**Glossary**

**B***Bill* - A proposal for a new law which has been presented to Parliament.

**C**
*Cabinet* - The key group of decision-makers in the Government, consisting of the either the full Ministry, or a specified group of Ministers selected by the Prime Minister.

*Cabinet Minister* - A Minister in a Government who is responsible for developing policy that affects the people of a state or nation. They are appointed to the Cabinet by the Prime Minister.

*Colonisation -* the act of or process of settling among and establishing control over an established country or group of people of an area without their consent, and historically, with force.

*Committee* - *Also known as a parliamentary committee*. A small group of government and non-government Members of Parliament, which investigates and makes recommendations about a particular issue.

*Constituency* - A group of voters in a specified area (usually known as an electorate), who elect a representative to a legislative body, like the Legislative Council or Legislative Assembly.

*Constituent* - A person who voters in a specified area (usually known as an electorate), who elect a representative to a legislative body, like the Legislative Council or Legislative Assembly.

*Country* - Country is the term often used by First Nations People to describe the lands, waterways and seas to which they are connected. The term contains complex ideas about law, place, custom, language, spiritual belief, cultural practice, material sustenance, family and identity. *You can learn more about Country and First Peoples culture and language via AIATSIS.*

**E***Electorate* - A geographical area represented by a Member of Parliament.

*Electorate office* - The office of a Member of Parliament in the electorate or region they represent. Members of Parliament will usually work in electorate offices when Parliament is not meeting.

*Electoral Officer* - An employee who works in the office of a Member of Parliament.

*Election* - The process by which eligible people vote for a person to represent them in a Parliament.

*Election campaign* - A competition for votes by people or parties who are seeking election to a Parliament.

**F**

*First Peoples -*  Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are the First Peoples of Australia, meaning they were here for thousands of years prior to colonisation. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples live in urban, regional and remote areas and are present in all communities, not necessarily on their traditional lands or islands. *You can learn more about First Peoples, their histories and connection to Country via AIATSIS.*

*Federal* - A term relating to the Australian Parliament and the Australian Government, rather than state and territory parliaments, and state and territory governments.

*Federal Government* - the group of elected representatives in the *Federal Parliament* that have a majority. They set the agenda for what laws and reforms are discussed and passed. They also are responsible for federal *Government Departments* that deliver services.

**G***Government* - the group of people who are elected to govern a country or a state.

In the Victorian Parliament, it refers to the party, or coalition of parties, with the support of the majority of members in the Legislative Assembly or the Lower House.

*Government Departments -* sections of the Government that administer and deliver services to the public. Major state departments look after Education, Health, Justice, Public Housing, Public Transport and Infrastructure. Major federal departments include Defence, Telecommunications, Immigration and Home Affairs and Social Security.

*Interest groups* - A group of people who organise together to promote an issue or cause which they have in common.

**L***Legislative Council* - The Upper House of Parliament in Victoria that is made up of Members of Parliament, elected to represent regions.

*Legislative Assembly* - The Lower House of Parliament in Victoria that is made up of Members of Parliament, elected to represent electorates.

*Local government* - The level of government that looks after local issues such as rubbish collection, pet control and local roads.

**M**
*Member of Parliament* - A person elected by people in an electorate or region to represent them in Parliament.

*Media* - the main means of mass communication that includes newspapers, television, radio stations and other organisations that collect and publish information.

*Minister* - a Member of Parliament, who is a member of the Government and is usually in charge of a government department.

**P***Parliament* - A group of elected representatives who legislate (or more simply make laws). In Victoria, elected representatives make state laws in the Victorian *State Parliament*.

*Petition* - A formal request by a person or a group of citizens for Parliament to take action to solve a particular problem.

*Political party* - An organisation that represents a particular group of people or set of ideas, and aims to have their members elected to Parliament.

*Premier* - The elected leader of the political party or coalition of parties that form a state government.

**S**

*Shire* - a rural area with its own elected council and/or local government.

*State Government* - the group of elected representatives in the *State Parliament* that have a majority. They set the agenda for what laws and reforms are discussed and passed. They also are responsible for *Government Departments* that deliver services.

*State Parliament* - the group of elected representatives who make State laws.

 **V***Vote* - A formal expression of a choice between two or more candidates, typically through a ballot.

*Voter* - A person who votes or is eligible to vote.

**W**

*Westminster Parliamentary system* - The system of government which originated in Britain, with an executive government drawn from and directly responsible to a parliament.

These terms have been gathered from the following sites, you can visit them for more information:

Glossary, Parliamentary Education Office, Commonwealth Government <https://peo.gov.au/understand-our-parliament/glossary/#W>

A parliamentary glossary, Parliament of Victoria <https://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/archive/gloss.html>

AIATSIS, Welcome to Country

<https://aiatsis.gov.au/explore/welcome-country>

AIATSIS, Australia's First People

<https://aiatsis.gov.au/explore/australias-first-peoples>