

ACT Ombudsman +

Inspector of the ACT Integrity Commission

ANNUAL REPORT

2025–26

Acknowledgement of Country

The Office of the ACT Ombudsman acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout the ACT. We recognise and respect their cultural heritage, beliefs and relationship with the land, waters and community. We pay our respects to Elders past and present, for they hold the memories and traditions of the oldest living culture.



Artwork description

This artwork, titled 'Community Together,' was created by local Canberra artist Leah Brideson. It was inspired by the beautiful natural environment of the ACT. In 2018, out of a field of 11 entries, Leah won the ACT Ombudsman's local art competition for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in the ACT. The original artwork hangs in the ACT Ombudsman's office in Canberra.

Contacting the ACT Ombudsman

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If you would like further information about the ACT Ombudsman, please go to:

Website ombudsman.act.gov.au

This 2025–26 ACT Ombudsman and Inspector of the ACT Integrity Commission Annual Report is available on the above website.

Accessibility

The ACT Ombudsman is committed to making information accessible to as many people as possible. If you would like to receive this publication in an alternative format, please telephone the Office on **(02) 5117 3650**.

If you are d/Deaf, hard of hearing or have a speech communication difficulty, you can use the National Relay Service (NRS) to contact the ACT Ombudsman. Visit the [National Relay Service website](#) or phone **1800 555 727**.

If English is not your first language and you require a translating and interpreting service, the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) is a free-of-charge service available on **13 14 50**.

Credits

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Transmittal certificate

12 October 2026

Mr Jeremy Hanson CSC
Speaker
ACT Legislative Assembly
London Circuit
CANBERRA ACT 2601

Dear Mr Speaker

I present to you the *ACT Ombudsman and Inspector of the ACT Integrity Commission Annual Report 2025–26*.

This report has been prepared to fulfil the requirements of s 7A of the *Annual Reports (Government Agencies) Act 2004* and s 283 of the *Integrity Commission Act 2018* (IC Act). It also contains the Inspector's annual operational review prepared under s 281 of the IC Act, as required by s 283(2)(a) of the IC Act.

I certify that this report is an honest and accurate account of the work of the ACT Ombudsman and Inspector of the ACT Integrity Commission and that all material information on the operations of my Office has been included for the period 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026.

As I am an Officer of the Assembly, this report is not subject to the *Annual Reports (Government Agencies) Directions 2026*. Where relevant to my Office, I sought to include similar information in this report to the information required under these directions.

Section 15 of the *Annual Reports (Government Agencies) Act 2004* requires that the Speaker present a copy of this report to the Legislative Assembly within 15 weeks after the end of the reporting year.

Yours sincerely



Iain Anderson
ACT Ombudsman and
Inspector of the ACT Integrity Commission

2025–26 HIGHLIGHTS

		 Received	 Finalised
	Complaints (Total)	663	625
	ACT Ombudsman complaints	620	590
	Inspector complaints	20	21
	Reportable conduct complaints	14	11
	Freedom of information complaints	9	3
	Reportable conduct notifications	264	219
	Freedom of Information (FOI) reviews	71	48
			 Number
	Formal complaint investigations finalised (Total)		43
	ACT Ombudsman complaint investigations		39
	Inspector complaint investigations		4
	Publications		30
	Submissions/appearances		32
	Inspections		10
	Recommendations/suggestions		84

From the Ombudsman



I am pleased to present the annual report for the ACT Ombudsman and Inspector of the ACT Integrity Commission for 2025–26.

The year has brought an increased demand for our services, with my Office experiencing a 26% increase in contacts across all our functions (1,238 contacts, compared to 977 in 2024–25). Of those contacts, we received 663 complaints, representing a 27% increase in complaints (see [Part 5](#)).

We have also seen a 37% increase in freedom of information (FOI) review applications (see [Part 6](#)) and a 35% increase in reportable conduct contacts (see [Part 7](#)). The sustained volume has required us to think creatively and strategically across all areas, and to use resources in ways that can have the most impact.

The top 5 agencies complained about — Housing ACT, ACT Policing, Access Canberra, ACT Corrective Services and ACT Revenue Office — made up 71% of our complaints about agencies (439 of 620). On its face, this is unsurprising, as they are the agencies that have the most interaction with members of the public.

However, we received nearly double the number of Housing ACT complaints this year (153 complaints, up from 79 in 2024–25) and saw increases in complaints about ACT Policing (96 complaints, up from 79 in 2024–25), Access Canberra (79 complaints, up from 62 in 2024–25) and ACT Corrective Services (77 complaints, up from 54 in 2024–25). This suggests that members of the ACT community are more aware of our services and have confidence in our ability to resolve matters.

In spite of the volume, we have seen improvements in our complaint handling performance. We finalised 625 complaints in 2025–26, which is a 17% increase on 2024–25. We also met 3 out of 4 performance standards for finalising complaints in a timely manner (see [Part 5](#)).



In handling complaints, we have continued to focus on systemic issues we are seeing emerging, with the aim of shining a light on areas where agency improvement would help many in the ACT community.

We published 3 complaint investigation reports, which identified deeper issues within the agencies investigated (see [Part 2](#)).

While the reports cover varied topics — housing maintenance, charging for calls in a place of detention and the process for issuing Working with Vulnerable People cards — each shows the importance of agencies adopting a citizen-centric focus, understanding their legal obligations and clearly communicating. These lessons are relevant to everyone working in the public sector.

This year, my Office received a record 71 FOI review applications, up from the previous record of 52 in 2024–25 (see [Part 6](#)). We finalised 48 Ombudsman reviews under the [Freedom of Information Act 2016](#) (FOI Act), with 23 of these decisions published on our website. We continue to not meet our FOI review performance standards, but we have seen an improvement in one KPI, which is notable given the increase in contacts and that we continue to see an increase in complex matters.

My Office also received a record 264 reportable conduct notifications in 2025–26, an increase of 33% from 2024–25, and we finalised 219, an increase of 15% (see [Part 7](#)). We continue to exceed our performance standards for reportable conduct. The increases in notifications and enquiries may be due to greater awareness of reporting obligations following media coverage of recent high-profile criminal matters.

In 2025–26, I initiated 2 own motion investigations (see [Part 3](#)). I opened an investigation into ACT Policing's mistaken arrest of a teenager at gunpoint during a search for an alleged offender on 11 November 2025. I am also considering Access Canberra's use of automated decision-making across its business areas. My findings on both investigations will be reported when they are complete.

As Inspector of the ACT Integrity Commission, I received 20 complaints about the Commission's functions under the [Integrity Commission Act 2018](#) (IC Act) and the [Public Interest Disclosure Act 2012](#) (PID Act). This year, 16 complaints were within jurisdiction, which is an increase on 13 in 2024–25. We finalised 21 complaints, 4 following investigations.

My Inspector's annual operational review (see [Part 8](#)) found that the Commission's conflict of interest register demonstrated active reporting and consideration of conflicts of interest by staff of the Commission. Subject to an outstanding investigation, I found the Commission operated within its legislative powers in this reporting period.

In 2025–26, the ACT National Preventive Mechanism (NPM) (see [Part 10](#)) unveiled our logo, which draws its colour palette from the 3 agencies that make up the ACT NPM, acknowledging our distinct contributions while creating a unified visual identity.

We also finalised our initial governance arrangements with the release of ACT NPM Guidelines and Standard Operating Procedures, which outline working arrangements between the ACT NPM members.

As the ACT NPM, we published reports on our inspections of Bimberi Youth Justice Centre and the ACT Policing Watch House and Police Stations, and we participated in a visit to the Dhulwa Mental Health Unit and Eating Disorders Residential Treatment Centre. We also co-facilitated a Youth Justice Forum with the Health and Community Services Directorate, in June 2026, to inform the development of a fit for purpose strategic plan and model of care for the Bimberi Youth Justice Centre.

We continued to engage with the ACT Legislative Assembly in 2025–26, making submissions to and appearing before several committee inquiries. We also provided advice to government on a number of areas, provided education and training about our oversight functions and developed publicly available resources (see [Part 4](#)).

In 2025–26, we undertook 6 inspections of law enforcement agencies' compliance with certain covert and intrusive powers (see [Part 9](#)), and we published a [report](#) on ACT Policing's compliance with Chapter 4 of the [Crimes \(Child Sex Offenders\) Act 2005](#).

I have continued to support the ACT Judicial Council as the Principal Officer. In this capacity, my Office provides secretariat services to the Council, receives the Council's enquiries and complaints, and helps it to conduct preliminary inquiries and other examinations (see [Part 11](#)).

This reporting period, my Office also prepared for the commencement from 1 July 2026 of a new function under the [Territory Records Act 2002](#) (Territory Records Act), in which we will conduct merit reviews of refusals to release records and consider extension of time requests.



To reflect the addition of that function in June 2026, I signed an updated [Services Agreement between Australian Capital Territory and Commonwealth of Australia 2025–2030](#).

In 2026–27, I look forward to building on my Office’s achievements, addressing individuals’ concerns and continuing to influence systemic improvements in public administration to provide better outcomes for the ACT community.



Iain Anderson
ACT Ombudsman and
Inspector of the ACT Integrity Commission

Part 1. Overview of the Office

Role of the ACT Ombudsman

The role of the ACT Ombudsman is to consider complaints about the actions of ACT Government agencies and ACT Policing and provide assurance that the entities we oversee act with integrity and treat people fairly.

We influence systemic improvements in public administration by:

- undertaking independent and impartial review of complaints about government administrative action
- providing oversight of:
 - the ACT Freedom of Information (FOI) framework
 - the ACT Reportable Conduct Scheme
 - ACT Policing
 - the ACT Integrity Commission (as Inspector)
- influencing government agencies to be accountable, lawful, fair, transparent and responsive
- providing assurance that law enforcement, integrity and regulatory agencies are complying with legal requirements when using covert, intrusive and coercive powers
- providing support to the Judicial Council as its Principal Officer.

We also form part of the ACT's multi-body National Preventive Mechanism (ACT NPM) for places of detention under the control of the ACT Government, alongside the ACT Custodial Inspector and the ACT Human Rights Commission. The ACT NPM supports Australia's implementation of the United Nations' (UN) Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman and Degrading Treatment or Punishment (OPCAT).



The ACT Ombudsman's functions and powers are prescribed under ACT legislation.¹

Under the [ACT Self-Government \(Consequential Provisions\) Amendment Act 1989](#) (Cth), and by [arrangement](#) between the Australian and ACT governments, the Commonwealth Ombudsman is also the ACT Ombudsman. The Territory and the Ombudsman recognise that the Office of the Commonwealth Ombudsman, while performing the role of the ACT Ombudsman, is a Commonwealth entity that is required to comply with Commonwealth legislation.

Performance snapshot

In 2025–26, we measured our performance against 4 overarching criteria (see [Table 1](#)). We met one criterion, partially achieved 2 and did not achieve another.

Table 1 Performance outcomes for 2025–26

Criterion 1	We provide quality complaint handling services	Not achieved
Criterion 2	We effectively deliver our reportable conduct and freedom of information activities	Partially achieved
Criterion 3	We maintain the confidence of the community, the Legislative Assembly and the ACT agencies we oversee	Partially achieved
Criterion 4	We influence enduring systemic improvement in public administration	Achieved

We assess our performance against these criteria by measuring our achievement against 13 key performance indicators (KPIs). For some criteria, we set a target (such as a target that 100% of reports will be published within statutory timeframes). For other measures, we set a benchmark that we strive to achieve and that can be improved upon in the coming years.

¹ See [Ombudsman Act 1989](#); [Public Interest Disclosure Act 2012](#); [Freedom of Information Act 2016](#); [Integrity Commission Act 2018](#); [Children and Young People Act 2008](#); [Monitoring of Places of Detention \(Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture\) Act 2018](#); [Crimes \(Controlled Operations\) Act 2008](#); [Crimes \(Child Sex Offenders\) Act 2005](#); [Crimes \(Assumed Identities\) Act 2009](#); [Crimes \(Surveillance Devices\) Act 2010](#); [Terrorism \(Extraordinary Temporary Powers\) Act 2006 \(ACT\)](#); and [Judicial Commissions Act 1994](#).

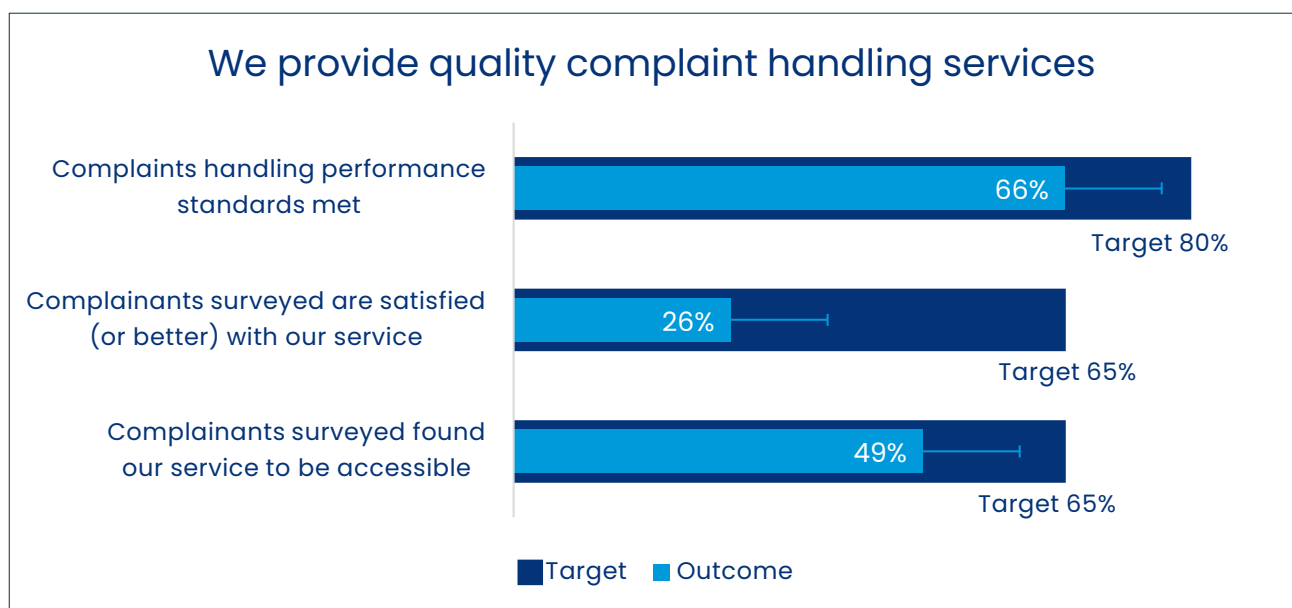
We are in the process of finalising new performance criteria for the 2026–27 financial year.

Criterion 1: Quality complaint handling services

In 2025–26, we again did not meet our criterion for complaint handling services (see [Figure 1](#)). We met only 66% of complaint handling performance standards against an 80% target, with complainant satisfaction rates also falling short of our targets. While we are working to lift our performance, this is a significant improvement on 2024–25, when we met only 45% of our complaint handling performance standards. We achieved this in a year with 27% more complaints received.

Complainant satisfaction rates also improved, with 26% of complainants surveyed indicating they were satisfied with our service (compared to 18% in 2024–25) and 49% of complainants finding our service to be accessible (compared to 45% in 2024–25).

Figure 1 Performance outcomes against Criterion 1



Note: 26% ($\pm 10.4\%$) of complainants surveyed were satisfied (or better) with our service and 49% ($\pm 10.7\%$) of complainants surveyed found our service to be accessible. Error margins are attributable to a low response rate of ACT complainants to the complainant survey.

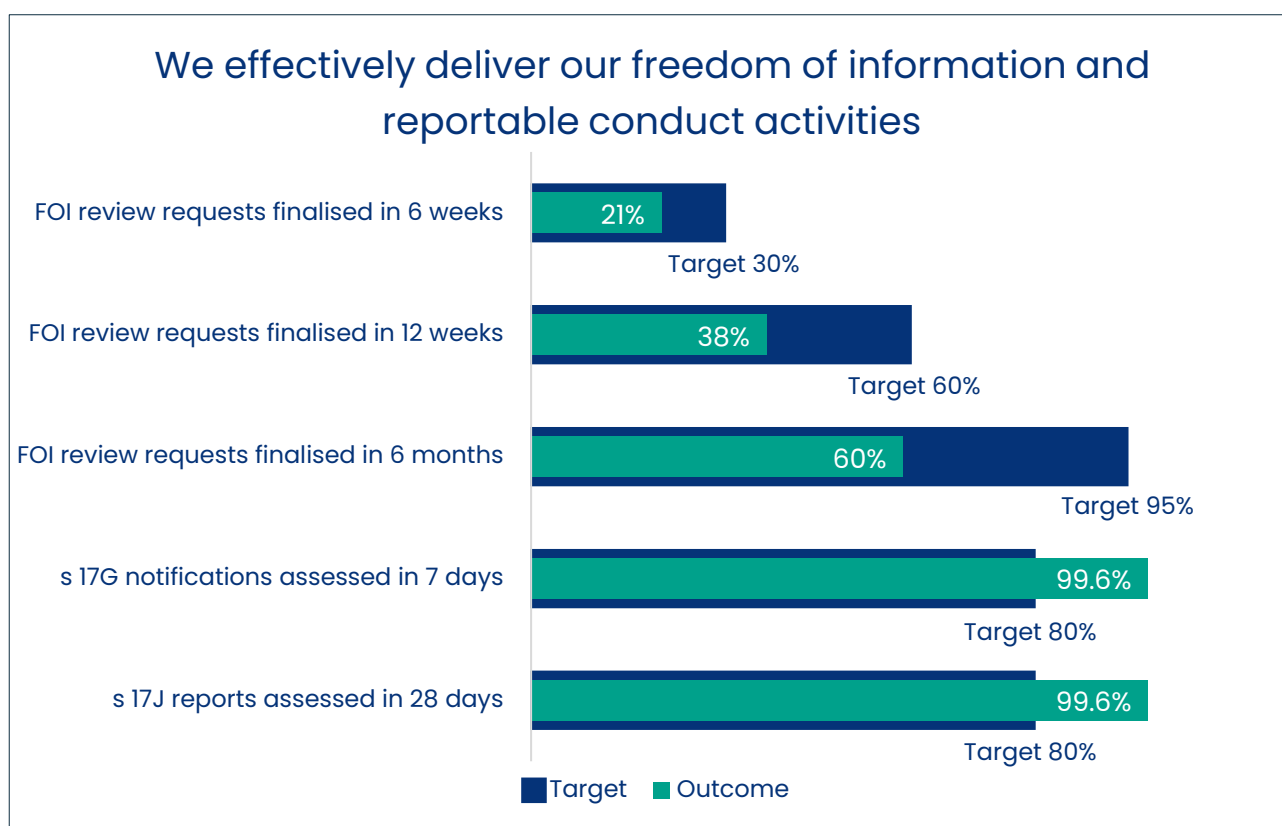
More detail on [Performance against complaint handling service standards](#) is in [Part 5](#).

Criterion 2: FOI and reportable conduct

In 2025–26, we partially achieved Criterion 2 (see [Figure 2](#)). We exceeded our reportable conduct performance targets by nearly 20%, while our FOI performance results were below target.

Although we did not meet our FOI targets, we still improved on last year (60% finalised in 6 months, up from 55% in 2024–25). This improvement occurred even with a record 71 FOI review applications received, a 37% increase on 2024–25.

