

# COMPLAINTS PROCESS

## 1. Application

- 1.1 This complaints process is applicable to third parties who wish to make a complaint against Science and Technology Australia, its directors, staff or contractors.
- 1.2 This complaints process is not applicable to internal complaints, who should refer to the internal complaints process.

## 2. Lodging a complaint

- 2.1 Complainants are encouraged in the first instance to seek resolution of their complaint directly with the person responsible for the decision, act, or omission which forms the basis of the complaint, if they believe it is appropriate to do so and they are able, willing and feel confident in approaching the person(s).
- 2.2 If the complaint cannot be resolved directly, complaints may be lodged in person, by post, or by email to the CEO at PO Box 259, Canberra City ACT 2601, or [ceo@sta.org.au](mailto:ceo@sta.org.au).
- 2.3 If the complainant feels unable to raise the issue with the CEO for any reason, they should address their complaint in writing to the President, at the above postal address, or [president@sta.org.au](mailto:president@sta.org.au).

## 3. Timing

- 3.1 A person must take reasonable steps to register their complaint as soon as reasonably practicable.

## 4. Resolving a complaint

- 4.1 Once received, complaints will be referred to:
  - a) The CEO, who will consider the complaint on behalf of STA; or
  - b) where inappropriate to refer to the CEO, the President will consider the complaint (“the Decision Maker”).
- 4.2 Complaints will generally be acknowledged by STA in writing no less than five working days following receipt.
- 4.3 Complaints will be assessed to determine whether further information is required or whether a complaint must be dealt with in a particular way.
- 4.4 If a decision is made to conduct an investigation into the complaint, the investigation will generally commence no less than 10 working days from receipt of the complaint. An investigation may be conducted by STA or an independent person appointed by STA.

- 4.5 Individuals who are the subject of a complaint will be afforded procedural fairness including being provided with details of the allegations against them and given full right of reply.
- 4.6 In responding to the complaint, the decision maker may consider and manage the wider effects and implications of the complaint for STA and its staff, officers, and stakeholders.
- 4.7 If the complaint is determined to be valid by the Decision Maker, STA will seek to resolve the complaint .
- 4.8 If the Decision Maker determines that a legal or regulatory breach has occurred, the complaint may be referred to the relevant authorities by the President or CEO.
- 4.9 Once the Decision Maker has made a decision in relation to the complaint, STA may:
  - a) notify the complainant and any involved parties in writing of the steps taken to address the complaint, the outcome of the complaint, and the reason for the outcome, and will disclose as much information about the complaint's resolution as the privacy and confidentiality of affected parties permit;
  - b) advise the STA CEO and Executive Committee / Board of the complaint's closure.
- 4.10 Anonymous complaints will be addressed in accordance with these procedures, with the exception that there is no requirement to identify or notify the complainant as otherwise set out above.

## 5. Privacy and confidentiality

- 5.1 STA will treat complaints confidentially and, other than required to address the complaint, will take reasonable steps not to disclose details of the complaint.
- 5.2 Complaints involving personal information will be dealt with in accordance with the requirements of the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth).