

## Media Release

### Increase in complaints to Public Transport Ombudsman

Cases received by the Victorian Public Transport Ombudsman (PTO) have increased 14% in 2007-08 according to the PTO Annual Report released today. The PTO dealt with 1137 cases in 2007-08.

Complaint issues included:

- 34% were about ticketing (malfunctioning ticketing machines and validators, faulty tickets, refunds, travel passes and infringement notices)
- 17% were about service delivery (punctuality, reliability, cancellations)
- 16% were about infrastructure and rolling stock (access, conditions of vehicles)
- 13% were about Authorised officers
- 11% were related to staff of the operators – mostly about customer service related issues.

1342 complaints were finalised - including 249 complaints investigated by the PTO.

Public Transport Ombudsman Simon Cohen said the increase in cases reflected the increased use of public transport across Victoria. With more commuters, the value of an independent ombudsman's office to review complaints has also increased.

"I encourage people to take up issues with public transport operators, and to come to us if they are not satisfied with the response they receive. It's important for people to make their concerns known, to improve the public transport system for the community's and commuters' needs.

"Many people who come to us with a complaint say they don't complain just for themselves – but because they want to improve things for others as well. Our report includes cases which resulted in better training for public transport staff, and better information or services for commuters. People who complain can make a difference", Mr Cohen explained.

The report includes complaints which were resolved through apologies and agreements by public transport operators to provide refunds and Metcards. "We are very pleased that satisfaction with the way we work at the PTO has increased. 77% of people who responded to our survey reported they were satisfied with the service they received – up 10% on the previous year," Mr Cohen stated.

There have been a range of changes in 2008 to the way the PTO operates. Most recently its jurisdiction expanded to include the ability to deal with complaints about ticketing inspectors and authorised officers – although people can still make complaints to the Victorian Ombudsman as previously.

*To download the Public Transport Ombudsman Annual Report 2007-08, go to [www.ptovic.com.au](http://www.ptovic.com.au).*

*For further information or to arrange interviews, please contact Kristen Barnes on 03 8623 2121.*

## Key points

- 1137 cases received – an increase of 14%
- 1342 complaints finalised, including 249 complaints investigated and determined
  - 91% finalised within 31 days
  - 77% complainants satisfied (up by 10%) with service of PTO
- Simon Cohen appointed as new Public Transport Ombudsman in February 2008
- 17 case studies about PTO complaints, including complaints about public transport information, ticketing, bus stops and PTO resolutions.
- PTO submissions on key reviews – East-West Link, bus safety and vexatious litigants

## Key graphs

Figure 1: Cases Received

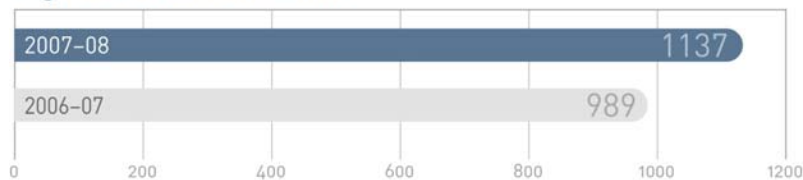


Figure 2: Top Five Issues

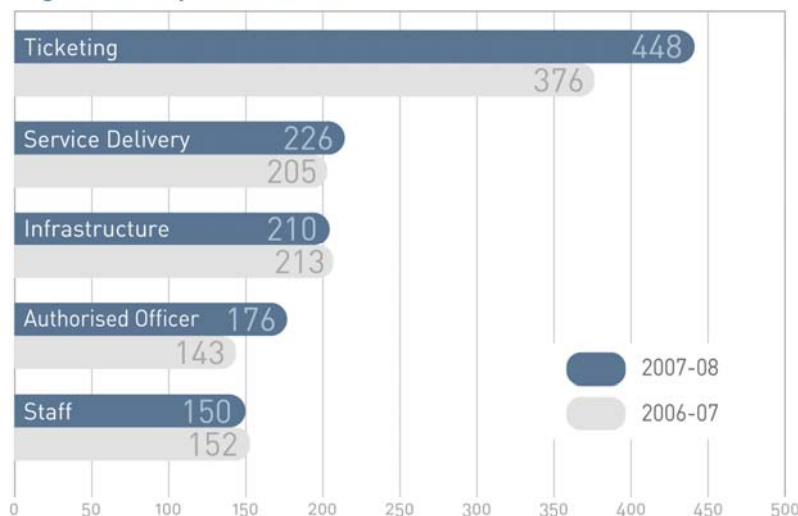


Figure 3: PTO Complaint Outcomes

