

Federal

The word **Federal** means the joining of the states to give the nation responsibility for making decisions for all Australians. The Australian Federation was created in 1901.

The Federal Parliament is located in Canberra and makes the laws which are carried out by the Federal Government. These laws are called acts of Parliament. There are two houses of Parliament: the House of Representatives and the Senate. All Australians vote for Members and Senators to represent them in Parliament. The Prime Minister who is a member of the House of Representatives is the leader of the Federal Government.

The Constitution gives the Federal Parliament more powers than state parliaments or local councils, including most powers over taxation and economic matters.

Some services for which the Federal Government is responsible include:



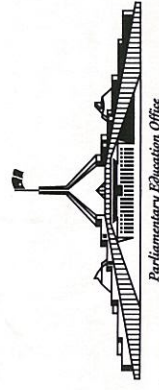
The three levels of government must work together so that every Australian shares the services provided by each level of government. State premiers and Territory chief ministers meet the Prime Minister and the Treasurer every year to discuss the amount of money the Federal government will give to states and territories to help pay for their services.

Each level of government makes many decisions related to its responsibilities. Can you find out which level of government is responsible for:

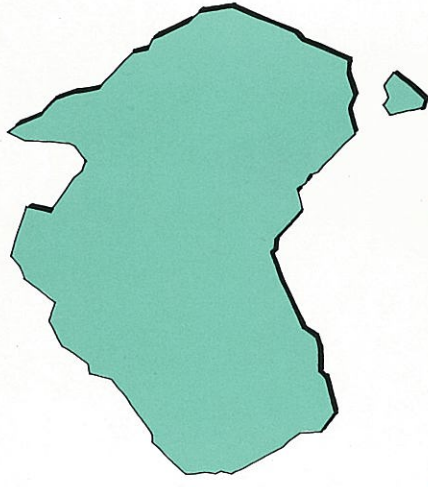
- installing a telephone in your home?
- collecting your garbage?
- collecting income tax from your parents?
- building and looking after your school?
- providing emergency services to injured people?
- providing a system of bus or rail transport?
- building lighthouses to protect ships?
- making sure that illegal drugs are not brought into Australia?

For more information about how the Federal Government works see the Booklet 'Parliament and the Government'.

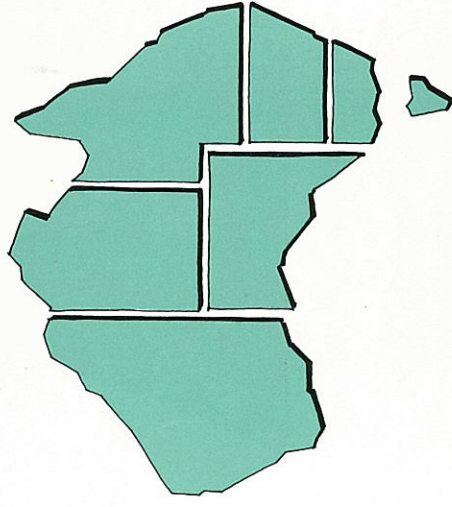
For further information contact:
The Parliamentary Education Office,
Parliament House,
Canberra ACT 2600
(06) 277 3508



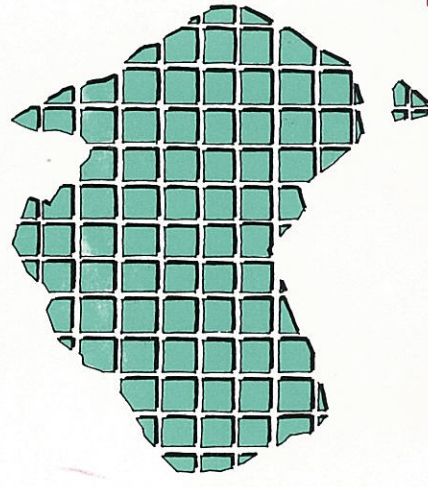
The three



levels of



Government

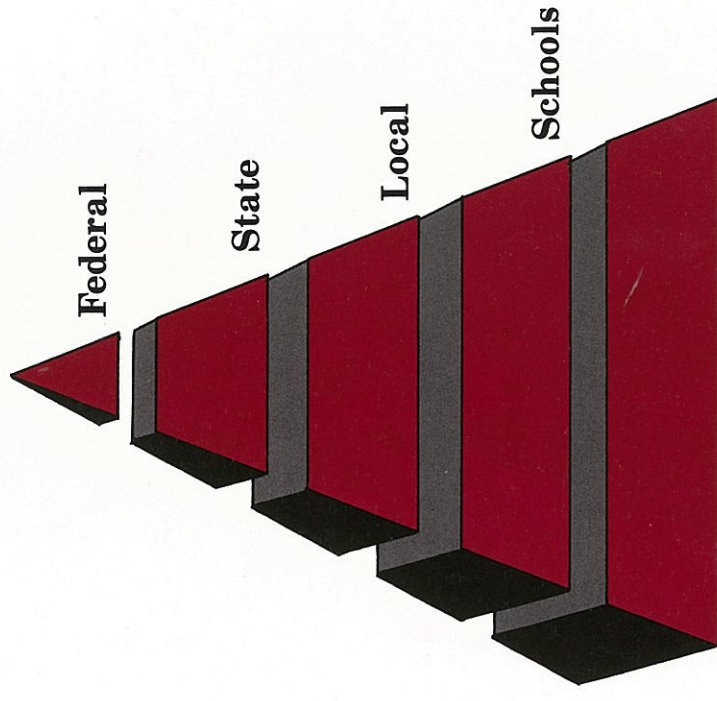


in Australia

Know your Constitution

Every day in Australia we make lots of decisions to satisfy our needs. These decisions can be made by one person or a group. Families, schools and clubs make decisions which we call rules.

Rules are made by our parliaments to keep order and allow for fairness in our community. These are called laws. It is the job of the Government to carry out the laws made by Parliament.



You and your family

Decisions need to be made to solve many problems that arise in local communities, states or territories and in the nation as a whole. These decisions are made by groups of people who are elected by citizens living in that particular area.

There are three levels of government in Australia. Each level provides different services to the people to whom it is responsible:

1. Local
2. State
3. Federal

Local

Local councils make decisions on local, town or city matters. They make laws called by-laws. There are about 850 local governments in Australia. These may be known as either municipalities, shires, boroughs, towns or cities depending on where you live. Aldermen or councillors are elected to represent the townspeople. The Mayor or Shire President leads the council or shire. Local government taxes, called rates, are collected from land owners. These, along with Federal and State money grants, pay for the following local government services:



State

Each State or Territory has its own government, a parliament and a Parliament House in its capital city where laws are made about state matters. The Premier is the leader of the State Government. Members of the State Parliament are elected to represent the people of each state. Each of the states, except Queensland, has two houses of Parliament. The lower house is called the Legislative Assembly or House of Assembly. The upper house is called the Legislative Council. The parliaments of each territory have only one house.

State governments raise money from taxes on goods and services. More than half of their money comes from the Federal Government.

Some services for which state governments are responsible include:

