

OFFICIAL
Released under the Freedom of Information Act 1982

Calendar year received

Row Labels	Count of N
2020	27,038
2021	24,094
2022	26,201
2023	22,756
2024	21,905
2025	26,038
Grand Total	148,032

Complaint jurisdiction or function

Count of Number	Column Labels						
Row Labels	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	Grand Total
ACT Ombudsman	463	454	433	327	386	503	2,566
Law Enforcement Ombudsman	153	<5	<5		<5		157
Commonwealth Ombudsman	11,660	12,351	14,146	10,854	10,857	11,834	71,702
Defence Force Ombudsman	215	<320	<320	292	<320	415	1,822
Private Health Insurance Ombudsman	3,655	2,921	3,338	3,840	3,622	3,330	20,706
National Student Ombudsman					5	3,547	3,552
Overseas Student Ombudsman	1,441	828	836	982	1,362	1,241	6,690
Postal Industry Ombudsman	3,901	3,696	4,405	3,754	4,374	4,463	24,593
VET Student Loans Ombudsman	5,550	3,566	2,738	2,707	978	705	16,244
Grand Total	27,038	24,094	26,201	22,756	21,905	26,038	148,032

Stage or progression reached by the complaint

Count of Number	Column Labels						
Row Labels	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	Grand Total
Investigated	4,745	2,598	2,635	2,606	902	495	13,981
Not Investigated	22,293	21,496	23,566	20,150	21,003	25,543	134,051
Grand Total	27,038	24,094	26,201	22,756	21,905	26,038	148,032

Finalised or open status

Count of Number	Column Labels						
Row Labels	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	Grand Total
Finalised	27,038	24,094	26,201	22,734	21,588	21,769	143,424
Open				22	317	4,269	4,608
Grand Total	27,038	24,094	26,201	22,756	21,905	26,038	148,032

Complaint outcome category

Sum of Count of Number	Column Labels						
Row Labels	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	Grand Total
Advised to pursue elsewhere\Advice body	105	204	143	287	88	76	903
Advised to pursue elsewhere\Agency complained of	7,355	7,890	7,894	5,175	5,093	5,922	39,329
Advised to pursue elsewhere\Court	26	80	53	31	48	38	276
Advised to pursue elsewhere\Member of Parliament	35	242	62	63	113	49	564
Advised to pursue elsewhere\Minister	28	22	25	28	88	16	207
Advised to pursue elsewhere\Other oversight body	286	467	272	254	317	357	1,953
Advised to pursue elsewhere\Tribunal	394	425	354	300	364	286	2,123
Investigation Declined\Already considered by Commonwealth/State/Territory body					<39	<39	39
Investigation Declined\Approach Lapsed	1,702	1,477	1,406	2,143	2,779	3,041	12,548
Investigation Declined\Approach withdrawn	1,020	1,399	1,597	1,293	1,464	1,516	8,289
Investigation Declined\Considered by Court	20	29	28	14	30	25	146
Investigation Declined\Considered by Minister	<11	11	<11	<11	11	<11	46
Investigation Declined\Considered by Tribunal	109	167	121	110	149	174	830
Investigation Declined\Frivolous, vexatious, not in good faith		<10	10	<10	<15	<10	43
Investigation Declined\Government commercial activity	<5	<5	<5			<5	<10
Investigation Declined\Insufficient interest	139	167	151	192	125	108	882
Investigation Declined\Not warranted in all circumstances	7,593	6,172	5,342	4,447	3,466	4,261	31,281
Investigation Declined\Over 12 months old	29	52	30	27	43	29	210
Investigation Declined\Request in writing not received	157	495	600	383	308	128	2,071
No further investigation\Appropriate remedy provided	5,812	3,208	3,353	3,068	1,616	1,312	18,369
Ombudsman Investigation\Opinion/Recommendation - AFP Agreed	<5						<5
Transfer to Agency\Transferred to Agency	6,645	5,111	6,468	6,457	6,840	6,521	38,042
Grand Total	31,463	27,628	27,914	24,291	22,954	23,911	158,161

