

**Senate Finance and Public Administration Standing
Committee**

**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
ESTIMATES ROUND 2009–10 (May 2009)**

PRIME MINISTER AND CABINET PORTFOLIO

Department/Agency: Commonwealth Ombudsman
Outcome/Output Group: Ombudsman
Topic: Efficiency dividend

Senator: Senator Ronaldson
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Type of question: Written

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Number of pages: One
Answer:

The Office of the Commonwealth Ombudsman continually reviews all service delivery to improve efficiency. Some gains can be made through better use of travel funding and alternatives to travel (increased use of teleconferencing) and additional gains are being sought through reconfiguration of office accommodation in Melbourne and Perth. However, the overwhelming bulk of our expenditure is attributed to salaries and therefore efficiencies must be gained through reductions in staffing compensated by more efficient handling of complaint work. To this end we are looking to reconfigure our telephone reception point which fields over 45,000 complaint calls per annum, reconfigure our website to improve delivery of services for people willing to use the internet as an alternative to personal contact over the phone, and reconfigurations of our electronic complaints management system to improve workflows. We are also constantly working with agencies to improve their complaint handling and thus reduce the flow of complaints through to this office.