

RESERVE BANK OF FIJI

Complaints Management Bulletin

Quarter 4, 2024



COMPLAINTS ESCALATED TO RBF

6 new complaints received in Q4, 2024.

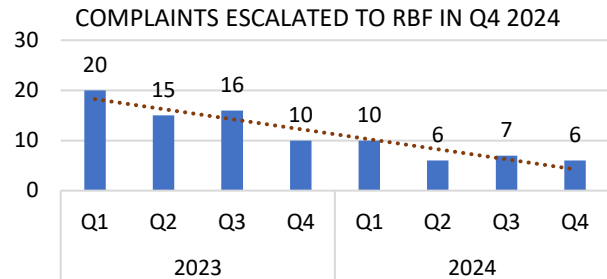
3 carried forward from Q3.

Top 3 Complaint Types

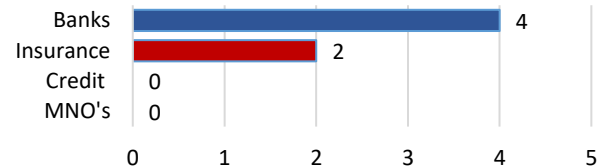
- 3 Customer Service
- 2 Motor Vehicle
- 1 Banking App

Location

- 5 Central
- 1 Western



COMPLAINTS ESCALATED TO THE RBF BY INDUSTRY TYPE



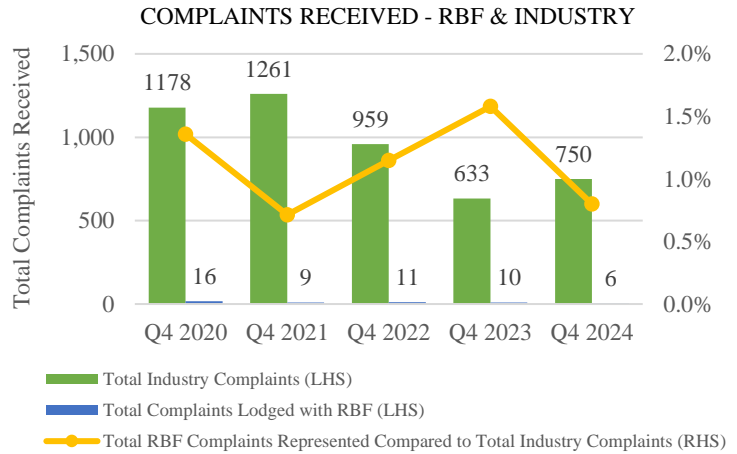
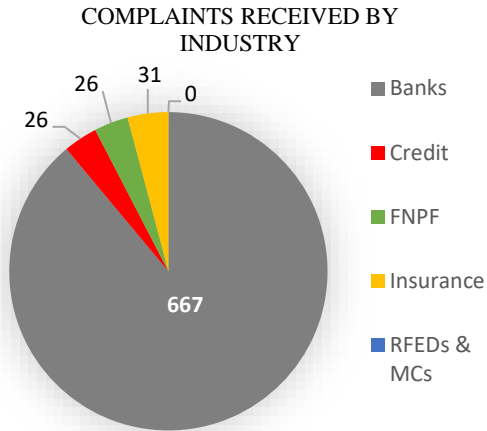
Nine (9) complaints were assessed in Q4, 2024 - 3 carried forward from the September quarter and 6 new complaints. Of these:

- 8 resolved; and
- 1 carried forward to Q1, 2025.

Fifty percent (50%) of the new complaints were customer service related from the banking sector and specifically about the lack of response from the banks with regards to their complaints. Majority of the complaints escalated to the RBF were resolved within the stipulated 21 days.

The RBF continues to encourage LFIs to work on improving communication with their customers by simplifying responses, minimising use of industry jargons and ensuring that customer complaints are prioritised when submitted. The new Policy for the Protection and Fair Treatment of Financial Consumers due to become effective in April 2025, also stipulates similar requirements for FSPs.

