdivided municipalities and multi-member wards, councillors must be elected by proportional representation. Under either system, people still vote in the same way. The only differences are the way that the votes are counted.

When there are single-member wards, the **preferential system** applies. Under the preferential system:

- a candidate must achieve an absolute majority (50% plus one) of the formal votes to be elected;
- if a candidate obtains an absolute majority of the first-preference votes, then that candidate is elected;
- if no candidate obtains an absolute majority of first-preference votes, preferences have to be distributed:
  - the candidate with the lowest number of first-preference votes is declared to be a defeated candidate, and that candidate's votes are distributed to the remaining candidates according to the second preferences on the ballot papers;
  - the process of excluding the lowest candidate and distributing that candidate's preferences to the remaining candidates continues until one candidate has an absolute majority of votes, and is declared elected.

Under this system, the way in which voters allocate their preferences can be just as important as where they place their first-preference votes. Candidates advise voters (through how-to-vote cards and candidate statements) about how to order their preferences, and may negotiate with other candidates about the order of preferences. In some cases, candidates have informal "running mates" to help with the flow of preferences to them.

### Combination of single-member and multi-member wards

Eleven of Victoria's municipalities have a mixture of single-member and multi-member wards.

The possible features of a combined system can be portrayed as follows:

Positive Features	Less Positive Features
A large community of interest can be included within a multi-member ward, and a smaller community of interest can be included within a single-member ward. This structure accommodates differences in population across a municipality, and allows small communities to be separately represented.	Electors in single-member wards may expect that their councillors will be more influential than their numbers suggest.
Clear ward boundaries are more likely.	

14

When there are multi-member wards or unsubdivided municipalities, **proportional representation** applies. The basis of proportional representation is that candidates are elected in proportion to their support. Under the proportional representation system:

- to be elected, a candidate must obtain a "quota", which is calculated by dividing the total number of votes by one more than the number of vacancies, and then adding one (for example, in an election for 3 vacancies with 800 votes cast, the quota would be 201);
- when a candidate receives more votes than a quota, the surplus votes are distributed to the continuing candidates at a reduced value, calculated by dividing the surplus votes by the total votes for the candidate (for example, if a candidate achieved 300 votes and the quota was 201 votes, the candidate's surplus would be 99, and ballot papers would be transferred to the remaining candidates at a value of 99 divided by 300);
- when all surplus votes have been distributed and there are still vacancies to be filled, preferences are distributed from the lowest-scoring candidates until a candidate has a quota.

This system means that any candidate who obtains a quota, either through first-preference votes or through the flow of preferences, is elected. In effect, candidates representing large minorities are likely to be represented as well as candidates representing majorities.

Under this system, candidates may group together and advise their supporters to follow a ticket in their preferences. However, such a group is unlikely to win all the vacancies in a ward or unsubdivided municipality unless it has overwhelming support.

### **How should ward boundaries be drawn?**

#### **Getting the numbers right**

If Alpine Shire is to be divided into wards, the ward boundaries must comply with legal requirements. Section 219D of the *Local Government Act 1989* requires that:

- the number of voters represented by each Councillor must be within 10% of the average number of voters per Councillor for that municipality; and
- the ward boundaries must provide a fair and equitable division of the municipal district.

Where there are multi-member wards, the number of voters represented by each councillor for such wards is taken to be the total number of voters for the ward divided by the number of councillors for the ward. For instance, if there are 3 councillors and 12,000 voters for a ward, the number of voters represented by each councillor will be 4,000, that is 12,000 divided by 3.

Ward boundaries **must** meet the approximate equality requirement set by the Act. The number of voters represented by each councillor cannot be more than 10% outside the average number for all councillors.

