We need to keep our voice in Darwin

The current review of Northern Territory electoral boundaries is widely tipped to abolish one seat in Central Australia.

Enrolments are increasing in the Top End while they are declining here.

This contradicts figures from the Australian Bureau of Statistics, which show the population of Alice Springs is stable.

The number of overseas-born people is increasing in Central Australia and it appears that many have not enrolled to vote because of ineligibility or choice.

It's unfortunate that Alice Springs will almost certainly lose influence in parliament and government because of a demographic quirk.

It's also unfortunate the Northern Territory is becoming more Darwin-centric.

Politics is about numbers and politicians inevitably pay more attention to where the votes are. Alice Springs is the heart of Australia and should continue to be paramount in Northern Territory decision making.

One way to express this is for parliament to sit regularly in Alice Springs – at least one week a year.

Darwin-based legislators and public servants should be required to work in Alice Springs, thereby gaining a broader understanding of Central Australian issues.

Parliament is for the people and Alice Springs residents should be able to witness proceedings first hand in the flesh.

Letters to the Editor

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Curfew no answer

The issue of safety, law and order is something that we, as a whole-of-community, are responsible for.

To encourage each member of our ‘village’ to contribute to its health and wellbeing, we have to engage positively and respectively with each other.

Talk of initiating youth curfews will not positively engage anyone: indeed such is like to alienate young people who will feel unreasonably targeted when the vast majority of them are law-abiding, decent young citizens who contribute much to our community.

The same people who were decrying the benefits of the banned drinkers register because it unfairly captured everyone who chose to purchase takeaway alcohol are now calling for an equally unfair measure that targets all young people.

That doesn’t make any sense. Breaches of law and order are perpetrated by people of all ages.

The issue is one of resourcing youth-targeted recreational and educational programs that will teach young people what social harmony looks like and how they can proactively be involved. The Member for Araluen, Robyn Lambley, is spot on with her comments regarding the adequate refunding of programs like the Youth Off The Streets initiative that was developed by the former government.

Clearly, it needs more than just money thrown at it. It needs organisation, structure, sensitivity and compassion. It needs to be properly and sustainably resourced with use made of already existing infrastructure and services.

We have some sensational youth-focused professionals in this town who are keen to help mould suitable, sustainable programs that will engage young people and enhance their life opportunities.

It was a mistake by the incumbent government to remove the services in the first place. If programs needed to be strengthened, consolidated or rolled out differently, then that’s what should have happened instead of the terminating of programs.

The current regime is so busy being pitted against itself and each other (and has been for over two years), it has lost the capacity to lead with any sense of integrity or credibility.

Given that we’re stuck with them until at least August next year, we have to try and make the most of a less than adequate team of dubious decision-makers.

Each person in the community has the capacity to engage in the process of growing our mutual obligation to each other to keep ourselves safe.

It’s not so much about what is said, but what will be done to strengthen our community.

We all have a responsibility to take part in an active and purposeful role.

Talking respectfully with each other rather than at each other along with making positive, credible suggestions will all help.

Our local Alice Springs Town Council has a recently appointed youth development officer who would be perfectly placed to be involved in any strategic planning and facilitation process.

Phil Walton
Independent candidate for Greatesor

Flick fracking

Congratulations to Alice Springs Town Council for proposing a moratorium on fracking. Council is responding to scientific advice and popular support.

Meanwhile the NT Government appears to be ignoring both. The recent NT Government inquiry into hydraulic fracking asked questions about how it can make fracking safe. A total of 262 submissions were received and 225 pages of report written.

The report makes recommendations to regulate to attempt to make fracking safe. A predictable response to the wrong questions.

The inquiry did not ask more important questions of sustainable energy and how to ensure we have clean water.

Dr Rosalie Schultz
Alice Springs

What are your experiences with youth crime in Alice Springs?

“T’ve actually just relocated back. I worked in communities. I think there’s certainly some issues that need to be addressed.”

NICK GUTHRIE

“I haven’t experienced any. I know of a few cases where people have had their cars broken into.”

MAGGIE SILVER

“I used to live at MacDonnell Range Caravan Park. Around there, you get a lot of crime.”

RAY WHITWAM

“Flick fracking is a mistake by the incumbent government. Council is responding to scientific advice and popular support. Meanwhile the NT Government appears to be ignoring both. The recent NT Government inquiry into hydraulic fracking asked questions about how it can make fracking safe. A total of 262 submissions were received and 225 pages of report written.”

DAVID LAWTON

ALICE SPRINGS

ASTEROIDS impacted Central Australia some 300-600 million years ago.

WOLFWORTHS trolleys were collected by council rangers last month.

REPORTED assaults in Alice Springs during 2014 compared with 1942 the previous year. It’s a drop of 25.2 per cent.