

# FACTSHEET

## Ombudsman recommendations

An Ombudsman investigation can result in recommendations being made. We make recommendations to influence systemic improvement in public administration.

After making recommendations we follow up on agencies' (and other entities') implementation of the accepted recommendations.

This fact sheet outlines what government agencies or other entities can expect when the Ombudsman seeks assurance that recommendations have been implemented.

### Ombudsman recommendations

The Ombudsman uses the smart model to ensure recommendations are practical and effective.

#### What agencies can expect

<i>the recommendation will be</i>	<i>in that it will:</i>
Specific	define concrete action
Measurable	agency can demonstrate action/change
Achievable	be practical if actioned within reason
Results-oriented	be linked to a desired outcome
Time-bound	set a timeframe for action or follow-up

#### Improvements we seek

Recommendations we make are aimed at addressing actions or inaction which is:

- Contrary to law
- Unjust
- Oppressive or improperly discriminatory
- Unreasonable  
(including unreasonable delay, procedural deficiencies, flawed processes)
- Based wholly or partly on a mistake of law or fact
- Otherwise, in all the circumstances, wrong

#### Contact us

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The Ombudsman  
will make  
recommendations  
and seek assurance of  
their implementation

## Evidence of implementation

We will consider a wide range of material as assurance that recommendations have been implemented.

### What agencies can expect

#### What we will ask for

Agencies should be able to provide evidence to show that a recommendation it has accepted has been implemented.

In most cases, documentary evidence is sufficient. Agencies should aim to provide us with existing records, rather than creating new documents for the purpose of providing evidence.

Types of evidence accepted by the Office can include, but is not limited to:

- governance materials such as agency strategies, implementation plans and audit committee minutes
- policy and procedure documents and supporting information to demonstrate policies and procedures are endorsed, communicated to staff and being followed
- training materials, attendance records and workforce development plans
- external communication materials such as website content, media releases and template letters
- internal communication materials such as intranet pages, emails, file notes and meeting minutes.

When producing evidence, agencies should explain how the evidence demonstrates that the recommendation is implemented. For example, when an agency produces a lengthy document covering a broad topic, the agency should clearly identify which part of the document demonstrates implementation of the recommendation.

In some cases, after we have received evidence from the agency of implementation, we may seek additional material. If we decide to do this, we will explain why.

### When do we follow up

We will request information according to the timeframes outlined in the recommendations or in correspondence.

We publish summary reports on agencies' and entities' implementation of our recommendations. When this happens, we may seek information or comments from agencies and entities before publishing.

### How we ask for evidence

We may ask for evidence of agencies' or entities' implementation of recommendations either by correspondence, during our regular liaison meetings, or using formal powers under the *Ombudsman Act 1976* (Cth) or the *Ombudsman Act 1989* (ACT).

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More information is available at [ombudsman.gov.au](http://ombudsman.gov.au).

Please note: This document is intended as a guide only. For this reason, the information should not be relied on as legal advice or regarded as a substitute for legal advice in individual cases. To the maximum extent permitted by the law, the Commonwealth Ombudsman is not liable to you for any loss or damage suffered as a result of reliance on this document. For the most up-to-date versions of cited Acts, please refer to the [Federal Register of Legislation](#).