

Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security

**Inquiry into the Telecommunications Legislation Amendment
(International Production Orders) Bill 2020**

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Office of the Commonwealth Ombudsman

MAY 2020

Department/Agency: Office of the Commonwealth Ombudsman

Question: 1

Topic: Resourcing requests and outcomes

Question:

Senator KENEALLY: So it's not closed off, not yet resolved. When was the last time you requested additional resources from the government; and what was the response?

Mr Manthorpe: We are in discussions with the government about a whole range of things across the office at any point in time. I think it would be fair to say sometimes we succeed in securing additional resources and sometimes we do not, like most agencies of the Commonwealth. I can't give you a more precise answer than that. If you would like, I can take that on notice.

Senator KENEALLY: That'd be great. Thank you.

Answer:

Since the 2017-18 financial year, the Office of the Commonwealth Ombudsman has requested and received additional funding as follows:

Function	Year/process	Amount
Overseeing the National Disability Insurance Agency and the National Disability Insurance Quality and Safeguards Commission	2017-18 BUDGET	\$6.427m over 4 years starting in 2017-18 (ongoing \$1.614m pa), plus a further \$2.325m over 3 years starting in 2021-22
Private Health Insurance Ombudsman – private health insurance reforms	2017-18 MYEFO	\$5.112m over 4 years starting in 2018-19 (ongoing \$1.041m pa)
Defence Force Ombudsman - Defence abuse reporting function	2018-19 BUDGET	\$27.093m over 4 years starting in 2018-19 (ongoing \$6.061m pa)

National Preventative Mechanism Coordinator for OPCAT	2018-19 BUDGET	\$1.202m over 4 years starting in 2018-19 (ongoing \$0.303m pa)
Postal Industry Ombudsman – funding model	2018-19 MYEFO	\$4.298m over 5 years starting in 2018-19 (ongoing \$0.889m pa)
VET Student Loans Ombudsman – funding to support the VET-FEE-HELP remedy scheme	2018-19 BUDGET 2018-19 MYEFO (2018-19 PAES published) 2019-20 MYEFO	\$1m (2018-19 only) \$5.650m over 2 years starting in 2018-19 \$15.415m over 2 years starting in 2019-20
NDIS Participant Service Guarantee - monitoring timeline performance	2019-20 BUDGET	\$2.000m over 4 years starting 2019-20 (\$0.500m ongoing)
Overseeing compliance by the proposed Commonwealth Integrity Commission with covert powers	2018-19 BUDGET 2019-20 BUDGET	\$1.350m over 5 years starting in 2017-18 (ongoing \$0.270m pa) \$0.965m over 3 years starting in 2020-21 (ongoing \$0.309m pa)

The Office has also requested funding, which has not yet been provided, for two additional functions:

- Overseeing agency compliance with the computer access and industry assistance provisions of the *Surveillance Devices Act 2004* and the *Telecommunications Act 1997*, as introduced by the *Telecommunications and Other Legislation Amendment (Assistance and Access) Act 2018*.
- Overseeing agency compliance with the international production order scheme, introduced in the *Telecommunications Legislation Amendment (International Production Orders) Bill 2020*.

We are in ongoing discussion with government on these two measures.