

Ombudsman encourages Home Affairs to act on remaining recommendation

A report released today reveals that after 7 years, the Department of Home Affairs (Home Affairs) still has not fully implemented all the Commonwealth Ombudsman's recommendations to improve the administration of Australian citizenship by conferral applications.

In 2017, the Ombudsman published investigation report [Delays in processing of applications for Australian Citizenship by conferral](#) which made 4 recommendations to help Home Affairs better manage complex identity issues in citizenship applications.

Recommendations 1, 3 and 4 have been fully implemented, but recommendation 2 remains unfinalised. Recommendation 2 involved Home Affairs developing Australian Citizenship Instructions on how to assess and be satisfied that an applicant is of good character, as well as the development of an internal instruction when considering protected intelligence information and allegations, as opposed to criminal convictions.

We were satisfied Home Affairs had finalised the first instruction. However, the second instruction is yet to be finished and approved for use.

'7 years is far too long. We are disappointed and concerned given Home Affairs said it was going to implement recommendation 2.'

Acting on agreed recommendations in a timely manner both improves Government administration and demonstrates accountability on the part of the agency,' said Commonwealth Ombudsman, Iain Anderson.

The full report is available on the Commonwealth Ombudsman [website](#).

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The Ombudsman first assessed Home Affairs' progress in implementing the recommendations in 2020 and published a report called [*Did They Do What They Said They Would? Reviewing our Recommendations.*](#)

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