

**Senate Community Affairs Committee**  
**ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**  
**SOCIAL SERVICES PORTFOLIO**  
**2013-14 Additional Estimates Hearings**

**Outcome Number:** 8

**Question No:** 538

**Topic:** Quality Agency / Complaints

**Hansard Page:** Written

**Senator Polley** asked:

- 1) Please outline the complaints made this financial year - including to the Aged Care Standards and Accreditation Agency, the Aged Care Complaints Scheme and to the Aged Care Quality Agency, including the nature of the complaints, by state and territory, and region.
- 2) How many of these complaints were resolved and how many are ongoing?
- 3) How many complaints are received about the Complaints Scheme or processes themselves?

**Answer:**

**Australian Aged Care Quality Agency**

On 1 January 2014, the Aged Care Standards and Accreditation Agency was replaced by the Australian Aged Care Quality Agency (Quality Agency). The Quality Agency's role is focussed on assessing the performance of homes against the Accreditation Standards. Issues raised with the Quality Agency about the quality of care provided to individuals are referred to the Aged Care Complaints Scheme (the Scheme).

**The Aged Care Complaints Scheme**

The Aged Care Complaints Scheme (the Scheme) has received 1,856 complaints during the period 7 September 2013 to 28 February 2014. Table 1 provides a breakdown of complaints by state and territory.

*Table 1 – Number of complaints to the Scheme for the period 7 September 2013 to 28 February 2014 by state/territory<sup>1</sup>*

	NSW	VIC	QLD	SA	WA	TAS	NT	ACT	Total
<b>Complaints</b>	612	536	335	190	124	38	8	13	1,856

**Nature of the issues**

Complaints examined by the Scheme often incorporate more than one issue. For the period 7 September 2013 to 28 February 2014, there were 4,517 individual issues identified within a total of 1,856 complaints. Table 2 identifies the issue keywords in complaints received by the Scheme for this period.

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<sup>1</sup> The Aged Care Complaints Scheme does not collect data based on aged care planning regions, so numbers by state and territory are provided.

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*Table 2 – Complaint case issues for complaints received for the period 7 September 2013 to 28 February 2014 by state/territory*

Issue Keyword	NSW	VIC	QLD	SA	WA	TAS	NT	ACT	Total
Health & Personal Care	388	350	252	140	75	16	5	10	1,236
Consultation & Communication	214	136	103	47	35	12	3	3	553
Physical Environment	136	155	96	58	27	4	1	4	481
Personnel	173	128	90	34	22	7	1	3	458
Medication Management	101	91	80	50	16	6	0	3	347
Choice & Dignity	113	85	50	32	6	5	0	1	292
Food & Catering	81	104	66	18	16	3	1	1	290
Specified Care & Services	62	53	18	16	13	4	0	2	168
Financial	74	41	20	14	8	5	2	0	164
Falls & Fall Prevention	33	46	40	21	3	4	0	1	148
Abuse	42	27	26	20	5	1	0	0	121
Security of Tenure / Agreement	70	19	14	4	1	5	0	0	113
Personal Property	37	20	18	4	9	4	0	0	92
Restraint	9	7	1	1	1	1	0	1	21
Security of Tenure / termination of agreement (Residential Care)	8	8	3	2	1	0	0	1	23
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,541</b>	<b>1,270</b>	<b>887</b>	<b>461</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>4,507</b>

During the period 7 September 2013 to 28 February 2014, 1,540 of the 1,856 complaints received were finalised.

*Table 3 – Number of complaints to the Scheme for 7 September 2013 to 28 February 2014 by status*

Status	NSW	VIC	QLD	SA	WA	TAS	NT	ACT	Total
Ongoing	80	76	99	44	4	8	1	4	316
Finalised	532	460	236	146	120	30	7	9	1,540
<b>Total</b>	<b>612</b>	<b>536</b>	<b>335</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>1,856</b>

In line with good administrative practice and the *Complaints Principles 2011*, if either party to a complaint is dissatisfied with certain decisions made by the Scheme in the complaints process, they can seek reconsideration of these decisions by the Scheme. During the period 7 September 2013 to 28 February 2014, 11 applications were received for internal reconsideration.

#### **The Aged Care Commissioner**

During the period 7 September 2013 to 28 February 2014, the Aged Care Commissioner (the Commissioner) received 20 complaints about the Scheme's process and 28 requests for examination of a Scheme decision.

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*Table 4 – Number of complaints received by the Office of the Aged Care Commissioner for the period 7 September 2013 to 28 February 2014 by state and territory*

<b>Nature of complaint</b>	<b>NSW</b>	<b>VIC</b>	<b>QLD</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>WA</b>	<b>TAS</b>	<b>ACT</b>	<b>NT</b>	<b>Total</b>
Complaints about decisions by the Complaints Scheme	16	3	3	4	-	1	1	-	28
Complaints about Complaints Scheme processes	13	5	1	-	-	1	-	-	20
<b>Total</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>48</b>