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## Fairtrade ANZ Complaints Handling Policy

### Introduction

#### 1. Objective and purpose of the Complaints Handling Policy

Fairtrade Australia & New Zealand (Fairtrade ANZ) recognises the importance of and value of listening and responding to concerns and complaints. We are committed to achieving the highest standard we can in every area of our work and to continuous improvement. Fairtrade ANZ is committed to working according to, or above, the standard required by the Code of Conduct of the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) and the NZ Council for International Development (CID). Fairtrade ANZ is also committed to maintaining its responsiveness to the needs and concerns of its licensees, the public and the producers it supports.

This Policy is designed to provide guidance on the manner in which Fairtrade ANZ receives and handles complaints made against the organization and its employees. The objective of the Policy is to assist the organization and employees in resolving complaints in an efficient, effective and professional manner.

This policy applies to all our people - employees and volunteers – and they are familiarised with it. Those with particular relevant responsibilities are trained in its application. We make clear the value we place on receiving concerns and complaints in all relevant communications. We advise how a copy of this policy may be obtained and we provide clear information on how complaints may be made

#### 2. What is a complaint?

The Policy is intended to address complaints made to Fairtrade ANZ. A **complaint** under this Policy is defined as an expression of dissatisfaction made to the organization, related to its services, or the complaints-handling process itself, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected.

Any person or organization (the **complainant**) who is dissatisfied with a service provided by the organization may contact Fairtrade ANZ to complain. At times, complaints can be by way of negative feedback, which may not require a resolution or formal follow-up. While this type of feedback is valuable to the organization, the Policy does not apply to feedback of this nature.

#### 3. Scope of our Policy

This Policy is intended to apply to any complaint, regardless of who makes it.

We will accept complaints relating to our paid staff, volunteers, partners, contracted service providers or anyone else acting on our behalf.

Any person may make a complaint. Anonymous complaints can be made, however our ability to investigate anonymous complaints may be limited due to the nature of the reporting.

## Guiding principles of effective complaints handling

Partners and employees should consider the following guiding principles of effective complaints handling:

Visibility	Our Complaints Handling Policy is available on the Fairtrade ANZ Website and also internally.
Accessibility	Our Complaints Handling Policy is readily accessible to all partners, employees and licensees. The Policy is easy to understand and includes details on making and resolving complaints.
Responsiveness	Receipt of each complaint is acknowledged to the complainant immediately. Complaints will be handled in an efficient and effective manner. Complainants will be treated courteously and kept informed of the progress of their complaint throughout the complaint-handling process.
Objectivity	Each complaint is addressed in an equitable, objective and unbiased manner through the complaints-handling process.
Charges	There will be no charge to the complainant for making a complaint.
Confidentiality	Personally identifiable information concerning the complainant is actively protected from disclosure unless the complainant expressly consents to disclosure.
Customer focused approach	All partners and employees of Fairtrade ANZ, including the members of the Board, the Chief Executive and the senior management team, are committed to efficient and fair resolution of complaints. We actively solicit feedback from our licensees and producer partners on a regular basis and acknowledge their right to complain.
Accountability	All partners and employees accept responsibility for effective complaints handling. The Chief Executive will ensure that, where appropriate, issues raised in the complaints handling process are reflected in partner and employee performance evaluation.
Continual	Our complaints handling process will be reviewed periodically, to enhance its efficient delivery of Improvement effective outcomes.

## Handling a complaint

### 1. How a complaint may be made

Where a complaint is about a particular engagement, service, partner or employee and the complainant is familiar with the team working on the relevant matter, the complainant should address his/her complaint to the manager of that team. The complaint should be made in writing and provided by hand, email or post. Where possible complaints should be made in writing so that the details of the complaint are clear and complete.

If the complainant is not sure who to address the complaint to, or if the complainant feels it is inappropriate to address the complaint to a particular person, the complaint can be addressed to:

#### **In Australia:**

Private and Confidential  
Chief Executive Officer  
Suite 312, 838 Collins Street, Docklands VIC 3008  
Phone: +61-3-9602 2225  
email: [info@fairtrade.com.au](mailto:info@fairtrade.com.au)

#### **In New Zealand:**

Private and Confidential  
Chief Executive Officer  
PO Box 33 1587, Takapuna, Auckland 0740  
Phone: +64 9920 4950  
email: [info@fairtrade.org.nz](mailto:info@fairtrade.org.nz)

As Fairtrade ANZ does not have a permanent office in the countries where some of Fairtrade ANZ's work is carried out, complaints arising from these countries should be made to either the Australian or New Zealand addresses identified above.

If your complaint is about the Chief Executive Officer, your complaint should be addressed to:  
Private and Confidential  
Chair of Board  
Suite 312, 838 Collins Street, Docklands VIC 3008

Fairtrade ANZ is an active member of the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) and the New Zealand Council for International Development (CID) and adheres to both the ACFID Code of Conduct and the CID Code of Conduct. These Codes of Conduct define the minimum standards of governance, management and accountability of development for members of non-governmental organisations.

