



Government
Services

Department of Government Services

Complaints Management Policy

Table of Contents

1.	Summary	3
2.	Scope	3
3.	Policy Principles	3
4.	Complaints Management	4
5.	Complaints Handling	4
5.1	Receiving Complaints	4
5.2	Appointment of Investigation Manager	5

6.	Timely Resolution of Complaints	5
6.1	Outcome Options	5

7.	Referral of Complaints to the Victorian Government Purchasing Board	6
7.1	Referral of Complaints to the VGPB	6

	Appendix A – DGS Complaints Management Framework	7
8.	Document Details	8

1. Summary

The Department of Government Services (DGS) is committed to resolving complaints made by suppliers in a timely fashion, and in a fair and transparent manner.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all procurement activity undertaken within DGS. This policy outlines how DGS deals with complaints made by suppliers in relation to the process and probity applied by DGS when carrying out procurement activity.

3. Policy Principles

i. The Policy

DGS' Complaints Management Policy outlines how the Department receives, processes, and resolves all complaints made by suppliers.

ii. Complaints Handling

DGS handles complaints in a consistent, fair, and transparent manner.

iii. Timely Resolution of Complaints

DGS aims to resolve all complaints made by supplier in a timely fashion.

iv. Referral of Complaints to the VGPB

DGS aims to resolve all complaints made by suppliers to the satisfaction of all parties. When complaints cannot be resolved between DGS and a supplier, the supplier has the option to refer their complain to the VGPB.

4. Complaints Management

The Chief Procurement Officer (CPO) is responsible for the Department's complaint management framework. Specifically, the CPO ensures that DGS' complaints management process demonstrates due process and integrity.

[Appendix A](#) provides a high-level summary of DGS' complaints management process and the timeframes for each step.

5. Complaints Handling

5.1 Receiving Complaints

DGS receives complaints from potential suppliers and contracted suppliers if they have a complaint(s) concerning any of the following:

- The procurement process followed by DGS, and/or
- The probity practice adopted by DGS during its procurement activity

Complainants wishing to complain about improper conduct, corrupt conduct, or fraudulent activity must be made under other disclosure regimes. For example, the Protected Disclosure Act 2012.

All complaints can be submitted to DGS' Corporate Procurement Team (CPT) through email.

DGS requires all complaints to be formally submitted in writing prior to the commencement of any investigation. At a minimum, a complainant must provide the following information:

- Their name and contact details
- The procurement process or probity practise the complainant relates to
- Any supporting documentation that is relevant to the complaint
- The outcome the complaining is seeking to achieve, and
- Whether the complainant is contacting DGS on behalf of another party

The Procurement Process Complaint Form may be used by complainants to assist them to lodge their complaint.

The CPT is responsible for recording the details of written complaints received by the department in the complaints register.

All information and documents received by DGS from complainants will be handled in accordance with the Public Records Act 1973 and the Information Privacy Act 2000.

The CPT will acknowledge receipt of a complaint within 5 business days of receiving that complaint. At this stage, the CPT will also notify the complainant whether they are required to supply more information to enable DGS to properly investigate their complaint.

5.2 Appointment of Investigation Manager

The CPO appoints a suitable qualified investigation manager to investigate a complaint the department received. The role of the investigation manager is to look into a complaint and determine the most suitable outcome to resolve the complaint.

At a minimum, the investigation manager must:

- Have appropriate knowledge of DGS and VGPB procurement policy and process
- Not have been directly or indirectly involved in the subject matter of the complaint, and
- Not have an actual or perceived conflict of interest in the subject matter of the complaint or with the person(s)/company making the complaint

6. Timely Resolution of Complaints

DGS aims to resolve complaints in a fair, transparent, and timely manner. Within 20 business days, DGS aims to investigate, determine and outcome, and provide its response to a complainant.

If DGS requests further information from the complainant, the number of working days between the request for, and receipt of, additional information will be added to the number of business days DGS has to resolve a complaint. In addition, DGS may be required to engage external parties to assist in the investigation of a complaint. Any working days needed to engage an external party will be added to the number of business days DGS will take to complete an investigation.

The CPT will notify a complainant if DGS intends to extend the 20-business day investigation timeframe and the length of that extension.

All investigation outcomes determined by the investigation manager must be approved by the CPO prior to the outcome being communicated to the complainant.

6.1 Outcome Options

The investigation manager has the discretion to:

- Decline a complaint in its entirety on the basis that:
 - A complainant fails to provide sufficient evidence to support their complaint, and
 - DGS' findings do not reveal any failings in its procurement process or probity practise relevant to the complaint
- Decline a complaint in part on the basis that:
 - Complainant fails to provide sufficient evidence to support a part of their complaint, and
 - DGS' findings reveal a partial failings in its procurement process or probity practice relevant to the complaint
- Accept the complaint in its entirety on the basis that:

- A complainant provided sufficient evidence to support their complaint, and
- DGS' findings reveal a total failing in its procurement process or probity practice relevant to the complaint

DGS will communicate its findings to the complainant and how it intends to resolve the complaint.

7. Referral of Complaints to the Victorian Government Purchasing Board

A complainant has the option to accept or reject DGS' findings following the completion of a complaint's investigation.

If a complainant accepts DGS' findings and response, the matter will be closed.

