

Head 114 — OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN

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

Estimate 2025–26 **\$134.2m**

Controlling Officer's Report

Programme

Complaints Administration

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

Detail

	2023–24 (Actual)	2024–25 (Original)	2024–25 (Revised)	2025–26 (Estimate)
Financial provision (\$m)	134.3	133.2	136.6 (+2.6%)	134.2 (–1.8%)
				(or +0.8% on 2024–25 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 him through inquiries, investigations, mediation and other forms of assistance. The Ombudsman may, of his own volition, initiate direct investigation operations into areas of suspected maladministration. The Office generally met its objectives and targets in 2024.

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 investigation operations 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>		
	2021–22 (Actual)	2022–23 (Actual)	2023–24 (Actual)
enquiries received.....	8 851	9 279	8 599
complaints received.....	4 934	5 357	4 351
complaints carried forward from the previous reporting year	692	594	628
total no. of complaints for processing.....	5 626	5 951	4 979
complaints concluded by full investigation.....	92	141	95
complaints concluded by inquiry	2 432	2 112	1 771
complaints concluded by mediation.....	215	305	187
complaints assessed and closed.....	2 293	2 765	2 344
total no. of complaints completed			
complaints	5 032	5 323	4 397
percentage over the total no. of complaints for processing (%)	89	90	88

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	<i>Reporting Year</i>		
	2021–22 (Actual)	2022–23 (Actual)	2023–24 (Actual)
complaints carried forward to the next reporting year	594	628	582
no. of direct investigation operations completed#	8	9	10
no. of recommendations made	139	211	186
no. of recommendations accepted as at end of respective year	129	187	169

Revised description of the previous indicator “no. of direct investigations completed” as from 2023–24.

Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2025–26

- 5** During 2025–26, the Office will continue to take forward its strategic focuses to:
- use mediation as the default handling mode in complaint cases involving minor or no maladministration;
 - promote interdepartmental collaboration through organising seminars and exchange forums from time to time and encouraging various government departments and public organisations to work together to enhance administrative arrangements for better public services and a stronger sense of gain and happiness among members of public; and
 - continue instilling a “positive complaint culture” in society and encouraging members of the public (especially younger generation) to express views in positive and constructive manner with the aim of improving public administration.

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ANALYSIS OF FINANCIAL PROVISION

Programme	2023–24 (Actual) (\$m)	2024–25 (Original) (\$m)	2024–25 (Revised) (\$m)	2025–26 (Estimate) (\$m)
Complaints Administration.....	134.3	133.2	136.6 (+2.6%)	134.2 (–1.8%)
				(or +0.8% on 2024–25 Original)

Analysis of Financial and Staffing Provision

Provision for 2025–26 is \$2.4 million (1.8%) lower than the revised estimate for 2024–25. This is due to the decreased provision for operating expenses.

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Sub-head (Code)	Actual expenditure 2023–24	Approved estimate 2024–25	Revised estimate 2024–25	Estimate 2025–26	
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	
Operating Account					
Recurrent					
000	Operational expenses	134,307	133,191	136,644	134,231
	Total, Recurrent.....	134,307	133,191	136,644	134,231
	Total, Operating Account	134,307	133,191	136,644	134,231
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	Total Expenditure	134,307	133,191	136,644	134,231
		<u>134,307</u>	<u>133,191</u>	<u>136,644</u>	<u>134,231</u>

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Details of Expenditure by Subhead

The estimate of the amount required in 2025–26 for the salaries and expenses of the Office of The Ombudsman is \$134,231,000. This represents a decrease of \$2,413,000 against the revised estimate for 2024–25 and \$76,000 against the actual expenditure in 2023–24.

Operating Account

Recurrent

2 Provision of \$134,231,000 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.