#### **Other considerations**

The Act does not prescribe any more details to define what constitutes a fair and equitable division of the municipality. However, the following criteria are useful in considering and (where possible) deciding on proposed ward boundaries:

- the boundaries should take account of communities of interest;
- the boundaries should follow clear lines, such as major roads, rivers and other natural features;
- growing areas should not be concentrated into one ward, but should be spread over several wards; and
- the boundaries should take account of likely population changes, by setting the number of voters in wards with high growth potential somewhat below the average, and the number of voters in wards with little growth potential somewhat above the average. This approach will help ensure that the boundaries stay within the 10% tolerance for a longer period, avoiding the need for frequent redrawing of boundaries.

In developing ward boundaries, the VEC aims to achieve the best possible balance among these criteria.

### **What should wards be called?**

There is a variety of possible approaches to the naming of wards, including:

- **Place names:** A number of municipalities name their wards after localities in the wards. This approach is useful where ward boundaries closely align with localities. However, it can lead to people in smaller localities within a ward feeling overlooked, and may cause confusion if the locality that a ward is named after cuts across a ward boundary;
- **Compass directions:** This is the current approach in, for example, the City of Whittlesea, where the wards are Central, East, East Central, North, North Central, South, South Central, South West and West. It is straightforward. It is of most use where the location of the wards is closely aligned to compass directions;
- **Names of historic buildings:** This is a way of celebrating the municipality's heritage;
- **Names of natural features:** Using the names of natural features such as hills or streams can be a way of identifying wards without the complications of locality names. The features would need to be well known and relevant to the particular wards;
- **Names of pioneers and former prominent citizens:** This is a way of recognising important former residents. It is most appropriate when the person is closely associated with the area covered by the ward; and
- **Aboriginal names:** This is a way of recognising the municipality's Aboriginal heritage. However, the use of Aboriginal names could be seen as being tokenistic if the names are not relevant to areas within the municipality.

**Table: Profiles of municipalities**

Estimates as at 31 May 2004 (unless otherwise indicated)

Metropolitan (including outer metropolitan)					
Municipality	Area (km <sup>2</sup> )	Number on roll	Number of councillors	Number of voters per councillor	Electoral structure
Bayside	62	90,989	7	12998	Single-member wards
Boroondara	37	67,025	9	7447	Single-member wards
Brimbank	60	122,181	10	12218	Single-member wards
Casey	123	119,910	9	13323	Single-member wards
Darebin	410	134,072	11	12188	Single-member wards
Frankston*	53	98,551	9	10950	Single-member wards
Glen Eira	130	90,910	7	12987	Single-member wards
Greater Dandenong	39	94,952	9	10550	3 three-member wards
Hobsons Bay*	129	94,387	11	8581	Single-member wards
Hume	64	63,197	8	7900	4 two-member wards
Kingston	504	98,763	9	10974	Single-member wards
Knox	91	107,800	7	15400	Single-member wards
Manningham	114	110,342	9	12260	Single-member wards
Maribyrnong	113	86,429	8	10804	4 two-member wards
Maroondah	31	48,346	7	6907	Single-member wards
Melbourne	61	77,306	7	11044	Single-member wards
Melton	36	64,000 <sup>†</sup>	9	7111	Unsubdivided
Monash	527	45,855	7	6551	Single-member wards
Moonee Valley	81	121,239	8	15155	Single-member wards
Moreland*	44	91,235	7	13034	Single-member wards
Mornington Peninsula	51	108,092 <sup>†</sup>	10	10809	Single-member wards
Nilumbik	723	136,448	9	15161	Single-member wards
Port Phillip	433	44,009	9	4890	Single-member wards
Stonnington*	21	73,812 <sup>†</sup>	7	10545	Single-member wards
Whitehorse	26	78,642 <sup>†</sup>	9	8738	Single-member wards
Whittlesea	64	111,679	10	11168	5 two-member wards
Wyndham	490	85,755	9	9528	Single-member wards
Yarra*	542	70,220	7	10031	Single-member wards
Yarra Ranges	20	60,097 <sup>†</sup>	9	6677	1 single-member ward & 4 two-member wards
<b>Average (median)</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>91,112</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10,880</b>	<b>Single-member wards</b>

