

Complaint Management Policy

About This Policy

This Policy sets out Mode's approach to managing complaint about our services, decisions, actions, and staff.

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1 Policy Overview

1.1 Introduction

As an independent Tasmanian Company, Mode Electrical has a serious commitment to excellence. While we prioritise customer satisfaction and quality of service we also appreciate that things don't always go according to plan, and value the public's right to complain about our services, decisions, actions, and staff. We are genuinely committed to treating complaints seriously, and dealing with them promptly, fairly, and effectively.

The information gained from complaints will help us improve our service and administration.

This policy is intended to:

- enable us to respond to issues raised by people making complaints in a timely and effective manner;
- deliver quality improvements in our services, staff and complaint handling procedures.

1.2 Scope

This policy applies to all staff receiving or managing complaints from the public, made to us, regarding our services, staff and complaint handling process.

Mode considers a complaint to be:

An expression of dissatisfaction made to Mode relating to our service, decisions, actions, or the complaint handling process itself.

This policy does not extend to requests for a review of a decision or action by Mode where the right to do so is granted by law. These reviews will be conducted in accordance with applicable legislation.

1.3 Commitment

Mode is committed to accessible, effective, efficient and fair complaint handling.

We will:

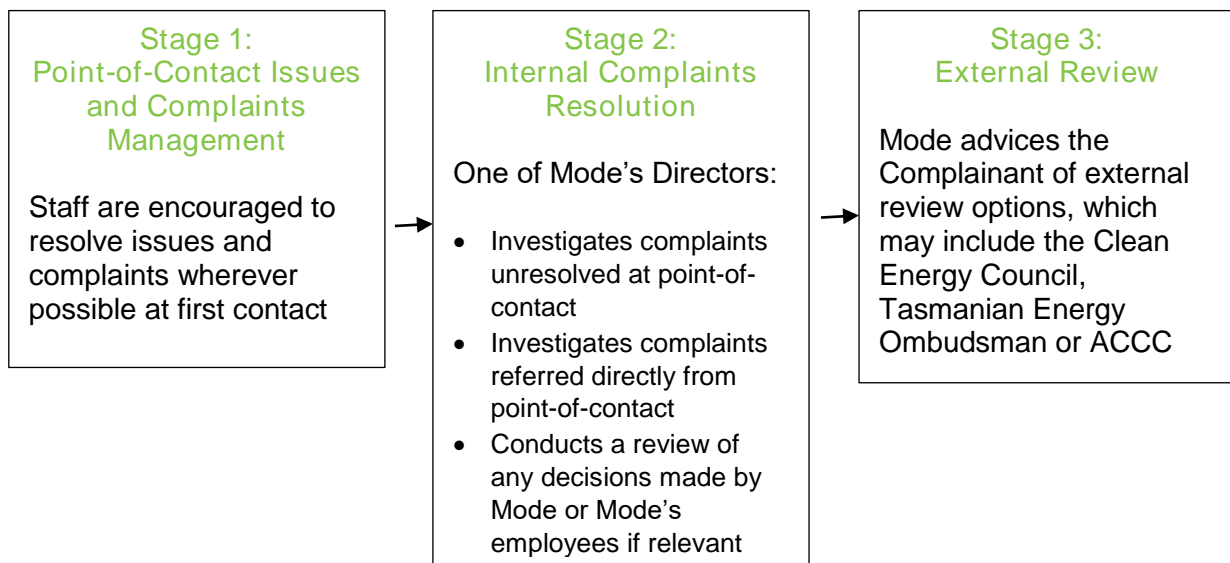
- Welcome complaints from people who have dealt directly with Mode and who are dissatisfied with our service, decisions, actions, or staff
- Treat complainants with respect, and provide clear explanations of Mode's actions and decisions wherever the law or Mode's policy allows
- Address each complaint in an objective, unbiased and equitable manner
- Treat complaints received in accordance with Mode's Privacy Policy
- Recognise feedback and complaints as opportunities to build knowledge and improve services
- Be courteous and professional
- Ensure our complaint process is accessible, transparent, and accountable

2 Mode's Approach to Complaint Management

2.1 Stages of the Complaint Management Process

Mode handles most complaints as outlined in Figure 1:

Figure 1: Complaint Management Model



At Stage 1, staff are encouraged and empowered to resolve issues wherever possible when a Complainant first raises the matter.

Complainants are encouraged to:

- Attempt to resolve their issue with the Mode staff member that they have been dealing with;
- If they are not satisfied, talking to that staff member's manager; and
- If they are still not satisfied, consider lodging a formal complaint through Mode's dedicated complaint channels.

If a complaint reaches Stage 2, it may be actioned through either:

- A complaint investigation by the Director; or
- An internal review of a decision or action

The focus of a complaint investigation is to:

- Assess the complaint to determine Mode's compliance with Mode's policies and procedures, and any relevant legislation;
- Determining what resolution (if any) may be appropriate, including whether further information should be provided to the Complainant regarding Mode's position; and
- Ascertaining whether there are opportunities for service and system improvement going forward

2.2 Visibility & Access

Complainants may make complaints by:

- Telephone
- Mail
- Email
- Online
- In Person

While we accept anonymous complaints, we will be limited in the extent to which we can address these without the ability to obtain further information or make further inquiries of the Complainant.