INDUSTRY REPORT



In summary, LFIs received 750 complaints during the December quarter, a decline of 2.0 percent from the last quarter, but an increase of 18.5 percent when compared to the same period in 2023.

By sector, the results are consistent with size of each industry. Banks registered the most complaints (667), followed by the insurance sector (31), FNNP (26) and credit institutions (26). No complaints registered with the RFEDs & MCs.

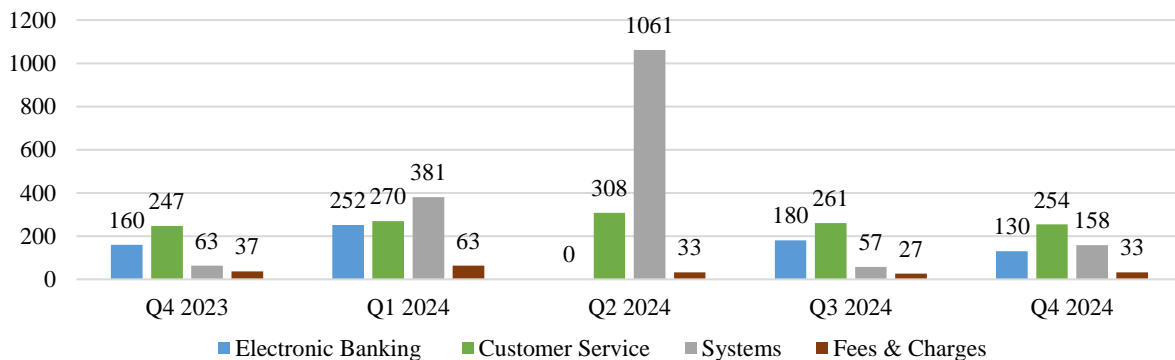
Of the total complaints, 95.6 percent (717) were resolved within the reporting quarter.

BANKING SECTOR

Received - 667 (88.9%) received

Resolved - 656 (98.4%) resolved

TOP COMPLAINT TYPES



Source: Commercial Banks

Total banking related complaints decreased by 3.6 percent when compared to the September quarter and but increased by 17.0 percent when compared to the same period in 2023.

TOP COMPLAINT TYPES

1. Customer Service

Customer services-related complaints continue to feature in the top 3 types of complaints in this industry. Bank customers complained about poor customer service and behaviour of staff, lack of follow-up, delays in responding to queries, delays in internet banking transfers and mobile money funds not being processed into customer accounts.

2. System

System related complaints increased by 177.2 percent when compared to the previous quarter. One LFI reported that they experienced a major system outage at the end of December which resulted in customers not being able to view their transactions as it was reflecting future dates. This has since been resolved.