Figure 2 Performance outcomes against Criterion 2

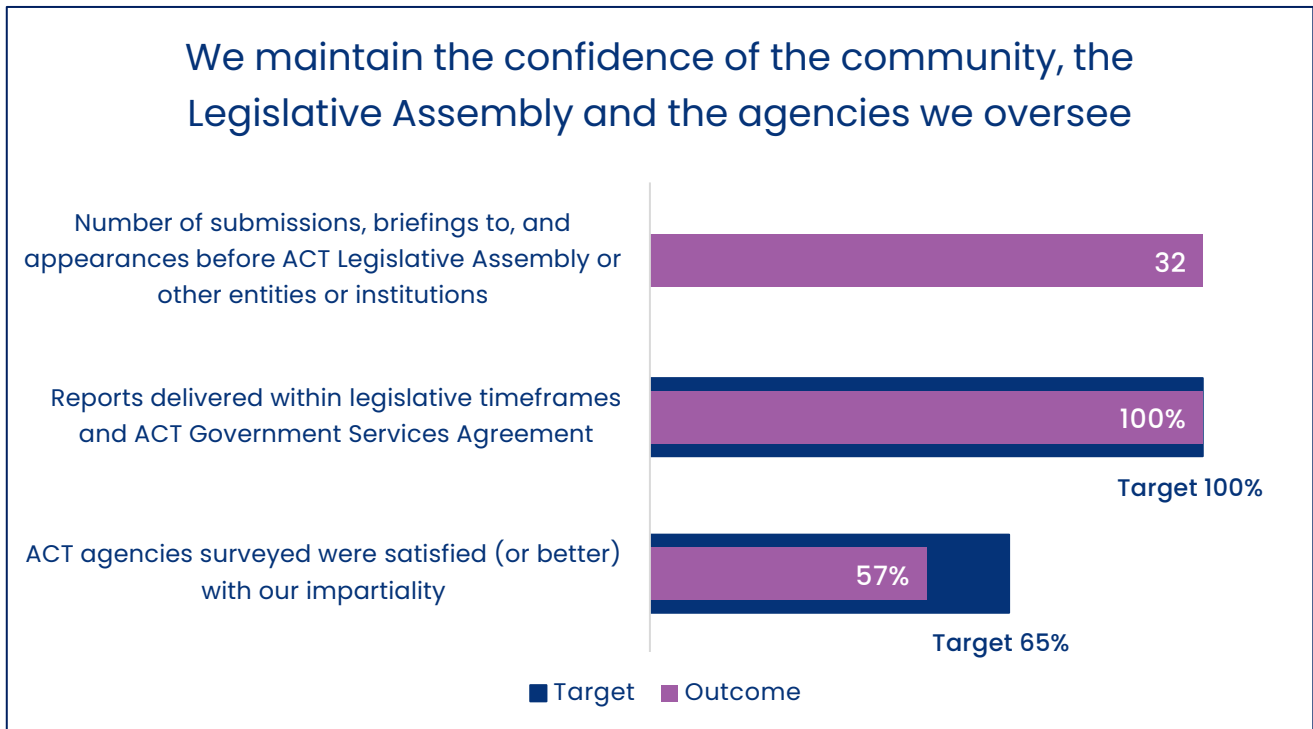


More detail on FOI review service standards is in [Part 6](#), and more detail about reportable conduct performance against service standards is in [Part 7](#).

Criterion 3: Community confidence

In 2025–26, we met 2 of the 3 targets for Criterion 3 (see [Figure 3](#)), which is about maintaining the confidence of the community, the Legislative Assembly and the agencies we oversee.

Figure 3 Performance outcomes against Criterion 3



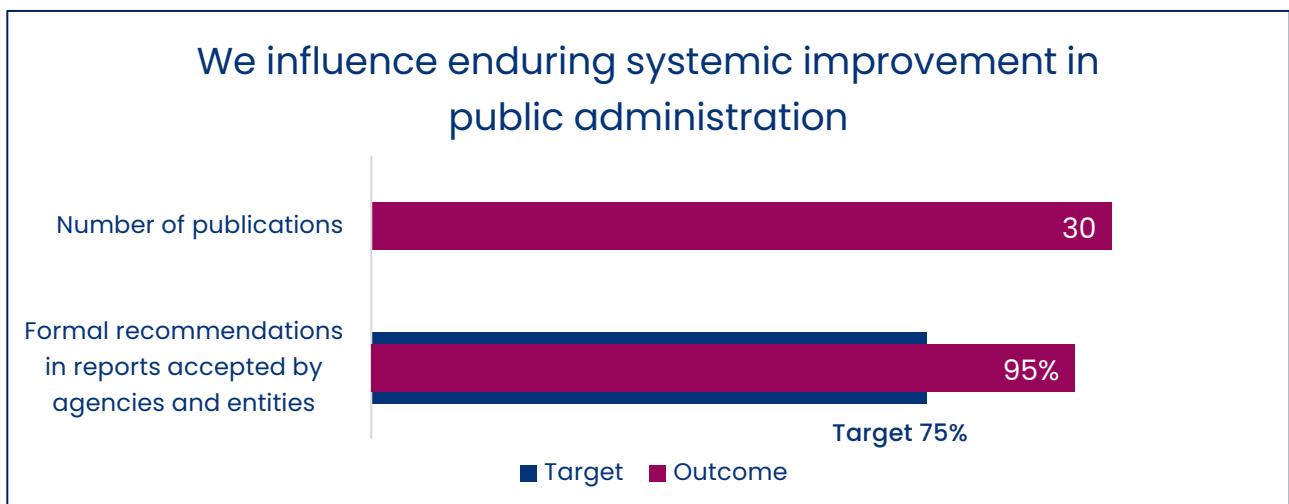
Note: The ACT agencies survey result is based on a small sample size and should be interpreted with caution.

For more information about our reports, see [Part 2](#), and for more information about our submissions, briefings and appearances, see [Part 4](#).

Criterion 4: Influence systemic improvement

In 2025–26, we achieved Criterion 4. We exceeded our target for recommendations accepted by agencies.

Figure 4 Performance outcomes against Criterion 4



For further information about our publications, see the [publications page](#) on the ACT Ombudsman website. For more information about our recommendations, see [Part 3](#).

Reporting requirements

The *Annual Reports (Government Agencies) Directions 2026* do not apply to the ACT Ombudsman, because he is an Officer of the Legislative Assembly. We nevertheless seek to include similar information in our annual reports, except when the information is reported in the annual report for the Office of the Commonwealth Ombudsman.

All reporting related to organisational operations, including risk management, internal audit, fraud prevention, workplace health and safety, our Reconciliation Action Plan, human resources management and detailed financial management, can be found in the *Commonwealth Ombudsman Annual Report 2025–26*, which will be made available on the [Commonwealth Ombudsman website](#).

The ACT Ombudsman is also required to report annually on the operation of the FOI Act² (see [Part 6](#)), the use of covert and intrusive powers³ (see [Part 9](#)), and on our operations as Inspector of the ACT Integrity Commission, including an operational review report⁴ (see [Part 8](#)).

Financial management

In the 2025–26 ACT Budget, released on 25 June 2025, the ACT Government allocated \$4,882,000 (GST exclusive) to the Commonwealth Ombudsman to undertake the ACT Ombudsman functions in accordance with the [Services Agreement 2025–30](#)⁵ between the Office of the Commonwealth Ombudsman and the ACT Government.

² See s 67 of the [Freedom of Information Act 2016](#).

³ See s 42 of the [Crimes \(Surveillance Devices\) Act 2010](#), s 31 of the [Crimes \(Controlled Operations\) Act 2008](#), s 41 of the [Crimes \(Assumed Identities\) Act 2009](#), and s 4C and Div 2.2 of the [Ombudsman Act 1989](#).

⁴ See s 281 and 283 of the [Integrity Commission Act 2018](#).

⁵ [Version 1](#) of the Services Agreement was in effect from 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026. [Version 1.1](#) commenced on 1 July 2026 to reflect the commencement of the new function under the [Territory Records Act 2002](#).

The Commonwealth Ombudsman was allocated funding by the ACT Government as set out in [Table 2](#).

Table 2 *ACT Ombudsman funding 2025–26*

Function	Funding (\$'000)
Ombudsman/ACT Policing	2,371
Reportable Conduct Scheme	1,138
Judicial Council	107
Freedom of Information Scheme	761
Inspector of the ACT Integrity Commission	310
ACT National Preventive Mechanism (NPM)	196
Total Ombudsman Funding	4,882

Note: All figures above are exclusive of GST.

Funding provided for the ACT Ombudsman in 2025–26 was approximately \$142,000 more than funding received in the previous financial year. This increase covered the indexation of costs.

The funding was used to perform core legislative obligations and deliverables required under our [Services Agreement 2025–30](#) with the ACT Government. Detailed financial statements are published in the *Office of the Commonwealth Ombudsman Annual Report 2025–26*, which will be made available on the [Commonwealth Ombudsman website](#).

FOI access applications

During 2025–26, we received 3 applications for the release of information under the FOI Act. One of these applications was withdrawn by the applicant. We do not charge for information released under an access application made to the ACT Ombudsman.

We refused access to 2 applications. In one matter, we refused on the basis that disclosure of the information requested would be contrary to the public interest. The other was refused as no documents responsive to the request were located.

All 3 matters were handled within required statutory timeframes.



In 2025–26, we did not receive any requests to amend personal information under the FOI Act. We also did not receive any applications under s 74 of the FOI Act for review of decisions made by our Office. No applications were made to the ACT Civil and Administrative Tribunal under s 84 of the FOI Act for review of decisions made by our Office.

Details of access applications dealt with by the ACT Ombudsman, including copies of any released information, can be viewed on the ACT Ombudsman [disclosure log](#).

Decisions on open access

In 2025–26, we made 51 decisions to publish open access information (see [Table 3](#)).

We did not make any decisions refusing to publish open access information or descriptions of open access information.

Table 3 Open access decisions 2025–26

Types of decisions	Total
To publish open access information	51
Not to publish open access information	0
Not to publish a description of open access information withheld	0

Public Interest Disclosure

The ACT Ombudsman is a ‘disclosure officer’ under the [Public Interest Disclosure Act 2012](#) (PID Act), which means we can receive disclosures and may investigate disclosable conduct if a disclosure is referred to the Ombudsman by the Integrity Commissioner (under s 19(2)(c)).

Under the PID Act, the ACT Integrity Commission is responsible for oversight of the Public Interest Disclosure (PID) Scheme. However, we can take complaints about, and review the handling of, PIDs by ACT public sector agencies and the Public Sector Standards Commissioner.

During 2025–26, we received 3 general PID enquiries and 2 disclosures about ACT Government agencies. We received no complaints about the handling of a disclosure.

Contacting our Office

ACT Ombudsman complaints: To make a complaint about an ACT agency or ACT Policing, use our [online complaint form](#), call us on **02 5117 3650** (option 1), or write to us at:

ACT Ombudsman
GPO Box 442
Canberra ACT 2601

FOI reviews and complaints: To seek a review of an FOI decision made by an ACT agency or make a complaint about their handling of an FOI request, email actfoi@ombudsman.gov.au or call us on **02 5117 3650** (option 3).

Reportable conduct: To make a complaint about how an organisation is responding, or not responding, to an allegation of reportable conduct, email act@ombudsman.gov.au or call us on **02 5119 5520**.

Inspector complaints: To make a complaint about the ACT Integrity Commission to the Inspector, use our [online complaint form](#) or call us on **02 5117 3650** (option 5).

Public Interest Disclosure: to make a disclosure or a complaint about the handling or investigation of a PID by an ACT Government agency to the ACT Ombudsman, email PID@ombudsman.gov.au or call us on **1300 362 072**.

Judicial Council: to make a complaint about the conduct of a judicial officer, email principal.officer@actjudicialcouncil.org.au or call us on **02 5119 5550**.

Executive records reviews: to request a review of a decision under the Territory Records Act, use the [Release Decision Review Form](#) or call us on **02 5117 3650**.

FOI requests: FOI access applications can be sent via email to FOI@ombudsman.gov.au or posted to:

Information Officer
ACT Ombudsman
GPO Box 442
Canberra ACT 2601

First Nations people can call our dedicated number **1800 060 789** or use our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language interpreter service.



If you are a **non-English speaking person** and need the support of an interpreter, please call the Translating and Interpreting Service (**TIS**) on **131 450** for a free and confidential interpreting service.

If you are d/Deaf, hard of hearing or have a speech communication difficulty, please use the **National Relay Service**:

- the speak and listen number is **1300 555 727**
- for TTY call **133 677**

Phone calls to the ACT Ombudsman from the Alexander Maconochie Centre are free.

More information is available on our website ombudsman.act.gov.au.



Part 2. Reports

The ACT Ombudsman published a number of investigation, inspection and monitoring reports in the 2025–26 financial year.

All reports can be found on the [publications page](#) of the ACT Ombudsman website.

Investigation reports

Left in limbo – when an agency doesn’t make a decision

In May 2026, we published [*Left in limbo – when an agency doesn’t make a decision*](#) following a complaint investigation about Access Canberra’s handling of an individual’s application for a Working with Vulnerable People card. We made 6 findings, identifying several issues with how Access Canberra processed the individual’s application, including poor communication, poor advice, delays in placing an interim bar, unnecessary requests for information that Access Canberra already held, unreasonable cancellation of the application and a failure to notify employers of the cancellation.

We made 5 recommendations to Access Canberra to improve its processes for complex applications. Access Canberra accepted one recommendation in full and partially accepted 4 recommendations.

Falling through the gaps

In March 2026, we published [*Falling through the gaps*](#) after investigating multiple complaints from Housing ACT tenants about their requests for repairs or maintenance in their homes.

We found the administration of public housing could be improved across 4 key areas:

- **timeliness** for completing non-urgent repairs
- **communicating** with tenants about the progress of the repair works or costs and reasons for decisions



- **resolving complaints** and identifying opportunities for improvement
- **quality assurance** monitoring and reporting frameworks.

We made 8 recommendations to Housing ACT to help it meet its legislative obligations under the [Residential Tenancies Act 1997](#), ensure its tenants have access to suitable housing and provide assurance to the public and Legislative Assembly that the ACT's public housing assets are well maintained.

Housing ACT accepted all 8 recommendations and advised us it would collaborate with Infrastructure Canberra and Programmed Facilities Management to address these recommendations.

Phone call charges at the Alexander Maconochie Centre: what does it really cost?

In February 2026, we published [Phone call charges at the Alexander Maconochie Centre: what does it really cost?](#) about the administration of telephone call charges at the Alexander Maconochie Centre (AMC). We investigated a complaint about the reintroduction of phone call charges at the AMC after people in detention had been able to make calls to Australian mobiles and landlines for free.

We made 6 findings, including that ACT Corrective Services (ACTCS) had been over-charging people in detention for their phone calls for over 2 years.

We made 5 recommendations to ACTCS to review call costs, publicly apologise and reimburse those affected, establish facilities for people in detention to receive calls as required by the law, and implement digital services to improve communication access.

ACTCS accepted all 5 recommendations.

Monitoring reports and statements

When we make recommendations or suggestions, we monitor and report on the actions taken to implement the recommendations the entity has accepted.

ACT Policing Watch House and police stations

In March 2026, as part of the ACT NPM and in collaboration with the Commonwealth NPM, we published [Assessment of Implementation of Past Suggestions: ACT Watch House and Police Stations](#), reporting on ACT Policing's implementation of 53 suggestions made in the June 2024 [Post Visit Summaries report on the ACT Watch House and Police Stations](#) and the October 2024 [Post Visit Summary report on the Jervis Bay Police Station](#).

Of the 53 suggestions, we found 26 suggestions implemented, 15 partially implemented, 11 not implemented and one superseded (see [Part 10](#)).

Section 17K investigation of Barnardos Australia

In September 2024, we released a [public statement](#) about an investigation we conducted under s 17K of the [Ombudsman Act 1989](#) (Ombudsman Act) as a result of concerns raised during our oversight of reportable conduct allegations investigated by Barnardos Australia (Barnardos). We made 6 recommendations aimed at improving timeliness, investigation planning, quality of information gathered and procedural fairness processes. Barnardos accepted 5 recommendations.

In January 2026, we made a [public statement](#) that we had reviewed Barnardos' implementation of the accepted recommendations. We found Barnardos had implemented all 5 accepted recommendations.

Section 17F monitoring of a designated entity

In November 2025, we released a [public statement](#) about a monitoring activity under s 17F of the Ombudsman Act of a designated entity's practices and procedures in place to prevent and respond to allegations of reportable conduct. Our monitoring followed concerns about the quantity and quality of notifications submitted by this entity and the timeliness of its investigations.

We identified the entity did not have up-to-date processes, employees were not skilled in identifying reportable conduct, incidents were often investigated internally and not reported to our Office, and investigations were sometimes cancelled when a complaint was withdrawn.



We provided feedback to the designated entity about its policies and procedures. The designated entity accepted this feedback and advised it would work to improve its reportable conduct practices as a priority.

Our Office will continue to monitor the progress of the designated entity's implementation of our feedback in 2026–27.

Inspection reports

Post Visit Report: ACT Watch House and Police Stations

In March 2026, in our role as part of the ACT NPM and in collaboration with the Commonwealth NPM, we published a [Post Visit Report](#) about our visits to the ACT Watch House and Police Stations between 23 May and 23 June 2025.

We made 30 recommendations across a broad range of topics (see [Part 10](#)), including:

- improvements in data collection and oversight
- critical infrastructure enhancements for existing and future policing facilities, important safeguards for the dignity and privacy of people deprived of liberty
- safety improvements, including further training and the adoption of body scanner technology
- reviewing the staffing model to ensure adequate coverage at all times
- addressing transportation vehicle deficiencies.

Monitoring child sex offenders in your community – how did ACT Policing go?

In September 2025, we published [Monitoring child sex offenders in your community – how did ACT Policing go?](#), containing the results of our inspection conducted in September 2024. We found ACT Policing was generally compliant with the record-keeping requirements of the [Crimes \(Child Sex Offenders\) Act 2005](#), but was not taking proactive action to disclose information for law enforcement purposes in circumstances where registrable offenders had breached their reporting conditions.



The report also noted that ACT Policing had not complied with internal policies and procedures for updating risk assessments and undertaking compliance checks.

Post Visit Summary: Bimberi Youth Justice Centre

In August 2025, in our role as part of the ACT NPM, we published a [Post Visit Summary](#) about our visit to the Bimberi Youth Justice Centre on 7 May 2025.

We made 6 recommendations, including responding to past recommendations from other reviews, keeping records of attendance, ensuring access of oversight entities, prioritising diversion programs and introducing body-worn cameras (see [Part 10](#)).



Part 3. Investigations and inspections

Systemic investigations

We publicly reported on the findings from 3 systemic investigations during 2025–26 (see [Part 2](#)):

- [*Left in limbo – when an agency doesn't make a decision: an investigation into Access Canberra's handling of an application for a Working with Vulnerable People card*](#)
- [*Falling through the gaps: how Housing ACT manages tenant requests for repairs to their homes*](#)
- [*Phone call charges at the Alexander Maconochie Centre: what does it really cost?: An investigation into ACT Corrective Services' administration of telephone call charges.*](#)

In addition, we have 2 own motion investigations underway.

ACT Policing's mistaken arrest of an Aboriginal teenager

In November 2025, the ACT Ombudsman commenced an [own motion investigation](#) into ACT Policing's mistaken arrest of a teenager at gunpoint during a search for an alleged offender on 11 November 2025. The focus of our investigation is on the systems, practice improvements and lessons that can be learned. Our findings will be reported when the investigation is complete.

Access Canberra's use of automated decision-making

In August 2025, the ACT Ombudsman commenced an own motion investigation into Access Canberra's use of automated decision-making (ADM).

Following a complaint investigation, the Ombudsman considered it timely to more broadly examine how Access Canberra employs ADM across its business areas. The objective is to assess whether Access Canberra's ADM policies, processes, systems and practices align with relevant legislation and comply with administrative law principles, human rights obligations, and privacy and data security requirements. Our findings will be reported when the investigation is complete.

