

## **Complaints Management Policy**

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## 1. Our commitment to good complaints handling

The Department of Resources recognises the importance and value of listening and responding to concerns and complaints. We are committed to continuous improvement and achieving the highest standard we can in every area of our work. Receiving complaints is one of the most important ways of learning how we can do our job better. Every effort will be made to understand and address the complaint at the initial point of contact.

This Complaints Management Policy (the Policy) applies to all our people – temporary and permanent staff including consultants, contractors or any other person that provides us with services on a paid or voluntary basis.

The Policy forms part of our customer service and governance arrangements. It provides support for the Department of Resources' [guiding principles](#) of proactive, courageous, pragmatic, respectful, resilient and collaborative.

## 2. Scope of the Policy

Section 264(1) of the *Public Sector Act 2022* (Public Sector Act) requires the Department of Resources to establish and implement a customer complaint management system. This Policy applies to all employees of the Department of Resources as defined by the Public Sector Act. The Department of Resources is also required to comply with the *Human Rights Act 2019* (Qld) (HR Act) for customer complaints that relate to a breach of an individual's human rights.

Our system should comply with AS/NZS 10002:2022, *Guidelines for complaint management in organisations*, providing a process for the appropriate receipt and processing of complaints and communication with complainants.

### In Scope

This policy applies to:

- complaints received from both external clients (i.e. the public) and internal clients (i.e. Department of Resources work units providing services to other Department of Resources work units);
- complaints received anonymously where contact information is provided; and
- complaints received by Ministerial or Director-General correspondence or contact.

### Out-of-scope

Customer complaints do not include:

- complaints alleging breach of legislation by other third parties;
- complaints not relating to the Department of Resources;
- anonymous complaints lodged without contact information are exempt from active involvement EXCEPT where it does not identify the complainant but includes a way for the complainant to be contacted;
- complaints made by staff about decisions affecting their employment, e.g., grievances, appeals (Public Sector Act);
- where a matter has been previously investigated and all options are exhausted;
- matters subjected to internal or appeal processes under Resources administered legislation;
- where a matter is being addressed in an external forum or court, e.g., a tribunal, a commission, a court or another agency;
- allegations of corrupt conduct made in accordance with the *Crime and Corruption Act 2001*;

- allegations of serious misconduct made against an employee in accordance with the Public Sector Act;
- complaints made by a public officer made in accordance with the *Public Interest Disclosure Act 2010*;
- complaints made in accordance with the *Right to Information Act 2009* and the *Information Privacy Act 2009*.

### 3. What is a customer complaint?

Under the Public Sector Act, a complaint is a verbal or written expression of dissatisfaction made by a person or organisation about the service or action of the department, or its staff, by a person who is apparently directly affected by the service or action. This includes complaints received by the Minister and Director-General.

There is no expectation that we seek to identify complaints made on third party social media accounts or channels.

Complaints may include, for example, any of the following concerns:

- a decision made, or failure to make a decision, by a public service employee of the Department of Resources;
- an act, or failure to act of the Department of Resources;
- the formulation of a proposal or intention by the Department of Resources;
- the making of a recommendation by the Department of Resources;
- the customer service provided by a Department of Resources officer (includes temporary and permanent staff, consultants, contractors or any other person that provides us with services on a paid or voluntary basis)

Key participants involved in the customer complaints process are described as follows:

Key Participants	Description
Complainant	Any person, organisation or their representative/advocate who lodges a complaint with the Department of Resources.
Frontline staff / Receiving Officer	An employee who receives the complaint and will solve or address the issue/s in the first phone or face-to-face contact.
Investigating Officer	An employee appointed by a managing officer to investigate and manage the complaint.
Managing Officer	A line manager or other senior employee appointed to oversee the complaint management process.
Chief Complaints Registrar	Responsible for allocating complaints received centrally to the department and reporting of complaints data to the Board.
Governing Body	A person or group of persons that has ultimate responsibility and authority for an organisation's activities, governance and policies to which top management reports and by which top management is held responsible (Qld Ombudsman)

### 4. Human Rights Complaints

One of the objectives of the HR Act aims to ensure that a culture is built in the Queensland Public Sector that respects and promotes human rights, accordingly placing human rights at the forefront of government decision-making and actions.