Count

Count of Number
148,032

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Outcomes	Cth Act	Definition
Advised to pursue elsewhere\Advice body	s6(1)(b)(iii)	Investigation is not warranted and we have advised a complainant to contact another advice body to seek assistance
Advised to pursue elsewhere\Agency complained of	s6(1A), s6(1B), s6(4)	Complainant has not yet complained to the agency about the concern or has not exhausted complaint process
Advised to pursue elsewhere\Court	s6(2), s6(3)	Complainant was advised they could seek legal advice and pursue the complaint via the court system.
Advised to pursue elsewhere\Member of Parliament	s6(1)(b)(iii)	Investigation is not warranted and we have advised a complainant to contact a member of parliament to seek assistance
Advised to pursue elsewhere\Minister	s6(1)(b)(iii)	Investigation is not warranted and we have advised a complainant to contact a government minister to seek assistance
Advised to pursue elsewhere\Other oversight body	s6(1)(b)(iii)	Investigation is not warranted and we have advised a complainant to contact another oversight body seek assistance
Advised to pursue elsewhere\Tribunal	s6(2), s6(3)	Complainant was advised they can seek legal advice and pursue the complaint via the tribunal system.
Investigation Declined\Already considered by Commonwealth/State/Territory body	s21A(e)	National Student Ombudsman complaints already considered by another Commonwealth/State/Territory body
Investigation Declined\Approach Lapsed		A complainant is uncontactable, has not made requested contact and/or provided requested information within a specified timeframe.
Investigation Declined\Approach withdrawn		Complainant has advised they want to withdraw their complaint and it can be closed.
Investigation Declined\Considered by Court	s6(2), s6(3)	Complainant has a decision on the complaint by a Court.
Investigation Declined\Considered by Minister	s5(2)(a)	Complainant has a decision on the complaint by a Minister.
Investigation Declined\Considered by Tribunal	s6(2), s6(3)	Complainant has a decision on the complaint by a Tribunal.
Investigation Declined\Frivolous, vexatious, not in good faith	s6(1)(b)(i)	Complaints lacking substance, potentially motivated by desire to cause trouble for an individual or agency, or there is documented evidence to suggest the complainant is deliberately withholding evidence.
Investigation Declined\Government commercial activity	s6(12)	Complaint is about actions or decisions that relate to the commercial activity of an agency.
Investigation Declined\Insufficient interest	s6(1)(b)(ii)	A complainant not directly affected by the action or decision that they are complaining about.
Investigation Declined\Not warranted in all circumstances	s6(1)(b)(iii)	Officer has discretion to decide that an investigation is not warranted due to other circumstances not listed.
Investigation Declined\Over 12 months old	s6(1)(a)	Issue being complained about is more than 12 months old. It is not an automatic closure, decision to use this discretion will depend on the circumstances of the complaint.
Investigation Declined\Request in writing not received	s7(2)	This provision should only be used when we cannot understand the complaint effectively without receiving it in written form.
No further investigation\Appropriate remedy provided	s6(1)(b)(iii)	This may be used where an investigation was completed or an appropriate remedy has been provided by the agency/provider before an investigation has been completed. Officer has discretion to decide to end an investigation if it is not warranted due to other circumstances not listed.
Ombudsman Investigation\Opinion\Recommendation - AFP Agreed	s8D	Investigation made by Ombudsman and AFP
Transfer to Agency\Transferred to Agency		Transfer of the complaint to another agency or oversight body either due to legislated mandatory transfer or for more effective action

NOTES:

Where data has been identified as containing less than 5 complaints, the actual figure has been replaced with "<5". This is to assist with the anonymising of data to make it less identifiable. This sometimes requires other columns and rows that are 5 or greater to be de-identified to prevent re-identification.

'Stage or progression' has been limited to complaints that were investigated and not investigated. Due to system limitations, providing specific stages of where the complaint was finalised would require manual review of each complaint file and would require an unreasonable diversion of resources.

Where appropriate, various outcomes have been merged into 1 outcome for readability purposes which provides more meaningful data

The decline in the proportion of complaints investigated should not be interpreted as reduced action.

Complaints can be managed through several pathways, including warm referral, providing advice to an entity, releasing public information, conducting a preliminary inquiry, or undertaking a full investigation. Matters can move between these pathways at any point

The data captures only investigations and does not reflect the broader set of actions taken