

**Sackley, Pip**

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**From:** Morrow, Kim  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 11 March 2014 3:47 PM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** FW: Complaint - Customer service

Good afternoon [REDACTED]

Your complaint has been escalated to me for response. Firstly, I would like to confirm that your RA has been processed and completed, and should be in your pay of 27/3/2014, and backdated to your date of occupancy.

I have spoken to Sue Wise about the telephone conversation that you refer to and she has expressed regret at her frustration in being unable to satisfactorily answer your queries. She has requested that I pass on her apologies for being unable to reach a positive outcome and suitable answers to your questions on the phone. She initially responded to your complaint in an attempt to clear up the misunderstanding that had occurred, and thought that you would not require the complaint to be escalated as the matter had been resolved. However, she now agrees that her initial apology only served to further aggravate the situation. This was certainly not her intent.

In regards to your original request about the rental agreement not being sufficient evidence for RA commencement I can confirm that it is a contractual requirement between defence and DHA for the supply of a rental statement. In this instance the Ipswich housing allocation team have implemented the policies correctly as per defence specifications. If you disagree or wish to have further clarification as to why this policy is in place you can refer this to [policy.inquiry@defence.gov.au](mailto:policy.inquiry@defence.gov.au).

Trusting that this adequately addresses the issues raised in your complaint regarding customer service and policy.

Kind Regards

**Kim Morrow | Property and Tenancy Manager**

Ipswich HMC | Defence Housing Australia  
Shop 12 Yamanto Shopping Centre  
CNR Warwick Road and Powells Road Yamanto QLD 4305  
Tel: 07 [REDACTED] | Mobile: [REDACTED]  
email: [REDACTED]@dha.gov.au | [www.dha.gov.au](http://www.dha.gov.au)

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 25 February 2014 4:18 PM  
**To:** Wise, Sue  
**Subject:** RE: Complaint [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

UNCLASSIFIED

Sue,

It is unfortunate that that the most basic level of customer services skills could not be afforded by the customer relations officer of a branch. Equally so, that you would consider that it is appropriate to answer a complaint which you are the subject of.

The receipt, to the extent required by DHA, was not in my possession (as explained in the email below) and was sought after you decided it was appropriate to hang up on me. The receipt I did have (and was sent to you on 21/02/14) was from the online banking receipt transferring funds to the account stipulated on the lease. I acquired the detailed receipt required by DHA simply because its easier to do so than deal with a problematic person and delay the approval of the application. The core of my question was why a receipt to this extent required, which your response does not address. You have simply stated 'Its required because its on the form'.

The purpose of the inquiry was simply to understand why it was necessary for an initial rent receipt to the detail required by DHA as the lease provides legal basis for payment of the allowance pursuant to PACMAN. Because it appeared unnecessary, I did not want to seek another receipt from the real estate. This was a simple inquiry that only occurred because I was already on the phone to you in relation to submitting an application and was not an issue. Any simple response would have been sufficient to avoid this issue such as:

- Its our policy at the moment, but I will forward your feedback to head office for consideration; or
- The reason we require additional information is people have forged leases before and this receipt verifies the information (or whatever the actual reason for this requirement is); or
- I'm not sure why its required but I can see if I can find out for you; or
- Maybe we don't need it, but there is a process to follow in order to change our internal requirements and I am unable to change that in time to process your application; or
- Just about any other response other than hang up.

Please pass this response to your next level supervisor or advise the appropriate address to send this complaint.

I do look forward to a positive relationship with DHA; however this experience with your branch has only reinforced the negative perception of DHA and the service it provides.

Regards,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

"Few will have the greatness to bend history itself, but each of us can work to change a small portion of events. It is from numberless diverse acts of courage and belief that human history is shaped. Each time a man stands up for an ideal, or acts to improve the lot of others, or strikes out against injustice, he sends forth a tiny ripple of hope, and crossing each other from a million different centers of energy and daring those ripples build a current which can sweep down the mightiest walls of oppression and resistance." - Robert F. Kennedy

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**From:** Wise, Sue [mailto:[REDACTED]@dha.gov.au]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 25 February 2014 15:17  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: Complaint [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Good afternoon [REDACTED]

I am sorry that we did not get off on the right foot in our initial conversation. It is unfortunate that you were not aware that you already had the signed lease and the receipt necessary to commence your RA. The requirement for a receipt stating the dates is outlined in the paper version of the RA application and the online RA application form. It is not a PACMAN reference, but rather part of the internal policy that is agreed between DHA and Defence as to how we conduct our business.

Thanks for providing all the information required in order for us to process your RA. We will get this done in time to meet pay cut-off of 13/3/2014. We are unable to change your categorisation in the system without creating a new case for you – this is what we are doing now.

We will send you a letter outlining your RA amounts, once completed, and hope we can look forward to a good working relationship in the future.

Thanks and regards

Sue

Sue Wise | Housing Team Leader

Ipswich HMC | Defence Housing Australia  
Shop 12 Yamanto Shopping Centre

CNR Warwick Road and Powells Road Yamanto QLD 4305

Tel: 07 [REDACTED] | Fax: 02 6222 2203

email: [REDACTED]@dha.gov.au | [www.dha.gov.au](http://www.dha.gov.au)

**Applying for Rent Allowance? Apply the no fuss way using DHA's Online Services DHA Online Services Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.**

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday, 21 February 2014 11:00 AM  
**To:** Ipswich Housing  
**Subject:** Complaint [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

UNCLASSIFIED

To whom it may concern,

Please explain why it is appropriate for a team leader to hang up on a Defence member who is seeking further information in relation to the requirements?

