

# Offices of the Ombudsman, Information Commissioner & Commissioner for Environmental Information Strategy Statement 2013-2015



## Foreword

The ongoing economic difficulties challenge us all to work differently. In seeking to meet economic challenges and to generate efficiencies, all public services must however continue to honour the fundamental principles of openness, fairness and accountability. Over the next three years we will strive to provide a high quality and timely service to members of the public who seek our assistance. We will regularly review how we operate to ensure that we respond as effectively and efficiently as possible to the increased demand from the large numbers of new bodies coming within my remit as Ombudsman and a potentially expanded remit for the Office of the Information Commissioner. We have a strong and committed team and we will support and strengthen this team in the coming years to ensure that we will continue to have a dynamic staff with the capability to deliver our goals. We will use our experience of dealing with complaints and reviewing FOI and AIE decisions to support public bodies in tackling the root causes of complaints and applications for review, thus maximising our impact and providing leadership in public sector reform. Above all, we will use our expertise and resources to support public administration in delivering quality public services to the people.

Emily O'Reilly,  
Ombudsman, Information Commissioner  
& Commissioner for Environmental Information  
February 2013



## Vision

A public service that is fair, open, accountable and effective.

## Mission

Through examining complaints and reviewing FOI and AIE decisions the Offices will improve standards in public administration and promote the principles of openness, fairness, accountability and effectiveness.

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## Key Priorities

### Process cases to the highest standards

- Robust management practices to manage casework demands, capacity and performance.
- Revised structures and processes in the OIC and OCEI to manage demand and performance.
- A structured process for continuous performance improvement.
- New quality standards, measures and practices in the Office of the Ombudsman.
- More strategic Ombudsman investigations and improved investigation process.

### Use learning to deliver systemic change

- Effective processes and information systems to identify current and emerging case trends.
- Effective interventions to address these trends, to achieve early resolution and systemic change.
- Publish material/guidance to assist agencies under remit to improve services (previous OIC / OCEI decisions, case digests and reports, quality standards, guidelines for improved decision making).

### Engage with stakeholders to improve public services

- New communications strategy and implementation plan to maximise outcomes from Offices.
- Plan of structured engagement with members of the public and agencies within remit.
- Seek feedback to improve the performance of our organisation and the levels of satisfaction with our service.
- Formal mechanism to share learning with key stakeholders on a regular basis.

### Develop the best team internally

- New Human Resource Strategy to include identification of competency areas that need to be improved, an internal and external staff mobility programme, measures to enhance engagement with staff and improved performance management practices.
- New training and development practices, including improved coaching and mentoring practices and closer integration of the training function with operational needs.
- Better knowledge management systems and new procedures for sharing our expertise internally.

### Influence change and maximise impact

- Strategic engagement with key organisations to achieve improvements in public administration.
- Strengthened relationship with the Public Services Oversight and Petitions Oireachtas Committee.
- Systemic investigations/initiatives to deliver wider improvements in public administration.
- Annual Ombudsman lecture on public administration.

## Measures of success

- Faster case completion times.
- Quality standards are met.
- Members of the public trust us. Satisfaction rates are high.
- The Offices command respect and co-operation from public bodies and the Oireachtas.
- Engagement with public bodies achieves early resolution and systemic change.
- Staff are developed and engaged.