The HR Act protects and promotes 23 human rights, reflecting four basic principles: freedom, respect, equality and dignity. It creates obligations on all public entities, which includes government employees, to

properly consider and act compatibly with human rights when making decisions, developing policies, making laws and delivering services.

Giving proper consideration to a human right in making a decision includes identifying:

- the human rights that may be affected by the proposed decision; and
- whether the proposed decision would be compatible with human rights (see section 58 of the HR Act)

The meaning of *compatible with human rights* is defined in section 8 of the HR Act. It states an act or decision will be compatible with human rights if:

- it does not limit a human right, or
- it limits a human right only to the extent that is reasonable and demonstrably justifiable, in accordance with section 13 of the HR Act.

When acting or making decisions please see the Guide: How to apply human rights in the Department of Resources available on the department's intranet:

[https://resourcesintranet.lands.resnet.qg/data/assets/pdf\\_file/0011/275591/how-to-apply-human-rights-act.pdf](https://resourcesintranet.lands.resnet.qg/data/assets/pdf_file/0011/275591/how-to-apply-human-rights-act.pdf)

You can also discuss the application of the HR Act with the Human Rights representative in your area in the Department of Resources.

### **Making a Human Rights Complaint**

If an individual believes their human rights have been breached due to an action or decision (e.g. policy, program or service) of the Department of Resources, they can raise a customer complaint through the Department of Resources' existing complaints management process.

A complaint is only made to the Queensland Human Rights Commission (QHRC) where the complaint has not been addressed by the Department of Resources to the reasonable satisfaction of the complainant.

### **Assessing a Human Rights Complaint**

The Department of Resources will assess all customer complaints for breaches of human rights, whether the individual has identified a human rights concern or not.

An initial assessment of the complaint may consider the context and circumstances of the complaint (and the individual who made the complaint) to determine its priority and how it should be managed and who should respond. If the basis of the complaint is not clear, the Department of Resources can ask the individual for details on how they believe the decision or action breached their human rights or was not proportionate.

If the person reviewing the complaint is not the original decision-maker, they can seek further information about why the decision was made, and how any limitation on human rights is proportionate.

Three key steps to identify and consider human rights are:

1. Identify the human rights relevant to the complaint.
2. Consider whether the action or decision limits those human rights.
3. Assess whether the limitation is justified and reasonable in the circumstances.

### **More information is available at:**

- **Human Rights Portal:** [www.forgov.qld.gov.au/humanrights](http://www.forgov.qld.gov.au/humanrights)
- **QHRC:** [www.qhrc.qld.gov.au/](http://www.qhrc.qld.gov.au/)
- **Queensland Ombudsman:** [www.ombudsman.qld.gov.au/](http://www.ombudsman.qld.gov.au/)

## 5. Complaints management principles

The following principles are the basis of our Complaints Management Policy.

Principle	
People focus	Everybody has the right to complain. We will treat people making complaints with respect and promote and protect human rights. We will seek clarification on whether feedback or general concern is intended to be handled as a complaint, where appropriate. We will actively involve the customer in the complaints process as far as practical and appropriate in the circumstances. We will assist the customer in making the complaint if required. We will protect privacy and confidentiality. Complaints lodged without contact information, where it appears the customer wants to retain anonymity, should be exempt from active involvement. We will only address the content where sufficient information enables us to do so.
Visibility	Information about how and where a complaint may be made is well publicised on the Department of Resources' website and made available at frontline service locations.
Accessibility	We will ensure that our complaint handling process is accessible and easy to use for all our customers. We will accept complaints verbally and in writing via a range of formats and will accept complaints from authorised representatives of complainants. A complainant will not be charged a fee to lodge a complaint.
Responsiveness	We will acknowledge each complaint received within 3 business days of receipt where possible. Each complaint will be assessed and prioritised based on urgency of issues raised. We will monitor and record a complaint until it is finalised. The complainant will be advised on the process, expected timeframes, likely involvement in the process and any possible or likely outcome of the complaint where practical.
Impartiality and Fairness	We will address all complaints in an equitable, fair and unbiased manner using evidence submitted by both the complainant and our staff through the complaint handling process. We will identify if any human rights may be relevant to a complaint.
Confidentiality	We will observe strict confidentiality in complaint handling.
Customer focus	The interests of our customers are foremost in our approach to complaint handling as we are committed to resolving problems, improving relations and our reputation and building loyalty. We will work together with the complainant to look for a win-win solution that provides the best outcome for all parties within the resource and practical constraints the situation presents.
Accountability and reporting	We will ensure responsibilities are clearly outlined to staff. Our complaints will be reported internally and externally as appropriate.
Continuous improvement	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– identify trends for the purpose of improving service and business practice;</li> <li>– keep abreast of complaint management best practice;</li> <li>– foster a customer-focused approach;</li> <li>– provide training to staff to foster better complaint handling practices;</li> <li>– encourage innovation in complaint handling practices;</li> <li>– recognise exemplary complaint handling behaviour by our staff.</li> </ul>

