

## **GRIEVANCE MECHANISM / PROCESS**

### **PURPOSE**

This Grievance Mechanism has been developed to receive and facilitate resolution of concerns and grievances about the Project's environmental and social performance. The aim of the grievance mechanism is to ensure that grievances or concerns raised by local landowners and or communities are addressed in a manner that:

- » Provides a predictable, transparent, and credible process to all parties, resulting in outcomes that are seen as fair, effective, and lasting.
- » Builds trust as an integral component of broader community relations activities.
- » Enables more systematic identification of emerging issues and trends, facilitating corrective action and pre-emptive engagement.

The aim of this Grievance Mechanism is to address grievances in a manner that does not require a potentially costly and time consuming legal process.

### **PROCEDURE FOR RECEIVING AND RESOLVING GRIEVANCES**

- » Local landowners, communities and authorities must be informed in writing by the Proponent of the grievance mechanism and the process by which grievances can be brought to the attention of the Proponent through its designated representative.
- » A company representative must be appointed as the contact person for grievances to be addressed to. The name and contact details of the contact person must be provided to local landowners, communities and authorities.
- » Project related grievances relating to the construction, operational and or decommissioning phase must be addressed in writing to the contact person. The contact person should assist local landowners and or communities who may lack resources to submit/prepare written grievances.
- » Significance of each grievance/ complaint will determine which process to follow.
- » Minor complaints to be addressed immediately and more serious grievances/ complaints will follow the formal grievance process as detailed below.
- » The grievance must be registered with the contact person who, within 5 working days of receipt of the grievance, must contact the Complainant to discuss the grievance and agree on suitable date and venue for a meeting in order to discuss the grievances raised. Unless otherwise agreed, the meeting should be held within 3 weeks of receipt of the grievance.
- » The contact person must draft a letter to be sent to the Complainant acknowledging receipt of the grievance, the name and contact details of the Complainant, the nature of the grievance, the date that the grievance was raised, and the date and venue for the meeting (once agreed).
- » Prior to the meeting being held the contact person must contact the Complainant to discuss and agree on the parties who should attend the meeting. The people who will be required to attend the meeting will depend on the nature of the grievance. While the Complainant and or proponent are entitled to invite their legal representatives to attend the meeting/s, it should be made clear that to all the parties involved in the process that the grievance mechanism process is not a legal process. It is therefore recommended that the involvement of legal representatives be limited.

- » The meeting should be chaired by the Proponent's representative appointed to address grievances. The Proponent must provide a person to take minutes of and record the meeting/s. Any costs associated with hiring venues must be covered by the Proponent.
- » Draft copies of the minutes must be made available to the Complainant and the Proponent within 4 working days of the meeting being held. Unless otherwise agreed, comments on the Draft Minutes must be forwarded to the company representative appointed to manage the grievance mechanism within 4 working days of receipt of the draft minutes.
- » In the event of the grievance being resolved to the satisfaction of all the parties concerned, the outcome must be recorded and signed off by the relevant parties. The record should provide details of the date of the meeting/s, the names of the people that attended the meeting/s, the outcome of the meeting/s, and where relevant, the measures identified to address the grievance, the party responsible for implementing the required measures, and the agreed upon timeframes for the measures to be implemented.
- » In the event of a dispute between the Complainant and the Proponent regarding the grievance, the option of appointing an independent mediator to assist with resolving the issue should be discussed. The record of the meeting/s must note that a dispute has arisen and that the grievance has not been resolved to the satisfaction of all the parties concerned.
- » In the event that the parties agree to appoint a mediator, the Proponent will be required to identify three (3) mediators and forward the names and CVs to the Complainant within 2 weeks of such agreement being reached. The Complainant, in consultation with the Proponent, must identify the preferred mediator and agree on a date for the next meeting. The cost of the mediator must be borne by the Proponent however the mediator may rule that the Complainant must re-imburse the Proponent a proportion of these costs. The Proponent must provide a person to take minutes of and record the meeting/s.
- » In the event of the grievance, with the assistance of the mediator, being resolved to the satisfaction of all the parties concerned, the outcome must be recorded and signed off by the relevant parties, including the mediator. The record should provide details on the date of the meeting/s, the names of the people that attended the meeting/s, the outcome of the meeting/s, and where relevant, the measures identified to address the grievance, the party responsible for implementing the required measures, and the agreed upon timeframes for the measures to be implemented.
- » In the event of the dispute not being resolved, the mediator must prepare a draft report that summaries the nature of the grievance and the dispute. The report should include a recommendation by the mediator on the proposed way forward with regard to the addressing the grievance.
- » The draft report must be made available to the Complainant and the Proponent for comment before being finalised and signed by all parties. Unless otherwise agreed, comments on the draft report must be forwarded to the company representative appointed to manage the grievance mechanism within 4 working days. The way forward will be informed by the recommendations of the mediator and the nature of the grievance.

A Complaint is closed out when no further action can be or needs to be taken. Closure status will be classified in the Complaints Register as follows:

- » Resolved. Complaints where a resolution has been agreed and implemented and the Complainant has signed the Confirmation Form.
- » Unresolved. Complaints where it has not been possible to reach an agreed resolution and the case has been authorised for close out by the Appeals Committee.

- » Abandoned. Complaints where the Complainant is not contactable after one month following receipt of a Complaint and efforts to trace his or her whereabouts have been unsuccessful.

The grievance mechanism does not replace the right of an individual, community, group or organization to take legal action should they so wish. In the event of the grievance not being resolved to the satisfaction of Complainant and or the Proponent, either party may be of the opinion that legal action may be the most appropriate option.