\* under review

<sup>†</sup> as at 2004 representation review

<sup>‡</sup> as at previous election

Regional Cities, Rural Cities and Boroughs					
Municipality	Area (km <sup>2</sup> )	Number on roll	Number of councillors	Number of voters per councillor	Electoral structure
Araat	4,210	9,586 <sup>†</sup>	7	1369	Unsubdivided
Ballarat	740	67,490	9	7499	Single-member wards
Benalla	2,354	11,768	7	1681	Single-member wards
Greater Bendigo*	2,999	77,291	7	11042	Single-member wards
Greater Geelong	1,247	160,368	12	13364	Single-member wards
Greater Shepparton*	2,422	39,622	7	5660	Unsubdivided
Horsham	4,249	14,520	7	2074	Unsubdivided
Latrobe	1,426	58,078	9	6453	Single-member wards
Mildura	22,082	36,082	9	4009	Unsubdivided
Queenscliffe	9	4,077	7	582	Unsubdivided
Swan Hill	6,116	14,365	7	2052	1 single-member ward & 3 two-member wards
Wangaratta*	3,639	21,599	8	2700	6 single-member wards & 1 two-member ward
Warrnambool*	121	24,274	7	3468	Single-member wards
Wodonga*	433	23,542	5	4708	Unsubdivided
<b>Average (median)</b>	<b>2,388</b>	<b>23,908</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>3738</b>	

\* under review

<sup>†</sup> as at 2004 representation review

<sup>‡</sup> as at previous election

Municipality	Area (km <sup>2</sup> )	Number on roll	Number of councillors	Number of voters per councillor	Electoral structure
Surf Coast <sup>†</sup>	1,553	25,457	9	2829	Unsubdivided
Towong*	6,673	5,218	5	1044	Unsubdivided
Wellington*	10,989	37,666	9	4185	Unsubdivided
West Wimmera	9,107	4,256	5	851	Unsubdivided
Yammblack	7,310	7,222	9	802	3 single-member wards & 2 three-member wards
<b>Average (median)</b>	<b>3,891</b>	<b>13,850</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>2190</b>	

\* under review

<sup>†</sup> as at 2004 representation review

<sup>‡</sup> reviewed 2003 – structure to come into effect at next election

Regional Shires					
Municipality	Area (km <sup>2</sup> )	Number on roll	Number of councillors	Number of voters per councillor	Electoral structure
<b>Alpine*</b>	<b>4,832</b>	<b>11,107</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2221</b>	<b>Unsubdivided</b>
Bass Coast	864	37,199	7	5314	Single-member wards
Baw Baw	4,032	30,563	9	3396	Single-member wards
Buloke	8,004	6,734	9	748	3 three-member wards
Campaspe	4,519	30,568	7	4367	5 single-member wards & 1 two-member ward
Cardinia	1,280	37,740	7	5391	Single-member wards
Central Goldfields	1,534	11,390	5	2278	Single-member wards
Colac Otway	3,433	20,414	7	2916	2 single-member wards, 1 two-member ward & 1 three-member ward
Corangamite*	4,404	13,985 <sup>†</sup>	10	1399	5 two-member wards
East Gippsland	20,931	36,993	8	4624	2 four-member wards
Gannawarra	3,732	9,917	7	1417	3 single-member wards & 2 two member wards
Glenselg	6,210	18,515	9	2057	Single-member wards
Golden Plains	2,704	13,850	9	1539	Single-member ridings
Hepburn	1,470	13,733	5	2747	Single-member wards
Hindmarsh	7,550	5,335	6	889	3 two-member wards
Indigo*	2,044	11,325	7	1618	Unsubdivided
Loddon	6,694	8,406	6	1401	Single-member ridings
Macedon Ranges*	1,747	30,386	9	3376	Single-member wards
Mansfield	3,891	9,217	5	1843	4 single-member wards & 1 two-member ward
Mitchell*	2,862	22,274	7	3182	5 single-member wards & 1 two-member ward
Moira	4,045	20,686	9	2298	3 three-member wards
Moorabool*	2,110	20,391 <sup>†</sup>	7	2913	4 single-member ridings & 1 three-member riding
Mount Alexander	1,529	15,332	7	2190	Single-member wards
Moyn	5,478	13,909	10	1391	5 two-member ridings
Murrindindi	3,877	13,714	6	2286	Single-member ridings
Northern Grampians	5,728	10,931	9	1215	1 three-member ward & 1 six-member ward
Pyrenees*	3,433	7,224 <sup>†</sup>	7	1032	Single-member ridings
South Gippsland*	3,295	28,669	9	3185	7 single-member wards & 1 two-member ward
Southern Grampians	6,652	13,186	7	1884	Unsubdivided
Strathbogie*	3,302	9,065	7	1295	Single-member wards

