



भारतीय रिज़र्व बैंक

RESERVE BANK OF INDIA

वेबसाइट : www.rbi.org.in/hindi

Website : www.rbi.org.in

इ-मेल email: helpdoc@rbi.org.in

संचार विभाग, केंद्रीय कार्यालय, एस.बी.एस.मार्ग, मुंबई-400001

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION, Central Office, S.B.S.Marg, Mumbai-400001

फोन/Phone: 91 22 2266 0502 फैक्स/Fax: 91 22 22660358

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Reserve Bank of India releases the Annual Report of the Banking Ombudsman Scheme 2006: 2013-14

The Reserve Bank of India, today, released the [Annual Report of the Banking Ombudsman Scheme for the year 2013-2014](#). The Banking Ombudsman Scheme was established by the Reserve Bank in 1995 to provide speedy solutions to the grievances faced by bank customers. There are 15 Offices of Banking Ombudsmen (BOS) across the country. The report is a synopsis of activities of all the offices of Banking Ombudsman.

The Report indicates that compared to last year, there has been an increase of 8.55 per cent in the number of complaints received by Ombudsman Offices in the year 2013-2014. People still preferred physical mode of complaints to electronic mode which is evident from the fact that 67 per cent complaints were received by way of letters/post cards/fax whereas complaints received by email and online constituted 20 per cent and 13 per cent respectively. Metro and Urban areas accounted for about 71 per cent of the total complaints received during the year 2013-14, followed by semi-urban (16 per cent) and rural areas (13 per cent). Banking Ombudsman offices redressed 96 per cent of the complaints received during the year. The report highlights various customer service initiatives by the Reserve Bank and some exemplary cases dealt with by BOs during the year.

Highlights of the Report

- During the year 2013-2014, the number of complaints received by Banking Ombudsmen increased by 8.55 per cent to 76,573, from 70,541 complaints received during the previous year.
- Banking Ombudsmen disposed off 96 per cent of the total complaints received.
- Of the total complaints received 32 per cent were against SBI and Associates and Nationalized Banks each, 22 per cent against Private Sector Banks and 6.5 per cent against Foreign Banks.
- Complaints pertaining to failure to meet commitment, non-observance of fair practices code, Banking Codes and Standards Board of India (BCSBI) Codes taken together constituted largest category of complaints (26.6 per cent of complaints received), followed by card related complaints (24.1 per cent).
- Non-adherence to prescribed working hours, refusal to accept, or delay in accepting, payments towards taxes, refusal to issue /delay in issuing or failure

to service, or delay in servicing, or redemption of Government securities, refusal to close or delay in closing of accounts were other categories of complaints.

- The Appellate Authority handled 107 appeals under the Scheme during the year.
- Awareness campaigns were undertaken by Banking Ombudsmen during the year to ensure greater reach of the Scheme among the members of public.
- The feedback emanating from the complaints handled by the Banking Ombudsmen occasioned several customer-centric policy decisions by the Reserve Bank during the year.

Background

The Reserve Bank introduced the Banking Ombudsman Scheme (BOS) in India on June 14, 1995 to provide an expeditious and inexpensive forum to bank customers for resolution of their complaints relating to deficiency in banking services provided by commercial banks, regional rural banks and scheduled primary co-operative banks. The feedback obtained in the course of administering the BOS has been used by the Reserve Bank to modify the Scheme in 2002, 2006, 2007 and 2009, to include, among other things, customer complaints on new areas such as credit card complaints, internet banking, deficiencies in providing promised services by both bank and its sales agents, levying service charges without prior notice to customers, non- adherence to Fair Practices Code adopted by individual banks, etc. From a total of 11 grounds of complaints, when the BO Scheme was introduced in 1995, today, BO Scheme provides for 27 grounds of complaints / deficiencies in bank services. The Reserve Bank operates the BOS, free of cost, so as to make it accessible to all. In order to increase its effectiveness and utility, BOS is today fully funded and staffed by the Reserve Bank.

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Alpana Killawala
Principal Chief General Manager