Inspections

We publicly reported on 3 inspections during 2025–26 (see [Part 2](#)):

- [Post Visit Report](#) about our visits to the ACT Watch House and Police Stations
- [Monitoring child sex offenders in your community – how did ACT Policing go?](#)
- [Post Visit Summary](#) about our visit to Bimberi Youth Justice Centre.

As ACT Ombudsman, through our oversight of covert and intrusive powers (see [Part 9](#)), we:

- undertook assurance activities in relation to how controlled operations were conducted by ACT Policing and the ACT Integrity Commission
- inspected ACT Policing's use of surveillance devices powers
- conducted an inspection of the ACT Child Sex Offenders Register, with findings to be finalised.

As a member of the ACT NPM, we participated in 2 NPM visits (see [Part 10](#)), both of which were led by the ACT Human Rights Commission:

- in February 2026, we joined the visit to the Eating Disorders Residential Treatment Centre.
- in July 2025, we joined the visit to Dhulwa Mental Health Unit.

As the Inspector of the ACT Integrity Commission, we completed 2 inspections of the Commission's conflict of interest register for the Commissioner and Commission staff (see [Part 8](#)). As Commonwealth Ombudsman, we conducted one inspection of the Commission's access to stored communications and telecommunications data under Chapters 3 and 4 of the [Telecommunications \(Interception and Access\) Act 1979](#) (Cth) (see [Part 9](#)).



Monitoring recommendations

When we complete an own motion investigation, we monitor and report on the actions agencies take to implement the recommendations they have accepted.

ACT Ombudsman

As ACT Ombudsman, we monitor and report on the implementation of recommendations from our past complaint and own motion investigations in a series called 'Actions Speak.' In 2025–26, we did not publish any 'Actions Speak' reports. However, we did formally assess Housing ACT and ACT Revenue Office's (ACTRO's) implementation of outstanding recommendations from past investigations.

Housing ACT: How do you tell someone they have to move?

In December 2024, we published [*Actions Speak. Housing ACT's Implementation of recommendations*](#) assessing the implementation of recommendations from our July 2023 report [*How do you tell someone they have to move?*](#) At that time, we found 5 recommendations implemented, 3 superseded and one (Recommendation 7) partially implemented. Recommendation 7 related to Housing ACT implementing a process to better collect, analyse and use information from complaints received to improve implementation and service delivery of the Growing and Renewing Public Housing Program (the Program).

In 2025–26, we reassessed Recommendation 7. Given the change in the Program's operating context and that the complaint collection process has been effectively replaced by a new operating model within the Health and Community Services Directorate, we found that the recommendation has been superseded.

We emphasised to Housing ACT that the intent of the recommendation, namely the importance of using complaints information to improve service delivery, is an important principle for Housing ACT and, more broadly, the Health and Community Services Directorate to bear in mind.

We have closed our formal monitoring of the recommendations from [*How do you tell someone they have to move?*](#)

ACT Revenue Office: Commercial land valuations

In July 2024, we published [*Actions Speak: ACT Revenue Office Implementation of recommendations in the Investigation into the transparency of commercial land valuation decisions*](#). We found 8 recommendations implemented and one recommendation (Recommendation 5) partially implemented.

Recommendation 5 required the deployment of a client portal. Initially, we were advised the portal would be deployed in August 2024, but when we followed up in May 2025 we were advised it had been deprioritised to instead be deployed in August 2025. In May 2026, in response to our request for information, ACTRO informed us that the final actions were now expected to be completed by mid-July 2026.

We received a demonstration of the client portal before it went live on 15 July 2026. Based on the demonstration and our testing of its functionality, we have assessed this recommendation as implemented after the go live date.

We have closed our formal monitoring of the recommendations from [*Investigation into the transparency of commercial land valuation decisions in the ACT*](#).

ACT Revenue Office: Historical debts investigation (private)

In May 2025, we published [*What's Fair? Collecting historical debts*](#) following an investigation into ACTRO's handling of historical debts. At the time, we also made private recommendations and suggestions to the ACTRO, which went to specific actions to address some of the complaints that had informed the broader public report.

In 2025–26, we assessed the implementation of the accepted recommendation and suggestion and found them to be implemented.

While we have closed our formal monitoring of the private report, we continue to monitor the 4 recommendations from [*What's Fair? Collecting historical debts*](#).

Ongoing monitoring

We continue to monitor recommendations from our recently published reports (see [*Part 2*](#)), as well as older reports: [*Use of force by ACT Policing: more to do to lessen harm*](#) (2025), [*ACT Policing's administrative framework for engagement with the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community*](#) (2021) and [*Parole processes at the*](#)



[Alexander Maconochie Centre – Investigation into the administration of parole by ACT Corrective Services](#) (2020).

Inspector

As Inspector of the ACT Integrity Commission, we continue to monitor the accepted recommendation from our recent [Investigation into a procurement by the ACT Integrity Commission](#) and 2 suggestions made following complaints investigations (see [Part 8](#)).

ACT NPM

As part of the ACT NPM and in collaboration with the Commonwealth NPM, we published the [Assessment of Implementation of Past Suggestions: ACT Watch House and Police Stations](#) (see [Part 2](#) and [Part 10](#)).

The ACT NPM continues to monitor recommendations from our visits, including to the [ACT Watch House and ACT Police Stations](#) and [Bimberi Youth Justice Centre](#) (see [Part 10](#)).

Part 4. Submissions, engagement and education

Submissions

During 2025–26, the ACT Ombudsman participated in various inquiries and consultation processes, contributing our insights and perspectives on a variety of matters.

Submissions and inquiry appearances

As ACT Ombudsman and as part of the ACT NPM, we made submissions to several ACT Legislative Assembly inquiries and reviews, including:

- the Standing Committee on Legal Affairs' Inquiry into Bail Amendment Bill 2026 ([ACT NPM submission](#))
- the Standing Committee on Legal Affairs' Inquiry into Legislation on proposed firearms reform ([ACT Ombudsman submission](#))
- the Legislative Assembly's independent assessment of the Implementation of the Latimer House Principles on the Separation of Powers of the Three Branches of Government in the Australian Capital Territory (not published)
- the Standing Committee on Transport and City Services' Inquiry into the provision of municipal services in Canberra ([ACT Ombudsman submission](#))
- the Standing Committee on Public Accounts and Administration's Inquiry into the Home Buyers Concession Scheme Administration ([ACT Ombudsman submission](#)).

At the request of one committee, we made a private submission to one of their inquiries.

We appeared at public hearings before the:

- Standing Committee on Legal Affairs as part of its Inquiry into the Bail Amendment Bill 2026
- Standing Committee on Legal Affairs as part of its Inquiry into Legislation on proposed firearms reform



- Standing Committee on the Integrity Commission and Statutory Office Holders as part of its Inquiry into Annual and Financial Reports 2024–25
- Standing Committee on Public Accounts and Administration as part of its Inquiry into the Home Buyers Concession Scheme Administration
- Select Committee on Estimates 2025–26 as part of its Inquiry into Appropriation Bill 2025–2026 and Appropriation (Office of the Legislative Assembly) Bill 2025–2026.

At the request of one committee, we provided a private briefing on topics relevant to their oversight functions.

We also provided submissions to:

- the Commonwealth’s Joint Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs’ inquiry into racism, hate and violence directed at Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people ([Commonwealth and ACT Ombudsman submission](#))
- the statutory review of the [Terrorism \(Extraordinary Temporary Powers\) Act 2006](#) (not published)
- the review of the operation of s 70 (Strip search on admission) of the *Corrections Management Act 2007* ([ACT NPM submission](#))
- the Commonwealth’s Legal and Constitutional Affairs References Committee’s inquiry into Australia’s youth justice and incarceration system ([ACT NPM submission](#)).

As the ACT NPM, we also contributed to 3 Australian NPM submissions (see [Part 10](#)).

Consultation on legislation

As ACT Ombudsman and the ACT NPM, we were consulted on a range of ACT Government policy initiatives from their initial stages through to the drafting of legislation. Key legislation we were consulted on included amendments to:

- the [Territory Records Act 2002](#), which provided our Office with an additional oversight function
- the [Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children and Young People Commissioner Act 2022](#), which allows the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children and Young People Commissioner to share information with the ACT NPM in the exercise of their functions
- the [Ombudsman Regulations 1989](#), enabling our Office and designated entities to share information with other state and territory reportable conduct schemes

- the [Firearms \(Public Safety\) Amendment Bill 2026](#), which, if passed, would provide our Office with an additional oversight function
- the [Crimes \(Coercive Control\) Amendment Bill 2026](#), which, if passed, would include the offence of coercive control within the ACT Reportable Conduct Scheme
- the [Bail Amendment Bill 2026](#), which proposed the mandatory consideration of relevant factors in bail decision-making, especially in regard to groups of vulnerable people.

Other consultations

We have also contributed to consultations and worked with directorates on a variety of initiatives, including:

- an updated [Commonwealth Ombudsman and ACT Government Services Agreement](#) to reflect our new function under the Territory Records Act
- the ACT Government's response to the statutory review of the operation of the FOI Act (see [Part 6](#))
- the ACT Government's further response to the independent review of the Integrity Commission Act (see [Part 8](#))
- the ACT Government's response to the independent review of the Public Interest Disclosure Act
- possible amendments to the Ombudsman Act and other oversight legislation
- updates to protocols and other agreements.

Statements and communiqués

In 2025–26, we published a range of statements and communiqués.

In our role overseeing FOI, we released a:

- [joint statement](#) from Information Commissioners and the ACT Ombudsman on the findings of their fourth cross-jurisdictional study of community attitudes on access to government information
- [communiqué](#) regarding a meeting of the Association of Information Access Commissioners of Australia and New Zealand (AIAC) on 2–3 October 2025 that discussed risks, challenges and opportunities affecting the public's right of access to government-held information.



In our role overseeing the Reportable Conduct Scheme, we released a:

- [communiqué](#) on standards of investigations for reportable conduct
- [public statement](#) about monitoring a designated entity's practices and procedures for preventing and responding to allegations of reportable conduct
- [public statement](#) with an update on the implementation of recommendations following the s 17K investigation into Barnardos Australia.

As a member of the ACT NPM, we released a [public statement](#) about our collaboration with the ACT Health and Community Services Directorate in jointly delivering a Youth Justice Forum to inform the development of a fit for purpose strategic plan and model of care for the Bimberi Youth Justice Centre. We also contributed to several joint statements by the Australian NPM on a range of deprivation of liberty issues (see [Part 10](#)).

We also released a [public statement](#) announcing our Office had opened an own motion investigation into the mistaken arrest of an Aboriginal teenager by ACT Policing.

Resources

In 2025–26, we produced a range of materials to enhance our engagement and educate stakeholders:

- [Guidance Material: ACT Watch House and Police Stations](#) – as part of the ACT NPM, we developed guidance for visiting teams on what to consider when attending ACT Policing facilities.
- [ACT NPM Guidelines](#) – guidelines about the way ACT NPM members exercise their functions under the [Monitoring of Places of Detention \(Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture\) Act 2018](#).
- [ACT NPM Standard Operating Procedures](#) – procedures that set out agreed arrangements and working methods for how we, along with the Office of the Inspector of Custodial Services and the ACT Human Rights Commission, will exercise our functions as the ACT NPM.
- [OPCAT Information for service providers](#) – as part of the ACT NPM, we released a pamphlet with information about the ACT NPM's implementation of the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (OPCAT).

- [Information for detained people: Preventing abuse in places of detention](#) – as part of the ACT NPM, we released a pamphlet for detained people about the ACT NPM's implementation of OPCAT.
- [Procedural fairness](#) – a factsheet providing guidance on our procedural fairness process, including the role of agencies and how we manage information we receive.
- [How to respond to an issue of legislative non-compliance](#) – a factsheet developed to help agencies respond when a policy, procedure or practice has been identified as not complying with the law.
- [How to make a proactive disclosure](#) – a factsheet developed to help agencies make a proactive disclosure to our Office when they identify an issue of legislative non-compliance.
- [How to Respond to a Request for Information](#) – a factsheet providing guidance to agencies on our Office's request for information process.
- [Integrity Commission \(Personal Interest\) Guidelines 2025](#) – guidelines which apply to all ACT Ombudsman staff, including staff supporting the Inspector function.

Engagement

We regularly engage with agencies through meetings and liaison activities. In 2025–26, our ACT Ombudsman and ACT NPM formal engagement activities included:

- training Australian Federal Police and ACT Policing recruits on the role of the Ombudsman and the NPM (August 2025; twice in September 2025; March 2026; April 2026; twice in May 2026)
- training ACT Official Visitors (August 2025)
- delivering an information session for custodial officer recruits alongside other AMC oversight bodies (November 2025)
- attending 'Who's New On The Street' meetings to hear community groups talk about their priorities and challenges
- regularly meeting with fellow oversight agencies, including the Auditor-General, ACT Human Rights Commission, Office of the Inspector of Custodial Services, Official Visitors, the Public Sector Standards Commissioner and Office of the ACT Integrity Commission
- attending the annual meeting of Australian and New Zealand parliamentary Ombudsmen and the annual meeting of Inspectors and Parliamentary Commissioners.



For FOI (see [Part 6](#)), we:

- hosted an FOI roundtable with senior information officers in the ACT Government (July 2025)
- attended meetings of the Association of Information Access Commissioners and the Privacy Authorities Australia/Association of Information Access Commissioners Communications Working Group.

For reportable conduct (see [Part 7](#)), we hosted an online practitioner forum in June 2026.

For the NPM (see [Part 10](#)), we:

- participated in ACT NPM governance meetings throughout the year
- engaged with the ACT Health and Community Services Directorate to organise and deliver a Youth Justice Forum in partnership with the ACT NPM on 29 June 2026.

Part 5. Complaint handling

The ACT Ombudsman receives complaints from people who consider they have been treated unfairly or unreasonably by an ACT Government agency, public sector body or ACT Policing.

We assess each complaint received to determine the most appropriate course of action. Complaints that are not in our jurisdiction may be referred to an organisation that is in a better position to help the person resolve their complaint. Complaints in our jurisdiction undergo further assessment to determine if the agency has been made aware of the issue, and if preliminary inquiries or an investigation of the matter are warranted. When making these assessments, we focus on whether there is something we can do to resolve the individual complaint, while also identifying any potential systemic issues.

While we cannot compel an agency to take any action in response to a complaint, we can make recommendations and suggestions about actions we believe would be appropriate.

There are several outcomes that can help resolve a complaint. These include a better explanation of an agency's action, an apology, a refund or a change of decision. Sometimes agencies may take further action or expedite a process already underway.

A vital part of complaints management is the ongoing improvement of administrative processes. We provide feedback to agencies to help avoid unfair or unreasonable decisions or actions and to ensure better communication with the public. Improving public administration is at the heart of what we do.

Contacts

In 2025–26, **1,238** contacts were made to our Office, compared to 977 in 2024–25. Contacts included:

- **620** complaints about ACT agencies, organisations and ACT Policing
- **598** program specific matters (for example, FOI review requests or reportable conduct notifications)
- **20** ACT Inspector complaints (see [Part 8](#)).

These are discussed in more detail in the sections below.



Complaints management

Complaints received

During 2025–26, we received 663 complaints across all of our functions. This is 141 more than last year and represents a 27% increase in complaints. As shown in [Table 4](#), complaints about ACT agencies account for most of this rise.

Complaint numbers can fluctuate over different periods, reflecting changes in agency complaint handling, or greater or lesser public awareness of external complaint avenues.

Table 4 ACT complaints received over the last 4 financial years

Complaints received	2022–23	2023–24	2024–25	2025–26
ACT agencies	354	325	403	524
ACT Policing	54	72	79	96
FOI Act	13	4	4	9
Reportable Conduct Scheme	16	8	11	14
ACT Integrity Commission	5	21	25	20
Total complaints received	442	430	522	663

Note: This data is dynamic and may be updated. For this reason, there may be minor differences when compared to previous published reports.

Further discussion about the handling of complaints about ACT agencies and ACT Policing is set out below, with information on complaints about FOI, reportable conduct and the Integrity Commission set out in the parts of this report relevant to each function (see [Part 6](#), [Part 7](#) and [Part 8](#) respectively).

ACT agencies and ACT Policing

[Table 5](#) shows a breakdown of the 620 complaints received in 2025–26 by the ACT Ombudsman about the administrative actions of ACT agencies (524 complaints) and ACT Policing (96 complaints).



Table 5 *ACT directorate, agency and ACT Policing complaints received 2025–26*

ACT reporting portfolio	Complaints received	% of total complaints
Health and Community Services Directorate	176	28%
City and Environment Directorate	119	19%
Justice and Community Safety Directorate	79	13%
Chief Minister, Treasury & Economic Development Directorate	50	8%
Education Directorate	25	4%
Canberra Health Services	12	2%
Digital Canberra	1	<1%
Infrastructure Canberra	2	<1%
Total complaints received (ACT directorates)	464	75%
Other bodies and authorities	47	8%
ACT Courts and Tribunal	11	2%
Territory-owned corporations	2	<1%
Total complaints received (ACT directorates and other bodies)	524	85%
ACT Policing	96	16%
Total complaints received (ACT directorates and other bodies, ACT Policing)	620	100%

**Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding.*

Due to machinery of government changes in July 2025, it is difficult to compare the complaint numbers of each directorate with 2024–25, as key areas have moved between portfolios. For example, the Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate (CMTEDD) regularly used to be the most complained about directorate, but with Access Canberra moving to the newly formed City and Environment Directorate (CED), CMTEDD is no longer in the top 3.

Over half of complaints received by the ACT Ombudsman in 2025–26 related to 3 directorates:

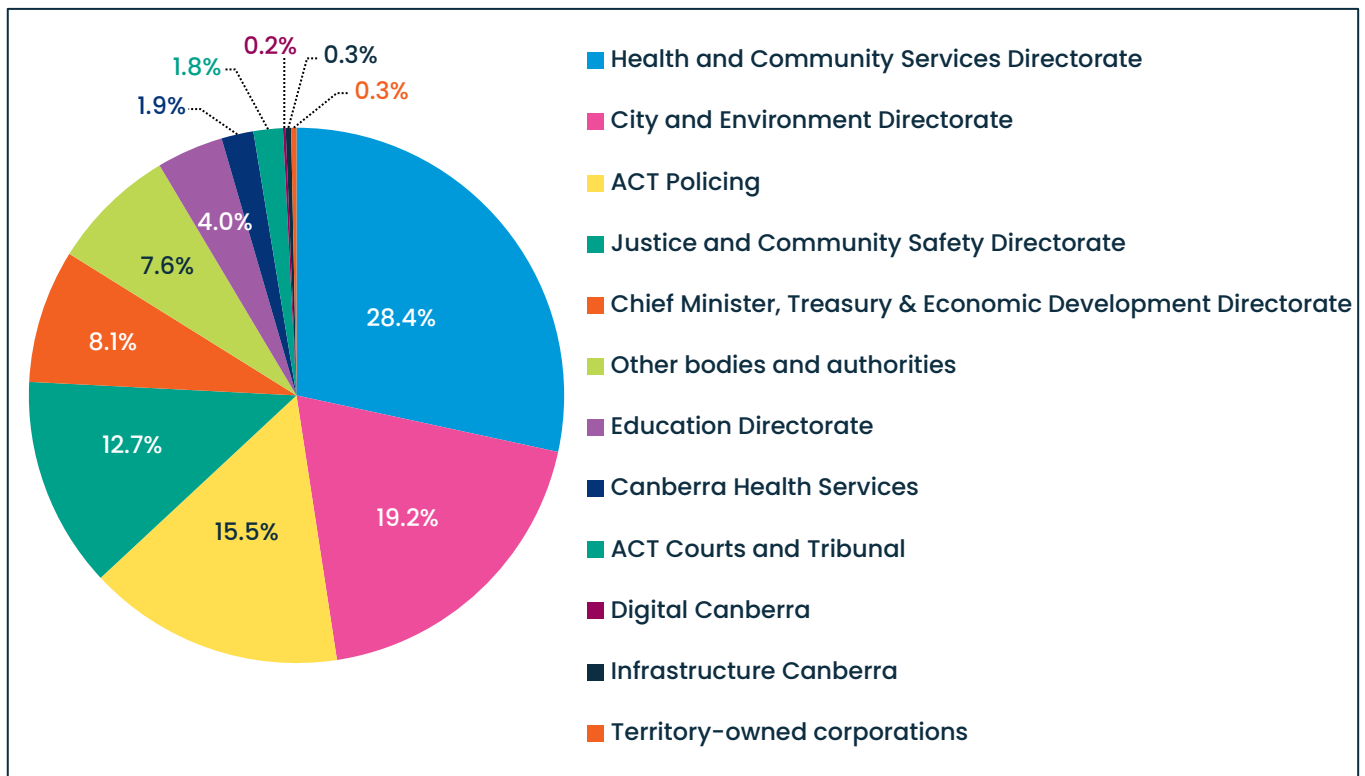
- Health and Community Services Directorate (176 complaints)
- City and Environment Directorate (119 complaints)
- Justice and Community Safety Directorate (79 complaints).

