

Overview of the Ombudsman's Office

Executive Summary – Year's Achievements

Operational Structure

The Ombudsman's office has two principal functions. First, the office investigates and resolves complaints about public authorities. Central to this is whether public authorities' actions and decisions have been fair and reasonable, and within the law. Second, the office aims to improve public administration for the benefit of all Western Australians. In part, this occurs through the recommendations for change to administrative practices that result from the investigation of complaints. In addition, the office undertakes a range of other activities designed specifically to improve the delivery of public services. They include education and liaison programs with public authorities and major investigations initiated by the Ombudsman into issues of concern to government and the community.

Complaint Investigation and Resolution

- Over 5,000 people contacted the Ombudsman's office during the financial year. The majority of concerns raised with the office were dealt with informally. The office dealt with 1,119 formal complaints for investigation.
- The average time to resolve allegations has improved by 36% compared with last year.
- Significantly reduced the average age of allegations on hand by 17 per cent.
- Significantly reduced the number of older cases on hand by approximately 20 per cent.
- Implemented a new case management system to further improve the management, efficiency, timeliness and quality of investigations.
- Finalised a review of the office's *Operations Manual* for staff.

Improved Public Administration

- Established an Administrative Improvement Team to enable a stronger and more strategic approach to improving public administration at a systemic level.
- Finalised an own motion investigation reviewing the use by Indigenous prisoners of the Department of Corrective Services' internal prisoner complaints process.
- Published the [Progress Report on the Implementation of the Ombudsman's Recommendations by the Department of Education and Training](#), which identified a number of systemic issues and contained five recommendations.

In 2007-08, the Ombudsman's Office made **34** recommendations for administrative improvement. Of these recommendations, **100%** were accepted by public authorities.

- Completed a project that tracked the implementation of recommendations and suggestions made to public authorities over the last six years. The project findings showed they had been implemented in 97 percent of cases.
- Provided strategic advice to the Department of Corrective Services and the Department for Child Protection on the implementation of their new complaint handling systems.
- Participated in the development of a training DVD produced by the Department for Child Protection to be used with staff across Western Australia.
- Continued to contribute to the Department of Corrective Services' training program for prison officers by providing awareness sessions to all new trainee prison officers about the role of the Ombudsman.
- Visited Casuarina Prison and Rangeview Remand Centre in conjunction with the Inspector of Custodial Services to assess the effectiveness of the prisoner complaints process and confidential mail system and met with peer support staff, prisoners and detainees to raise awareness of the office.

Other Initiatives

- Undertook 10 inspections under telecommunications interception legislation to audit the interception activities of the Western Australia Police and the Corruption and Crime Commission.
- Made significant progress to transfer the child death review jurisdiction from a ministerial advisory committee to the Ombudsman following endorsement of recommendations by the State Government arising from an independent review of the former Department for Community Development in 2007. The transfer requires legislative change and legislative drafting, which is well advanced.
- Worked with the Department of Water on the proposed transfer of the water service customer complaints function to the Ombudsman. Legislative change will be needed to enable the transfer to occur.

The percentage of matters finalised within 3 months has improved by **13%** and the percentage of complaints on hand less than 3 months old has improved by **54%**.

Strategic Partnerships

- Continued to participate in the Integrity Coordinating Group, which comprises the Ombudsman, Corruption and Crime Commissioner, Auditor General and Commissioner for Public Sector Standards.
- Partnered with the Commonwealth and New South Wales Ombudsmen in an AusAID funded program to strengthen the capacity of Ombudsman services in Indonesia.
- Participated in a national project led by the New South Wales Ombudsman to develop better strategies for dealing with complainants whose behaviour is challenging.

Communication and Access

- Launched a quarterly corporate newsletter [*Ombudsman Western Australia*](#) in March 2008 which is circulated to key stakeholders.
- Introduced a scheduled 'Ask the Ombudsman' slots on the 6PR Nightline program that provides opportunities for listeners to raise questions with the Ombudsman four to six times a year.
- Delivered a number of papers to conferences and made a number of presentations to community groups and public authorities.
- Participated in the production of an information DVD to be provided to all new arrivals in Australia, as part of an initiative of the Federal Attorney General and the Public Purposes Trust. The DVD is about Australian law and will assist to increase migrant awareness of the Ombudsman's role and services.

Organisational Development and Improvement

- Identified four key strategic priorities following a strategic planning day with staff in September 2007 and consultation with key stakeholders. These relate to continuing to build on improvements in timeliness and efficiency of complaint resolution; strengthening the office focus on administrative improvement; planning for new and enhanced functionality; and enhancing the office's strategic and corporate services.
- Implemented a new structure in March 2008 to support the office's strategic direction.
- Successfully transitioned the office's financial management services to the Office of Shared Services in December 2007.

Operational Structure

The Ombudsman

The Parliamentary Commissioner for Administrative Investigations - more commonly known as the Ombudsman - is an independent officer appointed by the Governor of Western Australia. The Ombudsman is responsible directly to the Parliament rather than to the Government of the day or a particular Minister.

Role and Functions of the Ombudsman

The Ombudsman's governing legislation is the [*Parliamentary Commissioner Act 1971*](#).

The *Parliamentary Commissioner Act 1971* provides that the core function of the Ombudsman is to investigate administrative actions of the public authorities covered by the *Parliamentary Commissioner Act 1971* and make recommendations for administrative improvements and prevent problems from arising.

The Ombudsman considers whether the actions (or lack of actions) and decisions have been fair, reasonable and within the law. The Ombudsman's services are free.

The Ombudsman's office fulfils this role by:

- providing an impartial, efficient and effective complaint-handling system to investigate and resolve complaints;
- providing a telephone enquiry service to deal with simple matters quickly through informal resolution processes and to refer matters that cannot be handled by the office to other bodies;
- identifying and investigating issues of concern to Parliament or the community, irrespective of whether complaints have been received;
- developing community awareness of the role of the Ombudsman and the services provided by the office; and
- assisting public authorities to improve their administrative practices, including their own internal complaint-handling systems.

Other Functions of the Ombudsman

Some of the Ombudsman's functions are derived from other legislation, codes or service delivery arrangements. Details are set out in the table below.

Ombudsman investigative functions derived from other legislation, codes or service delivery arrangements	Legislation, code or service delivery arrangement
<p>Public Interest Disclosure</p> <p>The Ombudsman receives disclosures under the <i>Public Interest Disclosure Act 2003</i> (the PID Act) about matters of State and local government administration that affect an individual. Investigations by the Ombudsman under the PID Act follow the process set out in the <i>Parliamentary Commissioner Act 1971</i>.</p>	<p><u>Public Interest Disclosure Act 2003</u></p>
<p>Terrorism</p> <p>The Ombudsman can receive complaints from a person detained under the <i>Terrorism (Preventative Detention) Act 2006</i>, about administrative matters connected with his or her detention.</p>	<p><u>Terrorism (Preventative Detention) Act 2006</u></p>
<p>Right of appeal for international students</p> <p>The <i>National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training for Overseas Students 2007</i> came into effect on 1 July 2007. The Code gives international students the right of appeal to an external and independent body, such as the Ombudsman, if their internal appeals were unsuccessful at school or university level.</p>	<p><u>National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2007</u></p>

Ombudsman investigative functions derived from other legislation, codes or service delivery arrangements	Legislation, code or service delivery arrangement
<p>Indian Ocean Territories</p> <p>A service delivery arrangement between the State Ombudsman and the Commonwealth Government enables the Ombudsman's office to offer its services to residents of the Indian Ocean Territories (Christmas and Cocos (Keeling) Islands). This covers public authorities in the Ombudsman's jurisdiction that operate in the Territories at the Commonwealth's request.</p>	<p><u>Indian Ocean Territories (Administration of Laws) Act 1992</u></p>

The Ombudsman also has other functions as set out in the table below:

Ombudsman functions	Legislation
<p>Energy Ombudsman</p> <p>Western Australia's Gas Industry Ombudsman scheme was established in 2004 and the Electricity Ombudsman scheme in 2005, when these roles were combined to form the Energy Ombudsman. The governing body of the two schemes is Energy Industry Ombudsman (Western Australia) Limited. Under a service delivery arrangement with the governing body, the Ombudsman undertakes the role of the Energy Ombudsman for the schemes. The costs of the governing body and the Energy Ombudsman are met by industry members.</p>	<p><u>Economic Regulation Authority Act 2003</u></p> <p><u>Electricity Industry Act 2004</u></p> <p><u>Energy Coordination Act 1994</u></p> <p><u>Parliamentary Commissioner Act 1971 (section 34)</u></p>
<p>Telecommunications Interception</p> <p>The Ombudsman has a separate function auditing telecommunication interception activities that are carried out by the Western Australia Police and the Corruption and Crime Commission. Due to the invasive nature of such activities, they are strictly regulated and the Ombudsman is responsible for ensuring that the intercepts are carried out in accordance with statutory requirements.</p>	<p><u>Telecommunications (Interception and Access) Act 1979 (Commonwealth)</u></p> <p><u>Telecommunications (Interception) Western Australia Act 1996</u></p> <p><u>Corruption and Crime Commission Act 2003</u></p>
<p>State Records Commission</p> <p>The Ombudsman is a member of the State Records Commission which was established in July 2001 under the <i>State Records Act 2000</i>. Other members of the Commission are the Auditor General, the Information Commissioner, and a person with record-keeping experience from outside government who is appointed by the Governor for a three year term.</p> <p>The Commission monitors the operation of, and compliance with, the legislation, monitors record-keeping compliance by government bodies and makes enquiries into alleged breaches of the legislation. The Commission reports direct to Parliament and submits a separate annual report to Parliament.</p>	<p><u>State Records Act 2000</u></p>

Other legislation relevant to the Ombudsman's activities

[**Corruption and Crime Commission Act 2003**](#)[**Disability Services Act 1993**](#)[**Equal Opportunity Act 1984**](#)[**Financial Management Act 2006**](#)[**Inspector of Custodial Services Act 2003**](#)[**Occupational Safety and Health Act 1984**](#)[**Prisons Act 1981**](#)[**Public Sector Management Act 1994**](#)[**Royal Commissions Act 1968**](#)[**Royal Commission \(Police\) Act 2002**](#)[**State Administrative Tribunal Act 2004**](#)[**State Supply Commission Act 1991**](#)[**Workers' Compensation and Injury Management Act 1981**](#)

Powers of the Ombudsman

The Ombudsman may commence an investigation:

- in response to a written complaint from any person or organisation personally affected by an administrative act or omission of a public authority covered by the Ombudsman's jurisdiction;
- on referral by either House of Parliament, a committee of either House, or a joint committee of both Houses; or
- on the Ombudsman's own motion.

The [**Parliamentary Commissioner Act 1971**](#) sets out the powers of the Ombudsman, including:

- at any time, tabling in Parliament a report on any matter arising in connection with the exercise of the Ombudsman's functions;
- wide investigative powers, including those of a Royal Commission;
- discretion whether to commence or continue an investigation;
- recommending to an agency that redress be given to a complainant and that practices, procedures or legislation be reviewed to prevent recurrence; and
- providing the Premier and Parliament with a report where an agency does not accept the Ombudsman's recommendations within a reasonable timeframe.

The [**Parliamentary Commissioner Act 1971**](#) also identifies limits on the Ombudsman's powers. The Ombudsman cannot:

- investigate the decisions of courts, Cabinet or ministers of the Crown, but may investigate recommendations made to ministers;
- make adverse comments in a report about any person unless that person is given a prior opportunity to respond;
- disclose information or make a statement about an investigation except in accordance with the provisions of this Act; or
- make a determination on a matter.

Process for Assessing and Handling Complaints

Assessing Complaints

The [Parliamentary Commissioner Act 1971](#) provides wide-ranging discretionary powers to help determine the scope and nature of investigations. All complaints are assessed before an investigation commences to:

- determine whether the authority complained about is within the Ombudsman's jurisdiction (State Government departments or agencies, prisons, schools, technical colleges, universities and local governments); and
- determine whether:
 - the action or decision complained about relates to a matter of administration;
 - the action complained about was within the agency's powers or functions;
 - the complainant is personally affected by the action or decision;
 - the complainant became aware of the action or decision within 12 months of making the complaint; and
 - the complainant has or had a legal remedy or a right of review or appeal.

The Ombudsman can exercise discretion about whether or not to investigate a complaint in situations where:

- special circumstances exist for matters over 12 months old;
- the complainant has a legal remedy or right of review or appeal where it is not reasonable to expect the complainant to resort to that remedy;
- the complaint appears to be frivolous, trivial, vexatious, or not in good faith;
- an investigation does not appear to be warranted in the circumstances, such as where the agency is still investigating the complaint, or where another complaint-taking body may be more appropriate; or
- the complainant does not have a sufficient personal interest in the matter.

New assessment procedures were introduced as part of implementing the new structure in March 2008 whereby complex matters are referred to the new Investigation and Resolution Team after an initial screening process. This enables the Assessment and Resolution Team to focus on quick resolution of simple cases, generally through informal mechanisms. Resources have been reallocated within the structure to provide for an additional telephone enquiry officer to deal with simple matters quickly and informally.

As part of streamlining the complaint handling processes, the office has developed a guide to identifying when certain complaints should be prioritised.

Complaints are ranked as either P1, P2 or P3, as detailed in the table below.

Complaint Ranking	Criterion
P1	Cases where the complaint involves the suggestion of immediate risk of harm to a child or other vulnerable person.
P2	Cases where the complaint suggests there is an immediate and serious consequence to the complainant, such as significant financial loss, homelessness, or loss of immigration status.
P3	All other cases.

Where a matter is given P1 or P2 status, it is referred for immediate assessment and investigation.

Handling Complaints

If a complaint is out of the Ombudsman's jurisdiction or there is a more appropriate body to investigate the matter, the complaint is referred to the appropriate body.

If a decision is made not to investigate a complaint, the complainant is advised and provided with reasons for the decision. If a decision is made to investigate, the agency and the complainant are advised.

A formal or an informal investigation can be conducted. The majority of the investigations undertaken by the office are conducted informally. Investigations are prioritised according to a range of factors such as whether there is any urgency attached to the outcome.

Formal investigations may involve the Ombudsman's Royal Commission powers and are used where there are high public interest or public policy implications in the matter or informal resolution is unlikely to be successful, and where:

- there is a reasonable prospect of proving an allegation or group of allegations;
- practical outcomes can be achieved for the complainant; and
- important systemic policy, procedural or legislative issues are involved.

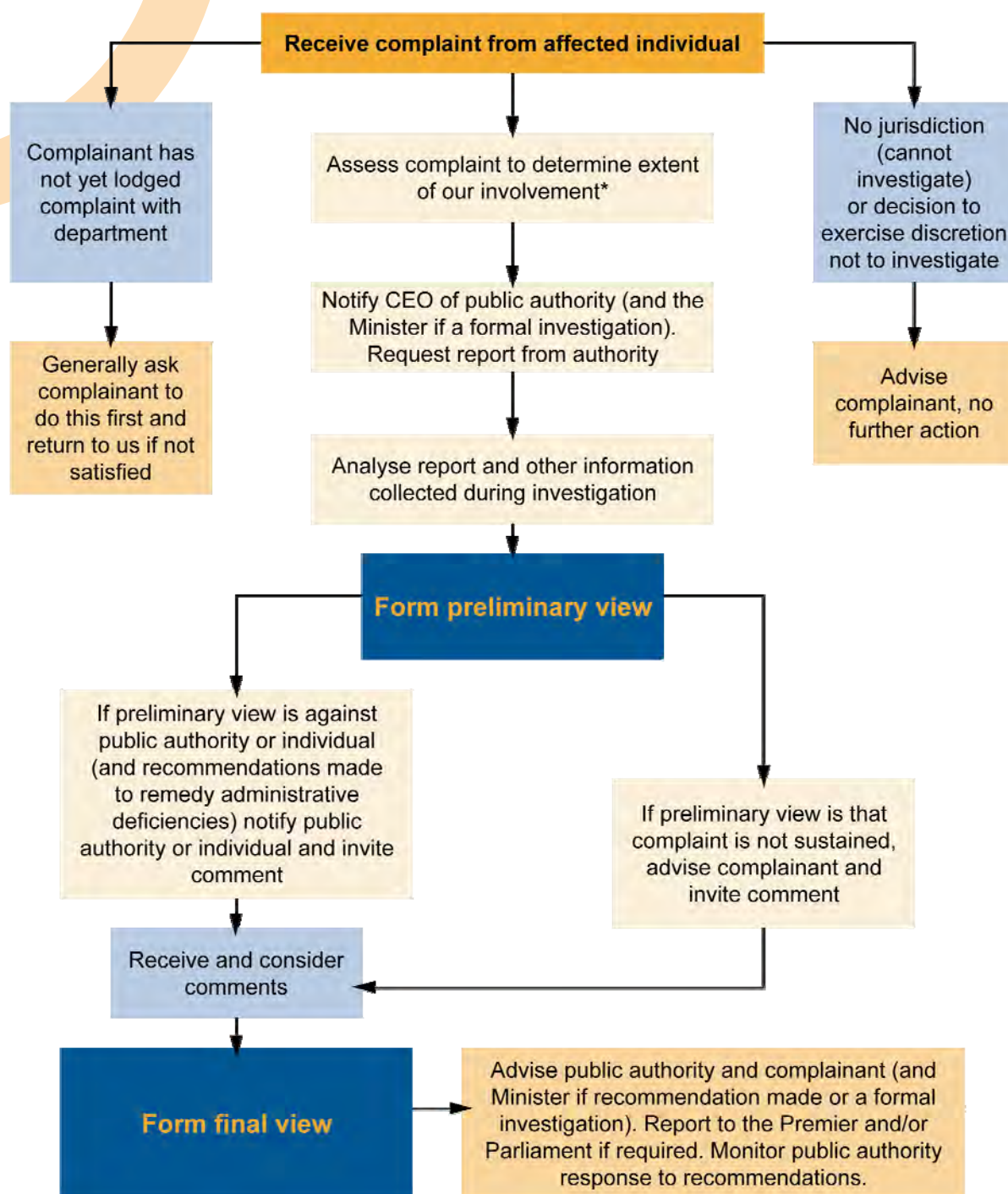
Once an investigation is finalised, if the Ombudsman's office considers that the complaint is not sustained and the office is of the view that no administrative improvements are required, the complainant will be advised and will generally be given the opportunity to comment before a final decision is made.

If it is considered that a complainant has been adversely affected by the actions or decisions of the public authority, both the authority and the complainant will be advised and given the opportunity to respond to any issues. The office may also make recommendations for change to the agency and, in this case, the relevant minister will be advised.

Often the public authority will agree with the office and take action that will assist the complainant and/or improve the authority's policy and processes. The complainant will be advised of any

outcome. If the action needed may take some time to implement, the office will ask the public authority to advise when it has been completed or follow-up with the authority later. In the event that the public authority does not agree, the Ombudsman may provide a report to the Premier and Parliament if required.

Overview of the complaint investigation process



[Appendix 1](#) gives details of all allegations received and finalised about public authorities during the reporting period.

Governance Framework

Mission and Values

The mission of the Ombudsman's office is to assist the Parliament of Western Australia to be confident that the public sector of the State is accountable for, and is improving the standard of, administrative decision-making, practices and conduct.

In achieving this mission, the Ombudsman acts in a way that is independent, fair and accountable.

The core values of the office are acting justly, equitably, efficiently and effectively. Acting justly implies that Ombudsman staff make decisions fairly, impartially and legally. Equity implies that all people and organisations have equal access to the Ombudsman's office and its processes, and that all people are treated with respect and dignity and without bias. Efficiency and effectiveness fundamentally concern stewardship of public resources. The office ensures that resources are utilised to pursue the mission of the office. Further, staff will provide reliable, efficient and effective service to their clients, treating them professionally, courteously and with appropriate sensitivity.

Corporate Executive

Chris Field, Ombudsman

Chris has held the position of Ombudsman since March 2007. He concurrently holds the roles of Energy Ombudsman and State Records Commissioner. Prior to his appointment as Ombudsman, Chris was a Member of the Economic Regulation Authority, Western Australia, Chair of the Consumer Utilities Advocacy Centre, Director of the Energy and Water Ombudsman Victoria, Chair in Consumer Law, La Trobe University and Principal of Chris Field Consulting Pty Ltd. Chris holds Arts and Law (Honours) degrees and is an Adjunct Professor at both the University of Western Australia and La Trobe University.

Heather Brown, Deputy Ombudsman

Heather commenced in the position of Deputy Ombudsman in May 2005. Heather joined the office after more than 20 years in the Western Australian public sector. During this time she worked in agencies responsible for health, local government, consumer affairs, disability services, land administration and land information. Heather holds a Doctor of Philosophy in Psychology from the University of Western Australia.

Kim Lazenby, Assistant Ombudsman, Administrative Improvements

Kim commenced in the position of Assistant Ombudsman in June 2008. Kim has 20 years experience in government, working at the Commonwealth and State levels, in both line and central agencies. After her early career in the fields of employment, education and training, Kim has worked in a range of regulatory roles, including with Auditor-General's offices in both Victoria and Western Australia. She holds a number of qualifications including a Master of Assessment and Evaluation from the University of Melbourne.

Mary White, Executive Director Strategic and Corporate Services

Mary was appointed to her current position in February 2008. Prior to this, Mary was the Director of Corporate and Business Services for the office. Mary has 25 years of experience in the public sector including strategic and corporate leadership roles in independent statutory offices and experience in the education and infrastructure sectors. Mary holds a range of qualifications including a Bachelor of Science (Genetics and Statistics), a Diploma in Education and a Post Graduate Diploma in Arts (Public Policy).

Sarah Cowie, Director Research and Projects

Sarah commenced in her current position in January 2008. Prior to this, Sarah worked in an investigative role in the office for more than six years. Sarah joined the office after 16 years in the Western Australian public sector. Sarah holds a Bachelor of Arts (Geography).

Julie Roberts, Director Investigation and Resolution

Julie joined the office in 2005 and commenced in her current role in February 2007. Julie has more than 25 years experience in the Commonwealth and State public sectors and the non-government community services sector, mainly in the human services in the adult and child protection jurisdictions. Julie holds a Bachelor of Applied Science (Social Work).

Jo Merrick, Director Access and Resolution

Jo joined the office in 2000, working largely in investigative roles, before being appointed to her current position in June 2008. Jo came to the office from the City of Perth, where she spent six years in a variety of roles, including Executive Research Officer within the Chief Executive's office. Jo, a qualified lawyer, holds a Bachelor of Laws.

Andrew Harvey, Case Management System Project Director

Andrew joined the office in 2005, managing the office's investigation team until November 2007, when he became responsible for managing the introduction of the office's new case management system - RESOLVE. Andrew has worked for a diverse range of Commonwealth and State agencies including the Australian Bureau of Statistics, Office of the Auditor General and the Economic Regulation Authority. Andrew holds a Bachelor of Arts (Politics and Anthropology) and a Masters in Criminal Justice.

Wayne Mann, Manager Energy

Wayne joined the office in 2002 and commenced his current role in 2005. Wayne has been employed in the Western Australian public sector for over 35 years in a range of administrative, research, advisory and management positions for agencies such as the Public Works Department, Mines Department, Public Service Commission and the Department of the Premier and Cabinet. Wayne was the inaugural CEO of the Anti Corruption Commission. Wayne holds a Bachelor of Business (Management) and a Diploma in Work Study.

Plans, Policies and Delegations

The Ombudsman's office has a strong organisational policy framework covering governance, conduct, communications and human resources. Policies are available to staff through the office's intranet and new staff are informed about them as part of their induction.

During the year, the office reviewed and updated its Instrument of Delegation Chief Executive Officer Functions to clarify decision making roles and responsibilities under the office's new structure, which was implemented in March 2008.

Internal Audit

An internal audit and risk management charter has been developed for the Ombudsman's office that sets out the internal audit process and provides for an Internal Audit and Risk Management Committee. The committee meets quarterly to consider the annual audit program, internal audit plans and scope documents, and the annual evaluation of internal audit activities.

