

# **TCO REVIEW**

**1 September 2012 – 28 February 2013**

**Michael Arnold  
Tolling Customer Ombudsman**

# **TOLLING CUSTOMER OMBUDSMAN REVIEW**

**1 SEPTEMBER 2012 – 28 FEBRUARY 2013**

## **Introduction**

The Tolling Customer Ombudsman (TCO) believes that it is important that there should be regular interaction between the TCO and toll road operators at the more personal level.

In order to achieve the objective, the TCO has organised a series of seminars to bring representatives of the toll road operators together.

## ***TCO Seminar***

The third TCO Seminar was held on 11 December 2012 in Melbourne with Michael Arnold (TCO), Ragini Durai (Deputy TCO), Michele Foulds (General Manager) and Andrew Hilton (Administrative Services) in attendance. All toll road operators under the TCO's jurisdiction had been invited to attend, the main purpose of which was to discuss areas of mutual interest and improve interoperability arrangements. This was also an opportunity for group discussion, to canvas opinions on emerging trends and the exchange of ideas of benefit to the various dispute resolution teams.

The response was very pleasing, with the attendance of representative of toll road operators from Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland. Informative presentations were made by the toll road operators as to plans for the future and methods of improving customer interaction with their processes. The emphasis was on improved customer service and making it easier for customers to access the various tolling services.

One of the highlights of the Seminar was the presentation by Jean Ker Walsh, a driving force behind the establishment of the TCO service. Jean has had an extensive career in the media and public relations and provided valuable insights into the benefits of enhanced customer services. In the course of an entertaining talk on a range of issues, she gave a potted history of her involvement in the development of the service and suggested options for further benefits for toll road customers. By way of an example, Jean suggested a "frequent flyer" program.

The continued success of such Seminars indicated that similar meetings should be held in Brisbane and Sydney in the future.

## Privacy

Complaints have been raised about breaches of privacy.

The TCO undertakes a monitoring role on the accepted industry standards in regard to customer service, the Privacy Act and the balance between same.

Toll road operators and their agents are often faced with enquiries being made by people who are related or connected to customers. Often operators are placed in a position of taking a hardline position in respect to disclosure of certain matters to persons who are not recorded as customers or nominated as secondary contacts, or providing information for the sake of expediency. Further, customers are often content to allow a pattern of conduct to continue between a toll road operator and a secondary contact until an issue arises. A complaint then may follow that there has been a breach of privacy requirements.

The TCO, whilst endorsing the Privacy legislation and requirements, does take a practical approach to complaints based on the evidence before it.

## Conclusion

The complaint resolution process of the toll road operators continues to be responsive to the needs of customers in the majority of instances.

This is essential, with the ongoing discussion about the increasing of the number of new roads that may be built as part of infrastructure development in the various States.

Toll road customer must be assured that there are processes in place if unsatisfactory services are provided.

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



**Michael Arnold**  
**Tolling Customer Ombudsman**

AirportlinkM7
CityLink
EastLink
Go Via
Roam
Roam Express



Category	Sept 12	Oct 12	Nov 12	Dec 12	Jan 13	Feb 13
Account Management				1		
	17	15	16	18	17	12
	3	1	2	4	4	4
	10	8	4	4	8	13
	6	2	2	2	6	4
	4	3	1	1	1	
Tolling/Billing	1	2	3	3	3	2
	8	11	12	10	7	8
	1	5	6		2	6
	9	11	9	8	11	10
	4	3	1	2	6	4
	2	3	4	2	2	
Infrastructure/ Traffic Management						
	1					
Service/Feedback		2		1		1
	1	1			1	
Enquiry/Copy to TCO only						1
						1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>
	<b>26</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>22</b>
	<b>4</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>10</b>
	<b>20</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>24</b>
	<b>10</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>8</b>
	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>-</b>
Resolved/Closed by Customer Resolutions	1	2	3	4	3	2
	26	28	28	29	24	22
	4	6	8	4	6	10
	20	20	13	12	20	24
	10	5	3	4	12	8
	6	6	5	3	3	-