

Head 114 — OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN

Controlling officer: The Ombudsman will account for expenditure under this Head.

Estimate 2019–20 **\$122.1m**

Controlling Officer's Report

Programme

Complaints Administration

This programme contributes to Policy Area 30: Complaints Against Maladministration (The Ombudsman).

Detail

	2017–18 (Actual)	2018–19 (Original)	2018–19 (Revised)	2019–20 (Estimate)
Financial provision (\$m)	116.6	117.1	121.5 (+3.8%)	122.1 (+0.5%)
				(or +4.3% on 2018–19 Original)

Aim

2 The aim is to redress grievances and address issues arising from maladministration in the public sector and to bring about improvement in the quality and standard of and promote fairness in public administration, through independent and impartial investigation.

Brief Description

3 The Ombudsman is responsible for resolving complaints of maladministration lodged by the public with her through inquiries, investigations, mediation and other forms of assistance. The Ombudsman may, of her own volition, initiate direct investigation into areas of suspected maladministration. The Office generally met its objectives and targets in 2018.

4 The key performance measures in respect of complaints administration are:

Targets

The performance of the Office of The Ombudsman can be measured by the extent of public awareness and acceptance of the Office, the thoroughness of investigations, the efficiency with which complaints are resolved, and the degree of acceptance and recognition of the effectiveness of recommendations made for the redress of grievances.

Indicators

Key indicators of performance are the number of complaint cases and enquiries received; the number of complaint cases investigated or resolved through inquiries and mediation; the number of direct investigations completed; and the number of recommendations accepted by government departments/public bodies either directly or after discussion in the legislature. The reporting year of the Office ends on 31 March. The performance figures for the last three reporting years are:

	<i>Reporting Year</i>		
	2015–16 (Actual)	2016–17 (Actual)	2017–18 (Actual)
enquiries received.....	12 159	11 564	11 424
complaints received.....	5 244	4 862	4 829
complaints carried forward from the previous reporting year	868	870	758
total no. of complaints for processing	6 112	5 732	5 587
complaints concluded by full investigation.....	226	218	195
complaints concluded by inquiry	2 740	2 556	2 292
complaints concluded by mediation.....	134	133	237
complaints assessed and closed.....	2 142	2 067	2 046
total no. of complaints completed			
complaints	5 242	4 974	4 770
percentage over the total no. of complaints for processing (%)	86	87	85

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	<i>Reporting Year</i>		
	2015–16 (Actual)	2016–17 (Actual)	2017–18 (Actual)
complaints carried forward to the next reporting year	870	758	817
no. of direct investigations completed	8	11	12
no. of recommendations made	277	254	209
no. of recommendations accepted as at end of respective year	236	211	174

Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2019–20

5 During 2019–20, the Office will continue to:

- monitor the administrative actions of the public sector and initiate direct investigations;
- encourage the use of mediation to settle complaints involving no or minor maladministration;
- develop strategic programmes to arouse public awareness and understanding of the work of the Office;
- enhance professionalism and the quality of complaint management in the Office and the public sector; and
- strengthen relationship with other ombudsman jurisdictions and related institutions through liaison and exchange programmes.

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ANALYSIS OF FINANCIAL PROVISION

Programme	2017–18 (Actual) (\$m)	2018–19 (Original) (\$m)	2018–19 (Revised) (\$m)	2019–20 (Estimate) (\$m)
Complaints Administration	116.6	117.1	121.5 (+3.8%)	122.1 (+0.5%)
				(or +4.3% on 2018–19 Original)

Analysis of Financial and Staffing Provision

Provision for 2019–20 is \$0.6 million (0.5%) higher than the revised estimate for 2018–19. This is mainly due to salary adjustment in line with the 2018 civil service pay rise.

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Sub-head (Code)	Actual expenditure 2017-18	Approved estimate 2018-19	Revised estimate 2018-19	Estimate 2019-20	
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	
Operating Account					
Recurrent					
000	Operational expenses	116,644	117,139	121,546	122,055
	Total, Recurrent	116,644	117,139	121,546	122,055
	Total, Operating Account	116,644	117,139	121,546	122,055
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	Total Expenditure	116,644	117,139	121,546	122,055

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Details of Expenditure by Subhead

The estimate of the amount required in 2019–20 for the salaries and expenses of the Office of The Ombudsman is \$122,055,000. This represents an increase of \$509,000 over the revised estimate for 2018–19 and \$5,411,000 over the actual expenditure in 2017–18.

Operating Account

Recurrent

2 Provision of \$122,055,000 under *Subhead 000 Operational expenses* is for the payment of subvention to the Office of The Ombudsman to cover its salaries, allowances and other operating expenses.