

COMMITTEE ON THE OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN & THE POLICE INTEGRITY COMMISSION

ACCESS TO INFORMATION INQUIRY

In accordance with its functions under s.31B of the *Ombudsman Act 1974* the Committee on the Office of the Ombudsman and the Police Integrity Committee is to conduct an inquiry into:

- matters raised in the Ombudsman's Annual Report for 1999-2000 in relation to freedom of information, including but not limited to, the need for a review of the *Freedom of Information Act 1989*, and the proliferation of access to information schemes established under the FOI Act, the *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998*, and the *Local Government Act 1993*;
- the impact of the access to information schemes upon the operation of the Office of the Ombudsman;
- the use of privacy and confidentiality considerations as a basis for refusing access to information;
- contractual arrangements between government agencies and private sector contractors providing services on behalf of those agencies, in particular, the reported use of commercial-in-confidence clauses and the transfer of ownership of documents to avoid the requirements of the FOI Act, investigation by the Ombudsman and other accountability measures;
- whether the Ombudsman's jurisdiction should be extended to include the conduct of a private contractor engaged by a public sector agency and using public monies to provide services, goods or other things, on behalf of that agency;
- the adequacy of arrangements for complaint handling and redress in relation to services contracted out by public sector agencies;
- legislative amendments to the *FOI Act* as suggested by the Deputy Ombudsman in response to questioning from the Committee during the 7th General Meeting with the Ombudsman;
- any other matter considered by the Committee to be relevant to the inquiry.

