

# Chapter 1: Government in our region

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# Chapter 1: Government in our region

## Overview

Australia is an important member of the Asia region. Our system of government is very similar to those of other Asian countries such as Japan, India and Indonesia, but there are also some differences. One of the key features of the system of government in Australia is **democracy**, which means that **sovereignty** lies with the people. It is the Australian people who determine how they will be governed. Australian democracy has certain values. These include freedom of election and being elected, freedom of assembly and political participation, freedom of speech, freedom of expression, support for parliamentary democracy, freedom of religious belief, support for the rule of law and support for other basic human rights.



**FIGURE 1** Australian society and system of government value freedom of speech, freedom of election, equality, freedom of religion, parliamentary democracy and the rule of law.

In this topic we compare the values associated with the system of government in Australia with the values associated with other countries in the Asia region.



**FIGURE 2** The prime minister of Australia and the former president of Indonesia shake hands during a dinner hosted for leaders during the 2013 Asia–Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum in Bali, Indonesia.

## eLesson

**Values of governments in our region**

Watch this video to learn more about the values of Australia's system of government compared with the values of other governments in the Asia region.

Searchlight ID: ELES-2374

## STARTER QUESTIONS

1. What is sovereignty?
2. What is democracy?
3. Which values do you think are important in Australia's system of democracy? Which values do you think are least important?
4. Do you think that other countries in the Asia region share these values?

## 1.1 Key features of Australia's system of government

Before **federation**, Australia consisted of six colonies: New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia, Tasmania, Victoria and Western Australia. Each colony had its own government and the power to make laws under the control of the British monarch. During the late 1880s and 1890s, there was increasing support for the idea of the six self-governing colonies joining together to become one united nation. The Commonwealth of Australia was formed on 1 January 1901. The colonies — now called states — agreed to keep some of their law-making powers and hand over others to the new Commonwealth Parliament.



**FIGURE 1** Parliament House in Canberra, the home of the Commonwealth Parliament

## Australia's system of government

Australia's system of government is based on the idea of democracy. Australia is an independent country governed by a **constitutional monarchy**, with three levels of government — federal, state and local. The Australian **Constitution**, which came into force on 1 January 1901, defines the powers and authority of the federal and state governments. The *Commonwealth of Australia Constitution Act 1900* is an Act of British Parliament that sets out the framework for the government of Australia. The law-making powers of the Commonwealth Parliament are listed in the Australian Constitution, and there is a division of powers between the Commonwealth and the states. Some law-making powers are passed to local governments.

The political system in Australia is based on Britain's **Westminster system**. This means that the Commonwealth Parliament and all state parliaments except Queensland are **bicameral**: they each have two houses. These bicameral parliaments consist of the **Crown**, a lower house and an upper house. The parliaments of Queensland and the territories are **unicameral**. The reigning British monarch, or Crown, is the head of each parliament. (This is currently the Queen.) The Crown is represented by the Governor-General in the Commonwealth Parliament and by a governor in each state parliament. All of Australia's self-governed territories, except the Australian Capital Territory, have administrators.

The people of Australia choose the members of the lower house and the upper house. The members of the winning party or coalition in a federal election choose the Australian prime minister.



**FIGURE 2** Australia's federal parliament consists of the Crown (the Queen or the Queen's representative, the Governor-General), the upper house (the Senate), and the lower house (the House of Representatives).

## Separation of powers

The governments of democracies like Australia have three arms or branches: legislative, executive and judicial. In Australia, the framework for the operation of government is the Constitution. It provides for the idea of the **separation of powers**. This allows each arm of government to check and balance the powers of the others and thereby maintain a fair and just society.

