Remote voting module

AEC
Australian Electoral Commission

MODULE

Remote voting

This module helps students understand the ways in which the AEC provides access to voting in remote Australian communities. Students explore the remote voting teams' role in supporting voters across Australia. This module also examines community engagement, information given to voters, and the unique materials and equipment used to provide access to voting to remote and very remote communities.

Learning outcomes

By the end of the first module, students will:

- Recall the AEC works with local communities to enable voting in remote areas.
- Recognise the AEC carefully considers cultural factors when engaging with communities.
- Recall the process of voting in remote areas mirrors that of an ordinary polling place.

Suggested extension application activities:

UNIT OF WORK: **Democracy across the distance**

The linked unit includes these suggested learning activities:

Students assume the role of *electoral strategy consultants* for a fictional remote region in Australia and propose strategies to improve democratic access.

Key questions

1. When the AEC goes to remote areas to facilitate voting, what sort of activities does it do before it gets there?
   Answer:
   - Prepares equipment to access remote areas
   - Contacts community elders and leaders beforehand when the AEC is coming and to make sure cultural factors are considered
   - Engages local assistants to support the community and the AEC
   - Provides information to share in the local community

2. Is voting in remote places the same as voting in the city or in a town?
   Answer: The process is the same. Some specialised equipment is used so that it's easier to carry it into remote areas. E.g. soft ballot boxes. Providing voting services in remote areas is complex - scheduling and logistical arrangements require the AEC to be agile covering thousands of square kilometres to deliver services.

UNIT OF WORK

Democracy across the distance – Access and equity through remote voting in Australia

DEMOCRACITY MODULE

Remote voting

KEY CONCEPT

Citizenship

RELATED CONCEPTS

- **Participation** – Ensuring all citizens can engage in democratic processes.
- **Equity** – Addressing geographic, cultural, and logistical barriers to voting.
- **Structure** – Electoral frameworks enabling inclusive access.

Overarching questions

How does remote voting support equitable democratic participation?

Inquiry questions:

Factual – How does remote mobile polling work in Australia?

Conceptual – Why is equitable access essential to a functioning democracy?

Learning outcomes

By the end of the activities, students will:

- Describe remote voting systems and polling methods used across Australia.
- Examine and explain barriers to participation including real-life challenges such as distance, language and cultural protocols.
- Evaluate remote voting practices and propose informed improvement to access.

Suggested extension learning experiences and activities:

Students assume the role of *electoral strategy consultants* for a fictional remote region in Australia in the 'Remote voting in Australia activity'.

Using what they've learned about mobile polling and associated challenges, they will:

- Describe and analyse the region's geography, population, and voting history.
- Identify potential barriers to electoral participation.
- Propose a practical and culturally respectful strategy to improve democratic access.
- Present their proposal via written report, infographic, or spoken pitch.

Democracy across the distance - Suggested assessment rubric

Criteria	Level 1-2	Level 3-4	Level 5-6	Level 7-8
Criterion A: Knowing and understanding Explains remote voting processes, challenges, and civic structures.	Demonstrates limited understanding; few accurate facts or concepts.	Demonstrates basic understanding of remote voting; some relevant details included.	Demonstrates clear understanding with accurate use of terminology and examples.	Demonstrates thorough understanding; integrates concepts of equity, geography, and electoral structure fluently.
Criterion B: Investigating Researches barriers to participation and community context for strategic planning.	Investigation is superficial; limited use of sources or analysis.	Uses relevant sources with some interpretation; conclusions are basic.	Investigates effectively with thoughtful use of data and contextual reasoning.	Investigates comprehensively; analyses challenges in depth and applies findings strategically to the fictional region.
Criterion C: Communicating Presents strategy proposal with clarity, structure, and civic relevance.	Communication lacks organisation; message may be unclear or incomplete.	Communicates ideas with some structure; message is mostly clear.	Communicates clearly with logical organisation, appropriate format, and civic terminology.	Communicates persuasively with structure, precision, and creative problem-solving; format enhances understanding.
Criterion D: Thinking critically Evaluates remote voting access and proposes informed recommendations.	Reflection is limited; ideas may be underdeveloped or unsupported.	Reflects with some insight; recommendations are basic or general.	Reflects thoughtfully with reasoned proposals grounded in evidence.	Reflects critically and innovatively; recommendations are feasible, impartial, and demonstrate nuanced civic reasoning.

