

The Year in Brief for 2011-12

Resolving Complaints

Complaints and Enquiries

There were 11,685 contacts with the Office, including:

- 9,259 enquiries; and
- 2,426 complaints.

Timely Complaint Handling

Timely complaint handling in 2011-12 meant that:

- 72% of allegations were finalised within 3 months and 99% were finalised within 12 months; and
- There has been a reduction of 10% in the average time to finalise complaints over the last year.

Over the last five years, very significant improvements have been achieved in timely complaint handling, including:

- The average time to finalise complaints decreased by 42% from 92 days in 2006-07 to 53 days in 2011-12; and
- Finalised complaints older than 12 months have decreased by 85% between 2006-07 and 2011-12.

Efficient Complaint Handling

- The average cost of finalising allegations reduced this year to \$1,866 per finalised allegation and has now decreased for the fourth consecutive year.

Child Death Reviews

- There were 41 investigable child deaths.
- Timely review processes have resulted in:
 - 68% of reviews completed within 3 months; and
 - 77% of reviews completed within 6 months.
- Important patterns and trends in relation to child deaths have been identified.
- As a result of child death reviews, improvements to public administration, designed to prevent or reduce child deaths, have been achieved.
- Significant work has been undertaken on a new function to review family and domestic violence fatalities, commencing on 1 July 2012.

Own Motion Investigations and Administrative Improvements

- Complaints to the Ombudsman resulted in improvements to administrative decision making and practices.
- A report of a major own motion investigation into planning for children in care was tabled in Parliament in November 2011. The report found significant and pleasing progress on improved planning for children in care has been achieved. However, there is still work to be done, particularly in relation to:
 - The timeliness of preparing care plans;
 - Ensuring care plans fully incorporate health and education needs, other wellbeing issues and the wishes and views of children in care; and
 - Regular review of care plans.

The report made 23 recommendations, all of which were accepted by the agencies involved.

- Significant work has been undertaken on an own motion investigation into ways to prevent or reduce sleep related infant deaths.

Collaboration and Access to Services

- Collaboration with other accountability agencies including the Integrity Coordinating Group was undertaken.
- Access for Indigenous Western Australians continued to be a focus through strategies to strengthen networks, particularly in rural and remote locations.
- Significant work was undertaken in relation to a series of new measures to ensure that our services are as accessible as possible to children and young people.