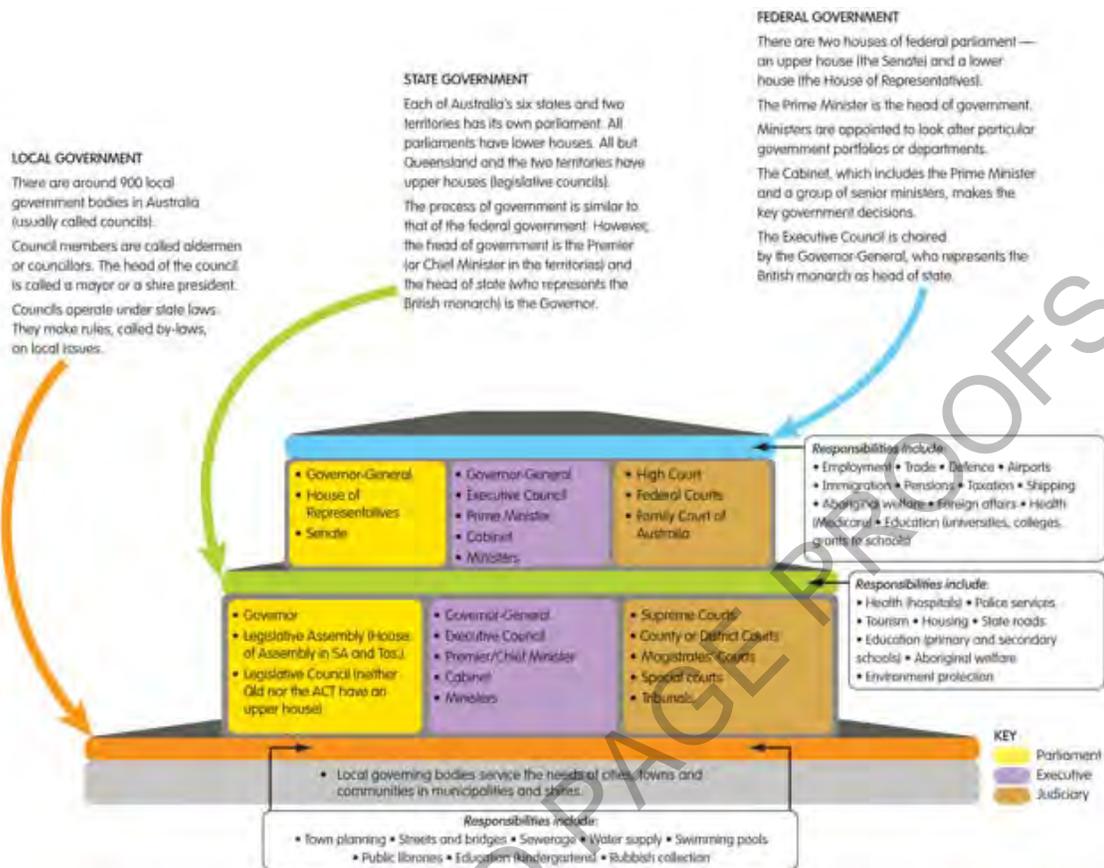


FIGURE 3 The division of powers and the separation of powers in Australia

## The legislative arm

The legislative arm (or legislature) refers to parliament's function to make new laws or to change or remove existing ones. Under the Constitution, parliament is the supreme law-maker. Commonwealth Parliament consists of the House of Representatives (the lower house) and the Senate (the upper house), as well as the Crown (the Governor-General as the representative of the Queen). Any draft law is known as a Bill. To become a law, the Bill must be read, debated and voted on by both houses of parliament and then approved by the Governor-General. A law that has been passed by parliament is called legislation, a statute or an Act.

## The executive arm

The **executive** arm administers the legislation passed by parliament. Executive power officially lies with the Governor-General or the Governor, representing the Crown, but government ministers and the public service actually exercise this power. For example, the department of health is an Australian public service department that administers the running of Australia's health system. The head of this department reports to the minister for health.

## The judicial arm

The judicial arm (consisting of the **judiciary** and the courts) makes judgements about the law. It is responsible for settling disputes and enforcing the law. The High Court of Australia is responsible for interpreting and applying the Constitution. It ensures that the other arms of government do not act in a way that is outside the powers granted by the Constitution. The judiciary can for example declare that laws passed by parliament are unconstitutional, or require particular actions if they believe that a branch of government is not performing a constitutional duty.

## Elections in Australia

One of the key features of Australia's democratic system of government is that every few years Australians are given the opportunity to choose who they want to represent them in elections. This occurs at all three levels of government:

- The people of Australia vote to elect members into both houses of federal parliament.
- The people of a state or territory vote to elect members into their state or territory parliament.
- The residents or property owners in a local council area are eligible to vote for local council representatives.

Voting in Australian elections is compulsory for all citizens over 18 years of age.

## The House of Representatives

When you vote for the House of Representatives in a federal election, you are given a green ballot paper like the one shown in figure 4. You must place a number in the box beside each candidate. You write the number 1 beside the name of the candidate you most prefer. This is your first-preference vote. You write the number 8 (if there are eight candidates) beside the name of the person you least prefer. For your vote to be formal you must place a number, in your preference order, in every box. The voting system for the House of Representatives in Australia is called a **preferential system**.

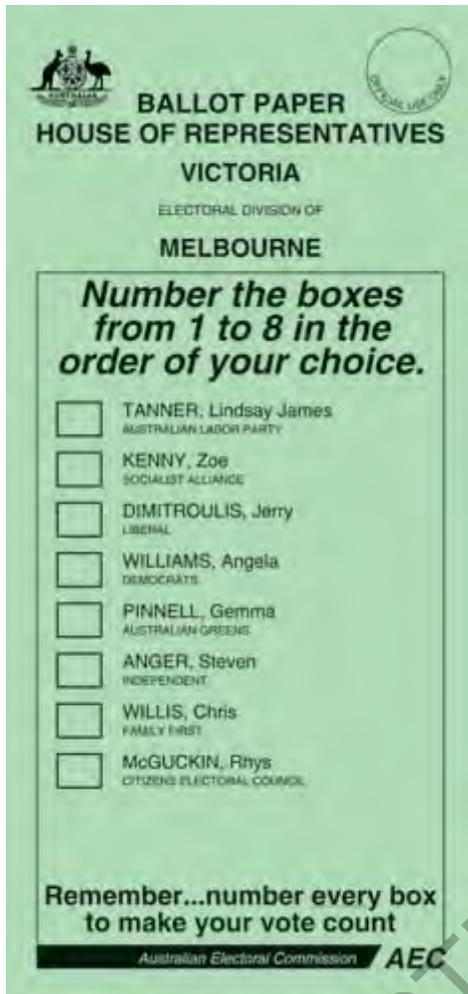


FIGURE 4 Ballot paper for a House of Representatives seat

To win a seat in the House of Representatives, a candidate must get an **absolute majority** — half the number of **formal votes** plus one. Some candidates are lucky; they get an absolute majority with first-preference votes. When no candidate has an absolute majority of first-preference votes, voter preferences are counted.

This system is different from the **first-past-the-post** voting method used in many other countries. Also known as the simple plurality or simple majority system, the first-past-the-post method require voters to simply mark their preferred candidate. In countries that use this voting system — including Canada, Japan, India, the United Kingdom and the United States — the candidate receiving the largest number of votes (plurality) is elected to office. There is no requirement that the winner of an election should gain an absolute majority of votes. He or she must only gain a plurality.

