

Complaints, Enquiries and Disputes Management Policy

Aim

TasWater is committed to meeting its customer expectations through high quality and consistent customer services. TasWater's focus on its customers means that it welcomes all forms of feedback, including enquiries and complaints.

Legislation

- Water and Sewerage Industry Act 2008
- *Water and Sewerage Industry (Customer Service Standards) Regulations 2009*

Definitions

Complaint means¹ an expression of dissatisfaction made to an organisation, related to its products, or the complaints-process itself, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected.

Policy

TasWater:

- welcomes all complaints, and actions each matter professionally;
- is dedicated to understanding and addressing systemic issues raised from any customer complaints through a continual process of improvement; and
- recognises and values the benefits of an efficient complaint management system.

To do this, TasWater has considered the Australian Standard on complaints handling (AS ISO 10002:2006) and has adopted the following principles of complaint management:

- **respect** – TasWater respects a customer's right to complain and will manage all relevant personal information in a confidential manner
- **visibility** – information about how and where to complain is well publicised to not only TasWater's customers, but external and internal stakeholders
- **accessibility** – TasWater wants to make the complaints process easy and accessible for those wanting to make contact with TasWater
- **responsiveness** – TasWater will use best endeavours to ensure that it promptly acknowledges, addresses and informs customers following receipt of their complaint and throughout the entire process
- **fairness** – TasWater will ensure that all of its complaints are dealt with in an equitable, objective and unbiased manner
- **review** – TasWater will provide its customers with the avenues available to them, for both internal and external review
- **accountability** – accountabilities for complaint management are clearly established. TasWater will monitor its complaints and responses, to ensure regular process improvement and will report on them to management and other stakeholders
- **continuous improvement** – TasWater considers each complaint as an opportunity to improve.

¹ defined in accordance with the Australian Standard AS ISO 10002-2006

Customers can make a complaint or raise an enquiry via phone, email or in person. Contact details will be provided on TasWater's website and customer communications literature.

TasWater will:

1. commence action to resolve a complaint or unresolved enquiry within 48 hours of receiving the complaint or unresolved enquiry;
2. provide a reply to a complaint or unresolved enquiry within 10 business days of receiving the complaint or unresolved enquiry;
3. provide written notification to a customer where the timeframe in (2) above cannot be achieved, explaining why the timeframe could not be met and when a reply will be provided;
4. ensure a reply to an enquiry or complaint deals with the substance of the enquiry or complaint;
5. provide the reasons for a decision made by TasWater in resolving a complaint, by including details of the legislative or policy basis for the reasons, where appropriate;
6. deliver a complaint and escalation process that gives customers an opportunity to raise a complaint or dispute up to the level of a senior manager within the organisation and provide information about referral to the Ombudsman Tasmania if a customer is not satisfied with the response;
7. restrict its ability to recover an amount of monies which is in dispute, until the dispute has been resolved; and
8. inform a complainant of the matters in clauses (1) to (6) above and rights as a customer as detailed in clause 4.2 of the *Tasmanian Water and Sewerage Industry Customer Service Code*.


Responsibilities

This policy assigns responsibility for complaints to all TasWater employees and the Chief Executive Officer is responsible for implementing the policy.

Associated Documents/ References

- AS ISO 10002:2006: *Customer Satisfaction – Guidelines for complaint handling in organisations*
- *Ombudsman Act 1978*
- *Ombudsman Tasmania – Guidelines for Complaint Handling 2013*
- *Personal Information Protection Act 2004*
- *Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)* (including the Australian Privacy Principles)

Approved by the Board at its meeting on 27 June 2018.



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Chairman