## 6. The Complaints Management Model

Best practice dictates that an effective complaints management system incorporate three levels of complaint management. We aim to address the majority of complaints at the first level – the frontline.

**Level 1** – Frontline complaint handling – early resolution

**Level 2** – Internal assessment, investigation, facilitated resolution or review

**Level 3** – External assessment, investigation, alternate dispute resolution or review

The level of escalation is relevant to the seriousness of the complaint and nature of previous contact the complainant has had with us.

So, what could that look like for Resources?

Level 1
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Initial Complaint – Managed by Frontline Staff</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If frontline staff appropriately address a complaint through immediate discussion or provide the customer with the appropriate details for making a complaint, the complaint does not need to be recorded.</li> <li>• If the above does not apply, the complaint should be recorded by Frontline/Receiving Officer.</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Initial Complaint – Receiving Officer</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Records the details and resolution of the complaint in the Complaints Register</li> <li>• Reports the complaint and any issues, actions, or improvements if needed; <b>OR</b></li> <li>• Refers the complaint to the Investigating Officer</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Initial Complaint – Investigating Officer</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Helps the customer with making their complaint</li> <li>• Assesses and classifies the complaint</li> <li>• Investigates and acts to process the complaint</li> <li>• Offers remedies or solutions that are fair and reasonable to all involved</li> <li>• Explains the process for an internal or external review</li> <li>• Records the complaint in the Complaints Register</li> <li>• Closes the complaint and ensures any issues or improvements are communicated and actioned within the work unit.</li> </ul>
Level 2
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Internal Review – Internal Review Officer</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review management of the complaint as per previous stage to inform an internal review and also: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ensure they are independent of, and more senior than, the original decision-maker</li> <li>- clarify the grounds for the review</li> <li>- undertake a merits review</li> <li>- explain the process for an external review to the complainant, if needed.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Level 3
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>External Review- Nominated Staff and Chief Complaints Registrar</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assists the Queensland Ombudsman’s Office or the Queensland Human Rights Commission</li> <li>• Provides any requested information or copies of complaint documentation.</li> </ul>

## 7. How to make a complaint

We always endeavour to address customer concerns prior to their escalation to a formal complaint. If this cannot be achieved, complaints can be communicated to us as follows:

- **In person** at any of our regional centres, listed at [www.resources.qld.gov.au/](http://www.resources.qld.gov.au/)
- **By telephone** to the Queensland Government switchboard 13 QGOV (13 74 68)
- **Via our Website** by completing the online form [www.resources.qld.gov.au/home/about-us/compliments-comments-complaints](http://www.resources.qld.gov.au/home/about-us/compliments-comments-complaints)
- **By email to** [customerfeedback@resources.qld.gov.au](mailto:customerfeedback@resources.qld.gov.au)
- **Via the Queensland Government website** [www.qld.gov.au/contact-us](http://www.qld.gov.au/contact-us)
- **By mail to** Department of Resources, PO Box 15216, CITY EAST QLD 4002
- **Via social media channels;**
- **Via 'apps'; for example Facebook and Twitter** comments that could be considered a complaint, will be assessed by the Social Media team who will request that the complaint is lodged formally. We do not identify complaints made on third party social media accounts or channels. Valid complaints will be provided to the Chief Complaints Registrar for dissemination to the appropriate division.
- **Verbal** complaints are to be recorded in writing and officers will assist customers to put their complaint in writing or to record it for the customer. Where verbal complaints are recorded in this way, the contents should be read to the customer to verify the details are accurate.