## The Senate

When you vote for the Senate in a federal election, you are given a cream-coloured ballot paper like the one shown in figure 5. You can vote in one of two ways:

1. in the top section of the form, place the number 1 in the box beside the party of your choice. This means any distribution of preferences will follow that party's instructions; or
2. in the bottom section of the form, place a number beside every name on the form, with the number 1 being your first preference, 2 being your second preference, and so on.

To win a seat, senators have to win a set proportion (or quota) of the votes. This is why the Senate voting system in Australia is called a **proportional representation** system.



**FIGURE 5** Part of a Senate ballot paper for Victoria

## ACTIVITIES

### REMEMBER

1. When did federation occur?
2. List the three levels of government in Australia.
3. Outline the role of the three arms of government in Australia, providing an example of each.
4. Who is eligible to vote in Australian elections?

### EXPLAIN

5. What is the difference between the 'division of powers' and the 'separation of powers'?
6. Outline the difference between the preferential system and the proportional representation system of voting.
7. Explain how the first-past-the-post system of voting works.

### DISCOVER

8. Using internet resources, find the names of the people who currently occupy the following positions in Australia:
  - a. Governor-General

- b. prime minister
  - c. your state's governor (or your territory's administrator)
  - d. your state's premier (or your territory's chief minister).
9. Follow the **Australian Electoral Commission** weblink in your Resources section to view the *How the House of Representatives votes are counted* and the *How the Senate votes are counted* video resources.
- a. Outline how a person is elected to the House of Representatives.
  - b. Outline how a person is elected to the Senate.



### THINK

- 10. Out of the two voting systems — the preferential system and the proportional representation system — which is more effective?
- 11. In what ways are the values of freedom of election and support for parliamentary democracy associated with the system of government in Australia?

## 1.2 Key features of Japan's system of government

The Empire of Japan was based on a military and **absolute monarchy**. This changed during the Allied occupation of the country at the end of World War II, when the Constitution of Japan was drawn up and the post-war country ceased to be an empire and became modern Japan. Enacted on 3 May 1947, Japan's Constitution is based on three principles: **sovereignty of the people**, respect for fundamental human rights and renunciation of war.



**FIGURE 1** The National Diet Building in Tokyo, the home of Japan's national parliament

## Japan's system of government

Japan's system of government is based on the idea of democracy. Japan is an independent country governed by a constitutional monarchy, with a parliamentary system of government. Japan's Constitution has remained unchanged since it came into force in 1947. The emperor is the head of state but only has a symbolic role.

The political system in Japan is based on Britain's Westminster system. This system was introduced into Japan by the new Constitution, which established a bicameral parliament called the National Diet. It consists of a lower house and an upper house. The people of Japan choose the members of the Diet, and the members of the Diet elect the Japanese prime minister from among themselves.

## Separation of powers

The Constitution of Japan specifies the independence of the three branches of government: legislative (the Diet), executive (the Cabinet) and judicial (the courts). These arms of government operate in a system of checks and balances.

## The legislative arm

Under Japan's Constitution, legislative power lies with the National Diet. This is Japan's national parliament. The Diet comprises the House of Representatives (the lower house) and the House of Councillors (the upper house). Any draft law is known as a Bill, and it is submitted to the Diet by the Cabinet or a law-maker. It is then considered separately in the two houses. A Bill becomes a law after both houses approve it. In any case of disagreement in vital matters, the lower house's decisions are upheld. For some legislation, the House of Representatives can overrule a House of Councillors' rejection by passing a Bill a second time.



**FIGURE 2** The National Diet of Japan consists of the House of Representatives (the lower house; top) and the House of Councillors (the upper house; bottom).

## The executive arm

Executive power lies with the Cabinet formed and led by the Japanese prime minister. The members of Cabinet are collectively responsible to the Diet in exercising this power. The prime minister and a majority of Cabinet members must be members of the Diet. They have the right as well as the obligation to attend Diet sessions. The Cabinet has the power to dissolve the House of Representatives and call for a general election. The Cabinet members are called ministers, and the departments they head are mostly called ministries (for example, the ministry of finance).

## The judicial arm

Judicial power lies with Japan's Supreme Court and the lower courts established by law, including high courts, family courts, district courts and summary courts. The Supreme Court consists of a

chief justice and 14 other justices, all of whom are chosen by the Cabinet. It is responsible for interpreting and applying the Constitution of Japan. The Supreme Court can declare that laws passed by the National Diet are unconstitutional.

