

Head 114 — OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN

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

Estimate 2024–25 **\$133.2m**

Controlling Officer's Report

Programme

Complaints Administration

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

Detail

	2022–23 (Actual)	2023–24 (Original)	2023–24 (Revised)	2024–25 (Estimate)
Financial provision (\$m)	129.5	129.7	134.3 (+3.5%)	133.2 (–0.8%)
				(or +2.7% on 2023–24 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 2023.

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 concluded 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>		
	2020–21 (Actual)	2021–22 (Actual)	2022–23 (Actual)
enquiries received.....	7 505	8 851	9 279
complaints received.....	29 814#	4 934#	5 357#
complaints carried forward from the previous reporting year	899	692	594
total no. of complaints for processing	30 713	5 626	5 951
complaints concluded by full investigation.....	167	92	141
complaints concluded by inquiry.....	2 480	2 432	2 112
complaints concluded by mediation.....	179	215	305
complaints assessed and closed.....	27 195	2 293	2 765
total no. of complaints completed			
complaints	30 021	5 032	5 323
percentage over the total no. of complaints for processing (%)	98	89	90

Head 114 — OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN

	<i>Reporting Year</i>		
	2020–21 (Actual)	2021–22 (Actual)	2022–23 (Actual)
complaints carried forward to the next reporting year	692	594	628
no. of direct investigations completed	9	8	9
no. of recommendations made	194	139	211
no. of recommendations accepted as at end of respective year	168	129	187

The majority of complaints received in the year 2020–21 was secondary cases of topical complaints on particular social issues. Discounting the topical complaints, the numbers of complaints received in 2020–21, 2021–22 and 2022–23 were 4 659, 4 794 and 5 124 respectively.

Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2024–25

5 During 2024–25, the Office will continue to:

- 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.

Head 114 — OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN

ANALYSIS OF FINANCIAL PROVISION

Programme	2022–23 (Actual) (\$m)	2023–24 (Original) (\$m)	2023–24 (Revised) (\$m)	2024–25 (Estimate) (\$m)
Complaints Administration.....	129.5	129.7	134.3 (+3.5%)	133.2 (–0.8%)
				(or +2.7% on 2023–24 Original)

Analysis of Financial and Staffing Provision

Provision for 2024–25 is \$1.1 million (0.8%) lower than the revised estimate for 2023–24. This is due to the decreased provision for operating expenses.

Head 114 — OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN

Sub-head (Code)	Actual expenditure 2022–23	Approved estimate 2023–24	Revised estimate 2023–24	Estimate 2024–25	
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	
Operating Account					
Recurrent					
000	Operational expenses	129,476	129,655	134,307	133,191
	Total, Recurrent.....	129,476	129,655	134,307	133,191
	Total, Operating Account	129,476	129,655	134,307	133,191
<hr/>					
	Total Expenditure	129,476	129,655	134,307	133,191

Head 114 — OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN

Details of Expenditure by Subhead

The estimate of the amount required in 2024–25 for the salaries and expenses of the Office of The Ombudsman is \$133,191,000. This represents a decrease of \$1,116,000 against the revised estimate for 2023–24 and an increase of \$3,715,000 over the actual expenditure in 2022–23.

Operating Account

Recurrent

2 Provision of \$133,191,000 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.