This incident occurred through a routine inquiry to submit an RA application as:

- The website would not function through the DRN;
- My marital status was incorrectly recorded despite recent interactions in the past two weeks to have this corrected; and
- Using a mobile to submit the application froze during the process.

On contacting the Ipswich office, your advisor (Sue Wise) stated that she required an initial rent receipt to state the dates which that amount covered. This is not a requirement of PACMAN, nor is it covered in DHA online guidance. The online guidance for what is required states:

- A copy of the full lease document (or a Member/Owner statement form for private arrangements), and
- The initial rent receipt or tenant payment ledger.

As discussed, the initial rent receipt could be provided; however it does not state the dates it covers. As it is the initial rent receipt, which can be checked by reviewing the lease and ensuring it matches the payment details, I fail to see why it would require these further details. When I requested further detail on the policy that required this further detail, your agent became abrupt, argumentative and hung up.

I would note that your agent specifically stated to 'just go and get a tenant ledger from the real estate'. However as the lease was only signed on Wednesday afternoon and the initial payment made subsequently, this is not yet available. As the lease is to take effect as of next Thursday the 27th and the Defence pay system has a lead time in order to process payments, I would seek to complete this application ASAP.

I fail to see why DHA cannot assist in this matter, nor how this behaviour is acceptable in a professional organisation.

Regards,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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[intmr02.dha.gov.au](mailto:intmr02.dha.gov.au)[6431820]

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**Sackley, Pip**

---

**From:** Morrow, Kim  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 12 March 2014 1:08 PM  
**To:** Wilson, Sharon; Wise, Sue  
**Subject:** Fwd: Complaint - Customer service [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Hi ladies the response. Instead of continued email banter I will request for him to come in. What are your thoughts.

**Kim Morrow** | Property and Tenancy Manager  
 Ipswich HMC | Defence Housing Australia  
 Shop 12 Yamanto Shopping Centre  
 CNR Warwick Road and Powells Road Yamanto QLD 4305  
 Tel: 07 [REDACTED] | Mobile: [REDACTED]  
 email: [REDACTED]@dha.gov.au | [www.dha.gov.au](http://www.dha.gov.au)

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Date:** 12 March 2014 10:13:02 am AEST  
**To:** "Morrow, Kim" <[REDACTED]@dha.gov.au>  
**Subject:** RE: Complaint - Customer service [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

UNCLASSIFIED

Kim,

I feel you may misunderstand the situation.

An simple apology would have accepted as a suitable response; however the response received states "I am sorry that we did not get off on the right foot in our initial conversation". This is not an apology for any action or behaviour, specifically as it does not state the behaviour for which was inappropriate; at best its a statement that it was not a positive encounter. The least of which I would expect would be an acknowledgement that it is not appropriate to hang up on a customer seeking further information! This is further compounded by the subsequent statement "*It is unfortunate that you were not aware that you already had the signed lease and the receipt necessary to commence your RA.*" which I can only infer in the intent of this statement to mean 'it is unfortunate you are an idiot for not realising you had the documents you needed'. This is despite the fact that the the receipt I did have was clearly explained during the telephone conversation and the subsequent email complaint which stated "*As discussed, the initial rent receipt could be provided; however it does not state the dates it covers*" and therefore does not comply with DHA 'policy'. As such, I do not see how the the response from Sue Wise could be considered an apology. As a result, it was not an apology that escalated the situation; but a distinct lack of respect for a customer, a subsequent insinuation and an answer that relied on a policy which was not provided (except to the extent it is stated on an application form).

Nonetheless, an apology at this point would be somewhat meaningless given the preceding correspondence from both Sue Wise and yourself which at best offer platitudes that 'it could have been done better'. Indeed neither of your responses actually mention hanging up on a customer.

In relation to the 'policy' (as described by Sue Wise) or the 'contractual requirement' between Defence and DHA (as described by you), please provide a copy of the policy or contract. If you are unable or unwilling to complete this request, please provide sufficient information for me to request this information through the Freedom of Information Act (such as the name of the contract, the date it was signed, the parties it was signed by, who is in possession of the contract or where is contract currently held). As you have 'confirmed' this as a contractual requirement, I presume you have sighted this document recently in order to provide such a response.

