

Select Committee on a National Integrity Commission
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Question on Notice 1:

Department/Agency: Office of the Commonwealth Ombudsman

Topic: Numbers of complaints investigated by the Commonwealth Ombudsman

Senator: Senator the Hon Jacinta Collins

Type of question: Hansard

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: Friday 7 July 2017

Number of pages: 1

Question: *What proportion of complaints received by the Commonwealth Ombudsman are investigated?*

Answer: Of the 37,790 complaints received by the Office of the Commonwealth Ombudsman in 2015-16, 5,339 were determined to be out of jurisdiction. Of the 32,451 in-jurisdiction complaints, 3,131 (9.6%) were investigated. Of those investigated, 2,540 were resolved after a single contact with the relevant agency, 582 were resolved after two or more substantive contacts with the relevant agency, and nine complaint investigations involved the formal use of powers being exercised under the *Ombudsman Act 1976*.

Question on Notice 2:

Topic: The definition of ‘conduct engaged in for the purpose of corruption’.

Senator: Senator Kakoschke-Moore

Type of question: Hansard

Question: *Turning to public interest disclosures, in the Ombudsman's annual report 2015-16 there were 612 public interest disclosures and 707 instances of disclosable conduct reported, and of those there were 25 instances of conduct engaged in for the purpose of corruption.*

Can you provide us a bit more detail about what 'conduct engaged in for the purpose of corruption' means?

Answer: “Conduct engaged in for the purpose of corruption” is not defined in the *Public Interest Disclosure Act 2013* (the PID Act). Agencies within the PID Act’s jurisdiction determine what, in their view, the term means.

The data resulting in the figure of 25 instances of corruption for the 2015-16 financial year was collated during the Annual Reporting process. No additional information on corruption was recorded at the time. Our records management process and data collation has since changed. We are now able to ascertain more insightful data about disclosable conduct.