

COMPLAINTS MANAGEMENT POLICY

APPROVED BY:	Board of Directors	DATE:	30 October 2015
APPROVING AUTHORITY	Chief Executive Officer		
DELEGATION INSTRUMENT	Board Resolution – 30 October 2015		
CUSTODIAN:	General Manager Strategy and External Relations		
COMMENTS:	Reviewed by the Chief Executive Officer – 1 November 2017 Reviewed by the Chief Executive Officer – 3 September 2018 Reviewed by the Chief Executive Officer – 10 September 2021 Reviewed by the Chief Executive Officer – 18 October 2024		

POLICY:

Ports North is committed to the effective management of complaints. Ports North acknowledges the right of the public to complain if they are dissatisfied with aspects of our operations or treatment by a staff member and encourages feedback from the community, customers and staff.

Ports North is committed to providing high standard port services to existing and potential port users and is committed to establishing long-term mutually beneficial relationships with port customers, port stakeholders and the community. Ports North employees and contractors are encouraged to look for methods to improve services and this includes acknowledging that customer feedback, both positive and negative, is essential in order to provide quality services that meet customer, community and stakeholder expectations and needs.

PURPOSE:

This Policy has been developed in line with *AS/NZS 10002:2018 Guidelines for complaints management in organisations*.

The aim of this policy is to provide guidelines for staff to undertake a consistent approach to managing complaints; to ensure that staff act fairly, honestly and in an efficient and confidential manner when managing complaints; and that both the complainant and staff are aware of the complaints management process and what to expect when a complaint is lodged.

The complaints management system includes a complaints procedure designed to ensure that all complaints are addressed in accordance with the objectives of this policy.

OBJECTIVES:

To manage complaints in accordance with the following principles:-

1. Enabling complaints:

- a. A people-focused approach recognising the right to make a complaint.
- b. Taking all reasonable steps to ensure no detriment to complainant.
- c. Visibility and transparency about how and where to make a complaint.
- d. Ensure our complaints management system is accessible to everyone.
- e. A complainant should not be charged a fee to complain.

2. Managing complaints:

- a. Responsiveness – promptly acknowledging complaints, dealing with complaints efficiently and actively managing complainant expectations.
- b. Managing complaints in an objective, fair and unbiased manner.
- c. Address all complaints in an equitable manner.
- d. Personally identifiable information only disclosed in compliance with relevant privacy laws and ethical obligations.
- e. Provide explanations for policies, procedures and decisions in our communications with complainants and our staff.

3. Managing the parties:

- a. Guidelines clarifying expected behaviour of staff and complainants.
- b. Practices ensuring the health and safety of staff involved in complaint management.
- c. Coordination of communication of complaints involving multiple parties.
- d. Encouraging staff feedback as a valuable source of insight.

4. Accountability, learning and prevention:

- a. Ensuring clear accountability for the operation of the complaints system.
- b. Learn from complaints as part of continual quality improvement.
- c. Systems that minimize complaints escalating into ongoing disputes.

APPLICABILITY: This Policy applies to all Directors, employees and contractors of Ports North.

DEFINITIONS: **Complaint** – an expression of dissatisfaction made to or about Ports North, related to its products, services, staff or the handling of a complaint, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected or legally required.

Complaints Management System – encompasses all aspects of the policies, procedures, practices, staff, hardware and software used by Ports North, for the management of complaints.

PROCEDURES: This policy is supported by a procedure which details how complaints will be managed by the organisation, who will be involved in that process and their roles. This policy and procedure are accessible by all staff within Ports North under Policies on Seaport and are available to the public on our website at www.portsnorth.com.au.

POLICY REVIEW: The policy will be reviewed every three years by the custodian and any recommended changes approved by the approving authority.