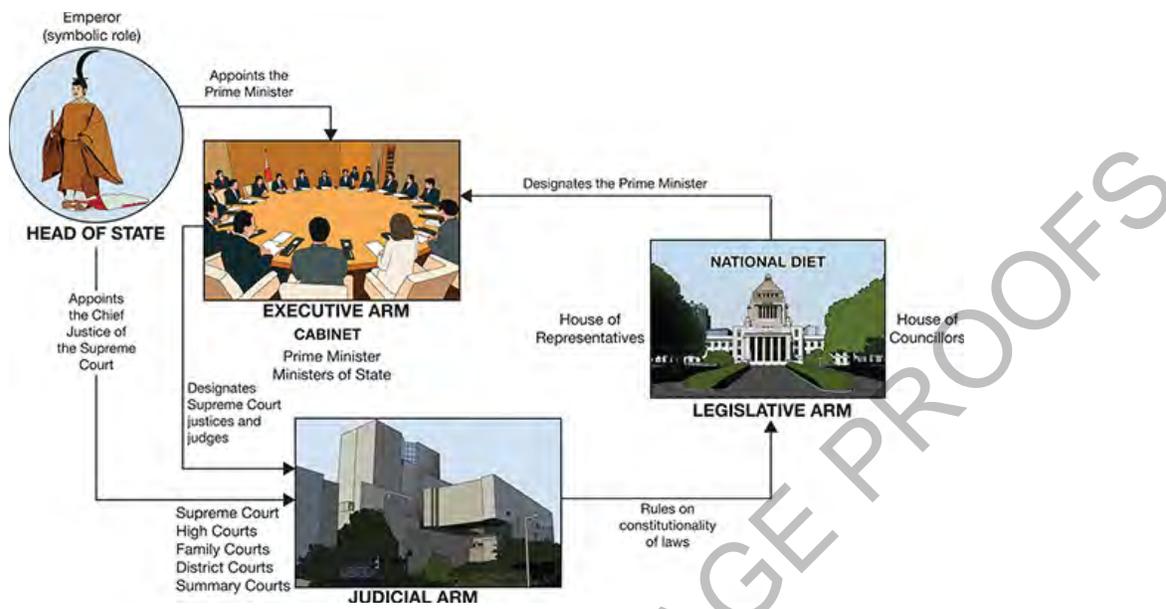


FIGURE 3 The separation of powers in Japan

## Elections in Japan

All Japanese citizens can vote in elections once they reach the age of 20. The National Diet consists of the House of Representatives with 480 members, and the House of Councillors with 242 members. The people directly elect the members of both houses of the National Diet. Elections for the House of Representatives are held every four years, and half the members of the House of Councillors are elected every three years. Local elections are also held every four years for elected positions in Japan's prefectures (regions), cities and villages.



FIGURE 4 Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda campaigning for re-election in Tokyo in 2012 (he lost)

## The House of Representatives

Of the 480 members of the House of Representatives, 300 members are in single-member constituencies (electoral districts). These members are elected using the first-past-the-post method. This means that the candidate receiving the largest number of votes in each constituency is elected to office. The other 180 members of the House of Representatives are in 11 multimember districts, referred to as electoral blocs. These blocs differ in size and contribute between 6 and 30 members. Using a proportional representation system, the bloc seats are awarded to party candidates according to a highest average method. To win a seat, parties have to win a set proportion (or quota) of the votes.

Ultimately each Japanese voter casts two ballots for the House of Representatives: one for a candidate in a local single-seat constituency, and one for a political party. The political parties all field candidates for each electoral bloc.

## The House of Councillors

Again, voters cast two ballots for the House of Councillors: one for an individual candidate in a constituency using single non-transferable votes, and one for a political party or candidate using proportional representation. Of the 242 members of the House of Councillors, 146 members are in 47 prefectural constituencies. The prefectural constituencies differ in size and return between 2 and 10 members. These members are elected by a single non-transferable vote. This means that Japanese citizens cast a ballot for an individual candidate, and the candidates with the largest number of votes in each constituency (up to the number of seats that need to be filled) are elected to office. The remaining 96 members of the House of Councillors are elected on a nationwide basis through proportional representation.

### ACTIVITIES

#### REMEMBER

1. When was the Constitution of Japan enacted?
2. What is the role of the emperor in Japan?
3. Outline the role of the three arms of government in Japan, providing an example of each.
4. Who is eligible to vote in Japanese elections?

#### EXPLAIN

5. Explain how the first-past-the-post system of voting works in Japan.

## DISCOVER

6. Using internet resources, find the names of the people who currently occupy the following positions in Japan:
  - a. emperor
  - b. prime minister.
7. Follow the **2013 Japanese upper house elections** weblink in your Resources section to watch the video and read the news article.
  - a. What political party does the Japanese prime minister belong to?
  - b. In what ways does winning seats in the upper house benefit the prime minister's party?



## THINK

8. Compare and contrast the key features of Japan's system of government with those of Australia by copying and completing the following table:

	Similarities between Japan and Australia	Differences between Japan and Australia
System of government		
Separation of powers		
Elections		

9. In what ways are the values of freedom of election and support for parliamentary democracy associated with the system of government in Japan?

## 1.3 Key features of India's system of government

With a population of more than one billion people, India is the world's largest democracy. India's political system dates back to the country's independence from Britain. From 1857 to 1947, the British ruled the Indian subcontinent (a region comprising India and land that now belongs to other countries, among them Pakistan and Bangladesh). During the early twentieth century, there was increasing support for the idea of India becoming self-governed. On 15 August 1947, India ceased

to be a dominion of the British Empire and became a sovereign democratic **republic**. The Republic of India, as it is officially known, is a federal union of 29 states and 7 union territories.



**FIGURE 1**

Sansad Bhavan (Parliament House) in New Delhi, the home of India's national parliament

## India's system of government

India's system of government is based on the idea of democracy. The Republic of India is an independent country with a parliamentary system of government. The Constitution of India is the longest written constitution of any of the world's sovereign countries, containing 444 articles and 12 schedules. It is also one of the most heavily amended national documents in the world – almost 100 changes have been made to the Constitution since it was first enacted in 1950. The president is the head of state, elected for a five-year term by the members of the federal and state parliaments. The president appoints the prime minister as well as the state governors.

The political system in India is based on Britain's Westminster system. The federal parliament is bicameral; it is composed of a lower house and an upper house. The states have either unicameral or bicameral parliaments. The people of India elect the members of parliament, and the members of the lower house of the Parliament of India elect the prime minister (who is usually the leader of the majority party or coalition).

## Separation of powers

The Constitution of India specifies the independence of the three branches of government: legislative (the parliament), executive (the Cabinet) and judicial (the courts). These arms of government operate in a system of checks and balances.

