

Essential Energy Complaints and Dispute Resolution Procedure

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to:

- > **ASSIST** employees to handle complaints in a consistent manner
- > **RECOGNISE**, promote and protect consumers' rights, including the right to comment and complain
- > **INCREASE** the level of consumer satisfaction through excellent customer service and improving Essential Energy's relationship with its customers
- > **ENSURE** complaints are handled in accordance with Australian Standard *ISO10002-2006 Customer Satisfaction - Guidelines for complaints handling* in organisations
- > **ENSURE** that complaints are recorded to meet legislative requirements
- > **PROVIDE** an efficient, fair and accessible means for resolving customer complaints
- > **SHOW** our customers that they can depend on us
- > **COMMITMENT** to continual improvement of complaints handling within the business, including being responsive to feedback from customers about the complaints handling procedure and periodically reviewing the procedure.

The Essential Energy complaints management procedures are on the Essential Energy website in summary form. The procedure can also be provided to customers upon request.

If a customer wishes to lodge a complaint, they can do so free of charge by phone, letter, email or via the website. Personally identifiable information concerning complainants will only be used for the purposes of addressing the complaint. Personal information will be used and disclosed in accordance with Essential Energy's Privacy Policy, available on the website.

2. HOW CAN A COMPLAINT BE MADE?

By telephone

You may telephone Essential Energy on **13 23 91**, or if the complaint relates to a current electricity supply issue telephone 13 20 80.

If your complaint cannot be resolved during the initial phone contact, your complaint will be transferred to the appropriate person or escalated via our Contact Management System.

If your initial contact was made via your retailer, your retailer will notify us of that complaint.

In writing or via Essential Energy's online make a complaint form

You may contact us in writing to notify us of any complaint in the first instance, or to request a review of a complaint where you are unsatisfied with the resolution of a complaint made by telephone.

Our contact address for written complaints is:

Essential Energy
Customer Advocacy
PO Box 5730
Port Macquarie NSW 2444

Alternatively, written complaints can be made via Essential Energy's website 'contact us' option.

Special arrangements will also be made available to complainants with specific needs.

Interpreter services can be accessed by phoning Translating and Interpreting Services (TIS) on 13 14 50.

3. RECEIPT OF COMPLAINT

Upon receipt of a complaint, Essential Energy employees will, where possible, resolve the complaint at the first point of contact.

If the matter cannot be resolved during initial contact it will be immediately recorded along with any supporting information and requested actions into Essential Energy's corporate Contact Management System.

This system ensures that the matter is allocated to the most appropriate responsible officer and allows the resolution progress to be monitored through to completion.

The responsible officer will ensure:

- > Prompt attention to the concern
- > Escalation if appropriate
- > Investigate and address concerns to ensure the customer receives the standards of service entitled under legislation and the applicable contract
- > Ensure on-going communication with the complainant until the matter is resolved.

4. RESPONSE STANDARDS

All complaints received will be acknowledged as soon as practicable, after receipt. Where a complaint is received via telephone it should be considered as having been acknowledged immediately.

Essential Energy employees will endeavour to provide a meaningful response within four (4) business days from receipt.

For complaints that are of a complex nature and require extensive investigation, or where a response cannot be provided within four (4) business days, Essential Energy employees will keep the complainant informed of progress and agree on a mutually acceptable extension of time.

Responses will be provided in the same manner as received, unless the complainant has indicated that a different means is required.

5. ESCALATION

If a customer is dissatisfied with the complaint resolution offered by Essential Energy, the matter will be reviewed by the Manager Customer Advocacy. If the customer remains dissatisfied, the complainant will be provided with the details of the appropriate Industry Ombudsman, depending on their location.

The Ombudsman provides a free, fair and independent dispute resolution service if you are unable to resolve a complaint with your electricity, gas or water supplier. Essential Energy is a member of the Energy and Water Ombudsman of NSW (EWON) and the Energy and Water Ombudsman Queensland (EWOQ).

EWON contact details:		EWOQ contact details:	
Freecall: 1800 246 545	Freefax: 1800 812 291	Freecall: 1800 662 837	Fax: 07 3087 9477
Mail: Reply Paid Box 86550 Sydney South NSW 1234 Email: omb@ewon.com.au		Mail: PO Box 3640 South Brisbane BC QLD 4101 Email: ewoq.com.au	