

LIONS AUSTRALIA

Complaint Handling Procedure

lionsaustralia
we serve



www.lionsclubs.org.au



COMPLAINT HANDLING PROCEDURE

Definitions and structure

Complainant: Party making the complaint.

Respondent: Party that is subject of the complaint.

Multiple District 201: Multiple District 201 of Lions Clubs International Inc. is the legal entity of Lions Australia. Its purposes, under its constitution are:

“To promote the Purposes of the International Association applicable to Multiple District 201.

To hold manage and control an annual convention of the Multiple District.

To take appropriate action on all matters relating to the Multiple District consistent with the Constitution and By-Laws of the International Association and the policies of the International Board.

To establish and maintain Trusts and Foundations for the purpose of rendering help and assistance in the fields of community aid, emergency relief and international understanding.”

The Council (Board) of the Multiple District are the District Governors and the elected Council Chairperson. In Australia, Multiple District 201 is an Incorporated Association. The Multiple District organises and coordinates clubs and Districts within Australia and PNG but does not control them. The Multiple District has responsibility for Multiple District Programs and activities authorised by the Multiple District Convention or Council.

Multiple District personnel: Members of Multiple Districts Committees as published in the “Terms of Office” document, members of the Management Group as defined in the Constitution, staff, and members of the Multiple District Council when acting in that capacity.

Multiple District Executive: The Council Chairperson, Executive Officer, National Legal Officer, and National Treasurer are the Executive of the Association.

Districts: The Multiple District is made up of individual districts. This structure is determined by the International Constitution of Lions Clubs International, and each District is administered independently of the Multiple District.

60-100 Lions Clubs are organised into each District, led by a District Governor that is elected at the District Convention. The District organises clubs within the District but does not control them. Districts have responsibility for District Programs and activities authorised by the District Convention or Cabinet.

National Office

The National Office is the Secretariat of Multiple District 201 and a contact point for members of the public.

The National Office provides services to the Multiple District Council (Board), Committees of Council responsible for approved national projects and the Management Group.

Revision No.	3.0	Relates to:	All complaints
Revision Date	1 December 2022	Applies to	All
Author	Rob Oerlemans	Authorised by	MD201 Council



It also provides a referral point for members of the public to contact Foundations, Districts and Clubs that operate independently.

Staff and management are committed to continual improvement of processes and services and welcome information from members and the Council about issues, problems, and difficulties, as well as comments about positive experience.

Structure of Lions Clubs in Australia

The structure of Lions Clubs within Australia and internationally, though appearing hierarchical, does not have the expected decision-making tree of hierarchical organisations. This influences how complaints are managed.

Directing complaints depends on identifying that part of the organisation that is accountable for resolving the complaint.

Lions Clubs International based in Chicago, USA: The parent organisation establishes the Constitution, by-laws, and other rules to which all Lions Clubs must subscribe. Lions Clubs International controls the charter of a Lions Club. A club may not operate without a charter approved by Lions Clubs International.

Lions Club: Each local Lions Club once chartered by Lions Clubs International, operates independently provided it follows the rules of Lions Clubs International including payment of dues (fees). Many Lions Clubs within Australia are incorporated as Associations.

Lion Membership: Membership of a Lions Club is by invitation. Only the member club has the right to accept or terminate the membership of a Lion, subject to its rules.

Revision No.	3.0	Relates to:	All complaints
Revision Date	1 December 2022	Applies to	All
Author	Rob Oerlemans	Authorised by	MD201 Council



Procedure

- 1) Who can make a complaint?
 - a) Complaints may be received from members of the public, representatives of government departments, media, commercial organisations, and members of Lions Clubs within Australia and overseas.

- 2) How to make a complaint?
 - a) Complaints may be received through online enquiry form, mail, e-mail, social media or verbally by telephone or in person.
 - b) Where complaints are made verbally, the complainant will be encouraged to submit the complaint in writing. The reason for this is to ensure that the complaint is accurately documented according to the view of the complainant to avoid future misunderstandings.
 - c) If the complainant does not wish to document their complaint in writing, it will be documented by the staff member receiving the call, with a notation to that effect.
 - d) Written complaints will be acknowledged with an appropriate direction. (3c)

- 3) Who will be told about the complaint?
 - a) Contact details and a brief summary of the complaint will be recorded by the staff member taking the call.
 - b) The complaint will be recorded in the complaint register.
 - c) **The complainant will be directed to on-forward the complaint to the accountable body.** (See “Who will be responsible for handling the complaint?”)
 - d) A record of the complaint documented by the National Office will be forwarded to the responsible District Governor.
 - e) Complaints may be reviewed by the Multiple District Executive.