If a complainant is not satisfied with DGS's findings and/or response, the complainant may refer the matter to the VGPB.

The CPT is responsible for recording the outcomes of all complaint investigations.

The CPO is responsible for informing the VGPB if any complaint could not be resolved to the satisfaction of all parties.

7.1 Referral of Complaints to the VGPB

If a complainant wishes to refer their matter to the VGPB, it must do so within 10-business days of the complaint receiving DGS' findings to:

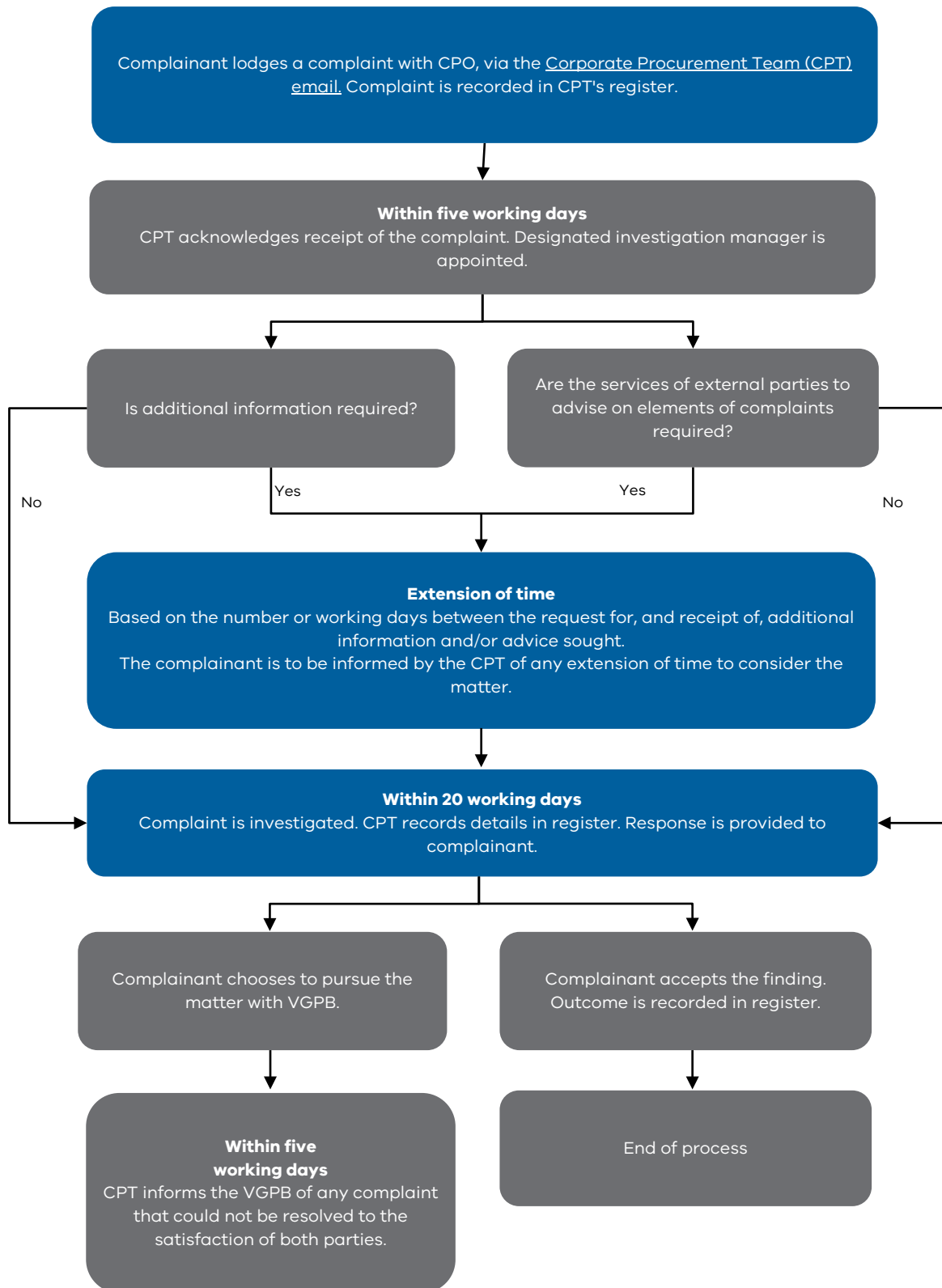
The Chair

Victorian Government Purchasing Board
Department of Government Services
GPO Box 4379
Melbourne VIC 3000

The complainant must also provide the following material:

- Evidence that DGS did not correctly apply supply policies in relation to a procurement activity
- Evidence that DGS' complaints management procedures were not applied correctly
- A copy of all relevant correspondence between the complainant and DGS in relation to the nature of the complaint, and
- Any additional material requested by the VGPB to assist in its findings

Appendix A – DGS Complaints Management Framework



All complaints submitted to the CPO will be reported annually to the VGPB for publication in the VGPB Annual Report and details provided to relevant department if not DGS.

8. Document Details

Title and Version:	DGS Complaints Management Policy, version 1.0
Policy Owner /	Chief Procurement Officer
Branch:	Government Procurement Branch
Effective Date:	7 March 2024
Last Review Date:	10 May 2024