Sixteen per cent of complaints were about ACT Policing (96 complaints).



Figure 5 shows the percentages of complaints received by the ACT Ombudsman about each directorate, agency and ACT Policing in 2025–26.

Figure 5 ACT directorates, other bodies and ACT Policing complaints by percentage received in 2025–26



Complaint trends

General trends

The top 5 agencies — Housing ACT, ACT Policing, Access Canberra, ACT Corrective Services and ACT Revenue Office — made up 71% of our complaints (439 of 620). Detail on the numbers of complaints received by the ACT Ombudsman by directorate and agency is at [Appendix A](#).

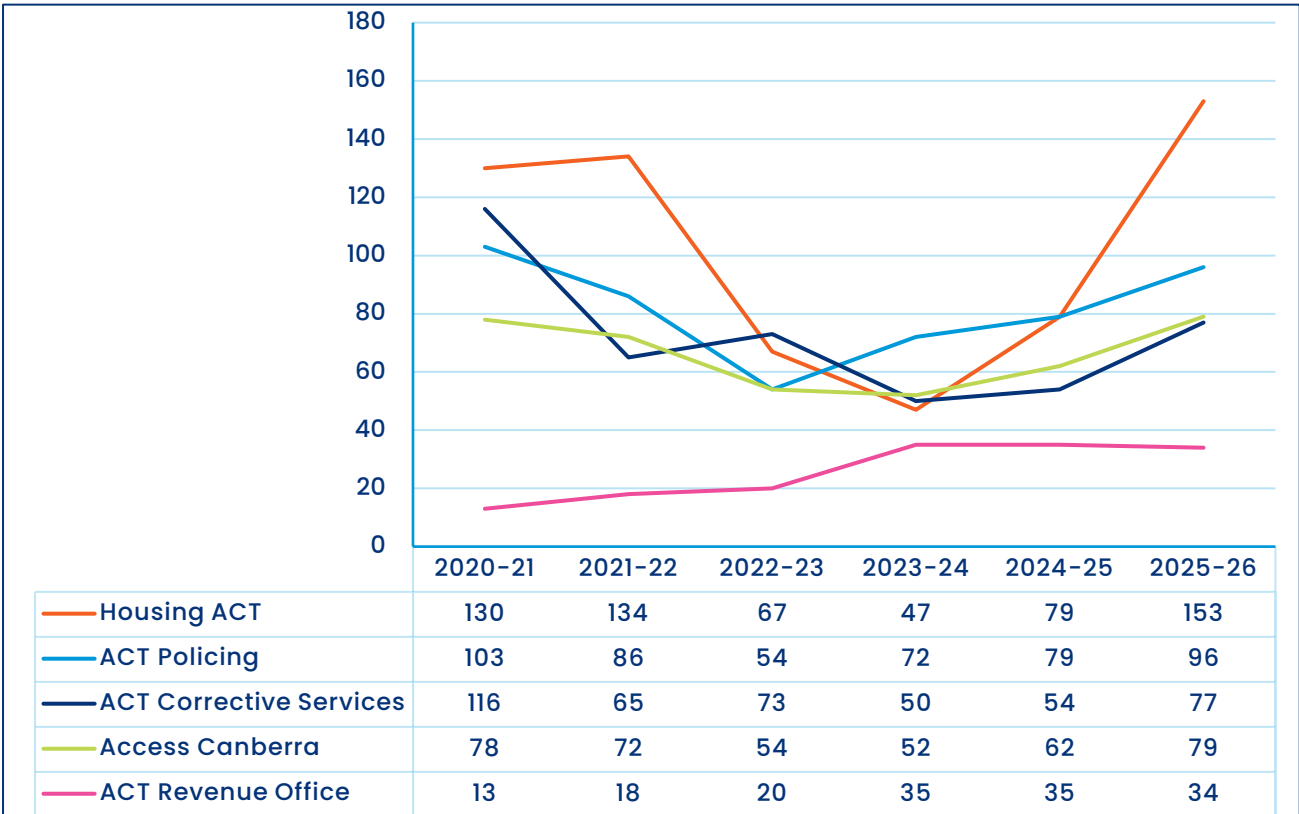
Housing ACT was the most complained about agency, receiving 153 complaints during 2025–26. ACT Policing (96), Access Canberra (79) and ACT Corrective Services (77) were the next most complained about agencies.

The top 5 most complained about agencies have been our top 5 for the previous 6 years (see [Figure 6](#)). While complaints increased for each of these agencies in 2025–26, the most significant increase related to Housing ACT (94%). The increases in

complaints about ACT Corrective Services (43%), Access Canberra (27%) and ACT Policing (22%) were more modest but still significant.

After rising from 20 complaints in 2022–23 to 35 complaints received in 2023–24 and 2024–25, the number of complaints about the ACT Revenue Office stabilised this year (34 complaints received in 2025–26).

Figure 6 Complaints received for the top 5 agencies by financial year since 1 July 2020



Note: This data is dynamic and may be updated. For this reason, there may be minor differences when compared to previous published reports.

The main issues of concern for each of these 5 agencies in complaints made to the ACT Ombudsman during 2025–26 are outlined below.

Housing ACT

Under machinery of government changes, Infrastructure Canberra (iCBR) has assumed responsibility for maintenance of Housing ACT properties. However, Housing ACT remains the interface with tenants, and our data continues to assign the complaints against Housing ACT.

During 2025–26, the Office received 153 complaints about Housing ACT, a significant (94%) increase from the 79 complaints we received in 2024–25.



The most common issues raised in Housing ACT complaints continued to be:

- maintenance and repair issues, including timeliness, lack of communication and unsatisfactory completion of tasks
- living conditions, including mould and/or persistent moisture issues
- new housing applications, including lengthy processing times and unsatisfactory outcomes
- anti-social behaviour and neighbourhood disputes
- administration of public housing waitlists/requests for transfers, including lengthy processing times and unsatisfactory outcomes or decisions.

The increase in complaints against Housing ACT was consistent throughout 2025–26. While we published our investigation report into how Housing ACT managed tenant requests for repairs to their homes in March 2026 (see [Part 2](#)), this did not result in a spike of complaints.

We engage with Housing ACT through regular meetings that include discussion of complaint trends, emerging issues and changes affecting how complaints are handled by Housing ACT.

ACT Policing

The ACT Ombudsman received 96 complaints about ACT Policing during 2025–26, a 22% increase from 79 complaints received in 2024–25. Key issues identified in ACT Policing complaints included:

- inaction and failure to investigate or respond
- officer misconduct and excessive use of force
- targeted policing or discrimination.

If a complainant has not yet raised their complaint about ACT Policing with the Australian Federal Police (AFP), we commonly refer the complaint for investigation by the AFP's Professional Standards area. We engage routinely with ACT Policing at various levels, with touch-points relevant to complaints, investigations and inspections.

Access Canberra

The ACT Ombudsman received 79 complaints about Access Canberra in 2025–26, a 27% increase from 62 complaints in 2024–25.

The most common issues raised in Access Canberra complaints included:



- fines, including parking, mobile phone use, seatbelt use, speeding infringements and disputes
- registrations and licences, including building and construction licences and certificates; delayed or denied licence or vehicle registration transfers; suspensions and cancellations; and medical conditions and exemptions
- customer service, including delays, staff behaviour and decisions.

We engage with Access Canberra through regular meetings that include discussion of complaint trends, emerging issues and changes affecting how complaints are handled by Access Canberra.

ACT Corrective Services

During 2025–26, we received 77 complaints about ACT Corrective Services, all of which were about the Alexander Maconochie Centre (AMC). This was a 43% increase from the 54 complaints in 2024–25.

The most common issues in ACT Corrective Services complaints included:

- telephone calls and visitation, including restrictions on telephone calls/visits from family and friends and excessive call charges
- accommodation, including inadequate accommodation, segregation, conflict between detainees and dissatisfaction with decisions
- health, including access to medical treatment or medication and inadequate catering/ability to meet dietary requirements
- officer conduct.

We work closely with other AMC oversight agencies and maintain regular contact with ACT Corrective Services, including through joint meetings and other communication, which allows us to raise and monitor issues of potential concern.

ACT Revenue Office

During 2025–26, we received 34 complaints about the ACT Revenue Office (ACTRO), which is in line with 35 complaints received in 2024–25.

The most common issues in ACTRO complaints included:

- historical debts, including levying of the debt, accrued interest charges and lack of timely communication and notifications
- customer service, including poor administrative practices and inconsistent advice



- communication, including lack of clear and consistent communication.

We engage with ACTRO through regular meetings that include discussion of complaint trends, emerging issues and monitoring of recommendations.

Complaints finalised and outcomes

We finalised 625 complaints in 2025–26 (see [Table 6](#)), which is a 17% increase on 2024–25. Of these, 496 complaints related to ACT agencies, with 139 about Housing ACT, 94 about ACT Policing and 80 about ACT Corrective Services.

Table 6 ACT complaints finalised 2025–26 compared to previous financial years.

	2022–23	2023–24	2024–25	2025–26
ACT Government agencies	387	286	418	496
ACT Policing	67	50	81	94
ACT FOI	13	4	1	3
ACT Reportable Conduct	15	9	11	11
ACT Integrity Commission	3	21	25	21
Total	485	370	536	625

Note: This data is dynamic and may be updated. For this reason, there may be minor differences when compared to previous published reports.

Positive outcomes for complainants can be achieved with or without a formal investigation. For example, there are times when we can provide a better explanation about decisions to a complainant based on our knowledge of directorates or agencies, or where an agency agrees, after receiving an initial enquiry from our office, that it will reconsider the action.

We finalised 33% of complaints by referring the complainant to the agency of concern's internal complaints pathway. An agency reviewing its own actions can be the quickest way to achieve an outcome for a complainant, because the agency has the ability to change its initial decision.

We finalised a further 32% of complaints without formal investigation. This included complaints where preliminary assessment led to a decision not to use our formal powers to investigate because it was not needed or warranted in the circumstances.

What happened?

In 2025, a complainant contacted our Office to make a complaint about an historical control order issued by Domestic Animal Services on their dog. The complaint was about how the control order was issued and its ongoing impact on the complainant and their dog. The complainant contacted our Office again requesting priority consideration, as a destruction order had been issued for the dog and they had 7 days to respond.

What did we do?

The complaint was triaged and given priority because of the time critical urgency of the matter. The Complaints Officer reviewed all of the material provided by the complainant and made 2 decisions:

- The complaint about actions from several years ago would not be investigated, due to the significant time elapsed since the order was given.
- The complaint about the destruction order would not be investigated, as the complainant had the ability to instead appeal to the ACT Civil and Administrative Tribunal.

The Complaints Officer contacted the complainant by phone and explained their decisions. The complainant was encouraged to consider appealing to the Tribunal, as the Tribunal had the power to change the destruction order, something we could at the most only recommend.

These decisions and information were provided by phone as quickly as practicable given the external timeframes and to help the complainant decide on their next steps.

Other complaints were finalised without formal investigation where the matter would be better pursued elsewhere, was out-of-jurisdiction, where the complainant was no longer engaging in the process or withdrew their complaint, or where a matter had already been considered. Seventeen per cent of complaints were finalised because the complaint was withdrawn or lapsed.

We transferred 31 complaints to the ACT Human Rights Commission (ACT HRC), as the complaints were about health services, disability services, or services for children or



young people or services for older people. We engage with the ACT HRC throughout the year to support the effective and efficient transfer of complaints across both entities.

Case study

Communication is key

What happened?

A couple of years ago, growth of a street tree resulted in damage to the kerb at the front of a home. The resident was concerned about potential risks to vehicles using the driveway and a trip hazard for pedestrians walking on the nature strip. They reported the issue to the ACT Government using the Fix My Street online tool.

An inspector attended the property and marked the damaged area with paint. Over the next 2 years, the complainant occasionally followed up for an update. They did not get a satisfactory response. They complained about the delay to Access Canberra. When they did not get a satisfactory response, they complained to our Office.

What did we do?

Our Complaints Officer reviewed the information provided by the complainant and discussed the complaint with them. The complainant explained inspectors had recently attended their premises. The complainant was concerned that this was the same process they had experienced before and that no action would be taken to fix the kerb.

Our Complaints Officer made preliminary inquiries and asked Access Canberra about the status of the Fix My Street report, expected timeframe for rectification and status of the complaint made to Access Canberra.

What was the outcome of our inquiry?

The City and Environment Directorate told us they had recently been in contact with the complainant and provided a timeframe for rectification of the kerb.

The complainant also reached out to us letting us know they had been contacted by the ACT Government. The complainant was satisfied with the update, and we closed the complaint.

Investigated complaints

During 2025–26, the Office finalised 39 formal complaint investigations about ACT directorates, agencies and ACT Policing. This is higher than the 15 complaint investigations finalised in 2024–25 and in part reflects our focus on systemic issues in Housing ACT’s handling of repairs and maintenance requests (see [Part 2](#)). Housing ACT accounted for nearly half (46%) of our finalised investigations, with 18 finalised complaint investigations.

Our investigations achieve outcomes for individuals, including through decisions being remade, financial remedies, clearer explanations about decisions and apologies for administrative errors. We also identify opportunities and make suggestions to improve an entity’s administrative policies and practices, communication with the public or staff training.

Following our independent and impartial review of concerns raised, we found in one case the agency had acted appropriately and in accordance with its obligations. Other outcomes recorded following our investigations included:

- the agency or the Ombudsman gave a better explanation to the complainant (11)
- the agency provided a non-financial remedy (6)
- the agency provided a remedy without Ombudsman intervention (5)
- the agency reconsidered the matter (5)
- the agency changed its policy or practice (5).

More than one outcome can be achieved per finalised investigation. The table at [Appendix B](#) provides further details of the outcomes of complaint investigations finalised during 2025–26.

Performance against complaint handling service standards

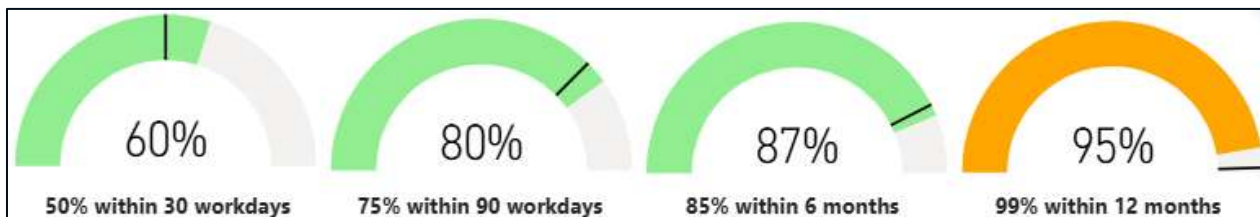
We have service standards which we apply to complaints received in relation to government entities in both the Commonwealth Ombudsman’s jurisdiction and the ACT Ombudsman’s jurisdiction.



In 2025–26, we met 3 out of 4 performance standards (see [Figure 7](#)) for finalising complaints in a timely manner:

- 60% of complaints were finalised within 30 workdays (above the target of 50%).
- 80% of complaints were finalised within 90 workdays (above the target of 75%).
- 87% of complaints were finalised within 6 months (above the target of 85%).
- 95% of complaints were finalised within 12 months (below the target of 99%).

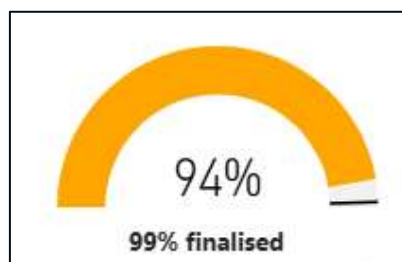
Figure 7 Performance against complaint finalisation timeliness standards 2025–26



We came within 5 percentage points of meeting all 4 performance standards. This is a turnaround from 2024–25, when we did not meet any of the 4 performance standards. We have been able to achieve this improvement even with the 27% increase in complaints.

Along with the timely finalisation of complaints, we also aim to ensure the number of complaints finalised each quarter is greater than or equal to 99% of the total number of complaints received. [Figure 8](#) shows that, this year, we received more complaints than we finalised (620 received, 590 finalised), which has contributed to an increase in on-hand complaints.

Figure 8 Finalised complaints as a percentage of total complaints received in 2025–26



We continue to review our processes to improve our performance, with particular focus on our triage processes at first touch and early identification and analysis of potential systemic issues. During the financial year, we implemented a new customer relationship management system with a modern and more reliable platform. We are continuing to explore technology solutions to drive efficiency.

Part 6. Freedom of information oversight

The ACT Ombudsman oversees the ACT [Freedom of Information Act 2016](#) (FOI Act) and promotes its objects by:

- conducting independent merits review of decisions on access applications
- publishing guidelines to assist FOI practitioners who make access decisions
- granting extensions of time to decide access applications
- investigating complaints about an agency's or Minister's actions under the FOI Act
- monitoring agencies' and Ministers' compliance with their open access obligations.

In reviewing a decision, we can confirm or vary the original decision or set it aside and substitute it with a new decision. Ombudsman review decisions are binding and may be appealed to the ACT Civil and Administrative Tribunal.

We resolve review matters informally where possible. For example, we can facilitate a compromise where an agency and applicant agree to some additional information being provided to the applicant, and the review application is subsequently withdrawn. We also work closely with agencies through regular forums to support them to build capability and meet their obligations under the FOI Act.

We publish a separate report every year on the operation of the FOI Act. This report is available on our [ACT Ombudsman website](#).