Regards,

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[REDACTED]

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**Sent:** Tuesday, 11 March 2014 14:47

**To:** [REDACTED]

**Subject:** FW: Complaint - Customer service

Good afternoon [REDACTED]

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Thanks and regards

Sue

Sue Wise | Housing Team Leader

Ipswich HMC | Defence Housing Australia  
Shop 12 Yamanto Shopping Centre

CNR Warwick Road and Powells Road Yamanto QLD 4305

Tel: 07 [REDACTED] | Fax: 02 6222 2203

email: [REDACTED]@dha.gov.au | [www.dha.gov.au](http://www.dha.gov.au)

**Applying for Rent Allowance? Apply the no fuss way using DHA's Online Services DHA Online Services Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.**

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday, 21 February 2014 11:00 AM  
**To:** Ipswich Housing  
**Subject:** Complaint [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

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Regards,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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ideal, or acts to improve the lot of others, or strikes out against injustice, he sends forth a tiny ripple of hope, and crossing each other from a million different centers of energy and daring those ripples build a current which can sweep down the mightiest walls of oppression and resistance.” - Robert F. Kennedy

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[intmr02.dha.gov.au](mailto:intmr02.dha.gov.au)[6431820]

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**Sackley, Pip**

---

**From:** Wise, Sue  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 12 March 2014 1:16 PM  
**To:** Morrow, Kim; Wilson, Sharon  
**Subject:** RE: Complaint - Customer service [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Hi there

I believe that more than enough time has been spent trying to placate a member whose contact with us has been unacceptable. I have shown the initial correspondence to [REDACTED] and he agreed that he is not being reasonable. I would be inclined to get his unit involved.

I don't know that brining him in to the office would be of any benefit....

**Sue Wise** | Housing Team Leader  
Ipswich HMC | Defence Housing Australia  
Shop 12 Yamanto Shopping Centre  
CNR Warwick Road and Powells Road Yamanto QLD 4305  
Tel: 07 [REDACTED] | Fax: 02 6222 2203  
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Begin forwarded message:

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Date:** 12 March 2014 10:13:02 am AEST  
**To:** "Morrow, Kim" <[REDACTED]@dha.gov.au>  
**Subject:** RE: Complaint - Customer service [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

UNCLASSIFIED

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**Sent:** Tuesday, 11 March 2014 14:47  
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**Sent:** Tuesday, 25 February 2014 4:18 PM  
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**Subject:** RE: Complaint [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

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The receipt, to the extent required by DHA, was not in my possession (as explained in the email below) and was sought after you decided it was appropriate to hang up

on me. The receipt I did have (and was sent to you on 21/02/14) was from the online banking receipt transferring funds to the account stipulated on the lease. I acquired the detailed receipt required by DHA simply because its easier to do so than deal with a problematic person and delay the approval of the application. The core of my question was why a receipt to this extent required, which your response does not address. You have simply stated 'its required because its on the form'.

The purpose of the inquiry was simply to understand why it was necessary for an initial rent receipt to the detail required by DHA as the lease provides legal basis for payment of the allowance pursuant to PACMAN. Because it appeared unnecessary, I did not want to seek another receipt from the real estate. This was a simple inquiry that only occurred because I was already on the phone to you in relation to submitting an application and was not an issue. Any simple response would have been sufficient to avoid this issue such as:

- Its our policy at the moment, but I will forward your feedback to head office for consideration; or
- The reason we require additional information is people have forged leases before and this receipt verifies the information (or whatever the actual reason for this requirement is); or
- I'm not sure why its required but I can see if I can find out for you; or
- Maybe we don't need it, but there is a process to follow in order to change our internal requirements and I am unable to change that in time to process your application; or
- Just about any other response other than hang up.

Please pass this response to your next level supervisor or advise the appropriate address to send this complaint.

I do look forward to a positive relationship with DHA; however this experience with your branch has only reinforced the negative perception of DHA and the service it provides.

Regards,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

"Few will have the greatness to bend history itself, but each of us can work to change a small portion of events. It is from numberless diverse acts of courage and belief that human history is shaped. Each time a man stands up for an ideal, or acts to improve the lot of others, or strikes out against injustice, he



sends forth a tiny ripple of hope, and crossing each other from a million different centers of energy and daring those ripples build a current which can sweep down the mightiest walls of oppression and resistance.” - Robert F. Kennedy

---

**From:** Wise, Sue [mailto:██████████@dha.gov.au]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 25 February 2014 15:17  
**To:** ██████████  
**Subject:** RE: Complaint [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Good afternoon ██████████

I am sorry that we did not get off on the right foot in our initial conversation. It is unfortunate that you were not aware that you already had the signed lease and the receipt necessary to commence your RA. The requirement for a receipt stating the dates is outlined in the paper version of the RA application and the online RA application form. It is not a PACMAN reference, but rather part of the internal policy that is agreed between DHA and Defence as to how we conduct our business.

Thanks for providing all the information required in order for us to process your RA. We will get this done in time to meet pay cut-off of 13/3/2014. We are unable to change your categorisation in the system without creating a new case for you – this is what we are doing now.

We will send you a letter outlining your RA amounts, once completed, and hope we can look forward to a good working relationship in the future.

Thanks and regards

Sue

Sue Wise | Housing Team Leader

Ipswich HMC | Defence Housing Australia  
Shop 12 Yamanto Shopping Centre

CNR Warwick Road and Powells Road Yamanto QLD 4305

Tel: 07 ██████████ | Fax: 02 6222 2203

email: [REDACTED]@dha.gov.au | [www.dha.gov.au](http://www.dha.gov.au)

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---

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday, 21 February 2014 11:00 AM  
**To:** Ipswich Housing  
**Subject:** Complaint [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

UNCLASSIFIED

To whom it may concern,

Please explain why it is appropriate for a team leader to hang up on a Defence member who is seeking further information in relation to the requirements?

This incident occurred through a routine inquiry to submit an RA application as:

- The website would not function through the DRN;
- My marital status was incorrectly recorded despite recent interactions in the past two weeks to have this corrected; and
- Using a mobile to submit the application froze during the process.

On contacting the Ipswich office, your advisor (Sue Wise) stated that she required an initial rent receipt to state the dates which that amount covered. This is not a requirement of PACMAN, nor is it covered in DHA online guidance. The online guidance for what is required states:

- A copy of the full lease document (or a Member/Owner statement form for private arrangements), and
- The initial rent receipt or tenant payment ledger.

As discussed, the initial rent receipt could be provided; however it does not state the dates it covers. As it is the initial rent receipt, which can be checked by reviewing the lease and ensuring it matches the payment details, I fail to see why it would require these further details. When I requested further detail on the policy that required this further detail, your agent became abrupt, argumentative and hung up.

I would note that you agent specifically stated to 'just go and get a tenant ledger from the real estate'. However as the lease was only signed on Wednesday afternoon and the initial payment made subsequently, this is not yet available. As the lease is to take effect as of next Thursday the 27th and the Defence pay system has a lead time in order to process payments. I would seek to complete this application ASAP.

I fail to see why DHA cannot assist in this matter, nor how this behaviour is acceptable in a professional organisation.

Regards,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

"Few will have the greatness to bend history itself, but each of us can work to change a small portion of events. It is from numberless diverse acts of courage and belief that human history is shaped. Each time a man stands up for an ideal, or acts to improve the lot of others, or strikes out against injustice, he sends forth a tiny ripple of hope, and crossing each other from a million different centers of energy and daring those ripples build a current which can sweep down the mightiest walls of oppression and resistance." - Robert F. Kennedy

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Defence Housing Australia will send you correspondence and documents by email if you request or if you use email to contact us. Email is not a secure form of communication and may transmit computer viruses.

[intmr02.dha.gov.au](mailto:intmr02.dha.gov.au)[6431820]

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[intmr02.dha.gov.au](mailto:intmr02.dha.gov.au)[6592177]

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**Sackley, Pip**

---

**From:** Wise, Sue  
**Sent:** Thursday, 13 March 2014 5:29 PM  
**To:** Wilson, Sharon; Morrow, Kim  
**Subject:** FW: Complaint - Customer service - [REDACTED]

Please see below Ryan's suggestions for a further response to [REDACTED]. Do you think the next response would be better coming from you Kim, or you, Sharon?

If he is still not placated, I think we should escalate to [REDACTED] and the member's unit.

Thanks  
Sue

Sue Wise | Housing Team Leader  
Ipswich HMC | Defence Housing Australia  
Shop 12 Yamanto Shopping Centre  
CNR Warwick Road and Powells Road Yamanto QLD 4305  
Tel: 07 [REDACTED] | Fax: 02 6222 2203  
email: [REDACTED]@dha.gov.au | [www.dha.gov.au](http://www.dha.gov.au)

**Applying for Rent Allowance? Apply the no fuss way using DHA's Online Services DHA Online Services Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.**

---

**From:** Van Engelen, Ryan  
**Sent:** Thursday, 13 March 2014 4:22 PM  
**To:** Wise, Sue  
**Subject:** RE: Complaint - Customer service - [REDACTED]

Hi Sue

I would reiterate what Kim sent him in her last email or send him to the DRHM.

*If you disagree or wish to have further clarification as to why this policy is in place you can refer this to [policy.inquiry@defence.gov.au](mailto:policy.inquiry@defence.gov.au).*

The Service Agreement is a controlled *Commercial in Confidence* document and we would not normally send him a copy. But if he wants to make an FOI request then have him submit a request.

<http://www.dha.gov.au/about-us/customer-relations/freedom-of-information>

[foi@dha.gov.au](mailto:foi@dha.gov.au)

**Ryan van Engelen** | National Allocations Manager - MWD  
Property & Tenancy Services | Defence Housing Australia

26 Brisbane Ave Barton, ACT 2612  
Tel: 02 [REDACTED] | [REDACTED]@dha.gov.au | [www.dha.gov.au](http://www.dha.gov.au)

**From:** Wise, Sue  
**Sent:** Thursday, 13 March 2014 4:08 PM  
**To:** Van Engelen, Ryan  
**Subject:** FW: Complaint - Customer service - [REDACTED]

Good afternoon Ryan

[REDACTED] is a lawyer and is wanting a copy of the contract between Defence and DHA. Any recommendations as to how to respond?

Thanks for your help.

Regards  
Sue

Sue Wise | Housing Team Leader  
Ipswich HMC | Defence Housing Australia  
Shop 12 Yamanto Shopping Centre  
CNR Warwick Road and Powells Road Yamanto QLD 4305  
Tel: 07 [REDACTED] | Fax: 02 6222 2203  
email: [REDACTED]@dha.gov.au | [www.dha.gov.au](http://www.dha.gov.au)

**Applying for Rent Allowance? Apply the no fuss way using DHA's Online Services DHA Online Services Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.**

Kim,

I feel you may misunderstand the situation.

An simple apology would have accepted as a suitable response; however the response received states "I am sorry that we did not get off on the right foot in our initial conversation". This is not an apology for any action or behaviour, specifically as it does not state the behaviour for which was inappropriate; at best its a statement that it was not a positive encounter. The least of which I would expect would be an acknowledgement that it is not appropriate to hang up on a customer seeking further information! This is further compounded by the subsequent statement "*It is unfortunate that you were not aware that you already had the signed lease and the receipt necessary to commence your RA.*" which I can only infer in the intent of this statement to mean 'it is unfortunate you are an idiot for not realising you had the documents you needed'. This is despite the fact that the the receipt I did have was clearly explained during the telephone conversation and the subsequent email complaint which stated "*As discussed, the initial rent receipt could be provided; however it does not state the dates it covers*" and therefore does not comply with DHA 'policy'. As such, I do not see how the the response from Sue Wise could be considered an apology. As a result, it was not an apology that escalated the situation; but a distinct lack of respect for a customer, a subsequent insinuation and an answer that relied on a policy which was not provided (except to the extent it is stated on an application form).

Nonetheless, an apology at this point would be somewhat meaningless given the preceding correspondence from both Sue Wise and yourself which at best offer platitudes that 'it could have been done better'. Indeed neither of your responses actually mention hanging up on a customer.

In relation to the 'policy' (as described by Sue Wise) or the 'contractual requirement' between Defence and DHA (as described by you), please provide a copy of the policy or contract. If you are unable or unwilling to complete this request, please provide sufficient information for me to request this information through the Freedom of Information Act (such as the name of the contract, the date it was signed, the parties it was signed by, who is in possession of the contract or where is contract currently held). As you have 'confirmed' this as a contractual requirement, I presume you have sighted this document recently in order to provide such a response.

Regards,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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---

**From:** Morrow, Kim [mailto:[REDACTED]@dha.gov.au]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 11 March 2014 14:47  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** FW: Complaint - Customer service

Good afternoon [REDACTED]

Your complaint has been escalated to me for response. Firstly, I would like to confirm that your RA has been processed and completed, and should be in your pay of 27/3/2014, and backdated to your date of occupancy.

I have spoken to Sue Wise about the telephone conversation that you refer to and she has expressed regret at her frustration in being unable to satisfactorily answer your queries. She has requested that I pass on her apologies for being unable to reach a positive outcome and suitable answers to your questions on the phone. She initially responded to your complaint in an attempt to clear up the misunderstanding that had occurred, and thought that you would not require the complaint to be escalated as the matter had been resolved. However, she now agrees that her initial apology only served to further aggravate the situation. This was certainly not her intent.

In regards to your original request about the rental agreement not being sufficient evidence for RA commencement I can confirm that it is a contractual requirement between defence and DHA for the supply of a rental statement. In this instance the Ipswich housing allocation team have implemented the policies correctly as per defence specifications. If you disagree or wish to have further clarification as to why this policy is in place you can refer this to [policy.inquiry@defence.gov.au](mailto:policy.inquiry@defence.gov.au).

Trusting that this adequately addresses the issues raised in your complaint regarding customer service and policy.

Kind Regards

**Kim Morrow** | Property and Tenancy Manager

Ipswich HMC | Defence Housing Australia  
Shop 12 Yamanto Shopping Centre  
CNR Warwick Road and Powells Road Yamanto QLD 4305  
Tel: 07 [REDACTED] | Mobile: [REDACTED]  
email: [REDACTED]@dha.gov.au | [www.dha.gov.au](http://www.dha.gov.au)

---

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 25 February 2014 4:18 PM  
**To:** Wise, Sue  
**Subject:** RE: Complaint [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

UNCLASSIFIED

Sue,

It is unfortunate that the most basic level of customer services skills could not be afforded by the customer relations officer of a branch. Equally so, that you would consider that it is appropriate to answer a complaint which you are the subject of.

The receipt, to the extent required by DHA, was not in my possession (as explained in the email below) and was sought after you decided it was appropriate to hang up on me. The receipt I did have (and was sent to you on 21/02/14) was from the online banking receipt transferring funds to the account stipulated on the lease. I acquired the detailed receipt required by DHA simply because its easier to do so than deal with a problematic person and delay the approval of the application. The core of my question was why a receipt to this extent required, which your response does not address. You have simply stated 'its required because its on the form'.

The purpose of the inquiry was simply to understand why it was necessary for an initial rent receipt to the detail required by DHA as the lease provides legal basis for payment of the allowance pursuant to PACMAN. Because it appeared unnecessary, I did not want to seek another receipt from the real estate. This was a simple inquiry that only occurred because I was already on the phone to you in relation to submitting an application and was not an issue. Any simple response would have been sufficient to avoid this issue such as:

- Its our policy at the moment, but I will forward your feedback to head office for consideration; or
- The reason we require additional information is people have forged leases before and this receipt verifies the information (or whatever the actual reason for this requirement is); or
- I'm not sure why its required but I can see if I can find out for you; or
- Maybe we don't need it, but there is a process to follow in order to change our internal requirements and I am unable to change that in time to process your application; or
- Just about any other response other than hang up.



Please pass this response to your next level supervisor or advise the appropriate address to send this complaint.

I do look forward to a positive relationship with DHA; however this experience with your branch has only reinforced the negative perception of DHA and the service it provides.

Regards,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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---

**From:** Wise, Sue [mailto:[REDACTED]@dha.gov.au]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 25 February 2014 15:17  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: Complaint [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Good afternoon [REDACTED]

I am sorry that we did not get off on the right foot in our initial conversation. It is unfortunate that you were not aware that you already had the signed lease and the receipt necessary to commence your RA. The requirement for a receipt stating the dates is outlined in the paper version of the RA application and the online RA application form. It is not a PACMAN reference, but rather part of the internal policy that is agreed between DHA and Defence as to how we conduct our business.

Thanks for providing all the information required in order for us to process your RA. We will get this done in time to meet pay cut-off of 13/3/2014. We are unable to change your categorisation in the system without creating a new case for you – this is what we are doing now.

We will send you a letter outlining your RA amounts, once completed, and hope we can look forward to a good working relationship in the future.

Thanks and regards

Sue

Sue Wise | Housing Team Leader

Ipswich HMC | Defence Housing Australia  
Shop 12 Yamanto Shopping Centre

CNR Warwick Road and Powells Road Yamanto QLD 4305

Tel: 07 [REDACTED] | Fax: 02 6222 2203

email: [REDACTED]@dha.gov.au | [www.dha.gov.au](http://www.dha.gov.au)

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday, 21 February 2014 11:00 AM  
**To:** Ipswich Housing  
**Subject:** Complaint [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

UNCLASSIFIED

To whom it may concern,

Please explain why it is appropriate for a team leader to hang up on a Defence member who is seeking further information in relation to the requirements?

This incident occurred through a routine inquiry to submit an RA application as:

- The website would not function through the DRN;
- My marital status was incorrectly recorded despite recent interactions in the past two weeks to have this corrected; and
- Using a mobile to submit the application froze during the process.

On contacting the Ipswich office, your advisor (Sue Wise) stated that she required an initial rent receipt to state the dates which that amount covered. This is not a requirement of PACMAN, nor is it covered in DHA online guidance. The online guidance for what is required states:

- A copy of the full lease document (or a Member/Owner statement form for private arrangements), and
- The initial rent receipt or tenant payment ledger.

As discussed, the initial rent receipt could be provided; however it does not state the dates it covers. As it is the initial rent receipt, which can be checked by reviewing the lease and ensuring it matches the payment details, I fail to see why it would require these further details. When I requested further detail on the policy that required this further detail, your agent became abrupt, argumentative and hung up.

I would note that you agent specifically stated to 'Just go and get a tenant ledger from the real estate'. However as the lease was only signed on Wednesday afternoon and the initial payment made subsequently, this is not yet available. As the lease is to take effect as of next Thursday the 27th and the Defence pay system has a lead time in order to process payments. I would seek to complete this application ASAP.

I fail to see why DHA cannot assist in this matter, nor how this behaviour is acceptable in a professional organisation.

Regards,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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sweep down the mightiest walls of oppression and resistance.” - Robert F. Kennedy

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**Sackley, Pip**

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**From:** Wise, Sue  
**Sent:** Thursday, 13 March 2014 5:32 PM  
**To:** Wilson, Sharon  
**Subject:** RE: Complaint - Customer service - [REDACTED]

If you do that this afternoon, we may have his response back tomorrow morning before the Consortium???

Sue Wise | Housing Team Leader  
Ipswich HMC | Defence Housing Australia  
Shop 12 Yamanto Shopping Centre  
CNR Warwick Road and Powells Road Yamanto QLD 4305  
Tel: 07 [REDACTED] | Fax: 02 6222 2203  
email: [REDACTED]@dha.gov.au | [www.dha.gov.au](http://www.dha.gov.au)

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**From:** Wilson, Sharon  
**Sent:** Thursday, 13 March 2014 4:31 PM  
**To:** Wise, Sue; Morrow, Kim  
**Subject:** RE: Complaint - Customer service - [REDACTED]

We can discuss with [REDACTED] at the Consortium meeting tomorrow. I am happy to send the next response.

Sharon Wilson | Ipswich Regional Director  
Ipswich HMC | Defence Housing Australia  
Shop 12 Yamanto Shopping Centre  
CNR Warwick Road and Powells Road Yamanto QLD 4305  
Tel: 07 [REDACTED] Mobile: [REDACTED]  
email: [REDACTED]@dha.gov.au | [www.dha.gov.au](http://www.dha.gov.au)

---

**From:** Wise, Sue  
**Sent:** Thursday, 13 March 2014 4:29 PM  
**To:** Wilson, Sharon; Morrow, Kim  
**Subject:** FW: Complaint - Customer service - [REDACTED]

Please see below Ryan's suggestions for a further response to [REDACTED]. Do you think the next response would be better coming from you Kim, or you, Sharon?

If he is still not placated, I think we should escalate to [REDACTED] and the member's unit.

Thanks  
Sue

Sue Wise | Housing Team Leader  
Ipswich HMC | Defence Housing Australia  
Shop 12 Yamanto Shopping Centre  
CNR Warwick Road and Powells Road Yamanto QLD 4305  
Tel: 07 [REDACTED] | Fax: 02 6222 2203  
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**From:** Van Engelen, Ryan  
**Sent:** Thursday, 13 March 2014 4:22 PM  
**To:** Wise, Sue  
**Subject:** RE: Complaint - Customer service - [REDACTED]

Hi Sue

I would reiterate what Kim sent him in her last email or send him to the DRHM.

