Are there too many governments?

Australia has too many governments and too many politicians. Our system of government means that three levels of government share the responsibility for running a nation of less than 20 million people.

It’s time to simplify the system. If we abolished state level government we would have a smaller, more efficient system of government. The central government would look after national issues and the regional governments would look after local needs.

Just think, we could save money by having fewer governments to run, and the different state systems such as education and even road laws could become the same all over the nation.

The Territory should be a state

All this talk of changing the Constitution and reforming our system of government leads me to ask, what about the Northern Territory?

The Northern Territory has outgrown its territory status and deserves to take its place in the federal system with all the rights and representation of a state. It needs to have an equal voice in Parliament to give us the fair share in national decision-making we deserve.

We may only have a small population but the Territory is big in many ways. We have a thriving tourist industry, rich natural resources and contribute more than our share to the nation.

Becoming a republic?

It is over a hundred years since the colonies decided that it was time to change the system of government to federate to form the Commonwealth of Australia. Now, a hundred years on, perhaps our system needs another review.

The question this time round is: Do we want to have the British monarch’s representative as our head of state or should we have an Australian-born president? Do we remain a constitutional monarchy, tied constitutionally to the United Kingdom, or do we stand up independent in the new millennium as a republic?

The Constitutional Convention of February 1998 agreed on a plan to be put to the people in 1999. This is not a decision we should take lightly. Before we proceed, remember that change, even simple change, has consequences. An alteration to the Australian Constitution also means that state and territory constitutions need to change.

Are we ready Australia, to take on the issue? I think that it is up to all of us to become informed about our system of government and prepare ourselves for the biggest decision of this generation.