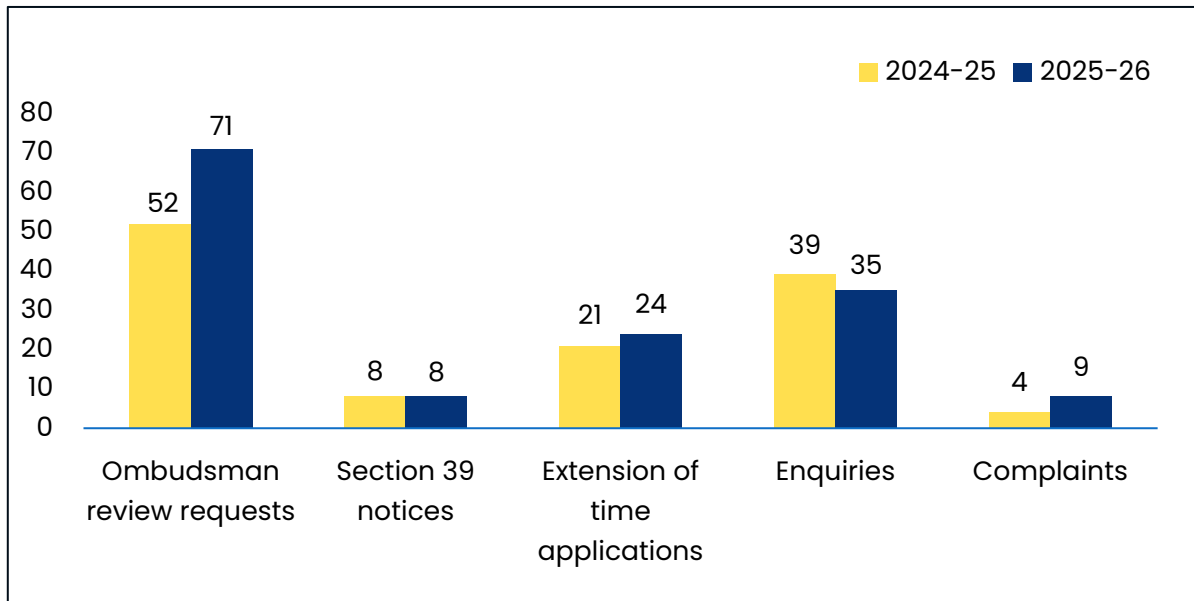
FOI contacts

The ACT Ombudsman received 147 contacts about our role under the FOI Act in 2025–26, compared to 124 contacts in 2024–25. The contacts included (also at [Figure 9](#)):

- 71 applications for Ombudsman review
- 8 notices given to the Ombudsman under s 39 to advise that an agency decision on an access application had not been made in time
- 24 extension of time requests from agencies
- 35 enquiries
- 9 complaints.



Figure 9 Contacts received under the FOI Act in 2025–26 compared to 2024–25



The 37% increase in FOI review applications may be due to an overall increase in FOI access applications to agencies, which has been anecdotally reported to the Ombudsman by agencies during our engagement in 2025–26. We observed that requests from Members of the Legislative Assembly decreased from 8 (15% of review applications) in 2024–25 to 3 (4% of review applications) in 2025–26.

FOI enquiries received by the Office remained steady, with 35 enquiries received in 2025–26, compared to 39 in 2024–25.

In 2025–26, the number of FOI complaints increased by 5. Despite the increase, the number remains relatively low. The Office managed to resolve some of the issues raised by members of the community by providing advice, information or referrals. In some cases, a complaint resulted in an Ombudsman review request, once the complainant was provided information by the Office about the review process.

Finalised Ombudsman reviews

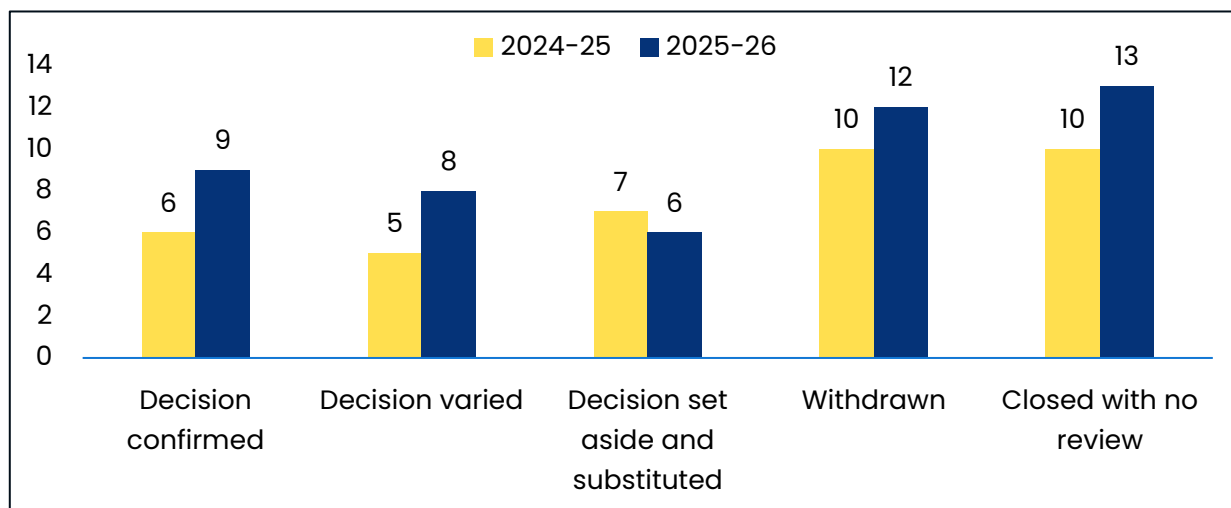
The ACT Ombudsman finalised 48 Ombudsman reviews in 2025–26 (see [Figure 10](#)). This was an increase on the 38 reviews finalised in 2024–25.

The outcomes of these 48 Ombudsman reviews were:

- the original decision was **confirmed** in 9 cases
- the original decision was **varied** in 8 cases

- the original decision was **set aside and substituted** with a new decision in 6 cases
- 12 applications were **withdrawn** following informal resolution
- 13 applications were **finalised without review** (for example, where the Office found there were no reasonable prospects of the original decision changing or where the matter was otherwise resolved).

Figure 10 FOI review requests finalised in 2025–26 compared to 2024–25



There was an increase in the number of reviews resolved by confirming the original decision made by the respondent, from 6 in 2024–25 to 9 in 2025–26, and the same increase in the number of reviews resolved without review, from 10 in 2024–25 to 13 in 2025–26.

Twelve review applications were resolved informally in 2025–26, compared to 10 in 2024–25. These numbers have remained consistent across the last 4 annual reporting periods, with approximately 25% of matters being resolved informally.

We continue to work with agencies to improve decision-making and the articulation of reasoning in decision notices. We use our draft considerations and final decisions as tools to improve agencies’ consideration of ACT FOI applications.

The percentage of ACT FOI review applications being varied or set aside has remained consistent with previous reporting periods at 29% for 2025–26, compared to 31% for 2024–25.

While it is encouraging to see this number has not been increasing, it suggests agencies could still better consider and articulate ACT FOI decisions, including



providing more detail about how the public interest factors have been balanced and explaining why releasing the information sought is contrary to the public interest.

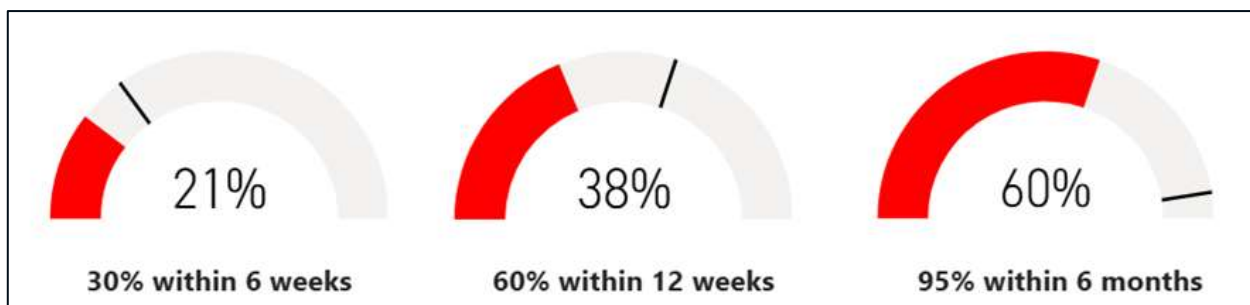
FOI review service standards

We have service standards for our FOI review applications. Our ability to meet service standards can vary depending on the number of cases finalised through informal resolution processes, the number of enquiries and extension of time requests received, other projects, resourcing pressures and the complexity of matters.

In 2025–26, as shown at [Figure 11](#), we did not meet the 3 service standards in relation to the 48 matters that were finalised:

- 21% of FOI review matters were finalised within 6 weeks (below the standard of 30%)
- 38% were finalised within 12 weeks (below the standard of 60%)
- 60% were finalised within 6 months (below the standard of 95%).

Figure 11 Performance against FOI service standards in 2025–26



The significant increase in enquiries, review applications and extension of time requests, along with increased third-party participation in reviews, impacted our Office's ability to finalise more reviews and to meet our performance standards.

We have seen a slight improvement this year in KPI 3, which is notable, given the significant increase in review applications. Despite the 37% increase in review applications, we finalised more reviews in 2025–26 than in 2024–25.

We continue to see an increase in complex matters. Complex matters require additional time and actions to be taken in completing the review, including multiple requests to parties for more information, the review of sensitive material, third party involvement, the information at issue being voluminous, or the additional work required

to assist parties to resolve matters informally. In 2025–26, we focused on resolving several older complex matters. Of the 48 finalised, 7 were from 2024 and 37 from 2025.

Where a formal decision is required, routine matters are expected to take 12 weeks to finalise, with complex matters taking longer. Several complex matters were finalised in this reporting period. As part of the review process, we also provide parties with the opportunity to respond to our preliminary view before the review decision is finalised.

We have observed an increase in the number of third parties participating in reviews. Further, several complex reviews were finalised in this reporting period where the information at issue concerned private sector business information and employment-related matters requiring substantial analysis.

Employment related matters

A significant number of applications for Ombudsman review related to personal employment matters, including misconduct processes, complaints and employment disputes. In many of these matters, applicants were dissatisfied with information received or the outcome following formal workplace management action, and sought information about the complaint made against them, the action taken in response to the complaint, and details about why certain employment decisions have been made.

These Ombudsman reviews consider the appropriate balance between the public interest in protecting an agency's management function or ability to conduct industrial relations, and the public interest in providing a person access to their own personal information and the reasons for a government decision.

In our view, employment related matters are better handled through industrial relations frameworks, complaint processes, and/or administrative release of information mechanisms. We have suggested directorates consider their approach to better handle access applications of this nature.

FOI published decisions

In 2025–26, we published 23 FOI decisions on the [ACT Ombudsman website](#). Publication of decisions provides agencies and applicants with guidance on the FOI Act, including the application of the public interest test and transparency in decision-making.



Open access monitoring

In 2024–25, we asked agencies to complete an Open Access Information Scheme (OAIS) self-assessment checklist, available in the [Freedom of Information \(Volume 1 - Open Access Information\) Guidelines 2020](#).

Our review of the results indicates that most agencies are meeting their basic OAIS obligations under the FOI Act and take a pro-disclosure approach. We were pleased to find agencies reported high compliance with the following requirements:

- the publication of functional information
- the publication of policy documents
- disclosure log information
- website information about how to request information without a formal access application.

The results also identify some areas for improvement, including:

- ensuring the OAIS strategy is reviewed annually
- conducting a public interest assessment where access is withheld
- publishing reasons for withholding access.

We will continue to monitor the operation of the OAIS and progress the open access monitoring strategy.

FOI engagement activities

Throughout 2025–26, we engaged with stakeholders in a variety of ways. We continued to communicate formally and informally with agencies, providing advice and clarification of FOI matters.

The ACT Ombudsman attended 2 meetings of the Association of Information Access Commissioners: one on 2 and 3 October 2025 and one on 29 and 30 April 2026.

We attend meetings of the Privacy Authorities Australia/Association of Information Access Commissioners Communications Working Group. With support from the NSW Information and Privacy Commission, we contribute to the [national dashboard and metrics on the public's use of FOI laws](#).



Part 7. Reportable Conduct Scheme

Under the ACT Reportable Conduct Scheme (the scheme), which is set out in Division 2.2A of the [Ombudsman Act](#), the ACT Ombudsman oversees how designated entities⁶ prevent and respond to allegations of child abuse and child-related misconduct by employees.

In addition to reporting to ACT Policing, Children, Youth and Families (CYF), and/or any other relevant professional or regulatory bodies, designated entities covered by the scheme must:

- report to the ACT Ombudsman allegations or convictions relating to child-related misconduct by employees, including volunteers and contractors, in the context of their professional or private activities⁷
- have practices and procedures in place to prevent reportable conduct, respond to such allegations and convictions, and to handle and share information in accordance with provisions in the [Children and Young People Act 2008](#) (CYP Act).

The ACT Ombudsman's role is to:

- receive and assess designated entities' responses to reportable conduct allegations or convictions, including the designated entity's response and the adequacy of any investigation carried out by the designated entity
- monitor the above practices and procedures a designated entity has in place to meet its obligations under the scheme.

The scheme does not replace or interfere with police investigations.

⁶ 'Designated entities' covered by the scheme include ACT Government directorates, health services, kinship and foster care organisations, residential care organisations, government and non-government schools, childcare services, education and care services (including after school care), and religious organisations.

⁷ ACT Ombudsman's Office, [ACT Ombudsman Practice Guide No. 2 Identifying Reportable Conduct](#), February 2018.



To enhance designated entity-based child protection outcomes and encourage best practice, we may also:

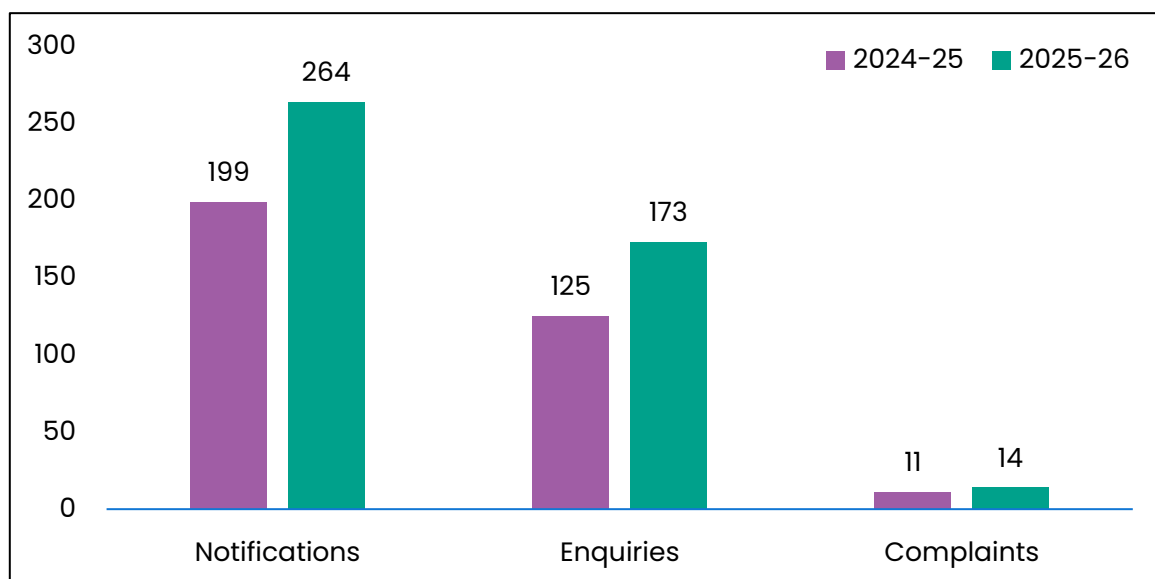
- monitor an investigation carried out by the designated entity
- investigate any reportable conduct allegation or conviction, or the response of an organisation to a reportable conduct allegation or conviction
- disclose information about investigations to a child, parent and carer, the Office of Fair Trading and other entities specified in the CYP Act.

Reportable conduct contacts

Contacts in relation to the scheme increased 35%, from 335 in 2024–25 to 451 in 2025–26 (see [Figure 12](#)). The contacts in 2025–26 comprised:

- 264 notifications from designated entities about allegations of reportable conduct
- 173 enquiries
- 14 complaints.

Figure 12 *Contacts received about reportable conduct in 2025–26, compared to 2024–25*



Notifications

In 2025–26, the Office received 264 notifications from designated entities about allegations. This is a 33% increase on the 199 notifications received in 2024–25. An increase in notifications does not necessarily suggest abuse against children is increasing.

Rather, this may reflect that designated entities have an improved awareness of, and are meeting, their obligations under the scheme. We have seen a particular increase in notifications from education and care service providers, ACT directorates and health service providers.

The increase in notifications from education and care service providers may reflect increased awareness of reporting obligations following recent high-profile criminal matters and increased media scrutiny relating to this sector. The increase in notifications from ACT directorates and health service providers may be influenced by a rise in unsolicited information sharing from CYF regarding possible reportable conduct allegations obtained through mandatory reporting.

The largest number of notifications received was from government and non-government schools (87 notifications), followed by education and care service providers (77 notifications), and then kinship and foster care (34 notifications) (see [Table 7](#)). This is consistent with the trends observed in 2024–25.

Table 7 *Notifications received in 2025–26 by sector*

Sector	Number	Percentage
Government and non-government schools	87	33%
Education and care service providers ⁸	77	29%
Kinship and foster care	34	13%
ACT directorates	24	9%
Residential care organisations	23	9%
Religious organisations	11	4%
Health service providers	8	3%
TOTAL	264	100%

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

Of the 264 notifications received this year, 94 were also reported to ACT Policing. The percentage of matters reported to ACT Policing has slightly increased from the previous

⁸ Since the 2024–25 reporting period, we have changed our definitions to better reflect the [Education and Care Services National Law \(ACT\) Act 2011](#), for reporting purposes and data collection. ‘Education and care services’ are those services covered by the National Law and include most long day care, family day care, outside school hours care and preschool programs.



financial year, with 36% of matters reported to ACT Policing in 2025–26 and 34% in 2024–25.

This suggests designated entities have maintained a strong reporting culture to ACT Policing and continue to meet their multiple reporting responsibilities. To oversee compliance, when the Office receives an allegation of reportable conduct that appears to have a criminal element, we inform designated entities to also report the matter to ACT Policing, if they have not already done so.

Enquiries and complaints

During 2025–26, the Office received 173 enquiries, which is a 38% increase from 2024–25.⁹ The enquiries were primarily from designated entities seeking guidance on subjects that included the definition of reportable conduct, reporting or investigation processes, and the definition of an employee.

During 2025–26, the Office received 14 complaints about designated entities' handling of reportable conduct allegations.

Designated entity compliance

Designated entities must lodge a notification under s 17G of the Ombudsman Act within 30 days of the designated entity becoming aware of a reportable conduct allegation. During 2025–26, designated entity compliance with this legislative requirement was 76%, consistent with the 2024–25 result of 77%.

In 2025–26, through our media monitoring, information sharing and oversight of matters already reported, the Office identified allegations that should have been notified to us. When the Office becomes aware of allegations not reported, we request a notification. This notification will usually arrive outside the legislated timeframe. The Office will continue to work with designated entities through our practitioner forums, targeted education projects, liaison meetings and case feedback to increase compliance with the legislative requirements.

⁹ The enquiry numbers for previous years have included both incoming and outgoing contacts. This year's enquiries count only captures incoming contacts.

Reports finalised

Under s 17J of the Ombudsman Act, designated entities must provide the ACT Ombudsman with a written report of the results of their investigation, including actions taken. The ACT Ombudsman assesses the designated entity's response to determine if the matter was investigated appropriately and if appropriate action was taken. We consider a range of factors when assessing a response, which are outlined in our [Practice Guide No. 9: How the Ombudsman Assesses an Employer's Response/Investigation](#). We may seek further information from a designated entity to ensure we are satisfied with the response and provide feedback to assist in improving reportable conduct practices and processes.

During 2025–26, we finalised 219 matters, an increase from the 190 matters finalised in 2024–25. [Table 8](#) shows the allegation types for all finalised matters reported to the ACT Ombudsman in 2025–26. A matter may include multiple allegations or convictions. The most common allegations/convictions reported to us in 2025–26 were ill-treatment involving hostile use of force or emotional abuse, and neglect.

