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COMPLAINTS HANDLING POLICY



TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. YOUR RIGHT TO COMPLAIN	3
2. CORE PRINCIPLES	3
3. HOW TO LODGE A COMPLAINT	4
4.1 Customer self-meter read Complaints.....	5
5. PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY.....	6
6. CONTACT DETAILS FOR THE ENERGY OMBUDSMAN SCHEMES	7
Energy and Water Ombudsman of Victoria	7
Energy and Water Ombudsman of South Australia	7
Energy and Water Ombudsman of Queensland.....	7
Energy and Water Ombudsman of New South Wales	7

1. YOUR RIGHT TO COMPLAIN

You have a right to lodge a complaint with us at any time and about any aspect of our services and, if you do so, we will abide by this policy. Next Business Energy encourages customers to come forward and let us know if they are not satisfied with an aspect of our service. Complaints present an opportunity for an organisation to review its policies and practices and to improve. Responding appropriately and learning from complaints will assist Next Business Energy in remaining competitive and retaining our reputation for excellence in customer service.

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction or a grievance about Next Business Energy. A complaint gives us the opportunity to identify and address issues of which we may be unaware.

This policy is available, free of charge, via our website or by request to us. Similarly, raising a complaint with us or any Ombudsman scheme is free of charge.

2. CORE PRINCIPLES

In all instances we agree that we will:

- Treat you with respect and courtesy;
- Take your complaint seriously;
- Commit to resolving complaints in an effective and efficient manner;
- Accept complaints lodged on our website, in person, by telephone, facsimile, email or letter;
- Acknowledge any complaint received within 48 hours;
- Begin an investigation into the reasons for your complaint within 24 hours of acknowledgment;
- Keep you updated as the investigation into your complaint progresses;
- Notify you of the outcome of our investigation and any proposal we have for resolution as soon as possible; and
- Provide you with the option of an internal review of your complaint if you are unsatisfied with the outcome of the original investigation or resolution proposed

You have various rights as a Next Business Energy customer under your agreement with us and various applicable laws including the Australian Consumer Law (ACL), Victorian Energy Retail Code, National Energy Retail Law and Rules. We will ensure that we respect those rights. In addition, we take a customer focused approach to hearing and assessing complaints and disputes, and seek to resolve any complaints having regard to the issues raised and the preferred remediation of our customers.

A summary of the procedure we will follow when reviewing complaints is found in this document. This summary provides you with information on your rights and what you can expect us to do when reviewing your complaint.

You may contact the Energy Ombudsman in your State or Territory if you are not satisfied with our response and investigation into your complaint. The Next Business Energy Board has responsibility for the development and approval of this policy and will be notified of the number and nature of complaints on a monthly basis.

The Next Business Energy Compliance Manager will review complaints from time to time to determine if any indicate a breach of an obligation and to report on any breach and on complaints to the relevant regulators. The Compliance Manager will also an annual audit on Next Business Energy's complaints management policy and practices and develop recommendations to be implemented with the approval of the board.

All complaints will be classified and then analyses to identify systematic, recurring and single incident problems and trends, and to help eliminate the underlying causes of complaints.

3. HOW TO LODGE A COMPLAINT

We will respond to any complaint that comes to our attention. Whether you contact us via the means noted below, or via social media, including twitter or Facebook, we will ensure that we follow this Policy in confirming receipt of your complaint and the subsequent investigation and resolution of your complaint.

You may contact us at any time to lodge a complaint using the following contact details:

By Post: PO Box 550, Flinders Lane, Melbourne VIC 8009

Phone: 1300 46 6398

Fax: (03) 8535 2550

Interpreter: 131 450 - For help using an interpreter visit **www.tisnational.gov.au**

NRS: 133 677 - For help using this service visit **www.relayservice.com.au**

Email: resolutions@nextbusinessenergy.com.au

4. HOW WE WILL ASSESS AND RESPOND TO YOUR COMPLAINT

We will acknowledge your complaint as soon as possible and no later than 48 hours following receipt. After receipt, we will assess your complaint, having regard to the severity, safety implication, complexity, impact, and the need and possibility of immediate action.

As soon as we have collected the information, we need to assess your complaint we will carry out an investigation and let you know about the results of our investigation and any proposal we have for a resolution. At all times we will keep you updated on the progress of the investigation into your complaint and you can always contact us to seek further information on the status of your complaint.

In the first instance your complaint may be managed by a customer care manager. If you wish to escalate your complaint, are not happy with the approach taken by our customer care manager or the resolution proposed, you may ask for your complaint to be escalated.

If you ask to have your complaint escalated, we will assign your complaint to a more senior person in Next Business Energy who will conduct a further review and speak to you about the complaint. You may ask for an escalation of your complaint at any time.

Once your complaint has been resolved we may contact you to follow up and seek your feedback on the resolution and on how we dealt with your complaint. Participation in any follow up is not mandatory.

4.1 Customer self-meter read Complaints

If your complaint is about the rejected meter read (Customer Read) provided to Next Business Energy to replace your estimated meter read. We will follow the below procedure;

- We will attempt to rectify the matter as soon as possible.
- We will assess the reason for the rejection and request you to resubmit the meter read if its within the relevant timelines. (Before the due date of the estimated read invoice)
- Guide you to provide the meter read for the correct meter for your site.
- Provide guidance and clear advice
- Resolve the complaint in timely manner

5. PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY

We will keep your complaint confidential at all times. If we need to discuss your complaint with a third-party we will seek your consent to do so prior. If you do not consent, and third-party involvement is required, the investigation and resolution of your complaint may be limited.

Where third-party has lodged a complaint with us on your behalf, we will deal with that third-party in accordance with your instructions. In most cases we will require a written authorisation to deal with a third-party on your behalf and particularly where we need to disclose personal information to that third-party.

When you lodge a complaint we may request personal information from you. This may include your name, address, account number and contact details. We will use the personal information you provide to us when lodging a complaint to identify you, to investigate your complaint and to get into contact with you.

You may lodge a complaint about privacy at any time including on how we collect, use, disclosure or store your personal information. Please refer to our privacy policy for more information on how we collect, use, disclosure and store personal information.

6. CONTACT DETAILS FOR THE ENERGY OMBUDSMAN SCHEMES

If you are not satisfied with our response or investigation a complaint you have lodged about your energy supply from Next Business Energy, you may contact the Energy Ombudsman in your state.

Energy and Water Ombudsman of New South Wales

By Post: Reply Paid 86550, Sydney South NSW 1234

Free call: 1800 246 545

Free fax: 1800 812 291

Interpreter: 131 450 - For help using an interpreter visit www.tisnational.gov.au

NRS: 133 677 - For help using this service visit www.relayservice.com.au

Email: omb@ewon.com.au

Energy and Water Ombudsman of Victoria

Freecall: 1800 500 509

Freefax: 1800 500 549

Interpreter: 131 450 - For help using an interpreter visit www.tisnational.gov.au

NRS: 133 677 - For help using this service visit www.relayservice.com.au

Email: ewovinfo@ewov.com.au

Energy and Water Ombudsman of South Australia

Freecall: 1800 665 565

Freefax: 1800 665 165

Interpreter: 131 450 - For help using an interpreter visit www.tisnational.gov.au

NRS: 133 677 - For help using this service visit www.relayservice.com.au

Energy and Water Ombudsman of Queensland

By post: PO Box 3640 South Brisbane BC Qld 4101

Freecall: 1800 668 837

Fax: (07) 3087 9477

Email: complaints@ewoq.com.au or info@ewoq.com.au