

PUBLIC GRIEVANCE

Public hearing is a transparent method adopted by the West Bengal Pollution Control Board for resolving the public problems related to environmental issues. The WBPCB hearing authority is composed of a retired Judicial Officer and other legal and technical officers of the Board. After careful consideration of the representations from both the complainant and the aggrieved, necessary directions are issued. If the directions are complied with within a time schedule, the case is disposed off. Otherwise, legal actions are taken against the errant unit during subsequent hearings. In the ultimate case, closure order is issued until the unit adopts an adequate precautionary arrangement for control of pollution. In case the complaint is found to be beyond the legal jurisdiction of the Board, necessary suggestion letter or letter of direction are

immediately sent to the concerned authorities. This process is diagrammatically represented below.

Following the general practice, the public lodges pollution-related complaints by directly approaching the office of the Board. Recently, the process of lodging a complaint at the WBPCB was made simple. One can now lodge a complaint by just clicking www.emis.wbpcb.gov.in and submitting the necessary information related to the complaint. Almost immediately, the complaints are acknowledged, inquired, inspected and subsequently redressed during a hearing in presence of both the parties involved. The Board punishes the defaulters with bank guarantees as well as with notices of disconnection of electricity and closure.

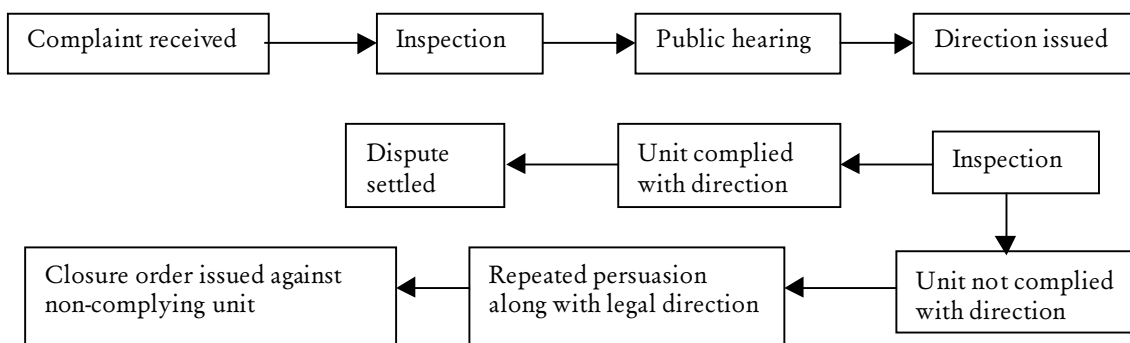


Table: 2.8.1
ACTIVITIES OF THE PUBLIC GRIEVANCE CELL DURING
THE TIME PERIOD 01-04-2004 TO 31-03-2005

Issues	Apr '04	May '04	Jun '04	July '04	Aug '04	Sep '04	Oct '04	Nov '04	Dec '04	Jan '05	Feb '05	Mar' 05	Total	Total complaints received
Brought forwarded from previous period													118	1548
Complainant received during the period.	87	82	100	77	89	103	48	86	89	105	77	90	1033	Total complaints disposed of
Suggestion letter issued.	26	27	25	17	21	24	9	17	15	32	20	14	247	1432
Letter of Direction issued to other authorities of redressal of grievance.	3	6	6	3	8	5	6	9	2	6	1	5	60	
Public hearing arranged and specific direction issued for complaint received during the period.	62	74	84	57	55	46	34	36	71	64	44	101	728	
Under process.	114	89	74	74	79	107	106	130	131	134	146	116	116	
Public hearing arranged for the review of old cases.	39	28	28	45	34	29	25	32	22	44	24	47	397	

The basic essence of the WBPCB Public Grievance System is to provide 'solutions' to the public who lodges complaints on pollution problems faced by them. The number and nature of the complaints received by the WBPCB acts as an indicator and speak volumes about the environmental scenario of the state. The

growing number of public grievances is indicative of how people are getting increasingly aware about the environmental challenges we all face. People now realise that industrial units and other pollution sources that are responsible for water, air and noise pollution also pose danger to their well being due to negligence and irresponsible functioning.

FIGURE 2.8.1
STATUS OF NATURE OF COMPLAINTS DURING 2004-2005

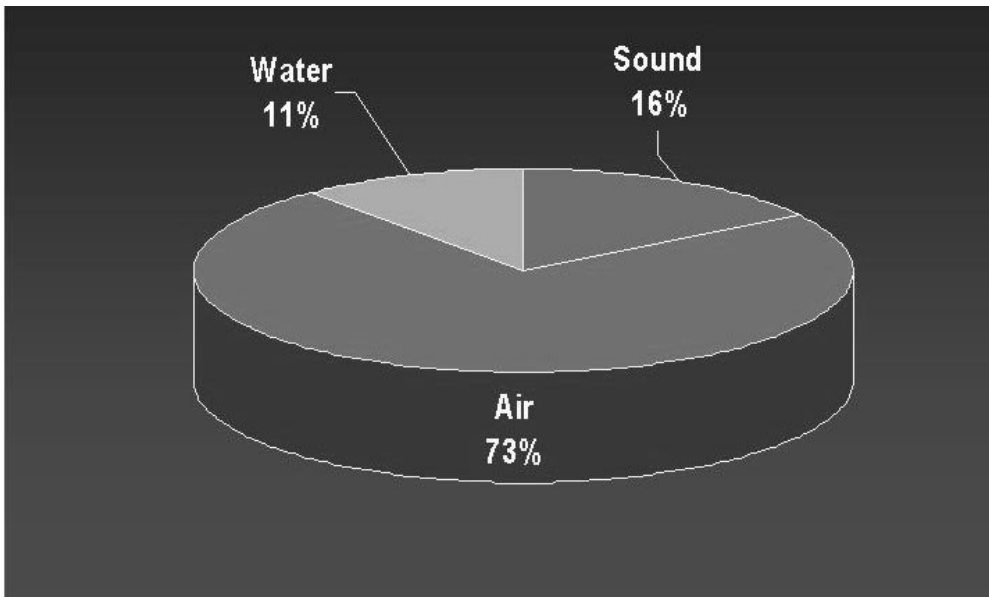


FIGURE 2.8.2
STATUS OF COMPLAINTS RECEIVED AND DISPOSED FOR LAST EIGHT YEARS

