

Complaint Management Framework

Owner: HUMAN RESOURCES

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Under the *Human Rights Act 2019* a decision maker has an obligation to act and make decisions in a way that is compatible with human rights, and when making a decision under this policy, to give proper consideration to human rights.

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1. Purpose

The purpose of this Complaint Management Framework (CMF) is to provide an overview of how complaints are managed within the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (DAF). Complaints can be received from parties internal and external to the Department about a diverse range of matters involving the work of DAF. The CMF aims to encapsulate all the different components of complaint management into this one summary document.

The CMF is best used as a reference guide for how different types of complaints are managed within the Department. The framework has been written for persons who may be wishing to make a complaint, or who are responding to a complaint received, or wishing to gain an overview about how complaints are managed within DAF. Persons wishing to make a complaint or respond to a complaint can refer to the applicable complaint category and read the detailed reference material associated with that type of complaint.

The CMF seeks to simplify and summarise for the reader all the different elements of complaint management within DAF including the fundamental principles underpinning how complaints are to be managed. At its heart, receipt of a complaint provides DAF with an opportunity to reflect on and review its practices with a view to making continuous improvement in its business processes, decision-making, and performance wherever possible and necessary.

2. Scope

Fundamentally, a complaint refers to an expression of dissatisfaction by a person about an act or omission that is said to have either occurred, is occurring, or will occur, that is within the responsibility of DAF to remediate. It is usually, but not always, made by a person who is directly affected by the act or omission. To constitute a complaint, the expression of dissatisfaction is sufficiently severe for an official record to be made. A minor matter that is resolved as part of everyday problem solving is not considered to be a complaint.

The CMF addresses the broad categories of complaints received by the department, describes the relevant authority, policy and / or procedure that relate to each complaint category, and sets out in broad terms fundamental principles for complaint management that DAF seeks to adhere to. The CMF is consistent with the requirements of legislation, industrial instruments, and complies with the Australian/New Zealand Standard AS/NZS 10002:2014 "*Guidelines for Complaint Management in Organizations*". DAF also gives proper consideration to human rights in responding to and making decisions about complaints in accordance with the [Human Rights Act 2019](#).

The CMF does not affect established processes for dealing with alleged breaches of legislation administered by the department where that legislation has specific requirements for complaint management, or there are already established complaint management procedures for that Act's administration.

The CMF does not address complaints about acts or omissions of staff of the Office of the Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries who are not public service employees. Such complaints should be directed to the Ministerial Services section of the Queensland Department of Premier and Cabinet.

3. DAF Operational Model for Complaint Management and Resolution

DAF has adopted a decentralised model for complaint management and resolution with centralised support to business areas from its Corporate Services division. Each DAF business area has one or more persons nominated to act as a complaint management representative (CMR) whose role entails acting as a co-ordination point for complaint management within the business area. The CMR will also act as a liaison point with Corporate Services to support effective complaint management resolution within their business area including supporting initiatives to advance the development of knowledge and expertise in professional complaint management practice.

4. Complaint Categories

There are three broad categories of complaints received and managed by DAF. They are:

1. Customer complaints about DAF products, services, or actions, noting that an employee of the department may also be a customer whose complaint is unrelated to their employment.
2. Employee complaints made by employees of the department about matters affecting their employment.
3. Specialist complaints made by any person about a specific type of matter such as:

- a. corrupt conduct
- b. a public interest disclosure
- c. a breach of human rights
- d. a breach of information privacy
- e. a decision on right to information
- f. a decision involving procurement
- g. a dispute about contract management
- h. a child protection matter

