Annual report

2013 - 2014 at a glance

Overview

• Received 11,044 complaints and other work, the second highest amount ever received, and 13% higher than the average amount of work received over the past 10 years

• Completed 11,505 complaints and other work, 19% more than the average amount of work completed over the past 10 years

• Finished the year with 1,602 complaints and other work on hand, down from 2,072 the previous year

• Completed 461 more complaints and other work in the reporting year than we received

• Obtained remedies for the benefit of public administration in 91 cases, almost 3 times as many as in the previous reporting year

• Struggled to meet some timeliness targets for completed complaints, given the volume of work on hand

• Improved the age profile of work on hand, with 51% of complaints and other contacts open as at 30 June 2014 aged 6 months or less, compared with 38% the previous year

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1 Including complaints, other contacts, deaths in custody and other work.
2 34 cases.
Ombudsmen Act (OA)

- Received 2,478 OA complaints and 6,032 other contacts concerning OA matters
- Completed 2,510 OA complaints and 6,056 other contacts concerning OA matters
- In total, completed 9,622 OA complaints and other contacts concerning all matters,\(^3\) 20% more than the average amount completed over the past 10 years
- Resolved 222 cases\(^4\)
- Provided advice and assistance in 2,579 cases
- Formally investigated 276 complaints, and formed 126 final opinions
- Identified administrative deficiency in 34 complaints, or 27% of all complaints where a final opinion was formed
- Made 11 recommendations
- Obtained remedies for the benefit of the individual concerned in 240 cases
- Obtained remedies for the benefit of public administration in 55 cases, a significant increase from 18 cases in the previous reporting year
- Monitored investigations into 14 deaths in custody
- Assessed 40 serious incidents in prisons, commencing an investigation in 1 case, and concluding investigations in 2 cases

Official information (OIA and LGOIMA)

- Received 1,207 OIA complaints, comparable with 2011/12 numbers,\(^5\) and 11% more than the average amount received over the past 10 years
- Received 246 LGOIMA complaints
- Completed 1,856 complaints, 403 more than received in the reporting year
- Resolved 644 complaints, or 35% of all complaints completed
- Investigated 672 complaints, and formed 306 final opinions

\(^3\) In previous years, other contacts were not differentiated by the type of matter they concerned, and so previous years reported on other contacts concerning all matters.

\(^4\) “Cases” refers to OA complaints and other contacts concerning OA matters.

\(^5\) The total number of complaints received in 2012/13 included 1,012 complaints made by one complainant against separate agencies, and so is not a useful comparison.
Identified administrative deficiency in 185 complaints, or 60% of all complaints where a final opinion was formed

Made 14 recommendations

Obtained remedies for the benefit of the individual concerned in 677 cases

Obtained remedies for the benefit of public administration in 36 cases, a significant increase from 16 cases in the previous reporting year

Crimes of Torture Act

Visited 37 places of detention, including 22 full inspections

44% of visits to places of detention were unannounced

Made 80 recommendations for improvement, 65 of which were accepted or partially accepted

United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Contributed to the second report of the Independent Monitoring Mechanism, Making Disability Rights Real

Received 16 complaints and other contacts which raised issues relevant to the Disabilities Convention

Actively considered the welfare of people with disabilities in prisons and other institutions and places of detention

Policy and professional practice

Advised on 27 legislative, policy and administrative proposals relevant to our jurisdiction

Made and published submissions on the Environment Reporting Bill and the Building (Earthquake-prone Buildings) Amendment Bill

Provided informal advice on 103 occasions to state sector agencies, mainly in relation to the processing of official information requests

Advised the Secretary of Transport on 8 applications for authorised access to personal information on the motor vehicle register
• Conducted 36 workshops and training seminars for state sector agencies, and delivered 44 presentations, on the role of the Ombudsman and the operation of the official information legislation

• Published 15 new or updated guidance materials on our website, including Ombudsman opinions

• Nationwide survey showed 69% awareness of the Ombudsman by the New Zealand public