

Head 114 — OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN

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

Estimate 2020–21 **\$127.9m**

Controlling Officer's Report

Programme

Complaints Administration

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

Detail

	2018–19 (Actual)	2019–20 (Original)	2019–20 (Revised)	2020–21 (Estimate)
Financial provision (\$m)	121.5	122.1	127.4 (+4.3%)	127.9 (+0.4%)
				(or +4.8% on 2019–20 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 2019.

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>		
	2016–17 (Actual)	2017–18 (Actual)	2018–19 (Actual)
enquiries received.....	11 564	11 424	10 403
complaints received.....	4 862	4 829	4 991
complaints carried forward from the previous reporting year	870	758	817
total no. of complaints for processing.....	5 732	5 587	5 808
complaints concluded by full investigation.....	218	195	205
complaints concluded by inquiry	2 556	2 292	2 502
complaints concluded by mediation.....	133	237	205
complaints assessed and closed.....	2 067	2 046	1 926
total no. of complaints completed			
complaints	4 974	4 770	4 838
percentage over the total no. of complaints for processing (%)	87	85	83

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	<i>Reporting Year</i>		
	2016–17 (Actual)	2017–18 (Actual)	2018–19 (Actual)
complaints carried forward to the next reporting year	758	817	970
no. of direct investigations completed	11	12	12
no. of recommendations made	254	209	253
no. of recommendations accepted as at end of respective year	211	174	233

Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2020–21

- 5** During 2020–21, the Office will continue to take forward the Strategic Plan for 2019–2024 as follows:
- enhance community awareness of the role and services of The Ombudsman;
 - foster improvement in the quality and fairness in public administration;
 - enhance transparency, efficiency and quality of the work of the Office; and
 - build professional capacity through enhanced staff development and knowledge management.

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ANALYSIS OF FINANCIAL PROVISION

Programme	2018–19 (Actual) (\$m)	2019–20 (Original) (\$m)	2019–20 (Revised) (\$m)	2020–21 (Estimate) (\$m)
Complaints Administration	121.5	122.1	127.4 (+4.3%)	127.9 (+0.4%)
				(or +4.8% on 2019–20 Original)

Analysis of Financial and Staffing Provision

Provision for 2020–21 is \$0.5 million (0.4%) higher than the revised estimate for 2019–20. This is due to the increased provision for departmental expenses.

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Sub-head (Code)	Actual expenditure 2018–19	Approved estimate 2019–20	Revised estimate 2019–20	Estimate 2020–21
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Operating Account				
Recurrent				
000	Operational expenses	121,546	122,055	127,419
	Total, Recurrent.....	<u>121,546</u>	<u>122,055</u>	<u>127,419</u>
	Total, Operating Account	<u>121,546</u>	<u>122,055</u>	<u>127,419</u>
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	Total Expenditure	<u><u>121,546</u></u>	<u><u>122,055</u></u>	<u><u>127,419</u></u>

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Details of Expenditure by Subhead

The estimate of the amount required in 2020–21 for the salaries and expenses of the Office of The Ombudsman is \$127,856,000. This represents an increase of \$437,000 over the revised estimate for 2019–20 and \$6,310,000 over the actual expenditure in 2018–19.

Operating Account

Recurrent

2 Provision of \$127,856,000 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.