5. Customer Complaint Category

| Customer Complaint | Description of Complainant and Nature of Complaint/Timeframes for Resolution | Relevant Authority/Policy/ Procedure | Key Contacts |
|---|---|---|--|
| Customer complaint about a DAF product, service or actions. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A complaint made by a person who has been directly affected by the Department's products, services, and / or actions. (Refer to section 219A of the Public Service Act 2008) In the case of a complaint by a DAF employee, the customer complaint is unrelated to their DAF employment. • If the complaint amounts to a human rights complaint, DAF has 45 business days to finalise the complaint, after which time, the complainant may forward their complaint to the Queensland Human Rights Commission. | DAF Customer Complaint Policy and Procedure Human Rights Complaints – Guide for Handling Human Rights Complaints Internally Preventing and Responding to Work-Related Violence Policy and Procedure Section 17 of the Public Service Regulation 2018 “Dealing with employee record if detrimental to employee’s interests.” | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managers • Heads of Business units • Frontline Staff |
| A complaint made by a DAF contractor about the alleged conduct of another DAF contractor. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DAF engages a number of contractors who work alongside DAF employees to deliver DAF products and services. Whilst a DAF contractor is not an employee, the contractor may make a complaint about the alleged conduct of another DAF contractor. The complaint is a customer complaint because it is not made by a DAF employee. • If the complaint amounts to a human rights complaint, DAF has 45 business days to finalise the complaint, after which time, the complainant may forward their complaint to the Queensland Human Rights Commission. | DAF Customer Complaint Policy and Procedure Human Rights Complaints – Guide for Handling Human Rights Complaints Internally | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Labour hire company which employs the contractor • Managers • Heads of Business Units • Complaint Management Representative |
| A complaint made by a DAF contractor about the alleged conduct of a DAF employee. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A DAF contractor may make a complaint about the conduct or performance of a DAF employee. The complaint is a customer complaint because it is not made by a DAF employee. • Timeframes for resolution are contained within the DAF Managing Employee Conduct and Performance Policy and Procedure. • If the complaint amounts to a human rights complaint, DAF has 45 business days to | DAF Managing Employee Conduct and Performance Policy and Procedure Human Rights Complaints – Guide for Handling Human Rights Complaints Internally | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Labour hire company which employs the contractor • Managers • Heads of Business Units • Human Resource |

| Customer Complaint | Description of Complainant and Nature of Complaint/Timeframes for Resolution | Relevant Authority/Policy/ Procedure | Key Contacts |
|--------------------|--|--------------------------------------|---|
| | finalise the complaint, after which time, the complainant may forward their complaint to the Queensland Human Rights Commission. | | Network Representative <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manager Governance and Ethics |

6. Employee Complaint Category

| Employee Complaint | Description of Complainant and Nature of Complaint/Timeframes for Resolution | Relevant Authority/Policy/ Procedure | Key Contacts |
|--|---|---|--|
| <p>A complaint by an employee about an administrative decision or omission of another DAF employee that affects the complainant's employment</p> | <p>A complaint made by a DAF employee about an administrative act or omission, or conduct of another DAF employee that has adversely affected their employment. An example of a complaint about an administrative decision would be an employee aggrieved about a decision to not approve their application for recreation leave.</p> <p>TIMEFRAME:</p> <p>Stage 1 – Local Action DAF must make a decision on the complaint within 28 calendar days from receipt unless the timeframe has been extended by mutual agreement between the parties.</p> <p>Stage 2 – Internal Review DAF must make a decision on the complaint within 14 calendar days from receipt unless the timeframe has been extended by mutual agreement between the parties.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the complaint amounts to a human rights complaint, DAF has 45 business days to finalise the complaint. If the complaint is not finalised within this time period, the complainant may forward their complaint to the Queensland Human Rights Commission. | <p>Public Service Commission Directive 02/17 Managing Employee Complaints</p> <p>Employee Complaint Management Policy and Procedure</p> <p>Managing Employee Conduct and Performance Policy and Procedure</p> <p>Workplace Investigations Information Sheet</p> <p>Human Rights Complaints – Guide for Handling Human Rights Complaints Internally</p> <p>Employee Complaint Lodgment Form</p> <p>Section 17 of the Public Service Regulation 2018 “Dealing with employee record if detrimental to employee’s interests.”</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Managers Human Resource Services Director-General or Delegate Heads of Business Units |
| <p>A complaint by an employee about the conduct of another DAF employee that adversely affects the complainant's employment</p> | <p>A complaint made by a DAF employee about the conduct of another DAF employee that has adversely affected their employment. An example of an employee complaint about the conduct of DAF employee would be alleged workplace bullying and harassment.</p> <p>TIMEFRAME:</p> <p>Stage 1—Local Action DAF must make a decision on the complaint within 28 calendar days from receipt unless the timeframe has been extended by mutual agreement between the parties.</p> <p>Stage 2—Internal Review DAF must make a decision on the complaint within 14 calendar days from receipt unless the timeframe has been extended by mutual agreement between the parties.</p> | <p>Workplace Bullying Prevention and Response Policy and Procedure</p> <p>Unlawful Discrimination and Sexual Harassment Policy and Procedure</p> <p>Queensland Public Service Code of Conduct</p> <p>Human Rights Complaints – Guide for Handling Human Rights Complaints Internally</p> <p>Employee Complaint Lodgment Form</p> <p>Section 17 of the Public Service Regulation 2018</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Managers Human Resource Services Director-General or Delegate Heads of Business Units |

