

tions for the future of the Commonwealth Ombudsman in Australia.

The booklet documents the achievements of the office, and the people who conceived, established and operated the Commonwealth Ombudsman's Office for the past 20 years.

The publication contains a visual summary of the work of the Office which provides a guide to:

- growth of complaints;
- the main sources of complaints;
- major changes in the Ombudsman's jurisdiction; and
- the number of staff in the Office.

The anniversary document includes contributions from the Hon. John Howard, Prime Minister of Australia; the Hon. Kim Beazley, Leader of the Opposition; Senator Cheryl Kernot, then Leader of the Australian Democrats; the Hon. Sir Gerard Brennan, Chief Justice of the High Court; Professor Jack Richardson and Professor Dennis Pearce, former Ombudsmen; Roberta Jamieson, Ontario Ombudsman; Sir John Robertson, former New Zealand Chief Ombudsman; and Robert Fitzgerald, the President of the Australian Council of Social Services.

Copies of the report can be obtained from Maria Ford in the Ombudsman's Office on phone (02) 6276 0124 or email Maria.Ford@comb.gov.au

Training for RAAF investigators

As a direct result of recommendations by the Ombudsman about problems with administrative investigations within the Australian Defence Force and about lack of training for investigators, the Royal Australian Air Force commissioned Charles Sturt University to develop an accredited course on Investigations process and investigation management for the Australian Defence Force. The Ombudsman's office has had significant input into the course, with presentations and case studies addressing investigation problems and issues such as procedural fairness. The course has now been run twice, in January and June 1997.

In addition, the Australian Defence Force has set up a tri-service team to assist with the implementation of the Ombudsman's recommendations following an own motion investigation into the way the Australian Defence Force responds to serious incidents and offences. The recommendations include the need to ensure that appropriate guidance and training is available to investigators.

ADMINISTRATIVE LAW WATCH

Launch of Window on the Law

On 2 July 1997, the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, the Hon. Daryl Williams AM QC MP and the then Minister for Administrative Services, the Hon. David Jull MP, issued the following Joint News Release

LAW ON THE NET

Australians now have easy access to information on our legal system via a user-friendly Internet site, Window on the Law, launched today by Attorney-General and Minister for Justice Daryl Williams and Minister for Administrative Services David Jull.

Mr Williams said Window on the Law includes an overview of the Australian Constitution, Australia's legal system and court structure and provides access to Commonwealth legal materials, Departmental publications and the Attorney's news releases.

"Window on the Law helps unravel the complex web of laws and regulations which are perhaps a mystery to many ordinary Australians," Mr Williams said.

"It is essential that Australians have access to information relating to our legal system and the operation of Australian laws that may affect them."

The web site also contains a gateway to SCALEplus – the online legal information system of Commonwealth legislation, caselaw and other legal materials.

Mr Jull said the launch of Window on the Law marked an extension of the relationship between the Australian Government Publishing Service and the Attorney-General's Department and a continuation of the Government commitment to providing Australians with easy access to important information.

"Window on the Law is proof of the Government's election commitment to ensure that all Australians have access to clear information about our legal system," Mr Jull said.

"Libraries, students at all levels, legal aid information centres, courts, governments, the media, legal publishers, the legal profession and the general public will all find this site useful. I urge all Australians to take advantage of this service."

The Window on the Law address is <http://law.gov.au>

Government Response to the Humphry Report on GBEs

The Minister for Finance, The Hon John Fahey MP, issued the following Media Release on 30 June 1997.

Government Business Enterprises – New Governance Arrangements

I am pleased to announce the adoption of new governance arrangements for Commonwealth Government Business Enterprises (GBEs), to take effect from 1 July, following a review of the previous accountability arrangements conducted by Mr Richard Humphry, Managing Director of the Australian Stock Exchange.

Mr Humphry's report, *Review of GBE Governance Arrangements*, examined all aspects of the relationships between the Commonwealth and its GBEs and made recommendations for changes or refinements to the arrangements governing those relationships so as to maintain a coherent, prudent and effective policy governing the relationship between the Government and its GBEs. The Government has adopted most of the key recommendations of the Humphry report.

A key change in the arrangements is the adoption of a joint Ministerial shareholder model for overseeing the performance of GBEs. The two shareholder Ministers will be the Minister for Finance and the Minister(s) responsible for the portfolios in which GBEs are currently located.