Table 8 Allegation type for matters finalised in 2025–26

Type of allegation	Number	Percentage
Ill-treatment – hostile use of force	185	30%
Ill-treatment – emotional abuse	156	25%
Neglect	93	15%
Misconduct of a sexual nature – crossing professional boundaries	88	14%
Misconduct of a sexual nature – sexually explicit comments and other overtly sexual behaviour	37	6%
Ill-treatment – inappropriate restrictive intervention	23	4%
Offences against the person, including physical offences, where a child is a victim or is present	12	2%
Offences against the <i>Education and Care Services National Law</i>	12	2%
Misconduct of a sexual nature – grooming behaviour	11	2%
Sexual offences where a child is a victim or is present	6	<1%
Psychological harm	2	<1%
Total	625	100%

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding.



Allegations of 'ill-treatment of a child – emotional abuse' decreased from 29% in 2024–25 to 25% in 2025–26. This may be the result of improved understanding among designated entities regarding the threshold of this allegation category. Where a designated entity determines an allegation does not meet the reportable conduct threshold and is a misconduct matter, they are required to keep a register for any possible complaints or future auditing by our Office.

There was an increase from the previous financial year in the percentage of allegations of 'misconduct of a sexual nature – crossing professional boundaries,' from 10% in 2024–25 to 14% in 2025–26. We also observed that allegations of 'misconduct of a sexual nature – sexually explicit comments and other overtly sexual behaviour' decreased from 12% in 2024–25 to 6% in 2025–26.

This may reflect that designated entities are reclassifying allegations they previously categorised as 'sexually explicit comments and other overtly sexual behaviour' into more appropriate sub-categories, such as 'crossing professional boundaries,' as designated entities become more familiar with the differing descriptors and thresholds of each sub-category. The increase in allegations of 'crossing professional boundaries' may also be influenced by an increased awareness of this type of conduct following a number of high-profile grooming cases in the media.

Section 17E of the Ombudsman Act includes as reportable conduct offences against the [*Education and Care Services National Law 2010*](#) (the National Law) provisions s 166 and s 167. Only the ACT early education and childcare regulator, Children's Education and Care Authority (CECA), can make a sustained finding for offences against the National Law. Under the scheme, education and care services providers are required to notify our Office when a sustained finding is made.

During 2025–26, the Office recorded 12 notifications of offences against the National Law, which we became aware of following an information share from CECA. While CECA advised these 12 sustained findings were made in 2024–25, these allegations have been reported by the Office in the 2025–26 financial year, as this is when they were received and entered into our records management system.

While 12 notifications of offences against the National Law were recorded in 2025–26, the Office did not receive any notifications from designated entities regarding this allegation type. The absence of any notifications from education and care service providers in 2025–26 suggests a gap in their understanding of reporting obligations.

Towards the end of the 2025–26 financial year, the Office conducted targeted engagement to remind education and care service providers of their reporting obligations under the scheme.

Following the online publication of CECA incident reports and tabling of complaints and compliance notices from 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2025 in the ACT Legislative Assembly, the Office conducted a review to establish designated entities that have never reported reportable conduct allegations. The Office contacted 36 designated entities and reminded them of their obligations under the scheme. We also gave a presentation about offences against the National Law during a general practitioner forum hosted by the Office in June 2026.

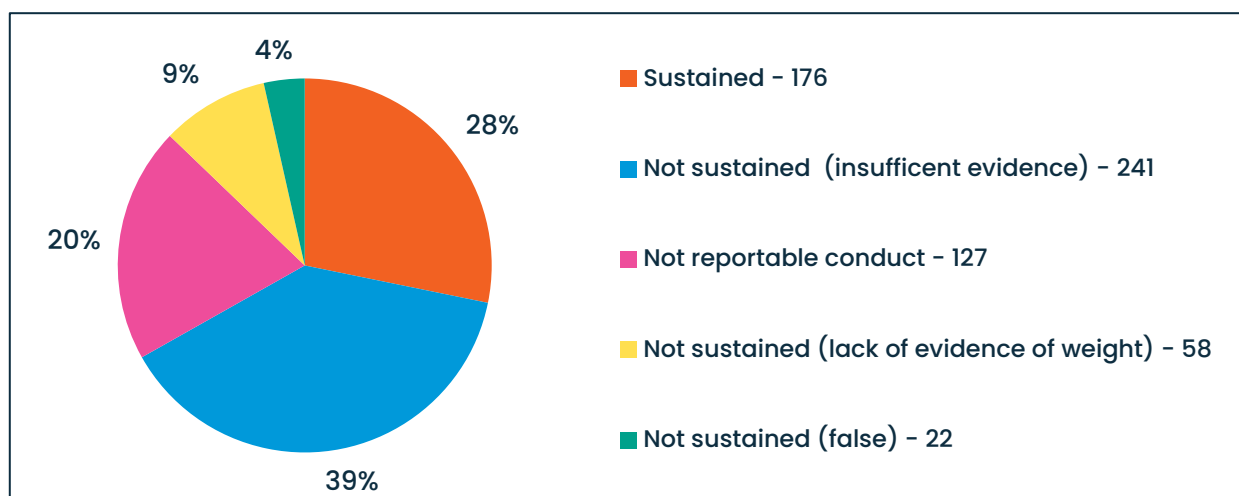
Following these education projects, the Office will continue to monitor entities' compliance with reporting obligations for offences against the National Law in 2026–27, including through further information sharing with CECA.

Outcomes

After notifying the ACT Ombudsman of a reportable conduct allegation or conviction, and on conclusion of its investigation, a designated entity must provide the Ombudsman with the outcome of its inquiries and what action it has taken or plans to take as a result. Designated entities are required to report on whether an allegation has been sustained or not sustained.

Figure 13 and Table 9 show the outcomes for each allegation and conviction, and the actions taken by designated entities, as provided to us in reports finalised in 2025–26.

Figure 13 Investigation outcomes reported by entities in 2025–26



Note: An investigation of one allegation did not result in a finding.

Table 9 *Final investigation actions taken by entities in 2025–26*

Action	Number	Percentage
No action after the investigation process	309	49%
Training	124	20%
Termination	89	14%
Counselling	36	6%
Letter of warning	24	4%
Other forms of disciplinary action as per employer	23	4%
Performance monitoring or managing	19	3%
No information provided	1	<1%
TOTAL	625	100%

Note: An investigation may contain more than one allegation, which may result in more than one finding and action. Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

Investigations and complaints

The ACT Ombudsman may, on its own initiative or in response to a complaint, choose to investigate any reportable conduct allegation or conviction against an employee of a designated entity considered under the scheme. The Ombudsman may also investigate a designated entity’s response to a reportable conduct allegation or conviction.

As mentioned in [Part 2](#), we conducted a monitoring activity under s 17F of the Ombudsman Act and, in November 2025, we published a public statement on the outcomes of this monitoring activity.

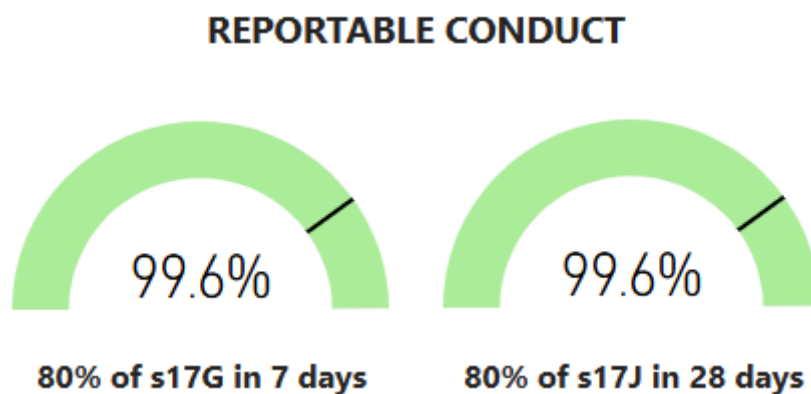
We also concluded a review of a designated entity’s implementation of our Office’s recommendations following investigation by our Office under s 17K of the Ombudsman Act. We published a public statement in January 2026.

In 2025–26, we received 14 complaints about designated entities’ handling of reportable conduct matters. Of the 14 complaints, 11 were resolved through contacting the relevant designated entity and facilitating pathways for complainants to access internal processes or information, resolving the issues through oversight of reported allegations or by providing further information directly to the complainant.

Reportable conduct performance against service standards

The ACT Ombudsman has service standards for the performance of our functions under the Reportable Conduct Scheme (see [Figure 14](#)).

Figure 14 Performance against reportable conduct service standards in 2025–26



When we receive a notification from a designated entity about an allegation of reportable conduct (s 17G notification), we conduct an assessment of the organisation's initial response against criteria including reporting to other bodies, risk assessment and investigation plan. This allows the designated entity to consider our feedback during its investigation. We aim to do this within 7 days in 80% of cases.

During 2025–26, we assessed 99.6% of initial notifications within 7 days.

When we receive a final report from a designated entity following its investigation into reportable conduct allegations (s 17J report), we consider whether there was a proper investigation, appropriate action taken and whether we need further information from the designated entity. This gives the designated entity reasonable opportunity to act on our feedback or provide further information. We aim to complete this within 28 days in 80% of cases.

During 2025–26, we completed 99.6% of these assessments within this timeframe.

Reportable conduct monitoring and education

Our [*Practice Guide No. 9: How the Ombudsman Assesses an Employer's Response/Investigation*](#) provides information for designated entities about how the ACT Ombudsman monitors practices and procedures for preventing reportable conduct, and how designated entities deal with reportable allegations and convictions.

As outlined in the guide, we consider the following aspects of a designated entity's response:

- initial response
- planning
- information gathering
- employee response
- making a finding
- taking action.

We provide written feedback to designated entities on the s 17J final reports provided to us under the Ombudsman Act. Where we identify systemic feedback concerns, this is raised in our written feedback or at liaison meetings.

Designated entities are also invited to contact us for further discussion about feedback, and we encourage designated entities to revisit previous feedback provided when handling new matters.

Case study

Using Ombudsman guidance to support allegation identification and investigation

In September 2025, our Office reviewed the s 17J report and associated documentation submitted by a designated entity in relation to its investigation of an employee alleged to have engaged in several incidents of reportable conduct under the category of 'ill-treatment of a child – hostile use of force/physical contact and emotional abuse'.

The designated entity was satisfied that the employee had engaged in a small proportion of the alleged conduct and took action against the employee. Our Office's



review of the investigation material revealed some factors had not been appropriately considered, and the employee may have engaged in further incidents of reportable conduct, including towards a staff member under the age of 18 who the designated entity had not recognised as being captured by the scheme. Our review also identified a second employee may have engaged in reportable conduct under the category of 'neglect'.

The Office reminded the designated entity of its legislative obligations and provided education about the scope of the scheme. We also encouraged the designated entity to review the material to ascertain if additional s 17G notifications were required and if further reportable conduct had occurred.

The designated entity reviewed the investigation material, lodged additional s 17G notifications and conducted further inquiries. While the designated entity determined the second employee did not engage in reportable conduct, the designated entity was satisfied the first employee had engaged in several more incidents of reportable conduct than initially identified, including towards the staff member under the age of 18.

Although this did not alter the action taken against the employee by the designated entity, the designated entity has since shared information about this matter with a relevant government body, who took action under its legislative framework. This case study demonstrates the importance of making appropriate findings for all allegations to enable relevant regulators to accurately assess and mitigate risks to children.

During 2025–26, our feedback to designated entities continued to address:

- clearly defining allegations before an investigation is conducted
- clearly articulating the appropriate category and sub-category of each allegation at commencement to enable appropriate findings at the conclusion of the investigation
- developing timely and comprehensive investigation plans
- adequately recording interviews and ensuring the record is signed by the interviewee
- encouraging entities to interview children, unless there is a good reason not to, and making a record of the reason for the decision if a child is not interviewed
- providing procedural fairness to those involved in an investigation
- adequately weighing evidence gathered in an investigation and clearly explaining how the evidence supports investigation findings



- addressing the reportable conduct thresholds outlined in [Practice Guide No. 2: Identifying Reportable Conduct](#) when the investigation determines the conduct did occur
- articulating and mitigating risks, including identifying lessons learned from the matter at hand and opportunities to improve policies and procedures to prevent future incidents of reportable conduct.

In previous years, our feedback to designated entities commonly addressed a reluctance to use the reportable conduct information sharing provisions, particularly when it is unsolicited. Over the last few years, we have observed significant improvements in the use of information sharing. We particularly acknowledge CYF, operated by the Health and Community Services Directorate, who are regularly sharing with designated entities possible reportable conduct allegations obtained through mandatory reporting.

Case study

Supporting information sharing between ACT designated entities

In July 2025, our Office received information from a designated entity about allegations of 'misconduct of a sexual nature – crossing professional boundaries' made regarding a former employee, who was now employed by another designated entity in the same sector.

Due to limitations of the ACT Reportable Conduct Scheme, the former employer was not required to investigate, as the individual was not an employee at the time it learned of the allegations. However, to mitigate risks to children, our Office encouraged the former employer to share information about the allegations with the current employer.

The current employer expressed challenges in gathering evidence for the investigation, as the alleged conduct did not take place at its organisation. Our Office facilitated communication between the 2 designated entities and encouraged collaboration to jointly conduct the investigation. Following guidance from our Office, the former employer gathered information from relevant witnesses and shared this with the current employer. This improved the information available to the current employer, enabling it to make evidenced findings and fulfil its legislated obligations under the scheme.

While the current employer could not be satisfied that reportable conduct had occurred, this case study highlights the importance of legislative information sharing provisions being used to assist designated entities to best conduct reportable conduct investigations. This also demonstrates how information sharing can limit opportunities for employees to evade proper investigation by leaving an organisation.

Through feedback on cases, future practitioner forums, stakeholder liaison and our published information, we continue to focus on how we can better support designated entities to implement our feedback and facilitate improvement in an achievable way.

Reportable conduct engagement activities

During the year, we engaged regularly with designated entities, ensuring appropriate liaison with key stakeholders and more regular liaison with those designated entities with high notification numbers. This engagement helped us provide timely feedback and support to designated entities to build their capacity to prevent, report and respond to allegations of reportable conduct.

We maintained regular liaison with Access Canberra's Working with Vulnerable People team, Barnardos Australia, CYF (operated by the Health and Community Services Directorate) and the Education Directorate. We also attended meetings with CECA and the Teachers Quality Institute as needed.

We attended 2 interjurisdictional reportable conduct forums, with each jurisdiction sharing challenges and strategies to address these. We also participated in a roundtable discussion on child safety with Minister for Education and Early Childhood Yvette Berry MLA, and we regularly attended working group meetings regarding the Child Safe Standards Scheme in the ACT.

We presented a session in a Child Safe Standards Scheme webinar hosted by the ACT Children and Young People Commissioner, and we presented a session to early childhood education and care students at the Canberra Institute of Technology.



We also continued to meet regularly with the relevant policy holders in the ACT, the Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate (CMTEDD), to discuss potential and upcoming changes to the legislation.

Reportable conduct practitioner forum

We hosted an online general practitioner forum in June 2026 to provide education and guidance to designated entities. The forum included a presentation from the Queensland Family and Child Commission about its report titled 'In Plain Sight: Review into System Responses to Child Sexual Abuse' and their learnings for organisations providing services to children. Our Office also gave presentations about interjurisdictional information sharing and reporting requirements for offences against the [National Law](#).¹⁰

In 2026–27, we will review our stakeholder engagement plan and consider adjusting our strategy for more sector-specific communities of practice and targeted engagement, while managing rising notifications.

Early education engagement

In June 2025, Thomas Emerson MLA passed a Legislative Assembly motion seeking the release of incident reports, complaints and compliance notifications from the ACT early education and childcare regulator, CECA. In December 2025, approximately 2,500 documents were released about serious incidents, incident reports, complaints and compliance notifications from 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2025.

Our Office conducted a review of the designated entities listed in the online publications to establish whether we had received contact and/or reportable conduct notifications from them. There were approximately 36 designated entities that we had not received reportable conduct notifications from.

We wrote to those designated entities advising it had come to our attention that some of the conduct described in the published documentation was reportable conduct and this was not reported to our Office. We reminded these designated entities of their obligations under the scheme. This included a reminder that offences against the

¹⁰ Under s 17E of the *Ombudsman Act 1989*, an offence against ss 166 or 167 of the Education and Care Services National Law is defined as reportable conduct.

[National Law](#) (ss 166 and 167) are defined as reportable conduct under s 17E of the Ombudsman Act.

In 2026–27, we will continue to monitor education and care service providers' compliance with their reporting obligations under the scheme.

Online information

An important part of our oversight function is to educate and support entities to meet their requirements under the scheme. One of the ways we achieve this is through publishing information.

In August 2025, following several media reports regarding allegations of sexual and physical abuse of children in the early education sector, we published a [communiqué](#) providing guidance and feedback to designated entities regarding the standards expected of investigations.

In line with our designated entity stakeholder engagement strategy, we also circulated newsletters in September and December 2025.

In November 2025, at the completion of a monitoring activity under s 17F of the Ombudsman Act, the Ombudsman published a [public statement](#) to share the issues discovered, lessons learned and recommendations made.

In January 2026, the Ombudsman published a [public statement](#) following a review of a designated entity's implementation of our Office's recommendations from an investigation in April 2024 under s 17K of the Ombudsman Act. This contained the Ombudsman's observations and findings, as well as lessons learned.

Legislative amendments

During 2025–26, the Office worked with CMTEDD, the policy holders of the scheme, to allow information sharing with reportable conduct schemes in other states and territories. On 24 October 2025, amendments to the [Ombudsman Regulation 1989](#) were notified and commenced. The Office is now able to share child safety information with the operators of reportable conduct schemes in other jurisdictions. Designated entities are also now able to request and provide information from other state and territory reportable conduct schemes.



We are in the process of updating our public information to reflect this legislative change. The Office will continue to liaise with CMTEDD in 2026–27 regarding any further amendments to the scheme.

Part 8. Inspector of the Integrity Commission

The ACT Ombudsman is the Inspector of the ACT Integrity Commission (the Inspector), an independent role created under the [Integrity Commission Act 2018](#) (IC Act). The Inspector's role and functions include:

- receiving, investigating and assessing complaints about the ACT Integrity Commission (the Commission) and its staff
- receiving monthly reports from the Commission relating to its operations
- assessing and reporting on the Commission's compliance with the IC Act, including conducting an annual operational review of the Commission
- making recommendations to the Commission and other public sector entities on how they can improve their practices and procedures.

Section 283 of the IC Act requires the Inspector to produce an annual report with specified information about the Inspector's activities and material received from the Commission.

The Inspector is also required under s 280 to undertake an annual operational review of the Commission to assess the Commission's compliance with the IC Act and any other relevant Acts.

Inspector activities

Table 10 provides an overview of key activities carried out by the Inspector during 2025–26 compared to previous financial years.



Table 10 *Inspector activities 2025–26*

Inspector complaints (s 257)	2023–24	2024–25	2025–26
Complaints received	21	25	20
Complaints within jurisdiction	17	13	16
Complaints not within jurisdiction	4	12	4
Complaints finalised	21	25	21
Complaint investigations finalised	0	4	4
Own initiative investigations (s 265)			
Own initiative investigations finalised	0	1	0
Referrals and disclosures			
Corruption reports referred to the Inspector under s 105 of the IC Act, concerning the Commissioner or Commission staff	3	1 [^]	1
Referrals made by the Inspector to other entities under s 271 of the IC Act	1	1	0
Disclosures of information by the Inspector to other entities under s 274 of the IC Act	2	1	0
Reports			
Special reports presented to the Legislative Assembly under s 278 of the IC Act	1	1	0
Recommendations and suggestions			
Recommendations made to the Commission under s 272 of the IC Act	7	3	0
Recommendations accepted by the Commission	7	1	0
Recommendations made to other entities under s 272 or s 273 of the IC Act	0	0	0
Suggestions made to the Commission for which implementation will be assessed	0	2	0*

[^]During 2025–26, the Inspector identified one corruption report from 2024–25 that the Commission had not referred to the Inspector. This report has been included.

