



2019 ANNUAL REPORT

Office of the Corporate Ombudsman

American Red Cross

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A Message from the Corporate Ombudsman

The Office of the Ombudsman was launched in October 2007 in accordance with the Governance Modernization Act of 2007. Our Office was created with the intention and focus of being a safe and confidential resource for all persons impacted by the American Red Cross, its workplace, mission and services to share their concerns. Since October 2007, we have provided resources and support to nearly 6,200 constituents; reached over 17,375 constituents through conflict resolution, education, outreach, and facilitation; and addressed approximately 15,900 issues.

I am pleased to present the twelfth annual report on the activities and initiatives of the Office of the Corporate Ombudsman for fiscal year 2019—from July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019. This report reflects concerns and inquiries brought to the Ombudsman Office from both internal and external constituents.

In FY19, the Ombudsman Office provided resources and supported 1,868 issues raised by 994 constituents. Through outreach, trainings, and group facilitations we were able to reach an additional 1,175 volunteers, employees and partners while supporting our donors, recipients of our mission-related services. The Ombudsman Office helps identify trends and emerging issues within the organization to inform leadership about matters that may impact the organization.

The issues raised with the Ombudsman comprise a small slice of data from self-selecting internal and external constituents. Moreover, the role of the Office of the Ombudsman is to provide informal dispute resolution and mediation, and to provide guidance on how best to raise or address issues within the organization. While we do not investigate or determine the veracity of the issues raised, we advocate for a fair process.

The office of Investigations, Compliance and Ethics investigates allegations of wrongdoing in administrative, civil and criminal matters. The office of Investigations, Compliance and Ethics provides oversight of the Whistleblower hotlines and fully supports any employee, volunteer or member of management who reports fraud, waste, abuse, Red Cross policy violations, illegal, unsafe or unethical conduct, or any other misconduct within the organization.

A few additional enhancements we made this year include successfully launching the inaugural Ombuds Day event at national headquarters in Washington, DC and online for remote employees and volunteers to promote the services of the Ombudsman's Office and our unique role. Additionally, using trending information, we published articles, resources and activities on the intranet for the workforce to access. And we continue to support the dispute resolution process as the designated confidential, neutral, informal and independent office in the American Red Cross.

Looking to the future, there will be increased outreach ensuring accessibility and awareness of the informal resources available to all constituents, and enhanced collaboration with the formal parts of the organization.