| Employee Complaint | Description of Complainant and Nature of Complaint/Timeframes for Resolution | Relevant Authority/Policy/ Procedure | Key Contacts |
|--------------------|---|---|--------------|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the complaint amounts to a human rights complaint, DAF has 45 business days to finalise the complaint. If the complaint is not finalised within this time period, the complainant may forward their complaint to the Queensland Human Rights Commission. | <p>“Dealing with employee record if detrimental to employee’s interests.”</p> | |

7. Specialist Complaint Category

| Corrupt Conduct Complaint | Description of Complainant and Nature of Complaint/Timeframes for Resolution | Relevant Authority/Policy/ Procedure | Key Contacts |
|---|---|--|--|
| <p>A report or complaint made by a member of the public or a DAF employee about alleged corrupt conduct adversely affecting the Department.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A report or complaint made by a person about alleged corrupt conduct as defined in section 15 of the Crime and Corruption Act 2001. | <p>Corrupt Conduct Policy and Procedure</p> <p>Definition of corrupt conduct in section 15 of the Crime and Corruption Act 2001</p> <p>Fraud, Corruption and Misconduct Control Policy</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Managers / Directors Manager Governance and Ethics/Crime and Corruption Commission Liaison Officer Crime and Corruption Commission |
| <p>A report or complaint made by a member of the public or an employee about alleged corrupt conduct of the Department’s Director-General.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A report or complaint made by a person about alleged corrupt conduct as defined in section 15 of the <i>Crime and Corruption Act 2001</i> involving the Director-General of the Department. | <p>Section 48A of the Crime and Corruption Act 2001</p> <p>Complaints about the Director-General Policy</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deputy Director-General Corporate Crime and Corruption Commission Liaison Officer Crime and Corruption Commission |

| Public Interest Disclosure | Description of Complainant and Nature of Complaint/Timeframes for Resolution | Relevant Authority/Policy/ Procedure | Key Contacts |
|---|--|--|--|
| <p>A report or a complaint made by a person about a matter that meets the requirements for the making of a public interest disclosure (PID) under the <i>Public Interest Disclosure Act 2010</i>.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A PID may be made to an appropriate authority by any person about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) A substantial and specific danger to the health or safety of a person with a disability (ii) An offence or the contravention of a condition imposed under Queensland environmental legislation if the matter would be or is a substantial and specific danger to the environment. (iii) The conduct of a person that could, if proved, be a reprisal for making or intending to make a PID. • A PID may be made by a public officer to an appropriate authority about conduct of another person, that could if proved, be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Corrupt conduct (ii) Maladministration that adversely affects a person's interests in a substantial and specific way (iii) Substantial misuse of public resources (other than an alleged misuse based on mere disagreement over policy that may properly be adopted about amounts, purpose or priorities of expenditure). <p>TIMEFRAME: A person may make substantially the same public interest disclosure to a journalist if the Department did not notify the person within 6 months after the disclosure was made, whether or not the disclosure was to be investigated or dealt with.</p> | <p>Public Interest Disclosure Act 2010</p> <p>Public Interest Disclosure Policy and Procedure</p> <p>Human Rights Complaints – Guide for Handling Human Rights Complaints Internally</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PID Coordinator • Manager Governance and Ethics • Managers / Directors • Specialist environmental and biosecurity business areas • Crime and Corruption Commission (for corrupt conduct) • Queensland Ombudsman (for maladministration) |

