

Issue Resolution and Complaint Management Policy.

External Stakeholders and Customers.

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Authorised by:	Bruce Easton, Managing Director

1. Introduction

Our vision is to be the company of choice in enabling householders and business owners to implement high-quality, energy saving technologies; therefore, Ecovantage consistently encourages feedback from our customers and other stakeholders. with a view that any complaint or issue is an opportunity to improve customer satisfaction by developing and strengthening our processes, systems and engagement.

At Ecovantage, our priority is customer satisfaction; we have processes and procedures in place to reduce the likelihood of a customer or stakeholder complaint in the event that a product or a service does not meet the desired standard or outcome. In the event a customer or a stakeholder reports an issue, Ecovantage staff are equipped to resolve the matter to prevent it from escalating to a complaint.

Policy Purpose

This policy provides Ecovantage staff, customers and stakeholders clarity around the difference between issue and complaint management and the necessary communication required to promptly facilitate issue resolution to prevent it escalating to a complaint.

This policy should be accessible to customers and stakeholders via our website <http://www.ecovantage.com.au/dispute-resolution>, along with the supporting process regarding how to escalate an issue relating to product and services with Ecovantage.

Policy Scope

This policy applies to all Ecovantage branch offices and other places where work is carried out including work from home offices and onsite locations. It applies to all Ecovantage employees, customers and stakeholders.

Key Points

1. Issue resolution is a routine process that occurs as a result of a customer or stakeholder reporting an issue relating to a product and or service provided by Ecovantage.
2. A customer or stakeholder complaint is the escalation of an issue that has not been resolved in a satisfactory manner.
3. A customer or key stakeholder may provide negative feedback, suggestions for improvement or expression of dissatisfaction, without requesting an issue to be resolved or raising a formal complaint.

Accountability flows from the CEO, through Senior and Operational Managers to staff handling an issue, complaint and or feedback and consists of ensuring that a robust system is in place and that all staff understand how to operate within its parameters.

Definitions

- **Incident** an individual occurrence or event often occurring in connection with something else that can lead to serious consequences.
- **Issue** a concern or dissatisfaction with a product and or service that is important enough to a stakeholder or customer to bring to the attention of others for resolution.
- **Complaint** the escalation of an issue that has not been resolved to the satisfaction of a stakeholder or customer, ultimately requiring escalation.

2. Issue Resolution

Each issue will be addressed in a calm, fair, objective and unbiased manner to ensure that the best possible outcome is achieved for the customer, stakeholder and other impacted parties.

Issues are to be promptly assessed for urgency, severity and required action, with the customer and or stakeholder advised of the action to be taken and the expected timeframe for resolution, including an explanation of the process, the roles and responsibilities of each party involved and the possible or likely outcomes of the resolution.

2.1 Receipt and Evaluation of Issues

Customers and stakeholders can report an issue via:

- Telephone - 1300 721 335 during business hours
- Email - customer.service@ecovantage.com.au
- Completing an online form - <https://ecovantage.com.au/dispute-resolution/>
- Mail - Ecovantage, PO Box 390, ABBOTSFORD VIC 3067 (Not recommended for urgent issues)
- In person - through an on site discussion with an Ecovantage representative
- From another agency or body, including the [Commonwealth Ombudsman](#)

It is the responsibility of the receiving employee to promptly assess the urgency, severity and required action, referencing the [Issue and Complaint Management Procedure](#).

Front line workers (Installers and Customer Service, Operations and Sales staff) will handle straight forward, minor issues (low – medium severity). Where issues can be dealt with immediately, they will be resolved. All issues and the actions taken are then recorded in the Ecovantage CRM (Hubspot). In the case of an installer, the issue and resolution must be forwarded to their Account Manager, Operations CoOrdinator and or the Compliance Team. This forms the basis of the monthly complaints register which is also used for energy retailers.

2.2 Issues Relating to Ecovantage Employees

If an issue is reported and relates to an Ecovantage employee's conduct or customer service, Ecovantage will follow their Employee Performance Management process to address the issue effectively with the staff member to effectively remediate and prevent reoccurrence. All issues and the actions taken are then recorded in the Ecovantage Human Resource Information System, Employment Hero as a 'ticket'.

Retraining will be conducted with the staff member in the Code of Conduct and Customer Service standards. In the event of reoccurrence, the staff member will be provided with a written warning and formal performance management plan will be implemented to monitor performance.

3. Complaint Management

3.1 All Ecovantage Employees

It is our aim to make the customer experience as pleasant as possible, and Ecovantage endeavours to address each issue as a learning experience and opportunity to improve our services. It is the responsibility of all employees to find effective and swift resolutions to issues as they arise to prevent it becoming an escalation and subsequently a complaint. Employees are encouraged, where possible, to implement proactive processes to minimise the reoccurrence of a reported issue.

All issues and complaints involving customers are to follow the principles below - using the three 'R' method as per the [ACCC](#):

- Repair - address the problem (return visit etc), ensure customer satisfaction.
- Replace - the product as required - full or partial.
- Refund - provide a partial/full (as appropriate/agreed) to the agreed value.

Employees are expected to work closely with their Managers on each case and obtain permission for each step and escalation as needed.

3.2 Managers

Our managers have additional leadership and legal responsibilities for:

- Implementing and ensuring compliance with this policy and the [Issue and Complaint Management Procedure](#) in their department or work area.
- Issue and complaint resolutions fall within the levels of [Ecovantage's Authorisation Mandate](#).

