



Murray Irrigation



Complaint Handling Procedure

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Document Revision Summary

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1 Purpose

The Complaints Handling Policy and accompanying Procedure is intended to ensure that Murray Irrigation handle complaints fairly, efficiently, and effectively.

The complaint management system is intended to:

- enable us to respond to issues raised by people making complaints in a timely and cost-effective way,
- boost public confidence in our administrative process, and
- provide information that can be used by us to deliver quality improvements in our products, services, staff, and complaint handling.

This procedure provides guidance to staff and people who wish to make a complaint on the key principles and concepts of our complaint management system.

2 Supporting Policies and documents

This procedure is compliant with and supported by the following documents:

- Murray Irrigation Complaint Handling Policy
- Murray Irrigation Work Health and Safety Policy
- Murray Irrigation Zero Tolerance Policy and Procedure.
- Murray Irrigation Managing Unreasonable Complainant Conduct Procedure.
- Murray Irrigation Customer Service Charter
- Murray Irrigation Customer Service Framework
- Murray Irrigation Quality Framework

3 Scope

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

Staff grievances, code of conduct complaints and public interest disclosures are dealt with through separate mechanisms.

4 Organisational commitment

Murray Irrigation 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.

5 Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Chief Executive Officer	Promote a culture that values complaints and their effective resolution. Report publicly on Murray Irrigation's complaint handling. Ensure adequate resources are provided for the complaint handling system compliance and reporting. Review Level 2 disputes as identified in this procedure.
General Managers	Ensure the implementation, review, and compliance reporting on the Complaint Handling Procedure within their area of control. Provide regular reports to the Chief Executive Officer on issues arising from complaint handling work. Regularly review reports about complaint trends and issues arising from complaints. Review Level 1 disputes as identified in this procedure.
Managers	Actively ensure employees in their teams are implementing the Complaint Handling system. Regularly review reports about complaint trends and issues arising from complaints. Ensure recommendations arising out of complaint data analysis are canvassed with Senior Management and implemented where appropriate. Train and empower staff to resolve complaints promptly and in

	accordance with this procedure. Encourage staff managing complaints to provide suggestions on ways to improve the organisation's complaint management system. 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.
All staff	Day to day implementation of Murray Irrigation's complaint handling policies and procedures. Treat all people with respect, including people who make complaints. Assist people who wish to make complaints access Murray Irrigation's complaints process. Be alert to complaints and assist staff handling complaints resolve matters promptly. Provide feedback to management on issues arising from complaints. Implement changes arising from individual complaints and from the analysis and evaluation of complaint data as directed by management.

6 Definitions

Term	Definition
Complaint	Expression of dissatisfaction made to or about us, our products, services, staff, or the handling of a complaint, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected or legally required. A complaint covered by this Procedure can be distinguished from: - staff grievances [see our Grievance Policy] - code of conduct breaches [see our Code of Conduct] - responses to requests for feedback about the standard of our service

	provision [see the definition of ‘feedback’ below] - reports of problems or wrongdoing merely intended to bring a problem to our notice with no expectation of a response [see definition of ‘feedback’] - service requests [see definition of ‘service request’ below], - reports under Murray Irrigation’s Whistleblower Policy and Procedure
Complaint Management System	All policies, procedures, practices, staff, hardware and software used by Murray Irrigation in the management of complaints.
Feedback	Opinions, comments and expressions of interest or concern, made directly or indirectly, explicitly or implicitly, to or about us, about our products, services or complaint handling where a response is not explicitly or implicitly expected or legally required.
Service Request	A request for the provision of services and/or assistance including: - requests that require action to be taken and/or approvals to be sought - routine enquiries about the organisations business
Grievance	A clear, formal written statement by an individual staff member about another staff member or a work-related problem.
Dispute	When a complainant is not satisfied with the outcome/resolution of their complaint they are in dispute and the matter is escalated either within or outside of Murray Irrigation.
Policy	A statement of instruction that sets out how we should fulfill our vision, mission and goals.
Procedure	A statement or instruction that sets out how our policies will be implemented and by whom.

7 Guiding principles



7.1 Facilitating complaints

Murray Irrigation is committed to seeking and receiving feedback and complaints about our services, systems, practices, procedures, products, and complaint handling.

People making complaints will be:

- provided with information about our complaint handling process,
- provided with multiple and accessible ways to make complaints,
- listened to and treated with respect by staff,
- advised of the specific process and expected timeframe to be followed for their case and kept informed at each step of the process.
- provided with reasons for our decision/s and any options for redress or review.