| Human Rights Complaint | Description of Complainant and Nature of Complaint/Timeframes for Resolution | Relevant Authority/Policy/ Procedure | Key Contacts |
|--|--|--|---|
| <p>A complaint made about an alleged breach of a human right by a DAF officer.</p> <p>Importantly, Human rights complaints are assessed as being of moderate to major severity and on receipt, <u>should be escalated to DAF senior management for their attention.</u></p> | <p>Any person aggrieved about an alleged breach of a human right as prescribed by the <i>Human Rights Act 2019</i>.</p> <p>The Act protects 23 fundamental human rights drawn from international human rights law:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognition and equality before the law • Right to life • Protection from torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment • Freedom from forced work • Freedom of movement • Freedom of thought, conscience, religion and belief • Freedom of expression • Peaceful assembly and freedom of association • Taking part in public life • Property rights • Privacy and reputation • Protection of families and children • Cultural rights – generally • Cultural rights – Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait islander peoples • Right to liberty and security of person • Humane treatment when deprived of liberty • Fair hearing • Rights in criminal proceedings • Children in the criminal process • Right not to be tried or punished more than once • Retrospective criminal laws • Right to education • Right to health services. <p>TIMEFRAME: DAF must respond to the complaint within 45 business days of receipt. If the complaint is not finalised within this time period, the complainant may forward their complaint to the Queensland Human Rights Commission.</p> | <p><u>Human Rights Act 2019</u></p> <p><u>Customer Complaints Policy and Procedure</u></p> <p><u>Employee Complaints Management Policy and Procedure</u></p> <p><u>Human Rights Complaints – Guide for Handling Human Rights Complaints Internally</u></p> <p><u>Human Rights Guide: Planning and Reporting for Human Rights</u></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heads of Business Units • Senior Executives / Managers / Directors • Manager Governance & Ethics, Human Resources • Queensland Human Rights Commission |

| Information Privacy Complaint | Description of Complainant and Nature of Complaint/Timeframes for Resolution | Relevant Authority/Policy/ Procedure | Key Contacts |
|--|--|---|---|
| A complaint made about an alleged breach of information privacy. | A person aggrieved about an alleged breach of one or more Information Privacy Principles. TIMEFRAME: the Department has 45 business days from receipt to investigate and respond. If this timeframe is not met, the complainant may make a complaint to the Office of the Information Commissioner . | Chapter 5 of the Information Privacy Act 2009 DAF Information Privacy Complaint Management Procedure | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heads of Business Units • Privacy Services, in the Department of Environment and Science |

| Right To Information Complaint | Description of Complainant and Nature of Complaint/Timeframes for Resolution | Relevant Authority/Policy/ Procedure | Key Contacts |
|---|---|---|--|
| A request for an internal review of a decision on a Right to Information (RTI) application. | A person aggrieved about a decision to exempt or refuse the release of information sought in an RTI application. TIMEFRAME: A decision on an application for internal review must be processed within 20 business days of receipt, otherwise the original decision is taken to be affirmed. | Chapter 3 of the Right to Information Act 2009 Part 8 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Right to Information Services in the Department of Environment and Science |

| Procurement Complaint | Description of Complainant and Nature of Complaint/Timeframes for Resolution | Relevant Authority/Policy/ Procedure | Key Contacts |
|--|--|--|---|
| A complaint about a procurement process. | A tenderer aggrieved about the integrity, probity, or decision-making of a procurement process. TIMEFRAME: As no timeframe is specified, Departmental responses should occur in a timely manner. | Queensland Procurement Policy 2019 DAF Procurement Policy & Procedure | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Head of Business Units • Procurement Services in the Department of Environment and Science |

