

Dispute resolution

Energy customers who have a dispute with their energy supplier (retailer or distributor) should first seek to resolve the dispute directly with the supplier. However, if you are unable to resolve a dispute directly, a number of external parties may be able to assist.

Energy and Water Ombudsman Queensland

The Queensland Government established the Energy and Water Ombudsman Queensland (EWOQ) to assist small domestic and business energy consumers to resolve a complaint or dispute with their energy supplier. EWOQ delivers complaint investigation and dispute resolution services about issues including:

- problems with payment
- account errors/disputes
- disconnections
- damages and loss
- market conduct
- contract issues
- vegetation management
- supply quality and reliability
- extensions to supply
- connection of supply
- general customer service issues
- Guaranteed Service Level rebates
- equipment issues.

Contact the Ombudsman:

- Freecall: 1800 662 837
- Website: www.ewoq.com.au
- Email: info@ewoq.com.au
- Post: PO Box 3640
South Brisbane Qld 4101

Other Complaints

Depending on the problem you are facing, your complaint may also be handled by organisations that are not energy specific. These include the Office of Fair Trading, Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal, or the Body Corporate and Community Management Office. Large customers are also able to raise certain disputes with the Queensland Competition Authority.

Office of Fair Trading

The Office of Fair Trading provides helpful information and advice about your rights and responsibilities as a consumer or business operating in Queensland.

Contact the Office of Fair Trading if you have complaints relating to:

- ethical standards
- company behaviour
- contractual obligations
- standards of work
- weights and measures
- liquefied petroleum gas (LPG/bottled gas)

For further information in relation to the complaints listed above you will need to contact the Office of Fair Trading on phone 13 QGOV (13 74 68) or www.fairtrading@qld.gov.au

Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal

The Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal (QCAT), formerly known as the Small Claims Tribunal, commenced in December 2009. QCAT offers access to Courts or voluntary dispute resolution services (provided through the Department of Justice and Attorney-General).

QCAT makes decisions for a number of matters including:

- debt disputes for amounts up to and including \$25 000, for example money lent and not repaid
- consumer and trader disputes for amounts up to and including \$25 000 arising out of a contract for the supply of goods and services
- domestic and commercial building disputes.

For further information about these services, call 1300 753 228 or

Email: enquiries@qcat.qld.gov.au

Website: www.qcat.qld.gov.au

Body Corporate & Community Management

The Body Corporate & Community Management (BCCM) is an information and complaint resolution point within the Department of Justice and Attorney-General for issues arising from the *Body Corporate and Community Management Act 1997* (BCCM Act).

If you have a dispute in relation to your Body Corporate or Community Management, the BCCM will be able to assist you.

The BCCM deals with:

- community title schemes
- providing information and advice to residents, owners and bodies corporate on their rights
- requirements and responsibilities under the BCCM Act.

The BCCM also offers a dispute resolution service for issues covered under the Act. As part of this service, they maintain a register of rulings and decisions on specific community title issues.

For further information call 1800 060 119 or

Email: BCCM@justice.qld.gov.au

Website: www.justice.qld.gov.au/3260htm

Queensland Competition Authority

Large customers who have a dispute with their electricity or gas supplier are not entitled to access the services of the Energy and Water Ombudsman Queensland. In some cases, a large customer may be able to apply to the Queensland Competition Authority (QCA) to resolve a dispute with their energy supplier. The QCA has the authority to decide disputes about:

- whether the terms and conditions of a connection contract or retail contract are fair and reasonable
- whether the amount of any capital contribution required by a distribution business is fair and reasonable
- the correct application of a distribution entity's capital contributions policy.

A customer may also apply to the QCA for the review of:

- a decision by a distributor not to provide connection services to the customer
- a decision by a retailer not to provide retail services to the customer
- any other decision listed in Schedule 5 of the Electricity Regulation 2006.

Contact the Queensland Competition Authority:

- Phone: (07) 3222 0555
- Website: www.qca.org.au
- Post: GPO Box 2257
Brisbane Qld 4001