



MEDIA RELEASE

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40 years of fairness for Queenslanders

This year marks the 40th anniversary of the establishment of the Office of the Queensland Ombudsman in October 1974.

Over 150,000 complaints about State government agencies, local councils or universities have been dealt with by the Queensland Ombudsman in its 40-year history.

The first ever complaint made to the Office was from a couple who claimed a local council caused structural damage to their house.

Queensland Ombudsman, Phil Clarke, said the Office of the Queensland Ombudsman has ensured Queenslanders received a fair go when dealing with the public sector over the past 40 years.

“From just 904 complaints received in 1974-75, the Office has grown into an organisation that finalised 6,293 complaints in 2013-14,” Mr Clarke said.

“Decisions made by public agencies can have a profound impact on people’s lives. In 2013-14 for example, the Office assisted a business owner who was overcharged on his rates and a university student who was overcharged \$1,300 for course fees after he had completed the course.

“These are just some of the 150,000 complaints this Office has helped Queenslanders with since 1974.”

Over time the Office has investigated noise problems, environmental management decisions, land zoning decisions, planning applications, child protection matters, public hospital issues, school problems, local council laws and regulations, and many more.

First known as the Parliamentary Commissioner for Administrative Investigations, the Office officially became known as the Queensland Ombudsman in 2001 with a review of the Act. The review also introduced a second component to the Ombudsman’s function – to help government agencies improve their decision-making and complaint management practices.

As a result, 17,000 public sector workers have been trained by the Office in making better and more ethical decisions and improved complaint processes.

“The Office encourages people to try and resolve their concerns with the agency before contacting the Ombudsman.

“The Office works with agencies to improve their complaint management processes so matters can be resolved quickly and justly.

“However, when a person is not satisfied with the agency’s response, or feels that more should have been done, the Office will consider an independent review.”

To make a complaint with the Queensland Ombudsman, phone 3005 7000 or 1800 068 908 (outside Brisbane), email ombudsman@ombudsman.qld.gov.au or visit www.ombudsman.qld.gov.au.

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