

Australian Pork Limited

AUSTRALIAN
Pork™

EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDER COMPLAINT POLICY

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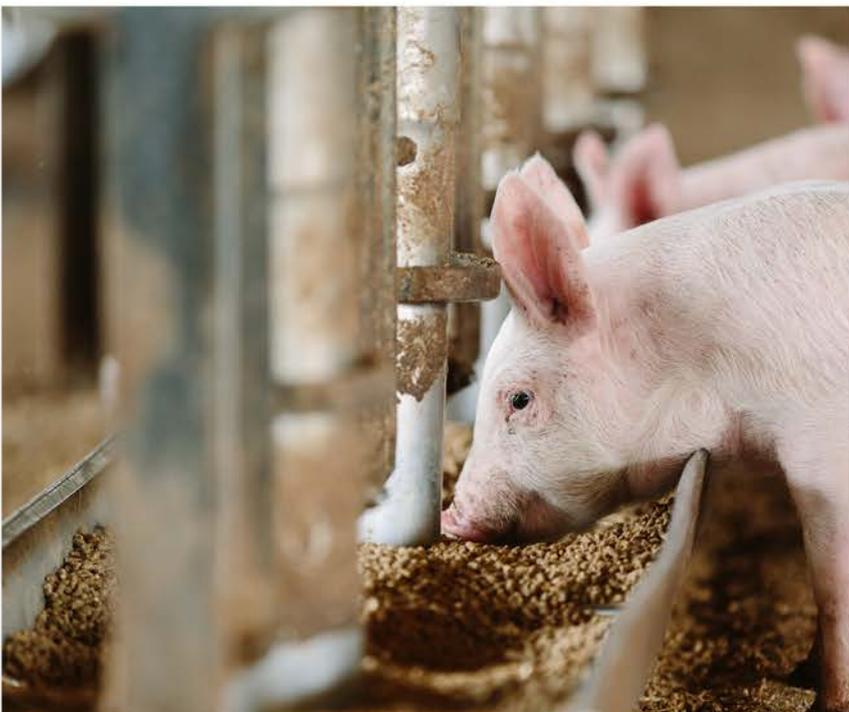


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I. External Stakeholder Complaint Policy

I.1 PURPOSE OF THE POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework and protocol for APL staff and board members to manage informal and formal external queries, complaints and grievances (**Complaints**) made by APL stakeholders, including delegates, members, levy-payers, governments and other individuals and organisations within and beyond the industry (**Stakeholders**).

This policy has been developed with the aim of maintaining an appropriate balance between:

- a) APL's obligations to consult with stakeholders;
- b) APL's desire to engage constructively to address queries, complaints and grievances;
- c) APL's obligations to efficiently utilise APL resources; and
- d) APL's obligations to protect APL workers.

A copy of this Policy is to be available on the APL website.

I.2 PROCEDURE OF INFORMAL COMPLAINTS

- I.2.1 APL has several established channels for Stakeholders to raise informal Complaints, including via delegate meetings and frequent consultation processes. Given the existence of these mechanisms and the role they play in APL's central governance structure, these established channels should be utilised when Stakeholders wish to raise informal Complaints.
- I.2.2 However, APL recognises that sometimes, for varying reasons, Stakeholders may wish to lodge formal Complaints directly with APL. The paragraphs below set out APL's approach to managing external formal Complaints.