- The health, safety and wellbeing of all people under their care when handling issues and complaints.

Complaints which cannot be handled by front line staff (high or severe) must be forwarded to the appropriate line manager and or the Business Unit General Manager, who will communicate directly with the customer to ensure that a satisfactory resolution is achieved.

Note: In South Australia, retailers must be advised when an issue becomes a “complaint” or “dispute” and is further escalated. This is reported following the Ecovantage [REPS Compliance Plan](#).

Where complaints are an accusation of theft or fraud, the incident will be brought to the attention of the CEO and General Manager, Finance and Operations for investigation.

In cases where the customer does not accept the outcome proposed or achieved by the General Manager, the complainant will be advised of the alternative options for resolution. These include approaching the Ombudsman, ESCOSA, Office of Fair Trading and/or other relevant regulatory bodies.

3.3 Electricians, Installers and Partners

In the event an issue is discovered by, or reported to, an electrician, installer or partner, they are encouraged to attempt to resolve the problem immediately, preventing it from becoming a complaint. If the problem cannot easily be resolved and it is not an emergency, then they should follow the Complaint Management Procedure provided during onboarding training.

Note: In Victoria, the accredited person MUST manage the conduct of the scheme participant, any scheme participants carrying out a regulated action for or on behalf of the accredited person; and any other person carrying out a regulated action in relation to a prescribed activity for which the accredited person will be creating a certificate. This covers consumer complaints relating to the conduct of the aforementioned parties carrying out a regulated action; scheduling the prescribed activity; and creating certificates for the prescribed activity.

3.4 Complaints Involving Multiple Parties

When a complaint involves multiple organisations, special consideration should be given to coordinating communication with all parties involved. Subject to privacy and confidentiality obligations, communication and information exchange between the organisations should be pre-arranged, where practicable and appropriate, and facilitated by Ecovantage, who will remain in contact with the complainant.

3.5 Conduct

Ecovantage employees are trained to identify unreasonable conduct by complainants and to handle the issue in a calm and fair manner.

Where a complainant is rude, threatening or abusive towards staff (e.g. swearing and demonstrating threatening behaviours) the employee may exercise their discretion to minimise their exposure or control the intensity of the situation by requesting the complainant to call

back after they have calmed down. The complainant will be given clear advice and reasons why. Notes will be taken accordingly for future reference.

4. Health Safety and Environment

In the event that a complaint is the result of an incident, the Business Unit General Manager is to be notified immediately and will accordingly notify the CEO.

In the event of a Health, Safety and Environment (HSE) incident, the HSE Management Plan for safety incidents must be followed. The incident will be logged in our incident register.

5. Training

All employees are trained on the handling of customer complaints which consists of the following:

- The approach and desired outcomes of Ecovantage for management of complaints
- The benefits of addressing an issue as promptly and as efficiently as practicable
- Development of skills in active listening, problem solving and communication, including engaging with customers that have special needs or other requirements.
- Use and purpose of the systems utilised for recording, management and report of issues
- The appropriate timing and use of escalation processes both within and external to Ecovantage.
- The value that effective engagement and management of issues can have on building a stronger and more resilient organisation.

6. Privacy

Personal information about any individual will be handled according to all relevant privacy laws and ethical obligations when managing a complaint.

7. Reporting

Ecovantage is required to report any complaints that may constitute any serious breach, complaint, dispute or legal ramification, in accordance with the Complaint Reporting KPI in our contracts with energy retailers. Ecovantage will notify energy retailers within the documented timeframes as outlined in individual contracts and will provide a monthly report of all complaints which relate to all submissions. The purpose of this report is to provide confidence to energy retailers that any complaints or disputes have been handled correctly and to highlight trend analysis. All and any updates in the investigation and subsequent outcomes will be communicated to the appropriate energy retailer within the timeframes documented in the contract.

Ecovantage also reports all reported issues as part of their Risk Management process to identify any trends and implement improvements.

8. Non-Compliance and Policy Breaches

Employees who are not fully compliant with this policy will be provided with additional information, instruction, training, or supervisory support to assist them to meet the standards required.

Employees who are in blatant breach of this policy and who have subsequently placed themselves, others or the company at risk will be subject to disciplinary action that may lead to termination of employment.

9. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years, and when there are legislative changes, changes in the workplace or the systems of work, and at the request of a Health and Safety/HSE Representative.

Related Policies

- [Ecovantage Authorisation Mandate](#)
- [Issue Resolution Guidelines](#)
- [Customer Payment Policy](#)
- [Ecovantage Code of Conduct - Telemarketers and Doorknocking](#)

Where to go for More Information

- Your Manager or Supervisor
- The Clean Energy Regulator <http://www.cleanenergyregulator.gov.au/>

Related Laws, Standards, and Compliance Codes

Standards

- [Commonwealth Ombudsman](#)
- [Clean Energy Regulator](#)
- [Essential Services Commission](#)
- [Essential Services Commission - SA](#)
- [Victorian Energy Upgrades program](#)
- [VEET Code of Conduct Regulations 2022](#)

Laws

- [Work Health and Safety Act](#)
- [Australian Consumer Law](#)

OFFICE USE ONLY:

Update Register	
Document:	Issue Resolution and Complaint Management Policy
Policy Owner:	COO
Author:	Tania Oldaker, COO

In Consultation With:	National Compliance Manager Account and Operations Managers Customer Service and Sales Manager
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Person Responsible For Review:	COO

Record Of Revisions

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3.0	January 2024	All	All	Business alignment