

## THE HARBOUR TRUST'S FORMAL COMPLAINTS PROCESS

The Sydney Harbour Federation Trust (Harbour Trust) respects the right of the community to complain if they are dissatisfied with our agency's services. We take formal complaints seriously and commit to consistent, fair and confidential complaint handling as well as the prompt resolution of complaints. This document explains what a formal complaint is and isn't, how a person can lodge a formal complaint and our complaints handling process.

### WHAT IS AND ISN'T A FORMAL COMPLAINT

A formal complaint is a clear expression of dissatisfaction by a person or organisation about the Harbour Trust. A formal complaint must be made in writing by email or letter to the Executive Director. A complaint can be made through a representative.

Complaints made over the phone or face-to-face are not considered formal complaints. If you don't wish to submit a formal complaint in writing, our staff will attempt to resolve your complaint.

The following cases are not considered formal complaints under this process:

- Any communications advising the Harbour Trust of a hazard or damage to one of our properties;
- A written or verbal request, for example to clarify a matter or to fix an error you think we have made;
- A statement about what the Harbour Trust should or should not do;
- Comments about our plans and policies.

If you wish to raise one of these matters, email [info@harbourtrust.gov.au](mailto:info@harbourtrust.gov.au). We will respond to your feedback within 48 hours. If you wish to provide feedback, including suggestions, comments and compliments, visit [harbourtrust.gov.au](http://harbourtrust.gov.au) and complete the feedback form on our 'Contact Us' webpage.

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### HOW TO LODGE A FORMAL COMPLAINT

Please email formal complaints to [complaints@harbourtrust.gov.au](mailto:complaints@harbourtrust.gov.au) or mail them to:

The Executive Director  
Sydney Harbour Federation Trust  
PO Box 607  
Mosman NSW 2088

### OUR COMPLAINTS HANDLING PROCESS

Your formal complaint will be registered and referred to the Harbour Trust Complaint Handling Committee. Once the committee considers your formal complaint and investigates its merit, you will receive a written response from the Harbour Trust. Our aim is to respond as quickly as possible to formal complaints, and in most cases this will be within ten business days. If we think it will take longer, we will keep you informed of our progress.

Throughout our complaints handling process, we will treat you with courtesy and fairness at all times. In turn, we hope that you will be courteous and fair in any dealings with our staff. We will treat your complaint, and any information gathered in the process of investigating your complaint, confidentially within the Harbour Trust.

### ESCALATING A FORMAL COMPLAINT

If you are not satisfied with the Harbour Trust's response to your formal complaint, you can write to us and request a review. If you are still unhappy, you may wish to contact one of the following organisations:

#### **Commonwealth Ombudsman**

Tel: 1300 362 072

E-mail: [ombudsman@ombudsman.gov.au](mailto:ombudsman@ombudsman.gov.au)

Mail: GPO Box 442, Canberra ACT 2601

Web: [www.ombudsman.gov.au](http://www.ombudsman.gov.au)

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### Administrative Appeals Tribunal

Tel: 1800 228 333 or (02) 9276 5000

E-mail: [generalreviews@aat.gov.au](mailto:generalreviews@aat.gov.au)

Mail: GPO Box 9955, Sydney, NSW 2001

Web: [www.aat.gov.au](http://www.aat.gov.au)

### PERSISTENT AND VEXATIOUS COMPLAINTS

The Harbour Trust will not respond to complaints that are abusive towards staff or complaints that are frivolous or vexatious about Harbour Trust staff. If a person or group repeatedly raises the same issue as a complaint, we may ask that you only contact us with significant, new information about your complaint, or if you have a new complaint about a different issue.

### COMPLAINTS INVOLVING SERIOUS ALLEGATIONS

If the matter you raise appears to involve criminal activities, the Harbour Trust will refer the matter to the Australian Federal Police and/or the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions. Complaints about Harbour Trust staff members involving serious allegations such as fraud, conflict of interest, improper conduct or use of Harbour Trust equipment or facilities will be addressed by following our internal Code of Conduct and other relevant policies and procedures.

**Note:** *This document was last updated by the Harbour Trust in May 2019.*

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