*Following the conclusion of one investigation, the Commission was provided with observations and suggestions that do not require follow-up assessment of implementation.

Complaints

Complaints received

In 2025–26, the Inspector received 20 complaints, compared to 25 complaints in 2024–25. Sixteen complaints were assessed as being within the Inspector’s jurisdiction to investigate (under s 257 of the IC Act), up from 13 in 2024–25.

The most common issues raised were about:

- the Commission’s reasons for dismissing a corruption report or disclosure under the [Public Interest Disclosure Act 2012](#) (PID Act)
- the Commission’s investigative practices, including the use of compulsory information-gathering powers, the scope of personal information required under summonses, privacy concerns and whether human rights obligations are being met, and the financial costs incurred by private individuals in responding to compulsory notices to produce material
- the impact of extended investigation timeframes on witness wellbeing, including concerns about the duration of confidentiality obligations where notices are revoked and reissued, potentially extending obligations beyond the 3-year period contemplated by s 84(c) of the IC Act.

Complaints finalised

During 2025–26, the Inspector finalised 21 complaints. Seventeen complaints were finalised without formal investigation and 4 following investigation. One complaint received this reporting period is still being investigated.

Four complaints were found to be outside the Inspector’s jurisdiction to investigate. These typically involved complainants seeking to have a matter investigated but who had not engaged with or made a report to the Commission, or complainants raising concerns about other agencies or businesses. Some of these complaints were also considered under other Ombudsman jurisdictions.

Of the 4 matters investigated, 2 were finalised on the basis the Commission had exercised its functions appropriately. In one matter, we identified an error in the reasons relied on for dismissing a corruption report. However, we concluded the decision was open to the Commission to make.



In one matter, we made several observations and suggestions about the Commission's practices and procedures. These related to the requirement under s 72 of the IC Act to provide reasons when dismissing a corruption report, aspects of the Commission's recordkeeping, the management of complex and ongoing engagement, and mandatory reporting requirements under s 105 of the IC Act.

The Commission acknowledged there were opportunities for improvement and took steps to address the issues we identified. This included strengthening the tracking of corruption reports, providing additional guidance and training to staff, and updating its practices to include information about alternative pathways when dismissing a report, where available.

Of the 17 matters finalised without investigation, most were finalised because we were satisfied the Commission had acted in accordance with its statutory obligations or because further explanation by the Inspector resolved the concerns raised. In one matter, the substantive issues had been considered previously, and it was determined that no further action was warranted in the circumstances.

Inspector's special reports

In June 2025, the Inspector presented a special report of an own initiative investigation to the Legislative Assembly, [*Investigation into a procurement by the ACT Integrity Commission*](#). The investigation found concerns with the Commission's processes for the procurement, including:

- inadequate documentation of the reasons for key decisions
- failures to properly consider, declare and manage the then CEO's clear conflict of interest
- the Commissioner's potential apprehension of bias.

In January 2026, the Standing Committee on the Integrity Commission and Statutory Office Holders (the Committee) released its [report](#) following its Inquiry into the Inspector's special report.

The Committee found the Commission did not meet the Committee's expectations of meticulous record-keeping of procurement decision-making and compliance with legislation, regulation and policy. The Committee made 2 recommendations:

- the Commission take steps to ensure meticulous record-keeping of procurement decision-making and compliance with legislation, regulation and policy

- the Commission and the Inspector adopt the Committee's principles outlined in the report for an effective working relationship.

The Commission accepted the Committee's finding and both recommendations. The Inspector accepted the second recommendation, as it related to the Inspector.

The Inspector and the Commission are working to adopt the relationship principles outlined in the Committee's report, including by updating existing relationship protocols. The principles emphasise the need for mutual respect, effective communication and cooperation, and consideration of operational and public confidence impacts of decisions. They also provide for unresolved differences to be referred to the Legislative Assembly for guidance.

Commission's monthly reporting

The Inspector received and considered monthly reports from the Commission relating to specific aspects of its operational activities. [Table 11](#) sets out the material the Inspector received from the Commission as part of the Commission's monthly reporting under s 205 of the IC Act compared to previous financial years. The Commission did not provide any other items that required the Inspector to report on them under s 283(1)(b) of the IC Act.

Table 11 *Monthly reporting to the Inspector – items received*

Commission activity	Section of Act	2023–24	2024–25	2025–26
Confidentiality notices	s 78 or s 79	63	68	121
Revocation of confidentiality notices	s 82	13	8	23
Preliminary inquiry notices	s 90	5	7	6
Preliminary inquiry notice extensions	s 94A(2)	–	3	2
Examination summons to appear	s 147(1)(a)	31	13	33
Examination summons to produce	s 147(1)(b)	23	24	38
Examination summons to appear and produce	s 147(1)(a)+(b)	1	1	–
Examination summons extensions	s 156A(2)	–	4	9
Video recordings of examinations	s 158	103	20	32
Examination transcripts	s 158	37	20	31
Public examinations	ss 140 and 144(1)	23	5	–



Inspector staff conducted selected reviews of those activities to assess the Commission's compliance with the IC Act. Where relevant, the review included assessment of the supporting reasons and decision documentation.

The Commission reported 295 activities during 2025–26, compared with 173 in 2024–25, an increase of 71%. The largest increases were in:

- examination summonses to attend an examination or to produce a document or other thing (87% increase)
- confidentiality notices (78% increase)
- video recordings of witness examinations (60% increase).

The monthly reporting numbers are consistent with the Office's understanding of the current stage of the Commission's investigations.

Recommendations for changes to Territory laws

Under s 283(2)(b) of the IC Act, the Inspector's annual report must provide any recommendations for change to Territory laws or administrative action the Inspector considers should be made.

During 2025–26, the Ombudsman continued to engage with the ACT Government on proposals for legislative amendment arising from matters identified from the Ombudsman's work, including work performed in the role of Inspector. In particular, we followed up on the proposals reported on in last year's annual report:

- *Framework for managing conflicts of interest and apprehension of bias*
That the ACT Government clarify its expectations in legislation (such as in the *Public Sector Management Act 1994* (PSM Act) and the IC Act), policies and guidance as to whether requirements to declare and manage conflicts of interest extend to potential apprehensions of bias.
- *Declarations of matters warranting recusal*
That the IC Act be amended to require the Commissioner to declare to the Speaker and the Inspector circumstances other than a conflict of interest where recusal may be appropriate (such as an apprehension of bias).
- *Ability for the Inspector to refer matters to the Public Sector Standards Commissioner*

That amendments be made to the PSM Act and/or the IC Act to enable the Inspector to refer relevant matters directly to the Public Sector Standards Commissioner, addressing an unintended gap in oversight.

The Inspector has also urged the ACT Government to prioritise the implementation of certain recommendations from the [Review of the Integrity Commission Act by Mr Ian Govey AM](#). In particular, the Inspector considers that Recommendation 12 has significant merit. Implementation would clarify the powers and functions of the CEO and make the CEO the head of agency for the purposes of the PSM Act, consistent with the model applied for most comparable bodies in other Australian jurisdictions.

The Inspector also supports implementing:

- Recommendation 42 (changing the mandatory 6-week procedural fairness period for Inspector special reports to 'a reasonable amount of time')
- Recommendation 47 (requiring the Commission to report to the Inspector on timeliness of matters)
- Recommendation 48 (clarifying current practice in relation to documents that may be covered by legal professional privilege)
- Recommendation 58 (removing the requirement for the Inspector to update a complainant every 3 months during an investigation).

Recognising the budgetary implications of some further reforms, the Inspector also considers there is merit in:

- Recommendation 34 (providing a legal assistance scheme for persons appearing before the Commission)
- Recommendation 35 (providing psychological support to witnesses).

Inspector's operational review

Under s 280(2) of the IC Act, the Inspector must assess the Commission's compliance with the IC Act as part of the Inspector's annual operational review. The Inspector is required to consider:

- the Commission's management of conflicts of interest
- whether the Commissioner and Commission staff acted within their legal powers
- the Commission's implementation of any previous recommendations made by the Inspector



- the adequacy of the Commission's wellbeing policy and whether the Commission has complied with the obligations set out in this policy
- any other matters the Inspector considers relevant.

Conflicts of interest

Inspections of the conflicts of interest register

The Commission's conflicts of interest register records conflicts declared by the Commissioner and Commission staff. During 2025–26, Inspector staff conducted 2 inspections of the register. The first, in August 2025, covered the period from 1 January 2025 to 30 June 2025. The second, in March 2026, covered the period from 1 July 2025 to 31 December 2025.

Based on these inspections, the Inspector is satisfied the register demonstrated active reporting, consideration and management of conflicts of interest by Commission staff.

Declarations by the Commissioner

Section 31(2) of the IC Act requires the Commissioner to declare a financial or other personal interest to the Speaker and the Inspector in writing. This applies where an interest may conflict, or may be perceived to conflict, with the Commissioner's functions. The disclosure must include the nature of the interest and any actual or potential conflict.

No conflicts were declared by the Commissioner during the reporting period.

Although no conflicts were declared, the Commissioner informed the Inspector of one matter that had been assessed as not giving rise to a potential conflict. To promote good governance and transparency, the Inspector provided guidance on documenting the assessment of that matter on the Commission's conflict of interest register, including any management measures that should be taken if a potential or actual conflict arose.

Professor John McMillan, Acting Commissioner, also informed the Inspector of a separate matter. The Inspector was satisfied the matter did not give rise to a potential or actual conflict.

Acting within legislative power

Under s 280(2)(b) of the IC Act, the Inspector must consider whether the Commission and members of staff of the Commission acted within legislative powers and in accordance with the IC Act and any other relevant Acts.

In assessing compliance, the Inspector considered:

- the Commission's monthly reporting under s 205 of the IC Act
- the inspections of the Commission's conflicts of interest register
- complaints and investigations undertaken by the Office
- other relevant material.

Based on the information currently available, the Inspector's assessment is that the Commission operated within its legislative powers and in compliance with relevant laws in force in the Territory during 2025–26. This assessment is subject to the issues identified below, and noting there is an ongoing investigation.

Mandatory corruption referrals (s 105)

During the reporting period, the Inspector identified, through the investigation of a complaint, one corruption report from 2024–25 that the Commission had not referred to the Inspector as required under s 105 of the IC Act. The Inspector reminded the Commission of its mandatory reporting obligations under s 105 and clarified that all allegations of corrupt conduct involving the Commissioner and Commission staff must be referred to the Inspector. The Inspector assessed the report and determined that no further action was warranted.

Use of controlled operation power

The Inspector's Office, as ACT Ombudsman, conducted one inspection of the Commission's use of controlled operation powers under the *Crimes (Controlled Operations) Act 2008* (ACT) (CO Act). The inspection found that the Commission did not give an annual report to the Minister for the period 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025 as required under s 28 of the CO Act.

To address this oversight, the Commission made a retrospective annual report to the Minister and revised its procedures to remove any 'single points of failure' to ensure all annual reporting obligations are met. Our inspection also found the Commission



updated its training material and standard operating procedures (SOPs) on controlled operations in May 2025. The training material was delivered to Commission staff in that same month. The Ombudsman, as Inspector, was satisfied that the SOPs and training material were adequate and comprehensive for the Commission's purposes.

Recommendation implementation

Under s 280(2)(c) of the IC Act, the Inspector must report on whether the Commission has implemented any previous recommendations made by the Inspector.

Special report

In 2025–26, we started the assessment of the Commission's implementation of the one accepted recommendations made in the June 2025 special report [*Investigation into a procurement by the ACT Integrity Commission*](#).

Recommendation 3: The ACT Integrity Commission develop and maintain a register of mandatory staff training, to include training on conflicts of interest and bias and procurement training.

The Inspector has not yet finalised the assessment.

Complaint investigation

In 2024–25, we reported 2 suggestions had been made to the Commission as a result of an investigation. We suggested the Commission:

- update its guidance material for disclosures under the PID Act
- provide reasons for decisions even where not expressly required under the PID Act.

The Commission accepted both suggestions and committed to review its guidance material, consistent with the suggestions provided. The Commission has advised work should be finalised in the 2026–27 reporting period.

Wellbeing framework

Section 280(3) of the IC Act requires the Inspector to assess whether the Commission's Witness Wellbeing Policy sufficiently protects the wellbeing of people involved in matters before the Commission and whether the policy is being applied in practice.

In conducting this assessment, the Inspector considered the Commission's Witness Wellbeing Policy, associated guidance and supporting materials, staff training, information obtained through the Inspector's oversight functions (including complaint and investigation matters and monthly reporting), information provided by the Commission and engagement with Commission staff.

This assessment is informed by the information available at the time of reporting and reflects the first 11 months' implementation of the Commission's revised Witness Wellbeing Policy and supporting materials. The Inspector will continue to assess the policy and its application as further evidence of its operation becomes available.

Witness Wellbeing Policy

During the reporting period, the Commission finalised a review of its Witness Wellbeing Policy and related materials. As part of the review, the Commission obtained expert advice from a suitably qualified professional, consulted with relevant stakeholders and reviewed its wellbeing resources. The Commission published the revised [Witness Wellbeing Policy](#) in July 2025.

The Witness Wellbeing Policy establishes principles and processes intended to support the wellbeing of people involved in matters before the Commission. The policy emphasises respectful treatment, minimising harm where reasonably practicable and adopting a risk-based approach to wellbeing management.

The policy provides a framework for managing witness wellbeing. Its effectiveness will ultimately depend on how consistently it is applied in practice and whether wellbeing considerations are embedded throughout the Commission's investigative decision-making.

The Commission has taken steps to support implementation of the principles outlined in the Witness Wellbeing Policy, including staff training, developing information resources for witnesses and establishing a Witness Welfare Liaison Officer role as a single point of contact for witnesses to raise wellbeing concerns.

These initiatives support the implementation of the Witness Wellbeing Policy in practice. However, as the policy has only recently come into effect, it is too early to assess its effectiveness or whether it is being applied consistently across all investigations and inquiries.



Inspector's observations

The Commission has taken positive steps to improve its approach to witness wellbeing. However, the Inspector considers there remains scope to better integrate wellbeing considerations into investigative decision-making.

It is important that witness wellbeing policies and practices include measures aimed at preventing or minimising foreseeable harm. This is particularly relevant in lengthy investigations, where confidentiality obligations for years may contribute to stress and isolation by limiting a witness subject to one from seeking support from their partner, family or employer.

The Inspector considers witness wellbeing should form part of the Commission's broader decision-making framework, and wellbeing considerations should inform decisions about the prioritisation and scope of investigations and the level of evidence required to support findings.

Consideration should be given to documenting how witness wellbeing has been taken into account when making key investigative decisions. This would assist the Inspector in assessing whether the Witness Wellbeing Policy is being applied in practice and provide greater transparency regarding the Commission's balancing of witness wellbeing and investigative objectives. This information could be included in the Commission's decision documentation, which forms part of the Commission's monthly reporting to the Inspector.

The Inspector also continues to support Recommendation 35 from the [Review of the Integrity Commission Act by Mr Ian Govey AM](#), regarding independent psychological support to be available to witnesses, with the option of reimbursement for psychological care from a clinician of a witness' choosing.

Noting there is an outstanding investigation from the 2025–26 reporting period, the Inspector does not have any further finalised views on the Commission's application of its Witness Wellbeing Policy in practice.

Part 9. Covert and intrusive powers oversight

The ACT Ombudsman is responsible for monitoring activities and inspecting the records of ACT law enforcement agencies' use of certain ACT legislated covert and intrusive powers. The agencies we monitor/inspect are ACT Policing (as the community policing arm of the Australian Federal Police (AFP)), the Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission (ACIC) and the ACT Integrity Commission.

Specifically, the ACT Ombudsman inspects compliance with the [Crimes \(Surveillance Devices\) Act 2010](#) (SD Act), the [Crimes \(Controlled Operations\) Act 2008](#) (CO Act) and the [Crimes \(Assumed Identities\) Act 2009](#) (AI Act). Under s 4C and Division 2.2 of the [Ombudsman Act 1989](#), the ACT Ombudsman also monitors ACT Policing's compliance with Chapter 4 and Part 3.11 of the [Crimes \(Child Sex Offenders\) Act 2005](#) (CCSO Act).

Surveillance devices

The SD Act provides a framework for law enforcement officers to use surveillance devices in criminal and corrupt conduct investigations, including investigations which extend beyond the ACT. Surveillance device means a data device, a listening device, an optical device, a tracking device or a device that is a combination of these devices. The SD Act also provides a framework for the use of body-worn cameras by police officers in the course of their duties.

These inspections are not compulsory each year. Section 42 of the SD Act states that the ACT Ombudsman may inspect the records of a law enforcement agency to determine the extent of compliance with the SD Act by each agency and its officers.

Inspection findings

In September 2025, we inspected ACT Policing's use of surveillance devices powers. ACT Policing authorised 22 surveillance devices warrants for the relevant period. We inspected all 22 records and made 4 findings, resulting in 3 suggestions and 2 comments.



We made a repeat finding in relation to timeliness of Final Effectiveness Reports (FERs) and saw instances of non-revocation of warrants, even though it had been determined the surveillance device was no longer necessary. We also observed inaccurate record-keeping and non-adherence to internal guidance materials.

ACT Policing accepted all our suggestions and comments and have taken appropriate action to remedy all findings.

We did not conduct any inspections of the ACIC or the Integrity Commission during the 2025–26 inspections period, as these agencies advised they had not used powers under the SD Act. The ACIC provided us with a copy of their annual report to the Attorney-General confirming nil usage.

Controlled operations

A controlled operation is a covert operation to obtain evidence that may lead to the prosecution of a person for a relevant offence or be used in an integrity investigation. A controlled operation provides protection from civil and criminal liability for law enforcement officers and civilians who engage in certain conduct that would otherwise be unlawful or lead to civil liability. Participants may engage in a variety of types of conduct, so long as that conduct is directly authorised or appropriately related to the authorised conduct.

The CO Act allows ACT Policing, the ACIC and the Integrity Commission to conduct controlled operations in the ACT and other participating jurisdictions. Under s 31 of the CO Act, the ACT Ombudsman is required to inspect the records of each agency at least once every 12 months to determine the extent of compliance by the agency and its officers. The ACT Ombudsman must report on the results of each inspection conducted in the previous financial year and must comment on the agency's cooperation and the comprehensiveness and adequacy of the agency's records.

Inspection findings

ACT Policing authorised one controlled operations warrant during the records period of 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025. In September 2025, we inspected that record and made one finding, resulting in 2 suggestions which addressed inconsistencies between the application and the authority concerning the intended conduct.

ACT Policing accepted our suggestions and have taken appropriate action to remedy our finding. We are satisfied that ACT Policing have a comprehensive framework of governance and guidance material to support the use of these powers.

The ACIC and the ACT Integrity Commission advised that they had not utilised the controlled operations powers under the ACT legislation during the records period. Consequently, the ACT Ombudsman conducted remote inspections of these agencies during May/June 2026, consisting of requests for information and inspection of procedures and guidance materials.

The ACIC advised it uses controlled operations powers under Commonwealth legislation (which is monitored by the Commonwealth Ombudsman) and does not intend to use the ACT powers, as 'there is no operational need to use the ACT framework.' The ACIC provided us with a copy of their annual report to the Attorney-General, which confirmed nil usage of controlled operations powers under the ACT legislation. As a result, we made no findings.

The Integrity Commission advised it had not yet utilised the controlled operations powers under the CO Act. To demonstrate its preparedness to use the powers in the future, the Integrity Commission provided us with copies of its general registers, training material and standard operating procedures, noting that staff had received updated training in May 2025. The ACT Ombudsman is satisfied that these materials are adequate and comprehensive for the Integrity Commission's purposes.