*If you disagree or wish to have further clarification as to why this policy is in place you can refer this to [policy.inquiry@defence.gov.au](mailto:policy.inquiry@defence.gov.au).*

The Service Agreement is a controlled *Commercial in Confidence* document and we would not normally send him a copy. But if he wants to make an FOI request then have him submit a request.

<http://www.dha.gov.au/about-us/customer-relations/freedom-of-information>

[foi@dha.gov.au](mailto:foi@dha.gov.au)

**Ryan van Engelen** | National Allocations Manager - MWD  
Property & Tenancy Services | Defence Housing Australia

26 Brisbane Ave Barton, ACT 2612  
Tel: 02 [REDACTED] | [REDACTED]@dha.gov.au | [www.dha.gov.au](http://www.dha.gov.au)

---

**From:** Wise, Sue  
**Sent:** Thursday, 13 March 2014 4:08 PM  
**To:** Van Engelen, Ryan  
**Subject:** FW: Complaint - Customer service - [REDACTED]

Good afternoon Ryan

[REDACTED] is a lawyer and is wanting a copy of the contract between Defence and DHA. Any recommendations as to how to respond?

Thanks for your help.

Regards  
Sue

**Sue Wise** | Housing Team Leader  
Ipswich HMC | Defence Housing Australia  
Shop 12 Yamanto Shopping Centre  
CNR Warwick Road and Powells Road Yamanto QLD 4305  
Tel: 07 [REDACTED] | Fax: 02 6222 2203  
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Kim,

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An simple apology would have accepted as a suitable response; however the response received states "I am sorry that we did not get off on the right foot in our initial conversation". This is not an apology for any action or behaviour, specifically as it does not state the behaviour for which was inappropriate; at best its a statement that it was not a positive encounter. The least of which I would expect would be an acknowledgement that it is not appropriate to hang up on a customer seeking further information! This is further compounded by the subsequent statement "*It is unfortunate that you were not aware that you already had the signed lease and the receipt necessary to commence your RA.*" which I can only infer in the intent of this statement to mean 'it is unfortunate you are an idiot for not realising you had the documents you needed'. This is despite the fact that the the receipt I did have was clearly explained during the telephone conversation and the subsequent email complaint which stated "*As discussed, the initial rent receipt could be provided; however it does not state the dates it covers*" and therefore does not comply with DHA 'policy'. As such, I do not see how the the response from Sue Wise could be considered an apology. As a result, it was not an apology that escalated the situation; but a distinct lack of respect for a customer, a subsequent insinuation and an answer that relied on a policy which was not provided (except to the extent it is stated on an application form).

Nonetheless, an apology at this point would be somewhat meaningless given the preceding correspondence from both Sue Wise and yourself which at best offer platitudes that 'it could have been done better'. Indeed neither of your responses actually mention hanging up on a customer.

In relation to the 'policy' (as described by Sue Wise) or the 'contractual requirement' between Defence and DHA (as described by you), please provide a copy of the policy or contract. If you are unable or unwilling to complete this request, please provide sufficient information for me to request this information through the Freedom of Information Act (such as the name of the contract, the date it was signed, the parties it was signed by, who is in possession of the contract or where is contract currently held). As you have 'confirmed' this as a contractual requirement, I presume you have sighted this document recently in order to provide such a response.

Regards,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

"Few will have the greatness to bend history itself, but each of us can work to change a small portion of events. It is from numberless diverse acts of courage and belief that human history is shaped. Each time a man stands up for an ideal, or acts to improve the lot of others, or strikes out against injustice, he sends forth a tiny ripple of hope, and crossing each other from a million different centers of energy and daring those ripples build a current which can sweep down the mightiest walls of oppression and resistance." - Robert F. Kennedy

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**From:** Morrow, Kim [mailto:[REDACTED]@dha.gov.au]

**Sent:** Tuesday, 11 March 2014 14:47

**To:** [REDACTED]

**Subject:** FW: Complaint - Customer service

Good afternoon [REDACTED]

Your complaint has been escalated to me for response. Firstly, I would like to confirm that your RA has been processed and completed, and should be in your pay of 27/3/2014, and backdated to your date of occupancy.

I have spoken to Sue Wise about the telephone conversation that you refer to and she has expressed regret at her frustration in being unable to satisfactorily answer your queries. She has requested that I pass on her apologies for being unable to reach a positive outcome and suitable answers to your questions on the phone. She initially responded to your complaint in an attempt to clear up the misunderstanding that had occurred, and thought that you would not require the complaint to be escalated as the matter had been resolved. However, she now agrees that her initial apology only served to further aggravate the situation. This was certainly not her intent.

In regards to your original request about the rental agreement not being sufficient evidence for RA commencement I can confirm that it is a contractual requirement between defence and DHA for the supply of a rental statement. In this instance the Ipswich housing allocation team have implemented the policies correctly as per defence specifications. If you disagree or wish to have further clarification as to why this policy is in place you can refer this to [policy.inquiry@defence.gov.au](mailto:policy.inquiry@defence.gov.au).

Trusting that this adequately addresses the issues raised in your complaint regarding customer service and policy.

