

Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security

**Inquiry into the Telecommunications Legislation Amendment
(International Production Orders) Bill 2020**

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Office of the Commonwealth Ombudsman

MAY 2020

Department/Agency: Office of the Commonwealth Ombudsman

Question: 1

Topic: Resourcing requests and outcomes

Question:

Senator KENEALLY: So it's not closed off, not yet resolved. When was the last time you requested additional resources from the government; and what was the response?

Mr Manthorpe: We are in discussions with the government about a whole range of things across the office at any point in time. I think it would be fair to say sometimes we succeed in securing additional resources and sometimes we do not, like most agencies of the Commonwealth. I can't give you a more precise answer than that. If you would like, I can take that on notice.

Senator KENEALLY: That'd be great. Thank you.

Answer:

Since the 2017-18 financial year, the Office of the Commonwealth Ombudsman has requested and received additional funding as follows:

Function	Year/process	Amount
Overseeing the National Disability Insurance Agency and the National Disability Insurance Quality and Safeguards Commission	2017-18 BUDGET	\$6.427m over 4 years starting in 2017-18 (ongoing \$1.614m pa), plus a further \$2.325m over 3 years starting in 2021-22
Private Health Insurance Ombudsman – private health insurance reforms	2017-18 MYEFO	\$5.112m over 4 years starting in 2018-19 (ongoing \$1.041m pa)
Defence Force Ombudsman - Defence abuse reporting function	2018-19 BUDGET	\$27.093m over 4 years starting in 2018-19 (ongoing \$6.061m pa)

National Preventative Mechanism Coordinator for OPCAT	2018-19 BUDGET	\$1.202m over 4 years starting in 2018-19 (ongoing \$0.303m pa)
Postal Industry Ombudsman – funding model	2018-19 MYEFO	\$4.298m over 5 years starting in 2018-19 (ongoing \$0.889m pa)
VET Student Loans Ombudsman – funding to support the VET-FEE-HELP remedy scheme	2018-19 BUDGET 2018-19 MYEFO (2018-19 PAES published) 2019-20 MYEFO	\$1m (2018-19 only) \$5.650m over 2 years starting in 2018-19 \$15.415m over 2 years starting in 2019-20
NDIS Participant Service Guarantee - monitoring timeline performance	2019-20 BUDGET	\$2.000m over 4 years starting 2019-20 (\$0.500m ongoing)
Overseeing compliance by the proposed Commonwealth Integrity Commission with covert powers	2018-19 BUDGET 2019-20 BUDGET	\$1.350m over 5 years starting in 2017-18 (ongoing \$0.270m pa) \$0.965m over 3 years starting in 2020-21 (ongoing \$0.309m pa)

The Office has also requested funding, which has not yet been provided, for two additional functions:

- Overseeing agency compliance with the computer access and industry assistance provisions of the *Surveillance Devices Act 2004* and the *Telecommunications Act 1997*, as introduced by the *Telecommunications and Other Legislation Amendment (Assistance and Access) Act 2018*.
- Overseeing agency compliance with the international production order scheme, introduced in the Telecommunications Legislation Amendment (International Production Orders) Bill 2020.

We are in ongoing discussion with government on these two measures.