

The Role of Government

Government, Parliament, Law Enforcement

Australia has three levels of government: Federal, State/Territory and local with Federal government being the highest level. Some responsibilities of Federal, State/Territory and local governments overlap, but generally each level of government provides different services. All levels of government raise money, through collecting taxes or rates; to pay for the services they provide. Representatives such as Ministers, Members of Parliament, Senators and Councillors, are elected to represent the needs and requirements of Australian citizens across the various levels of government.

Separation of Powers

The power to make and enforce law is divided between three groups. This division is based on the principle of 'separation of powers'. This is aimed to ensure that the power within a particular group is fair and that there are checks and balances in place so decisions are accountable. Each level of government in Australia has its own legislature, public service and judiciary.

Judiciary

The Police Force and Legal System (courts) enforce the laws.



Parliament /Legislature

Prime Minister (or Premier and Chief Ministers) and Cabinet legislate.



Executive Government

Government departments
Implement the Legislation.



The Three Levels of Government



Federal

Responsible for defence, immigration, foreign affairs, trade, postal services corporations and taxation.

Six States and Two Territories

Responsible for hospitals, education, police and housing services.



Local Government councils

Responsible for building regulations, rubbish collection, planning approval, local roads and pet control.

Doing Business in Australia

There are many reasons why Australia is a great place to do business. Australians have an excellent lifestyle, as there are an abundance of resources, a mild climate, a diverse multicultural community, a strong and effective legal system that supports ethical business practices. Australia has a stable economy and financial system. It has not had a recession in over 20 years and is AAA rated. Australia has one of the lowest levels of corruption making this an attractive and robust business climate that creates great opportunities for a large range of businesses across many industries.

Small Business Engagement with Government

As a business owner it is important to remember that you will need to engage with each level of government to operate lawfully and successfully.

Some reasons you may contact a government agency are: taxation, registration, licencing, compliance, grants and permits. It is also important to remember that sometimes more than one level of government is responsible for regulating a particular area. For example, if you want to operate a licenced café, you may need planning approval from local government, and a liquor licence from Liquor and Gaming NSW.

Links

Federal

Parliament of Australia
www.aph.gov.au

State

New South Wales Government
www.nsw.gov.au

Local

Office of Local Government
www.olg.nsw.gov.au