



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

**Monday 4 July 2022**

### **Ombudsman SA reaches 50**

2022 marks the 50th anniversary of Ombudsman SA.

The *Ombudsman Act 1972* was assented to on 23 November 1972 and the Office opened its doors to the public on 14 December 1972.

At that time South Australia was only the second Australian jurisdiction after Western Australia to install a parliamentary ombudsman (although South Australia was the first to use the title 'Ombudsman'). Now all States, Territories and the Commonwealth have an ombudsman.

The inaugural South Australian Ombudsman was Mr Gordon Combe (1917-2002). In his first annual report in 1973, Mr Combe recorded that in the first six months of operation his office had received 308 complaints and he had recruited six staff.

Fast forward 50 years and Ombudsman SA receives thousands of complaints each year and has 30 staff.

While we have seen enormous changes in government and society in the last 50 years, the need for an independent and impartial Office to hold public authorities to account and help resolve grievances between citizens and government has not changed.

For five decades the Office has provided South Australians a cost free, quick and accessible means of achieving a fair and reasonable resolution of their complaints about state and local government and has conducted enquiries and investigations of its own initiative.

The Office has made significant contributions to improving public administration, and ensuring that high standards of public administration are maintained.

Ombudsman SA has proven itself to be adaptable to an ever changing public administration environment and looks forward to continuing its service to South Australians in the years ahead.

For Media enquiries, please contact the Ombudsman SA on 08 8226 8699.