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An ECLEVA Case Study

How the Tax Ombudsman Turned an 18-Month Backlog Into a 90-Day Resolution Journey — Delivering Fairer, Faster Outcomes for Australians

Introduction

Summary

The **Tax Ombudsman** plays a critical role in ensuring fairness in Australia's tax and superannuation systems. With rising public expectations and growing case complexity, the Tax Ombudsman partnered with ECLEVA to modernise its complaints and investigations platform.

Through a **multi-phase transformation**, ECLEVA built a secure, automated, human-centred solution using Microsoft Dynamics 365 and the Power Platform. After go-live, the Tax Ombudsman established an **ongoing support partnership** with ECLEVA, ensuring continual improvement as the organisation's responsibilities expand.

The transformation dramatically reduced complaint resolution times, strengthened collaboration with Australian Taxation Office (ATO) and Tax Practitioners Board (TPB), and created a digital foundation ready for the Tax Ombudsman's enhanced legislative powers.

Key Outcomes

- **70% reduction in complaint resolution duration** (18 months backlog → 90 days)
- **Custom single-screen Investigation Matrix**
- Delivered via a **12-month implementation project**
- **Secure dual portals** for complainants & agencies
- **Long-term support partnership established post go-live**
- **Integrated telephony for accessibility**

1 The Business and the Challenge

The Office of the Inspector-General of Taxation was established as an independent statutory agency, responsible for ensuring the fair administration of Australia's tax laws. In 2015, the organisation expanded to include the **Tax Ombudsman** function — allowing it to resolve individual complaints and identify systemic issues within the tax and superannuation systems.

These complementary functions require precision at the case level and visibility across complaints to identify systemic trends. But the Tax Ombudsman's legacy tools were no longer capable of supporting their mandate.

Legacy Tools No Longer Adequate

Before modernisation, the Tax Ombudsman used a system that could store complaint data but lacked automation, workflow intelligence, reporting capability, and integration with the ATO and TPB. This resulted in:

1. Complaint resolution slowed by an 18-month case backlog
2. Manual email-driven communication
3. Slow, inconsistent reporting
4. Difficulty identifying systemic trends

A Defining Moment in the Organisation's Evolution

In recent years, the Tax Ombudsman's investigation process evolved significantly — driven by new complaint handling standards, best practice guides, parliamentary recommendations, and legislative change. However, the legacy systems in place could not keep pace with these demands.

Faced with increasing resource pressures and a rapidly changing regulatory environment, the Tax Ombudsman recognized the urgent need to modernize. The existing systems were no longer able to:

- Govern the investigation process effectively
- Empower automation to streamline workflows
- Enhance information management capability
- Improve interaction management with stakeholders
- Enable robust performance reporting

This gap between the Tax Ombudsman's evolving responsibilities and their technological capabilities became a critical barrier to delivering the level of service and oversight expected by the community and Parliament.

These shifts made digital modernisation not just necessary — but critical to the agency's statutory role and public accountability.

2 The Partnership

The Tax Ombudsman engaged ECLEVA through a government-approved procurement process. **Just over a year,** ECLEVA worked closely with the Tax Ombudsman to design and deliver a modern complaints and investigations system aligned to federal governance, accessibility, and security requirements.

After go-live, ECLEVA transitioned into a **long-term support partnership**, ensuring stability, incremental improvements, and responsiveness to legislative and operational changes.

Why the Partnership Worked

Shared mission:
Deliver faster, fairer outcomes for Australians

Rigorous security and compliance discipline

Human-centered co-design:
Built around real investigator workflows

Transparent communication and trusted collaboration

A Moment of Realisation

Near the end of the project, the Tax Ombudsman shared that they had an 18-month case backlog. ECLEVA had not known this — yet the system they designed helped clear that backlog and reduce average processing times to 90 days.

We built the system to be seamless and intuitive... but none of us realised the scale of impact it would have.

