



Internal Conflict and Complaints Policy

In managing internal complaints from station members our station will pursue the following commitments:

1. A fair, transparent and impartial investigation process;
2. To make all reasonable effort to resolve the internal conflict within 90 days;
3. To provide all parties involved with reasonable notice of meetings;
4. Access to some form of independent mediation processes where resolution is not easily achieved;
5. Access to an appeals process;
6. To respect all individuals rights to privacy and to fair and equal treatment.

Stage 1: Investigation and internal complaint resolution

The station will investigate complaints with all parties concerned by a nominated officer with the authority to represent the licensee (e.g. Station Manager or President), or a complaints committee made up of representatives of the board of management or other impartial members appointed to the committee. The investigation process will generally follow these steps:

- i. Establish if there has been any breach of station policy, broadcasting law, or other legal requirement;
- ii. Recommend appropriate action in relation to programmers/volunteers/staff if a breach has occurred;
- iii. Negotiate for dispute resolution by managing discussion between disputants, which is aimed to bring about agreement or a settlement of opposing demands or attitudes;
- iv. Recommend appropriate legal response if legal action is likely or is taking place;
- v. Recommend appropriate response to the complainant/s after taking legal advice if necessary;
- vi. Recommend appropriate action/s needed to avoid future breaches;
- vii. Write to all parties involved in the investigation outlining the outcomes of the investigation and informing them that they have a right to lodge a letter of Appeal regarding the determination made by the investigating party to the full board of the station at their next sitting.

Stage 2: Mediation

Where Complaints are not resolved through the findings of the investigation process:

- i. Consider independent mediation or arbitration if a reasonable outcome for all parties cannot be achieved. (A range of free services are available to not-for-profit organisations, or the station may use a person/party agreed by all to be independent and impartial to mediate an outcome).
- ii. Consider impartial legal or other expert advice as required.

Stage 3: Reporting and Record Keeping

To ensure stations can make a full response to the ACMA if requested the station is advised to include in their procedures the following steps: To keep a record of material relating to complaints, including logging tapes or audio copies of broadcast material, and written documentation for 1 year, including:

- i. The date and time the complaint was received;
- ii. The name and address of the complainant;
- iii. The substance of the complaint;
- iv. The substance and date of the licensee's response.