



## Standing Committee on Justice and Community Safety

### Inquiry into Annual and Financial Reports 2021-2022 ANSWER TO QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

---

Asked by Mr Peter CAIN MLA on 2 November 2022: Mr Iain Anderson, ACT Ombudsman, took on notice the following question(s):

Reference: Hansard [uncorrected] proof transcript 2 November 2022 [PAGE 62]

In relation to:

**Mr Anderson:** So we took on an additional 10 complaint handling staff.

**THE CHAIR:** Yes, I think you said that earlier too, yes, thank you. And 10 fulltime equivalent at what levels were those?

**Mr Anderson:** Typically, they are APS3, APS4, so relatively junior.

**THE CHAIR:** Okay.

**Mr Anderson:** And we had staff who were both dealing with incoming complaints and then also dealing with investigations and so we have said to those staff, no, actually, just focus on receiving the complaints and the first handling of complaints and other people will deal with investigations, so that is the second point about how we have focused staff.

**THE CHAIR:** And just on that minor detail, you said APS, you said—you said—that is a Commonwealth designation, you mean ASO which is ACT designation or do you use the Commonwealth designation?

**Mr Anderson:** We use the Commonwealth designation.

**THE CHAIR:** I see, yes.

**Mr Anderson:** Because as a Commonwealth agency, we employ people under the public service, the Commonwealth Public Service Act.

**THE CHAIR:** Yes, cool. And what was the budget for those extra 10 staff?

**Mr Anderson:** I would have to take that on notice.

**ACT OMBUDSMAN:** The answer to the Member's question is as follows:-

In 2021-22, the Office of the Commonwealth Ombudsman (the Office) allocated additional funding of \$840,000 to its Complaints Management and Education Branch to engage a surge workforce for complaint handling:

- 6 additional APS4/5 complaint handling staff on 6-month contracts for the period 1 July to 31 December 2021 (\$315,000), and
- 10 additional APS4/5 complaint handling staff on 6-month contracts for the period to 1 January to 30 June 2022 (\$525,000).

The Complaints Management and Education Branch manages complaints received on behalf of both the Commonwealth Ombudsman and ACT Ombudsman. The Office did not request or receive additional funding from the ACT Government to contribute to the \$840,000 funding for the surge workforce.

Approved for circulation to the Standing Committee on Justice and Community Safety

Signature:



Date: 11/11/22

By the ACT Ombudsman, Mr Iain Anderson