- 4) Who will be responsible for handling the complaint?

Complaints will be managed by the Lions entity that is accountable for the project or activity.

 - a) Multiple District projects, activities, and personnel: - Complaints against adopted Multiple District projects and activities and Multiple District personnel will be managed by the Executive Officer, in consultation with the Executive. (In the case of complaints about the behaviour, actions, and omissions of the Executive Officer, these will be referred to the Council Chairperson.)
 - b) Foundations: Complaints against Lions Foundations, other than those that are adopted as Multiple District Projects, should be directed to the Foundation Chairperson. The National Office will provide complainants with the contact details of the relevant chairperson.
 - c) Districts: Complaints against District Administrations, projects and activities should be referred to the relevant District Governor. The National Office will provide complainants with the contact details of the relevant District Governor.
 - d) District Governor: External complaints against the District Governor, in that capacity (rather than as a member of the MD Council), should be referred the District Cabinet. Note that internal complaints should follow the District Dispute Resolution procedure shown in the links below.
 - e) Clubs: Complaints against individual Lions Clubs or their members should be referred to the President of that Lions Club. The National Office will provide complainants with the contact details of the relevant President. Complainants may forward a copy to the District Governor for information.
 - f) Complaints about a Club President: Complaints about the Club President should be directed to the Board of Directors of that Lions Club through the Club Secretary.

Revision No.	3.0	Relates to:	All complaints
Revision Date	1 December 2022	Applies to	All
Author	Rob Oerlemans	Authorised by	MD201 Council



- 5) Complaint risk assessment: The Lions Australia Customer Service Officer (or other staff member receiving the complaint) will conduct a preliminary risk assessment to assess whether the substance of the complaint is likely to result in immediate harm to any persons. If so, that complaint will be escalated to the Executive Officer for further assessment and action.

Note: In the case where the complaint relates to allegations of abuse or risk of harm to children or young people, special procedures are to be followed.

[Refer to the Lions Australia Child Safe Policy](#) and/or the relevant club or District Child Safe Policy.

- 6) Feedback and documentation of outcomes.
 - a) Where the Multiple District is accountable for the complaint, the outcome will be documented in the complaint register. Complainants will be advised by e-mail or letter of the outcome of the complaint.
 - b) Where other parties are accountable for the complaint, they should be requested to advise the complainant of the outcome.
 - c) Other parties are encouraged to provide advice to the Lions Australia Customer Service Officer regarding the outcome of complaints so that this can be recorded in the register. This assists in managing future enquiries.

- 7) Appeal and review
 - a) Each Lions Club is independent and is responsible for resolving complaints for which the club is accountable. A complainant may seek advice from the District Governor but should note that the District Governor has no authority to overrule the decision of a club board.
 - b) A Lions Club is expected to manage complaints giving consideration to its 'social licence' to operate. This 'social licence' refers to the ongoing support of the community for the activities and projects of the Lions Club. Clubs survive and thrive due to the goodwill they hold within their communities.
 - c) If a complainant believes a Lions Club or member has acted unlawfully, they should direct the complaint to the appropriate authority.

- 8) Anonymous complaints
 - a) Anonymous complaints will be logged in the complaint register.
 - b) Investigation of any anonymous complaints will be at the discretion of the Executive Officer.

- 9) Member complaints
 - a) This procedure also applies to complaints between Lions Clubs and complaints between Lions members.
 - b) Disputes
 - i) Not every complaint results in a dispute.
 - ii) Disputes between members of the Lions family – Members, Lions Clubs, Leo Clubs, Districts and Multiple Districts should follow the procedures set out by Multiple District 201 and Lions Clubs International.
 - iii) Formal procedures regarding dispute resolution have been established by Lions Clubs International and can be found here.

