

# Complaints Handling Policy

This Complaints Handling Policy has been developed in line with *ISO 10002:2006, MOD, Customer Satisfaction – Guidelines for complaints handling in organisations.*

All customer complaints shall be identified, documented, reported and managed in accordance with this Policy. Port of Townsville Limited (the Corporation) integrates complaint information into business improvement processes and complaints are categorised to reflect their seriousness and complexity.

Port of Townsville Limited recognises that customer feedback, both positive and negative, is essential in order to provide quality services that meet customer and community expectations and needs. The Corporation affirms and supports the right of customers to provide feedback and have the complaint acted upon.

The Corporation will respond to all complaints within a period of three days and aim to close-out complaints within 15 working days of receipt.

## OBJECTIVES AND OWNERSHIP

To demonstrate integrity and accountability to our customers and community by having an ethical, comprehensive and customer-friendly complaints management process.

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis or as appropriate.

The management team at Port of Townsville Limited is committed to providing adequate resources and trained personnel to deal with recording, analysing and monitoring complaints.

## DEFINITIONS

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

**Complaints Handling Process** – the way individual complaints are dealt with by the Corporation encompassing the policy, procedures, practices and technology. It is a set of interrelated or interacting activities which transforms inputs into outputs.

**Complainant** – a person, organisation or its representative making a complaint.

## PURPOSE OF COMPLAINTS HANDLING PROCESS

The purpose of the Corporation complaints-handling process is to:-

- enhance the customer/agency relationship;
- recognise, promote and protect customers' rights, including the right to comment and complain;
- provide an efficient, fair and accessible mechanism for resolving complaints;
- provide information to customers on the Corporation complaints handling process;
- facilitate the monitoring of complaints to improve quality of service;
- enable the Corporation to maintain customer confidence in services that we provide; and,
- promote consistency in handling complaints.

## PRINCIPLES

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The following principles underpin the Port of Townsville Limited complaint process and will be reflected in customer complaints at all levels.

**1. Visibility**

Information about how and where to complain shall be well publicised to customers, personnel, and other interested parties.

**2. Accessibility**

The process will be easily accessible to all complainants. There will be flexibility in the methods of making complaints and the process will include provision for oral complaints, if a written complaint cannot be made. The Corporation will ensure that information is made available on the details of making and resolving complaints. Information relating to the complaints process will be easy to understand and use.

**3. Responsiveness**

Receipt of each complaint will be acknowledged and complaints will be addressed promptly, in accordance with their urgency. Complainants will be treated courteously and be kept informed on the progress of their complaint.

**4. Objectivity**

Each complaint will be addressed in an equitable, objective and unbiased manner.

**5. Charges**

Access to the complaints handling process will be free of charge to the complainant.

**6. Confidentiality**

Personally identifiable information concerning the complainant will be available where needed, but only for the purposes of addressing the complaint within the organisation and will be actively protected from disclosure, unless the customer or complainant expressly consents to its disclosure.

**7. Customer-Focussed Approach**

The Corporation emphasises a customer-focussed approach, and is open to feedback including complaints, and shows commitment to resolving complaints by its actions.

**8. Accountability**

The Corporation will ensure that accountability for and reporting on the actions and decisions of the organisation with respect to complaints handling is clearly established.

**9. Continual Improvement**

The continual improvement of the complaints-handling process is important to the Corporation. Therefore, the process will be reviewed annually, or as appropriate.

The review will ensure that:

- the process is operating efficiently and is effectively meeting the needs of the Corporation and customers;
- it is contributing to the improvement of the Corporation's business performance;
- customer satisfaction can be ascertained;
- data being collected is analysed to prevent systematic or recurring problems;
- any deficiencies in the system can be rectified, or improvements made.

Reviews will include evaluation of the policy and process as well as a survey of employees, customers and complainants.

**COMPLIANCE AND COMPETENCE**

<b>Standards</b>
• <i>AS ISO 10002-2006. Customer satisfaction - Guidelines for complaints handling in organizations</i>
<b>Legislation</b>
<i>Public Sector Ethics Act 1994 (part 2). Ombudsman Act 2001 (section 49).</i>

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