



**Australian Government**

**Attorney-General's Department**

**Indigenous Justice and  
Legal Assistance Division**

## **Dealing with complaints about Night Patrol Services in the Northern Territory**

When taking a complaint about a Service Provider, officers should take note of:

- the complainant's name and where they are from
- the date
- the name of the Service Provider in question, and
- details of the complaint.

### **Procedure**

1. Advise the complainant that Service Providers have procedures in place to deal with complaints and they should contact the relevant Night Patrol Regional Manager in the first instance.
2. The complainant should also contact the relevant Indigenous Coordination Centre Manager, especially if the complaint is coming from a Government Business Manager or Shire Services Manager.
3. Advise the complainant that if they are not satisfied with the response they receive from the Night Patrol Regional Manager or the ICC Manager, they can then write to the Director of the Northern Territory Service Delivery Team at the following address:

Director  
Northern Territory Service Delivery Team  
Indigenous Policy and Service Delivery Branch  
Attorney-General's Department  
Robert Garran Offices  
National Circuit  
BARTON ACT 2600

**Note:** the complainant, as part of their letter to the Director, must include permission for the Department to release a copy of their complaint to the Service Provider if they wish the complaint to be investigated by the Department

4. If there are literacy and language issues that impact on the complainant's ability to make a written statement, offer to transcribe the details of their complaint and advise that we will forward a copy to them for checking and signing. Once the complaint has

been signed and returned to the Department we will then follow-up with the service provider.

**Note:** if the complainant is unable to read a written transcript of their complaint, and is unwilling to ask their service provider for assistance in this respect, advise them to contact their local Indigenous Co-ordination Centre. A full list of ICC's can be found at: <http://www.indigenous.gov.au/icc/>

Where the complainant does not wish to contact the Night Patrol Regional Manager, is not willing to dictate a written statement, but nevertheless wants their verbal complaint acted upon:

- advise them that the Department is unable to pursue their complaint with the Service Provider concerned without a formal written complaint; and
  - advise them that you will make a file note with the details of the complaint for future reference.
5. Make a file note about the complaint.
  6. Place the file note on the project file for the relevant Service Provider.
  7. Enter the details of the complaint into the Complaints Register.
  8. Where appropriate, send a copy of the file note to the Director and Assistant Director for 'information only'.

### **Important Information**

When a complainant makes the effort to contact the Department, they just want to be heard, understood and respected.<sup>1</sup>

Let the complainant speak and do not interrupt – even if the complaint is not about a Service Provider.

Be mindful of the APS Values. As a public servant, you must deliver services “fairly, effectively, impartially and courteously to the Australian public” and “be sensitive to the diversity of the Australian public”.

### **Further Information**

If the complaint is about the Department, refer the person to the Department's complaints procedure on the Department's website. The address is:

[\[http://www.ag.gov.au/www/agd/agd.nsf/Page/About\\_the\\_DepartmentMaking\\_a\\_complaint\]](http://www.ag.gov.au/www/agd/agd.nsf/Page/About_the_DepartmentMaking_a_complaint)

Alternatively, they can call the Director, Corporate Governance and Coordination Section, by telephone (02) 6250 6707, facsimile (02) 6250 5948 or email [complaints@ag.gov.au](mailto:complaints@ag.gov.au).

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<sup>1</sup> *Understanding complainant behaviour, Information Sheet 5 – Dealing with difficult complainants, Ombudsman Western Australia, March 2005.*