[Dispute Resolution procedures](#)

Revision No.	3.0	Relates to:	All complaints
Revision Date	1 December 2022	Applies to	All
Author	Rob Oerlemans	Authorised by	MD201 Council

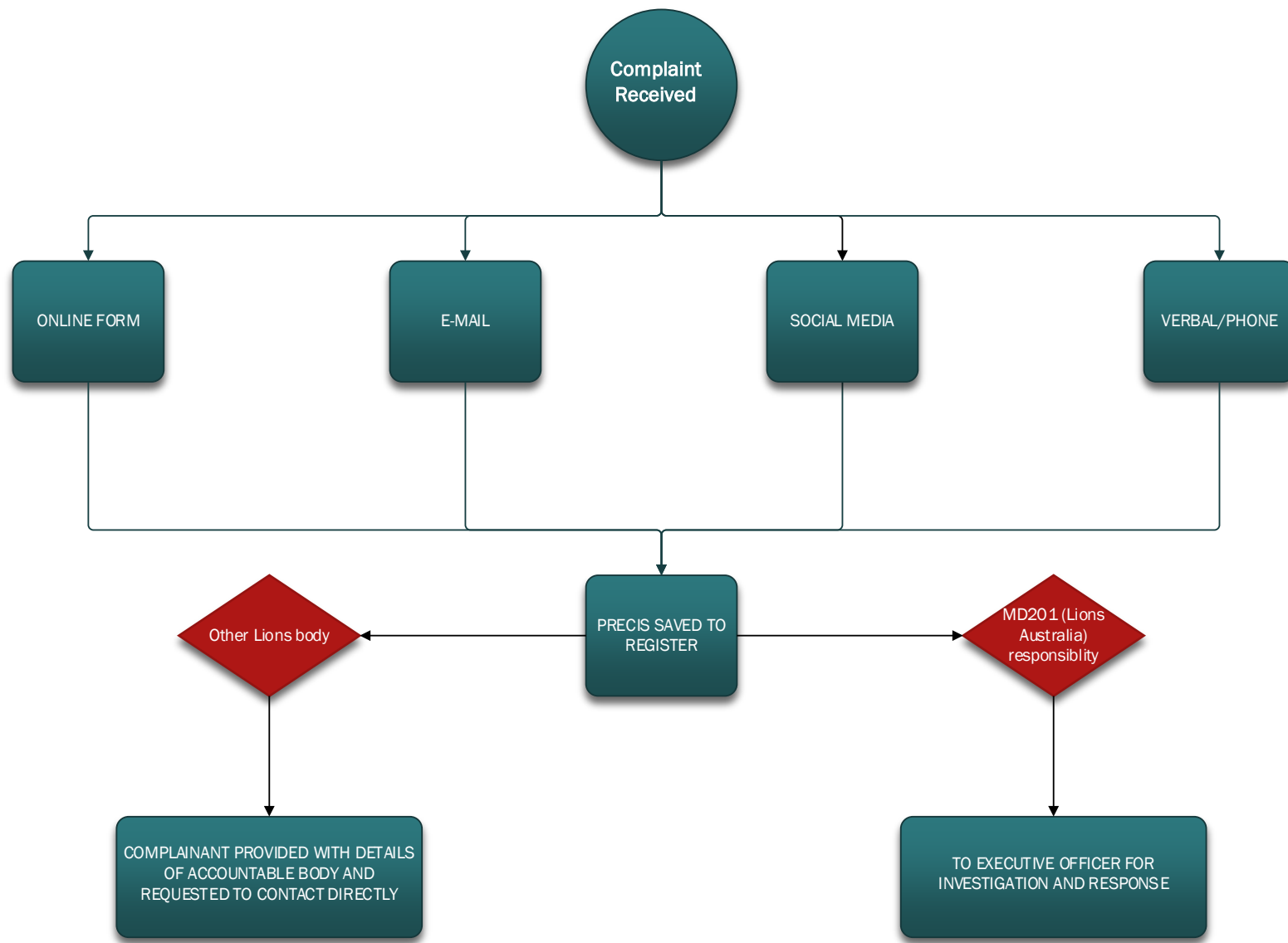
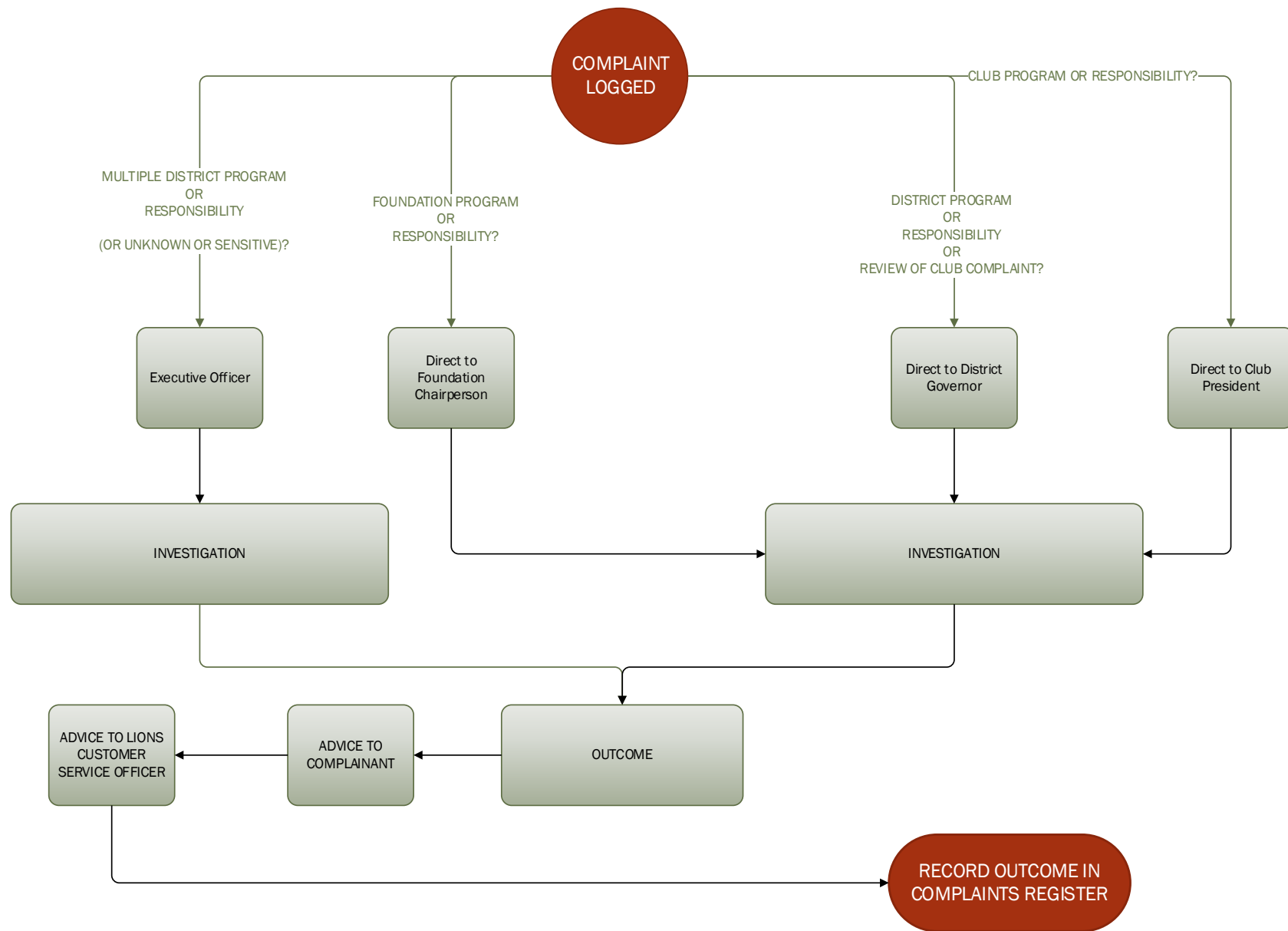


Figure 1 - COMPLAINT SOURCE

Revision No.	3.0	Relates to:	All complaints
Revision Date	1 December 2022	Applies to	All
Author	Rob Oerlemans	Authorised by	MD201 Council



Revision No.	3.0	Relates to:	All complaints
Revision Date	1 December 2022	Applies to	All
Author	Rob Oerlemans	Authorised by	MD201 Council

Figure 2 - COMPLAINT HANDLING

Revision No.	3.0	Relates to:	All complaints
Revision Date	1 December 2022	Applies to	All
Author	Rob Oerlemans	Authorised by	MD201 Council