

# Australian jurisdictions

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You may be required to work with colleagues across federal, state and local governments to deliver on priority issues for the people of NSW.

Australia has three levels of government:

- The Federal Parliament makes laws for the whole of Australia.
- The six state and two mainland territory parliaments make laws for each state and territory.
- More than 560 local councils make local laws for their region or district.

Each level of government has its own responsibilities, although in some cases these responsibilities are shared between multiple levels.

## Working across jurisdictions

As a senior executive you will inevitably work on projects that require collaboration across levels of government. You should:

- be aware of any partnership program arrangements in place, including changes to funding arrangements and stakeholder relationships
- identify which stakeholders you should collaborate with to achieve your shared goals
- build relationships with key stakeholders to ensure projects are delivered effectively
- advocate on behalf of NSW Government to ensure the best outcomes are achieved for the people of NSW
- develop and adhere to a clear delineation of responsibility and remain accountable and transparent in your work.

## Intergovernmental forums

Intergovernmental forums are an opportunity for the NSW Premier and Ministers to influence national policy and progress state priorities. When attending intergovernmental forums, the Premier and Ministers make decisions on behalf of NSW Government.

Examples of intergovernmental forums include:

- The Council for the Australian Federation comprises state premiers and territory chief ministers. It is a forum for state and territory leaders in Australia to discuss and resolve important issues independently of the Commonwealth.
- The National Federation Reform Council is made up of the Prime Minister, State Premiers and Territory Chief Ministers, Treasurers from each jurisdiction and the President of the Australian Local Government Association. This group focuses on priority national issues.

As a senior executive you may be required to prepare Ministerial briefs for these forums and act on outcomes of these meetings. When preparing your Minister before an intergovernmental meeting, it is important that you:

- reach out to the Department of Premier and Cabinet to discuss the nature of the negotiation and any other relevant intergovernmental issues
- confirm the process for Cabinet to consider the Minister's negotiating position
- make sure your preparation process is consistent with the relevant Premier's Memorandum and the **NSW Cabinet Handbook**.

## Intergovernmental agreements

As a senior executive you may be involved in the negotiation of multilateral or bilateral agreements. Some agreements outline the terms of Commonwealth funding to states, while others seek the commitment of other governments in pursuing consistent policy objectives.

Regardless of the type of agreement, the negotiation process must always be consistent with NSW government protocols.

Various agreements regulate the Commonwealth's funding of each state and in doing so outline a shared commitment to achieving agreed policy outcomes. These agreements fall under the **Intergovernmental Agreement on Federal Financial Relations** and include national agreements, national partnerships, and project agreements.

Depending on the type of agreement, it may be signed by the Premier, or by the Minister with the Premier's and Treasurer's endorsement.

When entering into negotiations for an intergovernmental agreement you will need to:

- determine whether or not the agreement falls under the Intergovernmental Agreement on Federal Financial Relations
- confirm with the Department of Premier and Cabinet the process for negotiating the agreement
- seek endorsement for the agreement in accordance with the Premier's Memorandum on the **NSW Protocol for the Intergovernmental Agreement on Federal Financial Relations (M2011-19)**.