



ASC Complaints Handling Policy

Purpose and Scope

This policy sets out the principles that the Australian Sports Commission (ASC) has adopted for the management of formal complaints from external customers relating to any aspect of the ASC's services, performance or the way we do our business.

Together with the *ASC Complaints Handling Guidelines and Procedure*, this policy provides direction on how all ASC employees must handle formal complaints.

This policy does **not** cover:

- complaints made by ASC staff relating to working conditions or conditions of service
 - refer to your Manager or Human Resources
- internal staff grievances about staff behavior or misconduct
 - refer to the General Manager Human Resources and are investigated in accordance with the ASC Code of Conduct and the ASC Collective Workplace Agreement
- allegations of criminal conduct against ASC staff members, which may include allegations of harassment or discrimination
 - refer to the General Manager Human Resources and are investigated in accordance with the ASC Code of Conduct
- complaints about sporting organisations
 - refer to the Sports Ethics Unit. Depending on the nature of the complaint, the ASC may refer the complaint to a third party such as the Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) and the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS).
- decisions where an external review or appeal mechanism already exists

Background

The ASC Complaints Handling Policy has been developed following recommendations from the internal audit on complaints handling (August 2009). The complaints handling audit identified the need to formalise a complaints handling policy, procedure and guideline to establish the roles and responsibilities of ASC staff and clearly outline the process to follow when the ASC receives complaints.

Policy

Complaints will be handled fairly and justly and in a timely and effective manner. Complainants will not be victimised or suffer negative treatment because they have made a complaint.

Staff dealing with a complaint must protect the confidentiality and privacy of those involved by ensuring relevant information is accessible only to those with a genuine need to know.

Customers will be kept informed of the progress of their complaint and of the final resolution. Complaints will be monitored to track the nature, frequency and resolution details for future reference. Complainants will be advised of avenues for further review of their complaint, if not satisfied with the resolution.

Roles and Responsibilities

Directors / General Managers

Directors/General Managers are responsible for:

- Responding to any complaints that are referred to them in an appropriate and timely manner;
- Ensuring that outstanding complaints are finalised;
- Ensuring that all staff in their Division are aware of their responsibilities under the *ASC Complaint Handling Policy, Guidelines and Procedure*;
- Identifying and recommending or implementing changes that may improve effectiveness and customer service.

All ASC Staff

All ASC staff receiving a complaint are to assist the complainant, resolve the complaint if possible, or refer the complainant directly to the person most appropriate to deal with it. All ASC staff must follow the *ASC Complaints Handling Procedure* when handling complaints. All details relating to the complaint must be recorded on the complaints database.

What we say and do can make a great difference to whether it satisfactorily is resolved. There are some general principles that are required in dealing with customers and particularly when dealing with complaints.

ASC Complaints Officer

Functions performed by the ASC Complaints Officer include:

- providing training, advice and support to staff involved in complaints management
- monitoring the complaints database to ensure time standards for responses are met
- recording, monitoring and analysing information about complaints
- reporting to both managers and staff on complaints
- identifying trends and systemic issues.

Definitions

Informal Complaint	A statement (usually oral) expressing disagreement or dissatisfaction that requires action or response
Formal Complaint	An official (written) expression of dissatisfaction or unmet expectation by or on behalf of a customer.
Complainant	A person or party making a complaint, either directly or through someone acting on their behalf.
Customer	Different organisations use different terms to refer to their customers, clients or consumers. We have used the generic term 'customer' to refer to all of these groups.
Privacy	Investigations of complaints are aligned with the <i>Privacy Act 1988</i> in ensuring fairness and transparency of the process. Only those involved in the case need to have access to information and any documents relating to complaints are stored appropriately and are restricted to authorised staff. All records, documentation and files about complaints should be marked In-Confidence and stored appropriately.
Statutory Reporting	A duty imposed by a statute/legislation to report an incident or occurrence to the relevant authority.

Related Legislation

- Privacy Act 1988
- Freedom of Information Act 1982
- Evidence Act 1995

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