

Complaint Handling Procedure

1 Background

This procedure is designed to provide guidance on the complaints handling process for both customers and employees of the Motor Accidents Insurance Board (MAIB).

The MAIB is committed to providing services of the highest quality. Key to meeting this commitment is utilising feedback from those who use the MAIB's services to improve the quality of the services provided. Feedback can be in the form of a complaint, a compliment or a suggestion.

A complaint is defined as any expression (verbal or written) of dissatisfaction or grievance made to an employee (or the MAIB) by a claimant or a member of the public in relation to the business of the MAIB.

The MAIB is committed to ensuring that:

- Complaints received are handled in a manner which is fair, courteous and respects the privacy of the person making the complaint;
- Reasons are provided for decisions made in relation to any complaint received; and
- All reasonable assistance is provided to those who make a complaint.

This procedure should be read in conjunction with the MAIB Customer Service Charter (COR114).

2 Verbal Complaints

Where possible, complaints are best handled by employees at the point of service delivery. Employees should make every reasonable effort to resolve complaints at first contact. More serious complaints, or complaints that cannot be resolved by an employee, should be referred to their Team Leader or Manager for investigation, resolution or other appropriate action.

2.1 Responding to Verbal Complaints

Employees should seek to establish a firm but courteous and respectful communication style with the complainant at the beginning of the conversation. When handling a verbal complaint an employee should attempt to:

- Listen attentively – focusing clearly on what the complainant is saying (clarifying their issue and expectations);
- Express empathy – giving some indication that their distress, disappointment and frustration is understood;
- Acknowledge the complainant's point of view (without necessarily agreeing with it);
- Apologise, where appropriate; and
- State clearly what can and cannot be done (providing clear reasons for MAIB decisions).

If a complaint cannot be resolved at a verbal level, a complainant should be advised that they are able to put their complaint in writing for review by the Complaints Officer.

3 Written Complaints

A complainant may prefer to lodge a written complaint without making a verbal complaint.

All written complaints should be addressed to:

Chief Executive Officer

MAIB

PO Box 590

Launceston TASMANIA 7250

3.1 Responses to Written Complaints

Upon receipt of a written complaint, the Complaints Officer or appropriate Manager will endeavour to contact the complainant within 2 business days of the complaint being received.

The acknowledgement should advise in general terms about the MAIB complaints handling policy and provide a date as to when the complainant can expect to be contacted again in relation to the complaint.

The complaint will be investigated by either the Complaints Officer or a Manager, who will contact the complainant (response letter), advising of the result of any investigations within 15 business days of the making of the initial written complaint.

The response letter to the complainant should give a history of the complaint and considerations in relation to the complaint as well as clear reasons for the decisions that have been made.

Abusive letters should be returned to the complainant (with a copy retained) with a request for it to be reformulated in more moderate and appropriate language.

3.2 Internal Review of an MAIB Decision

If a complainant is unhappy with the decision made by the Complaints Officer or Manager, the complainant can refer the matter to the Chief Operating Officer (COO) for a review of the decision. The COO will conduct a fresh investigation into the complaint and provide the complainant with a written response within 15 business days upon receipt of the request for a review of the original decision.

4 Referral to the Ombudsman

A complainant unhappy with the decision made by the COO may refer the matter to the Ombudsman.

The contact details for the Ombudsman are as follows:

Office of the Ombudsman

GPO Box 960

Hobart TAS 7001

Freecall: 1800 001 170

Email: ombudsman@ombudsman.tas.gov.au

Website: www.ombudsman.tas.gov.au