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Position description

Position:	Principal Investigator	Direct Reports:	Lead Investigator
Functional Area:	Dispute Resolution	Classification:	Grade 5
Reporting to:	Assistant Ombudsman, Dispute Resolution		

Position purpose

The primary role of the Principal Investigator is to provide oversight and leadership to groups of investigations teams to ensure unresolved complaints are allocated and dealt with efficiently and effectively without compromising quality.

The Principal Investigator handles the most difficult and complex matters to find resolutions through investigation and conciliation and provides information and advice to the Assistant Ombudsman about complaint trends, recommending approaches to complaint management.

Principal Investigators work closely with other senior leaders, including Adjudicators and the Quality and User Experience Specialist. They provide expert input to development of training materials and deliver training, including for the Graduate Certificate in Dispute Resolution (Industry).

Principal Investigators also manage relationships with external stakeholders, including members and the regulator.

Team overview

The Dispute Resolution Team handles unresolved consumer and small business complaints about telecommunication services, using a range of methods, including conciliation and investigation.

Organisation overview

The Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman (the TIO) offers a free and independent service for resolving complaints about telephone or internet services. Most complaints that come to the TIO are resolved between the parties. To resolve complaints, the TIO uses a wide range of dispute resolution techniques including conciliation and investigation.

The TIO was established in 1993 and legislation requires telco providers to join the scheme. The TIO is not for profit, and independent of the Government, telecommunications companies, and consumer groups.

The TIO purpose is to provide an effective and efficient dispute resolution service for the telecommunications industry that complies with the Benchmarks for Industry based customer dispute resolution schemes. Achieving the purpose will contribute to enhanced community confidence in the telecommunications industry.

The TIO has four key strategic goals:

1. To build an organisation that is sustainable, embraces changes and focusses on people and infrastructure.
2. To provide an independent dispute resolution service that is efficient and effective without compromising integrity.
3. To collaborate, share knowledge and educate members and stakeholders to reduce complaints and improve telecommunications services.
4. To be known, respected and accessible.

Position description

Key responsibilities

Case Management

- Manage a caseload of very complex unresolved disputes, using conciliation and investigation to find reasonable and appropriate outcomes
- Make recommendations to the parties in disputes about reasonable and appropriate resolutions to complaints
- Prepare recommendations and assessments summarising issues in disputes and appropriate outcomes to those disputes.
- Conduct conciliations for unresolved cases, including multiparty conciliations.
- Provide quality assurance for cases handled by Lead Investigators and other team members

Advice and Expertise

- Provide advice to the Assistant Ombudsman and Ombudsman on complaint trends and on emerging issues in the industry as they impact on consumer experience and complaints
- Provide subject matter expertise to the development of training modules that form part of the Graduate Certificate in Dispute Resolution (Industry).
- Provide expert input to guidance notes, internal and external training materials and content on the TIO's Knowledge Base.

Leadership

- Lead a team of Lead Investigators to provide timely and effective management of unresolved complaints, including allocation and reallocation of complaints
- Foster and model continuous learning, collaboration and innovation in and between teams
- Work with the Lead Investigators to determine staffing needs, work allocations and performance measures for teams and staff members.
- Manage employment matters including engagement of staff, performance plans, probation, leave and attendance
- Effectively and efficiently oversee the management and resolution of complex cases

Resource Management

- In consultation with the Reporting Lead and members, monitor complaint trends and numbers to ensure the Dispute Resolution area is adequately resourced to handle unresolved complaints in a timely and efficient manner

Quality and processes

- Promote a culture of continuous improvement, reflective practice and sharing of good practice with the Dispute Resolution area
- Identify opportunities to enhance the timeliness and effectiveness of processes for the delivery of TIO services through reviews of process performance metrics, workflows and feedback from leaders and staff

Stakeholder engagement

- Build and maintain effective relationships with internal and external stakeholders, including providers and the regulator, including representing the TIO at external meeting, forums and conferences

This position is required to undertake other duties and projects as directed.

Person specification

The following describes the knowledge, skills, personal attributes and experience required to complete the inherent requirements of the role.

Knowledge and skills

- Excellent knowledge of the Australian telecommunication sector and the co-regulatory scheme
- Excellent understanding of Australian Consumer law, privacy law and telecommunications law
- Highly developed verbal and written communication skills
- Problem solving and the ability to gather, collate and analyse complex information
- Significant experience in making impartial and reasoned decisions in an industry or government Ombudsman or dispute resolution organisation
- Demonstrated ability to lead high functioning teams
- Experience in leading change and continuous improvement within teams

Qualifications and experience

- Bachelor degree or higher in law, business or another relevant discipline
- Significant experience in investigating and managing complaints, particularly those involving or telecommunications products, privacy and Australian Consumer Law
- Graduate Certificate in Dispute Resolution (Industry) desirable
- Significant experience in mediation or conciliation and preparing impartial decisions

Personal attributes

- Excellent interpersonal skills
- High level analytical and problem-solving skills
- Organised and able to manage own time effectively
- Ability to develop effective working relationships across all levels of the organisation and both internally and externally
- Professional, impartial and diplomatic in dealing with internal and external stakeholders