

# AUSTRALIAN AND NEW ZEALAND OMBUDSMAN ASSOCIATION (ANZOA)

## Overview

A professional association, ANZOA is the peak body for Ombudsmen in Australia and New Zealand.

In this context, the term Ombudsman includes other positions, such as Complaints Commissioners, which perform the same independent role.

ANZOA Members come from not-for-profit, industry-based and statutory, external dispute resolution (EDR) offices.

The offices of ANZOA Members meet accepted high standards of independence, impartiality and effectiveness.

They also observe the Australian *Benchmarks for Industry-Based Customer Dispute Resolution Schemes*<sup>1</sup>(the 'National Benchmarks') and Australian Standards on Complaint Handling and Dispute Resolution.

Among other things, ANZOA acts as a network for consultation and discussion among Ombudsman offices on areas of interest, concern and common experience.

## History

ANZOA was incorporated on 22 May 2003, under the Associations Incorporations Act 1981 (Victoria).

Initially, it was an association for industry-based Ombudsmen.

Membership has since expanded to include State and Commonwealth Parliamentary Ombudsmen and, most recently, professional services Ombudsmen.

**ANZOA is the peak body for Ombudsmen  
in Australia and New Zealand**

More at [www.anzoa.com.au](http://www.anzoa.com.au)

<sup>1</sup> *Benchmarks for Industry-Based Customer Dispute Resolution Schemes*, Department of Industry Science & Technology, 1997

## Objects

1. To establish an Australian and New Zealand Ombudsman network
2. To establish a network for consultation and discussion of areas of interest, concern or common experiences
3. To promote co-operation and communication between recognised industry, parliamentary and professional Ombudsmen and their offices
4. To promote the appropriate use of the title of Ombudsman in both the public and private sectors
5. To accord recognition publicly to those persons who satisfy the defined criteria for membership of the Association
6. To enhance the status and visibility of recognised Ombudsmen and the importance of the profession
7. To formulate and promote standards of best practice to be met by Ombudsmen and their offices in the performance of their duties, including the adoption of the Australian *Benchmarks for Industry-Based Customer Dispute Resolution Schemes*, or equivalent
8. To provide a forum for the exchange of information and opinions on aspects of Ombudsman practices and procedures
9. To encourage and facilitate joint initiatives among recognised Ombudsmen and their offices, including but not limited to, research, publication of information, professional development, staff training, case management/ information technology systems and community education
10. To promote public awareness of the services offered by recognised Ombudsmen offices, including through the publication of papers, articles, and commentaries, and through the promotion of lectures, seminars and conferences about Ombudsman practices and procedures
11. To make and disseminate reports, commentaries and submissions on aspects of Ombudsman practices and procedures
12. To develop and foster links with overseas Ombudsmen and Ombudsman associations
13. To promote excellence in complaint handling through alternative dispute resolution methodologies.
14. To co-operate with institutions of academic learning, and with other persons having an interest in Ombudsman practices and procedures, to promote objects 1 to 13 above.

## 2009-10 Executive Committee

**Chair:** Fiona McLeod, Energy and Water Ombudsman (Victoria), Australia

**Secretary:** Karen Stevens, Insurance & Savings Ombudsman, New Zealand

**Treasurer:** Colin Neave, Chief Ombudsman, Financial Ombudsman Service, Australia

**Committee members:**

Simon Cohen, Public Transport Ombudsman (Victoria), Australia

Chris Field, Ombudsman Western Australia & Energy Ombudsman Western Australia

Judi Jones, Electricity and Gas Complaints Commissioner, New Zealand

Clare Petre, Energy & Water Ombudsman NSW, Australia

Prof. John McMillan, Commonwealth Ombudsman, Australia

## Offices of ANZOA Members

### Australia: Industry-based Ombudsmen

**Energy & Water Ombudsman NSW** (Clare Petre)

State-based office which investigates and resolves disputes between New South Wales residential and small business customers and their electricity, gas and water companies

**Energy and Water Ombudsman (Victoria)** (Fiona McLeod)

State-based office which investigates and resolves disputes between Victorian residential and small business customers and their electricity, gas and water companies

**Energy Ombudsman Queensland** (Barry Adams)

State-based office which investigates and resolves disputes between Queensland residential and small business customers and their electricity and gas companies

**Energy Ombudsman Western Australia** (Chris Field)

State-based office which investigates and resolves complaints between Western Australian residential and small business customers and their electricity and gas companies

**Financial Ombudsman Service** (Colin Neave, Alison Maynard, Philip Field)

National office which handles disputes about banking, general insurance, financial planning, stockbroking, life insurance, finance and lending, managed investments and mortgage and finance broking

**Public Transport Ombudsman (Victoria)** (Simon Cohen)

State-based office dealing with complaints about Victorian public transport that members of the community have been unable to resolve directly with the public transport operators

**Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman** (Simon Cleary, Acting)

National office which deals with complaints about telephone and internet companies

## **New Zealand: Industry-based Ombudsmen**

### **Banking Ombudsman** (Deborah Battell)

National office which handles disputes between banks and their customers, including partnerships, clubs and companies

### **Electricity and Gas Complaints Commissioner** (Judi Jones)

National office which investigates and resolves disputes between electricity and gas customers and their providers

### **Insurance & Savings Ombudsman** (Karen Stevens)

National office which handles complaints between policyholders or customers and their insurance/savings company or organisation, about personal or domestic insurance, or savings services

## **Australia: Parliamentary Ombudsmen**

### **Commonwealth Ombudsman** (Prof. John McMillan)

National office which investigates complaints about the administrative actions of Australian Government agencies

### **Ombudsman for the Northern Territory** (Carolyn Richards)

State office which takes complaints about Northern Territory government departments and agencies

### **Ombudsman Tasmania** (Simon Allston)

State office which investigates complaints about the administrative actions of government departments, councils and public authorities—the Ombudsman Tasmania is also the Energy Ombudsman Tasmania

### **Ombudsman Victoria** (George Brouwer)

State office which takes complaints about Victorian government departments, most statutory authorities and local government

### **Ombudsman Western Australia** (Chris Field)

State office which investigates complaints about Western Australian government departments, statutory authorities and local governments

## **New Zealand: Parliamentary Ombudsmen**

### **Office of the Ombudsmen in New Zealand** (Bev Wakem)

There are two Parliamentary Ombudsmen in New Zealand—their primary purpose is to inquire into complaints raised against New Zealand central, regional and local government organisations or agencies