



Managing Unreasonable Complaints and Complainants

The Australian Press Council (APC) welcomes complaints about material in newspapers, magazines, journals and other print and digital media that a complainant considers has breached the APC's Standards of Practice.

Dealing with unreasonable complaints and complainants

The APC has a legislative responsibility to provide a safe working environment for all its staff including those involved in handling complaints.

The APC expects all complainants to treat APC staff with courtesy and respect. It will not tolerate communications and conduct that put its staff and members at risk of physical or mental harm including communications and conduct that are:

- unreasonable
- abusive
- intimidating
- threatening
- bullying

The APC has a discretion not to consider *any complaint* at any stage of its complaint-handling process that:

- is communicated in a manner that is abusive, unreasonable, threatening, intimidating, or bullying;
- is an abuse of its process;
- has been lodged to achieve a wrongful purpose, or in a way that harasses or causes unreasonable annoyance or detriment, regardless of the subjective intention or motive of the person who lodged the complaint; or
- is unduly repetitive, burdensome or unwarranted when compared to its merits.

The APC has at any stage, a discretion not to deal with *any complainant* who engages in conduct falling into any of the above-mentioned categories. It also has a discretion to modify or restrict the manner in which a complainant who engages in such communications or conduct can engage with the APC.

Depending on the circumstances, the APC may issue a warning letter or email to a complainant before exercising such discretion. A complainant will be notified in writing of the APC's decision to exercise such a discretion.

Unreasonable communications or conduct

Unreasonable conduct by a complainant is any behaviour by a complainant which, because of its nature and/or frequency, raises health and safety issues for the APC, its staff, its members, or other complainants or stakeholders who engage with the APC, or adversely impacts the APC's equitable allocation of resources.