Sincerely,



Jacqueline Villafañe, Psy.D., CO-OP®
Corporate Ombudsman

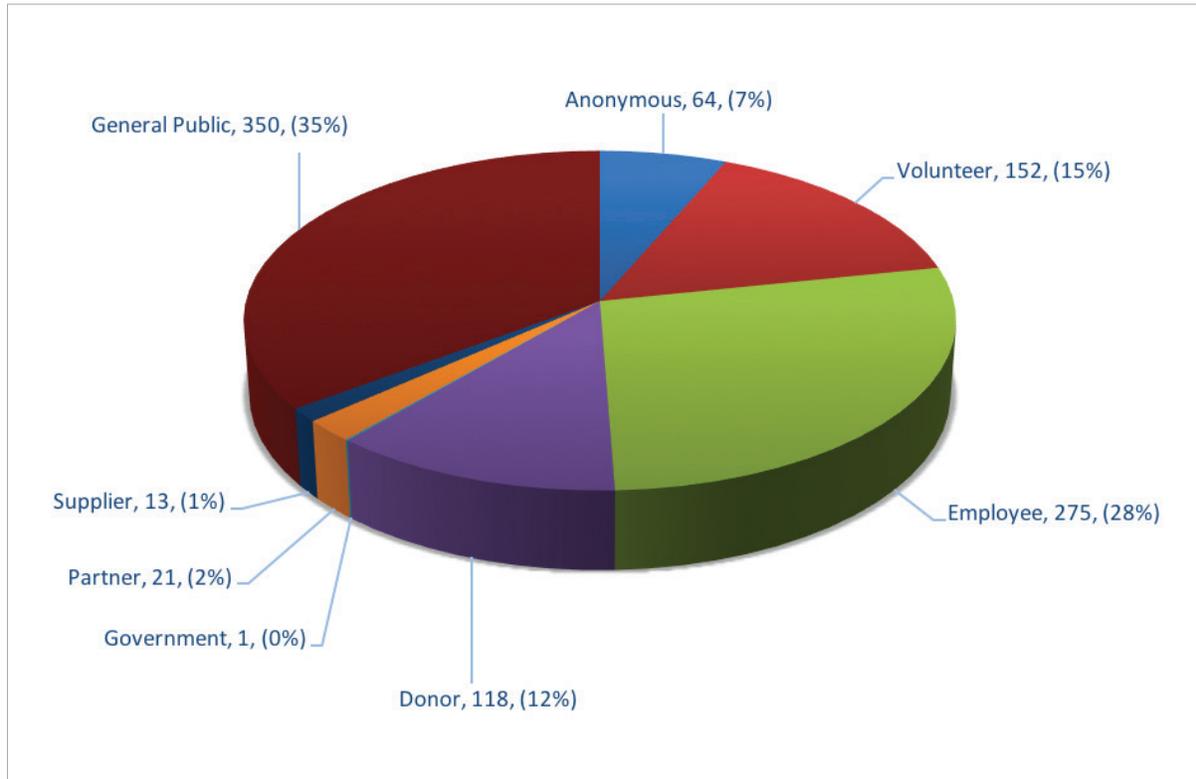
Constituent Profile

It is important to note that an increase or drop in the number of contacts with the Ombudsman Office does not necessarily indicate growing or reduced problems in the organization.

In FY19, 994 constituents reached out to the Ombudsman Office, and received resources and support to address their inquiries and issues compared to 1,107 constituents in FY18. The decrease in constituent contacts was primarily due to a slightly less active hurricane season in 2018 than the previous year.

Figure 1 illustrates the number and composition of internal and external constituents who contacted the Ombudsman Office in FY19 excluding 1,175 recipients from outreach, group facilitations and training .

Figure 1. All Constituents (994 Total)

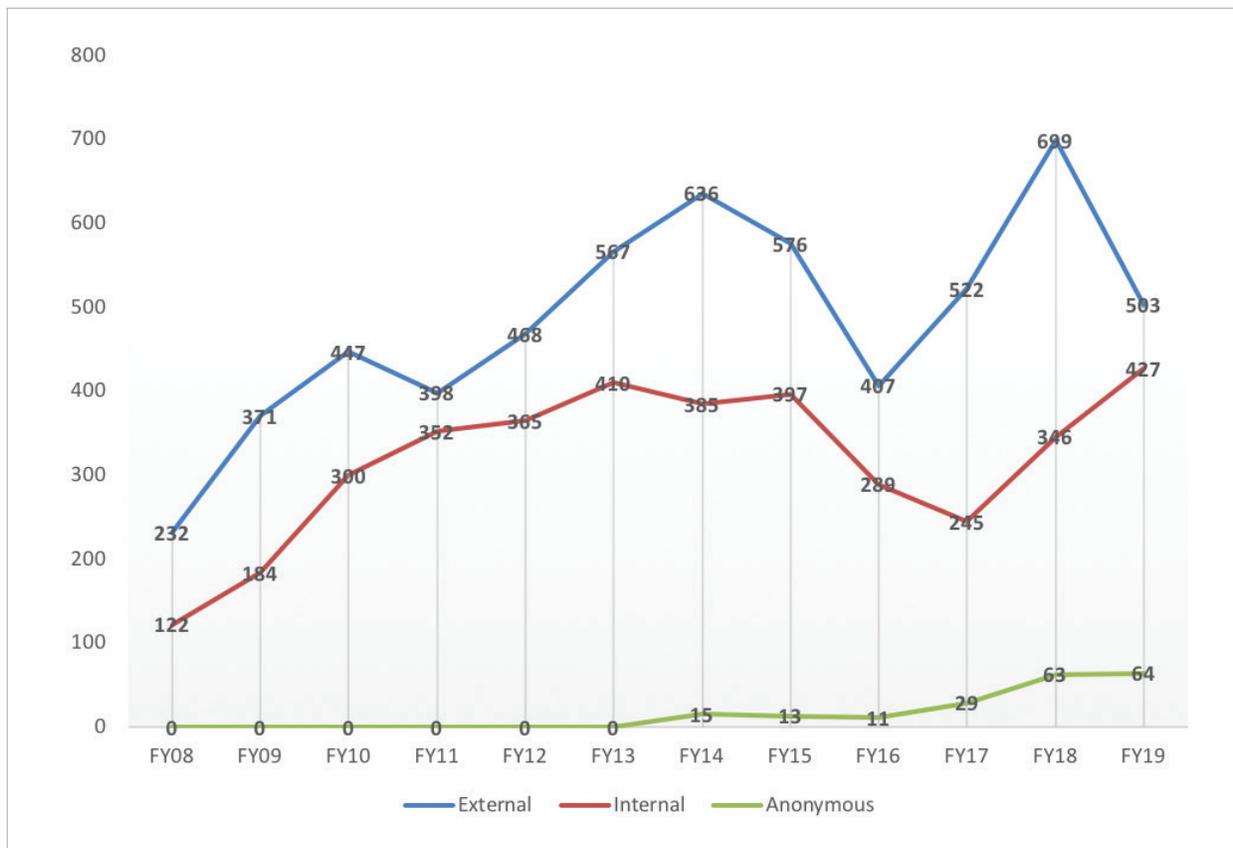


In FY19, 50 percent of contacts receiving Ombudsman resources and support were initiated by external stakeholders, while 43 percent were initiated by internal stakeholders. The remaining 7 percent of contacts identified as “anonymous” represents 64 contacts compared to 63 anonymous contacts in FY18.

