



Procurement Complaints Management

1. Our commitment

As a public sector entity, Ambulance Victoria (AV) is entrusted by the Victorian community to conduct our procurement management with integrity, accountability, and transparency. AV is committed to procurement-responsible practices that support a sustainable, high quality ambulance service that has capacity for service innovation and responsiveness to changing demands and complexities.

Our procurement resources are maximised in support of the achievement of our strategic plan and service delivery objectives, and health service agreement. We maintain appropriate procurement management systems and internal controls to verify the fair and ethical use of AV's funds, including within our procurement and contracting activities.

Purpose

This procedure outlines the independent review process to be followed in relation to suppliers who wish to submit a complaint about a procurement process conducted by AV.

Scope

In the context of procurement, AV applies the Victorian Government Purchasing Board (VGPB) definition of a complaint as:

"An issue or concern expressed by a supplier, including a potential supplier, in relation to the process and probity applied by an organisation when carrying out a procurement activity".

As a mandated VGPB entity, AV must review and act on any procurement complaints received and report any unresolved complaints as a matter of best practice.

2. Responsibility

Role	Responsibility
Chief Procurement Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Acknowledge complaints.• Undertake an initial assessment of complaints.• Advise complainant of the time required to complete the investigation.• Review files and documents relating to complaints.• Interview witnesses regarding complaints.• Update the complainant on the progress of the investigation including any actions, if longer than thirty (30) days.• Explain to the complainant the process for escalating the complaint to the VGPB.



Procedures

3. Lodging a complaint

If you are involved in any procurement conducted by AV and wish to lodge a complaint about the process, you should write (by letter or email) to:

Chief Procurement Officer
PO Box 2000
Doncaster Vic 3108

Email: externalprocurement.feedback@ambulance.vic.gov.au

The written complaint must be submitted within seven (7) business days of the issue becoming known and must set out:

- Your name and/or the organisation's contact details.
- The procurement that the complaint relates to.
- The basis for the complaint specifying the issues involved.
- How the subject of the complaint and the specific issue affects you or your organisation.
- Any relevant background information.
- The outcome desired by you or your organisation.

4. Complaint process

4.1 Receipt of complaint

AV will acknowledge a complaint in writing within five (5) working days of its receipt. An initial assessment of the complaint will determine whether AV will:

- Accept and investigate the complaint.
- Decline the complaint because lodgement requirements have not been met.

4.2 Investigation of complaint

Where a complaint has been accepted, AV will ensure the investigation and subsequent response will be overseen by a person not directly involved in the subject matter of the complaint.

For each investigation AV will:

- Inform the complainant of the anticipated time required to complete the investigation.
- Review AV's files and any documents submitted by the complainant.
- Interview witnesses (as considered necessary).
- Obtain other evidence (as considered necessary).

4.3 Time investigating complaint

The time required to investigate a complaint will depend upon:

- The nature of the complaint.
- The complexity of the investigation.
- The availability of the witnesses.

Most investigations will be finalised within thirty (30) working days of the complaint being received.



Where this is not possible, AV will regularly update the complainant regarding the progress of the investigation.

4.4 Investigation conclusion

At the conclusion of the investigation, AV will write to the complainant to:

- Explain the steps taken during the investigation.
- Summarise the evidence obtained.
- State whether or not the complaint was substantiated, dismissed or was unable to be determined.
- State the action (if any) AV will take as a result of the investigation.
- Explain the process available to the complainant for escalating the complaint to the VGPB.

4.5 Outcomes

The range of outcomes available following the completion of the investigation include:

- No action
- Providing an explanation for what has occurred.
- An apology.
- Amending policies or procedures to improve practices in the future.
- Terminating the procurement process (with the option of commencing a new process).
- Providing any other remedy that addresses the complainant's concerns.

The outcome may include more than one of the above options.

4.6 Referral of complaint

A complainant can refer the matter to the VGPB for review if not satisfied with the findings and actions. Complaints must be lodged by letter, email or fax within 10 working days of receipt of the findings by AV. Information on what needs to be submitted to the VGPB is available via the VGPB website.

A complainant can also refer the matter to other government bodies such as the Office of the Ombudsman; Office of the Small Business Commissioner; and Independent Broad-based Anti-Corruption Commission.

Potential suppliers are notified of this process within the AV market approach documentation.

4.7 Annual report

For each complaint received the procurement activity to which the complaint relates and the status (resolved, under investigation, not resolved) will be disclosed in the AV annual report.