Organisational Structure

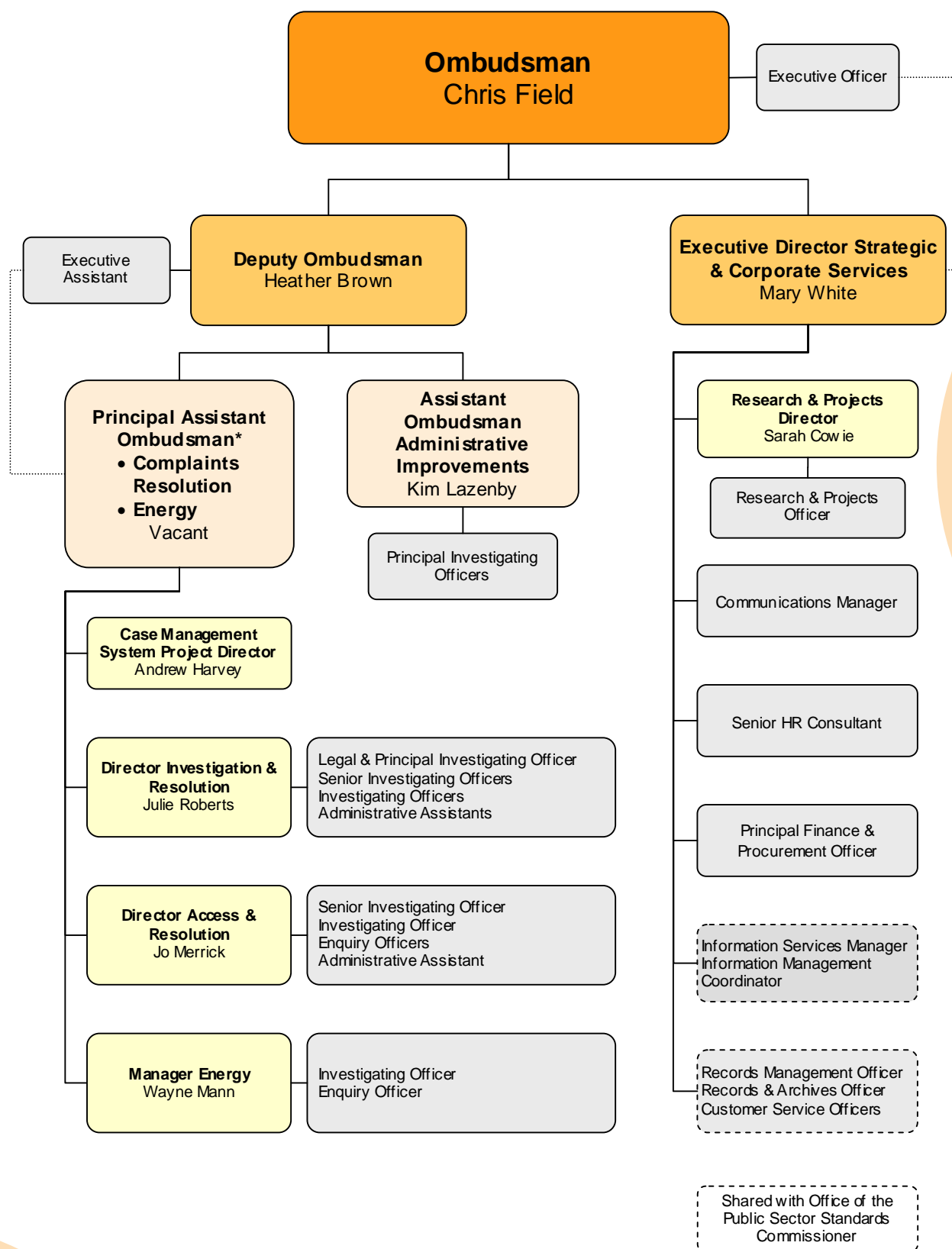
The Ombudsman's office has four key business areas, which were established under a new organisational structure in March 2008:

- The **Executive Team** includes the Ombudsman, Deputy Ombudsman, the Principal Assistant Ombudsman, and the Executive Director, Strategic and Corporate Services who oversee the operations of the office including the Energy Ombudsman function.
- The complaint-handling function is undertaken by the Complaint Resolution Team, split into two teams: the **Access and Resolution Team** which is responsible for the initial assessment of complaints, resolution of more straight forward cases and the office's telephone enquiry service; and the **Investigation and Resolution Team**, which deals with more complex cases. A newly established structure for complaint-handling has been designed and implemented to streamline complaint handling, to give a clearer focus to quick and informal resolution of simple matters and to allow a more flexible and efficient use of resources.
- The **Administrative Improvement Team** has responsibility for a broad range of strategies aimed at improving administrative practice across the public sector. This team also has responsibility for monitoring compliance by the Corruption and Crime Commission and Western Australia Police with telecommunications intercept legislation.
- The **Strategic and Corporate Services Team** supports the office in strengthening its strategic focus and governance and responding in a timely and effective way to emerging issues of significant concern. This team encompasses Research and Projects, Communications and Business Services. As well as undertaking strategic planning projects, it enhances the office's capacity to communicate effectively with public authorities and the public and to play a leading role in promoting integrity across the sector. It also provides corporate governance and business services to the office.

