

# SCOTLAND OFFICE

**Issued on behalf of  
the Boundary Commission for Scotland**



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before 0001 Hours on 21 May 2009**

## **Recommendations for constituencies and regions for the Scottish Parliament**

The Boundary Commission for Scotland today publishes its Revised Recommendations for constituencies and its Provisional Proposals for regions for the Scottish Parliament. There will now be a consultation period of one month. The review of Scottish Parliament boundaries is unrelated to the elections for the European Parliament.

The review of Scottish Parliament boundaries began in 2007, and will report to the Secretary of State for Scotland by June 2010.

The current constituencies and regions for the Scottish Parliament were defined in 1995, and changes in the distribution of population, as well as changes to local government areas since then, have led the Commission to conclude that a comprehensive review is required.

### **Constituencies**

The Commission published its Provisional Proposals for constituencies in February 2008. Having considered representations received and reports from Local Inquiries, the Commission has now produced its Revised Recommendations for constituencies.

The Commission is required to design constituencies and regions while working within rules set down in legislation. Those rules specify that there will be 73 constituencies and 8 regions for the Parliament. The rules also require the Commission to have regard to local authority boundaries, to make the electorate of each constituency as near to the average as practicable, to take into account special geographical considerations and to take account of inconveniences that would arise from, and local ties which would be broken by, alterations to constituencies.

The amount of change between the Provisional Proposals of 2008 and these Revised Recommendations varies across the country. In some areas, such as Falkirk and Glasgow, there was little comment on the Commission's Provisional

Proposals and there are only minor changes between those and the Revised Recommendations.

In some areas, such as Dumfries and Galloway, Perth and Kinross and South East Scotland, the Commission arranged for a Local Inquiry to take place to consider views and alternatives. However, in these areas, the Commission has not been persuaded that any of the alternatives put forward provide a better solution in accordance with the statutory rules.

In some areas, such as Highland, North East Scotland, Stirling and Clackmannanshire, the Commission arranged for a Local Inquiry to take place to consider views and alternatives, and after considering all of the evidence has produced revised recommendations while retaining the broad structure of its Provisional Proposals.

In other areas such as the West of Scotland and South West and Central Scotland, the Commission's Revised Recommendations differ substantially from its Provisional Proposals in order to take into account the views expressed in representations and the recommendations made in Local Inquiry reports.

## Regions

This publication includes the Commission's first proposals for Scottish Parliament regions. Each of the 8 regions is made up of a number of constituencies. In its proposals, the Commission has produced a comparable configuration to that of the existing regions. The proposed regions, in the main, produce compact geographic areas throughout Scotland and allow each of the main cities to be contained within a single region. The proposals reflect the special geographical considerations existing in the Highlands and Islands region and result in a lower electorate in that region than elsewhere.

The regions proposed by the Commission and the local authority areas covered by them are:

Region	Local authorities covered	Electorate
Highlands and Islands	Argyll and Bute, Highland, Moray (part), Na h-Eileanan an Iar, Orkney Islands, Shetland Islands, West Dunbartonshire (part).	388,990
North East Scotland	Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire, Angus, Dundee City, Moray (part).	540,310
Mid Scotland and Fife	Clackmannanshire, Fife, Perth and Kinross, Stirling.	490,700
West Central Scotland	East Renfrewshire, Inverclyde, North Ayrshire, Renfrewshire, South Lanarkshire (part).	477,430
Glasgow	Glasgow City, South Lanarkshire (part).	493,950
East Central Scotland	East Dunbartonshire, Falkirk, North Lanarkshire, South Lanarkshire (part), West Dunbartonshire (part), West Lothian (part).	552,790
Lothian	City of Edinburgh, East Lothian, Midlothian (part), West Lothian (part).	509,370
South Scotland	Dumfries and Galloway, East Ayrshire Midlothian (part), Scottish Borders, South Ayrshire, South	465,770

	Lanarkshire.(part).	
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The public are encouraged to comment on the Commission's recommendations and proposals. Information on the proposals is on display at locations across Scotland and on the Commission's website [www.bcomm-scotland.gov.uk](http://www.bcomm-scotland.gov.uk).

Representations should be submitted by 21 June 2009 by email to [representations@scottishboundaries.gov.uk](mailto:representations@scottishboundaries.gov.uk); by using the reply facility on the Commission's web site; in writing to The Secretary, Boundary Commission for Scotland, 3 Drumsheugh Gardens, Edinburgh, EH3 7QJ; or by fax to 0131 538 7511. Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, representations will be made available to those interested in the Review except in very exceptional circumstances.

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## **Notes for News Editors**

### **Local News Releases**

This News Release gives an overview of the Commission's proposals across Scotland. The Commission has also produced a series of News Releases which describe its proposals in more detail for different parts of the country.

### **Legal framework**

This is the first review of constituencies and regions for the Scottish Parliament and is governed by the Scotland Act 1998 as amended by the Scottish Parliament (Constituencies) Act 2004.