Kind Regards

**Kim Morrow** | Property and Tenancy Manager

Ipswich HMC | Defence Housing Australia  
Shop 12 Yamanto Shopping Centre  
CNR Warwick Road and Powells Road Yamanto QLD 4305  
Tel: 07 [REDACTED] | Mobile: [REDACTED]  
email: [REDACTED]@dha.gov.au | [www.dha.gov.au](http://www.dha.gov.au)

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 25 February 2014 4:18 PM  
**To:** Wise, Sue  
**Subject:** RE: Complaint [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

UNCLASSIFIED

Sue,

It is unfortunate that that the most basic level of customer services skills could not be afforded by the customer relations officer of a branch. Equally so, that you would consider that it is appropriate to answer a complaint which you are the subject of.



The receipt, to the extent required by DHA, was not in my possession (as explained in the email below) and was sought after you decided it was appropriate to hang up on me. The receipt I did have (and was sent to you on 21/02/14) was from the online banking receipt transferring funds to the account stipulated on the lease. I acquired the detailed receipt required by DHA simply because its easier to do so than deal with a problematic person and delay the approval of the application. The core of my question was why a receipt to this extent required, which your response does not address. You have simply stated 'its required because its on the form'.

The purpose of the inquiry was simply to understand why it was necessary for an initial rent receipt to the detail required by DHA as the lease provides legal basis for payment of the allowance pursuant to PACMAN. Because it appeared unnecessary, I did not want to seek another receipt from the real estate. This was a simple inquiry that only occurred because I was already on the phone to you in relation to submitting an application and was not an issue. Any simple response would have been sufficient to avoid this issue such as:

- Its our policy at the moment, but I will forward your feedback to head office for consideration; or
- The reason we require additional information is people have forged leases before and this receipt verifies the information (or whatever the actual reason for this requirement is); or
- I'm not sure why its required but I can see if I can find out for you; or
- Maybe we don't need it, but there is a process to follow in order to change our internal requirements and I am unable to change that in time to process your application; or
- Just about any other response other than hang up.

Please pass this response to your next level supervisor or advise the appropriate address to send this complaint.

I do look forward to a positive relationship with DHA; however this experience with your branch has only reinforced the negative perception of DHA and the service it provides.

Regards,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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and belief that human history is shaped. Each time a man stands up for an ideal, or acts to improve the lot of others, or strikes out against injustice, he sends forth a tiny ripple of hope, and crossing each other from a million different centers of energy and daring those ripples build a current which can sweep down the mightiest walls of oppression and resistance.” - Robert F. Kennedy

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**From:** Wise, Sue [mailto:██████████@dha.gov.au]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 25 February 2014 15:17  
**To:** ██████████  
**Subject:** RE: Complaint [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Good afternoon ██████████

I am sorry that we did not get off on the right foot in our initial conversation. It is unfortunate that you were not aware that you already had the signed lease and the receipt necessary to commence your RA. The requirement for a receipt stating the dates is outlined in the paper version of the RA application and the online RA application form. It is not a PACMAN reference, but rather part of the internal policy that is agreed between DHA and Defence as to how we conduct our business.

Thanks for providing all the information required in order for us to process your RA. We will get this done in time to meet pay cut-off of 13/3/2014. We are unable to change your categorisation in the system without creating a new case for you – this is what we are doing now.

We will send you a letter outlining your RA amounts, once completed, and hope we can look forward to a good working relationship in the future.

Thanks and regards

Sue

**Sue Wise | Housing Team Leader**

Ipswich HMC | Defence Housing Australia  
Shop 12 Yamanto Shopping Centre

CNR Warwick Road and Powells Road Yamanto QLD 4305

Tel: 07 [REDACTED] | Fax: 02 6222 2203

email: [REDACTED]@dha.gov.au | [www.dha.gov.au](http://www.dha.gov.au)

**Applying for Rent Allowance? Apply the no fuss way using DHA's Online Services DHA Online Services Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.**

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday, 21 February 2014 11:00 AM  
**To:** Ipswich Housing  
**Subject:** Complaint [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

UNCLASSIFIED

To whom it may concern,

Please explain why it is appropriate for a team leader to hang up on a Defence member who is seeking further information in relation to the requirements?

This incident occurred through a routine inquiry to submit an RA application as:

- The website would not function through the DRN;
- My marital status was incorrectly recorded despite recent interactions in the past two weeks to have this corrected; and
- Using a mobile to submit the application froze during the process.

On contacting the Ipswich office, your advisor (Sue Wise) stated that she required an initial rent receipt to state the dates which that amount covered. This is not a requirement of PACMAN, nor is it covered in DHA online guidance. The online guidance for what is required states:

- A copy of the full lease document (or a Member/Owner statement form for private arrangements), and
- The initial rent receipt or tenant payment ledger.

As discussed, the initial rent receipt could be provided; however it does not state the dates it covers. As it is the initial rent receipt, which can be checked by reviewing the lease and ensuring it matches the payment details, I fail to see why it would require these further details. When I requested further detail on the policy that required this further detail, your agent became abrupt, argumentative and hung up.

I would note that your agent specifically stated to 'just go and get a tenant ledger from the real estate'. However as the lease was only signed on Wednesday afternoon and the initial payment made subsequently, this is not yet available. As the lease is to take effect as of next Thursday the 27th and the Defence pay system has a lead time in order to process payments. I would seek to complete this application ASAP.

I fail to see why DHA cannot assist in this matter, nor how this behaviour is acceptable in a professional organisation.

Regards,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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