External constituent contacts are categorized as government, current partners, suppliers (prospective), blood donors, financial donors, service members and the general public. Internal constituent contacts are categorized as employees, volunteers, former employees, former volunteers, current contractors, and retirees.

Figure 2 illustrates the relationship of internal, external and anonymous contacts since the Ombudsman Office began its reporting in FY08.

Figure 2. Internal and External Constituents by Fiscal Year



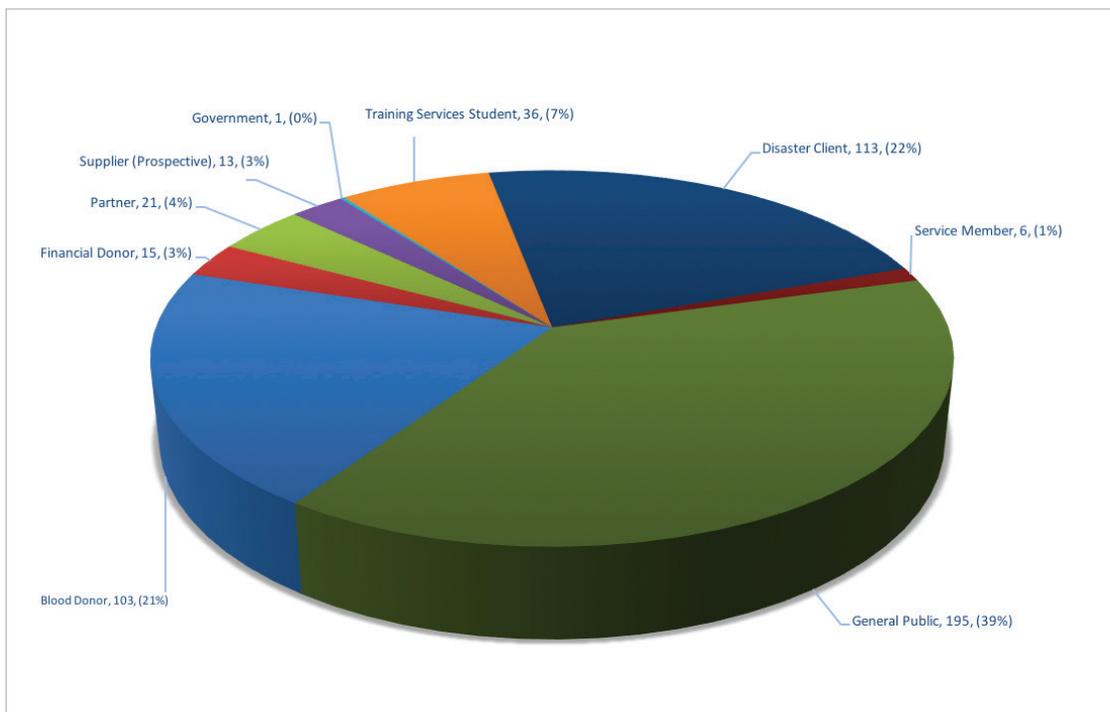
External Constituents

In FY19, a total of 503 external constituents contacted the Office of the Ombudsman with concerns or inquiries and received support and resources. We do not report detailed information on those that wish to remain anonymous, and they are not included in this part of the report.

During FY19, Red Cross donors accounted for 12 percent of all constituents contacting the Ombudsman Office and 23 percent of external constituents. Of the 118 donors reaching out to the Office of the Ombudsman, 103 were blood donors and 15 were financial donors with various concerns. It should be noted that the blood donor contacts are from a base of nearly 2.7 million volunteer donors nationwide.

Figure 3 illustrates the various types of external constituent contacts.

Figure 3. External Constituents (503 Total)



*In FY18, there were 377 constituents requesting resources related to the Hurricane Harvey Immediate Assistance program.