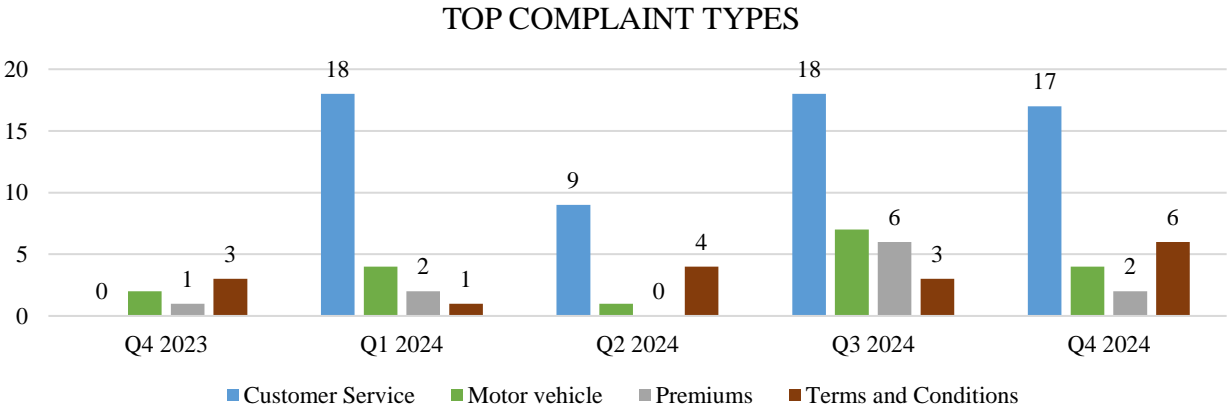
3. Electronic Banking

Electronic banking complaints decreased by 27.8 percent when compared to the previous quarter. The complaints remain the same attributing to poor network connectivity in certain areas, rendering incomplete transactions over the mobile banking applications and transaction errors related to incorrect punching in of figures and account details. With the National Payment System operating LIVE, customers are reminded to be vigilant when transferring funds and ensuring that they enter the correct account numbers as the new system matches against account numbers only. Because if the number is correct and the account is operational the transfer will settle.

INSURANCE

Received - 31 (4.1 %)

Resolved - 23 (74.2%)



Source: Insurance Companies

Insurance related complaints made to LFIs decreased by 26.2 percent when compared to the September quarter and similarly decreased by 16.2 percent when compared to the same period in 2023.

TOP COMPLAINT TYPES

1. Customer Service

Customer service continues to account for the highest number of complaints in this industry. The number of complaints decreased by 26.2 percent when compared to the previous quarter and similarly decreased by 16.2 percent when compared to the same period in 2023.

Communication from the insurers to policyholders continues to be a challenge. This is attributed to insufficient and unclear information from insurers regarding policy terms and conditions, which leads to a lot of frustration experienced by policyholders/customers. Insurers are reminded to remain vigilant and ensure that customer understand the key product information of their policies to ensure there is no mis-selling of products. Policyholders also have a responsibility to understand the product including the terms and conditions before they commit to an insurance plan.

2. Terms & Conditions

Over the quarter, terms and conditions complaints increased by 100 percent from 3 to 6 complaints with a similar increase when compared to the same period in 2023. given the complexities of insurance policies customers usually are not aware that or misunderstand important aspects of their policies e.g.. That they must declare any existing medical condition, what their policy covers and does not cover, payment schedules and exclusions. The RBF continues to work with the customer advocates on effective communication and transparency.

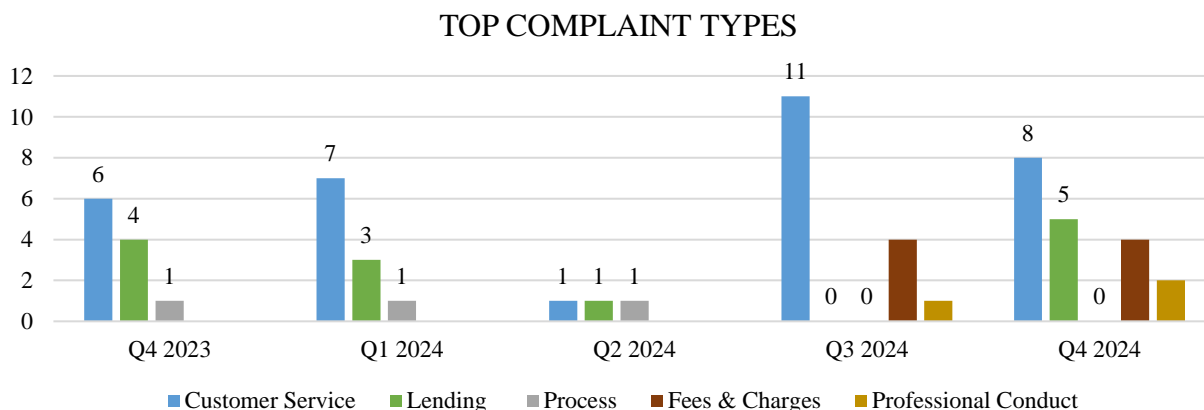
3. Motor Vehicle

Over the quarter motor vehicle related complaints decreased by 42.9 percent, and similarly decreases also by 100.0 percent when compared to the same period in 2023. This decrease is mostly due to the declinature or delays in motor vehicle claims process and no updates provided to the vehicle owners during the process. Complaints also related to disputes on the claim settlement amounts. Customers need to be aware that the value of a vehicle depreciates every year, and must be insured at market value, as this is the amount that the insurer will honour in the event of motor vehicle claim.

