

Department of Justice charged inmate incorrect amount for escort to attend tangi

Legislation	Ombudsmen Act 1975
Agency	Department of Justice
Ombudsman	John Robertson
Case number(s)	W27318
Date	1992

Excessive charge arising from escort of prison inmate—correspondence—failure of Department to reply

This complaint concerned, firstly, the charge levied for the escort of prison inmate to attend a tangi which the complainant believed was unreasonable, and secondly, the failure of the Department of Justice to reply to correspondence from the complainant who asked for the difference to be refunded from the correct charge for the escort and the deposit originally paid.

The Ombudsman ascertained from informal enquiries that the original deposit was held in a trust account of a District Court and had not been drawn on since payment. The Department confirmed there was a substantial balance outstanding, payable to the complainant, between the correct charge for the escort and the deposit paid. The Department asked if it was acceptable for it to write directly to the complainant, enclosing a cheque for the outstanding money and apologising for the delays experienced in responding to correspondence and resolving the matter. The Ombudsman considered this was a satisfactory course of action and was able to discontinue this investigation.

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