7.1.1 No detriment to people making complaints

Murray Irrigation will take all reasonable steps to ensure that people making complaints are not adversely affected because a complaint has been made by them or on their behalf.

7.1.2 Anonymous complaints

Murray Irrigation accepts anonymous complaints and will carry out an investigation of the issues raised where there is enough information provided.

7.1.3 Accessibility

Murray Irrigation will ensure that information about how and where complaints may be made to or about us is well publicised. Murray Irrigation will ensure that our systems to manage complaints are easily understood and accessible to everyone, particularly people who may require assistance.

If a person prefers or needs another person or organisation to assist or represent them in the making and/ or resolution of their complaint, Murray Irrigation will communicate with them through their representative if this is their wish. Anyone may represent a person wishing to make a complaint with their consent (e.g. advocate, family member, legal or community representative, member of Parliament, another organisation).

7.2 Responding to complaints

7.2.1 Early resolution

Where possible, complaints will be resolved at the first point of contact with Murray Irrigation.

7.2.2 Responsiveness

Murray Irrigation will promptly acknowledge receipt of complaints in line with service levels as described within the Customer Charter

Murray Irrigation will assess and prioritise complaints in accordance with the urgency, risks and/or seriousness of the issues raised. If a matter concerns an immediate risk to safety or security the response will be immediate and will be escalated appropriately in accordance with our Safety Management System.

Murray Irrigation is committed to managing people's expectations, and will inform them within two business days of receiving a complaint, of the following:

- the complaints process,
- the expected time frames for our actions,
- the progress of the complaint and reasons for any delay
- their likely involvement in the process, and
- the possible or likely outcome of their complaint.

Murray Irrigation will advise people as soon as possible when we are unable to deal with any part of their complaint and provide advice about where such issues and/or complaints may be directed (if known and appropriate).

Murray Irrigation will also advise people as soon as possible when we are unable to meet our time frames for responding to their complaint and the reason for our delay.

7.2.3 Objectivity and fairness

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

Murray Irrigation will ensure that the person handling a complaint is different from any staff member or team whose conduct or service is being complained about.

Conflicts of interests, whether actual or perceived, will be managed responsibly. In particular, internal reviews of how a complaint was managed will be conducted by a person other than the original decision maker.

7.2.4 Responding flexibly

Murray Irrigation staff are empowered to resolve complaints promptly and with as little formality as possible. Murray Irrigation will adopt flexible approaches to service delivery and problem solving to enhance accessibility for people making complaints and/or their representatives.

We will assess each complaint on its merits and involve people making complaints and/or their representative in the process as far as possible.

7.2.5 Confidentiality

Murray Irrigation will protect the identity of people making complaints where this is practical and appropriate.

Personal information that identifies individuals will only be disclosed or used by Murray Irrigation as permitted under the relevant privacy laws, secrecy provisions and any relevant confidentiality obligations.

7.3 Managing the parties to a complaint

7.3.1 Complaints involving multiple agencies

Where a complaint involves multiple organisations, Murray Irrigation will work with the other organisation/s where possible, to ensure that communication with the person making a complaint and/or their representative is clear and coordinated.

Subject to privacy and confidentiality considerations, communication and information sharing between the parties will also be organised to facilitate a timely response to the complaint.

Where a complaint involves multiple areas within our organisation, responsibility for communicating with the person making the complaint and/or their representative will also be coordinated.

Where our services are contracted out, Murray Irrigation expect contracted service providers to have an accessible and comprehensive complaint management system.

Murray Irrigation accepts complaints not only about the actions of staff, but also about the actions of service providers acting on our behalf.

7.3.2 Complaints involving multiple parties

When similar complaints are made by related parties Murray Irrigation will, by agreement, try to arrange to communicate with a single representative of the group.

7.3.3 Empowerment of staff

All staff managing complaints are empowered to implement our complaint management system as relevant to their role and responsibilities.

Staff are encouraged to provide feedback on the effectiveness and efficiency of all aspects of our complaint management system.

7.3.4 Managing unreasonable conduct by people making complaints

Murray Irrigation is committed to being accessible and responsive to all people who approach us with feedback or complaints. At the same time our success depends on:

- the health, safety, and security of our staff, and
- our ability to do our work and perform our functions in the most effective and efficient way possible, and
- our ability to allocate our resources fairly across all the complaints we receive.