## The legislative arm

Under the Constitution of India, parliament is the supreme lawmaker. The Parliament of India consists of the lower house or Lok Sabha (House of the People) and the upper house or Rajya Sabha (Council of States), as well as the president of India. The two houses of parliament share legislative powers. Any draft law is known as a Bill. To become a law, the Bill must be read, debated and voted on by both houses of parliament and then approved by the president. A law that has been passed by parliament is called legislation, a statute or an Act.



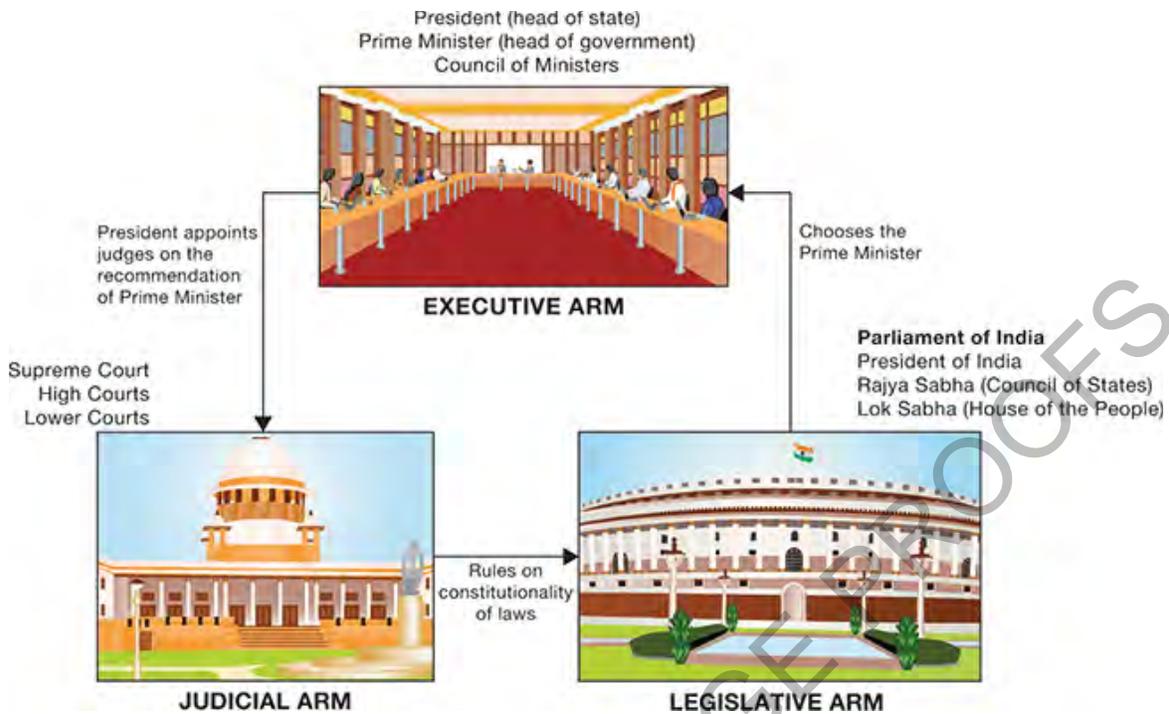
**FIGURE 2** Narendra Modi (seated far left, with members of his Cabinet) is sworn in as India's prime minister in May 2014.

## The executive arm

Executive power officially lies with the president but is actually exercised through the Council of Ministers of the Republic of India, consisting of a group of ministers headed by the prime minister. The prime minister is officially appointed by the president after being nominated by the majority party in the lower house. On the recommendation of the prime minister, the president then appoints ministers. These ministers collectively comprise the Council of Ministers.

## The judicial arm

Judicial power lies with India's Supreme Court, the High Courts in the states and the lower courts at the district level. The Supreme Court is responsible for interpreting and applying the Constitution of India. It ensures that the other arms of government do not act in a way that is outside the powers granted by the Constitution. The Supreme Court consists of up to 31 judges, including the Chief Justice of India. They are appointed by the president on the recommendation of the prime minister. The Supreme Court can declare that laws passed by the Parliament of India are unconstitutional.



**FIGURE 3** The separation of powers in India

## Elections in India

Officials are elected at the national, state and local levels. Because of India's large population, the organisation of any election is a massive and complicated task. More than 800 million people in India are eligible to vote, and in national elections over 900 000 polling booths must be set up for voters. National elections do not take place on a single day but run over the course of several weeks.

### The House of the People (Lok Sabha)

According to the Constitution, the maximum size of the Lok Sabha is 552 members. Of the 545 current members of the Lok Sabha, 543 are elected for five-year terms. The other two members are nominated by the president to represent the Anglo-Indian community if, in the president's opinion, that community does not have adequate representation in the house. The 545 members are elected using the first-past-the-post method.

### The Council of States (Rajya Sabha)

According to the Constitution, the maximum size of the Rajya Sabha is 250 member. Of the 245 current members of the Rajya Sabha, 233 are representatives of the states and union territories. They are elected for a six-year term using the proportional representation system, and one-third of them retires every two years. The other 12 members are nominated members. These people are chosen by the president for their special knowledge or practical experience in fields such as art, literature, science and social service.



**FIGURE 4** A cut-out of Indian politician Mamata Banerjee during the 2011 election campaign in Kolkata (she won)

## ACTIVITIES

### REMEMBER

1. When was the Constitution of India enacted?
2. What is the role of the president of India?
3. Outline the role of the three arms of government in India, providing an example of each.
4. Who is eligible to vote in Indian elections?

