Communiqué of the APOR Conference and 38th Members' Meeting

4-5 November 2026

The Australasian Pacific Ombudsman Region (APOR) of the International Ombudsman Institute held its 38th annual Members meeting and conference on 4-5 November in Canberra, Australia, bringing together Ombudsman and representatives from member offices across the region. The Office of the Commonwealth Ombudsman of Australia was pleased to host this event.

Under the conference theme, *Future – Proofing Fairness*, the conference considered how Ombudsman offices can respond to emerging opportunities and challenges. Sessions explored artificial intelligence and its implications for Ombudsman work, effective communication with communities and customer satisfaction and experiences.

The APOR members reflected on and reaffirmed their commitment to the independence and effectiveness of Ombudsman institutions, as well as considering the challenges and opportunities for the future. Over the two days they discussed:

- the importance of independent and effective Ombudsman institutions in promoting good governance and accountability
- the current and potential impact of artificial intelligence on oversight bodies, noting that it may offer opportunities to improve efficiency and service delivery, but its use must be transparent, accountable and subject to oversight
- the importance of clear, accessible communication and listening to feedback. Insights into customer satisfaction and lived experiences shared by members can ensure Ombudsman offices can identify what is working well and where services can be improved.

The value of regional cooperation was clear during the conference and at the Members Meeting, chaired by APOR President Niki Rattle, Ombudsman of the Cook Islands. Through country updates members shared practical experience. Members acknowledge this sharing helps to strengthen institutional capacity and improve outcomes for people engaging with Ombudsman Offices.