

# COMMUNIQUE No. 1, 2024

Meeting of the OPCAT Advisory Group

22 April 2024

On 22 April 2024, the Office of the Commonwealth Ombudsman's OPCAT Advisory Group (OAG) held its first meeting for 2024. The meeting was chaired by Iain Anderson, Commonwealth Ombudsman.

OAG members discussed various matters including:

- updates from recent work of the Commonwealth National Preventive Mechanism (NPM), including its planned visit activity for the rest of the financial year
- current work of the NPM Coordinator, including co-organising an OPCAT Training Workshop for the Australian NPM, along with the Australian Human Rights Commission and the Association for the Prevention of Torture, in May 2024
- the annual review of the OAG's terms of reference
- developing expectations documents to guide the Commonwealth NPM's oversight activity and educate stakeholders about the role of NPMs and appropriate treatment in detention.
- improving civil society engagement.

These matters demonstrate the important, ongoing work that is occurring in Australia to meet the requirements of OPCAT implementation. However, the meeting also highlighted the efforts still required to achieve full implementation of OPCAT, and the prevention of torture and other ill treatment. The OAG reiterates the importance of full and transparent oversight of detention, and the key requirement of effective, properly resourced NPMs across the full span of detention environments in Australia.

In 2020, the Commonwealth Ombudsman established the OAG to provide expert advice and guidance to the Ombudsman about their functions and responsibilities as the Commonwealth NPM and as the Coordinator of the Australian NPM. The OAG's terms of reference are available [here](#).

More information on recent OPCAT developments in Australia can be found [here](#).