Embedded Network Dispute Resolution and Complaint Handling Policy

(Electricity, Gas and Water)

Version 6.2

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1. Introduction

Vicinity Centres (Vicinity) is committed to providing fair, transparent and efficient complaint handling and dispute resolution processes in relation to the on-supply of electricity, gas and water.

Vicinity recognises the right of all individuals to raise complaints, have those complaints addressed respectfully and in a timely manner, and to be treated with dignity throughout the process.

This Policy aligns with **Australian Standard AS 10002:2022** and **International Standard ISO 10002:2018** for complaint management

2. Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to set out Vicinity's approach to managing embedded network complaints and disputes by:

- Establishing a structured and consistent approach to complaint handling and dispute resolution;
- Ensure complaints are managed fairly, efficiently and transparently;
- Define responsibilities for managing complaints across Vicinity;
- Support compliance with regulatory obligations relating to embedded networks; and
- Promote continuous improvement through complaint monitoring and resolution outcomes.

3. Scope

This Policy applies to:

- All complaints and disputes relating to Vicinity's embedded network services (electricity, gas and water);
- All customers, tenants and stakeholders interacting with Vicinity in relation to utility services;
- All Vicinity Team Members and service providers involved in complaint handling; and
- All embedded network operations managed by Vicinity and Centre Management Teams.

4. Definitions

The following definitions are relevant for the purpose of this Policy:

Table 1
General Policy Definitions

Term	Definition
Complaint	An expression of dissatisfaction made to or about Vicinity, related to its services, staff or processes, where a response or resolution is expected.
Dispute	A complaint that has not been resolved to the satisfaction of the customer and requires escalation or formal determination.
Customer	Any tenant, occupier or user receiving electricity, gas or water services through Vicinity's embedded network.
Embedded Network	A private network for distributing electricity, gas or water within a property or site.
Ombudsman	An independent body providing external dispute resolution services for energy and water complaints.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

5.1 All Team Members

- Comply with this Policy and associated procedures;
- Treat complainants with respect and fairness;
- Escalate complaints appropriately; and
- Maintain accurate records of complaints.

5.2 Centre Management Teams

- Act as the first point of contact for complaints;
- Assist in resolving complaints at the local level; and
- Liaise with the Embedded Network Team where required.

5.3 Embedded Network Team

- Monitor complaint trends and systemic issues;
- Ensure alignment with standards and regulatory frameworks; and
- Report material issues to relevant governance committees.

6. Policy Principles

The principles below are the minimum standard expected for Vicinity:

6.1 Customer – Centric Approach

Vicinity will treat all complainants with dignity, fairness and respect and ensure accessibility to complaint processes

6.2 Timely Resolution

Complaints will be addressed promptly, with timeframes communicated where delays occur.

6.3 Transparency and Communication

Customers will be kept informed of progress and outcomes throughout the complaint lifecycle.

6.4 Continuous Improvement

Complaint outcomes will be used to identify improvements to systems, processes and service delivery.

6.5 Escalation and Independence

Customers have access to internal escalation and independent external dispute resolution mechanisms if required

7. Complaint Lodgement

Customers can lodge complaints via:

- Email
- Phone
- Mail
- Direct contact with Centre Management

Contact Details:

Vicinity Centres Pty Ltd
Level 4, Chadstone Tower One
1341 Dandenong Road, Chadstone VIC 3148
Phone: 03 8657 4110
Email: electricity.queries@vicinity.zendesk.com

To ensure we can review and respond to your complaint or enquiry as quickly as possible, please provide the required Information listed below:

- Full name
- Contact details
- Site/location details
- Description of complaint
- Desired resolution
- Supporting documentation (if available)

8. Complaint Handling Process

Upon receiving a complaint, Vicinity will:

- Record complaint details in the complaint management system;
- Acknowledge receipt of the complaint;
- Assess and investigate the matter within a reasonable timeframe;
- Communicate progress updates to the complainant;
- Work with relevant stakeholders to resolve the issue; and
- Provide a formal response outlining the outcome.

Where necessary, complaints may be escalated internally to a higher level of authority for review.

9. Dispute Resolution and Escalation

If a complaint cannot be resolved initially:

- Vicinity will advise expected resolution timeframes;
- The complaint may be escalated internally for further review; and
- Customers may request reconsideration by a senior representative.
- If a customer is not satisfied with Vicinity's response, you may escalate the matter to external bodies. We will inform you of the relevant state Energy and Water Ombudsman and/or other external dispute resolution scheme.

10. External Dispute Resolution

All our customers have the right to contact their state energy and water ombudsman, including to lodge a complaint or for free independent information and advice. Energy ombudsman schemes investigate and resolve complaints from customers of electricity and gas providers, and some water providers.

Apart from energy ombudsman schemes, you may also access other dispute-resolution organisations, including to lodge a complaint. These bodies provide independent advice and dispute resolution services, although assistance for embedded networks may be limited in some cases.

Example:

- Civil and Administrative Tribunals (e.g. VCAT, NCAT, QCAT)
- Courts or Tribunal in the state where these have jurisdiction.

Table 2
List of state Energy Ombudsman, Tribunals, and (other) organisations

State	Contact	Mail	Web	Phone
NSW	Energy & Water Ombudsman NSW (EWON)	Reply Paid 86550, Sydney South, NSW 1234	www.ewon.com.au	1800 246 545
NSW	NCAT – New South Wales Civil & Administrative Tribunal	GPO Box 4005, Sydney NSW 2001	www.ncat.nsw.gov.au	1300 006 228
QLD	QCAT -Queensland Civil & Administrative Tribunal	GPO Box 1639, Brisbane, Qld, 4001	www.qcat.qld.gov.au	1300 753 228
QLD	EWOQ - Energy and Water Ombudsman Queensland	PO Box 3640 South Brisbane, QLD 4001	www.ewoq.com.au	1800 662 837
SA	South Australia Small Business Commissioner	GPO Box 1264, Adelaide SA 5001	www.sasbc.sa.gov.au	1800 072 722
SA	Energy Industry Ombudsman SA	GPO Box 2947, Adelaide SA 5001	www.ewosa.com.au	1800 665 565
VIC	Energy and Water Ombudsman (Victoria)	Reply Paid 469, Melbourne, VIC 8060	https://ewov.com.au/	1800 500 509
VIC	VCAT – Victoria Civil Administrative Tribunal	55 King Street Melbourne VIC 3000	www.vcat.vic.gov.au	1300 018 228
WA	Western Australia State Administrative Tribunal	GPO Box U1991, Perth 6845	www.sat.justice.wa.gov.au	1300 306 017
TAS	Energy and Water Ombudsman TAS	GPO Box 960 Hobart TAS 7001	www.ombudsman.tas.gov.au	1800 001 170
TAS	CBOS-Consumer, Building and Occupational Services	PO Box 56, Rosny Park, Tasmania 7018	https://cbos.tas.gov.au/	1300 654 499

11. Reporting and Monitoring

Vicinity will:

- Maintain records of all complaints;
- Monitor complaint trends and resolution outcomes;
- Identify systemic issues and implement corrective actions; and
- Report material issues to internal governance frameworks.

12. Consequences of Non-Compliance

Failure to comply with this Policy may result in:

- Additional training;
- Performance management actions;
- Disciplinary action (where applicable); and
- Escalation of systemic failures to senior management.

13. Review

This Policy will be reviewed at every year, or earlier if required due to regulatory or operational changes, to ensure ongoing effectiveness.