

## Complaints Management Policy

### Introduction

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Allygroup is committed to offering an open and transparent service to its clients and to those we deal with professionally. As part of this culture of transparency, Allygroup has adopted this complaints management policy and associated procedures

### Purpose

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The purpose of this policy is to formalise a process in which our clients and those with which we have professional relationships can provide us with positive and negative feedback, and to have any dissatisfaction with our services dealt with fairly, consistently and confidentially. We recognise that external feedback is an important tool that we can use to continually improve our services. This policy provides a framework for taking a consistent and professional approach to front-line complaint handling.

### Definitions

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In this policy:

**Allygroup** means Ally Group Pty Limited, its staff, officers, consultants and contractors.

**Complaint** generally means a complaint about Allygroup.

**Complainant** means a person who has made a complaint about Allygroup.

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### Scope

This policy provides the principles for managing a complaint about a commercial activity of Allygroup.

Examples of possible complaints about our office are:

- delay
- rudeness
- inaccurate information being included in a publication or report
- conflict of interest or bias
- failing to follow up or to do something that was promised.

This policy does not provide for:

- Complaints by Allygroup staff, officers, consultants or contractors (as the process for dealing with these complaints is dealt with under staff and consultant/contractor agreements).
- A complaint about criminal matters.
- A complaint that must be managed according to provisions contained in a local law or legislation such as the *Workplace Relations Act*.
- A complaint regarding a liability claim against Allygroup.

## Objectives and Principles

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The objectives of this policy are to:

- ensure that the process for managing a complaint about any of Allygroup's activities is fair, effective, efficient, transparent and consistent; and
- facilitate the use of the information obtained from the complaints management process to improve overall service delivery.

Allygroup adheres to the following principles when managing complaints:

- *Fair and objective:* The principles of natural justice are observed for all complaints.
- *Visibility and Accessibility:* The complaints process is easy to access and visible.
- *Confidential:* Complaints are managed confidentially, wherever possible.
- *Client focused and keeping the complainant informed:* Complainants are kept up to date with the progress of their complaint.
- *Effective:* The complaints process addresses the specific issues raised by the complainant.
- *Lessons learned are incorporated:* Where relevant, the lessons learned from complaints are incorporated into the complaints process.
- *Open and accountable:* The decisions and outcomes regarding a complaint are made available to the complainant, subject to statutory and confidentiality provisions.

The policy also aims to ensure the safety of Allygroup staff who manage complaints and that courtesy and consideration is given to all concerned when a complaint is lodged with Allygroup.

Our policy provides for three levels of complaint handling.

**First Point of Contact:** Wherever possible, Allygroup will aim to address a client's complaint at the client's first point of contact with Allygroup about the complaint. If a complaint cannot be resolved at the first point of contact, the following process will occur.

**First Review.** A complainant can request a First Review. The complaint may be referred to the Complaints Officer for investigation and a response will be provided to the complainant.

**Second Review.** If the complaint is not resolved by a First Review, the complainant can request a Second Review. The complaint may be referred to the Managing Director for further investigation, with a further response to be provided to the complainant.

A complaint to Allygroup is to be managed in accordance with the Allygroup Complaints Management Processes and Procedures (attached).

## All complaints must be recorded

Allygroup staff must record the details of every complaint that are received in accordance with the procedures supporting this policy. Staff should also record any actions that they have taken to resolve the complaint and any systemic issues that the complaint may raise. This will make it possible for Allygroup to properly analyse complaint information. The Complaints Officer is responsible for keeping central records of complaint information and a register of actions arising from these complaints.

### **Analysing and reporting on complaints**

The Complaints Officer is responsible for managing the complaints system. He or she will advise of any useful information received about systemic issues. They will talk to individual staff members and their supervisors to make sure any problems with the staff member's work are addressed. They are also responsible for analysing complaint data and preparing an annual report to the CEO and Managing Director.

### **Allygroup Approval:**

Current version approved by Allygroup on 8 February 2011.