ACTIVITY

Democracy across the distance: Remote voting activity

Background

Students assume the role of electoral strategy consultants for a fictional remote region in Australia. There are three community profiles to choose from: DemocraIsland, DemocraOutback and DemocraRural.

Materials:

- Remote voting activity profiles:
  - DemocraIsland
  - DemocraOutback
  - DemocraRural

Teacher Preparation:

- Read the teacher support notes on the next page.
- Print and share community profiles with instructions for students.

Activity Instructions

Students should select one or more of the communities and:

- Describe and analyse the community's characteristics including population, geography, education, cultural diversity, languages used, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander information and voting history.
- Identify potential barriers to electoral participation.
- Propose a practical and culturally respectful strategy to improve access and participation.
- Present your proposal in written report, infographic, or orally.

Teacher support notes

The background information below can be used for lesson planning and to help build connections between new and existing knowledge.

The AEC delivers a mobile voting service supporting electors who experience additional barriers to voting.

Remote mobile polling: Geographic remoteness is no barrier to supporting electors to cast their vote in a federal election. In the 2025 federal election almost 470 locations received an in-person voting service, utilising 77 teams across six states in remote and very remote areas of Australia. Teams travelled by road, air and sea visiting Indigenous communities, remote outstations, pastoral properties, and small townships. The AEC also engages local Indigenous people from within communities to promote voting opportunities, interpret and assist electors. Find out more in this video.

Remote communities: Many communities in the Northern Territory, Western Australia, and Queensland and some islands are considered remote due to their isolation.

Examples of barriers in communities:

- **Geographic isolation:** May lead to limited access to essential services including voter information.
- **Transport:** A lack of public transport and the need to travel vast distances for basic needs can impact the ability to access services and opportunities e.g. access to a polling place.
- **Healthcare:** Rural and remote areas have fewer healthcare professionals and this may impact individuals that have chronic conditions e.g. some voters may have medical conditions that impact their ability to vote in person.
- **Technology:** Not everyone can afford a computer and have access to digital technology. Some people may not have the digital or literacy skills to use it.
- **Infrastructure:** Unreliable power supply may prevent voters from accessing online services like enrolling to vote or researching electoral information.
- **Socio-economic barriers:** Including limited employment opportunities and access to education opportunities. These barriers can restrict access to polling places and/ or community voter education sessions.
- **Housing:** Overcrowding or homelessness e.g. see voters with no fixed address on the AEC website.
- **Environmental:** Areas that are vulnerable to natural disasters which can interfere with their ability to reach essential services e.g. floods, bushfires, cyclones, heatwaves, places cut off during ‘wet seasons’ or drought that can have significant economic impacts on agricultural communities.

Populations facing barriers:

- Elderly people.
- People with disabilities or health conditions.
- People experiencing homelessness.
- Indigenous communities.
- Refugee and migrant communities.
- Low-income households.

Obstacles voters may face:

- Access to election resources and information.
- Uncertainty about how to cast a formal vote.
- Literacy-related difficulties.
- Access to a polling booth.

ACTIVITY

Democracy across the distance

Background

You are assuming the role of electoral strategy consultants for a fictional remote region in Australia. There are three community profiles to choose from:

- DemocraIsland
- DemocraOutback
- DemocraRural

Using what you've learned about mobile polling and associated challenges through playing DemocraCity, now let's analyse a remote electorate profile to expand on what we've learned.

ACTIVTY 1: Analysing information and data

As an electoral strategy consultant, select one or more of the communities and:

- Describe and analyse the community's characteristics including population, geography, education, cultural diversity, languages used, and voting history.
- Identify potential barriers to electoral participation.
- Propose a practical and culturally respectful strategy to improve access and participation.
- Present your proposal in written report, infographic, or orally.

