

Scope

This policy applies to complaints made by members of the public about the services, actions, decisions and/or policies of Equis Australia (“**Equis**”), Equis staff and contractors.

The policy applies from inception throughout the life of the project.

In this policy, ‘staff’ is any person employed by Equis and ‘contractor’ is any person contracted by Equis to carry out functions on Equis’ behalf.

Purpose

This policy details the process by which complaints may be made by members of the public to Equis, and the process by which Equis will respond to such complaints.

This policy summarises and supports Equis’ Complaints Investigation and Response Plans (CIRPs), which are detailed, project-specific complaint management plans.

Policy statement

Equis values feedback and is committed to resolving complaints. Equis’ complaints process has been designed to ensure that complaints are processed in a timely, objective and fair manner, through accessible, transparent and free complaints systems.

Equis is open about the complaints we receive and what has been done to resolve them. Complaints data is analysed by Equis to identify trends and potential issues that require attention. This information is used to devise solutions and improve Equis’ services.

Who can make a complaint

Anyone can make a complaint. A complaint may be made anonymously, but this may limit how Equis responds to the complaint. A complaint may be made, verbally or in writing, where the complainant is dissatisfied with a decision Equis has made, an action Equis has taken or a service Equis has delivered.

How to make a complaint

Complaints may be made verbally or in writing. Equis requires as much information as possible about the complaint to help ensure the problem is understood and addressed. You will need to:

- provide your name and contact details (unless you opt to remain anonymous);
- outline the action, inaction, decision, or service you are not happy about and why;
- add dates, times, locations, reference numbers, and any supporting documents; and
- let Equis know the outcome you are seeking from making your complaint.

Let Equis know if you have any specific communication needs or barriers so that appropriate assistance can be arranged, including:

- an assistance service, such an interpreter or TTY (for free);
- Equis staff to speak with you if you have trouble reading or writing; and

- Equis staff to communicate with another person acting on your behalf if you cannot make the complaint yourself.

You can make your complaint to Equis by:

- Calling 1800 161 249 at any time (this phone line is staffed 24 hours of every day)
- Emailing AUProjects@equis.com
- Writing to Equis at Ground Floor, 36 Esplanade Brighton Victoria, 3186
- Going online to the Equis Australia website at equis.com.au
- Going online to the Engagement Hub project pages: <https://equis.engagementhub.com.au>

The complaint management process

Equis' CIRPs set out the processes for effective and consistent management of any complaints received by external stakeholders, interested parties, and members of the public in relation to Equis' projects. CIRPs are available on Equis' [Ehub engagement portal](#). Each CIRP details:

- the roles and responsibilities of Equis personnel involved in managing a complaint;
- an overview of the complaint management process;
- a complaint resolution flowchart, for easy reference;
- how complaints are registered, investigated, escalated internally and externally, and closed; and
- the dispute resolution process to be followed if a complaint cannot be resolved.

Equis aims to resolve your complaint the first time you contact us (in line with the principles of the ISO 10002:2018).

Equis will promptly acknowledge receipt of your complaint, register your complaint in our database, and give you a reference number. You can quote your reference number if you contact Equis to follow up on the progress of your complaint.

Equis undertakes to investigate and, if appropriate, take action to resolve your complaint.

If Equis is unable to resolve your complaint, Equis will explain why and outline the required next steps. Where possible, Equis will inform you about other options.

Equis will inform you of the outcome of your complaint and explain any relevant rationale.

Reviewing a decision

You can request a review of Equis' decision if you are not satisfied with a response to your complaint. An internal review will be conducted by an individual who is not:

- the person who took the action;
- the person who made the decision; or
- the person who provided the service.

Equis will inform you of the outcome of any internal review and explain our reasons within **30 calendar days** of receiving a request for a review.

If you are still unhappy with Equis' response, Equis may help you find a relevant external party to make your complaint to.

Equis strives to be respectful and responsive when communicating with you and expects the same of you when you communicate with Equis or its staff. Equis may change the way we communicate with you if your behavior or conduct raises health, safety, resource or equity issues for Equis staff involved in the complaints process.

Your privacy

Equis keeps your personal information secure, in line with our obligations under relevant privacy legislation, including the *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth). Equis may need to engage external parties to help resolve your complaint. If so, Equis will obtain your consent before sharing your personal information with those third parties.

Equis will use information you have provided about the complaint to investigate and resolve the issue you have raised. Equis may share such information with third parties, if necessary, for that purpose. Equis may also use the information to improve services that relate to the subject of your complaint. Equis will remove personal information from any complaint data we publish.

Your Feedback

You can provide feedback on how you feel Equis has handled your complaint through our online complaints survey submission form at <https://equis.engagementhub.com.au>.

Your feedback will be important to Equis for monitoring and measuring customer satisfaction. Equis will also use your feedback for our internal complaints audit reviews, which analyse our complaints-handling process, the resolution of complaints, and process improvements made.

Supporting documents

This **Complaints Policy** is supported by policies and procedures set out in the following documents:

- (i) **Community Engagement Policy** (public document); and
- (ii) **Community Engagement Communications Guideline** (Equis internal document).

Document management

Endorsement date	June 2022
Last reviewed and approved	September 2024
Current version	2
Review cycle	Annual
Next review date	September 2025
Responsible department	Legal and Compliance (Australia)
Relevant legislation, standards and policies	<i>Privacy Act 1988</i> (Cth) <i>Public Interest Disclosures Act 2013</i> (Cth) <i>Planning and Environment Act 1987</i> (Vic) ISO 10002:2018, AS 10002:2022 https://iap2.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/IAP2_Quality_Assurance_Standard_2015.pdf