



## **Port of Milford Haven Complaints Policy and Procedure (External)**

### **Purpose of this policy**

The purpose of this policy is to ensure any complaints regarding a service provided or actions taken by any part of the Port of Milford Haven are handled quickly, effectively and courteously and to swiftly resolve any issues, where possible.

### **Making a complaint**

Any customer of the Port (or someone acting on their behalf) who has received, or was entitled to receive, a service may make a complaint. Additionally, any Stakeholder, defined as anyone who uses or is connected to the Port or whose livelihood and welfare may be dependant on the Port and all bodies who represent others in this context, may make a complaint.

We regularly review who we consider to be our stakeholders and publish this list in our Annual Report and Financial Statements which can be found on our website <https://goo.gl/R1iaTT>

Our mission is to build the Haven's prosperity and we aim to do this by delivering port infrastructure and services with energy and excellence. Operational excellence is mandatory, and excellent customer service is key to achieving our objectives.

However, sometimes things can go wrong. If you are unhappy with the service you have received, or if our activities have negatively impacted you as a stakeholder, then please let us know. It is important that we know what's gone wrong so that we can try to put it right.

This complaints policy sets out a clear process for anyone wishing to make a complaint and outlines what the Port of Milford Haven will do with any complaint received.

### **What is a complaint?**

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction requiring a response, communicated verbally, electronically, or in writing. Complaints may be made by any users of our service and by any of our stakeholders. Examples might include complaints about:

- the Port's actions or lack of action,
- governance issues,
- a standard of service received, or
- issues arising from the Port's activities.



### **What is not a complaint?**

A complaint is not an expression of a concern or an enquiry. A concern or enquiry is a problem raised that can be resolved / responded to straight away (by the end of the next working day). These are not reported as complaints and fall outside this complaints policy.

Our staff will mostly be able to resolve issues themselves without the need to instigate a formal complaints process. These informal matters are not officially recorded as part of our complaints process.

### **The complaints process**

A complaint should be made using the Complaints Form on the Port of Milford Haven website.

### **There are 4 stages to the complaints process...**

#### **Stage 1 – Formal**

A formal complaint must be made in writing to the manager/supervisor of the area most relevant to your grievance. Please complete our online complaints form which can be found here <https://www.mhpa.co.uk/complaint-form/>

Your complaint will be acknowledged within 7 working days. The manager responsible for the business area in which your complaint relates will be appointed to liaise with you to fully understand any concerns. You will then receive a written response within 28 days setting out whether your complaint is considered to be justified and any remedial action to be taken.

#### What if I don't agree with the outcome of the investigation?

If you are dissatisfied with the department manager's response to your complaint, you can appeal by writing formally to the Stakeholder Engagement and Communications Manager who will escalate your complaint to the Senior Management Team. This is Stage 2 of the Port's Complaints Process.

#### **Stage 2 Appeal - SMT**

Please address your letter of appeal to:

Stakeholder Engagement and Communications Manager  
Suite 7 Cedar Court,  
Havens Head Business Park,  
Milford Haven, SA73 3LS



Your complaint and appeal will be acknowledged by the Stakeholder Engagement and Communications Manager within 7 working days. It will then be brought to the attention of the Senior Management Team who will review the details of the complaint and any actions taken by members of staff to resolve the issue, as well as your appeal against the Manager's decision(s) or action(s). The Senior Management Team will form a view on any further action to be taken and you will receive a written response outlining this within 28 days.

### What if I still don't agree with the outcome?

You can appeal against the decision made by the Senior Management Team if you feel your complaint has not been handled sufficiently. This is stage 3 of the Port's complaint process.

### **Stage 3 Appeal – Stakeholder Accountability Committee**

An appeal must be made in writing to the Chairman of the Port's Stakeholder Accountability Committee (contact details below). The Stakeholder Accountability Committee is a Board Committee responsible for ensuring that the Port, as a Trust Port, holds itself properly accountable to its stakeholders. The Committee acts as an appeals committee to which stakeholders should direct concerns to.

The Committee corresponds directly with stakeholders and reports on its proceedings to the Port's full Board. Membership of the Committee comprises three non-executive and one executive member of the Board and four external stakeholder members, appointed by the Board.

Letters of appeal to the Stakeholder Accountability Committee should be addressed to:

Mr Andrew Edwards, Chair, Stakeholder Accountability Committee, Gorsewood Drive, Milford Haven, Pembrokeshire, SA73 3EP.

Alternatively, you may email the Chair at [andy.edwards@mhpa.co.uk](mailto:andy.edwards@mhpa.co.uk)

If an appeal is brought to the attention of the Chairman of the Stakeholder Accountability Committee, an emergency meeting of the Committee will be convened to discuss the matter. The Committee will document, investigate, resolve (if possible) and respond, within 28 days, to any stakeholder in relation to any specific complaint issue or concern relating to accountability raised by a stakeholder or group of stakeholders.

### What if I am still dissatisfied or I don't feel my complaint has been handled correctly?

If not satisfied with the response of the Port's Stakeholder Accountability Committee, a complainant may draw it to the attention of the Department for Transport (DfT). This is stage 4 of the Port's complaint process.



#### **Stage 4 – Department for Transport**

Complaints to the DfT should be made in writing to:

Maladministration Complaints  
Department for Transport  
D/04, Ashdown House  
Sedlescombe Road North  
St Leonards on Sea  
East Sussex  
TN37 7GA

DfT will then consider it and decide whether to take the matter up with the Port itself. This is likely only to occur in what may appear to be particularly significant issues in relation to governance or where the Port's complaint handling process has not been inadequate. Where DfT decides not to follow a complaint up with the Port, it will write to the complainant setting out its reasons why. Whilst DfT is unlikely to have any formal powers or role empowering it to take action in relation to any governance matter, its interest is in ensuring that a Trust Port Board is governed well and does not take decisions in an arbitrary or unaccountable manner.