Complaints regarding breaches of the ACFID Code of Conduct can be made to the ACFID Code of Conduct Committee. For information on the ACFID Code of Conduct and how to make a complaint, see the ACFID website: [www.acfid.asn.au](http://www.acfid.asn.au).

Complaints regarding breaches of the CID Code of Conduct can be made to the CID Code of Conduct Committee. For information on the CID Code of Conduct and how to make a complaint, see the CID website: [www.cid.org.nz](http://www.cid.org.nz)

## **2. What information is required when making a complaint?**

When making a complaint, providing as much of the following information as possible will make it easier for us to resolve matters:

- Your name, position and contact details
- Your relationship with Fairtrade ANZ (for example: are you a licensee?)
- The nature of the complaint
- Details of the Fairtrade ANZ partner or employee involved (if applicable)
- Relevant dates
- Copies of any documentation supporting the complaint

## **3. Complaints Procedure**

- We will endeavour to deal with inquires and minor complaints which are made orally by telephone or in person, during that initial phone call or meeting. If we cannot adequately deal with a complaint, the complaint will be assigned to a relevant staff member as outlined below for further investigation.
- We will acknowledge all written complaints within 2 days of receipt.

- Your complaint will be assigned to a relevant staff member (or depending on the nature and seriousness of the complaint, a Board member) for investigation. For example, if your complaint relates to an issue of product certification, a member of the Licensing and Certification Team will conduct the review. If your complaint relates to a disagreement about provisions in the Licensing Agreement, it will be reviewed by our legal officer. Any person with a conflict of interest in relation to the complaint shall be excluded from the review and decision making process.
- Each complaint (other than those determined by the relevant staff member to be frivolous or vexatious) will be investigated. The person handling the complaint will make reasonable effort to:
  - Establish the facts and gather the relevant information regarding the complaint; and
  - If necessary and/or practicable, interview those involved.
 The level of investigation will be commensurate with the seriousness and frequency of the complaint.
- Once we have investigated your complaint, we will provide you with a written response.
- If you are dissatisfied with Fairtrade ANZ's response, you have the right to ask for reconsideration of the response by the Chief Executive. Such a request should be made in writing and forwarded by post, email or fax to the address provided above.

#### **4. Your rights during the complaint process**

- You have the right to enquire as to the status of your complaint by contacting the staff member who has been identified to you as handling your complaint.
- Your personal information will be protected from disclosure unless you expressly consent to disclosure.
- Your complaint will be addressed in an equitable, objective and unbiased manner
- There will be no charge for making a complaint.

#### **5. Assistance with making a complaint**

If you need assistance in formulating or lodging a complaint, please contact any member of Fairtrade. If this is not appropriate, please contact the Chief Executive Officer (contact details as above). In particular, a member of staff can assist you to identify the information which should be provided to establish the facts of the complaint and identify the outcome you are seeking in relation to the complaint.

#### **6. Further action**

If you are a licensee or certified trader and the matter comes within the terms of the License Agreement or the Certification Agreement, please refer to the dispute resolution clause in the Licensing Agreement if you are dissatisfied with the response from Fairtrade.

For other matters, if you are dissatisfied with the manner in which your complaint has been handled, you have a right to refer the matter to:

- mediation/arbitration
- the Commonwealth Ombudsman
- the Privacy Commissioner
- the Administrative Appeals Tribunal
- the Courts (see the Magistrates or Supreme Court in your area).

While you are free to use these methods at any time, we strongly recommend you use Fairtrade ANZ's internal review mechanisms before seeking independent assistance.

You may also make a complaint to ACFID ([www.acfid.asn.au](http://www.acfid.asn.au)) in Australia or CID in New Zealand if your complaint is in relation to a breach of the ACFID or CID Code of Conduct.

## **7. Timeframes**

We aim to resolve complaints as quickly as possible and within 30 days unless there are exceptional circumstances. If a complaint is not able to be resolved within 30 days we will inform the complainant of progress and keep them informed of progress every two weeks.

External reviews will have their own timeframes.

### **Our quality controls**

A register of complaints will be kept. Complaints will be analysed by the Chief Executive Officer for the identification of systemic or recurring problems. If such problems are identified, the organization will consider what actions it may need to take to address these problems.

The complaints handling process will be reviewed periodically to enhance its delivery of efficient and effective outcomes. This review will be performed by the Chief Executive Officer or an appropriate appointee. The organization will consider what actions it may need to take to address any deficiencies identified in the review.

Where appropriate, issues that arise as a result of the complaints handling process may be incorporated in the process for monitoring and evaluating employee performance.

**Approved by Board:** 28 November 2016