

Complaints, Enquiries and Disputes Management Policy

Aim

We are committed to providing a great experience for our customers through high quality and consistent customer service.

We value customer feedback, including enquiries and complaints, as it helps us understand our customers' experience and how we can continue to meet their needs. Customer feedback also provides insights into how our processes, services and infrastructure are performing and presents us with opportunities to improve services.

Compliance Obligations

- *Water and Sewerage Industry Act 2008*
- *Water and Sewerage Industry (Customer Service Standards) Regulations 2019.*

Definitions

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

Policy

TasWater:

- Welcomes complaints and makes it easy for our customers to tell us their concerns
- Will manage complaints consistently, professionally, efficiently, and fairly
- Promotes a culture of learning from complaints and making improvements
- Recognise and value the benefits of an efficient complaint management system.

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

- **respect** – we respect 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 for our customers and stakeholders
- **accessibility** – we want to make the complaints process easy and accessible
- **responsiveness** – we will promptly acknowledge, address and inform customers following receipt of their complaint and throughout the entire complaint journey
- **fairness** – we will ensure that all complaints are handled in an equitable, objective and unbiased manner
- **review** – we will provide our customers with the avenues available to them for internal and external review
- **accountability** – accountabilities for complaint management are clearly established. We will monitor complaints and responses to identify process improvement opportunities and will report on them to management and other stakeholders
- **continuous improvement** – we consider each complaint 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, webchat, e-mail, mail or 'contact us' via social media platforms. Contact information will be provided on our website and via customer communications.

We 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. communicate with 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 us 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 our 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 (7) above and rights as a customer as detailed in clause 4.2 of the *Tasmanian Water and Sewerage Industry Customer Service Code*.

Review

This Policy and associated procedures will be reviewed in line with any relevant changes to the Customer Service Code or water and sewerage legislation.

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 (Tas)*
- *Ombudsman Tasmania – Guidelines for Complaint Handling 2013*
- *Personal Information Protection Act 2004 (Tas)*
- *Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)* (including the Australian Privacy Principles)

Approved by the Chief Executive Officer on 15 July 2022.



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Chief Executive Officer