The current constituency boundaries were established following the Commission's Fourth Periodical Report of Parliamentary Constituencies for the purpose of returning Scottish members to the Westminster Parliament, which was published in 1995. The current region boundaries were established as European Parliament constituencies in June 1996.

The Scotland Act 1998 envisaged that the boundaries of constituencies for the Westminster and Holyrood parliaments would be coterminous. This was amended by the Scottish Parliament (Constituencies) Act 2004, which fixed the number of constituencies for the Scottish Parliament at 73 and thus broke the link between the Holyrood and Westminster constituencies. The Commission's Fifth Periodical Review was completed in 2004 and resulted in the number of Scottish constituencies for Westminster being reduced to 59.

The legislation stipulates:

- 73 constituencies returning members to the parliament, only 71 are subject to review – for Orkney and Shetland, the Act specifies that each will be a separate constituency;
- 8 regions in Scotland, all of which are subject to review. Each region returns 7 members to the Scottish Parliament;
- A set of rules for designing constituencies and regions.

### **The review**

Changes in the distribution of electorate, as well as changes to local government areas since the existing constituencies were defined have led the Commission to conclude that a comprehensive review is required. The review was announced on 3 July 2007.

The Commission published its Provisional Proposals for constituencies on 14 February 2008. This is the publication of Revised Recommendations following consideration of comments received on those Provisional Proposals.

The Commission is required to complete a review of the boundaries of constituencies and regions for the Scottish Parliament between 1 July 2007 and 30 June 2010.

## **Constituency and region design**

When designing constituencies and regions, the Commission is required to observe rules which are set down in legislation. The rules for constituencies include requirements to have regard to local authority boundaries; to aim to have the same number of electors in each constituency; to take account of special geographical considerations; and to consider the local effects of alterations. The rules for regions include requirements to form each region by combining a number of constituencies; to take account of special geographical considerations; and to aim to have the same number of electors in each region.

The electoral quota for the review is 54,728 - this is the average number of electors in each constituency outside Orkney and Shetland. The electoral quota is fixed and is used throughout the review. The average electorate for each region is 489,914.

In previous reviews of parliamentary constituencies in Scotland, the Commission relied on the use of local government wards as building blocks for constituencies. In 2007, a new structure of local government wards was introduced in Scotland to accommodate proportional representation for local authority elections, with much larger wards that each return either 3 or 4 members. As a result, in many areas across Scotland it is not possible to use the significantly enlarged wards to construct revised constituencies within the terms of the statutory rules. As a consequence, the boundaries for the proposed constituencies have been created from whichever geographic feature or boundary creates a constituency approaching electoral parity, while respecting community ties wherever possible.

Each constituency is designated as either a burgh constituency (BC) or county constituency (CC) - this designation affects the regulations concerning election expenditure.

## **Maps of Current and Proposed Constituencies and Regions**

The Commission has produced sets of maps showing the current constituency and region boundaries, its Provisional Proposals and its Revised Recommendations. The relevant maps are displayed at selected council offices, libraries, etc. for the duration of the consultation. The locations for display are listed in Statutory Notices which are being published today in newspapers, and are also available on the Commission's website. The maps are also available in PDF, GIF and TIF format on the Commission's website at [www.bcomm-scotland.gov.uk](http://www.bcomm-scotland.gov.uk).

A media webpage giving access to images for use in media publications is available at [http://www.bcomm-scotland.gov.uk/1st\\_holyrood/media/April\\_09.htm](http://www.bcomm-scotland.gov.uk/1st_holyrood/media/April_09.htm).

## **Local Inquiries**

Where representations objecting to a proposal concerning a constituency are made by a local authority covering the constituency, or by a body of 100 or more electors resident in the proposed constituency, and no Local Inquiry has already been held in the area as part of the review, the Commission will hold a Local Inquiry. Otherwise, a Local Inquiry may be held, but is not obligatory.

Where representations objecting to a proposal concerning a region are made by a council whose area is wholly or partly within the region, or by a body of 500 or more electors in the proposed region, and no Local Inquiry has already been held about the proposal as part of the review, the Commission will hold a Local Inquiry. Otherwise, a Local Inquiry may be held, but is not obligatory.

### **Implementation of the Recommendations**

The Commission is required to submit its report on the review to the Secretary of State for Scotland by 30 June 2010. It is the Secretary of State for Scotland's duty to lay the Commission's report before the UK Parliament together with a draft Order in Council giving effect to the recommendations. The draft Order is submitted to both Houses of Parliament for approval and the new boundaries take effect at the next general election to the Scottish Parliament following the making of the Order.

The Commission's must also lay a copy of its report before the Scottish Parliament.

### **Elections to the European Parliament**

The Commission is aware that these proposals are being published during preparations for the European Parliament elections on 4 June 2009. In deciding upon the publication date for these proposals, the Commission took this into account, together with the constraints of the legislative timetable governing the review. A later publication date would jeopardise the required completion of the review by June 2010.

### **Contact for Further Information:**

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