

# **WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE THE TARGET OF A COMPLAINT**

## **Don't panic**

Don't panic. If you have not received a complaint before, or if you are uncertain about the response you need to provide, don't be afraid to ask for help either via email or phone. WASPA is there to answer your questions and give advice.

## **Check the parts of the Code mentioned**

Make sure that you read through the entire complaint and understand why the complainant has lodged it. If the complainant cited specific clauses please check those clauses in the WASPA Code. You can find the latest version of the Code, and an archive of all previous versions, on the WASPA web site.

## **Complaint procedure**

Familiarize yourself with the complaints procedure as set out in section 14 of the Code. The WASPA complaints team is not allowed to deviate from this procedure – and neither is a WASPA member. If you need more help, the complaints team has a short flow-chart of the process, which we will happily share with you.

## **Respond within the time frames**

Make sure you respond within the prescribed time frames. The Code does allow for some extensions at the discretion of the WASPA Secretariat. If you need more time to respond to a complaint please ask for an extension. It reflects badly if a case-file is assigned to an adjudicator and no response was provided by the WASPA member involved. A complaint will not go away if you don't respond.

## **Provide a thorough response**

It is much better to provide a thorough response, containing more information than required, than to reply with a one line email. If ten issues have been raised by the complainant, make sure you address all ten. If you have any documentation supporting your case, make sure you include that with your response. If applicable, in your response offer to provide the adjudicator with more information if he/she needs it to make a decision.

## **Satisfying a complainant**

WASPA members are allowed to contact a complainant directly to try resolve complaints informally, but a formal response to the WASPA Secretariat is still required. If you have trouble making contact with the complainant, please ask the WASPA Secretariat for help; we might have alternative contact information for the complainant. In most cases, satisfying the complainant resolves a complaint informally. If a refund is provided to a complaint, it is a good idea to provide the WASPA Secretariat with confirmation or proof of the refund.

## **WASPA is here to help**

Please feel free to contact the WASPA complaints team at any time for any advice or assistance. The complaints team cannot over-rule an adjudicator, or deviate from the established complaints process, but we can advise you on the best way to deal with a complaint.

## **Advice on a service**

If you need advice on a new service or advertisement, please contact the WASPA Media Monitor. The Monitor will have a look at your service or advert and give you advice where needed. Please note that the Monitor cannot approve a service or an advert, but can provide you with some valuable guidance.

Complaints correspondence: **[complaints@waspa.org.za](mailto:complaints@waspa.org.za)**  
Monitor notifications and advice: **[notify@waspa.org.za](mailto:notify@waspa.org.za)**

WASPA Code of Conduct online: **<http://waspa.org.za/code/codeconduct.shtml>**