CREDIT INSTITUTIONS

Received - 26 (3.5%)

Resolved - 20 (76.9%)



Source: Credit Institutions

TOP COMPLAINT TYPES

1. Customer Service

Customer service-related complaints feature in the top 3 types of complaints in this industry as well, registering an increase of 36.8 percent over the quarter from 19 to 26 complaints received in this reporting period. Complaints received during the reporting period were related to poor customer service with delays in loan applications and settlements, unprofessional behaviour and delay in responding to queries.

2. Fees & Charges

Four complaints relating to fees & charges was received in the review quarter which remains the same when compared to the previous quarter. As noted from the complaints, customers are still unaware of the high interest/fees & charges that are applied due to the high risk that the financial institutions take on when providing loans without any collateral. Complaints were also received regarding incorrect/erroneous deductions after the loan was fully paid off. Customers are urged to check their statements regularly and ensure that the accounts have been closed off after loans have been fully paid off.

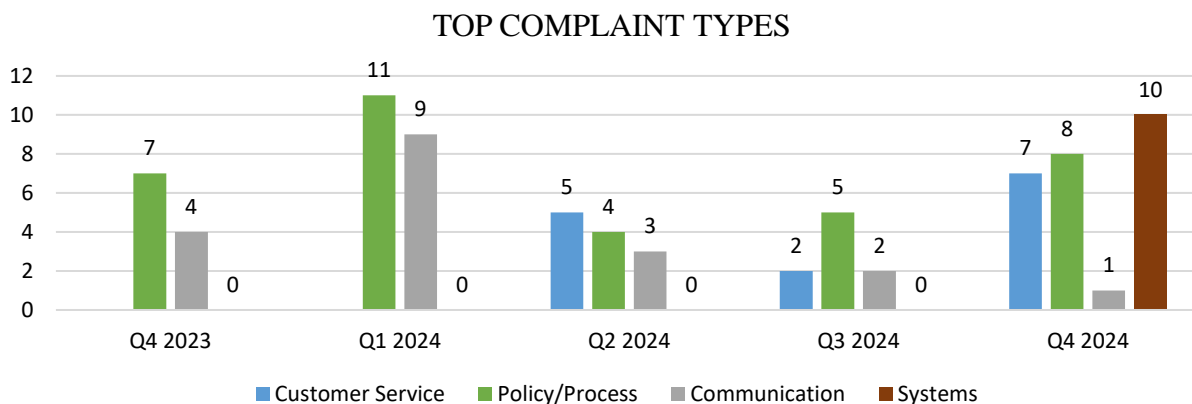
3. Lending

In the December quarter, 5 complaints were highlighted to the credit institutions relating to Lending. These were mainly related to delays in processing of loan applications or settlement of accounts and delays in processing of funds to customer accounts

FIJI NATIONAL PROVIDENT FUND

Received - 26 (3.5%)

Resolved - 18 (69.2%)



Source: Fiji National Provident Fund

During the December quarter, the Fund registered a total of 26 new complaints, an increase of 116.7 percent from the previous quarter and similarly an increase of 136.4 percent when compared to the same period in 2023. The nature of grievances lodged with FNPF in the review quarter was predominantly relating to System-related which increased from 0 to 10 complaints over the quarter. This was due to sign in issues to the App and portal that some customer faced after upgrades to the framework. Issues relating to customer services increased by 250.0 percent over the quarter.

RFEDs and MCs

There were no complaints received by this industry in this reporting period.