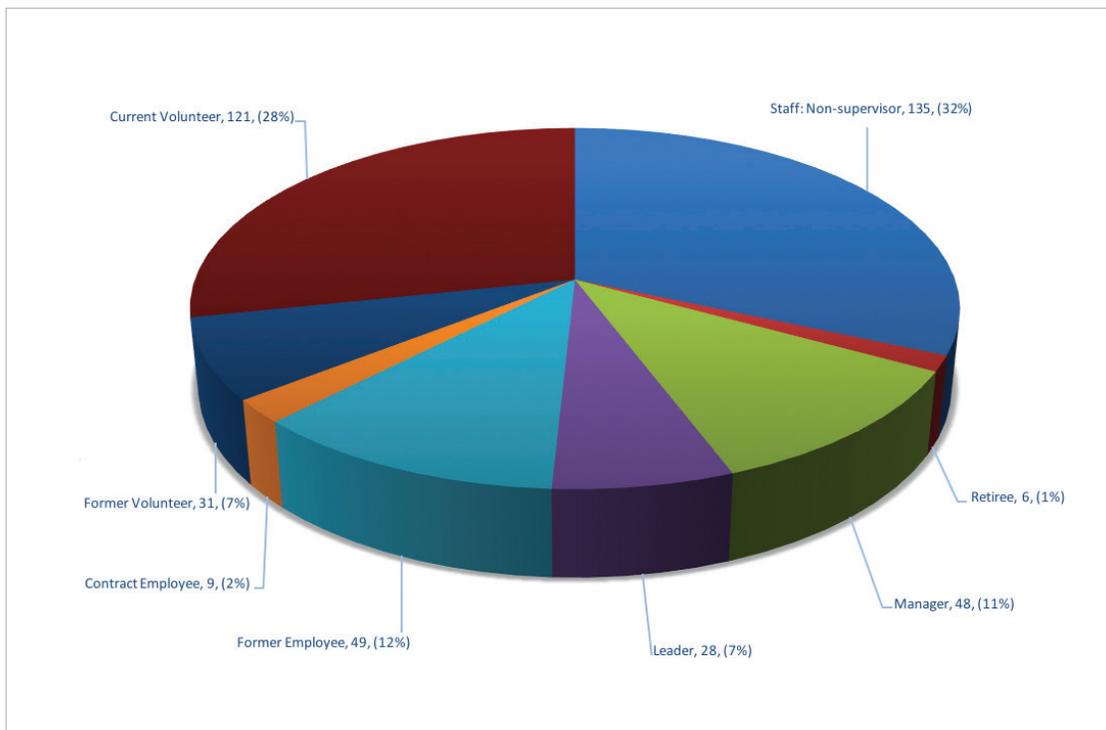
Internal Constituents

In FY19, 275 current employees contacted the Ombudsman Office. Employees comprised 52 percent of internal constituents and 28 percent of all constituents to the Ombudsman Office in FY19. We do not collect detailed information on those that wish to remain anonymous and they are not included in this part of the report.

Leader is defined as someone who supervises multiple teams or is in an executive role. A manager is responsible for a program, supervises work groups or teams with deliverables. A contract employee is generally hired for a specific job, for a defined period of time, at a specific rate of pay. AmeriCorps participants, temporary disaster employees or an employee contracted through a third-party agency have been categorized as contract employees for data purposes.

Figure 4 reflects internal constituents by category and role within the Red Cross.

Figure 4. Internal Constituents (427 Total)



