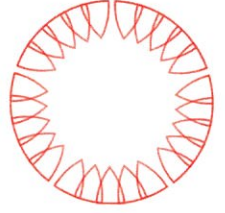




مملكة البحرين
Kingdom of Bahrain

الأمانة العامة
للتظلمات
OMBUDSMAN
وزارة الداخلية
Ministry of Interior

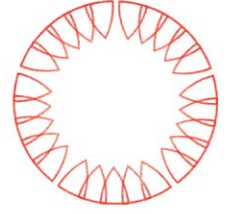


Press Release - 2018

The Bahrain Independent Ombudsman has released his fifth Annual Report. The Office of the Ombudsman was established as part of the Bahraini government response to the recommendations of the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry (BICI).

The Ombudsman Office was the first of its kind in the Gulf region and the Middle East and the Ombudsman uses his fifth Annual Report to reflect on his five year journey. He comments that *“More than 4300 of individuals, particularly those detained away from their families, have been positively affected by Ombudsman recommendations and other interventions following requests for assistance. Positive outcomes relate to healthcare services, education and training, family visits, family phone calls, gender specific needs, needs related to disability and many more.”*

The report also describes some of the structural, policy and practice arrangements that have resulted from Ombudsman investigation into complaints and deaths in detention. These include the relocation of convicted young persons aged between 15 and 18 away from adult inmates to new dedicated detention facilities; the inclusion of bathroom facilities; adequate natural lighting and a television in all rooms in the new facilities being rolled out throughout the prison estate and significant



increases in the location of CCTV cameras in police and prison buildings. Case studies included in the report demonstrate the Ombudsman Office use of CCTV cameras to gather incriminating evidence against staff alleged to have mistreated detainees.

Information relating to the 2017 / 2018 performance of the Ombudsman Office shows that 334 complaints were received of which 120 were referred, following the Ombudsman investigation, for criminal or formal disciplinary investigation. 760 additional requests for assistance, relating to issues such as the arrangements for prison and detention centre visits, phone calls, medical services and access to education, were also received. 912 of those complaining or asking for help attended the Ombudsman Office themselves or, in the case of detainees, asked a family member to attend on their behalf. Almost all of those attending in person were able to speak with an investigator at the time of their visit.