



COMPLAINTS MANAGEMENT POLICY

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

The Department of Regional Development (DRD) is committed to delivering services of the highest quality in an accountable and transparent manner. People who use DRD's products and services, whether satisfied or dissatisfied, are recognised as a valuable source of information about those products and services.

1.2 Purpose

1.2.1 The purpose of this policy is to establish clear parameters for the professional administration of all feedback received from clients and members of the community. The Office of the Director General is responsible for administering all complaints, compliments and suggestions received by DRD.

1.2.2 It is the intent of this policy to:

- maintain public, client, staff and government confidence in DRD's processes
- ensure that the administration of feedback is consistent with legislated obligations
- ensure that confidentiality is maintained to the extent possible in respect of the administration and resolution of feedback
- improve transparency and accountability in decision making
- facilitate continuous improvement to service delivery across the agency
- ensure adequate procedures for the professional administration and resolution of feedback.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all feedback received from complainants, all services, actions and inactions of DRD and its employees, including those provided on behalf of DRD by external organisations and individuals.

This policy does not apply to the following types of complaints:

- Employees wishing to lodge a complaint in their capacity as employees.
 - Information on the complaint avenues available to employees is available on DRD's iConnect.
- This policy does not apply to employee grievances.
 - These matters are dealt with by DRD's Human Resources.
- This policy does not apply to reports of suspected misconduct.
 - These matters are to be referred to DRD's Executive Director, Corporate and External Services.

3. Principles

Principles underlying this policy are:

- accessibility
- compliance
- confidentiality
- continuous improvement
- professionalism, efficiency and effectiveness
- transparency of process and accountability.

4. Reporting

DRD will seek to resolve complaints:

- in a fair and consistent manner
- in a manner consistent with its legal responsibilities
- by ensuring that complainants are informed of their rights and responsibilities throughout the process
- by way of a process based on proper consideration of the relevant facts and circumstances
- with decisions which are impartial, transparent and open to review.

It is the aim that DRD's complaints policy and procedures are simple, fair, effective and accessible.

5. Process

5.1 The process for resolution of complaints includes:

- assessment or investigation consistent with DRD legal responsibilities
- proper consideration of the relevant facts and circumstances
- identifying the person(s) responsible for the process.

5.2 Other considerations may also include:

- if appropriate, a confidentiality statement to the complainant
- identification of any conflict of interests
- a timeline for investigation and resolution
- if appropriate, a letter to the complainant outlining the course of action, incorporating any sensitivities, as well as the process for requesting a review of the process or resolution of the complaint, for signature by the Manager Ministerial and Executive Services.

5.3 A complainant who is not satisfied by the process or resolution of the complaint may request an internal review. The request may be verbal or in writing and should be made to the Manager Ministerial and Executive Services within 10 working days of notification to the complainant. The process and resolution of an internal review is the responsibility of the Manager Ministerial and Executive Services.

5.4 Any statistical data (number and status of complaints) will be reported to Corporate and External Services on a quarterly basis.

The report will contain:

- the number of and type of feedback received
- the amount of time required to respond to complaints
- type of resolution/action taken
- any service improvements or agency related changes made as a result of the complaint.

Corporate and External Services will use information from the report to report against divisional plans and performance targets. Corporate and External Services recognises that an effective feedback and complaints process can lead to improvements in processes and, where complaints are properly handled, can improve the reputation of the organisation.

6. Authority

Public Sector Management Act 1994

Public Sector Commissioner's Circular: 2009-27 Complaints Management

In February 2012, a whole-of-Government complaints management policy was issued by the Public Sector Commissioner through Circular: [2009-27 Complaints Management](#). This policy applies to all public sector agencies and promotes effective complaints management in agencies across the sector.

Australian Standard ISO 10002-2006 Customer Satisfaction

The handling of complaints through a standardised process can enhance customer satisfaction. Encouraging customer feedback, including complaints if customers are not satisfied, can offer opportunities to maintain or enhance customer loyalty and approval.

Guidelines on Decision Making – [Ombudsman Western Australia](#)