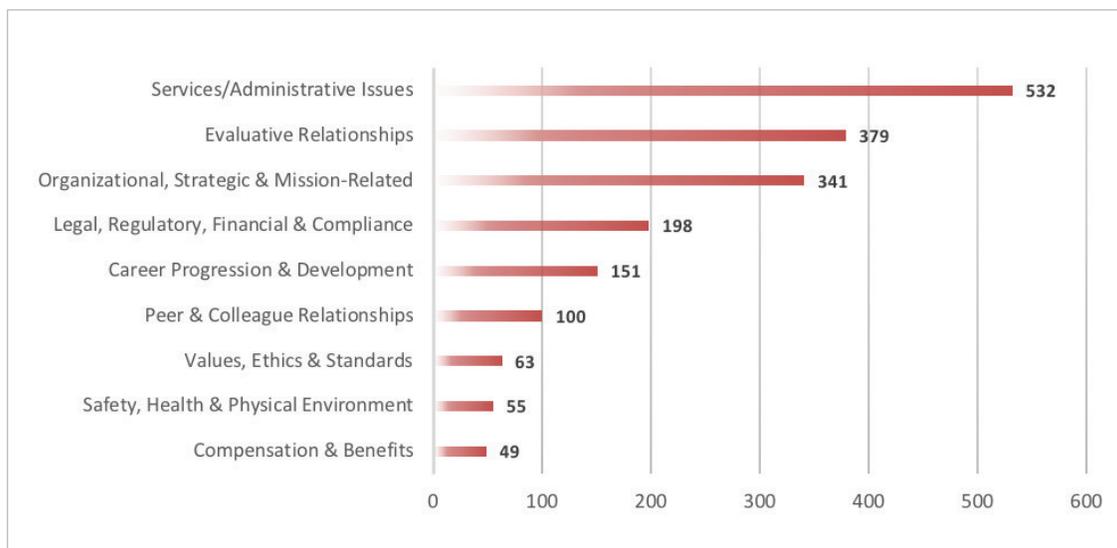
Issues

Reasons for Contacting the Ombudsman Office

In FY19, a total of 1,868 issues were brought to the attention of the Ombudsman Office. The issues are represented according to the uniform reporting categories promulgated for the organizational ombudsman field by the International Ombudsman Association (IOA). The reporting categories are designed to classify the types of issues for which people use Ombudsman services and help identify trends for consistent reporting.

It is important to note that the issue count reflects individual contacts to the Office of the Ombudsman raising multiple concerns; trainings and group facilitations to address organizational issues; and issues raised by constituents who have reached out to the Office of the Ombudsman.

Figure 5. Issue Identification
All Issues Identified Under IOA Uniform Reporting Categories
(1,868 Total)

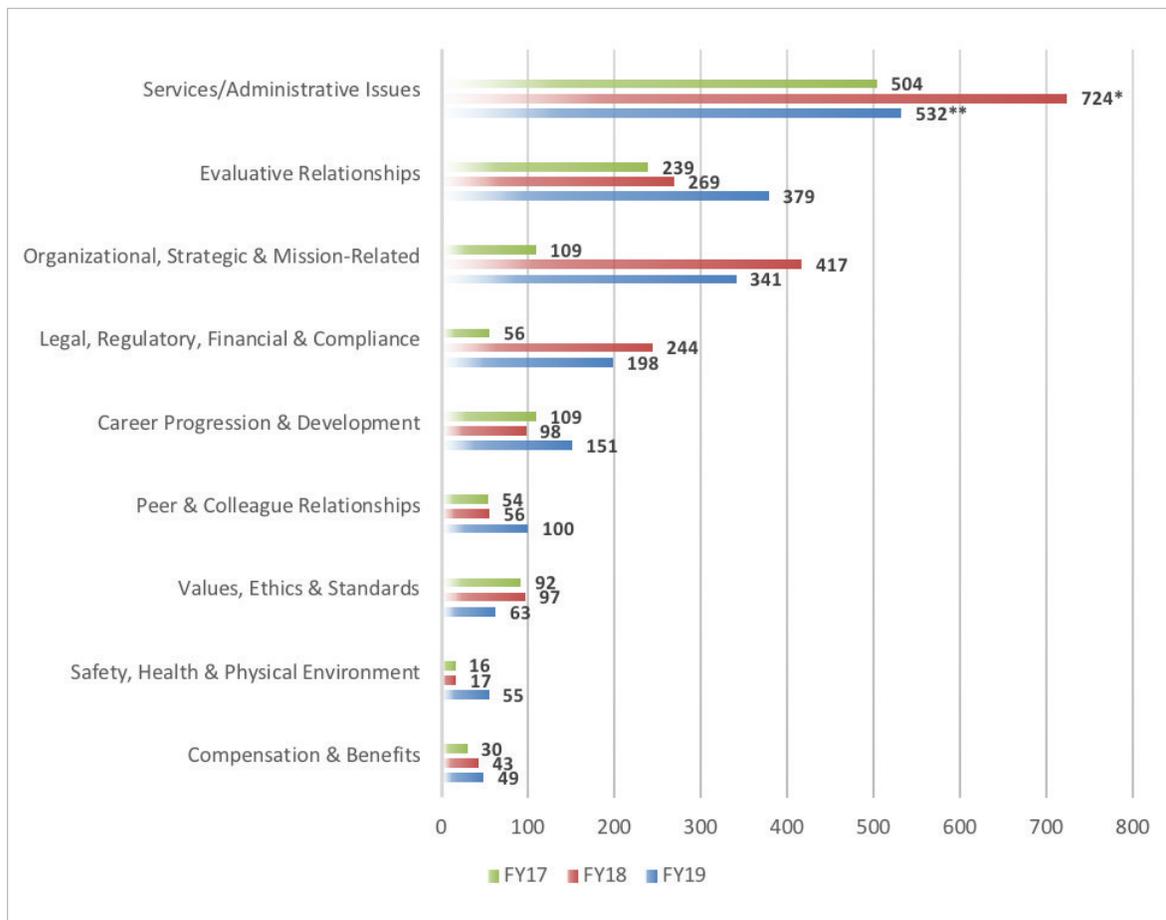


*The top five issues in Services/Administrative Issues are: (1) Quality of Services provided, (2) Responsiveness Timeliness of response, (3) Administrative Decisions and the Interpretation /Application of Rules, (4) Behavior of Service Provider, and (5) Other /General Inquiries.

