

# HAWAI'I FOREST INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION

## POLICY ON COMPLAINTS

### **Policy Statement**

The Hawai'i Forest Industry Association (HFIA) believes that if one of the organization's employees or contractors wishes to make a complaint or register a concern they should find it easy to do so. It is our policy to welcome complaints and look upon them as an opportunity to learn, adapt, improve and provide better services. This policy is intended to ensure that complaints are dealt with properly and that all complaints or comments are taken seriously.

HFIA supports the concept that most complaints, if dealt with early, openly and honestly, can be sorted out at the project level. If this fails due to either the project team or the complainant being dissatisfied with the result, the complaint will be referred to the HFIA Executive Committee.

### **Aim**

HFIA's aim is to ensure that its complaints procedure is properly and effectively implemented, and that employees and contractors are confident that their complaints and worries are listened to and acted upon promptly and fairly.

### **Goals**

The goals of HFIA are to ensure that:

- Contractors and employees follow the proper protocols when filing a complaint;
- HFIA provides easy to use opportunities for them to register their complaints;
- Complaints are dealt with promptly, fairly and sensitively with due regard to the upset and worry that they can cause to the parties involved.

### **Complaints Procedure**

- All complaints should be made in writing to the Site Manager, Project Manager, and/or Executive Director.
- The person filing the complaint should include their name, title, place of employment as well as similar information for the offender in the complaint; describe each incident that comprises the grievance; list any witnesses present; include all available documentation; and state what actions they think should be taken to redress the grievance.
- If necessary, further details should be obtained from the complainant.
- A copy of this complaint policy should be sent to the complainant.
- The complaint should be timely, within 7-14 days of the incident.
- Documentation is of great importance to any complaint. Documentation should be gathered before the complaint is made and any witnesses should be identified.
- If the complaint raises potentially serious matters, advice should be sought from a legal advisor. If legal action is taken at this stage, any investigation by HFIA under the complaints procedure should cease immediately.
- Immediately on receipt of the complaint, HFIA should launch an investigation and within 10 days should be in a position to provide a full explanation to the complainant, either in writing or by arranging a meeting with the individuals concerned.
- If the issues are too complex to complete the investigation within 10 days, the complainant should be informed of any delays.

- At the meeting a detailed explanation of the results of the investigation should be given and also an apology if it is deemed appropriate (apologizing for what has happened need not be an admission of liability).
- Such a meeting gives HFIA the opportunity to show the complainant that the matter has been taken seriously and has been thoroughly investigated.
- After the meeting, or if the complainant does not want a meeting, a written account of the investigation should be sent to the complainant. This should include details of how to approach the HFIA Executive Committee if the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome.
- The outcomes of the investigation and the meeting should be recorded and any shortcomings in HFIA's procedures should be identified and acted upon.

Throughout the years, HFIA has earned a well-deserved reputation for promoting healthy and productive forest and providing quality forest management and outreach and education services. It is up to each of us to protect and enhance that reputation. Contractors and employees should not criticize HFIA, its contractors or employees, or its projects and programs to any outside company or agency. All complaints should followed the above-mentioned complaints procedure.