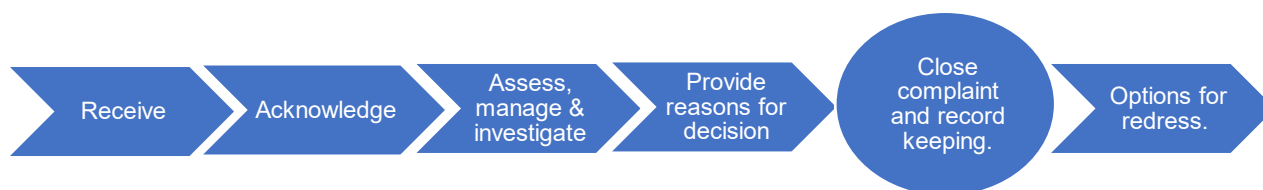
When people behave unreasonably in their dealings with us, their conduct can significantly affect the progress and efficiency of our work. As a result, Murray Irrigation will take proactive and decisive action to manage any conduct that negatively and unreasonably affects us and will support our staff to do the same in accordance with Murray Irrigation's Managing Unreasonable Complainant Conduct Procedure.

8 Complaint management system

When responding to complaints, staff should act in accordance with this Complaint Handling Procedure as well as any other internal documents providing guidance on the management of complaints.

Staff should also consider any relevant legislation and/or regulations when responding to complaints and feedback. For example Water Management Act and Environmental Protection Licence.

The six key stages in our complaint management system are set out below.



8.1 Receipt of complaints

Murray Irrigation will record all complaints and any supporting information in our Customer Relationship Management System (CIRAS). Murray Irrigation will also assign a unique identifier to the complaint file.

The record of the complaint will document:

- the contact information of the person making a complaint,
- issues raised by the person making a complaint and the outcome/s they want,
- any other relevant information and
- any additional support the person making a complaint requires.

8.2 Acknowledgement of complaints

Murray Irrigation will acknowledge receipt of each complaint promptly, and preferably within 2 business days as described in the Customer Charter.

Consideration will be given to the most appropriate medium (e.g. email, letter) for communicating with the person making a complaint.

8.3 Assessment, management and investigation of complaints

8.3.1 Initial assessment

After acknowledging receipt of the complaint, Murray Irrigation will confirm whether the issue/s raised in the complaint are within our control.

Murray Irrigation will also consider the outcome/s sought by the person making a complaint and, where there is more than one issue raised, determine whether each issue needs to be separately addressed.

When determining how a complaint will be managed, Murray Irrigation will consider:

- How serious, complicated, or urgent the complaint is,
- Whether the complaint raises concerns about people's health and safety,
- How the person making the complaint is being affected,
- The risks involved if resolution of the complaint is delayed, and
- Whether a resolution requires the involvement of other organisations.

8.3.2 Management and investigation of complaints

After assessing the complaint, Murray Irrigation will consider how to manage it. All complaints will be assessed against policy, legislation, and service level.

To manage a complaint, we may:

- Give the person making a complaint information or an explanation,
- Gather information from the product, person, or area that the complaint is about, or
- Investigate the claims made in the complaint.

Murray Irrigation will keep the person making the complaint up to date on our progress, particularly if there are any delays.

Murray Irrigation will also communicate the outcome of the complaint using the most appropriate medium. Which actions we decide to take will be tailored to each case and consider any statutory requirements.

8.4 Providing reasons for decisions

Following consideration of the complaint and any investigation into the issues raised, Murray Irrigation will contact the person making the complaint and advise them:

- the outcome of the complaint and any action Murray Irrigation took,
- the reason/s for our decision
- the remedy or resolution/s that Murray Irrigation have proposed or put in place, and
- any options for review that may be available to the complainant, such as an internal review, external review or appeal.

If in the course of investigation, Murray Irrigation make any adverse findings about a particular individual, Murray Irrigation 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 person making the complaint.

8.5 Closing the complaint and record keeping

Murray Irrigation will keep comprehensive records about:

- How we managed the complaint,
- The outcome/s 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, and
- Any outstanding actions that need to be followed up.

Murray Irrigation will ensure that outcomes are properly implemented, monitored, and reported to senior management.

