

Please accept this submission for the JSCEM's Inquiry into the 2010 Federal Election.

I am an Australian citizen living in the UK.

I have been living outside Australia since 1974(although I've returned to visit relatives on numerous occasions).

I am not currently on the Commonwealth electoral roll.

My experiences with the Australian federal electoral system while offshore are as follows: I wasn't aware I could not vote until about 15 years ago. I have kept in touch with Australian matters through the internet. Since the 1980s I felt estranged from my country of birth - Australia was indeed a foreign country to me, particularly as I didn't have the option of voting after 3 years being offshore. Voting keeps the bonds intact. I was surprised (and delighted) to see the present female prime minister in office but would like to have been more in touch via having an option of voting while overseas.