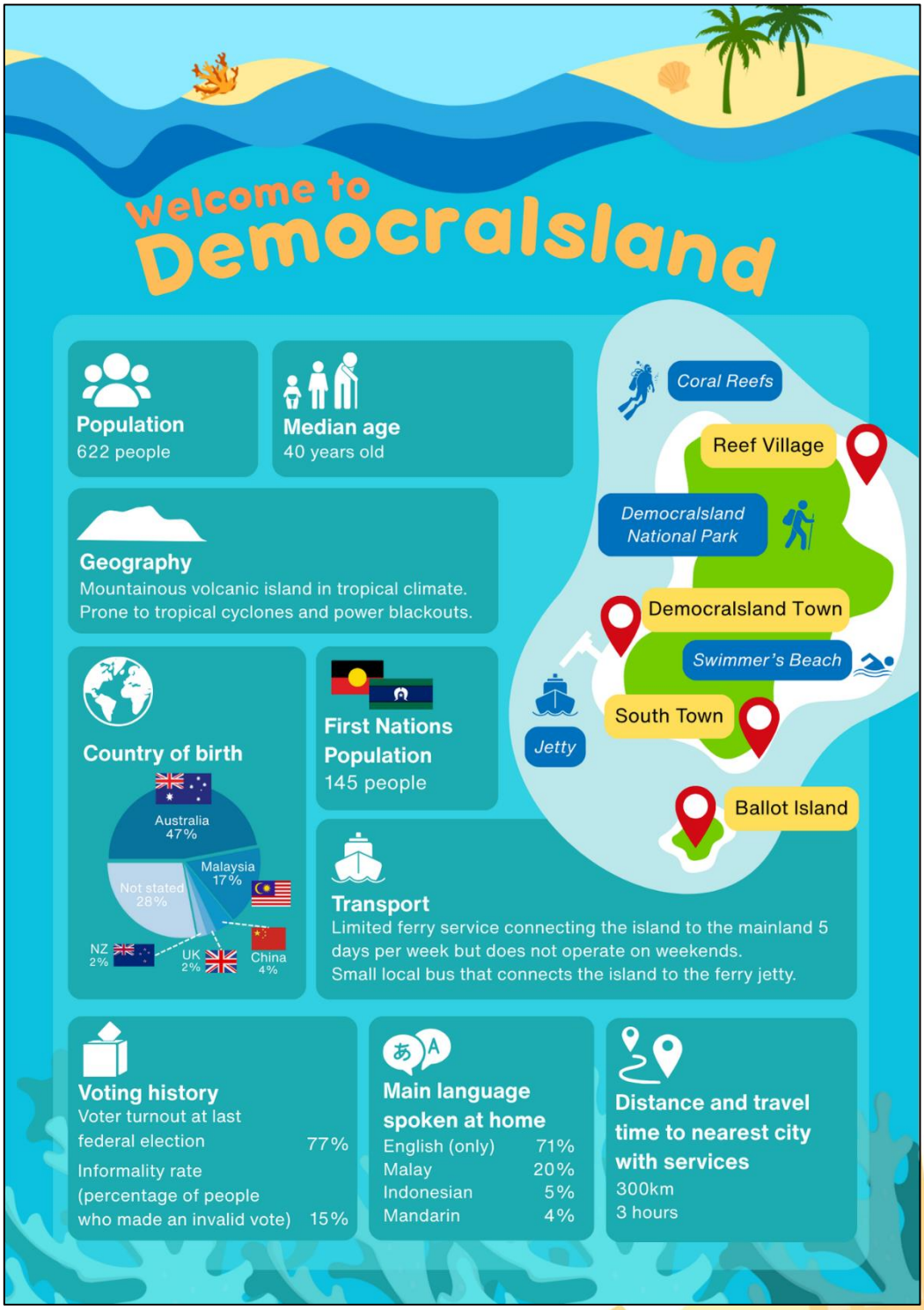
Historical barriers to participation

Each remote community has the following historical barriers you will need to think about when analysing:

- Originally only had access to postal voting.
- Mobile voting facilities were made available but only on election day, rather than in the in-person early voting period.
- Information in local media was often not up to date.
- More recently lack of reliable internet connectivity to access news, including election campaign information from political parties.