| Contract Management Complaint | Description of Complainant and Nature of Complaint/Timeframes for Resolution | Relevant Authority/Policy/ Procedure | Key Contacts |
|---|---|--|--|
| A complaint made about the management of a contract for provision of a product and / or service to DAF. | A contractor aggrieved about the management of a contract between the contractor and DAF for the provision of goods and / or services. TIMEFRAME: As no timeframe is specified, Departmental responses should occur in a timely manner. | Government Contract Management Framework | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Head of Business Units • Procurement Services in the Department of Environment and Science • Legal Unit in the Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy |

| Child Protection Complaint | Description of Complainant and Nature of Complaint/Timeframes for Resolution | Relevant Authority/Policy/ Procedure | Key Contacts |
|--|--|--|--|
| <p>A complaint made by a person about any matter that has caused or could cause harm to a child or young person.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children and young people attend departmental work sites for various educational and training activities. • Young people attend departmental work sites for work experience to achieve a training qualification. • A child is an individual under 18 years of age and includes a young person. • Harm, to a child, is any detrimental effect of a significant nature on the child's physical, psychological or emotional wellbeing. It is immaterial how the harm is caused. • Any person should immediately inform the Queensland Department of Child Safety about any reasonable suspicion about harm or risk of harm to a child. • If the matter involves a possible criminal offence, the matter should also be reported to the Queensland Police Service. | <p><u>Child Protection Act 1999</u> <u>Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000</u> <u>Blue Card Services</u> <u>DAF Managing Employee Conduct and Performance Policy and Procedure</u></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managers where child related activity occurs • Heads of Business units where child related activity occurs • Manager Governance and Ethics |

8. Support for Making a Complaint and Participating in the Complaint Management Process

Any person is able to make a complaint to the Department if they choose to do so. Assistance is available to persons to be able to make a complaint and fully participate in the complaint management process as required. There is no financial charge for making a complaint to DAF.

For example, if a complainant or witness comes from a non-english speaking background, and has limited proficiency in English, DAF will engage the use of an interpreter to enable the complainant to be heard and understood.

If a complainant or witness has a hearing or speech impairment, arrangements will be made for translation services to occur to enable the person to be heard and understood.

If a complainant or witness is unable to make a written complaint, a statement will be taken from the person to ensure their evidence is heard and considered.

DAF complies with the [Queensland Government Language Services Policy](#).

A complainant, respondent, or witness may choose to have a support person present whilst they participate in the complaint process.

An employee who is a respondent to a complaint may access DAF's [Employee Assistance Program](#) (EAP) if counselling is required. Management may initiate an EAP service for an employee where concerns are held about an employee's welfare. The Assigned Officer can provide guidance to the delegate and management about appropriate contact with respondents. A respondent will be provided with the contact details of the Assigned Officer who can answer enquiries about the matter.

9. Complaints Involving Multiple Parties and Multiple DAF Business Areas

If a complaint is received from multiple entities about essentially the same matter, subject to obligations to maintain privacy and confidentiality, arrangements may be made with the consent of the complainants to receive co-ordinated communications, and responses to the complaints.

Where a complaint involves multiple business areas within DAF, one business area will be established as the lead for managing the complaint and will co-ordinate with the other relevant business areas in the preparation and implementation of the Department's response to the complaint.

10. Anonymous Complaints

Persons who wish to make a complaint are encouraged to identify themselves when doing so. If a complainant identifies themselves, the Department is able to make contact with the person to gather further information and advise them of the outcome of their complaint. Whilst it is possible to make an anonymous complaint, including a public interest disclosure, it is not possible to make contact with an anonymous complainant to gather further information or advise them of the outcome of the complaint. Unless the initial information contained in an anonymous complaint is sufficient, the capacity of Department to fully act on the complaint maybe restricted given the inability to return to the complainant to obtain any further clarifying information.