The category of Services/Administrative Issues is defined as any question, concern, issue or inquiry about services or administrative offices, including from internal and external constituents.

Figure 6 illustrates the issues raised across the past three fiscal years (FY17-FY19)

Figure 6. Issues – Yearly Comparison



*The spike in issues in the Services/Administrative Issues category in FY18 is reflective of constituent inquiries related to the Hurricane Harvey Immediate Assistance program.

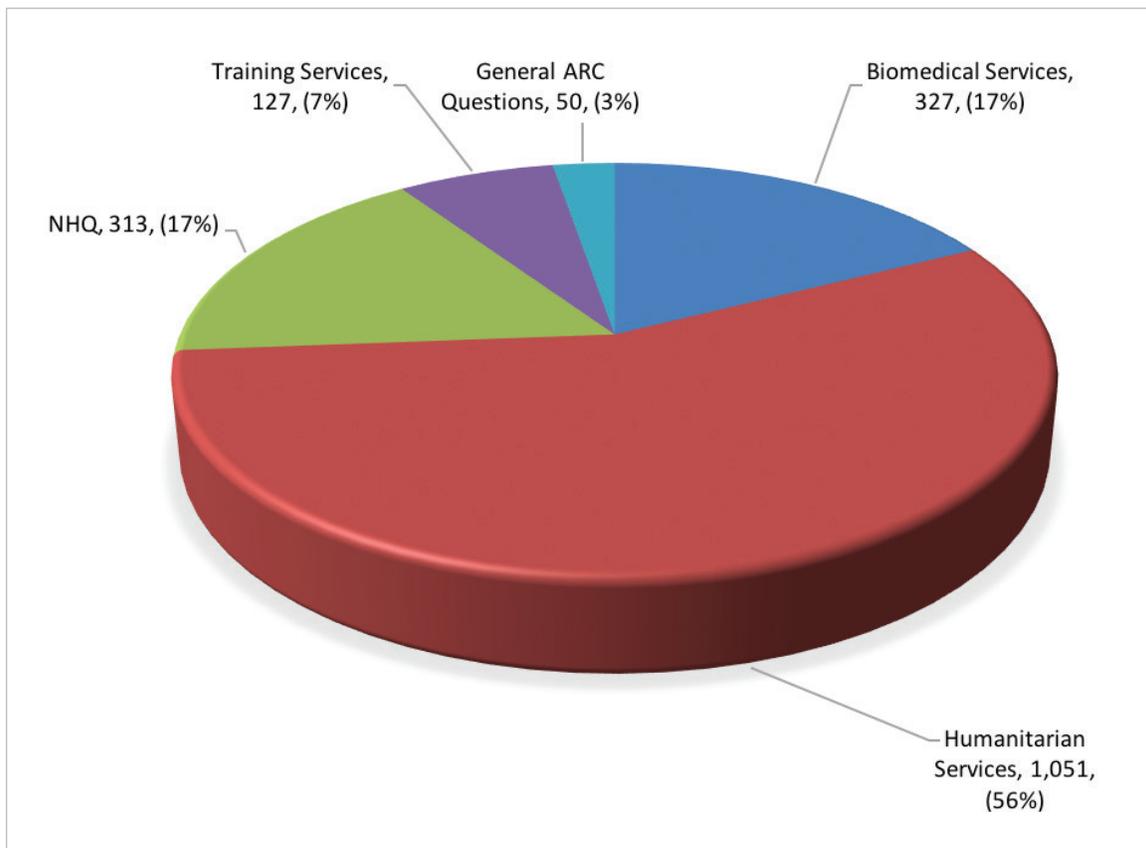
**Note that Services/Administrative Issues inquiries and concerns include requests from external constituents seeking information on services which are out of the scope of the red Cross mission, questions regarding how the American Red Cross is supporting various global humanitarian issues and other general inquiries.

Issues Per Organizational Unit

Figure 7 reflects the number and percentage of issues raised in FY18 pertaining to Red Cross organizational units. In FY18, Humanitarian Services includes: International Services, Disaster Cycle Services, Service to the Armed Forces, and the Office of Volunteer Services. Biomedical Services includes inquiries and concerns related to Biomedical Regions, National Testing Labs and Biomedical Services Headquarters operations. Issues and concerns related to specific corporate departments have been designated to National Headquarters (NHQ). All issues presented by a constituent have been attributed to the identified primary unit of concern.

In FY18, general questions are associated with the organizational unit. There were 26 questions from the general public inquiring about Red Cross services that were not mission related or related to a corporate department specifically and have not been assigned to an organizational unit.

