

Fact sheet 1

About the Victorian Ombudsman

The Ombudsman is an independent officer of the Victorian Parliament. Her office investigates complaints about administrative actions taken by Victorian government agencies, including departments (such as the Department of Human Services), most statutory authorities (such as VicRoads), and local government.

The Victorian Ombudsman is impartial, ethical and respectful of individual rights.

The Ombudsman has jurisdiction over more than 1000 Victorian public bodies, including government departments, statutory authorities, professional boards, councils, universities and government schools, prisons (including private prisons) and authorised officers on public transport. In addition, the Ombudsman can investigate private organisations contracted to perform functions for government agencies.

The Ombudsman's mission is to promote fairness, integrity, respect for human rights and administrative excellence in the Victorian public sector. The Ombudsman aims to achieve this mission by:

- independently investigating, reviewing and resolving complaints concerning administrative actions of state government departments, local councils and statutory authorities
- reporting the results to complainants and the agencies involved
- reporting to Parliament
- improving accountability
- promoting fair and reasonable public administration.

Any person can make a complaint to the Ombudsman about a matter which affects them. You can make a complaint about a Victorian agency even if you are not a Victorian resident. Brochures to assist non-English speaking people who want to access the Ombudsman are available in the 19 most common languages spoken in Victoria at <http://www.ombudsman.vic.gov.au/www/html/72-translations.asp>.

The Ombudsman will generally accept a complaint after the relevant public body has been given the opportunity to respond to the complaint.

History of the Victorian Ombudsman

The office of the Victorian Ombudsman was established on 30 October 1973 under the *Ombudsman Act 1973*. It was the third Ombudsman's office created in Australia, following the appointment of the Western Australian Ombudsman (1971) and the South Australian Ombudsman (1972).

The Ombudsman's office has seen major changes in the Victorian public sector and the delivery of government services. While the office itself has also undergone some changes over this period, none of them have affected the core role and responsibilities of the Ombudsman.

Since 1973 the Ombudsman has drawn the government's attention to significant issues of concern and helped to improve broader public administration by resolving individual grievances.

The Victorian Ombudsman



The Victorian Ombudsman is Deborah Glass OBE. She was appointed in March 2014 for a term of 10 years.

Deborah was raised in Melbourne where she studied law at Monash University.

Deborah practiced law briefly in the city, before joining a US investment bank in Switzerland in 1985. She was appointed to the Hong Kong Securities and Futures Commission at its inception in 1989, where she became Senior Director, instrumental in raising standards in the investment management industry.

Deborah moved to London in 1998 where she became the Chief Executive of the Investment Management Regulatory Organisation. In 2001, she joined the UK Police Complaints Authority, and in 2004 became a Commissioner with the new Independent Police Complaints Commission of England and Wales (IPCC).

She was the Commissioner responsible for London, and for many high profile criminal and misconduct investigations into police conduct. Deborah was appointed IPCC Deputy Chair in 2008, carrying operational responsibility for the IPCC's regional Commissioners, and was awarded an OBE for her service in the New Year Honours List in 2012.

Deborah is committed to ensuring fair and reasonable decision making in the Victorian public sector, and to improving public administration. She holds a firm belief in public sector integrity and the protection of human rights.

Please note: This document is intended as a guide only. For this reason the information contained herein should not be relied on as legal advice or regarded as a substitute for legal advice in individual cases. To the maximum extent permitted by the law, the Victorian Ombudsman is not liable to you for any loss or damage suffered as a result of reliance on this document. For the most up-to-date versions of cited Acts, please refer to www.legislation.vic.gov.au.

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