11. Vexatious, Frivolous, and False Complaints

A person must hold an honest belief based on reasonable grounds that the information contained in their complaint is true and correct. It is an offence under various legislation to knowingly make a false or misleading complaint to an authority intending for that authority to act on the complaint. A prosecution under the relevant legislation (or disciplinary action in the case of an employee) may be initiated if there is sufficient evidence to show that a person knowingly made a false or misleading complaint to an authority intending for it to be acted upon. The Department will take no further action in relation to complaints that are assessed or found to be frivolous and / or vexatious where it is apparent there is no substance to the complaint, and notify the complainant accordingly. It is important to note that if a complaint is found to be unsubstantiated, this does not mean the complaint was frivolous and / or vexatious. It may merely mean that there was insufficient evidence available to the required standard of proof to substantiate the complaint.

12. Reprisals

A person who causes or attempts or conspires to cause a detriment to another person because of a belief that a person has made or intends to make a public interest disclosure commits a criminal offence.

For other complaints which are not public interest disclosures, the taking of a reprisal against a person because of them making an honest complaint, will be referred to the police if the reprisal involves a criminal offence, and, in the case of an employee, disciplinary action being taken even if the reprisal is not a criminal offence.

13. Guiding Principles for Effective Complaint Management:

DAF has adopted a people focused and pro-active approach to managing complaints. This includes:

- Respect for human rights - Everyone has a right to lodge an honest complaint and receive a fair hearing.
- Customer focus – Professional complaint handling is a customer service provided by DAF.
- Accessibility and transparency - Information on the complaints process is readily available and accessible to internal and external complainants. Appeal avenues are notified to complainants in DAF decisions.
- Responsiveness and confidentiality - Complaints are resolved promptly at the lowest appropriate level. All employees are empowered to fulfil their relevant role in any part of the process for the receiving, reporting, processing, responding and reporting on complaints and maintaining appropriate confidentiality.
- Objectivity, fairness and natural justice – A complaint is managed in accordance with the policies and procedures assigned to the relevant complaint category. Underpinning all action on complaints is objectivity, fairness, and application of principles of natural justice in decision-making.
- Accountability, continuous improvement, and prevention – Investigators, reviewers, and decision-makers are accountable for their recommendations and decisions in the complaint management process. The complaint process provides an opportunity to determine if further improvements can be made to systems and practices and prevent the need for similar complaints to be made in the future.
- Feedback and reporting – Keeping the parties to the complaint informed of the status of the complaint at the appropriate time and in reasonable intervals. Maintain accurate records to fulfil obligations to report complaint statistics to DAF management and government as required.

14. Summary Overview of the Complaint Process

A complainant should receive a written acknowledgement of their complaint and a reference number for use in future communication on the matter. An initial assessment is made on all complaints received. The assessment may determine what further information is required to clarify the history or background to the complaint, and determine what further action is required in response.

If the complaint is not within the jurisdiction of the department to enable the matter to be addressed, the department will inform the complainant of this, and where applicable, provide advice on where and / or how their matter may be addressed.

A complaint may be referred for investigation, review, mediation, another dispute resolution process, or another agency if there is a requirement to do so, or the agency has been established to manage that type of complaint.

A decision-maker will have delegated authority to make a decision about that type of complaint.

But for an exceptional circumstance, no adverse finding will be made about a person / business entity unless the person / business entity has been provided with an opportunity to be heard in response to the proposed finding.

If a complainant is aggrieved at an initial decision of the Department, the complainant may request an internal review of the decision. This internal review will be conducted by a person who was not involved in the initial decision-making and will be delegated with the authority to make a final decision on the matter on behalf of the Department.

The parties to the complaint will be notified of the outcome of the complaint and avenues for external review / appeal where applicable.

15. Responsibilities of Complainants

Complainants can assist the complaint management process by:

- providing sufficient detail of the complaint including responding to any departmental request for further details;
- retaining objectivity in relation to the matters in dispute as much as possible;
- being clear about the problem giving rise to the complaint and the outcome they are seeking from making the complaint;
- co-operating with the Department's response in a respectful and reasonable way;
- understanding that in being fair to all parties, complex complaints can take time to finalise;
- understanding that abusive, aggressive, or disrespectful conduct will not be tolerated by Departmental responders.

