

Strategic overview

Strategic Plan 2018-22

- Vision: Fair and accountable public administration in Queensland
- Purpose: To independently investigate complaints, review systemic problems and work with agencies to improve their administration practices and decisions

Objective	Measures	Actual 2019-20	Target/Estimate 2020-21	Actual 2020-21
Provide independent and effective review of the administrative actions and decisions of agencies	→ Average time to complete preliminary assessments	2.2 days	10 days	3.2 days
	→ Proportion of complaints finalised within 12 months of lodgement	100%	99%	99%
	→ Proportion of investigations completed within target timeframes	89%	90%	84%
Improve the quality of administrative systems in agencies	→ Proportion of investigations resulting in a rectification action	15%	15%	14%
	→ Proportion of recommendations accepted by the relevant agency at time of reporting	100%	90%	100%
	→ Proportion of complaints reviewed where original decision upheld	87%	80%	91%
Build capacity in agencies and the community to better manage complaints and PIDs	→ Proportion of complaints received from outside South East Queensland (target: at least aligned to population)	38%	33%	38%
	→ Training participation	2,783	3,000	1,718
	→ Participants who report that training improves their decision-making capability	92%	90%	93%
Our workforce, systems and culture support accountable and sustainable service delivery	→ % of total salary budget allocated to learning and development	0.6%	2%	1.9%
	→ Permanent separation rate	9%	5%	13%
	→ Sick and unplanned leave	Absent 8.9 days incl. 8.6 sick days	Absent 9.8 days incl. 7.3 sick days	Absent 8.0 days incl. 7.6 sick days

Performance and environmental factors

The delivery of complaints services, including intake, assessment and investigation, was generally in line with targets. The number of complaints received, and investigations undertaken by the Office this year is broadly in line with the previous year (complaints in 2020-21: 7,051, 2019-20: 7,207; investigations in 2020-21: 1,071, 2019-20: 1,140). Performance targets for improving the quality of administrative systems in agencies were met or exceeded, with one exception. The proportion of investigations resulting in a rectification action was near target (achieved 14%; target 15%).

This year, training participation numbers were down 38%. This reduction reflects the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic – particularly the need to cancel or reschedule training in response to public health directions. Satisfaction levels with training delivered remained high.

The Office's workforce, systems and culture supported accountable and sustainable service delivery. Responses to the pandemic included COVID-safe work practices and working arrangements; ongoing officer communication and consultation (directly and through the Office's workplace health and safety committee) and increased use of technology to support service delivery.

Strategic risks and opportunities

The Office maintained its reputation for independence. Governance requirements, including reporting to the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee; submissions to the State Budget process; and other corporate reporting were successfully completed. The Office finished the year with total income matching total expenditure.

The Office harnessed technology to improve services and respond to the continuity risks associated with COVID-19. Training programs were redesigned for online delivery; business systems supported service delivery through lockdowns using hybrid working arrangements (a mix of in-office and working-from-home arrangements); and improved information security was implemented.

Risks to workforce capability were mitigated through active management of workplace health, safety and well-being and a continued focus on learning and development for officers.

The Office continued to provide oversight of closed environments, including correctional centres and youth detention services.

Looking ahead

This year, we developed the Office's *Strategic Plan 2021-25*. The planning process included consultation with public sector chief executives, our officers and senior management.

Our vision is that **we strive to be an agent of positive change for fair and accountable public administration in Queensland**.

The plan sets three objectives:

- Improve administrative processes and decision-making
- Improve public interest disclosure management
- Be a sustainable and capable organisation.

In 2021-22, we will:

- continue to deliver services that help people to know how and when to make a complaint
- provide a free and independent investigation service that reviews administrative actions of state government departments and agencies, local councils and public universities
- help agencies to improve their decision-making, administrative practices and PID management by making recommendations for improvement, delivering training programs and providing advisory services.

The full plan is available at www.ombudsman.qld.gov.au/about-us/corporate-documents/strategic-plan-2021-25