

# Review of constitutional arrangements for the Coomalie Community Government Council's electoral representation

<p>Consideration in accordance with regulation 63(2)-(3) of the <i>Local Government (Electoral) Regulations 2008</i></p>	<p><b>Assessment of the effectiveness of constitutional arrangements for electoral representation of the council's area</b></p> <p>The Coomalie Community Government Council area extends from Manton Dam in the north to the town of Adelaide River in the south, and east from the Adelaide River to Litchfield National Park in the west. The Council area includes the localities of Adelaide River, Batchelor and Lake Bennett.</p> <p>There are 612 enrolled voters in the Coomalie Community Government Council area, as at 4 May 2020 (Northern Territory Electoral Commission). The Council has three wards: Adelaide River Ward; Batchelor Township Ward; and Coomalie Rural Ward. Each ward has two councillors, who are:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="654 380 1005 1232"> <thead> <tr> <th>Councillor</th> <th>Ward</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Max Corliss</td> <td>Adelaide River</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sharon Beswick</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Deborah Moyle</td> <td>Batchelor Township</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Christian McElwee</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Andrew Turner (President)</td> <td>Coomalie Rural</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sue Bulmer</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>The main industries within the Council area are livestock production, tertiary education, horticulture, stock feed production, tourism, and agriculture.</p> <p>Since September 2017, the Council and the Belyuen Community Government Council have been in discussions on a proposal toward a long-term sustainable regional council model. Both Councils have the view that a strong rural based Council is essential for the sustainable delivery of local governance and services into the future.</p>	Councillor	Ward	Max Corliss	Adelaide River	Sharon Beswick		Deborah Moyle	Batchelor Township	Christian McElwee		Andrew Turner (President)	Coomalie Rural	Sue Bulmer	
Councillor	Ward														
Max Corliss	Adelaide River														
Sharon Beswick															
Deborah Moyle	Batchelor Township														
Christian McElwee															
Andrew Turner (President)	Coomalie Rural														
Sue Bulmer															
<p>1.</p> <p>63(2)(a) – community of interests in the local government area including economic, social and regional interests</p>															

2.	63(2)(b) – types of communication and travel in the local government area with special reference to disabilities arising out of remoteness or distance	<p>The Coomalie Community Government Council area is located in the north-western section of the Northern Territory, about 75 kilometres south of the Darwin CBD. There is no regular public transport service from Darwin or within the Council area.</p> <p>The Council is responsible for 194.51 kilometres of road comprising of: 86.236 kilometres of sealed road; 77.594 kilometres of gravel road; 27.720 kilometres of formed road; and 2.960 kilometres of cycle path (Local Government Grants Commission, 2019).</p>																																										
3.	63(2)(c) – the trend of population changes in the local government area	<p>According to Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2018 Population data, the population of the Coomalie Community Government Council area has increased from 1,310 in 2013 to 1,391 in 2018. The population trend in the Council area is shown in the table below:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="539 161 837 1451"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>2013</th> <th>2014</th> <th>2015</th> <th>2016</th> <th>2017</th> <th>2018</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Males (total number)</td> <td>746</td> <td>751</td> <td>747</td> <td>748</td> <td>728</td> <td>712</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Females (total number)</td> <td>564</td> <td>558</td> <td>549</td> <td>691</td> <td>678</td> <td>679</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Persons (total number)</b></td> <td><b>1,310</b></td> <td><b>1,309</b></td> <td><b>1,296</b></td> <td><b>1,439</b></td> <td><b>1,406</b></td> <td><b>1,391</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Median age (years)</td> <td>45.7</td> <td>46.4</td> <td>47.5</td> <td>45.9</td> <td>47.1</td> <td>48.3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Working age population – 15 to 64 years (%)</td> <td>73.6</td> <td>73.0</td> <td>73.1</td> <td>65.3</td> <td>62.8</td> <td>62.8</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>The population density in the Coomalie Community Government Council area is 0.68 persons per square kilometre.</p>		2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	Males (total number)	746	751	747	748	728	712	Females (total number)	564	558	549	691	678	679	<b>Persons (total number)</b>	<b>1,310</b>	<b>1,309</b>	<b>1,296</b>	<b>1,439</b>	<b>1,406</b>	<b>1,391</b>	Median age (years)	45.7	46.4	47.5	45.9	47.1	48.3	Working age population – 15 to 64 years (%)	73.6	73.0	73.1	65.3	62.8	62.8
	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018																																						
Males (total number)	746	751	747	748	728	712																																						
Females (total number)	564	558	549	691	678	679																																						
<b>Persons (total number)</b>	<b>1,310</b>	<b>1,309</b>	<b>1,296</b>	<b>1,439</b>	<b>1,406</b>	<b>1,391</b>																																						
Median age (years)	45.7	46.4	47.5	45.9	47.1	48.3																																						
Working age population – 15 to 64 years (%)	73.6	73.0	73.1	65.3	62.8	62.8																																						
4.	63(2)(d) – the density of population in the local government area	<p>The population density in the Coomalie Community Government Council area is 0.68 persons per square kilometre.</p>																																										
5.	63(2)(e) – the physical features of the local government area	<p>The Coomalie Community Government Council encompasses a total area of 2,056 km<sup>2</sup>. The Council area is bounded by the Litchfield Council area in the north, the Victoria Daly Regional Council area in the south and unincorporated land in the east and the west.</p>																																										

