The separation of powers – text version

Governing a country requires a lot of power.

In Australia this power is divided up into three groups, the executive, the Legislature and the Judiciary, in order to ensure that that the power is balanced out

The constitution sets out how this power is divided.

The idea behind the separation of powers is to prevent all the power being in the hands of one individual or group

In 1748, Montesquieu, a French philosopher, wrote that a nation’s liberty depended on the separation of the three types of power.

The Executive is made up of the Prime Minister and Ministers. They lead day-to-day government and administer the law through government departments.

The Legislature is Parliament. It is here that Statute law is made. It has two houses, the House of Representatives and the Senate.

The Judiciary is made up of Courts and Judges. They interpret the laws and adjudicate on conflicts.