



CityLink Customer Ombudsman

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CCO REVIEW

1 MARCH – 31 AUGUST 2005

**Michael Arnold
CityLink Customer Ombudsman**

CITYLINK CUSTOMER OMBUDSMAN REVIEW

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Introduction

This is my second report as the CityLink Customer Ombudsman service since it came into operation in mid-September 2004 with the objective of providing a free and independent service for CityLink customers who had an unresolved complaint with CityLink.

The Review

As part of the accountability of the CityLink Customer Ombudsman I am required to make a report to the Chief Executive Officer of CityLink each six months. CityLink will then also publicly report on its Customer Charter commitments.

My workload continues to be limited with CityLink maintaining its responsiveness to the complaints to the CityLink Customer Ombudsman that have been then referred to CityLink for action. Forty-two complaints were received in the period with the majority promptly resolved directly with the customer by CityLink. I have made one formal written Determination in this period.

I noted in my last report that a number of complaints related to infringement notices issued by Victoria Police in respect of which the CityLink Customer Ombudsman did not have jurisdiction. This trend was maintained and again I contacted the complainants explaining the process.

The introduction from 1 July 2005 of a system whereby invoices will be issued to non-CityLink customers, giving these travellers time to pay for their travel on CityLink before Victoria Police issues an infringement notice, will be a considerable benefit to road users. Particularly for people from the country or interstate who are not familiar with the system.

The formal Determination that I made was in respect of damage to a vehicle from debris lying on a CityLink roadway. I found that CityLink had not breached its duty of care in relation to its management of the roadway and was not liable for the damage done to the vehicle.

CityLink has a road management and maintenance plan as required by the Road Management Act 2005. I note that CityLink and VicRoads have joined forces to

tackle this highly dangerous issue that regularly causes traffic chaos and threatens motorists' safety on Victoria's roads.

CityLink was regularly forced to close traffic lanes while response teams collected on-road debris and lost loads. Around 40 tonnes of debris is picked up from the 22 kilometres of CityLink road every month. During 2004 CityLink lane closure times for debris collection were as short as one minute and as long as 49 minutes.

The two organisations have launched "Lock Down That Load", a driver awareness campaign aimed at professional carriers, tradesmen, farmers and drivers who use a trailer to move house or take rubbish to the tip. I believe that this is a very responsible adjunct to CityLink's road management responsibilities. I believe that in addition there should be a campaign to encourage CityLink users to report the presence of debris and litter on roadways that are likely to be a hazard.

Below is a table of complaints and outcomes for the reporting period.

	March 05	April 05	May 05	June 05	July 05	Aug 05
Billing	1		1		1	
Infringement	4	6	5	3	2	1
Damage to Vehicle				2		
Other Damage	1					1
Vehicle Classification			1			
Service levels					2	1
Traffic Management	1					
Account Management	2		2			2
Website					2	
Pricing				1		
TOTAL	9	6	9	6	7	5
Answered by CCO	4	4	4			
Resolved by ICR	3	2	5	3	5	1
Pending	2			3	2	4
Determinations By CCO						

Conclusion

The last six months of the CityLink Customer Ombudsman service has again seen CityLink deal with the majority of complaints that I have referred back to it.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Arnold', written in a cursive style.

Michael Arnold
CityLink Customer Ombudsman

September 2005