I.3 PROCEDURE OF FORMAL COMPLAINTS

- I.3.1 If a Stakeholder wishes to directly raise a formal Complaint with APL, they can do so by emailing the mailbox queries@australianpork.com.au. This inbox will be monitored by APL staff. APL staff will acknowledge receipt of the Complaint within seventy-two (72) hours (excluding weekends and public holidays).
- I.3.2 To standardise, formalise and ensure consistency in APL's approach, only Complaints lodged in accordance with this policy will be considered and acted upon. Should a Stakeholder make a Complaint through another channel, they will be directed to this policy and to the process set out within.
- I.3.3 Upon receipt and acknowledgement of a Complaint lodged in accordance with paragraph I.3.1, APL will nominate a Contact Officer for that Complaint. Following the acknowledgement of receipt, the Contact Officer will respond to the substance of the communication within ten (10) business days from the time of acknowledgement of receipt. In exceptional circumstances, including where responding to the Complaint requires gathering and reviewing extensive information and documentation, the Contact Officer will reply within twenty (20) business days of the acknowledgement. In such circumstances, the Stakeholder will be advised of as to when they can expect to receive a formal response from APL.

- 1.3.4 Once the Contact Officer has replied to the Complaint and the matter has been finalised, this will be communicated to the Stakeholder.

1.4 MULTIPLE QUERIES, COMPLAINTS OR GRIEVANCES

- 1.4.1 APL has limited resources and cannot respond to voluminous, continuous or vexatious Complaints. APL has obligations to all its Stakeholders and dedicating a disproportionate amount of time and resources to a single Complaint diminishes APL's ability to satisfy its all-stakeholder obligations. This is particularly so when APL receives multiple Complaints from the same individual about the same subject matter. Accordingly, Stakeholders are asked to include all Complaints in a singular email.
- 1.4.2 If the Stakeholder lodges a further Complaint, and the Contact Officer believes that it is substantially identical to a matter that has already been concluded, the further Complaint will be forwarded to the APL Chair. Should the APL Chair agree with that characterisation, the communication will be disregarded. Alternatively, the APL Chair may appoint a mediator to mediate between the parties as to an appropriate resolution to the Complaint.

1.5 DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION

- 1.5.1 APL values transparency and accessibility as an organisation. Many APL documents are available via the APL website. When a Stakeholder's Complaint includes a request for APL documentation, APL will seek to provide it, unless:
- a) the document is commercial in confidence;
 - b) the document contains personal information;
 - c) disclosure of the document would require APL to expend resources to an unreasonable extent; or
 - d) disclosure of the document would be contrary to law or APL's contractual obligations.
- 1.5.2 Clause 1.5.1 does not provide Stakeholders with any legal right to APL documentation and release of documents (otherwise than pursuant to law) remains at the sole and exclusive discretion of APL.

1.6 TONE AND LANGUAGE

- 1.6.1 APL welcomes constructive feedback on its operations. APL also accepts that Stakeholders may have a legitimate disagreement with the nature, form or direction of its operations, and may wish to express that disagreement as a Complaint. However, APL will not tolerate abuse, bullying or harassment. APL has legislative obligations to its staff to provide a safe and supportive workplace.
- 1.6.2 Should a Contact Officer receive a Complaint that they consider to be abusive or constitute bullying or harassment, they will forward it to the APL Chair who shall advise the Contact Officer as to a suitable response.
- 1.6.3 If a Stakeholder persists with Complaints that are abusive or constitute bullying or harassment, APL may take steps to protect its staff members, including (but not limited to) reporting the matter to the police, or seeking a court order against the stakeholder.

I.7 DISTRESSING COMMUNICATIONS

- I.7.1 APL staff and board members have from time to time in the past received queries that have been distressing, including queries that reveal the Stakeholder has suicidal thoughts or intentions.
- I.7.2 In such circumstances, whether received by email or telephone, the APL staff member or board member to receive the query should refer the Stakeholder to Lifeline: 13 11 14. While the APL staff member or board member may wish to provide immediate comfort or support, and they can do so prior to referring the Stakeholder to Lifeline, they should be mindful that they are typically not qualified or experienced in counselling and that providing support may impact their own wellbeing. Accordingly, any communication beyond a referral to Lifeline should be kept brief.
- I.7.3 Following any such query, the APL staff member must alert a member of the Executive Team. The staff member will be provided with a referral for support services, if necessary.



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