8.6 Options for redress

8.6.1 Dissatisfaction with complaint resolution

If the complainant is unhappy with the resolution of their complaint, they are described as being in dispute with the decision, and can request that it be escalated for review, or Murray Irrigation will support the complainant to refer it to an external agency.

Dissatisfaction with a complaint at the levels described below will be escalated as shown:

- Level 1 – Operational Manager responsible for the area of complaint
- Level 2 – General Manager or Senior Manager responsible for the area of the complaint
- Level 3 – CEO / Board Chairperson

➤ Level 4 – External service

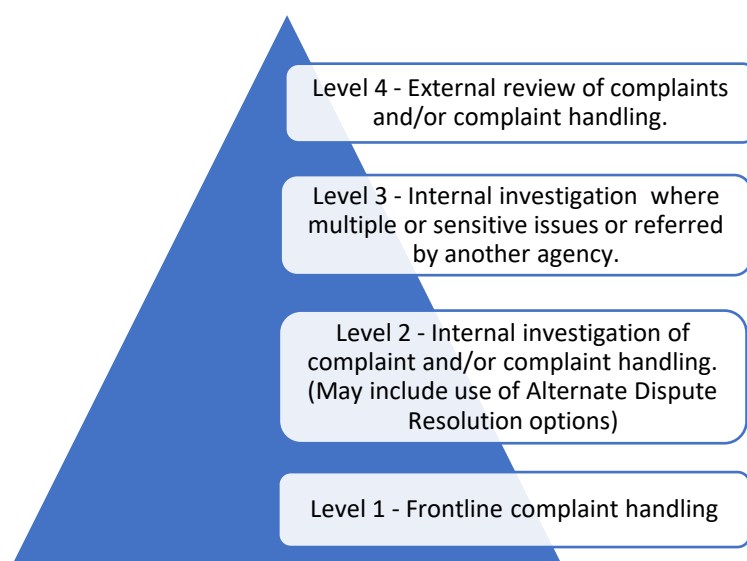
A dispute is resolved if Murray Irrigation has informed the complainant of the outcome of the review, and the complainant has not within ten (10) business days:

- sought a further review of the complaint at the next level; or
- lodged a claim to an external agency.

9 Alternative avenues for dealing with complaints

Murray Irrigation will inform people who make complaints to or about us about any internal or external review options available to them. From 1 July 2026 this includes the Energy & Water Ombudsman NSW (EWON).

10 Complaint type and resolution timeframes



Type	Description	Target resolution timeframe	Responsibility
Level 1	Single issues that are straight forward and simple to resolve. Managed by the person receiving the complaint in line with Murray Irrigation's Customer Service Framework.	7 days	Operations
Level 2	Complex issues where investigation may be required. Managed through Murray Irrigation's Quality Framework.	14 days	Operations
Level 3	Multiple issues of a serious or sensitive issues including complaints referred by another agency, where intensive investigation is needed. Managed by the CEO and reported immediately to the Board.	28 days	CEO / Board
Level 4	Where an external review has been requested or allegations of serious misconduct or unlawful behaviour or required to be reported or referred to an authorised agency. Managed by the CEO and reported immediately to the Board.	28 days	CEO / Board

11 Reporting and improvement

11.1 Analysis and evaluation of complaints

Murray Irrigation will ensure that complaints are recorded in a systematic way so that information can be easily retrieved for reporting and analysis.

Regular reports will be run on:

- the number of complaints received,
- the outcome of complaints, including matters resolved at the frontline,

- issues arising from complaints,
- systemic issues identified, and
- the number of requests (disputes) Murray Irrigation receive for internal and/or external review of our complaint handling.

Regular analysis of these reports will be undertaken to monitor trends, measure the quality of our customer service and make improvements.

Both reports and their analysis will be provided to Murray Irrigation's CEO and senior management for review.

11.2 Monitoring of the complaint management system

Murray Irrigation will continually monitor our complaint management system to:

- ensure its effectiveness in responding to and resolving complaints, and
- identify and correct deficiencies in the operation of the system.
- Monitoring may include the use of audits, complaint satisfaction surveys and online listening tools and alerts.

11.3 Continuous improvement

Murray Irrigation are committed to improving the effectiveness and efficiency of our complaint management system. To this end, we will:

- support the making and appropriate resolution of complaints,
- implement best practices in complaint handling,
- recognise and reward exemplary complaint handling by staff,
- regularly review the complaints management system and complaint data, and
- implement appropriate system changes arising out of our analysis of complaints data and continual monitoring of the system.