



**TRADE PRACTICES  
COMPLAINTS HANDLING  
POLICY**

**Adopted by The Ingles Group  
10<sup>TH</sup> December 2008**

## **TRADE PRACTICES COMPLAINTS HANDLING POLICY**

### ***STATEMENT***

The Ingles Group is committed to dealing with Trade Practices complaints and resolving disputes efficiently and fairly. The directors expressly endorse this commitment.

Handling complaints well gives The Ingles Group an opportunity to better understand its customers, improve service and minimise disputes.

All relevant staff are required to follow this procedure.

### ***PURPOSE***

The purpose of this policy is to assist customers and relevant staff with the process involved for handling Trade Practices complaints and to ensure that the complaints and the responses to them are recorded and stored by The Ingles Group.

### ***TERMINOLOGY***

The Ingles Group also means any business identity owned or managed by the group.

Complainant - person, organization or its representative, making a complaint

Complaint - expression of dissatisfaction made to an organization, related to its products, or the complaints-handling process itself, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected

Customer - organization or person that receives a product  
Example: Consumer, client, end-user, retainer, beneficiary and purchaser.

Relevant Staff - means employees, consultants and contractors who may receive complaints from customers.

## ***GUIDING PRINCIPLES***

The Ingles Group adhere to the following guiding principles for the effective handling of Trade Practices complaints.

**Visibility** – Information about how and where to complain is well publicized to all. Ingles Trade Practices Complaint Handling Policy and Complaints Form are available on the web site and all relevant staff are briefed on the procedures.

**Accessibility** - The complaints handling process is easily accessible to all complainants either via the web page or is sent to complainant upon request.

**Responsiveness** – The Ingles Group aims to deal with complaints quickly and courteously. Receipt of each complaint is to be acknowledged to the complainant immediately. Complaints are to be addressed promptly in accordance with their urgency. The complainants are to be treated courteously and be kept informed of the progress of their complaint through the complaints-handling process.

**Objectivity** - Each complaint is addressed in an equitable, objective and unbiased manner through the complaints handling process.

**Charges** – Complaints handling process is at no charge to the complainant.

**Confidentiality** - Personally identifiable information concerning the complainant is only available where needed, but only for the purposes of addressing the complaint within the Ingles Group and is to be actively protected from disclosure, unless the customer or complainant expressly consents to its disclosure.

**Customer-focused approach** - The Ingles Group has adopted a customer-focused approach, is open to feedback including complaints, and is committed to resolving complaints by its actions.

**Accountability** - The Ingles Group has appointed a Trade Practices Compliance Officer to ensure that accountability for and reporting on the actions and decisions of the Ingles Group with respect to complaints handling is clearly established.

**Continual improvement** - The continual improvement of the complaints-handling process is by review and changes implemented on a biannual internal and annually external basis.

## ***PROCEDURES***

When a COMPLAINT is received by Ingles Group

### **Written complaint**

Acknowledge the complaint in writing to the complainant as soon as practical within 24 hrs and enclose a copy of this Complaints Handling and Dispute Resolution Policy.

Refer it immediately to the Compliance Officer

The Compliance Officer will respond to the complainant, in writing, within seven (7) days, or at a later date if agreed to by the Complainant.

If the complaint is accepted, we will arrange restitution (if applicable) within seven (7) days of our written response, or at a later date, if agreed to by the Complainant.

### **Oral Complaint**

Resolve it on the spot to the client's satisfaction.

If this is not achieved send a copy of this complaints handling policy to the complainant and refer the complaint to the Compliance Officer.

### **All Complaints**

All Relevant Staff when dealing with a complaint:

- Must act in good faith when dealing with the complaint
- Must be objective
- Must investigate the complaint by seeking all information from the complainant and Ingles Group Staff.
- The emphasis must be on resolving the problem not assigning blame

All other relevant staff: Complete the Ingles Complaints Form (Attachment A) found on Ingles Intranet site and notify the Compliance Officer.

### **Forms**

Ingles Group Complaints Form can be complete in two ways:

Manual      Open Complaints Form found on the Ingles Group Intranet site under Forms / Policy in Forms. Click the Print out button, Fill in the form and send to the Compliance Officer.

Electronic      Open Complaints Form (Excel) found on the W: Company drive in the Complaints folder. Click the Data Entry button, Fill in the form. ( Note : when asked to enable macros click yes)

Trade Practices Complaints Handling Policy Document can be found on the Ingles Group Intranet site under Forms / Policy in ACCC.

## **Compliance Officer**

The Compliance Officer must ensure:

- Guiding Principles are adhered to
- All steps outlined within this policy are carried out
- Maintain the records for all complaint matters
- Carry out education and or training of all relevant staff both initially and annually

## **Complaints Register**

The Compliance Officer must ensure that a Complaints Register is established, maintained and kept up to date. The register is comprised of a copy of each Complaint Form.

The Compliance Officer must periodically review the Register amongst other thing to check that:

Complaints are being handled appropriately, including in accordance with this Policy, and within the required time frames.  
Systemic or recurring complaints are being identified, and the cause of those complaints is being identified and remedied.

The register must be tabled at least biannually to the directors.

## **Review**

The Compliance Officer is responsible for ensuring this Policy is adhered to.

Quarterly, the Compliance Officer must review this Policy and report the outcome to The Ingles Group directors.

When reviewing the Policy, consideration must be given as to whether the Policy:

- Continues to comply with all applicable legislative requirements
- Is efficiently delivering effective outcomes.
- Tested against documented performance standards (Attachment B)

**ATTACHMENT A**



COMPLAINTS HANDLING FORM

COMPLAINANT			
NAME	FIRST <input type="text"/>	LAST <input type="text"/>	PHONE <input type="text"/>
ADDRESS	<input type="text"/>		EMAIL <input type="text"/>
			NOTE <input type="text"/>
		POST CODE <input type="text"/>	
SUBURB / CITY	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
COMPLAINT			
DATE	<input type="text"/>	NUMBER	<input type="text"/>
DEPARTMENT	<input type="text"/>	VIA	<input type="checkbox"/> Oral <input type="checkbox"/> Email <input type="checkbox"/> Written
CATEGORY	<input type="text"/>	TYPE	<input type="checkbox"/> Enquiry <input type="checkbox"/> Complaint <input type="checkbox"/> Dispute
DETAILS	<input type="text"/>		
RESOLUTION			
DATES	ACKNOWLEDGE <input type="text"/>	RESPONSE <input type="text"/>	RESOLVE <input type="text"/>
DETAILS	<input type="text"/>		
NOTE	Departments: Sales, Housing, Golf Course, Commercial, Land Development, Other Categories: Minor, Moderate, Urgent, Major		

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**ATTACHMENT B****Documented Performance Standards**

No	Action Required	Timeframe
1	Copy of The Ingles Group's Complaints Handling Policy is send to customers who ask for them.	Within 24 hrs
2	Oral complaints not resolved "on the spot" and written complaint to be referred to the Compliance Officer.	Immediately
3	Compliance Officer to write to complainant acknowledging receipt of complaint, and forwarding copy of Ingles Complaints Handling Policy	Within 24 hrs
4	Compliance Officer to advise complainant in writing of outcome and (if complaint not resolved to complainant's satisfaction) advise complainant in writing of availability of external dispute resolution mechanism.	Within 7 days of receiving complaint
5	Complaints and Disputes Register – Compliance Officer to : A record complaint on Register B keep Register/ Log updated about the complaint	A Within 7 days of receipt B Within 45 days of receipt