

Tony Hill

10 April 2015

Time Zone  
Department of State Development  
GPO Box 320  
Adelaide SA 5001

Dear Sir/Madam

The State of South Australia is uniquely positioned whereby it shares a border with all mainland states and the Northern Territory. No other state has this comparative advantage. Its ability to forge close trading arrangements, both to the west, east and (increasingly relevant) ties to the north is strengthened by a centralised time zone that doesn't impugn these business (both commercial and government) relationships and logistics.

Until the SA Government broke with ranks in 1899, three time zones known as Western Standard Time (EST), Central Standard Time (CST) and Eastern Standard Time (EST) existed with South Australia perfectly aligned so that it was an hour ahead of Western Australia and an hour behind the eastern states. This was a logical and pragmatic approach based on the science that for every 15 degree of longitude there needs to be a one hour adjustment for the westerly shift of the sun. Western Australia is ~16 degrees of longitude with South Australia and Eastern states 12 and 12.5 degrees respectively.

The reasons for adopting a unified timekeeping practice wherein response to the expansion of transport and communications, as well as trade globalisation. However, an equally important consideration was the quality of life that each global citizen should be entitled to whereby daylight hours are not compromised for economic reasons.

The 30 minute shift to EST in 1895 by South Australia, in disregard to common international practice, was in response to farmers, mercantile firms and the sporting community who felt that the 1 hour time difference placed them at a great disadvantage and inconvenience. Attempts to correct this oddity in 1986 and 1994 were rejected.

Of note is that there seems to be widespread opinion from people advocating either adoption of the EST or original CST (UTC = 9 hours) that the status quo of UTC + 9.5 hours is illogical and confusing.

The argument for aligning our time zone with the eastern states sound compelling when you hear from the business community, particularly those that are close to the border (e.g. Mount Gambier) and even Adelaide which, as the crow flies, lies only 215 km west of the border. By comparison, Ceduna and The Border Village lie 690 km and 1140 km west of the border.

However, these arguments start to wear thin when you talk to and read submissions from the west coast communities.

The health of both youth and workers who, in the winter months drive long distances in the dark to get to workplaces and regional schools in the morning, endangering their lives due to sleep deprivation and wildlife wandering on the roads is a real issue. Sleep deprivation contributes to considerable mental health and learning disabilities and there are numerous studies to validate these findings.

Conversely, excess daylight hours in the summer months, particularly in the evening period when the sun doesn't set until after 10pm, mean that the young are once again exposed to reduce sleeping hours.

The following table illustrates the current 2015 times for sunrise and sunset for the winter and summer solstice by region compared with revised times if we adopt EST.

Solstice		Mount Gambier		Adelaide		Port Lincoln		Ceduna	
		CST	EST	CST	EST	CST	EST	CST	EST
Winter	Sunrise	7.22am	7.52am	7.23am	7.53am	7.33am	8:03am	7.35am	8:05am
	Sunset	4.55pm	5.25pm	5.11pm	5.41pm	5.23pm	5.53pm	5.38pm	6.08pm
Summer	Sunrise	6.41am	7.11am	6.59am	7.29am	7.10am	7.40am	7.26am	7.56am
	Sunset	9.29pm	9.59pm	9.29pm	9.59pm	9.39pm	10.09pm	9.41pm	10.11pm

\* CDST (+1 hour)

One thing that stands out is that irrespective of where you live in South Australia, in the mid of winter everyone will be commuting to school and work either prior to or at the onset of sunrise (see highlighted times). Even at the summer solstice, people in Ceduna don't see sunrise until just before 8am

In 2013 the State Government launched its new highly effective and eye catching Open Door logo that is marketed with great effect to our trading partners, both established and emerging.

We compete with our neighbouring states and territories for investment dollars but increasingly are punching above our weight attracting investment from international companies, particularly in the minerals and energy resources sector. Front and centre in all the promotional material that is used to successfully attract foreign investment is the Open the Door logo which had gained resonance due to its highly effective graphics and symbolism – South Australia stands proud and central, and so should its time zone!

However, I fear that in reality the Government is more focussed to the east and that in reality the open door is more open to some and not others. *This is a lost opportunity in my view.* With our resource and defence sectors aligned increasingly

to the west and north respectively, we have to maintain and build on our strong economic ties in these regions rather than abandon them in preference to the east.

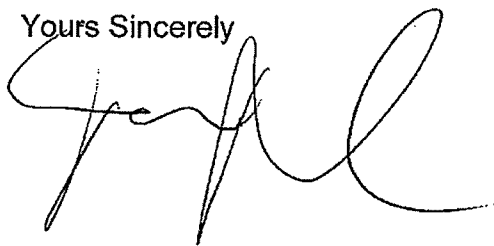
Increasingly, Western Australians express feelings of estrangement and talk of secession in response to Federal Government initiatives that impact on their viability as a proud state. They are our next door neighbours in more ways than one and we should foster this relationship rather than inconvenience them (and us) by pushing the time zone further east.

Finally, any decision to change our time zone cannot be unilateral and must consider implications for our northern neighbour. The Northern Territory and South Australia are inextricably linked by our geography and the longitudinal meridians that govern time. I don't think a referendum would work as the people who have most to lose in the west coast are a minority. Strong leadership to articulate the pros and cons from submissions and community workshops ahead of an informed decision is the best approach in informing cabinet and voting accordingly.

Quality of life issues should not be dominated by a perceived economic advantage if we align ourselves to the east, particularly when the benefits of alignment to the west, north and South East Asia are brought into the argument. On this last point, a complete cost benefit analysis for the various proposed time zone models should be undertaken including the costs of associated health issues and potential accidents that could arise by adopting EST.

In conclusion, it's time<sup>\*</sup> to stand proud as a state and look at the outweighing positives of adopting the original and logical Central Standard Time (UTC +9 hours) so that we maximise trading opportunities with neighbouring states and territories and internationally, particularly South East Asia, whilst at the same time maximise lifestyle quality choices for all South Australians, not just those that fringe the eastern part of the state.

Yours Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tony Hill', written in a cursive style.

Tony Hill

\* Seems apt to use this well known advertising jingle that helped the Whitlam Government rise to office. SA could use this effectively to gain acceptance of a revised CST. A 'SA Heaps Good' style T-shirt with It's Time would get my vote and that I would wear with pride!