

Ex-senator puts up his hand for Lyons

By SEAN FORD

THE state Liberals hope to take three of the five Lyons seats now former senator Guy Barnett has confirmed his candidacy.

Sitting Liberal Lyons MHAs Rene Hidding and Mark Shelton will go around again in the March election, raising Liberal hopes of gaining a third seat in the big rural electorate.

If so, they will need to unseat one of Labor pair Michael Polley and Rebecca White and Green Tim Morris.

Liberal state president Geoff Page announced Mr Barnett's candidacy yesterday.

Mr Barnett said he was very excited to be running.

"I think the main thing is to turn Tasmania around and to give people hope and an opportunity for the future, particularly in respect of providing a strong economy and jobs," Mr Barnett said.

"That is top of the list."



Guy Barnett

He was a senator for 9½ years from early 2002, serving through the last half of the Howard government and the Rudd and some of the Gillard

prime ministerships.

"I'm hoping my experience in the Howard government will be extremely beneficial to Tasmania because we have seen a government that has overspent, a deficit at record levels and we're in serious trouble," he said.

"We're in recession.

"I'm hoping that experience will be valuable and give value in Tasmania."

Asked about the chances of gaining a third Lyons seat, he said he was hopeful and he believed the party was hopeful.

"A lot of people see Lyons as a pivotal seat," he said.

"Gaining three in Lyons would help provide that majority government Tasmania so desperately deserves."

Mr Barnett has been working as a consultant since leaving the Senate in 2011 after being defeated in 2010.

The state Liberals expect to name more Lyons candidates in coming months.