16. Responsibilities of Respondents

Respondents can assist themselves and the complaint management process by:

- respecting the confidentiality of the process
- avoiding interpreting the event personally as much as possible for their own well-being
- accepting that the complaint process forms part of their accountability obligations as a professional public servant
- co-operating with the Department's response to the complaint in a respectful and reasonable way
- remaining accountable for one's acts and omissions and using the experience for any important learnings for the future.

17. DAF Responsibilities for Complaints Management:

The Director-General:

- normalises and prioritises complaint management and resolution as a core part of DAF business
- supports a culture which views complaints as providing a possible opportunity and impetus for continuous improvement in business processes and practice
- approves the CMF for DAF.

Deputy Director-General, Corporate:

- establishes and maintains an effective, efficient and professional CMF.

Deputy Directors-General:

- lead the implementation of the CMF across the operational areas of their business groups
- oversee the governance, accountability, monitoring and evaluation for handling complaints within the business group
- contribute to a DAF consolidated approach to utilising complaints information as a strategic asset that will contribute to driving performance
- use complaint information in program review and service delivery

Corporate Services:

- develop and maintain policies and procedures related to Complaints Management
- assist decision makers in the handling of complaints
- provide Crime and Corruption Commission Liaison services for corrupt conduct notifications
- manage the mandatory reporting requirements.

Manager Governance and Ethics, Corporate Human Resources

- lead and co-ordinate centralised initiatives to develop and maintain professional and effective complaint management practices across the Department including appropriate recording keeping and statistical returns
- support DAF business groups with particular matters as required to support best practice complaint management processes.

Complaint Management Representative(s) for Business Unit(s):

- embed the CMF within their business unit
- maintain responsibility for and report on complaint handling
- manage and support the Assigned Officers in their role and responsibilities
- promote internal networks to enable Assigned Officers to work with and be supported by other employees, as required
- co-ordinate appropriate action, including preventative action, taken to address sources of complaints, adverse issues and trends identified and foster continuous improvement
- act as a coordination point for the business group to ensure all complaints are appropriately managed and recorded
- co-ordinate quarterly reporting and ensure complaint management data is available for review by senior management.

Assigned Officers:

- undertake the necessary actions to fully investigate the complaint including identifying facts, gathering relevant information, consideration of relevant procedures/legislation and prepare a report with findings and recommendations for the delegated officer, as required.
- have the requisite skills / experience or are appropriately trained in complaints management

Employees:

- perform their work duties in accordance with the Code of Conduct to minimise the risk of a complaint being made
- comply with all legislation, directives and policy in relation to complaints
- co-operatively participate in complaint management and resolution processes as required
- make reasonable endeavours to resolve complaints at the local level and record complaints as per local level requirements which meet the business group's CMF arrangements
- assist customers gain access to the DAF complaints policy and procedures
- assist Assigned Officers to understand DAF's business and assist in resolving complaints where required
- respond to systemic issues that arise as a result of data gathered through complaint handling
- escalate observations to management that can improve customer service and business processes.

18. Authority

[Anti-Discrimination Act 1991](#)

[Crime and Corruption Act 2001](#)

[Information Privacy Act 2009](#)

[Judicial Review Act 1991](#)

[Public Interest Disclosure Act 2010](#)

[Public Service Act 2008](#)

[Public Service Regulation 2008](#)

[Right to Information Act 2009](#)

[Human Rights Act 2019](#)

The CMF applies to all the department's products and services and all persons bound by the whole of government [Code of Conduct](#) and DAF [Applying the Code of Conduct Supplement](#).

19. Delegations

Delegations are to be exercised in accordance with the relevant Financial and Human Resources Delegations and Authorisations procedures for [DAF](#).

20. Records

Documentation received and created is to be stored in a secure manner and disposed of in accordance with Queensland State Archives [Disposal Schedule](#). All personal information is to be managed in accordance with the requirements of the [Information Privacy Act 2009](#).