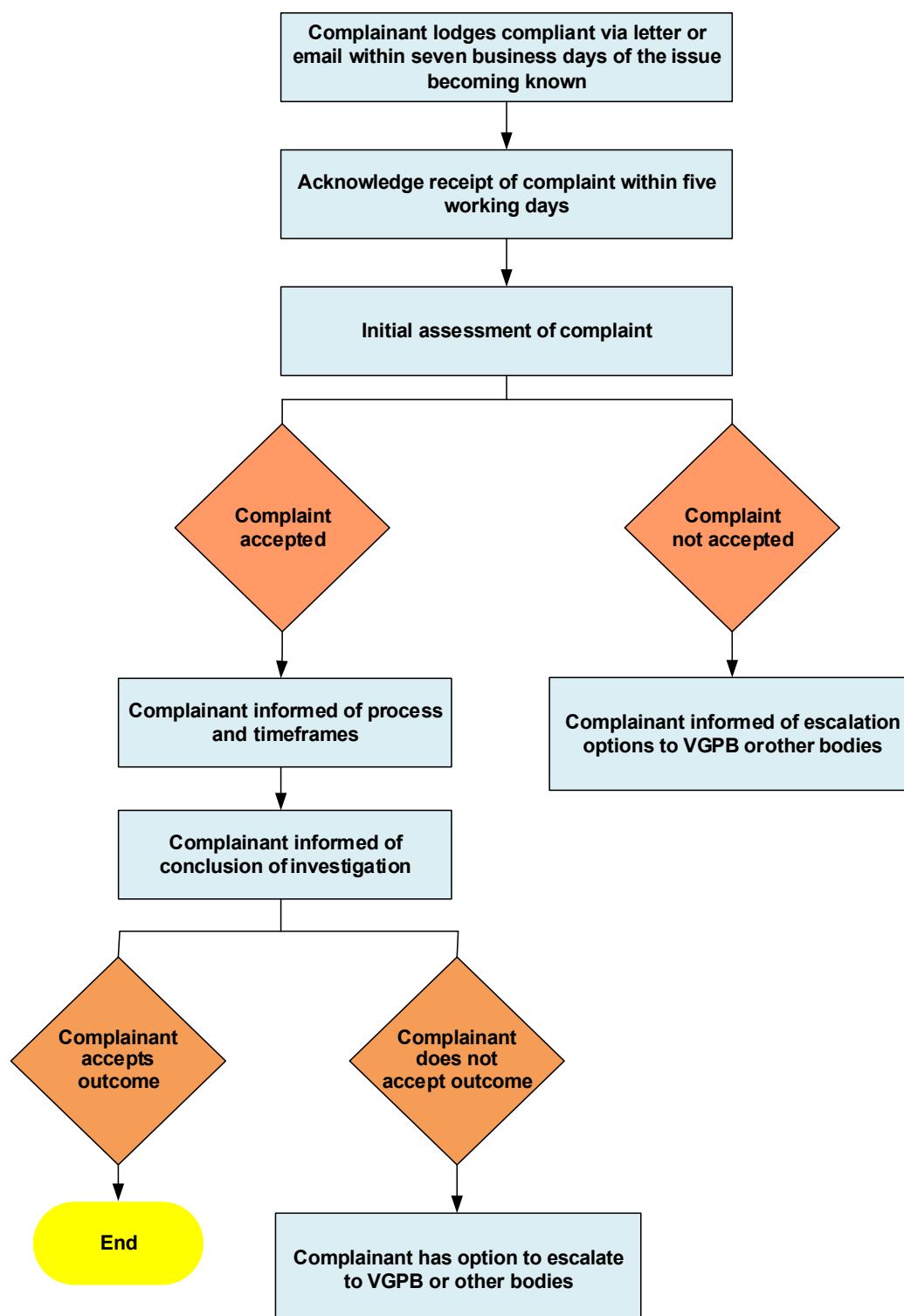
5. Definitions

Term	Definition
Procurement complaint	An issue or concern expressed by a supplier, including a potential supplier, in relation to the process and probity applied by an organisation when carrying out a procurement activity.



Procurement compliant process – flowchart

The following flowchart provides an overview of the procurement complaints process.



Document name	PROCUREMENT COMPLAINTS MANAGEMENT		
Applies to	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Corporate		
Document no.	PRO/FCS/061	Stored:	Content Manager PRO/FCS/061
Version	6.0	Review:	<input type="checkbox"/> Annual <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3-Yearly
Division	Corporate Services		
Responsible Executive	Executive Director, Corporate Services		
Responsible Manager	Senior Manager Procurement and Commercial		
Key stakeholders: (including external)	Consulted: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior Manager Procurement and Commercial • Manager Procurement Governance and Support • Manager Social Procurement • ICT Contact Manager 		To be informed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All staff
National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards	To be completed by the National Standards Accreditation Lead: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NSQHS standards are NOT applicable.		
Review date	By 6 October 2025 or in accordance with applicable legislative or regulatory changes.		
Material legislation	The following legislation, regulations and/or standards are material to this document: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial Management Act 1994 		
Material associated documents	The following documents are material to this procedure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent policy: POL/FCS/083 Procurement Policy – Goods and Services • PRO/FCS/048 Purchasing 		

Version control and change history

Version	Date approved	Date superseded	Amendment
4.0	6 August 2018	12 July 2021	Conversion to current AV template. Cyclic review.
5.0	12 July 2021	6 October 2022	Amendments in compliance with Victorian Government Purchasing Board Governance policy.
6.0	6 October 2022	Current	