ACTIVITY

Democracy across the distance: DemocraIsland



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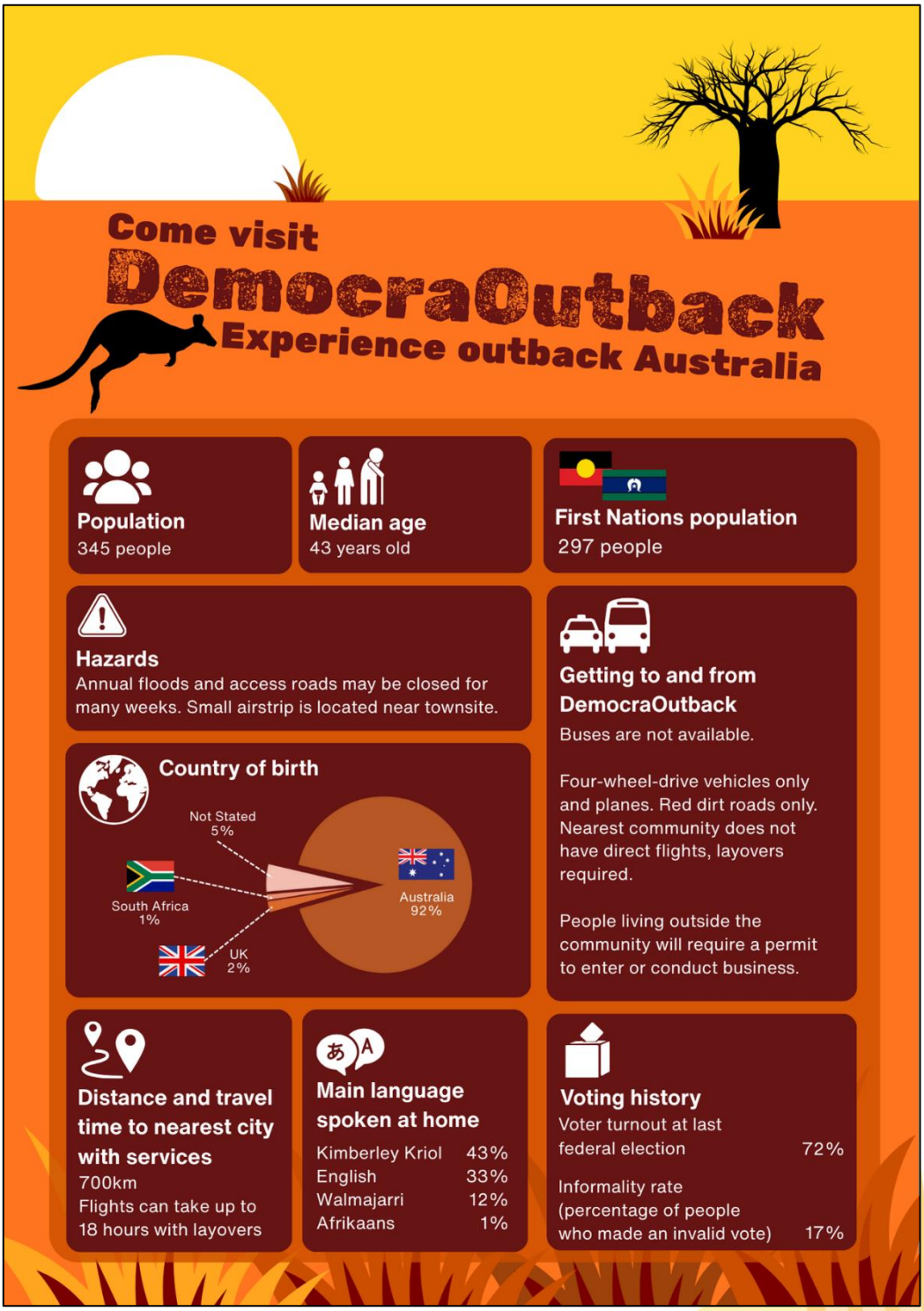
ACTIVITY

Democracy across the distance: DemocraOutback



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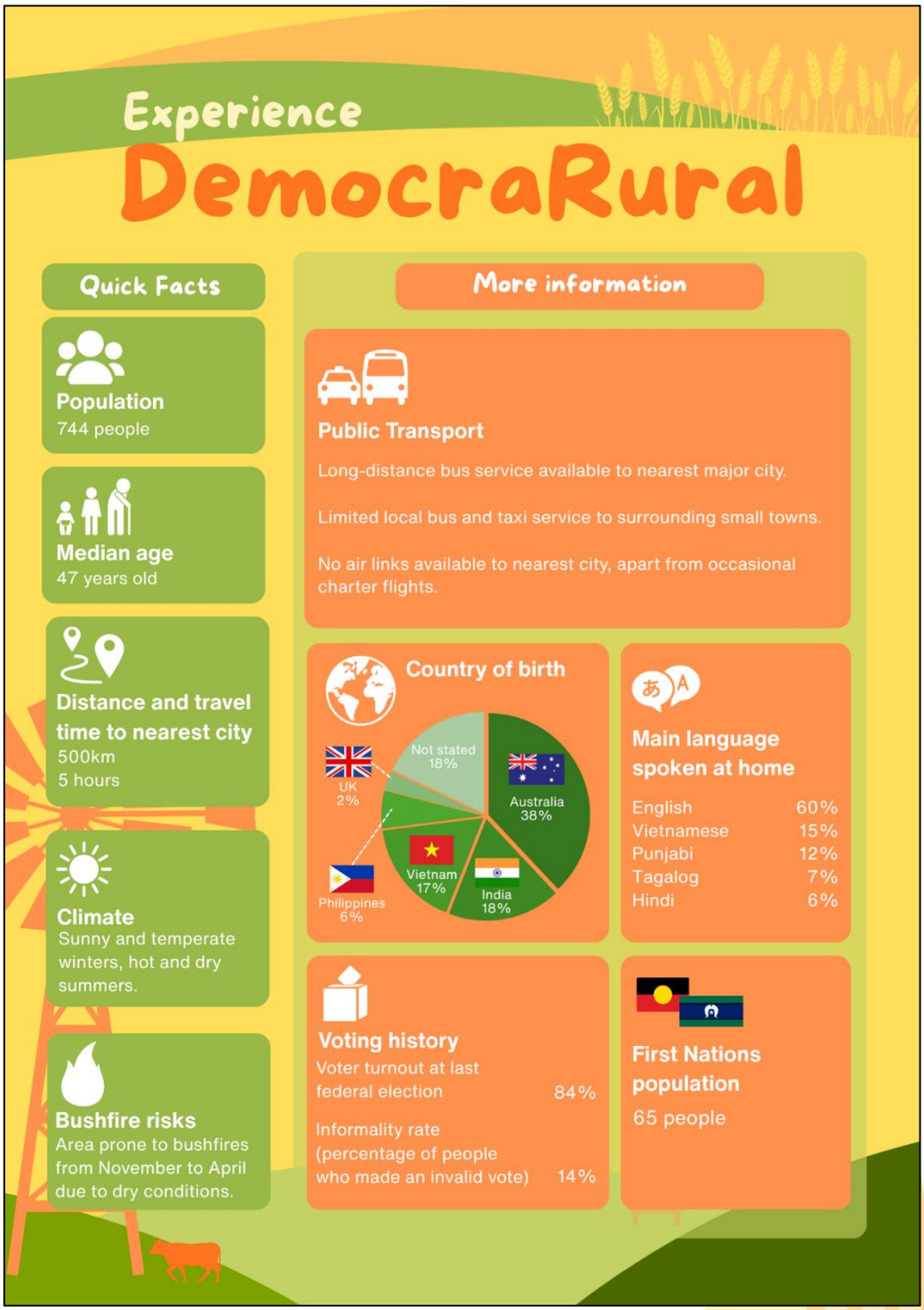
ACTIVITY

Democracy across the distance: DemocraRural



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