### EXPLAIN

5. Explain how the first-past-the-post system of voting works in India.

### DISCOVER

6. Using internet resources, find the names of the people who currently occupy the following positions in India:
  - a. president
  - b. prime minister.
7. Follow the **India votes 2014** weblink in your Resources section to read the news article.
  - a. How many Indian voters will participate in the election?

- b. How many people are employed by the Election Commission?
- c. How is government formed in India?



**THINK**

- 8. Compare and contrast the key features of India’s system of government with those of Australia by copying and completing the following table:

	Similarities between India and Australia	Differences between India and Australia
System of government		
Separation of powers		
Elections		

- 9. In what ways are the values of freedom of election and support for parliamentary democracy associated with the system of government in India?

## 1.4 Key features of Indonesia’s system of government

The **Republic** of Indonesia was declared in 1945 following its independence from a long period of Dutch colonial rule and Japanese wartime occupation. The Constitution was written while Indonesia emerged from Japanese control at the end of World War II. A centralised form of government was established to unify the many ethnic, religious and cultural groups of a nation spread across nearly one thousand permanently settled islands. Since then, Indonesia’s political transition to a democracy has been turbulent. The original Constitution of 1945 was replaced by the Federal Constitution of 1949 and then the Provisional Constitution of 1950. Indonesia’s first election after independence was not held until 1955.

President Sukarno, Indonesia’s first president, dissolved the elected parliament in 1959 and introduced a form of government called guided democracy. The 1945 Constitution of Indonesia was reintroduced. Sukarno’s successor, President Suharto, was **authoritarian** and Indonesia entered a new political era, officially called the New Order. During this period, which lasted for more than 30 years, the parliament served as a mere formality for approving decisions made by the executive arm of government. The end of Suharto’s presidency came about due to pressure for a less-centralised system of government. An era of reform and amendments to the Constitution followed. New election laws were introduced and, in 1999, elections were held for the first time

since 1955. Significant amendments were made to the 1945 Constitution of Indonesia in the early twenty-first century, resulting in changes to all arms of government.



FIGURE 1

Part of the DPR/MPR complex in Jakarta, the home of Indonesia's national parliament

## Indonesia's system of government

Indonesia's system of government is based on the idea of democracy. Indonesia is a republic with sovereignty vested in the hands of its people and exercised through law. The amended 1945 Constitution of Indonesia regulates the responsibilities of state officials, and the rights and responsibilities of citizens. It also governs relations between state institutions — legislative, executive and judicial. Since 2004 Indonesia's parliament (the People's Consultative Assembly or MPR) has been bicameral, with a lower house and an upper house. The president is both the head of state and the head of government, and is chosen through direct popular election. The people of Indonesia also choose the members of the MPR.

Indonesia is divided into provinces and then regents and cities. Each province, regency and city has its own local government and legislative body. A governor heads each government at the provincial level, and a regent or mayor heads each government at the regency and city levels.

## Separation of powers

The amended 1945 Constitution of Indonesia provides for the idea of the separation of powers. This allows each arm of government (legislative, executive and judicial) to check and balance the powers of the others and thereby maintain a fair and just society.

## The legislative arm

Under the amended 1945 Constitution of Indonesia, legislative power lies with parliament — the People's Consultative Assembly (Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat or MPR). It consists of the People's Representative Council (Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat or DPR; the lower house) and the Regional Representatives Council (Dewan Perwakilan Daerah or DPD; the upper house). The DPD

was created through an amendment to the 1945 Constitution of Indonesia in 2001 but does not have the revising powers of an upper house such as Australia's Senate. It was established with the intention of increasing the role of the regions in making laws.

The DPR drafts Bills and passes laws. The DPD can draft Bills related to regional issues that will be considered by the DPR, but it does not have independent legislative authority. A Bill can only be passed if there is joint agreement on the Bill by both the DPR and the President.



**FIGURE 2** Indonesia's parliament (the People's Consultative Assembly or MPR)

## The executive arm

The 1945 Constitution invested most of Indonesia's power in the executive arm of government. This has been reduced through the amendments to the Constitution. Until 2002, the members of the MPR elected the president and vice-president every five years. From 2004, both leaders have been directly elected. New legislation limits the president to two five-year terms. The president carries out his or her tasks assisted by the vice-president and Cabinet. Cabinet ministers are appointed by the president to manage areas of government responsibility such as economic affairs, foreign affairs, defence and education. Cabinet ministers do not have to be elected members of the MPR.

## The judicial arm

In Indonesia, the Supreme Court (Mahkamah Agung) is the highest judicial institution. It forms the judicial arm of government together with the lower legal bodies. These include High Courts, located in the provinces, and District Courts. There are approximately 50 justices (including a chief justice) sitting in the Supreme Court, with more than 7000 judges employed in other courts across Indonesia. According to the original 1945 Constitution, the Supreme Court does not have the power to interpret and apply the Constitution. However, the Constitutional Court (Mahkamah Konstitusi) was established by a group of justices in 2003 with the power to review the Constitution and resolve constitutional disputes between state institutions. It can also resolve disputes over

electoral results, dissolve political parties, and review and rule on cases involving charges against the president.