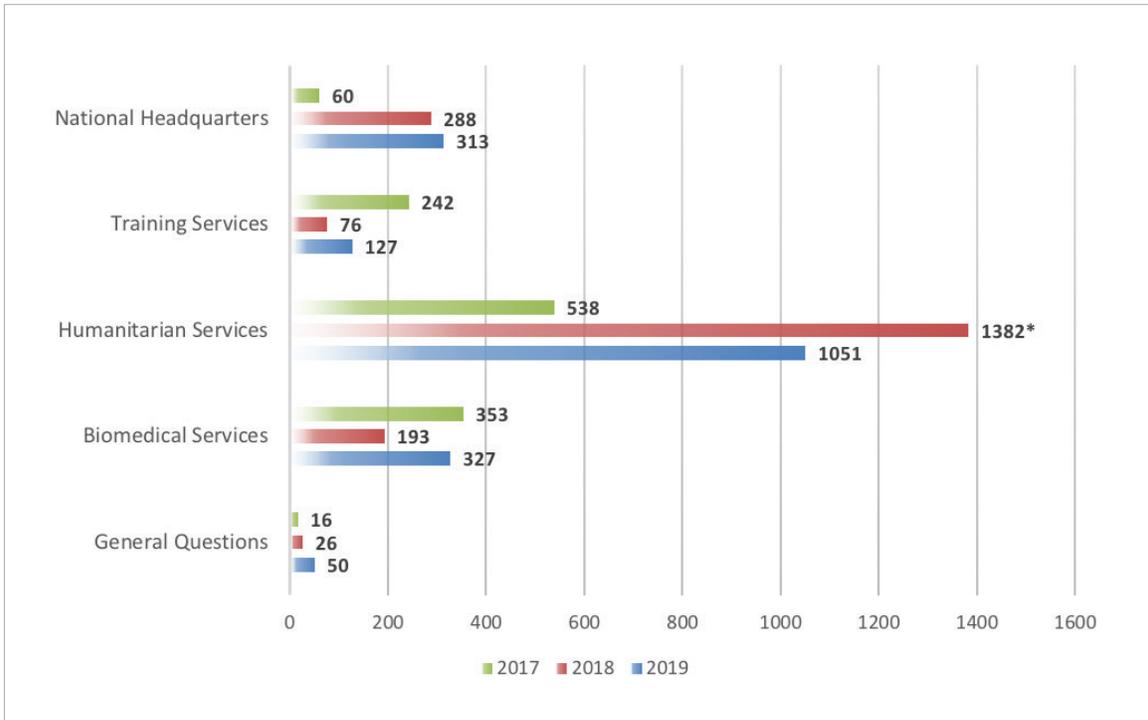
Figure 7. Issues Per Organizational Unit (1,868 Total)



Note that in FY19, Preparedness, Health & Safety Services is now Training Services.

Figure 8 illustrates issues in relation to the Red Cross organizational lines of service from FY17 through FY19.

Figure 8. Issues Per Unit – Yearly Comparison



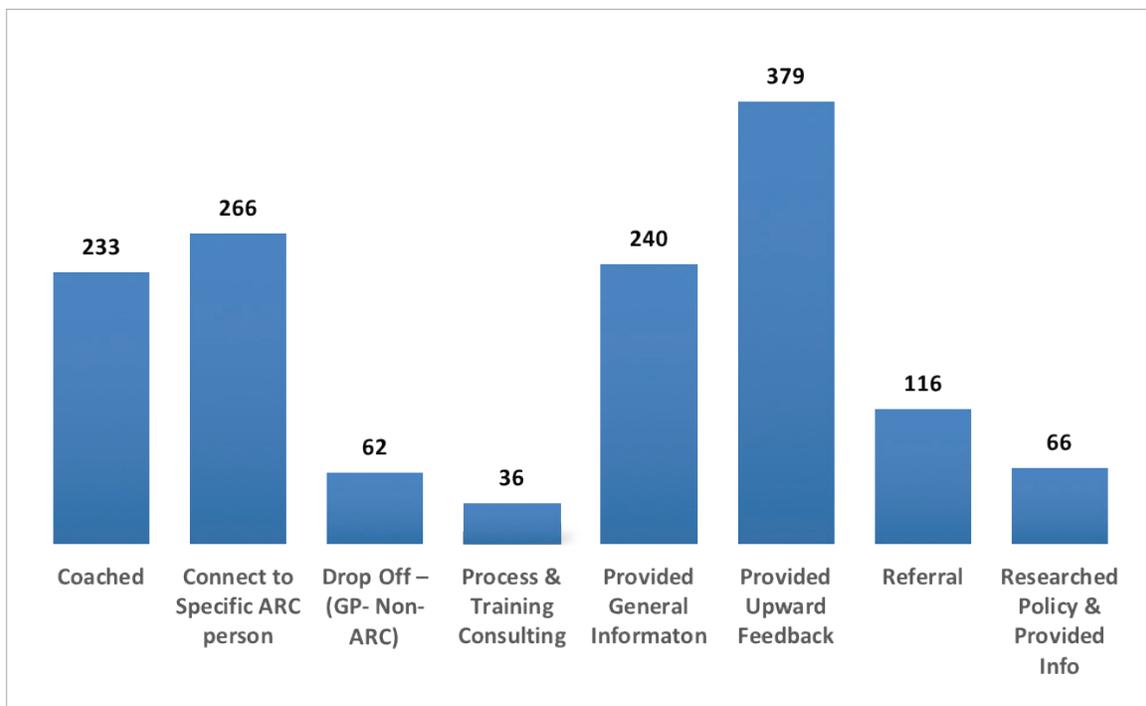
*The top three issues for Humanitarian Services are: Evaluative Relationships, Organization, Strategic and Mission Related Issues, and Services/Administrative Issues.