21. Definitions and glossary of terms

The words and meanings defined below are for the purpose of this Framework and its related policies and Procedures only.

| | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Assigned officer | An employees who has been assigned the responsibility to investigate and / or lead the response to a complaint. |
| Complaint | An expression of dissatisfaction about the service or actions of the department or its employees as classified in the Complaints Classification Framework. |
| Complaint Management Representative | An employee who has undertaken complaint management training or has experience in customer complaint management who has been tasked by a business area to promote and co-ordinate professional complaint management practices within that business area. |
| Complainant | The person who makes the complaint. It includes employees, contractors, stakeholders, customers, or member of the public. |
| Confidentiality | An imposed condition designed to protect information that can only be disclosed to persons with a need to know. |
| Corrupt conduct | The meaning given under ss14 and 15 of the Crime and Corruption Act 2001 |
| Customer Complaint | A complaint, usually made by an external party that relates to the services or actions of the department by its employees. For example it would include a complaint by a member of the public that they were charged the wrong amount for a permit and the officer gave them the wrong conditions on the permit. |
| DAF Complaints Management Framework | The DAF Framework provides the relevant policy, procedures, personnel and technology used by the department in receiving, recording, responding to and reporting about complaints. |
| Employee | A public service employee as defined in section 9 of the Public Service Act 2008 . |
| Employee Complaint | A complaint made by an employee as defined in the DAF Employee Complaints Management Policy and Procedure . |
| Corporate Services | Representatives for Human Resources, WH&S, Risk and Governance to assist Complaint Assessors, decision makers and support employees to deal with Employee Complaints and coordinates reporting on Employee Complaints to management and CCC. |
| Crime and Corruption Commission | As established by the Crime and Corruption Act 2001 . |
| Personal Information | The meaning in section 12 of the Information Privacy Act 2009 |
| Public Interest Disclosure (PID) | The meaning given under section 11 of the Public Interest Disclosure Act 2010 . |
| Respondent | The person who is the subject of a Complaint |
| Specialist Complaints | Complaints that have a special process for resolution, usually set by legislation or government policy. For example, complaints concerning privacy, workplace health and safety, procurement and complaints raising legal issues. Specialist complaints do not include customer complaints about an employee's work performance. |
| Witness | A witness to a complaint is a person who has evidence potentially relevant to the matters under consideration arising from the complaint. |

22. References

- [Ombudsman Act 2001](#)
- [Public Service Regulation 2008](#)
- [Human Rights Act 2019](#)
- [Judicial Review Act 1991](#)
- [Information Privacy Act 2009](#)
- [Public Interest Disclosure Act 2010](#)
- [Public Service Act 2008](#)

- [Crime and Corruption Act 2001](#)
- [Anti-Discrimination Act 1991](#)
- [Qld Ombudsman website](#) – complaints management
- [Code of Conduct for the Queensland Public Service](#)
- [Applying the Code of Conduct Supplement](#)
- [Employee Complaints Management Policy and Procedure](#)
- [Customer Complaints Policy and Procedure](#)

23. Further Information

Materials and information for employees and managers are available on the [DAF](#) intranet. Information for customers is available on the [DAF website](#).

Approval

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| <p>Signed:</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Sinead McCarthy Deputy Director-General Corporate, Department of Agriculture and Fisheries</p> <p>Date: 24 December 2019</p> |
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24. Version history

| Date | Version | Action | Description / comments |
|------------|---------|---|--|
| 30/1/2014 | 1.00 | Endorsed by A/DDG Corporate Services | New Policy |
| 1/5/2016 | 1.01 | Updated | Updated policy to reflect changes to the CCC, minor edits to point of service, service delivery complaints, and corrected broken links and template |
| 13/9/18 | 1.02 | Updated | Updated policy to reflect changes to remove DTESB, minor changes to 3 categories of complaints, alphabetical reordering of definitions/glossary of terms, and timeframe to request internal review. |
| 24/12/19 | 2.0 | Approved Framework. Reviewed, changed name and updated consistent with <i>Human Rights Act 2019</i> | Change name from Complaints Management Policy to Complaints Management Framework (CMF), create CMF, and update information regarding policies and procedures taking account of human rights pursuant to the <i>Human Rights Act 2019</i> . |
| 10/03/2022 | 2.01 | Update | Updated the Human Rights banner wording. |