### 7.1. Accessibility and interpreter assistance

- Frontline staff should be familiar with the complaints process and trained in the acknowledgement of any complaints received. Frontline staff will refer complainants to a person who can manage the complaint.
- For deaf and hearing-impaired customers, we recommend the following communication options using the National Relay Service:
  - TTY users' phone 133 677
  - Speak and listen (speech-to-speech relay) 1300 555 727
  - Internet relay users connect to the National Relay Service.
- For English language assistance, we recommend the following options available:
  - Telephone interpreters - Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) National. TIS National is available 24 hours/ 7 days a week, for the cost of a local call on 131 450
  - Directory of Accredited Practitioners of Translating and Interpreting - National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters. NAATI Hotline 1300 557 470 within Australia

## 8. How we handle complaints

The Department of Resources aims to manage customer complaints quickly at the frontline or the point where the complaint is received. We will make every reasonable effort to ensure a complaint is fully understood and to investigate all the circumstances and information surrounding it.

We will show empathy for our customer, but we will not attempt to take sides, lay blame, become defensive or create false expectations. We will treat customers with respect and will maintain their confidentiality.

Where necessary, we will look to provide assistance to people experiencing vulnerability. We will seek to identify people who may need additional support and practical assistance to make a complaint.

All complaints will be dealt with using the principles of natural justice, fairness and impartiality.

Anonymous complaints can be made, however our ability to investigate them may be limited.

Complaints will be recorded according to the classification set out in the below table:

<b>Classification</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Service Delivery</b>	A complaint relating to how a service is provided including timeliness, quality or cost of the service
<b>Staff Conduct</b>	A complaint about the behaviour of a staff member when providing a service
<b>Administrative Decision</b>	A complaint about a decision made by a Department of Resources staff when providing a service
<b>Policy / Procedure</b>	A complaint about the process followed to provide a service
<b>Statutory</b>	A complaint about a decision/actions that is covered by a process provided for outside this Policy
<b>Human Rights</b>	A complaint by an individual about an alleged contravention of section 58(1) of the HR Act, that the Department of Resources have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• acted or made a decision that is not compatible with human rights; or</li><li>• in making a decision, failed to give proper consideration to a human right relevant to the decision.</li></ul>

### 8.1. Complaints that will not be investigated

Some circumstances exist where a complaint will not be investigated. Where these circumstances exist, the customer must be notified and given the reasons as to why the complaint has been declined. In these cases, the customer may pursue the issues through other avenues such as lodging the complaint with the Office of the Queensland Ombudsman or QHRC.

These circumstances are:

- the Department of Resources is not the correct agency to address the concern
- the complainant does not have sufficient direct interest in the issue e.g. where a person's rights or interests would not be affected if the administrative action stood or continued
- there are no sufficient demonstrated grounds for a complaint
- there is an existing right of appeal or review available to the complainant
- the resources required to handle the complaint are disproportionate to the likely outcome
- the matter has been previously investigated by the Department of Resources and all internal review options have been exercised
- the matter is currently being managed through a statutory process, or has already been adequately managed, by an external agency, court or tribunal, for example, the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal (QCAT)
- it is impracticable to investigate a matter due to the length of time that has passed since its occurrence
- after assessment, the complaint is determined to be frivolous or vexatious.

## 8.2. Timeframes

We aim to address complaints as quickly and reasonably as possible within the following timeframes:

- Within **one business day** of receipt of the complaint by the Department of Resources, allocate the complaint to the relevant work unit (if not addressed in first point of contact).
- Within **three business days** of receipt of the complaint by the Department of Resources, the customer must be advised the complaint has been received and the expected timeframe for review and resolution.
- Where possible, within **20 business days** of receipt of the complaint by the Department of Resources, the work unit must address the complaint or have made a genuine attempt to address the complaint or have the matter addressed to the complainant or department's satisfaction.

In the event of an investigation proving more complex and requiring more time than previously advised, communicate the rationale for the extended time to the customer. The customer will be informed on a regular basis of progress with the complaint.