Ombudsman Office Actions

As an enhancement to other parts of the organization, and when appropriate, the Ombudsman Office refers constituents to appropriate departments for formal resolution. In FY19, we helped facilitate 116 referrals to formal parts of the organization such as Concern Connection Line, Human Resources, Office of General Counsel and connected 266 constituents to various departments in the Red Cross. We coached, provided process and training consultation, researched policy and provided information to 335 constituents. Also, mediation was provided to seven constituent groups, and virtual shuttle diplomacy was delivered to 31 constituent groups where resolutions were discovered and embraced, preventing a formal grievance and complaint from being made.

Figure 9 demonstrates the actions taken to bring cases towards resolution.

Figure 9. Ombudsman Actions



Ombudsman Office Actions

The Ombudsman Office provides an independent, neutral, informal and off-the-record, confidential and alternate channel of communication for all constituents to bring forward and resolve workplace issues and concerns without fear of retribution at any level. In FY19, the Ombudsman Office engaged in 42 activities related to outreach, training and group facilitation, reaching approximately 1,175 employees, volunteers and partners, and provided support to the Spanish speaking constituents.

One of the roles of the Ombudsman Office is to provide “upward feedback” to leadership to proactively address workplace and service delivery issues while maintaining the confidentiality of individual communications. In this way, the Ombudsman can serve as a valuable early warning system for the Red Cross to identify trends and systemic matters to help Red Cross leadership successfully manage risk and ensure Red Cross values and its mission are not compromised.

Ombudsman Office cases are handled in a variety of ways to help meet the needs of various constituents. These include confidential coaching, to help people think strategically through difficult situations. We may also practice shuttle diplomacy, where we reach out to individuals involved in conflicts or disagreements independent of each other to help move them toward a mutually satisfactory resolution. We have also brought disputing parties together and mediated in-person resolution meetings. As a neutral and independent office, we can also provide process consulting to assist individuals, teams, and leaders to identify conversational techniques to increase collaboration, communication and create options for resolving conflicts.

Leaders have reached out to the Ombudsman Office in its neutral and informal role as facilitator to address team and group effectiveness, and collaboration. Through group facilitation the following issues have been addressed: team and group dynamics as it relates to managing change, interpersonal issues impacting teamwork, and reinforcing conflict resolution strategies supported by the Human Resources team.

Ombudsman training and group facilitations have addressed topics such as promoting a culture of trust, improving teamwork, planning for difficult conversations, helping constituents identify and appreciate communication differences, managing effective meetings, developing critical thinking skills to support effective decision-making, increasing accountability and empowerment, and embracing facilitative leadership.

The Ombudsman Office provided direct support to the 2018 hurricane season, providing support to the Workforce Care Team members during disaster operations. Additional support was provided to teams in the areas of Diversity & Inclusion with issues related to race, age, gender, sexuality, and managing an inclusive work environment, workplace harassment prevention, and gender equity issues. We supported various organizational initiatives such as crucial conversation training, InsideOut Coaching and restructuring while reinforcing the Red Cross values and guiding behaviors in training, group facilitation, and when helping constituents evaluate resolutions.

As we celebrate our twelfth year, the Office of the Ombudsman remains committed to serving the American Red Cross, its employees, volunteers, donors, partners, government, suppliers, and the general public in a capacity that reflects the Office of the Ombudsman Charter.

2007-2019

6,200 Constituents

Another 17,375 Reached
through Outreach, Training
and Facilitation

15,900 Issues



**American
Red Cross**

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