— Mohit Patel, Enterprise Solution Architect, ECLEVA

3 The Solution

ECLEVA designed and delivered a modern complaints and investigations ecosystem built on **Microsoft Dynamics 365 Customer Service**, enhanced with **Power Apps Portals, Model-Driven Power Apps, Power Automate, SharePoint Online**, and an integrated telephony system. The result is a secure, scalable, and human-centred platform that reimagines how the Tax Ombudsman manages complaints, investigations, and systemic oversight.

While the technology foundation is powerful, the true transformation came from tailoring these tools to the Tax Ombudsman's real-world processes, legislative requirements, and complex case workflows.

Dynamics 365 + Power Platform: Core Components Delivered

1. Dynamics 365 Customer Service — Complaint & Case Management Engine

Dynamics 365 Customer Service manages the entire lifecycle of a complaint, including:

- case creation
- automated triage
- investigator allocation
- correspondence generation
- lifecycle tracking
- audit trails and compliance logging
- multi-agency collaboration

Its out-of-the-box capabilities were extended using Power Automate to support the unique governance and oversight workflows required by the Tax Ombudsman.

ECLEVA listened, understood, and designed with us. They adapted the solution to our needs without heavy customisation. They continue to strengthen our existing capability while providing targeted expertise and support where and when it matters. It's been a genuine partnership.

— David Clancy, Director of Business Improvements, The Tax Ombudsman

2. Purpose-Built Digital Portals for the Tax Ombudsman

Complainant Portal

ECLEVA designed and delivered the Complainant Portal using the ECLEVA Portal Framework, ensuring a highly controlled, accessible, and secure environment tailored to the Tax Ombudsman's requirements.

This portal provides:

- identity verification (email, mobile)
- guided, structured complaint lodgment
- decision logic ensuring complainants contact ATO/TPB first when required
- real-time visibility of complaint progress
- a secure channel for exchanging information with the Tax Ombudsman

This approach ensured the portal delivered exactly the user experience, behaviour, and accessibility that the Tax Ombudsman needed.

Agency Portal

The Agency Portal — used by ATO and TPB representatives — was also built using the ECLEVA Portal Framework, providing a consistent and highly secure experience for inter-agency collaboration.

The portal enables partner agencies to:

- securely exchange documents
- respond to the Tax Ombudsman requests
- track activity and deadlines
- reduce manual email-based communication

Using a shared framework ensured consistent design, security, and performance across both portals, giving the Tax Ombudsman a cohesive digital experience across the entire complaints lifecycle.

Why the ECLEVA Portal Framework

ECLEVA's Portal Framework is a hybrid portal model that combines the structured form-rendering strengths of Dynamics 365 CRM Form XML with the flexibility of a fully custom-built portal. This allows ECLEVA to deliver capabilities far beyond what standard off-the-shelf portal solutions can provide.

The framework provides:

- Full control of UI/UX and backend logic, enabling complex behaviour, workflows, and validations
- Seamless rendering of Dynamics 365 forms, without platform constraints
- Strong support for complex complaint rules, identity verification, and role-based
- experiences
- Responsive, accessible design across all browsers and devices
- Flexible hosting options, including Azure, IIS, and AWS

Technology Foundations

The ECLEVA Portal Framework is built on an MVC architecture with a C# backend, leveraging the latest .NET frameworks and integrating seamlessly with Dynamics 365 via Dataverse.

This ensures a secure, scalable, and adaptable portal, built to evolve with the Tax Ombudsman's needs over time.

3. Model-Driven Power App — Custom Investigation Workspace

The custom **Model-Driven Power App** introduced several high-impact tools purpose-built for the Tax Ombudsman.

Investigation Matrix (Single-Screen Interface)

Investigators can now review every element of a case — RFIs, observations, evaluations, outcomes — all from one screen.

This replaced extensive navigation across multiple Dynamics forms and grids, significantly improving productivity.

Chronology Builder

Creates a structured narrative of case events, drawing documents directly from SharePoint and letting investigators link facts, dates, and evidence.

SharePoint Document Viewer

Provides seamless in-app access to documents stored in SharePoint Online — improving workflow continuity.

