

Chief Ombudsman publishes OIA and LGOIMA complaints information

Date 15 March 2023

The Chief Ombudsman Peter Boshier has published his half-yearly data on Official Information Act (OIA) and Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act (LGOIMA) complaints.

The data covers the number of complaints received under each Act for the period 1 July 2022 to 31 December 2022 as well as the number of complaints completed during this period.

The figures show that the number of OIA complaints received (808) has dropped by almost 40 percent compared to the last six-month period when 1300 complaints were received.

However during the last period 550 of those complaints were from one complainant. When these complaints are excluded, the number of complaints appear to be stable.

The number of complaints about requests under the LGOIMA has dropped slightly in the past six months from 206 to 164.

The biggest shift was the number of delay complaints overall, pursued through to a final opinion, and a corresponding increase in the number of upheld complaints and findings of deficiencies.

“This reflects a change in the way I am dealing with delay complaints. I [announced last year](#) that I would take a stronger approach if Ministers, agencies and local authorities did not follow the right steps to meet the timeframe required by law or making decisions and communicating them to requesters.

“The data around delay over the past six months reflects this change in approach. However, it is too early to say whether this has improved timeliness and resulted in more complaints being resolved.

“I intend to gauge the effect of my approach on agency practice in future when more data becomes available.”

“My [latest investigation](#) into the Official Information Act practices of public agencies is also based on concerns about delays in responses to requests for information.

The investigation will look at the reasons for delay – including agencies extending the maximum timeframe before providing their responses, and transferring requests to other departments.

Complaints received	Received	Individual	Media	Other[1]		
LGOIMA	164	127	33	3		
OIA	808	592	132	84		
Received – reasons	Delay in decision	Refusal in full	Refusal in part	Incomplete / inadequate response	Extension	Other[3]
LGOIMA	28	59	29	21	11	16
OIA	178	208	177	86	62	97
Complaints completed	Completed	Individual	Media	Other[2]		
LGOIMA	142	106	31	5		
OIA	699	482	127	90		

[1] This includes all city, district and regional councils, as well as council-controlled organisations, community boards, domain boards, public reserves boards and licensing trusts among others. [See Schedules 1 & 2 LGOIMA for more details.](#)

[2] For the LGOIMA, this comprises special interest groups and companies, associations, and incorporated societies.
For the OIA, this comprises departments, government organisations, or local authorities; companies, associations, incorporated societies; political party research units; special interest groups; trade unions; researchers; Members of Parliament; and review agencies (eg: HDC, IPCA).

[3] For the LGOIMA, this comprises decisions not made as soon as practicable, charge, manner or form of release, delay in releasing information, refusal - personal information about body corporate, Privacy Act request, extension, and other.
For the OIA, it comprises Privacy Act requests, charges, delay in releasing information, decisions not made as soon as reasonably practicable, refusal - statement of reasons, refusal – internal rules and guidelines, refusal - personal information about body corporate, manner or form of release, and other.

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About the data

The data released by the Ombudsman concerns both OIA and LGOIMA complaints received and completed from 1 July to 31 December 2022. It includes information on the number of complaints received by Minister or agency, the nature of the complaint and type of complainant (media, private individual, etc). For the complaints completed, the data also includes the outcome of the complaint.

The data does not enable a direct comparison among agencies, as complaints data on its own does not give the full picture. The number of complaints received by the Ombudsman may be a very small proportion of the total number of OIA or LGOIMA requests received by an agency.

See the Ombudsman's [complaints data](#).

FAQs on Official information complaint data publications can be found [here](#).

More guidance is available [here](#).

Shortly after the Ombudsman publishes complaints and outcomes data, Te Kawa Mataaho Public Service Commission publishes its own data on OIA requests received by agencies and their response times. This data [can be viewed here](#) today.