<p>63(3)(a) – the desirability of the number of electors for each ward being as near to equal as practicable at the next general election</p>	<p>Current enrolled voters for each ward and the ratio of councillors to electors, as at 4 May 2020, is shown in the table below (Northern Territory Electoral Commission).</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="247 302 526 1310"> <thead> <tr> <th>Ward</th> <th>Number of councillors</th> <th>Number of electors</th> <th>Ratio of councillors to electors</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Adelaide River</td> <td>2</td> <td>214</td> <td>1:107</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Batchelor Township</td> <td>2</td> <td>163</td> <td>1:82</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Coomalie Rural</td> <td>2</td> <td>235</td> <td>1:118</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Total</b></td> <td><b>6</b></td> <td><b>612</b></td> <td><b>1:102</b></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>From the table above, the average ratio of councillors to electors is 1:102. Both the Adelaide River Ward and Coomalie Rural Ward have a lower ratio of councillors as compared to electors (1:107 and 1:118, respectively). The Batchelor Township Ward has a greater ratio of councillors as compared to electors (1:82).</p> <p>It is likely that the number of enrolled electors in each ward will change prior to the next local government general elections scheduled for August 2021. It is considered that the above ratio of councillors to electors is as near to equal as practicable for the next general election.</p>	Ward	Number of councillors	Number of electors	Ratio of councillors to electors	Adelaide River	2	214	1:107	Batchelor Township	2	163	1:82	Coomalie Rural	2	235	1:118	<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>612</b>	<b>1:102</b>
Ward	Number of councillors	Number of electors	Ratio of councillors to electors																		
Adelaide River	2	214	1:107																		
Batchelor Township	2	163	1:82																		
Coomalie Rural	2	235	1:118																		
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>612</b>	<b>1:102</b>																		
<p>6. 63(3)(b) – the desirability of keeping the area of each ward containing rural and remote areas as small as practicable</p>	<p>The proposal to retain the current constitutional arrangements for council electoral representation will ensure the area of each ward contains minimal rural and remote areas.</p>																				
<p>7. 63(3)(c) – the desirability of keeping the demographic and geographic nature of each ward as uniform as practicable</p>	<p>The proposal to retain the current constitutional arrangements for council electoral representation will ensure the demographic and geographical nature of each ward is as uniform as practicable.</p>																				
<p>8. 63(3)(d) – the desirability of including an identifiable community wholly within 1 ward if practicable</p>	<p>The proposal to retain the current constitutional arrangements for council electoral representation will ensure that identifiable communities remain wholly within 1 ward as far as practicable.</p>																				

This report has been prepared with reference to information provided by the Northern Territory Electoral Commission.

Having given proper consideration to all matters relevant to the constitutional arrangements for electoral representation in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2008* and *Local Government (Electoral) Regulations 2008*, it is recommended that the current constitutional arrangements still provide effective electoral representation and that there be no proposed changes to the current constitutional arrangements.



Council Chief Executive Officer (sign)

Date: 21 / 07 / 2020