### Timeframes for Human Rights Complaints

An individual must make a complaint to the Department of Resources in the first instance. After 45 business days, the individual can then take their complaint to the QHRC. This does not mean that complaints must be addressed within 45 business days; there may be situations where a process extends beyond this time. The individual will be advised of the reason for the extended time and regularly updated on the complaint's progress.

## 8.3. Unreasonable complainant conduct

The complainant must work productively with the Department of Resources so the customer complaint can be addressed, and the complainant's conduct must not be unreasonable. Safety and wellbeing is paramount and if complainant conduct creates unacceptable risk, the Department of Resources may take necessary action including discontinue contact with them. Unreasonable conduct is defined as any behaviour by a person which because of its nature or frequency, raises substantial health, safety, resources or equity issues for the people involved in the complaint process.

Such instances might include:

- **Unreasonable lack of cooperation** – providing disorganised, excessive or irrelevant information, an unwillingness to consider other viewpoints or a refusal to define issues of concern
- **Unreasonable arguments** – irrational cause and effect arguments, holding conspiracy theories unsupported by evidence, or illogically interpreting facts
- **Unreasonable behaviour** – extreme anger, aggression, threats or other violent conduct
- **Unreasonable persistence** – a refusal to accept a final decision and persisting with issues despite advice they have been fully considered and no further action will be taken
- **Unreasonable demands** – insisting on outcomes that are unattainable, changing the objectives of the process or demanding to have a matter dealt with in a particular way.

**To note:** Any strategies used to manage unreasonable complainant conduct should be considered for compatibility with any relevant human rights to prevent a breach of an individual's human rights.

## 9. Further action / internal review

If a customer is not satisfied with the Department of Resources' response to a complaint, they may request that the Department of Resources conduct an internal review. When requesting an internal review, the customer must explain why the review is appropriate, i.e. why the original complaint outcome was not reasonable and/or the complaint handling process was unfair or deficient.

The internal review will be conducted by an officer of at least the same level as the original Investigating Officer and will be independent of the original decision.

If the customer is not satisfied with the outcome of an independent review, they may contact the Queensland Ombudsman or Human Rights Commission to request an independent review on:

#### **The Queensland Ombudsman**

GPO Box 3314  
Brisbane QLD 4001  
Tel: 07 3005 7000 or  
1800 068 908 (toll free outside Brisbane)

#### **The Queensland Human Rights Commission**

PO Box 15565  
City East QLD 4002  
Tel: 1300 130 670 (toll free in Queensland)

## **10. Remedies**

When a complaint is considered justified, an appropriate remedy should be determined taking into consideration the available options including any remedies that are provided in legislation; the outcome sought by the complainant and/or the degree of detriment to the complainant. Informal resolution and compromise are attempted wherever possible.

If it is determined that the complainant's human rights have been limited in a way that is not reasonable or demonstrably justifiable, the next step is to determine how the complaint can be addressed to the satisfaction of both parties.

Possible remedies, alone or in combination, may include:

- acknowledgement of an error made
- apology
- change of decision
- change of policy, procedures, practice or product
- compensation or financial assistance such as an ex-gratia payment
- correction of misleading or incorrect records
- explanation of how and why the problem occurred and what steps the Department of Resources is taking or has taken to avoid it recurring
- offering more training to staff
- provision of information or technical assistance
- advising that disciplinary or management action has been taken (if appropriate)
- repair/rework
- provision of a substitute product or service.

## **11. Recording and reporting complaint data**

The Department of Resources will keep accurate records documenting the complaint investigation in a Complaints Register. These records will include evidence of the process used to consider the complaint, records of meetings, telephone conversations and interviews, findings from the investigation and recommendations and approvals.

The complaint records will be available for internal and external review, subject to information privacy, right to information considerations and legislative obligation, e.g. *Ombudsman Act 2001*.

Customer complaints data must be reported quarterly to the Board to inform activities such as risk management and strategic and operational planning, and drive service delivery improvements.

In accordance with section 264(3) of the Public Sector Act, the Department of Resources must publish its annual customer complaints data to include:

- the number of customer complaints received by the Department of Resources in the year;
- the number of those complaints resulting in further action; and
- the number of those complaints resulting in no further action.