Shared Business Services

The Ombudsman's office is co-located with the Commonwealth Ombudsman's Perth office, the Office of the Public Sector Standards Commissioner, the Office of Health Review and the Freedom of Information Commissioner. Parts of the Business Services section of the office are shared with the Office of the Public Sector Standards Commissioner, including information technology services, records, reception and general administration. The shared arrangements of business services also provide reception and other services for the Office of Health Review, the Commonwealth Ombudsman and the Information Commissioner under a Memorandum of Understanding.

Organisational Chart – structure as at 30 June 2008



* Reports to Ombudsman for Energy Issues and Deputy Ombudsman for Parliamentary Issues.

Performance Management Framework

Mission

The mission of the Ombudsman's office is to assist the Parliament of Western Australia to be confident that the public sector of the State is accountable for, and is improving the standard of, administrative decision-making, practices and conduct.

Relationship to Government Goals

The Ombudsman's office supports the goal of a skilled, diverse and ethical public sector as shown below.

Government goal	Desired outcomes of the Ombudsman's office	Services provided by the Ombudsman
Developing and maintaining a skilled, diverse and ethical public sector serving the Government with consideration of the public interest.	The public sector of Western Australia is accountable for, and is improving the standard of, administrative decision-making, practices and conduct.	Investigation of complaints about administrative actions of public sector organisations.
	Confidence that telecommunication interceptions are conducted in accordance with statutory provisions.	Inspection of eligible authorities to ensure compliance with statutory provisions when they intercept telecommunications.

Major Achievements for 2007-08 and Planned Initiatives for 2008-09

The Ombudsman's office outlined planned major achievements for 2007-08 in the 2007-08 budget papers and planned initiatives for 2008-09 in the 2008-09 budget papers. A summary of the outcomes for 2007-08 and forward planning for 2008-09 is detailed below.

Major Achievements for 2007-08

- Significant progress was made in implementing relevant recommendations of the review of the former Department of Community Development that will see the Ombudsman take on new responsibilities for the review of notifiable deaths of children known to the Department of Child Protection.
- Implemented a new case management system to continue to improve operational effectiveness in relation to the investigation of complaints.
- Participated in a national Ombudsman's trial of strategies for managing challenging complainants and developed tools and guidelines for public sector agencies.

- Completed an investigation into the complaints system for Indigenous prisoners at Broome prison.
- Provided advice to the Department of Corrective Services, the Department of Child Protection and the Department of Education and Training on development of internal complaint systems.
- Partnered with the Commonwealth Ombudsman and New South Wales Ombudsman in the second year of an AusAID project to strengthen the capacity of Ombudsmen in Indonesia. The office provided expert advice to Indonesian Ombudsman staff to improve their investigative and complaint handling skills through placement programs in Indonesia and Australia.
- Significantly reduced the number of older cases on hand through enhanced case management and staff training and development.
- Over 5,000 people contacted the Ombudsman's office during the financial year. The majority of concerns raised with the office were dealt with informally. The office dealt with 1,119 formal complaints for investigation.

Major Initiatives Planned for 2008-09

- Facilitate the drafting of legislative change to the [Parliamentary Commissioner Act 1971](#) to enable the Ombudsman to undertake child death reviews and, subject to this being passed by the Western Australian Parliament, establish a new specialist unit to take on the responsibilities for the review of notifiable deaths of children known to the Department of Child Protection.
- Work with educational institutions on the resolution of complaints and the development of complaint handling procedures under the new [National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2007](#) for registered providers of education services to overseas students.
- Improve the capacity to identify and address key systemic issues through the newly established administrative improvement team.
- Continue to make further improvements to the timeliness, consistency and quality of investigations through a range of strategies, including through the implementation of a new case management system.
- Continue to raise the profile of the Ombudsman amongst stakeholder groups and promote accessibility, particularly for regional and Indigenous groups, to the Ombudsman through development and implementation of a communications strategy.
- Partner with the Commonwealth and New South Wales Ombudsmen in the third year of an AusAID project to strengthen the capacity of Ombudsmen in Indonesia through ongoing provision of expert advice and participation in placement activities in Indonesia and Australia.