Information on the complaint management process appears on Mode's website, and is available in print form. If required, Mode staff handling complaints over the telephone can explain the process, and direct potential Complainants to where they can access further information.

If a Complainant prefers another party to represent them in the complaint process, we will communicate with them through their designated representative. Anyone may represent a person wishing to make a complaint, with their consent.

2.3 Responsiveness

Mode will:

- a) Resolve complaints at the first point of contact, wherever possible
- b) Acknowledge complaints promptly
- c) Inform Complainants of the progress of their complaint
- d) Assess and finalise each complaint as quickly as possible

3 Assessment & Action

3.1 Complaint Categories

Complaints will be categorized into four types:

1. Service
2. Regulatory
3. Conduct
4. Other

The categorization of each complaint determines how Mode will handle the complaint.

In handling complaints, Mode will:

- a) Categorise and prioritise each complaint according to its seriousness, urgency, and complexity;
- b) Address each complaint in a considerate, objective, equitable and professional manner throughout the complaint management process; and
- c) If appropriate, refer complaint and/or Complainants to external agencies on receipt on the complaint

Service (Non-Regulatory) Complaints

Mode supplies and installs renewable energy systems, hot water systems, and heat-pumps, as well as providing general electrical servicing, system maintenance, and energy efficiency audits. In the context of this work, members of the public at times may raise concerns about delivery of these services. As mentioned previously, we will initially attempt resolution of service complaints at point of contact. If we are unable to resolve the complaint at this level, we will escalate it for review.

Regulatory Complaints

Regulatory complaints include complaints relating to decisions or actions made in the context of our regulatory obligations and responsibilities.

Conduct Complaints

Complaints about conduct involve any allegations of unacceptable conduct against a Mode staff member. These will be divided into two categories:

1. Serious: relating to conduct that relates to the health and safety of the Complainant, or that may significantly affect Mode's reputation or regulatory responsibilities
2. Less Serious: relating to all other conduct complaints not considered to fall within the 'serious' category, including (but not limited to) rudeness, poor or inappropriate service, or discourtesy.

Other Complaints

Any complaints that do not fit within the categories listed above, including complaints about breaches of privacy.

3.2 Outcomes

Mode will communicate outcomes to Complainants as soon as practicable of any decisions made in response to a complaint, with an explanation for the decisions as appropriate. We will outline any remedies or resolutions that will be implemented to minimise or prevent recurrence of the issue, and Complainants will be advised of any available internal review options and/or any statutory external appeal option on enquiry.

If we make any adverse findings about a particular individual in the course of investigations, we will consider any applicable privacy obligations under the *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998* and any applicable exemptions in or made pursuant to that Act, before sharing our findings with the Complainant.

3.3 Monitoring Effectiveness

Mode is committed to monitoring the quality and effectiveness of our complaint management framework. We will monitor our complaint management system to:

- a) ensure its effectiveness in responding to and resolving complaints, and
- b) identify and correct deficiencies in the operation of the system.

We will communicate any internal issue or opportunity for improvement highlighted by a complaint to the party or parties able to implement corrective action, education, and/or systemic improvement. Mode will also ensure that complaints are recorded in a systematic way so that information can be easily retrieved for reporting and analysis.

3.4 Continuous Improvement

Mode views complaint reports as an opportunity to identify areas in which we can improve our products and service.

3.5 Roles & Responsibilities

Mode's Directors are responsible for ensuring that Mode has a complaint management system that:

- a) deals effectively with complaints
- b) uses complaint information to identify issues and drive improvement
- c) refers Complainants to any appropriate external agency if they are dissatisfied at the conclusion of Mode's complaint management process

As part of the complaint management framework, the Office Manager is responsible for:

- a) Implementing complaints policy & procedure
- b) Monitoring complaints data
- c) Drive continuous improvement by monitoring remedies implemented in response to a complaint

All staff members are to ensure that any relevant policies, remedies, or resolutions adopted in response to a complaint are implemented and maintained as relevant.

4 Terms and Definitions

Complainant

A person who makes a complaint

Complaint

Expression of dissatisfaction made to Mode in relation to our services, decisions, or actions, or the complaint management process itself, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected or legally required.

Complaint management framework

All systems and policies supporting implementation of Mode's complaint management policy.

Feedback

Opinions, comments and expressions of interest or concern made to us about our products, services or complaint handling where a response is *not* required.

5 Related Information

Standards

Australian/New Zealand Standard AS/NZS 10002:2014 *Guidelines for Complaint Management in Organisations*

ISO 10002:2014 *Quality Management – Customer Satisfaction – Guidelines for Complaints Handling in Organisations*

Commonwealth Ombudsman

Better Practice Guide to Complaint Handling (2009)

http://www.ombudsman.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0020/35615/Better-practice-guide-to-complaint-handling.pdf Accessed 08/01/2018

Unreasonable Complainant Conduct

http://www.ombudsman.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0031/35599/Unreasonable-complainant-conduct.pdf Accessed 08/01/2018