

GISA Complaint Policy

Policy statement

The Department of the Premier and Cabinet (PC) Circular 039 “Complaint Management in the South Australian Public Sector” requires all South Australian public sector agencies to establish and maintain an effective complaint management system that conforms to the principles in the Australian/New Zealand Standard: Guidelines for Complaint Management in Organizations (AS/NZS10002:2022).

GISA is transparent and accountable in its operations and committed to seeking and receiving feedback and complaints about our people and services.

This policy will ensure that Green Industries SA (GISA) handles complaints fairly, efficiently and effectively, and provides guidance to GISA staff on the key principles and concepts of the Agency’s complaint management process.

Scope

This policy applies to all staff, board members and contractors receiving or managing complaints from the public made to or about GISA, regarding its services, staff and complaint handling.

This procedure does not apply to staff grievances, public interest disclosures or misconduct matters that should be referred to the [Independent Commission Against Corruption \(ICAC\)](#), [Office for Public Integrity](#) or [Ombudsman SA](#). See Appendix 1 for more information on complaints out of scope.

Policy

Complaints and feedback can be received direct to GISA staff or via:

- the [whole of Government online complaints and feedback form](#)
- email, at greenindustries@sa.gov.au
- telephone, on 08 8204 2051 during office hours
- mail, at GPO Box 1047, Adelaide SA 5001.

Any person or organisation may represent a person wishing to make a complaint with their consent (e.g. family member, legal or community representative, Member of Parliament or another organisation), however, proof of consent may be requested.

Complaints may be made anonymously. However, anonymous complaints are more difficult to assess and investigate because there is no option to follow up if further information is required, nor will GISA be able to advise the outcome of the complaint.

GISA’s preferred response to complaints is resolution at first point of contact wherever possible however, in the event this is not achieved, GISA will address the complaint using the following principles:

Initial assessment

After receiving a complaint or feedback, staff will confirm with the customer whether the issues raised are within their area's responsibility. If not, employees will advise the person making the complaint and provide specific assistance to forward the complaint to the correct area.

Receipt of complaints

Staff managing complaints will record the complaint or feedback and any supporting information in the Complaints Register.

At a minimum, the complaint record will include:

- the complainants' details (noting some complaints are made anonymously)
- proof of consent for a third party to represent a person wishing to make a complaint (if required)
- the date of the contact (to establish response timeframes)
- the nature of the contact (adding keywords 'complaint', 'suggestion' or 'enquiry')
- the action sought by the customer (if a complaint)
- the outcome and decision of the complaint (once the investigation is completed), and
- any other information required to properly respond to the matter.

Acknowledgement of complaints

GISA will acknowledge receipt of complaints or feedback within 5 working days.

Staff will use the customer's preferred communication method to acknowledge the complaint and to keep in contact. Regular and responsive communication will be used to reduce complaint escalation.

Investigating complaints

GISA will address each complaint with integrity and in an equitable, objective and unbiased manner.

GISA may:

- give the person making the complaint information or an explanation
- gather information from the person making the complaint or area that the complaint relates to
- investigate the claims made in the complaint.

Our investigations will be outcome focused. If there are any delays, GISA will keep the person making the complaint up-to-date with progress. Investigation records will be complete and informative.

GISA aims to address and resolve complaints or feedback within 20 working days. Where a complaint is not resolved within 20 working days or a longer period as notified and/or agreed with the person making the complaint, the complainant can request for the issue to be escalated for review, either directly through the staff member handling the matter, or by contacting GISA through the avenues listed above.

Providing reasons for decisions

Following consideration of the issues raised, GISA will contact the person making the complaint and advise them of:

- the outcome of the complaint and any action taken
- the reasons for the decision
- the remedy or resolutions that has been proposed or put in place
- any options for review that may be available to the person making the complaint, such as an internal review, external review or appeal.

The form and method of communication will depend on the circumstances of the individual case.

Closing the complaint

GISA will keep complete records about:

- how the complaint was managed
- the outcome of the complaint (including whether it or any aspect of it was substantiated), any recommendations made to address problems identified and any decisions made on those recommendations
- any outstanding actions that need to be followed up.

At the end of the investigation, GISA will review the cause of the complaint. GISA will ensure our records include a complaint category to assist us track trends and flag opportunities for service improvement. GISA will ensure that complaint outcomes are properly implemented, monitored and reported to senior management.

Complaints review

GISA will inform people who make complaints about the internal and external review options available to them, including to the SA Ombudsman at www.ombudsman.sa.gov.au.

Reporting

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GISA will comply with the mandatory reporting of complaints under PC 013 – Annual Reporting Requirements.

GISA's complaints register will be reviewed every six months and a report on any trends identified to the Chief Executive.

All complaints relating to Chief Executive and/or Board Members will be reported to the Chair of the Board of GISA.

Complaint Policy Review Schedule

In line with [PC039 Complaint Management in the South Australian Public Sector](#), GISA will assess and monitor the performance of the complaint policy and procedure annually to identify trends, measure customer service quality and make service improvements.

Managing unreasonable conduct by people making complaints

Whilst GISA is committed to being accessible and responsive to all people who approach us with feedback or complaints, when people behave unreasonably in their dealings this can significantly affect the progress in resolving the complaint and adversely impact on staff well-being.

