# SOUTH PACIFIC EDUCATORS IN VISION IMPAIRMENT COMPLAINT HANDLING POLICY

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## Introduction

South Pacific Educators in Vision Impairment Inc. (SPEVI) is the major professional association for educators of students with vision impairments in Australia, New Zealand and the South Pacific region. SPEVI acts as the professional body in matters pertaining to the education and support of persons who are blind, have low vision, deaf-blindness, or additional disabilities.

This document describes SPEVI’s Complaint Handling Policy, which has been implemented to ensure compliance with the Australian laws and regulations relating to complaint handling.

## Application

This Policy applies to all officers, members, advisors and agents of SPEVI.  SPEVI has no employees.

## Objective

This Policy’s objective is to minimise damage to SPEVI’s reputation and reduce the risk of litigation by handling complaints from parties with whom we deal, in a timely, effective and consistent manner.

## Person Responsible

The SPEVI President is responsible for:

* the application of this policy;
* reviewing this policy on a regular basis to ensure that it continues to comply with industry laws, regulations, guidelines and best practices; and
* communicating this policy to all officers, members and advisors of the firm.

## Definitions

A complaint means:

1. a written statement from a party with whom SPEVI deals, alleging a grievance involving the conduct, business or affairs of SPEVI or any officers, members and advisors of SPEVI; or
2. a verbal complaint deemed by the person receiving the complaint, based upon the nature and severity of the allegations, sufficiently serious to be dealt with in the same way as a written complaint.

A complaint should include at least one of the three following elements:

* A complaint about SPEVI;
* A reference to damages or potential damages suffered by the complainant; or
* A request for corrective measures.

Note:  Acceptance by SPEVI that corrections may be required does not constitute a complaint, unless a party suffers some grievance as a result of repetition or recurrence.

## Requirements

It is the policy of the Association to:
(a) Handle complaints from parties with whom we deal in a timely, effective, fair and consistent manner.

(b) Record complaints centrally in the Complaints Log, being a database to track key elements of the complaint process in order to ensure that Complaints are dealt with effectively and to identify potential trends or concerns.

## Acknowledgement Letter

When SPEVI receives a complaint, an acknowledgment letter will be sent to the complainant within five business days. This letter will state:

* The name of the person responsible for handling the complaint;
* Key elements of SPEVI’s Complaints Policy; and
* The expected timing of the outcome.

## Complaint Log

1. All complaints will immediately be reported to the President;
2. All complaints will be logged in the Complaint Log. The Complaint Log will, at least, include the following information:
	* Date of complaint;
	* Complainant’s name;
	* Nature of the complaint and the circumstances;
	* Name of the person who is the subject of the complaint;
	* The matter which is the subject of the complaint; and
	* The date and conclusions of the decision rendered in connection with the complaint.
3. Complaints in the Complaint Log will be maintained for a period of 7 years from the resolution date.

## Change of Procedures and Disciplinary Measures

The SPEVI President must monitor the complaint log and ensure that appropriate corrective and/or disciplinary measures are taken if necessary and provide recommendations for change in SPEVI’s procedures as appropriate.