



QUEENSLAND GOVERNMENT

Hon. Jim Elder MLA  
Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development  
and Minister for Trade

02 OCT 1998

The Honourable Gary Fenlon MLA  
Chair  
Legal, Constitutional and Administrative  
Review Committee  
Parliament House  
BRISBANE QLD 4000

RECEIVED  
LEGAL, CONSTITUTIONAL AND  
ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW  
SPEC 14-1

Dear Mr Fenlon

Thank you for your letter of 13 August 1998 concerning the Report of the Strategic Review of the Queensland Ombudsman. I note that you have sent an identical letter to the Director-General of my Department of State Development. Overall, I support the recommendations and particularly welcome the range of recommendation designed to increase the profile of the Ombudsman's Office and enhance its interaction with State and local Government agencies.

I consider the establishment of a network of contact officers in Queensland Government Agencies (Rec 8), the creation of an 'intake' unit (Rec 18) and the development of internal complaint handling procedures within Government agencies (Rec 10) should help to address the major issue of timeliness, identified in the Report. However, I am concerned that the implementation of these recommendations should not exacerbate the "unwieldy maze of public administration appeal mechanisms" cited in Professor Wiltshire's report.

I believe that Queensland's citizens should have access to a transparent and responsive process for dealing with complaints against Government and I strongly agree with Professor Wiltshire's view that there is considerable potential for rationalising existing mechanisms. Consequently, I consider that recommendation 6 of the report could be considerably expanded to advise Queenslanders not only about the Ombudsman's role, but also the other avenues that are available to them.

I would note that through my Department's regulatory reform function, we have amassed considerable experience and knowledge of the difficulties that business has in dealing with Government and I would be prepared to offer this knowledge to assist in any rationalisation initiative that may arise from this report.

Yours sincerely

JIM ELDER