

## Our structure

### Public administration

The public administration branch deals with complaints about a broad range of public authorities, as well as local councils. In addition to this 'traditional' Ombudsman role, the branch also includes our custodial services and public interest disclosures units.

#### Complaints, investigations and projects

This team performs what many would see as a 'traditional' Ombudsman role, receiving and responding to complaints about a wide range of public authorities, as well as local councils. The team also conducts investigative and project work aimed at public authorities to improve the services they provide.

#### Inquiries

Our inquiries unit are often the first point of contact for people seeking information and assistance from our office. They deal with a wide range of matters, and provide clear and practical advice. In many cases, they are able to help people resolve their problem without having to make a formal complaint.

#### Custodial services

Our custodial services unit is responsible for our work relating to correctional and juvenile justice centres. Staff from the unit have regular contact with inmates and centre staff, dealing both with complaints and systemic issues.

#### Public interest disclosures

Our public interest disclosures unit was established in 2011, and provides advice and assistance to public authorities and public officials on the operation of the *Public Interest Disclosures Act 1994*. The unit also provides support to the Public Interest Disclosures Steering Committee.

### Human services

The human services branch consists of our community services division, employment-related child protection division, and disability reportable incidents division.

#### Community services

The community services division has a wide range of functions under the *Community Services (Complaints, Reviews and Monitoring) Act 1993*. Among other things, the division handles complaints about community and disability services, and conducts inquiries into matters affecting people eligible to receive such services, and matters affecting service providers. The division is also responsible for reviewing the deaths of certain children and people with disability, supporting the NSW Child Death Review Team, and coordinating the Official Community Visitor scheme.

#### Employment related child protection

The employment-related child protection division oversees the investigation by certain agencies into allegations against their employees that involve inappropriate or abusive behaviour towards children; scrutinises the systems those agencies have in place for preventing and responding to these types of allegations; and manages the Ombudsman's 'Notification of Concern' function in connection with the new working with children check.

#### Disability reportable incidents

The disability reportable incidents division receives notifications of allegations of serious incidents involving people with disability living in supported group accommodation. The division oversees how organisations respond to these allegations, and keeps under scrutiny their systems for preventing and effectively responding to such matters.

### Police and compliance

The police and compliance branch consists of our police division, which is responsible for overseeing serious police complaint investigations, as well as auditing police complaint records and conducting a wide range of legislative reviews. The branch also includes our secure monitoring unit.

#### Police complaints

Our work relating to police complaints is conducted by staff in several units. The serious misconduct unit directly oversees the handling of more serious police complaints. They work alongside staff in our assessment, information and auditing area, who assess complaints, collect, collate and analyse a wide range of information, as well as auditing the processes police have for dealing with less serious complaints.

#### Legislative reviews

We are responsible for reviewing the application and use of a range of pieces of legislation providing police with new and extraordinary powers. This work is conducted by staff from our research and projects area.

#### Secure monitoring

The secure monitoring unit handles appeals and complaints under the Witness Protection Act. They also inspect the records of eligible authorities and law enforcement agencies to assess and report on their compliance with certain legislation.

### Corporate

The work of all of the areas of our office is supported by a small, diverse corporate branch.

#### Personnel

Personnel is responsible for payroll, leave administration, recruitment, performance management and work, health and safety.

#### Business improvement

The business improvement unit facilitates a range of different improvements to our processes across the office, with a particular focus on making the best possible use of our information and document management systems.

#### Finance

Finance is responsible for accounting, budgeting and office services.

#### Information technology

Information technology develops and manages computer systems to deliver our core work and protect our data assets.

#### Records

Records manage our physical records including creating, archiving and disposing of files.

#### Projects

The projects staff are responsible for office administration, executive support, policy review and development, corporate governance, internal audit, and media interaction.

### Aboriginal programs

Part 3B of the *Ombudsman Act 1974* requires us to monitor and assess certain Aboriginal programs, providing independent oversight of the design, delivery and results of government services for Aboriginal people in NSW. The Deputy Ombudsman (Aboriginal Programs) leads this function.

The first such program is OCHRE, the NSW Government plan for Aboriginal affairs. OCHRE includes six key initiatives:

- Local Decision Making
- Connected Communities
- Opportunity Hubs
- Industry-based Agreements
- Aboriginal Economic Development Framework and related initiatives
- Aboriginal Language and Culture Nests.

### Strategic projects

The strategic projects division is responsible for leading major projects and investigations, particularly those that cross jurisdictions of the Ombudsman's various operational areas. The division has a particular focus on Aboriginal and youth issues and houses several of the 'cross office' units/positions including the Aboriginal unit, the community education and training unit, OCHRE team, youth liaison officer and a team of research and investigative staff.

#### Aboriginal unit

Our Aboriginal unit examines ways to improve service delivery by government agencies and non-government service providers to Aboriginal people in NSW. The unit helps Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in NSW to resolve complaints about a range of matters and works hard to develop and maintain strong and positive relationships with communities, organisations and agencies to improve outcomes for Aboriginal people.

#### Community education and training

The community education and training unit is responsible for providing training and awareness sessions on a broad range of subjects, including the rights and responsibilities of those using community services and managing unreasonable complainant conduct.