We made one finding in relation to the failure to provide an annual report to the Minister for the period 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025. The Integrity Commission advised this was an administrative oversight and immediately took steps to provide a retrospective annual report, which was delivered to the Minister on 17 June 2026. The Integrity Commission also implemented additional procedures to ensure all reporting obligations are met in the future.

Assumed identities

The AI Act facilitates law enforcement investigations and intelligence-gathering in relation to criminal activity by providing for the lawful acquisition and use of assumed identities. Section 41 of the AI Act provides that the ACT Ombudsman may inspect the records of law enforcement agencies who utilise these powers to assess compliance with the AI Act.



To date, we have not conducted any inspections under the AI Act, as all agencies advised these powers have not, to date, been used.

Telecommunications data and stored communications

Under the [Telecommunications \(Interception and Access\) Act 1979](#) (Cth) (TIA Act), the Commonwealth Ombudsman must inspect and report annually on the compliance of agencies using powers under the TIA Act.

The ACT Integrity Commission's authority to utilise Chapter 3 and Chapter 4 powers of the TIA Act derives from interim [declarations](#) issued by the Federal Minister for Home Affairs designating the ACT Integrity Commission as a criminal law enforcement agency under the TIA Act. The declarations are issued pursuant to a request from the ACT Government Chief Minister.

Inspection findings

We inspected the ACT Integrity Commission's use of Chapter 3 and Chapter 4 powers on 29 June 2026. Chapter 3 powers were not used in the 2025–26 period. The ACT Integrity Commission used the Chapter 4 powers twice in the 2025–26 period, and we inspected both of those records.

We made no findings in relation to either the Chapter 3 or Chapter 4 powers.

Child sex offenders register

Under the CCSO Act, ACT Policing must establish and manage the ACT Child Sex Offenders Register (the Register) in accordance with the requirements set out in Chapter 4 of the CCSO Act. Chapter 4 also sets out the information that must be recorded on the Register, which includes personal details of registrable child sex offenders, and the controls that must be applied to the use and disclosure of that information. Part 3.11 of the CCSO Act enables ACT Policing to apply for a warrant to enter and search the premises of a registrable offender to verify personal details or determine whether the offender has breached, or is likely to breach, an order prohibiting certain conduct.

Section 4C of the Ombudsman Act provides that a function of the ACT Ombudsman is to monitor ACT Policing's compliance with Chapter 4 and Part 3.11 of the CCSO Act, and Division 2.2 and s 20A provide powers to monitor and report on that compliance.

Report from 2024 inspection

In September 2025, we published [Monitoring child sex offenders in your community – how did ACT Policing go?](#), containing the results of our inspection conducted in September 2024. As a result of our inspection, we made 5 findings resulting in 3 recommendations and 8 suggestions.

We were concerned that ACT Policing, while generally compliant with the record-keeping requirements of the CCSO Act, was not acting proactively to fulfil the intent and purposes of the CCSO Act, such as disclosing information for law enforcement purposes to approved agencies when registrable offenders breached reporting obligations. We also found a lack of records to justify those decisions and made a repeat finding of deficiencies, errors and inconsistencies in records.

2025 inspection findings

Our annual inspection of ACT Policing's administration of the Register was conducted in December 2025. As in previous years, we did not assess compliance with Part 3.11 (entry and search warrants) of the Act, as ACT Policing advised it had not used these provisions. The report for this inspection is yet to be finalised.

Review of complaint handling under Part V of the AFP Act

Under s 40XA of the [Australian Federal Police Act 1979](#) (Cth) (AFP Act), the Commonwealth Ombudsman (who is also the ACT Ombudsman) is required to review the administration of the AFP's handling of complaints through inspection of AFP records. This includes reviewing the handling of complaints about ACT Policing. Further, under s 40XB of the AFP Act, the Ombudsman may, at any time, inspect the records of AFP conduct and practice issues dealt with under Divisions 3 and 4 for the purposes of reviewing the administration of Part V of the AFP Act.



Inspection findings

The Commonwealth Ombudsman reports annually to the Australian Parliament on our reviews of AFP activities under Part V of the AFP Act. Our report for the 2024–25 inspections period has not yet been finalised. Further inspections were conducted in May and June 2026, with outcomes and findings currently being formulated.

Part 10. ACT National Preventive Mechanism

The ACT Ombudsman, together with the ACT Inspector of Custodial Services and ACT Human Rights Commission, is part of the ACT's multi-body National Preventive Mechanism (NPM) supporting Australia's implementation of the United Nations' Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman and Degrading Treatment or Punishment (OPCAT).

Governance

The [*Monitoring of Places of Detention \(Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture\) Act 2018*](#) prescribes the ACT NPM's functions, powers and members. The ACT Ombudsman provides the function of ACT NPM Coordinator, supporting the ACT NPM in its governance arrangements and coordinating its collective activities.

The ACT NPM continues to face challenges of limited resources to proactively undertake its role to improve the treatment and conditions of people deprived of liberty, and to strengthen the protection of detainees against torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

In 2025–26, the ACT NPM Governance Committee met 6 times. During these meetings, they approved governance documents and discussed and agreed ACT NPM activities, including NPM visits, reports and engagement opportunities.

In September 2025, the ACT NPM published the [ACT NPM Guidelines](#), which inform how the ACT NPM exercises its functions. The ACT NPM also published the [ACT NPM Standard Operating Procedures](#), which complement the ACT NPM Guidelines, outlining agreed working arrangements between ACT NPM members.

In 2025–26, the ACT NPM also unveiled its new logo, designed by Warralang Projects, that draws its colour palette from the 3 agencies that make up the ACT NPM, acknowledging their distinct contributions while creating a unified visual identity.



NPM visits

Dhulwa Mental Health Unit

On 29 July 2025, officers from the ACT Human Rights Commission together with the ACT NPM Coordinator, who also represented the ACT Ombudsman, conducted a visit to the Dhulwa Mental Health Unit. A post visit summary was provided to Canberra Health Services, and they accepted all recommendations from the visit.

Eating Disorders Residential Treatment Centre

On 4 February 2026, officers from the ACT Human Rights Commission together with the ACT NPM Coordinator, who also represented the ACT Ombudsman, conducted a visit to the Eating Disorders Residential Treatment Centre. A post visit summary was provided to Canberra Health Services in March 2026.

NPM reports

Post Visit Summary: Bimberi Youth Justice Centre

On 26 August 2025, the ACT NPM published a [Post Visit Summary](#) about our visit to Bimberi Youth Justice Centre on 7 May 2025.

We found the increased number of young people being detained in Bimberi contributed to staffing pressure and fatigue. Combined with the centre's operational focus on physical and procedural security and its low-risk appetite, this was reducing young people's access to education, health and other essential services. This means that young people may not be receiving support that can assist them to avoid future offending.

During the visit, we were also made aware of incidents that raised significant concerns, and we reviewed CCTV footage, incident reports and information from Canberra Health Services. These incidents highlighted the importance of youth detention officers wearing body-worn cameras to improve transparency, record-keeping and accountability.



We made 6 recommendations aimed at ensuring the humane treatment of the vulnerable cohort of young people deprived of liberty at Bimberi and supporting the diversion of young people from Bimberi more generally. The Health and Community Services Directorate agreed to 4 recommendations while noting 2 recommendations required consideration by the ACT Government due to potential financial implications.

We will continue to monitor these recommendations.

Post Visit Report: ACT Watch House and Police Stations

In March 2026, in our role as part of the ACT NPM and in collaboration with the Commonwealth NPM, we published a [Post Visit Report](#) about our visits to the ACT Watch House and ACT Police Stations between 23 May and 23 June 2025.

We welcomed several positive observations throughout the visit, including remediation works at the ACT Watch House and several other police stations, a trial of ways to monitor the key health signs of people deprived of liberty and improved onboarding for new staff. However, we identified some deficiencies in ACT Policing's data collection practices to identify and resolve systemic issues in police custody practices, as well as deficiencies in the use of police vehicles for transportation that impacted upon the safety of transporting officers and people deprived of liberty.

We assessed the implementation of past suggestions made by the ACT and Commonwealth NPMs in our Post Visit Summaries of the ACT Policing Watch House and ACT Police Stations published in June 2024 about our visits in June 2023. Of the 53 suggestions we made in 2024, we found 26 had been fully implemented, 15 were partially implemented, 11 had not yet been implemented and one was superseded.

Following the most recent visits, we made another 30 recommendations that were relevant either across all facilities, to the ACT Watch House or to specific ACT Police Stations. The recommendations covered several topics, including supporting improvements in data collection, critical infrastructure, staff training and important safeguards for the dignity and privacy of people deprived of liberty. ACT Policing accepted 29 recommendations while not accepting a recommendation about the installation of privacy screening in cells at the ACT Watch House.



We will continue to work with the Commonwealth NPM and engage with ACT Policing to visit the ACT Watch House and police stations to monitor the implementation of these recommendations, as well as make other recommendations to improve the treatment and conditions of people deprived of liberty at these sites.

Assessment of Implementation of Past Suggestions: ACT Watch House and Police Stations

In March 2026, the ACT and Commonwealth NPMs published an [*Assessment of Implementation of Past Suggestions: ACT Watch House and Police Stations*](#), which reported on the implementation of 53 suggestions made by the ACT and Commonwealth NPMs in 2024.

The suggestions, made across 2 Post Visit Summary Reports on the [*ACT Watch House and Police Stations*](#) and [*Jervis Bay Police Station*](#), were aimed at improving the conditions for people deprived of liberty as well as staff, and ensuring their safety.

We found ACT Policing had fully implemented 26 of our suggestions, 15 had been partially implemented, 11 had not been implemented and one recommendation had been superseded. We were pleased with ACT Policing's substantial efforts to address these past suggestions, noting that ACT Policing should prioritise infrastructure concerns identified at all its police stations.

Australian NPM Annual Report

On 4 March 2025, the [*Australian NPM Annual Report for 2024–25*](#) was published. It included a short profile of the ACT NPM as well as broader discussion and commentary on the work of the Australian NPM and common themes of collective concern that have been identified by members of the Australian NPM.

NPM submissions and statements

With our ACT NPM colleagues, and at times with our Australian NPM colleagues, we made the following submissions, statements and contributions to consultations in 2025–26:

- [ACT NPM statement: ACT Youth Justice Forum – Developing a Strategic Purpose & Model of Care for Youth Detention](#) (June 2026)
- [Australian NPM statement: 20 years of OPCAT: Preventing ill-treatment through independent oversight](#) (June 2026)
- [ACT NPM submission to Inquiry into Bail Amendment Bill 2026](#) (June 2026)
- [Australian NPM statement: Australian NPM listed by the SPT](#) (May 2026)
- [ACT NPM Submission: Inquiry into Australia’s youth justice and incarceration system](#) (December 2025)
- [Australian NPM submission: Seventh periodic report of Australia under the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman and Degrading Treatment or Punishment](#) (September 2025)
- [Australian NPM submission: Draft National Report: Australia’s 4th Universal Periodic Review](#) (August 2025)
- [Australian NPM submission: Working Group on Arbitrary Detention December 2025 visit to Australia](#) (August 2025)
- [ACT NPM submission: Review of operation of s 70 \(Strip search on admission\) of the Corrections Management Act 2007](#) (August 2025)
- [Australian NPM statement: Rushed youth justice reforms won’t make NT safer](#) (August 2025).

The ACT NPM appeared before the Standing Committee on Legal Affairs in June 2026 as part of its Inquiry into Bail Amendment Bill 2026.

The ACT NPM was also consulted on a range of ACT Government policy initiatives, including:

- amendments to the [Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children and Young People Commissioner Act 2022](#), which allow the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children and Young People Commissioner to share information with the ACT NPM in the exercise of their functions
- statutory review of the [Terrorism \(Extraordinary Temporary Powers\) Act 2006](#)
- amendments to the [Bail Act 1992](#).



NPM education and engagement

As part of the Australian NPM, ACT Ombudsman staff engage in a variety of learning opportunities and stakeholder engagements as we continue to build our capabilities to undertake our NPM role. In 2025–26, our ACT NPM engagement activities included:

- co-facilitating a Youth Justice Forum with the Health and Community Services Directorate to inform the development of a fit for purpose strategic plan and model of care for the Bimberi Youth Justice Centre (June 2026). The forum drew on national and international experiences, and participants included key decision-makers, and those working directly and indirectly with young people in contact with the criminal legal system, in government and community roles.
- with our Commonwealth NPM colleagues, conducting a learning and development session on conducting joint visits for the Australian NPM (May 2026).
- with our Commonwealth NPM colleagues, providing information sessions on the role of the NPM to ACT Policing inductees at the ACT Watch House (August 2025; October 2025; November 2025; March 2026).
- meeting with a delegation from the United Nations Working Group on Arbitrary Detention during their formal visit to Australia (December 2025). The Working Group issued a [press release](#) at the conclusion of their visit.
- facilitating a workshop on engaging with the UN anti-torture mechanisms for refugee and diaspora community leaders at the invitation of the Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors (STARTTS), Diplomacy Training Program (DTP) and the Whitlam Institute (December 2025).
- providing an information session to custodial officer recruits (November 2025).
- presenting to the strategic Workshop on Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture Ratification in South Korea, at the invitation of the National Human Rights Commission of Korea and Association for the Prevention of Torture (October 2025).
- with our Commonwealth NPM colleagues, providing an information session to Australian Federal Police recruits (September 2025).

Part 11. ACT Judicial Council

The ACT Ombudsman provides support to the ACT Judicial Council (the Council).

The Council is a separate entity established under the [*Judicial Commissions Act 1994*](#) with powers to receive and examine complaints about the conduct or capacity of ACT judicial officers (judges and magistrates). The Council has 4 members:

- the Chief Justice of the ACT Supreme Court
- the Chief Magistrate of the ACT Magistrates Court
- an appointed legal practitioner member
- an appointed member of the community.

The ACT Ombudsman is the Council's Principal Officer. Together with nominated staff, the Ombudsman is responsible for:

- receiving the Council's enquiries and complaints
- assisting the Council to conduct preliminary inquiries and other examinations
- facilitating communication between the Council, complainants and judicial officers.

Ombudsman staff also perform secretariat services for the Council.

In 2025–26, the Council received 19 complaints and 16 enquiries. The Council finalised 5 complaints.

The Council issues a separate annual report to the ACT Attorney-General, published on the Council's [website](#).



Part 12. Appendices

Appendix A: Complaints about ACT directorates and agencies in 2025–26

Directorate or other body	Total received	Total finalised	Finalised with investigation	Finalised no investigation
Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate	50	50	2	48
ACT Revenue Office	34	42	2	40
Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development – other	9	3	0	3
WorkSafe ACT	7	5	0	5
Health and Community Services Directorate*	176	162	18	121
Housing ACT	153	139	18	121
Office for Children, Youth and Family Support	16	14	0	14
Health and Community Services – other	7	6	0	6
Community Services Directorate	0	3	0	3
City and Environment Directorate*	119	115	5	110
Access Canberra	79	79	4	75
City Services (Fix My Street)	18	7	0	7
City and Environment Directorate – other	4	3	0	3
Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate**	0	2	0	2
Planning, Development and Infrastructure	7	3	0	3
Transport Canberra	4	3	0	3
Transport Canberra and City Services Directorate**	0	11	1	10
Domestic Animal Services	5	5	0	5



Directorate or other body	Total received	Total finalised	Finalised with investigation	Finalised no investigation
Canberra Memorial Parks	1	1	0	1
Parks and Conservation Services	1	1	0	1
Justice and Community Safety Directorate	79	82	12	68
ACT Corrective Services	77	80	12	68
ACT Emergency Services Agency	1	1	0	1
Justice and Community Safety – other	1	1	0	1
Education Directorate	25	19	0	19
Infrastructure Canberra*	2	1	0	1
Digital Canberra*	1	1	0	1
Canberra Health Services	12	9	1	8
Total ACT directorates	464	439	38	401
Other bodies and authorities	47	41	0	41
Public Trustee and Guardian for the ACT	14	12	0	12
Public Advocate of the ACT	1	0	0	0
Office of the ACT Legislative Assembly	6	6	0	6
Legal Aid Commission (Legal Aid ACT)	9	9	0	9
ACT Law Society	2	2	0	2
ACT Human Rights Commission	10	8	0	8
ACT Long Service Leave Authority	0	0	0	0
Suburban Land Agency	3	1	0	1
Director of Public Prosecutions	2	3	0	3
Territory-owned corporations	2	3	0	3
Icon Water	2	3	0	3



Directorate or other body	Total received	Total finalised	Finalised with investigation	Finalised no investigation
ACT Courts and Tribunal	11	13	0	13
Total ACT directorates and other bodies	524	496	38	458
ACT Policing	96	94	1	93
Total ACT directorates, other bodies and ACT Policing	620	590	39	551

Note: Data on complaints finalised includes complaints received from 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026, as well as complaints received in prior months.

**New ACT Directorates commenced on 1 July 2025 following the ACT Machinery of Government changes.*

***The Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate and Transport Canberra and City Services Directorate ceased to exist from 1 July 2025 following the ACT Machinery of Government changes. Data recorded against these directorates relate to complaints received before 1 July 2025 but finalised in the 2025–26 financial year.*

Appendix B: Outcomes of formal complaint investigations finalised in 2025–26

Directorate or other body	Better explanation / independent review	Agency to pursue systemic improvement	Remedies provided by agency					Total
			Apology	Decision changed or reconsidered	Payment granted	Penalty/fee waived or reduced	Other remedy	
Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	3
ACT Revenue Office			1	1		1		3
Health and Community Services Directorate*	2	0	0	0	0	0	13	15
Housing ACT	2						13	15
Justice and Community Safety Directorate	4	3	1	2	0	1	1	12
ACT Corrective Services	4	3	1	2		1	1	12
City and Environment Directorate*	5	2	1	2	0	1	0	11
Access Canberra	4	2	1	2		1		11
Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate**	1							1
Total ACT directorates, other bodies and ACT Policing								41

**Note: Other remedies may include having a fault rectified or issue fixed. More than one outcome can be achieved following a complaint investigation.*

**New ACT Directorates commenced on 1 July 2025 following the ACT Machinery of Government changes.*



Part 13. References

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Abbreviations, acronyms and technical terms

Acronym	Meaning
ACIC	Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission
ACT	Australian Capital Territory
ACT NPM	ACT National Preventive Mechanism
ACTRO	ACT Revenue Office
AFP	Australian Federal Police
AFP Act	<i>Australian Federal Police Act 1979</i> (Cth)
Agencies	Administrative units of ACT Government business
AI Act	<i>Crimes (Assumed Identities) Act 2009</i>
AMC	Alexander Maconochie Centre
CCSO Act	<i>Crimes (Child Sex Offenders) Act 2005</i>
CECA	Children's Education and Care Authority
CO Act	<i>Crimes (Controlled Operations) Act 2008</i>
Commission	ACT Integrity Commission
CYP Act	<i>Children and Young People Act 2008</i>
Directorates	Administrative units of ACT Government business
Entities	Designated entities
FOI	Freedom of information
FOI Act	<i>Freedom of Information Act 2016</i>
IC Act	<i>Integrity Commission Act 2018</i>
JC Act	<i>Judicial Commissions Act 1994</i>
MLA	Member of the ACT Legislative Assembly
NPM	National Preventive Mechanism
Ombudsman Act	<i>Ombudsman Act 1989</i>
OPCAT	Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment
PID	Public Interest Disclosure
PID Act	<i>Public Interest Disclosure Act 2012</i>
PSOA	Person subject of allegation
RC	Reportable conduct
SD Act	<i>Crimes (Surveillance Devices) Act 2010</i>
Services Agreement	<i>Services Agreement between Australian Capital Territory and Commonwealth of Australia 2025–2030</i>
Territory Records Act	<i>Territory Records Act 2002</i>
TIA Act	<i>Telecommunications (Interception and Access) Act 1979</i> (Cth)