In accordance with the HR Act, the Department of Resources must publish its annual human rights complaints data to include:

- activities during the reporting period that further the objects of the HR Act
- human rights complaints received, including:
  - the number;
  - the outcome; and
  - any other information prescribed by regulation relating to complaints;
- reviews of policies, programs, procedures, practices or services for their compatibility with human rights.

## **12. Business improvement**

Continuous business improvement requires analysis of complaints and trends so that business practices and behaviours can be evaluated and, through feedback to business areas, improved where necessary.

The Managing Officer involved with the complaint will ensure that their staff are informed of the circumstances of the complaint and its resolution to ensure processes are improved and rectified as necessary.

## **13. Staff education**

This Policy applies to all our people. Those with particular responsibilities in customer complaint management are trained in its application.

The Queensland Ombudsman, in conjunction with the Department of Resources, provides specialist complaint management training/advice to all staff who are dealing with customers and their queries or complaints.

The QHRC also provides face-to-face and online training for Department of Resources staff on the HR Act.

## **14. Review of Policy**

This Policy will be reviewed and updated, if required, every two years from the date of approval, unless circumstances indicate it should be reviewed earlier.

## 15. Roles and responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Governing Body	<p>The Board will be accountable for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the complaints management policy and review of that policy</li> <li>• ensuring quarterly reports are received by the Board               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- complaint volumes</li> <li>- average response timeframes and number of open complaints including timeframes</li> <li>- identification and rectification of systemic issues</li> <li>- media associated with any individual complaint or systemic issue</li> </ul> </li> <li>• ensuring adequate funding and resourcing is allocated to manage complaints and address systemic issues</li> <li>• providing accurate reporting and disclosures to relevant regulators and agencies</li> </ul>
Deputy Directors-General	<p>Deputy Directors-General (DDG) will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• be accountable for complaints management policy being followed in each division</li> <li>• ensure timely and effective resolution of complaints in accordance with this policy</li> <li>• decide if a complaint will NOT be investigated</li> <li>• ensure that appropriate action, including preventative action where warranted, is taken to address sources of complaints, adverse issues and trends identified and foster continuous improvement</li> <li>• provide appropriate training courses such as those offered by the Queensland Ombudsman on Complaints Management Training and Human Rights Complaints Training</li> <li>• provide Quarterly Reporting to the Chief Complaints Registrar inclusive of all complaints and human rights complaints received by the Department of Resources</li> </ul>
Executive Directors	<p>Executive Directors will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• allocate sufficient resources to ensure complaints are effectively managed, including the assignment of specific roles and responsibilities to staff</li> <li>• ensure that staff with roles in handling complaints are provided with appropriate information and training</li> <li>• immediately refer allegations of official misconduct or other fraudulent activity and public interest disclosures to the Manager, Employee Relations, Human Resources, for assessment</li> <li>• decide if a complaint will NOT be investigated or refer the complaint to the relevant DDG to decide</li> <li>• designate an internal reviewer or conduct the review if an internal review of a complaint is required</li> <li>• ensure that all human rights complaints are identified, considered and handled accordingly</li> <li>• ensure that the complaints register is used to manage and action complaints</li> <li>• ensure that the approved resolution actions are implemented</li> <li>• ensure that appropriate action, including preventative action where warranted, is taken to address sources of complaints, adverse issues and trends identified and foster continuous improvement</li> </ul>
Chief Complaints Registrar	<p>The Chief Complaints Registrar will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• allocate complaints received centrally within one day of receipt</li> <li>• manage any incoming complaints received or referred to the Department of Resources and the Minister</li> </ul>