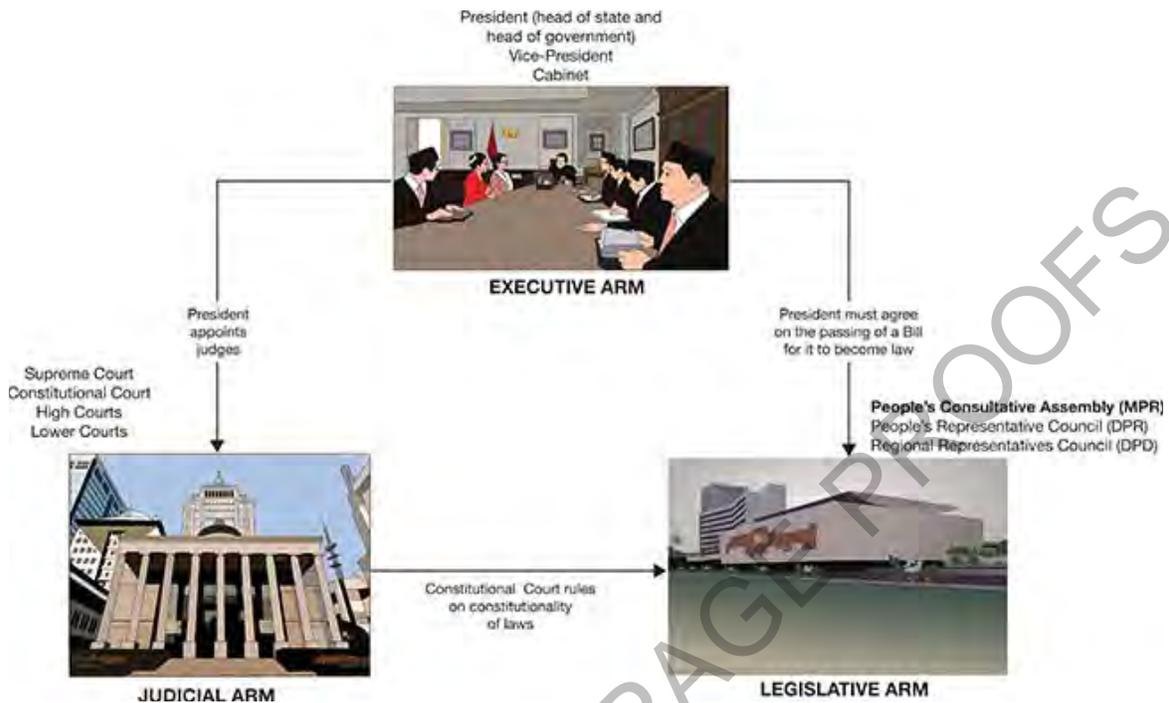


FIGURE 3 The separation of powers in Indonesia

## Elections in Indonesia

All Indonesian citizens who have reached the minimum age of 17 or who are married may vote in general elections. More than 188 million people in Indonesia are eligible to vote. Presidential elections occur every five years. The Indonesian parliament (MPR) consists of two houses:

- the People's Representative Council (DPR), made up of representatives of political parties. It currently has 560 members with representatives from ten political parties. Every member comes from one of the 77 multimember electoral districts. Each electoral district is represented by three to ten seats, depending on the population of the district.
- the Regional Representatives Council (DPD), made up of representatives from each province in Indonesia. Four members are elected from each of the 34 provinces on a non-partisan basis. This means that members are not officially affiliated with any political party.

Elections for the DPR and the DPD are held simultaneously every five years.

## The president

Indonesian citizens vote for a ticket including a president and a vice-president. Whichever pair receives the most votes (more than 50 per cent nationally, with 20 per cent from more than half the provinces) will rule over the next term. If no clear winner emerges, the two tickets that received the highest percentage of the national vote compete in a run-off election.

## The People's Representative Council (DPR)

Members of the DPR are elected through an open-list proportional system. When voting, an Indonesian citizen receives a ballot listing the candidates from each party who are running for a seat in the voter's electoral district. The voter selects his or her preferred candidate. The process allows the voter to cast a ballot for an individual candidate or a particular party, or for both. The Election Commission then calculates a quota for each electoral district by dividing the total number of valid votes obtained by political parties that must be received to secure parliamentary representation (currently 3.5 per cent of the national vote) by the total number of seats in that electoral district. The political parties then receive a seat for each quota they meet, and are required to allocate these seats to the candidates who received the most votes. Any party that fails to obtain a 3.5 per cent share of the national vote is eliminated from the election.

Some parties will have votes left over. These remaining votes are used to distribute unallocated seats. Unallocated seats are awarded to the parties with the largest numbers of remaining votes one by one until all seats are allocated.



**FIGURE 4** A woman casts her vote during elections in Indonesia in 2014.

## The Regional Representatives Council (DPD)

The members of the DPD are elected using a much simpler system. Voters in each province select one candidate on their ballot forms. The four candidates who win the most votes in each province represent that province at the DPD.

## ACTIVITIES

### REMEMBER

1. When was the Constitution of Indonesia originally enacted?
2. What is the role of the president of Indonesia?
3. Outline the role of the three arms of government in Indonesia, providing an example of each.
4. Who is eligible to vote in Indonesian elections?

### EXPLAIN

5. Describe what happened to the Constitution of Indonesia following its original enactment.
6. Outline how voting works in Indonesia for:
  - a. the People's Representative Council
  - b. the president.

### DISCOVER

7. Using internet resources, find the names of the people who currently occupy the following positions in Indonesia:
  - a. president
  - b. vice-president.
8. Use the **Indonesian elections 2014** weblink in your Resources section to view the video.
  - a. How many polling stations were set up for the 2014 presidential election?
  - b. How many voters cast ballots in the presidential election?
  - c. Name the body organising the running of the presidential election in 2014.
  - d. How long can it take to obtain a final result in a presidential election in Indonesia?



### THINK

9. Compare and contrast the key features of Indonesia's system of government with those of Australia by copying and completing the following table.