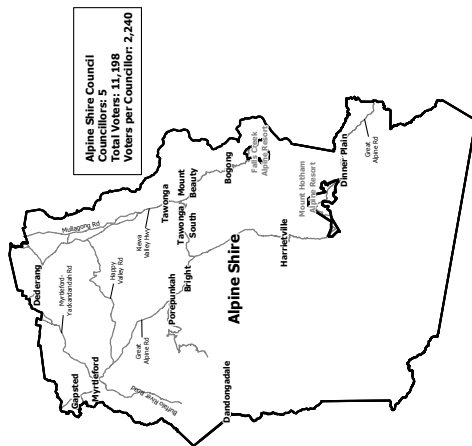
### About the VEC

The Victorian Electoral Commission is an independent statutory authority established under Victoria's *Electoral Act 2002*. The VEC is not subject to ministerial direction or control in the performance of its responsibilities. The VEC's main functions include:

- conducting parliamentary elections and by-elections;
- conducting local government elections and by-elections (when appointed by councils);
- conducting representation reviews for councils;
- maintaining an accurate and up-to-date register of electors and preparing rolls for elections; and
- contributing to public understanding of elections and electoral matters through information and education programmes.

In performing these functions, the VEC acts as an independent, impartial authority, acting transparently and with integrity.

### Alpine Supplement: Actual voter numbers as at 23 June 2004



The numbers of voters in each Census collector district within Alpine Shire are:

CCD	Voters	CCD	Voters	CCD	Voters
2032001	94	2032013	76	2032201	598
2032002	66	2032101	405	2032202	437
2032003	243	2032102	145	2032203	378
2032004	339	2032103	322	2032204	254
2032005	632	2032104	593	2032205	254
2032006	441	2032105	442	2032206	168
2032007	438	2032106	480	2032207	46
2032008	284	2032107	314	2032208	350
2032009	338	2032108	231	2032209	192
2032010	119	2032109	314	2032210	407
2032011	358	2032110	471	2032211	376
2032012	344	2032111	249		

A map showing the exact boundaries for each Census collector district can be purchased from the Australian Bureau of Statistics – [www.abs.gov.au](http://www.abs.gov.au) or call 1300 135 070. An electronic version of voter numbers by Census collector district can be downloaded from the VEC's website at [www.vec.vic.gov.au](http://www.vec.vic.gov.au)

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## **9.5 List of persons and groups making submissions**

### **Preliminary submissions**

Graeme Keith Abraham  
Alpine Shire Council  
Cr Bill Best  
The Binder Family  
Thelma J Dennis  
Ray Dixon  
The Fletcher Pastoral Group  
Michael Gorey  
Michael Hay  
Jennie MacGill  
Norma MacGill  
Bruce McDonald  
Max McGillivray  
Myrtleford and District Residents & Ratepayers Association Inc.  
KJ Smith and HJ Norman  
Proportional Representation Society of Australia  
Andrew Randell  
Gurmeet Sekhon

### **Response submissions**

Graeme Keith Abraham  
Alpine Shire Council  
Ray Dixon  
Michael Gorey  
The Proportional Representation Society of Australia







