

What is an Ombudsman?

An Ombudsman is a person who can investigate complaints from people about their dealings with government agencies and officials.

Often the Ombudsman will make recommendations to government to fix problems and improve administration.

All Ombudsman investigation is carried out in private and is confidential.

The Ombudsman's role is to make sure that the Solomon Islands government acts fairly towards Solomon Islands people, to make sure that government decisions are proper and just, and to help make government administration better.

The Ombudsman's office is always independent when carrying out its duties. The Office is established by the National Constitution.

The term for an Ombudsman is five years.

Who can make a complaint?

Any aggrieved person or a representative of such person. However, the Ombudsman cannot investigate all complaints, he might decide not to investigate some complaints.

If you make a complaint that the Ombudsman either cannot or will not investigate, he will inform you of the reason why, and he will try to find you another way to deal with your problem.

Who can the Ombudsman Investigate?

The Ombudsman has the power to investigate issues or complaints about:

- Any public service ministry, department or officer, including the police and correctional services
- Honiara City Council
- Provincial governments and their officers
- Statutory corporations such as Solomon Water, Solomon power, SIPA, CEMA and their officers
- Government contractors and agents

OMBUDSMAN services are free of charge to the public

What are examples of maladministration?

- Making decisions not based on proper reasons
- Failure to follow procedures or law
- Not following a fair and open process in awarding of contracts, and scholarships
- Failure to give reason for a decision
- Denying the access to information
- Inadequate or poor record keeping
- Undue delay
- Chronic 'kam back tomorrow'

DECISIONS WITHOUT REASONS ARE NOT GOOD ADMINISTRATION



The Ombudsman works as a **watchdog** of ministries and statutory bodies

How do you make a complaint to the Ombudsman?

You can make a complaint in the form of a letter or email or through telephone or direct visitation to the Office of the Ombudsman. Ombudsman can also begin an own-motion investigation on his own account.

However, before you make a complaint you should first try to resolve your problem with the official or the agency involved.

If you have already talked to the official or agency involved, but have not been able to resolve your problem, the Ombudsman might be able to investigate your complain and help find a solution.

The Ombudsman will always ensure that investigation of complaints are completed within a reasonable timeframe.

What happens when you make a complaint?

When making a complaint to the Ombudsman, it is important to provide as much relevant information as possible so the Ombudsman can get a clear picture of what the problem is.



Upon receiving your complaint, the Ombudsman might decide to investigate it. For example, the Ombudsman's Office might contact the relevant ministry, agencies or official to find out what they have to say about the complaint, and if necessary, review the agency's files, policies and procedures.

If the Ombudsman decides that the Ministry, agency or official has made a mistake or acted wrongly, the Ombudsman will recommend action to fix the problem.

This can include asking the ministry, agency or official to reconsider or change its decision, apologize, or change a law, policy or procedure.

What happens after the investigation?

When the investigation is completed, the Ombudsman will let you know the result and what recommendations have been made.

If the Ombudsman finds that a complaint cannot be proven, he will explain why we have reached that view.

Assist in the improvement of the practices and procedures of government

Reporting

In some instances, when an Ombudsman report is not adhered to, the Ombudsman can make a formal complaint about the report. Such a complaint, in the form of a report can be sent to the officials concerned, the relevant minister and the Prime Minister. Some reports are sent to Parliament.



Investigates complaints about Solomon Islands government agencies

Contact the Ombudsman's Office

Phone: (677) 21855/21856

Fax: (677) 28626

Email: OOSI@ombudsman.gov.sb

Postal Address: P.O.Box 535 Honiara



OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN

What you should know about the role of the Ombudsman

Luk lo waka blo gavman