	Similarities between Indonesia and Australia	Differences between Indonesia and Australia
System of government		
Separation of powers		
Elections		

10. In what ways are the values of freedom of election and support for parliamentary democracy associated with the system of government in Indonesia?

## SkillBuilder: Conducting an interview

### Tell me

#### What is an interview?

An interview is a conversation with some sort of purpose between two or more people. Questions will be asked by the interviewer/s to obtain information, facts or statements from the person/s being interviewed. Interviews can be conducted face-to-face between two people or in small groups, or by some form of communications technology such as the telephone or internet.

#### Why is conducting an interview useful in this subject?

An interview is important because it allows the interviewer to gather a wide range of views and facts. Interviews can reveal information about people's values, motivations, attitudes and feelings.



**FIGURE 1**

Interviewing a person allows the interviewer to gather a wide range of views and facts.

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## Show me

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### How to complete an interview

**You will need:**

- a sheet of lined paper or somewhere else to record your questions and answers
- a pen
- a recording device such as a mobile phone (if necessary).

**Procedure:**

STEP 1

Establish what the goals of the interview are. What do you want to find out from the person?

STEP 2

Work out the questions you will need to ask the person at an interview. Use the questions in the 'Developing my skills' section of this SkillBuilder as a guide. You may need to modify these questions to suit the person being interviewed and ask follow-up questions to obtain further information.

STEP 3

Visit the person and interview them. Be polite. Do not try to interview them if they are busy. You might need to ask them if you can come back at a more convenient time. Explain why you are doing the interview and what will happen to their responses. Remember to thank the person for their time.

STEP 4

Write a transcript of the interview using proper sentences and headings. Present the transcript so that it is easy to read.

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## Let me do it

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### Developing my skills

Use these questions for an interview with a person with connections to a country in the Asia region:

1. What country in the Asia region do you have connections to?
2. In what country do you currently live?
3. What values do you associate with Australia's system of government?
4. What values do you associate with the country in the Asia region that you have connections to?
5. Can you see any similarities or differences between the values of Australia's system of government and those of the country in the Asia region that you have connections to?

Conduct the interview and write a transcript of it. Create a heading for the transcript, then write a short introductory paragraph preceding the transcript outlining who you interviewed, when the interview took place and what the interview was about (a summary of your main questions). Decide whether your transcript will follow a simple question-and-answer format, or be written like a narrative (a written account of the interview).

## Review and reflect

### Review

Australia's system of government is categorised by democratic elections and the separation of powers. There are similarities and differences between Australia's system of government and the systems of government found in other countries in the Asia region, in particular Japan, India and Indonesia. The systems of government in these three countries are also categorised by democratic elections and the separation of powers.

- Australia's government is based on the idea of democracy. This means that sovereignty lies with the Australian people, and values such as freedom of election and support for parliamentary democracy are associated with our system of government.
- The governments of Japan, India and Indonesia are also based on the idea of democracy. This means that sovereignty lies with their people, and values such as freedom of election and support for parliamentary democracy are associated with their systems of government.
- Australia is a constitutional monarchy, with a Commonwealth Parliament consisting of two houses (the House of Representatives and the Senate) and the Crown (represented by the governor general).
- Japan is a constitutional monarchy, with its parliament (the National Diet) consisting of the House of Representatives and the House of Councillors. The emperor plays only a symbolic role as Japan's head of state.
- India is a republic, with the Parliament of India consisting of the House of the People (Lok Sabha) and the Council of States (Rajya Sabha) as well as the president, who is India's head of state.
- Indonesia is a republic. Its parliament, the People's Consultative Assembly (Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat or the MPR), consists of the People's Representative Council (Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat or DPR; the lower house) and the Regional Representatives Council (Dewan Perwakilan Daerah or DPD; the upper house). The president is both the head of state and the head of government.

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## Interactivity

### Multiple choice

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## Interactivity

### True/false

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## Interactivity

### Crossword

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## Reflect

1. While unveiling a suite of counter-terrorism measures in August 2014, Prime Minister Tony Abbott elaborated on his Team Australia comments. 'Everyone has got to put this country, its interests, its values and its people first, and you don't migrate to this country unless you want to join our team,' Mr Abbott said.
  - a. Mr Abbott often refers to 'Australian values'. What do you think he means by this term?
  - b. What values do you associate with the system of government in Australia?
  - c. Choosing a country in the Asia region that you have studied, what values do you associate with the system of government in that country?
  - d. How similar or different are the values associated with Australia's system of government to those of the country in the Asia region that you have studied?
2. Read the 'Australian values and principles' extract below and then complete the following:
  - a. Describe Australia's parliamentary democracy.
  - b. What values are associated with Australia's parliamentary democracy?
  - c. Outline how elections work in Australia.
  - d. What values are associated with elections in Australia?



FIGURE 1 Prime Minister Tony Abbott

## Australian values and principles

To maintain a stable, peaceful and prosperous community, Australians of all backgrounds are expected to uphold the shared principles and values that underpin Australian society.

These values provide the basis for Australia's free and democratic society. They include:

- respect for the equal worth, dignity and freedom of the individual
- freedom of speech
- freedom of religion and secular government
- freedom of association
- support for parliamentary democracy and the rule of law
- equality under the law
- equality of men and women
- equality of opportunity
- peacefulness
- a spirit of egalitarianism that embraces tolerance, mutual respect and compassion for those in need.

While shared to some extent by many other countries, these values and principles have been adapted to Australia's unique setting, shaped and modernised through the settlement in Australia of millions of people from all over the world. Although they may be expressed differently by different people, their meaning remains the same.

Source: Commonwealth of Australia 2007, *Life in Australia*, p. 4.