



Thursday, 19 February 2009

Reaching out to regional Western Australians

The Ombudsman today announced an important new initiative to reach out to regional Western Australians.

The Ombudsman Regional Awareness and Accessibility Program aims to significantly enhance awareness of, and accessibility to, the Ombudsman's services for regional Western Australians. The Program will also target awareness and accessibility for Indigenous Western Australians.

Announcing the initiative, Ombudsman Chris Field said that regional Western Australians and Indigenous Western Australians have been identified by the Ombudsman's office as two particular groups who are currently under-represented among our complainants.

"I want to ensure that the services of my office are as accessible as they can possibly be to Western Australians living in regional locations," said Chris Field.

"In 2009, we will visit three regional locations - the Goldfields in April, the Mid West in June and the Peel Region in October."

Major activities to be undertaken as part of each regional visit include:

- A complaints clinic, which will provide an opportunity for people to speak with the Ombudsman's complaint resolution staff face to face;
- Seminars for regionally-based public sector agencies and local governments to discuss the role of the Ombudsman, relevant issues and trends related to complaints and good administrative practice;
- A seminar for community groups to discuss the role of the Ombudsman and how to make a complaint;
- A workshop with Indigenous community groups on issues of interest to them and ways to improve accessibility to the Ombudsman's office; and
- Individual meetings with key regional stakeholders and, where appropriate, visits to regional prisons.

The Program will also be coordinated with the work of other relevant public sector agencies, including the accountability and complaint resolution agencies co-located with the office of the Ombudsman.

Media Release



Chris Field said that the Program would extend beyond 2009 with visits to other regional locations in 2010.

For more details on the Ombudsman Regional Awareness and Accessibility Program visit the Ombudsman Western Australia website at www.ombudsman.wa.gov.au.

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