As a result, GISA will take proactive and decisive action to manage any conduct that negatively and unreasonably affects the agency and its staff.

GISA is also aware of the public's legal right to access information under the [Freedom of Information Act 1991](#) (FOI Act). Any restrictions imposed on a complainant under this policy will not interfere with these statutory rights but inappropriate customer behaviour may contribute to a request being denied under s18 (2a) of the FOI Act.

Managing Frivolous, Malicious, Trivial or Vexatious Complaints

When determining whether a complaint is malicious, frivolous, vexatious or unreasonable, the following factors must be considered:

- any previous complaints made by the complainant (i.e. on the same subject);
- the complainant's reaction and outcome to earlier complaints (if any)
- if the complaint has merit and/or may be proved on the basis of the information presented;
- the complainants desired goals; and
- the resources required to address complainants' issue (to ensure that no public resources are being unjustifiably diverted)

If the Chief Executive deems that a complaint is malicious, frivolous, trivial or vexatious the complainant is notified that no further action will be taken.

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Responsibilities

GISA expects staff at all levels to be committed to fair, effective and efficient complaint handling. The following table outlines the nature of the commitment expected from staff and the way that commitment should be implemented.

Position	Responsibility
Chief Executive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report publicly on GISA’s complaint handling. • Provide adequate training, support and direction to key staff responsible for handling complaints. • Regularly review reports about complaint trends and issues arising from complaints. • Encourage all staff to be alert to complaints and assist those responsible for handling complaints to resolve them promptly. • Encourage staff to make recommendations for system improvements. • Recognise and acknowledge good complaint handling by staff. • Consider recommendations for service, staff and complaint handling improvements arising from analysis of complaint data. • Ensure appropriate resources are allocated for effective complaint management.
Directors/ Associate Directors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide regular reports to the Chief Executive on issues arising from complaint handling work. • Ensure recommendations arising out of complaint data analysis are canvassed with Chief Executive and implemented where appropriate. • Train and empower staff to resolve complaints promptly and in accordance with GISA’s policies and procedures. • Encourage staff managing complaints to provide suggestions on ways to improve GISA’s complaint management process. • Encourage all staff to be alert to complaints and assist those responsible for handling complaints to resolve them promptly. • Recognise and reward good complaint handling by staff. • Implement changes arising from individual complaints and from the analysis and evaluation of complaint data as directed by management. • Address complaints that are escalated by the complainant
All staff and contractors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treat all people with respect, including people who make complaints. • Be aware of GISA’s complaint handling policies and procedures

	<p>including requirements for confidentiality and privacy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assist people who wish to make complaints access the GISA complaints process.• Be alert to complaints and assist staff handling complaints to resolve matters promptly.• Provide feedback to their Director/Associate Director on issues arising from complaints.• Provide suggestions to management on ways to improve the GISA's complaints management system.• Implement changes arising from individual complaints and from the analysis and evaluation of complaint data as directed by management.
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Definitions

Complaint - expression of dissatisfaction made to or about GISA, our services or staff where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected or legally required.

Dispute - an unresolved complaint escalated either within or outside of GISA.

Feedback - opinions, comments and expressions of interest or concern, made directly or indirectly, explicitly or implicitly, to or about GISA's services or complaint handling where a response is not explicitly or implicitly expected or legally required.

Frivolous Complaint - a request or expression of interest / concern that lacks substance, merit or is trivial in nature.

Grievance - a clear, formal written statement by an individual staff member about another staff member or a work-related problem.

Malicious Complaint - is a complaint made with improper, vicious, or mischievous purposes.

Public interest information - a report about wrong doing made by a public official in South Australia that meets the requirements of the Public Interest Disclosure Act 2013 (PID Act).

Trivial Complaint - a complaint of little or no importance, where it is unreasonable to dedicate resources to investigate the matter.


Vexatious Complaint - a complaint or request made to harass, annoy, delay or cause trouble to GISA or a third party. A complaint may be considered vexatious if it contains false allegation, lacks reasonable grounds, the complainant does not have sufficient interest in the subject matter, and/or the matter has been investigated previously and no further information or evidence has been provided to warrant further consideration/action.

Associated Documents and References

- Australian/New Zealand Standard: Guidelines for Complaints Management in Organisations (AS/NZS 10002:2014)
- GISA Complaint Procedure
- [Independent Commissioner Against Corruption \(ICAC\) Public Interest Disclosure Act 2018](#)
- [Premier and Cabinet Circular PC012 – Information Privacy Principles](#)
- [Premier and Cabinet Circular PC013 – Annual Reporting Requirements](#)
- [Premier and Cabinet Circular PC039 – Complaint Management in the South Australian Public Sector](#)
- [SA Ombudsman’s Complaints Management Framework](#)
- [State Records Act \(1997\)](#)

Contact

Governance and Business Team - greenindustries@sa.gov.au or 08 8204 2051 during office hours or

Approver name	Josh Wheeler	Signed	
Approver title	Chief Executive		
Version	February 2025	Date Approved	21 February 2025
Responsible Unit	Governance and Business	Date of next review	February 2029