4. Power Automate — Workflow Intelligence & Automation

Power Automate orchestrates key processes across the entire system, including:

- identity and contact verification
- conditional routing and triage
- assignment of cases to investigators
- automated notifications
- document creation & filing
- telephony and email integrations

These automations helped clear an 18-month case backlog and reduce resolution times to 90 days.

5. SharePoint Online — Secure Document Management

SharePoint Online provides secure, compliant storage for:

- complaint-related documents
- generated correspondence
- evidence sets
- version histories

Its tight integration with Dynamics ensures documents are accessible wherever investigators work.

6. Telephony Integration — Making Every Call Count

The Tax Ombudsman serves many Australians who prefer or rely on phone interactions. To ensure equitable access and rigorous case management, they embedded an advanced telephony capability directly into their case platform—so phone calls are treated as **first-class evidence** alongside digital lodgements, emails, and documents.

Microsoft's built-in call intelligence enables investigators to:

- Instantly navigate transcripts to key moments in a call
- See sentiment indicators that flag urgency or distress
- Use suggested call notes to quickly capture outcomes and next steps

All phone interactions appear alongside emails and online submissions in a unified workspace, giving the Tax Ombudsman staff a complete view of each case. Automated workflows ensure phone-lodged complaints are triaged and followed up efficiently, supporting the Tax Ombudsman's commitment to accessible, fair, and transparent service for all Australians.

Empowering the Tax Ombudsman Staff with Complete Documentation

By consolidating voice interactions, transcripts, and case materials in one platform, Dynamics 365 empowers the Tax Ombudsman staff to work with complete, accurate, and accessible documentation. Investigators no longer need to chase missing details or reconcile information across multiple systems — everything they need to assess a complaint is readily available in the same place.

7. Advanced Security Architecture — Federal-Grade Compliance

The Tax Ombudsman's system incorporates strict controls to meet federal requirements:

- region-locked access within Australia
- comprehensive third-party penetration testing
- restricted production access
- advanced conflict-of-interest model using separate business units

For cases with sensitivities, the Tax Ombudsman staff, or any situation that could present a conflict, investigators can activate the 'Conflict of Interest' flag. This single action triggers a complex backend security workflow that moves the case into a segregated business unit, ensuring all related records are hidden from standard users and accessible only to authorised personnel.

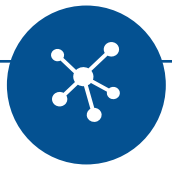
4 The Impact

From 18 months to 90 days — a new standard for resolution speed

Complaint handling accelerated from an **18-month backlog to 90-day processing times**, delivering 70% faster outcomes for Australians.

Investigators empowered with modern tools

Staff consistently highlight how modern and intuitive the platform feels — in many cases exceeding the systems used by larger agencies they work with.



Better data for oversight and systemic insights

Structured chronology, consistent evidence capture, and integrated reporting help the Tax Ombudsman detect systemic issues earlier.

Improved multi-agency collaboration

Secure portals reduce delays, miscommunication, and manual follow-up with ATO and TPB.

Enhanced accessibility

Leveraging Dynamics 365's ability to integrate with external telephony systems means the Tax Ombudsman can offer multiple pathways for Australians to seek support.

Whether a complaint is lodged online or by phone, the experience is unified, consistent, and equitable — while giving staff the full visibility they need to resolve cases effectively.

5 What's Next

After go-live, the Tax Ombudsman entered a **long-term support partnership** with ECLEVA. This ensures:

- system reliability
- ongoing enhancements
- security updates
- alignment with evolving legislation
- readiness for future AI capabilities (e.g., Copilot-driven case summarisation)

With its public rebrand as the Tax Ombudsman and new oversight powers enabled by government reforms, the Tax Ombudsman now has a digital foundation that strengthens public trust and supports a more accountable tax system.

6 Ready to Modernise Your Agency?

For government agencies seeking to modernise services, empower staff, and strengthen public trust, ECLEVA brings the experience, empathy, and technical capability to guide meaningful transformation.

Let's build better public services — together.

If you'd like to explore what this could look like for your agency, our team is ready to support you — from early discovery through to full-scale implementation and ongoing optimisation.

Connect with us at info@ecleva.com or learn more about our work at www.ecleva.com

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