Making a Building Consent Authority Complaint

Council works within the building regulatory framework when providing the services related to building consent processing, inspecting, and issuing Code Compliance Certificates. However sometimes issues arise.

Policy Statement

This Council is registered and accredited to carry out work as a Building Consent Authority (BCA) and is required to have a BCA Complaints Policy.

The BCA is committed to the delivery of quality services to meet the needs of its customers in line with its responsibilities as a BCA and Council's 'making it easier to do business' strategy.

The BCA welcomes feedback from customers as this provides opportunities for learning and improving services. We want to hear from you if you feel dissatisfied with any part of our service related to building consent processing or inspection and issuing Code Compliance Certificates.

Learning from our mistakes is an important part of our continuous improvement. The BCA will always try to resolve complaints in a fair, timely and confidential manner to achieve positive outcomes for customers and staff.

Complaints that fall outside the scope of the responsibilities of a BCA will be passed to Council as a territorial authority for investigation and action. BCA complaints relate to an active building consent, specifically, after an application has been made and prior the code compliance certificate being issued.

Definition of a Complaint

For the purposes of the BCA process, a complaint is defined as a customer informing the Building Team either verbally or in writing that:

- They are dissatisfied with the standard of service they have received; and/or
- The Building Team have failed to do something required by statute or that it had agreed to do (for example exceeding statutory timeframes for processing building consents or not meeting published service levels); and/or
- They are dissatisfied with the way they have been treated.

Some situations will not be considered under this process, for example:

- Complaints that constitute a disagreement with, or refusal, to accept matters that the BCA is obliged or required by statute to apply.
- Complaints where another formal process has commenced.

If your issue is regarding a process or technical decision made by us about your building consent, please refer the matter to the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, for a Determination. You can find out more here: https://www.building.govt.nz/resolving-problems/resolution-options/determinations

Note: If a concern is verbal and is resolved at the first point of contact then this is not regarded as a 'complaint' but as a 'business as usual' enquiry or discussion and does not need to be recorded (except where the customer requests a complaint be recorded).

Every effort will be made to resolve an issue as quickly as possible at the first point of contact. If the issue cannot be resolved at the first point of contact, then it will be managed in accordance with this policy.

Monitoring

All complaints will be investigated and dealt with in confidence, consistent with the needs of the investigation. To enable the BCA's policy and procedures to be adequately reviewed and revised, monitoring of compliance will be undertaken.

The information will be used to monitor BCA performance, highlight areas of failure and feed into the continuous improvement process.

Responsibility and Review

The BCA Complaints Process is the responsibility of the Building Consents Manager and will be subject to regular review.

Service Standards

The BCA will ensure that:

- Investigations will be undertaken in a way that ensures objectivity and fairness to all parties.
- Complaints will be prioritised according to risk and urgency.
- Complaints will be responded to as quickly as possible by the most appropriate method.
- A full response will be made within two working days, or an acknowledgement will be sent. If the issue needs more time, we will let you know and keep you updated.
- Remedies will be proportionate to the issues raised.
- Complaint records will be kept and will cover:
  - details of the investigation,
  - the outcome (e.g., whether the complaint is upheld, action taken, apology, or reason why Council is unable to assist), and
  - information on the right of further redress and escalation if the customer remains dissatisfied.

Process and Escalation

Complaints should initially be directed to the Building Consents Manager.

Please send your complaint to: building.enquiries@huttcity.govt.nz.

Once received, complaints are assigned to a senior member of the Building Team for investigation.

The senior member of the Building Team investigates the complaint and reports the result of the investigation back to the complainant.

If necessary, the complaint is escalated for investigation and resolution.

Where the complaint relates to the actions of a senior member of the Building Team, it is investigated by the Head of Building Control.

If necessary, the Head of Building Control escalates the complaint to the Director of Economy and Development.