

Australian Standard[®]

Complaints handling

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The following interests are represented on Committee OB/9:

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Australian Consumers Association
Australian Council of Allied Health Professions
Australian Federation of Consumer Organizations
Department of Consumer Affairs, N.S.W.
Insurance Council of Australia
Law Consumers Association
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PREFACE

This Standard was prepared by the Standards Australia Committee on Complaints Handling, in response to the call from professional and other organizations for assistance in what is now accepted as an essential component of quality management. It is also regarded as one of the components of competitiveness in domestic and international markets.

The objectives of this Standard include the provision of a complaints handling process for those making and receiving complaints and to serve as a reference document on current best practices for handling complaints. The Standard is subject to any statutory or other legal obligations imposed on organizations.

Use of the principles embodied in the Standard will assist organizations to identify deficiencies in any current complaint handling procedures and therefore opportunities for improvement.

An expected outcome for sole traders, small business and other organizations which implement complaints handling processes in accordance with the Standard would be continuous improvement in consumer satisfaction, both with complaints handling and with products and services. This in turn will have benefits for organizations and the communities they serve and also demonstrate to governments the capacity of business and the professions to deal with complaints using a self-regulatory approach.

The essential elements of an effective complaints handling process are contained in Section 2 of the Standard. Sections 3, 4 and 5 are guidelines dealing with the implementation of the process, the actual complaint handling and disputes.

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