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Session 3: Levels of government in Australia

You will need

Activity sheets downloaded from our website:

- **Levels of government pages** Print relevant pages of the PDF for Federal, State and Local (or Federal, Territory and Local) government at A4 or A3 size. You may like to laminate these for multiple use.
- **Levels of government cards** Print the two sheets of cards at the same size (in colour if you can) and cut them out before laminating.

Activity

- Introduce each level of government by showing the three activity sheets in turn.
- Assist the group to discuss the services illustrated on each card and decide which level of government they think would be responsible for it.
- After allocating all the cards, go through each level of government in turn. Explain/discuss any that are not correct.
- If there is an election coming up, focus on that level of government and make a list of issues within its responsibilities that are of particular concern to people in the group.

Extension activity

- Consider asking the group to brainstorm as many services as possible provided by government in Australia. List them on a white board, then categorise them according to the level of government that provides the service and has responsibility for its management.
- Look in a newspaper to identify articles which relate to different levels of government. Would this be the same if you were looking in a local or regional paper compared to a major city newspaper?

Notes for facilitator

Australia has three levels of government. Representatives are elected to each level of government to make laws (rules) about services for which that level of government is responsible.

Each level of government is responsible for a different range of services.

- Federal government responsibilities include: foreign affairs, social security, industrial relations, trade, immigration, postage and currency, defence.
- State and territory government responsibilities include: justice, consumer affairs, hospitals, education, emergency services, forestry, public transport, main roads.
- Local government responsibilities include: local road maintenance, garbage collection, street cleaning, building regulations and land subdivisions, public libraries and recreation facilities such as swimming pools.

Note There is no local government in the ACT. Responsibility for these services is held by the territory government.

For more information, see the AEC fact sheet about three levels of government_
http://www.aec.gov.au/About_AEC/Publications/Fact_Sheets/three_lvls.htm