Role	Responsibility
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ensure that the complaint has been logged in the Complaints Register for tracking and reporting purposes, whether the complaint has been addressed or not</li> <li>• update the complaints register with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- number of complaints received</li> <li>- number of complaints requiring further action and</li> <li>- number of complaints requiring no further action</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Prepare quarterly reports for the Board</li> <li>• Provide the HR complaints information for the Annual Report which is collected during the preceding financial year by 30 September for annual report publishing in accordance with the HR Act. The information will include statistics on the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- number of human rights complaints received, including the total number,</li> <li>- details of each human rights complaint and</li> <li>- the actions taken</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Publish in accordance with section 264(3) of the Public Sector Act, the information will include statistics on the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- number of customer complaints received</li> <li>- number of those complaints requiring further action</li> <li>- number of those complaints requiring no further action</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>Managing Officer (decision-maker)</p>	<p>The Managing Officer will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• assess complaint and undertake immediate corrective action if necessary</li> <li>• ensure that every complaint is considered and assessed as a possible human rights complaint</li> <li>• ensure that the complaint has been logged into the Complaint Register for tracking and reporting purposes, whether the complaint has been addressed or not</li> <li>• attempt to address the complaint through an informal process</li> <li>• undertake an investigation into the complaint, or assign to an officer to manage the complaint if the informal process proves unsuccessful</li> <li>• ensure that natural justice is applied throughout the complaints process</li> <li>• approve the resolution and response for each complaint</li> <li>• advise the customer of the outcome</li> <li>• ensure that staff attend the complaints management training courses offered by the Queensland Ombudsman</li> <li>• ensure that staff attend the human rights complaints training courses offered by the QHRC</li> </ul>
<p>Investigating Officer</p>	<p>The Officer who has been assigned to assess and investigate the complaint will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• acknowledge receipt of the complaint with the customer within three business days and advise service standard timeframe for resolution of response</li> <li>• if possible, explore informal resolution with the customer</li> <li>• liaise with customer to obtain further information and provide advice regarding the progress of complaints</li> <li>• assess and investigate complaint</li> <li>• ensure that every complaint is considered and assessed as a possible human rights complaint</li> <li>• apply natural justice to customer and staff throughout the complaints process</li> <li>• recommend the resolution and response for each complaint to the Managing Officer</li> </ul>

Role	Responsibility
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• attend the complaints management training courses offered by the Queensland Ombudsman</li> <li>• attend the human rights complaints training courses offered by the QHRC</li> </ul>
All Staff	<p>All staff will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• deal with matters raised by customers locally in the first instance in order to minimise formal complaints</li> <li>• ensure that every complaint is considered and assessed as a possible human rights complaint</li> <li>• inform customers of the processes for lodging and managing complaints</li> <li>• provide assistance to enable customers to lodge complaints</li> <li>• encourage complainants to submit complete information through written form</li> <li>• maintain privacy and confidentiality</li> <li>• record and submit verbal complaints received to their Manager</li> <li>• ensure all complaint dealings are recorded in the complaints register</li> <li>• undertake training courses</li> </ul>

## 16. Version History

Date	Version	Action	Description / comments
30 Jun 2014	Draft	New framework	For consideration by ED
27 Jan 2016	1.00	Amended to reflect final version issued to Department	
10 Feb 2016	1.01	Clarification to response delegations	Feedback incorporated including amended process map
20 Feb 2017	1.02	Update definition of a complaint	As approved BOM presentation 21 July 2016
20 Feb 2017	1.02	Update how to lodge verbal complaints	As per the Customer Complaints Management Handbook endorsed by the Board 21 July 2016
21 Feb 2017	1.02	Update reference on limiting contact by complainants with the department	As per the Customer Complaints Management Handbook endorsed by the Board 21 July 2016
21 Feb 2017	1.02	Clarified wording of service delivery timeframes in role description	As per the Customer Complaints Management Handbook endorsed by the Board 21 July 2016
22 Feb 2017	1.02	Updated role description for DDG and ED to reflect a decision not to investigate a complaint	As per the Complaints Framework endorsed by the Board 7 May 2015
30 June 2018	2.00	Reviewed and updated to reflect new department (former Department of Energy and Water Supply and former Department of Natural Resources and Mines.	Department of Natural Resources Mines and Energy
30 June 2020	3.00	Review and update to reflect the Human Rights Act 2019	Information incorporated to be considered during the complaints process.
31 March 2020	3.01	Review and update to reflect new Department of Resources	Department of Resources
June 2023	3.02	Review to incorporate AS/NZS 10002:2022, Guidelines for complaint management in organisations, and change name from Framework to Policy	Department of Resources
September 2023	3.03	Updated to replace <i>Public Service Act 2008</i> with the <i>Public Sector Act 2022</i> .	Department of Resources

### Keywords

CHB/2016/1982; Framework; handbook; complaints; register; complainant; customer complaint; assessing complaint; internal review of complaints; complaint policy