



**MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND
ECONOMIC MANAGEMENT
GOVERNMENT OF THE COOK ISLANDS**

**EXTERNAL
COMMUNICATIONS
PROCEDURE**

1. INTRODUCTION

In order to ensure transparent complaints handling, several modes of transmission are to be implemented by the Ministry of Finance and Economic Management (MFEM). Therefore, to send us a complaint, we have the following methods:

- Go on to the MFEM website: www.mfem.gov.ck and click on 'Development' and then onto 'Complaints', this will go directly to the relevant email address to receive complaints.
- A written complaint can be delivered to the Development Coordination Division (DCD) of MFEM, third floor of the MFEM building, Avarua, Rarotonga.
- Call +682 29521.

This document describes the impartial complaints handling procedure of the MFEM who is committed to observe the highest ethical, legal and moral standards in the project that the Ministry funds and coordinates.

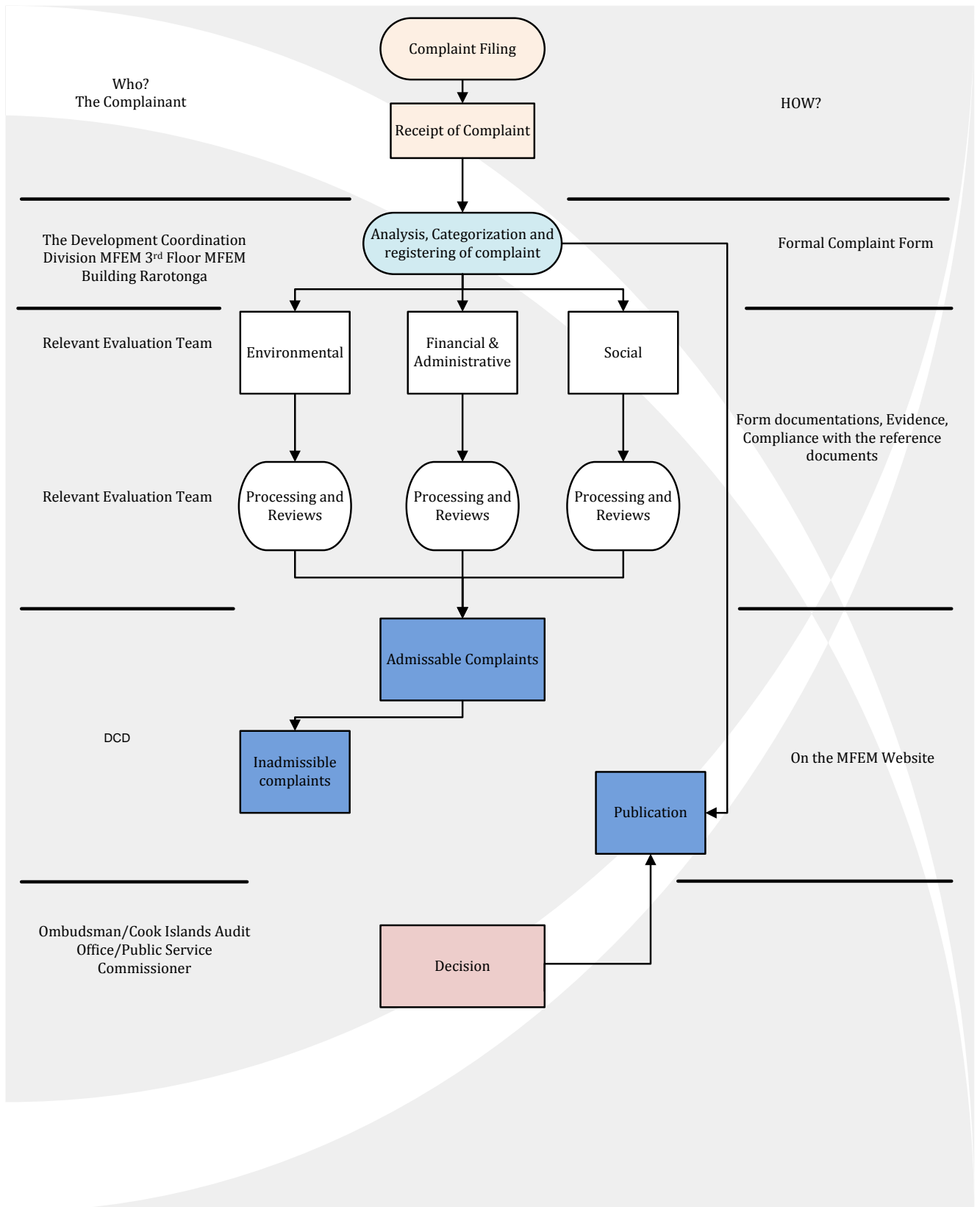
2. SCOPE OF APPLICATION

The MFEM staff are required to report any act of fraud or corruption or other failure that they note. Likewise, the public, grant beneficiaries and project stakeholders can confidentially report fraud and corruption cases and the impact of projects funded via the MFEM.

The complaints may concern the following items:

- Fraud
- Corruption
- Labour and working conditions
- Resource efficiency, pollution prevention and management
- Community health, safety and security
- Land acquisition, restrictions on land use and involuntary resettlement
- Biodiversity conservation and sustainable management of living natural resources
- Indigenous people and traditional local communities
- Stakeholder engagement and information disclosure.

3. SYNOPTIC OF THE PROCEEDINGS



The process

| WHAT | HOW | WHO | WHEN |
|---|---|---|---|
| Step 1. Complaint filing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fill out the Complaint Form and Email, Deposit in Person or Calling. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DCD staff Partners The public | During business hours or anytime |
| Step 2. Receipt of complaint | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Receiving an email Reception in person at the DCD office in Avarua Acknowledging receipt of the complaint | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DCD staff The Environmental and Social Team of the Evaluation Grant Award Committee | Within 5 working days |
| Step 3. Analysis, categorisation and registering complaints | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Registration Documentation evidence Compliance with the reference documents | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DCD staff The Environmental and Social Team of the Evaluation Grant Award Committee | Within 10 working days |
| Step 4. Complaint Publication | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On the MFEM website | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DCD | After 10 working days |
| Step 5. Complaint processing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Location of project Nature of infringement Photography, documents or other evidence Name and address of complainant Reasoned opinion | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DCD staff The Environmental and Social Team of the Evaluation Grant Award Committee | Within 15 working days |
| Complaint processing (stage 2) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The date of issue The nature of the problem The name/s of project employees involved Supporting documents Name and address of the complainant Reasoned opinion | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Environmental and Social Team of the Evaluation Grant Award Committee | Within 15 working days |
| Step 6. Registration and Decision Making | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complaint registration Analysis of the reasoned opinion Arbitration on the reasoned opinion from the relevant authority Decision making | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DCD staff The relevant authority, e.g. Ombudsman, the Cook Islands Audit Office or the Public Service Commissioner | Depending on the complaint, however, feedback should be provided on whom is dealing with the complaint and anticipated timeframes |
| Step 7. Publication of the decision | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On the MFEM website | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DCD staff | Within 5 days of receipt of the decision |