

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARINGS– FEBRUARY 2017

Finance and Public Administration Portfolio

Department/Agency: Office of the Commonwealth Ombudsman

Outcome/Program:

Outcome 1. Fair and accountable administrative action by Australian Government entities and prescribed private sector organisations, by investigating complaints, reviewing administrative action and statutory compliance inspections and reporting.

Topic: Defence Force Ombudsman

Senator: Senator Skye Kakoschke-Moore

Question reference number: 122

Type of question: Written

Number of pages: 2

Question:

Senator SKYE KAKOSCHKE-MOORE:

Abuse Reporting Function

From 1 December 2016 our role will expand to include an abuse reporting function for serving and former Defence members, and civilians deployed on operations. This provides a confidential mechanism to report sexual abuse, serious physical abuse and serious bullying and harassment within Defence, for those who feel unable to access Defence's internal mechanisms.

Since the role of the Defence Ombudsman was expanded on 1 December 2016 to include an abuse reporting function, how many reports have been made since that time?

Answer:

51 (as at 31 March 2017).

Question:

How many people have contacted the office regarding this function, but have not made a report?

Answer:

8 (as at 31 March 2017).

Question:

Have any serving members contacted your office to make a report about

- a. abuse?
- b. other complaints?

Answer:

- a. 13 (as at 31 March 2017).
- b. The Office of the Commonwealth Ombudsman does not capture information about the service status of people making administrative complaints about Defence.

Question:

Have any former members contacted your office?

Answer:

As at 31 March 2017, 35 former members have made a report of abuse.

Question:

How many people have contacted the Defence Ombudsman's office with complaints about defence administrative issues?

Answer:

Between 1 December 2016 and 31 March 2017, 209 complaints have been received about defence administrative issues (which includes complaints about the Department of Defence, the three services, the Department of Veterans' Affairs and other defence portfolio agencies).

Question:

Have many people have contacted the Ombudsman's office who missed the DART reporting date?

Answer:

16 (as at 31 March 2017).